

Religious Rhetoric of Power in Byzantium and South-Eastern Europe

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Religious Rhetoric of Power in Byzantium and South-Eastern Europe

Proceedings of the session held at
the 12th International Congress of South-East European Studies
(Bucharest, 2-6 September 2019)

Edited by

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INTRODUCTION

This volume gathers papers presented at the session on *Religious Rhetoric of Power in Byzantium and South-Eastern Europe*, organized by Ivan Biliarsky and Andrei Timotin at the 12th International Congress of South-East European Studies (Bucharest, September 2-6, 2019). The topic of this session is also the subject of a homonymous research project lead by the Institute for South-East European Studies of the Romanian Academy and the Institute of Historical Studies of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, in collaboration with the “Nicolae Iorga” Institute of History of the Romanian Academy (2018-2021). This proceedings volume presents the research carried out within the framework of this project, as well as that of other researchers from Bulgaria, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, and the United Kingdom, which came together in the frame of the Congress session.

The title of the volume and of the research project from which it emerged calls for several preliminary remarks to define its content. The rhetoric in question is not rhetoric in the strict sense of an art of persuasive discourse.¹ This term is used in this volume to designate more broadly all the means of expression used for the purpose of persuasion by a person or group of people.² When the content of these means of expression falls within the religious realm, one can speak of “religious rhetoric”.³ The contributions in this volume examine its complex relationships to the various forms of power in Byzantine society⁴

¹ See mainly E. Jeffreys (ed.), *Rhetoric in Byzantium. Papers from the Thirty-fifth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies (Exeter College, University of Oxford, March 2001)*, Routledge, 2003; eadem, “Byzantine Poetry and Rhetoric”, in W. Hörandner, A. Rhoby, and N. Zagklas (eds.), *A Companion to Byzantine Poetry*, Leiden – Boston, 2019, p. 92-112; V. Valiavitcharska, *Rhetoric and Rhythm in Byzantium. The Sound of Persuasion*, Cambridge, 2013; S. Papaioannou, “Rhetoric and Rhetorical Theory”, in A. Kaldellis, N. Siniosoglou (eds.), *The Cambridge Intellectual History of Byzantium*, Cambridge, 2017, p. 101-112; M. Vogiatzi, *Byzantine Commentaries on Aristotle’s “Rhetoric”*, Berlin, 2019.

² On different expansive definitions and uses of rhetoric, see, for instance, the 60 chapters of *The Oxford Handbook of Rhetorical Studies*, ed. by M. J. MacDonald, Oxford, 2017.

³ The intersection between rhetoric and religion is diversely explored in Brepols’ series *Recherches sur les Rhétoriques Religieuses* (general editors: G. Freyburger and L. Pernot). Its central subject-matter is however Greco-Roman Antiquity.

⁴ See, for instance, J.-Cl. Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance (963-1210)*, Paris, 1990; idem, “Official power and non-official power”, in A. Cameron (ed.), *Fifty Years of Prosopography. The Later Roman Empire, Byzantium and Beyond*, Oxford, 2003, p. 137-151 [repr. in eadem, *The Byzantine Aristocracy and its Military Function*, Aldershot, 2006, no. VII]; A. Timotin, *Visions, prophéties et pouvoir à Byzance. Étude sur l’hagiographie méso-byzantine (IX^e-*

and other medieval and pre-modern societies located in the political and cultural orbit of Byzantium.⁵ The volume has a threefold structure, organized both chronologically and geographically: Byzantine, Slavo-Byzantine, and Romanian.

The Byzantine section opens with a contribution by Paul Magdalino, based on the keynote lecture offered at the 2019 Congress session. The author links rhetoric with ideology, expressed through the use of Biblical *typoi* and classic *exempla*, where typology constitutes “an elaborate form of rhetorical comparison, *synkrisis*” and “the basis of Byzantine religious and political thought”. Magdalino studies a specific figure in Byzantine society and literature, namely the prophet, and his relationship with power through the prism of his political prophecies. This study extends and develops the conclusions of an article Magdalino presented at a colloquium on the place of prophetic discourse in Byzantine society, organized in Bucharest in 2017.⁶

Typology and *synkrisis* also lie at the heart of another study in this volume authored by Florin Filimon, who examines from this perspective two twelfth-century hagiographies of Meletios of Myoupolis by the Komnenian men of letters Nikolaos of Methone and Theodoros Prodromos. Filimon highlights the extensive use of intertextuality by Byzantine *literati* and the instrumentalization of hagiography in literary controversies and rivalries.

Andrei Timotin draws up a typology of the relationship between religious rhetoric and power and distinguishes a religious rhetoric of local communities *against* imperial power from a religious rhetoric *of* imperial power, a praise of power through religious means of expression. The two rhetorical strategies are illustrated through the analysis of two texts from the middle Byzantine period, namely the *Life of Nikon “Metanoieite”* and the *Vision of Kosmas the Monk*.

Hagiography, a privileged literary genre of religious rhetoric, is also at the core of Mihail Mitrea’s study, in which he examines Philotheos Kokkinos’ lives of contemporaneous saints to identify his political agenda, revealed by his

XI^e siècles), Paris, 2010; D. Angelov and M. Saxby (eds.), *Power and Subversion in Byzantium. Papers from the 43rd Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies (Birmingham, March 2010)*, Farnham, 2013; A. Beihammer, S. Constantinou, and M. Parani (eds.), *Court Ceremonies and Rituals of Power in Byzantium and the Medieval Mediterranean. Comparative Perspectives*, Leiden – Boston, 2013.

⁵ See, for instance, I. Biliarsky and R. G. Păun (eds.), *The Biblical Models of Power and Law / Les modèles bibliques du pouvoir et du droit*, Frankfurt am Main, 2008; I. Biliarsky, *Word and Power in Mediaeval Bulgaria*, Leiden – Boston, 2011; idem, *Vestigia semper adora. Power, Faith and Institutions in Byzantine and Post-Byzantine World*, ed. by O. Cristea, Bucharest – Brăila, 2020; see also *De Potestate. Semne și expresii ale puterii în Evul Mediu românesc*, Iași, 2006.

⁶ P. Magdalino, “Prophecy, Divination and the Church in Byzantium”, in P. Magdalino and A. Timotin (eds.), *Savoirs prédictifs et techniques divinatoires de l’Antiquité tardive à Byzance*, Seyssel, 2019, p. 185-202.

depiction of imperial and ecclesiastical figures. Moreover, his analysis sheds light on Kokkinos' view on the relationship between *basileia* and *ekklesia*.

The first section also features Adrian Pirtea's contribution on Arethas of Caesarea's *Commentary on the Apocalypse*. Based on manuscript evidence, Pirtea argues for the importance and "unique" role of Arethas' exegetical and editorial work on St John's *Apocalypse*, which contributed to its canonical status, as well as its Eastern Christian perception and reception.

The Slavo-Byzantine section of the volume opens with a study by Smilja Marjanović-Dušanić on the relationship between the rhetoric of power and the liturgical ritual of coronation in the medieval kingdom of Serbia. This relationship is established at a double level: the legitimization of royal power through the ritual of coronation and the emanation of political power from the very nature of the liturgical ritual. The act of elevating Serbia to the rank of kingdom was accompanied by several ceremonies that enshrined the new status of the Serbian State and Church at the end of the second decade of the 13th century, among which in particular the consecration of the temple of Žiça and its elevation to the rank of cathedral of the coronation of future kings.

Relics played an important role in the ideology of the Second Bulgarian Empire, as shown in Ivan Biliarsky's study of the political and religious program of Patriarch Euthymus of Tarnovo. The relics of St Paraskevi, St Empress Theophano, and St Philothea were gathered and venerated in the capital of the Bulgarian Empire, seen as a New Constantinople, as protectors of the Empire and the people. The link between their cults and their relationship with Marian veneration is part of a religious rhetoric that Biliarsky clearly delineates from the hagiographic texts of Patriarch Euthymus.

Byzantine religious rhetoric also spread in the cultural orbit of Byzantium, including in the Romanian Principalities. Tudor Teoteoi examines in detail the idealized portrait of the ruler in John VI Kantakouzenos' *Memoirs* and the Slavic-Romanian chronicles, highlighting the close relationship of the latter to Byzantine imperial ideology. Andrei Prohin offers an analysis of the universal chronicle written by Mihail Moxa, Wallachian historiographer and author of the first extant chronicle in Romanian in early 17th century. Prohin's article shows that Moxa's particular interest in sovereigns' prophetic dreams comes from a spiritual reading of the history inherited from Byzantine universal chronicles.

The last section of the volume is devoted to religious rhetoric in the Romanian speaking area. Through an in-depth analysis of the *arengae* of Vlad IV the Monk, a controversial 15th century Wallachian prince, Marian Coman traces elements of a concern with the millennium of the monk-turned-prince that affords a better understanding of many of his political and cultural enterprises. While Vlad the Monk is undoubtedly an atypical monarch, around the year 1000 the example of Basil II already provided Byzantium with a model that joined the quasi-monastic ethos with millenarianism.

Ovidiu Cristea highlights the religious rhetoric employed by Romanian princes during the “Long Turkish War”, notably the recurrent idea of *antemurale christianitatis*. The voivodes of Wallachia and Moldavia used this idea as part of a rhetorical strategy aimed to persuade Emperor Rudolph II and Pope Clement VIII that the Romanian Principalities were part of the Christian Commonwealth and ready to engage in the war against the infidels. This strategy, nuanced according to the recipients, surfaces, for example, in these rulers’ correspondence with the European courts. A special case is Michael the Brave, whose rhetoric influenced and was inherited by some of his successors on the Wallachian throne.

Lidia Cotovanu examines the rhetoric employed by the Wallachian prince Matei Basarab to legitimize his ascension to the throne. Through a detailed study of his religious foundations *typika* and other written sources (court chronicles, diplomatic correspondence, chrysobulls confirming various rights, judicial sentences, typographical work), Cotovanu shows that the prince aimed to rhetorically connect his reign to the founders of the country, the “Basarab lineage”, and to present himself as a restorer of its ancient customs.

Rhetoric is not just written or spoken discourse; there is also a visual rhetoric, which can assume the guise of religious images.⁷ Radu Nedici underlines this aspect in his study of the complex political and ecclesiastical strategy and meanings of the failed promotion of a weeping icon of the Virgin in 18th century Blaj (Transylvania), in the context of a Greek Catholic ceremony. Finally, Radu G. Păun’s study offers an enlightening contribution to the history, which is yet to be written, of the rituals of monarchical power in Wallachia, starting from a manuscript prayer of coronation, probably never used in cult, written in early 19th century Wallachia.

The contributions in this volume amply display the richness of the topic of the religious rhetoric of power in Byzantium and its political and cultural orbit, highlighting both its diversity and coherence. Beyond the geographical and chronological diversity of the subjects examined, the studies in this volume share numerous points of convergence in terms of the themes addressed and methodology employed. It is our hope that the contributions presented here will lay the grounds for further inquiries into this topic, which will contribute to a better understanding of the religious rhetoric of power in Byzantium and South-Eastern Europe.

Ivan Biliarsky, Mihail Mitrea, and Andrei Timotin

⁷ See, for instance, H. Maguire, *Art and Eloquence in Byzantium*, Princeton, 1981; see also the contributions of Henry Maguire, Robin Cormack, and Leslie Brubaker in E. Jeffreys (ed.), *Rhetoric in Byzantium...*; R. Webb, *Ekphrasis, Imagination and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice*, Farnham, 2009. On the rhetoric of visual arts, see the seminal study of R. Barthes, “Rhétorique de l’image”, *Communications* 4, 1964, p. 40-51.

BYZANTIUM

THE RELIGIOUS RHETORIC OF POLITICAL PROPHECY

Paul Magdalino

Religious rhetoric is, *strictissimo sensu*, a contradiction in terms, insofar as religion is the artless experience of revealed truth, while rhetoric is the artful simulation and dissimulation of the truth. In a Christian context, religion is obedience to the Word of God, whereas rhetoric is the manipulation of words in the service of human vanity and ambition. This dichotomy was fundamental to the Byzantine conception of knowledge, inherited from the early church, which drew a basic distinction between the inner and the outer learning, ἡ καθ' ἑμᾶς παιδεία versus ἡ θύραθεν παιδεία. This was partly a Christianized refinement of the Platonic distinction between wisdom and sophistry, but mainly it was a rejection of the pagan and secular content of the literature on which a classical education in rhetoric and philosophy was based.

Yet, as we all know, the church in practice embraced Hellenic learning from the time of St Paul, and it adopted the methods of classical rhetoric at all levels of religious discourse. The most influential theologians, exegetes and preachers in the Greek East were masters of classical oratory, trained in the schools of Athens, Antioch, and Alexandria, and less educated Christian writers absorbed at second hand the precepts of rhetorical eloquence expounded in the teaching manuals of the Second Sophistic. Rhetorical techniques and tropes pervaded all genres of Christian literature, from the most learned treatises to the most popular homilies, hymns, and hagiographies.¹ The denial of the outer learning, the claim to speak in the plain language of simple fishermen,² was itself a rhetorical posture, an expression of the rhetorical mentality that one might identify as the quintessence of Byzantine culture. In this sense, Byzantine religious rhetoric went well beyond the Christianization of the Second Sophistic, and it must be defined in much more general terms. In this paper, I propose a definition of rhetoric in general as the language of ideology. Ideology deals in commonplaces and stereotypes, and so rhetoric is the art of managing *topoi* and

¹ Most strikingly in the hymns of Romanos the Melodist. See S. Gador-Whyte, *Theology and Poetry in Early Byzantium. The Kontakia of Romanos the Melodist*, Cambridge, 2017.

² Expressed most famously, and disingenuously, by Gregory of Nazianzos, *Oration* 23. 12, ed. by J. Mossay, *Grégoire de Nazianze. Discours 20-23*, Paris, 1980, p. 304-306: ... δογματικῶς, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀντιλογικῶς· ἀλιεντικῶς, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀριστοτελικῶς· πνευματικῶς, ἀλλ' οὐ κακοπραγμονικῶς· ἐκκλησιαστικῶς, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀγοραίως· ὠφελίμως, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐπιδεικτικῶς.

typoi for public consumption. The particular function of religious rhetoric in Byzantium was the construction of typology, which deserves to be regarded as the basis of Byzantine religious and political thought.

Typology may be understood as a literary and exegetical device that connects two historical phenomena over time and invests them with meaning by presenting the earlier as the prefiguration and the later as the fulfilment of the other – a process that can be extended indefinitely with the addition of extra examples. We associate typology primarily with the Bible, and above all with the notion, already fundamental to the New Testament, that the sacred figures and events of Old Testament history were *typoi* of the life and incarnation of Christ.³ But typology in Byzantine literature is not confined to the canonical Bible; it extends to biblical Apocrypha, related pseudepigrapha, and post-biblical history, and it makes use of other representational strategies, notably metaphor, allegory, and *exempla* from Greco-Roman history and mythology. Indeed, Byzantine typology may be thought of as an elaborate form of rhetorical comparison, *synkrisis*, which used both Christian *typos* and classical *exemplum* as models for the construction of identities and profiles. It did so by accumulating references and allusions – the more, and the more diverse, the better – to prototypes that are not only reproduced but surpassed by the subject under discussion.⁴ The ideological essence of this rhetoric of typology by *synkrisis* is distilled in the formula that designates X as ‘the New Y’; hence *Neos Konstantinos*, *Nea Ekklesia*, and, first and foremost, *Nea Ierousalem*.⁵ What all these expressions have in common is the idea that the ‘new’ object is not a derivative copy, a pale shadow, but the ultimate fulfilment of its predecessor.

In what follows, I will apply the notion of rhetoric as typology by considering the literary representation of one type of Byzantine religious figure who has not received due attention, because his role has not been properly profiled: the prophet. I have chosen to focus on political prophecy because this highlights the real, functional importance of the prophet in Byzantine society.

³ A useful introduction is C. Rapp, “Old Testament Models for Emperors in Early Byzantium”, in P. Magdalino and R. S. Nelson (eds.), *The Old Testament in Byzantium*, Washington, D.C., 2010, p. 175-197.

⁴ This style of religious rhetoric is particularly well developed in the panegyric homilies of Niketas the Paphlagonian. See, for example, his panegyrics on St Gregory of Nazianzos (ed. by J. J. Rizzo, *The Encomium of Gregory Nazianzen by Nicetas the Paphlagonian*, Brussels, 1976) and St Nicholas (ed. by F. Halkin, *Saints de Byzance et du Proche-Orient. Seize textes grecs inédits (dix Vies ou Passions sans nom d’auteur et six discours de Nicétas de Paphlagonie)*, Geneva, 1986, p. 147-157).

⁵ See P. Magdalino, “Observations on the *Nea Ekklesia* of Basil I”, *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 37, 1977, p. 51-64 [repr. in idem, *Studies on the History and Topography of Medieval Constantinople*, Aldershot, 2007, no. V]; J. Erdeljan, *Chosen Places. Constructing New Jerusalems in Slavia Orthodoxa*, Leiden – Boston, 2017.

The texts that convey political prophecy are of two kinds: those that purport to be prophetic utterances and those that report the prophetic activity of holy men.⁶ The texts in the first group are generally referred to as apocalypses and they are all pseudepigraphical, that is, they are fictively ascribed to well-known figures, most famously the prophet Daniel, the Church Father Methodius of Patara, and the emperor Leo VI. Loosely inspired by the language and motifs of biblical prophecy, they narrate in the future tense a sequence of events up to and sometimes including the Second Coming of Christ and the Last Judgement. They are political insofar as their narrative includes the end of the Roman Empire and the series of imperial reigns leading up to the last emperor, his abdication and his succession by the Antichrist. Part of the narrative is *vaticinium ex eventu*, that is, it presents as prophecy of the future an account of events that have already taken place. The schematic portrayal of the protagonists lends itself to stereotype, and Byzantine apocalypses are built on typology, as András Kraft has demonstrated.⁷ The typology of Christ's kingship structures and dominates the narrative. The story begins notionally with the Saviour's first coming to earth and ends with his triumphal return. The actions and attributes of Christ inform the portrayal of the charismatic, messianic emperor whose reign is the high point of the political narrative. Yet the same Christ-like charisma is also faked by the Antichrist, whose rule overturns the work of salvation. At the same time, the prophesied emperors echo historical emperors in ways that suggest that the latter were not only used to provide a semblance of realism, but also were conceived as types that would be repeated and brought to fulfilment. Thus, the messianic emperor reigns for thirty-two years, a clear reminiscence of Constantine the Great. Beginning with the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, the same emperor, who is also often the last emperor, goes to Jerusalem to end his reign.⁸ The motif was evidently inspired by Heraclius, the only Byzantine emperor who visited the Holy City, and it implied that Heraclius' visit had been a trial run for the real thing. A similar process of anticipated and implied typology might be at work in the caricature, featured in some prophecies, of an

⁶ I have emphasised this basic distinction in two previous publications: P. Magdalino, "Apocryphal Narrative: Patterns of Fiction in Byzantine Prophetic and Patriographic Literature", in P. Roilos (ed.), *Medieval Greek Storytelling. Fictionality and Narrative in Byzantium*, Wiesbaden, 2014, p. 87-102; idem, "Prophecy, Divination and the Church in Byzantium", in P. Magdalino and A. Timotin (eds.), *Savoirs prédictifs et techniques divinatoires de l'Antiquité tardive à Byzance*, Seyssel, 2019, p. 185-202.

⁷ A. Kraft, "Typological Hermeneutics and Apocalyptic Time: A Case Study of the Medieval Greek *Last Vision of the Prophet Daniel*", in H. Saradi (ed.), *Όψεις του Βυζαντινού Χρόνου*, Athens, 2018, p. 180-193; idem, "Living on the Edge of Time: Temporal Patterns and Irregularities in Byzantine Historical Apocalypses", in S. Baumbach, L. Henningsen, and K. Oschema (eds.), *The Fascination with Unknown Time*, Cham, 2017, p. 71-92.

⁸ Idem, "The Last Roman Emperor *Topos* in the Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition", *Byzantion* 82, 2012, p. 213-257.

evil female ruler, which was obviously inspired by the unprecedented rule of the empress Eirene (797-802), and was kept in the narrative long after she became irrelevant.⁹

There is clearly room for further research on the typology of emperors in apocalyptic prophecies. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for their authors, since these are completely unknown, except in two cases that are reported in other sources. Therefore, it is to the narrative sources that report prophetic activity that we must turn in order to investigate the typology of the prophets themselves. Here we are looking not at the rhetoric of a prophetic narrative about emperors, but at the rhetoric of a literary narrative about the relationship between emperors and prophets, in which the words of the prophet are summarised or, at best, excerpted in brief quotations. The texts fall into two narrative genres, political historiography and hagiography. The two genres agree on two basic points: the prophets are monks with a reputation as holy men, and their most important political prophecies foretell an individual's elevation to the imperial throne. Beyond that, the portrayal of prophets diverges significantly. Most notably, in a saint's life, the prophecy is always presented as charismatic and divinely inspired, whereas in a secular history it is generally reported without reference to causation and motivation, except where it is interpreted negatively as demonic or self-serving. In historical narrative, the prophet is a minor character, whereas in a saint's life he is the protagonist; on the other hand, his gift of prophecy is only one of his saintly attributes, but it is commonly the only or main reason for mentioning him in a secular history.

The secular reporting of charismatic prophecy, whether in history writing or in literary invective, is obviously a valuable corrective to the hagiographical narrative with its tendentious agenda of inflating and idealizing the image of the saintly prophet. Notably, it lays bare the mundane process of *quid pro quo* that lay behind the political prophecies of holy men. Those who got their prophecies right could expect to be promoted to high ecclesiastical office by the emperors whose successful usurpation they had foretold.¹⁰ We are not told what happened to those who got it wrong, as some inevitably did, like the recluse at the Blachernae who gave his prophetic backing to the failed

⁹ P. Magdalino, "Apocryphal Narrative...", p. 93-95.

¹⁰ For example, Patriarch Kyros of Constantinople who had foretold the return to power of Justinian II (Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. by C. de Boor, Leipzig, 1883, p. 375); the monk Theodore, promoted patriarch of Antioch by John I Tzimiskes (John Skylitzes, *Synopsis historiarum*, ed. by H. Thurn, Berlin – New York, 1973, p. 286); Dositheos who prophesied the accession of Isaac II and was patriarch of both Jerusalem and Constantinople (Niketas Choniates, *Historia*, ed. by J. A. van Dieten, Berlin – New York, 1975, p. 405-408). Anna Komnene indicates that Eustratios Garidas cultivated the favour of Anna Dalassene and thus earned his elevation to the patriarchate in 1081, by prophesying the reign of her son Alexios I (*Alexias* III. 2, 7: ed. by D. R. Reinsch and A. Kambylis, Berlin – New York, 2001, p. 92).

conspiracy of John Krokoas (or Kourkouas) against Basil I.¹¹ What the secular sources confirm is that political prophecy was big business, with high stakes for both churchmen and politicians, and that religious literature does not inflate the importance of holy men as political prophets. But while historiography confirms the social and political reality of the prophetic imperative, and the key role of prophecy in the function of the holy man, it is not of much help for investigating the religious rhetoric of the prophetic tradition. It provides a limited database and it does not represent the cultural continuum that is necessary to the emergence of a typology. Most seriously, its evidence essentially covers the middle Byzantine period, beginning in the seventh century, and it does not document the formative period of Byzantine political prophecy in the fifth and sixth centuries. Therefore, it is in the hagiography of this period that we must seek the typology of prophets and political prophecy in Byzantine literature.¹²

Two texts recommend themselves particularly for their political and prophetic content: the anonymous *Life of Daniel the Stylite* dating from the last years of the fifth century¹³ and the *Life of the Patriarch Eutychios* written by the priest Eustratios sometime after 582.¹⁴ They are representative of the fifth and sixth centuries respectively, they are rich in typology and prophecy, and they are model examples of their genres, being full, coherent narratives, written with close attention to circumstantial detail and exact chronology by able writers who were disciples of the saints concerned. Their narratives are naturally distorted by the conventions of the genre, for example, in both cases, by the introduction of divine visions to explain awkward transitions, notably the saint's profitable career move to Constantinople. But it is precisely their setting in Constantinople that gives them their prime value as evidence for the relationship between power and holiness, and it is their concern to make their protagonists conform to a saintly type that makes them valuable as typological constructions.

The *Life of Daniel the Stylite* tells the story of a barely literate, Syriac speaking monk who became a major celebrity in Constantinople. He took advantage of a window of opportunity in the mid fifth century to export an extreme and bizarre but very successful model of asceticism from the Syrian outback to the burgeoning Eastern capital of the Roman Empire, which was still growing fast and still in need of boosting its sacred credentials. Having brought

¹¹ Symeon Magistros and Logothetes, *Chronicon* 133. 26, ed. by S. Wahlgren, Berlin – New York, 2006, p. 269: χρηματισθέντος παρὰ τοῦ ὄντος ἐν Βλαχέρναις ἐγκλείστου.

¹² See in general S. Efthymiadis and V. Déroche, “Greek Hagiography in Late Antiquity (Fourth–Seventh Centuries)”, in S. Efthymiadis (ed.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, I: *Periods and Places*, Farnham, 2011, p. 35-94.

¹³ Ed. by H. Delehaye, *Les saints stylites*, Brussels, 1923, p. 1-94; English translation by E. Dawes and N. H. Baynes, *Three Byzantine Saints: Contemporary Biographies*, 2nd ed., London – Oxford, 1977, p. 7-84.

¹⁴ Ed. by C. Laga, *Eustratii Presbyteri Vita Eutychii Patriarchae Constantinopolitani*, Turnhout, 1992.

himself to the attention of the secular and ecclesiastical authorities, and advertising himself as the disciple of Symeon the Stylite, he induced his powerful patrons to build him a succession of increasingly taller columns beside the Bosphorus. On top of these, he presided over crowds of admirers and gave interviews to the great and the good, including emperors and patriarchs, for over thirty years, in which he descended only once, to join a protest against the religious policy of the usurper emperor Basiliscus.

During his career in Constantinople, Daniel made numerous political prophecies. Even before he took his place on his first column, he prophesied to the Roman senator Olybrius that his wife Eudoxia, daughter of the empress Placidia, would come to Constantinople from Africa; in gratitude for this, she offered to find him a comfortable retreat on one of her estates, though Daniel declined the offer.¹⁵ Foreseeing that a great manifestation of divine wrath was going to descend on Constantinople, he urged the patriarch to organise a penitential procession (λειτουργία), but since it was the Holy Week the patriarch chose not to take his advice;¹⁶ the result was the great fire that gutted the city in 466 and caused Daniel to cite the example of Nineveh, which had been spared the wrath of God because it had heeded the warning prophecy of Jonah.¹⁷ In one version of the *Life*, the emperor Leo I is said to have ordered the patriarch to ordain Daniel as a priest, “having had experience of many prophetic matters from the holy man”.¹⁸ When rumours circulated that Genseric, king of the Vandals, was about to attack Alexandria, Daniel said there was no truth in it.¹⁹ When Leo I sent his son-in-law Zeno against the barbarians in Thrace and asked Daniel to pray for him, the holy man predicted that Zeno would suffer an attack but return unharmed.²⁰ Having become emperor after the deaths of Leo I and Leo II, Zeno became aware of the plot being hatched against him, and went to confide in Daniel.²¹ Daniel consoled him with the following words, which echo a prophecy in the biblical book of Daniel (Dan. 4:28-33):

Do not let yourself be troubled about this, for all things that have been foreordained must be accomplished in you. They will chase you out of the kingdom, and in the place where you find refuge, you will be in such distress that in your need you will partake of the grass of the earth. But do not lose heart, for it is necessary that you should become a second Nebuchadnezzar, and those who are now expelling you, having felt the

¹⁵ H. Delehay, *Les saints stylites*, p. 33 (ch. 35).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 37-38 (ch. 41).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 42-44 (ch. 45).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 38 (ch. 42). Quoted from the alternative recension of the text (D’); the other version refers only to benefits that Leo had enjoyed from Daniel’s prayers.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 55 (ch. 56).

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 64 (ch. 65).

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 65 (ch. 68).

lack of you, will recall you in the fullness of time. You will return to your kingship, and more honour and glory will be added unto you and you shall die in it. Therefore bear all with gratitude, for thus must these things be.²²

Reassured, Zeno thanked Daniel for these words, “because he already had experience of Daniel in other prophecies”.

During the ‘tyranny’ of Basiliscus, Daniel predicted that it would not last long and that the usurper would come to a bad end.²³ He later predicted Zeno’s death, both indirectly to the emperor’s envoys, and directly to the members of his own monastic community, adding that the widowed empress Ariadne would remarry and share power with a pious and righteous man; so it turned out with the accession of Anastasios.²⁴ Finally, Daniel foresaw his own death in three months’ time: “for God deemed him worthy of the prophetic gift”.²⁵

In two of these instances, Daniel or his biographer cites an Old Testament precedent. Does this mean that he was seen, or saw himself, in a typological relationship with the Old Testament prophets, and if so, was this typology the dominant factor in the construction of his sainthood? On a superficial reading, it would seem not. The *Life* does not insist on forcing all his prophetic activity into an Old Testament mould, while, on the other hand, it is careful to make him conform to the paradigm of Christian and Christ-like, ascetic and apostolic sainthood that had been taking shape since the *Life of St Anthony* – whom Daniel is said explicitly to revere as a role model.²⁶ He is deeply respectful of the Church hierarchy, and his ordination to the priesthood, performed in person by the patriarch who climbs up to the top of the column in order to administer the Eucharist, is presented as a defining moment in his career. He is passionately devoted to the cause of Orthodoxy in a time of acute Christological controversy, and even comes down from his column in order to defend it. Above all, he proves his sanctity not only by making prophecies, but equally by his prodigious feats of asceticism, and by healing infirmities and casting out demons. The descriptions of his endurance and the accounts of his exorcisms, in which the demons make speeches of protest as they depart, are the most vivid and entertaining parts of the narrative. It is mainly for these ‘apostolic’ healing miracles that the crowds come to see him. In short, Daniel corresponds to the cumulative model of saintly typology that is neatly summarised in the *Life* of Daniel’s contemporary St Markellos the Akoimetos:

²² Trans. by E. Dawes and N. H. Baynes, *Three Byzantine Saints...*, p. 48.

²³ H. Delehaye, *Les saints stylites*, p. 68 (ch. 71), 74 (ch. 76), 80 (ch. 85).

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 85-86 (ch. 91).

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 87-88 (ch. 93).

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 14 (ch. 14).

Let us, the disciples of Christ and of his disciples, thank our Saviour ... that in our fathers' day he gave to us through Markellos both a prophetic and an apostolic blessing. For there came together in Markellos, from the prophets on the one hand the faith of Abraham, the mildness of Moses and Joshua's righteous wrath against the unjust; from the apostles, on the other hand, there came the zest of Peter, the virginity and theology of John, and Paul's preaching of the Gospel in every nation. From all of them together came prophecy and miracles.²⁷

And yet on closer reading, Old Testament prophecy emerges as the persistent and dominant motif in the story. It begins with Daniel receiving by 'divine revelation' through a form of biblical sortition the name of an Old Testament prophet when he becomes a monk.²⁸ The deeper significance of the name is underlined later in the text. First, the holy man's extensively quoted prophecy to Zeno echoes, as we have seen, a passage from the book of Daniel. Then, when he dies, he is buried beneath the relics of the Three Holy Children Ananias, Azarias and Misael, who are known from the book of Daniel as Daniel's companions at the court of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 1:6-7). In the context of the burial, we learn that the relics had been brought from Babylon by order of the emperor Leo I, and deposited in the monastery church near Daniel's column by the patriarch Euphemios – a clear indication that both the holy man and the authorities saw the biblical prophet as his sacred prototype.²⁹

Yet Daniel is not the only biblical prophet evoked in the text. The Psalms of the 'prophet David' are quoted to give authority to both the author and the saint; thus "The words of the psalm were fulfilled in the holy man, 'He [God] shall do the will of them that fear Him, He will hear their prayer and save them'".³⁰ Most crucially, when the mantle of stylite asceticism passes to Daniel from Symeon the Stylite, prophetic typology is used to authenticate the succession and therefore to justify Daniel's move on to a column from the ruined temple where he had spent the first nine years of his solitary asceticism on the Bosphorus.³¹ He sees a vision in which he is lifted up to the top of Symeon's column by angels and hears a loud voice telling him to "Stand fast and be a man". The bystanders to whom he relates his vision explain that he has to adopt Symeon's way of life. He says, "May God's will be done", and consults the Gospel. It falls open at Luke 1:76, where he reads, "And you, O child, shall be called the prophet of the highest". A few days later, a monk from St Symeon's monastery arrives in Constantinople to tell of the saint's death and to give his

²⁷ Ed. by G. Dagron, "La Vie ancienne de saint Marcel l'Acémète", *Analecta Bollandiana* 86, 1968, p. 320.

²⁸ H. Delehaye, *Les saints stylites*, p. 3-4 (ch. 3).

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 87 (ch. 92).

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 20 (ch. 20).

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 21-24 (chs. 21-22).

leather cloak to the emperor Leo I. But God arranges for it to come into the hands of Daniel, “in order that the New Elisha might receive the sheepskin of Elijah”.

The author again uses prophetic typology to heighten the drama and the importance of the other high point of Daniel’s sacred mission, his descent from his column to lead the opposition to the religious policy of Basiliscus. To encourage his intervention,

almost the whole city assembled in the Great Church, and they shouted, “The holy man to the church. O New Daniel, come and save Susanna who is in danger. Another Elijah will shame Jezebel and Ahab. In you we have the priest of Orthodoxy. He who stands upright for Christ will protect Christ’s bride, the Church”.³²

The chant, if accurately reported, shows that typological thinking was an integral part of popular religion and informed the chanting of the circus factions. Coming down from the column, Daniel addressed the assembled people in a speech that began by invoking the precedent of Moses: “The outstretched hands of the servant of God Moses destroyed all, whether kings or nations, who rose up against the people of the Lord”.³³

Finally, it is worth noting a curious pattern in the text’s references to the sacred *realia* of Constantinople. It is perhaps not surprising that the only sacred relics it refers to were those that were kept at Daniel’s monastery: the leather cloak of St Symeon the Stylite, whose ‘type’ was the sheepskin of Elijah, St Symeon’s body, and the relics of the Three Holy Children³⁴. More remarkable is the fact that the only churches mentioned, apart from the cathedral of Constantinople and the church of the Archangel Michael at Anaplous on the Bosphorus, are churches dedicated to prophets: Zachariah,³⁵ Samuel,³⁶ and St John the Baptist, whose church at the Stoudios monastery is designated once as a *martyrion* and twice as a *propheteion*.³⁷ The numerous martyr churches of Constantinople are conspicuous by their absence, and so, even more remarkably, are those of the Theotokos. This is despite the fact that three of her earliest shrines were built by two of Daniel the Stylite’s most devoted admirers, the ex-prefect Kyros³⁸ and the emperor Leo I, who, in addition to founding the two major sanctuaries of the Blachernae and the Chalkoprateia, was responsible for the translation to Constantinople of the two main Marian contact relics, the

³² *Ibid.*, p. 68 (ch. 71).

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 70 (ch. 73).

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 23 (ch. 23), p. 55-57 (chs. 57-58), p. 81-82 (chs. 86-87).

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 63 (ch. 64).

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 71 (ch. 74).

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 75 (chs. 78-79).

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 30-31 (ch. 31), 34 (ch. 36).

Virgin's *zone* and *maphorion*.³⁹ However we choose to explain these omissions, it is difficult to explain why the author of Daniel's *Life* did not choose to link the popularity and promotion of his hero with the cult of the Virgin that was taking off in the same time and place. But the result of his choice is clear: a portrait of a Christian holy man who fulfils the typology of the Old Testament prophet, uncluttered by the other models of sanctity that were in fashion in late fifth-century Constantinople.

The *Life of Patriarch Eutychios* is a more pretentious piece of rhetoric, as befits its author and its subject, both of whom were well versed in the writings of the Cappadocian Fathers. The author, the presbyter Eustratios, also wrote a polemical treatise on the cult of the saints.⁴⁰ The subject of the biography, Eutychios, came from a well-connected family – his father had served as an officer of Belisarios – in the region of Amaseia, and the career trajectory that led him to become patriarch of Constantinople was perhaps less steep and more predictable than the *Life* makes it appear. His claim to sanctity was based on the standard attributes of the holy man, that is his lifelong dedication to God, his rigorous asceticism and all that stemmed from it, notably the power to work miracles and the gift of prophecy. But the model of sainthood to which his biographer ultimately makes him conform is that of the Church Fathers, particularly St Athanasios and St Basil, with whom he is compared in words heavily borrowed from St Gregory of Nazianzos.⁴¹ What defined his career above all was his leadership quality as a spokesman of orthodoxy: his vociferous condemnation of the Three Chapters at the Fifth Ecumenical Council (553) and subsequent elevation to the patriarchate; his deposition in 564 after refusing to accept the Aphthartodocetist doctrine espoused by Justinian, and his remarkable comeback after twelve years spent as head of a monastic community at Amaseia. It is during this period of monastic exile that Eustratios sets his detailed account of Eutychios' healing and exorcism miracles,⁴² and it is in the context of explaining his hero's recall to the patriarchate, "the miracle that happened for him",⁴³ that he narrates Eutychios' three political prophecies predicting the accessions of three emperors, Justin II, Tiberius II, and Maurice.⁴⁴

³⁹ See C. Mango, "The Origins of the Blachernae Shrine at Constantinople", in N. Cambi and E. Marin (eds.), *Acta XIII Congressus Internationalis Archaeologiae Christianae II*, Vatican – Split, 1998, p. 61-76; idem, "Constantinople as Theotokoupolis", in M. Vassilaki (ed.), *Mother of God. Representations of the Virgin in Byzantine Art*, Milan, 2000, p. 17-25.

⁴⁰ Ed. by P. van Deun, *Eustratii Presbyteri Constantinopolitani De statu animarum post mortem: (CPG 7522)*, Turnhout, 2006; M. Dal Santo, *Debating the Saints' Cult in the Ages of Gregory the Great*, Oxford, 2012.

⁴¹ C. Laga, *Eustratii Presbyteri Vita Eutychii...*, ll. 2049-2071, 2253-2319, 2659-2674, 2721-2765 (references are to the line numbers of the edition).

⁴² *Ibid.*, ll. 1196-1779.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, l. 1780.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, ll. 1780-1951.

At the death of the interloper, John Scholastikos, the Christ-loving people demanded the return of their pastor and teacher. The emperors, Justin II and Tiberius, were happy to comply, because it was what they themselves had always wanted, “for many reasons, and especially because he had foretold their reigns before they reigned”.⁴⁵ The author then digresses to relate these prophecies at length, “for it is not right to pass over God’s grace in forgetfulness”.⁴⁶ The predictions concerning Justin II and Tiberius had been made during Eutychios’ first patriarchate, but having narrated them, Eustratios goes on to describe how the holy man had also predicted the accession of the present emperor, Maurice, during his time in the monastery at Amaseia. The three narratives are very different, and they are written with an attention to realistic, circumstantial detail that is explicitly intended to leave no doubt that they are not clichés.⁴⁷ In other words, here the author is actually going out of his way to avoid typology. He is not constructing his saint according to the *typos* of an Old Testament prophet.

And yet the narrative as a whole is a piece of multiple typology constructed by rhetorical *synkrisis*, in which the saint’s prophecies have the function of describing and prescribing the ideal relationship between power and holiness, holiness that is systematically constructed in terms of Old Testament types. Thus Eutychios is said to be a second Job⁴⁸ and second Elijah,⁴⁹ a New Moses,⁵⁰ New Jacob,⁵¹ New Joseph and New Daniel,⁵² while the Persian King Khusro I is a New Nebuchadnezzar.⁵³ Eutychios imitates Elijah and John the Baptist⁵⁴ and David;⁵⁵ the people who flock to him for miraculous cures imitate those who had sought Elijah and Elisha.⁵⁶ He is compared to Abraham,⁵⁷ Isaac,⁵⁸ Jacob,⁵⁹ Moses,⁶⁰ Phineas⁶¹ and Samuel,⁶² and his status as patriarch is likened to

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, ll. 1843-1844.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, ll. 2349-2350.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, ll. 1946-1949.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, l. 64.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, l. 1716.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, ll. 566-567, 851.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, ll. 281, 2632.

⁵² *Ibid.*, l. 580.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, ll. 1720-1721.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, ll. 447-448.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, ll. 2342-2343.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, ll. 1254-1257.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, ll. 268, 567-568.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, ll. 714-715.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, ll. 276, 864, 2630-2631.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, ll. 1674, 2180-2181.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, ll. 945-946.

⁶² *Ibid.*, ll. 150-163, 259.

that of the biblical patriarchs.⁶³ Passages in the Psalms⁶⁴ and prophecies of Ezekiel⁶⁵ are said to apply to him. There are other, more discreet allusions, of which one in particular is worth mentioning. In the account of Eustratios' prediction concerning the succession of Justin II, which took place during a public procession to the Hebdomon, Eustratios writes that the patriarch took Justin aside to a place where there was a window, which acted as a witness [to what was said], "just like the mountain of old".⁶⁶ This is a reference to Genesis 31:46, where Jacob makes a heap of stones (called βουνός in the Septuagint) to be a witness to his covenant with his father-in-law Laban.

The apparatus to the text in Laga's edition of the *Life* does not indicate to what extent all this typology was Eustratios' own invention or derived from biblical exegesis. One citation at least can be shown to have had a long history. In the account of the Fifth Ecumenical Council, Eutychios is said to be a New Moses who stretches out his arm to smite the heretics with his rod, that is, the cross. As we have seen, Daniel the Stylite invokes the same scene from Exodus in his speech against the heretical oppression of Basiliscus.

The *Life of Eutychios* is actually much richer in explicit Old Testament typology than the *Life of Daniel*, despite the fact that it does not model its hero's prophetic activity on Old Testament prophecy, or identify Eutychios with particular Old Testament prophets, in the way that Daniel is identified with his biblical namesake and with Elisha, the successor of Elijah who is the prototype of Daniel's model and mentor St Symeon the Stylite. Instead, the *Life of Eutychios* discreetly emphasises a typological relationship between the Christian patriarch and the patriarchs of the Old Testament, particularly Jacob. At one point, Eutychios is characterised as "the New Jacob in all respects and great patriarch";⁶⁷ on his deathbed, "he blessed all present as Jacob of old had blessed his sons, the New Jacob raising his hands, just as the former Jacob had raised his feet".⁶⁸ The readers of the *Life* did not need to be reminded – though Eustratios reminded them anyway⁶⁹ – that Jacob had been renamed Israel, so calling Eutychios the New Jacob was tantamount to describing him as the father of the New Israel and thus investing him with the collective identity that Byzantium as a whole was in the process of adopting.⁷⁰ That this was the intention of the typology is confirmed in two other passages where Eustratios develops the comparison by introducing the idea that Jacob's two wives, Leah and Rachel, the

⁶³ *Ibid.*, ll. 1202-1219.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, ll. 54-56, 416, 703-704, 781-783.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, ll. 974, 1141-1145.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, ll. 1255-1258.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, ll. 864-865.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, ll. 2630-2633.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, ll. 868-869.

⁷⁰ See S. Eshel, *The Concept of the Elect Nation in Byzantium*, Leiden – Boston, 2018.

daughters of Laban, typify the two components of the universal church to which Eutychios is wedded as ecumenical patriarch: Leah is the church of the Jews, and Rachel is the church of the Gentiles.⁷¹ The idea of a duality in the church, formed of Jewish and Gentile *typoi*, is clearly important to Eustratios, because he brings it up yet again, in the passage where he describes the symbolic perfection of the patriarch's body: "his firm and straight legs that swerve neither to the right nor to the left as they walk the beaten and royal road, which is trodden by ox and ass (Is 32:20), that is the faithful people from the Jews and the Gentiles".⁷²

Why this insistence on the dual ethnic and cultural origin of the church? Does it merely serve to enhance the typology of Eutychios as a New Jacob? Is it a statement of an incontrovertible historical fact, or does it address contemporary concerns, perhaps even a controversy in which Eutychios and/or Eustratios had been involved? At another point in the text, Eustratios demonstrably uses his biography as an occasion to state his position on another controversial issue that he pursued elsewhere, the argument over the status and efficacy of the saints in the interval between their bodily death and the general resurrection.⁷³ There is one passage that strongly suggests that Eustratios and Eutychios were keenly, and positively, interested in the church's relations with the Jewish community in their own day. In his account of Eutychios' restoration to the patriarchate and return from Amaseia to Constantinople, which he invests with the character of a triumphal progression, Eustratios has this to say about the reception they received at Nikomedeia:

Not only did the faithful and Christ-loving people, the royal priesthood and holy nation (1 Peter 2:9, cf. Exodus 19:6), make fitting acclamations and give thanks to God, but the deme of the unbelieving Hebrews who are outsiders to our enclosure, all but imitating the children [on Palm Sunday] cried out and said, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord", and "May the faith of the Christians increase!"⁷⁴

This final formula and the use of the word *demos* suggest that the Jews chanted their acclamations as members of the Nicomedian circus factions, probably the Blue faction with which the Jews were particularly associated.⁷⁵ But if so, it is still significant that Eustratios chose to turn this banal ceremonial participation into a Jewish expression of support and sympathy, not for a Christian emperor but for a Christian patriarch and the Christian faith. Only one

⁷¹ C. Laga, *Eustratii Presbyteri Vita Eutychii*..., ll. 276-283, 887-895.

⁷² *Ibid.*, ll. 2233-2237.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, ll. 2704-2720. See M. Dal Santo, *Debating the Saints' Cult*....

⁷⁴ C. Laga, *Eustratii Presbyteri Vita Eutychii*..., ll. 2041-2048.

⁷⁵ A. Sharf, *Byzantine Jewry from Justinian to the Fourth Crusade*, London, 1971, p. 27-29, 47-48; G. Dagron and V. Déroche, *Juifs et chrétiens en Orient byzantin*, Paris, 2010, p. 234-237.

explanation is plausible: that the patriarch and his biographer belonged to the ‘Jewish lobby’ in the church, that is, those Christians who respected Jewish tradition and preferred a literal, liberal reading of Romans 11:26, “When the full number of the Gentiles has come in, then all Israel will be saved”.⁷⁶ In other words, in the fulfilment of God’s plan for the salvation of mankind, when the Gospel had been preached throughout the world and all nations had been converted to Christ, the Jews themselves would finally recognise Christ as their Lord and King. In typological terms, the Old Israel of the Jewish synagogue and the New Israel of the Christian church would become one in the New Jerusalem, Constantinople. The *Life of Euthychios* makes this equation twice,⁷⁷ and it is only the second text to do so, the first being the *Life of Daniel the Stylite*.⁷⁸

In the light of recent scholarship on Byzantine eschatology, Byzantine political identity and Byzantine biblical culture, it is hardly necessary to point out that the late sixth and early seventh centuries were a period when, in a climate of intensifying anticipation of the end of the world, the Christian typology of the Elect Nation, the New Israel and the New Jerusalem became increasingly less spiritual, abstract and universal, and increasingly focused on concrete earthly institutions, which in the mainstream Christian East were the Roman Empire, the Chalcedonian church hierarchy, and the city of Constantinople. It is also clear that while the eschatological climate change was a complex and cumulative process, its basic trigger was the completion, around the year 500 AD, of the sixth millennium since the creation of the world according to Christian calculations. The hagiography of the period should be read in the context of the typological paradigm shift, to which it is indeed a witness and a contributor – thus, as we have just seen, the two *Lives* studied here made an explicit and perhaps decisive contribution to the rhetoric of Constantinople as the New Jerusalem. We have concentrated on these two texts because their Constantinopolitan focus makes them ideal reflections of the idealised relationship between power and holiness that was meant to characterise the New Jerusalem, but we should realise that they do not stand alone. While Daniel the Stylite is a fairly isolated figure in the hagiographical landscape of the late fifth and early sixth centuries, the Patriarch Eutychios invites comparison

⁷⁶ See P. Magdalino, “‘All Israel will be saved’? The forced baptism of the Jews and imperial eschatology”, in J. Tolan, N. de Lange, L. Foschia, and C. Nemo-Pekelman (eds.), *Jews in Early Christian Law, Byzantium and the Latin West, 6th–11th Centuries*, Turnhout, 2014, p. 231–242.

⁷⁷ C. Laga, *Eustratii Presbyteri Vita Eutychii...*, ll. 762, 2078–2079.

⁷⁸ H. Delehay, *Les saints stylites*, p. 12 (ch. 10). The expression is put into the mouth of Symeon Stylites the Elder, who appears to Daniel in a vision and tells him not to complete his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, but “Go to Byzantium and you will see a second Jerusalem, namely Constantinople”. Trans. by E. Dawes and N. H. Baynes, *Three Byzantine Saints...*, p. 13.

with two other near contemporary holy men who were equally celebrated for their rigorous asceticism, innumerable miracles, and memorable prophecies.⁷⁹

The *Lives* of Symeon Stylites the Younger and Theodore of Sykeon are even richer in accounts of political prophecy, and the former goes further than any other text in portraying its hero in the style of an Old Testament prophet. What all four texts have in common, and what they bequeath to the religious rhetoric of medieval Byzantium, is their image of the holy man as the Christian answer to, and fulfilment of, the role model of the Old Testament man of God, whose asceticism gives him the *parrhesia* to speak plainly to kings, and who earns and proves his right to be heard by the accuracy of his political prophecies. If Byzantium was to be identified as the New Israel, then the identities of its emperors had to be found in the rulers of the ancient kingdoms of Israel and Judah, and indeed not only David and Solomon, but also their successors, worthy and unworthy, such as Rehoboam, Manasseh, Hezekiah and Ahab now came into play as *typoi* of good and bad kingship. The empire's enemies were also likened to the enemies of the Children of Israel. But a New Israel needed not only typical kings and oppressors; it also needed new prophets to stand up to them and to articulate God's decisions. New, Christian prophets were needed, moreover, to prophesy the second coming of Christ, to convince the Jews that Jesus Christ was indeed the Messiah prophesied in the Old Testament, and to reassure both Jews and Christians that the catastrophes through which they were living did not have to mean the end of the world, nor even the end of the Empire; they were God's chastisements, which He would reverse if the rulers and people heeded the prophet's call for atonement and repentance. Prophets were there to state with authority that these were not quite the end times, and in this, of course, the admonitions of charismatic holy men meshed with the predictions of pseudepigraphical apocalyptic texts. Thus, while the sixth-century Near East was waiting for the Messiah, what it wanted most immediately was a prophet. And that is what it got, both inside the Roman Empire in the form of Christian holy men, and in the Arabian desert, in the person of the prophet Mohammad.

⁷⁹ For the powers of the saints as a subject of contemporary controversy, in which Eustratios himself took part, see M. Dal Santo, *Debating the Saints' Cult...*, especially p. 46-54 on prophecy.

RELIGIOUS RHETORIC OF POWER IN THE MIDDLE-BYZANTINE PERIOD. SOME REFLECTIONS

Andrei Timotin

Religious rhetoric represents here, according to the definition formulated in the introduction,¹ a set of means of expression specific to a person or group of people whose content falls within the religious domain. I shall limit myself here to the more traditional sense of the notion, which associates rhetoric with discursive language, and in particular with certain narrative categories such as hagiography or visionary accounts (*revelationes*).²

The power which employs this rhetoric or is targeted by it is often the imperial power, but also the aristocratic groups that may oppose it, local communities in more or less marked opposition to the central power or its local hierarchy. Correspondingly, we can highlight a religious rhetoric of local communities *against* imperial power and a religious rhetoric *of* imperial power, a praise of power through religious means of expression. These two cases are illustrated here by two examples from middle Byzantine literature: the *Life of Nikon "Metanoëite"* (BHG³ 1366, 1367) and the *Vision of Kosmas the Monk* (BHG 2084, 2085).

1. Religious rhetoric against imperial power

If we examine the genesis of some of the cults that developed in the 9th–10th centuries in Byzantium and the role that icon and vision play in their promotion, we can show that these are often initiatives related to a certain kinship network of which the new saint is part,³ that is "family cults".⁴ The icon and the vision are not only emblems of a cult and a monastery, but also family

¹ See *supra*, p. 5.

² On *revelationes* as a literary genre in medieval literature, see P. Dinzelbacher, *Revelationes*, Turnhout, 1991; J. Baun, *Tales from Another Byzantium. Celestial Journey and Local Community in the Medieval Greek Apocrypha*, Cambridge, 2007.

³ See A. Timotin, *Visions, prophéties et pouvoir à Byzance. Étude sur l'hagiographie méso-byzantine (IX^e-XI^e siècles)*, Paris, 2010, p. 211-281.

⁴ A.-M. Talbot, "Family cults in Byzantium: the case of St. Theodora of Thessalonike", in J. O. Rosenqvist (ed.), *Λειτουργία. Studies Presented to Lennart Rydén on his Sixty-fifth Birthday*, Uppsala, 1996, p. 49-69 (repr. in eadem, *Women and Religious Life in Byzantium*, Aldershot, 2001, no. VII).

crests. These kinship networks can take on a political aspect and, in this case, the icon and the vision represent the endorsement of a local power and become a political weapon. In hagiography, the vision functions, in fact, as an extension of the saint and of the local power that claims it, as a means of political action. I have previously analyzed two significant cases elsewhere:⁵ Irene Gouber, in *The Life of St Irene of Chrysobalanton* (BHG 952),⁶ who persuades Basil II to release his imprisoned relative following a vision in the guise of an icon; the visions of Simeon the New Theologian and the icon of his spiritual master are also exploited by a pole of power in the service of his protest message.⁷ It is certainly not fortuitous that the emperor concerned by these two stories is Basil II; the authority of visions as a political weapon crystallizes, at the end of the 10th century, within the framework of the rhetorical strategies developed during the conflict which opposed Basil II to the powerful Anatolian aristocracy.⁸

A specific feature of middle Byzantine hagiography is the mutual relationship established between vision and icon: the cult icon is based on vision and, conversely, the vision is the product of a devotion articulated around the icon.⁹ This particularity is essentially based on two phenomena: on the one hand, the iconoclastic controversy, with its consequences on the status of the icon and on the role of vision in the legitimization of icons as objects of worship; on the other hand, the new cults of saints, from the second half of the 9th century, in the promotion of which the vision-based icon plays an important role. At that time, the icon, in search of theological legitimacy during the iconoclastic controversy, gradually took on the features of vision until it became its reproduction, its material analogon.

The new status that the icon acquired as a result of the iconoclastic controversy had important effects on the way of conceiving artistic production. On the one hand, as a reflection of an immaterial model, the icon can no longer be considered as an art of imitation, but as the effect of a divine inspiration, of a revelation of which the painter is the sole beneficiary.¹⁰ On the other hand, icons

⁵ A. Timotin, *Visions, prophéties et pouvoir à Byzance...*, p. 257-280.

⁶ J. O. Rosenqvist, *The Life of St Irene Abbess of Chrysobalanton: A Critical Edition with Introduction, Translation, Notes and Indices*, Uppsala, 1986.

⁷ I. Hausherr, *La Vie de Syméon le Nouveau Théologien (949-1022) par Nicéas Stéthatos*, texte grec inédit publié avec introduction, notes critiques et traduction française, Rome, 1928. On this *vita*, see also A. Timotin, "Icône privée et pouvoir local. L'icône de Syméon Eulabès et les opposants de Basile II", *Études byzantines et post-byzantines* VI, 2011, p. 127-134.

⁸ On this conflict, see C. Holmes, *Basil II and the Governance of Empire (976-1025)*, Oxford, 2005, especially p. 240-298.

⁹ See A. Timotin, *Visions, prophéties et pouvoir à Byzance...*, p. 211-234. See also idem, "Rêves de peintres. Culte des saints, piété familiale et visions à Byzance aux IX^e-XI^e siècles", *Revue des études sud-est européennes* 45, 2007, p. 117-134.

¹⁰ This capacity to perceive and set the divine with which the Byzantine artist was credited, a privilege which in a way sanctified his profession, did not in reality improve his social position, assimilated to that of any other craftsman, benefiting from certain fiscal privileges from the 4th

have become, after the restoration of orthodoxy, indispensable elements of the sanctification of the new saints: the icon is added to the relic and to hagiography as an ingredient, in principle indispensable, of the cult of saints.

The new hagiography that appeared at the end of the 9th century obviously had to integrate, in a more or less stereotypical way, this requirement: the icon is almost everywhere the result of a miracle, of a vision.¹¹ The vision and the miracle serve at the same time to legitimize and promote the convents and the icons of these saints against the background of a remarkable proliferation of private religious foundations, from the end of the 9th century, in the new poles of stability of the Empire formed as a result of large population displacements which followed the Arab-Byzantine and Byzantine-Bulgarian military conflicts. The phenomenon took a considerable scale especially in the period after the reign of Leo VI, whose legislation testifies to the dissemination on a large scale of private convents (monasteries, churches and chapels).¹²

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The *Life of Nikon "Metanoëite"*¹³ offers a very suggestive example in this respect. The text was most likely written around the middle of the 11th century by the abbot of the saint's convent in the Peloponnese.¹⁴ Nikon was born in Asia Minor, around 930, in the Polemonic Bridge, in the theme of the Armenians, from unknown parents. The domains of the Nikon family were operated by *paroikoi*, which suggests a family of large landowners. Still a child, he left his father's house for the faith of Christ and travelled for several days to the border between Pontus and Paphlagonia, where the Chryse Petra convent

century, but entirely subordinate to the orders received and to the generosity of the sponsors; see N. Oikonomidès, "L'artiste-amateur à Byzance", in X. Barral I Altet (ed.), *Artistes, artisans et production artistique au Moyen Âge*. Colloque international CNRS, Université de Rennes II-Haute Bretagne, 2-6 mai 1983, vol. I: *Les hommes*, Paris, 1986, p. 45-50.

¹¹ See C. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312-1453. Sources and documents*, Toronto, 1986, p. 210-215; A. Kazhdan and H. Maguire, "Byzantine Hagiographical Texts as Sources on Art", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 45, 1991, p. 1-22; G. Dagron, "Holy Images and Likeness", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 45, 1991, p. 23-34; idem, *Décrire et peindre. Essai sur le portrait iconique*, Paris, 2007, p. 73-77.

¹² P. Noailles and A. Dain (eds.), *Les Nouvelles de Léon VI le Sage*, Paris, 1944, p. 55-61 (Nov. 14-15). On private devotion in this period, see É. Patlagean, "Byzance X^e-XI^e siècle", in Ph. Ariès and G. Duby (eds.), *Histoire de la vie privée*, vol. I: *De l'Empire romain à l'an mil*, ed. by P. Veyne, Paris, 1985, p. 609-610.

¹³ D. F. Sullivan, *The Life of Saint Nikon: Text, Translation and Commentary*, Brookline, Mass., 1987. The text is preserved in two manuscripts dating respectively from the 15th and 17th centuries, the precise relationship of which is still a subject of debate. See J. O. Rosenqvist, "The Text of the Life of St. Nikon 'Metanoëite' Reconsidered", in idem (ed.), *Λειμών...*, p. 96-103, who suggests that in some important places the text of Koutloumous should be preferred to that of the Vatican.

¹⁴ For the date and the author, see D. F. Sullivan, *The Life of Saint Nikon...*, p. 2-7; cf. J. O. Rosenqvist, "The Text of the Life of St. Nikon...", p. 102-103, who suggests ca. 1000-1042.

was located.¹⁵ Well received by the abbot of the monastery who, endowed with the gift of prophecy, recognizes in him the future saint, Nikon is tonsured in this convent where he remains for twelve years. Through a vision, the abbot knows that Nikon is dedicated to the apostolic mission of preaching, like a new apostle Paul, a message of repentance in the towns and villages of the Empire. From that moment on, he prepares him for the trip. Around 950, Nikon began his mission in Asia Minor. Shortly after Nikephoros Phocas' reconquest of Crete in 961, Nikon set out on a trip to the island, where he remained for seven years to re-Christianize its inhabitants, build churches, and appoint priests and deacons.¹⁶

After short periods spent in Athens, Chalcis, Thebes and in other towns and villages of Hellas and the Peloponnese, where he continued the work of evangelization of the Slavs begun under Basil I, Nikon arrives around 970 in Sparta. After founding a church under the name of Christ, the Virgin and the martyr Kyriake, following a vision, he remained in Sparta until the end of his life, which occurred in the last years of the 10th century. During this period, he accomplished a series of miracles, some of which concerning influential aristocrats from the Peloponnese, such as the protospatharios John Malakenos, the strategos Basil Apokaukos, Michael Choirosphaktes or Michael Argyromytes.

The episode in which the hero is Jean Malakenos¹⁷ deserves attention. The protospatharios is arrested at the request of Basil II, following a slanderous charge of high treason, and, at the time of his arrest, he calls the saint and asks him to pray for him so that he will not be the victim of the emperor's anger. The saint predicts him a happy outcome of the affair: he will enjoy the favors of the emperor even more and, what is more, he will have the opportunity to see him once again. The prediction comes true, Malakenos is forgiven and offered a high office in the capital, where he later settles. After the saint's death, Malakenos is plunged into great affliction, thinking that Nikon's second prophecy will not be fulfilled. Therefore, he decides to call a painter and, describing to him the general appearance of the saint, asks him to paint his portrait. However, the painter shows himself incapable of sketching the portrait of a person he has never known before; he is disturbed by his inability and at that moment the saint appears to him in a vision, asking him to make the portrait and his image is printed alone on the material medium. The painter finishes the icon by adding a

¹⁵ On the location of the convent, see E. Kountoura-Galakè, "The Location of the Monastery of Chryse Petra", *Symmeikta* 13, 1999, p. 69-75.

¹⁶ See E. Voulgarakis, "Nikon Metanoëite und die Rechristianisierung der Kreter von Islam", *Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft und Religionswissenschaft* 47, 1963, p. 192-204.

¹⁷ See V. Laurent, *Le Corpus des sceaux de l'empire byzantin*, vol. II, Paris, 1961, no. 872; J.-Cl. Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance (963-1210)*, Paris, 1990, p. 34. A Malakenos having the dignity of patrician also commanded the Byzantine army sent to Italy in 951 to fight against the Arabs. He was killed at the Battle of Geraci, in 952; see A. A. Vasiliev, *Byzance et les Arabes*, vol. II, Brussels, 1968, p. 303-305.

few touches and brings it to Constantinople to offer it to Malakenos, who is happy to see the miraculous way in which the saint's prophecy was fulfilled. The hagiographer adds that even in his time this icon was venerated in the convent.

The chronicle of Skylitzes corroborates the information provided by the hagiographer and confirms the arrest in 997 of the protospatharios John Malakenos, accused of having maintained secret relations with the Bulgarians against the interests of the Empire, then his release and the obtaining of a high position in the Senate.¹⁸

The origin and nature of the relationship between Nikon and the protospatharios Malakenos is unknown. What the hagiographer does not hide, however, is that Malakenos' devotion continued even after his establishment in Constantinople, since he shows him very distressed by the news of Nikon's death and anxious to acquire a portrait of the saint. Forced to leave Sparta to settle in Constantinople, John Malakenos has a particular devotion to his spiritual master in the city where he had spent most of his life. This devotion continues well after the death of Nikon through the veneration of his icon, which he requests specifically for his personal use and which the saint will provide in a miraculous way.

The special devotion which the saint enjoyed in Sparta after his death was formed around an icon initially intended for private use in Constantinople. This icon, from the moment when it became the object of monastic devotion and, therefore, was part of a hagiographic dossier, had to adapt to the new demands of the genre: to become *acheiropoietes*, that is to reproduce the model of a vision or, better, to imprint itself on the material support without even the painter contributing to it other than by his superfluous and certifying presence.

The sponsor of this icon is the protospatharios John Malakenos, a close friend and perhaps the spiritual son of Saint Nikon. Accused by the emperor of high treason, Malakenos naturally calls his spiritual protector who will predict the happy outcome of the affair. The vision and icon here represent the symbol of a contested local power, which combines the authority derived from its position in the secular hierarchy and one derived from the intimacy of a charismatic monk. The icon and the vision are engaged in a political space where they are placed on the side of a local power in search of relief and legitimacy. In writing the *Life of Saint Nikon*, his hagiographer therefore resorts to religious rhetoric *against* the central power.

¹⁸ *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, ed. by H. Thurn, Berlin – New York, 1973, p. 343.

2. In praise of power

There is also a religious rhetoric of imperial power, which I have chosen to illustrate with an example from the *Vision of Kosmas the Monk*. The text has been transmitted to us in two reviews: a short review (BHG 2084) which is found in the *Synaxarion*,¹⁹ and a long review (BHG 2085) preserved in several manuscripts, the oldest of which dates from the beginning of the 12th century.²⁰ Both versions contain chronological clues allowing a rigorous dating of the events related: the vision of Kosmas happened precisely in 933.²¹ Knowing also, by the epilogue of the long version, that Kosmas lived a little more than thirty years after the vision, it follows that his death occurred around 963. Regarding the writing of the *Vision*, 963 is a *terminus post quem* and it is reasonable to assume that the text could not have been composed long after this date.

The story can be summarized as follows: Kosmas, ex-*koitonites* of Emperor Alexander (911-913), withdrew from the world shortly after the emperor's death, in the imperial monastery of the Theotokos tou Eusebiou, in northwest Asia Minor, in the theme of the Optimates.²² Falling into ecstasy, he travels to the other world. There he meets dark demons who forcefully lead him down the narrow path where the damned are thrown down by a terrifying giant. Saved by saints Andrew and John, he is guided by them to Abraham's bosom, to heavenly Jerusalem and to the palace on its outskirts. While partaking in the banquet of the righteous, angels warn him that he is granted to live yet. He then leaves the world of the blessed and crosses the underworld. Suddenly, Kosmas comes to himself. The devil plots against him and his convent and a murder is committed following a conflict between the monastery of the Theotokos and a nearby monastery, the Patriarchal Monastery of Traianou.²³ Kosmas obtains the imperial permission to unify the two convents of which he becomes the abbot.

The junction between vision and worship occurs here on a double level. First, Kosmas' vision serves as the etiology for the unification of two convents, an imperial monastery and a patriarchal monastery, under his administration.²⁴ Second, the allusions to the oral form of the speech, to Constantinople as a place

¹⁹ H. Delehay, *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae. Propylaeum ad Acta Sanctorum Novembris*, Brussels, 1902, coll. 107-114.

²⁰ Ch. Angelidi, "La version longue de la vision du moine Cosmas", *Analecta Bollandiana* 101, 1983, p. 73-99.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

²² The convent is known from only one other source, *Narratio de imagine Edessena* (PG 113, col. 448 sq.); cf. Ch. Angelidi, "La version longue...", p. 74.

²³ Little information remains about this convent in a short hagiographic notice which nevertheless attests to the relations between the two monasteries; cf. R. Janin, *Les églises et les monastères des grands centres byzantins (Bithynie, Hellespont, Latros, Galèsios, Trébizonde, Athènes, Thessalonique)*, Paris, 1975, p. 102-103.

²⁴ Ch. Angelidi, "La version longue...", p. 89, lines 247 sqq.

of reading and to an ecclesiastical audience suggest that the text was written to be read in the capital, in the form of a eulogy for the funeral of Kosmas or on the anniversary of his death.²⁵ The vision thus serves as a starting point and a legitimation both for the saint's place of worship and for his praise, which here replaces the usual hagiographic narrative.

Kosmas' journey to paradise evokes the imperial palace and glorifies his familiars in both monastic and secular space, notably the eunuchs:

A large olive grove followed the end of the valley, the trees of which were more numerous, in my opinion, than the stars in the sky; and under every tree there was a tent and in every tent a bed and on every bed a man. *Among these men I recognized many who frequented the Palace, many people from the city, some inhabitants of the countryside and some monks from our convent.*²⁶ [...] After this olive grove there was a big city, whose beauty, diversity and harmony and the arrangement of the wall were unspeakable [...] Towards the end of the city stood a marvelous palace; at the entrance of the palace there was a hall the dimensions of which were about a stone's throw. Across the hall was a Roman marble table at a good height for a man to lean on. It was full of people lying down, and the whole house was filled with pure light, scent and charm. At the end of the room there was a small spiral staircase. At the top of this staircase was a pleasant terrace overlooking the table. *From that terrace luminous eunuchs with lightning-like faces and full of glory leaned down and said to the old men who were holding me: - Let him also lie down at this table. And while uttering these words they showed a place.* The old men took me there, made me lie down there and then went to sit in another part of the room. The eunuchs entered I do not know which apartment was on the terrace and they stayed there for many hours. *During this time, I took the opportunity to look around the table and I recognized several of my connections among the people lying there: both people from our convent and others who frequented the Palace.*²⁷

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 89, line 262 and p. 79, lines 7 and 11; *ibid.*, p. 79, line 22; *ibid.*, p. 79, line 17; see Ch. Angelidi, "La version longue...", p. 76-77.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 85, lines 147-154 (translation and underlining are mine): Καὶ πληρουμένης ἐκείνης τῆς κολιάδος διεδέχετο μέγιστος ἐλαιών, οὗ τὰ δένδρα πλείονα τῶν ἄστρον, ὡς ὑπολαμβάνω, ἦσαν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ. Καὶ καθ' ἕκαστον δένδρον οἶον σκηνὴ ἦν καὶ κλίνη καθ' ἑκάστην σκηνὴν καὶ ἐφ' ἑκάστην κλίνην ἄνθρωπος, ἐν οἷς ἀνεγνώριζον πολλοὺς μὲν τῶν ἀναστρεφόμενων τὰ βασιλεία, πολλοὺς δὲ τῶν κατὰ τὴν πόλιν, τινὰς καὶ τῶν οἰκούντων ἐν τοῖς ἀγροῖς καὶ τινὰς πρὸς τοῦτοις τῶν ἐκ τῆς καθ' ἡμᾶς μονῆς.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 85-87, lines 162-164 and 178-201 (translation and underlining are mine): Μετ' ἐκεῖνον δὲ τὸν ἐλαιῶνα πόλις ἦν, ἥς τὸ κάλλος καὶ τὴν περὶ τὸ τεῖχος ἀρμονίαν καὶ σύνθεσιν ἀμήχανον ἐξεῖπεν [...] Πρὸς δὲ τὸ ἄκρον ταύτης τῆς πόλεως θαυμαστά βασιλεία ὤκοδόμηντο. Εἰς δὲ τὴν τῶν βασιλείων εἴσοδον θάλαμος ἦν, οὗ τὸ περίμετρον ἦν ὥσει λίθου βολή. Ἀπ' ἄκρου δὲ τοῦ θαλάμου μέχρι τῶν ἄκρων τετάνυστο τράπεζα ἐκ μαρμάρου πᾶσα ῥωμαϊκοῦ, τοσοῦτον τῆς γῆς ἀπέχουσα, ὅσον ἐπερείδεσθαι ἄνθρωπον, πλήρης δὲ ἦν πᾶσα τῶν ἀνακεκλιμένων, ἀκραϊφνεστάτου δὲ φωτὸς καὶ εὐωδίας καὶ χάριτος ἅπας ὁ οἶκος ἐπεπλήρωτο. Τὸ δὲ του κοιλίου

The representation of the celestial court in the form of the imperial court is a *topos* in Byzantium, whose hagiography during this period gives a large number of illustrations.²⁸ However, the presence of eunuchs in the celestial palace is doubly significant. On the one hand, they appear as a worldly analogon of angels, since the celestial hierarchy reflects both the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the hierarchy of the court and, in this perspective, the angelic order corresponds to the body of eunuchs; this correspondence rests on a series of symbolic analogies concerning their nature and functions: transmission of messages, mediation, protection, fidelity, asexuality.²⁹ The confusion between angels and eunuchs is well attested in the visionary accounts and is commonplace in the middle Byzantine hagiography.³⁰ On the other hand, their presence next to Kosmas is justified by the fact that Kosmas, as *koitonites* of Alexander, must have been a eunuch himself. The angelic figures he finds in the heavenly palace are obviously his relatives, the “people of the Palace” whom he had known daily during his secular career.

The praise of Kosmas therefore appears to be the praise of a particular social group to which emperor Alexander’s corps of eunuchs certainly belonged. These figures are, in part, identifiable. The characters in Alexander’s entourage are known to us from the chronicle of Skylitzes: John, Gabrielopoulos, and Basilitzes.³¹ These are figures without genealogy who only appeared at court

τέλος τερπνὸν ἡλιακὸν διεδέχετο πρὸς αὐτὴν ἀπονεδὺν τὴν τράπεζαν. Ἐξ οὗ φωτοειδεῖς εὐνοῦχοι προκύναντες τὴν ὄψιν ἀσταπῇ παραπλήσιοι καὶ πάσης ἀγλαίας ὑπέρπλεοι, λέγουσιν ἐκείνοις τοῖς γηραιοῖς τοῖς κρατοῦσί με· Κατακλιθῆτω δὴ καὶ οὗτος ἐπὶ τὴν τράπεζαν. Καὶ ὅμα τῷ λόγῳ τὸν τόπον ὑποδεικνύουσιν, ἔφ’ ὃν οἱ γηραιοὶ με φέροντες ἀνακλίνουσιν, αὐτοὶ δὲ ἔφ’ ἐν τοῦ θαλάμου μέρος ἀπελθόντες ἐκάθισαν. Οἱ τοίνυν εὐνοῦχοι ἐκεῖνοι ὡς πρὸς τὸ ἔνδον τῆς ἐπὶ τὸν ἡλιακὸν οἰκίας διῆθεν εἰσέδυσαν καὶ ἐπὶ πολλὰς τὰς ὥρας ἐχρόνιζον. Ἐν δὲ τῷ τούτους χρονίζειν οὐ παρέργως ἐγὼ τὰ κατ’ ἐκείνην τὴν τράπεζαν ἐθεώρουν. Καὶ γὰρ πολλοὺς συνήθεις ἐκ ἀνακειμένων ἐγνώριζον ἐκ τε τοῦ κοσμικοῦ καὶ μοναδικοῦ καταλόγου τυγχάνοντας, πρὸς οἷς καὶ τινὰς τῶν ἐκ τῆς καθ’ ἡμᾶς μονῆς, τινὰς δὲ καὶ τῶν ἀναστρεφομένων εἰς τὰ βασίλεια.

²⁸ C. Mango, *Byzantium. The Empire of the New Rome*, London, 1980, p. 151-158; H. Maguire, “The Heavenly Court”, in idem (ed.), *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, Washington, D.C., 1997, p. 247-258.

²⁹ See G. Sidéris, “‘Eunuchs of light’. Power, Imperial Ceremonial and Positive Representations of Eunuchs in Byzantium (4th-12th centuries AD)”, in S. Tougher (ed.), *Eunuchs in Antiquity and Beyond*, London, 2002, p. 166-168; K. M. Ringrose, *The Perfect Servant. Eunuchs and the Social Construction of Gender in Byzantium*, Chicago, 2003, p. 142-163; Ch. Messis, *Les eunuques à Byzance, entre réalité et imaginaire*, Paris, 2014, p. 186-192.

³⁰ Cf. J. Noret, *Vitae duae antiquae Sancti Athanasii Athonitae*, Turnhout – Leuven, 1982, *Vita B*, chap. 28, line 14, p. 156; L. Rydén, *The Life of St Andrew the Fool*, vol. II, Uppsala, 1995, p. 145, line 973; p. 291, lines 4211 sqq.; A. V. Rystenko, *Materialien zur Geschichte der byzantinisch-slavisches Literatur und Sprache*, Odessa, 1928, p. 44, line 24; p. 53, line 33 (*Life of St Niphon of Constantiana*); R. P. H. Greenfield, *The Life of Lazaros of Mt. Galesion: An Eleventh-Century Pillar Saint*. Introduction, translation and notes, Washington, D.C., 2000, chap. 157, p. 555 F; chap. 207, p. 571 F, etc.

³¹ Skylitzes, ed. by H. Thurn, p. 201; cf. *ibid.*, p. 196.

during Alexander's short reign. They were also an ephemeral part of the regency council installed by Alexander before his death, alongside the patriarch Nicholas, the magister Stephen and the magister John Eladas. They were then quickly driven from the court, along with other relatives of Alexander, at the instigation of John Eladas, after the failure of the revolt of Doukas and the return to the palace of Zoe Karbonopsina. It therefore appears very probable that the entry into the monastery of the *ex-koitonites* Kosmas is linked precisely to this political purge which took place in the troubled period following the death of the emperor Alexander and the failure of the revolt of Doukas.

It is quite possible that the author of the *Vision* was himself one of the intimates of the emperor Alexander and that, in this capacity, he had to share, after the sudden death of the emperor in 913, the unenviable fate of all the people around him. Monk in the same convent, unified with another convent directly dependent on the patriarchate, and aware, down to the details, of the topography of the imperial palace, his profile is not very different from that of the hero whose praise he composed. It will never be known if there was a kinship between them, but what the *Vision* suggests is the existence of a close relationship between the two convents and the imperial palace. We do not know if an icon of Kosmas ever existed, but the vision attributed to him did replace its functions: it unified two convents and earned Kosmas hagiographic praise and private piety in Constantinople.

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Reflecting imperial ideology, the *Vision of Kosmas the Monk*, like other visionary accounts from the same period,³² mirrors the Heavenly and the Imperial Court, the Empire and Kingdom of Heaven, Constantinople and Heavenly Jerusalem. Discourse of power and religious discourse overlap at a time when spiritual authority merges with secular power in Constantinople. The hagiography completes the idealized image of the secular hierarchy and the monastery, both as a starting point and as a place of refuge, converts temporal power into religious authority, into spiritual prestige. Holiness and its charisms are thus absorbed in the religious rhetoric of power.

³² For example, the *Life of St Andrew the Fool* or the *Life of St Basil the Younger*; see L. Rydén, *The Life of St Andrew the Fool*, 2 vols., Uppsala, 1995; D. F. Sullivan, A.-M. Talbot, and S. McGrath (eds.), *The Life of Saint Basil the Younger: Critical Edition and Annotated Translation of the Moscow Version*, Washington, D.C., 2014. The two texts are analysed from this perspective in A. Timotin, *Visions, prophéties et pouvoir à Byzance...*, p. 304-342.

MANUSCRIPTS, PARATEXTS AND THE NEW TESTAMENT CANON: ARETHAS OF CAESAREA AND THE RECEPTION OF ST JOHN'S *APOCALYPSE* IN BYZANTIUM (NINTH-ELEVENTH CENTURIES)

Adrian C. Pirtea

Introduction

When Nerses of Lambron, the Armenian archbishop of Tarsus (1153-1198), first read the *Apocalypse of John* (*Apc*) in the 1170s, he was so puzzled by the book's cryptic language that he began an arduous search for a commentary explaining its "amazing words". Nerses' perplexity was understandable, given that *Apc* was almost unknown to Armenian Christians before the twelfth century, even though an older Armenian translation of the text must have existed.¹ During a visit to Antioch, the capital city of the eponymous Crusader state at the time, Nerses eventually found a commentary on *Apc* written by two authors in the "Lombard language" (*lunpart barbar*) at the Latin monastery of St. Paul.² However, Nerses could not find anyone to translate this

¹ See R. W. Thomson, *Nerses of Lambron. Commentary on the Revelation of Saint John, translation of the Armenian text, notes and introduction*, Leuven – Paris – Dudley, MA, 2007, p. 2-4, 6-10.

² *Meknut' iwn Yaytnut' ean S. Awetaranč' in Yovhannu arareal S. Andrēi ew Aritasay episkoposac' n Kesaru*, Jerusalem, 1855, p. 322; R. W. Thomson, *Nerses of Lambron...*, p. 17. It is unclear which 'Lombard' commentary Nerses refers to. Thomson (*ibid.*, p. 17, n. 80) believes this to be an Italian vernacular translation of Arethas' "revision of Andrew's commentary", but this is highly unlikely, as no Latin or vernacular reception of Andrew or Arethas is known prior to the sixteenth century. Nerses is more likely to refer to an early Lombard vernacular version of two Western commentators. Although Italian vernacular versions of Biblical books and commentaries are not attested before the thirteenth century, such translations could already have existed in the latter half of the twelfth century. See L. Leonardi, "Versioni e revisioni dell'Apocalisse in volgare. Obiettivi e metodi di una ricerca", in idem (ed.), *La Bibbia in italiano tra Medioevo e Rinascimento, atti del Convegno internazionale: Firenze, Certosa del Galluzzo, 8-9 novembre 1996*, Florence, 1998, p. 37-92; idem, "The Bible in Italian", in R. Marsden and E. A. Matter (eds.), *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 2: *From 600 to 1450*, Cambridge, 2012, p. 268-287; N. Morgan, "Latin and vernacular Apocalypses", in R. Marsden and E. A. Matter (eds.), *The New Cambridge History...*, p. 404-426. On the presence of Latin and Greek monks in the Crusader states and on the monastery of St Paul in Antioch in particular, see A. Jotischky, *The Perfection of Solitude. Hermits and Monks in the Crusader States*, University Park, PA, 1995; B. Hamilton and A. Jotischky,

commentary into Greek or Armenian. Finally, a Greek recluse named Basil, who lived in the mountains near Antioch, provided Nerses with what he had so long sought for: a Greek commentary on *Apc*, written by Andrew of Caesarea (ca. 560-614).³ Nerses immediately organized for the commentary to be translated into Armenian, with the blessing of the catholicos Gregory IV (sed. 1173-1193) and the help of Constantine, the Armenian metropolitan of Hierapolis (Mabbug). Constantine completed a draft translation of the commentary in 1179, which was later revised by Nerses.⁴ Although the translation is undoubtedly based on Andrew's commentary, the Armenian title oddly mentions a second commentator, Arethas of Caesarea (ca. 850/860-after 932):

Ի Յայտնութիւնն Յովհաննու սրբոյ Հօրն մերոյ Անդրէի երանելի
եպիսկոպոսի Կեսարոյ Կապադովկացոյ համառօտ տեսութիւն, ընդ
նմին և Արեթաս եպիսկոպոս նմին քաղաքի:

A brief exposition of the Apocalypse of John by our holy father Andrew, the blessed bishop of Caesarea of Cappadocia, *therewith also* Arethas, *bishop of the same city*.⁵

However, since there are no discernible traces of Arethas' *Commentary* in Nerses' work, scholars have concluded that the mention of Arethas in the title is only due to a misunderstanding and that Arethas did not play any role in the Armenian reception of *Apc*.⁶ This conclusion reflects a general scholarly tendency to attribute to Arethas only a marginal role in the Byzantine and Eastern Christian reception of *Apc*. Arethas' *Commentary* has been often described as hardly anything more than a reworking of Andrew, with only a few original contributions, that never achieved the popularity of the commentary written by his more illustrious predecessor. It is also Andrew, not Arethas, who

Latin and Greek Monasticism in the Crusader States, Cambridge, 2020, p. 212-219. See also C. MacEvitt, "True Romans: remembering the Crusades among Eastern Christians", in M. Cassidy-Welch and A. E. Lester (eds.), *Crusades and Memory. Rethinking Past and Present*, London, 2017, p. 35-50, here p. 46-47. On the much later Italian vernacular translation of *Apc* curiously preserved in the margins of Nerses' autograph manuscript, see below, n. 8.

³ *Meknut'iwn Yaytnut'ean...*, p. 322-323; R. W. Thomson, *Nerses of Lambron...*, p. 17-18. On Andrew's commentary, see below.

⁴ *Meknut'iwn Yaytnut'ean...*, p. 323-324; R. W. Thomson, *Nerses of Lambron...*, p. 18-19. See J. Schmid, *Studien zur Geschichte des griechischen Apokalypse-Textes*. 1. Teil: *Der Apokalypse-Kommentar des Andreas von Kaisareia*. Vol. I, Part 1: *Einleitung*, Munich, 1956, p. 106-113.

⁵ *Meknut'iwn Yaytnut'ean...*, p. 11; R. W. Thomson, *Nerses of Lambron...*, p. 39 (modified, my emphasis).

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 15; J. Schmid, *Studien zur Geschichte...*, vol. I, Part 1, p. 110.

is usually credited with enabling the wide acceptance of *Apc* in the Christian East.⁷

Yet even though Nerses did not make any discernible use of Arethas' *Commentary*, there is at least some evidence that he was aware of Arethas' work on *Apc*. Besides the Armenian *Commentary* based on Andrew, Nerses also made a revised Armenian translation of *Apc* from the original Greek. In the oldest manuscript of this translation, which is Nerses' autograph,⁸ the Greek text of *Apc* is a representative of the so-called Arethas text type (*Ap*), a distinct subgroup of the *Koine* text (*K*) which is usually transmitted along with Arethas' *Commentary* and possibly originated with Arethas himself.⁹ The fact that this text type occurs in Nerses' handwritten copy shows that the Armenian archbishop at least had access to Greek manuscripts linked to Arethas' activity as a scholar and that he was likely aware of Arethas' exegetical work as well. A further indication in this sense is the close resemblance between the title of Nerses' *Commentary* and the title of the σύνοψις σχολική, a short preface to *Apc* composed by Arethas (see below).

Nerses' encounter with the Greek text of *Apc* illustrates that Arethas *did* play a role – albeit a less obvious one – in the Eastern Christian reception of *Apc*. In his *Commentary*, Arethas showed great interest in supporting the canonical status of *Apc*, e.g., by appealing to Patristic authority and to stylistic

⁷ See, e.g., E. S. Constantinou, *Guiding to a Blessed End. Andrew of Caesarea and His Apocalypse Commentary in the Ancient Church*, Washington, D.C., 2013, p. 300-303.

⁸ GA 256 (Paris, BNF, arm. 27 [ancien fonds arm. 9], s. XI/XII). This is a trilingual Greek-Armenian-Italian manuscript of the Praxapostolos and *Apc*. See P. P. Martin, *Description technique des manuscrits grecs relatifs au Nouveau Testament, conservés dans le bibliothèques de Paris*, Paris, 1884, p. 123-126; R. H. Kévorkian and A. Ter-Stépanian, *Manuscrits arméniens de la Bibliothèque nationale de France. Catalogue*, Paris, 1998, p. 40-42. The three columns were written in different periods: the first column (Greek) dates to the eleventh/twelfth century; Nerses copied the second column (Armenian) in the late twelfth century (see fol. 292^v); the Italian version (only for *Apc* 1,1-4,1) was added in the margins by a later hand (late fifteenth or sixteenth century, according to a personal communication by Prof. Paolo Eleuteri). F. C. Conybeare wrongly dates the Italian text to ca. 1300 and calls it “probably the first Italian translation of the N.T.” (F. C. Conybeare, *The Armenian Version of Revelation and Cyril of Alexandria's Scholia on the Incarnation and Epistle on Easter*, London, 1907, p. 70). This Italian translation is absent from the inventory of Italian vernacular manuscripts of the Bible (cf. L. Leonardi, “Inventario dei manoscritti biblici italiani”, *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Moyen-Âge* 105.2, 1993, p. 863-886). As a cursory comparison shows, the Italian text is a direct copy of the incunable edition of the Italian vernacular Bible published by Nicolò Malermi in 1471.

⁹ On the Arethas text type, see J. Schmid, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des griechischen Apokalypsetextes. I: Der Apokalypsetext des Arethas von Kaisareia und einiger anderer jüngerer Gruppen*, Athens, 1936; idem, *Studien zur Geschichte des griechischen Apokalypse-Textes*, 2. Teil: *Die alten Stämme*, Munich, 1955, p. 27, 40-41; cf. M. Lembke, D. Müller, U. B. Schmid, and M. Karrer (eds.), *Text und Textwert der griechischen Handschriften des Neuen Testaments. VI: Die Apokalypse. Teststellenkollation und Auswertungen*, Berlin, 2017, p. 67*-69*; M. Sigismund, “Quaestiones Arethae I”, in M. Sigismund and D. Müller (eds.), *Studien zum Text der Apokalypse II*, Berlin, 2017, p. 411-432. See section 3.1 below.

arguments for the book's authenticity. While Arethas made extensive use of Oecumenius and Andrew, he nevertheless pursued his own agenda when recasting the exegetical work of his predecessors. Yet beyond his merits as a commentator, Arethas was probably more influential as a Biblical scholar and promoter of the *Apocalypse*. Based on a selection of relevant Byzantine manuscripts, I will argue that Arethas' major contribution consisted in designing or updating a *paratextual apparatus* for *Apc* (chapter-titles, chapter numbers, tables of contents, prefaces, etc.) and in promoting new ways of presenting *Apc* as an integral part of the New Testament.

A series of recent publications have highlighted the importance of paratexts for the reception of the Bible in the Late Antique and Medieval periods.¹⁰ Other scholars have rightly drawn attention to the complexity of the Byzantine engagement with and reception of the Bible.¹¹ In the case of *Apc*, a recent monograph and a new research project provide the first comprehensive studies of the paratexts to *Apc* produced in the Byzantine period.¹² Against this background, the present contribution intends to bring into focus Arethas' unique role within this broader process. I will restrict myself to a discussion of the formal and philological aspects of Arethas' work on *Apc*, but I hope to address the possible theological, exegetical and socio-political motivations behind Arethas' *Commentary* in a future study.¹³

¹⁰ See, e.g., E. W. Scherbenske, *Canonizing Paul. Ancient Editorial Practice and the Corpus Paulinum*, Oxford, 2013; M. Wallraff and P. Andrist, "Paratexts of the Bible: A New Research Project on Greek Textual Transmission", *Early Christianity* 6, 2015, p. 237-243 (the results of the project *ParaTexBib* are accessible in the *Pinakes* database; see: <http://paratexbib.eu/> and <http://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr> (last accessed, 23.1.2021); M. R. Crawford, *The Eusebian Canon Tables. Ordering Textual Knowledge in Late Antiquity*, Oxford, 2019, esp. p. 21-33.

¹¹ R. S. Nelson and P. Magdalino (eds.), *The Old Testament in Byzantium*, Washington, D.C., 2010; D. Krueger and R. S. Nelson (eds.), *The New Testament in Byzantium*, Washington, D.C., 2016; C. Rapp and A. Külzer (eds.), *The Bible in Byzantium. Appropriation, Adaptation, Interpretation*, Göttingen, 2019. On the manuscript tradition and reception of *Apc* in Greek, see now G. Allen, *Manuscripts of the Book of Revelation. New Philology, Paratexts, Reception*, Oxford, 2020.

¹² See D. Müller and P. Malik, "Rediscovering Paratexts in the Manuscripts of Revelation", *Early Christianity* 11.2, 2020, p. 247-264; P. Malik and E. Gerke, "Marginalglossen in GA 2323: Edition und Übersetzung", in M. Sigismund, D. Müller and M. Geigenfeind (eds.), *Studien zum Text der Apokalypse III*, Berlin, 2020, p. 371-415; G. Allen, *Manuscripts of the Book...*, esp. p. 44-73, on the titles of *Apc* as paratexts.

¹³ In particular, this will concern the archbishop's stance towards the potential millennialist interpretations of *Apc* and the apocalyptic expectations linked to the year 1000. On this subject, see P. Magdalino, "The year 1000 in Byzantium", in idem (ed.), *Byzantium in the Year 1000*, Leiden, 2003, p. 233-270, with a helpful survey of earlier scholarship.

1. Previous Research on Arethas' *Commentary*. Editions and Manuscripts

Although studies on Arethas' other writings, his career and his manuscript library have appeared at a steady pace during the last decades, his most voluminous exegetical work, the *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, has remained fairly neglected in scholarship.¹⁴ So far, most scholars have approached the *Commentary* only as a valuable source for the textual history of the New Testament. It is indeed thanks to the fundamental studies of Josef Schmid (1893-1975) that we now have a good understanding of the manuscript tradition of Arethas' *Commentary* and the *Apc* text he used.¹⁵ Recently, Albrecht von Blumenthal's German translation has finally made the *Commentary* available to non-specialist readers.¹⁶ However, aside from a critical edition of the text, which is still a major desideratum, much research needs to be done on the historical and cultural context of Arethas' activity as a Byzantine churchman, exegete and scholar.¹⁷

Arethas' *Commentary* is extant in two recensions. A *shorter recension* is found in the manuscripts GA 91 (Paris, BNF, gr. 219, s. XI), GA 617 (Venice, Bibl. Marciana, gr. 546, s. XI) and GA 1934 (Paris, BNF, gr. 224, s. XI/XII). GA 91 formed the basis of the *editio princeps* of the text published by Bernardinus Donatus (1483-1543) in Verona in 1532, which was later reprinted by the French scholar Frédéric Morel (1552-1630) in Paris.¹⁸ In 1844, John A. Cramer (1793-1848) published a *longer recension* of the commentary based on the manuscript GA 314 (Oxford, Bodleian Library, *Barocc.* gr. 3, s. X), to which

¹⁴ Brief discussions in S. B. Kougeas, *Ο Καισαρείας Αρέθας και το έργο του: συμβολή εις την ιστορίαν της πρώτης αναγεννήσεως των ελληνικών γραμμάτων εν Βυζαντίω*, Athens, 1913, p. 36-38; P. Lemerle, *Le premier humanisme byzantin. Notes et remarques sur enseignement et culture à Byzance des origines au X^e siècle*, Paris, 1971, p. 233-234. More recent discussions of Arethas' commentary are found in M. Sigismund, "Quaestiones Arethae I"; F. X. Gumerlock, "Exegesis of the Apocalypse in the tenth century", in C. McAllister (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Apocalyptic Literature*, Cambridge, 2020, p. 137-155.

¹⁵ J. Schmid, "Die handschriftliche Überlieferung des Apokalypse-Kommentars des Arethas von Kaisareia", *Byzantinisch-neugriechische Jahrbücher* 17, 1939-1943, p. 72-81, and above, n. 9.

¹⁶ A. von Blumenthal, *Arethas von Caesarea: Kommentar zur Offenbarung des Johannes. Deutsche Erstübersetzung*, Berlin, 2015.

¹⁷ Cf. B. Flusin, "Aréthas de Césarée et la transmission du savoir", in B. Flusin and J.-C. Cheynet (eds.), *Autour du Premier humanisme byzantin & des Cinq études sur le XI^e siècle, quarante ans après Paul Lemerle*, Paris, 2017, p. 309-324, who does not mention the *Commentary* at all.

¹⁸ Bernardinus Donatus (ed.), *Ἑξηγήσεις παλαιαὶ καὶ λίαν ὠφέλιμοι βραχυλογία τε καὶ σαφηνεῖαν τοῦ λόγου ἔχουσαι θαυμαστὴν ἐκ διαφορῶν τῶν ἁγίων πατέρων ὑπομνημάτων ὑπὸ Οἰκουμενίου καὶ Ἀρέθα συλλεχθεῖσαι εἰς τὰς τῆς νέας διαθήκης πραγματείας τάσδε. Τοῦ μὲν Οἰκουμενίου εἰς τὰς πράξεις τῶν Ἀποστόλων εἰς τὰς καθολικὰς λεγόμενας ἐπιστολὰς εἰς τὰς Παύλου πάσας. Τοῦ δὲ Ἀρέθα εἰς τὴν Ἰωάννου Ἀποκάλυψιν*, Verona, 1532; F. Morell (ed.), *Oecumenii operum et Arethae in Apocalypsin*, vol. 2: *Oecumenii commentariorum in Novum Testamentum, accesserunt Arethae Caesareae Cappadociae episcopi explanationes in Apocalypsin*, Paris, 1631.

I will return below.¹⁹ The same longer recension is also preserved in two later Athonite manuscripts: GA 2075 (Athos, Iviron, *gr.* 370 [546], s. XIV) and GA 2077 (Athos, Iviron, *gr.* 508 [644], a. 1685).²⁰ The most recent edition of Arethas' *Commentary* remains the one published in the *Patrologia Graeca* in 1863, which reproduces Cramer's text but leaves out what the French editors considered to be additions in the longer recension.²¹ According to the most recent lists of witnesses, several other manuscripts contain the Arethas text type without the commentary, while others only preserve the preface, the chapter-titles and the table of contents (*pinax*) designed by Arethas.²²

2. The Byzantine Reception of *Apc* before Arethas

Before I discuss Arethas' unique contribution to the promotion of *Apc*'s canonical status in Byzantium, it will be useful to review the problematic reception of *Apc* in the Byzantine East before Arethas' lifetime.²³

After an initial period of relatively widespread acceptance in the second and early third centuries (Irenaeus of Lyon, Hippolytus, Tertullian, Origen, etc.), doubts began to be raised concerning the authenticity of *Apc* beginning with ca. the mid-third century. At least in part, this was a consequence of the polemical discussions regarding the legitimacy of literal vs. allegorical interpretations of

¹⁹ J. A. Cramer (ed.), *Catena Graecorum Patrum in Novum Testamentum*, vol. VIII: *Catena in Epistolas Catholicas, accesserunt Oecumenii et Arethae Comentariorum in Apocalypsin*, Oxford, 1844.

²⁰ J. Schmid, "Die handschriftliche Überlieferung...", p. 74-76.

²¹ PG 106, coll. 487-786. See J. Schmid, "Die handschriftliche Überlieferung...", p. 81.

²² M. de Groote, "Die σύνοψις σχολική zum Apokalypse-Kommentar des Arethas, nebst einem Anhang: Die handschriftliche Überlieferung des Apokalypse-Kommentars des Arethas", *Sacris Erudiri* 34, 1994, p. 125-134, here p. 133-134; M. Sigismund, "Quaestiones Arethae I", p. 430.

²³ For a history of the reception of *Apc* and its canonical status in Antiquity and the Middle Ages, see N. B. Stonehouse, *The Apocalypse in the Ancient Church: A Study in the History of the New Testament Canon*, Goes, 1929; B. M. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament. Its Origin, Development, and Significance*, Oxford, 1987, p. 113-141, 209-217, *passim*; J. K. Elliott, "The Distinctiveness of the Greek Manuscripts of the Book of Revelation", *Journal of Theological Studies* 48, 1997, p. 116-124; T. Nicklas, "The Early Text of Revelation", in C. E. Hill and M. J. Kruger (eds.), *The Early Text of the New Testament*, Oxford, 2012, p. 225-238; E. S. Constantinou, *Andrew of Caesarea and the Apocalypse in the Ancient Church of the East. Studies and Translation*, 2 vols, PhD dissertation, Université Laval, Québec, 2008, vol. 1, p. 31-117; eadem, *Guiding to a Blessed End...*, p. 14-46; J. Verheyden, "The New Testament Canon", in J. C. Paget and J. Schaper (eds.), *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 1: *From the Beginnings to 600*, Cambridge, 2013, p. 389-411; S. Shoemaker, "The Afterlife of the Apocalypse of John in Byzantium", in D. Krueger and R. S. Nelson (eds.), *The New Testament...*, p. 301-316; M. Karrer, *Johannesoffenbarung (Offb 1,1-5,14)*, Göttingen, 2017, p. 108-134; E. L. Gallagher and J. D. Meade, *The Biblical Canon Lists from Early Christianity. Texts and Analysis*, Oxford, 2017, p. 49-52; T. Nicklas, "Revelation and the New Testament Canon", in C. R. Koester (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Book of Revelation*, Oxford, 2020, p. 361-376.

the “thousand years” mentioned in *Apc* 20.²⁴ Even during the fourth century, when most of the Biblical canon became relatively stable, the status of *Apc* was still not settled in the East. Methodius of Olympus (d. 311) acknowledges and quotes the book, but Eusebius of Caesarea (d. ca. 339), who offers an extensive report on the problematic authorship of *Apc*, seems to be undecided about the book’s authenticity.²⁵ While it is true that Athanasius of Alexandria’s *Festal Letter* of 367 includes *Apc* as part of the New Testament, other Church Fathers like Cyril of Jerusalem and (possibly) Gregory of Nazianzus omit it from their lists of accepted books.²⁶ At the end of the fourth century, Amphilochius of Iconium (d. after 394) states regarding *Apc* that “most people consider it spurious” (οἱ πλείους δέ γε νόθον λέγουσιν).²⁷ Strong support for the book’s canonicity was seemingly prevalent in Egypt (Origen, Athanasius, Didymus, Cyril), but was notably lacking in other areas, such as Antioch and Syria.²⁸ A survey of the synodal acts of the period shows that Western councils accepted the book, while Eastern conciliary and pseudo-conciliary acts rejected it.²⁹

The Greek manuscript record for the first Christian centuries is also quite poor. According to the most recent census, only seven papyrus fragments (second-sixth century) and five small uncial parchment fragments (fourth-eighth century) contain *Apc*.³⁰ Although *Apc* is included in three of the major Bibles of Late Antiquity (*Codex Alexandrinus*, *Codex Sinaiticus*, *Codex Ephraemi*

²⁴ E. S. Constantinou, *Guiding to a Blessed End...*, p. 22-27; G. Podskalsky, *Byzantinische Reicheschatologie. Die Periodisierung der Weltgeschichte in den vier Grossreichen (Daniel 2 und 7) und dem tausendjährigen Friedensreiche (Apok 20). Eine motivgeschichtliche Untersuchung*, Munich, 1972, p. 77-91.

²⁵ Eusebius of Caesarea, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 3.25.1-7; see B. M. Metzger, *The Canon...*, p. 201-207, 309; E. L. Gallagher and J. D. Meade, *The Biblical Canon Lists...*, p. 104-105. However, I agree with Shoemaker that Constantinou overemphasises Eusebius’ role in undermining confidence in *Apc* (S. Shoemaker, “The Afterlife...”, p. 303).

²⁶ B. M. Metzger, *The Canon...*, p. 311-313; E. L. Gallagher and J. D. Meade, *The Biblical Canon Lists...*, p. 110-129, 141-148.

²⁷ Amphilochius of Iconium, *Iambi ad Seleucum*, 316-318, ed. by E. Oberg, *Amphilochii Iconiensis iambi ad Seleucum*, Berlin, 1969; see B. M. Metzger, *The Canon...*, p. 212-213, 313-314; E. L. Gallagher and J. D. Meade, *The Biblical Canon Lists...*, p. 148-157.

²⁸ One other important, but neglected early Byzantine source that includes *Apc* in its NT canon is the *Synopsis Scripturae Sacrae* of Pseudo-Athanasius of Alexandria (CPG 2249, PG 28, coll. 281-432).

²⁹ For the West: the synods of Carthage (the *Breviarium Hipponense*); for the East: the (pseudo-) Apostolic Canons, canon 85; and the Council of Laodicea (363), canon 59; see E. L. Gallagher and J. D. Meade, *The Biblical Canon Lists...*, p. 129-141, 222-225. On these councils, see below.

³⁰ For the following discussions on Greek *Apc* manuscripts I rely mainly on the list provided in M. Lembke, D. Müller, U. B. Schmid, and M. Karrer (eds.), *Text und Textwert...*, p. 1-22 (with some minor adjustments). See also the table in G. Allen, *Manuscripts of the Book...*, p. 16. The most important Late Antique papyrus of *Apc* (P47) was recently edited by P. Malik, *P. Beatty III (P47): The Codex, Its Scribe, and Its Text*, Leiden, 2017. See also idem, “The Greek Text of Revelation in Late Antique Egypt: Materials, Texts, and Social History”, *Zeitschrift für Antike und Christentum* 22.3, 2018, p. 400-421.

Rescriptus, absent in the *Codex Vaticanus*), in comparison to the Gospels and Paul's letters it remains heavily underrepresented. Even its inclusion in the early majuscule codices does not offer definitive proof that *Apc* was universally accepted.³¹ Moreover, Greek Patristic quotations from *Apc* are relatively rare and there are no extant Greek commentaries before the sixth century. By comparison, in the Latin West a rich commentary tradition developed already in the third century and *Apc* remained very important throughout the first millennium and beyond.³²

The end of the fifth century coincided with the year 6000 *anno mundi* and led to growing apocalyptic concerns in the Eastern Mediterranean. In the wake of these expectations, one can observe a renewed interest in *Apc*. Around the year 500, a few quotations appear in the *Corpus Dionysiacum*, prompting John of Scythopolis a few decades later to note that an apostolic figure like Dionysius the Areopagite accepted the work as divinely inspired.³³ An Alexandrian source from the last decades of the sixth century, Ps-Leontius' *De sectis*, considers *Apc* canonical.³⁴ The anonymous scholia on *Apc* attributed to Origen are possibly also products of the same period.³⁵ Finally, two major Greek commentaries on *Apc* emerged over the span of a century. The first is that of

³¹ On the text of *Apc* in the three majuscules, see J. Hernández, *Scribal Habits and Theological Influences in the Apocalypse. The Singular Readings of Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus and Ephraemi*, Tübingen, 2006.

³² R. Gryson, "Les commentaires patristiques latins de l'Apocalypse", *Revue théologique de Louvain* 28.3, 1997, p. 305-337; 28.4, 1997, p. 484-502; K. Poole, "The Western Apocalypse Commentary Tradition of the Early Middle Ages", in M. A. Ryan (ed.), *A Companion to the Premodern Apocalypse*, Leiden, 2016, p. 103-143; E. A. Matter, "Latin Reception of the Apocalypse in the Early Middle Ages", in C. McAllister (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion...*, p. 120-136.

³³ John of Scythopolis, *Scholia in DN*, 212,31-41 (ed. by B. R. Suchla, *Corpus Dionysiacum IV/I. Ioannis Scythopolitani Prologus et Scholia in Dionysii Areopagitae librum de Divinis Nominibus cum additamentis interpretum aliorum*, Berlin, 2012, p. 162-163). See J. Lamoreaux, "The Provenance of Ecumenius' Commentary on the Apocalypse", *Vigiliae Christianae* 52.1, 1998, p. 88-108, here p. 88, n. 1.

³⁴ See Ps-Leontius of Byzantium, *De Sectis*, actio II (PG 86, col. 1204C). On the dating and provenance of this treatise, see B. Gleede, "Der Traktat *De Sectis* des Abba Theodor. Eine unvollendete Handreichung zur Widerlegung der διακρινόμενοι", in D. Bumazhnov (ed.), *Christliches Ägypten in der spätantiken Zeit. Akten der 2. Tübinger Tagung zum Christlichen Orient (7.-8. Dezember 2007)*, Tübingen, 2013, p. 179-216.

³⁵ See P. Tzamalikos, *An Ancient Commentary on the Book of Revelation. A Critical Edition of the Scholia in Apocalypsin*, Cambridge, 2013. Tzamalikos' attempt to identify the author of these scholia with 'Cassian the Sabbaite' remains unconvincing, but a sixth-century dating should not be ruled out; cf. the reviews of K. Plaxco in *Theological Studies* 75.4, 2014, p. 903-905 and K. Huber in *The Journal of Theological Studies* 66.2, 2015, p. 798-800. See also G. Allen, "The Reception of Scripture and Exegetical Resources in the *Scholia in Apocalypsin* (GA 2351)", in H. Houghton (ed.), *Commentaries, Catenae and Biblical Tradition. Papers from the Ninth Birmingham Colloquium on the Textual Criticism of the New Testament, in association with the COMPAUL Project*, Piscataway, NJ, 2016, p. 141-163.

Oecumenius, an author whose identity was for a long time a matter of scholarly debate and whose activity has been variously dated to either the beginning or the end of the sixth century.³⁶ Although Oecumenius' work influenced both Andrew and Arethas, his commentary remained little known in the Byzantine period.³⁷ At the beginning of the seventh century, Andrew of Caesarea wrote another commentary, possibly as a reaction to Oecumenius' work. Although Andrew's *Commentary* eventually became the most popular exegetical text on *Apc* in the Christian East,³⁸ in the first two or three centuries after Andrew Byzantine interest in *Apc* remained marginal.³⁹ Even if the period between the sixth and the ninth centuries is generally poor in terms of New Testament manuscripts, it is symptomatic that there are *no complete manuscript copies* of *Apc* in Greek attested for any period between ca. 450 and 850. Even the most prolific Greek Christian authors of the seventh century, Maximus Confessor and Anastasius Sinaites, do not give any verbatim quotations from *Apc*.⁴⁰ In the eighth century, John of Damascus lists *Apc* among the canonical books of the New Testament but does not seem to cite it elsewhere.⁴¹

Even as this period marked a low point in the reception of *Apc* in Byzantium, apocryphal apocalypses and political prophecies became increasingly fashionable, certainly in part as a result of the Muslim conquests. To mention only a few examples: the Syriac *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* was translated into Greek some time in the early 700s, merely a few decades after its composition; a series of apocalyptic pseudepigrapha attributed to the prophet Daniel were composed in ca. the eighth century and later (e.g., the *Diegesis Danielis*); finally, there are several attempts at end-time calculations,

³⁶ M. de Groote, "Die *Quaestio Oecumeniana*", *Sacris Erudiri* 36, 1996, p. 67-105; cf. J. Lamoreaux, "The Provenance...", esp. p. 106-108; E. S. Constantinou, *Guiding to a Blessed End...*, p. 47-61; cf. S. Shoemaker, "The Afterlife...", p. 306-309.

³⁷ Only one twelfth-century manuscript contains the complete text, but excerpts from the commentary are found as scholia in dozens of manuscripts, some as early as the ninth century (see below). For a detailed description of the manuscript witnesses, see M. de Groote, "Die handschriftliche Überlieferung des Oecumenius-Kommentars zur Apokalypse", *Sacris Erudiri* 35, 1995, p. 5-29; idem, *Oecumenii Commentarius in Apocalypsin*, Leuven, 1999.

³⁸ See J. Schmid, *Studien zur Geschichte...*, vol. I, Part 1, p. 99-117. For a recent study of the broader 'Andrew tradition' and Andrew's role in the reception of *Apc* in Greek, see G. Allen, *Manuscripts of the Book...*, p. 74-120.

³⁹ This is in stark opposition to the Latin West, where at least three commentaries on *Apc* were composed in the eighth century, i.e., Bede, Beatus of Liébana and Ambrosius Autpertus (R. Gryson, "Les commentaires...", p. 484-502).

⁴⁰ The few instances recorded in the *indices* to Anastasius' and Maximus' major works are scriptural allusions which do not necessarily presuppose a direct knowledge of *Apc*.

⁴¹ John of Damascus, *Expositio fidei* 90 (ed. by B. Kotter, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos. II: Έκδοσις ἀκριβής τῆς ὀρθοδόξου πίστεως – Expositio fidei*, Berlin, 1973, p. 211).

such as those of Anastasius Sinaites or Theophanes the monk, both from the early eighth century.⁴²

It remains to be determined if and to what extent this surge in apocalyptic literature encouraged a renewed interest in St John's *Apocalypse* in Byzantium. In any case, more favorable views towards the canonicity of *Apc* slowly emerged at the beginning of the ninth century, particularly in Constantinople. Theodore of Stoudios (759-826) explicitly identifies John "the Theologian and the Apostle" (θεόλογος καὶ ἀπόστολος) as the author of *Apc* in a letter dated 818.⁴³ More importantly, Theodore quotes from *Apc* several times in his *Small Catecheses*, a work addressed to the monastic community at Stoudios. As Marcus Sigismund has argued recently, Theodore's repeated use of *Apc* in his *Catecheses* implies that the Stoudite community under his leadership acknowledged the book's scriptural authority.⁴⁴ This is particularly revealing in light of Nadezhda Kavrus-Hoffmann's revision of the date and provenance of GA 1424,⁴⁵ a remarkable manuscript connected to the Stoudios scriptorium.⁴⁶ According to Kavrus-Hoffmann's assessment, which corrects earlier evaluations of the manuscript,⁴⁷ GA 1424 bears all the characteristics of the early minuscules copied at Stoudios, meaning that it could not have been produced much later than the mid-ninth century.⁴⁸ This makes GA 1424 not only the earliest minuscule copy of *Apc*, but also the earliest among the ca. fifty complete

⁴² See A. Kraft, "An Inventory of Medieval Greek Apocalyptic Sources (c. 500-1500 AD): Naming and Dating, Editions and Manuscripts", *Millennium-Jahrbuch* 15, 2018, p. 69-144, here p. 81-88. See also idem, "Byzantine Apocalyptic Literature", in C. McAllister (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion...*, p. 172-189. On the Daniel tradition, see L. DiTommaso, *The Book of Daniel and the Apocryphal Daniel Literature*, Leiden, 2005.

⁴³ Theodore the Stoudite, *Ep.* 360 (ed. by G. Fatouros, *Theodori Studitae Epistulae. Pars altera: textum epp. 71-564 et indices continens*, Berlin, 1992, p. 494.6-7). On Theodore, see R.-J. Lilie et al. (eds.), *Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit Online* (= PmbZO), s.v. Theodoros Studites (Nr. 7574/corr).

⁴⁴ M. Sigismund, "Form und Funktion der Apk-Zitate bei Theodoros Studites", in M. Sigismund, D. Müller, and M. Geigenfeind (eds.), *Studien zum Text der Apokalypse III*, p. 109-124.

⁴⁵ Ms. Drama, Monê Kosinitsês, *cod.* 003 (3P), olim Chicago, Lutheran School of Theology, Jesuit-Krauss-McCormick Library, *ms. Gruber* 152. See N. Kavirus-Hoffmann, "Catalogue of Greek Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the Collections of the United States of America. Part IX: Chicago, Illinois, The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, The Jesuit-Krauss-McCormick Library", *Manuscripta* 59.1, 2015, p. 61-139, here p. 117-131.

⁴⁶ N. Kavirus-Hoffmann, "Catalogue..."; eadem, "Producing New Testament Manuscripts in Byzantium. Scribes, Scriptoria, and Patrons", in D. Krueger and R. S. Nelson (eds.), *The New Testament...*, p. 117-145, esp. p. 123-126.

⁴⁷ See, e.g., M. de Groote, "Die Scholien aus dem Oecumenius-Kommentar zur Apokalypse", *Sacris Erudiri* 35, 1995, p. 31-43, here p. 34-35, who follows A. Vaccari (*La Grecia nell' Italia meridionale. Studi letterari e bibliografici*, Rome, 1925) in suggesting a Southern Italian provenance of the manuscript.

⁴⁸ N. Kavirus-Hoffmann, "Producing New Testament Manuscripts...", p. 126.

minuscule New Testament (*eapr*) manuscripts extant today.⁴⁹ The order of the books in GA 1424 is peculiar, with *Apc* being placed between the Catholic Epistles and the Pauline corpus.⁵⁰ Even more important is the presence of scholia in the margins of virtually all the books of the New Testament. Although most of these scholia were copied by a later hand (ca. twelfth century), the scholia for *Apc* are certainly the work of the original scribe, a monk named Sabas.⁵¹ Somewhat surprisingly, the scholia on *Apc* are not based on Andrew of Caesarea, but are all extracted from Oecumenius' commentary.⁵² Last but not least, the text of *Apc* in GA 1424 agrees in some instances with the one used by Theodore.⁵³

The historical context of GA 1424 thus confirms Sigismund's conclusions regarding the use of *Apc* at Stoudios and indicates the rising interest in the exegesis of *Apc* during the ninth century. By comparison, the only other known ninth-century copy of *Apc* in Greek is the rather unassuming GA 046 (*Vat. gr.* 2066) from Southern Italy, in which the *Apocalypse* is coupled with works of Basil the Great and Gregory of Nyssa, with no indication that it was regarded as Scripture.⁵⁴

In the last decades of the eighth century, Nicephorus of Constantinople (ca. 757/8-828, sed. 806-815) included in his *Chronologia brevis* (Χρονογραφικὸν σύντομον) a Biblical canon, known as the *Stichometry of Nicephorus*.⁵⁵ According to this list, based on a source of uncertain date and

⁴⁹ See U. Schmid, "Die Apokalypse, überliefert mit anderen neutestamentlichen Schriften – eapr-Handschriften", in M. Sigismund, M. Karrer and U. Schmid (eds.), *Studien zum Text der Apokalypse*, Berlin, 2015, p. 421-441. The standard abbreviations for the different parts of the New Testament will be occasionally used here as well: *e* = Gospels; *a* = *Acts* and Catholic Epistles; *p* = Pauline corpus; *r* = *Apocalypse* (Revelation).

⁵⁰ This is a rare arrangement that GA 1424 shares with the early tenth-century Leo Bible and some Latin manuscripts. See P. Canart (ed.), *La Bible du patrice Léon: Codex Reginensis Graecus I. Commentaire codicologique, paléographique, philologique et artistique*, Città del Vaticano, 2011, p. 8-9; R. Gryson, *Apocalypsis Johannis*, Freiburg, 2000, p. 80.

⁵¹ N. Kavirus-Hoffmann, "Catalogue...", p. 127.

⁵² The same set of scholia, with some variations, are found in more than a dozen later manuscripts. See M. de Groote, "Die Scholien..."; idem, "Die Scholien aus dem Oecumenius-Kommentar zur Apokalypse. Kritische Herausgabe", *Sacris Erudiri* 37, 1997, p. 111-131.

⁵³ For example, GA 1424 and Theodore agree in their readings of *Apc* 1:5b (ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν) and 1:6 (ἐποίησεν ἡμῶς βασιλείαν); see M. Sigismund, "Form und Funktion...", p. 113, 117.

⁵⁴ On the ninth-century dating and Southern Italian provenance of GA 046, see S. Lucà and G. Nardoza, "La *Parva Catechesis* di Teodoro studiata in Italia meridionale: un nuovo testimone ritrovato a Melfi, in Basilicata", *Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici* 52, 2015, p. 93-153, here p. 144-146 (with further bibliography). The tenth-century dating proposed by K. Aland (*Kurzgefasste Liste der griechischen Handschriften des Neuen Testaments*, Berlin, 1994, p. 23) is almost certainly too late.

⁵⁵ See B. M. Metzger, *The Canon...*, p. 188-189; C. Mango, *Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople. Short History*, Washington, D.C., 1990, p. 2-4; E. S. Constantinou, *Guiding to a Blessed End...*, p. 35-36.

origin, *Apc* is ranked among the “disputed books” (ἀντιλεγόμενα), together with the *Apocalypse of Peter*, the *Gospel according to the Hebrews* and the *Epistle of Barnabas*.⁵⁶ Yet even if the *Stichometry* raises doubts about *Apc*, it should not be taken as definitive evidence that Nicephorus simply rejected the book. Years later, in the context of the second Iconoclast controversy, the patriarch mentions “the Apocalypse of John the Divine” (τοῦ θείου Ἰωάννου Ἀποκαλύψεως) in his *Contra Eusebium et Epiphaniidem*. Here, Nicephorus cites his iconoclast opponents who use *Apc* 22:8 as an argument against the depiction of angels on icons, but in his refutation, Nicephorus does not attack or question the veracity of the scriptural passage cited.⁵⁷ This raises interesting questions about the possible role of *Apc* in the Iconoclast debates, but also indicates a possible change in attitude towards *Apc* on the part of the (by then deposed) patriarch, perhaps under the influence of Theodore and the iconophile monks at Stoudios.⁵⁸

Nicephorus’ later successor, Photius I of Constantinople (ca. 810-894), has been cited by various scholars as having supported the canonical status of *Apc*,⁵⁹ although there are no explicit statements on this issue in his works. Photius does mention John as the author of *Apc* in his *Bibliotheca*, but only in his summary of Methodius of Olympus’ *Symposium*.⁶⁰ However, the second patriarchate of Photius is important for another reason. The *Collection in 14 Titles*, a compendium of ecclesiastic law of the late sixth century, was revised in Constantinople during Photius’ second tenure (in 882/3) and later came to be misattributed to him.⁶¹ Under Title III (“On Prayers, Psalm-chanting, Readings, etc.”), both the original and the revised *Collection* successively cite three canons

⁵⁶ Nicephorus, *Chron. brevis*, 134.10-14 (ed. by C. de Boor, *Nicephori Archiepiscopi Constantinopolitani Opuscula historica*, accedit Ignatii Diaconi Vita Nicephori, Leipzig, 1880).

⁵⁷ Nicephorus, *Contra Epiphaniidem* 8.36 (ed. by J.-B. Pitra, *Spicilegium Solesmense complectens Sanctorum Patrum scriptorumque ecclesiasticorum anecdota hactenus opera*, Paris, 1858, vol. 4, p. 319).

⁵⁸ Nicephorus was in conflict with the Stoudites on account of his ordination, but following the outbreak of the second Iconoclastic period, they found themselves facing a common adversary. Theodore the Stoudite is even said to have visited Nicephorus during the latter’s exile in Chalcedon (see PmbZO, s.v. Nikephoros I, Nr. 5301/corr.).

⁵⁹ See e.g. E. S. Constantinou, *The Apocalypse...*, p. 109; eadem, *Guiding to a Blessed End...*, p. 36, citing E. J. Goodspeed, *The Formation of the New Testament*, Chicago, 1927, p. 140.

⁶⁰ Photius, *Bibliotheca*, cod. 237, 299a, 311a-b; ed. by R. Henry, *Photius. Bibliothèque, tome V (codices 230-241)*, Paris, 1967, p. 99-100, 135.

⁶¹ J.-B. Pitra, *Iuris Ecclesiastici Graecorum Historia et Monumenta*, 2 vols., Rome, 1864-1868, vol. 2, p. 445-636; V. N. Benešević, *Kanoničeskij Sbornik XIV titulov so vtoroj četverti VII veka do 883 g.*, St. Petersburg, 1905. On the 883 revision, see N. van der Wal and J. H. A. Lokin, *Historiae iuris graeco-romani delineatio. Les sources du droit byzantin de 300 à 1453*, Groningen, 1985, p. 87-89; B. H. Stolte, “A Note on the un-Photian Revision of the Nomocanon XIV Titulorum”, in S. Troianos (ed.), *Analecta Atheniensia ad ius Byzantinum spectantia I*, Athens – Komotini, 1997, p. 115-130; S. Troianos, *Οι πηγές του Βυζαντινού δικαίου*, Athens – Komotini, 1999, p. 144-147; D. Wagschal, *Law and Legality in the Greek East. The Byzantine Canonical Tradition, 381-883*, Oxford, 2015, p. 47-50.

concerned with the list of accepted books of the Bible. These are the Apostolic canon 85, canon 59 of the Council of Laodicea (363) and canon 24 of the synod of Carthage.⁶² These sources disagreed on the status of some Biblical books, including that of *Apc*. Of the three synodal documents, only the Western synod considered *Apc* to be a part of the New Testament. Interestingly, this is the only Western (Latin) synodal text that was regularly included in the major Byzantine collections of canon law.⁶³ This conflicting evidence, already implicit in the decisions of the Quinisext Council of 691/2 (which ratified all these canons, regardless of their inner contradictions), but made explicit in the revised *Collection in 14 Titles*, would have raised once again the question about the status of *Apc*.

Thus, by the beginning of the tenth century, there were more than ten different lists of the New Testament canon circulating in the Byzantine world, of which at least six omitted *Apc*.⁶⁴ In this context of apparent uncertainty and confusion regarding the divine inspiration of St John's apocalyptic vision, no scholar was in a better position to settle the question of *Apc*'s canonicity than Arethas of Caesarea.

3. Arethas of Caesarea: Editor, Exegete, and Promoter of *Apc*

Highly educated and with a passionate interest in classical and early Christian literature, Arethas deliberately portrayed himself as the successor of Basil the Great and Andrew on the episcopal see of Caesarea and as an exegete following in their footsteps. For instance, in an obvious attempt to pose as the continuator of Basil, Arethas wrote two commentaries on *Psalms* 1 and 38, the two psalms on which Basil had not left complete exegetical homilies.⁶⁵ Arethas

⁶² Text in V. N. Benešević, *Kanoničeskij Sbornik XIV titulov...*, p. 80-82, 278-279, 327-328; see also Photius, *Syntagma canonum* tit. III, cap. 1 (PG 104, coll. 589-592), *Nomocanon* tit. III, cap. 1 (PG 104, coll. 1049-1052). On the synod of Carthage, see next note.

⁶³ Cf. B. M. Metzger, *The Canon...*, p. 314-315. The Greek text of the 'synod of Carthage' is, in fact, a translation of a larger collection of several North African council acts integrated in the second recension of Dionysius Exiguus' *Collectio canonum*; see F. L. Cross, "History and Fiction in the African Canons", *Journal of Theological Studies* 12.2, 1961, p. 227-247; ed. by C. Munier, *Concilia Africae, A. 345 – A. 525*, Turnhout, 1975. On the inclusion of the North African synodal sources (the *materies Africana*) in the *Coll14*, see N. van der Wal and J. H. A. Lokin, *Historiae iuris graeco-romani delineatio...*, p. 60-62; D. Wagschal, *Law and Legality...*, p. 39-40 (with further bibliography).

⁶⁴ I.e., the council of Laodicea, the Apostolic Canons, the lists of Gregory Nazianzen, Cyril of Jerusalem, Amphilochius and Nicephorus (without *Apc*) vs. the synod of Carthage, John of Damascus, Athanasius, Pseudo-Athanasius and Pseudo-Leontius (with *Apc*); cf. B. M. Metzger, *The Canon...*, p. 217.

⁶⁵ Ed. by L. G. Westerink, *Arethae archiepiscopi Caesariensis Scripta minora*, Leipzig, 1968, vol. 1, p. 19-46. On Arethas' self-styling as the successor of Basil, see S. B. Kougeas, *O Καταρπείας Αρέθας...*, p. 34.

also composed several scholia on the Pauline corpus and the Catholic Epistles.⁶⁶ This endeavour was certainly timely, as it coincided with a growing interest in Byzantium to collect, transcribe and disseminate *catenae* collections on the entire New Testament.⁶⁷ Although the primary interest of catenists always remained the four Gospels, the creation of *catenae* for *Acts* and the Epistles also experienced a manifest upswing in the period.⁶⁸ GA 605 (Paris, BNF, *grec* 216, s. IX *ex.*) can serve as a good showcase example in this sense. Copied in Constantinople between ca. 880-900, GA 605 contains a *catena* commentary on Acts, the Catholic Epistles and the Pauline corpus. The organization and layout of this outstanding manuscript bear all the hallmarks of a professional ‘Study Bible’: the main text is written on two columns in an elegant *minuscule bouletée* and is supported by the Euthalian apparatus (divisions of chapters, hypotheses, Biblical *testimonia*, subscriptions) and by an extensive set of exegetical notes in the form of scholia. There is a distinct possibility that Arethas knew, or even owned the manuscript, since the scribe of GA 605 is the same Stephanos who copied the famous Euclid manuscript Oxford, Bodleian Library, *D’Orville* 301 for Arethas’ library in 888.⁶⁹

Amidst this lively literary activity of creating Byzantine Bible manuscripts with full apparatus and commentaries, Arethas could have easily remarked – as modern scholars have – the conspicuous absence of any similar ‘projects’ concerning *Apc*. For one thing, Arethas was in a good position to observe the conflicting evidence regarding the status of *Apc* found in the various church canons discussed above. Incidentally, the earliest manuscript copy of the *Collection in 14 Titles* is the codex Rome, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, *cod. F* 10,

⁶⁶ See K. Krumbacher, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur. Von Justinian bis zum Ende des oströmischen Reiches (527-1453)*, 2. Auflage, Munich, 1897, p. 130-131; S. B. Kougeas, *Ο Κασσάπειας Ἀρέθας...*, p. 38-40; G. Karo and J. Lietzmann, *Catenarum Graecarum Catalogus*, Göttingen, 1902, p. 43, 47, 48, 597, 604. An edition of Arethas’ scholia on Paul are found in K. Staab, *Pauluskommentare aus der griechischen Kirche aus Katenenhandschriften gesammelt und herausgegeben*, Münster, 1933, p. 653-661 (see also *ibid.*, p. XLVII).

⁶⁷ For an overview of Greek NT *catenae*, see CPG C110-C179; G. Karo and J. Lietzmann, *Catenarum Graecarum...*; R. Devreesse, *Chânes exégétiques grecques*. Extrait de: *Supplément du Dictionnaire de la Bible*, Paris, 1928; W. Lamb, “Conservation and Conversation: New Testament Catenae in Byzantium”, in D. Krueger and R. S. Nelson (eds.), *The New Testament...*, p. 277-299; H. Houghton and D. C. Parker, “An Introduction to Greek New Testament Commentaries with a Preliminary Checklist of New Testament Catena Manuscripts”, in H. Houghton (ed.), *Commentaries, Catenae...*, p. 1-36.

⁶⁸ See K. Staab, “Die griechischen Katenenkommentare zu den Katholischen Briefen”, *Biblica* 5, 1924, p. 296-353; W. Lamb, “Conservation and Conversation...”, p. 290-293.

⁶⁹ On Paris, BNF, *gr.* 216, see M. L. Agati, *La minuscola «bouletée»*, Vatican, 1992, p. 261-263; D. Krueger and R. S. Nelson, “New Testaments of Byzantium. Seen, Heard, Written, Excerpted, Interpreted”, in *idem* (eds.), *The New Testament...*, p. 1-20, here p. 17-19. On the identification of the scribe, see A. A. Aletta, “Su Stefano, copista di Areta”, *Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici* 41, 2004, p. 73-94.

which was purchased by Arethas in Constantinople around 900. The manuscript was produced in a Constantinopolitan scriptorium shortly before Arethas acquired it and annotated its margins.⁷⁰ Although Arethas does not comment specifically on the Church canons dealing with the New Testament, the very presence of this codex in Arethas' library and his evident interest in its contents enabled him to observe the discrepancy between the Western and the Byzantine Biblical NT canons that the *Collection* presented. But even more than these sources on canon law, it was probably the profusion of conflicting Patristic lists of Biblical books and the apparent absence of *Apc* from the contemporary *catenae* collections that convinced Arethas to embark on a project to settle the matter of the book's canonicity.

As I will try to show below, the existence of a deliberate effort on the part of Arethas to promote *Apc* as a divinely inspired book can be ascertained by a contextualized study of the Greek NT manuscripts produced from the early tenth century onward. The picture that emerges from a survey of the manuscript evidence is that Arethas proposed and carried out an 'editorial project' which aimed at bringing the presentation of this contended text (*Apc*) in line with the rest of the New Testament. This project entailed four main steps. Given the existence of multiple textual traditions of *Apc* in Byzantium, the first step was to establish a reliable text, based on the best manuscripts available. Second, this Biblical text required a suitable paratextual apparatus that provided an easily discernible structure and facilitated navigation, referencing and scholarly study (chapter divisions and numbers, thematic chapter titles, a preface, etc.). Third, *Apc* needed an authoritative commentary, drawn from trusted patristic sources, to 'frame' the main text, both literally (in the form of scholia and exegetical chains) and figuratively (by providing interpretative guidelines in accord with Orthodox exegesis). Finally, all these separate elements would ideally be interlinked and displayed as a unity with the rest of the New Testament, i.e., in a *single codex*. As will become apparent, Arethas not only managed to fulfill all these steps with his 'project' but even succeeded in effecting significant changes in the later production of Greek NT manuscripts, thereby promoting the authenticity of John's *Apocalypse* in Byzantium.

⁷⁰ On the manuscript and its connection to Arethas, see L. Perria, "Arethaea. Il codice vallicelliano di Areta e la Ciropedia dell'Escorial", *Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici* 25, 1988, p. 41-56; eadem, "Arethaea II. Impaginazione e scrittura nei codici di Areta", *Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici* 27, 1990, p. 55-87; A. Schminck and D. Getov, *Repertorium de Handschriften des byzantinischen Rechts. Teil II: Die Handschriften des kirchlichen Rechts I (Nr. 328-427)*, Frankfurt a.M., 2010, p. 136-139, nr. 383 (with further bibliography). On Arethas' scholia in this manuscript, see D. Wagschal, "The Byzantine Canonical Scholia. A Case Study in Reading Byzantine manuscript marginalia", *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 43.1, 2019, p. 24-41.

3.1. The Arethas Text Type

Even though Schmid's differentiation of the main stems (*Textstämme*) of *Apc* is not without its shortcomings and some of his conclusions may well be revised in the new *Editio Critica Maior*, the basic distinction between Andrew's text type (*Av*) and the *Koine* text (*K*) still remains valid.⁷¹ These two text types were arguably the most common versions of the Greek *Apocalypse* that circulated in Arethas' time, although 'older forms' of the text were still known.⁷² The prevalence of *Av* and *K* in the Middle Byzantine period would certainly explain the emergence of the particular subgroup associated with Arethas and his *Commentary*, i.e., the Arethas text type (*Ap*).⁷³ According to Schmid's analysis of this text type, *Ap* is a 'mixed text' (*Mischtext*) that uses a *K* manuscript as its basis, but introduces occasional readings from *Av*, particularly in the last chapters of the book (*Apc* 17-22).⁷⁴ Although manuscripts of *Ap* later circulated independently of Arethas' *Commentary*, the close association of text and commentary led Schmid to conclude that the editor of *Ap* was none other than Arethas.⁷⁵ Some supporting evidence can be found in the *Commentary* itself: Arethas claims that he consulted different manuscripts of *Apc* and, at times, he even suggests emendations to the text.⁷⁶ Most significantly, at *Apc* 1:2 Arethas states that he found the phrase "...all that he heard, the things that are and those that must come to pass afterward" in another manuscript (ἐν ἑτέρῳ ἀντιγράφῳ πρόσκειται καὶ ταῦτα, καὶ ὅσα ἤκουσε, καὶ ἅτινα εἰσί, καὶ ἅτινα δεῖ γενέσθαι μετὰ ταῦτα).⁷⁷ Even if the words καὶ ὅσα ἤκουσε are not attested anywhere else, the manuscript Arethas used for comparison must have represented the Andrew text type, of which the rest of the phrase (καὶ ἅτινα εἰσί, etc.) is a characteristic variant.⁷⁸ Pending a new edition and comprehensive study of *Ap* and its relation to the rest of the Greek manuscript tradition, one may provisionally conclude that Arethas' work on *Apc* may have resulted in a new text type (*Ap*). This, in turn, demonstrates that Arethas was concerned to provide a reliable source text

⁷¹ See J. Schmid, *Studien zur Geschichte...*, vol. 2, p. 44-85; cf. M. Lembke, D. Müller, U. B. Schmid, and M. Karrer (eds.), *Text und Textwert...*, p. 67*-69*; J. Hernández, "The Relevance of Andrew of Caesarea for New Testament Textual Criticism", *Journal of Biblical Literature* 103, 2011, p. 183-196; idem, "The Greek Text of Revelation", in C. R. Koester (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook...*, p. 343-360.

⁷² J. Schmid, *Studien zur Geschichte...*, vol. 2, p. 24-26.

⁷³ See above, n. 9.

⁷⁴ J. Schmid, *Der Apokalypsetext des Arethas...*

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁷⁶ See, e.g., Arethas, *Comm. in Apoc. XV ad 6,6* (ed. by J. A. Cramer, *Catenae...*, p. 267), on the omission of ὥς, and *XVI ad 6,7* (*ibid.*, p. 271).

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, *ad 1,2* (ed. by J. A. Cramer, *Catenae...*, p. 183).

⁷⁸ J. Schmid, *Studien zur Geschichte...*, p. 44.

for John's *Apocalypse*, based on a comparative study of the predominant textual traditions at his disposal.

3.2. The Paratextual Apparatus

The second and more substantial step in Arethas' project was the elaboration of a suitable paratextual apparatus for *Apc*, i.e., a standardized division of the text into thematic sections or chapters (κεφάλαια) with accompanying chapter-titles (τίτλοι), an overview of these chapters in a table of contents (πίναξ) and an introductory argument (ὑπόθεσις). Such paratextual elements already existed for the rest of the New Testament since Late Antiquity, e.g., the Eusebian canons for the Gospels, including Eusebius' letter to Carpianus, the Euthalian apparatus for the *Praxapostolos*, the various divisions in chapters (κεφάλαια) of the Gospels, the lists of Biblical *testimonia*, the stichometric subscriptions, etc.⁷⁹ Once again, the *Apocalypse* represents a glaring exception. All the Late Antique witnesses to *Apc* (including the great majuscules *Alexandrinus*, *Sinaiticus*, *Ephraemi Rescriptus*) and many later Byzantine witnesses lack any kind of paratextual elements for this last book of the New Testament. The absence of such features can still be observed in Oecumenius' *Commentary*, which is divided into twelve λόγοι but offers no structure for the Biblical text itself.

Andrew of Caesarea was the first Byzantine author to attempt a division into chapters, although it is not clear if he relied on previous Greek models or if he possibly came into contact with the Western commentary tradition, which had already developed an elaborate *appareil éditorial* to accompany the Latin translation of *Apc*.⁸⁰ Andrew's structuring of the text follows a unique numerological principle. Inspired by the number of elders mentioned in *Apc* 4:4, Andrew divided the text into 24 λόγοι, which in turn he subdivided into a total of 72 (24 × 3) chapters (κεφάλαια) with individual titles. Although the majority of manuscripts contain the chapter-titles within the main text of Andrew's

⁷⁹ See E. W. Scherbenske, *Canonizing Paul...*; M. R. Crawford, *Eusebian Canon Tables...*; L. C. Willard, *A Critical Study of the Euthalian Apparatus*, Berlin – New York, 2009; V. Blomkvist, *Euthalian Traditions. Text, Translation and Commentary*, Berlin – New York, 2012; C. B. Amphoux, "La division du texte grec des Évangiles dans l'Antiquité", in J.-C. Fredouille, M.-O. Goulet-Cazé, P. Hoffmann, and P. Petitmengin (eds.), *Titres et articulations du texte dans les œuvres antiques. Actes du Colloque International de Chantilly 13-15 décembre 1994*, Paris, 1997, p. 301-312; J. R. Edwards, "The Hermeneutical Significance of Chapter Divisions in Ancient Gospel Manuscripts", *New Testament Studies* 56, 2010, p. 413-426.

⁸⁰ See R. Gryson, *Apocalypsis Johannis*, p. 54-77. The earliest Syriac commentary on *Apc* is also divided into 72 chapters, but its relation to the Greek commentary tradition has yet to be determined (see S. Larson, *The Earliest Syriac Commentary on the Apocalypse. Transcription, Translation, and Importance of Brit. Lib. Ms. Add. 17,127*, PhD Dissertation, University of Birmingham, 1984, p. 413).

Commentary, it is noteworthy that only a handful of manuscripts present the 24 λόγοι and 72 κεφάλαια in a separate table of contents (*pinax*) attached to the commentary. Since none of the manuscripts that contain the *pinax* antedate the late tenth century,⁸¹ a separate table of contents could have been created at a later stage by a scribe who extracted the chapter-titles from Andrew's main text and arranged them in a list.

Arethas may have even played a role in this process. We know that Arethas adapted the chapter division proposed by Andrew by eliminating the 24 λόγοι, altering the length of some of the 72 κεφάλαια and changing several of the original chapter-titles in Andrew's *Commentary*. In addition, Arethas also composed a separate *pinax* of the 72 chapters, which accompanies all the early witnesses to his *Commentary* and is attested in at least eight other manuscripts.⁸² Notably, Arethas' *pinax* is not only better and more consistently attested than Andrew's table of contents, but it is also attested *earlier*. The oldest copy of Arethas' *pinax* is the well-known majuscule *Codex Porphyrianus* (P 025, St. Petersburg, RNB, gr. 225), a palimpsest erroneously dated to the eighth-ninth centuries, but which must date to Arethas' lifetime (end of the ninth or the beginning of the tenth century).⁸³ P contains the *Praxapostolos* and *Apc*, the latter being preceded by Arethas' *pinax*, which bears the title τὰ κεφάλαια τῆς ἀποκαλύψεως τοῦ ἁγίου Ἰωάννου τοῦ θεολόγου.⁸⁴ Apart from its early date, the manuscript has two other peculiarities: first, the text of *Apc* in P is not the expected Arethas text type *Ap*, but a text closely related to *Av*;⁸⁵ second, the main text contains marginal chapter numbers which follow Andrew's original division, not the one revised by Arethas. This mixture of features raises some intriguing questions: is P the work of a single scribe, or was the *pinax* added

⁸¹ According to J. Schmid, the manuscripts that contain the *pinax* of Andrew's commentary are GA 2020, 2044, 2059, 2069, 2073, 2081, and 2428. Of these, one manuscript dates to the late tenth or early eleventh century (GA 2059 = Vatican, BAV, gr. 370), another one to the eleventh century (GA 2081 = Patmos, M. Ioannou tou Theologou, 64). The dating of GA 2059 is based on Enrica Follieri's evaluation (see E. Follieri, "La minuscola libraria dei secoli IX e X", in eadem, *Byzantina et italograeca. Studi di filologia e di paleografia*, ed. by A. A. Longo, L. Perria, and A. Luzzi, Rome, 1997, p. 205-248, here at p. 206, n. 3. Schmid proposes an eleventh-century dating (*Studien zur Geschichte...*, vol. 1.1, p. 11).

⁸² See above, n. 22 and below, n. 91. Although Arethas' *pinax* is indeed very similar to that of Andrew, the two *pinakes* should be clearly distinguished (cf. G. Allen, *The Manuscripts of the Book...*, p. 100, n. 53).

⁸³ J. Schmid, *Studien zur Geschichte...*, p. 15. Cf. K. Treu, *Die griechischen Handschriften des Neuen Testaments in der UdSSR. Eine systematische Auswertung der Texthandschriften in Leningrad, Moskau, Kiev, Odessa, Tbilisi und Erevan*, Berlin, 1966, p. 101-105.

⁸⁴ Ed. by C. von Tischendorf, *Apocalypsis et Actus apostolorum cum quarti Maccabaeorum libri fragmento item quattuor Evangeliorum reliquiae. Ex duobus codicibus palimpsestis octavi fere et sexti saeculi, altero Porphyrii episcopi, altero Guelferbyitano*, Leipzig, 1869, p. 1.

⁸⁵ J. Schmid, *Studien zur Geschichte...*, p. 15; on P, see also G. Allen, *The Manuscripts of the Book...*, p. 94-99.

later? Can the manuscript be linked to Arethas or his immediate milieu? Does P perhaps represent an intermediary stage in Arethas' work on *Apc* in which he collected manuscript copies of the Biblical text and attempted to structure it by experimenting with various chapter divisions? Did Arethas attach a *pinax* to the text because Andrew had not done so before? Only a detailed investigation of the (currently inaccessible) *Codex Porphyrianus* will provide answers to these questions, but even so, there remains a distinct possibility that the *pinax* attached in some manuscripts to Andrew's *Commentary* was inspired by Arethas' work, not vice versa.

A similar process can be observed concerning another paratextual element that often supplements the Greek Byzantine copies of *Apc*. This is the so-called σύνοψις σχολική (= *ssA*), which Arethas composed as a short prefatory text to his commentary. Like the *pinax*, the *ssA* is extant in the oldest complete manuscripts of Arethas' *Commentary*, but also circulated independently.⁸⁶ Apart from being the likely source of Nerses' confusing title in his Armenian translation (see above), this short preface is important for highlighting the ecclesiastic and exegetical continuity between Andrew and Arethas, who styles himself an "unworthy bishop" and successor of Andrew.⁸⁷ The *ssA* first discusses the symbolism behind Andrew's division of *Apc* and then offers a list of Church Fathers who favored the divine inspiration of the book (περὶ δὲ τοῦ θεοπνεύστου τῆς βίβλου): Basil the Great, Gregory Nazianzen, Cyril of Alexandria, Methodius, Papias, Irenaeus, and Hippolytus.⁸⁸ Arethas' *ssA* thus assumes the role of similar prefaces (ὑπόθεσις, πρόλογος) for other Biblical books and adds another paratextual layer in support of the apostolic authority and inspiration of *Apc*.

It is important to note that Arethas' σύνοψις σχολική probably inspired the creation of a similar short preface based on the beginning of Oecumenius' *Commentary* in the first part of the tenth century.⁸⁹ Although this text (= *ssO*) uses material extracted from Oecumenius' older commentary, in its present form as a separate preface it seems to be directly dependent on Arethas' *ssA*.⁹⁰ Furthermore, *ssO* is almost exclusively preserved in manuscripts linked to the

⁸⁶ Edition: M. de Groote, "Die σύνοψις σχολική zum Apokalypse-Kommentar des Arethas...".

⁸⁷ The full title is: Ἐκ τῶν Ἀνδρέα τῷ μακαρίῳ ἀρχιεπισκόπῳ Καισαρείας Καππαδοκίας εἰς τὴν Ἀποκάλυψιν πεπονημένων θεαρέστως σύνοψις σχολικὴ παρατεθεῖσα ὑπὸ Ἀρέθα ἀναξίου ἐπισκόπου Καισαρείας Καππαδοκίας (M. de Groote, *ibid.*, p. 131). The "brief exposition" in the Armenian title of Nerses' *Commentary* could reflect the term σύνοψις σχολική. One possibility is that Nerses' *Vorlage* contained the *ssA*, followed by *Apc* and Andrew's *Commentary* copied in the margins.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

⁸⁹ Ed. by M. de Groote, "Die σύνοψις σχολικὴ aus dem Kommentar des Oecumenius zur Apokalypse", *Sacris Erudiri* 32, 1991, p. 107-119.

⁹⁰ J. Schmid, *Studien zur Geschichte...*, vol. 1, Part 1, p. 78-81; M. de Groote, "Die σύνοψις σχολικὴ aus dem Kommentar des Oecumenius...", p. 109-110.

commentaries of Andrew and Arethas, which suggests that it has no direct connection to Oecumenius' original commentary.⁹¹ This provides a striking parallel to the case of the two *pinakes* attached to Arethas' and Andrew's commentaries. Since both *ssO* and the *pinax* in Andrew's commentary are only transmitted in manuscripts of the tenth century or later, it is possible that Arethas' introduction of such paratextual tools as the *ssA* and the *pinax* inspired contemporary and later Byzantine scholars to create similar philological instruments derived from the works of Oecumenius and Andrew.

3.3. Presenting the Text – The Manuscript GA 314 (Oxford, Bodl. Barocc. 3)

All the formal aspects of Arethas' work on *Apc* discussed so far (his revision of the Biblical text, the creation of a paratextual support, etc.) and his general efforts to settle the question of the book's authenticity can be seen to converge in one manuscript which was possibly produced during Arethas' lifetime. The manuscript GA 314 (Oxford, Bodleian Library, *Barocci* 3, s. X) has been dated by earlier scholars to the eleventh century.⁹² However, Irmgard Hutter has convincingly placed the production of this codex in the first half of the tenth century, i.e., before or not long after Arethas' death. Despite some important similarities with the 'Ephrem style' (ca. mid-tenth century), Hutter assigns the production of this codex to a different scriptorium in the Byzantine capital. Hutter is undecided whether or not this manuscript belonged to Arethas, but the new proposed dating plausibly places the codex in the archbishop's immediate context.⁹³ The revised pre-950 date of GA 314 is not only of crucial importance for the textual history of Arethas' commentary, of which this manuscript becomes the oldest complete witness, but also for illustrating the realization of Arethas' editorial project.

This pocket-size manuscript (130 × 95 mm) contains all the books of the New Testament except the Gospels (*apr*), as follows: Acts (fols. 1-14^v, 122^{r-v}, 84-97^v, 15-27), the Catholic Epistles (fols. 27^v-62^v), the Pauline corpus (fols. 63-83^v, 98-121^v, 123-242^v), the *Apocalypse* (fols. 243-299^v). The manuscript lost its first quire (fols. 1-9 have been replaced in the fourteenth century) and is

⁹¹ These are mss. GA 250 (Paris, BNF, *Coisl. gr.* 224, s. XI), GA 452 (Vatican, BAV, *Pii* II 50, s. X), GA 314 (Oxford, Bodleian Library, *Barocc.* 3, s. X), GA 506 (Oxford, Christ Church, *Wake* 12, s. XIII), GA 254 (Athens, EBE, *gr.* 490, s. XV), GA 467 (Paris, BNF, *gr.* 59, s. XV), GA 2021 (Vatican, BAV, *Reg. gr.* 68, s. XV).

⁹² A late eleventh-century date is proposed in H. O. Coxe, *Bodleian Library Quarto Catalogues: Greek Manuscripts*, Oxford, 1853, vol. 2, Part 1, coll. 3-6; M. de Groote, "Die σύνοψις σχολική aus dem Kommentar des Oecumenius...", p. 111. K. Aland (*Kurzgefasste Liste...*, p. 65) suggests the eleventh century.

⁹³ I. Hutter, *Corpus der byzantinischen Miniaturenhandschriften*. Band 3.1: *Oxford, Bodleian Library III (Textband)*, Stuttgart, 1992, p. 14-15.

incomplete at the end, where it lacks *Apc* 20-22. The main text is framed throughout by *catenae* (Ps.-Oecumenius, John Chrysostom) and contains the Euthalian apparatus for all epistles (the corresponding part for the Acts is lost). Compared with other *apr* manuscripts of the tenth and even many those of the eleventh century, GA 314 stands out with its full apparatus which supplements the text of *Apc*. The section on the *Apocalypse* begins with the *σύνοψις* extracted from Oecumenius (*ssO*, fol. 242^{r-v}, inc. mut.), followed by Arethas' *pinax* of 72 chapter-titles (fols. 243-245) and Arethas' *σύνοψις σχολική* (*ssA*, fol. 245^v). The rest of the manuscript contains the main text of *Apc* framed by the longer recension of Arethas' commentary. The discrepancy between the layout in the section on *Apc* and the space allotted to the *catenae* for the other books is worth noting. While in the case of the Acts and the Epistles the Biblical text usually covers the whole page (ca. 17-21 lines per page) and the scholia are copied in a minute script in the margins, the main text of *Apc* is sometimes reduced to only 7-8 lines/page, in order to make room for the longer recension of Arethas' commentary (see, e.g., fol. 247^{r-v}). The title of Arethas' *pinax* is written in a decorative majuscule and the *pinax* itself is rubricated throughout. By contrast, the titles and *pinakes* for many of the other books are written in the same brown ink used for the main text.⁹⁴ Taken together, these features, combined with the new proposed dating of the manuscript to before ca. 950, strongly suggest that the scribe(s) who designed and copied the codex intended to highlight Arethas' new commentary as the exegetical centerpiece of the entire manuscript.

Even if it was not directly commissioned by Arethas, GA 314 is certainly an accurate reflection of the archbishop's intended design and could even be a direct copy of Arethas' exemplar. Moreover, GA 314 is unique among the rest of the late ninth- and tenth-century NT manuscripts, of which only a fraction contain *Apc* (i.e., *eapr*, *apr*, *pr*, or *er* manuscripts), and none of which display a comparable apparatus. Here are a few relevant examples: the ninth-century GA 046 and 1424 (see above) contain no preface, chapter titles, or chapter numbers for *Apc*. GA 920 (El Escorial, Bibl. Real, Ψ III 18, s. X) and the two related *apr* manuscripts GA 82 (Paris, BNF, gr. 237, s. X) and GA 93 (Paris, BNF, *Coislin* gr. 205, s. X)⁹⁵ have an extensive set of liturgical instructions, *hypotheses*, *kephalaia*, *testimonia*, subscriptions, etc. for all the epistles and *Acts*, but nothing similar for *Apc*, even though GA 82 preserves an abbreviated version of Andrew's *Commentary* copied in its margins (GA 82, fols. 217^v-242^r; GA 93, fols. 226^f-249^v). A similar case is GA 1870 (Istanbul, Chalki, *Panaghia*

⁹⁴ See, e.g., fols. 28^r, 143^r, 167^r.

⁹⁵ Fols. 226-227 in GA 93 are later replacements (fourteenth-fifteenth century). The manuscript has a buyer's note on fol. 269 dated to 1078/1079, but the codex is probably significantly older. On GA 82, see A. A. Aletta, "Su Stefano, copista...", p. 87-92, who argues for a dating towards the end of the ninth century or beginning of the tenth century and draws attention to similarities with other known Arethas codices.

26, s. X) in which the Acts, the Catholic Epistles (fols. 9-108) and the Pauline corpus (fols. 143-301) have chapter titles, *hypotheseis* and subscriptions, while *Apc* (fols. 110^v-142^r) only has an excerpt from Andrew's *Commentary* serving as an improvised preface (fol. 109^v) and the Oecumenian scholia in the margins.⁹⁶ GA 627 (Vatican, BAV, gr. 2062, s. X), copied in Southern Italy, has chapter titles for the Catholic Epistles but none for *Apc*, although it also has the Oecumenian scholia to *Apc* and the numbers for the seven churches, angels, plagues, etc. inscribed in the margins.⁹⁷ Even in the eleventh century, Byzantine *eapr*, *apr* and *er* manuscripts rarely contain a paratextual apparatus to *Apc* as complex as the one in GA 314. Although during this period the *Apocalypse* starts to be copied in a growing number of expensive, illuminated NT codices, such as GA 1006 (Athos, Iviron, gr. 728 [56], s. XI), GA 699 (London, British Library, Egerton 3145 + Add. 28815, s. X/XI) or GA 1734 (Athos, Lavra, B 18, a. 1015), the concern to endow *Apc* with any standardized paratextual elements is still marginal.⁹⁸

4. Later Reflections of Arethas' Project in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries

The production of complete NT manuscripts, in which the presentation of *Apc* is fully brought into accord with that of the other neo-testamentary writings, is usually a phenomenon of the later Byzantine centuries, as exemplified by GA 506 (Oxford, Christ Church, Wake 12, s. XIII).⁹⁹ There are nevertheless several manuscripts of the tenth and eleventh centuries in which *Apc* is consistently presented with its paratexts as an integral part of the New Testament. What is striking in these latter cases, however, is that many of them can be linked in some way to Arethas' editorial project on *Apc*. Excluding the 'near-prototype' GA 314 discussed above, several manuscripts adopt one or more of the paratextual elements introduced or promoted by Arethas. Quite

⁹⁶ See M. Kouroupou and P. Géhin, *Catalogue des manuscrits conservés dans la Bibliothèque du Patriarcat Œcuménique. Les manuscrits du monastère de la Panaghia de Chalki*, vol. 1: *Notices descriptives*, Istanbul – Paris, 2008, p. 117-119. The tenth century is much more likely than the eleventh-century dating proposed in K. Aland, *Kurzgefasste Liste...*, p. 153, no. 1870. J. Schmid (*Studien zur Geschichte...*, vol. 1, Part 1, p. 89, n. 2) already observed that the scribe of this manuscript intended to give *Apc* a similar configuration as that of the rest of the New Testament. The scholia have been edited by Marc de Groote ("Die Scholien...", p. 37). The mention of a scholion attributed to "Gennadius" (fol. 138^v) in M. Kouroupou and P. Géhin, *Catalogue...*, p. 117 is mistaken. The text is explicitly attributed to Irenaeus (Εἰρηναίου ἐκ τοῦ Ε' λόγου) and is, indeed, an excerpt from *Adversus Haereses* V, 36.

⁹⁷ M. de Groote, "Die Scholien...", p. 33-34.

⁹⁸ K. Weitzmann, *Die byzantinische Buchmalerei des 9. und 10. Jahrhunderts. Nachdruck der Ausgabe Berlin 1935*, Vienna, 1996, p. 20, 34.

⁹⁹ I. Hutter, *Corpus der byzantinischen Miniaturenhandschriften*. Band 4.1: *Oxford, Christ Church. Textband*, Stuttgart, 1993, p. 85-91.

remarkably, a good percentage of these codices are decorated and illuminated – sometimes lavishly, indicating the involvement of high-level patronage and the investment of significant resources into their production. For the second half of the tenth century, one can mention GA 452 (Vatican, BAV, *Pius II. gr.* 50, s. X), a decorated *apc* codex produced in Constantinople, in which *Apc* is preceded by *ssO* (fols. 288^r-290^r), Arethas' *pinax* (fols. 290-293^v) and *ssA* (fols. 293^v-294^r).¹⁰⁰ These elements have been added in analogy to the Euthalian *hypotheseis* and *kephalaia* for the *Acts* and the epistles attested in the same manuscript. A similar case is found in GA 1611 (Athens, EBE, *gr.* 94, s. X), another *apc* manuscript written on two columns with decorations in gold ink: the text of *Apc* is introduced by Arethas' *pinax* (fols. 273^v-276^v), followed by *ssA* (fols. 276^v-277^r).¹⁰¹ A slightly later example with the *ssA* and Arethas' *pinax* is GA 203 (London, BL, *Add.* 28815, a. 1111). Moreover, other tenth and eleventh-century manuscripts begin to choose *Ap* over other text types, even if they do not contain the paratexts dependent on Arethas, e.g. GA 175 (Vatican, BAV, *gr.* 2080, s. X) or GA 256, the codex used by Nerses in Armenian Cilicia.¹⁰²

Another feature for which Arethas and GA 314 set the trend in the later tenth and eleventh centuries is the integration of *Apc* commentaries in NT *catenae* manuscripts. One early witness to this new current is GA 82, which Alessia Aletta has linked to the Constantinopolitan scriptoria in Arethas' time.¹⁰³ This practice becomes more common in the eleventh century, when one finds exquisite parchment codices with the Ps-Oecumenian or Ps.-Andrew *catenae* on the *Acts* and *Epistles*, followed by a shortened and/or revised version of Andrew's *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, e.g., GA 1862 (Athos, Agiou Pavlou 2, s. XI 2/2) and GA 1888 (Jerusalem, Gr. Patriarchate, 38, s. XI), two expensive copies of the *Praxapostolos* with commentary, possibly copied in the same scriptorium; GA 424 (Vienna, ÖNB, *Theol. gr.* 302, a. 1064-1068), GA 250 (Paris, BNF, *Coislin gr.* 224, a. 1025-1028). The substantial abridgment of Andrew's original commentary must have been motivated precisely by the desire to include a more manageable version of Andrew's interpretation in *catenae* collections. In a parallel development, an abridgment and 'catenization' was carried out with Arethas' long recension of the *Commentary*. As noted above, the *recensio brevior* of Arethas' *Commentary*, which derives from the longer recension, is found in three eleventh-century luxurious *apc catenae* collections, GA 91, 617, and 1934. The last manuscript, in particular, provides excellent proof for Arethas' role in supporting the canonicity of *Apc*. Like its

¹⁰⁰ K. Weitzmann, *Die byzantinische Buchmalerei...*, p. 22; M. de Groote, "Die σύνοψις σχολική aus dem Kommentar des Oecumenius...", p. 111.

¹⁰¹ The presence of Arethas' *pinax* in this manuscript has apparently gone unnoticed (cf. M. de Groote, "Die σύνοψις σχολική zum Apokalypse-Kommentar des Arethas...", p. 128-129, 133).

¹⁰² See above, n. 9.

¹⁰³ See above, n. 95.

sister codex GA 91, GA 1934 (Paris, BNF, *gr.* 224, s. XI *ex./XII in.*) contains the Pauline corpus with *catenae*, followed by *Apc* with the short version of Arethas' commentary, the *ssA* (fol. 221^r) and the *pinax* (fols. 221^r-222^r). At the beginning of the manuscript, there are two exceptional miniature portraits of St Paul (fol. 6^v) and John Chrysostom, Oecumenius and Theodoretus (fol. 7^r).¹⁰⁴ The rest of the manuscript does not contain any other miniatures, but immediately before *Apc* (on fol. 222^v) there is a beautifully decorated cross with five dodecasyllable verses inscribed in gold ink in the middle and on the four arms of the cross. The verses urge the reader (or patron) of the manuscript to receive the mystical revelation of John, "the son of thunder":

Ἡ βίβλος αὕτη ταῦτα συμπεριγράφει / τὴν ἐκκάλυψιν τὴν Ἰωάννου δέχου /
τοῦ φωὸς ἀπαστράψαντος ὡς βροντῆς γόνου. / Ἰωάννου πρόρρησις
ἀψευδестаτή. / Ἰωάννου μύησις ἡ κεκρυμμένη.¹⁰⁵

This book comprises the following: / Receive the revelation of John / who
as the son of thunder made the light shine forth. / John's prophecy pure
from all deceit / John's concealed initiation.

In light of the history of the Middle Byzantine NT manuscripts that I sketched above, this epigram can be seen as one of the latest Biblical paratexts to be composed with the aim of confirming the indisputable authority of St John's *Apocalypse*. Beyond its ornamental role in the deluxe codex that contains it, the cross and the epigram lay the finishing touch on the project commenced by Arethas in the late ninth or early tenth century, when the status of *Apc* was much less certain in Byzantium.

Conclusions

Arethas' interest in *Apc* came in a period when its canonical status was still not entirely settled in the Byzantine Church. Although some Church Fathers had been in favor of the book's canonicity since the first Christian centuries, the great diversity of views on the subject, as evidenced by the various lists of Biblical books still in circulation in the early tenth century, showed that the earlier commentaries of Oecumenius and Andrew had not been sufficient to convince everyone of *Apc*'s apostolic authority. As a consequence, Arethas'

¹⁰⁴ K. Weitzmann, *Die byzantinische Buchmalerei...*, p. 87; cf. K. Krause, *Die illustrierten Homilien des Johannes Chrysostomos in Byzanz*, Wiesbaden, 2004, p. 188-193. Weitzmann argues for a late tenth-century date, but Krause opts, more plausibly, for the beginning of the twelfth century. I thank Karin Krause for her helpful comments on this issue.

¹⁰⁵ Text after A. Rhoby, *Ausgewählte Byzantinische Epigramme in illuminierten Handschriften. Verse und ihre „inschriftliche“ Verwendung in Codices des 9. bis 15. Jahrhunderts*, Vienna, 2018, p. 135.

strategy had to involve more than a simple rewriting of the works of his predecessors. Indeed, Arethas not only updated and expanded on Andrew's *Commentary* but also invested effort in the formal and material aspects of how the New Testament was received in the cultural context of his time. Drawing from what had already become standard practices in Late Antique and Byzantine Biblical philology and manuscript production, Arethas aimed at presenting the text of St John's *Apocalypse* in a way analogous to that of the Gospels and the *Praxapostolos*. One essential step in this process was certainly the creation of a set of paratexts to *Apc*, the role of which was to structure, divide and present the text so as to enable scholars and theologians to study it more easily.

Thanks to the survival of a large number of Byzantine Biblical manuscripts from the ninth century onward, we are in a good position to study the different stages and to measure the success of Arethas' endeavor. At least in one case, we have first-hand evidence of how Arethas envisaged his project to materialize: the manuscript GA 314. Moreover, as I tried to show, Arethas managed to influence to a significant degree the later perception and reception of the book in Byzantium. Both his revision of the text, the Arethas text type, and the paratextual tools he devised were successfully disseminated – even beyond the Byzantine area to Nerses' Armenian Cilicia – and eventually became standard features in the later Greek manuscripts of the New Testament.

WEAVING SAINTLY AUTHORITY: *SYNKRISIS* AND TYPOLOGY IN THE *LIVES* OF MELETIOS¹

Florin Filimon

The opening of a recent volume that showcases how modern narratology may offer a better understanding of Byzantine visual and textual narratives points out two key habitual features of Byzantine narrative texts. The first refers to the fabric of references and quotations, since “Byzantine literature is extremely codified, filled with classical and/or biblical references which exemplify, explain or even summarize and replace the narrative”.² The second characteristic concerns the episodic character of Byzantine texts and states the existence of independent narrative units that are arranged into a fluent narrative based on extratextual criteria.³ These considerations also apply to the biographies of holy persons, known as *lives* of saints.⁴

In the case of Christian encomiastic biographies, which aim to exalt hero-saints in order to magnify their authority and cults, the sequence of episodes tends to reflect the form and the topical structure prescribed by epideictic rhetoric, as well as the *topoi* perpetuated throughout the centuries, firstly in imitation to Athanasios’ *Life of Antony* (hereafter *VAnt*), the most influential expression of Greek hagiographic discourse.⁵ Moreover, *synkrisis*

¹ This paper has been conceived and partly written while working under the direction of Prof. Michael Grünbart in the Teilprojekt C02 “Die Rolle des Übernatürlichen in Prozessen herrschaftlichen Entscheidens in Byzanz zwischen dem 6. und 12. Jahrhundert”, within the Sonderforschungsbereich 1150 “Kulturen des Entscheidens”, financed by the “Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG)”, at the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster.

² Ch. Messis and I. Nilsson, “Byzantine Storytelling and Modern Narratology: an Introduction”, in Ch. Messis, M. Mullett, and I. Nilsson (eds.), *Storytelling in Byzantium: Narratological Approaches to Byzantine Texts and Images*, Uppsala, 2018, p. 3-4. Most revealing for how *florilegium* material replaces the narrative *per se* is the *Life of Saint Cyril Phileotes* (hereafter *VCyrPhil*) (BHG 468) by Nikolaos Kataskepēnos, ed. by É. Sargologos, *La Vie de saint Cyrille le Philéote, moine byzantin (†1110)*, Brussels, 1964, though its case is rather exceptional.

³ Ch. Messis and I. Nilsson, “Byzantine Storytelling...”, p. 3.

⁴ On the plurality of Byzantine hagiographic literary forms, see M. Hinterberger, “Byzantine Hagiography and its Literary Genres”, in S. Efthymiadis (ed.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, vol. 2: *Genres and Contexts*, Farnham, 2014, p. 25-60.

⁵ Though Athanasios’ *VAnt* (BHG 140) is labelled as ἐπιστολή. On the literary commonplaces perpetuated by Christian biographies of saints and their purpose, see N. Delierneux,

(“comparison”) is one of the most common rhetorical devices recommended by the late antique epideictic tradition that remained very popular in Byzantium in the form of handbooks.⁶ The “comparison”, which denotes the juxtaposition of the praised or blamed one with other notable characters, was readily adopted by the biographers of holy men. Hagiographers drew correspondences between their heroes and biblical characters, claiming that the former embodied the virtues possessed by the latter, at times to a degree that made them supersede their scriptural pairs.⁷ Such correspondences are theorized as typological structures, where the holy person – the *antitypos* – relates to a *typos* either analogically (e.g., the saint is a “new Moses”) or antithetically (e.g., he is “better than Moses”).⁸ Typology escaped the confines of the Christian scriptures so that holy-heroes would also claim the lineage of previous famed ascetics: ascetics refer typologically to other ascetics. When portraying holy men and women as reenactors of the righteous, the prophets, the apostles, Christ, or ascetics, writers

“L’exploitation des ‘topoi’ hagiographiques: du cliché figé à la réalité codée”, *Byzantion* 70.1, 2000, p. 57-90; T. Pratsch, *Der hagiographische Topos: griechische Heiligenviten in mittelbyzantinischer Zeit*, Berlin, 2005.

⁶ G. L. Kustas, *Studies in Byzantine Rhetoric*, Thessalonike, 1973, p. 5-26; E. Schiffer, “Bemerkungen zur Auseinandersetzung mit Progymnasmata in byzantinischen Lehrschriften zur Rhetorik”, in E. Schiffer and A. Rhoby (eds.), *Imitatio-aemulatio-variatio*, Vienna, 2010, p. 237-241. On the twelfth century, see P. Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia. A Poetic of the Twelfth-Century Medieval Greek Novel*, Washington, D.C., 2005, p. 27-39.

⁷ See P. Magdalino’s contribution in this volume, p. 11-25.

⁸ Such connections that have earlier events or characters referencing subsequent counterparts were present in the Old Testament (hereafter OT) and became more prominent in New Testament (hereafter NT), where they refer chiefly to Christ as the pre-figured Messiah. Initially an inner-scriptural hermeneutical tool, typology is developed by the Church Fathers as a biblical exegetical method. J. Daniélou, *Sacramentum futuri: études sur les origines de la typologie biblique*, Paris, 1950. On biblical typology in hagiography, see M. Van Uytenghe, *Stylisation biblique et condition humaine dans l’hagiographie mérovingienne (600-750)*, Brussels, 1987; D. Krueger, “Typological Figuration in Theodoret of Cyrrhus’s *Religious History* and the Art of Postbiblical Narrative”, *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 5.3, 1997, p. 393-419, reworked into “Typology and Hagiography: Theodoret of Cyrrhus’s *Religious History*”, in idem, *Writing and Holiness. The Practice of Authorship in Early Christian East*, Philadelphia, 2004, p. 15-32; idem, *Liturgical Subjects: Christian Ritual, Biblical Narrative, and the Formation of the Self in Byzantium*, Philadelphia, 2014, p. 67-105, 143-158, where he explores hymnography; O. Delouis, “*Topos* et *Typos*, ou les dessous vétérotestamentaires de la rhétorique hagiographique à Byzance aux VIII^e et IX^e siècles”, *Hypotheses* 6, 2002, p. 235-248. On the typological content of Byzantine eschatological material, see most recently A. Kraft, “The Apocalyptic Horizon in Byzantium: Philosophy, Prophecy and Politics during the Eleventh through Thirteenth Centuries”, PhD thesis, Central European University, Budapest, 2018, p. 94-121. The OT *typoi* feature also in P. Magdalino and R. Nelson (eds.), *The Old Testament in Byzantium*, Washington, D.C., 2010, especially p. 175-197, 199-221; while Moses is traced in historiographic and hagiographic sources by C. Rapp, “Comparison, Paradigm and the Case of Moses in Panegyric and Hagiography”, in M. Whitby (ed.), *The Propaganda of Power. The Role of Panegyric in Late Antiquity*, Leiden, 1998, p. 277-298.

could choose to make the comparisons explicit through mentioning the names of the types or to make implicit allusions.

Therefore, the biographers of holy men and women wrote typologically when translating the deeds of their heroes in a scriptural or hagiographic framework. This translation implies the imitation of previous texts. Although literary imitation in Byzantium has long been the subject of scholarly attention, one contribution by Ingela Nilsson stands out for having advanced the discussion by proposing the accommodation of the Genettian theory of transtextuality to Byzantine literary production.⁹ Nilsson's caution that the system requires adjustments and must not be rigidly imposed is valid, as is her note that distinguishing between the five degrees of transtextuality proves helpful to leave the negative view on imitation and to decipher its possible meaning(s).¹⁰ Furthermore, *synkrisis* (which entails literary borrowings) features among the tools through which the encomiast could construct subversion.¹¹ The *Lives* could be a well-suited platform for criticism, not just towards the praised one, but also towards other targets, such as the monastic institution, or even the texts on which the hagiographers draw and their authors.¹²

In what follows, I examine the use of (extra-)biblical typology in the two twelfth-century hagiographies of Meletios of Myoupolis by the prominent Komnenian *literati* Nikolaos of Methone and Theodōros Prodromos.¹³ I will

⁹ I. Nilsson, "The Same Story, but Another. A Reappraisal of Literary Imitation in Byzantium", in E. Schiffer and A. Rhoby (eds.), *Imitatio-aemulatio-variatio*, p. 195-208, p. 202 (theoretical part), p. 203-205 (case study analysis of the *Life* of Theoktistē, BHG 1723-23).

¹⁰ The five levels of transtextuality are intertextuality, paratextuality, metatextuality, architextuality, and hypertextuality.

¹¹ E.g., see the "toolbox" elaborated by M. Mullett, "How to criticise the *laudandus*", in D. Angelov and M. Saxby (eds.), *Power and Subversion in Byzantium*, Farnham, 2013, p. 262. For further samples of subversive criticism in imperial encomia, see D. Angelov, "Late Byzantine Imperial Panegyric as Advice Literature, 1204–c.1350", in E. Jeffreys (ed.), *Rhetoric in Byzantium*, Aldershot, 2003, p. 55-72.

¹² See D. Angelov, "Power and subversion in Byzantium: approaches and frameworks", in D. Angelov and M. Saxby (eds.), *Power and Subversion....*, p. 1-18, at p. 8 for the possible targets of subversion in Byzantium.

¹³ The *Life* by Nikolaos of Methone, henceforth *VMelet* (BHG 1247) and the one by Theodōros Prodromos (BHG 1248) are extant in a thirteenth-century manuscript kept in Moscow. The first *Life* is given also by a seventeenth-century codex kept on Mount Athos. Both *Lives* were recently re-edited by I. Polemis, with facing modern Greek translation and footnotes, *Oi Bíoι τοῦ ἁγίου Μελετίου τοῦ Νέου*, Athens, 2018, p. 30-149, 152-253. Polemis' edition supersedes that of V. Vasil'evskij, "Νικολάου ἐπισκόπου Μεθώνης καὶ Θεοδώρου, τοῦ Προδρόμου βίοι Μελετίου τοῦ νέου", *Pravoslavnyi Palestinskij Sbornik* 17, 1886, p. 1-39, 40-69; the latter was emended by E. Kurz, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 2, 1893, p. 312, and later reprinted with few interventions and biblical references by C. Papadopoulos, *Ὅσιος Μελέτιος ὁ Νέος. Συμβολαὶ εἰς τὴν ἱστορίαν τοῦ μοναχικοῦ βίου ἐν Ἑλλάδι. Β' . Ὁ ὅσιος Μελέτιος «ὁ Νέος»*, Athens, 1935, p. 34-91. I follow the chapters from Polemis' edition. The translations are by P. Armstrong, "The Lives of Meletios of Myoupolis. Edition and Commentary", MA thesis, Queen's University, Belfast, 1989 (with modifications). I am grateful to Prof. Armstrong for providing me with her old English rendition.

argue that Prodromos employs typology/*synkrisis* to mock the text of Nikolaos and, possibly, the *laudandus*. Furthermore, I will show the distinct narrative function of typology in the *Life* by Prodromos. It will be apparent that since non-biblical references, yet not classical either, are woven in the *Lives* of Meletios, the aforementioned general statement regarding intertextuality does not refer to them. Also, inasmuch as (biblical) typology is part of the text, I will show that it can be a criterion for ordering the narrative, that is, for arranging the story-sequence.

Meletios, his *Lives*, and their authors

Meletios is one of the notable monastic founders during the reign of Alexios I Komnenos (r. 1081-1118), and the recipient of imperial largess as claimed by Prodromos.¹⁴ Since his *typikon*, which could have included autobiographical notes, is lost, all known elements are sourced in his *Lives*, both written around the 1150s. In numerous respects, the authors, Nikolaos, bishop of Methone, and Theodōros Prodromos, offer conflicting information, including about Meletios' links to Constantinopolitan and Thracian officials and local potentates.¹⁵

Born in the village of Moutalaskē, in Cappadocia,¹⁶ perhaps around 1035,¹⁷ Meletios was tonsured in Constantinople at the age of 15. He travelled to Thessaloniki, then settled as an ascetic near Thebes. Tormented by his increasing fame and, hence, wishing to attain ascetic perfection, Meletios went on pilgrimages to Rome, Santiago de Compostella, and the Holy Land, where he

¹⁴ Prodromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §11, 36-44, where Meletios is praised for having accepted just 422 gold pieces per year out of a much more consistent donation. On the holy figures that benefitted from Alexios I, and their monasteries, see P. Armstrong, "Alexios Komnenos, holy men and monasteries", in M. Mullett and D. Smythe (eds.), *Alexios I Komnenos. Papers of the Second Belfast Byzantine International Colloquium, 14-16 April 1989*, Belfast, 1996, p. 219-231.

¹⁵ Ch. Messis, "Deux versions de la même 'vérité': les dieux Vies d'hosios Mélétiōs au XII^e siècle", in P. Odorico and P. A. Agapitos (eds.), *Les vies des saints à Byzance, genre littéraire ou biographie historique?*, Paris, 2004, p. 303-345, at p. 320-345; P. Armstrong, "Literary Polemic in the Twelfth-Century Constantinople", in *Change in the Byzantine World in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries. First International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium: Proceedings*, Istanbul, 2010, p. 337-338.

¹⁶ F. Hild and M. Restle, *Kappadokien (Kappadokia, Charsianon, Sebasteia und Lykandos)*, Vienna, 1981, p. 242.

¹⁷ Polemis agrees on this date, first offered by Vasil'evskij. The different *termini* that have been suggested are given by Ch. Messis, "Deux versions...", p. 313, n. 30. Armstrong, who is preparing for publication an edition of the *Lives* with English translation and commentary, has proposed loose *termini*: P. Armstrong and A. Kirby, "Text and stone: Evergetis, Christodoulos and Meletios", in M. Mullett and A. Kirby (eds.), *The Theotokos Evergetis and Eleventh Century Monasticism: Papers of the Third Belfast Byzantine International Colloquium, 1-4 May 1992*, Belfast, 1994, p. 152.

stayed for three years. On his return, he first went to Thebes, and later he settled on Mount Kithairon, on the border of Attica and Boeotia. There, Meletios entered the Symbolon Monastery in 1081, received the spiritual leadership of its dependency, and eventually succeeded the abbot Theodosios. Under Meletios' hegoumenate the monastery flourished: more than twenty (the accounts give either twenty-two or twenty-four) metochia were founded.¹⁸ If taken at face value, Prodromos' account, which mentions that Meletios petitioned patriarch Nikolaos III Grammatikos (1084-1111) to grant him the blessing to hear confessions, implies that the monastery governed by Meletios had the status of *stauropegion*.¹⁹

Nikolaos of Methone states that he is writing thirty-six years after Meletios' death, which was pinned to around 1105.²⁰ It would then result that Nikolaos penned the *Life* in 1041 or within the last years of emperor Iōannēs II's reign (1118-1143). However, Armstrong and Messis mention the year 1148 as a *terminus post quem*, the former offering as evidence the fact that Nikolaos has Meletios miraculously intervening in Alexios I's campaign against the Cumans in 1095, with whom Emperor Manuel I also had to deal in 1148.²¹ As to his literary profile, modern scholarship holds up Nikolaos of Methone, born around the beginning of the 1100s, as a prime example of a court theologian. Indeed, he stood near the centre of the dogmatic disputes of Manuel's reign. Nikolaos' surviving works have earned him a reputation as an anti-Latin religious and anti-Hellenic philosophical polemicist.²² The hagiography of Meletios seems to be one of his earliest *œuvres*, if not his literary *début*.²³ Nikolaos died between 1160 and 1166.

The other hagiographer, Theodōros Prodromos (ca. 1100-ca. 1170) is first and foremost the poet laureate of the Komnenian court. His versifications range from encomiastic compositions (dedicated to imperial and aristocratic individuals) to a metrical calendar of saints, tetrastichs on the Old and New Testaments, saints (e.g., the Holy Hierarchs and military saints), a humorous

¹⁸ On Meletios' *lavra* and its dependencies (ἐνκτήρια / παραλαύρια), see P. Armstrong and A. Kirby, "Text and stone...", p. 153-154, 157-160; P. Armstrong, "Monasteries Old and New: The Nature of the Evidence", in M. Mullett (ed.), *Founders and Refounders of Byzantine Monasteries*, Belfast, 2007, p. 332-336.

¹⁹ Prodromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §10, 23-35; D. Krausmüller, "'Monks who are not priests do not have the power to bind and to loose': the debate about confession in eleventh- and twelfth-century Byzantium", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 109.2, 2016, p. 762-763.

²⁰ Nikolaos, *VMelet* (BHG 1247), §17, 41-42. The dating is of Vasil'evskij.

²¹ P. Armstrong, "Alexios Komnenos...", p. 224, n. 27; Ch. Messis, "Deux versions...", p. 315; A. D. Angelou, *Nicholas of Methone. "Refutation of Proclus' Elements of Theology"*, Leiden, 1984, p. xvi.

²² A. D. Angelou, *Nicholas of Methone...*, p. ix-xxiii (biography), xxv-xliv (works); P. Armstrong, "Literary polemic...", p. 334-335.

²³ D. Angelou, *Nicholas of Methone...*, p. xiii. A canon to Meletios has been attributed to Nikolaos, *ibid.*, p. xxviii.

epos, and a novel. As a professional writer, Prodromos also wrote in prose (e.g., letters, commentaries on Aristotle).²⁴ Unlike Nikolaos, who refuted the Proklian *Elements of Theology*, Prodromos was a Platonist.²⁵ Additionally to his verses on saints, Theodōros also authored commentaries on the canons of Kosmas and John of Damascus. Hence, as Pamela Armstrong notes, when perusing their surviving texts, Prodromos seems to have a better claim at the label of “theologian” than Nikolaos.²⁶

Though Armstrong has convincingly argued for further plausible elements, there is no other certain link between the two *literati* apart from Meletios’ *Lives*.²⁷ Their editors thought that they were written independently and that all similarities are due to the material which both Nikolaos and Prodromos used.²⁸ In the preface, the bishop of Methone mentions the commissioner of the *Life* and the dossier the latter provided him.²⁹ As for the audience targeted by the two, the dominant opinion is that Nikolaos’ *bios* is addressing the monastic community of Meletios and its connections from Constantinople, whereas Theodōros writes primarily for the Constantinopolitan audience that would assemble in the *theatra*.³⁰ According to Messis, “il existe un rapport certain entre les deux textes, un dialogue indirect entre les deux auteurs”,³¹ whereas Armstrong starkly advocated for that “throughout Prodromos’ version of the *Vita* there are signals of both satire and subversion”.³² The analysis of the use of typology provides support for Armstrong’s argument.

²⁴ W. Hörandner, *Theodoros Prodromos. Historische Gedichte*, Vienna, 1974, p. 44-48, 59-61; W. Hörandner, A. Rhoby, and N. Zagklas (eds.), *A Companion to Byzantine Poetry*, Leiden, 2019, p. 243-244. The attribution of the *Ptochoprodromika* corpus to Prodromos is now widely accepted; cf. *ibid.*, p. 58.

²⁵ P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143-1180*, Cambridge, 1993, p. 332-333.

²⁶ P. Armstrong, “Literary polemic...”, p. 336, calls both “philosophers cum theologians”.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 337-340.

²⁸ I. Polemis, *Oi Bíoι τοῦ ἁγίου Μελετίου...*, p. 21-22. I. Polemis hypothesises that Nikolaos’ anonymous source may be Hilarion, Meletios’ disciple mentioned by the bishop of Methone.

²⁹ Nikolaos, *VMelet* (BHG 1247), §1, 12-15: [...] ἡμῖν ἐπιτρέψας ἀνάγραφτον θέσται τὴν τῶν κατ’ αὐτὸν ἐξητασμένων τε καὶ ἡκριβωμένων καὶ πολλαχόθεν πεπληροφορημένων διήγησιν [...].

³⁰ S. Efthymiadis and N. Kalogeras, “Audience, Language and Patronage in Byzantine Hagiography”, in S. Efthymiadis (ed.), *The Ashgate Research Companion...*, vol. 2, p. 267; on Byzantine *theatron*, see P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel...*, p. 336-346; P. Marciniak, “Byzantine *Theatron* – A Place of Performance?”, in M. Grünbart and G. Fatouros (eds.), *Theatron: Rhetorische Kultur in Spätantike und Mittelalter = Rhetorical Culture in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, Berlin, 2007, p. 277-286.

³¹ Ch. Messis, “Deux versions...”, p. 315, 320, n. 63: “Nous sommes d’avis qu’il existe un rapport certain entre les deux textes, un dialogue indirect entre les deux auteurs”.

³² P. Armstrong, “Literary polemic...”, p. 337.

Ascetic and thaumaturgic types of Meletios

The idea that monastics conceived asceticism as *mimesis*, that is, monks strove to emulate famous heroes, be they biblical or not, has been already formulated.³³ It is indeed reflected in Prodromos' words: Meletios too accumulated all ascetic virtues – listed in a string that starts with the contentment with little (ὀλιγαρκία) and ends with his simple clothing (τὸ δὲ τῆς ἐσθῆτος ἀπλούστερον) – “in the workshop of his soul either collecting [them] with his toil, or establishing [them] in time, or acquiring them in imitation of his esteemed predecessors (τῇ τῶν προσευδοκιμησάντων μιμήσει)”.³⁴ The precursors of Meletios are from biblical, as well as later times. For instance, Meletios possessed the pureness of Abraham's ministry (διὰ τὸ καθαρὸν τὴν ἱερωσύνης), the gentleness of David (Ps 131:1), and the fasting and the love of solitude of Elijah, one of the ascetic types from the Old Testament.³⁵ To the same well-established repertoire pertain commonalities, such as taking up the Cross and following Christ.

Enduring bodily impairment is a prime feature of asceticism. Nikolaos grants Meletios' illness a double etiology, one of which is demonic. Indeed, being tried by demons or even Satan was an inherent part of the life of the best ascetics (starting with Antony the Great)³⁶ and Meletios receives his portion of blows.³⁷ The ascetic athletics that Meletios imposed upon himself – without making it a requirement for his followers – is the other cause of his illness. “The secret labor for goodness (τὴν ἄλλην μυστικὴν τῆς ἀρετῆς ἐργασίαν)”, the severe ascetic routine exercised by Meletios included among others countless genuflexions and standing still.³⁸ The *stasis* is the element that Nikolaos stresses when emphasizing Meletios' deplorable condition: he attributes the purulent discharge at Meletios' feet solely to the holy's “unending standing still in prayers (ἄμετρος ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς στάσις)”.³⁹ It is thus clear that the illness allowed Nikolaos (or perhaps even the monastic community on Mt Kithairon) to associate Meletios with the stylite saint, who stood unmoved on the top of a pillar.⁴⁰

³³ D. Krueger, “Typology and Hagiography...”, p. 18.

³⁴ Prodromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §17, 1-9.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, §27, 17 sqq.

³⁶ D. Brakke, *Demons and the Making of the Monk: Spiritual Combat in Early Christianity*, Cambridge, 2006.

³⁷ Nikolaos, *VMelet* (BHG 1247), §9, 13-26.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, §8, 14-22. The biography of Kyrillos of Philea, another renowned holy man of the century, mentions that his early ascetic regimen included even more extreme methods of mortification, such as chaining or self-flagellation with rope and club, *VCyrPhil* (BHG 468), §5, 7.

³⁹ Nikolaos, *VMelet* (BHG 1247), §10, 12.

⁴⁰ Prodromos only grants chronology to Meletios' suffering: after he was cured, he goes to Jerusalem.

Unlike Prodhromos, Nikolaos includes an episode that emphasizes Meletios' obstinate refusal to attend to his wounds.⁴¹ Consequently, his state worsened to the degree in which worms were feeding on his wounds. The account of the horrendous sight of the laceration continues, and the references to a Greek biography of Symeon the Elder (390-459) becomes obvious. The biography of Symeon Stylitēs attributed to Antonios, one of the saint's close disciples, and dated to the turn of the sixth century, recounts a miracle that involved maggots populating the stylite's wounds.⁴² On a visit to the pillar, none other than a king of the Saracens takes hold of a worm that fell from the top of the column and, instead of listening to the holy man's request to return it, he keeps the creature as a blessing. Nikolaos condensed the vignette as follows:

Nikolaos, <i>VMelet</i> (BHG 1247), §10, 48-53	Antonios, <i>VSymStyl</i> (BHG 1682-1685k), §18
[Meletios] described the worms as precious stones or pearls (ὡς λίθους τιμίους ἢ μαργαρίτας περιεῖπε τοὺς σκώληκας), corresponding to his crown of endurance, as if sheathed with gold by the sore. For that reason he not only did not let them drop out of his wound but if one accidentally dropped out, he picked up the worm that had dropped out and restored it to its place.	While they [Symeon and the king] were talking together, a worm fell from [Simeon's] thigh; it caught the king's attention and, since he did not yet know what it was, he ran and picked it up. He placed it on his eyes and onto his heart and went outside holding it in his hand. The saint sent a message to him, saying, "Come inside and put away what you have taken up, for you are bringing misery upon me, a sinner. It is a stinking worm from stinking flesh. Why soil your hand, you, a man held in honor?" [...] When he [the Arab] opened his hand, a precious pearl (μαργαρίτη τίμιος) was in his hand. When
Prodhromos, <i>VMelet</i> (BHG 1248), §27, 58-63	
Who [...] has not heard of the putrefaction of his feet, which befell him from standing	

⁴¹ Nikolaos, *VMelet* (BHG 1247), §10. Meletios spiritually attends to a doctor that came to treat him. His prophetic charisma (ἡ προορατικῆς χάρις) enables Meletios to disclose to the physician his imminent death. Beyond the commonness of the episode, the words through which Nikolaos phrases Meletios' dioratic power are worth mentioning: "Gazing at him [*scil.* the doctor] with his mind's eye rather than his eyes for seeing and observing the hidden doctor (πρὸ αἰσθητῶν ὀφθαλμῶν τοῖς νοητοῖς ἀτενίσας καὶ τὸν κρυπτόμενον ἱατρὸν κατοπτεύσας), by virtue of his divine grace he foresaw the future [...]" (§10, 27-30). On the notion of "spiritual" sight, as opposed to the "sensible" one, see C. Cupane, "Metamorphosen des Eros. Liebesdarstellung und Liebesdiskurs in der byzantinischen Literatur der Komnenenzeit", in P. A. Agapitos and D. R. Reinsch (eds.), *Der Roman im Byzanz der Komnenenzeit. Referate des Internationalen Symposiums an der Freien Universität Berlin, 3. bis 6. April 1998*, Frankfurt, 2000, p. 37, n. 80.

⁴² Antonios, *The Life of Symeon the Stylite* (hereafter *VSymStyl*) (BHG 1682-1685k). On the hefty hagiographic dossier of Symeon, see B. Caseau, "Syméon Stylite l'Ancien entre puanteur et parfum", *Revue des études byzantines* 63, 2005, p. 71-96. The maggots figure in the other biographies as well, see A.-B. Renger and A. Stellmacher, "Der Asketen- als Wissenskörper: Zum verkörperlichten Wissen des Simeon Stylites in ausgewählten Texten der Spätantike", *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 62.4, 2010, p. 332-333 (for *stasis*), 329, 335-336 (for the worms).

still all night? And similarly, who [...] has not heard of the precious worms (τιμίους σκώληκας) that dropped from them, in which he took far greater pride than emperors [do] in the pearls that they wear?	he saw it, he began to glorify God and said to the righteous man, “Look! What you said was a worm is a pearl – in fact, a priceless one – (μαργαρίτης ὑπάρχει εἰ τις τιμὴν οὐκ ἔχει) by means of which the Lord has enlightened me”.⁴³
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As shown in the synoptic table above, Prodromos imports the allusion, hence, he maintains the typological tie between his hero and the first and most revered stylite saint. While remaining implicit in the *Life* by Nikolaos, Prodromos makes the allusion explicit, without drawing an obvious link to the locus in the *Vita* by Antonios, since the connection is blurred by an interpolation.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, a portion of his audience was supposedly well-acquainted with Symeon’s exploits, especially since the episode was selected and rewritten in the metaphrastic redaction of Symeon’s *Life*.⁴⁵

Symeon the Elder is projected as “the new Job” and the typological lineage is perpetuated by the hagiographers of the subsequent stylite saints.⁴⁶ The bishop of Methone does not miss the facile typological association with this biblical model. Thus, to the embarrassment of his diabolical opponent, Meletios resists his physical trials just like Job. Nikolaos places the two side by side and the *synkrisis* results in the ascetic surpassing the biblical model of patient endurance. Having been a monk from a young age, hence without family or possessions to be deprived of, makes Meletios less vulnerable. Furthermore, he

⁴³ Antonios, *VSymStyl* (BHG 1682-1685k), §18, ed. by H. Lietzmann, *Das Leben des heiligen Symeon Stylites*, Leipzig, 1908, p. 44-45; trans. by R. Doran, *The Lives of Symeon the Stylite*, Kalamazoo, 1992, p. 94-95.

⁴⁴ Lazaros, the biblical destitute, comes in between the explicit reference to Symeon and the reference to his *Life*. Prodromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §27, 72-75.

⁴⁵ *VSymStylMet* (BHG 1686-7), §29, PG 114, coll. 357-360. Pillar saints were no oddity, even in Komnenian times. Two decades after Meletios’ *Lives* were composed, Eustathios of Thessalonike deplores the contemporary emulators of Symeon the Elder and schools one in an oration; see P. Magdalino, “The Byzantine holy man in the twelfth century”, in S. Hackel (ed.), *The Byzantine Saint*, London, 1981, p. 54, 59, 60. Stylites figure within the host of monks that resist the coenobitic regime, whom Iōannēs Tzetēs denounces in his *Letter 57*, ed. by P. M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae Epistulae*, Leipzig, 1972, p. 82, 8-20. Regardless the criticism that it faced, asceticism on a column remains appealing since, while in Constantinople in 1157, Leontios of Jerusalem considered taking up the example of Daniel the Stylite; see *VLeontPatr* (BHG 985), §37, ed. and trans. by D. Tsougarakis, *The Life of Leontios Patriarch of Jerusalem*, Leiden, 1993, p. 74.

⁴⁶ Antonios, *VSymStyl* (BHG 1682-1685k), §7. The seventh-century stylite Alypius is also said to have been struck with a wound on his foot, like Job, unlike whom he did not curse the day of his birth because of the calamities that befell upon him; see *VAlypStyl* (BHG 65), ed. by H. Delehay, *Les Saints Stylites*, Brussels, 1923, p. 166, 26-33. For Job as typological archetype of stylite saints, see F. Filimon, “Pillar of the Communities: the *Lives* of Alypius the Stylite”, MA thesis, Central European University, Budapest, 2015, p. 45-46.

did not even ask for a potsherd to alleviate his state (Job 2:8).⁴⁷ In turn, Prodromos refers to Job more rhetorically with the toponym Αὐσίτης, adducing yet another scriptural model, the poor Lazaros. The biblical parable served Meletios as textbook ascetic material: he emulated the poor while avoiding the greed of the rich.⁴⁸

The illness that perhaps Symeon and Meletios shared⁴⁹ is not the only reason for borrowing from the biography of Symeon. As disclosed by Prodromos, the association is mainly due to biographic coincidence: like his ascetic antitype, Meletios died on September 1.⁵⁰ Likewise, due to a biographic commonality, the two hagiographers relate typologically Meletios with Sabas (439-532), the monk credited with bringing monasticism to Palestine. What makes Meletios “another Sabas in our times” is the fact that the two were born in the same village in Cappadocia.⁵¹ Polemis observed that Nikolaos (or the material provided to him) draws significantly on Sabas’ *Life* by Kyrillos of Scythopolis. Meletios performed several miracles in common with his predecessor.⁵² A blatant example is the one that has Meletios sweetening the cooked gourd that turned out to be bitter, which replicates Sabas altering the bitter taste of boiled gourds when solicited by a cook of the lavra.⁵³ It would be no surprise if, as argued by Polemis, even the name of Meletios’ parents given

⁴⁷ Nikolaos, *VMelet* (BHG 1247), §9, 30 sqq, §11, 1 sqq.

⁴⁸ Prodromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §7, 27-30: τὸ γὰρ τοι ἅπαν σῶμα τοῦ μακαρίου ἔλκει πονήρου κατὰ τὸν Αὐσίτην παῖσας κατέστιξεν [...]; §27, 63-70.

⁴⁹ There is a difference in that Meletios’ diseased foot was the right one, according to Nikolaos or the tradition on which he relies, whereas the first of Symeon’s affected members is his left foot, as reported by Theodoret of Cyrhus (see R. Doran, *The Lives of Symeon the Stylite*, p. 81).

⁵⁰ Prodromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §28, 1-4. Indeed, Symeon stood upfront in the pantheon of saints celebrated throughout the year. It is more likely that Prodromos was aware of the coincidence since his hagiographic *œuvre* includes also a metric whole-year calendar, which opens with the celebration of St Symeon; see A. Acconcia Longo, *Il calendario giambico in monastici di Teodoro Prodromo*, Rome, 1983, p. 93: Ὁ ἅγιος Συμεὼν ὁ στυλίτης εἰρήνην τελειοῦται. / Τὸν Συμεῶνην ἐκ στόλου πόλος φέρει.

⁵¹ Nikolaos, *VMelet* (BHG 1247), §2, 9-10; Prodromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §2, 19-21, §27, 10-11.

⁵² I. Polemis, *Οἱ Βίοι τοῦ ἁγίου Μελετίου...*, p. 23-26; Ch. Messis, *Les eunuques à Byzance: entre réalité et imaginaire*, Paris, 2014, p. 183; *VSab* (BHG 1608), ed. by E. Schwartz, *Kyrillos von Skythopolis*, Leipzig, 1939, p. 85-200; trans. by R. Price, *Lives of the Monks of Palestine by Cyril of Scythopolis*, Kalamazoo, 1991, p. 93-209.

⁵³ Nikolaos, *VMelet* (BHG 1247), §24, 8-19; *VSabas* (BHG 1608), p. 138, 11-18, trans. by R. Price, *Lives of the Monks...*, p. 148. Even though reverting stale food or drink to their previous state is part of the arsenal of miracle performed by saints: e.g., Nikon the “Metanoeite” entreats God with prayers for turning the old and pungent wine gifted by a poor city dweller into a good one (*VNikonMet*, BHG 1366-7, §36, 21 – §37, 8, ed. and trans. by D. F. Sullivan, *The Life of Saint Nikon: Text, Translation and Commentary*, Brookline, Mass., 1987, p. 126).

just by Nikolaos (Iōannēs and Sophia), are derived from the tradition around Sabas.⁵⁴

According to Genettian transtextual theory, the textual borrowing from the *Life* of Symeon is a sample of intertextuality, but when considering Meletios' illness as a major biographic element, the *Life* of Symeon becomes a hypotext of that of Meletios. The other hypotext, certainly more obvious, as we have seen, is the *Life* of Sabas. Another motive of this latter narrative choice becomes clear when considering that, according to Armstrong and Kirby, the monastic system established by Meletios owns much to the Sabaite lavriote model.⁵⁵ Therefore, Nikolaos, then Prodromos, or perhaps Meletios or his community, had an interest in promoting this typological lineage. In the coenobitic system imposed by Meletios, the monks were under the same commander, father instructor, and teacher.⁵⁶ To Nikolaos, monastic discipline is indeed key. He refers to Nikodemos, one of the few "Judas" reached by the diabolical snake. The monk that disobeyed his abbot receives as retribution sudden death by a lightning strike. Nikolaos anticipates the demise of the lapsed Nikodemos by invoking in *synkrisis* Elijah and Peter, that is, Meletios is shown "like another Elijah or another Peter, breathing fire through the mouth and delivering the sinner to immediate death".⁵⁷ The ascetic champion did not just appropriate Paul's continence and mortification, but he is following the Apostle's lead in working with his own hands. He is Christ-like in that he was sitting among the lesser members of the community at the common table.⁵⁸

Once more, the bishop of Methone outlines Meletios' profile: he acquired the fame of an ascetic, a prophet, and a miracle worker (τὸν ἀσκητὴν, τὸν προφήτην, τὸν θαυματουργόν).⁵⁹ In the earliest stages of development of Christian biographies, typology constituted a "primary tool for placing the deeds

⁵⁴ Indeed, the notice in the *Synaxarion of the Great Church*, ed. by H. Delehay, *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae e Codice Sirmondiano nunc Berolinensi*, Brussels, 1902, p. 281, assigns Sabas homonymous parents. As further arguments one would mention the omission by Prodromos and that Nikolaos did not exploit the connection. He instead, in a traditional way, translates the names as tokens devised by the divine foreknowledge to indicate the spiritual descent of their offspring to those capable of comprehension, that is, "the divine grace" and "wisdom" respectively, Nikolaos, *VMelet* (BHG 1247), §2, 11-25.

⁵⁵ P. Armstrong and A. Kirby, "Text and stone...", p. 153-54.

⁵⁶ Nikolaos, *VMelet* (BHG 1247), §16, 1-10: ὅφ' ἐνὶ αὐτῷ καὶ ταξιάρχῳ καὶ πατρὶ καὶ παιδευτῇ καὶ καθηγητῇ.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, §12, 1-3; Sir 48:1, Acts 5:1-11.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, §6, 38-40: ἐγκρατεία ... ἐδουλαγώγει τὸ σῶμα καὶ ὑποπιάζειν (1 Cor 9:27); §7, 16-19 (1 Cor 4:12); §6, 50-54: τὸν ἐμὸν μιμούμενος Ἰησοῦν ... (Mt 11:9). Also, as Jesus to Nathaniel, so did Meletios reminded Batazēs of his doubts (that he may learn something from the former). This Batazēs was the companion of a Bryennios, doux of Thebes; see Nikolaos, *VMelet* (BHG 1247), §24, 28-9; Jn 1:46-50.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, §15, 5-8.

of the local saints into a context comprehensible to the readers”.⁶⁰ Thus, it framed the understanding of the holy man’s thaumaturgic activities and granted them verisimilitude. In the twelfth century, there was no need for typology to fulfill this function, but the narratives of miracles are still modelled upon or accompanied by biblical precedents. Nikolaos makes Meletios perform wonders that rivaled those worked by Moses. For instance, the crossing of the sea is invoked in the episode on Nikodemos, the lapsed former follower of the holy man. He is punished, as were the Egyptians, while the Thebans, who sided with the lapsed, were gifted, as were the Israelites, with the end of drought through the prayers of Meletios, “a new Moses”.⁶¹ Joshua of Navi, who stopped the sun, and the three youngsters whom the furnace did not harm are *typoi* of Meletios when he prevented fire from consuming his monasteries.⁶² He refers himself to biblical precedents as he entreats God to work wonders similar to those accomplished in the Old Testament times.⁶³

Prodromos’ Meletios is not only summoning in prayer Christ who cured the palsied before ordering Matthew, the ill to rise and stand on his feet, but the whole episode is tailored to fit a recognizably biblical setting (Jn 5): the invalid is brought to Meletios’ monastery as to another fold (ἄλλη προβατική), where Christ’s flock was herded; Meletios’ cell or hut is like an arcade (ἐτέραν στοάν), whereas the Bethesda pool had five. The father must delay his cure for teaching his disciples a lesson, so he ordered to wait for the movement of the water.⁶⁴ In the *Life* by Prodromos, Meletios is Christlike even posthumously.⁶⁵

Though the parallels with the biblical characters are more copious in the piece by Prodromos, at times they serve a literary role, rather than being genuine typological association: e.g., when the hero is being tonsured in Constantinople, he does not resemble Samson, though their trials by a seductress are alike.⁶⁶ Another time, the name of the hero’s contesteer provokes (or perhaps the other way around?) a *synkrisis* with biblical connotations. This Noah, who has abandoned the “carnal Noah” (τὸν σαρκικὸν Νῶε) and the place of the deluge,

⁶⁰ D. Krueger, “Typology and Hagiography...”, p. 15.

⁶¹ Nikolaos, *VMelet* (BHG 1247), §12, 69-76. Prodromos’ Meletios is καὶνὸς Μωϋσῆς too (BHG 1248), §14, 26-27.

⁶² Nikolaos, *VMelet* (BHG 1247), §16; Jo 10:12; Dn 3:49-50.

⁶³ Elijah filling of Zarepath’s flask from 1 Kgs 17:4 in *VMelet* (BHG 1247), §26, 21-5; and the sweetening the water at Merrha by Moses from Ex 15:23 in §28, 14-17.

⁶⁴ Also, Christ multiplying nourishment features in the words attributed to Meletios when imitating the miracle; Mk 6:44; Nikolaos, *VMelet* (BHG 1247), §12, 1-10.

⁶⁵ The leprose Bardas, a wealthy Theban, could not see a Christ on earth that might cure him, an eleventh leper. Meletios’ relics cured him and Bardas proved himself like the grateful Samaritan; Prodromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §29; Lk 17.

⁶⁶ Like a Nazirite (Jgs 16:17; Prodromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §4, 25-26). When attacked by the Theban temptress, Meletios is resisting a Delilah (Jgs 16:19-21; Prodromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §7, 9-11).

Constantinople, came to encounter the “spiritual Noah” (τὸν κατὰ πνεῦμα Νῶε), that is, Meletios, and thought to merit the praise of Japhet. This monk, whose state of mind the demon perverted in the end, was able to mask his character of Ham under the appearance of Japhet.⁶⁷

The holy figure reenacts biblical events and in him, biblical prophecies are being fulfilled (anew). Meletios is a “new Abraham” who has obeyed the divine command and departed his land and his family (Gn 12:1-6). When he assumed the hegoumenate of the Symbolon, Meletios fulfilled the promise made to Abraham of the old and that formulated in one Psalm (Ps 36:29).⁶⁸

Prodromos’ *synkriseis* result more often in the antitype superseding his types, such as Moses and John the Forerunner,⁶⁹ both featuring also within the general *synkrisis*. The “over-all comparison” is one key element of the epideictic topic. It precedes the epilogue of the encomiastic piece and it resumes the qualities for which the *laudandus* was already praised.⁷⁰ The more rhetorical of the two *Lives*, the one by Prodromos, has the final *synkrisis*, which comes before the posthumous miracles. It amasses copious references to biblical and ascetic types. A chain of *adynata* (among which “quarrying away Athos – Ἀθῶ διαλαξεύει) expresses the way the hagiographer is helpless in sampling all virtues acquired by Meletios.⁷¹ The same is reaffirmed through rhetorical questions.⁷² Next, Prodromos invokes in *synkrisis* with *amplificatio* Elijah, the Forerunner, and Paul. Unlike Elijah, Meletios was not miraculously nourished before he fasted through his way to Choreb, and the nourishment brought by ravens to the prophet was opulent in comparison with Meletios’ frugal diet (τὸ ἔτνος καὶ μάζα τοῦ πιτριοῦ; 1 Kgs 17:6; 19:5-8). The camel hair cloak worn by

⁶⁷ Prodromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §24; Gn 9.

⁶⁸ Nikolaos, *VMelet* (BHG 1247), §15, 48-58; Prodromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §11, 7-9, picks up Gn 22:17.

⁶⁹ Meletios alone was worthy of being guided by a pillar of fire, Prodromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §9, 23-28; another time, implicitly, since the water, which streamed out of the cliff struck by Meletios, was clean and drinkable and so it needed no wood so that it would turn sweet like at Marah (Ex 15:23-25), nor the salt in a bowl as in Jericho (2 Kgs 2:19-22), Prodromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §14, 11-20. The people gathering around Meletios were not just receiving the baptism, but remaining around him, Prodromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §10, 9-15.

⁷⁰ The “most complete / over-all comparison” (τελειοτάτη / ἄθροα σύγκρισις) is the *topos* that, though used earlier, was first codified by Menander Rhetor, *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικόν*, ed. and trans. by D. A. Russell and N. G. Wilson, *Menander Rhetor*, Oxford, 1981, 376, 31 – 377, 10; O. Delouis, “*Topos et typos...*”, p. 8-9.

⁷¹ Cf. Nikolaos, *VMelet* (BHG 1247), §19, 11-14: “draining the sea and counting the [grains of] sand and measuring the vault of heaven”.

⁷² Prodromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §27. Given the author’s philosophical stance, one such question is worth sampling: “in which mystery, whereby independence of the rational soul is accomplished, and the activity concerning/according to the mind, the unity in the mind, and God, did he appear not initiated?” = τίνος δὲ ἀτέλεστος πέφηνε θεουργοῦ, ὅφ’ ὧν τε αὐτοπραγία τῆς λογικῆς ψυχῆς κατορθοῦναι, καὶ τὸ πρὸς νοῦν καὶ τὴν ἐν αὐτῷ ἐνάδα καὶ τὸν Θεὸν ἐνεργεῖν; (§27, 13-16).

John the Baptist (Mt 3:4) also seems luxurious when compared to the patched one clothing Meletios. The latter travelled by foot, whilst the Apostle had a beast of burden. If the torments through various means and devices endured by the martyrs in Christ's name are a thing of wonder, so are Meletios' self-martyrdom, voluntary contest, and the crucifixion of his earthly limbs. His endurance is on par with that of Symeon the Elder the Stylite and the poor Lazaros. The *synkrisis* flows forth and embellishes the holy man's death. Prodromos introduces the audience to the host of ascetics that welcomed Meletios in the afterlife: the already mentioned Symeon the Stylite and Sabas are joined by Paul of Thebes. Prodromos co-opts the early Egyptian hermit through rhetorical license: "Paul of Thebes greets him [Meletios] because he honoured his ancestral Thebes through his conduct and he built a city in the wilderness there".⁷³ The Old Testament figures are next: Abraham, Moses, who got water from the stone (Ex 17:5-6), Samuel on account on his novel visions and foresight (διὰ τὰς καινὰς ὁράσεις ἢ προοράσεις), David and again Elijah.

Rhetorical license and subversive use of *synkrisis*

It may indeed seem tempting to interpret the abundance of saintly *typoi* associated by Prodromos with Meletios primarily as deliberately excessive, and, hence, as references to the *Life* drafted by Nikolaos or even subversive towards the ascetic model promoted by it.⁷⁴ But in doing so one would overlook the

⁷³ *Ibid.*, §28, 10-14: ὁ Θηβαῖος Παῦλος ἀσπάζεται, ὡς τὴν πάτριον αὐτῷ Θηβαΐδα τῇ πολιτείᾳ τημῆσαντα καὶ τὴν κατ' ἐκείνην ἐρημίαν πολίσαντα. Rhetoric certainly allows for the blurring of the geographical distance between the Egyptian and the Boeotian Thebes. But there is a similar case where the biographer associates his hero with a *typos* based on the topographical homonymy. Theoktistos the Studite writes in his *Life* of Athanasios of Constantinople (1289-1293; 1303-1309) how the patriarch emulated the sixth-seventh century stylite saint Alypius (*VAthPatr*, BHG 194, ed. by A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, "Žitija dvuh Vselenskih patriarhov XIV v., svv. Afanasija I i Isidora I", *Zapiski istoriko-filologičeskago fakul'teta Imperatorskago S.-Peterburgskago Universiteta* 76, 1905, p. 1-51). A plausible reason for this lineage is the origin of the two: Alypius was born in Adrianoupolis in Paphlagonia, whereas the future patriarch stemmed from Adrianoupolis in Thrace; see H. Delehay, "La vie d'Athanase, patriarche de Constantinople (1289-1293, 1304-1310)", *Mélanges de l'école française de Rome* 17, 1897, p. 48, n. 3.

⁷⁴ Ch. Messis, "Deux versions...", p. 334-335: "Son [Prodromos'] but dissimulé est plutôt de faire une critique qui concerne [...] un certain type de monachisme, qui cherche dans les figures d'Élie, Jean Prodrome et Paul un renouveau spirituel, voire un monachisme individuel de connotation hésychaste avant l'hésychasme, défiant les conceptions commènes de la sainteté qui privilégient le cadre des communautés monastiques bien administrées et économiquement assainies [...] la tirade de Prodrome sur la supériorité du saint par comparaison aux figures bibliques répond aux comparaisons de Nicolas entre le saint et les mêmes figures, mais dans un esprit plus traditionnel. Il est possible de discerner ici une critique dissimulée d'un courant monastique que Nicolas semble promouvoir". Nikolaos Kataskepēnos, the eulogizer of Kyrillos Phileotēs also proposes Elijah and his intra-scriptural *typos* John the Baptist as models for the hero; see M. Mullett, "Food for the spirit and a light for the road: reading the Bible in the *Life* of Cyril Phileotes", in C. Holmes

retorical exigencies and the hagiographic tradition, that is, numerous texts making the corpus with which the *bios* of Meletios is in architextual relation.⁷⁵ In turn, there are other instances where we see how Prodromos deploys typology and *synkrisis* to engage with the hagiography of Nikolaos.

When referring to Meletios' prophetic charisma, both of his hagiographers turn to Samuel, traditionally the biblical character with whom dioratic ascetics typologically relate.⁷⁶ Notably, Prodromos also picks up the association with Samuel regarding a particular moment of his biblical biography. The choice appears to be odd for more than one reason, hence, the insertion must be unfitting on purpose. The episode opens with the narratorial voice introducing the audience to Epiphanius Kamateros, the recipient of the miracle. Epiphanius is identified as the holder of the title of the *anthypatos* of Hellas and the Peloponnesos.⁷⁷ Then follows the phrase: "raised from the dead through spiritual necromancy (διὰ τῆς λογικῆς νεκρύας) just like Samuel",⁷⁸ which epitomizes how Meletios resuscitates Kamateros by demanding him to spit out the fishbone that was suffocating him. In this synoptic phrase, Prodromos references 1 Samuel 28:3-50 where the woman of Endor mediates the conversing of King Saul with the (alleged) soul of Samuel. The adjective that Prodromos uses to qualify the divinatory art holds two possible meanings. On the one hand, according to a literal interpretation, λογική is pointing to the fact that the recovery occurred through Meletios' authoritative word. On the other hand, another reading implies that Prodromos employs the oxymoronic and jocular "spiritual necromancy" about Meletios' charisma, subverting the latter.

The majority of Christian authors that ventured into interpreting this biblical passage held the belief that Saul had spoken to demons impersonating the prophet,⁷⁹ of which Prodromos could hardly have been unaware. Also, there

and J. Waring (eds.), *Literacy, Education and Manuscript Transmission in Byzantium and Beyond*, Leiden, 2002, p. 159-160.

⁷⁵ See above, n. 8-9.

⁷⁶ Nikolaos, *VMelet* (BHG 1247), §14, 11-12, where Meletios is called a real latter-day Samuel, for having foreseen the death of a Theban's daughter and thus the saint prevented the loss of her dowry; Prodromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §28, 21-2; see also *The Life of Saint Basil the Younger* (hereafter *VBasilJun*) (BHG 263) 1, §13, 20-21, ed. and trans. by D. Sullivan, A.-M. Talbot, and St. McGrath, Washington, D.C., 2014, p. 88: ὥστε ἕτερον Σαμουὴλ βλέποντα τὰ ἐμπροσθεν ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἡμῶν, "like another Samuel, seeing in our days the future actions of each person".

⁷⁷ A. Bon, *Le Péloponnèse byzantin jusqu'en 1204*, Paris, 1951, p. 196-197.

⁷⁸ Prodromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §17, 19-22.

⁷⁹ See K. A. D. Smelik, "The Witch of Endor: 1 Samuel 28 in Rabbinic and Christian Exegesis till 800 A.D.", *Vigiliae Christianae* 33, 1979, p. 160-179. For a recent analysis of the biblical narrative on the necromantic episode, see E. J. Hamori, *Women's Divination in Biblical Literature: Prophecy, Necromancy, and Other Arts of Knowledge*, New Haven, 2015, p. 110 sqq. Closer to the times of our hagiographers, Psellos devoted an opusculum to the interpretation of the passage, though his interest lies in elucidating ἐγγαστριμύθος, the name given by the *Septuagint* to the necromancer: *De saga ventriloqua*, ed. by A. R. Littlewood, "Michael Psellos and the Witch of

is no obvious tie between the gluttonous Kamateros and the shadow of Samuel inquired in divination by Saul. What is more, this association projects Meletios in an implicit typological relationship with the necromancer of Endor, certainly detrimental to a hagiographer's eulogizing efforts. One is thus left to assume that through this comparison, Prodromos is engaging with the *Life* by Nikolaos, where, as the ultimate proof of the power gained through his faith, the bishop of Methone has Meletios raising a dead monk for just long enough to recite the usual prayer at the communal table.⁸⁰ It is Nikolaos himself that cannot choose a definite reason for which a brother asked Meletios to let the dead Markos say the prayer: it is either that the grieving brother was not aware of what he was saying, or he did not believe that his abbot was capable of performing such wonders – Nikolaos favors this last motivation. Thus, Prodromos retains the resurrection *topos* and modifies its content: instead of briefly inspiriting the body of a deceased to strengthen a monk's faith, Meletios' holy command resuscitates a greedy official choking on a fishbone. By deliberately joining a pedantic phrase and an infelicitous typological association, Prodromos seeks to attain humorous effects. Two questions remain: whether Meletios too is the target and how much of the audience was able to pick up the mockery of his literary rival.

Staying on the same *thauma*, in the finale that confirms the governor's rescue, Prodromos finds it appropriate to insert a contrasting comparison between the simplicity of Meletios' remedy and the medical arts exposed in Galen's *Remedies* (Θεραπευτική) and the *Epidemics* and *Aphorisms* of Hippokratēs.⁸¹ The *synkrisis* with the treatises is preceded by a vividly anatomic description of Epiphanius' body struggling not to succumb. The audience would expect nothing less from a *grammatikos*.

Endor", *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 40, 1990, p. 225-229; P. Magdalino and M. Mavroudi, "Introduction", in P. Magdalino and M. Mavroudi (eds.), *The Occult Sciences in Byzantium*, Geneva, 2006, p. 30-31.

⁸⁰ Nikolaos, *VMelet* (BHG 1247), §11. One could find fitting precedents for this miracle in the monastic literature. E.g., Iōannēs Moschos, *Pratum Spirituale*, §32, PG 87.3, coll. 2860-2861, where a certain abbot Hagiodoulos reanimates a brother for a final greeting (ἀσπασμός).

⁸¹ Μέθοδος θεραπευτική, in fourteen books, ed. by C. G. Kühn, *Claudii Galeni opera omnia*, vol. 10, Leipzig, 1825 (repr. Hildesheim, 1965). Both Hippocratic treatises reached us. The *Aphorisms* (Ἀφορισμοί) reunites 412 medical precepts and guidelines organized in seven books, ed. and trans. in the "Loeb Classical Library" (hereafter LCL) 150, p. 98-221. The *Epidemics* (or *Visits*, according to the initial meaning of the Greek title Ἐπιδημῖαι) is a treatise transmitted as part of the *Hippocratic Corpus*, ed. and trans. in LCL 147 and LCL 477; conveniently, see W. Golder, *Hippokrates und das Corpus Hippocraticum. Eine Einführung für Philologen und Mediziner*, Würzburg, 2007, p. 34-39, 45-46. Two of the posthumous miracles given by Prodromos follow the pattern of an incubation story: Meletios is delivering the healing touch in dreams to the ailing that was sleeping near his tomb: (BHG 1248), §30. For incubation as reflected in the hagiography of the middle-Byzantine period, see S. Efthymiadis, "L'incubation à l'époque mésobyzantine: problèmes de survivance historique et de représentation littéraire (VIII^e-XIII^e siècle)", in O. Delouis, S. Métivier, and P. Pagès (eds.), *Le Saint, le moine et le paysan*, Paris, 2016, p. 155-169.

The Prodromic hagiography has two more such learned digressions that provide antithetical comparisons to Meletios' prophetic gift. They were to prove that by no means did Meletios "have no share in the dioratic gift (τοῦ δὲ διορατικοῦ ἡμοίρει χάρισματος)", but that he "was clearly contemplating (κατεθεᾶτο) the future and perceiving (καθεώρα) those about to happen above Thoulē and Illoustris as if they would lie before his eyes".⁸² The two digressions frame five thaumaturgic episodes, which make the textual unit §§19-24. They are meant to be "testimonies from different sources". Prodromos resorts to listing old oracular instances to whom Meletios relates antithetically. Within the first digression, Prodromos adduces from Iamblichus' *Reply to the Letter of Porphyry to Annebo* the Korybantes, those possessed by the Phrygian Sabazios (Σαβίσιος) and the servants of the Great Mother, the priest of the Clarian Apollo in Colophon and the prophetesses at Delphi. Prodromos picks the seers Kinyras of Cyprus, Aristaeus of Cyrene, Abaris the Hyperborean, Boiō of Delphi, Manthō of Thebes, and the Sybils from Clement of Alexandria's first book of the *Stromateis*.⁸³ All their nonsensical utterances recorded by mythographers are laughable and at odds with the dioratic gift bestowed upon Meletios by the True Prophet. With the second digression, the inventory of ancient oracle-issuers sourced in the passage from Clement resumes. It includes the priest Demainetus of Phocaea, the sage Zoroaster (Ζώστρατος) the Mede, Empedotimos of Syracuse, but also Nikias of Karystos, Epigenes of Thespieae, and Theoklymenos of Kephallenia. Prodromos diverges from the habitual hagiographic discourse by not picking up the demonic source of ancient oracles.⁸⁴ Instead, he restates the observations made in the first digression and grounds the unreliability of these predictions in the non-historicity of the sources that relate them: "For these [foretellings] were not recorded (ιστορήθησαν) but rather related fabulously/invented (ἐμυθεύθησαν) by the blabbers in the times of the Hellēnes (καθ' Ἑλλήνας)".⁸⁵ But beyond simply arguing for the miracles worked by Meletios having historical credence, there is more.

The narrations of the five *thaumata* disposed between the two comparisons include no *typoi*. Furthermore, the miracle that precedes the last concatenation of oracular names is noteworthy.⁸⁶ It revolves around a beautiful

⁸² Prodromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §19. Thoulē is the island thought to be in the far North. As for Illoustris, the editor Polemis does not exclude a scribal error.

⁸³ Iamblichos, *De mysteriis*, 3, 10 and 11, ed. by É. Des Places, *Jamblique. Les mystères d'Égypte*, Paris, 1966, p. 110-113; Clemens of Alexandria, *Stromata*, 1, 21, 131-3, ed. by L. Früchtel, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, vol. 2, Berlin, 1985⁴, p. 82.

⁸⁴ E.g., the influential Ps.-Chrysostomic passage discussed by P. Magdalino in "Prophecy, divination and the church in Byzantium", in P. Magdalino and A. Timotin (eds.), *Savoirs prédictifs et techniques divinatoires de la l'Antiquité tardive à Byzance*, Seyssel, 2019, p. 185-202.

⁸⁵ Prodromos' argument stays at the core of Ch. Mennis' "Deux versions...", p. 309 (for this passage).

⁸⁶ Prodromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §23.

beardless youth in service to the general Leōn Nikeritēs, to whom he was related.⁸⁷ This unnamed lad, of whom the eunuch general of Peloponnese was very fond, fell severely ill with no cure. His unexpected recovery is reported by a monk, perhaps the same through whom the general has earlier reached Meletios asking for his prayers. The monk witnessed how by transgressing space, Meletios miraculously informed himself about the new developments and perceived that the ill man had died, while Nikeritēs was now filled with sorrow. Prodnromos verbalizes the external (physical) state of Meletios in the following way: “The elder listened to this and for a short time kept his silence and concentrated within him, as it were, all his perceptive senses; he looked like a transfixed and a god-possessed. Then as if inspired and filled by some sacred Bacchic frenzy, he turned his gaze on the monk and spoke”.⁸⁸

The wording chosen by Prodnromos for describing the symptoms of Meletios’ prophetic state points towards an ecstatic revelation. He self-induces the trance-like state by concentrating his senses inward, one of the means prescribed by earlier monastic writings.⁸⁹ Unlike the first two signifiers of Meletios’ state, “god-possessed” (θεόληπτος) and “transfixed” (ἐξισταμένος), which are both attested in Christian narratives,⁹⁰ the other two elements apply to

⁸⁷ He reaches Meletios through one of his monks asking for prayers on behalf of the sick. Meletios’ rough reply, that his prayers could not aid one on the verge of death, makes the general summon Theodosios, a renowned physician from Athens, who had previously attended the ailing one. In direct speech, Nikeritēs scolds Theodosios for estimating the recovery of the one now “coughing up his soul”. Worried by the accusations, the doctor proceeds to examine the moribund man, and, since the latter seemed healed, with boasting confidence, he warranted with his head that Leōn will not lose the young man. The general is attested also in *Alexias*, where, perhaps unsurprisingly, is presented in a positive light; see *Alexias*, vii, §2, 9; viii, §9, 7; xiii, §5, 1, ed. by D. R. Reinsch and A. Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, Berlin, 2001, p. 208, 257, 397. On Leon, see the online *Prosopography of the Byzantine World*, Leon 15008 (<http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Leon/15008/>, last accessed 11.01.2021).

⁸⁸ Prodnromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §23, 68-72: Ἦκουσε τούτων ὁ γέρων, καὶ μικρὸν ἐφησυχάσας τῷ λόγῳ καὶ τὰς αἰσθήσεις οἷον ἀπάσας ἐν ἑαυτῷ συγκλεισάμενος, ἐξισταμένῳ ἔφκει καὶ θεολήπτῳ, εἶτα ὥσπερ ἐνθουσιάσας καὶ ἱερᾶς τινὸς βακχείας ὑποπλησθεὶς [...] φησι καὶ πρὸς τὸν μοναχὸν τὸ ὄμμα ἐπιστρεψάμενος (my emphasis).

⁸⁹ For an assessment of the attitudes towards ecstasy in early monastic writings (including saints’ lives), see B. Kronung, “Ekstasen und andere Formen von Visionserfahrungen in der frühbyzantinischen monastischen Literatur”, in A. Gerok-Reiter and C. Walde (eds.), *Traum und Visionen in der Vormoderne*, Berlin, 2012, p. 55-90, on the ascetic means of inducing ecstatic visions at p. 73-4; republished and slightly adapted as “Ecstasy as a Form of Visionary Experience in Early Byzantine Monastic Literature”, in C. Angelidi and G. T. Calofonos (eds.), *Dreaming in Byzantium and Beyond*, Farnham, 2014, p. 125-144.

⁹⁰ θεόληπτος is an attribute of the prophets, as in e.g., Eusebius, *Commentarii in Psalmos*, PG 23, col. 576, 11, or the *VBasilJun* (BHG 263), 5, 138, 23, p. 686: θεολήπτων προφητῶν. The second term is employed by Gregory, the hagiographer of the same Basil to describe himself when gazing at the celestial landscape: *VBasilJun* (BHG 263), 4, §7, 4-5, p. 364: ἀποθανυμάζοντι καὶ ἐξισταμένῳ ἐπὶ τῇ τούτου θεωρίᾳ [...]. “As I stood in that meadow in wonderment and was transfixed at the sight [...]”.

Dionysian ecstasy (especially the *ἱερᾶς τινὸς βακχείας ὑποπλησθεῖς*). It is thus clear that carefully designating a sanctioned vision, that is, in accordance with biblical or hagiographical precedents, is not a priority for Prodromos. Rather, the two latter insertions are markers of authorial intentions.

First, they serve a narrative purpose, that of granting cohesion to the unit. The terms refer first to the prophetic *enthousiasmos* experienced by the individuals mentioned in the digression that preceded the five episodes. Additionally, the terms ensure the transition to the subsequent digression that resumes the *synkrisis* in which oracles (*χρησμολογίαι*), predictions (*προγνώσεις*), and prophecies (*προρρήσεις*) by mythical soothsayers are contrasted with Meletios' foreknowledge both witnessed and reliably reported. As for the second intention, Prodromos is not simply casting different material in the topical structure of the *vita* by Nikolaos, but he is doing so mocking this parallel text. Prodromos is in fact replicating the climactic episode in which Meletios comes to the aid of the imperilled Alexios I Komnēnos.

Nikolaos' *Life* positions the miracles relative to public affairs according to their political magnitude. Accordingly, Meletios saving Alexios opens the section in which the hero performs miracles for the benefit of public figures.⁹¹ Nikolaos briefly sets the coordinates: the Cuman forces attacked Thrace, hence Alexios, who was ahead of his army, turned Anchialos, a city in Thrace, into his base. Since the Cumans were plundering the surrounding areas, the emperor was planning an adequate response. Meletios must intervene because such a reaction would not have benefitted the Rhomaioi. Though living in ascetic quietness on Mount Kithairon, Meletios was well aware of the perils threatening the imperial person. Thus, while talking with his close disciple Hilarion:

Meletios interrupted his conversation with Hilarion for a moment and standing senseless (*ὥσπερ ἐννεὸς καταστάς*), he saw the emperor himself appear before him. He said "Take care, wondrous Lord Alexios, do not go out of the city". And at once he sealed his words with his hand by stretching it out in the direction where he perceived the emperor to be and tracing the shape of the cross.⁹²

⁹¹ With §21, the narrative comes to a turning point; §21, 1-2: "but not only monastic and private but also public and worldly affairs" (*ὅτι μὴ τὰ μοναχικὰ μόνον καὶ ἰδικά, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ κοινὰ καὶ τὰ κοσμικὰ φροντίδος*).

⁹² Nikolaos, *VMelet* (BHG 1247), §21, 22-8: *Ὁ δὲ τὴν πρὸς Ἰλαρίωνα διακόψας ἐπὶ μικρὸν ὁμιλίαν, καὶ ὥσπερ ἐννεὸς καταστάς καὶ αὐτὸν ὁρῶν παρόντα τὸν βασιλέα· ὅρα, ἔφη, θαυμάστε κύριε Ἀλέξιε, μὴ ἐξέλθῃς τοῦ ἄστεος· καὶ ἅμα τῇ χειρὶ τὸν λόγον ἐπεσφράγισε πρὸς ἐκεῖνο τὸ μέρος ἐκτείνας αὐτήν, ἐνθα κατανόει παρόντα τὸν βασιλέα, καὶ τὸν τοῦ σταυροῦ τύπον διαχαράζας*. One can indeed render *ἐννεὸς* also as "speechless" or "amazed". The term describes Epiphanius' awe at the sight of an angelic cook; see *The Life of St Andrew the Fool* (BHG 115z), §15, 969, ed. and trans. by L. Rydén, Uppsala, 1995, vol. 2, p. 76-77.

The hero comes to the rescue of the baffled spiritual son and provides him the due explanation of what he had witnessed: “‘The emperor, my child, at this very hour was proposing to go out to battle with the accursed Cumans. If he fulfills his purpose, he shall not see the imperial city’. He then prayed and summoned divine aid to save the emperor; the prayer was accepted and the emperor’s attack was prevented”.⁹³

Whereas Prodromos, as we have seen, insists on the seer’s symptoms, Nikolaos limits the description of Meletios’ state to the neutral ἐννεός. Like Prodromos, Nikolaos assures the audience that Meletios’ vision (θεωρία) was accurate through the report by the monk Hilarion. Later, when a member of the imperial guard visited Meletios, Hilarion confronted the details and date of the prophecy, which he had noted down. In fact, one can read this miracle against the more extensive narrative of this confrontation by Anna Komnēnē.⁹⁴ Facing an army that outnumbered his own by far, the emperor’s military prowess proves effective. Alexios did not let himself be drawn into battle, so the Cuman troops eager to engage finally left Anchialos. Nikolaos ascribes to Meletios’ intervention the imperial patience (καρτερία), which Anna praises as a military virtuosity. Deeming it a mere adaptation of Nikolaos’ silenced Meletios for the sake of a different audience is not a sufficient explanation for Prodromos’ frenzied Meletios. The same goes for explaining it through Prodromos’ lack of interest in complying with (and even less, his ignorance of) the traits of a genuine spiritual vision. We are therefore left with observing a reference to the *Life* by Nikolaos.⁹⁵

⁹³ Nikolaos, *VMelet* (BHG 1247), §21, 32-7: “ὁ βασιλεὺς, τέκνον, εἶπε, τῇ ὥρᾳ ταύτῃ προέθετο πρὸς πόλεμον τοῖς ἀλιτηρίοις Κομάνοις ἀπεξελθεῖν· καὶ εἰ τὰ τῆς προθέσεως ἐκπληρώσει, τὴν βασιλεύουσιν οὐχ ὀρᾷ”. ἐπὶ τούτοις προσηύξατο, τὸ θεῖον εἰς σωτηρίαν τῷ βασιλεῖ ἐπικαλεσάμενος, καὶ ἡ εὐχὴ προσεδέχθη, καὶ ἡ τοῦ βασιλέως ὁρμὴ ἐπεσχέθη.

⁹⁴ *Alexias*, X, §§2-3, especially §3, 3, trans. by D. R. Reinsch, *Anna Komnene: Alexias*, Cologne, 1996, p. 325; P. Armstrong, “Alexios Komnenos...”, p. 226. Alexios’ military campaign against the Cumans that crossed the Danube dates to 1095. An imposter of low origins was impersonating Leōn, a dead son of Rhōmanos IV. Hoping to fulfill his imperial pretensions, he seized the chance and joined the external enemy. According to Anna, Pseudo-Leōn was repudiated by Theodōra, Alexios’ sister and the widow of the real Leo, as well as by Leo’s adoptive uncle, Nikēphoros Bryennios. J.-C. Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance (963-1210)*, Paris, 1990, no. 129, p. 99-100. If one were to accept that Nikolaos used the *Alexias*, one would need to consider its composition (dated to the late 40s or early 50s) as a terminus for the *Life*; see L. Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, Cambridge, 2018, p. 175.

⁹⁵ In fact, this not the only reference to Nikolaos’ text by Prodromos in this miracle. Through the critique to eunuchs prompted by the choice of the eunuch general as main character, Prodromos is also alluding at the angelic being with the appearance of an eunuch that directs Meletios to Thebes (*VMelet*, BHG 1247, §4); it has an equivalent also in ἡ σύμμαχος, whom God sent Meletios to deliver him from all Arabian perils (*VMelet*, BHG 1248, §8, 15-6). See more in Ch. Messis, “Deux versions...”, p. 335; idem, *Les eunuques...*, p. 181-182, 188, 197-198.

Finally, on the narrative function of *typoi* in the *lives*, Derek Krueger writes that: “Appeal to biblical models functioned as a principle for selecting what to narrate and how to narrate it, dictating the reshaping, and even fabrication, of events. By employing typology as a structural feature, authors endeavored to sustain a close intertextual relationship with sacred history”.⁹⁶

As we have seen already, the consideration fits best the piece by Theodōros Prodromos. The sequence of narrated episodes appears more than once to have been driven by *typoi*. Before sampling again the adequacy of the statement by Krueger, it is necessary to mention that, at times, the chain is broken and the transition to the next narrative unit is made through narrative formulae or authorial interventions, as when Prodromos, enunciates through the narratorial voice how the hagiographer is left with no other means of selecting the miracles to recount other than, as the proverb goes, by casting a die.⁹⁷ Prodromos has Meletios typologically relating to Elijah in a story that follows the multiplication of nourishment (three loaves and some vegetables).⁹⁸ This time, the hagiographer is recounting a wonder where Meletios fills the emptied oil flask used by the churchwarden (νεωκόρος) to replenish the lamps of the church. Its content sufficed not just to fuel the lamps, but also to feed the monks. “The flask imitate the widow’s cruse” (μεμεῖται τὸν τῆς χήρας καμψάκην ἢ λήκυθος) turned inexhaustible by the Old Testament prophet.⁹⁹ The association with Elijah is narratologically exploited, as it serves as a nexus to the next section, where the setting changes, and the scene where the miracle occurs is the metochion consecrated to the Zealot.¹⁰⁰ The arid surroundings occasion a more ample reference to the Tishbite, but then another biblical protagonist takes his place. The monks accompanying Meletios suffered from the lack of a water source. However, instead of grumbling “against their Moses” (κατὰ τοῦ ἐαυτῶν Μωϋσέως), they invoke the staff that made water gush out from stone (Ex 17:5). Meletios complies and a rhetorical question, which reiterates the typological link with Moses, concludes the episode: εἶδετε καινὸν Μωϋσέα, εἶδετε ῥάβδου θαυματουργίαν παράδοξον. The wonder-working staff that Meletios was carrying as a new Moses is the element that vectors the narratorial sequence of the next three exorcistic miracles. Just as in the *Life* by Nikolaos, the staff is the instrument that cures the possessed through contact: the inflicted either simply touches the staff or has it inserted in his mouth.¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ D. Krueger, “Typology and Hagiography...”, p. 17.

⁹⁷ Prodromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §17, 10-19.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, §12: τριάδα μόνην ἄρτων καὶ ὀλίγην λαχάνων φυλλάδα.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, §13; 1 Kgs 17.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, §14.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, §15; two of the three cured demoniacs will later lapse, out of which one will be seized by demons once he will renounce the monastic garb and will be drowned by them like the Gadarene swine (Mt 5:1-20). In Nikolaos’ *VMelet* (BHG 1247), §31, 3-28: the cured ones are an epileptic

Conclusion

Both authors of Meletios' biographies consistently make use of typology and *synkrisis*. Prodromos firmly sets his *Life* in the framework of *synkrisis*, since the declared aim of his project, as exposed in the proem, is to counter and dissuade those who idealize the past and, hence, disdain the present, who limit virtue to former times due to their misunderstanding or disregard of the scriptures, which say that "everything belonging to antiquity is worthier of respect".¹⁰² Meletios, who "lived by the lees of life and this despised era", will prove that "the past does not have a larger share of the splendor according to Christ's grace than the present, nor does the present than the future".¹⁰³ Such pessimistic views concerning new saints, as the one eloquently evoked by Prodromos, are indeed already noticeable from the tenth century, as there is a certain hagiographic and intellectual snobbery in the twelfth century.¹⁰⁴

From the succinct analysis of the ascetic and thaumaturgic types that feature in the *Lives*, we can conclude the following: first, we can affirm with sufficient certainty that Theodōros Prodromos was indeed aware of the *Life* by Nikolaos of Methone (as indicated, for instance, by the intertextuality with the *Life* of Symeon the Elder by the Metaphrast resulting in an implicit *synkrisis* with the stylite saint). Secondly, Prodromos' use of *typoi* appears as a means of subversion destined for those most educated attendees of the literary *theatra* in Constantinople to appreciate. Prodromos was expecting his audience to engage with the text in a complex hermeneutical effort for decrypting allusions not only to the classical and Christian literary tradition but also to synchronous both *realia* and literary production.¹⁰⁵ Drawing rhetorical comparisons with results incongruous with the declared encomiastic aims was an often used means of subversion, especially during an *aetas rhetorica*, such as the twelfth-century.¹⁰⁶ As Paul Magdalino noted, "There were no theoretical limits to the rhetor's power with words [...] His 'double-tongued' art could create a reputation with

that had a seizure in the church's narthex, and another possessed named Theophylaktos. In addition, the staff is instrumental in curing the back of the horse that belonged to a member of Constantine Choirosphaktes' entourage (§30, 5-14).

¹⁰² A phrase of Basil the Great (*De ieiunio*, PG 31, col. 165) quoted, among others, by John of Damascus and Kyrillos of Scythopolis. Basil uses it in support for fasting, which is as ancient as humankind, the first commandment given to Adam. In turn, Prodromos shows that Cain, though second to Adam, is a fratricide, while the much later Moses made himself worthy of seeing God.

¹⁰³ Prodromos, *VMelet* (BHG 1248), §1, 25-7: Μὴ κατὰ τι τὸν χθὲς τοῦ σήμερον τοῦ ἐξῆς τῷ μεγαλείῳ τῆς κατὰ τὸν Ἰησοῦν χάριτος.

¹⁰⁴ P. Magdalino, "The Byzantine holy man...", p. 55, 57.

¹⁰⁵ The last two elements were possible to trace in the third level of interpretation, as Ch. Messis, "Une lecture subversive de la Vie de Basile est-elle possible? Stratégies narratives et objectifs politiques à la cour de Constantin VII Porphyrogénète", in Ch. Messis, M. Mullett, and I. Nilsson (eds.), *Storytelling in Byzantium...*, p. 201-222, at p. 211-212.

¹⁰⁶ M. Mullett, "How to criticise...", p. 262.

the techniques of Praise (ἔπαινος) or destroy it by the techniques of Invective (ψόγος), or compromise it by insidious Comparison (σύγκρισις)”.¹⁰⁷

The subversive traits constitute just one layer of the *Life* that Prodhomos intended mainly for an urban and aristocratic audience. Authoring hagiography was a means through which a professional writer could prove his skills, as evidenced by the nearly synchronous *hypomnema* on Lucia of Syracuse by Tzetzēs.¹⁰⁸ Within Prodhomos’ *œuvre*, the *Life* of Meletios stands not just beside his metrical calendar on saints and other of his poetic works to be associated with hagiography, but, probably, also an oration on the chains of Peter and their translation to Constantinople.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel...*, p. 335.

¹⁰⁸ BHG 996, dated to around 1154; see S. Efthymiadis and N. Kalogeras, “Audience, Language...”, p. 267.

¹⁰⁹ BHG 1488m, attributed to Prodhomos in three Athonite manuscripts; see V. von Falkenhausen, “Petri Kettenferien in Byzanz. Phantasie über ein Apostelfest”, in G. Prinzing and D. Simon (eds.), *Fest und Alltag in Byzanz*, Munich, 1990, p. 135-137, 144.

SPIRITUAL AND IMPERIAL AUTHORITY IN THE HAGIOGRAPHIC WORKS OF PHILOTHEOS KOKKINOS

Mihail Mitrea

In memoriam Ruth Macrides († 2019)¹

Introduction

Lives of saints are repositories of unique insights into the relationship between the imperial office and ecclesiastical authority in Byzantium. The *vitae* composed by Philotheos Kokkinos (ca. 1300-1378) for his contemporaries, especially Sabas the Younger (BHG 1606), Isidore Boucheir (BHG 962), and Gregory Palamas (BHG 718), offer valuable information for the study of this relationship in fourteenth-century Byzantium.² As a seminal figure of the hesychast movement, who played a leading role in orchestrating its societal breakthrough, Kokkinos employed hagiography as a versatile tool for promoting and legitimizing not only holy men, but also imperial figures, which served his own personal, ecclesiastical and political agenda. As this article contends, in his saints' *lives*, Kokkinos rhetorically constructs legitimacy for emperors, particularly John VI Kantakouzenos, promotes their image to the faithful, and advances a certain ideal of empire-church relations.

¹ I dedicate this contribution to Ruth Macrides, whose untimely demise deeply saddened the community of Byzantinists and deprived it of a gifted and dedicated scholar, as well as a dear mentor. I discussed several points presented in this paper with Ruth and I owe her the reference to F. Dölger's article on Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos. The Byzantine imperial office was a topic dear to Ruth, whose knowledge she significantly advanced through her research and publications. I presented shorter versions of this paper at conferences in Cardiff and Bucharest. I am grateful to Elena-Cristina Mitrea for her insightful comments on this paper. Translations are mine, unless otherwise indicated. Parts of this article have been completed over the course of the "Sacred Landscapes in Late Byzantium" research project that has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement no. 752292, which I gratefully acknowledge.

² For the critical edition of Philotheos Kokkinos' *vitae*, see D. G. Tsames, *Φιλοθέου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως τοῦ Κοκκίνου ἁγιολογικὰ ἔργα. Α'. Θεσσαλονικεῖς ἅγιοι*, Thessalonike, 1985. For a comprehensive analysis and contextualization of these saints' *lives*, see M. Mitrea, "A late-Byzantine hagiographer: Philotheos Kokkinos and his *vitae* of contemporary saints", PhD dissertation, The University of Edinburgh, 2018.

Politics and religion were inextricably linked in Byzantium. To employ an appropriate metaphor, there were two luminaries on the Golden Horn, the emperor and the patriarch, both drawing their power from Christ.³ The emperor initiated and played an essential role in the election of the patriarch by convoking the Holy Synod at Constantinople, reserving the right to reject its candidates and investing the patriarch-elect, while the patriarch performed the coronation of the emperor.⁴ Moreover, the two powers meddled in each other's affairs, as patriarchs, for instance, often chose political sides in matters of succession or civil war, engaging in what Casiday calls "theology-cum-politics" (e.g., Patriarchs Isaïas and John XIV Kalekas).⁵ The relations between *basileia* and *ekklēsia*, the two anchors of the Byzantine society, ranged on a continuum from close collaboration to open conflict, and underwent periods of intense strain over the centuries.⁶

This relationship has been a subject of longstanding interest for students of Byzantium, who have mined a wealth of textual sources to capture its nuances and vagaries throughout the thousand years of Byzantine history.⁷ Such

³ Cf. M. Grünbart, L. Rickelt, and M. M. Vučetić (eds.), *Zwei Sonnen am Goldenen Horn? Kaiserliche und patriarchale Macht im byzantinischen Mittelalter*, 2 vols, Münster, 2011, 2013.

⁴ On the election of the patriarch in Byzantium, see L. Bréhier, "L'investiture des patriarches de Constantinople au Moyen Âge", in *Miscellanea Giovanni Mercati*, vol. 3: *Letteratura e storia bizantina*, Vatican, 1946, p. 368-372; V. Laurent, "Le rituel de l'investiture du patriarche byzantin au début du XV^e siècle", *Bulletin de la Section Historique de l'Académie Roumaine* 28, 1947, p. 218-232; M.-H. Blanchet, "L'élection du patriarche à Byzance à la fin du Moyen Âge (XIV^e-XV^e siècles)", in C. Péneau (ed.), *Élections et pouvoirs politiques du VI^e au XVII^e siècle*, Pompignac, 2008, p. 63-78. On the evolution of the Byzantine coronation ritual, see F. E. Brightman, "Byzantine imperial coronations", *The Journal of Theological Studies* 2.7, 1901, p. 359-392; on the liturgical aspects of the imperial coronation, see M. Arranz, "Couronnement royal et autres promotions de cour. Les sacrements de l'institution de l'ancien Euchologe constantinopolitain III-1", *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 56, 1990, p. 83-133; see also P. Charanis, "Church-state relations in the Byzantine empire as reflected in the role of the patriarch in the coronation of the Byzantine emperor", in A. Blane and T. E. Bird (eds.), *The Ecumenical World of Orthodox Civilization. Russia and Orthodoxy*, vol. 3: *Essays in Honor of Georges Florovsky*, The Hague – Paris, 1974, p. 77-90; P. Yannopoulos, "Le couronnement de l'empereur à Byzance: rituel et fond institutionnel", *Byzantion* 61, 1991, p. 73-89; G. P. Majeska, "The emperor and his Church: imperial ritual in the Church of St. Sophia", in H. Maguire (ed.), *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, Washington, D.C., 1997, p. 1-11.

⁵ A. Casiday, "John XIV (Kalekas), Byzantine theology-cum-politics and the early hesychast controversy", in *Le Patriarcat Œcuménique de Constantinople aux XIV^e-XVI^e siècles: rupture et continuité*, Paris, 2007, p. 19-35.

⁶ Most notably during the iconomachy, when the Church distanced itself from imperial power. On iconomachy in Byzantium, see L. Brubaker and J. Haldon, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era, c. 680–850: A History*, Cambridge, New York, 2011; M.-F. Auzépy, *L'Iconoclisme*, Paris, 2006; cf. T. Teoteoi, "Empire et sacerdoce à Byzance au temps des Paléologues", *Revue des études sud-est européennes* 33, 1995, p. 121-132.

⁷ From the vast literature on the rapports between the imperial office and ecclesiastical authority in Byzantium, see, for instance, V. Laurent, "Les droits de l'empereur en matière ecclésiastique.

endeavor is surely not devoid of caveats and difficulties, since, as Drake aptly pointed out, “[t]he categories of ‘Church’ and ‘Empire’ (or, more broadly, ‘church’ and ‘state’) are so firmly ingrained in modern thought that they pose significant obstacles to a full understanding of the relationship between Christian and imperial rulers that began in late antiquity”.⁸ What today are designated in general and abstract terms as “church” and “state” were much less homogenous entities in Byzantium than their modern counterparts. For instance, tensions often arose in the Church between the secular and the monastic clergy, as well as between different groups from the latter category. Therefore, variations in the protracted evolution of the rapport between imperial office and the ecclesiastical authority depended as much on context, as on the interests and agenda of specific groups and individuals (e.g., emperors and patriarchs) involved.⁹

L'accord de 1380/82”, *Revue des études byzantines* 13, 1955, p. 5-20; D. J. Geanakoplos, “Church and state in the Byzantine Empire: A reconsideration of the problem of caesaropapism”, *Church History* 34, 1965, p. 381-403; S. N. Troianos, “Kirche und Staat: Die Berührungspunkte der beiden Rechtsordnungen in Byzanz”, *Ostkirchliche Studien* 37, 1988, p. 291-296; idem, “Nomos und Kanon in Byzanz”, *Kanon* 10, 1991, p. 37-51; G. Dagron, “Le caractère sacerdotal de la royauté d’après les commentaires canoniques du XII^e siècle”, in N. Oikonomides (ed.), *To Βυζάντιο κατά τον 12^ο αιώνα. Κανονικό Δίκαιο, κράτος και κοινωνία*, Athens, 1991, p. 165-178; idem, *Empereur et prêtre: Étude sur le «césaropapisme» byzantin*, Paris, 1996 = *Emperor and Priest. The Imperial Office in Byzantium*, trans. by J. Birrell, Cambridge, UK, 2003; K. G. Pitsakis, “La συναλληλία, principe fondamental des rapports entre l’Église et l’État (Idéologie et pratique byzantines et transformations contemporaines)”, *Kanon* 10, 1991, p. 17-35; idem, “Empire et Église (le modèle de la Nouvelle Rome): la question des ordres juridiques”, in M. P. Baccari (ed.), *Diritto e religione da Roma a Costantinopoli a Mosca*, Rome, 1994, p. 107-123; idem, “Quelques réflexions au sujet d’individu et pouvoir” dans l’Empire romain d’Orient: idéologie politique et pensée canonique”, *Méditerranées* 16, 1998, p. 139-166; idem, “Sainteté et empire. À propos de la sainteté impériale: formes de sainteté ‘d’office’ et de sainteté collective dans l’Empire d’Orient?”, *Bizantinistica* 3, 2001, p. 155-227; idem, “La révolution dans le droit de l’Église d’Orient. Doctrine et pratique canonique de la Nouvelle Rome: une brèche dans le concept de symphonie?”, in P. Catalano and G. Lohbrano (eds.), *Antichità e rivoluzioni da Roma a Costantinopoli a Mosca*, Rome, 2002, p. 235-260; idem, “Un laïc: l’empereur romain d’Orient”, in P. Catalano and P. Siniscalco (eds.), *Laicità tra diritto e religione da Roma a Costantinopoli a Mosca*, Rome, 2009, p. 123-141 (= “L’empereur romain d’Orient: un laïc”, *Kanon* 15, 1999, p. 196-221). See also M.-H. Congourdeau, “L’empereur et le patriarche dans l’empire byzantin”, *Istina* 40, 2005, p. 8-21, M. Gallina, *Incoronati da Dio. Per una storia del pensiero politico bizantino*, Rome, 2016, who unfortunately does not include the Palaiologan era in his synthesis; for the late Byzantine period, see T. Kiousopoulou, *Βασιλεύς ή οικονομός. Πολιτική εξουσία και ιδεολογία πριν την Άλωση*, Athens, 2007 = *Emperor or Manager: Power and Political Ideology in Byzantium before 1453*, trans. by P. Magdalino, Seyssel, 2011, and most recently P. Guran, *Rendre la couronne au Christ. Étude sur la fin de l’idée impériale byzantine*, Heidelberg, 2021; cf. idem, “Sainteté royale et pouvoir universel en terre d’Orthodoxie (fin du Moyen Âge et début de l’époque moderne)”, PhD dissertation, EHESS, 2003.

⁸ H. A. Drake, “Church and empire”, in S. Ashbrook Harvey and D. G. Hunter (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, Oxford, 2008, p. 446-464, here at p. 447.

⁹ K. G. Pitsakis, “Sainteté et empire...”, p. 158-159, underlines that “une question de ‘rapports entre l’État et l’Église’ semble inconcevable à Byzance. Le problème ne se posait parfois qu’au

Textual sources and Byzantine authors, such as Emperor Justinian's famous preface to his *Novel* 6 (535), the ninth-century *Eisagogē*, the twelfth-century canonist Theodore Balsamon, and the well-known 1393 *Letter* of Patriarch Antony IV to Basil, the grand prince of Moscow, articulate diverse stances on the ideal configuration of the rapport between *basileia* and *ekklēsia*. For instance, Justinian I (r. 527-565) states in the preamble to *Novel* 6 that both priesthood (*hierōsynē*) and sovereignty (*basileia*) derive their authority from a common divine source (*archē*) and their rapport entails a distinction between the roles of the clergy and that of the emperor. The latter regulates the lives of both his priestly and lay subjects, while the former prays for divine support for the emperor. In this way, there is a concord (*symphōnia*) between the two, which benefits everyone:

The greatest gifts that God, in his celestial benevolence, has bestowed on mankind are priesthood and sovereignty, the one serving on matters divine, and the other ruling over human affairs, and caring for them. Each proceeds from one and the same *source*, and regulates human life. Thus, nothing could have as great a claim on the attention of sovereigns as the honor of priests, seeing that they are the very ones who constantly offer prayer to God on the sovereigns' behalf. Hence, should the one be above reproach in every respect, and enjoy access to God, while the other keeps in correct and proper order the realm that has been entrusted to it, there will be satisfactory harmony, conferring every conceivable benefit on the human race.¹⁰

As Congourdeau pointed out, this relation was “dissymmetric”,¹¹ since *hierōsynē* was not exempt from imperial regulation. This is contrary to the view of Pope Gelasius I (492-496), who attributed a higher importance to the priestly than to the imperial office.¹² Correspondingly, the *Eisagogē*, attributed to Patriarch

niveau personnel, le seul où une question de ‘rapports’ pût être conçue: rapports entre personnes, prédominance chaque fois de la personnalité la plus forte, compte tenu de ses prétentions politiques, de la puissance de sa position dans les circonstances, de la conjoncture historique”.

¹⁰ D. J. D. Miller and P. Sarris, *The Novels of Justinian. A Complete Annotated English Translation*, Cambridge, New York, 2018, p. 97-98 (translation slightly modified, my emphasis). Cf. F. Dvornik, *Early Christian and Byzantine Political Philosophy: Origins and Background*, Washington, D.C., 1996, vol. 2, p. 817; G. Dagron, *Empereur et prêtre...*, p. 312-313 = *Emperor and Priest...*, p. 303-304; C. Rapp, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity: The Nature of Christian Leadership in an Age of Transition*, Berkeley, Calif., 2005, p. 277.

¹¹ M.-H. Congourdeau, “L’empereur et le patriarche...”.

¹² In his letter (decretal) sent to Emperor Anastasios (r. 491-518) in 494 (*Ep.* 8, PL 59, col. 42), Pope Gelasius I contends that “By all means, there are two [forces] (*duo sunt quippe*), o august Emperor, by which this world is primarily ruled: the sacred authority (*auctoritas sacra*) of the archpriests and the royal power (*regalis potestas*). Among these, much heavier is the responsibility (literally, “weight”) of the priests, inasmuch as they will give to the Lord an account for the kings themselves in the divine judgement”. On Gelasius I’s decretal and view on the rapport between the

Photios (858-886), states in its preamble that, like the Holy Trinity, there ought to be a trinity of separate powers of authority to rule Byzantium (that is, the emperor, the patriarch, and the law). Among these, the role of the emperor seems to have been articulated as subservient to that of the patriarch.¹³ In his commentary on canon 16 of the Council of Carthage (419), Theodore Balsamon explains that the Byzantine emperor is above the law and the ecclesiastical canons (*princeps legibus solutus*), having the authority (*exousia*) to appoint and replace bishops.¹⁴ In the fourteenth century, the understanding of the relationship between the two powers shifted towards a greater need for cooperation, as several sources indicate. For instance, in a synodal act issued in June 1380, the

ecclesiastical *auctoritas* and the imperial *potestas*, see, for example, F. Dvornik, "Pope Gelasius and Emperor Anastasius", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 44, 1951, p. 111-116; W. Ensslin, "Auctoritas und Potestas: zur Zweigewaltenlehre des Papstes Gelasius I", *Historisches Jahrbuch* 74, 1955, p. 661-668; M. H. Hoeflich, "Gelasius I and Roman law: one further word", *The Journal of Theological Studies* 26.1, 1975, p. 114-119; H. A. Drake, "Church and empire".

¹³ For a critical edition of the *Introduction* to the *Eisagogē*, see A. Schminck, *Studien zu mittelbyzantinischen Rechtsbüchern*, Frankfurt am Main, 1986, p. 1-15. For the different scholarly interpretations of the *Eisagogē* and especially its second and third titles, *περὶ βασιλέως* and *περὶ πατριάρχου* respectively, see H.-G. Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reich*, Munich, 1959, p. 525, who characterizes the *Eisagogē* as "eine Art Zweischwertertheorie mit sehr selbständiger Auffassung von der Gewalt des Patriarchen". A. Schminck, "'Rota tu volubilis'. Kaisermacht und Patriarchenmacht in Mosaiken", in L. Burgmann, M. Th. Fögen, and A. Schminck (eds.), *Cupido legum*, Frankfurt am Main, 1985, p. 211-234, at p. 211-214, contended that this legal manual advocated for the subordination of the emperor to the patriarch, while S. N. Troianos, "Ὁ μέγας Φώτιος καὶ οἱ διατάξεις τῆς Εἰσαγωγῆς. Μερικὲς παρατηρήσεις ὡς πρὸς τὶς σχέσεις Ἐκκλησίας καὶ Πολιτείας", *Ἐκκλησία καὶ Θεολογία* 10, 1989-1991, p. 489-504, at p. 497-498, idem, "Nomos und Kanon", p. 40-41, and idem, "Kirche und Staat...", p. 292-293, argued that on the whole the *Eisagogē* advocated for an equal footing of *basileia* and *ekklēsia*, which operate not as two separate powers, but in consonance as an inseparable union. See also K. G. Pitsakis, "La συναλληλία...", p. 20-21; idem, "Empire et Église...", p. 107-109, who stresses that the rapport between the *basileia* and *ekklēsia* is not a separation of two separate powers, but an entity through consonance (*συναλληλία*). On the *Eisagogē*, see also J. H. A. Lokin, "The significance of law and legislation in the law books of the ninth to eleventh centuries", in A. E. Laiou and D. Simon (eds.), *Law and Society in Byzantium. Ninth–Twelfth Centuries*, Washington, D.C., 1994, p. 71-91, at 78-83; Z. Chitwood, *Byzantine Legal Culture and the Roman Legal Tradition, 867–1056*, Cambridge, UK, 2017, p. 29-32; M.-H. Congourdeau, "Deux patriarches palamites en rivalité: Kallistos et Philothée", in *Le Patriarcat Œcuménique...*, p. 37-53, at p. 45-46.

¹⁴ PG 138, col. 93AC; G. A. Rhalles and M. Potles, *Σύνταγμα τῶν ἱερῶν καὶ θεῶν κανόνων*, vol. 3, Athens, 1853, p. 344-351, at p. 349: ὁ βασιλεὺς οὐτε νόμοις οὐτε κανόσιν ὑπόκειται. On the relationship of the Byzantine emperor to the law, see D. Simon, "*Princeps legibus solutus*: Die Stellung des byzantinischen Kaisers zum Gesetz", in D. Nörr and D. Simon (eds.), *Gedächtnisschrift für Wolfgang Kunkel*, Frankfurt am Main, 1984, p. 449-492, esp. p. 475-477; see G. Dagron, "Lawful society and legitimate power: ἔννομος πολιτεία, ἔννομος ἀρχή", in A. E. Laiou and D. Simon (eds.), *Law and Society in Byzantium...*, p. 27-51, at p. 34, 39. For Balsamon as a theorist of imperial power, see G. Dagron, *Empereur et prêtre...*, p. 256-289 = *Emperor and Priest...*, p. 248-281; B. H. Stolte, "'Law is king of all things?' The emperor and the law", in S. Tougher (ed.), *The Emperor in the Byzantine World. Papers from the Forty-Seventh Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, London, 2019, p. 171-178.

hesychast Patriarch Neilos Kerameus (1380-1388) underlines the unity and strong relationship between *basileia* and *ekklēsia*:

Basileia and *ekklēsia* are the most powerful [institutions] in our rule; for one legislates the external and visible [matters], while the other presides over the inner and intelligible [matters], and, by giving and receiving from one another what is appropriate, together become a great wealth for the subjects, and turn into agents of great benefit for them. One would therefore see their wonderful intertwining and unbroken unity, for each becomes rich with these from the other [...].¹⁵

Finally, in his *Letter* of 1393, which Pitsakis deems “the last manifest of the Byzantine political ideology”,¹⁶ Patriarch Antony IV rebukes the grand prince of Moscow for having removed the name of the Byzantine emperor from the diptychs.¹⁷ He asserts the importance of the emperor for the Church and their indissociable link:

The holy emperor has a great place in the Church, [...] for even if, by God’s permission, the nations have constricted the authority and domain of the emperor, still to this day the emperor possesses the same election (*cheirotomia*) from the Church and the same rank and the same prayers

¹⁵ F. Miklosich and J. Müller (eds.), *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana*, vol. 2: *Acta Patriarchatus Constantinopolitani MCCCXV–MCCCCII*, Vienna, 1862, no. 335, p. 9-11, at p. 9-10: καὶ γὰρ βασιλεία καὶ ἐκκλησία τῆς ἐν ἡμῖν ἡγεμονίας τὰ κράτιστα· ἡ μὲν γὰρ τοῖς ἐκτὸς καὶ φαινομένοις νομοθετεῖ, ἡ δὲ τοῖς ἐντὸς καὶ νοουμένοις ἐπιστατεῖ, καὶ ἅμφω παρ’ ἀλλήλων ἀντιδιδούσαι τε καὶ λαμβάνουσαι τὰ προσήκοντα μέγα τι τοῖς ἀρχομένοις καθίστανται χρῆμα, καὶ μεγάλης αὐτοῖς ὠφελείας γίνονται πρόξενοι· καὶ τοίνυν ἴδοι τις ἂν θαυμασίαν τὴν τούτων πλοκὴν καὶ τὴν ἔνωσιν ἀδιάρρηκτον, ἃ γὰρ ἑκάτερα παρὰ τῆς ἐτέρας πλουτεῖ [...]. J. Darrouzès (ed.), *Les Regestes des actes du Patriarcat de Constantinople*, I. *Les Actes des patriarches*, fasc. 6: *Les Regestes de 1377 à 1410*, Paris, 1979, no. 2704, p. 24-25.

¹⁶ K. G. Pitsakis, “Sainteté et empire...”, p. 161.

¹⁷ On the *Letter* of Patriarch Antony IV, see, for instance, D. I. Mureșan and P. Ș. Năsturel, “Du καθολικός βασιλεὺς à l’αὐθέντης καθολικός. Notes sur les avatars d’une idée politique”, *Études byzantines et post-byzantines* 6, 2011, p. 251-281, esp. p. 259-263. The West often regarded the relationship of the Church to the imperial office in Byzantium as submissive. For instance, at the Ferrara-Florence council (1438-1439), during a one-to-one conversation (with the help of an interpreter), Pope Eugenius IV reportedly reproached Patriarch Joseph II the servitude of the *ekklēsia* to the secular power. According to Sylvester Syropoulos’ *Memoirs*, Patriarch Joseph II briefed his delegation that “[t]he only thing that he [i.e., the Pope] reproached us for was that we have placed the Church under great servitude to the worldly power”. V. Laurent, *Les «Mémoires» du Grand Ecclésiarque de l’Église de Constantinople Sylvestre Syropoulos sur le concile de Florence (1438–1439)*, Paris, 1971, p. 240 (IV.38, ll. 11-12): Τοῦτο δὲ μόνον ἐμέμψατο ἡμῖν, ὅτι ὑπὸ πολλὴν δουλείαν ὑπετάξαμεν τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν εἰς τὴν κοσμικὴν ἀρχήν. English translation in F. Kondyli, V. Andriopoulou, E. Panou, and M. B. Cunningham (eds.), *Sylvester Syropoulos on Politics and Culture in the Fifteenth-Century Mediterranean. Themes and Problems in the Memoirs, Section IV*, London, 2014, p. 228 (modified).

[from the Church]. [...] Therefore, my son, you are wrong to affirm that we have the Church without an emperor, for it is impossible for Christians to have a Church and no emperor. For the *basileia* and the *ekklēsia* have a great unity and communion, and cannot be separated from each other.¹⁸

Following a “golden age” during the middle Byzantine period,¹⁹ imperial authority was weakened in late Byzantium by external threats and internal dissent. Kokkinos’ life in particular coincided with a turbulent period in Byzantium, in which political and religious dissent (i.e., the hesychast debates) was coupled with territorial contraction, increased impoverishment, lack of social cohesion, and social unrest.²⁰ While the emperor ultimately came to rule

¹⁸ F. Miklosich and J. Müller (eds.), *Acta et diplomata...*, vol. 2, no. 447, p. 188-192, here at p. 190-191: ὁ βασιλεὺς ὁ ἅγιος πολλὸν τόπον ἔχει εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, [...] εἰ γὰρ καὶ συγχωρήσει Θεοῦ τὰ ἔθνη περιεκύκλωσαν τὴν ἀρχὴν τοῦ βασιλείως καὶ τὸν τόπον, ἀλλὰ μέχρι τῆς σήμερον τὴν αὐτὴν χειροτονίαν ἔχει ὁ βασιλεὺς παρὰ τῆς ἐκκλησίας καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν τάξιν καὶ τὰς αὐτὰς εὐχὰς [...] οὐδὲν οὖν ἐνὶ καλόν, υἱέ μου, ἵνα λεγῇς ὅτι ἐκκλησίαν ἔχομεν, οὐχὶ βασιλεία, οὐκ ἐνὶ δυνατόν εἰς τοὺς Χριστιανοὺς ἐκκλησίαν ἔχειν καὶ βασιλεία οὐκ ἔχειν· ἡ γὰρ βασιλεία καὶ ἐκκλησία πολλὴν ἔνωσιν καὶ κοινωνίαν ἔχει, καὶ οὐκ ἐνὶ δυνατόν ἀπ’ ἀλλήλων διαίρεθῆναι. J. Darrouzès (ed.), *Les Regestes de 1377 à 1410*, no. 2931, p. 210-212. Partial English trans. by D. J. Geanakoplos, *Byzantium. Church, Society, and Civilization Seen through Contemporary Eyes*, Chicago, 1984, p. 143-144, here at p. 143 (modified).

¹⁹ P. Magdalino, “*Basileia*: The idea of monarchy in Byzantium, 600–1200”, in A. Kaldellis and N. Siniossoglou (eds.), *The Cambridge Intellectual History of Byzantium*, Cambridge, UK, 2017, p. 575-598.

²⁰ On late Byzantium, see N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins: Politics and Society in the Late Empire*, Cambridge, New York, 2009; D. Angelov (ed.), *Church and Society in Late Byzantium*, Kalamazoo, Mich., 2009; D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium, 1261–1453*, Cambridge, UK, 1993; S. Ćurčić and D. Mouriki (eds.), *The Twilight of Byzantium: Aspects of Cultural and Religious History in the Late Byzantine Empire*, Princeton, N.J., 1991. On the Zealot revolt in Thessalonike, see M.-H. Congourdeau, *Les zélotes: une révolte urbaine à Thessalonique au 14^e siècle: le dossier des sources*, Paris, 2013; eadem (ed.), *Thessalonique au temps des Zélotes (1342–1350)*, Paris, 2014; C. Malatras, “Ο μύθος των Ζηλωτών της Θεσσαλονίκης”, *Βυζαντικά* 30, 2012-2013, p. 229-242; I. Ševčenko, “Nicolas Cabasilas’ ‘anti-Zealot’ discourse: a reinterpretation”, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 11, 1957, p. 81-171; J. W. Barker, “Late Byzantine Thessalonike: A second city’s challenges and responses”, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 57, 2003, p. 5-33, esp. p. 16-21; see also C. Bakirtzis, “The urban continuity and size of late Byzantine Thessalonike”, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 57, 2003, p. 35-64. On the fourteenth-century hesychast debates, see, for instance, A. Rigo (ed.), *Gregorio Palamas e oltre. Studi e documenti sulle controversie teologiche del XIV secolo bizantino*, Florence, 2004; A. Fyrigos, *Dalla controversia palamitica alla polemica esicastica*, Rome, 2005; J. Nadal-Cañellas, *La résistance d’Akindynos à Grégoire Palamas. Enquête historique, avec traduction et commentaire de quatre traités édités récemment*, 2 vols, Leuven, 2006; J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Hesychasm: Historical, Theological and Social Problems: Collected Studies*, London, 1974; D. Krausmüller, “The rise of hesychasm”, in M. Angold (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, vol. 5: *Eastern Christianity*, Cambridge, UK, 2006, p. 101-126; and more recently N. Russell, *Gregory Palamas. The Hesychast Controversy and the Debate with Islam. Documents relating to Gregory Palamas*, Liverpool, 2020; idem, “The hesychast controversy”, in A. Kaldellis and N. Siniossoglou (eds.), *The Cambridge Intellectual History of Byzantium*, p. 494-508.

over a city-state, the patriarch exercised his authority over a large Christian flock that extended well beyond the political boundaries of the empire, as richly evidenced by the *Register of the Patriarchate of Constantinople*.²¹ Patriarchs were in fact fond of emphasizing their authority over the entire Christian *oikoumenē* and referred to themselves as leaders of all Christians. For instance, in a letter to metropolitan Alexis, dated to June 1370, Kokkinos wrote that “[s]ince God has appointed our Humility as leader of all Christians found anywhere on the inhabited earth, as solicitor and guardian of their souls, all of them depend on me, the father and teacher of them all”.²² Runciman, Dagron and Angelov argued that the enhanced authority and (moral) prestige of the Church in the Palaiologan period was coupled with a decline of the imperial authority over Church matters, and thus advanced a hierocratic vision of late Byzantium, which implies a superiority of *ekklēsia* over *basileia*.²³ Based on ceremonial protocol evidence provided by Pseudo-Kodinos, Macrides challenged this view and convincingly argued that the influence of the emperor over the Church remained strong even in the twilight of Byzantium. Although events such as the Arsenite schism and the attempts to unite the Churches cast a shadow over the position of the emperor, they did not diminish its power to the extent previously assumed.²⁴ The emperor continued to play an important role in the process of appointing the patriarch, as will be discussed below in the case of Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos.

In addition to sources such as those discussed above (laws, synodal acts, protocols, letters), hagiography also offers valuable insights into the relationship

²¹ See *Das Register des Patriarchats von Konstantinopel*, vol. 1: *Edition und Übersetzung aus der Urkunden aus den Jahren 1315–1331*, ed. by H. Hunger and O. Kresten; vol. 2: *Edition und Übersetzung aus der Urkunden aus den Jahren 1337–1350*, ed. by H. Hunger, O. Kresten, E. Kislinger, and C. Cupane; vol. 3: *Edition und Übersetzung aus der Urkunden aus den Jahren 1350–1363*, ed. by J. Koder, M. Hinterberger, and O. Kresten, Vienna, 1981, 1995, 2001. For a series of relevant studies on the *Register*, see C. Gastgeber, E. Mitsiou, and J. Preiser-Kapeller (eds.), *The Register of the Patriarchate of Constantinople: An Essential Source for the History and Church of Late Byzantium*, Vienna, 2013; cf. D. Angelov, “Introduction” to *Church and Society*..., p. 1-7, here at p. 2.

²² F. Miklosich and J. Müller (eds.), *Acta et diplomata*..., vol. 1, Vienna, 1860, no. 266, p. 520-522, here at p. 521: ἐπεὶ γὰρ ὁ Θεὸς τὴν ἡμῶν μετριότητα ἔταξεν προστάτην τῶν ἀπανταχοῦ τῆς οἰκουμένης εὐρισκομένων Χριστιανῶν καὶ κηδεμόνα καὶ φροντιστὴν τῶν ψυχῶν αὐτῶν, πάντες εἰς ἐμὲ ἀνάκεινται, πατέρα ὄντα καὶ διδάσκαλον πάντων. English trans. by J. Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia. A Study of Byzantino-Russian Relations in the Fourteenth Century*, Cambridge, New York, 1981, p. 283-284, here at p. 283.

²³ 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*, New York, 1968; G. Dagron, *Empereur et prêtre*..., p. 290-322 = *Emperor and Priest*..., p. 282-312; D. Angelov (ed.), *Church and Society*..., p. 1-7, 91-157; idem, *Imperial Ideology and Political Thought in Byzantium, 1204–1330*, Cambridge, UK, 2007, p. 351-416.

²⁴ R. Macrides, “Emperor and Church in the last centuries of Byzantium”, *Studies in Church History* 54, 2018, p. 123-143.

between *basileia* and *ekklēsia*. Byzantine hagiographers have chronicled encounters between emperors and holy men, or what Morris would call “political saints”,²⁵ who offered counselling to the Byzantine elite, as well as imperial figures, exercising spiritual influence over them.²⁶ Emperors often sought to associate with these charismatic figures in order to benefit their own image and gain legitimacy based on their spiritual capital. In the middle Byzantine period, examples of such holy men include Cyril Phileotes—whose cell “acts as a magnet to the politics of the age”—and Lazaros of Mount Galesion, while in late Byzantium imperial figures sought Maximos Kausokalybites (the “hutburner”) and Sabas the Younger for spiritual counsel.²⁷

In the following, this paper analyzes the dynamics between Kokkinos’ saintly heroes, particularly Sabas the Younger, and the powerful of the day, especially Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos. It first discusses briefly Kokkinos’ literary representation of imperial figures in his saints’ *lives*; it focuses next on

²⁵ R. Morris, “The political saint in Byzantium in the tenth and eleventh centuries”, in J. Petersohn (ed.), *Politik und Heiligenverehrung im Hochmittelalter*, Sigmaringen, 1994, p. 385-402; cf. eadem, “The political saint of the eleventh century”, in S. Hackel (ed.), *The Byzantine Saint*, London, 1981, p. 43-50.

²⁶ On the rapports between holiness, monks, the imperial authority and/or the institutional Church, see the pioneering articles by É. Patlagean, “Sainteté et pouvoir”, in S. Hackel (ed.), *The Byzantine Saint*, p. 88-105, and “Les Stoudites, l’empereur et Rome: figure byzantine d’un monachisme réformateur”, in *Bisanzio, Roma e l’Italia nell’Alto Medioevo*, SSAM 34, Spoleto, 1988, p. 429-460, repr. in É. Patlagean, *Figures du pouvoir à Byzance (IX^e-XII^e siècle)*, Spoleto, 2001, p. 173-195 and p. 73-98 respectively; A. E. Laiou, “The general and the saint: Michael Maleinos and Nikephoros Phokas”, in *EYΨYXIA. Mélanges offerts à Hélène Ahrweiler*, Paris, 1998, vol. 2, p. 399-412; M. Kaplan, “Les moines et le clergé séculier à Byzance (V^e-XII^e siècles)”, in *Byzance. Villes e campagnes*, Paris, 2006, p. 240-251; see also idem (ed.), *Monastères, images, pouvoirs et société à Byzance*, Paris, 2006; B. Flusin, “Saint Sabas: un leader monastique à l’autorité contestée”, in A. Camplani et G. Filoramo (eds.), *Foundations of Power and Conflicts of Authority in Late-Antique Monasticism. Proceedings of the International Seminar, Turin, December 2-4, 2004*, Leuven, 2007, p. 195-216; S. Métivier, “Aristocrate et saint: le cas d’Eudokimos”, in B. Caseau (ed.), *Les réseaux familiaux. Antiquité tardive et Moyen Âge. In memoriam A. Laiou et É. Patlagean*, Paris, 2012, p. 95-112; R. Morris, *Monks and Laymen in Byzantium, 843-1118*, Cambridge, UK, 1995; R. Benoit-Meggenis, *L’empereur et le moine: les relations du pouvoir impérial avec les monastères à Byzance (IX^e-XIII^e siècle)*, Lyon, 2017; cf. the insightful review of Benoit-Meggenis’ monograph by A. Pirtea in *BMCR* 2020.06.22. On the relationship between power and holiness, see also P. Magdalino’s chapter in this volume, p. 11-25.

²⁷ On the *vita* of St Cyril Phileotes (BHG 468), composed by Nicholas Kataskepenos, see M. Mullett, “Literary biography and historical genre in the *Life* of Cyril Phileotes by Nicholas Kataskepenos”, in P. Odorico and P. Agapitos (eds.), *Les vies des saints à Byzance: Genre littéraire ou biographie historique?*, Paris, 2004, p. 387-409, here at p. 399, repr. in M. Mullett, *Letters, Literacy and Literature in Byzantium*, Aldershot, 2007, no. XV. For the *vita* of St Lazaros (BHG 979), composed by Gregory Kellarites, see R. P. H. Greenfield, *The Life of Lazaros of Mt. Galesion. An Eleventh-Century Pillar Saint*, Washington, D.C., 2000; cf. R. Morris, “The political saint in Byzantium...”, p. 396-397; on St Lazaros’ connections with high-ranked officials in Constantinople, see R. Morris, *Monks and Laymen...*, p. 104-105, and eadem, “The political saint of the eleventh century”, p. 48-50; for the *vitae* of Maximos Kausokalybites, see below.

the account of the encounter between John VI Kantakouzenos and the renowned holy man Sabas the Younger, arguably infused with the hagiographer's own views on the ideal relationship between the imperial and spiritual power. Finally, insights from a set of prayers for the emperors delivered by Kokkinos and Palamas upon their ordination as metropolitans of Thracian Herakleia and Thessalonike respectively complement the analysis of the hagiographic material.

Imperial figures in Kokkinos' *lives* of saints

Kokkinos' *vitae* include a wealth of imperial figures in their cast of characters, among whom the Palaiologoi Michael VIII, Andronikos II, and Andronikos III, and the Kantakouzenoi John VI and his son Matthew, as well as other members of the imperial family, such as Constantine Palaiologos, the son of Andronikos II, Anna of Savoy, and Helene Kantakouzene Palaiologina. Throughout his *vitae*, Kokkinos praises imperial figures as customary, while subtly criticizing others in a manner telling of his political standpoint.

In the *Life of Sabas*, for instance, Kokkinos underlines that Emperor Andronikos II wrote letters urging all the monks practicing *askēsis* in various corners of Mount Athos to seek refuge in fortified monasteries until the end of the Turkish raids of ca. 1308. Kokkinos equates the emperor's concern for saving the Athonite monks with saving the empire (*basileia*).²⁸ This is telling of his views on the role of the emperor as guardian of his Christian subjects, including Athos, styled as the heart of the empire. This echoes Dagron's observation that "the feeling that the church and empire were indissociable prevailed in Byzantium".²⁹

The most extensive presence of Andronikos II occurs in the *Life of Gregory Palamas*, in the section covering the holy man's childhood.³⁰ Kokkinos underlines the high esteem in which the emperor holds Palamas' father, Constantine. Andronikos II also takes great pride in the young Palamas and makes plans for his future at the imperial court. However, these plans are thwarted by the holy man's decision to pursue a monastic life. Kokkinos reports that the emperor deems Palamas' departure from the imperial palace as a great loss and "amputation of the empire" and reportedly uses promises of high official dignities to convince him, to no avail, to stay.³¹ Constantine, Andronikos II's son, as well as Andronikos III, his grandson, also feature in Palamas' *vita*. Palamas' father, Constantine, convinces the former to return a large sum of

²⁸ Kokkinos, *Life of Sabas* (hereafter *v.Sab.*) 13. 27-29: τὸ δὲ πλεῖστον Ἄθω τὸν θαυμαστὸν ἐπὶ νοῦν ἔχων καὶ τὸ σφύζεσθαι τὸν χορὸν τῶν ἁγίων ἐκείνων περὶ πλείστου τιθέμενος, οὕτω γὰρ αὐτῷ σφύζεσθαι καὶ τὴν βασιλείαν.

²⁹ G. Dagron, *Emperor and Priest...*, p. 311.

³⁰ Kokkinos, *Life of Gregory Palamas* (hereafter *v.G.Pal.*) 4-5, 13.

³¹ Kokkinos, *v.G.Pal.* 13. 4-5: τοῦ κράτους ἀκρωτηριασμόν.

money to a poor widow,³² and acts as “father and *didaskalos*” for the latter. Moreover, Kokkinos pens a brief psychological sketch of young Andronikos III as intelligent, sharp and keen to gain primacy in all things.³³

In the *Life of Gregory Palamas*, Kokkinos praises the dowager Empress Anna of Savoy (1306-1365/6) as a “Christ loving empress” who defended Orthodoxy and deposed Patriarch John XIV Kalekas, whom he describes as “the falsely called leader of the Church”.³⁴ Kokkinos particularly extols her prompt actions in defense of Orthodoxy: “When she heard about these things, the wonderful empress, who is commendably guarding the right belief, sends *at once* to John, the defender of heresy, exhorting him to break off communion once and for all with those sharing the opinions of Barlaam and Akindynos”.³⁵ Moreover, Kokkinos underscores that God rewarded the empress with a long imperial power due to her active support and defense of Orthodoxy:

It was for this reason, I believe, that her imperial role (*ta tēs basileias*) was preserved for her into her old age by God, who rightly rewarded her wonderful zeal for the right belief and her patronage of the Church and alliance with it, as well as her excellent imitation and courage for the right belief of her wonderful emperor and husband [Andronikos III].³⁶

Kokkinos praises the empress along similar lines in his *Life of Sabas*. In the lengthy laudatory digression on Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos, examined below, he writes that in the immediate aftermath of the civil war, John VI finds out that his “sister and empress” Anna also opposes and fights along with him against the rivals of the Church, being zealous like her deceased husband. Thus, she ousted the defender of the opposing party (i.e., the anti-hesychasts), assembling the synod of the “champions of Orthodoxy”, which condemned and deposed Kalekas. In this way, concludes Kokkinos, “she thought and acted in a manner worthy of the sacred *basileia*”.³⁷ Kokkinos also praises Empress Anna

³² *Ibid.*, 5. 14-36.

³³ *Ibid.*, 4. 8-16.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 77. 21-22: Ὁ δὲ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ψευδώνυμος ἀρχηγός.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 78. 1-4: Ὡς γὰρ ἦσθετο καὶ τούτων ἡ καλῶς τῆς εὐσεβείας προΐσταμένη θαυμαστὴ βασιλῆς, πέμπει *παρευθὺς* πρὸς τὸν τῆς αἰρέσεως ὑπέρμαχον Ἰωάννην, καθάπαξ ἀπέχεσθαι παραινοῦσα τῆς κοινωνίας τῶν τὰ Βαρλαάμ καὶ Ἀκινδύνου φρονούντων. English translation by N. Russell, *Gregory Palamas*..., p. 135 (modified, emphasis mine).

³⁶ Kokkinos, *v. G. Pal.* 78. 28-33: καὶ ἀξίως ἐαυτῆς τε καὶ Θεοῦ παρεσκευακίας, δι’ ἧς οἶμαι καὶ εἰς γῆρας αὐτῇ τὰ τῆς βασιλείας ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ συντηρεῖται, τὸν ὑπὲρ εὐσεβείας θαυμαστὸν αὐτῆς ζῆλον καὶ τὴν τῆς ἐκκλησίας αὐτοῦ προστασίαν καὶ συμμαχίαν καὶ τὴν τοῦ θαυμαστοῦ βασιλέως καὶ ὁμοζύγου καλὴν ὑπὲρ εὐσεβείας μίμησιν καὶ ἀνδρίαν δικαίως ἀμειβομένου. English translation by N. Russell, *Gregory Palamas*..., 136 (modified).

³⁷ Kokkinos, *v. Sab.* 74. 44-48: εὗρε καὶ γὰρ καὶ τὴν ἀδελφὴν τε καὶ βασιλῖδα κάλλιστα κατὰ τῶν αὐτῶν τε καὶ ὑπὲρ τῶν αὐτῶν ἱσταμένην τε καὶ συναγωνιζομένην καὶ τοῦ μεταστάντος ἀνδρός τε

for her intervention and reconciliatory actions that allowed Gregory Palamas to assume his metropolitan see. Thus, he recounts that in the spring of 1352 the “Christ loving empress” arrives in Thessalonike together with her son John V Palaiologos and breaks his alliance with Stefan Dušan:

[T]he wonderful and Christ loving empress arrived [in Thessalonike] with a noble and imperial purpose and shattered those agreements, or rather the appearance and pretense of the agreements, between her son and emperor [John V] and Stefan, and together with the emperor and her son [John V] worthily recalled the archbishop [Gregory Palamas] to his church and city.³⁸

This passage also includes a subtle criticism, and ultimately an exoneration of John V, the reigning emperor at the time of writing the *Life of Gregory Palamas*. While praising him customarily as wise (*sophos*) and Christ loving (*philochristos*), Kokkinos adds that John had not been able to make use of his superior qualities due to the respective adverse circumstances:

[H]e was wise and Christ loving and could claim a will, a nobility of character and benevolent habits (if anyone of the emperors preceding him), even if the difficulty and adverse circumstances of the times prevented him earlier [in his life] from making use of himself and his natural advantages, in accordance with his own will.³⁹

Kokkinos is also critical of Emperor Michael VIII. For instance, in the *Life of Germanos*, he underlines the opposition of Germanos’ master to the Latin doctrine on the procession of the Holy Spirit. Without mentioning the emperor’s name, Kokkinos refers to the people who have imposed it as “tyrants of the right belief”, most likely a reference to, and criticism of, Michael VIII’s unionist policy.⁴⁰

καὶ βασιλέως οὐδὲν ἔλαττον σπεύδουσιν ἔχειν ἐν τούτοις. [...] καλῶς ἐνταῦθα καὶ διανοηθεῖσα καὶ πράξασα καὶ τῆς εὐσεβοῦς βασιλείας ἀξίως.

³⁸ Kokkinos, *v.G.Pal.* 96. 4-7: ἡ θαυμαστὴ καὶ φιλόχριστος βασιλεὺς ἐπιστάσα φρονήματι γενναίῳ τε καὶ βασιλικῷ καὶ τὰς τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ βασιλέως πρὸς τὸν Στέφανον διαρρήγνυσιν συνθήκας ἐκείνας, μᾶλλον δὲ τὰ τῶν συνθηκῶν ἰνδάλματα καὶ τὰς προσποιήσεις, καὶ τὸν ἀρχιερέα σὺν γε τῷ βασιλεῖ τε καὶ υἱεὶ παρὰ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τε καὶ τὴν πόλιν ἀξίως μετακαλοῦνται. English translation by N. Russell, *Gregory Palamas...*, p. 153 (modified). On Empress Anna’s fruitful mission to Thessalonike, see D. M. Nicol, *The Reluctant Emperor*, Cambridge, UK, 1996, p. 115-117.

³⁹ Kokkinos, *v.G.Pal.* 96. 10-14: σοφός τε καὶ φιλόχριστος ὢν καὶ γνώμης καὶ καλοκάγαθίας καὶ τρόπων χρηστῶν ἀντιποιούμενος, εἴπερ τις τῶν πρὸ αὐτοῦ βεβασιλευκότων, εἰ καὶ τὸ τῶν πραγμάτων τε καὶ τῶν καιρῶν δυσχερὲς καὶ ἀντίξουν ἀπεῖργεν αὐτὸν καὶ πρότερον, ἑαυτῷ καὶ τοῖς τῆς φύσεως προτερήμασι κατὰ γνώμην οἰκείαν κεχρησθαι. English translation by N. Russell, *Gregory Palamas...*, p. 153-154 (modified).

⁴⁰ Kokkinos, *Life of Germanos* 16. 10-11: τυράννους ... ὑπὲρ τῆς ὀρθῆς δόξης. On the Filioque controversy in Byzantium, see A. Papadakis, *Crisis in Byzantium: the Filioque Controversy in the*

The emperor and the holy man: John VI Kantakouzenos and Sabas the Younger

Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos, whose remarkable figure and “caractère multiforme de sa personnalité”⁴¹ attracted vast scholarly attention,⁴² features most prominently in Kokkinos’ *vitae*. In the *Life of Isidore*, Kokkinos includes a miracle to the benefit of one of Kantakouzenos’ supporters by the name of Nicholas of Monembasia, whose house in Constantinople the holy man protects (through the intercession of the Theotokos) against an angry and “irrational” mob that tries to set it on fire.⁴³ Set before the end of the civil war and reported in considerable detail by Kokkinos, this miracle has a clear political flavor, since it benefits a supporter of Kantakouzenos against aggression from a group most likely siding with the Palaiologoi. At a later point in the *vita*, Kokkinos describes Kantakouzenos’ ties with Patriarch Isidore and praises him as a benevolent emperor, who rebuilds the empire in the aftermath of the civil war.⁴⁴

Kantakouzenos’ most extensive presence occurs in the *Life of Sabas*. In a narrative section of more than 2,400 words, Kokkinos presents at length the emperor’s attempts to persuade the holy man to accept the patriarchal see.⁴⁵ This occurs in the context of the election of a new patriarch for the Constantinopolitan throne, left vacant after Kalekas’ deposition *in absentia*, in the early February 1347. At that time, Constantinople had two emperors, John

Patriarchate of Gregory II of Cyprus (1283–1289), New York, 1983; idem, “The Byzantines and the rise of papacy: points for reflection 1204–1453”, in M. Hinterberger and C. D. Schabel (eds.), *Greeks, Latins, and Intellectual History, 1204–1500*, Leuven, 2011, p. 19–42; T. Kolbaba, “Repercussions of the second council of Lyon (1274): Theological polemic and the boundaries of Orthodoxy”, in M. Hinterberger and C. D. Schabel (eds.), *Greeks, Latins...*, p. 43–68. See also A. E. Siecienski, *The Filioque. History of a Doctrinal Controversy*, Oxford, 2010.

⁴¹ T. Teoteoi, “La conception de Jean VI Cantacuzène sur l’État byzantin vue principalement à la lumière de son *Histoire*”, *Revue des études sud-est européennes* 13.2, 1975, p. 167–185, here at p. 169, n. 7.

⁴² G. Weiss, *Joannes Kantakuzenos – Aristokrat, Staatsmann, Kaiser und Mönch*, in *der Gesellschaftsentwicklung von Byzanz im 14. Jahrhundert*, Wiesbaden, 1969; R.-J. Loenertz, “Ordre et désordre dans les Mémoires de Jean Cantacuzène”, *Revue des études byzantines* 22, 1964, p. 222–237; D. M. Nicol, *The Reluctant Emperor*; idem, *The Byzantine Family of Kantakouzenos (Cantacuzenus) ca. 1100–1460. A Genealogical and Prosopographical Study*, Washington, D.C., 1968.

⁴³ Kokkinos, *Life of Isidore* (hereafter *v.Isid.*) 42. On this ‘political’ miracle, see A. E. Laiou-Thomadakis, “Saints and society in the late Byzantine Empire”, in A. E. Laiou-Thomadakis (ed.), *Charanis Studies: Essays in Honor of Peter Charanis*, New Brunswick, N.J., 1980, p. 84–114, at p. 105; N. Gaul, “‘And the whole city cheered’. The poetics and politics of the miraculous in the early Palaiologan period”, in A. Mattiello and M. A. Rossi (eds.), *Late Byzantium Reconsidered. The Arts of the Palaiologan Era in the Mediterranean*, London, 2019, p. 7–30, at p. 16–17.

⁴⁴ Kokkinos, *v.Isid.* 57–60.

⁴⁵ Kokkinos, *v.Sab.* 75–78, ed. by D. G. Tsames, *Θεσσαλονικεῖς ἄγιοι*, p. 307–315.

VI Kantakouzenos and John V Palaiologos, but lacked a patriarch. Kantakouzenos therefore deploys all his forces to appoint a new patriarch that would legitimize his rule. The section is prefaced by an extensive (ca. 750 words) eulogy of John VI (what Timotin would define as religious rhetoric in praise of imperial power),⁴⁶ in which Kokkinos portrays him as wise, noble, conciliatory and a gifted rhetorician.⁴⁷ The praise starts with heralding the encounter between John V and Sabas: the holy man offers advice especially to “the excellent vindicator and champion” of the Church, “I mean, the wise and noble emperor”.⁴⁸ Next, Kokkinos commends Kantakouzenos’ role as *defensor ecclesiae*, both before and after becoming emperor. He depicts him as well versed in theology and presents his skillful involvement in the defense of Orthodoxy and refutation of Gregory Akindynos.⁴⁹ He praises him for restoring the peace and laying an excellent foundation of the imperial power by proclaiming Orthodoxy, as well as for rebuilding the ruins of the Church.⁵⁰

Given the accusations of usurpation Kantakouzenos faced, the glittering surface of Kokkinos’ laudatory discourse bears clear legitimizing undertones, similarly to the miracle in the *Life of Isidore*. Kokkinos thus constructs, as much as rhetorically underlines, dynastic legitimacy for Emperor John VI, most likely aware of, and willing to support, John VI’s own self-promotion as scion and kindred with the Palaiologan imperial family. As Dölger pointed out, in a series of imperial documents, Kantakouzenos fashioned and placed himself in the lineage of Andronikos II and Andronikos III, which he referred to as “my grandfather” and “my brother” respectively.⁵¹ Similarly, Kokkinos stresses that prior to holding the scepter of the empire, John VI ruled together with “his brother and emperor” Andronikos III and held most or rather all of the power.⁵² Moreover, as mentioned, Kokkinos refers to the dowager Empress Anna of Savoy as John VI’s “sister”.⁵³ Finally, at the end of this eulogy, Kokkinos reminds his audience once again that the “excellent emperor” had Sabas as a close advisor, who prepared him with prayers and counsel, while the emperor

⁴⁶ See A. Timotin’s article in this volume, p. 27-35.

⁴⁷ Kokkinos, v. *Sab.* 74, ed. by D. G. Tsames, *Θεσσαλονικεῖς ἄγιοι*, p. 305-307.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 74. 6-7: πρὸ δὲ πάντων τῷ καὶ πάντων ἀρίστῳ ταύτης ἐκδικητῇ καὶ προμάχῳ, βασιλεῖ φημι τῷ σοφῷ καὶ γενναίῳ.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 74. 13-34.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 74. 39-68: [...] ταύτην ἀρίστην οἶονεῖ καταβάλλεται κρηπίδα τοῦ κράτους [...] τὴν τῆς ὀρθῆς δόξης ἐπ’ ἐκκλησίας ἀνακήρυξιν τε καὶ παρρησίαν [...] τὰ συντρίμματα τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ νύμφης, τῆς ἐκκλησίας, εὐτέχνως ἄγαν καὶ συνετῶς ἀνοικοδομήσας. On Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos’ qualities, see T. Teoteoi’s chapter in this volume, p. 149-166.

⁵¹ F. Dölger, “Johannes VI. Kantakouzenos als dynastischer Legitimist”, *Seminarium Kondakovianum* 10, 1938, p. 19-30.

⁵² Kokkinos, v. *Sab.* 74. 7-9: ὃς καὶ πρὶν μὲν ἐγκρατὴς γενέσθαι τῶν Ῥωμαϊκῶν σκήπτρων, ἐτι συνὼν τὰ δελφῶ τε καὶ βασιλεῖ καὶ τὸ πλέον ἢ καὶ τὸ πᾶν τῆς ἀρχῆς ἔχων.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 74. 44-45.

was very close to the holy man.⁵⁴ Thus, Kokkinos frames his praise of John VI, stressing the emperor's legitimizing association and friendship with the renowned holy man, which he highlights in the next narrative section of the *Life of Sabas*.

Kokkinos' portrait of Kantakouzenos as ideal emperor is completed in his account of the encounter between John VI and Sabas, which details, as mentioned, the former's efforts to convince the latter to accept the patriarchal see of Constantinople.⁵⁵ Kokkinos sets the stage for the encounter by describing first the election process for a new patriarch, which proved to have been a difficult undertaking due to a lack of consensus among the electors.⁵⁶ However, he stresses that "the wisest emperor" finally nominates Sabas, which immediately elicits the agreement of everyone, "not only of the bishops, but of all the Church and the senate and almost the whole City".⁵⁷ Once consensus is reached, the next step is to convince the holy man to accept ordination.

The emperor's son Matthew, whom Kokkinos also praises as wise and well versed in rhetoric, with a sound knowledge of the Scriptures, like his father, undertakes a first embassy to convince the holy man to accept the patriarchal throne.⁵⁸ At that time, Sabas was a resident of the capital, practicing *askēsis* at the Chora Monastery, after his arrival in Constantinople with the Athonite embassy (*presbeia*) in late March 1342 to plead, to no avail, for the end of the civil war.⁵⁹ Despite his strong will, imperial authority, rhetorical and scriptural arguments, Matthew fails to convince Sabas.

After Matthew's failed attempt, "the Christ loving emperor, taking at once with himself the choir of the archpriests and the senate", goes to the holy man.⁶⁰ Kokkinos styles the dialogue between Kantakouzenos and Sabas as instruction (*paideuma*) and canon (*kanōn*) for those undertaking leadership (*prostasia*), a *mirror for princes* as it were.⁶¹ He stresses *ab initio* that in order to convince Sabas to accept the patriarchate, the emperor entreats him, promising his "unrivalled obedience" (*aparamillos hypakoē*).⁶² In fact, in his *Memoirs*,

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 74. 68-72: Εἶχε δὲ καὶ τὸν μέγαν ὁ θαυμαστός βασιλεὺς εὐχαῖς τε καὶ παραινέσεσιν ὑπαλείφοντα ... ὃ δηλαδὴ καὶ προσκείμενος ἦν καὶ συμπεφυκώς ὥσπερ τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ τῆς ἱερᾶς ἐκείνου ψυχῆς καὶ γλώττης ἐξηρητημένος.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 75-78.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 75. 31-42.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 75. 42-48: [...] οὐκ ἀρχιερέων φημι μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ὁμοῦ πάσης καὶ τῆς συγκλήτου καὶ σχεδὸν ἅμα τῆς πόλεως πάσης.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 75. 50-55.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 67-69.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 76. 8-10: Ὁ δὲ φιλόχριστος βασιλεὺς, τὸν τε χορὸν τῶν ἀρχιερέων εὐθὺς καὶ τὴν σύγκλητον μεθ' ἑαυτοῦ συμπαραλαβὼν, αὐτὸς ἐκεῖνος ἄπεισι πρὸς τὸν μέγαν.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 76. 11-14: [...] τὸ συγγραφῇ δοῦναι παιδεῦμα καὶ κανόνα τινὰ τοῖς τε ψηφιομένοις ὁμοίως καὶ τοῖς ἐπὶ ταύτην ἰοῦσι τὴν προστασίαν.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 76. 15-19.

Kantakouzenos repeatedly stresses the submission of the imperial office to the ecclesiastical power. For instance, he points out that “now besides governing the Church, the patriarch has also no less authority over the political affairs, being admired by all the Romans and called father and guardian of the emperor”.⁶³ As Angelov pointed out, from the first half of the fourteenth century, Byzantine emperors declared themselves faithful servants of the Church as part of their coronation promise.⁶⁴ Thus, according to the ceremonial book of Pseudo-Kodinos, in his confession of faith, written and signed in his own hand prior to the coronation, the emperor includes the following oath:

Likewise I promise to remain and to be continually and lastingly a faithful and true servant and son of the holy Church and in addition to be its defender and vindicator, and to be benevolent and loving to my subjects, as is fitting and right, and to abstain from murders, mutilations and the like, as far as possible, and to incline toward all truth and justice.⁶⁵

Kokkinos reports that Sabas marvels at the emperor’s wisdom and words, but remains steadfast. Like a modern film director, the hagiographer captures next the gestures of his protagonists in vivid detail. The holy man stands up from his seat, takes the emperor’s hand and tells him he refuses his proposal.⁶⁶ They both support their respective positions, arguing that God himself revealed His will to them, and thus have divine endorsement for their refusal, and proposal respectively, of the patriarchate. However, Kantakouzenos cannot change Sabas’ mind. Kokkinos details that the emperor stands up from his seat with great sorrow.⁶⁷ Then, it is the turn of Kantakouzenos’ companions (ecclesiastics, senators, and court officials) to try to persuade Sabas with arguments of all sorts, to which he remains adamant.⁶⁸ Next, the emperor intervenes again: overcome by his love for the holy man, writes Kokkinos, he does not want to give up and therefore tries, to no avail however, to convince Sabas for the rest of the day. The first day of their encounter ends when Sabas’ disciple convinces the emperor to give the holy man some time to ponder on the offer, in the hope that he will change his mind. Thus, the emperor leaves together with his retinue, only to return the second day with even more

⁶³ Kantakouzenos, *Historiae* III. 72 (ed. by L. Schopen, vol. II, p. 438-439): νυνὶ δὲ πρὸς τῷ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἄρχειν, καὶ τῶν πολιτικῶν πραγμάτων οὐδὲν ἥττον ἐστὶ κύριος, περιβλεπτός ἐν πᾶσι Ῥωμαίοις γεγενημένος καὶ πατὴρ καὶ κηδεμὼν βασιλέως προσαγορευόμενος.

⁶⁴ D. Angelov, “Introduction”, p. 4; idem, *Imperial Ideology...*, p. 411-414.

⁶⁵ R. Macrides, J. A. Munitiz, and D. Angelov, *Pseudo-Kodinos and the Constantinopolitan Court: Offices and Ceremonies*, Farnham, 2013, p. 212-215.

⁶⁶ Kokkinos, *v.Sab.* 76. 22-23: Ὅθεν εὐθὺς ἐξαναστὰς τοῦ συλλόγου τῆς χειρὸς τε λαμβάνεται τούτου [...].

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 76. 31-33.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 76. 34-49: [...] Ἄλλ’ ὁ μέγας πᾶσιν ὡσαύτως ἀνένδοτός τε καὶ ἀνεπιχείρητος ἦν [...].

attendants. Kokkinos reports that the discussions spanned over five days, without the emperor making any progress.

In an explanatory authorial aside (a feature of his hagiographic style), Kokkinos comments on the status quo of the encounter and expounds the motivations of both the holy man and the emperor. Moved by love for God, they staunchly defend diametrically opposed positions. Thus, Sabas refuses the prospect of ordination and any worldly honor out of humility, fearing that the responsibility of ecclesiastical office will cause him to lose his spiritual gifts and slacken his ascetic discipline, while Kantakouzenos acts out of his care for the Church, striving to appoint as patriarch the man who surpassed all his contemporaries in virtue.⁶⁹ The dialogue constructed by Kokkinos for the two resembles in style the exchanges between obstinate *abbas* from the early Christian literature, the emperor pleading, “Father, for God’s sake, stay!” and the holy man replying, “Father, for God’s sake, I must leave”.⁷⁰

On the fifth day, after having made no progress with his arguments, the emperor decides to change his methods and pursue a last-resort option: ordination by force. He therefore orders for all the arrangements for Sabas’ ordination to be stealthily made in the church of the monastery (i.e., Chora), and then goes to the holy man, as it were trying to persuade him to change his mind, like in the previous days. Once in the company of Sabas, writes Kokkinos, “the wise emperor launches immediately his commended deceit”.⁷¹ He takes the holy man by hand and cunningly leads him towards the church, on pretense of having a conversation before the start of the Divine Liturgy. Kokkinos prolongs the suspense of the scene with an aside on other examples of forced ordination, such as those of Daniel the Stylite and Gregory Thaumaturgos.⁷² Once they come near the church, ministers forcefully seize Sabas like a prey trapped inside the hunter’s net.⁷³ As he is about to be dragged into the sanctuary for ordination, he takes in his turn hold of Kantakouzenos’ hand, leaning on it as if it were a prop. Faced with a critical junction that endangers his inner peace and *hesychia*, the

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 77. 1-14.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 77. 15-19: [...] “Στηθί μοι διὰ τὸν Θεόν, πάτερ”, ἔλεγεν· ὁ δ’ ἀνὰ κράτος φεύγων, δριμυτάτῳ τῆς ἡσυχίας ἔρωτι, “Κἀγὼ διὰ τὸν Θεὸν φεύγω, πάτερ”, ἀνέκραζεν.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 77. 30-31: ὁ σοφὸς βασιλεὺς εὐθὺς ἄρχεται τῆς ἐπαινουμένης κλοπῆς.

⁷² Forced ordination is a commonplace in hagiography. Daniel the Stylite and Gregory Thaumaturgos were ordained against their will without the actual imposition of hands. The former was ordained by Patriarch Gennadios of Constantinople, who stood at the bottom of his pillar and invoked God’s grace. Gregory of Nyssa writes in his *Life of St Gregory the Wonderworker*, trans. by M. Slusser, Washington, D.C., 1998, p. 3, that bishop Phaidimos of Amaseia ordained Gregory while the latter was hiding: “disregarding the intervening distance by which he was separated from Gregory (he was three days’ journey away), but looking to God and saying that both of them were equally present to the sight of God, laid on Gregory his word in place of his hand, consecrating to God one who was not present bodily”.

⁷³ Kokkinos, *v.Sab.* 77. 31-56.

holy man calls for a proof of the emperor's friendship and addresses him with *parrhēsia*:

Friends are good in time of distress. Now is the moment for your help.
Now is necessary for you to demonstrate fully your true friendship to me.
For they drag me and strive to remove by force the foundations of my
soul, as if of some firm buttress of tranquility (*apragmosynē*) and *hesychia*
... I beg you, for the sake of our friendship, do not allow for such things.⁷⁴

Sabas' request includes common tropes of rejection of ordination, such as fear of losing *hesychia* and the responsibility and inner struggle involved by the patriarchal office.⁷⁵ His request successfully captures the ear and heart of the emperor, who sets him free and confesses before all that the holy man "rules over" his heart.⁷⁶ Then, Kantakouzenos and the members of the senate praise Sabas' unrivalled spiritual wisdom and virtue, stressing that one would sooner hold fire in the palm of his hands, tie the wind, or gather the rays of the sun in a bind, than reach holy man's height of virtue.⁷⁷ Kokkinos makes an interesting remark, stressing that such a praise disclosed their love and respect for Sabas, which was greater than towards the patriarch.⁷⁸ Finally, the emperor concedes the victory to Sabas and acknowledges his own defeat, which, as Kokkinos stresses, does nothing but increase his affection for and confidence in the holy man.⁷⁹ Moreover, adds the hagiographer, the emperor's love for the holy man increases and he visits him frequently and partakes in his precious words.⁸⁰

Sabas' rejection of the patriarchal see comes as no surprise (to Kokkinos' audience), since the hagiographer previously reported two other instances in which his hero escaped ordination as a priest. The first occurs during Sabas' early years of monastic life on Mount Athos, when he practiced *askēsis* near Karyes under his spiritual father Abraham. Although styled as a model disciple, Sabas resists his master's plan of ordaining him, invoking common tropes of unworthiness, and runs away in secret to avoid any conflict.⁸¹

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 78. 3-7, 10-11: "Φίλοι", πρὸς ἐκεῖνον ἔλεγεν, "ἐν ἀνάγκαις ἔστωσαν χρήσιμοι. Νῦν βοηθείας καιρός· νῦν δεῖ σε πάντως ἐπ' ἐμοὶ τὰ τῆς ἀληθινῆς φιλίας ἐνδείξασθαι· οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἔλκουσί με καὶ τὰς τῆς ψυχῆς βάσεις οἰοῦντι τινος ἀσφαλοῦς ἐρείσματος τῆς ἀπραγμοσύνης τε καὶ τῆς ἡσυχίας ἐκσπᾶσαι φιλονεικοῦσι [...] ἀλλὰ σὺ μηδαμῶς τούτοις ἐπευδοκίῃς· μὴ, πρὸς τῆς φιλίας αὐτῆς, δέομαι".

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 78. 12-25.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 78. 27-29: ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς ἤττων τῆς τοῦ ἀνδρὸς φιλίας καὶ τῶν λόγων ὅλος γενόμενος, "Ἐκράτησέ μου τῆς καρδίας αὐτῆς", πρὸς τοὺς συνόντας ὁρῶν ἔλεγεν.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 78. 38-44.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 78. 44-46: καὶ ταῦτα λέγοντες δῆλοι προφανῶς ἦσαν ἐκείνου τῆς ἀγάπης ἐξηρητημένοι καὶ μεῖζον ἢ κατὰ πατριάρχην πολλῶ τινι τῷ μέσῳ στέργοντες ὁμοῦ καὶ αἰδούμενοι.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 78. 47-50.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 78. 50-54.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 11.

He rejects ordination a second time during his stay at Vatopedi, after returning from his twenty-year-long travels.⁸² This time, Kokkinos includes a long explanation of the reasons behind his hero's action, emphasizing especially his fear of losing his *hesychia*, a reason monks commonly invoked in such circumstances.⁸³ To defend his position, Sabas presents a parable, the first embedded narrative or story-within-a-story included by Kokkinos in the *vita*. This is the edifying story (borrowed by Kokkinos from the Old Testament, i.e., Jotham's parable) of the barren thornbush, which accepts the leadership of the trees, after the vine, the fig tree, and the other fruit-bearing trees decline this honor, so they can enjoy their fruits.⁸⁴ In reported speech, Sabas draws a parallel between his case and that of the fruit-bearing trees, but explains that holding office is not a sign of barrenness, praising the high calling and duty of priesthood using quotations from the Scriptures.⁸⁵

Kokkinos styles Sabas' example and way of life as influential for the emperor's later decision to espouse the monastic life. According to him, this encounter made the emperor understand the pettiness of his worldly rule and sowed within his heart the seeds of longing to be a subject of the Heavenly Kingdom. Thus, the account ends with the emperor's words to the holy man, which hint at the dire civil war and its aftermath, as well as reveal Kantakouzenos' desire to become Sabas' spiritual son and disciple:

"Father, pray from your soul. Pray, I beseech you", he said, "so that after having smoothed out a little the preceding anomaly, as much as it is possible, and, with God's will, having given a certain beginning and a right path to the matters in [our] hands [i.e., *basileia*], then having left everything, we may all fulfill at once what we have long ago promised to you and prove our allegiances with actions. For I will consider a loss (literally, "garbage") everything [cf. Phil 3:8] in the present rule and course, except I were to dwell and live together with you and become your son and disciple since you have clothed yourself entirely in Christ and live only for Him even before your demise".⁸⁶

⁸² *Ibid.*, 61-62.

⁸³ Cf. Rapp, *Holy Bishops...*, p. 141-147.

⁸⁴ Kokkinos, *v.Sab.* 61. 33-45; see Judges 9:7-15.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 61. 46-65.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 78. 54-63: "Εὐχου, πάτερ, ἀπὸ ψυχῆς· εὐχου, δέομαι", ἔλεγεν, "ὥς ἂν καὶ ἡμεῖς μικρόν τι, καθ' ὅσον οἶόν τε, τὰ τῆς προλαβούσης ἀνωμαλίας ἐξομαλίσαντες καὶ οἰονεῖ τινα σὺν Θεῷ δόντες ἀρχὴν καὶ τρίβον εὐθείαν τοῖς ἐν χεροῖν πράγμασιν, ἔπειτα πάντα καταλιπόντες, ἀθρόον ὅλοι τῶν πάλαι πρὸς σὲ συντεθειμένων γενώμεθα καὶ τὰς ὁμολογίας ἐπὶ τῶν ἔργων αὐτῶν ἐνδειξώμεθα· σκύβαλα καὶ γάρ μοι λογισθήσεται τὰ τῆς παρούσης ἀρχῆς τε καὶ περιφορᾶς πάντα, εἰ μόνον συνοικεῖν καὶ συμβιοτεῖν σοι γένοιτο καὶ υἱὸν γενέσθαι καὶ φοιτητὴ τοῦ τὸν Χριστὸν ὅλον ἐνδεδυμένου κάκεινῳ ζῶντος μόνον καθάπαξ καὶ πρὸ τῆς λύσεως".

Kokkinos thus fashions the encounter with the holy man as consequential for an awakening that marks the birth, as it were, of the future monk within the emperor's soul. Indeed, following his forced abdication in December 1354, Kantakouzenos espoused the *bios theōrētikos* under the name of Joasaph⁸⁷ and retired to the Constantinopolitan monasteries of St George of Mangana (where he lived for a while after his abdication) and John Charsianeites, from where he actively engaged in political and theological matters.⁸⁸ In his *Memoires*, completed at the monastery of Charsianeites, Kantakouzenos himself spells out several times his desire to retreat to a monastery, revealing his predilection for Vatopedi, which was Sabas' former monastic abode.⁸⁹ Nicol credited Kantakouzenos' assertions and underscored the earnestness of his monastic vocation and religious beliefs, although these were "much criticized and ridiculed", contending that he "was a deeply and sincerely religious man; his interest in and understanding of faith and doctrine are attested by his own writings".⁹⁰

The *vitae* of Maximos Kausokalybites composed by Niphon of Athos (BHG 1236z) and Theophanes of Vatopedi (BHG 1237) also reference (retrospectively) Kantakouzenos' monastic calling.⁹¹ Niphon, for instance, reports that the emperors John VI and John V visited Maximos on Mount Athos "with much piety and humility" around 1350 and the holy man offered them spiritual advice.⁹² Later, Maximos sent to Kantakouzenos a gift consisting of a rusk, a head of garlic and an onion, that is, the daily fare of a monk. Niphon explains that the emperor "asked the empress what this might be about. And in

⁸⁷ The practice of an emperor donning the monastic habit was common in Byzantium, as, for instance, in the case of Emperor Andronikos II who became the monk Antonios.

⁸⁸ For the context of Kantakouzenos' abdication, see D. M. Nicol, "The abdication of John VI Cantacuzene", *Byzantinische Forschungen* 2, 1967, p. 269-283; idem, *Family of Kantakouzenos...*, p. 86, 92-94; idem, *The Last Centuries...*, p. 244-249.

⁸⁹ The thesis of Kantakouzenos' sojourn at Vatopedi has been rejected by D. M. Nicol, *Family of Kantakouzenos...*, p. 92-93; cf. T. Teoteoi, "La conception de Jean VI Cantacuzène...", p. 169, 171 and n. 8. Kantakouzenos expresses several times his fondness for Vatopedi in his *Memoires*, e.g., IV. 24 (ed. by L. Schopen, vol. 3, p. 176-178), IV. 42 (ed. by L. Schopen, vol. 3, p. 308). He seems to have visited Vatopedi while *megas domestikos* in 1340. As emperor, he granted several properties to Vatopedi, as well as endowed it with around 26 deluxe manuscripts (some of which with state-of-the-art miniatures); see D. M. Nicol, *Family of Kantakouzenos...*, p. 92-94; E. Lamberz, "The library of Vatopaidi and its manuscripts", in *The Holy and Great Monastery of Vatopaidi. Tradition – History – Art*, Mount Athos, 1998, vol. 2, p. 562-574, 672-677, at p. 567-569 for the donation.

⁹⁰ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries...*, p. 247; cf. idem, *Family of Kantakouzenos...*, p. 95. On emperors/rulers turned monks (and the other way around) in medieval Europe, including Wallachia, see M. Coman's chapter in this volume, p. 189-221.

⁹¹ F. Halkin, "Deux vies de S. Maxime le Kausokalybe ermite au Mont Athos (XIV^e s)", *Analecta Bollandiana* 54, 1936, p. 38-112, at p. 57-58 and p. 93-94 respectively.

⁹² R. P. H. Greenfield and A.-M. Talbot (eds. and trans.), *Holy Men of Mount Athos*, Cambridge, Mass., 2016, p. 381, 383.

the end they rightly understood the things that the blessed one had done and said as being a sign of the monastic life”.⁹³ In Theophanes’ more extensive version, Maximos foretells that Kantakouzenos would assume the monastic habit and become the superior of a monastery. Moreover, the holy man lectures him and John V on the duties of emperors to shun injustice and greed, forgive those who offend them, comfort the poor, care for the needs of monks (a *pro domo* plea), as well as maintain the power of the *ekklēsia*:

Even if you are emperors of the earth, you are still always obliged to look to the heavenly Emperor, and uphold His law like a heavenly scepter, to carry out His divine commandments first, and imitate Him in all things to the best of your ability [...] In the same way you are obliged to teach all your subjects faith, righteousness, truth, love, peace and holiness; and to maintain the beauty and the power of the universal Church and preserve its honor for the sake of Christ in accordance with the command and obligation to do so from above. Be compassionate toward those who sin, “be patient with them all” [1 Thes 5:14], have mercy on the poor, visit the sick, show love to the monks and receive them as soldiers and friends of Christ, the emperor of all, and give them what they need when they ask for it.⁹⁴

An interesting detail that Kokkinos offers in his account of the encounter between the emperor and the holy man is the fact that they often hold hands: Sabas takes the emperor’s hand when he first explains his refusal; Kantakouzenos leads Sabas by hand to the church of the monastery; finally, the holy man begs the emperor to annul the ordination preparations while holding his hand. This gesture is recurrent, for instance, in biblical passages such as Psalms 73:23, “*I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand*”.⁹⁵ George Akropolites also writes in his *History* that Emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos goes to the patriarch (Arsenios) in the Great Church, and taking his hand, entrusts him the patriarchal see.⁹⁶ In his *Life of St Theoktiste of Lesbos* (BHG 1723-24), the tenth-century court official Niketas Magistros reports that during a short stay on the island of Paros, he met the hermit Symeon, who seized his

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 417.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 519, 521 (translation slightly modified).

⁹⁵ Cf. Is 41:13, Mt 8:15 and Mk 5:23.

⁹⁶ In R. Macrides’ excellent translation, *George Akropolites. The History*, Oxford, 2007, p. 384 (ch. 88): “The emperor went to the holy palace, the shrine of the Great Wisdom, in order to entrust the see to the bishop. And there assembled with the emperor all those in office and the most distinguished officials and all the people. Taking the hand of the patriarch, the emperor said, ‘You have your throne, master. Enjoy now the see of which you have long been deprived’. It was in this way that the emperor’s affairs turned out also with regard to the patriarch”.

hand, moved by sympathy as if he were an old acquaintance, and confided him the story of St Theoktiste. Niketas explains the gesture:

He [the hermit Symeon] seized my hand and pressed it, as if he were an old acquaintance; this is what his simple disposition prompted him to do. For when the souls of great men are in communion with the highest power, they strive to become like it and, through communion with the Original Good, they become good in every way, pure, simple, removed from all our <affections>, just like this great man who, by being gracious and good, appeared in his unaffected manner to be one of us.⁹⁷

Possibly aware of such examples, Kokkinos could have included the details about holding hands in order to convey the closeness and friendship between John VI and Sabas, and by extension, the importance of a close relationship between *basileia* and *ekklēsia*. He also stresses the emperor's strong spiritual ties to the holy man. As already mentioned, Kokkinos highlights several times that Sabas offers spiritual guidance and counsel to Kantakouzenos, both before and after the latter's rise to power.

The arduous search for a new patriarch in February 1347 concludes with the election of Isidore Boucheir. Kokkinos also briefly documents this election process in the *Life of Isidore*,⁹⁸ which he composed after the *Life of Sabas*. He recounts similarly, albeit more concisely, that after Kalekas' deposition, the quest for a new patriarch began. Of the many candidates, one of whom was Palamas, the electors choose Sabas. Kokkinos offers a brief portrait of the holy man, emphasizing their connection: "my Sabas, the distinguished and most notable citizen of Athos, the steadfast pillar of all action and contemplation, truly the greatest and most radiant house of the highest and first wisdom".⁹⁹ He then succinctly reports—most likely to an audience familiar with this episode—the visit of the "wise emperor" to the holy man, his entreaties, and ultimately Sabas' obstinacy in refusing the patriarchal throne. After Isidore's appointment, Kokkinos describes Kantakouzenos as a Christ loving and compassionate emperor who listens to Isidore's pleas on behalf of his flock.¹⁰⁰

In the *Life of Sabas*, the account of the encounter and dialogue between the emperor and the holy man is not devoid of Kokkinos' own political and ecclesiastical standpoint. Since he composed this hagiographic work around

⁹⁷ A. Constantinides Hero, "Life of St. Theoktiste of Lesbos", in A.-M. Talbot (ed.), *Holy Women of Byzantium. Ten Saints' Lives in English Translation*, Washington, D.C., 1996, p. 101-116, at p. 106 (ch. 10).

⁹⁸ Kokkinos, v. *Isid.* 49. 21–50. 13.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 49. 30-33: Σάβαν φημι τὸν ἐμόν, τὸν περιφανῆ καὶ κάλλιστον πολίτην ... τοῦ Ἄθω, τὸν τῆς πράξεως ξυμπάσης ὁμοῦ καὶ τῆς θεωρίας ἀπερίτρεπτον στῦλον, τὸν μέγιστον ὄντως καὶ λαμπρὸν οἶκον τῆς ἀνωτάτω καὶ πρώτης σοφίας.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 57.

1350, while still metropolitan of Thracian Herakleia, he may have fashioned this narrative section of the *vita* as an encomium intended to reach the emperor's ears. This was likely motivated by a desire for personal gain or strengthening the emperor's benevolence towards the Church. Moreover, in order to make sure that this *Life* enjoys a good press, Kokkinos himself undertook its publication and diffusion. Thus, under his close supervision, prolific and erudite scribes copied the *vita* in 'author's edition' codices such as *Marcianus gr.* 582 (ff. 51^r-136^v) and *Mosquensis Bibl. Synod. gr.* 164 (ff. 122^v-246^v), which he perused and annotated. There is also evidence that the *Life of Sabas* circulated among fourteenth-century *pepaideumenoi* and court officials (e.g., Demetrios Kydones).¹⁰¹ In fact, shortly after writing the *Life*, and following Patriarch Kallistos I's refusal to crown Matthew Kantakouzenos, Kokkinos was promoted to the patriarchal see, possibly due, among other reasons and political maneuvers, to his talents in praising the emperor and to his support for John VI's cause to crown his son.

The relationship between the imperial and spiritual power also surfaces in the fourteenth-century *Apologia*. This text was composed ca. early 1355 to underline post factum the legitimacy and canonical validity of the deposition of Patriarch Kallistos I (1350-1353) and his replacement with Kokkinos (1353-1344/5), in the context of the feud regarding the coronation of Matthew Kantakouzenos.¹⁰² The text survives in the *Mosquensis Bibl. Synod. gr.* 349, ff. 183^r-211^v (as it seems, the only witness), a fourteenth-century manuscript gathering Kokkinos' liturgical (including one prayer for the emperor), dogmatic, homiletic and hagiographic works, most of which were copied by his close collaborator and prolific scribe παπᾶς Malachias (e.g., ff. 68^r-104^r, 107^r-170^r). Throughout the codex, there are several autograph interventions (e.g., corrections *in rasura*), which indicate that the Moscow manuscript constitutes an 'author's edition', copied under Kokkinos' close supervision. This suggests that the author(s) of the *Apologia* were closely connected to Kokkinos' influence and entourage, or even that Kokkinos himself authored the text (pleading *pro domo*, as it were), or, at least, inspired it.¹⁰³ In fact, Kokkinos makes autograph interventions on the folios carrying the text (ff. 185, 198^v, 206^v).¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ See M. Mitrea, "A late-Byzantine hagiographer...", p. 111-112.

¹⁰² *Ἀπολογία ὑπὲρ τῶν πρὸ ὀλίγον πραχθέντων ὑπὸ τοῦ κοινοῦ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἐκκλησιαστικῶν τε καὶ βασιλικῶν* (hereafter *Apologia*), ed. by A. Failler, "La déposition du patriarche Calliste I^{er} (1353)", *Revue des études byzantines* 31, 1973, p. 5-163, Greek text with facing French translation at p. 22-75.

¹⁰³ A. Failler, "La déposition...", p. 21; M.-H. Congourdeau, "Deux patriarches...", p. 45-46; eadem, "L'empereur et le patriarche...".

¹⁰⁴ B. L. Fonkič, "Les autographes de Philotheos Kokkinos, patriarche de Constantinople", in *Manuscripts grecs dans les collections européennes. Études paléographiques et codicologiques 1988-1998*, Moscow, 1999, p. 78-92 (with 23 plates), here at p. 87 (in Russian) = "Gli autografi del patriarca di Costantinopoli Philotheos Kokkinos", in S. Lucà and L. Perria (eds.), *Ὀπώρα*.

The *Apologia* stresses that only emperors, the senate, and the army have the prerogative to proclaim new emperors, while patriarchs, the synod, and the Church must accept the proclaimed emperor, provided that he is faithful and Orthodox.¹⁰⁵ Ecclesiastical figures ought therefore to resist meddling in politics and in the transfer of power, leaving the decisive role in this respect to earthly powers. In turn, the emperor should protect the Church, without intruding in its affairs. Thus, at the end, the text stresses that:

And she [i.e., the Church] loves and honors our holy and Christ loving emperor [i.e., John V] and sincerely embraces him in a maternal fashion as son and lord, and having longed for him for a long time and now loving him beyond measure and praying for longevity, victories and dazzling trophies against enemies for him and his sovereignty (*basileia*), and above all for a dazzling peace and without dissent (*astasiastos*), so that in his serenity we may also live a tranquil and peaceful life, according to the great Apostle [1 Tm 2:2] [...] This will be, if he [i.e., the emperor] lets the Church alone to judge by herself and decide and regulate and set in order her own affairs, that is, according to the divine laws—for this knowledge does not belong to all, nor it is allowed to the imperial office (*basileia*) to handle these [affairs]—, [and if] the Christ loving emperor himself would undergo the defense [of the Church], guarding and fighting for her and standing strong against those who attack her.¹⁰⁶

Further insights into Kokkinos' view on the relationship between *basileia* and *ekklēsia* can be distilled from his two hitherto-unedited prayers for the emperors, analyzed in detail elsewhere.¹⁰⁷ As mentioned, the first *euchē*

Studi in onore di mgr Paul Canart per il LXX compleanno, vol. 3 (= *Bollettino della Badia Greca di Grottaferrata* 53), Rome, 1999, p. 239-254, here at p. 252. Unfortunately, I was not able to consult the section of the manuscript transmitting the *Apologia*.

¹⁰⁵ *Apologia* ll. 183-186, ed. by A. Failler, "La déposition...", p. 35: Βασιλέων γὰρ ἴδιον καὶ συγκλήτου καὶ στρατοῦ τὸ βασιλέας ἀναγορεύειν, ἀλλ' οὐ πατριαρχῶν, οὐδὲ συνόδου, οὐδὲ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ὅλως· τοῦτο δὲ μόνον αὐτῆς τὸ τὸν ἀναγορευθέντα, ὅστις ἂν εἴη, δέχεσθαι βασιλέα, πιστὸν καὶ τῆς ὀρθῆς δόξης ὄντα.

¹⁰⁶ *Apologia* ll. 755-761, 767-772, ed. by A. Failler, "La déposition...", p. 67, 69: Καὶ τὸν φιλόχριστον καὶ ἅγιον ἡμῶν βασιλέα καὶ στέργει καὶ προσκυνεῖ καὶ μητρικῶς ὡς υἱὸν καὶ δεσπότην γνησίως ἀσπάζεται, καὶ πάλαι ποθοῦσα καὶ νῦν ὑπερφύλουσα καὶ εὐχομένη αὐτῷ καὶ τῇ αὐτοῦ βασιλείᾳ μῆκος ζωῆς, νίκας καὶ τρόπαια λαμπρὰ κατὰ τῶν ἐχθρῶν καὶ εἰρήνην ἐπὶ πᾶσι λαμπράν τε καὶ ἀστασίαστον, ἵνα καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐν τῇ γαλήνῃ αὐτοῦ ἡρεμον καὶ ἡσύχιον βίον διάγωμεν, κατὰ τὸν μέγαν ἀπόστολον [...] Ἔσται δὲ τοῦτο, εἰ τὴν μὲν ἐκκλησίαν αὐτὴν ἐφ' ἑαυτῆς μόνην ἐάσει καὶ κρίνειν καὶ διακρίνειν καὶ κανονίζειν καὶ διευθετεῖν τὰ οἰκεῖα, κατὰ θεοῦς θεσμούςς τε δηλαδὴ — οὐ γὰρ πάντων ἡ γνώσις αὕτη οὐδ' ἐφεῖται τῇ βασιλείᾳ τούτοις ἐπιχειρεῖν ... —, αὐτὸς δ' ὁ φιλόχριστος βασιλεὺς τὴν ἐκδίκησιν ἐπιφέρει, προϊστάμενος καὶ ὑπερμαχῶν αὐτῆς καὶ κατὰ τῶν ἐπεμβαίνόντων ταυτῇ χωρῶν ἀνυπόστατος.

¹⁰⁷ M. Mitrea, "Save your servants, our faithful emperors". Philotheos Kokkinos' prayers for the emperors" (forthcoming). For prayers in the context of imperial coronations, see the contributions by S. Marjanović-Dušanović and R. G. Păun in this volume, p. 115-126 and 297-338.

survives in the *Mosquensis Bibl. Synod. gr.* 349 (f. 57), as well as in the *euchologion* Sofia, *Dujčev gr.* 26 (ff. 302^r-303^v) and the liturgical miscellany Sofia, *Dujčev gr.* 89 (ff. 59^r-60^r).¹⁰⁸ To the best of my knowledge, the second prayer is transmitted only in the late fourteenth-century codex Sofia, *Dujčev gr.* 89 (ff. 56^r-59^r).¹⁰⁹ Kokkinos most likely composed and delivered the prayers (surely the second) in the presence of Emperors John VI Kantakouzenos and John V Palaiologos, shortly after his ordination as metropolitan of Thracian Herakleia in the early summer of 1347.

The first prayer begins with a praise of Christ as the “eternal and everlasting source of *basileia*” through whom emperors rule on earth and who saves the Christian flock through both lawful *basileia* and ecclesiastical leadership. Kokkinos includes advice for the conduct of the two emperors, a *mirror for princes*, as it were, praying that they would model Christ’s archetypal goodness, patience and compassion, so they could become models of good *politeia*. Moreover, Kokkinos gives primal importance to their attitude towards the Church, praying for their benevolence towards and protection of it. In the second prayer, Kokkinos stresses the importance of *ekklēsia* and *basileia*, both appropriately placed by Christ on earth for the salvation of the Christian flock. Moreover, he deems their organic unity and close collaboration as the foundation for the welfare and survival of the Byzantine society, thus spelling out the ideal relationship between the two. Similar entreaties surface in the lengthy prayer Gregory Palamas delivered upon his ordination as metropolitan of Thessalonike in the same context (i.e., the early summer of 1347). The prayer survives in several fourteenth- and fifteenth-century collections of his works, such as *Parisinus gr.* 1239 (ff. 304^r-305^v), and bears legitimizing undertones, as Palamas deems any disobedience towards the emperors as a transgression of God’s will, Who granted them the right to rule.¹¹⁰

Conclusion

This paper has analyzed the literary depiction of the relationship between spiritual and imperial authority in the *vitae* of contemporaneous saints composed by the late Byzantine man of letters and ecclesiastic figure Philotheos Kokkinos. Kokkinos employed hagiographic discourse as a tool for promoting

¹⁰⁸ On the Sofia manuscripts, see D. Getov, *A Catalogue of Greek Liturgical Manuscripts in the “Ivan Dujčev Centre for Slavo-Byzantine Studies*, Rome, 2007, p. 94-103, 198-202, who dates them to the (early) fifteenth century; on paleographical grounds, *Dujčev gr.* 89 could be dated to the last decades of the fourteenth century.

¹⁰⁹ See M. Mitrea, “A late-Byzantine hagiographer...”, p. 407-411.

¹¹⁰ Palamas, *Εὐχή ἥν μετὰ τὴν χειροτονίαν ὀφθεῖς τοῖς βασιλεῦσι συνήθως ᾠζῶτο*, in P. K. Chrestou (ed.), *Γρηγορίου τοῦ Παλαμᾶ Συγγράμματα*, vol. 5: *Κεφάλαια ἑκατὸν πενήκοντα, Ἀσκητικὰ συγγράμματα, Εὐχαί*, Thessalonike, 1992, p. 269-272.

imperial figures, especially Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos, to advance his own personal, political, and ecclesiastical agenda. In February 1347, after his rise to power, Kantakouzenos undertook the search for a new patriarch for the Constantinopolitan see left vacant after Kalekas' deposition. His proposal was Sabas the Younger, a contemporaneous renowned holy man. Despite his efforts, he failed to appoint him as patriarch and thus earn spiritual capital and legitimacy to his *basileia*.¹¹¹ In his hagiographic rendering of this episode in the *Life of Sabas*, Kokkinos reverses this "failure" by portraying the emperor as an intimate of his saintly hero and thus rhetorically constructing and conferring legitimacy to his rule. In Kokkinos' view, not only is Kantakouzenos the ideal emperor, but, in addition to the sacred character of the imperial office itself,¹¹² the emperor manifests a personal predisposition and call for monastic life and ultimately sainthood. The hagiographic account of the encounter between the emperor and the holy man, as well as the prayers briefly introduced in this paper, convey the importance Kokkinos placed on the mutual support between *basileia* and *ekklēsia* in the troubled social and political context of fourteenth-century Byzantium. Although not a member of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, Sabas enjoyed great spiritual authority, and his character in the *Life* became a porte-parole for Kokkinos' own views as metropolitan of Thracian Herakleia (during which time he composed this *vita*) on the relationship between spiritual and imperial authority.

¹¹¹ Cf. I. Biliarsky and R. G. Păun (eds.), *Les cultes des saints souverains et des saints guerriers et l'idéologie du pouvoir en Europe Centrale et Orientale*, Bucharest, 2007, p. 8.

¹¹² Cf. G. Dagron, *Empereur et prêtre...*, p. 159-168 = *Emperor and Priest...*, p. 149-157; K. G. Pitsakis, "Sainteté et empire...".

BYZANTINO-SLAVIC WORLD

LE RITUEL LITURGIQUE ET LA RHÉTORIQUE DU POUVOIR DANS LE ROYAUME SERBE DU XIII^e SIÈCLE

Smilja Marjanović-Dušanić

La relation entre le rituel liturgique du couronnement et la rhétorique du pouvoir occupe le premier plan de notre recherche. Le lien entre le rituel et le liturgique s'établit à plusieurs niveaux : non seulement la royauté se dote d'une légitimité absolue par le biais du rituel du sacre, mais encore le pouvoir politique découle de la nature même du rituel liturgique. Tout rituel repose sur une forme symbolique répétitive indiquant le besoin éternel d'un peuple de se reconnaître comme organisme unique à travers des gestes qui, par leur répétition, renouvellent sans cesse la tradition et consolident le pouvoir politique du moment historique en question¹. Des gestes différents ont graduellement modelé les systèmes du transfert des messages non-verbal et ritualisé². Conçus comme des cérémonies d'une large importance, ses systèmes fonctionnent comme les codes d'une pratique sociale visant à transmettre une image voulue. Cette image complexe, partie constituante de l'acte d'une importance sacrale et étatique du premier rang, peut également servir de *memoria* officielle des célébrations particulières. Dans le centre d'un tel « théâtre du pouvoir » se trouve la représentation iconique, supérieure, par sa nature même, à la réalité physique.

En tant que figure centrale des cérémonies « étatiques », le prince fonctionne comme une icône en ce qu'il incarne l'image de « l'essence » du royaume (empire)³. C'est dans ce contexte que le véritable caractère du rituel peut être saisi : il sert d'*exemplum*, modèle d'après lequel est façonnée une

¹ Sur le sujet v. E. Palazzo, *Liturgie et société au Moyen Age*, Paris, 2000 ; Y. Hen, « Key themes in the study of medieval liturgy », dans *T&T Clark Companion to Liturgy*, A. Reid (ed.), London, 2015, p. 73-92.

² Dans le très riche corpus de références abordant ces questions, cf. les titres suivants, étroitement liés au sujet de la présente analyse : J.-C. Schmitt, *La raison des gestes dans le Moyen Age Occidental*, Paris, 1990 ; C. Bell, *Ritual. Perspectives and Dimensions*, Oxford, 2009² ; Ph. Buc, « Political ritual: medieval and modern interpretations », dans H.-W. Goetz (ed.), *Die Aktualität des Mittelalters*, Bochum, 2000, p. 255-272 ; à ce sujet v. aussi le numéro thématique de *Gesta* 9.1, 1970.

³ C. Geertz, « Religion as a Cultural System », dans *Interpretation of Cultures*, New York, 1973, p. 87-125. Cf. C. Geertz, « Centers, Kings and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbols of Power », dans *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology*, New York, 1983, p. 120-123.

société⁴. Conformément à la croyance fondamentale à la réactualisation des événements éternels de la vie du Christ et de l'Histoire sainte dans le présent, les célébrations liturgiques deviennent une partie capitale et inséparable du protocole du sacre royal. Les textes qui nous intéressent ici, tout comme la pratique liturgique, témoignent de la puissance de l'État incarnée dans la capacité grâce à laquelle cérémonies et rituels transforment le récit biblique en outil efficace de la propagande politique. Choisie et préparée avec soin, toute cérémonie de la sorte portait des caractéristiques propres servant de « recommandation historique et politique »⁵.

À se pencher sur l'exemple concret du lien entre le liturgique et le politique du royaume serbe du début du XIII^e siècle, on peut, en étudiant les aspects divers de la légitimation du royaume et de l'Église autocéphale serbes, apprécier le processus de la formation d'un langage liturgique particulier⁶. Qu'il s'agisse des rituels étroitement liés au culte des saints, des icônes et des reliques, ou bien des cérémonies officielles qui portent sur les liens entre politique et performativité, on peut suivre l'usage et la fonction de ce langage spécifique des rituels. Il témoigne du lien direct établi entre le royaume terrestre et son prototype céleste, ainsi que du caractère sacré et de la source divine de l'office royal, perceptible surtout dans les rituels du couronnement et de l'onction. Visible dans le contenu et la composition des textes liturgiques utilisés pour la célébration officielle de l'État et de l'Église, ce langage offre une illustration de l'extension de l'usage de la liturgie dans le champ politique.

L'étude des aspects de la propagande officielle de l'Église et de la royauté nationales, ainsi que de la prise de contrôle du pouvoir de la part des institutions ecclésiastiques par le biais des rituels, aide à examiner la place des cérémonies dans le dispositif que construit la dynastie régnante pour s'assurer le monopole idéologique dans la société serbe médiévale. L'analyse des pratiques rituelles permet de comprendre différents aspects du transfert de la sainteté, nés dans le but de consolider l'identité du souverain, la puissance dynastique, ainsi que d'indiquer la légitimité des nouveaux États créés au début du XIII^e siècle sur les vestiges de l'Empire romain d'Orient. Ces processus deviennent beaucoup plus clairs une fois que l'on prend en considération le fait que la liturgie se concrétise dans la culture donnée, à laquelle elle emprunte les outils expressifs.

⁴ L'« *exemplum* », éd. C. Bremond, J. Le Goff, J.-C. Schmitt, Turnhout, 1996, p. 32-42.

⁵ G. Dagron, *Empereur et prêtre. Étude sur le « césaropapisme » byzantin*, Paris, 1996, p. 100-102.

⁶ Sur la formation du « langage liturgique », cf. V. Vukašinović, « The Liturgical Framework of Serbian and Byzantine Religious Art », dans D. Vojvodić and D. Popović (éd.), *Sacral Art of Serbian Lands in the Middle Ages*, Belgrade, 2016, p. 91-101 ; V. Vukašinović, « Литургијска анализа крунисања Стефана Првовенчаног » [A Liturgical Analysis of the Rite of the Coronation of Stefan the First Crowned], dans Lj. Maksimović and S. Pirivatrić (ed.), *Краљевство и архиепископија у српским и поморским земљама Немањића* [The Kingdom and the Archbishopric of the Serbian and Maritime Lands of the Nemanjić Dynasty], Belgrade, 2019, p. 189-218 (en serbe).

C'est pourquoi l'analyse des éléments liturgiques essentiels (en premier lieu du temps et de l'espace) s'avérera une clé fiable pour deviner des messages politiques. L'ensemble des cérémonies royales, notamment les rituels de l'onction et du couronnement (outre la cérémonie de consécration du temple, les enterrements des rois et des représentants du haut clergé, les conciles d'État, les entrées royales, et les translations des reliques), ont contribué à la création d'une langue liturgique qui a servi de support lors du processus de l'organisation sociale et politique dans ces nouveaux royaumes.

Après avoir présenté les axes principaux de notre recherche, nous tenterons d'abord de dessiner le contexte historique global dans lequel a été située la cérémonie du sacre royal serbe. Pour des raisons multiples, nous consacrons une attention particulière à l'étude des messages liturgiques et symboliques de l'événement formatif jouant un rôle décisif dans la formation de l'idéologie politique et ecclésiastique serbe : il s'agit du sacre de Stefan le Protocouronné, premier roi serbe, qui fut intronisé dans le monastère de Žiža en 1221⁷. L'analyse des circonstances politiques dans lesquelles le royaume et l'archevêché serbe ont été nés, considérée à la lumière du lien entre l'acte de l'intronisation et la nature du pouvoir établi, permet de mieux comprendre les implications idéologiques de la cérémonie du sacre royal à Žiža.

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Pour comprendre la pratique liturgique et la rhétorique du pouvoir dans la Serbie du XIII^e siècle, outre les deux *vies* de saint Sava, il est important de mentionner les acoluthies présentant les rites ecclésiastiques liés à ces rituels⁸.

⁷ Les circonstances politiques et idéologiques autour du couronnement royal de Žiža ont été le sujet de notre étude approfondie : S. Marjanović-Dušanić, « Српски успон на краљевство: тумачења и значења обреда крунисања » [The Serbian Rise to Kingship: Interpretations and Meanings of the Coronation Rite], dans Lj. Maksimović and S. Pirivatrić (éd.), *Краљевство и архиепископија у српским и поморским земљама Немањића* [The Kingdom and the Archbishopric...], p. 147-188 (en serbe).

⁸ Les plus anciennes sources slaves pour étudier l'ordre du sacre remontent au dernier quart du XIV^e et au début du XV^e siècle, avec en premier lieu *Le Synodicon du tsar Boril* (Борилев Синодик: Издание и превод, Иван Божилов, Анна-Мария Тотоманова, Иван Билярски, Sofia 2010). De même, les manuscrits des bréviaires de Dečani, de Chilandar et de Peć conservent des rituels d'intronisation serbes. Certains manuscrits serbes du Mont Athos se trouvaient en possession du patriarche de Moscou Nikon au XVII^e siècle, et sont passés ensuite dans la Bibliothèque Synodale de Moscou. Vers la fin du XVI^e et le début du XVII^e siècle voient le jour les protocoles d'intronisation les plus « récents », analysés par I. Biliarsky, « Le rite de couronnement des tsars dans les pays slaves et promotion d'autres *axiai* », *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 59, 1993, p. 91-139. Les prières pour le sacre de différents dignitaires ont été publiées à deux reprises par K. И. Невострујев (« Двије старинске српске молитве: Кад долази владика у своју епархију и При случају навале непријатеља (на Србију) », *Гласник СУД* 3:XX, 1866, p. 136-156 ; cf. aussi les trois prières pour le sacre du tsar, César, despote et prince : K. И. Невострујев, « Три молитве », *Гласник СУД* 5:XXII, 1867, p. 360-364. Outre le manuscrit susmentionné (*Bibliothèque du Synode de Moscou* n. 374), il convient de mentionner celui de

Ce sont des prières diverses pour la grâce de Dieu pour l'autorité de souverain, les acoluthies à la consécration de divers rangs (ecclésiastiques ainsi que laïcs) qui font partie du service de culte. Les manuscrits dans lesquels se trouvent les textes liturgiques sont le plus souvent des Euchologes⁹.

Les circonstances politiques d'après 1204, voire le crépuscule du concept universaliste de la répartition du pouvoir dans l'œcoumène¹⁰, ont profondément marqué la naissance du royaume serbe. En Serbie, on voit depuis le début de XIII^e siècle s'installer un équilibre entre l'autorité religieuse et le pouvoir royal. Parallèlement avec les efforts que Sava déployait pour réglementer la pratique liturgique¹¹ se déroulaient les préparatifs des bases

Chilandar n. 378 (cf. I. Biliarsky, « Le rite ecclésiastique pour le couronnement des souverains. Les sources serbes », dans E. Timotin (éd.), *Elemente de ceremonial în literatura din spațiul românesc (secolele al XIV-lea – al XVIII-lea)*, Bucarest, 2019, p. 9-50).

⁹ Les euchologes byzantins conservés représentent une importante source d'étude de ces prières. Outre l'euchologe pré-iconoclaste *Barberini* 336 (S. Parenti, E. Velkovska, *L'eucologio Barberini Gr. 336: ff. 1-263*, Rome, 1995), deux autres textes sont d'une importance particulière pour notre sujet : il s'agit notamment des euchologes de la Grande Église de Sainte-Sophie à Constantinople : *L'Euchologe de Stratigue* (Coislin. gr. 213), rédigé en 1027 (J. Duncan, *Coislin 213. Euchologe de la Grande Église*, Rome, 1983 ; M. Arranz, *Eucologio Constantinopolitano agli inizi del secolo XI. Hagiasmatarion & Archieratikon (Rituale & Pontificale) con l'aggiunta del Leiturgikon (Missale)*, Rome, 1996) et l'Euchologe dit de *Bessarion*, rédigé au cours de la seconde moitié du XIII^e siècle, après la libération de Constantinople.

¹⁰ Pour un contexte plus large cf. D. Jacoby, « From Byzantium to Latin Romania: Continuity and Change », dans B. Arbel, B. Hamilton et D. Jacoby (éd.), *Latins and Greeks in the Eastern Mediterranean after 1204*, London, 1989, p. 1-44 ; J. Herrin and G. Saint-Guillain (éd.), *Identities and Allegiances in the Eastern Mediterranean after 1204*, Aldershot, 2011.

¹¹ Comme l'objet du présent travail est le lien entre le liturgique et le politique, il convient de se pencher aussi sur les traditions liturgiques de l'archevêché serbe au XIII^e siècle. En effet, deux fortes traditions liturgiques y cohabitent pratiquement dans la même mesure, l'une constantino-politaine-studite, et l'autre jérusalémienne-sabaïte. Le *typikon* de Jérusalem a été « officiellement » introduit dans la vie liturgique de l'Église serbe grâce aux traductions de l'archevêque Nicodème, datant de 1318, et du moine athonite Roman, remontant à 1331. Arrivé au Mont Athos en 1191, saint Sava y prit connaissance de la vie liturgique réglementée par le synaxaire athono-studite, modelé entre le milieu du X^e et le XII^e siècle à la base de la rédaction salonique du synaxaire studite. En peu de temps, Sava introduira ce même protocole liturgique dans le nouveau monastère de Chilandar. Il introduira également dans la vie liturgique de l'Église serbe un changement de tout premier ordre, en remplaçant ladite constitution par le nouveau *typikon* de Chilandar, qui, lui, fut créé sur une base différente de celle des mêmes documents athonites. Le *typikon* de Chilandar représente une version traduite et partiellement remaniée du *typikon* (*Hypotyposis*) d'Évergète, datant probablement de 1199. Ce *typikon* appartient lui aussi à la famille des constitutions studites, mais il fut créé à la base d'un autre texte, à savoir de la rédaction constantino-politaine du synaxaire studite, remaniée dans des centres monastiques de l'Asie Mineure. Le premier pèlerinage de Sava à la Terre Sainte aura une influence décisive sur la suite de l'évolution de la vie liturgique de l'Église serbe, y compris la consolidation des modèles sabaïtes. Au cours de ce voyage, Sava eut l'occasion de se familiariser avec ce qu'on appelle aujourd'hui le *Typikon* de Jérusalem, c'est-à-dire avec les formes développées de la législation liturgique néosabaïtes, fruit du labeur des moines palestiniens en matière de l'adaptation de la Première rédaction constantino-politaine du synaxaire studite, qui se fraya le chemin dans Jérusalem même et dans des monastères palestiniens

sacrales de la tradition royale et épiscopale serbe, en tout premier lieu par l'érection de la cathédrale du sacre au sein du monastère de Žiča.

L'église du Saint-Sauveur, faisant partie du monastère de Žiča, a été élevée au rang du siège de l'archevêché serbe autocéphale. En même temps, son fondateur, Stefan le Protocouronné, le premier roi serbe, en accord avec son frère Sava, l'a désignée pour le lieu du sacre des rois serbes. Notre attention s'arrêtera pour le moment sur la cérémonie du couronnement à Žiča, au cours de laquelle Sava, le premier archevêque serbe, a joué un rôle central¹². La cérémonie de Žiča est précédée par le premier couronnement de Stefan en 1217, qui probablement eut lieu à l'église Saint-Pierre (aux abords de la ville actuelle de Novi Pazar), siège de l'évêché de Rascie, en présence d'un cardinal, envoyé du pape Honorius III. Lors de ce rituel, dont l'analyse dépasse le cadre du présent article, on fit référence aux vieux liens avec la papauté remontant aux traditions royales de la Dioclée de la fin du XI^e siècle.

L'ordre instauré après la prise de Constantinople a introduit de nouveaux acteurs dans la sphère de la politique ecclésiastique et séculière. Aux yeux des Serbes, le rituel du couronnement royal représentait l'événement capital à l'égard de la défense de l'héritage de Stefan Nemanja, définissant les contours politiques et idéologiques de la scène historique jusqu'à la restauration de l'empire sous la dynastie des Paléologues. Les liens politiques et économiques établis avec les états nés des ruines de la croisade ont largement déterminé la direction de la politique étatique et ecclésiastique des fils de Nemanja. La réorientation vers l'Occident à partir de 1199 indique que le

durant la seconde moitié du X^e siècle. Ces questions sont abordées de manière détaillée par V. Vukašinović dans « The Liturgical Framework... », p. 91-101.

¹² Les descriptions les plus exhaustives de cette cérémonie sont conservées dans les deux *vies* de Saint Sava de Serbie, composées à un demi-siècle d'intervalle. Le récit le plus ancien relatant l'événement a été écrit par le moine athonite Domentian au milieu du XIII^e siècle (édition du texte : Domentijan, *Žitije Svetoga Save [Vie de Saint Sava]*, éd. L.J. Juhas-Georgievska, T. Jovanović, Belgrade, 2001). Les versions conservées du manuscrit de *La Vie de saint Sava* (celle de Vienne et celle de Jagić) offrent les dates différentes de la genèse de cette œuvre. D'après le manuscrit de Vienne, elle a été composée en 6751 (1242-1243), alors que la rédaction de Jagić la situe dans la décennie suivante, en l'an 6762 (1253-1254). L'hagiographie ultérieure du saint a été rédigée par le moine athonite Théodose. Les cadres chronologiques de sa vie et de son œuvre font toujours objet de débats, même s'il est habituel de considérer qu'il a atteint son apogée littéraire durant les dernières décennies du XIII^e siècle. Conservée dans un grand nombre de copies (et non seulement dans la rédaction en langue serbe), la *Vie de saint Sava* n'a toujours pas eu d'édition critique ; nous utilisons encore l'édition de Đura Daničić de 1860 (réimpression 1973). Avec le temps, à mesure que les souvenirs des témoins oculaires s'estompaient, le modelage de la mémoire officielle du royaume dépendait de plus en plus des circonstances politiques et confessionnelles, ce qui explique de nombreuses différences dans les deux hagiographies relatant cet événement. Sur la question, v. S. Marjanović-Dušanić, « The perception of St. Sava by his biographers Domentijan and Teodosije », *Ημερίδα Ο Αγιορείτης Άγιος Σάββας ο Χιλανδαρινός*, Θεσσαλονίκη 9 Δεκεμβρίου 2019, Περίληψεις, p. 80-81 (résumé ; le texte intégral sera publié au cours de 2021).

nouveau cours de la politique serbe coïncide avec les processus avancés de désintégration que subissait l'Empire byzantin à la fin du XII^e siècle.

Cette nouvelle orientation de la politique extérieure se reflète dans toute une suite d'actions diplomatiques qui ont suivi le modèle politique bulgare. La politique que le Saint-Siège menait à l'époque, surtout sous l'énergique Innocent III, a été marquée par la pratique de l'offre des titres royaux aux dynastes d'Orient¹³. Tous ces couronnements ont été organisés dans des circonstances extraordinaires, visant à confirmer la puissance politique et l'identité au temps de la crise de l'Empire byzantin qui a rapidement entraîné de larges modifications globales. Pour pouvoir comprendre le fond de cette politique, il est nécessaire de placer les événements dans un contexte idéologique et historique approprié. Sans nul doute, embrasser le couronnement d'après un protocole latin sur le plan politique et cérémonial signifiait lier ces états avec la sphère de l'Orient latin, ce qui est également confirmé par des réactions et des révoltes locales¹⁴. Le pape menait une politique pareille envers les pays des Balkans, cherchant à étendre son influence à l'Orient aussi loin que possible. Ce n'est pas un hasard si les pourparlers avec la cour bulgare coïncident avec ceux que la curie a menés avec le grand joupán Stefan, futur roi serbe.

Le pouvoir qu'exerçaient les différentes branches de la famille princière des Nemanides fut graduellement concentré entre les mains du souverain et supplanté par une monarchie héréditaire¹⁵. Ce processus fut de loin terminé vers la fin de la deuxième décennie du XIII^e siècle. Le pas suivant – le rituel de l'onction faisant partie intégrante de la cérémonie du couronnement – contribua à la création du lien direct entre l'oïnt et le lignage princier davidien¹⁶. Les deux

¹³ Cf. I. Rapti, « Featuring the King: Rituals of Coronation and Burial in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia », dans A. Beihammer, S. Constantinou, M. Parani (éd.), *Court Ceremonies and Rituals of Power in Byzantium and the Medieval Mediterranean. Comparative Perspectives*, Leiden – Boston, 2013, p. 291-336 ; P. W. Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus and the Crusades*, Cambridge, 1991, p. 29-33; S. Der Nersessian, « The Kingdom of Cilician Armenia », dans K. M. Setton (éd.), *A History of the Crusades*, 6 vols, Madison, WI (1969-89), vol. 2, p. 630-660, ici p. 646-649.

¹⁴ Globalement parlant, la politique qu'Innocent III menait envers les pays orientaux a subi un échec. À ce sujet, v. A. J. Andrea, « Innocent III and the Byzantine Rite, 1198-1216 », dans A. Laiou (éd.), *Urbs capta. The Fourth Crusade and its Consequences*, Paris, 2005, p. 111-122.

¹⁵ Les contours de cette ambition ont été suggérés par la cérémonie de l'intronisation de Stefan au rang de grand joupán à l'église Saint-Pierre à Ras en 1196, alors que la nature héréditaire du pouvoir accordé par la grâce de Dieu est accentuée par le rituel d'une double bénédiction – celle de l'église et du souverain précédent. Pour plus de détails sur ce rituel, v. M. Radujko, « The "Blessing and Crowning" of Grand Zupan Stefan Nemanjić: the Structure, Sources, Symbolic and Ideological-Political Strategy of the Rite », dans B. Krsmanović, Lj. Maksimović, R. Radić (éd.), *Byzantine World in the Balkans II*, Belgrade, 2012, p. 253-284.

¹⁶ Ces questions ont été abordées dans un de nos travaux récents : v. S. Marjanović-Dušanić, « La mémoire d'un rituel : sur le rôle des reliques dans le couronnement du roi serbe », *Travaux et mémoires* 23.1, 2019, p. 497-509, ici p. 500. Comme le présent article met l'accent sur l'enchevêtrement du liturgique et du politique, nous avons dû reprendre quelques résultats de

cérémonies font une sorte d'unité, car la première (celle de 1217) restera incomplète sans celle ultérieure, qui s'est déroulée à Žiča, sous la conduite du premier archevêque Sava de Serbie. C'est par cette dernière que s'assura la nature héréditaire du pouvoir de la dynastie Némanide. La vie de saint Sava, écrite par le moine athonite Domentian, nous montre bien les étapes de la création de la mémoire collective officielle par un texte canonisé dans la tradition serbe. Cette œuvre a mis au premier plan le sacre de Žiča, comme un évènement d'ultime importance.

Sur l'ordre du sacre et de l'onction suivant lequel s'est déroulé le rituel du couronnement à Žiča, l'héritage hagiographique serbe manque de donner des détails précis. L'étude de la structure de ces rituels, et surtout de leur signification théologique, instaurée depuis les premiers écrits des Pères fondateurs de l'Église, devrait d'abord être située dans un cadre précis de l'évolution du protocole du couronnement byzantin, voire des sources grecques et slaves qui en abritent la description¹⁷. Il convient de souligner qu'aucun *ordo/ordre du sacre* écrit qui a probablement figuré dans la pratique des couronnements serbes au XIII^e siècle n'est conservé. L'ordre du sacre serboslave, dont il ne reste pas de traces, a dû ressembler à une des deux étapes d'évolution du couronnement parmi les orthodoxes orientaux¹⁸. Quant à l'office même, diverses étapes de l'évolution des règles concernant le couronnement du prince ne diffèrent pas en matière des prières lues, mais uniquement en matière des rubriques définissant les gestes liturgiques et les actions accompagnant le couronnement.

Pour connaître la cérémonie du sacre de Žiča, il convient d'abord de consulter deux sources majeures, à savoir deux hagiographies du premier archevêque serbe Sava, qui dirigea en personne l'acte même du couronnement du premier roi serbe. Une lecture attentive des deux descriptions du

l'article mentionné, dont le sujet principal est le rôle qu'ont joué les reliques dans le rituel du sacre royal.

¹⁷ Cette question a été objet d'une étude récente de V. Vukašinović, « A Liturgical Analysis of the Rite... » (v. *supra*, note 6).

¹⁸ Les traductions slaves du protocole de l'intronisation qui nous sont connues ont été faites d'après l'Euchologe de la « Grande Église ». Sont conservés deux manuscrits grecs de la version intégrale de l'Euchologe de la Grande Église de Sainte-Sophie à Constantinople, l'un étant rédigé en 1027, sous le presbytère Stratigie (*Paris. Coislin. gr.* 213), tandis que l'autre, dit l'Euchologe de Bessarion (Grotta Ferrata, *gr.* Gb1) remonte à l'époque d'après la libération de Constantinople dans la seconde moitié du XIII^e siècle. La variante de la consécration du temple conservée dans *L'Euchologe de Stratigie* a été traduite en vieux slave et copiée (voire imprimée dans différents euchologes en Serbie à la fin du XV^e et au cours du XVI^e siècle) pour être diffusée jusqu'aux changements survenus aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles. Le manuscrit de Studenica, datant de 1286, représente la plus ancienne traduction slave de ce protocole. Sur ces questions, v. M. C. Желтов, « Чин освящения храма и положения святых мощей в византийских Евхологиях XI века », dans A. M. Лидов (éd.), *Реликвии в искусстве и культуре восточно-христианского мира, Тезисы докладов и материалы международного симпозиума*, Moscow, 2000, p. 111-126.

couronnement de Stefan le Protocouronné contenues dans ces deux hagiographies¹⁹ – *La Vie de saint Sava* de Domentian (rédigé vers 1253) et celle venant de la plume d'un autre moine athonite – Théodose (datant de la dernière décennie du XIII^e siècle) – dévoile un degré élevé de la coïncidence entre ce rituel et celui pratiqué à Byzance de l'époque. Cependant, y sont également perceptibles des différences importantes auxquelles il faut prêter une attention particulière.

Dans sa description du sacre de Stefan, Théodose fournit plus de détails que Domentian, énumérant avec précision les étapes structurelles de la cérémonie : *habillement, couronnement, onction, prosternation* et *acclamation*. L'acte du couronnement se faisait ordinairement devant les saintes portes – sur la soléa ou dans la nef, au centre de l'église, devant « le peuple entier », lors de la partie préparatoire de la liturgie, à savoir la « liturgie de la Parole », au cours de laquelle on lit et interprète la Bible²⁰. L'archevêque serbe Sava bénit d'abord les insignes royaux²¹ : le manteau pourpre, la ceinture à la perle, la couronne et le sceptre²². D'après le règlement, la couronne est située sur l'antimension et le couronnement se déroule sur l'ambon de l'église²³. Les sources liturgiques ultérieures, ainsi que les textes des protocoles du sacre dont on dispose ne font aucune mention de l'autel, mais affirment que le couronnement, qu'il soit de nature liturgique ou autre, a lieu sur l'ambon²⁴. Pseudo-Kodinos souligne que, selon la règle du couronnement des derniers siècles byzantins, la couronne ne figurait pas sur l'autel ; elle était tenue par les diacres, qui, à l'heure prévue,

¹⁹ Pour les éditions de ces deux textes, v. *supra*, note 12.

²⁰ Après la « petite entrée » et avant la lecture de l'Évangile, la Bible est prise de sur la sainte table, puis portée à travers l'église et remise dans le sanctuaire. Si le couronnement royal fait partie de la liturgie, il a lieu après la première partie de l'office et avant la lecture de la Bible. C'est à ce moment-là que se déroulent les rituels de l'ordination épiscopale et de l'intronisation de l'archevêque. Sur la question v. S. Marjanović-Dušanić, « La mémoire d'un rituel... », p. 500-501.

²¹ Ce répertoire des insignes comprenait aussi sans nul doute l'encolpion de Nemanja – à ce sujet, v. S. Marjanović-Dušanić, « Vladarski znaci Stefana Nemanje », dans J. Kalić (éd.), *Stefan Nemanja – sveti Simeon Mirotočivi*, Belgrade, 2000, p. 77-87.

²² Domentian nous informe que la « sainte couronne » royale se trouvait déjà sur l'autel, d'où Sava la retira afin d'oindre et couronner son frère. Quant à Théodose, il affirme que Sava effectua l'acte même du couronnement dans le sanctuaire, ce qui signifierait que la couronne se trouvait sur la sainte table. Par conséquent, cet acte pourrait indiquer que la règle du couronnement liturgique en usage à Nicée n'a pas été respectée lors de la cérémonie à Žiča. Cf. П. И. Жаворонков, « Избрание и коронация никейских императоров », *Византийский временник* 49, 1988, p. 56-57.

²³ Pour plus de détails sur ce sujet, v. R. F. Taft, *The Great Entrance, A History of the Transfer of Gifts and Other Preanaphoral Rites*, Rome, 1978².

²⁴ Pseudo-Kodinos, *Traité des offices (De officiis)*, éd. par J. Verpeaux, Paris, 1966, p. 221 ; G. P. Majeska, *The Coronation of Manuel II*, p. 428 ; *The "Journey to Constantinople" of Ignatius of Smolensk*, p. 108 ; M. Arranz, « Couronnement royal et autres promotions de cour : les sacrements de l'institution de l'ancien Euchologe constantinopolitain », *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 56, 1990, p. 91. Cf. S. Marjanović-Dušanić, « La mémoire d'un rituel... », p. 501.

l'apportaient sur l'ambon²⁵, d'où le patriarche la prenait pour couronner l'empereur en prononçant l'invocation « Digne », reprise trois fois par les autres participants au rituel²⁶.

D'abord, l'archevêque fait la bénédiction du futur roi : il pose les mains sur sa tête en le signant de croix, un geste accompagné de paroles liturgiques convenables. Les hagiographes de Sava attestent que la bénédiction fut suivie de l'onction, puis de la proclamation solennelle du roi acceptée par le peuple et du chant de l'acclamation liturgique. Une différence considérable entre le protocole du couronnement byzantin et celui de l'intronisation de Stefan le Protocouronné décrit par les hagiographes de saint Sava porte sur la description de l'ordre suivant lequel le couronnement et l'onction ont été faits. Les vies de saint Sava affirment que le premier archevêque serbe a d'abord couronné Stefan pour l'oindre après. Cet ordre ne correspond pas aux descriptions du couronnement byzantin traditionnel, où l'onction précède habituellement le couronnement²⁷, presque sans exception²⁸. La description que Théodose a laissée, plus détaillée, contient l'ancienne réglementation protocolaire d'après laquelle l'habillement du prince précédait le couronnement, qui fut suivi de l'onction.

Les chercheurs ont discuté la question de l'introduction de l'onction dans le rituel du couronnement du basileus et de la possible influence latine sur cette pratique à maintes reprises²⁹. Comme ce fut démontré par M. Arranz, la description de l'onction des princes byzantins laissée dans l'œuvre plus tardive de Syméon de Thessalonique (XV^e siècle) corrobore la conclusion que l'onction existait dans la pratique byzantine, quoique les livres liturgiques n'en fassent pas

²⁵ *De Officiis*, p. 223; *Pseudo-Kodinos and the Constantinopolitan Court: Offices and Ceremonies*, éd. R. Macrides, J. A. Munitiz, D. Angelov, Farnham, 2013, p. 415.

²⁶ Pourtant, si l'on prend en considération le protocole du sacre tel qu'il est décrit dans le plus ancien euchologe italo-grec, l'*Euchologe Barberini* 336, on se rendra compte que la totalité du rituel s'est déroulée dans l'autel. Quoique appartenant aux euchologes provinciaux, ce texte, venant du territoire de la Grande Grèce (Magna Graecia), contient le sacre de l'empereur et d'autres titulatures curiales. Compte tenu du fait que ce rituel de couronnement fut pratiqué dans l'Italie du sud jusqu'à la fin du XII^e siècle, il est possible que la cour serbe en fût familière aussi. Les prières prononcées lors du couronnement contenu dans cet euchologe sont quasi identiques à celle des livres d'office ultérieurs.

²⁷ Il en est ainsi, par ailleurs, dans le texte de Domentian, qui note comme suit : « il maria son pieux frère et l'oignit de Saint Esprit pour le faire roi » (Domentian, 157).

²⁸ Le même ordre figure, il est vrai, dans la description du sacre de Michel IX Paléologue (qui, lui, ne fut pas empereur mais co-empereur, associé au trône de son père) que note Georges Pachimère (*Pseudo-Kodinos and the Constantinopolitan Court: Offices and Ceremonies*, p. 425).

²⁹ S'appuyant sur les recherches antérieures, dans son texte publié en 1955, Ostrogorski nie l'existence de la pratique d'onction des princes byzantins avant le début du XIII^e siècle. Dans le même travail, il émet l'hypothèse d'après laquelle tous témoignages d'onction antérieurs, contenus dans des sources variées, ne sont que de nature métaphorique, et que l'onction a été introduite à l'instar des modèles occidentaux, tant anciens que contemporains. Г. Острогорски, « О царевом миропомазању и подизању на штит у позновизантијском церемонијалу », *О Вјеровањима и схватањима Византинаца*, Belgrade, 1970, p. 319-329.

mention³⁰, et que l'acte même ne représentait pas une nouveauté ; c'est plutôt le moyen à l'aide duquel il était effectué qui a changé. En effet, même si l'onction des princes byzantins existait avant³¹, ce n'est qu'à partir du premier quart du XIII^e siècle qu'elle s'effectuait avec le saint myron à la place de l'huile sainte. Le sacrement de l'onction, ainsi que l'acte même du couronnement du prince, sont dotés d'une symbolique évidente : ce sont des « signes » d'une nouvelle naissance entamée par l'intronisation impériale. De même, l'onction devient la base du charisme du prince au sein de la communauté, pris dans le sens du don divin, ou, autrement dit, du don spirituel³². Comme l'image paradigmatique du héros charismatique comprend une personne ayant été touchée par la grâce divine, le lien entre le langage liturgique conçu pour des cérémonies pareilles et la rhétorique du pouvoir peut être expliqué par le parallélisme entre les sacrements de l'ordre sacerdotal et l'ordination épiscopale et l'intronisation de l'archevêque et du roi aussi bien sur le plan de la cérémonie qu'au niveau des idées.

Théodose clôt le récit du couronnement de Stefan par la description de la prostration et de l'acclamation du clergé et des laïcs réunis à cette occasion³³. Ces deux éléments de la cérémonie, repris de la pratique impériale byzantine, avaient traditionnellement pour but de confirmer de manière symbolique la légitimité du prince couronné. Tandis que les prosternations indiquaient en premier lieu l'origine divine du pouvoir, les acclamations publiques contenaient les vœux du peuple, souhaitant à son nouveau prince une longue vie, ainsi que la victoire au combat. La cérémonie terminée, on procéda au festin et à la remise d'offrandes royales.

Quant à la pratique liturgique liée à la constitution du royaume serbe, les cérémonies du sacre et de l'onction de Stefan le Protocouronné ont été précédées par le rituel de consécration de la future cathédrale du sacre royal à Žiča³⁴, décrit dans les *vies* de saint Sava. Les auteurs serbes n'ignoraient pas le parallèle liturgique entre les sacrements du baptême et de l'onction et la consécration de l'église. Ainsi, la consécration du temple est mentionnée dans les cas de

³⁰ M. Arranz, *Eucologio Constantinopolitano...*, p. 133 (*De Sacro Templo*, PG 155, col. 146, c – d).

³¹ *Pseudo-Kodinos and the Constantinopolitan Court: Offices and Ceremonies*, p. 424-425. D'après certains chercheurs, la pratique de l'onction remonte au IX^e siècle (v. П. И. Жаворонков, *Избрание и коронация...*, p. 56-57).

³² D. L. Sadler, *Reading the Reverse Façade of Reims Cathedral: Royalty and Ritual in 13th-Century France*, Farnham – Burlington, VT, 2012, p. 132.

³³ Des acclamations comme « *mnogoletije* » (Ad multos annos), voire polychronies, prononcées à des occasions variées, constituent « l'acte crucial du consentement lors du sacre du prince » (« Acclamation », *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, éd. par A. P. Kazhdan, New York – Oxford, 1991, p. 10). Pour en savoir plus v. H. Tillyard, « The Acclamation of Emperors in Byzantine Ritual », *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 18, 1912, p. 239-260.

³⁴ Le texte intégral de la consécration du temple ne figure que dans le manuscrit de ДЕЧ 69, datant de la dernière décennie du XIV^e siècle, tandis que d'autres manuscrits n'en conservent que des fragments (cf. Д. Богдановић (éd.), *Инвентар ћирилских рукописа у Југославији (XI-XVII века)*, Belgrade, 1982, бр. 1563, p. 108).

Chilandar (après que Sava est arrivé de Vatopédi à Chilandar en juillet 1198) et de Žiča (dès son arrivée à Žiča, l'archevêque Sava consacra d'abord la grande église du Saint-Sauveur). Théodose fait mention des éléments constitutifs du rituel, soulignant que Sava « ... consacra [l'église] et l'orna de sainte table et de reliques saintes... »³⁵.

Les descriptions de ces rituels témoignent que la Serbie du premier XIII^e siècle comprenait profondément le sens et l'importance de l'espace liturgique. Une lecture attentive du *Sermon de Žiča sur la vraie foi*, prononcé par Sava après le rituel du sacre et noté par ses deux hagiographes, en dévoile les bases. Dans ce sermon est constitué le cadre théologique de vénération de l'espace liturgique à partir d'une polémique avec les hérésies anciennes tout comme avec le bogomilisme actuel à l'époque de Sava. L'interprétation du sermon permet aussi de remarquer que le sacre royal fut précédé de la constitution du trésor de Žiča, c'est-à-dire de l'offrande des reliques porteuses d'un sens particulier³⁶.

Outre les insignes, la présence des reliques saintes que l'on touchait et embrassait constituait l'essence sacrale du rituel³⁷. La cathédrale du sacre de Žiča abritait un trésor des reliques du premier rang³⁸. Elles servaient, comme il est bien connu, de palladium à la dynastie et à son royaume, tout en marquant symboliquement le lien entre la possession de prestigieuses reliques et la légitimité du pouvoir. Le programme constitué par Sava, en accordance avec son frère royal, a certainement compris l'acquisition de prestigieuses reliques authentiques, provenant de la Terre Sainte, tout comme la proclamation de la sainteté du Siméon, le fondateur dynastique. Cette stratégie visait à assurer la légitimité de l'autorité par le processus de sacralisation du pouvoir politique et archihiérarchique. Cette ambition a été tracée par la fondation du monastère qui deviendrait la cathédrale de couronnement, acte qui fut confirmé par la délivrance de deux chartes solennelles transcrites par la suite sur les murs du porche placé au rez-de-chaussée de la tour-clocher de la cathédrale du sacre à Žiča. Ces actes de donation solennels mentionnent les rituels – cérémonies et serments – qui ont constitué le royaume.

Dans ce contexte, la transcription murale des chartes sur la tour d'entrée à Žiča avait un rôle symbolique additionnel³⁹. Le texte des chartes fournit une

³⁵ Теодосије, *Житије светог Саве*, éd. Ђ. Даничић, Belgrade, 1860, p. 204.

³⁶ А. Јевтић, « Из богословља Светог Саве (Жичка беседа Светог Саве о правој вери) », *Свети Сава и Косовски завет*, Belgrade, 1992, p. 168.

³⁷ Sur la question, v. S. Marjanović-Dušanić, « La mémoire d'un rituel... », p. 501-502.

³⁸ L'aperçu le plus exhaustif du contenu sacral du trésor de Žiča est publié dans la monographie M. Čanak-Medić, D. Popović, D. Vojvodić, *Manastir Žiča*, Belgrade, 2014, p. 44-63, avec la liste des références bibliographiques pertinentes. Cf. également D. Popović, « A Staurotheke of Serbian Provenance in Pienza », *Zograf* 36, 2012, p. 157-170.

³⁹ Ces chartes ont été publiées pour la dernière fois dans le tome I du Recueil des actes diplomatiques serbes : *Zbornik srednjovekovnih ćirilćkih povelja i pisama Srbije, Bosne i Dubrovnika, knjiga I, 1186-1321*, éd. V. Mošin, S. Ćirković, D. Sindik, Belgrade, 2011, n° 14 et n°

liste détaillée des « trésors du paradis » offerts au monastère par les souverains serbes⁴⁰. L'essence du pouvoir royal ainsi que de sa célébration liturgique par l'onction et le sacre du nouveau souverain était essentielle pour façonner la mémoire dynastique⁴¹. Sans aucun doute, la présence des reliques de haute valeur spirituelle représentant le signe actif de la participation de la Terre sainte au rituel de couronnement de roi serbe.

L'acte d'élévation de la Serbie au rang de royaume fut composé de plusieurs cérémonies qui, dans leur ensemble, consacrèrent le nouveau statut de l'État et de l'Église serbes à la fin de la deuxième décennie du XIII^e siècle. Il faut y ajouter la consécration du temple de Žiža et son élévation au rang de cathédrale du sacre de futurs rois. Tous ces rituels montrent que le monastère de Žiža est devenu le miroir d'un programme de nature étatique, dynastique et sacrée à la fois. Les reliques saintes ont joué un rôle symbolique de premier rang au cours desdites cérémonies, en assurant une participation légitime de la Terre Sainte au rituel constitutif du sacre et de l'onction du premier roi serbe. En même temps, Stefan Radoslav ayant été nommé prince dauphin, la cérémonie a revêtu un caractère dynastique, achevant de transformer la vision de l'état en tant qu'héritage paternel en celle d'un royaume héréditaire établi par la grâce de Dieu.

15. Pour l'analyse des documents, de leur place au sein de l'espace sacré de Žiža et de leur sens symbolique v. S. Marjanović-Dušanić, « La charte et l'espace sacré. Les actes royaux transcrits dans les peintures murales serbes (XIII^e-XIV^e siècles) et leur contexte symbolique », *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, t. 167, 2009, p. 391-416.

⁴⁰ La transcription murale des chartes fait mention des fragments de la Vraie Croix et des reliques de la Passion, des parties du maphorion et de la ceinture de la Vierge, du bras droit et d'une partie du chef de Jean Baptiste, ainsi que de parcelles des reliques des saints apôtres, des prophètes, des martyrs et de révérends saints. Les rois serbes offraient également au trésor de l'église du sacre un grand nombre d'objets tels icônes, chapelle dorée ou argentée, rideaux, chasubles, livres sacrés et maints autres ornements. Parmi tous ces objets, on ne peut suivre les traces que de la main de Jean Baptiste (la charte souligne que c'est la main que Jean Baptiste a posée sur la tête du Christ) et de la staurothèque abritant les morceaux de la Vraie Croix. Sur la question, v. J. Ebersolt, *Sanctuaires de Byzance. Recherches sur les anciens trésors des églises de Constantinople*, Paris, 1921, p. 80 (note 4), 134-136 ; M. Ćorović-Ljubinković, « Pretečina desnica i drugo krunisanje Prvovenčanog », *Starinar* 5-6, 1954-55, p. 105-114 ; D. Popović, « The Siena Relic of John the Baptist's Right Arm », *Zograf* 42, 2018, p. 73-87.

⁴¹ Cf. M. Räsänen, G. Hartmann, E. J. Richards, *Relics, Identity and Memory in Medieval Europe*, Turnhout, 2016 ; A. Wharton, *Selling Jerusalem: Relics, Replicas, Theme Parks*, Chicago, 2006, ainsi que S. Marjanović-Dušanić, « La mémoire d'un rituel... », p. 509.

IMAGINES VIRGINIS ET LA RHÉTORIQUE DU POUVOIR DANS L'ŒUVRE LITTÉRAIRE DU PATRIARCHE EUTHYME DE TARNOVO ET DE SON CERCLE

Ivan Biliarsky

1. Introduction

Le Patriarche Euthyme vivait et écrivait pendant une période dramatique pour la chrétienté orientale. Ce fut le temps de la conquête ottomane de l'Anatolie et de l'Europe du sud-est, qui rendit nécessaire l'aide militaire et financière de la part de l'Occident, qui vint avec l'aspiration de l'union des Églises sous la domination du Saint Siège de Rome. Cette situation incita à une résistance contre la papauté et à la consolidation de l'Orthodoxie, ce qui eut un impact sur la manière de concevoir le pouvoir : la sacralisation de l'État et du souverain, l'interpénétration entre l'État et l'Église en ce qui concerne leur perception, leurs actions, leur désignation dans l'histoire et dans ce monde. En Bulgarie, le principal protagoniste de ces tendances était le patriarche Euthyme de Tarnovo. Le prélat lettré ambitionnait, à travers ses œuvres, de créer un chœur de saints-protecteurs du Second Empire bulgare par l'hagiographie, par les services divins et des panégyriques des saints hommes et femmes liés au pays. C'étaient surtout ceux dont les reliques étaient transférées par les tsars à Tarnovo. Il s'agissait aussi des pratiques et des textes qui menaient à la sacralisation de l'espace de l'État et de sa capitale, du pouvoir, des souverains et du peuple, effectuée par les translations de reliques des saints. Toutes ces idées, exprimées dans un langage fondé sur l'Écriture Sainte, trouvaient leur place dans l'œuvre du saint patriarche et dominaient la pensée politique des Slaves méridionaux durant cette époque et même plus tard.

Cette recherche n'essayera pas de toucher tous les problèmes liés à l'interprétation des écrits du patriarche dans la perspective de l'idéologie politique. Je ne m'arrêterai que sur la vénération des femmes bienheureuses dont les reliques étaient transférées dans la capitale, à savoir sainte Parascève d'Epibatae, sainte impératrice Théophano et sainte Philothée. Toutes les trois étaient des protectrices de la capitale et de l'Empire en suivant le modèle de l'intercession de la Vierge en faveur de Constantinople. Ces vénérationes peuvent être mieux comprises à partir du culte de l'unique sainte femme, d'ailleurs

l'unique martyre aussi, dont les reliques n'ont jamais été à Tarnovo, pour laquelle le saint patriarche a écrit un panégyrique – sainte Nedelja (Kyriaki). Dans son étude sur la sainteté féminine à Byzance, Alice-Mary Talbot affirmait que d'habitude les saintes femmes sont séparées des saints hommes et forment un groupe compact, sans subdivisions, tandis que les hommes appartiennent à différents types (guerriers, martyrs, évêques, moines, rois et ainsi de suite)¹. Dans cet article, nous allons étudier le cas des saintes femmes dans l'œuvre du saint patriarche Euthyme séparément des hommes mais en soulignant leur appartenance à une certaine catégorie de sainteté. Il était important que toutes les saintes dont les reliques se trouvaient dans la capitale du Second Empire bulgare soient bienheureuses et que leur vénération soit différente de celle de sainte Nedelja, au moins autant que nous la connaissions. C'est un fait qui doit être noté et avoir son explication.

2. Les saintes femmes protectrices

Il y a des années, j'ai consacré une recherche au culte de sainte Parascève-Petka en Bulgarie, en Serbie et les Pays roumains où j'ai lancé l'idée que sa vénération, particulièrement dans le domaine politique, fonctionnait comme une sorte de substitution du culte marial, notamment de la Vierge Protectrice-de-la-Ville². Ce dernier était une partie essentielle de l'idéologie impériale de Constantinople. J'étais poussé à revenir sur le sujet par le livre très intéressant récemment paru de Maya Petrova-Taneva, dédié au culte de sainte impératrice Théophano³. L'auteur y trouve des traits de la vénération de l'intercesseur du pouvoir impérial et de la Protectrice-de-la-Ville. On ne dispose pas d'une *Vita* de cette sainte femme écrite par le patriarche Euthyme mais il nous a laissé le texte d'un service liturgique pour elle qui confirme les conclusions, bâties sur l'ensemble des textes byzantins, sur lesquelles se fonde sa vénération. C'est bien cela qui m'a déterminé à jeter un coup d'œil sur les autres femmes bienheureuses et de chercher un programme politique dans les écrits du patriarche de Tarnovo.

¹ A.-M. Talbot, « Female Sanctity in Byzantium », dans eadem, *Women and Religious Life in Byzantium*, Aldershot – Burlington, 2001, VI, p. 1-2.

² И. Билярски, *Покровители на Царството. Св. цар Петър и св. Параскева/Петка*, Sofia, 2004, p. 43-102 ; idem, « The Cult of Saint Petka and the Constantinopolitan Marial Cult », dans *Les cultes des saints souverains et des saints guerriers et l'idéologie du pouvoir en Europe centrale et orientale (Actes du colloque international, 17 janvier 2004, New Europe College, Bucarest)*, éd. I. Biliarsky, R. G. Păun, Bucarest, 2007, p. 81-104.

³ М. Петрова-Танева, *‘Помощница на царете’: Света императрица Теофана в южно-славянската традиция*, Sofia, 2018.

2.1. Sainte Parascève

Il faut commencer par sainte Parascève, qui est la plus vénérée et la plus étudiée⁴. La vie terrestre de sainte Parascève d'Epibatae se situe dans la seconde moitié du X^e et au début du XI^e siècle et, dans cette perspective, elle appartient aux saintes femmes de la période méso-byzantine. Si l'on suit la classification proposée par Alice-Mary Talbot, elle fait partie des saintes nones⁵. Dans les conclusions de son étude, Alice-Mary Talbot affirmait que les femmes saintes à Byzance n'étaient pas, pendant cette période ainsi que jusqu'à la fin de l'Empire, l'objet d'une vénération populaire mais avaient un culte local et étaient promues surtout par leurs familles⁶. Ceci était vrai en ce qui concerne Byzance pour sainte Parascève aussi, mais non en ce qui concerne la diffusion de son culte en Bulgarie et dans les pays balkaniques, où il était promu et développé par le pouvoir et continue de l'être jusqu'à nos jours. La vénération de sainte Petka (son nom chez les Slaves) était largement connue non seulement au niveau officiel, dans les milieux ecclésiastiques, mais aussi par la foi populaire folklorique. Elle avait la priorité parmi les saintes femmes (excepté la Vierge) dans les contextes bulgare, serbe et roumain. En ce sens, on voit une différence considérable par rapport à la situation dans les milieux byzantin et grec, et cette différence se perpétue au moins jusqu'au XVII^e siècle.

Dans cette brève introduction, je suis contraint à répéter certains de mes arguments formulés dans les études déjà citées. Le culte de la sainte femme est devenu important et fortement accentué par le pouvoir impérial en Bulgarie en relation avec la translation des reliques à Tarnovo après la bataille de Klokotnitsa en 1230⁷. La vénération de la sainte Parascève possédait multiples facettes et cela contribuait à son développement et à son importance pour l'idéologie politique ainsi qu'à son rapprochement du culte marial. Comme on l'a déjà dit, cette vénération se manifeste d'une manière aussi bien officielle que populaire. Cette dernière est toujours dominante en Bulgarie occidentale et en Serbie où elle prend des formes exceptionnelles et très intéressantes jusqu'à nos jours, mais cet aspect ne fait pas partie de la recherche actuelle. Dans la vénération officielle, c'est-à-dire ecclésiastique et impériale, la sainte devient la Protectrice-de-la-ville capitale et de l'Empire, ce qui se reflète dans différentes

⁴ Voir E. Минева, *Пет химнографски творби за св. Петка Търновска*, Sofia, 2005 ; eadem, *The Byzantine Hagiographic and Hymnographic Texts on St Parasceve of Epibatae*, Part One: *The Byzantine Vita of St Parasceve of Epibatae or the Vita by "Vasilikos the Deacon"*, Sofia, 2017.

⁵ A.-M. Talbot, « Female Sanctity in Byzantium », p. 6-10.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 15-16. Un cas typique pour le développement du culte grâce à la famille de la sainte femme est celui de sainte Théodora de Thessalonique : A.-M. Talbot, « Family Cults in Byzantium: The case of St Theodora of Thessalonike », dans *LEIMON. Studies presented to Lennard Rydén for his Sixty-fifth Birthday*, éd. J. O. Rosenqvist, Uppsala, 1996, p. 49-69.

⁷ С. Кожухаров, « Неизвестен летописен разказ от времето на Иван Асен II », dans idem, *Проблеми на старобългарската поезия*, т. I, Sofia, 2004, p. 310-322.

sources de l'époque et surtout dans la *Vita* écrite par le saint patriarche de Tarnovo⁸. Il faut souligner qu'Euthyme ne créa pas un nouveau culte mais renforça des traits qu'on pouvait retrouver encore au XIII^e siècle. La vénération de sainte Parascève existait déjà dans l'Empire avant son arrivée en Bulgarie. Purement locale au départ, elle est devenue importante et fortement politisée à Tarnovo même avant l'œuvre du patriarche. Durant un siècle et demi la bienheureuse d'Epibatae avait un rôle très important dans la capitale de la Bulgarie. Ce phénomène fut à la base de la production littéraire remarquable dont le patriarche Euthyme était le continuateur⁹. À côté de la *Vita* déjà mentionnée, il faut noter le service divin pour la sainte Parascève dit « tarnovien » que St. Kožuharov attribua au saint patriarche¹⁰. C'est un texte très riche, qui nous offre une grande partie des matériaux pour notre recherche sur la vénération de la sainte femme en tant que protectrice de l'Empire. L'attribution définitive de cette œuvre au patriarche Euthyme serait une confirmation de l'importance de son héritage pour la vie spirituelle en Bulgarie du Bas Moyen âge.

Dans ce contexte, il faut étudier aussi la prolongation du culte de sainte Parascève après la chute de Tarnovo. Peu après ces événements tragiques, les reliques de la sainte quittèrent l'ex-capitale et se dirigèrent en *translatio* vers Vidin, la dernière ville des tsars de la Bulgarie. Elle ne fut pas seule mais accompagnée de pratiquement toutes les saintes femmes protectrices de la capitale où leurs reliques reposaient. C'était sans aucun doute une confirmation de la continuité des traditions du Second Empire. Après la conquête ottomane de la ville danubienne, suite à la défaite des Croisés lors de la bataille de Nicopolis (1396), les reliques se sont dirigées vers Belgrade. Ces deux mouvements et avènements furent décrits par la plume de Grégoire Tsamblak – disciple de saint patriarche Euthyme et auteur qui appartenait au monde byzantin et post-byzantin¹¹. Quant à ces deux premières *translationes*, il faut citer son mot selon lequel « la gloire de la Bulgarie est devenue la gloire de la Serbie »¹². À Belgrade, le culte de sainte Parascève gardait la même typologie que celle de Bulgarie. En effet, il s'agissait de la vénération envers la Protectrice-de-la-ville capitale et l'intercesseur du souverain et de l'État¹³. La rhétorique de sa glorification, construite en Bulgarie et formulée et renforcée par le patriarche

⁸ E. Kałużniacki, *Werke des Patriarchen von Bulgarien Euthymius (1375-1393)*, Vienne, 1901, p. 59-77 ; Патриарх Евтимий, *Съчинения*, изд. Кл. Иванова, Sofia, 1990, p. 82-95.

⁹ On peut inclure ici les *vitae* synaxaires de la sainte femme, les textes hagiographiques et liturgiques traduits du grec.

¹⁰ С. Кожухаров, « Търновска (Евтимиева?) служба за св. Петка Епиватска », dans idem, *Проблеми на старобългарската поезия*, т. I, Sofia, 2004, p. 109-139.

¹¹ E. Kałużniacki, *Werke des Patriarchen Euthymius*, p. 432-436.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 436.

¹³ J. Erdeljan, *Chosen Places. Constructing New Jerusalems in Slavia Orthodoxa*, Leiden – Boston, 2017, p. 185-186.

Euthyme, obtint ainsi avec l'œuvre de Grégoire Tsamblak la consécration de sa notoriété. Belgrade fut conquise par les Osmanlis en 1521 et les reliques capturées par Suleyman le Magnifique sont parties vers Constantinople¹⁴. Ce transfert effectué par un sultan musulman doit avoir son explication. Il mérite une attention à part et une étude spéciale, qui est déjà prévue. Ici je ne ferai que quelques observations. Bien que cette pratique soit appelée chez les Chrétiens « un cérémonial monarchique »¹⁵, les intentions de Suleyman ne coïncidaient pas avec celles des souverains orthodoxes lors de leurs actes de translation des reliques vers les capitales. Pour expliquer le fait qu'un musulman transféra les reliques de sainte Parascève à Constantinople, il faut se rendre compte que l'on trouve suffisamment de cas où les autorités ottomanes ont aidé ces actions chrétiennes après la conquête des Balkans. Tel est le cas des reliques de saint Jean de Rila qui quittèrent Tarnovo pour aller à la montagne de Rila¹⁶ ; tels sont les cas des voyages de sainte Parascève, de sainte Théophano et de sainte Philothée de l'ancienne capitale à Vidin et puis à Belgrade dont il était déjà question. Pour revenir à l'an 1521, il faut dire que le sultan conquérant était assez bien reçu à Belgrade et on ne peut point penser que le transfert des reliques fut un acte hostile contre les Chrétiens belgradois. Ce fait a encore besoin d'une explication mais, en tout cas, nous pouvons le percevoir comme une confirmation de l'importance de la vénération de la sainte femme. On ne sait pas beaucoup sur ce qui s'est passé avec les reliques de sainte Parascève à Constantinople mais de toute évidence leur présence n'a jamais joui d'une vénération particulière. Les sources ne sont pas très éloquentes. Nous savons qu'elles furent placées à l'église de Notre Dame Pammakaristos à Constantinople (Fethiye Camii), avec celles de sainte Théophano dans une chapelle particulière où personne ne pouvait entrer sous menace de mort mais les croyants avaient un accès visuel limité vers l'intérieur¹⁷. Il est difficile de définir la signification de ce récit mais on peut citer un contemporain qui soutenait que les reliques ne produisaient pas des miracles car elles n'étaient pas l'objet d'une

¹⁴ Ces événements ne sont pas très bien documentés mais on peut citer la collection des sources sur le transfert des reliques des saintes femmes avec une icône miraculeuse de Belgrade à Constantinople, réunie par Hilarion Ruvarac, à laquelle on peut ajouter aussi des sources contemporaines vénitiennes : И. Руварац, « Прилошци к објашњењу извора српске историје. XIII. О светињама београдске цркве г. 1521 », *Гласник српског ученог друштва*, 48, 1881, p. 1-5.

¹⁵ P. Guran, « Invention et translation des reliques – un cérémonial monarchique ? », *Revue des études sud-est européennes* XXXVI, 1998, p. 195-229.

¹⁶ E. Kałużniacki, *Werke des Patriarchen Euthymius*, p. 405-431 ; I. Biliarsky, « Le dernier voyage de saint Jean de Rila. La translation des reliques dans le contexte du début de la domination ottomane », dans X. Perrot (éd.), *Les reliques en action. Variations juridiques sur la force agissante des choses sacrées*, Limoges, 2019, p. 147-163.

¹⁷ P. Schreiner, « Eine unbekannte Beschreibung der Pammakaristoskirche (Fethiye Camii) und weitere Texte zur Topographie Konstantinopels », *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 25, 1971, p. 224-225, No 24₁₂₁₋₁₄₃ ; М. Петрова-Танева, *Помощница на царете*, p. 62-63.

vénération particulière¹⁸. Ces mots du prêtre Synadinos de Serrès confirment l'attention particulière et la vénération extraordinaire que les reliques avaient en Bulgarie et dans d'autres pays balkaniques. Cela nous rappelle aussi l'observation d'Alice-Mary Talbot concernant la vénération des saintes femmes dans le milieu grec où elles étaient vénérées surtout au niveau local et familial¹⁹. Ce n'était pas le cas de leur culte en Bulgarie et en Serbie. La *translatio* finale a eu lieu de Constantinople dans la Principauté de Moldavie, où ces reliques se trouvent encore aujourd'hui et sont honorées en tant que reliques de la protectrice de toute la Roumanie.

Ces remarques préliminaires sur la vénération de sainte Parascève et sa présence dans l'idéologie du pouvoir du Second Empire bulgare nous permettent d'identifier le rôle important du patriarche Euthyme. Il n'a créé ni le culte ni son usage pour la légitimation des autorités de Tarnovo mais c'était lui qui développa les idées, les images et les messages politiques du culte de sainte Parascève. En effet, il contribua à la création d'une doctrine de l'État qui avait des visions bien plus larges que l'État bulgare lui-même, dont la chute a eu lieu devant les yeux du patriarche, qui survécut à la conquête de Tarnovo par les Osmanlis. La vénération de la sainte femme d'Epibatae s'est répandue dans tous les pays des Balkans et même hors de la péninsule et pénétra dans les cours des gouvernants. On peut dire que partout elle suivait les idées et les formes développées par le saint patriarche Euthyme. Cette observation trouve sa confirmation dans la diffusion et la multiplication du texte de la *Vita* de la sainte femme rédigée par lui. L'utilisation de son texte dans les représentations artistiques aussi bien en Moldavie qu'en Pologne confirme le respect que sa mémoire gagna dans le monde orthodoxe tout entier.

2.2. Sainte Théophano

L'autre sainte femme qui trouva sa place dans le chœur des saintes-protectrices du Second Empire bulgare est la sainte impératrice Théophano. Dès le début de son culte, créé à Byzance aux temps des Macédoniens, il était instauré et développé comme un des piliers de la légitimation, de la justification ainsi que de la confirmation et de la glorification de la dynastie dont le mari de Théophano était un des représentants principaux²⁰. Alice-Mary Talbot range ce culte de la période méso-byzantine dans le type des saintes femmes mariées, matrones pieuses, qui restaient dans le monde mais menaient une vie de piété et charité²¹. Il est à noter que cette nouvelle pratique de sanctification changea les

¹⁸ P. Odorico *et alii*, *Conseils et mémoires de Synadinos, prêtre de Serrès en Macédoine (XVII^e siècle)*, Paris, 1996, p. 162-166.

¹⁹ A.-M. Talbot, « Female Sanctity in Byzantium », p. 15-16.

²⁰ M. Петрова-Танева, *Помощница на царете*, p. 35-38.

²¹ A.-M. Talbot, « Female Sanctity in Byzantium », p. 10-13.

critères même d'instauration d'un culte, ce qui n'était pas bien accepté et facilement accueilli par l'Église. C'est la raison de l'opposition de la hiérarchie ecclésiastique à la sainteté de l'impératrice Théophano²². Le profil de la femme auguste correspondait parfaitement aux caractéristiques de ce type de sainteté féminine : elle était mariée, était pieuse et son culte était promu par la famille avec cette grande différence que la famille était la dynastie impériale régnante²³. Sans doute s'agit-il d'une promotion de la maison mais dans ce cas cette promotion devient très politique. C'était le but poursuivi par Léon VI et ses descendants. Après l'abolition des Macédoniens, la vénération de sainte Théophano se réduisit et se banalisa dans l'Empire pour resurgir et trouver son nouvel apogée à Tarnovo, comme un des points forts de la légitimation du pouvoir des tsars de Bulgarie²⁴. Ce développement montre des traits semblables à la vénération de sainte Parascève ; les deux ont eu des suites littéraires apparentées. Il ne s'agit pas seulement de certains *topoi* dans les textes mais plutôt du fonctionnement des cultes en Bulgarie et dans d'autres pays. Tandis que sainte Parascève d'Epibatae était une none pieuse, sainte Théophano était impératrice et sa vénération a toutes les caractéristiques d'un culte impérial, créé sous la pression du palais et à travers l'influence du pouvoir. Le culte de sainte Parascève est lié à l'autorité suprême en Bulgarie mais celui de la sainte Théophano est arrivé à Tarnovo dans sa forme et sa signification byzantines. Il n'a connu dans la capitale des Assénides et puis à Belgrade qu'une renaissance et un approfondissement de son caractère politique. Tout cela est dû, comme dans le cas de sainte Parascève, à la présence des reliques de la sainte femme dans la capitale du Second Empire mais on ne sait rien, malheureusement, de leur arrivée²⁵.

À Byzance, la vénération de sainte Théophano amplifiait l'importance de la figure de l'empereur Léon VI, son époux, et de la dynastie macédonienne en général. Étant parvenus au pouvoir, les Macédoniens avaient besoin d'un épaulement de sainteté. Les récits de la grande partie des miracles de la sainte le montrent. Le caractère de sa vénération comme l'intercesseur du pouvoir est bien présent en Bulgarie et en Serbie aussi. Arrivée en Bulgarie, la sainte impératrice devint une des protectrices de la dynastie. Le premier signe dans cette direction était l'utilisation de son prénom Théophano en tant que nom

²² G. Dagron, *Empereur et prêtre. Étude sur le « césaropapisme » byzantin*, Paris, 1996, p. 209-210 ; M. Петрова-Танева, *Помощница на царете*, p. 34-35. C'était le cas pour d'autres saintes femmes de la période aussi : A.-M. Talbot, « Female Sanctity in Byzantium », p. 9.

²³ A.-M. Talbot, « Female Sanctity in Byzantium », p. 13, 15-16.

²⁴ Il est à noter que le fait même de la préparation de l'éloge pour la sainte impératrice par Nicéphore Grégoras témoigne d'un fort intérêt pour sa vénération à Byzance qui était utilisée aussi dans les disputes palamites (M. Петрова-Танева, *Помощница на царете*, p. 51-54). Quant à la Bulgarie voir *ibid.*, p. 56 et suiv.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 57-60.

monacal des femmes de la dynastie Assénide : c'étaient la mère et la première épouse du tsar Jean Alexandre²⁶. La production littéraire hagiographique était une conséquence importante et elle confirme la diffusion du culte. On peut suivre les traductions des outils nécessaires pour la vénération ecclésiastique. Nous avons tous les textes essentiels²⁷ : la *Vita* longue par le diacre Nicolas, qui a eu deux traductions en slavon : l'une faite probablement à Tarnovo vers le milieu du XIV^e siècle, et l'autre serbe, écrite un demi-siècle environ plus tard ; les *Vitae* synaxaires ; l'éloge du Recueil de Bdin (Vidin) ; et le service divin pour la sainte impératrice. Je voudrais attirer l'attention sur les deux derniers textes.

L'intégration d'une vie-éloge, bien que compilée, composite, artificielle, etc., de sainte Théophano au Recueil de Bdin (Vidin) est un fait significatif, non seulement à cause du texte lui-même mais parce qu'il s'agit d'un codex manuscrit, commandé par et préparé sous la surveillance de la tsarine Anna et du tsar Jean Stratsimir. C'était en même temps la réponse du souverain de Vidin aux méfaits de son père et un acte de révérence envers sa mère et ses malheurs²⁸. La présence de sainte Théophano est d'une importance clé, car le codex est consacré aux saintes femmes mais ce n'est qu'elle qui est une impératrice abandonnée par son mari et ayant vécu les difficultés de la séparation de la famille et de la perte de ses enfants ; qui plus est, après le temps passé dans le monastère, elle prit le nom monacal de Théophano (Théophana). Ce qui importe pour notre recherche est la relation étroite entre le culte de sainte impératrice Théophano et la cour impériale de Bulgarie et son importance pour l'identité de la dynastie. En ce sens, le développement de son culte est proche de celui de Constantinople sous les Macédoniens.

Ce développement de la vénération de sainte Théophano et son application politique nous mène de nouveau vers le patriarche Euthyme. Il y participait et sans aucun doute l'impératrice pieuse était une des figures principales du chœur des protectrices du Second Empire que le patriarche préparait. Il est l'auteur du document local (bulgare, mais ayant aussi une rédaction serbe) le plus important qui présente de la manière la plus claire sa fonction d'intercesseur du pouvoir et de l'Empire : le service divin en son honneur. Théophano y est même appelée « auxiliaire des tsars » et protectrice de leur capitale, comparée à Constantinople, protégée par la Vierge²⁹. La translation des reliques après 1393 est un témoignage de la diffusion du culte : pour que la

²⁶ И. Божилов, *Фамилията на Асенеци (1186-1460). Генеалогия и просопография*, Sofia, 1985, I/28, p. 136-139, 167 suiv.

²⁷ Cette production littéraire est bien étudiée dans le livre de Maya Petrova-Taneva.

²⁸ I. Dujčev, « Preface », dans idem (éd.), *Bdinski sbornik. Ghent Slavonic Ms. 408, AD 1360*, London, 1972, p. vi-vii. Cet avis était largement accepté et confirmé dans la littérature historique.

²⁹ E. Kałużniacki, *Werke des Patriarchen Euthymius*, p. 260, 274 ; Патриарх Евтимий, *Съчинения*, p. 234, 243 ; М. Петрова-Танева, *Помощница на царете*, p. 64-67, 193-194.

translatio soit effectuée, la sainte impératrice devait déjà avoir eu son importance chez les Bulgares. L'arrivée des reliques dans la capitale danubienne devint la raison d'un rayonnement supplémentaire de sa vénération. La ville de Vidin tomba entre les mains des Osmanlis après la bataille de Nicopolis en 1396 et, avec elle, tomba aussi le dernier État bulgare médiéval. Les destins des reliques sont connus : elles furent transférées en Serbie sur l'ordre du sultan Bayazid I^{er} en suivant la demande du despote Étienne Lazarević et de la famille gouvernant le pays. Ces cérémonies, qui eurent lieu entre Tarnovo, Vidin et Belgrade, eurent la valeur d'une vraie *translatio imperii* entre les Slaves orthodoxes des Balkans. Au début, les reliques étaient déposées à Kruševac et après à Belgrade pour quitter la ville après sa conquête par Suleyman I^{er} en 1521, avec celles de sainte Parascève, pour se diriger vers Constantinople. Ces voyages des objets sacrés nous les présentent comme une unité précieuse et quasi-inséparable : les reliques des femmes saintes et en 1521 aussi une icône miraculeuse de la Vierge.

2.3. Sainte Philothée

La troisième des saintes femmes entrées dans le chœur des saints euthymien est la sainte Philothée, dont les reliques se trouvaient, elles aussi, dans la capitale du Second Empire bulgare. Elle était une femme pieuse inconnue qui menait une vie dévote tout en étant mariée. Ces aspects nous permettent de la ranger parmi les matrones pieuses de la période méso-byzantine, un type qui exigeait de nouveaux critères pour la sainteté féminine³⁰. Néanmoins, il faut se poser la question si elle ne s'approche pas du type des saintes nonnes car elle garde sa virginité pendant le mariage et, après la mort de son mari, sa vie devient vraiment ascétique et monacale³¹. Sainte Philothée était un vrai défenseur de la foi chrétienne, de la charité et de la pureté. Ses sermons, présentés dans sa *Vita* par le patriarche Euthyme, la présentent aussi comme un pilier de la foi orthodoxe³². On ne sait presque rien de sa vie et les sources qui nous sont parvenues sont assez confuses et contradictoires. Sa vénération à Byzance était à tel point limitée qu'on n'en trouve aucune trace dans les ménées grecs³³. Cela confirme les remarques d'Alice-Mary Talbot sur le caractère marginal de certains cultes féminins à Byzance. De nouveau, comme dans le cas de sainte Parascève, on peut dire qu'en Bulgarie la situation était différente, car, dans la capitale du Second Empire, sainte Philothée a bénéficié d'une attention

³⁰ A.-M. Talbot, « Female Sanctity in Byzantium », p. 10-13.

³¹ E. Kałużniacki, *Werke des Patriarchen Euthymius*, p. 85-89 ; Патриарх Евтимий, *Съчинения*, p. 101-104.

³² E. Kałużniacki, *Werke des Patriarchen Euthymius*, p. 89-93 ; Патриарх Евтимий, *Съчинения*, p. 104-107 ; A.-M. Talbot, « Female Sanctity in Byzantium », p. 4-6.

³³ Патриарх Евтимий, *Съчинения*, p. 270-271.

particulière. Son culte devait sa diffusion et son importance à la translation de ses reliques par le tsar Kaloïan qui eut lieu avant celles des autres saints tarnoviens. Cet événement faisait partie des victoires du célèbre tsar bulgare en Thrace dans le contexte ayant suivi la IV^e croisade et le pouvoir latin à Constantinople. Dans la *Vie de sainte Philothée*, le patriarche Euthyme décrit la *translatio* en détail en la présentant comme un *adventus* victorieux à Tarnovo³⁴. L'initiative appartenait, bien évidemment, au tsar tout comme sa réalisation, mais finalement la *translatio* était perçue comme un acte du Seigneur, comme le montre la citation du livre des Proverbes 21:1 (*Le cœur du roi rassemble à des cours d'eaux dans la main de Yahvé : il l'incline vers tout ce qui lui plaît*). Comme dans le cas du courant d'eau, c'est Lui Qui décida aussi la présence des reliques à Tarnovo, qui devint un signe de Sa grâce pour le tsar et pour la capitale³⁵. Après l'arrivée du corps précieux de la sainte dans la capitale, sa présence revêtit un caractère protecteur. C'était la raison pour laquelle le patriarche Euthyme prépara une *Vie* longue de la sainte et lui adressa sa prière pour protéger la ville et pour être intercesseur du tsar³⁶.

L'importance du culte est confirmée par la nouvelle translation de ses reliques, cette fois avec celles de sainte Parascève et de la sainte impératrice Théophano, de Tarnovo à Vidin. Après la chute de l'État du tsar Jean Stratsimir en 1396, les voies des trois saintes femmes furent séparées pour des raisons inconnues. On n'a pas de témoignages de la présence de sainte Philothée à Belgrade. Bien plus tard on trouve des témoignages sur le culte d'une femme homonyme à Curtea de Argeș, en Valachie, qui diffère beaucoup de celui que le patriarche Euthyme nous a légué, mais qui était toujours conçu comme sa continuation et peut-être il en était dans un certain sens³⁷. Dans cette nouvelle interprétation, sainte Philothée était une jeune fille pieuse, une martyre, qui fut décapitée par son père car elle distribuait les biens de sa famille aux pauvres³⁸. Même s'il y avait une période où sa vénération n'était pas très répandue en Valachie et la *Vita* n'existait pas dans la Principauté (le texte du patriarche Euthyme est attesté seulement en Moldavie), elle obtint finalement, ici aussi, un

³⁴ E. Kałuźniacki, *Werke des Patriarchen Euthymius*, S. 93-99 ; Патриарх Евтимий, *Съчинения*, p. 109-112.

³⁵ Sur l'importance de cette citation biblique pour l'idéologie du pouvoir, voir H. Hattenhauer, « Das Herz des Königs in der Hand Gottes. Zum Herrscherbild in Spätantike und Mittelalter », *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte* XCVIII, *Kanonistische Abteilung* 67.1, 1981, p. 1-35.

³⁶ E. Kałuźniacki, *Werke des Patriarchen Euthymius*, p. 98-99 ; Патриарх Евтимий, *Съчинения*, p. 112.

³⁷ D. R. Mazilu, *Sfânta Filoteia de la Argeș. Lămurirea unor probleme istorico-literare. Monografie hagiografică*, Bucarest, 1933 ; P. Cernovodeanu, « La double histoire de sainte Philothée d'Argeș et ses miracles », dans P. Guran (éd.), *L'empereur hagiographe. Culte des saints et monarchie byzantine et post-byzantine*, Bucarest, 2001, p. 159-176.

³⁸ P. Cernovodeanu, « La double histoire de sainte Philothée d'Argeș et ses miracles », p. 168-171.

caractère de protectrice de l'État, du pouvoir et du peuple. Ce développement fut confirmé en 1955 par la promotion de son culte au rang de culte « national »³⁹. Bien que l'histoire de la vie de Philothée et de sa réception comporte encore nombre de points obscurs, on peut affirmer que son caractère protecteur créé à Tarnovo avec la participation du saint patriarche continua en Valachie où il perdure jusqu'à nos jours.

3. Un ensemble de saintes femmes protectrices

Les trois saintes femmes qu'on a évoquées ici formaient un ensemble et étaient liées entre elles de plusieurs manières : par la présence de leurs reliques à Tarnovo ; par des destins semblables (les translations comprises) ; ce qui aboutissait à leur fonction similaire des protectrices de la capitale et du pouvoir. Pour notre présente étude, il est important de discerner le mécanisme ou bien les mécanismes par lesquels ces femmes étaient appelées à jouer ce rôle. Pour cela, il faut chercher des traits caractéristiques communs en ce qui concerne leur vénération, ainsi que des similitudes éventuelles entre le culte qui leur était consacré et le culte marial de la Protectrice-de-la-ville.

La présence des reliques à Tarnovo correspondait à la politique des tsars qui restait, malgré tout, assez aléatoire dans la sélection des différentes saintes, ce qui eut des conséquences sur la manière dont elles étaient perçues. Leur présence dans la capitale était sans doute la raison principale de la création ou de l'enrichissement voire même du développement de leur vénération. À leur départ de Byzance, les cultes de sainte Parascève d'Epibatae et de sainte Philothée étaient d'importance mineure voire insignifiante. En revanche, le culte des deux saintes gagnait de l'importance en Bulgarie. Au contraire, le culte de sainte Théophano qui jouissait au départ, à Constantinople, d'une grande popularité, mais qu'il avait perdue après la fin de la dynastie macédonienne, a pu rétablir son importance chez les Slaves méridionaux. Réunies à Tarnovo, les saintes ont subi le même destin après la prise de la ville par les Ottomans. En 1394 les reliques se dirigèrent vers Vidin. L'acquisition des reliques par le tsar Jean Stratsimir et son fils Constantin devenait importante non seulement pour la succession de la protection divine mais aussi pour la confirmation de l'héritage et de la continuité de l'État des Assénides. La *translatio* des reliques de sainte Parascève et de sainte Théophano à Belgrade après la chute de Vidin en 1396 est, sans aucun doute, une manifestation de la même continuité entre les États des Slaves méridionaux et un témoignage de la relation des trois vénérationes avec l'idéologie du pouvoir chez ces peuples. Leur voyage n'était pas seulement un acte pieux et religieux, *adventus* de la grâce divine, mais il s'agissait d'une véritable *translatio imperii* montrant l'unité de l'idéologie du pouvoir et la

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 174-176.

tradition commune de ces pays. L'effondrement de l'État serbe, en soi, n'eut pas de conséquences directes sur les reliques. Leur destin a changé, en revanche, avec l'occupation de Belgrade par le sultan en 1521. L'occupation devint la cause d'une nouvelle *translatio* : sainte Parascève et sainte Théophano se dirigèrent vers Constantinople. Après un séjour obscur dans la capitale impériale, dans la même église, les deux saintes furent séparées et les aléas de l'histoire acheminèrent les reliques de sainte Parascève à Jassy. Sa vénération dans cette ville bénéficia d'un essor particulier et la sainte devint la protectrice céleste de la Moldavie et de ses maîtres. On peut dire en général que la vénération de cette sainte a connu, et connaît même aujourd'hui une popularité exceptionnelle aussi bien au niveau de l'Église et de l'État qu'au niveau de la foi populaire en Roumanie, en Bulgarie et en Serbie. Les deux autres saintes du chœur euthymien n'ont jamais connu des cultes aussi importants.

Avant de continuer notre recherche, il vaut la peine de voir quelle était la signification de la présence de sainte Nedelja (sainte Kyriaki) dans l'œuvre de patriarche Euthyme. Il lui consacra un panégyrique, prononcé à Tarnovo dans un couvent de nones le 7 juillet, jour de la fête de la sainte martyre⁴⁰. D'habitude le patriarche écrivait sur les saints étroitement liés à son diocèse avec deux exceptions – les éloges des saints Constantin et Hélène⁴¹ et de la sainte Nedelja. Il est à noter d'ailleurs qu'il s'agit de deux panégyriques et non pas de *vitae*. Nous n'avons pas des données confirmant la présence des reliques de la sainte dans la Bulgarie médiévale. Les saints empereurs présentent un cas particulier en ce qui concerne leur importance pour le pouvoir et la sainte martyre reste, en effet, un cas isolé. Son éloge est un texte exemplaire, non seulement dans la littérature médiévale bulgare, mais aussi, plus généralement, dans le monde orthodoxe. Le saint patriarche Euthyme maîtrisait la langue, le style et il était bien conscient du message qu'il voulait transmettre. En ce sens, il faut reconnaître que son discours nous mène vers des directions différentes en ce qui concerne les autres saintes. Le panégyrique de sainte Nedelja est une apothéose du calvaire et de la victoire sur le Malin car le martyre est conçu comme une victoire accomplie par un paradoxe. Cette victoire est, en effet, le résultat non pas d'une conquête mais d'une peine subie. En fait, la figure de sainte Nedelja et la rhétorique de la protection de l'État, de la défense de la capitale et de l'intercession en faveur du pouvoir ne sont pas présentes dans ce texte. Si on compare ce texte aux autres écrits du patriarche relatifs aux saintes femmes, on voit que le message qui s'en dégage est différent. On n'y trouve pas de la rhétorique politique. C'est probablement la raison pour laquelle la diffusion de

⁴⁰ E. Kałużniacki, *Werke des Patriarchen Euthymius*, p. 147-169 ; Патриарх Евтимий, *Съчинения*, p. 175-194.

⁴¹ E. Kałużniacki, *Werke des Patriarchen Euthymius*, p. 103-146 ; Патриарх Евтимий, *Съчинения*, p. 113-147.

ce texte, comparée à celle des autres écrits, fut relativement faible et le culte eut moins de retombées sur la vie politique et sociale.

Les saints hommes ou femmes dont les reliques étaient transférées et conservées dans la capitale de Second Empire bulgare représentaient un ensemble affirmé. Le fonctionnement de leur culte était fortement marqué par les visées des tsars qui ont accompli les translations au cours de la première moitié du XIII^e siècle lors de la confirmation et la légitimation de leur pouvoir⁴². Les saints étaient mis en relation aussi dans les œuvres mêmes du patriarche Euthyme, faisant partie de son projet de création d'un chœur des saints de l'Empire. On trouve le témoignage le plus évident de cette relation dans le *Panégryque* de saint Jean de Polyboton, où ils sont tous invoqués par leur nom avec la mention de leur vie pieuse. Saint Hilaire de Moglena, saint Jean de Rila, la bienheureuse Parascève, sainte impératrice Théophano, sainte Philothée y sont mentionnés, mais, en revanche, saint Michel le Guerrier de Potouka manque⁴³. Ils sont réunis par leur prière commune adressée au Seigneur pour les tsars et pour le peuple. Néanmoins, les saintes femmes formaient un corps particulier. Il est évident que la vénération envers la sainte Parascève, la sainte impératrice Théophano et la sainte Philothée formait un ensemble cohérent ; les saintes femmes étaient, de surcroît, séparées des autres en raison de la translation conjointe de leurs reliques à Vidin. On a déjà vu qu'elles étaient différentes de sainte Nedelja, car elles n'étaient pas martyres mais femmes pieuses et bienheureuses⁴⁴. Mais la différence essentielle vient du fait de la présence de leurs reliques dans la capitale de la Bulgarie. Quant aux saints hommes dont les corps sacrés étaient à Tarnovo, il faut dire que parmi eux il n'y avait aucun saint-martyre non plus. La vénération envers les saints hommes avait aussi un caractère politique de protection et intercession pour le pouvoir, bien marqué dans les œuvres du patriarche Euthyme, mais cet aspect pourrait faire l'objet d'une recherche particulière.

Pour revenir aux saintes femmes, il faut repérer les témoignages des relations entre leurs cultes que l'on trouve dans les textes hagiographiques et surtout de l'impact du culte de sainte Parascève sur les autres. Il y a des emprunts directs entre certains textes concernant sainte Théophano et des œuvres présentant la vénération de la bienheureuse d'Epibatae⁴⁵. Pour dresser cette comparaison, on peut utiliser leurs services divins, d'autant plus que le saint patriarche Euthyme est l'auteur du service pour sainte Théophano et – en suivant l'hypothèse de St. Kožuharov – probablement aussi de celui, dit

⁴² P. Guran, « Invention et translation des reliques – un cérémonial monarchique ? ».

⁴³ Il n'y a pas de mention de sainte Nedelja ce qui confirme que ses reliques n'étaient pas à Tarnovo.

⁴⁴ Bien que, comme on l'a vu, sainte Philothée d'Argeș ait pu être envisagée en Valachie comme une martyre, mais il s'agit d'un développement tardif de son culte.

⁴⁵ М. Петрова-Танева, *Помощница на царете*, p. 45-46, 179-181, 199-201, etc.

« Tarnovien », pour sainte Parascève⁴⁶. Nous pouvons suivre ainsi la rhétorique du pouvoir chez ce grand représentant de la pensée et de la pratique politique en Bulgarie du XIV^e siècle. La vénération de ces saints s'est développée dans le même contexte historique et culturel sous le patronage de la même élite politique et ecclésiastique, de la société et de l'État. Le but politique était identique dans les deux cas. On est confronté à une situation différente si l'on compare l'ancien service de sainte Parascève, traduit de grec, et celui qui dérive, probablement, de la plume du patriarche. J'ai déjà publié une étude sur cette question, à laquelle je me permets de renvoyer le lecteur⁴⁷, en me limitant ici aux différences, qui sont considérables et qui présentent pour nous un intérêt particulier. Le service divin traduit du grec ne représente pas un vrai culte de la Protectrice-de-la-capitale, bien qu'on y trouve des ajouts opérés en Bulgarie pour adapter la vénération de la sainte femme au contexte tarnovien. La situation est similaire dans le cas du service divin pour sainte Philothée. On peut y trouver d'éléments de la défense du peuple mais l'idée dominante est celle de l'eschatologie du Salut, illustrée par la figure de la jeune fille qui attend impatiemment son mari, c'est-à-dire le Sauveur. Cette idée renvoie avant tout à l'image de l'Église et à sa mission salvatrice.

Le service divin pour sainte Théophano écrit par le patriarche Euthyme contient, certes, des éléments qui le lient au pouvoir et à sa glorification⁴⁸. La vie de la cour de l'impératrice-épouse de Léon VI est mentionnée afin d'opérer une distinction entre le Royaume de Dieu et le Royaume du César. L'Empire terrestre ne peut être qu'un écho du Royaume céleste et la sainte choisit, évidemment, celui l'éternel⁴⁹. Il est très important à noter que dans le texte hymnographique on souligne que la sainte femme « embrassa la vie ascétique ayant la dignité impériale » (l'office des Grandes Vêpres)⁵⁰, ce qui peut paraître paradoxal mais il façonne une nouvelle figure de la sainte femme, différente de celle du monastère ou du désert. Cela engendrait des difficultés au sein de l'Église, qui

⁴⁶ С. Кожухаров, « Търновска (Евтимиева?) служба за св. Петка Епиватска », dans С. Кожухаров, *Проблеми на старобългарската поезия*, т. I, Sofia, 2004, p. 120.

⁴⁷ I. Билярски, *Покровители на Царството*, p. 50 et suiv. ; idem, « The Cult of Saint Petka and the Constantinopolitan Marial Cult », p. 84 et suiv.

⁴⁸ Dans mon étude sur le culte de sainte Parascève, j'ai avancé des idées que je voudrais préciser. En comparant les textes des services divins de sainte Parascève et de sainte Théophano, j'ai mis en doute certaines manifestations politiques de la vénération de cette dernière. Mon idée principale était que, malgré son caractère impérial et d'intercession du pouvoir, la présentation de sainte Théophano en tant que substitut du culte marial constantinopolitain n'était pas aussi évidente que chez sainte Parascève. (Билярски, *Покровители на Царството*, p. 61-69). Cette affirmation pourrait engendrer des confusions. Sainte Théophano était, certes, vénérée en tant que protectrice des tsars et de la capitale bien que cette fonction soit plus évidente chez la bienheureuse d'Epibatae.

⁴⁹ E. Kałużniacki, *Werke des Patriarchen Euthymius*, p. 255 ; I. Билярски, *Покровители на Царството*, p. 63-64 ; M. Петрова-Танева, *Помощница на царете*, p. 186-187.

⁵⁰ E. Kałużniacki, *Werke des Patriarchen Euthymius*, p. 258.

ne pouvait être que réticente à l'égard d'un tel culte⁵¹. Malgré ces réticences, le rôle d'impératrice, de femme de celui oint par Dieu, permet au culte de sainte Théophano de se développer dans la direction d'une intercession pour le pouvoir et notamment pour les tsars de Bulgarie. Dans le texte du service on trouve plusieurs références relatives à la protection de l'Humanité opérée à la fois par la sainte et par la Vierge.

Nous allons revenir sur le sujet mais je voudrais attirer ici l'attention notamment sur les références à la Protectrice-de-la-ville dans le service divin créé par patriarche Euthyme. Ces références sont facilement repérables dans le texte liturgique sur sainte Parascève. Quant à sainte Théophano, on peut dire que la capitale du Second Empire – Tarnovo – est bien présente dans la source, où l'on y trouve un éloge qui est parmi les plus brillants dans la littérature médiévale bulgare. À la fin du service divin il y a une mention directe de la capitale de Bulgarie :

Aujourd'hui la ville glorieuse de Tarnovo se réjouit // et elle appelle la ville régnante sur toutes les villes en disant : // « Réjouis-toi avec moi, la Mère des villes, // car ceux que tu as élevés // sont devenus maintenant ma gloire, // car je les ai acquis comme protecteurs et intercesseurs. // Je suis vraiment bienheureuse parmi les villes // car j'ai pu ramasser de bons trésors : // les reliques honorables des saints // et par leur intercession, que je possède, // je me débarrasse de tous les malheurs // et en ayant comme protectrice la Mère de Dieu la plus Pure des pures, // je me mets à l'abri de tous les malheurs par ses prières »⁵².

Tarnovo obtint par les reliques la gloire, des protecteurs forts, des intercesseurs et des trésors. On découvre même une juxtaposition avec Constantinople : la glorieuse cité de Tarnovo s'adresse à la « Ville régnante sur toutes les villes ». C'est une reprise de l'appellation grecque ἡ Βασιλεύσα Πόλις mais il est encore plus intéressant que dans le *troparion* de la Théotokos de la neuvième ode du canon on trouve une appellation similaire pour Bethlehem, « la mère de toutes les villes »⁵³. L'insertion dans le texte des références à la ville natale du Sauveur situe les trois cités sacrées dans un complexe qui est sans doute important pour comprendre que la sainteté de l'Empire doit être conçue dans le contexte de l'Incarnation divine et du Salut.

⁵¹ Comme je l'ai déjà affirmé, la sanctification des matrones et des femmes pieuses qui ne quittèrent jamais la vie de ce monde exigeait une redéfinition des critères de la sainteté, ce qui entraîna une résistance de la part de l'Église. Ce phénomène général est signalé par Alice-Mary Talbot (« Female Sanctity in Byzantium », p. 9-13) et développé pour différentes saintes femmes de la période méso-byzantine (G. Dagron, *Empereur et prêtre*, p. 209-210 ; M. Петрова-Танева, *Помощница на царете*, p. 34-35).

⁵² E. Kałużniacki, *Werke des Patriarchen Euthymius*, p. 274 ; Патриарх Евтимий, *Съчинения*, p. 243.

⁵³ E. Kałużniacki, *Werke des Patriarchen Euthymius*, p. 273 ; Патриарх Евтимий, *Съчинения*, p. 242.

La Protectrice-de-la-capitale est, en effet, également une protectrice et un intercesseur pour le pouvoir et pour le souverain, l'oïnt de Dieu. Sainte Théophano avait-elle sans doute une telle fonction dans l'imaginaire de l'époque, qui se reflète dans le service divin rédigé par le patriarche Euthyme. Dans le texte des Grandes Vêpres, l'impératrice pieuse est appelée « Louange des rois » et dans un texte similaire, dans la neuvième ode, « honneur des rois »⁵⁴. Dans la gloire, elle est « protectrice des rois »⁵⁵. Une synthèse de ces attributs se retrouve dans les stichères : « Gloire des rois et embellissement des croyants, tu deviens un réceptacle de l'Esprit... »⁵⁶. Cette dernière expression évoque la vénération mariale par la formule $\chi\acute{o}\rho\alpha\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \acute{\alpha}\chi\omega\rho\acute{\iota}\tau\omicron\upsilon$, « réceptacle de l'Infini », « maison de Dieu ». Ces mots ouvrent la voie vers l'autre juxtaposition des trois cultes qui forment, on l'a déjà dit, un complexe commun et inséparable.

4. Les saintes femmes protectrices et la Mère de Dieu

On touche ainsi le sujet qui est d'une importance particulière pour notre étude : la relation entre la vénération des saintes femmes tarnoviennes et celle de la Mère de Dieu. Cette importance est définie par la fonction particulière de la Vierge en tant que Protectrice-de-la-Ville et intercesseur pour le pouvoir. Les saints protecteurs de la ville agissent d'habitude de deux manières : soit ils prient le Seigneur d'intervenir en faveur du pouvoir impérial, soit ils opèrent directement eux-mêmes. La première est plus habituelle et mieux représentée dans les sources hagiographiques. Elle est, en général, l'attribut de la Vierge, mais peut être associé à d'autres saints également. La Mère de Dieu est l'intercesseur de l'Humanité auprès de son Fils, elle est notre Mère et notre Protectrice. L'action directe des saints a son archétype toujours dans les interventions salvatrices de la Vierge contre les ennemis des Romains lors du siège de Constantinople en 626, de deux sièges arabes des VII^e et VIII^e siècles, ainsi que du siège des Rhôs en 860⁵⁷. Il s'agit d'une fonction déjà clairement liée à la Mère de Dieu ainsi qu'à certains saints militaires.

Les prières des saintes femmes tarnoviennes pour la protection divine de la capitale et de l'Empire sont invoquées plusieurs fois aussi bien dans les textes liturgiques, que dans d'autres textes liés à leurs cultes, comme les écrits du patriarche Euthyme. Quant aux actions directes, elles sont plutôt liées au culte de sainte Parascève. À ce titre on peut évoquer un passage de la *Vita* par le

⁵⁴ E. Kałużniacki, *Werke des Patriarchen Euthymius*, p. 272 ; Патриарх Евтимий, *Съчинения*, p. 242.

⁵⁵ E. Kałużniacki, *Werke des Patriarchen Euthymius*, p. 260 ; Патриарх Евтимий, *Съчинения*, p. 234.

⁵⁶ E. Kałużniacki, *Werke des Patriarchen Euthymius*, p. 274 ; Патриарх Евтимий, *Съчинения*, p. 242.

⁵⁷ K. Ivanova, I. Biliarsky, « Traducerea slavonă a istorisirii asediului Constantinopolului, citită în Sămbăta Acatistului Maicii Domnului », *Analele Putnei* X, 2014, 2, p. 19-48 ; M. Hurbanič, *The Avar Siege of Constantinople in 626. History and Legend*, Palgrave, 2019.

patriarche Euthyme où il prie la sainte d'intercéder auprès du Seigneur en faveur de Tarnovo contre les Barbares. Elle, « comme un brave stratège, rejeta leurs visages éhontés par la force de son mari, Jésus Christ »⁵⁸. Ce texte représente une reprise littérale de l'Hymne Akathiste de la Vierge. On y trouve l'appellation des ennemis comme « Barbares », typique pour les « Avars » dans certaines lectures liturgiques pour la fête de l'Akathiste⁵⁹. Ce qui est le plus important, c'est la citation de l'ὑπέρμαχος στρατηγός, qui est un renvoi explicite à l'Hymne Akathiste et à l'image la Vierge abattant les bateaux des ennemis⁶⁰. La sainte est ainsi appelée à défendre sa ville, la capitale, selon le modèle de la Mère de Dieu qui avait protégé Constantinople au cours des siècles.

Dans ce contexte on peut mentionner aussi d'autres éléments du service divin, traduit du grec, pour la sainte Parascève, où les messages politiques ne sont pas aussi nombreux car il fonctionnait différemment à Byzance. Après son développement en Bulgarie, on trouve des éléments intéressants dont une mention du voile de la Vierge⁶¹. Il ne s'agit pas, dans ce cas, d'une référence directe à l'intercession pour le pouvoir mais la mention me semble pourtant intéressante pour mon propos en raison de la grande importance du culte du voile chez les Orthodoxes, et plus tard notamment à Moscou⁶². J'ai étudié ce sujet ailleurs⁶³.

Bien que considérablement moins nombreuses et moins pertinentes, les références mariales se retrouvent également dans l'hagiographie de sainte Philothée : par exemple, son appellation comme nouvelle (et pieuse) Ève, vainqueur du Séducteur, dans les Stichères des Vêpres de son service divin⁶⁴ ; dans la première ode du canon, la sainte est aussi appelée « temple très pur du Seigneur »⁶⁵. Il s'agit dans les deux cas des références à la Vierge, la Nouvelle Ève ayant vaincu le péché, et, en même temps, en tant que Mère de Jésus Christ,

⁵⁸ E. Kałużniacki, *Werke des Patriarchen Euthymius*, p. 74.

⁵⁹ K. Ivanova, I. Biliarsky, « Traducerea slavonă a istorisirii asediului Constantinopolului », p. 30-33.

⁶⁰ M. Hurbanič, *Avar Siege of Constantinople in 626*, p. 133-134, 191-195, 216-218.

⁶¹ Ст. Кожухаров, « Търновска (Евтимиева?) служба за св. Петка Епиватска », p. 139.

⁶² М. Плюханова, *Сюжеты и символы Московского царства*, St. Petersburg, 1995, p. 23-62 et *passim* ; М. Pliukhanova, « Le feste dedicate alle icone della Madre di Dion el calendario ecclesiastico russo », dans *Il tempo dei santitra Oriente e Occidente. Liturgia e agiografia dal tardo Antico al Concilio di Trento. Atti del IV convegno di studio dell'Associazione italiana per lo studio della santità et dei culti e agiografia, Firenze, 26-28 ottobre 2000*, a cura di A. Benvenuti e M. Garzaniti, Rome, 2004, p. 419-433 ; B. Lourié, « The feast of Pokrov, its Byzantine origine, and the cult of Gregory the Illuminator and Isaac the Parthian (Shahak Part'ev) in Byzantium », *Scrinium*, VII-VIII, 2011-2012, p. 231-331 ; М. Плюханова, « Покров и Знамение в Новгороде и Пскове в XIV веке », *Вестник сектора древнерусского искусства. Журнал по истории древнерусского искусства*, 1, 2019, p. 16-29.

⁶³ I. Билярски, *Покровители на Царството*, p. 70 et suiv.

⁶⁴ <http://scripta-bulgarica.eu/bg/sources/sluzhba-za-sv-filoteya-temnishka>, consulté le 15 mai 2020.

⁶⁵ <http://scripta-bulgarica.eu/bg/sources/sluzhba-za-sv-filoteya-temnishka>, consulté le 15 mai 2020.

χώρα τοῦ ἀχωρίτου, Temple du Seigneur. Ces références ne sont pas, bien sûr, exceptionnelles dans le langage hagiographique mais elles nous permettent de déceler des traits « mariaux » dans la vénération de sainte Philothée.

Les motifs mariaux dans la vénération de la sainte impératrice Théophano peuvent être expliqués aussi par la proximité de sa fête avec celle de la Nativité. Sa protection est alors projetée sur un arrière-plan défini par le Salut. L'impératrice était conçue comme porteur de la grâce divine, qui prie le Seigneur pour l'Humanité. On retrouve ici aussi l'appellation χώρα τοῦ ἀχωρίτου. Pour notre étude, le service divin écrit par le patriarche Euthyme a une importance particulière et c'est la raison pour laquelle nous allons commencer par les citations tirées de ce texte liturgique. Dans les stichères, on lit ainsi que « *Tu es devenue maison du Créateur du tout, // où le Seigneur de la gloire trouva Son habitation, // Qui t'enrichit par les miracles* »⁶⁶. Et on arrive à la protection du pouvoir et des princes de ce siècle, conçue comme un moyen de gérer la voie des hommes vers le Salut : dans le stichères de Petits Vêpres on lit : « *Prie, Tsarine, le Roi des rois // de protéger et renforcer notre Tsar // ainsi que nous aussi qui glorifions tes miracles* »⁶⁷.

La *Vita* de la sainte impératrice contient des éléments qui renforcent ces conclusions, en établissant une relation étroite avec le culte marial. La *Vie* anonyme raconte que lors de sa naissance, la future sainte bénéficiait de l'aide et de la protection de la Mère de Dieu et que c'était elle, la Théotokos, qui avait oint Théophano dès la matrice de sa mère⁶⁸. Cette expression a une importance particulière car elle est utilisée d'habitude en relation avec les prophètes ou les rois. L'élection de la matrice de la mère est une figure qui est liée au pouvoir de Dieu et à l'intercession de Sa Mère. Quant à la naissance de sainte Théophano, il y a une différence entre les textes grecs et slavons de la *Vie* de synaxaire qui doit être signalée : sa mère Anna lui donna naissance tardivement et ce fait est comparé dans le texte grec avec la naissance du prophète Samuel, dont la mère s'appelle également Anna, mais dans le texte slavon elle est comparée aussi avec la naissance de la Vierge par sainte Anne⁶⁹. Les deux figures sont essentielles et liées à l'idéologie du pouvoir mais pour notre étude il est important de souligner qu'on y retrouve une référence à la Mère de Dieu. La fin de la vie de sainte Théophano est également liée à celle de la Vierge puisqu'elle est décédée (selon la *Vie* de saint Euthyme, le patriarche œcuménique) au monastère de Blachernes, alors un des lieux les plus importants du culte de la Mère de Dieu comme Protectrice de la Ville. À Tarnovo, ses reliques ont été placées dans une église de la Vierge, de même qu'à Vidin, à Belgrade et puis de nouveau à Constantinople. En accomplissant des miracles, elle agit aussi en coopération avec la Vierge. Il

⁶⁶ E. Kałużniacki, *Werke des Patriarchen Euthymius*, p. 256 ; Патриарх Евтимий, *Съчинения*, p. 231.

⁶⁷ E. Kałużniacki, *Werke des Patriarchen Euthymius*, p. 256 ; Патриарх Евтимий, *Съчинения*, p. 231.

⁶⁸ М. Петрова-Танева, *Помощница на царете*, p. 189.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 69-70, 189-190, 220-221.

est à noter spécialement la guérison miraculeuse de l'empereur Léon VI par l'eau de la *Zoodochos pègè* – d'ailleurs un des lieux mariaux à Constantinople – à la suite des prières que Théophano adresse à la Mère de Dieu. La relation entre la vénération de la sainte impératrice et le culte marial est très marquée, ce qui renforce sa fonction de protectrice céleste du pouvoir. Néanmoins, il faut noter que Théophano est ointe par les prières de la Vierge et agit toujours en coopération avec elle, ce qui rend difficile, dans son cas, la possibilité d'une substitution cultuelle de la Vierge. L'impératrice était toujours « une des siennes » mais non pas une duplication. Le cas de Théophano est ici différent de celui de sainte Parascève.

La Mère de Dieu, on le sait bien, est la Protectrice de l'Humanité et, en tant que telle, elle devient aussi la protectrice de Constantinople, l'œil de l'Univers chrétien et de l'Empire œcuménique. Le culte de la Vierge Protectrice-de-la-Ville atteint son apogée lors des sièges de Constantinople et spécialement celui de 626⁷⁰. C'est un des plus forts éléments religieux de confirmation et de glorification du pouvoir impérial dans la Chrétienté orientale, qui se trouve au cœur de l'idéologie politique de Constantinople et du *Byzantine Commonwealth*. Comme disait Cyril Mango, *Constantinoupolis* est devenue *Theotokoupolis*⁷¹. C'est une description juste de l'attitude envers la Ville, liée à l'appellation de la Mère de Dieu. La Ville, la capitale de l'Empire, devient non seulement un point stratégique dans le sens militaire ou politique mais en tant que centre de l'Univers chrétien, elle obtient une importance particulière pour l'histoire du monde, conçue comme la voie de l'Humanité vers le Salut.

Je ne citerai ici que des témoignages extraits des œuvres qui formaient la base littéraire nécessaire d'un culte. Ce sont des œuvres créées à Byzance ou ailleurs mais traduites en Bulgarie pour donner naissance au culte de Tarnovo. La grande figure du XIV^e siècle bulgare, le saint patriarche Euthyme participe à ce processus comme écrivain, traducteur et notamment en tant que promoteur, car il s'agit bien de son projet à lui, visant la consolidation des Chrétiens orthodoxes face à la conquête. Au cœur de ce projet se trouvait le chœur des saints que nous appelons « euthymien » et la création d'un noyau sacré du Second Empire bulgare. La portée de l'intercession céleste pour le pouvoir impérial est encore plus clairement et formellement manifeste chez sainte Parascève que chez les autres saintes femmes de Tarnovo. Le culte des trois saintes femmes est fortement lié à la présence de leurs reliques dans la capitale du Second Empire et à la nécessité de l'affirmation et de la légitimation du pouvoir. On devait cette présence aux projets politiques des tsars qui coïncidaient sur ce point avec ceux du patriarche. Les trois cultes sont influencés

⁷⁰ M. Hurbanič, *Avar Siege of Constantinople in 626*, p. 269-284 ; K. Ivanova, I. Biliarsky, « Traducerea slavonă a istorisirii asediului Constantinopolului », p. 21-24, 29-33.

⁷¹ C. Mango, « Constantinople as Theotokoupolis », dans M. Vassilaki (éd.), *Mother of God: Representations of the Virgin in Byzantine Art*, Athènes – Milan, 2000, p. 17-25.

par le culte marial et tous visaient l'intercession et la protection divine sur le peuple et sur son tsar.

5. *Imagines Virginis* et leurs voix dans le chœur des saints du patriarche Euthyme

On arrive ainsi au message du saint patriarche Euthyme concernant le pouvoir. Dès le début de cette étude, on a affirmé que le prélat bulgare créa ou exprima intentionnellement une idéologie politique du Second Empire, largement basée sur la religion chrétienne. La création de cette idéologie et son instauration dans la société exigeaient une synthèse des idées, illustrée par certaines images, qui correspondent à la création d'un chœur de saints voué à devenir le pilier de l'Empire et de son pouvoir. On a brièvement présenté ici les images des femmes protectrices, auxquelles il faut ajouter celles des saints hommes et surtout du saint empereur Constantin qui participaient à la création de l'idéologie politique de Tarnovo.

Évidemment, la création des portraits verbaux des femmes protectrices exigeait du patriarche Euthyme une rhétorique particulière. On la découvre dans leurs images. Pour le pouvoir, elles ne sont pas des modèles à suivre bien qu'elles soient des modèles moraux pour les femmes et pour la société en général. Quant au pouvoir, nous voyons que les saintes femmes – sainte Parascève, sainte impératrice Théophano et sainte Philothée – sont vénérées comme protectrices et intercesseurs. Elles sont protectrices de la capitale où leurs reliques étaient réunies par les autorités bulgares ; elles sont ainsi devenues des protectrices des mêmes autorités, de l'Empire et du peuple. Leurs cultes étaient liés entre eux par les textes hagiographiques, par le type de vénération, par leurs destins semblables (les translations communes comprises) et finalement par leur fonctionnement. Un trait caractéristique est leur relation de dépendance de la vénération mariale. La Mère de Dieu est la protectrice de l'Humanité et, en tant que telle, protectrice de l'institution universelle terrestre représentant l'Humanité, à savoir l'Empire œcuménique et son cœur – la capitale, la Ville, Constantinople. La Bulgarie médiévale d'après l'évangélisation créait sa culture, son identité et sa doctrine d'État sur la base des modèles byzantins. Elle les suivait dans tous les domaines de la vie publique et à tous les niveaux. C'était un reflet pâle se trouvant loin de l'original. L'Empire bulgare prétendait être œcuménique et il en était d'une certaine façon, uniquement au sens idéologique, malgré le désastre de la situation réelle. Bien sûr, il ne possédait pas la Ville mais essayait d'en créer un substitut à Tarnovo et, avant, à Preslav la Grande. Cette Nouvelle Ville impériale avait besoin de ses protectrices et les trouva dans l'image des femmes saintes dont les reliques se trouvaient entre les murs de la ville des tsars de la Bulgarie, soit à Tarnovo, soit à Vidin. La première, dans l'ordre de l'importance, était la sainte Parascève mais toutes les trois reflétaient à

un certain degré la sainteté de la Mère de Dieu, la Mère de toute l'Humanité. C'était une partie des efforts des tsars de faire de la capitale une Nouvelle Constantinople et la rhétorique du patriarche Euthyme visait exactement cet objectif.

Nous avons vu ainsi la vénération et les images des saintes protectrices qui formaient une partie du chœur des saints intercesseurs du Second Empire bulgare. Il serait peut-être trop ambitieux de dire que tout cela est créé par le patriarche Euthyme mais il a sans doute réuni, généralisé et systématisé leurs cultes. Sa rhétorique dans ses textes concernant le pouvoir dépend profondément des tâches qu'il s'est fixées par son œuvre. En laissant les images de saint Constantin et des saints hommes dont les reliques étaient à Tarnovo pour une étude à part, nous avons essayé de suivre ici la vénération des saintes femmes tarnoviennes et, plus particulièrement, leur fonction centrée sur la légitimation, le renforcement et la sacralisation du pouvoir selon le modèle du culte constantinopolitain de la Protectrice-de-la-Ville. Dans cette perspective, elles deviennent d'une certaine manière des *images Virginis*.

QUALITÉS DU SOUVERAIN ORTHODOXE, VUES À TRAVERS L'*HISTOIRE* DE JEAN VI CANTACUZÈNE ET LES CHRONIQUES SLAVO-ROUMAINES

Tudor Teoteoi

Au temps de la guerre civile entre Andronic II et son petit fils Andronic III, dans la troisième décennie du XIV^e siècle, ce dernier a été déshérité par son grand-père. Cette mesure a éveillé les ambitions impériales des autres compétiteurs d'Andronic III, y compris de ses oncles. Parmi eux se trouvait Théodore, qui héritait le titre de marquis de Montferrat en sa qualité de fils d'Irène de Montferrat, la deuxième épouse d'Andronic II. Mais la possibilité de devenir empereur de Byzance le tentait encore plus. Affligé par le manque de soutien de la part de son père Andronic II, fortement attaché aux traditions byzantines, Théodore de Montferrat a dû renoncer à ces ambitions et s'est vite consolé avec sa position en Occident, car par « façon de pensée, confession, habits, ainsi que par sa *barbe rasée* et ses autres mœurs il était entièrement latin (*gnome kai pistei kai schemati kai geneion koura kai pasi ethesin latinos en akraiphnes*) »¹. Et voilà maintenant un fragment du Premier *Letopisec* de Putna, qui nous semble très proche du texte byzantin cité auparavant. Ce fragment porte sur le concile de Florence, appelé synode ou *săbor*, où « se sont rencontrés l'empereur grec, le patriarche de Constantinople et un grand nombre des métropolitains, chez le pape de la Rome Ancienne, et trompés par les Latins, beaucoup parmi eux sont revenus à Byzance *ayant les barbes rasées* »².

En s'agissant d'un rapprochement assez hardi entre le texte d'une sorte de roman-fleuve tel les *Mémoires* autobiographiques de Jean VI Cantacuzène, d'étendue considérable, similaire d'ailleurs à l'*Histoire* de son contemporain Nicéphore Grégoras, d'un côté, et le texte assez bref des Chroniques slavo-roumaines, nous nous bornerons ici à remarquer que l'historiographie byzantine a toujours favorisé les textes historiques monumentaux et de grande haleine. C'est ainsi qu'elle a laissé assez vite en arrière le genre des chronographes et c'est seulement vers la fin de Byzance qu'on voit se multiplier les chroniques

¹ Nikephoros Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia*, vol. I, Bonn, 1829, p. 396.

² *Cronicile slavo-române din sec. XV-XVI, publicate de Ion Bogdan*, éd. revue et complétée par P. P. Panaitescu (CSR ci-après), Bucarest, 1959, p. 48-49.

brèves, tandis que dans les Pays Roumains c'est exactement ce genre de chroniques brèves qui marque les débuts du genre historiographique.

Cette approche nous semble donc pleinement justifiée, étant donné que les chroniques slavo-roumaines – dont le *Premier Letopisec de Putna* porte même le titre de « Brève récit » (*Skazanie vǎ kratcja o moldavskyh gospodareh*), à la façon de bon nombre de chroniques brèves byzantines, intitulées *Chronikon en syntomō* – s'adonnent à des commentaires qui manquent dans les chroniques brèves byzantines.

Loin de nous la prétention présomptueuse de dresser l'inventaire complet de ces qualités, nous dirons simplement qu'il s'agit de celles qui se dégagent de la lecture des Chroniques slavo-roumaines et qui ont des correspondances ou des similitudes dans l'une de deux *Histoires* byzantines mentionnées. Pour faciliter la compréhension, en vertu des raisons plutôt didactiques, nous avons divisé tout le matériel extrait de ces textes en deux catégories : (I) qualités réelles, qui existent de façon effective dans la réalité sociale, et (II) qualités théoriques, fruit de la projection imaginaire d'une doctrine plutôt immuable, cristallisée au cours des siècles, et à plus forte raison liées à la rhétorique du pouvoir.

I. Qualités réelles

1. *Commandant militaire*. En cette qualité, le souverain jouit de l'aide de Dieu ou du saint commémoré le jour de la victoire sur ses ennemis, comme les soldats byzantins – que Jean Cantacuzène traite d'ailleurs quelquefois de camarades d'armes ou de co-militons combattants³ – sont allés à la rencontre des Ottomans d'Orchan dans la bataille de Pelekanos ou Philokrene, en juin 1330, tout en portant le signe de la croix (*staurō te kathoplisantes heautous*) en tant que arme invincible⁴. C'est dans cette même qualité qu'Étienne le Grand a remporté la victoire de Râmnic sur Basarab Țepeluș « par la miséricorde de Dieu, les prières de la Très Pure Mère de Dieu et de tous les Saints, et par la prière du saint et loué Grand Martyre de Dieu Procope »⁵, puis, le 26 octobre 1497, celle de Codrii Cosminului sur les Polonais, « par la miséricorde de Dieu et avec les prières de la Très Pure Mère de Dieu, et avec la prière du saint et loué grand martyr et myroblyte Démétrius »⁶.

³ *Ioannis Cantacuzeni Historiarum Libri IV*, livre I, chap. 31, éd. L. Schopen, t. I, p. 182, l. 15 ; livre III, chap. 41, t. II, Bonn, 1831, p. 249, l. 19 (*andres systratiōtai*).

⁴ *Ibid.*, livre II, chap. 6, t. I, Bonn, 1828, p. 347, l. 4-5. Voir aussi T. Teoteoi, « La conception de Jean VI Cantacuzène sur l'État byzantin », *Revue des études sud-est européennes* (= RESEE), XIII, 2, 1975, p. 167-185, ici p. 173.

⁵ CSR, *Letopiseșul Anonim al Moldovei*, p. 19, l. 5-7.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 21, l. 12-14.

2. *Possesseur d'un centre du pouvoir, la cité qui est sa Capitale* ; pour Byzance la ville de Constantinople, la « reine des cités » (*regina urbium, hē basileuosa polis*), « gardée par Dieu » ou « sauvée par Dieu », ou Suceava pour la Moldavie, cité qui, bien qu'elle ne soit pas « le Nouvel Carigrad » comme Veliko Tarnovo dans les sources médio-bulgares, est toutefois la « très glorifiée cité » (*prea slăvita cetate*) de Suceava⁷. Jean Cantacuzène met l'épithète *regina urbium*, ça veut dire en grec *hē basilis tōn poleōn*, pour la Capitale byzantine⁸, dans la bouche même d'un Latin : il s'agit de Barthélemy, envoyé du pape Clément VI et du Dauphin de Viennois à Constantinople.

3. *Détenteur d'un pouvoir absolu (autokratōr, ou tou pantos kyrios)* ; plusieurs fois chez Cantacuzène⁹, il est aussi *basileus kai autokratōr*, celui qui exerce seul le pouvoir suprême (*monarchōn*)¹⁰ et universel (en théorie seulement), le prince *singur stăpânitor* ou *schiptrul singurei stăpâniri* chez le chroniqueur moldave Azarie, *marele singur stăpânitor al turcilor* étant le sultan ottoman, en qualité de continuateur des empereurs de Byzance, tandis que Sigismond III Auguste est seulement *craiu leșesc (kral ljašeski)*¹¹ et universel en théorie seulement.

4. *Origine aristocratique* ; chez Cantacuzène « de bonne naissance », en s'agissant des familles qui, « de Père en fils sont eux-mêmes des hommes forts et vaillants, portant les enseignes des vertus ancestrales, distingués par l'éclat de leur lignée, par les compétences et la vaillance des devanciers et, finalement, par leurs compétences militaires »¹², tandis que d'autres, surtout parmi ses adversaires, venaient des familles de basse condition, *ek phaulou kai asēmou genous*¹³. À leur tour, ces adversaires mêmes considéraient Jean Cantacuzène comme très adroit pour diriger les affaires publiques, car il surpassait de loin tous les Rhomées de son temps « non seulement par sa vaillance et son expérience dans les guerres, mais aussi par l'éclat et l'origine brillante de sa famille, et par sa sagesse »¹⁴.

Tout en passant maintenant à la lecture des chroniques slavo-roumains, nous pouvons remarquer que Marie, la fille de Radu le Bel et la dernière épouse d'Étienne le Grand était princesse « de sang et de haute souche »¹⁵. En Moldavie

⁷ CSR, *Chronique de Macaire*, p. 105, l. 18-19, et *Chronique d'Azarie*, p. 141, l. 30.

⁸ *Ioannis Cantacuzeni Historiarum Libri IV*, livre IV, chap. 2, t. III, Bonn, 1832, p. 13, l. 23, ou p. 16, l. 13 (*hē basileuosa polis*).

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 208, l. 20 (*ho pantos kyrios*).

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, livre IV, chap. 1 et 2, p. 15, l. 8, et p. 8, l. 8.

¹¹ *Chronique d'Azarie*, p. 146, l. 11, ou p. 147, l. 6, p. 145, l. 14, et p. 140, l. 11.

¹² Dans un document rédigé en novembre 1347 en faveur du grand papias Demetrios Kabasilas (N. Oikonomdès, *Actes de Dionysiou*, Paris, 1968, p. 46, l. 15-19).

¹³ *Ioannis Cantacuzeni Historiarum Libri IV*, t. I, p. 117, l. 25 (*asēmos kai ex asēmōn*, en parlant d'Apokaukos) et p. 17, l. 24 (*phaulē kai asēmos mētēr*, en parlant de la mère de Michel Catharos).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, livre III, chap. 18, t. II, Bonn, 1831, p. 115, l. 16-19.

¹⁵ CSR, *Cronica moldo-germană*, p. 31, l. 13.

au XVI^e siècle, « il y avait donc parmi les boyards, pas des plus grands, un certain Tomşa, beau quant à son apparence physique, vaillant, aux mains fortes, âme hardie », ayant « une affection fervente pour la droite croyance »¹⁶. Iliş et Ştefan, les enfants de Pierre (ou Petru) Rareş et de son épouse, *doamna* Hélène Branković, étaient, bien sûr, « de bonne souche » (*de bun neam*)¹⁷.

5. *Appartenance à une maison ou dynastie régnante* ; Cantacuzène soulignait ses parentés avec les autres familles régnantes telles les Anges, avant le mariage de sa fille Hélène avec Jean V Paléologue. Hors Théodora, mariée avec Orchan (1326-1362), Marie, la plus grande parmi ses filles, a été mariée avec Nicéphore II de l'Épire, élevé au rang de despote par son grand père devenu empereur de façon effective en 1347. Après l'abdication de son grand père, et la mort d'Étienne Douchan une année plus tard, Nicéphore s'est vu tenté par l'idée de répudier sa femme pour un nouveau mariage avec la sœur d'Hélène, la veuve du tsar serbe. Le commentaire de Cantacuzène a une valeur vraiment anthologique : par cette attitude, Nicéphore voulait changer de l'or contre le cuivre¹⁸, selon l'opinion publique, car l'Empire byzantin se trouvait au-dessus de tous les autres États, ceux de condition impériale y compris, comme les deux tsarats orthodoxes des Balkans. Mais ce projet matrimonial du despote a échoué et, peu de temps après, il est tombé dans une escarmouche avec les Albanais. Sa veuve Marie, après avoir pérégriné en Péloponnèse, où régnait son frère Manuel, a fini sa vie dans le monastère *tēs Kyras Marthas*, de même que sa mère Théodore.

L'appellation d'Ange, Comnène, Paléologue, Cantacuzène, que le sultan d'Égypte accorda à l'empereur Jean VI Cantacuzène, est mentionnée avec une grande fierté par le même personnage, cette fois l'ex-empereur Jean-Joasaph Cantacuzène dans ses Mémoires historiques¹⁹.

Bien sûr, les voïévodes roumains étaient bien conscients de leur condition politique plus modeste dans la hiérarchie médiévale des États. Mais leur appartenance à la famille régnante du pays était incontestable pour légitimer leur pouvoir. Les Chroniques slavo-roumaines soulignent assez souvent la descendance des voïévodes ou leur relation avec la famille régnante du pays. Sur cette question de la souche princière ou du lignage, selon le chroniqueur Azarie « il y avait dans la cité de Rhodes un certain exilé qui s'appelait Jean <le

¹⁶ *Chronique d'Azarie*, p. 143, l. 25-30.

¹⁷ *Chronique de Macaire*, p. 103, l. 4.

¹⁸ *Ioannis Cantacuzeni Historiarum Libri IV*, livre IV, chap. 43, t. III, Bonn, 1832, p. 318, l. 14. L'auteur souligne plusieurs fois la supériorité des empereurs de Byzance sur tous les autres souverains, car ils sont « *plus grands et plus prestigieux que tous les empereurs ou dynastes des autres peuples* », car « non seulement les barbares, mais aussi les Italiens et tous les autres souverains considèrent l'Empire des Rhomées comme *plus grand et plus prestigieux que tous les autres et que le leur* » (*ibid.*, t. II, p. 53, et t. I, p. 195-196). Cf. T. Teoteoi, « La conception de Jean VI Cantacuzène sur l'État byzantin », p. 175-176.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, livre IV, 14, t. III, p. 94, l. 16-17.

Terrible, il s'agit de Ion Vodă cel Viteaz ou Cumplit>, et je ne sais pas qui était-il et d'où tirait-il sa souche, qui était son père, car il prétendait avoir des origines princières »²⁰. On pourrait ajouter ici les dires d'Euthyme ou du même Azarie sur Alexandru Lăpuşneanu²¹.

6. *Possesseur d'une éducation impériale (qui le poussait vers un savoir absolu à Byzance), ou princièr dans les Pays Roumains.* Après la mort de Michel IX en septembre 1320, coempereur et fils d'Andronic II, ce dernier a décidé d'écarter du pouvoir son petit-fils Andronic III, dont l'héritage légitime au trône de Byzance avait été décidé d'avance, en faveur de son autre petit-fils, Michel Catharos, né d'une union illégitime avec une femme de basse condition (*ek phaulou kai asēmou genous*). Pour mieux souligner sa prise de position en faveur d'Andronic III, Cantacuzène souligne les nombreuses raisons qui faisaient totalement indigne de la qualité impériale ce Catharos, qui « dès par sa nature même n'était point capable d'une pensée saine, il n'avait pas reçu aucun enseignement sur les arts libéraux, ni exercé la pratique des choses militaires, ni exercé d'autres qualités qui ornent l'esprit et la formation des jeunes gens, ...en se trouvant complètement dénué des qualités nécessaires pour gouverner ce brillant empire des Rhomées »²². Bref, il n'avait pas reçu une éducation impériale (*paideia basilikē*). Ces défauts évidents quant à son éducation impériale sautent aux yeux d'autant plus si on les met en comparaison avec les descendants légitimes, tels Andronic III et son frère Manuel, qui avaient été confiés à leur grand-père Andronic II, « pour être élevés à la façon des empereurs » (*anagesthai basilikōs*)²³.

Un voïévode des Pays Roumains devait lui-aussi recevoir de bons Enseignements, tels que ceux de Neagoe Basarab pour son fils Théodose, pour pouvoir bien régner, à l'instar de tant des voïévodes dont les portraits sont si favorablement dressés par les Chroniques des XV^e-XVI^e siècles. Les fils d'Alexandru Lăpuşneanu et de Roxande, « qui était la fille de Pierre <Rareş>, ont été soigneusement éduqués et donnés pour apprendre les livres et les préceptes de l'orthodoxie »²⁴. Issu de la dynastie valaque des Basarab et frère du prince Alexandre II de Valachie (1568 = 1577), Pierre le Boiteux (Petru Şchiopul) était lui-aussi « homme de souche princièr » (*om de neam domnesc*) ou « de bonne souche » (*de neam bun*) pour le même Azarie²⁵.

²⁰ CSR, *Chronique d'Azarie*, p. 148, l. 32-34. Ion Vodă se donnait fils naturel d'Étienne le Jeune (1517-1527).

²¹ CSR, *Chronique d'Euthyme*, p. 122, l. 21-23, qui le donne fils de Bogdan III le Borgne, comme il se prétendait lui-même, mais selon Azarie (p. 140, l. 9), il était seulement « l'un parmi les boyards ».

²² *Ioannis Cantacuzeni Historiarum Libri IV*, t. I, p. 14, l. 23-15, l. 5.

²³ *Ibid.*, livre I, chap. 1, p. 13, l. 9. Pontanus a traduit la formule grecque par *regali disciplina educandos*.

²⁴ CSR, *Chronique d'Azarie*, p. 140, l. 24-26.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 150, l. 6, et p. 151, l. 24.

7. *Théologien orthodoxe et défenseur de la tradition.* Selon ses contemporains, l'empereur Jean Cantacuzène se vantait plus de l'orthodoxie et des dogmes établis par les Apôtres et les ancêtres, que de la pourpre et de la couronne impériale. Plus que Constantin le Grand, qui présida le Premier concile œcuménique, plus que « l'empereur théologien qui fut Justinien, voire plus qu'Alexios I^{er} Comnène, fortement loué par sa fille Anne pour ses compétences en matière de théologie, Jean VI Cantacuzène eut une contribution décisive au triomphe de la doctrine palamite, non seulement par ses décisions prises en qualité d'empereur, mais aussi par les écrits théologiques rédigés par lui-même ou par d'autres théologiens byzantins de l'époque en son nom, après avoir entré dans les ordres et pris le nom de moine Josaphat. Bien au courant des controverses théologiques de son temps, qui aboutirent à la sanctification de Grégoire Palamas au synode de 1368, il a pris aussi une part active aux discussions concernant le projet d'un futur concile œcuménique. Bien nombreux sont les passages de son Histoire où il exprime son amour et sa haute estime pour des moines comme Sabas le Jeune, pour le Mont Athos, pour ses monastères et ses moines. Il nous semble hautement intéressant que les sources hagiographiques de l'époque mentionnent des épisodes vraiment favorables pour lui, mais qui n'existent pas dans son Histoire. Par exemple, Grégoire le Sinaïte a prédit que même les empereurs de Byzance viendront le chercher « afin de s'informer sur les choses qu'ils devront affronter dans le futur, ainsi que pour sauver leurs âmes ». Et cette prophétie s'est accomplie exactement, car les deux empereurs qui régnaient alors ensemble (1347-1354) lui ont rendu visite et se sont entretenus avec lui, puis ils sont partis. Mais avant de se séparer, Grégoire a prédit à chacun de deux empereurs sa future carrière. Il a mis ainsi en garde Cantacuzène avec ces mots : « Prête attention à ce fait, car tu seras conduit au monastère »²⁶. Au temps de la guerre civile entre les deux Jean (1341-1347), les adversaires de Cantacuzène ont pris la décision de reléguer au monastère Chôra de la capitale le moine Sabas, « qui surpassait les autres par sa vertu et parce qu'il se trouvait parmi les plus fameux amis de l'empereur <Cantacuzène>, vu le refus de Sabas de se mettre d'accord avec eux »²⁷. Il s'agit du fameux Sabas le Jeune, moine athonite considéré comme saint par Philothée Kokkinos, tous deux adeptes de l'hésychasme palamite et de Cantacuzène²⁸.

Passons maintenant au cas roumain, avec une citation du chroniqueur Azarie : « Dans la quatrième année de son deuxième règne, Alexandre <Lăpușneanu> est tombé gravement malade, d'une maladie mortelle, et ayant bien la clairvoyance de sa mort, <comme tout les saints qui d'habitude sont en

²⁶ F. Halkin, *Deux vies de saint Maxime le Kausokalybe*, « *Analecta Bollandiana* », LIV, 1936, p. 93, l. 4-5 (chap. 20) ; cf. T. Teoteoi, « Ștefan cel Mare între tradiția bizantină și cea apuseană », dans le vol. *Ștefan cel Mare și epoca sa*, Bucarest, 2007, p. 165.

²⁷ *Ioannis Cantacuzeni Historiarum Libri IV*, livre III, 35, t. II, p. 213, l. 8-11.

²⁸ Voir la contribution de M. Mitrea dans ce volume, p. 87-112.

mesure de prédire même la journée de leur mort prochaine>, il a convoqué les hauts prélats de l'Église, les prêtres et tous les dignitaires, et il leur a donné un nombre considérable d'enseignements divins, et il a confié le sceptre du pouvoir autocratique à son fils Bogdan. Car tout en se trouvant encore en vie, il a préféré les choses de la vie future au lieu des biens de ce monde, et à la place du porphyre tissu en or, il a reçu l'habit de moine confectionné de laine grossière, et à la place de la couronne ornée de perles et de pierres précieuses, il a plus aimé de se faire couper les cheveux et de changer son nom en Pacôme, selon la façon angélique de vie »²⁹. On voit donc comme ce voïévode roumain a pris l'habit monacal sur son lit de mort, de même que tel empereur de Byzance, et de même que Jean Cantacuzène, qui près de trois décennies après son abdication a vécu dans la condition de moine.

8. *Le souverain en étroite relation avec le clergé, et notamment avec les moines.* Pour ce sujet, l'*Histoire* de Cantacuzène fournit un matériel tellement riche qu'on pourrait rédiger une étude de dimension considérable là-dessus. À la mort du patriarche Isidore, protégé par Cantacuzène, ce dernier « décide d'installer sur le siège patriarcal Calliste, qui, après avoir renoncé au monde, vivait retiré dans le monastère des Ibères, au Mont Athos »³⁰. L'empereur s'est préalablement informé sur ses qualités, en le trouvant plein de vertus et très adroit pour ce haut service (*diakonia*), il l'emmena dans la Capitale par la voie de la mer (1350). C'était à partir de ce moment que Jean Cantacuzène mentionne ses premières intentions d'abdiquer et d'embrasser la condition monacale, de pair avec sa femme, en laissant le trône impérial à son gendre, Jean V. Avant d'être promu patriarche œcuménique, Philothée Kokkinos était un « bon pasteur » (*kalos poimēn*) de son « troupeau » chrétien, en s'agissant de ses ouailles de la métropole d'Héraclée de Thrace, car il était « vénérable quant à ses mœurs et sa vertu », et très bon connaisseur de la sagesse, tant de « celle d'au-dehors » (*hē exō*), que de celle « de chez nous » (*hē kath'hēmas*)³¹. De son côté, le culte religieux soulignait fortement cette inséparable relation entre l'État et l'Église byzantine par l'habitude de faire une commémoration publique des empereurs orthodoxes et des patriarches au premier Dimanche du Carême³², qui depuis la fin de la dispute iconoclaste est restée jusque à nos jours comme le

²⁹ CSR, *Chronique d'Azarie*, p. 147, l. 3-11 : În al patrulea an din domnia lui a doua, Alexandru a căzut în boală rea și de moarte și prevăzându-și moartea, a chemat pe căpeteniile Bisericii și pe preoți și pe toți cei ce erau în dregătorii și le-a împărțit multe învățături dumnezeiești și a dat schiptrul singurei stăpâniri fiului său Bogdan. Și încă viu fiind, i-au plăcut mai mult cele viitoare decât cele de față și în locul porfirului țesut cu aur, a primit asupra lui haina de lână călugărească și în locul cununei de mărgăritare și cu pietre scumpe, a îndrăgit viața cu tunderea capului și și-a schimbat numele, după rândul îngeresc, în Pahomie.

³⁰ *Ioannis Cantacuzeni Historiarum Libri IV*, livre IV, chap. 16, t. III, p. 106, l. 2-4.

³¹ *Ibid.*, livre IV, chap. 29, t. III, p. 217, l. 9 et 14-15.

³² Nicéphore Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia*, livre VIII, chap. 5, t. I, 1829, p. 303, l. 16-17.

Dimanche de la Fête de l'Orthodoxie³³. Les calendriers des Églises orthodoxes actuelles prouvent ce fait de façon éclatante.

Après son entrée victorieuse dans la Capitale au mois de février 1347, Jean Cantacuzène est arrivé au Palais Impérial, où « il a trouvé l'impératrice avec ses enfants assise devant l'icône Hodēgētria pour mieux fléchir l'empereur et le convaincre d'oublier les malheurs survenus pendant la guerre <civile> »³⁴. Cette image précède en quelque sorte la description donnée par le chroniqueur Macaire à la fuite de Pierre Rareș en Transylvanie, en 1538, avec un court et plein de dangers arrêt dans le monastère de Bistrița, « où je suis tombé par terre devant les saintes icônes et j'ai beaucoup pleuré ; et l'hégoumène avec tout le conseil du monastère pleuraient avec moi avec des larmes brûlantes »³⁵.

De même que l'empereur byzantin, le voïevode devait être de confession orthodoxe. Avec le retour d'Alexandru Lăpușeanu sur le trône moldave, en qualité de « seul maître autocrate » (*samodržec*) « ont brillé de nouveau les rayons des bienfaits de l'orthodoxie, a fui l'hiver sombre des luthériens impurs <allusion au règne de Despot Vodă> et a fleuri le printemps, cause de toutes sortes de joies, c'est-à-dire le bien-être des églises et à la place des vagues a souri le silence. ... Depuis que la tempête qui bouleverse les vagues s'est apaisée, et on pouvait flotter sans trouble sur la mer de la vie, car le zéphire divin de la droite foi (*blagočestie*) soufflait légèrement »³⁶. Le chroniqueur se fait ici l'écho d'une métaphore très répandue dans la littérature byzantine dès la période patristique³⁷, bien présente aussi dans l'*Histoire* de Jean Cantacuzène, qui compare l'Empire byzantin à un navire qui flotte sur les vagues d'une mer rarement calme et plutôt agitée. La Chronique rimée de Constantin Manassès l'utilise plus d'une dizaine de fois³⁸. Avant l'éclatement de la dernière phase de la guerre entre les deux Andronic (1321-1328), Jean Cantacuzène met dans la bouche d'Andronic le Jeune l'antithèse entre la paix profonde accordée par Dieu aux sujets de l'Empire byzantin, et l'imminence d'une nouvelle guerre civile, qui menaçait l'Empire d'un effondrement total, semblable à celui d'un navire submergé, avec tous ses voyageurs, par les flots géants d'une terrible tempête³⁹.

9. *Défenseur de l'Église (ekdikos, dephensōr tēs ekklēσίας, le premier terme étant d'origine grecque, l'autre latin), protecteur des moines et des*

³³ N. Bănescu, *Istoria Imperiului Bizantin*, t. II (610-1081), éd. T. Teoteoi, Bucarest, 2003, p. 217-220.

³⁴ *Ioannis Cantacuzeni Historiarum Libri IV*, livre IV, chap. 2, t. III, p. 8, l. 11-15.

³⁵ *Istoria Românilor* (sous l'égide de l'Académie roumaine), t. IV, 2^e éd., Bucarest, 2012, p. 787.

³⁶ CSR, *Chronique d'Azarie*, p. 146, l. 11-21.

³⁷ T. Ojog, *Motivul corabiei în opera Sfântului Ioan Gură de Aur între tradiție și inovație*, Bucarest, 2015.

³⁸ T. Teoteoi « „Corabia împărăției” – o metaforă des întâlnită în Cronograful lui Constantin Manassès », dans O. Nedelcu (éd.), *Anca Irina Ionescu. Omagiu la 70 de primăveri*, Bucarest, 2016, p. 485-495.

³⁹ *Ioannis Cantacuzeni Historiarum Libri IV*, livre I, chap. 46, t. I, 1828, p. 223, l. 15-22.

monastères. Roxande Lăpușneanu « exhortait les prêtres aux prières par des aumônes consolatrices et bienfaitrices, et par de nombreuses fréquentations rafraîchissait et consolait les cœurs <et les âmes> des moines assoiffés de Dieu soit à l'intérieur des monastères, soit en menant une vie pure hors des monastères, ou une vie pleine des passions et d'endurance dans la solitude des endroits déserts »⁴⁰.

10. *Porteur de la justice et de la philanthropie envers ses sujets*. Dans sa lettre adressée au pape Clément VI, Barthélemy, envoyé à Constantinople par le dauphin Humbert de Viennois, apportait des louanges à Jean VI Cantacuzène, qu'il considérait innocent quant à la guerre civile de Byzance, pour ses qualités de miséricorde (*eleos*) et de justice (*dikaiosynē*)⁴¹.

Dans les Pays roumains, la même Roxande Lăpușneanu « n'a pas épargné de l'or pour la consolation de ceux qui étaient tourmentés par des maladies, avec des bienfaits en faveur de ceux qui étaient dans l'incapacité du travail ou des pauvres, pour ceux qui étaient exténués par des vieillessees mauvaises, douloureuses et pleines de souffrance »⁴². Le même Azarie apporte des louanges similaires à l'adresse de son époux, le voïévode Lăpușneanu, pour l'attention que celui-ci a prêté à l'égard des églises et des monastères, mais aussi pour avoir nourri les pauvres. Il voulait des aides matériaux au peuple, mais se voyant dans l'impossibilité d'accomplir pleinement ce geste, il était « fâché et affligé »⁴³.

11. *Oint et couronné, par le patriarche de Constantinople, en ce qui concerne l'empereur de Byzance, ou oint par le métropolite du pays lorsqu'il s'agit d'un voïévode*. Il suffit de comparer ici les trois couronnements de Jean VI Cantacuzène, décrits par lui-même, avec les nombreuses onctions des voïévodes rencontrées dans les Chroniques slavo-roumaines.

Après un second couronnement, opéré par le patriarche Lazare de Jérusalem à Adrinople en 1346, Jean Cantacuzène eut droit à un troisième couronnement, officié à Constantinople en mai 1347, par le patriarche Isidore, récemment promu alors à cette dignité. « Même si celui-ci <Jean Cantacuzène> avait reçu d'avance la couronne <impériale> (*proteron estephthē*) à Adrinople des mains du patriarche Lazare de Jérusalem, et cette onction avec de l'huile sainte aurait pu paraître suffisante aux yeux des gens sages et raisonnables, toutefois, afin d'éviter de fournir des raisons ou des occasions favorables pour des commentaires malveillants aux divers médisants, qui pouvaient soulever

⁴⁰ CSR, *Chronique d'Azarie*, p. 147, l. 26-29.

⁴¹ *Ioannis Cantacuzeni Historiarum Libri IV*, livre IV, chap. 2, t. III, p. 14, l. 20-24.

⁴² CSR, *Chronique d'Azarie*, p. 147, l. 23-26.

⁴³ CSR, *Chronique d'Azarie*, p. 141, l. 2 (*pe cei săraci îi hrănia*), et p. 140, l. 20 (*era supărat și întristat*). Certains parmi les exemples donnés ici, ainsi que d'autres, se retrouvent dans notre étude « Clișee bizantine în cronică slavo-română a Moldovei din sec. XV–XVI », dans *Polychronion. Înaltpresfințitului Arhiepiscop Casian, la 60 de ani*, Brăila, 2015, p. 377-389, ici p. 385-386.

d'objections à ce sujet, à savoir qu'il ne fut pas couronné à Byzance selon l'ancienne coutume des empereurs, il décida d'accomplir encore une fois cette cérémonie »⁴⁴.

Assez nombreuses sont les mentions que les Chroniques slavo-roumaines font des onctions voïévodales opérées par les métropolitains du pays. Après la victoire d'Étienne le Grand sur Pierre Aron, « tout le pays s'est rassemblé avec le très saint métropolitain, kyr Théoctiste, qui l'a oint pour régner, sur le Siret, au lieu appelé Dereptate »⁴⁵. La Chronique murale de Suceava apporte la précision qu'« avec l'aide de Dieu, le 2 février 7098 (= 1590), on lui (à Pierre le Boiteux) a apporté l'étendard du règne de la part de l'empereur turc, et il a été puis oint pour le règne par la main de très saint notre père kyr Gheorghe Movilă, métropolitain de tout le pays de la Moldavie »⁴⁶. On voit que l'onction était celle qui comptait dans le Moyen Âge roumain, tandis que chez Jean Cantacuzène elle représentait seulement une partie du cérémonial de couronnement de l'empereur.

Chose intéressante, et assez singulière, nous semble celle de voir ici non seulement un empereur byzantin couronné par les autorités humaines, mais surtout par Dieu. Ce fait nous porte vers les qualités théoriques du souverain.

II. Qualités théoriques (virtuelles)

Nous pouvons clore ici le chapitre concernant les qualités réelles du souverain, pour ouvrir le second chapitre, consacré à ses qualités théoriques ou virtuelles du souverain, avec l'observation que la plupart des qualités réelles mentionnées ont dans la pratique seulement une signification virtuelle. On ne peut pas se passer de ces qualités, car elles s'inscrivent bien dans le sillage d'un sujet qui concerne la rhétorique du pouvoir.

1. *Le souverain oint (et couronné) par Dieu.* L'empereur byzantin avait reçu l'onction et la couronne des mains du patriarche, mais plus que cela, il était oint et couronné par Dieu. Au début de la guerre entre les deux Andronic, un conseil secret eut lieu entre les partisans du jeune empereur Andronic III. À cette occasion, de différentes opinions ont été avancées quant au sort réservé à Andronic II, parmi lesquelles il y avait certaines propositions qui allaient même jusqu'à l'idée qu'il devait être assassiné. Jean Cantacuzène a vivement combattu une telle idée, en évoquant plusieurs raisons pour l'écarter. « Tout d'abord, élever la main contre l'empereur et *l'oint de Dieu* signifie la perte totale de l'espérance du salut de l'âme de celui qui s'adonne à une telle action, car il sera

⁴⁴ *Ioannis Cantacuzeni Historiarum Libri IV*, livre IV, chap. 4, t. III, p. 29, l. 9-14.

⁴⁵ CSR, Le *Letopisec* de Putna n° 1, p. 49, l. 11-13. Le *Letopisec* de Putna n° 2 (p. 61) reproduit l'information dans des termes similaires.

⁴⁶ CSR, p. 163.

privé non seulement de la chance d'être pardonné par la gent humaine, mais de la part de Dieu même nous perdrons les dernières espérances de salut »⁴⁷.

En Valachie, Neagoe Basarab s'adressait à ses héritiers avec « mes fils et oints de Dieu »⁴⁸, dans le même sens moral.

2. *Le souverain gardien de la justice et miséricordieux.* Il est *dikaïos* et *philanthropos* envers ses sujets, mais il est aussi modèle de comportement pour ces derniers, qui l'imitent sur plusieurs plans, peut-être dans la même mesure qu'il tend à imiter Dieu. Fruits d'une projection imaginaire faite en marge d'une construction théorique qui dépasse les limites de la réalité, ces qualités théoriques placent le souverain entre Dieu et ses sujets. L'empereur byzantin est celui « qui imite Dieu » (*theomimētos*), « qui aime le Christ » (*philochristos*), tandis que le voïévode des Chroniques slavo-roumaines est *binecinstitor*⁴⁹, ce qui veut dire « orthodoxe », voire « icône du Christ »⁵⁰, ce qui n'est pas sans rappeler la représentation byzantine du patriarche comme « icône vivante du Christ » (*eikōn zōsa Christou*).

3. *Le souverain digne de sa qualité.* L'empereur byzantin était donc « digne » (*axios*) de sa qualité, et aussi « saint » (*hagios*) en vertu de cette même qualité, comme il est dit dans l'hymne *Trisagion* lors du cérémonial de couronnement⁵¹. Cantacuzène va plus loin encore, en affirmant que juste après la mort d'Andronic III, le patriarche Jean Kalekas l'a reconnu en particulier en qualité d'empereur *de facto*, en récitant l'hymne *Trisagion* et encore une prière sur sa tête, en lui souhaitant beaucoup de paix, glorieuse réputation (*eukleia*) et toutes les bonnes choses⁵².

Après la mort de Pierre Rareș, qui « passait ses vieillesse en bonne fortune, ... comme un *aigle blanc* sur le toit <de la maison>, ... avec l'accord des évêques et du conseil princier tout entier, fut élevé à la hauteur du règne et sur le trône de son père Iliaș, homme au cœur mol et à l'âme faible, qui ne se montra en rien semblable à son père, comme si celui-ci ne l'aurait point élevé en tant que son fils, car il bouleversa et endommagea toutes choses »⁵³.

⁴⁷ *Ioannis Cantacuzeni Historiarum Libri IV*, livre I, chap. 9, t. I, p. 45, l. 17-21.

⁴⁸ CSR, *Enseignements de Neagoe Basarab pour son fils Théodose*, p. 277, l. 30 (texte slave, p. 229, l. 26).

⁴⁹ CSR, *Chronique d'Azarie*, p. 139, l. 14 et 24, p. 140, l. 24 (à propos de Roxande Lăpușneanu, fille de Pierre Rareș). *Chronique d'Euthyme*, p. 124, l. 9 et 14-15 (à propos d'Alexandre Lăpușneanu et de sa mère).

⁵⁰ CSR, *Chronique d'Euthyme*, p. 123, l. 23 – 24 (*ca la icoana lui Hristos, așa priveau la voievod*, à propos d'Alexandru Lăpușneanu).

⁵¹ *Pro de tēs tou Trisagiou theias hymnologias aneisin epi ton ambōna ho patriarchēs tōn adytōn exiōn* (*Ioannis Cantacuzeni Historiarum Libri IV*, t. I, p. 197, l. 18-20, à l'occasion du couronnement d'Andronic III, le 2 février 1325).

⁵² *Ibid.*, livre III, chap. 6, t. II, p. 51, l. 20-24.

⁵³ CSR, *Chronique de Macaire*, p. 103, l. 8-10 et 27-30.

L'empereur pouvait être aussi *trismakaristos* (« trois fois heureux »), épithète ayant ses origines dans la patristique et inspirée par le dogme de la Sainte Trinité, mais après la mort il devenait *makaritēs*, comme les autres mortels. Il nous semble vraiment intéressant le dérivé négatif *triskataratos*, « trois fois maudit », trouvé dans une Apocalypse apocryphe pour désigner l'Antichrist⁵⁴, que nous rencontrons dans les Chroniques slavo-roumaines, accompagné de références au sultan Soliman le Magnifique, aux musulmans ou bien à Iliș Rareș, considéré « trois fois malheureux » pour avoir abjuré le christianisme en faveur de la religion islamique⁵⁵.

4. *Le souverain sage*. La sagesse était une autre qualité attribuée à l'empereur Léon VI (886-912), auquel on prête un célèbre livre d'« Oracles », accompagné chez les Byzantins de l'épithète de « Sage », qui voulait désigner l'homme instruit non seulement dans la sagesse « du dehors », donc profane, mais aussi dans la « vraie » sagesse chrétienne « de l'intérieur », gouvernée par la théologie et apanage des gens de l'Église et surtout des moines. La sagesse de l'empereur pouvait être partagée par les membres de sa famille, y compris par les femmes, par exemple par sa mère, par son épouse l'*Augousta*, etc. La mère de Jean VI Cantacuzène avait, selon les *Mémoires* de son fils, « une grande expérience dans l'administration des choses publiques, étant douée d'une vivacité de pensée qui se plaçait au-dessus du naturel féminin »⁵⁶, opinion partagée par Nicéphore Grégoras, d'ailleurs adversaire de Cantacuzène sur plusieurs points, qui considérait la mère de ce dernier comme « femme de grand conseil, ornée de mœurs pleines de distinction et richement douée d'une pensée profonde et d'une grande capacité d'adaptation aux situations les plus malheureuses ». Cantacuzène prête les mêmes qualités à sa femme, la future impératrice Irène, « qui montrait un état d'âme et une capacité de penser qui se situait bien au-dessus de la nature féminine »⁵⁷.

On peut évoquer ici le portrait similaire que le chroniqueur Azarie dresse à Roxande, la veuve de Lăpușneanu, qui après la mort de son mari dirigea la régence au nom de son fils Bogdan, « car elle avait une pensée d'homme, grande âme, *douée de sagesse*, en se montrant comme un paradis fleuri et animé qui nourrissait son jardin avec des bienfaits »⁵⁸.

5. *Le souverain régnant en paix*. Héritée directement de l'Empire romain, l'idée byzantine d'empire s'associait étroitement à celle de l'empire

⁵⁴ G. W. H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, Oxford, 1972 (1^{re} éd., 1961), p. 1409, s.v.

⁵⁵ CSR, *Chronique de Macaire*, p. 94, l. 17 (*împăratul de trei ori blestemat, Suliimen*) ; *Chronique d'Euthyme*, p. 119, l. 1 (*agăreni de trei ori blestemați*) ; *Chronique de Macaire*, p. 104, l. 34 (*de trei ori nenorocitul Iliș Rareș*).

⁵⁶ *Ioannis Cantacuzeni Historiarum Libri IV*, t. I, p. 125, l. 18-20.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, t. II, p. 336, l. 20 (*meizon epideixamenē ē kata gynaikeion phronēma*).

⁵⁸ CSR, *Chronique d'Azarie*, p. 147, l. 18-20 (*Căci era cu minte de bărbat, cu suflet mare, împodobiți cu înțelepciune, fiind ca un rai însuflețit, care-și hrănea grădina cu binefaceri*).

unique et universel. Les Byzantins du XIV^e siècle s'étaient déjà accommodés avec l'existence des plusieurs empires et acceptaient cette réalité, mais à leurs yeux c'étaient seulement leurs empereurs qui avaient la qualité d'empereurs *romains*, « plus grands et plus prestigieux que les autres », comme nous allons voir dans les pages suivantes. Fortement ébranlée par des nombreuses contestations réelles, l'idée impériale byzantine devenait plutôt mythologique en théorie. Cette situation a eu une importance considérable pour la reprise, ou plutôt pour la survivance de cette idée impériale dans les États orthodoxes héritiers de Byzance, même après la chute de cet État, qui dès le XIV^e siècle se voyait continuellement restreint jusqu'à sa dernière expression territoriale. Jusqu'au milieu du XV^e siècle l'opinion publique de deux jeunes Principautés roumaines a pu facilement réaliser que l'Empire millénaire des *basileis* était plus petit et plus faible que chacun de ces États, et que l'empereur de Byzance continuait toutefois de se considérer au sommet de la hiérarchie médiévale des États. Après la disparition de Byzance, les voïévodes de ces deux pays, de même que les souverains des autres États orthodoxes, comme ceux de la Géorgie par exemple, n'ont vu aucun obstacle de se croire empereurs eux-aussi, tout en étant toutefois bien conscients qu'il ne s'agissait pas ici d'une prétention effective, mais seulement d'une sorte d'envoûtement théorique. Puis, en second lieu, durant une époque historique si trouble comme celle de l'expansion ottomane, où la vie calme et paisible s'avérait plutôt un *pium desiderium*, l'idée impériale s'associait avec celle de la *pax romana*, héritée de l'Empire romain elle-aussi, par la même filière byzantine.

« Que tout le peuple de l'Empire des Rhomées se réjouisse, et que *tout le monde* (*sympas ho kosmos*) se félicite de la victoire d'un tel empereur », car « il est *l'empereur de la paix*, le deuxième Solomon, dont le visage désire voire toute la création »⁵⁹, puis « la vérité du Christ a montré la vérité de cet empereur innocent, et à cause du fait que la vérité et la *miséricorde* (*eleos*) l'ont rencontré, il aime la *paix* et la *justice* (*eirēnē kai dikaiosynē*). Je suis persuadé – continue le même Barthélemy, l'envoyé du dauphin Humbert de Viennois à Constantinople dans la susdite lettre au pape Clément VI – que ce fait est d'autant plus favorable pour la *paix* et le bon état de tout le peuple chrétien, et pour l'accroissement du trophée obtenu contre les ennemis de la Croix, car la discorde augmentée au plus grand degré avec le temps a causé de grands dommages aux empereurs de la Rhōmanie »⁶⁰. Tant Jean VI, de même que son gendre Jean V, sont de « très sereins (*galēnotatoi*) empereurs »⁶¹.

De même que l'empereur byzantin « porteur des trophées (*tropaiophoros*, ou *pobedonosec* dans le texte slavo-roumain, équivalent du

⁵⁹ *Ioannis Cantacuzeni Historiarum Libri IV*, livre IV, chap. 2, t. III, p. 13, l. 8-10 et l. 16-17.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, livre IV, 2, t. III, p. 14, l. 20-15, l. 4.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, t. III, p. 15, l. 6 et 8.

« toujours vainqueur » ou *aei nikētēs* de Kekaumenos), après la grande victoire remportée sur le pouvoir ottoman le 10 janvier 1475, Étienne le Grand fut accueilli par le métropolite avec les prêtres sortis à sa rencontre « la Sainte Évangile à la main et en bénissant le tsar avec des souhaits « Que vive le tsar ». Et une grande joie s'est répandue alors parmi les gens et dans tous les royaumes environnants ». Mais après la défaite subie par le même voïévode de la part des Turcs le 26 juillet 1476, « un grand chagrin s'est abattu sur le pays de la Moldavie et sur tous les royaumes environnants et parmi les chrétiens bien croyants »⁶². Trois quarts de siècle plus tard, le « bien croyant » voïévode Alexandru Lăpușneanu « a bien réglé sous son gouvernement la Moldavie, en faisant descendre sur tous ses habitants la *paix de Dieu*, et en accordant un grand honneur à l'Église de Moldavie et aux vénérables monastères »⁶³. Par ailleurs « une *paix profonde* s'étendait partout, qui jouissait l'ouïe des gens et pour tous la *paix* signifiait un trésor. Et la gloire ailée qui le concernait s'est diffusée au-delà des pays et sur toute la terre illuminée par le soleil on racontait de son ardeur bien croyante et de son amour envers Dieu et envers les saintes églises, et son nom est devenu fameux dans tous les lieux et les règnes environnants »⁶⁴.

On voit donc, en jugeant les choses à la lumière des textes historiques byzantins, ainsi que des chroniques slavo-roumaines, que l'idée de la paix allait de pair avec l'universalisme médiéval. Cette idée est présente aussi dans d'autres milieux culturels orthodoxes sud-slaves, comme le Tsarat bulgare du XIV^e siècle, il s'agit donc d'une période contemporaine avec celle de Jean VI Cantacuzène. Un Psautier médio-bulgare de 1336-1337 (car il est daté avec l'indiction 5), « copié à la demande de notre grand tsar Jean Alexandre, élu et confié à nous par Dieu », souverain loué par le copiste pour la victoire de Rhossokastron (17 juillet 1331) contre les Byzantins, ainsi que pour l'étouffement de la révolte de son oncle Belaur, dans la région de Vidin. « Et un état de *tranquillité* régnait partout dans le monde »⁶⁵. Si l'on pense aux relations spéciales d'amitié qui ont existé entre les premiers voïévodes valaques et le Tsarat de Vidin, où s'était déployée aussi l'action de Belaur, et au nom même de cet oncle du tsar bulgare Jean Alexandre, l'hypothèse de son origine vlaque ou même valaque nous semble assez bien fondée.

6. *Le souverain et les corps ou facteurs constitutionnels*. En règle générale, l'ascension d'un souverain médiéval sur le trône de ses ancêtres avait lieu en vertu d'un droit d'hérédité, surtout dans l'Occident de l'Europe. Plusieurs dynasties se sont succédées aussi sur le trône de Byzance. Ce fait n'a toutefois

⁶² CSR, *Le Letopisec anonyme de la Moldavie*, p. 18, l. 12-17 et l. 28-29.

⁶³ CSR, *La Chronique d'Euthyme*, p. 124, l. 9-12.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 124, l. 16-21.

⁶⁵ V. Gjuzev, *Bulgarien zwischen Orient und Okzident. Die Grundlagen seiner geistigen Kultur vom 13. bis zum 15. Jahrhundert*, aus dem Bulgarischen übersetzt von Ch. Belčeva, Vienne – Cologne – Weimar, 1993, p. 244.

jamais écarté, ni remis en question l'ancienne coutume romaine concernant l'élection unanime du Sénat, de l'armée et du peuple (*psepho koine tes synkletou, tes stratias kai tou demou*), que les textes mentionnent – c'est vrai que de façon de plus en plus variable et de plus en plus rhétorique – jusqu'à la fin de Byzance. La règle générale était donc l'accord unanime des facteurs constitutionnels, et on pourrait la suivre jusqu'à la fin de Byzance et pour Jean VI Cantacuzène aussi, monté sur le trône de Byzance à la suite d'une guerre civile (*emphylios polemos*) où deux partis ou deux camps du pouvoir se sont confrontés, chacune ayant son unanimité. Pour son premier couronnement, à Didymoteichon en octobre 1341, Cantacuzène eut l'accord de « tous ceux qui se trouvaient alors dans la ville, non seulement ceux de bonne naissance et proches de l'empereur par des liens de parenté, et d'autres parmi les sénateurs et l'armée ». Le lendemain de son entrée victorieuse à Constantinople en février 1347, Cantacuzène demanda non seulement à ses adversaires, mais aussi à ses partisans qui se trouvaient encore en-dehors des murs de la Capitale, aux sénateurs, aux militaires et aux autres dignitaires de l'impératrice Anne de Savoie, de prêter serment de fidélité aux empereurs, sans faire aucune différence ou soulever d'objection quelconque, « afin qu'ils se rangent tous sous le gouvernement d'un seul empire ».

Plus d'un siècle plus tard, en avril 1457, Étienne le Grand de Moldavie, victorieux sur son adversaire Pierre Aron, a rassemblé tout le pays avec le très saint métropolite kyr Théoctiste, qui l'a oint pour régner au lieu qui s'appelle Dereptate jusque de nos jours »⁶⁶. En 1527 Pierre Rareș, parce qu'il était, « lui-aussi, l'un de ses rejetons », donc fils d'Étienne, « fut monté lui-aussi avec honneur au siège du règne avec le conseil général <du pays>, et oint avec l'huile de la bénédiction »⁶⁷ par le métropolite Théoctiste II. En 1552, « une assemblée générale de tout le peuple étant convoquée », car tout le peuple se rassembla avec les commandants militaires, les évêques, les boyards et tout le Conseil princier »⁶⁸, Alexandru Lăpușneanu fut élevé à la dignité de voïévode mais il prit ensuite en mariage Roxande, fille de Pierre Rareș, pour s'assurer la légitimité, chose qui avait préoccupé également Jean VI Cantacuzène à Byzance⁶⁹. On voit donc que le droit de l'héritage s'alliait avec celui de l'élection.

Cette idée de l'unanimité des facteurs constitutionnels dérive de la conception romaine sur l'État, de la doctrine concernant la supériorité des

⁶⁶ CSR, les *Letopisec* de Putna I, p. 49, l. 11-13, et Putna II, p. 61, l. 27 – 28 (ou *l-au pomozuit domn*, dans la traduction roumaine de 1800, p. 70, l. 21).

⁶⁷ CSR, *Chronique de Macaire*, p. 95, l. 10. Un autre exemple sur Étienne le Jeune (1517-1527), à la p. 92, l. 15.

⁶⁸ CSR, *Chronique d'Euthyme*, p. 123, l. 13 et 21, et *Chronique d'Azarie*, p. 140, l. 13-14.

⁶⁹ F. Dölger, « Johannes VI. Kantakuzenos als dynastischer Legitimist », *Seminarium Kondakovianum*, 10, 1938, p. 19-30.

intérêts généraux de l'État (*to koinon*) sur ceux des particuliers (*idiōtai*, dont l'ensemble constitue *to idion*), doctrine si souvent et de façon exemplaire défendue par Cantacuzène. Il voit l'État byzantin comme une *res publica*, qui convoitait une *pax byzantina*, dans sa vaine espérance de voir rétablie l'ancienne bonheur (*hē archaia eudaimonia*) de l'Empire des Rhomées de jadis, quand cette monarchie s'était effectivement trouvée au sommet de la hiérarchie médiévale des États, et ses empereurs *étaient plus grands et plus prestigieux que tous les empereurs et dynastes des autres peuples*⁷⁰, comme Cantacuzène l'affirme directement. Il est à la fois pleinement conscient du déclin byzantin, en disant que « nous sommes tombés au milieu de plus grands dangers » (*tois eschatois peripesoumetha kindynois*)⁷¹. Dès le début de son règne, devant « l'assemblée des états » de Byzance, donc envers ses sujets, ainsi que devant le pape Clément VI, par une ambassade envoyée à Avignon (1348), il cherchait à se disculper de son alliance avec les Turcs durant la guerre civile, ses alliés « barbares, qui aujourd'hui tuent et asservissent les Byzantins »⁷². Déçu dans toutes les espérances de redresser la situation de l'Empire au niveau de jadis (*hōsper en tois palai chronois*)⁷³, il a dû finalement abdiquer, écrasé par le contraste entre la grandeur théorique d'un héritage millénaire si troublant et la réalité si catastrophique du déclin irréversible.

Jean Cantacuzène s'affirme comme un défenseur d'élite des intérêts publics de l'État, qui à ses yeux doivent être situés toujours et dans toutes les circonstances au-dessus de ceux des particuliers. Il montre plusieurs fois son dévouement envers les intérêts généraux de l'État byzantin, placés par lui toujours au-dessus des intérêts des particuliers, même au-dessus de ses intérêts personnels. Il se fait un titre d'honneur de sa capacité d'avoir offert à cet État des ressources considérables qui venaient de sa fortune personnelle. Il s'arrête sur le grand nombre de biens que ses adversaires politiques lui ont confisqué pendant la guerre civile. Mais il tient à souligner que sa plus grande amertume n'était pas provoquée par la perte de tant de richesses, mais surtout par le fait que toutes les confiscations qu'il avait subies n'ont pas été d'aucune utilité à l'État, étant dissipées et évanouies, pour le grand dommage de l'État (*to koinon*)⁷⁴.

Cette conception étatique tirait ses origines lointaines dans le droit romain, qui voyait dans l'État une institution d'intérêt publique, qui avait une prééminence indiscutable sur les intérêts personnels des particuliers⁷⁵. L'Empire

⁷⁰ *Ioannis Cantacuzeni Historiarum Libri IV*, livre III, chap. 6, t. II, p. 53, l. 13-14.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, t. II, p. 48, l. 21-22.

⁷² *Ibid.*, t. III, p. 53, l. 21-23.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, t. II, 1831, p. 80, l. 8-9.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, livre III, chap. 25, t. II, p. 152, l. 14 et suiv., et livre III, t. II, chap. 30, p. 185.

⁷⁵ H.-G. Beck, « *Res Publica Romana. Vom Staatsdenken der Byzantiner* », *Sitzungsberichte der bayerischen Ak. der Wissenschaften. Philos.-histor. Klasse*, 1970, Heft 2, p. 28 et suiv.

byzantin a repris cette conception dans ses lignes générales, le droit byzantin étant pris en considération aussi en tant que droit *romain-byzantin*. Ce droit a été puis transmis au monde orthodoxe post-byzantin, à celui roumain du Moyen Âge y compris.

7. *Du souverain d'un État du bien publique à celui d'un État conçu comme bien patrimonial*. Il y a toutefois un aspect où les chroniques slavo-roumaines ne partagent plus les mêmes idées que les sources byzantines, qui trouvent en Jean Cantacuzène un porte-parole des plus autorisées, surtout en ce qui concerne l'idée de la *res publica*.

Bien sûr, chez les Roumains du Moyen Âge, le pays (*țara, zemlja, chōra*), de même que le règne (*domnia, gospodstvo, authentia*), par le rôle plutôt théorique qui revient à l'assemblée ou au conseil général du peuple (*sfatul de obște*), ont quelque chose de commun avec la *res publica romana* (ou *byzantina*), mais surtout avec la *pax romana* (ou *byzantina*, puis *othomanica*), que les chroniqueurs slavo-roumains appellent toutefois *pax Dei* (*pacea lui Dumnezeu, mir Božii, eirēnē*), qui nous rappelle plutôt la trêve ou la paix de Dieu de l'Europe occidentale que l'*eirēnē Theou* de Byzance, syntagme peu agréé par les Byzantins, qui d'habitude parlent seulement de l'*eirēnē*. Selon Euthyme, « le pieux et grand prince Alexandre voïévode a bien réglé sous son gouvernement la Moldavie, en faisant descendre sur tous ses habitants la paix de Dieu, et en accordant un grand honneur à l'Église de Moldavie et aux vénérables monastères »⁷⁶.

Mais cette sorte de *res publica* nous semble fortement liée à la propriété patrimoniale (*moșie, otăc'stvo*, d'où vient le roumain *ocină*, qui correspond au byzantin *ktēma gonikon*), donc plutôt selon le modèle du Moyen Âge occidental. Le voïévode valaque Vladislav II (1446-1456) se lamentait aux citoyens de Brașov du fait que son « père » Ioan Corvin de Hunedoara avait renoncé de le protéger, et lui montrait sa mauvaise humeur, en voulant lui arracher son domaine patrimonial (*ocina*) et son petit pays (*țărișoara*), le Făgăraș et l'Amlaș⁷⁷. On peut se poser à ce titre la question si le voïévode comprenait par ces deux termes (*ocină* et *țărișoară*) seulement les deux fiefs transylvains ou toute la Valachie.

On doit placer dans le même contexte la demande adressée par Pierre Rareș au roi polonais en vue d'obtenir la restitution de la province de Pocuția, « son bien patrimonial » (*otč'skoe emu dostoanie*)⁷⁸, donc *ktēma gonikon*, notion qui à Byzance était en vigueur seulement pour les particuliers, et non pour l'État. Dans la même perspective on doit lire le chroniqueur Euthyme, selon lequel Alexandru Lăpușneanu « se dirigea avec vaillance vers son domaine patrimonial

⁷⁶ CSR, *Chronique d'Euthyme*, p. 124, l. 9-12.

⁷⁷ Cf. *Istoria Românilor* (sous l'égide de l'Académie Roumaine), t. IV, 2^e éd., Bucarest, 2012, p. 344.

⁷⁸ CSR, *Chronique de Macaire*, p. 83, l. 18-19 = p. 97, l. 29-30.

(*otăč'stvo*), pour prendre le règne de la Moldovlachie », circonstance où la notion de « règne » est désignée par *carstvo* (*na vâsprientie carstva*). Par ailleurs, il nous semble hautement intéressant de constater, en ce qui concerne les chroniqueurs Macaire, Euthyme et Azarie, que dans bon nombre de cas où Ioan Bogdan et Petre P. Panaitescu ont traduit *domnie*, le texte slave contient le terme de *carstvo*. D'habitude, la notion qui se fait droit de cité est celle de *voïévode* (au lieu de *car*), mais ici aussi on doit mentionner que le règne (*domnia*) n'est pas indiqué par *gospodstvo*, mais en général par *carstvo*⁷⁹.

En guise de conclusion, si chez Jean Cantacuzène nous observons une conscience aigüe du déclin byzantin qui vient de l'écart toujours accru entre la suprématie théorique de l'Empire byzantin et sa situation réelle de plus en plus modeste – car « sa fleur s'est fanée et a disparu », comme l'historien Doukas l'affirma plus tard⁸⁰ –, chez les chroniqueurs slavo-roumains on part de la condition réelle assez modeste des deux pays roumains extra-carpatiques pour s'envoler vers le rêve d'une condition impériale en théorie, et c'est pour cette raison que cette condition est plutôt métaphorique que réelle.

⁷⁹ T. Teoteoi, « Clișee bizantine... », p. 380-381.

⁸⁰ Ducas, *Istoria turco-bizantină, 1341-1462*, éd. V. Grecu, Bucarest, 1958, VI, 1, p. 46, l. 26.

THE SOVEREIGN'S DREAM AS HISTORICAL PARABLE IN THE BYZANTINE WORLD CHRONICLES FROM THE ROMANIAN PRINCIPALITIES (16th-17th C.)

Andrei Prohin

The present paper is dedicated to a series of marvellous episodes from the Byzantine world chronicles (sometimes called *chronographs* – in Romanian *cronograf* – from the Greek word *χρονογραφία*) that circulated in the Romanian Principalities for several centuries through Slavonic translations. These chronicles contained information from several fields (history, theology, philosophy, geography) and were a favourite reading for a large public due to their accessible style and their entertaining stories.¹ The Slavonic translations of Byzantine chronicles also provided historiographic models for several Romanian chroniclers from the 16th–17th centuries (Macarie, Azarie, Mihail Moxa, etc.) and helped them to integrate the history of Romanians in that of the world.² The study of Byzantine chronicles enables us, therefore, to reconstruct a significant part of the knowledge and historical thought shared by the Romanian scholars of the time and by other people that had access to their content, by means of reading or listening.

Dreams as subject of historical study

A frequently encountered episode in the Byzantine chronicles, as well as in other literary genres, is the sovereign's prophetic dream. This kind of dream, according to chroniclers, often foretold crucial events for an emperor – his birth, the ascension to throne, the end of an important battle or the emperor's death. Dreams, as a cultural phenomenon, have become a subject of long-time research for several Byzantinists, such as Steven M. Oberhelman,³ George Calofonos,⁴

¹ D. Mihăescu, *Cronografele românești*, Bucharest, 2006, p. 15.

² D. H. Mazilu, *Studii de literatură română veche*, Bucharest, 2005, p. 307, 313-314.

³ S. M. Oberhelman, "Dreams and dream visions", in A. P. Kazhdan (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, New York, 1991, vol. 1, p. 661; idem, "How Popular Were the Byzantine Dreambooks? Divination and Byzantine Dreamers", in P. Magdalino and A. Timotin (eds.), *Savoirs prédictifs et techniques divinatoires de l'Antiquité tardive à Byzance*, Seyssel, 2019, p. 401-433.

Christine Angelidi,⁵ and others. The subject of medieval dream accounts was also touched upon by several Romanian mediaevalists: Matei Cazacu,⁶ Alexandru-Florin Platon,⁷ and Maria Magdalena Székely.⁸ An extensive investigation of prophetic dreams and other kinds of prophecies was undertaken by Andrei Timotin in *Visions, prophéties et pouvoir à Byzance*.⁹ The author examines an impressive number of Greek sources, showing that prophetic visions and dreams were invested with various significances and functions, which is a proof of their importance in the Byzantine society. These divine revelations could announce the close birth or death, could offer spiritual guidance, correct behaviours, heal or transmit revelations about the otherworld etc.¹⁰ Dreams often played an important role in political disputes, being used either as instruments to criticize a sovereign or as means to legitimise his power.¹¹ Timotin also remarks that all kinds of prophecies “serve as a literary device to convey messages having a philosophic and religious content”.¹² He examines the significance of prophetic dreams within the social and political environment where the accounts about them emerged. In our paper, we shall consider Byzantine dream narratives in another historical context, hundreds of years after their emergence, during the 16th–17th centuries, when many of them were copied, translated, and read by Romanian scholars. Our aim is to analyse prophetic dreams as samples of medieval historical thought and understand what they could have meant for the readers from Moldova and Wallachia.

⁴ G. T. Calofonos, “Dream Interpretation: A Byzantinist superstition?”, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 9, 1984-1985, p. 215-220; idem, “Dream narratives in historical writing. Making sense of history in Theophanes’ *Chronographia*”, in R. Macrides (ed.), *History as Literature in Byzantium*, Farnham, 2010, p. 133-144.

⁵ Chr. Angelidi, “The Writing of Dreams: A Note on Psellos’ Funeral Oration for his Mother”, in C. Barber and D. Jenkins (eds.), *Reading Michael Psellos*, Leiden – Boston, 2006, p. 153-168. Chr. Angelidi and G. T. Calofonos (eds.), *Dreaming in Byzantium and Beyond*, Farnham, 2014. Chr. Angelidi, “The Dreams of a Woman: An Episode from the *Life of Andrew the Fool*”, in Th. Antonopoulou, S. Kotzabassi, and M. Loukaki (eds.), *Myriobiblos. Essays on Byzantine Literature and Culture*, Boston – Berlin – Munich, 2015, p. 25-38.

⁶ M. Cazacu, *Minuni, vedenii și vise premonitorii în trecutul românesc*, Bucharest, 2003.

⁷ Al.-Fl. Platon, *Societate și mentalități în Europa medievală*, Iași, 2000, p. 140-153.

⁸ M. M. Székely, “Cuvântul pentru zidirea Sfintei Mănăstiri Pângărași și figura ctitorului ideal în Moldova secolelor XV-XVI”, *Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie* 31, 2013, p. 275-298.

⁹ A. Timotin, *Visions, prophéties et pouvoir à Byzance. Étude sur l’hagiographie méso-byzantine (IX^e-XI^e siècles)*, Paris, 2010.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 284. The translation of quotations from non-English texts, in this case and further, belongs to us.

An overview of historical sources

The Slavonic manuscripts copied by medieval scholars from the Romanian Principalities – or brought from other regions and preserved in monastic libraries – contain various genres of Byzantine literature, world chronicles among them. In the 15th–early 17th centuries, these chronicles circulated through translations made by South-Slavonic scholars, which were copied in manuscripts from the Romanian area. The late linguist and editor Gheorghe Mihăilă, in several of his publications, listed five such chronicles attested in Slavonic-Romanian manuscripts: the *Brief Chronographikon* of Patriarch Nikephoros; the *Chronicle* of George Hamartolos; the abridged version (called *Paralipomenon*) of the *Historical Epitome* of John Zonaras; the *Chronicle* of Symeon Magister and the Logothete, and the *Chronicle* of Constantine Manasses.¹³ We shall supplement the information regarding some manuscripts of these chronicles with data found in several recent investigations, which were available to us. Thus, we shall argue the relevance of each chronicle for our study.

With the exception of Patriarch Nikephoros' *Brief Chronographikon*, all the aforementioned world chronicles contain accounts of dreams seen by different sovereigns. The *Chronicle* of Hamartolos, as Mihăilă indicated, is preserved in three Slavic manuscripts from the Library of the Romanian Academy, Bucharest (BAR), Mss. Slav. 320, 321, and 330. In Mihăilă's above-cited publications, the dating of some manuscripts does not always coincide, but the scientist indicated definitively that they were copied in Wallachia.¹⁴ According to one of his last publications (a catalogue of Slavic manuscripts from BAR, revised by Mihăilă), all three manuscripts date from the 15th century.¹⁵ In another catalogue of Slavic manuscripts from Romania, the dating and origin of the same manuscripts differ: BAR Ms. Slav. 320 dates from the second half of the 14th c., hypothetically of Serbian origin; BAR Ms. Slav. 321, late 15th c., supposedly from Serbia; BAR Ms. Slav. 330 consists of two parts – the first one was written in late 15th c., in Wallachia, while the second part, which includes Hamartolos' *Chronicle*, dates from the 17th c. and comes from Russia.¹⁶ In a short article, the Slavist Maya Petrova reconsidered BAR Ms. Slav. 321. She

¹³ G. Mihăilă, "Istoriografia românească veche (sec. al XV-lea – începutul sec. al XVII-lea) în raport cu istoriografia bizantină și slavă", in G. Mihăilă, *Contribuții la istoria culturii și literaturii române vechi*, Bucharest, 1972, p. 106-114; idem, "Cronica universală a lui Mihail Moxa și izvoarele sale", in M. Moxa, *Cronica universală*, ed. by G. Mihăilă, Bucharest, 1989, p. 8-21.

¹⁴ G. Mihăilă, "Istoriografia românească veche...", p. 110-111; idem, "Cronica universală a lui Mihail Moxa...", p. 9, 11.

¹⁵ P. P. Panaitescu, *Catalogul manuscriselor slavo-române și slave din Biblioteca Academiei Române*, ed. by D.-L. Aramă, revised by G. Mihăilă, vol. II, Bucharest, 2003, p. 83-84, 102.

¹⁶ I. R. Mircea, *Répertoire des manuscrits slaves en Roumanie. Auteurs byzantins et slaves*, revised by P. Bojčeva and Sv. Todorova, Sofia, 2005, p. 233-234.

argues that it contains not the *Chronicle* of Hamartolos, but a version – which she supposes to be the complete one – of Zonaras' *Chronicle*.¹⁷ According to the investigations of the Serbian experts cited by Petrova, the manuscript was written in the last decade of the 14th century.¹⁸ The scientist also points to the existence of “marginal notes and glosses (either of a later date or contemporary to the main text), traces of which survive on different folia”,¹⁹ which could shed more light on the history of the manuscript and of the translation. Because of the poor state of conservation of the manuscript, these notes are still not deciphered. We have not yet found a detailed study on BAR Ms. Slav. 321, as well as on the other two (Mss. Slav. 320 and 330), that would shed more light on their place in space and time.

Along with the three manuscripts from BAR, the *Chronicle* of George Hamartolos was mentioned in two Moldavian manuscripts from the 15th c., preserved in the Library of the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church (Mss. III 26 and III 22).²⁰ Unfortunately, we do not know additional data about these manuscripts.

Another copy of Hamartolos is mentioned in Ms. 921 (fund 178 “Museum Collection”) from the Russian State Library (Moscow).²¹ The late researcher Valentina Pelin, who studied the manuscript *de visu*, considered that it was written in Moldova, in the early 16th century. On the last page, a note mentions the clerk Teodor Tehai who lived in 1627, during the reign of Miron Barnovschi (1626-1629, 1633).²² It could be a proof that the manuscript, at that time, was on Moldovan territory. In his turn, the reputed Slavist Anatoly Turilov expressed the opinion that the origin of Ms. 921 needs to be established more accurately.²³ In a more recent article, Turilov mentions that Ms. 921 dates from the second quarter of the 16th c.; perhaps it originates from Moldova (or, less probably, from Wallachia).²⁴ Other than these brief indications, we have not yet found a more detailed analysis of Ms. 921.

¹⁷ M. Petrova, “Hamartolos or Zonaras: Searching for the Author of a Chronicle in a Fourteenth-century Slavic Manuscript (MS. Slav. 321 from the Library of the Romanian Academy of Sciences)”, *Scripta & e-Scripta* 8-9, 2010, p. 414.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 405 and n. 3.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 414.

²⁰ I. R. Mircea, *Répertoire des manuscrits...*, p. 236, nos. 145 and 146.

²¹ V. Pelin, *Manuscrise românești din secolele XIII-XIX în colecții străine (Rusia, Ucraina, Bielorusia)*. Catalog, ed. by A. Eșanu, V. Eșanu, and V. Cosovan, Chișinău, 2017, p. 180-181, no. 159.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 181.

²³ A. A. Turilov, “Критерии определения славяно-молдавских рукописей XV-XVI вв.”, in *Slavia Cyrillomethodiana. Источниковедение истории и культуры южных славян и Древней Руси. Межславянские культурные связи эпохи средневековья*, Moscow, 2010, p. 424, n. 22.

²⁴ Idem, “Георгий Амартол. Славяно-русские переводы”, *Православная энциклопедия* 11, p. 48-56, available at <http://www.pravenc.ru/text/164333.html> (last accessed 24.01.2021).

To sum up the opinions of the cited authors, it is obvious that the versions and the circulation of the Slavonic translations of Hamartolos in the Romanian Principalities lack an updated study. Otherwise, it is impossible to assess the significances of each manuscript of the chronicle in a concrete historical context. Beside the information about the dating and origin of each manuscript, it is also important to know the owners of manuscripts and the possible literary echoes of the *Chronicle* of Hamartolos in the Romanian culture. Even if some copies of the chronicle were written outside the Romanian area, they could have reached Romanian scholars during the Middle Ages. Such is the case, for instance, of BAR Ms. Slav. 320, which once had (on the now-lost front and back cover) three notes containing Romanian names of persons and places. One of these notes, dating from the 17th c. (according to the Slavist A. I. Yatzimirsky), mentions that the book belonged to the Bistrița Monastery (Wallachia).²⁵ This monastery, endowed with a scriptorium and a library, was an important cultural centre during the Middle Ages.²⁶ It is admitted that at Bistrița, in the early 17th c., the monk Mihail Moxa wrote the first world chronicle in Romanian,²⁷ taking inspiration from Byzantine and South-Slavic chronicles. Mihăilă, the editor of Moxa's chronicle, does not mention passages borrowed from Hamartolos. Nevertheless, he explains that the name "Moxa" (a unique one in the Romanian culture) comes from the Greek νοξάλια. Its synonym is ἀμαρτία, from which, hundreds of years before, the second name of the Byzantine chronicler George Hamartolos was derived.²⁸ Maybe the coincidence of the meaning of these two names simply reflects a common practice of medieval monks to show humbleness by assuming depreciatory epithets. On the other hand, it may very well be that Mihail Moxa had read or at least had knowledge about the *Chronicle* of George Hamartolos, from the library of the Bistrița Monastery, and had decided to imitate his Byzantine forerunner.

The abridged version (called *Paralipomenon*) of the *Chronicle* of John Zonaras, according to the information used by Mihăilă, is comprised in Ms. 81 (9) from the Krušedol Monastery (Serbia). Following old descriptions, the Romanian linguist concluded that the manuscript is "at least, partially, Slavonic-Romanian" and that it dates from late 15th–early 16th c.²⁹ From a more recent Romanian edition, we learn that this manuscript is preserved nowadays in the Museum of the Serbian Orthodox Church (Belgrade). Bearing the number 42, it dates from the second half of the 15th c. and was written in Wallachia and Srem.

²⁵ P. P. Panaitescu, *Catalogul manuscriselor slavo-române...*, vol. 2, p. 84.

²⁶ G. Mihăilă, "Cronica universală a lui Mihail Moxa...", p. 33.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 32, 35.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 37-38.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

Ms. 42 contains “the *Palaea*, Zonaras’ *Chronicle* and patristic texts”.³⁰ Several Serbian experts date the manuscript earlier, in the second quarter of the 15th c.³¹ We do not know additional data regarding its possible Romanian origin.

Mihăilă also indicated other witnesses for the circulation of the *Paralipomenon* in the Romanian Principalities. A part of the text is interpolated into and continues (by exposing the events from Byzantium between 948-1067) the Slavonic version of the *Chronicle* of Symeon the Logothete, which was copied in Moldova, in a manuscript from 1637.³² The manuscript is preserved nowadays in the Russian National Library (Sankt Petersburg), fund 550 (Basic Collection of Manuscript Books), under no. F.IV.307.³³ We may suppose that either the copyist used a separate manuscript with Zonaras’ *Paralipomenon* to interpolate and continue Symeon the Logothete’s work, or the passages from Zonaras were already present in the manuscript that served as basis for the Moldavian copy of the *Chronicle* of Symeon the Logothete.

A Moldavian manuscript from 1504, containing the “Chronicle of John Zonaras and hagiographic texts”, is preserved nowadays in the Russian State Library from Moscow.³⁴ From the edition of the chronicle, we learn that it is the abridged version of Zonaras’ chronicle, the *Paralipomenon*.³⁵ The editor, regretfully, mentions nothing about the Moldavian origin of this manuscript.

A fragment from Zonaras, concerning “The capture of Jerusalem by the Assyrians”, was signalled in a 15th manuscript from the Neamț Monastery (Moldova), which is now lost.³⁶ Mihăilă identified several passages from Zonaras’ *Paralipomenon* and from the *Chronicle* of Symeon the Logothete, as well as from other sources, that were abridged and translated in Romanian, in Mihail Moxa’s above-mentioned *World Chronicle* (whose oldest copy dates from 1620). This means that Moxa worked with a manuscript of Zonaras’ *Paralipomenon* and another manuscript of the *Chronicle* of Symeon the Logothete. The translation of Moxa is also a valuable witness to how a Romanian monk from the early 17th c. read and understood Byzantine world chronicles (particularly dream accounts).

³⁰ V. Cădea, *Mărturii românești peste hotare*, serie nouă, ed. by I. Feodorov and A. Timotin, vol. 5, Bucharest – Brăila, 2014, p. 22.

³¹ M. Petrova, “Hamartolos or Zonaras...”, p. 413.

³² G. Mihăilă, “Cronica universală a lui Mihail Moxa...”, p. 13-14.

³³ A. D. Paskal and J. L. Levshina, “Славянские рукописи молдавского и валахского происхождения XV-XVII столетий в собраниях РНБ”, in *Византия – Балканы – Русь. Перекрестки культурных путей. Материалы международной научной конференции «Одиннадцатые Загребинские чтения» (4-5 октября 2016)*, St. Petersburg, 2017, p. 87.

³⁴ V. Cădea, *Mărturii românești peste hotare. Serie nouă*, ed. by I. Feodorov and A. Timotin, vol. 4, Bucharest – Brăila, 2012, p. 206, no. 478.

³⁵ O. V. Tvorogov, “Паралипомен Зонары: текст и комментарий”, in O. L. Novikova (ed.), *Летописи и хроники. Новые исследования. 2009-2010*, St. Petersburg, 2010, p. 3-101.

³⁶ G. Mihăilă, “Cronica universală a lui Mihail Moxa...”, p. 14.

A copy of the *Chronicle* of Constantine Manasses, translated into Slavonic, is preserved in BAR Ms. Slav. 649. According to the most recent assessments (known to us), the manuscript was written in Moldova, in the second half of the 16th c.³⁷ Although a single Slavonic-Romanian manuscript of this Byzantine chronicle is known, several researchers have hypothesised that more copies of it existed in the past. This is suggested by the fact that the Moldavian chroniclers Macarie (d. 1558) and Azarie (mid-16th c.) used it, borrowing words and expressions for their works, possibly as a result of their having access to a copy of the chronicle).³⁸

A neo-Hellenic rework of Manasses, extending the narration until the end of the 16th c., was copied in 1590, at the request of the Moldovan prince Petru Șchiopul, and then printed under the name of Dorotheos of Monemvasia (Venice, 1631).³⁹ In the early 17th c., probably in the Bistrița Monastery (Wallachia), Mihail Moxa translated and abridged a large part of Manasses' *Chronicle*, which became the main source for his *World Chronicle*.⁴⁰ The researcher Margareta Ștefănescu argued that echoes of the Slavonic translation of Manasses can be found in some Romanian translations of *Alexander's Romance* and the *Story of Troy*.⁴¹ The Wallachian chronicler Radu Popescu included several fragments from Manasses' *Chronicle* in his work *The Histories of Princes of Wallachia*.⁴² They suppose that the Moldavian scholar Nicolae Costin (ca. 1660-1712) made use of it too for his *Chronicle of the Moldavian Principality from the creation of the world until 1601*.⁴³ Constantine Manasses, along with "Metaphrastes" and "Zonaras", are mentioned among the authors studied by Dimitrie Cantemir (1673-1723) for his work *Chronicle of the Antiquity of the Romano-Moldavo-Wallachians*, written in Russia.⁴⁴ One of his sons, Antioch Cantemir, living in Moscow, translated Manasses' *Chronicle* from Latin into Russian, with additions and adjustments after the Greek text, in 1725.⁴⁵ The cited witnesses prove that several Romanian scholars held this Byzantine world chronicle in high esteem, making use of it as a source of

³⁷ P. P. Panaitescu and Z. Mihail, *Catalogul manuscriselor slavo-române și slave din Biblioteca Academiei Române*, vol. 3, first part, ed. by Z. Mihail, Bucharest, 2018, p. 64, 68.

³⁸ D. Mihăescu, *Cronografele românești*, p. 49, n. 101.

³⁹ G. Mihăilă, "Cronica universală a lui Mihail Moxa...", p. 32.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁴¹ M. Ștefănescu, "Influența traducerii medio-bulgare a Cronicei lui Manasses asupra literaturii româno-slave și române vechi", *Arhiva. Organul Societății istorico-filologice din Iași* 3-4, 1927, p. 176-186.

⁴² P. Cernovodeanu, "Préoccupations en matière d'histoire universelle dans l'historiographie roumaine aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles (I)", *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire* 9.4, 1970, p. 682.

⁴³ D. H. Mazilu, *Studii de literatură română...*, p. 307.

⁴⁴ D. Cantemir, *Opere. Hronicul vechimei a romano-moldo-vlahilor*, ed. by S. Toma, Chișinău, 2016, p. 106-107, 410, 415.

⁴⁵ *Dinastia Cantemireștilor. Secolele XVII-XVIII*, coord. by A. Eșanu, Chișinău, 2008, p. 499.

historical information and a stylistic model. The Slavonic translation of Manasses was also one of the main sources of the *Russian Chronography* and inspired several Russian historical writings from the 16th–17th c.⁴⁶ Thus, the Romanian scholars belong to a wider geographical area where the *Chronicle* of Constantine Manasses was read and inspired other historical writings.

A chronograph was signalled in a Slavonic manuscript from 1384-1385, conserved in the Library of the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church.⁴⁷ In the same library, there is a Slavonic copy from 1459 of Georgios Kedrenos' *Chronograph*.⁴⁸ We do not know any other information concerning the origin, content and circulation of these manuscripts in the Romanian Principalities.

Taking the available information about the circulation of the Byzantine world chronicles in the Romanian area into consideration, our investigation will be based on the *Chronicle* of Constantine Manasses. It is a work rich in accounts of prophetic dreams and we have the numerous witnesses about its reception in Romanian society. We shall also mention the presence of the same episodes in the chronicles of Symeon the Logothete (the edition of the Moldavian manuscript from 1637), George Hamartolos (using BAR Mss. Slav. 320 and 330) and John Zonaras (using BAR Ms. Slav. 321). In fact, these three Byzantine chronicles (written in Greek) were among the sources used by Manasses.⁴⁹ The existence of similar episodes in several chronicles bears witness to how widespread accounts about the sovereigns' dreams were in the Romanian medieval society. In turn, the *World Chronicle* of Mihail Moxa, in Romanian, is an important source that mirrors the reception of dream narratives from the Byzantine world chronicles.

Prophetic dreams and historical laws in Manasses' *Chronicle*

The *Chronicle* of Manasses was conceived as a sequence of distinct episodes, each of them being a short story with its own introduction and end.⁵⁰ Constantine Manasses borrowed the subjects of the stories from several ancient and medieval authors, exposing them in verse. He often comments different episodes, emphasizing general truths that manifest themselves through history. Prophetic dreams illustrate this kind of short stories that enable the reader to

⁴⁶ *Словарь книжников и книжности Древней Руси*, ed. by D. S. Likhachov, issue 2 (second half of the XIV-XVI c.), part 2, Leningrad, 1989, p. 495.

⁴⁷ *Manuscrise din Biblioteca Sfântului Sinod al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, coord. by Archim. P. Chițulescu, Bucharest, 2008, p. 16.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁴⁹ V. Y. Zharkaya, "Константин Манасси", in *Православная энциклопедия*, vol. 37, Moscow, 2015, p. 99.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

discover the laws of human history. Most dreams foreshadow unfortunate events for a sovereign – death, loss of power or defeat in war. It is the case of dreams that foretold the replacement of the kingdom of Medes with the Persian Empire; the fall of Troy; the assassination of Julius Caesar; the death of Domitian and Anastasius I Dicorus. The author presents these omens as fatal scenarios, despite the attempts of sovereigns to ward them off. Manasses sometimes explains why the foretold events could not be avoided: “but the fabric of the good fortune (праща добра части) was uncut and what has once been foretold could not perish”,⁵¹ “but undefeated is the power of God’s Providence (божия промысла), no mortal can prove it inactive”.⁵² In his translation of Manasses’ commentary to the Trojan war, Mihail Moxa skips the images inspired from the Greek mythology (“the fabric of the good fortune”), but maintains the belief that historic events follow a scenario that cannot be avoided. His abridged translation from Manasses is short and resembles a folk proverb: “what should be, cannot be overpassed (*ce iaste să fie, nu se poate trece*)”.⁵³

This kind of assertion, along with the prophetic dreams presented as their proof, reinforces the readers’ belief in a supreme power (alternatively named “fortune” or “God’s Providence”) that decides beforehand the course of events. The attempts of some sovereigns to challenge this power by avoiding the prophecy are presented as crimes (e.g., Astyages and Priam got rid of their newborn babies,⁵⁴ Cambyses organized a plot to kill Smerdis,⁵⁵ Zenon ordered the murder of several “honoured and glorified” senators).⁵⁶ In several episodes, Manasses does not state the reason why this supreme power decided an evil end for the sovereign. However, in other passages, he says that human life consists both of fortunate and unfortunate events, and human happiness is unstable,⁵⁷ or, in his own words, “the wheel of fortune (именити коло) rolls up and down”.⁵⁸

There are still a few examples where Manasses suggests that the emperor’s death, as predicted in a dream, was a form of punishment for his evil character and deeds. Thus, it is said that emperor Anastasius Dicorus (491-518) dreamt of “a fearful man (мужа страшна)” who announced to him that because God “hates the wickedness of your life and the mean habits, by thus cutting, has cut the course of your life and has taken 14 years thereof”.⁵⁹ One

⁵¹ *Cronica lui Constantin Manasses*, ed. by D. Ristin and I. Bogdan, Bucharest, 2015, p. 17 (Romanian translation), 144 (Slavonic text).

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 52 (Romanian translation), 219 (Slavonic text).

⁵³ M. Moxa, *Cronica universală*, p. 115.

⁵⁴ *Cronica lui Constantin Manasses*, p. 11-12, 17, 22.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 13-14.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 48, 58.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 97 (Romanian translation), 315 (Slavonic text).

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 53 (Romanian translation), 220 (Slavonic text).

reads the same account in the Slavonic translations of the chronicles of Symeon the Logothete,⁶⁰ in Zonaras' *Chronicle*⁶¹ and in the *World Chronicle* of Mihail Moxa.⁶² Another episode, narrated briefly by Manasses,⁶³ but with more details in the complete version of Zonaras' *Chronicle*,⁶⁴ in Symeon the Logothete and Moxa,⁶⁵ concerns Emperor Maurice (582-602). Symeon the Logothete narrates that the emperor prayed to God "to be delivered from that sin" (i.e., for not paying ransom for the 12,000 prisoners taken and ultimately executed by the Avar khan) during his earthly life, not at the Last Judgement. Consequently, Maurice had a dream in which he heard "a divine voice" from an icon of Christ, who "ordered to yield himself and his wife and his children and all his relatives to the warrior Phocas".⁶⁶

In a similar prophetic dream, according to Hamartolos⁶⁷ and Zonaras' *Paralipomenon*,⁶⁸ Emperor Leo V the Armenian (813-820) was sentenced to death for his iconoclast actions. The cited authors do not draw conclusions from these examples of divine punishment, but this fact notwithstanding, it is clear from the Christian worldview that after each sin follows a punishment that one experiences already in earthly life. In the case of the above-mentioned emperors, the divine punishment consists in a premature death (through murder or an unfortunate event), thus illustrating the Apostle Paul's words in a literal manner: "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). This spiritual truth – one may conclude from the above-mentioned episodes – also applies to earthly realities. For instance, at the end of the *Story of Troy*⁶⁹ (included in some manuscripts of the Slavonic translation of Manasses), one reads the following conclusion, a real historical law: "the righteous God loves righteousness and cleans the paths from wicked ones and with His arm opposes to proud ones. But those that walk righteously He rewards and does not leave destitute of His mercy".⁷⁰

Several passages from Mihail Moxa's *World Chronicle* bear witness to the fact that the monk understood some prophetic dreams as examples of

⁶⁰ Симеона Метафраста и Логофета Списание мира от бытия и летоуник собран от различных летописецъ. Славянский перевод хроники Симеона Логофета с дополнениями, ed. by V. I. Sreznevsky, St. Petersburg, 1905, p. 54.

⁶¹ BAR, Ms. Slav. 321, f. 228^v.

⁶² M. Moxa, *Cronica universală*, p. 150.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 285 (= BAR Ms. Slav. 649, f. 175^v).

⁶⁴ BAR, Ms. Slav. 321, f. 232^v.

⁶⁵ M. Moxa, *Cronica universală*, p. 157.

⁶⁶ Симеона Метафраста и Логофета Списание мира..., p. 63.

⁶⁷ BAR, Ms. Slav. 320, f. 149^f.

⁶⁸ O. V. Tvorogov, "Паралипомен Зонары...", p. 85.

⁶⁹ Scientists suppose that the *Story of Troy* (a conventional title) was created in the 13th c., in Bosnia or northern Dalmatia. It is based on an unknown Western work, in Latin or in a Romanic language (*Старобългарска литература. Енциклопедичен речник*, coord. by D. Petkanova, 2nd ed., Veliko Tărnovo, 2003, p. 519, 551).

⁷⁰ *Cronica lui Constantin Manasses*, p. 31.

punishment for sin. Thus, when translating the episode about the prophetic dream seen by Maurice, Moxa leaves out some details. On the other hand, he emphasizes that it was a punishment for the emperor's sin. In the version narrated by Symeon the Logothete, the Saviour asks Maurice: "where do you want to yield yourself (да ѿдам ти), here or in the future age?"⁷¹ The expression "to yield yourself" does not render clear enough Maurice's fate. John Zonaras is more explicit in this case: "where do you want to suffer (мѹчитѣ се) for the sin you have committed in regard of your neighbours, in this age or in the future one?"⁷² Moxa formulates this question in indirect speech: "he [Maurice] was asked to choose between two punishments (*muncă*), here or an endless one".⁷³ Most probably, Moxa followed Zonaras' account, where the verb "to suffer" is used. We may also suppose that the Wallachian monk was thinking about "the torments of hell (*muncile iadului*)", a common expression in Church literature, because he specified that these punishments are eternal.

Symeon the Logothete says further that Christ ordered that Maurice and his entire kin "yielded [...] to the warrior Phocas".⁷⁴ Zonaras has a similar expression: "yield him with his kin to the warrior Phocas".⁷⁵ Moxa uses a verb that suggests more clearly the idea of punishment for sin: "And a voice said: 'Yield him that Phocas may punish him (*să-l muncescă*)'".⁷⁶ Through the vocabulary he uses, Moxa underlines that after the emperor's sin followed a harsh divine punishment. In fact, the Lord showed mercy towards Maurice, allowing him to receive the punishment in his earthly life, lasting a limited time span, and not in the afterlife, where the punishment would be eternal. However, Mihail Moxa skipped the sentences that mention Maurice's remorse.

Another example of the reception of a prophetic revelation is the dream that foretold the death of the Roman emperor Domitian (81-96). According to Constantine Manasses, before his death, Domitian saw in a dream that he was riding an imperial horse and wore weapons. Then the weapons suddenly fell in a ditch; the emperor, together with his horse and clothes, also fell in a pit and thus died.⁷⁷ Mihail Moxa did not include this dream in his chronicle. However, in the end of the chapter dedicated to Domitian, he concludes thus: "wicked he was, wicked was his end".⁷⁸ Moxa does not mention how Domitian died. Neither Symeon the Logothete, nor Zonaras' *Paralipomenon* give details about his death. Mihail Moxa, we suppose,

⁷¹ Симеона Метафраста и Логофета Списание мира..., p. 63.

⁷² BAR, Ms. Slav. 321, f. 232^v.

⁷³ M. Moxa, *Cronica universală*, p. 157.

⁷⁴ Симеона Метафраста и Логофета Списание мира..., p. 63.

⁷⁵ BAR, Ms. Slav. 321, f. 232^v.

⁷⁶ M. Moxa, *Cronica universală*, p. 157.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 258 (= BAR, Ms. Slav. 649, f. 148^r).

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

concluded from the dream narrated by Manasses that the Roman emperor had had a bad end. Moxa placed this conclusion after the negative account of Domitian's reign. He felt perhaps the need to stress that the evil character and deeds of Domitian had led to a bad end, like a punishment (although there is no clear reference to punishment or divine intervention). The formulation of the conclusion contains a syntactical parallelism, "wicked he was, wicked was his end (*rău fu, rău se sfârși*)", and thus resembles a folk proverb. Moxa's readers could receive this moral conclusion as a general truth that is valid for the entire history.

The *Chronicle* of Manasses contains also positive dreams that mirror the divine support for emperors who were predestined to hold the throne. These are the dreams that predicted the imperial power for Cyrus I, the founder of the Persian Empire, for Octavian Augustus (retold also by Symeon the Logothete⁷⁹ and Mihail Moxa⁸⁰) and Basil I the Macedonian (his story is found also in George Hamartolos,⁸¹ Symeon the Logothete,⁸² Zonaras' *Paralipomenon*⁸³ and Mihail Moxa⁸⁴). As for the two dreams of Olympias, mother of Alexander the Great, which predicted the exceptional career of her future son, one may find them in Zonaras' *Paralipomenon*.⁸⁵ The fulfilment of some dreams suggests that nothing could hinder the political rise of the already mentioned emperors – neither assassination attempts (in case of Cyrus I), nor poverty and low social origin (Basil I). One may conclude that the same divine force that overturned the reign of some sovereigns, at other times can support the rise of others. Referring to the omens that portended the reign of Marcianus (450-457), Constantine Manasses draws a timeless conclusion: "thus, even a heathen man has shame before the imperial [dignity] (цр(с)тва) that is protected by God and the wild [man] respects customs, regarding them with sympathy for men".⁸⁶ Translating this passage, Mihail Moxa shortens it and draws a conclusion that bears a closer relation to the episode about Marcian: "thus notice: whom God pities, even birds

⁷⁹ Симеона Метафраста и Логофета Списание мира..., p. 29.

⁸⁰ M. Moxa, *Cronica universală*, p. 125.

⁸¹ BAR, Ms. Slav. 320, f. 173^r and sq. (the reign of Basil I). While preparing the present article, we did not have access to this manuscript in order to indicate the exact folio where this episode is. We indicate instead the place of the same episode in another manuscript, which contains the same Slavonic translation of Hamartolos: *Летовникъ съкращень от различных летописъкъ же и поведателю. Избранъ и съставленъ от Георгия грешнаа инока*, third and final issue, St. Petersburg, 1881, f. 383^r (= Ms. 148, written in 1386, at Hilandar Monastery, Mount Athos, now in the Synodal Collection from the State Historical Museum, Moscow).

⁸² Симеона Метафраста и Логофета Списание мира..., p. 102.

⁸³ O. V. Tvorogov, "Паралипомен Зонары...", p. 27.

⁸⁴ M. Moxa, *Cronica universală*, p. 182-183.

⁸⁵ O. V. Tvorogov, "Паралипомен Зонары...", p. 75.

⁸⁶ M. Moxa, *Cronica universală*, p. 273 (= BAR, Ms. Slav. 649, f. 161^v).

serve and heathens honour".⁸⁷ Whereas Manasses referred to the majesty of the imperial dignity, Moxa turned it into a more general truth that concerns anyone who enjoys the Lord's protection.

Dreams as historical parables

The prophetic dreams of sovereigns and their relatives, in the *Chronicle* of Manasses, as well as in other aforementioned chronicles, are based on several ideas that explain the succession of historical events. One could summarize them as follows: there is a supreme force (Manasses calls it alternatively "fate" or "God") that can decide the historical scenario beforehand and this scenario cannot be avoided. This force punishes evil sovereigns through death and supports to gain power those monarchs that were predestined to gain it. Sometimes Manasses overtly expresses these ideas, at other times they are implied in historical episodes. Dream narratives serve as illustrations for historical views that underlie the entire chronicle.

With regards to Byzantine chronicles, the researcher George T. Calofonos notes that the prophetic dreams "have a tendency to acquire a life of their own within the larger narratives in which they are found".⁸⁸ In one of his studies, Paul Magdalino esteems dream narratives as samples of hagiography within Byzantine historical literature.⁸⁹ In order to determine their literary features in a more precise manner, we believe that premonitory dreams can represent *parables*, a literary form called in Slavonic **притѣча**. This term was used as equivalent for several Greek nouns (αἰνιγμα, ἀπόφθεγμα, μῦθος, παραβολή, παράδειγμα, παροιμία, πρόβλημα, πρόφασις), thus having multiple meanings. The Slavic term was used in different literary works to designate proverbs, Jesus' parables (in Gospels), other sayings, allegories, a story containing an allegory and its interpretation, a fable.⁹⁰ The late literary historian Donka Petkanova considered that all kind of parables render "a certain law of things from the physical world and from the spiritual one".⁹¹ Some authors admit that stories about the past (including excerpts from chronicles) and historical anecdotes can represent parables.⁹² An example for that could be the *Story of Troy* from some manuscripts of Manasses' *Chronicle* (in the Slavonic

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

⁸⁸ G. T. Calofonos, "Dream narratives...", p. 119.

⁸⁹ P. Magdalino, "The Historiography of Dreaming in Medieval Byzantium", in Chr. Angelidi and G. T. Calofonos (eds.), *Dreaming in Byzantium and Beyond*, Farnham, 2014, p. 127.

⁹⁰ D. Petkanova, "Притчата в средновековната литература", in *Славянска филология. Доклади и статии за VII Международен конгрес на славистите*, vol. 13: (*Литературознание*), Sofia, 1973, p. 291-296; *Старобългарска литература. Енциклопедичен речник*, p. 406-407.

⁹¹ D. Petkanova, "Притчата в средновековната литература", p. 297.

⁹² E. K. Romodanovskaia, "Специфика жанра притчи в древнерусской литературе", in *Проблемы исторической поэтики* 5, Petrozavodsk, 1998, p. 85.

translation). Its title contains the expression “parable about kings (о кралѣхъ прича)”.⁹³ When comparing prophetic dreams with parables, one may distinguish the following common traits: man is their main character, they feature a scene from life, both use brief descriptions, their composition and meaning is unitary, they convey a dogmatic or moral idea.

Medieval parables usually lack miracles or other fantastic elements.⁹⁴ The sovereigns’ dreams, on the contrary, are presented as supernatural revelations, as messages coming from the otherworld. The dream contains the defining features of a prophecy: it transmits the divine will to humans, conveys a knowledge that is inaccessible to mortals (like predicting future), and offers spiritual advice. Constantine Manasses emphasizes that dreams are divine revelations, and not physiological phenomena or a mere opinion about the future. The messengers that announce predictions in dream are the Saviour, a saint or “a fearful man”.⁹⁵ The predictions contain crucial events for human existence, namely those that depend only on the power of God – birth and death. Besides its individual content, each prophetic dream reminds the readers that their earthly life depends on a supreme force, on God, and that each man will answer before the Lord for his earthly deeds. This knowledge offers spiritual guidance to humans, motivating them to keep faithful to the Christian doctrine (expressed in the teachings of Eastern Church) and to live according to it. The spiritual content of dreams is also an argument for readers to take into consideration a dream account. Otherwise, in the Church literature, dreams were considered to be suspicious, the result of a biological process or a demonic work in order to deceive Christians.

Many scientists commend the *Chronicle* of Manasses rather for its literary value than for the historical information. “His merit”, wrote Prof. Ivan Duychev, “consists in the fact that he had gathered reliable sources, made a selection based on them and depicted several of the most interesting episodes of the past mainly from an artistic perspective”.⁹⁶ Several contemporary Byzantinists characterize the same chronicle as “interesting”, “entertaining”,⁹⁷ with “emphasis on romantic adventure”.⁹⁸ In our opinion, what seems to be merely “entertaining” (for instance, premonitory dreams) for modern readers could comprise a deep religious message which was clear for the medieval man.

⁹³ *Cronica lui Constantin Manasses*, p. 153.

⁹⁴ E. K. Romodanovskaya, “Специфика жанра притчи...”, p. 79.

⁹⁵ *Cronica lui Constantin Manasses*, p. 53 (Romanian translation), 220 (Slavonic text).

⁹⁶ I. Duychev, “Константин Манассия и его ‘Всемирная летопись’”, in I. Duychev and D. S. Likhachev (eds.), *Среднеболгарский перевод Хроники Константина Манассии в славянских литературах*, Sofia, 1988, p. 27.

⁹⁷ L. Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, Cambridge, 2018, p. 200-201.

⁹⁸ I. Nilsson and E. Nyström, “To compose, read, and use a Byzantine text: aspects of the *Chronicle* of Constantine Manasses”, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 33.1, 2009, p. 50.

Dmitry Likhachev considered that Constantin Manasses “was interested not in the historical, but in the instructive meaning of events”.⁹⁹ It is significant, from this perspective, that the author’s epithet in the title of the Slavonic translation is “the most wise and chronicler Manasses (Прѣмѣдраго Манаѣа и лѣтописца)”.¹⁰⁰ It is a hint that the Slavonic translators perceived his chronicle as a source of wisdom, one of the highest Christian values. This appraisal of Manasses’ work is notable already on Greek soil. In some manuscripts, the author bears the title “philosopher (τοῦ φιλοσόφου)”.¹⁰¹ The Greek copies of the chronicle have marginal notations that indicate proverbs or sayings from the text.¹⁰² There also circulated excerpts with sayings from the *Chronicle* of Manasses, “considered to be useful for many different occasions”.¹⁰³ Speaking about the authors used for his chronicle, Mihail Moxa notes: “some of the Holy Fathers wrote chronicles about some [things], others about other [things]”.¹⁰⁴ Among the “Holy Fathers”, he means of course Constantine Manasses, the main source for his chronicle. The Romanian monk thus places him among those Christian writers, whose works were accepted in the Church as sources of dogmatic and moral teachings.

World chronicles, dreams and their reception among Romanian scholars

The oldest Slavonic translation of Manasses’ *Chronicle* was preserved in the “Priest Philip’s miscellany”, a manuscript dating from 1344/1345, which was conceived as an encyclopaedia for the family of the Bulgarian Tsar Ivan Alexander (1331-1371).¹⁰⁵ Beside the world chronicle, the Priest Philip’s miscellany contains also several theological works and apocryphal apocalypses. The researcher Vasya Velinova (“Prof. Ivan Duichev” Center for Slavonic-Byzantine Studies, Sofia) considers that these different texts, “united by their thematic connection with the dogmatic and moral issues of the Christian religion”, could bear the title “Book about Belief” (according to the title of the first work from the manuscript).¹⁰⁶ The core texts of the miscellany were intended “to provide, in a short, condensed and accessible form, the most

⁹⁹ D. S. Likhachev, “Введение”, in *Среднеболгарский перевод...*, p. 9.

¹⁰⁰ M. Moxa, *Cronica universală*, p. 227 (= BAR, Ms. Slav. 649, f. 103^v).

¹⁰¹ I. Nilsson and E. Nyström, “To compose...”, p. 58. *Constantini Manassis Breviarium Chronicum*, ed. by O. Lampsidis, Pars Prior, Athens, 1996, p. 4 (apparatus).

¹⁰² I. Nilsson and E. Nyström, “To compose...”, p. 53.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

¹⁰⁴ M. Moxa, *Cronica universală*, p. 202-203.

¹⁰⁵ V. Velinova, *Среднобългарският превод на Хрониката на Константин Манасий и неговият литературен контекст*, Sofia, 2013, p. 109-111.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 90.

important information for a Christian”.¹⁰⁷ The author argues for the existence of a connection between Manasses’ *Chronicle* and other texts from the same miscellany. The theological works constituted “the dogmatic frame in which the chronicle should be interpreted”.¹⁰⁸ Being translated into Slavonic, the *Chronicle* of Manasses “was separated from the context of the Byzantine court culture and entered a new environment, deeply pervaded by religiosity and by the worldview of monasticism that evolved more actively”.¹⁰⁹ The chronicle “is reinterpreted as a sacred history and infiltrates within the frame of dogma and catechesis”.¹¹⁰ In fact, this change of perception is also valid for other Byzantine chronicles translated in Slavonic. Through Slavonic translations, says Boris Todorov, the historical narrative passed “from a primarily public, worldly sphere of life where knowledge of the past justifies and helps interpret decision-making and action into the sphere of the spiritual – the confines of the monastery where the reader has chosen to stay away from the world and engages in a life of contemplation”.¹¹¹ We may suppose henceforth that the compilers and many readers of the Byzantine world chronicles, translated into Slavonic, regarded dream narratives as episodes having religious and moral meanings. They could interpret dreams from the perspective of the Christian teaching.

Velinova argues that the Priest Philip’s miscellany, as a type of encyclopaedic work, enjoyed popularity in the Balkans. This fact is proved by the existence of other Slavic manuscripts that – more or less accurately – reproduce its structure and content. One of its closest copies is considered to be the *Tulcea Codex*,¹¹² that is, BAR, Ms. Slav. 649 (written in Moldova, in the second half of 16th c.), which contains the single surviving Slavonic-Romanian copy of Manasses’ *Chronicle*. One of its endnotes indicates that the manuscript belonged to archpriest Ursu from Iași. In 1710, the archpriest’s widow gave it to priest Gheorghii from Băiceni “as alms for eternity” for her entire family.¹¹³ The next note shows that the book had belonged to Mancio N. Djudjov (born between 1832-1835), a Bulgarian from the town of Panagyurishte; in 1861 it was bought by an unknown person from a Lippovan.¹¹⁴ From this disparate information we may conclude that the manuscript was in the library of at least two priests (Ursu from Iași and Gheorghii from Băiceni). They may have used it as a source of information on Christian doctrine, but also on world history and

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

¹¹¹ B. Todorov, “Monks and History: Byzantine Chronicles in Church Slavonic”, in K. L. Fresco and Ch. D. Wright (eds.), *Translating the Middle Ages*, Farnham, 2012, p. 148.

¹¹² V. Velinova, *Среднобългарският превод...*, p. 91.

¹¹³ P. P. Panaitescu and Z. Mihail, *Catalogul manuscriselor slavo-române...*, vol. 3, part 1, p. 67.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 67-68.

history of Moldova (it contains a copy of the *Anonymous Chronicle of Moldova*, exposing events from 1359-1506). We may also suppose that in the 17th century, some chroniclers consulted the historical works from this manuscript, seeing how Nicolae Costin (probably) and Dimitrie Cantemir knew the *Chronicle* of Manasses. The Romanian scholar Doru Mihăescu supposes (from the linguistic peculiarities of Moxa's *World Chronicle*) that the beginning or even the entire Manasses' *Chronicle* was first translated in Moldova, around the year 1600, and later copied by the Wallachian monk Mihail Moxa.¹¹⁵ One may legitimately assume that the *Tulcea Codex* could have served as a source for this translation.

The copyist of the *Chronicle* of Symeon the Logothete informs us, at the end of the manuscript, that it was Archbishop Anastasie Crimca (who held the metropolitan see of Moldova during 1608-1617, 1619-1629) who had begun this copy, "but he did not manage to finish it". The work was brought to end by the monk priest Iorest (hegumen of Dragomirna Monastery, founded by Crimca); the copy was written by priest Manoil from Suceava.¹¹⁶ We do not hold further information regarding the circulation and use of this manuscript. However, we may notice that the copy of the chronicle belongs to a range of twenty-two Slavonic manuscripts that were copied and decorated personally by Anastasie Crimca or at his command.¹¹⁷ These manuscripts represent biblical books used during the Church service (Psalters, Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, a Prologue), several liturgy books, homilies of Church Fathers, a copy of the *Syntagma* of Matthew Blastares, lives of saints. The Moldavian archbishop also showed interest in works with a historical content. He made a copy of Palladius' *Lavsaiicon*, offered to the Dragomirna Monastery a copy of the Acts of Apostles and a volume containing lives of saints.¹¹⁸ The *Chronicle* of Symeon the Logothete, we may suppose, mirrors his interest for works about the history of Christianity and of the Christian Church.

Anastasie Crimca was not the only high clergyman in the Romanian Principalities who was interested in world chronicles. Before him, in 16th century Moldova, Macarie, hegumen at the Neamț Monastery, later bishop of Roman, had consulted Manasses, as a stylistic model, for his own chronicle. The famous scholar, translator and poet Dosoftei (1624-1692), metropolitan of Moldova, translated the world chronicle of Matthaios Kigalas from Greek into Romanian.¹¹⁹ Some researchers presume that Dosoftei translated also a second

¹¹⁵ D. Mihăescu, *Cronografele românești*, p. 49.

¹¹⁶ Симеона Метаврста и Логофета Списание мира..., p. 186.

¹¹⁷ E. Turdeanu, "Le métropolitaine Anastase Crimca et son œuvre littéraire et artistique (1608-1629)", *Revue des études slaves* 29.1-4, 1952, p. 59-62.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

¹¹⁹ D. Mihăescu, "Scurtă privire asupra cronografelor românești", in P. Balmuș and V. Căndea (eds.), *Un veac de aur în Moldova (1643-1743). Contribuții la studiul culturii și literaturii române*

world chronicle (known as the *Danovici Chronography*) that combines the chronicle of Kigalas and the one attributed to Dorotheos of Monemvasia.¹²⁰ In Wallachia, Theophil, hegumen at the Bistrița Monastery, later bishop of Râmnic and metropolitan of Wallachia (1636-1648), prompted Mihail Moxa to compose a world chronicle in Romanian, using Byzantine chronicles, as well as other sources.¹²¹ The Wallachian Metropolitan Antim Ivireanul (cca. 1660-1716) exposed a brief history of the Old Testament (*Figures of the Old and New Testament or the Genealogic Tree of Jesus Christ*), with 503 portraits, using the Bible, along with chronographs, other historical and religious works.¹²² We can add, in the same context, that the supposedly Slavonic-Romanian copy of Zonaras' *Paralipomenon*, from the 15th century (MS. 42 from the Museum of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Belgrade) also belonged to a metropolitan – Maxim Branković, Metropolitan of Wallachia between 1505-1508.¹²³

The world chronicles hence drew the attention of several cultural personalities, famous for their efforts to promote books (through manuscripts or press) – Anastasie Crimca, Dosoftei, Theophil of Râmnic, Antim Ivireanul. Holding high positions in the Church, they had the possibility to support the copying and translation of such voluminous writings like world chronicles. On the other hand, they would not have initiated this work without their conviction about the importance of these chronicles for many Christians of their time. Metropolitans, bishops, hegumens, and other ranks of clergy surely needed information about the history of mankind, particularly of Christianity, in order to be able to answer different questions related to Christian religion. We cannot exclude that lay readers also needed information of this kind. Romanian princes could be interested in the fate of previous rulers (the researcher Boris Todorov esteems that Manasses' *Chronicle*, from BAR, Ms. Slav. 649, functioned as a "mirror of princes").¹²⁴ Their descendants and children of the boyar families could be educated using such Byzantine world chronicles, which were in fact real encyclopaedias.

The Romanian readers of Byzantine world chronicles – clergymen (first of all) and laymen – were surely familiar also with other kinds of literature (the Bible, lives of saints, popular romances, and apocrypha), which contained

vechi, Chișinău – Bucharest, 1996, p. 179-180. *Dicționarul literaturii române de la origini până la 1900*, 2nd ed., Chișinău, 2002, p. 306.

¹²⁰ D. Mihăescu, "Scurtă privire...", p. 181-183.

¹²¹ G. Mihăilă, *Cronica universală a lui Mihail Moxa*, p. 35.

¹²² *Dicționarul literaturii române...*, p. 45; M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, Chișinău, 1993, p. 221.

¹²³ G. Mihăilă, *Cronica universală a lui Mihail Moxa*, p. 13. More recent investigations argue that he was not Metropolitan of Wallachia, but only of Belgrade, being ordained by Moldovan bishops; see L. Pilat, "Mitropolitul Maxim Brancovici, Bogdan al III-lea și legăturile Moldovei cu Biserica sârbă", *Analele Putnei* 1, 2010, p. 229-238.

¹²⁴ B. A. Todorov, "Monks and History...", p. 153.

prophetic dreams and other kinds of divine revelations. The presence of several prophetic dreams in the Bible, particularly in the Gospels (e.g., the angel instructed Joseph in a dream to flee with the Holy Family to Egypt, and later to return to Palestine – Matthew 2:13, 19), supported the belief in premonitory dreams, and thus consolidated their acceptance in the Church. For readers familiar with Church literature, the dreams of sovereigns from the past were not just entertaining stories (as they appear to a modern reader). These dreams were probably received as divine messages addressed to humans that announced the future, exactly as the Almighty had planned it. Historians of the Romanian literature stress that world chronicles, due to the presence of revelations and other kinds of miracles, responded to the interests of common people.¹²⁵ We would like to emphasize that sermons of parish priests and other clergymen were likewise addressed to a mass audience. It was the duty of clergymen to present the religious ideas in an accessible and attractive way, so that Christian values may become a part of the consciousness and behaviour of more believers. The accounts about prophetic dreams and their fulfilment, having historical personalities as main characters, could be convincing examples of the powerful presence of God in the earthly world, an argument for obeying His commands.

The *World Chronicle* of Mihail Moxa bears witness to how a Romanian monk from early 17th century regarded sovereigns' dreams from Byzantine world chronicles. Researchers have proven that his chronicle is not a mere translation of Manasses, but a compilation of several sources, with abridgements and personal interventions.¹²⁶ Mihail Moxa retold many dreams of sovereigns, mentioned in the chronicles of Manasses, Symeon the Logothete and John Zonaras. He could have skipped these episodes – as he had done with other details from the Byzantine chronicles – but decided to keep them instead. This suggests that he considered it would be beneficial to know about them. The analysis of a few of Moxa's abridgements of dreams, in comparison with his sources, shows that he stressed the Christian elements of the accounts (such as the power of God and the punishment for sin). He also kept some conclusive reflections, but rendered them shorter, akin to folk proverbs. The treatment of dream narratives concords with the general trend of Moxa's chronicle. The Romanian Slavist Margareta Ștefănescu characterised it so: "[Moxa] reduces everything to its main idea, which he detaches from Manasses' periphrases, figures of speech or thought; he maintains in his whole narrative a religious note and a moral concern";¹²⁷ his chronicle is "the result of a work around some

¹²⁵ *Istoria literaturii române*, vol. 1, Bucharest, 1964, p. 355, 504. D. Mihăescu, *Cronografele românești*, p. 15.

¹²⁶ M. Ștefănescu, "Influența traducerii medio-bulgare...", p. 160, 174-176; *Istoria literaturii române*, vol. 1, p. 357.

¹²⁷ M. Ștefănescu, "Influența traducerii medio-bulgare...", p. 174.

dominating ideas and feeling: religiosity and morality”.¹²⁸ In our opinion, dream narratives offered many suggestions for the realms of religiosity and morality. Dreams were, in fact, short stories that announced, by means of a divine revelation, important facts in the life of an ancient or medieval sovereign. Akin to parables, they featured a spiritual truth: that one cannot avoid foretold events, that sin is unavoidably punished, that the career of a future sovereign is sometimes announced even before his birth. Prophetic dreams and their fulfilment offered a good occasion to insert reflections on certain laws that govern the life of individuals and peoples, especially about the intervention of the divine Providence. This intermingling of religious ideas and historical accounts, manifested in the dreams of sovereigns, illustrates a spiritual reading of history.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

ROMANIAN SPEAKING REGIONS

THE REIGN OF A DEFROCKED MONK. A LATE FIFTEENTH-CENTURY CASE STUDY IN THE WALLACHIAN POLITICAL LANGUAGE

Marian Coman

In the summer of 1482, a new lord ascended to the throne of Wallachia. Following the practice of the realm, he took a regnal name, calling himself Vlad, after his father. He reigned uninterruptedly for 13 years and he died peacefully, leaving the throne to his son. By 15th century Wallachian standards, this was an impressive achievement, given that a lord's reign-span was considerably shorter and usually ended in bloodshed. Typically, a lord reigned for a couple of years before being chased away by a rival, only to return a few years later for another round on the throne. The cycle continued until the day he was killed, either by one of his rivals or by his own subjects. This seemingly endless cycle of political violence and instability started in 1418, when Mircea, Vlad's grandfather, died on the throne after the longest and, arguably, the most remarkable reign in the history of medieval Wallachia. This was followed by a series of brief and intermittent reigns and endlessly contested successions. The cycle broke with Vlad's advent, as he and his son ruled Wallachia for 25 years and set a new course for the realm.

In the 15th century, Wallachia was a dynastic polity and by tradition any male descendent, whether legitimate or not, could, and often did, lay claim to the throne.¹ The competition within the same dynastic family, the Basarabs, intensified significantly throughout the 15th century, fuelled by the regional conflict between the Ottoman Empire and the Kingdom of Hungary.² A Basarab pretender had a longer list of potential protectors to choose from and many candidates took their chances and made a bid for the throne. The most desirable protectors were, obviously, the Hungarian Kings and the Ottoman Sultans, but some other local power brokers also joined in the game of Wallachian politics. Transylvanian Saxon cities had vital commercial stakes in Wallachia and they

¹ Șt. Andreescu, *Vlad Țepeș. Între legendă și adevăr istoric*, 3rd ed., Bucharest, 2015, p. 21-27.

² T. Pálosfalvi, *From Nicopolis to Mohács: A History of Ottoman-Hungarian Warfare, 1389-1526*, Leiden, 2018.

usually harboured a few pretenders, as leverage for getting better trade deals.³ The neighbouring Moldavian lords realized the advantage of having their own candidates, especially during Stephen the Great's reign (1457-1504) who made a habit of changing the Wallachian rulers.⁴ Last, but not least, the Ottoman warlords from the Danubian frontier, as the illustrious *gazi* family Mihaloğlu, barged in this convoluted political landscape.⁵

This was a recipe for disaster and nothing illustrates better the political volatility of the realm than modern scholars' debates on the precise number of lords that succeeded on the Wallachian throne throughout the 15th century. From Mircea's death (1418) to Vlad's ascent (1482), the estimate varies between 12 and 15.⁶ Most of these lords met a violent death and none of them managed to pass the throne to one of their sons. A pretender had to fight for decades for his father's throne, usually against his brothers, uncles, and cousins. Vlad followed the same path to power, as for more than two decades he led the adventurous life of a pretender. He conspired against the reigning lords, lived in exile, courted potential protectors, made generous promises, narrowly escaped an assassination attempt, and even took part in an armed invasion of Wallachia.⁷ Finally, after the rise and fall of two of his brothers and three of his cousins, Vlad saw his dream come true in 1482. One of the first diplomas issued by Vlad as lord of Wallachia was a gesture of gratification to a group of nobles that caught and killed his predecessor (a cousin of his, not that it mattered).⁸ It looked like the cycle of violence and instability was going to perpetuate itself. The number of pretenders was still legion, the Hungarian Kingdom and the Ottoman Empire continued to be locked in a struggle for regional supremacy and the Wallachian aristocracy was strongly divided along territorially-based clans. In spite of these rather gloomy premises, Vlad held on to the throne longer than anyone would have

³ R. Manolescu, *Comerțul Țării Românești și Moldovei cu Brașovul (secolele XIV-XVI)*, Bucharest, 1965; M. Pakucs-Willcocks, *Sibiu-Hermannstadt*, Cologne – Weimar, 2007.

⁴ Șt. S. Gorovei, M. M. Székely, *Princeps Omni Laude Maior. O istorie a lui Ștefan cel Mare*, Putna, 2005.

⁵ M. Kiprovskă, "The Mihaloğlu Family: Gazi Warriors and Patrons of Dervish Hospices", *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 32, 2008, p. 193-222; M. Kiprovskă, "Shaping the Ottoman Borderland: the Architectural Patronage of the Frontier Lords from the Mihaloğlu Family", in M. Baramova, G. Boykov, and I. Parvev (eds.), *Bordering Early Modern Europe*, Wiesbaden, 2015, p. 185-220.

⁶ A. Pippidi, "Despre Dan voievod. Rectificări cronologice și genealogice", *Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie* 31, 2013, p. 47-96; C. Rezachevici, *Cronologia critică a domnilor din Țara Românească și Moldova, I. Secolele XIV-XVI*, Bucharest, 2001.

⁷ The only monograph on Vlad the Monk is the insightful, though now antiquated, A. Lapedatu, *Vlad-Vodă Călugărul: 1482-1496: monografie istorică*, Bucharest, 1903.

⁸ I. Bogdan, *Documentele privitoare la relațiile Țării Românești cu Brașovul și cu Țara Ungurească în secolele XV și XVI*, Bucharest, 1905, no. 150, and *Documenta Romaniae Historica, B. Țara Românească* (hereafter DRH.B), vol. 1, ed. by P. P. Panaitescu and D. Mioc, Bucharest, 1966, no. 184. For a discussion, see M. Coman, *Putere și teritoriu. Țara Românească medievală (secolele XIV-XVI)*, Iași, 2013, p. 120-128.

expected. Taking into account the reign lengths of all 15th and 16th century Wallachian lords, Vlad comes only second, while his son, who followed him on the throne, is a close third.⁹

This remarkable achievement is even more surprising if one considers that Vlad had begun his quest for the throne under the most inauspicious circumstances. As the fourth son of a former lord of Wallachia, his chances to ascend to the throne were slim from the very beginning.¹⁰ This is probably why he initially renounced his birth right to the throne, either by his own will or by coercion, and he took the monastic vow. Pahomie, by his monastic name, was ordained to priesthood and even became abbot.¹¹ However, at some point in his life, Pahomie/Vlad¹² left the monastery, renounced his monastic vows and began his unlikely quest for power. There are copious examples of medieval rulers that stepped away from the transient earthly honours and devoted their lives to the eternal glory of God. The ruler-turned-monk was a widespread model both in Latin and Slavo-Byzantine Europe. His example was promoted by the Church, as it poignantly illustrated the superiority of the spiritual over the secular, but also by his descendants, as a holy monk was only second to a saint in boosting the prestige of a dynasty (and more than once a monk's cloak was the first step to sainthood for a former prince). In this respect, Pahomie/Vlad, the defrocked monk that became lord of Wallachia, might be aptly called an anti-model. He took the opposite course, as he left the spiritual life of the monastery and dived into the world of political struggle and violence; after he broke his vow of celibacy, he married twice and he had at least five children.

⁹ The first is, by far, Mircea the Elder who reigned for almost 32 years (1386-1418), while Vlad the Monk (1482-1495) and his son, Radu the Great (1495-1508), ruled for approximately 13 years each; next in line comes Mihnea the Renegade with a reign of almost 12 years, though interrupted for two years (1577-1583, 1585-1591).

¹⁰ Unlike his three elder brothers, Mircea, Vlad, and Radu, Peter/Vlad was never mentioned in the diplomas issued by his father; see DRH.B, vol. 1, nos. 89, 91, and 99. In the 1493 diploma for Tismana, Vlad explicitly names his grandfather, Mircea, and his father, Vlad, while referring generically to his brothers' reigns, see DRH.B, vol. 1, no. 239.

¹¹ For Vlad's monastic name, see his son's diploma, DRH.B, vol. 1, no. 263. Details on Vlad's monastic life are given by a Russian account, see I. Bogdan, *Cronicile slavo-române din sec. XV-XVI*, ed. by P. P. Panaitescu, Bucharest, 1959, p. 207, 213-214. For a detailed discussion of this account see below.

¹² Some Romanian scholars consider that the baptismal name of Vlad/Pahomie was Peter, see C. Rezachevici, *Cronologia critică...*, p. 125. I could not find any historical source for this claim, which seems to be simply inferred from Vlad's monastic name, Pahomie, as usually monks chose their new names to start with the same letter as the baptismal ones. Therefore, a likely baptismal name for Pahomie would be Peter. Peter was not an uncommon name in the family, as Pahomie/Vlad's grandson will be named Peter. Following in his grandfather's footsteps, this Peter was to become monk under the name Paisie and to assume the regnal name of Radu at his ascension to the throne.

Similar cases of monks-turned-rulers are so rare in medieval Europe that it is worth placing the Wallachian example in a comparative perspective. An exhaustive survey reveals only a handful of such cases: Judicaël, king of the Armorican principality of Domnonée (c. 615-642), the Anglo-Saxons Sigebert, king of East Anglia (c. 629-634), and Ceolwulf, king of Northumbria (729-737), the Bulgarian Boris-Michael (852-889), Ramiro II of Aragon (1086-1157), and the Wallachians Vlad the Monk (1482-1495) and Radu Paisie (1535-1545).¹³ The Breton Judicaël was sidelined from succession by his brother and took refuge in a monastery where he received the tonsure.¹⁴ After his brother's demise, he took the throne to ward off the Frankish attacks. Most importantly, at the end of a long and effective reign, Judicaël retired to the monastery of Gâel to live his last years. The next examples share some common ground: the conversion to Christianity was of a very recent date in 7th c. East Anglia and in 9th c. Bulgaria. Sigebert and Boris left their monasteries reluctantly, only to confront a foreign invasion (Sigebert faced the Mercians and Boris the Magyars) or to prevent a pagan reaction (Boris).¹⁵ Most importantly, the Anglo-Saxon and the Bulgarian princely monks were all former rulers that took back their kings' cloaks in some extraordinary circumstances and only for a brief period. Thus, we should refer to them more appropriately as kings-turned-monks-turned-kings-turned monks.¹⁶ Sigebert could not actually return to the monastery, as he was killed on the battlefield, but Ceolwulf and Boris spent the last years of their lives, more than 25 in the case of Ceolwulf, as monks. Ramiro II of Aragon, as

¹³ I did not include in this list the early modern monks-turned-pretenders, as the defrocked monk Grigory/Griska Otrepyev, the first false Dimitry. Nagy Pienaru drew my attention to some Ottoman documents from 1571 referring to a monk that claimed the throne of Wallachia, pretending that he was the son of a the former lord Radu. We have to wait for these documents to be edited in order to identify this new monk-pretender, possible one of Radu Paisie's sons and, therefore, Vlad the Monk's grandson.

¹⁴ A. Vauchez, *Saints, prophètes et visionnaires. Le pouvoir surnaturel au Moyen Âge*, Paris, 1999, p. 155-156.

¹⁵ Both Anglo-Saxon examples come from Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, ed. by C. Plummer, Oxford, 1896, III: 18 (Sigebert) and V: 23 (Ceolwulf). Actually, Bede's history was dedicated to Ceolwulf. For these Anglo-Saxon examples, see also S. Ridyard, "Monk-Kings and the Anglo-Saxon Hagiographic Tradition", *Haskins Society Journal* 6, 1994, p. 13-27. In the case of Boris a seal inscription refers to him as to "Michael the Monk, who is archon of the Bulgarians", see I. Iordanov, *Korpus na pechatite na srednovekovna Bulgarija*, Sofia, 2001, p. 34-36. Liudprand of Cremona called Boris' son, Symeon, a "Julian", on account that he had broken his monastic vows for taking the throne. For a discussion, see B. Todorov, "The value of empire: tenth-century Bulgaria between Magyars, Pechenegs and Byzantium", *Journal of Medieval History* 36.4, 2010, p. 312-326.

¹⁶ In the case of Sigebert, there is a possibility that he might have spent some time in a Frankish monastery before claiming the throne of East Anglia. But most probably he was just seeking sanctuary, not taking the monastic vows, see B. Yorke, "The adaptation of Anglo-Saxon royal courts to Christianity", in M. Carver (ed.), *The Cross Goes North: Process of Conversion in Northern Europe AD 300-1300*, Suffolk, 2003, p. 247.

Vlad the Monk and Radu Paisie, entered the monastery at an early age and became an abbot.¹⁷ A dynastic crisis forced him to renounce his monastic vows, but after producing an heir, he symbolically withdrew from power and performed public penance for his sins, before returning to a monastic life. Ramiro's reign was a short and tumultuous one that ended with a public contrition, as he blatantly disregarded the monastic vows by leaving the monastery, ascending to the throne and getting married. As I will further argue, the Wallachian cases of Vlad the Monk and of his grandson, Radu Paisie, clearly stand apart from all these examples.

In 1482, Wallachia did not face either a foreign invasion, or a dynastic crisis. Vlad was not a former ruler retired to the monastery, but a defrocked monk that was chasing the throne for more than two decades. His reign was to be a long and successful one and it seems that the breaking of his monastic vows was only remembered by his most irreconcilable enemies. Vlad himself did not hide his monastic past; on the contrary, he was overplaying it. One might argue that the Wallachian nobles could not care much about the violation of the canonic law (and probably they did not), but certainly the metropolitan and, most importantly, the Wallachian and the Athonite abbots that flocked at Vlad's court did. They needed some sort of justification to accept the defrocked monk as a legitimate ruler. This study attempts to explain how Vlad managed, against all odds, to become such a successful ruler. In order to provide an answer to this question, I will be looking into Vlad's legitimizing strategies and I will be analysing the political language of his charters.

This article has a threefold structure. In the first section, I examine the relationship between the two models, that of the ruler-turned-monk and that of the monk-turned-ruler, in late medieval Wallachia. My contention is that the prince-monk model had spread in Wallachia no earlier than the first decades of the 16th century. Although this model, of a Serbian origin, influenced to some extent the historical memory of Vlad the Monk, it could not have played any significant role during his actual reign, which ended in 1495. In the second section, I turn to the corpus of sources that provide a unique insight into Vlad's political discourse: his charters and, more specifically, his *arengae*. My argument is that Vlad's *arengae* are most unusual for the Wallachian chancery, both in their form and in their substance. The innovative *arengae* used by Vlad in his solemn charters display an intimate knowledge of the Bible, but also of monastic teachings and homiletic rhetoric. Finally, in the last section of the article, I argue that the gloomy tone of Vlad's *arengae*, their intricate theological resonances and the recurrent warnings of the forthcoming "time of judgement",

¹⁷ S. McDougall, *Royal Bastards: The Birth of Illegitimacy, 800-1230*, Oxford, 2017, p. 183-215 (the subchapter is entitled *The Monk-King*).

are related to the eschatological expectations of the year 7000 (1491/1492) in Wallachia.

The Ruler-turned-Monk and the Monk-turned-Ruler

Ten years into his reign, in 1492, Vlad issued a donation diploma for Hilandar, stating that he took upon himself the patronage of the Athonite monastery at the special request of Mara Branković, the Serbian princess that entered Murad II's harem.¹⁸ Vlad's close connections with the Hilandar Monastery were thoroughly discussed by Romanian and Serbian scholars, especially by Petre Ș. Năsturel, Boško I. Bojović, and Radu Păun, but the irony of Vlad's gesture apparently escaped them.¹⁹ A monastery founded by a ruler-turned-monk, Simeon, the former grand zhupan Stephen Nemanja, was now placed under the benevolent protection of a monk-turned-ruler, Vlad, the former brother and priest Pahomie.

The model of the pious ruler who renounced his throne and retired from the world to take the monastic habit was widespread among Wallachia's neighbours, both in the Slavo-Byzantine world, as well as in Latin Hungary. Isaac I Komnenos, Manuel I Komnenos, Michael VII Doukas, John VI Kantakouzenos, Stephen II of Hungary, Stephen Nemanja, Stefan Nemanjić Prvovenčani or Jovan Uroš Nemanjić are just a few examples from a much longer list of rulers that turned monks.²⁰ Some were actually forced into a

¹⁸ DRH.B, vol. 1, no. 235. Mara is explicitly referred to in Vlad's diploma, twice, as "the most revered lady and empress (господыни и царина)" and as "our mother", using the Serbian word (майка). For Mara, see A. Fotić, "Despina Mara Branković and Chilandar: Between the Desired and the Possible", in V. Korać (ed.), *Huit siècles du monastère de Chilandar. Histoire, vie spirituelle, littérature, art et architecture*, Belgrade, 2000, p. 93-100; B. Bojović, P. Ș. Năsturel, "Les fondations dynastiques du Mont Athos. Des dynastes serbes et de la sultane Mara aux princes roumains", *Revue des études sud-est européennes* 41, 2003, p. 149-175, and M. St. Popović, *Mara Branković: eine Frau zwischen dem christlichen und dem islamischen Kulturkreis im 15. Jahrhundert*, Mainz – Ruppolding, 2010.

¹⁹ P. Ș. Năsturel, "Sultana Mara, Vlad Vodă Călugărul și începutul legăturilor Țării Românești cu mănăstirea Hilandar (1492)", *Glasul Bisericii* 19.5-6, 1960, p. 498-502; R. G. Păun, "Quelques notes sur les débuts des rapports entre la Valachie et le monastère de Chilandar au Mont Athos", *Revue des études sud-est européennes* 46, 2008, p. 151-164; B. I. Bojović, *Chilandar et les pays roumains (XV^e-XVII^e siècle). Les actes des princes roumains des archives de Chilandar (Mont-Athos)*, Paris, 2010; R. G. Păun, "La Valachie et le monastère de Chilandar au Mont Athos. Nouveaux témoignages (XV^e-XVI^e siècles)", *Medieval and Early Modern Studies for Central and Eastern Europe* 2, 2010, p. 137-184; idem, "Mount Athos and the Byzantine-Slavic Tradition in Wallachia and Moldavia after the Fall of Constantinople", in V. Stanković (ed.), *The Balkans and the Byzantine World before and after the Captures of Constantinople, 1204 and 1453*, Maryland, 2015, p. 117-163.

²⁰ According to Rodolphe Guiland, 12 former Byzantine emperors took the monastic cloak; see R. Guiland, *Études byzantines*, Paris, 1959, p. 34-37. For the Serbian examples, see S. Marjanović-Dušanić, *Vladarska ideologija Nemanjića: diplomatska studija*, Belgrade, 1997, p. 274-286. For

monk's habit by their enemies, by political failure or by illness, but they usually accepted their new status with equanimity. This was expected of them, as the portrait of the ruler-turned-monk was even more effectively shaped by literary models than by historical examples. Two of the most popular 14th Slavonic texts, *Eulogy on Emperor Nikephoros II Phokas* and *Barlaam and Josaphat*, drew on the same *topos*, of the ruler that only reluctantly and temporarily accepted the power, as his true calling was the monastic vocation.²¹ This model became so dominant that Smilja Marjanović-Dušanić even coined the phrase "royal monkhood" for capturing the tight bonds between kingship and monasticism in Nemanjić Serbia.²²

Unfortunately, it is rather difficult to ascertain precisely when the ruler-monk model made its way into Wallachia, in the monastic milieu or at the princely court. The manuscript evidence begins in the first decades of the 16th century. The story of *Barlaam and Josaphat* was to become extremely popular in Wallachia, but there are no 15th century manuscripts and the earliest reference comes from the parenetic text attributed to Neagoe, the lord of Wallachia (1512-1521).²³ The oldest extant Wallachian iconographical representation of the two saints dates from the same period and is found in Argeş, the monastic foundation of the same Neagoe.²⁴ Considering that Neagoe's wife was a Brancović and that

Stephen II of Hungary's deathbed monastic vow, see *Chronica de Gestis Hungarorum e Codice Picto Saec. xiv.* = *The Illuminated Chronicle. Chronicle of the Deeds of the Hungarians from the Fourteenth Century Illuminated Codex*, ed. and trans. by J. M. Bak and L. Veszprémy, Budapest, 2018, p. 297.

²¹ E. Turdeanu (ed.), *Le dit de l'empereur Nicéphore II Phocas et de son épouse Théophano*, Thessaloniki, 1976; E. L. Vranoussi, "Un 'discours' byzantin en l'honneur du saint empereur Nicéphore Phocas transmis par la littérature slave", *Revue des études sud-est européennes* 16, 1978, p. 729-744. Despite its popularity in Bulgaria, Serbia and Moldavia, there is no extant Wallachian manuscript. The Bucharest manuscript used by Turdeanu as the base of his edition (ms. 740 in the Romanian National Archives) dates from the 16th c. and is of a Moldavian provenience. For Joasaph as a role model for the Nemanjić dynasty, see V. J. Djurić, "Le nouveau Joasaph", *Cahiers archéologiques* 33, 1985, p. 99-109.

²² S. Marjanović-Dušanić, "Patterns of Martyrial Sanctity in the Royal Ideology of Medieval Serbia: Continuity and Change", *Balkanica* 37, 2006, p. 72.

²³ See G. Mihăilă, D. Zamfirescu, *Învățăturile lui Neagoe Basarab către fiul său Theodosie*, Bucharest, 1970, p. 26-28. For a list of the Slavonic manuscripts of *Barlaam and Josaphat*, see M. Moraru and C. Velculescu, *Bibliografia analitică a literaturii române vechi. Cărțile populare*, Bucharest, 1976-1978, p. 494-500. For the reception of this book in Wallachia, see also D. H. Mazilu, *Varlaam și Ioasaf. Istoria unei cărți*, Bucharest, 1981. The Moldavian manuscripts and pictorial representations pre-date the Wallachian ones. Two 14th century manuscripts were discovered in the library of the Neamțu Monastery, but probably they were brought in Moldavia at a later date, see N. Cartoian, *Cărțile populare în literatura românească*, vol. 1, Bucharest, 1974, p. 300. In the late 15th century the story of *Barlaam and Josaphat* was painted at the same Neamțu Monastery, see I. D. Ștefănescu, "Le roman de Barlaam et Joasaph illustré en peinture", *Byzantion* 7.2, 1932, p. 347-369.

²⁴ E. Lăzărescu, "O icoană puțin cunoscută din secolul al XVI-lea și problema pronaosului bisericii mănăstirii Argeşului", *Studii și Cercetări de Istoria Artei. Seria artă plastică* 14.2, 1967,

the Serbian cult of Barlaam and Joasaph was closely connected with the royal iconography,²⁵ a Serbian provenance might be reasonably assumed. Such an inspiration fits well with the evidence of an increasing Serbian influence on the Wallachian court. In the gallery of princely portraits painted in the 1520s at the same Argeş monastery, the highly-visible and impressive portrait of Lazar Hrebeljanović was placed near that of Neagoe himself, suggesting he was something of a role-model for the Wallachian lord.²⁶ Facing Neagoe and Lazar were painted the two Nemanijđ prince-monks, Simeon and Sava. Around the same time, the two Serbian princely saints were also depicted at the Bistriţa monastery,²⁷ while a Bistriţa *Psalter* from 1531 explicitly documents the cult of Simeon, the archetypal ruler-turned-monk.²⁸ The oldest extant Wallachian icon of the two Serbian saints, depicting Neagoe's wife and two of their daughters as donors, dates from the 1520s.²⁹ Obviously, the diffusion of the ruler-turned-monk Serbian model into Wallachia might have preceded this iconographical and textual evidence. As the names of Simeon and Sava are mentioned in the first ever Wallachian printed book, in 1508, one might place the early diffusion of their cult at the beginning of the 16th century, during Radu's reign.³⁰ Nonetheless, the Wallachian court's familiarity with the Serbian ruler-monks saints was rather scant during Vlad's and Radu's reigns. In the above-mentioned diploma issued by Vlad in 1492 for the Hilandar Monastery, the founders of the Athonite monastery were generically referred to as "the pious Serbian sovereigns and blessed benefactors".³¹ The names of Simeon and Sava were mentioned for the first time in a Wallachian diploma for Hilandar only in 1534,

p. 187-199. According to Ioana Iancovescu, the two saints had already been included in the fourteenth-century iconography of the Cozia narthex. Nevertheless, the same scholar argues that the cult of Barlaam and Joasaph was boosted in the early sixteenth century by the Serbian influence on Neagoe Basarab's court, see I. Iancovescu, "Viaţa sfinţilor Varlaam şi Ioasaf. Versiuni iconografice româneşti", in *Închinarea lui Petre Ş. Năsturel la 80 de ani*, ed. I. Căndea, P. Cernovodeanu, Gh. Lazăr, Brăila, 2003, p. 507-517.

²⁵ M. Vuković, "The Barlaam and Joasaph novel - the voyage of influences and images", *Patrimonium.Mk* 7.12, 2014, p. 93-104.

²⁶ E. Cernea, L. Pătrăşcanu (eds.), *Mărturii. Frescele Mănăstirii Argeşului. Catalog expoziţional*, Bucharest, 2012, p. 72-73.

²⁷ I.-R. Mircea, "Relations culturelles romano-serbes au XVI^e siècle", *Revue des études sud-est européennes* 1.3-4, 1963, p. 387, note 41.

²⁸ *The Bistriţa Psalter* (Slavonic Ms. 221, the Library of the Romanian Academy). The Psalter comprises liturgical hymns (*katavasia*) for several Serbian saints, including Simeon and Sava Nemanja, see P. P. Panaitescu, *Manuscrisele slave din Biblioteca Academiei*, Bucharest, 1959, vol. 1, p. 319-322.

²⁹ A. Efremov, *Icoane Româneşti*, Bucharest, 2002, no. 11, p. 182-183. See also E. Negrău, *Cultul suveranului sud-est european şi cazul Ţării Româneşti. O perspectivă artistică*, Iaşi, 2011, p. 132, 138.

³⁰ P. P. Panaitescu, *Liturghierul lui Macarie*, Bucharest, 1961, p. 19-20.

³¹ DRH.B, vol. 1, no. 235.

while two years later, in 1536, a dynastic name was added to Simeon, Nemanja, pointing towards an increasing familiarity with the Serbian royal saints.³²

The Nemanijd royal ideology seems to have spread in Wallachia during the first decades of the 16th century, possibly already during Radu's reign, but certainly in Neagoe's time. Nevertheless, a more wide-ranging Serbian influence on the Wallachian court is documented for a slightly earlier period, going back to Vlad the Monk's reign. Linguists studied the so-call "Serbianization" of the Wallachian chancery language in the second half of the 15th century, while historians looked into the dynastic marriages from the last decades of the century.³³ Vlad's son and successor, Radu, allegedly married a Crnojević, while one of the most important Wallachian noblemen wedded an Iakšić.³⁴ These ties might explain the Serbian chroniclers' interest for the Wallachian affairs and if it was not for two such chronicles we would have not known the precise year of Vlad's death.³⁵ At the beginning of the 16th century, the Wallachian court even welcomed a living embodiment of the ruler-turned-monk Serbian model: the former despot Đorđe Brancović, who had taken the habit under the name Maxim and was soon to become yet another Serbian royal saint.³⁶ According to his hagiographer, Đorđe/Maxim even brought with him in Wallachia the relics of two Serbian holy princes: Stephan and Jovan, his own father and brother.³⁷ A few years later, Đorđe/Maxim was enthroned archbishop of Wallachia and came to play an important part in the political and ecclesiastical life of the realm. The bonds between the Wallachian lords and the Serbian despots were the outcome

³² DRH.B, vol. 3, no. 178; vol. 4, no. 6.

³³ L. Djamo-Diaconiță, *Limba documentelor slavo-române emise în Țara Românească în sec. XIV și XV*, Bucharest, 1971; C. M. MacRobert, "Syntactic differentiation in the Bulgarian documents of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Wallachia", *Oxford Slavonic Papers* 16, 1983, p. 13. For a recent overview of the scholarship on the Wallachian-Serbian relationship see R. G. Păun, "Les principautés danubiennes et la Slavia Orthodoxa balkanique (à l'exception des terres bulgares), XIV^e-debut du XVIII^e siècle. Propositions pour un bilan historiographique", in A. Timotin (ed.), *Un siècle d'études sud-est européennes en Roumanie. Bilan historiographique*, Brăila, 2019, p. 99-132.

³⁴ Șt. Andreescu, "Alliances dynastiques des princes de Valachie (XIV–XVI siècles)", in I. Agrigoroaiei et al. (eds.), *Românii în istoria universală*, vol. 2.1, Iași, 1987, p. 675-684. For a sceptical view on the Montenegrin origins of Radu's second wife, see R. G. Păun, "Mount Athos and the Byzantine-Slavic Tradition...", p. 129.

³⁵ A. Iancu, "Știri despre români în izvoare istoriografice sârbești (secolele XV–XVII)", in E. Stănescu (ed.), *Studii istorice sud-est europene*, vol. 1, Bucharest, 1974, p. 25; D. Mioc, "Știri de istorie a românilor în *Letopisețul brancovicesc*", *Studii și materiale de istorie medie* 9, 1978, p. 140.

³⁶ S. Tomin, "Archbishop Maxim Branković. Supplement to understanding of Serbian-Romanian relationships at the beginning of the 16th century", *Medieval and Early Modern Studies for Central and Eastern Europe* 1, 2009, p. 107-119.

³⁷ G. Mihăilă, "Viața și slujba lui Maxim Brancovici. Momentul 1507 în letopisețele românești", in G. Mihăilă, *Între Orient și Occident. Studii de cultură și literatură română în secolele al XV-lea-al XVIII-lea*, Bucharest, 1999, p. 207.

of an active policy pursued by Radu, but, by all appearances, initiated by his father, Vlad. A few years before Đorđe/Maxim Brancović came to Wallachia, Vlad and Radu has financed the Serbian monastic foundation of Lapușnja, inaugurated in 1501. Radu's portrait as a ktetor of the monastery, or rather as a joint-ktetor, is still visible on the west wall, nearby the dedicatory inscription that mentions his name.³⁸ Thus, the Serbian influence on the Wallachian courtly and monastic life seems to intensify precisely with the reigns of Vlad and his son, Radu. The special relationship cultivated by the two Wallachian lords with Serbia, and especially with the Brancović despots, blossomed later, in the 1520s and 1530s, into a full-fledged cult of the Nemanijds.

One can easily understand why the Nemanijd-Brancović model of the ruler-monk might have appealed to Vlad and Radu. By making use of the Serbian examples of rulers-turned-monks, the Wallachian lords were hoping to plead their own case, that of a monk-turner-ruler. One of the first charters issued by Radu as sole lord of Wallachia, shortly after Vlad's death, refers to his father not by his regnal name, but by the monastic one. The charter issued for the Athonite monastery of Saint Panteleimon includes a liturgical list of Radu's family, but while the ruling lord's grandfather was called by his regnal name, Vlad, his father was called by the monastic moniker, Pahomie,³⁹ which seems to be a reference to his cloistral youth. One cannot exclude the possibility that Vlad took once again the monastic habit in the last days of his life,⁴⁰ although the chronology is rather tight and such deathbed conversion was unusual for a Wallachian lord.⁴¹ All the same, by conveying a direct reference to Vlad's monasticism, Radu was making one thing clear: the monastic persona of his

³⁸ B. Cvetković, "The portraits in Lapușnja and iconography of joint ktetorship", *Niš I Vizantija* 11, 2013, p. 295-308.

³⁹ DRH.B, vol. 1, no. 263.

⁴⁰ Vlad the Monk's burial place is not known, but according to an early 18th century tombstone recently discovered at the Glavacioc monastery, it might have been there, see S. Cristoceca and M. Păduraru, "Domnul Vlad Călugărul, ctitor la mănăstirea Glavacioc, jud. Argeș", in C. Rezachevici (ed.), *Izvoare istorice, artă, cultură și societate. În memoria lui Constantin Bălan (1928-2005)*, Bucharest, 2010, p. 129-139. According to the 1704 inscription, the monastery was founded by Vlad and by his son, Radu. However, the documentary evidence points to a much older foundation, see DRH.B, vol. 1, no. 94 and vol. 2, no. 53. Most certainly, the 1704 inscription mentioning "Vlad voevod the Monk and his son Radu" was based on an older tombstone. It is possible however that the identification of Vlad voevod from the original inscription with Vlad the Monk to be an early 18th century confusion.

⁴¹ According to the above-mentioned Serbian chronicles, Vlad died in 7003 or 7004 (1494 or 1495). Vlad's last diploma dates from the beginning of 7004 (the 8th of September 1495). For a critical examination of the hypothesis that Vlad's contemporary and rival Stephen of Moldavia's took the monastic habit *in articulo mortis*, see M. M. Székely and Șt. S. Gorovei, "Călugărirea lui Ștefan cel Mare", *Analele Putnei* 1, 2005, p. 93-99. The only documented Wallachian or Moldavian lord that renounced the throne and become a monk was the Moldavian Alexandru Lăpușneanu in 1568.

father was nothing to be ashamed of, on the contrary. Radu's decision to present himself publicly as a monk's son and successor is rather surprising, but Vlad the Monk's posthumous celebrity was just taking off.

Vlad's descendants proudly acknowledged their forefather's monastic past. Vlad was identified by the sobriquet *the Monk* in the Wallachian princely chancery during his grandsons' reigns, if not already during his son's rule.⁴² No fewer than six of Vlad's grandsons managed to get the throne of Wallachia, two of them for a few months, four of them for a few years.⁴³ In his grandsons' diplomas, Vlad is usually referred to as "my lordship's grandfather Vlad voievod the Monk" (Дѣдъ господства ми Влада воиевода Калдгеръ).⁴⁴ Even more remarkably, two of the grandsons not only called their grandfather Vlad *the Monk*, but they altogether dropped the regnal name and dubbed their own father "the Monk's son" (синъ Калдгеръ).⁴⁵ It seems that Vlad's grandsons, far from being ashamed of their defrocked grandfather, drew credit from his monastic past. As I already suggested, this surprising twist might be explained, at least partially, by the Serbian connections and by the diffusion of the Nemanijđ-Brancović royal ideology in early 16th century Wallachia. There is even a further parallel between the Wallachian example and the Serbian model: in both cases, the divine grace was transmitted within the same family, from father to son.

Vlad the Monk was the first Wallachian prince that renounced the monastic habit to take the throne, but he was not the last. A few decades after his death, his precedent inspired two other Wallachian princely-monks to try their luck in the game of politics. Both monks-turned-rulers were Vlad's offsprings. The first attempt, in the autumn of 1521, was a failed one. There are only a handful of sources that mention the bid for the throne made by "Dragomir the Monk" (*Calager ille Dragomir*) or "our enemy the Monk" (вражмаш Калдгеръ).⁴⁶ Unfortunately, none of Dragomir's diplomas or letters survived; therefore, we cannot tell if he explicitly invoked the precedent of Vlad the Monk. Nonetheless, his letters are referred to by other sources. Thus, we know that Dragomir took the regnal name of Vlad, who was either his grandfather or

⁴² Radu's 1501 diploma that mentions Vlad the Monk is preserved only in a late Romanian translation from around 1700, therefore the sobriquet might be an interpolation. DRH.B, vol. 2, no. 9.

⁴³ Radu from Afumați, Radu Bădica, Vlad Vintilă, Radu Paisie, Mircea the Shepherd, and Vlad the Drowned.

⁴⁴ DRH.B, vol. 3, no. 25 and no. 141.

⁴⁵ V. Vintilă in DRH.B, vol. 3, no. 171. R. Bădica in G. G. Tocilescu (ed.), *534 documente istorice slavo-române din Țara Românească și Moldova privitoare la legăturile cu Ardealul 1346-1603*, Bucharest, 1931, no. 283.

⁴⁶ N. Iorga (ed.), *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor culese de Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki*, vol. 15.1, Bucharest, 1911, no. 464 (a letter sent by the Hungarian king to the city of Sibiu); G. G. Tocilescu (ed.), *534 documente...*, no. 274 (a letter sent by the reigning lord of Wallachia to the city of Brașov).

his father.⁴⁷ Fortunately, the second attempt is much better documented, as it was a successful one. In the spring of 1535, another of Vlad's grandsons, by his baptismal name Peter, by his monastic name Paisie, was abbot of the Argeş monastery. When the reigning lord of Wallachia was dethroned by a group of discontent noblemen, Peter/Paisie seized the opportunity, renounced the monastic habit and took the regnal name of his father, Radu.⁴⁸ During his nine-year reign, Radu mentioned his grandfather several times, almost always both by his regnal name, Vlad, and by his sobriquet, the Monk.⁴⁹ Some of these references stand out as quite unusual, as the 1536 diploma that mentions a land transaction between Vlad the Monk and a certain abbot. The land bought by Vlad was a whole mountain, but the most interesting aspect of the transaction was the price he paid: a Gospel Book.⁵⁰ This is the only direct reference to Vlad the Monk's religious manuscripts, a subject I will further explore in the next section of this article. It also reveals, once again, that Vlad's grandson was proud to bring up his grandfather's monastic past. For Radu Paisie, his grandfather was more important than his father, at least as far as his legitimacy was concerned. In a 1538 diploma related to the watershed moment of his reign, a battle against one of his rivals, Radu Paisie entitled himself "the son of Vlad's son".⁵¹

Vlad the Monk's descendants, especially the two Radus, his son and his grandson, drew on their forefather's prestige and evoked his monastic persona. As I suggested above, it seems more than a coincidence that, precisely around the same decades, the cult of the Nemanijds ruler-monks saints was spreading in Wallachia. As abbot of the Argeş monastery, Radu Paisie must have spent many hours under the portraits of two Nemanijd prince-monks, Simeon and Sava. There is no direct evidence that Radu Paisie was associating the Wallachian monks-turned-rulers examples, that of him and that of his grandfather, with the Serbian rulers-turned-monks model. But to his mind, the two were perfectly reconciled. In the 1536 diploma for the Hilandar monastery, the defrocked monk Paisie who gave the monastic life for worldly gains saw no irony and no

⁴⁷ See the mentioning of "litteras de novo wayvoda Transalpinensi Wlad" or "litteris ex parte novi electi waywodae Transalpinensis Wlad nomine" in *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Brassó*, vol. 1, Kronstadt, 1896, p. 361-362. Most scholars thought Dragomir to have been Vlad the Monk's grandson, but recently Daniel Mirea resuscitated a suggestion made by Iorga and made a compelling case for considering Dragomir Vlad's son, in D. Mirea, "Theodosie voievod, Dragomir Călugărul și un document îndoiețnic din vremea lui Vlad cel Tânăr", *Analele științifice ale Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași (serie nouă)*. *Istorie* 60, 2014, p. 162-164.

⁴⁸ Peter/Paisie/Radu's dynastic ascendancy is more convoluted, as his cousin, the Transylvanian Humanist, Nicolaus Olahus, refers to him as "Peter from Argeş, Stanciu's son".

⁴⁹ DRH.B, vol. 3, no. 212 and vol. 4, nos. 15, 24, 30, 46, 53, 84, 85, 100, 105, 117, 147, and 167.

⁵⁰ DRH.B, vol. 4, no. 15.

⁵¹ DRH.B, vol. 4, no. 69. C. Rezachevici *Cronologia critică...*, p. 219, disputed the authenticity of this diploma, on the reason that it does not fit with the chronology of the events. However, the diploma, preserved at the Library of the Romanian Academy, bears all signs of authenticity.

contradiction in praising the founding fathers of the Athonite monastery, the saint Simeon, called Nemanja, and the saint Sava (свѣтъи Симеон, нареченаго Неманѣа, и свѣтъи Сава), for “leaving the glory of this world and for taking the narrow path of God’s redemption” (вѣсакѣ славѣ мира сего оставившихъ Бого спасеніиже пѣтъ тѣснѣи).⁵² Radu Paisie was actively using his grandfather’s precedent and, probably, was eager to conflate the Wallachian monk-turned-into-ruler examples with the Nemanijđ Serbian model of ruler-turned-into-monk.⁵³ However, none of these two legitimising strategies had been available a half-century earlier for Vlad the Monk. It seems rather unlikely that Vlad vindicated his actions by drawing on the Serbian royal example, as the Nemanijđ-Brancović model made its way into Wallachia only later, during Radu’s reign at the earliest. And, unlike his grandson, Vlad was the first Wallachian prince that renounced the monastic habit to pursue the throne, so there was no precedent to call upon. Most importantly, his adversaries were quick to point out that a defrocked monk was most unsuited for the throne.

From the very moment Pahomie/Vlad left the monastery to pursue the throne of Wallachia, he was slandered and defamed by his rivals for abandoning the monastic habit. The first mention of this unusual pretender comes from a 1457 letter, sent by his reigning brother, the infamous Vlad the Impaler, to the Saxon city of Sibiu. The letter, written in Latin, refers to the machinations of a pretender who briefly occupied a Transylvanian domain of the Wallachian lord, the Amlas.⁵⁴ The pretender was not explicitly named, but was derisively referred to as “that priest of the Wallachians who calls himself a lord’s son” (*sacerdos Wolachorum qui se nominat filium vaivodae*). By labelling his rival a defrocked priest, Vlad the Impaler was implicitly pointing to Pahomie/Vlad’s disgraceful status: a cleric turned into a pretender. By stressing that he was pretending to be a former lord’s son, Vlad the Impaler was also casting some doubts on his dynastic rights. Pahomie/Vlad remained in the Amlaş only for a few years, as in 1460 the domain was dreadfully ransacked by Vlad the Impaler.⁵⁵ Nothing is

⁵² DRH.B, vol. 4, no. 6.

⁵³ Ștefan Andreescu drew my attention that Radu is called in his votive portraits from the Cozia monastery (the infirmary church) and from the Argeș monastery by his baptismal name of Peter and not by the regnal one of Radu. Radu’s Cozia portrait is highly interesting for a second reason: it is the first Wallachian representation of a crowning angel, a motif that arrived to Wallachia either from Athos or from Serbia, see C. L. Dumitrescu, *Pictura murală din Țara Românească în veacul al XVI-lea*, Bucharest, 1978, p. 52 and E. Negrău, “Policy and prophecy. The legend of the last emperor and the iconography of the ruler crowned by angels in Wallachia”, *Zograf* 43, 2019, p. 171-184.

⁵⁴ G. Gündisch, *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*, vol. 5: (1438-1457), Bucharest, 1975, no. 3070. A digitized copy is available at the Romanian National Historical Archives, Arhiva Medievală a României (hereafter AMR), digital number SB-F-00001-1-U5-1658.

⁵⁵ Șt. Andreescu, *Vlad Țepeș Dracula. Între legendă și adevăr istoric*, Bucharest, 2015, p. 83-84.

known about the pretender's fate for the next two decades, as he only resurfaced again in 1481, this time in the other Saxon city placed at the borders of Wallachia: Braşov. A letter sent by the Transylvanian voievod to the city of Braşov mentions an assassination attempt against Vlad, called the lord-monk.⁵⁶ The Latin phrase, *vaivoda Kalager*, is using the Slavic word *калогѣръ*, derived from Greek *καλόγερος*. It seems that, by that point, Vlad was known by this sobriquet both by his allies and by his enemies. His rival, the ruling Wallachian lord, wrote to the Braşov Saxons asking them to banish from their city his avowed enemy, the Monk (*вражмаш господства ми Калдгера*).⁵⁷ The contemporary Moldavian chronicles, which are depicting Vlad as a traitor that turned against his former protector, Stephan of Moldavia, are usually naming him by the same sobriquet, the Monk.⁵⁸

The most detailed account of Pahomie/Vlad's monastic youth comes from a writing ascribed to Fyodor Kuritsyn, a Muscovite emissary to the Hungarian court in the 1480s. The text, known as *The Tale of Voievod Dracula* accounted the exploits of Vlad the Monk's brother and rival, Vlad the Impaler.⁵⁹ The *Tale* ends with Vlad the Monk's ascension to the throne of Wallachia:

In his youth, this Vlad was a monk, then a priest, and later an abbot of some monastery. Then he defrocked himself [*ростригъ ся*] and he rose to the throne and he got married. He married the widow of the lord who reigned briefly after Dracula and who was killed by Stephen of Moldavia. Having thus taken the lord's wife, he reigns now over the realm of Wallachia; Vlad, he who had been a monk and an abbot.⁶⁰

Ivan Kuritsyn's astonishment that the reigning lord of Wallachia was someone who had been a monk, a priest and an abbot most probably echoes the disparagement of his informer. This was no other than Vlad's nephew and rival, Mihnea, who took refuge at Buda and who was actively pursuing the throne of Wallachia when he met the Muscovite emissary.⁶¹ Mihnea had to wait for two

⁵⁶ N. Iorga (ed.), *Documente Hurmuzaki*, vol. 15.1, no. 205 (AMR, BV-F-00001-1-219).

⁵⁷ I. Bogdan (ed.), *Documentele privitoare la relațiile Țării Românești cu Braşovul*, no. 135 (AMR, BV-F-00001-4-1-89).

⁵⁸ I. Bogdan, *Cronicile slavo-române...*, p. 10, 19, 46, 51, 58, 64.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 197-214. The authorship of Fyodor Kuritsyn was contested, but most scholars today agree that he authored the *Tale*, see M. Cazacu, *Dracula*, ed. by St. W. Reinert, Leiden, 2017, p. 219-222. For a thorough rejection of the other hypotheses, especially the Slavo-Romanian one, see Al. Mareş, "Povestirea despre Dracula-Voievod, creație a literaturii slavo-române?", *Limba Română* 63.4, 2014, p. 521-546.

⁶⁰ I. Bogdan, *Cronicile slavo-române...*, p. 207, 213-214.

⁶¹ In the *Tale*, the short account on Vlad the Monk begins with the author's meeting in Buda with Michael/Mihnea, Vlad the Impaler's sons. Most likely, Mihnea was the one who gave Kuritsyn all the details on his uncle's past.

more decades to become lord of Wallachia, but he finally succeeded in 1508, after Radu's death. Coming back to Kuritsyn's text written in the 1480s, one might safely state that it aimed to smear Vlad by reiterating his rivals' calumnies. By denouncing his monastic and priestly vows, Vlad made a loathsome transgression, even more vile as he had a triple clerical status, that of a monk, of a priest and of an abbot.

To sum up, from the very moment he left the monastery and entered the political arena, Vlad was tarnished by his rivals for his monastic past. His enemies used to call him mockingly *the Monk*, an infamous sobriquet, but one that was to be proudly adopted by Vlad's own descendants in the 16th century. In a few decades' time, Vlad's sobriquet made a remarkable comeback from shame to glory. Vlad seems to have managed the impossible: to reconcile the figure of the defrocked monk Pahomie with that of the reigning lord, Vlad, and to convert an initial liability into a family asset. The question is, of course, how did he do it? How did he bring together his monastic past and his regnal status? Fortunately, a rich and largely unexploited Wallachian corpus of sources gives us a glimpse into Vlad's political discourse and sheds some light into his legitimizing strategies. This corpus consists of Vlad's diplomas, more specifically of their *arengae*, spectacular pious preambles that are unlike anything else in the history of the Wallachian diplomatics. Vlad's *arengae* constitute our best source for understanding his political language and for grasping the underlying reasons of his success. The argument I am putting forward is that Vlad actively exploited his cloistral past and knowledge in order to portray himself as the most appropriate ruler, in the most remarkable of circumstances.

The diplomas of a ruler-monk. A study of the *arengae*

The study of medieval *arengae* underwent a massive reassessment throughout the last century. In his highly influential *Manuel de diplomatique* from the end of the 19th century, Arthur Giry largely dismissed the historical relevance of the *arengae*, considering them literary ornaments that seldom had any relevance for the actual content of the diplomas.⁶² In the same vein, some scholars went as far as to truncate the preambles when editing medieval documents, leaving only the incipit, as they viewed the *arengae* as highly formulaic and, ultimately, as historically irrelevant. This interpretation changed dramatically in 1957, when Henrich Fichtenau published his seminal study on the *arengae*, arguing that this diplomatic formula actually embodied the political

⁶² A. Giry, *Manuel de Diplomatique*, Paris, 1925, vol. 1, p. 537-546.

language of medieval Europe.⁶³ Fichtenau's study was confined to Latin Europe, but it did not take long for scholars to reach a similar conclusion with regard to the Byzantine preambles. In 1964, Herbert Hunger attempted to reconstruct the imperial political ideology using the recurring clichés included in the Byzantine *prooemia*.⁶⁴ Fichtenau's and Hunger's ground-breaking studies convincingly argued that these seemingly ornamental passages, long time overlooked by scholars, were much more than met the eye. Their contention was confirmed by an impressive number of case studies, covering the whole of medieval Latin Europe, from its papal centre to its peripheries, as well as the Slavo-Byzantine sphere.⁶⁵

Romanian diplomatics were for a long time influenced by Giry's handbook and, as a result, the most comprehensive study on the *arengae* is an introductory chapter to the edition of the most famous and controversial medieval Wallachian literary text: *Neagoe Basarab's Teachings*.⁶⁶ The two scholars of medieval literature that edited the text, Gheorghe Mihăilă and Dan Zamfirescu, integrated their interpretation of the *arengae* in an elaborated

⁶³ H. Fichtenau, *Arenga: Spätantike und Mittelalter im Spiegel von Urkundenformeln*, Graz – Cologne, 1957.

⁶⁴ H. Hunger, *Prooimion. Elemente der byzantinischen Kaiseridee in den Arengen der Urkunden*, Vienna, 1964.

⁶⁵ B. Barbiche, "Diplomatie, diplomatique et théologie: les préambules des lettres de légation (XIII^e–XVII^e siècle)", in B. Barbiche, *Bulla, Legatus, Nuntius: Études de diplomatique et de diplomatie pontificales (XIII^e–XVII^e siècle)*, Paris, 2007, p. 147-156; M. Zimmermann, "Protocoles et préambules dans les documents catalans du X^e au XII^e s.: Evolution diplomatique et signification spirituelle. II: les préambules", *Mélanges de la Casa de Velázquez* 11, 1975, p. 51-79; J. Avril, "Observance monastique et spiritualité dans les préambules des actes (X^e–XIII^e s.)", *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 85, 1990, p. 5-29; N. Damsholt, "Kingship in the Arengas of Danish Royal Diplomas 1140–1223", *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 3, 1970, p. 66-108; A. Adamska, "Dieu, le Christ, la Vierge et l'Eglise dans les préambules polonais du Moyen Age", *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes* 155.2, 1997, p. 543-573; A. Kurcz, "Arenga und Narratio ungarischer Urkunden des 13. Jahrhunderts", *Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 70, 1962, p. 323-354; Ž. Vujošević, "Moses as a Role Model in the Serbian Charters after 1371. Changing Patterns", *Balkanica* 39, 2008, p. 69-78.

⁶⁶ *Învățăturile lui Neagoe Basarab către fiul său Theodosie*, ed. by D. Zamfirescu and G. Mihăilă, Bucharest, 1970, p. 86-100. The most influential Romanian handbook in medieval diplomatics begins the chapter on the *arenga* with two quotes from Arthur Giry's and Alain de Boüard's manuals, arguing that this formula was superfluous, nothing more than a literary ornament, see D. Bogdan, "Diplomatica slavo-română", in *Documente privind istoria României. Introducere*, vol. 2, Bucharest, 1956, p. 84. To my knowledge, there is no study dedicated to the Wallachian *arengae*. There is one study on the Moldavian preambles, which is rather ironic considering that the Wallachian chancery used the *arengae* far more often than the Moldavian chancery did, Gh. T. Ionescu, "Arenga în documentele de cancelarie din Moldova", in Gh. T. Ionescu, *Contribuții la istoria românilor*, ed. by I. Cădea, Brăila, 2004. For some concise but insightful considerations on the Wallachian *arengae*, see A. Pippidi, *Tradiția politică bizantină în Țările Române în secolele XVI–XVII*, Bucharest, 2001, p. 34-39.

demonstration of the text's authorship.⁶⁷ The result is a biased and flawed analysis that failed to notice the utterly conservative use of this diplomatic formula by the Wallachian chancery during Neagoe's reign. Neagoe's chancery avoided any innovations and simply copied the pre-existing *arengae* or, at the most, used a patchwork technique to combine the previous models. Three out of the four new types of preambles ascribed by Mihăilă and Zamfirescu to Neagoe's chancery were actually composed during Vlad the Monk's reign.⁶⁸ This brings us to the key question in interpreting a medieval *arenga*, that of the relationship between tradition and originality, between *imitatio* and *inventio*.⁶⁹ Medieval chanceries often copied or recycled ancient formulas, but sometimes a significant amount of energy and creativity was invested in the composition of a new *arenga*. In these cases, the Biblical language and the scriptural allusions were woven into complex and subtle political messages, relevant for a particular historical context. As I will argue further, this was precisely the case with Vlad the Monk's new *arengae*.

Prior to Vlad the Monk's reign, the Wallachian princely chancery seems to have used only two *arenga* templates. The first type, documented already at the end of the 14th century, was a rather short one, usually comprising the first three lines in a diploma.⁷⁰ Nonetheless, three biblical references were packed within these lines: Romans 8:14, Romans 2:7, and Matthew 25:34. The excerpts from the epistle to the Romans were introduced as the words of the godly apostle (БОЖЕСТВЕННИЙ АПОСТОЛЪ), while the Gospel quote began with a mention of Christ's ever-lasting joyful voice of bliss (ГЛАС РАДОВАНИЕ ОУСЛЫШАВШЕ). There is even a fourth reference, to the ephemerality of the earthly things, which most likely comes from a liturgical hymn. This *arenga* was to be constantly used, word for word, in almost all global confirmations of the Cozia monastery's

⁶⁷ The entire introduction is a passionate defence of Neagoe's authorship of the text. For a balanced discussion that focuses on the concept of authorship, see A. Pippidi, "Basileia kai authentia. Quelques considérations à propos des Enseignements de Neagoe Basarab", in A. Pippidi, *Byzantins, Ottomans, Roumains, Le Sud-Est européen entre l'héritage impérial et les influences occidentales*, Paris, 2006, p. 95-119.

⁶⁸ According to D. Zamfirescu and G. Mihăilă, Neagoe's chancery composed three new *arengae*, which drew on some of the ideas developed in his *Teachings*, see *Învățăturile lui Neagoe Basarab...*, p. 93-95. Actually, Neagoe's chancery reused the previous *arengae*, mostly the ones composed during Vlad the Monk's reign. Thus, Neagoe's chancery used the "talents' *arenga*" in the diplomas for Vișina monastery (undated), for Corbii (1517), for Bolintin (1517), for Govora (1517), and for Cotmeana (1518), the "fear of God *arenga*" in the diploma for Bistrița (1520), and two variants of the "damnation *arenga*" in the diploma for Dealu (1514) and Seaca (1519). For these three types of *arengae*, see the discussion below.

⁶⁹ See H. Wolfram, "Political theory and narrative in charters", *Viator* 26, 1995, p. 51; S. Barret, "Ad captandam benevolentiam: stéréotype et inventivité dans les préambules d'actes médiévaux and narrative in charters", in M. Zimmermann (ed.), *Auctor et auctoritas: invention et conformisme dans l'écriture médiévale*, Paris, 2001, p. 321-336.

⁷⁰ DRH.B, vol. 1, no. 9.

estates issued throughout the 15th century (no fewer than eight up to 1482).⁷¹ From the 1440s onwards, the chancery started to use this same *arenga* in diplomas given to some other Wallachian monasteries, as Snagov (1441), Codemana (1445) or Bolintin (1453).⁷² In this last charter, the chancery scribe added a new phrase to the *arenga*, which elaborated on Luke 18:18.⁷³ The new amended formula found its way into the diplomas issued for Snagov (1464, 1482) and for Cozia (1475).⁷⁴ The transfer of the same *arenga* from one beneficiary to another suggests that by mid-15th century there was some kind of formulaic transmission within the chancery. For several decades, the chancery used this template for a sole beneficiary, the Cozia monastery. This meant that every time a lord of Wallachia renewed the privileges of the monastery, the scribes simply copied the *arenga* from the previous documents that the monks brought to the chancery. Around mid-15th century, an important change occurred. The chancery scribes began to keep copies of this *arenga*, probably in some kind of book of *formulae*, to amend it, and to use the new “improved” version, instead of simply recopying the previous one.

The transmission of the second template followed a strikingly similar pattern. This type of *arenga* is also documented for the first time in a diploma for Cozia, issued by Mircea the Elder sometimes around 1400.⁷⁵ However, this time the document was a donation charter and not a global confirmation diploma. Its preamble is far more impressive, taking more than half of the entire diploma. It starts from the very beginning of the document, after the beautifully drawn cross that serves as a pictorial invocation, with a fragment from Hebrews.⁷⁶ It follows with a comment on the apostles’ teachings on the two paths to redemption, the monastic one, through prayer, vigil and fasting, and the laic one, through almsgiving and repentance. It continues with a reference to Christ’s voice (ΓΛΩΣΣΗ), followed by two extensive biblical quotations, taken from Matthew 11:28-30 and Matthew 25:34-35.⁷⁷ The *arenga* is briefly interrupted by the *intitulatio*, but it continues immediately with another four, considerable shorter, biblical references. The first two are to the Pauline epistle to the Romans, while the last two are from the Psalms.⁷⁸ The references to the Psalms

⁷¹ DRH.B, vol. 1, nos. 17, 20, 56, 77, 96, 107, 115, 161.

⁷² DRH.B, vol. 1, nos. 95, 98, and C. Bălan, “Hrisoavele mănăstirii Bolintin din 1453 și 1479”, in V. Barbu (ed.), *In honorem Paul Cernovodeanu*, Bucharest, 1998, p. 88-91.

⁷³ C. Bălan, “Hrisoavele mănăstirii Bolintin...”, p. 89: “As I remembered that many kings rejoiced their earthly kingdoms, but few of them will inherit the kingdom of God”.

⁷⁴ DRH.B, vol. 1, nos. 127, 150, 179.

⁷⁵ DRH.B, vol. 1, no. 20.

⁷⁶ Hebrews 7:5: “a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law”. For all English translation of the Biblical quotes, I use the King James Version.

⁷⁷ The two types of *arengae* share this last biblical reference, Matthew 25:34.

⁷⁸ “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God” (Romans 8:28); “For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace” (Romans 8:6);

are explicit quotations, introduced by the phrase: “the word spoken by David, prophet and emperor (слово Давида пророка и царѣ)”. There is another donation charter, from around the same time, given by a Wallachian nobleman, Aldea, to the Koutlounousiou monastery.⁷⁹ The diplomatic *formulae* and the list of witnesses strongly suggest that Aldea’s charter was also written in the princely chancery. The *arenga* is almost identical with that of Mircea’s donation for Cozia, only considerably shorter: it starts with the same fragment from Hebrews 7:5 and continues with the reference to the apostles’ teachings on the paths to redemption through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Documented twice at the end of the 15th century, in a longer and a shorter version, this *arenga* seems to have fallen out of use for the next 75 years. Most surprisingly, it comes back again, verbatim, in the last decades of the century, re-emerging for the first time in a diploma given in 1475 by the Wallachian lord to the monastery of Koutlounousiou.⁸⁰ The transmission of an *arenga* from a 1400 Cozia charter into a 1475 Athonite diploma remains a mystery. A possible explanation would be that the Koutlounousiou monks brought back in Wallachia a diploma issued by Mircea 75 years earlier, which in the meantime got lost. The transmission of the formula within the Wallachian chancery, from a generation of scribes to another, is also possible, although rather unlikely for such an early period. As we have seen, records of the *arenga formulae* within the Wallachian chancery are documented, indirectly, only after the 1450s. In the late 1470s and early 1480s, this second template was also copied by the chancery scribes into diplomas given to several different beneficiaries. Vlad the Monk’s chancery used it not only for the Koutlounousiou, but also for the two Wallachian monasteries of Govora and Glavacioc.⁸¹

To conclude, at the beginning of Vlad’s reign, the Wallachian princely chancery had two *arenga* templates in its portofolio, which the scribes used with minimal adjustments. During the next 13 years, throughout Vlad’s reign, there was an explosion of new *arengae*, as the number of templates increased fourfold. The princely chancery coined no fewer than six new types, with a possible seventh if we take into account a charter preserved only in a late 18th c. Romanian translation.⁸²

“Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven” (Psalms 31:1); “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God” (Psalms 42:1).

⁷⁹ DRH.B, vol. 1, no. 19.

⁸⁰ DRH.B, vol. 1, no. 151.

⁸¹ DRH.B, vol. 1, nos. 220, 241.

⁸² The diploma issued for Cotmeana on the 8th of January 1489 was preserved only in an 18th century Romanian translation copied in the monastic cartulary, see DRH.B, vol. 1, no. 213. The scribe copied only the incipit of the *arenga*, including the quote from Matthew 25:34. Based on this incipit, the *arenga* seems to have been a traditional one (type 2). However, taking into account that Vlad’s chancery had the habit of composing a new *arenga* using the incipit of old ones (see the discussion bellow), the Cotmeana preamble might equally have been an innovative one.

There is no direct evidence that would allow us to attribute, without doubt, the invention of the new *arengae* to Vlad the Monk himself, as the chancellor, the scribes and the beneficiaries were also involved in the production of diplomas. However, despite the continuity in the chancery personnel and practices, there is a noticeable difference in style between the *arengae* of his predecessors and those of Vlad's.⁸³ As Vlad would have at the very least approved the new *arengae*, I will continue to attribute them to him, with the caveat that the extent of his involvement in their composition is impossible to assess. There is also the possibility that some of these *arengae* were not actually new, but only seem new to us. Obviously, we know only a fraction of the Wallachian chancery's production, as few medieval archives survived, mostly the monastic ones. However, the explosion of new *arengae* during Vlad's reign is impressive not only when compared with the previous period, scarcely recorded, but also with the subsequent one, much more abundantly documented. There is roughly a fivefold increase in the number of extant Wallachian diplomas in the first decades of the 16th century. However, in this considerable larger corpus of documents, there are only two new types of *arengae*. In 1502, Radu the Great issued a new diploma for the Athonite monastery of Saint Panteleimon with a beautiful *arenga* that was paraphrasing the Book of Genesis, invoking God's creation, the original sin committed by our ancestors in the Garden of Eden and the promise of salvation for all humankind.⁸⁴ This preamble, never attested before in Wallachia, was directly influenced by the Serbian chancery practice. An *arenga* inspired by Genesis 1-2 on the creation of man and the promise of salvation was firstly documented in prince Lazar's diploma for the monastery of Ždrelo (Gornjak), while Adam was frequently referred to in the Serbian *arengae*.⁸⁵ This example substantiates once again the increasing

⁸³ Shortly after his ascent to the throne, Vlad changed the chancellor and replaced Vintilă Florescu, a powerful nobleman who served the two previous lords, with his own man, Staico from Bucov, who was to become his future son-in-law, see the genealogical table in G. D. Florescu, *Divanele domnești din Țara Românească*, vol. 1: (1389-1495), Bucharest, 1943, p. 320-321. The change at the top seems to have little impact, if any, on the chancery itself. There were around 20 scribes active in the princely chancery during Vlad's reign, which is an unusually high number. Some of these scribes are documented prior to Vlad's ascent (Albul, Ceucuț, Codrea, Drăgoi), while others remained active after Vlad's death (Ban, Ceucuț, Corlat, Hrană, Oancea, Radu, Stan, Stanciu). In a rather speculative and unconvincing article, Petre Cristea even postulated that during Vlad the Monk's reign, the court's school for scribes entered a new phase, see P. Cristea, "A existat școala domnească de grămătică în secolul al XV-lea la Târgoviște?", *Chronica valachica* 5, 1973, p. 267. For an overview of the medieval Wallachian princely chancery, see M. Cazacu, "La Chancellerie des principautés valaque et moldave (XIV^e- XVIII^e siècles)", in Ch. Hannick (ed.), *Kanzleiwesen und Kanzleisprachen im östlichen Europa*, Cologne, 1999, p. 87-127.

⁸⁴ DRH.B, vol. 2, no. 12.

⁸⁵ I would like to thank Dr Nebojsa Porčić for introducing me to the intricate topic of the Serbian diplomatics and for generously sharing with me his database of Serbian *arengae*. The section on the *arengae* from his PhD thesis helped me to grasp better the differences between the Serbian and

Serbian influence on the Wallachia court of Vlad's son, Radu. The second new template comes from a 1525 diploma issued for the bishopric of Buzău. This is the first Wallachian *arenga* that explicitly quotes not only the Bible, but also the writings of a Church Father, Ephrem the Syrian.⁸⁶ The circulation and diffusion of the Slavic translation of Ephrem's homilies in Wallachia, especially in the first decades of the 16th century, were extensively studied.⁸⁷ This *arenga* suggests a direct correlation between the diffusion of Slavonic translations of patristic texts and their reception at the princely court. The composition of new *arengae* was therefore highly unusual in the Wallachian chancery practice, both prior and after Vlad's reign. Furthermore, Vlad's *arengae* broke with the chancery tradition not only in their numbers, but also in their substance.

The six new *arengae* are documented each in only one diploma. It seems that the princely chancery composed a new *arenga* every time Vlad issued another solemn diploma. They seem to have been composed mostly for the charters given to the Athonite monasteries, but they bear little resemblance to the Byzantine, Bulgarian and Serbian Athonite *arengae*. The six solemn diplomas, formal and highly elaborated documents, quite different from the everyday charters, had been written by different scribes.⁸⁸ Unfortunately, we know only one by name, Radu, and we have little information about his background.⁸⁹ Radu was the son of a small Wallachian nobleman, Furcă, the key-keeper of the court

the Wallachian chancery practices, see H. T. Порчић, *Дипломатички образци средњовековних владарских докумената: српски пример* [Diplomatic Patterns of Medieval Royal Documents: The Serbian Example], Belgrade, 2012, p. 47-54. For Lazar's *arenga* in the Ždrelo diploma, see Ž. Vujošević, "Moses as a Role Model...", p. 74.

⁸⁶ DRH.B, vol. 2, no. 242.

⁸⁷ For the Wallachian reception of Ephrem's homilies, see P. Olteanu, "Contribuții la studiul literaturii omiletice în vechile literaturi bulgară și română", *Romanoslavica. Lingvistică* 14, 1967, p. 305-358; Z. Mihail, "Diffusion en roumain de l'œuvre de saint Ephrem le Syrien: une expression de l'héritage byzantin", *Byzantinische Forschungen* 25, 1999, p. 111-129.

⁸⁸ The Wallachian solemn diplomas had a pendant seal (the usual diplomas had only an applied one), while the sign of the cross placed before the text and the initial letter were written in red ink and, sometimes, were beautifully ornamented. All Vlad's solemn diplomas share these features. In addition, the diplomas for Tismana, for Philotheou, for Bistrița and for Stanciu also used red ink for several letters within the text itself, in order to mark the different parts of the formulary (such as the *arenga*, the spiritual sanction, or the list of witnesses). Digital scans of the Vlad's diplomas kept in the Romanian archives are easy available at the Arhiva Medievală a României (AMR BU-F-00684-65 – Tismana's diploma; BU-F-00684-91 – Bistrița's diploma and BU-F-00312-119-1 – Stanciu's diploma). The Athonite diplomas are unfortunately less accessible. A digital copy of the Hilandar's diploma is included in the CD that accompanies B. I. Bojović's *Chilandar et les pays roumains...*, but the Docheiarou's and Philotheou's diplomas are available only in some black and white older reproduction, in *Documente privind istoria României. B. Țara Românească*, Bucharest, 1953, vol. 1, p. 378, and St. Nicolaescu, "Ajutoare bănești și danii ale domnilor români către mănăstirea Filoteiu din muntele Athos", *Revista Arhivelor* 1, 1924, p. 125-130.

⁸⁹ Radu wrote his name and his title, Radu the key-keeper, at the end of Stanciu's diploma, DRH.B, vol. 1, no. 243.

(ключарь) in the late 1460s. Radu followed in his father's footsteps and, after spending some time in the princely chancery, was appointed key-keeper by Vlad in the early 1490s.⁹⁰ It is worth remembering at this point that the princely chancery, as Ștefan Andreescu poignantly observed, was at the origins of some of the most impressive careers at the Wallachian court.⁹¹ The name of Furcă, the Wallachian key-keeper, is also mentioned in a manuscript colophon. Most remarkably, one of the only two extant 15th century Wallachian Gospel Books, now in a Sankt Petersburg library,⁹² was paid for by Furcă, Radu's father in 1471.⁹³ The manuscript was bequeathed to the Moldavian monastery of Humor, revealing thus the close connections between the Wallachian court and the Moldavian monastic milieu. If one also takes into account the manuscript given by Vlad the Monk himself in exchange for a mountain,⁹⁴ one gets a better sense of the role played by the Wallachian court in disseminating manuscript copies of the Gospel Books in the 1470s and 1480s.

Coming back to Vlad's new preambles, I will briefly explain their content, labelling each *arenga* by its individualizing feature, in order to simplify the discussion.⁹⁵ The "monastic *arenga*" comes from a 1483 diploma for the Tismana monastery and comprises a reference to some unnamed abbot's teachings for preparing one's soul for the Final Judgement.⁹⁶ The "damnation

⁹⁰ Fortunately, Radu noted down his patronymic name at the end of another charter he wrote: "Radu, the son of Furcă, the former key-keeper", DRH.B, vol. 1, no. 249. Furcă the key-keeper is mentioned by two documents issued by the chancery in 1469, DRH.B, vol. 1, nos. 135, 136.

⁹¹ Șt. Andreescu, *Perspective medievale*, Bucharest, 2002, p. 53-56; idem, *Restitutio Daciae. Studii cu privire la Mihai Viteazul*, Bucharest, 1997, p. 405-406.

⁹² The National Library of Russia, in Saint Petersburg (Fonds 536, ms. F 136), see V. Pelin, *Manuscrise românești din secolele XIII-XIX în colecții străine (Rusia, Ucraina, Bielorusia)*, Chișinău, 2017, p. 59-60 (no. 35).

⁹³ The colophon at f. 299^v mentions the name of the scribe, Dobromir, the name of the Wallachian lord, Radu, Vlad the Monk's brother, and the name of Furcă the key-keeper, for whom the manuscript was written, see V. Pelin, "Manuscrise din vremea lui Ștefan cel Mare (II)", *Analele Putnei* 4.2, 2008, p. 318-319. The oldest Wallachian Gospel Book is the one copied by Nicodim of Tismana in 1404-1405, during his Transylvanian exile, see I. R. Mircea, "Cel mai vechi manuscris miniat din Țara Românească: Tetraevangelul popii Nicodim (1404-1405)", *Romanoslavica* 13, 1966, p. 203-221.

⁹⁴ See above, footnote 50.

⁹⁵ I will not use the typology proposed by G. Mihăilă and D. Zamfirescu, as it distorts and largely neglects the originality of Vlad's *arengae* in the Wallachian diplomatic formulary. The "monastic *arenga*" is included by the two scholars among the first type, although it shares only the incipit with the other preambles. The "damnation *arenga*" and the "monarchs' *arenga*" are classified as the second type, but once again, except for the beginning, their content differs substantially. G. Mihăilă and D. Zamfirescu conceded that Vlad's *arenga* added "some new ideas" to the template. The "loyalty's *arenga*" is completely ignored by G. Mihăilă and D. Zamfirescu, who only acknowledged the originality of the "talents' *arenga*" and of the "fear of God's *arenga*" (type 3 and 4 in their catalogue), see *Învățăturile lui Neagoe Basarab*..., p. 88-91.

⁹⁶ The "monastic *arenga*" begins with the usual reference to Hebrew 7:5 ("a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law"), but continues with the reference to the abbot's

arenga”, included in an undated diploma for the Athonite monastery of Philotheou, is arguably the gloomiest preamble ever used by the Wallachian chancery, as the threat of eternal damnation seems to overcome the hope of redemption.⁹⁷ The “monarchs’ *arenga*”, composed for a diploma to the Athonite Docheiariou monastery, elaborates on a passage from the Wisdom of Solomon on the divine origins of earthly powers.⁹⁸ The “talents’ *arenga*” comes from the above-mentioned Vlad’s diploma for the Hilandar monastery, and draws on the parable of talents from the Gospel of Matthew.⁹⁹ The “fear of God’s *arenga*”, from a diploma issued for the Bistrița monastery, expounds on the Proverbs 1:7: “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge”.¹⁰⁰ Finally, the “loyalty’s

teachings (слово старца нѣкогѣо): “the time of iniquity has come and we must earn with wisdom and humility all that might be of help to us and to bring at the time of judgement and of retribution”, in DRH.B, vol. 1, no. 186.

⁹⁷ The succession of the Biblical references in the *arenga* is the following: Romans 8:14 (“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God”); Romans 2:7 (“To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life”); Matthew 25:34 (“Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world”); Matthew 25:41-43 (“Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not”); Matthew 25:13 (“Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh”); Ezekiel 33:11 (“Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live”); Matthew 9:13 (“for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance”), in DRH.B, vol. 1, no. 202.

⁹⁸ The Biblical references are the following: Romans 8:14 (“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God”); Romans 2:7 (“To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life”); Matthew 25:34 (“Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world”); Book of Wisdom 6:1-3 (“Hear therefore, O ye kings, and understand; learn, ye that be judges of the ends of the earth. Give ear, ye that rule the people, and glory in the multitude of nations. For power is given you of the Lord, and sovereignty from the Highest, who shall try your works, and search out your counsels”), in DRH.B, vol. 1, no. 223.

⁹⁹ The Biblical references are: Hosea 6:6 (quoted in Matthew 9:13, 12:7) (“For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice”); Ecclesiasticus (The Wisdom of Sirach) 3:30 (“alms maketh an atonement for sins”); Matthew 5:7 (“Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy”); Psalms 34:8 (“O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him”); Book of Wisdom 6:1-3 (“Hear therefore, O ye kings, and understand; learn, ye that be judges of the ends of the earth. Give ear, ye that rule the people, and glory in the multitude of nations. For power is given you of the Lord, and sovereignty from the Highest, who shall try your works, and search out your counsels”); Matthew 25:14-30 (paraphrase of the parable of the talents); Matthew 25:21 (“Well done, thou good and faithful servant [...] enter thou into the joy of thy lord”); Ecclesiastes 3:1 (“To every thing there is a season”); Psalms 42:1 (“As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God”), in DRH.B, vol. 1, no. 235.

¹⁰⁰ The Biblical references are: Proverbs 1:7 (“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge”); Matthew 22: 37-38 (“Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind [...] Thou shalt love thy neighbour as

arenga” is the only preamble from a diploma written for a lay beneficiary and includes a detailed description of the ideal behaviour of a faithful nobleman: to serve one’s lord relentlessly and in every aspect, to not run away when facing the enemies, to not spare their blood and to shed it for their lord.¹⁰¹

The repertoire of Vlad the Monk’s *arengae* is impressive and highly innovative, both in style and in substance. As far as the sources are concerned, each *arenga* comprises at least one biblical quotation, even the eminently laic “loyalty’s *arenga*”, but occasionally the number of scriptural references is astounding.¹⁰² The “damnation *arenga*” comprises seven biblical references, while the “talents’ *arenga*” nine. The corpus of biblical references is substantial, with a clear bias for the Gospel of Matthew (nine excerpts) and for some of the Old Testament books, such as the Solomonic ones. The good reception at the Wallachian court of the Book of Wisdom, allegedly written by Solomon and addressed to the rulers of the earth, is unsurprising.¹⁰³ However, it should be stressed that although the Wallachian *arengae* increasingly drew on the Solomonic books, the name of Solomon never appears. The only Old Testament figure mentioned is that of David. Neither Solomon, nor Moses, quite popular in the Byzantine and Serbian *arengae*, challenged David’s position in the Wallachian ones. There is also a more subtle, terminological change. Vlad’s chancery continued the practice of introducing the biblical quotations by specific references: a psalm is announced as “the word of David”, the epistles are referred to as “the word of the apostle”, and a Gospel passage begins with a mention of Christ’s blissful voice. However, Vlad’s *arengae* doubled these specific indications with generic references to the Godly or Holy Writ: БОЖЬСТВЪНЪ ПИСАНІЕ. Moreover, two of Vlad’s diplomas, for Hilandar and for Bistrița, actually begin with a direct reference to the hearing of the Scripture: “utterly observing the Holy Godly Writ that says” (ВЪСЕ СВѢТОМЪ БОЖЕСТВЕНОМЪ

thysel’f”); Psalms 37:4 (“Delight thysel’f also in the Lord: and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart”), in DRH.B, vol. 1, no. 247.

¹⁰¹ The *arenga* begins with Matthew 13:23 (“But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it”) and continues with the ideal portrait of the loyal subject: to serve one’s lord relentlessly and in every aspect, to not run away when facing their lord’s enemies and to not spare their blood and to shed it for their lord, in DRH.B, vol. 1, no. 243.

¹⁰² The DRH edition, published during the communist regime, did not identify the biblical references. Some of the above identifications are based on P. P. Panaitescu, *Documentele Țării Românești. I. Documente interne (1369-1490)*, Bucharest, 1938; on B. I. Bojović, *Chilandar et les pays roumains...*, and on J. S. Otto, *A Philological Survey of Late 15th Century Wallachian Edicts in the Hilandar Monastery Library*, MA Thesis, Ohio State University, 1994. The rest are my own.

¹⁰³ The same biblical quotation (Wisdom 6:1-3) was used as a reading in the services of St. John Chrysostom and St. Cyril the Philosopher. The biblical verses inserted in the Wallachian *arenga* are almost identical with those used in the *Bavarian Service of St. Cyril* and in the *Khudov Parimejnik*, see B. Mircheva, “On the ‘second’ service for St. Cyril the Philosopher”, in A. Kulik, C. M. MacRobert, S. Nikolova, M. Taube, and C. M. Vakareliyska (eds.), *The Bible in Slavic Tradition*, Leiden, 2016, p. 471-472.

послѣдѣще писанію рекшомъ) and “I’ve heard the Holy Writ saying” (Въсе свѣтаа писаніа слышахъмъ).¹⁰⁴ This innovative practice reminds of the rhetorical strategies specific to homilies. There are several other rhetorical novelties in Vlad’s *arengae* that suggest a strong familiarity with religious writings. For instance, the “fear of God’s *arenga*” is similar in its structure to a homily, as each biblical reference is followed by a question and afterwards by a brief answer.¹⁰⁵

Stylistically, the most surprising feature of Vlad’s *arengae* is their compositional pattern, as most of them look like erudite spinoffs of the two long-established preambles. The “monastic *arenga*” begins with a quotation from Hebrews 7:5, as the second traditional template. However, instead of continuing on the same line, it then turns surprisingly to the monastic teachings on preparing one’s soul for the Final Judgement. The compositional pattern of the “damnation *arenga*” is strikingly similar. It begins like the first traditional template with Matthew 25:34, but then it takes a sudden twist and, as if the entire Gospel of Matthew came to the composer’s mind, it continues with Matthew 25:41-43, 25:13, and 9:13. The last derivative preamble is the “monarchs’ *arenga*”, which also starts with Matthew 25:34, only to continue with the fragment from the Wisdom of Solomon on the divine origins of earthly powers. The same biblical passage was to be later incorporated in the “talents *arenga*”, by far the most successful of Vlad’s preambles, judging by its posterity.¹⁰⁶ This pattern of composition, of an *arenga* that starts as a conventional template but then it turns into a completely new composition by an avalanche of astutely interwoven biblical references, seems something of a show off. Someone at Vlad’s court, and it is quite difficult not to think of Vlad the Monk himself, was parading his Biblical proficiency, his familiarity with the monastic teachings and his displays of homiletic rhetoric. Vlad’s involvement in the composition of these *arengae* is, as I already mentioned, impossible to

¹⁰⁴ For a discussion on the Slavonic names of the Bible and of the Biblical Books in the Bulgarian tradition, see T. Ilieva, “The names of the books from the biblical corpus in old Bulgarian literature”, in A. Kulik et al. (eds.), *The Bible in Slavic Tradition*, p. 311-338.

¹⁰⁵ Its structure is the following: Proverbs 1:7; rhetorical question (“Which are the good deeds that those who fear God should accomplish?”), brief answer; Matthew 22:37-38; Psalms 37:4; rhetorical question (“What is the best way to delight yourself into God?”); brief answer. For the questions-and-answers texts, a propaedeutic monastic genre popular in the Slavonic medieval tradition, see A. Miltenova, “Erotapokriseis in Medieval Slavonic Literature: Exegesis or Catechesis?”, in S. H. Aufrère, P. S. Alexander, and Z. Pleše (eds.), *On the Fringe of Commentary. Metatextuality in Ancient Near Eastern and Ancient Mediterranean Cultures*, Leuven, 2014, p. 379-403.

¹⁰⁶ Radu’s chancery used this *arenga* twice, for Govora and for the Saint Catherine monastery on Mount Sinai, Vlad the Young’s once in his diploma for Hilandar, while Neagoe Basarab included it in five of his diplomas (for Vișina, for Corbii, for Bolintin, for Govora and for Cotmeana); in DRH.B, vol. 1, nos. 273, 279; vol. 2, nos. 71, 97, 153, 163, and 173, and P. Zahariuc, “Câteva documente de la Neagoe Basarab”, *Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie* 28, 2010, p. 202-205.

assess. Nonetheless, what seems certain is that the former monk-turned-lord was not in the least trying to conceal his monastic past, but instead he was vigorously exploiting it. In the first year of his reign, in the first new *arenga*, Vlad's chancery chose to invoke explicitly the monastic teachings of an anonymous abbot. Such an unusual reference is startling, but even more remarkable is the warning call it contained: "the time of iniquity has come" (ДОСАЖДЕНІА ВРѢМѦ) and we must prepare "for the time of judgement and reward" (ВРѢМѦ СЪДА И ВЪЗДАНІА).

A ruler-monk "for the time of judgement"

Vlad the Monk ascended to the throne in 1482, but back then the Wallachian chancery was not reckoning the passage of time from the birth of Jesus.¹⁰⁷ Vlad and his court counted the years according to the Byzantine tradition, from the creation of Adam. Therefore, the year of Vlad's ascension was 6990 and the end of the seventh millennium was just around the corner. The eschatological fears of the year 7000 are well documented in some ecclesiastical circles of the Slavo-Byzantine sphere. The cosmic week of seven thousand years was coming a full circle and the beginning of the eighth day was the time of fulfilment.¹⁰⁸ The first patriarch of the Ottoman Constantinople, Gennadius Scholarius, dedicated the second part of his *Chronograph* to an eschatological computation.¹⁰⁹ He concluded that there were only 20 years left to the Last Judgement. A Slavic-writing Cantacuzène was asked in 1469 to compose a life of Saint John of Rila, in the context of the translation of the saint's relics.¹¹⁰ The one mediating the transfer of the relics was a relative of Demetrius Cantacuzène, no other than Mara Brancović, whom we already encountered. Cantacuzène's *Life* was overtly alluding to the closing end of the world, as some of his other writings did: "it seems to me that the end of the century has already arrived; the

¹⁰⁷ It was only towards the end of the 16th century that the Wallachian chancery used for the first time, sporadically and reticently, the Anno Domini chronology, see D. Bogdan, "Diplomatica slavo-română", p. 116-118. It seems that Manole the scribe introduced the Anno Domini chronology in two private noble charters, issued in 1598-1599, doubling the traditional chronology, from the Creation of Adam. Suggestively, Manole chose to express the new date by using Arabic numbers and not Cyrillic numerals, see DHR.B, vol. 11, nos. 315 and 318 (AMR-BU-F-00684-1643).

¹⁰⁸ P. Magdalino, "The year 1000 in Byzantium", in P. Magdalino (ed.), *Byzantium in the Year 1000*, Leiden, 2003, p. 238.

¹⁰⁹ M.-H. Congourdeau, "Byzance et la fin du monde. Courants de pensée Apocalyptiques sous les Paleologues", in B. Lellouch and S. Yerasimos (eds.), *Les traditions Apocalyptiques au tournant de la chute de Constantinople*, Paris, 1999, p. 69-70; A. A. Vasiliev, "Medieval ideas of the end of the world: West and East", *Byzantion* 16.2, 1942, p. 497-501.

¹¹⁰ I. Dujčev, *Medioevo Bizantino-Slavo*, vol. 3, Rome, 1971, p. 316-318.

time of the eighth millennium, the one which will meet no end, is close now”.¹¹¹ The numerous *paschalias* that ended abruptly with the year 7000 suggest that the fear of millennium spread through the Orthodox lands, amongst the ecclesiastical milieu, from Thessaloniki to Moscow.¹¹² Despite living thousands of miles apart, the clerics that computed the dates of movable feasts for the years to come, shared the same thought: the Easter of the year 7000 was to be the last one. Such a *paschalia* that stopped suddenly at the end of the seventh millennium was also used in Wallachia, as Alexandru Mareş convincingly argued.¹¹³ The Slavonic manuscripts copied in Wallachia and Moldavia attest to the circulation of the eschatological expectations surrounding the end of the seventh millennium.¹¹⁴ Such was the *Life* of Andrew the Fool, which comprises the answer given by the saint to a question asked by his disciple, Epiphanius: how will this world come to an end?¹¹⁵ The saint reveals that the end of this world will come with the year 7000 and in support of this prophecy, he invokes Solomon’s words from Ecclesiastes (11:2): “Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth”. Saint Andrew the Fool’s *Life* arrived in Wallachia and Moldavia through Bulgaria and Serbia and, most probably, it was already circulating in the second half of the 15th century.¹¹⁶

Thus, to use Paul Magdalino’s taxonomy, around the year 7000, Wallachian and Moldavian monks were familiar with two forms of eschatological dating: “computus dating”, the projection of numerically significant dates, and “dating on the side”, the chronology projected by apocalyptic texts.¹¹⁷ To these, one might also add the “blind dating”, the interpretation of natural phenomena believed to herald the end of the world. The first mention of Pahomie/Vlad as a pretender, presumably shortly after he left the monastery, comes from 1457. Just a year before, in 1456, the Halley comet

¹¹¹ The quotation is from Demetrius Cantacuzène’s epistle to lord Isaiah (*Poslanje kir Isaji*), in I. Dujčev, *Medioevo Bizantino-Slavo*, p. 317-318.

¹¹² For the Thessaloniki *paschalia*, see M.-H. Congourdeau, “Byzance et la fin du monde...”, p. 72. For the Moscow *paschalia*, see I. Ševčenko, “Byzantium and the Eastern Slavs after 1453”, *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 2.1, 1978, p. 10.

¹¹³ A. Mareş, “Sfârşitul lumii (anii 7000 şi 8000) în textele slavo-române şi româneşti din secolele al XV-lea–al XVIII-lea”, *Studii şi Materiale de Istorie Medie* 22, 2004, p. 196-197 with an addendum in 23, 2005, p. 329-330.

¹¹⁴ For the later circulation of Byzantine and post-Byzantine eschatological texts in Romanian translation, see A. Timotin, *Profeţii bizantine şi postbizantine în Țările Române (secolele al XVII-lea – al XIX-lea)*, Bucharest, 2015.

¹¹⁵ For the 10th c. Greek original of the saint’s *Life* see L. Rydén, *The Life of St Andrew the Fool*, vol. 2: *Text, Translation and Notes*, Uppsala, 1995. For later Romanian translations of this saint’s *Life*, see C. Velculescu, *Nebuni întru Hristos*, Bucharest, 2007 with some later additions in C. Velculescu, *Proloage, Fiziolog, Alexandria, Cosmografii*, s.l., 2018, p. 83-111.

¹¹⁶ For a discussion on the manuscript circulation of Andrew the Fool’s *Life* in medieval Wallachia and Moldavia, see A. Mareş, “Sfârşitul lumii...”, p. 198-199.

¹¹⁷ P. Magdalino, “The year 1000...”, p. 239-240.

crossed the skies of Wallachia and made a powerful impression on its inhabitants, at least judging by the coin minted on this occasion by the ruling prince, Vlad's own brother.¹¹⁸

The political implications of such eschatological beliefs are difficult to assess and interpreting the mindset of a political community based on a few manuscripts and some ecclesiastical tables of dates might be methodologically problematic. Nonetheless, it can be done, as Maria Magdalena Székely and Liviu Pilat had persuasively demonstrated in their studies on Stephen the Great and the expectations of the year 7000 in Moldavia.¹¹⁹ Their investigations took different paths, but their conclusion was the same: Stephen was aware of the millennial expectations, as some of his actions suggest. Moreover, his remarkable political success might be partially explained by a collective eschatological expectation in some of the Moldavian milieux. Both authors were skilfully building their arguments using circumstantial evidence, while both deplored the absence of direct textual corroboration. Fortunately, for the Wallachian case of Vlad the Monk there is no need of erudite conjectures, as his *arengae* give us a unique insight into the eschatological anxiety of the year 7000 and into its political use.

Vlad's first new preamble is the "monastic *arenga*" from 6991 (1483), which explicitly drew on the monastic eschatological literature as it straightforwardly announced that "the time of iniquity has come" and that they all must prepare "for the time of judgement and reward". The motif of the Last Judgement is further expounded in Vlad's most grim *arenga*, written in the diploma for Philotheou. The document has no date, which in itself is highly unusual for a solemn diploma.¹²⁰ A small palaeographical detail reveals how important dating was for Vlad the Monk's chancery. To distinguish numbers from texts, as both were written with Cyrillic letters, the chancery scribe usually added a title over the year. In order to emphasize the dating, Vlad's scribes sometimes used three and even four such diacritic symbols, one for each letter-

¹¹⁸ O. Iliescu, "Vlad l'Empaleur et le droit monétaire", *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire* 18.1, 1979, p. 107-131.

¹¹⁹ M. M. Székely, "Ștefan cel Mare și sfârșitul lumii", *Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie* 21, 2003, p. 271-278; L. Pilat, "Mesianism și escatologie în imaginarul epocii lui Ștefan cel Mare", *Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie* 22, 2004, p. 101-116. For an attempt to link the eschatological expectations to the late 15th century Moldavian historical writing, see E. Dragnev, "Literatura profetico-escatologică bizantină în țările române (sec. XV-XVI). Note preliminare", in S. Șipoș, D. O. Cepraga, and I. Gumenăi (eds.), *Tradiții istorice românești și perspective europene. În Onoarea academician Ioan-Aurel Pop*, Oradea – Chișinău, 2015, p. 161-187. For a more skeptical view on the Moldavian eschatological expectations of the year 7000, see Șt. Andreescu, *Din istoria Mării Negre*, Bucharest, 2001, p. 305.

¹²⁰ Of the 15 extant solemn diplomas issued by Vlad's chancery, the Philotheou diploma is the only one undated. Usually, the solemn diplomas were dated by the year from the Creation of Adam and by the indiction, see DRH.B, vol. 1, nos. 186, 189, 192, 203, 214, 220, 223, 226, 234, 235, 241, 243, 244, and 247.

number of the year.¹²¹ Coming back to the Philotheou diploma, a *terminus post quem* can be safely set for the last months of 6995 (1487) due to the mentioning of one of Vlad's sons amongst the dead.¹²² Unfortunately, a *terminus ante quem* is much more difficult to determine, therefore the Philotheou diploma could have been issued either before the year 7000, or shortly after it.¹²³ Nonetheless, the eschatological references included in the *arenga* are instantly recognizable and the whole diploma is a formulaic hapax. All Wallachian diplomas used to begin with the symbolic invocation of the cross. So does the Philotheou diploma, but for the first time the cross was replaced with a NIKΑ Christogram.¹²⁴ It then followed the bleak *arenga*, which mentioned that the doers of good deeds will partake in the joy of God, while the sinners will be sent to the eternal fire. Reminding everyone that the Lord might come at any moment and find them unprepared,¹²⁵ Vlad urged all those who were burdened by a heavy load of sins or who had been hurt by the Devil's terrible arrow to repent. There was still hope for salvation, although Vlad confessed that they were all overwhelmed by worldly affairs and by the vanities of this transient existence. The diploma continued with the granting of a yearly donation to the Philotheou monastery, in exchange of which Vlad asked the Athonite monks to include the names of the members of his family in the liturgical memorial and to serve a liturgy every week for them.¹²⁶ The diploma ends, highly unusual for the Wallachian diplomatics, with a prayer for the intercession of the patron saint of Philotheou, the Virgin.¹²⁷ The context in which this extraordinary unusual diploma was

¹²¹ D. P. Bogdan, *Paleografia româno-slavă*, Bucharest, 1978, p. 191.

¹²² Vlad's son Vlad (Vladula) was still alive on the 12th of June 1487, but he died before the 4th of February 1488, see DHR. B, vol. 1, nos. 103 and 210.

¹²³ The first editor, Stoica Nicolaescu, dated the diploma in between 1488-1492, while the DRH editors extended the interval in between 1487-1492, see S. Nicolaescu, "Ajutoare bănești și danii...", p. 126 and DRH.B, vol. 1, no. 202. Unfortunately, neither the reference to the *proegoumenoi* German and Stephan helps us to narrow down the interval, as the list of the late 15th century *egoumenoi* and *proegoumenoi* of Philotheou is incomplete. Based on the signatures on the Dionysiou acts, the *proegoumenoi* German and Stephan are dated sometimes in-between 1483 and 1502, which is not very helpful, see N. Oikonomidès, *Actes du Dionysiou*, Paris, 1968, p. 212-213.

¹²⁴ To my knowledge, this is the only document issued by the Wallachian chancery throughout the 15th and the 16th centuries that begins with a Nika Christogram. I found the Christogram only in one other Wallachian document, but this time at the end of it, in the diploma issued by Vlad's son, Radu, for the Athonite monastery of Saint Panteleimon, see DRH.B, vol. 1, no. 263.

¹²⁵ The *arenga* was quoting Matthew 25:13 ("Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh").

¹²⁶ The diploma also included the promise that Vlad's sons and successors will continue to pay the bequest.

¹²⁷ To complicate things even further, at some point after Vlad's diploma was issued, the relationship between the Philotheou monastery and the Wallachian court seems to have broken. Unlike the other Athonite monasteries, Philotheou did not received any financial aid from Vlad's successors. For a discussion, see P. Ș. Năsturel, *Le Mont Athos et les Roumains. Recherches sur leurs relations du milieu du XIV^e siècle à 1654*, Rome, 1986, p. 225-226 and especially R. Allison,

issued by the Wallachian chancery must have been exceptional in itself. The question that seems to have troubled Vlad – and if it mattered to him, it should also matter to us, as Geoffrey Koziol brilliantly argued¹²⁸ – was that of his and his family's salvation. Undoubtedly, for Vlad his personal and his family's salvation were inextricably intertwined. The gloomy Philotheou *arenga* was not just some sort of rhetorical exercise of a Biblical connoisseur, but the articulation of a haunting question: "Was I/Were we going to burn in hell?" The Philotheou diploma is jam-packed with eschatological imagery: "the sinners that will be sent in the eternal fire", "burdened by the heavy load of sins", "hurt by the devil's arrow", "the frightful Judgment", "the time of the terrifying Judgment". One gets a palpable impression of the terrible fear that must have been experienced both by those who wrote this diploma, but also by those who listened to its words.

We should never forget that Vlad's diplomas, especially the solemn ones, were meant for public reading and scrutiny. Before being bestowed to the monks, the diplomas were displayed and read out loud in front of the Wallachian court. Thus, the message conveyed by the *arengae* was also addressed to the core political community of the realm. The high clerics were also usually there, as the metropolitan of Wallachia opens the list of witnesses in the Tismana diploma (6991/1483) and in the Bistrița diploma (7002/1494).¹²⁹ Most likely, the metropolitans also attended the court when the Athonite delegations received a donation, but as the list of witnesses is usually absent from the Athonite solemn diplomas' formulary, their presence remains undocumented.¹³⁰ By means of his *arengae*, Vlad self-fashioned the identity of a deeply devout ruler who had a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures and who reigned in eschatological times. Due to the lack of sources, it is impossible to reconstruct if and how this identity was transposed into political actions. There are, however, some interesting clues. Considering the number of nobles' lands he confiscated and redistributed, Vlad the Monk dwarfs all other 15th century rulers.¹³¹ This means that his reign was contested, but also that he was extremely successful in thwarting all challenges and upheavals. To some extent, Vlad's style of reigning echoes the "mixture of hardline autocracy and ascetic piety" displayed by another millenaristic ruler, Basil II.¹³² The first test came shortly after Vlad's ascension, in the first year of

"Founders and refounders of Philotheou monastery on Mt. Athos", in M. Mullett (ed.), *Founders and Refounders of Byzantine Monasteries*, Belfast, 2007, p. 493-503.

¹²⁸ G. Koziol, "Is Robert I in hell? The diploma for Saint-Denis and the mind of a rebel king (Jan. 25, 923)", *Early Medieval Europe* 14.3, 2006, p. 233-267.

¹²⁹ DRH.B, vol. 1, nos. 186 and 247.

¹³⁰ Of all six Athonite diplomas issued by Vlad's chancery, only a document for Kutlumis includes a list of witnesses, see DRH.B, vol. 1, nos. 202, 203, 214, 223, 231, and 235.

¹³¹ I. Donat, *Domeniul domnesc în Țara Românească (sec. XIV-XVI)*, Bucharest, 1996, p. 32.

¹³² P. Magdalino, "The year 1000...", p. 265.

his reign, when he defeated in battle a pretender and afterwards decapitated him.¹³³ From the very beginning, Vlad had a stout group of supporters, but he showed great skills in expanding his political base with some of the most influential noble families in Wallachia. A diploma issued by Vlad's chancery in 6995/1487 lists fourteen witnesses, of which only seven had an office at the court.¹³⁴ The first names on the list were the representatives of the most prominent Wallachian noble families: Dragomir Udriște, Neagoe Borcea, Vintilă Florescu, Drăghici Vintilescu, and Barbu Craiovescu.¹³⁵ We do not know how Vlad the Monk managed to enlist the support of all these Wallachian "big men", but we might suspect that the eschatological expectations played a part in this unprecedented success.¹³⁶ To us, Vlad's mundane strategies, his long-term donations and especially his attempts to ensure his sons' succession to the throne seem difficult to reconcile with the eschatological expectations. Nonetheless, different modes of thinking about the future could easily coexist in the same mind-frame. To take just one famous medieval example, studied by Piero Boitani, Dante's anxiety and eschatological passion did not prevent him to be equally concerned with his enduring fame as a poet.¹³⁷ The expectation of the Second Coming did not mean the abandonment of all worldly duties and desires. Vlad did not know whether the End will certainly come in the year 7000, but he was fearful of such a possibility.

The year 7000 came and went, yet the world continued. The new *paschalias* were the most tangible proof that those who once expected the end of times, were again planning ahead for the future. Vlad himself had to readjust, but ten years into his reign he was in a far better position than ever before. The year 7001 brought Vlad's most daring political move: the transfer of the

¹³³ The confrontation between Vlad the Monk and the usurper, Vlad from Bădești, is mentioned in a diploma issued by Radu the Great DRH.B, vol. 2, no. 9. For a thorough discussion, see R. Oprea, "Un caz de hicleie în vremea lui Vlad Călugărul voievod (1481, 1482-1495)", *Revista de Istorie Militară* 5/6, 2009, p. 1-7.

¹³⁴ DRH.B, vol. 1, no. 205.

¹³⁵ For Dragomir Udriște, see M. Coman and O. Cristea, "Istории paralele, istorii convergente. Moldova și Țara Românească în 1457 și 1476", *Analele Putnei* 11.1, 2015, p. 110-111. For Neagoe, Borcea's son, see L. Rădvan, "Observații privitoare la evoluția Craiovei în secolele XV-XVII", *Historia Urbana* 11.1-2, 2004, p. 97-98. For Vintilă Florescu, see G. D. Florescu, *Divanele domnești...*, p. 227-229. For Drăghici Vintilescu, see N. Stoicescu, *Dicționar al marilor dregători din Țara Românească și Moldova: sec. XIV-XVII*, Bucharest, 1971, p. 55-56. On Barbu Craiovescu, see I. C. Filitti, "Banatul Olteniei și Craioveștii", *Arhivele Olteniei* 11, 1932, pp. 1-128.

¹³⁶ After the reigns of Vlad and his son's Radu, Wallachia was torn apart by the disputes between the Western-based nobles (led by the Craioveștii) and the Eastern-based ones (led by the Vintileștii), see M. Coman, *Putere și teritoriu...*, p. 110-128.

¹³⁷ P. Boitani, "Those who will call this time ancient: The Futures of Prophecy and Poetry", in J. A. Burrow and I. P. Wei (eds.), *Medieval Futures. Attitudes to the Future in the Middle Ages*, Woodbridge, 2000, p. 51-65.

patronage of the Athonite monastery of Hilandar from the Brancović to Vlad's family. Actually, as Radu Păun has compellingly shown, Vlad's pretence was a fraud. There was no such transfer of a "patronage legacy" from Mara Brancović and her sister "Cantacuzina" and, most importantly, Vlad was definitely not the first Wallachian lord to assume the role of Hilandar's protector. Vlad's diploma for Hilandar from 7001 was simply erasing the memory of his predecessor and rival, who was already included amongst the *ktetors* of the Serbian Athonite monastery and whom an Ottoman *nishan* registered as a protector of it.¹³⁸ The benefits that Vlad could draw from overlooking the previous relations between the Wallachian court and Hilandar are rather obvious and have already been thoroughly discussed. However, the timing of the Hilandar diploma was not wholly explained.¹³⁹ Once again, the *arenga* might help us to better grasp the meaning of Vlad's deceptive act from 7001 (1492). There could not be a greater contrast between the Philotheou and the Hilandar *arengae*. Any eschatological reference vanished from the Hilandar diploma and the grim tone of the Philotheou donation was replaced by the most serene feeling. Instead of anxiously expecting for the future Last Judgement, the Hilandar diploma turns towards the past, as its leitmotif are "the foregoing rulers". The *arenga* includes the Book of Wisdom's call to the kings of the earth, followed by no fewer than four references to the "venerating and blessed foregoing lords". This category included the Serbian dynasts, but it was not limited to them, as it also comprised the former lords of Wallachia and the Old Testament kings.¹⁴⁰ A new legitimizing strategy came to light, one that might be aptly called 'the Serbian turn', marking the last years of Vlad's reign, one that was to be continued by Vlad's son and successor, Radu.

Conclusions

One can hardly find a medieval lord of Wallachia more disparaged and derided by modern scholars than Vlad the Monk. His only biographer,

¹³⁸ The *nishan* was published by the Ottomanist Vančo Boškov in 1982. For a discussion and full bibliographical references, see R. G. Păun, "Quelques notes...", p. 155-156. The list of Wallachian princes, benefactors of the monastery, included in a Hilandar manuscript (ms. HRL 510) began with Basarab the Young, see R. G. Păun, "La Valachie et le monastère de Chilandar...", p. 144-145.

¹³⁹ The Athonite perspective was convincingly reconstructed by Radu Păun, who argued that the Hilandar monks sought Vlad's help in the years 1491-1492 because at that point they were confronting a double crisis (Mara's wills were contested by her niece, Maria-Jelena, and the Ottoman authorities antagonized the Athonite monks by destroying their bells), see R. G. Păun, "Quelques notes...", p. 159-160. However, the Wallachian-Hilandar relationship was a two-way affair and Vlad the Monk must have had his own reasons for supporting the monastery at that moment.

¹⁴⁰ A. Pippidi, *Tradiția politică bizantină...*, p. 36-37.

Alexandru Lapedatu, thought of no better way to advertise his subject than to say, at the very beginning of his monograph, that: “the Wallachian chroniclers did not remember Vlad, and there is little wonder why, given that the former monk’s personality was weak and his reign was inconsequential”.¹⁴¹ Nicolae Iorga, with his unrivalled authority, gave an even harsher verdict: Vlad was nothing more than a poor old man, incapable of fighting and who travelled throughout his realm, ignobly, by a wagon.¹⁴² But nothing equals the devastating literary portrait made to Vlad by the Romanian poet George Coșbuc. In a little-known satire, Coșbuc depicted Vlad as a shrewd political player that used religion to bring his court and the Wallachian nobles into submission.¹⁴³ For once, the poet’s imagination seems to be more accurate than the historian’s investigation. Unlike Coșbuc, I do not believe that Vlad manipulated religion, more specifically the eschatological expectations of the year 7000, in a highly calculated and unscrupulous manner. The analysis of his *arengae* suggests that Vlad was genuinely anxious about the Final Judgment, as he knew his sins very well. The most difficult years for a newly enthroned lord of Wallachia were right at the beginning of his reign. By convincing, or at least half-convincing, his most powerful subjects that the world was to end in 7000, Vlad bought himself the necessary time to consolidate his rule. Vlad did not spend these years in an ecstatic expectation of the Second Coming; on the contrary, he was most active. After all, it was his duty as a God-appointed ruler to put his principality in order for the reception of the King of Kings and, viewed in this context, many of his political and cultural enterprises make far more sense. Thus, using wisely the time given to him, Vlad the Monk set the ground for a new regime that was to last for 25 years. Considering the systemic instability of the late medieval Wallachian politics, one might say that this quarter of century almost equates to a millennium of peace.

¹⁴¹ A. Lapedatu, *Vlad-Vodă Călugărul...*, p. 3.

¹⁴² N. Iorga, *Istoria românilor*, vol. IV, ed. by S. Cheptea and V. Neamțu, Bucharest, 1996, p. 152. Part of Iorga’s criticism towards Vlad was due to the accurate remark that he continued to behave as a monk even after his enthronement (p. 161).

¹⁴³ “Dacă vor veni-mpotriva/Țării tale agarei/Scoți pe sfânta Paraschiva/Și cu mila dumneaci/Le mânăci la toți coliva/Iar popor când o să vie:/“Noi pierim, mărite Domn!”/Iai ceaslovul unde scrie/Rugăciunile spre somn/Și spre pace-o să le fie!/Oh, păgâna tălmăcire./Cu acel “Io Voievod”!/Dar de-a pururi fericire/Când va-ncepe orice izvod/Cu “de la Matei cetire”/Iar boieri tăind vreodată,/N-o să moară fără’ de popi,/Tu, cu mila ta de tată/Pui odăjdii și-i îngropi/Prohodindu-i fără plată!/Și-ndreptar a tot erezeul,/Tu, apoi, cădelnițând,/Vornicul va spune Crezul/Tretilogofăt purtând/Căldărușa cu botezul/Și boierii-apoi grămadă/Cu cădelniți și potcap/Sfinții-n rai de-așa paradă/Nici în piele nu-și încap”, in G. Coșbuc, “Vlad-Vodă Călugărul (Din condica unui monah)”, *Viața românească* 3.4, 1908, p. 57-58.

WAR AND RELIGIOUS RHETORIC IN WALLACHIA DURING THE “LONG TURKISH WAR”

Ovidiu Cristea

In 1601, during the Habsburg-Ottoman clashes near Székesfehérvár, a Capuchin monk, Lorenzo da Brindisi, was one of the most praised figures in the Christian camp. In the key moments of the battle, he encouraged the soldiers, both Catholics and Protestants, and holding his “weapon” – a cross full of relics¹ – joined the first line of combat. According to the imperial adviser Girolamo Dentice, an eyewitness to the events, father Lorenzo was the main reason for the success of the Habsburgs, his cross and blessings protecting the soldiers against their foes.² When the Ottomans seemed to break through the imperial lines, father Lorenzo raised his cross and, invoking the name of God, heartened the troops to resume the fight.³ Other sources confirm Dentice’s testimony. Girolamo Lovencito, a subject of the Duke of Savoy, stated that the Crucifix of the Capuchins worked miracles during the battle,⁴ while other testimonies claimed that, before the battle, Lorenzo’s sermon used a topic from the second book of the Chronicles (*Iuda et Ierusalem, nolite timere: cras egrediemini et Dominus erit vobiscum*)⁵ which inspired the troops. Lorenzo not only motivated the soldiers but also vowed to take the cross and to lead them in combat, a promise that he put into practice.⁶ Obviously, it may be assumed that Girolamo

¹ *San Lorenzo da Brindisi. Dottore de la Chiesa universale (1559-1619) IV.1. Documenti*, Venice – Mestre, 1960, doc. 202, p. 174: “Et in questo mezzo il buon padre nostro capucino andava a cavallo ad una chinea di portanti con le sue armi, che era una croce di legna, piena di reliquie. Discorreva per l’esercito, dando le sue benedizioni di inanimando tutti et confessando alcuni divoti a cavallo con molta carità. Certo fu osservato et stimato da tutti et Catolici et heretici, li quali non lo burlavano più, anzi l’honoravano et amavano”.

² *Ibid.*, p. 173: “si può ben dire che le benedizioni della croce che porta et con le sue orationi fu causa d’ogni nostro bene”. A similar view is shared by Filippo Bevilacqua, see P. Arturo M. da Carmignano di Brenta, *San Lorenzo da Brindisi IV.2. Documenti*, Venice – Mestre, 1960, doc. 1142, p. 297: “questa relation della opinion universal di tutto il campo, che la vittoria fosse venuta per intercession del padre, fu riferita alla maestà dell’imperatore in Praga”.

³ *Ibid.*, IV.1, p. 175.

⁴ *Ibid.*, doc. 206, p. 179: “ma il stendardo del crucifisso che portavan i Capuzzini ha fatto miraculi”.

⁵ 2 Chronicles 20:17.

⁶ P. Arturo M. da Carmignano di Brenta, *San Lorenzo da Brindisi*, II, p. 154.

Dentice exaggerated Lorenzo da Brindisi's part in the Habsburgs' success.⁷ However, the emphasis that Dentice placed on religious aspects of the war and on Lorenzo da Brindisi's role as a messenger of God is by no means exceptional during the "Long Turkish War". In 1595, for instance, the apostolic nuncio who accompanied the Christian army led by the Transylvanian prince, Sigismund Báthory during the expedition in Wallachia blessed the prince's armour before the battle of Târgoviște, a gesture aimed to ensure the divine protection for a prince considered as a new "Alexander the Great". The prince himself, mounted on a horse, encouraged the troops to show bravery in their combat for Christ's glory. Sigismund also claimed that he was a son and a servant of the Catholic Church and that, strengthened by spiritual weapons, he was confident in the success of the expedition.⁸

As we shall see, Sigismund Báthory's gestures and words before the battle belong to a type of exemplary attitude aimed to represent a sovereign not only as an ideal monarch, but also as a perfect soldier of Christ. In similar contexts, several princes of Wallachia and Moldavia used comparable gestures in an effort to legitimate their fight against their enemies, both Muslims and Christians. Such concern for legitimacy had at the time a double purpose: it was directed towards the princes' own subjects in an attempt to ensure the cohesion of the realm during the war, but it was also aimed to convince other European courts of the princes' good intentions. The latter aspect was of particular importance for Transylvania, Wallachia and Moldavia since for all three Principalities the pursuit of war depended heavily on the military and financial support of other Christian powers, the special emphasis on the legitimacy of their wars could be easily understood. Strongly related with the search for legitimacy and the invocation of divine protection were the premonitory events mentioned by various testimonies (ominous signs, natural phenomena) which were interpreted as a clear indication of God's intervention. Thus, in the same Wallachian campaign of 1595, the troops witnessed several extraordinary events: a burning torch appeared one night in the sky;⁹ a splendid celestial light¹⁰

⁷ This is the case of a long and detailed description made by an Italian officer, Giovanni Marco Isolano. A Hungarian translation of the text was published by K. Benda, "Giovanni Marco Isolano grof ezredes feljegyzesei a magyarországi török háborúrol, 1594-1602", *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 96, 1983, p. 651-681. An edition of the text with a Romanian translation is in progress.

⁸ *Mihai Viteazul în Conștiința Europeană* (hereafter MVCE), I. *Documente externe*, Bucharest, 1982, doc. 23, p. 125. The testimony belongs to the Jesuit Giacomo Uniensi, so one may suspect that he overemphasizes the related events. For the role of the Jesuits in the spreading of Catholic reform among the soldiers, see V. Lavenia, "Tra Cristo e Marte: disciplina e catechesi del soldato Cristiano in età moderna", in G. P. Brizzi and G. Olmi (eds.), *Dai cantieri alla storia: "Liber amicorum" per Paolo Prodi*, Bologna, 2007, p. 37-54.

⁹ MVCE, I, doc. 123, p. 125: "apparuit noctu tamquam fax accensa in caelo".

surrounded Prince Sigismund's tent and, later on, an eagle descended to the same tent landing at the prince's feet.¹¹ The last sign was interpreted as a good omen for the future campaign, while a comet, usually an ambiguous sign, which appeared during the same time on the sky, was seen as a premonition of Ottoman imminent defeat. Although Pope Clement VIII expressed his scepticism with respect to the aforementioned premonitory signs, he nevertheless considered them as noteworthy. According to the Pope, omens have a great impact on ordinary people and, consequently, could be used by pontifical and Habsburg propaganda for gaining support for the anti-Ottoman war.¹²

The Pope's words point to the relation between the "miraculous" events and the political ideas developed by the main actors of the war or, in other words, between the facts and the discourses which mirrored them. In November 1594, the Wallachian and Moldavian voivodes – Michael "the Brave" and Aron "the Tyrant" – revolted against the Porte stating that it was a duty of every Christian prince to join the fight against the infidels for the benefit of all Christendom. Before the outbreak of the rebellion and in the following months, this topic of devotion for the common cause of Christianity was always related, in the discourses of Wallachian and Moldavian princes, with the pleas for help addressed to other Christian sovereigns. Both topics had a long history in the diplomacy of Romanian Principalities but it will be wrong to assume that, at the end of the 16th century, the voivodes reshaped old clichés in the context of a new conflict with the Porte. More probably, the voivodes used arguments that could convince other sovereigns of their good intentions. In context, speaking about a common enemy and a shared religion seem to be a good starting point for negotiation.

Strongly related with the Wallachian and Moldavian devotion for Christendom was the idea that the Romanian Principalities were an outpost of

¹⁰ A. Decei, "Documente din arhivele Vaticanului privind anul 1595", *Revista Arhivelor* 10.1, 1967, doc. 86, p. 236. It is possible, however, that the sources describe in different ways the same omen.

¹¹ E. Veress, *Carillo Alfonz Jezsuita-Atya, Levelezése és iratai (1591-1618)*, Budapest, 1906, doc. 114, p. 167: "qui refert cum tentorium Ser^{mi} principis extenderetur ad primum pagum Valachiae, ad illud ex edita rupe vicina, quam vulgo vocant *Lapidem regium* aquilam praegrandem advolasse, atque illud ita condescendisse, ut a nostris capta fuerit, quam conservant et alunt in castris pro bono omine"; a Romanian version of the text in M. Holban, M. M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and P. Cernovodeanu (eds.), *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, III, Bucharest, 1971, p. 704.

¹² A. Veress, *Documente privitoare la istoria Ardealului, Moldovei și Țării Românești*, vol. IV: *Acte și scrisori (1593-1595)*, Bucharest, 1932, doc. 169, p. 309; MVCE, V. *Mărturii*, Bucharest, 1990, doc. 43 p. 111: "Sua Sanctità soglionse non si deve creder a questii augurii; tuttavia si legono cose grandi et fanno grandi impressioni nei popoli et questo potrebbono giovare al nostro bisogno".

Christianity. It was a topic used with a double purpose.¹³ On one hand, it underlined the key defensive role of the Romanian Principalities for all Christendom, while on the other hand it emphasized their military weakness in front of the Ottoman military might. While this idea of *antemurale christianitatis* was used by voivodes of Wallachia and Moldavia since the 15th c., during the “Long War” the topic seems to have been part of a strategy aimed to convince Emperor Rudolph II and Pope Clement VIII of the loyalty of Romanian Principalities and their determination to pursue the war against the infidels.

As already underscored, similar topics were used by other political actors. In 1594, for instance, the Cossacks claimed in front of imperial emissary, Erich Lassota von Steblau, that they were ready to shed their blood for the Christian faith.¹⁴ About the same time, the Serbs, who rebelled against the Porte, swore allegiance to Sigismund Báthory and Michael the Brave in the name of the common faith.¹⁵ Likewise, two years later, in 1596, Sigismund Báthory stated that he is determined to continue the fight against the Ottomans despite their repeated offers for a peace settlement,¹⁶ while in 1598 the Archbishop of Târnovo with all the “bishops, priests and the leading people” swore to fight to the death along their Christian brothers against their common foe.¹⁷

Thus, there is no surprise that the princes from Bucharest and Iași used at the beginning of the “Long Turkish War” similar topics in their correspondence with other European courts. The Moldavian prince, Aron, assured the Polish chancellor, Jan Zamoyski, that he was ready to fight to death along his fellows Christians,¹⁸ while the lord of Wallachia, Michael, used the same idea in a number of documents written from 1594 until the end of his reign. For instance, in 1595, the common interest of Christendom is the main topic of a letter sent to a Polish nobleman, Jan Potocki. After the beginning of rebellion against the Porte, – claimed Michael at the beginning of the letter – the events are favourable for the Christian camp and if the Poles will agree to join the fight, the infidels will be crushed “by the legs and by the Christian swords”. Also, added the prince, Wallachia is a “shield” of Christianity, the struggle against the Ottomans is a vengeance for the griefs endured by the Christians

¹³ The topic of *antemurale christianitatis* was spread among many kingdoms during the Middle Ages and the early modern period; for the Polish case, see W. Weintraub, “Renaissance Poland and *Antemurale Christianitatis*”, *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 3-4, 1979-1980, part. II, p. 920-930.

¹⁴ L. R. Wynar (ed.), *Habsburgs and Zaporozhian Cossacks. The Diary of Erich Lassota von Steblau 1594*, trans. by O. Subtelny, Littleton, Colo., 1975, p. 89.

¹⁵ A. Veress, *Documente...*, IV, doc. 45, p. 77-79.

¹⁶ A. Veress, *Documente...*, V. *Acte și scrisori (1596-1599)*, Bucharest, 1932, doc. 11, p. 19-22.

¹⁷ The testimony belongs to the Ragusan Paolo Giorgi; see M. Holban, M. M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and P. Cernovodeanu (eds.), *Călători străini...*, p. 411.

¹⁸ E. de Hurmuzaki, *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, vol. 1, supl. II: (1510-1600). *Documente culese din arhive și biblioteci polone*, ed. by I. Bogdan, Bucharest, 1893, doc. 167, p. 329.

under the sultan's yoke and a common fight of all Christian princes against the infidels will ensure the salvation of Christendom.¹⁹ Michael's arguments bear a striking resemblance with those included in 1475 by Stephen the Great, prince of Moldavia in a letter sent to "all Christian monarchs" after the defeat of an Ottoman army in the battle of Vaslui (10 January 1475). Like Michael, Stephen's letter was a bulletin of victory and a plea for help. The Moldavian prince claimed that his realm was a "gateway of Christianity" and its eventual conquest by the Turks will put all Christendom in jeopardy.²⁰ The similarity does not imply that the political ideas remained unchanged in Wallachia and Moldavia between 1475 and 1595, or that Michael imitates the arguments of a Moldavian lord from the 15th century. Most likely, a similar context and, mainly, the need for military and political support, generated an analogous discourse. In 1595, Michael used the themes derived from the idea of a common Christian faith in an attempt to convince Poland to join the anti-Ottoman war. Later on, under different circumstances, Michael the Brave employed a similar discourse in the aim to provoke a particular reaction and, eventually, to influence the political decision of his partner of dialogue.

Thus, in March 1596, the prince asked for the Cossacks' support in the war "for the Holy Cross and for the Christian blood" while two years later he renewed his request inviting the Cossacks "to shed together the blood in the benefit of the Holy Cross".²¹ The text of 1596 reflects the starting point of an anticipated military collaboration. Michael's request for help is phrased in cautious words. He mentions a previous embassy sent to the Cossacks, which ended in failure, a fact that explains the generally humble tone of the letter. Michael even anticipates a new refusal and tries to convince the Cossacks' *ataman* to give permission to leave to those who intend to join the Wallachian army. Only after this request, the voivode uses the rhetorical *topos* of the joint battle against the infidels. This religious idea may be considered as the final argument in a strategy of persuasion. By employing a figure of speech regularly used in the diplomatic language of the time, Michael the Brave could hope for a favourable response.

The second letter, sent in 1598, shows that the relationship with the Cossacks had been somewhat modified. The military successes against the Porte in the previous years enhanced significantly Michael the Brave's reputation and, accordingly, attracted many mercenaries, Cossacks included, under his banner. As in 1596, Michael promises gifts, money and plunder for those Cossacks who intended to join his army, but this time he mentions a special condition. Those

¹⁹ P. P. Panaitescu, *Documente privitoare la istoria lui Mihai Viteazul*, Bucharest, 1936, doc. 4, p. 13-15.

²⁰ I. Bogdan, *Documentele lui Ștefan cel Mare*, II, Bucharest, 1913, doc. 143, p. 321.

²¹ E. de Hurmuzaki, *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, XII: (1594-1602), Bucharest, 1903, p. 332.

who will enrol under his flag will have to swear loyalty to the Christian cause. He also adds another element absent in the previous letter of 1596. He asks the Cossacks to be prepared to fight not only against the infidels but also against those who “help the enemies of the Cross against Christians and their emperor”.²² The detail anticipates that the enemies will be not only the Ottomans and their Tatar allies, but also Christian realms, an implicit allusion to Transylvania, Moldavia or even Poland.

This topic points to another theme belonging to the ancient vocabulary of the crusade: the sin of shedding Christian blood. The subject appears many times in the correspondence of Michael the Brave and of one of his successors, Radu Șerban,²³ a prince who also followed a pro-Habsburg policy. This may suggest that the issue was seen as a serious matter for the contemporaries, especially because during the “Long Turkish War”, more than once, Christian armies clashed against each other. In such cases, the generals of the confronting armies tried to substantiate the justness of their cause and to explain their decision to engage in battle. Michael skilfully used the argument by usually casting his adversary as a polar opposite: a perjurer, a traitor to the Christian cause, and a friend of the enemies of the Cross. In these circumstances, argued Michael, “shedding Christian blood” was the lesser of two evils. This was the case of a letter sent to the Emperor Rudolph II in 1599 after the conquest of Transylvania. It was a delicate matter since the Wallachian army confronted a ruler, Andrew Báthory, who was both prince of Transylvania and cardinal of the Catholic Church. However, explained Michael, he was compelled to use the weapons due to the treacherous behaviour of the Transylvanian prince, who openly supported the Ottomans and their allies, thus betraying the Habsburgs’ camp. Andrew Báthory, continued the letter, was an illegitimate ruler, due his pro-Ottoman policy. Moreover, he refused to abdicate and to yield Transylvania to its rightful master, Emperor Rudolph II. While Michael deplored the shed of the Christian blood, he considered the battle as a judgement of God who, in the end, punished a perjurer and a traitor.²⁴

²² *Ibid.*: “Sicome gli disse Waivoda che lui vol spargier la sua sangue con loro insieme per servitio della Santa Croce et per servir la christianità contra gli pagani et quelli che aiutano alli pagani contra li cristiani et contra il Imperatore Cristiano”. Boris Godunov used a similar argument in a letter to Archduke Maximilian. The tsar proposed not only to attack the Turks and the Tatars, but also the Poles, seen as enemies of Christendom; see N. Iorga, “Documente noi în mare parte românești relative la Petru Șchiopul și Mihai Viteazul”, *Academia Română. Memoriile Secțiunii Istorice* (ARMSI), series II, XX, 1898, p. 26-27.

²³ For his reign, the best monographic approach remains M. Stoy, “Radu Șerban, Fürst der Walachei 1602-1611, und die Habsburger. Eine Fallstudie”, *Südost-Forschungen* 54, 1995, p. 49-103.

²⁴ E. de Hurmuzaki, *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, III: 1576-1599, Bucharest, 1880, doc. 262, p. 339. Michael used similar arguments in a dialogue with the papal nuncio Germanico Malaspina published in E. de Hurmuzaki, III *Appendice. Documente descoperite de d-l Esarcu în*

In 1600, Michael used again a similar approach in a letter to Emperor Rudolph II aimed to justify the invasion of Moldavia. The prince explained why he was forced to attack the neighbouring principality, ignoring the emperor's advice to avoid any hostile act against Moldavia. The main point in Michael's justification was that he could no longer tolerate "the unbearable injustices" inflicted by "an enemy and a deceiver of Christendom", that is, the prince of Moldavia, Jeremiah Movilă.²⁵ Jeremiah is pictured as a Trojan horse of Christendom, a turncoat who "received in [our] own house (i.e., the Christendom) secretly prepares his army against Christians". Moreover, he gave shelter to another archenemy of the Christians, the former Transylvanian prince, Sigismund Báthory. It was obvious, Michael implied, that both Jeremiah and Sigismund were plotting against the emperor, trying to extract Transylvania and Wallachia from under Habsburg obedience.²⁶ Although the shed of Christian blood is not mentioned in the document, the idea is somehow implicit.

By contrast, it is explicitly mentioned in a document directed to the Moldavian boyars and clergymen that took shelter along with their prince, Jeremiah Movilă, in the fortress of Hotin after Michael's invasion of Moldavia. On that occasion (10 May 1600), the "Christian lord, Michael voivode prince of Wallachia and Transylvania"²⁷ wrote to the "most honest and holy metropolitans and to the boyars who are with our brother Jeremiah Movilă in the fortress [of Hotin]".²⁸ Such courteous language labelling an enemy as a "brother" aimed to convince the defenders of Hotin to surrender. At that moment, Michael could not afford a long siege, as he had no siege guns, so he tried a diplomatic approach based on the idea of Christian fraternity. Naming Jeremiah as "a brother", while in other contexts the same prince was depicted as a traitor of Christendom, points to the strategy used by Michael the Brave in his attempt to convince the besieged to surrender.

Michael promised to spare Jeremiah's life, who was free to go wherever he wanted, and also promised to grant freedom to all those who wanted to join the Moldavian lord in exile.²⁹ There was no point for the besieged, continued Michael's letter, to persist in their resistance; it would only amplify the loss of

arhivele din Italia, doc. 71, p. 511: "[Michael] non per libidine di dominare, nè per sete che avesse di spargere il sangue Cristiano essendo egli tutto intento a voler spargere quello dei Turchi, e che a lui bastava di poter vivere sicuro nella sua provincia di Valacchia" (my emphasis).

²⁵ E. de Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, XII, doc. 33-34, p. 1279-1280; MVCE, V, doc. 186, p. 275-277.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ It should be emphasized that Michael avoided calling himself "prince of Moldavia" despite the fact that at that moment the realm was already conquered, except the fortress of Hotin.

²⁸ P. P. Panaitescu, *Documente...*, doc. 45, p. 110; cf. MVCE, I, doc. 172, p. 480-482.

²⁹ Michael underlined that the loyalty of the subjects for their lord was normal, as it was their duty to follow their master; the idea is mirrored by other contemporary documents. See, for instance, the report of Jan Potocki published by I. Corfuz, *Documente privitoare la istoria României culese din arhivele polone. Secolul al XVII-lea*, Bucharest, 1983 (hereafter *Documente XVII*), doc. 2, p. 6.

lives, which was a sin mainly because the final outcome was a certain defeat for Jeremiah. The text also contains a double threat: if the bloodshed continues, argued Michael, Jeremiah will be judged by the Wallachian prince and also by God, whose judgement decides the result of the war. Once again, the letter included the argument that shedding Christian blood was a mortal sin. Furthermore, Michael insisted that he had no intention to kill Jeremiah “because he is a Christian ruler and I am a Christian prince too”.³⁰

Despite a very elaborate strategy of persuasion, the diplomatic attempt eventually ended in failure. The Moldavians refused to open the gates of Hotin and Michael was forced to retire. The setback suffered in front of the fortress opened a series of Michael defeats, which finally compelled him to abandon Wallachia and to leave for Prague in search of Rudolph II's support.³¹

While these events are well known, for the present discussion it suffices to remark that, during his reign, Michael the Brave used a wide range of topics grounded in the ancient vocabulary of the crusade and that he adapted his discourse according to his aims, his partner of dialogue and the particular political and military context of the moment. From the beginning of the revolt against the Porte in November 1594, Michael emphasized his determination to fight against the infidels and his loyalty towards the Christian emperor and the Christendom. Because the political international context during the war was in a continuous configuration, he was forced to adapt his discourse and to use various topics, many of them grounded in the vocabulary of the crusade. As the pursuit of conflict forced the Wallachian prince to clash with his Christian neighbours, Michael adjusted his political language to support the idea that his Christian enemies deserve to be punished because they were loyal tools in the hand of the infidels.

Both his policy and his ideas were assumed by one of his successors, his former cupbearer (*paharnic*) Radu Șerban who became lord of Wallachia (for a short period in 1601 and between 1602-1611) with the support of an important political faction of the realm, led by the Buzescu family. As Michael, Radu Șerban waged war both against a Moldavian pretender, Simion Movilă (brother of the Moldavian *voivode* Jeremiah) and against two Transylvanian rulers, Moise Szekely and Gabriel Báthory.

Some of the arguments previously used by Michael the Brave could be found also in the documents issued by Radu Șerban. Thus, on 26 April 1602, the Wallachian prince recommended Marcu, the son of a former Wallachian prince, Petru Cercel, for the Moldavian throne. Marcu, stated Radu voivode, was

³⁰ P. P. Panaitescu, *Documente...*, doc. 45, p. 110-111: “Deci spuneți Măriei Sale să nu mai facă altă tulburare și pieire pentru domniile voastre, căci aș dori ca domniei sale să nu-i vină pieirea de la domnia mea, pentru că este domn creștin și suntem și domnia mea creștin” (my emphasis).

³¹ N. Iorga, *Istoria lui Mihai Viteazul*, ed. by N. Gheran and V. Iova, Bucharest, 1968, p. 368-388; P. P. Panaitescu, *Mihai Viteazul*, Bucharest, 2002, p. 225-235.

requested as ruler by Moldavian boyars and his eventual enthrone in Moldavia would be a noteworthy gain for the anti-Ottoman war. The letter is full of references to the Christian faith and to the Wallachian and Moldavian determination to serve the Christendom.³²

A similar discourse could be found in two princely charters (issued in 1604 and, probably, 1608) that describe in detail the circumstances of the battle between Radu Șerban and Simion Movilă's troops at Ogretin-Teișani (13/23-14/24 September 1602).³³ Both documents considered Emperor Rudolph II as an ultimate source of legitimacy and the military success of Radu Șerban as a victory of all Christendom.³⁴ Despite significant differences in their content, the two documents share a similar view of the meaning of the battle against Simion and his Tatar allies. It was a combat for the Christian emperor and the sacrifice of the soldiers and of one of the leading boyars – Stroe Buzescu – was for the Christian faith.³⁵ In context, the idea seems more than a simple *topos*. The relation established by the texts between the prince of Wallachia and his boyars, the Emperor Rudolph II and the war for the Christian faith seems the main argument in the construction of Radu Șerban's legitimacy. Confronted with two other candidates supported by the Porte (Radu Mihnea) or by Poland and to a lesser extent by the Ottomans (Simion Movilă), Radu Șerban articulated his claims to the Wallachian throne around the relation with the Christian emperor. For Radu and his followers, Rudolph II was the supreme source of legitimacy and the only source of power able to support Wallachia shatter the Ottoman yoke. The implicit conclusion is that Wallachia was a part of Christendom even if, for a long period, it was a vassal state of the Ottoman Empire. Also, the text suggests that the Christian realms should be united in their loyalty toward the emperor, as they shared a common faith and a common enemy.

³² A. Veress, *Documente...*, vol. VII: *Acte și scrisori (1602-1606)*, Bucharest, 1934, doc. 25, p. 26.

³³ For this battle, see N. Iorga, *Un biruitor Radu Vodă Șerban*, Vălenii de Munte, 1911; M. Stoy, "Radu Șerban...", p. 49-103 (especially p. 64-65); E. C. Antoché, "La victoire de Radu Șerban, prince de Valachie à la bataille d'Ogretin-Teișani (23-24 septembre 1602)", *Revista de istorie militară* 3-4, 2014, p. 60-71.

³⁴ For an analysis on how the battle was mirrored in contemporary documents, see O. Cristea and Ramona Neacșa, "Words of Stone: War and Memory in Wallachia during the Long Turkish War", in O. Olar and K. Petrovsky (eds.), *Writing History in Ottoman Europe, 1500-1800*, Leiden-Boston (forthcoming).

³⁵ *Documente privind istoria României. Veacul XVII B. Țara Românească*, vol. I: (1601-1610), Bucharest, doc. 137, p. 135: "Iar întru acestea, cinstiții dregători ai domniei mele mai sus numiți ei s-au străduit cu slujbă dreaptă și credincioasă și cu vărsare de sânge dinaintea feții domniei mele și a tuturor dregătorilor și boierilor domniei mele și întru nimic nu și-au pierdut credința, nici dușmanilor noștri n-au întors spatele, fără încetare și-au vărsat sângele lor pentru domnia mea și pentru creștinii țării domniei mele, încât putem spune cu adevărat pentru dregătorul domniei mele, răposatul jupan Stroe fost mare stolnic, dacă a văzut atâta greutate și nevoie asupra capului domniei mele, el s-a luptat cu atât mai mult cu dușmanii domniei mele pentru domnia mea și pentru legea creștinească și pentru patria noastră ca să ne scoată din mâna dușmanilor noștri".

In contrast with the Christian camp, Simion Movilă is depicted in the abovementioned documents as an incarnation of evil. Not only he allied with the Tatar Khan, but he also used in his support other foreign mercenaries to plunder, enslave and bring death to Wallachian subjects. Eventually, God punished him and, according to a contemporary source, “the Tatar dogs failed to achieve their goals”.³⁶

Radu Șerban’s conflict with the prince of Transylvania, Moses Székely, is described in similar tones by a Wallachian narrative source, the so-called *Letopisețul cantacuzinesc*. The text raises many questions related to its paternity and his dependence on a previous Wallachian chronicle written during the reign of Matei Basarab (1632-1654). It is generally accepted that it was written in the second half of the 17th century by a familiar of the powerful Cantacuzenos family and that the work depended heavily on the aforementioned internal chronicle that was re-written in some parts according with the interests of Cantacuzenos family. The scholars also agree that the chronicler used for his work many sources, among which a previous internal chronicle, a hagiographical source (*The Life of St. Niphon*) and the rhymed chronicle of Matthew of Myra.³⁷

The fragment begins by praising prince Radu Șerban. He was elected “by divine grace” and he was wise, kind-hearted, merciful, brave, and put the realm in order. Moreover, he made peace with the sultan “to avoid any harm” (*să nu mai fie răutăți în țară*) and also sealed the peace with all his neighbours. It should be emphasized that the fragment re-shapes the chronology, since the peace with the sultan was established only in 1606, several years after the time mentioned by the chronicler and, by consequence, the peace was established not at the beginning of Radu Șerban’s reign, but several years later. This change of chronology had a clear purpose for the chronicle: to describe an ideal prince. Peace seems to be the keyword of the fragment, as the text insists that the new prince aimed to have concord with everybody, that he despised quarrels and

³⁶ The words are a part of Stroe Buzescu’s epitaph; see the last edition of the inscription in C. Bălan, *Inscripții medievale și din epoca modernă a României. Județul istoric Vâlcea (sec. XIV-1848)*, Bucharest, 2005, p. 910.

³⁷ *Istoria Țării Românești (1290-1690). Letopisețul Cantacuzinesc*, ed. by C. Grecescu and D. Simonescu, Bucharest, 1960; many historians considered that the chronicle was the work of Stoica Ludescu; see N. Iorga, “Cronicele muntene. Întâiul memoriu. Cronicele din secolul al XVII-lea”, *Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile Secției Istorice*, series II, XXI, 1898-1899, p. 325-326; N. Cartoian, *Istoria literaturii române vechi*, Bucharest, 1996, p. 379; L. Onu, “Date noi cu privire la Stoica Ludescu. Din nou problema paternității Letopisețului cantacuzinesc”, *Limba Română* 21.1, 1972, p. 17-26. For a different opinion, see I. Ionașcu, “Despre logofătul Stoica Ludescu și paternitatea cronicii *Istoria Țării Românești*”, *Analele Universității C. I. Parhon – seria istorie* 5.5, 1956, p. 261-299. For the manner in which the chronicle of Matthew of Myra was used by the author of *Letopisețul Cantacuzinesc*, see D. Zamfirescu, “Matei al Mirelor și Letopisețul cantacuzinesc”, in D. Zamfirescu, *Studii și articole de literatură română veche*, Bucharest, 1967, p. 190-191.

ignored anger. The cease of hostilities brought “great joy and happiness in Wallachia and the people scattered [around the world] came back thanking God for the state of peace”.³⁸ It is a striking contrast between this depicted ideal peace and the period of war which preceded Radu Șerban’s reign. The chronicler seems to suggest that Radu voivode was a peacemaker, a quality that contrasts with the bravery mentioned as one of the main qualities of the new prince. Nevertheless, the abovementioned trait anticipates somehow the events that were to follow. The story continues with a drastic change, which proves that Radu Șerban’s bravery was an attribute well pondered by the chronicler. According to the text, the usual archenemy of humankind, the devil, who had no love for any Christian, incited envy and anger among them. The devil’s instrument was the “heretic” (*proclutul*) prince of Transylvania, Moses Székely, who started to gather troops aiming to invade Wallachia and to shed blood for honour and glory. It is interesting to see how the author ignores completely the political context of the period for a traditional perspective in which any harm or disaster was the consequence of the devil’s intrigues.

In contrast with a prince searching for vainglory, Radu Șerban chose to safeguard peace at any costs. He took the council of his boyars and sent precious gifts to Moses Székely, asking him to abandon the war and keep “the brotherhood and friendship” as previously. Once again, the text puts in opposition two different ways of action. A legitimate one (a political decision taken by a prince and his council) and a dishonest one resulted as an instigation of devil. It is a subtle antagonism between Moses Székely’s “bad thoughts” and the common decision of the Wallachian political elite, which points to another recurring theme of the Wallachian and Moldavian historiography of the 17th century: the prince’s duty to consult his advisors.³⁹ Moses Székely infringed this rule as well as another; he rejected the gifts and the offers for peace and persisted in his determination to wage an unjust war.

As a result, Radu Șerban was compelled to take the arms but, before the outbreak of the conflict, he took another step, which enforced his legitimacy and ensured God’s support in the war that was to follow. He gathered the clerics who celebrated a holy service, blessed the prince and asked God to give him health and victory against his foes.⁴⁰ The epilogue is easy to anticipate. Moses Székely

³⁸ *Cronicari munteni*, ed. by D. H. Mazilu, Bucharest, 2004, p. 152-153: “Și făcu pace cu împăratul turcesc, ca să-i dea haraci, să nu mai fie răutăți în țară. Așijderea făcu pace cu crai și domnii carii era împrejurul Țării Rumânești. Că nu-i era dragă ciarta, nici mânia, ci-i era voia să aibă cu toți pace. Atuncea s-au potolit toate războaiele și oștile cele multe și s-au pogorât de la Dumnezeu mare bucurie și veselie în Țara Rumânească. Și să strânsă toți oamenii cei răsipiți, cineși la locul lui, mulțumind lui Dumnezeu pentru pacea ce le-au dat”.

³⁹ O. Cristea, “Sfat, taină, șoapte: instrumente ale cercului puterii în evul mediu românesc” (forthcoming).

⁴⁰ *Cronicari munteni*, p. 153.

lost his army and his life, while Radu *voivode* thanked God for the victory and turned back to his capital, putting an end to “all the quarrels” (*toate vrăjbele*) and setting his realm in good peace.

It should be mentioned that other variants of the *Letopisețul cantacuzinesc* add a discourse of prince Radu Șerban addressed to Moses Székely when he acknowledged his rival's refuse to keep the peace: “The mindless head brings misfortune and I hope and pray God for your terrible death and I bow [to His will]. You will be guilty for the blood shed on earth and for people's sins and you should know that I will not come against you with the sword, but only with God's power. He will punish you!”⁴¹

The fragment has remarkable similitudes with the manner in which the Moldavian boyar and chronicler, Miron Costin, describes the battle of Areni (3/13 December 1595) between the prince Jeremiah Movilă and a former lord of Moldavia and contender to the throne, Ștefan Răzvan. Costin depicts Jeremiah as an ideal sovereign who entered the church before the combat for the holy liturgy and refused to quit the religious service even when the two armies engaged in battle.⁴² In Costin's view, Jeremiah's option was exemplary. The prince knew that the bloodshed was a sin and he entrusted his fate to God's judgement. Jeremiah himself spoke about the conflict with his rival, Ștefan Răzvan, in similar terms. In a letter to Polish chancellor and *hetman*, Jan Zamoyski, Jeremiah explained that he tried to convince Ștefan Răzvan to abandon the war: “I did not hesitate to rebuke him”, said Jeremiah, “because it is not a Christian custom to shed Christian blood and I invited him to spare his forces for the fight against the enemies of the Holy Cross”. Unfortunately, continued the letter, Ștefan Răzvan chose to ignore the warning and to persist in his decision to wage war. “Thus”, added Jeremiah, “we had to confront an enemy thirsty for our blood (...) entrusting to God our innocence and trusting his divine justice we waited with humility. God, Who makes holy justice, gave a glorious victory to His Majesty's [i.e., Sigismund III Wasa, King of Poland and Jeremiah's protector] troops and to us revenge against our foes almost without losses and damages”.⁴³

A comparison between the texts mirroring the wars of Radu Șerban and Jeremiah Movilă underlines a comparable perspective. Both princes deplore the

⁴¹ I. I. Georgescu, “O copie necunoscută a Letopisețului cantacuzinesc”, *Mitropolia Olteniei* 13, 1961, p. 524; cf. D. Simonescu, “Le Chroniqueur Matthieu de Myre et une traduction ignorée de son histoire”, *Revue des études sud-est européennes* 4.1-2, 1966, p. 105: “Capul cel fără de minte se face jărtvă, iar eu trag nădejde și mă rog lui Dumnezeu pentru moartea cea rea și mă plec și mă închin. Sângele ce se va vărsa pe fața pământului și păcatele oamenilor să fie în sufletul tău și să știi că nu vin asupra-ți cu sabie, ce numai cu puterea lui Dumnezeu. De la el să găsești această plată”.

⁴² M. Costin, *Letopisețul Țării Moldovei*, in *Opere*, ed. by P. P. Panaitescu, Bucharest, 1958, p. 46.

⁴³ E. de Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, I, supl. II: (1510-1600), ed. by I. Bogdan, Bucharest, 1893, doc. 189, p. 372-373.

fight against a Christian army, both of them tried to settle the dispute by diplomatic means, than they equally invoked God's support and, in the end, were victorious against their foes. Moreover, in both cases, the rivals guilty for the bloodshed paid with their own life, a clear sign of divine punishment for a capital sin. For Jeremiah, the battle of Areni was an exceptional event, since his reign was usually a peaceful one and he depended heavily on Polish military support in the conflicts he was involved. In contrast, Radu Șerban, as an ally of the Habsburgs, took part in several combats due to the military evolution on various fronts of the "Long Turkish War".

It is worth noting that Radu Șerban's conflicts are mirrored differently in the *Letopisețul cantacuzinesc*. If the chronicle strongly emphasizes the religious component of the battle against Moses Székely, it ignores completely the topic in the case of Radu Șerban's conflicts against Simion Movilă and Gabriel Báthory. In case of the war against the latter, the explanation consists in the negative outcome of the conflict. The prince of Transylvania, Gabriel Báthory, prepared secretly the invasion of Wallachia and Radu Șerban was completely taken by surprise. Once again, the war was instigated by the devil, but this time, for unknown reasons, Radu voivode was unaware of the forthcoming attack and was forced to abandon his country. It was already noted that in this point the chronicler removed all the references made by a source he used – the rhymed chronicle of Matthew of Myra – to a divine punishment inflicted to Radu Șerban due to the abandonment of the just ways.⁴⁴ Thus, by erasing all negative implications, the *Letopisețul cantacuzinesc* creates an ambiguity, as it leaves unexplained the fall of Radu Șerban. Trusting in God's judgment, the prince repulsed Moses Székely's attack but was completely taken by surprise by a similar maneuver of Gabriel Báthory.

More difficult is to explain the absence of any religious allusion in respect to the fight against Simion Movilă. As it was already mentioned, the Moldavian pretender was supported by a large Tatar army, an enemy *par excellence*, whose defeat could easily be interpreted as the result of a divine intervention. Furthermore, as the above quoted charters issued by the Wallachian chancellery in 1604 and 1608 underlined, Radu Șerban himself depicted the war against Simion and his allies as a just combat for the Christendom.

A possible explanation is that the chronicler limited himself to compile different testimonies preserving the original style of the documents. Thus, he preserved the religious emphasis put by Matthew of Myra (the source used for the conflict with Moses Székely). The hypothesis is strengthened by the fact that *Cronica Bălenilor*, a chronicle written for a political faction opposed to the Cantacuzenos family, relates the war with Moses Székely in similar terms:

⁴⁴ D. Zamfirescu, "Matei al Mirelor...", p. 202-203.

The devil, who always aims for dissensions, gained the heart of the prince of Transylvania, Moses Székely, who gathered troops aimed to attack and to plunder Wallachia. Șerban voivode and his boyars tried to appease him with favours and sent boyars with precious gifts asking him to avoid shedding innocent blood. But he refused and arrogantly stated that he intend to hurt [Wallachia]. So the [Wallachian] prince and the boyars seeing his madness gathered their army quickly and went to Transylvania where they arrived in three days. And the [Transylvanian] prince met them with a great army (*oști semețe*). It was a great battle and the Hungarians were vanquished and killed badly by our troops. And the arrogant prince Moses Székely was found dead. And prince [Radu] turned back with all his boyars and all his army. And thanking God [for the victory] they lived in peace for five-six years.⁴⁵

While *Cronica Bălenilor* seems to give an abridged version of the events, the main “ingredients” – the devil’s instigation, the failed diplomatic attempt to settle the conflict, God’s support for the Wallachian army – are all mentioned. Certainly, the role of the clergymen and their blessing before the combat is ignored but, despite this important omission, the similarities suggest a common source that was used by both chroniclers.⁴⁶

It is surprising to see that, despite a significant change in respect to the previous period, Moldavian and Wallachian historiography still uses some “medieval” topics to explain the outcome of a battle. As the medieval annals and chroniclers of the 15th and 16th centuries, the chroniclers of the 17th century seemed to believe that success in war depended only on God’s favour. However, in contrast with the concise style of their medieval predecessors, the authors of the 17th century pay more attention and put more emphasis on how the princes of Wallachia and Moldavia assumed their role as God’s instruments and how they tried to gain the divine favour before a combat.

As I argued, a similar trend could be found in the princely charters or in the letters written by the voivodes of Wallachia and Moldavia. This could suggest that the political vocabulary used by the princes influenced the writing of history even if, the contrary hypothesis – the influence of ancient clichés and illustrious historical examples on the political discourses and political decisions – could be also taken into account. In any case, the 17th century chronicles seem to adopt a significant change of paradigm in the way of narrating a war. Certainly, there is still little interest in military manoeuvres, tactical decisions or a detailed presentation of the political context. However, the emphasis on the

⁴⁵ *Cronicari munteni*, ed. Dan Horia Mazilu, Bucharest, 2004, p. 310.

⁴⁶ For a discussion of the manuscript tradition, see D. Zamfirescu, “Matei al Mirelor...”, p. 184-204. The author considers that the most reliable version is the one preserved at Neamț Monastery that has many similitudes with the manuscript no. 2591 published by D. Simonescu. Thus, it is probable that they had a common archetype; see D. Zamfirescu, “Matei al Mirelor...”, p. 185.

legitimacy of a conflict may suggest a strong link between the political vocabulary and gestures of the rulers and the writing of history during the time. As suggested by some recent analysis, in the 17th century the discourses on war acknowledged a significant change due mainly to the boyars' interest to forge their own identity and to preserve in the memory of a larger community the heroic exploits of their ancestors. The conclusions of an analysis on the Wallachian family Golescu made by Marian Coman⁴⁷ seem to be confirmed by the examination of the individual combat between Stroe Buzescu's and a Tatar Khan's relative during the battle of Ogretin-Teişani.⁴⁸

The documents analysed above suggest, in their turn, a change of perspective in relation with the princes' attitude toward the legitimization of war. While the political vocabulary of the Wallachian and Moldavian princes preserves some traits of their forerunners, it also seems well adapted to the diplomatic language of the end of the 16th century. The resurgence of religious topics in the context of the "Long Turkish War" was the result of a combined imperial and papal propaganda aimed to involve as many Christian rulers as possible. Transylvania, Wallachia and Moldavia tried to use these circumstances to renegotiate their political status from tributaries of the Porte to members of "Christian commonwealth". In the first years of conflict, the voice of the Transylvanian prince seemed to gain gradually in importance, but after an apex in 1595 (represented the victorious campaign in Wallachia), Sigismund Báthory's figure faded away, especially after the Ottoman victory at Mezökeresztes (24-26 October 1596) and Sigismund's subsequent abdication.

His place was taken by the Wallachian prince Michael the Brave, whose discourses share some of the topics used by his Transylvanian rival. As I argued, Michael chose his arguments carefully, depending of his partner of dialogue. In 1595, his plea for help addressed to the Polish nobleman Jan Potocki corresponded to a moment when the hetman and the chancellor of the realm, Jan Zamoyski, prepared a military expedition with unclear targets.⁴⁹ Michael seems to have had nothing to offer apart from his good intentions. His letter suggests that it was the Polish duty to help a Christian realm menaced by the Ottoman conquest. A similar discourse is repeated in July 1595 during the discussion with the Polish ambassador Lubieniecki and sometime later on 9 August, when Michael's emissary, Petru Gregorovici, asked again for support during his

⁴⁷ M. Coman, "Memoria războiului în documentele de cancelarie ale Țării Românești. Hrisoavele Goleștilor", *Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie* 36, 2018, p. 317-352.

⁴⁸ O. Cristea and R. Neacșa, "Words of Stone...".

⁴⁹ I. Corfus, "Jurnalul expediției polone în Moldova din 1595", *Revista Arhivelor* 47.2, 1970, 2, p. 525-546; M. Holban, M. M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and P. Cernovodeanu (eds.), *Călători străini...*, p. 643-653.

mission to Jan Zamoyski.⁵⁰ All along the first half of 1595, Michael's discourses mirror the difficult political context that he had to confront. In his views a "poor realm", bulwark of all Christendom needed to receive help urgently otherwise it was doomed to fall again under Ottoman yoke. At first glance, the discourse is not too original or elaborate. There is also a surprising detail in the statement that "I (i.e., Michael the Brave) had no hardship from the Turks".⁵¹ However, it may be assumed that the point aimed to underline that Wallachia entered the war only for the sake of the Christian faith and that Christianity, in its turn, had to support a small principality menaced by the Ottoman conquest.

Some of these topics are re-shaped and used in the correspondence with other political actors involved in the war. At a certain point, the subject concerning the fight against the infidels went hand in hand with the one related to the necessity to fight against the "bad Christians". Similar ideas are to be found not only in the case of his successor, Radu Șerban, but also in the case of his Moldavian archenemy, Jeremiah Movilă. Although the Moldavian prince was by no means a warrior ruler as Michael the Brave was, his description of the battle of Areni shows that Jeremiah was aware of the importance of topics related to the vocabulary of the just war. Certainly, one may ask how successful such discourses were among the contemporaries. The answer is not an easy one, as it depended on various factors. First of all, Michael was an important figure in the "Long War", which was never the case with Radu Șerban or Jeremiah Movilă. However, even their voices had a certain impact, at least in relation with the Habsburgs (the former) and Polish kingdom (the latter).

In Michael's case, as one may expect, the allies seemed to accept his claims, at least on several occasions,⁵² while his adversaries usually considered them doubtful or false. In some situations, they even interpreted them in an opposite way; in December 1595, for instance, Michael's decision to support a former Moldavian prince, Ștefan Răzvan, against Jeremiah Movilă was criticised by the English Ambassador in Constantinople, Edward Barton: "...Mihal for his insolencie, who nott contentinge him selfe with the victory God had given him over the Turks, wold seeke the damadge of his poore Christian neighbour, and

⁵⁰ M. Holban, M. M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and P. Cernovodeanu (eds.), *Călători străini...*, p. 644.

⁵¹ Sigismund Báthory made a similar statement during his visit to Prague, provoking perplexity. At best, Rudolph II and his counsellors could suspect that the prince intended to gain as much support as he could from the Habsburgs, but is more probable that the imperials suspected that Sigismund negotiated in parallel with the Ottomans. See, for instance, the reports of the Venetian ambassador in Prague, Tommaso Contarini, about Sigismund Báthory's visit at Rudolph II's court, E. de Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, III/2, doc. 189, p. 169; doc. 193, p. 173-174.

⁵² See, for instance, the report of imperial emissary Giovanni di Marini Polli written on 16 October 1597 in Târgoviște, E. de Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, XII/2, doc. 19, p. 1263-1264.

oppose him self to the forces of the three most mighty Princes, the Grand Signior, Pole and the Tartar”.⁵³

One may suspect that Barton shared the Polish view on the issue, but his judgement nevertheless rejects the idea that the intervention of Moldavia was in the interest of Christendom. Not only was the attack directed against a “poor” Christian prince, but the outcome of the confrontation – which ended with Jeremiah’s victory – put Michael’s realm in jeopardy, menaced by the Ottomans, the Poles and the Tatars.

In the same vein, the papal nuncio in Transylvania, Germanico Malaspina, had a very harsh judgement after Michael’s conquest of the principality in 1599: he was “orthodox, sloppily, fickle and perjurer”.⁵⁴ The main blame concerned Michael’s decisions to attack Transylvania after he accepted to seal a treaty with Andrew Báthory. Like Barton, Malaspina was well connected to the Polish court and more than once he adopted the Polish perspective in respect with the events occurring during the “Long War”.

Thus, the impact of diplomatic language grounded in the religious rhetoric had, at least in Michael’s case, limited results, but not because the arguments were considered obsolete or unappropriated by the receptors, but because the interests and the objectives of the political actors involved in the war were always in contrast. However, the religious rhetoric persistence among the diplomatic tools used by the princes of Wallachia and Moldavia shows that it was considered as a strong point in forging legitimacy. A similar idea is supported by the fact that the narrative sources of the 17th century written by clerics or laymen used similar topics in the construction of the image of a just war. Spoken or written, the language of the Wallachian and Moldavian princes seem to lend support to one of Peter Burke’s conclusions for Western Europe.⁵⁵ Language, in context the political discourse, was an important tool during the “Long Turkish War” and for the Wallachian and Moldavian princes was a way to argue that their principalities are a part of the Christian world.

⁵³ MVCE, V, doc. 51, p. 124.

⁵⁴ MVCE, I, doc. 125, p. 338: “Natione enim schismaticus est, levis”.

⁵⁵ P. Burke, “A Civil Tongue: Language and Politeness in Early Modern Europe”, in P. Burke, B. Harrison, and P. Slack (eds.), *Civil Histories. Essays presented to Sir Keith Thomas*, London, 2000, p. 31: “spoken or written [the language] was viewed as one of the most obvious if not the most important ways of demonstrating status, manners or breeding”.

LE *KTHTOPIKON AIKAION*, LES PATRIARCHES GRECS ET LES LIMITES DU POUVOIR ABSOLU DES PRINCES VALAQUES. AUTOUR DE LA PRETENDUE REFORME MONASTIQUE DE MATEI BASARAB (1632-1654)*

Lidia Cotovanu

Autour du pouvoir autocratique des princes danubiens

Tout au long des XIV^e – XVII^e siècles, les princes de Valachie et de Moldavie ont évoqué de manière constante la source et la nature de leur pouvoir : « par la grâce de Dieu, prince de toute la Hongrovalachie / du Pays de Moldavie » (sl. *милостіж Божієж господинь въсен Оуггровлахїи / Земли Молдавскои*), « règne qui m'a été donné par Dieu » (*богодарованнаго ми господства*), « d'honorer Dieu qui m'a honoré et m'a mis solennellement sur le trône de mes parents » (*изволих прославити прославляшаго ма Бога и на престоли родителїи моихъ съ славою възнесеша*), « oint de Dieu » (*богопомазаны*)¹. Tout vient de Dieu au monarque : *le pouvoir*, la *grâce* qu'il

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¹ *Documenta Romaniae Historica*, A, *Moldova* [désormais : DRH, A], t. I-XXVIII, Bucarest, 1969-2011 ; *Documenta Romaniae Historica*, B, *Țara Românească* [désormais : DRH, B], t. I-XL, Bucarest, 1966-2020. Je ne m'attarderai pas ici sur les différences d'expression diplomatique du caractère divin du pouvoir en Valachie et en Moldavie, ni sur le cérémonial de l'investiture des princes : liturgique ou laïc, avec onction effective et couronnement ou non. Pour ces derniers aspects, à propos de la Valachie des XIV^e – XVI^e siècles, voir, dernièrement, les hypothèses de M. Coman, « Înainte de tradiția bizantină. Încăunarea domnilor în Țara Românească medievală (secolele al XIV-lea – al XVI-lea) », dans E. Timotin (éd.), *Elemente de ceremonial în literatura din spațiul românesc (secolele al XIV-lea – al XVIII-lea)*, Bucarest, 2019, p. 63-94, avec la bibliographie antérieure. Pour la Valachie du XVII^e siècle, voir V. Barbu, Gh. Lazăr, « *Coronatio*. Tradiția liturgică în Țările Române », dans Gh. Lazăr, O. Cristea (éd.), *Național și universal în istoria românilor. Studii oferite Prof. Dr. Șerban Papacostea cu ocazia împlinirii a 70 de ani*, Bucarest, 1998, p. 40-68. Pour le couronnement et l'économie de la grâce en Moldavie, voir Val. Al. Georgescu, *Bizanțul și instituțiile românești până la mijlocul secolului al XVIII-lea*, Bucarest, 1980, p. 44 ; R. G. Păun, *Pouvoirs, offices et patronage dans la Principauté de Moldavie au XVII^e*

reverse autour de lui, *le pays-patrimoine et la terre* circonscrite à ses limites, *sa qualité de juge suprême* et dernière instance d'appel en justice. Tout se passe par la volonté du Créateur. Le monarque ne peut rien changer à cette loi fondamentale, car il existe à travers elle en souverain « autocrate » (*самодержавный*), à l'instar des empereurs byzantins (*αὐτοκράτωρ*) et des autres souverains chrétiens².

Le pouvoir princier (*domnia*) existe tant que la grâce divine se reverse sur la personne du monarque, ce qui veut dire que l'institution, et l'État lui-même, ne peuvent pas exister, ni être perçus sous forme abstraite, en dehors de la personne qui les incarne. Du prince découlent tous les pouvoirs dans la sphère publique : c'est lui qui distribue la justice, les offices, les domaines, les titres de possession foncière, ce qui relie les sujets de manière personnelle au monarque. Les dernières recherches sur les fondements théologico-liturgiques du pouvoir dans les Pays Roumains montrent qu'il y a un lien consubstantiel entre le Prince et l'État, d'où la pertinence analytique du terme *État-Prince* pour l'Ancien Régime valaque et moldave, et que les relations de pouvoir sont fortement personnalisées. La représentation vicariale du pouvoir princier ne laisse pas de place à la distinction, dans l'imaginaire politique et social, entre *l'homme* et *l'institution* ; la mort de *l'homme* atteint par la grâce divine rend le pouvoir discontinu et l'office éphémère, tout comme les mesures à caractère législatif et les sentences judiciaires émises par les souverains, d'ailleurs³.

Par conséquent, en principe, le monarque est investi d'un pouvoir absolu, qu'il exerce par délégation, à l'aide de ses serviteurs fidèles. En sa qualité de juge suprême du pays, il distribue la justice en acte de grâce et intervient, si besoin est, sur la qualité des normes de droit coutumier et positif

siècle. *L'aristocratie roumaine et la pénétration gréco-levantine*, Thèse de doctorat, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris, 2003, inédite, p. 41-54.

² Pour le caractère autocratique du pouvoir princier, voir Val. Al. Georgescu, P. Strihan, *Judecata domnească în Țara Românească și Moldova (1611-1831)*, t. I/1, *Organizarea judecătorească (1611-1740)*, Bucarest, 1979, p. 35-39 ; Val. Al. Georgescu, *Bizanțul și instituțiile*, p. 41-45.

³ R. Păun, « La circulation des pouvoirs dans les Pays Roumains au XVII^e siècle. Repères pour un modèle théorique », dans *New Europe College Yearbook, 1998-1999*, Bucarest, 2001, p. 263-311 ; Cr. Codarcea, *Société et pouvoir en Valachie (1601-1654) entre la coutume et la loi*, Bucarest, 2002, p. 325 ; O. Sachelarie, « Autoritatea hotărârilor judecătorești în dreptul vechi românesc », *Studii și materiale de istorie medie*, VII, 1974, p. 243-250 ; O. Sachelarie, N. Stoicescu (éd.), *Instituții feudale din Țările române. Dicționar*, Bucarest, 1988, p. 30-31, lemme « autoritatea lucrului judecat ». Voir aussi O. Rădulescu, « Jurisprudence roumaine ancienne. Sur l'efficacité de la chose jugée dans le procès civil », *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire*, XLVII, n^{os} 1-2, 2008, p. 55-96, qui considère qu'il vaut mieux parler de l'efficacité, ou plutôt de l'inefficacité des sentences que du manque d'autorité de la chose jugée. Pourtant, rappelons qu'à chaque changement de monarque, les possesseurs de grands patrimoines fonciers s'empresaient de se faire renouveler les titres de possession auprès du nouvel occupant du trône. Quant à la chose jugée, ce n'est qu'en 1818 qu'on lui a fixé, en Valachie du moins, un terme de prescription après trois jugements : voir *Legiunea Caragea*, éd. Al. Rădulescu et al., Bucarest, 1955, VI^e partie, Chap. 4, Art. 8-10, p. 180, 181.

afin de les ajuster aux nécessités de la pratique. Il se place au-dessus des lois terrestres et humaines, mais en même temps doit en tenir compte pour garder l'ordre public et assurer la paix sociale. Toujours en principe, la principale source de limitation au pouvoir princier c'est le respect de la Loi de Dieu, inscrite dans les commandements des Saintes Écritures, le cas contraire entraînant la retraite de la grâce et la perte du trône⁴.

Les limites terrestres du pouvoir princier

En pratique, les facteurs limitatifs du caractère absolu du pouvoir princier sont multiples. À commencer par les facteurs internes, d'ordre administratif, on notera que le souverain ne peut pas gouverner seul, voire gérer le pays-patrimoine, dans sa dimension territoriale et humaine (roum. *țara*). Il exerce son pouvoir à l'aide des possesseurs de la terre (haute et petite noblesse, Église, paysannerie libre) et de l'appareil politico-administratif, quoique les titres de possession et les offices dépendent de sa décision. Pour maintenir l'ordre social et public, le souverain doit se montrer philanthrope et tolérant, s'accommoder des attentes de ses sujets, et notamment de ceux qui l'aide à mettre en exploitation la terre et à administrer le pays. Car pour se maintenir sur son trône, il doit plaire par la qualité de ses actes non seulement à Dieu, mais aussi à ses sujets, les puissants en tête de liste⁵.

À l'instar des *basileis* byzantins, les princes danubiens doivent défendre par tous les moyens et se montrer évergètes envers l'Église, qui entretient l'entier système de croyances et de valeurs chrétiennes, dont le caractère divin du pouvoir princier lui-même⁶. À part le fait que l'Église, en tant que possesseur de grandes surfaces foncières, participe à la mise en exploitation de la terre et à l'administration de la main d'œuvre, elle entretient l'entier système d'assistance sociale du pays, ainsi que la reproduction culturelle chrétienne, indispensable à la reproduction du type de pouvoir séculier en place⁷. Rappelons que le

⁴ R. G. Păun, *Pouvoirs, offices et patronage*, p. 45-49. Selon D. Barbu, « Un vechi principiu constituțional românesc “Carele ia domnia, plătește și datoria” », dans Gh. Lazăr, O. Cristea (éd.), *Național și universal*, p. 110-124, l'État atteint dans les Principautés, au XVII^e siècle, un certain degré de dépersonnalisation ; thèse combattue par R. Păun, *Pouvoirs, offices et patronage*, p. 65 et n. 101. Les arguments mobilisés dans la présente étude, en marge de la prétendue « réforme monastique » entamée par Matei Basarab de Valachie, convergent plutôt vers la seconde prise de position : *infra*.

⁵ R. G. Păun, *Pouvoirs, offices et patronage*, p. 45-49.

⁶ Val. Al. Georgescu, *Bizanțul și instituțiile*, p. 41 et n. 21, sur les vertus impériales des princes roumains (*indulgentia, philanthropia*) ; D. I. Mureșan, P.Ș. Năsturel, « Du καθολικός βασιλεὺς à l'αὐθέντης καθολικός. Notes sur les avatars d'une idée politique », *Études byzantines et post-byzantines*, VI, 2011, p. 251-281.

⁷ Au sujet des attributions d'intérêt commun de l'Église et tout particulièrement des monastères, je me permets de renvoyer le lecteur vers deux de mes dernières études : « De la place des laïcs dans le système d'assistance sociale orthodoxe (XVI^e – début du XVIII^e siècle) », dans A. Boltanski,

métropolit fait partie du Conseil princier et qu'il siège à la droite du monarque, qu'il tient la place du juge principal dans le traitement des affaires civiles de droit canon (mariage, divorce, héritage, filiation, adoption) et, pour certaines, de droit pénal (adultère, inceste)⁸.

Il est communément admis que les princes roumains sont à la fois *legibus adligatus* et *legibus solutus*. En théorie, personne ne peut contester les décisions et les sentences princières, mais en pratique le souverain est astreint, par l'effet des interdépendances qui le reliait à ses sujets et à ses délégués de pouvoir, à tenir compte des lois qui régissent la vie en communautés restreintes et élargies. Il doit respecter les lois écrites (*Pravila*) et coutumières (*obiceul pământului*) et ainsi se montrer juste envers ses sujets et par là plaire à Dieu⁹.

Si le monarque peut créer des précédents juridiques par ses décisions, en instituant de nouvelles normes de droit 'public' (*așezăminte*)¹⁰, s'il peut administrer la justice en collaboration avec l'autorité ecclésiastique et parfois même juger des affaires relevant de la compétence de l'évêque¹¹, si on lui tolère de transgresser certaines normes de droit canon dans son intérêt personnel (le troisième et le quatrième mariage ou le concubinage, par exemple), il y a un domaine où la hiérarchie ecclésiastique ne lui permet pas d'y mettre le pied : faire la loi à l'Église, à savoir se mêler des dogmes, des normes liées aux choses sacrées¹² et, on le verra plus loin, des normes assurant du capital économique à l'Église. Car l'Église est elle-même source de droit dans la société et, de ce point de vue, elle fait de la concurrence au pouvoir séculier et au droit coutumier¹³. En

M.-L. Copete (éd.), *L'Église des laïcs. Le sacré en partage (XVI^e – XX^e siècles)*, Madrid, 2021, p. 180-194 ; « Orthodox Monasteries as Banks : A Comparison with Catholic Mounts of Piety », dans R. Avramov, Al. Fotić, E. Kolovos, Ph. P. Kotzageorgis (éd.), *Monastic Economy across Time. Wealth Management, Patterns, and Trends*, Sofia, 2021, p. 155-181.

⁸ *Călători străini despre Țările române*, t. VI/1, éd. M. M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, Bucarest, 1976, p. 120 (témoignage de Paul d'Alep) ; O. Sachelarie, N. Stoicescu (éd.), *Instituții feudale*, p. 298, s.v. « mitropolit » ; O. Dragotoni, « Implicarea Bisericii în practica juridică din Țara Românească, în timpul lui Matei Basarab », *Revista istorică*, VII, n^{os} 5-6, 1996, p. 349, 351-352.

⁹ Val. Al. Georgescu, P. Strihan, *Judecata domnească*, t. I/1, p. 41-46 ; Val. Al. Georgescu, *Bizanțul și instituțiile*, p. 45 ; R. G. Păun, *Pouvoirs, offices et patronage*, p. 54-62. Voir aussi D. Barbu, « Un vechi principiu », p. 114.

¹⁰ O. Sachelarie, N. Stoicescu (éd.), *Instituții feudale*, p. 29, s.v. « așezământ » ; D. Barbu, *O arheologie constituțională românească. Studii și documente*, Bucarest, 2000.

¹¹ Șt. Berechet, *Dreptul vechilor noștri ierarhi în judecata mirenilor*, Bucarest, 1938 ; Gh. Cronț, « Justiția bisericească din Moldova și Țara Românească în secolele XIV – XVII », *Mitropolia Moldovei și a Sucevei*, LI, n^{os} 3-4, 1975, p. 258-274 ; idem, « Instanțele de judecată ale Bisericii în Țările Române în secolele XIV – XVIII », *Mitropolia Moldovei și a Sucevei*, LIX, n^{os} 5-6, 1976, p. 338-359 ; Val. Al. Georgescu, P. Strihan, *Judecata domnească*, t. I/1, p. 119-123 ; O. Dragotoni, « Implicarea Bisericii », p. 345-355.

¹² O.-V. Olar, « Orthodoxie et politique. I. Le Synode de Târgoviște (janvier 1659) », *Archaeus*, XI-XII, 2007-2008, p. 177-204.

¹³ R. G. Păun, *Pouvoirs, offices et patronage*, p. 59.

plus, les Églises de la Valachie et de la Moldavie, au rang de Métropoles, dépendent canoniquement du Patriarcat de Constantinople¹⁴ et la Grande Église jouit ainsi du droit de juridiction sur les deux diocèses. En pratique, elle y exerce son droit de juridiction à des degrés variables, suivant l'époque, les circonstances, les liens personnels des patriarches avec l'autorité séculière locale¹⁵.

Certes, en vertu des prérogatives qui sont propres à l'Église et qui sont productrices de droit, les princes de Valachie et de Moldavie ont un concurrent de taille : le Patriarcat de Constantinople, qui tente de les soumettre aux lois écrites byzantines, telles qu'elles avaient été compilées par les canonistes hésychastes et qui avaient été 'exportées' vers les Principautés danubiennes sous forme de nomocanons manuscrits ou par voie de diffusion orale et coutumière à travers les États sud-slaves. Cette concurrence a perturbé plus d'une fois les rapports des voïévodes avec les œcuméniques. Le cas de Niphon II de Constantinople (1486-1488, 1497-1498), venu dans la Valachie de Radu le Grand (1495-1508) pour mettre de l'ordre dans l'Église du pays, est connu de tous¹⁶. Ce fut un temps où les voïévodes se permettaient encore d'ignorer les

¹⁴ Pour la dépendance canonique des Églises valaque et moldave du Patriarcat de Constantinople à l'époque post-byzantine, voir E. A. Zachariadou, *Δέκα τουρκικά έγγραφα για την Μεγάλη Εκκλησία (1483-1567)*, Athènes, 1996, p. 160-162, 174-179 ; M. Maxim, « Les relations des Pays roumains avec l'Archevêché d'Ochride à la lumière des documents turcs inédits », dans idem, *L'Empire ottoman au nord du Danube et l'autonomie des Principautés Roumaines au XVI^e siècle. Études et documents*, Istanbul, 1999, p. 83-107 ; A. Popescu, « Mitropolia Goției într-o diplomă otomană de investire a patriarhului de Constantinopol », *Studii și materiale de istorie medie*, XVIII, 2000, p. 169-170 ; Ph. Kotzageorgis, « The Newly Found Oldest Patriarchal Berat », *Turkish Historical Review*, 11, 2020, p. 26.

¹⁵ Sujet peu étudié dans l'historiographie roumaine, tant sous l'aspect canonique, que sous celui des formes pratiques prises par le droit de juridiction patriarcal en Valachie et en Moldavie. Voir les quelques considérations de N. Iorga, « Mitropolitul Antim și lupta pentru drepturile Bisericii sale », *Biserica Ortodoxă Română*, LIII, n^{os} 11-12, 1934, p. 721-725 ; I. Rămureanu, « Antim Ivireanul luptător pentru Ortodoxie », *Biserica Ortodoxă Română*, LXXIV, n^{os} 8-9, 1956, p. 831-853 ; Al. Elian, « Legăturile Mitropoliei Ungrovlahiei cu Patriarhia de Constantinopol și cu celelalte Biserici ortodoxe », dans idem, *Bizanțul, Biserica și cultura românească*, éd. V. V. Muntean, Iași, 2003, p. 141-180 ; idem, « Antim Ivireanul – apărător al prerogativelor scaunului mitropolitan al Ungrovlahiei », *ibid.*, p. 181-193 ; Cr. Codarcea, *Société et pouvoir*, p. 326-328 ; V. Barbu, « La conscience et la Loi. Notes concernant la compétence juridique du patriarche de Jérusalem dans les Pays Roumains », *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire*, XLIV, n^{os} 1-4, 2005, p. 19-38 ; eadem, « Pașaport pentru Paradis : cărțile de iertare patriarhale (συγχωροχάρτια, indulgentia) din colecțiile Bibliotecii Academiei Române », *Limba Română*, LX, n^o 1, 2011, p. 10-25 ; C. Chelcu, « Justiție și fiscalitate în cazul mănăstirilor închinat din Moldova (sfârșitul secolului XVI – secolul XVII », *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie « Al. Xenopol »*, Iași, XLVIII, 2011, p. 41-62. Pour la compétence juridique et la participation des hiérarques orientaux à l'administration de la justice dans les Principautés, voir les commentaires éparpillés à travers la bibliographie citée à la note 11, *supra*.

¹⁶ A. Falangas, *Présences grecques dans les Pays roumains (XIV^e – XVI^e siècles). Le témoignage des sources narratives roumaines*, Bucarest, 2009, p. 159, avec sources et bibliographie.

enseignements des patriarches et même de les interdire l'entrée au pays, comme Bogdan le Borgne de Moldavie l'aurait fait avec l'œcuménique Joachim I^{er} au début du XVI^e siècle¹⁷. Mais à l'époque, les Principautés étaient seulement tributaires de la Porte ottomane (la Valachie depuis 1418, la Moldavie depuis 1456) et les élites laïques gréco-orthodoxes fidèles à Constantinople étaient encore faiblement représentées et intégrées dans les structures de pouvoir des deux pays ; le Patriarcat de Constantinople manquait alors de base sociale et logistique au Nord du Danube, pour pouvoir y appuyer ses intérêts politiques et économiques¹⁸. De ce fait, les princes de Valachie et de Moldavie se permettaient encore de tenir les patriarches à l'écart de leurs diocèses nord-danubiennes et de leur barrer l'accès direct aux affaires ecclésiastiques locales, tout en répondant eux-mêmes à leurs devoirs d'évergètes envers l'Église orthodoxe dans son ensemble¹⁹.

Les choses ont substantiellement changé suite à l'intégration des Principautés dans l'espace politique et économique ottoman, au cours du XVI^e siècle, fût-ce dans un régime d'autonomie politico-administrative et judiciaire locale. Le pouvoir princier fut fragilisé par son affectation à un système parallèle de circulation de la grâce ayant pour source le sultan²⁰. Désormais, tout prince élu localement devait se rendre dans la capitale de l'Empire et recevoir la confirmation des mains du padischah. Les princes nommés directement à Constantinople, tels Mircea le Pâtre (1545-1559, avec des interruptions), Alexandru II Mircea de Valachie (1568-1577, avec des interruptions) et son frère Petru le Boiteux de Moldavie (1575-1591, avec des interruptions), ne tardèrent pas à faire leur apparition dans le paysage politique des deux pays, inaugurant la catégorie des « princes étrangers, casseurs des bonnes coutumes

¹⁷ N. Popescu, *Patriarhii Țarigradului prin Țările române (veacul XVI)*, Bucarest, 1914, p. 10 sq. ; P. Ș. Năsturel, « Radu vodă cel Mare și patriarhul de Constantinopol Ioachim I-ul », *Studii și materiale de istorie medie*, XX, 2002, p. 23-31. L. Pilat, *Vizita patriarhului de Constantinopol Ioachim I în Moldova*, dans P. Zahariuc (éd.), *Contribuții privitoare la istoria relațiilor dintre Țările române și Bisericile răsăritene în secolele XIV – XIX*, Iași, 2009, p. 75-80, voit dans l'attitude de Bogdan le Borgne le refus de soumettre l'Église moldave à la juridiction du Patriarcat œcuménique. Les bérats de 1476, 1477, 1483 et 1525 attestent pourtant cette dépendance canonique : *supra*, n. 14.

¹⁸ L. Cotovanu, *Migrations et mutations identitaires dans l'Europe du Sud-Est (vues de Valachie et de Moldavie, XIV^e – XVII^e siècles)*, Thèse de doctorat, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris, 2014, inédite, I^{ère} Partie.

¹⁹ Pour les donations des princes danubiens envers les Lieux Saints d'Orient avant 1550, voir L. Cotovanu, « “Qu'on prie pour moi là-bas et ici”. Donation religieuse et patriotisme local dans l'Orient orthodoxe (XVI^e – XVII^e siècles) », dans R. G. Păun (éd.), *Histoire, mémoire et dévotion. Regards croisés sur la construction des identités dans le monde orthodoxe aux époques byzantine et post-byzantine*, Seyssel, 2016, p. 207-218, avec bibliographie.

²⁰ R. G. Păun, « La circulation des pouvoirs », p. 278-280 ; O. Rîzescu, *Avant l'« État-juge »*, p. 398-411.

locales », ainsi qu'ils furent qualifiés par les partis traditionnalistes locaux tout au long du XVII^e siècle (*infra*)²¹.

Sur fond de ces changements structuraux, le Patriarcat œcuménique, qui s'accommodait de mieux en mieux du pouvoir ottoman²², trouva une brèche juridique dans le caractère localement absolu du pouvoir princier, brèche à travers laquelle la Grande Église de Constantinople et, sur ses traces, les autres Patriarcats d'Orient se sont taillés un accès durable à la sphère publique de prise de décisions (administration de la justice, par exemple) et aux ressources économiques des Principautés. Il s'agit précisément du *droit de fondation* (κτητορικὸν δίκαιον), dans sa version byzantine tardive.

Le κτητορικὸν δίκαιον – une brèche dans l'autocratie princière

Selon les normes du κτητορικὸν δίκαιον byzantin, qui est un droit privé sanctionné le long de l'histoire byzantine par les Conciles œcuméniques et les décisions impériales, toute personne ayant les moyens sur mesure était en droit de fonder des nouveaux lieux de culte, sur ses propres domaines, à condition qu'elle demande la permission de l'évêque des lieux, de doter le nouveau édifice de tout le nécessaire à son fonctionnement et de lui donner les biens promis qui, une fois entrés dans la possession de la fondation, deviennent irrévocables et inaliénables²³. Au ktitor de décider de la façon dont l'édifice allait être administré : dans un régime d'autonomie, comparable à celui acquis par les monastères athonites dès le X^e siècle ; sous le patronage de l'évêque des lieux ;

²¹ Les premières réactions des boyards de Valachie à l'encontre des princes « issus des Grecs » datent de la fin du XVI^e siècle : *Documente și însemnări românești din secolul al XVI-lea*, éd. Gh. Chivu *et al.*, Bucarest, 1979, n^o XVIII, p. 111-113 ; L. Cotovanu, « 'Chasing away the Greeks': The Prince-State and the undesired foreigners (Moldavia and Wallachia, end of the 16th – beginning of the 18th Century) », dans O. Katsiardi-Hering, M. A. Stassinopoulou (éd.), *Across the Danube: Southeastern Europeans and Their Travelling Identities (17th – 19th Centuries)*, Leiden – Boston, 2017, p. 224-231.

²² P. Konortas, *Les rapports juridiques et politiques entre le Patriarcat orthodoxe de Constantinople et l'Administration ottomane de 1453 à 1600 (d'après les documents grecs et ottomans)*, Thèse de doctorat, Université Paris – I, Paris, 1985, inédite ; idem, *Οθωμανικές θεωρήσεις για το Οικουμενικό Πατριαρχείο, 17^{ος} – αρχές του 20^{ου} αιώνα*, Athènes, 1998 ; T. Papademetriou, *Render unto the Sultan. Power, Authority, and the Greek Orthodox Church in the Early Ottoman Centuries*, Oxford, 2015. Pour la situation des autres Patriarcats grecs, voir H. Çolak, *The Orthodox Church in the Early Modern Middle East: Relations between the Ottoman Central Administration and the Patriarchates of Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria*, Ankara, 2015.

²³ L'inaliénabilité des biens acquis par l'Église via les donations a été fixée par la loi dès l'époque de l'empereur Justinien (VI^e siècle) : J. Chaudenet, *L'Église dans l'Empire romain (IV^e – V^e siècles)*, Paris, 1958, p. 297-304 ; Ph. Jobert, *La notion de donation. Convergences : 630-750*, Paris, 1977, p. 85-92 ; P. Konidaris, *Νομική θεώρηση των μοναστηριακών τυπικών*, Athènes, 2003², p. 215-223 ; V. Toneatto, *Les Banquiers du Seigneur: Évêques et moines face à la richesse (IV^e – début IX^e siècle)*, Rennes, 2012, p. 183-207.

sous le patronage des ktitors eux-mêmes, ce qui arrivait le plus souvent ; en régime d'*épidosis* ou d'*emphytevsis*, à savoir confié à titre d'usufruit à un particulier ou à un autre lieu de culte, sur une période déterminée²⁴, et d'autres encore. C'est au cours des derniers siècles de Byzance que s'imposa la pratique consistant à écarter les laïcs de la gestion économique des édifices religieux et à accorder l'administration d'un lieu de culte à un autre, du libre choix du ktitor, un monastère en règle générale, plus grand, plus riche et donc plus durable. Le lieu de culte dédié prit le nom de *métoque* (μετόχιον), qu'on peut traduire par « dépendance »²⁵. La dédicace se faisait à perpétuité, avec seule possibilité de retrait en cas de mauvaise gestion du métoque et de ses biens. C'est justement cette institution qui c'est diffusée à travers les Balkans et jusque dans des Principautés danubiennes²⁶. Comme dans la Byzance tardive, dans des Principautés, il y avait, à partir de la seconde moitié du XIV^e siècle, des monastères autonomes, des monastères princiers, placés donc sous le patronage des princes régnants, des monastères mis sous le patronage des évêques et des monastères privés, au sens de leur placement sous le patronage des ktitors particuliers eux-mêmes. Mais il y avait aussi des monastères, parfois des églises aussi, dédiés comme métoques à d'autres monastères du pays²⁷.

Ce n'est qu'à partir des années 1568-1570 que l'espace vers lequel s'adresse un acte de dédicace dépasse les limites séculières des Principautés et s'étend sur la vaste juridiction du Patriarcat de Constantinople et des autres Patriarcats d'Orient. Le premier édifice dédié à titre de métoque, à la Simonopetra athonite notamment, fut le monastère bucarestois St-Nicolas, sur la volonté de son ktitor Ghiorma grand *ban* de Craiova et en accord avec les patriarches de Constantinople Jérémie I^{er} (1522-1523, 1523-1537, 1537-1545) et Joasaph II Argyropoulos (1556-1565) ; ils étaient tous originaires d'Épire. La pratique prit essor sous les règnes d'Alexandru II Mircea et de son fils Mihnea le

²⁴ H. Ahrweiler, « *Charisticariat* et autres formes d'attribution de fondations pieuses aux X^e – XI^e siècles », *Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta*, X, 1967, p. 1-27.

²⁵ On ignore quand l'institution est née, mais elle existait déjà aux X^e – XI^e siècles : A.-M. Talbot dans *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, New York – Oxford, t. I, p. 1356-1357 s.v. « Metochion » ; M. Kaplan, *Les hommes et la terre à Byzance du VI^e au XI^e siècle. Propriété et exploitation du sol*, Paris, 1992, p. 301, 303, 307-310. Voir aussi les études réunies dans *Θ' Διεθνές Επιστημονικό Συνέδριο « Η εξακτίνωση του Αγίου Όρους στον Ορθόδοξο κόσμο: τα μετόχια »*. Πρακτικά συνεδρίου, Θεσσαλονίκη, 21-23 Νοεμβρίου 2014, Thessalonique, 2015.

²⁶ Pour le droit de fondation plus généralement, tel qu'il s'applique dans les Principautés, voir Gh. Băileanu, « Dreptul de ctitorie în Moldova », tiré à part de *Buletinul Institutului de Istoria Românilor « A.D. Xenopol »*, 3, 1942, p. 1-8 ; Gh. Cronț, « Dreptul de ctitorie în Țara Românească și Moldova. Constituirea și natura juridică a fundațiilor în Evul Mediu », *Studii și materiale de istorie medie*, IV, 1960, p. 77-116 ; Val. Al. Georgescu, *Bizanțul și instituțiile*, p. 154-179 ; V. Pușcașu, *Actul de ctitorie ca fenomen istoric în Țara Românească și Moldova până la sfârșitul secolului al XVIII-lea*, Bucurest, 2001.

²⁷ V. V. Muntean, *Organizarea mănăstirilor românești în comparație cu cele bizantine (până la 1600)*, Bucurest, 1984, *passim*.

Turcisé (1577-1591, avec des interruptions), en Valachie, et sous les multiples règnes du frère et oncle des deux voïévodes valaques, Petru le Boiteux, en Moldavie. Mihnea le Turcisé dédia lui-même le monastère bucarestois de Plumbuita à Xéropotamou du Mont-Athos ; la construction du couvent avait été commencée par son père Alexandru II Mircea et menée à bien par Mihnea lui-même, de commun effort avec sa mère Caterina Salvaresso. On entend bien que le prince Mihnea a dédié Plumbuita en tant que fondation familiale, privée donc. Quelques décennies plus tard, son fils Radu Mihnea (1611-1616, 1620-1623) a agi de la même manière, en dédiant le monastère, toujours familial, de Radu-Vodă, refait par lui-même depuis les fondements, au monastère athonite d'Iviron. Je ne m'attarderai pas sur d'autres exemples²⁸.

Les cas cités indiquent que le droit de fondation, premièrement, permet la dédicace de lieux de culte érigés en Valachie ou en Moldavie à des monastères situés en dehors des deux pays, voire dans la juridiction du Patriarcat de Constantinople et, par extension, dans celle des autres Patriarcats grecs. Deuxièmement, le monarque agit en la matière à titre privé : il ne peut décider que du sort de ses propres fondations et de celles érigées par ses ancêtres. Troisièmement, et en rapport avec le point précédent, le κτητορικὸν δίκαιον interdit aux princes régnants de toucher au statut établi par des ktitors d'en dehors de leur famille. Le droit de fondation s'avère être donc une *source de limites* au pouvoir absolu du monarque « élu par la grâce de Dieu » (le souverain n'intervient qu'en cas de mauvaise gestion du métoque et de ses biens, qui restent circonscrits à son pays-patrimoine et à sa juridiction). On peut supposer que ce sont ces limites là, entre autres, qui ont importuné les princes et les boyards menant une politique intérieure traditionaliste, dont Matei Basarab de Valachie (1632-1654), qui s'affichait en défenseur des « bonnes et vieilles coutumes » du pays et qui ne cachait pas son aversion à l'égard des « princes étrangers » et des hiérarques « grecs » (roum. *greci*)²⁹ ; la dédicace des lieux de culte locaux aux Lieux Saints était légale, mais une nouveauté quand même à

²⁸ Pour plus de détails, voir L. Cotovanu, « Aux débuts de la dédicace des lieux de culte "roumains" envers le Mont-Athos (seconde moitié du XVI^e siècle) : entreprise publique ou privée ? », dans *Θ' Διεθνές Επιστημονικό Συνέδριο « Η εξακτίνωση του Αγίου Όρους στον Ορθόδοξο κόσμο: τα μετόχια »*, p. 191-215. Pour le monastère bucarestois Radu-Vodă, voir N. Stoicescu, *Repertoriul bibliografic al monumentelor feudale din București*, Bucarest, 1961, p. 259-264 ; Fl. Teleman, « Relationships between Radu Vodă Monastery in Bucharest and Ivir Monastery on Mount Athos », dans *ATINER's Conference Paper Series HIS2015-1878*, Athènes, 2016, p. 3-16.

²⁹ Le nom collectif « greci », tiré des sources valaques et moldaves, correspond au grec Ρωμαίοι, par lequel s'autoindentifient les ressortissants gréco-orthodoxes de l'Empire ottoman. Communément, le nom « Grecs » couvrait de son sens à la fois les individus qui partageaient l'unique appartenance collective grecque que ceux qui partageaient bien d'autres appartenances (aroumaine, albanaise). Les derniers pouvaient jouer de leurs multiples appartenances collectives en fonction des circonstances et des intérêts à défendre. Par contre, le corolaire sémantique du nom à l'époque ne se confond pas avec celui qu'il a pris à l'âge de l'État-nation grec : sujet amplement traité dans L. Cotovanu, *Migrations, l'Introduction* et la II^e partie.

partir des années 1570. Bien sûr, cela n'a pas empêché Matei Basarab à s'entourer lui-même de Grecs, mais il resta cohérent dans sa politique intérieure, parsemée de discours anti-grecs, et ne fit aucune dédicace de couvents locaux vers l'extérieur du pays. Il fit tout le contraire par rapport aux princes « étrangers » qu'il critiquait : il interdit la dédicace d'un certain nombre de monastères aux Lieux Saints de l'Orient chrétien³⁰, ce qui lui valut dans l'historiographie roumaine récente l'appréciation d'avoir entamé une véritable « réforme monastique ». Or là encore, on le verra sous peu, Matei Basarab, tout autochtoniste qu'il était, agissait en toute conformité avec les prescriptions du κτητορικὸν δίκαιον, en cherchant juste à imprimer une dimension d'utilité publique à ses décisions et à les renforcer à l'aide d'outils inhérents à la sphère publique. C'est à travers son cas que je tenterai d'illustrer, en ce qui suit, le droit de fondation comme source de limites pour le caractère absolu du pouvoir princier. En contrepartie, c'est à travers ces limites d'ordre juridiques qu'on pourra mieux comprendre le sens des décisions de Matei Basarab, passées dans l'historiographie roumaine pour l'expression d'une « réforme monastique ».

Matei Basarab et la dédicace de monastères valaques aux Lieux Saints : réforme monastique ou projet de légitimation politique ?

Au cours de la septième et la huitième année de son règne, Matei Basarab émit trois chrysobulles (ici désignés comme A, B, C) concernant directement la question de la dédicace des lieux de culte valaques à titre de métoques à des monastères situés « au Pays Grec et au Mont-Athos » (*de pren Țara Grecească și de la Sveata Gora / εἰς τὸν τόπον τῶν Ῥωμαίων, καὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὁρους*)³¹. Il s'agit de trois décisions prises devant l'Assemblée du pays : l'une au cours de l'année 1639, la deuxième le 27 novembre 1640 et la troisième le 8 décembre 1640³².

Les trois chrysobulles ont été peu étudiés depuis les disputes générées par la Sécularisation d'Alexandru I. Cuza (1863)³³. Les personnalités impliquées

³⁰ Par « Lieux Saints », on entend ici les Patriarcats de l'Orient orthodoxe (Constantinople, Jérusalem, Antioche, Alexandrie) et les monastères qui en dépendaient canoniquement, tels les monastères du Mont-Athos, du Mont-Sinaï, des rochers des Météores, les stavropégies patriarcales et autres lieux de culte disséminés à travers les diocèses balkaniques du Patriarcat de Constantinople.

³¹ DRH, B, t. XXVII, éd. V. Barbu *et al.*, Bucarest, 2013, n° 10, p. 13. Le contenu de l'acte princier émis le 27 novembre 1640, en roumain, est repris en forme abrégée dans l'acte patriarcal de Parthénios de Constantinople, émis en grec, en avril 1641 : DRH, B, t. XXVIII, éd. O. Rizescu *et al.*, Bucarest, 2019, n° 79, p. 114-117 (texte grec), 117-120 (trad. roum.).

³² Publiées dans DRH, B, t. XXVII, n° 10, p. 12-17 (1639, août, *post* 10-28), n° 511, p. 618-622 (1640, nov. 27), n° 524, p. 633-636 (1640, déc. 8).

³³ Sur la Sécularisation de 1863, voir M. Lazăr, « Considerații privind statutul mănăstirilor din Țara Românească închinată Sfințelor Locuri (secolele XVIII – XIX) », dans P. Zahariuc (éd.), *Contribuții*, p. 9-33 ; Șt. Petrescu, *Migrație și Ortodoxie în Europa de Sud-Est de la*

alors dans le débat ont vu dans les décisions de Matei Basarab la volonté de « libérer » les monastères les plus importants du pays de leur statut de métoques « soumis » à des lieux de culte « étrangers ». De nos jours, les chercheurs intéressés à cette affaire³⁴ ont vu dans ces mesures « fondamentales » et « novatrices » la volonté de Matei Basarab de « réformer » la vie monastique de la Valachie et l'administration des couvents locaux. Petre Ș. Năsturel voyait dans le voievode valaque « le précurseur d'Alexandru I. Cuza » et estimait que ses mesures ont marqué un tournant dans l'œuvre princière de patronage matériel des Lieux Saints orthodoxes³⁵. Pour Violeta Barbu, « paradoxalement »³⁶, Matei Basarab cherchait non pas à empêcher la pratique de la dédicace, mais à rétablir les « vieilles et bonnes coutumes » en matière de fondation et de gestion des lieux de culte. Entre autres, le voievode aurait tâché d'instituer un régime formel d'autorisation princière de la dédicace et de renforcer par là l'autorité du souverain³⁷ et son droit de légiférer en matière d'organisation des fondations religieuses³⁸. Son but aurait été donc d'empêcher la dédicace *abusive* des monastères locaux à titre de métoques aux Patriarcats

« destrămarea » societății fanariote la constituirea comunităților grecești în prima jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea, Bucarest, 2013, p. 219-265, avec sources et bibliographie.

³⁴ P. Ș. Năsturel, *Le Mont Athos et les Roumains. Recherches sur leurs relations du milieu du XIV^e siècle à 1654*, Rome, 1986, p. 324-326 ; I. Moldoveanu, *Contribuții la istoria relațiilor Țărilor române cu Muntele Athos (1650-1863)*, Bucarest, 2007, p. 24 ; O. Rizescu, *Avant l'« État-juge »*, p. 164-169 ; V. Barbu, Gh. Lazăr, O. Olar, « Reforma monastică a domnului Matei Basarab », *Studii și materiale de istorie medie*, XXX, 2012, p. 9-54.

³⁵ P. Ș. Năsturel, *Le Mont Athos*.

³⁶ V. Barbu, Gh. Lazăr, O. Olar, « Reforma monastică », p. 12.

³⁷ En réalité, Matei Basarab n'a innové dans aucun de ces domaines. La confirmation princière des dédicaces était obligatoire avant son règne, conformément au principe local du *dominium eminens*. Voir, à titre d'exemple, le cas du monastère de Snagov, dont la dédicace a été interdite par Alexandru Iliș, qui invoqua à cet effet le *typikon* du monastère établi par ses ktitors : DRH, B, t. XXII, éd. D. Mioc, Bucarest, 1969, n° 31, p. 51-55 (1628, mars 6) ; P. Ș. Năsturel, *Le Mont Athos*, p. 164-165, 324. Voir aussi les confirmations d'Alexandru Coconul de la dédicace du monastère d'Iezerul à Ivron du Mont-Athos : (1625, avril 25 : *Documente privind Istoria României*, B, *Țara Românească* [dsormais : DIR, B], t. XVII/4, éd. I. Ionașcu, Bucarest, 1954, n° 526, p. 503-505), du monastère dit « Izvorul lui Voievod », fondé par Grama sénéchal, au monastère Radu-Vodă de Bucarest et par là à Ivron (1630, avril 12 : *Catalogul documentelor moldovenești din Direcția Arhivelor Centrale*, Supliment I [1403-1700], éd. M. Soveja et al., Bucarest, 1975, n° 464bis, p. 166), la confirmation de Leon Tomșa de la dédicace de l'église du *ban* Ghiorma de Bucarest à l'Archevêché de Pogoniani (1631, mars 18 : DRH, B, t. XXIII, éd. D. Mioc, Bucarest, 1969, n° 196, p. 322-323), etc. Il faut prendre également en compte les chartes princières confirmant les possessions des monastères dédiés aux Lieux Saints, qui montrent, indirectement, que les souverains de Valachie permettaient les dédicaces elles-mêmes. Même situation en Moldavie.

³⁸ V. Barbu, Gh. Lazăr, O. Olar, « Reforma monastică », p. 38-39, qui, par ailleurs, citent comme précédent la décision de Michel le Brave (1596, avril 13 : DRH, B, t. XI, n° 160, p. 205-206) à propos de l'administration des monastères du pays. Par conséquent, Matei Basarab n'a pas innové dans ce domaine non plus.

grecs³⁹. Malgré ces tentatives de donner une interprétation plus large aux intentions du voïévode, les trois chrysobulles sont encore de nos jours qualifiées d'actes de « libération » (*dezrobire, slobozire, dezînchinare, dezânchinăciune*) des édifices valaques dédiés aux Lieux Saints⁴⁰. C'est une qualification à relativiser, comme je tâcherai de le montrer à la lumière du caractère privé du droit de fondation en cours en Valachie (en Moldavie aussi).

Le terme « soumission » (*supunere*) était véhiculé à l'époque étudiée même, en référence à la dédicace des monastères princiers de Valachie, mais il renvoyait plutôt à la dédicace (*închinare*) en tant que source de dépendance juridique du métoque par rapport au monastère administrateur qui se trouvait hors du pays⁴¹. C'est vrai que dans le chrysobulle patriarcal de Parthénios I^{er}⁴², l'expression roumaine « le-au închinat » (*les ont dédiés*) a été traduite par « les ont soumises » (ὕπεταξαν), accompagné par « les ont rendus esclaves » (κατεδούλωσαν). Ce dernier terme est absent des chrysobulles princiers, mais dans la traduction grecque de leur contenu il renvoie manifestement à la représentation aulique des actes de dédicace. Par conséquent, il faudra étudier ce jugement véhiculé à la Cour de Matei Basarab – et qu'il faut prendre entre guillemets – dans le contexte des événements qui en ont généré l'usage. De toute évidence, le terme κατεδούλωσαν⁴³ reflète le caractère anti-grec des trois

³⁹ O. Rădescu, *Avant l'État-juge*, p. 171.

⁴⁰ Voir P. Ș. Năsturel, *Le Mont Athos*, p. 324-326 ; A. Pippidi, *Tradiția politică bizantină în Țările Române în secolele XVI – XVIII*, Bucarest, 2001² (1983¹), p. 303 ; I. Moldoveanu, *Contribuții*, p. 24 ; idem, « Din legăturile românilor cu Muntele Athos. Mănăstiri românești “îchinate” », *Tabor*, 1, 2012, p. 10, n. 24, p. 17 ; O. Rădescu, *op. cit.*, p. 165-169 ; V. Barbu dans DRH, B, t. XXII, p. XI, XVII-XXVIII ; V. Barbu, Gh. Lazăr, O. Olar, *op. cit.* ; L. Rădvan, « Mănăstirile și orașele în Țările Române. Evoluții în secolele XIV – XVII », *Historia Urbana*, XXII, 2014, p. 102, n. 133, p. 103-104 ; K. Petrovsky, « “Those Violating the Good, Old Customs of our Land” : Forms and Functions of Graecophobia in the Danubian Principalities, 16th – 18th Centuries », dans H. T. Karateke, H. Erdem Çipa, E. Anetshofer (éd.), *Disliking Others : Loathing, Hostility, and Distrust in Premodern Ottoman Lands*, Leiden – Boston, 2018, p. 200, n. 48 ; O. Rădescu dans DRH, B, t. XXVIII, p. XXII-XXIII, etc.

⁴¹ « [...] începură [...] a le supune metoașe dajnice altor mănăstiri de prin Țara Grecească și de la Sveata Gora, făcându-le hrsoave de închinăciune », « le-au supus metoașe dajnice », « singuri ctitorii le-au închinat și le-au supus metoașe », « și va închina și va supune vreuna din mănăstirile țării » : DRH, B, t. XXVII, n° 10, p. 13, 14, 15. Voir aussi DRH, B, t. XXVII, n° 511, p. 619, 620 ; DRH, B, t. XXVIII, n° 79, p. 114-120.

⁴² DRH, B, t. XXVIII, n° 79, p. 114-120.

⁴³ Voir aussi la charte du patriarche Parthénios I^{er} pour le monastère de Bistrița (1642, juin), qui précise à propos de cet édifice qu'il soit « libre, insoumis et non importuné » (εἰν(αι) ἐλευθέρα, καὶ ἀδούλωτη, καὶ ἀκαταπάτητη) : DRH, B, t. XXVIII, n° 499, p. 611-612 (texte gr.), 612-613 (trad. roum.).

chrysobulles princiers (*infra*) et plus généralement l'atmosphère anti-grecque qui planait sur la Valachie au cours de la première moitié du XVII^e siècle⁴⁴.

Le contenu des chrysobulles A et B : l'argumentation

Les deux premiers chrysobulles ont le même contenu, excepté la liste des monastères concernés, qui sera présentée plus loin. Le discours est structuré selon un schéma bien recherché et cohérent :

1) Invocation, en slavon, de la Ste-Trinité, signe d'attachement de l'émetteur à la foi chrétienne.

2) La titulature du prince, qui indique : a) la nature divine de son pouvoir (*cu darul lui Dumnezeu, domnitoriul și biruitoriu*) ; b) l'espace / la terre dans les limites duquel / de laquelle il est délégué à gouverner (*a toată Țara Românească, încă și unor părți de preste munte, Almașului și Făgărașului domn i proci*) ; c) les destinataires des deux documents : des ecclésiastiques et des laïcs qui, dans l'ensemble, constituent « le pays » lui-même comme corps sociopolitique (*lăcuitorilor Țării noastre Rumânești de-ntr-amândoaă rândurile, așa duhovnicilor, ca și mirenilor*). La titulature renvoie au principe local de la double élection du souverain : « oint par la grâce de Dieu », d'une part, et élu par le « pays », dans la dynastie régnante des lieux, d'autre part. Elle annonce par là le fait que l'œuvre du prince doublement élu doit plaire à tous ceux qui l'ont choisi ou accepté pour gouverner⁴⁵.

3) S'ensuit, en trois séquences, l'argumentation de l'émission des deux documents :

Premièrement, les deux actes évoquent la pratique de la fondation de lieux de culte comme une 'vieille et bonne' coutume du monde chrétien, qui s'est enracinée dans le Pays de Valachie depuis sa fondation même. Il était accoutumé depuis ces temps reculés que les princes, les métropolites, les évêques, les boyards, bref, les puissants des lieux, construisent des monastères et les dotent des biens nécessaires, pour *le salut de leur âme*, mais aussi pour contribuer *au bien du pays*. L'on souligne donc, d'une part, l'ancienneté de cette 'bonne' coutume dans le pays, enracinée depuis la fondation même de la Valachie, et son utilité spirituelle et publique. Il y est précisé aussi que ladite coutume a survécu jusqu'aux temps présents, c'est-à-dire jusqu'au règne de Matei Basarab. Avec ceci, le souverain émetteur annonce que lui-même s'inscrit dans la lignée des souverains qui ont veillé à la conservation de la 'bonne'

⁴⁴ Le discours anti-grec aulique concernait la domination étrangère / constantinopolitaine sur les Principautés danubiennes, portée à l'intérieur des deux pays, en principe autonomes, par les migrants « grecs » : L. Cotovanu, « "Chasing away the Greeks" », p. 215-252 ; *infra*.

⁴⁵ Val. Al. Georgescu, *Bizanțul și instituțiile*, p. 126-153 ; R. Păun, « La circulation des pouvoirs », *passim*.

coutume et ont contribué par là à l'entretien du bien commun local ; on retrouvera cet argument plus loin.

Deuxièmement, les deux actes font état du fait que le cours des 'bonnes' choses évoquées auparavant a été perturbé et transgressé par l'arrivée sur le trône princier et à la tête de l'Église valaque de princes et de métropolites « étrangers » (*striini*), à savoir des « Grecs », perçus comme tels non pas à travers leur « sainte foi », mais à travers « la nation, la langue et leurs mauvaises habitudes » (*oameni striini noao, nu cu legea sfântă, ce cu neamul, cu limba și cu năravurile cele rele, adică greci*). Ce sont les « Grecs » qui ont méprisé « les bonnes et anciennes coutumes du pays » (*obiceaiele cele bune, bătrâne ale țării* / τὰ ζακόνια τὰ καλά, καὶ τὰ παλαιὰ τοῦ τόπου) et ont mené le pays à la ruine. Ils ont porté atteinte au bien être des « saints monastères princiers du pays », à savoir à leur organisation telle qu'elle avait été adoptée en Valachie depuis la fondation du pays (*ce îndrăzniră a le călca obiceaiele mănăstirilor și pravilele ctitorilor, domnilor bătrâni* / καταφρονήσαντες τῶν ζακονίων τῶν ἱερῶν μοναστηρίων [...] καὶ νόμων τῶν κτιτόρων τῶν παλαιῶν ἐκείνων καὶ μακαρίων αὐθεντῶν) – c'est un détail important à retenir ! Précisément, ils ont commencé à vendre « les saints monastères du pays et les lares princières » (*sfintele mănăstiri ale țării și lavrele domnești*) et à les dédier comme métèques à des monastères « du Pays Grec et du Mont Athos », en soutenant leur geste d'actes écrits de dédicace, sans l'accord du Conseil princier, du Synode et du « pays » plus généralement⁴⁶. On a affaire ici à un cliché, attesté par d'autres types de sources de l'époque, selon lequel les bonnes coutumes sont transgressées par les étrangers, et notamment par les Grecs qui gravitent autour des institutions de pouvoir constantinopolitaines : la Porte et le Patriarcat œcuménique⁴⁷. Allusion y est faite également au système pluriel de droit caractéristique des Principautés et à la promotion du droit byzantin écrit par les « princes étrangers » et par leurs conseillers grecs, au détriment du droit coutumier local défendu par les « princes autochtones » (*domni de țară*)⁴⁸.

⁴⁶ DRH, B, t. XXVII, n° 10, p. 12-17 ; DRH, B, t. XXVIII, n° 79, p. 114-117. Le terme ζακόνι correspond au roumain « zakon », d'origine slave (*loi*, mais aussi *coutume*). Dans ce cas concret, il traduit le roumain « obicei » (*coutume*). Pour les termes roumains entrés dans la langue grecque pratiquée dans les Principautés, voir N. Iorga, « Le grec dans les Pays roumains », *Académie Roumaine. Bulletin de la Section Historique*, XI, 1924, p. 136-141 ; Al. Elian, « Elemente de paleografie greco-română », dans DIR, I, *Introducere*, Bucarest, 1956, p. 370-377 ; P. Ș. Năsturel, « Remarques sur les documents grecs des princes roumains », dans idem, *Études d'histoire byzantine et post-byzantine*, éd. Em. C. Antoch, L. Cotovanu, I.-Al. Tudorie, Brăila, 2019, p. 845-859 ; T. Teoteoi, « Termeni comuni români și bulgari în texte bizantine și postbizantine », dans idem, *Byzantina et Daco-romana. Studii de istorie și civilizație bizantină și românească medievală*, Bucarest, 2008, p. 245-254 ; *Cronica Ghiculeștilor. Istoria Moldovei între anii 1695-1754*, éd. N. Camariano, A. Camariano-Cioran, Bucarest, 1965, p. XIV-XV, LIII.

⁴⁷ Voir L. Cotovanu, « "Chasing away the Greeks" », avec sources et bibliographie.

⁴⁸ Matthieu de Myres déjà, qui vécut en Valachie en 1603-1624, avertissait le prince Alexandru Iliaș (1616-1618) – l'homme de la Porte – du besoin d'appliquer de manière équilibrée le droit

La troisième séquence de l'argumentation est censée, d'une part, relier le règne et la 'bonne' œuvre de Matei Basarab à celle de ces « ancêtres Basarab » (*neamul nostru bășărăbescu*), les fondateurs du pays et gardiens des 'bonnes' coutumes locales ; le voïévode confond sciemment dans le nom *Basarab* la dynastie fondatrice du Pays de Valachie – descendante de Basarab I^{er} (1324-1351/2) – et celle qui, au XVII^e siècle, recherche ses racines dans le règne de Neagoe Craiovescu-Basarab (1512-1521) ; je reviendrai sur cet aspect. D'autre part, Matei Basarab, en tant que prince issu de la lignée des souverains autochtones et après avoir subi personnellement la persécution des « étrangers », s'investit de la mission de faire chasser ces derniers du pays et de rétablir « les vieilles et bonnes coutumes » locales. « On m'a fait monter sur le trône de mes ancêtres » (*și ne ridică la scaunul moșilor noștri*), affirme-t-il, rappelant ainsi, d'une part, *le caractère patrimonial du pouvoir*, car reçu en héritage « par la grâce de Dieu » et, d'autre part, *la légitimité de son élection*, appuyée sur l'autochtonie de sa candidature et sur son appartenance à la dynastie des princes fondateurs (*cei domni moșneni țărâi*), qui avaient instauré en Valachie « les bonnes coutumes des monastères » (*obiceaiele cele bune, obiceaiele mănăstirilor*). On reconnaît ici un discours légitimateur du pouvoir que Matei Basarab a arraché par « coup d'État » à Leon Tomșa (1629-1632)⁴⁹, prince nommé à Constantinople et accusé de protéger les Grecs⁵⁰ ; le voïévode a usé du même argument dans sa *Chronique* aulique aujourd'hui perdue⁵¹.

byzantin écrit (νομιμάρι, νόμους της Βασιλείας) et le droit coutumier du pays (λέξια τζέρρη, roum. *legea țării*), afin d'éviter l'annulation des décisions princières d'un règne à l'autre : voir Matthieu de Myre, *Ἑτέρα Ἱστορία τῶν κατὰ τὴν Οὐγγροβλαχίαν τελεσθέντων, ἀρχαμένη ἀπὸ Σερμπάνου Βονβόνδα μέχρι Γαβριήλ Βονβόνδα...*, dans E. Legrand (éd.), *Bibliothèque grecque vulgaire*, t. II, Paris, 1881, p. 280-281 ; commentaires Val. Al. Georgescu, *Bizanțul și instituțiile*, p. 82, 225-227 ; L. Cotovanu, « Οι πολλαπλές αναπαραστάσεις των Ρωμαίων / Γραικών στις Παραδουνάβιες Ηγεμονίες : η μαρτυρία του Ματθαίου Μυρέων (αρχές του 17^{ου} αιώνα) », dans Ev. Karamanolakis *et al.* (éd.), *Ἑλλην, Ρωμῆς, Γραικός : Συλλογικοί προσδιορισμοί και ταυτότητες*, Athènes, 2018, p. 445.

⁴⁹ DRH, B, t. XXIII, n° 272, p. 434-436 ; I. Lupaș, *Documente istorice transilvane*, t. I, Cluj, 1940, p. 185-187 ; N. Stoicescu, *Matei Basarab*, p. 17 et n. 34, p. 23, 32-33 ; C. Rezachevici, « Cum a apărut numele dinastic *Basarab* și când l-a adoptat Matei Vodă », *Analele Universității din Craiova. Istorie*, « *Epoca lui Matei Basarab* », X, n° 10, 2005, p. 16.

⁵⁰ Selon ses contemporains, Leon Tomșa était un « marchand grec », « Grec de Constantinople ». Lui-même affirmait être le fils de Ștefan Tomșa, prince de Moldavie (1611-1615, 1621-1623) : V. Căndea, « Letopisețul Țării Românești (1292-1664) în versiunea arabă a lui Macarie Zaim », *Studii. Revista de istorie*, XXIII, n° 4, 1970, p. 678 ; C. Rezachevici, *Cronologia domnilor din Țara Românească și Moldova (a. 1324-1881)*, t. I. (*sec. XIV – XVI*), Bucurest, 2001, p. 73 ; A. Pippidi, « L'histoire de Marcada, ses versions et ses lecteurs », *Revue des études sud-est européennes*, XXIX, n° 1-2, 1991, p. 30.

⁵¹ P. Chihaia, « Cronica despre Radu de la Afumați (1525) », dans idem, *De la « Negru Vodă » la Neagoe. Interferențe literar-artistice în cultura românească a veacului de mijloc*, Bucurest, 1976, p. 17-43 ; Șt. Andreescu, « Despre “fața Matei Basarab” din *Cronica Țării Românești* », *Revista de istorie și teorie literară*, XXXVII-XXXVIII, n° 3-4, 1989-1990, p. 244-250. Des fragments de

Qu'est ce qu'on peut retenir de cette première partie, commune aux deux chrysobulles ? On y reconnaît les antinomies *princes autochtones, protecteurs du bien public, voire la dynastie Basarab / étrangers, corrompus et détracteurs du pays, voire les Grecs, bonnes / mauvaises coutumes* (dont la dédicace des monastères princiers aux Lieux Saints), véhiculées par les élites de Valachie dans le cadre plus large de l'attitude anti-grecque qui a tourmenté la vie politique des Principautés tout au long du XVII^e siècle⁵². La dédicace des monastères princiers est associée à l'arrivée des princes et des métropolitains grecs dans les deux pays, ce qui nous suggère la chronologie du changement survenu dans le respect des anciennes coutumes des lieux. Comme je l'ai évoqué plus haut, le phénomène de la dédicace des lieux de culte danubiens à des monastères dépendants des Patriarcats grecs a émergé dans les décennies ayant suivi la soumission, dans un régime de plus en plus pesant, des Principautés à la Porte : la Moldavie en 1538 et la Valachie en 1545. À partir de ces dates, les princes danubiens devaient être confirmés par le sultan en personne et la dépendance des deux pays envers la Porte faisait que souvent ils étaient élus à Constantinople même, parmi des candidats qui n'avaient aucun lien avec la dynastie régnante valaque⁵³. Ainsi est née la figure métaphorique du « prince étranger », qui arrivait sur le trône entouré de sa clientèle « grecque constantino-politaine ». C'est du moins dans ces termes qu'elle prend contour dans l'imaginaire sociopolitique danubien : « le prince étranger » et « les Grecs » y incarnent la domination constantino-politaine elle-même sur les deux pays⁵⁴. Qui plus est, la pratique de la dédicace a émergé sur l'initiative privée des migrants originaires de la juridiction du Patriarcat de Constantinople et installés à demeure dans les Principautés à partir du milieu du XVI^e siècle⁵⁵. Cela eut de quoi alimenter le cliché du « Grec » ignorant les coutumes et détracteur des monastères du pays,

cette chronique nous sont parvenus dans la traduction arabe faite par le patriarche Macaire d'Antioche : V. Căndea, « Letopisețul », p. 673-692. Les événements racontés par la *Chronique* aulique de Matei Basarab ont été repris, cinq décennies plus tard, dans la *Chronique des Cantacuzène*, dont l'approche est la même que dans les chrysobulles A et B de Matei Basarab. Selon cette chronique, du temps de Matei Basarab, « les princes étrangers et les Grecs constantinopolitains » avaient détruit le pays. De ce fait, les boyards et les valets d'armes, avec l'aide d'Abaza *pasha* de Nikopolis, ont décidé de mettre sur le trône du pays Matei *aga* de Brâncoveni, qui se trouvait réfugié en Transylvanie à cause des Grecs : *Istoria Țării Românești (1290-1690). Letopisețul Cantacuzinesc*, éd. C. Grecescu, D. Simonescu, Bucarest, 1960, p. 98-100 ; commentaire chez N. Stoicescu, *Matei Basarab*, Bucarest, 1988, p. 11-17.

⁵² L. Cotovanu, « "Chasing away the Greeks" », *passim*, avec la bibliographie du sujet.

⁵³ Dans maints cas, il s'agit de fils de princes, retenus en otage auprès de la Porte : D. I. Mureșan, « Princes du Sud-Est Européen otages à Constantinople (X^e – XV^e siècles) », dans V. Sârbu, Cr. Luca (éd.), *Miscellanea Historica et Archaeologica in Honorem Professoris Ionel Căndea*, Brăila, 2008, p. 145-153.

⁵⁴ L. Cotovanu, « "Chasing away the Greeks" », *passim*.

⁵⁵ Eadem, « Aux débuts de la dédicace », *passim*.

bien que les ktitors allogènes aient dédié leurs fondations aux Lieux Saints en toute légalité.

À partir du milieu du XVI^e siècle, l'élite politique des Principautés se retrouve divisée entre ceux qui se conforment à la dépendance des deux pays par rapport à la Porte et aux changements institutionnels et sociaux que cela implique, et ceux qui cherchent à les faire sortir de leur vassalité ottomane, avec l'appui des puissances chrétiennes, ou du moins préserver leur autonomie politico-administrative et judiciaire et leurs anciennes coutumes dans le cadre de leur dépendance de Constantinople⁵⁶. Suite aux changements institutionnels qui s'opèrent à cette époque dans les rapports des Principautés avec Constantinople, la période d'avant, avec princes 'autochtones', 'bonnes' coutumes et peu d'ingérence des « Grecs constantinopolitains » dans les affaires intérieures, devient une source d'appui idéologique et de légitimation politique pour les prétendants locaux au trône. Ce sont notamment les prétendants issus de la famille élargie de Neagoe Basarab (lui-même étant un usurpateur du nom du fondateur de la Valachie, Basarab I^{er}⁵⁷) qui ont usé de ces arguments pour ainsi dire *traditionalistes* et *anti-grecs*. Il s'agit de Radu Șerban (1602-1610, 1611), de Matei Basarab (1632-1654), des frères Cantacuzène, dont la mère était la fille de Radu Șerban – l'un d'eux, Șerban, a régné en Valachie (1678-1688) –, de Constantin Șerban (1654-1658), le fils Radu Șerban, de Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688-1714), qui était, par sa mère, le neveu des Cantacuzène ; excepté Șerban Cantacuzène, tous les autres ont accolé à leur nom de famille acquis en tant que boyards celui princier de *Basarab*⁵⁸. Constantin Rezachevici a montré, avec des arguments convaincants, que, pour des raisons de légitimation dynastique, Radu Șerban fut le premier voievode qui s'est approprié le nom princier *Basarab*, en reliant ainsi sa descendance lointaine des boyards Craiovescu au nom de leur

⁵⁶ Șt. Andreescu, « La politique de Mircea le Pâtre », *Revue des études sud-est européennes*, X, n° 1, 1972, p. 115-122 ; Fl. Constantiniu, « De la Mihai Viteazul la Fanarioți. Observații asupra politicii externe românești », *Studii și materiale de istorie medie*, VIII, 1975, p. 101-135.

⁵⁷ N. Stoicescu, *Dicționar al marilor dregători din Țara Românească și Moldova, sec. XIV – XVII*, București, 1971, p. 18-19.

⁵⁸ C. Rezachevici, *Radu Șerban și epoca sa*, Thèse de doctorat, Université de Bucarest, 1978, inédite ; idem, « Începutul epocii lui Matei Basarab și Vasile Lupu în lumina relațiilor cu Imperiul Otoman și cu Transilvania », *Studii. Revista de istorie*, XXXV, n° 9, 1982, p. 1003-1012 ; V. Cîndea, *Războiul dominantă*, București, 1979, p. 40-47 ; N. Stoicescu, « Lupta lui Matei din Brâncoveni pentru ocuparea tronului Țării Românești », *Studii. Revista de istorie*, XXXV, n° 9, 1982, p. 985-1002 ; idem, *Matei Basarab* ; C. Șerban, « Matei Basarab înainte de domnie », *Revista istorică*, I, n° 5, 1990, p. 481-507 ; I. Sârbu, *Relațiile externe ale lui Matei Basarab între anii 1632-1654 (cu privire la istoria Orientului european)*, București, 1992 ; N. Stoicescu, *Constantin Șerban*, București, 1990 ; M. Lazăr, « Spre folosul acestei sfinte case ». *Constituirea și evoluția domeniului mănăstirii Cotroceni (secolele XVII – XIX)*, Brăila, 2012 ; P. Cernovodeanu, Fl. Constantiniu (éd.), *Constantin Brâncoveanu*, București, 1989.

neveu couronné Neagoe Craiovescu-Basarab⁵⁹. Neagoe lui-même, qui était le fils de Pârnu Craiovescu, pour légitimer ses prétentions au trône valaque, déclara être le fils du prince Basarab Țepeluș (1474-1482, avec des interruptions), celui-ci étant le fils de Basarab II (1442-1444). Il prit de la sorte le nom de *Basarab* en signe d'appartenance à la dynastie régnante du pays⁶⁰. Le grand *aga* Matei de Brâncoveni, dès qu'il monta sur le trône, en 1632, suivit l'exemple de son ancêtre Radu Șerban, vu qu'il descendait lui aussi, de loin, des boyards Craiovescu et par là, de manière indirecte, du prince Neagoe Basarab⁶¹. Matei Basarab entreprit, moyennant tout un arsenal d'instruments discursifs⁶², de relier ses ancêtres Craiovescu, oncles de Neagoe Basarab, à la dynastie fondatrice du pays représentée par Basarab I^{er} (connu du temps de Matei Basarab du nom de *Radu Negru* ; il s'agissait d'une confusion avec Radu I^{er}, le petit-fils de Basarab I^{er}). Alors que Radu Șerban prétendait descendre de Neagoe Basarab, Matei Basarab réclamait sa descendance du fondateur de la Valachie en personne⁶³. Dans son discours politique, « les princes étrangers », hommes de la Porte, étaient venus perturber l'équilibre intérieur du pays, usurper le trône et transgresser les 'bonnes' coutumes des lieux, y compris les coutumes des monastères. Sa propre accession au trône des « ancêtres » était censée corriger ces déviations. C'est notamment par rapport à cette construction idéologique que l'on comprend mieux son ambition affichée de « rétablir les bonnes coutumes des monastères ».

On retrouve dans la *Chronique des Cantacuzène* – rédigée vers 1690, sur la base de la *Chronique* aulique de Matei Basarab pour ce qui est de la période 1632-1654 – exactement la même structure dans l'argumentation de l'autochtonie et de l'utilité publique de la famille que celle constatée dans les chrysobulles de Matei Basarab. L'auteur de la *Chronique* véhicule les mêmes clichés antinomiques : *princes autochtones issus des Basarab (contributeurs au bien commun) / Grecs étrangers corrompus et détracteurs du pays* et, respectivement, *bonnes / mauvaises coutumes*⁶⁴. À part Constantin Șerban et

⁵⁹ C. Rezachevici, « Cum a apărut numele dinastic *Basarab* », p. 7-14. Radu Șerban était le descendant éloigné d'une cousine de Neagoe Basarab : N. Stoicescu, *Dicționar*, p. 19.

⁶⁰ A. Falangas, *Présences grecques*, p. 165-187 ; O.-V. Olar, « Dracula au rebours. Notes sur la *Vie de Saint Niphon* (BHG 1373a) », dans Fr. Mosetti Casaretto (éd.), *Il corpo impuro e le sue rappresentazioni nelle letterature medievale*, Alexandria, 2012, p. 435-459.

⁶¹ Matei Basarab était l'arrière-petit-fils de la sœur de Neagoe Basarab, appelée Marga de Caracal : N. Stoicescu, *Dicționar*, p. 18 (Pârnu Craiovescu), 49 (Danciu de Brâncoveni), 209 (Matei Basarab).

⁶² Voir, plus en détail, C. Rezachevici, « Cum a apărut numele dinastic *Basarab* », p. 7-29.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ L. Cotovanu, *Migrations*, p. 524-540. Voir aussi l'*Introduction* des éditeurs C. Grecescu et D. Simonescu à la *Chronique des Cantacuzène*, p. V-XXXIII, et les commentaires de B. Joudiou, « Le rôle des chroniques roumaines dans la transmission des traditions "nationales" : propagande et "mémoire" », dans *Hommage à Alain Ducellier*, Toulouse, 2004, p. 237-253. Somme toute, les

Constantin Brâncoveanu, tous les princes prétendument issus des Basarab ont revendiqué le trône, pour eux-mêmes ou pour leurs favoris, en incitant le pays à combattre « les princes étrangers » en place et leur entourage « grec »⁶⁵. C'était une façon de montrer publiquement que le pays récusait les « princes étrangers », malgré la légitimité de leur élection à Constantinople ; en vertu des coutumes et de l'autonomie politico-administrative et judiciaire reconnue par la Porte à la Valachie, les gouvernants locaux – fidèles aux « princes autochtones » élus par la volonté du pays – considéraient leur élévation au trône comme illégale⁶⁶. D'où mon hypothèse qu'avant d'afficher une volonté de « radicalement » réformer la vie monastique de Valachie et de renforcer le pouvoir de décision du souverain en matière d'affaires ecclésiastiques, les chrysobulles de Matei Basarab reflètent un acte de légitimation politique par l'affirmation de l'autochtonie du voïévode et de son apport au bien commun du pays. D'une part, les princes et les métropolites « étrangers », « grecs » plus précisément, lui servent de figure d'altérité. D'autre part, il semblerait que Matei Basarab a trouvé dans la nouvelle pratique de la dédicace des lieux de culte locaux à des monastères « grecs » un argument de plus à l'appui du caractère *autochtone* de son règne et une voie d'illustration de son apport au *bien commun* – pour lui, c'étaient les princes « étrangers » qui avaient pris l'habitude de dédier les monastères princiers comme métoques !⁶⁷ –, voire à l'entretien des *bonnes coutumes* instituées par ses ancêtres, fondateurs de dynastie et de pays. Ne pas répondre à ces deux conditions d'élection et de bon gouvernement était devenu un grave chef d'accusation dans les Principautés du XVII^e siècle et coûta le trône à maints souverains des lieux, pour la plupart nommés directement à Constantinople⁶⁸.

Cantacuzène reprenaient des stéréotypes (*coutumes bonnes / corrompues, étrangers ou Grecs / princes autochtones*, etc.) véhiculés en Valachie durant tout le XVII^e siècle.

⁶⁵ L. Cotovanu, « “Chasing away the Greeks” ».

⁶⁶ Voir R. G. Păun, *Pouvoirs, offices et patronage*, p. 91-104 ; O. Rizescu, *Avant l'« État-juge »*, p. 169-172.

⁶⁷ Par ailleurs, des sources de l'époque il ressort qu'effectivement, c'étaient les princes nommés à Constantinople, entourés de leur clientèle constantinopolitaine, qui dédiaient leurs monastères à des couvents « étrangers » : Alexandru II Mircea (1568-1574, 1574-1577), Mihnea le Turcisé (1577-1583, 1585-1591), Radu Mihnea (1611-1616, 1620-1623), Alexandru l'Enfant (1623-1627), Alexandru Iliș (1616-1618, 1627-1629), Leon Tomșa (1629-1632). Ce qui ne précise ni Matei Basarab, ni les autres voïévodes autochtonisants, c'est qu'en règle générale, les « princes étrangers » dédiaient aux Lieux Saints les monastères érigés par eux-mêmes ou par leurs devanciers : exemples dans L. Cotovanu, « Aux débuts de la dédicace », p. 254-255.

⁶⁸ Les sources de l'époque font état d'au moins 13 révoltes qui aboutirent à détrôner les princes en place sur l'accusation d'être des « Grecs » ou de protéger les « Grecs » : L. Cotovanu, « “Chasing away the Greeks” », p. 238-240.

Typologie des monastères concernés par les chrysobulles A et B

Mon hypothèse est confortée par la typologie des monastères visés par les chrysobulles de Matei Basarab. *La disposition* proprement dite des deux documents en contient la liste. La première caractéristique qui se dégage à propos des monastères concernés est qu'il s'agit de fondations princières. Le chrysobulle A est claire là-dessus : il se réfère aux « laures princières » (*lavre domnești*), en nombre de 22, dédiées « sur pot-de-vin » (*pentru mită*) par « les princes et les métropolitites étrangers » (*domni și vlădici striini*) au Mont-Athos et à d'autres monastères de Roumélie :

Tismana, Cozia, Argeș, Bistrița, Govora, Dealu et Glavacioc (métoques d'Iviron), Snagov, Cotmeana, Valea (métoque du monastère épirote de Goura), Râncăcirov, Mislea (métoque du monastère Paterôn de la Zitsa épirote), Bolintin (métoque de Simonopetra à travers le monastère Mihai-Vodă de Bucarest), Câmpulung, Căldărușani, Brâncoveni, Sadova, Arnova, Gura Motrului, Topolog, Nucet (métoque du monastère thessalien de Dousikou), Tânganul⁶⁹.

Le chrysobulle B reprend la liste, avec 3 monastères en moins (Bolintin⁷⁰, Nucet⁷¹, Topolog) et 9 en plus (Brădet, Iezerul, Potoc, Menedic, Deunlemn,

⁶⁹ DRH, B, t. XXVII, n° 10, p. 14.

⁷⁰ Le monastère de Bolintin eut pour premier ktitor le grand logothète Pilea / Filea / Filos, boyard grecophone qui vécut au temps de Mircea l'Ancien (1386-1418). Le prince Alexandru Coconul, de commun accord avec son Conseil (*cu toți boierii*), l'a dédié au monastère athonite de Simonopetra par l'intermédiaire de Mihai-Vodă de Bucarest, le 6 mars 1626 : DRH, B, t. XXI, n° 24, p. 36. Matei Basarab en personne a confirmé la dédicace le 23 novembre 1644 : I. Ionașcu, « Vechimea mănăstirii din Pădurea cea Mare de la Bolintin », *Revista istorică română*, VII, n°s 3-4, 1937, p. 323-338 (Annexe XIX, p. 336, pour le chrysobulle slavons de confirmation). Pour d'autres informations au sujet de l'histoire du monastère et de ses fondateurs, voir N. Stoicescu, *Bibliografia localităților și monumentelor feudale din România, Țara Românească (Muntenia, Oltenia și Dobrogea)*, t. I : A-L, Mitropolia Olteniei, 1970, p. 80 ; P. Zahariuc, « O biserică veche din București și neamul doamnei Anca », dans O. Cristea, Gh. Lazăr (éd.), *Vocația Istoriei. Prinos Profesorului Șerban Papacostea*, Brăila, 2008, p. 691-701 ; idem, « "Soră după Sfânta Evanghelie". Note despre neamul jupăneșei Caplea și despre mănăstirea Sfântul Nicolae din București, ctitoria lui Ghiorma banul », dans idem, *De la Iași la Muntele Athos. Studii și documente de istorie a Bisericii*, Iași, 2008, p. 125-140.

⁷¹ Le monastère de Nucet a été fondé par Gherghina burgrave de Poienari, l'oncle du prince Radu le Grand (1495-1508) et le beau-père de Danciul Craiovescu : N. Stoicescu, *Dicționar*, p. 18, 21. Les descendants du premier ktitor ont dédié l'édifice au monastère thessalien de Dousikou, décision confirmée par Matei Basarab en personne le 17 mai 1640 : DRH, B, t. XXVII, n° 361, p. 452-456. À noter que Matei Basarab ne s'est pas opposé à la décision des ktitors de fixer la somme annuelle due par le métoque au monastère grec administrateur à 20 000 aspres. La coutume exigeait que les métoques versent annuellement aux couvents administrateurs le surplus de leurs revenus annuels : M. Lazăr, « Acte domnești reglementând statul mănăstirilor închinat », *Revista istorică*, VII, n°s 5-6, 1996, p. 432 ; eadem, « *Spre folosul acestei sfinte case* », p. 60-61.

Mărgineni, Drăgănești de Ruși, Brebul, Plătărești)⁷², faisant 28 en tout. Il s'agit toujours de monastères princiers, repartis cette fois-ci en trois catégories, accompagnées chacune de dispositions spécifiques :

a) La première catégorie inclut 12 « lares princières » dédiées par « les princes et les métropolitains étrangers », « sans l'accord du Conseil princier et du Synode » (*fără de știrea sveatului și fără de voia săborului*) :

Tismana, Argeș, Brădet, Dealu et Glavacioc (métoques d'Iviron), Snagov, Valea (métoque de Goura), Râncăcirov, Mislea (métoque du monastère Pateron de Zitsa), Potoc (métoque de St-Étienne des Météores), Menedic, Tânganul.

Pour cette catégorie d'édifices, il est décidé que leur statut de métoques soit annulé, qu'ils soient libres, comme ils l'ont été « avant » (*mai nainte*) – voire avant la soumission de la Valachie à la Porte, l'émergence du phénomène de la dédicace et l'arrivée des princes et des métropolitains « étrangers » dans le pays, à partir du milieu du XVI^e siècle –, conformément aux *typika* de leurs « fondateurs et ktitors » (*pre acea pravilă și tocmeală cum au legiuit ziditorii și ctitorii lor*). Qu'ils soient désormais « sur le compte du pays » (*pre seama țării*), « comme ce fut toujours le cas » (*cum au fost de veac*)⁷³.

On remarquera pourtant que des 12 monastères inclus dans cette catégorie, seulement 5 (Dealu, Glavacioc, Mislea, Potoc, Valea) étaient, effectivement, dédiés, dont 4 ont conservé leur statut de métoques mêmes après la prétendue « réforme » de Matei Basarab⁷⁴. L'explication réside soit dans le fait que la dédicace des quatre édifices fut accomplie par les descendants des anciens ktitors – couronnés ou non –, soit dans le fait que lesdits métoques n'avaient aucun rapport avec les ancêtres de Matei Basarab⁷⁵. En effet, les

⁷² DRH, B, t. XXVII, n° 511, p. 620.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ N. Stoicescu, *Bibliografia localităților*, t. I, p. 84-85 (Butoiul / Potoc), 338-339 (Glavacioc) ; idem, *Bibliografia localităților și monumentelor feudale din România, Țara Românească (Muntenia, Oltenia și Dobrogea)*, t. II : M-Z, Mitropolia Olteniei, 1970, p. 431 (Mislea), 694 (Valea).

⁷⁵ Des documents anciens attestent que Mihnea le Turcisé a refait la « laire princière » de Glavacioc. C'est le motif pour lequel son petit-fils Alexandru l'Enfant (*Coconul*) l'a dédié comme métoque au monastère d'Iviron (le 8 mars 1626), par l'intermédiaire du monastère plus grand Radu-Vodă de Bucarest (*și nu am voit domnia mea să las [...] să piară pomana ctitorilor și a răposașilor părinți ai domniei mele*) : DRH, B, t. XXI, éd. D. Mioc, Bucarest, 1965, n° 26, p. 37-41 ; Fl. Marinescu, *Ποιμαντικά έγγραφα του Αγίου Όρους. Αρχείο Ιεράς Μονής Ιβήρων*, t. I, Athènes, 2002, p. 44, n° 51, p. 160-161. Le monastère de Mislea a été fondé par Radu Pașie (1536/7) et refait par Petru Boucle d'Oreille (1584) – ni l'un, ni l'autre n'appartenait à la lignée de Neagoe Basarab et des boyards Craiovescu. L'édifice a été dédié comme métoque – on ignore par qui – à une date antérieure à 1616 : I. Brezoianu, *Mănăstirile zise închinare și călugării străini*, Bucarest, 1861, p. 7 ; A. Camariano-Cioran, *L'Épire et les Pays Roumains*, Ioannina, 1984, p. 54. Quant au monastère de Potoc, plus tard appelé aussi *Butoiul*, il a été fondé au XV^e siècle par

sources disponibles témoignent du fait que Matei Basarab avait ordonné des enquêtes à propos des circonstances dans lesquelles les édifices en question avaient été dédiés⁷⁶.

Pour ce qui est des 7 autres édifices, on ne dispose à ce jour d'aucune preuve qu'ils aient été dédiés à des monastères grecs. Au contraire, tout indique qu'ils n'ont jamais été soumis à l'administration de couvents « étrangers »⁷⁷.

b) Dans la catégorie suivante sont inclus 6 monastères princiers, non pas dédiés, mais « abusivement vendus et trafiqués » (*vândute și cârciumărite*) : Cozia, Bistrița, Govora, Cotmeana, Iezerul, Gura Motrului. Là encore, les sources qui sont parvenues jusqu'à nous ne laissent pas transparaître ces pratiques ; il est vraiment difficile de vérifier l'ampleur des abus condamnés par Matei Basarab, qui ne désigne ni des monastères acheteurs, ni des personnes physiques impliquées dans la prétendue vente des « laures princières »⁷⁸. Certes, il ne s'agit pas de métoques, à part Iezerul (dépendant d'Iviron par la volonté de

Dragomir grand palatin de Bănești, alors qu'il a été dédié à St-Étienne des Météores par les descendants du premier ktitor vers 1575-1578 ; la dédicace fut reconduite en 1650 : L. Cotovanu, « Une dédicace controversée: l'*aphierosis* du monastère valaque de Potoc-Butoiul à St-Étienne des Météores (seconde moitié du XVI^e siècle), dans P. Zahariuc (éd.), *Românii și Creștinătatea Răsăriteană (sec. XIV – XX)*, Iași, 2020, sous presses. Enfin, le monastère de Valea, fondé par Radu Paisie (1547/8), a été dédié à l'Archevêché de Pogoniani, le 8 mai 1623, par ses nouveaux ktitors, des particuliers : DIR, B, t. XVII/4, n° 286, p. 270.

⁷⁶ V. Barbu, Gh. Lazăr, O. Olar, « Reforma monastică », p. 28-29 ; contrairement à ce qu'affirment les auteurs, les sources ne confirment pas que Matei Basarab ait exigé des enquêtes sur tous les monastères du pays. Le voïévode déclare avoir visé notamment les monastères dédiés à titre de métoques (*iar mai vartos pentru mănăstirile cele ce s-au orânduit și s-au închinat*) : DRH, B, XXVII, n° 361, p. 452-456. Les documents conservés montrent qu'il s'était intéressé très précisément aux monastères princiers anciens (Bistrița, Cozia et son métoque de Cotmeana, Câmpulung, Tismana, Glavacioc, Snagov) et à ceux soupçonnés d'avoir un lien avec les maisons princières, surtout avec ses propres ancêtres : DRH, B, t. XXIV, éd. D. Mioc *et alii*, Bucarest, 1974, n° 271, p. 361-363 ; DRH, B, t. XXVII, n° 361, p. 452-456 ; DRH, B, t. XXVIII, n° 499, p. 611-613 ; DRH, B, t. XXXI, éd. V. Barbu, Bucarest, 2003, n° 353, p. 377-379, n° 354, p. 379-382 ; DRH, B, t. XXXIII, éd. Gh. Lazăr *et al.*, Bucarest, 2006, n° 112, p. 103-106, n° 164 p. 166-167, n° 165, p. 167-198, n° 166, p. 170, n° 169, p. 198-200.

⁷⁷ J'ai mentionné plus haut la décision d'Alexandru Iliaș de ne pas dédier le monastère de Snagov au Mont-Athos. Voir aussi DRH, B, t. XXXIII, n° 169, p. 198, où l'on prétend que le monastère de Tismana aurait été dédié par les princes Alexandru Iliaș et Leon Tomșa, mais le scribe a laissé vide l'endroit où devait figurer le nom du monastère grec bénéficiaire de la dédicace. Par ailleurs, au sujet du monastère de Tismana, O. Rizescu, *Avant l'« État-juge »*, p. 167, remarque à juste titre que Matei Basarab en personne lui confirme, en 1648, toutes les possessions acquises au fil du temps, mais ne souffle mot à propos d'une éventuelle dédicace / vente de l'édifice à un « monastère étranger », ni de l'annulation de son éventuel statut de métoque entre 1639-1640. Cette remarque est valable aussi pour les monastères de Cozia, d'Argeș et de Bistrița. À noter même que l'autonomie originaire de Cozia a été confirmée à maintes reprises par le passé ; voir les actes de confirmation du métropolite du pays Luc le Chypriote et du patriarche de Constantinople Cyrille Loukaris : DIR, B, t. XVII/2, n° 108, p. 102-103 (1612) ; DRH, B, t. XXIII, n° 43, p. 80-81 (<1630>, février).

⁷⁸ Même remarque chez O. Rizescu, *Avant l'« État-juge »*, p. 167-168.

ses ktitors⁷⁹), mais d'édifices que le voïévode mettait sous interdiction perpétuelle de dédicace.

c) La troisième catégorie inclut 10 monastères, qui ne sont autres que les édifices fondés ou refaits par Matei Basarab lui-même : Câmpulung, Căldărușani, Brâncoveni, Sadova, Arnota, Deunlemn, Mărgineni, Drăgănești de Ruși, Brebul, Plătărești. Il s'agit là encore de monastères princiers non dédiés, pour lesquels le voïévode ktitor dispose qu'ils restent autonomes à jamais.

Le poids idéologique des chrysobulles A et B confirmé par le C

Plusieurs conclusions se dégagent de *la disposition* des chrysobulles A et B. Premièrement, elle ne concerne que les monastères princiers, mais pas tous les monastères princiers ; 28 édifices sont choisis, dont 8 seulement étaient dédiés et 7 d'entre eux ont conservé leur statut de métoques. Ceci veut dire que Matei Basarab n'a « libéré » qu'un seul édifice, Dealu, de sa dépendance d'Ivion récemment instituée⁸⁰. Il n'est donc nullement justifié de qualifier les mesures de Matei Basarab d'« actes de libération » des monastères du pays et, par conséquent, il faut relativiser le caractère réformateur de son geste. Car il n'entreprend, en fait, que d'interdire la dédicace d'un nombre de monastères qui n'ont jamais été dédiés. Reste à voir encore si les plus importants monastères du pays, tels Tismana, Cozia, Argeș, Bistrița, Govora et d'autres, ont été vendus par les moines grecs à leur gré, comme il est affirmé dans les deux chrysobulles ; les sources n'en apportent pas des preuves.

On remarquera une fois de plus que les actes de Matei Basarab ne visaient pas tous les monastères princiers du pays. Il y a une certaine logique chronologique dans le choix :

⁷⁹ Le monastère d'Iezerul a été fondé par Chiajna vorniceasa, l'épouse du grand palatin Cernica, qui l'a dédié, en 1625, au monastère athonite d'Ivion *via* le monastère bucarestois Radu-Vodă : DIR, B, t. XVII/4, n° 525, p. 502-503, n° 526, p. 503-505 ; N. Stoicescu, *Bibliografia localităților*, t. I, p. 380 ; N. Ș. Năsturel, *Le Mont Athos*, p. 115 ; Fl. Marinescu, *Ρομανικά έγγραφα – Ιβήρων*, t. I, p. 38-39 et n. 138.

⁸⁰ En effet, le monastère de Dealu a été dédié abusivement à Ivion par Leon Tomșa, le 14 février 1630, en dépit du fait que son dernier ktitor, Radu Mihnea (1611-1616, 1620-1623), lui avait accordé l'autonomie de type athonite, le 14 juillet 1614 : DIR, B, t. XVII/2, n° 267, p. 296-302 (charte de Radu Mihnea) ; DRH, B, t. XXIII, n° 52, p. 192 (charte de Leon Tomșa) ; N. Stoicescu, *Bibliografia localităților*, t. I, p. 269-270. À noter que Leon Tomșa a justifié la dédicace par des arguments semblables à ceux mobilisés par Matei Basarab lorsqu'il interdit la dédicace des laures princiers à des « monastères étrangers » : « le revenu du monastère a été enlevé par les étrangers qui ont été [ses] higoumènes et ont quitté le monastère » : voir DRH, B, t. XXIII, n° 52, p. 192. À supposer que le métropolitain du pays Grégoire (1629-1636), ancien moine d'Ivion installé à Radu-Vodă de Bucarest vers 1613, a étroitement influencé la dédicace du couvent valaque à Ivion. C'est encore lui qui fit refaire un autre métoque bucarestois d'Ivion, le monastère Stelea de Bucarest : I.-V. Voinea, « Mitropolitul Grigorie I al Ungrovlahiei », *Studii Teologice*, XXVI, n° 9-10, 1974, p. 739-747 ; M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, I, Bucarest, 1991, p. 459.

a) On distingue un groupe de monastères fondés avant le milieu du XVI^e siècle – c’est-à-dire avant l’arrivée des « princes étrangers » et avant l’émergence de la pratique de la dédicace :

Bistrița, Bolintin, Brădet, Brâncoveni, Potoc-Butoiul, Câmpulung, Cozia, Cotmeana, Argeș, Dealu, Glavaciog, Govora, Gura Motrului, Iezerul, Mărgineni, Mislea, Menedic, Nucet, Râncăcirov, Sadova, Snagov, Tânganul, Tismana, Topolog (dit aussi *Flămânda*), Valea⁸¹.

b) Un second groupe inclut les monastères fondés ou refaits par Matei Basarab lui-même, en tant que descendant des premiers ktitors des édifices, qui ont vécu avant le milieu du XVI^e siècle :

Arnota, Brâncoveni, Brebul, Căldărușani, Câmpulung, Deunlemn/Dintr-un-Lemn, Drăgăneștii-de-Ruși, Plătărești, Sadova⁸².

On retrouve par là la volonté du voïévode de relier entre elles ses ‘bonnes’ intentions de protéger le bien commun du pays et les ‘bonnes’ coutumes locales à l’œuvre de ces ancêtres couronnés, issus de la dynastie Basarab. Ceci n’est qu’une autre voie d’affirmation de l’autochtonie de son propre règne, d’où encore une fois la conclusion que les chrysobulles de 1639-1640 s’inscrivent dans la démarche plus large de la légitimation du pouvoir de l’émetteur qui,

⁸¹ N. Stoicescu, *Bibliografia localităților*, t. I, p. 71 (Bistrița, fondé par les boyards Craiovescu, oncles de Neagoe Basarab, ainsi que l’atteste Matei Basarab lui-même : C. Rezachevici, « Cum a apărut numele dinastic *Basarab* », p. 19), p. 84-85 (Brădet / seconde moitié du XV^e siècle, métoque du monastère d’Argeș, la fondation de Neagoe Basarab), p. 98-100 (Brâncoveni, fondation des boyards Craiovescu), p. 163-166 (Câmpulung, érigé par le fondateur du pays Radu Negru / Basarab I^{er}, selon Matei Basarab, qui se revendique la descendance du premier ktitor : C. Rezachevici, *op. cit.*, p. 20-21, 24), p. 205 (Cozia, fondé par Mircea l’Ancien, le petit-fils de Basarab I^{er}, vers 1387/8), p. 202 (Cotmeana, métoque de Cozia, fondé par Radu I^{er}, le fils de Basarab I^{er}, avant 1385), p. 243 (Argeș, fondation de Neagoe Basarab), p. 269-270 (Dealu : supra, n. 80), p. 338-339 (Glavacioc : supra, n. 75), p. 346-347 (Govora, fondé par Vlad le Diable, le fils de Mircea l’Ancien et l’arrière-petit-fils de Basarab I^{er}, vers 1440, et refait par Matei Basarab vers 1640), p. 355-356 (Gura-Motrului, fondé par le grand logothète Harvat, l’ancêtre de Matei Basarab, au début du XVI^e siècle), p. 419-420 (Mărgineni, XV^e siècle) ; idem, *Bibliografia localităților*, t. II, p. 425-426 (Menedic, fondé par le prince Vlad Vintilă / 1532), p. 544 (Râncăcirov, au ktitor inconnu, XV^e siècle), p. 564-565 (Sadova, fondation des boyards Craiovescu), p. 589-592 (Snagov, au catholicon refait depuis les fondements par Neagoe Basarab), p. 634-635 (Tânganul, fondé par Radu le Bel, le fils de Vlad le Diable, en 1462-1474), p. 653-658 (Tismana, XIV^e siècle), p. 306-307 (Topolog, fondé par le grand logothète Teodosie Rudeanu / fin du XVI^e siècle).

⁸² N. Stoicescu, *Bibliografia localităților*, I, p. 36-38 (Arnota), 97-98 (Brebul), 129-131 (Căldărușani), 276-279 (Dintr-un-Lemn, fondé par Preda Brâncoveanu, le neveu de Matei Basarab), 551 (Drăgăneștii-de-Ruși), 491 (Plătărești). Pour les lieux de culte fondé par Matei Basarab, voir également V. Nicolae, *Ctitoriile lui Matei Basarab*, Bucarest, 1982 ; N. Stoicescu, *Matei Basarab*, p. 94-125.

finale, n'avait qu'une très mince et lointaine filiation de sang avec Neagoe Basarab et qui avait usurpé le trône de Leon Tomşa⁸³.

Pour assortir cette démarche légitimatrice d'une œuvre concrète d'utilité publique, le voïévode n'a pu décider que du sort des monastères dont les ktitors faisaient partie – de fait ou prétendument – de la lignée des princes Basarab, dont il affirmait descendre lui-même⁸⁴. Il s'agit de monastères fondés avant le milieu du XVI^e siècle, comme je l'ai montré auparavant. Le voïévode semble avoir agi en toute connaissance du fait qu'il n'aurait pas pu décider du sort des monastères dédiés aux Lieux Saints de l'Orient par les ktitors eux-mêmes, qu'ils fussent des particuliers ou bien des princes issus de la dynastie régnante locale. Cela s'explique par le fait que la pratique de la dédicace tenait du droit privé de fondation de lieux de culte⁸⁵ : seuls les ktitors et leurs descendants légaux étaient : en droit de décider de la façon dont allaient être administrées leurs fondations religieuses. Le fait que Matei Basarab s'est vu limité dans son intention de mettre à l'abri de la dédicace un certain nombre de lieux de culte est confirmé par le fait qu'il introduit dans le chrysobulle B la clause suivante :

À part ces monastères [c'est-à-dire les monastères princiers qu'il défendait d'être transformés en métèques], tous les autres, qu'ils soient fondés par des princes ou par des boyards, pour lesquels les ktitors eux-mêmes ont décidé de les dédier et de les soumettre comme métèques, là où chacun d'entre eux l'a voulu, qu'ils demeurent soumis et dépendants des moines étrangers. Qu'on respecte ce que les ktitors eux-mêmes avaient décidé dans leurs actes de dédicace écrits [...] ⁸⁶.

Étonnante décision, on dirait, pour un monarque qui, quelques lignes plus haut, reprochait aux « princes et aux métropolites étrangers », voire aux Grecs, le lourd péché d'avoir corrompu et cassé les « bonnes et vieilles » coutumes du pays. Il ne fait que réaffirmer un état de fait et de droit en vigueur depuis toujours en Valachie : toute personne ayant les moyens était en droit de fonder un lieu de culte et décider de la façon dont il allait être administré, au besoin, de le dédier à titre de métèque à un autre lieu de culte, y compris à des monastères « étrangers », pourvu que se soit dans la juridiction des Patriarcats grecs (le fait

⁸³ N. Stoicescu, *Dicționar*, p. 209 ; idem, *Matei Basarab*. Comme je l'ai déjà mentionné (*supra*), le prince Leon Tomşa, nommé par le sultan en personne, pour se légitimer aux yeux de ses sujets prétendait être le fils de feu le prince de Moldavie Ștefan Tomşa (1611-1615, 1621-1623).

⁸⁴ À part Neagoe Basarab, Matei Basarab mentionne parmi ses ancêtres Mircea l'Ancien (1386-1418), dans un document concernant le monastère de Tismana : DRH, B, XXXIII, n° 166, p. 189.

⁸⁵ Gh. Cronț, « Dreptul de ctitorie », *passim*.

⁸⁶ « Însă alegându afară acéle mănăstiri, măcară domnești, măcară boierești, cari singuri ctitorii le-au închinat și le-au supus metoașe, cine unde au vrut, acélea să fie supuse și stătătoare călugărilor striini. Însă după cum vor fi scris și legiuit ctitorii în cărțile lor de închinăciune, pre acéa tocmeală neschimbată să trăiască » : DRH, B, XXVII, n° 511, p. 620.

que la pratique de la dédicace profitait aux seuls lieux de culte grecs – les monastères dépendants du Patriarcat serbe de Peć en étaient exclus – atteste de la mainmise des Patriarcats grecs sur l'application du κτητορικὸν δίκαιον dans les Principautés⁸⁷).

Voici pourquoi Matei Basarab lui-même s'est appuyé dans son projet sur les monastères princiers fondés avant l'émergence de la pratique de la dédicace et avant l'arrivée des « princes étrangers » de Constantinople, c'est-à-dire avant le milieu du XVI^e siècle. Ces princes là n'étaient en droit de dédier que les édifices qu'ils auraient fondés eux-mêmes, à titre privé. Pour la même raison, Matei Basarab s'est appuyé principalement sur les monastères fondés par des ancêtres et par lui-même, conformément aux prescriptions du κτητορικὸν δίκαιον. Il actionna en vertu du même droit privé de fondation et de dédicace, ce qui imprime, encore une fois, aux mesures qu'il a pris en 1639-1640 un caractère personnel. Finalement, il aura mis à l'abri de la dédicace ses propres fondations religieuses et celles de sa lignée ascendante. Ce constat est pleinement confirmé par le troisième chrysobulle.

Le chrysobulle C, émis en décembre 1640, ne retient plus que les monastères construits ou refaits par Matei Basarab lui-même et par ces « ancêtres, arrière-grands-pères et grands-pères », 9 en tout :

ΜΟΝΑΣΤΗΡΕΣ ΤΑΚΩ ΣΑΜΕΜΙ ΝΑΜΙ, ΙΚΩΖΕ ΠΡΑΡΟΔΙΤΕΛΕΣ ΔΕΔΥ Ν ΠΡΑΔΕΔΥ
ΝΑΜΙΜΙ, ΣΥΖΑΝΝΗΧ, traduit en grec par Τῶν δὲ ἱερῶν καὶ σεβασμίων
μοναστηρίων ἢ κλησὶς, ἃ μὲν αὐτὸς οἴκοθεν ἀνοικωδόμησεν ἃ δὲ καὶ
εὗρατο ἀπὸ τῶν πάππων καὶ προπάππων αὐτοῦ⁸⁸.

Le voïévode dispose qu'après lui aucune instance n'ose remettre ces 9 édifices « entre les mains des Grecs et d'autres étrangers »⁸⁹ et que leurs higoumènes soient élus par les moines eux-mêmes. Le chrysobulle C, tout comme les deux précédents, ressemble plutôt à un *typikon* monastique⁹⁰ – collectif, vu qu'il concerne l'ensemble des monastères fondés ou refaits depuis les fondements par Matei Basarab – qu'à une décision de *réforme monastique* générale.

⁸⁷ Sujet non étudié à ce jour, que je compte développer dans une étude à part.

⁸⁸ DRH, B, t. XVII, n° 524, p. 633 ; DRH, B, t. XXVIII, n° 78, p. 111-114.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ Comparez avec les *typika* des monastères de Tismana et Cozia, par lesquels les ktitors – Vladislav I^{er} (1364-1376/7), Dan I^{er} (1385-1386) et Mircea l'Ancien (1386-1418) – leur accordaient l'autonomie par rapport aux autorités ecclésiastiques et séculières locales : DRH, B, t. I, n° 6, p. 17-19 (<1374>), n° 7, p. 19-22 (1385, octobre 3), n° 9, p. 25-28 (1388, mai 20). Voir aussi le *typikon* plus tardif du monastère de Dealu, émis par son dernier ktitor, le prince Radu Mihnea, en s'inspirant de celui de Cozia : DIR, B, t. XVII/2, n° 267, p. 296-302 (1614, juillet 10).

Du discours légitimateur aux limites du pouvoir princier

On peut comprendre à présent pourquoi ni pendant le règne de Matei Basarab, ni après, rien n'a changé dans l'organisation et l'administration des monastères princiers du pays. Les moines grecs ont continué à y habiter et à accéder à l'higouménat⁹¹, alors que les princes qui lui ont succédé ont continué à fonder des « laures princières » et à les dédier comme métoques au Mont-Athos et ailleurs au « Pays Grec »⁹². Matei Basarab lui-même a confirmé certaines dédicaces, décidées par les ktitors, envers des monastères / Patriarcats grecs, tout en acceptant la pratique de l'élection des higoumènes des métoques parmi les moines grecs administrateurs (ποσλανι ωτ велика монастир)⁹³.

Matei Basarab n'aura fait que blâmer, au niveau discursif, la pratique de la dédicace envers les monastères grecs comme innovation des « princes étrangers » et user de l'argument anti-grec pour mieux asseoir son propre règne. Il tâcha de l'assortir de 'bonnes' œuvres et prétendit corriger les coutumes entachées par les Grecs de leurs 'mauvais' agissements. D'une part, il a mené toute une campagne de réfection de monastères à travers le pays et de construction de nombreux autres nouveaux édifices durant les premières années de son règne ; pendant l'entier XVII^e siècle, aucun autre voïévode de Valachie n'a fondé autant d'églises et de monastères⁹⁴. D'autre part, il choisit de n'en pas confier l'administration à des monastères grecs – qu'il a néanmoins subventionné de consistantes sommes d'argent et honoré d'objets précieux⁹⁵ –,

⁹¹ O. Rizescu, *Avant l'État-juge*, p. 166-167.

⁹² M. Lazăr, « Politica ctitoricească a domnilor Țării Românești (a doua jumătate a secolului al XVII-lea) », *Studii și materiale de istorie medie*, XIX, 2001, p. 79-108 ; O. Rizescu, *Avant l'État-juge*, p. 171. Pour ne citer qu'un seul exemple, voir le cas du « saint monastère et laure princière » de Cotroceni, fondé par le prince Șerban Cantacuzène (1678-1688) et dédié par son ktitor aux 20 monastères du Mont-Athos : M. Lazăr, « *Spre folosul acestei sfinte case* ».

⁹³ Voir le cas du monastère de Bradu, dédié par les boyards de Cândești, ses ktitors, au monastère Molyvdoskepasti de Pogoniani (DRH, B, t. XXVIII, n° 139, p. 226-231 ; voir aussi les confirmations des biens de Bradu par Païsios de Jérusalem et Parthène de Constantinople : DRH, B, t. XXX, n° 182, p. 223-224, et DRH, B, t. XXXI, n° 117, p. 131-133), ou encore celui de Polovragi, dédié par son ktitor Danciul Pâraianu logothète au Patriarcat de Jérusalem, dédicace confirmée également par Païsios de Jérusalem (DRH, B, t. XXXIII, n° 172, p. 202-208, n° 173, p. 208-213, n° 183, p. 221-225).

⁹⁴ V. Nicolae, *Ctitoriile lui Matei Basarab, passim* ; N. Stoicescu, *Matei Basarab*, p. 94-125.

⁹⁵ Voir V. Căndeia, « Letopisețul », p. 692 ; P. Ș. Năsturel, *Le Mont Athos, Index*, au nom de « Matei Basarab » ; L. Politis, « Πολυτελή ευαγγέλια αφιερώματα του ηγεμόνα της Βλαχίας Ματθαίου Μπασαράμπα », *Δελτίον της Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρίας*, IV, n° 1, 1980-1981, p. 259-272 ; Șt. Andreescu, « Une fondation de Matei Basarab à Giurgiu », *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire*, XXV, n° 4, 1986, p. 343-349 ; G.K. Papazoglou, « Ἀνθίμος ο ἐξ Ἰωαννίνων βιβλιογράφος του 17^{ου} αἰώνα », *Ηπειρωτικά Χρονικά* 23 (1981), p. 341-343 ; M.-D. Ciucă, « Reconstituirea hrisovului solemn al lui Matei Basarab din 28 februarie 1645, dat mănăstirii Sf. Ecaterina de la Muntele Sinai », *Arhiva Românească*, I, n° 1, 1995, p. 159-173 ; *Condica Marii Logofeții (1692-1714)*, éd. M. Băzgan, Bucarest, 2009, n° 91, p. 117-118 ; A. Pippidi, *Tradiția*

pour rester cohérent et conforme à l'idéologie anti-grecque et anti-constantinopolitaine qui lui permit d'accéder au trône de Valachie et de légitimer son règne. Mais voilà que dans les deux cas, il se heurta aux normes du κτητορικὸν δίκαιον, qui ne lui permettaient de décider que du sort et du statut de ces propres fondations et de celles bâties par ses « ancêtres Basarab ». Vu que le voïévode n'eut pas d'héritiers issus de son propre sang – il n'a pas eu d'enfants⁹⁶ –, on comprend qu'il n'a fait que mettre à l'abri de la dédicace les fondations religieuses familiales et celles érigées par lui-même, auxquelles il aura légué tout son patrimoine privé⁹⁷ (en effet, les possessions personnelles du souverain ne se confondent pas avec le domaine public⁹⁸).

Mais pour donner du poids à cet acte privé et lui conférer l'allure d'une œuvre hautement importante pour l'intérêt général, il mobilisa son pouvoir princier et les ressources administratives du pays pour mener des enquêtes, émit des chartes solennelles en présence du Conseil (n'oublions pas pour autant que Matei Basarab gouvernait le pays à l'aide de ses proches parents⁹⁹), usa de la malédiction pour garantir l'efficacité de ses décisions¹⁰⁰. En somme, Matei

politică, p. 301-303, etc. Matei Basarab n'a dédié aucun monastère au Mont-Athos, contrairement à ce qu'affirme O. Rizescu, *op. cit.*, p. 171. Par contre, il a rénové certains des monastères valaques déjà dédiés à titre de métoques, tel Arhimandritul de Bucarest, métoque de la Métropole de Târnovo, selon M. Cazacu, « Despre câteva vechi biserici bucureștene din veacurile XVI – XVIII », dans O. Cristea, P. Zahariuc, Gh. Lazăr (éd.), *Aut viam inveniam aut faciam. In honorem Ștefan Andreescu*, Iași, 2012, p. 474-475. Il a refait également le monastère bucarestois de Plumbuita, dédié à Xéropotamou de l'Athos depuis 1585 : P. Zahariuc, « Succesiune și solidaritate în ctitoria domnească : mănăstirea Plumbuita », dans L. Rădvan (éd.), *Civilizația urbană din spațiul românesc în secolele XVI – XVIII. Studii și documente*, Iași 2006, p. 57-71. En plus, il n'a pas hésité à embaucher des peintres grecs pour décorer de peintures votives ses propres fondations : V. Tchentsova, « Les peintures de l'église Saint-Sauveur de Berestovo : Remarques sur le programme iconographique et épigraphique », *Museikon*, 4, 2020, p. 193-208.

⁹⁶ Vers 1635, Matei Basarab et son épouse Elina ont adopté leur neveu nouveau-né Matei, le fils du grand logothète Udriște Năsturel, qui est décédé à l'âge de 17 ans, en 1652 : V. Motogna, « Avut-au Matei Basarab un fiu ? », *Revista istorică*, XIV, n° 1, 1928, p. 39-41 ; St. Nicolaescu, *Mateiaș voievod, fiul lui Matei Basarab voievod, 1635-1652*, Craiova, 1941 ; N. Stoicescu, *Matei Basarab*, p. 212-213.

⁹⁷ Pour le patrimoine foncier de Matei Basarab, qu'il avait hérité en grande partie de ses ancêtres Craiovescu, voir I. Micu, R. Lungu, « Domeniul lui Matei Basarab », *Revista istorică*, XXXV, n° 12, 1982, p. 1313-1329, notamment p. 1318 ; *idem*, « Date noi privind domeniul lui Matei Basarab din Țara Românească », *Revista istorică*, XXXVI, n° 10, 1983, p. 1028-1033.

⁹⁸ I. Donat, *Domeniul domnesc în Țara Românească (sec. XIV – XVI)*, Bucarest, 1996, p. 41.

⁹⁹ Durant le règne de Matei Basarab, le Conseil Princier a été constitué des boyards qui l'avaient soutenu à obtenir le trône. La moitié d'entre eux étaient ses proches parents : N. Stoicescu, *Matei Basarab*, p. 54-55 ; Șt. Andreescu, « Ascendența maternă a lui Matei Basarab », *Arhiva genealogică*, III(VIII), n° 3-4, 1996, p. 203.

¹⁰⁰ Voir la lourde malédiction exprimée par le voïévode dans les trois chrysobulles : DRH, B, t. XXVII, n° 10, p. 15, n° 511, p. 621, n° 524, p. 635. Pour la malédiction comme moyen de garantir l'efficacité des décisions princières, voir O. Sachelarie, N. Stoicescu (éd.), *Instituții feudale*, p. 50-52, s.v. « blestem » ; D. H. Mazilu, *O istorie a blestemului*, Iași, 2001 ; Cr. Codarcea,

Basarab aura sanctionné du haut de la Chancellerie princière les *typika* de ses propres fondations.

Le voïévode valaque n'envisagea ni d'interdire la pratique de la dédicace des monastères locaux à des monastères grecs, ni de « libérer » les édifices déjà dédiés aux Lieux Saints. À la lumière de la démonstration ci-dessus, il semble s'être intéressé et ordonné des enquêtes spécialement au sujet des monastères susceptibles d'avoir un lien avec ses ancêtres couronnés ou non. Quoi qu'il en soit, il n'envisagea nullement d'attenter aux intérêts et aux acquis économiques des Patriarcats grecs en Valachie. Bien au contraire, il en reconnaissait pleinement l'autorité sur les affaires ecclésiastiques locales. Pour preuve, quatre mois après l'émission de la charte C, en avril 1641, Matei Basarab obtient de l'œcuménique Parthénios I^{er} la confirmation par actes synodaux de ses décisions (καὶ ἐπειδὴ ἐζητήθη καὶ παρ' ἡμῶν ἢ τούτων ἐπιβεβαίωσις)¹⁰¹, ce qui est bien plus qu'une charte patriarcale de malédiction destinée à garantir la viabilité des actes princiers. Outre cela, Matei Basarab sollicite la confirmation par le patriarche de Constantinople, ou par celui de Jérusalem présent en Valachie, du régime d'autonomie institué pour chacune des laures princières visées par les chrysobulles A, B, C¹⁰².

En matière d'affaires de droit canon, y compris d'affaires relevant du κτητορικὸν δίκαιον, le patriarche de Constantinople a le dernier mot. L'œcuménique Cyrille Loukaris l'affirmait clairement en 1628, à l'occasion de la dédicace du monastère de la Dormition de Iași au Patriarcat de Jérusalem par son ktitor le prince Miron Barnovschi :

πολλῶ πλέον ἔσται ὁ ἔπαινος καὶ ἡ ψυχικὴ ὠφέλεια τῷ διὰ γραμμάτων πατριαρχικῶν ἐπικυροῦντι καὶ βεβαιοῦντι τὰ ἐπιβραβευθέντα ἔγγραφα τοῖς θείοις μοναστηρίοις, παρὰ τῶν εὐσεβῶν αὐθέντων καὶ ἄλλων τινῶν ἀρχόντων, εἰς στηριγμὸν καὶ βεβαίωσιν τῶν αὐτοῖς ὑπ' αὐτῶν κατὰ καιροῦς προσηλωθέντων ἀφηρωμάτων, ὑπὲρ ψυχικῆς αὐτῶν σωτηρίας.
[...] καὶ ἐζητήθη καὶ γράμμα ἡμετέρων παρὰ τοῦ πορρηθέντος κτίτορος καὶ αὐθέντου, βεβαιοῦντος μὲν καὶ ἐπικυροῦντος τὰ παρ' αὐτοῦ

Société et pouvoir, p. 318-339 ; O. Rădescu, « Jurământ și blestem în procedura judiciară din Țara Românească până la sfârșitul secolului al XVII-lea. Instrumentarea jurământului cu blestem », *Revista istorică*, XXV, n^{os} 1-2, 2014, p. 149-183 ; eadem dans DRH, B, t. XXVIII, p. XVII-XX.

¹⁰¹ DRH, B, t. XXVIII, n^o 78, p. 110-114, n^o 79, p. 114-120 (orig. gr.).

¹⁰² DRH, B, t. XXVIII, n^o 499, p. 611-613 (1642, juin, pour Bistrița) ; DRH, B, t. XXIX, n^o 312, p. 364-368 (1643, déc., pour Argeș), n^o 313, p. 368-372 (1643, déc., pour Arnota), n^o 314, p. 372-376 (1643, déc., pour Căldărușani) ; DRH, B, t. XXIX, n^o 315, p. 377-378 (1643, déc., pour Gura-Motruului) ; DRH, B, t. XXXIII, n^o 94, p. 84-86 (1648, avril 20, pour Câmpulung), n^o 112, p. 103-106 (1648, mai 6, pour Cozia), n^{os} 164-165, p. 166-170, n^o 169, p. 198-201 (1648, juillet, pour Tismana), etc.

ἐπιβραβευθέντα τῷ μοναστηρίῳ αὐτῷ καὶ μετοχίῳ τοῦ Ἁγίου Τάφου
χρυσόβουλλα καὶ αὐθεντικὰ γράμματα¹⁰³.

J'en déduis que Matei Basarab recourut à l'autorité patriarcale à titre privé et s'offrit la confirmation des *typika* institués – à titre collectif – pour ses fondations personnelles. Bien que le κτητορικὸν δίκαιον valide en lui-même l'acte de fondation, accompli par la volonté particulière du ktitor et sur l'autorisation du hiérarque local, le voïévode tint à avoir la confirmation de l'autorité ecclésiastique suprême. Malgré le caractère solennel qu'il imprima aux trois chrysobulles depuis sa position de souverain, en droit de valider tout acte de possession patrimoniale, il semble avoir cherché à prévenir les limites imposées à ses décisions par le caractère 'constitutionnellement' viager de son règne, par le caractère éphémère de l'office qu'il incarnait « par la grâce de Dieu » et des jugements qu'il aura exprimés durant son règne. Et pour cause, car après sa disparition, en 1654, les higoumènes des monastères visés par ses chrysobulles ont continué à courir la Cour princière à chaque changement de voïévode pour obtenir la confirmation du statut institué par leur ktitor et des titres de possession acquis au fil du temps. Constantin Șerban (1654-1658), qui suivit la ligne politique des 'nouveaux' Basarab¹⁰⁴, a littéralement repris les décisions de son prédécesseur Matei Basarab, qui accorda l'autonomie à ses fondations religieuses¹⁰⁵.

De manière générale, la volonté de Matei Basarab à propos du statut de ses fondations religieuses a été respectée par ses successeurs¹⁰⁶. Néanmoins, ni les *typika* solennellement émis par le ktitor, ni la malédiction, ni les confirmations patriarcales n'auront empêché la dédicace au Patriarcat de Jérusalem de deux monastères concernés par ses chrysobulles (Plătărești et Tânganul) et de deux autres fondés par Matei Basarab après l'émission des trois chrysobulles (Negoiești et Soveja)¹⁰⁷. Pour ce qui est de Plătărești et de Negoiești, à ce stade de la recherche on ignore tout de la date et du prince qui les

¹⁰³ *Documente privitoare la istoria orașului Iași*, t. I, *Acte interne (1408-1660)*, I, éd. I. Caproșu, P. Zahariuc, Iași, 1999, n° 186, p. 251-254 (1628, mai 21, orig. gr.).

¹⁰⁴ N. Stoicescu, *Constantin Șerban*, passim.

¹⁰⁵ *Catalogul documentelor Țării Românești din Arhivele Naționale*, t. IX (1657-1659), éd. M. Comănescu, L. Niculescu, I. Dincă, Bucarest, 2012, n° 138, p. 98-100.

¹⁰⁶ Pour ne citer qu'un seul exemple, voir la confirmation du statut et des droits du monastère de Câmpulung accordée par Constantin Șerban le 22 octobre 1655 : DRH, B, t. XL, éd. O. Rizescu, Fl.-M. Constantin, A.-R. Iancu, Bucarest, 2013, n° 262, p. 253-255. La liste de toutes les confirmations de ce genre, jusqu'en 1714 – période couverte par mes propres recherches –, pour tous les monastères refaits ou fondés par Matei Basarab, serait trop longue pour être citée ici.

¹⁰⁷ Pour les monastères de Negoiești et Soveja, voir N. Stoicescu, *Bibliografia localităților*, t. II, p. 445 ; idem, *Repertoriul bibliografic al localităților și monumentelor medievale din Moldova*, Bucarest, 1974, p. 773-774.

avait dédiés à Jérusalem¹⁰⁸. Quant à la dédicace de Soveja et de Tânganul, ce fut l'œuvre du prince Nicolae Mavrocordat (1716, 1719-1730). Soveja a été remis aux mains des moines grecs en 1715¹⁰⁹. En 1721, Nicolae Mavrocordat dédia sa propre fondation, le monastère de Văcărești, au Patriarcat de Jérusalem¹¹⁰. À une date que l'on ignore, le monastère de Tânganul fut dédié à Văcărești et par là à Jérusalem¹¹¹. Faute d'avoir retrouvé les actes de dédicace pour chaque couvent en question, il est difficile d'estimer qu'est-ce qui avait motivé les gestes du prince Mavrocordat.

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On ignore comment les contemporains ont réagi, s'ils ont réagi, aux mesures prises par Matei Basarab à propos des lares princières fondées par la lignée Basarab, y compris par lui-même, mais le voïévode a certainement fait croire aux historiens de notre temps à la *réforme monastique*, à son *pouvoir législatif* en matière de gestion et de dédicace des monastères aux Lieux Saints orthodoxes et au *caractère constitutionnel* de ses trois chrysobulles dits à tort « de libération » des monastères valaques. Rien de pareil. Il n'aurait pas porté préjudice aux normes du κτητορικὸν δίκαιον devenues coutumes en Valachie, ni à l'autorité des patriarches grecs qui en étaient les garants, ni aux intérêts économiques des Patriarcats grecs, qui bénéficiaient de la protection du sultan et, qui plus est, disposaient d'une large base sociale en Valachie, faite de générations de migrants originaires de Roumélie. À travers ces trois chrysobulles le voïévode visait autre chose.

Le message transmis à travers les trois documents devient compréhensible si on le remet dans le cadre plus large de la rhétorique véhiculée par le boyard Matei *aga* de Brâncoveni, devenu le prince Matei Basarab, pour légitimer son ascension au trône valaque et révéler la ligne politique adoptée. Il avança deux arguments *via* les *typika* de ses fondations religieuses et d'autres instruments écrits (*Chronique* aulique, correspondance diplomatique, chrysobulles de confirmation de droits divers, sentences judiciaires, œuvre typographique, etc.). Premièrement, il relia son règne – par la généalogie, l'anthroponymie et la réfection d'une série d'anciens monastères princiers du pays – à celui de Neagoe Basarab et par là aux fondateurs même du pays, « la

¹⁰⁸ De l'avis de M. Păcurariu, *Studii de istorie a Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, Bucarest, 2005, p. 503, la dédicace devait avoir été faite par Constantin Brâncoveanu, vers 1693, mais aucune source n'est citée en renfort de cette hypothèse.

¹⁰⁹ E. de Hurmuzaki, *Documente grecești privitoare la Istoria Românilor publicate după originale, copiile Academiei Române și tipărituri*, t. XIV/1, éd. N. Iorga, Bucarest, 1915, n° DCLVI, p. 687-688, n° DCLVII, p. 689.

¹¹⁰ E. de Hurmuzaki, *Documente grecești privitoare la Istoria Românilor publicate după originale, copiile Academiei Române și tipărituri*, t. XIV/2, éd. N. Iorga, Bucarest, 1917, n° DCCCL, p. 872-875 ; N. Stoicescu, *Repertoriul – București*, p. 317.

¹¹¹ N. Stoicescu, *Bibliografia localităților*, t. II, p. 634 ; M. Păcurariu, *Studii de istorie*, p. 503.

lignée Basarab » (*neamul bășărăbesc*). Secondement, il usa des formules devenues clichés du « prince étranger » et des « Grecs casseurs des bonnes et vieilles coutumes du pays » pour promouvoir, par contraste, d'une part sa propre autochtonie et appartenance à la dynastie régnante locale et, d'autre part, sa propre contribution au bien commun et au rétablissement des 'bonnes' coutumes du pays. Matei Basarab se présenta de la sorte en défenseur de l'autonomie de la Valachie par rapport à la Porte et aux cercles de pouvoir constantinopolitains, sans pour autant s'élever contre la hiérarchie des pouvoirs en place. À ce titre, il réaffirma l'autonomie des laures princières fondées par ses ancêtres et l'attribua à celles fondées par lui-même, les mettant à l'abri du clergé grec, sans attenter pour autant aux intérêts économiques des Patriarcats grecs en Valachie ; les normes du droit de fondation lui auraient défendu d'imprimer un caractère généralisé à cette mesure et de légiférer au sujet de la façon dont devaient être gérés les lieux de culte du pays dans leur ensemble. Certes, par sa politique et ses discours, Matei Basarab sut plaire à ses sujets et se maintenir sur le trône pendant vingt-deux longues années de règne, chose peu courante le long du mouvementé XVII^e siècle valaque.

WONDROUS ICONS BETWEEN POLITICS AND RELIGION: BUILDING LEGITIMACY AMONG THE ROMANIANS IN TRANSYLVANIA IN A TIME OF INTERNAL POWER STRUGGLES AND CONFESSIONAL DISSENT*

Radu Nedici

The early days of spring 1764 were a busy time in the small cathedral town of Blaj, in central Transylvania. The Greek Catholic bishop, Petru Pavel Aron, who had been in charge for the past ten years, had just passed away while on a canonical visitation to the northern territories of his large and troubled diocese. Preparations were under way for his funeral, when a miraculous event happened. The bishop's coffin had been laying in state inside the chapel of the episcopal palace for just one night, before the following morning, March 18, a young cleric saw what appeared as a teardrop pouring from the eyes of the Mother of God, depicted in one of the icons that adorned the sovereign tier of the iconostasis. In awe and disbelief, he called his brothers and superiors from the neighbouring monastery, which served the role of cathedral chapter, who declared it a sign of God and took the first steps toward formal recognition, including by publicizing the marvel by means of a broadsheet. The news spread immediately and attracted growing crowds, until the Habsburg authorities launched an official investigation and confiscated the icon in order to submit it to an expert analysis in Vienna, from where it never returned.

In all earnest, this story has already been told a number of times, even if historians often relegated it to an aside note – when not ignoring it entirely –, as they regarded it rather as a bizarre moment that was hardly meaningful.¹ Every

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¹ A. Bunea, *Episcopii Petru Paul Aron și Dionisiu Novacovicî sau Istoria Românilor Transilvăneni de la 1751 până la 1764*, Blaj, 1902, p. 427-428; Al. Lupeanu-Melin, *Evocări din viața Blajului*, Blaj, 1937, p. 44-68; *Biserica Română Unită: Două sute cincizeci de ani de istorie*, Cluj-Napoca, 1998 (1st ed. 1952), p. 46; Z. Păclișanu, "Istoria Bisericii Române Unite, partea a doua: 1752–1783", *Perspective* 14–16.53-60, 1991-1993, p. 45; I. Chindriș, "Testamentul lui Petru Pavel Aron", in I. Chindriș (ed.), *Biblia Vulgata: Blaj, 1760–1761*, vol. 1, Bucharest, 2005, p. lxxviii; C. Ghișa, *Biserica Greco-Catolică din Transilvania (1700–1850): Elaborarea discursului identitar*, Cluj-Napoca, 2006, p. 351-352. The only recent attempts to offer a more elaborate interpretation, by connecting it with other similar episodes in Transylvania, are G.-M. Miron, M.

remaining shadow has been cleared since the publication, almost three decades ago, of the records of the special commission instituted to inquire on the facts, which collected the testimonies of those who witnessed the wonder of the weeping icon first-hand.² Yet, it is the contention of my article that certain elements point to a much more elaborate manipulation of the alleged miracle than has generally been acknowledged. Through a re-reading of the sources I intend to show that the whole episode was less concerned with capitalizing on the extraordinary occurrence for obvious confessional ends and more so connected to the question of dealing with the memory of the late bishop and the political disputes involving his immediate successors. The evidence on which my analysis rests is primarily visual, since the woodcut depicting the miracle is the single most powerful proof of the official discourse of the day, while written documents will provide the necessary contextualization.

Transylvania, the Habsburgs, and the Byzantine-rite Christians

The Greek Catholic Church of Transylvania was established in the wake of the Habsburg conquest of the former Ottoman territories in Hungary, as the principality gradually changed hands in the late 1680s and early 1690s. The establishment of this new church shared many similarities with earlier initiatives in Poland and northern Hungary and was instrumental to the plans of Emperor Leopold I, since it allowed him to tackle the political consequences of the religious diversity that characterized the newly conquered lands in East-Central Europe. In fact, by 1691 Vienna had come to recognize a power-sharing mechanism asked for by the Estates, involving the three political nations and four sanctioned confessions of Transylvania, where Catholics formed only a minority. The sudden acknowledgement by the Byzantine-rite faithful of the primacy of the pope at the turn of the eighteenth century made it possible for Catholics to claim that the religious balance shifted in their favour and hence assert control over the entire administration. Since the fiction worked to their advantage and no real competitor subsisted in the political arena beyond the insurrection led by Ferenc II Rákóczi and the ensuing peace of Sătmăr in 1711, the Habsburgs made little effort to strengthen the new diocese over the following

Crăciun, "Tipografia de la Blaj și comunicarea religioasă în societatea transilvăneană a secolului al XVIII-lea", in I. Costea et al. (eds.), *Istoria culturii, cultura istoriei: Omagiu Profesorului Doru Radosav la vârsta de 60 de ani*, Cluj-Napoca, 2010, p. 129-130, 134-136 and A. Dumitran, E. Hegedűs, V. Rus, *Fecioarele înlăcrimate ale Transilvaniei: Preliminarii la o istorie ilustrată a toleranței religioase*, Alba Iulia, 2011, p. 128-131.

² A. Miskolczy, J. V. András, "A balászfalvi könnyező ikon irataiból", *Europa Balcanica-Danubiana-Carpathica. Annales: Cultura-Historia-Philologia* 2/B, 1995, p. 422-469. The text has been reissued in a separate volume, I. Chindriș (ed.), *Icoana plângătoare de la Blaj: 1764 / Icon lacrymans Balasfalvensis: MDCCLXIV*, Cluj-Napoca, 1997.

decades. In the confessional landscape of the Monarchy this proved to be a mistake, as the Serbian Orthodox patriarch took the opportunity to widen his influence and, starting with the mid-1740s, campaigned among the Uniate Romanians in Transylvania to convince them that union with Rome would lead to eternal damnation. It is only when rebel villagers began ousting their priests and taking possession of the churches in the name of their old faith that the court in Vienna became aware of the need to support the Greek Catholic elite in its delayed push for confessionalization.³

A handful of monks in the Basilian monastery in Blaj, from whose ranks the bishops, the vicars general, and most members of the cathedral chapter were appointed, took charge of delivering the new discourse meant to explain to the dissenting crowds the theology of church union. In a very short while they managed to put together book printing, education, and various missionary strategies to try and reverse the tide of contestation. The constant tension between a Latin-educated elite and the conservative popular expectations that was a trademark of the period proved paramount for the development of doctrines that gave the final shape to the Greek Catholic religion in Transylvania during the 1750s and 1760s.⁴ At the same time, attempts by the Habsburg bureaucracy to deal with the protests by way of terror and repression, prosecuting the local leaders and mulcting the villages that refused to submit, proved ineffective. Despite a temporary decline in violence just past the middle of the century, dissent remained endemic and was to regain momentum in the second half of the sixth decade. The complicated context of the Seven Years War, which left Transylvania without any significant military presence able to oppose the rioters, precipitated the shift toward a more realistic religious policy. Tolerance for the Greek Orthodox in the principality was officially proclaimed in 1759, although they remained the object of discriminatory regulations. The final effort by the Serbian metropolitan to convince the court to place the new eparchy under his spiritual guidance, which led to a powerful outbreak of violence under the command of a charismatic leader, Sofronie from Cioara, failed to achieve its objective. In 1761, Dionisije Novaković, the Orthodox bishop of Buda, was finally appointed exempt bishop over the Orthodox in Transylvania and he immediately began the work of organizing them into a separate diocese. By then, nearly four fifths of the Byzantine-rite Christians in the province, totalling more

³ R. Nedici, *Formarea identității confesionale greco-catolice în Transilvania veacului al XVIII-lea: Biserică și comunitate*, Bucharest, 2013, p. 65-233, with references to all the relevant literature.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 269-421.

than 600,000 souls, had abandoned union with Rome, bringing the Greek Catholic Church on the brink of collapse.⁵

The miracle

It was in this altered context after 1761 that the miraculous events tied to the death of Bishop Aron took place. The crisis of the Greek Catholic Church prompted its clerical elite to adapt the strategies of communication to the use of new media, in order to suit the illiterate public and thus maintain hope to eventually bring back the estranged brethren. Images were a much-needed addition to the arsenal of missionary methods, as they began to be employed on a larger scale around the half point of the 1760s,⁶ but they were only message carriers, deployed for the use of those who could not read. The more meaningful underlying transformation concerned the parallel invention of symbols, able to convince and educate those outside the group, while at the same time reassuring the existing Greek Catholics of their religious option and binding them more closely together. In this sense, Virgin Mary's weeping signalled not only an act of divine providence, but a direct intervention by God himself in the ongoing disputes, taking sides with one of the conflicting Churches by choosing to make His presence felt in one of their sanctuaries. What better way to shake the hesitating consciences than by publicizing the wondrous presence of God among His chosen? It was the supreme and incontestable sign of divine preference, which came at the right moment to indicate that Truth was being professed in communion with Rome, at the expense of religious dissent, which had to face God's silence.

To strengthen the message, this was not a one-time wonder, either, but the marvel went on for days and months on end. After the initial sighting of the tears, on the morning of March 18, the icon remained on display in the iconostasis for another week, before being moved behind a glass window to protect it from the too devout faithful who began cutting small wood pieces to take home with them.⁷ Testimonies collected in 1766 show that during this time almost three dozen witnesses saw a varying number of droplets covering the face of the painting, from something as thick as dew to only a couple of tear drops

⁵ The official data of the confessional census carried out between 1760–1762 is in V. Ciobanu, "Statistica românilor ardeleni din anii 1760–1762", *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie Națională* 3, 1924–1925, p. 616–700.

⁶ G.-M. Miron, M. Crăciun, "Tipografia de la Blaj și comunicarea religioasă...", p. 116–151; G.-M. Miron, "L'Unione con la Chiesa Romana nell'immagine: 'Il Sinodo degli Santi Padri ossia la Chiesa dell'Oriente e quella dell'Occidente immaginate come albero fruttifero', Blaj (1765–1766)", in I.-A. Pop et al. (eds.), *Dal cuore dell'Europa: Omaggio al professor Cesare Alzati per il compimento dei 70 anni*, Cluj-Napoca, 2015, p. 243–258.

⁷ I. Chindriș (ed.), *Icoana plângătoare...*, p. 44, 60.

that originated in both eyes of the Virgin, some that ran down to the lower frame, others that stood still at different places.⁸ The largest were as big as pea-seeds, made from a clear, fluid, slightly oily liquid, that had no specific taste or smell.⁹ Despite an early attempt to wipe clean the icon by a deacon, the effusions continued unimpeded.¹⁰ One such tear drop remained still in spite of all the shocks caused by the transportation of the icon first to Sibiu, in August, and from there to Vienna, two months later.¹¹ At the request of Empress Maria Theresa, the archbishop of Vienna, Cardinal Migazzi, inspected the sacred painting along with several other experts in theology, medical sciences and the arts, who confirmed the existence of the traces of moisture previously indicated and found nothing either in wood or paint to suggest human intervention. However, the archbishop stopped short of declaring it a miracle in his report in 1764 and once again in 1767 and thus sealed its fate.¹²

There can be little doubt at this stage that all the creative effort invested in promoting the wonder went beyond the mere advertising of yet another devotional image of the Mother of God and aimed instead much higher, at the fabrication of a new saint. Several clues point in this direction, most notably the striving to ascertain the miracle, which should have made Petru Pavel Aron the privileged partaker of all the supernatural manifestations. Whilst preparing to reconquer the lost ground in Transylvania, enlisting the support of a holy icon would have offered an advantage to the Greek Catholic Church, obviously, but nothing comparable to having its own saintly figure to instrumentalize for legitimization purposes. The recording of the 34 eyewitness accounts confirming to have seen the icon shedding tears, as if mourning the death of Aron, was thereby only the first stage in a multi-layered process that should have led to a formal beatification request. As we know from other European scenarios of the time, those called to testify on the various marvels performed by candidates to sainthood were carefully selected with a focus on just how convincing overall they could prove during the subsequent canonization process.¹³ Despite official statements that everyone with any degree of knowledge on the facts was to be listened, a hand note that accompanied the synopsis of the investigation in Transylvania that reached Rome makes it clear that the file was only representative of a limited sample. The commissioners looked to increase the credibility of the testimonies by targeting people from a mix of social and

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 44, 68.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 36, 58, 102, 106.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 44, 64, 66.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 34-41, 144-147.

¹³ A. Burkardt, *Les clients des saints. Maladie et quête du miracle à travers les procès de canonisation de la première moitié du XVII^e siècle en France*, Rome, 2004, p. 99-168.

denominational backgrounds, in order to show that the cult of the icon reached well beyond the confessional borders of the Greek Catholic Church.¹⁴

The model of early modern sainthood privileged, in fact, charisma as an argument for recognition, instead of the more traditional sufferings of the modern martyrs of faith, which did not suit the triumphalist self-image of post-Tridentine Catholicism. The new spirituality numbered among its central figures, first and foremost, the long line of founders and reformers of the religious orders, followed by the bishops that had managed to impose the revised discipline in their dioceses, the missionaries that had pushed the frontiers of the Christian world overseas or who became noteworthy for their caritative work, along with the unique category of the mystical saints. The ostensible heterogeneity that characterizes this group, especially if we consider the many saints beatified mostly in the eighteenth century whose fame remained confined to the limits of their native region, vanishes when one reflects on the attributes that warranted their success. Initially supported by local monastic communities or by some influential faction within the provincial society, the fame of sanctity had to be officially recognized through a complex bureaucratic procedure over which the Roman Curia had full monopoly.¹⁵ Starting with the sixteenth century, the papacy enacted strict routines that not only enabled it to supervise and filter requests, but also allowed it to promote certain hagiographic stereotypes that were consistent with the ideals of Tridentine Catholicism. Thereby, the saints of early modern Europe appear joined together by a limited set of heroic virtues, meant to illustrate to the common faithful the values of the universal church in its most basic forms, for them to understand and imitate entirely.¹⁶ Their role as a model was all the more important in the lands of East-Central Europe, where they were called also to provide an answer to the attacks of non-Catholics. Particularly in these peripheral regions, the slow development of a critical spirit in assembling and reading of the saintly lives could not inhibit the proliferation of miraculous occurrences, seen as an essential element in the fight to prove Catholic superiority against its opponents.¹⁷ The link between miracle and

¹⁴ Archivio della Congregazione per l'Evangelizzazione dei Popoli o "de Propaganda Fide" (hereafter: APF), Scritture riferite nei Congressi, Greci di Croazia, Dalmazia, Schiavonia, Transilvania, Ungheria (hereafter: SC, Greci di Croazia...), vol. 2, fol. 336^v.

¹⁵ S. Ditchfield, "Tridentine worship and the cult of saints", in R. Po-Chia Hsia (ed.), *Cambridge History of Christianity*, vol. 6: *Reform and Expansion: 1500–1660*, Cambridge, 2007, p. 207–215.

¹⁶ Unless otherwise noted, the previous considerations summarize the argument in P. Burke, "How to Be a Counter-Reformation Saint", in K. von Greyerz (ed.), *Religion and Society in Early Modern Europe, 1500–1800*, London, 1984, p. 45–55, and R. Po-Chia Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal, 1540–1770*, Cambridge, 2005, p. 127–143.

¹⁷ See in this regard the classic case study by Ph. M. Soergel, *Wondrous in His Saints: Counter-Reformation Propaganda in Bavaria*, Berkeley, Calif., 1993, along with the observations by S. Ditchfield, *Liturgy, Sanctity and History in Tridentine Italy: Pietro Maria Campi and the Preservation of the Particular*, Cambridge, 1995, p. 117–134.

sainthood was inexorable, for it was at the same time the result of the lifestyle of the saint-to-be, as well as the manifest and required proof of perfection in relation to God, in the absence of which beatification could advance no further.¹⁸

While it never arrived at a formal inquisition over the merits of the late bishop, the three commissioners who led the investigation in 1766 – Athanasie Rednic, the new Greek Catholic bishop of Făgăraș, Antal Szereday, the provost of the cathedral chapter of the Roman Catholic diocese in Transylvania, and István More, Jesuit theologian to the Greek Catholic bishop – clearly made the first move in this direction, by opening the tomb and preparing an official report on the state of Aron's body two years after his death. Provost Szereday acted as the medical expert of the three and, although with much delay, in February 1767, he signed a first-person account on the earlier findings. According to this document, at the end of June of the previous year, in the presence of his two colleagues and of many Basilian monks in the monastery in Blaj, he had examined the lifeless remains of the former bishop in the chapel's crypt. After a careful analysis, he established that his body had remained for the most part incorrupt, except for the side of his right shin, which caused him pain and had ultimately led to his death, with no signs of rotting smell, despite his viscera had not been removed, and displayed no rigidity in the joints of the neck, lower spine, hands, and legs.¹⁹ Looking for miraculous signs in the cadavers of those who died in odour of sanctity was a tradition that went back to the middle ages and came to be reinforced in recent centuries, and thus had a cultural value none of those involved could have easily ignored. The supernatural preservation of the corpse, avouched by the commissioner, figured among the edifying evidence that could be collected to strengthen a possible case for beatification.²⁰

Other contemporary elements hint at the same approach. Gathered in synod, the Greek Catholic clergy was informed by Bishop Rednic that in august 1766 he had asked the empress to send back to Transylvania the miraculous icon, two years after it had been transported to Vienna, on grounds that it was useful for spreading church union among the Orthodox Romanians. Besides the immediate benefits that the presence of a miracle-working image would entail

¹⁸ S. Boesch Gajano, "Dalla storiografia alla storia", in S. Boesch Gajano and M. Modica (eds.), *Miracoli: Dai segni alla storia*, Rome, 2000, p. 220.

¹⁹ Arhivele Naționale ale României (hereafter: ANR), Serviciul Județean al Arhivelor Naționale Cluj (hereafter: SJAN Cluj), Colecția de Documente Blaj, no. 481, fol. 2^{r-v}. Already in August 1766, the bishop communicated the outcome of the examination to the cardinals of Propaganda Fide, ANR, Serviciul Județean al Arhivelor Naționale Alba (hereafter: SJAN Alba), Mitropolia Greco-Catolică Română Unită de Alba Iulia și Făgăraș – Blaj, Arhiva Generală – Acte neînregistrate (hereafter: MRUB, AG-A.n.), no. 12/1765, fol. 47^r.

²⁰ K. Park, "The Criminal and the Saintly Body: Autopsy and Dissection in Renaissance Italy", *Renaissance Quarterly* 47.1, 1994, p. 1-33; N. G. Siraisi, "Signs and Evidence: Autopsy and Sanctity in Late Sixteenth-Century Italy", in idem, *Medicine and the Italian Universities, 1250–1600*, Leiden, 2001, p. 356-380.

for Blaj, a place until then deprived of such a powerful symbol, there would also be rewarding side effects, the argument went, for the holy painting would constantly remind everyone of the exemplary life of Bishop Aron and incite them to follow in his footsteps.²¹ The language employed in 1768 by the then vicar general Ignatie Darabant in a letter to the influential Jesuit Ioannes Teophilus Delpini was even more explicit. In a paragraph disapproving of his superior, he stated that Rednic and others alongside him kept pushing for proclaiming the late bishop “Blessed and Saint”, two attributes that shine a direct light over the reputation Aron continued to enjoy at least within a faction of the upper ranks of the Byzantine Catholic clergy a few years from his death.²² Even the less enthusiastic chroniclers of the next generation, such as Samuil Micu, who began his career during the tenure of Aron and Rednic, but was linked through family ties to Bishop Klein, and as such was rather critical of the former’s actions, recalled the image of a saintly person. According to this description, Petru Pavel Aron never ate meat in the course of his life after becoming bishop and fastened frequently, only dressed in a simple monk’s habit, and permanently wore an iron spike belt around the waist, which he removed on the death bed alone.²³

It was not all just talk, either. Another broadsheet issued in the first couple of years after Rednic’s appointment, which presented the Christian traditions of East and West in the guise of parallel branches growing from the trunk of the same tree and bearing the effigies of outstanding theologians and churchmen who had contributed to maintaining its unity, also included the figure of Bishop Aron. He was pictured on the lower right branch, wearing a black cassock, his head covered with the usual klobuk, and positioned in line with the leading Byzantine participants at the Council of Ferrara-Florence, from Emperor John VIII Palaeologus to Cardinal Isidore of Kiev. At the upper level of the same tree, the viewer could contemplate a number of saints from the Roman and Greek Catholic tradition, with a very graphic representation of the well-known martyr of the Union of Brest, Blessed Josafat Kuncevyč, placed directly above Aron.²⁴ In addition to the detailed labelling of every individual, the engraving was accompanied by a lengthy Romanian and Latin description that provided the

²¹ I. Bălan, “Un sinod diecezan necunoscut, de sub Rednik”, *Cultura Creștină* 16.5, 1936, p. 288-289.

²² D. Dumitran, “Contribuții documentare la începuturile activității lui Ignatie Darabant”, *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai, Theologia Graeco-Catholica Varadiensis* 49.1, 2004, p. 195.

²³ S. Micu, *Istoria Românilor*, ed. I. Chindriș, vol. 2, Bucharest, 1995, p. 341.

²⁴ This broadsheet was first discovered and discussed by G.-M. Miron, *Biserica Greco-Catolică din comitatul Cluj în secolul al XVIII-lea*, Cluj-Napoca, 2007, p. 144-147; G.-M. Miron, M. Crăciun, “Tipografia de la Blaj și comunicarea religioasă...”, p. 116-128, together with illustrations 1-8; G.-M. Miron, “L’Unione con la Chiesa Romana nell’immagine...”, p. 243-258. See also my comments about its making, R. Nedici, *Formarea identității confesionale...*, p. 372-376.

official reading for the metaphor, although it disregarded both Aron and Kuncevyč, among others.²⁵ Various records show that this image was actively used by Bishop Rednic during his canonical visitations in the second half of the 1760s to help explain a key concept in the Greek Catholic discourse that untied dogma from ritual observances.²⁶ Petru Maior, who had witnessed such displays in his youth, remembers that people spotted their former bishop in the broadsheet and laughed at such incongruous historical juxtaposition.²⁷ Despite the questionable results, this was not by accident or careless design, quite the opposite. Bishop Rednic's deliberate choice to portray his predecessor in that context implied that the Greek Catholic Church in Transylvania could boast a figure of comparable scale that had fought in defence of religious union, sparring no effort during his years at the helm of the diocese. Himself worthy of becoming a saint, Petru Pavel Aron was furthermore connected to a model he was to replicate in the afterlife, in the hope of overcoming the recent confessional disagreements across the ethnic community, as had been the case a century earlier in Poland-Lithuania.²⁸ For seemingly unrelated reasons that deserve their own separate account, the whole initiative ended abruptly and the topic was never going to make it to the agenda again. In fact, not much remained of this failed attempt at fabricating a local saint, except some written traces here and there and the woodcut that captured the scene of the weeping Madonna.

(Un)hidden meanings

The printed image has survived in just three copies of a broadsheet, one in Budapest, attached to the file containing the testimonies of those who witnessed the miracle,²⁹ another in Rome, belonging initially to Cardinal Stefano Borgia, secretary of the Propaganda Fide, who probably kept it for his private

²⁵ The Romanian version of the text in G.-M. Miron, *Biserica din comitatul Cluj...*, p. 144, n. 4.

²⁶ D. Dumitran, "Contribuții documentare privitoare la problema misionarismului greco-catolic în timpul episcopului Atanasie Rednic", *Apulum. Acta Musei Apulensis* 40, 2003, p. 313; "Însemnări de cronică ale clericilor din Șcheii Brașovului", ed. N. Iorga, *Buletinul Comisiei Istorice a României* 12, 1933, p. 79.

²⁷ P. Maior, *Istoria Bisericii Românilor*, ed. I. Chindriș, Bucharest, 1995, p. 131-132.

²⁸ G.-M. Miron, "L'Unione con la Chiesa Romana nell'immagine...", p. 253, 256. For a recent interpretation on the complex role Josafat Kuncevyč played in the Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth of the seventeenth century, see S. Rohdewald, "Medium uniierter konfessioneller Identität oder polnisch-ruthenischer Einigung? Zur Verehrung Josafat Kuncevyčs im 17. Jahrhundert", in Y. Kleinmann (ed.), *Kommunikation durch symbolische Akte. Religiöse Heterogenität und politische Herrschaft in Polen-Litauen*, Stuttgart, 2010, p. 271-290.

²⁹ Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár, Országos Levéltár (hereafter: MNL, OL), A szekció – Magyar kancelláriai levéltár, Magyar Királyi Kancellária regisztrátúrája, A 98 – Transylvania (hereafter: A 98), Fasc. 13 et c., fol. 72^v. First published by A. Miskolczy, J. V. András, "A balázsfalvi könnyező ikon...", p. 469.

collection and returned it to the archive some years after the events,³⁰ the third in Timișoara, mixed with other materials in a sketchbook by an eighteenth-century icon painter whose identity remains the object of dispute.³¹ Strikingly, it is unlike any other depiction of a miracle-working icon of the Counter-Reformation in the Habsburg lands, where they played a vital part in the religious communication of the day. The influx of exceptional sacred images was integral to the baroque Catholic culture that had developed at odds with Protestant ideas and in the combat against the Muslim neighbour and which, in the end, brought the various political elites under the same flag of dynastic patriotism.³²

Throughout the Monarchy, the Mother of God was the main recipient and intercessor of miraculous signs. The dynasty led the way in reinforcing her cult, with old shrines revisited, most notably that of Mariazell, and new relics added to the table, from the icon of the Virgin Mary that galvanized the Habsburg troops before their victory in the battle of the White Mountain in 1620 to that of Mary of Pócs that helped the Christian armies defeat the Ottoman forces at Zenta in 1697.³³ Driven by the religious orders and the nobility, the pious practices directed to the Blessed Virgin spread at a quick pace both within and outside of the Hereditary Lands, giving birth to a whole range of regional celebrations and processions, linked either to an existing or imported image or statue thought to have supernatural strengths.³⁴ In the particular settings of northern Hungary and Transylvania, the marvel often involved a Byzantine-rite painting that supposedly shed tears in some village church before being transferred with great pomp to the more decorous setting of a Latin place of

³⁰ APF, SC, Greci di Croazia..., vol. 2, fol. 335^r.

³¹ D. S. Pârvolescu, "Un caiet de modele aparținând unui zugrav din secolul al XVIII-lea", *Ars Transsilvaniae* 2, 1992, p. 127-136; idem, *Un caiet de modele de zugrăvie din secolul al XVIII-lea*, Timișoara, 2008, p. 97; C. Tatai-Baltă, "Une valetureuse gravure sur bois de Sandu (XVIII^e s.) conservée au Musée du Banat de Timișoara", *Ars Transsilvaniae* 5, 1995, p. 75-83.

³² A. Coreth, *Pietas Austriaca*, West Lafayette, IN, 2004 (1st German ed. 1959); R. J. W. Evans, *The Making of the Habsburg Monarchy 1550–1700: An Interpretation*, Oxford, 1979. Recent scholarship favours a much more decentralized model, see M. E. Ducreux, "Emperors, Kingdoms, Territories: Multiple Versions of the 'Pietas Austriaca'?", *The Catholic Historical Review* 97.2, 2011, p. 276-304.

³³ L. L. Kinsey, "The Habsburgs at Mariazell: Piety, Patronage, and Statecraft, 1620–1760", PhD thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 2000; O. Chaline, *La bataille de la Montagne Blanche (8 novembre 1620): Un mystique chez les guerriers*, Paris, 2000; K. Schreiner, "Kriege im Namen Gottes, Jesu und Mariä: Heilige Abwehrkämpfe gegen die Türken im späten Mittelalter und in der Frühen Neuzeit", in K. Schreiner and E. Müller-Luckner (eds.), *Heilige Kriege. Religiöse Begründungen militärischer Gewaltanwendung: Judentum, Christentum und Islam im Vergleich*, Munich, 2008, p. 161-192.

³⁴ H. Aurenhammer, *Die Mariengnadenbilder Wiens und Niederösterreichs in der Barockzeit: Der Wandel ihrer Ikonographie und ihrer Verehrung*, Vienna, 1956, p. 41-81; J. Royt, *Obraz a kult v Čechách v 17. a 18. století*, 2nd ed., Prague, 2011, p. 212-277; G. Tüskés, *Búcsújárás a barokk kori Magyarországon a mirákulumirodalom tükrében*, Budapest, 1993, in particular p. 13-31.

worship, crediting the idea that such wondrous performances were cunningly exploited by Catholic missionaries to push for church union among the Orthodox inhabitants.³⁵ From the countless occurrences, however, only some would acquire the status of permanent Marian pilgrimage sites.³⁶ Their success was determined by how quickly they gained the approval of the authorities, and this in turn hinged on who their patrons were, but it was also achieved by skilful propaganda that advertised the marvel using a mix of textual and visual media. The iconographic evidence is, for that matter, so significant, that historians have seldom ventured outside the mere cataloguing of the existing images for any given territory. We therefore lack any systematic research at European level with an eye for the cultural transfer of prototypes and copies, for the economic implications of their production and circulation, and, ultimately, for a comparative analysis across the continent.

Nevertheless, two main typologies emerge in regard to the devotional depictions of the miracle-working icons or statues.³⁷ In most cases, they simply render the artefact that the religious cult centred on, with the purpose of offering the viewer a faithful representation by medium of which he could direct his piety toward the original. The frame and background can be adorned with various decorative elements – putti, coats of arms, vegetal and geometrical forms – without interfering with the main subject. A short text may or may not accompany the engraving, giving, when present, only minimal information on what the picture was about. Two of the earliest print replicas of the icons of Pócs / Vienna and Nicula / Cluj, which had a lasting influence over future designs, both of them the work of the Viennese master Johann Frank von Langgraffen contained within the 1701 edition of Péter Pázmány's prayer book, belong to this group.³⁸ The call to godliness may be further enhanced by the inclusion in the

³⁵ G. Barna, "Gnadenorte der 'tränenenden Marienbilder' in Ungarn. Mittel der Ideologie der katholischen Restauration und der kirchlichen Union", *Acta Ethnographica Hungarica* 45, 2000, nos. 1-2, p. 137-149. On how icons acquired a prominent place in the Byzantine cult of the Virgin Mary, see B. V. Pentcheva, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium*, University Park, PA, 2006.

³⁶ A catalogue of the miraculous images of the Madonna compiled at the end of the seventeenth century put their number for Hungary alone at over 100, at a time when the Marian piety was just beginning to take off, see P. Esterházi, *Litaniae Ad Beatam Virginem Mariam, Per Totius Mundi Miraculosas Imagines Divisæ, Ac Per Regna, Et Provincias, Ac Loca Distinctæ*, Vienna, 1697, p. 25-30 (<http://data.onb.ac.at/rep/107B4383>, accessed January 15, 2021).

³⁷ On the specific case of Transylvania, see A. Tüskés, "Pilgrimage Art in Eighteenth Century Transylvania: Icons, Woodcuts and Engravings", in D. Dumitran and V. Moga (eds.), *Economy and Society in Central and Eastern Europe: Territory, Population, Consumption*, Münster, 2013, p. 211.

³⁸ P. Pázmány, *Imádságos könyv*, Nagy Szombatban, 1701, fol. 143 (*Miraculosa B. V. M. Pöcensis in Hung.*), fol. 383 (*Miraculosa B. V. M. Claudiopoli*); all references are to the copy RMK I. 1640 available in the Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, Budapest (https://library.hungaricana.hu/hu/view/RMK_I_1640/?pg=4&layout=s, accessed 15.01.2021). A. Tüskés, "Representations of the

lower register of the image of some defenceless character imploring the intercession of the Virgin, it too with no detrimental effect on the general focus. Johann Philip Binder's addition of a sick person, perhaps disabled by the loss of one of his limbs, surrounded by grieving relatives in his copperplate of the Mary of Cluj from around 1770 is one such example that attempts to target a narrower class of worshipers.³⁹ Further south, in the Orthodox diocese of Sremski Karlovci, veneration for the Mother of God also took Catholic forms in the eighteenth century and Serb engravers began reproducing Greek and Russian icons in the established manner of Baroque artists, with a prime example in the 1725 broadsheet of the Virgin of the Černihiv monastery signed by monk Gavril.⁴⁰

More elaborate renditions, probably restricted to elite consumers by way of the intricate composition, the complexity of their text, and the associated cost,⁴¹ fall in a second, variegated category. It covers engravings that combine the revered object itself with either a reminder of the historical context of the first miraculous occurrence, a panorama, usually of the church building or monastic ensemble that housed it, or an infinite blend of these elements. The two distinct planes are in dialogue and reinforce each other constantly by moving back and forth between past instances when the marvel was experienced and the then current realities. The central stage, however, is always taken by the sacred image being reproduced, most often by its inclusion at a much bigger scale compared to the rest of the elements. Some notable examples comprise the anonymous broadsheet commemorating the Habsburg victory at Zenta under the protection of the Virgin of Pócs,⁴² Langgraffen's allegory of the *Regnum Marianum* that sees the two leading icons in Hungary and Transylvania surmounted by the crown of St. Stephen,⁴³ and the 1735 birds-eye view over Vienna that singles out the location of all sanctuaries holding wondrous representations of the Madonna in the imperial capital.⁴⁴ Often though, such engravings serve to promote only one pilgrimage site, showing the detailed shape of the local basilica and the holy image floating high above it on a cloud

Mary-Icon of Mariapócs in Engravings", *Annales Universitatis Apulensis. Series Historica* 18.1, 2014, p. 157; A. Dumitran, E. Hegedűs, V. Rus, *Fecioarele înlăcrimate...*, p. 68-69.

³⁹ Z. Szilárdfy, *Barokk szentképek Magyarországon*, Budapest, 1984, fig. 21.

⁴⁰ Galerija Matice Srpske, Novi Sad (hereafter: GMS), 18th Century Art Collection, online at: <http://www.galerijamaticesrpske.rs/en/graphic-art-of-the-18th-century.html> (accessed January 15, 2021); M. Timotijević, "Suze i zvezde: O plaču Bogorodičinih čudotvornih ikona u baroku", in Dejan Ajdačić (ed.), *Čudo u slovenskim kulturama*, Belgrade – Novi Sad, 2000, p. 221-236.

⁴¹ A. Tüskés, "Pilgrimage Art...", p. 212.

⁴² K. Schreiner, "Kriege im Namen Gottes...", p. 188, fig. 7.

⁴³ P. Pázmány, *Imádságos könyv*, unnumbered leaf before the title page.

⁴⁴ S. Kayser, *Austria Mariana, Seu Gratosarum Virgineae Dei-Parentis Iconum per Austriam, Origines, progressus, ac beneficia singularia*, [Vienna], 1735, unnumbered leaf before the title page (<http://resolver.sub.uni-goettingen.de/purl?PPN660140934>, accessed January 15, 2021).

or supported by angels. It was the typical presentation for the church in Pócs for over a century starting around 1750 with the initial design completed by Franz Feninger,⁴⁵ but the scheme was also in use for Šaštín⁴⁶ and Marianka⁴⁷ (both by Josef Jäger, 1743), as well as that of the Loretan chapel in Mikulov (the Klauber brothers, middle of the 18th century)⁴⁸ among others. The model was simultaneously replicated in Orthodox milieus in a series of copperplates on the Serb Marian shrines in Bođani (Zaharija Orfelin, 1758), Bezdin (Johann Christoph Winkler, 1762), and Piva (unknown author, 1766).⁴⁹

Yet, the image in Blaj differs notably from both patterns outlined above. The woodcut includes obviously so much more than just the weeping icon in itself, but it does not conform to the historical model either, for it misses the characteristic overlapping of planes and the blowing out of proportions of the sacred object with respect to the surroundings to make it stand out. On the contrary, everything takes the shape of a realistic representation of the shedding of tears scene in the original setting, almost as it had just been revealed to the onlookers. Enclosed in a rectangular border, it shows the inside of the chapel where Bishop Aron's coffin was laid in state, with the complete iconostasis covering almost three quarters of the frame. Although easy to identify, no special emphasis is placed on the icon of the Mother of God, which keeps its position in the row of four that compose the sovereign tier. The lower part of the image is split equally between the centrally placed body of the deceased hierarch and two symmetrical groups of mourners, to his left and right. The slanting coffin together with the hatched floor tiles contribute to a false feeling of depth to an otherwise vertically oriented design (see Fig. 1). A Latin caption identifying Aron and the inscription below the picture that reads: "Tabulatum Sanctuarii Capellæ, seu Templi Episcopalis, in quo Icon B. V. Mariæ sub obitu Petri Pauli Aaron Episcopi Fogarasiensis Græci ritus Unitorum sudare, et lachrymari visa est anno 1764. Balasfalvæ in Transylvania" are the only clues to deciphering the event thus immortalized. The woodcut is signed on the bottom right corner by "Szando", none other than Sandu Tipograful, one of the most gifted master printers and engravers active in the workshop in Blaj during the 1760s, many of his matrices making their way into books published well after

⁴⁵ Z. Szilárdffy, *Barokk szentképek...*, fig. 18; A. Tüskés, "Representations of the Mary-Icon of Mariapócs...", p. 163-164.

⁴⁶ Z. Szilárdffy, *Barokk szentképek...*, fig. 25.

⁴⁷ J. V. Ecsedy, *A könyvnyomtatás Magyarországon a kézisajtó korában: 1473–1800*, Budapest, 1999, p. 287, fig. 86.

⁴⁸ J. Mihola, "Mariánský atlas Markrabství moravského – zrcadlo živých i zapomenutých poutníků. K baroknímu poutnictví na Moravě v 18. Století", *Sborník prací Pedagogické fakulty Masarykovy univerzity, Řada společenských věd* 33.2, 2019, p. 54, fig. 4.

⁴⁹ GMS, 18th Century Art Collection, online at: <http://www.galerijamatice.rs/en/graphic-art-of-the-18th-century.html> (accessed January 15, 2021); D. Davidov, *Srpska grafika XVIII veka*, Novi Sad, 1978, p. 296-298, 365-366.

his death, up to the first two decades of the nineteenth century.⁵⁰ While it also discloses the place of its making – Blaj, the cathedral town and the very spot of the marvel – it does not offer any indication as to the year of its carving and printing.

Whether this was done in 1764 or a couple of years later, to coincide with the inquiry into the miracle itself, makes not much of a difference, anyway. Since one of its copies was attached to the file of the official investigation, this can only mean that the broadsheet must have been achieved by the summer of 1766 at the latest. This leaves us with a window of production of little more than two years, inside which, I think, there is a greater probability for it to have been made rather closer to the moment it depicts than sometime afterwards. The supposition rests on piecing together indirect evidence concerning, first, the absence from Blaj of the prelate in charge of the printshop, Vicar General turned Bishop Athanasie Rednic, between December 1764 and August 1765.⁵¹ Secondly, events affecting Sandu's life immediately after the official installation of the new bishop, when he was hit by accusations of attempting to counterfeit a gold coin and eventually lost the position of master printer, make him a less likely candidate to have received such an assignment in the second part of the interval.⁵² Finally, the fact that the commission was accomplished using the available workforce and instruments, in the form of a woodcut instead of the more complex copper engraving that had to be outsourced, as would later happen in the case of the broadsheet explaining church union, suggests that whoever was behind the idea was in a hurry to get it into the hands of the public.

It was not the first time that the engravers in Blaj had been asked to carve a woodblock of a wondrous image of the Virgin Mary, although previously these had been used only as illustrations. One of the earliest books issued by the printshop of the Greek Catholic Church in Transylvania, the 1751 *Breviary*, displayed a full-page woodcut of the weeping icon in Cluj, signed by the local artist Vlaicu, but inspired by previous copperplates.⁵³ The image would be further reproduced in the second edition of the same volume in 1753 and would reappear with a changed caption on the reverse of the title page in the 1757 Latin adaptation of the *Christian Doctrine*, a small catechism that went through multiple Romanian print runs between 1755–1756.⁵⁴ After a break of

⁵⁰ On his biography and activity, see E. Mârza, F. Bogdan (eds.), *Repertoriul tipografilor, gravurilor, patronilor, editorilor cărților românești (1508–1830)*, 2nd ed., Sibiu, 2013, p. 243–245.

⁵¹ A letter of the nuncio announced his arrival in Vienna on December 22, 1764 to undergo the preliminary procedure for appointment as bishop of Făgăraș, APF, SC, Greci di Croazia..., Miscellanea 2, fol. 303^r. His return home following investiture and consecration came only on August 27, 1765, see Z. Păclișanu, "Istoria Bisericii...", 2nd part, p. 96.

⁵² G. Mircea, *Tipografia din Blaj în anii 1747–1830*, Alba Iulia, 2008, p. 210, 213–216.

⁵³ A. Dumitran, E. Hegedűs, V. Rus, *Fecioarele înlăcrimate...*, p. 85 and fig. 31.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 85–86.

almost two decades, the theme of the Mother of God made a spectacular return within the pages of the fourth and fifth edition of the *Breviary* in 1773 and 1778, respectively. This time, the woodcut, signed by Petru Papavici, reproduced a different icon of the Blessed Virgin, seated and richly decorated, flanked by Archangels Michael and Gabriel, accompanied by a short inscription that said nothing about the location of its prototype. The iconography, which resembles that found in the depiction of the iconostasis in the chapel of the episcopal palace, together with the clear signs of recent tears under Her eyes, hint at recognizing it as a devotional representation of the Mary of Blaj.⁵⁵ The avoidance of any reference to the cathedral town or the earlier marvel may have been dictated by a self-imposed censorship on the part of the artist since the claimed miracle had failed to secure an official endorsement after all that time and, equally, by the fact that in the meanwhile the Church leadership had passed to the hands of a new bishop, Grigore Maior. Whether or not a common template might have been employed during the 1760s for the printing of a broadsheet that advertised to the simple faithful the weeping icon in Blaj, carrying a Romanian Cyrillic caption and the signature of Petru Papavici, is impossible to ascertain at the moment.⁵⁶ No copy is known to have survived and the only available description, which gives the accompanying text, but relates no visual details, is a casual note that dates back to the beginning of the twentieth century.⁵⁷

Together, these disparate instances from the 1750s till the 1770s prove that the Greek Catholic elite was well aware of the established conventions on representing in print the miracle-working icons of the Mother of God. If they chose to ignore them and render the scene of the wondrous occurrence in 1764 in a novel manner, it was because the message it needed to send to the viewers was less concerned with boosting the piety to the Virgin and more oriented toward the political tensions of the day. A closer look at the bottom half of the broadsheet, which is where all the action takes place, makes it instantly obvious that the woodcut was meant to underline not the miracle of the weeping icon, but instead to whom it had been performed (Fig. 2). The gestures of those witnessing the marvel are most telling, as one character in each group to the left and right of the image point with their hands both to the holy picture and to the coffin of the departed bishop, denoting an equal regard and creating an implicit link between the two. At the same time, Aron, who is clearly labelled in capital letters, unlike

⁵⁵ C. Tatai-Baltă, "The Icon of the Virgin Which Shed Tears at Bishop Petru Pavel Aron's Death (1764)", *Series Byzantina: Studies on Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* 10, 2012, p. 65-66 and p. 64, fig. 2.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

⁵⁷ N. Iorga (ed.), *Scrisori și inscripții ardelene și maramureșene*, vol. II: *Inscripții și însemnări*, Bucharest, 1906, p. 13, no. 21, has read the following lines: "The icon of the Most Holy Mother of God that wept in Transylvania, in the holy Metropolitan See of Blaj; March 18, 1764. Petru P., typographer" (my own translation).

the icon itself, is positioned with his head directly under the wondrous image of the Blessed Virgin, almost making eye contact due to Her pose with the slightly inclined head. Finally, the few lines of text that were critical in aiding the viewers get an unambiguous reading of the visual in what was essentially a hybrid media,⁵⁸ also signpost the connection between the deceased and the developing marvel by stressing that the shedding of tears began on the death of Bishop Aron. Thereby, once again, it was not the miracle, but the receiver that was meant to capture the main attention.

The caption also says something important about the intended public of the broadsheet. The use of Latin in an age when few Romanians could read and fewer still were able to understand a foreign text that was not written in the common Cyrillic script they employed daily, greatly restricted its audience to the educated elite. Here lies another argument against seeing the print reproduction of the marvel as an attempt to foster the cult of Virgin Mary or one specifically directed at convincing the Orthodox to return to church union. It were not the common faithful that were the target here, but the small number of influential Greek Catholics who were called to manage the crisis brought by the death of the bishop, elect a new leadership, and run the diocese in the interim. It has already been suggested that the woodcut operated to legitimize the transition of power from Petru Pavel Aron to his successor, Athanasie Rednic, and to induce a sentiment of continuity able to offset any potential fears of instability caused by the death of the former, while placing the entire Church under the protection of the Madonna.⁵⁹

To work, though, such a discourse would have required a bond of trust between the new shepherd and his flock, which was far from being the case in 1764. Blaj was at that moment in a turmoil. As Aron was laid to rest, an underground fight for who was to become the next bishop of Făgăraș began almost immediately. Its contenders belonged to two opposing camps. On one side, there was Athanasie Rednic, vicar general and long-time friend of the departed bishop, the man who was his closest collaborator throughout most of his career and was influential in many of the decisions taken in critical moments. On the other side, Grigore Maior and Silvestru Caliani, fellows from the days of their studies in Cluj and Rome, never got over the fact that Aron, who was only a couple of years their elder, got promoted as bishop after the resignation of Inocențiu Klein in 1751. They stood behind contestations against Aron in the late 1740s as well as in 1757–1758 and were obviously outraged at the idea that they could lose the nomination again to one of Aron's henchmen. It went beyond

⁵⁸ R. W. Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation*, Oxford, 1994, p. xv, 244. See also R. Chartier, "General Introduction: Print Culture", in R. Chartier (ed.), *The Culture of Print: Power and the Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge, 1989, p. 5-7.

⁵⁹ G.-M. Miron, M. Crăciun, "Tipografia de la Blaj și comunicarea religioasă...", p. 136.

personal adversity though, as they clashed on a number of topics, from the discipline in the monastery to how the diocese should be run and what was the adequate answer to Orthodoxy's recent resurgence in Transylvania.⁶⁰

According to the rules in place, the election of the new hierarch was entrusted to the general synod, composed of the archdeacons and delegates of the clergy, together with the Basilian monks in the monastery in Blaj, who filled an equivalent position to that of the capitular canons in the Latin church. As a result of the ballot, they were to submit three candidate names to the court in Vienna, from among whom the empress was to appoint the future bishop.⁶¹ In this race for the favours of the electors, Maior and Caliani positioned themselves as pretenders that would bring a change from the style of the departed bishop, while Rednic was obviously the candidate that warranted continuity. But he was a very calculated and rational man and must have been aware that Aron's legacy was disputed at best, given his failure to prevent Orthodoxy from gaining ground in Transylvania over the past decade or so. He also knew that he would have a tough time selling an identical programme to mostly the same delegates who voted rather reluctantly for Petru Pavel Aron 13 years earlier.⁶² Besides, either Maior or Caliani were much more popular figures than the austere and radical Rednic, so that was another difficulty he needed to overcome.

All his concerns proved real once the ballots were cast in June 1764. The synod used the opportunity to make a loud statement about Aron's term in power and the required changes for the future by giving a large share of the votes to his known opponents: Grigore Maior – with 87 of the 172 cast ballots – and the

⁶⁰ Z. I. Tóth, *Primul secol al naționalismului românesc ardelean: 1697–1792*, Bucharest, 2001, p. 188-189; O. Ghitta, "Bishop Manuel Olsavszky and the unrest in the Romanian Uniate Church of Transylvania (the fifth decade of the 18th century)", *Annales Universitatis Apulensis, series Historica* 11.2, 2007, p. 180-194; A. Bunea, *Episcopii Aron și Novacovič...*, p. 289-292; G.-M. Miron, "The Basilian Monk and the Identity of the Uniate Church in Eighteenth-Century Transylvania", in M. Crăciun and E. Fulton (eds.), *Communities of Devotion: Religious Orders and Society in East Central Europe, 1450–1800*, Farnham, 2011, p. 258-262.

⁶¹ The practice was officially sanctioned through Emperor Leopold I's diploma of March 19, 1701, N. Nilles (ed.), *Symbolae ad illustrandam historiam Ecclesiae Orientalis in terris coronae S. Stephani*, vol. 1, Ćeniponte, 1885, p. 299. A draft of instructions for the assembly of the general synod, presumably in 1764, expressly mentioned the submission of three candidate names, ANR, SJAN Cluj, Colecția de Documente Blaj, no. 1282, fol. 1^r-2^v.

⁶² A. Bunea, *Episcopii Aron și Novacovič...*, p. 5-7. Despite the number of votes he received in 1751, Aron's election was heavily influenced by concerns about the court's plans to appoint the Ruthenian Olšovský and by the removal for a long time from the diocese of his closest rivals, Maior and Caliani; see the letter of the synod announcing the result of the election, Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Finanz- und Hofkammerarchiv, Alte Hofkammer, Hoffinanz Ungarn, Siebenbürgen Akten, Siebenbürgische Kameralverhandlungen, Karton 127, fol. 654^r–656^v; for the keeping in Vienna of the two Basilians from 1748 until 1754, see R. Nedici, *Formarea identității confesionale...*, p. 344-345. On the initial reluctance of the clergy toward Petru Pavel Aron, the earlier synod in 1748 is telling, O. Ghitta, "Bishop Manuel Olsavszky and the unrest...", p. 189-193.

exiled Inocențiu Klein, who got 70 votes, all the more impressive since everyone knew he had been in disfavour with the court for almost two decades. Rednic was a distant fourth, with only five votes, behind Silvestru Caliani who made the cut to the top three with seven ballots to his name.⁶³ The result displeased Empress Maria Theresa and her ministers, who did not think very highly of Maior and abhorred Klein for the troubles he had caused earlier as bishop. They thus invoked the inability of the latter to stand for the same position once more and cancelled his name from the list, at the same time promoting Rednic to the third spot and making him eligible to receive the royal appointment as a result.⁶⁴

The reactions in Transylvania to this abuse against the will of the general synod went on for months, producing fierce arguments that give a unique insight into how the newly announced bishop was perceived by the higher clergy. Athanasie Rednic could count solely on the backing of the young monks in the monastery, who had just elected him abbot in November of the previous year,⁶⁵ together with that of the Roman alumnus Filotei László, who endorsed his candidature in a letter to the cardinals of Propaganda Fide right after Aron's death.⁶⁶ He faced a strong coalition formed of the veteran monks in Blaj – chiefly Maior and Caliani, but also Gherontie Cotore – and most of the 50 or so archdeacons in the diocese, who launched a campaign to block his confirmation through petitions directed at the local administration and the court, vouching to disobey the unwanted nominee and openly asking for his resignation.⁶⁷ At the same time, they elicited support from the Holy See, in an attempt to circumvent the Habsburg authorities and transfer the legal battle from Vienna to Rome, where the pope was to have the final word.

In a first letter to Clement XIII of October 26, 1764 signed by two leading archdeacons, Avram Pop and Ioan Săcădate, and by the secretary Vasile Caliani, the clergy accused Rednic of being the main reason why so many of the Transylvanian Romanians had previously departed from the Greek Catholic faith, while warning against the danger of deepening the strife if he would come to receive the papal confirmation. Time and again they had tried to persuade him to abandon the harmful manner of conducting the business of the eparchy, both in private conversations and through public reprimands, but to no avail. As such, he could stir only resentment and hatred and no one wanted him as bishop, nor

⁶³ Z. Păclișanu, "Istoria Bisericii...", 2nd part, p. 90.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 90; Fr. Pall (ed.), *Inochentie Micu-Klein. Exilul la Roma: 1745–1768*, vol. 1, Cluj-Napoca, 1997, p. 203-212.

⁶⁵ ANR, SJAN Alba, MRUB, AG–A.n., no. 11/1763, fol. 1^r.

⁶⁶ APF, SC, Greci di Croazia..., vol. 2, fol. 155^v–156^r.

⁶⁷ Z. I. Tóth, *Primul secol...*, p. 246-247; Z. Păclișanu, "Istoria Bisericii...", 2nd part, p. 91-94.

would they recognize him.⁶⁸ The charges were repeated with further bitterness in January 1765, once it became clear that the empress would not backtrack on her choice, in a petition to Propaganda Fide under the hand of the same Avram Pop and Ioan Săcădate, who styled themselves plenipotentiaries of the Greek Catholic clergy in Transylvania. According to this text, the appointment of Athanasie Rednic would bring the ruin of the Uniate Church, for the people hated him and would not stand having him as their religious leader. It continued by raising doubts about his morality, starting with the fact that his first measure as bishop-elect was to ask for the immediate payment of the due tax that each priest contributed every year for the maintenance of the hierarch and that he threatened with excommunication those who did not obey. The portrayal went on asserting that he was a solitary man, only interested in his own profit, loving only himself, and accepting advice from no one.⁶⁹ Grigore Maior added to this in a letter written on May 28, 1765, at a time when Rednic had already been preconized, in which the former blamed the latter for the recent disturbances, as he was loved by nobody in the diocese and yet he pressed on with becoming bishop, regardless of the fact that the eparchy already had a living hierarch, in the person of the exiled Inocențiu Klein.⁷⁰

Since the controversy showed no signs of calming down and taking up the administration of the diocese under such auspices would have proved impossible, Bishop Rednic asked the government to step in. The three Basilian monks and half a dozen archdeacons considered responsible for inciting the opposition were called for questioning in Sibiu, but only Grigore Maior, Avram Pop, and Ioan Săcădate were eventually placed in house arrest.⁷¹ By mid-summer Maior was sent to atone for his mistakes in confinement at the monastery in Mukačiv, unable to make contact with anyone in Transylvania, while Pop and Săcădate were set free by Bishop Athanasie Rednic after his return to the diocese. Caliani and Cotore, on the other hand, were also hit with punishments in the first consistory presided by the new hierarch, who announced his decision to transfer the two monks to remote monasteries and away from Blaj, although he later allowed Silvestru Caliani to stay in place, but stripped him of all previous honours.⁷² These measures delivered a strong message to the remaining archdeacons who yielded to the new bishop and were no longer to

⁶⁸ APF, SC, Greci di Croazia..., vol. 2, fol. 177–178. Also published in the original Latin and in Romanian translation by I. Dumitriu-Snagov (ed.), *Românii în arhivele Romei (Secolul XVIII)*, Bucharest, 1973, p. 200–205, but with a different pagination.

⁶⁹ APF, SC, Greci di Croazia..., vol. 2, fol. 181^{rv}.

⁷⁰ APF, SC, Ungheria e Transilvania, vol. 6, fol. 137^{rv}.

⁷¹ S. Micu, *Istoria Românilor*, vol. 2, p. 347.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 347–348, 350–351; G.-M. Miron, “Un episod din viața lui Grigorie Maior. Penitența la Muncaci”, in N. Bocșan, A. V. Sima, and I. Cârja (eds.), *Identități confesionale în Europa Central-Orientală (secolele XVII–XXI)*, Cluj-Napoca, 2009, p. 137–162.

present a challenge during the following eight years of his short episcopate. The display of power proved a more adequate answer for curbing the tensions in the second half of 1765, thus making the metaphorical woodcut of yesteryear superfluous.

Conclusions

The images look to have developed the strange habit of intervening or delivering messages in some supernatural form in the environments of the Greek Catholic Church of Transylvania around the middle of the eighteenth century. Unsurprisingly, this is altogether consistent with the concern of the ecclesiastical elites of the age toward diversifying the media they used to reach the Byzantine rite public. The tears shed by the icon of the Mother of God on the death of Bishop Aron were just one in a series of incidents that placed images at the core of religious communication. Half a decade earlier, Petru Pavel Aron was said to have miraculously escaped with his life from an attempted assassination by a Calvinist fanatic in Hațeg thanks to the intercession of the icon of the Blessed Virgin in the monastery in Prislop, who prevented the gun from firing its deadly charge three times in a row.⁷³ Only a few years later, in 1768, the painting that portrayed Bishop Inocențiu Klein fell off the wall in the episcopal palace at the same moment that he took his last breath in Rome, telling everyone of his death weeks before the official news reached Blaj.⁷⁴

The miracle of the weeping icon was an opportunity for Athanasie Rednic, who seized it to enhance his chances of presenting himself not as a successor to an unloved bishop, but as a direct follower in the footsteps of a saintly figure. The broadsheet that was meant to advertise the marvel was most probably issued in the months leading to the election or immediately afterwards, when an appeasement with his opponents became necessary. In those days of intense conflict, people were bound to make a connection between the individualized figures in the woodcut and the real characters that fought for power and were thus likely to identify Rednic with one of the monks present within the frame. He stood there next to the coffin of his predecessor not just as a witness to a wondrous event, but in testament to the divine election with regard to their way of leading the Greek Catholic Church through turbulent times. Yet, this strategy failed miserably and, in the end, coercive measures were required to enforce compliance from the archdeacons with the appointment of Rednic to succeed Aron at the helm of the diocese.

In terms of the religious rhetoric, the whole episode is illustrative for two entangled questions that are often neglected by research: the credibility of

⁷³ A. Bunea, *Episcopi Aron și Novacovic...*, p. 153-155.

⁷⁴ S. Micu, *Istoria Românilor*, vol. 2, p. 327-328.

those advertising their connections to the sacred and the way propaganda instrumentalizes the symbols it creates. The miracle failed to gain traction not because the people were not ready for its message, but because Athanasie Rednic did not have enough following in the spring of 1764 to make it into a topic on the public agenda. Likewise, once the icon of the Virgin Mary became associated with Rednic's struggle to turn Aron into a saint so that he could become bishop instead, the holy object lost much of its power for anything else. It is not perhaps by chance that the only negative comment concerning the marvel comes from an account of a heated exchange between Grigore Maior and Filotei László, one of Rednic's main supporters. As László invoked the shedding of tears during the argument, Maior allegedly replicated that he did not need any help from the Mother of God, as he was already happy in this world.⁷⁵ His arrogant answer speaks not of any lack of Marian piety in this former Jesuit student, but targets the very particular representation of the Virgin, expressing his understanding that the icon which wept in Blaj could not provide him with aid once it had been successfully claimed by Rednic's camp.

As the Mary of Blaj was taken to Vienna to avoid the rise of an unsanctioned cult, the cathedral town missed the chance to become a pilgrimage site and no specific memory survived in the aftermath of the episcopal election. Bishop Athanasie Rednic himself later turned to another weeping Madonna, contending that the Greek Catholic monastery in Nicula held the genuine image that dropped tears at the end of the previous century, thus laying the foundation of a flourishing tradition.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 346.

⁷⁶ A. Dumitran, E. Hegedüs, V. Rus, *Fecioarele înlăcrimate...*, p. 118-122, 382-383; R. Born, "Nicula", in J. Bahlcke, S. Rohdewald, and Th. Wünsch (eds.), *Religiöse Erinnerungsorte in Ostmitteleuropa: Konstitution und Konkurrenz im nationen- und epochenübergreifenden Zugriff*, Berlin, 2013, p. 209-222.

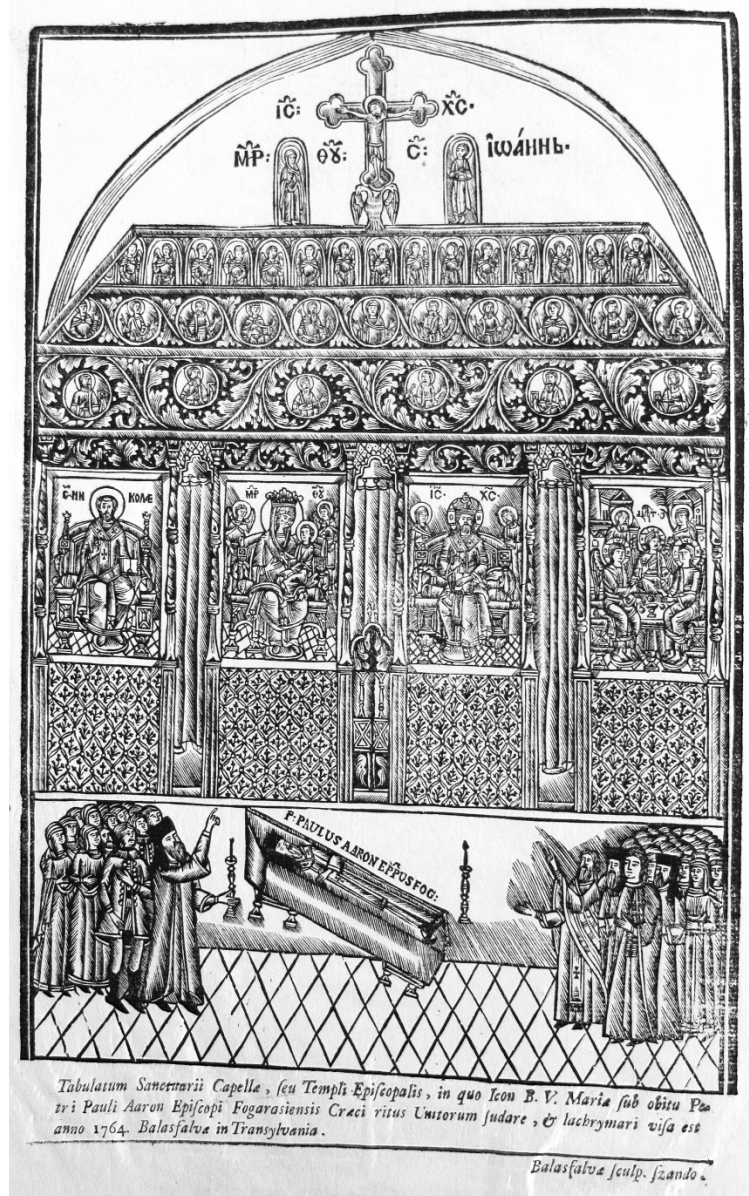


Fig. 1 – Tabulatum Sanctuarii Capellæ, seu Templi Episcopalis, in quo Icon B. V. Mariæ sub obitu Petri Pauli Aaron Episcopi Fogarasiensis Græci ritus Unitorum sudare, et lachrymari visa est anno 1764. Balasfalvæ in Transylvania, woodcut, c. 1764–1766. Broadsheet bound to the file of the investigation on the miraculous weeping of the icon of the Mother of God in Blaj, MNL, OL, A 98, Fasc. 13 et c., fol. 72^v (reproduced by permission of the National Archives of Hungary, Budapest)

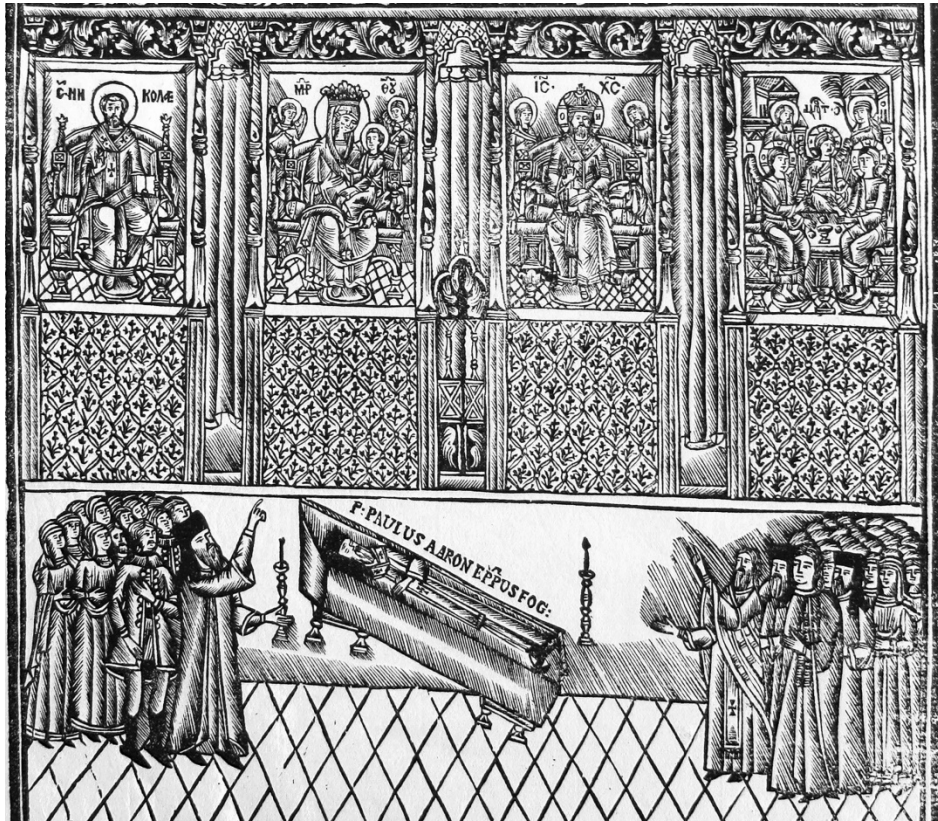


Fig. 2 – *Tabulatum Sanctuarii Capellæ, seu Templi Episcopalis, in quo Icon B. V. Mariæ sub obitu Petri Pauli Aaron Episcopi Fogarasiensis Græci ritus Unitorum sudare, et lachrymari visa est anno 1764. Balasfalvæ in Transylvania, woodcut, c. 1764–1766.* Detail view of the sovereign tier of the iconostasis with the wondrous icon of the Mother of God and of those that first witnessed the marvel while mourning Bishop Aron's death, MNL, OL, A 98, Fasc. 13 et c., fol. 72^v (reproduced by permission of the National Archives of Hungary, Budapest)

**LA MISE EN RITUEL DU POUVOIR.
UNE PRIÈRE DE COURONNEMENT COPIÉE
PAR DIONISIE ECLESIARHUL (1813)***

Radu G. Păun

L'histoire des rituels du pouvoir monarchique dans les principautés de Valachie et de Moldavie reste à écrire et avec elle sera réécrite un jour l'histoire même de l'institution, qui ne se limite pas, comme on le croit trop souvent, à ses dimensions administratives. En effet, régner et gouverner n'est pas seulement contrôler et mesurer, mais aussi, et peut-être en premier lieu, persuader les autres qu'on a le droit de le faire et, par-dessus tout, qu'on est le seul à avoir ce droit, en tant que monarque « par la grâce de Dieu ».

C'est là l'idée force de tout un corps de doctrine qui se construit incessamment au fil des siècles et qui est vouée à expliciter les fondements du pouvoir, sa raison d'exister. Cette construction continue n'est pas forcément progressive et d'autant moins linéaire : certaines pièces et idées y sont introduites par moments, alors que certaines autres tombent dans l'oubli ou bien sont réinterprétées en fonction du contexte immédiat et des objectifs poursuivis par les acteurs¹. Ces derniers sont bien divers : les princes sont les plus visibles, certes, mais, très souvent, ce n'est pas à eux de nourrir d'idées cette doctrine. Pour ce faire, ils emploient des voix et des plumes, entretiennent des conseillers, des maîtres de cérémonies et des secrétaires. Les têtes de l'Église sont à leurs côtés aussi – tout cela est connu. Il y a cependant des acteurs qui n'agissent pas

* Le document que nous analysons ici a donné matière à deux études préliminaires, publiées il y a longtemps : R. G. Păun, « Dinamica politică în reprezentare rituală. O molitvă de încoronare copiată de Dionisie Eclesiarhul (1813) », *Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie*, 17, 1999, p. 75-91 ; idem, « Le couronnement des princes "phanariotes" et la "Renaissance byzantine". Le manuscrit 3567 de la Bibliothèque de l'Académie Roumaine », dans A. Argyriou, K. A. Dimadis, A. Danai-Lazaridou (éds.), *Ο ελληνικός κόσμος ανάμεσα στην Ανατολή και τη Δύση, 1453-1981*, vol. 2, Athènes, 1999, p. 37-44.

¹ Voir, par exemple, R. G. Păun, « Pouvoir, Croisade et Jugement Dernier au XVII^e siècle : le vécu et l'invisible », dans I. Biliarsky (éd.), *Ius et Ritus. Rechtshistorische Abhandlungen über Ritus, Macht und Recht*, Sofia, 2006, p. 213-283 ; idem, « "Elu de la matrice de ma mère" : pouvoir et prédestination aux XVI^e-XVII^e siècles », dans I. Biliarsky, R. G. Păun (éds.), *The Biblical Models of Power and Law / Les modèles bibliques du pouvoir et du droit*, Francfort/Main, 2008, p. 225-270.

forcément sur commande – érudits ou gens « ordinaires », scribes et copistes de tout ordre – et dont le travail non seulement a pu contribuer à la construction du corpus évoqué ci-dessus, mais il rend aussi compte de l’image que les sujets se faisaient du pouvoir. Les lire c’est projeter un rayon de lumière sur un monde enveloppé d’obscurité ; plus de rayons on projette, mieux on déchiffre ce monde-là.

Cet essai se propose de mettre à profit un tel faisceau de lumière afin d’éclairer, tant que faire se peut, l’histoire d’un rituel fondamental pour toute monarchie chrétienne : le couronnement.

BAR ms. roum. 3567 : description, attribution, datation

Le document que nous allons analyser est un ordre de couronnement de facture particulière : la description du rituel à observer est en roumain, alors que la prière de consécration du nouveau prince est rédigée en grec². Le texte se trouve dans BAR ms. roum. 3567 (ff. 3^v-5^r), un Euchologe fragmentaire qui contient des prières de consécration et de commémoration d’usage courant. Les couvertures, en cuir, sont relativement bien conservées ; les dimensions du codex sont 23,5 x 17 cm. Le codex contient aussi l’office pour l’ordination du confesseur (*duhovnic*), daté le 28 mai 1813 (f. 6^{r-v}), le texte grec du même office (*ἡ γινόμενη τάξις ἐπὶ τοῦ προχαρισμοῦ τοῦ πνευματικοῦ*), écrit, selon une notice marginale, par « le père Troados, kyr Venedict » (« s-au scris de pārintele Troados, kir Venedict, 1813 octombrie 12 », f. 7^{r-v})³, une prière pour l’ordination du porteur des chandelles (f. 8^{r-v} ; texte inachevé), une prière pour la commémoration des défunts (ff. 21-22) et une prière d’exorcisation en cas de malédiction (ff. 23-24^v ; le texte est repris à l’identique aux ff. 25-26^v). Le reste des feuillets sont blancs. Le codex a certainement été plus volumineux, mais les ff. 21-59 sont aujourd’hui perdus. Le manuscrit a appartenu au monastère de

² Pour les *ordines* de couronnement des princes valaques et moldaves connus à ce jour, on se rapportera à l’Annexe 5 de la présente étude. Sur le couronnement des mêmes princes à Constantinople, voir notre article : « Byzance d’empereur et Byzance d’Église. Sur le couronnement des princes “phanariotes” à Constantinople », dans O. Delouis, A. Couderc, P. Guran (coord.), *Héritages de Byzance en Europe du Sud-Est à l’époque moderne et contemporaine*, Athènes, 2013, p. 141-160.

³ Venedict a été vicaire métropolitain dans les années 1810 et s’est fait ensuite remplacer par Gherasim de Buzău, sur l’ordre du prince Grigore Dimitrie Ghica. Il avait été – du moins non-officiellement – le chef de l’Église valaque durant l’absence du métropolitain Dionisie Lupu, qui avait choisi le chemin de l’exil lors de la révolte de Tudor Vladimirescu, V. A. Urechia, *Istoria românilor*, vol. 13, *Revoluțiunea lui Tudor Vladimirescu (după documente noue) 1821-1822*, Bucarest, 1901, p. 334.

Sinaia et a été donné à l'Académie roumaine par l'archimandrite Nifon, l'hégoumène du monastère, en 1908⁴.

Le texte qui nous intéresse est écrit de manière soignée, à l'encre noire et en lettres cursives par la main d'un professionnel. Les indications de rituel et la prière de couronnement sont écrites de la même main. Le texte se trouve dans un double encadrement dessiné à l'encre rouge et marron ; par endroits l'encre est rouge et noire. Les initiales sont ornées de motifs végétaux, qui se retrouvent aussi dans le registre supérieur du premier feuillet, où le texte est surplombé par les armoiries du pays : l'aigle portant la croix au bec, en encadrement doré, entouré des initiales du nom et du titre princiers écrits à l'encre rouge : *Іѡ Іѡа Гр Гіє К ЪБ : Іѡ Іoan G[heo]rg[h]ie K[aratzas] V[oie]v[od]*⁵. Les armoiries ne comprennent donc pas le blason de la famille Karatzas (roum. : Caragea), à savoir les deux chèvres rampantes qui encadrent d'habitudes les armes du pays⁶. Dans BAR ms. roum. 3567, les armoiries sont surplombées d'une couronne fermée, encadrée d'une épée (à droite) et d'une masse ferrée ou *topuz* (à gauche) – une figuration très proche de celle qui se trouve sur la page de titre du *Code de Lois* promulgué par le même prince. Le final du texte (f. 5^r) est aussi décoré de motifs floraux.

L'auteur de l'ordre de couronnement est dévoilé par une notice autographe qui se trouve à la f. 1^r. La voici :

La leat 1813, ianuarie 26, în zilele mării sale Ioan Gheorghie Caragea Voievod, s-au hirotonisit episcop al Râmnicului Noului Severin prea-sfinția sa părintele Kiriu Galaction, de prea sfinția sa părintele mitropolitul Ungrovlahiei Kiriu Kiriu Nectarie, având împreună-slujitori pe prea sfințiții episcopi ai Argeșului kiriu Iosif și al Buzăului kiriu Costandie, în zi de duminică, în biserica sfintei mitropolii a sfinților împărați Constantin și Elena. Fiind cea dintâiu sfântă liturghie, aceasta a prea sfinției sale de când s-au suit în scaunul Sfintei Mitropolii a Ungrovlahiei de la sfânta episcopie a Râmnicului. Deci spre știință am însemnat aicea întru această sfântă liturghie.

Patrierșind în Țarigrad prea sfințitul Kiriu Kiriu Ieremia.
Dionisie Eclisiarh Mitropoliei⁷.

⁴ G. Ștrempel, *Catalogul manuscriselor românești din Biblioteca Academiei Române*, vol. 3, Bucarest, 1987, p. 175 (description sommaire).

⁵ Sur la particule *Іѡ* (soi disant « nom théophorique ») dans le titre des princes valaques et moldaves, voir E. Vîrtosu, *Titulatura domnilor și asocierea la domnie în Țara Românească și Moldova până în secolul al XVI-lea*, Bucarest, 1960, p. 11-103, et surtout M. Tadin, « L'origine et la signification de la particule *Іѡ* dans le titre honorifique des princes de Bulgarie, de Serbie (méridionale), de Valachie et de Moldavie », *Cyrrilomethodianum*, 4, 1977, p. 172-196.

⁶ Voir D. Cernovodeanu, *Știința și arta heraldică în România*, Bucarest, 1977, p. 252-253, fig. 3.

⁷ Le texte est reproduit aussi par G. Ștrempel, *Catalogul manuscriselor*, vol. 3, p. 175 (avec des lacunes et inachevé). Le métropolitain Nectarie (Néktarios) dit « le Moréote » (roum. : « Moraitul »), c'est-à-dire de Morée, a été le successeur d'Ignatie dit « le Grec » (roum. : « Grecul ») ; cf.

L'an 1813, le 26 janvier, aux jours de Son Altesse Ioan Gheorghe Caragea Voïévode, Sa Sainteté notre père Kyr Galaction s'est fait consacrer évêque de Râmnic Noul Severin, par Sa Sainteté notre père le métropolite de la Valachie Kyr Nectarie, avec comme officiants les saints évêques Kyr Iosif d'Argeș et Kyr Costandie de Buzău, un dimanche, dans l'église de la sainte Métropole [dédiée aux] saints empereurs Constantin et Hélène. Et ce fut la première messe de Sa Sainteté depuis qu'il a monté sur le trône de la sainte Métropole [en venant] du saint évêché de Râmnic. J'ai donc écrit ici pour que l'on sache de cette sainte messe.
Sa sainteté Kyr Jérémie étant patriarche à Constantinople.
Dionisie l'ecclésiarque de la Métropole.

La comparaison entre cette notice et l'ordre de couronnement qui lui fait suite permet d'établir que l'auteur de ce dernier est le même Dionisie Eclesiarhul (env. 1759-1820) et que la date de rédaction du texte est proche de celle de l'écriture de la notice, voire plus ancienne⁸. Si nous acceptons l'hypothèse que Dionisie se trouvait à Bucarest lors de l'arrivée du prince Caragea, alors le texte peut être daté en janvier 1813, car le prince a fait son entrée solennelle dans la capitale autour de la fête de Noël de l'an 1812 et Dionisie a été démis de ses fonctions d'ecclésiarque peu après la promotion de Nectarie comme métropolite et en tout cas après le 26 janvier 1813⁹. Dans son *Hronograf*, Dionisie affirme que le prince est entré dans la capitale « l'an 1813, après la Saint-Georges » (« la leatul 1813, după Sfeti Gheorghe »), donc après le 25 novembre, car il s'agit de la Saint-Georges de l'automne. Selon le consul de France à Bucarest, le même

N. Iorga, *Istoria Bisericii românești și a vieții religioase a românilor*, vol. 2, Vălenii de Munte, 1909, p. 331 ; M. Păcurariu, « Listele cronologice ale ierarhilor Bisericii Ortodoxe Române », *BOR*, 93/3-4, 1975, p. 326. Le patriarche œcuménique mentionné dans le texte est Jérémie IV (mai 1809 – mars 1813) ; voir P. Ș. Năsturel, « Lista patriarhilor ortodocși. Constantinopol, Alexandria, Antiohia, Ierusalim », *Hrisovul*, 7, 1947, p. 156.

⁸ G. Ștrempel (*Catalogul manuscriselor*, vol. 3, p. 175) n'identifie pas l'auteur de la prière, contrairement à ce qu'affirment V. Barbu et Gh. Lazăr, « *Coronatio*. Tradiția liturgică în Țările Române », dans O. Cristea, Gh. Lazăr (éds.), *Național și universal în istoria românilor. Studii oferite prof. dr. Șerban Papacostea cu ocazia împlinirii a 70 de ani*, Bucarest, 1998, p. 49. Ce texte ne figure pas non plus parmi les écrits attribués à Dionisie ; cf. Dionisie Eclesiarhul, *Hronograf (1764-1815)*, éd. par D. Bălașa, étude introductive par D. Bălașa et N. Stoicescu, notes et commentaires par N. Stoicescu, Bucarest, 1987, p. 27 (répertoire dressé par D. Bălașa).

⁹ D. Eclesiarhul, *Hronograf*, p. 7. Selon Ioan Dobrescu, Nectarie a été élu métropolite juste après l'entrée solennelle de Caragea dans la capitale, à savoir le 16 décembre 1812. Il n'a pu cependant prendre ses fonctions qu'après sa confirmation par le patriarche œcuménique, qui serait arrivée à Bucarest le 19 janvier 1813. Nous ne savons pourtant pas si Dobrescu emploie le style ancien ou bien le nouveau, I. Corfus, « Cronica meșteșugarului Ioan Dobrescu, (1802-1830) », *Studii și Articole de Istorie*, 8, 1966, p. 336. Un rapport autrichien assure que la confirmation de Nectarie par le Patriarcat œcuménique est arrivée à Bucarest à la fin du mois de janvier, *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor culese de Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki*, vol. 20, *Correspondență diplomatică și rapoarte consulare austriace 1812-1822*, éd. par I. I. Nistor, Cernăuți, 1940, p. 76 (n° LXXIII ; Fleischackl à Metternich, le 3 février 1813).

événement a eu lieu le 24 décembre 1812 (nouveau style)¹⁰, fait confirmé par quelques notes contemporaines¹¹. Ion Ghica place l'entrée du prince le jour de la Saint-Spyridon, ce qui veut dire le 12 décembre. Fait important, il ajoute : « il s'est rendu à l'église de la Curtea Veche [la Vieille Cour¹²] où il a été oint selon l'usage » (« s-a dus de s-a miruit în biserica Curtea Veche, după obicei »)¹³. Enfin, l'agent autrichien Fleischackl parle du 6 décembre 1812¹⁴. Vu les confusions qui peuvent apparaître entre les deux styles chez les divers auteurs, il est fort probable que Caragea ait fait son entrée juste avant le jour de Noël 1812. Pour cette dernière date plaide aussi un panégyrique mixte (pour l'intronisation et la fête de Noël) adressé au même prince¹⁵.

Quoi qu'il en fût, il est à supposer que la prière a été rédigée pendant le premier mois du règne d'Ioan Gheorghe Caragea. La question qui se pose est de savoir si l'auteur en est Dionisie lui-même ou bien il n'a fait que copier un texte déjà existant. La première hypothèse n'est pas à exclure, car notre personnage était très bien situé pour avoir accès aux documents conservés dans les archives de la Métropole. Il est connu par ailleurs qu'il a entrepris une activité assidue de transcription et traduction de documents et manuscrits anciens en possession de cette institution, avec l'aide de toute une école de calligraphes et copistes qu'il avait lui-même organisée. En même temps, Dionisie était un bon connaisseur des textes liturgiques. Il a copié et/ou traduit en roumain plusieurs prières, surtout du slavon, et il connaissait certainement le grec¹⁶.

¹⁰ *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor. Urmare la colecțiunea lui Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki. Suplement I, vol. 2, 1781-1814. Documente culese din Arhivele Ministeriului Afacerilor Străine din Paris de Al. I. Odobescu*, Bucarest, 1885, p. 700 (n° DCCCCXIII, rapport du 26 décembre 1812).

¹¹ I. Corfus, *Însemnări de demult*, Iași, 1971, p. 28, 315 ; idem, « Cronica meșteșugarului », p. 336 (dans tous les cas, la date est le 12 décembre, probablement selon le vieux style, donc le 24 nouveau style). Voir aussi D. Eclesiarhul, *Hronograf*, p. 172-173, note 340.

¹² Il s'agit de l'ancienne résidence princière, où avait traditionnellement lieu le couronnement des princes ; voir N. Stoicescu, *Repertoriul bibliografic al monumentelor feudale din București*, Bucarest, 2017², p. 35-49.

¹³ I. Ghica, « Din vremea lui Caragea », dans idem, *Scrisori către Vasile Alecsandri*, Bucarest, 1967, p. 35.

¹⁴ *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor culese de Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki*, vol. 20, p. 57 (n° LIII, le 9 décembre 1812).

¹⁵ R. G. Păun, « Literatura encomiastică și mirajul puterii absolute în veacul XVIII. Documente românești », *Revista de Istorie Socială*, 2-3, 1997-1998, p. 320-321.

¹⁶ Voir D. Bălașa, « Contribuția cronicarului Dionisie la îmbogățirea Molitfelnicului românesc », *BOR*, 86/1-2, 1968, p. 209-220 ; idem, « Contribuția cronicarului Dionisie la îmbogățirea Molitfelnicului românesc. Un alt manuscris inedit », *BOR*, 99/5-6, 1981, p. 665-674.

Liturgie et pouvoir, liturgie du pouvoir

La description du rituel de couronnement dans BAR ms. roum. 3567 n'apporte pratiquement rien de nouveau par rapport aux autres documents du même type que nous connaissons. Preuve en est la description, probablement contemporaine, due à Dionysios Phôteinos (Annexe 2).

Si les deux auteurs décrivent le rituel qui se déroule dans l'espace public de l'église de la même manière et avec les mêmes détails¹⁷, une différence essentielle existe en ce qui concerne les actions qui ont lieu à l'intérieur du sanctuaire. Homme « du monde », Phôteinos est laconique là-dessus : il ne dit rien de l'onction et de la prière de consécration et ne mentionne pas le fait que le prince embrasse les quatre coins de la sainte table – des moments et des gestes essentiels de l'algorithme rituel. Pour sa part, Dionisie, dont une des responsabilités comme ecclésiarque était précisément de veiller au bon déroulement des services liturgiques, tâche de tout enregistrer, en s'appuyant peut-être sur des documents qu'il a pu consulter dans l'archive de la Métropole.

Du reste, il nous semble bien clair qu'aucun des deux textes ne se réfère à la consécration de tel ou tel prince ; les deux ont un caractère prescriptif et impersonnel, fait indiqué par l'absence du nom du protagoniste dans les deux descriptions.

L'identification de la prière de consécration contenue dans BAR ms. roum. 3567 soulève des problèmes complexes, car le texte diffère beaucoup par rapport à tout autre *ordo* connu pour le couronnement des princes de Valachie et de Moldavie. En même temps, elle ne reproduit pas l'*ordo* de couronnement des *basileis*, tel qu'on le connaît dans ses versions grecques¹⁸, sud-slaves¹⁹ et russes²⁰. L'examen du grand Euchologe publié par Jacobus Goar

¹⁷ Phôteinos ne mentionne pas le moment de la vénération des icônes à l'entrée du prince dans l'église ; en revanche, Dionisie omet la réponse du prince au sermon fait par le prédicateur, épisode qui clôt la cérémonie.

¹⁸ Voir *Euchologion sive Rituale Graecorum complectens ritus et ordines divinae liturgiae, officiorum, sacramentorum, consecrationum, benedictionum, funerum, orationum [...] juxta usum orientalis Ecclesiae*, Paris, 1647, p. 924-930 ; Pseudo-Codinos, *Traité des offices*, éd. par J. Verpeaux, Paris, 1968, p. 252-273 et 353-361 ; M. Arranz, « Couronnement royal et autres promotions de la cour. Les sacrements d'institution de l'ancien Euchologe constantinopolitain » (III-1), *OCP*, 56/1, 1990, p. 88-101 ; voir aussi idem, *L'Eucologio costantinopolitano agli inizi del secolo XI. Hagiasmatarion & Archieratikon (Rituale & Pontificale. Con l'aggiunta del Leiturgikon (Messale))*, Rome, 1996, p. 334-337.

¹⁹ I. Biliarsky, « Le rite de couronnement des tsars dans les pays slaves et la promotion d'autres *axiai* », *OCP*, 59/1, 1993, p. 103-106.

²⁰ Voir G. Olšr, « La Chiesa e lo Stato nel cerimoniale d'incoronazione degli ultimi sovrani Rurikidi » *OCP*, 16, 1950, p. 267-302 ; idem, « La Chiesa e lo Stato nel cerimoniale d'incoronazione degli zar russi nel Periodo dei torbidi (1598-1613) », *OCP*, 17, 1951, p. 395-434 ; idem, « La Chiesa e lo Stato nel cerimoniale d'incoronazione degli zar Romanov », *OCP*, 18, 1952, p. 344-376 ; M. Garzaniti, « *Sacerdotium* » e « *imperium* » a Mosca fra il XV e il XVI sec.,

et de l'édition critique due au Père Miguel Arranz nous a permis d'établir que notre texte est très proche, *mais sans être identique*, de la prière pour la promotion du César, du nobilissime et du couropalate (*Εὐχὴ ἐπὶ προχειρέσει καίσαρος, νοβελισίμου καὶ κουροπαλάτου*) (voir Annexe 3). Cette prière était déjà connue dans les pays slaves et dans les deux principautés roumaines, mais sous un titre et une forme modifiés, car elle a été associée à la cérémonie de la désignation du César, du despote et des autres dignitaires²¹. Il s'agit d'une modification qui exprime la dynamique des hiérarchies des titres pendant les derniers siècles d'existence de l'Empire byzantin, à savoir l'ascension de la dignité despotale et le déclin de l'office de κουροπάλατος.

Comme prière pour la désignation du César et du despote, ce texte n'est connu que par sa traduction slave, aucune version grecque ou roumaine n'ayant été repérée jusqu'à présent. Le plus ancien manuscrit le contenant date de la fin du XIV^e siècle et fait partie du codex dit « Palauzov », rédigé à la cour du tsar bulgare Boril (Sofia, Bibliothèque nationale « Saints Cyrille et Méthode », ms. sl. 289/55)²². La plus ancienne version du texte ayant certainement circulé dans les principautés nord-danubiennes a été rédigée au monastère athonite de Zographou, en 1532, et a été introduite en Moldavie à l'initiative du prince Petru Rareș (1527-1538 ; 1541-1546). Le manuscrit, connu comme le « Paroissial de Solovky », est actuellement conservé à Saint-Petersbourg²³. Plusieurs autres manuscrits contenant la prière qui nous intéresse ici ont circulé en Valachie. Les plus récents semblent être ceux réalisés à l'initiative du métropolite local Ștefan (1648-1653 ; 1655-1668) : BAR ms. roum. 1790 et Cluj-Napoca BAR ms. roum. 1216.

Il nous semble cependant exclu que le copiste de BAR ms. roum. 3567 ait employé une version slave de la prière²⁴.

Rome, 1990 ; M.-K. Schaub, *Pouvoir et sacralité du tsar : les rituels de couronnement et leur symbolique, Russie, 1498-1682*, thèse de doctorat inédite, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris, 1999.

²¹ I. Biliarsky, « Le rite de couronnement des tsars » ; V. Barbu, Gh. Lazăr, « *Coronatio* », p. 43-46 et 65 (avec le texte de BAR ms. roum. 1790). Voir aussi *Arhieratikon trilingv. Ms. rom. 1216 de la Biblioteca Academiei Române – Cluj*, Bucarest, 2013 (fac-similé).

²² I. Biliarsky, « Le rite de couronnement des tsars », p. 94-95.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 96-97 ; V. Barbu, Gh. Lazăr, « *Coronatio* », p. 43-44. Les auteurs cités signalent également un autre codex (Cluj-Napoca, Bibliothèque Universitaire, ms. sl. 4065), dont la partie qui nous intéresse daterait du XV^e siècle. Un autre manuscrit à prendre en considération est BAR ms. sl. 783 (ff. 14^v-15), pour lequel voir la notice à l'Annexe 5 du présent article.

²⁴ Nous prenons comme repère les textes qui se trouvent dans BAR ms. roum. 1790 (édité, avec des fautes, par V. Barbu et Gh. Lazăr, « *Coronatio* », p. 63) et Cluj-Napoca BAR ms. roum. 1216, dont le fac-similé est publié dans *Arhieratikon trilingv.*, ici f. 77^v. Les rapports entre les différents manuscrits slavo-roumains qui contiennent la même prière ne seront pas abordés ici ; voir, en ce sens, les études réunies dans *Manuscris trilingv. Preliminarii la o editare*, Bucarest, 2010, et *Arhieratikon trilingv.* Une édition critique du BAR ms. roum. 1790 est en cours de publication.

Observons d'abord que dans la prière copiée par Dionisie, le caractère de la cérémonie est désigné par le terme *προχειρέσει* – le même qui sert à désigner le couronnement des *basileis* et la promotion du César, du nobilissime et du couropalate dans les textes byzantins²⁵. Dans le texte slave le mot employé est *поѡтавѣнїе*, qui est commun aux *ordines* pour le couronnement du tsar et pour la désignation du despote et du César, respectivement. Comme l'explique Miguel Arranz²⁶, le terme *προχειρέσει* provient du verbe *προχειρίζω* / *προχειρίζομαι*, qui veut dire à la fois « mettre entre les mains » et « élire auparavant ». L'éminent liturgiste considère qu'allusion est faite ici à l'élection du nouveau *basileus* par l'armée et le Sénat, acte qui précédait la consécration liturgique. Il nous semble cependant probable que, dans le cas de l'empereur byzantin, ce terme renvoie aussi à la prédestination. Ainsi, dans le Nouveau Testament, le verbe n'apparaît que trois fois, mais il exprime toujours l'élection divine²⁷. En revanche, dans l'ordre pour la désignation du despote, le terme doit avoir le premier sens, à savoir « mettre entre les mains », vu qu'il s'agit d'une promotion administrative²⁸.

Ceci n'est pas le cas de la prière copiée par Dionisie Ecclesiarhul, qui tâche à mettre en exergue l'origine divine du pouvoir princier, une dimension qui manque à la dignité despotale telle qu'elle était conçue par les Byzantins.

²⁵ Dans le seul texte grec connu d'un *ordo* de couronnement des princes valaques et moldaves, le titre est le suivant : *Τάξις γινομένη εἰς στέμνιν αὐθέντων*, *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor culese de Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki*, vol. 13/1, *Texte grecești privitoare la istoria românească din anii 1592-1837*, éd. par Ath. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, Bucarest, 1909, p. 535-536 (texte rédigé par Georgios Papadopoulos, professeur à l'Académie princière de Iași ; à dater aux années 1720-1730).

²⁶ M. Arranz, « Couronnement royal », p. 88, note 12.

²⁷ A. Schmoller, *Handkonkordanz zum griechischen Neuen Testament*, Stuttgart, 1994⁸, p. 443. Il s'agit de : Actes III : 20 (« καὶ ἀποστείλῃ τὸν προκεχειρισμένον ὑμῖν Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν » / « et qu'il envoie le Christ qui a été désigné d'avance pour vous, Jésus ») ; XXII : 14 (« Ὁ Θεὸς τῶν πατέρων ἡμῶν προεχειρίσατό σε γνῶναι τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ » / « Le Dieu de nos pères t'a destiné d'avance pour connaître sa volonté ») et XXVI : 16 (« εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ ὤφθην σοι, προχειρίσασθαί σε ὑπηρετήν καὶ μάρτυρα » / « car voici pourquoi je te suis apparu : pour t'établir ministre et témoin »). Dans le premier cas, il s'agit de l'élection de Jésus-Christ, dans les deux suivants, de celle de l'apôtre Paul par Jésus lui-même. L'idée de la prédestination ne fut pas étrangère aux princes valaques ; voir notre article « “Élu de la matrice de ma mère” ».

²⁸ Toutefois, dans le texte du Pseudo-Kodinos le terme employé est *προβλήσεως* (Pseudo-Codinos, *Traité des offices*, p. 274), le même que pour la promotion du patriarche (*ibid.*, p. 277). Le terme est aussi présent dans le texte de Dionysios Phôteinos reproduit ci-dessous (Annexe 2), en référence au métropolite valaque : *Θεοπροβλήτου Μητροπολίτου* (« métropolite promu par Dieu »). Pour le rapport entre ces deux termes et leurs significations, voir J. Darrouzès, *Recherches sur les ὁφίκια dans l'Eglise byzantine*, Paris, 1970, notamment, p. 161 et 471. Une discussion plus récente chez N. Kastrinakis, *Εικονογραφημένοι χρησμοί του Λέοντος του Σοφοῦ : Από τη βυζαντινή εποχή στην πρώτη έντυπη έκδοση (1596)*, thèse de doctorat inédite, Université de Crète à Réthymnon, vol. 2, p. 820 et suiv.

Les modifications opérées dans le texte original soutiennent pleinement cette interprétation. La prière se construit sur le paradigme des hiérarchies emprunté au Pseudo-Denys l'Aréopagite, comme l'indique la phrase « ὁ κατ' εἰκόνα τῆς ἐπουρανίου διακοσμήσεως, τὴν ἐπίγειον ταύτην πολιτείαν συστησάμενος, καὶ θέμενος ἐν αὐτῇ ἀρχὰς καὶ ἐξουσίας κατὰ μίμησιν τῶν ἀγγελικῶν σου δυνάμεων » (DE, 3-6). La même phrase est reprise, quoique d'une manière légèrement différente, par les textes slaves : « БЖТВНБІ ОΥΚΡΑШЕНІИ ЖЕНАГО СЕГО ЖІТЕЛСТВА СЪТВОРІВЫИ І ПОЛОЖІВЫІ Ё НІ НАЧАЛА І ВЛАСТИ ПО ПОДОБІЮ АГΓΛΙΚІ ТВОИ СІЛЪ » (BAR ms. roum. 1790, 3-4). L'ordre terrestre est donc construit à l'image de l'ordre divin. À ce point, le texte de Dionisie est pratiquement identique par rapport au texte grec, à deux différences près. Dans le premier, il est seulement question de « l'ordre céleste » (« τῆς ἐπουρανίου διακοσμήσεως »), alors que le dernier évoque « l'ordre céleste *et* divin » (« τῆς ἐπουρανίου καὶ θείας διακοσμήσεως »). Aussi, dans le texte original, l'emploi du verbe *ποιέω* (« πολιτείαν ποιησάμενος ») souligne plutôt la création, alors que dans le texte de Dionisie la formule « πολιτείαν συστησάμενος » semble privilégier l'idée d'organisation.

Cette perspective, qui sous-entend l'idée de hiérarchie, est également affirmée par la formule « ὁ καὶ τὰς ἐπιγείους βασιλείας διαταξάμενος » (DE, 7), qui remplace dans la prière du BAR ms. roum. 3567 le syntagme « ὁ βασιλεὺς τὸν ἐπὶ γῆς καταστησάμενος » (Arranz, 7). Il s'agit d'une modification qui permet de faire plus facilement le lien avec les « autorités secondaires » (« δευτέρας ἀρχὰς ») évoquées juste après. Notons que le texte slave est plus proche par rapport à l'original grec, car il fait référence non pas aux empires (royaumes) terrestres en général, comme dans la prière de Dionisie, mais à l'« empereur de la terre » (црѣ зѣмларѣ). Ainsi, l'universalité et l'unicité du maître terrestre correspondraient à l'universalité et à l'unicité du Maître suprême.

En Valachie, comme ailleurs dans le monde orthodoxe, le discours du pouvoir s'est construit précisément sur ce principe hiérarchique de l'organisation de l'univers. Citons à titre d'exemple les panégyriques que Sébastos Kyminètès, directeur de l'Académie princière de Bucarest et prédicateur de la cour²⁹, a adressés au prince Constantin Brâncoveanu (r. 1678-1688). Kyminètès se place dans la logique du Pseudo-Denys : le monde terrestre est organisé selon les mêmes principes que le monde des cieux, afin que les humains soient gouvernés selon la volonté du Seigneur par des pasteurs politiques et ecclésiastiques et pour

²⁹ Sur ce personnage, voir notamment Ath. E. Karathanassis, *Oi Έλληνες λόγιοι στὴ Βλαχία (1670-1714). Συμβολὴ στὴ μελέτῃ τῆς ἑλληνικῆς πνευματικῆς κίνησῃς στὶς Παραδουνάβιες Ἡγεμονίες κατὰ τὴν προφαναριωτικὴ περίοδο*, Thessalonique, 1982, p. 83-89, et Ch. Karanasios, *Sebastos Trapezuntios Kyminetes (1632-1702). Biographie, Werkheurstik und die editio princeps der Exegese zu De virtute des Pseudo-Aristoteles*, Wiesbaden, 2001.

que le Christ soit présent en tout et partout, dans ce siècle et dans le siècle des siècles :

Κατὰ τὸν ὅμοιον τρόπον καὶ εἰς τὴν παροῦσαν ζωὴν καὶ εἰς τὸν πρόσκαιρον τοῦτον κόσμον αὐτὸς ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν βασιλευόντων ἔστησεν ὅρια ἔθνων κατὰ ἀριθμὸν ἀγγέλων Θεοῦ, καὶ χειροτονεῖ ὁ ἐπουράνιος βασιλεὺς βασιλεῖς καὶ ἄρχοντας ἐπιγείους, καὶ ὁ ἐπουράνιος ἀρχιερεὺς ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ ποιμένας ἐπιγείους κατὰ μίμησιν τῆς οὐρανίου ἱεραρχίας τε καὶ βασιλείας (ἐπειδὴ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐξουσία κατὰ τὸν ἀπόστολον, εἰ μὴ ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ, διὰ τὰ κυβερνῶνται καὶ οἱ ἐπίγειοι ἄνθρωποι ὑπὸ ποιμένων ἐκκλησιαστικῶν τε καὶ πολιτικῶν θεαρέστως, κατὰ μίμησιν τῆς ἀγγελικῆς ἐκείνης διαγωγῆς τε καὶ πολιτείας, ἵνα ἢ τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσι Χριστὸς ἐν τε τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι καὶ ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι³⁰.

Ikône de Dieu sur la terre, le prince « reflète » son principe supérieur, tout en aspirant vers Lui. En même temps il se reflète lui-même dans les principes inférieurs – ses sujets – qu'il doit guider sur la voie du Salut, selon la mission dont il a été investi par le Seigneur. Il est, en ce sens, un instrument de l'intervention du Créateur dans Sa création, tout comme les anges de Dieu, dont il emprunte ainsi le rôle.

Cette vision du monde et de l'histoire domine encore à la fin du XVIII^e siècle et le début du siècle suivant, comme en témoigne Naum Râmnicéanu (1764-1838/9), le contemporain de Dionisie Eclesiarhul. Pour Naum, l'ordre terrestre imite l'ordre céleste (*τῆς οὐρανίου εὐταξίας*), où les hiérarchies se dessinent en fonction de la proximité par rapport au Seigneur : les Anges, les Archanges, les Principautés, les Dominations, les Vertus, les Puissances, les Trônes, les Chérubins et les Séraphins. Ainsi, tout comme le Maître suprême règne dans les Cieux, sur la terre, l'empereur, le prince et les nobles « imitent les armées célestes », selon la dignité de chacun :

Οὐ γὰρ Ἄγγελοι μόνον ἐν οὐρανοῖς, ἀλλὰ καὶ Ἀρχιστράτηγοι Ἀγγέλων, καὶ Ἀρχάς, καὶ Κυρίότητες, καὶ δυνάμεις, καὶ ἐξουσίαι, καὶ θρόνοι, καὶ Χερουβίμ, καὶ τὰ φρικτὰ Σεραφεῖμ, τὰ ἔγγουν τῆς ἀπροσήτου θεότητος. Ὅσπερ οὖν ὁ ὕψιστος Θεὸς ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ἔχων τὸν θρόνον αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ πάντων δεσπόζει, οὕτως ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ὁ Βασιλεὺς, ὁ Ἡγεμὼν καὶ οἱ Ἄρχοντες τὰ οὐράνια μιμοῦνται. Διάφοροι τάξεις ἐν οὐρανοῖς, διάφοροι ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς³¹.

³⁰ *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor culese de Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki*, vol. 13/1, p. 242 (panégyrique lors de la fête de la Nativité, 1695). Pour l'idée de hiérarchie chez le Pseudo-Denys, voir notamment R. Roques, *L'Univers dionysien. Structure hiérarchique du monde selon le Pseudo-Denys*, Paris, 1954. Sur l'application de cette vision du monde à Byzance, voir I. Al. Biliarsky, *Hierarchia. L'ordre sacré. Étude de l'esprit romanique*, Fribourg, 1997.

³¹ Naum Râmnicéanu, *Despre originea românilor*, dans C. Erbiceanu, *Cronicarii greci cari au scris despre Români în epoca fanariotă*, Bucarest, 1888, p. 242. L'ordre est cependant légèrement

Le prince régnant est donc l'image de Dieu sur la terre, ce que les titulaires de la fonction n'ont jamais manqué à souligner. Dans le chrysobulle de promulgation de son *Συνταγματικὸν νομικόν* (roum. : *Mica rânduială juridică*, connu sous le titre *Pravilniceasca Condică*, 1780), Alexandros Hypsilantès l'affirme explicitement :

οὐ μόνον γὰρ τὸ ἄρχειν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς κατὰ θεϊαν εἰκόνα ἔχομεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ κρίνειν κατὰ μίμησιν τοῦ τῶν ἀπάντων κριτοῦ ἡμῖν κεχάρισται.

[...] căci noi, după chipul cel dumnezeesc, nu numai că avem a stăpâni pe pământ, ci și a judeca, după asemănarea judecătorului tuturor ni s-au dăruit³².

Dans notre texte, la répétition de la formule « ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν βασιλευόντων, καὶ κύριος τῶν κυριευόντων »³³ (DE, 2) va dans le même sens. La première occurrence, au tout début, souligne à la fois l'origine divine de tout pouvoir terrestre et la hiérarchie de ses détenteurs. Selon cette logique, les empereurs sont supérieurs à tous les autres « maîtres » (*κύριοι* dans le texte grec, *господа́*, dans les textes slaves). La deuxième formule n'est pas complètement identique à la première est vise à délimiter un contexte précis : dans ce monde où tout pouvoir vient de Dieu, les princes occupent un rang inférieur aux *basileis* (« Αὐτὸς Δέσποτα τῶν ἀπάντων, δι' οὗ βασιλεῖς βασιλεύουσι, καὶ ἡγεμόνες ἡγεμονεύουσι, οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν ἐξουσία », DE, 11-13). Le terme général « ceux qui exercent l'autorité » (*κύριοι*) est remplacé par le plus concret *ἡγεμόνες*, dénomination courante pour les princes valaques et moldaves. Cette répétition n'existe ni dans le texte grec pour la désignation du César, du nobilissime et du couropalate, ni dans les versions slaves de l'*ordo* pour la désignation du César et du despote, où on se contente de traduire littéralement « αὐτὸς Δέσποτα τῶν ἀπάντων » par « τῷ βῆκω βεῖς ».

Au moment de la consécration, l'officiant prononce : « εἰ μὴ παρὰ σοῦ, καὶ τὸν δοῦλον σου [le nom du prince] ὃν ἡρετίσω, καὶ ἡυδόκησας τὴν τῆς

bouleversé, car selon les Pères de l'Église, l'ordre correct est : Anges, Archanges, Principautés, Puissances, Vertus, Dominations, Trônes, Chérubins, Séraphins. Notons aussi que Dionisie avait connu Naum ; voir D. Eclesiarhul, *Hronograf*, p. 6.

³² *Pravilniceasca Condică 1780. Ediție critică*, éd. par A. Rădulescu (coord.) et al., Bucarest, 1957, p. 43. Voir les commentaires d'E. Popescu-Mihuț, « Ideologie politică și propagandă în actele cancelariilor domnești din Țările Române (1775-1821) », dans Al. Duțu (coord.), *Sud-Estul european în vremea Revoluției Franceze. Stări de spirit, reacții, confluențe*, Bucarest, 1994, p. 73-99. Dionisie a lui-même copié un exemplaire de ce texte (BAR ms. roum 2112, daté 1817), D. Eclesiarhul, *Hronograf*, p. 28. Voir aussi Val. Al. Georgescu, « L'œuvre juridique de Michel Fotino et la version roumaine du IV^e livre de droit coutumier dans son *Manuel de lois 1777* », *RESEE*, 5/1-2, 1967, p. 119-166.

³³ Traduite telle quelle dans les textes slaves : « Гѣ велі́кїи ѡ бѣ́гнѣи, црѣ ѡбѣ́дици ѡ гѣ роебѣ́дици » ; voir, par exemple, BAR, ms. roum. 1790, 1-2.

Οὐγγροβλαχίας ἀναδύσασθαι ἡγεμονίαν » (DE, 13-14). Une adaptation du texte original était nécessaire, compte tenu du contexte où la prière a été produite et devait être utilisée. Ainsi, dans notre texte, la dignité que le candidat était en train d'obtenir est *ἡγεμονία* au lieu d'*ἄζία* (Arranz, 13) ou *δοστώινα* (BAR ms. roum. 1790, 10), deux termes très généraux. L'auteur fait ainsi le lien avec la ligne précédente et met en évidence que le prince est institué pour régner au nom de Dieu. Une institution qui ne doit avoir rien d'une simple promotion administrative, ce que souligne l'emploi du verbe *ἀναδέω* (aor. *ἀναδήσασθαι*, ici sous la forme *ἀναδύσασθαι*), qui renvoie au couronnement³⁴. Dans le texte original, le terme correspondant, *ἐνδύσασθαι* (aoriste du verbe *ἐνδύω*), veut plutôt dire « investir », dans ce cas, vêtir quelqu'un d'une dignité, en référence aux *insignia* y associées. L'idée d'élection divine est renforcée par l'usage du verbe *αἰρετίζω* (aor. *ἡρετίσω*) au lieu de *ἐκλέγω* (aor. *ἐξελέξω*), comme dans le texte original³⁵. Le texte slave suit de près l'original grec, mettant tout de même l'accent sur l'élection par Dieu : « *сєрѡ рѡдѡ тѡєгѡ Імѡ, ѣгѡ ѿ вѣсѣх ѡзєрѡвѣ, влѣгѡиѡзѡлѡиѡвѣ сємѡ ѡблєцѡиѣе досѡтѡиѡна* » (BAR ms. roum. 1790, 9-10).

Le pouvoir et la dignité princière sont donc des dons du Seigneur. C'est ce qu'affirment sans cesse les princes « phanariotes », et cela malgré l'érosion accélérée de leur autorité effective. Dans le chrysobulle de promulgation de son *Κῶδιξ πολιτικός τοῦ Πριγκιπάτου τῆς Μολδαβίας* (1816-1817), Scarlat Callimachi (r. 1812-1818) assure fièrement que le gouvernement est chose majestueuse et vraiment divine, au-dessus de tout ce qui est humain. Instauré par la nécessité de la nature, au moment même de la Création, le gouvernement rend le monarque comparable au Seigneur, à l'image duquel il a été d'ailleurs créé.

³⁴ Nous avons utilisé Greek Word Study Tool (<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu>). Dans cette base de données, on trouve ce mot dans la version grecque de *Vita Barlaam et Joasaph* 33 (éd. G. R. Woodward et H. Mattingly) : « *καὶ δικαιοσύνη ἤδη προκατάρθωτο αὐτῷ, ὡς τὸν στέφανον τῆς σωφροσύνης ἀναδησαμένῳ καὶ τὴν πορφύραν τῆς δικαιοσύνης ἀμφιασμένῳ* ») et dans l'*Histoire ecclésiastique* par Eusèbe de Césarée, IV, 16 : « *τελευτῶν ἧς ἐπρέσβευεν ἀληθείας διὰ τοῦ μαρτυρίου τοῦ κατ' αὐτὸν ἀνεδήσατο* ».

³⁵ Dans l'Ancien Testament, on trouve le verbe *αἰρετίζω* dans Gen XXX : 20 : « *Δεδώρηταί μοι ὁ θεὸς δῶρον καλόν· ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ αἰρετιεῖ με ὁ ἀνὴρ μου* » (« Le Seigneur vient de me faire un don précieux, maintenant [Il] choisira mon époux »). Il n'apparaît qu'une seule fois dans le Nouveau Testament (Mt XII : 18), en référence à la prophétie d'Isaïe : « *Ἰδοὺ, ὁ παῖς μου ὃν ἡρέτισα : ὁ ἀγαπητός μου εἰς ὃν εὐδόκησεν ἡ ψυχὴ μου : θήσω τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπ' αὐτόν, καὶ κρίσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἀπαγγελεῖ* » (« Voici mon serviteur, que j'ai élu, mon bien-aimé, en qui mon âme a pris plaisir. Je mettrai mon Esprit sur lui, et il annoncera le jugement aux nations »). On le retrouve également deux fois dans les Psaumes de Salomon : « *ὅτι σὺ ἡρετίσω τὸ σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ παρὰ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη* » (« Car tu as choisi la race d'Abraham à l'exclusion de toutes les nations » – IX : 9) et « *Σὺ, κύριε, ἡρετίσω τὸν Δαυὶδ βασιλέα ἐπὶ Ἰσραὴλ* » (« Toi, Seigneur, tu as choisi David comme roi sur Israël » – XVII : 4).

Μεγαλεπήβολον καὶ μεγαλοφυῆς καὶ τφόντι θεῖον ἡ Ἀρχὴ καὶ οὐδὲν ἰσομέγεθες αὐτῇ πάντων τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων, ἐκ πρώτης τῆς τῶν ὅλων γενέσεως ἀνάγκῃ τῆς φύσεως συστὰν καὶ τῷ χρόνῳ εἰς τόδε προαχθέν. [...] Καὶ ὁ μὲν παλαιὸς λόγος βούλεται κοινὸν ἔχειν Θεόν καὶ ἄνθρωπον, εὐεργεσίαν καὶ ἀλήθειαν, ὁ δὲ ἐμβριθέστερον συνορῶν καὶ τὸν νοῦν ἀκριβέστερων τῷ πράγματι ἐφιστῶν, εὖροι ἂν οὐ μᾶλλον ταῦτα ἢ τὴν Ἀρχὴν ἀφομοιοῦσαν τὸν ἄνθρωπον Θεῷ καὶ ταύτην συστᾶσαν πρὸς παράδειγμα τὸ ἐκείνου³⁶.

Ioan Gheorghe Caragea le souligne à son tour dans la charte de promulgation de son *Code de Lois* (*Νομοθεσία*), émise le 12 août 1818. Il est certain, dit-il, que le règne (« domneasca oblăduire ») de ce « pays gardé par Dieu » (« de Dumnezeu păzită țară ») lui a été accordé par la Providence divine (« din dumnezeiasca pronie »)³⁷.

Conséquence de l'élection divine, le prince est tenu de suivre les préceptes du Seigneur, comme l'indique la formule « καὶ τὰ ἄρεστα σοι ποιεῖν διαπαντὸς καταξίωσον » (DE, 16), qui n'existe ni dans le texte original grec ni dans les textes slaves qui s'en sont inspirés. Elle est empruntée à la deuxième prière pour le couronnement des *basileis* (*κεφαλοκλησία*)³⁸ et se retrouve également dans les prières que le patriarche prononce pour l'empereur à l'occasion des Pâques³⁹.

L'équilibre du monde terrestre – image du monde d'En Haut – a et doit avoir dans l'« oint de Dieu » le pilier le plus fort – d'où la supplication de l'officiant que le Seigneur garde le nouveau monarque sain et sauf devant ses ennemis : « ἀσινῇ καὶ ἀλώβητον ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ὁρατῶν καὶ ἀοράτων ἐχθρῶν » (DE, 18). Cette dernière formule – d'usage liturgique courant, par ailleurs – est également absente à la fois de l'*ordo* grec pour la désignation du César, du nobilissime et du couropalate et de celui pour le couronnement du *basileus* et des versions slaves qui leurs correspondent. On la retrouve, en revanche, sous une forme légèrement différente, dans la prière composée par le patriarche Calliste I^{er} (m. 1363) « pour l'empereur et son armée » (*Εὐχὴ εἰς βασιλέα καὶ εἰς τὸν στρατὸν αὐτοῦ*)⁴⁰. Il convient de préciser que cette dernière prière figure aussi dans l'Euchologe grec contemporain à Dionisie, où la formule qui nous intéresse apparaît dans le contexte suivant : « εἰς ὁδηγίαν κατ' ἐχθρῶν ὁρωμόνων καὶ

³⁶ *Codul Calimach. Ediție critică*, éd. par A. Rădulescu (coord.) et al., Bucarest, 1958, p. 44.

³⁷ *Legiuirea Caragea. Ediție critică*, éd. par Andrei Rădulescu (coord.) et al., Bucarest, 1955, p. 189.

³⁸ M. Arranz, « Couronnement royal », p. 97, 7 : « τὰ εὐάρετά σοι πράττειν διαπαντὸς αὐτὸν καταξίωσον ». Il a été également repris par les textes sud-slaves et russes, I. Biliarsky, « Le rite de couronnement des tsars », p. 105.

³⁹ M. Arranz, « Couronnement royal », p. 111, 9 : « καὶ τὰ εὐάρετά σοι πράττειν διαπαντὸς αὐτοῦ καταξίωσον ».

⁴⁰ *Euchologion sive Rituale Graecorum*, p. 827.

ἀοράτων νίκην τοῦ κρατίστου καὶ ἁγίου μου Ὁρθόδοξον Αὐτοκράτορος». Remarquons également que l'épithète « orthodoxe » accolée à l'empereur n'existe pas dans la version plus ancienne, éditée par Goar⁴¹. La même phrase est présente, toujours sous une forme légèrement modifiée, dans certaines prières de couronnement des princes valaques et moldaves, pour supplier le Seigneur de soumettre sous les pieds de ces derniers « tout ennemi visible et invisible » (« supune sub picioarele lui pre tot văzutul și nevăzutul vrăjmaș »)⁴². Dans les panégyriques adressés aux princes, la phrase se retrouve à la fin du discours, lorsque la bénédiction divine est demandée pour le souverain et les siens⁴³. Enfin, elle figure dans les dédicaces des livres imprimés et dans les poèmes dédiés aux armoiries des princes régnants (*versuri la stemă*), patrons des livres en question⁴⁴, ou bien dans les dédicaces et les formules de salutation réservées aux évêques et aux métropolitains locaux⁴⁵.

Tout aussi intéressante est la dernière modification opérée dans le texte de Dionisie : « Ἐπίσκεψαι αὐτὸν τοῖς πλουσίοις οἰκτιρμοῖς, καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν τῶν ἐκ γῆς ἀγαθῶν εὐφορίαν τῷ λαῷ σου δώρησαι » (DE, 23-24). Encore une fois, il s'agit d'une formule qui est absente des textes grecs et slaves, la prière pour le couronnement du *basileus* (ou du tsar) comprise, mais qui se retrouve dans les prières prononcées par le patriarche lors des grandes fêtes liturgiques et surtout à Pâques⁴⁶.

⁴¹ Voir, par exemple, *Εὐχολόγιον τὸ Μέγα ἐν ᾧ περιέχονται κατὰ τάξιν αἱ τῶν ἐπὶ τῶν Μυστηρίων Ἀκολουθίαι προσετέθη δὲ καὶ ἡ τῶν Ἐγκαινίων τοῦ Ναοῦ ἀκολουθία, κατὰ τὴν ἐν Βουκουρεστίῳ ἔκδοσιν*, Constantinople, 1803, p. 388.

⁴² Il s'agit de BAR mss. roum. 1138 et 4979, V. Barbu, Gh. Lazăr, « *Coronatio* », p. 68. Pour ces textes, voir les références fournies dans l'Annexe 5.

⁴³ Voir, par exemple, *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor culese de Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki*, vol. 13/1, p. 233, 243 (panégyriques de Sébastos Kyminètès pour Constantin Brâncoveanu) ; Radu logofătul Greceanu, *Istoria domniei lui Constantin Basarab Brâncoveanu Voievod (1688-1714)*, éd. par A. Ilieș, Bucarest, 1970, p. 51 (la préface-dédicace de la chronique) ; R. G. Păun, « *Literatura encomiastică* », p. 320.

⁴⁴ Voir, par exemple, *Antologhion* (Bucarest, 1786), I. Bianu, N. Hodoș, *Bibliografia românească veche 1508-1830*, vol. 2, Bucarest, 1910, p. 311 (n° 498, poème dédié aux armes de Nikolaos Mavroyéni) ; *Vieșile sfinților pe luna martie* (Neamț, 1813), I. Bianu, N. Hodoș, D. Simonescu, *Bibliografia românească veche 1508-1830*, vol. 3, Bucarest, 1936, p. 87 (n° 838, poème dédié aux armes de Scarlat Callimachi). Ajoutons également la dédicace rédigée par le métropolitain valaque Grigore pour le prince Grigore Alexandru Ghica (1769) dans BAR ms. roum. 1512, ff. 30-31 (version roumaine de la *Confession orthodoxe* de Pierre Moghila, préparée pour l'imprimerie mais restée en manuscrit), P. Mihail, Z. Mihail, « L'œuvre de Pierre Movilă en langue roumaine. Témoignages inédits des XVIII^e-XIX^e siècles », dans *Pierre Movilă et son temps*, Bucarest, 1996, p. 115.

⁴⁵ Voir, par exemple, *Catavasier* (Râmnic, 1734), I. Bianu, N. Hodoș, *Bibliografia*, vol. 2, p. 49 (n° 210 ; salutation de l'évêque local) ; *Octoih* (Râmnic, 1750), *ibid.*, p. 118 (n° 277 ; dédicace par Grigore Râmnicéanul pour le métropolitain valaque Neofit), etc.

⁴⁶ M. Arranz, « Couronnement royal », p. 112-113 : « πᾶσαν ἀφθονίαν τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς ἀγαθῶν ἐπὶ τῆς βασιλείας αὐτῶν δωρούμενος ». L'idée, exprimée d'une manière différente (« ἀφθονα τῇ οἰκουμένῃ »), se retrouve aussi dans les acclamations dont avaient droit les empereurs lors de leur

On constate donc que la plupart des modifications opérées par l'auteur de la prière de BAR ms. roum. 3567 se retrouvent également dans les versions slaves – les seules connues jusqu'à maintenant – de la prière pour la désignation du César et du despote. Cela porte à croire que toutes ces pièces ont une source commune, à savoir une version grecque de la prière en question, dont l'*εὐχή* copiée par Dionisie Ecclesiarhul en est aujourd'hui le seul témoin connu. *La prière pour le couronnement du prince valaque de BAR ms. roum. 3567 suit donc de près la prière byzantine pour la désignation du César et du despote.* Comme le corpus de prières associées au *basileus* et à la hiérarchie de la cour byzantine n'existe pas dans les Euchologes grecs imprimés, il est pratiquement certain que notre copiste a eu sous la main un texte manuscrit, peut-être en provenance de Constantinople ou du Mont Athos, car il nous semble assez peu probable qu'il ait eu accès à l'une des éditions de Goar.

Quant aux différences entre notre prière et les textes slaves, elles peuvent s'expliquer par les manières diverses de se rapporter à l'original byzantin. Ainsi, les traducteurs en slavon auraient pu supprimer du texte grec des phrases comme « καὶ τὰ ἄρεστα σοι ποιεῖν διαπαντὸς καταξίωσον » (DE, 16) et « Ἐπίσκεψαι αὐτὸν τοῖς πλουσίοις οἰκτιρμοῖς, καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν τῶν ἐκ γῆς ἀγαθῶν εὐφορίαν τῷ λαῷ σου δώρησαι » (DE, 23-24), alors que Dionisie les a reproduites, d'autant plus qu'elles sont aussi présentes dans d'autres prières de couronnement des princes valaques et moldaves et dans la littérature de cour des deux principautés. En revanche, l'insertion de la phrase « ἀσινῇ καὶ ἀλώβητον ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ὁρατῶν καὶ ἀοράτων ἐχθρῶν » (DE, 18) est bien attribuable au copiste de la prière du BAR ms. roum. 3567, car elle manque des *ordines* byzantins connus, mais se retrouve dans la littérature aulique valaque et moldave. Parmi les modifications à attribuer à Dionisie, il faut aussi mentionner la répétition de la formule « ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν βασιλευόντων, καὶ κύριος τῶν κυριευόντων » et la référence aux *ἡγεμόνες* au lieu de *κύριοι*, dont le but a été de désigner de manière précise la dignité princière. Le remplacement d'*ἁγία* (Arranz, 13) ou *Δοστώινα* (BAR ms. roum. 1790, 10) par le syntagme « τῆς Οὐγγροβλαχίας ἡγεμονίαν » suit la même logique.

Quoi qu'il en soit, il est évident qu'il s'agit de choix délibérés. À l'époque paléologue, l'ascension du despote dans la hiérarchie de la cour byzantine ne pouvait pas rester sans conséquences sur les rapports du *basileus* avec les dynastes sud-slaves, qui ont repris et traduit en slavon l'*ordo* correspondant à un titre qu'ils ont souvent reçu de la part de l'empereur

avènement ; voir G. Dagron, « L'œcuménicité politique. Droit sur l'espace, droit sur le temps », dans idem, *Idées byzantines*, vol. 2, Paris, 2012, p. 407, note 8, en référence à *Constantini Porphyrogeniti Imperatoris De Cerimoniis aulae byzantinae libri duo*, éd. par J. J. Reiske, vol. 1, Bonn, 1829, I, 102 (93), p. 429₂₁ (l'avènement de Justin I^{er}, décrit par Pierre le Patrice).

byzantin⁴⁷. Quant au copiste/traducteur de notre prière, il a agi sous l'emprise d'un tout autre contexte. Dans son cas, le grand défi était de trouver une solution liturgique, voire théologique, pour concilier deux dimensions contradictoires du pouvoir princier : son origine divine, incessamment affirmée par les titulaires, et son caractère secondaire, qui découlait des rapports de subordination à l'égard du sultan ottoman.

Pour ce faire, il se refuse – et cela est significatif – de reprendre et adapter la prière pour la consécration du *basileus*, alors qu'elle était connue en Valachie, comme en Moldavie voisine. Une des raisons a pu être le fait que cette prière avait déjà été adoptée et adaptée par les « très pieux empereurs orthodoxes » de la Russie, protecteurs, à partir de 1774, des deux Principautés et des orthodoxes de l'Empire ottoman, et il est sûr que certaines descriptions du rituel observé à la cour russe ont effectivement circulé dans l'espace roumain⁴⁸. Or, notre copiste, comme nombre de ses contemporains, se plaçait explicitement à l'intérieur d'une vision hiérarchique du monde, dans lequel *οἱ βασιλεῖς βασιλεύουσι* alors que *οἱ ἡγεμόνες ἡγεμονεύουσι*. Associer au prince valaque une pièce liturgique propre à l'empereur (byzantin ou russe) aurait signifié non seulement ébranler l'ordre terrestre mais défier le Créateur, qui avait conçu le monde d'ici-bas selon l'image de l'univers divin.

Une prière correspondant à une dignité de second rang convenait donc beaucoup mieux pour décrire en termes liturgiques une autorité deux fois secondaire : asservie au sultan ottoman, d'une part, et se trouvant sous le protectorat, souvent difficile à supporter, de l'empereur chrétien de Saint-Pétersbourg, d'autre part. Dans ces conditions, se rapporter à la prière pour la désignation du despote a dû apparaître à notre copiste – ou bien au(x) commanditaire(s) du texte – comme un choix tout à fait naturel. Après tout, le despote était le premier dans la hiérarchie après le *basileus*. De la sorte, les princes valaques et moldaves de l'époque étaient les premiers monarques orthodoxes après les tsars russes.

On nous dira qu'il y a peu de chances que le copiste ait vraiment maîtrisé l'histoire des dignités de la cour byzantine ; il maîtrisait encore moins le très compliqué cérémonial aulique de l'Empire chrétien depuis longtemps

⁴⁷ I. Biliarsky, « Le rite de couronnement des tsars », p. 132-133 ; idem, *Word and Power in Mediaeval Bulgaria*, Leyde – Boston, 2011, p. 277-285.

⁴⁸ Cet aspect mérite une étude approfondie ; voir, pour quelques détails de plus, notre article « L'espace-lecteur comme arène. La propagande russe dans les Pays Roumains (1769-1830) », dans R. G. Păun (coord.), *Culture de l'imprimé et discours du pouvoir. France, Russie, Roumanie, XVI^e-XIX^e siècles*, Bucarest, 2008, p. 57-89. Nous attirons aussi l'attention sur un Euchologion (*Molebnic*) copié par Vartolomei Mazereanu en Russie (1770). Lorsqu'il a été employé dans le culte, en Moldavie, aux endroits où il fallait faire mention de la famille impériale russe, le copiste a introduit le nom du prince local, P. Mihail, « Două manuscrise necunoscută din secolul al XVIII-lea », *Romanoslavica*, 10, 1964, p. 466.

disparu. Pourquoi aurait-il pensé au despote et non pas au César, par exemple, tant que la prière était commune aux deux dignités ?

Le despote est un monarque comme les autres

Les raisons tiennent, à notre avis, aux sens des deux termes dans la culture politique des Roumains. Pour eux, le César (*chesarul*) était *exclusivement* l'empereur « allemand », à savoir le souverain du Saint-Empire. Quant à la présence et aux significations du terme *despote* dans la culture roumaine, elles exigent une discussion plus détaillée.

Disons d'abord qu'à Byzance le mot *despote*, au sens général de *maître*, a été couramment employé, d'abord pour s'adresser à l'empereur, et ensuite au *sébastokrator*, au patriarche ou bien aux évêques⁴⁹. La grécité post-byzantine en a préservé et le sens et l'usage : ainsi, Sébastos Kyminètès a copié un des écrits du « μακαριωτάτου μου αὐθεντὸς καὶ δεσπότης κυρίου κυρίου Δοσιθέου » (nous soulignons), à savoir le patriarche Dosithéos II de Jérusalem (BAR ms. gr. 75, f. 148)⁵⁰. Au XVIII^e siècle, cette manière de s'adresser au *maître* était courante⁵¹.

Quant au titre despotal, il a été institué par Manuel I^{er} Comnène, en 1163, pour être accordé plus tard non seulement aux membres de la famille impériale *stricto sensu*, mais également à des hauts personnages de l'Empire. Toutefois, « le titre de despote était un simple titre nobiliaire ; il ne donnait à celui qui en était investi que des honneurs et des privilèges de préséances. Il ne lui conférait aucune part d'autorité, aucun commandement, aucune participation à la conduite des affaires »⁵².

Fait très important aussi, ce titre n'était pas héréditaire. Après la conquête latine, cependant, le titre despotal a été associé de plus en plus au nom et au contrôle d'un territoire (Lacédémone, Péloponnèse, Thessalie, Épire,

⁴⁹ Ainsi, par exemple chez Pachymères : « δέσποτα μου, ἅγιε βασιλεῦ », R. Guiland, « Recherches sur l'histoire administrative de l'Empire byzantin : Le despote, δεσπότης », *REB*, 17, 1959, p. 67. Pour une période plus reculée, voir E. Dickey, « Κύριε, δέσποτα, domine. Greek Politeness in the Roman Empire », *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 121, 2001, p. 1-11. Le terme faisait partie de la formule classique pour s'adresser au patriarche œcuménique : « ὁ παναγιώτατος ἡμῶν δεσπότης, ὁ οἰκουμενικὸς πατριάρχης », T. Teoteoi, « Calitatea de *authentes* a patriarhului ecumenic Dionysios al II-lea (1546) », dans I. Căndea, P. Cernovodeanu, Gh. Lazăr (éds.), *Închinare lui Petre Ș. Năsturel la 80 de ani*, Brăila, 2003, p. 574-575 et suiv. Plus rarement, la qualité de « maître » était exprimée par le mot *αὐθέντης*.

⁵⁰ C. Litzica, *Catalogul manuscriselor grecești*, vol. 1, Bucarest, 1909, p. 310.

⁵¹ Voir T. Teoteoi, « Les notions d'*authentes* et *despotes* dans les sources byzantines et post-byzantines », *RESEE*, 44, 2006, p. 71-81. Ce fait a été remarqué, entre autres, par le baron de Tott, qui explique cette appellation (*despoti*, chez lui) comme il suit : « titre que les Evêques Grecs se sont attribués pour désigner le pouvoir absolu dont ils sont revêtus », pour ajouter ironiquement : « mais dont le Grand-Seigneur leur fait mieux sentir la valeur », voir *Mémoires du baron de Tott sur les Turcs et les Tartares*, vol. 1, Amsterdam, 1784, p. 97 (note).

⁵² R. Guiland, « Recherches sur l'histoire administrative », p. 67 et suiv.

Morée, etc.) et cet usage s'est généralisé, en sorte que, au XIV^e et surtout au XV^e siècle, il avait commencé déjà à se « vulgariser »⁵³. Cette « vulgarisation » ou banalisation doit beaucoup au fait que les *basileis* sont devenus de plus en plus généreux, en accordant le titre despotal de plus en plus souvent à des dynastes locaux, afin de les intégrer dans la hiérarchie byzantine. Certes, tous les dynastes locaux n'étaient pas des *despotai*, et vice versa⁵⁴. Toutefois, le terme devint tellement associé à l'idée d'un pouvoir territorial que ce sens s'imposa dans l'usage commun⁵⁵. Cas révélateur, le dernier prince serbe Jovan Branković (m. 1502) a détenu le titre de despote, alors qu'il ne l'avait pas reçu de l'empereur byzantin, comme il se devait. Après la chute de Byzance et du « despotat » serbe (1459), l'histoire des « despotes » serbes a continué en Hongrie. Le titre – devenu une anomalie du point de vue institutionnel – a été ainsi accordé par le roi de la Hongrie, après la mort de Jovan Branković, à Ivaniša Berislavić et a été ensuite hérité par le fils du celui-ci, Stefan⁵⁶.

C'est cette définition du despote comme prince territorial qui s'est imposée dans la culture roumaine, surtout par référence aux dynastes serbes, en sorte que *despote* et *деспотинь* (plus tard *domn*) sont parfois synonymes⁵⁷. Dans la chronique de Mihail Moxa (les années 1620), le prince Lazar Hrebeljanović (r. 1371-1389) est appelé *domn*, alors que son fils et successeur, Stefan (r. 1389-1427), est *despote*. Une différence entre les deux titres est aussi perceptible lorsque le chroniqueur emploie les deux à la fois : « il a installé comme prince le *despote* Ștefan » (« îl puse domn pe Ștefan *despot* » ; nous soulignons)⁵⁸. Témoignage d'une confusion de termes similaire, l'auteur de la chronique anonyme de la Moldavie (XVI^e siècle) désigne Maxim Branković, fils de Țurad

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

⁵⁴ Voir, plus des détails, G. Ostrogorsky, « Urum Despotes. Die Anfänge der Despotenwürde in Byzanz », *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 44, 1951, p. 448-460 ; R. Guiland, « Recherches sur l'histoire administrative » ; B. Ferjančić, *Деспоту у Византији и у јужнословенским земљама*, Belgrade, 1960 ; I. Biliarsky, « The Despots in Mediaeval Bulgaria », *Byzantinobulgaria*, 9, 1995, p. 121-162 ; idem, *Words and Power*, p. 275-294. Voir aussi S. Ćirković « Поствизантијски деспоти », *ЗПВИ*, 38, 1999-2000, p. 395-406.

⁵⁵ Ainsi les chroniqueurs Doukas et Sphrantzès appellent-ils les princes serbes constamment « despotes », M. Nikolić, « The Byzantine Historiography on the State of Serbian Despots », *ЗПВИ*, 45, 2008, p. 285.

⁵⁶ B. Ferjančić, *Деспоту*, p. 194-204 ; I. Biliarsky, *Word and Power*, p. 290-291.

⁵⁷ A. Pippidi, *Tradiția politică bizantină în țările române în secolele XVI-XVIII*, Bucarest, 1983, p. 25 (référence est faite aux chartes de donation à la lauréate serbe de Hilandar). Voir aussi Al. Mareș, « Elemente de ceremonial aulic într-un manuscris slavon din secolul al XVI-lea », dans E. Timotin (éd.), *Elemente de ceremonial în literatura din spațiul românesc (secolele al XIV-lea – al XVIII-lea)*, Bucarest, 2019, p. 59-62. Selon Ștefan S. Gorovei, dans les dernières décennies du XVI^e siècle et la première décennie du siècle suivant, les anciens princes de la Moldavie étaient aussi connus sous le nom de despotes ; voir Șt. S. Gorovei, « Descendența domnească a Movileștilor. Observații și argumente noi », dans O. Cristea, P. Zahariuc, Gh. Lazăr (éds.), *Aut viam inveniam aut faciam. In honorem Ștefan Andreescu*, Iași, 2012, p. 229.

⁵⁸ Mihail Moxa, *Cronica universală*, éd. par Gh. Mihăilă, Bucarest, 1989, p. 211.

et éphémère *despote* serbe sous suzeraineté hongroise (1486-1497), comme le moine « Maximian, fils du *Despote*, le tsar serbe » (nous soulignons)⁵⁹. Aussi, l'épouse du prince moldave Petru Rareș, fille du « *despote* Jovan » (nous soulignons) est constamment appelé *Despotovna*, à savoir, « la fille du despote »⁶⁰, et les exemples peuvent être multipliés. Dans la vision du chroniqueur Ion Neculce, *Despot* est plutôt un nom propre. Pour lui, la même Elena Branković, l'épouse du prince Petru Rareș, est « de la souche des *Despotes*, la fille du roi *Despot* » (« de neamul *Despoților*, fata lui *Despot* crai » ; nous soulignons)⁶¹. C'est bien ce que croient les auteurs d'une des inscriptions roumaines de l'église de l'Assomption de la Mère de Dieu à Botoșani, fondation de la même princesse. En appelant Elena « fille d'Ioan Despot Voievode » (« fiica lui Ioan Despot Voevod »), ils traduisent en fait le texte slave de l'ancienne inscription, écrite sur la commande de la princesse elle-même, et qui veut – c'est la seule différence entre les deux textes – que son père soit *empereur* (« Елена Деспотова гжда Петра Воевода, дъци Іоанна Деспота цръ »)⁶². Quelques décennies plus tard, quelqu'un comme Mihai Cantacuzino (1723-ca 1790), très bon connaisseur de l'historiographie byzantine, sait que *despote* est un titre (*boierie*) à la cour byzantine⁶³ mais n'hésite tout de même pas à voir dans les despotes serbes et bulgares des princes territoriaux⁶⁴.

En même temps, la hiérarchie des dignités de l'Empire chrétien disparu n'était pas inconnue dans l'espace roumain. Les principaux véhicules d'information en furent les *Chronographes* de Pseudo-Dorotheos de Monemvasia (Venise, 1631) et de Matthaios Kigalas (Venise, 1635), qui ont circulé tant en version originale qu'en traduction roumaine et comprenaient une liste des offices de l'« empire des Grecs » (« boieriile a împărății grecilor »), où, tout naturellement, le despote vient juste après le *basileus*. Des listes de dignités – tirées de ces ouvrages, ou bien ayant une autre provenance – ont aussi circulé

⁵⁹ *Cronicile slavo-române din sec. XV-XVI publicate de Ion Bogdan*, éd. par P. P. Panaitescu, Bucarest, 1959, p. 13.

⁶⁰ Voir I. R. Mircea, « Relations culturelles roumano-serbes au XVI^e siècle », *RESEE*, 1/3-4, 1963, p. 393, note 66.

⁶¹ I. Neculce, *O samă de cuvinte*, dans *Opere*, éd. par G. Ștrempel, Bucarest, 1982, p. 170 (XIV). Dans une des versions manuscrites du même ouvrage, elle est appelée « la fille du Despot, le roi serbe » (« fata lui Despot craiul sârbăscu »), *ibid.*

⁶² N. Iorga, *Inscripții din bisericile României*, vol. 1/1, Bucarest, 1905, p. 219-220 (n^{os} 1 et 3). L'inscription en roumain date de 1724-1725.

⁶³ *Genealogia Cantacuzinilor de banul Mihai Cantacuzino*, éd. par N. Iorga, Bucarest, 1902, p. 16 (« Matei Cantacuzino, măcar că el de la tată-său nici o boierie n-a avut dată, dar să protimisia mai sus și mai mult decât toți *Despoții* ») et 17 (« Ioan Cantacuzino, căruia Ioan Împăratul Paleologul i-au dat cin de *Despot* »). Nous soulignons.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 18 (« Gheorghe Brancovici, Despotul Sârbilor »), 23 (« Ștefan Despotul Sârbilor ») et 28 (« Eudocsia, fata Despotului Bulgarilor »).

séparément⁶⁵. L'intérêt pour ces lectures s'est maintenu bien longtemps ; preuve en est la traduction que Naum Râmniceanu a faite du *Chronographe* de Pseudo-Dorotheos, autour de 1836⁶⁶. Dionisie a sûrement connu cette production historiographique, car il y fait référence à plusieurs reprises⁶⁷.

Un autre véhicule fut le soi-disant *Traité des offices* attribué à l'époque à Georgios Kodinos le *Couropalate*, en fait l'œuvre d'un anonyme conventionnellement désigné par les savants modernes comme Pseudo-Kodinos⁶⁸. Cet ouvrage, qui a beaucoup circulé en forme manuscrite avant qu'il ne soit imprimé à Heidelberg, en 1588, contient également une liste des dignités de la cour byzantine, où le despote figure en deuxième position après le *basileus*. Au tout début du traité (Chapitre I : *Περὶ τῆς τάξεως τε ἀξιωματῶν καὶ ὀφφικίων*) est écrit :

Οἱ τοῦ βασιλέως υἱοὶ οἱ δεσπότες προΐστανται τῶν ἀδελφῶν καὶ τῶν γαμβρῶν τοῦ βασιλέως, δεσποτῶν καὶ αὐτῶν ὄντων.

Δεσπότης

Σεβαστοκράτωρ.

Les fils de l'empereur, les despotes, ont la préséance sur les frères et les gendres de l'empereur, eux aussi étant despotes.

Despote,

Sébastokratôr⁶⁹.

L'anonyme décrit également la cérémonie de la promotion du despote (Chapitre VIII : *Περὶ προβλήσεως δεσπότης*)⁷⁰ mais sans dire mot sur la

⁶⁵ Voir, par exemple, BAR mss. roum. 1070 (Valachie, autour de 1758), ff. 516^v-518^r et 1073 (Moldavie, 1783), ff. 509^r-510^v. Voir aussi BAR mss. gr. 214 (XVI^e siècle), ff. 410-412 et 262 (XV^e-XVI^e siècle) et ff. 411^r-415^v, C. Litzica, *Catalogul manuscriselor grecești*, vol. 1, p. 288 et 298. Pour les versions roumaines des deux chronographes, voir surtout P. Cernovodeanu, « Studiu introductiv », dans *Cronograf. Tradus din grecește de Pătrașco Danovici*, éd. par G. Ștrempel, étude introductive par P. Cernovodeanu, vol. 1, Bucarest, 1998, p. XXXVII-LXXXVI, et D. Mihăescu, *Cronografele românești*, Bucarest, 2006. Voir aussi R. G. Păun « Mémoires d'Empire. Les listes d'empereurs dans le Chronographe de Pseudo-Dorotheos de Monemvasia », dans G. Salinero, M. Á. Melón Jiménez (coord.), *Le temps des listes. Représenter, savoir et croire à l'époque moderne*, Bruxelles-Francfort/Main-Berne, 2018, p. 83-104.

⁶⁶ C. Erbiceanu, *Viața și activitatea literară a protosinghelului Naum Râmniceanu*, Bucarest, 1900, p. 81-82.

⁶⁷ D. Ecclesiarhul, *Hronograf*, p. 12.

⁶⁸ Al. Elian, « Moldova și Bizanțul în secolul al XV-lea », dans idem, *Bizanțul, Biserica și cultura românească. Studii și articole de istorie*, éd. par V. V. Muntean, Iași, 2003, p. 25, note 44.

⁶⁹ Pseudo-Codinos, *Traité des offices*, p. 133.

⁷⁰ Pseudo-Codinos, *Traité des offices*, p. 274-275. Sur cette cérémonie, voir aussi M. E. Pomero, « Alcune osservazioni sul vestiario e le insegne del potere del δεσπότης nelle fonti scritte ed iconografiche », dans S. Cosentino, M. E. Pomero, G. Vespignani (éds.), *Dialoghi con Bisanzio. Spazi di discussione, percorsi di ricerca. Atti dell'VIII Congresso dell'Associazione Italiana di Studi Bizantini (Ravenna 22-25 settembre 2015)*, vol. 1, Spolète, 2019, p. 817-834.

dimension liturgique de l'acte. Il est donc évident que l'auteur de la prière qui nous occupe ici n'a pas pu s'inspirer du *Traité des offices*.

Un des premiers érudits roumains à connaître ce traité fut Dimitrie Cantemir, qui se réfère d'ailleurs aux « offices de la cour » (*aulica officia*) byzantine⁷¹. Le texte a été traduit en grec vernaculaire par le futur patriarche Chrysanthos Notaras, sur l'ordre du prince Constantin Brâncoveanu (1691)⁷². Un manuscrit de l'ouvrage (BAR ms. gr. 725) a appartenu à Constantin Rosetti de Moldavie, le beau-père du prince Constantin Maurocordato (r. 1711-1769, avec interruptions), auquel il le prêta pour qu'il fût copié par Konstantinos Dapontes⁷³. Une nouvelle édition vit le jour à Venise, en 1729 (Georgios Patussa), une autre se trouve dans l'anthologie d'Iôannès Stanos, *Bίβλος χρονική περιέχουσα την ιστορίαν της Βυζαντίδος μεταφρασθεῖσα ἐκ τοῦ ἐλληνικοῦ εἰς τὸ κοινὸν ἡμέτερον διάλεκτον* (Venise, 6 volumes à partir de 1757)⁷⁴. En Moldavie, le *Traité* a été certainement connu par Gheorgachi le deuxième logothète, qui a rédigé un recueil d'usages de la cour de Iași (1762)⁷⁵.

La dignité de despote était donc assez bien connue dans les deux principautés, à cette nuance près qu'elle n'était pas – ou plus – associée à un titre aulique, comme cela avait été le cas à Byzance, mais désignait pratiquement toujours un prince territorial.

Au XVIII^e siècle, lorsque l'emploi du grec gagna du terrain dans les deux principautés, la contagion devint assez fréquente entre les deux termes grecs « classiques » pour désigner le prince, en l'occurrence *αὐθέντης* et *ἡγεμών*, d'un côté, et *δεσπότης*, employé tant au sens général de « maître » que comme titre, de l'autre côté. Dans l'*Histoire politique et géographique de la Valachie* publiée par les frères Tunusli, le prince local est appelé « αὐθέντης ἦτον αὐτοδεσπότης », le dernier terme, d'apparence assez curieuse, étant censé traduire en grec le slavon *самодержецъ*, présent de tout temps dans le titre princier, à son tour calqué sur le grec *αὐτοκράτορ*⁷⁶. Cet artifice linguistique

⁷¹ D. Cantemir, *Descriptio antiqui et hodierni status Moldaviae*, traduction par Gh. Guțu, introduction par M. Holban, commentaires par N. Stoicescu, Bucarest, 1973, p. 198-199 ; Al. Elian, « Moldova și Bizanțul », p. 27, note 51.

⁷² A. Pippidi, *Tradiția politică bizantină*, p. 30.

⁷³ D. Simonescu, *Literatura românească de ceremonial. Condica lui Gheorgachi, 1762. Studiu și text*, Bucarest, 1939, p. 67-70. Ce dernier manuscrit est conservé aujourd'hui à Athènes, dans la Bibliothèque du Parlement grec (ms. 35) ; voir aussi A. Timotin, « Le Code des usages de Gheorgachi le logothète et ses rapports avec la littérature byzantine de cérémonial », *Études Balkaniques*, 54/2, 2018, p. 315.

⁷⁴ Al. Elian, « Moldova și Bizanțul », p. 25, 27, 41.

⁷⁵ D. Simonescu, *Literatura românească* ; A. Timotin, « Le Code des usages », p. 315.

⁷⁶ *Ιστορία της Βλαχίας πολιτική και γεωγραφική ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρχαιοτάτης αὐτῆς καταστάσεως ἕως τοῦ 1774 ἔτους*, Vienne, 1806. Il s'agit, en fait, de la traduction de l'œuvre de Mihail Cantacuzino ; voir N. Iorga, *Istoria literaturii române în secolul al XVIII-lea (1688-1821)*, éd. par B. Theodorescu, vol. 2, Bucarest, 1969², p. 17.

s'explique par le fait que *αὐτοκράτορ* est constamment employé dans le texte pour désigner l'empereur byzantin. Preuve du sens assez flou que le mot *δεσπότης* revêt à l'époque, le même auteur parle de la « *δεσποτείας τῆς Κραϊώβας* », alors que le titulaire de l'office est nommé *μπάνος* (*ban, banus*), comme en roumain⁷⁷.

D'un autre côté, il ne fut pas rare que le titre de despote soit aussi attribué aux princes locaux. Selon Marcos Antonios Katzaitis, de passage à la cour de Constantin Maurocordato, en 1742, les princes de Valachie et de Moldavie auraient préservé les titres qu'ils avaient détenus « sous les empereurs grecs », à savoir *ἡγεμόν* ou *δεσπότης*, en gardant autour d'eux la plupart des offices et des dignités qu'avaient jadis existé à la cour des *basileis*⁷⁸. Katzaitis, comme Dimitrie Cantemir avant lui⁷⁹, croyait à une ancienne vassalité de la principauté par rapport à Byzance, condition qui aurait d'ailleurs permis aux princes de recevoir le titre despotal de la part des *basileis*, comme il se devait. Il n'est pas impossible que Katzaitis soit la victime de ses propres lectures. Effectivement, dans le vocabulaire politique byzantin le titre despotal était souvent associé à la *ἡγεμονία* qui « désigne aussi bien le fait d'exercer un commandement militaire que celui d'administrer un territoire », ce qui fut le cas de Trébizonde, par exemple, dont les seigneurs étaient appelés *ἡγεμόνες* et *δεσπότες* en même temps⁸⁰.

Ce témoignage n'est pas unique. Quelques décennies plus tard, le Valaque Naum Râmnicéanu considérait aussi que les princes moldaves et valaques avaient été soumis par les Byzantins, qui les avaient appelés *despotes* (*Δεσπότες*), alors que les Polonais les appelaient *voïévodes* et les Bulgares *gospodars* :

Ἡγεμόνες δὲ Βλαχίας, οἱ ἡμέτεροι Δάκιαι, ὑπὸ μὲν τῶν βασιλέων Κωνσταντινουπόλεως Ῥωμαίων, ὀνομάζοντο Δεσπότες, ὑπὸ Λέχων

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 24. Pour sa part, Naum Râmnicéanu considère que les frères Petru et Asan, révoltés contre le pouvoir byzantin, auraient détenu le titre de despote à Craiova : « Μῆτε γὰρ Ἀσάν καὶ Πέτρος, τῆς Κραϊώβας οἱ ἀρχαῖοι, εἶχον τινὰ ἐξουσίαν, κατὰ τὰς δὲ δεσποτείας » (nous soulignons), N. Râmnicéanu, *Despre originea românilor*, p. 245.

⁷⁸ M. A. Katzaitis, « Călătorie de la Constantinopol ... la Iași și de la Iași la București, în anul 1742 », dans *Saeculum. Documente inedite*, éd. par E. Moisuc et D. Limona, Iași, 1977, p. 75. Voir aussi les commentaires d'A. Pippidi, *Tradiția politică bizantină*, p. 23. Sur le terme *ἡγεμόν*, voir L. Bréhier, *Le monde byzantin. Les institutions de l'Empire byzantin*, Paris, 1970², p. 97 et 180 ; Val. Al. Georgescu, E. Popescu-Mihuț, *Organizarea de Stat a Țării Românești (1765-1782) / L'organisation d'État de la Valachie (1765-1782)*, Bucarest, 1989, p. 247, note 7 ; T. Teoteoi, « Calitatea de autentice ».

⁷⁹ D. Cantemir, *Descriptio*, p. 246 ; A. Pippidi, *Tradiția politică bizantină*, p. 28.

⁸⁰ R. Guillard, « Recherches sur l'histoire administrative », p. 67.

Βοῖβόδες, Γοσποδάρ δὲ ὑπὸ Βουλγάρων, Ἀθηνῶν Μελέτιος φησί (Μελ. Γεωγ.)⁸¹.

Son contemporain, Dionysios Phôteinos (1777-1821) est du même avis, mais dresse en plus un parallèle entre les princes *daces* et les dynastes du Péloponnèse, qui portaient tous le titre de despote :

Βοεβόδαν ἐκάλουν οἱ Δάκες τὸν ἡγεμόνα κατὰ τὴν Σαρματικὴν φωνὴν, ὡς καὶ μέχρι τῆς σήμερον. Κατὰ δὲ τὴν Σλαβονικὴν ἐλέγετο Γοσποδάρ. Οἱ Ῥωμαῖοι ὅμως τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως ὑποτάξαντες αὐτούς, τοὺς ἐκάλουν Δεσπότης καθὼς καὶ τοὺς τῆς Πελοποννησοῦ⁸².

Les deux s'inspirent ici de Mélétios d'Athènes que Naum cite d'ailleurs expressément. Effectivement, Mélétios en parle dans les mêmes termes dans son *Γεωγραφία Παλαιὰ καὶ Νέα* (Venise, 1728, ouvrage qui a connu une large circulation⁸³).

Vers la même époque, en Moldavie, la légende qui voulait que le prince Alexandru le Bon (1400-1432) ait reçu la couronne impériale et le titre despotal de la part de l'empereur byzantin lui-même gagna droit de cité sous l'influence de l'œuvre de Dimitrie Cantemir, du récit attribué au métropolite Gheorghe IV (1723) et du soi-disant « acte synodal » de 1752, en réalité un faux produit par le

⁸¹ N. Râmniceanu, *Despre originea românilor*, p. 245. Dans sa chronique en roumain, Naum met le signe d'égalité entre *despote* et *duc*. Selon lui, les *ducs* de la Valachie et de la Moldavie occupaient la troisième position dans la hiérarchie des monarques de l'Europe, après les empereurs et les rois : « Să numără deosebi între ducaturile Evropei și Domnia Țării Moldovei și Domnia Țării Rumănești [...]. Iar între titlurile stăpânilor [...] mai mare este al împăraților, ca a unor stăpânitori de sineși, al doilea, al coroanei crailor, și al treilea al slăvirii Duchilor, dă carea să bucură și Domnii noștri (cărora, după Meletie, împărații grecești le zicea *despoți* iar slovenește *gospodar* iar leșește *Voivod* » (nous soulignons), Șt. Bezdechi, *Cronica inedită de la Blaj a protosinghelului Naum Râmniceanu. Partea I-a. Text însoțit de un studiu introductiv*, Cluj-Napoca – Sibiu, 1944, p. 65.

⁸² D. Phôteinos, *Ἱστορία τῆς παλᾶι Δακίας τὰ νῦν Τρανσυλβανίας, Βλαχίας καὶ Μολδαβίας*, vol. 1, Vienne, 1818, p. 243, note de bas de page. Nous remercions Mme Emanuela Popescu-Mihuț de nous avoir signalé ce passage.

⁸³ Dans la seconde édition (*Μελετίου Γεωγραφία Παλαιὰ καὶ Νέα...*, Venise, 1807), que nous avons consultée, le paragraphe se trouve dans le vol. 2, p. 67-68. On remarquera en passant que la Valachie, la Moldavie, ainsi que la Serbie, sont appelées *despotats* dans la carte géographique de Johann Matthias Hase (Johannes Hasius, 1684-1742), publiée en 1744 (I^{ère} édition, Nürnberg, 1739), à la différence de la Hongrie et de la Bulgarie, par exemple, chacune désignée comme *regnum* ; voir *Carte d'HONGRIE en general, contenant selon la Division ancienne & methodique, la HONGRIE en particulier, la CROATIE, la DALMATIE, la BOSNIE, la BOULGARIE, la Principauté de TRANSYLVANIE, les Despotats de Walachie & de MOLDAV, le tout dressé sur le pied de l'ancienne et de la nouvelle Géographie par Mon. I.M Hasius, Profess. des Mathématiques*, Paris, 1744 (<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b84695719>, consulté le 1^{er} juin 2020). Nous remercions Marian Coman (Bucarest) qui nous a communiqué ce document.

logothète Grigoraș de la Métropole de Iași⁸⁴. Ainsi, dans le chrysobulle de promulgation du *Κῶδιξ πολιτικός τοῦ Πριγκιπάτου τῆς Μολδαβίας*, émis le 1^{er} juillet 1817, le prince Scarlat Callimachi l'affirme ouvertement, en citant le même Cantemir : Alexandru le Bon aurait bien reçu la couronne impériale et la dignité de despote (« καὶ τοῦ βασιλείου στέμματος συνάμα καὶ τοῦ ἀξιώματος τοῦ Δεσπότης ») de la part de l'empereur byzantin⁸⁵.

Nous croyons que ces données suffissent pour expliquer le choix du copiste valaque : le premier, après le *basileus*, dans la hiérarchie du monde orthodoxe, le despote *ou* le *ἡγεμών* n'était, pour lui, tout comme pour nombre de ses contemporains, personne d'autre que son prince lui-même⁸⁶. À ce titre, il était tout à fait normal que notre copiste reprenne et « mette à jour » précisément la prière pour la désignation de ce dignitaire-là : sous sa plume, le despote devient donc un monarque de plein droit.

Cette lecture trahit pourtant de manière décisive l'esprit constitutif de l'idée de hiérarchie, telle qu'elle avait pris forme et contenu à Byzance. Tout comme l'univers céleste est organisé par et en fonction de Dieu, le monde terrestre l'est par et en fonction du *basileus*, image du Seigneur sur la terre, sans lequel tout titre et toute dignité n'ont simplement pas de sens⁸⁷. L'ordre liturgique byzantin s'est construit sur ce même principe, ce dont témoigne le fait qu'il ne fait aucune place à un monarque autre que le *basileus* : tous les autres seigneurs de la terre n'existent que dans la mesure où ils se rapportent à lui. Cela explique l'énorme difficulté des autres monarques orthodoxes à se tailler un dispositif liturgique propre et cohérent à l'intérieur de l'héritage byzantin.

De la liturgie à la loi

Du reste, le copiste de notre prière n'est ni le premier ni le seul à avoir tenté d'adapter la tradition liturgico-politique byzantine aux réalités moldo-valaques. Si le premier *ordo* de couronnement conservé, celui contenu dans le soi-disant « Paroissial de Solovky » (1532), n'est qu'une copie en vieux slavons

⁸⁴ Pour plus de détails à ce sujet, voir Șt. S. Gorovei, « Un cărturar uitaț : logofătul Grigoraș », *AIIAI*, 23/2, 1986, p. 681-698; idem, « Semnificația unor documente false din veacul XVIII. I. "Cartea Sobornicească" din 1 ianuarie 1752 », *AIIAI*, 26, 1989, p. 430-480; R. G. Păun, « L'éternel retour à la fiction. Récits sur la fondation de l'Église et du droit en Moldavie aux XVII^e – XIX^e siècles », *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique Moderne et Contemporain*, 2, 2020 : <https://doi.org/10.4000/bchmc.406>.

⁸⁵ *Codul Calimach*, p. 47.

⁸⁶ Il faudrait donc nuancer les conclusions de Tudor Teoteoi, qui considère que « la terminologie de la période byzantine s'est conservée sans altérations majeures durant la période suivante, celle de la Turcocratie », en sorte que le terme *despotes* « reste réservé de préférence aux autorités ecclésiastiques, le patriarche œcuménique en premier lieu »; voir T. Teoteoi, « Les notions d'*authentēs* et *despotes* », p. 81.

⁸⁷ Voir, à ce propos, I. Biliarsky, *Hierarchia*.

de l'*ordo* de couronnement du *basileus*⁸⁸, la tentative de traduction en roumain de ce texte, due au métropolite valaque Ștefan (1648-1653 ; 1655-1668), montre bien les difficultés à accorder le cérémonial impérial et le statut des princes valaques. L'*ordo* en question est bilingue : les indications de rituel sont en roumain et les prières en vieux slavon. Le titre même suggère l'ambiguïté : « L'ordre observé lors de l'installation de l'empereur *ou* du prince » (*Rânduiala carele se face la punerea împăratului sau a domnului*). Le texte fait référence ensuite aux « vêtements de l'empire *ou* de la *domnia* », au « patriarche *ou* le métropolite », à l'« impératrice *ou* la princesse régnante (*doamna*) »⁸⁹. S'agit-il là de simples synonymes ? Ștefan voulait-il suggérer que le même rituel est observé à la fois pour les empereurs et pour les princes régnants de la Valachie ? Il y a toutes les raisons d'en douter, d'autant plus qu'une rubrique concerne expressément l'endroit de l'église où le monarque devait être couronné. « S'il s'agit d'un mâle », précise le texte, « il faut le faire couronner à l'*ambon* de la Grande Église et il faut qu'il prenne la communion de la main de l'archiéreus » (nous soulignons). Il est donc évident que référence y est faite au *basileus*, le seul qui se faisait couronner dans la « Grande Église ». En outre, des *ordines* de couronnement plus récents précisent que la consécration du prince – valaque autant que moldave – se faisait dans le sanctuaire et non pas à l'*ambon*, comme à Constantinople⁹⁰. De ce point de vue, le texte dû au métropolite Ștefan s'arrête à mi-chemin entre la tradition liturgique impériale byzantine et une tradition valaque qui attendait encore d'être « inventée ».

Car, au milieu du XVII^e siècle, il n'y avait pas une seule tradition liturgique du couronnement des princes en Valachie⁹¹, mais plutôt un faisceau de coutumes diverses, dont la mise en rituel pouvait varier en fonction de plusieurs facteurs. C'est ce qui suggère le rituel observé lors du couronnement de Mihnea III (ou Mihail Radu, r. 1658-1659), décrit par un des acteurs de l'événement – le diacre melkite Paul d'Alep (1627-1669). Malgré la mention expresse par l'auteur du fait que le prince avait demandé au patriarche Macaire Za'im, qui se trouvait alors en Valachie, de le faire couronner selon le rituel prescrit par « le Grand Euchologe impérial », l'analyse de l'algorithme rituel montre clairement que les différences sont considérables entre le rituel byzantin et celui accompli par le patriarche d'Antioche à cette occasion⁹².

⁸⁸ Idem, « Le rite de couronnement des tsars ».

⁸⁹ V. Barbu, Gh. Lazăr, « *Coronatio* », p. 63 (BAR ms. roum. 1790, f. 95^v).

⁹⁰ Voir R. G. Păun, « Byzance d'empereur et Byzance d'Église ». Nous préparons une étude spéciale sur ce sujet.

⁹¹ Pour une opinion contraire, voir V. Barbu, Gh. Lazăr, « *Coronatio* ».

⁹² R. G. Păun, « *Si Deus nobiscum quis contra nos?* Mihnea III : note de teologie politică » dans O. Cristea, Gh. Lazăr (éds.), *Național și universal în istoria românilor. Studii oferite prof. dr. Șerban Papacostea la împlinirea a 70 de ani*, Bucarest, 1998, p. 69-100. Le texte de Paul d'Alep est maintenant disponible en édition critique : Paul din Alep, *Jurnal de călătorie în Moldova și Valahia*, ici p. 413-415.

Le processus de construction du dispositif rituel du pouvoir ne s'est pas arrêté là, certainement, et il fut inextricablement lié au long et complexe développement du dispositif liturgique de l'Église elle-même, développement qui ne prit fin, dans ses lignes générales, que dans les premières décennies du XIX^e siècle. Pendant tout ce temps, le déplacement du centre de la décision politique vers Constantinople, avec la nomination des princes directement par le sultan ottoman et l'ascension politique du patriciat grec orthodoxe de la capitale impériale⁹³, a dû avoir des conséquences notables à la fois sur la définition théologico-politique du pouvoir princier et sur la mise en rituel de ce même pouvoir. Le couronnement des princes de Valachie et de Moldavie à Constantinople par la main du patriarche œcuménique – qui débuta à une date pour l'instant incertaine – a multiplié les acteurs du jeu liturgico-politique, tout en les obligeant à (ré)définir leurs positions réciproques. Forte d'une longue tradition et munie d'un arsenal théologico-liturgique sur mesure, la Grande Église n'a pas tardé de le faire dans un sens ostensiblement « anti-impérial », en refusant aux princes de Valachie et de Moldavie tout attribut qui pouvait renvoyer de quelque manière que ce soit à la sacralité du *basileus* de jadis⁹⁴.

Qu'en-est-il cependant des Églises locales – valaque et moldave – et des princes eux-mêmes ? Les sources n'en disent pas beaucoup, mais elles laissent toutefois entrevoir les hésitations et l'embarras des acteurs. Ainsi la « prière de couronnement » (*molitva de domnie*), que le primat local lisait lors de la consécration du nouveau prince dans l'« église du pays », pouvait-elle se présenter sous des formes diverses, qui ne se rattachent pas à une « tradition » bien cristallisée et établie une fois pour toutes, et cela pour la simple raison que la « tradition » n'était pas comprise de la même manière par tout le monde. En témoignent, par exemple, les prières « à lire lors de l'installation du prince d'un pays » (*Rugăciunea care să citește la punerea domnului al vreunii țări*) qui se trouvent actuellement dans les BAR mss. roum. 1138 (Valachie, début du XVIII^e siècle) et 4979 (Valachie, environ 1775-1790). Loin d'être une création « baroque, raffinée et archaïsante » rassemblant plusieurs pièces canoniques d'origine byzantine, comme certains chercheurs ont pu le croire⁹⁵, ces deux textes (pratiquement identiques) sont des versions roumaines d'une prière « pour l'empereur et son armée » (*Εὐχή εἰς βασιλέα καὶ εἰς τὸν στρατὸν αὐτοῦ*), œuvre du patriarche œcuménique Calliste I^{er}. Partie intégrante du corpus liturgique associé au cérémonial impérial byzantin, cette prière n'était pourtant pas une

⁹³ Sur ces phénomènes, voir Chr. M. Philliou, *Biography of an Empire. Governing Ottomans in an Age of Revolution*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-Londres, 2010, et nos observations : R. G. Păun « Some Remarks about the Historical Origins of the "Phanariot Phenomenon" in Moldavia and Wallachia (16th-19th centuries) », dans G. Harlaftis, R. G. Păun (éds.), *Greeks in Romania in the Nineteenth Century*, Athènes, 2013, p. 47-94.

⁹⁴ Voir, à ce propos, R. G. Păun, « Byzance d'empereur et Byzance d'Église ».

⁹⁵ V. Barbu, Gh. Lazăr, « *Coronatio* », p. 57-59.

prière de consécration d'un nouveau monarque. Le fait qu'elle a été investie avec cette fonction inhabituelle rend compte à la fois du caractère flou de la tradition locale en matière de couronnement des princes et de l'effet des changements politiques évoqués ci-dessus, qui ont certainement dû déstabiliser encore plus la « tradition »⁹⁶.

Tous les auteurs des tentatives d'adaptation dont il a été question ont puisé donc leur inspiration dans la tradition byzantine, une tradition qui ne se laissa pourtant découvrir, comprendre et « récupérer » que par morceaux. Faire de ces morceaux système s'est avéré une épreuve redoutable, trop redoutable pour aboutir à des résultats cohérents.

Cette observation ne vise pas seulement les mots et les gestes, car, au-delà de la mise en discours et du dispositif rituel, ce sont les fondements mêmes du pouvoir princier qui étaient en cause. En témoignent les trois versions du *Manuel de lois* rédigé par le juriste Michaël Phôteinos de Chio (1765, 1766 et 1777), ouvrage qui ne fut par ailleurs jamais sanctionné officiellement⁹⁷. Comme il a été remarqué, et cela est fort significatif, il s'agit de la première tentative de définir juridiquement le caractère du pouvoir princier⁹⁸.

La tâche se montra tout aussi lourde pour le juriste que pour les hommes de l'Église. Comment définir une autorité qui était souveraine et subordonnée, car soumise au sultan ottoman, à la fois ? Comment traduire l'universalisme byzantin en termes locaux ?

À quelques (très rares) exceptions près, le droit byzantin ne systématisait pas le statut juridique du *basileus*⁹⁹. La solution empruntée par Phôteinos fut de combiner des éléments tirés de la doctrine byzantine de l'imitation (*μίμῃσις*) de Dieu par l'empereur et de celle des vertus impériales avec certains titres du Livre VI des *Basiliques*, qui précisaient les attributions des gouverneurs de provinces (*ἄρχοντες* ou *ἡγεμόνες τῆς ἐπαρχίας*). Le risque, que le juriste n'a pas pu éviter complètement, était de sacrifier la composante sacrée du pouvoir et de

⁹⁶ *Euchologion sive Rituale Graecorum*, p. 827. Voir aussi D. V. Gonès, *Τὸ συγγραφικὸν ἔργον τοῦ πατριάρχου Καλλίστου Α΄*, Athènes, 1980, p. 285-286. En 1819, cette prière n'avait pas encore gagné sa place dans les livres de culte, car le même Dionisie Ecclesiarhul la traduit depuis le slavons, D. Bălașa, « Contribuția cronicarului Dionisie la îmbogățirea Molitfelnicului românesc ».

⁹⁷ Les *Manuels* de Phôteinos ont cependant beaucoup circulé ; voir Val. Al. Georgescu, E. Popescu-Mihuț, *Organizarea de Stat*, p. 57-62 et suiv. ; E. Popescu-Mihuț, « Une traduction roumaine inconnue du manuel de lois rédigé par Michel Photinos », *RESEE*, 24/3, 1986, p. 259-276.

⁹⁸ Selon Val. Al. Georgescu : « On y a affaire à un premier essai de formuler plus largement, à l'aide d'un choix de sources byzantines adaptées, non pas une doctrine ou un véritable code du pouvoir princier, mais, en tout cas, une synthèse à caractère éthique, socio-politique et juridique du statut du pouvoir princier », Val. Al. Georgescu, E. Popescu-Mihuț, *Organizarea de Stat*, p. 62.

⁹⁹ Val. Al. Georgescu, « L'idée impériale romano-byzantine et la structuration du pouvoir princier en Valachie de 1765 à 1818 (Les Manuels de lois de Michel Fotino et le Code Caradja) », dans E. von Caemmerer *et al.* (éds.), *Ξένων. Festschrift für Pan. J. Zepos*, Athènes-Freiburg/Bresgau-Cologne, 1973, p. 458.

transformer la dignité princière en simple fonction administrative. Ainsi, dans la version de 1765 du *Manuel*, Phôteinos précise : « Ὁ αὐθέντης εἰς τὸν θρόνον τοῦ μείζον κράτος ἔχει πάντων καὶ ἀπόλυτον ἐξουσίαν καὶ σερπεστιέτι » (« Tant qu'il se trouve sur le trône, le prince détient un pouvoir plus grand que tout le monde et une autorité sans limites et *serbestyet* »)¹⁰⁰. La source en est le Chapitre 16 des *Basiliques* (« Ὁ ἄρχων ἐν τῇ ἐπαρχίᾳ μείζον κράτος πάντων ἔχει μετὰ τὸν βασιλέα »), que le juriste s'est évertué à adapter en remplaçant ἐν τῇ ἐπαρχίᾳ de l'original par εἰς τὸν θρόνον τοῦ et μετὰ τὸν βασιλέα par ἀπόλυτον ἐξουσίαν καὶ σερπεστιέτι¹⁰¹. Dans la version de 1766, ce même article devient « Ὁ αὐθέντης εἰς τὴν ἐπικρατείαν τοῦ ἔχει ἀπόλυτον ἐξουσίαν καὶ σερπεστιέτι », alors que dans celle de 1777 Phôteinos précise que ὁ ἄρχων veut dire en fait ὁ ἡγεμὼν : « Ὁ ἄρχων ἦτοι ὁ ἡγεμὼν ἐν τῇ ἐπαρχίᾳ μείζον κράτος πάντων ἔχει μετὰ τὸν βασιλέα » (« Dans toute province, le gouverneur du lieu, *c'est-à-dire le prince*, détient le plus grand pouvoir après l'empereur » ; nous soulignons)¹⁰².

Par rapport aux deux premières rédactions, dans cette dernière Phôteinos précise ses termes en intitulant le chapitre concernant le prince *Περὶ ἡγεμόνων* au lieu de *Περὶ αὐθεντῶν* et, fait significatif, il n'y inscrit plus l'autonomie par rapport à la Porte (*serbestyet*)¹⁰³ parmi les attributs constitutifs de pouvoir princier. Toutefois, les hésitations concernant la définition de ce pouvoir persistent. Dans le manuscrit publié par Valentin Alexandru Georgescu et Emanuela Popescu-Mihuț, ce même chapitre comprend des extraits de la *neară* 17 de Justinien, à côté des parties tirés du VI^{ème} Livre des *Basiliques* (Chapitre 14), ce qui indique que le juriste continuait à puiser ses sources dans la production législative byzantine consacrée aux droits et devoirs des gouverneurs des provinces. Le paragraphe 30 du même titre fait état de ces hésitations : s'il découvre que quelqu'un parmi les puissants (*δύνατοι*) a commis des injustices, ὁ ἡγεμὼν (le prince ?) ne peut ni le punir, ni le porter en justice, mais il est tenu de communiquer cette situation à l'empereur (*ἀναφερέτω τῷ βασιλεῖ*)¹⁰⁴. Un autre article va dans le même sens, qui précise que le prince doit garder ses mains propres devant Dieu et devant la loi. Si tel article n'est pas nouveau dans la

¹⁰⁰ Val. Al. Georgescu, E. Popescu-Mihuț, *Organizarea de Stat*, p. 94-95 (§ 7), 106 et suiv. (notes des éditeurs).

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 107, note 7.

¹⁰² *Ibid.* p. 116 (§ 7) et 154 (§ 22), respectivement.

¹⁰³ Pour l'explication de ce terme, qui fait référence à l'autonomie des deux Principautés par rapport à la Porte ottomane, voir *ibid.*, p. 107-108. Les écrits historiques et les mémoires adressés à la Porte l'utilisent à partir de 1774. Voir aussi V. Panaite, « Wallachia and Moldavia from the Ottoman Juridical and Political Viewpoint, 1774-1829 », dans A. Anastasopoulos, E. Kolovos (éds.), *Ottoman Rule and the Balkans, 1760-1858. Conflict, Transformation, Adaptation*, Réthymnon, 2007, p. 36-37.

¹⁰⁴ Val. Al. Georgescu, E. Popescu-Mihuț, *Organizarea de Stat*, p. 156 ; voir aussi § 31, 32, 33, 34, etc.

culture juridique des deux principautés, il a néanmoins visé par le passé les juges et non pas les princes régnants¹⁰⁵.

L'effort de Phôteinos de traduire en termes juridiques le pouvoir princier rime donc bien avec la tentative de l'auteur de la prière de couronnement de BAR ms. roum. 3567. Plumes du pouvoir, les deux se sont employés de bonne foi à trouver une formule respectivement liturgique et juridique, apte à consacrer, exprimer et expliciter une autorité à la fois secondaire et de droit divin – cas sans équivalent dans la tradition byzantine telle qu'elle était perçue au XVIII^e siècle¹⁰⁶.

Les princes, quant à eux, avaient depuis longtemps résolu ce dilemme à leur manière, en affirmant qu'ils détenaient leur pouvoir « par la grâce de Dieu et par celle de l'honorable empereur », une formule qui fait son apparition aux premières décennies du XVI^e siècle¹⁰⁷. Monarque « infidèle », le sultan ottoman ne pouvait pourtant être autre chose qu'un instrument – supposé passif – de la volonté divine, car appartenant à un autre horizon de croyance et à un autre ordre symbolique. Ainsi, faire de lui l'héritier des *basileis* restait une simple figure de discours tant que cette succession n'était pas traduite en termes liturgiques et ne trouvait une expression juridique appropriée.

Pour nos auteurs ceci s'avéra une entreprise sans issue. Conséquence immédiate sur le plan juridique, la position et les attributs du prince ne seront pas codifiés dans les codes de lois promulgués pendant les dernières décennies de l'« époque phanariote »¹⁰⁸, qui s'y réfèrent toujours comme à une réalité *sui generis*. Au niveau liturgique, la constitution d'une « tradition » unique n'aboutira pas non plus – ou du moins c'est l'impression que nous laissent les documents disponibles pour l'heure.

Il est fort probable que la prière de couronnement que nous avons analysée ici n'ait jamais été utilisée dans le culte et en cela qu'elle ait connu la

¹⁰⁵ « Ὁ αὐθέντης πρὸ πάντων τῶν ἄλλων πρέπει νὰ φυλάττη τὰς χεῖρας τοῦ καθαρὰς Θεῷ καὶ τῷ νόμῳ ἥτοι νὰ εἶναι εὐσεβὴς καὶ δίκαιος », *ibid.*, p. 116 (version de 1766, I, § 13), 144 (version de 1777, I, § 1), 138, note 11 (commentaires des éditeurs). Cet article manque de la version de 1765.

¹⁰⁶ En même temps, aucun des deux auteurs ne laisse entrevoir le statut subordonné des princes valaques, si ce n'est que par la référence à l'autonomie (*serbestyet*) dans les deux premières versions du *Manuel* de Phôteinos.

¹⁰⁷ Voir, à ce propos, A. Pippidi, *Tradiția politică bizantină*, p. 71-76 et notre article, « La circulation des pouvoirs dans les Pays Roumains au XVII^e siècle. Repères pour un modèle théorique », *New Europe College Yearbook*, 1998-1999, Bucarest, 2001, p. 265-310. Dionisie voit les choses d'un même œil lorsqu'il affirme que la chute de l'« Empire des Grecs » (byzantin) entre les mains des Turcs a été voulue par Dieu même, afin que la foi chrétienne ne soit pas détruite par les hérésies. Le pouvoir ottoman est donc l'héritier de droit du pouvoir des empereurs chrétiens, D. Eclesiarhul, *Hronograf*, p. 124-125.

¹⁰⁸ Un tel chapitre avait existé dans un des projets du Code (*Noμoθεσία*) du prince Caragea lui-même, mais il n'a pas été retenu dans la version définitive, C. C. Giurescu, « Legiuirea Caragea (un anteproiect necunoscut) », *Buletinul Comisiunii Monumentelor Istorice*, 3, 1924, p. 66 ; *Legiuirea Caragea*, p. 192-193.

même fortune que les *Manuels* de Phôteinos, qui n'ont pas reçu la sanction officielle. Toutefois, si de tels documents n'arrivent pas à « expliquer » le pouvoir princier, ils éclairent au moins les étapes et les tâtonnements d'une réflexion sur ce pouvoir et font état des contradictions structurantes qui lui étaient propres.

Annexe 1
L'ordre de couronnement copié par Dionisie Ecclesiarhul (1813)
BAR ms. roum. 3567, ff. 3^v-5^r

f. 3^v După ce vine domnul cu alai la biserica domnească, la ușă îl întâmpină mitropolitul cu Evanghelia, împreună fiind și episcopii țării, și sărutând domnul Evanghelia, încep cântăreții ᾠζιον ἐστίν. Și mergând în biserică, sărută domnul întâiu sfintele icoane, apoi îl iau doi din episcopi de mâini și, băgându-l în Sfântul oltar, încungioară Sfântul prestol de trei ori, sărutând colțurile Sfântului prestol, cântând « Sfinților Mucenici », « Slavă Ție Hristoase Dumnezeu și « Isaia danțuiește ». Apoi, îngenunchiindu-l înaintea Sfântului prestol, îi citește mitropolitul molitva aceasta de domnie¹⁰⁹.

[Lorsque le prince, accompagné par sa suite solennelle, arrive à l'église princière, le métropolite l'accueille avec l'Évangile, en présence des évêques, et, lorsque le prince embrasse l'Évangile, les chœurs commencent à chanter « Il est digne ». Une fois entré dans l'église, le prince embrasse d'abord les saintes icônes, après quoi il est pris par la main par deux évêques et introduit dans le sanctuaire, où il marche trois fois autour de la sainte table et embrasse les coins de celle-ci en chantant [les hymnes] « Saints martyrs », « Gloire à Toi, Christ notre Dieu » et « la danse d'Isaïe ». Après quoi, s'agenouillant le prince devant la sainte table, le métropolite lui lit cette prière de couronnement.]

1. ὁ Θεὸς ὁ μέγας, ὁ αἰώνιος,
Dieu grand et éternel,
2. ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν βασιλευόντων, καὶ κύριος τῶν κυριευόντων,
roi de ceux qui règnent et seigneur de ceux qui exercent la seigneurie,
3. ὁ κατ' εἰκόνα τῆς ἐπουρανίου διακοσμήσεως
qui d'après l'image de l'ordre céleste
4. τὴν ἐπίγειον ταύτην πολιτείαν συστησάμενος,
as organisé cette société terrestre
5. καὶ θέμενος ἐν αὐτῇ ἀρχὰς καὶ ἐξουσίας
et as mis en elle autorités et pouvoirs
6. κατὰ μίμησιν τῶν ἀγγελικῶν σου δυνάμεων
à l'imitation de tes forces angéliques
7. ὁ καὶ τὰς ἐπιγείους βασιλείας διαταξάμενος,
[toi] qui as institué les empires (royaumes) terrestres,
8. καὶ τὰς μετ' αὐτὰς δευτέρας ἀρχὰς ἰδρυσάμενος,
et as établi après eux des autorités secondaires
9. εἰς ἀλλήλων μὲν ἐπικουρίαν καὶ συνέχειαν,
pour le mutuel secours et sauvegarde,

¹⁰⁹ Le texte de la prière est ordonné selon les versets du rituel, pour faciliter la comparaison avec celui publié par Miguel Arranz (Annexe 3). Nous avons conservé l'orthographe d'origine.

10. κοινήν δὲ τῶν ἀρχομένων προστασίαν, καὶ λυσιτέλειαν.

et pour la commune protection et avantage des sujets.

11. Αὐτὸς Δέσποτα τῶν ἀπάντων,

Toi, maître de toute chose,

12. δι' οὗ βασιλεῖς βασιλεύουσι, καὶ ἡγεμόνες ἡγεμονεύουσι,

par lequel les empereurs règnent et les princes exercent leur pouvoir princier,

13. οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν ἐξουσία, εἰ μὴ παρὰ σοῦ, καὶ τὸν δοῦλον σου ... ὃν ἡρετίσω

car il n'existe d'autre pouvoir que le Tien, et à Ton serviteur N, que Tu as élu

14. καὶ ἡδύοκῃσας τὴν τῆς Οὐγγροβλαχίας ἀναδύσασθαι ἡγεμονίαν,

et que Tu t'es complu de faire couronner de la dignité princière de la

Hongrovalachie,

15. ἐνδύσον αὐτὸν τὴν ἐξ ὕψους δύναμιν καὶ ἀσφάλειαν,

habille-le de la force et de la sécurité d'en haut,

16. καὶ τὰ ἄρεστα σοι ποιεῖν διαπαντὸς καταξίωσον,

et rend-le digne de faire toujours ce qui T'est agréable,

17. φρουρήσον αὐτὸν ὑπὸ τὴν σκέπην τῶν πτερύχων σου,

garde-le sous la couverture de Tes ailes,

18. ἀσινῇ καὶ ἀλώβητον ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ὁρατῶν καὶ ἀοράτων ἐχθρῶν,

indemne et sauf devant tous les ennemis visibles et invisibles,

19. ἀνεπίφθονον καὶ ἀνεπιρέαστον τὴν ἀρχὴν αὐτῷ ταύτην διατήρησον

conserve lui cette autorité sans reproche ni offense,

20. εἰρηνικὴν διὰ βίου, καὶ ἀστασίαστον // f. 4^v // τὴν ζωὴν αὐτῷ χαριζόμενος,

lui faisant grâce d'une existence pacifique et sans trouble tout au long de sa vie,

21. ποιήσον αὐτὸν τοῖς πολέμοις φοβερὸν καὶ ἀνυπόστατον,

rend-le redoutable et irrésistible aux ennemis,

22. εὐμενῇ τοῖς ὑπὸ χεῖρα καὶ φίλιον.

bienveillant et philanthrope pour ceux qui l'entourent.

23. Ἐπίσκεψαι αὐτὸν τοῖς πλουσίοις οἰκτιρμοῖς,

Veille sur lui avec Ton abondante miséricorde,

24. καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν τῶν ἐκ γῆς ἀγαθῶν εὐφορίαν τῷ λαῷ σου δώρησαι,

et fais don à Ton peuple de toute l'abondance des biens de la terre,

25. ἀξιῶν αὐτὸν καὶ πάντας ἡμᾶς καὶ τῆς ἐπουρανίου βασιλείας σου.

en rendant lui et nous tous dignes de Ton règne céleste

[Ἐκφώνως :]

[Doxologie :]

26. Ἵνα διὰ πάντων δοξάζεται σου τὸ παναγίου ὄνομα,

Pour que par toute chose soit glorifié Ton tout-saint nom,

27. τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος. Ἀμήν.

Du Père et du Fils et du Saint-Esprit. Amen.

Apoi, după cetirea molitvei, îl unge cu Sfântul ...¹¹⁰ și, luându-l episcopii de mâini, îl pun în scaunul cel domnesc. Ieșind și mitropolitul din oltar, șade la locul său ; asemenea și episcopii. Apoi, diaconul începe ecteniile și preotul vozglașenia și otpustul¹¹¹. Cântareții polihronismos. După aceasta, ieșind domnul din biserică, tot cu alaiu merge la curtea domnească, unde, fiind gătit scaunul cel domnesc, să suie într-însul, însă nu șade jos, ci // f. 5^r // în picioare și cu cuca împărătească¹¹² pe cap, fiind de față și mitropolitul cu episcopii și cu toată boierimea, și să cetește de cătră divan avfendi¹¹³ fermanul cel împărătesc. După aceasta, fiind tălmăcit și rumânește, să cetește de cătră vistierul cel mare. Șăzând în scaun și isprăvindu-să sărutarea mâinii domnului de cătră boieri. Și merg cu toți într-ale sale.

[Ensuite, après avoir lu la prière, il l'oint avec le saint ... et, après, les évêques le prennent par la main et l'installent sur le trône princier. Le métropolitain sort de l'autel à son tour et s'assoit à sa place, de même que les évêques. Ensuite, le diacre commence les ekténies [litanies] et le prêtre la doxologie et le renvoi. Les chantres [chantent le] polihronismos [longue vie]. Ensuite, le prince sort de l'église et se rend à la cour princière, accompagné toujours par sa suite solennelle, et là, le trône princier étant déjà préparé, il y monte, mais ne s'assoit pas dessus mais il reste debout portant le bonnet impérial sur la tête, étant présents également le métropolitain et les évêques et tous les boyards, et le divan-effendi lit le ferman impérial. Après quoi, le ferman étant aussi traduit en roumain, il est lu par le grand trésorier. [Le prince] s'assoit sur [son] trône et après que les boyards baisent la main du prince tout le monde va à ses affaires.

¹¹⁰ Espace blanc dans le texte. La référence devrait se faire au saint myron ou bien à l'huile sainte, mais il n'est pas clair quelle était la substance employée pour l'onction des princes.

¹¹¹ *Otpust*, mot d'origine slave, correspond au grec *ἀπόλυσις* ; voir ci-dessous, note 118.

¹¹² Il s'agit d'un couvre-chef richement orné qui avait remplacé, probablement dès le XVII^e siècle, sinon plus tôt, la couronne princière. On l'appelle « impérial », parce qu'il fait partie des insignes accordés au nouveau prince par le sultan.

¹¹³ *Divan-efendi* – le secrétaire du prince pour la langue turque, P. Strihan, « Divan Effendi în Țara Românească și Moldova în secolele XVII-XVIII », *Studii Revistă de Istorie*, 21/5, 1968, p. 881-896.

Annexe 2

Le rituel de couronnement du prince de la Valachie
selon Dionysios Phôteinos *Ιστορία τῆς πάλαι Δακίας τὰ νῦν Τρανσυλβανίας,*
***Βλαχίας καὶ Μολδαβίας*, t. 3, Vienne, 1819, p. 442-443¹¹⁴**

Μὲ τοιαύτην λοιπὸν παράταξιν, καὶ μὲ τὸν ἀδιάκοπον κρότον ὅλων τῶν Καμπάνων τῶν Μοναστηρίων καὶ ἐκκλησιῶν, εἰσέρχεται ἐν Βουκουρεστίῳ. Ὁ δὲ Μητροπολίτης μετὰ τῶν ἐπισκόπων, εὐρίσκεται εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τῆς παλαιᾶς Κούρτης, ὅπου ἦτον τὸ πάλαι ἡ καθέδρα τῶν ἡγεμόνων. Κακεῖθεν διαβαίνουσα ἡ παράταξις ἴσταται, καὶ καταβαίνει ὁ ἡγεμὼν μὲ ὅλους τοὺς ἄρχοντας, ἵνα εἰσέλθῃ εἰς τὸν ναόν. Ὁ δὲ Μητροπολίτης μετὰ τῶν ἐπισκόπων τὸν ὑποδέχεται εἰς τὴν πύλην, ἐνδεδυμένος τὴν ἀρχιερατικὴν στολὴν, καὶ μὲ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον εἰς τὰς χεῖρας, καὶ ψάλλοντες οἱ ψάλται τὸ Ἄξιον ἐστίν, εἰσέρχεται ὁ ἡγεμὼν ἔσωθεν, τὸν ὅποιον λαμβάνοντες ἐκ τῶν χειρῶν ὅτε Μητροπολίτης καὶ οἱ ἐπίσκοποι, καὶ ἐμβάζοντες αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ ἅγιον βῆμα, τὸν περιφέρουσι γύρωθεν τῆς ἀγίας τραπέζης, ψάλλοντες τὸ Ἡσαΐα χόρευε, καὶ τὰ λοιπά. Ἐπειτα ἐξάγοντες διὰ τῆς ὥραίας πύλης αὐτὸν ἐκ τοῦ βήματος, ἐκφωνεῖ τὴν τοῦ Μητροπολίτου φήμην ὁ ἀρχidiaκονος.

Δεῖνος τοῦ Πανιερωτάτου, καὶ Θεοπροβλήτου Μητροπολίτου τῆς ἀγιωτάτης Μητροπόλεως Οὐγγροβλαχίας, ὑπερτίμου καὶ ἐξάρχου Πλαγινῶν¹¹⁵, καὶ τὸν τόπον ἐπέχοντος Καισαρείας, Καππαδοκίας, πολλὰ τὰ ἔτη.

Ἀναβιβάζοντες δὲ καὶ τὸν ἡγεμόνα εἰς τὸν θρόνον αὐτοῦ, ἄρχονται ἀμέσως οἱ ψάλται νὰ ψάλλουν.

Πολυχρόνιον ποίησις κύριος ὁ Θεὸς τὸν εὐσεβέστατον καὶ φιλόχριστον ἡμῶν Αὐθέντην καὶ ἡγεμόνα πάσης Οὐγγροβλαχίας ... σὺν τῇ εὐσεβεστάτῃ Δόμνῃ καὶ τοῖς τέκνοις αὐτῶν, κύριε φύλαττε εἰς πολλὰ τὰ ἔτη.

Ὁ δὲ διάκονος ἐκφωνῶν τὰς αἰτήσεις¹¹⁶, ἅμα ὡς τελειώσῃ, ἄρχεται ὁ ἱεροκύριξ ἔπ' ἄμβωνος¹¹⁷, ἢ ὁ Μητροπολίτης ἱστάμενος εἰς τὸν θρόνον τοῦ νὰ ἐκφωνήσῃ λόγον, διὰ τὴν αἰσίαν καθίδρυσιν τοῦ ἡγεμόνος εἰς τὸν τῆς Βλαχίας θρόνον καὶ τελειώνει μὲ εὐχὴν τῆς αὐτοῦ στερεώσεως. Ἐπειτα καὶ ὁ ἡγεμὼν

¹¹⁴ Nous reproduisons en ce qui suit seulement le rituel observé à l'église, laissant de côté la cérémonie qui se déroulait à la cour princière.

¹¹⁵ Référence est faite à la juridiction extra-territoriale des métropolites de la Valachie. La question des limites géographiques de cette juridiction n'est pas encore élucidée ; voir N. Șerbănescu, « Titulatura mitropolitelor, jurisdicția, hotarele și reședințele mitropoliei », *BOR*, 77/7-10 1959, p. 698-721, et, plus récemment, Șt. Andreescu, « Exarhatul. Geneza instituției în Țara Românească și Moldova », *RI*, 19/1, 2008, p. 21-27.

¹¹⁶ Série d'invocations prononcées par le diacre ; à chacune le peuple répond : *Παράσχου Κύριε*. Le nom provient des derniers mots : « παρὰ τοῦ Κυρίου αἰτησώμεθα », L. Clugnet, *Dictionnaire grec-français des noms liturgiques*, Paris, 1895, *sub voce*.

¹¹⁷ Il s'agit du discours prononcé depuis l'ambon (« ὁ λόγος ἐπ' ἄμβωνος ») ; voir la description de la cérémonie de couronnement des princes à Constantinople, dans notre étude « Byzance d'empereur et Byzance d'Église ».

προσφέρων εὐχαριστήριον πρὸς Θεὸν λόγον, καὶ ἐντ' αὐτῷ παραιναιτικὸν πρὸς τοὺς ἄρχοντας, ἄρχονται αὖθις νὰ ψάλλουν τὸν πολυχρονισμόν καὶ εὐθὺς ἡ ἀπόλυσις¹¹⁸.

Traduction

C'est avec une telle pompe et accompagné du son incessant des toutes les cloches des monastères et des églises que [le prince] entre dans Bucarest. Le métropolite et les évêques se trouvent dans l'église de la Vieille Cour, où était jadis la résidence [trône] des princes. Là, la procession solennelle s'arrête et le prince et tous les boyards mettent pied à terre afin d'entrer dans l'église. Vêtu de ses vêtements sacerdotaux et l'Évangile à la main, le métropolite accueille le prince à la porte, avec les évêques, et les psaltes chantent « Il est digne ». Le prince entre [dans l'église] et le métropolite et les évêques le prennent par la main et l'introduisent dans le saint autel, où, en marchant autour de la sainte table, on chante « la danse d'Isaïe » et les autres. Après qu'ils le sortent de l'autel par les portes royales, l'archidiacre dit à haute voix en l'honneur du métropolite : « Longues années à untel, très saint et promu par Dieu métropolite de la Hungrovalachie, très honorable exarque des territoires d'outre les montagnes et vicaire des sièges de Césarée et de Cappadoce ! ».

Après avoir installé le prince dans sa stalle, les psaltes commencent aussitôt à chanter : « Que Dieu accorde de longues années au très pieux et ami du Christ notre seigneur et prince de toute la Hungrovalachie Seigneur, garde-le pour de longues années avec sa princesse et ses enfants ».

Le diacre prononce les *αἰτήσεις* et quand il finit, le prédicateur commence [la parole] à l'ambon ; le métropolite se tenant debout devant sa stalle, prononce à haute voix un discours souhaitant au prince un heureux avènement au trône de la Valachie et finit en priant pour son affermissement. Après quoi le prince adresse un discours de remerciement à Dieu et des conseils aux boyards. On recommence à chanter le polychronismos [longue vie] et c'est tout de suite la fin.

¹¹⁸ *Ἀπόλυσις* – le renvoi des assistants par l'officiant à la fin du service, comportant la récitation d'une prière spéciale, variable en fonction de la fête et de la nature de la cérémonie, L. Clugnet, *Dictionnaire grec-français, sub voce αἰτήσεις*.

Annexe 3

**Εὐχή ἐπὶ προχειρέσει καίσαρος, νοβελισίμου καὶ κουροπαλάτου.
 Prière pour la désignation d'un César, d'un nobilissime et d'un
 couropalate¹¹⁹**

1. ὁ Θεὸς μέγας, ὁ αἰώνιος,
O Dieu grand et éternel,
2. ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν βασιλευόντων καὶ κύριος τῶν κυριευόντων,
roi de ceux qui règnent et seigneur de ceux qui exercent la seigneurie,
3. ὁ κατ' εἰκόνα τῆς ἐπουρανίου καὶ θείας διακοσμήσεως,
qui d'après le modèle de l'ordre céleste et divin
4. τὴν ἐπίγειον ταύτην πολιτείαν ποιησάμενος,
as créé cette société terrestre
5. καὶ θέμενος ἐν αὐτῇ ἀρχὰς καὶ ἐξουσίας
et as mis en elle autorités et pouvoirs
6. κατὰ μίμησιν τῶν ἀγγελικῶν σου δυνάμεων,
à l'imitation des forces angéliques
7. ὁ βασιλέα τὸν ἐπὶ γῆς καταστησάμενος,
[Toi] qui as installé un roi sur la terre
8. καὶ τὰς μετ' αὐτὸν δευτέρας ἀρχὰς ἰδρυσάμενος,
et as établi après lui des autorités secondaires
9. εἰς ἀλλήλων μὲν ἐπικουρίαν καὶ συνέχειαν,
pour le mutuel secours et sauvegarde
10. κοινὴν δὲ τῶν ἀρχομένων προστασίαν καὶ λυσιτέλειαν.
et pour la commune protection et avantage des sujets.
11. αὐτὸς δέσποτα τῶν ἀπάντων,
Toi, maître de toute chose,
12. καὶ τὸν δοῦλον σου τόνδε ὃν ἐκ πάντων ἐξελέξω,
à Ton serviteur N – que Tu as choisi entre tous
13. καὶ εὐδόκησας τὴν τοῦδε ἐνδύσασθαι ἀξίαν,
et que Tu T'es complu de faire revêtir de la dignité de N –
14. ἐνδυσον αὐτὸν τὴν ἐξ ὕψους δύναμιν καὶ ἀσφάλειαν,
habille-le de la force et de la sécurité d'en haut,
15. φρούρησον αὐτὸν ὑπὸ τὴν σκέπην τῶν πτερύχων σου,
garde-le sous la couverture de tes ailes,
16. ἀνεπίφθονον αὐτῷ καὶ ἀνεπιρέαστον τὴν ἀρχὴν ταύτην διατήρησον,
conserve-lui cette autorité sans reproche ni offense,
17. εἰρηνικὴν καὶ διὰ βίου καὶ ἀστασίαστον τὴν ζωὴν αὐτῷ χαριζόμενος,
lui faisant grâce d'une existence pacifique et sans trouble tout au long de sa vie,

¹¹⁹ Reproduit d'après M. Arranz, « Couronnement royal », p. 103. Voir aussi idem, *L'Eucologio costantinopolitano*, p. 338.

18. ποιήσον αὐτὸν τοῖς πολεμίοις φοβερὸν καὶ ἀνυπόστατον,
rends-le redoutable et irrésistible aux ennemis,

19. εὐμενῇ τοῖς ὑπὸ χεῖρα καὶ φιλάν[θρωπον],
bienveillant et philanthrope pour ceux qui l'entourent,

20. ἀξιῶν καὶ τῆς ἐπουρανίου σου βασιλείας.
le rendant digne aussi de Ton règne céleste

(Ἐκφώνως)

(Doxologie :)

21. Ἵνα διὰ πάντων δοξάζεται σου τὸ πανάγιον ὄνομα τοῦ
Pour que par toute chose soit glorifié Ton nom tout-saint

22. Πατὴρ καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος, νῦν.
Du Père et du Fils et du Saint-Esprit, maintenant.

12. $\epsilon\zeta\chi\rho\eta\iota$ $\epsilon\gamma\omicron$ $\pi\delta\kappa\rho\omicron\upsilon\breve{\omicron}$ $\kappa\rho\upsilon\lambda\delta$ $\tau\upsilon\omicron\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\iota\omicron$,
garde-le sous la couverture de Tes ailes,
13. $\mu\epsilon\zeta\alpha\zeta\omicron\rho\eta\omega$ η $\mu\epsilon\mu\alpha\pi\acute{\alpha}\varsigma\tau\eta\omega$ $\mu\alpha\gamma\acute{\alpha}\lambda\omicron$ $\tau\omicron\gamma\omega$ $\epsilon\zeta\beta\lambda\upsilon\delta\iota$.
conserve-lui cette autorité sans déshonneur et sans tentation,
14. $\mu\eta\rho\eta\omega$ η $\mu\epsilon\beta\lambda\alpha\zeta\eta\epsilon\eta\omega$ $\mu\eta\tau\epsilon$ $\epsilon\mu\delta$ $\delta\alpha\rho\delta\iota$.
accorde-lui une vie pacifique et sans tâche
15. $\epsilon\zeta\tau\upsilon\omicron\rho\eta$ $\epsilon\gamma\omicron$ $\beta\rho\acute{\alpha}\eta\epsilon$ $\epsilon\tau\rho\acute{\alpha}\mu\eta\alpha$ η $\mu\epsilon\mu\omicron\upsilon\beta\epsilon\delta\iota\mu\alpha$.
Fais-le redoutable et invincible en guerre,
16. $\beta\lambda\gamma\omicron\rho\alpha\zeta\delta\eta\alpha$ η $\gamma\lambda\kappa\omicron\lambda\upsilon\beta\eta\alpha$
bienveillant et philanthrope [pour ceux qui l'entourent]
17. η $\sigma\pi\delta\beta\eta$ $\epsilon\gamma\omicron$ η $\mu\epsilon\mu\omicron\mu\delta$ $\tau\upsilon\omicron\epsilon\mu\delta$ $\iota\epsilon\rho\tau\epsilon\iota\omicron$.
le rendant aussi digne de Ton règne céleste.
18. $\epsilon\zeta\gamma\gamma\lambda\alpha$. $\epsilon\gamma\kappa\omicron$ $\delta\acute{\alpha}$ ω $\nu\varsigma\epsilon$ $\mu\upsilon\sigma\lambda\alpha\upsilon\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\tau\epsilon\varsigma\alpha$ $\mu\eta\tau\omicron\epsilon$ $\eta\mu\alpha$ $\tau\upsilon\omicron\epsilon$, $\delta\iota\alpha$ η $\sigma\eta\alpha$ η ϵ $\delta\chi\alpha$. η η $\mu\eta\mu\omicron$
(Doxologie :) Pour que par toute chose soit glorifié Ton très saint Nom, le Père
et le Fils et le Saint Esprit, maintenant et toujours.
De-acia $\mu\omicron\mu\lambda\delta\iota$ $\eta\alpha$ $\beta\epsilon$, $\varsigma\iota$ $\omicron\tau\mu\sigma\tau$. $\varsigma\iota$ $\eta\mu\alpha$ $\tau\iota$ η , $\mu\upsilon\sigma\lambda\omicron\upsilon\upsilon\alpha\varsigma\tau\epsilon$ -l $\varsigma\iota$ $\mu\epsilon\alpha\rho\gamma\acute{\alpha}$.
De là : « Seigneur prends pitié de nous » et la fin. Donne-lui des conseils, bénis-
le et il peut s'en aller.

Annexe 5

**Répertoire des prières de couronnement des princes de Valachie et de
Moldavie par ordre chronologique (jusqu'en 1821)¹²¹**

Saint-Pétersbourg, Bibliothèque nationale de Russie (Российская Национальная Библиотека), cote Сол. 1015/1124. Paroissial de Solovky, ff. 64^r-65^r (acéphale ; le titre manque). Slave. Écrit au monastère de Zographou au Mont Athos pour le prince moldave Petru Rareș. 1532. I. Biliarsky, « Le rite de couronnement des tsars », p. 96-97 et 103-106 (édition critique du texte et bibliographie) ; V. Barbu, Gh. Lazăr, « *Coronatio* », p. 44-45 (mention et bibliographie).

Sofia, Bibliothèque nationale « Saints Cyrille et Méthode », ms. sl. 954, ff. 150^v-154^v (УІНЬ ВЪІВАЕМЫИ НА ПОСТАВЛЕНІЕ ЦР҃Ь). Slave. Écrit probablement en Valachie. Début du XVII^e siècle. I. Biliarsky, « Молитви за царя. (Към истроията за средновековния славянски Евхологион) », *Исторически преглед*, 5, 1991, p. 74-89 (description du manuscrit ; commentaires) ; idem, « Le rite de couronnement des tsars », p. 96-97 et 103-106 (édition critique du texte et bibliographie).

Moscou, ms. Российский государственный архив древних актов (RGADA), fond 188, inv. 1, n° 85, ff. 50^v-53^r (УІНЬ ВЪІВАЕМЫИ НА ПОСТАВЛЕНІЕ ЦР҃Ь). 1612. Slave. Écrit en Moldavie sur la commande du métropolite Anastasie Crimca (m. 1629). Al. Pascal, « Surse noi, descoperite recent, privind viața și activitatea mitropolitului Anastasie Crimca », dans *Dragomirna. Ctitori și restauratori*, Sfânta mănăstire Dragomirna, 2015, p. 140-146 (description du manuscrit). Inédit ; publication en préparation.

Bucarest, Bibliothèque Nationale, fond Colecții speciale, ms. sl. 4251, f. 59^r (УІНЬ ВЪІВАЕМЫИ НА ПОСТАВЛЕНІЕ ЦР҃Ь). Slave. Valachie, milieu du XVII^e siècle. V. Barbu, Gh. Lazăr, « *Coronatio* », p. 45 (description).

Bucarest, BAR ms. sl. 738, ff. 12^v-14^v (УІНЬ ВЪІВАЕМЫИ НА ПОСТАВЛЕНІЕ ЦР҃Ь). Slave. Écrit en Valachie, XVII^e siècle. P. P. Panaitescu, Z. Mihail, *Catalogul manuscriselor slavo-române și slave din Biblioteca Academiei Române*, vol. 3, partea I-a, Bucarest, 2018, p. 367-368 (description du manuscrit) ; Z. Mihail, « Două Liturghiere arhieresti copiate de ieromonahul Ghervasie de la Putna (1676-1677) », *Analele Putnei*, 7/1, 2011, p. 37-62 (description).

¹²¹ Nous n'avons retenu ici les documents descriptifs (par exemple, D. Cantemir, *Descriptio*, p. 154) ni les indications offertes par Gheorgachi le second logothète dans son recueil ; voir D. Simonescu, *Literatura românească*, p. 265. Ces textes, qui exigent un travail de contextualisation approprié, seront abordés dans une étude séparée, que nous préparons avec notre collègue et ami Ivan Biliarsky.

Bucarest, BAR ms. roum. 1790, ff. 93^v-95^r (*Rânduiala carele se face la punerea împăratului sau domnului*). Slave avec des indications de rituel en roumain. Écrit en Valachie sur la commande du métropolite local Ștefan, après 1640 et avant 1658. V. Barbu, Gh. Lazăr, « *Coronatio* », p. 45-46 (description), 62-65 (texte) ; *Manuscris trilingv* (description, rapports entre les diverses rédactions). Nouvelle édition critique accompagnée du fac-similé en cours.

Cluj-Napoca, BAR ms. roum. 1216, ff. 75^r-76^r (*Rânduiala carele se face la punerea împăratului sau a domnului*). Slave avec des indications de rituel en roumain. Écrit en Valachie, probablement sur la commande du métropolite local Ștefan, après 1640 et avant 1658. V. Barbu, Gh. Lazăr, « *Coronatio* », p. 46-47 (description) ; *Manuscris trilingv* (description, rapports entre les diverses rédactions) ; *Arhieraticon trilingv* (description, commentaires, fac-similés).

Iași, Bibliothèque Universitaire, ms. slavo-roumain (cote non communiquée), ff. 31^r-32^r (*Rânduiala ce se face la încoronația domnilor*). Roumain. Moldavie, probablement 1705. P. Mihail, I. Caproșu, « Despre ceremonialul domnesc », *AIIAI*, 8, 1971, p. 397-399 (description et édition).

Bucarest, BAR ms. roum. 1138, ff. 50^r-52^v (*Rugăciunea care să citește la punerea domnului al vreunii țări*). Roumain. Valachie. Début du XVIII^e siècle. V. Barbu, Gh. Lazăr, « *Coronatio* », p. 47-48 (description), 67-68 (édition).

Τάξις γινομένη εἰς στέψιν αὐθέντου. Grec. Écrit probablement en Moldavie. Rédigé par Georgios Papadopoulos, professeur à l'Académie princière de Iași. À dater aux années 1720-1730. *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor culese de Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki*, vol. 13/1, p. 535-536 (édition) ; *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor culese de Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki*, vol. 13/2, *Texte grecești privitoare la istoria românească din anii 1592-1837*, traduction par George Murnu et Constantin Litzica, Bucarest, 1914, p. 481-482 (traduction en roumain).

Bucarest, BAR ms. roum. 4979, ff. 15^r-17^r (*Rugăciunea care să citește la punerea domnului vreunii țări*). Roumain. Valachie. Fin du XVIII^e siècle, cca 1775-1790. V. Barbu, Gh. Lazăr, « *Coronatio* », p. 48 (description).

Liturghie, Iași, 1794, ff. 163^v-164^v (*Rânduiala ce să face la încoronație domnilor*). Texte imprimé. Roumain. I. Bianu, N. Hodoș, *Bibliografia românească veche*, vol. 2, p. 365-366, n° 578 (description du livre) ; P. Mihail, I. Caproșu, « Despre ceremonialul domnesc », p. 397 (mention).

Bucarest, BAR ms. roum. 1839, ff. 1^r-2^v (*Molitfa când să face domnu*). Roumain. Moldavie. Fin du XVIII^e ou début du XIX^e siècle. R. G. Păun, « Încoronarea în Țara Românească și Moldova în secolul XVIII. Principii, atitudini, simboluri », *RI*, V/7-8, 1994, p. 744, note 4 (mention) ; V. Barbu, Gh. Lazăr, « *Coronatio* », p. 48 (description). Inédit ; publication en préparation.

Bucarest, BAR ms. roum. 3567, ff. 3^v-5^r. Sans titre. Description du rituel en roumain ; texte de la prière en grec. Valachie. 1813. R. G. Păun, « *Dinamica*

politică » (description et publication), idem, « Le couronnement des princes “phanariotes” et la “Renaissance byzantine” » (brève description, publication). Texte analysé dans le présent article.

Abbreviations

AARMSI = Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile Secțiunii Istorice, Bucarest

AIIAI = Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie « A.D. Xenopol » din Iași

BOR = Biserica Ortodoxă Română, Bucarest

OCP = Orientalia Christiana Periodica, Rome

REB = Revue des Études Byzantines, Paris

RER = Revue des Études Roumaines, Paris-Iași

RESEE = Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes, Bucarest

RI = Revista Istorică, Bucarest

ЗРВИ = Зборник Радова Византолошког Института, Belgrade

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