

STUDIA CERANEA

Journal of the Waldemar Ceran Research Centre

for

the History and Culture of the Mediterranean Area
and South-East Europe

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FEMALE DEITIES AND DEMONS IN INDO-EUROPEAN CULTURE, 19TH-21ST OCTOBER, 2017

MACIEJ JASZCZYŃSKI, <i>Indo-European Roots of the Helen of Troy</i>	11
IDALIANA KACZOR, <i>Characteristics of Roman Female Deities</i>	23
LEONID KULIKOV, <i>The First Woman Yamī, Her Origin and Her Status in Indo-Iranian Mythology: Demigoddess or Half-human? (Evidence from Ṛgveda 10.10, Iranian Parallels and Greek Relatives)</i>	43
HANNA ZALEWSKA-JURA, <i>Circe and Rome. The Origin of the Legend</i>	77

ARTICLES

DARIUSZ DĄBROWSKI, <i>On the Possibilities of Researching the Marriage Policies of the Rurikids: The Case of Mstislav Fyodor Vladimirovich Monomakhovich</i> .	91
GERGANA GANEVA, <i>Electronic Diachronic Corpus and Dictionaries of Old Bulgarian</i>	111
MATEJ GOGOLA, <i>Prolegomena to the Christian Images Not Made by Human Hands</i>	121
ANDRZEJ R. HOŁASEK, <i>Catechumens in the East in the Light of Pseudo-epigraphic Normative Church Sources from the 4th Century</i>	139
NIKOLAY KANEV, <i>Byzantine Rank Hierarchy in the 9th-11th Centuries</i>	153
KIRIŁ MARINOW, <i>Asparuh and His People on the Lower Danube through the Eyes of Theophanes, or a Story that Was Not Meant to Happen</i>	167
IRENEUSZ MILEWSKI, <i>The Economic Condition of the Bishopric of Gaza (Palestine) during the Rule of Bishop Porphyry (circa 395-420)</i>	193

MOHAMMED AL-NASARAT, <i>From Paganism to Christianity. General Remarks on the Religious Changes in Petra (1st–6th Cent. AD)</i>	209
ŁUKASZ PIGOŃSKI, <i>Berichus and the Evidence for Aspar's Political Power and Aims in the Last Years of Theodosius II's Reign</i>	237
SZYMON WIERZBIŃSKI, <i>Prospective Gain or Actual Cost? Arab Civilian and Military Captives in the Light of Byzantine Narrative Sources and Military Manuals from the 10th Century</i>	253
NEŽA ZAJC, <i>The Byzantine-Poetic Path of the Works of St. Maximus the Greek (Mikhail Trivolis, *Arta, ca. 1470 – St. Maximus the Greek, †Moscow, 1556)</i> .	285

BOOK REVIEWS

MAŁGORZATA B. LESZKA, MIROŚLAW J. LESZKA, <i>Athenais-Eudocia – the Augusta of Palestine</i> (remarks on the book: Т.Л. АЛЕКСАНДРОВА, <i>Византийская императрица Афинаида-Евдокия. Жизнь и творчество в контексте эпохи правления императора Феодосия II (401–450)</i>)	321
MAŁGORZATA SKOWRONEK, <i>Średniowieczne opowieści biblijne. Paleja historyczna w tradycji bizantyńsko-słowiańskiej</i> – MACIEJ DAWCZYK	326
LIBANIOS, <i>Discours</i> , t. III, <i>Discours XI. Antiochicos</i> , texte établi et traduit par M. CASEVITZ, O. LAGACHERIE, notes complémentaires par C. SALIOU – PAWEŁ FILIPCZAK	328
ŚW. JAN CHRYZOSTOM, <i>Mowy do Antiocheńczyków o posągach</i> , przekład i komentarz J. ILUK – PAWEŁ FILIPCZAK	332
ZOFIA A. BRZOZOWSKA, MIROŚLAW J. LESZKA, <i>Maria Lekapene, Empress of the Bulgarians. Neither a Saint nor a Malefactress</i> , translated by M. MAJER, A. MĘKARSKI, M. ZYTKA – ANNA KOTŁOWSKA	335
ЛЕВ ХИРОСФАКТ, <i>Сочинения</i> , перевод с греческого, подготовка издания, комментарии, вступительная статья Т.А. СЕНИНОЙ (монахини Кассии) – MIROŚLAW J. LESZKA	336
LEONORA NEVILLE, <i>Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing</i> , with the assistance of DAVID HARRISVILLE, IRINA TAMARKINA, and CHARLOTTE WHATLEY – MIROŚLAW J. LESZKA	338
LEONORA NEVILLE, <i>Heroes and Romans in Twelfth-Century Byzantium. The Material for History of Nikephoros Bryennios</i> – ZDZISŁAW PENTEK	340

MAŁGORZATA SKOWRONEK, <i>Palaea Historica. The Second Slavic Translation: Commentary and Text</i> , trans. Y. LOSKE – ŁUKASZ PIGOŃSKI	342
<i>Średniowieczne herezje dualistyczne na Bałkanach. Źródła słowiańskie opracowanie, przekład i komentarz</i> GEORGI MINCZEW, MAŁGORZATA SKOWRONEK, JAN MIKOŁAJ WOLSKI – ŁUKASZ PIGOŃSKI	343
ABBREVIATIONS	345
GUIDELINES FOR THE AUTHORS	355

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FEMALE DEITIES AND DEMONS
IN INDO-EUROPEAN CULTURE, 19TH–21ST OCTOBER, 2017



Maciej Jaszczyński (Paris)

INDO-EUROPEAN ROOTS OF THE HELEN OF TROY

Establishing Helen's divinity

Firstly, it needs to be established that although Helen is widely known as a mythological, yet mortal and definitely human figure in the Greek literature, she was in fact considered as a goddess in some parts of Greece. Already in 1893, the Swedish philologist Samuel Wide published a comprehensive review of the evidence for Helen's cult in Laconia in his monograph *Lakonische Kulte*¹. She had a *ἱερόν* – a temple – in Sparta, but the main place of her cult was Therapne, where she was worshipped with Menelaus. From the oldest times, her cult in Laconia had a form of tree-worship – young girls would bring lotos flowers and olive oil and put them on plane trees². We also know of the cult of Ἑλένη δειροῖτις on Rhodes³. Children were often put under the protection of Helen in her temple. According to Hesychius, there was a festival in Laconia called Ἑλένια, where young women would carry baskets to the temple of Helen. Spartan Helen appears on many votive reliefs with Dioskouroi – her brothers Kastor and Polydeukes – which suggests that they were worshipped together⁴. One can also mention Helen's apotheosis together with Achilleus on the island of Leuce narrated by Philostrates in the *Heroicus*⁵. Thus it is proper to treat her at least as local Greek goddess and there is evidence that in fact she, or rather her 'prototype', was an important member of the Proto-Indo-European pantheon.

¹ S. WIDE, *Lakonische Kulte*, Leipzig 1893, p. 340–346.

² *Ibidem*, p. 340–341.

³ PAUSANIAS, *Description of Greece*, III, 19, 10, vol. II, Books 3–5 (*Laconia, Messenia, Elis 1*), trans. W.H.S. JONES, H.A. ORMEROD, Cambridge Massachusett–London 1926 [= LCL, 188]: *They say that this Polyxo desired to avenge the death of Tlepolemus on Helen, now that she had her in her power. So she sent against her when she was bathing handmaidens dressed up as Furies, who seized Helen and hanged her on a tree, and for this reason the Rhodians have a sanctuary of Helen of the Tree.*

⁴ S. WIDE, *Lakonische...*, p. 344, after Hesychius.

⁵ PHILOSTRATE, *Sur les Héros*, 54–55, ed. et trans. S. FOLLET, Paris 2017 [= CUF.SG, 531e].

Etymology of Helen's name

As in the case of some Greek deities, we can firstly turn to the linguistic heritage and examine Helen's name and its etymology to establish whether we can trace it back to Proto-Indo-European times. As a curiosity, we can invoke the synchronic, folk etymology provided by Aeschylus in the *Agamemnon* who connected Helen with the aorist stem of the verb αἰρέω 'ἐλ-' which can mean 'overpower, kill' to evoke her blame for the devastating effects of the Trojan War⁶.

Many scholars have undertaken this task over the last century and no-one has been able to reach a fully satisfying conclusion. Some even deemed the challenge hopeless⁷. There have been three main lines of interpretation for her name, although there exist nine possible etymologies⁸.

The first one, proposed among others by Martin West derives Helen's name from the Proto-Indo-European root *swel- 'to shine', or as suggested by Stefan Höfler – *swelh₁- 'to glow with heat'⁹. It appears in many other Indo-European families¹⁰. This analysis is supported by Julius Pokorny who gives examples of other manifestations of this root, e.g. Vedic *svárati* 'shines', Greek itself has some other instances, εἴλη, ἔλη 'sunshine, sun's heat', ἐλάνη 'torch'. Interestingly, Σέλας 'light' and its derivatives, like σέληνη 'moon', are quite problematic and its relationship with the root is unclear. Semantically it fits, but the preservation of the initial /s/ before a vowel is not a typical outcome for Greek at any stage of its development¹¹. Apart from that, we find Albanian *diell* 'sun', Old English *swelan* 'to burn', German *schwelen*, Lithuanian *svilti* 'grill', so the root itself is very well established.

There is a controversy between the roots *swel- and *swelh₁-. The *LIV* lists *swel- as the root meaning 'schwelen, Brennen' and *swelH- as the one with the significance of 'anschwellen'¹². However, S. Höfler convincingly argues that in fact the correct root should be reconstructed as *swelh₁-. The evidence is the acute variant of the Lithuanian verb *svilti*, just mentioned, Old English *swol* – 'flame'

⁶ AESCHYLUS, *Agamemnon*, 687–688, [in:] *Aeschylus*, vol. II, *Agamemnon. Libation-Bearers. Eumenides. Fragments*, ed. et trans. H.W. SMYTH, London 1926 [= LCL, 146], p. 60–61: ἐπεὶ πρεπόντως/ ἐλένας, ἔλανδρος, ἐλέπτολις: *For, true to her name, a Hell she proved to ships, Hell to men, Hell to city.*

⁷ P. CHANTRAINE, *Dictionnaire Étymologique de la Langue Grecque*, Paris 1968, p. 335 (s.v. Ἐλένη: *Quelle que soit l'interprétation tentée par les historiens de la religion, il est vain de chercher une étymologie*).

⁸ G. SMOOT, *Helenos and the Polyphyletic Etymologies of Helen*, <https://classical-inquiries.chs.harvard.edu/helenos-and-the-polyphyletic-etymologies-of-helen/> [16 X 2017].

⁹ S. HÖFLER, "La Belle Hélène", a *Generic Brothel, and the Development of *CRHC Sequences in Ancient Greek*, https://www.academia.edu/34917682/La_belle_Helene_Handout_SHORT [13 I 2018], p. 2.

¹⁰ M. WEST, *Indo-European Poetry and Myth*, Oxford 2007, p. 231.

¹¹ A.L. SIHLER, *New Comparative Grammar of Greek and Latin*, New York–Oxford 1995, p. 170–171, 216.

¹² *Lexikon der indogermanischen Verben*, ed. H. RIX et al., Wiesbaden 2001, p. 609sq.

from **sw_lH-o-* and the Greek ἀλέη – ‘warmth, heat’ which shows a coloring of the *auslauting* laryngeal¹³.

The key evidence in support of this line of derivation is the discovery of two archaic Laconian inscriptions, one from 675–650 BC, the other from the 6th century BC, where the name is spelled with the initial digamma¹⁴. This definitely rules out the direct derivation from σέλας and the connection with the Vedic goddess Saraṇyū – the mare-mother of the Áśvins, proposed by some scholars, but allows to reconstruct an older form of the name as **Sweléna*, with an expected development of **swe-* into **he-*, as in the Proto-Indo-European reflexive pronoun **swe* (refl.) which surfaces in Attic Greek as ἔ. This suggests the derivation from the root **swelh₁-* with the suffix **-nos/*neh₂>*nā*, very characteristic of the names of Indo-European gods, presumably meaning ‘the lord of/lady of’: Anatolian *Tarḫunna*s, Indic *Varuṇa*, Greek Οὐρανός, Roman *Neptūnus* and *Vulcānus*, Lithuanian *Perkūnas* and others¹⁵. This would conveniently explain Helen’s name as *Lady of Light*, as already proposed by J. Pokorny¹⁶.

There are, however, others who would like very much to connect Helen, her name and her story with the Vedic Saraṇyū. Otto Skutsch in his article on Helen points out that the spelling with the initial digamma is not fully authoritative, as we do find Helen’s name spelled without a digamma on two Corinthian craters from the early 6th century. The Doric dialect of Corinth retains the digamma word-initially relatively long, the first known, and isolated, omission comes in early 5th century in an inscription honoring those who died at Salamis. This version brings Helen perfectly in line with Saraṇyū, whose name is derived from the adjective *sarāna-* – ‘swift’, phonetically matching with Ἐλένη, if we assume that the Corinthian form is the original one¹⁷. This led O. Skutsch to believe that there were two separate Helens, one **Selena* and the other **Swelena*, who merged at some point in the Greek mythological and religious tradition. He justifies this radical idea, not only by two parallel possible etymologies, but also by the fact that Helen had two different identities in the Greek religious tradition. There was Helen, daughter of Zeus, sister of the Dioskouroi, taking over the solar attributes of the Dawn-goddess, but we also have a lot of evidence that in historical times Helen was worshipped in multiples places in the Greek world as a vegetation deity, as mentioned by S. Wide – Ἐλένη δεινδρῆτις.

I consider the possibility of Helen being originally two separate entities to be highly unlikely. Especially because O. Skutsch creates this separate goddess

¹³ S. HÖFLER, “La Belle Hélène”..., p. 2–3.

¹⁴ *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*, vol. XXVI, (1976–1977), ed. H.W. PLEKET, R.S. STROUD, Alphen aan den Rijn–Germantown 1979, 457, 458, p. 123.

¹⁵ M. WEST, *Indo-European*..., p. 137.

¹⁶ J. POKORNY, *Indogermanisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, vol. I, Bern–München 1959, p. 1045 (s.v. swel-).

¹⁷ O. SKUTSCH, *Helen, Her Name and Nature*, JHS 107, 1987, p. 190.

**Selena*, just to equate her with Saranyū, so to go back to her association with the Vedic Aśvins. This is quite an extreme concept, which needs a lot more evidence and justification to be convincing. No other Indo-European tradition provides any evidence for two separate goddesses, one **Selena* and the other **Swelena*. While the inconsistencies of the epigraphic evidence and very different roles of Helen in Greece are baffling, it is not enough to conjure an additional goddess for the Proto-Indo-European period merely to explain a specifically Greek problem.

The third concept, represented by Linda Clader completely discards Helen's associations with the root **swel-* or with Saranyū and treats it as deriving from either of the homophones ἑλένη, one meaning 'basket of woven rope' and the other 'the torch of reeds', both of which she considers coming from the root **wel-* 'to turn', not as J. Pokorny suggests **swel-* in the case of the torch. She noticed that both objects can be produced by twisting reeds, which would explain their etymology. Her reconstructed version of Helen's name is thus **Welena*. She connects the name with the ritual practices found in Sparta where at the festival of *Helenephoria* baskets called ἑλέναι were carried by young girls¹⁸.

I do not consider this to be a probable solution to the question of the etymology of Helen's name. While it is true that Helen was mostly worshipped in Laconia, she was still a very well-known figure in all of Greece, possibly quite archaic given her importance in the Homeric epics and parallels with other Indo-European traditions, so on this basis alone, it is difficult to imagine that her name derives from a local Laconian ritual practice.

Finally, it is also necessary to mention a new etymology proposed by Georges-Jean Pinault in his recent article. He completely refutes any connections with the Vedic Saranyū as linguistically impossible in the light of the epigraphic evidence of the spelling with a digamma and suggests that the Corinthian spelling might be a result of the Attic influence in the context of the vase-painting¹⁹. He also denies the legitimacy of M. West's reconstruction on the basis that the suffix *-eno*, which were to be added to the root **swel-* is not productive in Greek. This, however, can be solved by positing the root **swelh₁-*, as proposed and well argued by S. Höfler²⁰. Instead, G.-J. Pinault tries to explain the name as a compound **suh₁-l-h₁eno* > **suh₁-l-h₁eno*, which would mean 'having a year like a thread'. Thus, he considers Helen's name to be related to the function of Greek Μοῖραι or Latin *Parcae*.

The circumstantial evidence, that is her association with the Divine Twins, similarities with the Vedic deities, explored in the following parts of this paper, strongly suggests that the character of Helen is old and Proto-Indo-European. As I have explained earlier, the existence of two Helens, one **Swelena* from the root **swelh₁-* 'to shine', and the other **Selena*, cognate with Vedic *saraṇa* – 'swift' and

¹⁸ L. CLADER, *Helen. The Evolution from Divine to Heroic in Greek Epic Tradition*, Leiden 1976 [= Mn.S., 42], p. 63sqq.

¹⁹ G.-J. PINAULT, *Hélène retrouvée: l'étymologie de grec ἑλένη*, Be 54, 2015, p. 157–162.

²⁰ S. HÖFLER, "La Belle Hélène"..., p. 2–3.

thus *Saranyū* is completely improbable, as there is simply not enough evidence for that. When it comes to the epigraphic controversy of **Swelena* versus **Selena*, although the evidence is inconclusive, as a rule it is generally easier to explain, or overlook, the unexpected lack of digamma than its presence in the inscriptions, so I do think that M. West and J. Pokorny are ultimately the closest ones to the truth by explaining her name as ‘Lady of Light’ or ‘Lichtgöttin’, although we have to keep in mind that the direct derivation from *σέλας* is not possible. G.-J. Pinault’s idea is definitely viable linguistically, but the solar explanations fit much better culturally and comparatively.

Proto-Indo-European Dawn and the Daughter of the Sun

There have been numerous publications discussing the members of the divine family of Indo-European gods, e.g. *Indo-European Poetry and Myth* by M. West, or an article by Peter Jackson *Light from Distant Asterisks*²¹. Among the reconstructed deities we often find two similar figures: Dawn and the ‘Daughter of the Sun’. The two are best preserved in the Vedic tradition as *Uṣās* – Dawn and *Sūryā́*, which is the feminine form of *Sūrya-* – the Sun – with the shift of the accent, who is the wife of the *Aśvins* – the Divine Twins. The goddess of dawn is a very well attested Indo-European divinity and there is not doubt about her archaic character, even purely on linguistic grounds, as Vedic *uṣas-*, Avestan *uša-*, Greek ἠώς and Latin *Aurora* all go back to the Proto-Indo-European verbal root **h₂us-/*h₂eus-* meaning ‘to glow, to flame’ extended with an *-os suffix²². As it is often the case with the Greek deities, who we would like to take back to the Proto-Indo-European times, it is not easy to find direct equivalents in other Indo-European traditions. Like in the case of the Zeus, whose name is obviously related to Vedic *Dyaus*, his function and attributes often correspond to Indra. Likewise, the Dawn goddess – ἠώς is well-attested in the Homeric epics, but there is no explicit mention of the ‘Daughter of the Sun’ or the ‘Sun-princess’ as she is sometimes called in the literature. However, Helen shows some similarities with both *Uṣās* and *Sūryā́*.

Helen’s parenthood, epithets and attributes

Let us start with the question of her parenthood as well as epithets and attributes which connect her with the divine. The issue of Helen’s parenthood occupied the minds of ancient scholars and there have been many competing theories, but almost everybody agrees that her father was Zeus. The *Iliad* firmly confirms that and states that she had the same mother as the *Dioskouroi*, that is *Leda*, although she is not explicitly named in the poem. As to similarities with *Sūryā́*, only once

²¹ P. JACKSON, *Light from Distant Asterisks. Towards a Description of the Indo-European Religious Heritage*, Nu 49, 2002, p. 61–102.

²² M. WEST, *Indo-European...*, p. 217.

and in late sources Helen is called the daughter of Ἥλιος – the Sun, which because of its late character is not very significant, but it is an interesting remark, highlighting Helen's solar connotations²³. The main controversy revolves around the identity of Helen's mother. Hesiod's *Catalogue of Women* suggests Leda²⁴. However, the *Cypria* states that Helen was the daughter of Zeus and Nemesis who laid an egg with Helen with it, and Leda was her adoptive mother²⁵. The best-known version is that it was Leda who laid the egg from which Helen was born. In truth, we cannot tell if the oldest authors knew the story of the birth from an egg.

The whole matter is important from the comparative point of view, because, strikingly, it does find a parallel in the Baltic region. The Lithuanian mythology knows the figure of *Sáulės dukrýtė*, the Latvian – *Saules meita* – Daughter of the Sun. They have spread to Estonia and Finland. In Estonia, she became *Salme* and was said to have been born from a goose-egg, just like Helen²⁶.

Another interesting area are Helen's epithets and attributes which connect her both with the divine and with the Indo-European tradition. An excellent review of this topic has been prepared by L. Clader in her monograph on Helen, where she shows that Helen shares her epithets mostly with goddesses rather than mortal women, for example λευκώλενος – white-armed – used predominantly of Hera, or κόυρη Διός – daughter of Zeus, usually describing Athena. Given the importance of the formulaic nature of these phrases and their archaic character, it might suggest that earlier in the epic tradition Helen did belong more to the realm of gods. Alongside κόυρη Διός, the most important epithet of Helen from the Indo-European perspective is Διὸς θυγάτηρ with the same meaning, also often used to describe Aphrodite, which etymologically and semantically corresponds exactly to Vedic epithet of Uṣās – Dawn – *duhitā Divāḥ* or *Divō duhitā* – daughter of Dyaus (Heaven)²⁷. This is crucial, because Uṣās is not only the daughter of Dyaus, but is sometimes called the sister of the Aśvins, born on the yoke of their chariot²⁸.

²³ Ptolemy Hephaestion ap. Photius, *Bibliotheca*, 149a31, [in:] *Ptolemaei Hephaestionis Novarum historiarum ad variam eruditionem pertinentium excerpta e Photio*, ed. J.I.G. ROULEZ, Lipsiae 1834, p. 90: *Singulare sane videretur, quod infra Ptolemaeus Helenam perhibet Solis et Ledae filiam.*

²⁴ HESIOD, *Γυναικῶν κατάλογος*, fr. 23, [in:] *Hesiodi Theogonia, Opera et dies, Scutum*, ed. F. SOLMSEN, R. MERKELBACH, M. WEST, ²Oxford 1983 (cetera: Hesiod), p. 120.

²⁵ *Cypria*, fr. 9, [in:] *Poetarum epicorum Graecorum. Testimonia et fragmenta*, ed. A. BERNABÉ, Leipzig 1987 [= BSGR], p. 49.

²⁶ W. MANNHARDT, *Die lettischen Sonnemythen*, ZE 7, 1875, p. 314sq; M. WEST, *Indo-European...*, p. 228–231.

²⁷ Analysis of Helen's epithets see L. CLADER, *Helen...*, p. 47sq. On the epithet of Daughter of the Sky see M. WEST, *Indo-European...*, p. 219 and *Die Hymnen des Rig Veda*, 10.39.12, ed. T. AUFRECHT, ²Bonn 1877, digitized by B.A. VAN NOOTEN, G.B. HOLLAND, http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/1_sanskr/1_veda/1_sam/1_rv/rvh1-10u.htm [27 IX 2018] (cetera: RV).

²⁸ RV 1.180.2: *when your sister [=Dawn] will bring you, o you welcomed by all, and (the singer) solemnly invokes you for victory's prize and for refreshment, o honey-drinkers*, translation: S.W. JAMISON, J.P. BRERETON, *The Rigveda. The Earliest Religious Poetry of India*, vol. I, Oxford 2014 [= SAR] (ce-

It is difficult to decide how to treat such passages, because the Ásvins were sons of Saraṇyū and Sūrya in his form of Vivasvan, or sometimes Savitṛ, another solar deity, while Uṣās is clearly the daughter of Dyaus, thus it is more reasonable to treat this as a metaphor for companionship, rather than an indication of real kinship.

Relationship with the Divine Twins

The most obvious place to go when we want to establish Helen's Indo-European provenience is her relationship with her twin brothers – the Dioskouroi – the Greek version of the Divine Twins, known in the Vedas as the Ásvins. The Proto-Indo-European origins of the myth of the Divine Twins is a topic for another paper, but it is relatively uncontroversial and widely accepted by linguists and historians of religion. What is most important for us is the similarity of the relationship between the Ásvins and the Vedic goddesses Uūs and Sūryā́, and between the Dioskouroi and Helen. Thus, even though Ἥώς is still present in Homeric mythology as a separate divinity, the attributes of the Proto-Indo-European goddess of Dawn are divided between several figures, including Ἥώς, Aphrodite and Helen²⁹. One has to note the especially close link between Aphrodite and Helen in Greek mythology and the story of the Trojan War. In the Vedic mythology, the Ásvins represent the light of sunrise and sunset, they accompany Uṣās in a golden chariot. They both married together Sūryā́ – the daughter of the Sun. Their associations with the Sun and the Dawn are very obvious, but their exact relationship is not. The way we interpret this relationship between the Ásvins, Uṣās and Sūryā́, determines how we want to translate it into the Greek model. This is the most problematic matter. Since Ásvins are both strongly associated with Uṣās and Sūryā́ – the former being called their sister and the later their wife, scholars are at pains recreating this pattern in the Greek mythology.

While Ásvins and Dioskouroi are quite obviously equivalent, it is difficult to decide whether it is better to link Helen with Uṣās or with Sūryā́. On one hand, the argument for Uṣās is the exact same epithet of Διὸς θυγάτηρ and passages declaring Uṣās the sister of Ásvins, just like Helen is the sister of Kastor and Polydeukes. On the other hand, if we disregard them and assume that Uṣās and Ásvins were not actually related, the evidence becomes less convincing. If we take Helen as the recreation of Sūryā́ – the daughter of the Sun, she is still strongly associated with the Divine Twins, and her double marriage is represented by Helen's bizarre relationship with the *Atreidai* – Agamemnon and Menelaus. Although she was only married to Menelaus, it was Agamemnon who wooed on his behalf and the two

tera: *The Rigveda*), p. 382; RV 10.39.12: *Drive here with your chariot swifter than thought, which is Ṛbhus made for you, o Ásvins, and at whose hitching up the Daughter of Heaven [=Dawn] is born and both bright-lit day halves of Vivasvant*, translation: *The Rigveda*, vol. III, p. 1441.

²⁹ For the relationship between Aphrodite and Eos see D.D. BOEDEKER, *Aphrodite's Entry into Greek Epic*, Leiden 1974, p. 10–17.

brothers went together on an expedition to win her back³⁰. The Dioskouroi are somewhat related to Helen's marriage as well, because according to Hesiod, they organised the contest for her hand and chose the victor.

The etymology of Helen's name and her relationship with the Divine Twins do not point to any clear solution, because both Uṣās and Sūryā have clearly a strong connection with the Aśvins. Ultimately, any attempts to decisively equate Helen with either Uṣās or with Sūryā are going to be inconclusive. There are two possibilities: the first one is that Helen simply started to take over the attributes and imagery of Ἥως, the second one is that she is the Greek embodiment of the Indo-European daughter of the Sun. However, these two options are not mutually exclusive, especially that both the Dawn and the Daughter of the Sun are thematically very similar to each other. If we believe that Helen's name is indeed very archaic and means 'Lady of Light', then it would fit more that she is the Greek reflection of the Sun-princess, who was thematically so close to Dawn, that with time she started to take over her epithets.

Story of abduction and rescue

Apart from all the solar connotations, Helen represents a well-known Indo-European theme of a kidnapped wife. It has come to the attention of many scholars that both in the two Indic epics: the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyana* and in the *Iliad*, the main plot revolves around an abduction of a woman. In her excellent article *Draupadī on the Walls of Troy*, Stephanie Jamison identifies essential, common elements between the two traditions, quite probably inherited from the Indo-European poetic past, shedding some light on the Indo-European practices regarding marriage.

In ancient India, marriage by abduction, called *Rākṣasa*, was a legitimate procedure for the *Kṣatriya* – the warrior class, but only if performed in the correct way, as a ritual. It is even described by Bhīṣma, one of the great heroes of the *Mahābhārata*, as the best way of marrying for a warrior. If done correctly, the family of the bride has to accept it, but if done incorrectly, the family or the former husband can launch an expedition to re-abduct the bride. The crucial element is an act of heroism in abducting a wife, for example defeating the current husband in a duel. Thus, the *Iliad* and the *Rāmāyana* are the stories of repercussions of an illegitimate abduction³¹.

The scene from book III of the *Iliad*, when Helen, standing on the walls of Troy, identifies the Greek heroes to Priam, the Trojan king, is directly comparable to

³⁰ HESIOD, fr. 204. 84; E. CINGANO, *A Catalogue Within a Catalogue: Helen's Suitors in the Hesiodic Catalogue of Women* (fr. 196–204), [in:] *The Hesiodic "Catalogue of Women". Constructions and Reconstructions*, ed. R. HUNTER, Cambridge–New York 2005, p. 138.

³¹ S. JAMISON, *Draupadī on the Walls of Troy: 'Iliad' 3 from an Indic Perspective*, CA 13, 1994, p. 7–10.

the scene from book III of the *Mahābhārata*, where Draupadī, the wife of the Pāṇḍavas, is being abducted by king Jayadratha and while they are escaping in his chariot, she is asked to identify her five husbands pursuing them. It is important to note that the identification is the legal requirement – *dharma* – in these circumstances³². The Pāṇḍavas defeat the army of king Jayadratha and spare his life – a sign of humiliation rather than pity.

The corresponding episode in the *Iliad* follows the same scenario of the counter-abduction. The identification takes place at the first encounter between the Greeks and the Trojans in the *Iliad*, the fact that it is the tenth year of the war seems to be insignificant, in fact many literary scholars claim that the episode originally came from another epic story, because it clearly does not make sense at this point in the war³³. S. Jamison suggests that the words of Helen, who is the focal point of the whole scene, are crucial in this episode as they legitimise the duel and the violence that is about to happen. Like in the case of Draupadī, it was *dharma* – the law, which explains its presence in the poem, when in fact Priam must have been able to identify all the major Greek heroes after ten years of fighting³⁴. Even the syntax of the passages is similar. Draupadī describes each of her husbands with two or three lines of relative clauses, revealing their name at the end. The *Iliad* presents it as a dialogue between Priam and Helen, where Priam asks about the heroes describing them also with relative clauses and Helen replies with the name. The oath taken by Menelaus and Paris before their duel also reflects some inherited elements. Calling Zeus and Helios for witness brings up the important distinction between the legitimate abduction with witnesses and an illegitimate one without any³⁵. The duel is a pivotal element as a heroic deed – it will either legitimise Paris' abduction or Menelaus' re-abduction. The ending of the scene in the *Iliad* is seemingly very different – Aphrodite covers defeated Paris in the mist and takes him back to Helen. However, it is similar to *Mahābhārata* in the way that Paris, having violated the warrior's code does not deserve a noble death on the battlefield. Moreover, as this episode seems to be taken from an earlier period of the war, it cannot provide a conclusion to the story for narrative reasons, since we would not get the rest of the epos.

Another parallel with the Indic epics goes back to 'Helen of the tree' and her side as a vegetation deity. Another kidnapped wife – Sītā – originally was also a vegetation deity and her name literally means 'furrow'³⁶.

³² *Ibidem*, p. 10–11.

³³ *Ibidem*, p. 1sq. and notes.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 13.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 15.

³⁶ RV 4.57.6–7: *Become inclined our way, well-portioned Furrow* [skr. *sītā*]. *We will extol you, so that you will be well-portioned for us, so that you will be well-fruited for us. Let Indra lay down the Furrow* [skr. *sītām*]; let Pūṣan extend her straight, translation: *The Rigveda*, vol. I, p. 643.

Lowell Edmunds adds Celtic, specifically Welsh, stories fitting the abduction paradigm³⁷. It is also worth mentioning that Paris was not Helen's first kidnapper. As a child, she had been abducted by Theseus, who desired to marry a daughter of Zeus. That time, her brothers Castor and Polydeukes managed to rescue her.

The fact that Helen is repeatedly the main character of stories about abduction of women, which have direct parallels in other Indo-European traditions, most explicitly Indic, as we have just seen, reinforces her position as a deeply Indo-European figure in the Greek mythology. This is a completely new and separate angle from the question of her role of the prototypical 'Daughter of the Sun' or sharing attributes with the Dawn goddess. The two deeply Indo-European themes coincide within her character in the most archaic Greek literature.

Story of *eidolon*

As I mentioned before, O. Skutsch prefers to align the Helen with Vedic Saraṇyū, mainly on shaky etymological grounds. Saraṇyū is of course also closely connected with the Aśvins being their mother, and with the Sun, being the wife of Sūrya. It has to be mentioned that a striking similarity between Helen and Saraṇyū is the theme of an *eidolon*, as it is usually called. Saraṇyū decided to leave her husband, but she left an image of herself, so that he would not realise that she was gone. This immediately reminds us of the story of Stesichorus, who composed a poem absolving Helen from the blame for the Trojan War, saying that she in fact did not go to Troy, it was only her *eidolon* – her image, while she herself spent that whole time in Egypt. There is, however, no evidence whether this story comes from some older tradition, or is entirely a product of poet's imagination and does not point to any common ancestry of Helen and Saraṇyū. In light of much stronger arguments for linking Helen with Sūryā́ – the daughter of the Sun, both linguistically and culturally, it remains but an interesting detail³⁸.

* * *

Helen is a figure deeply rooted in the Indo-European culture. Her name is clearly of Indo-European origins, although there is still controversy regarding its exact etymology. Her strong connection with the Divine Twins and her solar affinities make a strong case for regarding her as a Greek product of the Proto-Indo-European Daughter of the Sun, also incorporating some attributes of the Dawn goddess. Her local cults in parts of Greece, most notably Laconia, suggest that she was considered to be a goddess, not just a mortal heroine.

³⁷ L. EDMUNDS, *Stealing Helen. The Myth of the Abducted Wife in Comparative Perspective*, Princeton 2016, p. 93–95.

³⁸ More on the story of Helen's *eidolon* vide N. AUSTIN, *Helen of Troy and Her Shameless Phantom*, Ithaca–London 1994 [= MPo].

Apart from that, Helen is the main character of the Indo-European story of wife abduction, finding close narrative parallels in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyana*. The comparative analysis of S. Jamison not only provides a better interpretation of the scene in *Iliad* III, but additionally connects Helen with the Indo-European world.

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Abstract. As a part of the series on female deities and demons in the Indo-European culture, the article begins by establishing Helen's divine character in the Greek tradition and religion. The first area where the Indo-European character of Helen is displayed concerns the etymology of her name, which has been the subject of discussion and controversy throughout several decades. The most prominent theories are presented, including the concept of Pokorny and West to explain her name as 'Lady of Light' from the Proto-Indo-European root *swel- or *swelh₁, the idea of Skutsch to connect Helen with Vedic Saṛanyū, the etymology by Clader relying on the local Greek ritual practices and finally the new etymology provided by Pinault explaining the name as 'having a year like a thread' from Proto-Indo-European *suh₁-h₁leno. The second part of the article deals with the cultural, literary and religious attributes of Helen which connect her with the Indo-European world, especially with the Vedic tradition. The most interesting aspects include the issue of Helen's parenthood and her birth, her relationship with her brothers – the Dioskouroi – the prototypical Indo-European Divine Twins, as well as similarities with Vedic goddesses Uṣās – Dawn and Sūryā – the Sun Princess. The final part of the article establishes Helen as the Greek representation of the Indo-European myth of an abducted wife. Relying heavily on the analysis of Jamison, it draws on the similarities between the passages in the book III of the *Mahābhārata* and the book III of the *Iliad*, which from the comparative perspective explains well the inclusion of this scene in the Homeric epic and Helen's role in it as well as sheds more light on the Indo-European practices regarding marriage. Lastly, the article mentions a connection between Helen and Vedic Saṛanyū by the story of *eidolon* – a phantom, which both characters created at certain points in some literary traditions.

Keywords: Helen, Greek mythology, comparative mythology, Indo-European religion, Greek etymology, Greek religion

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CHARACTERISTICS OF ROMAN FEMALE DEITIES

In the reconstruction and analysis of the competences of Roman female deities, scholars are forced to base their research on existent literary sources, mainly Latin inscriptions, as well as prose and poetry. Due to the fact that Romans did not leave any sort of writings of theological nature, the surviving Latin literature becomes an essential source of information on this matter for researchers of Roman religious cults.

The fundamental source of inscriptions used in the reconstruction of the Roman religious system, including the characteristics of their gods, are carved stone tablets featuring the *fasti*, i.e. lists of sacral events organized in ancient Rome and subordinate cities¹.

¹ The oldest documents of this type are likely to have contained only writings on the festivals with fixed dates, and it was not until later that notes were added about annual celebrations of the anniversaries of temples dedication. Later, in the Age of Empire, important facts of the deeds and lives of emperors were also included in the official *fasti*, as long as these facts were given the status of state holidays (e.g. the emperor's birthday, the day of his triumph). The *fasti* that have survived in fragments come from different regions of Italy, e.g. *Praeneste*, *Amiternum*, *Ostia*, *Caere*, *Tusculum* (they received the adjective description from the name of the places where they had been found e.g. *fasti Praenestini*, *fasti Amiternini*). All calendars were compiled in a column structure and provided indications of special days (i.e. *notae*). *Notae* are the graphic marks in the form of capital letters of the Latin alphabet, which were abbreviations of words with which the author of the *fasti* designated the character of a particular day that was a result of the distinctive division of the days in the Roman calendar. The first religious division of the days was into two groups: *dies festi* (holidays) designed for honouring the gods and the *dies profesti* (common days) intended for the citizens' private and public activities. *Dies festi* were divided into the following: *sacrificia* (days of sacrifices), *epulae* (religious feasts), *ludi* (religious games), *feriae* (private or state holidays). *Feriae publicae* were divided into *feriae stativae* or *statae*, *feriae conceptivae* and *feriae imperativae*. Apart from the above-mentioned division, another one of administrative-judicial character was also applied: within the common days (*dies profesti*) the *dies fasti* and *nefasti* were also distinguished. *Dies fasti* were those days on which court hearings and official meetings could not take place, whereas *dies nefasti* excluded such possibility. Among the *dies fasti* there were such days on which the communal meetings would take place and, hence, received the name *dies comitiales*. *Dies nefasti* were further divided into *nefasti parte* (during which administrative activities were forbidden from morning till the sacrificial offerings) as well as *dies nefasti* described as *endotercisus* (*intercिसus*), i.e. such a day, which was *nefastus* in the morning and in the afternoon, therefore during the killing of the animal sacrifice and the offering of its intestines to the god (between these activities the day became *fastus*). Cf. VARRO, *On the Latin*

Although preserved in fragments, these records provide us with information to which gods sacral festivals were dedicated, and sometimes what sacral celebrations involved. Furthermore, knowing the timing of a holiday in the Roman religious calendar, we are able to reconstruct the character of the festival, and through this the competences of the honoured god².

The purpose of the religious event recorded in the *fasti* usually resulted from its placement at a specific moment of the religious year, which was of great significance to the sacral community. The arrangement of the religious festivals in the *fasti* points to such a time in the Roman religious year, during which it was believed that divine power emanated the most and the fullest, i.e. to a degree that was required and necessary for fulfilling the material and non-material needs of the sacral community³. According to *homo religiosus*, such time was perceived as the most important and most effective for the interaction of the *numen*⁴ with men, an indispensable cooperation of practices that sustained and enlarged *pax deorum*, which was of great importance to the civilian and religious community⁵.

Language, VI, 31, vol. I, *Books V–VII*, vol. II, *Books VIII–X, Fragments*, trans. R.G. KENT, London 1938 [= LCL, 333–334] (cetera: VARRO, *De Lingua Latina*); *Ambrosii Theodosii Macrobiani Saturnalia*, I, 16, vol. I, ed. I. WILLIS, Lipsiae 1963 [= BSGR] (cetera: MACROBIUS, *Saturnalia*). *Notae dierum* were the following: *dies fastus* – F; *dies comitalis* – C; *dies nefastus* – N (or N and at the top a small F); *dies endotercisus* – EN (or E); the ligature of the letters N and P is explained differently or as *nefastus parte* or as *feriae publicae*. Besides these abbreviations, the calendar also noted the abbreviated names of the three typical Roman *fasti* days: calendae (K), nonae (NON), ides (EID). All calendars contained usually three letter abbreviations of the names of the public holidays, e.g. LEM for Lemuria. For the discussion and listing as well as the graphic presentation of the *fasti*, see: *CIL* I², Berlin 1903 and A. DEGRASSI, *Fasti anni Numani et Iuliani*, Rome 1963 [= IIt, 13.2].

² Cf. S.A. TAKÁCS, *Vestal Virgins, Sibyls and Matrons. Women in Roman Religion*, Austin–Chesham 2008, p. 25.

³ *Servii Grammatici qui feruntur in Vergilii Carmina Commentarii*, ed. G. THILO, H. HAGEN, vol. I, *Aeneidos librorum I–V Commentarii*, II, 141, ed. G. THILO, Hildesheim 1961 (cetera: SERVIUS, *In Vergilii Aeneidos*): *Nam ea numina invocans, quae sunt conscia numina veritatis, quia et pontifices dicunt, singulis actibus proprios deos praeesse. Hos Varro certos deos appellat.* Cf. ARNOBIUS, *Adversus nationes*; L. *Annaei Senecae Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales*, 41, vol. I–II, ed. L.D. REYNOLDS, Oxonii 1965 [= SCBO] (cetera: SENECA, *Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium*): *Si tibi occurrerit vetustis arboribus et solitam altitudinem egressus frequens lucus et conspectum caeli <densitate> ramorum aliorum alios protegentium summovens, illa proceritas silvae et secretum loci et admiratio umbrae in aperto tam densae atque continuae fidem tibi numinis faciet;* SENECA, *Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium*, 95: *Primus est deorum cultus deos credere; deinde reddere illis maiestatem suam, reddere bonitatem sine qua nulla maiestas est; scire illos esse qui praesident mundo, qui universa vi sua temperant, qui humani generis tutelam gerunt interdum incuriosos singulorum. Hi nec dant malum nec habent; ceterum castigant quosdam et coercent et inrogant poenas et aliquando specie boni puniunt.*

⁴ The term *numen* used by the Romans has no equivalent in other ancient European religions. It denotes the non-figurative, non-nominative and explicit divine intervention into human life. It is possible that the Romans coined the term *numen* before the anthropomorphisation of the deities of their pantheon. *Numen*, therefore, would be a *deus* only without the human figure.

⁵ The ‘peace with the gods’, which was established and constantly renewed not only during the festivals but also in quotidian activities that the Romans assigned sacral value. The *pax deorum*

The Romans' pragmatic attitude to their reality created a model of the civil-religious community based on the co-responsibility of its members in maintaining the group's continuity and permanence; every Roman man and woman fulfilled a set of life duties that were meant to secure the existence of the group, whereas the state required from its civilians such behaviour that secured the existence of the community⁶.

Moreover, the Romans' foresight constructed such a way of guaranteeing the effectiveness of the above-mentioned actions undertaken by the Roman society by placing the co-responsibility for the fate of Rome and its inhabitants onto their deities, too⁷. This divine guardianship has been integrated with civil responsibilities fulfilled by the Romans, whereas specific duties have been submitted under the patronage of specific gods⁸. Such simple combination of human and divine purposes formed the Roman citizens into a pious people, obedient to their gods⁹,

ensured the continual existence of Rome. Cf. CICERO, *De Legibus*, I, 34, [in:] CICERO, *De Re Publica. De Legibus*, trans. C.W. KEYES, London 1969 [= LCL, 213]: *etiam in deos caerimoniae religionesque tollentur, quas non metu, sed ea coniunctione quae est homini cum deo conseruandas puto*. Cf. A. GILLMEISTER, D. MUSIAŁ, *W cieniu Kapitolu. Religia starożytnych Rzymian*, Kraków 2012, p. 32.

⁶ CICERO, *De Re Publica*, I, 39, [in:] CICERO, *De Re Publica...* (cetera: CICERO, *De Re Publica*).

⁷ CICERO, *De Re Publica*, VI, 13.

⁸ The Latin *indigitamentum* (pl. *indigitamenta*) is a derivative of the verb *indigitare* – to call, to call on a god, to ritually summon the gods³ and regards the religious practices of the pontifices (*Nonii Marcelli De compendiosa doctrina libros XX*, vol. I, LL. I–III, ed. W.M. LINDSAY, Lipsiae 1903, p. 559; MACROBIUS, *Saturnalia*, I, 12, 21). A single *indigitamentum*, which epithet usually came from the verb referring to a specific activity, was believed to accompany a Roman in his/her actions, i.e. in the realization of his/her life activity that simultaneously was perceived as a display of the activity of the *indigitamentum* itself. To a Roman, the activity of an *indigitamentum* expressed its power and will to participate and actualise the actions taken by man. Therefore, it seems that, in the view of the Roman sacral community, the idea of *indigitamentum* was similar to that of *numen*, however, in contrast to the latter, which needn't always to be defined by a name, the former did possess such a name. Cf. M. TERENTIUS VARRO, *Antiquitates Rerum Divinarum*, vol. I, *Die Fragmente*, fr. 87, ed. B. CARDAUNS, Wiesbaden 1976 (cetera: VARRO, *Antiquitates rerum divinarum*); SERVIUS, *In Vergilii Aeneidos*, II 141. In *Antiquitates Rerum Divinarum*, VARRO (fr. 90–202) lists ca. 100 names and competences of this category of divine beings. According to many scholars, such divinization of everyday human activities is typical for the Roman religion (J. RIES, *Héritage indo-européen et religion romaine. À propos de La religion romaine archaïque de Georges Dumézil*, RTL 7, 1976, p. 485). Usually the cognomina of the Roman gods reflect one of their many competences and illustrate his/her patronage over a specific activity. This is a well-known process in the evolution of Roman beliefs of transforming individual functions ascribed earlier to the *indigitamenta* into one of a god's sacral competences. For instance, VARRO (*Antiquitates Rerum Divinarum*, fr. 100, 101) gives the example of an *indigitamentum* of the name *Lucina*, a derivative of the Latin verb *lucere* 'to shine', which in time became the cognomen of the goddess Juno as the patroness of women who were pregnant, in labour and their new-born children.

⁹ CICERO, *De Haruspicum Responsis*, 19, [in:] CICERO, *The Speeches*, trans. N.H. WATTS, London 1961 [= LCL, 158] (cetera: CICERO, *De Haruspicum Responsis*).

constituting a civilian as well as religious group¹⁰ responsible, in both individual and collective sense, for the future of the community and Rome itself.

The Roman sacral system comprises of many holidays dedicated to goddesses, as well as of few clearly prominent sequences of festivals that focus on the primary religious idea, in which the main numinous figure is a female deity¹¹. Observations emerging from the analysis of the *fasti*, which are a valuable and essential source in the research on the competences of Roman goddesses and the character of their festivals, broadened by the information provided by literature and enriched by archaeological and linguistic studies, allow a scholar of religion to answer the following questions: 1) which Roman civil and religious duties did the female *numina* patronize; 2) in which way did these deities make it possible for the city inhabitants to fulfil their tasks given to them by their own community; 3) how, when and why did the actions of the Roman citizens accept religious value that augmented the sphere of *sacrum*?

Based on the records of the Roman holidays found in the sacral calendar-based lists, we can easily distinguish those dedicated to female deities. The chronologically written *fasti* render the image of a cohesive and universal religious system established by the citizens of Rome, which is clearly reflected in the nature of the holidays. The placement of the event at an important moment of the sacral year defined the character and competences of the goddess, in whose honour the festival was held¹².

¹⁰ The Romans formed a civil-religious community. Cf. J. SCHEID, *Le délit religieux dans la Rome tardo-républicaine*, PEFR 48, 1981, p. 168: *toute la théologie gravitait autour de salut public*; IDEM, *La religion des Romains*, Paris 1998 [= C.HA], p. 110: *Il est vrai que dans le monde romain il n'existait pas de différence entre la vie 'laïque' et la vie religieuse. Tout acte public était religieux et tout acte religieux était public*; IDEM, *La religione a Roma*, trans. M.N. PIERINI, Bari 1983, p. 8: *La religione romana [...] può essere caratterizzata da due elementi: è una religione sociale ed è religione fatta di atti di culto. Religione sociale, essa è praticata dall'uomo in quanto membro di una comunità e non in quanto singolo individuo, persona.*

¹¹ Cf. the Roman agrarian festivals: *Rome was an agricultural society, which its cultic cycle reinforced. Like the seasons, there was great religious activity in preparation for a during the growing season, while there was little of note after the harvest season*, S.A. TAKÁCS, *Vestal...*, p. 25.

¹² *Fasti* are a list of holidays indicated in particular months of the year. A research problem, with which this article deals with, requires keeping the chronological structure in the presentation of the characteristics of the Roman female deities. The first information presents the day of the month, the next the name of the worshipped goddess, the last is the name of the festival held in her honour. Occasionally, the cognomen is placed after the goddess' name, under which on this day she was honoured.

Roman female deities and their festivals¹³ – *feriae stativae* or *statae sollemnes*¹⁴

Mensis Ianuarius

11 and 15 January: Carmenta vel Carmentes¹⁵; Carmentalia vel Karmentalia.

16 January: Concordia¹⁶; Concordiae Augustae [eo die] aedis dedicata est¹⁷.

Carmenta was the goddess of pregnancy and childbirth. She was responsible for the foetus' position in the mother's womb¹⁸. Literary sources mention two Carmentas – *Porrina* (or *Prorsa*) and *Postverta*. The former was the patron of a birth of a child born with its head first (i.e. head childbirth), the latter of a birth when the child came feet first (i.e. pelvis childbirth)¹⁹, which was very dangerous and often ended in the death of both mother and child. During the *Carmentalia*, the whole Roman community gathered in the deity's temple, in which it was forbidden to wear leather or other skins of dead animals, a ban that emphasizes the goddess' relation with her being a patroness of life.

Mensis Martius

1 March: Iuno Lucina; Matronalia.

5 March: Isis; Isidis navigium²⁰.

¹³ The list of these festivals has been based on the data found in: *CIL* I², p. 306–338.

¹⁴ These were public holidays, listed in the *fasti*, that were held annually on a fixed or stable date of the calendar (VARRO, *De lingua Latina*, VI, 28).

¹⁵ *Carmentes* is the plural form of the goddess' name.

¹⁶ In colloquial Latin, the term *concordia* means 'agreement'. The *Concordia* found in the *fasti* refers to the deified virtue, whereas the following description of the celebration contains information about the consecration of the deity's temple, which anniversary was celebrated. *Concordia* had in Rome one more temple, which consecration was annually celebrated on 5 February (*CIL* I², p. 309). Her festival is mentioned also as being held on 22 July (*CIL* I², p. 323). The *fasti* list also the anniversaries of the dedication of temples for other deified virtues under the following dates: 29 May and 2 August (*Virtus* – Courage), 3 June (*Bellona* – War), 8 June (*Mens* – Mind), 1 July and 12 August (*Felicitas* – Happiness) and 9 October (*Fausta Felicitas* – Favoring Good Luck), 4 July and 30 January (*Pax* – Peace), 1 August (*Spes* – Hope), 5 August (*Salus* – Success), 28 August (*Victoria* – Victory), 1 October (*Fides* – Fidelity), 15 December (*Fortuna* – Fate). Most deities of such type had no other holidays nor did they have an expanded cult. The festivals in their honour were limited to celebrating the anniversary of the consecration of temples, for this reason these festivals are not discussed in this article.

¹⁷ This information is often found in the notes of the *fasti* authors and denotes that on this particular day the god's temple was consecrated; it was the only celebration accompanying this holiday.

¹⁸ The *Carmentalia* were the first in the year festival that was celebrated by women under the auspices of those female deities that cared for pregnant women and, through this, the number of the Roman community. The fact that this festival was placed at the beginning of the year reflects how important the physical state of their citizens was to the Romans. Cf. S.A. TAKÁCS, *Vestal...*, p. 28: *The Carmentalia was the first festival of the 12-month year that involved woman*.

¹⁹ *Auli Gellii Noctium Atticarum libri XX, XVI, 16, 4, vol. I–II, rec. C. HOSIUS, Stutgardiae 1981 [= BSGR].*

²⁰ Isis was an Egyptian goddess, whose cult was known in Rome already in the first century BC, but spread only during the empire after the Julio-Claudian era (M. JACZYŃSKA, *Religia świata*

15 March: Anna Perenna; feriae Annae Perennae
 19 March: Minerva; Quinquatrus Maiores vel Quinquatria. [...] Minervae aedis
 [...] eo dies est dedicata²¹.
 31 March: Luna²². Lunae eo die aedis dedicata est.

Juno²³ was the protectress of young Roman women, especially those who were married. She took care of pregnant women, women in childbirth, women in confinement and also of newborn babies. As *Iuno* with the epithet *Lucina*, she received new-borns into the world and bestowed upon them light, the symbol of life. At the *Matronalia*, Roman women went to her temple, where they prayed for safe childbirth for themselves and their children.

In the Roman pantheon, Anna Perenna²⁴ deified the new year that began in March. Her approval was supposed to guarantee the continuity of the surrounding world and maintenance of life until the next celebrations held in her honour²⁵. The Romans celebrated the festivity of Anna Perenna outside the city, on the shores of the river Tiber, where crowds of pairs of lovers gathered for feasting and play. Such unusual course of the *sacrum Annae Perennae* resulted from the timing of this festivity in the Roman sacral calendar, since March 15 was the first full moon in the new sacral year of the Roman society²⁶.

To the Romans, Minerva was mostly perceived as the divine patroness of various crafts and professions as well as the people following them²⁷. City inhabitants ascribed to her those competences of the Greek goddess Athena of the epithet *Ergane*; this may indicate the non-Roman provenance of her cult. Both celebrations

rymskiego, Warszawa 1987, p. 204). Celebrations in her honour took place between 28 October and 4 November (*CIL* I², p. 333–334).

²¹ Minerva, a goddess of non-Roman origin, was honoured as the patroness of various crafts and professions as well as of craftsmen. Cf. D. SABBATUCCI, *La religione di Roma antica. Dal calendario festivo all'ordine cosmico*, Milano 1988, p. 110–111; S.A. TAKÁCS, *Vestal...*, p. 48.

²² Latin *luna* 'moon'. It is likely that on this day the temple was dedicated to the goddess. The *fasti* mention another enigmatic festival in honour of the goddess to be held on 24 August (*CIL* I², p. 327) and 28 August (*CIL* I², p. 327). On this day, the temples for Luna and the god of the Sun (*Sol*) were erected. In the Roman belief system, the worship of heavenly bodies as deities was not strongly emphasized.

²³ The theonym *Iūno* contains the Indo-European root **iūn-*, which also appears in later Latin words, such as *iūnix* 'heifer', *iūnior* 'subst. young woman' (A. CARNOY, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la mythologie gréco-romaine*, Louvain 1957, p. 86; A. WALDE, J.B. HOFMANN, *Lateinisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, vol. I, Heidelberg 1938 [= IgB, 1], p. 731).

²⁴ Latin *annus* 'year'; *perennis* 'lasting a year, yearly'. This celebration belongs to those festivals at the turn of the sacral year. Often, such festivals comprised of a ritual scenario that was untypical for them (I. KACZOR, *Sakralizacja czasu w rzymskim systemie wierzeń*, [in:] *Kategorie i funkcje czasu w ujęciu starożytnych*, ed. J. CZERWIŃSKA, I. KACZOR, M. KOŹLUK, A. LENARTOWICZ, J. RYBOWSKA, Łódź 2009, p. 230).

²⁵ MACROBIUS, *Saturnalia*, I, 12, 6.

²⁶ S. BENOIST, *La Fête à Rome au premier siècle de l'Empire. Recherches sur l'univers festif sous les règnes d'Auguste et des Julio-Claudiens*, Bruxelles 1999, p. 150.

²⁷ *Ovid's Fasti*, III, 817–831, trans. J.G. FRAZER, London 1959 [= LCL, 253] (cetera: OVIDIUS, *Fasti*).

dedicated to Minerva – *Quinquatrus Maiores*²⁸ and *Quinquatrus Minusculae* – were holidays of professional artisans’.

Mensis Aprilis

1 April: Fortuna Virilis; sacrum Fortunae Virili²⁹.

1 April: Venus Verticordia; Veneralia.

4–10 April: mater deum Idaea; ludi Megalesiaci³⁰.

5 April: Fortuna Publica; Fortunae Publicae eo die aedis dedicata est.

15 April: Tellus; Fordicidia vel Hordicidia.

19 April: Ceres; Cerialia, ludi Cerales (12–19 April)³¹.

21 April: Pales; Parilia.

23 April: Venus Erycina vel Erucina; Veneri Erycinae eo die aedes dedicata est³².

25 April: Robigo; Robigalia.

28 April – 3 May: Flora; Floralia³³.

Fortuna³⁴ was the deity of all incidents, be it good or bad, that happened in people’s lives. In Rome, the goddess was worshipped under many epithets, which shows that she was perceived as the patroness of important events in the quotidian actions of men and society³⁵. During the *sacrum Fortunae Virili*, women

²⁸ One of the authors of the *fasti* (*CIL* I², p. 329) called this holiday *artificum dies*, ‘day of the artists’, who, in the view of ancient Romans, were people of artistic and technical professions.

²⁹ Latin *virilis* ‘male’; *subst. virile* ‘male genital’.

³⁰ *Mater deum* or *magna Mater* is the Phrygian goddess *Cybele*. Her cult was introduced in Rome in the 3rd century BC. On 10 April, her temple was dedicated (*CIL* I², p. 315). The Romans included the celebrations held in her honour, which had already begun by the end of March, into the so-called *sacra peregrina*, i.e. the worshipping of foreign gods that have been officially accepted into the Roman pantheon (FESTUS, *De verborum significatu*, [in:] *Glossaria Latina*, vol. IV, *Placidus, Festus*, ed. J.W. PIRIE, W.-M. LINDSAY, Hildesheim 1965 (cetera: FESTUS, *De verborum significatu*), p. 342.

³¹ *Ludi* were a few day celebration added to the primary festival held in honour of the god.

³² In Rome, the assigning value to the cult of Venus was basically for political purposes, because the Romans, in creating the legendary beginnings of their city, exploited the well-known from Greek literature story about the Trojan war, from which Aeneas was supposed to escape, reach Italy, and then found the dynasty of Roman kings. His mother, Aphrodite, was identified with Venus, the Roman goddess of the same competences. In Rome there appeared the cult of Aphrodite worshipped on the Aventine hill. This was dedicated to her on 23 April, earlier on 19 August. In the Julio-Claudian era and in later times, the Roman emperors often referred to the patronage of Venus over the imperial family that ruled the *Imperium Romanum*. At that time, Venus became an official state deity, whose new gained functions were reflected in the epithets *Victrix* vel *Victoria* and *Genetrix*.

³³ *Floralia* was the last spring agricultural festival held on a fixed date, noted by the Roman sacral-calendar, the *fasti*. At the end of May, the body of priests, *fratres Arvales*, performed in the goddess’ orchard the *sacrum Deae Diae*, the annually proclaimed and complex purification ritual, which marked the end of the sowing of seeds and the growing of crops and initiated the time of harvest anticipation. The course of the holiday is reconstructed on the basis of the priests’ notes and the inscriptions (*Acta Fratrum Arvalium quae supersunt*, ed. W. HENZEN, Berolini 1874).

³⁴ Literally: ‘fate’.

³⁵ Cf. festivals held on: 25 May (*Fortuna Publica Populi Romani*), 24 June (*Fors Fortuna*), 6 July (*Fortuna Muliebris*), 30 July (*Fortuna huiusque diei*), 13 November (*Fortuna Primigenia*).

took a ritual bath in those public bathhouses, where men earlier have bathed, and prayed to the goddess to hide their beauty flaws from the eyes of their lovers.

The ancient Romans considered Venus³⁶ to be one of the vegetative divinities that took care of garden plants. In time, when the city inhabitants started to identify this goddess with Aphrodite, i.e. the mother of their ancestor Aeneas, they extended her sacral functions as they started to recognize in her a deity responsible for human feelings and physical love. Venus *Verticordia* who directed the heart in one's direction, bestowing love celebrated her holiday the *Veneralia* on 1 April. During the *Veneralia*, both married and unmarried Roman women took a ritual bath. The course of the ritual, as it is described by Ovid in the *Fasti*³⁷, points to its Greek origin.

According to the religious mentality of the Romans, *Tellus* was the deity of earth's fertility, perceived as the land, the cultivated soil that received seeds and bore fruit³⁸. Two important Roman festivals were dedicated to this goddess, which clearly reflected her divine competences in twofold manner: 1) by the timing of the festival itself, and 2) by the laying emphasis in the rituals on the primary function of *Tellus*. During the *Fordicidia*, which took place in mid-April, over two months after sowing the seeds³⁹, the Romans prayed to the goddess for good harvest. An in-calf heifer was sacrificed to her, on the basis of the belief that *Telluri plenae victima plena datur*⁴⁰, i.e. *Tellus fertilized with seeds receives a pregnant cow* in order to ensure good harvest for the city inhabitants. The *Fordicidia* are the first agricultural-vegetative festival that has been placed in the sacral calendar on a fixed date.

Several days after the *Fordicidia*, the Romans honoured *Ceres*, who, according to early Roman belief, was responsible for the growth of cereals from sowed grain⁴¹

³⁶ The lexeme *venus* derives from the Indo-European root **Áen-* 'to desire, to want'. The Latin *venus* in the common meaning refers to 'bodily love', however, from the moment it became the name of the goddess, it denotes the force of sexual desire (R. SCHILLING, *La relation Venus-Venia*, L 21, 1962, p. 4). Cf. IDEM, *La religion romaine de Vénus depuis les origines jusqu'au temps d'Auguste*, Paris 1954, p. 60.

³⁷ OVIDIUS, *Fasti*, IV, 133–144; 151–160. Researchers underline the significance of this work for religious studies. Cf. J. RÜPKE, *Roman Religion—Religions of Rome*, [in:] *A Companion to Roman Religion*, ed. IDEM, Malden 2007 [= BCAW], p. 8.

³⁸ COLUMELLA, *On Agriculture*, X, 1, 157, vol. III, *Books 10–12. On Trees*, trans. E.S. FORSTER, E.H. HEFFNER, London 1955 [= LCL, 408].

³⁹ The ceremonious sowing termed *feriae Sementivae* were a festival of a non-fixed date and took place at the end of January; these were held in the honour of two goddesses, *Tellus* and *Ceres*. The description of the festival is found in OVID's *Fasti* (I, 657–696).

⁴⁰ OVIDIUS, *Fasti*, IV, 635.

⁴¹ *Ceres*' primary competences may be recognized in her name. The theonym *Ceres* contains of the Indo-European root **jer-*, **jerē-* 'to grow, to cause growth'. The same root appears in the Latin verb *creare* 'to create, to bring to life' (A. WALDE, J.B. HOFMANN, *Lateinisches...*, vol. I, p. 204; A. CARNOY, *Dictionnaire...*, p. 37) and *crescere* 'to grow, germinate, be born' (G. RADKE, *Beobachtungen zum Namen des Festes der Cerialia*, [in:] *Hommages à Henri Le Bonniec. Res Sacrae*, ed. D. PORTE, J.-P. NÉRAUDAU, Bruxelles 1988 [= COLL, 201], p. 370; B.S. SPAETH, *The Roman Goddess Ceres*, Austin 1996, p. 33).

that had been offered to Tellus. During the *Ceralia*, Ceres received the offering of a covered sow. Without any doubt the magical symbolism of a pregnant sacrifice to both Tellus and Ceres is identical, since both goddesses were co-responsible for the fertility of cereals and other plants: the former by accepting seeds sowed by farmers, the latter by bestowing these with the force of germination and growth that was visible to men.

In the Roman pantheon, the goddess Pales was the patroness of herds of farm animals that could graze on meadows from the day of her holiday, the *Parilia*; this day was considered were the beginning of the new shepherd year. During the festival, the animals and their shepherds participated in a purification ritual. Such rite performed at the *Parilia* was of apotropaic nature, for it aimed at protecting from danger the herd and herdsmen who were away from other peoples' dwellings. Also, Pales' protection was supposed to aid the fertility of animals. According to the Roman poet Tibullus⁴², young people were especially fond of this holiday, as on this day they were allowed to feast and play in nature.

The Romans considered Robigo⁴³ to be a dangerous deity, due to the fact that in unfavourable climate conditions (high temperature and humidity) she could infect young plants with fungus. For this reason she was considered to be the deified symptom of this disease. The festival dedicated to her, *Robigalia*, had a supplicatory, i.e. apotropaic character, as the rituals were meant to prevent the harmful activity of the *numen*. The sacral practices took place in an orchard dedicated to the goddess, where the priest sacrificed a sheep and a red-haired puppy, whose colouring was a reference to the red blight that attacked the crops.

Another vegetative Roman deity was Flora⁴⁴, the deified force inspiring flowers to bloom on all plants, from the branches of fruit trees and other cultivated bushes as well as spikes of grain. Flora belonged to the group of gods whose potential wrath one was supposed to avoid and attempt to pacify her dissatisfaction beforehand⁴⁵. During the festival in honour, which was augmented with the *ludi*, theatrical performances were shown, during which Roman courtesans were prepared and publicly presented; the prostitutes appeared then naked, showed a sexy dance and made jokes of explicit sexual nature⁴⁶.

Mensis Maius

15 May: Maia; Mercurio Maiaae eo die aedis dedicata est.

25 May: Fortuna Publica Populi Romani; Fortunae Publicae Populi Romani eo die aedis dedicata est.

⁴² *Albii Tibulli Aliorumque Carmina, Elegiae* II, 5, 95–102, ed. G. LUCK, Stuttgartiae 1988 [= BSGR].

⁴³ Literally 'cereal rust'.

⁴⁴ The Latin *flōra* is connected with other Latin terms with the same meaning: *flōs* (*flōris*) 'flower in the state of blossoming and blooming' and *flōrēre* 'to bloom, blossom, grow lushly'.

⁴⁵ CICERO, *The Verrine Orations*, V 36, vol. I–II, trans. L.H.G. GREENWOOD, London 1959–1960 [= LCL, 221].

⁴⁶ *Valeri Maximi Factorum et Dictorum Memorabilium libri novem*, II, 10, 8, ed. C. HALM, Lipsiae 1865.

Maia was an old Roman deity that over time lost its religious significance and its primary competences became forgotten. She was later identified with the Greek goddess Maia, mother of Hermes, whose religious functions were identified with that of the Roman Mercury. Hence the shared temple for both divinities.

Mensis Iunius

1 June: Iuno Moneta; Iunoni Monetae eo die aedes dedicata est.

1 June: Carna; circenses fabricii (fabarici) vel ludi fabarici⁴⁷.

9 June: Vesta; Vestalia.

11 June: Mater Matuta; Matralia.

13 June: Musae; Natalis Musarum⁴⁸.

19 June: Minerva; Quinquatrus Minusculae⁴⁹. Minervae eo die aedis dedicata est.

24 June: Fors Fortuna; sacrum Fortis Fortunae.

The name Carna itself may show the primary sacral competences of the deity. According to linguists, the goddess' theonym contains the root that appears also in the Latin term *caro* 'piece of meat'⁵⁰, since Carna took care of the inner organs of men, whose good health was protected by her. The goddess was also responsible for the absorption of nutrients from consumed foods that supported the functioning of the human body⁵¹. Her dedicated offering was a mush of beans and flour as well as lard, that is the types of food that were commonly regarded as most nutritious⁵². Ovid⁵³ gives a description of a ritual that was supposed to heal a child who was close to dying after being attacked by a strix; the goddess herself protected and participated in this ritual. Such apotropaic rite corresponds to the sequence of rituals that were supposed to ensure the protection and health of the youngest members of the Roman society.

The Romans identified Vesta with the hearth as well as in temple fire. The fire that was a visible sign of the goddess' presence in her temple at the Forum Romanum was considered a symbol of Rome's permanence and stability of its fate⁵⁴. The

⁴⁷ The name of this festival should be related to the Latin term *faba* 'bean'.

⁴⁸ The term *natalis* mentioned by the author of the *fasti* in the information about the festival means that on this day was the dedication of the goddess' temple occurred. The Muses were Greek divinities, the patronesses of art and science. The consecration of their temple coincided probably with the time of the festival of Minerva (19 June) the patroness of musicians (*CIL* I², p. 320).

⁴⁹ The information in the *fasti* is a supplementation to the note from 19 March. It is probable that in June the building of the goddess' new temple was formally declared and then finished in March, hence the two days of its dedication (*CIL* I², p. 320).

⁵⁰ G. RADKE, *Die Götter Altitaliens*, Münster 1965, p. 84.

⁵¹ G. DUMÉZIL, *Carna*, REL 38, 1960, p. 90.

⁵² MACROBIUS, *Saturnalia*, I, 12, 32–33.

⁵³ OVIDIUS, *Fasti*, VI, 155–168.

⁵⁴ An essential festival in honour of Vesta, albeit not included in the *fasti*, was the extinguishing and lighting of the new fire in her temple. This ritual took place on the first day of March, i.e. the first day of the new Roman religious year (MACROBIUS, *Saturnalia*, I, 12, 6).

Vestalia held in June were of mainly purifying character, during which garbage was swept out of the goddess' temple and was later thrown into the river Tiber. Moreover, the goddess was the patroness of bakers, what may be suggested by the fact that the Romans, in the archaic times of their religion, attributed Vesta the functions of a deity responsible for providing the citizens with food⁵⁵.

It is difficult to reconstruct the primary sacral competences of the goddess Mater Matuta, since the single source for their interpretation is the mention of an enigmatic rite that accompanied the celebrations held in her honour. At the *Matralia*, women and their children held by their mothers' sisters, probably in order to stress both parental and sisterly bond gathered in the goddess' temple. Slave women were not allowed in the temple of Mater Matuta, and during the *Matralia* one slave was whipped and then driven out of the temple. It is possible that this ritual was meant to be purifying and apotropaic, whereas the slave woman played the role of a 'scapegoat'; by taking on the sins and faults of the sacral community, she liberated the group from the responsibility for them.

Fors Fortuna was one of the hypostasis of the deity of chance, i.e. events and incidents in one's life that were independent from human will. The significance of this goddess is emphasized by the timing of the festival held in her honour and the ritual conduct of its participants. *Sacrum Fortis Fortunae* occurred on the summer solstice, which was assigned the sacral value of the moment of the combat of two contradictory forces of nature: the benevolent light which symbolized life and the dangerous darkness which was, in accordance to the religious code of ancient communities, identified with death. This festival was held at the river Tiber, probably near the goddess' temple. The participants, who were usually young people, would come on foot or take boats decorated with flowers down the river; they would then organize common feasts.

Mensis Iulius

6 July: Fortuna Muliebris⁵⁶; Fortunae Muliebri eo die aedis dedicata est.

⁵⁵ Cf. R. WRIGHT, *Vesta. A Study on the Origin of a Goddess and Her Cultus*, Washington 1995, p. 196: *the Vestal priestesses' exclusive association with the ritual preparation and sacramental use of grain seemed to be a consistent with the Great Goddess' sovereignty over the growth, storage and preparation of this staple.*

⁵⁶ Goddess of female fertility. Such role of Fortuna Muliebris is questioned by Celia E. SCHULTZ (*Women's Religious Activity in the Roman Republic*, Chapel Hill–London 2006 [= SHGR]). The scholar indicates the fact that the literary sources, on which the analysis of the role of women in Roman religion is based on, are non-objective since only men were their authors. Schultz discusses the role of women in Roman religion from a gender perspective (*ibidem*, p. 89–93). Similar observations have been already expressed earlier: *The lesson from Roman religion was, as I showed, that women never had a ritual identity independent of their relationship to men. In one sense this is not peculiar to Rome. Women have always been classified according to their sexuality. Even today women are classified according to the stages of their sexual development into roughly pre-menarche, post-menarche and post-menopausal stages* (A. STAPLES, *From Good Goddess to Vestal Virgins. Sex and Category in Roman Religion*, London 1998, p. 160).

7 July: Iuno Caprotina⁵⁷; ancillarum feriae vel Nonae Caprotinae⁵⁸.

25 July: Furrina; Furrinalia.

30 July: Fortuna huiusque diei; Fortunae huiusque diei eo die aedes dedicata est.

The sacral competences of Juno clearly attribute her patronage over young girls and married women, and her divine functions are confirmed in the festivals held in her honour, the ritual conduct of her worshippers and the prayer phrases. *Nonae Caprotinae* gathered women from beyond the city, but slave women also participated in these celebrations, often taking on the responsibilities for the sacral offenses of the whole community in the purification rituals. The offering of a sap resembling milk from a tree was used and made in Juno's honour under a wild fig tree⁵⁹, after which slave women held a mock fight with rocks and whipped each other with fig tree twigs⁶⁰. The ritual arrangement of this festival resembled rites of 'expelling evil forces', known in many archaic communities⁶¹. In this type of rituals, the people, who personified these powers, were expelled by being beaten with twigs and thrown at with rocks. Often, they carried fig fruit around their necks. Because the *Nonae Caprotinae* were dedicated to Juno and only women were allowed to participate in them, this apotropaic in its character festival could have aimed at averting dangers threatening married women expecting a child.

Like some other other female Roman deities (such as *Feronia*⁶² and Maia), Furrina gradually lost her sacral significance and became a goddess of unclear heritage and uncertain competences⁶³. This was due to the fact that we are not able to reconstruct the primary functions of Furrina, because of the few and difficult in interpretation remarks found in Roman literature and the short note in the *Fasti*.

Mensis Augustus

12 August: Venus Victrix vel Victoria; Veneri Victrici vel Victoriae eo die aedis dedicata est.

13 August: Diana; Natalis Dianae⁶⁴.

19 August: Venus; Veneri eo die aedis dedicata est.

23 August: Ops Opifera; Opi Opiferae eo die aedis dedicata est.

25 August: Ops Consiva; Opiconsivia vel Opeconsivia.

⁵⁷ The goddess' epithet is related to the Latin noun *caper* 'billy-goat' (*capra* 'goat'). In ancient culture, this animal was a theriomorphic symbol of fertility.

⁵⁸ VARRO names the festival in such manner (*De lingua Latina*, VI, 18).

⁵⁹ The Latin *caprificus* literally means 'goat fig'.

⁶⁰ VARRO, *De lingua Latina*, VI, 18.

⁶¹ J.G. FRAZER, *Złota gałąź*, trans. H. KRZECZKOWSKI, Warszawa 1996, p. 425–432.

⁶² *Confer*: the anniversary of the dedication of Ferronia's temple (13 November), about which even less information is available.

⁶³ VARRO, *De lingua Latina*, VII, 45.

⁶⁴ On this day, Diana's temple on the Aventine was dedicated, whereas the Romans took over her cult from the sanctuary not far from Aritia, where she was worshipped under the epithet of *Nemorensis* 'woodland like'. During the nocturnal festival, women gathered in the goddess' grove asking Diana for successful childbirth.

Ops⁶⁵ is a female deity of wealth and opulence. The goddess' epithets: *Opifera* 'she, who bestows plenty (of cereal)' and *Consiv(i)a*⁶⁶ 'she, who is the plenty of grain (from the sowing and used for the next sowing)' leave the sacral competences of Ops to no doubt. The August *Opalia* reflect the divinity's connection with agricultural fertility cults, for they comply with the sequence of celebrations of agrarian and vegetative character, which end the agricultural works with the after harvest ceremonies and the beginning of the autumnal sowing of cereals.

Mensis September⁶⁷

- 1 September: Iuno Regina; Iunoni Reginae eo die aedes dedicata est.
 13 September: Minerva et Iuppiter; Iovis epulum; Minervae epulum⁶⁸.
 26 September: Venus Genetrix. Veneri Genetrici eo die aedis dedicata est.

Mensis October

- 1 October: Iuno Sororia; Tigillum Sororium.
 7 October: Iuno Curritis vel Quiritis; Iunoni Curriti eo die aedes dedicata est.
 9 October: Venus Victrix (Capitolina); Veneri Victrici eo die aedis dedicata est.

It is probable that the festivals held in the honour of Juno under the epithet *Sororia* contain an ancient initiation rite for girls. This celebration took part near the place called by Romans *Tigillum Sororium* and hence the name noted in the *fasti*. This celebration was supposed to confirm the young Roman girls readiness for their roles as wives and mothers. Such theory finds support in the etymological study of Juno's epithet, for linguists see in the lexeme *sororia* the Indo-European root *sÁél 'to swell (in reference to the girls' breasts)'⁶⁹. This festival must have been of sacral as well as of public character, which ritual indicated the girls' beginning of puberty and entering physical maturity⁷⁰.

⁶⁵ Latin *ops* (sg.) 'power, force, help'; (pl.) 'fortune, riches'.

⁶⁶ A. WALDE and J.B. HOFMANN (*Lateinisches...*, vol. I, p. 265) agree that the epithet *Consiva* (-ia) is the ritual equivalent of *Consus*, the male partner of *Ops*; the goddess' epithet was constructed from this theonym. Linguists derive the name of the god *Consus* from the Latin verb *condere* 'to hold on to, to hide'. He was supposed to take care of the bringing of cereals from the fields and their placing in the siloses.

⁶⁷ Cf. footnote 16.

⁶⁸ *Epulum* was an opulent feast organized for the gods. The mentioned festival was probably an enrichment to the annual celebration of the dedication of the temple of Jupiter, Juno and Minerva on the Capitolium erected at the end of the sixth century BC.

⁶⁹ G. RADKE, *Die Götter...*, p. 291. The Latin verb *sororiare* describes 'the swelling of breasts of young girls' (*FESTUS, De verborum significatu*, p. 396).

⁷⁰ N. BOËLS-JANSSEN, *La vie religieuse des matrones dans la Rome archaïque*, Rome 1993 [= ColeFR, 176], p. 42; H.H. SCULLARD, *Festivals and Ceremonies of the Roman Republic*, London 1981 [= AGRL], p. 190.

Mensis November⁷¹

13 November: Feronia; Feroniae eo die aedes dedicata est.

13 November: Fortuna Primigenia; Fortunae Primigeniae eo die aedes dedicata est.

Mensis December

13 December: Tellus et Ceres; Telluri et Cereri eo die aedes dedicata est.

19 December: Ops; Opalia.

21 December: Angerona; Divalia.

23 December: Acca Larentina vel Acca Larentia; Larentalia.

The December *Opalia*, another festival after the one in August in honour of Ops, belonged to a series of feasts that began the preparations for the new agrarian season. The intervention of the goddess was supposed to provide the Romans with the multiplication of the vital forces of grain sowed into the soil during autumnal sowing, as well as with a good harvest.

The significance of Angerona for the system of Roman beliefs is emphasized mainly by the date of her festival, which coincided with the winter solstice. In view of many researches, ancient religions assigned this time of the year a sacral value, as a time when the forces of darkness combated those of the light over the rule of the vital forces of the world. Such hypothesis may be supported by the suggestions of some linguists on the etymology of the deity's name which is supposed to contain the Indo-European root **anǵhā-* 'squeeze, choke'⁷². Perhaps the Romans recognized in Angerona a divinity that 'choked' the light of the sun. Divalia was interpreted as a culmination of the moment of this struggle between light and darkness.

Acca Larentina *vel* Larentia belonged to those Roman deities of clearly chthonic nature, for during the festivals in her honour public offerings in honour of the dead were performed⁷³. In the Roman calendar, such type of festivals appeared at the end of the old and the beginning of the new year and were aimed at protecting people from attacks from hostile forces towards living beings. *Acca Larentia* is the semantic equivalent of the description *Mater Larum* (Mother of Lares), also known as Mania. In honour of Mania and the Lares with the epithet *Compitales* which protected crossroads, the Romans held the festival termed *Compitalia*. In contrast to the *Larentalia*, a festival in honour of Acca Larentia, this one had a changeable date that appeared between the end of December and more often at the beginning of January. It is possible that the *Larentalia* and *Compitalia* may have been two versions of the same festival, although, according to literary sources, the *Compitalia* used to have a more dramatic course in ancient times, for the most important

⁷¹ Cf. footnote 16.

⁷² G. RADKE, *Die Götter...*, p. 64.

⁷³ MACROBIUS, *Saturnalia*, I, 10, 17.

part of the festival were sacrifices⁷⁴ of children in honour of Mania and the Lares, i.e. the spirits of the dead; such offering was intended to maintain the lives of the other members of the family⁷⁵. In later times, the savage norm of performing human sacrifice was lifted. As a result, depictions resembling human beings were hung in front of the main entrance to the house⁷⁶ and on the crossroads⁷⁷.

* * *

Based on the above-mentioned information about the sacral festivals in honour of the goddesses found in the *fasti* and literary sources, we may formulate the hypothesis in regard of the changes to which the cults of female Roman deities were subjected. Firstly, some of them lost their sacral significance, whereas their primary competences became forgotten; others expanded their religious influence and became important figures in the pantheon. For instance, those female *numina* gained more significance, whose sacral functions allowed the Roman community to fulfil its civilian duties or attribute sacral value to those activities that supported the security of Rome and its inhabitants in regard of the physical and spiritual spheres. This was due to the fact that *pax deorum* guaranteed the community's biological existence when religious acts were performed by its members. Furthermore, residents of Rome also took over the cults of conquered tribes and peoples, enriching and supplementing their own pantheon. The Romans consequently and efficiently established their historical politics, which enabled them to justify their territorial acquisitions but also facilitate the cultural domination over foreigners, i.e. non-Roman social and sacral communities. This way they developed an ideologically coherent religious system with complex ceremonies, which satisfied the most essential material and non-material needs of city residents.

In view of the discussion above, we may divide the many festivals dedicated to female Roman into groups of sacral sequences on the basis of the character of ritual conducts, which directly present the competences ascribed to the goddesses by the Roman sacral community:

1. Festivals in honour of agro-vegetative deities appear throughout the Roman sacral year, but dominate in the time of spring, the seasonal growth of cereal (January – *feriae Sementivae*, April – *Fordicidia*, *Cerialia*, *Robigalia*, *Floralia*, May – *sacrum Deae Diae*). The success of these protected the Roman community from poor harvest and famine.

⁷⁴ Researchers of religious studies define this sacrifice as *pars pro toto*, i.e. 'a part instead of the whole' (W. BURKERT, *Stwarzanie świętości. Ślady biologii we wczesnych wierzeniach religijnych*, trans. L. TRZCIONKOWSKI, Kraków 2006, p. 77).

⁷⁵ MACROBIUS, *Saturnalia*, I, 7, 34–35.

⁷⁶ MACROBIUS, *Saturnalia*, I, 7, 34–35.

⁷⁷ FESTUS, *De verborum significatu*, p. 344.

2. Festivals in honour of the goddesses who were patronesses of women's fertility and the health of little children were performed by Roman woman almost throughout the whole year (January – *Carmentalia*, March – *Matronalia*, April – *Veneralia*, *sacrum Fortis Fortunae*, May – *sacrum Deae Bonae*⁷⁸, June – *ludi fabarici*, *Matralia*, *sacrum Fortis Fortunae*, July – *Nonae Caprotinae*, August – *sacrum Dianae*, October – *Tigillum Sororium*, December – *sacrum Bonae Deae*). These were aimed at protecting the community from the loss of control over its growth.

3. Festivals at the turn of the sacral year dedicated to goddesses appear in March, with which the Romans initiated the religious year (March – the extinguishing of the fire in the Vesta temple, March – *sacrum Annae Perennae*) as well as at the turn of December and January (December – *Divalia*, *Larentalia*, December or January – *Compitalia*), and also at the beginning of the pastoral year (April – *Parilia*). Often, these festivals were of purifying and apotropaic character; they isolated the Roman community from chthonic forces that threatened human beings.

4. A characteristic feature of some agrarian, female and turn-of-the-year festivals was the disruption of accepted norms of conduct: the abuse of wine, erotic freedom, nudity of the female participants of the festival, sexual acts, including groups sex obscene gestures, vulgar lore (March – *sacrum Annae Perennae*, April – *Floralia*, June – *sacrum Fortis Fortunae*). These actions were aimed at enforcing the life force accumulated on earth, as well as the birth forces attributed to women by nature, so that harvest and human fertility would guarantee Rome's security and biological continuity⁷⁹.

⁷⁸ Bona Dea was a deity whose two festivities were intended only for women. The December festival had the Roman women, both unmarried and married, gather in the house of one of the Roman officials. The basic requirement for this nocturnal festival, which was conducted *pro populo Romano*, was the expulsion of all men and male animals as well as the hiding of objects with phallic connotations. The goddess' protection was supposed to favour the baring of many children by the Roman women; cf. CICERO, *De Haruspicum Responsis*, 37; PLUTARCHUS, *Caesar* 9–10, [in:] *Plutarch's Lives. In Eleven Volumes*, vol. I, trans. B. PERRIN, London 1959. Cf. H.H.J. BROUWER, *Bona Dea. The Sources and a Description of the Cult*, Leiden 1989 [= EPROLR, 110], p. 398: *as a fertility goddess and through the female, representative, part of the population she guarded the community*.

⁷⁹ In ancient religions, harvest was connected with female fertility, hence the sowing of seeds was identified with the sexual act (H. LE BONNIEC, *Le culte de Cérès à Rome. Des origines à la fin de la République*, Paris 1958, p. 128; M. ELIADE, *Historia wierzeń i idei religijnych*, vol. I, *Od epoki kamiennej do misteriów eleuzyńskich*, trans. S. TOKARSKI, Warszawa 1997, p. 29).

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Abstract. Ancient Romans' sacral community established a cohesive and complex religious system. Its reflection was a multi-figural pantheon of gods with a variety of sacral functions that were supposed to meet the most essential material and non-material needs of the members of this religious community. This article focuses on those needs of great importance to the whole community of Rome which were met by the female figures of the Roman pantheon.

Keywords: Roman female deities, Roman religious cults, Roman pantheon of gods

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THE FIRST WOMAN YAMĪ, HER ORIGIN AND HER STATUS IN INDO-IRANIAN MYTHOLOGY: DEMIGODDESS OR HALF-HUMAN? (EVIDENCE FROM ṚGVEDA 10.10, IRANIAN PARALLELS AND GREEK RELATIVES)*

1. Yama and Yamī in Vedic mythology: introductory remarks

The story of Yama and Yamī is undoubtedly one of the most fascinating and intriguing episodes of Vedic mythology. I shall first recapitulate the plot of this legend as well as its mythological and socio-cultural context.

Our main source of information about Indo-Iranian mythology is of course the Ṛgveda (RV) – the most ancient Vedic (Old Indo-Aryan and, more generally, Indo-Iranian) text – as well as the Atharvaveda. Both texts document the early Vedic period, which can be tentatively dated to the end of the second half of the II millennium BC. In addition, some information can be gleaned from other Vedic Saṃhitās (Yajurveda) and Vedic prose (Brāhmaṇas), as well as – to some extent – from younger, post-Vedic texts (Epics, Purāṇas etc.).

According to Vedic mythology, Yama and his twin sister Yamī are the first humans, who thus have a peculiar position among other mythological figures. Yama, the first mortal (*mṛtya*) and thus the first human doomed to die, acquires a remarkable status of the king of the realm of dead after his death. Although it is clear that the pair of twins do not belong to the Vedic gods, their position within the Vedic pantheon is far from clear. Obviously, being children of some non-human (divine?) creatures, they cannot be considered as normal humans either.

Although the Indo-Iranian age of this myth is beyond any doubt – as clearly indicated by the Avestan (Yima) and Nuristāni (Im-(ra)) cognates of Yama, let alone the numerous parallels in Old and Middle Iranian tradition – the exact character of the relationship between Yama and Yamī remains one of the greatest puzzles

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of Indo-Iranian mythology. While Yama, as the god of death and the underworld, is the addressee of a few RVic hymns, the information about his sister Yamī is much scarcer: it is essentially limited to the famous dialogue hymn RV 10, 10, which is still quite poorly understood and constitutes one of the most fascinating and yet most difficult RVic texts from the linguistic, philological and exegetic point of view¹.

The central topic of this dialogue hymn is the intricate relationship between Yamī and Yama. Yamī (who authors each odd stanza, i.e. first, third, fifth etc.) attempts to seduce her twin into an incestual relationship. Yama, who replies in the even stanzas (second, fourth etc.), refuses this invitation. Yamī continues to insist, drawing further arguments, such as the necessity of producing offspring and thus continuing humankind; their prenatal physical union in the womb of their common mother; etc. Yet, Yama keeps arguing that the incestuous relationship is inappropriate and strictly prohibited, which makes their sexual encounter impossible.

¹ This hymn has been repeatedly translated and analysed in Vedic scholarship, remaining one of the most vividly debated texts of Vedic literature. Alongside the classic full translations of the RV, which also offer translations of and comments on RV, 10, 10 (*Der Rigveda oder die heiligen hymnen der Brāhmana*, vol. I–II, trans. A. LUDWIG, Prag 1876 and *Der Rigveda oder die heiligen hymnen der Brāhmana*, vol. IV–V, *Commentar zur Rigveda-übersetzung* A. LUDWIG, Prag–Leipzig 1883 (cetera: LUDWIG); *Rig-Veda*, vol. II, trans. et comm. H. GRASSMANN, Leipzig 1876–1877, p. 296–297, 514; *Der Rig-Veda*, vol. III, trans. et comm. K.F. GELDNER, Cambridge Massachusetts 1951 [= HOS, 33–35] (cetera: GELDNER), p. 132–136; *Ригведа. Мандалы IX–X*, trans. et comm. Т.Я. ЕЛИЗАРЕНКОВА, Москва 1999 (cetera: ЕЛИЗАРЕНКОВА), p. 124–126, 418–420; *The Rigveda. The Earliest Religious Poetry of India*, vol. III, trans. et comm. S.W. JAMISON, J.P. BRERETON, New York 2014 (cetera: JAMISON and BRERETON), p. 1380–1383), this hymn is included in several anthologies (*Hymnes spéculatifs du Véda*, trans. et comm. L. RENOU, Paris 1956 (cetera: RENOU), p. 55–57, 236–237; *The Rig Veda. An Anthology. One Hundred and Eight Hymns*, trans. et comm. W. DONIGER O’FLAHERTY, London 1981, p. 247–250). A detailed commentary of this hymn can also be found in the monographic study of the dialogue hymns in the Ṛgveda, S. SCHNAUS, *Die Dialoglieder im altindischen Rigveda. Kommentar unter besonderer Berücksichtigung textlinguistischer Kriterien*, Hamburg 2008, p. 163–191. Large parts of the hymn are also translated and discussed in M. JEŽIĆ, *Rgvedski himni. Izvori indijske kulture i indoeuropsko nasljeđe*, Zagreb 1987, p. 181sq. and J. EHNI, *Der Vedische Mythos des Yama verglichen mit den analogen Typen der Persischen, Griechischen und Germanischen Mythologie*, Strassburg 1890. It has been the subject of several articles (U. SCHNEIDER, *Yama und Yamī (RV X 10)*, IJ 10, 1967, p. 1–32; H.W. BODEWITZ, *The Dialogue of Yama and Yamī (RV. 10, 10)*, IJ 52, 2009, p. 251–285; G.-J. PINAULT, *Sur l’hymne védique dialogué de Yama et Yamī (RV X.10)*, [in:] *Yama/Yima. Variations indo-iraniennes sur la geste mythique = Variations on the Indo-Iranian myth of Yama/Yima*, ed. S. AZARNOUCHE, C. REDARD, Paris 2012 [= PICI. Série in 8°, 81], p. 139–178, to name the most important works). For a discussion of the Indo-European roots and parallels of the myth, see, among many others, B. LINCOLN, *The Lord of the Dead*, HR 20, 1981, p. 224–241, p. 224sqq.; B.B. ИВАНОВ, В.Н. ТОПОРОВ, *К проблеме лти. jumis и балтийского близнечного культа*, БСИ 1981, p. 140–175; as well as, most recently, N. OETTINGER, *Before Noah: Possible Relics of the Flood-myth in Proto-Indo-Iranian and Earlier*, [in:] *Proceedings of the 24th Annual UCLA Indo-European Conference*, ed. S.W. JAMISON, H.C. MELCHERT, B. VINE, Bremen 2013, p. 169–183 (this paper has unfortunately been unavailable to me).

The most important characteristics and features of Yamī as a mythological personage can thus only be recovered from the text of this dialogue on the basis of its thorough linguistic, philological and text-critical study. Let us take a closer look at this text, paying special attention to the differences in the behaviour of the twins.

2. Ṛgveda 10.10: a linguistic and text-critical study of the relevant stanzas

2.1. Ṛgveda 10.10.1: Yamī invites Yama to a sexual relation

The first half (pādas ab) of the first stanza of the hymn runs as follows (for clarity, I provide morphological glossing):

(1) ó [=á=u]	<i>cit</i>	<i>sákhāyaṃ</i>	<i>sakhyā́</i>	<i>vavṛtyāṃ</i>
to=PTCL	PTCL	friend:ACC.SG	friendship:???	turn:PF:1SG.ACT
<i>tiráḥ</i>	<i>purú</i>	<i>cid</i>	<i>aṛṇavám</i>	<i>jagan-ván</i>
through	many:???	PTCL	flood:ACC.SG	go:PF-PTC.ACT:NOM.SG.M

Linguistically, the most difficult form of this passage and one of the most debated forms of the whole hymn is *sakhyā́* in the first line of the hymn (pāda a). This is the abstract noun derived from *sákhi-* ‘friend, partner, companion’ (the accusative singular form of which, *sákhāyaṃ*, immediately precedes *sakhyā́*), thus meaning ‘friendship, partnership’, but its exact grammatical characteristics remain unclear. Another difficult word that may require special comments is *purú* in pāda b. In their recent English translation of the Ṛgveda Stephanie W. Jamison and Joel P. Brereton render these two verses as

I would turn my partner right here **to partnership** – even though he has gone across **many** (realms), across the flood [emphasis is mine – L.K.]².

Translating *sakhyā́* as ‘to partnership’, they obviously follow the standard German translation and interpretation by Karl Friedrich Geldner:

Ich möchte doch den Freund **zu einem Freundschaftsdienst** bewegen.
Auch wenn er noch so viele (Meilen), über das Meer gegangen ist, (sollte er kommen)³.

Geldner explains his interpretation in a note drawing upon a conjecture: he saw in *sakhyā́* a truncated form of the dative singular form (*sakhyā́* Dat. für *sakhyā́ya*), thus ultimately following Sāyaṇa’s indigenous commentary and subscribing to the

² JAMISON and BRERETON, vol. III, p. 1382.

³ GELDNER, vol. III, p. 412.

analysis put forth by Richard Pischel⁴. However, this analysis – adopted by many Sanskritists⁵ – appears questionable: as Hermann Oldenberg⁶ convincingly argues, the heavy emendation (**sakhyá*[*ya*]) is unnecessary.

In fact, *sakhyá* can be satisfactorily analysed as a grammatically correct form of the abstract substantive *sakhyá*- ‘friendship, partnership’ without any emendation. One such formal option is to take *sakhyá* as the instrumental singular form⁷, adopted, for instance, by Susanne Schnaus⁸, who sees here an “Instrumental des Grundes” and translates this passage as follows:

Herbei möchte ich den Freund aufgrund der Freundschaft wenden.
Er ist über wirklich vieles hinweg zum wallenden Meer gegangen.

Albeit formally possible, this analysis does not make much sense: the instrumental of cause (*I would like to invite a friend because of friendship?*) appears redundant in this context.

The other available option⁹ is to take *sakhyá* as an accusative plural form, thus rendering *pāda* a as *I would like turn my friend towards friendships...* or the like, which makes the dative analysis (*sakhyá*[*ya*]) unnecessary. As Oldenberg¹⁰ rightly noticed, the accusative of goal is quite common with the verb *á-vrt*. This analysis was adopted, in particular, by Louis Renou¹¹ as well as, most recently, by Hendrik Wilhelm Bodewitz¹² and Georges-Jean Pinault¹³. The last two authors disagree as regards the exact rendering of the verbal form: Bodewitz¹⁴ believes that it can be interpreted as ‘(make) return to’ ([a]pparently *Yamī* wants to get back the

⁴ R. PISCHEL, *Vedische Studien*, vol. I, Stuttgart 1889, p. 64sq.

⁵ RENO, p. 55: *Que ne puis-je vers l'amitié attirer mon ami, fût-il allé au loin, par delà les mers!* Later, L. RENO (*Études védiques et pāninéennes*, vol. XVI, Paris 1967, p. 122) abandoned his earlier analysis, subscribing to the view of H. OLDENBERG (*R̥gveda. Textkritische und exegetische Noten*, vol. II, *Siebentes bis zehntes Buch*, Berlin 1912) instead, see below. U. SCHNEIDER, *Yama und Yamī...*, p. 3: *Herbei, unter allen Umständen, [ó cit] möchte ich den Genossen zur gemeinsamen Sache bewegen. Auch wenn er noch so weit über das Meer [arnavá] gegangen ist...* DONIGER O'FLAHERTY (*The Rig Veda. An Anthology...*, p. 247): *Would that I might draw my friend into intimate friendship, now that he has gone far across the ocean.* JAMISON and BRERETON, quoted above.

⁶ H. OLDENBERG, *Vedische Untersuchungen*, ZDMG 63, 1909, p. 287.

⁷ C.R. LANMAN, *A Statistical Account of Noun-inflection in the Veda*, JAOS 10, 1880, p. 336; LUDWIG, vol. V, p. 511.

⁸ S. SCHNAUS, *Die Dialoglieder...*, p. 163sq.

⁹ Put forth by H. OLDENBERG, *Vedische...*, p. 287; IDEM, *R̥gveda. Textkritische...*, ad loc., p. 204.

¹⁰ IDEM, *Vedische...*, p. 287.

¹¹ In his posthumously published comments on RV, 10, 10; see L. RENO, *Études védiques...*, p. 122, and this analysis is also adopted in Елизаренкова, p. 419; however, her translation – *Как бы я хотела повернуть друга к дружбе...* (*ibidem*, p. 124) – rather suggests the dative analysis of the form.

¹² H.W. BODEWITZ, *The Dialogue...*, p. 256sq.

¹³ G.-J. PINAULT, *Sur l'hymne...*, p. 144sq.

¹⁴ H.W. BODEWITZ, *The Dialogue...*, p. 257.

situations of friendship (therefore the plural is used), but now with a special form of sexual partnership), while Pinault doubts this interpretation (*Yamī ne propose pas à Yama de “revenir” à une “amitié” antérieure: aucun terme n’implique l’idée de retour. Le pluriel de l’abstrait sakh(i)yá- ajoute à la tonalité officielle et délibérément euphémistique de l’intervention de Yamī*)¹⁵. Pinault’s objection against Bodewitz’s translation of the verb *ā-vṛt* appears fully justified, but his own explanation of the meaning of the plural form does not seem convincing either: the exact meaning of *sakhyā* remains unclear. Let us take a closer look at the semantics of this plural noun, paying special attention to the possible semantic nuances induced by the pragmatic context of Yamī’s response addressed to Yama.

First of all, it should be borne in mind that Yamī encourages her brother to become her sexual partner. Therefore, the meaning of the accusative *sākhāyam* should be rendered not just as ‘friend’ or ‘partner’, but, rather – more precisely – as ‘sexual partner’. Thus, Yamī is anticipating the future type of relationship with Yama which she is eager to achieve, rather than referring to the actually existing type of relation. Accordingly, the abstract noun *sakhyā-*, derived from a noun with this particular meaning, should be understood as ‘sexual partnership, sexual relation’ (which, in fact, is very close to Bodewitz’s proposal quoted above). How can a plural form of such a noun be interpreted? As is well-known, abstract nouns are typically uncountable, thus very often being unable to form plural forms (*singularia tantum*). When a noun of this class nevertheless does form a plural, this necessarily implies a semantic shift¹⁶. Specifically, the plural form of a noun denoting an abstract notion Q may either refer to various sorts of Q (e.g. friendships = various types of friendship) or multiple realizations of Q (e.g. beauties = many realizations or occurrences of beauty). The former option makes little, if any, sense in our case: *I would like to turn my partner to [various sorts of] friendship/(sexual) partnership?* By contrast, the latter, in my view, perfectly fits into the context of Yamī’s offer: *I would like to turn [= invite] my sexual partner to [many realizations of] sexual partnership*. In other words, Yamī encourages Yama to perform many acts of love with her¹⁷. Furthermore, this interpretation is indirectly supported by the form *purū* ‘many’ in the next pāda b, which is usually taken as lacking an overtly expressed syntactic head¹⁸ and thus syntactically hanging. Instead of restoring the ellipsis of a hypothetical head of *purū* within pāda b, one might tentatively connect it with *sakhyā*. Although they are separated by as many as two words, it does not seem syntactically impossible, if *purū* is regarded as Yamī’s delayed (and thus somewhat

¹⁵ G.-J. PINAULT, *Sur l’hymne...*, p. 144.

¹⁶ As noticed in many linguistic handbooks; see, e.g. O. JESPERSEN, *A Modern English Grammar on Historical Principles*, pars 2, *Syntax*, vol. I, London–Copenhagen 1949, p. 114sqq.

¹⁷ Quite close to this interpretation is BODEWITZ’s ‘situations of friendship’.

¹⁸ Cf. JAMISON and BRERETON: ‘many (realms)’, vol. III, p. 1382; GELDNER: ‘so viele (Meilen)’, vol. III, p. 412.

camouflaged) addition to her sexual offer: *I would like to turn my sexual partner to make love with me, many* [times], lit.:...*to loves, ...many* [loves]!

To sum up, in the very first line of the hymn, Yamī invites Yama – as his potential partner – to repeatedly have sex with her, thus exhibiting sexually explicit behaviour. This hypersexuality of Yamī is in striking contrast to the wholly different and most reserved conduct of her brother, who is constantly trying to calm Yamī down. We find further evidence for this drastic difference in another verse of the same hymn, this time in Yama’s response.

2.2. Ṛgveda 10.10.6d: Yama blames Yamī for her sexually explicit behaviour

In stanza 6, after pointing to the supreme character of Mitra and Varuṇa’s laws (10.10.6c: *bṛhán mitráśya váruṇasya dhāma*), in the last pāda (d), Yama blames his sister for her indecent behaviour:

<i>kād</i>	<i>u</i>	<i>brava</i>	<i>āhano</i>	<i>vīcyā</i>	<i>nṛṇ</i>
how	PTCL	talk:PRES:SUBJ:2SG.ACT	lustful:VOC.SG.F	???	man:ACC.PL

How can you talk, [*vīcyā*], o lustful (one) (?), to men!?

This is the most difficult line in the stanza and, again, one of the most difficult passages in the entire hymn. The two problematic forms here (shown in boldface) are the rare word *āhanás-* (in the vocative form) and the hapax *vīcyā*. Although it is evident that Yama accuses Yamī of her sexually explicit behaviour, the exact meaning of these two forms, which constitute the main content of this accusation, is unclear.

āhanás- is usually translated as ‘lustful, obscene’, but its etymology remains a subject of debate. Elsewhere¹⁹ I argued that Manfred Mayrhofer’s²⁰ translation of this form as ‘schwellend, strotzend, geil, üppig’ and its derivation from the hypothetical root **g^hen-* ‘schwellen’ should be rejected. Here, I will briefly summarize the main conclusions of that paper. As I argue, the analysis of this form as an *-as-* derivative of the root *han* ‘hit, beat, strike’ (with the preverb *ā*), adopted by Christianus C. Uhlenbeck²¹, who obviously followed Otto von Böhtlingk and Rudolf von Roth’s *Sanskrit-Wörterbuch*²² – should ultimately be accepted, though

¹⁹ L. KULIKOV, *Vedic āhanás- and Its Relatives / Cognates within and outside Indo-Iranian*, [in:] *Farnah. Indo-Iranian and Indo-European Studies in Honor of Sasha Lubotsky*, Ann Arbor 2018, p. 153–161.

²⁰ M. MAYRHOFER, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindoarischen* (cetera: *EWAia*), vol. I, Heidelberg 1986, p. 184.

²¹ C.C. UHLENBECK, *Kurzgefasstes etymologisches Wörterbuch der altindischen Sprache*, Amsterdam 1898/1899, p. 23.

²² O. BÖHTLINGK, R. ROTH, *Sanskrit-Wörterbuch*, vol. I, St. Petersburg 1855, p. 746: *schwellend, strotzend, üppig, āhanás-, zu hánti schlägt* (vgl. russ. *nabityj voll zu bití schlagen und ghanás*);

assuming a semantic development different from that envisaged by Böhlingk. In fact, the connection between the primary meaning of the root *han*, ‘beat, strike’ and the meaning ‘make love, have sex, fuck’ is obvious and hardly requires special argumentation. This semantic development, in accordance with the diachronic scenario ‘beat, strike’ → ‘perform sexual strikes’ → ‘perform sexual movements’, is universal and occurs in many languages²³. Under this analysis, *āhanás-* clearly represents a derivative in *-as-* based on the compounded verb *ā-han*. This compound is relatively rare in Vedic, yet we find the following remarkable example of a *-ta-* adjective derived from this compound in the wedding hymn RV 10, 85:

*śúcī te cakré yāt,yā́ ' v,yānó ákṣa āhataḥ*²⁴

The two gleaming ones [= Heaven and Earth?] were your two wheels as you drove. Breath was **hammered in** as the axle²⁵.

Obviously, at least one of the meanings of the compound *ā-han* was ‘hammer in, insert, stick (in),’ said in particular of an axle inserted into the hub of a wheel. Given the common connection between the meanings ‘beat’ and ‘perform sex’, the compound *ā-han* could easily develop the sexual meaning ‘insert, hammer in’ (of a penis). The sexual metaphors of the type ‘insert the axle into the hub of a wheel’ ~ ‘insert the penis into the vagina’ or ‘two rolling wheels (connected with an axle)’ ~ ‘two lovers having sex’ (note that this erotic connotation is particularly appropriate in the context of the wedding hymn RV 10, 85) is of course obvious and does not require special comments. The meaning ‘lascivious, lustful, obscene’ can be obtained for the agentive masculine *-as-* derivative of this compound, *āhanás-*, as developing from ‘the one who strikes in(side), the one who hammers in’.

While the lexeme *āhanás-* is at least etymologically clear and can be unambiguously identified as an *-as-* derivative of the compound *ā-han*, *vīcyā* is obscure even at the morphological level. Some scholars have taken it as an absolutive (converb) of a compound verb with the preverb *vī-*²⁶, but such an analysis is untenable: there

more accurate would be comparison with Russ. *взбитый* ‘whipped’ (of cream). The meaning ‘lustful’ was obviously understood by Böhlingk as based on ‘overstuffed, swollen’ [vollgestopft, überfüllt] → ‘curvaceous, voluptuous, buxom’, discarded in M. MAYRHOFER, *Kurzgefaßtes etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen = A Concise Etymological Sanskrit Dictionary*, vol. I, Heidelberg 1956, p. 84.

²³ Cf. Eng. *fuck* ~ PIE **peuǵ-* ‘prick, stab’; Latin *futuo* ‘fuck, copulate’ ~ *-futo* ‘strike’; Rus. (vulg.) *трахнуть* (‘beat’ →) ‘screw, fuck’, etc.

²⁴ RV, 10, 85, 12ab.

²⁵ JAMISON and BRERETON, vol. III, p. 1522.

²⁶ E.g. *vi-yāc* ‘ask’ in S. SCHNAUS, *Die Dialoglieder...*, p. 174sq. In her translation: *Wirst du sprechen, Geile, die Männer bitten?* This analysis is impossible for several reasons: first, as Schnaus herself notices, this compound does not occur in Vedic; second, and most importantly, the zero grade *īc-* is never attested for this non-alternating root, which always appears in the full grade *yāc-*.

is no root which could yield the zero grade *-ic-* in the absolutive. More plausible is the analysis²⁷ as the instrumental singular feminine form derived from the hypothetical adjective *vy-áñc-*, with the suffix *-añc-* of the type *ud-áñc-* ‘directed upwards’, *práñc-* ‘directed forwards’ etc. Most such adjectives are based on spatial preverbs: *úd-* ‘up’, *prá-* ‘forwards’ etc. This analysis is readily adopted by most Vedicists, but, again, the exact meaning of the form is not yet correctly understood in my view. The syntactically ‘hanging’ adjective suggests the ellipsis of a feminine head noun. The missing substantive is restored by most scholars as *vác-* ‘speech’, and the form in question is rendered as ‘with diverted, deviant [speech]’ or the like²⁸. This analysis seems dubious. First of all, *vác-* does not normally occur in constructions with spatial adjectives. The basic meaning of the preverb *ví-* (etymologically relying on **dvis-* ‘in two’²⁹) is ‘apart, asunder, in two’, rather than ‘aside, deviating’. Accordingly, the meaning of *vy-áñc-* should be determined – in accordance with the basic (and etymological) meaning of *ví-* – as ‘directed apart, spread (out)’. This meaning makes little sense in the context of *vác-* ‘speech’ (which, incidentally, does not occur in the text of RV 10, 10). However, it is perfectly plausible in a construction with another feminine substantive, which, unlike *vác-*, occurs as many as six times in RV 10, 10: *tanú-* ‘body’. Supplying the instrumental *tanvā*, we obtain the meaning ‘[with the body/legs] spread out’, which, most probably, refers to some sort of an obscene posture. The latter can, incidentally, be readily illustrated with Classical Indian sculpture (see Fig. 1a) as well as with several iconographic images that have developed in some branches of Hinduism (where this particular ‘spreading’ posture could have acquired special importance; see Fig. 1b representing the Tantric goddess of desire Kamakhya, worshipped in Assam)³⁰. The entire pāda d can now be tentatively translated as: *How can you talk to men, taking an obscene posture [= with legs spread out?]³¹, o eager one to have sex!?*

²⁷ Proposed already by H. OLDENBERG, *Rgveda. Textkritische...*, ad loc. and adopted, for instance, by RENO and GELDNER.

²⁸ Thus H. OLDENBERG (*Rgveda. Textkritische...*, ad loc.): *mit sich entfernender (von Wahrheit, Sittlichkeit abweichender) (Rede)*, with question mark; RENO, p. 56: ‘avec cette malice’; G.-J. PINAULT, *Sur l’hymne...*, p. 153sqq.: *Lascive, parleras-tu aux hommes d’une façon qui la contrarie*; JAMISON and BRERETON, vol. III, p. 1382): ‘with deviant (speech)’.

²⁹ See A. LUBOTSKY, *RV. ávidhat*, [in:] *Früh-, Mittel-, Spätindogermanisch. Akten der IX. Fachtagung der Indogermanischen Gesellschaft vom 5. bis 9. Oktober 1992 in Zürich*, ed. G. DUNKEL et al., Wiesbaden 1994, p. 201–206.

³⁰ Even though such images come from a much later time, their very presence in the Indian iconographic tradition and religious art may point to the archaic character of the corresponding conceptual pattern.

³¹ Among the existing translations, the one closest to the present proposal is probably ЕЛИЗАРЕНКОВА, p. 125: *О сладострастная, что же ты обращаешься с (таким) соблазном к мужчинам?*

2.3. Ṛgveda 10.10.7cd: Yamī's sexual metaphors

Yet another passage which betrays Yamī's hypersexuality is found in the next stanza, where Yamī once again invites Yama to have sex with her. In the last two verses of the stanza, we read:

jāyēva pātye tan_uvām riricyām ' ví cid vṛheva ráth,yeva cakrá

While the translation of pāda c does not pose any difficulties (*Like a wife to the husband I would like to offer [him] [my] body*), the exact meaning of the optative verbal form *ví... vṛheva* in pāda d *Let us... [?] like two wheels of a chariot!* is difficult to determine on the basis of the constituents of the compound *ví-vṛh*, i.e. *ví-* 'apart' + *vṛh* 'tear (out)'. Still, given that the image of the two wheels is commonly used in Vedic as a sexual metaphor (as in RV 10, 85, 12 quoted above), the verbal form in question should probably be understood as referring to intensive sex, compared to the movements of the two wheels of a chariot connected with an axle and alternating two opposite types of movements: insertion and tearing out (*ví-vṛh*). Accordingly, the last pāda can be tentatively translated as follows: *Let us roll, mutually screwing [in and] out like two wheels of a chariot!*

To sum up, Yamī demonstrates remarkable sexually explicit behaviour, which is in drastic contrast with that of her brother. This may be the key to a better understanding of their mythological status as well as their role in the continuation of the human race. In order to clarify this issue, we have to take a closer look at the ancestry of the first humans.

3. Two versions of Yama and Yamī's ancestry

According to the standard genealogy of Yama and Yamī, they are the children of the solar god Vivasvant (one of the manifestations of Sūrya; see Fig. 2) and his consort Saraṇyū, the daughter of Tvaṣṭar (note that in stanza 5 Yamī appeals to her grandfather as a witness of their common origin from the same womb)³².

Yet, once in our hymn, in RV 10, 10, 4, we come across a different – and less exalted – version of Yama and Yamī's ancestry. It is summarized by Yama as follows:

*gandharvó aps_uv āpyā ca yósā ' sá no nābhiḥ...*³³

A gandharva in the waters, and a young woman connected with water – that is our origin...
[i.e. blood relationship].

³² Cf., for instance, RV, 10, 14, 10, 135, 10.154; in RV, 10, 14, 1 we find an explicit mention of *vaivasvatám... yamám rājānam* (*Yama the king, the son of Vivasvant*).

³³ RV, 10, 10, 4cd.

The expression *ápyā... yóṣā* ‘woman connected with water’ undoubtedly refers to an Apsara. Thus, we find here an entirely different version of the origin of Yama and Yamī. Although several attempts have been made to reconcile this controversy by identifying Vivasvant with Gandharva – thus taking the two as mere alternant names of the same god³⁴ – they do not appear convincing. Rather, one should take this brief reference more seriously, as it may provide the key to the explanation of Yamī and Yama’s behaviour and, more generally, of their status in the mythological pantheon.

4. Gandharva in the early Vedic pantheon and Indo-Iranian mythology

In classical Hindu mythology, the Gandharvas and the Apsaras have a rather modest status of semi-divine creatures, acting as celestial musicians and dancers, respectively. The Apsaras are often represented as beautiful seductive women, and this image can be traced back as far as the early Vedic period. However, their characteristics in the early Vedic period – as documented in the earliest Vedic texts, such as above all the Ṛgveda and the Atharvaveda – are quite different from what we find about these rather harmless figures in later Hinduism. In the early Vedic divine hierarchy, the Gandharvas (with their spouses, the Apsaras) occupy a rather low rank of semi-divine or demonic creatures, yet of a fairly dangerous nature. They are mentioned in the Ṛgveda relatively rarely (ca. 20 times)³⁵, and their status remains obscure in several respects.

Thus, in the wedding hymn RV 10, 85 we read that the Gandharva is granted special access to the bride, after Soma³⁶. This technique, not infrequent in many mythologies and magic rituals, is presumably aimed at pacifying dangerous creatures:

*sómaḥ prathamó vivide ' gandharvó vivida úttaraḥ*³⁷

Soma has known [the bride/wife] first; Gandharva has known [her] the second...

More information about the features of and especially the dangers caused by the Gandharvas and the Apsaras can be gleaned from the Atharvavedic spell

³⁴ E.g. J. EHNI, *Der Vedische...*, p. 142sq.; L.D. BARNETT, *Yama, Gandharva, and Glaucus*, BSOS 4, 1928, p. 703–716.

³⁵ All relevant passages are collected and discussed by C. HAAS (*Wie man den Veda lesen kann. Gandharva und die "Zwischenzustände" im Ṛgveda und im Kommentar des Sāyaṇa. Wege der Interpretation eines archaischen Textes*, Göttingen 2004 [= Hsf, 43]), although her conclusions are rather debatable; see S.W. JAMISON, [rec.]: C. Haas, *Wie man den Veda lesen kann...* – JAOS 128, 2008, p. 394–395. For an overview, see for instance A.A. MACDONELL, *Vedic mythology*, Strassburg 1897, p. 134–138; U.G. THITE, *Gandharvas and Apsaras in the Veda*, JIMS 18, 1987, p. 52sqq.

³⁶ For a discussion of this attitude, see e.g. C. HAAS, *Wie man...*, p. 140sqq.

³⁷ RV, 10, 85, 40.

“Against Gandharvas and Apsaras with Arāṭakī-plant”. In what follows, I quote a few relevant fragments of this spell, attested in both recensions, Śaunakīya (cetera: AVŚ) and Paippalāda (cetera: AVP)³⁸, AVŚ 4.37 ≈ AVP 12.7–8.

The magic Arāṭakī-plant is intended to expel Apsaras and Gandharvas with its fragrance (*gandhā-*), as we read in stanza 2 of this hymn:

*tvāyā vayām apsarāso ' gandharvāṃś cātayāmahe /
ājaśṛṅgy āja rākṣaḥ ' sārvaṅ gandhēna nāśaya*³⁹

We chase away with you Apsaras und Gandharvas. O goat-horned [herb], drive away the Rakṣas, make them all disappear with [your] fragrance.

Particularly valuable information about the features and aspects of the Gandharvas is found in the second half of the spell. In the stanza AVP 12, 8, 4 ≈ AVŚ 4, 37, 10, Gandharva is described as a scary demonic creature living in marshy landscapes:

*avakādān +abhiśocān ' bhitsu [Śaun. apsú] dyotayamāmakān /
gandharvān sarvaṅ ośadhe ' pra ṇudasva parā ṇaya*⁴⁰

O plant, push away, carry away the gandharvas, the avaka-eaters⁴¹, [who appear as] shining will-o'-the-wisps in the splits (Paipp.) / in the waters (Śaun.).

The ability to take different forms and shapes accounts for the dangers that this creature poses to young women:

*śvévaikaḥ kapīr ivaikaḥ ' kumārāḥ sarvakeśakāḥ /
priyó dṛśá iva bhūtvā ' gandharvāḥ sacate striyā*⁴²

One [appears] as a dog, another as an ape, yet another, becoming like a young man having all [kinds of] hair [= including pubic hair = sexually adult], pleasant for seeing, a gandharva runs after women.

³⁸ *Atharva-Veda Samhitā*, trans. et comm. W.D. WHITNEY, ed. C.R. LANMAN, vol. I, Cambridge Massachusetts 1905 [= HOS, 7], p. 211–213; *Atharvaveda (Śaunaka)*, trans. et comm. T.Ja. ELIARENKOVA, vol. I, Moskva 2005, p. 210–211, 449–450. Alongside the existing translations of the Śaunakīya recension, I use the unpublished edition and translation of the Paippalāda book 12 by G. Ehlers.

³⁹ AVŚ, 4, 37, 2 ≈ AVP, 12, 8, 4.

⁴⁰ AVP, 12, 8, 4 ≈ AVŚ, 4, 37, 10.

⁴¹ *Avaka-* – a grassy herb (Blyxa Octandra Rich.) growing on marshes, partly under water.

⁴² AVŚ, 4, 37, 11abcd ≈ AVP, 12, 8, 6cdef.

The lustful character of this creature explains why, instead of killing it, it suffices to neutralize a Gandharva sexually, making him impotent:

ānṛtyataḥ śikhaṇḍīno ' gandharvāsyaāpsarāpatēḥ |
bhinādmī muṣkāv 'āpā 'yātu⁴³ śépaḥ⁴⁴

Of the hither-dancing, crested gandharva, Apsaras-lord, I crush [his] testicles, let [his] penis become unerect [= let this gandharva become impotent]!

The evidence available from this Atharvavedic spell clearly shows that the Apsaras and especially the Gandharvas are not (yet) as harmless as in the classical period. The latter creatures, lustful and sexually aggressive, are particularly dangerous for young women. I cannot help noticing that, in this respect, Yamī is a worthy heir of her semi-divine or demonic parents, viz. her seductive mother and particularly her lustful father. In this perspective, many peculiarities of her sexually explicit or even indecent conduct, of which her brother accuses her (himself exhibiting a most distinct, constrained type of behaviour) in RV 10, 10, 6, can be satisfactorily accounted for.

There is yet another Sanskrit form that may be relevant for the discussion of the origins of the form *gandharvá-*, namely the name of the love god *kandarpa-* (see Fig. 3). Although this name is not found in Vedic texts, first occurring from the Epics onwards, its remarkable similarity with *gandharvá-*⁴⁵ is at least worth mentioning here. L.D. Barnett⁴⁶ saw in this form the Middle Indic (Paiśācī?) reflex of *gandharvá-* (through ***kandappa-*?), with subsequent hypersanskritization. In modern scholarship, *kandarpa-* is usually regarded as non-etymologizable⁴⁷, though some parts of this form may point to secondary re-etymologization, cf. *kān-* (← *kāma-* 'love') and *darpa-* 'madness' (?) (← root *dyṣ-* 'be mad'). Notice that the first component of such hypothetical compound would rather be expected in the form *kāma-*, while *darpa-* typically means 'pride, arrogance, haughtiness', not 'madness (caused by love)' or the like.

The isolated character of the genealogical statement about Yama and Yamī's origin from a Gandharva and an Apsara might produce the impression that this ancestry of the twins is uncertain and should not be taken seriously, in favour

⁴³ My own conjecture for Śaun. *āpi yāmi*, Paipp. *api yātu*; see L. KULIKOV, *The Vedic -ya-presents. Passives and Intransitivity in Old Indo-Aryan*, Amsterdam 2012 [= LSIE, 19], p. 670sq. for a discussion of this difficult verse.

⁴⁴ AVŚ, 4, 37, 7 ≈ AVP, 12, 7, 9.

⁴⁵ Only rarely noticed in Sanskrit scholarship; see e.g. A.K. COOMARASWAMY, *Yakṣas*, pars 1–2, Washington 1928–1931; W. NORMAN BROWN, [rec.:] A.K. COOMARASWAMY, *Yakṣas*, pars 1–2, Washington 1928–1931, JAOS 51, 1931, p. 288.

⁴⁶ L.D. BARNETT, *Yama...*, p. 704, an. 2.

⁴⁷ M. MAYRHOFER, *EWaia*, vol. III, p. 55.

of mere identification of Gandharva with Vivasvant, mentioned above. Nevertheless, in Iranian mythology we find a striking parallel which strongly supports this connection. Even though the Old Iranian cognate of Yama – Yima – is said to be a son of Vivahvañ (= Vivasvant), the equivalent of Gandharva is not unknown to the Iranians either. The Avestan form *gaṇdarəba-* (var. *gaṇdərəβa-* and *gaṇdaraβa-*; corresponding to Middle Persian Gandarw/Gandarb), the undoubted cognate of Gandharva, is the name of an aquatic monster that lived in the lake Vourukaša and was killed by the hero Kərəsāspa (Mid. Pers. Kirsāsp; Mod. Pers. Karšāsp)⁴⁸. Most interestingly, according to Middle Iranian sources, Gaṇdarəba is born from a sexual union of Jam (= Yama) with a witch (*parīg*; cf. Mod. Persian *peri*). The importance of Gandharva (*GandharBa?) in the Proto-Iranian mythological system is further supported by Uralic borrowings from Iranian, which include terms for dangerous animals and mythological beings (cf. Udmurt *gondīr* ‘bear’, Komi-Zyrian *gundīr* ‘dragon, serpent, Hydra, evil spirit’, etc)⁴⁹.

The connection between Yima and Gaṇdarəba in Iranian, though of a precisely opposite character (father – son) with regard to that between Yama and Gandharva (son – father), clearly testifies to the Common Indo-Iranian age of the blood relationship of these two figures, to which Yamī should of course be added. We thus have good reasons to reconstruct this connection for Proto-Indo-Iranian mythology.

5. Gandharva and his cognates outside Indo-Iranian?

While Yama and Yamī do not pose any problem from the etymological point of view, being mere terms for twins (cf. such cognates as Latv. *jumis*⁵⁰ and perhaps – with a secondary development of the final consonant – Lat. *geminus*⁵¹), the form *gandharvā-* has no good Indo-European etymology and is thus unanimously considered as non-Indo-European. Yet this does not necessarily imply the isolated character of the Gandharvas in the context of Indo-European mythology.

Already in the middle of the 19th century, Kuhn⁵² attempted to connect *gandharvā-* with the Greek name for another mythological creature, Κένταυρος, Centaur⁵³. For purely phonetic reasons, these two forms cannot be direct cognates in terms of regular phonetic correspondences: Gr. κ- cannot correspond to Ved. *g-*, Gr. τ- cannot correspond to Ved. *dh-*, etc. The few existing attempts to construct

⁴⁸ Yašt 5, 38 (Avesta. *Die heiligen Bücher der Parsen, übersetzt auf der Grundlage von Chr. Bartholomae's altiranischem Wörterbuch*, 5, 38, trans. F. WOLFF, Strasbourg 1910, p. 171).

⁴⁹ See В.В. НАПОЛЬСКИХ, *Кентавр ~ гандхарва ~ дракон ~ медведь: к эволюции одного мифологического образа в Северной Евразии*, NJAOS 5, 2008, p. 43–63.

⁵⁰ В.В. ИВАНОВ, В.Н. ТОПОРОВ, *К проблеме...*, p. 163 and *passim*.

⁵¹ See M. МАУРНОФЕР, *EWAia*, vol. II, p. 400.

⁵² A. KUHN, *Gandharven und Kentauren*, ZVS 1.6, 1852, p. 513–542.

⁵³ See also E.H. MEYER, *Indogermanische Mythen*, vol. I, *Gandharven-Kentauren*, Berlin 1883.

a plausible Indo-European mythology for these forms⁵⁴ have been unsuccessful, and this comparison is now rejected by all etymological dictionaries. Accordingly, no Proto-Indo-European source of the Vedic and Greek forms can be reconstructed: both are considered as words without an Indo-European etymology⁵⁵.

That being said, it would be incorrect to consider the Indo-Iranian and Greek forms unrelated, given their striking similarity. Most likely, both forms go back to the same source, being borrowings from an unknown non-Indo-European language (perhaps through an intermediary).

As far as Common Indo-Iranian is concerned, it is worth mentioning that the form *gandharvá-* is listed among Common Indo-Iranian forms that have no (reliable) Indo-European etymology and, according to the very plausible assumption by Alexander Lubotsky⁵⁶, could have been borrowed from the unidentified language spoken by the population of the Bactria-Margiana Archaeological Complex (BMAC). Dated to the last centuries of the III – first centuries of the II millennium BC, the culture was located immediately to the south of the Andronovo culture (see Fig. 4), with which the Proto-Indo-Iranians are commonly identified.

Other words of non-Indo-European origin, presumably traceable to the same source, include, in particular, yet another religious/mythological term: *átharvan-*, Av. *āθrauuan-* < PIIr. **átharuān-* ‘(a particular type of) priest’ (?)⁵⁷, perhaps with the same suffixal part (*-aruā-*).

Both *gandharvá-* and κένταυρος could have been subject to a number of secondary developments based on re-etymologization. Thus, Greek could have introduced *t* under the influence of the word for yet another ungulate, ταῦρος ‘bull’, while the initial part, κέν-, is sometimes compared with κεντέω ‘pierce’. Similarly, the initial part of *gandharvá-* could have been modified under the influence of *gandhá-* ‘fragrance’ (likewise of unclear origin)⁵⁸. Of course, this makes the reconstruction of the common source of *gandharvá-* and κένταυρος a challenging

⁵⁴ Such as G. DUMÉZIL, *Le Problème des centaures. Étude de mythologie comparée indo-européenne*, Paris 1929.

⁵⁵ See e.g. M. MAYRHOFER, *EWAia*, vol. I, p. 462 and H. FRISK, *Griechisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, Heidelberg 1960, p. 819sq.; P. CHANTRAINE et al., *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque. Histoire des mots*, Paris 1968, p. 514sq. for Vedic and Greek, respectively. For the possible etymological connections of κένταυρος, see also P. KRETSCHMER, *Mythische Namen*. 9. *Die Kentauren*, *Glo* 10, 1920, p. 50sq.; W. BELARDI, *Consonanze mediterranee e asiatiche con il nome dei Centauri*, *SMSR* 20, 1996, p. 23–53; A. DE ANGELIS, *Tra dati linguistici e fonti letterarie: per un’etimologia del gr. κένταυρος ‘divoratore di viscere’*, *Glo* 85, 2009, p. 59–74.

⁵⁶ A. LUBOTSKY, *The Indo-Iranian Substratum*, [in:] *Early Contacts between Uralic and Indo-European. Linguistic and Archaeological Considerations*, ed. C. CARPELAN, A. PARPOLA, P. KOSKIKALLIO, Helsinki 2001 [= MSFO, 242], p. 301–317.

⁵⁷ See G.-J. PINAULT, *Further Links between the Indo-Iranian Substratum and the BMAC Language*, [in:] *Themes and Tasks in Old and Middle Indo-Aryan linguistics*, ed. B. TIKKANEN, H. HETTRICH, Delhi 2006, p. 167–196.

⁵⁸ Cf. the association between *gandharvá-* and *gandhá-* mentioned in AVŚ, 4, 37, 2 ≈ AVP, 12, 8, 4.

task. However, relying above all on the non-etymologizable parts of the two forms, one might tentatively reconstruct the source form as *GenDVruV- or the like, where *G* and *D* stand for (voiced?) velar and dental consonants, while *V* represents any (?) full vowel (*e*, *a*, or *o*).

6. Gandharvas and Centaurs: mythological parallelisms

Even though the two figures do not appear identical, the several striking parallels between them that can be observed in Indo-Iranian and Greek mythologies point to the fact that the similarity of the two forms cannot be accidental and must be due to some deeper affinity.

6.1. Hypersexuality and water

Both Gandharvas and Centaurs are notorious for their lustful character and sexually aggressive behaviour⁵⁹. The post-Vedic name of the love god Kandarpa, which might be another variant of the form *gandharvá-*, provides additional evidence for this connection. Note also the association of both the Gandharvas and the Apsaras with humid, marshy landscapes and rivers; this, again, emphasizes the above-mentioned feature, given the regular association between water and liquid on the one hand⁶⁰ and sexual activity on the other hand. In this sense, the (early Vedic) Apsaras are a perfect match for the plethora of seductive water nymphs in both Indo-European (cf. Greek *Naiads* [Ναϊάδες], Slavic *rusalka*⁶¹) and non-Indo-European mythologies; cf. the famous legend about Heracles' companion Hylas (Greek: Ὕλας) abducted by water nymphs (Fig. 5, 6) or the legend of Salmacis [Σαλμακίς], who attempted to rape Hermaphroditus (Fig. 7).

As regards the Centaurs, we find numerous episodes in Greek mythology that point to their hypersexuality. It should suffice to mention the story of their attempt to abduct Hippodamia and other Lapith women (Fig. 9)⁶².

6.2. Hybrid or metamorphic (human/animal) nature

While the dual nature of the Centaurs (combination of the half upper body of a human and the lower body and legs of a horse) does not require special comments⁶³, the hybrid character of the Gandharvas is, at first glance, less ob-

⁵⁹ As for the Gandharvas, see the brief discussion in Section 4 above.

⁶⁰ See also L.D. BARNETT, *Yama...*, p. 706.

⁶¹ Rus. *русалка*, Pol. *rusalka* etc.

⁶² See also P. DUBOIS, *On Horse/Men, Amazons, and Endogamy*, *Aret* 1979, 12, p. 37sqq.; W.F. HANSEN, *Handbook of Classical Mythology*, Santa Barbara 2004, p. 287, just to name a few relevant works.

⁶³ See also P. KRETSCHMER, *Mythische...*, p. 57; J.N. BREMMER, *Greek Demons of the Wilderness: the Case of the Centaurs*, [in:] *Wilderness in Mythology and Religion. Approaching Religious Spatialities, Cosmologies, and Ideas of Wild Nature*, ed. L. FELDT, Berlin 2012, p. 25–53.

vios. Nevertheless, there are many features that point to the similar character of this figure.

First, the remarkable ability of the Gandharvas to appear in different shapes (shapeshifting) – as described in AVŚ 4, 37 = AVP 12, 7–8 and discussed above (once as will-o'-the-wisps, once as a dog, once as an ape, once as a handsome young man) – clearly points to their metamorphic nature, which can be directly compared to the hybrid nature of the Centaurs. Second, we also find metamorphic features in some other figures of the Vedic pantheon related to the Gandharvas. Thus, Saraṇyū – the mother of Yama and Yamī according to their canonical genealogy – is said to have turned into a mare to run away from her husband, Vivasvant⁶⁴. Third, the Iranian sea monster Gaṇḍarəba, albeit only poorly characterized in Iranian mythology, again points to the metamorphic character of the corresponding Proto-Indo-Iranian creature. Finally, the Old Iranian form *gaṇḍarəba-* has survived in several modern Iranian (in particular, Pamir) languages, where its reflexes refer to various monsters and shapeshifters, cf. Shughni *žindūrv* (< **gandarba-*) 'werewolf', *žindīrv* (< **gandarbi-*) 'she-werewolf'.

6.3. (Semi-)equinal nature

One of the main shapes regularly associated with the Gandharvas/Centaurs is that of the horse, which points to their [semi-]equinal nature. This feature is obvious for the Centaurs, but also not in-existent for the Gandharvas. As already mentioned in the preceding section, Saraṇyū, who is the mother of Yama and Yamī, is said to have turned into a mare to run away from her husband⁶⁵. Moreover, clearly prone to beget twins, she was the mother of yet another twin pair, namely the dual gods Aśvins (note the etymology of their name: 'related to/having horses'). Although the anthropomorphic image of the Aśvins clearly prevails in the Vedic tradition, in later Hinduism they are often represented with the upper body of a horse and the lower body of a human, thus appearing as a mirror image of the Centaurs. Episodes in which some manipulations involve a horse head, mentioned in the context of the Aśvins (in RV 10, 116, 12 and Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa 14, 1, 1, 18–24) might be regarded as indirect evidence for the more archaic character of their theriomorphism.

⁶⁴ On this legend, see in particular W. DONIGER O'FLAHERTY, *Sacred Cows and Profane Mares in Indian Mythology*, HR 19, 1979, p. 5sqq.; P. JACKSON, *The Transformations of Helen. Indo-European Myth and the Roots of the Trojan Cycle*, Dettelbach 2006 [= MSS, 23], p. 80–83. Note also the etymology of Saraṇyū, derived from the root *sr̥* 'run, speed' (often said of water); see M. MAYRHOFER, *EWAia*, vol. II, p. 706–707 and P. JACKSON, *The Transformations...* This may be yet another indication, though indirect, of a connection between the Gandharvas and water.

⁶⁵ See W. DONIGER O'FLAHERTY, *Sacred Cows...*; P. JACKSON, *The Transformations...*

It is interesting to note that in the Purāṇas and Epics (Harivaṃśa), we find the legend of yet another demon, Keśin (Keśī), who takes the form of a huge horse, killed by Kṛṣṇa (Fig. 10).

Although we only find this legend in post-Vedic texts, the origins of this demon can probably be traced as far back as the Atharvaveda. In an AVic spell against demons harmful for a pregnant woman, we find a reference to the demon Keśī (to compare with *sarvakeśakā-* in AVŚ 4, 37, 11 ≈ AVP 12, 8, 6 quoted above?), which is said to cause harm to the foetus in the area of the female genitals:

yāḥ kṛṣṇāḥ keśy āsurā ' stambajā utā tūṇḍikah |
arāyān asyā muṣkābhyāṃ ' bhāṃsasó 'pa hanmasi⁶⁶

Who is the black asura Keśin [or: hairy], tuft-born and snout-mouthed, we beat away nigards from her genitals (vulvar lips), from her buttocks.

6.4. Water/liquid ~ hypersexuality ~ horse: a cross-cultural correlation

Furthermore, all of the aspects briefly discussed above – hypersexuality, equinal nature and aquatic character – are frequently related to each other in many world mythologies. Thus, universal correlations of the type Horse ~ Water; Water/Liquid ~ Sexuality; Horse ~ Sexuality are very common⁶⁷. The universal – or at least exceedingly common – connection between all these features cannot of course serve as evidence for the reconstruction of the corresponding mythologeme (Gandharva/Centaur) for Proto-Indo-European mythology, or even its Graeco-Aryan variety. However, these correlations testify to the general credibility of the connections between Gandharvas and Centaurs from a universal/typological point of view and, eventually, point to the likelihood of their genetic relationships. These two creatures, however different they might appear, undoubtedly occupy the same (or at least notably similar) niche within the two genetically related (Greek and Indo-Iranian) mythological pantheons. Accordingly, the negative conclusion formulated by Martin L. West⁶⁸, who claims that the Gandharvas and the Centaurs “have virtually nothing in common mythologically”, should be discarded as unjustified.

⁶⁶ AVŚ, 8, 6, 5.

⁶⁷ See e.g. W. DONIGER O'FLAHERTY, *Women, Androgynes, and Other Mythical Beasts*, Chicago 1980; EADEM, *On Hinduism*, Oxford 2014, p. 459sq.; M. ODENT, *Water and Sexuality*, London 1990; B.S. THORNTON, *Eros. The Myth of Ancient Greek Sexuality*, Boulder 1998, p. 38–40; J.S. LIDKE, *A Union of Fire and Water: Sexuality and Spirituality in Hinduism*, [in:] *Sexuality and the World's Religions*, ed. D.W. MACHACEK, M.M. WILCOX, Santa Barbara 2003, p. 104sqq.; L. GRAYSMITH, *Sex and Gender in the Equine in Literature* (unpublished MA thesis, Iowa State University, 2008).

⁶⁸ M.L. WEST, *Indo-European Poetry and Myth*, Oxford 2007, p. 285.

7. Remarks on the possible origins of the Gandharvas/Centaurs

The further origin of the Gandharvas/Centaurs remains obscure. While in the case of Indo-Iranian we can only rely on the linguistic and etymological speculations about possible non-Indo-European languages and cultures from which the Gandharvas could have been borrowed by the Indo-Iranians, in the case of the Greek Centaurs we also have some limited evidence from the history of the early contacts of ancient Greeks with other cultures. Possible sources of the Centaurs can be found in Near Eastern mythologies, particularly in Kassite mythology⁶⁹.

Our knowledge of the Kassites, who ruled Babylonia at the end of the II millennium BC, is quite scarce. The non-Indo-European character of their language is beyond any doubt, but its possible genetic relations are obscure; there are some reasons to assume a connection with the Hurro-Urartian languages⁷⁰ and thus, eventually, with the North Caucasian macrofamily. The lexical material of Kassite is only poorly known from a Kassite-Babylonian dictionary as well as some personal names and terms attested in Akkadian texts⁷¹, but we find some forms that might at least be relevant for the discussion of the hypothetical sources of *gandharvá*-/κένταυρος, cf. especially Kass. *gaddaš* ‘king’ (~ Hatt. *katte* id.)⁷², to read *gandaš*, where the stem is possibly *gʷan^dz-*⁷³ and *gidar* (the name of a war god?)⁷⁴.

The abundance of hybrid half-animal creatures in Kassite mythology has been repeatedly noticed in the literature⁷⁵. The same feature characterizes the geographically and chronologically adjacent mythology of the Middle Assyrian Empire⁷⁶. The assumption of the contacts between Kassites and Indo-Iranians is corroborated by the numerous Kassite names borrowed from Indo-Iranian (or Indo-Aryan).

⁶⁹ See especially E.A. LAWRENCE, *The Centaur. Its History and Meaning in Human Culture*, JPC 27, 1994, p. 57; V. MASCIADRI, *Das Problem der Kentauren – die Griechen und das Wunderbare*, [in:] *Spinnenfuss und Krötenbauch: Genese und Symbolik von Kompositwesen*, ed. P. MICHEL, Zürich 2013, p. 65–85; M. MATURO, “Uomini-cavallo”: *genesi, elaborazione e memoria iconografica della figura del centauro, alcuni esempi*, Ac 2, 2014, p. 7–40; A. SCOBIE, *The Origins of ‘Centaurs’*, Fol 89, 1978, p. 142sqq.

⁷⁰ See T. SCHNEIDER, *Kassitisch und Hurro-Urartäisch: Ein Diskussionsbeitrag zu möglichen lexikalischen Isoglossen*, AFor 30, 2003, p. 372–381.

⁷¹ See esp. K. JARITZ, *Die kassitischen Sprachreste*, Anthr 52, 1957, p. 850–898.

⁷² Notice the interesting split *ga(n)d-/kat-*, remarkably parallel to the difference between the initial parts of the forms *gandh(arvá)*- and κέντ(αυρος), which may reflect two different paths of borrowing of the hypothetical source of the *gandharvá*-/κένταυρος into Indo-Iranian and Greek (through an intermediary form of the Hatti type?), respectively.

⁷³ See T. SCHNEIDER, *Kassitisch...*, p. 324.

⁷⁴ See K. JARITZ, *Die kassitischen...*, p. 871sq.

⁷⁵ See, for instance, J. BLACK, A. GREEN, *Gods, Demons and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia. An Illustrated Dictionary*, London 1992, p. 63 and *passim*; I.M. SHEAR, *Mycenaean Centaurs at Ugarit*, JHS 122, 2002, p. 151, an. 38; A. TAHERI, *The “Man-Bull” and the «Master of Animals» in Mesopotamia and in Iran*, IJHIRI 20, 2013, p. 13–28.

⁷⁶ See, e.g. J. BLACK, A. GREEN, *Gods...*

Although direct evidence for similar contacts between Kassites and Greeks has not (yet) been found, the possibility of the Centaurs having been borrowed by the Greeks from the Kassites (and/or some of their neighbours?), most probably through North-Western Anatolia, does not seem unlikely and has been suggested by several scholars⁷⁷, cf. Fig. 11–12. Furthermore, the geographic location of the Kassites – approximately half-way between the home of the Greeks and the hypothetical homeland of the Indo-Iranians, to the north of the territory of the BMAC – make the localization of the source of the *gandharvá*-κένταυρος in this part of the ancient world quite plausible.

8. Yamī (vs. Yama): her semi-divine origin and half-human nature

Let us return to the discussion of the mythological status of Yamī and her nature. Her origin from semi-divine (or even demonic) creatures, a Gandharva and an Apsara, notorious for hypersexuality, perfectly accounts for Yamī's hypersexuality and sexually explicit behaviour, radically differing from that of her brother Yama. As I mentioned above, Yamī can be described as a worthy heir of her parents – especially, of the lustful Gandharva. Most importantly, Yamī and Yama represent two diametrically opposite lines of behaviour and, eventually, two distinct ethic codices of conduct – at least as far as sexual relationships are concerned. Obviously, for Yamī incestual relationships with her brother are not impossible, whilst for Yama such sort of relation is a strict taboo⁷⁸. Refusing to perform sex with her sister, Yama provides an important explanation for his reluctance to engage in such incestual relations. In RV 10, 10, 10, which is Yama's response to yet another of Yamī's invitations to start sexual relations, we read:

á ghā tá gachān úttarā yugāni ' yātra jāmayah kṛṇāvann ājāmi⁷⁹

As I argue elsewhere⁸⁰, the particle *ghā* should be understood here as a consecutive connector, meaning 'then, in that case', and the passage in question can be rendered as follows:

[Yama:] [If we do it now], then / in that case, later generations will come, where kin will do
[what is] im[proper for] kin.

Evidently, Yamī is warned by her brother about their incestual relationship's direct consequences for the future generations of humankind. It seems that Yama's

⁷⁷ See, e.g. E.A. LAWRENCE, *The Centaur...*; M. MATURO, "Uomini-cavallo"...; I.M. SHEAR, *Mycenaean...*

⁷⁸ Cf. Yama's explicit refusal to have sex with Yamī in RV, 10, 10, 2a *nā te sakhā sakhyām vaṣṭy etāt* – *Your friend [= Yama] does not want this [type of] partnership.*

⁷⁹ RV, 10, 10, 10ab.

⁸⁰ L. KULIKOV, *The Vedic particle ghā reconsidered...* (forthcoming).

central message here is: not only is sexual relationship with a sister a strict taboo, but, moreover, performing sex would imply licensing this conduct as a norm for future human generations. In other words, Yama believes that what Yamī considers possible for them, as *not (yet) humans*, is inappropriate for them as *humans*. Yamī's hypersexuality, probably inherited from her non-human or semi-divine (demonic) parents – a Gandharva and an Apsara – is strictly rejected by Yama as incompatible with human ethics and moral norms.

We do not know how this clear-cut difference between the twins could have arisen, eventually resulting in their different status within the early Vedic mythological system. Yama becomes the first mortal doomed to die (as we know from the famous legend told in the Yajurveda), whilst Yamī inherits and at least partly preserves her non-human, semi-divine nature; accordingly, she retains divine immortality. Perhaps the key to this metamorphosis is Yama's journey over the sea mentioned in RV 10, 10, 1b (*tiráḥ* [...] *cid arṇavām jaganvān* '...even though he [= Yama] has gone across [...] the flood'). As Ulrich Schneider⁸¹ suggested in his analysis of the hymn, crossing a sea could be the reason for losing immortality and becoming a *martya* (mortal)⁸². Whatever the exact origin of this feature, one might assume that the loss of immortality could have caused the complete 'humanification' of Yama, who thus became the first human, unlike Yamī. Let us remember that in RV 10, 10, 3b Yamī calls her brother *éka- márya*- 'the only mortal'.

9. Concluding remarks

The further development of the relation between Yama and Yamī is, again, one of the obscure issues of Vedic mythology. After the famous Yajurvedic legend of Yama's death and creation of night, Yamī virtually disappears in the shadow of Yama (who, as the first mortal, becomes the king of the dead) and vanishes from the Vedic mythological scenery altogether⁸³. Classical Hinduism ascribes the merit of continuing the human race to Manu, yet another child of Vivasvant (and thus yet another (half-)brother of Yama and Yamī) – born not by Saraṇyū, but by her substitute, Savarṇā⁸⁴. Yamī is virtually unknown in the later, post-Vedic, literature, being partly replaced by Yamunā, and we do not know if she finally managed to seduce Yama and to beget offspring with him.

⁸¹ U. SCHNEIDER, *Yama und Yamī*..., p. 16sq.

⁸² Note also that, as we know from classical Hinduism, crossing a sea should be avoided by the Brahmanas.

⁸³ As C. MALAMOUD, *Yama, Yamī et les diverses manières de former une paire*, [in:] *Yama/Yima. Variations*..., p. 107, notices, [l]e destin de Yamī [...] n'est autre que sa quasi disparition.

⁸⁴ Cf. RV, 10, 17, 2; see, for instance, A. KUHN, *Saraṇyū* – Ἐριωνύς, ZVS 1.5, 1852, p. 439–470; A.A. MACDONELL, *Vedic*..., p. 139; see also M. BLOOMFIELD, *Contributions to the Interpretation of the Veda*, JAOS 15, 1893, p. 172sqq.

Evidence from Iranian mythology is of special interest. Although exact parallels to the explicit discussion of the brother-sister incest found in RV 10, 10 are lacking in Old Iranian (Avestan) and Middle Iranian texts, a similar myth existed in Iranian tradition. The motive of the incest (marriage) of Jam(šid), the Middle Iranian equivalent of Ved. Yama / Av. Yima, with his twin sister, Yimeh/Yimak, is well-known in Middle Iranian (Pāhlavī) tradition⁸⁵. Some attempts have even been made to trace the Iranian incestual myth as far as the Avesta⁸⁶, but the corresponding Avestan passage⁸⁷ is too obscure to be used as conclusive evidence for this assumption. In any case, the myth of the incest of twins giving rise to humankind can safely be reconstructed for Proto-Indo-Iranian. Its Indic version, which does not contain any explicit mention of the committed incest (of which clear traces can be found in Iranian), may result from later editing and revision of a more complete proto-version⁸⁸.

Further comparative studies of the Anatolian, Near Eastern and Central Asian mythologies, as well as the linguistic analysis of the material available from the languages used by the corresponding cultures, may shed more light on the origin and deeper genesis of this episode within Indo-Iranian and Indo-European mythology, thus clarifying both the origin of the primordial twins and the character of the relationships between them.

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⁸⁵ See, for instance, A.J. CARNOY, *Iranian*, [in:] *The Mythology of All Races*, vol. VI, *Indian. Iranian*, ed. L.H. GRAY, G.F. MOORE, Boston 1917, p. 310–311; C.R. COULTER, P. TURNER, *Encyclopedia of Ancient Deities*, London 2000, p. 248, 517. The Middle Persian text Bundahišn preserves another version of the legend, where both Jam and his sister are said to copulate with demons (thus used as substitutes for the sister/brother in sexual relations), to produce a variety of creatures such as monkeys, bears etc. This probably points to a secondary revision of the original incestual myth.

⁸⁶ See W. LENTZ, *Yima and Khwarenah in the Avestan Gathas*, [in:] *A Locust's Leg. Studies in Honour of S.H. Taqizadeh*, ed. W.B. HENNING, E. YARSHATER, London 1962, p. 131–134 and J. KELLENS, *Yima, magicien entre les dieux et les hommes*, [in:] *Orientalia J. Duchesne-Guillemin Oblata*, Leuven–Leiden 1984 [= *AIr*, 23], p. 267–281 for discussion.

⁸⁷ Yasna 30, 3 (see, e.g., P.O. SKJÆRVØ, *The Spirit of Zoroastrianism*, New Haven–London 2011, p. 45).

⁸⁸ See, for instance, B. SIKLÓS, *The Evolution of the Buddhist Yama*, [in:] *The Buddhist Forum*, vol. IV, ed. T. SKORUPSKI, London 1996, p. 168.

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Abstract. This paper focuses on the mythology of Yamī and her twin-brother Yama (the first humans according to Indo-Iranian mythology), their non-human origin and some aspects of Yamī’s behaviour which presumably betray a number of features of a female half-deity.

The relationships between Yamī and Yama are the central topic of the dialogue hymn Rgveda 10.10, where Yamī attempts to seduce her twin to incest in order to produce offspring and thus continue the human race. This offer is refused by Yama, who refers to the inappropriateness of incest. Although Yamī and Yama are humans according to the Vedic tradition, their origin from two half-deities – a Gandharva father and an Apsara mother – remains inexplicable: how could a couple of non-human beings (half-deities or demons) give birth to humans? Obviously, the mythological status of the twins should be reconsidered. I argue that at least one of them, Yamī, retains immortality and some other features of the non-human (semi-divine) nature. On the basis of the analysis of the Yama and Yamī hymn and some related Vedic texts, I argue that this assumption may account for certain peculiarities of Yamī’s behaviour – particularly her hypersexuality (which can be qualified as demonic type of behaviour), as opposed to the much more constrained, human type of conduct displayed by Yama. Given the notoriously lustful character of the Gandharvas, an origin from this semi-divine creature may account for Yamī’s hypersexuality.

Although the word *gandharvá-* does not have Indo-European etymology, we can find possible Indo-European parallels. In particular, the Gandharvas are comparable with the Centaurs, which cannot be etymologically related but possibly originate in the same non-Indo-European source. There are some reasons to assume that both words are borrowed from the Kassite language and mythology, which, in turn, may have been related to the language and culture of the Proto-North-Caucasians.

Although we do not find exact equivalents of Yamī outside of the Indo-Iranian pantheon, indirect parallels can be found in other Indo-European traditions. The Apsaras (water nymphs) can be compared to a variety of water deities (nymphs) in Greek mythology, such as the Naiads, or to the Slavic *rusalki*.

Keywords: Yamī, Yama, Indo-Iranian mythology, Rgveda

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1a. A Sculpture in Virupaksha Temple, Hampi, Karnataka, Southern India (7th cent. AD)



Fig. 1b. Kamakhya, Tantric goddess of desire, North-East India (Assam)



Fig. 2. Vivasvant-Sūrya with his consorts Saranyū and Chāyā, Surendrapuri Temple



Fig. 3. Kandarpa, or Kāmadeva (love god)



Fig. 4. Andronovo culture (Proto-Indo-Iranians?) and BMAC



Fig. 5. *Hylas and the Nymphs*, a Gallo-Roman mosaic, 2nd-3rd century AD (Musée Gallo-Romain de Saint-Romain-en-Gal)



Fig. 6. HENRIETTA RAE, *Hylas and the Water Nymphs*, 1910



Fig. 7. К. МАКОВСКИЙ, *Mermaids* [К. МАКОВСКИЙ, *Русалки*], 1879 (The State Russian Museum, Saint Petersburg)

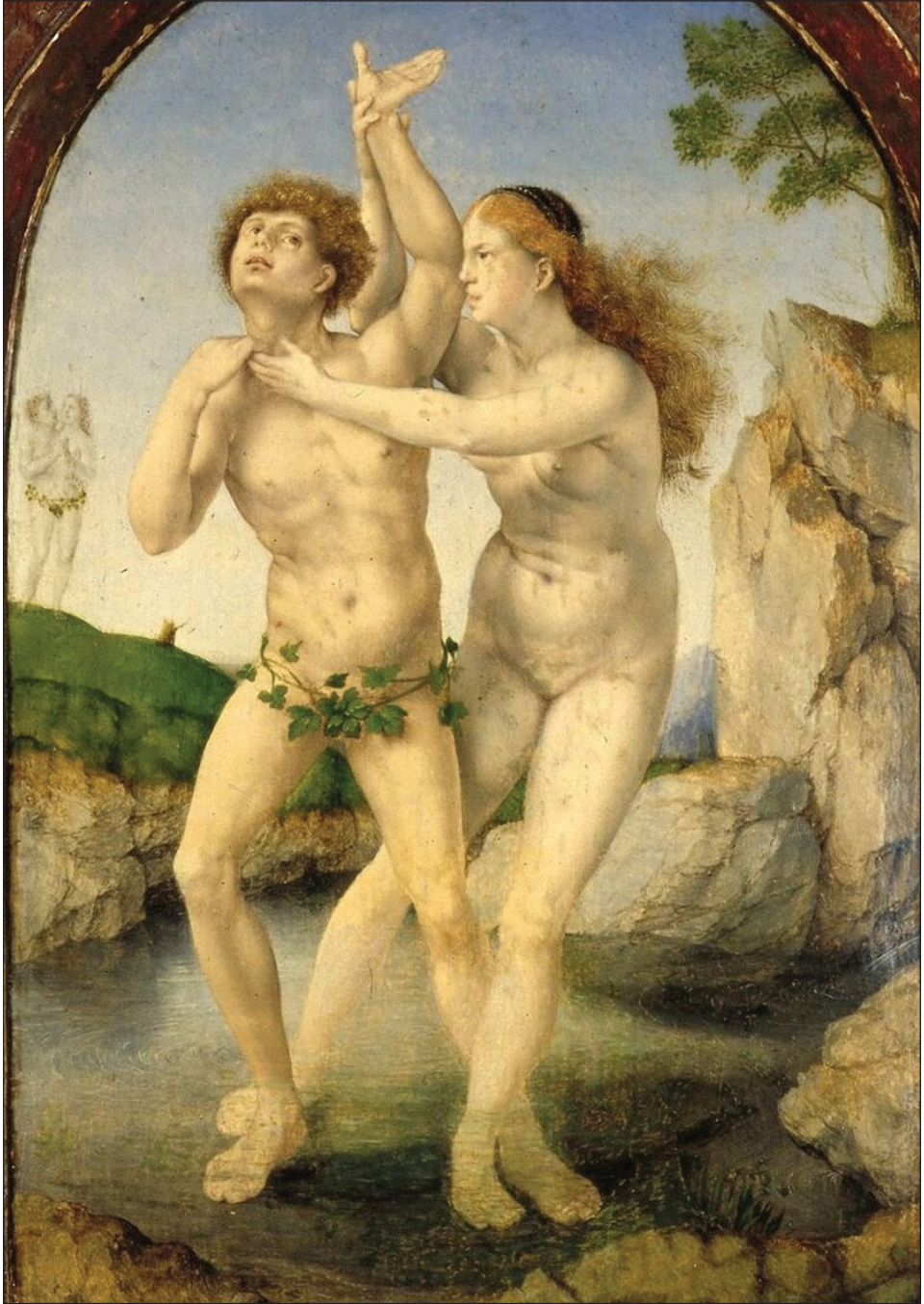


Fig. 8. JAN GOSSAERT, *Salmacis*, c. 1520 (Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam)



Fig. 9. PETER PAUL RUBENS, *The Rape of Hippodame*, 1636–1638 (Museo del Prado, Madrid)



Fig. 10. Kṛṣṇa killing the horse demon Keśi, Gupta sculpture, 5th century AD



Fig. 11–12. A winged horse-man Centaur on the side of the land grant to Ḥasardu kudurru (boundary stone), a four-sided limestone memorial stele, late 2nd millennium BC (BM 90829)





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CIRCE AND ROME. THE ORIGIN OF THE LEGEND

Many doubts still remain regarding the origins of the mythological Circe: no evidence is available to decide whether the character was simply invented by Homer in his *Odyssey* or had already appeared in earlier folk tales or old sailors' stories¹. The figure of Circe may also have been the result of the mixing of Greek folklore and Homer's unrestrained imagination. Homer, in any case, was the first to give the impulse to promulgate the character of Circe in mass culture as a sorceress renowned for her vast knowledge of potions and herbs, which she used in her magical practices.

Yet, in ancient literature, the image of this dangerous witch-figure of Greek mythology got entrenched through various works of ancient dramatists. Thus, from that point onwards, she started to appear in comedies² and satyr plays³, later also to be interpreted in ironic and facetious contexts⁴.

Since the 5th century BC, Circe has been mentioned in many scholarly works, often in connection with Italic toponyms – making her a purported prehistorical ancestor of the tribes that occupied the areas described by the respective authors. Here, a question arises: how did ancient writers come to associate the eminent witch known from Homer's poem with assorted Italic cities, including Rome? The present article – where the relevant literary testimony will be analysed – will not perhaps answer this question directly, but its aim is at least to highlight some possible origins of these thought-provoking references and hopefully to reveal the mechanisms that gave rise to the legend.

¹ G.S. KIRK, *Homer*, [in:] *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature*, vol. I, *Greek Literature*, ed. P.E. EASTERLING, E.J. KENNEY, Cambridge 1987, p. 85–91.

² E.g. the lost comedies entitled *Circe* by Chionides, Ehippus and Anaxilas; K. BARTOL, J. DANIELEWICZ, *Komedia grecka od Epicharma do Menandra. Wybór fragmentów*, Warszawa 2011, p. 32, 351, 416.

³ E.g. the lost drama entitled *Circe* by Aeschylus; H. ZALEWSKA-JURA, *W rytmie sikinnis. Studium nad warstwą aluzji i podtekstów w greckim dramacie satyrowym*, Łódź 2006 [= RHUŁ], p. 50, 59.

⁴ E.g. in the literary epigrams by Palladas of Alexandria (*The Palatine Anthology*, IX 395 and X 50; H. KOBUS-ZALEWSKA, *Wątki i elementy mityczne w epigramach Antologii Palatyńskiej*, Wrocław 1998 [= AFi, 54], p. 129–130) and Julianus Antikensor (*The Palatine Anthology*, XI 367); H. ZALEWSKA-JURA, *Mythical Motifs in Early Byzantine Epigrams*, [in:] *The Metamorphoses of Ancient Myths*, ed. M. BUDZOWSKA, B. İDEM DİNÇEL, J. CZERWIŃSKA, K. CHIŻYŃSKA, Frankfurt am Main 2017, p. 107.

One of the most noteworthy parts of the 10th book of the *Odyssey* is the fantastic story of Odysseus's visit to the mysterious island of Aeaëa, inhabited by the enchantress Circe, who turns Odysseus's crewmen into animals using her herbal *pharmaka*. Odysseus's journey as described in the epic takes place along a route that is partly a projection of real places; the fact that the location of Aeaëa nevertheless remains elusive seems an interesting issue to discuss⁵. Although the island could be merely a fictitious place invented by Homer, the genealogy of Circe as the daughter of Helios, the sun god, and Perse, an Oceanid nymph and the sister of Aeetes (*Od.* X 135–138), remains a conventional element of the myth⁶. It is worth mentioning that other, alternative accounts – attested in later testimonies⁷ – make her the daughter of that same Aeetes and Hecate, the goddess of witchcraft. The second variant of her genealogy is nothing but a mental stereotype, emphasizing the relation between Hecate (the divine patroness of magic) with the famed sorceress⁸. It remains unknown whether Homer was aware of – and decided to neglect – this latter version of Circe's provenance. In any case, locating Circe high in the divine hierarchy in view of her genealogy gave the poet an opportunity to equip her with knowledge attributed to immortal gods; she could share it with Odysseus, revealing future events to him.

Nevertheless, none of the stories about Circe told in *Odyssey* leads to Rome.

As far as ancient sources are concerned, the first association of Circe with Roman Italy may be traced back to the final verses of Hesiod's *Theogony* (v. 1011–1016):

Κίρκη δ' Ἡελίου θυγάτηρ Ὑπεριονίδαο
 γείνατ' Ὀδυσσεύος ταλασίφρονος ἐν φιλότῃτι
 Ἄγριον ἢ δὲ Λατίνον ἀμύμονά τε κρατερόν τε
 [Τηλέγονον δ' ἔτικτε διὰ χρυσῆν Ἀφροδίτην·]
 οἳ δὴ τοι μάλα τῆλε μυχῶ νήσων ἱεράων
 πᾶσιν Τυρσηνοῖσιν ἀγακλειτοῖσιν ἄνασσον

And Circe the daughter of Helius, Hyperion's son, loved steadfast Odysseus and bore Agrius and Latinus who was faultless and strong: also she brought forth Telegonus by the will of golden Aphrodite. And they ruled over the famous Tyrsenians, very far off in a recess of the holy islands⁹.

⁵ Any attempts at a precise reconstruction of Odysseus's journey remain more or less widely accepted conjectures.

⁶ For more on the semantics of the terms 'myth' and 'legend' cf. H. KOBUS-ZALEWSKA, *Wątki...*, p. 8–9.

⁷ The first source would be the *Argonautica* by Dionysius Scytobrachion (ca. half of the 3rd century BC), mentioned by the scholiast of the *Argonautica* by Apollodorus of Rhodes (III, 20). For more on the characteristics of Dionysius's texts see A. BOBROWSKI, "Dziennik wojny trojańskiej" *Diktysa z Krety. Studium historycznoliterackie*, Kraków 2009, p. 51. DIODORUS SICULUS confirms such a genealogy of Circe in *Bibliotheca historica* (IV, 45, 3).

⁸ For some important remarks on Hecate see J. RYBOWSKA, *Hecate – bogini o wielu twarzach*, [in:] *Czary, alchemia, opętanie w kulturze na przestrzeni stuleci. Studia przypadków*, ed. J. PIETRZAK-THÉBAULT, Ł. CYBULSKI, Warszawa 2015, p. 53–68.

⁹ HESIOD, *The Homeric Hymns and Homericica*, trans. H.G. EVELYN-WHITE, London 1914 [= LCL, 57].

Hesiod's mentioning the fact that Circe had a son by Odysseus called Latinus (the eponym of one of the Italic tribes, the Latins – the inhabitants of Latium, where the city of Rome was later founded), as well as his geographical reference to the tribes that lived by the Tyrrhenian Sea (whom the Greeks used to call *Tyrrenoi* or *Tyrsenoi*), might point to the Etruscans. This could be a sufficient premise for the recognition of Hesiod's *Theogony* as the source of the legend of Circe's relations with the mythical history of Roman Italy. Unfortunately, the fragment quoted above is considered to be a later interpolation by many scholars¹⁰. Further doubts concern the origin of the problematic supplement: was it written by Hesiod, and if so, is it an excerpt from one of his lost works, e.g. *The Catalogue of Women*? Or is it perhaps a later *apocryphon*? What is crucial for determining the origin of the legend is not so much the title of Hesiod's poem as the fact that the information about Latinus, son of Circe, appeared in his writings. We could then limit ourselves to stating that the earliest literary testimony dates back to one of the epic poems by Hesiod. However, it is hardly credible that the poet (who, moreover, admits that the only trip he ever made was sailing to Chalcis on the island of Euboea – *E.* in 648–655), actually possessed geographical information about the western coast of today's Apennine Peninsula and about the Tyrrhenian Sea, even if the elusive references merely place the Etruscans on certain vaguely specified 'holy islands'.

The second important piece of information is found in Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who relates the testimony of the lost *Chronicles* by 5th century BC historian Xenagoras. In the *Antiquitates Romanae*, Dionysius states (*AR* I, 72):

Ξεναγόρας δὲ ὁ συγγραφεὺς Ὀδυσσεῶς καὶ Κίρκης υἱοὺς γενέσθαι τρεῖς Ῥώμιον Ἀντίαν, Ἀρδέαν· οἰκίσαντας δὲ τρεῖς πόλεις ἀφ' αὐτῶν θέσθαι τοῖς κτίμασι τὰς ὀνομασίας.

Xenagoras, the historian, writes that Odysseus and Circe had three sons, Romus, Anteias and Ardeias, who built three cities and called them after their own names¹¹.

The cities the author has in mind are Rome, Antium, and Ardea, respectively; they are all located in Latium, very close to each other. Xenagoras, however, underlines the connections between Circe and the Italic region in a manner different from Hesiod's. The testimony referred to by Dionysius obviously ennobles Circe, making her the mother of the eponymous founder of Rome and thus an ancestor of the city. The same version of the story is also later found in Plutarch (*Romulus*, II, 1, 1–5): *Some tell us that it was Romanus, a son of Odysseus and Circe, who colonized the city*¹² (οἱ δὲ Ῥωμανόν, Ὀδυσσεῶς παῖδα καὶ Κίρκης, οἰκίσαι τὴν πόλιν·). It is notable that three sons of Odysseus and Circe, the eponyms of Rome, Antium,

¹⁰ See J.P. BARRON, *Hesiod*, [in:] *The Cambridge...*, p. 96–97.

¹¹ *The Roman Antiquities of Dionysius of Halicarnassus*, trans. E. CARY, London 1879.

¹² *Plutarch's Lives*, vol. I, trans. B. PERRIN, London 1914 [= LCL, 46].

and Ardea, appear once again in the 5th century in *De prosodia catholica* (3.1, p. 276) by Aelius Herodianus and in the 8th century in the *Ecloga chronographica* by Georgius Syncellus (p. 227). In the 6th century, the story is evoked by Stephen of Byzantium in the *Ethnika*, where he mentions the city of Antea, i.e. Antium (p. 98):

Ἄντεια, πόλις Ἰταλίας ὑπήκοος Ῥωμαίων ἐκλήθη δὲ ἀπὸ Κίρκης παιδός. Ὀδυσσέως γὰρ καὶ Κίρκης υἱὸς [γενέσθαι] τρεῖς Ῥώμιον Ἀντεῖαν Ἀρδεῖαν·

Antea, Italic city under the rule of the Romans, took its name from the son of Circe. There were three sons of Odysseus and Circe: Romus, Anteias and Ardeias¹³.

In the same work, Stephen of Byzantium provides the etymology of the name of the city of Praeneste (now Palestrina) (p. 534):

Πραίνεστος, πόλις Ἰταλίας, ἀπὸ Πραινέστου τοῦ Λατίνου τοῦ Ὀδυσσέως καὶ Κίρκης υἱοῦ

The Italic city of Praeneste was named after Praenestos, the son of Latinus, who was the son of Circe and Odysseus,

referring to the version of the story known from Hesiod's *Theogony*. Stephen is not always consistent in his references to the different variants of the myth as regards the direct descendants of Odysseus and Circe.

In the fragments of the *Chronicles* by Xenagoras, there is no information on how the sons of Odysseus and Circe arrived in Italy. This *lacuna* is filled by Dionysius (AR IV 61, 3):

ἔστι δὲ χερσονησοειδῆς σκόπελος ὑψηλὸς ἐπιεικῶς ἐπὶ τοῦ Τυρρηνιοῦ πελάγους κείμενος ἔνθα λόγος ἔχει Κίρκην τὴν Ἥλιου θυγατέρα κατοικήσαι·

For it is a fairly high rock in the nature of a peninsula, situated on the Tyrrhenian Sea; and tradition has it that Circe, the daughter of the Sun, lived there.

Dionysius suggests that Aea was located somewhere in the Apennine Peninsula on the coastline of the Tyrrhenian Sea (note that Homer thinks of it as an island). Locating Circe's abode here corresponds with the information found in the *Argonautica*, the poem written by Apollonius of Rhodes in the 3rd century BC. This poem had been popular for ages and the author of *Antiquitates Romanae* certainly must have been familiar with it. In the 4th book, Apollonius provides a detailed description of this place (Arg. IV 659–661):

¹³ Translated by the author.

Καρπαλίμωσ δ' ἐνθένδε διέξ ἄλδσ ὄδμα νέοντο
 Αὐσονίησ ἀκτὰσ Τυρσηνίδσ εἰσορόωντεσ
 ἴξον δ' Αἰαίησ λιμένα κλυτόν

And quickly from there they passed through the sea, beholding the Tyrrhenian shores of Ausonia; and they came to the famous harbour of Aeaëa¹⁴.

During the Hellenistic Period, the name 'Ausonia' was given to the central part of the Apennine Peninsula, including Latium. As time passed, its meaning broadened and came to include the whole Peninsula. Auson, after whom the region was named, might have been a son of Odysseus and Circe or, according to other accounts, of Calypso. This model of the aetiological legend also makes Circe an important figure in the early history of the Roman Empire. Clearly, it must be admitted that Apollonius of Rhodes resorted to a version of the myth that was most unusual at the time, so that looking for its sources in earlier literary tradition would be a vain enterprise. It was his custom to put into practice one of the principal postulates of Hellenistic literature, i.e. to surprise the reader with an original conception of the topic and with erudition understood as profound scholarly knowledge, concealed *inter alia* in unexpected allusions to such themes as geography, astronomy, literature, or unexplored myths known exclusively from oral tradition. Authors would even make their own compilations of various versions of mythical stories. Apollonius exhibits his erudition by locating Circe's home in a real place: he uses a unique toponym (Ausonia) and makes indirect references to it with a non-widely known aetiological myth (the figure of Auson)¹⁵. Through the juxtaposition of a fictional and a real world in the *Argonautica*, a narrative filled with thorough knowledge, the mythical events gain the value of 'historicity', while the mythical characters – authenticity.

Apollonius's image of Circe is, in a way, quite novel. In his epic, her activities are not exclusively restricted to magic; rather, she is first and foremost a divinity associated with the purification ritual, which she performs twice during a short episode in the 4th book.

In the light of all the above, the statement that the *Argonautica* by Apollonius of Rhodes should be considered a literary breakthrough that transformed the image of Circe – both in locating her home on the mainland and in influencing the way in which she was perceived – seems reasonable and founded.

There is a wide gap between the fantasies of Homer and the profound geographical knowledge of Apollonius as regards locating Aeaëa on an island or on the mainland, respectively. Strabo, in his *Geographica*, ventures to reconcile this incompatibility and at the same time to rationalize the poetic fiction of the author

¹⁴ APOLLONIUS RHODIUS, *The Argonautica*, trans. R.C. SEATON, London 1912 [= LCL, 1].

¹⁵ For useful information on Apollonius of Rhodes's scientific knowledge, including geography, see J. ROSTROPOWICZ, *Apollonios z Rodos epos o Argonautach*, Opole 1988, p. 95–109.

of the *Odyssey*. An outstanding researcher from the turn of the millennia, Strabo visited most of the regions described in his monumental work, and he dedicated two out of the seventeen books to the geography of Italy and Sicily. Concerning the places under discussion, he says the following (V 3, 6):

Μετὰ δὲ Ἄντιον τὸ Κίρκαϊον ἐστὶν ἐν διακοσίοις καὶ ἐνενήκοντα σταδίοις ὄρος νησίζον θαλάττῃ τε καὶ ἔλεσι. φασὶ δὲ καὶ πολύρριζον εἶναι, τάχα τῷ μύθῳ τῷ περὶ τῆς Κίρκης συν- νικειοῦντες ἔχει δὲ πολίχνην καὶ Κίρκης ἱερὸν καὶ Ἀθηνᾶς βωμόν, δείκνυσθαι δὲ καὶ φιάλην τινὰ φασὶν Ὀδυσσεύως.

At 290 stadia from Antium is Mount Circaeum, insulated by the sea and marshes. They say that it contains numerous roots, but this perhaps is only to harmonize with the myth relating to Circe. It has a small city, together with a temple to Circe and an altar to Minerva; they likewise say that a cup is shown which belonged to Ulysses¹⁶.

Even five centuries later, Procopius pays attention to this incongruity between the two epic writers in his work *De bellis* (V 11, 2–3):

πεδία γὰρ πολλὰ ἐνταυθὰ ἐσιν. ῥεῖ δὲ καὶ ποταμὸς ὃν Δεκεννόβιον τῇ Λατίνων φωνῇ καλοῦσιν οἱ ἐπιχώριοι, ὅτι δὴ ἐννεακαίδεκα περιῶν σημεία, ὅπερ ξύνεισιν ἐς τρισκαίδεκα καὶ ἑκατὸν σταδίου, οὕτω δὴ ἐκβάλλει ἐς θάλασσαν, ἀμφὶ πόλιν Ταρακίνην, ἧς ἀγχιστα ὄρος τὸ Κίρκαϊον ἐστίν, οὗ τὸν Ὀδυσσεῖα τῇ Κίρκῃ ξυγγενέσθαι φασὶ, ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐ πιστὰ λέγοντες, ἐπεὶ ἐν νήσῳ Ὅμηρος τὰ τῆς Κίρκης οἰκία ἰσχυρίζεται εἶναι. ἐκεῖνο μέντοι ἔχω εἰπεῖν, ὡς τὸ Κίρκαϊον τοῦτο, ἐπὶ πολὺ τῆς θαλάσσης διῆκον, νήσῳ ἐμφορὲς ἐστί.

For there are extensive plains there which furnish pasture for horses. And a river also flows by the place, which the inhabitants call Decennovium in the Latin tongue, because it flows past nineteen milestones, a distance which amounts to one hundred and thirteen stades, before it empties into the sea near the city of Taracina [Lat. Terracina]; and very near that place is Mt. Circaeum, where they say Odysseus met Circe, though the story seems to me untrustworthy, for Homer declares that the habitation of Circe was on an island. This, however, I am able to say, that this Mt. Circaeum, extending as it does far into the sea, resembles an island¹⁷.

Kirkaion (Lat. Circaeum), mentioned by Strabo, was the name of the contemporary Monte Circeo, which is located south of Anzio (old Antium) on the one side and west of Terracina (the one described by Procopius) on the other side. When one looks at Monte Circeo from the sea, it resembles an island full of trees. It is impossible to determine the origins of the name of the mountain, though it is phonetically close to the name of Homer's sorceress. The question arises

¹⁶ *The Geography of Strabo*, vol. I–III, trans. H.C. HAMILTON, W. FALCONER, London 1903–1906. In the 12th century, Eustathius will refer to this information in his *Commentarium in Dionysii periegetae orbis descriptione* (694) in the context of the “Circaean plain” (Κίρκαϊον πεδίου).

¹⁷ PROCOPIOUS, *History of the Wars*, vol. III, Books 5 – 6.15. (*Gothic War*), trans. H.B. DEWING, Cambridge Massachusetts 1916 [= LCL, 107].

whether Apollonius of Rhodes, the author most crucial for our deliberations, knew this particular name of the mountain. We may surmise that if he had known this name, he would have mentioned it in his work. However, the poet uses the phrase *the haven of Aeaea* (Αἰαίης λιμή); the toponym Kirkaion is just the name of the plain in Cholchis (II 400, III 199–200). On the other hand, in a passage from *On Marvellous Rivers* (Περὶ ποταμῶν παραδόξων) written by Philostephanus of Cyrene in the 3rd century, we find the following passage (fr. 23): *The Italic river of Titon flows near Circaeum, which was named after Circe*¹⁸ (Τῆτων ποταμὸς Ἰταλίας ἐγγυὺς Κίρκαίου, ὃ Κίρκαίον ἀπὸ τῆς Κίρκης καλεῖται).

The evidence provided in this article enables the conclusion that, at a certain stage, a number of elements of the myth became combined: the fact that Hesiod associated Circe with Latium by her son Latinus, the information found in the *Chronicles* by Xenagoras, and above all the location of Aeaea as determined in one of the episodes of the *Argonautica* by Apollonius of Rhodes. Other local accounts are also likely to have existed, but they did not survive in writing. All of this intriguing material, combined with favourable topographical conditions, may have given rise to the legend that the enigmatic Aeaea – the abode of Circe – was a mountain resembling an island, located on the west coast of the Italian Peninsula, and that the sons born from the sorceress's relationship with Odysseus (which is strongly embedded in the Homeric tradition) played an important role in the earliest history of the land as the founders of several cities, including Rome.

The notion that Circe was somehow connected with early Roman history did not escape the attention of Byzantine thinkers, as evidenced by the testimonies adduced in the course of the above reflections. Some authors refer to earlier testimonies¹⁹, while some furnish certain additional details. John the Lydian, the 6th-century Byzantine administrator and writer on antiquarian subjects, writes as follows in his treatise *De mensibus* (IV 4, 11–16):

φασὶ <δ>Λατῖνον ἐκεῖνον τοῦ Τηλεγόνου μὲν ἀδελφόν, Κίρκης δὲ παῖδα πενθερὸν δὲ Αἰνείου κτίζοντα τὴν τῆς Ῥώμης ἀκρόπολιν πρὸ τῆς παρουσίας Αἰνείου εὐρεῖν ἐπὶ τοῦ τόπου δάφνην κατὰ τύχην καὶ οὕτως πάλιν ἔασαι αὐτὴν ἐκεῖσε διαμένειν·

And they say that the famous Latinus, Telegonus' brother, Circe's son, and Aeneas' father-in-law, when he was founding the "acropolis" of Rome before the coming of Aeneas, found a laurel tree [daphnê] by chance at the spot, and thus allowed it to remain there. For this reason, here too they designate the Palatium as "Daphne"²⁰.

¹⁸ Translated by the author.

¹⁹ E.g. in the scholion *In Lycophronem* 1278 we find the above-quoted fragment 23 from the work by Philostephanus of Cyrene.

²⁰ JOHN LYDUS, *On the Months (De mensibus)*, trans. et ed. M. HOOKER, 2017, <http://www.rogerpearse.com/weblog/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/John-Lydus-On-the-Months-tr.-Hooker-2nd-ed.-2017-1.pdf> [28 I 2018].

Cassianus Bassus (6th century) explains these words in his *Geoponica* (XI 2, 8):

ἀλλὰ καὶ δάφνη τὸ παλάτιον ὠνομάσθη, ἀπὸ τῆς ἐπικλήσεως δάφνης τῆς ἐν Ῥώμῃ. Φασὶ γὰρ Λατίνον τὸν Τηλεγόνου μὲν ἀδελφόν, Κίρκης δὲ παῖδα, πενθερόν δὲ Αἰνείου, κτίζοντα τὴν ἀκρόπολιν πρὸ τῆς Αἰνείου παρουσίας εὐρηκέναι ἐκεῖ δάφνην.

Palatium was named daphne (a laurel) after the name of the laurel tree in Rome. Some say that Latinus, Telegonos's brother, Circe's son, Aeneas's father-in-law, founding the acropolis before the coming of Aeneas, found a laurel there²¹.

Both of the aforementioned quotations reveal the mechanism of copying information among various authors, which facilitated the transmission of the legend about Circe's merits in Roman history. A certain carelessness and lack of criticism may be observed at least in the case of some writers – e.g. in *De mensibus*, where we find a version of the origin of the toponym different from the one quoted earlier (I, 12, 1–10):

Κίρκη τις ἦν ἐν Ἰταλία τῷ τε γένει περιφανῆς καὶ διαπρηγῆς, ἥτις καὶ τοῦ Ὀδυσσεύως πλανωμένου ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ σὺν Διομήδει ἐρασθεῖσα καὶ συγγενομένη τούτῳ ἔτεκεν ἐξ αὐτοῦ τὸν Αὔσονα, τὸν τῆς χώρας πάσης ἐν ὑστέρω κρατήσαντα, ἐξ οὗ Αὔσονία ἢ ἐσπέριος ἐκλήθη. αὕτη γοῦν ἢ Κίρκη διὰ κάλλους ὑπερβολὴν τοῦ Ἥλιου θυγάτηρ εἶναι ἐκόμπαζε καὶ εἰς τιμὴν τοῦ οἰκείου δῆθεν πατρὸς ἵππικὸν ἀγῶνα πρώτη ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ ἐτέλεσεν, ὃς δὴ καὶ ἐξ αὐτῆς ὠνομάσθη κίρκος.

There was in Italy a certain Circe, notable for her birth and remarkable for her beauty, who fell in love with Odysseus when he was wandering in Italy with Diomedes; after being united with him, she bore him Auson, who later took power over the entire territory, and from who[se name] the western [land] was called Ausonia. At any rate, this Circe boasted that she was the daughter of Helios on account of her exceedingly great beauty, and in honour of her own father, I suppose, she was the first in Italy to celebrate a chariot race, which indeed was named circus after her.

Incidentally, as concerns the quasi-scientific etymology of the Latin noun *circus*, there is a mental leap in John the Lydian's train of thought: the phonetic association with the name of Circe concerns not the equestrian competitions themselves, but the place where they could be held. The aetiology provided by the Greek historian relies not only on the homonymy, but also by the natural world associations that connect the name of the sorceress with the species of the falcon or the hawk (κίρκος) – birds which circle while hunting for prey. In his commentary on Dionysius Periegetes, Eustathius of Thessalonica, a philologist of the 12th century, brings up different variants of the legend (78):

Λέγονται δὲ Αὔσονες ἀπὸ Αὔσονος ὃς πρῶτος τῶν κατὰ Ῥώμην βασιλεῦσαι πρὸς τινῶν ἱστορεῖται, Ὀδυσσεῖ γεγονῶς ἐκ τῆς Κίρκης

²¹ Translated by the author.

The Ausones are called after Auson, who, as some authors say, was the first to rule over the tribes that lived near Rome, and he was the son of Odysseus and Circe²²,

and in another commentary (350): *Rome is a region in Latium, and the Latins took their names after Latinus, son of Circe and Odysseus*²³ (ἡ Ἰώμη τῆς Λατίνης χώρας ἐστὶ, καὶ ὅτι Λατίνου ὁμώνυμοὶ εἰσὶν Λατίνοι, ὃς Ὀδυσσεύος καὶ Κίρκης λέγεται).

The remarks by ancient and Byzantine authors quoted in the course of our deliberations do not, as we can see, form a linear logical sequence. Rather, they are a mosaic of diverse versions of the myth, related to an array of geographical names. Whether it was the toponyms that shaped the legends, or whether it was the names that were shaped by the local accounts, must remain an unanswered question. Be that as it may, it is worth emphasizing that Circe had a permanent presence in the earliest history of several cities in the region of Latium (including in Rome) as the mother of their eponymous founders. In the post-Homeric tradition of Greek literature, there appear three variants of the legend about the sons of Circe and Odysseus, all related to Roman history: 1. Latinus (eponym of Latium), Agrios and Telegonos (also attested in the pseudo-Homeric *Telegonea*) in Hesiod's *Theogony*; 2. Romos (eponym of Rome), Antias (eponym of Antium) and Ardeas (eponym of Ardea) in the passage from the *Chronicle* by Xenagoras; 3. Auson, mentioned in connection with the name of the geographical region of Ausonia in the *Argonautica* by Apollonius of Rhodes. Later writers would choose freely from among these versions (not always consistently), adopting the one which was the most consistent with their own purpose, but always emphasizing the connection of a given mythical founder or a ruler with Circe – even in a later generation, as Stephen of Byzantium did in his *Ethnika* while writing about the prehistory of the Latin city of Praeneste. In this way, with time, the image of Circe shifted from the Homeric sorceress and magic wand-wielding *femme fatale* into her new role of the mother of Roman heroes. Perhaps it was due to Strabo's authority that, beginning at the turn of the millennia, the legendary connections between Circe and Italy – one of the most important territories in the geopolitics of those days – became issues widely discussed in Greek scholarly literature. The legend of the country's origins was later established on Roman ground, though not without a number of obvious references to Greek tradition²⁴; it primarily emphasised the Roman part of Aeneas's adventures, thus omitting the accounts in which Circe was presented as the mother of the nation. Owing to the Greek authors, traces of this myth have survived, although it was rather unpopular from the perspective of Roman ideological propaganda.

²² Translated by the author.

²³ Translated by the author.

²⁴ For more on Greek and Roman literary and historical source texts about the myth, known due to Vergilius's *Aeneis*, see S. STABRYŁA, *Wergiliusz. Świat poetycki*, Wrocław 1987, p. 171–177.

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Abstract. Circe is associated first of all with the episode narrated in the 10th book of the *Odyssey*, in which she turns Odysseus's crewmen into pigs using her herbal *pharmaka*. Odysseus survives due to divine help, his inborn cleverness, and the miraculous herb *moly*. The fairy-tale theme of the spells of Circe, clearly showing its folk provenance, got entrenched in ancient literature: featured most often in poems of playful content, Circe symbolized the power to subjugate male souls and bodies. From the Hellenistic era to the Byzantine times, however, Circe is mentioned in scholarly works – in the context of the history of Roman Italy. The aim of the present article is, first of all, to analyse the Greek-language source texts and show the ways in which ancient authors managed to connect a character from a folk fairy tale – intrinsically different in form and not identifiable with any heroic myth – with the prehistory of Roman Italy, and even place her among the ancestors of Rome. The considerations also allow us to identify some of the mechanisms of the creation and functioning of the legend as a cultural phenomenon of the ancient world.

Keywords: Circe, myth, history of Roman Italy, ancient and Byzantine scholarly works

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ARTICLES



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ON THE POSSIBILITIES OF RESEARCHING THE MARRIAGE POLICIES OF THE RURIKIDS: THE CASE OF MSTISLAV FYODOR VLADIMIROVICH MONOMAKHOVICH

Some time ago already, we indicated¹ the necessity of a scholarly synthesis of the marriage-of-state politics employed by the Mstislavichi, i.e. the descendants of Mstislav, the eldest son of Vladimir Monomakh. This branch of the Rurikid dynasty rose to prominence in the Rus' in the early 12th century and remained influential virtually until the late 14th century².

The issue requires a number of introductory remarks concerning the methodology involved.

Firstly, it should be pointed out that a *sine qua non* of this kind of research is the availability of reliable, verified biographical information concerning the historical figures in question. In our case, this condition happens to be fulfilled: an in-depth study on the genealogy of the Mstislavichi has been published recently³.

The enterprise of tracing the dynastic policies exercised by individual rulers may bring manifold benefits. Not infrequently, a marriage is the only indication of the formation of an alliance to get mentioned in the sources (it goes without saying that matrimonial deals were part and parcel of political life; this fact has

¹ D. DĄBROWSKI, *Genealogia Mściśławowiczów. Pierwsze pokolenia (do początku XIV wieku)*, Kraków 2008, p. 732.

² Let us restate the basic facts: the descendants of Mstislav I Vladimirovich ruled Kiev (intermittently until 1240), Novgorod the Great (intermittently until 1221), Volhynia (until 1340), Halych (ultimately, from 1198/1199, intermittently until 1340) and Smolensk (as essentially independent rulers until the death of Ivan Aleksandrovich, 1358, or Svyatoslav Ivanovich, 1386). We may add that the history of the Principality of Smolensk deserves a modern synthesis: although the monograph by Petr GOLUBOVSKIJ (*История Смоленской земли до начала х ст.*, Киев 1895) is not without merit, it is often necessary to verify the interpretations it offers.

³ D. DĄBROWSKI, *Genealogia...* Cf. also the revised and considerably enlarged Russian edition of this book: Д. ДОМБРОВСКИЙ, *Генеалогия Мстиславичей. Первые поколения (до начала XIV в.)*, trans. et ed. К. ЕРУСАЛИМСКИЙ, О. ОСТАПЧУК, Санкт-Петербург 2015 [= SSO, 10]. If we did not have at our disposal an appropriate basis – preferably one conforming to the principles of the so-called Polish genealogical school (Oswald Balzer, Kazimierz Jasiński) – we would soon get 'buried' in examining the primary data, which would substantially hinder (if not entirely thwart) our main project in this study.

been confirmed by numerous studies). Elsewhere⁴, we presented two arguments concerning this topic, corroborated by a number of concrete examples: firstly, that matrimonial ‘clashes’ of sorts were not uncommon, and secondly, that alliances based on marriages of state were usually of an *ad hoc* nature – aimed at achieving current political objectives – and therefore tended to lose actual political importance quite rapidly. On the other hand, they would sometimes bring about long-term effects in many fields, such as e.g. the migration of names from one family to another, cultural influences of various kinds, impact on the development of family memory, etc.; these aspects were sometimes utilized pragmatically a long time after the marriage itself.

Finally, we owe the reader one more remark. It stands to reason that there are many parallel ways in which the marriage policies of any dynasty (including, of course, the Rurikids) can be analyzed. The broadest approach would be tantamount to a synthetic study of the topic in its entirety (“The Marriage Policies of the Rurikids”). It could be divided into chronological units (e.g. “The Marriage Policies of the Rurikids in the 13th Century”). Furthermore, it is by all means legitimate to narrow down the focus of the study to a single branch only (“The Marriage Policies of the Mstislavichi”), possibly with a concomitant chronological delimitation “The Marriage Policies of the Mstislavichi in the Second Half of the 12th Century”). Each of the above-mentioned approaches would undoubtedly yield fruitful results, albeit somewhat different in each case. In our opinion, however, it is optimal for research of this kind to be conducted ‘bottom-up’, taking individual rulers or smaller family groups as the point of departure. The key advantage of this method of inquiry – which we have termed “dynastic micro-genealogy”⁵ – is the high level of precision of the results it yields. This translates into a deeper insight into the circumstances surrounding each marriage, which in turn enables us to interpret the political context of the relationships (at least as long as the state of preservation of the sources permits this⁶). Only subsequently – after the above-defined modules (i.e. single matrimonial arrangements) have been analyzed – do we go further, formulating synthetic conclusions and seeking a broader view of the phenomenon (in terms of time, space and family background). This, finally, opens up the possibilities of studying further aspects of the topic: processes and changes

⁴ D. DĄBROWSKI, *Piasten und Rurikiden im 11. bis zur Mitte des 13. Jahrhunderts*, [in:] *Fernhändler, Dynasten, Kleriker. Die piastische Herrschaft in kontinentalen Beziehungsgeflechten vom 10. bis zum frühen 13. Jahrhundert*, ed. D. ADAMCZYK, N. KERSKEN, Wiesbaden 2015, p. 187–189.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 160.

⁶ Regrettably, the poor condition of the extant source material often renders this approach impossible. Regarding many Rurikids, the information at our disposal is extraordinarily scanty; cases where a given representative of the dynasty is only mentioned in the sources a single time are not uncommon. The situation is even worse as far as the princely wives and princesses are concerned: the sources clearly discriminate against women in their narratives, as we remarked elsewhere (cf. D. DĄBROWSKI, *Genealogia...*, p. 733–734).

occurring in time, similarities and differences in the mechanisms of marriage alliance policies, their causes and effects, etc.

This is, we claim, the method of choice: it enables the most effective research into the marriage alliance strategies of particular dynasts and dynasties⁷.

Thus, let us have a look at the marriage policies of a particular Rurikid – Mstislav Fyodor Vladimirovich Monomakhovich. We should note right away that the above wording is still somewhat imprecise: as a matter of fact, we should declare that the article will deal both with the marriage policies of Mstislav himself and with the strategies that he and his children were subject to. Furthermore, we should remark that the core issue of our study is not so much the reconstruction of the marriage-related activities of prince Mstislav and the other historical figures involved (i.e. tracing the mechanisms employed by particular persons as well as the objectives and effects achieved in the relevant spheres) as another rudimentary issue, already alluded to above: namely, the possibilities offered in this respect by the source material. Accordingly, we shall appraise the character and value of the information found in the sources, reflecting on its relevance for studying the marriage policies of this key figure in the history of Rus'. This will provide the basis for further deliberations on the prospects, purposefulness and viability of studying the marriage alliance policies of the Rurikids in general – or at least the greater part of the dynasty. The reason for which we are undertaking this venture is that numerous scholars – even when making use of the highly specialized, well-thought-out methodology described above – fail to disclose the basis of their findings to their readers, which puts the accuracy of their conclusions in doubt and blurs the overall picture. We decided to follow the approach outlined above when the work on the article was already under way: we were impressed by picture of the sheer source material (which was, of course, well-known to us in advance) as it appeared when assembled for this particular purpose. The line adopted here will, we believe, be instrumental in demonstrating the character of scholarly findings in the field under discussion, revealing the proportions between results based on information directly stated in the sources and those that derive from intermediate analytical reasoning – and are therefore inevitably hypothetical to some extent. We shall adduce a number of examples that will serve to illustrate the factors and mechanisms by which research hypotheses – the groundwork of scholarly reasoning – are constructed in our field. In other words, we will attempt to expose the ins and outs of the working methods of a historian who studies the marriage policies of a medieval dynasty.

⁷ Thus, we are following the established methodology proposed some time ago by German scholars, especially Dieter VELDTRUP (*Zwischen Eherecht und Familienpolitik. Studien zu den dynastischen Heiratsprojekten Karls IV*, Warendorf 1988) and Tobias WELLER (*Die Heiratspolitik des deutschen Hochadels im 12. Jahrhundert*, Köln 2004).

At the same time, we shall ponder the question what determines the extent to which information on the princely marriages is included in various sources. These considerations – which ultimately pertain to the historical culture of the period – may turn out useful for the purposes of further research on the mechanisms in which medieval authors registered various kinds of information.

Let us now turn to the facts.

Mstislav Fyodor Vladimirovich was born in mid-February 1076 and died on April 15, 1132. He was the son of Vladimir Vasily Vsevolodovich Monomakh and Gytha of Wessex, daughter of King Harold Godwinson of England (d. 1066). He was married twice. His first consort was Christina, daughter of King Inge Stenkilsson of Sweden; she died on January 18, 1122. His second wife was N., daughter of Novgorod *posadnik* Dmitry; she outlived her husband considerably, dying after May 15 or on May 19, 1167⁸.

The former marriage probably yielded eleven children (known to the sources)⁹:

- 1) N., daughter (b. 1095–1099, d. after August 15, 1118);
- 2) Malmfred (b. 1095–1102, d. after January 1, 1135);
- 3) Ingeborg (b. 1097–1102, d. after January 1131);
- 4) Vsevolod Gabriel (b. abt. 1103, d. February 11, 1137 or February 10, 1138);
- 5) Izyaslav Panteleimon (b. 1106–1108, d. on the night of November 13/14, 1154);
- 6) Rostislav Michael (b. 1107–1109, d. March 14, 1167);
- 7) N., known as Irene in the Byzantine Empire (b. 1108/1109–1110/1111, d. 1125 – 1st half of 1136);
- 8) N., possibly baptismal or monastic name Xenia (b. abt. 1105–1112, d. after August 1127, before 1200);
- 9) N., possibly baptismal or monastic name Maria (b. abt. 1110–1113, d. March 1, 1179 – February 28, 1180);
- 10) Rogneda (b. before January 18, 1122, d. after March 14, 1167);
- 11) Svyatopolk (b. 1114–1118, d. between March 26 and November 13, 1154).

From the second marriage, Mstislav had – according to our own research – three children:

- 12) Euphrosyne (b. 1123–1130, d. in or shortly after 1193);
- 13) Vladimir, called Macheshich (b. 1131, d. May 10, 1171);
- 14) Yaropolk (b. 1132, d. shortly after September 2, 1149)¹⁰.

⁸ D. DĄBROWSKI, *Genealogia...*, p. 80–82; IDEM, *Генеалогія...*, p. 75–77.

⁹ This uncertainty concerning the number of Mstislav's children from his first marriage is due to doubts regarding the biography of Rogneda: namely, it cannot be ruled out that one of Mstislav's nameless daughters should be identified with her.

¹⁰ All biographical information follows D. DĄBROWSKI, *Genealogia...*, p. 82–187; IDEM, *Генеалогія...*, p. 77–187.

This picture results largely from the analysis of certain indirect indications, given that the sources do not state the relevant facts in a direct manner. Still, we would like to emphasize that the above presentation is more accurate than any other one currently found in the literature.

Marriages that occurred after Mstislav's death (April 15, 1132)¹¹, we should note, essentially fall outside of the scope of our study. Nevertheless, certain conclusions regarding them will be presented in the final part of the article.

Accordingly, the basis of our analysis will be narrowed down to a total of 12 marriages – 2 by Mstislav Vladimirovich himself and 10 by his children. We may note that Mstislav did not live to see any of his grandchildren enter wedlock, in stark contrast to the case of Vladimir Monomakh – an observation which will turn out relevant for our considerations to some extent.

In what follows, the marriages are presented in chronological order.

The entries consist primarily of the presentation of the source material relevant for each marriage. Besides, further information important for the present study is added: the names of the spouses, the basic data concerning their filiation, the thrones they occupied, the date of the marriage, and other pertinent facts as needed:

- 1) Mstislav Fyodor Vladimirovich (at the time, Prince of Novgorod the Great) x Christina, daughter of King Inge Stenkilsson of Sweden and Helena (1091–1096)

A direct remark on this marriage – though extremely brief, vague and lacking chronological context – is found in *Fagrskinna*, a saga written down around 1225¹². The passage in question reads as follows: [...] *er* [Harald Valdemarsson, i.e. the name under which Mstislav Vladimirovich is known in the Scandinavian tradition] *fekk Kristinar, dóttur Inga konungs Steinkelssonar*¹³. A non-nuanced reading might indicate that Mstislav himself must have been the principal agent behind the relationship. However, in view of the brevity of the passage and its other characteristics (after all, it stems from a chapter portraying the consanguinity and affinity relations among a group of dynasts, primarily Scandinavian), is

¹¹ This applies to the following marriages: 1) Svyatopolk to N., Moravian princess, between December 25, 1143 and January 6, 1144; 2) Euphrosyne to King Géza II of Hungary, probably in 1144; 3) Vladimir (called Macheshich) to N., daughter of ban Beloš, between December 1150 and February 1151; 4) Izjaslav Panteleimon to Rusudan, daughter of King Demetrius I of Georgia, winter 1151/1152; 5) Vladimir (called Macheshich) to N., presumably daughter of Prince Rostislav Yaroslavich of Ryazan, probably winter 1155/1156.

¹² Recently on the dating of this source cf. H. JANSON, *The Dukedom of Braunschweig-Lüneburg and the Dating of Fagrskinna*, [in:] *Древнейшие государства Восточной Европы. Материалы и исследования 2016 год*, Москва 2018, p. 97–110.

¹³ *Fagrskinna*, [in:] *Ágrip af Nóregskonunga sögum; Fagrskinna – Nóregs konunga tal*, ed. B. EINARSSON, Reykjavík 1985 [= Ifo, 29] (cetera: *Fagrskinna*), p. 295 (LXXVII. Kapítúli). The English translation (*Fagrskinna, a Catalogue of the Kings of Norway*, trans. et ed. A. FINLAY, Leiden–Boston 2004, p. 236) reads: *King Haraldr [...] married Kristin, daughter of King Ingi Steinkelsson*.

this conclusion really warranted? By no means. The wording in the text contains a fixed phrase; what is more, no historical context is provided. We may add that other sagas only mention the relationship under discussion indirectly, in passages similar to the one quoted above¹⁴.

As we can see, the source material does not permit us to formulate any conclusions on the political background of this marriage, the more so because its very date remains unknown¹⁵.

2) N. daughter of Mstislav x Prince Yaroslav Sviatopolchich of Vladimir-in-Volhynia (late spring 1112)

In the Hypatian text of the *Tale of Bygone Years* (probably completed around 1119 in Kiev and, according to Mark Aleshkovsky, constituting a *family chronicle of the house of Monomakh*¹⁶, we find the following entry under the year 6620: Ярославъ [...] сынъ Свѣтополчъ [...] посла Новугороду. и поя Мѣстиславу дщерь совѣ женѣ. Володимірю внуку¹⁷. A similar account concerning this or the following year (6621) is furnished by other Rus' sources¹⁸.

As can be seen, the sources offer no detailed evidence that could be used for analyzing the politics behind the relationship, although the phrasing Ярославъ [...] посла Новугороду. и поя Мѣстиславу дщерь совѣ женѣ could at least be taken as an indication concerning Yaroslav's agency.

¹⁴ Cf. e.g. SNORRI STURLUSON, *Heimskringla*, vol. III, ed. V. АДАЛBJАРНАРОН, Reykjavík 1979 [= Ifo, 28] (cetera: SNORRI STURLUSON), p. 258 (Magnússona saga, XX. Kapítúli).

¹⁵ Based on indirect premises, Mstislav's first marriage is usually dated to 1091–1096; recently on this D. ДОМБРОВСКИЙ, *Генеалогия...*, p. 71–73.

¹⁶ М.Х. АЛЕШКОВСКИЙ, *Повесть временных лет. Из истории создания и редакционной переработки*, ed. Ф.Б. УСПЕНСКИЙ, Москва 2015, p. 294. The origin and history of the *Tale of Bygone Years* as well as its redactions is a complex subject with a vast, ever-growing scholarly literature. Without going into too much detail, we may note that the intricacies involved (including, for instance, the contested time of origin of the particular redactions) do not affect our present considerations. An English translation of the source (as found in the Laurentian text) is available in: *The Russian Primary Chronicle. Laurentian Text*, trans. et ed. S. HAZZARD CROSS, O.P. SHERBOWITZ-WETZOR, Cambridge Massachusetts 1953. For the record, we may mention that there also exist several Polish translations of the *Tale of Bygone Years*: cf. *Latopis Nestora*, trans. et ed. A. BIEŁOWSKI, J. WAGILEWICZ, [in:] МРН, vol. I, Lwów 1864 [repr. Warszawa 1960], p. 521–862; *Powieść minionych lat. Charakterystyka historycznoliteracka*, trans. F. SIELICKI, ed. M. JAKÓBIEC, W. JAKUBOWSKI, Wrocław 1968 (2nd ed.: Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1999).

¹⁷ *Ипатьевская летопись*, [in:] ПСРЛ, vol. II, Москва 1998 (cetera: *Ипатьевская летопись*), col. 273.

¹⁸ Under the year 6620: *Московский летописный свод конца XV века*, [in:] ПСРЛ, vol. XXV, Москва 2004 (cetera: *Московский летописный*), p. 27; *Летопись по Воскресенскому списку*, [in:] ПСРЛ, vol. VII, Москва 2001 (cetera: *Летопись по Воскресенскому списку*), p. 22. Under 6621: *Новгородская первая летопись старшего и младшего изводов*, [in:] ПСРЛ, vol. III, Москва 2000 (cetera: *Новгородская первая летопись*), p. 20, 203.

3) Malmfred x King Sigurd Jorsalafari of Norway (1111–1115)

The only source to provide any details concerning the marriage in question comes from contemporary Norman chronicler Orderic Vitalis, who lived in the years 1075–1142¹⁹. Among other things, he provides some hints regarding the chronology, albeit not overly precise. Thus, Orderic writes that Sigurd Jorsalafari *Malfridam, regis filiam, uxorem duxit* while returning from the crusade; subsequently, *domumque reversus, paulo post, regnum, dante Deo, suscepit*²⁰. Other than that, the existence of this marriage is only confirmed anachronistically by Scandinavian sources, in passages dealing with the consanguinity and affinity relations of certain (primarily Scandinavian) royals²¹.

Therefore, the extant sources do not yield any direct information that could help us gain insight into the marriage policies involved: in fact, we are not even told who initiated the marriage.

4) Ingeborg x Canute Lavard (1115–1117)

The case of this marriage is quite exceptional. Firstly, *Knýtlinga saga*²² recounts the story of Canute Lavard's advances aimed at winning the hand of Mstislav's daughter Ingeborg. We learn that the Danish prince dispatched a wealthy merchant known as Vidgaut of Sambia to Novgorod the Great – at the time ruled by Harald, son of Valdemar, son of Jarizleif, son of Valdemar²³, foster father of Olaf Tryggvason. The envoy's task was to conduct talks with the prince. After an exchange of gifts, Vidgaut praised Canute and stated his message to Mstislav. The ruler of Novgorod consented to the marriage and subsequently made his decision known to his counsellors and to Ingeborg. With the plan endorsed by all parties, Vidgaut returned to Denmark to inform Canute of the mission's success. Later, at a pre-arranged time, Mstislav sent his daughter to her prospective husband²⁴. In short, we are evidently dealing with an exceptionally detailed and presumably quite reliable account of Canute's efforts to earn Ingeborg's hand. Ironically, however, the content that would be the most interesting from our point of view is

¹⁹ Concerning Orderic, cf. U. SCHMIDT, *Ordericus Vitalis*, [in:] *BBKL*, vol. VI, col. 1230–1231.

²⁰ *Orderici Vitalis Angligenae coenobii uticensis monachi Historia Ecclesiastica*, III, 10, 4, [in:] *PL*, vol. CLXXXVIII, col. 727. Orderic's account is generally accepted as reliable in the modern literature, cf. e.g. А.Ф. ЛИТВИНА, Ф.Б. УСПЕНСКИЙ, *Выбор имени у русских князей в X–XVI вв. Династическая история сквозь призму антропониимики*, Москва 2006, p. 246, an. 26.

²¹ Cf. e.g.: *Fagrskinna*, p. 295 (LXXVII. Kapitúli); SNORRI STURLUSON, p. 258 (*Magnússon saga*. XX. Kapitúli).

²² The source is dated to the mid-13th century.

²³ As we can see, the presentation of Mstislav's genealogy here is not free from error: it omits the prince's grandfather, Vsevolod Yaroslavich.

²⁴ *Knýtlinga saga*, [in:] *Danakonunga sögur. Skjöldunga saga; Knýtlinga saga; Ágrip af sögu Danakonunga*, ed. B. GUÐNASON, Reykjavík 1982 [= Ifo, 35] (cetera: *Knýtlinga saga*), p. 246–247 (LXXXVIII. Kapitúli).

missing – perhaps save for the clear suggestion that the Danish prince was the active side in arranging the marriage. On the other hand, we also have at our disposal the testimony of Danish historian Saxo Grammaticus, who lived from about 1160 until after 1208. He has the following to say about Canute's marriage to Mstislav's daughter:

Cui mater [of Magnus, the son of King Niels of Denmark; the woman in question is Margaret Fredkulla] ampliorem propinquorum favorem affinitatum beneficio creare cupiens, Henrico Regnaldi fratris, Kanuto Ingiburgam sororis filiam coniugo copulavit²⁵.

The passage is important for two reasons: firstly, because it directly names (in an exceptional manner) the woman who was the principal agent behind seeking the marriage deal, and secondly, because it reveals the exact motives that led the queen of Denmark to pursue this plan. To wit, the aim was to bolster family ties through arranging a marriage. Although still relatively vague, this statement is nonetheless remarkable when compared with the information we have concerning the other marriages under analysis. Finally, we may add that the two accounts by no means contradict one another; on the contrary, they can be read as complementary.

5) N., known as Irene in the Byzantine Empire x Alexios Komnenos, son of Emperor John II (1122)

In the *Kievan Chronicle* – whose currently extant form arose at the turn of the 12th and 13th centuries in Kiev (hence the name)²⁶ – we find the following sentence under the entry for 6630: **ВЕДЕНА МЪСТИСЛАВНА ВЪ ГРЪКЪ ЗА ЦЪРЬ**²⁷. Similar passages are found in other Rus' sources, presumably relying to a certain degree on the above-mentioned statement in the *Kievan Chronicle*²⁸.

²⁵ *Saxonis Gesta Danorum*, XIII, 1, vol. I, rec. J. OLRİK, H. RÆDER, Hauniae 1931 (cetera: *Saxonis Gesta Danorum*), p. 342.

²⁶ The source has been the subject of a great deal of reliable scholarly work. Neither the date of its origin nor the fact that it displays an intricate internal structure, reflecting a whole array of *svods*, have given rise to significant controversy (cf. e.g. В.Ю. ФРАНЧУК, *Киевская летопись. Состав и источники в лингвистическом освещении*, Киев 1986). It is worth noting that a new edition of this text been published recently, valuable especially from the philological point of view, *Киевская летопись*, ed. И.С. ЮРЬЕВА, Москва 2017. The text has been translated into Polish: *Latopis kijowski 1118–1158*, trans. et ed. E. GORANIN, Wrocław 1995 [= AUW.SW, 86]; *Latopis kijowski 1159–1198*, trans. et ed. E. GORANIN, Wrocław 1988 [= AUW.SW, 40]. The only English translation is available in: *The Kievan Chronicle*, trans. L. HEINRICH (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1977).

²⁷ *Ипатьевская летопись*, col. 286.

²⁸ Cf. e.g. *Летопись по Воскресенскому списку*, p. 25: дщи Мстислава ведена вьсть во Греки за царевича. As we see, the text provides some additional information here inasmuch as it identifies the groom's background. The 17th-century *Hustynja Chronicle* (*Густынская летопись*, [in:] *ПСРЛ*, vol. XL, Санкт-Петербург 2003, p. 76) goes even further in this respect: **В лѣто 6630. Мстиславъ**

Clearly, the adduced passage cannot be the basis for any conclusions regarding the circumstances and motivation behind the marriage in question.

It is interesting and quite noteworthy, however, that certain information complementing the above text is offered by 18th-century Russian historian Vasily Tatishchev (1686–1750). In the first redaction of his *Russian History*, the 6627 entry contains the fragment: **Послы же** [of emperor Alexios Komnenos] **рекоша;** under 6630, we read: **Введена дочь Мстислава, Владимирова внука, во Царьград за царя Иоанна, и проводиша ю с честью. С нею же иде епископ Никита**²⁹. In the second redaction of the work, the events are described as follows:

Потом просили послы [of emperor Alexios Komnenos], чтоб Владимир дал внуку свою, дочь Мстиславу, за сына императорского Иоанна [...] а о браке младости ради сочетающихся отложили на два года (6627) and Владимир отпустил внуку свою Довродею, дочь Мстиславу, в Царьград за императора Иоанна. С нею же послал Никиту епископа и других знатных вельмож. И принята была с великою честью (6630)³⁰.

Were we to take the above narrative at face value, we would at least obtain a partial explanation for the *raison d'être* of the marriage: the Byzantine emperor's initiative and the decision of the princess's grandfather (ruling in Kiev) to marry her off once she reaches adulthood. It must be emphasized, however, that – as we have already remarked elsewhere – almost none of the facts described here find confirmation in any other known sources (to the exception of the princess's filiation and the date of the marriage). In fact, some of them – as e.g. the identification of the princess's imperial husband – are patently false. Thus, bearing in mind Tatishchev's confabulatory tendencies as well as his habit of filling in missing information, we are forced to reject the account under discussion³¹.

- 6) Mstislav Fyodor Vladimirovich (at the time, Prince of Belgorod Kievsky) x N., daughter of Novgorod *posadnik* Dmitry Zavidich (October 15, 1122 – February 17, 1123)

Certain Rus' sources inform us about this marriage in a direct manner. For instance, the *Kievan Chronicle* includes the following passage under the 6630 entry: **се же лѣто привезоша из Новгорода. Мъстиславу жену другую Дмитровну.**

Володымирч отда дщер свою за царевича Греческого, сына Иоанна Комнина. See also the edition: *The Hustyynja Chronicle*, coll. O. ТОЛОЧКО, Cambridge Massachusetts 2013 [= HLEUL.T, 11], cf. p. 192. For the record, we may add that a Polish translation can be found in: *Latopis hustyński*, trans. et ed. H. SUSZKO, Wrocław 2003 [= AUW.SW, 124].

²⁹ В.Н. ТАТИШЕВ, *История российская*, pars 2, [in:] ИДЕМ, *Собрание сочинений*, vol. IV, Москва 1995, p. 182–183.

³⁰ ИДЕМ, *История российская*, pars 2, [in:] ИДЕМ, *Собрание сочинений*, vol. II–III, Москва 1995, p. 133, 135.

³¹ D. DĄBROWSKI, *Genealogia...*, p. 136–137; ИДЕМ, *Генеалогия...*, p. 136–137.

Завидову внуку³², while the Novgorod First Chronicle entry for the same year features the statement: **Томъ же лѣтъ оженися Мъстиславъ Кыевъ, поя Дмитровъну Новѣгородѣ Завидиця**³³. Thus, the latter source complements the former one by revealing that the marriage took place in Kiev³⁴. No further information is offered by any other chronicles³⁵. Indidentally, the phrasing **оженися Мъстиславъ Кыевъ** may at first glance appear to suggest that the marriage was initiated by the prince himself. Whether that was indeed the case remains unverifiable, however; note that Vladimir Monomakh, Mstislav's father, was still alive at the time, remaining fully in control of the state and the family³⁶.

It is clear that the extant data offer no possibility of any direct inference concerning the circumstances of the marriage; thus we can hardly draw any conclusions that would be satisfactory from the viewpoint of research on marriage politics.

7) Vsevolod Gabriel (at the time, Prince of Novgorod the Great) x N., daughter of Svyatoslav (Svyatosha) Davidovich (March 1, 1123 – February 29, 1124)

The 6631 entry of the *Novgorod First Chronicle* informs us: **Оженися Всеволод, сын Мъстиславль, Новѣгородѣ**³⁷; similar notes are found in other Rus' sources, probably based on the above statement³⁸. Needless to say, this information merely enables us to confirm the existence of the marriage and to determine the approximate date³⁹.

³² *Ипатьевская летопись*, col. 286.

³³ *Новгородская первая летопись*, p. 21, 205.

³⁴ The *Kievan chronicles* did not consider it necessary to note from where привезоша из Новгорода. **Мъстиславу жену**, since the destination was the very place where he wrote his work.

³⁵ *Софийская первая летопись старшего извода*, [in:] *ПСРЛ*, vol. VI.1, Москва 2000 (cetera: *Софийская первая летопись*), col. 220: [6630 г.] **Женися князь Мъстиславъ Бълодимеричъ в Кыевъ, поя Дмитриевну в Новѣгородѣ Завидовичъ**. Similarly e.g. *Тверская летопись*, [in:] *ПСРЛ*, vol. XV, Москва 2000 (cetera: *Тверская летопись*), col. 193; *Типографская летопись*, [in:] *ПСРЛ*, vol. XXIV, Москва 2000, p. 74.

³⁶ A telling sign of Monomakh's remaining in charge of state and family matters alike is, for example, Mstislav's being transferred from Novgorod the Great to Belgorod Kievsky in 1117 (*Ипатьевская летопись*, col. 284; *Лаврентьевская летопись*, [in:] *ПСРЛ*, vol. I, Москва 2001 (cetera: *Лаврентьевская летопись*), col. 291). Furthermore, at the time, the old prince would frequently manipulate his sons as executors of his political will. One instance of such behavior – particularly informative as regards the topic of our study – occurred when Yaroslav Svyatopolchich (according to a group of chronicles) sent away his wife, Mstislav's daughter and Vladimir's granddaughter. Monomakh organized an expedition against Yaroslav and installed his son Roman in the conquered city of Vladimir-in-Volhynia; when Roman died, he was replaced by his brother Andrew (*Московский летописный*, p. 28).

³⁷ *Новгородская первая летопись*, p. 21, 205.

³⁸ *Новгородская четвертая летопись*, [in:] *ПСРЛ*, vol. IV, Москва 2000, p. 143 (entry for 6631); *Софийская первая летопись*, col. 220 (entry for 6631); *Тверская летопись*, col. 193 (entry for 6631).

³⁹ Concerning the chronological details, cf. Д. ДОМБРОВСКИЙ, *Генеалогия...*, p. 110.

We may add that the bride's filiation can be established based on the following passage from the *Novgorod First Chronicle*: **В лето 6641 [...] пострижесе Святоша князь, сын Давыдов, Чьрнигове, тьсть Всеволожь**⁴⁰.

Again, it is evident that the circumstances and motivation behind the marriage remain unrecoverable in view of the quite limited information in the sources.

8) Izyaslav Panteleimon x NN (before 1130 (in the 1220s))

The sources do not mention the fact of Izyaslav's marriage – his relationship with NN is only attested indirectly. For example, the princess's death is noted in the *Kievan Chronicle* entry for the year 6659⁴¹; moreover, the couple's children have a clear presence in the sources⁴².

Thus, this case exemplifies the situation where absolutely no conclusions regarding the circumstances and political significance of a given marriage are possible.

9) N., possibly baptismal or monastic name Xenia x Prince Bryachislav of Logoyisk and Izyaslavl (1119 – before August 1127)

Not unlike in the preceding case, no source mentions the event of the marriage directly; we can only infer the latter's existence from the *Kievan Chronicle* account of Mstislav Vladimirovich's expedition against Polotsk (year 6636), where we read:

Изыславъ [Мстиславич] же. перестрапъ два дни у Логожьска. и иде къ Изаславию. къ строеви своему. вода съ собою Брачислава зата своего. иже еаше пошель. к штцью своему и быеть посредеѣ пути и острашиса не мога поити ни сѣлю ни онамо. и иде шюрину своему в рущѣ и Логожаны приведе. иже еѣ вывелъ из Логожьства и виднеше Изаслави княза своего. и Логожаны. иже ес пакости сѣть [...] Воротиславъ Яндрѣевъ тысячькыи. и Иванко Вячславъ въсласта отроки своя в городъ [Изыславль = Заславль = Заслауѣ]. и свитающю. оубиднеше вси вон тако възаша. и в ночи и одева Мьстиславыи товаръ ублюдоша. и то з нуажю бьучиса.⁴³

In effect, we are dealing with yet another marriage whose circumstances and political motivation remain entirely obscure due to the lack of source information.

10) N., possibly baptismal or monastic name Maria x Vsevolod Olegovich, son of Oleg Svyatoslavich (summer 1126 – spring 1127)

⁴⁰ *Новгородская первая летопись*, p. 19, 203.

⁴¹ *Ипатьевская летопись*, col. 446: то же верей престависа княгини Изаславляя. A similar note concerning the death of Izyaslav's first wife is found in the *Laurentian Chronicle* (*Лаврентьевская летопись*, col. 336: **В то же время престависа княгини Изаславляя**).

⁴² On the children from Izyaslav's first marriage cf. e.g. D. DĄBROWSKI, *Genealogia...*, p. 212–248.

⁴³ *Ипатьевская летопись*, col. 292, 292–293. Similar information is also found in other chronicles (*Лаврентьевская летопись*, col. 298; *Радзивилловская летопись*, [in:] *ПСРЛ*, vol. XXXVIII, Ленинград 1989, p. 106).

This is the third consecutive case in which the event of the marriage is not reflected in the sources at all. That the unnamed daughter of Mstislav was the wife of Vsevolod Olegovich can only be deduced from the (rather numerous) indirect indications showing the relationship of affinity between Vsevolod and Mstislav's sons and the relationship of consanguinity between the latter and Vsevolod's princess, as well as between Svyatoslav Vsevolodovich and Izyaslav Mstislavich⁴⁴.

It follows that, as far as information useful for researching marriage politics is concerned, the sources provide us with no data whatsoever – just as in the two preceding cases.

11) Malmfred x King Eric Emune of Denmark (after 7 January 1131 – winter 1131/1132)

Malmfred's second marriage is only reflected in Scandinavian sources. Interestingly, however, Saxo Grammaticus provides information that may give us some understanding of the politics behind it. The relevant passage reads:

Superveniunt legati, a Magno rege Norvagiensium missi, maiorem Kanuti filiam, sed non-dum nuptiis tempestivam, eius coniugio petituri. Quorum legationem Ericus contrahendarum virium spe favorabiliter habuit, excepit alacriter, cupiens finitimorum auxilia affinitatis beneficio comparare. Ipse quoque, bellis otium interpellantibus, adhuc coniugio vacuus, novercam Magni, Norvagiensium quondam reginam, utpote dignus hac nuptiarum vicissitudine favente eiusdem privigno, suscepit uxorem.⁴⁵

Evidently, Norwegian ruler Magnus Blinde – himself striving to marry Christina, daughter of Canute Lavard and Ingeborg – resolved to augment his alliance with Eric Emune (who was fighting for control over Denmark) with as many as two marriages. This also provided him with the opportunity to have his stepmother leave the country. Eric, counting on Norwegian support, accepted the deal. Incidentally, after losing the war for the crown, he fled to Norway and took Malmfred with him. Although initially received cordially, he was later imprisoned. He managed to break free; soon afterwards, Mangus Blinde sent Christina to him⁴⁶. The fact that this alliance – based on two marriages – turned out to be so volatile is a prime example of how erratic the dynamics of marriage-related politics could be: they were clearly determined by a number of extemporaneous factors.

⁴⁴ Cf. e.g. *Ипатьевская летопись*, col. 308, 309, 327, 377; *Лаврентьевская летопись*, col. 309.

⁴⁵ *Saxonis Gesta Danorum*, XIII, 8, vol. I, p. 360. Similar accounts are found in: *Historia Sancti Canuti Ducis et Martyris, auctore Anonymo*, [in:] *Scriptores Rerum Danicarum Medii Aevii*, vol. IV, ed. J. LANGEBEK, Hafniae 1776, p. 250; *Ágrip af sögu Danakonunga*, [in:] *Danakonunga sögur. Skjöldunga saga; Knýtlinga saga; Ágrip af sögu Danakonunga*, ed. B. GUÐNÁSON, Reykjavík 1982 [= Ifö, 35], p. 332–333.

⁴⁶ *Saxonis Gesta Danorum*, XIII, 8, vol. I, p. 360.

- 12) Rostislav Michael x NN, a representative of the Halych branch of the Rurikids, daughter of Volodar Rostislavich or Vasil'ko Rostislavich (before 1133/1134 r.)

We can only include this relationship in our survey hypothetically, since we do not know when the marriage took place. Certain indirect indications permit us to surmise that it happened before 1133/1134 at the latest⁴⁷, i.e. possibly during Mstislav's final years.

As the reader may have inferred from the above statement, Rostislav Mstislavich's marriage is not mentioned in the sources directly. Our knowledge about it is based on a number of random, enigmatic remarks concerning his wife scattered across various sources⁴⁸, as well as on the fact of his having children (well-documented in the source material⁴⁹).

Hence, in the light of the extant evidence, we are scarcely able to formulate any hypothesis regarding the circumstances and political context of Rostislav's marriage.

* * *

The analysis of the source material reveals certain most unfavorable tendencies as far as research on marriage policies is concerned. Firstly, from among the marriages selected for our sample, four are not mentioned directly in any source at all (Izyaslav to NN; N., possibly baptismal or monastic name Xenia to Bryachislav; N., possibly baptismal or monastic name Maria to Vsevolod Olegovich; Rostislav to N., possibly a representative of the Halych branch of the Rurikids). This amounts to as much as one third of the selection. Secondly, if we limit ourselves to sources native to Rus', a number of further relationships elude us completely, namely those of Mstislav Vladimirovich (first marriage), Ingeborg, and Malmfred (both marriages). It turns out, then, that Rus' authors failed to mention 8 out of the 12 marriages ($\frac{2}{3}$ of the sample⁵⁰).

Accordingly, both the marriage of Mstislav himself to the Swedish royal and the relationships of Mstislav's daughters with one Norwegian and two Danish dynasts are only reflected – with various levels of attention to detail – in foreign sources (predominantly Scandinavian; in a single case, Norman⁵¹).

⁴⁷ Concerning the chronology cf. D. DĄBROWSKI, *Genealogia...*, p. 129, 132.

⁴⁸ Cf. e.g. *Новгородская первая летопись*, p. 30, 217; *Ипатьевская летопись*, col. 516.

⁴⁹ Most extensively on Rostislav's children cf. D. DĄBROWSKI, *Genealogia...*, p. 400–444.

⁵⁰ Needless to say, we mean information stated explicitly, not indirect allusions of various sorts.

⁵¹ As correctly pointed out by Tatjana Jackson, Rus' sources fail to note a single marriage of a member of the native ruling family to a Scandinavian dynast (Т.Н. ДЖАКСОН, *Исландские королевские саги о Восточной Европе (середина XI – середина XIII в.). Тексты, перевод, комментарий*, Москва 2000, p. 11).

To be sure, we should concede that in the case of Malmfred's second marriage this fact is fully understandable, given that it was an affair of intra-Scandinavian scope. This, however, leads to a conclusion that is interesting in its own right. Namely, the example of Malmfred might permit us to assume that a princess married off in a foreign land was no longer in the sphere of interest of a Rus' ruler as far as marriage politics was concerned. Nonetheless, although the case under discussion could be explained in this way, we also know of instances (likewise stemming from Rurikid practices) where the converse was true. We may exemplify this with the marriages of Anastasia, daughter of Prince Alexander Vsevolodovich of Belz⁵². In what is incidentally the only appearance of the princess in the text, the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* states:

Потом[ь] же с[ы]нъ его оумре Болеславъ, Мазовец[ь]кый княз[ь], | и вѣдсть Мазовешь
врату своему Сомовитови, послѣшавъ княза Данила, вѣ бо братоучада его за нимъ | дѣщи
Ялеѣандрова именован[ь] Настасіа, яже посаже потом[ь] | за водрина оугор[ь]скаго именован[ь]
Дмитра⁵³.

Clearly, Anastasia's future was decided not by the kinsmen of her Masovian husband, but by her Rus' relative: the latter was not only the hegemon on the territories that the princess's father (presumably no longer alive at the time) had ruled before, but also probably the architect behind Anastasia's first marriage as well. The veracity of the account found in the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* is corroborated by the very choice of the second husband for Bolesław I's widow: a Hungarian nobleman by the name of Dmitry. The princes of Masovia had no interests in Hungary, while Daniel by all means did.

In consequence, it is difficult to point out any definite principles concerning the Rurikid princesses' marriages outside of Rus'. It seems that, in the case of the husband's death, their further fate depended on a combination of diverse factors. This conclusion also applies to the story of Mstislav's daughter Ingeborg, where a yet different approach was chosen: namely, we know that after her husband's murder the princess relocated to Rus'. There, she gave birth to his posthumous son Valdemar, who later became an eminent ruler of Denmark⁵⁴.

Digressions aside, let us return to the main issue at hand.

⁵² It can be inferred from a number of indirect premises that Anastasia married Prince Bolesław I Konradowic of Masovia between late spring 1244 and August 17 or 18, 1245 (D. DĄBROWSKI, *Genealogia...*, p. 391–394). This view was recently accepted e.g. by Janusz GRABOWSKI, one of the leading experts on the Masovia Piasts (*Dynastia Piastów mazowieckich*, ²Warszawa–Kraków 2016, p. 434).

⁵³ *Kronika halicko-wołyńska. (Kronika Romanowiczów)*, rec. D. DĄBROWSKI, A. JUSUPOVIĆ et al., [in:] *MPH.SN*, vol. XVI, p. 299–300. (For the English translation of the source, see: *The Hypatian Codex*, pars 2, *The Galician-Volynian Chronicle*, trans. G.A. PERFECKY, München 1973 [= HSUS, 16.2]). Cf. also *Ипатьевская летопись*, col. 810.

⁵⁴ *Saxonis Gesta Danorum*, XIII, 7, vol. I, p. 356. Cf. also *Knyttlinga saga*, XLIII. Kapitúli.

It should be emphasized particularly strongly that – save for two exceptions of Scandinavian provenance – the sources convey no information whatsoever as regards the political aims behind this or that marriage agreement.

It appears, then, that the chroniclers of the period and cultural sphere in question did not regard details concerning marriages (such as their circumstances or the reasons behind them) as information notable enough to be worth preserving. Truth be told, even the very fact of the marriage did not always belong to this category. And to the extent that such information is given after all, the pattern of omitting the woman's name predominates in the sample under analysis (we mean the native Rus's sources here): Mstislav's daughters figure in the relevant passages anonymously, and so do his sons' wives. This principle, we may note, also applied to other women who belonged to (or entered) the dynasty. Sometimes, of course, a Rus' chronicler would decide to include the name of a given princess in his narrative. However, pursuing this issue further would be outside of the scope of the present study; we will limit ourselves to noting that the Scandinavian sources follow a wholly different practice when speaking about Mstislav's wife and daughters.

Are we in a position to answer the question why Rus' chroniclers, quite unlike their Scandinavian counterparts, displayed so little interest in the local dynasty's marriages? Although the problem remains rather enigmatic, we may at least venture a tentative explanation. Firstly, let us note how the genre of a given source, as well as the environment in which it arose, could influence its content. Thus, the *Novgorod First Chronicle* – closely associated with the ruler's court during the time under discussion, and resembling the western annals in form and substance – tended to note down the relevant content in a succinct manner, not necessarily delving into the political intricacies behind the princely marriages. On the other hand, the final part of the *Tale of Bygone Years* and the beginning of the *Kievan Chronicle* – which, as we noted above, may be regarded as a 'personal' court journal of Monomakh and his house – hardly pay any more attention to the royals' matrimonial life. Is it due to the individual interests of the author or authors? Who knows. Be that as it may, it is a fact that the various authors associated with the Rus' princely courts did display some variation as regards their interest in particular topics; this issue is in need of substantial further research. Although we cannot deal with the question here, we may make certain preliminary observations. Thus, while the chronicler of Vsevolod the Big Nest consistently – and quite atypically – included precise information concerning the births of the princely couple's children, the author writing for Vladimir Vasil'kovich paid particular attention to his master's daily life and deeds. We have no choice but to abandon this topic here, however – hoping to develop it further on a different occasion – and we shall return to issues of direct relevance for our central question.

We must turn to another fundamental issue. Does the glaring scarcity of data – as described above on the basis of several examples – preclude any research on

the Rurikid marriage policies whatsoever? Before we proceed to answering this more general question, let us first return to the narrower issue to which the present study is devoted. Thus, in spite of the extremely sparse source material (first and foremost, the virtual lack of information stated directly), we should still answer the question in the positive: such research is possible. Let us first recall the obvious truth that even an indirect remark concerning the existence of a given marriage is tantamount to confirming the relationship between the parties involved. Consequently, a meticulous analysis of other data concerning the relations between the relevant states (or principalities, in the case of inter-Rus' affairs) may bring considerable results, especially when concentrated on a highly specific period (based on the available chronological indications). Regrettably, in those cases where no chronological clues concerning the event of the marriage are available, the situation is markedly less optimistic: in fact, we usually remain utterly helpless, unable to locate the potentially traceable political background. Even in such instances, however, there is sometimes hope. To exemplify this, we shall inspect the marriage of N. (Mstislav's daughter) to Vsevolod Olegovich. Let us first note that – although we would be searching the sources in vain for a direct mention of the event – we are in the position to ascertain the *terminus ad quem* quite precisely. This is so because we know that: 1) Svyatoslav Vsevolodovich, who was in all likelihood the couple's eldest child, married already in 6651 (i.e. 1143); 2) Zvenislava, daughter of Vsevolod, was married off to Bolesław the Tall; 3) Yaroslav Vsevolodovich was born in 6648 (i.e. 1139). It is plain to see that Vsevolod Olegovich must have married Mstislav's anonymous daughter no later than in 1126–1127⁵⁵. Having established the *terminus ad quem* – which, although based exclusively on indirect evidence, can be considered fairly reliable – we may direct our attention to the likely political setting of this marriage. It is known that in 6635 or 6636 – according to Rus' sources – Vsevolod Olegovich rebelled against his paternal uncle Yaroslav Svyatoslavich, who ruled Chernigov at the time. The revolt was successful; the defeated prince was later relocated to Murom, while Vsevolod ascended the Chernigov throne⁵⁶. Despite an earlier agreement with Yaroslav, Mstislav Vladimirovich – the Kievan prince at the time – did not support him, taking Vsevolod's side instead⁵⁷. As we already argued above, we believe that this evident shift of alliances was related to nothing other than a newly-reached agreement between the ruler in Kiev and Vsevolod Olegovich – an agreement augmented by marriage⁵⁸. This case exemplifies what we consider successful use of indirect argumentation in research on marriage politics (in a situation in which direct information is wanting).

⁵⁵ The essence of this reasoning is presented in D. DĄBROWSKI, *Genealogia...*, p. 148–149.

⁵⁶ *Лаврентьевская летопись*, col. 296–297 (entry for 6635); *Ипатьевская летопись*, col. 290–292 (entry for 6636).

⁵⁷ *Ипатьевская летопись*, col. 291–292.

⁵⁸ D. DĄBROWSKI, *Genealogia...*, p. 148–152.

Naturally, as far as certain other members of the Rurikid dynasty are concerned, the source material is not as meager as in the case of Mstislav Vladimirovich and his children: we may mention e.g. Daniel Romanovich, where much more information of the relevant kind has been preserved⁵⁹. Again, however, developing this point further would be outside the scope of the present article.

We shall close our analysis with a judgement more optimistic than could be expected based on the fairly gloomy opening: in spite of the mercilessly sparse source material, it is by all means possible to conduct feasible research on the Rurikids' marriage policies. One must know how to do it right, however. Thus, such studies must on the one hand be rooted in a deep knowledge of the relevant sources (not only of Rus' provenance) as well as the ability to subject them to astute analysis; on the other hand, they must adhere to the methodology established by our predecessors in the field, as outlined in the introductory sections of the present work.

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⁵⁹ Concerning this representative of the dynasty, cf. the two recently published volumes on his biography (D. DAŃBROWSKI, *Daniel Romanowicz król Rusi (ok. 1201–1264). Biografia polityczna*, Kraków 2012 [= M.UKW.PBDR, 1]; IDEM, *Król Rusi Daniel Romanowicz. O ruskiej rodzinie książęcej, społeczeństwie i kulturze w XIII w.*, Kraków 2016 [= M.UKW.PBDR, 4]).

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Abstract. The main goal of the article is to present the possibilities and methods of research on the Rurikid's matrimonial policy in the Middle Ages on the example of a selected group of princes. As the subject of studies were chosen Mstislav Vladimirovich and his children. In total, 12 matrimonial relationships were included.

The analysis of the source material revealed very unfavorable phenomena from the perspective of the topic under study. The Rus' primary sources gave information on the conclusion of just four marriages out of twelve. The next four matrimonial arrangement inform foreign sources (Scandinavian and Norman). It should be emphasized particularly strongly that – save for two exceptions of Scandinavian provenance – the sources convey no information whatsoever as regards the political aims behind this or that marriage agreement.

It appears, then, that the chroniclers of the period and cultural sphere in question did not regard details concerning marriages (such as their circumstances or the reasons behind them) as “information notable enough to be worth preserving”. Truth be told, even the very fact of the marriage did not always belong to this category.

Due to the state of preservation of primary sources the basic question arises as to whether it is possible to study the Rurikids' matrimonial policy?

In spite of the mercilessly sparse source material, it is by all means possible to conduct feasible research on the Rurikids' marriage policy. One must know how to do it right, however. Thus, such studies must on the one hand be rooted in a deep knowledge of the relevant sources (not only of Rus' provenance) as well as the ability to subject them to astute analysis; on the other hand, they must adhere to the specially developed methodology, presented in the first part of the article.

Keywords: genealogy, matrimonial policy, Rurikids, medieval Rus', Mstislav Fedor Vladimirovich and his family

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ELECTRONIC DIACHRONIC CORPUS AND DICTIONARIES OF OLD BULGARIAN

The *histdict* electronic resource (available at histdict.uni-sofia.bg)¹, launched over nine years ago, is the first attempt at creating a representative diachronic corpus of the Bulgarian language, as well as a historical dictionary and set of electronic tools for processing medieval texts².

The work on the *histdict* system started with the development of specialized Old Bulgarian Unicode fonts with a diverse inventory of letters and diacritic marks. Three such fonts were developed at that time: Cyrillica Bulgarian 10U, Cyrillica Ohrid 10U and Cyrillica OldStyle 10U, which is designated for Early Modern Bulgarian texts. The fonts also feature a convertor that converts texts typed in non-Unicode fonts into Unicode. Naturally, the objective was for the electronic resources to be accessible to everyone, not requiring the user to have the respective font.

The objective of the *histdict* electronic diachronic corpus is to present the Bulgarian literary heritage of the period from the 10th to the 18th century in all of its genres and across its thematic diversity. The corpus comprises texts of certain Bulgarian provenance – both original works and translations by Bulgarian scribes (including ones preserved in later Russian and Serbian copies). Thus, the corpus contains works by Clement of Ohrid, John the Exarch, Constantine of Preslav, Patriarch Euthymius, and Constantine of Kostenets; also included are the texts of the Manasses chronicle and the Troyan parable, the Philippi Monotropi Dioptra, the Wallachian-Bulgarian diplomas, Paisii Hilendarski's *Slavonic-Bulgarian History*, the Lovech and Troyan Damascenes, etc. Furthermore, the corpus features chronicles, pieces of monastic literature, historical and apocalyptic texts, legal texts, miscellanies with stable and mixed content, and codicils³. At present, the

¹ The aim of this paper is to present the *histdict* system. The paper was written with the support from the project BG05M2OP001-2-009-0005 “Modern Palaeoslavonic and Medieval Studies”, financed under the Operational Program “Science and Education for Smart Growth”, co-financed by the European Union through the European Structural and Investment Funds.

² The development of the *histdict* system has been financed by several consecutive grants of the Fund for Scientific Studies at the Ministry of Education and Science, the Human Resources Development Operational Program, as well as the Center for Excellence in the Humanities “Alma Mater”.

³ А. ТОТОМАНОВА, *Диахронный корпус болгарского языка. Состояние и перспективы* (in press: “Filologia”, Zagreb).

electronic corpus does not include any texts from the classic Old Bulgarian (Old Church Slavonic) corpus, such as Codex Marianus, Codex Zographensis, Codex Assemanius, Sava's book, Codex Suprasliensis, etc.; these manuscripts have been lexicographically processed and their material included (with contexts) in the two-volume Old Bulgarian dictionary of the Institute for Bulgarian Language at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences⁴. The dictionary has been digitalized and incorporated in the *histsdict* system. Inasmuch as the electronic version of the dictionary is a type of annotated corpus, it may be used for automated searching and extracting of information.

The documents in the corpus normally reflect the original spelling of the manuscripts or editions they have been drawn from. The corpus is freely accessible and includes certain text annotation tools: comments, variant readings, paleographic and codicological notes, etc. Footnotes are marked in yellow, variant readings in blue, while words marked for both footnotes and variant readings are displayed in green. For our users' convenience, some of the text titles have also been translated into Latin.

As regards the contents of the electronic diachronic corpus, it may be noted that – in the perfect scenario – this should be a matter of policy rather than a given person's enthusiasm or subjective assessment. The matter of representation and sampling is a highly contentious issue in diachronic corpora. Only a diachronic corpus with a highly diverse and rich content may be claimed to have a truly representative character. Thus, it is mandatory for a diachronic corpus to have a clear underlying concept of its nature and of the identity of the texts that it is supposed to include – so that it does not omit any works of importance for the relevant language and its literary history, and so that a certain type of texts does not dominate over others. Simply put, the diachronic corpus of a particular language should never be a mere mechanical collection of works, and it should by no means be used as a tool for including and sharing unwarranted texts based solely on their availability.

Two dictionaries are currently included in the *histsdict* system – the digitalized Old Bulgarian dictionary, already mentioned above, and a historical dictionary of the Bulgarian language. The latter traces the history of words and their meanings from the time of their first attestation in medieval manuscripts until the present day⁵. The concept of the *histsdict* system is to create a historical dictionary of the Bulgarian language through editing and supplementing the digitalized Old Bulgarian dictionary⁶. To this end, specialized software has been developed, namely two separate programs for creating and editing dictionary entries.

⁴ *Старобългарски речник*, vol. I–II, София 1999–2009.

⁵ A. ТОГОМАНОВА, *Digital Presentation of Bulgarian Lexical Heritage. Towards an Electronic Historical Dictionary*, SCer, 2, 2012, p. 221–234.

⁶ In order to accommodate our users, new words and words edited on the basis of their appearance in the Old Bulgarian dictionary have been marked in blue and green, respectively, in the historical dictionary.

Firstly, let us briefly describe the principles behind our electronic historical dictionary of the Bulgarian language. A historical dictionary should be regarded as a lexicographical manual which follows the changes in the meaning of words, interpreted as changes of the semantic content. The dictionary in question is not interested in all contextual variations, nor does it claim to be exhaustive in terms of manuscript attestations. The historical dictionary of the *histdict* system is based on four principles: 1) the history of words is reviewed in a wide chronological perspective; 2) meanings are retrieved from a language corpus unlimited from the thematic point of view; 3) it has an open glossary; 4) the meanings are ordered according to their occurrence, and according to the genetic connections among them.

The historical dictionary of the Bulgarian language is constructed according to a thematically-oriented principle. After the separate lexical fields have been processed, such a thematic approach to the lexicon of the Bulgarian language in a diachronic perspective allows to reach certain conclusions regarding the pathways of the intellectualization of the language during the Middle Ages as well as regarding the development of the literary vocabulary. At the present stage, the section on the Christian terminology has been developed, including approximately 800 new and revised dictionary entries. The selection of this particular lexical field was dictated by the fact that Old Bulgarian (Old Church Slavic) was the sacred and literary language of the Orthodox Slavs⁷.

During the development of the program for creating and editing dictionary entries, we have encountered a number of problems. The first software we developed operates according to a form-based principle. It displays a sequence of boxes featuring a dropdown menu, or typing boxes (fig. 1). It is possible to complete and/or modify their content. The development of this program was the result of a prolonged and meticulous effort spanning many years. From the very beginning, we were aware of the fact that we needed a piece of software which would allow changing a single letter in the longest and most complex dictionary entry, and saving it without any other changes. This meant that forms had to be structured in such a manner that they could cover all entries from the digitalized Old Bulgarian dictionary, which we intended to edit and supplement in order to create our historical dictionary. This idea, which at first glance appeared simple and appropriate, proved to be challenging to implement, because the authors of the Old Bulgarian dictionary had allowed for certain ambiguities and inconsistencies in their entries. However, even in dictionaries created with the finest level of precision certain entries will most likely have an ambiguous structure, and this group

⁷ А. ТОТОМАНОВА, Проектът “Информатика, граматика, лексикография” и дигиталната обработка на средновековни славянски текстове, *Информатика, граматика, лексикография* BG051-3.3-06-0024/2012, [in:] *Информатика, граматика, лексикография* BG051-3.3-06-0024/2012. Сборник доклади и материали от заключителната конференция, София, 29–30.06.2015 г., ed. А. ТОТОМАНОВА, Т. СЛАНОВА, София 2015, p. 5–16.

is prone to be exceedingly difficult to digitalize using the model of the remaining entries. However, we still make use of this program anyway: our experience has shown that it is quite convenient for making small changes, such as correcting printing errors. The software is also highly useful for editing the information contained in the dropdown menus – in our case, this corresponds to grammatical information. For example, there was a group of words in the Old Bulgarian dictionary which were inadequately marked as participles in their ‘part of speech’ field (ОГЛАШЕНЪ, ПОВЕЛЕНЪ, ЧУДНАИЪ, БОГОУТВЪВАНЪ, БОГОУПОУЧЕНЪ, НЕВЪДОМЪ etc.). It became evident that, using the above-described form-based software, it was possible to change the grammatical category quickly and easily, marking these words as adjectives or verbs, which they indeed are⁸.

This software for composing and editing dictionary entries proved to be far less convenient for implementing major changes, however (for example, for merging meanings, adding new ones, interchanging them, etc.), as well as for creating wholly new entries. Currently, we are working on a dictionary of the language of Patriarch Euthymius, which requires writing entirely new dictionary entries. The form-based software makes it necessary to compose the text in Word files and subsequently to distribute the information across the relevant boxes by copying and pasting. This is overly labor-intensive, and therefore we created new software specifically designed for dictionary entries, which is of the convertor type (fig. 2). The text has to be composed in a Word file nevertheless, but in accordance with special conventions – there are requirements regarding the formatting of the headline, grammatical information, meanings, examples, etc. Afterwards, the authors copy and paste their entries into a special box in *histdict*. When converting, the software automatically arranges the words in alphabetical order. If we copy and paste an already existing headword into the dictionary of Patriarch Euthymius, the new content is automatically substituted in place of the pre-existing one. It is possible to copy a word from the electronic dictionary into a Word file, edit it there, and then replace it in the dictionary by copy-pasting. In principle, this new convertor could be used to input an unlimited number of words, but in practice it starts slowing down when more than 100 entries are submitted. Although this software has been created for the dictionary of Patriarch Euthymius, it is suitable for creating new dictionaries. *Histdict* now incorporates both the legacy software and the new software for dictionary entries; users can choose the one they consider easier and more comfortable to work with.

The electronic grammatical dictionary of the Old Bulgarian language (9th–15th century) is also part of the *histdict* system (fig. 3). Without a grammatical dictionary, it would not have been possible to create an adequate electronic system for

⁸ The changes we introduce are only saved in our historical dictionary. The digitalized Old Bulgarian dictionary does not use this software, and it remains a precise copy of the printed version of the Old Bulgarian dictionary.

presenting the Bulgarian literary heritage. Considerations of a technical nature make it essential to include such an element. Search engines may only operate efficiently and provide reliable data when working on an annotated corpus, and the morphological annotation of parts of speech is necessary at the very least. An automated analysis tool (tagger) is indispensable for such morphological annotation, and in turn the tagger could not have been created without a grammatical dictionary. To compile such a dictionary, it was necessary to generate all possible word forms from our medieval manuscripts. Initially conceived as a mere ancillary tool for the future tagger, the grammatical dictionary of *hstdict* in fact took on an existence of its own. Currently, it presents complete paradigms of words, taking into account any phonetic and morphological changes in the endings; it also displays the shape of the relevant word forms according to the Russian and Serbian recensions of the Old Bulgarian (Old Church Slavic) language. The grammatical dictionary is incorporated in the historical dictionary. The information may be retrieved either by a special search, using the 'word forms' button, or by clicking on the respective word in the historical dictionary.

It is natural that the grammatical dictionary needs to provide actually reliable grammatical information. For example, the verb ДЪРАТИ only attests imperfect forms of the type ДѢРѢХЪ, and we could not be certain if there had ever existed any forms of the type ДЪРААХЪ, as traditionally stated in the grammars. A similar situation obtains for deficient noun paradigms (for example, *singularia* or *pluralia tantum*), aorist types in the verbs of the I and II conjugation, etc. A question arises how to proceed in such cases: is it justified, for the sake of creating a comprehensive resource, to mechanically generate word forms whose existence cannot be confirmed by sufficient evidence? Furthermore, if such forms are to be reconstructed, is it necessary to mark them in any special way?⁹

Thus, in order to create a reliable grammatical dictionary, it is necessary to verify (using the search engine) which forms are attested in the electronic diachronic corpus and which ones are not. But the reason for creating the grammatical dictionary is precisely because no reliable search engine could be created in the corpus. The salvation in this case was the ingenious solution of adopting the functionalities of browsers in order to allow searches in the electronic corpus and in the historical dictionary. Currently, the search engine of the *hstdict* system only displays the texts in which a given search string is attested and the frequency of the string in each of those texts. Subsequently, by clicking on the title of a given text, a search inside the text itself can be performed, which allows locating all of the occurrences. The search engine has a virtual keyboard, and it works flawlessly with the historical dictionary, which is a type of annotated corpus.

⁹ In our grammatical dictionary, defective paradigms are marked with a dash, while an asterisk is placed in front of reconstructed forms (which are themselves colored in red).

In order to create an electronic grammatical dictionary, it was necessary to specify all possible formal types (rules for generating forms) of the Old Bulgarian language (fig. 4). What we have in mind here is not a traditional grammatical description; instead, we operate on the principle of ‘cutting and pasting’. The common part of the word forms – interpreted literally, not in a strictly linguistic sense – is separated; e.g., the ‘basic part’ of the word forms of the verb *дѣрати* is not the root *дѣр-/дѣр-*, but is *д-*. Next, the ‘endings’ (likewise interpreted superficially, and not grammatically) are pasted after the main part: for example, if *-ерѣши* is pasted after *д-*, one gets the form for the 2nd person singular present indicative. Similarly, *-ерѣтъ*, *-ерѣтъ* and *-ерѣт* are the possible elements that can be pasted to obtain the 3rd person singular present indicative. To provide one more example: verbs such as *ковати*, *зѣвати* or *дѣрати*, which belong to the III subtype of the I conjugation, could not be described in the grammatical dictionary using a single rule. The verb *ковати*, *ковѣши* could not be generated using the model of *дѣрати*, *дѣрѣши*, because the common part of the word forms of *ковати* is *ков-*, and therefore the following element could not be pasted as *-ерѣши*, *-ерѣтъ* etc., but only *-ѣши*, *-ѣтъ* etc. The verbs *зѣвати* and *дѣрати*, for their part, also do not follow the same rule for generating their forms¹⁰. As regards *зѣвати*, manuscripts provide evidence for imperfect forms of the type *зѣваахъ*, *зѣваашѣ* and *зѣвахъ*, *зѣвахѣ*, while for *дѣрати* only the type *дѣрѣхъ*, *дѣрѣхѣ* is attested.

Altogether, a total of 163 formal types have been specified for nouns, 22 for adjectives, and 230 for verbs¹¹. Once created, a formal rule can be applied to an unlimited number of new words. This means that it is possible to automatically generate paradigms of new words later to be included in the historical dictionary. Another advantage of the electronic grammatical dictionary is the possibility to edit the rules at any time, in case yet different types of forms were to occur in a newly added manuscript.

A total of 16 cells of the system are allocated for nouns, 129 for adjectives and 33 for verbs. Each cell can be filled with several word forms, because both language change and spelling variations are considered. Furthermore, this number is not final; rather, it constantly increases with the inclusion of new texts in our corpus. In fact, the large number of patterns in the grammatical dictionary reflects the different formal types in declension and conjugation, the changes that have occurred in the history of the language, as well as the natural anomalies and exceptions in the inflection of Bulgarian, a fusional language.

In conclusion, we would like to state that we have always been guided by the aspiration to make the *histdict* system an open, rich and well-structured platform, which would guarantee its longevity. We are trying to make this electronic

¹⁰ Compare the forms *зѣвати*, *зѣвахѣ* and *дѣрати*, *дѣрѣши*.

¹¹ А. ТОТОМАНОВА, Т. СЛАВОВА, Г. ГАНЕВА, *Морфосинтактичен тагсет на старобългарския книжовен език*, [in:] *Информатика...*, p. 17–117.

resource provide its users with as much information as possible. It is clear to us that *histdict* has a representative function, and it can potentially be utilized by a wide range of users.

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TOTOMANOVA A., SLAVOVA T., GANEVA G., *Morfosintaktiĉen tagset na starobŭlgarskija knižoven ezik*, [in:] *Informatika, gramatika, leksikografija BG051-3.3-06-0024/2012. Sbornik dokladi i materiali ot zakljuĉitelnata konferencija, Sofija, 29–30.06.2015 g.*, ed. A. TOTOMANOVA, T. SLAVOVA, Sofija 2015, p. 17–117.

Abstract. The electronic system *histdict* is designed as a tool for research, adequate presentation and popularization of a part of Bulgaria's cultural and historical heritage: the Bulgarian language and its medieval literature. The article describes the various steps in the development of *histdict*. Attention is paid to each component of the resource: specialized Unicode fonts, electronic diachronic corpus, dictionary of Old Bulgarian, historical dictionary equipped with tools for writing and editing dictionary entries, grammatical dictionary, prototypical search engine, and virtual keyboard. The article also lays out the principles followed in the development of the diachronic grammatical dictionary of the Bulgarian language.

Keywords: *histdict*, historical dictionary, grammatical dictionary, electronic diachronic corpus.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

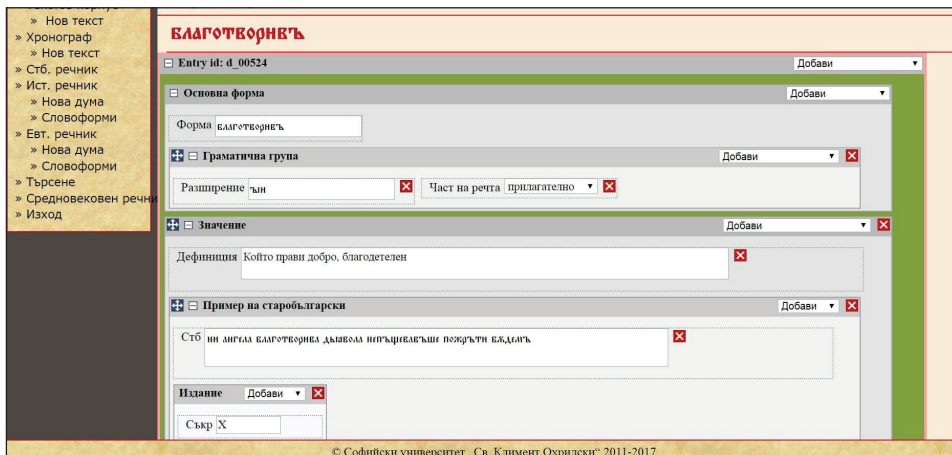


Fig. 1. Form-based software for dictionary entries

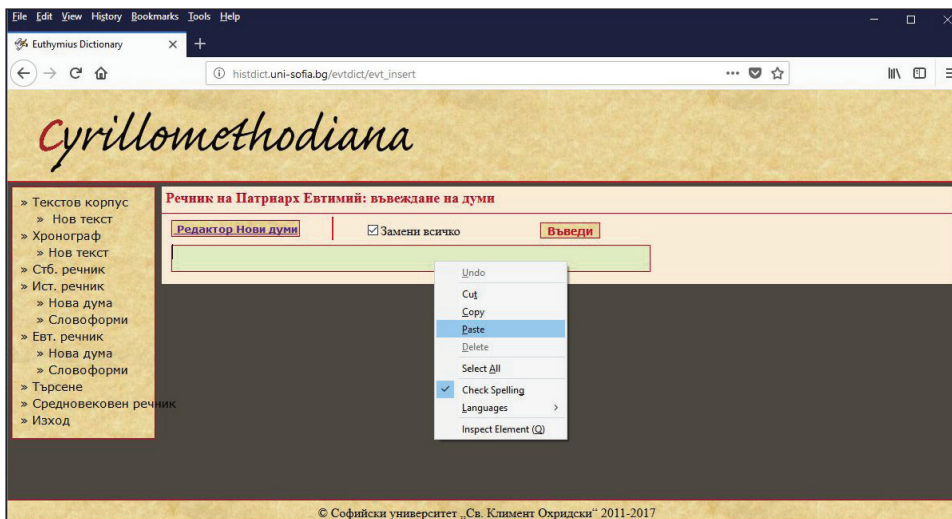


Fig. 2. Converter-type software for dictionary entries



Matej Gogola (Bratislava)

PROLEGOMENA TO THE CHRISTIAN IMAGES NOT MADE BY HUMAN HANDS

Images not made by human hands (*acheiropoietai*) played a significant role in Byzantine history as far as the emergence of local spiritual culture was concerned. However, a person not versed in Byzantine iconology and iconography, or in the ecclesiastical history of the Eastern rite as such, might find the phenomenon completely unfamiliar. The Greek term ἀχειροποίητος represents the opposite of the adjective χειροποίητος, which consists of two words – χεῖρ ('hand') and the verb ποιεῖν ('to make, create'). The meaning is thus equivalent to 'made by human hands'¹. However, the prefix morpheme ἀ- reverses the semantics, so that ἀχειροποίητος can be literally translated as 'not made by human hands' / 'not created by a human'. Since this interpretation overturned the meaning of the term completely, icons (images) lost their label of objects of idolatry². Images which were not created by a human acquired the status of images created by God, consequently becoming particularly important and revered artefacts³.

The well-known German historian and art theorist Hans Belting defined the Greek term ἀχειροποίητος as referring to everything that had been created by God – including the human being, created in the image of God⁴. The concept of 'not made by human hands' is found already in the New Testament. Specifically, Paul explains in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians that at the moment of our

¹ Cf. Mc 14, 58; Act 7, 48; Act 17, 24; Eph 2, 11; Heb 9, 11; Heb 9, 24.

² E. VON DOBSCHÜTZ, *Christusbilder. Untersuchungen zur christlichen Legende*, Leipzig 1899 [= TUGAL, 18], p. 357; E. KITZINGER, *The Cult of Images in the Age before Iconoclasm*, DOP 8, 1954, p. 143.

³ L. BRUBAKER, *Conclusion: Image, Audience and Place: Interaction and Reproduction*, [in:] *The Sacred Image. East and West*, ed. R. OUSTERHOUT, L. BRUBAKER, Urbana 1995 [= IBS, 4], p. 214; cf. E. KITZINGER, *The Cult...*, p. 112–115; R. CORMACK, *Miraculous Icons in Byzantium and Their Powers*, ArtC 76, 1988, p. 60; J. TRILLING, *The Image Not Made by Hands and the Byzantine Way of Seeing*, [in:] *The Holy Face and the Paradox of Representation. Papers from a Colloquium Held at the Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome and the Villa Spelman, Florence, 1996*, ed. H.L. KESSLER, G. WOLF, Bologna 1998, p. 109–127.

⁴ H. BELTING, *Bild und Kult. Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst*, München 1990; cf. E. VON DOBSCHÜTZ, *Christusbilder...*, p. 37. *And God created man in His image; in the image of God (εἰκόνα Θεοῦ) He created him; male and female He created them* (Gn 1, 27).

passing to the world beyond, *a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens* – a Divine dwelling – awaits us (2Cor 5, 1). In the Gospel of Mark, Christ states that instead of the old temple, he is going to create a new temple *not made with hands* (Mc 14, 58). In this temple, there would be people circumcised by means of a circumcision *not performed by human hands* (Col 2, 11).

The first known non-Biblical source to attest the adjective χειροποίητος is probably even older than the New Testament reference. Historians have dated the text in question – a papyrus letter from a certain Nearchos to Heliodoros⁵ – to the 1st or 2nd century AD. Having ventured up the Nile as far as to the town of Aswan, in the area of the first cataract, the author continued further towards the river's source. Subsequently, he left the Nile and travelled westwards to the Oasis of Siwa in the Libyan Desert, where the oracle of Amon was allegedly located. One can assume that Nearchos encountered numerous sights during his journeys; in the letter, he describes his impressions to his friend. He uses the word χειροποίητος when praising the beauty of the art which he saw and which had been created by human hands⁶.

Unfortunately, there is no example such as Nearchos's impressions of his travels in Egypt as regards the term ἀχειροποίητος. To obtain a better understanding of the word ἀχειροποίητος – not only within the symbolic form of the Holy Scripture, but also as far as the source material is concerned – several 'predecessors' of images not made by human hands shall be introduced. *Acheiropoietai* can be found in sources from the second half of the 6th century onwards and have much in common with their pre-Christian 'relatives': their veneration was based, among other things, on the experience of worshipping images containing pagan motifs in the pre-Christian period.

⁵ Cf. the different dating by L. MITTEIS, U. WILCKEN, *Grundzüge und Chrestomathie der Papyruskunde*, Hildesheim 1963, no. 117, p. 147–148 and *Greek Papyri in the British Museum. Catalogue with Texts*, vol. III, ed. F.G. KENYON, H.I. BELL, Milano 1973, p. 205–206.

⁶ Νέαρχος α [... 'Ηλιοδώρω κα(ίρειν).]
 Πολλῶν τοῦ κα [...]
 Καὶ μέχρι τοῦ πλεῖν ε.[...]
 μένον ἵνα τὰς χε[ι]ροπ[οι]ή[τους τέ]
 χνας ἱστορήσωσι ἐγὼ παρεπο[ιη]ά
 μεν καὶ ἀράμενος ἀνάπλο[υν καὶ π]αρ[α]
 γενόμενός τε εἶς τε Σοήνας καὶ ὄθεν τ[υγ]κά
 νει Νεῖλος ῥέον καὶ εἶς Λιβύην ὅπου
 Ἄμμων πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις χρεσμοφδεῖ
 [καὶ] εὔτομα ἱστόρ[η]σα καὶ τῶν φίλων
 [ἐ]μ[ῶν τ]α ὀνόματα ἐνεχάραξα τοῖς ἰ[ε]
 ροῖς ἀειμνήστως τὸ προσκύνημα
 The following two lines are erased
 'Ηλιοδώρω.

See L. MITTEIS, U. WILCKEN, *Grundzüge...*, no. 117, p. 148.

Images in the pre-Christian period

Pre-Christian literature referred to several images which were ascribed a heavenly origin. These were known as images of the *diipetes* type (Διιπέτης, i.e. 'fallen from Heaven' or 'sent by Zeus to the Earth')⁷. The best known of such images was probably the *Trojan palladion*⁸ (Lat. *palladium*). It is a wooden carving of the goddess Athena, believed to have the ability of preventing the conquest of the city which kept the object within its walls⁹. The image was purported to wield immense power, and Athena became both the patroness and the protector of the city – ἐρυσίπολις. Consequently, the Greeks did not manage to conquer the city while its protector was still present there¹⁰. Apart from Troy, the towns of Argos and Lindos were in possession of a *palladion* as well, although these *palladia* were believed to have been of human making – unlike the Trojan one¹¹. The image of Artemis from Ephesus, carved in wood, is to be counted among the images of the *diipetes* type¹². It is even mentioned in the New Testament: *The city of Ephesus is the guardian of the temple of the great Artemis and of her image, which fell from heaven* (Act 19, 35).

The Egyptian metropolis of Alexandria owned an image of the ancient Egyptian god Serapis, created during the Ptolemaic reign in order to ensure a greater political and religious unity¹³. The god used to be depicted as man with a moustache,

⁷ H.G. LIDDELL, R. SCOTT, *A Greek English Lexicon*, Oxford 1883, p. 370.

⁸ Ernst von DOBSCHÜTZ (*Christusbilder...*, p. 2) claims that the term παλλάδιον emerged from a Semitic source, specifically originating from Phoenician *palat* 'to save, protect'. However, a more probable explanation is offered by Hjalmar Frisk, even though he states that the word's etymology is actually unknown. Since the term spread throughout various languages and cultures, uncovering its exact past is not possible. It may be derived from παλλακή, which probably comes from Latin *paelex*, a concubine. Other meanings can be of a Semitic or Old Iranian origin. H. FRISK, *Griechisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, vol. II, Heidelberg 1970, p. 468–469.

⁹ Cf. F. BENNET, *A Study of the Word Ἐόανον*, AJA 21, 1917, p. 8. Greek geographer, historian and philosopher Strabo (64 or 63 BC – 19–24 AD) mentions several types of these sculptures. STRABO, *Geographica*, IV, 1, 4; IV, 1, 5; VI, 1, 14, rec. A. MEINEKE, Lipsiae 1877; see also J. PAPADOPOULOS, *Xoana e sphyrelata. Testimonianza delle fonti scritte*, Roma 1980, p. 15–65; M. HURBANIČ, *História a mýtus. Avarský útok na Konštantínopol roku 626 v legendách*, Prešov 2010, p. 73; IDEM, *Konstantinopol 626. Poslední bitva antiky*, Praha 2016, p. 417.

¹⁰ E. VON DOBSCHÜTZ, *Christusbilder...*, p. 3.

¹¹ The *Trojan palladion* was kept in the main Athenian temple in the Acropolis, R. HOŠEK, *Náboženství antického Řecka*, Praha 2004, p. 50.

¹² PAUSANIAS, *Graeciae descriptio*, I, 23, vol. I, Lipsiae 1829 (cetera: PAUSANIAS), p. 9. Pausanias writes that Iphigenia, daughter of Agamemnon, brought the image to Athens and later to Argos, PAUSANIAS, I, 33, p. 1. EURIPIDES, *Iphigenia in Tauris*, trans. R. POTTER, London 1814, p. 1431–1464. The festivals of goddess Artemis were held every five years; on this occasion, five- to ten-year old girls wore saffron-dyed garments, representing she-bears through their dance, see R. HOŠEK, *Náboženství...*, p. 52.

¹³ D. FRANKFURTER, *Religion in Roman Egypt. Assimilation and Resistance*, Princeton–Chichester 1998, p. 169; H. BELTING, *In Search of Christ's Body. Image or Imprint?*, [in:] *The Holy Face and the*

resembling Zeus. Apart from Alexandria, his cult was widespread not only in the cities of Memphis, Sabrata, Leptis Magna, Rome or Ephesus, but also in the Danubian provinces¹⁴.

These *palladia* provided the inhabitants of the respective cities with significant and unquestionable authority. The images were publicly worshipped during various processions. In other words, the *diipetes* – ‘fallen from heaven’ – were a sort of pagan predecessor of Christian images not made by human hands. The cult of images (and not only it) was subject to a smooth and continuous transformation from the adoration of pagan objects and idols to the worship of Christian relics and artefacts.

As regards the appearance of the *acheiropoietai*, the only fact that we may point out in the light of the sources (since the mid-6th century onwards) is that they were created on pieces of cloth. Cloth, more specifically linen, was frequently used as a base for all kinds of images in both the West and the East throughout many centuries¹⁵.

Old Testament prohibition of the worship of images

The Christian tradition has preserved the premise that the first cult image – *eikon* – of the God-bearer (*Theotokos*, Θεοτόκος) was created by the apostle Luke. Many other images apart from the image of the Mother with the little Christ were ascribed to him; he was said to have created them with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit¹⁶.

The first account of Luke’s image of the *Theotokos* comes from the 6th century *Ecclesiastical History* by Theodore Anagnostes (also known as Theodorus Lector)¹⁷. It refers to a 5th-century event: Eudokia, wife of emperor Theodosius II (408–450), sent the image of the *Theotokos* from Jerusalem to Arcadius’s daughter Pulcheria¹⁸. A similar account is to be found in the 8th-century work by Andrew of Crete – *De sanctorum imaginum veneratione*. However, in contrast to the former source, this is no interpolation into the original text¹⁹. Theodore Anagnostes does not

Paradox of Representation. Papers from a Colloquium Held at the Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome and the Villa Spelman, Florence, 1996, ed. H.L. KESSLER, G. WOLF, Bologna 1998, p. 7.

¹⁴ I. SHAW, *Dějiny starověkého Egypta*, trans. D. FELTOVÁ, Brno 2003, p. 456.

¹⁵ Cf. E. KITZINGER, *On Some Icons of the Seventh Century*, [in:] *Late Classical and Medieval Studies in Honor of Albert Mathias Friend, Jr.*, ed. K. WEITZMANN, Princeton 1955, p. 141; J. TRILLING, *The Image...*, p. 112.

¹⁶ E. VON DOBSCHÜTZ, *Christusbilder...*, p. 269, 271; H. BELTING, *Bild und...*, p. 65–66.

¹⁷ THEODOROS ANAGNOSTES, *Kirchengeschichte*, 353, 9–10, ed. G.C. HANSEN, Berlin 1971 [= GCS, 54] (cetera: THEODOROS ANAGNOSTES), p. 100. See also A.M. LIDOV, *Miracle-Working Icons of the Mother of God*, [in:] *Mother of God. Representations of the Virgin in Byzantine Art*, ed. M. VASSILAKI, Milan–London 2000, p. 48–49.

¹⁸ ἡ Εὐδοκία τῆ Πουλχερία τὴν εἰκόνα τῆς θεομήτορος, ἣν ὁ ἀπόστολος Λουκᾶς καθιστόρησεν, ἐξ Ἱεροσολύμων ἀπέστειλεν, THEODOROS ANAGNOSTES, 353, 9–10, p. 100.

¹⁹ ANDREAS CRETENSIS, *De sanctorum imaginum veneratione*, [in:] PG, vol. XCVII, col. 1304.

describe the *Theotokos* more specifically, but Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos, a 14th-century patriarch of Constantinople, identified the God-bearer with the Ὁδηγήτρια from the Constantinople monastery of *Hodegon*²⁰. Xanthopoulos also substituted Jerusalem for the Syrian Antioch in the original legend of Anagnostes²¹. However, it is actually improbable that the apostle Luke could have created the Ὁδηγήτρια *Theotokos*. There were clear and strict rules regarding the creation of images in the Old Testament-based Christian religion, as the Old Testament God forbids idolatry and the manufacturing of idols, or anything aimed at winning their favour. Thus, it is prohibited to create *images in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below* (Ex 20, 4–5).

Luke was converted by the apostle Paul, whose attitude to images was – again, in accordance with the Old Testament – manifestly negative: he placed it on the same level as idolatry. *They exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles* (Rom 1, 23).

According to Paul's Epistle to the Romans – one of the books of the New Testament – people are used to preferring ephemeral and mundane things, thus suppressing God. Paul sharply rebukes such an attitude, as stated in the Acts of the Apostles. In Ephesus, he lectures the gathered masses that gods created by human hands are actually no gods at all: οὐκ εἰσὶ θεοὶ οἱ διὰ χειρῶν γινόμενοι (Act 19, 26).

Returning to the image of the *Theotokos*, it is nevertheless correct to state – in a figurative sense – that it was Luke who created the first image of the God-bearer. He did indeed 'author' the image, although not in the sense of a real, tangible object. Rather, the image in question represents spiritual legacy, as he was the one who wrote about the *Theotokos* the most extensively out of all the evangelists.

In the first centuries after Christ, the original Christian communities accepted the so-called prohibition of depiction, widely known from several Old Testament books, namely the Second Book of Moses – *Exodus*, the Third Book of Moses – *Leviticus*, the Fifth Book of Moses – *Deuteronomy*, and the Book of Isaiah. According to the *Book of Exodus*, God forbids creating any idols as well as any attempts to win their favour by idolatry. People cannot bow to them or serve them (Ex 20, 4–5). The Third Book of Moses prohibits making idols, creating their carved images or monuments, or painted stones for people to bow down to them (Lv 26, 1). According to the Book of Deuteronomy, people should not manufacture graven images (for themselves):

²⁰ The source of Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos quotes the older 6th century text by Theodore Anagnostes. For more information see B.V. PENTCHEVA, *Icons and Power. The Mother of God in Byzantium*, University Park 2006, p. 120–121; M. HURBANIČ, *Konštantínopol, tradícia avarskeho útoku z roku 626 a posvätné relikvie*, SISI 44, 2009, p. 113.

²¹ NICEPHORUS CALLISTUS XANTHOPOULOS, *Historia ecclesiastica*, XV, 14, [in:] PG, vol. CXLVII, col. 44.

in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any animal that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the sky, the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water below the earth (Dt 4, 16–18).

Chapter 40 of the *Book of Isaiah* asks who God could be compared to (Is 40, 18). An image or any other comparison to God is identified as an idol as defined by the Old Testament and thus considered simply unacceptable²².

However, even in the Old Testament there are certain passages which could be interpreted as only outlawing the images of God (Ex 20, 23; Dt 27, 15). The Mediterranean area was traditionally known to favour images. Such an attitude towards images had already originated in pre-Christian times and managed to persist in the later periods, albeit only partially and locally. Despite the actual rejection of the cult of images by the first Christians, based on a clear interpretation of the biblical prohibition, we do not agree with Ernst Kitzinger's opinion that such a prohibition did not permit the application of any figurative motifs, which could be a part of a temple decoration, for instance²³. Even in this case, there are some exceptions to be found; the best known one is the example from the Mesopotamian Dura-Europos.

This small fortified town on the bank of the Euphrates was known as a home to a Jewish diaspora community, with its own synagogue. Archaeological research has brought forth a surprising revelation: the interior of the synagogue was decorated with numerous 3rd-century mural paintings in the manner of an illustrated Bible²⁴. Whole biblical cycles are to be found in the synagogue: the stories of Moses, Elias, Daniel and others. In fact, the synagogue makes the impression that its decorations are the predecessors of Byzantine mural painting²⁵. Even if such a statement cannot be easily verified, it is quite obvious that the period

²² Cf. A. AVENARIUS, *Byzantský ikonoklazmus, 726–843. Storočie zápasu o ikonu*, Bratislava 1998, p. 34; L. BRUBAKER, J.F. HALDON, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era c. 680–850. A History*, Cambridge 2011, p. 40. John of Damascus (675/676 – 749 or 753) thought of idolatry in clearly negative terms, although he was the first one to distinguish clearly between an idol and an image. Referring to the apostle Paul (Gal 4, 8–9), he claims that the period of idolatry ended when people accepted God (2Cor 5, 17). Thus, John of Damascus makes a sharp distinction between an Old Testament idol and a New Testament image; JOANNES DAMASCENUS, *Contra imaginum calumniatores orationes tres*, I, 1, ed. B. KOTTER, Berlin 1975 [= PTS, 17]. See also A. AVENARIUS, *Učenie Jána z Damašku o ikone: K problému stredovekého symbolizmu*, HČSAV 46, 1998, p. 82. During the so-called iconoclasm period, the adherents of the prohibition of idolatry attempted to bring back these original Christian customs and traditions. The iconoclastic Synod of Constantinople enabled this *de iure* in 754.

²³ E. KITZINGER, *The Cult...*, p. 89.

²⁴ R. HACHLILLI, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archeology in the Diaspora*, Leiden 1998, p. 96–197; G. STEMBERGER, *Klasické židovství. Kultura a historie rabínské doby*, Praha 2011, p. 193–194.

²⁵ E. SENDLER, *Ikona. Obraz neviditelného*, Olomouc 2011, p. 14.

in question witnessed an interesting set of experiments with figurative art among the Hellenised Jewish communities of the Middle East. However, it seems that it has not found any significant continuation in the next centuries.

The first Christian communities were not quite homogenous; while the prohibition of depiction was general, it was not actually observed everywhere, as the example of the Roman catacombs shows. Temple decorations of that time often included stylized plants (olive branches, apples) or geometrical ornaments (monograms) as well as symbols such as the cross, lamb, pelican, peacock or fish²⁶. On the other hand, statues posed a problem for the Christians in the beginning; they never obtained such a status in the East as they enjoyed among the believers in the West. The reason was their temporariness, as they tended to rot, mould and decay with time. They would often be damaged by insects, infested by mice and soiled by birds²⁷. Due to the insufficiency of archaeological findings and literary sources, it is impossible to take a definite stance on this issue. Why should not the Christians of the first centuries actually have accepted visual depictions, statues or any other material symbols which would have led them in their chosen spiritual way? One of the possible answers might be the one offered by Irenaeus of Lyon (died circa 202), one of the most prominent theologians of the time, as well as bishop of Gallic Lugdunum (nowadays Lyon). In his work *Contra haereses libri quinque*, he displays an attitude of clear antagonism against images of Christ, considering them a relic from the pagan period. Book 1 mentions the Gnostic heresy of the so-called Carpocratians (Lat. *Carpocrates*), who:

have images, some painted, some of other materials. They claim that the depiction of Christ was created by Pilate at the times when [Christ] lived amongst the people. They decorate these images and put them on display together with secular philosophers such as Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle or others. They worship these images also in other ways, similar to those of the pagans.²⁸

Irenaeus condemns such behaviour and regards it as idolatry; he refuses to place images of Christ at the same level as depictions of philosophers. This negative attitude is aimed at distinguishing his beliefs strictly from paganism.

The Christian Church fought against the originally pagan custom of idolatry for a long time. On the one hand, there was of course the Old Testament prohibition of depicting; on the other hand, there were some acceptable exceptions when the point was not to depict the Divine entity as such, but rather to focus on the educational or pedagogical function of the image – a ‘poor man’s Bible’ of sorts. Tertullian (circa 155 – circa 222) – a writer, lawyer and one of the most

²⁶ For example A. AVENARIUS, *Byzantský...*, p. 23.

²⁷ T.F.X. NOBLE, *Images, Iconoclasm, and the Carolingians*, Philadelphia 2009, p. 11.

²⁸ IRENAEUS, *Contra haereses libri quinque*, I, 25, 6, [in:] PG, vol. VII, col. 685.

distinguished Church Fathers – was at the same time one of the most ardent opponents of images. In his work *De idolatria*, he wrote that *The biggest crime of the mankind, the worst wrongdoing there is, is idolatry*²⁹. He calls those participating in the idolatry murderers and condemns *serving the false gods* alongside adultery and fornication³⁰. On the other hand, personalities such as for instance Hypatius, bishop of Ephesus, defended the above-mentioned function of images, namely their educational and didactic impact (specifically on illiterate people). Accordingly, Hypatius writes: *This is a way how to teach those who are otherwise impossible to be taught*³¹. Thus, the above quotations from the two prominent thinkers are an excellent illustration of both views and the insurmountable differences between them³².

Let us mention one more anecdote, probably dating back to the 4th century:

Father Sopatros has been asked: Give me advice, father, and I shall follow it. Father Sopatros replied: Do not allow a woman to enter your cell and do not read apocryphal literature. Do not start debates on the image. Although this is not heresy, there is too much ignorance and fancies when disputing this issue between two parties. It is impossible to comprehend the truth.³³

Images were symbols of those who had lost their physical body at the moment of their death; this implies a significant degree of reverence, aside from the didactic aspect³⁴. Before the times of the *acheiropoietai*, images of rulers (emperors, members of the imperial family etc.) were worshipped in view of their ability to serve as a substitute for the actual human beings. The veneration of imperial portraits was later transformed into reverence for images not made by human hands. Therefore, we shall briefly outline why and how the above-mentioned imperial images acquired their highly specific importance.

²⁹ Tertullian's exact words in his treatise are as follows: *Principale crimen generis humani summus saeculi reatus, tota causa iudicii idolatria*, TERTULLIANUS, *De idolatria*, I, 1, ed. J.H. WASZINK, J.C.M. van WINDEN, Leiden 1987 [= VC.S, 1] (cetera: TERTULLIANUS).

³⁰ TERTULLIANUS, I, 1.

³¹ See P.J. ALEXANDER, *Hypatius of Ephesus: A Note on Image Worship in the Sixth Century*, HTR 45, 1952, p. 180; S. GERO, *Hypatius of Ephesus on Cult of Images*, [in:] *Christianity, Judaism and Other Graeco Roman Cults*, ed. J. NEUSNER, M. SMITH, Leiden 1975 [= SJLA, 12], p. 208–216; I.M. BUGAR, *Zacchaeus and Veneration of Images: Image of the Emperor – Image of a Saint*, [in:] *SP*, vol. XXXIV, p. 11–22.

³² For more on the subject, cf. M.P. KRUK, *Sztuka w cesarstwie rzymskim w IV wieku*, [in:] *Świat rzymski w IV wieku*, ed. P. FILIPCZAK, R. KOSIŃSKI, Kraków 2015, p. 460–462.

³³ *Apophthegmata patrum*, [in:] *PG*, vol. LXV, col. 413; cf. Ward's English translation: *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, trans. B. WARD, Kalamazoo 1984, p. 225.

³⁴ H. BELTING, *Bild und...*, p. 54.

Imago imperialis

Although the Christian cult of images might have only existed legally to a limited extent, its examples are to be found as early as the 4th century onwards³⁵. On the other hand, images of rulers are of a much earlier date. These cult pictures – or imperial portraits – did not depict Christ, the *Theotokos*, angels or saints; rather, they were images of the rulers themselves (*imagines imperiales*)³⁶. There are various Latin and Greek expressions preserved on imperial images, such as *sacra laurata*, *sacer vultus*, *divinus vultus*, θεῖα λαυράτα, βασιλικάι εἰκόνες. Thus, terms such as *saint* or *divine* were used in reference to emperors on their very portraits, too: after all, this was the way in which emperors styled themselves in public³⁷.

It should be emphasised, however, that there is a continuity between imperial portraits and cult pagan depictions of imperial authority³⁸. The cult of the emperor, manifested by faithful depictions, can be traced back to the Principate period (circa 27 BC – 284 AD)³⁹. The sources attest that the imperial portrait practice can already be encountered as early as during the Julio-Claudian dynasty⁴⁰. Imperial effigies symbolised power and a sovereign position within the society; during military coups, imperial images were among the first things to be destroyed at the imperial court.

Syrian bishop Severian of Gabala, who lived at the turn of the 4th and 5th century, wrote in his work *De mundi creatione*:

Just consider, how many officials [ἄρχοντες⁴¹] there are in this world. Since an emperor cannot be present to all persons, it is necessary to set up the statue of the emperor in law courts,

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 86, 122; L. BRUBAKER, *The Sacred Image*, [in:] *The Sacred Image. East and West*, ed. R. OUSTERHOUT, L. BRUBAKER, Urbana 1995 [= IBS, 4], p. 3.

³⁶ Some scholars simplify the division of images into three groups, placing sacred images of emperors somewhere in between icons and idols; A. EASTMOND, *Between Icon and Idol: The Uncertainty of Imperial Images*, [in:] *Icon and Word. The Power of Images in Byzantium*, ed. A. EASTMOND, L. JAMES, Aldershot 2003, p. 73–86. See also H. BELTING, *Bild und...*, p. 118–119; K.W. HARL, *Sacrifice and Pagan Belief in Fifth- and Sixth-Century Byzantium*, PP 128, 1990, p. 9; R.M. JENSEN, *Face to Face. Portraits of the Divine in Early Christianity*, Minneapolis 2005, p. 234.

³⁷ See A. ГРАБАР, *Император в византийском искусстве*, Москва 2000, p. 25.

³⁸ Cf. H. KRUSE, *Studien zur offiziellen Geltung des Kaiserbildes im römischen Reiche*, Paderborn 1934 [= SGKA, 19.3], p. 116; A. ГРАБАР, *Император...*, p. 328. See J. DÉER, *Der Globus des spätrömischen und des byzantinischen Kaisers. Symbol oder Insigne?*, BZ 54, 1961, p. 53–85; G.B. LADNER, *Images and Ideas in the Middle Ages. Selected Studies in History and Art*, Roma 1983, p. 51.

³⁹ Actually, there are some images of emperors even from an earlier period, though not to such an extent; I. GRADEL, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion*, Oxford 2002 [= OCM], p. 398.

⁴⁰ CASSIUS DIO, *Historia Romana*, LXIII, 25, vol. V, ed. L.A. DINDORF, Lipsiae 1865 [= BSGR]; TACITUS, *Z dějin císařského Říma. Dějiny*, I, 41; III, 12; III, 13; III, 31, trans. A. MINAŘÍK, A. HARTMANN, V. BAHNÍK, Praha 1976; PLUTARCHOS, *Životopisy slávných Grékov a Římanov*, 26, vol. II, trans. D. ŠKOVIERA, P. KUKLICA, Bratislava 2008.

⁴¹ Understood as the ruler's deputy, authorised representative, member of the high society/elite.

market places, public assemblies [έν συλλόγοις], and theatres. In every place, in fact, where an official acts, the imperial effigy must be present, so that the emperor may thus confirm whatever takes place. For the emperor is only a human being, and he cannot be present everywhere.⁴²

Severian aptly captures both the meaning and the necessity of existence of cult images during the Roman period. The emperor had to be an omnipresent figure. He presided all the important state and church ceremonies; if he could not attend some of those in person, he was represented by his depiction, which served as his complete substitution. Imperial images held a place of honour in any public space⁴³. Sometimes, it was the effigy of the emperor that presided over games in the circus⁴⁴. Among other things, the image of the emperor played an irreplaceable role during court proceedings⁴⁵. A similar phenomenon can be seen in the 6th-century Rossano Gospels or *Codex purpureus Rossanensis*, one of the oldest and most unique illuminated manuscripts in existence. Although only less than half of the work has been preserved, there are two extant scenes containing imperial portraits. Christ, standing in front of Pilate, is surrounded by members of the latter's camarilla, holding imperial images⁴⁶. The portrait of the emperor was not only an official symbol but also an object of cult reverence⁴⁷.

A similar manifestation of respect – even fear – related to the depiction of an emperor can be observed in other cultures as well. Thus, a statue of emperor Trajan (98–117) was allegedly kept in the 6th-century Sassanid Empire. It was reported to arouse such respect, or even awe, that soldiers were afraid to sit on their horses whenever they approached the statue. In the end, it was pulled down by Khosrow I at the times of the Byzantine-Sassanid wars, as it was believed to symbolize Roman superiority over the Sassanid realm⁴⁸.

There are even accounts claiming that images of emperors marked the borders of the empire. They would be placed on pillars or artificially elevated places made of brass and marble, with the aim of indicating the Roman *limes*. However, this information is not supported by any archaeological findings, as no similar artefacts have been preserved on the eastern Roman border⁴⁹. On the other

⁴² SEVERIANUS GABALENSIS, *De mundi creatione*, or. VI, 5, [in:] PG, vol. LVI, col. 490.

⁴³ H. KRUSE, *Studien...*, p. 12.

⁴⁴ А. ГРАБАР, *Император...*, p. 26.

⁴⁵ H. KRUSE, *Studien...*, p. 80.

⁴⁶ W. SANDAY, *The Text of the Codex Rossanensis*, [in:] *Studia Biblica. Essays in Biblical Archeology and Criticism and Kindred Subjects*, ed. S.R. DRIVER, W. SANDAY, J. WORDSWORTH, Oxford 1885, p. 103–112. See also C.R. GREGORY, *Textkritik des Neuen Testaments*, Leipzig 1900, p. 92.

⁴⁷ H. BELTING, *Bild und...*, p. 118.

⁴⁸ With reference to John of Ephesus – see W.E. KAEGI, *Byzantium and the Early Islamic Conquest*, Cambridge 1992, p. 166.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*.

hand, John Malalas writes that at the times of Diocletian (284–305), statues of the emperor and *caesar* were to be found on the Syrian border⁵⁰.

Besides, John Malalas's chronicle from the mid-6th century states, for example, that Constantine the Great carried his own image during the festive procession on the day of the foundation of the city of Constantinople (11th May). In this way, he intended to demonstrate that this day was his and his exclusively⁵¹.

In the 5th, 6th, but also 14th century, we encounter the phenomenon of depicting the emperor or members of the imperial family on the upper part of the garment of important court officials. Images of the royals' faces and upper body were stitched on or woven into clothes. This was the way in which emperors would mark their favourite members of the court; thus, such a garment was supposed to serve as a distinction⁵². Book 17 of Malalas's chronicle records an account concerning a certain successor to the throne of Lazika – an area of constant strategic interest for the Sassanids. *Basileus* Tzathios I refused Sassanid rule over his kingdom and instead chose the Byzantine Empire, ruled at the time by Justin I (518–527), as his ally. Apart from being married to a granddaughter of an influential Constantinople patrician, he was crowned with an imperial crown, wearing a tunic of pure silk⁵³. However, there was a golden – not purple – hem on the tunic, containing a purple portrait of the emperor in the middle⁵⁴. Images of emperors were also to be found on objects intended as gifts heading abroad. These presents were meant to mark a victory or confirm an agreement, cooperation, or the emperor's protection. Even rings, seals, diadems, ceremonial garments or indeed anything else bearing the emperor's likeness could serve as such a gift⁵⁵.

In his *De administrando imperio*, Constantine Porphyrogenitus (905–959) mentions the Western Roman emperor Anthemius (467–472), whose portrait was received at the court of Eastern Roman emperor Leo I (457–474). The Eastern emperor had helped Anthemius become emperor in the West. Naturally, he was pursuing his own goals, trying to avoid the succession of Olybrius, who was close to Genseric, King of the Vandals. To further support this policy, in the year of the coronation, he had an image of Anthemius (decorated with laurels) received in Constantinople with great splendour. The reception and acceptance of this picture meant the recognition of Anthemius himself as co-emperor⁵⁶: his image was paid the same homage that he would have received in person.

⁵⁰ JOANNES MALALAS, *Chronographia*, XII, 308, ed. L. DINDORFII, Bonnae 1831 [= CSHB] (cetera: JOANNES MALALAS).

⁵¹ JOANNES MALALAS, XIII, 322.

⁵² А. ГРАБАР, *Император...*, p. 26.

⁵³ JOANNES MALALAS, XVII, 412–413.

⁵⁴ JOANNES MALALAS, XVII, 413.

⁵⁵ А. ГРАБАР, *Император...*, p. 27–28.

⁵⁶ CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENITUS, *De ceremoniis aulae Byzantinae*, I, 87, vol. I, ed. J.J. REISKE, Bonn 1929; H. KRUSE, *Studien...*, p. 28–30; H. BELTING, *Bild und...*, p. 119.

As early as at his acclamation, a new emperor was to be paid tribute by means of the so-called *proskynesis*, either in person at the court in Constantinople or via his effigy (in the more remote regions of the empire)⁵⁷. This act connected with reverence for the imperial image was later transferred onto the *acheiropoietai*.

The converse of the above process was valid as well: the destruction of imperial portraits expressed the deposition or general non-acceptance of the rulers themselves. In 324, Constantine the Great was outraged by the destruction of his busts and statues by Licinius in the border zone near Emona (nowadays Ljubljana, Slovenia). As it turned out, Constantine used this as a pretext for declaring war on Licinius⁵⁸.

Some of the Christian Church Fathers were willing to back the cult of the emperor (consisting in the veneration of imperial images) in exchange for the official acknowledgment of the Christian church, including support in the form of state endowment⁵⁹. Christian thinking came closer to Greek philosophy and culture, thus also becoming more distanced from its original form, where the creation of images had been considered an unacceptable sin.

Thus, imperial images – although only mentioned here briefly – contributed greatly to the change in the perception of images in general. The manifestation of immense tribute which had been paid to the person of the emperor exclusively was transformed onto his sacred likeness⁶⁰. Suddenly, the emperor and his effigy appeared to be the same. The image served as the emperor's deputy in places where the sovereign could not be present in person⁶¹. The *imagines imperiales* wielded the same authority as their model; real imperial personality and its portraits were regarded at the same level. Thus, homage and all other honours were paid not only to the emperor but to his image representation as well – since it served as his full-bodied substitution⁶².

⁵⁷ H. KRUSE, *Studien...*, p. 37; H. BELTING, *Bild und...*, p. 119; A. CAMERON, *The Language of Images: The Rise of Icons and Christian Representation*, SCH 28, 1992, p. 9.

⁵⁸ *Origo Constantini imperatoris sive Anonymi Valesiani pars prior*, 5, [in:] *Chronica Minora, saec. IV, V, VI, VII*, ed. T. MOMMSEN, Berolini 1892, p. 15–16.

⁵⁹ BASILIUS MAGNUS, *Liber de spiritu sancto*, 18, 45, [in:] PG, vol. XXXII, col. 149; *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312–1453*, ed. C. MANGO, Toronto–London 1986, p. 47.

⁶⁰ 6th century Syrian chronicler John Malalas was the first to write about the reverence for sacred imperial images in the Byzantine Empire, specifically related to Constantine the Great. According to Malalas, Constantine introduced the practice when his image was carried in the festive procession on the occasion of the foundation of Constantinople, when the masses were to bow to this image; JOANNES MALALAS, XIII, cf. *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum*, II, rec. T. PREGER, Lipsiae 1907, p. 42–43; H. BELTING, *Bild und...*, p. 117–129; A. EASTMOND, *Between Icon...*, p. 74. In Rome, imperial images from Constantinople were received until the 8th century as a substitution for the absent Byzantine emperors. In order to manifest the latter's sovereignty over the city, the images were to be carried in a procession to a chapel on the Palatine Hill (G. WOLF, *Salus Populi Romani. Die Geschichte römischer Kultbilder im Mittelalter*, Weinheim 1990, p. 7–8).

⁶¹ E. KITZINGER, *The Cult...*, p. 122.

⁶² H. KRUSE, *Studien...*, p. 30; H. BELTING, *Bild und...*, p. 119.

Our example of the veneration of the *imagines imperiales* demonstrates the power of the cult of images. Understanding the worship of images of rulers is the first step in grasping the reverence for religious images, in particular the *acheiropoietai* from the second half of the 6th century onwards. The veneration of Christian images not made by human hands was directly based on the experience with paying homage to imperial images: as in the case of the latter, the picture was supposed to replace the actual figure depicted in it. *Acheiropoietai* were created through direct contact with Christ – whom they also depicted. Kitzinger divides images not made by human hands into two groups: those that were not created by the hand of a mortal according to the tradition (as for instance the Image of Edessa, the Shroud of Turin or the *Vera icona*)⁶³ and those that were created mechanically – the mortal acting as a mediator in this case – but still possessed magical power and represented a sort of reflection or imprint of an image not made by human hands (the so-called Image of Camuliana as well as the two images which were created due to its effect, or the *Keramion* – the print of Christ's face on a roof tile, as recorded in the 10th-century *Narratio de imagine Edessena*)⁶⁴.

Judging by the sources, *acheiropoietai* started appearing within the vastness of the Byzantine world and the Christian Orient *a priori* starting in the second half of the 6th century. They constitute some remnants of – or rather, especially considering the images of the *diipetes* type, the continuation of – the pre-Christian era. Images not made by human hands were venerated for their apotropaic effects, as they were believed to turn away harm or evil influences; thus, their possession supposedly guaranteed safety for a given location (e.g. preventing the conquest of a city). Their importance resided in their embodying the model they depicted. Emperors often carried these images when going to battle in order to ensure military luck, which their magical powers were thought to bring.

Why the 6th century in particular, however? No simple or precise answer can in fact be given. The rise and spread of the *acheiropoietai* in the second half of the 6th century, in particular during the reign of emperor Justinian (527–565), was influenced by various factors which can be divided into three main categories, as presented below⁶⁵.

Firstly, there existed reasons of a political and military nature. Byzantium may have achieved the restoration of the borders of the former Eastern Roman Empire – but only at the cost of permanent war. The wars with the Vandals and Persia, the Slavic penetration of the Byzantine *limes* and the costly and exhausting campaign

⁶³ Cf. M. GOGOLA, *Mandylyon z Edessy. Rukou-nestvorený obraz a jeho miesto v byzantskom umení a duchovnej kultúre*, Bratislava 2017, *passim*. Concerning the term *Mandylyon*, see M.P. KRUK, *Mandylyon*, [in:] *EK*, vol. XI, p. 1135–1137.

⁶⁴ E. KITZINGER, *The Cult...*, p. 113; see also M. GOGOLA, *Narratio de imagine Edessena ako jeden zo základných prameňov v genéze legiend k dejinám edesského obrazu*, [in:] *Byzantinoslovaca V. Zborník k životnému jubileu Tatiany Štefanovičovej*, Bratislava 2014, p. 181–191.

⁶⁵ See J. TRILLING, *The Image...*, p. 109–127.

in Italy – all of this was happening at the same time as buying peace on the eastern border by paying exorbitant sums of money. Hence, wars and the resulting economic burden had significantly weakened the Empire. Secondly, the second half of the 6th century was a period of natural disasters (appearance of a comet, catastrophic droughts, plague epidemics, etc.) as well as social turmoil (famine, the Nika Riot) in Justinian's empire⁶⁶. Thus, the people were in need of turning to something they could possibly believe in. Finally, the Hellenic world was clearly in favour of the veneration of images, a phenomenon stemming from Antique times and considered an inseparable part of Hellenic culture. The people of the region had a markedly spiritual attitude to their beliefs in comparison with the more rational Occident. Therefore, it is no coincidence that *acheiropoietai* first emerged in Syria and Asia Minor, i.e. the areas known for their pre-Christian tradition of venerating *diipetes* images.

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⁶⁶ J.F. HALDON, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century. The Transformation of a Culture*, Cambridge 1990, p. 355–370; H. BELTING, *Bild und...*, p. 69.

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Abstract. Images not made by human hands (*acheiropoietai*, Gr. ἀχειροποίηται) played a significant role in Byzantine spiritual culture and history. This paper discusses the emergence and rise of the *acheiropoietai*, which represented a most important and unusual element in the Byzantine Empire. The author analyses the chronological ancestors of Christian images not made by human hands, i.e. the so-called *diipetes* (Gr. Διιπέτης), and proceeds to demonstrate the disagreements on the topic among some of the Christian Church Fathers. The *imagines imperiales*, i.e. effigies of Roman emperors, constituted a significant factor in the process leading to the later veneration of images not made by human hands. The most famous of the latter is the image from Edessa, also known in historiography as *Mandyliion of Edessa*.

Keywords: Byzantine spiritual culture, Byzantine history, images not made by human hands, *acheiropoietai*

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CATECHUMENS IN THE EAST IN THE LIGHT OF PSEUDO-EPIGRAPHIC NORMATIVE CHURCH SOURCES FROM THE 4TH CENTURY*

As a result of the policy of the Roman authorities, Christianisation activities across the Mediterranean basin accelerated during the 4th century, so that the number of people who wanted to join the Christian Church increased rapidly. We know little about the circumstances in which these conversions occurred¹; what we do know, however, are the criteria and procedures associated with the preparations of those wishing to receive baptism. The candidates were called catechumens (κατηχούμενος), i.e. those who should be taught the principles of faith. They did not fully belong to the Christian community, but they were also not entirely outside of it². Their status and the associated limitations were regulated by Church rules, including those written by pseudo-epigraphic Canon authors. In what follows, we shall analyse the so-called *Canons of Hippolytus*³ and *Apostolic Constitutions*⁴ in order to see what requirements were imposed on the catechumens by the authors of these collections.

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¹ Ewa WIPSYCKA (*Storia della Chiesa nella tarda antichità*, trans. V. VERDIANI, Milano 2000, p. 62–83) presents an overview of the Christianisation of the Mediterranean world between the 3rd and 4th century.

² Cf. A. LAURENTIN, M. DUJARIER, *Catéchuménat. Données de l'histoire et perspectives nouvelles*, Paris 1969; G. GROppo, *L'evoluzione del catechumenato nelle Chiesa dal punto di vista pastorale*, [in:] *Valori attuali della catechesi primitiva*, ed. S. FELICI, Roma 1979, p. 29–49.

³ *Les Canons d'Hippolyte*, ed. et trans. R.-G. COQUIN, Paris 1966 [= PO, 31.2] (cetera: *Can. Hipp.*), p. 339–427. On this collection of regulations, cf. R.-G. COQUIN, *Introduction*, [in:] *Les Canons d'Hippolyte...*, p. 273–276.

⁴ *Les Constitutions Apostoliques*, vol. I–III, ed. et trans. M. METZGER, Paris 1985–1987 [= SC, 320, 329, 336], (cetera: *Const. ap.*). On *Apostolic Constitutions* cf. M. METZGER, *Introduction*, [in:] *Les Constitutions Apostoliques*, vol. I... [= SC, 320], p. 13–93; J.G. MUELLER, *L'ancien Testament dans l'ecclésiologie des Pères. Une lecture des Constitutions Apostoliques*, Turnhout 2004, p. 35–136.

1. Catechumens in Egypt

We learn a lot about the process of accepting catechumens into the Egyptian Church – as well as about the demands that were made of them – from the *Canons of Hippolytus*, whose author used the *Apostolic Tradition* as the basis for his work. He did not copy its Canons word for word, however; instead, he adapted them to the contemporary circumstances. In Canon 10, the author advises bishops to maintain vigilance in order to ensure that the candidates are seeking to become Christians out of true faith, rather than for other reasons⁵. From the *Canons of Hippolytus*, we learn that the first stage of the catechumenate consisted of an ‘interview’ designed to establish the candidate’s intentions and occupation⁶. Subsequently, a deacon would provide the candidate with an introductory instruction concerning the principles of the faith. From that moment onwards, the person was considered a catechumen and was allowed to participate in the liturgy of the Word. Pseudo-Hippolytus does not describe the ceremony accompanying the acceptance of the candidate into the catechumenate, nor does he state how long this period of instruction should last. In any case, this stage was of great importance, since it shaped the new habits associated with professing the Christian faith. The *Canons of Hippolytus* inform us that the catechumens were expected to begin adjusting their lives to the principles they were learning.

The first expression of this process was to be the abandoning of an inappropriate occupation or profession. The aim was to prevent the candidates from defiling themselves with activities that contradicted the Christian faith and morality. For this reason, in Canon 12, the author enumerates the professions in which no catechumen or baptised faithful should be engaged. These included acting (likely also dancing and pantomime), professional sports (associated with participation in games), teaching to play musical instruments, membership in an orchestra (perhaps due to links with ceremonies of pagan cults or games), being a gladiator, hunting, training horses (likely because of chariot races in the hippodrome), and serving as a pagan priest⁷. In Canon 15, he also adds performing magic and divination, working as a claqueur to arouse the enthusiasm of the crowds, manufacturing of talismans, and usury⁸. Clearly, he lists professions which Christians considered immoral, as well as ones associated with violence, magic, and pagan beliefs. Being accepted into the Christian community was predicated on abandoning any such profession.

An interesting passage from the second part of Canon 12, regarding the author’s expectations from those catechumens who worked as school teachers, deserves to be discussed separately. In the *Apostolic Tradition*, it is recommended that teachers

⁵ *Can. Hipp.*, 10, p. 362, 363.

⁶ *Can. Hipp.*, 10, p. 362, 363.

⁷ *Can. Hipp.*, 12, p. 364–365.

⁸ *Can. Hipp.*, 15, p. 368–371.

should abandon their occupation; however, as a last resort, if they were unable to find a different livelihood, they were allowed to continue working in that profession⁹. Meanwhile, Pseudo-Hippolytus postulates that they should also teach the Christian faith alongside classical literature, as well as make their pupils aware that the pagan religion is false. The author likely refers to grammarians (γραμματικός), who taught proper language, declension, conjugation etc., but also explained tropes and figures used in poetic works¹⁰. The stance of the *Apostolic Traditions* was relatively moderate: in fact, many 3rd-century Christian moralists were prepared to reject the heritage of ancient literature in its entirety, considering it dangerous for the shaping of strong faith¹¹. However, the author of the *Canons of Hippolytus*, writing with the perspective of the first half of the 4th century in mind, saw in this profession an opportunity for evangelical work. According to him, teaching children correct grammar and the basics of literature could be combined with familiarizing them with the foundations of Christian beliefs. Regrettably, we are not in a position to ascertain whether such a form of evangelisation indeed took place at all during the first half of the 4th century, and if so, whether it was effective. It would have undoubtedly involved the risk of the loss of employment if the children's parents turned out unhappy with the attempts at converting their children. Nonetheless, in such a situation, the catechumen-teacher would have been able to count on support from his community.

Pseudo-Hippolytus expected that during the first stage of becoming familiar with the Christian lifestyle the catechumens would begin to adapt to the requirements of a moral nature. In Canon 15, he explains that baptism should not be bestowed on those who live promiscuously, prostitute themselves, torment others (e.g. slaves), make false promises, or are hypocrites insulting others with slander. The author advises particular caution towards those who have these faults and bad habits: he argues that people do not change quickly, as this requires strength of character¹². He is undoubtedly right about that, likely having witnessed himself how some people returned to their old ways after baptism. Following the *Apostolic Tradition*, the author repeats the prohibition of baptising slaves whose owners are pagan and oppose conversion. Such people had to be satisfied with being among the catechumens¹³. This not only highlighted the respect for the right of ownership, but was also likely intended to avoid antagonising the owners towards Christians:

⁹ HIPPOLYTE DE ROME, *La Tradition Apostolique d'après les anciennes versions*, 16, trans. B. BOTTE, Paris 1968 [= SC, 11bis] (cetera: *Trad. ap.*), p. 70, 71.

¹⁰ Cf. T. MORGAN, *Literate Education in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds*, Cambridge 1998, p. 156–189; R. CRIBIORE, *Gymnastic of the Mind. Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt*, Princeton 2001, p. 185–219.

¹¹ Such views are represented by Tertullian, cf. *The Apostolic Tradition. A Commentary*, ed. P.F. BRADSHAW, M.E. JOHNSON, L.E. PHILLIPS, Minneapolis 2002, p. 94, an. 5.

¹² *Can. Hipp.*, 15, p. 368–371.

¹³ *Can. Hipp.*, 10, p. 362, 363.

after all, the owners could potentially be converted too. In addition, a slave in such a position would not have been able to fulfil the duty of regularly attending services or to become fully engaged in the life of the community. Of course, remaining a catechumen for life meant that such the person in question could never receive the Holy Communion; nonetheless, in the eyes of their community, they would have kept the faith.

Canon 19 sheds light on the forms of Christian activities which were required of the candidates during the initial period of the catechumenate: these were associated with charitable work, specifically visiting the sick and giving alms to the poor¹⁴. However, during the 4th century, many catechumens would extend this period of Christian initiation indefinitely. Because of this, bishops appealed to them not to wait¹⁵. A well-known example of a convert who only received baptism at his deathbed is Emperor Constantine himself¹⁶.

The second stage of the catechumenate began when the candidate expressed readiness for accepting baptism. Pseudo-Hippolytus furnishes a few details on this subject. The decision that the candidate was ready required the testimony of three people, who needed to confirm the catechumen's Christian lifestyle¹⁷. Subsequently, the candidate deepened their knowledge of the faith through receiving catechesis, delivered either by the bishop or by a priest who was prepared for the task. Once it was clear that the attendees had mastered the principles of faith, they were allowed to be baptised¹⁸. In Canon 19, the author specifies that all of the catechumens (from one diocese) ought to gather together and receive instruction from the same teacher¹⁹. It should be noted that the forty-day tutoring period referred to by Pseudo-Hippolytus is consistent with the usual practice in the East during his times²⁰. Meanwhile, in the *Apostolic Tradition*, on which he based his work, the stipulated preparatory period lasts for as much as three years²¹. The fact that the author of the *Canons of Hippolytus* updated this information shows that the collection does, to some extent, reflect the reality with which he was familiar. Nevertheless, it

¹⁴ *Can. Hipp.*, 19, p. 376, 377.

¹⁵ Cf. BASILIUS MAGNUS, *Homilia exhortatoria ad sanctum baptismum*, [in:] *PG*, vol. XXXI, col. 423–444; GREGORIUS NYSSENUS, *De iis qui baptismum differunt*, [in:] *PG*, vol. XLVI, col. 416–432.

¹⁶ Cf. EUSEBÈ DE CÉSARÉE, *Vie de Constantin*, IV, 61–64, trans. M.-J. RONDEAU, Paris 2013 [= SC, 559], p. 528–535; A.H.M. JONES, *Constantine and the Conversion of Europe*, Toronto 1987, p. 195–200; H.A. DRAKE, *Constantine and the Bishops. The Politics of Intolerance*, Baltimore–London 2002, p. 307, 308.

¹⁷ *Can. Hipp.*, 15, p. 370, 371.

¹⁸ *Can. Hipp.*, 12, p. 364, 365.

¹⁹ *Can. Hipp.*, 19, p. 384–387.

²⁰ The forty-day long preparatory period was described in the greatest detail by the pilgrim Egeria, who visited Jerusalem towards the end of the 4th century; cf. ÉGÉRIE, *Journal de voyage*, 45, 46, trans. P. MARAVAL, Paris 2002 [= SC, 296], p. 304–313.

²¹ *Trad. ap.*, 17, p. 74, 75.

by no means solves all the problems related to the scholarly research on the subject. It is known that in the East, during the 4th century, candidates who wished to be baptised would express their desire at the beginning of Lent (specifically, on the first Sunday thereof). If they were deemed worthy, their names were written down in the church documents; thus they began their forty days of preparation, after which they were baptised during Easter. It seems, however, that the practice described by Pseudo-Hippolytus does not in fact relate to Lent. The arguments on this matter provided by the editor of the French edition of the *Canons of Hippolytus*, René-Georges Coquin, are rather convincing²². The scholar demonstrates that the aforementioned catechisation could not have taken place during Lent, while the description of the baptism ceremony indicates that it did not occur during Easter either. Based on the analysis of the rules set down by Pseudo-Hippolytus, Coquin observes that the catechumens were allowed to bathe and eat until they were sated during the Thursday before the baptism, which would have been unthinkable during the Holy Week. He also draws attention to the fact that, according to the instructions, the baptism of female catechumens who were undergoing menstruation was to be moved to a different date²³. We know that baptism was bestowed at two times each year in the first three centuries: during Easter and during Pentecost²⁴. Perhaps Pseudo-Hippolytus' description attests to baptism being administered in Egypt more frequently; it may have been related to the local practice of baptising little children. The earliest direct evidence for this comes from the 3rd century; however, it is known that the practice in fact predates that time²⁵. Our author also confirms this, recommending (in Canon 19) that the children's baptism should take place before the other catechumens are submerged in the font²⁶. Jean Gaudemet also believes that the gradual disappearance of the Easter baptism was associated with the baptism of small children – he notes that the local communities performed the rite during Christmas, Epiphany, the Feast

²² Cf. *Can. Hipp.*, 12, p. 364, 365, an. 6. On the 4th-century practice of baptising during Easter and the Lent catechumenate, cf. T. MAERTENS, *Histoire et pastoral du rituel du catéchuménat et du baptême*, Bruges 1962, p. 126–129, 146.

²³ We may conclude from Canon 22 that the author of the guidelines regarding the celebration of Easter took into account Jewish customs associated with celebrating Passover; cf. *Can. Hipp.*, 22, p. 388–391. In view of this, it is likely that he allowed the sick to celebrate Easter in the second term, i.e. during Pentecost; cf. Nm, 9, 1–14. It cannot be excluded that the same rule applied to the baptism of women in the above-mentioned cases.

²⁴ Cf. TERTULLIANUS, *De baptismo*, 19, [in:] *Tertullian's Homily on Baptism*, ed. et trans. E. EVANS, London 1964, p. 40, 41.

²⁵ Cf. A.N.S. LANE, *Did the Apostolic Church Baptise Babies? A Seismological Approach*, Tynd.Bull 55.1, 2004, p. 109–130.

²⁶ *Can. Hipp.*, 19, p. 378, 379. The author copied this piece of advice from the *Apostolic Tradition*, cf. *Trad. ap.*, 21, p. 80, 81.

of the Apostles, or during holidays commemorating particular martyrs²⁷. Everett Ferguson refers to a very late, 10th century source from which we learn that the decision to change the frequency of baptism was due to Patriarch Theophilus, motivated by high mortality among children²⁸.

2. Catechumens in north-western Syria

A comprehensive discussion on the requirements set before catechumens in Syria can be found in the *Apostolic Constitutions*. In book VIII, the author includes a detailed description of the relevant criteria as well as the admission-related activities. Here, much like in Egypt, the deacons played a certain role during the first meeting between the candidate and the bishop (or the priests). They were the ones who introduced the candidate, also bringing those who vouched for his or her earnest intentions. The prospective catechumen would be questioned about his or her motivations²⁹. Ascertaining the reasons behind the desire for baptism was important, since the clergy was careful not to admit those who wavered or those who were still only seeking their religious path. Accordingly, candidates who were to join the Christian community had to meet certain conditions. Thus, the 'qualifying interview' was intended to establish the character of the person with whom the bishop (or priest) were dealing with. The first question that the author advises to settle is whether the candidate is a free person or a slave. If the candidate was a slave, then their potential admission into the catechumenate depended on the approval and positive opinion of their owner. If the owner was a pagan, the candidate was instructed to obtain his goodwill first³⁰. Therefore, it is likely that such slaves were refused admission to the catechumenate in Syria³¹.

The initial instruction in the principles of faith also included a discussion concerning the moral laws which should guide all Christians. Accordingly, the clergyman reminded that a catechumen should only be married once, while those who had lived alone until then should get married. There was no consent to informal relationships of any kind, e.g. of an owner with a slave woman. The author of our text stresses that a Christian who maintains carnal relations with a slave should be excommunicated³². According to the contemporary practice, and in parallel

²⁷ Cf. J. GAUDEMET, *L'Église dans l'Empire Romain (IV^e–V^e siècle)*, Paris 1958, p. 61.

²⁸ E. FERGUSON, *Baptism in Early Church. History, Theology, and Liturgy in the First Five Centuries*, Michigan–Cambridge 2009, p. 699.

²⁹ *Const. ap.*, VIII, 32, 2, vol. III, p. 234–237.

³⁰ *Const. ap.*, VIII, 32, 3, vol. III, p. 236, 237.

³¹ Unlike in Egypt, where such a slave could remain a catechumen for their entire life. Cf. *Can. Hipp.*, 10, p. 362, 363.

³² *Const. ap.*, VIII, 32, 5; 34, 13, vol. III, p. 236, 237, 246, 247. John Chrysostom emphatically opposed the sexual exploitation of slaves. Cf. P. SZCZUR, *Problematyka społeczna w późnoantycznej Antiochii. Na podstawie nauczania homiletycznego Jana Chryzostoma*, Lublin 2008, p. 392.

to the situation in Egypt, the author permits accepting an enslaved person who is nearing death to the catechumenate³³. He subsequently lists the occupations and professions which the candidates should abandon if they want to become catechumens. Differently than Pseudo-Hippolytus, he states categorically that if they do not change their occupation, they will be rejected. We may guess that the candidates were given some time to make the necessary adjustments; after the set period had passed, they were likely scrutinized to confirm whether the required change had indeed occurred. Among the forbidden professions we find the most obvious ones, such as pimp, prostitute, manufacturer of idols, actor, circus driver, gladiator, runner, games organiser, athlete, piper, citharist, lutist, dancer, and innkeeper³⁴. Soldiers were to be given a condition: they should be satisfied with their pay alone, and not harm anyone³⁵. Therefore, a soldier who became a Christian did not have to abandon his profession – unlike sportsmen, musicians, gladiators, innkeepers, and many others. Nonetheless, they were not allowed to inflict injury on anyone. This prohibition likely refers to the practice – common at the time – of using violence when forcefully acquiring accommodation and food, of looting houses, etc., all of which caused suffering to the local people. There is no indication, however, that the prohibition also applied to killing in combat³⁶. As regards users of magic, diviners, and those who participated in pagan mysteries, as well as those who were known for their immoral lifestyle, the author advises for them to be observed for a prolonged period; if they persisted in these pursuits, they were to be rejected³⁷.

³³ *Const. ap.*, VIII, 32, 6, vol. III, p. 236, 237. Cf. an. 25, 26.

³⁴ *Const. ap.*, VIII, 32, 7–9, vol. III, p. 236, 237.

³⁵ *Const. ap.*, VIII, 32, 10, vol. III, p. 238, 239. The quoted rule clearly refers to the fragment of Lc, 3, 14.

³⁶ Georges MINOIS (*Kościół i wojna. Od czasów Biblii do ery atomowej*, trans. A. SZYMANOWSKI, Warszawa 1998, p. 45, 46) points out that the military service lasted for a long time, usually about twenty years. Since it was voluntary, it was a path most often chosen by men from the lower social strata. Soldiers were not allowed to marry; therefore, they often sought the services of prostitutes or maintained concubines. Their pay was low, and life in the camp was devoid of variety and entertainment. During the 4th century, recruitment extended to the borderland barbarians; during the movement of troops, there were incidents of violence towards the local populace, which was often forced to provide accommodation. Cf. A. ŚWIĘTOŃ, *Przymusowy kwaterunek wojskowy w IV i V w n.e. i związane z nim nadużycia*, [in:] *Contra Leges et Bonos Mores. Przestępstwa obyczajowe w starożytnej Grecji i Rzymie*, ed. H. KOWALSKI, M. KURYŁOWICZ, Lublin 2005, p. 343–350. If the rule under discussion were to be examined in the light of the author's earlier arguments, then the infliction of harm (mainly towards the relatives of the victim) would be the killing of an innocent person. However, such harm would not be caused by the killing of an enemy who invaded the country and was threatening the Christian order (*Const. ap.* VII, 2, 8; VIII, 12, 42, vol. III, p. 28, 29, 200, 201). This, in our opinion, was the meaning of the rules concerning military service included in the *Apostolic Constitutions*. Consequently, a soldier who was a Christian could fulfil his service with clear conscience for the benefit of all.

³⁷ *Const. ap.*, VIII, 32, 11, vol. III, p. 238, 239. On the attitude of the author of the *Apostolic Constitutions* towards magic and those who practised its various forms, cf. A. BARON, *Magia i czary*

The author also forbids living in concubinage, practising Jewish or pagan customs, and indulging in pastimes associated with violence, as well as games³⁸.

Book VIII tells us that the catechumenate was to last for three years. Thus, the author harks back to the guidelines delineated in the *Apostolic Traditions*, which he used when editing this part of his work³⁹. As we have already learned, however, in the 4th century the tendency to postpone baptism by many years had become established in the East. In addition, as we saw, other sources indicate that the period of catechesis became shortened to forty days immediately prior to baptism. Still, it cannot be ruled out that the *Apostolic Constitutions* describes the practice observed in Syria. The collection known as *Testamentum Domini Nostri Jesu Christi*, most likely compiled in that region during the 5th century, also only allows baptism to be performed after a three-year period of catechumenate⁴⁰. Another possibility is that our author thought that the pre-baptism preparatory period as customarily observed in his times was too short. He did not, however, see any contraindications to baptising a particularly eager catechumen sooner⁴¹. Nonetheless, he undoubtedly considered it crucial that the catechumens change their previous lifestyle into that suitable for a Christian in due time. The author of the *Apostolic Constitutions* does not narrow down the schooling of the catechumens to Lent alone. We do know, however, that in Antioch, which is where the *Apostolic Constitutions* were written, the catechetical preparations for baptism during the second half of the 4th century lasted thirty days, and began during Lent⁴². In book V, we find a confirmation of the fact that baptism occurred during Easter⁴³; the author does not specify whether it could also be administered at other times, however.

Book VII outlines the fairly large body of knowledge that every catechumen had to master before being baptised. This included the teachings about the Holy Trinity, the events of the Old and the New Testament, as well as a commentary on the significance of Christ's salutary activity. It is worth noting, however, that – in book VIII – the author allows the role of the instructor to be fulfilled by

w *Konstytucjach apostołskich*, [in:] *Zabobony, czary i magia w Kościele starożytnym*, ed. M. Ożóg, N. WIDOK, Opole 2013 [= OBT, 138], p. 75–95.

³⁸ *Const. ap.*, VIII, 32, 12–15, vol. III, p. 238, 239.

³⁹ *Const. ap.*, VIII, 32, 16, vol. III, p. 238, 239; *Trad. ap.*, 17, p. 74, 75.

⁴⁰ *Testamentum Domini Nostri Jesu Christi*, II, 3, ed. I.E. RAHMANI, Moguntiae 1899, p. 116, 117. On the basis of the *Apostolic Constitutions* and the fragment of *Testament of Our Lord* quoted here, Pietro Rentinck is inclined to think that the catechumenate in Antioch and in Syria lasted from two to three years. Cf. P. RENTINCK, *La cura pastorale in Antiochia nel IV secolo*, Roma 1970 [= AGR.SFHE, sectio B, 178], p. 38.

⁴¹ *Const. ap.* VIII, 32, 16, vol. III, p. 238–241.

⁴² P. RENTINCK, *La cura...*, p. 38.

⁴³ *Const. ap.*, V, 19, 3, vol. II, p. 270, 271. Roman Murawski concluded that the *Apostolic Constitutions* lacked a link between the celebration of baptism and Easter – a view clearly contradicted by this fragment. Cf. R. MURAWSKI, *Historia Katechezy. Katecheza w pierwszych wiekach*, Warszawa 2011, p. 253, 255.

a layperson. This had to be a man with experience in teaching, leading a worthy life. Meanwhile, we do know that during the 4th century in the East, catechumens were instructed in churches by bishops and priests. We are unable to say why the author allows a deviation from this practice.

In book VIII, the author quotes a prayer said for the catechumens prior to their departure from the church, ahead of the Eucharist. In it, we find important information regarding the rigours of the Church discipline to which the catechumens were subjected. The author stresses that none of the so-called “listeners” or “unbelievers” may be present while the prayer is said⁴⁴. The latter were likely those who had not yet joined the ranks of the catechumens. However, in the context of what was required of the candidates for baptism, we are interested in the so-called “listeners” (ἀκροάμενοι)⁴⁵. They were one of the four groups of Christians who had broken the Church law and were required to undergo a public penance⁴⁶. They were allowed to gather in the narthex of the church⁴⁷. If a catechumen committed a serious sin, he or she could not be excommunicated, not being a full member of the community in the first place. Nonetheless, such a deed did not remain without consequences: Canon 5 of the Council of Neocaesarea (314–319) declares that if such a person expresses their regret for the sin along with the group of the “weeping ones”, they may become part of the “listeners”⁴⁸. Regarding the catechumens who broke down under persecution and participated in a pagan cult, the Council of Nicaea (325) also dictates that they should join the group of the “listeners” for three years. After that time, they were once again allowed to pray with the catechumens⁴⁹. Sending a catechumen to the group of the “listening” penitents meant that, for a period of time, they were not allowed to put themselves forward for baptism. This leads to another question: what happened if a catechumen committed a forbidden act again during this period? The answer is, again, provided in Canon 5 of the Council of Neocaesarea: in such cases, the ‘recidivist’ sinner was erased from the list of the catechumens⁵⁰. Was being deprived of the status of a catechumen meant as a lifetime punishment, however? Certainly not; such a person was allowed to make further attempts at joining the Christian community

⁴⁴ *Const. ap.*, VIII, 6, 2, vol. III, p. 150, 151.

⁴⁵ Cf. G.W.H. LAMPE, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, Oxford 1995, p. 65 (s.v. ἀκροάμων; ἀκρο-άμαι).

⁴⁶ The 4th-century Canon 11 ascribes to George the Wonderworker the names of four groups of penitents: crying, listening, lying prostrate and standing, cf. GREGORIUS THAUMATURGUS, *Canones*, 11, [in:] P.-P. JOANNOU, *Discipline générale antique (IV^e–IX^e s.)*, vol. II, *Les canons des Pères Grecs*, Roma 1963, p. 29, 30. On the types of penitence appropriate for each of these groups, cf. M. CHŁOPOWIEC, *Teologia pokuty pierwszych wieków chrześcijaństwa w Kościele wschodnim*, RTM 3, 2011, p. 134–140.

⁴⁷ Cf. S. ČURČIĆ, *Narthex*, [in:] *ODB*, vol. II, p. 1438–1439.

⁴⁸ *Canones Synodi Neocesariensis*, can. 5, [in:] P.-P. JOANNOU, *Discipline générale antique (IV^e–IX^e s.)*, vol. I.2, *Les canons des Synodes Particuliers*, Roma 1962 (cetera: *Can. Syn. Neoc.*), p. 77.

⁴⁹ *Concilium Nicaenum I – 325*, can. 14, [in:] *COGD*, vol. I, ed. G. ALBERIGO, Turnhout 2006, p. 27.

⁵⁰ *Can. Syn. Neoc.*, can. 5, p. 77.

if they ceased the forbidden practices. That being said, the matter of when they would be allowed to return to the group of the catechumens most likely depended on the gravity of their transgression and on an attestation that they were following a Christian way of life⁵¹.

3. Conclusions

In the 4th and 5th centuries, catechumens were a very numerous group of Christians in the East. This was no doubt partly caused by the change in the attitude towards Christians on the part of the Roman authorities, leading to the faith being granted the status of *religio licita*. This also significantly accelerated the Christianisation of the other parts of the Empire, which in turn necessitated the change of the existing procedures regulating the acceptance of catechumens into the community. The period of catechesis was limited to thirty or forty days immediately prior to baptism. The numerous conversions did not always lead to a full-scale change in the way of life into one that was expected of a future Christian, however. As a result, high requirements were put before the catechumens by the authors of pseudo-epigraphic Church regulations. Some of them, following the *Apostolic Tradition*, instruct the catechumens to abandon certain occupations and activities that were associated with a pagan cult, immoral sexual conduct, forbidden entertainment, or violence. However, since many of the candidates reverted to their old habits after only a brief time, the author of the *Apostolic Constitutions* advises the return to the three-year period of catechisation. In the 4th century, the faltering candidates were also obliged to undergo a public penance. During a service, they would join the “listening” penitents, who gathered in the narthex of the church; they would leave the temple before the prayer for the catechumens. The *Canons of Hippolytus* attest that baptism was administered to little children already during that time, with the responsibility for their Christian upbringing resting on their parents or guardians. The rules analysed above reveal the authors’ great care for

⁵¹ Two interesting rules were adopted at the Council of Elvira (ca. 306?). Canon 45 describes the situation of a former catechumen who did not go to church for a long time; if there were people who could attest that the catechumen nonetheless led a Christian life, he could be baptised. Canon 68, in turn, discusses the case of female catechumens who murdered their newborn children: such women were only allowed to be baptised toward the end of their lives, cf. *Concilium Eliberitanum*, can. 45, 68, [in:] *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*, vol. II, ed. J.D. MANSI, Florentiae 1759 [repr. Paris 1901], col. 13, 17. Of course, we need to remember that the decisions of the Council of Elvira were local in scope. The synod convened during the early 4th century, at a time when there was still no full freedom of Christian worship in the East. Since the council took place soon after persecutions had ended in the West, the bishops were highly rigid regarding certain matters. Nonetheless, Canon 45 does confirm that a former catechumen was allowed to seek baptism once again.

preserving the high standards of the catechumenate at a time when Christianisation was gaining momentum. They knew perfectly well that the quality of the functioning of a Christian community – and therefore the zealous adherence to ecclesiastic rules – depended on the successful shaping of new thought patterns and a novel way of life. For this reason, the authors put such great emphasis on the process of catechisation.

Translated by Michał Zytka

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Abstract. The article discusses the requirements that 4th-century catechumens in the East were expected to meet. Accordingly, the pseudo-epigraphic Church regulations found in the *Canons of Hippolytus* and in the *Apostolic Constitutions* are analysed. It can be seen from these texts that their authors showed considerable concern for maintaining high standards associated with the period of the catechumenate; furthermore, they put considerable emphasis on the adherence to the Church regulations and the implementation of Christian standards of thought in daily life.

Keywords: late antiquity, early Church, baptism, catechumens, *Canons of Hippolytus*, *Apostolic Constitutions*, requirements set for catechumens in the East

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BYZANTINE RANK HIERARCHY IN THE 9TH–11TH CENTURIES

When considering Byzantine rank hierarchy – the phenomenon as a whole or any of its specific aspects – during the period indicated in the title, we must bear in mind the general intricacy and tangible polysemy of the very term in itself. 9th–11th century Byzantium knew not one but several distinct, relatively independent official hierarchical systems; all of them, however, were mutually interconnected to varying degrees and thus formed a single, pan-imperial hierarchical construct, expressed through the so-called system of palace precedence of ranks in the empire. It is this global and more general paradigm that reflects the Byzantine hierarchical model of the 9th–11th centuries; consequently, it seems fitting to refer to it as the rank hierarchy of the classical Middle Byzantine period, in the era preceding the reforms of Alexios I Komnenos (1081–1118)¹.

The two pillars of Byzantine secular rank hierarchy during the 9th–11th centuries were the hierarchy of honorific titles and the hierarchy of offices. For the Byzantines, these two kinds of hierarchy – along with another ranked construct, i.e. the ecclesiastical hierarchy – provided the three cornerstones of the harmonic organization of the empire (and the Christian world in general) under the auspices of the Byzantine *basileus*. Let us bear in mind, among other things, that – from the viewpoint of Byzantine imperial ideology – the empire and the Christian world

¹ The present publication is based on an open lecture on the same topic, delivered by the author at the University of Lodz in November 2015; it also summarizes a part of the author's doctoral dissertation, entitled *Titles and Rank Hierarchy in Byzantium in the 9th–11th Centuries* [Н. КЪНЕВ, *Титли и рангова йерархия във Византия през IX–XI в. (по данните на сфрагистиката)*, София 2007 (unpublished doctoral dissertation)]. There exist numerous works which, to a larger or lesser extent, deal with particular aspects of Byzantine rank hierarchy and the system of palace precedence in the 9th–11th centuries; similarly, there is no dearth of studies focusing on the institutions of the Middle Byzantine era (such as e.g. L. BRÉHIER, *Le monde byzantine*, vol. II, *Les institutions de l'empire byzantin*, Paris 1970). However, the number of comprehensive investigations of the Byzantine hierarchical model in the period is considerably smaller – cf. especially N. ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΔΗΣ, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IX^e et X^e siècles*, Paris 1972, also J.B. BURY, *The Imperial Administrative System in the Ninth Century*, London 1911 and Н. КЪНЕВ, *Византийският йерархичен модел от IX–XI в. (Общ вид на системата на средновизантийската рангова йерархия и видове йерархии във Византия през IX–XI в.)*, АДСВ 39, 2009, p. 142–163.

were treated as virtually synonymous; this underlying entity was the source not only of the postulate concerning the universal dimensions of Byzantine imperial power, but also of the axiomatic understanding of Byzantine rank hierarchy.

The Byzantine concept of hierarchy entirely excluded the possibility of two or more positions being ascribed identical weight (similarly, it was inadmissible for two or more persons to occupy positions in the imperial hierarchy that would be fully equivalent their importance). At the same time, for the *Romaioi*, the meaning and content of that very hierarchy were inseparably connected, emanating from the persona of the emperor. The latter was in charge of the earthly world in accordance with divine providence; and this world, in turn, could only be harmonious as long as it represented a mirror copy of the celestial one. From this point of view, nothing could symbolize (and simultaneously express) the universal Christian hierarchy of the empire more effectively than the arrangement of Byzantine dignitaries in the palace ceremonial, in particular – the order in which they were called at imperial receptions. On a concrete level, this principle was realized through taking into account both the importance of the honorific title and the office-related status of each Byzantine dignitary. These factors determined the spot he occupied in the system of rank precedence, i.e. in the overall structure of the pan-imperial rank hierarchy; his position at imperial receptions, holidays and banquets was calculated accordingly².

As far as the hierarchies of offices and of titles were concerned, the latter was the more important of the two for the Byzantines. It was the honorific titles that showed their holder's personal, hierarchical link to the sacred, super-hierarchical persona of the *basileus*, manifested on earth mirroring the heavenly arrangement centered around Lord God Almighty. While the title hierarchy was strictly personal (it is no coincidence that the titles involved were awarded for a lifetime), the office hierarchy only had functional significance: each official rank gave a Byzantine functionary a temporary (and effectively non-personal) kind of importance. The latter was derived not from the intrinsically hierarchical position held by a given person relative to the emperor, but solely from the duties performed for him in a particular capacity. Consequently, this ephemeral and essentially purely functional significance of a particular official could expire at any given moment, with the duties transferred to another person³.

Honorific title distinctions occupied a particularly important spot in the socio-political structure of the Byzantine Empire and the ideological model of the *Romaioi's* supremacy over the ecumene, presided over by the God-appointed *basileus*

² Cf. N. ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΔÈΣ, *Les listes...*, p. 22–23.

³ For a full overview of the official ranks employed (as part of the system of precedence) during the period in question in Byzantium, cf. N. ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΔÈΣ, *Les listes...*, p. 302–348. On Byzantine office ranks and duties, as well as on the office hierarchy in general, cf. also J.B. BURY, *The Imperial...*, p. 36–119.

in Constantinople. The hierarchy of titles in Byzantium underwent considerable development in the 9th–11th centuries. The aim of this specific hierarchical scheme of honorific distinctions, where the emphasis was on the person and not on the functional characteristics, was to both illustrate and – no less importantly – to institutionalize the personal importance of the relevant dignitaries and their direct, special link to the sovereign of the Christian ecumene, i.e. the Byzantine *basileus* (a link that existed at least on a theoretical level). Because of this, the title hierarchy was supposed to constitute – to the fullest possible extent – an earthly reflection of the heavenly, angelic hierarchy, and thus to embody the all-embracing harmony of God's chosen, unitary, universal Byzantine-Christian Empire. Just as the celestial, angelic rank hierarchy was centered on God, the Creator and Omnipotent Ruler of the universe, thus – according to the Byzantines – the earthly title hierarchy had to revolve around the God-appointed and God-inspired emperor.

From this point of view, the honorific title hierarchy under discussion was both Byzantine and simultaneously universal in nature, since its essential perception was based on treating the Empire and the ecumene as inseparable, overlapping notions. This also explains why Byzantine honorific titles could be bestowed on foreigners, including sovereign rulers. In such cases, the aim was to integrate the individuals distinguished in this way into the personal, hierarchical arrangement of the ecumene, as well as to 'situate' them appropriately within the earthly *taxis* (which reflected the heavenly one). This procedure determined their distinct position relative to the *basileus* as the highest commander of the civilized Christian world. In this sense, the very granting of a Byzantine title to a foreign ruler or prince was a 'personal act' of sorts, without legally fixed consequences for the state or the dynasty from which the distinguished ruler hailed. This indicates a personal-level – rather than state-level – kind of connection and dependence, with no bearing whatsoever on the status of the relevant polity⁴. From the point of view of how world harmony and the God-appointed earthly *taxis* were construed, however, the hierarchy and universal arrangement according to honorific titles outweighed any state-level hierarchy of monarchs. It was so because the latter was reducible to a mere temporary constellation, with no roots in the earthly *taxis* as a faithful copy of the celestial Kingdom of God; accordingly, its existence was not originally sanctioned by the divine design of the ecumene (the more so because the very ecumene was supposed to achieve an ultimate, finished and eternally unified state one day, under direct rule of the Christian *basileus* in Constantinople as God's sole earthly deputy and servant).

Four groups of ranks may be distinguished in the hierarchy of Byzantine honorific titles: senior, first-class, second-class and lower-class titles. Besides, an

⁴ Cf. Н. КЪНЕВ, *Византийският...*, p. 151–153; ИДЕМ, *За значението на кесарската титла на българския владетел Тервел*, [in:] *Историкии*, vol. II, *Научни изследвания в чест на доц. д-р Стоян Танев по случай неговата 70-годишнина*, Шумен 2007, p. 67–68.

important feature of the typology was the distinction concerning titles meant for eunuchs and those for non-eunuchs, i.e. the so-called 'bearded ones'. Finally, yet another typological divide distinguished titles connected with the senatorial and the military classes, respectively⁵.

The senior group of titles included those honorary distinctions which could only be borne by members or close relatives of the imperial family; accordingly, the class in question can also be termed the imperial one⁶. In the early stages of the period under discussion, this category included three titles: in the first place, *kaisar*, in the second – *nobelissimos*, and in the third – *kouropalates*⁷. These titles could not, in principle, be combined with others; in the absence of a co-emperor, especially in the first half of the relevant period, they carried certain presumptive rights regarding the succession. For this reason, they were rarely held by more than one person at any given time, although the rule was not without exceptions. Each of the above-mentioned titles was accompanied by a most generous state pension. In the case of a *kaisar*, for instance, it could reach the exorbitant 128 *litrai* of gold (i.e. over 9200 *nomismata*!).

During the reign of emperor Theophilos (829–842), another title was added to the imperial group – that of *zoste patrikia*, the only specifically feminine title in the Byzantine hierarchy. The distinction under discussion, which likewise could not be borne by more than one person at a given time, was created especially for the emperor's mother-in-law; during the following two centuries, it could only be bestowed on women who were relatives of the *basileus*.

Senior titles in 9th–11th Byzantium, with their clearly defined general characteristics, formed the topmost layer in the rank hierarchy of the period. All of the titles belonging to this group were, in principle, reserved for the members and closest relatives of the imperial family; at least until the mid-9th century, they were awarded exceedingly rarely. Their bearers enjoyed the exceptional privilege of sharing the table with the Emperor of the *Romaioi*, thus having access to him personally. All of these titles, including *zoste patrikia*, belonged exclusively to the hierarchy of the 'bearded ones', and bestowing them on eunuchs was regarded as absolutely unthinkable until the 1040s. All of them were singular honorary distinctions; before the second half of the 11th century, it was rarely allowed for any of them to be borne by two people at a given time. In view of their superior status

⁵ Cf. IDEM, *Титли...*, p. 27–29. On the crucial role of eunuchs and their peculiar status in the Middle Byzantine period, cf. e.g. R. GUILLAND, *Les Eunuques dans l'Empire byzantin. Étude de titulature et de prosopographie byzantines*, REB 1, 1943, p. 197–238. On the categorization of Byzantine titles into those meant for members of the senate and those meant for the military class, clearly attested already in the *Klētorologion* of Philotheos (εις συγκλητικούς and εις προελευσιμαίους or εν τοις βασιλικοις κατατάττονται κώδιξιν), cf. N. ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΔΗΣ, *Les listes...*, p. 86–87, 98–99, as well as J.B. BURY, *The Imperial...*, p. 22–23.

⁶ On the senior group of titles, cf. H. КЪНЕВ, *Титли...*, p. 105–184.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 81–82.

in the hierarchy, combining them with other titles was not admissible (in contrast to other honorific titles in Byzantium); only the title of *kouropalates* was sometimes exempt from this rule.

For the same reason, until the middle of the 11th century, the titles in question were normally not combined with administrative or court offices. The process of their devaluation began markedly later than in the case of other Byzantine titles. On the whole, with the exception of *zoste patrikia*, the senior titles survived the demise of the hierarchical system of rank precedence at the end of the period under analysis and continued to be employed in the age of the Komnenos dynasty, albeit with a considerably different status.

The second group was that of *first-class titles*, which encompassed the highest honorary distinctions available to individuals not belonging to the imperial family⁸. Granted to members of the highest elites of the empire, these titles were associated with remarkable prestige, importance and social desirability throughout the period under discussion. At the outset of the Middle Byzantine era, the highest accessible title was perhaps that of *patrikios*. This and several other titles that arose later (but which did not belong to the imperial class – normally reserved for the family of the *basileus*, as described above) formed the group of first-class titular ranks in Byzantium. For a long time, the highest reachable title, topping the group under discussion, was that of *magistros*. In the 960s, it was surpassed by the newly-created title of *proedros*; still, taking into account the fact that the latter was reserved for eunuchs, the title of *magistros* remained the highest achievable level in the rank promotion of ‘bearded ones’ until as late as the mid-11th century.

The strict differentiation between the titulature available to ‘bearded ones’ and to eunuchs, respectively, was adhered to until the 1040s. Accordingly, it is also reflected in the group of first-class titles, among which the ranks of *proedros*, *vestarches*, *vestes* and *patrikios* were available to eunuchs, while ‘bearded ones’ could attain those of *magistros*, *vestes*, *anthypatos* and *patrikios*. In the mid-11th century, however, the division under discussion disintegrated. Slightly later still, new derivative titles started to appear, formed from previously existing ones by means of the prefix *proto-*. This was, first and foremost, a corollary of the generally intensifying devaluation of Byzantine titles in the 11th century (on which process see also below); beginning from the third quarter of the century, it gradually led to their far-reaching depreciation and loss of prestige⁹. The titles of the group under analysis did not persist following the transformation of the rank hierarchy dur-

⁸ On the group of first-class titles, cf. *ibidem*, p. 185–315.

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 185; cf. also IDEM, *The Contribution of Sigillography in Elucidating the Devaluation of the Byzantine Honorific Titles in the Hierarchy of the so-called System of Precedence in the Mid-Byzantine Period (turn of the VIIIth/IXth – turn of the XIth/XIIth Centuries)*, [in:] *Proceedings of the 22nd International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Sofia, 22–27 August 2011*, vol. III, *Abstracts of Free Communications*, ed. A. NIKOLOV, E. KOSTOVA, V. ANGELOV, Sofia 2011, p. 110–111; J.-C. CHEYNET, *Dévaluation des dignités et dévaluation monétaire dans la seconde moitié du XI^e s.*, B 53, 1983, p. 453–477.

ing the reign of Alexios I Komnenos; most of them fell into disuse no later than in the early decades of the 12th century. The ranks of *proedros* and *protoproedros* were the only ones to survive as long as until the mid-12th century.

The third group in the rank hierarchy was that of *second-class titles*. Towards the end of the 9th century, it encompassed (in descending order) the dignities of *praipositos* (exclusively for eunuchs), *protospatharios* (accessible both to 'bearded ones' and to eunuchs), *primikerios*, *ostiarios* and *spatharokoubikoularios* (all three for eunuchs only), *spatharokandidatos* and *dishypatos* (both for 'bearded ones' only), *koubikoularios* (for eunuchs only) and *hypatos* (for the 'bearded ones' only). This is the most massive group; numerous bearers of the titles belonging here were figures who, particularly in the 9th–10th centuries, simultaneously occupied the chief palace-related, administrative and military posts, both in the provinces and in the capital. Needless to say, the most crucial offices were still primarily held by those bearing first-class titles; nevertheless, at least until the beginning of the 11th century, it was possible even for posts such as *strategos* of a theme or *logothetes* of one of the central offices to be occupied by a person with the title of *protospatharios*.

Finally, the fourth group is that of *lower-class titles*, which included, in descending order, the dignities of *strator*, *kandidatos*, *basilikos mandator*, *nipsistarios*, *vestetor*, *silentarios*, and – at the very bottom – *apoeparchon* and *stratelates*. From among these titles, it appears that only *nipsistarios* was meant for eunuchs.

A phenomenon testifying to the importance of titles in the Byzantine world was the widespread practice of one and the same person bearing a range of different titles. The phenomenon was quite characteristic of the period under discussion. In Byzantium, being awarded a higher-ranking title did not necessarily entail forfeiting the ranks already held at that moment, or the honors and benefits connected with them – be they financial gains or privileges related to the system of palace precedence. In this way, a single individual could accumulate a number of titular dignities at the same time, which was, in a number of cases, reflected in that person's position in the arrangement of the court ceremonial. It could also mean receiving the total sum of the yearly pays deriving from each of the possessed titles (in the form of a *roga*, i.e. pension; cf. in more detail below).

At the same time, the accumulation of titles was not an across-the-board principle; a number of restrictions were in effect. First and foremost – as mentioned above – the titles that were by origin directly related to that of the emperor (i.e. *kaisar* and *nobelissimos*) were not subject to conjoining with other dignities, at least in the Middle Byzantine period. Neither Byzantine lead seals nor the available narrative sources nor the currently known documents from the period attest the combination of the titles *kaisar* and *nobelissimos* with any other. Evidently, in the eyes of the Byzantines, these titular distinctions were connected with imperial power and dignity (and accordingly topped the hierarchy, precisely because of their extraordinarily elevated status and their direct reflection of the

imperial *sacrum*). Therefore, they remained outside of the scope of – or perhaps even above – the tradition of accumulating titles; their conjoining was disallowed due to the same reasons that barred the very title of emperor to be combined with any other rank. By and large, the same applied to the remaining two senior titles in the hierarchy, generally restricted to the imperial family's close relatives – *kouropalates* and *zoste patrikia*, despite the fact that their origin was different from that of *kaisar* and *nobelissimos*. The title of *zoste patrikia* – the only one intended for women – quite simply could not be subject to the rule of title accumulation, given that no other feminine titles (with which it could have theoretically been combined) were in existence. The conjoining of the title of *kouropalates* with other dignities could only occur under exceptional circumstances; still, cases in which the bearer simultaneously held other, lower honorific titles are attested. One such example is furnished by the brother of emperor Nikephoros II Phokas (963–969), Leo, who bore the titles of *kouropalates* and *magistros* at the same time¹⁰.

The accumulation of several honorific titles by one person was fully allowed – and even considered a routine practice – as far as the groups of first-class and second-class titles were concerned, although it appears that this was not the case with lower-class titles.

The analysis of the available sources from the period – in particular, the sigillographic material of the 9th–11th centuries – shows that a number of additional restrictions obtained as regards title accumulation, in addition to the ones described above. Thus, for example, in the 9th–10th centuries the title of *kouropalates* could be combined with that of *magistros* alone – as opposed to the preceding centuries, when a *kouropalates* was free to retain the previously held title of *patrikios*. It seems that the constraints regarding the dignity of *kouropalates* likewise pertained to the ranks of *proedros* and *protoproedros*, which arose later, since the latter two titles are usually attested alone, combined with no others.

Similarly, as regards first-class titles (with parallel restrictions applying to *proedros* and *protoproedros*), it seems that they could only be combined with lower titles within the limits of the same group; if the process of accumulation transgressed this boundary, this was strictly limited to the very highest titles of the second-class group (*protospatharios* for 'bearded ones' and *praipositos*, *protospatharios* as well as *primikerios* for eunuchs). 'Bearded' *patrikioi* could – albeit rarely, and presumably only exceptionally – further accumulate the titles of *dishypatos* and *hypatos*.

It should also be pointed out that the titles formed through the addition of the prefix *proto-* to already existing ranks normally could not be combined with the titles from which they were derived. Conceivably, this constraint was connected

¹⁰ Cf. *Ioannes Scylitzae Synopsis historiarum*, 4, p. 250, 50–52; 1, p. 284, 11–12, ed. I. THURN, Berolini 1973 [= *CFHB*, 5]; *Leonis Diaconi Caloensis Historiae Libri Decem*, III, 8, ed. C.B. HASE, Bonnæ 1828 [= *CSHB*, 3], p. 49.

with the traditional, original interpretation of such titles – pictured as the ‘first’ among a given rank level. However, combining them with other, unrelated titles was entirely possible, in accordance with the above-mentioned rules.

Roughly until the 1140s, it was absolutely unacceptable to accumulate ranks belonging to the hierarchies designed for the ‘bearded ones’ and for eunuchs simultaneously.

As has already been pointed out, one of the rationales behind the tradition of accumulating ranks in Byzantium was the possibility of accruing the benefits that came with them. It was an important characteristic of Byzantine titles of the period under discussion that, although in principle hardly connected with performing any official duties, they provided their bearers with the entitlement to a fixed income in the form of a yearly pension disbursed from the state treasury, called a *roga* (ρόγα). In some instances, however, being awarded an honorific title did not entail being granted a *roga*. Such cases arose when the title was not bestowed on a given person in view of their merits or as a token of imperial grace, but when it was obtained through payment (on which see below) – i.e. whenever the recipient only paid the amount of money that constituted the price of the title itself, not accompanied by the right to a corresponding *roga*. Similarly, receiving a title may not have been tantamount to being awarded a *roga* when the recipient was a foreign prince or aristocrat. The prestige of Byzantine honorific titles, both within the Empire and in other states within the sphere of Byzantine cultural and political influence, was usually sufficiently large in and of itself – consequently, the titles were often regarded as sought-after and precious gains even when not connected with financial benefits in the form of a *roga*.

The *rogas* accompanying each title amounted to rigorously defined sums, which, in all probability, remained generally unchanged during almost the entire period under discussion. For example, the *roga* of a bearer of the dignity of *protospatharios* totaled 1 *litra* (i.e. 72 *nomismata*) a year, while that of a *magistros* was tantamount to 16 *litrai* (i.e. 1152 *nomismata*)¹¹. In fact, during the analyzed period, the *roga* largely ensured the financial well-being of Byzantine title-bearers, not infrequently providing them with a sole source of stable income. As such, it was an essential instrument of influence in the hands of the *basileus*. On the other hand, the total number of title-bearers was quite vast, the more so because it had been rising steadily (particularly during the 9th century). If we take into account the fact that the *roga* was also paid out to the holders of assorted offices in the central and provincial administration (e.g. some of the *strategoi*), it follows that the yearly payment of the *rogai* must have constituted one of the principal expenses in the imperial budget.

¹¹ Cf. J.-C. СНЕУНЕТ, *Dévaluation...*, p. 469; Н. КЪНЕВ, *Титли...*, p. 61; ИДЕМ, *Византинобългарски студии*, Велико Търново 2013, p. 235–236, an. 23.

Theoretically speaking, titles in Byzantium were considered as lifetime honorific distinctions. As testified by Philotheos at the end of the 9th century, they were a sign of divine benevolence and were distributed by emperors in accordance with God's will on particular holidays; as a result, legally speaking, they could never be the object of buying or selling in any form. Fairly often, however, the reality was quite the opposite. Especially in the 10th century, trading titles was by no means rare – be it by directly breaching the existing legal norms or by circumventing them. As observed by French historian Paul Lemerle *Byzantine history abounds in alternating testimonies concerning the practice of buying offices and titles – with or without salary or pension [...] – and concerning the disadvantages of this practice*¹². However, the practice in question – involving the selling and buying of titles – only concerned honorific titles of the lower and middle echelons of the hierarchy; the highest hierarchical position subject to this kind of trade was that of the *protospatharios*. In some cases, the phenomenon was sanctioned at the highest levels – certain periods even saw the existence of fixed tariffs, so that the prices of the particular titles were precisely delineated. Furthermore, titles could be purchased with or without the corresponding *roga*. Emperors often turned a blind eye towards the practice; at times, they would tolerate it openly and even benefit from it directly.

Still, as mentioned above, the phenomenon never affected the senior and first-class titles: these remained unscathed, and the very acquisition of such a title in the above-mentioned way would have made it illegal and void, besides potentially leading to harsh consequences for the illicit bearer. As noted before, the highest honorific distinctions were in principle reserved for the members and direct relatives of the imperial family, while first-class titles were only available to the members of the topmost aristocratic layers and the holders of elite offices (being granted one of such titles was a token of particular grace and benevolence on the part of the *basileus*). Consequently, the relevant social circle and the total number of bearers of these titular ranks were at all times rather limited; thus, the potential acquiring of one of these highest-ranking titles by purchase could not have remained unnoticed (and consequently unpunished).

The principal exclusion of senior and first-class titles from the (no doubt real) practice of trading ranks in the empire supports the conclusion that these titles furnish a palpable and relatively objective criterion for determining a given person's role and prominence, as well as their belonging to the highest layers of the aristocratic, palace- and government-related elite of the Byzantine state.

* * *

¹² P. LEMERLE, *Roga et rente d'état aux X^e–XI^e siècles*, REB 25, 1967, p. 77.

The Byzantine rank hierarchy achieved its most expanded form in the 11th century. In the same period, particularly from the 1030s onwards, it slowly – but steadily – developed a marked ‘devaluation potential’¹³. Starting from the time of the Doukid dynasty, the process of rank inflation proceeded faster and faster, achieving levels jeopardizing the existence of the system during the reign of Michael VII Doukas (1071–1078) and Nikephoros III Botaneiates (1078–1081). But already in the time of Michael V Kalaphates (1041–1042), and particularly of Constantine IX Monomachos (1042–1055), the unrestrained, widespread distribution of honorific titles was fully underway; before long, this resulted in a strong devaluation of a number of titular distinctions, as well as of the Byzantine rank hierarchy as a whole. These, incidentally, were some of the most glaring symptoms of the profound crisis that the empire succumbed to in the 11th century. Michael Psellos, though generally favorable towards Constantine Monomachos, does not hide his indignation when reporting on the emperor’s violation of the laws concerning rank hierarchy (Constantine tampered with the established order of the titles and made some of them available even to persons of low standing): *The doors of the senate were thrown open to nearly all the rascally vagabonds of the market, and the honour was conferred not on two or three, nor on a mere handful, but the whole gang was elevated to the highest offices of state by a single decree...*¹⁴ The above-described tendency continued into the following decades, culminating in the 1070s and early 1080s.¹⁵

In a way, the system of honorific rank hierarchy had reached its limit already in the late 1050s: the existing possibilities had been depleted, so that new ranks (intermediate between and superior to the existing levels) had to be created. This explains the emergence of titles which included the prefix *proto-* (save for the case of *protospatharios*, a title which had already existed for a considerable time). The first such creations were *protoproedros*, *provestiarios* and *protovestis*; in the late 1070s and early 1080s, *protokouropalates*, *protonobelissimos* and *protoanthypatos* followed suit.

It is during the reign of Constantine IX Monomachos that the title of *sebastos* (σεβαστός) – or, to be more precise, its feminine form *sebaste* (σεβαστή) – first entered the scene. According to eminent Byzantinologists such as e.g. Nicolas Oikonomidès, the introduction of the title of *sebastos* during the administration of the above-mentioned emperor constituted the most far-reaching innovation

¹³ On the accelerating process of devaluation of Byzantine titulature during the 11th century, cf. e.g. N. ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΔΗΣ, *L'évolution de l'organisation administrative de l'empire byzantine au XI^e siècle (1025–1118)*, TM 6, 1976, p. 125–152; J.-C. CHEYNET, *Dévaluation...*, p. 468–477; H. ΚΩΝΕΒ, *Τιτλι...*, p. 91–94.

¹⁴ MICHEL PSELLOS, *Chronographie ou histoire d'un siècle de Byzance (976–1077)*, VI, 29, vol. I, ed. et trans. E. RENAULD, Paris 1926 [= CB], p. 132; *Fourteen Byzantine Rulers. The Chronographia of Michael Psellus*, trans. E.R.A. SEWTER, Harmondsworth 1953, p. 125.

¹⁵ Cf. N. ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΔΗΣ, *L'évolution...*, p. 126.

in Byzantine rank hierarchy in the 11th century before the comprehensive Komnenian reform. However, the term *sebastos* (which translates as ‘venerable’) was, in fact, the Byzantine rendition of the Roman imperial title of *augustus*. Until that moment, *sebastos* and *sebaste* had existed solely in the capacity of imperial epithets, forming part of the titulature of the emperor and empress, respectively. In what constitutes the first two cases of the title being employed with reference to persons other than the imperial couple, the dignity of *sebaste* was bestowed on two of Constantine IX Monomachos’s favorites (Maria Skleraina and subsequently her Alanian successor, the emperor’s mistress during the second half of his reign). In both cases, by calling his favorites *sebastai*, Constantine IX in a way strove to equate them with the legitimate empresses Zoe and Theodora, or at least to approximate the latter’s status to the greatest possible extent. Although Psellos claims in his *Chronographia* that the new title of *sebasta* was coined during Constantine IX Monomachos’s reign for Maria Skleraina, it cannot be considered certain whether this novel title did not simply result from applying the dignity of *augusta* to a person who had not been crowned Empress of the *Romaioi* (i.e. that it was an attempt to grant the status of *augusta* to a woman who was not an empress either by birth or by marriage, and consequently could not be considered one in accordance with the law). In view of this, it is not illogical to presume that the new title under discussion had not yet been integrated into the hierarchy in the mid-11th century. Similarly, it is possible that the subsequent bestowals of the title *sebastos* before Alexios I Komnenos’s 1081 reforms – to wit, on Constantine Keroularios towards the close of the reign of Michael VII Doukas¹⁶ as well as on Alexios and Isaac Komnenoi (possibly also Philaretos Brachamios) by Nikephoros III Botaneiates¹⁷ – were not connected with awarding an actual senior title belonging to the hierarchy of the ἀξίαι διὰ βραβείων (a status that *sebastos* probably only reached after 1081). Rather, these acts may have been meant to underscore the high and distinguished status of the persons involved, in particular their proximity to the *basileus*. Thus, being called *sebastos* hinted at imperial status to a certain degree, though without any factual legal status or prerogatives.

It goes without saying that we cannot exclude the possibility of *sebastos* being used as a full-fledged title already before the administration of Alexios I. In this case, however, a number of questions would have to remain unanswered, at least for the time being: Why is the creation of the title not reflected in the sources adequately? Furthermore, where exactly should the rank of *sebastos* be positioned in the title hierarchy? (Possibly, the correct location would be below *kaisar* and

¹⁶ Cf. N. OIKONOMIDÈS, *L'évolution...*, p. 126, an. 6–7; R. GUILLAND, *Recherches sur les institutions Byzantines*, vol. I, Berlin–Amsterdam 1967, p. 575; N. OIKONOMIDÈS, *Le serment de l'impératrice Eudocie (1067). Un épisode de l'histoire dynastique de Byzance*, REB 21, 1963, p. 119–120.

¹⁷ Cf. e.g. G. ZACOS, A. VEGLERY, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, vol. I, pars 3, Basel 1972, Seals, I/3, nos. 2701 bis, 2707, 2707 bis; V. LAURENT, *Les sceaux byzantins du Médaillier Vatican*, Città del Vaticano 1962, p. 119, as well as N. OIKONOMIDÈS, *L'évolution...*, p. 126, an. 7.

above *nobelissimos*, at least if we were to follow the logic behind the hierarchical position of the title 1081). In view of the scanty source material, drawing any more detailed conclusions concerning the dignity of *sebastos* (including its practical and legal ramifications as well as its position in the Byzantine rank hierarchy before the reforms of Alexios I Komnenos) would be no more than pure speculation. After all, it should not be forgotten that the title of *sebastos* is primarily associated with the hierarchy of the Komnenian era, not of the period under discussion.

It is, however, beyond all doubt that the escalating process of devaluation of titles in Byzantium (which is seen at work for most of the 11th century, and which could apparently no longer be compensated for by the creation of new titles within the existing hierarchical structure in the third quarter of that century) was one of the two¹⁸ principal reasons that led emperor Alexios I Komnenos to reform the rank hierarchy by replacing the existing model with a new one.

Translated by Marek Majer

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¹⁸ The other one, of course, was of a financial nature: the empire was no longer able to expend the colossal sums of money required to sustain the thousands of pensions paid each year to Byzantium's numerous title-bearers.

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Abstract. The aim of the article is to present the Byzantine secular rank hierarchy of the 9th–11th centuries. During the above-mentioned period of time Byzantium knew not one but several distinct, relatively independent official hierarchical systems. All of them, however, were mutually interconnected to varying degrees and thus formed a single, pan-imperial hierarchical construct, expressed through the so-called system of palace precedence of ranks in the empire. It is this global and more general paradigm that reflects the Byzantine hierarchical model of the 9th–11th centuries; consequently, it seems fitting to refer to it as the rank hierarchy of the classical Middle Byzantine period, in the era preceding the reforms of Alexios I Komnenos (1081–1118).

Keywords: Byzantine rank hierarchy, Middle-Byzantine administration, Byzantine aristocracy, Byzantine court, Middle-Byzantine state organization

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ASPARUH AND HIS PEOPLE ON THE LOWER DANUBE THROUGH THE EYES OF THEOPHANES, OR A STORY THAT WAS NOT MEANT TO HAPPEN

Authors of medieval historical texts often crafted a specific image of the past they were recounting. They strived not only to describe a given event but also to present it in an appropriate light, interpreted in a particular way. It was no different in the case of Byzantine historians and chroniclers¹. In the context of Bulgarians' migration to the Balkan Peninsula and the establishment of their country there at the end of the seventh century AD², the works of Nicephorus (before 758–828), the Patriarch of Constantinople in 806–815, author of *Historía sýntomos*, and Theophanes the Confessor (?³, 760–817), monk and author of *Chronography*, written in 810–814, are of primary importance to us⁴.

¹ A concise overview of the issue: *L'écriture de la mémoire. La littérature de l'historiographie*, ed. P. ODORICO, P. AGAPITOS, M. HINTERBERGER, Paris 2006 [= DByz, 6]; R. SCOTT, *Text and Context in Byzantine Historiography*, [in:] *A Companion to Byzantium*, ed. L. JAMES, Chichester 2010, p. 251–262; *History as Literature in Byzantium. Papers from the Fortieth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, University of Birmingham, April 2007*, ed. R. MACRIDES, Aldershot 2010; M. ANGOLD, M. WITNEY, *Historiography*, [in:] *OHBS*, p. 838–852.

² Recently on this subject: Г. АТАНАСОВ, *Кан Аспарух – едно ново начало*, [in:] *Българска национална история*, vol. III, *Първо българско царство (680–1018)*, ed. Пл. Павлов, Велико Търново 2015, p. 13–67.

³ Debate on the authorship of *Chronography*, traditionally attributed to the Confessor, continues – see the latest research results: TM 19, *Studies in Theophanes*, ed. M. JANKOWIAK, F. MONTINARO, Paris 2015; А. КОМПА, *Gnesioi filoi: the Search for George Syncellus' and Theophanes the Confessor's Own Words, and the Authorship of Their Oeuvre*, *SCer* 5, 2015, p. 155–230.

⁴ More on Nicephorus and his *Breviarium* – P.J. ALEXANDER, *The Patriarch Nicephorus of Constantinople. Ecclesiastic Policy and Image Worship in Byzantine Empire*, Oxford 1958; P. O'CONNELL, *The Ecclesiology of St. Nicephorus I*, Rome 1972; H.-G. BECK, *Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reich*, München 1977, p. 489–491; H. HUNGER, *Die Hochsprachliche Profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, vol. I, *Philosophie – Rhetorik – Epistolographie – Gesschichtsschreibung – Geographie*, München 1978, p. 344–347; Л.А. ФРЕЙБЕРГ, Т. ПОПОВА, *Византийская литература эпохи расцвета IX–XV вв.*, Москва 1978, p. 48–52; И.С. ЧИЧУРОВ, *Византийские исторические сочинения: Хронография Феодана, Бревиарий Никифора*, Москва 1980, p. 145–150; J. KARAYANNOPOULOS, G. WEISS, *Quellenkunde zur Geschichte von Byzanz (324–1453). Methodik. Typologie. Randzonen*,

Both accounts have already been often interpreted by generations of scholars, focusing, above all, on a number of fundamental research problems, namely: what was the number of people led by Khan Asparuh to the Danube, where and what was Oglos/Onglos mentioned in the texts, how many Slavic tribes actually lived in the territories conquered by Bulgarians south of that river, and what was the nature of the Bulgarian relations with local Slavs?⁵ I, on the other hand, will concentrate on issues that have either been omitted or barely examined by the majority of researchers. Thus, I am not so much interested in the reconstruction of events as in the opinion of Theophanes, author of *Chronography*, on the arrival of Bulgarians and their settlement in the former Byzantine territories on the Danube. In other words, I will propose an interpretation model of this Byzantine chronicler's text, an attempt to read the ideological message that I believe he deliberately included in his account.

For the sake of clarity, I will quote extensive excerpts from the texts by Theophanes and Nicephorus, albeit with a focus on the former.

vol. II, Wiesbaden 1982, p. 339–340; O. JUREWICZ, *Historia literatury bizantyńskiej. Zarys*, Wrocław 1984, p. 135–137, 148–149; J. TRAVIS, *The Defense of the Faith. The Theology of Patriarch Nikephoros of Constantinople*, Brookline 1984; A.P. KAZHDAN, *Nikephoros I*, [in:] ODB, vol. III, p. 1477; IDEM, L.F. SHERRY, C. ANGELIDI, *A History of Byzantine Literature (650–850)*, Athens 1999, p. 211–215; L. BRUBAKER, J. HALDON, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era (c. 680–850): the Sources. An Annotated Survey*, Aldershot 2001, p. 171–172; H. СИЧОСКА, *Nikefor*, [in:] *Encyklopedia kultury bizantyńskiej*, ed. O. JUREWICZ, Warszawa 2002, p. 370–371; V. VAVŘÍNEK, *Encyklopedie Byzance*, coop. P. BALCÁRKA, Praha 2011, p. 349; W. TREADGOLD, *The Middle Byzantine Historians*, New York–Basingstoke 2013, p. 26–31.

On Theophanes and his *oeuvre* – H. HUNGER, *Die Hochsprachliche Profane Literatur...*, p. 334–339; И.С. ЧИЧУРОВ, *Византийские исторические сочинения...*, p. 17–23; J. KARAYANNOPULOS, G. WEISS, *Quellenkunde...*, p. 338–339; O. JUREWICZ, *Historia...*, p. 132–135; A.P. KAZHDAN, *Theophanes the Confessor*, [in:] ODB, vol. III, p. 2063; I. ROCHOW, *Byzanz im 8. Jahrhundert in der Sicht des Theophanes. Quellenkritisch-Historischer Kommentar zu den Jahren 715–813*, Berlin 1991; A. KAZHDAN, L.F. SHERRY, C. ANGELIDI, *A History...*, p. 205–235; L. BRUBAKER, J. HALDON, *Byzantium...*, p. 168–171; H. СИЧОСКА, *Teofanes Wyznawca*, [in:] *Encyklopedia kultury...*, p. 466–467; V. VAVŘÍNEK, *Encyklopedie...*, p. 481; W. TREADGOLD, *The Middle Byzantine...*, p. 38–77. In the case of both authors and their historical works, I include only selected monographs and dictionaries.

⁵ There is vast literature on the subject. I am presenting only a selection of the most important overview works – W. SWOBODA, *Powstanie państwa bułgarskiego na tle słowiańskich procesów państwowotwórczych na Bałkanach*, [in:] *1300–lecie państwa bułgarskiego 681–1981. Materiały z sesji naukowej*, ed. T. ZDANCEWICZ, Poznań 1983, p. 67–76; T. WASILEWSKI, *Kontrowersje wokół powstania i najstarszych dziejów państwa bułgarskiego*, [in:] *Trzyście wieków Bułgarii. Materiały polsko-bułgarskiej sesji naukowej*, Warszawa 28–30 X 1981, ed. J. SIATKOWSKI, Wrocław 1983, p. 181–189; Г.Г. ЛИТАВРИН, *К проблеме становления болгарского государства*, [in:] IDEM, *Византия и славяне (сборник статей)*, Санкт-Петербург 1999, p. 192–217.

Theophanes:

In this year, too, the tribe of the Bulgarians assailed Thrace (Καὶ τούτῳ τῷ χρόνῳ τὸ τῶν Βουλγάρων ἔθνος ἐπήλθε τῇ Θράκῃ). It is now necessary to relate the ancient history of the Ounnogoundour Bulgars and Kotragoi. On the northern, that is the far side of the Euxine Sea, is the so-called Maeotid Lake into which flows a huge river called Atel, which comes down from the Ocean through the land of the Sarmatians. The Atel is joined by the river Tanais, which also rises from the Iberian Gates that are in the mountains of Caucasus. From the confluence of the Tanais and the Atel (it is above the aforementioned Maeotid Lake that the Atel splits off) flows the river called Kouphis which discharges into the far end of the Pontic Sea near Nekropela, by the promontory called Ram's Head. From the aforesaid lake is a stretch of sea like a river which joins the Euxine through the land of the Cimmerian Bosphorus, in which river are caught the so-called *mourzoulin* and similar fish. Now on the eastern side of the lake that lies above, in the direction of Phanagouria and of the Jews that live there, march a great many tribes; whereas, starting from the same lake in the direction of the river called Kouphis [where the Bulgarian fish called *xyston* is caught (τὸ ξυστόν... Βουλγαρικόν)] is the Old Great Bulgaria (ἡ παλαιὰ Βουλγαρία... ἡ μεγάλη) and the so-called Kotragoi, who are of the same stock as the Bulgars.

In the days of Constantine, who dwelt in the West, **Krobatos, the chieftain of the aforesaid Bulgaria** (Κροβάτου τοῦ κυροῦ τῆς λεχθείσης Βουλγαρίας) **and of the Kotragoi, died leaving five sons, on whom he enjoined not to depart under any circumstances from their common life that they might prevail in every way and not be enslaved by another tribe** (διατυπώσαντος μηδαμῶς τούτους ἀποχωρισθῆναι ἐκ τῆς πρὸς ἀλλήλους διαίτης, διὰ τὸ πάντη κυριεῦειν αὐτοὺς καὶ ἑτέρῳ μὴ δουλωθῆναι ἔθνει). A short time after his demise, however, his five sons **fell out and parted company, each with the host that was subject to him** (διέστησαν ἀπ' ἀλλήλων μετὰ τοῦ ἐν ὑπεξουσιότητι ἐκάστου αὐτῶν ὑποκειμένου λαοῦ). The eldest (πρώτος) son, called Batbaian, **observed his father's command and has remained until this day in his ancestral land** (τὴν ἐντολήν τοῦ οἰκείου φυλάξας πατρὸς διέμεινεν ἐν τῇ προγονικῇ αὐτοῦ γῆ). His younger brother, called Kotragos, crossed the river Tanais and dwelt opposite his eldest brother. The fourth and fifth went over the river Istros, that is the Danube: the former **became subject of the Chagan of the Avars** (ὑποταγεὶς τῷ Χαγάνῳ τῶν Ἀβάρων) in Avar Pannonia and remained there with his army, whereas the latter reached the Pentapolis, which is near Ravenna, and **accepted allegiance to the Christian Empire** (ὑπὸ τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν Χριστιανῶν γέγονεν). **Coming after them, the third brother, called Asparuh** (ἔπειτα τούτων ὁ τρίτος, Ἀσπαροῦχ λεγόμενος) crossed the Danapris and Danastris (rivers that are farther north than the Danube) and, on reaching the Oglos, settled between the former and the latter, since he judged that place to be secure and impregnable on both sides: on the near side it is marshy, while on the far side it is encircled by the rivers. It thus provided ample security from enemies **to this tribe that had been weakened by its division** (τῷ ἔθνει τεταπεινωμένῳ διὰ τὸν μερισμόν).

When they had thus divided into five parts and had been reduced to a paltry estate (τούτων δὲ οὕτως εἰς πέντε μέρη διαιεθέντων καὶ ἐν βραχύτητι κατατησάντων), **the great nation of the Chazars** issued forth from the inner depths of Berzilia, that is from the First Sarmatia, and **conquered all the country beyond the sea as far as the Sea of Pontos; and they subjugated the eldest brother Batbaian, chieftain of the First Bulgaria, from whom they exact tribute to this day** (τὸ μέγα ἔθνος τῶν Χαζάρων... καὶ ἐδέσποσε πάσης τῆς περατικῆς γῆς μέχρι τῆς Ποντικῆς θαλάσσης· καὶ τὸν πρώτον ἀδελφὸν Βατβαϊᾶν, τῆς πρώτης Βουλγαρίας ἄρχοντα, ὑποτελή καταστήσας φόρους παρ' αὐτοῦ κομίζεται μέχρι τοῦ

vūn). Now, when the emperor Constantine had been informed that **a foul and unclean tribe suddenly** (ἐξάπινα ἔθνος ρυπαρὸν καὶ ἀκάθαρτον) had settled beyond the Danube at the Oglos and was overrunning and laying waste the environs of the Danube, **that is the country that is now in their possession, but was then in Christian hands** (τοῦτ' ἔστι τὴν νῦν κρατουμένην ὑπ' αὐτῶν χώραν, ὑπὸ Χριστιανῶν τότε κρατουμένην), he was greatly distressed and ordered all the *themata* to cross over to Thrace. He fitted out a fleet and moved against them by land and sea in an attempt to drive them away by force of arms, and he drew up his infantry on the land that faces the so-called Oglos and the Danube, while he anchored his ships by the adjoining shore. When the Bulgars had seen the sudden arrival of this enormous armament, they despaired of their safety and **took refuge in the aforementioned fastness, where they made themselves secure** (εἰς τὸ προλεχθὲν ὄχυρωμα καταφεύγουσι καὶ ἑαυτοῦς ἀσφαλίζονται). For three or four days **did not dare come out of their fastness** (ἐκ τοῦ τοιούτου ὄχυρώματος αὐτῶν μὲν ἐξελεῖν μὴ τολμησάντων), nor did the Romans join battle on account of the marshes that lay before them. Perceiving, therefore, the sluggishness of the Romans, **the abject tribe** (τὸ μιαρὸν ἔθνος) **was revived and became bolder** (ἀνελάβετο καὶ προθυμότερον γέγονεν). Now the emperor developed an acute case of gout and was constrained to return to Mesembria together with five *dromones* and his retinue so as to have the use of a bath. He left behind the commanders and the army, whom he ordered to make simulated attacks so as to draw the Bulgars out of their fastness and so engage them in battle if they happened to come out, and if not, to besiege them and keep watch over the defences. But the cavalryman spread the rumour that the emperor was fleeing and, being seized by fear, they too, fled, although no one was pursuing them.

When the Bulgars saw this, they gave pursuit and put most of them to the sword and wounded many others. They chased them as far as the Danube, which they crossed and come to Varna, as it is called, near Odysos and the inland territory that is there. They perceived that this place was very secure, being guarded at the rear by the river Danube, in front and on the sides by means of mountain passes and the Pontic Sea. Having, furthermore, **subjugated** (κυρτευσάντων) the so-called Seven Tribes of the neighbouring Sklavinian nations, they settled the Severeis from the forward mountain pass of Beregaba in the direction of the east, and the remaining six tribes, which were tributary to them, in the southern and western regions as far as the land of the Avars. **Having thus extended their domains, they grew arrogant** (ἐν τούτοις οὖν πλατυνθέντων αὐτῶν ἐγαυρίασαν) and began to attack and capture the forts and villages that belonged to the Roman state. Being under constraint, the emperor made peace with them and agreed to pay them yearly tribute. **Thus the Romans were put to shame for their many sins** (ἐπ' αἰσύχνη Ῥωμαίων διὰ πλῆθος πταισμάτων).

Both those who lived afar and those who lived near were astonished to hear that he who had subjugated everyone, those in the east and in the west, in the north and in the south, **was vanquished by this abhorrent and newly-arisen tribe** (ὑπὸ τοῦδε τοῦ μυσαρῶ καὶ νεοφανοῦς ἔθνους ἠττήθη). But he believed that this had happened to the Christians by God's providence and made peace in the spirit of the Gospels; and until his death he remained undisturbed by all his enemies⁶ [emphasis mine – K.M.].

⁶ *Theophanis Chronographia*, AM 6171, ed. C. DE BOOR, vol. I, Lipsiae 1883 [= *CSHB*], p. 356, 18 – 359, 25; English translation: *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor. Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 284–813*, trans. et ed. C. MANGO, R. SCOTT, G. GREATREX, Oxford 1997, p. 497–499 (with minor changes by me – K.M.).

Nicephorus:

It is now time to speak of the dominion of the Huns (as they are called) and the Bulgarians and their affairs. In the area of the Maeotic lake, by the river Kophis, lies **Great Bulgaria (as it was called on olden times)** and (here lived) the so-called Kotragoi, who are also of the same stock (as the Bulgarians). In the days of Constantine who died in the West, **a certain man by the name of Kobratos became master of these tribes.** On his death he left five sons, **upon whom he enjoined not to part company under any circumstances, so that their dominion might be preserved thanks to their mutual friendship.** **But they took little account of the paternal injunction** and a short time thereafter **they divided, each one of them taking his own share of their people.** The eldest son, called Baianos, **in accordance with his father's command, has remained until this day in his ancestral land.** The second, called Kotragos, crossed the river Tanais and dwelt opposite the first; the fourth went over the river Istros and settled in Pannonia, which is now under the Avars, **becoming an ally of the local nation.** The fifth established himself in the Pentapolis of Ravenna and **became tributary to the Romans.** The remaining brother, called Asparuh, crossed the rivers Danapris and Danastris and settled near the Istros, where he found a suitable place for habitation (called Onglos in their language), which happened to be difficult (of access) and impregnable by the foe: for it is secure in front because it is impassable and marshy, while at the back it is fenced by inaccessible cliffs. **When this nation had thus divided and scattered,** the tribe of the Chazars, (issuing) from the interior of the country called Bersilia, where they had lived next to the Sarmatians, invaded with great audacity all the places that are beyond the Euxine Sea. Among others, **they subjected Baianos to paying tribute them.**

When Constantine became aware that **the nation which had settled by the Istros** was attempting to devastate by its incursions the neighboring places that were under Roman rule, he conveyed an army to Thrace and, furthermore, fitted out a fleet and set out to ward off that nation. On seeing the multitude of cavalry and ships and amazed as they were by the unexpected suddenness (of the attack), the Bulgarians fled to their fortifications and remained four days there. Since, however, the Romans were unable to engage them in battle because of the difficulty of the terrain, they regained strength and eagerness. Now the emperor was seized by an attack of gout and being in much pain, sailed off to the city of Mesembria for treatment after giving orders to the officers and soldiers to keep on investing the fort and do whatever was necessary to oppose the nation. But a rumor spread about that the emperor had fled and, being on this account thrown into confusion, they fled headlong although no one was on their heels. Seeing this, the Bulgarians pursued them in strength, killing those they caught and wounding many others. After crossing the Istros in the direction of Varna, which is near Odysos, and perceiving how strong and secure was the inland area thanks to the river and the great difficulty of the terrain, they settled there. Furthermore, they subjugated the neighboring Slavonic tribes, some of which they directed to guard the area in the vicinity of the Avars and others to watch the Roman border. So, fortifying themselves and gaining in strength, they attempted to lay waste the villages and towns of Thrace. Seeing this, the emperor **was obliged to treat with them and pay them tribute** [emphasis mine – K.M.].⁷

⁷ *Nicephori Patriarchae Constantinopolitani breviarium historicum*, 35–36, ed. C. MANGO, Washingtoniae 1990 [= *CFHB*] (cetera: NICEPHORUS), p. 86, 38 – 90, 29; English translation: *ibidem*, p. 87–91 (with minor changes by me – K.M.).

At first glance, two basic conclusions can be drawn from the two texts. First of all, both descriptions are almost identical, which clearly indicates that their authors used a common historical source with regard to the discussed subject⁸. Secondly, Nicephorus conveys the information dispassionately, while Theophanes' account is definitely more emotional and personal, as it is enriched by additional epithets that were most likely absent from the original description. The latter observation allows us to assume that the creation of the past in the text by the Byzantine chronicler is much more conscious and deliberate, i.e. he imbued it with a deeper meaning, offering his own interpretation of the account of an anonymous predecessor, whose text he used to recreate the original Bulgarian history in the Balkans. Under these circumstances, Nicephorus' message seems to be more of a point of reference for Theophanes' text, highlighting the content that the latter added to the text of their shared source, which undoubtedly lent a unique depth to the account of the arrival of Bulgarians on the Lower Danube. On the other hand, we must not forget that most of the ideas in Theophanes' message probably came directly from the author of the older text, which served as the basis for the accounts by the two Byzantine authors. In any case, a meticulous comparative analysis of the language and content of both texts carried out by Vesselin Beševliev proves the precedence of Theophanes' story over that by Nicephorus. It follows that the former held closer to the original message from the eighth century, while the latter abbreviated it, omitting certain phrases. This does not mean that Theophanes never skipped fragments of the original narrative either. However, the eminent Bulgarian philologist and historian concluded that regarding the events described, Nicephorus loses his position as the main source and must be seen as an auxiliary text for a better understanding of Theophanes' message, as a skillful paraphrase of their shared primary account⁹. However, this statement does not alter the fact that the discrepancies are not so substantial as to rule out the significance of Nicephorus' text for the control of Bulgarian passages in Theophanes' case. Even more so, we know that the latter sometimes intentionally passed over information known from elsewhere in the description of the future patriarch¹⁰. As I have already pointed out above, even in the excerpts from both works cited above it is evident that the Confessor used a number of epithets addressed to Bulgarians that are absent in Nicephorus' works, which clearly proves the chronicler's

⁸ This obvious fact has already been pointed out – cf. e.g. В. БЕШЕВЛИЕВ, *Съобщението на Теофан за основаването на българската държава*, ИИМБ 18 (33), 1982, p. 34; С. MANGO, *Introduction*, [in:] NICEPHORUS, p. 15–16.

⁹ В. БЕШЕВЛИЕВ, *Съобщението...*, p. 34–39; С. MANGO, *Introduction...*, p. 16.

¹⁰ These include the omission of the fact that Emperor Justinian II Rhinotmetos (685–695, 705–711) granted the Bulgarian Tervel the title of caesar in 705, a piece of information taken from the same source as the story of Bulgarians migrating to the Danube. More on this *vide* M.J. LESZKA, *Wizerunek władców Pierwszego Państwa Bułgarskiego w bizantyńskich źródłach pisanych (VIII – pierwsza połowa XII wieku)*, Łódź 2003 [= BL, 7], p. 20–23.

own invention in this respect, going beyond the content of the original account. The deliberate interference in the description of events is also evidenced by the fact that, when constructing the story of former Bulgarian settlements from before their arrival on the Lower Danube, he included in his narrative information from sources other than the text by the anonymous author from the first quarter of the eighth century¹¹.

Scholarly literature points out that neither Theophanes nor Nicephorus devotes almost any attention to the characteristics of Asparuh. Moreover, it has been indicated that they ignore his role in the events associated with the founding of the Bulgarian Danube State. It is believed that this was due to the lack of information or a deliberate omission of the source used by both chroniclers¹². At other times, it is believed that this was the result of the mechanical inclusion of a separate source, specifically dedicated to the campaign of Emperor Constantine IV Pogonatos (668–685) against the Bulgarians in the Danube Delta. The latter view, although probable, is not conclusive¹³.

Although the above conclusions on the portrayal of the first Khan of the Danube Bulgaria are generally correct, it seems to me that one could be tempted to draw a little more data from the accounts by both Byzantine historians. The legend of Kubrat (Krobotos, Kobratos of the sources)¹⁴, already mentioned by Theophanes (and Nicephorus, of course), who on his deathbed orders his sons to remain united and not to divide the state, implicitly includes the characteristics of Asparuh and his brothers. Kubrat, *Lord* (Gr. κύριος) of the Great Bulgaria, is presented here as a prudent man who cared about the safety of his people and wanted to prevent the disintegration of his country. In this context, the reference to his five sons, including Asparuh, being in conflict with one another testifies to their immaturity, arrogant nature and desire for power. Everyone wanted to be independent, they did not want to share power and consult one another. The Byzantine chronicler states that their division brought about the one thing that Kubrat was trying to counteract, namely the fall of the First Bulgaria. And so the descendants of the Khan – old and therefore more experienced and wise

¹¹ *Vide* philological analysis in В. БЕШЕВЛИЕВ, *Съобщението...*, p. 34–35. Warren TREADGOLD, *The Middle Byzantine...*, p. 8–17, assumes that the author of this lost historical work was Trajan the Patrician, who lived and worked during the reign of Emperor Justinian II.

¹² M.J. LESZKA, *Wizerunek...*, p. 13, 32–34. On Asparuh *vide* e.g. В. ГЮЗЕЛЕВ, Ал. Фол, *Хан Аспарух*, [in:] *Бележити българи*, vol. I, 681–1396, ed. Б. ЧОЛПАНОВ, В. ГЮЗЕЛЕВ, София 1967, p. 7–25; V. GJUZELEV, *Chan Asparuch und die Gründung des bulgarischen Reiches*, [in:] MBu, vol. III, p. 25–46; Й. АНДРЕЕВ, М. ЛАЛКОВ, *Исторически справочник. Българските ханове и царе. От хан Кубрат до цар Борис III*, Велико Търново 1996, p. 16–21; Й. АНДРЕЕВ, *Аспарух*, [in:] ИДЕМ, Ив. ЛАЗАРОВ, Пл. ПАВЛОВ, *Кой кой е в Средновековна България (Трето допълнено и основно преработено издание)*, София 2012, p. 54–59; Г. АТАНАСОВ, *Първосторителите на българската държавност. Органи, Кубрат, Аспарух, Тервел*, София 2015, p. 161–246.

¹³ В. БЕШЕВЛИЕВ, *Съобщението...*, p. 49.

¹⁴ Г. АТАНАСОВ, *Първосторителите...*, p. 47–160.

– disregarded and betrayed the last will of their own father. Thus, they did not show him respect as their parent, which for every Christian, and especially for a monk like Theophanes, must have been on a par with a violation of one of the Ten Commandments, one that directly follows those concerning man's attitude towards God himself, and thus the most important in terms of family relations, and in the long run also social relations, and in the case of the ruling family, as we will see, even interstate relations:

τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα, ἵνα εὖ σοι γένηται, καὶ ἵνα μακροχρόνιος μητέρα ἐπὶ τῆς τῆς θεός πατέρα, ἧς κύριος ὁ γῆς σου δίδωσίν σοι.

Honor your father and mother as that it may be well with you and so that you may be long-lived on the good land that the Lord your God is giving you¹⁵.

Let us start with the most obvious thing, namely that we are dealing with God's commandment here, and although Kubrat's sons were neither followers of Judaism nor Christians, for Theophanes and his readership the commandment applied to all people, regardless of their knowledge of the matter. Since it concerned one of the most important requirements that Lord gave unto his creation, this fact alone was enough to obey this command. This order to honor one's parents, repeated once again literally in the Deuteronomy¹⁶, which undoubtedly also included obedient and faithful observance of their recommendations, entailed, as St. Paul emphatically states in his Letter to the Ephesians¹⁷, a promise, we would say a specific justification and an incentive for such an attitude towards one's parents. Respect for them and the principles they instilled guaranteed success and a long, peaceful life in the territories that God bestowed on individual persons/peoples¹⁸. The Apostle himself pointed out in the aforementioned letter that the

¹⁵ *Exodus*, 20, 12, [in:] *Septuaginta. Id est Vetus Testamentum graecae iuxta LXX interpretes*, vol. I, ed. A. RAHLFS, rec. R. HANHART, Stuttgart 2006, p. 120; English translation – *Exodus*, trans. L.J. PERKINS, [in:] *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, ed. A. PIETERSMA, B.G. WRIGHT, Oxford 2007, p. 65.

¹⁶ *Deuteronomium*, 5, 16, [in:] *Septuaginta...*, vol. I, p. 296.

¹⁷ *Ad Ephesios*, 6, 1–3, [in:] *Novum Testamentum Graecae*, ed. B. ALAND, K. ALAND, J. KARAVIDOPOULOS, C.M. MARTINI, B.M. METZGER, ²⁸Stuttgart 2012, p. 601; English translation – *The Pocket Interlinear New Testament. Numerically Coded to Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*, ed. J.P. GREEN, Grand Rapids 1988, p. 529: *Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with a promise, that is may be well with you, and you may be long-lived on the earth* (Τὰ τέκνα, ὑπακούετε τοῖς γονεῦσιν ὑμῶν ἐν κυρίῳ· τοῦτο γάρ ἐστιν δίκαιον. τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα, ἧτις ἐστὶν ἐντολὴ πρώτη ἐν ἐπαγγελίᾳ, ἵνα εὖ σοι γένηται καὶ ἔσῃ μακροχρόνιος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς).

¹⁸ Cf. *Actus Apostolorum*, 17, 26, [in:] *Novum Testamentum Graecae...*, p. 442; English translation: *The Pocket Interlinear New Testament...*, p. 377: *And He [i.e. the God – K.M.] made every nation of men of one blood, to live on all the face of the earth, ordaining fore-appointed seasons and boundaries of their*

Old Testament commandment and the ensuing promise are directly related to the issue of obedience to one's parents. As we can see, therefore, it is a promise that perfectly corresponds to the instruction that Kubrat left to his male descendants – if they remain faithful to his commandment, they will live and reign over the land of their ancestors, which he entrusted to their care. The development of the idea of honoring one's parents, and specifically obedience to the teachings of the father and the blessing associated with it, can be found in the Book of Proverbs:

Listen, children, to a father's discipline
 (Ακούσατε, παῖδες, παιδείαν πατρὸς),
 and pay attention, that you may come to
 know-how insight,
 for I present to you a good gift;
 do not abandon my law
 (τὸν ἐμὸν νόμον μὴ ἐγκαταλίπητε).
 For I became a son, and I am obedient to
 we father
 (υἱὸς γὰρ ἐγενόμην κἀγὼ πατρὶ ὑπήκοος),
 and beloved in the eyes of my mother,
 who would speak and instruct me:
 "Let our word become fixed in your heart.
 Keep the commandments; do not forget
 nor disregard the sayings of my mouth
 (μηδὲ παρίδης ῥήσιν ἐμοῦ στόματος).
 Nor abandon her, and she will cleave to you;
 love her, and she will guard you;
 Secure her, and she will exalt you;
 honor her, that she may embrace you
 in order that she may grant your head a
 garland of graces
 and may protect you with a garland
 of delight".¹⁹

The text makes it clear that the father's instruction is a gift for his children, the culmination of the wisdom of his life, through which he wants to ensure that his descendants are successful. This commandment is intended to protect, exalt, shield, and grant them various graces. To give strength and security, to be a testimony of their noble character, because they respect the words of the one who sired them, and to guarantee power and victory, as the reference to the wreath indicates.

dwelling (ἐποίησέν τε ἐξ ἑνὸς πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων κατοικεῖν ἐπὶ παντὸς προσώπου τῆς γῆς, ὅρισας προστεταγμένους καιροὺς καὶ τὰς ὁροθεσίας τῆς κατοικίας αὐτῶν).

¹⁹ *Proverbia*, 4, 1–9, [in:] *Septuaginta...*, vol. II, p. 188–189; English translation: *Proverbs*, trans. L.J. PERKINS, [in:] *A New English Translation...*, p. 626. Cf. also Prv 1, 8–9; 6, 20–22; 13, 1; 23, 22–25 (*Septuaginta...*, vol. II, p. 183, 193, 204, 222).

Therefore these are exactly the things that the old Bulgarians' Khan sought for his sons. The biblical father strongly emphasizes that his words should not be disregarded, and the text repeats the instruction that the offspring should not deviate from his commandments and customs. In order to reinforce the message, he adds that he followed his own parents' instructions faithfully, and it was that very custom of obedience that he did not want his successors to abandon. The offspring are not only responsible to their father, but also to all previous generations, to their ancestors, who bore the burden of responsibility for their shared heritage before them. This idea is amplified by the father's reference not to his own words, but to the warnings addressed to him by his parents. A similar element is also to be found in Theophanes' account, who indicated that Kubrat implored his sons not to abandon their current customs, as well as emphasized that only Batbaian (Baianos, i.e. Baian), guarding the father's will, remained on the land of his ancestors. He was therefore the only one to respect tradition and not to betray the will of his forefathers.

Also the ancient Greek thought, in one way or another living and cultivated in the Eastern Roman Empire, regarded respect for parents as one of the cardinal, unwritten natural laws, and its violation as an expression of ungodliness (δυσσέβεια). When the suffering Heracles gave the last orders to his son Hyllus on his death bed (i.e. in the same situation as Kubrat) – to help him die and marry Iole, his beloved captive, after his passing – and Hyllus did not want to fulfill them, the hero said:

Since, then, my son, those words are clearly finding their fulfilment, thou, on thy part, must lend me thine aid. Thou must not delay, and so provoke me to bitter speech: thou must consent and help with a good grace, as one who hath learned that best of laws, obedience to a sire (νόμον κάλλιστον ἐξευρόντα, πειθαρχεῖν πατρί).

[...]

Even so. This, in brief, is the charge that I give thee, my son. When I am dead, if thou wouldst show a pious (εὐσεβεῖν) remembrance of thine oath unto thy father, disobey me not (μηδ' ἀπιστήσης πατρί), but take this woman to be thy wife.

Hyllus faced the threat of vengeance from the gods for his disobedience, as Heracles invoked:

He [i.e. Hyllus – K.M.] will render no reverence, it seems, to my dying prayer.—Nay, be sure that the curse of the gods will attend thee for disobedience (ἀπιστήσαντα) to my voice.²⁰

Here, as in biblical tradition, we have a reference to νόμος, a law or a custom that dictates that sons listen to their fathers even if they do not agree with their instructions. In addition, however, unpleasant consequences are pointed out

²⁰ *Τραχίνιαι*, [in:] *Sophoclis tragoediae*, vol. II, *Trachiniae, Antigone, Philoctetus, Oedipus Coloneus*, ed. R.D. DAWE, Leipzig 1985 [= BSGR], p. 42, 1174–1178; p. 43, 1221–1224; p. 44, 1238–1240; English trans. – *Trachiniae*, [in:] *The Tragedies of Sophocles*, trans. R.C. JEBB, Cambridge 1917, p. 319, 321.

– *the curse of the gods* – which will surely affect the progeny that refuses to obey the parents. This element is evident in the fate of most of the descendants of the Old Bulgaria's rulers.

Regardless of which tradition we rely on, or even of their coalescence, disobeying their father's orders put Kubrat's sons in a negative light in the eyes of the reader, and a further description of the events confirmed that such an attitude was disastrous. The division and dispersion of the people led to the weakening of each individual part of the thereof, as a result of which three of the brothers (the fourth, the fifth and the eldest Batbaian), together with their subjects, fell under the dominion of foreign rulers. Thus they lost the legacy of their ancestors, namely independence (including power) and freedom. By rejecting unity and mutual benevolence, they wasted the achievements of previous generations, that is everything what their predecessors had toil over and to which their father had devoted his life. Admittedly, the two brothers managed to keep their freedom and acquire new territories for themselves, but in the case of Kotrag this was probably because he took over the areas further north of the busy Black Sea routes, thus avoiding the fate of Batbaian. Moreover, from the Byzantine point of view, he did not threaten the empire in any way, so his transgression was a bit less severe. As for Asparuh, his success, in the light of our source, was not so much the result of his own skill and merit, or that of his people, but the effect of the mistakes of the Byzantines themselves.

According to the text, the only righteous and obedient son of Kubrat was Baian, the only one that Theophanes calls the *chiftain* (Gr. ἄρχων) of the First Bulgaria. It seems that, according to the Byzantine chronicler, he alone deserved to bear this title and to be the head of all Bulgarians. First of all, he was the eldest²¹. Secondly, while he was also at odds with his brothers, he was the only one to observe his father's command, as he wanted to stay on the land of his ancestors in order to keep the legacy he had inherited. Thus, he fully deserved the title of ruler, just like his father, for he showed wisdom, as befitted the eldest of the family. Theophanes presents him as a positive hero of his tale. He proved his respect for his parent by

²¹ I feel obliged to indicate that according to Ivan VENEDIKOV (*Митове на българската земя*, vol. I, *Медното гумно* (Второ преработено издание), Стара Загора 1995, p. 41–42) the sons of Kubrat of Theophanes' account were not ranked according to seniority, but according to the order in which they occupied the geographical areas indicated. This is a thoroughly justified view, which I would consider convincing, albeit with the exception of Baian, who seems, in the light of our source, to have had the strongest claim to the original territory of his father, or more precisely to the supreme authority over it, most probably because of his age. It cannot be ruled out that it was for this very reason that he was the only one to be called ruler by Theophanes. Despite this, the probability that the sons of Bulgarian Khan were listed in the order of seniority remains strong – it can be indirectly proved by a comparison in the source of the first and old Bulgaria (Kubrat's) with that of Asparuh, treated as second and new, and then in Theophanes' narrative clearly called Bulgaria. In other words, for the Byzantine chronographer the first one was equal to the old one, which could also apply to the sons of the old ruler – the first of them was the oldest, etc.

keeping his commandment. The chronicler, however, does not want to emphasize the very idea of obedience to his father. This obedience has a much deeper, very specific meaning for him. Through it, Baian stayed in his place, in the land that the Byzantines accepted as a territory that belonged to Bulgarians²². I have no doubt that Theophanes believed and suggested that it was there, on the banks of the Kouphis River and the Maeotid (Meotic in Nicephorus) Lake, that they were allowed to be rulers and masters, and that even a local species of fish could be called *Bulgarian* there. Moreover, the fact that this fish is referred to as such is an indication of the how long the Bulgarians inhabited the area. These are the territories of the *First, Ancient/Old* and *Great Bulgaria*. The only true Bulgaria! *Great* (Gr. Μεγάλη), so according to one of the meanings of the Byzantine use of this Greek term – *Further* or *Remote*²³, and therefore not in the immediate vicinity of

²² And if we take into account the testimony of Patriarch Nicephorus, it was also the territory in which they functioned as allies of Byzantium, fulfilling their obligations towards the empire, enjoying the favor and friendship of the Constantinople rulers – NICEPHORUS, 22, p. 70, 1–7; В. БЕШЕВЛИЕВ, *Съобщението...*, p. 44; Φ.Κ. ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΥ, *Το πρώτο βουλγαρικό κράτος και η Βυζαντινή Οικουμενική αυτοκρατορία (681–852). Βυζαντινοβουλγαρικές πολιτικές σχέσεις*, Θεσσαλονίκη 2001, p. 33.

²³ Cf. R. DOSTÁLOVÁ, *ΜΕΓΑΛΗ ΜΟΡΑΒΙΑ*, Bsl 27, 1966, p. 344–349; И.С. ЧИЧУРОВ, *Византийские исторические сочинения...*, p. 110, an. 264; TNDS.SG, vol. III, p. 91, an. 29. *Vide* also V. VACHKOVA, *Danube Bulgaria and Khazaria as Parts of Byzantine Oikumene*, [in:] *The Other Europe in the Middle Ages. Avars, Bulgars, Khazars and Cumans*, ed. F. CURTA, R. KOVALEV, Leiden 2008, p. 345, according to which *Old Great Bulgaria* means peripheral (by analogy with the Scythia Minor/Scythia Maior and Asia Minor/Asia Maior), which is not part of the main body of the Byzantine world, in other words barbaric, unlike Asparuh's *Minor*, or *civilized, Romanized* Bulgaria. It should be stressed that in fact the *peripheral* Bulgaria stands semantically close to the *remote* one, from the point of view of the center, i.e. Constantinople. Of course, Kubrat's state was barbaric for the Romans, but those barbarians distant from the essential Byzantine territories were better barbarians than those who forcibly occupied the imperial lands! In addition, Theophanes was not at all positively disposed towards *civilized* and *Romanized* Bulgarians and their Danube Khanate, as evidenced not only by an in-depth analysis of the *passus* on Asparuh's migration, but also by the rest of his text on Bulgarian issues. Therefore, the second part of the above statement can only be accepted if we apply it exclusively to the geographical area – outside and within the Roman borders – and not to Asparuh's Bulgaria as such. There is also another view (О.Н. ТРУБАЧЕВ, *Этногенез и культура древнейших славян. Лингвистические исследования*, ²Москва 2003, p. 261–265) on the meaning of the Greek term μεγάλη combined with a national or, more generally, a territorial name, according to which, based on the ancient phrase Magna Graecia (Gr. ἡ Ἑλλάς ἢ Μεγάλη) distinguishing the southern parts of the Apennine Peninsula and Sicily, later inhabited by Greek colonists, in contrast to the areas where they originally resided, as well as referring to later examples such as Britain–Great Britain, Scotia Minor–Scotia Maior and Малороссия–Великороссия, it can be concluded that this term meant only *new, newly* or *afterward occupied/acquired* territory. In this sense, according to the Russian linguist, Great Moravia was different from the original Moravia, and the word *great* pointed to the direction of the migration process from the original areas of residence. Trubachov's comments are undoubtedly important, but I would not be as categorical as he is in stating that the Greek word μεγάλη can only be understood in the way he has indicated. Without going deeper into the topic, let me just point out that another example, built on the same principle as the one he cites, raises justified doubts – namely Scythia Minor–Scythia (*Maior/Magna*), because we cannot assume that it would

the core territories of the Byzantine state, as the present *Closer* and *Second*, Danube Bulgaria²⁴. In other words, one that threatened neither the Byzantine capital

mean the migration of ancient Scythians from today's Dobruzha towards their settlement on the northern shores of the Black Sea. Another doubtful example is the fact that as early as in the Middle Ages, the former Magyar ancestral land on the Volga River, from which they emigrated to Central Europe, used to be known as *Ungaria Maior/Magna*, and not, as one would expect according to Trubachov's rationale, as *Ungaria Minor*! However, I am not going to discuss this issue further because for me it is more important that the Russian linguist's idea has been approved by other scholars with respect to Kubrat's *Great Bulgaria* – see, e.g. Цв. СТЕПАНОВ, *О локализации "Великой Болгарии" Кубрата*, ВНР 24.2, 1995, p. 8; Ст. ЙОРДАНОВ, *За социално-политическата организация на Кубратова Велика България: I. Племенната общност на уногундурите, Patria Onoguria и Велика България*, [in:] БСП, vol. V, p. 63–64. And as the latter scholar claims: *either Great Bulgaria as a whole is a newly conquered territory, or part of Kubrat's state was described as such – a kind of 'terminus technicus' to designate the acquired territories that did not belong to the original tribal territory of Bulgarians*. As I have already pointed out, such an interpretation of the term *great* is fully plausible, even though we cannot treat it as the only valid one. Without fully rejecting this view, because unlike the indicated researchers I am not looking for what is real in Theophanes, but rather for what is imagined (or rather his reading of the source text on which he based his account), I must stress that in the case of the Byzantine chronicler (as well as his source) matters are much more concrete than in that of Great Moravia, on which the scholars base their conclusions. This is because in the Byzantine narrative other adjectives, such as the *old/ancient* (ἡ παλαιά) and the *first* (ἡ πρώτη) were used to denote Kubrat's Bulgaria – the first in connection with the aforementioned *great*, and the second directly as a substitute or synonym for the last one! From the context of the entire description devoted to the creation of the Danube Khanate, it follows that to write about *Old*, *Great* and *First Bulgaria*, the anonymous author of the base text, as well as Theophanes, did not mean it as a newly conquered area (because they would then contradict themselves, claiming that it is *old*, or better *ancient*, as well as *first*) but on the contrary, they considered it as primary Bulgarian territory. This is because by mentioning it, they were actually concentrating on the Danube Bulgaria, which from their point of view was a newly conquered, secondary land occupied by Asparuh's Bulgarians. This is also evidenced by the term used by Theophanes to designate the original areas inhabited by the Chazars, namely *Berzilia* in *First Sarmatia*, from which they migrated to other territories as a result of the division between the sons of Kubrat. So in both cases – Bulgaria and Sarmatia – *first* meant original to our authors and it does not matter for me here whether or not they erred in their views on this subject from the point of view of modern historical scholarship. Because according to Trubachov's logic (Moravia – Great Moravia) there should be some kind of Bulgaria before the Great Bulgaria, and even if there was one, Theophanes did not mention it. In other words, as he explicitly writes, Kubrat's Bulgaria was the original one for him. On the other hand, even if I accept the interpretation that Byzantine authors were really aware [either by mechanically copying from earlier sources, or by in some other way (?) assimilating the adjective *μεγαλή* to denote Kubrat's early state] that part of the territory of Kubrat's state (and why not its entire area?) was newly acquired, they still considered Great Bulgaria as the old and original with regard to Danube Bulgaria. In any case, there is no doubt that in his description Theophanes focuses more on the juxtaposition between Kubrat's Bulgaria and that of Asparuh than on the internal relations between individual areas of the former. Which, by the way, did not mean that there were not any.

²⁴ More on the so-called Old Great Bulgaria cf. e.g. Г. АТАНАСОВ, *Старата Велика България и кан Кубрат*, [in:] *Българска национална история*, vol. II, *Древните българи, Старата Велика България и нейните наследници в Източна Европа през Средновековието*, ed. Пл. ПАВЛОВ, Велико Търново 2013, p. 107–170; Р. РАШЕВ, *Културата на Старата Велика България – археологиче-*

nor its hinterland. In yet another sense of this Greek term the *Old and Great Bulgaria* is opposed, as undivided one, to the *New and Minor Danube Bulgaria*²⁵. New, because devoid of roots and tradition, not yet having any justified claim over the newly occupied territories, in contrast to the ancient, i.e. rooted, long-established, imbued with the tradition of Bulgarian tribes, with real and indisputable rights to its land. Minor because it was formed only by a part of the people who made up this old, great, that is to say, powerful one, probably covering also vast territories by default. The Byzantine text indicates that while the power and security of *Great Bulgaria* was to be determined by the unity of thought and action of the sons of Khan, and therefore the large number of their subjects taken together, the defense and peace of that part of the people who emigrated along with Asparuh were to be decided by the natural environment between Oglos, and the Dnieper and the Dniester. The divided nation could no longer rely on its own strength, which would undoubtedly have added to its glory²⁶. However, no matter how we understand the meaning of *Great Bulgaria*, there can be no doubt that for Theophanes it was precisely there, in this distant northern land, that both Baian and all other sons of Kubrat, should remain in order to jointly rule the lands of their forefathers. Their obedience and fidelity to the orders of their parents were to guarantee not only their own prosperity, but also, indirectly, the peace of the empire itself – the existing *status quo*.

The rebellion of the four brothers undermined the authority of the eldest Baian, whose opinion they should, after all, consider. Not only did they ignore their father's instructions, but they neglected to show respect for the one among them who most deserved it. Their schism led to brought misfortune on him – innocent, because he heeded his father's warning. Weakened, left to his own devices, he had no chance of confronting the Chazars and had to recognize their sovereignty – in the source text, his *tribe that had been weakened by its division and reduced to a paltry estate*, is clearly contrasted with *the great nation of the Chazars*, to which the former had

ски паметници, [in:] *Българска национална...*, vol. II, p. 171–248; Н. ХРИСИМОВ, *Българската държавност и Старата родина (VII–XI в.): така наречената Черна България*, [in:] *Българска национална...*, vol. II, p. 249–296.

²⁵ Cf. M. БЕТЪ, *The Making of Christian Moravia (858–882). Papal Power and Political Reality*, Leiden–Boston 2014, p. 15, an. 17.

²⁶ Veselin ВЕШЕВЛИЕВ (*Съобщението...*, p. 47–48) sees a misunderstanding in Theophanes' text because in the light of his own account, as well as that of Nicephorus, Asparuh set off only with one part of Bulgarians and not with the entire nation, so the scholar is surprised by the Byzantine chronicler's statement that Oglos offered shelter to a nation diminished in number because of the division. Adopting the interpretation I proposed above, this contradiction should not come as a surprise, as it is in line with the logic of the Byzantine author's account and proves that Theophanes still referred here to the unfortunate division of Bulgarians as a result of disobeying Khan Kubrat's instruction. For him, the nation was a community of Bulgarian tribes living in unity in the territory of Old Bulgaria, so Asparuh led only a part of it, which was by necessity weakened and therefore in need of safe shelter.

to succumb. It is worth noting that, in the light of the Byzantine author's testimony, the Chazars left their ancestral land, namely Berzilia, which was the innermost region of *First Sarmatia*, only when the Bulgarians became conflicted and their state lost power (Nicephorus adds that upon learning that the new invaders grew arrogant). Such a narrative implies that if Kubrat's descendants had followed his orders, a new important political factor in the region, namely the Chazars, would not have appeared. Moreover, the fact that his younger brothers *took little account of the paternal injunction* also brought misfortune upon Byzantium, as Asparuh, having abandoned the former territories, settled down with his part of the people on the lower Danube and began to plunder the territories that belonged to the empire. Meanwhile he should have stayed in the country of his ancestors, enjoy the peace and power in the land he owned, and enjoy catching *xyston* fish. He should respect his father's will and, like his eldest brother, prove to be his faithful steward. His disobedience, arrogance and lust for power, which are all grave sins, led to problems in the empire itself – unfaithfulness to his father's will led not only to the fall of the *First, Old* and *Great Bulgaria*, but also brought misfortune on the innocent Eastern Rome! In other words, in global terms, the disobedience of the sons of the Bulgarian Khan not only brought misery on most of them, but also led to the violation of the existing geopolitical order in this part of the world – the collapse of Bulgaria, Chazars expansion and the loss of part of the Byzantium's territory.

This, in my opinion, is, among other things, the message of a story about the origins of Bulgarians. Its aim was to explain how they came to be in the Danube region, according to Theophanes, who relayed the words of the eighth century author, in a country *that is now in their possession*, i.e. perhaps *circa* 720 in the original narrative²⁷, but, as the Confessor understood it, undoubtedly referring also to the second decade of the ninth century, when he wrote his work. Of course, the entire description of the origins of the Bulgarian tribes is also an ethnographic excursion, typical of Greek literature since Herodotus, included in historical works in order to familiarize readers with the history and customs of the people who appeared on the historical arena at a given moment and made themselves part of the history of the Greeks, and in this particular situation – of the Byzantines²⁸.

The account of the occupation of the new homeland by Asparuh's Bulgarians leaves no doubt as to the views of its author. This people were in the same situation

²⁷ The fact that this phrase was in the original source and referred to the time when it was written was pointed out by В. БЕШЕВЛИЕВ, *Съобщението...*, p. 37; cf. p. 34, 46 (due to a similar wording referring to Batbaian's stay in the area of the so-called First Bulgaria). Cyril MANGO (*Introduction*, [in:] NICEPHORUS, p. 15–16; this is accepted by W. TREADGOLD, *The Middle Byzantine...*, p. 8, 12, 17), suggests that this work, shared by Theophanes and Nicephorus, was written *circa* 720.

²⁸ Cf. B.A. TODOROV, *Byzantine Myths of Origins and Their Functions*, SSBP 2, 2008, p. 66–67; A. KALDELLIS, *Ethnography after Antiquity. Foreign Lands and Peoples in Byzantine Literature*, Philadelphia 2013, p. 93–98.

as their countrymen under the authority of the other sons of Kubrat, i.e. they were also weakened by the division and unable to confront a more serious opponent. This is evidenced by the description of the Byzantine campaign against Oglos – upon seeing the imperial forces, Bulgarians doubted that they could survive and the only thing they could do was to hide behind the walls of the fortifications mentioned in the text and the vast mudslides. The author explicitly states that they did not have the courage to face the Byzantine forces in an open field. In other words, all the advantages were on the Byzantine side. It was therefore necessary, in accordance with the order of the emperor, who had to go to Mesembria for treatment, to trick opponents out of the fortifications and forcing them to fight an open battle. Or, if the tricks should fail, start a regular siege, imprisoning the enemy inside the fortifications. The very fact that the emperor decided to leave the army under the command of individual strategists proves that the threat from enemies was under the control of the Byzantine forces. So what happened? What was the reason why a certain victory over a weak people turned into a shameful defeat of the imperial forces, as a result of which *a foul and unclean tribe*, as the Byzantine called them, frightened by the imperial power, conquered the Danube lands permanently? If Batbaian, faithful to Kubrat and righteous in Theophanes' opinion, succumbed to the godless Chazars, how was it possible that the Arch-Christian Byzantines failed to defeat Asparuh, who disobeyed his father? All the more so because the second of the listed brothers, the one who settled near Pentapolis on the Apennine Peninsula, had surrendered to their authority.

Apparently, it was all the fault of the Byzantines themselves. At first they were undecided in action, because horsemen was unable or unwilling to attack the enemy on the muddy ground. Incidentally, the author stresses once again that it was not the Bulgarians' own skills that saved them, but a natural obstacle preventing the Byzantines from attacking Bulgarian positions. Then the same Byzantine riders misunderstood the ruler's position completely, believing that he had lost faith in the success of his mission and that he was in the process of retreating. The army became confused, panic broke out and everyone fled, although, as the author emphatically points out, in reality nobody was chasing the Byzantines. At the sight of this unorganized, panicked retreat of the imperial army, the Bulgarians came out of the fortifications and pursued the Romans, most of whom they killed and wounded many. The chase continued south of the Danube until they reached the so-called Varna²⁹, near Odyssos. Here, as the invaders realized that the place was naturally fortified, as it was protected from the back by the Danube, from the front by mountain passes (of nowadays Stara Planina), and from the side by Pontos, they subjugated local Slavic tribes. It was this attitude of the imperial troops, contrary to the orders and intentions of the ruler himself, that led the weak and

²⁹ A comprehensive overview of the subject matter related to the so-called Varna can be found in В. Плетнёв, *Варна през Средновековието*, vol. I, *От VII до края на X век*, Варна 2008, p. 87–196.

frightened people, who had only just believed themselves to be hopeless, to regain their strength and became bolder. Just as disobeying Kubrat's instruction made the Chazars bold, which led to the collapse and enslavement of Great Bulgaria, so the lack of determination and insubordination of the strategists against *basileus* orders made the Bulgarians bold, thus bringing defeat onto the empire.

Having defeated the fleeing Byzantines, Bulgarians *subjugated* (κυριευσάντων) the land and the Slavs who lived there. Reflecting on the character of the invaders' rule, Theophanes used the same expression that appeared in his account of the joint reign of Kubrat's sons over their original homeland. The old khan wanted to maintain the same power that he himself exercised. Thus, as a result of mistakes and disobedience of the imperial army, *the foul, unclean and bold nation*, or rather its ruler, undeservedly achieved what he wanted, namely independent control (by implication as κύριος, because the noun is semantically associated with the verb quoted above) over other Byzantine lands. Of course, the text does not explicitly refer to Asparuh as the chieftain. However, the best proof of his significance for the events described above is the fact that the story of his settlement in Oglos was told as last, after listing Kubrat's four other sons in order from the eldest to the youngest, even though he was third. Undoubtedly, for the Byzantine authors he was the most important out of all the brothers.

Scholars conclude that the sources in question do not give Asparuh the title, nor do they make him the leader of Bulgarians³⁰. Indeed, his name is not accompanied by any word describing his status among those Bulgarians who were his subjects. In the whole fragment concerning the early Bulgarian history only Kubrat and Baian are given any such titles. This may indicate that Khan's other sons were not held in any particular esteem. On the other hand, however, the text clearly states that some Bulgarian tribes were his subjects and he had them under his rule. This should not come as a surprise because this power, like that of his brothers, had been sanctioned by their father when they had lived together in the old Bulgaria, when he advised them to reign over it together, and so it was a fully legitimate government. However, the second of the above scholar statements requires a certain degree of revision. In the light of both sources, Kubrat's third son is identified with those Bulgarians who were his subjects and who came with him to the Danube. It was for them that he found a convenient and safe place to settle, which proves his strategic sense. It is interesting that the story begins with a reference to Asparuh himself and ends with a statement that the tribe settled there. In this context, the lack of any mention of his name further in the narrative proves that the other epithets appearing in both texts and concerning all Bulgarians also apply to him. It is significant that regarding Bulgarians, including Asparuh, Theophanes' account differs slightly, albeit significantly from that of Nicephorus. Theophanes calls Asparuh indirectly, as all Bulgarians under him, a *foul and unclean, abhorrent,*

³⁰ M.J. LESZKA, *Wizerunek...*, p. 32–33.

abject, bold and arrogant man. Nicephorus's account does not contain the above epithets, it only conveys the course of events.

Based on their experience to date and the positive role played by the natural obstacles in their clash with the Byzantines, the Bulgarians once again made sure that they were protected from all sides. As part of these activities, they also relocated the Slavs under their authority to the vulnerable border areas of their territory³¹. This allowed them in turn to spread unhindered in the controlled areas, and in consequence to feel so arrogant that they began to attack and ravage Byzantine territories south of the Stara Planina mountain range. As a result, as *the Romans were put to shame for their many sins*, the emperor was forced to make peace with them and to pay them an annual tribute. Why were the Byzantines disgraced? Because they did not make peace of their own accord but were forced to do so by the circumstances – the proud Romans had to recognize the superiority of the barbaric, pagan people! Because they, as our source testifies, were in the habit of making other peoples their taxpayers! And now they committed themselves to paying the newcomers every year in order to maintain peace with them, i.e. to halt their further expansion, which undoubtedly testified to the weakness of the empire³². The disgrace was all the more painful since the news was to reach both neighbors and distant peoples, i.e. to become common knowledge. After all, it was about an empire whose rulers claimed power over the entire *oikoumene*! And they lost to some insignificant, *abhorrent and newly-arisen tribe* who had just appeared (the sudden and recent appearance of Bulgarians on the Danube is emphasized twice in the text, basically forming a frame for the story of their conquest of territories south of the great river)! The Byzantines were disgraced because it emphasized their defeat, and in a broader Christian perspective – it revealed their sinful nature, which lost them the grace of God! It was obvious to Theophanes that ultimately the defeat of the imperial troops was a result of the sins of the Byzantines. Both individual, such as sluggishness, cowardice and insubordination of the imperial troops under Oglós, and common, concerning the inhabitants of the empire as a whole, perhaps also the ruler himself. It was obvious that if it had not been for these sins, the *foul* Bulgarians, who should have stayed in their ancestral homeland in the north, would have never managed to defeat the imperial army and humiliate Byzantium. Eventually, Theophanes tries to find some positives in this situation. He emphasizes the humility, philanthropy and devotion of the then emperor, who believed that what had happened was God's will and that it was better to establish peace than to continue the war with the invaders. That peace, which lasted until

³¹ On securing the Danube region of Bulgarians' sovereignty cf. K. MARINOW, *Góry Hemos jak miejsce schronienia, baza wypadowa i punkt obserwacyjny w świetle bułgarsko-bizantyńskich zmagañ zbrojnych okresu wczesnego średniowiecza*, BP 20, 2013, p. 5–8.

³² Φ.Κ. ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΥ, *Το πρώτο...*, p. 33–41, believes that the term *shame* used by Theophanes to describe the disgrace of the Romans should be understood as a waiver and recognition of the rule of Bulgarians in the lands they conquered and where they settled.

the end of his reign, was probably a proof that he made the right decision. There was no other way out, so he had to accept the facts.

It is also only Theophanes who mentions that the Danube region is now under the rule of Bulgarians, whereas it used to be ruled by Romans. Nevertheless, it may be assumed that the eighth-century anonymous author used this particular phrase and Nicephorus simply omitted it³³. This does not necessarily mean, however, that the Confessor did not apply the expression to his own time, as after all it was in line with the realities of the era in which he lived and worked. After all, at the beginning of the second decade of the ninth century Bulgarians still ruled over the lands that had originally been occupied by Asparuh. And they continued to attack the Byzantine territories, as did Asparuh, with growing intensity. This was due to the expansionist policy of Krum, the Bulgarian Khan (796/803–814) who wreaked havoc in the European domains of the Empire, even threatening Constantinople itself³⁴, in 812–814, and thus precisely at the time when the Byzantine chronicler was working on his text. Therefore, the wording in the original account took on a new, current meaning in Theophanes' times. The threat from the Bulgarians, which Theophanes witnessed personally, resulted in a more deliberate approach to creating the image of Asparuh, Krum's predecessor on the Bulgarian throne, and in Theophanes' eyes – perhaps his direct ancestor. His attitude is more marked by contempt and aversion towards the empire's antagonists. Theophanes was more resentful towards Bulgarians because he was writing at the time of Krum's rule, and for this reason he found it was particularly justified. Unlike him, Nicephorus most likely completed his *Historia syntomos* before taking over the Patriarchate in 806³⁵, i.e. before Krum commenced military action against Byzantium and ultimately made his own name so infamous in Byzantine annals³⁶. Undoubtedly, both texts were written from the their respective authors' current perspective, especially as far as the Confessor is concerned. For me, there is no doubt that his explicit dislike of Bulgarians, including their rulers, was strongly motivated by events related to the anti-Byzantine actions of Krum, who was a contemporary of the Byzantine chronicler. The great threat posed by Bulgarians, especially after 811, had to stimulate interest in their origins and the circumstances of their settlement in the former lands of the empire. However, while in the case of Nicephorus, who completed his work before the outbreak of the Byzantine-Bulgarian conflict, we are dealing with a simple summary of the source from which

³³ Cf. В. БЕШЕВЛИЕВ, *Съобщението...*, p. 37.

³⁴ More on the subject cf. В. ГЮЗЕЛЕВ, *Езическа България*, [in:] Ив. БОЖИЛОВ, В. ГЮЗЕЛЕВ, *История на средновековна България*, София 1999, p. 126–143.

³⁵ The date of Nicephorus work is analyzed by Cyril MANGO (*Introduction...*, p. 8–12), who argues that it was written in the 780s. W. TREADGOLD, *The Middle Byzantine...*, p. 27, believes that it was the 790s.

³⁶ More about his image in these sources cf. П. АНГЕЛОВ, *България и българите в представите на византийците (VII–XIV век)*, София 1999, p. 161–168; M.J. LESZKA, *Wizerunek...*, p. 36–55.

he drew and whose author merely wanted to *speak of the dominion of the Huns (as they are called) and the Bulgarians and their affairs*, Theophanes is different in that respect. He begins his narrative of the Asparuh's appearance in the Lower Danube region with a sentence that unambiguously directs the course of the story – *In this year, too, the tribe of the Bulgarians assailed Thrace*. Already at the outset, Bulgarians are presented as aggressors, and the reader is negatively disposed towards them. Stigmatizing the sins of Kubrat's sons and the misfortune they brought upon the Byzantines, Theophanes implicitly points to Krum himself, who in his opinion was the epitome of a terrible, barbaric threat to the empire. His destructive actions were, after all, a distant consequence of the settlement of Bulgarians on the lower Danube, and he himself was, like Asparuh and his people, a bloodthirsty pagan, not guided by the noble principles of the Christian faith. If the Bulgarian settlers had not come to the territory of the empire, if they had remained in the north, where their true homeland was, then Krum and his invasions would not have occurred, Byzantine blood would not have been spilled and the ungodly pride of the foul and abject invaders would not have prevailed. Undoubtedly, therefore, the personal experience of the difficult times in which the Byzantine author worked exacerbated his views on the northern neighbors of the empire.

Even if we assume that the story of Kubrat and his will is a literary *topos*³⁷, it is worth noting that the anonymous author (Trajan the Patrician?) from the first quarter of the eighth century, whose account became the basis of Theophanes' narrative, gave the names of Bulgarian rulers – Kubrat and Asparuh – confirmed by an independent Bulgarian source, called the *Nominalia of the Bulgarian Khans*³⁸.

³⁷ Cf. W. РОHL, *Die Awaren. Ein Steppenvolk in Mitteleuropa 567–822 n. Chr.*, München 1988, p. 281; *TNDS.SG*, vol. III, p. 93, an. 32. More on mythological tales and their interpretation as a reflection of real practices *vide* Ст. ЙОРДАНОВ, *Обичаят "свещена пролет" у прабългарите и механизъмът на преселенията им в Северното Причерноморие и Балканите*, [in:] БСП, vol. II, p. 30–51, esp. 33–34, 46; cf. А. НИКОЛОВ, *Българската историческа топоика: "Българи-скити", "славяни-скити"*, [in:] БСП, vol. VII, p. 235–236. In turn В. БЕШЕВЛИЕВ, *Съобщението...*, p. 48, considers that the presence of similar themes in other traditions does not prove them to be untrue, merely as evidence of literary transmission, but, on the contrary, indicates the universality and legitimacy of the advice given by Kubrat to his sons. He only considers the number of the brothers (five) to be legendary.

³⁸ More on this source cf. М. МОСКОВ, *Именник на българските ханове (Ново тълкуване)*, София 1988. It should be pointed out, however, that the names Kurt and Bezmer are rather unlikely to be derived from Kubrat and Batbaian, respectively – *vide* Б. СИМЕОНОВ, *Прабългарска ономастика*, Пловдив 2008, p. 143, 146. Despite this, there is no doubt that three of the rulers mentioned by Theophanes and Nicephorus correspond to those appearing in the Old Bulgarian source. I leave aside the question of whether Asparuh really was the name of the Bulgarian Khan – cf. Ст. ЙОРДАНОВ, *Паусий или Никифор: за личното име и титлите на основателя на Първото българско царство*, [in:] *Българистични проучвания*. 9. Актуални проблеми на българистиката и славистиката. Осма международна научна сесия, Велико Търново, август 2002 г., Велико Търново 2003, p. 70–81.

Moreover, according to Vesselin Beševliev, based on the correlation of his account with other known sources, it is possible to prove the existence of four out of the five brothers mentioned there³⁹. Other scholars accept that three of them might have been real – Batbaian, Kotrag (possibly a legendary eponym of the Kotrags) and Asparuh – concluding that they might be the leaders of the three basic groups in Kubrat's Bulgaria, corresponding to the three parts into which it disintegrated after his death⁴⁰. Despite these divergent views, it seems that the source seems to indicate that the author had considerable knowledge of the early Bulgarian history.

To conclude, Theophanes looked at the migration and permanent settlement of Bulgarians on the Lower Danube through the prism of the experience of the second decade of the ninth century, when he was writing his work, and when Bulgarians posed a serious threat to the Byzantine Empire. In order to express his views on the empire's northern neighbors, he deliberately introduced a series of highly significant epithets into the earlier source on which this part of his *Chronography* is based, which lent this account a clear ideological dimension.

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³⁹ В. БЕШЕВЛИЕВ, *Съобщението...*, p. 45, 48. Ст. ЙОРДАНОВ, *За социално-политическата организация...*, p. 49–69, supports this view through interpretations relating to the organization of Great Bulgaria.

⁴⁰ ИВ. ВЕНЕДИКОВ, *Митове...*, p. 39–43; В. ГЮЗЕЛЕВ, *Езическа България...*, p. 81–82; А. НИКОЛОВ, *Българската историческа топоника...*, p. 235–236.

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Abstract. The Bulgarians' settlement in the Lower Danube area constituted one of the most significant events in the history of the Balkan Peninsula in the Middle Ages. The Danube Bulgaria's rise and its territorial expansion changed the political situation in this area. The Bulgarians became Byzantium's chief opponents in the struggle for establishing ascendancy over the Balkan Peninsula. The analysis of Theophanes' *Chronography*, which remains, in addition to the account by Patriarch Nicephorus, the main source of information about these events supports the conclusion that this

Byzantine author took a very negative view of the effects of the arrival of these nomads in the former Byzantine territories. Although this account has been analysed in detail by a number of scholars, these authors have paid no attention to the key role of the tale of Khan Kubrat and the disobedience of his five sons who failed to remain faithful to his last wish. The significance of the personal experiences of Theophanes, who witnessed the Bulgarian expansion during the era of Khan Krum, is also omitted from today's discussion of these issues. These experiences contributed to the way in which he viewed the migration of the ancestors of the distinguished Bulgarian ruler. The chronicler may thus be considered to have offered a very clear view of what the readers should think of the Bulgarians' arrival in the Balkan territories.

Keywords: Kubrat, Asparuh, Kotrag, Theophanes the Confessor, Onglos, medieval Bulgaria, Byzantine historiography, myths and legends of origins, Byzantine ideology

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THE ECONOMIC CONDITION OF THE BISHOPRIC OF GAZA (PALESTINE) DURING THE RULE OF BISHOP PORPHYRY (CIRCA 395–420)*

Not much is known about property owned by bishoprics in Late Antiquity outside of Egypt¹, be it in the Western or the Eastern provinces of the Empire. Due to the lack of concrete data concerning the property owned (including real estate and buildings of various uses) or cash reserves, a rough idea of the size of the relevant financial assets may be inferred from information on the scale of the charities run by individual bishoprics (i.e. the sums of money mentioned at such occasions), the donations received, as well as residual data concerning the economical operations undertaken, including leased property. The latter information is rather scarce; and in view of its laconic nature, even the little that we do have leaves much to be desired. This also applies to the cases that will be addressed below, where we shall attempt to describe the financial condition of a small provincial bishopric, namely the church in Gaza (Palestine) during the rule of bishop Porphyry (395–420 AD). All of the information on the subject comes from the *Vita Porphyrii*, a source whose historical value has often been disputed. Despite the unequivocal title, the text is not a typical hagiographic work: in the version in which we know it today, it is more of a record of bishop Porphyry's struggle against pagans in Gaza². Only in passing, it seems – while describing the consecutive stages of the disputes

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¹ As a matter of fact, the literature on Church property in early Byzantine Egypt is so extensive that it is hardly possible to list even the most important works here; cf., among others, E. WIPSYCKA, *Les ressources et les activités économiques des églises en Égypte du IV^e au VIII^e siècle*, Bruxelles 1972 [= PapB, 10]; J. GASCOU, *Les grands domaines, la cité et l'état en Égypte byzantine. (Recherches d'histoire agraire, fiscale et administrative)*, TM 9, 1985, p. 1–90; R. BAGNAL, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, Princeton 1995.

² A.H.M. JONES, *The Later Roman Empire, 284–602. A Social, Economic and Administrative Survey*, vol. II, Oxford 1964, p. 345, 943, 994; G. FOWDEN, *Bishops and Temples in the Eastern Roman Empire AD 320–435*, JTS 29, 1978, p. 53sq; C. RAPB, *Mark the Deacon, Life of St. Porphyry of Gaza*, [in:] *Medieval Hagiography. An Anthology*, ed. T. HEAD, New York–London 2001, p. 55.

– does Mark the Deacon make certain observations shedding some light on the economic standing of the bishopric. The analysis of those accounts will be the subject of the present study.

First, however, a few remarks on the *Vita Porphyrii* and its author are in order. Little is known about Mark the Deacon; all information about him comes from his work. As he himself assures us, he came from *Asia* and was a calligrapher by profession. In the early 390s, as a pious pilgrim, Mark reaches Palestine and settles down in Jerusalem, where he meets Porphyry. The latter was probably ordained priest there in 392, by bishop John (in the *Vita* replaced by Praylios, his Orthodox substitute). At that point, the lives of both personae of *The Life* become intertwined, so that Mark will accompany his bishop – as a participant of the events described – until his mentor's death in 420 AD³. Already in 395 AD, however, Mark is ordained deacon and follows his bishop to his new seat in Gaza⁴. Mark the Deacon claims that he was an eyewitness of the events he describes; nonetheless, such assurances are frequent in hagiographic works.

As was mentioned above, *The Life* is not a typical hagiographic work; besides, in view of its numerous problems, it belongs to the most controversial early Byzantine sources. Some of the difficulties are connected with the chronology of the work's origin (as well as the location where it was written down); others relate to the anachronisms that appear in it⁵. In the version known to us today, it constitutes, most of all, a narrative of the clashes between the Christians and the pagans in Gaza at the turn of the 4th and 5th centuries. Such a statement is indeed justified, since the text is dominated by descriptions of Gaza and the religious conflicts in the city⁶. The *Vita Porphyrii* bears traces of later thorough redactions, probably in the middle of the 6th century⁷. It is worth mentioning that, apart from the Greek version of *The Life* used in the research on the history of the late Empire,

³ MARC LE DIACRE, *Vie de Porphyre, évêque de Gaza*, 103, trans. H. GRÉGOIRE, M.-A. KUGENER, Paris 1930 [= CB] (cetera: MARCUS DIACONUS, *Vita Porphyrii*). For comments on the authorship of the *Vita Porphyrii* and the time of its creation, cf. recently T.D. BARNES, *Early Christian Hagiography and Roman History*, Tübingen 2010, p. 260–284, who argues for a 6th-century date for the Greek text of the *Vita*. Cf. also F.R. TROMBLEY, *Hellenic Religion and Christianization*, c. 370–529, vol. I, Leiden–New York 1993, p. 246sq. See also the comments in the two latest editions of the *Vita*: MARCUS DIACONUS, *Vita Sancti Porphyrii = Leben des heiligen Porphyrius*, trans. A. HÜBNER, Freiburg im Breisgau 2013 [= FCh, 53], p. 7sq. and *La conversion de Gaza au christianisme. La Vie de S. Porphyre de Gaza par Marc le Diacre (BHG 1570)*, ed. et trans. A. LAMPADARIDI, Bruxelles 2016 [= SHa, 95], p. 12sq.

⁴ MARCUS DIACONUS, *Vita Porphyrii*, 17–18. Cf. also O. NICHOLSON, R. DURMAZ, *Porphyry of Gaza*, [in:] *The Oxford Dictionary of Late Antiquity*, vol. II, ed. O. NICHOLSON, Oxford 2018, p. 1211.

⁵ K.G. HOLM, *Theodosian Emperresses. Women and Imperial Dominion in Late Antiquity*, Berkeley–London 1982, p. 55.

⁶ Я.М. ЧЕХАНОВЕЦ, *Marnas victus est a Christo. К вопросу о христианизации древней Газы*, [in:] МНЕМОН. Исследования и публикации по истории античного мира, V, ed. Э.Д. Фролов, Санкт–Петербург 2006, p. 419sq.

⁷ Cf. P. MAYERSON, *Justinian's Novella 103 and the Reorganisation of Palestine*, BASOR 269, 1988, p. 65sq.

a Georgian version (probably based on a Syriac one) is also extant⁸, as is a still unpublished Slavonic one. In terms of historical value, they do not differ from the Greek version, which will constitute the basis for the findings presented below.

Thus, let us proceed to discussing the main issue at hand, i.e. the size of the assets held by the bishopric of Gaza under Porphyry's rule.

The property of the bishopric of Gaza: real estate

In the *Vita Porphyrii*, Mark the Deacon mentions property in possession of the church of Gaza on two occasions. At the turn of the 5th century AD, the city was pagan⁹, as were most towns in the East at the time. Local Christians, if we are to believe Mark's account, only counted 280 souls at the moment of bishop Porphyry's arrival in Gaza (circa 395 AD)¹⁰. According to the statistic presented by the author in a later part of the text (the credibility of which I doubt), the city had barely over 400 inhabitants at the point when the pagan shrines were destroyed (the event may be dated to the late spring of 404 AD based on the clues given by Mark). Thus, unfortunately, we have practically no reliable information to determine the number of inhabitants at the turn of the 5th century AD, when Porphyry was the bishop of the city¹¹. Still, it is clear that the Christian community of the town was sparse, and as such probably reflected the typical proportion in the towns of the Roman East at the time. As we learn from Mark the Deacon's account, the bishopric of Gaza owned property managed by means of lease, also to local pagans. At one time, an attempt to execute such due rent (ἐκκλησιαστικὸς κανὼν) resulted in the battery of deacon Barochas, who had been sent to collect the money – he served in the church of Gaza as a steward (treasurer)¹² at that time. The incident led to an upheaval in the town after Barochas, beaten unconscious and presumed dead by the pagans, was taken into the city by the Christians¹³. Here, the thread

⁸ On the Georgian version of the *Vita Porphyrii* see P. PEETERS, *La vie géorgienne de saint Porphyre de Gaza*, AB 59, 1941, p. 165–216 (introduction, commentary and Georgian text with Latin translation).

⁹ F.R. TROMBLEY, *Hellenic...*, p. 246 sqq; ffv

¹⁰ MARCUS DIACONUS, *Vita Porphyrii*, 19. Cf. also C. RAPP, *Mark...*, p. 54; J. HAHN, *Die Herausforderung der antiken Stadt in der Spätantike – Christentum, urbane Sakraltopographie und religiöse Gewalt*, [in:] *Pluralität. Konkurrenz. Konflikt Religiöse Spannungen im städtischen Raum der Vormoderne*, ed. J. OBERSTE, Regensburg 2013 [= FM.S, 8], p. 11–30.

¹¹ For some estimates of the number of inhabitants of Gaza in the Roman and early Byzantine period, cf. M. BROSHI, *The Population of Western Palestine in the Roman-Byzantine Period*, BASOR 236, 1979, p. 5; L. SEGNI, *The Territory of Gaza. Notes of Historical Geography*, [in:] *Christian Gaza in Late Antiquity*, ed. B. BITTON-ASHKELONY, A. KOFSKY, Leiden–Boston 2004 [= JSRC, 3], p. 41sq.

¹² MARCUS DIACONUS, *Vita Porphyrii*, 22.

¹³ Cf. M. BLUME, *La Vie de Porphyre et les papyrus. Quelques aspects de la vie municipale à la fin du IV^e et au début du V^e siècle*, CE 66, 1991, p. 237sq; P. FILIPCZAK, *Historia diakona Barochasa. Kilka uwag na temat niepokojów społecznych w miastach wczesnego Bizancjum*, [in:] *Byzantina Europaea. Księga jubileuszowa ofiarowana Profesorowi Waldemarowi Ceranowi*, ed. M. KOKOSZKO, M.J. LESZKA, Łódź 2007 [= BL, 11], p. 108–109.

of the property owned by the Gaza bishopric breaks; it recurs, however, in the final part of *The Life*. Naturally, managing real estate assets entailed keeping in contact with pagan local officials (a fact stressed by Mark the Deacon). Due to the fact that, at the turn of the 5th century AD, the cities in the East still remained pagan for the most part, the relations between the local Christians and the pagan officials were quite strained. Judging by Mark the Deacon's account, in Gaza the relations worsened significantly after the local shrines had been demolished, which also testifies of the power of pagan communities in the early decades of the 5th century AD in the East. Even when bereaved of their temples, the pagans still played an important role there, mostly in terms of economy. Around the year 420 AD (as follows from Mark the Deacon's chronology), Gaza became a place of a dispute that broke out in connection with certain property (ἀντιβολῆς γεναμένες χάριν χωρίων) between an anonymous church steward and Sampsychos, one of the local officials (πρωτεύοντες) and a member of the city council. This disagreement likewise led to a brawl, which culminated in a pogrom of the local Christians¹⁴. The tensions in the city were eventually pacified by Claros, the governor of *Palaestina Prima*, who dispatched one of his officers accompanied by "a great army" (μετὰ πολλῆς βοηθείας)¹⁵. What could have been the subject of the dispute in question? What, apart from religious matters (not mentioned by the author in this case), may have generated animosities between the local bishop and the *decurions*? I suppose that the conflict was in fact caused by financial issues – such as taxation burden, some unpaid obligations, or taking advantage of fiscal privileges on such occasions (these were allegedly bestowed on the bishopric of Gaza by empress Eudoxia; more on this below). If the account of the feud with Sampsychos were to be taken at face value, we should conclude that financial matters were the only factor at play here. If religious issues had been one of the causes, the author of the account would not have left this fact unmentioned, since he never does this in the other parts of his work (where, in fact, he widely describes the "persecutions" of Gaza Christians by the local pagans¹⁶).

Cash reserves owned by the bishopric of Gaza at the beginning of the 5th century

In the *Vita Porphyrii*, we only find one piece of information concerning the topic in question, connected with an event dated to the early autumn of 403 AD. At that time, bishop Porphyry travelled to Palestinian Caesarea intending to resign from his office: as he claimed, he was not able to withstand the ever more aggressive actions on the part of the pagans. The tone used in the narrative is somewhat

¹⁴ A. LANIADO, *Recherches sur les notables municipaux dans l'Empire protobyzantin*, Paris 2002 [= TM.M, 13], p. 202sqq.

¹⁵ MARCUS DIACONUS, *Vita Porphyrii*, 99. Cf. also P. FILIPCZAK, *Historia...*, p. 115sqq.

¹⁶ Cf. also P. FILIPCZAK, *Historia...*, p. 119.

dramatic, yet it may well reflect the actual problems concerning the relations with pagans in Gaza. The latter group still constituted a numerous and economically superior community, which drew its wealth mainly from wine trade, as confirmed not only by the accounts of Mark¹⁷ but also by archaeological finds from early Byzantine Gaza¹⁸. In Caesarea, the decision is reached for bishop Porphyry not to step down from his post yet, but to go to the capital city of Constantinople together with his metropolitan. The power of paganism in Gaza was considered to be rooted in the temples – and rightly so, as those were not only places of pagan cult (including a renowned oracle in the temple of Zeus Marnas, also called the “lord of the rains” – κύριος τῶν ὀμβρῶν)¹⁹, but first and foremost an economic supply base. In the latter capacity, they had grown and developed for centuries, although Mark the Deacon does not utter a single word on this aspect. If the temples were to be destroyed, their assets would be liquidated as well-probably quite arbitrarily, yet the local Church would nevertheless certainly be one of the beneficiaries in such a case²⁰. Undoubtedly, the economic supply base was also an important element of Christianisation.

¹⁷ MARCUS DIACONUS, *Vita Porphyrii*, 20.

¹⁸ W.J. HOPKINS, *The City Region in Roman Palestine*, PEQ 112, 1980, p. 19; P. MAYERSON, *The Wine and Vineyards of Gaza in the Byzantine Period*, BASOR 257, 1985, p. 75–80; B. JOHNSON, L. STAGER, *Ashkelon: Wine Emporium of the Holy Land*, [in:] *Recent Excavations in Israel. A View to the West. Reports on Kabri, Nami, Miqne-Ekron, Dor and Ashkelon*, ed. S. GITIN, Dubuque 1995, p. 95–109; Y. TSAFRIR, *The Fate of Pagan Cult Places in Palestine. The Archeological Evidence with Emphasis on Beth Shean*, [in:] *Religious and Ethnic Communities in Later Roman Palestine*, ed. H. LAPIN, Potomac 1998 [= STJHC, 5], p. 202–204; S.A. KINGSLEY, *The Economic Impact of the Palestinian Wine Trade in Late Antiquity*, [in:] *Economy and Exchange in the East Mediterranean during Late Antiquity. Proceedings of a Conference at College (Oxford, 29th May 1999)*, ed. S.A. KINGSLEY, M. DECKER, Oxford 2001, p. 44; L. SEGNI, *The Territory...*, p. 41sqq.

¹⁹ Zeus Marnas was the Hellenistic incarnation of Dagon, the local god and patron of agriculture, cf. J. STRAUB, *Marnas*, [in:] *Historia-Augusta-Colloquium*, Bonn 1963, ed. IDEM, Bonn 1964 [= Ant, 4; BHAF, 2], p. 165–170; P. CHUVIN, *Chronique des derniers païens. La disparition du paganisme dans l'Empire romain, du règne de Constantin à celui de Justinien*, Paris 1990, p. 64sqq; N. BELAYCHE, *Iudaea-Palaestina. The Pagan Cults in Roman Palestine (Second to Fourth Century)*, Tübingen 2001 [= RRP, 1], p. 232–256.

²⁰ On the confiscation of the property of pagan temples see: A. FRANTZ, *From Paganism to Christianity in the Temples of Athens*, DOP 19, 1965, p. 201sqq; F. THÉLAMON, *Païens et Chrétiens au IV^e siècle. L'apport de Histoire ecclésiastique de Rufin de Aquilée*, Paris 1981, p. 255sqq; C. FOSS, *Ankyra*, [in:] RAC, vol. I, *Supplement*, p. 458–459; H. SARADI-MENDELUVICI, *Christian Attitudes toward Pagan Monuments in Late Antiquity and Their Legacy in Later Byzantine Centuries*, DOP 44, 1990, p. 53sqq; P. THRAMS, *Christianisierung des Römerreiches und heidnischer Widerstand*, Heidelberg 1992, p. 114–116sqq; P. GROSSMANN, *Tempel als Ort des Konflikts in christlicher Zeit*, [in:] *Le temple, lieu de conflit. Actes du colloque de Cartigny*, 1991, ed. P. BORGEAUD et al., Leuven 1995, p. 181sqq; C. HAAS, *Alexandria in Late Antiquity. Topography and Social Conflicts*, Baltimore–London 1997 [= ASH], p. 146sqq; J. HAHN, *Tempelzerstörung und Tempelreinigung*, [in:] *Kult, Konflikt, Sühne. Beiträge zur kultischen Sühne in religiösen, sozialen und politischen Auseinandersetzungen des antiken Mittelmeerraumes*, ed. H. ALBERTZ, Münster 2001, p. 272–282.

Therefore, Bishop Porphyry was to travel to Constantinople (...ἐπὶ τὴν βασιλίδα πόλιν) together with his metropolitan, aiming to reach the court and beg the emperors (...ἵνα δεηθῶμεν τῶν βασιλέων) to allow him to demolish the shrines in Gaza (...καταστρέψαι τοὺς ναοὺς τῶν εἰδώλων), particularly the local temple of Zeus (the so-called *Marneion*). The idea was not ungrounded, after all, and it was hoped that John – the bishop of the capital – would help²¹. If the two priests had not had at least a shred of hope of reaching the court, the whole trip would have been pointless. When summoned to Caesarea, Mark, the deacon of the church of Gaza, takes with him 43 pieces of gold (τεσσαράρακοντα τρία νομίσματα) as well as certain laconically described “three books” (τρεῖς βίβλους) for the purpose of the trip, thus emptying the bishopric’s treasury²². The books do not appear in the later part of the account, yet it may be presumed that they were volumes of the Scripture, or even the Gospels only (most probably codices, more convenient in use and transport than scrolls). Why would as many as three volumes be taken, then? There can only be one explanation: they were to be sold to help cover the expenses of the travel and stay in Constantinople. An analogical case is known from another work of hagiography completed in Palestine during the second half of the 4th century AD. The text in question is *The Life of Hilarion*, where the protagonist, as Hieronymus claims, sold a volume of the Gospel that he owned in order to pay for his sea voyage from Africa to Sicily. We are not told whether it was the whole set of the canonical Gospels or just one of them²³.

If the assumption concerning the aforementioned books is valid, how much could they be worth? If a volume was not made in a particularly exquisite fashion, its value may have reached the sum of 20 solidi per piece. Such a price is stated by the author of one of the *Apophthegmata Patrum*²⁴. In the case at hand, however, there is no information regarding the value of the codex put on sale, the quality of its making, or the condition in which it was preserved. Let us now return to the account, according to which Mark was ordered to deliver the cash as well as the aforementioned “three books” from the church treasury to Caesarea. It would follow that the bishopric of Gaza at the end of 403 AD (October or November, as the beginning of Porphyry’s journey to Constantinople is dated to that time) only had very modest means at its disposal, given that the cash and objects taken to be

²¹ Cf. G. DAGRON, *Naissance d'une capitale. Constantinople et ses institutions de 330 à 451*, Paris 1974 [= BBE, 7], p. 498–504; IDEM, *Le christianisme dans la ville byzantine*, DOP 31, 1977, p. 8–9; F. VAN OMMESLAEGHE, *Jean Chrysostome en conflit avec l'imperatrice Eudoxie. Le dossier et les origines d'une légende*, AB 97, 1979, p. 131sqq; K.G. HOLM, *Theodosian...*, p. 70–78; C. TIERSCH, *Johannes Chrysostomus in Konstantinopel (398–404). Weltsicht und Wirken eines Bischofs in der Hauptstadt des Oströmischen Reiches*, Tübingen 2002 [= STAC, 6], p. 327–378.

²² MARCUS DIACONUS, *Vita Porphyrii*, 34.

²³ Cf. HIERONYMUS, *Vita Hilarionis*, 35–36, [in:] PL, vol. XXIII, col. 47.

²⁴ Cf. *Apophthegmata Patrum. De abbate Gelasio*, [in:] PG, vol. LXV, col. 145–146, where the prices of 16 (νομίσματα δεκαέξ) and 18 solidi (ἄξιον δεκαοκτῶ νομισμάτων) are mentioned for the Old and New Testament codices, respectively.

sold would have been worth a total of ca. 100 solidi²⁵. We may note that the money that Porphyry had come into from his inheritance in Thessaloniki totalled 4400 solidi, while the valuables cashed in Jerusalem totalled 1400 solidi²⁶. This money was spent on charitable causes.

Charitable activities of the bishopric of Gaza

The information on the charity work conducted during the period of bishop Porphyry's rule gives us certain insight into the wealth of the church of Gaza at the time. The first relevant piece of information is the record of the alms amounting to three solidi (τρία νομίσματα), which was to be paid to a mother of a seven-year-old boy who, as a *medium*, communicated God's will to the Christians of Gaza concerning the local temple of Zeus²⁷. Further information concerning the alms distributed by the bishopric of Gaza only appears at one more spot in our text – when the circumstances of the consecration of the *Eudoxiane*, a basilica erected at the site of the destroyed *Marneion*²⁸, are described. According to the Mark the Deacon's account, bishop Porphyry spent generous amounts on this purpose and ordered to give out alms²⁹. The narrative mentions donations totalling from 6 to 10 obols³⁰. In order to cover these expenses, Porphyry assigned a certain sum from the income of the bishopric of Gaza. However, he highlighted that if for whatever reason the money was not distributed in Gaza, it should be spent on supporting the poor in Palestinian Caesarea³¹.

In addition, another piece of information – laconic as it may be – sheds some light on the financial situation of the Gaza bishopric around 420 AD. It seems that bishop Porphyry, intending to return the favour to certain women who had helped him by providing shelter during the pogrom of Christians in the city, ordered to pay them financial gratifications. A woman named Salaphta and her grandmother were to receive 4 solidi each, daily, for an indefinite amount of time, whereas her aunt was to be given a single payment of 1 solidus³². The information is not too clear, not least as regards the amounts cited. If valid, the latter would indicate that the economic condition of the bishopric of Gaza towards the end of Porphyry's rule was at least fairly good.

²⁵ MARCUS DIACONUS, *Vita Porphyrii*, 34.

²⁶ MARCUS DIACONUS, *Vita Porphyrii*, 6, 9.

²⁷ MARCUS DIACONUS, *Vita Porphyrii*, 68.

²⁸ J. STRAUB, *Marnas...*, p. 165sq; G. MUSSIES, *Marnas God of Gaza*, [in:] ANRW, vol. XVIII.4, p. 2412sq. The financial means for this purpose were transferred to bishop Porphyry by empress Aelia Eudoxia. cf. MARCUS DIACONUS, *Vita Porphyrii*, 53.

²⁹ MARCUS DIACONUS, *Vita Porphyrii*, 92.

³⁰ MARCUS DIACONUS, *Vita Porphyrii*, 94 (...ὀβολοὺς ἕξ.....ὀβολοὺς δέκα...).

³¹ MARCUS DIACONUS, *Vita Porphyrii*, 94.

³² MARCUS DIACONUS, *Vita Porphyrii*, 100.

Endowments of the imperial court to the bishopric of Gaza

It is difficult to assess the validity of the account concerning one of the main themes of *The Life* – i.e. Porphyry's journey to Constantinople, including the endowments he received there (the latter being a crucial issue from the point of view of our inquiry). Similarly, it is unclear what we should make of the poorly described fiscal privileges mentioned there, which – we may presume – must have had a significant influence on the economic situation of the church of Gaza in the times of bishop Porphyry and after his death³³. The essential question is, however, whether the donations by empress Eudoxia and her husband, emperor Arcadius, really took place. Since hagiographic texts are infamously unreliable on issues such as this, it is difficult to settle the case unequivocally. Firstly, we may ask whether such a journey was even possible to undertake in the first place. It probably was, it would seem, considering the fact that the bishops would travel to Constantinople convinced of support from the local bishop John (a fact conspicuously emphasized by Mark the Deacon)³⁴. Secondly, is it conceivable that blatantly false information concerning such an important journey might have been included in the narrative – the more so that it had such a crucial meaning for the development of later events? Let us recall that the story culminates in the destruction of the shrines in Gaza, including the *Marneion*, at whose location a luxurious basilica was erected and named after empress Eudoxia. The latter circumstance, in particular, seems to confirm the validity of Mark the Deacon's account. All the same, it does not mean that one should necessarily embrace all of the details found in it, including the description of how the Palestinian bishops were received at the court and what donations they received on these occasions. If the story is true, such donations must have indeed occurred (the generosity of Arcadius and Aelia Eudoxia towards those who were allowed to appear before their imperial majesties was obvious), yet perhaps not in the amounts cited by Mark the Deacon. The bishopric of Gaza, which had no more than 43 pieces of gold in its treasury in 403 AD, could not have afforded to build a lavish basilica of the kind that Mark describes. We must bear in mind that the text, even if it was not created shortly after the demise of bishop Porphyry (as Mark the Deacon assures us), could not have contained a distortion in a matter as important as the imperial court's financing the construction of the

³³ Cf. among others G. DAGRON, *Naissance...*, p. 498–504; F. VAN OMMESLAEGHE, *Jean...*, p. 131sq; K.G. HOLUM, *Theodosian...*, p. 70sq; A. McCLANAN, *Representations of Early Byzantine Empresses. Image and Empire*, New York–Basingstoke 2002, p. 19–20; C. TIERSCH, *Johannes...*, p. 327sq; M. KAHLOS, *Forbearance and Compulsion. The Rhetoric of Religious Tolerance and Intolerance in Late Antiquity*, London 2009, p. 134.

³⁴ J.N.D. KELLY, *Golden Mouth. The Story of John Chrysostom – Ascetic, Preacher, Bishop*, London 1995, p. 140–141; P. VAN NUFFELEN, *Playing the Ritual Game in Constantinople under the Theodosian Dynasty (379–457)*, [in:] *Two Romes. From Rome to Constantinople*, ed. L. GRIG, G. KELLY, Oxford 2012, p. 190–196.

basilica (although we know that the empress died several months after Porphyry had left Constantinople³⁵). Thus, the account may well have been embellished or even distorted regarding certain points. Nevertheless, the essential part of the message still remains credible: the existence of an exquisite basilica in the centre of Gaza has been confirmed not only by the aforementioned accounts as well as the depictions in the mosaics of Madaba³⁶, but also by an accidental discovery made at the beginning of April 2016 in Gaza³⁷. The latter proves that a majestic church or basilica once stood within the early Byzantine limits of the city. In the published photographs from the site of the discovery, one may see not only a huge column capital bearing the sign of a cross (90 centimetres in height), but also at least two impressive columns, shattered and perhaps duly left at the spot where the demolished basilica once stood. As far as I know, there is no unequivocal confirmation of the fact that we are indeed dealing with the basilica described by Mark, yet it is certainly a temple dating back to the early Byzantine period, and it appears to be the one depicted in the mosaics of Madaba. The author of the mosaic – or rather the person who ordered and funded it – evidently considered the grand building as a symbol of the city (in the period in question, this was the key according to which motifs or buildings to be included in mosaics were chosen).

However, let us return to Porphyry's journey to Constantinople, the main goal of which was to reach the imperial court and obtain the permission to demolish the pagan temples in Gaza. Mark the Deacon claims that, during a series of audiences, bishop Porphyry was able to secure great amounts of gold from the imperial couple. Besides a total of 200 solidi to cover the expenses during the stay in Constantinople³⁸, Porphyry received significant amounts for the needs of his bishopric as well as the planned construction. Porphyry received two *kentenaria* of gold (δύο κεντηνάρια – 200 pounds of gold, circa 14 400 *solidi*) from empress Eudoxia³⁹; he also obtained an unidentified sum for building a *kseudodocheion* in Gaza⁴⁰. In addition, emperor Arcadius endowed the sum of 20 pounds of gold (χρυσού

³⁵ O. SEECK, *Eudoxia*, [in:] *RE*, vol. VI.1, col. 926.

³⁶ M. AVI-YONAH, *The Madaba Mosaic Map with Introduction and Commentary*, Jerusalem 1954, p. 72, an. 101; M. PICCIRILLO, *Mosaics of Jordan*, ed. P.M. BIKAI, T.A. DAILEY, Amman 1992 [= ACORP, 1], p. 227, 232. Cf. also G. DOWNEY, *Gaza in the Early Sixth Century*, Norman 1963, p. 17; C.A.M. GLUCKER, *The City of Gaza in the Roman and Byzantine Periods*, Oxford 1987, p. 48sq; G. MUSSIES, *Marnas...*, 2418; L. RYDEN, *Gaza, Emesa, and Constantinople*, [in:] *Aspects of Late Antiquity and Early Byzantium. Papers Read at a Colloquium Held at the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, 31 May – 5 June 1992*, ed. L. RYDÉN, J.O. ROSENQVIST, Stockholm 1993, p. 133–137.

³⁷ Cf. the local press reports: www.mostresource.org/storybank/ruins-byzantine-church-discovered-gaza and www.ekalexandria.org/en/2016/04/22/workers-find-remnants-byzantine-church-gaza/#.WlqwWHmzXDc [19 V 2018].

³⁸ MARCUS DIACONUS, *Vita Porphyrii*, 41, 54. Cf. also C. TIERSCH, *Johannes...*, p. 206sq.

³⁹ C. MORRISSON, G. DAGRON, *Le Kenténarion dans les sources byzantines*, RN 17, 1975, p. 157sq; J.-P. CALLU, *Le "centenarium" et l'enrichissement monétaire au Bas-Empire*, Kt 3, 1978, p. 305–306.

⁴⁰ MARCUS DIACONUS, *Vita Porphyrii*, 53.

λίτρας εἴκοσι) for the needs of the bishopric⁴¹. Finally, the church in Gaza received from the emperor the aforementioned fiscal privileges (...καὶ προνόμια τῆ ἀγία ἐκκλησία καὶ τοῖς Χριστιανοῖς καὶ πρόσοδον παρασχεθῆναι), which would guarantee its economic development in the forthcoming decades⁴².

* * *

To conclude, what can be said of the financial standing of the church of Gaza in the years 395–420 AD, during the rule of bishop Porphyry? In spite of the scarcity of the relevant data, we do gain some insight into the financial standing of the bishopric. In comparison to analogical accounts concerning other bishoprics in the Eastern provinces of the Empire in late Antiquity, we may in fact speak of an abundance of information, as in most cases the data are still more sparse or non-existent at all. Outside of Egypt, it is hard to find a case better documented than the one under discussion. To be sure, we do have certain accounts concerning the church in Ephesus at the turn of the 5th century AD, yet that information relates to the personal wealth of the corrupt bishop Antoninos (who mostly acquired it through practising simony)⁴³. A similar case is that of Nazianzos (in Cappadocia) under Gregory's rule: this bishop's *Testament*, although a valuable source of information on the monetary history of late Antiquity, only refers to his personal wealth⁴⁴. The rich legacy of the Cappadocian Fathers of the Church furnishes little information concerning the economic state of the bishoprics they managed. We may note that – according to Mark the Deacon – bishop Porphyry owned private property towards the end of his life; he acquired it during his tenure in Gaza. Let us recall that he came to the city without a dime in his pocket (all cash reserves, inheritance, and other assets had been given out to support the poor in Jerusalem), while his last will is described by Mark as “bequeathing gifts to many”⁴⁵.

Surprising as it may seem, even as regards churches such as those of Antioch⁴⁶ or Constantinople⁴⁷, little is known about their wealth at the turn of the 5th century AD. In most cases (save for the several statements by John Chrysostom, Palladius of Helenopolis⁴⁸, and the anonymous author of the *Vita Olym-*

⁴¹ MARCUS DIACONUS, *Vita Porphyrii*, 54.

⁴² MARCUS DIACONUS, *Vita Porphyrii*, 46, 48–50.

⁴³ Cf. J.N.D. KELLY, *Golden...*, 172–180; H. WILLER LAALE, *Ephesus (Ephesos). An Abbreviated History from Androclus to Constantine XI*, Bloomington 2011, p. 304–306; P. WHITWORTH, *Constantinople to Chalcedon. Shaping the World to Come*, Durham 2017, p. 82–83.

⁴⁴ Cf. J. BEAUCAMP, *Le Testament de Grégoire de Nazianze*, [in:] *Fontes minores*, X, ed. L. BURGMANN, Frankfurt am Main 1998 [= FBR, 22], p. 1–100.

⁴⁵ MARCUS DIACONUS, *Vita Porphyrii*, 103.

⁴⁶ J.N.D. KELLY, *Golden...*, p. 55sqq.

⁴⁷ Cf. G. DAGRON, *Naissance...*, p. 496–509.

⁴⁸ PALLADIOS, *Dialogue sur la vie de Jean Chrysostome*, XVII, 141–147, vol. II, ed. A.-M. MALINGREY, Paris 1988 [= SC, 342], p. 170; *The Lausiaca History of Palladius*, LVI, 2, vol. II, *The Greek Text*, ed. C. BUTLER, Cambridge 1904, p. 150.

*piadis*⁴⁹), we are dealing with bare estimates; the main gauge that allows to appraise the financial standing of these churches is the information on the charity work undertaken there (usually with no specific figures cited).

Consequently, the data presented above – albeit admittedly scanty – are still quite remarkable when compared with those from other churches in the Eastern provinces of the early Byzantine period. Undeniably, it seems justified to treat at least some of the amounts cited in the *Vita Porphyrii* as reflecting particular *topoi* (especially when we hear of three solidi, three handfuls of solidi, or the sums of 100 and 1000 solidi⁵⁰); nevertheless, the source under analysis greatly enhances our knowledge of the wealth of the Church as well as its functions in the early Byzantine period.

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⁴⁹ *Vita Olympiadis*, V, 21–33; VII, 3–4, [in:] JEAN CHRYSOSTOME, *Lettres à Olympias; La Vie anonyme d'Olympias*, trans. A.-M. MALINGREY, ²Paris 1968 [= SC, 13bis], p. 418–420. Cf. also C. BROU, *Le rôle des femmes dans l'Église de Constantinople d'après la correspondance de Jean Chrysostome*, [in:] SP, vol. XXVII, p. 151sq; E.M. SYNEK, *Heilige Frauen der frühen Christenheit. Zu den Frauenbildern in hagiographischen Texten des christlichen Ostens*, Würzburg 1994 [= OC.NF, 43], p. 175–181; W. MEYER, *Constantinopolitan Women in Chrysostom's Circle*, VC 53, 1999, p. 267sq; M. HEINE, *Die Spiritualität von Asketinnen. Von den Wüstenmüttern zum städtischen Asketinnenentum im östlichen Mittelmeerraum und in Rom vom 3. bis zum 5. Jahrhundert*, Berlin 2008, p. 109–110.

⁵⁰ For some remarks on digits and numbers quoted in ancient Greek literature cf. R. MEHRLEIN, *Drei*, [in:] RAC, vol. IV, p. 269sq; D. FEHLING, *Die Quellenangaben bei Herodot. Studien zur Erzählkunst Herodots*, Berlin–New York 1971 [= ULG, 9], p. 155–167; K. RUFFING, 300, [in:] *Herodots Quellen – die Quellen Herodots*, ed. B. DUNSCH, K. RUFFING, Wiesbaden 2013, p. 201sq. On numbers in early Byzantine hagiography cf. P. DEVOS, *Les nombres dans l'Historia monachorum in Aegypto*, AB 92, 1974, p. 97–108.

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Abstract. The study attempts to determine the economic condition of a small provincial bishopric, namely the church of Gaza (Palestine) during the rule of bishop Porphyry (circa 395–420 AD). All of the information on the subject comes from the *Vita Porphyrii* by Mark the Deacon – a source whose historical value has often been disputed. Although the information on the wealth of the church in Gaza at the turn of the 4th and 5th centuries is not particularly vast or illuminating, it is nevertheless possible to identify several spheres of economic activity of the Gaza bishopric. These are, among other things, the property owned by the bishopric (real estate), its cash reserves (mostly at the beginning of the 5th century), the endowments of the imperial court (given by emperor Arcadius and his wife, empress Aelia Eudoxia), as well as the charitable activity of the bishopric (especially on the occasion of erecting the *Eudoxiane*, probably in 407).

Keywords: early Byzantium, late Roman economy, early Byzantine hagiography, early Byzantine Church

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FROM PAGANISM TO CHRISTIANITY. GENERAL REMARKS ON THE RELIGIOUS CHANGES IN PETRA (1ST–6TH CENT. AD)

Introduction

In the 1st century AD, Greek historian Strabo mentions that *the Nabataeans are a sensible people, and are so much inclined to acquire possessions that they publicly fine anyone who has diminished [them], and also confer honors on anyone who has increased them...*¹ Strabo also points out that *they worship the sun, building an altar on the top of the house, and pouring libations on it daily and burning frankincense*². John F. Healey mentions that Dushara³ represents the sun among the Nabataeans⁴. Some scholars think that Dushara was worshipped in Petra beginning in the 4th century BC – the time when the Nabataeans settled down in the area, which was under the occupation of the Edomites⁵. The Nabataeans worshipped the same deities that they used to venerate in their original homeland in the Arabian Peninsula⁶; these included Allat, el-'Uzza, Manat, Dushara, and Shai al-Qaum, the god who hates drinking wine and protects the tribe⁷. These were gods that the Nabataeans brought with themselves around the 4th century BC⁸. Thus, like other Arabs from the Arabian Peninsula, the Nabataeans worshipped

¹ STRABO, *Geography*, XVI, 4, 26, trans. H.L. JONES, London 1932 [= LCL, 49] (cetera: STRABO).

² STRABO, XVI, 4, 26.

³ Dushara means *the one of the Shara mountain range*. Thus, it seems that the name Al-Shara is connected with a geographical area. J.F. HEALEY, *The Religion of the Nabataeans. A Conspectus*, Leiden 2001 [= RGRW, 136], p. 23. M. MURRAY, *Religion and the Nomadic Lifestyle. The Nabateans*, [in:] *Travel and Religion in Antiquity*, ed. P.A. HARLAND, Waterloo Ontario 2001 [= SCJ, 21], p. 230.

⁴ J.F. HEALEY, *The Religion...*, p. 103.

⁵ R. WENNING, *North Arabian Deities and the Deities of Petra. An Approach to the Origins of the Nabataeans*, [in:] *Men on the Rock. The Formation of Nabataean Petra*, ed. S.G. SCHMID, M. MOUTON, Berlin 2013, p. 339. F. ZAYADINE, *The Nabataean Gods and Their Sanctuaries*, [in:] *Petra Rediscovered. Lost City of the Nabataeans*, ed. G. MARKOE, New York 2003, p. 58.

⁶ F. ZAYADINE, *The Nabataean...*, p. 58.

⁷ J. TEIXIDOR, *The Pagan God. Popular Religion in the Greco-Roman Near East*, Princeton 1977, p. 70; J.F. HEALEY, *The Religion...*, p. 103; P. ALPASS, *The Religious Life of Nabataea*, Leiden–Boston 2013 [= RGRW, 175], p. 278.

⁸ Z. AL-SALAMEEN, *Introduction to History and Civilization of Petra*, Amman 2010, p. 165.

the god Dushara, who was considered the greatest Nabataean god⁹. The Nabataeans engaged in building temples¹⁰, designed as places of worship. These temples were spread all over the regions of the Nabataean Kingdom and included objects such as the Temple of Winged Lions¹¹, the Great Temple¹², and the Temple of Qasr el-Bint in Petra, considered the most famous temple in the city; it was specially meant for the worship of Dushara¹³.

Any discussion on the earliest relationships between Christianity and the region of Petra should take into account two Pauline epistles. The first one – Galatians – mentions Paul's journey to Arabia after he became a follower of Jesus Christ, and then his return to Damascus. Thus, he writes in his letter to the Galatians: *but I went into Arabia and returned again unto Damascus* (Gal 1, 15–17).

In his epistle to the Galatians and their churches, beside preaching and discussing matters of faith, Saint Paul talks about his trip from Jerusalem to Damascus and then his return to Arabia (the Kingdom of the Nabataeans) conducted at the Lord's behest, after he was oppressed by the Jews in Jerusalem¹⁴. Some scholars maintain that Paul's epistle was written during the period of 40–50 AD¹⁵, and that during his missionary activity the term 'Arabia' referred to the Nabataean Kingdom, extending from Damascus in the north to Made'n Saleh in the south and ruled by king Aretas IV (9 BC–40 AD)¹⁶; the latter was connected by affinity with the family of the Jewish king Herod¹⁷. Paul does not mention in his letter how far he traveled into the Nabataean Kingdom or how much time he spent there; it seems, however, that he carried out his missionary activities and preaching among the Nabataeans and the citizens of Damascus. Some scholars mention that Paul settled among the Nabataeans for at least two to three years after he had converted to Christianity, and that he spent that time in contemplation and prayer – the more so because when he was in Damascus, he was passing through a time

⁹ J.F. HEALEY, *The Religion...*, p. 97; F. ZAYADINE, S. FARAJAT, *Excavation and Clearance at Petra and Beida*, ADAJ 35, 1991, p. 282.

¹⁰ A. Negev argues that most of the Nabataean temples were built during the reign of king Obadas III (9/8 BC–40 AD), cf. A. NEGEV, *The Chronology of the Middle Nabatean Period*, PEQ 101, 1969, p. 13.

¹¹ P.C. HAMMOND, *The Temple of the Winged Lions*, [in:] *Petra Rediscovered...*, p. 223–229.

¹² M. JOUKOWSKY, *The Great Temple*, [in:] *Petra Rediscovered...*, p. 214–223.

¹³ F. ZAYADINE, *Recent Excavations and Restoration at Qasr el Bint of Petra*, ADAJ 29, 1985, p. 239–249; J.F. HEALEY, *The Religion...*, p. 39.

¹⁴ R.A. BAILEY, *The Structure of Paul's Letters*, p. 55, www.inthebeginning.org/structure/complete.pdf [8 X 2018].

¹⁵ B. MACDONALD, *What Happened to the Nabataeans? The Literary and Archaeological Evidence*, [in:] *Studies on the Nabataean Culture II. Refereed Bulletin of the International Conference on the Nabataean Culture*, ed. N.I. KHAIRY et al., Amman 2016, p. 186.

¹⁶ R. SMITH, *Arabia*, [in:] *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. I, ed. D. FREEDMAN, New York–London 1992, p. 326.

¹⁷ B. MACDONALD, *What Happened...*, p. 187.

of confusion and bewilderment. Thus, the trip to the Nabataean Kingdom would have given him more time for contemplation, allowing him to reorganize his apostolic ideas and to prepare for the great mission he was entrusted with¹⁸.

In the other letter – 2 Corinthians – we read: *In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: and through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall and escaped his hands* (1 Cor 11, 32–33). The call of Apostle Paul did not lead to the rise of any Christian communities; there is no indication that there was a Christian presence among the Nabataeans during the period of Paul's visits to Damascus and the Nabataean Kingdom¹⁹. It appears from the letter sent to the Corinthian Christians that he was able to flee from the soldiers of Nabataean king Aretas IV stationed in Damascus (Act 9, 23–25). It seems that towards the end of his reign, king Aretas IV discovered the missionary activity of Paul in his kingdom, and thus he ordered his governor in Damascus to have him killed. This means that Paul's mission among the Nabataeans had not been particularly successful with regard to the propagation of Christianity; some scholars point out that the religion was entering the Nabataean kingdom at a slow pace²⁰.

From paganism to Christianity in Petra

1. Testimonies of narrative sources

The adoption of Christianity as the religion of the Byzantine Empire had a profound influence on the culture of the region (which had lived under paganism for centuries), as evidenced by the number of churches built during the transition from paganism to Christianity. The conversion from paganism to Christianity in Petra is one of the most difficult periods to study, since there is no pertinent historical material. As mentioned above, in Petra the process of conversion to Christianity was slow²¹, especially bearing in mind the penetration of the pagan beliefs into the minds and culture of the local population. This is also reflected in the course of the transition from paganism to Christianity in the Byzantine Empire in general. The Byzantine Empire considered carefully to allow Christians to assimilate with the pagan society²². Paganism was an essential force in the Byzantine society

¹⁸ C.W. BRIGGS, *The Apostle Paul in Arabia*, BWo 41, 1913, p. 255; M. HENGEL, *Paul in Arabia*, BBR 12, 2002, p. 47.

¹⁹ B. MACDONALD, *What Happened...*, p. 187.

²⁰ K. SCHMITT-KORTE, *An Early Christian Record of the Nabataeans. The Maslam Inscription (ca. 350 AD)*, ARAM.P 2, 1990, p. 123–142.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 132.

²² H. SARADI, *The Christianization of Pagan Temples in the Greek Hagiographical Texts*, [in:] *From Temple to Church. Destruction and Renewal of Local Cultic Topography in Late Antiquity*, ed. J. HAHN, S. EMMEL, U. GOTTER, Leiden 2008 [= RGRW, 163], p. 113–134.

and therefore pagans were allowed to coexist with Christians at the beginning of the transition to maintain social unity within the state²³.

Thus, paganism was found in Petra side by side with Christianity during the 4th century AD and this state continued until the 5th century AD²⁴. It should be noted that Christianity did not spread throughout the Byzantine Empire in one blow; rather, it took a considerable period of time for it to become the official religion, and the use of certain pagan symbols in art and mosaics continued well into the Christian period. Bert de Vries mentions that the end of paganism in the regions of Jordan and southern Syria cannot be attributed to the coming of Christianity, but to the oppressive policy applied by the Byzantine state against the followers of the respective pagan cults, and the ensuing destruction of the cultural and religious identity of the pagans²⁵. Helen Saradi states that the attitude of the Byzantine Empire towards paganism and its characteristics was linked firstly with the religious policy of the Byzantine emperors and secondly with the social and cultural reality of the empire's population during the 4th and 5th centuries AD²⁶.

The Byzantine period of 324–636 AD was one of the most important timespans of intensive human settlement in the region²⁷. During this time, Petra enjoyed immense importance as it became the capital of *Palaestina Salutaris (Palaestina Tertia)*, which included southern Jordan in addition to the Negev and the Sinai²⁸. Eusebius describes Petra during this period as 'the famous noble city'²⁹. He also discusses the construction of churches in the area in the period 324–337 AD, characterizing the city as full of superstitions and works of demons³⁰. During the 4th century AD, Petra was quite like any other Byzantine city in this respect: followers of ancient paganism and Christianity coexisted side by side, with the city torn by internal conflicts over whether to preserve and continue the use of old

²³ H. SARADI-MENDELOVICI, *Christian Attitudes toward Pagan Monuments in Late Antiquity and Their Legacy in Later Byzantine Centuries*, DOP 44, 1990, p. 47–61.

²⁴ Z. FIEMA, *Late-Antique Petra and Its Hinterland. Recent Research and New Interpretations*, [in:] *The Roman and Byzantine Near East*, vol. III, ed. N. HUMPHREY, Portsmouth 2002 [= JRA.SS, 31], p. 194.

²⁵ B. DE VRIES, *Between the Cults of Syria and Arabia. Traces of Pagan Religion at Umm al-Jimal*, SHAJ 10, 2009, p. 190.

²⁶ H. SARADI-MENDELOVICI, *Christian Attitudes...*, p. 48.

²⁷ Z. FIEMA, *Economics, Administration and Demography of Late Roman and Byzantine Southern Transjordan* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Utah, 1991), p. 137; Z. FIEMA, *The Islamic Conquest of Southern Jordan. A New Research Perspective*, ADAJ 36, 1992, p. 329.

²⁸ Z. FIEMA, *Economics, Administration...*, p. 23–39; W.D. WARD, *From Provincia Arabia to Palaestina Tertia. The Impact of Geography, Economy, and Religion on Sedentary and Nomadic Communities in the Later Roman Province of Third Palestine* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California, 2008), p. 68–77.

²⁹ *Eusebius' Life of Constantine*, XXXVI, 13–14, trans. et ed. A. CAMERON, S. HALL, Oxford 1999 [= CAHS] (cetera: EUSEBIUS).

³⁰ EUSEBIUS, XXXVI, 13–14.

temples or to build churches. It seems that the enduring paganism and its celebration in Petra – with the concomitant presence of a Christian sect – led to inter-communal disputes³¹, which can be seen in the Byzantine historical sources.

When the Byzantine Empire converted to Christianity, the Nabataeans gradually followed suit, although the available ecclesiastical sources do not mention any bishops from Petra participating in the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD³². This may be indicative of a religious dispute during the initial stages of Christianity in Petra: the religious division concerning the new religion and its nature sustained among its followers in Petra. While some of the city's priests attended the Orthodox councils, others followed the Arian doctrine of the human nature of Christ³³. In 343 AD, the Council of Sardica convened to discuss the Christian dispute over the nature of Christ. Church historian Theodoret (393–458 AD) states that the bishop of Petra, Asterius, rejected the ideas put forward by the followers of Arius and joined the other side of the conflict. Theodoret states that Asterius withdrew from the proceedings of the Ecumenical Council in Sardica and was subsequently banished to Libya by emperor Constantius II³⁴. During the period 343–361 AD, a new bishop was appointed in Asterius's place. Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, mentions the participation of Germanus, bishop of Petra, in the 359 AD Council of Seleucia, where the heresy of Arius of Alexandria was discussed³⁵.

It seems that Germanus was appointed as bishop of Petra after the exile of bishop Asterius. However, in 362 AD – during the reign of the pagan emperor Julian (361–364 AD) – Germanus was removed from his post, while Asterius was reappointed as the city's bishop and attended the Orthodox Council in Alexandria in 362 AD³⁶. It appears that the deposition of Germanus happened after Julian took over the rule in 361 AD. Indeed, in 362 AD, Christianity suffered a violent blow at the hands of emperor Julian, who declared his apostasy from Christianity – starting to persecute the religion anew – and returned to paganism³⁷. This prompted the Christians to convene the Council of Alexandria in the same year at the invitation of pope Athenasius. Most of the bishops who attended this Council returned from exile or had been tortured, including Asterius, bishop of Petra³⁸.

³¹ Z. FIEMA, *Reinventing the Sacred. From Shrine to Monastery at Jabal Hārūn*, PSAS 42, 2012, p. 27–38.

³² A. HARNACK, *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*, vol. II, trans. et ed. J. MOFFATT, New York 1908, p. 2, 117.

³³ B. MACDONALD, *What Happened...*, p. 190.

³⁴ THEODORET, *Kirchengeschichte*, VI, 8, ed. L. PARMENTIER, Berlin 1954 [= GCS, 44].

³⁵ *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis. Books II and III, De fide*, 115, 26, 8, trans. F. WILLIAMS, Leiden–Boston 2013 [= NHMS, 79] (cetera: EPIPHANIUS, *The Panarion*).

³⁶ T.D. BARNES, *Athanasius and Constantius. Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire*, Cambridge Massachusetts 2001, p. 236–264.

³⁷ SOZOMENUS, *Church History from AD 323–425*, VI, 3, trans. C.D. HARTRANFT, [in:] NPFC II, vol. II, ed. P. SCHAFF, H. WACE, New York 1890 (cetera: SOZOMENUS).

³⁸ Z. FIEMA, *Reinventing the Sacred...*, p. 32.

There is no information on the relationship between the two bishops of Petra, Asterius and Germanus, during this period.

Despite the damage that Petra was exposed to in the earthquake of 363 AD, and the destruction of parts of the city, it continued to be a vibrant center, becoming the seat of a Byzantine bishopric³⁹. An example of a Christian presence in Petra in the mid-4th century AD – specifically, the presence of influential bishops during this period – is the account concerning monk Paul of Petra, who was the head of the Raithu monastery in Mount Sinai. The monastery and the monks residing there were exposed to a massacre at the hands of the Saracens, who attacked the monastery in the years 373–378 AD⁴⁰.

However, it would be difficult to conclude that paganism was completely eradicated from the areas under the rule of the Nabataeans. A slow transition to the Christian religion was underway, with the Nabataeans continuing to worship their gods even during the Christian period⁴¹. Some researchers point out that the process of transition to Christianity in Petra was particularly slow, sometimes proceeding at an uneven pace⁴². Thus, pagan worship continued in Petra alongside the construction of new churches. Christian historian Eusebius speaks about the construction of churches in Petra as well as the existence of paganism during this period⁴³. This means that the city saw dual pagan and Christian worship in the first third of the 4th century AD. Similarly, Church historian Sozomen (370–450 AD) mentions that Areopolis and Petra were among the cities whose pagan people defended their temples, and says:

There were still pagans in many cities, who contended zealously in behalf of their temples; as, for instance, the inhabitants of Petræa and of Areopolis, in Arabia; of Raphi and Gaza, in Palestine⁴⁴.

Sozomen's wording indicates that paganism persisted in Petra until the end of the 4th century AD, and probably the beginning of the 5th. This means that the transition from paganism to Christianity passed through harsh and difficult conditions during the 4th and 5th centuries AD. Sozomen links the destruction of the temples in the city of Petra with the closure of the temple of Serapeum in Alexandria, which strengthened the triumph of Christianity over paganism⁴⁵. These

³⁹ M. JOUKOWSKY, *The Great Temple...*, p. 32; Z. FIEMA, *From the Annexation to Aaron. Petra in Roman and Byzantine Times*, [in:] *Petra. A City Forgotten and Rediscovered*, ed. J. FRÖSEN, Z. FIEMA, Helsinki 2002, p. 67.

⁴⁰ I. SHAHID, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fourth Century*, Washington 1984, p. 298.

⁴¹ J.F. HEALEY, *The Religion...*, p. 16.

⁴² Z. FIEMA, *The Byzantine Church at Petra*, [in:] *Petra Rediscovered...*, p. 239–249; W. TABBERNEE, *Early Christianity in Contexts. An Exploration across Cultures and Continents*, Grand Rapids 2014, p. 58.

⁴³ *Das Onomastikon der biblischen Ortsnamen*, XXXVI, 13–14, ed. E. KLOSTERMANN, Hildesheim 1966.

⁴⁴ SOZOMENUS, VII, 15, 11–12.

⁴⁵ SOZOMENUS, VII, 15, 11–12.

events are dated to 391 AD, a period of mutual hostility between the pagans and Christians in the region in general⁴⁶.

The closure of the temples was a consequence of the legislation issued by emperor Theodosius I prohibiting the practice of pagan rituals in the empire. Importantly, Sozomen's words indicate that there was still a pagan sect in Petra as late as at the beginning of the 5th century AD.

The spread of Christianity in Petra did not prevent the persistence of pagan worship until the end of the 4th century AD. In his most famous work – the *Panarion* – Epiphanius (315–403 AD) describes the worship of Dushara and the celebrations held in Petra as well as in some nearby areas (such as Khulsa in the Negev) on the 25th of December of each year. He writes:

First, at Alexandria, in the Coreum, as they call it; it is a very large temple, the shrine of Core. They stay up all night singing hymns to the idol with a flute accompaniment. And when they have concluded their nightlong vigil torchbearers descend into an underground shrine after cockcrow [...] This also goes on in the city of Petra, in the idolatrous temple there. (Petra is the capital city of Arabia, the scriptural Edom). They praise the virgin with hymns in the Arab language and call her Chaamu – that is, Core, or virgin – in Arabic. And the child who is born of her they call Dusares, that is, 'the Lord's only-begotten'. And this is also done that night in the city of Elusa, as it there in Petra, and in Alexandria⁴⁷

It is clear from Epiphanius's description of the persistent paganism and continued worship of the god Dushara until the end of the 4th century AD – and the performing of the rituals of worship in the Nabataean language – that the Nabataeans represented this god in a solid form. This is in contrast to the forms of the gods that they had worshipped during the previous period, as a result of the influence of the Roman culture⁴⁸; thus, this Dushara became Dusares, equated with Dionysus in the 5th century AD⁴⁹. Epiphanius considers these religious practices of the Nabataeans a kind of heresy⁵⁰.

Epiphanius's description of the Nabataeans' celebration of Dushara might be associated with Strabo's 1st century AD description of the Nabataeans holding a feast, where the celebrating group along with the king drank wine from golden cups⁵¹. According to J.F. Healey, Allat is the mother of the god Dushara; this would

⁴⁶ R. BAYLISS, *Usurping the Urban Image. The Experience of Ritual Topography in Late Antique Cities of the Near East*, [in:] TRAC 98. *Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference, Leicester 1998*, ed. P. BAKER, C. FORCEY, S. JUNDI, R. WITCHER, Oxford 1999, p. 71.

⁴⁷ EPIPHANIUS, *The Panarion*, 51, 22, 11.

⁴⁸ W.D. WARD, *The 363 Earthquake and the End of Public Paganism in the Southern Transjordan*, JLA 9, 2016, p. 154.

⁴⁹ K.D. POLITIS, *Nabataean Cultural Continuity into the Byzantine Period*, [in:] *The World of the Nabataeans. Volume 2 of the International Conference The World of the Herods and the Nabataeans held at the British Museum, 17–19 April 2001*, ed. IDEM, London 2007, p. 189.

⁵⁰ W.D. WARD, *From Provincia...*, p. 227.

⁵¹ STRABO, XVI, 4, 26.

be in line with the Nabataean inscription found in the region of Hawran in southern Syria, where it is mentioned that Allat is known as the 'mother of the gods'⁵². The continuation of Dushara's worship in Petra at the end of the 4th century shows the integration of paganism and Christianity in Petra.

In the 5th century AD, Byzantine author Hesychius of Alexandria states that *Dusares is Dionysus of the Nabataeans*⁵³. Certain 6th century sources also mention that there were some stones that represented the gods in various areas close to Petra which were part of the Nabataean Kingdom and later entered the province of *Palaestina Salutaris*. Antoninus of Placentinus remarks at the end of the 6th century that he saw some pagan practices by the Saracens in Mount Sinai⁵⁴; the pagans erected an idol on Mount Sinai and directed their worship to it. The religious celebration by these Saracens was based on the *waxing and the waning of the moon*⁵⁵. The persistence of paganism was not limited to the city of Petra; evidence of paganism may be seen in various parts of Palestine during the 4th and 5th centuries AD and continues at least until the 6th century AD⁵⁶.

The late Byzantine lexicon known as the *Suda* (dated to the 10th century AD) mentions the worship of the god Dushara in Petra, stating:

'Theus Ares' [Dusares]: That is the god Ares, in Petra of Arabia. The god Ares is worshipped among them: for they honour him especially. The image is a black stone, square in shape, unshaped, four feet tall and two wide: it is mounted on a base of beaten gold. To this they sacrifice and pour the blood of the sacrificial animals, and that is how they make libations. And the whole house is rich in gold, and there are many votive offerings.⁵⁷

Here, it must be said that the betyls found in different parts of the Nabataean kingdom and Petra in particular are similar to those mentioned in the text of the *Suda* in terms of form and size. Fawzi Zayadine remarks that rituals related to the worship of Dushara as described in the Byzantine lexicon were held in the Temple of Qasr el-Bint, and that the remnants of the golden foliage found in the temple confirms this; we read that *the whole temple is shining with gold*⁵⁸.

Regardless of the spread of Christianity in Petra during the 4th century and beyond, the evidence for Christian hostility towards the pagan forms of worship in Petra is uncertain, despite Sozomen's allusion to the pagans defending their temples during the 4th century AD. The archaeological material provides us with important information about the continued presence of the god Dushara in Petra during the later periods of the history of the city; a large bust of this god was found

⁵² P. ALPASS, *The Religious...*, p. 49.

⁵³ F. ZAYADINE, *The Nabataean...*, p. 60.

⁵⁴ U. AVNER, *Nabataean Standing Stones and Their Interpretation*, ARAM.P 11–12, 1999–2000, p. 99.

⁵⁵ W.D. WARD, *From Provincia...*, p. 259.

⁵⁶ D. BAR, *The Christianisation of Rural Palestine during Late Antiquity*, JEH 54, 2003, p. 405.

⁵⁷ P. ALPASS, *The Religious...*, p. 53.

⁵⁸ F. ZAYADINE, *Recent Excavations...*, p. 240.

at the gate of the temple of Qasr al-Bint. The statue was found above a layer of sand that helped maintain it. Judith McKenzie believes that the statue remained in its original place at the gate of Qasr al-Bint throughout the Nabataean, Roman and Byzantine periods. This means that it survived the movement of iconoclasm that spread in Petra⁵⁹, although this was a conflict that involved the followers of both paganism and Christianity. The Nabataean inscriptions found in the Oboda region of the Negev indicate that the Nabataeans in the region still worshipped Dushara during the early Byzantine period⁶⁰.

It is worth noting that the 5th century AD marked the emergence of a large force hostile to the existence of pagans and against pagan gods. This hostility against paganism was part of Christian culture, especially among monks and bishops⁶¹. The struggle between paganism and Christianity towards the end of the 4th century AD in Petra continued later, despite the series of decrees issued by emperor Theodosius I prohibiting pagan practices and the construction of temples in the Byzantine Empire (especially the law issued on May 25th, 385 AD)⁶².

The 419–422 AD journey of Barsauma, bishop of Nisibis⁶³, along with 40 other Christian bishops revealed the presence of pagan ruins in the city of Petra and showed how the pagans in the city had been forced to convert to Christianity, especially in the time after the flood that hit the city⁶⁴. The Church of Nisibis undertook to spread Christianity through missionary campaigns, including the one sent to RQM (Petra) to propagate the religion among the local population⁶⁵. On the way, Barsauma noted that paganism was strong in the areas they passed; they were the masters of the country and the towns of the region, and they would close their cities' gates in his and his companions' faces⁶⁶. As for Barsauma and his comrades, they headed for Palestine and the province of Arabia, destroyed the pagan temples (burning them down in the process), and demolished the Jewish temples⁶⁷.

⁵⁹ J. MCKENZIE, *Iconoclasm in Petra and the Other Nabataean Sites*, [in:] *Studies on the Nabataean Culture I. Refereed Proceedings of the International Conference on the Nabataean Culture*, ed. N.I. KHAIRY, T.M. WEBER, Amman 2013, p. 19.

⁶⁰ K.D. POLITIS, *Nabataean Cultural...*, p. 188.

⁶¹ Z. FIEMA, *Reinventing the Sacred...*, p. 34.

⁶² H. SARADI, *The Christianization...*, p. 116–118. We find many examples of bishops and other Christians utilizing imperial decrees as a weapon in their struggle against the followers of paganism; such decrees were used as the driving force for them to destroy the pagan temples. This was particularly widespread in the *Syria Secunda* during the reign of emperor Theodosius I.

⁶³ Barsauma became bishop of Nisibis in 450 AD. He was a confidant of the Sasanian king Peroz I and a follower of Nestorianism. Z. AL-SALAMEEN, *RQM = (Raqeem) in Historical and Epigraphic Sources*, JSHS 31, 2015, p. 25.

⁶⁴ K.D. POLITIS, *Nabataean Cultural...*, p. 194.

⁶⁵ Z. FIEMA, *Late-Antique Petra...*, p. 193; Z. AL-SALAMEEN, *RQM...*, p. 25.

⁶⁶ D. CANER, *History and Hagiography from the Late Antique Sinai. Including Translations of Pseudo-Nilus' Narrations, Ammonius' Report on the Slaughter of the Monks of Sinai and Rhaithou, and Anastasius of Sinai's Tales of the Sinai Fathers*, Liverpool 2010 [= TTH, 53], p. 14.

⁶⁷ G. BOWERSOCK, *Polytheism and Monotheism in Arabia and the Three Palestines*, DOP 51, 1997, p. 3.

He then headed for Petra by the *Via Nova Traiana*, which had been constructed by Roman emperor Trajan after the annexation of the Nabataean Kingdom into the Roman Empire in 106 AD⁶⁸. Barsauma states that paganism was widespread in the cities and areas they visited during their journey to Petra, and that the people of this city closed the gates preventing them from entering⁶⁹, although some cities on their way opened their doors to them⁷⁰. Barsauma remarks that when he arrived in Petra⁷¹, he found the gates closed and guarded by the local residents. He addressed them, saying: *Let me approach you, do not let anyone hurt me. I am the youngest Christian. They have sent me a messenger to speak to you, the word of peace*⁷². Barsauma continued his expedition into Petra after he was allowed to enter on condition that he would not hurt the inhabitants or the city, and that he would not burn their gods with fire⁷³; this indicates that the city's inhabitants during this period were pagans.

Barsauma spoke to the people of the city about the wisdom of God and true faith, and that the God of the Christians was the one who had created them, who made rain fall, and who gave food to all flesh. Meanwhile, the people of the city answered that it was their gods who had created the sky and the earth, and that for four years no drop of rain had fallen. They challenged Barsauma, saying that if his God was the one who made rain fall, he should pray for him to make the rain fall on them; if this were to happen, they would become Christians⁷⁴.

After hearing these words, Barsauma told the people that he and his companions would call on God to make the rain fall down on their city, and that if they failed, they would be free to stone them to death. Subsequently, Barsauma and his disciples went to pray, until the rain fell; the water drowned the city and its streets, even destroying its walls. The rain lasted for four days⁷⁵. At this point, the inhabitants asked Barsauma to make his God stop the rain. He responded to them saying that in order to make the rain stop, they would have to renounce their deceitful idols and to acknowledge the God of the Christians. Then, the inhabitants shouted in one voice: *We declare our innocence from our dead idols and acknowledge the living God*. He then asked them to take their hammers and smash their misleading idols, and all the priests took the iron tools and destroyed the statues. Subsequently, Barsauma left the city safely, went to Sinai and prayed there⁷⁶. Afterwards, he

⁶⁸ Z. AL-SALAMEEN, *RQM...*, p. 25.

⁶⁹ W.D. WARD, *From Provincia...*, p. 249; Z. AL-SALAMEEN, *RQM...*, p. 25.

⁷⁰ W.D. WARD, *From Provincia...*, p. 249.

⁷¹ Barsauma mentions the old name of Petra, 'Reqem Dgaia' ('RQM Dgaia'), and says that it is the greatest city in the province of *Palestina Tertia*, W.D. WARD, *From Provincia...*, p. 249.

⁷² Z. AL-SALAMEEN, *RQM...*, p. 27.

⁷³ K.D. POLITIS, *Nabataean Cultural...*, p. 194; Z. AL-SALAMEEN, *RQM...*, p. 27.

⁷⁴ Z. AL-SALAMEEN, *RQM...*, p. 27.

⁷⁵ Z. FIEMA et al., *The Petra Church*, Amman 2001, p. 3; Z. AL-SALAMEEN, *RQM...*, p. 27.

⁷⁶ Z. AL-SALAMEEN, *RQM...*, p. 27. Geological surveys using paleoflood reconstruction techniques indicate that Petra was hit by a destructive flood during the period of the 4th–6th century AD.

and his 40 companions travelled to Areopolis in Kerak, where they found a large temple called *bits̄bta*, built of huge stones, with its roof and walls adorned with bronze, silver and gold. Inside, there was a range of luxurious arches, tables and candlesticks made of gold; its interior doors were made of bronze, while the outer gate was made of iron. He burned it down and prevented the theft of its contents. After this incident, Barsauma and his companions crossed Wadi al-Mujib and continued to destroy the temples in northern Jordan and Syria⁷⁷. It is interesting to note that there is no indication of the presence of pagans in Petra after that date. In the course of this period Barsauma proceeded to destroy pagan and Jewish temples – roughly at the same time when emperor Theodosius II issued a regulation (in 423 AD) that prohibited the destruction or looting of pagan and Jewish temples⁷⁸. It seems that the law came as the Byzantine Empire's reaction to the deeds of this bishop, although – as we mentioned earlier – Theodosius II would later issue a decree (in 438 AD) quite contrary to the first one, stipulating the destruction of temples and ordering the prevention of pagan worship.

Bishop Barsauma and his companions' encounter with the pagan population of Petra is consistent with what Byzantine historian Jerome (347–420 AD) says about the missionary activities of bishop Hilarion⁷⁹ (291–371 AD) in the vicinity of Gaza⁸⁰. Sozomen confirms that his grandfather converted to Christianity through bishop Hilarion⁸¹. Jerome states that while Hilarion was in the desert to the south of Gaza, a group of residents of the vicinities of Aila, Jerusalem and Rhinocolura (Arish) came to him, seeking to be cured of diseases. Since he was able to treat them, these miracles increased his fame and many of the locals converted to Christianity. He was also credited with establishing monasteries in the region of Palestine⁸². Jerome adds that when he visited the city of Khalsa in the Negev with his disciples around 350 AD, he found people there holding a great celebration of the goddess Venus. When the people heard of the arrival of this blessed man, they came out with their wives and children to receive him, and when they saw him, they shouted and said to him 'Mubarak'. Hilarion received them with all humility and love, and called on them to worship God instead of stones; then he looked up at the sky, crying profusely, and promised to visit them again if they kept their faith in the Lord Christ. They allowed him to leave only after he had laid

The flood is described as sudden and destructive, reaching the height of 4–6 meters at the Siq entrance, T.R. PARADISE, *The Great Flood of Petra. Evidence for a 4th–5th AD Century Catastrophic Flood*, ADAJ 56, 2012, p. 143–158. This means that it occurred during the period when Barsauma visited Petra, which might confirm the narrative transmitted by this bishop.

⁷⁷ W.D. WARD, *From Provincia...*, p. 249.

⁷⁸ G. BOWERSOCK, *Polytheism...*, p. 3.

⁷⁹ A bishop from Gaza who took upon himself the responsibility of Christian missionary activity, W.D. WARD, *From Provincia...*, p. 222.

⁸⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁸¹ SOZOMENUS, V, 15, 227.

⁸² W.D. WARD, *From Provincia...*, p. 226.

the foundation for their church⁸³. Altogether, it is clear that Hilarion's mission succeeded in making the Nabataeans as well as the inhabitants of Khalsa and of the nearby regions start their transition to Christianity. This task was later finished by bishop Barsauma.

The role of Hilarion and his miracles involving the healing of the sick was similar to that of bishop Barsauma and his miracles related to causing the rainfall. The local people would convert to Christianity after witnessing such miracles, especially since the visit of Hilarion was chronologically close to that of Barsauma. In the end, both bishops contributed to the victorious outcome of the mission.

2. Religious changeover in Petra in the light of archeological evidence

The names found in the Christian cemetery in the Ghor al-Safi region, dated to the period from the 4th to the 6th century AD, indicate that a group of Christian citizens from Petra was buried there. Christian symbols such as crucifixes were found on their tombstones⁸⁴. The inscriptions on these tombstones include e.g. the following: *Monument of Anna daughter of Azizos from the city of Petra* (427 AD), *Monument of Kosmas son of Abdamochos from Petra* (final quarter of the 4th century AD)⁸⁵. The analysis of archaeological finds and historical sources indicates that the process of transitioning to Christianity was completed among the population of Petra during the 6th century AD. The Petra papyri dated between 527 and 582 AD reveal the existence of a Christian community in the region during this period, with some of the inhabitants remaining pagan⁸⁶. In many of the areas that were under Byzantine rule, such as Hawran and Golan, paganism was practiced side by side with the Christian religion⁸⁷.

The archaeological excavations in the Wadi Farasa at Petra have uncovered the presence of triangular stones or tombstones bearing inscriptions in Greek, dating back to the 5th century AD, along with pictures of groups of crosses surrounded by palm branches⁸⁸. This indicates the existence of a Christian community in the 5th century AD, and the transition of the local population from pagan symbols to Christian ones.

The period from the late 4th to the 6th century AD witnessed the peak of the conversion of pagan sites and temples into churches⁸⁹. One of the most significant

⁸³ *Ibidem*; D. CANER, *History...*, p. 16.

⁸⁴ Y. MEIMARIS, K. KRITIKAKOU-NIKOLAROPOULOU, *Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. The Greek Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoom)*, Athens 2005, p. 32.

⁸⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁸⁶ P. BIKAI, *Petra Church Project, Petra Papyri*, ADAJ 40, 1996, p. 487–489.

⁸⁷ C.M. DAUPHIN, *Jewish and Christian Communities in the Roman and Byzantine Gaulanitis. A Study of Evidence from Archaeological Surveys*, PEQ 114, 1982, p. 129–142.

⁸⁸ K.D. POLITIS, *Nabataean Cultural...*, p. 194.

⁸⁹ R. BAYLISS, *Usurping the Urban Image...*, p. 63.

pieces of evidence for the transition of the population of Petra to Christianity is the inscription of the Urn Tomb (Fig. 1), from June 24th, 446 AD. It refers to the conversion of the Urn Tomb into a church by Jason, the bishop of the city, and Julian, the deacon⁹⁰. The inscription, found on one of the interior corners of the mausoleum, reads: *In the time of the most holy bishop Jason this place was dedicated [...] to Christ the Saviour*⁹¹.

This religious transition from paganism to Christianity – as some scholars see it – reveals the power of the new ethos in the city of Petra in the face of paganism⁹². The niches found in the eastern wall of the Urn Tomb were expanded to create the nave for the church, while a number of subterranean arches were added in the western end of the mausoleum⁹³.

The turning of the Urn Tomb into a church during this period gives the impression that the number of Christians in Petra was still limited after the visit of bishop Barsauma to the city. The Christians' inability to build their own church may also be indicative of hard economic conditions that made it impossible to undertake such an enterprise⁹⁴.

Some scholars believe that the conversion of pagan temples to churches was generally uncommon in Palestine during the Byzantine period. However, stones from ruined temples were widely used to build new churches⁹⁵. Christians seemed to have had two ways of dealing with pagan temples: either to destroy them entirely or to modify some of the architectural features of the existing buildings in accordance with the nature of Christianity.

Archaeological surveys point to the conversion of the royal tomb in Petra, known as the ed-Deir, into a Christian monastery at an unspecified time⁹⁶. This monastery had been used by the Nabataeans as a place for holding their religious rites⁹⁷. The inscriptions found near the monastery (featuring a set of crosses carved into the rock and dating back to the 5th century AD) indicate that it was used by Christians⁹⁸. These new churches in the Urn Tomb and the Monastery, carved deep into the rock, were not affected by the earthquakes that hit Petra later on; they have remained virtually unchanged till today⁹⁹.

⁹⁰ Y. MEIMARIS, *Chronological Systems in Roman-Byzantine Palestine and Arabia. The Evidence of the Dated Greek Inscriptions*, Athens 1992, p. 213; Z. FIEMA, *Late-Antique Petra...*, p. 193.

⁹¹ J. TAYLOR, *Petra and the Lost Kingdom of the Nabataeans*, Cambridge 2012, p. 204.

⁹² C. COÛASNON, *The Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem*, London 1974, p. 161.

⁹³ Z. FIEMA, *Late-Antique Petra...*, p. 195; K.D. Politis, *Nabataean Cultural...*, p. 194.

⁹⁴ P. BIKAI, *The Churches of Byzantine Petra*, NEA 65, 2002, p. 272.

⁹⁵ Z. FIEMA, *Late-Antique Petra...*, p. 220.

⁹⁶ A. LAHELMA, Z. FIEMA, *From Goddess to Prophet. 2000 Years of Continuity on the Mountain of Aar-on near Petra, Jordan*, Tem 44, 2008, p. 215.

⁹⁷ J.F. HEALEY, *The Religion...*, p. 47–50.

⁹⁸ A. LAHELMA, Z. FIEMA, *From Goddess...*, p. 215.

⁹⁹ W.D. WARD, *From Provincia...*, p. 226.

J. McKenzie emphasizes that the Nabataeans did not destroy or erase faces of stone sculptures if they were not acceptable to them; they would not have made them because they knew that they were destined for obliteration¹⁰⁰. Here, it seems important to point out that the earthquake that hit the region on May 19th, 363 AD had the greatest impact on the demolition of many of Petra's landmarks¹⁰¹: more than a third of the city was shattered, including the Temple of the Winged Lions, the Great Temple, and the Qasr el-Bint Temple. The destruction of these temples was a major blow to the pagan practices in Petra at the end of the 4th century AD¹⁰². Kenneth W. Russell notes that this earthquake affected most areas of Petra and its surroundings, such as the Temple of Kherbit el-Tannur, as well as the buildings in the Negev area, such as Mempsis¹⁰³.

It is evident from the archaeological evidence that the spread of Christianity in the 4th century AD was not the main factor in ending paganism in Petra; rather, it was the earthquake of 363 AD and the ensuing destruction of the region that played the decisive role in the demolishing of the pagan temples¹⁰⁴. The archaeological material also indicates that three Nabataean temples, the temple of Khirbet et-Tannur and the temple of Khirbet ed-Dharieh¹⁰⁵ kept on practicing the worship of paganism after the transition to Christianity and the destruction of the area in the earthquakes¹⁰⁶. Martha Joukowsky believes that the Great Temple in Petra kept being used by the pagans until the beginning of the 4th century AD¹⁰⁷. Similarly, the Temple of Qasr el-Bint in Petra remained open until the second half of the 4th century AD, when it was destroyed in the earthquake of 363¹⁰⁸. This means that the Christian community in Petra did not actively work to dispose of the pagan temples that existed in the city, and that the pagans were allowed to practice their rituals for an extended period of time. Pagan temples in Petra were abandoned gradually during the later periods. The earthquake that hit Petra in 419 AD had a great impact on the destruction of the city's landmarks in that the ruins of these buildings were never restored¹⁰⁹.

¹⁰⁰ J. MCKENZIE, *Iconoclasm...*, p. 20.

¹⁰¹ Z. FIEMA, S. SCHMID, *Nabataean Basileia and the Earthquake of AD 363 at Petra. Some Consideration*, Man 17, 2014, p. 419.

¹⁰² S.P. BROCK, *A Letter Attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem on the Rebuilding of the Temple*, BSOAS 40, 1977, p. 267-286.

¹⁰³ K.W. RUSSELL, *The Earthquake of May 19, AD 363*, BASOR 238, 1980, p. 47. A later earthquake, which struck the city in the year 551, also caused the destruction of many of the landmarks in Petra, *ibidem*, p. 48.

¹⁰⁴ W.D. WARD, *The 363 Earthquake...*, p. 134.

¹⁰⁵ The archeological evidence suggests that the temples of Khirbet edh-Dharieh and Khirbet et-Tannor were deserted at the same time after the earthquake of 363 AD, but at an unspecified period in the 6th century AD, *ibidem*, p. 142.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 134.

¹⁰⁷ M. JOUKOWSKY, *The Great Temple...*, p. 222.

¹⁰⁸ F. ZAYADINE, *Recent Excavations...*, p. 249.

¹⁰⁹ Z. FIEMA, *Late-Antique Petra...*, p. 222.

3. Churches in Petra

The 4th and 5th centuries AD saw an increase in human settlement in the areas of Jordan in general, and Petra in particular¹¹⁰. This led to the local people's endeavors to establish churches, chapels and monasteries¹¹¹. The 6th century also witnessed the peak in the construction of churches in such provinces of the Byzantine Empire as the *Provincia Arabia* and the *Palaestina Salutaris*; this continued until the Umayyad and Abbasid periods¹¹².

It is evident from the construction of the churches in Petra and their decoration with mosaic floors, as well as the use of marble in their construction, that these enterprises were funded by donors from the local population¹¹³. Archaeological excavations have revealed the presence of stones belonging to the Great Temple in Petra. The faces on the temple were erased so that the elements could be reused in the building of the Main Church¹¹⁴. After the transition of the local population to Christianity, the people worked to rehabilitate and reuse the Khirbet edh-Dharih and Khirbet et-Tannur temples as churches; thus, they preserved the images of stone statues and of living organisms which had been there before¹¹⁵.

The composition of the churches in Petra shows that the local inhabitants used the stones of the temples that were destroyed as a result of the earthquake in 363 AD¹¹⁶. Facade stones bearing the image of a goddess (Aphrodite), found in street columns, were used in the construction of the church¹¹⁷.

Archaeological excavations have revealed the existence of three churches in Petra, opposite the Great Temple¹¹⁸, as well as a church attached to the Christian monastery in Jabal Hārūn¹¹⁹ (Fig. 2). The Petra papyri have made it clear that ecclesiastical figures – such as deacons, bishops and priests – played an important role in the city's community, intervening in matters such as disputes among the inhabitants, the distribution of water, and the leasing of agricultural lands¹²⁰. This shows the prominent status of the Church in the daily life of Petra Christians.

¹¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 192–193; Z. FIEMA, *Economics, Administration...*, p. 17–35.

¹¹¹ T.S. PARKER, *An Empire's New Holy Land. The Byzantine Period*, NEA 62, 1999, p. 138.

¹¹² L. HABAS, *Crosses in the Mosaic Floors of Churches in Provincia Arabia and Nearby Territories, Against the Background of the Edict of Theodosius II*, JMR 8, 2015, p. 33–60.

¹¹³ Z. FIEMA, *Late-Antique Petra...*, p. 220.

¹¹⁴ J. MCKENZIE, *Iconoclasm...*, p. 14.

¹¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹¹⁶ W.D. WARD, *The 363 Earthquake...*, p. 133. This was by the end of the 4th and the beginning of the 6th century AD.

¹¹⁷ Z. FIEMA, *Late-Antique Petra...*, p. 219.

¹¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 227.

¹¹⁹ *Ibidem*. Jabal al-Nabī Hārūn is 5 km to the south-east of Petra, about 1255 m above the sea level. It is the highest mountain in Petra and its name was associated with prophet Harun, brother of prophet Moses, G. PETERMAN, R. SCHICK, *The Monastery of Saint Aaron*, ADAJ 40, 1996, p. 473–480.

¹²⁰ Z. FIEMA, *Late-Antique Petra...*, p. 227.

All three Petra churches are located in one place. It remains unknown, however, why the Christians did not build their churches over the three pagan temples which symbolized paganism in the city – i.e. the Temple of Qasr el-Bint, the Temple of the Winged Lions, and the Great Temple. It seems that the increase in the Christian population in Petra prompted the faithful to convert the Urn Tomb and the Monastery into churches, in addition to building new churches that met the spiritual and religious needs of the people. As regards design, the architects and bishops followed the basilica system when building churches in Petra, with the admixture of local customs, with no long-established designs¹²¹. The construction of the three churches that have been discovered (so far) shows that the Christians aimed to locate their churches in the center of the city, not in marginal areas far from there.

The first church, measuring 15 x 25 m, was called the Main Church (Fig. 3). It was erected between the 4th and the 5th century AD¹²² and continued to be used until the end of the 6th century, as evidenced by the various papyri related to the church, found charred in a chamber next to the building¹²³. The papyri explain that this church was built in honor of the ‘blessed and all holy Lady, the most glorious Mother of God, and ever virgin Mary’¹²⁴. The Church of Petra is considered one of the most outstanding churches that have preserved their state and the mosaics contained inside. Some columns and stones from old Nabataean buildings were reused to build this church¹²⁵. Inside, there was a small basin used for baptizing children and even pagan adults who converted to Christianity¹²⁶.

The examination of the layers of the church floor shows that the area in which it was constructed had been used during the Nabataean period from the 1st century BC to the 4th century AD¹²⁷. Patricia Bikai opines that the area in which the Main Church of Petra was built had witnessed military settlement during the Nabataean and Roman periods¹²⁸. The analysis of the construction layers has also yielded evidence for Byzantine settlement in the area of the church from 363 AD until the middle of the 5th century AD¹²⁹. The use of this church continued at least until the end of the 6th or even the beginning of the 7th century AD¹³⁰. The ongoing

¹²¹ C. COÛASNON, *The Church...*, p. 167.

¹²² J. TAYLOR, *Petra and the Lost...*, p. 197.

¹²³ A. ARJAVA, M. BUCHHOLZ, T. GAGOS, M. KAIMIO, *The Petra Papyri IV*, Amman 2011, p. 23;

P. BIKAI, *The Ridge Church at Petra*, ADAJ 40, 1996, p. 481–486.

¹²⁴ Z. FIEMA et al., *The Petra Church...*, p. 42–43.

¹²⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 172–173; P. BIKAI, M. PERRY, *Petra North Ridge Tombs 1 and 2. Preliminary Report*, BASOR 324, 2001, p. 59–78.

¹²⁶ J. TAYLOR, *Petra and the Lost...*, p. 197.

¹²⁷ Z. FIEMA et al., *The Petra Church...*, p. 10–13.

¹²⁸ P. BIKAI, *The Churches of Byzantine...*, p. 271.

¹²⁹ Z. FIEMA et al., *The Petra Church...*, p. 97.

¹³⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 306.

Christian presence in Petra during the 6th century shows that this church was restored by the local Christian population.

The second Christian Church, known as the Blue Church (Fig. 4), is located between the Main and Ridge Churches. Archaeological surveys have shown that it was built on the ruins of a military barracks used during the Nabataean and Roman periods, but it was later reused by the Petra Christians¹³¹.

The construction of the church dates back to the same period in which the Main Church was built, i.e. the 4th–5th century AD¹³². Archaeological research at the site has revealed a number of blue marble blocks used in the manufacturing of the church pulpit, in addition to the chancel screens¹³³. In fact, the church was called the Blue Church precisely because of the use of four Egyptian blue marble columns stemming from the Nabataean period¹³⁴. The comparison of this church with the other churches in Petra shows that it is small in size – its area does not exceed 111 m², while the Main Church boasts 358 m² and the Ridge Church 158 m². This indicates either that the Blue Church served smaller Christian groups or that its use was restricted to the upper-class faithful. The church continued to be used until it was destroyed by the earthquake of 748 AD¹³⁵.

The original name of third church is not known; it is therefore referred to as the Ridge Church (Fig. 5)¹³⁶. Measuring 13.5 x 18 m, it was built according to the basilica system and features one semi-circular apse and a nave; the apse was decorated with colorful mosaic pieces¹³⁷. It dates back to the end of the 4th or the beginning of the 5th century AD¹³⁸, which makes it the oldest currently known church in Petra; it was built on the ruins of an unidentified temple-like structure, whose stones were used in the building of the church¹³⁹. The archeological findings from the site include a stone used in the construction of the church bearing an engraved gift-related inscription in Latin, evidently written by a Roman soldier; this text dates roughly to the end of the 3rd century AD¹⁴⁰. This indicates that the building may have been constructed at that time, especially given the presence of a Christian sect in Petra.

The church is located at the northern edge of the Main and Blue Churches¹⁴¹. This church, like all others in Petra, contains a semi-circular apse, a courtyard and

¹³¹ P. BIKAI, *The Churches of Byzantine...*, p. 271.

¹³² *Ibidem*.

¹³³ *Ibidem*, p. 274.

¹³⁴ P. BIKAI, M. PERRY, *Petra North Ridge...*, p. 59–78.

¹³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 66.

¹³⁶ P. BIKAI, *The Ridge Church...*, p. 481.

¹³⁷ Z. FIEMA, *Late-Antique Petra...*, p. 220.

¹³⁸ *Ibidem*.

¹³⁹ P. BIKAI, *The Ridge Church...*, p. 484.

¹⁴⁰ IDEM, *The Churches of Byzantine...*, p. 271.

¹⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

two northern and southern aisles, with five columns separating the northern and southern aisles from the church. It is also directed eastwards¹⁴². Some researchers report that the columns and capitals used in the construction of the Main and Ridge Churches were drawn from ancient Nabataean buildings and reused for the new Christian temples¹⁴³.

It seems that this church was built immediately after the earthquake of the year 363 AD; this is indicated by the presence of an apse and side chambers dating back to the period following the earthquake¹⁴⁴. Archaeological explorations have revealed that the area on which the church was built had been a Nabataean cemetery (Fig. 5)¹⁴⁵.

The three Petra churches were renovated during the 6th century AD, and together they constituted the Christian council complex of Petra. The floors of these churches were paved with expensive marble panels; it seems that such kind of flooring was found only in important churches in the area¹⁴⁶. This testifies to the existence of a rich class within the Christian community of Petra during the 5th and 6th centuries AD¹⁴⁷. The use of these churches continued until the end of the 6th century AD, when the Christian population of Petra decreased, especially after the decline in the interest in maintaining the city's infrastructure and the destruction of the channels that provided it with water.

Another church, measuring ca. 22.6 x 13.6 m, was found attached to a large monastery. Its area is ca. 62 m north-south x 48 m east-west in the Jabal al-Nabī Hārūn region. It dates back to the end of the 5th century AD. This church was built in accordance with the basilica system¹⁴⁸, on the ruins of a Nabataean temple from the 1st century AD¹⁴⁹.

The Nabataean pilgrims visiting the shrine of prophet Harun were used to praying and sacrificing for the Isis betyl in Wadi Abu Ullayqa in Petra¹⁵⁰. It seems that the goddess Isis was worshiped in the region of Jabal Hārūn, especially given the presence of her images in the valley of Abu Ullayqa on the road leading to the mountain. The name of Isis was associated with fertility and agriculture, and this may apply to the area near Jabal Hārūn, which was characterized by the presence of ample agricultural lands – still cultivated today by the local residents¹⁵¹. The

¹⁴² *Ibidem*.

¹⁴³ Z. FIEMA et al., *The Petra Church...*, p. 172–173.

¹⁴⁴ P. BIKAL, *The Churches of Byzantine...*, p. 271.

¹⁴⁵ M. PERRY, *Life and Death in Nabataea. The North Ridge Tombs and Nabataean Burial Practices*, NEA 65, 2002, p. 265.

¹⁴⁶ P. BIKAL, *The Churches of Byzantine...*, p. 273.

¹⁴⁷ R. SCHICK, *Christianity at Humayma, Jordan*, SBFLA 45, 1995, p. 340.

¹⁴⁸ Z. FIEMA, *Late-Antique Petra...*, p. 220; Z. FIEMA, R. HOLMGREN, *The Byzantine Monastic/Pilgrimage Center of St. Aaron near Petra*, [in:] *Petra. A City...*, p. 101.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibidem*. This temple was dedicated to the worship of the god el-'Uzza.

¹⁵⁰ A. LAHELMA, Z. FIEMA, *From Goddess...*, p. 208.

¹⁵¹ N. HEISKA, *The Economy and Livelihoods of the Early Christian Monasteries in Palestine* (unpublished M.A thesis, University of Helsinki, 2003), p. 40.

location of the Christian monastery near the shrine and in the vicinity of the agricultural areas suggests that the monastery was used by the Christians for residential purposes, especially following the destruction of the Nabataean temple in the earthquake of 363 AD.

The monastery and the church that were found in Jabal Hārūn were associated with the transition of the population from paganism to Christianity at an early period of the religion's history¹⁵². Christian pilgrims would come to Jabal Hārūn (in the region forming the southern part of Petra) starting in the 4th century AD, even before the earthquake of 363 AD – i.e. during the period when the Nabataeans worshiped there¹⁵³. Pagans and Christians continued to visit Jabal Hārūn until the 5th century AD, when the church was built and the pagan practices were discontinued. It seems that the Christians diligently removed all the monuments that reminded them of paganism in the course of the construction¹⁵⁴. Archaeological research in Mount Haroun has shown that some parts of the Christian monastery continued to be used until the end of the Late Byzantine period and the beginning of the Islamic period¹⁵⁵.

Some scholars mention that during the period between the 5th and 6th centuries AD, the bishops and monks of Petra wiped out some of the features and aspects of pagan gods, in a symbolic gesture proving that Christianity had vanquished the pagan gods in Petra¹⁵⁶. Thus, the images of the goddess Isis carved in Wadi Abu Ullayga were destroyed by hammers, with her heads being broken¹⁵⁷. Some of the monuments in the Qattar ad-Dayr area of Petra were also distorted and the betyl converted into a cross¹⁵⁸. The fact that the Christians decided to efface these pagan elements in Petra could indicate that the latter were still somehow powerful in the society; however, it may also simply mean that the Christians wanted to show the triumph of their faith over paganism in the city¹⁵⁹.

Consequently, we conclude that although Petra was the capital of the province of *Palaestina Salutaris*, and that the shrine of prophet Harun near Petra was a pilgrimage destination, the transition to Christianity in the city did not differ in essence from those undergone by the remaining pagan societies in the Byzantine Empire. It should be borne in mind that by the 6th century AD, pagans became a minority not only in Petra but also in the Empire as a whole.

¹⁵² Z. FIEMA, *Reinventing the Sacred...*, p. 32.

¹⁵³ *Ibidem*.

¹⁵⁴ Z. FIEMA, R. HOLMGREN, *The Byzantine...*, p. 102.

¹⁵⁵ Z. FIEMA, *Reinventing the Sacred...*, p. 32.

¹⁵⁶ R. WENNING, *The Betyls of Petra*, BASOR 324, 2001, p. 82; W.D. WARD, *The 363 Earthquake...*, p. 134.

¹⁵⁷ M.-J. ROCHE, *A Nabataean shrine to Isis in Wādī Abū 'Ullayqah, in the South-West of Petra*, PSAS 42, 2012, p. 55–71.

¹⁵⁸ R. WENNING, *The Betyls of Petra...*, p. 82.

¹⁵⁹ W.D. WARD, *The 363 Earthquake...*, p. 134.

Conclusion

The archaeological material discovered in Petra in particular – and in other Nabataean areas in general – has provided us with material indispensable for increasing our understanding of the transition of the Petra community from paganism to Christianity. This transformation included the accompanying changes in culture and in the Christians' view of paganism.

Crucially, the advent of Christianity in the 4th century AD did not lead to the eradication of paganism from the minds and culture of the people. Rather, paganism continued to exist in the ensuing centuries, even after the destruction of the pagan buildings in Petra due to the earthquake of 363 AD and the demise of the last Byzantine emperor who supported paganism – Julian. Such a situation is reflected in the Christian sources, which speak about the existence of certain pagan elements and sects that still practiced their rituals until a very late time in Petra. This is tantamount to the survival of a minority of pagans who managed to preserve their ancient religion. It seems that these were a small number of Bedouin Saracens, who were not under the control of the Byzantine Empire (especially during the 6th century AD).

The Petra papyri show that the Main Church remained open until the end of the 6th or even the beginning of the 7th century AD. This indicates the existence of a Christian society that fully exercised its functions and was integrated into the Byzantine Empire.

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Abstract. The aim of this paper is to shed some light on the period of Petra's passage from paganism to Christianity, which saw the deterioration of pagan beliefs and the struggle for survival between paganism and Christianity. The recognition of Christianity as the official religion of the Byzantine Empire in 313 AD did not mean that paganism had disappeared from Petra. In fact, most of the Nabataean temples in the city remained open until the second half of the 4th century AD, when the city was hit by the earthquake of 363. It was this event that had the greatest impact on the abandoning of the city's temples, such as the Temple of the Winged Lions, the Temple of Qasr el-Bent and the Great Temple. The historical and archaeological evidence confirms the construction of a number of churches in Petra, which received considerable attention from the Christian clergy and the administration of the city during the 5th and 6th centuries AD.

Keywords: Church, Christianity, paganism, Petra, Byzantine, religion, Southern Jordan.

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ILLUSTRATIONS



Fig. 1. The Urn Tomb, converted into a church by the Bishop Jason (J. TAYLOR, *Petra and the Lost Kingdom of the Nabataeans*, Cambridge 2012, p. 205)



Fig. 2. Architectural complex on Jabal al-Nabī Hārūn (Photo by the author)



Fig. 3. The Main Petra Church (Z. FIEMA, *From the Annexation to Aaron. Petra in Roman and Byzantine Times*, [in:] *Petra. A City Forgotten and Rediscovered*, ed. J. FRÖSEN, Z. FIEMA, Helsinki 2002, p. 70)



Fig. 4. View of the Blue Chapel with its four Egyptian blue granite columns with limestone capitals (P. ΒΙΚΑΙ, *The Churches of Byzantine Petra*, “Near Eastern Archaeology” 65, 2002, p. 275)

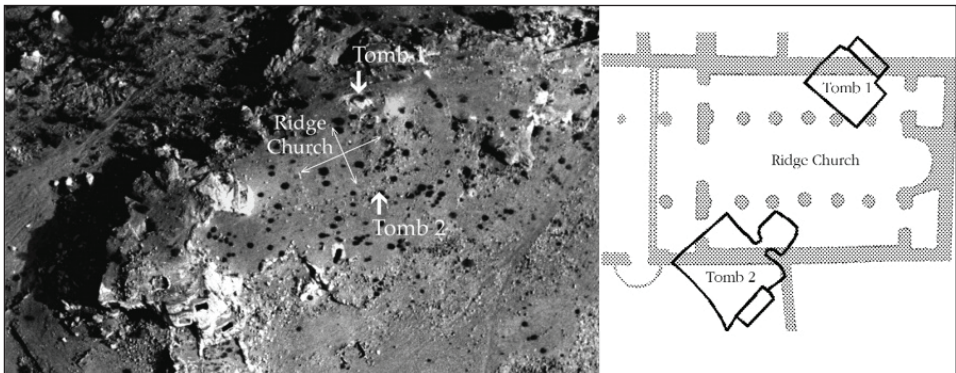


Fig. 5. Aerial view of the North Ridge Church, and Location of Nabataean Tombs 1 and 2 on the North Ridge (M. PERRY, *Life and Death in Nabataea. The North Ridge Tombs and Nabataean Burial Practices*, “Near Eastern Archaeology” 65, 2002, p. 265–266)



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BERICHUS AND THE EVIDENCE FOR ASPAR'S POLITICAL POWER AND AIMS IN THE LAST YEARS OF THEODOSIUS II'S REIGN

The objective of this article is to explore the evidence for the political position of Aspar in the last years of the reign of Theodosius II. There is almost no information concerning the general's activity in the sources; only one situation mentioned by Priscus provides some evidence, albeit indirect. The event in question is the diplomatic scandal concerning a certain Berichus, a Hunnic nobleman and diplomat, who fell into disagreement with the envoy Maximinus over the latter's alleged statements concerning Aspar's incompetence and lack of influence at the court. The situation is certainly unclear and calls for further analysis.

It is important to note that scholars are not in agreement when it comes to the evaluation of Aspar's political power and goals in the last years of the reign of Theodosius II. Most researchers concentrate on the political struggle that emerged immediately after the emperor's death and involved Aspar, Theodosius's sister Pulcheria, as well as the eunuch Chrysaphius – Theodosius's all-powerful advisor. It used to be assumed routinely in the literature that Aspar retained his political power despite his military defeats at the hands of the Huns, and used it to secure the throne for his close subordinate, Marcian¹.

This viewpoint was independently challenged by Ronald Bleeker and Kenneth Holum, both of whom claimed that Aspar's influence diminished severely in those years, so that he was only able to regain it through his alliance with Pulcheria². This

¹ The accounts vary between those that underscore Aspar's power and influence as *Kaisermacher* – G. VERNADSKY, *Flavius Ardabur Aspar*, SF 6, 1941, p. 53; A.H.M. JONES, *The Later Roman Empire 284–602. A Social, Economic and Administrative Survey*, Oxford 1964, p. 218; B. BACHRACH, *A History of the Alans in the West. From Their First Appearance in the Sources of Classical Antiquity through the Early Middle Ages*, Minneapolis 1973, p. 44; A. DEMANDT, *Geschichte der Spätantike*, ²München 2008, p. 152 [= AGBHB], and those that put more emphasis on Pulcheria's role – J.B. BURY, *History of the Later Roman Empire from the Death of Theodosius I to the Death of Justinian, AD 395 to AD 565*, London 1923, p. 235–236; E. STEIN, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, Paris 1959, p. 311.

² R.A. BLEEKER, *Aspar and Attila: The Role of Flavius Ardaburius Aspar in the Hun Wars of the 440s*, AWO 3, 1980, p. 23–29; K.G. HOLUM, *Theodosian Empresses. Women and Imperial Dominion in Late*

theory was criticized by Richard Burgess, who considers it much more likely that Pulcheria was a mere pawn in Aspar's hands, and that the commander was one of the most important people at the court³. Other scholars opt for a more balanced approach, recognizing both Aspar and Pulcheria as powerful political figures, who created a political alliance with the Isaurian general Flavius Zeno⁴.

There are multiple questions that remain unanswered. What was the situation on the Byzantine political scene in the last three years of Theodosius's reign, and how did the war of 447 affect it? Did Aspar ally himself with Flavius Zeno, and if so, why did the two potential rivals decide to work together? Did Aspar oppose Chrysaphius all along, or did he do so only when he saw the opportunity to secure the throne for his protégé? Only a handful of voices in the literature have attempted to deal with the problem of Aspar's actual aims. Gerhard Wirth acknowledges Aspar as one of the most powerful people at the court, considering him a proponent of pro-Hunnic policy; interestingly enough, the scholar bases his argument on Berichus's claims⁵. Contrary to that, Leighton Scott considers it unlikely that Aspar supported the Huns⁶; however, he considers the whole scandal concerning Maximinus and Berichus an expression of the former's anti-barbarian prejudice⁷.

Antiquity, Berkeley–London 1981, p. 206–209. Even though Holum's work seems to have much greater prominence in the scholarly literature, Bleeker's interpretation is markedly more detailed, especially considering the topic of this article; therefore, it deserves more attention. Based on the vague description by Theophanes (*Theophanis Chronographia*, AM 5942, rec. C. DE BOOR, Lipsiae 1883–1885 [cetera: THEOPHANES]), Bleeker assumes that both Aspar and Areobindus held the titles of *magistri militum in praesentis*; however, they would have been demoted due to their unsuccessful attempts at stopping the Huns in the 440s (R.A. BLEEKER, *Aspar...*, p. 25–26). The scholar presents the events in the context of the political struggle between different ethnic groups in the army, claiming that the failure of Germanic commanders allowed the Romans and the Isaurians to gain the upper hand for a short period of time, until Aspar recovered his position with Pulcheria's help (R.A. BLEEKER, *Aspar...*, p. 27–28). This is very unlikely, however (see note 19), as it does not take into consideration some of the relevant events, such as the conflict between the Isaurian Flavius Zeno and Chrysaphius. Nonetheless, it should be noted that this is not the only interpretation that follows such train of thought. Earlier, E.A. THOMPSON (*The Isaurians under Theodosius II*, Her 48, 1946, p. 29–30) pointed out that Aspar had a powerful political contender in Flavius Zeno, hinting at the Alan commander's losing some of his influence due to Zeno's rise to power. However, when analysing the relevant power structure, the researcher calls Zeno's lack of initiative to face Aspar "a mystery", offering no explanation.

³ R.W. BURGESS, *The Accession of Marcian in the Light of Chalcedonian Apologetic and Monophysite Polemic*, BZ 86/87, 1994, p. 27–68.

⁴ C. ZUCKERMANN, *L'Empire d'Orient et les Huns. Notes sur Priscus*, TM 12, 1994, p. 176; *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius Scholasticus*, ed. et. trans. M. WHITBY, Liverpool 2000 [= TTH, 33], p. 60, an. 12; A.D. LEE, *Theodosius and His Generals*, [in:] *Theodosius II. Rethinking the Roman Empire in Late Antiquity*, ed. C. KELLY, Cambridge–New York 2013 [= CCS], p. 95–96. The researcher also claims that following Aspar's defeats in 447, the general could have lost his command over the imperial armies, while Zeno's forces in the East remained unscathed; this would have rendered him the most powerful general at the time. Cf. C. ZUCKERMANN, *L'Empire...*, p. 172.

⁵ G. WIRTH, *Attila. Das Hunnenreich und Europa*, Stuttgart 1999, p. 87–88.

⁶ L. SCOTT, *Aspar and the Burden of Barbarian Heritage*, ByzS 3, 1976, p. 63.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 59.

Roger Blockley provides a different explanation, claiming that Berichus may have simply been concerned with the influence of his Gothic compatriots in the Empire⁸. Nevertheless, he considers Aspar to be an opponent of Theodosius II's Hunnic policy and even attributes his falling out of favour to those disagreements⁹.

Thus, in what follows, we shall analyse all of the available information in detail. Regrettably, not much is known about Berichus himself. According to Priscus, he was one of Attila's *logades* (Gr. λογάδες). Some scholars have attributed this term found in Priscus's account to a certain political rank within the Hunnic society¹⁰. However, it is more likely that the term simply meant 'distinguished', and, as explained by Otto Maenchen-Helfen, it did not entail any specific function¹¹.

Nevertheless, in the case of Berichus, we have some additional information about his political position within the Hunnic society. Priscus claims that he was well-born; thus, he was likely descended from an established aristocratic line, which would have certainly helped his political standing. Additionally, he was a landowner – as related by Priscus, he ruled numerous villages in Scythia. Furthermore, he probably commanded military contingents from said settlements and was responsible for taxation in them, which would point to his having a considerable political status due to wealth, prestige, as well as military and administrative functions.

We also know that he took part in the banquet organized by Attila and sat in front of the Roman ambassador at the table. Considering that, he must have been a significant figure, yet not one of Attila's closest men, as Priscus states, that the embassy was purposefully sat at the king's left-hand side, which was to indicate its lesser status¹². It follows that Berichus's place at the table was not particularly prestigious. However, we do not know whether that was due to his

⁸ R.C. BLOCKLEY, *East Roman Foreign Policy. Formation and Conduct from Diocletian to Anastasius*, Leeds 1992, p. 66. A similar explanation was offered by L. TYSZKIEWICZ (*Hunowie w Europie. Ich wpływ na Cesarstwo Wschodnie i Zachodnie oraz na ludy barbarzyńskie*, Wrocław 2004 [= AUW, 2695], p. 135), with the difference that Berichus's anger would have been caused by personal grudge rather than political concern.

⁹ R.C. BLOCKLEY, *East...*, p. 67.

¹⁰ According to some scholars, they were responsible for collecting taxes and leading the tribal contingents in battle. Distinct from the original aristocracy, they would have been closely connected to – or even personally picked by – the king himself. See E.A. THOMPSON, *A History of Attila and the Huns*, Oxford 1948, p. 163–166; F. ALTHEIM, *Geschichte der Hunnen*, vol. IV, Berlin 1975, p. 281; T. STICKLER, *Die Hunnen*, München 2007, p. 85–87; M. ROUCHE, *Attila. La violence nomade*, Paris 2009, p. 259; H.J. KIM, *The Huns, Romans and the Birth of Europe*, Cambridge 2013, p. 57–58.

¹¹ O. MAENCHEN-HELFFEN (*The World of Huns. Studies in Their History and Culture*, ed. M. KNIGHT, Berkeley–London 1973, p. 194–195) argues that the meaning of the word could be close to the term *optimates*, used by Ammianus Marcellinus in a similar context when describing the nobility of barbarian tribes.

¹² PRISCUS, *Fragmenta*, fr. 13, [in:] *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire. Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus*, vol. II, ed. et trans. R.C. BLOCKLEY, Liverpool 1983 (cetera: PRISCUS).

relatively low political position, or rather due to the fact that he probably had diplomatic experience with the Romans: the latter circumstance could have been the reason for him to keep company with Maximinus and his compatriots.

This claim could be supported by the fact that Berichus was indeed sent on an envoy's duty to Constantinople, accompanying Maximinus's embassy on the way back home. We have reasons to think that the Huns, unlike the Romans¹³, preferred to specialize their diplomats. At least that was the case in the earlier period, when we hear of Eslas, the diplomat of king Ruga, usually carrying out diplomatic talks with Romans¹⁴. However, the preceding Hun embassy to Constantinople was conducted by Orestes and Edeco, which would indicate that Attila tended to shuffle his emissaries more, or perhaps that Berichus had fallen out of favour. Be that as it may, it is quite doubtful that he would have been chosen for an envoy without previous experience. We can assume, therefore, that he was at least moderately knowledgeable in internal Roman matters and perhaps even knew some Greek (which would have been an excellent reason for him to be seated at the envoys' table)¹⁵.

When Berichus accompanied the Romans, everything was going as planned until the group crossed the border; Priscus even mentions that they considered the Hun to be gentle and friendly. Afterwards, however, something happened, and the Romans were quite at a loss to understand what had gone wrong. For some reason, Berichus changed his attitude towards them completely. Firstly, he took back the horse that he had given as a gift to Maximinus back in the land of the Huns by order of Attila¹⁶. Furthermore, he refused to ride together with the Romans, nor was he willing to dine with them. This awkward situation continued as the envoys travelled from Philipopolis to Adrianople, where they decided to attempt a reconciliation with the Hun. They approached him, clearly not understanding the reason for his anger and silence, claiming that they had done him no wrong; they asked him to accompany them for dinner. However, the barbarian remained unswayed. After they reached Constantinople, Priscus explains, the company hoped that Berichus would cool down his temper, and that his anger would finally wear off. That did not happen. However, at long last, he explained the reason for his change of attitude, in a furious outbreak that Priscus attributes to his savage nature. Apparently, he was angered because of Maximinus's actions back in Scythia, about which he had learned shortly before by overhearing a conversation between caravan hands accompanying the embassy. He heard that Maximinus had told Attila that the

¹³ In the case of the Romans, it was usually the closest available military commander – B. CROKE, *Anatolius and Nomus: Envoys to Attila*, Bsl 42, 1981, p. 165–166.

¹⁴ PRISCUS, fr. 2.

¹⁵ E.P. GLUŠANIN (*Военная знать ранней Византии*, Варнаул 1991, p. 108) actually claims that Berichus was close to Chrysaphius; unfortunately, however, he does not explain his reasoning or provide any sources supporting his assertion.

¹⁶ PRISCUS (fr. 14) explains that Attila wanted his *logades* to show friendship to the Roman guests by giving them gifts.

generals Areobindus and Aspar had no importance at the Constantinopolitan court and that he had undermined their achievements by calling them unreliable barbarians¹⁷.

This, however, does not explain much; rather, it leads to many further questions. Why did Berichus get so gravely insulted by Maximinus's actions? Let us recall that, ordered by Attila himself to accompany the Romans, he nevertheless rode alone, not saying a word to them during the whole way. He also saw fit to take away the gift given earlier to Maximinus – a thoroughly undiplomatic deed. Thus, it would be no understatement to refer to the incident in question as a serious diplomatic scandal. Furthermore, why did Berichus, a Hun and companion of Attila, care in the slightest for Aspar and Areobindus, two Roman generals of barbarian origin, and for their achievements being recognized?¹⁸

One of the reasons could have been that Berichus simply thought that Maximinus's statements were false. To some extent, this may have been the case: while the political position of Aspar and Areobindus doubtless suffered due to their failure to defend Thrace against the Huns, it would have been quite unlikely for the generals to hold no importance at all at the court of Theodosius II, and to have no say in political matters. This applies especially to Aspar, who was connected by marriage with Plintha and Theoderic Strabo, thus enjoying the support of the Gothic *foederati* who inhabited Thrace¹⁹. The several thousand barbarian warriors

¹⁷ PRISCUS, fr. 14.

¹⁸ R.C. BLOCKLEY's (*East...*, p. 66) argument seemingly answers this question very well; however, it builds upon the notion that barbarians of similar ethnic origins shared a common identity – a widespread assumption in older literature, especially regarding Aspar and his loyalties. His relationship with Geiseric was based on the fact that Aspar was of Alan descent (G. VERNADSKY, *Flavius...*, p. 58–60; E. GAUTIER, *Genséric. Roi de Carthage*, Paris 1951, p. 253–254, 264; A. BACHRACH, *A History...*, p. 45. See also K. VÖSSING, *Das Königreich der Vandalen. Geiserichs Herrschaft und das Imperium Romanum*, Darmstadt 2014, p. 45, who supports the idea, albeit in a more balanced manner – he claims that Aspar had an advantage in coming to an agreement with the king because of his background) and the conflict with Leo I, which supposedly ran along ethnical lines in the army – between the pro-Aspar Germans and the Isaurians supporting the emperor. J.B. BURY, *History...*, p. 316–318; E. STEIN, *Histoire...*, p. 358–361; A. DEMANDT, *Geschichte...*, p. 155–156; A.D. LEE, *The Eastern Empire: Theodosius to Anastasius*, [in:] CAH, vol. XIV, p. 46–47. However, it has been successfully proved by B. CROKE (*Dynasty and Ethnicity. Emperor Leo I and the Eclipse of Aspar*, *Chi* 35, 2005, p. 147–203) that those assumptions were false; his argument can be extended to disprove the existence of a common barbarian identity between Roman generals of barbarian origin and the barbarian people. See also: C. ZUCKERMANN, *L'Empire...*, p. 176; M. WILCZYŃSKI, *Gejzeryk i "czwarta wojna punicka"*, *Oświęcim* 2016, p. 104–105. Interestingly, one of the recent articles on Aspar by M. McEVoy (*Becoming Roman? The Not-So-Curious Case of Aspar and the Ardaburii*, *JLA* 9, 2016, p. 504) – while in agreement with the aforementioned notion – claims that the general and his family constituted an exception, and they made conscious efforts to retain their non-Roman character.

¹⁹ A.H.M. JONES, *The Later...*, p. 221; R. BLOCKLEY, *East...*, p. 67; A. DEMANDT, *Geschichte...*, p. 155. It is possible, however, that this alliance was only augmented by marriage later in the 460s, in response to Leo's support for Zeno-Tarasikodissa and the imminent political conflict. Cf. P. HEATHER, *Goths and Romans 332–489*, Oxford 1991 [= OHM], p. 254–255.

were certainly a factor to be reckoned with, the more so because some of them were introduced into Aspar's own personal retinue of *bucellari*; their loyalty to him was even proverbial²⁰. In addition, he owned numerous estates and considerable wealth²¹, as well as possibly had connections in the administration, senate, and at the court. Finally, it should be noted that he in fact managed to elevate his close subordinate Marcian – a lower-rank officer with no political capital – to the throne in 450.

Another reason why Maximinus may have offended Berichus is that he made the opponents of the Huns look incompetent and weak. This could have been a personal matter, as Berichus had probably taken part in the fighting. In other words, we should not overlook such things as his pride, which may have been a sufficient reason for his outburst. This, however, would suggest that the Hunnic victories of 447 were not as one-sided as is generally assumed²² – for which there are also certain other indications. The only battle of 447 described by the sources is the one on the Utus river. While the final outcome was catastrophic for the Romans, who were defeated, this was due to the fact that the retinue of army leader Arnegisclus

²⁰ As illustrated by the example of Ostrys (*Ioannis Malalae Chronographia*, XIV, 40, rec. I. THURN, Beriolini–Novi Eboraci 2000 [=CFHB.SBe, 35]). For a more in-depth look at Aspar's retinue, see A. LANIADO, *Aspar and His Phoideratoi: John Malalas on a Special Relationship*, [in:] *Governare e riformare l'impero al momento della sua divisione. Oriente, Occidente, Illirico*, ed. U. ROBERTO, L. MCELLA, Rome 2016 [= ColEFR, 507], p. 325–344. E.P. GLUŠANIN (*Военная...*, p. 111) doubts whether Aspar had his own retinue seem unsubstantiated. See also A. URBANIEC, *Wpływ patrycjusza Aspara na cesarską elekcję Leona*, USS 11, 2011, p. 185–189.

²¹ M. McEVOY, *Becoming...*, p. 494–495.

²² J.B. BURY, *History...*, p. 275; A.H.M. JONES, *The Later...*, p. 193; A. DEMANDT, *Geschichte...*, p. 140; H.J. KIM, *The Huns...*, p. 71. It is, however, more likely that the sense of dread and defencelessness detectable in the sources comes primarily from the fact that Constantinople's fortifications had been damaged in an earthquake, and had to be hastily repaired (*The Chronicle of Marcellinus*, a. 447, ed. et trans. B. CROKE, Sydney 1995 [= BAus, 7], cetera: MARCELLINUS). The Huns, in fact, reached the outskirts of the capital, approaching as far as to Thermopolis (*Attila usque ad Thermopolim infestus advenit* – MARCELLINUS, a. 447; not Thermopylae, as is sometimes wrongly assumed. Concerning this misconception see J. KARAYANNOPULOS, *Byzantinische Miscellen*, [in:] *Studia in honorem Veselini Beševliev*, ed. V. GEORGIEV, Sofia 1978, p. 490; J. PROSTKO-PROSTYŃSKI, *Attila and Novae*, [in:] *Novae. Legionary Fortress and Late Antique Town*, vol. I, *A Companion to the Study of Novae*, ed. T. DERDA, P. DYCZEK, J. KOLENDO, Warsaw 2008, p. 137, an. 24.). The outcome of the ensuing peace settlements was disastrous. G. WIRTH (*Attila...*, p. 94) provides an interesting counterpoint, considering the outcome of Attila's 447 campaign a Hunnic defeat. While there is certainly some truth to his argument concerning the long-term effects of this endeavour, the researcher goes somewhat too far in his reasoning; after all, for the Romans, the aftermath was decidedly worse. With Naissus abandoned, Serdica destroyed, and with Constantia, Ratiaria, Acadiopolis and other cities sharing a similar fate (THEOPHANES, AM 5942), the Roman losses cannot be overstated. The author of the Gallic Chronicle of 452 mentions seventy destroyed cities and even goes as far as to blame the West for its indifference and lack of help (*Chronica Gallica a.CCCCLII*, 132, [in:] *Chronica Gallica*, ed. T. MOMMSEN, Berolini 1892 [= MGH.AA]). A much more balanced overview is provided by O. MAENCHEN-HELFEN (*The World...*, p. 125).

got caught in an encirclement; when the general was struck down, the whole army scattered²³. However, Marcellinus Comes speaks of a bloody battle, which suggests high casualties on both sides. Some scholars note that the campaign of 447 was likely a costly endeavour for Attila and his army, and the Roman forces were a formidable opponent²⁴.

The question arises whether Aspar and Areobindus's forces accompanied the army of Arnegisclus, and whether the defeat in the battle of the Utus may have been what Maximinus had in mind when talking to Attila. This is possible, but no source mentions other leaders than Arnegisclus himself²⁵. Conceivably, the Romans planned to consolidate their units, but Arnegisclus's detachment was caught by the main Hunnic forces on the way from Marcianopolis to the rallying point with the forces from the western parts of the Balkans. Even assuming that Aspar and Areobindus's detachments were still in fighting condition after Utus (regardless if they had taken part in the battle or not), it would have been highly risky to engage the superior Hun forces²⁶. Aspar was certainly no risk-taker, which is apparent from his campaigns against the Vandals in Africa (when he decided to stall by defending Carthage after one unlucky battle²⁷) or the campaign against Dengizich (when he only engaged the enemy after gathering every available army in the area²⁸). Therefore, this theory is consistent with the commander's behaviour in other similar situations, and it is likely that Aspar intended to wait for reinforcements before engaging in battle with the Huns.

²³ MARCELLINUS, a. 447; IORDANES, *Romana*, 331, [in:] *Jordanis Romana et Getica*, rec. T. MOMMSEN, Berolini 1882 [= *MGH.AA*]; *Chronicon Paschale*, a. 447, vol. I–II, ed. L. DINDORFIUS, Bonnæ 1832 [= *CSHB*, 14–15].

²⁴ E.A. THOMPSON, *A History...*, p. 92–93; G. WIRTH, *Attila...*, p. 73, 94.

²⁵ The only source that names other commanders is THEOPHANES (AM 5942); however, his account is chronologically chaotic and he mentions the defeats in general, not the battle of the Utus specifically. Nevertheless, some scholars are of the opinion that Attila confronted the bulk of Roman forces there, including Aspar and Areobindus's detachments. See: Е.П. ГЛУШАНИН, *Военная...*, p. 109; K. FELD, *Barbarische Bürger. Die Isaurier und das Römische Reich*, Berlin 2005, p. 214. An interesting alternative interpretation is put forth by C. KELLY (*Neither Conquest nor Settlement: Attila's Empire and Its Impact*, [in:] *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Attila*, ed. M. MAAS, Cambridge 2015 [= *CCAW*], p. 200–201), who claims that the Roman forces were divided in order to block all approaches to Constantinople, stopping the Huns from reaching the city before the walls got rebuilt. However, the scholar assumes that the battle of the Utus took place when Attila's forces were already marching back home, which is highly dubious.

²⁶ I. BÓNA (*Das Hunnenreich*, Stuttgart 1991, p. 85) claims that the Roman army was still able to fight after Utus and it took up the responsibility of defending the capital. The scholar fails to take Zeno's troops into account, however.

²⁷ PROCOPIUS, *History of the Wars*, III, 3, 34–35, vol. II, *Books 3–4. (Vandalic War)*, trans. H.B. DEWING, Cambridge Massachusetts 1916 [= *LCL*, 81].

²⁸ PRISCUS, fr. 49; T.S. BURNS, *A History of the Ostrogoths*, Bloomington 1984, p. 54. The sources mention the combined forces of Anagastes, Aspar and Ostrys, and possibly those of Basiliscus and Anthemius as well.

The next battle in the campaign of 447 took place on the Chersonesus. It is only referred to at the beginning of the fragment by Priscus; its outcome is left unmentioned, however, and we never learn who led the imperial army²⁹. The result was presumably undecided, or the Huns may have suffered a close defeat; this would explain why we hear nothing of their further attempts at attacking Constantinople, with Attila actually agreeing to a cease fire. On the other hand, Priscus claims that the Romans only acceded to the treaty because their leaders were overwhelmed by fear³⁰. Could this mean that those leaders were Aspar and Areobindus, or is Priscus criticizing Theodosius II and Chrysaphius for making no attempts at confronting the Hunnic menace?³¹

Notwithstanding, we know for certain who was not afraid, and who most certainly wanted to continue the campaign and pursue the Huns: that was Flavius Zeno, who had rallied a detachment of hardy Isaurian mountaineers to defend Constantinople. We can assume that those forces were involved in the battle of Chersonesus; if we consider that the Romans could have concentrated the forces of Aspar, Areobindus, Anatolius, and Zeno, it is likely that this formidable army would have managed to hold its ground³². If the Hunnic forces were pushed back, it is no wonder that Zeno saw an opportunity to chase and destroy the enemy.

Still, all evidence suggests that the saviour of Constantinople was not allowed to pursue his ambition: the high command of the imperial forces was given to someone else. Although the sources do not state exactly who it was, we have good reasons to assume that the position was given to Anatolius. It was a common practice for the Romans to send commanding generals of nearby forces to conduct diplomatic talks with the barbarians, so that Anatolius's involvement in signing the treaty with the Huns may be a clue. The conditions of the ensuing treaty were very harsh; yet, one can understand the situation of Theodosius II and Chrysaphius, who decided that seeking an agreement would be the best course of action. After all, chasing the Hunnic army through the Balkans could have taken a lot of time³³ and would have hardly prevented them from laying waste to Roman provinces

²⁹ PRISCUS, fr. 9, 3 – The description of the battle was presumably placed in between the second and third fragments of the *Excerpta de Legationibus Gentium ad Romanos*; since it did not contain information about the diplomatic exchange, it was omitted by the compiler.

³⁰ PRISCUS, fr. 9, 3.

³¹ R.C. BLOCKLEY (*The Fragmentary...*, p. 237) translates τοὺς ἄρχοντας as 'commanders'; however, ὁ ἄρχων could also mean 'ruler', and Priscus may have had in mind the authorities in charge of running the empire, not military commanders. This argument could be supported by the fact that the historian is generally condescending of the regime of Theodosius and Chrysaphius. Cf. PRISCUS, fr. 3.

³² In this case, we would have to assume that the battle of Chersonesus took place after the Hun forces had approached Constantinople.

³³ To name a parallel example, we know that dealing with Dengizich, whose army got decisively defeated in the battle of 467 (PRISCUS, fr. 49; T.S. BURNS, *A History...*, p. 54), which was certainly not the case with Attila in 447, took Romans two years till 469. MARCELLINUS, a. 469.

until a decisive battle was fought. The outcome of the latter, considering the previous record, was by no means certain for the Romans. *Realpolitik* aside, this decision was highly unpopular, especially when it turned out that the Huns were by no means willing to leave the occupied areas³⁴. Furthermore, to pay off the tribute required by the treaty, the inhabitants of the Balkans – who had just experienced Hunnic hordes ravaging their lands – had to endure new taxes levied by the central government. We hear from Priscus about the aftermath of the war³⁵; while his description may be somewhat exaggerated, the Roman taxpayers were undoubtedly put under heavy strain³⁶.

Similarly, Zeno was clearly disappointed by such a course of events, so that he proceeded to do whatever was in his power to sabotage the Hunnic politics of Chrysaphius³⁷. Zeno's actions put him at odds with the emperor; in consequence, the former was forced to leave Constantinople and go into hiding. Interestingly enough, the person who was sent to find him was Maximinus. It would seem, therefore, that Maximinus was a supporter of Chrysaphius and Theodosius II's policies. Similarly, he was privy to Chrysaphius's plot, organized together with certain Hunnic nobles to kill Attila³⁸. Therefore, Priscus's superior was likely

³⁴ It has been generally assumed in the literature that Attila's claims to the conquered territories were justified by the first peace with Anatolius of 447, A.H.M. JONES, *The Later...*, p. 194; O. MAENCHEN-HELFFEN, *The World...*, 124; R. HOHLFELDER, *Marcian's Gamble. A Reassessment of Eastern Imperial Policy toward Attila AD 450–453*, AJAH 9, 1984, p. 55; T. STICKLER, *Aëtius. Gestaltungsspielräume eines Heermeisters im ausgehenden Weströmischen Reich*, München 2002, p. 123. As a matter of fact, however, it is more likely that Attila simply occupied those lands to pressure the Eastern Roman government into giving in to his other demands, B. CROKE, *Anatolius...*, p. 169; J. PROSTKO-PROSTYŃSKI, *Attila...*, p. 139.

³⁵ PRISCUS, fr. 9, 3.

³⁶ C.D. GORDON, *The Age of Attila. Fifth-Century Byzantium and the Barbarians*, Michigan 1961, p. 66–67; O. MAENCHEN-HELFFEN, *The World...*, p. 114; N. Lensky, *Captivity among the Barbarians and Its Impact on the Fate of the Roman Empire*, [in:] *The Cambridge...*, p. 235–238. It should be noted that some researchers downplay the severity of the taxes: E.A. Thompson, *The Foreign Policies of Theodosius II and Marcian*, Her 76, 1950, p. 73; A.H.M. JONES, *The Later...*, p. 206–207. We should not forget, however, that the additional taxes were imposed on citizens who had just experienced the Hunnic hordes, an earthquake, and a plague. In view of this, Priscus's viewpoint seems more justified. An interesting point is also put forth by A.D. LEE (*The Eastern...*, p. 45, an. 77): he argues that the tributes to the Huns must have been a heavy burden on the Empire indeed, since when Marcian decided to stop paying himself off, he was able to collect impressive amounts of wealth in his treasury in just 7 years of his reign.

³⁷ One of Attila's demands was that the Emperor provide a high-born woman as a bride for a certain Constantiolus (who had earlier agreed to give the dowry to the king). Theodosius consented to that and picked a suitable candidate; however, when Zeno heard of this, he kidnapped the woman and married her off to one of his subordinates. Predictably, this resulted in a scandal – PRISCUS, fr. 14; K. FELD, *Barbarische...*, p. 218–219; R. KOSIŃSKI, *The Emperor Zeno. Religion and Politics*, trans. M. FIJAK, Cracow 2010 [= BSC, 6], p. 61.

³⁸ PRISCUS (fr. 11) states that Maximinus did not know about Chrysaphius's plot. Yet this is improbable; in all likelihood, the historian is simply protecting his superior. Aside from the fact that Maxi-

to have been part of the political equation – perhaps even not as a pawn, but as an active figure indeed.

It is most likely that the remarks that Berichus accused Maximinus of making took place during a conversation with Attila, when the men were deciding who should lead the next foreign embassy. Attila expected the Romans to send the highest-ranking officials, and Priscus notes that he meant Anatolius, Nomus, or Senator³⁹. All the same, it has been pointed out that Attila probably mentioned two other names as well – to wit, Aspar and Areobindus⁴⁰. They were both of pro-consular rank and had already led an embassy to the Huns, so it is likely that Attila would have been satisfied with any of these five. But – if Berichus is to be believed – at that moment Maximinus protested by claiming that Attila's request was pointless in regard to Aspar and Areobindus, because, according to the envoy, they held no political power at the court and were supposedly unreliable. As was mentioned before, his act at Attila's court was politically motivated; most likely, the people he had named were the only ones he considered trustworthy. Nomus was a staunch supporter of Chrysaphius and – by extension – his Hunnic policy of reconciliation. Flavius Senator probably belonged to the same camp. Anatolius, despite being a military commander, also supported this policy, which explains why he was eventually chosen as the envoy accompanying Nomus in the embassy of 449.

What Chrysaphius needed in order to ensure the success of his attempts was both the goodwill of Attila and a consistent Roman policy in that regard. That, however, proved difficult in view of the political scandal orchestrated by Zeno. If Aspar and Areobindus were in the same political camp, they could sabotage Chrysaphius's policies even further. There had been an example in the Roman-Hunnic relations when two different officials wanted to conduct talks with the Huns; one of them, Plintha, convinced a Hunnic noble to ask king Ruga to conduct the talks exclusively with him and ignore the other envoy⁴¹. This situation shows that there was a reasonable fear that Aspar or Areobindus might sabotage the embassies of Anatolius and Nomus.

This, however, means that Maximinus's claims were actually false, meant to mislead Attila into dealing solely with Chrysaphius's faction. Accordingly, Berichus's outburst upon his learning what Maximinus said to Attila appears understandable: he knew enough about Roman politics to realize that Maximinus was lying. He

minus should have known about the conspiracy in view of being the leader of the embassy, there is a passage in PRISCUS (fr. 11) in which he clearly tried to evaluate whether Onegisius could be introduced to it (the Hun decided to remain loyal to his king, however).

³⁹ PRISCUS, fr. 13.

⁴⁰ B. CROKE (*Anatolius...*, p. 166) claims that Attila mentioned Aspar and Areobindus alongside Anatolius, Nomus and Senator because they had already conducted talks with the king. As a result, they would have been 'proven' in his eyes.

⁴¹ PRISCUS, fr. 2.

had probably fought in the war himself, and knew that Aspar and Areobindus were no less formidable than the other commanders. Nonetheless, it is doubtful that he knew the real reasons behind the envoy's actions; rather, he probably understood Maximinus's words as yet another attempt on the part of the Romans to swagger and twist the truth, and to depict the Hunnic achievements as less worthy. This hurt his personal pride⁴².

Considering the above analysis, we can present a new reconstruction of the events of 447–449. At the beginning of the Hun invasion of 447, the Roman armies failed to join forces. One of their detachments, led by Arnegisclus and travelling to meet the remainder of the army, got caught by the Hunnic forces on the river Utus and was defeated, with the Huns taking a heavy toll. The remaining generals Aspar and Areobindus decided not to risk an engagement and retreated from the Hunnic hordes. When Attila approached Constantinople, they joined Anatolius's forces as well as Zeno's Isaurians and managed to prevail in the battle of Chersonesus, though by no means decisively. At that point, however, Theodosius II and Chrysaphius decided not to risk further war and to find settlement quickly. They dispatched Anatolius, the only commander who agreed with their plans. Yet this was at odds with Zeno's ambition to continue the war, and it is likely that the other commanders, Aspar and Areobindus, were of a similar opinion⁴³. This posed a problem for the government, because Zeno went as far as to sabotage the above-mentioned diplomatic attempts. Chrysaphius could not risk having someone meddle in his affairs, and therefore needed trusted people to conduct diplomacy with Attila. This was the reason why Maximinus accepted three names out of the five suggested by Attila: the envoy knew that Aspar and Areobindus would not agree with the political goals set by Chrysaphius.

To conclude, the analysis of Berichus's story and the surrounding events provides evidence for faction struggle after the war of 447, focused on how to resolve the conflict with the Huns. The argument between Chrysaphius and his opponents was not motivated merely by drive for power and religious politics; they also wanted the country to pursue a different policy towards the Huns. This was most evidently true in the case of Zeno the Isaurian. However, the fact that Chrysaphius clearly did not entrust either Aspar or Areobindus with conducting the diplomatic talks with the Huns proves that they were also conflicted with the eunuch, possibly along the lines of how to tackle the Hun problem. If Aspar was truly

⁴² We have an example of a very similar diplomatic scandal at the beginning of the journey of Priscus's embassy, when the interpreter Vigilas said that one could not compare Attila to the emperor Theodosius, since the former was a man while the latter was god. This obviously angered the Huns, who only calmed down after they had been given valuable gifts – PRISCUS, fr. 11, 2.

⁴³ Although we do not have direct evidence for that, we know that Aspar was a political opponent of Chrysaphius and that the later emperor Marcian, who was certainly somewhat dependent on Aspar, embarked on a hard-line policy towards the Huns.

a proponent of military action against Attila, it would explain how he could find common ground with Flavius Zeno, as well as provide another argument in support of the current scholarly consensus on the alliance between these two figures against Chrysaphius. Nevertheless, it is important to note that Aspar and Zeno might have been cooperating longer than generally thought. Finally, Maximinus's claims about Aspar were only meant to mislead Attila and cannot be taken as an argument for the evaluation of Aspar and Areobindus's position at the court. It is very likely that their influence did not suffer as severely during the war with the Huns, and that they remained powerful figures in Byzantine politics. Altogether, the short and seemingly unimportant fragment in Priscus's histories provides extensive evidence for re-evaluating our perspective on the events of 447–450 as well as Aspar's power, political goals and alliances during that time.

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Abstract. The article examines Priscus’s account of the conflict that emerged between the leader of the Roman embassy, Maximinus, and the Hunnic envoy, Berichus. The barbarian got offended by the remarks concerning the lack of competence and influence of Aspar and Areobindus. A detailed analysis of this short passage – entailing the persona of Berichus himself, the reasons for his anger, and the possible explanations for Maximinus’s behaviour – can provide us with evidence regarding the political position of Aspar in the last years of the reign of Theodosius II. Most scholars use this example to illustrate Aspar’s falling out of favour and power; it is more likely, however, that the situation was actually more complex. The political struggle between Chrysaphius, a proponent of the policy of reconciliation with the Huns, and Zeno, the opponent of such policies, makes it far more probable that the government feared that their diplomatic effort might be hijacked by the opposing

faction. Therefore, it was political differences – and not the failures in the war of 447 – that were the reason for Aspar's falling out with the emperor. This would also mean that Zeno and Aspar shared similar views on how to solve the Hunnic problem, which would be the basis for their cooperation, resulting in the overthrowing of Chrysaphius and the crowning of Marcian in 450.

Keywords: Byzantium, Huns, Aspar, Theodosius II, Byzantine foreign policy, Byzantine military elite.

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PROSPECTIVE GAIN OR ACTUAL COST? ARAB CIVILIAN AND MILITARY CAPTIVES IN THE LIGHT OF BYZANTINE NARRATIVE SOURCES AND MILITARY MANUALS FROM THE 10TH CENTURY

It is safe to say that the 10th century was a military renaissance for the Byzantines. During this period, the Eastern Empire waged numerous wars, broadened its boundaries and regained much of its formerly lost prestige. For the Byzantine emperors of the 10th century, the eastern front was the crucial one, due to the constant struggle with the Abbasid Caliphate¹. In the course of this conflict – from which Byzantium emerged victorious – the capturing and enslaving of soldiers and civilians alike was an everyday reality. The main objective of this paper is to define the role of prisoners of war in the strategy and tactics of Byzantine generals. First, I will attempt to determine whether the latter treated the captives as a potential gain under various aspects (i.e. financial, prestige-related, or diplomatic). Next, I will focus on those situations in which prisoners were nothing more than a burden. With the help of narrative sources and military manuals, I will try to clarify why both sides occasionally decided to execute their captives in certain episodes of the 10th century Arab-Byzantine conflict. Finally, I will specify how Byzantine generals made use of prisoners in order to get the upper hand over their Arab rivals. It should be emphasized that the present research was carried out mainly on the basis of the written sources. Since the period in question is well documented, I will focus on the Arab-Byzantine conflict only.

Byzantine written sources leave no doubt that the generals of the Empire, as a rule, tried to take prisoners during the campaigns in northern Syria². The process

¹ During the period in question, most of the military operations were concentrated within the eastern frontier of Byzantium, which was called the *thughūr* by the Arabs, M. BONNER, *The Naming of the Frontier: Awāšim, Thughūr, and the Arab Geographers*, BSOAS 57, 1994, p. 17–24; A.A. EGER, *Islamic Frontiers, Real and Imagined*, AUAW 17, 2005, p. 1–6. As noted by K. NAKADA, the ongoing war with the Arabs was in fact one of the crucial concerns of the emperors (*The Taktika of Leo VI and the Byzantine Eastern Frontier During the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, SOJ 1, 2017, p. 17–27).

² The struggle was greatly enhanced by the pacification of the Paulician fortress of Tephrike in 872 AD, W. TREADGOLD, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society*, Stanford 1997, p. 457; K. NAKADA,

is quite evident especially in the second half of the 10th century, when the defense of Islam rested on the emirs of Aleppo and Mosul. However, during the first decades of the period under discussion, it was the Arabs who ravaged the eastern border of Byzantium more often³ (at that time, the most prominent enemy of the Empire was the emirate of Tarsus). In the first years of Leo VI's rule, the Arabs captured Hypsele⁴. As pointed out by Warren Treadgold, in the years 896–898 the Byzantine territory was raided each year and major settlements or fortresses were taken (Kars, Corum in Cappadocia and most of the Theme of the Cibyrrhaeots⁵). Also during Leo's reign, the Arabs sacked Samos and took Constantine Paspalas captive⁶. The most striking Arab success, however, came in 904 AD, when Leo of Tripolis captured Thessalonica⁷. Taking advantage of the internal problems of the Byzantines as well as the Bulgarian threat, the emirs of Melitene and Tyr ravaged the Byzantine borderlands between 916 and 918⁸. Due to the upcoming war with the Bulgarians, empress Zoe decided to sign a truce with the Arabs, although it seems that the warlike rulers took it lightly⁹. The streak of luck for the Arabs came to an end with the ascension of Romanus I Lecapenus to the throne and John Curcuas's appointment as Domestic of the Schools (δομέστικος τῶν σχολῶν). As

The Taktika..., p. 22. From then on, both the Arabs and the Byzantines fought for domination over the bordering emirates and other contested lands.

³ After the defeat suffered during the campaign of 960 AD, the Arabs were under constant pressure, so that the roles in fact changed: while at the beginning of 10th century the Arabs would repeatedly breach the Byzantine border for loot and slaves, during the reign of Romanus II the Empire began a swift reconquest. It is worth mentioning that most of the above-described military operations were focused within one region, namely the Cilician plain, M. BONNER, *The Naming...*, p. 17; K. DURAK, *Traffic across the Cilician Frontier in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries: Movement of People between Byzantium and the Islamic Near East in the Early Middle Ages*, [in:] *Proceedings of the International Symposium Byzantium and the Arab World. Encounter of Civilizations. (Thessaloniki, 16–18 December 2011)*, ed. A. KRALIDES, A. GKOUTZIOUKOSTAS, Thessaloniki 2013, p. 141.

⁴ *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis historiarum*, 4, 94–96, ed. H. THURN, Berolini 1973 [= *CFHB*, 5] (cetera: SCYLITZES), p. 172; *Theophanes Continuatus*, VI, 4, 11–15, ed. I. BEKKER, Bonnæ–Lipsiae 1838 [= *CSHB*, 31] (cetera: *Theophanes Continuatus*), p. 354.

⁵ W. TREADGOLD, *A History...*, p. 465–466. It seems that the Arabs followed certain preferred directions in their campaigns, K. NAKADA, *The Taktika...*, p. 20. According to some scholars, the military operations were accompanied by a strong religious and ideological component. As pointed out by A. Asa Eger, the reason for this might have been the semi-nomadic transhumance of the Arabs and the rivalry for land suitable for pastoralism, A.A. EGER, *Islamic...*, p. 1–2.

⁶ SCYLITZES, 9, 64–65, p. 175; *Theophanes Continuatus*, VI, 7, 3–4, p. 357.

⁷ SCYLITZES, 23, 66–69, p. 183; *Theophanes Continuatus*, VI, 20, 1–5, p. 368.

⁸ SCYLITZES, 7, 67–70, p. 202; *Theophanes Continuatus*, VI, 9, 5–12, p. 388; G. OSTROGORSKI, *Dzieje Bizancjum*, trans. ed. H. EVERT-KAPPESOWA, ³Warszawa 2008, p. 270–271; W. TREADGOLD, *A History...*, p. 474–475.

⁹ SCYLITZES, 8, 71–76, p. 202–203; *Theophanes Continuatus*, VI, 10, 13–17, p. 388; *Kronika Leona Gramatyka*, [in:] *TNDS.SG*, V, *Pisarze z X wieku*, trans. et ed. A. BRZÓSTKOWSKA, Warszawa 2009 [= *PSla*, 127] (cetera: LEO GRAMMATICUS), p. 81.

a result, it was not until 948/949 when Sayf al-Dawla organized another large-scale expedition against the Empire, at a time when Constantine Porphyrogenetus had sent an army to recover Crete¹⁰. In 950 AD, too, the emir campaigned on the eastern border of Byzantium, though during his return he was ambushed by Leo Phocas and sustained heavy casualties¹¹. A short period of prosperity came for the Arabs during the years 952–955, when Bardas Phocas held the post of Domestic of the Schools¹². In 956 AD, the Hamdanid army attacked the Empire once again and although Sayf managed to defeat the then inexperienced John Tzimiskes, in the meantime Leo Phocas captured the emir's cousin near Aleppo¹³. The Arabs tried their luck once more in the year 960 (while the Byzantines were busy conquering Crete), but they were repulsed with heavy losses near Adrassos¹⁴. Although the campaigns were no longer a threat to Empire's integrity, the Muslims would plunder the border themes for slaves and booty, not infrequently year after year.

Of course, the Byzantines did not limit themselves to mere defense; they undertook numerous attempts to harass the aggressor's territory¹⁵. In fact, it is worth mentioning that they were at times not satisfied with the mere ravaging the land of their enemies, but also tried to claim it for good. Thus, the reconquest of northern Syria from the hands of the Muslims started during the reign of Basil the Macedonian on a rather modest scale, only to end with the capture of Antioch by Nicephorus II Phocas and John Tzimiskes's campaigns less than a century later¹⁶. The weakness of the Abbaside Caliphate and the Byzantines' overcoming their internal problems resulted in a more aggressive approach toward the Arabs. Consequently, towards the end of the 9th century Basil I undertook two campaigns against them¹⁷. Several years later, the Byzantines under Domestic of the Schools Andrew defeated the emir of Tarsus, with both *Theophanes Continuatus* and Scylitzes pointing out that he had gained many victories against the Arabs even before¹⁸. One should

¹⁰ W. TREADGOLD, *A History...*, p. 486; SCYLITZES, 15, 33–35, p. 245–246.

¹¹ SCYLITZES, 9, 41–46, p. 240–242; JOHN SKYLITZES, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811–1057*, trans. J. WORTLEY, Cambridge 2010, p. 234, an. 42.

¹² W. TREADGOLD, *A History...*, p. 492; SCYLITZES, 9, 5–14, p. 240–241.

¹³ SCYLITZES, 9, 18–22, p. 241; M. MCCORMICK, *Eternal Victory. Triumphal Rulership in Late Antiquity, Byzantium and the Early Medieval West*, Cambridge 1986 [= P.P.P.], p. 159–160; A. RAMADAN, *The Treatment of Arab Prisoners of War in Byzantium, 9th–10th Centuries*, AIs 43, 2009, p. 178.

¹⁴ SCYLITZES, 4, 52–57, p. 250; *Theophanes Continuatus*, VI, 14, 18–22, 1, p. 479–480.

¹⁵ In these cases, the campaigns were mostly conducted by the domestics, while in the case of defensive operations, the command was given to the local *strategoi*, K. NAKADA, *The Taktika...*, p. 20–21.

¹⁶ For the consequences for the Cilician plain see A.A. EGER, *Islamic...*, p. 5–6.

¹⁷ *Theophanes Continuatus* mentions both of them, the first in the year 873 and the second in 878 AD, *Chronographiae quae Theophanis Continuati nomine fertur Liber V quo Vita Basilii Imperatoris amplectitur*, 39–40; 46, ed. I. ŠEVČENKO, Berlin–Boston 2011 [= CFHB, 42] (cetera: THEOPHANES (ŠEVČENKO)); this edition does not include book VI; as a result, in most cases I consulted the edition from the year 1838), p. 141–147, 165–167.

¹⁸ THEOPHANES (ŠEVČENKO), V, 50, p. 179–185; SCYLITZES, 24, 23–25, p. 143–144.

stress that, in the period under discussion, the Empire was concerned with the consolidation of power in the new territories as well as with strengthening the alliances with the Armenians. Thus, taking prisoners was, as a rule, an additional gain in the event of victory. This was probably the case in the two campaigns undertaken by Leo VII in 901 and 902 AD¹⁹. Two years later, the emperor sent Eustathius Argyrus and Andronicus Ducas to acquire captives in order to exchange them for the imprisoned citizens of Thessalonica²⁰. Some years later, in 911 AD, Leo made his final and unsuccessful attempt to reconquer Crete²¹. The internal struggle for the imperial throne as well as the Bulgarian incursions onto the Byzantine territory caused the Empire to lower the pace of the war with the Arabs²². However, the situation improved after the ascension of Romanus I Lecapenus to the throne and John Curcuas's appointment as Domestic of the Schools. First, he managed to capture (albeit briefly) the emirate of Melitene, between 926–927 AD²³. Eventually, the seat of the Muslim state was taken in 934 AD by Curcuas and Melias, the *strategos* of the Theme of Lycandus; only those willing to become Christians were allowed to stay²⁴. The fortune also favored Curcuas later: the apogee of his success were the campaigns from the years 942–944. The domestic besieged Edessa so efficiently that its citizens were forced to ask for peace and returned the sacred *mandylion*²⁵. Theophanes stresses that Curcuas achieved numerous victories and took many prisoners, although he exaggerates somewhat when crediting him with the conquest of the whole Syria²⁶. In the year 948, Bardas Phocas captured Adata and it is likely that he took prisoners during this operation²⁷. However, the first years after Curcuas's dismissal were rather difficult for the Empire, due to Sayf al-Dawla's dominance over the new domestic. The Byzantines' luck turned again after the post had been taken by Nicephorus Phocas, Bardas's son. When the emir of Aleppo attacked the Byzantine frontier, Leo Phocas captured his cousin Abu'l-Asha'ir in 956 AD²⁸. Two years later, the Byzantines took Samosata²⁹. One of the

¹⁹ A.A. VASILIEV, *Byzance et les Arabes*, vol. II, *La Dynastie macédonienne, 867–959*, Bruxelles 1950, p. 141–144; W. TREADGOLD, *A History...*, p. 466.

²⁰ SCYLITZES, 24, 83–86, p. 183.

²¹ SCYLITZES, 33, 7–8, p. 191; *Theophanes Continuatus*, VI, 31, 23, 1–4, p. 376–377.

²² However, one should note that even in those difficult periods, the Empire managed to achieve some success, such as the defeat of Leo of Tripolis in 922 AD, SCYLITZES, 11, 4–8, p. 218; *Theophanes Continuatus*, VI, 14, 11–16, p. 405.

²³ SCYLITZES, 19, 69–71, p. 224; *Theophanes Continuatus*, VI, 24, 8–12, p. 416.

²⁴ W. TREADGOLD, *A History...*, p. 481.

²⁵ SCYLITZES, 37, 66–70, p. 231–232; *Theophanes Continuatus*, VI, 48, 4–11, p. 432.

²⁶ SCYLITZES, 32, 31–33, p. 230; *Theophanes Continuatus*, VI, 24, 10–16, p. 415; VI, 40, 25, 1–4, p. 426–427.

²⁷ SCYLITZES, 15, 33–35, p. 245.

²⁸ SCYLITZES, 9, 18–20, p. 241; M. McCORMICK, *Eternal...*, p. 159–160; A. RAMADAN, *The Treatment...*, p. 178.

²⁹ *Theophanes Continuatus*, VI, 44, 11–17, p. 461–462.

greatest successes, however, was the conquest of Crete as a result of the campaign that took place 960–961 AD³⁰. Knowing that Sayf al-Dawla was preparing an attack, Nicephorus Phocas anticipated the aggression and struck in 962 AD. As we are told by Scylitzes, the Byzantines took most of Aleppo except for the citadel³¹; likewise, Bar Hebraeus informs us that Nicephorus took many prisoners³². From this moment onwards, the Hamdanid power was clearly broken, so that both Nicephorus II Phocas and John Tzimiskes conquered new territories in the years that followed. Among the many accomplishments, one should mention particularly the taking of Mopsuestia and Tarsus in 965 AD³³. As remarked by Leo the Deacon, all inhabitants of the former city who survived the siege were taken into captivity³⁴. Eventually, in the year 969, the Byzantines conquered Antioch³⁵. During the reign of John Tzimiskes, too, the Byzantine armies campaigned in Syria, acquiring loot and prisoners. This applies especially to the period after the war with the Bulgarians, i.e. 972–975³⁶. Particularly noteworthy is Leo the Deacon's account of the campaign of the years 972–974. It is likely that Tzimiskes ravaged the emirate of Mosul during this period, which would have surely resulted in the taking of many captives³⁷. Although it is still disputed what the extent of Tzimiskes's conquest was, it is relatively uncontroversial that he campaigned in 972, 974 and 975 AD³⁸ (that being said, certain scholars contend that there is no sufficient proof that the campaign from the year 974 really took place³⁹).

One can observe at least two regularities that characterize the period under discussion. Firstly, between the enthronement of Leo VI the Wise in 886 AD and the coronation of Nicephorus II in 963 AD, most of the campaigns were conducted

³⁰ *Leonis Diaconi Caloensis Historiae Libri Decem*, II, 7, ed. C.B. HASE, Bonnae 1828 [= CSHB, 3] (cetera: LEO THE DEACON (HASE)); *The History of Leo the Deacon. Byzantine Military Expansion in the Tenth Century*, II, 7, trans. et ed. A.-M. TALBOT, D.F. SULLIVAN, Washington 2005 [= DOS, 41] (cetera: LEO THE DEACON (trans.)), p. 78–79; SCYLITZES, 4, 52–57, p. 250.

³¹ SCYLITZES, 10, 24–29, p. 252–253.

³² *The Chronography of Gregory Abu'l Faraj 1225–1286, the Son of Aaron, the Hebrew Physician, Commonly Known as Bar Hebraeus*, X, trans. E.A. WALLIS BUDGE, Amsterdam 1976 (cetera: BAR HEBRAEUS), p. 168.

³³ *Histoire de Yahya-ibn-Sa'id d'Antioche, continuateur de Sa'id-ibn-Bitriq*, ed. et trans. I. KRATCHKOVSKY, A. VASILIEV, Paris 1924 [= PO, 18.5] (cetera: YAHYA), p. 795–796; SCYLITZES, 12, 20–23, p. 268–269.

³⁴ LEO THE DEACON (HASE), III, 10–11; LEO THE DEACON (trans.), p. 101–102.

³⁵ LEO THE DEACON (HASE), V, 4–5; LEO THE DEACON (trans.), p. 132–134; SCYLITZES, 17, 27–31, p. 271–273; YAHYA, p. 823.

³⁶ W. TREADGOLD, *A History...*, p. 511–512.

³⁷ LEO THE DEACON (HASE), X, 2; LEO THE DEACON (trans.), p. 202–205. Finally, in 975 AD, the emperor captured Baalbek (which he described in a letter to his ally Ashot III), *Chronique de Matthieu d'Édesse (962–1136) avec la Continuation de Grégoire le prêtre jusqu'en 1162*, trans. E. DULAURIER, Paris 1858, p. 16–24.

³⁸ A.-M. TALBOT, D.F. SULLIVAN, *Introduction*, [in:] *The History of Leo the Deacon...*, p. 22.

³⁹ A. KALDELLIS, *Did Ioannes I Tzimiskes Campaign in the East in 974?*, B 84, 2014, p. 235–240.

by officials or generals designated by the *basileus*. Unsurprisingly, most of latter were military leaders in the rank of Domestic of the Schools⁴⁰. The other salient feature of the Arab-Byzantine conflict in the 10th century was the presence of frequent temporary truces, negotiated by both sides in times of internal conflicts or in the case of external threats⁴¹. This is one of the main reasons why the struggle between the vast Byzantine empire and the small but valiant Arab border emirates of the Abbasid Caliphate continued for so long⁴².

Throughout this conflict, both sides were eager to take prisoners, although not for the same reasons. Sometimes, as in the case of Hypsele (captured by the Arabs in the first years of the reign of Leo the Wise) or the sack of Thessalonica (by Leo of Tripolis), the main aim of the attackers was to acquire slaves and booty⁴³. In other cases, such as in 916 AD, the generals were given orders to campaign on enemy territory in order to capture civilians destined to be exchanged for Byzantine captives⁴⁴. These three examples prove that while taking prisoners was sometimes a mere additional objective for the army, at other times it could be a priority⁴⁵. Thus, the value of the prisoners would differ, depending on the campaign's main objective. In this respect, it is worth considering how the matter of taking captives was perceived by Byzantine generals.

The symbolic significance of Arab captives in Byzantium – cost for the general, gain for the Empire?

As can be seen from the above, the Arab-Byzantine conflict was quite prolonged. During its course, both sides searched for various ways to get the upper hand. In this connection, it seems clear that Arab prisoners of war played an important role in the Byzantine propaganda of success. Among the many ways in which the Empire sought to demonstrate the superiority of its military power, there was one ceremony that held a unique place in the cultural heritage of its citizens. The

⁴⁰ A. KAZHDAN, *Domestikos ton scholon*, [in:] ODB, vol. I, p. 647–648; T.C. LOUNGHIS, *The Decline of the Opsikian Domesticates and the Rise of the Domesticate of the Scholae*, ΒΣΦΜ 10, 1996, p. 27–36.

⁴¹ This was the case in 917 AD, when empress Zoe strove to contain the threat posed by Tsar Symeon and needed all the power she could gather. The same applies to the situation from 932/933, when Romanus Lecapenus intended to pacify the mutiny along the eastern borders of the Empire: SCYLITZES, 8, 71–76, p. 202–203; G. OSTROGORSKI, *Dzieje...*, p. 265–266; W. TREADGOLD, *A History...*, p. 474, 481.

⁴² K. DURAK, *Traffic...*, p. 142–143.

⁴³ Scylitzes relates that in Hypsele the Arabs took all inhabitants into captivity, while in the case of Thessalonica only half of the citizens were taken prisoner, SCYLITZES, 4, 94–96, p. 172; 23, 66–69, p. 183.

⁴⁴ This was probably the case in the campaigns undertaken by Eustathius Argyrus and Andronicus Ducas, SCYLITZES, 24, 83–86, p. 183; W. TREADGOLD, *A History...*, p. 467.

⁴⁵ Bar Hebraeus claims that the Byzantines captured some 50 000 people in Tarsus and Marash, BAR HEBRAEUS, X, p. 156.

spectacle in question, inherited from the times of the Roman Empire, was the triumph⁴⁶. An integral part of it was a parade of the victorious emperors and commanders alongside the captured enemies. The ceremony itself took place in the hippodrome of Constantinople and was meant to uphold the Byzantine identity, including the affinity with the Roman Empire. Since the role of the triumph was so prominent, the authors of written (mainly narrative) sources mention it on many occasions⁴⁷. As regards the 10th century, one of the most interesting descriptions of the ceremony comes from Constantine Porphyrogenetus⁴⁸. Apart from him, another Byzantine statesman who experienced the honor of triumph (at least once) was John Curcuas⁴⁹. The ceremony also took place after the victories of Nicephorus II Phocas and his brother Leo Phocas, as well as their relative John Tzimiskes⁵⁰.

As mentioned before, the Byzantines considered themselves Romans (in the sense of the Greek-Byzantine self-designation Ῥωμαῖοι – *Rhōmaîoi*). What is more, organizing a parade displaying the captive Arabs – the arch-enemies of the Byzantines – was designed to demonstrate the superiority of the Christian arms as well as to bolster the cultural identity of Byzantium as the heir of the Roman Empire⁵¹.

⁴⁶ There is a vast literature on this topic, although the discussion has been centered on the religious aspects of the ceremony, M. McCORMICK, *Eternal...*, p. 110–111.

⁴⁷ The importance of the triumph is seen just as clearly in sources from earlier periods as well. One of such examples can be found in the anonymous treatise on strategy, most likely composed sometime in the 6th century, perhaps during the reign of Justinian, *De Re Strategica*, 3, 101–107, [in:] *Three Byzantine Military Treatises*, trans. et ed. G.T. DENNIS, Washington 1985 [= DOT, 9] (cetera: *De Re Strategica*), p. 18–19.

⁴⁸ CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENITUS, *Three Treatises on Imperial Military Expeditions*, ed. et trans. J.F. HALDON, Wien 1990 [= CFHB, 28] (cetera: *Three Treatises*), p. 141–143, 149; W. TREADGOLD, *A History...*, p. 459. The emperor gives a most detailed description of Basil I's triumph in 879 AD, held together with his son Constantine.

⁴⁹ The first triumph probably took place after the final defeat of the emirate of Melitene, probably around 934 AD (*Theophanes Continuatus*, VI, 24, 23, 1–2, p. 415–416). Curcuas was awarded the second triumph in 944 AD, not long before his dismissal from the post of Domestic of the Schools. Both *Theophanes Continuatus* and Scylitzes indicate that it was a reward not only for the military victory but also for securing the *Mandylion* (SCYLITZES, 32, 26–30, p. 230; 37, 70–72, p. 231–232; *Theophanes Continuatus*, VI, 48, 4–11, p. 432). Note also W. TREADGOLD, *A History...*, p. 479–481.

⁵⁰ Nicephorus Phocas – after conquering Crete in 961 AD (LEO THE DEACON (HASE), II, 8; LEO THE DEACON (trans.), p. 79–81) and after the campaign resulting in the conquest of Mopsuestia and Tarsus in 965 AD (SCYLITZES, 16, 64–71, p. 271; LEO THE DEACON (HASE), IV, 4; LEO THE DEACON (trans.), p. 109); Leo Phocas – in 956 AD after capturing Sayf al-Dawlā's cousin (SCYLITZES, 9, 18–22, p. 241), in 960 AD after fending off the latter's offensive near Adrassus (LEO THE DEACON (HASE), II, 4; LEO THE DEACON (trans.), p. 75; SCYLITZES, 4, 53–58, p. 309–310; W. TREADGOLD, *A History...*, p. 509), and in 974 AD after defeating the Arabs of Mosul (LEO THE DEACON (HASE), X, 2; LEO THE DEACON (trans.), p. 204; W. TREADGOLD, *A History...*, p. 511).

⁵¹ Another interesting custom with a strong symbolic meaning was the presence of different groups of barbarians near the emperor, D.C. SMYTHE, *Why Do Barbarians Stand Round the Emperor at Diplomatic Receptions?*, [in:] *Byzantine Diplomacy. Papers from the Twenty-fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Cambridge, March 1990*, ed. J.S. SHEPARD, S. FRANKLIN, Aldershot 1992 [= SPBSP, 1], p. 305–306, 311–312.

Hence, the presence of the captives (representing the loathed Abbasid Caliphate) was clearly an indispensable element⁵². The sources at our disposal allow us to presume that in some cases the victorious Byzantine commanders' agenda was to make sure that at least some of Arab prisoners would live long enough to participate in the triumph. According to Leo the Deacon, the above-mentioned procedure was followed by Nicephorus II Phocas after his conquest of Crete⁵³. The author leaves no doubt that the future emperor separated the chosen prisoners from the rest of the booty meant for the army because he intended to organize a triumph in Constantinople.

The presence of Arab prisoners of war during the triumph was also desired when the commanders of the Empire succeeded in routing the invasion of the Hamdanid army in the Byzantine territory. The reason is that the struggle against the warlike emir of Aleppo, Sayf al-Dawla, in the second half of 10th century was a particularly intense and bloody one, so that both sides resorted to ideology and religion in their respective narratives⁵⁴. A unique triumph took place after Leo Phocas's victory over Sayf al-Dawla in 960 AD, as we are informed by Leo the Deacon⁵⁵. The success was memorable, as Leo Phocas managed to set free the Christians taken captive by the emir of Aleppo at the earlier stages of his campaign. This was truly a notable achievement, considering the fact that ten years earlier the commander had not been able to prevent the slaughter of prisoners at the hands of the Arabs, although he had defeated the emir⁵⁶. What is more, Sayf al-Dawla's army was utterly annihilated; almost two years passed before he managed to muster a new one. In his chronicle, John Scylitzes claims that it was impossible to count how many enemies had perished during the battle, and that the Byzantines took

⁵² As pointed out by Liliana SIMEONOVA, during the ceremonies in question the Byzantines would not only humiliate the Arab prisoners in many ways, but also torture some of their animals, such as horses (*In the Depths of Tenth-century Byzantine Ceremonial: the Treatment of Arab Prisoners of War at Imperial Banquets*, BMGS 22, 1998, p. 75). Moreover, Jakub SYPIAŃSKI notes that – in view of the sophisticated culture of the Arabs – it was not only religion that was challenged, but also imperial ideology (*Arabo-Byzantine Relations in the 9th and 10th Centuries as an Area of Cultural Rivalry*, [in:] *Proceedings...*, p. 465).

⁵³ LEO THE DEACON (HASE), II, 8; LEO THE DEACON (trans.), p. 79–80; L. SIMEONOVA, *In the Depths...*, p. 100–101.

⁵⁴ It is worth mentioning that the Arabs played an important role not only during the Byzantine triumphs, but also in other situations. As a Christian ruler, the emperor would utilize the Muslim prisoners in various events at the court, involving semi-baptismal ceremonies, L. SIMEONOVA, *In the Depths...*, p. 76.

⁵⁵ The success must have been perceived as quite illustrious, since it is mentioned by *Theophanes Continuatus* (*Theophanes Continuatus*, VI, 14, 10–12, p. 480), JOHN SCYLITZES (SCYLITZES, 4, 52–57, p. 250) and LEO THE DEACON (LEO THE DEACON (HASE), II, 5; LEO THE DEACON (trans.), p. 75–76).

⁵⁶ LEO THE DEACON (HASE), II, 5; LEO THE DEACON (trans.), p. 75. As we mentioned, a decade earlier the Byzantines could only watch as Sayf al-Dawla butchered the captives before pulling back to his territory, SCYLITZES, 9, 41–46, p. 240–242.

so many captives that both urban and rural estates got filled with slaves⁵⁷. In turn, Leo the Deacon observes that the citizens of Constantinople who witnessed the triumph were amazed by the multitude of Arab prisoners⁵⁸. Sometimes, however, the status of the captives was far more important than their number. This was true of the triumph of 956 AD, for example. That year, Sayf al-Dawla launched another campaign, which proved too difficult to repel by the commanders of the Empire. The Byzantines were desperate for any success, so when Abu'l-Asha'ir (nephew of Sayf al-Dawla) was captured during Leo Phocas's raid on Aleppo, a unique manifestation of victory took place in Constantinople⁵⁹. According to John Scylitzes, an exquisite triumph was held, during which Leo Phocas put his foot on the neck of the emir's nephew⁶⁰. Considering the military account of 956 AD, Abu'l-Asha'ir turned out to be a prisoner of great importance and value⁶¹. Curiously, immediately after the triumph, Constantine Porphyrogenetus bestowed the captives with rich gifts and honors⁶². This incoherent behavior proves that the treatment of Abu'l-Asha'ir during the triumph was a carefully calculated, instrumental action. Clearly, Constantine did not share the prejudices of his grandfather Basil the Macedonian.

Even though the triumph was a distinctly Byzantine ceremony, this does not mean that the Arabs would never parade their prisoners in case of a notable victory over the Christians. Although the relevant written material is far scarcer, there is at least one account referring to a triumph-like parade being held in the emirate of Aleppo. As John Scylitzes informs us, one of the sons of then Domestic of the Schools Constantine Phocas was captured by Sayf al-Dawla during the battle of Marash in 953 AD⁶³. The Byzantine chronicler mentions that the young *strategos* of the Theme of Seleucia was later paraded in Aleppo, following the successful Arab campaign.

The above-mentioned examples prove that whenever an important prisoner was captured, it was high priority for the commander to deliver him safely to the capital of the Empire, regardless of the campaign's prime objectives. Such a captive might have been a burden for the army at times; from the strategic perspective, however, he was of great value.

⁵⁷ SCYLITZES, 4, 52–57, p. 250.

⁵⁸ Leo the Deacon speaks of *myriads of Hagarens* (i.e. Arabs), LEO THE DEACON (HASE), II, 5; LEO THE DEACON (trans.), p. 76.

⁵⁹ YAHYA, p. 773.

⁶⁰ SCYLITZES, 9, 18–20, p. 241.

⁶¹ Y. FRIEDMAN, *The Nusayrī-ʿAlawīs. An Introduction to the Religion, History, and Identity of the Leading Minority in Syria*, Leiden 2010 [= IHC, 77], p. 31.

⁶² SCYLITZES, 9, 21–24, p. 241.

⁶³ SCYLITZES, 9, 24–27, p. 241.

Prisoners of war as a source of wealth – virtual profit and real threat?

Needless to say, prisoners meant potential financial gains for both sides of the conflict. The opportunity of capturing slaves, who could subsequently be sold or exchanged for ransom, was one of two motivations for the Arabs to raid Byzantine frontier territories (the second reason was the prospect of capturing skilled craftsmen). Surprisingly, however, taking captives during the campaign also offered many benefits for the Byzantine generals. According to Leo the Wise, should the campaign prolong too much, commanders should consider buying back prisoners from their soldiers⁶⁴. At first glimpse, this makes little sense. However, one should remember that before the captives who were divided between the soldiers participating in the campaign could be sold for money, both the owners and prisoners had to survive long enough to return from war⁶⁵. Thus, instead, the commander could buy back the captives from the army – which was a win-win situation for all, except for the captured. The soldiers received money and were no longer districted from fighting, while the generals got motivated soldiers. This practice was especially important in times when a soldier's pay would not always arrive on time. As correctly remarked by Timothy Dawson, it was during the reign of Constantine Porphyrogennetus that the army rebelled due to delays in pay⁶⁶. As we know, after the rebellion was quelled, a decree was issued stipulating that a soldier's pay should be distributed every four years⁶⁷. However, it is no secret that even at that time, delays were not an infrequent issue. Thus, even after the above regulation, soldiers would still risk their lives for a number of years before receiving any remuneration. Thus, it is clear that capturing prisoners during a campaign was an important, if not crucial, motivation for the soldiers of the Empire.

Still, one should bear in mind that the above-mentioned agenda could sometimes in fact put the whole army in peril: undisciplined soldiers who focused more on pillaging and taking prisoners than on the battle itself made for an easy target. Such a situation took place during Nicephorus II Phocas's conquest of Crete between 960–961 AD. As we learn from Leo the Deacon, the future emperor sent some troops under the command of Nicephorus Pastilas, the *strategos* of the Theme of Thrakesion, with the task of scouting the area. The author of the source stresses that Nicephorus Phocas warned his officer to stay cautious and not to relax the discipline⁶⁸. However, the fertile rural territory, and (probably) the prospect of looting,

⁶⁴ *The Taktika of Leo VI*, XVI, 8, 41–47, trans. et ed. G. DENNIS, Washington 2010 [= *CFHB.SW*] (cetera: *Tactica*), p. 385.

⁶⁵ Leo also teaches commanders that taking captives and pillaging is desirable in case the campaign continues for a longer time, *Tactica*, XVI, 4–5, p. 383–385.

⁶⁶ T. DAWSON, *Byzantine Infantryman – Eastern Roman Empire c. 900–1204*, Oxford 2007, p. 41–42; IDEM, *Byzantine Cavalryman c. 900–1204*, Oxford 2009, p. 20.

⁶⁷ *Constantini Porphyrogeniti imperatoris De cerimoniis aulae byzantinae libri duo*, II, 44, ed. J.J. REISKE, Bonn 1830 [= *CSHB*, 1] (cetera: *De Cerimoniis*), p. 493–494.

⁶⁸ LEO THE DEACON (HASE), I, 3; LEO THE DEACON (trans.), p. 63.

was apparently a temptation that the general could not resist. As a result, the troops fell into an Arab ambush and everyone, including Pastilas, perished in the ensuing battle.

Thus, generals knew very well that the desire to take prisoners was a double-edged sword and that it could affect the whole campaign. Leo the Wise instructs his generals that while plundering enemy territory is a sound move, it should be carried out with caution and according to a strict order⁶⁹. What is more, the officers' duty was not only to select the soldiers for the expedition, but also to prevent unwanted volunteers for joining the looting party⁷⁰. This regulation also applied to taking prisoners from among the defeated army in case the battle was won. The author of the *Praecepta Militaria* stresses that it is unacceptable for soldiers to focus on dividing the booty or capturing prisoners before such a command is given⁷¹. In case an enemy line was broken, soldiers were forbidden to engage in pursuit, except for those who were entrusted with such a mission⁷².

This, however, leads to another question: if the prisoners were already divided by the time when the triumph in the capital was held, when did the division of the booty usually take place? On the basis of Constantine Porphyrogenetus's account of emperor Theophilus's triumph, Abdelaziz Ramadan argues that the division of booty occurred after the campaign, i.e. just before the triumphal parade in the capital⁷³. However, there are also reasons to assume that it might well have taken place before the return to Constantinople. According to Leo the Deacon's description of Leo's victory over Sayf al-Dawla in 960 AD, the general divided the goods and captives right after the battle⁷⁴. It seems undisputable that Nicephorus Phocas did the same thing after taking Chandax, i.e. the capital of the Arab emirate of Crete⁷⁵. The loot was also divided among the Byzantine soldiers immediately after the capture of Mopsuestia in 965 AD and of Antioch in 969 AD⁷⁶. Nevertheless, these examples do not mean that a general could not decide otherwise; it seems reasonable to suppose that the commander would have the final say in this matter⁷⁷. The main criteria were probably the tactical situation and the morale among the soldiers.

⁶⁹ *Tactica*, XVII, 36, 191–197, p. 405–407.

⁷⁰ *Tactica*, XVII, 53, 300–304, p. 413 – those who transgressed this regulation were punished in accordance with military law.

⁷¹ *Praecepta Militaria*, II, 7, 68–76, [in:] E. McGEER, *Sowing the Dragon's Teeth. Byzantine Warfare in the Tenth Century*, Washington 1995 [= DOS, 33] (cetera: *Praecepta Militaria*), p. 27.

⁷² *Praecepta Militaria*, IV, 14, 57–64, p. 49.

⁷³ A. RAMADAN, *The Treatment...*, p. 162–163; *Three Treatises*, p. 163.

⁷⁴ LEO THE DEACON (HASE), II, 4; LEO THE DEACON (trans.), p. 75.

⁷⁵ LEO THE DEACON (HASE), II, 8; LEO THE DEACON (trans.), p. 79–80.

⁷⁶ LEO THE DEACON (HASE), III, 11; V, 4, col. 779–780; LEO THE DEACON (trans.), p. 102; V, 4, p. 134.

⁷⁷ Whether or not prisoners would be taken also depended on the commander's decision, *Tactica*, XVI, 7, 39–40, p. 385.

While reconstructing the process of the division of loot in the 10th century army is a useful enterprise, one can gain even better insight into the motivations of the Byzantine soldiers by determining how much a prisoner was worth during the period in question. In order to do so, we must first address the issue of the average pay of the soldiers at the time. As argued by Cecile Morrisson and Jean-Claude Cheynet, it would have been comparable with the monthly wage of an unskilled worker, amounting to one gold *nomisma*⁷⁸. Of course, it is clear that the people who received this pay were simple rank-and-file soldiers of the theme armies⁷⁹. This estimation also receives some support from the written sources, since the Arab chronicler Ibn Khurdadbeh reports that a veteran soldier's annual pay was 12–18 gold *dinars*⁸⁰. This amount of money would easily suffice as a basic livelihood for the whole family, on condition that there was no famine or disease and that the city was not besieged⁸¹. C. Morrisson and J.-C. Cheynet argue that the pay of soldiers from more prestigious formations, such as the *tagmata*, was at least twice as high⁸². Officers earned 25–30 *nomisma* on average; however, high-ranking officers enjoyed real luxury, since their pay was counted in pounds of gold⁸³. According to Ibn Khurdadbeh, the lowest pay of a *strategos* was 6 pounds of gold⁸⁴ (approximately 432 *nomisma*⁸⁵).

The written sources also offer some information about the ransom for different categories of captives. The amount of money paid for a prisoner's freedom varied greatly, depending primarily on his provenance⁸⁶. C. Morrisson and J.-C. Cheynet provide strong evidence to assume that the highest ransom was paid for state officials, Church notables, and of course nobles taken captive during military

⁷⁸ C. MORRISSON, J.-C. CHEYNET, *Prices and Wages in the Byzantine World*, [in:] *The Economic History of Byzantium. From the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*, ed. A.E. LAIOU, Washington 2002, p. 872.

⁷⁹ S. BLONDAL, *The Varangians of Byzantium. An Aspect of Byzantine Military History*, trans. B.S. BENEDIKZ, Cambridge 1978, p. 25.

⁸⁰ IBN KHORDADBEH, *Kitab al-Masalik wa'l-Mamalik*, ed. M.J. DE GOEJE, Lugduni Batavorum 1889 [= BGA, 6] (cetera: IBN KHURDADBEH), p. 84. It is worth mentioning that by doing so, the Arab chronicler sees no difference in the value of gold *nomisma* and gold *dinar*. The fact that Arab prisoners invited to Eastern ceremonies at the Byzantine court received 3 *nomismata* shows that the gift was a valuable one, L. SIMEONOVA, *In the Depths...*, p. 89.

⁸¹ C. MORRISSON, J.-C. CHEYNET, *Prices...*, p. 873. At the time of peace, 1 kg of bread was worth approximately 3–8 *folleis*.

⁸² *Ibidem*, p. 872.

⁸³ Depending on the rank and region of service, the amount in question was between 5 and 40 *litrai*, *De cerimoniis*, II, 50, p. 696–697.

⁸⁴ IBN KHURDADBEH, p. 84.

⁸⁵ Were we to stick to the nominal amount, this would be equivalent to 5 184 silver *milaresia* and 124 416 *folleis*, the most common currency in everyday life.

⁸⁶ For instance, Anthony CUTLER states that the regular price for a prisoner during the reign of Leo VI was 107 *dinars*. However, one should assume that this sum referred to captives of noble birth (*Gifts and Gift Exchange as Aspects of the Byzantine, Arab, and Related Economies*, DOP 55, 2001, p. 252).

operations⁸⁷. As regards the period in question, the above-mentioned scholars give two examples. In the first case, a ransom of 5000 *dinars* was accepted in return for the freedom of the governor of Byzantine Apulia in 925 AD⁸⁸. In the second example, the sum was even higher: in order to set free a member of the Dalassenus family in 998 AD, it was necessary to pay no less than 6 000 *dinars*⁸⁹. Of course, one should emphasize that it is difficult to decide what currency is in fact hidden behind the *dinar*. It is possible that the authors of the sources referred to standard gold coins; however, one must remember that the *dinar* and the *nomisma* were in fact two separate currencies. The former was of Arab provenance and amounted to approximately 4.25 g of gold⁹⁰, while the latter was slightly heavier, theoretically reaching 4.5 g of pure gold⁹¹. If the authors meant Arab *dinars*, then the amounts expressed in *nomismata* would be 4 722 and 5 666 gold pieces, respectively. However, we should add that a few different versions of both currencies existed during the period in question. Thus, the sums are of a purely tentative character⁹².

Be that as it may, the above sums were exorbitantly high, out of reach for ordinary citizens of Byzantium or the Caliphate. Accordingly, it is improbable that commanders would allow rank-and-file soldiers to keep such precious prisoners for themselves. Also, one should bear in mind that the division of the booty often took place directly after the battle, with $\frac{1}{6}$ to $\frac{1}{5}$ of the goods (depending on the source) being allocated to the imperial treasury⁹³. Still, it is perfectly possible that even an ordinary soldier could take a prisoner from the enemy army in order to sell him to his commander or at a slave market after the campaign finished. How profitable was this? According to C. Morrisson and J.-C. Cheynet, the approximate value of a prisoner of war (without any noteworthy status) oscillated around

⁸⁷ C. MORRISSON, J.-C. CHEYNET, *Prices...*, p. 845–846.

⁸⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 845.

⁸⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁹⁰ J. PORTEOUS, *Coins in History. A Survey of Coinage from the Reform of Diocletian to the Latin Monetary Union*, London 1969, p. 14–33.

⁹¹ P. GRIERSON, *Nomisma*, [in:] *ODB*, vol. III, p. 1490; IDEM, *Solidus*, [in:] *ODB*, vol. III, p. 1924.

⁹² Inconsistencies of this kind were frequently utilized by Byzantine emperors, who were always in need of money. Thus, it was a frequent practice to replace one currency with another, taking advantage of the ratio. A good example of such politics is the reform implemented by Nicephorus II Phocas, who demanded taxes in a heavier *nomisma* (*histamenon*), while he paid all expenses in a lighter one (*tetareron*), P. GRIERSON, *Tetareron*, [in:] *ODB*, vol. III, p. 2026–2027.

⁹³ The sources disagree on this matter. According to the author of the *Ecloga*, one-sixth was reserved for the imperial treasury (*Ecloga. Das Gesetzbuch Leons III. und Konstantinos' V.*, ed. L. BURGMANN, Frankfurt 1983 [= FBR, 10], p. 245). The author of the *Sylloge Tacticorum* gives the same information (*A Tenth-Century Byzantine Military Manual. The Sylloge Tacticorum*, trans. G. CHATZELIS, J. HARRIS, London 2017 [= BBOS] (cetera: *Sylloge Tacticorum*), p. 84–85). Interestingly enough, however, Leo VI demands in his *Tactica* no less than $\frac{1}{5}$ of the booty (*Tactica*, XX, 192, 976–981, p. 604–605). Considering that the *Sylloge Tacticorum* is a younger source than the *Tactica*, one can suspect that the regulation changed over time.

10–15 *nomismata*⁹⁴. This means that in the case of a victorious battle, at least some soldiers – those fortunate enough to capture an enemy – could become richer by almost a year's pay.

Ransom was sometimes payed not only for individuals, but also for whole groups of prisoners. Arnold Toynbee and Clément Huart point out that the Arabs paid 80 000 *dinars* for 230 captives held by the Byzantines in 946 AD⁹⁵. This would put the average ransom at around 347 gold *dinars* (or 327 *nomismata*) per prisoner. Almost twenty years later, in 966 AD, Sayf al-Dawla pledged to buy back 3 000 of his soldiers from Nicephorus II Phocas for 270 *dinars* (255 *nomisma*) each⁹⁶. Regardless of the exact sum, it is clear that in both cases the prisoners in question must have been people of certain prominence, since the ransom greatly exceeded the average sum for rank-and-file soldiers. What is more, there is some proof that there were indeed certain notable individuals among the captives, such as Abu Firas, who regained freedom after at least six years⁹⁷.

Summing up, the prospect of capturing a prisoner was a considerable temptation for the Byzantine soldiers, especially in the light of the problems with regular payment. Besides, capturing prisoners of high social status allowed officers and generals to enrich themselves even more. Taking prisoners after victorious battles was also profitable for the state, since part of the loot was transferred to the imperial treasury automatically. What is more, the prisoners could later be sold back to the Caliphate for a substantial amount of gold. However, the prospect of financial gain was also a threat to the discipline during the campaign: there was the risk that soldiers would pay more attention to taking captives than to fighting the battle. In short, greed could bring about the defeat of a whole army. This is why the authors of military manuals drew such attention to the issue of discipline during and after the battle. The most common way to ensure order among soldiers was to select groups of men responsible for pursuit and taking captives in case the enemy lines were broken; such soldiers were appointed in advance⁹⁸.

Exchanging prisoners – an asset during negotiations?

Enemy soldiers or civilians captured by the Byzantines were also an asset during the prospective peace negotiations. Leo the Wise urges his commanders not to kill prisoners until the end of the campaign, since they may be utilized to free citizens of

⁹⁴ This estimation excludes clergy, for the above-mentioned reasons, C. MORRISSON, J.-C. CHEYNET, *Prices...*, p. 846.

⁹⁵ A. TOYNBEE, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus and His World*, London–New York 1973, p. 392–393; C. HUART, *Lamas-Şü*, [in:] *The Encyclopedia of Islam. New Edition*, vol. V, Leiden–New York 1986, p. 647.

⁹⁶ YAHYA, p. 804; C. MORRISSON, J.-C. CHEYNET, *Prices...*, p. 846.

⁹⁷ During that time, the Arab poet probably met the emperor Nicephorus II Phocas, J. SYPIAŃSKI, *Arabo-Byzantine...*, p. 467.

⁹⁸ *Præcepta Militaria*, IV, 14, 158–166, p. 47–49.

the Empire from slavery or even to capture an important fortress⁹⁹. The authors of the sources confirm that at earlier stages of the Arab-Byzantine conflict, such exchanges were resolved between the emperor and the caliph; with time, however, the Byzantine authorities started to negotiate on this matter directly with the bordering emirates¹⁰⁰. A. Ramadan points out that a traditional place of exchanging prisoners during the 10th century was Tarsus¹⁰¹. In case the enemy was unwilling to conclude the transaction, Leo would let his generals decide what to do with the prisoners¹⁰². Thus, as a rule, most of them were sold into slavery.

It appears that the procedure of exchanging prisoners was applied frequently in the Arab-Byzantine conflict of the 10th century¹⁰³. Arab chronicler al-Tabari informs us that in 902 AD Leo the Wise sent an emissary to the caliph in order to arrange a treaty involving such a trade-off¹⁰⁴. The agreement was probably not fulfilled in its entirety due to the emperor's suspicions concerning the loyalty of one of the generals (namely Andronicus Ducas)¹⁰⁵. Thus, the exchange of 905 AD was discontinued, and only part of the prisoners was set free¹⁰⁶. As Bar Hebraeus informs us, the eunuch Basil had to travel to the caliph's court once again in 906/907 AD in order to seek another agreement with the Arabs¹⁰⁷. Eventually, the deal was reached in 908 AD, and according to the sources 3 000 people were freed on both sides¹⁰⁸.

Sometimes, however, the exchange of prisoners was only a part of a more complex treaty. One such agreement was signed on behalf of empress and regent Zoe with the emir of Tarsus in 917 AD. The treaty was crucial for the Empire, since the Byzantines were determined to resolve their problems with Bulgarian Tsar Simeon once and for all. Thus, apart from the non-aggression pact, an exchange of prisoners was agreed to¹⁰⁹. Describing the above events, Bar Hebraeus mentions one more

⁹⁹ *Tactica*, XVI, 9, 50–54, p. 384–385. This was something of a novelty, since in the previous century Arabs unwilling to convert were tortured and executed, L. SIMEONOVA, *In the Depths...*, p. 77.

¹⁰⁰ On Byzantine and Arab envoys see M.T. MANSOURI, *Byzantium and the Arabs from the VIIth to XIth Century*, MW/MS 20, 2010, p. 63–65.

¹⁰¹ A. RAMADAN, *The Treatment...*, p. 161.

¹⁰² *Tactica*, XVI, 9, 54–55, p. 386–387.

¹⁰³ K. DURAK, *Traffic...*, p. 146. This applies to the earlier period as well – CUTLER (*Gifts...*, p. 252) points out that the Byzantines were ready to set free 200 Arab prisoners and pay 12 000 *nomismata* only to recover the lost *Mandyllion*. On another note, as remarked by SIMEONOVA, the mass scale and high frequency of those exchanges contributed to a more humane treatment of the prisoners, L. SIMEONOVA, *In the Depths...*, p. 76.

¹⁰⁴ *The History of al-Tabari*, vol. XXXVIII, *The Return of the Caliphate to Baghdad*, y. 902, trans. F. ROSENTHAL, Albany 1985 [= BPe] (cetera: AL-TABARI), p. 133.

¹⁰⁵ W. TREADGOLD, *A History...*, p. 468.

¹⁰⁶ AL-TABARI, y. 905, p. 153. 1200 Muslims were freed as a result.

¹⁰⁷ AL-TABARI, y. 906, p. 181; BAR HEBRAEUS, X, p. 154–155.

¹⁰⁸ AL-TABARI, y. 908, p. 185; BAR HEBRAEUS, X, p. 155. According to the author, 3000 people were exchanged.

¹⁰⁹ LEO GRAMMATICUS, p. 81.

interesting detail: that year, according to the chronicler, the emissaries of caliph al-Muktadir arrived in Constantinople carrying a large sum of money (170 000 gold *dinars*)¹¹⁰. Their aim was to ransom more Arab prisoners, since Byzantines held far more captives than the Muslim rulers did. This account gives us some reasons to assume that the Byzantine administration avoided selling all their captives, saving some of them for a potential future exchange¹¹¹. Indeed, such opportunities appeared quite regularly: three major treaties were signed before 950 AD, not taking into account the numerous minor, local agreements at the frontier of the Empire. C. Huart and A. Toynbee point out that a large exchange involving 4 000 people took place in 925 AD¹¹². Moreover a 938 AD treaty is mentioned by Yahya of Antioch¹¹³, while yet another exchange took place eight years later. The author of *Theophanes Continuatus* notes that 2 500 people were freed in 946; the Arabs also ransomed the remaining group of 230 captives for a sum of 80 000 *dinars*¹¹⁴. This is also the last major treaty until 966 AD, when Sayf al-Dawla petitioned Nicephorus II Phocas for an agreement by which 3 000 Arab soldiers regained freedom¹¹⁵. It is also worth mentioning that the very organization of an exchange of prisoners presumably included costly preparations¹¹⁶.

Although these exchanges involved large groups of prisoners, it is clear that only a small part of the captured soldiers were lucky enough to be eligible for the procedure¹¹⁷: as stressed by A. Ramadan, most of them became slaves¹¹⁸. The scale of the practice must have been considerable, given that it attracted the attention of the emperor himself: as the number of slaves in Byzantium increased, John Tzimiskes issued a law regulating slave trade in the territory of the whole empire. Eric McGeer observes that the novel was issued between 972–975 AD, when Byzantium finally got the upper hand in the conflict with the Arabs and completed the conquest of northern Syria¹¹⁹. The influx of slaves was substantial, which

¹¹⁰ BAR HEBRAEUS, X, p. 156–157.

¹¹¹ It seems that an organized jail system was created for the Arab prisoners. One of the prisons was meant for Tarsians. High-status captives were held separately, while rank-and-file soldiers were imprisoned in provincial thematic centers, L. SIMEONOVA, *In the Depths...*, p. 90–91; K. DURAK, *Traffic...*, p. 145.

¹¹² A. TOYNBEE, *Constantine...*, p. 392–393; C. HUART, *Lamas-Şū...*, p. 647.

¹¹³ According to Yahya the exchange took place in 938 AD, YAHYA, p. 710.

¹¹⁴ *Theophanes Continuatus*, VI, 9, 1–12, p. 442–443.

¹¹⁵ YAHYA, p. 804.

¹¹⁶ These involved valuable gifts given to the rulers, A. CUTLER, *Gifts...*, p. 264–269. One should bear in mind that at least since the time of Leo VI, the Arabs occupied a high position within the Byzantine diplomatic protocol, L. SIMEONOVA, *In the Depths...*, p. 78. Consequently, any prisoner exchange or diplomatic visit was an opportunity to show Arab or Byzantine superiority over the enemy, J. SYPIAŃSKI, *Arabo-Byzantine...*, p. 465–466.

¹¹⁷ Among those who were not likely to be sold into slavery directly after the campaign were qualified workers, artists, and craftsmen, A. CUTLER, *Gifts...*, p. 255.

¹¹⁸ A. RAMADAN, *The Treatment...*, p. 162–166; K. DURAK, *Traffic...*, p. 144.

¹¹⁹ E. MCGEER, *Sowing...*, p. 368.

required clear fiscal regulations. According to the new law, the trade between a soldier possessing a prisoner and his commander was exempt from taxation. However, curiously enough, if the owner decided to sell his captive to someone unrelated to the campaign – e.g. at the marketplace in Constantinople – then the transaction was taxed¹²⁰. Thus, the regulations in question evidently favored situations in which commanders bought back prisoners from their soldiers, possibly for a price lower than the free market one. In any case, the law proves that slave trade became an important issue towards the end of the period in question and required the emperor's intervention. The sources also corroborate the claim that Byzantine generals were not only willing to take prisoners, but it was sometimes also the main goal of the campaign.

Prominent prisoners – too precious to set them free?

The examples adduced above show that some prisoners, especially those of noble descent and related to the powerful elite, were perceived as particularly valuable, so that their captors were determined to keep them alive. However, this does not mean that they could always count on regaining their freedom. The above-mentioned Abu'l-Asha'ir, although living in luxury and treated with honor, never returned to his country¹²¹. A similar fate befell many Byzantine nobles unlucky enough to be captured by the Arabs. One example is Constantine Phocas, the son of Bardas (then Domestic of the Schools), taken prisoner by Sayf al-Dawla during the battle of Marash. The Byzantine chronicler John Scylitzes claims that the domestic's son was poisoned by the emir of Aleppo after refusing to convert to Islam¹²². In fact, Constantine's death brought fatal consequences to both sides of the conflict: as we are told by Scylitzes, Bardas ordered to slaughter all Arab prisoners in his possession, including the relatives of Sayf al-Dawla¹²³. What is more, no prisoner exchanges took place between 954–966 AD. These two facts alone prove that the death of the domestic's son was a major scandal. Interestingly, while Byzantine chroniclers blame the emir of Aleppo for Constantine's death, Arab chroniclers – such as Ibn Shaddād – portray the relevant events differently¹²⁴. According to their tradition it was the Byzantines who arranged the poisoning

¹²⁰ *Novella of the Emperor John Concerning the Tax on Slaves Taken in War*, [in:] E. McGEER, *Sowing...*, p. 368.

¹²¹ Yahya of Antioch states explicitly that he died in captivity, YAHYA, p. 773.

¹²² SCYLITZES, 9, 24–27, p. 241.

¹²³ SCYLITZES, 9, 27–29, p. 241.

¹²⁴ Alexander A. VASILIEV (*Byzance...*, p. 196) argues that Constantine and Sayf al-Dawla were in good relations when the former lived in captivity. Bardas is said to have offered 800 000 *dinars* and 3000 Arab prisoners in return for freeing his son, but the offer was rejected. As a proof for the above-mentioned relationship, Vasiliev refers to the account of Ibn Shaddad (Ms Vatican, 730, Fo 215, II, 2, post: A.A. VASILIEV, *Byzance...*, p. 196).

of the young general after Sayf al-Dawla rejected the offer of ransom issued by Bardas¹²⁵. Yahya of Antioch claims that Constantine was treated by the emir with respect, and was buried with honors by the local Christian community of Aleppo¹²⁶. One must admit that this latter interpretation of the events is viewed as more plausible in modern scholarship. Aleksandr A. Vasiliev points out that Sayf al-Dawla acted in accordance with a long-standing Arab tradition, caring for his prisoner and doing everything he could to save his life. When this was to no avail, he wrote a letter to Bardas explaining the circumstances of his son's death¹²⁷. Similarly, J.-C. Cheynet states that it is improbable that the emir of Aleppo was responsible for Constantine's death¹²⁸: if he had been the one who had the young general poisoned, he would not have cared to explain himself to his father. Although the mystery remains unsolved, it cannot be doubted that the incident greatly affected the already tense relations between the Arabs and the Byzantines¹²⁹.

Sometimes, however, one comes across stories with a happy ending. Such was the case of Abu Firas, a relative of Sayf al-Dawla¹³⁰. The nobleman in question was not only the governor of the strategically important cities of Manbij and Harran, but also one of the most eminent Arab poets of his time¹³¹. According to various accounts, he was captured sometime between 959–962 AD, certainly during the rule of Romanus II¹³². His captor, Theodore Parsacutenus, did his best to exchange him for his own father and brother, who had remained in captivity since 954 AD. Curiously enough, however, Sayf al-Dawla would rather leave his relative in a Byzantine prison than release those two generals¹³³. Eventually, Abu Firas was released in 966 AD as a result of the prisoner exchange arranged by the emir of Aleppo and Nicephorus II Phocas¹³⁴. Although we may only speculate why Sayf al-Dawla waited so long, it is likely that letting go of certain prisoners was simply too risky¹³⁵. Such valuable captives were treated at least in an acceptable way and

¹²⁵ A.A. VASILIEV, *Byzance...*, p. 196. Koray Durak reconstructs the same sequence of events, though without mentioning Bardas Phocas's name directly, K. DURAK, *Traffic...*, p. 148.

¹²⁶ YAHYA, p. 771.

¹²⁷ A.A. VASILIEV, *Byzance...*, p. 351.

¹²⁸ JOHN SKYLITZES, *A Synopsis...*, p. 233, an. 39.

¹²⁹ The case of Constantine's death is indeed a mysterious one. It seems that, as a matter of fact, the final result was detrimental to all of the parties involved: Bardas lost his beloved son, while Sayf must have been aware that killing the domestic's son would have been tantamount to putting his own relatives in Byzantine captivity in tremendous risk.

¹³⁰ H.A.R. GIBB, *Abū Firās*, [in:] *The Encyclopedia...*, vol. I, p. 119–120.

¹³¹ S.E.H.A. NIAKI, H.S. CHAFJIRI, *The Common Themes of Prison Poetry in the Poems by Abu-Firas Al-Hamdani and Mas'od Sa'd Salman*, JAEBS 5, 2015, p. 286–287.

¹³² *Vaticani arabi*, 730, Fo 246, II, 3 (post: A.A. VASILIEV, *Byzance...*, p. 197). Abu Firas was captured around 959 AD, A.A. VASILIEV, *Byzance...*, p. 197.

¹³³ *PMZ II*, vol. VI, p. 368–369 (s.v. Theodore Parsacutenos, #27758).

¹³⁴ W. TREADGOLD, *A History...*, p. 501.

¹³⁵ In the case of such prisoners, it is likely that the emir knew their military talents and was thus reluctant to release them. As far as Constantine Bardas is concerned, Sayf may have hoped for achieving certain non-financial benefits, such as e.g. giving up a strategically important fortress.

often had access to their captors (this was the case with Constantine Phocas). Besides, Abu Firas was visited at least once by Nicephorus II Phocas – who, we may note, insulted the poet claiming that *the Arabs are meant to write but not to fight*¹³⁶.

The above examples prove that, in some cases, it was more cost-effective to keep notable captives in prison than to exchange them, even if this meant spending a substantial amount of money¹³⁷. Sometimes, the reason behind the refusal was the military skill of a given prisoner.

Kill them all! – Revenge, necessity or calculation?

Leo the Wise mentions in his *Tactica* that under certain circumstances the campaigning army should not take any booty (i.e. also no prisoners)¹³⁸. Thus, on some occasions, generals were not interested in keeping the captives alive. One of the reasons why both the Arabs and the Byzantines would slaughter their prisoners was vengeance. As stressed by A. Ramadan, the practice emerged from the fact that the conflict between the Eastern Christians and the Muslims in the 9th–10th centuries was an intense one, with a strong ideological component¹³⁹. Thus, it is no secret that both sides committed acts of cruelty. One of the sources that shed some light on the atmosphere of the war is the chronicle of Ibn Khurdadbeh. The historian states that the Byzantine nobles (i.e. the generals called *patrikioi*) not only fought the Muslims with the sword, but also tortured the prisoners by burning them alive¹⁴⁰. In some cases, revenge was a personal matter – as in the case of Bardas Phocas, who ordered the execution of all Arab prisoners upon hearing of his son's death in captivity¹⁴¹. This act of vengeance was certainly quite dramatic, since it involved Sayf al-Dawla's relatives, who had been in Byzantine captivity for some time already.

A. Ramadan remarks that an equally dramatic event took place after the unsuccessful plot against the court of Aleppo instigated by the Byzantines in 957 AD. In retaliation for the conspiracy, Sayf al-Dawla executed 400 Byzantine host-

¹³⁶ *Dīwān al-Amīr Abī Firās al-Ḥamdānī*, ed. M. AL-TUNJI, Damascus 1987, p. 34. It is striking that, during the period in question, the Arabs in fact showed greater interest in classical Greek culture than the Byzantines, J. SYPIAŃSKI, *Arabo-Byzantine...*, p. 470.

¹³⁷ Sometimes, these valuable prisoners could be utilized for achieving diplomatic goals. Although the example comes from later period, it is worth noting that Nur ad-Din decided to set free some 1000 crusader prisoners and their leaders in order to avoid a joint Byzantine-Crusader campaign, A. CUTLER, *Gifts...*, p. 259.

¹³⁸ *Tactica*, XVI, 7, 39–40, p. 384–385.

¹³⁹ A. RAMADAN, *The Treatment...*, p. 157.

¹⁴⁰ IBN KHURDADBEH, p. 109. Specifically, the Arab chronicler mentions burning the prisoners with fire while they were tied to iron bars. Also, while *patrikios* is clearly a court dignity, Ibn Khurdadbeh must have meant military commanders holding this rank.

¹⁴¹ SCYLITZES, 9, 27–29, p. 241. However, one must admit that, starting with the reign of Leo VI, the Byzantines showed moderate leniency towards the Arabs, L. SIMEONOVA, *In the Depths...*, p. 79–80.

ages¹⁴². W. Treadgold suggests that this decision might have been the result of a spontaneous impulse¹⁴³. Nicephorus II Phocas, too, slaughtered Arab prisoners for personal reasons: as we learn from Bar Hebraeus, after the emperor's nephew was killed during the siege of Antioch between 962–963 AD, Nicephorus ordered the execution of 1 200 Arab captives as an act of vengeance¹⁴⁴. Similarly, A. Ramadan points out that both the Arabs and the Byzantines massacred prisoners during the siege of Tarsus in 965 AD¹⁴⁵.

However, there were also situations in which the generals executed the captives in spite of earlier plans to the contrary. There are at least two examples from the period in question showing how people's lives turned from asset to burden for commanders. The first situation took place in 878 AD, during Basil the Macedonian's campaign¹⁴⁶. Though in general successful, the operation did not result in the capture of any of the important Arab strongholds, save for Geron¹⁴⁷. Thus, Basil had to face the prospect of withdrawal with a large enemy force behind, while his army was slowed down by prisoners taken during the campaign. Even though the emperor primarily allowed the division of spoils and captives among the soldiers, after some time he changed his mind and ordered the execution of all prisoners¹⁴⁸. A most similar drama unfolded almost 75 years later, when Sayf al-Dawla retreated to Aleppo after a successful campaign with many notable Byzantine captives¹⁴⁹. As we are told by John Scylitzes, the Arab army was ambushed by Leo Phocas, so that the emir had to slaughter the prisoners in order to secure a successful retreat to his territory¹⁵⁰. J.-C. Cheynet argues that this was in fact a great loss not only for the Byzantines, but also for Sayf al-Dawla, since the 400 hostages in question were of noble descent and could have been exchanged for a substantial ransom¹⁵¹. Although both events were clearly dramatic, it seems that the decisions were the result of pure calculation. Leo the Wise advises his generals that if the army is surprised by the enemy during a withdrawal while carrying booty and prisoners, the commander may negotiate the terms of evacuation with the adversaries in return

¹⁴² A. RAMADAN, *The Treatment...*, p. 157.

¹⁴³ W. TREADGOLD, *A History...*, p. 493.

¹⁴⁴ BAR HEBRAEUS, X, p. 169.

¹⁴⁵ A. RAMADAN, *The Treatment...*, p. 159.

¹⁴⁶ W. TREADGOLD, *A History...*, p. 458.

¹⁴⁷ The emperor could capture neither Samosata nor Germanicea nor Adata, *Theophanes Continuatus*, V, 48, 1–10, p. 280.

¹⁴⁸ *Theophanes Continuatus*, V, 49, 1–8, p. 283.

¹⁴⁹ A. RAMADAN (*The Treatment...*, p. 157) wrongly connects Scylitzes's account with the battle of 956 AD – in fact, the chronicler does not stick to linear chronology strictly. Similarly, J.-C. CHEYNET in his comment on the translation of SCYLITZES, argues that the massacre took place in 950 AD, JOHN SKYLITZES, *A Synopsis...*, p. 234, an. 42.

¹⁵⁰ SCYLITZES, 9, 45–46, p. 242.

¹⁵¹ JOHN SKYLITZES, *A Synopsis...*, p. 234, an. 42; W. TREADGOLD, *A History...*, p. 489.

for freeing the captives¹⁵². In the case of refusal, however, the general should have the captives executed in front of the enemy army and then withdraw *as best as one can*¹⁵³. Likewise, the anonymous author of *De velitatione* advises commanders who find themselves in such a situation either to kill the prisoners or to send them ahead¹⁵⁴. Thus, both military manuals justify executing captives in case the army is in danger.

Sometimes, however, slaughtering prisoners of war was not a necessity of the moment, but a carefully thought-out strategy. This was probably the case during John Tzimiskes's campaign of 963 AD¹⁵⁵. According to Scylitzes's account, after the elite contingent of Sayf al-Dawla was broken, the defeated soldiers sought refuge in the mountainous terrain¹⁵⁶. Although giving up the pursuit to avoid sustaining possible casualties seemed the reasonable option, Tzimiskes nevertheless chased the Arabs until the last soldier was dead¹⁵⁷. J.-C. Cheynet rightly asserts that the general wanted to eliminate the emir's best soldiers, thus weakening him permanently¹⁵⁸. This was no isolated incident; as a matter of fact, the Byzantines were quite inclined toward cold calculation. Another such example is furnished by Ibn al-Athir, who tells us about the slaughtering of 400 Arab prisoners at the Arab-Byzantine frontier in 927 AD¹⁵⁹. Notably, this was the time when the Byzantines subjugated the Melitene Emirate for the first time (though for a short period only). In fact, Scylitzes claims that John Curcuas brought the citizens to despair, so that they had no option but to ask for a treaty¹⁶⁰. Thus, the first defeat of the Melitene Emirate may in fact have been achieved through intimidation, which in turn was the effect of the slaughtering of the Arab captives. Instrumentalizing the death of enemy combatants was also the tactic employed by Nicephorus II Phocas during his conquest of Crete in 960–961 AD – Athina Kolia-Dermitzaki argues that the future emperor resorted to executing the prisoners during the campaign¹⁶¹. In Leo the Deacon's narrative, however, we only hear of beheading already dead Arab soldiers in order to display them to the besieged¹⁶².

¹⁵² *Tactica*, IX, 49, p. 174–175.

¹⁵³ *Tactica*, IX, 50, p. 174–175.

¹⁵⁴ *De velitatione*, 11, 27–31, [in:] *Three Byzantine Military...* (cetera: *De velitatione*), p. 185.

¹⁵⁵ John Scylitzes mentions that it took place soon after Nicephorus II ascended the throne, SCYLITZES, 10, p. 267–268.

¹⁵⁶ SCYLITZES, 10, 80–82, p. 268.

¹⁵⁷ SCYLITZES, 10, 83–88, p. 268.

¹⁵⁸ JOHN SKYLITZES, *A Synopsis...*, p. 257, an. 32.

¹⁵⁹ IBN AL-ATHIR, *al-Kāmil fī at-Ta'rikh*, 315 (927), ed. M.Y. AL-DAQAQ, Beirut 1987, p. 35.

¹⁶⁰ SCYLITZES, 19, 61–65, p. 224–225.

¹⁶¹ A. KOLIA-DERMITZAKI, *Some Remarks on the Fate of Prisoners of War in Byzantium (9th–10th Centuries)*, [in:] *La liberazione dei 'cattivi' tra cristianità e islam. Oltre La Crociata e il Ġihād. Tolleranza e servizio umanitario. Atti del Congresso interdisciplinare di studi storici*, ed. G. GIPOLLONE, Città del Vaticano 2000 [= CAV, 46], p. 586.

¹⁶² LEO THE DEACON (HASE), I, 7; LEO THE DEACON (trans.), p. 67.

In any case, it is evident that there were situations in which Byzantine generals and Arab leaders alike killed their prisoners. As a rule, it happened out of revenge, due to an urgent necessity, or as part of a pre-planned strategy. Depending on the situation, the prisoners' life could be used a tool for punishing the enemy, saving one's own army, or exerting pressure on a besieged foe.

Prisoners as a burden for the campaigning army

It is clear that both notable and rank-and-file captives were a logistic challenge for the campaigning army. The prisoners had to be guarded, consumed part of the available food supplies, and slowed down the captors' march. As we may conclude from the written sources, both Byzantine and Arab armies were exposed to unexpected attacks and ambushes not only during the campaign itself, but also during the return home¹⁶³. In the historical period under discussion, the Byzantines in fact favored engaging enemy armies when they were already on their way back¹⁶⁴. Such a tactic would have been unacceptable for the anonymous author of the *Treaty on Strategy* from the 6th century¹⁶⁵: according to this document, a general should see to the safety of the local population before undertaking any action against the enemy¹⁶⁶. However, the above tactic would not have brought any good against the mobile raiding parties of the Arab emirates, typically employing hit-and-run scenarios. The change in the Byzantine tactics was connected with the characteristics of the border conflict, which, in this case, involved marches across a difficult, mountainous terrain¹⁶⁷. Accordingly, overcoming the local defenses and taking booty was only part of the task of the raiding Hamdanid armies. The second phase of the operation involved the return to the emirate of Aleppo, and this was in fact the crucial and often the riskiest stage¹⁶⁸. The presence of the captives made the aggressor's army vulnerable to attack, which the Byzantines knew perfectly well. This is precisely the reason why Leo the Wise advises his generals to attack the Arabs while they are on their return journey through the Taurus mountains¹⁶⁹. The author of *De velitatione* goes even further: according to the anonymous general, one should allow the Arabs to pillage and plunder until the raiding party decides

¹⁶³ One should stress that both sides used the same routes across the Cilician frontier, which made a surprise attack even more probable, K. DURAK, *Traffic...*, p. 143–144.

¹⁶⁴ Generally speaking, the Byzantines were known for employing stratagems in order to wear down their opponents, E. MCGEER, *Sowing...*, p. 254–255.

¹⁶⁵ *De Re Strategica*, 5, p. 20–21.

¹⁶⁶ *De Re Strategica*, 5, 7–10, p. 20. The guiding principle of the treatise is to make sure that the Byzantine territory suffers no harm.

¹⁶⁷ The importance of those border regions was known to the emperors, which resulted in the formation of small border semi-themes called *kleisoura*, A. KAZHDAN, *Kleisoura*, [in:] *ODB*, vol. II, p. 1132.

¹⁶⁸ This is why the control over mountain passes was so crucial. The author of the source provides detailed instructions in this regard, *De velitatione*, 23, p. 231–233.

¹⁶⁹ *Tactica*, XVIII, 128, 627–629, p. 484–485.

to return home¹⁷⁰. What is more, these tactics were employed both in pitched battles and in small-scale ambushes on raiding parties¹⁷¹. As a result, greed proved the typical reason for defeat. The Byzantine generals were aware of this mechanism and occasionally tried to set traps on the Arabs. Thus, the author of *De velitatione* instructs commanders to select some brave soldiers and dress them in civil clothes, so that they pretend to be farmers¹⁷². Such a group was sent (along with herds) to the vicinity of the Arab forces. At some distance from them, however, a strong unit of soldiers would wait in hiding to intercept the careless attackers.

Teresa Wolińska argues that there were two reasons for this strategy¹⁷³. She points out that the priority of the Byzantine authorities was the defense of the fertile coastal territories, while the borderlands of the Empire were of little value due to the constant conflict with the Arabs¹⁷⁴. What is more, in order to protect the interior of the state, the main aim was to destroy the foe and not to defend local inhabitants. Thus, generals delayed the attack until there were favorable circumstances to achieve both of the aforementioned objectives. Secondly, Leo the Wise observed that while the Arabs were capable fighters, they were unable to reform the line once their formation was broken in battle¹⁷⁵. Thus, attacking undisciplined soldiers gave the best prospect of victory. All in all, one is left with the impression that Byzantine commanders occasionally treated the local population as bait.

Furthermore, as remarked above, the captives consumed part of the food supplies, and a detachment of soldiers had to guard them. Aware of this, Leo advises his generals to keep only strong and young captives during the siege of a city, while women, children and the elderly should be sent back¹⁷⁶. The freed civilians were of no use for the besieged; on the contrary, they could occasionally do the Byzantines a favor. What is more, the defendants were less motivated to fight, since they expected good treatment in case of a swift surrender.

Prisoners of war – source of information or tool of diversion?

One could deduce from the previous part of the paper that prisoners were mainly a burden, unless commanders managed to deliver them safely to their territory. However, in some cases, the Byzantine generals knew how to utilize the captured

¹⁷⁰ *De velitatione*, 4, 14–28, p. 157–159. The strategy was as follows: firstly, take advantage of the fact that the enemy army is already tired as a result of the campaign; secondly, utilize the fact that part of the army is occupied with keeping an eye on the prisoners; finally, make use of the enemy's lowered morale (the soldiers would focus on the impending return home rather than on fighting further battles).

¹⁷¹ *De velitatione*, 11, 13–31, p. 185.

¹⁷² *De velitatione*, 18, 21–31, p. 211–215.

¹⁷³ T. WOLIŃSKA, *Synowie Hagar. Wiedza Bizantyńczyków o armii arabskiej w świetle traktatów wojсковych z IX i X wieku*, VP 35, 2015, p. 397–416.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 413.

¹⁷⁵ *Tactica*, XVIII, 111, 538–540, p. 478–479; T. WOLIŃSKA, *Synowie...*, p. 409.

¹⁷⁶ *Tactica*, XV, 22, 134–135, p. 360–361.

enemies to their advantage in yet different ways. Prisoners were taken not only to be enslaved or for ransom, but also to provide important information during the war. Most of the military manuals from the period in question stress that this was one of the most common and fundamental ways of determining what the enemy was planning, where he was stationed, and how strong he was. The advice to take prisoners in order to gain tactical information recurs on multiple occasions in the *Tactica* by Leo the Wise¹⁷⁷. Similarly, the author of *De velitatione* lists raiding and taking captives among the basic duties of the *trapezites*¹⁷⁸. It is worth mentioning that, according to both sources, it was the commander in chief who questioned the prisoners.

What is particularly striking, however, is that taking captives from enemy lines was emphasized more than protecting the citizens of the Empire. The author of *De velitatione* urges commanders to delay the attack on the Arabs until they break formation and start pillaging Byzantine farms and villages¹⁷⁹. Thus, the prospect of capturing Hamdanid warriors, some of whom were well-informed about the strength of the army as well as its itinerary, must have been the key motivation of the Byzantines. Likewise, the author of the *Praecepta Militaria* points out that information acquired in this way had great impact on planning the campaign, decisions on when to give battle, and maintaining discipline in the Byzantine military camp¹⁸⁰. For instance, if the prisoners provided a general with credible information that there was only one enemy army ahead, he could afford more aggressive tactics as well as – if the lines were broken – a more audacious pursuit.

However, both sides of the conflict knew the mechanism in question and tried to use it to their advantage. This is why Leo the Wise warned his commanders to double the guards and the intelligence effort before the battle in order to intercept potential deserters from the Byzantine army – or enemy spies¹⁸¹. The author of *De velitatione* was likewise aware that if any of the Empire's soldiers were captured (as deserters or members of the reconnaissance squad), the whole military operation could come under dire threat¹⁸². What is more, even if such soldiers were set free or regained their freedom in any other way, the authors of military manuals advised the commanders to keep their eyes on them. If someone had been kept in captivity, the general should not appoint him to a garrison in a fortress or a guarding post in a military camp¹⁸³. On the other hand, the Byzantines were always eager to accept deserters from the enemy army. The anonymous author of the *Treaty on*

¹⁷⁷ *Tactica*, XVII, 31, 161–162, p. 403–404; XVII, 49, 273–275, p. 410–411.

¹⁷⁸ *De velitatione*, 2, 28–31, p. 153.

¹⁷⁹ *De velitatione*, 10, 17–19, p. 175.

¹⁸⁰ *Praecepta Militaria*, II, 3, 25–27, p. 25.

¹⁸¹ *Tactica*, XIV, 25, 171–175, p. 304–305.

¹⁸² *De velitatione*, 15, 13–15, p. 197–199.

¹⁸³ *De Re Strategica*, 9, 34–39, p. 30–31.

Strategy advises treating enemy deserters well, although one should watch them carefully, even if they accepted Christianity or married Byzantine women¹⁸⁴.

Leo the Wise was even less optimistic concerning the credibility of deserters. The emperor mentions twice in his *Tactica* that it is usually prisoners of war (i.e. those captured in combat) who deliver crucial and trustworthy information, not deserters¹⁸⁵. On the contrary, Leo advises being suspicious of combatants who deserted their former masters, as deceit is likely to be involved¹⁸⁶. This stratagem was in fact practiced by the Byzantines themselves, judging by the advice in the military manuals¹⁸⁷. Leo mentions in his treaty that one can sometimes select brave volunteers who can let themselves get caught or feign desertion¹⁸⁸. These individuals were to provide the foe with information in a way controlled by the Byzantines. One can presume that in the case of this stratagem, it was crucial that the movements of the Byzantine army should match the information given by the spy to the enemy (at least at the beginning), in order to protect his life.

The above-mentioned examples prove that prisoners of war were also of practical use for the commanders, especially during campaigns on enemy territory. Although captives could provide the army with credible and valuable information, it was not advisable to trust their account uncritically. Leo preferred to rely on the account of captured combatants, not on deserters; he was aware, however, that both could have been offered as bait.

Captives as part of a marching army

Whether soldiers or civilians, captives were often utilized as human shields by both Byzantine and Arab armies¹⁸⁹. This maneuver was resorted to especially during marches through difficult and hostile terrain¹⁹⁰. Although it could seem that this tactic was typical of the Hamdanids raiding the borderlands of the Empire, it is in fact the Byzantines who left us a detailed description concerning the role of prisoners in shielding the army¹⁹¹. Thus, Leo the Wise advises his generals to lead

¹⁸⁴ *De Re Strategica*, 41, 3–5, p. 120–121.

¹⁸⁵ *Tactica*, XVII, 32, 166–168, p. 404–405; XX, 38, 199–200, p. 550–551.

¹⁸⁶ The author of a younger source, namely the *Sylloge Tacticorum*, emphasizes this very strongly, *Sylloge Tacticorum*, XXVII, 1–3, p. 45–46.

¹⁸⁷ *Sylloge Tacticorum*, LXXVII, 1–5, p. 99–100.

¹⁸⁸ *Tactica*, XVII, 13, 79–83, p. 398–399.

¹⁸⁹ The most detailed description is provided in Leo's *Tactica* in book IX.

¹⁹⁰ One should also remember that both infantry and cavalry tactics underwent considerable evolution during the 10th century. The square formation was frequent in march and in battle alike, E. McGEER, *Infantry versus Cavalry: The Byzantine Response*, REB 46, 1988, p. 137–141.

¹⁹¹ Leading prisoners on the flanks offered some defense both against the attacks of the swift Bedouin light cavalry and the heavily armored Hamdanid riders. The square formation offered shelter within, and in most cases the prisoners were kept inside, E. McGEER, *Infantry...*, p. 139–141.

the captives at the flanks of the marching column in order to protect the Byzantine soldiers in case of enemy fire¹⁹². The emperor remarks that this may in fact make it possible to get the army safely across inaccessible terrain and deter the enemy from attacking. The above-mentioned instruction corresponds with the further order to kill the prisoners should the enemy attack the column¹⁹³. Thus, the captives were utilized for blackmailing the enemy army and for encouraging it to parley or retreat. Perhaps this was the case in 950 AD: that year, Leo Phocas surprised Sayf al-Dawla, who was already returning to his territory after a successful campaign, carrying notable prisoners. John Scylitzes mentions that although the Byzantines were victorious, the Arabs managed to kill the captives. Although this is pure speculation, we may wonder if the domestic perhaps deliberately went out on a limb, choosing to inflict damage on the Hamdanid army rather than negotiate with the emir and watch him leave intact.

However, this was not the only way in which captives were used in service of the Byzantine army. Leo mentions in his treaty that captured enemy soldiers could be used to bolster the morale of the Byzantine troops. In the case of low-profile captives, it was particularly advisable to humiliate them in front of imperial soldiers and make them beg for their lives¹⁹⁴. It is remarkable that whenever a well-built and armored enemy soldier was captured, the generals' duty was to hide him from the eyes of the army. Both examples show that captives played an important role in Byzantine propaganda of success.

Sometimes, commanders would use the captured enemies for tasks they wanted to spare their own soldiers. When additional food or water supplies were found during the campaign, it was the prisoners who had to taste them first¹⁹⁵. Leo deems this practice necessary, since the enemy would not infrequently leave poisoned food or drink with the hope that the campaigning army would fall for the trap. In some cases, the captured soldiers were used as messengers, since sending them to deliver certain information was safer than sending Byzantine soldiers¹⁹⁶.

Among the many further ways of making use of captured enemy soldiers, one practice mentioned by Leo seems particularly noteworthy. The emperor notes that if the general knew to whom the captives belonged in the first place, he could use them to stir up turmoil in the enemy camp¹⁹⁷. If the Byzantine commander released captives belonging to one enemy noble only, or spared his estates, this would certainly cast suspicion on the latter's loyalty in the eyes of the enemy. Eventually, this could make the target leader ally with the Byzantines and strengthen their own army.

¹⁹² *Tactica*, IX, 48, 235–238, p. 172–173.

¹⁹³ *Tactica*, IX, 50, 246–249, p. 174–175.

¹⁹⁴ *Tactica*, XIII, 5, 20–25, p. 280–281.

¹⁹⁵ *Tactica*, XVII, 54, 305–307, p. 414–415.

¹⁹⁶ *Tactica*, XX, 23, 123–124, p. 544–545.

¹⁹⁷ *Tactica*, XX, 22, 113–118, p. 544–545.

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It is clear that taking prisoners of war during the 10th century Arab-Byzantine conflict was an important aspect of any successful campaign, regardless of who was on the offensive. The captives could be used in many different ways by soldiers, commanders, and even by the state itself. For ordinary soldiers, prisoners mostly meant additional remuneration for their service, paid by the general still during the campaign or by slave traders back in the country. Commanders were especially eager to capture notable prisoners in hope of obtaining substantial ransom for them; besides, generals could use low-profile captives as a source of information or to increase the probability of success during the campaign. For the state, prisoners meant sheer profit, which could be utilized in propaganda, economy, and diplomacy. However, this could happen only if the victorious general was able to lead the captives safely onto Byzantine territory. The period between taking the prisoners and crossing the state border was a dangerous one, not only for the captives, but also for the captors. The instructions in the *Tactica*, *De velitatione* and *Praecepta Militaria* leave no doubt that both Muslim emirs and Byzantine commanders were aware that a marching army was more vulnerable to attacks if it included a large number of captives and carried considerable booty. Admittedly, the written sources only provide a limited number of examples referring to captured soldiers and civilians during the Arab-Byzantine conflict. However, the extant information clearly proves that the military treatises were based on day-to-day experience. Thus, the situations described must have been quite frequent during this turbulent period. The authors of the military manuals do not condemn taking prisoners in general; rather, they advise flexibility. The captives are perceived as a natural consequence of the war and as an element that may provide many benefits for the victorious army. However, under certain circumstances, prisoners were more of a threat than a profit for the whole operation; in such cases of danger, the commander was advised not to hesitate.

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Abstract. For the Byzantine emperors of the 10th century, the eastern front was the crucial one, due to the constant struggle with the Abbasid Caliphate. In the course of this conflict – from which Byzantium emerged victorious – the capturing and enslaving of soldiers and civilians alike was an everyday reality. The main objective of this paper is to define the role of prisoners of war in the strategy and tactics of Byzantine generals. First, I will attempt to determine whether the latter treated the captives as a potential gain under various aspects (i.e. financial, prestige-related, or diplomatic). Next, I will focus on those situations in which prisoners were nothing more than a burden. With the help of narrative sources and military manuals, I will try to clarify why both sides occasionally decided to execute their captives in certain episodes of the 10th century Arab-Byzantine conflict. Finally, I will specify how Byzantine generals made use of prisoners in order to get the upper hand over their Arab rivals.

Keywords: Arab-Byzantine conflict, civilian captives, military captives.

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THE BYZANTINE-POETIC PATH OF THE WORKS OF ST. MAXIMUS THE GREEK (MIKHAIL TRIVOLIS, *ARTA, CA. 1470 – ST. MAXIMUS THE GREEK, †MOSCOW, 1556)*

Some biographical notes¹

Mikhail Trivolis was born around 1470 in the Greek Macedonian town of Arta, which at that time became administratively Orthodox². He received his initial education from his relative (probably an uncle) Demetrius Trivolis, a bibliophile with well-established links to Greek and Italian scholars. The young Mikhail was invited to travel to Corfu and to northern Italy – possibly by Iannos Laskaris, who visited Trivolis in Arta while searching for valuable manuscripts for the Medici library. While on Corfu, Mikhail Trivolis became close with Greek scholars and philologists³ such as Marco Musuros and Demetrius Halkhondyle, learned men of the Moschos family⁴. Together, they travelled to Italy along the

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¹ Our method follows two main principles. Firstly, we purposely limit ourselves to the author's (i.e. Maximus the Greek's) viewpoint of the concrete historical period. Secondly, we are dealing only with manuscripts from his lifetime; all conclusions and goals of the present investigation are reached on the basis of these texts. As a result, we are focusing on a handful of carefully selected manuscripts (from the 16th century) that were deemed highly authoritative in the process of extensive analytic reading. In other words, we are not dealing with a chronologically quantitative list of Maximus the Greek's manuscripts – rather, with simultaneously listed manuscripts that may be said to have preserved his “fingerprints” (metaphorically speaking). This kind of method could be named “synchronic-diachronic”, as opposed to plain “linear diachronic argumentation”. Additionally, up-to-date information from biographical sources is indispensable; only such data may offer a sufficiently objective biographical frame. Consequently, the above-described method enables us to bring to light some significant details that may have been neglected or overlooked in past studies. Moreover, our research is firmly based on the precise comparative analysis of the personal Slavic idiom of Maximus the Greek, often misunderstood by previous scholars. For this reason, some observations in this paper might appear unexpected; nevertheless, we are convinced that they are fully justified.

² I. ŠEVČENKO, *The Four Worlds and the Two Puzzles of Maxim the Greek*, Psl 19, 2011, p. 294.

³ Н.В. СИНИЦЫНА, *Максим Грек*, Москва 2008 [= ЖЗЛ. СБ, 1362], p. 18–19.

⁴ E. DENISOFF, *Maxime le Grec et l'Occident*, Paris–Louvain 1943, p. 140–143.

Greek and Croatian islands. Mikhail first established himself in Florence, dedicated to the Holy Annunciation of Virgin Mary, which left a deep impression in his imagination for all his life (he remembered this city *as the most beautiful and the most wonderful town in the Italian land that he had ever seen*⁵). In the Florence apartment of Iannos Laskaris, who became Mikhail's supervisor in his translation and linguistic endeavours, he was introduced to the elite community of scribes, translators, and professional calligraphers, who were carefully carrying out the process of transmitting ancient manuscripts into a new, printed form. Already in 1492⁶, in Florence, Mikhail Trivolis established the first contacts with Aldo Manuzio; furthermore, he became acquainted with such Florentine humanists and intellectuals as Marsilio Ficino⁷, Cristophoro Landino⁸ or Angelo Poliziano⁹. While in Florence, Mikhail transcribed the Greek manuscript of the *Geoponica* for Iannos Laskaris, twice¹⁰. In this manuscript, Mikhail Trivolis left a signature, which not only provides certain chronological evidence, but also constitutes an important sign of self-identification. It shows that Trivolis was aware of the concept of non-anonymous work – a most bold and progressive thought from an early Renaissance perspective. Mikhail also copied Strabo's *Geography*, in which manuscript he first used his special forms of handwritten Greek words and letters (Gr. *k*, *m*, *n*), which he kept on using for the remainder of this life (cf. the resemblance of his Greek manuscripts – for example, in the Greek *Psalter*, which he copied in Russia)¹¹. Mikhail concluded this manuscript with verses forming an ode to the ancient author. His copy of the manuscript of Joseph Flavius's *Antiquities of the Jews*¹² contains certain expressions indicating facts from his personal biography; for example, he later noted that he travelled to the south edge of Western Europe *from the Alps and the Pyrenees to Gadeir*¹³ (in the *First Polemical Letter to Fiodor*

⁵ Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale (BN), Slav. 123, f. 461 r.

⁶ D. SPERANZI, *Michele Trivoli e Giano Lascari. Appunti su copisti e manoscritti greci tra Corfù e Firenze*, SSLa 7, 2010, p. 275–276.

⁷ The first Latin translator of Dionisus Areopaghyte.

⁸ M. GARZANITI, *Michele Trivolis/Massimo il Greco (1470 – circa-1555/1556). Una moderna adesione al vangelo nella tradizione ortodossa*, CS 36, 2015, p. 343.

⁹ E. DENISOFF, *Maxime...*, p. 152.

¹⁰ Paris, Bibliothèque nationale (BN), Gr. 1994, cf. E. DENISOFF, *Maxime...*, p. 88. During the lifetime of Laskaris, this manuscript was handed over to the Italian poet, diplomat, and philologist Andrea Nauggerii (1483–1529), Б.Л. ФОНКИЧ, *Новый автограф Максима Грека*, [in:] ИДЕМ, *Греческие рукописи и документы в России в XIV – начале XVIII в.*, Москва 2003 [= РХВ.Б, 4], p. 77–79.

¹¹ Sankt Petersburg, Russian National Library, PHB, Соф. 78.

¹² Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana: *A Geography of Strabo* (Reg.gr. 83); Joseph Flavius's *Antiquities of the Jews* (Barb.gr. 100).

¹³ Lat. Gades, Gr. Gadeir (Cádiz, a town in Southern Spain). The same expression was used in the works of Sigismund HERBERSTEIN, cf. *The Gratae Posteritati (Edition Stored in Ptuj, 1560)*, Ljubljana 2017, p. 45. The Russian scholar maintains that “Gadir” means Gibraltar, А.И. ИВАНОВ, *Литературное наследие Максима Грека. Характеристики, атрибуции, библиография*, Ленинград 1969, p. 174.

*Karpov Against the Latins*¹⁴). Mikhail Trivolis was also once in possession of his own copy of Dioscorides¹⁵ (printed in 1499 by Manuzio) – first owned by Trivolis at Corfu, then by Georgios Moschos, and subsequently by Mikhail's cousin, Antonio Eparque¹⁶. Clearly, he transcribed the oldest and most sought-after Greek books, all of them records of previously illuminated manuscripts. Besides, he was most probably included in the group of educated men who were engaged in the project of the planned Medici Library. Within a few years, Mikhail was already in touch with the newly established printing house of Aldo Manuzio in Venice; he became part of the editorial group responsible for newly printed Greek books. At that time, in Manuzio's printery, the programme of *Nel'Accademia* was being formed. There, he met other Greek colleagues, members of the second Greek diaspora – Iannos Grigoropulos, Aristobule Apostolios, Nikolas Sofianos¹⁷, Zacharias Kalliergis (Cretan calligrapher and founder of the Greek Press in Medici Rome), Nikolas Vlastos¹⁸, Pietro Bembo (Venetian historiographer and expert in the Slavic areas forming part of the Venetian Republic), and philologist Giovanni Crastone. His correspondence with Scipio Carteromach and Ioannos Grigoropulos from that period is quite well preserved¹⁹. Manuzio purposefully chose the original handwritten script of Mikhail Trivolis as the model ("Druckvorlage") for the first prints of the *Idylles* of Theocritus²⁰. Like Marco Musuros (the first professor of Greek at the University of Padova and the first censor of Greek books in Venice in 1503, who created over 200 lines)²¹ and Demetrios Moschos, Mikhail Trivolis started cultivating his own poetic creativity; this occurred already in Florence. The first verses of his own can be found in the marginalia of a manuscript that contained the works of Ermogen, Sirianus, and Sopatro²², which were in many respects part of the canon of Byzantine rhetoric and poetics, especially concerning the recognition of the rhythm and the metre²³ (the rhythmical unit of prose and the rhythmical unit of verse). In the marginalia of this manuscript, Mikhail included a form of monokondylion containing the name of his father – Manuel²⁴. Later, he also

¹⁴ ПРЕПОДОБНЫЙ МАКСИМ ГРЕК, *Сочинения*, vol. I, Москва 2008 (cetera: ПРЕП. МАКСИМ ГРЕК I), p. 177.

¹⁵ E. DENISSOFF, *Maxime...*, p. 88.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 143.

¹⁷ I. ŠEVČENKO, *The Four...*, p. 296.

¹⁸ E. DENISSOFF, *Maxime...*, p. 88–89.

¹⁹ ПРЕП. МАКСИМ ГРЕК I, p. 101.

²⁰ Н.В. СИНИЦЫНА, *Максим Грек...*, p. 34; D. SPERANZI, *Michele...*, p. 280, an. 94.

²¹ I. ŠEVČENKO, *On the Greek Poetic Output of Maksim Grek*, Bsl 58, 1997, p. 61.

²² In June 1491, Iannos Laskaris visited Demetrios Trivolis with the aim of acquiring the manuscripts of Sopatro for the library of Lorenzo Magnifico Medici, E. DENISSOFF, *Maxime...*, p. 128.

²³ V. VALIAVITCHARSKA, *Rhetoric and Rhythm in Byzantium. The Sound of Persuasion*, Cambridge–New York 2013, p. 33.

²⁴ D. SPERANZI, *Michele...*, p. 266, an. 23, p. 278, 280; E. DENISSOFF, *Maxime...*, p. 136.

used the rhythmical principle of poetry (hexameter, pentameter – heroic metre, and iambic²⁵) in his theological and polemical prose writings.

Mikhail Trivolis also visited Milan and Ferrara; twice, he stayed at the Mirandola castle²⁶ for a longer period, teaching the Greek tongue to Gianfrancesco della Mirandola. At Mirandola, he firstly studied the corpus of Dionisius Areopaghyte. As we learn from Mikhail's letters from Mirandola sent to Ioannos Grigoropoulos and to minor canon Nicolla Tarassci in Vercelli (March 29th, 1498), he also received a letter of invitation from humanist Antonio Urceo Codro to work as a professor of Greek at the University of Bologna. Trivolis did not decide to accept this kind of post, however²⁷. Under profound spiritual influence of the public theological preachings of Girolamo Savonarola, in 1502 he joined the Dominican Monastery of San Marco in Florence. Still, he was not ordained, staying there as a novice for about two years (1501–1503). He left the Monastery of San Marco in 1504 due to reasons of a strictly personal nature²⁸. He was only able to find spiritual peace in working with manuscripts and first-printed books in Manuzio's printery in Venice. In that city, Mikhail was involved in the preparations for the printing of Greek Orthodox liturgical books (Byzantine books for the Holy Liturgy)²⁹. Aldo Manuzio, to whom Maximus later referred as the "wise Romanian"³⁰, devised a special plan for the printing of Greek liturgical books, which, however, was never implemented. In fact, two earlier attempts to print liturgical books for Orthodox Christians had also failed: the first was due to the Cretan Georgios Alexandrou, who printed the *Psalterion* in Venice in 1486, while the other was by Aldo Manuzio himself³¹. In 1498–1500, the first Greek Orthodox community was established in Venice, known as the School of St. Nicholas (later joined by Marco Musuros)³².

In 1505, Mikhail Trivolis left Italy. His theological and monastic worldview took final shape at Mount Athos, in the Holy Monastery of Vatopaidi, dedicated to the Holy Annunciation. There, he was ordained as a monk in 1506³³, receiving the

²⁵ E. DENISSOFF, *Maxime...*, p. 142.

²⁶ Also preserved is a letter from 1500 that Mousouros wrote to Trivolis, residing in Mirandola at the time (Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Id. 2002).

²⁷ E. DENISSOFF, *Maxime...*, p. 89; ПРЕП. МАКСИМ ГРЕК I, p. 87–89.

²⁸ ПРЕП. МАКСИМ ГРЕК I, p. 98–99; Н.В. СИНИЦЫНА, *Раннее творчество преподобного Максима Грека*, [in:] ПРЕПОДОБНЫЙ МАКСИМ ГРЕК, *Сочинения*, vol. I..., p. 18.

²⁹ *Psaltery*, Venice 1485; *Horologion*, Venice 1509; *Oktoechos*, Rome 1520; *Parakletike*, Venice 1522; *Triodion*, Venice 1526; *Euchologion*, Venice 1526; *Typikon*, Venice 1545; *Menaia*, Venice 1548, cf. E. WELLESZ, *The History of Byzantine Music and Hymnography*, Oxford 1998, p. 431.

³⁰ Maximus the Greek explained the meaning of the additional name borne by Apostle Paul – the Romanian – as the noble name always attained by respectfully following the ancestor, in manuscript: Moscow, Russian State Library, РГБ, 256.264, f. 68 r.).

³¹ E. LAYTON, *Notes on Some Printers and Publishers of 16th Century Modern Greek Books in Venice*, Thes 18, 1981, p. 120.

³² Н.В. СИНИЦЫНА, *Максим Грек...*, p. 53, 83.

³³ ЕАДЕМ, *Раннее...*, p. 27; ЕАДЕМ, *Максим Грек...*, p. 90.

monastic name of Maximus (after St. Maximus the Confessor). While at the Holy Mount Athos, he continued his work with manuscripts, combining Eastern and Western sources of canonical Christian knowledge. His previous education and experience in Italy were not only considered as valid, but also quite appreciated. As a monk at the Monastery of Vatopaidi, Maximus had access to the oldest manuscripts of Mount Athos (upon request, he transcribed a damaged old manuscript that was of significant value in a dispute related to certain properties of the monasteries of Kastamonitou and Zograf). As a monk, he began studying the writings of the Holy Fathers³⁴ of the Orthodox Church; he was also introduced to the chants of Byzantine hymnography. He embarked on a profiled translation activity, based on the Greek normative tendencies, through which Bulgarian linguistic features were soon being replaced not with Russian but with Serbian ones³⁵. In the Athonite libraries of the Serbian Hilandar Monastery³⁶, which housed the oldest Slavic manuscripts³⁷, the monk Maximus was able to study the liturgical language of the South Slavs. In this period, Maximus became the closest disciple of Niphon II, Patriarch of Constantinople³⁸, who was also appointed Metropolitan of Wallachia at that time. For Patriarch Niphon, Maximus created many texts in verse, dating to the years 1506–1516³⁹. Moreover, it was here that he wrote the first poetic works of his own, mainly of an epigrammatic and homiletic character. He wrote the *Elegiacs on the Grand Rhetor Manuel of Corinth* for the Great Rhetor of the Church of Constantinople (1482–1532)⁴⁰, a hymnographer and musician related to the ruler of Moldo-Vlachia, Neagoe Basarab (himself a *ktitor* of Constantinople and of Jerusalem⁴¹). Maximus also wrote the *Verses on Patriarch Joachim I*⁴², similar in form to the biographical epitaphs popular among humanists in the middle of the 15th century, especially in North Italy and the Western

³⁴ E. DENISOFF, *Maxime...*, p. 27.

³⁵ В.А. МОШИН, *О периодизации русско-южнославянских литературных связей X–XV вв.*, [in:] *Русь и южные славяне. Сборник статей к 100-летию со дня рождения В.А. Мошина (1894–1987)*, ed. В.М. ЗАГРЕБИН, Санкт-Петербург 1998, p. 85.

³⁶ The Panteleimon Monastery, traditionally Russian, also housed a large number of Serbian monks at the time, Д.И. МУРЕШАН, *От второго к третьему Риму (Роль Патриархата и румынских влияний)*, Ори 9, 2014, p. 117.

³⁷ Cf. В.А. МОШИН, *О периодизации...*, p. 85.

³⁸ Later, in Moscow, Maximus also mentions Patriarch Niphon II in the text *About the Athonite Monasteries*, in which he emphasises the principles of mutual help and common possession: *In our days, there were abundant gifts of the holy Patriarch Niphon who piously passed away in this monastery and, hallowed from God was celebrated*, ПРЕП. МАКСИМ ГРЕК I, p. 124.

³⁹ ПРЕП. МАКСИМ ГРЕК I, p. 102–119.

⁴⁰ I. ŠEVČENKO, *The Four...*, p. 298.

⁴¹ Д.И. МУРЕШАН, *От второго...*, p. 138.

⁴² Joachim I received funerary honours from Wallachian ruler Radu the Great (d. 1508). In the years 1497/1498, he confirmed the position of Moldavian king Stephen III the Great (1433–1504) as “Protector of Athos”, Д.И. МУРЕШАН, *От второго...*, p. 116–117.

Slavic lands⁴³. However, from this period onwards, Maximus's poetic works were closely tied with liturgical contemplation. Beside the *Verses on Martyr St. Demetrius*, he also composed the complex *Service-prayer to St. Erasmus of Ochrid*⁴⁴ with 8 odes and 8 corresponding songs, dedicated to the Virgin Mary (*theotokion*). The significance of the second ode and the *theotokia* is the connection with the Byzantine hymnography of the 7th–8th centuries, particularly the canons by St. Andrew of Crete⁴⁵. The prayer, which corresponds to the supplicatory evening service (*apolythykion, apostixon*) as well as the night vigils (*pannyxida*)⁴⁶, ends with a soteriological message and a final extended speech, entitled *St. Erasmus' Synaxarium* and signed by the author in February 1509⁴⁷. In the first paragraph, Maximus reveals that he was not able to learn much about Erasmus's childhood and education, as he had to rely on severely damaged manuscripts in the course of his work on the transcript. Nevertheless, he proceeds to tell the life of the great scholar (*hieromartyr*) Erasmus⁴⁸ in accordance with what he was able to understand from the manuscript. The latter information is extremely important in that it confirms that Maximus's work at Vatopaidi was not limited to liturgical manuscripts: he also studied hagiographic content meticulously.

Maximus's most important work while at Vatopaidi was the hymn in the form of the *Intercessory Canon to St. John the Baptist*⁴⁹. In contrast to Romanos Melodos

⁴³ Under the influence of Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, Johannes Rot also wrote an Epitaph for Ulrich II of Cuilli following the latter's death, P. SIMONITI, *Humanizem na Slovenskem in Slovenski humanisti do srede XVI. stoletja*, Ljubljana 1979, p. 16–17, 239–242. Later, in Russia, Maximus the Greek translated Piccolomini's work entitled *The story of the Fall of Constantinople*, sharing with pope Pius II the fear for the threatened Christian knowledge after the fall of Byzantium.

⁴⁴ *Απαντα Αγίου Μαξίμου Γραικού*, vol. IV, *Λόγοι*, Άγιον Όρος 2017, p. 329–341. Unfortunately, we were not able to consult the original manuscript. For this reason, we quote from the present edition, although it is not considered to be critical.

⁴⁵ А.Ю. НИКИФОРОВА, *Из истории Минеи в Византии. Гимнографические памятники VIII–XII вв. из собрания монастыря святой Екатерины на Синае*, Москва 2012, p. 183.

⁴⁶ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 287, 289, 292.

⁴⁷ *Απαντα Αγίου Μαξίμου...*, p. 340.

⁴⁸ Maximus provides a short account of the life of St. Erasmus: *Hieromartyr Erasmus of Antioch suffered torments under emperor Maximian when he ruled over the territory of Illyricum. It started when Erasmus, preaching Christ's faith, toppled statues in the city of Lychnidos. The emperor sent his troops, who arrested Erasmus and brought him before his face. Trying to force him to adore other gods, he took him to the temple of Zeus, where Erasmus toppled the god's statue simply by looking at it. A giant snake crawled from under the statue. Terrified, people looked to Erasmus for help – and he baptised them. The emperor then ordered the baptised to be killed, while Erasmus was placed inside a hot bronze cage. The latter cooled down owing to God's grace, so that Erasmus survived. Subsequently, he was imprisoned, yet God again saved him. He then miraculously arrived in Campania, in the city of Phyrmos, where he preached the gospel and baptised many people. There, he died, Απαντα Αγίου Μαξίμου...*, p. 340. It is also worth noting that St. Erasmus was honoured particularly in Macedonia (Ochrid) and Albania at the time of the rule of Andronicus II. These lands were close to Arta, where Mikhail Trivolis was born.

⁴⁹ The Holy Mount Athos, The Holy Monastery of Vatopaidi, Cod. 1016, f. 32 r.–34 v.

– who, in the 6th century, composed a poem on the death of St. John the Baptist which contained 18 odes⁵⁰ – Maximus’s canon features 8 odes with the ensuing *heirmoi*, associated with the liturgical realisation of the text, particularly with the feast of John the Baptist⁵¹. The odes are interpolated with verses dedicated to the Holy Mother of God. The canon also contains an overture in the form of a hymn to the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross (the first feast after the Birth of the Holy Theotokos), and after that an ode to the Prophet John the Baptist, connected with the Feast of the Prophet and Forerunner John the Baptist on the first Sunday after Epiphany⁵². After the reading from Psalm 50 is found the first glorification (doxology) dedicated to the Mother of God⁵³, whom the author implores to recognize him as worthy, as she is “the only Divine Mother” (Gr. ἀξίωσον μόνη Θεομήτορ)⁵⁴. It seems that Maximus was particularly influenced by the mystagogical and theological views of Maximus the Confessor, since both authors managed to combine monastic humility with the liturgical observance of the sacred space of the church; and they did so using the language of biblical awareness (in particular, respecting the prophetic message of John the Baptist, repeated throughout the canon)⁵⁵. This can be observed in the following *heirmos*, placed after the above-mentioned *theotokion*:

Ωδή γ'. Οὐρανίας ἀψίδος.
 Προστασίαν καὶ σκέπην τὴν αἰεὶ δίδου μοι, ἐπικαλουμένω//
 Προφήτα σύ με κυβέρνησον, ταῖς ἱκεσίαις σου, τὸν ἀ//
 σφαλὴ πρὸς λιμένα, τῶ δεσμῶν ἐξαιρῶν με τοῦ πολε//
 μήτορος.

4th chant of the Heavenly Dome/Arch.
 But give me your protection and cover when I call you; you steer me,
 o Prophet, with your prayers, into a safe haven
 liberating me from those who fight (against me)⁵⁶.

⁵⁰ H.J.W. TILLYARD, *Byzantine Music and Hymnography*, London 1923, p. 14–16.

⁵¹ The feasts in honour of St. John the Baptist were traditionally widely celebrated in the liturgy services of the Athonite monasteries (of the Studite tradition), cf. А.Ю. НИКИФОРОВА, *Из истории...*, p. 183, an. 4.

⁵² Later, these verses were known as the *Apolythikon of St. John the Baptist* in Orthodox liturgy.

⁵³ A similar praise in honour of the Mother of God is placed after the reading from the Gospel of Matthew, The Holy Mount Athos, The Holy Monastery of Vatopaidi, Cod. 1016, f. 34 r.

⁵⁴ This short prayer corresponds to the *theotokion* from the *Kanon Parakletikos Agion Parthenion* by Symeon the Metaphrast, traditionally read in July before the Feast of Dormition.

⁵⁵ Cf. R. BORNERT, *Les commentaires byzantins de la divine liturgie. Du VIIe au XVe siècle*, Paris 1966 [= AOC, 9], p. 86–88.

⁵⁶ The Holy Mount Athos, The Holy Monastery of Vatopaidi, Cod. 1016, f. 32 v.

The final address in the 9th ode is a direct and clear veneration (Κυρίως Θεοτόκον). Mentioning the community of God the Son and His Mother, it accomplishes the pious request with the following words:

Χαράς μου τήν καρδίαν, Πρό//
δρομε Κυρίον, σὺν Μαριάμ τῇ Παρθένῳ πλμρώσασθαι, τὸν τῶν//
ἀπάντων Δεσπότην νὺν καθικέτευε

To fill my heart with joy, the Fore//
runner of the Lord, please, together with Virgin Mary,
beg the Lord⁵⁷.

This passage expresses the prayer by referring to the very important Athonite icon of the Holy Theotokos, called Ἄξιόν ἐστίν⁵⁸. Besides, already in this prayer one may notice the quite special syntactic and semantic way of constructing the theological message: the repetition of similar but grammatically different words, which enhances the liturgical message of the prayer. This method can be found in the later works by Maximus the Greek as the leading principle of the structuring of his theological message and his main textual innovation.

By that time, the monk Maximus had already revised various liturgical manuscripts, since his marginalia have been found in the rare Greek manuscript of the *Hagiography of Clement of Ochrid*⁵⁹, which also contains the liturgical service to this Slavic scholar and saint (in the *Menologion* for the month of November, on November 25th). On the occasion of Metropolitan Niphon's death, on August 11th, 1508, Maximus wrote the *First Epitaph on Patriarch Niphon II*, in which he used a linguistic comparison: Patriarch Niphon was called "the second Elijah", which could be explained by the fact that this saint was highly venerated among the Orthodox South Slavs. Maximus also wrote the *Verses on the Reliquary of Patriarch Niphon II*⁶⁰. These facts confirm that Maximus accompanied Patriarch Niphon II on his Orthodox missions outside Mount Athos⁶¹, especially to Moldo-Vlachia⁶²,

⁵⁷ The Holy Mount Athos, The Holy Monastery of Vatopaidi, Cod. 1016, f. 34 v.

⁵⁸ The Holy Mount Athos, The Holy Monastery of Vatopaidi, Cod. 1016, f. 34 v.

⁵⁹ The Holy Mount Athos, The Holy Monastery of Vatopaidi, Cod. 1134, f. 355 v., 369 v., 368 v., 368 r., 367 v., 363 r., 362 r., 362 v., 361 r., 361 v.

⁶⁰ I. ŠEVČENKO, *On the Greek...*, p. 68–69. It is worth mentioning that, in the 15th century, the Orthodox believers of Moldo-Vlachia were a particularly crucial element of the intermediate intellectual exchange between Serbia and Russia (including Southern Russia and Ukraine), В.А. МОШИН, *О непуодузацци...*, p. 96. Moreover, Moldo-Vlachia had a significant role in the political and ecclesiastical organization of the Orthodox Patriarchate, particularly between Moscow and Constantinople, Д.И. МУРЕШАН, *От второго...*, p. 117–118.

⁶¹ During such Orthodox missions, where all members would not speak the various national languages, Latin was used as the language of diplomacy (*Humanist Educational Treatises*, trans. C.W. KALLENDORE, Cambridge Massachusetts–London 2008 [= TRL], p. 87), as was common at European imperial courts at the time.

⁶² I. ŠEVČENKO, *On the Greek...*, p. 63–64; E. DENISOFF, *Maxime...*, p. 321–329.

which was later described in Maximus's letter to Russian Metropolitan Makarius⁶³. After ten years of monastic life at Mount Athos, Maximus – as an experienced scribe with linguistic skills – was chosen for a mission to Russia. Thus, in 1516, he was sent to Russia as a translator (from Greek to Church Slavic) and editor of liturgical books, as part of a new Orthodox mission that was sent as a response to the request made by Vasili III, Grand Prince of Moscow. On his journey to Moscow, Maximus was accompanied by one Bulgarian and one Russian monk⁶⁴. Moreover, the above-mentioned verses dedicated to Patriarch Niphon confirm that, while on his way to Moscow as part of the Athonite delegation⁶⁵, he stopped in the Wallachian city of Curtea de Argesi, where the holy relics of Patriarch Niphon II were transferred in 1517. Maximus probably also passed through Constantinople. Besides, he most certainly stopped in Venice, where he had some old acquaintances; in addition, it was only there that he could acquire the Greek books that he would need for his future work with liturgical manuscripts in Russia. Thus, it is worth pointing out that exactly at that time Venice saw the rise of liturgical printing for South Slavic Orthodox believers, in the printing house of Božidar and Vincenzo Vuković; this occurred in two phases (in 1518/1519 and in 1546/1547, respectively). This was the first time when Maximus purposefully focused on the study of the Slavic language(s), which can be explained not only by the above-mentioned contacts with Wallachian and other Eastern Christian ecclesiastical centres, but also by the vicinity of the northern Italian cities – particularly Venice – to the Slavic lands.

Soon after his arrival in Moscow in 1518, Maksim Grek – as he was called in Russia – translated the first part of the *Apostol*⁶⁶ (the Acts, completed in 1519), and in 1520 also the second part (the Apostolic Letters)⁶⁷. In 1522, he fini-

⁶³ In this letter (cf. the manuscript from Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale (BN), Slav. 123, f. 79 r.), Maximus explicitly reports that he had already preached the Orthodox theological principles to “the Noble Lachs” (i.e. Italian Catholics or Moldo-Vlachians) before his arrival to Moscow, in places where the Nomocanon of the Patriarch Photius had been *regula legis* for a long time, J.-B. PITRA, *Des Canons et des collections canoniques de l'Église Grecque*, p. 63, an. 3. He then continues: I was sent from the Holy Monastery of Vatopaidi to preach the pure Orthodox faith and I did so with the holy support and the inspiration of the Divine Paraclete, and from everywhere I was deliberately returned to the Holy Mount Athos, but nowhere did it happen to me like here, in Russia, where I was put into iron chains, and I experienced in a dark cell the cold, the smoke, and starving, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale (BN), Slav. 123, f. 79 r.

⁶⁴ Notably, it has been proposed that Maximus learned the Slavic language not with the help of Greek, but Latin, S. RUNCIMAN, *The Great Church in Captivity. A Study of the Patriarchate of Constantinople from the Eve of the Turkish Conquest to the Greek War of Independence*, London 1968, p. 327; И.В. Ягич, *Рассуждения южнославянской и русской старины о церковнославянском языке*, Санкт-Петербург 1896, p. 301, 306.

⁶⁵ I. ŠEVČENKO, *The Four...*, p. 299, 304; Д.И. МУРЕШАН, *От второго...*, p. 117–118.

⁶⁶ Н.В. СИНИЦЫНА, *Максим Грек в России*, Москва 1977, p. 64.

⁶⁷ The only version from 16th century is in Moscow, State Historical Museum, ГИМ, Муз. 3475; А.И. ИВАНОВ, *Литературное...*, p. 47.

shed⁶⁸ the translation of the extensive *Annotated Psalter*⁶⁹, with copious notes that expanded the manuscript into 1042 pages. It was Maximus the Greek's translation of the *Annotated Psalter* that first appeared in Russian Church Slavic. When in 1522 Daniil became Metropolitan of Moscow, he asked Maximus to translate for him the *Ecclesiastical History* by St. Theodoret from Cyrrihus; he refused, aware of the theologically complex content that could have led to misunderstandings. But he never suspected that this rejection would almost cost him his life. In 1525, at the Moscow Church synod, he was for the first time accused of purported heretical translation errors in Russian liturgical manuscript books. As a result, he was imprisoned in the Joseph Volokolamsk Monastery. A minor linguistic misunderstanding⁷⁰ between the political body of the Russian church and Maximus the Greek was the official reason for even more serious accusations against him. Consequently, he was excommunicated and not allowed to attend Church service (the Divine Liturgy), to communicate, to have or read books⁷¹, as well as to write. Maximus was put into irons and barred from the Sacrament of the Holy Communion/Eucharist – the harshest thinkable punishment for an Orthodox monk. In May 1531, the charges against him were renewed. This time, he was accused of several transgressions, including that he was a spy for the Islamic court. Two of his translations of letters were also deemed problematic: pope Pius II's letter to Mehmed II, or the story about the fall of Constantinople by Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini⁷², as well as the letter of Suleiman the Magnificent to Marino Grimani, doge of Venice⁷³ – an ardent persecutor of Protestant teaching in the Northern Slavic lands⁷⁴. In addition, he was accused of having committed heretical errors in the translation of the hagiographic text of the *Life of Mother of God* from the *Hagiographic Collection-Menologion of Symeon the Logothete (Metaphrast)*. After ten years of imprisonment, under metropolitan Joasaphus, he was transferred (probably in the autumn of 1536) from the Joseph Volokolamsk Monastery to the Otroch

⁶⁸ Н.В. СИНИЦЫНА, *Новые данные о российском периоде жизни преподобного Максима Грека (материалы для научной биографии)*, ВЦИ 4, 2006, p. 222.

⁶⁹ Moscow, State Historical Museum, ГИМ, Шук. 4. In this manuscript, it counted 789 pages.

⁷⁰ Б.А. УСПЕНСКИЙ, *История русского литературного языка (XI–XVII вв.)*, ³Москва 2002, p. 234–235.

⁷¹ *Судные списки Максима Грека и Исака Собаки*, ed. Н.Н. ПОКРОВСКИЙ, Москва 1971, p. 55, fol. 344v.

⁷² *The Story of the Turkish Capture of Constantinople* by Enea Silvio Piccolomini (pope Pius II), in which the pope – setting out for a new Crusade against the Turks – addresses Sultan Mehmed II the Conqueror, challenging him to accept the Christian faith. The letter was considered lost, but preserved only in this translation: Moscow, State Historical Museum, ГИМ, Син. 791. Н.В. СИНИЦЫНА, *Археографический обзор*, [in:] ПРЕПОДОБНЫЙ МАКСИМ ГРЕК, *Сочинения*, vol. I..., p. 522; ЕАДЕМ, *Творчество преподобного Максима Грека 30–50 гг. XVI в. и собрание избранных сочинений из 47 глав*, [in:] ПРЕПОДОБНЫЙ МАКСИМ ГРЕК, *Сочинения*, vol. II, Москва 2014, p. 24; В.Ф. РЖИГА, *Кто перевел краткую повесть о взятии Константинополя турками*, *Sla* 13.1, 1934, p. 105–108.

⁷³ Н.В. СИНИЦЫНА, *Археографический...*, p. 522.

⁷⁴ P. SIMONITI, *Humanizem...*, p. 88, an. 25.

Monastery in Tver. This time, the circumstances of his imprisonment became slightly milder in that he was at least allowed to write⁷⁵. With the fall of Daniil, after 1547, Maximus's position improved. In 1552 (following the Stoglav of 1551)⁷⁶, he found a new home in the Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius. That year, he also managed to send his two poems in Greek to the Western European countries (they also exist in his Slavic version). Maximus the Greek died in the Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius in 1556. On January 21st, he was consecrated at the memorial day of St. Maximus the Confessor. In 1986 this day was finally dedicated to St. Maximus the Greek and he was included among the Orthodox saints by an official confirmation of the Russian Church.

Maximus's Philological, Theological and Liturgical Contributions

Maximus wrote a wide range of works in Church Slavic, which may be defined most appropriately as theological writings; he re-edited them several times in his final years, adding corrections and assembling them three times. To the three lifetime "Russian" collections of works could be added the collection of his selected works preserved in Paris (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale (BN), Slav. 123)⁷⁷, presenting an intermediate image – i.e. between the Iosif and Chludov collections (two lifetime collections of the works by St. Maximus the Greek⁷⁸). This manuscript volume, representing a very rich selection of his works⁷⁹, also contains the reflection of an archetype manuscript that is not extant in the known Russian collections⁸⁰; it has been suggested that some materials from the author's personal archive were preserved there. But none of the manuscripts written entirely by the hand of Maximus the Greek in Slavic have been preserved: all of his Slavic manuscripts were copied or supposed to be written under his dictation. The only material identified as his original handwriting is preserved in the marginalia, comprising various interventions and commentaries⁸¹. Beside his Slavic texts, some of his Greek manuscripts are extant, as are his letters and some of his notes in Latin⁸².

⁷⁵ Н.В. Синецина, *Новые...*, p. 224–225.

⁷⁶ Sinitsyna also mentions the date 1548/1549 as the year of the third attempt of the trial against him, Н.В. Синецина, *Творчество...*, p. 18.

⁷⁷ Unfortunately, we were not able to access the published version of this edition (Moscow 2017); however, the Russian scholars from the Institute of History (Moscow, RAN) notified us that it was obviously based on a most problematic copy of the manuscript, as a result of which the published version contains a large number of mistakes and dubious readings. For this reason, we are relying on the original manuscript [N.Z.].

⁷⁸ Cf. Н.В. Синецина, *Творчество...*, p. 34–40.

⁷⁹ The version published in Moscow in 2017 is inadequate in view of the numerous misprints and problematic readings, cf. above.

⁸⁰ This information was discussed and confirmed in a conversation with Nina Vasil'evna Sinitsyna in April 2103 [N.Z.].

⁸¹ Б.Л. Фонкич, *Новый...*, p. 74–79.

⁸² The front cover of the letter to Carteromach, E. DENISSOFF, *Maxime...*, plate VII.

If in his early texts Maximus fought vehemently against the Latin modification of the Creed of the Christian faith (the addition of the controversial *filioque*)⁸³, his texts from the later period were secretly permeated with his objections to the diminution of the holiness of the Mother of God. He also emphasized the heretical mistakes in the Russian manuscripts, essentially those that contradicted Orthodox theology and the pure glory of the Mother of God; paradoxically, during his second trial in Moscow, he was accused of the very same offence. His translation of the *Annotated Psalter* contained an extended patristic interpretation of the nine biblical canticles⁸⁴, following the readings of the 150 psalms. Among these, one can find a detailed interpretation of the Song of Mary, known in the Western liturgical tradition as the *Magnificat* (based on the evangelical verses in Lc 1, 46–55), which Maximus summarises as expressing glory to the Son of God⁸⁵ (furthermore, he connects the message of this song with the cosmographical hierarchy in accordance with the theological views of Gregory of Nazianzus). At this time, Maximus was obviously introducing a particular understanding of the principal theological unity (inherent alliance, essential non-separability) of Mary and God the Son, which he later expressed more clearly from the theological point of view – namely, in his argumentation on the Holy Trinity (Mary as the one responsible for the incarnation/birth of Christ/Word). This is a topic that Maximus indirectly – though persistently – attempted to clarify when working with Russian clerics and monks, as can be seen through a close reading of his text *The Confessional Creed of the Orthodox Faith*. Moreover, this can be confirmed in the theological doctrine only by the refusal of the addition to the Confessional Creed of the Latin *filioque*, and this partly explains Maximus's constant polemics against Catholicism.

⁸³ The controversial addition to the Creed, also connected with the “new” teaching, is associated with certain beliefs concerning the proceeding of the Holy Spirit. In particular, it claims that the Holy Spirit proceeds not only from God the Father, but also from God the Son. It began to spread through the Christian West during the rule of Charlemagne (in the year 802), when this kind of thought (based on the Augustinian Trinitarian doctrine) appeared in the teachings of Alcuin of York, E.A. SIECIENSKI, *The Filioque. A History of a Doctrinal Controversy*, New York–Oxford 2010, p. 95. In fact, Greek theologians rejected the innovation mainly because it deprived the liturgical act of the *epiklesis* (the Greek practice of a prayer invoking the Holy Ghost at the consecration of the Host) – a prayer which the Latins omitted from then on, S. RUNCIMAN, *The Last Byzantine Renaissance*, London 1970, p. 37.

⁸⁴ 1–2) the two song-prayers of Moses (Ex 15, 1–19; Dt 32, 1–43); 3) the prayer of the prophetess Hannah (1Sam 2, 1–10); 4) the prayer of Habakkuk (Hab 3, 2–19); 5) the prayer of Isaiah (Is 26, 9–19); 6) the prayer of Jonah (Jon 2, 2–19); 7) the prayer of Azariah (Dn 3, 26–45); 8) the song of the three Holy children (Dn 3, 52–88); 9) the song of Mary (Lc 1, 46–55), Г.М. ПРОХОРОВ, “Так воссияют праведники...”. *Византийская литература XIV в. в Древней Руси*, Санкт-Петербург 2009, p. 131. Additionally, in the Old Testament one may also find other song-prayers, which all display the syllabic rhythmical principle, an assonance, and an acrostic, U. CHEVALIER, *Poésie liturgique du Moyen Âge*, Paris–Lyon 1893, p. 9, 11: the prayer of Salomon (2Par 6, 14.18–21.40–42); 1Par 16, 8–36; Is 26, 9–20; Is 38, 10–20; Is 42, 10–13; Jer 10, 6–16; Jer 17, 5–18 etc.)

⁸⁵ Moscow, State Historical Museum, ГИМ, Щук. 4, f. 794 r.

Maximus's interpretation of the *Magnificat* follows the hierarchically cosmographical view from the theology of Gregory of Nazianzus, but also shows his own affiliation, which led to his ideas about the goodness of earthly life and the virtue of human creation. Maximus specifically connects the message of this liturgical song with the idea of God's benevolent love of humankind, as seen in the words with which he concluded his second translation of the *Liturgical Psalter* in 1552 (four years before his death). In Maximus's opinion, the highest example of the purest Divine inspiration was the translation endeavour of the *Septuagint* – also one of the first examples of a bilingual translation process – which he mostly followed. The analysis of Maximus's language in the Psalms (1552)⁸⁶ suggests that he knew the first Greek-Latin Psalter, published in Milan on September 20th, 1481 (a copy that contains notes on the margins was also preserved in Russia, today in St. Petersburg)⁸⁷, in which the editor Giovanni Crastone critically corrected the previous Latin edition of St. Hieronymus⁸⁸ on the basis of a comparison with the Greek *Septuagint*⁸⁹, as the author explains in the *Preface*. The comparison of the most significant replacements introduced by Crastone⁹⁰ and Maximus's second editing of the language of the *Liturgical Psalter* (1552)⁹¹ shows that Maximus considered both versions of the Psalter (Greek and Latin)⁹², on the basis of which he selected the Slavic word. But unlike Crastone, Maximus the Greek paid great attention to the liturgical meanings of the relevant word combinations, which confirms

⁸⁶ Moscow, State Historical Museum, ГИМ, Увар. 15/85.

⁸⁷ А.Х. ГОРФУНКЕЛЬ, *Миланская Псалтирь Джованни Кростоне 1481 г. и гуманистическая критика Библии*, [in:] *Коллекции. Книги. Автографы*, 2, *Книжные редкости Публичной библиотеки*, Ленинград 1991, p. 40.

⁸⁸ The Parallel Greek, Hebrew and Latin text was reproduced in the (pseudo-)Aldine, 1518. This edition has been the most frequently mentioned as the one that Maximus the Greek took to Moscow (Venice, Aldo Manuzio 1494), С. БЕЛОКУРОВ, *О библиотеке московских государей в XVI столетии*, Москва 1899, p. 302–304.

⁸⁹ This publication was presumably not intended for a Greek but for a Latin readership, specifically for Latin monks who wanted to learn Biblical Greek, cf. E. LAYTON, *Notes...*, p. 120, an. 4; А.Х. ГОРФУНКЕЛЬ, *Миланская...*, p. 35.

⁹⁰ Ps 5, 4; Ps 16, 2; Ps 31, 2; Ps 39, 7; Ps 86, 5; Ps 131, 15; Ps 138, 4, А.Х. ГОРФУНКЕЛЬ, *Миланская...*, p. 36–37. The first Russian printed edition of the Bible (the Bible of Ostrog), published by Ivan Fyodorov, was closer to the Septuagint and the Aldine Bible. The Synodical Russian Psalter mostly agrees with the Vulgate and the Masoretic version of the Book of Psalms. For Maximus the Greek's indirect motivation for the establishment of the Print Yard in Moscow see F.J. THOMSON, *The Slavonic Translation of the Old Testament*, [in:] *The Interpretation of the Bible. The International Symposium in Slovenia*, ed. J. KRASOVEC, Sheffield–Ljubljana 1998 [= JSOT.SS, 289], p. 108–112.

⁹¹ Moscow, State Historical Museum, ГИМ, Увар. 15/85. Cf. И.В. ВЕРНЕР, *К истории перевода Псалтыри Максимом Греком в 1522–1552 годах: хронология, текстология, методология*, Слав 2, 2017, p. 45–46.

⁹² И.В. ВЕРНЕР, *Грамматическая справка Максима Грека в Псалтыри 1552 г.*, [in:] *Письменность, литература, фольклор славянских народов. История славистики, XV Международный съезд славистов*, Москва 2013, p. 108, 110, 113.

his awareness of the complex biblical linguistic message. Crastone's words in the Preface concerning the errors of previous translators⁹³ are close to Maximus's argumentation about the Holy Grammar. Indeed, Maximus also understood the knowledge of Slavic in terms of strict criticism⁹⁴ – this is an issue which he explains several times in his manuscripts. It is expressed clearly in his writing entitled *The Treatise of the Monk Maximus about Correcting the Russian Books, and Against Those Who Speak that the Body of Lord after the Resurrection became indescribable*, in which Maximus explained the manner in which he dealt with the Russian liturgical book (Triodion):

I do not corrupt Russian books, as I was falsely accused, but take great care in my fear of God to correct, with my common sense, what has spread from inept copyists, unfamiliar with the holy grammar – or from the first translators of the Holy texts. Truth must be told. Sometimes the gist of Hellenic sayings was not fully apprehended, which led to steering away from the truth. Hellenic speech is often difficult to interpret; those who do not learn its grammar, poetry and above all philosophy, cannot clearly understand what was written, let alone translate it. The truth must be told that I carefully and diligently corrected what they misunderstood, the same must be explained to your Excellency with all honesty, in front of whom I humble myself as before God. Let me start with the following. I took the holy book of Triodion and noticed in the 9th hymn of the Maundy Thursday Canon: 'In His nature non-created Son and Word of the Father Who is always without the beginning, Who is not in His nature non-created, as they sing about Him.' I could not stand this great insult, so I amended the injury, as was handed to us by the most sublime Paraclete through the most blessed Kosmas in our books.⁹⁵

Moreover, it is clear that Maximus the Greek considered the knowledge of the language – of Greek, and especially the language of the Bible – literally as Holy Wisdom ("the Holy Grammar"); consequently, his reception of Slavic grammar was likewise marked with a significant theological dimension⁹⁶. Certainly, Maximus's use of the Slavic language was invariably intentional. It is clear that Maximus the Greek was also close to the philological group that assembled the bilingual (Greek-Latin) material for the *Lexicon* published by Manuzio and edited by Crastone in Milan in 1478. Between the preface and the core part of the lexicon, we find two epigrams with a praise to Manuzio. The authors were Scipio Carteromach and Marco Musuros, two of Mikhail Trivolis's companions and members of the second wave of Greek diaspora; in the verses, they expressed their longing for home and their wish to cultivate their mother tongue of Greek⁹⁷.

⁹³ А.Х. Горфункель, *Миланская...*, p. 34.

⁹⁴ И.В. Ягич, *Рассуждения...*, p. 301, 306.

⁹⁵ Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale (BN), Slav. 123, f. 259 v.–260 r.

⁹⁶ N. ZAJC, *Some Notes on the Life and Works of Maxim the Greek (Michael Trivolis, ca 1470 – Maksim Grek, 1555/1556). Part 2: Maxim the Greek's Slavic Idiolect*, Scri 12, 2016, p. 380–382.

⁹⁷ The two epigrams translate as follows. Scipio Carteromach: *Upon the strangers who seek, // This book bestows many flowers of the Hellenic tongue, // Like a meadow. For the Latin-speaking, it keeps many*

However, the process of Maximus the Greek's translation endeavours in Russia was initially realized through the mediation of Russian translators, Dmitri Gerasimov and Vlas, with the aid of the scribe Mikhail Medovartsev⁹⁸. Maximus would translate expressions from Greek and provide the relevant phrases in Latin, whereas they would translate them into the Russian recension of the Church Slavic language. As regards the latter, Maximus followed a particular usage of verbal forms, which did not change until the end of his life in Russia. Namely, he used the perfect form (*l*-form plus copula of the verb "to be") instead of the traditional aorist, which left the Russian clerics with the impression that he did not refer to the eternal meaning of the Saviour. In fact, while such a linguistic difference was absent from the spoken Russian language of the time, it did exist in the 15th/16th-century spoken⁹⁹ literary language (which was considered the same as the liturgical one) of those South Slavic nations that were geographically close to or in contact with Latin liturgy¹⁰⁰ (Slovene, Croatian¹⁰¹ – the Slavic languages of the Christian milieu spoken in close proximity of the northern Italian lands). Additionally, it could be noted that this kind of verbal form (without copula)¹⁰² may have been familiar to Maximus from his native places, because Arta bordered on the Macedonian-Albanian territory, where such forms were used frequently (especially with transitive verbs) in the everyday spoken varieties of the local Slavic dialects from the 9th century onwards¹⁰³. But through that linguistic difference – the copula – Maximus introduced into the Russian (Church Slavic) language a new distinction (as found e.g. in Latin), namely between the 2nd and the 3rd person singular perfect. The effect was a verbal form that could be

treasures, // And Aldus made a great effort in making it very handy. Marcos Musuros of Crete: When the Pelasgian tongue and the Ausonian daughter [an allusion to Latin – N.Z.] // Came into strife about the origin of the book, // Aldus, giving it a thought, saw that it was undecided, // So he decided it to be common to them both.

⁹⁸ Moscow, State Historical Museum, ГИМ, Щук. 4, ф. 1 v.; *Судные списки Максима Грека и Исаака Собаки*, p. 104–107.

⁹⁹ Cf. Е.В. КРАВЕЦ, *Книжная справа и переводы Максима Грека как опыт нормализации церковнославянского языка XVI века*, RLin 15, 1991, p. 252.

¹⁰⁰ Note that the parallel linguistic experience within the Latin liturgy did not cause any interference between the relevant languages.

¹⁰¹ В. НАВРАНЕК, *Aspects et temps du verbe en vieux slave*, [in:] *Mélanges de linguistique offerts à Charles Bally sous les auspices de la Faculté des lettres de l'Université de Genève par des collègues, des confrères, des disciples reconnaissants*, Genève 1939, p. 223–230.

¹⁰² Cf. А.Н. СОВОЛЕВ, *Hybrid Grammar in a Macedonian Dialect from Albania*, [in:] *Индоевропейское языкознание и классическая филология – XXII (чтения памяти И.М. Тронского). Материалы Международной конференции, проходившей 18–20 июня 2018 г.*, pars 2, (с. 795–1486), ed. Н.Н. КАЗАНСКИЙ, Санкт Петербург 2018, p. 1252.

¹⁰³ А.Л. МАКАРОВА, *Македонский ESSE-перфект: Эволюция формы*, [in:] *Индоевропейское языкознание и классическая филология-XXII (чтения памяти И.М. Тронского). Материалы Международной конференции, проходившей 18–20 июня 2018 г.*, pars 2, ed. Н.Н. КАЗАНСКИЙ, Санкт Петербург 2018, p. 822.

used for direct addressing (-л + еси). Undoubtedly, he introduced this innovation in Russian intentionally, especially because of the theological purpose of addressing (Gr. ἀπόστροφος) the Son of God directly. Yet, Maximus knew that this kind of addressing had already existed in Slavic: he could have heard it in the years before he left Venice for Mount Athos (1502–1504) or during his travel from Athos to Russia, when he might have stopped in Venice (in 1517) and nearby. In these areas, members of the Croatian Glagolitic community as well as Slovene and Serbian monks were found in quite large numbers.

Maximus the Greek translated the *Hagiographic Life of the Mother of God* from Metaphrast's *Menologion*¹⁰⁴ already in 1521. It was an apology of Her untouched nature, which could not be expressed in earthly terms; thus, he underlined the important patristic views along with extensive biblical references (canonical and non-canonical – for example, rejecting the information from the Infancy Gospel of Thomas), as well as some less known patristic sources (e.g. Juvenal of Jerusalem, who was a great opponent of Nestorius¹⁰⁵). Maximus certainly referred to pre-Metaphrast editions¹⁰⁶, and his translation shows traces of the text entitled *The Life of the Virgin*, attributed to Maximus the Confessor¹⁰⁷ and preserved until today only in Georgian translation in an Athonite manuscript. The manuscript of the *Hagiography of the Mother of God*¹⁰⁸ in the translation by Maximus the Greek in the original form (i.e. containing uncorrected words related to the second trial in 1531¹⁰⁹) still shows Maximus's corrections of certain words (possibly in his own hand)¹¹⁰. Despite that, it offers an insight into his translation process. Maximus's method of translating was substantially different from the earlier (Cyrillo-Methodian) practice of translating texts into Slavic. Rather than operating on a word-by-word basis, it followed a sentence-by-sentence procedure (or word-by-word in a theological context), where the guiding principle of translation was idiomatic usage, according to phrases and combinations of words.

¹⁰⁴ *Menologii anonymi Byzantini saeculi X quae supersunt. Fasciculos duos sumptibus Caesareae Academiae Scientiarum e Codice Mosquensi 376 Vlad*, ed. V.V. ЛАТЫШЕВ, Leipzig 1970 [= SBLOI, 12], p. 347–383.

¹⁰⁵ In his polemical writings, Maximus the Greek strongly rejected the Christian heresies – not only those known as the first Christian heresies (Arians, Nestorians, Macedonians, Eutychians), but also e.g. Judaizers, Persians, Muslims, or Armenians, D. ČIŽEVSKIJ, *History of Russian Literature. From the Eleventh Century to the End of the Baroque*, S-Gravenhage 1960, p. 298.

¹⁰⁶ S.J. SHOEMAKER, *The Georgian Life of the Virgin attributed to Maximus the Confessor: Its Authenticity(?) and Importance*, Scri 2, 2006, p. 307–328.

¹⁰⁷ MAXIMUS THE CONFESSOR, *The Life of the Virgin*, trans. et ed. S.J. SHOEMAKER, New Haven–London 2012.

¹⁰⁸ Sankt Petersburg, Russian National Library, PHБ, Соф. 1498, f. 119–160 v.

¹⁰⁹ The corrections can be seen in the manuscripts: Moscow, Russian State Library, РГБ, 113.544, f. 3, 5, 5v; Н.В. СИНИЦЫНА, *Книжный мастер Михаил Медоварцев*, [in:] *Древнерусское искусство. Рукописная книга*, Москва 1972, p. 314–317.

¹¹⁰ Starting on page 132 r. in the manuscript, further also on the margins.

Maximus's language was dominated by the effort to find correspondences with Greek grammatical constructions, due to his wish to achieve full accordance with Greek grammatical categories. His translation principles show that he combined the two oldest grammatical traditions: the Greek and Latin contributions that integrated the most ancient Greek syntactical foundations of language (Apollonius Dyscolus) with the Byzantine morphological literary context and the Latin syntactical definitions of grammatical categories (Donatus, Priscian). Moreover, it can be detected that he also combined two different methods of translation, known from biblical and sacred texts. The manuscript of the *Hagiography of the Mother of God* suggests that Maximus translated the original Greek text into Slavic respecting the special prepositional order of Greek – one that reflected the language's morphological ability to express the main grammatical categories – more than the principle of syntax as known at that time in the West¹¹¹. The repetition of words with the same linguistic (not always equivalent with etymological) root was necessary for him in order to achieve the parallel effect of literary forms and hagiographical as well as theological content¹¹². Through the simultaneous ramification of selected words, it was possible to stress the liturgical reception of the text (the repetition of the basic semantic core of the word enhanced the theological meaning). Maximus the Greek also utilized this method of textual formation of the theological and liturgical sense of the text in his personal writings in the later periods; it combined his translation practice and his own grammatical investigations in Slavic. Through the creation of antithetical terms, he touched upon the anthropological level of literary acceptance, which was deliberated by the achievement of the spiritual progress that was finally revealed. Such a method was especially appropriate in the process of translating poetic devices; in effect, the desired effect of the phonetical echo of Maximus's constant prayer was achieved. Indeed, Maximus's own forms of Slavic reflected a certain translation practice already in the first period: he did not translate forms directly, but as compounds, which could be a sign of a previous comparison of a given word's meaning with the Latin one at the first level of the translation project. If he would at first submit words to Russian translators in Latin, one may surmise that very soon, after 1520, Maximus was fully competent to dictate to a given Russian/Slavic scribe in Slavic.

¹¹¹ R.H. ROBINS, *The Byzantine Grammarians. Their Place in History*, Berlin–New York 1993, p. 32.

¹¹² For example, in the manuscript of *The Hagiography of the Mother of God* [repetitions are marked in normal font – N.Z.]: *Вездѣ бо божественныхъ еваггелии мати она по неизреченномъ роженіи пресвѣтль же и истиннь именуется [...] и отнудѣ недомыслено обрѣсти инако ту именуему* (РНБ, Соф. 1498, f. 142v.); *тѣмже ниже множаишаа чюдеса воскресения случися тѣмъ видѣти, она же неоттрѣже ныне близѣ гробу присвѣдаци, зряще вся явѣ [...] всяя яко имяше извѣстнѣ виде, еже ниже мало якоже рѣхомъ отступити от гроба, дондеже и живоносное виде воскресение [...] види же ся убо прѣвѣти датися и благовещения и воскресения, и яко мощно зрителници Еи быти Сыновня свѣтлости* (РНБ, Соф. 1498, f. 143).

Maximus would conclude his translation and writing process by a critical reading of the scribe's text; he would insert corrections and commentaries on the margins of the manuscript pages¹¹³.

Maximus propagated arguments concerning the holiness of Mary, known to him from the *Hagiography of Mother of God*, in his further theological works and in his confessional writings. In the text *Against Those Who are Blemishing the Holiness of the Mother of God*¹¹⁴ he applied to the Holy Virgin a language taken from the Mosaic law (including the snake of Moses). He made use of Old Testament metaphorical predictions from the psalms (Ps 31, 4; Ps 44, 10; Ps 44, 11; Ps 44, 14; Ps 45, 5–6; Ps 67, 16–17; Ps 109, 3; Ps 81, 1; Ps 88, 37–38) as well the vision of Isaiah in the desert (Is 11, 1); he considered the type of Mother of God as the non-burning Bush (Ex 3, 1–6), also known from the First Ode of the poetic Christmas Canon of St. John of Damascus¹¹⁵, as well as the pre-echoes in certain female characters of the Old Testament (Esther, Leah, Mariam, etc.) as the biblical prophetic testimony of the Holy Virgin, but also references to apostolic speech. Maximus's most innovative gesture expressed the presence of the Mother of God as the link between the two Covenants. He used in his writings inserted pieces of Byzantine hymnography: the Ladder of St. James as the confirmation of the Holy being of Mary, and the first *heirmos* of the third canticle (the second tone¹¹⁶) from the Sunday Matins after the first reading of the *Liturgical Psalter*, associated with the Feast of Apostle John the Theologian (26th September) and making use of a significant Greek symbol of the lily (Gr. *kriin*) – which, according to Maximus's words, adequately symbolizes the Trinitarian purpose of the Holy Mother of God. He defines this kind of theological recognition as “the language of the Holy Scripture”. Through this, he connects the liturgical and hagiographical tradition of the Feast of Dormition (in the verse of Christ's invitation to His Mother: *Come, and be my bride; Angels were frightened, seeing how the Lord is carrying in His hand the soul of a woman*) and points out the areas where the canonical Christian knowledge¹¹⁷ of the holiness of the Mother of God was established and preserved. This occurred in the Orthodox poetic prayers of the early Christian, especially

¹¹³ The translation process described here is connected with the editorial and philological activity familiar to Maximus from the Florentine period, during which he collaborated with Iannos Laskaris. Thus, editing and correcting the text was only one of the Renaissance methods of dealing with Greek manuscripts and first printings.

¹¹⁴ Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale (BN), Slav. 123, f. 125 r.–129 r.; Л.И. ЖУРОВА, *Авторский текст Максима Грека. Рукописная и литературная традиции*, pars 2, *Сочинения*, Новосибирск 2011, p. 172–182.

¹¹⁵ E. LASH, *Biblical Interpretation in Worship*, [in:] *Orthodox Christian Theology*, ed. M.B. CUNNINGHAM, E. THEOKRITOFF, Cambridge 2008 [= CCR], p. 45.

¹¹⁶ Cf. *The desert, the barren church of the gentiles, blossomed as a lily at your coming, Lord*.

¹¹⁷ On the basis of his critical principles, Maximus the Greek offered a successful critique of certain apocrypha which were among the most problematic and incompetent (e.g. the *Tale of Aphroditian*, a Bogomil writing), D. ČIŽEVSKI, *History...*, p. 298.

Eastern, patristic theologians in Byzantine hymnography, in liturgical odes from which the unique knowledge about the life of Mary as the Holy Theotokos was preserved¹¹⁸. Such inclusion of the Theotokos could be found in the contemplation of Gregory of Nyssa about the *Song of Songs*, where he recognized the Mother of God as the Church of Christ¹¹⁹, but also in the poetic vision of Ambrose of Mila regarding the female figure of the Holy Scripture. The latter author is considered one of the founders of Western hymnography under Byzantine influence¹²⁰; he also had a place in the writings of Maximus the Greek, who named him the “miraculous Arch-priest of God”¹²¹.

In particular, Maximus directly connected the belief concerning the timelessness of Her presence with the endless presence of Christ the Redeemer – both progressed in individual prayers. The long, poetic *Prayer on Dormition* attributed to Symeon the Metaphrast, which Maximus translated in Russia, also presents the principal connection of the Holy Theotokos and the Holy Trinity: *Be joyful, you, the fortress of my evangelical deed, rewarmed by unshaken hopes, you who are the co-partner [co-promiser¹²², co-adviser] of the unspeakable consultations, you, the only woman that deserves the respect of the three shines of the Holy Trinity*¹²³. It must be stressed that Maximus the Greek clearly expressed such addition of the Holy Mother of God to the statement of the Orthodox Trinity in his *Confessional Creed of the Orthodox Faith*, in the following words:

I also believe and confess always essential the Son and God the Word without beginning and born from God the Father without beginning and with the spreading grace and glorified act of the Holy Spirit in the most pure nature [being] of the most Holy, and the most Virgin Mary, the Mother of God [...] Additionally I confess and am preaching myself and every pious man, the most blessing Empress of mine, the Holy Theotokos, the intercessor and the mediator of all Orthodox Christians, all perfectly saintly and the most pure and the most untouchable and the through-out all-Virgin.¹²⁴

¹¹⁸ See W. KALLISTOS, *The Final Mystery: the Dormition of the Holy Virgin in Orthodox Worship*, [in:] *Mary for Time and Eternity*, ed. W.M. McLAUGHLIN, J. PINNOCK, Leominster 2007, p. 250.

¹¹⁹ A. LOUTH, ‘From Beginning to Beginning’: *Endless Spiritual Progress in St Gregory of Nyssa. Lecture at the XXI Conference on the Orthodox Spirituality*, [in:] *The Proceedings of the XXI International Ecumenical Conference on Orthodox spirituality “The Ages of the Spiritual Life”*, ed. E. BIANCHI, Bose 2014.

¹²⁰ E. WELLESZ, *The History...*, p. 43.

¹²¹ ПРЕПОДОБНЫЙ МАКСИМ ГРЕК, *Сочинения*, vol. II... (cetera: ПРЕП. МАКСИМ ГРЕК II), p. 270.

¹²² Cf. Gr. Κοινωνός (Lc 5, 10).

¹²³ Moscow, Russian State Library, РГБ, 113.488, fol. 65–65v.

¹²⁴ Cf. *Исповедание православной веры: Такжеже върую и исповѣдую ражаемаго безначалнѣ и присносущнѣ Сына// и Бога Слова от безначалнаго Бога и Отца, благоволениемъ Отчимъ и осънениемъ Святаго Духа зачята бывша въ пречистыхъ ложеснахъ Пресвятыя и приснодевы Марии Божия матери [...]. Еще к симъ исповѣдую и про//повѣдую себѣ же и всякому благовѣрному преблагословеную владычицу мою Богородицу, прѣдстателницу и заступницу всѣмъ православнымъ христіаномъ, по всему быти святую и пречистую и пренепорочную и Приснодеву* (ПРЕП. МАКСИМ ГРЕК II, p. 52, 53).

Thus, this prayer suggests that it could be a song – it contains prominent, repeated expressive verses that could be chanted and act as a refrain in this rhythmic prose:

Inspire me, Empress [Queen], with the power of the words and give me a stronghold of pre-images, to feel the divine entities with compassion of the heart¹²⁵.

The latter expression could be theologically explained by means of a biblical exegesis, in that the holiness of the Mother of God was also foretold in certain verses of the Psalms as well as in certain pre-Christian oracles as proto-forms of the unshakable faith in the Son of God; there, the oral Christian tradition of the pronouncement of the “future” biblical reality was shown. The latter texts were known to Maximus, who also translated two short poems attributed to the Sibyllian tradition, with an Acrostic to Jesus Christ¹²⁶.

Maximus the Greek wrote many heterogeneous texts, titled prayers, which reflected his theologically polemical or liturgical stance on Orthodox contemplation. The conclusion of most of them is the appeal to include Mary in each thanksgiving Trinitarian prayer (*The Ode to the Holy Trinity*, *The Prayer to All-pure Mother of God*, and also *About the Lord's Sufferings*, *The Prayer of Mother of God*, *The Prayer of Mary of Egypt*¹²⁷, *The Prayer of Susanna*, *The Song about How St. Peter Cried Out*¹²⁸). In the prayer *About the Birth of God the Son*, Maximus wrote critically against the Jews, while in the three texts entitled *The Third Poem of the Prophetess Anna* (i.e. the third liturgical song after the reading of the 150 psalms¹²⁹), he argued against astrological beliefs – one of his main polemical subjects. *The Prayer of Mary of Egypt* confirms the tripartite structure of Maximus's prayers: the personal repentance is followed by the thanksgiving prayer to the Mother of God¹³⁰, and the final metamorphose of the mortal dark of the human flesh disappears on account of the pain of the discovery of spiritual enlightening (often paraphrasing the evangelical scene of the brightness at the attendance of the Holy marriage, stemming from Matthew 20, 1–16). Moreover, bearing in mind that Maximus the Greek was barred from receiving the Communion for more than 21 years, it seems reasonable to conclude that he was forced to create his own prayers for a personal

¹²⁵ Moscow, Russian State Library, ПГБ, 113.488, fol. 70 r.

¹²⁶ Moscow, Russian State Library, ПГБ, 256.264, f. 64 v. – 66 v.

¹²⁷ Moscow, Russian State Library, ПГБ, 256.264, f. 66 v.–67 v., 220 r. – 222 v.

¹²⁸ Cf. a similar canticle of St. Ambrose of Milan, “Super Luc. de poenit., distinct”, P. TRUBAR, *Articuli oli deili te prave stare vere kersanske*, Tübingen 1562, p. 143.

¹²⁹ Only in the manuscript: Moscow, Russian State Library, ПГБ, 256.264. The three texts are followed by a text introducing a special veneration of the Eucharistic bread (Holy Communion) and the veneration of the Mother of God (Gr. Παναγία), while pointing out the mistaken beliefs of astrological thinking.

¹³⁰ It is different from the traditional prayers treating the legend of St. Mary of Egypt, also recognized in the iconographic tradition, cf. А.Ю. НИКИФОРОВА, *Из стопуи...*, p. 181–182.

liturgy¹³¹. This is why his prayers, dedicated to the three entities of the Holy Trinity as well as to the Mother of God, can be understood as basic monastic prayers – not only acting as Maximus’s preamble to a text, but also his substitutes for the standard liturgical prayers.

Epilogue

The most important item in Maximus the Greek’s approach to the Holy Trinity was his theologically personal attitude to the Holy Theotokos, which led to the kernel of his theological system, with its specifically synthetic theological-liturgical-iconographical understanding of the Christian tradition¹³². Maximus’s synthetic theological vision is evident in his *Canon to the Holy Spirit Paraclete*¹³³ which he wrote during his first imprisonment in the dark cell of the Joseph Volokolamsk Monastery, on a wall, with a piece of wood charcoal. This piece displays certain traits of a confessing prayer, especially in that it includes a personally addressed speech (Gr. ἀπόστροφος) as an element of prosody – known at that time also in the West, but equally present in the oldest pieces of Slavic hymnography¹³⁴, where certain elements were also translated from Latin and not only from Greek. The meaning of this poetic prayer, which could offer a pious end of the mortal lifetime, also conveyed an invocatory moment with empowered eschatological mindfulness in the personal prayer for the beginning of Maximus’s daily writing. It is to be sung at the third hour of the day (i.e. very early in the morning) – as the author notes in the overture¹³⁵ – and it is supposed to be a personal, precatory, solicitous prayer (“покаянный канон”). It could be presumed that Maximus pronounced this prayer silently, but *in extenso*: not only as a prelude, as is common in the present days¹³⁶, but as his inner *Kanon Parakletikos*, a supplicatory hymn forming a part of his daily compline.

After the dedication to the Holy Spirit and the introduction of the Canon, Maximus contemplates the interior of the Temple or Church (*Радуйся дверь Господня непроходимая – Rejoice, the Lord’s door that could not be entered*)¹³⁷ in the form

¹³¹ Cf. С. БЕЛОКУРОВ, *О библиотеке...*, p. LXXX–LXXXII.

¹³² Cf. Sankt Petersburg, Russian National Library, РНБ, Соф. 1498, f. 119 v., 121 v.

¹³³ We are dealing with 16th-century manuscripts: Moscow, Russian State Library, РГБ, 247.302, f. 423 r.–440 r.; РГБ, 173.I.42, f. 408 v.–416 r.; РГБ, 304.I.267, f. 176–187 v.

¹³⁴ Т.И. АФАНАСЬЕВА, М.Г. ШАРИХИНА, *Употребление перфекта 2-го лица ед. числа вместо аориста: к вопросу о времени становления грамматической нормы*, ДРВМ 67, 2017, p. 103. On how important this kind of addressing was to Maximus see more in: И.В. ВЕРНЕР, *Грамматическая...*, p. 116; especially regarding addressing God the Son, N. ЗАЈС, *Some Notes...*, Part 2, p. 380–381.

¹³⁵ Moscow, Russian State Library, РГБ, 247.302, f. 423 r.–440 r.; РГБ, 173.I.42, f. 409–416; РГБ, 304.I.267, f. 176–187 v.

¹³⁶ Cf. H.J.W. TILLYARD, *Byzantine...*, p. 12.

¹³⁷ Moscow, Russian State Library, РГБ, 247.302, f. 423 v.; РГБ, 173.I.42, f. 409 r.; РГБ, 304.I.267, there are added the following words, clearly addressing the Mother of God: *Joy the walls and Intercession//*

of an authentic *diataxis*, known from a 16th century¹³⁸ prayer of Vatopaidi, in fact an implicit address to the Mother of God of a 13th-century icon called Paramythia. At the same time, this form corresponds to the prayer-invitation of the icon of the Holy Theotokos of Ivron¹³⁹, called the “Doorkeeper”. This kind of reference (ref. Ez 43, 27; 44, 1–4) not only fulfilled the liturgical rule of worshiping the icon before leaving the church, when the igumen would always give the keys of monastery’s doors to the doorkeeper, but also served to dedicate the Church. Additionally, it is repeated literally in the bilingual Greek-Slavic Kontakion to the Annunciation, which Maximus wrote down in his Greek *Psalter* in 1540 when teaching Greek to the monk Benjamin¹⁴⁰. This Kontakion, which Maximus entitled the *New Kontakion to the Annunciation*¹⁴¹, was traditionally inserted in the last hymn of the Akathistos prayer¹⁴². The issue can be observed iconographically in the scenes of the Holy Annunciation (from the second half of the 11th century) and the *Deisis* (from the late 11th – early 12th century) in the mosaics of the Vatopaidi Monastery; it was also proclaimed by Andronicus II in a chrysobull (1301¹⁴³), a copy of which Maximus carried from Athos to Moscow in 1518¹⁴⁴. Indeed, it was during the time of Andronicus II – who had an important part in confirming Stephen the Great as the Tsar and carrying out the 1296 jurisdictional reform¹⁴⁵ – that the honouring of the Holy Theotokos at Vatopaidi was expanded.

The above-described liturgical moment and dedicatory gesture of opening the doors followed the anaphora before the receiving the Holy Communion¹⁴⁶. Similarly, Igor’ Ševčenko found anonymous verses in the margins of the Milan

the Protection to whom we are running to, Joy//the windless harbour, that had never//experienced the marriage, You who gave a birth and the body//to the Creator and Your God, //I beg You, please, us, who are praying, do not//neglect, and we are praising and knee//ling before your Birth (f. 176 v.).

¹³⁸ Н.Д. УСПЕНСКИЙ, *Византийская литургия: историко-литургическое исследование. Анафора: опыт историко-литургического анализа*, Москва 2006, p. 212.

¹³⁹ Maximus the Greek’s text about the Vatopaidi Icon of the Mother of God is preserved in Moscow, State Historical Museum, ГИМ, Хлуд. 34, f. 236v.–240r. A copy of this icon was brought to Russia in the 17th century at the request of the Patriarch Nikon.

¹⁴⁰ ПРЕП. МАКСИМ ГРЕК II, p. 14.

¹⁴¹ Sankt Petersburg, Russian National Library, РНБ, Соф. 78, f. 160 v.

¹⁴² T. VELMANS, *Une illustration inédite de l’acathiste et l’iconographie des hymnes liturgiques a Byzance*, САГ 22, 1972, p. 133.

¹⁴³ *Le Mont Athos et l’Empire byzantine – Tresors de la Sainte Montagne*, Paris 2009, p. 136, an. 45.

¹⁴⁴ С.М. КАШТАНОВ, *К истории русско-греческих культурных связей в XVI в.*, [in:] *Московия. Проблемы византийской и новогреческой филологии*, Москва 2001, p. 214; Н.В. СИНИЦЫНА, *Послание Максима Грека Василию III об устройстве афонских монастырей (1518–1519 гг.)*, ВВ 26, 1965, p. 113.

¹⁴⁵ Д.И. МУРЕШАН, *Om второго...*, p. 131–132; P. LEMERLE, *Le Juge général des Grecs et la réforme judiciaire d’Andronic III*, [in:] *Mémorial Louis Petit. Mélanges d’histoire et d’archéologie byzantines*, Bucarest 1948 [= АОС, 1], p. 292–316.

¹⁴⁶ R.F. ТАФТ, *A History of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, vol. V, *The Precommunion Rites*, Roma 2000 [= ОСА, 261], p. 70–72.

manuscript that contains many of Maximus's poems, corresponding to his favourite meditation about the decoration of the church (which might be identified with the Church of the Theotokos Pammakaristos)¹⁴⁷, expressed in several of his writings. The latter could confirm that the verse – used by Maximus in the function of a *Katavasia* – must be sung in the body of Church¹⁴⁸. The echo of the antiphons of the *enarxis* and of the hymns of the Little Entrance could be heard¹⁴⁹. The subtle allusion that the portal of the church or monastery is the gate of heaven is but a humble overture to the prayer service (the “*Moleben*”), as the *Canon to the Holy Spirit Paraclete* by Maximus the Greek is titled. After Psalm 50, the *heirmos* and the *troparia* the author implies the special rule of the further chanting glorification. In particular, he notes the combination of a specific¹⁵⁰ sequence, indicating the three praying songs of praise, varying and metamorphosing through the whole Canon until the end. This rule is presented in the Prologue to the First Ode as the three versions of the *Kyrileison* (to God the Son, Jesus Christ; to the Holy Trinity; to the Holy Paraclete) and it is observed after every *heirmos* at the beginning of each ode. In other words, Maximus added to each song an obligatory praise of the Holy Theotokos as two special “thanksgiving” verses (“*Doxa*” – “*Слава*”) in honour of the Virgin Mary, which should form the conclusion of every song¹⁵¹. A verse or two verses in honour of the Virgin Mary are regularly inserted between the odes; thus, every ode also begins with the initial words of the *heirmoi*, similar to those that were later known as the *heirmoi* of the *Kanon Parakletikos to the Holy Theotokos* (as the 9th part of the Greek liturgical Anthology¹⁵²). Maximus the Greek's *Canon to the Holy Paraclete* with 9 odes (traditional for the Canon¹⁵³),

¹⁴⁷ The anonymous verses in the Milan manuscript, once attributed to Mikhail Trivolis (I. ŠEVČENKO, *The Four...*, p. 298–299), describe the Church of the Theotokos Pammakaristos, previously of the Patriarchate of Constantinople (whereas the verses mention Patriarch Pachomios, dating them between 1505 and 1514, N.P. ŠEVČENKO, *The Service of the Virgins's Lament Revisited*, [in:] *The Cult of the Mother of God in Byzantium. Texts and Images*, ed. L. BRUBAKER, M.B. CUNNINGHAM, Farnham 2011 [= BBOS], p. 298–299. Note also that the same time as the daughter of Stephen the Great, Elena, married Ivan III, Stephen bought for his son Alexander the “residence of Moldavian princes”, only a few metres from the Imperial Church of Pammakaristos. Neagoe Basarab helped restore this church, Д.И. МУРЕШАН, *От вѣропого...*, p. 117, 138.

¹⁴⁸ *Hymns of the Eastern Church*, trans. et ed. J.M. NEALE, ²London 1863, p. 845.

¹⁴⁹ In 1509, the first such *Prologion* was printed in Venice, F.E. BRIGHTMAN, *Introduction*, [in:] *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, ed. IDEM, Oxford 1896, p. LXXXII.

¹⁵⁰ This opinion was expressed by a Russian scholar, Г.А. КАЗИМОВА, *Канон молебен к божественному и поклоняемому Параклиту преподобного Максима Грека: к вопросу об атрибуции и функциональной трансформации текста*, [in:] *Лингвистическое источниковедение и история русского языка (2004–2005)*, Москва 2006, p. 290.

¹⁵¹ Cf. H.J.W. TILLYARD, *Byzantine...*, p. 19.

¹⁵² S. SALAVILLE, *Liturgies orientales*, Paris 1932 [= BCSR, 87bis], p. 193. The canon to the Holy Theotokos was first attributed to the Metropolitan of Crete, Elias II (1111–1120), who titled in this manner the service for the rite of the *Proskomedia*, V. LAURENT, *Le rituel de la proskomidie et le métropolitain de Crète Élie*, REB 16, 1958, p. 122.

¹⁵³ E. WELLESZ, *The “Akathistos”*. A Study in Byzantine Hymnography, DOP 9/10, 1956, p. 200–202.

containing approximately 45 songs of special eulogy with interchangeable dedications to God the Son, to the Holy Trinity and to the Holy Spirit, as well as to the Holy Mother of God, also reflects the basic principles of the Akathistos hymn and the main liturgical canticles (eight from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament, i.e. the *Magnificat*)¹⁵⁴. The First Ode is an implicit praise to the incarnation of the Logos, wholly present on earth, which expresses the Orthodox view against Apollinarius of Laodicea (a heretical teaching on the unleavened Eucharist), but at the same time the final call includes a praise of the Mother of God represented as Holy Earth¹⁵⁵. The Second Ode is in fact missing, according to the earliest editions¹⁵⁶; the Third¹⁵⁷ as well as the Fifth Odes are – after mentioning the Holy Trinity briefly – dedicated to an extended invocation of the Holy Spirit, subsequently turning into a short prayer to the Holy Theotokos¹⁵⁸. However, Maximus's *Canon to the Holy Paraclete* does not feature concrete imitations of the forms of the *Great Canon* (the “Lenten Canon” by Andrew of Crete). The Fourth Ode, after addressing the Lord shortly, expresses gratitude to the Holy Trinity and conveys a warm orison to the Holy Mother of God. In the Sixth Ode, the “specific sequence” of addressing is strictly adhered to, following the order of God the Son, the Holy Trinity, the Holy Paraclete, and the Holy Theotokos:

и в тѣ аки в послѣднѣ безднахъ вѣну! О҃бсе мѡи потопл'яемъ. тѣвѣ сѧ, молю! струїами живодателнаго ѣже оу тѣвѣ! истѡчника ѡживѣ ѡа. Великаго молчанїа войстинѣ достоина сѣть вѣа! твоѧ тайнства. трилицѣтвѣши! бо въ єдинѡ сошествовѣ. и соєдина'ем! превывѧеши несамкшѣна. но безнача'ланаа Трѣце, твоѧ рѣкъ вѣрненое мѡсозданїе О҃бси [...], но Паракліте превлѣгїи пасѡднїи показнїа ищѣлїи ѡа. Внапѣстѣ лютыи по оуму падѡ, и недооумѣнїемъ содержїи! єсмь всѡду. и в вѣдахъ разлїчныхъ падаю. и якоже лодїа в морьскѡ волнѣнїи! обѣурѣвѧемъ єсмь. но превлѣгїи оутѣшителю, лютаго сего обѡурѣванїа молю! тѧ и схїтима скорѣе. Падѣнїемъ лютыи падѡ престѣпнїевъ. ѡже к твоєму О҃нѣ собѣты моа. но ѡкоже истѡчника щедросѡ и влгоудѣрбѣїа сѣщїю! пѣчиноу всенепорѡчнїю тѧ молю милѡстїва сотворїи О҃го!¹⁵⁹

The first expression (струїами живодателнаго ѣже оу тѣвѣ! истѡчника) was used by Maximus already when he was a Vatopaidian monk, in the *Canon to St. John the Baptist* (Gr. ἐν ρείθροισ βαπτίσαι), and could also have been known to him

¹⁵⁴ The connections among the Odes of the Canon and the Canticles were known from the Canons of John of Damascus, particularly from his *Canon for the first Sunday after Easter*, E. WELLESZ, *The History...*, p. 222.

¹⁵⁵ IDEM, *The “Akathistos”...*, p. 147.

¹⁵⁶ P.F. КРЫПІАКІЕВІЦЪ, *De hymni Acathisti auctore*, BZ 18, 1909, p. 361.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. A. KRETSKI, *Véliki kánon*, Ljubljana 2013, p. 59, 69; *Великий покаянный канон. Творение святого Андрея Критского. С прибавлением Жития преподобной Марии Египетской*, Москва 2013, p. 124–125.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. A. KRETSKI, *Véliki...*, p. 105.

¹⁵⁹ Moscow, Russian State Library, РГБ, 247.302, f. 435 v.–436 r.; РГБ, 173.I.42, f. 411 v.–412 r.; РГБ, 304.I.267, f. 181 r.–182 v.

from the homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus; it served to denote the spiritual inspiration shown in literary eloquence¹⁶⁰. This Ode also features the semantic content of a specific metaphor – a literary depiction of the condition of the human soul at a windy sea (и якоже лодїа в морьскѣ волнѣнїи| обвуреваеть ѣсмь). Accordingly, the image of a calm harbour¹⁶¹ – which appeared already in the *Canon to St. John the Baptist*¹⁶², as well in the beginning of the present *Canon*¹⁶³ and at its very end, with the direct naming of the Theotokos as a such peaceful place for believers (ГЛАВА ТРЕТЬ МѢНИ БЖІА ВЪРНЫ ПРИБЪЖИЦѢ) – confirms the important connection with Maximus’s earlier poetic and prayer activity. In between, after the addressing of the Holy Trinity, we find the acknowledgment that the Holy Spirit proceeds only from the Father; thus, we could propose that Maximus the Greek wrote his *Canon to the Holy Paraclete* as a result of his humble prayer and concentration on the moment of *epiklesis* (the basis of his battle against the *filioque*) in a non-eucharistic context¹⁶⁴. In this way, the presence of the Divine Spirit in Maximus’s *Canon* is an invocatory sign of the permission for addressing the Lord, and the spread of the fearful but free creativity of the individual:

Весь цѣль О҃нѣ вѣруемъ| ѣсть во о҃цѣи существенѣ и Дх҃ъ. (Ѣ) не| бо ѡки ѡ| единого начала| соприсносущнѣ| и овои сїають| и пребываютъ о севѣ| в живоначалнѣхъ| ипостасѣхъ своихъ¹⁶⁵

Before the final prayer to the Holy Spirit in the form of an epilogue, there is a paraphrase of the Athonite icon “Aksion Estin” – which was also the quintessence of Maximus’s *Canon to St. John the Baptist* – assimilated to the veneration of the Holy Paraclete.

However, Maximus’s monastic, humble attitude was very precise: his aim was to balance the veneration among the voices of the Orthodox Trinity¹⁶⁶. Traditionally,

¹⁶⁰ A *Patristic Greek Lexicon*, ed. G.W.H. LAMPE, Oxford–London 2010, p. 1213.

¹⁶¹ Cf. Maximus’s description of Manuzio’s printing symbol, depicting an anchor. Maximus gave his own interpretation of the anchor, according to which it represents – like a printed manuscript – the salvage for the ship at a windy sea; similarly, Manuzio’s wise innovation, which could fix the human “manuscript”, is a metaphor of a firm localization (“a calm, safe harbour”) for a solemn soul, N. ЗАЈС, *Some Notes on the Life and Works of Maxim the Greek (Michael Trivolis, ca 1470 – Maksim Grek, 1555/1556). Part 1: Biography*, Scri 11, 2015, p. 319.

¹⁶² The Holy Mount Athos, The Holy Monastery of Vatopaidi, Cod. 1016, f. 32 v.

¹⁶³ See footnote 137; cf. “the windless harbour”.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. M.E. JOHNSON, *The Origins of the Anaphoral Use of the Sanctus and Epiclesis Revisited. The Contribution of Gabriele Winkler and Its Implications*, [in:] *Crossroad of Cultures. Studies in Liturgy and Patristics in Honor of Gabriele Winkler*, ed. H.-J. FEULNER, E. VELKOVSKA, R. TAFT, Roma 2000, p. 405–442 [= OCA, 260], p. 408.

¹⁶⁵ Moscow, Russian State Library, РГБ, 247.302, f. 435 v.–436 r.; РГБ, 171.I.42, f. 412 r.; РГБ, 304.I.267, f. 181 r.

¹⁶⁶ Thus, it is worth adding that many linguistic specifics regarding Maximus’s veneration of the Holy Theotokos (for example, in the list of analogue Greek and Old Church Slavic expressions for the

the *Kanon Parakletikos* was always addressed to the Virgin, especially in Constantinople, and it was also associated with the funerary Canon¹⁶⁷. The praise of the Mother of God forms the conclusion of each ode of Maximus's Canon and also of each of his Trinitarian venerations. The author dedicated this hymn to the Holy Paraclete (the Canon ends in a prayer to the Holy Spirit). Through the appropriate Trinitarian addressing in direct speech, with echoes from the ancient Kontakia, dating to the times before the 7th-century Byzantine reform and its expansion¹⁶⁸, in his *Canon to the Holy Spirit Paraclete*¹⁶⁹ Maximus perfects the Slavic rhythmic variations and theological proclamations that yield poetic correspondences to the oldest prayers and Byzantine hymns. While managing to find an equal place for the Holy Theotokos alongside the three entities of the Orthodox Trinity in his theological writings (as shown above), he at the same time reaffirms the pious veneration of the Holy Mother of God that began to flourish especially from the 11th to the 15th century in Byzantine hymnography, but at the same time also in Western as well as Slavic liturgical poetry¹⁷⁰. We may note that Maximus's contribution offers praise and thanksgiving to the Holy Mother of God with the power of vigil singing during the whole night without a pause, as was primary in the Akathistos, when no signs of involving the Holy Theotokos in military service were yet to be seen¹⁷¹. Thus, it is also obvious that Maximus the Greek was aware that prayers to the Holy Mother of God had the power of preventing the various heresies and dubious teachings; he expresses this thought in his *Prayer to the Holy Mother of God, and also about the Lord's Suffering*¹⁷², just as it was expressed in the tradition of the Akathistos hymns, especially concerning the argumentation of the Christological dogma¹⁷³. In this way, he was able to reach back into cultural memory and reveal the devoted creativity of the first Slavic liturgical poet, Constantine the Philosopher¹⁷⁴: the latter author wrote a similar accordance in the Canon, entitled *To the Memory of Saint Demetrius and Martyr in Christ*¹⁷⁵ and including the Holy Virgin in the Trinitarian form. Hence, already his vision was compared to the writings

Holy Theotokos, among them the very significant expression literally denoting a lily (Gr. *kriin*) that Maximus wrote about) are preserved in the manuscript inserted in the Serbian Prayer and Liturgical Service Book, first printed in Venice in 1546, cf. Ljubljana, National Library, K 19996.

¹⁶⁷ N.P. ŠEVČENKO, *The Service...*, p. 252.

¹⁶⁸ E. WELLESZ, *The "Akathistos"...*, p. 203.

¹⁶⁹ Unfortunately, a detailed study of this prayer-poem remains a task for the future.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana, San Marco 32; G. ROPA, *Il culto della Vergine a Bologna nel Medioevo*, [in:] *Codex Angelicus 123. Studi sul graduale-tropario bolognese del secolo 11. e sui manoscritti collegati*, ed. M.T.R. BAREZZANI, G. ROPA, Cremona 1996, p. 28–32.

¹⁷¹ E. WELLESZ, *The "Akathistos"...*, p. 151–152.

¹⁷² ПРЕП. МАКСИМ ГРЕК II, p. 60–61.

¹⁷³ E. WELLESZ, *The "Akathistos"...*, p. 147–148.

¹⁷⁴ Cf. I. ŠEVČENKO, *On the Greek...*, p. 52.

¹⁷⁵ R. JAKOBSON, *Selected Writings*, vol. VI, *Early Slavic Paths and Crossroads*, pars 1, ed. S. RUDY, Berlin–New-York–Amsterdam 1985, p. 304–306.

of Gregory of Nyssa, who devoted the first of his sermons to the “mystery of the Canticles”¹⁷⁶. Indeed, Maximus the Greek polished the Church Slavic liturgical language to such a level that it could serve him as a voice analogous and parallel to the Greek language of the Gospels, focusing on the service to the Christian God in the Holy Trinity.

* * *

It had been proposed that Maximus the Greek precisely remembered the exact formal characteristics of the ancient Christian texts in Greek, as well as the Church Slavic usage of the biblical language¹⁷⁷. In the present study, it is proposed that at the moment of his arrival in Moscow on March 5th, 1518, Maximus had in his memory the sound of the spoken South Slavic languages, which was reflected in his use of Slavic in his manuscripts; at the same time, he had a visual memory of the Slavic manuscripts from the Athonite libraries, mainly of Serbian ones with liturgical content¹⁷⁸ (this corresponded to the final stage of the South Slavic influence, in which the Bulgarian elements were no longer authoritative in Russia¹⁷⁹). But Maximus had not been in contact with Russian manuscripts before his arrival in Moscow (this is confirmed in the short manuscript where he describes the monasteries of the Holy Mount Athos, not listing the Russian one among them)¹⁸⁰. In particular, his personal variety of Slavic – especially in its lexical and phonetic aspect¹⁸¹ – shows that he had an excellent acoustic linguistic memory¹⁸². This helped him grasp two forms of Slavic languages: one from the Western South Slavic nations (Slovenian or Croatian – possibly members of the Glagolitic community – from the Venetian and Istrian lands), and the other from the South Macedonian milieu. Besides, he had contact with Albanian in Sicily (the Basilian communities)¹⁸³, where he also travelled during his Italian period according to his manuscripts. All of these areas had highly bilingual and multi-ethnic, although Christian populations. The above-mentioned languages were characterized by a significant number of sophisticated, non-simplified grammatical categories, including some idiosyncratic and synthetic archaic forms¹⁸⁴; all of this became quite representative for

¹⁷⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 325.

¹⁷⁷ See H.M. OLMSTED, *Recognizing Maksim Grek: Features of His Language*, Psl 10, 2002, p. 7–14.

¹⁷⁸ В.А. МОШИН, *О периодизации...*, p. 85.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 96–97.

¹⁸⁰ Moscow, Russian State Library, ПГБ, 256.264, f. 133 v.–134 r.

¹⁸¹ Cf. our current research, based on the linguistic analysis of the language of the early manuscripts of Maximus the Greek.

¹⁸² Maximus attested that he had a very good memory of the verbal constructions of Ancient (Hellenistic) Greek literature, although he had not read for many years, В.Ф. РЖИГА, *Неизданные сочинения Максима Грека*, Bsl 6, 1935–1936, p. 88.

¹⁸³ F.E. BRIGHTMAN, *Introduction...*, p. XC–XCI.

¹⁸⁴ Cf. A.N. SOBOLEV, *Hybrid...*, p. 1253.

Maximus's personal Slavic idiom. At the second stage of the translation process, his texts reflect the careful study of each single word or expression, but with special attention to the rhythmical order; the original wording in Greek is closely adhered to (so-called sublexical morphemic translational correspondences). Thus, Maximus paid significant attention to the stress of words that could be accented the same way as in Greek, which was dominant for the accentuation in spoken Russian (especially in monastic communities and at the court) in the 16th century. It has been noticed that the accentuation of some words – especially those that had three stresses in his prayers – reflect the accentual differences of the Western South Slavic dialects (Slovenian and Čakavian), while no such distinctions existed in Russian¹⁸⁵. Not surprisingly, Maximus accepted that kind of textual treatment in the process of his own writing as well. This might provide the explanation for why not a single text that Maximus wrote in Slavic has been preserved. He would dictate his works, and therefore, at the following stage, also correct them by clarifying the meaning of each single theologically decisive word. As a result, he managed to create his own variety of Slavic, with the aim of praying properly and in accordance with the Greek Orthodox theology.

This kind of linguistic reception of translated words significantly intensified the condensed stylistic manner and the periodically rhythmical effects of his texts – which, of course, reflected poetic prose. He made prominent use of constructions based on anapaest accentuation and assonant metrical patterns (both also known from biblical canticles¹⁸⁶), combined with the caesura ending of the theological denotation of the thought. Such a principle was used in Old Byzantine patristic alphabetic hymns as well as in Slavic pieces of similar content; Maximus the Greek's lexical selection patterns had much in common with these works. Indeed, Maximus's poem written in Slavic entitled *Verses on Repentance* shows a basic Byzantine rhythmical organization of the metrical unit of the colon, or verses in which the number of syllables may vary from one to fifteen or sixteen in each colon¹⁸⁷. This may occasionally fall into a line, composed of twelve syllables, with caesura (division, or diaeresis) after the fifth or the seventh syllable¹⁸⁸; this was typical of Church Slavic prayers¹⁸⁹, and especially perceivable in Maximus's

¹⁸⁵ A.F. GOVE, *The Slavic Akathistos Hymn. Poetic Elements of the Byzantine Text and Its Old Church Slavonic Translation*, München 1988 [= SBe, 224], p. 93, an. 18.

¹⁸⁶ U. CHEVALIER, *Poésie...*, p. 13.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. H.J.W. TILLYARD, *Byzantine...*, p. 40. This division of his diction was not respected in the critical edition of his works, Преп. МАКСИМ Грек II, p. 199–206.

¹⁸⁸ R. NAHTIGAL, *Rekonstrukcija treh starocerkenoslovanskih izvirnih pesnitev*, Ljubljana 1942, p. 51. Maximus the Greek's speech shows a somewhat wider use of the descend of the theological thought after the seventh syllable (note that such "septénaire" rhythmical deviation was characteristic of Greek melodic liturgical songs, but not for Latin – U. CHEVALIER, *Poésie...*, p. 9).

¹⁸⁹ Cf. V. VALIAVITCHARSKA, *Rhetoric...*, p. 145.

prayers¹⁹⁰. In such a theological and poetic manner, through the personal practice of the inner prayer, Maximus the Greek managed to recreate in the Church Slavic language an equivalent of the oldest patterns of Christian liturgy, as could be found in Greek liturgical manuscripts from the 9th century onwards. His personal language reflected his awareness of Byzantine hymnographical rules as well the Church Slavic models of prayer-related apprehension and linguistic contemplation.

Thus, Maximus the Greek raised the Church Slavic liturgical language to a level at which it could serve him as a voice analogous and parallel to the Greek of the Gospels, focusing on the prayerfulness to God in the Holy Trinity. The theological writings of Maximus the Greek were significantly marked not only with his firm knowledge (memory) of the Holy Scripture and the Fathers of the Orthodox Church (Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, Maximus the Confessor), but also with a significant poetic effect. This is the reason for which the late Byzantine (Constantinopolitan) and Athonite liturgical traditions could be understood as the most important sources of Maximus's spiritual inspiration. However, it could not be said that the above-mentioned sources were directly reproduced or literally translated by Maximus into the Slavic language. On the contrary, his prayers are thoroughly theological and contain a proper appreciation of Mary's place in the biblically formed scheme of the human redemption, as long as She is seen in union with Jesus Christ. By implicitly – though constantly – underlining the holiness of the Mother of God, Maximus the Greek combined the iconographical, hagiographical and liturgical sources of Christian knowledge, which completed his Orthodox theological system with a significant harmonic argumentation, marked with a profoundly humane pathos. But only the detailed study of the deeply personal language of his Slavic idiolect – i.e. the language of his theological works and his individual, occasionally hermetic prayers – could give us insight into the traces of his personal prayer practice, as well as the inner prayer practice of the Holy Vatopaidi Monastery.

¹⁹⁰ Indeed, Maximus the Greek was extremely cautious about stress marks: in particular, he renounced the use of the “*varia*” in the middle of the word and used the combination of the “*varia*” and the “*kamora*”, В.В. КОЛЕСОВ, *Надстрочные знаки «силы» в русской орфографической традиции*, [in:] *Восточнославянские языки. Источники для их изучения*, ed. Л.П. ЖУКОВСКАЯ, Н.И. ТАРАБАСОВА, Москва 1972, p. 231, 253. He was thus able to note precisely the stressing point that built the syllabic principle, with the caesura after the fifth or the seventh syllable, cf. **Всѣхъ цѣль Онь в'вруем; но Параклитѣ превѣгн послѣднѣй| показнѣа ѿсцѣлѣи мѣ.**

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Abstract. Maximus the Greek has been frequently misunderstood because of his individual use of the Slavic language. Born as Mikhail Trivolis in the Greek town of Arta, he received his humanist education in North Italy, particularly in Florence and Venice, where he was engaged in the process of the first editions of printed books and where he would constantly deal with manuscript samples. His original, authorial work, as preserved in his manuscripts, reflects his awareness of firm Orthodox theology and at the same time a special attention to grammatical rules. The paper shows how his use of the (Slavic) language was at all times intentional and at the same time profoundly influenced by the metrical rules of liturgical emphasis. Through such attitude, Maximus the Greek managed to create his own, deeply personal language and to express the complexity of Byzantine patristic, hagiographic and iconographic issues. Finally, he successfully established his Orthodox theological system, significantly marked with the poetic effect that strongly inspired his theological works.

Keywords: St. Maximus the Greek, the Holy Mount Athos, Manuscripts, Byzantine Hymnography, Orthodox Theology

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BOOK REVIEWS

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ATHENAIS-EUDOCIA – THE AUGUSTA OF PALESTINE

(remarks on the book: Т.Л. АЛЕКСАНДРОВА, *Византийская императрица Афинаида-Евдокия. Жизнь и творчество в контексте эпохи правления императора Феодосия II (401–450)* [Byzantine Empress Athenais-Eudocia. Life and Works in the Context of the Reign of Theodosius II (401–450)], Алетейя, Санкт-Петербург 2018, pp. 415 [Новая византийская библиотека. Исследования])

Tat'jana Lvovna Aleksandrova is associate professor at the Department of Ancient Languages and Ancient Christian Literature at Saint Tikhon's Orthodox University of the Humanities in Moscow. She has authored many studies on Late Antique ecclesiastical writers as well as published several editions and translations of their works¹. The book on Athenais-Eudocia is the fruit of many years' worth

of research, whose results have partly been published in earlier smaller articles².

The protagonist of Aleksandrova's book is certainly a multi-faceted and controversial figure. Probably born after 400 in the family of pagan philosopher Leontius, she was given the name Athenais. Tradition has it that she was born in Athens, although some scholars³ have proposed Antioch as another possible location. Her father made sure she received an education and developed her literary interests. Athenais also had two brothers, Gessius and Valerius. After her father's death, Athenais remained in the custody of the mother's sister; with her, she traveled to Constantinople, where she was in turn taken care of by the sister of her late father. Some sources maintain that she was received (in the company of her aunts) by Theodosius II's sister Pulcheria, to whom she com-

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¹ АМВРОСИЙ МЕДИОЛАНСКИЙ, *Собрание творений* [AMBROSE OF MILAN, *Collected Works*], vol. II, introd. ed. et. Т.Л. АЛЕКСАНДРОВОЙ, Москва 2012; АМВРОСИЙ МЕДИОЛАНСКИЙ, *Собрание творений* [AMBROSE OF MILAN, *Collected Works*], vol. IV.1, trans. Т.Л. АЛЕКСАНДРОВОЙ, Москва 2014; ГЕРОНТИЙ, *Житие преподобной Мелании* [GERONTIUS, *Life of Melania*], introd., ed. et trans. Т.Л. АЛЕКСАНДРОВОЙ, ВПСТГУ 3.3 (43), 2015, p. 71–107; ГРИГОРИЙ НИССКИЙ, *Аскетические сочинения и письма* [GREGORY OF NYSSA, *Ascetical Works and Letters*], ed. et introd. Т.Л. АЛЕКСАНДРОВОЙ, Москва 2007; ГРИГОРИЙ НИССКИЙ, *Послание о жизни святой Макрины* [GREGORY OF NYSSA, *Epistle on the Life of St. Macrina*], trans. et ed. Т.Л. АЛЕКСАНДРОВОЙ, Москва 2002; *Феодосий II и Пульхерия в изображении Созомена. (К проблеме датировки «Церковной истории»)* [Theodosius II and Pulcheria as Depicted by Sozomen. (Revisiting the Chronology of "Historia Ecclesiastica")], ВДИ 76.2, 2016, p. 371–386.

² E.g.: *Императрица Евдокия и почитание Богоматери в V в. по Р.Х.* [Empress Eudocia and the Veneration of the Theotokos in the 5th Century AD], СМу 7, 2015, p. 88–95; *Императрица Афинаида-Евдокия: путь к трону* [Empress Athenais-Eudocia: the Path to the Throne], ПИФК 1, 2017, p. 75–87; *О времени и причинах удаления императрицы Евдокии во Святую Землю* [On the Dating and Reasons for Eudocia's Leaving for the Holy Land], ВДИ 77.1, 2017, p. 106–125.

³ K.G. HOLUM, *Theodosian Empresses. Women and Imperial Dominion in Late Antiquity*, Berkeley–Los Angeles 1982, p. 117.

plained regarding her father's unjust testament, favoring her brothers⁴. She reportedly charmed Pulcheria with her beauty, stature and erudition; in effect, the empress recommended her to her brother – emperor Theodosius – as a potential wife. Theodosius fell deeply in love with Athenais and indeed decided to marry her. Before this happened, however, she had to renounce her ancestors' religion and convert to Christianity. At her baptism – officiated by Atticus, bishop of Constantinople – Athenais received her new name, Eudocia. The marriage ceremony took place on June 7, 421; the emperor celebrated it by holding races at the Hippodrome and arranging numerous theatrical spectacles. There can be little doubt that Theodosius's marriage was a political act of utmost importance. It was so because in February 421, in the western part of the Empire, Theodosius's uncle Honorius bestowed the title of emperor on Constantius, the husband of his half-sister Galla Placidia; subsequently, they jointly conferred on her the title of *augusta*. The imperial couple had had a male child – Valentinian – for two years already, while an heir was yet to appear at the court in Constantinople. As a result, Eudocia faced the task of ensuring the dynasty's continuity.

Thus, 422 saw the birth of Eudocia and Theodosius's first child – Licinia Eudoxia. Later, the imperial couple had one more daughter (Flacilla) as well as a son (Arcadius), but both died in early childhood, so that all of Theodosius and his wife's hopes rested on Licinia Eudoxia. The birth of the first child certainly fortified Eudocia's position at her husband's side. On January 2, 423 she was proclaimed *augusta*; her image started appearing on coins. From that point onwards, two women held the title of *augusta* in the East: Eudocia-Athenais and her sister-in-law Pulcheria. The status of Eudocia's family also increased considerably: her uncle Asclepiodotus was appointed praetorian prefect of the East, her brother Gessius – praetorian prefect of Illyricum, while Valerius became *magister officiorum*.

One of the effects of Eudocia's influence on Theodosius was reportedly the founding of

the university in Constantinople in 425. The empress was famous for her love of books: as we learn from Socrates Scholasticus, *she had excellent literary taste and had been instructed in every kind of learning by her father*⁵. In fact, she was an active writer herself, having authored e.g. an epic on the 421–422 war against the Persians, a paraphrase of the Old Testament, a work on St. Cyprian, or a history of the passion of the Christ. These works may not have been of superior quality, but they nevertheless testify to the author's extraordinary skills when compared with the general status of women at the time. Theodosius's wife is also credited with having brought to Constantinople a number of eminent orators and philosophers (including pagans), who enjoyed the support of the imperial court.

In 437, Eudocia participated in her daughter Licinia Eudoxia's wedding to Western Roman emperor Valentinian III, son of Galla Placidia and Constantius III; the ceremony was held in Constantinople. Soon afterwards, the empress left the capital. According to the tradition, her departure was connected with an oath she had made – namely, that she would embark on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land as soon as she saw her daughter married. It seems, however, that the *augusta's* position at the court had been deteriorating steadily since 431; the one benefiting from this was Pulcheria, her rival, whose influence had grown stronger. Some scholars argue that Theodosius – indubitably a devout ruler, deeply concerned with matters of religion – may have resolved to remain in celibacy (following the example of his sister), which automatically made it impossible for Eudocia to give birth to a male heir to the throne. Unable to stand the atmosphere at the court and seeing her influence on her husband wane – it is claimed – Eudocia decided to leave for Jerusalem, which happened in February or March 438. While on her way to the Holy Land, she stopped in Antioch, whose inhabitants celebrated her presence by erecting two statues in her honor (of gold and bronze, respectively); on her part,

⁴ *Ioannis Malalae chronographia*, XIV, 4, ed. J. THURN, Berolini–Novi Eboraci 2000 [= *CFHB*, 35] (cetera: MALALAS).

⁵ SOKRATES, *Kirchengeschichte*, VII, 21, ed. G.C. HANSEN, Berlin 1995 [= *GCS*, 1] (cetera: SOKRATES); SOKRATES, *Church History from AD 305–438*, trans. A.C. ZENOS, [in:] *NPFC* II, vol. II, ed. P. SCHAFF, H. WACE, New York 1890, p. 164.

the *augusta* spent some of her financial assets on covering the needs of the Antiochene community. When she reached Jerusalem in May 438, her closest associates came to include Melania the Younger (an organizer of women's monastic life, whom she had met back in Constantinople) and Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria (with whom she participated in the consecration of the temple of Stephen the Martyr). Furthermore, she made contact with Syrian archimandrite Barsauma, whose clothes she later brought to Constantinople alongside the relics of Saint Stephen the Martyr. The empress visited numerous holy sites, took part in religious ceremonies, and distributed donations; Socrates Scholasticus asserts that *on her visit to the sacred city, [she] adorned its churches with the most costly gifts; and both then, and after her return, decorated all the churches in the other cities of the East with a variety of ornaments*⁶.

Eudocia's arrival in Constantinople in 439 was in fact triumphal: she returned as an empress who, like Constantine the Great's mother Helena, made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, was venerated by the Antiochenes with statues, mingled with saints, and brought their relics with her. She was greeted exceptionally cordially by the people of Constantinople, led by none other than emperor Theodosius (as stressed by 6th-century historian Marcellinus Comes⁷). It appeared that Eudocia could hope to recover the lost position at her husband's side – all the more so because her return coincided with one of her close allies, Cyrus (of Panopolis in Egypt), assuming the post of prefect of Constantinople. This was not to be, however, as the rivalry between Eudocia and Pulcheria rekindled and was noticed by Theodosius's eunuch Chrysaphius, an immensely ambitious and power-thirsty figure. He decided to manipulate the conflict between the two *augustae* to his own benefit – in order to assume full control over the emperor. As remarked by Theophanes⁸, Chrysaphius talked Eudocia into demanding that her husband transfer Pulcheria's court *praepositus*

under her command. In practice, this would have been tantamount to annihilating the independence of her rival's palace retinue. When Theodosius refused, Eudocia suggested – again, following Chrysaphius's advice – that he make Pulcheria a nun, given that she had sworn virginity anyway. The ruler consented, but Proclus, the patriarch of Constantinople at the time, managed to warn Pulcheria of the impending danger. Thus, aware of the emperor's intents, his sister left the court on her own and relocated to the palace in Hebdomon, outside Constantinople. As it later turned out, this was by no means the final chapter of the empress's political career; in fact, in the long run, it was Pulcheria who was to emerge victorious from the confrontation with Eudocia and Chrysaphius. For the time being, however, the latter two were triumphant.

Meanwhile, Chrysaphius – having done away with a dangerous rival with Eudocia's help – now turned against his ally and her associates. In 443, Cyrus lost his post of prefect of Constantinople and was exiled (his wealth forfeited). Some sources⁹ maintain that the empress herself faced serious trouble, as Theodosius purportedly came to suspect her of having an affair with *magister officiorum* Paulinus (the famed story of the Phrygian apple¹⁰). This information is entirely untrue, however; it was fabricated in order to make the empress look bad. On the other hand, it is a fact that Theodosius first exiled the *magister officiorum* to Cappadocia (443) and subsequently sentenced him to death; Paulinus was probably executed in 444 in Caesarea. In all likelihood, the reason for these harsh measures was his plotting against the emperor.

Sometime after Paulinus's demise, but independently of this event, Eudocia left Constantinople and once again made her way to the Holy Land (with her husband's permission). She remained there for the rest of her life. Owing to her efforts, the walls of Jerusalem were renovated and strengthened. She also spent considerable amounts of money supporting the monks and the clergy, for whom she constantly acted as a patron. Her donations enabled the building of a bishop's palace as well as shelters for pilgrims and for the poor; they also made it pos-

⁶ SOCRATES, VII, 47 (translation p. 178).

⁷ *Chronicle of Marcellinus*, a. 439, trans. et ed. B. CROKE, Sydney 1995 [= BAus, 7].

⁸ THEOPHANES, *Chronographia*, AM 5940, ed. C. DE BOOR, vol. I, Lipsiae 1883.

⁹ MALALAS, XIV, 8.

¹⁰ MALALAS, *loc. cit.*

sible to adorn a number of churches. The most spectacular of those – as reported by Evagrius Scholasticus¹¹ – was the: *very great sanctuary of Stephen the first deacon and martyr, outstanding in size and beauty, not one stade distant from Jerusalem*. This church had been inaugurated already in 438, when Eudocia had visited the city for the first time. The empress also commenced the construction of the church of St. Peter as well as of a large cistern two miles away from the monastery of St. Euphemius.

In her final years – after the death of Theodosius II, during the reign of Marcian and Pulcheria – Eudocia got involved in the struggle for the bishop's throne of Jerusalem. The contenders were Juvenal, a follower of the Council of Chalcedon backed by the imperial court in Constantinople, and Theodosius, supported by Eudocia as well as by a large part of Palestinian monks, adhering to the Monophysite heresy (we may add that the empress herself apparently sided with the latter as well). It took a military intervention to restore Jerusalem under Juvenal's control. In 455, Eudocia – beseeched by her relatives, implored by pope Leo the Great, and advised by Simeon Stylites as well as St. Euphemius – decided to return to the Orthodox faith and to recognize Juvenal as patriarch. That being said, we know that she kept supporting the Monophysites, offering them sites for new monasteries.

In the last year of her life, the empress persuaded Anastasius, patriarch of Jerusalem and successor of Juvenal, to consecrate the still unfinished church of St. Stephen, and subsequently to embark on a journey across Palestine to sanctify all churches she had funded there, including those still under construction.

Eudocia died in 460 in Jerusalem, retaining the dignity of *augusta* until her death. The above brief outline of her biography and accomplishments should suffice to justify our previous statement that she was a most interesting figure – both in view of her turbulent life and her ecclesiastic and literary activities. It should be

pointed out, however, that the available sources make it challenging to conduct research on Eudocia: the material is not only scanty, but also irregularly distributed (only shedding light on certain stages of the empress's life) as well as largely tendentious (to wit, unfavorable towards Eudocia).

Aleksandrova's book grew out of her fascination with the Byzantine empress and her achievements. The Russian scholar divided her work into five essential parts. In Chapter I, *Athenais-Eudocia's Path to the Throne* (*Путь Афинаиды-Евдокии к трону*, p. 17–67), Aleksandrova depicts the intellectual environment of Athens, where the young Athenais grew up (the author subscribes to the view that the future empress was born in this city); besides, she analyzes the circumstances that ultimately led Athenais towards the imperial palace. According to Aleksandrova, the figures behind her ascent included her uncle Asclepiodotus as well as the group of people that the scholar refers to as the "Christian Hellenists" (p. 37): they expected that Athenais would weaken the position of Pulcheria, a rigorous Christian. Leontius's daughter caught Theodosius's attention due to both her beauty and her intellectual pursuits, which the emperor happened to share. In Chapter II, *Eudocia – the Empress of the Romaioi* (*Евдокия – царица империи ромеев*, p. 68–153), Aleksandrova presents the story of her protagonist against the backdrop of the political and religious life of the Empire from the year 421 until the late 430s, when Eudocia began her pilgrimage to the Holy Land. In this part of the book, the Russian scholar devotes considerable space to the issue of Theodosius and Eudocia's son Arcadius: she agrees with the view that the imperial couple indeed had a male descendant and presents certain new arguments in support of it. In Chapter III, *The Dark Decade* (*Темное десятилетие*, p. 154–218), the author attempts to reconstruct Eudocia's life during the 440s, poorly and often ambiguously reflected in the sources. Aleksandrova focuses especially on the circumstances of the empress's second voyage to the Holy Land. The comprehensive analysis of the sources leads the scholar to conclude that the journey may well have taken place only in the late 440s and that it certainly had nothing to do with Paulinus's

¹¹ *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius with the Scholia*, I, 22, ed. J. BIDEZ, L. PARMENTIER, London 1898 [= ByzT]; *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius Scholasticus*, trans. et ed. M. WHITBY, Liverpool 2000 [= TTH, 33], p. 52.

fall from grace. Moreover, Aleksandrova is of the opinion that even if there was indeed some sort of conflict between Eudocia and Theodosius, it would have hardly precluded the empress's return to Constantinople. It was only after the emperor's untimely death that the possibility was no longer available. In Chapter IV, *Eudocia in Jerusalem* (Евдокия в Иерусалиме, p. 219–279), Aleksandrova recounts the empress's final years, discussing her acts of donation, her stance on the Council of Chalcedon, as well as the question of her canonization. Chapter V, *Eudocia's Poetic Works* (Поэтическое творчество Евдокии, p. 280–381), features an extensive analysis of the extant remains of the empress's literary output. As regards the latter's artistic value, Aleksandrova comes to the balanced and presumably legitimate conclusion that *as a poet, Eudocia was no 'first-class' figure; still, the hyper-critical attitude toward her works, dominant in the last decades, is unjustified*¹². The book is complemented by an *Introduction* (p. 5–16), *Conclusions* (p. 382–386), indices (p. 387–388), list of abbreviations (p. 398–401) and bibliography (p. 402–413).

Tat'jana L'vovna Aleksandrova's book is an interesting attempt to present the biography and literary oeuvre of empress Eudocia in a comprehensive manner. The work utilizes an ample body of secondary literature¹³ as well as – even more importantly – an exhaustive source base; through the meticulous analysis of the latter, Aleksandrova is able to construct novel and original views

on a number of issues relevant for present-day scholarship. Thus, the book will no doubt inspire other researchers to participate in further discussion on the 'Augusta of Palestine'.

Translated by Marek Majer

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¹² Как поэт Евдокия не принадлежала к фигурам "первого ряда", но гиперкритическое отношение к ее творчеству, преобладавшее в последние десятилетия, неправомерно (p. 379).

¹³ However, we should note that the bibliography lacks several works by K. TWARDOWSKA, *Religious Views of the Empress Athenais Eudocia*, [in:] *Hortus Historiae. Księga pamiątkowa ku czci Profesora Józefa Wolskiego w setną rocznicę urodzin*, ed. E. DĄBROWA, M. DZIELSKA, M. SALAMON, S. SPRAWSKI, Kraków 2010, p. 621–634; *Athenais Eudocia – Divine or Christian Woman?*, [in:] *Divine Men and Women in the History and Society of Late Hellenism*, ed. M. DZIELSKA, K. TWARDOWSKA, Kraków 2013, p. 149–158; *Religious Foundations of Empress Athenais Eudocia in Palestine*, [in:] *Within the Circle of Ancient Ideas and Virtues. Studies in Honour of Professor Maria Dzielska*, ed. K. TWARDOWSKA, M. SALAMON, S. SPRAWSKI, M. STACHURA, S. TURLEJ, Kraków 2014, p. 307–317.

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MAŁGORZATA SKOWRONEK, *Średniowieczne opowieści biblijne. Paleja historyczna w tradycji bizantyńsko-słowiańskiej [Medieval Biblical Stories. Palaea Historica in the Byzantine-Slavic Tradition]*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, Łódź 2017 [= Series Ceranea, 4], pp. 396.

The monograph by Dr. Małgorzata Skowronek (Department of Slavic Philology, Faculty of Philology, University of Lodz), entitled *Medieval Biblical Stories. Palaea Historica in the Byzantine-Slavic Tradition*¹ [*Średniowieczne opowieści biblijne. Paleja historyczna w tradycji bizantyńsko-słowiańskiej*] and published by Lodz University Press, constitutes a continuation of the author's previous research: earlier, in 2016, the Lodz-based philologist published a commented critical edition of the second Slavic translation of the *Palaea Historica*².

¹ The translations of all titles in the book under review follow the ones provided in the English summary at the end (translator's note).

² M. SKOWRONEK, *Palaea Historica. The Second Slavic Translation: Commentary and Text*, trans. Y. LOSKE, Łódź 2016 [= SeCer, 3]. The scholar's other key works include: *Średniowieczne herezje dualistyczne na Bałkanach. Źródła słowiańskie [Medieval Dualist Heresies in the Balkans. The Slavic Sources]*, ed. et trans. G. MINCZEW, M. SKOWRONEK, J.M. WOLSKI, Łódź

The literary monument that Skowronek is interested in is a collection of Old Testament narratives – based in part on the Scripture as well as on certain non-canonical texts, but also drawing on assorted other sources. The *Palaea Historica* was written in the 9th century in Greek, by an unknown author. Subsequently, two Slavic translations of the work arose independently of each other. Both in her most recent work and in the above-mentioned source edition, Skowronek deals with the second Slavic translation (referred to using the abbreviation PH II in the work), comparing it extensively with the Byzantine original (PGr) as well as the first Slavic translation (PH I). The scholar undertakes a meticulous analysis of the text, striving to uncover its exact sources as well as to identify the

2015 [= SeCer, 1]; "Świat cały ma Cię za obrońcę". *Michał Archanioł w kulturze Słowian prawosławnych na Bałkanach* ["The Whole World Has a Guardian in You". *Archangel Michael in the Culture of Orthodox Slavs in the Balkans*], Łódź 2008.

means used by the anonymous author to give the work its individual character.

The work consists of seven chapters. The first one – entitled *Terminology. A survey of sources and literature* (*Wśród terminów. Przegląd źródeł i literatury*, p. 17–48), is divided into two subchapters. In the first of these – *Survey of sources* (*Przegląd źródeł*, p. 21–27) – Skowronek discusses the extant copies of the second Slavic translation of the *Palaea Historica*, while in the second one, *From the history of research* (*Z historii badań*, p. 27–48), she surveys the previous research on the text, including on the Greek original and the first Slavic translation. Chapter II – *The first two translations of the Palaea Historica. Between the variants: structure and contents* (*Dwa pierwsze przekłady Palei historycznej. Między wariantami: struktura i treść*, p. 49–94) – examines the differences in structure and content among the Greek original and the two Slavic translations. Here, likewise, the author organizes her considerations into two subchapters. The first one – *Differences in number values* (*Różnice wartości liczbowych*, p. 61–64) – reviews the discrepancies regarding the number values used in the three versions of the *Palaea*, whereas the second one – *Content* (*Treść*, p. 64–94) – deals with the chief narrative differences among the texts. In Chapter III – *Author of the stories. Biblical quotations in the Palaea Historica* (*Autor opowieści. Cytaty biblijne w Palei historycznej*, p. 95–144) – Skowronek describes the intellectual formation of the work's anonymous author, demonstrating that he presumably hailed from Byzantine monastic circles. The scholar divides the Biblical quotations used in the work into those that perform a narrative role in the text and those that do not. She also notes that in some cases the biblical content featured in the work need not have been sourced directly from the Old Testament; rather, it may have been transmitted via apocryphal texts drawing on the Bible. Chapter IV, entitled *The construction of the sacral stories in the text of the translated Palaea Historica* (*Konstruowanie historii sakralnej w Palei historycznej*, p. 145–232), is devoted to the way in which the author of the *Palaea* made use of the Old Testament Octateuch as well as of non-canonical texts when developing his nar-

rative. In the subchapter *Interferences in the biblical text* (*Ingerencje w tekst Pisma*, p. 145–168), Skowronek presents the errors committed by the author when adapting the text of the Bible and describes the numerous narrative, stylistic, and rhetorical devices he utilized when creating his work. The subchapter *Stories beyond the Octateuch* (*Narracje spoza Ośmioksięgu*, p. 169–232) analyses selected fragments of non-biblical provenance present in the second translation of the *Palaea Historica*. The scholar stresses that the elements drawn by the author from outside the Scripture do not collide with the sense of the Old Testament-based content; similarly, the artistic measures used by the creator of the *Palaea* gave the biblical stories presented an individual flair while preserving their content and core meaning unscathed. Accordingly, in the case of the *Palaea Historica*, we should speak of 'para-biblical' rather than 'apocryphal' literature. Chapter V – *Other components of contents and form* (*Inne komponenty treści i formy*, p. 233–278) – concerns the remaining sources exploited by the author of the *Palaea* in the composition of his work; here, again, the discussion is divided into two subchapters. The first one, entitled *Poetry* (*Poezja*, p. 233–255), discusses the pieces of liturgical and biblical poetry used in the *Palaea*, while the second one – *Anathemas* (*Anatemy*, p. 255–278) – concerns the anathemas woven into the text. Finally, in Chapter VI – *Between the texts. On the relations of the Palaea Historica to other works* (*Między tekstami. O relacjach Palei historycznej z innymi utworami*, p. 279–308) – Skowronek presents the relationship between the second translation of the *Palaea* and other texts that accompany it in the extant codices; thus, she is able to determine the cultural context in which the work functioned. The study contains four appendices: I – *Stemma codicum of PH II* (*Stemma codicum PH II*, p. 343), II – *Table of titles of the chapters in PH II* (*Zestawienie tytułów rozdziałów w odpisach PH II*, p. 344–354), III – *The Great Canon of Penance in PH I and PH II* (*Wielki kanon pokutny w PH I i PH II*, p. 355–360), and IV – *Edition of selected texts accompanying the PH II* (*Edycja wyboru tekstów towarzyszących PH II*, p. 361–382); the works included in the

edition provided in Appendix IV are the *Series of mystagogical-theological teachings and explanations*, the *Story of Susanna*, the *Homily on the Genealogy of the Holy Family*, as well as the *Stories on Old Testament themes*. The publication also features a *List of biblical characters of the Palaea Historica II (Wykaz postaci biblijnych w PH II, p. 383–388)*. Needless to say, the book opens with an *Introduction* (p. 9–16) and closes with a *Conclusion* (p. 309–314); it also has an ample *Bibliography* (p. 315–340) as well as summaries in Bulgarian (p. 389–392) and English (p. 393–396).

Without any doubt, the work by Małgorzata Skowronek will be of great interest to all students of the *Slavia Orthodoxa* cultural sphere, be it philologists or historians. It is a meaningful contribution to the research on the reception of Byzantine culture in the Slavic world. Its exceptional value lies in that it concerns the second Slavic translation of the *Palaea* – usually given the short shrift in the scholarship, where

much more attention is paid to the Greek original and the first Slavic translation.

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Średniowieczne herezje dualistyczne na Bałkanach. *Źródła słowiańskie*, ed. et trans. G. MINCZEW, M. SKOWRONEK, J.M. WOLSKI, Łódź 2015 [= Series Ceranea, 1].

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LIBANIOS, *Discours*, t. III, *Discours XI. Antiochicos*, texte établi et traduit par M. CASEVITZ, O. LAGACHERIE, notes complémentaires par C. SALIOU, Les Belles Lettres, Paris 2016 [= Collection des Universités de France. Série grecque, 524], pp. CIII, 213.

The book in question is the third volume containing Libanius's writings published in the renowned “Collection Budé” series edited by French philologists and historians: Michel Casevitz, Odile Lagacherie and Catherine Saliou¹. This bilingual edition (the original Greek and the facing-page French translation, p. 1–74) is preceded with a detailed introduction (p. VII–LVII) and a comprehensive bibliography (p. LIX–CII)². To accompany the

translation, the editors provided the reader with a studious commentary (p. 75–197; double pagination), indexes, and maps. This edition is the most comprehensive of all available editions of Oration 11, which is certainly one of the most important sources for the history of Antioch on the Orontes.

ture on the subject (which is so dispersed in terms of its geographical and chronological distribution) are a manifest sign of the need for an annotated bibliography of the entire corpus of Libanius's works (perhaps following the approach of the recently published bibliography concerning the writings of Ammianus Marcellinus; F.W. JENKINS, *Ammianus Marcellinus. An Annotated Bibliography, 1474 to the Present*, Leiden–Boston 2016 [= PHCAM]).

¹ LIBANIOS, *Discours*, vol. II, *Discours II–X*, ed. et trans. J. MARTIN, Paris 1988 [= CUFSG, 319]; LIBANIOS, *Discours*, vol. I, *Autobiographie (Discours I)*, ed. J. MARTIN, trans. P. PETIT, Paris 1979 [= CUFSG, 256].

² The summary of the sources and the detailed and meticulously compiled list of modern scholarly litera-

The staggering number of opaque allusions contained in the text as well as its complex metaphors and similarly numerous *topoi* subject to the intricate principles of Greek rhetoric continue to perplex modern readers. A literal reading may easily lead us astray, hence the need for a commentary to provide the reader with a key to understand the oration. The French edition of this text stands out among its predecessors on account of its length and penetrative character of the commentary³. Most of it was prepared by Catherine Saliou, whose statements about the oration are summarised below.

³ The earliest Russian and Polish translations are beautifully written and can be considered as masterpieces of translator's craft, but they lack a substantial commentary, including as they do only a general introduction and excessively cursory footnotes (at least by current standards). See: ЛИБАНИЙ, *Похвала Антиохии (Orat. XI F.)*, [in:] *Речи Либания*, vol. II, trans. et ed. С. ШЕСТАКОВ, Казань 1916, p. 346–399 and LIBANIOS, *Mowa XI: mowa na cześć Antiochii*, [in:] LIBANIOS, *Wybór mów*, trans. et ed. L. MAŁU- NOWICZÓWNA, Wrocław 1953, p. 7–81. The following two English translations are endowed with a greater amount of accompanying material (both include short introductions, the newer one is also extensively footnoted): *Libanius' Oration in Praise of Antioch (Or. XI)*, trans. et ed. G. DOWNEY, PAPS 103, 5 (1959), p. 652–686; LIBANIOS, *The Antiochicos: In Praise of Antioch*, [in:] *Antioch as a Centre of Hellenic Culture as Observed by Libanius*, trans. A.F. NORMAN, Liverpool 2000 [= TTH, 34], p. 3–65. An in-depth introduction and an impressive and detailed commentary was published with a translation into German: LIBANIOS, *Antiochikos (or. XI). Zur heidnischen Renaissance in der Spätantike*, trans. G. FATOUROS, T. KRISCHER, Wien-Berlin 1992, p. 286. For a translation into Spanish, see: LIBANIO, *Discursos*, vol. II, ed. et trans. Á. GONZÁLEZ GÁLVEZ, Madrid 2001 [= BCG, 292], p. 81–180 (Kindle edition, loc. 945–2870). The Spanish and English (by A.F. Norman) publications contain only basic commentaries drawing on a few classic studies by Downey, Festugière, Petit and Liebeschuetz. Only the German commentary can match the French in terms of its detailed and penetrative character. See also: A.J. FESTUGIÈRE, *Antioche païenne et chrétienne. Libanius, Chrysostome et les moines de Syrie*, Paris 1959, p. 23–37 (including paragraphs 196–271 translated into French) and *Der Antiochikos des Libanios*, trans. et ed. L. HUGI, Solothurn 1919 (including paragraphs 1–131 translated into German).

The oration was delivered in its shorter version during the Olympic games taking place in Antioch in 356. The full version as we know it today has circulated in public since about 362. This laudatory speech, a eulogy, was composed in keeping with the principles of epideictic rhetoric, presenting an idealised version of the reality it aimed to describe. Without overlooking the impact of earlier speeches in praise of cities (and in contrast to the earlier commentators), C. Saliou proves that Libanius was greatly influenced by the principles of epideictic rhetoric developed by Menander Rhetor (p. VII–XI)⁴.

Her analysis of the oration draws attention to the instances where panegyric hallmarks can best be seen: the descriptions of local climate and landscape, the mythical origins of the city, its long history, the attitudes of the gods to Antioch, the character of its inhabitants, its social relations, the outlook of the city and the suburbs, and its food and water supplies (p. XI–XXXI).

About a third of the oration deals with the history of Antioch. Libanius is selective and manipulative in his presentation of historical facts (for instance, there is hardly anything about the city in the early imperial period), harnessing them to glorify Antioch and the Antiochenes. In order to convince his audience that Antioch had been an ancient city related to other Greek urban centres, Libanius referred to the city founders of the legendary past (Triptolemus of Argos, Casius of Crete, Cypriots and the Heraclids) as well as to historical figures, including Cambyses, Alexander the Great and Seleucus I Nicator. These references relate to legends which originated in the Hellenistic period without any solid historical grounds (e.g. the part played by Alexander the Great in the city's

⁴ For the impact of epideictic tradition (including Menander Rhetor) on Libanius, see opinions of A.F. Norman (LIBANIOS, *The Antiochicos...*, p. 4) and Á. González Gálvez (LIBANIO, *Discursos*, vol. II..., Kindle edition, loc. 981–982). On the other hand, Fatouros and Krischer omit Menander and state that: *Das ist nicht zu verwundern, den von allen nachklassischen Autoren hat keiner einen größeren Einfluß auf Libanios ausgeübt als Aristides (LIBANIOS, Antiochikos (or. XI)...*, p. 14).

foundation) or to purely hypothetical suppositions (e.g. the migrations of Cretans and Cypriots to Syria before the Hellenistic era). The past is thus merely a tool for creating an idealised image. However, the historical worth of Oration 11 should not be considered simply by judging its factual accuracy. The oration recreates the collective memory by referring to the origins of Antioch and to its distant past, but to some extent, in the section describing the city in the Hellenistic period, it also allows us to catch a glimpse of the official dynastic historiography of the Seleucid dynasty (p. XXXI–XLI).

Despite its clearly rhetorical nature, Oration 11 remains the best source for studying the urban planning and topography of Antioch in the year 356. Given that it would be rash to expect an objective rendering of the city's landscape in a eulogy, one has to pay special attention to the passages relating to individual, specific objects or places. In many instances, passages such as these are undeniably noteworthy historical documents. In any case, Libanius avoids using the names of objects and places for fear of making the speech appear incomprehensible to people who are unfamiliar with the topography of Antioch. Also, he may have demonstrated in this way his aversion to ordinary language. Another striking feature, resulting from the use of metonymy, is the use of the name and description of the main street in cases where references are made to the city as a whole. Some topographic and toponymic descriptions referring to the period before the foundation of the city and to the foundation itself result from urban memories rooted in specific urban spaces. However, some of the places described on such occasions are difficult to identify, and the referents used by Libanius have little in common with those commonly used, but result from a longer literary tradition (p. XLI–XLV).

Paul Petit stated that this oration, replete as it is with references to the past and the gods, may be interpreted as the pagan faction's manifesto; C. Saliou notes that this view has been disproved in contemporary scholarship. We cannot be sure about the content of the original speech delivered by Libanius during the games, an em-

phatically pagan event dedicated to Zeus. However, most references to the gods in Oration 11 curiously look back to the past, while the name of Zeus, the patron of the games, is omitted altogether. It seems that Libanius takes a very careful approach to the paganism of his contemporaries. Oration 11 is certainly not a monument to the pagan's resistance; we should see it instead as an attempt at reaching a consensus and creating a common space for all inhabitants of the city despite its religious diversity. This work can also be seen as a testimony to the fragile stability achieved in Antioch by various religious groups (p. XLV–XLVII).

In addition to that, Oration 11 is also a source for the history of political ideas, which is due primarily to the central role that Libanius attributed to the city council. It replicates the views of at least some members of the city's elite and some emperors as well (note especially the case of Julian). The description of the curia is another element aimed to produce the image of Antioch as the most distinguished city among all others (Alexandria in particular) in the Roman Middle East (p. XLII–L).

The reception of Oration 11 went far beyond the traditional boundaries of late antique and mediaeval literature (note especially Choricius of Gaza, John Phocas, Nicolaus Mesarites, Bessarion), as can clearly be seen in the twentieth-century studies on urban planning (by M. Bosanquet, M. Poëte, and L. Mumford) where Libanius is viewed as the actual forerunner of modern urban thought (p. L–LIV). These considerations are indeed a novelty, given that we would look in vain for such views in earlier studies on Oration 11.

The topics addressed in the introduction are developed in the part prepared by C. Saliou which contains more detailed comments. That part consists of individual entries referring to specific paragraphs of the original text; explanatory notes are provided for about 230 paragraphs of the oration (the original is divided into 272 paragraphs). In keeping with the oration's composition, the first part of the commentary deals with the history of the city from its origins to the fourth century AD (p. 75–128). This section

includes a long discussion of *addenda et corrigenda* to Libanius's vision of Antioch in the Hellenistic period and aims in particular to demythologise the role of Seleucus I in the city's history (for instance, critical attention is given to the status of the city as capital during his reign, the construction of porticoes along the main street, the use of elephants for laying out the grid system of the streets, the establishment of the cult of Zeus Bottaios, the adoption of the cult of Isis, and so on, p. 103–120). The second part of the commentary deals with the general questions concerning the daily functioning of Antioch during Libanius's lifetime (p. 128–197). For instance, C. Saliou slightly distanced herself from the earlier statements of P. Petit and noted that the terms *χορηγία* and *λειτουργία* are synonymous in Libanius's letters and orations and refer to organising hunts and providing heating to the baths (p. 77). Like many other contemporary researchers, C. Saliou disproves the earlier view of G. Tchalenko on the fundamental role of olive oil among the agricultural products of northern Syria. Olive oil was not the only alimentary product of Syria marketed far and wide by means of seaborne trade; contrary to Libanius's opinion, wine also played a significant role among the goods exported from the region. This particular question certainly requires further study, especially considering the fact that in late antiquity, in the light of the research conducted recently by Polish scholars, Syria ceased to export olive oil on a massive scale (it was traded at the time only in the neighbouring regions, particularly in Egypt, Mesopotamia and Hijaz)⁵.

The detailed commentary to individual paragraphs together with the introduction to the translation provide the reader with a comprehensive and coherent picture of our current knowledge about ancient Antioch. It is beyond doubt that no serious study on the history of this Syrian city can now be conducted without using this work of scholarship.

⁵ T. WALISZEWSKI, *Elaion. Olive Oil Production in Roman and Byzantine Syria-Palestine*, Warsaw 2014 [= PAM.MS, 6], p. 301–302, 307–311.

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Św. JAN CHRYSOSTOM, *Mowy do Antiocheńczyków o posągach* [Speches for Antiochenes on the Statues], przekład i komentarz J. ILUK, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, Gdańsk–Sopot 2017, pp. XXII, 278.

The twenty-one *Homiliae XXI de statu* *ad populum Antiochenum* by John Chrysostom have been translated thus far into seven modern languages¹, which is now coupled with a Polish translation by Professor Jan Iluk, a seasoned translator of numerous texts authored by Chrysostom², greatly knowledgeable in the history of Antioch in Syria and of the Judaism of late antiquity. The publication includes an introduction (p. VII–XXIII), a translation of the twenty-one homilies (p. 1–248), a list of rhetorical figures employed in the texts (p. 249–255), basic bibliographical information (p. 256–261) and indices (of biblical references, personal and geographical names, and subjects; p. 262–278).

¹ The French translation: SAINT JEAN CHRYSOSTOME, *Homélie sur les Statues au peuple d'Antioche*, [in:] SAINT JEAN CHRYSOSTOME, *Oeuvres complètes*, vol. II (p. 531–573), vol. III (p. 1–130), trans. M. JEANNIN, Bar-le-Duc 1864; German: JOHANNES CHRYSOSTOMUS, *Einundzwanzig Homilien über die Bildsäule*, [in:] *Ausgewählte Schriften des heiligen Chrysostomus, Erzbischof von Constantinopel und Kirchenlehrer*, vol. II, trans. J.C. MITTERRUTZNER, Kempten 1874 [= BKv, 1.22]; English: JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, *Homilies on the Statues, to the People of Antioch*, trans. W.R.W. STEPHENS, [in:] *NPFC*, vol. IX, ed. P. SCHAFF, New York 1886, p. 315–489; Italian: GIOVANNI CRISOSTOMO, *Discorso esortatorio per l'inizio della santa Quaresima*, trans. M.L. CERVINI, Torino 1953 [= CPS, SG, 16]; Spanish: SAN JUAN CRISOSTOMO, *Las XXI Homilias de las Estatuas*, vol. I–II, trans. J. OTEO URUÑUELA, Madrid 1946; Romanian: IOAN GURĂ DE AUR, *Omilia la statui*, vol. I–II, ed. et trans. A. PODARU, Iași 2011 [= TCr, 12–13]; Russian: ИОАНН ЗЛАТОУСТ, *Беседы о статуях, говоренные к антиохийскому народу*, [in:] ИОАНН ЗЛАТОУСТ, *Полное собрание творений*, vol. II.1, Киев 2005, p. 10–314.

² Św. JAN CHRYSOSTOM, *Mowy przeciwko judaizantom i Żydom. Przeciwno Żydom i Hellenom*, trans. et ed. J. ILUK, Kraków 2007 [= ŻMT, 41]; J. ILUK, *Żydowska politeja i Kościół w imperium rzymskim u schyłku antyku*, vol. I, *Jana Chryzostoma kapłana Antiochii mowy przeciwko judaizantom i Żydom*, trans. J. ILUK, Gdańsk 2010.

Iluk begins with a brief historical introduction, discussing the riot of the Antiochene populace in 387. Thoroughly based on the fundamental scholarly literature dealing with this topic, written by researchers in Polish and in other languages alike, it provides the reader with an outline of the well-known historical facts connected with the riot along with a discussion of its chronology, which is followed by a short presentation of Chrysostom's orations from the series *On the Statues*. Iluk duly emphasises that the primary intention of these homilies, aside from their numerous and detailed references to the revolt, was to offer the listeners catechetical instruction for Lent. In keeping with the results of modern-day commentators, he also contends that in his homilies John Chrysostom supported the bishop Flavian, to whom he unequivocally gave credit for having saved the city from the emperor's ire. The introduction also includes an extraordinarily useful tool: a chronological chart indicating the precise dates when the individual homilies were delivered together with an outline of the key questions discussed in these sermons.

The Polish translation provides the reader with the twenty-one homilies as originally printed in the *Patrologia Graeca* (PG, vol. XLIX, col. 15–222) in the order established by F. van de Pavard³. Iluk believes that the collection of the homilies *in statu* – as sermons for Lent – should also include the two baptismal catecheses (*Catecheses II ad Illuminandos*, PG, vol. XLIX, col. 231–240) which he nevertheless decided to leave out as they had been previously translated into Polish and published by Wojciech Kania⁴. Moreover, Iluk would expand the

³ F. VAN DE PAVARD, *St. John Chrysostom. The Homilies on the Statues*, Rome 1992 [= OCA, 239], p. 205–363.

⁴ Św. JAN CHRYSOSTOM, *Katechez chrzcielne*. (Homilie katechetyczne do tych, którzy mają być oświeceni, oraz do neofitów), trans. W. KANIA, ed. M. STAROWIEYSKI, Lublin 1993, p. 23–39.

collection *in statuis* even further and include into it two more sermons (*De decem milium talentorum debito*, PG, vol. LI, col. 17–30 and *In Psalmum 145*, PG, vol. LV, col. 519–528)⁵, as A. Valevicius has fairly recently proposed, but nor do these appear in his volume as they contain no references whatsoever to the riot of 387.

This Polish translation is not a bilingual edition and does not offer the Greek original on facing pages, but it has to be noted that Greek terms and passages are profusely quoted in the footnotes. A lion's share of the footnotes (946 in total) offers descriptions of rhetorical figures (over thirty types used throughout the text), which are also given in the original Greek. Numerous footnotes contain references to biblical motives and passages employed by Chrysostom in the homilies. It is worth mentioning that fragments of the homilies from the *De statuis* series are preserved in the eleventh-century compilation by the Byzantine rhetor and hagiographer Theodore Daphnopates. In the footnotes to his translation, Iluk makes references to the specific passages of Theodore's text. Last but not least, the footnotes also include the first Polish translation of the passages from the orations of Libanius which, like the homilies *in statuis*, directly refer to the Antiochene rebellion of 387. This is a remarkably useful feature, especially from the point of view of historians, as it allows them to compare with ease the descriptions of the events seen by these two authors.

Translating rhetorical texts from Greek is always a daunting task for any translator. The Polish translation is truly as beautifully written as it is precise. There are only a few debatable points, all of them of a fairly minor character. For instance, it is questionable whether the *archon* referred to by Chrysostom in the title and opening passages of Oration 16 was the Prefect of the East (i.e. *praefectus pretorio per Orientem*), as Iluk has it, or the governor of the Oriens diocese (*comes Orientis*), or perhaps the governor of the Syria Coele province (*consularis Syriae*)⁶. It seems to me that Chrysostom referred to

one of the last two of those magistrates. However, given that the nomenclature of Roman officialdom appearing in ancient rhetorical texts was never, to put it mildly, precise or consistent, these references give us much leeway with regard to their interpretation⁷.

reference to governors of provinces or dioceses as opposed to the prefect, commonly referred to as *eparchos* (e.g. H.J. MASON, *Greek Terms for Roman Institutions. A Lexicon and Analysis*, Toronto 1974 [= ASPA, 13], *passim*, e.g. p. X, 40, 52, 136, 138–139) – it seems more plausible that the magistrate implied in this particular instance was either the governor of the diocese or of the province. It is possible that one of these two started the crackdown on the rebellion by deploying a unit of archers under his command and that for this reason he must have been present in the city (cf. P. PETIT, *Libanius et la vie municipale à Antioche au IV^e siècle après J.-C.*, Paris 1955 [= IFAB.BAH, 62], p. 241, an. 3: the governor [of the province?]; G. DOWNEY, *A History of Antioch in Syria from Seleucus to the Arab Conquest*, Princeton 1961, p. 429 [the comes of the East]; *contra* – R. BROWNING, *The Riot of AD 387 in Antioch: The Role of the Theatrical Claques in the Later Empire*, JRS 42, 1952, p. 15, an. 42 [local police force]; J.H.W.G. LIEBESCHUETZ, *Antioch. City and Imperial Administration in the Later Roman Empire*, Oxford 1972, p. 124 [nykteparchos]). The office of provincial governor in 387 was held by Celsus (cf. PLRE I, p. 194, s.v. Celsus 5; P. PETIT (*Les fonctionnaires dans l'oeuvre de Libanius. Analyse prosopographique*, introd. A. CHASTAGNOL, Paris 1994 [= CRHA, 134], p. 66) believes it was Celsus who quelled the riot; he also contends that Celsus was a pagan and that it was to him that Chrysostom referred in Oration 16. This is certainly debatable; earlier studies indicated that the rebellion had been suppressed by the governor of the diocese (cf. O. SEECK, *Die Briefe des Libanius. Zeitlich geordnet*, Leipzig 1906 [= TUGAL, 30.1–2], p. 107; G. SIEVERS, *Das Leben des Libanius*, Berlin–Leipzig 1868, p. 175). In any case, the presence of the Prefect of the East himself is the least probable option; that office was held from 384 to 388 by Maternus Cynegius (cf. e.g. PLRE I, p. 235–236, s.v. Maternus Cynegius 3).

⁷ For instance: JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, *Homilies on the Statues...*, p. 445: *the Prefect entering the Church, I commend the Prefect's consideration*, with the suggestion that this may have implied the *praefectus praetorio per Orientem*; SAINT JEAN CHRYSOSTOME, *Homélies sur les Statues...*, p. 80: *Je loue la prudence du gouverneur*, with the suggestion that *le gouverneur de la ville* is implied; ИОАНН ЗЛАТОУСТ, *Беседы...*,

⁵ A. VALEVICIUS, *Les 24 homélies De statuis de Jean Chrysostome. Recherches nouvelles*, REAP 46, 2000, p. 83–91.

⁶ Given that the term *archon* (or *hegemon*) was used to denote a state official – most probably, however, with

To conclude, this volume by Jan Iluk containing his excellent Polish translation of this collection of Chrysostom's homilies is immensely important for the study of the history of Antioch in Syria in its multifarious aspects: aside from those of political and social nature, it is highly informative not only with regard to Chrysostom's social, theological and political thought (or, more broadly, to that of other patristic writers), but also to the history of the Antiochene Church at large and, most notably, the Antiochene patriarchate.

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p. 118: как градоначалник, градоначалника я похвалил...; JOHANNES CHRYSOSTOMUS, *Einundzwanzig...*, p. 312–313: Statthalter.

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ZOFIA A. BRZOZOWSKA, MIROŚLAW J. LESZKA, *Maria Lekapene, Empress of the Bulgarians. Neither a Saint nor a Malefactress*, translated by M. MAJER, A. MĘKARSKI, M. ZYTKA, Łódź University Press, Jagiellonian University Press, Łódź–Kraków 2017 [= *Byzantina Lodziensia*, 36], pp. VII, 226.

In the latest publication in the series “Byzantina Lodziensia” (published since 1997 and fundamental for the development of Byzantine studies in Poland) the authors undertook the difficult task of writing a biography of Maria Lekapena, one of the most interesting and mysterious Bulgarian and Byzantine political figures of the first half of the 10th century. Both Mirosław J. Leszka, an expert in the political history of medieval Bulgaria (recently: *Simeon Veliki i Vizantija*, Sofia 2017) and Zofia A. Brzozowska (translator and editor of Rus’ literature, e.g. *Święta księżna kijowska Olga. Wybór tekstów źródłowych*, Łódź 2014) are researchers who are perfectly prepared to meet this objective.

Maria Lekapena, daughter of Christoforus, and granddaughter of the great Emperor Romanos, has long been popular with researchers due to her marriage to the Bulgarian Tsar Peter. However, a closer look reveals increasing problems with a small amount of source data. On many, even basic issues (such as when she lived: born 907/915 – died before 963, perhaps in the early 960s; the number of children and their gender), the authors of the biography had to take their own stand. It is always relevant and supported according to the highest scholarly standards. However, on such controversial issues as Maria’s personal political influence on Bulgarian-Byzantine relations, consensus will not be reached for a long time.

The treatise consists of eight chapters. The first one presents a synthesis of the source characteristics, while the remaining seven are a reconstruction of Maria’s biography against a broad comparative background (especially in the area of politics and the political system: Mirosław J. Leszka). The authors have meticulously collected all source references, both literary and, which is worth emphasizing, sigillographic. Occasionally they were forced to reason

ex silentio, but they always did so with great caution and prudence. Due to the silence of written sources in many aspects, undoubtedly a little mysterious, archaeological sources proved to be useful. Discoveries in the field of material culture in the Preslav region confirmed the influence of Byzantine women’s fashion on Bulgarian aristocrats (dresses, jewelry), which can undoubtedly be attributed to the activity of Maria’s court. On the other hand, the lack of archaeological evidence confirms the silence of written sources about the possible foundation and charitable activities of the Tsaritsa. This way, two categories of sources confirm a certain element of her life, which is also controversial, given that this type of activity was a widely recognized tradition in the case of the Byzantine empresses, and was zealously imitated, for example, by the Kiev Duchesses. The above examples show how difficult a task (one that requires sensitivity, intuition and, at the same time, caution in dealing with the sources) the researchers had to face in order to uncover the life of Maria Lekapena, certainly extraordinary but hidden in the shadow.

A particularly valuable part of the book is the Appendix (p. 155–170). It contains an annotated translation of the so-called second edition of the Hellenic and Roman Chronicle, written in Rus’ in the first half of the 15th century. The text, based on both Slavic historiography (Rus’ and Bulgarian) and Slavic translations of Byzantine historiography, provides information about the Tsar’s family. Zofia Brzozowska not only presents a translation with an exhaustive philological and historical commentary, but also carefully describes the manuscript tradition of the relic, includes the codicological characteristics and the original text with the source apparatus. Given that editions of Slavic texts continue to be rare on the Polish publishing market, the work of the author should be particularly appreciated.

The bibliography and footnotes have been compiled in accordance with the standard of the publishing series and meet all substantive requirements. The bibliography has been prepared very carefully, divided into sources and studies. It is very extensive and contains many works also from outside the English-speaking scholarly milieu (p. 170–200). As a result, the overall achievements of European Byzantine studies (especially the Bulgarian ones, as is natural in this case, but also Polish) have been noticed and appreciated. The Indices (p. 201–212) and the illustrations (p. 213–220) only attest to the care taken in releasing the work.

A separate point of interest is the linguistic editing and translation by Marek Majer. Translation is a form of art and, as is well known, involves a great deal of responsibility on the part of the translator. Marek Majer, who translated a significant part of the book and supervised the editing, has done an excellent job. The standardization of the translation of medieval Greek, Latin and Slavic terminology, while maintaining the lightness and clarity of style (the text reads well, the narrative is fast-paced, there are even appropriate native English proverbs in place of Polish ones), is a task that requires great skill, knowledge and talent. From the point of view of Polish Byzantine studies, good translation is of fundamental importance for the reception

in the world's scholarly community. Of course by now the Łódź center has made a significant contribution in this respect to the undisputed successes (e.g. a marked increase in the representation of Polish literature in the bibliography of "Byzantinische Zeitschrift", a world-famous journal, or the quotability of the sister periodical "Studia Ceranea" even in publications on material culture that are not directly related to Byzantine studies¹).

Therefore, there is no doubt that the reviewed publication meets all conditions both on the substantive and editorial level to participate in the international scholarly debate on equal terms.

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¹ Cf. *Textile Terminologies from the Orient to the Mediterranean and Europe, 1000 BC to 1000 AD*, ed. S. GASPA, C. MICHEL, M.-L. NOSCH, Lincoln 2017.

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Лев ХИРОСФАКТ, *Сочинения*, перевод с греческого, подготовка издания, комментарии, вступительная статья Т.А. СЕНИНОЙ (монахини Кассии) [LEO CHOIROSPHAKTES, *Works*, translated from Greek and edited with a commentary and introduction by T.A. SENINA (nun Kassia)], Алетейя, Санкт-Петербург 2017 [= Новая византийская библиотека. Источники], pp. 279.

Leo Choiosphaktes (845/850 – bef. 920) – the author of the works translated and published by Tat'jana Anatolevna Senina in the volume under review¹ – hailed from the Byzan-

¹ Beside the book under review, the scholarly output of Tat'jana A. SENINA includes editions and studies such as: Св. КАССИЯ КОНСТАНТИНОПОЛЬСКАЯ, *Гимны, каноны, эпиграммы* [St. KASSIA OF CON-

STANTINOPLE, *Hymns, Canons, Epigrams*] / Татьяна СЕНИНА, *Кассия Константинопольская: жизнь и творчество* [St. Kassia of Constantinople: Life and Works], Санкт-Петербург 2015 [= LL.SB]; Лев МАТЕМАТИК И ФИЛОСОФ, *Сочинения* [LEO THE MATHEMATICIAN AND PHILOSOPHER, *Works*], trans. et ed. T.A. СЕНИНА, Санкт-Петербург 2017 [= НВБ.И]; *Эллинизм в Византии IX века* [Hellenism in 9th-Century Byzantium], Санкт-Петербург 2018 [= НВБ.И];

tine aristocracy. He had family ties to the Macedonian dynasty and received a splendid education in his youth. For many years, he played an important role at the court of Basil I, and later Leo VI; among other things, he was entrusted with numerous diplomatic missions². His career deteriorated somewhat in the final stages of the latter emperor's reign, and fell apart completely after the ruler's death. Thus, Choïrosphaktes spent his last days as a monk in the Monastery of Stoudios in Constantinople, where he was confined following his participation in the failed rebellion of Constantine Doukas (913). Leo Choïrosphaktes was not only a state dignitary, but also a writer, with numerous theological works, hymns, and epigrams in his oeuvre. For the present reviewer, the most interesting corpus of writings associated with Choïrosphaktes is the collection of 27 letters – including ones that he authored and ones that he received. The correspondence in question is a most interesting testimony to Choïrosphaktes's participation in the political life of Byzantium in the late 9th and early 10th century. It also provides certain clues as to the group of people with whom he maintained contacts. There can be no doubt that Leo Choïrosphaktes was an unconventional and controversial figure. In fact, the intense emotions that he aroused among other intellectuals of his time can be gleaned from two extant texts written by his Byzantine contemporaries, attacking him in an uncompromising way – one by Arethas of Caesarea (Χοιροσφάκης ἢ Μισογόης) and the other by Constantine of Rhodes (*Against Leo Choïrosphaktes*). Apart from political issues, the objections raised in these polemics

include the accusation of Hellenism – bordering, in fact, on apostasy.

The book under review is divided into two fundamental parts. In the first one, Senina presents *Leo's Biography* (Биография Льва, p. 6–20); further, she describes his various *Works* (Сочинения, p. 21–83), covering his anacreontics, iambi, epigrams, the poem *Theology in a Thousand Verses* (to which Senina devotes the most space – p. 37–69), hymns, commentaries on the Old and New Testaments, and finally letters. This part also features a section entitled *Yet Another 'Wizard'* (Еще один “чародеѳ”, p. 75–83), analyzing the above-mentioned texts against Leo Choïrosphaktes written by Arethas of Caesarea and Constantine of Rhodes. The second part of the book comprises translations of Leo's works, in the following order: anacreontics (p. 84–99), iambus no. 6 (p. 99–108), epigrams (p. 109–112), the poem *Theology in a Thousand Verses* (p. 113–187), hymns (188–195), a fragment of a commentary on the Old Testament (p. 196–201), and letters (p. 202–238). The texts are supplied with a basic philological, theological and historical commentary. The book is accompanied by two appendices (containing the translations of the above-mentioned pieces by Constantine of Rhodes, p. 239–241, and by Arethas of Caesarea, p. 242–259, respectively), a list of abbreviations (p. 260–261), bibliography (p. 262–271) and indices (272–279).

This edition, collecting the works by Leo Choïrosphaktes in a single place and making them available in Russian translation, will enable readers fluent in that language to acquaint themselves with Leo's literary output and to form an independent opinion on this author. For scholars, the book under review may be of interest primarily owing to the valuable, competent and thought-provoking presentation of Choïrosphaktes's biography and discussion of his writings.

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T.A. SENINA, Anth. *Gr. 15.12 de Léon le Philosophe comme source autobiographique*, GRBS 57.3, 2017, p. 713–720.

² On Leo's career, cf.: G. KOLIAS, *Biographie*, [in:] *Léon Choerosphactès, magistre, proconsul et patrice. Biographie – Correspondance (texte et traduction)*, ed. IDEM, Athen 1939, p. 15–73; R.J.H. JENKINS, *Leo Choerosphactes and the Saracen Vizier*, [in:] IDEM, *Studies on Byzantine History of the 9th and 10th Centuries*, London 1970, art. XI, p. 167–175; P. MAGDALINO, *In Search of the Byzantine Courtier: Leo Choïrosphaktes and Constantine Manasses*, [in:] *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, ed. H. MAGUIRE, Washington 1997, p. 146–161.

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Sv. KASSIJA KONSTANTINOPOL'SKAJA, *Gimny, kanony, epigrammy* / T. SENINA, *Kassija Konstantinovskaja: žizn' i tvorčestvo*, Sankt-Peterburg 2015 [= Legenda legantur. Quadrivium издательский проект. Seria Byzantina / Legenda legantur. Quadrivium izdatel'skij projekt. Seria Byzantina].

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LEONORA NEVILLE, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing, with the assistance of DAVID HARRISVILLE, IRINA TAMARKINA, and CHARLOTTE WHATLEY, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2018, pp. XII, 322.*

The work under discussion has been edited by Leonora Neville, professor at the University of Wisconsin and expert in the history and culture of the Middle Byzantine period; the bibliography was compiled with the assistance of David Harrisville, Irina Tamarkina and Charlotte Whatley (p. XI). The book is conceived as a companion to Byzantine historical works written between the years 600 and 1490. Thus, the author purposefully leaves out the Early Byzantine period as well as reaches beyond the year 1453, marking the end of the Byzantine state (p. 4–5). As regards Neville's criteria for selecting the texts to be covered the volume, she chose only those that *call themselves “histories” or “chronicles”, or that clearly look like such* (p. 4) as well as those that *ostensibly participate in traditions of Greek history writing* (p. 3).

The core, entry-based part of the book is preceded by an *Introduction* (p. 1–44), in which the author expounds her conception of Byzantine historical literature and characterizes the community of Byzantine historians of the relevant periods: she describes the objectives they

set before themselves and makes certain remarks about the intended readers of their works. Some space is also devoted to issues such as *classicism, emphasis, and meaning* in Byzantine historical writings, as well as to the problems of dating, nomenclature, and the language itself. The final part of the *Introduction* provides information on the principal series of publications in which editions of Byzantine historical sources may be found as well a basic bibliography, featuring several essential works from which – according to Neville – the reader should begin his or her study of Byzantine historiography.

The main part of the book consists of 52 entries, covering the following authors/works: Theophylakt Simokatta (p. 47–51), *Paschal Chronicle* (p. 52–55), George Synkellos (p. 56–60), *Chronicle of Theophanes* (p. 61–71), Patriarch Nikephoros (p. 72–77), *Scriptor Incertus de Leo V* (p. 78–80), *Chronicle of 811* (p. 81–84), *Megas Chronographos* (p. 85–86), George the Monk (p. 87–92), Peter of Alexandria (p. 93–94), Genesios (p. 95–100), *Theophanes Continuatus* (p. 101–109), *Constan-*

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¹ It is fairly surprising that translations of the pertinent works into Slavic languages are cited most inconsistently. Thus, some of the entries mention the available translations into Russian, Czech, Bulgarian or Polish, while in certain others these are omitted completely – for no apparent reason. For instance, no mention is made of the very existence of the translations of the *History* by Theophylakt Simokatta – the subject of the first entry in the book – into Russian (ФЕОФИЛАКТ СИМОКАТТА, *История*, trans. Н.В. ПИГУЛЕВСКАЯ, Москва 1957) and Polish (ТЕОФИЛАКТ СИМОКАТТА, *Historia powszechna*, trans. A. KOTŁOWSKA, Ł. RÓŻYCKI, Poznań 2016 [= Rh.ZHB, 7]; likewise omitted is the Czech translation of the work by Laonikos Chalko-

also features a selection of contemporary scholarly literature, arranged according to the topics treated and with an indication of the work(s) from which it is advisable to begin studying (*Starting Point*). Predictably, the layout and size of the entries varies greatly, reflecting the degree of interest that a given author of work has aroused in modern scholarship. The authors of the bibliography focus predominantly on works published in western languages (especially English), no doubt a consequence of the fact that the volume is directed primarily at a western readership.

The book is capped by two appendices – A: *Time Periods Covered in the Histories* (p. 319–321) and B: *Timeline of Authors' Lives* (p. 322).

Leonora Neville's book appears to be an apt introduction to the Byzantine historiography of the 7th–15th centuries – both as a point of departure for those intending to study it more closely and as a source of information for those merely interested in acquiring a basic familiarity with the topic. Nevertheless, the work is to some extent hampered by the non-inclusion (with a small number of exceptions) of the scholarly output of Byzantinists writing in Slavic languages.

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kondyles, the last author to be treated in the volume (LAONIKOS CHALKOKONDYLES, *Poslední zápas Byzance*, trans. J. KALIVODA, R. DOSTÁLOVÁ, Praha 1988).

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LEONORA NEVILLE, *Heroes and Romans in Twelfth-Century Byzantium. The Material for History of Nikephoros Bryennios*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2016, pp. XIV, 243 (paperback).

The publications by Leonora Alice Neville (*1970) of the University of Wisconsin-Madison mostly deal with the Byzantine Empire under the Komnenos dynasty¹. The period in question saw the rise of a number of crucial historical works that enabled later generations to understand not only the political situation, but also the cultural background against which the writers created their oeuvres. Neville bases her analysis of the work by Nikephoros Bryennios (1062–1137) on Paul Gautier's 1975 critical edition². Neville's study on Bryennios's writings consists of three main parts, further divided into 16 chapters. The entire work is preceded by two condensed genealogical charts of the Komnenos and Doukas dynasties as well as an *Introduction* (p. I–IX), in which the author clarifies the origin and the turbulent history of the Bryennios family. In the first part of the book, entitled *Contexts* (p. 13–59, spanning four chapters), Neville provides an outline of the Komnenoi's politics, while also sketching out the practical aspects of historical writings in 12th-century Byzantium. Important fragments of this part are devoted to the sources utilized by Bryennios in his *Material for History*. Neville is of the opinion that Bryennios was a thoroughly educated man (p. 39), as is apparent from his being well-versed in the Bible as well as his imitating ancient authors, such as Homer, Xenophon, Sophocles, Euripides, Polybius, or Plutarch. Furthermore, according to Neville (as well as other scholars), Bryennios's erudition was influenced by a number of authors less distant from him in space and time, such as

Michael Psellos or John Skylitzes. Finally, Bryennios also had access to the imperial archives, which no doubt enhanced the value of his narrative. In the second part of the book, entitled *Readings in the Material for History* (p. 63–170, chapters 5–13), we find a painstakingly detailed analysis of the main object of the study, i.e. the *Material for History* itself. Bryennios's work covers the years 1070–1079, far from an easy time for the Empire in terms of political and military matters. The chronicler himself views that time as the Empire's all-time low, substantiating this claim with a wealth of examples, all of them most painful for Byzantium: the Seljuk invasion and the defeat in the Battle of Manzikert, the death of emperor Romanos, civil war, problems with the Slavs in Thrace, and issues involving mercenaries. According to Neville, Bryennios realized that the civil war and the dangers coming from the "uncontrollable" (p. 74) mercenaries had led to the Empire abruptly losing much of its capacities in the 1070s. As regards Alexios I Komnenos, Bryennios thought – and tried to demonstrate – that he possessed imperial strength. In a sense, the chronicler thought that in view of the Empire's previous decline, Alexios I and the Komnenoi were the right people to lead the country. Neville emphasizes that it was in the interest of Bryennios himself – as well as the political fraction he belonged to – that Alexios I be emperor. In chapter 7 of this part, where the author ponders the question of who was viewed as an enemy of the Byzantines (Romans), she discusses the issue of how Bryennios approaches the Romans and the Empire; she comes to the conclusion that he tends to focus on the people rather than the state. Thus, he calls other nations (such as Turks or Franks) "barbarians", invoking the relevant ethnonyms. A descendant of military commanders, the chronicler pays attention to issues of *Military virtue*, to which topic Neville devotes chapter 8 of her work. She analyzes Bryennios's judgments on these matters

¹ L.A. NEVILLE, *Authority in Byzantine Provincial Society, 950–1100*, Cambridge 2004; L.A. NEVILLE, *Anna Komnene. The Life and Work of a Medieval Historian*, New York 2016 [= OSHC].

² NICÉPHORE BRYENNIOS, *Histoire*, ed. et trans. P. GAUTIER, Bruxelles 1975 [= CFHB.SBr, 9]. A Polish translation is available in: NIKEFOR BRYENNIOS, *Materiały historyczne*, ed. et trans. O. JUREWICZ, Wrocław 2006 (based on ed. of 1974).

in great detail; her investigations are presented in several interesting charts (p. 90 and 93–94), as well as a conclusions section. In chapter 9, the scholar examines Bryennios's views on *Roman family politics*, claiming that the historian put particular emphasis on cooperation among family members and relying on it for achieving political gains. In chapter 10, Neville convincingly argues that Bryennios's narrative is not firmly couched in any particular theological framework; in general, religion is seldom in the foreground, although an inseparable part of Byzantine culture. Chapter 11 is entitled *Roman heroes*; needless to say, the figure of Nikephoros Bryennios the Elder, the historian's grandfather, is one of the protagonists in this narrative. Neville studies Bryennios's battle descriptions quite meticulously, registering the virtues ascribed to particular figures; her inquiry confirms that the characters depicted by the chronicler correspond to the classical image of a Byzantine warrior. Chapter 12 (*A Roman mother*) is a survey of imperial mothers, widows, and daughters who lived under the "stigma" of politics. Neville reviews Bryennios's judgments and juxtaposes them with the opinions of other Byzantine authors. In chapter 13 (*A bold young man*), she discusses the descriptions of Alexios I Komnenos, portrayed in a number of divergent ways in each of Bryennios's four books. These interpretations are most interesting: although Alexios I is generally viewed as a hero by Bryennios, the chronicler did not fail to point out his negative traits as well. In the third part of the work – *The Material for History in Twelfth-Century politics and culture* (p. 171–203) – the author points out that Bryennios's work had certain purely practical aspects, being actively used in contemporary politics. Thus, Bryennios's critique of Alexios I was political in nature (p. 173). In chapter 15 (*Nikephoros and Anna*, p. 182–193), Neville directs attention to Bryennios's wife Anna, the daughter of Alexios I. Finally, in chapter 16 – entitled *Roman ideals and twelfth-century Constantinopolitan culture* (p. 194–203) – she investigates the role of such ideals in Constantinople in the early 12th century. Neville compares the world of the figures that Bryennios knew in his time with the characters depicted by classical writers of antiquity.

Leonora Neville's thought-provoking study of Bryennios's testimony is certainly an important contribution to the scholarly debate on the matter. To be sure, the author only rarely alludes to earlier historiographical discussions, but this does not seem to have been her objective; on the other hand, she makes ample use of primarily sources, which she quotes in the original as well as in English translation. Neville is confident in the importance of gender studies, as seen in chapter 12 and 15. The publication is closed by two *Appendices*, a selective bibliography and an index. Neville claims that Bryennios's effort has not been fully appreciated in the historiography, not least because of the towering status of the work by his wife Anna, i.e. the *Alexiad*. The scholar also points out that Bryennios extols the figure of his grandfather – a usurper, but also a man of honor. Accordingly, the narrative revolves around the notion of honor, alluding to the traditional understanding of this concept in Roman times. Well-written and testifying to the author's erudition and imaginativeness, Neville's publication is a must-read for all Byzantinists, particularly those studying the age of the Komnenoi. It provides important insight into the Byzantines' understanding of the notion of honor – not only in Bryennios's times.

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MAŁGORZATA SKOWRONEK, *Palaea Historica. The Second Slavic Translation: Commentary and Text*, trans. Y. LOSKE, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, Łódź 2016 [Series Ceranea, 3], pp. 204.

The book under review was written by Małgorzata Skowronek¹ of the Department of Slavic Philology at the University of Łódź. The scholar specializes in Paleo-Slavic studies, the history and textology of medieval Slavic literature, as well as translating texts from Old Church Slavic into Polish. The book can be divided into two major parts: the analysis of the source and the edition of the text itself. The first part consists of four chapters. The first one, *Source Texts* (p. 13–20), provides information on the various editions and extant physical copies of the *Palaea Historica* that provided the basis for the reconstruction of the original text. The following chapter, *On the 2nd Slavic translation of the Palaea Historica* (p. 21–30), deals with the phenomenon of the *Palaea Historica* as an important artifact of Byzantine-Slavic culture. The author discusses the dating of the original text as well as its Slavic translations; subsequently, she describes the contents, taking into account the textual variation among the different versions of the *Palaea Historica*. Finally, she presents the research perspectives offered by the source. The third chapter, *Copies of the PH II. Textological Notes* (p. 31–36), delves into the more intricate philological differences among the copies of the second Slavic translation of the *Palaea Historica*. Furthermore, it contains tables presenting the variety of chapter titles across the different manuscripts (p. 37–47). The fourth chapter, *Edition of the Text* (p. 48–57), states the criteria and principles that were adhered to in the edition; Skowronek explains the manner in which the

manuscripts were used to reconstruct the source and presents the rationale behind the inclusion or exclusion of the alternative versions of certain words in the footnotes. The last, fifth chapter, *PH II. The Text* (p. 59–180), constitutes the second major part of the book; it is an edition of the second Slavic translation of the *Palaea Historica* in its original Old Church Slavic version. It has been meticulously annotated with footnotes indicating loanwords, biblical quotes and other references, as well as the aforementioned differences among manuscripts.

The main body of the book has been complemented with a Preface (p. 7), followed by a list of abbreviations (p. 9) and bibliography (p. 9–12). In addition, the author provided an *Index of citations and references* (p. 181–183), directing the reader to the appropriate footnotes, as well as an *Index of proper names* (p. 185–188), which certainly facilitates the use of this edition. It was a welcome choice to include thirteen illustrations depicting the pages of the manuscripts (p. 191–203).

It is somewhat unfortunate that the author did not attempt a translation, thus limiting the reception of the book to a small community of specialists well-versed in the Old Church Slavic language. Nevertheless, the work under discussion sets an example of a professionally prepared source edition, undoubtedly making it a major scholarly contribution to the research in Slavic Philology.

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¹ M. SKOWRONEK is the author of “Świat cały ma Cię za obrońcę”. *Michał Archanioł w kulturze Słowian prawosławnych na Bałkanach* [“The Whole World has a Guardian in You”. *Archangel Michael in the Culture of Orthodox Slavs in the Balkans*], Łódź 2008. Besides, her output includes several editions and translations of works of foreign scholarship, as well as over 30 authored and co-authored articles in renowned scholarly journals.

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Średniowieczne herezje dualistyczne na Bałkanach. Źródła słowiańskie [Medieval Dualist Heresies in the Balkans. Slavic Sources] opracowanie, przekład i komentarz GEORGI MINCZEW, MAŁGORZATA SKOWRONEK, JAN MIKOŁAJ WOLSKI, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, Łódź 2015 [= Series Ceranea, 1], pp. 240.

The book under review is a collection of medieval texts edited, translated, and supplemented with a commentary by a team comprising three scholars: Georgi Minczew¹, head of the Department of Slavic Philology of the University of Łódź and a renowned Polish-Bulgarian scholar specializing in medieval Bulgarian literature, Orthodox liturgy, Slavic, and apocryphal texts; Małgorzata Skowronek² from the same department, whose field of expertise is the history of medieval Slavic literature and translation from Old Church Slavonic to Polish; and Jan M. Wolski³, a young researcher specializing

in Bulgarian monastic culture and affiliated with the Waldemar Ceran Research Centre for the History and Culture of the Mediterranean Area and South-East Europe, *Ceraneum*.

The book is the initial volume of the “Series Ceranea”, a publishing venture of *Ceraneum*. It contains a bilingual (Polish and English) foreword explaining the idea behind the project and its mission, written by the editors of the series – Mirosław J. Leszka and Kiril Marinow. The first, introductory chapter of the book, entitled *Slavic Anti-Heretical Texts as a Source of Information on Dualist Heresies in the Balkans* (Słowiańskie teksty antyheretyckie jako źródło do poznania herezji dualistycznych na Bałkanach, p. 13–58) and authored by Georgi Minczew, describes the current state of research and subsequently presents the various heresies that existed within the Byzantine-Slavic cultural sphere. Next, the author analyses the Slavic anti-heretical literature focusing on its content and originality, as well as surveying the issue of anti-heretical literature as a whole. The final part is dedicated to the doctrine of the most important medieval Slavic heresy – Bogomilism. The author reconstructs various aspects of Bogomil views: cosmology, cosmogony, notions of Jesus Christ and Mary, soteriology, attitude towards Scripture, the Church Fathers, rituals, sacraments, images, and morality.

The remaining part of the book consists of an edition of fifteen original source texts or their fragments, relevant for the topic; they have been edited and translated into Polish by either Wolski or Skowronek. The corpus includes the

¹ Georgi MINCZEW is the author of the following books: *Święta księga – ikona – obrzęd. Teksty kanoniczne i pseudokanoniczne a ich funkcjonowanie w sztuce sakralnej i folklorze prawosławnych Słowian na Bałkanach* [*Holy Book – Icon – Ritual. Canonical Texts Pseudo-Canonical and Their Functioning in the Religious Art and Folklore of the Slavs in the Balkans*], Łódź 2003 [= RHUL]; *Слово и обред. Тълкуванията на литургията в контекста на други културно близки текстове на славянското Средновековие* [*Word and Ritual. Interpretations of Liturgy in the Context of Other Culturally Close Texts of the Slavic Middle Ages*], София 2011 [= ПИК]; he has also written over 80 articles covering similar topics.

² Małgorzata SKOWRONEK is the author of the following books: *Palaea Historica. The Second Slavic Translation: Commentary and Text*, trans. Y. LOSKE, Łódź 2016 [= SeCer, 3]; “Świat cały ma Cię za obrońcę”. *Michał Archanioł w kulturze Słowian prawosławnych na Bałkanach* [“The Whole World has a Guardian in You”. *Archangel Michael in the Culture of Orthodox Slavs in the Balkans*], Łódź 2008. Besides, her output includes several editions and translations of works of foreign scholarship, as well as over 30 authored and co-authored articles in renowned scholarly journals.

³ Jan M. WOLSKI is the author of the book *Kultura monastyczna w późnośredniowiecznej Bułgarii* [*Monastic Culture in Late Medieval Bulgaria*], Łódź 2018 [= BL, 30], as well as several articles, the most impor-

tant of which are: (*Pseudo-*)*Basilian Rules for Monks in Late Medieval Bulgaria. A Few Remarks on a Bulgarian Nomocanon from the End of the 14th Century*, Pbg 36.2, 2012, p. 39–44; *Autoproscopae, Bogomils and Messalians in the 14th Century Bulgaria*, SCer 4, 2014, p. 233–241.

following texts: excerpts from John the Exarch's *Hexameron* (p. 59–65); excerpts from the *Sermon Against the Heretics* by Cosmas the Priest (p. 67–125); anathemas from the *Palaea Historica* (p. 127–131); anathemas from the Bulgarian *Synodicon for the Sunday of Orthodoxy*, alternatively known as *Tsar Boril's Synodicon* (p. 133–145); anathemas from the Serbian *Synodica for the Sunday of Orthodoxy* (p. 147–153); a short text known as *On Messalians or Bogomils* by Demetrius of Cyzicus (p. 155–157); a compilation of excerpts called *On Priest Bogomil* from the Slavic Kormchaia (p. 159–161); excerpts from Pseudo-John Chrysostom's *On Ecclesiastical Law* (p. 163–167); an anti-heretical text from the *Eremitic Rule* (p. 169–171); excerpts from *The Life of Theodosius of Tarnovo* by patriarch Callistus I (p. 173–191); excerpts from *The Life of Hilarion of Moglena* by patriarch Euthymius of Tarnovo (p. 193–214); excerpts from Pseudo-Zonaras's *Nomocanon* (p. 215–219); excerpts from *The Life of the Holy Patriarch Ephrem* (p. 221–223); *Sermon ('Slovo') on the Origin of the Paulicians* (p. 225–231); *On the Messalian Heresy, Called Eutychian* (p. 233–235). It is important to note that every text is preceded by an introduction presenting its origins, history, editions, and the pertinent bibliography. The texts collected here are provided both in their original form and in Polish translation, page by page, for more convenient use.

The appended heresiological glossary (p. 237–243), containing a comprehensive list of terms and names with brief explanations and bibliography, is especially welcome for those readers who do not specialize in the field. Furthermore, the book is supplemented by an index of biblical quotations (p. 245–249), listing all references to the Bible found in the edited texts, as well as an index of persons and terms (p. 251–260) facilitating the navigation across the various sources. The book is closed by an English *Resume* (p. 261–267), which includes short summaries of all of the edited source texts.

The book is certainly a meaningful contribution to the research on Orthodoxy as well as on medieval South Slavic culture and literature. As stated by the authors themselves, there are numerous dogmas in academia regarding the topic of medieval dualist heresies in the Balkans and they can only be successfully challenged by

means of a 'return to the sources'. The authors' work undeniably proves that they have stayed true to their mission, as the book is an exemplary critical edition of medieval sources (even if – by virtue of the specific selection and commentary – it concentrates on a particular problem instead of providing raw source material).

In conclusion, the work under review is doubtless an important addition to the scholarship on the topic and a commendable achievement both for the research team and for the "Series Ceranea", which it opens. In view of the way it is structured, the book can be of great use both to specialists in the field and to those looking for an introduction to the problem of medieval dualist heresies in the Balkans.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Analecta Bollandiana
Ac	Acme
ACORP	American Center of Oriental Research Publications
AFi	Archiwum Filologiczne
AFor	Altorientalische Forschungen
AGBHB	Alte Geschichte in Beck's historischer Bibliothek
AGr.SFHE	Analecta Gregoriana. Series Facultatis Historiae Ecclesiasticae
AGRL	Aspects of Greek and Roman Life
AIr	Acta Iranica, encyclopédie permanente des études iraniennes
AIs	Annales Islamologiques
AJA	American Journal of Archaeology
AJAH	American Journal of Ancient History
ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt. Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung</i> , T. I, <i>Von den Anfängen Roms bis zum Ausgang der Republik</i> , Bd. I–IV, hrsg. H. TEMPORINI, New York–Berlin 1972–1973; T. II, <i>Principat</i> , Bd. I–XXXVII, hrsg. H. TEMPORINI, W. HAASE, New York–Berlin 1974–
Ant	Antiquitas
Anthr	Anthropos. Internationale Zeitschrift für Völker- und Sprachenkunde
AOC	Archives de l'Orient chrétien
ARAM	ARAM. Society for Syro-Mesopotamian Studies
ARAM.P	ARAM Periodical
Aret	Arethusa
ArtC	Arte Cristiana
ASH	Ancient Society and History
ASPa	American Studies in Papyrology
AUAW	Al-'Usur Al-Wusta. The Bulletin of the Middle East Medievalists
AUW	Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis
AUW.SW	Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis. Slavica Wratislaviensia

AWo	Ancient World
B	Byzantion. Revue internationale des études byzantines
BASOR	Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research in Jerusalem and Baghdad
BAus	Byzantina Australiensia
BBE	Bibliothèque byzantine. Études
BBKL	<i>Biographisch-bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon</i> , Bd. I–XXXIX, hrsg. F.W. BAUTZ, Hamm 1975–
BBOS	Birmingham Byzantine and Ottoman Studies
BBR	Bulletin for Biblical Research
BCAW	Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World
BCG	Biblioteca Clásica Gredos
BCSR	Bibliothèque catholique des sciences religieuses
BGA	Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum
BHAF	Beiträge zur Historia-Augusta-Forschung
BHR	Bulgarian Historical Review / Revue bulgare d'histoire
BKv	<i>Bibliothek der Kirchenväter</i> , vol. I–LXXXIII, ed. O. BARDEHEWER et al., Kempten–München 1911–1931
BL	Byzantina Lodziensia
BMGS	Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies
BP	Balcanica Posnaniensia. Acta et Studia
BPe	Bibliotheca Persica
BSC	Byzantina et Slavica Cracoviensia
BSGR	Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana
Bsl	Byzantinoslavica. Revue internationale des études byzantines
BSOAS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies
BSOS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies
BWo	Biblical World
ByzS	Byzantine Studies / Études byzantines
ByzT	Byzantine Texts
BZ	Byzantinische Zeitschrift
C.HA	Cursus. Histoire de l'Antiquité

CA	Classical Antiquity
CAH	<i>Cambridge Ancient History</i>
CAHS	Clarendon Ancient History Series
CAr	Cahiers archéologiques. Fin de l'antiquité et Moyen âge
CAV	Collectanea Archivi Vaticani
CB	<i>Collection byzantine</i> , publiée sous le patronage de l'Association Guillaume Budé, Paris 1926–
CCAW	Cambridge Companions to the Ancient World
CCRe	Cambridge Companions to Religion
CCS	Cambridge Classical Studies
CE	Chronique d'Égypte
CFHB	<i>Corpus fontium historiae byzantinae</i>
CFHB.SBe	<i>Corpus fontium historiae byzantinae. Series Berolinensis</i>
CFHB.SBr	<i>Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae. Series Bruxellensis</i>
CFHB.SW	<i>Corpus fontium historiae byzantinae. Series Washingtonensis</i>
Chi	Chiron. Mitteilungen der Kommission für alte Geschichte und Epigraphik des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts
CIL	<i>Corpus inscriptionum latinarum</i> , Berlin 1862–
CMu	Cursor mundi
COGD	<i>Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Generaliumque Decreta</i> , vol. I–VII, <i>A Special Series of Corpus Christianorum</i> , 2006–
ColEFR	Collection de l'École française de Rome
ColL	Collection Latomus
CPS.SG	Corona Patrum Salesiana. Serie Greca
CRHA	Centre de recherches d'histoire ancienne
CS	Cristianesimo nella Storia. Ricerche storiche, esegetiche, teologiche
CSHB	<i>Corpus scriptorum historiae byzantinae</i>
CUF.SG	Collection des Universités de France. Série grecque
DByz	Dossiers Byzantins
DOP	Dumbarton Oaks Papers
DOS	Dumbarton Oaks Studies
DOT	Dumbarton Oaks Texts

EK	<i>Encyklopedia Katolicka</i> , vol. I–XX, Lublin 1973–2014
EPROLR	Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain
FBR	Forschungen zur Byzantinischen Rechtsgeschichte
FCh	<i>Fontes Christiani</i> , Freiburg–Basel–Wien 1991–
FM.S	Forum Mittelalter. Studien
Fol	Folklore
GCS	<i>Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten [drei] Jahrhunderte</i>
Glo	Glotta. Zeitschrift für griechische und lateinische Sprache
GRBS	Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies
HČSAV	Historický časopis Slovenskej akadémie vied, Bratislava
Her	Hermathena. A Dublin University Review
HLEUL.T	Harvard Library of Early Ukrainian Literature. Texts
HOS	Harvard Oriental Series
HR	History of Religions
HSf	Historische Sprachforschung
HSUS	Harvard Series in Ukrainian Studies
HTR	The Harvard Theological Review
IBS	Illinois Byzantine Studies
IFAB.BAH	Institut Français d'Archéologie de Beyrouth. Bibliothèque archéologique et historique
Ifo	Íslenzk fornrit
IgB	Indogermanische Bibliothek
IHC	Islamic History and Civilization
IJ	Indo-Iranian Journal
IIt	Inscriptiones Italiae
IJHIRI	International Journal of Humanities of the Islamic Republic of Iran
JAEBS	Journal of Applied Environmental and Biological Sciences
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society
JEH	Journal of Ecclesiastical History
JHS	Journal of Hellenic Studies
JIMS	Journal of the Indian Musicological Society

JLA	Journal of Late Antiquity
JMR	Journal of Mosaic Research
JPC	Journal of Popular Culture
JRA.SS	Journal of Roman Archaeology. Supplementary Series
JRS	Journal of Roman Studies
JSHS	Journal of the Saudi Historical Society
JSOT.SS	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament. Supplement Series
JSRC	Jerusalem Studies in Religion and Culture
JTS	The Journal of Theological Studies
Kt	Ktēma. Civilisation de l'Orient, Grèce et Rome Antiques
L	Latomus
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LL.SB	Legenda legantur. Quadrivium издательский проект. Seria Byzantina
LSIE	Leiden Studies in Indo-European
M.UKW.PBDR	Monografie. Uniwersytet Kazimierza Wielkiego. Pracownia Badań nad Dziejami Rusi
Man	Mediterraneo antico
MBu	Miscellanea Bulgarica. Mitteilungen des Bulgarischen Forschungsinstitutes in Österreich, ed. V. GJUZELEV
MGH.AA	<i>Monumenta Germaniae historica, Auctores antiquissimi</i>
Mn.S	Mnemosyne. Bibliotheca Classica Batava. Supplementum
MPH	<i>Monumenta Poloniae Historica</i>
MPH.SN	<i>Monumenta Poloniae Historica. Series Nova</i>
MPo	Myth and Poetics
MSFO	Mémoires de la Société Finno-Ougrienne
MSS	Münchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft
MW/MS	Mediterranean World / Mediterranean Studies
NEA	Near Eastern Archaeology
NHMS	Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies
NJAOS	Nartamongæ. The Journal of Alano-Ossetic Studies
NPFC	<i>Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of Christian Church</i>

Nu	Numen
OBT	Opolska Biblioteka Teologiczna
OC.NF	Das Östliche Christentum, Neue Folge
OCA	Orientalia Christiana Analecta
OCM	Oxford Classical Monographs
ODB	<i>The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium</i> , ed. A. KAZHDAN et al., vol. I–III, New York–Oxford 1991
OHBS	<i>The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies</i> , ed. E. JEFFREYS, J. HALDON, R. CORMACK, Oxford 2008
OHM	Oxford Historical Monographs
OSHC	Onassis Series in Hellenic Culture
PAM.MS	Polish Archaeology in Mediterranean. Monograph Series
PapB	Papyrologica Bruxellensia
PAPS	Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society
Pbg	Palaeobulgarica / Старобългаристика
PEFR	Publications de l'École Française de Rome
PEQ	Palestine Exploration Quarterly
PG	<i>Patrologiae cursus completus, Series graeca</i> , ed. J.-P. MIGNE, Paris 1857–1866
PHCAM	Philological and Historical Commentary on Ammianus Marcellinus
PICI	Publications de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne
PL	<i>Patrologiae cursus completus, Series latina</i> , ed. J.-P. MIGNE, Paris 1844–1880
PLRE	<i>The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire</i> , vol. I, ed. A.H.M. JONES, J.R. MARTINDALE, J. MORRIS, Cambridge 1971; vol. II, ed. J.R. MARTINDALE, Cambridge 1980; vol. III, ed. J.R. MARTINDALE, Cambridge 1992
PMZ	<i>Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit</i> , ed. R.-J. LILIE et al., Berlin 1999–
PO	<i>Patrologia orientalis</i>
PP	Past and Present: A Journal of Historical Studies
PP.P	Past and Present Publications

PSAS	Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies
Psl	Palaeoslavica
PSla	Prace Slawistyczne
PTS	Patristische Texte und Studien
RAC	<i>Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum</i> , ed. T. KLAUSER, Stuttgart 1950–
RE	<i>Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> , ed. G. WISSOWA, W. KROLL, Stuttgart 1894–1978
REAP	Revue des Etudes Augustiniennes et Patristiques
REB	Revue des études byzantines
REL	Revue des études latines
RGRW	Religions in the Graeco-Roman World
Rh.ŻHB	Rhomaioi. Źródła do Historii Bizancjum
RHUŁ	Rozprawy Habilitacyjne Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego
RLin	Russian Linguistics
RN	Revue numismatique
RRP	Religions in the Roman Provinces = Religion der römischen Provinzen
RTL	Revue théologique de Louvain
RTM	Roczniki Teologii Moralnej
SAR	South Asia Research
SBe	Slavistische Beiträge
SBFLA	Studium biblicum franciscanum: Liber annuus
SBLOI	Subsidia Byzantina lucis ope iterata
SC	Sources chrétiennes
SCBO	Scriptorum Classicorum Bibliotheca Oxoniensis
SCer	Studia Ceranea. Journal of the Waldemar Ceran Research Center for the History and Culture of the Mediterranean Area and South-Eastern Europe
SCH	Studies in Church History
SCJ	Studies in Christianity and Judaism
Scri	Scrinium
SeCer	Series Ceranea

SF	Südost-Forschungen
SGKA	Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des Altertums
SHa	Subsidia hagiographica
SHAJ	Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan
SHGR	Studies in the History of Greece and Rome
SJLA	Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity
Sla	Slavia
SISl	Slavica Slovaca
SMSR	Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni
SOJ	Spicilegium. Online Journal of Japan Society for Medieval European Studies
SP	<i>Studia patristica</i>
SPBSP	Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies Publications
SSBP	Studia Slavica et Balcanica Petropolitana
SSla	Studi Slavistici
SSO	Studiorum Slavicorum Orbis
STAC	Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum
STJHC	Studies and Texts in Jewish History and Culture
TCr	Traditia Crestina
Tem	Temenos
Thes	Thesaurismata
TM	Travaux et mémoires du Centre de recherches d'histoire et civilisation byzantines
TM.M	Travaux et mémoires du Centre de recherche d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance, Collège de France. Monographies
TNDS.SG	<i>Testimonia najdawniejszych dziejów Słowian. Seria grecka</i> , vol. I–VI, <i>Pisarze z VII–X wieku</i> , ed. A. BRZÓSTKOWSKA et al., Wrocław–Warszawa 1989–2013
TRL	The I Tatti Renaissance Library
TTH	Translated Texts for Historians
TUGAL	<i>Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur</i> , Leipzig–Berlin 1882–

Tynd.Bull	Tyndale Bulletin
ULG	Untersuchungen zur antiken Literatur und Geschichte
USS	U Schyłku Starożytności. Studia Źródłoznawcze
VC	Vigiliae christianae: A Review of Early Christian Life and Language
VC.S	Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae
VP	Vox Patrum. Antyk Chrześcijański
ZDMG	Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft
ZE	Zeitschrift für Ethnologie
ZVS	Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Sprachforschung
ŹMT	Źródła Myśli Teologicznej

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ВΣυμ	Βυζαντινά Σύμμεκτα
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АДСВ	Античная древность и средние века
БСИ	Балто-славянские исследования
БСП	Българите в северното Причерноморие. Изследвания и материали, vol. I–X, ed. В. ТЪПКОВА-ЗАИМОВА et al., Велико Търново 1992–2009
Бе	Балканско езикознание
ВВ	Византийский временник
ВДИ	Вестник древней истории
ВПСТГУ	Вестник Православного Свято-Тихоновского гуманитарного университета
ВЦИ	Вестник церковной истории
ДРВМ	Древняя Русь. Вопросы медиевистики
ЖЗЛ. СБ	Жизнь замечательных людей. Серия биографий
ИНМВ	Известия на Народния музей-Варна
НВБ.И	Новая Византийская Библиотека. Источники
Ори	Ориентиры...

ПИК	Поредица История и Книжнина
ПИФК	Проблемы истории, филологии, культуры
ПСРЛ	<i>Полное собрание русских летописей</i>
РХВ.Б	Россия и христианский Восток. Библиотека
Слав	Славяноведение

GUIDELINES FOR THE AUTHORS

1. Sources should be cited as follows:

Theophanis Chronographia, AM 5946, rec. C. DE BOOR, vol. I, Lipsiae 1883 (cetera: THEOPHANES), p. 108, 5–7.

THEOPHANES, AM 5948, p. 109, 22–24.

EUNAPIUS, *Testimonia*, I, 1, 19–20, [in:] *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire. Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus*, vol. II, ed. et trans. R.C. BLOCKLEY, Liverpool 1983 (cetera: EUNAPIUS), p. 13–14.

Book numbers should be given in Roman numerals. Sources with singular structure are cited only in Arabic numerals. Pages are to be cited only when verses are counted on every page separately.

If the same source is cited for a second (or further) time, an abbreviated version of the title (signalized in the first use with the word ‘cetera:’), and not ‘*ibidem*’, should be used, e.g.:

²⁵ ZONARAS, XV, 13, 11.

²⁶ ZONARAS, XV, 13, 19–22.

2. Books by modern authors should be referenced as follows:

²¹ M. ANGOLD, *A Byzantine Government in Exile. Government and Society under the Laskarids of Nicaea, 1204–1261*, Oxford 1975, p. 126.

²² И. ИЛИЕВ, *Св. Климент Охридски. Живот и дело*, Пловдив 2010, p. 142.

If the same work is cited for a second (or further) time, an abbreviated version of the title (consisting of the first word(s) of the title followed by an ellipsis) should be used, e.g.:

²³ G. OSTROGORSKI, *Geschichte...*, p. 72.

²⁴ A. VAN MILLINGEN, *Byzantine Constantinople...*, p. 123.

²⁵ G. OSTROGORSKI, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

²⁶ A. VAN MILLINGEN, *Byzantine Churches...*, p. 44.

3. Articles and papers should be mentioned in the notes as:

L.W. BARNARD, *The Emperor Cult and the Origins of the Iconoclastic Controversy*, B 43, 1973, p. 11–29.

P. GAUTIER, *Le typikon du sebasto Grégoire Pakourianos*, REB 42, 1984, p. 5–145.

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Numbers of fascicles are cited only if pages are counted separately for every volume within a single year.

4. Articles in Festschrifts, collections of studies etc. should be cited as follow:

M. WHITBY, *A New Image for a New Age: George of Pisidia on the Emperor Heraclius*, [in:] *The Roman and Byzantine Army in the East. Proceedings of a Colloquium Held at the Jagiellonian University, Kraków in September 1992*, ed. E. DAŁBROWA, Cracow 1994, p. 197–225.

Г. ТОДОРОВ, *Св. Княз Борис и митът за мнимото: избиване на 52 болярски рода*, [in:] *Християнската култура в средновековна България. Материали от национална научна конференция, Шумен 2–4 май 2007 година по случай 1100 години от смъртта на св. Княз Борис-Михаил (ок. 835–907 г.)*, ed. П. ГЕОРГИЕВ, Велико Търново 2008, p. 23.

5. Examples of notes referring to webpages or sources available online:

Ghewond's History, 10, trans. R. BEDROSIAN, p. 30–31, www.rbedrosian.com/ghew3.htm [20 VII 2011].

www.ancientrome.org/history.html [20 VII 2011].

6. Reviews:

P. СПЕСК, [rec.:] *Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople: Short History / Nicephori patriarchae Constantinopolitani Breviarium Historicum...* – BZ 83, 1990, p. 471.

Footnote numbers should be placed before punctuation marks.

In all footnotes, only the conventional abbreviated Latin phrases should be used for referencing literature both in the Latin and in the Cyrillic alphabet.

These are:

cetera:	<i>ibidem</i> (note: only used for secondary literature)	rec. [here: <i>recensuit</i> / <i>recognovit</i>]
cf.	IDEM/EADEM	[rec.:] [here: <i>recensio</i>]
col. [here: <i>columna</i>]	IDEM/EADEM	s.a. [here: <i>sine anno</i>]
coll. [here: <i>collegit</i>]	IDEM/IDEM/EADEM	s.l. [here: <i>sine loco</i>]
e.g.	[in:]	sel. [here: <i>selegit</i>]
ed.	<i>l. cit.</i>	sq, sqq
et al.	p. [here: <i>pagina</i>]	trans.
etc.	<i>passim</i>	vol.

References to the Bible are also indicated using the standard Latin abbreviations:

Gn Ex Lv Nm Dt Ios Idc Rt 1Sam 2Sam 1Reg 2Reg 1Par 2Par Esd Ne Tb Idt Est Job Ps Prv Eccle Ct Sap Eccli Is Jer Lam Bar Ez Dn Os Il Am Abd Ion Mich Nah Hab Soph Ag Zach Mal 1Mac 2Mac

Mt Mc Lc Io Act Rom 1Cor 2Cor Gal Eph Phil Col 1Thess 2Thess 1Tim 2Tim Tit Philm Heb Iac 1Pe 2Pe 1Io 2Io 3Io Ids Apc

Greek and Latin terms are either given in the original Greek or Latin version, in the nominative, without italics (a1), or transliterated (a2) – italicized, with accentuation (Greek only):

- (a.1.) φρούριον, ἰατροσοφιστής
 (a.2.) *ius intercedendi, hálme, asfáragos, proskýnesis*

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(O)CS: (Old) Church Slavic, Rus.: Russian, Blr.: Belarusian, Ukr.: Ukrainian, Bulg.: Bulgarian, Mac.: Macedonian. Note: for Serbian, the official Serbian Latin script should be used.

Cyr.	(O)CS	Rus.	Blr.	Ukr.	Bulg.	Mac.
а	a	a	a	a	a	a
б	b	b	b	b	b	b
в	v	v	v	v	v	v
г	g	g	h	h	g	g
г			(g)	g		
д	d	d	d	d	d	d
ѣ						ǰ
е		e	e	e	e	e

Cyr.	(O)CS	Rus.	Blr.	Ukr.	Bulg.	Mac.
ë		ë	ë			
е	e			je		
ж	ž	ž	ž	ž	ž	ž
з	z	z	z	z	z	z
с	dz					dz
и	i	i		y	i	i
і	i	(i)	i	i		
ї	i			ï		
й		j	j	j	j	
ј						j
к	k	k	k	k	k	k
л	l	l	l	l	l	l
љ						lj
м	m	m	m	m	m	m
н	n	n	n	n	n	n
њ						nj
о	o	o	o	o	o	o
п	p	p	p	p	p	p
р	r	r	r	r	r	r
с	s	s	s	s	s	s
т	t	t	t	t	t	t
ќ						ќ
ћ	ǵ					
у	u	u	u	u	u	u
ў			ǔ			
ф	f	f	f	f	f	f
х	ch	ch	ch	ch	h	h
ц	c	c	c	c	c	c

Cyr.	(O)CS	Rus.	Blr.	Ukr.	Bulg.	Mac.
ч	č	č	č	č	č	č
Ѡ						dž
ш	š	š	š	š	š	š
щ	št	šč		šč	št	
ѡ	ѡ	"			ă	
ы	y	y	y			
ь	ь	'	'	'	j	
ѣ	ě	(ě)	(ě)	(ě)	(ě)	
э		è	è			
ю	ju	ju	ju	ju	ju	
я		ja	ja	ja	ja	
‘			(omit)	(omit)		‘
ѡ	o					
ѣ	ę					
ѣ	ję					
ѡ	o					
ѡ	j o					
ѣ	ks					
ѡ	ps					
ѡ	th					
ѡ	ü					
ѡ	je					
ѡ	ja					

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