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Contents

<i>Contributors of this volume</i>	7
<i>About Us</i>	9

STUDIES

István M. BUGÁR <i>Is there a life without a body?</i>	11
Kornél NAGY <i>The Foundation of the Armenian (Ruthenian) College of Lviv (Lemberg) (1664–1681)</i>	35
Ilaria VIGORELLI <i>L'unità dell'uomo in Gregorio di Nissa. La distinzione corpo-anima nella dottrina della salvezza</i>	77
András DOBOS <i>Tropari ai makarismi del venerdì santo nel Typikon dell'Anastasis</i>	95
Atanasia Maria SMETANIAK <i>La μετένοια come elemento della preghiera del corpo nell'Apophthegmata Patrum e nel Pratum spirituale</i>	119
Evariszt URBÁN <i>The role of the function of the servant (δοῦλος) as the steward of the ἀπόφασις in the divine Liturgies of Byzantine origin</i>	137

BOOK REVIEWS

Gaetano Colantuono, <i>Unioni tardoantiche. Documenti conciliari e giuridici per una storia sociale del matrimonio nella tarda antichità</i>	157
Szilveszter Terdik, <i>A Munkácsi Egyházmegye festészete a XIX. században [Painting in the Eparchy of Mukachevo (Munkács) in the 19th Century]</i> . . .	167
Bernadett Puskás, <i>Puskás László. A szent vonzásában [László Puskás: Attracted by the Sacred]</i>	168

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Is there a life without a body?

István M. BUGÁR

1. Early Christian views on the soul-body relation 2. Personal eschatology; Intermediate state, resurrection 3. Pseudo-Justin, Melito of Sardis, Hippolytus, Pseudo-Josephus/Origen, Aphrahat, Ephrem the Syrian

In Richard Attenborough's *Shadowlands* we can hear the following dialogue between Joy Gresham and "Christopher Riley", just introduced to each-other in the company of C. S. Lewis (Jack), at a Christmas reception in the senior common room of Magdalene College, Oxford:

PROF. Am I right in assuming that you are from the USA?

RILEY

JOY Yes, I am.

PROF. Then perhaps you can satisfy my curiosity in a related

RILEY matter. I have always understood Americans to be hard-writing, tough-talking, and one-sensed sort of people, yet Jack tells me, his children's stories sell very well there. Who can be buying them?

JOY Well, Prof. Riley, we are not all cowboys, you know. Have you read any of Jack's children's books?

PROF. Jack has read abstracts aloud to me. It is one of his tests of

RILEY friendship.

JOY Why, I think they are rather magical.

- PROF. Congratulations, Jack, you seem to have found a soul-mate.
RILEY mate.
- JACK I thought you believed we didn't have souls, Christopher?
- PROF. Well, yes, now I regard the soul as an essentially feminine
RILEY accessory, *anima*, quite different from *animus*, the male variant. This is how I explain the otherwise puzzling difference between the sexes; where men have intellect, women have soul.
- JOY As you say Prof Riley, I'm from the US, and different cultures have different modes of discourse. ... Are you trying to be offensive or just merely stupid?

I have strong reasons to suppose that who stands behind the fictive character of Christopher Riley is nobody else than Lewis' colleague at Magdalene College, one of the most influential philosophers of the twentieth century, Gilbert Ryle². Here he represents a stance that has since become ubiquitous. As Mark Edwards has put it:

- 1 *Shadowland* (1993), film dir. by Sir Richard Attenborough 36'52"- 38'00" (based on a television film [Thames Television 1985] and a stage play [1989] by William Nicholson, original script by Brian Sibley and Norman Stone [*I Call It Joy*]). Cf. Brian Sibley, *Shadowlands: The True Story of C. S. Lewis and Joy Davidman*, London, 1998, where, however, the character of Riley does not appear.
- 2 "Dick Lucas' early years and what C.S. Lewis was like as a professor" [audio interview with transcript] (Part 1 of 5) <https://www.leadershipresources.org/dick-lucas-early-years-and-what-c-s-lewis-was-like-as-a-professor/>: "He then became very unpopular with the senior faculty at Magdalen College. Magdalen was a godless college and a very famous college, very atheistical. People like Gilbert Ryle the philosopher. So [Lewis] got a rough ride there. He never made professor at Oxford." Cf. also A. J. Barkman, "The Philosophical Christianity of C.S. Lewis: Its Sources, Content and Formation" PhD Diss. Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 2009 (online at <https://research.vu.nl/en/publications/the-philosophical-christianity-of-cs-lewis-its-sources-content-an>) p. 5.n. 2; p. 58. n. 205; and p. 246 (a quote from Lewis' *De Descriptione*

One can seldom speak of the soul in modern English without being taken for either a Christian or a poet³.

Indeed, contemporary philosophers do not talk about soul – but they do talk about mind; but we must remind ourselves that when soul was introduced into the philosophical discussion, mainly⁴ by Plato⁵, it was but a synonym for the self and for the mind, the main function of it being cognition. In the scene above Prof. Riley also does talk about the mind (*animus*), as did the historical Ryle, too, in

Temporum). I did not have access either to the earlier film of the same title made for television by William Nicholson in 1985 or its stage play version from 1989.

3 Mark Julian Edwards, *Origen against Plato*, Aldershot, 2002, 87.

4 The word is attested in the Pythagorean theory of the transmigration of souls (Xenophanes fr. B7) and in the seemingly non-verbatim quotation of Anaximenes, fr. B2 (cf. Diogenes of Apollonia B5), and becomes a key concept for Heraclitus (fr. B13; 36; 45; 68; 77; 85; 98; 107; 115; 117; 118; 126) but all this does not amount to a philosophical discussion of the concept. K. Kerényi might be correct that the term did not play a role in Empedocles' anthropology and eschatology: Karl Kerényi, *Pythagoras und Orpheus. Präludien zu einer zukünftigen Geschichte der Orphik und des Pythagoreismus*, Zürich, 1950²; at least it is conspicuously missing in the verbatim fragments of Empedocles (the only occurrence would be fr. B138 where it can simply mean "life"). In Anaxagoras, ψυχή is a principle of life common to humans and animals (fr. B4; 12), while having νοῦς is a human privilege (fr. B12). For Plato, ψυχή can have either of these functions, with a definite emphasis on the latter (as the *true* nature of soul): see next note.

5 The main function of ψυχή is φρόνησις in the *Phaedo*, even if the soul remains here and there the principle of life/motion/change. Cf. *Alcibiades* 117b; 132d; 133c (on modern discussion of the authenticity of this dialogue see J. Annas, "Self-Knowledge in Early Plato", in *Platonic Investigations* (ed. Dominic J. O'Meara), Washington, DC, 1985, 112-115; Nicholas D. Smith, "Did Plato write the *Alcibiades I*?", in *Apeiron* 37 (2004), 93-108; Paulina Remes, "Reason to Care: The Object and Structure of Self-Knowledge in the *Alcibiades I*", in *Apeiron* 46 (2013), 274-277.

an influential monograph.⁶ But he did so only to tell that to speak about mind as something distinct from the body is like saying that one bought two gloves *and besides* also a pair (of gloves)⁷.

This is in striking contrast with Antiquity, especially Platonism-dominated Late Antiquity. Socrates, to start with, asks Alcibiades in Plato's dialogue entitled after the latter, which of the three the self is: soul, body, or a conjunction of the two⁸. They answer the last two options negatively and conclude that we are nothing but soul. This position has gradually become the dominant philosophical stance in Roman and Byzantine times⁹. The typical attitude towards the body is plastically expressed in Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus*

Plotinus [...] seemed ashamed of being in the body. [...] And he objected so strongly to sitting to a painter or sculptor that he said [...] „Why [...] leave behind me a longer-lasting image of the image, as if it was something genuinely worth looking at?”¹⁰

Recent philosophers (and most people from scientists to common folk) have tended to choose the second option offered by Plato's Socrates, while the Platonist choice appears an outdated, old-fashioned, even impossible one. In this paper I ask the question where early Christian thinkers stood in this respect. Of course, I cannot give a comprehensive overview. Neither space, nor my competence would suffice for that. Indeed, there has lately been a vivid theological

6 Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of Mind*, New York, 1949.

7 Cf. *Ibid.* 22.

8 Plato, *Alcibiades I* 128e-130d.

9 On this, see the collective volume *A History of Mind and Body in Late Antiquity* (eds. Anna Marmodoro – Sophie Cartwright), Cambridge, 2017, 3-4.

10 Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus* in Plotinus, *Enneads* (tr. A. H. Armstrong), I LCL 440, 1989, 3. On Plotinus see Lloyd P. Gerson, “Plotinus”, in *A History of Mind and Body*, 67-84 and Stephen R. L. Clark, “Plotinus: Body and soul”, in *The Cambridge Companion to Plotinus* (ed. Lloyd P. Gerson), Cambridge, 1996, 275-291.

and historical interest in the issue. Among others¹¹, a recent collective volume, a workshop at the last Oxford Patristic Conference¹², and our present symposium are also a witness to this. Thus, what I am able to do in this paper is that by musing on the problem, I believe, I shall shed some light on the early history of one of the positions early theologians took in the issue detailed above. Out of the three options offered by Socrates they choose neither the Platonic nor the modern physicalist view but the third one: we are body *and* soul.

Resurrection and Body as an Image of God

The doctrine of the resurrection is both a source and a test case for Christian anthropology as is the whole issue of death and afterlife, including the so-called middle-state. A thorough consideration of this question, however, has to take into account a philosophical-theological conundrum, including a reconsideration of all our anthropological and cosmological concepts, such as matter, body, soul, mind, spirit, person, time, space. We should, for example, refrain from naively operating with an absolute linear concept of time in both the empirical and the transcendent world, or to speak about

11 On the theological issue, see e.g. Joseph Ratzinger, *Eschatology: Death and Eternal Life* (trans. Michael Waldstein), Washington, DC, 1988, 104-161; Georges Florovsky, "The Anthropomorphites in the Egyptian Desert", in *Aspects of Church History*, Belmont, Mass., 1975, 89-96; "Theophilus of Alexandria and Apa Aphou of Pemdje", *Ibid.* 97-129; John D. Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church* (ed. Paul McPartlan), New York, 2006, 263-269; esp. 279-283; cf. also Christopher West, "Preface" and Michael Waldstein, "Introduction" in John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body* (tr. Michael Waldstein), Boston, 2006, xxvii-xxx; 94-104.

12 E.g. the workshop "Bodily Resurrection vs Immortality: Philosophy, Medicine, Theology" at the last Oxford Patristic Conference (I refer to several papers below).

embodiment or disembodiment without considering what exactly the distance of this body and resurrected body in the authors concerned is, or what they mean by a body in heaven.

We may begin with an assertion of St Paul in his autobiographical letter to the Galatians:

the life, which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God (Gal 2,20 KJV).

Now, is there also a life without the flesh? In the *First letter to the Corinthians*, roughly contemporary with that to the Galatians, arguing against those who deny that there is a resurrection of the body¹³, St Paul confirms that the afterlife is also a life in a body, although in a different body:

And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not *that body* that shall be [...] It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. (1Cor 15,37-8; 44 KJV)

In the following paper, however, I shall not dwell on this distinction between this-worldly and otherworldly bodies, but only on the permanence of the bodily aspect of our life. Neither shall I consider the possible difference between *flesh* (*sarx*) and *body* (*sōma*), since neither St Paul in the quotation above, nor the Patristic authors I shall examine make this distinction¹⁴.

Thus, keeping in mind all the philosophical issues hinted at above, but without entering the conceptual problems in detail, I now propose

13 1Cor 15,12-58.

14 In other words, it is not Pauline interpretation that is at stake in this paper, neither in the sense of reconstructing the conceptual framework of St Paul, nor of modern theologies which use Pauline texts as a pretext to deploy their own key ideas. For all this, one can consult Vito Limone “The Christian Conception of the Body and Paul’s Use of the Term *Sōma* in 1 Corinthians”, in *A History of Mind and Body*, 191-206. Here I am concerned with the Pauline *dictum* only as a point of reference for the authors I am dealing with in the present paper.

to look first at a definite set of early fathers how they dealt with the body. First of all, we have to see how this group of Christian thinkers is different and from whom.

When interaction between Christians and the Graeco-Roman culture started, philosophy was ever growingly dominated by Platonism. Not the fashionable and widespread esoteric movements of the age and their Christian counterparts, the so-called Gnostics alone, but also the initiators of Christian theology, Aristides, Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria and Origen made use of the Platonist weaponry and were even in their person to some extent or at some point attached to Platonic schools. Platonism seemed to be in many respects a natural ally to Christianity in its combat against contemporary Greco-Roman religion and the common way of life. Now, as we have seen, in the field of anthropology Platonism stood for a radical soul-body dualism, affirming the self-subsistent, independent and eternal existence of the soul as opposed to the lower and temporary body. Our real Self is identical with soul, to which body is only external, even an obstacle, something she had better get rid of for good. As far at least as anthropology is concerned, Origen was beyond doubt the most eloquent proponent of the Platonic view:

The Son of God [...] came not to bring peace on the earth, that is, to corporeal and sensible things, but a sword, and to cut through, if I may say so, the disastrous friendship of soul and body, so that the soul, committing herself to the spirit which was against the flesh, may enter into friendship with God¹⁵.

15 Origen, *Com. Jo* I 32(229); translation by Allan Menzies in ANF 9, 316. *Ibid.* II 6 Origen apparently degrades the significance of Incarnation as something base and of temporary value: "For He is also (called by Moses) true as opposed to shadow, token, and image, since this is indeed characteristic of the Word in the Open Heaven. For he is not the same on Earth as He is in heaven, inasmuch as He became flesh and spoke through shade, tokens, and images. However, the majority of those who are supposed to have believed are disciples

The religion of Incarnation, however, could not ignore the carnal side of human existence that was assumed and sanctified by God himself. Further, as Tertullian has observed, the doctrine of the incarnation and that of the resurrection of the flesh are closely interrelated¹⁶. From the beginning it should have been evident from the Athenian speech of St Paul as reported by St Luke that in spite of all common points with contemporary philosophy, a most central faith-fact of Christianity, the resurrection of the body is not one of them¹⁷, on the contrary, it is a dividing line between Christian theology and Hellenic Philosophy.

It is no surprise then that the fathers I shall consider expounded their theology of the body mainly in their apology for the carnal resurrection, like Hippolytus¹⁸, Pseudo-Justin¹⁹. (I leave aside the related texts of Tertullian, who has been a subject of a distinct paper²⁰.)

of the shade of the Word, and not of the true Word of God in the Open Heaven. Thus Jeremiah says: Christ the Lord is the spirit of our face, about whom we have said: «we shall live in his shadow among the nations»”.

16 Tertullian, *De carne Christi* 1; 25; *De resurrectione* 2.

17 AA 17,18; 32.

18 See CPG 1900-1901.

19 See Bernard Poderon, “Le contexte polémique du De Resurrectione attribué à Justin: destinataires et adversaires”, in *Studia Patristica* 31 (1997), 143-166; the work is attributed to Athenagoras by Martin Heimgartner, *Pseudo-Justin: Über die Auferstehung* PTS 54 Berlin, 2001, 193-233 (with a critical edition *Ibid.* 97-131); to Hippolytus believed to be identical with the author of the *Refutatio*: Alice Whealey, “Pseudo-Justin’s De resurrectione: Athenagoras or Hippolytus?”, in *Vigiliae Christianae* 60 (2006), 420-430. However, the author’s innovative hypothetical and neutral use of Greek philosophical theories is very distinct from that of the Roman author of the *Refutatio* or that of Athenagoras and is unparalleled in the works of Hippolytus (including the fragments of his work on the resurrection), and, for that matter, that of Tatian.

20 Tertullian, *De resurrectione* (CPL 19). On Tertullian further see Jonathan Barnes, “Anima Christiana”, in *Body and Soul in Ancient Philosophy* (eds. Dorothea Frede – Burkhard Reis), Berlin, 2009, 451-464.

Now let us see how their fourfold message concerning the question of the body is evolving in the polemical context.

First, these authors, like St Irenaeus²¹, maintain that human beings are composed of two indispensable aspects, soul and body, and only the two together make a (wo)man. The most lucid statement of this comes from a *De resurrectione* falsely attributed to Justin martyr:

What is a human being? What else than a rational animal composed of soul and body? Is the soul somehow in itself a human being? By no means, but it is the soul *of* a human being. Would you call the body a human being? By no means; you call it a body *of* a human being. None of these in itself makes a human being, but the composite out of the two [...] ²²

Of course, maintaining the composite nature of humanity does not automatically mean that the unity of soul and body is *essential* for being human. Origen, for example, in a record of a debate also declares that we are body and soul²³, but it is well known that whether

21 Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* V 6,1; cf. e.g. Tertullianus, *De resurrectione* 5-7.

22 Pseudo-Justin, *De resurrectione* 8,8-10: 593d (120 ed. Heimgartner); English translation is available also in *ANF* I 297. Gregory of Nyssa asks the question above in the manner of the Platonic *Alcibiades* and answers it in the terms of Pseudo-Justin: *In sanctum Pascha* GNO IX.1, 266-7, quoted in Nicholas Constatas, “To Sleep, Perchance to Dream: The Middle State of Souls in Patristic and Byzantine Literature”, in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 55 (2001), 91-124; Gregory in fact uses Epiphanius’ parable mentioned below (n. 81).

23 – and spirit: *Dialogus cum Heraclide* 6,20-29 (SC 67) Σύνθετον εἶναι τὸν ἄνθρωπον | μεμαθήκαμεν ἀπὸ τῶν ἱερῶν γραφῶν. Φησὶν γὰρ ὁ | ἀπόστολος: ‘Ὁ δὲ Θεὸς ἀγιάσαι ὑμῶν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ | ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ τὸ σῶμα.’ τὸ δὲ ‘Ἀγιάσαι ὑμᾶς ὀλοτελεῖς, | καὶ ὀλόκληρον ὑμῶν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ τὸ | σῶμα ἀμέμπτως ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν | Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τηρηθεῖν’, – τοῦτο τὸ πνεῦμα οὐκ | ἔστιν τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, ἀλλὰ μέρος τῆς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | συστάσεως, ὡς διδάσκων ὁ αὐτὸς ἀπόστολος λέγει | ‘Τὸ πνεῦμα συμμαρτυρεῖ τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν.’ Later, however, he makes it clear that as in *De principiis* that humans were originally made an immaterial substance and as such they are in the image of God. In §23 the image is found in the ψυχή.

he holds the same in the eschatological perspective is at least highly questionable and certainly a crux for his interpreters²⁴. Thus, for example, even later Nemesius of Emesa, an author indebted to Origen, to middle and late Platonism, can, for example, open his discussion on human nature by emphasising the perfect unity of soul and body in humans and *at the same time* maintain that body is only a temporary vehicle of the soul²⁵. In Ps-Justin and the texts related, however, we are in the context of arguing for the resurrection of the body, which makes the claim on our double nature a permanent truth. Further, to be more accurate, Origen states that humans are *composed of* soul and body, which is far from identical to saying that we *are* soul and body²⁶. The former claim can be naturally interpreted as a form of substance dualism, while the latter as a sort of attribute-dualism.

Secondly, as a consequence of this, the early defenders of resurrection maintain that since humans were made in the image of God²⁷ and are made up of soul and body, both these aspects of our being must exhibit the image of God. As stated by the very same author:

24 Even the keynote speaker on the subject at the ultimate Oxford Patristic Conference, Anders Christian Jacobsson, “Origen on Body and Freedom in Origen” paper presented at the XVIII International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 21st August 2019 (expected to appear in *Studia Patristica*) did not attempt at a solution of the conundrum. another paper on the subject proposed by Samuel Fernández seems to have been withdrawn.

25 Nemesius of Emesa, *De natura hominis [henceforth NH]* 1: p. 1,1-3; contrast e.g. *Ibid.* p 2. I agree with Anna Usacheva, “The Human Brain, Consciousness and a Quest for Immortality in Nemesius of Emesa” paper presented at the XVIII International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 21st August 2019 (expected to appear in *Studia Patristica*) that here Nemesius is under the double and incongruent influence of Plato and Galen.

26 The difference is not always palpable as far as the expression is concerned, although Pseudo-Justin has *συνεστός* and *συμπλοκή*, whereas Origen *σύνθετον*, which is somewhat more indicative of a nonessential unity.

27 Gen 1,27.

Does not the Word say *Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness*? What sort of human being? Obviously a carnal one, since it says ‘humankind’. For thus speaks the Word: *then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground (Gen 2,7)*. It is palpable that the human being formed according to the image of God was carnal²⁸.

In opposition to this, a well-known and influential Alexandrian Jewish and Christian tradition insisted that human mind alone is the image of God²⁹, an idea followed also by contemporary writings like Pseudo-Athenagoras’ *De resurrectione*³⁰, or an *Apology* attributed to a certain “Melito Philosopher”³¹. Some 60 years ago G. B. Ladner in an influential article stated that this latter was the standard interpretation of the divine image in Genesis and remarked that Irenaeus and

28 Ps-Justin, *De resurrectione* 7,3-5; 592d; here I have followed Otto’s text, which is only slightly different form that of Heimgartner but corrects obvious scribal errors: Io. Car. Th. de Otto, *Corpus apologetarum christianorum saeculi secundi: Iustinus philosophus et martyr*, 3rd edn III, Jena, 1879, 234.

29 See Philo of Alexandria, *De opificio mundi* 69; *Legum Allegoriae* I,31-32; Clement of Alexandria, *Protrepticus* X 98,1-4; *Stromata* V,14,94,5; Origen, *Hom. Gen* I 15.

30 For the work in general with the most convincing arguments advanced thus far against the attribution to Athenagoras, see Attila Petrovits, “Athénagoras vagy Pseudo-Athénagoras? A »De resurrectione« szerzőségének kérdéséhez”, in *Irodalom, teológia, művészet: Válogatás a Magyar Patrisztikai Társaság VII-XI. konferenciáin elhangzott előadások szerkesztett változataiból* (ed. by Judit Tóth and György Heidl), *Studia Patrum* 5, Budapest, 2014, 33-73. For its image-concept see *ibid.*, 56.

31 Cf. István M. Bugár, “Melitón filozófus beszédének eszmetörténeti kontextusa” [The place of the *Oration* of ‘Melito the Philosopher’ in the History of Ideas], in *Orpheus Noster* 7/1 (2015), 20-43 (English summary on p. 43), repeated in, *A teológia kezdetei – a jánosi tradícióban: A Melitón- és a Hippolütosz-dosszié* [The Formation of Christian Theology and the Asiatic Tradition: The Dossiers of Melito and Hippolytus (in Hungarian with an English summary on pp. 432-436)], *Caténa monográfiák* 16, Budapest, 2016, 130-150.

Methodius are somewhat rare exceptions to this general rule³². The truth is that the Alexandrians had only a better press in modern scholarship. The opposite tradition, however, is also a consistent and continuous line of exegesis, first³³ expressed clearly by the eloquent bishop Melito of Sardis around 160 AD – as intimated by G. Florovsky and proven recently through the gradual uncovering of another key homily of Melito³⁴. He is then followed, besides Pseudo-Justin, by Irenaeus³⁵, Hippolytus³⁶, and Tertullian³⁷ in the second, Methodius,

- 32 Gerhart B. Ladner, “The Concept of the Image in the Greek Fathers and the Byzantine Iconoclastic Controversy”, in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 7 (1953), 1-34, 10-11 with notes 45-47.
- 33 A paper at the Oxford Workshop “Bodily Resurrection vs Immortality: Philosophy, Medicine, Theology”, however, argued for a prominent place for Clement of Rome and Justin martyr in the list constructed above: Jörg Ulrich, “The Peculiar Merit of the Human Body. Exegesis of Gen 1,27f. and Gen 2,7 in 1Clem, Justin and (Ps?)Justin”, paper presented at the XVIII International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 20th August 2019 (expected to appear in *Studia Patristica*).
- 34 An intuition of Georges Florovsky, “The Anthropomorphites in the Egyptian Desert”, in *Aspects of Church History*, Belmont, Mass., 1975), 89-96, esp. 94 later evidenced by the gradual uncover of a Melitonian homily: see István M. Bugár, “Melito and the Body”, in *Studia Patristica* 91 (2017), 303-314. (Against the criticism of Róbert Somos – for which I am grateful – I still maintain that whatever “bodiless” meant for Melito – and Irenaeus –, Origen’s reference cannot be but to Melito’s homily *On Soul, Body, and Incarnation*, the subject of which is in no ways the corporeal nature of God.) On the homily *De anima, corpore et incarnatione* [henceforth *ACTI*] see “Melito and the Body”, 304-307.
- 35 G. Florovsky, “The Anthropomorphites”, 94-95; Adlin Rousseau “Image et ressemblance de Dieu chez Irénée”, in Irénée de Lyon, *Démonstration de la prédication apostolique* (ed. Adlin Rousseau), SC 406 (1995), 365-371; ill. Heidl György, “Irenaeus és a test teológiája”, in *Vigilia* 78 (2013), 812-819 (with further literature).
- 36 See Hippolytus, *In Genesin* fr 3: *Hippolytus Werke I. Exegetische und homiletische Schriften* edd. G. Nat. Bonwetsch & Hans Achelis, GCS 1, 1897, II 52.
- 37 Tertullianus, *De resurrectione* 5-7.

Peter of Alexandria³⁸, and perhaps his successor, Alexander of Alexandria³⁹ in the late third / early fourth⁴⁰, by Ephrem the Syrian⁴¹, Gregory of Nyssa⁴² and by Epiphanius of Salamis together with the monastic authors nicknamed anthropomorphite in the late fourth / early fifth century⁴³. We may also see a precursor of this thought in the so-called *Second letter of Clement*, where the incorrupt flesh is said to be the image of the spirit⁴⁴.

38 Peter of Alexandria, *De anima* (CPG 1637) fr. 1: *Synodus Constantinopolitana et Hierosolymitana anno 536* (ed. E. Schwartz) *Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum* III, Berlin, 1940, 197; Karl Holl, *Fragmente vorncänischer Kirchenväter aus den Sacra Paralella*, TU 20/2, Leipzig, 1899, 210; fr. 460, and Wolfgang Bienert, “Neue Fragmente des Dionysius und des Petrus von Alexandrien aus Cod. Vatop. 236”, in *Κληρονομιά* 5 (1973), 308-311; cf. Hippolytus, *De resurrectione* (CPG 1638) fr. C ed. J- B. Pitra, *Analecta Sacra* IV, Tusculum, 1883, 190 (Syriac) 427 (Latin translation).

39 Supposing that he is indeed the author of a reworking of Melito’s *ACI* that survives in Syriac.

40 Lactantius’ insistence on the divine character of human face, *De opificio Dei* 8 (PL 7,34A): *Hominis itaque solius ... vultus Deo patrii communis ac Proximus* – although I have been warned by my colleague Gábor Kendeffy that otherwise Lactantius did not share the above concept of the divine image.

41 Ephrem the Syrian, *Carmina Nisibena* 46,8 (resurrection is the revival of the entire divine image, that is to say, of soul and body).

42 Cf. Gregory of Nyssa, *De hominis opificio* 5-6; see. N. Conzas, “To Sleep, Perchance to Dream”, 97-8, with a synopsis of literature on Gregory’s anthropology in n. 21; to which one may add now, e.g. Morwenna Ludlow, “Christian Formation and the Body–Soul Relationship in Gregory of Nyssa”, c. 9. in *Exploring Gregory of Nyssa: Philosophical, Theological, and Historical Studies* (eds. Anna Marmodoro – Neil B. McLynn), Oxford, 2018.

43 G. Florovsky, “Anthropomorphites”, 96; *Id.*, “Theophilus of Alexandria and Apa Aphou of Pemdje”, in *Aspects of Church History*, Belmont, Mass., 1975, 97-129, 112-127; on Epiphanius, see *Ibid.* 119-122. The Coptic adaptation of Melito’s *ACI* preserved under the name of Athanasius is placed within this current by Dmitrij Bumazhnov, *Der Mensch als Gottes Bild im christlichen Ägypten*, Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 34, Tübingen, 2006.

44 *2Clem* 14,3. The same homily also envisages the eschatological unity of body and soul (*Ibid.* 12,2-4) and emphasises the identity of *this* body with

Thirdly, within this tradition early authors, like Melito⁴⁵, Tertullian⁴⁶, and Theophilus of Antioch⁴⁷ emphasize that what makes humans unique in creation is the fact that everything else was created by the Word of God alone, but Adam by both the Word and the Hand of God. In Melito⁴⁸ (who seems to have used the word ‘deed’ rather than ‘hand’ in this context), it is obvious that what is meant is the formation of the body, as is clear also from the words of the Genesis. Melito alone also intimates the distinction between the formation of man from the earth by the Hand and animation by the Spirit of God⁴⁹.

the eschatological one (9,1-5). However, while maintaining also that the opportunity for repentance is restricted to our present life, it does not explicitly make carnal existence a prerequisite of repentance, unlike Tatian (*Or* 15,10) and later Nemesius of Emesa (*NH* p 9-10 ed. Morani). The connection of the opportunity for repentance with having a body has been analysed by David Bradshaw, “Patristic Views on Why There Is No Repentance after Death” paper presented at the XVIII International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 21st August 2019 (expected to appear in *Studia Patristica*).

45 Melito, *ACI* I (Alex; AthC) reconstruction in Bugár M. I. *A teológiai kezdetei*, 447-457; for the testimonies used and their abbreviation see I. M. Bugár “Melito and the Body”, 304-307.

46 Tertullian, *De resurrectione* 5.

47 Theophilus of Antioch, *Ad Autolycum* II,18.

48 In Theophilus and Irenaeus God’s Hands generally refer to the *Logos* and *Sophia*, which, in their turn, are generally understood to mean the Son and the Spirit, respectively. A doubt is cast on this traditional interpretation by Daniel Buda, “Sophia in Theophilus of Antioch”, in *Sophia. The Wisdom of God - Die Weisheit Gottes. Forscher aus dem Osten und Westen Europas an den Quellen des gemeinsamen Glaubens* (ed. by T. Hainthaler, F. Mali, G. Emmenegger, & M. L. Ostermann), Innsbruck – Wien, 2017, 95-99 and *Id.*, “Holy Spirit in Theophilus of Antioch”, paper presented at the XVIII International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 22nd August 2019 (expected to appear in *Studia Patristica*). However, in the passage referred to it seems that the surplus in the formation of humans is the participation of the Holy Spirit, since the Word is active in all the days of the creation.

49 The thought is echoed also in Ephrem the Syrian, *In Gen* 2,7, and *Carmina Nisibena* 44,1.

Fourthly, while our first author, Melito of Sardis unfolded his anthropology in a homily entitled *On Soul, Body, and Incarnation*, thus emphasising the role of the body in creation and salvation, this leads to the eschatological perspective. While sin resulted in the separation of soul and body, through the Incarnation the unification of the two is made possible and in the eschaton will be fulfilled. This is guaranteed by the fact that in the ascension Christ took the human body into heaven⁵⁰ where there has been no body before. St Hippolytus within the same tradition also emphasizes this ontological change of the status of the body after the Easter events⁵¹.

Soul, Body, and the Middle State

After considering body in the resurrection, I shall turn to ideas about the Middle State, the supposed interval between death and the eschaton. As I have said before, a thoughtful theologian or philosopher would beware of an inconsiderate use of notions of time⁵², space, perception, mind, soul, body, person in this context. But at present, I am interested in the historical quest alone, that is to say, how the above delineated tradition envisaged such an intermediary stage and what the consequences are for the soul-body relationship

In Melito's reconstructed homily on *Soul and Body*, the soul, after having been separated from the body, is bound and lies inert,

50 Melito, *ACI* II 17 (AthG; Ep/Chrys; Alex; AthC).

51 Hippolytus, in *Danielem* IV 11,5; *Contra Haeresin Noeti* 4,10-11; cf. *In odam magnam* fr. 1 (GCS 1,2 = Theodoretus, *Eranistes* 155,29-156,9); in *Psalmos* intr. 17.

52 This aspect of the problem is mentioned also by N. Constatas, "To Sleep, Perchance to Dream", 91.

“immovable”⁵³, “is capable of nothing”⁵⁴. We shall see that bondage is one of the common pictures used to describe the Middle State and appears also in such a different genre as the *Apophthegmata Patrum*⁵⁵. What is significant in Melito, however, is that he describes this soul as powerless similarly to the Platonist Nemesius’ characterization of the body after death. In Nemesius, this state of the dead body is in contrast with the activity of the soul. In Melito, there is a kind of parallelism instead: the body is dissolved *because* the soul is bound and thus cannot control it. She is in a state of contempt, possessed by death. This description is very much in accordance with that of Tatian, and later, with Aphrahat, and anticipates St Ephrem’s characterization of the faculties of the soul as impossible without the body, which will be discussed below.

By contrast, a Roman Christian writer loosely connected to the chain of fathers discussed above, an author of a discourse on Hades preserved under the name of Josephus (and probably also of the famous *Refutatio* transmitted as a work of Origen) while describing

53 ⲙⲉⲗⲓⲧⲟ ⲛⲉⲙⲉⲥⲓⲟⲥ Melito, *ACI* I = Alexander of Alexandria, *De anima, corpore et de incarnatione* in *Coptic Homilies in the Dialect of Upper Egypt Edited from the Papyrus Codex Oriental 5001 in the British Museum* (ed. E. A. Wallis Budge), London, 1910, 409 (= British Library [BL] add. 17,192 fol. 279a); *Nova Patrum Bibliotheca* II (ed. Angelo Mai), Roma, 1844, 533, l.20 (=Vat. Syr. 368, repr. PG 18,592B). The idea is missing in the later Coptic reworking.

54 *Ibid.*

- ⲙⲉⲗⲓⲧⲟ ⲛⲉⲙⲉⲥⲓⲟⲥ p. 533 l.7 ed. Mai (=Vat. Syr. 368, repr. in. PG 18,589D). In Mai’s Latin rendering: *cessat eius actio*; p. 409 ed. Wallis Budge, 8 (= BL add. 17,192 fol. 279a). Missing in the Coptic reworking.

- ⲙⲉⲗⲓⲧⲟ ⲛⲉⲙⲉⲥⲓⲟⲥ p. 534, l.2 ed. Mai (=Vat. Syr. 368 repr. PG 18,592D); ⲙⲉⲗⲓⲧⲟ ⲛⲉⲙⲉⲥⲓⲟⲥ ⲛⲉⲙⲉⲥⲓⲟⲥ „sic” (ed. Wallis Budge p 410 = BL add. 17,192 fol. 279b). The expression is present also in the Coptic version (fol 146aII: ed. Wallis Budge 118; translation on p. 261).

55 *Apophthegmata patrum: Collectio alphabetica* Macarius 38: PG 65,280.

the Middle State of the soul similarly as in a bondage in a prison⁵⁶, maintains, however, that souls do have a perception, a perception which, unusually, has as its object the future, their future fate. The just watch a kind of ‘trailer’ of the heavenly life; the unjust, however, while facing the place of the future punishment, perceive also the revenger angels and the blissful place of the just. They do not yet have the body in which they will be tormented, but still they do feel the bodily punishment of fire. The idea of such a temporary punishment is present already in Justin martyr⁵⁷, and Pseudo-Josephus’ fragment shows numerous parallels also with Tertullian, including the comparison with a prison, a state of detention awaiting trial⁵⁸. This prison has a spatial, even geographical location under the earth. This, then, entails an idea of a spatial dimension of the soul. Indeed, a different fragment of the same work reveals that the author believed that soul has a spatial form identical with her body, a view again shared by Tertullian⁵⁹, and probably professed already by Irenaeus⁶⁰.

56 Pseudo-Josephus, *De universo* F 6: *Fragmente vornizänischer Kirchenväter aus den Sacra Parallela* (ed. Karl Holl), TU 20/2, Leipzig, 1899, 139; for further codices of the fragment see I. M. Bugár, *A teológia kezdetei*, 349–350. In Pseudo-Josephus, however, only the unjust are bound in chains.

57 Justin martyr, *Dialoguscum Tryphone* 5,3. Cf. Charles E. Hill, “Hades of Hippolytus or Tartarus of Tertullian? The Authorship of the Fragment *De Universo*”, in *Vigiliae Christianae* 43 (1989), 116.

58 Tertullianus, *De anima* 7; 35,3; 53,5–6; 55-8: C. E. Hill, “Hades or Tartarus”, 117; cf. Carl Schmidt, “Excurs II”, in *Gespräche Jesu mit seinen Jüngern nach der Auferstehung: Ein katholisch-apostolisches Sendschreiben des 2. Jahrhunderts nach einem koptischen Papyrus des Institut de la Mission Archeol. Française au Caire* TU 43, Leipzig, 1919, 512.

59 See e.g. the close parallel of Pseudo-Josephus, *de universo* F 3 (= Photius, *Bibl. cod.* 48: 11b14–12a18) with Tertullian, *an* 9,7 on the shape of the soul identical with that of the body: C. E. Hill, “Hades or Tartarus”, 119.

60 Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* II,19,6.

This latter idea is in accordance with the Stoic doctrine on the soul⁶¹. In fact, the entire argument appears in a polemical treatise against Plato and contemporary Platonism. However, this, of course, does not mean that it is not influenced by Plato. Indeed, the author reveals a moderate sympathy towards Plato⁶², and in fact the pictures he uses to describe the fate of the souls after death are deeply reminiscent of the Tartarus of the *Phaedo*⁶³ and even more of the cave-prison of the *Republic*⁶⁴.

As opposed to Ps-Josephus, Hippolytus – whom we have seen to belong largely to the same theological tradition – does not envisage a temporary state for the soul of the deceased, at least not for the just⁶⁵. For him, personal eschatology and historical eschatology coincide⁶⁶, as if he was operating with a non-homogenous time-concept, and thus escapes the problem involved in positing souls living without a body.

61 Cf. *SVF* II 879 (A. A. Long and D. N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, Cambridge, 1987, No53G).

62 Pseudo-Josephus, *De universo* F1 (=Emanuele Castelli, “Il Prologo del Peri tou pantos”, in *Vetera Christianorum* 42/1 (2005), 37-54).

63 Plato, *Phd.*112a–4c. For views on the underworld in Plato’s dialogues see also *Ap.* 41a; *Cri.* 54; *Phd.* 68–71; 83–5; 107–8; *Grg.* 525; *Resp.* I 330d; II 363cd; 386b; X 619a (Tertullian explicitly refers to the passage in the *Phd.* in *De anima* 54,4, but mentions also [another feature of] the story of Er from the *Republic* in the same work [51,2]; cf. J. H. Waszink, *Quinti Septimi Florentis Tertulliani De Anima*, Amsterdam, 1947/ Leiden, 2010, 41’).

64 Plato, *Resp.* VII 514a-7a.

65 C. E. Hill, “Hades or Tartarus”, 105-7. Similar views are expressed also by Origen in *Dialogus cum Heraclide* 23: ὁ [δ]ίκαιος καὶ ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ψυχῇ ζῆ μετ[ὰ] Χριστοῦ. [...] ἢ ἀπολυθεῖσα τοῦ σώματος ... μετὰ Χριστοῦ ἀναπαύεται.

66 Most importantly, Hippolytus, in *Danielem* IV 18,7; 39,7 (on the just); cf. *De Benedictione Moysis*, PO 27,155,4-9 (on the condemned). These passages that do not occur in Hill’s list of evidences on immediate recompense (see previous note), with which these two passages can be completed.

Early Syriac Fathers on the relationship of body and cognitive faculties

In the Early Syriac Fathers, we find a different solution for the same problem, which is conceptually close to that of Melito. The condition of the soul in death is described as an inert⁶⁷, insensitive state, a (largely) unconscious sleep⁶⁸. K. Jaehyun, following F. Gavin⁶⁹, finds the forerunner of this idea in another early author, Tatian, not without a foundation⁷⁰. In Aphrahat, the dead soul is incapable of

67 We find expressions to this effect, as we have seen (notes 53-54), in our close testimony of the Melitonian text. One may, of course, note that our source, (Pseudo-)Alexander of Alexandria's sermon, survives in Syriac, that is to say, translated in a milieu where the concept of the inert, sleeping soul in death was common and thus might be considered as an addition of the translator. To this we may object that, as we can see in the second part of *ACI*, the Alexandrian reworking of Melito's homily stays very close to the ideas and expressions, while changing the form to a less poetic prose. The soul in bondage forms the spine of the homily, as the second part of the homily, which answers the first, emphasises that Christ in His descent has set free the souls bound in the Hades. Further, in this special case, at least in the second occasion, the (free but independent) Coptic reworking of the Melitonian text also contains the expression in question.

68 On this issue see N. Constat, "To Sleep, Perchance to Dream", 110-111 with further literature in n. 69; Brian E. Daley, *The Hope of the Early Church: A Handbook of Patristic Eschatology*, Cambridge, 1991, 73-77 with important (further) studies in n. 3; and Kim Jaehyun, "Body and Soul in Ephrem the Syrian", in *Korean Journal of Religious Study* 21 (2000), 79-117, esp. 85-89; 101-9. The last of the three contains by far the most complete collection of evidence concerning the subject not only of the sleep of the soul but also of the general issue discussed below. One can only regret that the study as printed remained incomplete in respect of conceptual analysis, (accurate) references to sources, and English idiom. I am very grateful to Levan Gigineishvili for drawing my attention to this paper.

69 F. Gavin, "The Sleep of the Soul in the Early Syriac Church", in *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 40 (1920), 103-120; esp. 110-111.

70 K. Jaehyun, "Body and Soul", 84-85 quotes Tatian, *Oratio ad Graecos* 13,1, which is, however, a puzzling passage. At face value, it rather says that the

sensation⁷¹, of memory⁷², and of discerning good from bad⁷³. Since, however, this sleep is interrupted by dreams either good or bad⁷⁴ foretelling the future fate of the dead, Aphrahat's picture is not all that different from that of Pseudo-Josephus either; the Syriac author offers a kind of rational explanation of the metaphorical-mythical picture of the latter.

We must, however, make a small but important digression here. Unlike Melito, but similar to – at least some key passages of – Irenaeus, Hippolytus⁷⁵, and to the statement of Origen quoted above⁷⁶, Aphrahat thinks in a tripartite anthropology, where humans in the full sense comprise body, soul, *and* spirit; or, in Aphrahat's own terminology, body, psychic spirit, and holy spirit. The unjust lose the latter, while the holy spirit of the just returns to God where she intercedes for her body (and, conceivably, soul)⁷⁷. Tatian, arguably, is of the same

soul of the sinner dies with the body, but that of the just lives – a view that is not very distant from that of Hippolytus described above. Aphrahat also says something to the same effect, but he distinguishes the psychical spirit from the spirit of holiness (*sic!*) which lives after death with God, as we shall see in the next paragraph.

71 Aphrahat, *Demonstration* 6,14 (referred to in *Demonstration* 8,23).

72 Aphrahat, *Demonstration* 22,6; 11 (in the resurrection only the memory of good, of knowledge, of the divine is restored: *Ibid.* 12).

73 *Ibid.* 7.

74 Cf. Aphrahat, *Demonstration* 8,19.

75 Hippolytus, in *Psalmos* intr. 17; In *Danielem* II,38,5.

76 See n. 23 above.

77 Like in the case of Christ's death in Origen's passage (*Dialogus cum Heraclide* 7) and in Pseudo-Hippolytus, *In sanctum Pascham* 56,1. I should remark that here I would hesitate whether „holy spirit” should be capitalised; in other words, how far we can speak of holy spirits of persons and what their relation to the Holy Spirit is. I'm afraid that this question was not even clearly asked in Irenaeus of Aphrahat, but in her intimate relationship with her dwelling place, the body, the “spirit of holiness” has definitely a human personal character. I wish I could have consulted Giulio Maspero, *Dio trino perché vivo: lo spirito di Dio e lo spirito dell'uomo nella patristica greca*, Brescia, 2018, to which I had

conviction⁷⁸. In Ephrem, this threefold division is occasionally very emphatic⁷⁹, but is not connected, as far as I can see, to the problem of the intermediary state. Further, in Ephrem human spirit tends to be assimilated to *nous*⁸⁰, like in Origen, in which case our basic question on the relationship of cognitive faculties to the body remains whether we speak of soul or spirit. This is why I dare not to treat this aspect of the problem here thoroughly, although in the case of the intermediary state the threefold division opens up a philosophically/theologically plausible solution of the difficulty.

In the second half of the fourth century several developments led to a reevaluation of the soul-body problem in the footsteps of the authors discussed above. One of these triggering circumstances was the Origenist controversy of the late fourth, early fifth century. One of the main actors of the debate, St Epiphanius of Cyprus dwells on the relation of the two factors in humans in this context. Very much like Melito in his *On Soul, Body, and Incarnation*, he maintains that neither component can achieve anything without the other. He borrows an earlier simile saying that body and soul are like the alliance of a blind and a lame man, who are inert separately but can achieve anything together⁸¹. It is also conceivable, that the same context led to the revival and reworking of Melito's homily *On Soul, Body, and Incarnation* under the name of Athanasius of Alexandria⁸².

no access but the reader may be able to look up for a proper treatment of the subject.

78 K. Jaehyun, "Body and Soul", 83-4; F. Gavin, "The Sleep of the Soul", 111.

79 See Ephrem the Syrian, *Hymns on Paradise* 9,19-21; cf. *Ibid.* 13;16; 18; *Carmina Nisibena* 47,7-10.

80 *Ibid.* 19-20, where "spirit" (ܝܘܣܘܪ) is freely replaced by "thought" (ܕܘܚܝܘܬܐ).

81 Epiphanius of Salamis, *Panarion* 64,70: GCS 31,516 (for the possible apocryphal source of the edifying tale told by Epiphanius, see K. Holl's notes in the edition; for further literature on the parable see N. Constat, "T Sleep, Perchance to Dream", 98 n. 22).

82 See above n. 43.

The author, however, who expounded most clearly the anthropology of this tradition, was St Ephrem the Syrian. He has, in his turn, been also motivated by controversy with the heritage of Bardaisan and Marcion and with Manicheism, as can be seen from his *Prose Refutations*⁸³. Here he insists against any form of substance-dualism that neither body nor soul can exist separately⁸⁴, there is neither sensation, nor speech, nor discernment in thought without the active contribution from the body⁸⁵. Not even dream is possible without the body⁸⁶, which entails that in the intermediary state the soul cannot even dream.

Although confined within the form of poetry, in his 8th *Hymn on the Paradise*⁸⁷ Ephrem expresses clearly and even furthers the same ideas, again not just stating but providing detailed reasons for the inseparability of body and soul. Firstly, psychical and cognitive

83 Ephrem the Syrian, *Prose Refutations* 5 (discussed in K. Jaehyun, “Body and Soul”, 97-101) is the most relevant for the present issue.

84 Saint Ephraim, *Prose Refutations of Mani, Marcion, and Bardaisan* ed. by C. W. Mitchell, London, 1912, 5: I civ ed. They belong together as object and its shadow *Ibid.* cii.

85 *Ibid.* civ. On thought (ܡܘܨܘܪܐ) see *Ibid.* cv; it is less clear to me how we should understand that while for the soul mind (ܡܘܨܘܪܐ) is sufficient, but mind needs also the body besides the soul. On communication see *Ibid.* cviii. The problem of thought and sensation is discussed in Ute Possekel, *Evidence of Greek Philosophical Concepts in the Writings of Ephrem the Syrian* (CSCO 580, Subs. 102), Peeters, Leuven, 1999, 192-196; 207-210.

86 *Ibid.* 106.

87 *Ephraem des Syrens Hymnen De paradiso und Contra Julianum* (ed. E. von Beck), CSCO 174 Syr 78, Louvain, 1957, 33-35; with German translation in CSCO 175 Syr 79, Louvain, 1957, 30-33; English translation: Saint Ephrem, *Hymns on Paradise* (intr. and tr. Sebastian Brock), Crestwood, New York, 1990, 131-135. The importance of the hymn in our present perspective is highlighted by D. Bumazhnov, *Der Mensch als Gottes Bild*, 81-84; K. Jaehyun, “Body and Soul”, 81-83; 96-97; 106. Besides this poem, and the prose work mentioned in the previous note, *Carmina Nisibena* 47 is the most telling, besides 44, the eloquent apology on the value of body.

activities, he argues, are body-bound; even cognition is anchored in physical language⁸⁸. Secondly, the affections of soul and body are common – as later maintained by St Gregory of Palamas following Aristotle’s psychology⁸⁹. In sum, according to St Ephrem, soul has but an embryonic existence without the body and can achieve nothing. His argument is in striking contrast with Nemesius’ description of perception, thinking, remembering, who maintains that soul *uses* different parts of the brain for each process – but nevertheless the intelligent soul is independent of the body⁹⁰. Then, one may ask, why would she use it?

Ephrem’s hymn is a member in the cycle of a lyrical commentary on the 2nd and 3rd chapters of Genesis, but also has in view Paradise regained, that is to say, the eschatological perspective, thus maintaining that no salvation is possible without the body. He, however, also hints at the difference between the present and the eschatological body⁹¹. This is manifested in their relation to space; in the eschaton a lot of good people will find enough room even in a small place.

Conclusion

As is the case with the teaching on resurrection, we should also remember that the gradual unfolding of a Christian anthropology of the flesh, too, was motivated by apology against various systems of thought informed by or akin to Platonism. For the earliest theologians,

88 For thought see the last lines of Ephrem, *Hymns on Paradise* 8,5; and 8,8; cf. also *Carmina Nisibena* 47,3.

89 St. Gregory of Palamas, *Triads* I,ii 1-3; 9; I,iii 31; II,ii. 12-14 cf. Aristotle, *De anima* I,1: 403a16-b19.

90 Nemesius, *NH* 11-13 discussed also by Usacheva (see n. 25. above).

91 The same idea is not only hinted but clearly expressed in *Prose Refutations* 5; p. cv; and in *Hymns on Paradise* 9, where, however, it is stressed that not only human body, but also soul and spirit/mind have to be transformed in the eschaton.

like Melito, Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Tertullian, Pseudo-Athenagoras, the inspiring opponent was Christian “Gnosticism”; for Methodius, Epiphanius and their contemporaries it was (a peculiar reception of) Origen. In the further theological development, the doctrinal counterpart was Manichaeism, Marcion, and probably Bardaisan⁹² for St Ephrem the Syrian, early iconoclasm for St John of Damascus⁹³, and finally, Barlaam of Calabria’s Christian Platonism for St Gregory of Palamas⁹⁴. No doubt, in the western world Augustine also had a word in this development, which is, however, a different story⁹⁵. Of course, the above list of names as stages in a development could give the deceitful impression that there is a monotonic evolution of Christian theology. Of course, all of us know that the story is much more complicated. However, I still maintain that there is a clear – even if not continuous – line in Christian tradition that refuses radical soul-body dualism (without, at the same time, embracing a strict monism). And this thread of thought appears appealing for our own anthropological horizon.

92 I. Ramelli highlights the closeness of the metaphysical and anthropological aspects of Origen’s and Bardaisan’s thought: Ilaria Ramelli, *Bardaisan of Edessa: A Reassessment of the Evidence and a New Interpretation*, Piscataway, NJ, 2009, 18-19; esp. 170-171 (the three aspects of humanhood – body, soul, spirit/ intellect – derive from the descent of the last).

93 In his first apology, he eloquently stresses the role of matter in salvation and deification in a passage that nearly amounts to a hymn: John Damascene, *De imaginibus* I 16.

94 The body also participates in divine grace and is divinised; it becomes “psychic” in the sense as the soul can also become “carnal” Gregory of Palamas, *Triads* I,ii 1-3; 9; I,iii 31; II,ii. 12-14. The process then culminates in Cabasilas’ sacramental realism in his *Life in Christ*, which is clearly expressed in his description of the Eucharist as “the only mystery by which we are flesh from his flesh”: Nikolaos Kabasilas, *De vita in Christo* IV,30 (SC 355, 290; PG 150,593D) [my translation]. The passage is highlighted by John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes*, New York, 1983, 108-109.

95 Here I left aside the issue of Augustine. For him, see Giovanni Catapano, “Augustine”, in *A History of Mind and Body*, 343-363.

The Foundation of the Armenian (Ruthenian) College of Lviv (Lemberg) (1664–1681)¹

Kornél NAGY

1. Introduction 2. Historical antecedents 3. The Foundation and Early Activities of the Armenian College 4. Summary

1. Introduction

The view stating that the contemporary Armenian Catholic (or Armenian Uniate) Church was created in the territory of the former Ottoman Empire remains prevalent in church-history to this day. This position holds that the Church was founded in 1743 for Armenians living in the territory of the Empire but confessionally faithful to Rome, headed by the Armenian Catholic Catholicos appointed by the Ottoman Sultan². However, thanks to recent scholarly inquiries, this claim has been subject to substantial re-appraisal as, in areas of the erstwhile Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (*Rzecz Pospolita Obojga Narodow*) and Transylvania, an Armenian Catholic Church existed as early as the final decades of the 17th century, and their

1 Investigations on the subject of the present study were conducted in Rome and Vatican City thanks to the Klebelsberg Kunó Scholarships granted in the years 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010 and 2018. The author wishes to express his gratitude for the support provided.

2 Charles Aaron Frazee, “The Formation of the Armenian Catholic Community in the Ottoman Empire”, in *Eastern Churches Review*, 7 (1975), 149-163; Charles Aaron Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans. The Church and the Ottoman Empire, 1453–1923*, Cambridge, 1983, 46-58, 88-102.

respective history was closely connected to the Armenian colonies of Eastern Europe. It is nonetheless undeniable that, akin to the Greek Catholics, the Armenian Catholic Church was also the product of re-Catholicisation and evolved in Eastern Europe, within the early-modern Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, in the late 16th century and the first third of the 17th century³. Moreover, as suggested by the latest research findings, the term Armenian Catholic as a category identifying denominational affiliation first emerged in written records in conjunction with Transylvania, for previously Armenian Catholics had predominantly been referred to by the term Armenian Uniate. In fact, in his ordinance issued in 1726, the Emperor and King Charles IV (1711–1740) specifically obliged the Armenian Catholic Church of Transylvania to obey the Roman Catholic Bishop of Transylvania (*Alba Iulia/ Gyulafehérvár*) in matters of faith until a bishop was appointed for them by the Apostolic Holy See⁴.

The Armenian College (*Collegium Armenum*) of Lviv (*Ilov/ Lemberg/Lwów/Ilyvó*) called into being by the Apostolic Holy See in 1664 played an important role in training new generations of Uniate priests for the region. Initially, it educated priests catering for the needs of the Armenian Catholic Churches of Poland and Transylvania, and subsequently, from 1709, the Armenian College opened its doors to Uniate Ruthenian, Ukrainian, and Belarusian students as well. By the early 1720s, the majority of the students of the institution were no longer Armenians but increasingly students

3 Kornél Nagy, “Az elképzelt ‘Aranykor’. Az erdélyi örménykatolikus (unitus) egyház a 18. században”, in *Történelmi Szemle*, 61 (2019), No. 2, 267–268.

4 APF = (Archivio storico della Sacra Congregazione per l’Evangelizzazione dei Popoli o de “Propaganda Fide”, Roma) Acta SC (= Acta Sacrae Congregationis). Vol. 96. Fol. 143/v.–144r.; APF SC (= Scritture riferite nei Congressi) Fondo Armeni. Vol. 9. Fol. 601r.; *Erdélyi római katolikus egyházlátogatási jegyzőkönyvek és okmányok*, Vol. 1., szerk. András Kovács, Zsolt Kovács, Kolozsvár/Cluj-Napoca, 2002, 90.

of Ruthenian descent. This is also indicated by the circumstance that the educational institution adopted the name Armenian and Ruthenian College (*Collegium Armenum et Ruthenum*) even officially as early as 1723. Furthermore, in the 18th century, the seminary represented a significant source of new generations of clergymen for the Greek Catholic community of Transcarpathia, too. Additionally, the Armenian College also acted as a mediator in the resolution of the disputes surrounding the legal status of the Greek Catholic Bishopric of Mukachevo (*Mukačevo /Munkács*) and its occupancy following Rákóczi's War of Independence (1703–1711)⁵. Thus, the present study is an attempt to describe the foundation, beginnings, early activities and Armenological aspects of the Armenian or – to use its subsequent name – Armenian-Ruthenian College of Lviv, as well as its brief historical antecedents, in the light of recent archival investigations.

- 5 The Armenian-Ruthenian College was finally closed by the Emperor and King Joseph II (1765–1790) by decree in 1784. The step was justified on grounds that there were too few students of Armenian or Ruthenian extraction studying at the Armenian-Ruthenian College of Lviv; APF CP (= Congregazioni Particolari). Vol. 65. Fol. 290r.; APF Lettere SC (= Lettere e Decreti della Sacra Congregazione). Vol. 104. Fol. 104r.; APF SC Fondo Ungheria e Transilvania. Vol. 4. Fol. 163/r.-v., Fol. 165/r.-v., Fol. 433/r.-v., Fol. 435/r.-v.; APF SC Coll. Var. (= Collegi Vari). Vol. 2. Fol. 40r.–57r., Fol. 227r., Fol. 333r.–334r.; APF SC Coll. Var. Vol. 3. Fol. 109/r.-v., Fol. 166r., Fol. 176r., Fol. 209r.; Antal Hodinka, *A munkácsi görög-katholikus püspökség története*, Budapest, 1909. 478, 497-499, 521-522, 529-542, 583-584; Gregorio Petrowicz, *L'unione degli armeni in Polonia con la Santa Sede (1627–1686)*, Roma, 1950, 148-155; Dmytro Blažejovskij, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical Seminaries of Lviv*, Rome, 1975, 239-245; Dmytro Blažejovskij, *Byzantine Kyivan Rite Students in Pontifical Colleges, and in Seminaries, Universities and Institutions of Central and Western Europe*, Rome, 1984, 39-40; Gregorio Petrowicz, *La chiesa armena in Polonia e nei paesi limitrofi*, Roma, 1988, 78, 147-148, 175-177, 228-229; Bálint Kovács, “A galíciai örmények hagyatéka Varsóban”, in *Látó – Szépirodalmi Folyóirat*, 19 (2008), No. 4., 65-66; Aslanian, D. Sebouh, “Prepared in the Language of the Hagarites. Abbot Mkhitar's 1727 Armeno-Turkish Grammar of Modern Western Armenian”, in *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies*, 25 (2016), 64.

2. *Historical antecedents*

From its foundation in the 4th century AD, the Armenian Apostolic (Oriental) Church was nearly always caught in the crossfire of dogmatic and canonical disputes. Due to active involvement in the uprising against the Sasanian Persian Empire in AD 449, representatives of the Armenian Church were unable to attend the negotiations of the 451 Fourth Ecumenical Council in Chalcedon. The teaching of Chalcedon would only appear on the horizons of the Armenian Apostolic Church half a century later, in 504 or 505. However, owing to the paucity of information, the incorrect teaching that reached Armenia suggested that Nestorianism, which was also regarded as a heresy by the Armenians, had been rehabilitated at the Ecumenical Council. Therefore, they rejected the teaching of Chalcedon⁶. Also half a century later, at the synod held at its seat, in the city of Dwin⁷, in the period between 551 and 555, the Armenian Apostolic Church decided to separate from the (Universal) Catholic Church. At the same time, the bishops and theologians present at the synod declared their adherence to the Orthodox and Catholic faith and also denounced Monophysitism, professing one, i.e. the divine nature of Jesus Christ, as heresy. In Constantinople and Rome, separation was, however, misinterpreted as the Armenians supporting Monophysitism and its leading theologians. For this reason, over time, the Armenian Apostolic Church would take centre stage in the church unification efforts of Constantinople (Byzantium) and

6 Karekin Sarkissian, *The Council of Chalcedon and the Armenian Church*, New York, 1975, (Second Edition), 8-19, 196-215; Krzysztof Stopka, *Armenia Christiana: Armenian Religious Identity and Churches of Constantinople and Rome (14th and 15th Century)*, Krakow, 2016, 54-76.

7 In the transliteration of Armenian names and terms in the present publication, the internationally accepted academic norms endorsed and mandated by the International Association of Armenian Studies (*Association Internationale des Études Arménienne* = AIEA) were applied.

Rome⁸.

In 1045, the Byzantine Empire annexed historical or medieval Armenia, soon to be followed by the Seljuk-Turkish conquest in 1071, as well as later by the devastation of the Mongol hordes in the 13th century. These events precipitated the mass migration of the Armenians upon a biblical scale from parts of their native land. This way, large numbers of Armenians found their new home in the territories of Kievan/Kyivan Rus' and its successor states⁹. Around 1280, Lev Danilovich, the Rurikid Prince of Halych (1271–1301), founded the city of Lemberg (today's Lviv, Ukraine), which would quickly become the seat of the Principality. From the earliest times, numerous Armenian families settled in the northern quarter of the new city¹⁰. Even in that period, the Armenians founded a monastery in honour of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (*Vank'ë Srboyn Xaç'kataroyñ*) and built a wooden church. Their religious practice would before long come under the control of a bishop appointed by the Head of the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Catholicos. In 1340, Halych and Lemberg/Lviv (the latter already called Lwów at the time) were placed under the jurisdiction of the medieval Kingdom of Poland. Casimir III the Great, King of Poland (1333–1370), granted a wide range of legal,

8 Nina Garsoïan, *L'église arménienne et le grand schisme d'Orient*, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1999, 38-42, 91-96, 126-127, 173-178, 187-188, 213, 236-239; Mesrop K. Krikorian, "Calcedonia: storia, conflitti, cristologi e riconciliazione", in *Il Concilio di Calcedonia 1550 anni dopo*, a cura di Antonio Duca, Città del Vaticano, 127-131; Kornél Nagy, *Az erdélyi örmények katolizációja (1685-1715)*, Budapest, 2012, 27-28.

9 Blažejovskij, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical*, 81.

10 Frank Zachariasewicz, *Wiadomość o Ormianach w Polsce*, Lwów, 1842, 17, 65, 77; Gregorio Petrowicz, *La chiesa armena in Polonia*, Roma, 1971, 9; Blažejovskij, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical*, 82; Eleonora Nadel-Golobič, "Armenians and Jews in Medieval Lvov and Their Role in Oriental Trade", in *Cahiers du Monde russe et soviétique*, 20 (1979), No. 3-4, 345-388.

economic, and religious privileges to the Armenians of Lviv in 1356¹¹. In 1363, the Armenian Apostolic Cathedral of the Assumption of the Holy Theotokos of Lviv (*Mayr Tačar Verap'oxman Srboyn Astwacacni*) was built from the pious donation of two Armenian merchants from Crimea, Yakob Kaffayec'i and P'anos Vaysurc'i¹². One year later, in 1364, Armenian Catholicos Mesrop I (*Mesrop Artazec'i*) (1359–1372) elevated the city's Bishopric to the rank of Archbishopric, a move subsequently approved by the King of Poland¹³. Moreover, Casimir III granted the Armenian community of Lviv and Poland the right to elect their Archbishop freely, which was in turn recognised by the Head of the Armenian Church. From the Middle Ages, the Armenian clergy of Lviv primarily came from areas in Armenia and actively participated in the life of the local community as well¹⁴.

By the beginning of the early modern era, the Armenian community living in the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth had become the most affluent community outside Armenia. In addition, with its churches, schools and printing press, the Armenian colony of Lviv came to be one of the most significant

- 11 *Das alte Recht der Armenier in Lemberg*, hrsg. von Ferdinand Bischoff, Wien, 1862, 14-20, 39-43, 61-62; *Urkunden zur Geschichte der Armenier in Lemberg*, hrsg. von Ferdinand Bischoff, Wien, 1864, 92-97, 118-124; Tadeusz Gromnicki, *Ormjanie w Polsce Ich historia, prawa i przywileje*, Warszawa, 1889, 26-30; Gregorio Petrowicz, "L'organisation juridique des Arméniens sous les monarques polonaises", in *Revue des études arméniennes – Nouvelle Série*, 4 (1967), 340-345; Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 12.
- 12 Minas Bžškeanc', *Čanaparhordut' iwn i Lehasan*, Venetik, 1830, 104; Zachariasewicz, *Wiadamość*, 18; Petrowicz, *La chiesa*, 1971, 19-20; Blažejovskij, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical*, 84.
- 13 Georges Bournoutian, "A Fresh Look at the Causes of Decline of the Armenian Colonies in Poland", in *Series Byzantina. Studies on Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art*, Vol. 9. (ed. Waldemar Deluga), Warsaw, 2011, 145-146.
- 14 Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 3; Krzysztof Stopka, "The Religious Culture of Polish Armenians (Church-Public Structures and Relations)", in *Acta Poloniae Historica*, 101 (2010), 163-205; Bournoutian, *A Fresh Look*, 147.

sanctuaries of Armenian culture, while the old homeland was trapped in the buffer-zone of Ottoman-Turkish and Persian imperial expansions¹⁵. The Armenian community was confronted with Rome's unificationist denominational policies already in the Middle Ages, but those attempts would regularly fail on account of the resistance of the Armenian lay community and of the clergy¹⁶. After the Council of Trent (1545–1563), however, such intentions of Rome intensified again and even came within reach following the 1596 Ruthenian church-union of Brest¹⁷.

In 1624, the Armenian Apostolic (Eastern) Archiepiscopal office in Lviv became vacant with the death of *vardapet* Mesrop Kaffayec'i (1550–1624), an opponent of church-union, and the lay representatives of the community were unable to come to an agreement on the question of succession. Three years later, the anti-catholicos Melchizedek (*Melk'isēt' Garnec'i*) (1570–1627) arrived in Lviv with his entourage from Armenia, occupied by the Persian Safavid Empire¹⁸.

15 Apart from the city of Lviv, Kamieniec-Podolski, Stanisławów (Ivano-Frankivsk/Stanyславiv), and Zamość also had economically powerful and well-organised Armenian communities. Bžškeanc', *Čanaparbordut' iwn*, 99–100, 147, 155; Edmond Schütz, "An Armeno-Kipchak Print from L'vov (A. D. 1618)", in *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 13 (1961), 123–130.

16 In reality, these attempts at attaining union led only to partial success. Zdzisław Obertyński, *Die Florentiner Union der polnischen Armenier und ihr Bischofskatalog*, Röm, 1934, 12, 24, 44–45; Petrowicz, *La chiesa armena*, 52–60; Lewon Bōlos Zek'iyān, "14 dari kronakan večerē: naxak'ayler Hayoc' ekelec' banakan kargavičakē", in *Ėjmiacin*, 56 (2000), No. 1, 106–127; Stopka, *Armenia Christiana*, 143–156, 193–220, 291–308.

17 Bžškeanc', *Čanaparbordut' iwn*, 149; Alexandr Osipian, "Between Mercantilism, Oriental Luxury and the Ottoman Threat: Discourses on the Armenian Diaspora in Early Modern Kingdom of Poland", in *Acta Poloniae Historica*, 116 (2017), 188–201.

18 As a matter of fact, Melchizedek held the rank of bishop, serving as vicar to the Head of the Church (*tetapah*), and paraded himself as self-styled catholicos while the legal head of the Armenian Apostolic (Oriental) Church

As contemporary documents reveal, the Armenian hierarch was effectively obliged to flee his native country after embezzling the church property and tax revenue entrusted to him. Furthermore, he also provoked the anger of the clergy in Armenia repeatedly. Firstly, he styled himself catholicos without possessing such authority. Secondly, he declared his adherence to the Catholic faith in the presence of missionaries from the Apostolic Holy See. Thirdly, he had the Armenians' most sacred relics – including the Holy Right Hand of the Apostle of the Armenians, Saint Gregory the Illuminator (*Surb Grigor Lusaworič'*) (257–331) – transported to Rome via missionaries¹⁹.

The Lviv community had a young ambitious Armenian monk, Nikol Torosowicz (*Nikolōs T'oroseanc'*) (1603–1681), who, thanks to his wealthy family, maintained extensive ties with the Polish nobility and the Royal Court²⁰. As attested by sources, in 1627, Nikol Torosowicz visited the anti-catholicos Melchizedek residing in the city at the time

was Catholicos David V (*Dawit' Vałaršapatec'i*) (1587–1629), placed under Persian house arrest. On this subject, see: Edmond Schütz, "An Armenian–Kipchak Document of 1640 from Lvov and its Background in Armenia and in the Diaspora", in *Between the Danube and the Caucasus. A Collection of Papers concerning Oriental Sources on the History of the Peoples of Central and South-Eastern Europe* (ed. György Kara), Budapest, 1987, 268–269; Nagy, *Az erdélyi örmények*, 46–47.

- 19 MAMAT (= Matenadaran called Mesrop Maštoc' – The National Archives of Armenia, Yerevan/Erewan) MS (= Manuscripta). No. 2644. Fol. 229r.–253v.; Aṙak'el Dawrižec'i, *Patmut'iwñ Aṙak'el Dawrižec'woy*, Vałaršapat, 1896, 9–13, 27–29, 222–228; Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 9–12, 23; Step'anos Rōšk'ay, *Žamanakagrut'iwñ kamtarekank' ekelec'akank'*, ašx. Hamazasp Oskean, Vienna, 1964, 167–172; Schütz, *Armenian-Kipchak*, 272–276, 288; Nagy, *Az erdélyi örmények*, 48.
- 20 APF SOCG (= Scrittura Originali riferite nelle Congregazioni Generali). Vol. 291. Fol. 167r.; APF SOCG. Vol. 293. Fol. 183/v.–184/v; MAMAT MS. No. 1004. Fol. 190/v.; Dawrižec'i, *Patmut'iwñ*, 364; *Kamenic': Taregirk' Hayoc' Lebastani ew Rumenioy*, ašx. Lewond Ališan, Venetik, 1896, 203; Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 14–16, 52; Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 285.

and, in exchange for an enormous fortune, he successfully persuaded him into appointing him archbishop in secret in the Armenian Monastery of the Exaltation of Holy Cross in Lviv in the middle of the night²¹.

Afterwards, having enlisted the support of the Polish Court, Archbishop Torosowicz embarked on an aggressive ecclesiastical policy, imprisoning the lay leaders of the community and replacing them with his own sympathisers. This caused considerable uproar within the Armenian Apostolic Church²². In 1630, Catholicos Moses III (*Movsēs Tat'ewac'i*) (1629–1633) dispatched legates (*nwirakn*) to Lviv, calling on Torosowicz to resign, but he was unwilling to comply. Subsequently, the legates pronounced an anathema (*nzovumn*) upon the new Archbishop²³. Therefore, in 1630, accompanied by his

21 Some suggest that Torosowicz declared his adherence to the Catholic faith to the anti-catholicos Melchizedek already at this point, though such an act has not been verified by the relevant sources. Dawrižec'i, *Patmut'iwn*, 365; *Kamenic'*, 211; *Simēon dpri Leah'woy Utegrut'iwn*, ašx. Nersēs Akinean, Vienna, 1936, 377, 399–405, 410–417; Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 39, 46–47; Rōšk'ay, *Žamanakagrut'iwn*, 172; Angèle Kapoïan, “Siméon de Pologne: le diacre de Zamość (1584/5 – après 1639)”, in *Series Byzantina. Studies on Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art*, Vol. 9. (ed. Waldemar Deluga), Warsaw, 2011, 155–156; Osipian, *Between Mercantilism*, 179–180; Claude Mutafian, *La Saga des Arméniens de l'Ararat aux Carpathes*, Paris, 2018, 137–174.

22 Torosowicz's archiepiscopal appointment and alleged allegiance of faith were noted by the Apostolic Holy See as well. In his letter to Rome, Antonio Santacroce (1598–1641), Apostolic Nuncio in Warsaw and Titular Archbishop of Seleucia in Isauria, wrote that this was a propitious moment to convince the Armenians living in Lviv (and hence in the whole of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) to accept the church-union. On this subject, see: APF Istruzioni. Vol. 3. Fol. 93/v.–95r.

23 APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 2. Fol. 113/v; Dawrižec'i, *Patmut'iwn*, 366–370, 375; *Kamenic'*, 206; Nersēs Akinean, *Movsēs Tat'ewac'i Hayoc' Kat'otikosn ew ir žamanakē*, Vienna, 1936, 249–255, 260; Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 286, 291–292.

followers, Nikol Torosowicz escaped to the Saint Michael Monastery of the Discalced Carmelites in Lviv, where he proclaimed church-union in the presence of the prior and declared his adherence to the Catholic faith to him²⁴. With the joint support of the Polish Catholic Church and Royal Court behind him, Torosowicz thus began aggressive conversion campaigns: Assisted by secular authorities, he had the Archiepiscopal Cathedral seized and incarcerated protesting Armenian priests and the lay leaders of the community as heretics. This, however, failed to quell the discord. Moreover, even the Catholic Church was dissatisfied with his activities as, despite his church-union, Archbishop Torosowicz continued to say Mass according to Oriental traditions, and his Catholicism was in fact but mere pretence²⁵.

Therefore, in 1634, he was summoned to Rome, where, in the course of the following year, he re-affirmed his adherence to the Catholic faith in the presence of Pope Urban VIII (1623–1644) and pledged to say Mass exclusively according to the Latin Rite thereafter and to

- 24 Onorato Visconti (1585–1645), Apostolic Nuncio in Warsaw and Titular Archbishop of Larissa in Thessalia, notified the Apostolic Holy See of Torosowicz's declaration of adherence to the Catholic faith in multiple letters only a year later, in 1631. On this subject, see also: Other views point out that the Archbishop declared his adherence to the faith to the Jesuit Provincial. APF SOCG Vol. 73. Fol. 9r.+Fol. 12r.–v., Fol. 10r.–11v., Fol. 14r.–17v., Fol. 29r.+Fol. 32v., Fol. 33r.–v., Fol. 34v.–35v.+Fol. 37v., Fol. 38r.–40v., Fol. 42r., Fol. 43r.–44v., Fol. 41r.+Fol. 46v., Fol. 51r.–52r.; APF Lettere SC. Vol. 11. Fol. 39r.–v., Fol. 45v.; APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 2. Fol. 113v.–114r.; AAV (= Archivio Apostolico [Segreto] Vaticano, Città del Vaticano) ANV (= Archivio della Nunziatura in Varsavia [in Polonia]). Vol. 42/A. Fol. 203r.–v.; Dawřižec'i, *Patmut' iwn*, 289; *Kamenic'*, 209–210; Rōšk'ay, *Žamanakagrut' iwn*, 174; Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 290–295; Lewon Xaç'ikean, "Haykakan gał'avayrerē Ukrainayum XVI–XVII darrerum", in *Ašxatut' iwnner*, Hat. 2, ašx. Paroyr Muradean, Erewan, 1999, 251–253.
- 25 APF SOCG. Vol. 64. Fol. 148r.; APF SOCG. Vol. 298. Fol. 151r.; Dawřižec'i, *Patmut' iwn*, 381–382; Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 61, 75, 81, 123; Blažejovskij, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical*, 85.

do everything in his power to found a seminary for the Catholicised (Uniate) Armenian Church in Lviv, for Poland lacked a substantial clergy loyal to Rome²⁶.

In 1635, Mario Filonardi (1594–1644), Archbishop of Avignon, was appointed as an Apostolic Nuncio in Warsaw, who was from the start discontent with the Archbishop's ecclesiastical policies²⁷. His reports disclose that, on the one hand, Archbishop Torosowicz did continue to say Mass according to the (Eastern) Armenian Apostolic Rite and, on the other hand, he stirred a scandal by spending the funds provided by the Apostolic Holy See on earthly vanities. His unfavourable situation was further aggravated by the fact that, though an archbishop, he lived in marriage, had lovers and had several illegitimate children born to him²⁸. Nuncio Filonardi felt compelled to

26 APF SOCG. Vol. 59. Fol. 178/v.; APF CP. Vol. 22. Fol. 134/r.-v.+Fol. 135/v.; APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 2. Fol. 109/r.-v.; APF Istruzioni. Vol. I. Fol. 215r.-217/v.; AAV ANV. Vol. 47. Fol. 58r.; MAMAT MS. No. 1004. Fol. 193r.-194r.; Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 71-73, 79-80, 83-87; Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 301.

27 APF SOCG. Vol. 136. Fol. 337r.; APF SOCG. Vol. 293. Fol. 102r. –103r., Fol. 113r., Fol. 115/r.-v., Fol. 116/r.-v., Fol. 118/r.-v., Fol. 120r.+Fol. 125/v.; AAV ANV. Vol. 47. Fol. 323r.; AAV Segretaria di Stato. Polonia. Vol. 47. Fol. 353r.; AAV Segretaria di Stato. Polonia. Vol. 175. Fol. 144/r.-v.; APMV (= Archivio dei Padri Mechitaristi di Venezia, Venezia) MS (= Manuscripta). No. 1788. Fol. 89/v.-91r., Fol. 101r.-102/v.; *Kamenic'*, 241-243, 244-246, 247-249; *Acta Nuntiaturae Poloniae, Tomus XXV, Marius Filonardi (1635-1643), Vol. 2., (I XI 1636-31 X 1637)* (ed. Theresia Chynczewska-Hennel), Cracoviae, 2006, 6-7, 8-9, 13, 18, 23, 39, 45; *Stosunki dawnej Rzeczypospolitej z Persją Safawidów i katolikosatem w Eczmiadzinie w świetle dokumentów archiwalnych. - The Relations of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth with Safavid Iran and the Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin in the Light of the Archival Documents*, (eds and trs. Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, Stanisław Adam Jaśkowski, Piruza Mnatsakanian), Warszawa, 2017, 262-267, 294-297, 316-320, 344-347.

28 APF SOCG. Vol. 65. Fol. 165/r.-v.; Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 40-45, 123-124; Nagy, *Az erdélyi örmények*, 54.

act²⁹. With the help of the Apostolic Holy See, he summoned Paolo Piromalli OP (1592–1667), a Dominican missionary born in Italy, from Armenia to Lviv. Piromalli was well-acquainted with Armenian language and culture and worked on the development of an Armenian Uniate Rite³⁰. He was tasked with correcting practices in the Armenian liturgy that were considered to be wrong, as well as promoting Armenian Uniate priest training and keeping the difficult Armenian Archbishop in check³¹. Once arriving in Lviv, the Italian missionary priest began to work at once, but his activities would continually be hampered by the Archbishop from the outset³². At last, between 1642 and 1644, via the Polish Royal Court, the Archbishop

29 In 1635 and 1638, Nuncio Filonardi even submitted a proposal to the Apostolic Holy See for the foundation of a seminary for Uniate Armenians. Furthermore, he also urged that a Uniate auxiliary bishop, truly loyal to the Roman Church, who could hold the Archbishop at bay, be assigned to the Archbishop. APF SOCG. Vol. 136. Fol. 332r.+Fol. 347v.; AAV ANV. Vol. 47. Fol. 323r.+Fol. 334v., Fol. 324r.; AAV ANV. Vol. 175. Fol. 135r.–v.

30 APF SOCG. Vol. 291. Fol. 151r.–v., Fol. 247r.; Bžškeanc', *Čanaparhordut' iwn*, 114, 156; Dawrižec'i, *Patmut' iwn*, 383; Kamenic', 139–140; Akinean, *Movsēs Tat'ewac'i*, 376; Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 104, 109–111; Rōšk'ay, *Žamanakagrut' iwn*, 176.

31 APF SOCG. Vol. 81. Fol. 426r.; APF SOCG. Vol. 87. Fol. 193r.–194v.; APF SOCG. Vol. 136. Fol. 315r., Fol. 326r., Fol. 335r., Fol. 359v.–360v., Fol. 358r.+Fol. 361v.; APF SOCG. Vol. 293. Fol. 130r., Fol. 133r.–136v., Fol. 247r., Fol. 249r., Fol. 256r.; APF CP. Vol. 3. Fol. 235r.–v.; APF CP. Vol. 22. Fol. 136r.–137v., Fol. 138r.–v., Fol. 139r., Fol. 146r.–147r., Fol. 148r.–149r.; APF Lettere SC. Vol. 17. Fol. 10v.–11r., Fol. 12r., Fol. 46r.–v., Fol. 69v.–70v.; AAV Segretario di Stato. Polonia. Vol. 175. Fol. 146v.–147r.; APMV MS. No. 1788. Fol. 135v.–137v.; Rōšk'ay, *Žamanakagrut' iwn*, 176–177.; Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 317–326.; *Litterae missionarium de Hungaria et Transylvania (1627–1717)* Vol. 2. (ed. István György Tóth), Roma – Budapest, 2002, 1284; *Acta Nuntiaturae*, 67–68, 77–78, 102–104, 114–118, 125–127, 174–176, 194–195, 196–197, 198–199, 200, 216–217, 231–233, 237–238, 240–241, 243–244, 245–246, 261–263, 265, 273–275, 276, 293, 309–310, 314–316.

32 APF SOCG. Vol. 309. Fol. 322r.–v.

arranged for Piromalli to be recalled to Rome³³. This step provoked the resentment of the missionary organ of the Apostolic Holy See, the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (*Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*)³⁴. Most disgruntled by Archbishop Torosowicz's action was the Secretary of the institution, Francesco Ingoli (1578–1649)³⁵. By the late 1640s, trust was also eroded around Archbishop Torosowicz, and he could only count on the support of the Court³⁶. This spurred the Archbishop to take action: he re-contacted leaders of the Armenian Apostolic Church. Following years of negotiations, in 1652, the Archbishop secretly travelled to Constantinople, where he met Armenian Catholicos Philip I (*P'ilippos Atbakec'i*) (1633–1655) in person. In the presence of the Head of the Armenian Apostolic Church, Archbishop Torosowicz solemnly disavowed the ecclesiastical union previously concluded with Rome and re-affirmed his allegiance to the Armenian Apostolic Church. The Catholicos sent the Archbishop back with the instruction to resume his work in Lviv as a hierarch of the Armenian Apostolic faith³⁷. This practically amounted to the revocation of the declarations of 1630 and

33 Afterwards, Piromalli left for Armenia and was made head of the Dominican Missions in the rank of archbishop. APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 2. Fol. 107r.–108v., Fol. 109r.–v., Fol. 110r.; *Linguae Haicanae scriptores Ord. Praed. Cong. Fratrum Uniatorum et FF. Armenorum* (ed. Marcantonio van den Oudenrijn), Bern, 1960, 50; Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 296–299; Dennis Halft, “Paolo Piromalli”, in *Christian – Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History*, Vol. 10. (Ottoman and Safavid Empires 1600–1700) (eds. David Thomas David, John Chesworth), Leiden, 2017, 518–523.

34 The missionary institution of the Holy See will hereafter be referred to as *Propaganda Fide*.

35 APF SOCG. Vol. 64. Fol. 148r., Fol. 150r., Fol. 151r.; Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 123, 127–129.

36 APF SOCG. Vol. 65. Fol. 60r., Fol. 165r., Fol. 169r.

37 APF CP. Vol. 22. Fol. 5r., Fol. 277r.; *Kamenic'*, 250, 255; Dawrižec'i, *Patmut'wn*, 376–377, 382–383, 385–387; Rōšk'ay, *Žamanakagrut'wn*, 176–179; Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 266; Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 300, 304.

1635 and hence of church-union. Thus, ecclesiastical union seemed to be doomed to failure once and for all in Lviv and Poland.

3. *The Foundation and Early Activities of the Armenian College*

Sources keep silent on the Archbishop and the ten-year period concerned (1652–1662) as well. The only information available in this regard is that the insurrection associated with the name of the Zaporizhian Cossack Hetman Bohdan Chmielnicki/Khmelnysky (1593–1657), the Polish-Swedish War, as well as the invasion of Poland led by George II Rákóczi (1621–1660), Prince of Transylvania, with a portentous outcome, also happened in the area of Lviv, all wreaking severe havoc³⁸.

Word of Archbishop Torosowicz's 1652 turnabout reached Rome only with several years of delay, for even the Apostolic Nunciature in Warsaw would learn of it as late as 1662. The authorities at the Apostolic Holy See were taken completely unawares and were extremely shocked by the news³⁹. Therefore, the Apostolic Nunciature in Warsaw proposed the implementation of more effective measures against Archbishop Torosowicz. In the reports dispatched to Rome, the Armenian Archbishop was described as utterly untrustworthy and incapable of discharging the duties of his office. Moreover, in 1662, the Apostolic Nunciature's intention to replace Archbishop Torosowicz because his person no longer represented any guarantee

38 On this period, see: Gáspár Katkó, "The Redemption of Transylvanian Army Captured by Tatars in 1657", in *Crimean Khanate between East and West (15th–18th Century)* (ed. Denise Klein), Wiesbaden, 2012, 91-106; Gábor Kármán, *Confession and Politics in Principality of Transylvania, 1644–1657*, Göttingen, 2020, 103-117, 157-177, 236-250.

39 APF CP. Vol. 22. Fol. 5r., Fol. 277r.; *Kamenic'*, 253-255; Dawrižec'i, *Patmut' iwn*, 386; Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 136, 157-159; Schütz, *An Armeno-Kipchak*, 304, 306-307, 309-310.

for the consolidation and further development of church-union increasingly intensified⁴⁰.

In the middle of the 17th century, the Apostolic Holy See came to consider it of paramount importance to found a seminary for Uniate (Catholicised) Armenians in Lviv⁴¹. The necessity thereof was felt because, on the one hand, it was hoped to strengthen the Armenian Uniate faith among the faithful, and, on the other hand, it was expected to ensure continuity in the training of educated and reliable Uniate priests in the territory of the Archdiocese. At the same time, the establishment of a seminary was also motivated by a third reason: It was speculated that the foundation of the Armenian College could offset the rather problematic Archbishop Torosowicz's influence in Lviv. Thus, the institution was envisaged as a counterbalance of some kind against the Archbishop and his associates. In the early 1660s, the Apostolic Holy See repeatedly raised the possibility of creating a Uniate Armenian Rite, informed by the insights of Dominican and Theatine fathers, who had considerable missionary experience in Armenia⁴². At the very beginning of the 1660s, the chief proponent of this position was Antonio Pignatelli (1615–1700), Apostolic Nuncio in Warsaw, who would later become Pope Innocent XII (1691–1700)⁴³.

40 Blažejovskij, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical*, 86.

41 Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 149–151; Blažejovskij, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical*, III.

42 APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 1. Fol. 13r.–18/v.

43 Around 1730, in his account, Armenian Uniate ecclesiastical historiographer Step'an Step'anean Rōšk'ay (*Stefan Stefanowicz Roszka*) (1670–1739) suggests that the Armenian College was founded expressly at Archbishop Torosowicz's request. This, however, is contradicted by the sources of the Apostolic Holy See. In fact, the Archbishop played no part in this. On this subject, see also: APF CP. Vol. 22. Fol. 148r.–149r.; Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 165; Rōšk'ay, *Žamanakagrut' iwn*, 180–181; Blažejovskij, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical*, 109–110; *Acta Nuntiaturae Poloniae*, 245–246, 273–275.

In 1662, Mario Alberizzi (1609–1680), Secretary of the *Propaganda Fide*, wrote a letter to Nuncio Antonio Pignatelli, asking him to enquire about the foundation of the proposed Armenian College from the clerical and lay leaders of the Armenian community in Lviv⁴⁴. In his two responses written in the same year, Pignatelli articulated that, in the course of his negotiations, the lay or clerical leaders of the Armenians did not object to the establishment of the Armenian College⁴⁵. Apparently oblivious of the actual intent of the Apostolic Holy See, Archbishop Torosowicz also supported the idea of founding an Armenian College himself. For his part, he only pointed out one problem: He did not see it fit for young Armenian Uniate ordinands to be educated by Roman Catholic priests – primarily Jesuits – while they themselves were unfamiliar with the old Armenian ecclesiastical traditions⁴⁶.

Nevertheless, Nuncio Pignatelli remained distrustful of the Archbishop. In addition, in a letter, he urged the *Propaganda Fide* to found the Seminary for the Uniate Church in Lviv as soon as possible, in a way that the Archbishop would have only a minimum say in its operation and management⁴⁷. The Nuncio justified this stipulation by stressing that the eighteen priests and two monastics serving in the territory of the Archdiocese were only formally Uniate. In effect, these individuals continued to celebrate the liturgy in a manner seen by

44 APF Acta SC. Vol. 33. Fol. 149/v.–150r.

45 APF SOCG. Vol. 224. Fol. 101/v.; APF SOCG. Vol. 225. Fol. 72/r.–v.

46 APF Acta SC. Vol. 33. Fol. 150r.; APF SOCG. Vol. 225. Fol. 100r.; On this subject, see also: Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 151, 216–217; Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 303; Bournoutian, *A Fresh Look*, 146–147.

47 Besides, Nuncio Pignatelli also wrote detailed reports on the ecclesiastical conditions of the Armenians in Poland and Moldavia. APF SOCG. Vol. 225. Fol. 74r.; Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 173.; Alexandr Osipian, “Trans-Cultural Trade in the Black Sea Region, 1250–1700: Integration of the Armenian Trading Diaspora in Moldavian Principality”, in *New Europe College Yearbook* (2012–2013), No. 1., 133.

the Holy See as ‘heretical’. Moreover, Archbishop Torosowicz himself was but seemingly loyal to Rome and said Mass in a schismatic way almost as a rule⁴⁸. In his 1662 letter, the Nuncio noted that the alms, donations and other gifts offered by the faithful did not satisfy the Archbishop’s greed: They were insufficient to sustain the appearance of Torosowicz’s authority in the community or the livelihood of his family, or – more precisely – of his partner and children. The Nuncio even accused Torosowicz of the sin of simony as the Archbishop had sold church offices in Poland for money and acquired abundant profit from the transactions. Even worse, he appointed the most ineligible people possible to head various ecclesiastical offices⁴⁹.

The *Propaganda Fide* unanimously advanced the Theatine father Clemente Galano CR (1611–1666) as a head of the future Armenian College. His candidacy was also supported by his missionary experience in Armenia and his excellent theological background⁵⁰. Furthermore, the father Galano was fluent in contemporary spoken Armenian, as well as he had learnt Grabar, the Old (Classical) Armenian language used in the liturgy, and had extensively studied the history, teaching and theology of the Armenian Apostolic Church⁵¹.

48 APF Acta SC. Vol. 33. Fol. 149/r.-v.

49 APF SOCG. Vol. 225. Fol. 100r.

50 Francesco Antonio Vezzosi, *Scrittori dei chierici regolari detti teatini*, Vol. 1., Roma, 1780, 378–383; Xač’ikean, *Haykakan gal’avyrerē*, 253–254; Simonetta Pelusi, “Un Codice Marciano Armeno-Polacco e l’unione degli armeni di Leopoli con la Santa Sede”, in *Humanistica Marciana. Saggi offerti a Marino Zorzi*, a cura di: Simonetta Pelusi, Alessandro Scarsella, Milano, 2008, 142–143; Simonetta Pelusi, “Quel libro che vale un tesoro.’ Le circolazione dei manoscritti slavi a Venezia dalle biblioteche religiose alla Pubblica Libreria”, in *Venezia e Slovene Književnosti. Zbornik radova*, pr. Dejan Ajdačić, Persida Lazarević Di Đakomo, Beograd, 2011, 133–139.

51 APF Acta SC. Vol. 30. Fol. 93r.–99/v.; APF SOCG. Vol. 121. Fol. 322/r.-v.; Petrowicz, *L’unione*, 152–154; Blažejovskyj, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical*, 116–117; Petrowicz, *La chiesa armena in Polonia*, 3; Pelusi, *Quel libro*, 142–143.

Galano would soon accept the nomination⁵². As he saw it, education, along with the necessary logistical background, was initially to be provided for twenty seminarians, and the concomitant expenses would be covered partly by the *Propaganda Fide* and partly by the Archbishopric. Apart from this, Galano deemed the creation of an Armenian Rite conforming to the Catholic (Latin) liturgy to be imperative. In fact, he was completely opposed to the idea of the students studying exclusively according to the Latin Rite, arguing that insistence on such an arrangement could substantially undermine a fragile ecclesiastical union in Lviv and in the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth⁵³.

Archbishop Torosowicz made a building adjacent to the Archiepiscopal Palace available to the Seminary to be created. To oversee its maintenance and management, he appointed one of his men but stipulated that the costs would have to be financed not by him but by the *Propaganda Fide*, while reserving the right of control over the institution to himself⁵⁴. This, however, was vehemently disapproved by Nuncio Pignatelli. In his report sent to Rome, he recommended that the *Propaganda Fide* exercise direct control over the Armenian College. Although this would entail greater expenses, the Archbishop's influence was to be suppressed in this area as well⁵⁵.

The *Propaganda Fide* discussed the question of the foundation of the Armenian College of Lviv on 2 April 1663. In the general session (*Congregazione Generale*), the cardinals present endorsed Pignatelli's observations with one accord. Thus, the future educational institution was to be placed directly under the jurisdiction of the *Propaganda Fide*.

52 Blažejovskij, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical*, 110.

53 APF CP. Vol. 22. Fol. 150r.

54 APF SOCG. Vol. 225. Fol. 122r., Fol. 132r.; APF CP. Vol. 22. Fol. 150r.; Dawrižec'i, *Patmut' iwn*, 385; Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 165; Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 305.

55 APF CP. Vol. 22. Fol. 151r.-v.

In addition, based on previous negotiations, a final decision was also made about requesting the aforementioned Theatine father, Clemente Galano, to found the Seminary of Lviv, develop its training system and manage it⁵⁶. Once the Italian Theatine father accepted the request, he sought permission from the *Propaganda Fide* to take with him a young and talented fellow member of his order, Father Louis Marie Pidoux de Saint-Olon (1637–1717) CR, a Frenchman of aristocratic descent, who also had an excellent command of an Armenian language. His request was also accepted and approved by the *Propaganda Fide* shortly afterwards⁵⁷. At the same time, the *Propaganda Fide* also asked Galano to keep an eye on the untrustworthy Archbishop and notify them of every step of his⁵⁸.

After a few months of preparation, the Theatine fathers departed for Lviv in September 1663. They spent the winter of 1663 and 1664 in the Theatine Religious House of Our Lady and Saint Cajetan in Munich. When the winter was over, Father Galano and his companions arrived in the city of Lviv on 1 May 1664⁵⁹. They met Archbishop Torosowicz on the same day and immediately came into conflict with him. Galano described the Armenian Archbishop as a selfish, unbearable and aggressive figure. At the time of their talks, it became obvious that they could hope for no moral or financial support from the Archbishop, and they would need to pay for all other expenses themselves⁶⁰.

56 APF Acta SC. Vol. 32. Fol. 68r.–69/v.

57 The two were accompanied by Bonaventura Accostacci CR, an Italian Theatine monk, who also spoke good Armenian. Francesco Antonio Vezosi, *Scrittore dei chierici regolari detti teatini*, Vol. 2., Roma, 1780, 182–185; Blažejovskij, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical*, 111; Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 303.

58 APF SOCG. Vol. 225. Fol. 122r., Fol. 132r.; On this subject in brief, see also: Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 1950. 165; Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 305.

59 Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 163–165, 171–172; Blažejovskij, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical*, 112.

60 APF Acta SC. Vol. 33. Fol. 150r.

Furthermore, in his report, Galano recorded that, during the talks, Torosowicz did nothing to hide his extravagant life style from them, conducting himself not as an archbishop but like a temporal prince in the city. He would always travel in ornate coaches and was spendthrift with the money of the Church. He did not spurn delicious food or select beverages, either. With his entourage, he would regularly hold revelries and use the services of local girls. It was an open secret that, outside the city walls, he harboured a young maid, who was effectively his lover. At any rate, Galano expressed his doubts to the *Propaganda Fide*, citing the fact that the Armenian community was not supportive of Torosowicz but did not have the courage to rebel against him overtly because he was still backed by the Polish Court and the aristocracy. Even though the Archbishop professed to be a believer of the Catholic Church to Galano, the monastic missionary was not convinced of this. Actually, Galano considered the Archbishop unsuitable to perform his official duties and refused to call the Diocese Uniate even with the best of intentions. At the end of his report, he remarked that Archbishop Torosowicz did not care about the Church at all but was preoccupied only with his own career and economic interests, causing previous declarations of adherence to the Catholic faith to further not church-union but his own selfish interests instead⁶¹.

The Theatine monk also described the miserable conditions obtaining in the Diocese. As indicated, as many as thirty priests served in the territory of the Archbishopric, who were as a matter of fact not Uniate, for they celebrated the liturgy according to the old Apostolic traditions. Nearly all of the Armenian priests and monks concerned were married or had lovers⁶². As Galano notes, the Armenian priests

61 APF Acta SC. Vol. 33. Fol. 152/r.-v.

62 APF SOCG. Vol. 225. Fol. 76/r.-v., Fol. 166r.; MAMAT MS. No. 1004. Fol. 194r.; Petrowicz, *L'unione* 173; Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 311-312.

had no idea as to what church-union or ecclesiastical discipline meant in reality, or what being Uniate or Catholic involved⁶³. For all this, he blamed Archbishop Torosowicz, who utterly neglected his Diocese. In the territory of the Archbishopric, Galano found but only two Armenian clerics who were cognisant of church-union and candidly embraced the faith of Rome, observing church-discipline, though they fell out of favour with Archbishop Torosowicz for this reason⁶⁴.

At the same time, Torosowicz did not conceal his displeasure with the Theatine fathers: He regarded them as troublemakers and even fanatics. The reason for the Archbishop's reservations was that he was in fact afraid of Galano⁶⁵. He thought that, in his person, the Apostolic Holy See and the *Propaganda Fide* had delegated not merely a rival but a potential archiepiscopal candidate to Lviv, who could over time deprive him of his archiepiscopal office ensuring high revenues and great power⁶⁶.

In addition, the conflict of the two would be further exacerbated. Father Galano threatened the Archbishop with disclosing even the smallest details of his not really Christian way of life, as well as of his murky finances to the Polish Royal Court and Pope Alexander VII (1655–1667)⁶⁷. The real reason behind this move was the fact that the Theatine fathers could count on the full support of the *Propaganda Fide*, and, in such a situation, it did not matter that they were only 'ordinary' priests or monks. Their views carried considerable weight in the eyes of the authorities of the Apostolic Holy See, and they

63 Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 179–180.

64 APF Acta SC. Vol. 33. Fol. 150/v.; APF SOCG. Vol. 228. Fol. 5r., Fol. 122/r.–v.

65 *Brni Miut'iwu Hayoc' Lebastani end eketec'woyn Hrovmay Žamanakic' Yišatakarank'*, ašx. Karapet Ėzean, Sankt–Petersburg, 1884, 18; Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 179–180.

66 APF Acta SC. Vol. 33. Fol. 150r.; Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 166; Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 311–312.

67 *Brni Miut'iwu*, 31, 36–38, 164; *Kamenic'*, 213; Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 314.

could positively devastate the Archbishop's respectability⁶⁸. It was typical of the tense relations between the two parties that, for their accommodation, Archbishop Torosowicz deliberately provided a dilapidated and derelict property without furniture or heating to the three Theatine monks arriving in Lviv. The necessary items (furniture, bedlinen, etc.) were purchased by Galano himself at the market in the city of Lviv from the *Propaganda Fide's* money⁶⁹. Torosowicz's subsequent step proved to be telling: He pronounced the Theatine fathers as *personae non gratae* and sought to have them expelled from the territory of the country by the secular authorities⁷⁰.

Moreover, another conflict also erupted between Galano and Torosowicz because the Theatine father endeavoured to admit as many Armenian youth as possible to the institute. Torosowicz, however, feared that Galano intended to 'recruit' students from his own followers or their families, seeking to weaken his positions in Lviv⁷¹. The Archbishop's apprehension was indeed not unfounded as, in the September of 1664, teaching began with twelve young seminarians, all from Torosowicz's environment, who, under Galano's and Pidoux's influence, would over time come to oppose the Archbishop though⁷².

In the first place, the Theatine fathers taught the seminarians Latin, Italian and Armenian. They put a particularly great emphasis on the acquisition of spoken and written Armenian (i.e. Grabar/ Classical or Old Armenian) because, based on their experience, (partly for historical reasons) Armenians in Poland had since the 15th century communicated among themselves not in their mother tongue but in the Crimean Kipchak (or the so-called Armeno-Kipchak) language,

68 APF Acta SC. Vol. 33. Fol. 153r.

69 APF CP. Vol. 22. Fol. 207/r.-v.

70 Blažejovskyj, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical*, 113.

71 APF CP. Vol. 68. Fol. 25r.; APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 2. Fol. 50/r.-v., Fol. 51/r.-v.

72 APF Acta SC. Vol. 33. Fol. Fol. 153/v.-154r.

for the writing of which they would use the Armenian script. Armenian was spoken only by ecclesiastics, but they lacked native speaker competence. In other words, even their Armenian language skills were imperfect⁷³.

In the course of the training, Galano and Pidoux, as well as their fellow monks, came to the realisation that the denominational unifications associated with Archbishop Torosowicz's name could not be considered ecclesiastical union. Declarations of adherence to the Catholic faith made by the Archbishop were merely confined to recognition of the primacy of the Pope in Rome. Unlike the 1596 Ruthenian church-union in Brest, these did not cover issues such as the remuneration of Uniate Armenian priests or the betterment of their social status. The church-unions involving Torosowicz even hereafter failed to resolve numerous important questions concerning the liturgy and doctrine such as the endorsement of the Fourth Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon and of the *Filioque procedit* prayer (*ew yOrdwoyn btxi*), the rejection of the improper way of singing the *Trisagium/Trisagion* Hymn, the usage of the old Armenian calendar, the Eucharist or the use of a liturgical language. Galano and his associates would persist in their putatively well-founded objection that, despite the ecclesiastical unions, Archbishop Torosowicz and his followers continued to engage in the old schismatic customs and teachings. Therefore, Galano thought that, by founding the Armenian College, they would provide an institutional framework for the continuous education of well-trained Armenian Uniate priests⁷⁴.

73 Following the occupation of the city of Kaffa by the Ottoman Turks in 1475, a large number of Armenian refugees speaking the language of the Tartars but using the Armenian script for writing it came to Poland from Crimea. APF CP. Vol. 64. Fol. 41r.-47v.; APF CP. Vol. 133. Fol. 270r.-310v.; Blažejovsky, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical*, 114; Nagy, *Az erdélyi örmények*, 55.

74 APF SOCG. Vol. 225. Fol. 76r., Fol. 166v.-167r.; Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 66-69, 172, 182; Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 311-312; Nagy, *Az erdélyi örmények*, 54-55.

Besides, Galano was to face other problems as well. In fact, funds for the overheads had been depleted in the meantime, and Galano requested additional financial aid from the *Propaganda Fide*. In response, the institution of the Apostolic Holy See decided to allocate 400 *scudi* in the form of early assistance. Furthermore, in light of the reports received, the Cardinals of the *Propaganda Fide* also determined that direct control over the Armenian College would be exercised by the Latin Archbishop in Lviv and the incumbent Apostolic Nuncio in Warsaw on their behalf, for, as they argued, it was impermissible that the Armenian Archbishop should gain any influence on matters relative to the Seminary, on account of his untrustworthiness⁷⁵.

Soon afterwards, Nuncio Pignatelli proposed that Archbishop Torosowicz be symbolically involved in matters of the Seminary though. The corresponding letter ought, however, to be seen as motivated not by a desire to attain reconciliation but rather by the need to ensure that the *Propaganda Fide* would be able to keep an even closer watch on the unreliable Archbishop. Moreover, Nuncio Pignatelli made this recommendation because, as he pointed out, the Armenian Archiepiscopate of Lviv would not always be headed by Torosowicz, and thus it did not appear wise to exclude the incumbent head of the Archbishopric from overseeing the issues of the Armenian College permanently. However, the *Propaganda Fide* did not address this suggestion substantively in any official form. The documents of the unofficial sessions, i.e. the so-called congresses, of the missionary institution revealed that the reason for their silence clearly had to do with the fact that they had no confidence in Torosowicz and identified the Archiepiscopate exclusively with his person and attitudes at that time⁷⁶.

75 The Latin-rite Archbishop of Lviv was Jan Tarnowski (d. 1669) at the time. APF Acta SC. Vol. 33. Fol. 156/r.-v.

76 APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 2. Fol. 65/r.-v., Fol. 75/r.-v.

In 1665, the Armenian College continued to operate undisrupted, a new generation of Armenian students were admitted, and another decent amount of money was sent from Rome to cover the expenses. In addition, after protracted debates, the Cardinals of the *Propaganda Fide* also decided to take it upon themselves to meet all the costs of maintaining the Armenian College, including funding the studies of the students⁷⁷. Thanks to this step, more new students could be accepted. It was at this time that Deodatus Nersesowicz (1644–1709), who would later have a noteworthy church career, also became a student of the Armenian College⁷⁸.

As part of the training, Galano and Pidoux involved the students in the creation of the Armenian Uniate Rite⁷⁹. The Theatine fathers capitalised on their prior missionary experience⁸⁰. Even the *Propaganda*

77 In 1665, Father Galano estimated the annual budget for one student to cost the Apostolic Holy See approximately 40 *scudi*. APF Acta SC. Vol. 34. Fol. 50r.-v., Fol. 78r.-79v., Fol. 147r.-v.; APF SC Coll. Var. Vol. 2. Fol. 2r.-23v.; AGT (= Archivio Generale dei Teatini, Roma) CL (= Collegio di Leopoli). Portfolio 1. (Without folio numbers).

78 Deodatus Nersesowicz (*Astwacatur Nersësean*), born in Krasnopol, was the son of Nerses Nersesowicz (*Nersës Nersësean*), the Armenian Apostolic (Oriental) parish priest of the town in Jazłówiec (now Yazlovets in Ukraine). Between 1683 and 1686, as well as 1698 and 1709, he was Coadjutor to the Armenian Uniate Archbishop of Lviv and Titular Bishop of Traianopolis in Rhodope (*in partibus infidelium*). APF Acta SC. Vol. 53. Fol. 248r.-v.; APF SOCG. Vol. 488. Fol. 273r.-v., Fol. 275r.-276v., Fol. 277r.-281r., Fol. 283r.-284v., Fol. 286r.; APF CP. Vol. 29. Fol. 159r.-160r.+Fol. 160v., Fol. 165r.-v., Fol. 166v.; APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 3. Fol. 318r., Fol. 325r.; APF Lettere SC. Vol. 72. Fol. 69r., Fol. 199v.-200r.; APF Lettere SC. Vol. 73. Fol. 69r.-v., Fol. 72r.-73r.; APF Fondo di Vienna. Vol. 42. Fol. 49r.-v.; AGT CL. Portfolio 1. (Without folio numbers); Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 176; Rõšk'ay, *Žamanakagrut'iwn*, 195; Blažejovskij, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical*, 115; Petrowicz, *La chiesa armena in Polonia*, 7-11; Nagy, *Az erdélyi örmények*, 94-96.

79 APF Lettere SC. Vol. 76. Fol. 136r.

80 Petrowicz, *La chiesa armena in Polonia*, 14.

Fide assured them of its support for their ideas about the Armenian Uniate Rite and, as a result, had an additional substantial amount allocated to the Armenian College via the Nunciature in Warsaw⁸¹. Consequently, the number of students significantly rose, entailing continued resentment on Archbishop Torosowicz's part in turn as this diminished the number of his own followers⁸². Apart from linguistic studies, considerable attention was paid to the cultivation of logic, philosophy, rhetoric and history at the Armenian College. A premium was also put on acquaintance with Armenian history and its instruction. Within a short while, Father Galano and his fellow monks created a well-functioning school in Lviv. Moreover, it is also safe to say that, in Lviv, the Armenians had not only a seminary but also a scholarly workshop of note established, which, albeit confessionally, was instrumental in laying the foundations of modern Armenology⁸³. At the same time, Father Galano could not accomplish his mission: In the early spring of 1666, a cold caused him to fall ill, and he left for Krakow for medical treatment. In his absence, his brethren continued teaching in the institution. However, owing to complications of his illness, Father Galano departed this life in Krakow on 14 May 1666⁸⁴. In accordance with the decision of Nuncio Pignatelli, as well as of the *Propaganda Fide*, his position, i.e. the rectorship (prefecture) of the Armenian College, was temporarily taken over by Father Louis Pidoux⁸⁵.

81 APF Acta SC. Vol. 34. Fol. 148r.-149r.

82 APF Acta SC. Vol. 34. Fol. 273r.

83 Blažejovskij, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical*, 115; Kornél Nagy, "Az armenológus Schütz Ödön", in *Keletkutatás* (2016), Tavasz, 29-30.

84 Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 176-177; Rõšk'ay, *Žamanakagrut'iwun*, 181; Pelusi, *Un Codice Marciano Armeno-Polacco*, 144.

85 APF Acta SC. Vol. 34. Fol. 224r., Fol. 246r.; APF Acta SC. Vol. 35. Fol. 136/ r.-v.; AGT CL. Portfolio 1. (Without folio numbers); On this subject, see also: Blažejovskij, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical*, 117-118; Xaç'ikean, *Haykakan gatl'avayrerë*, 258.

After Galano's death, the *Propaganda Fide* sent two new Theatine fathers educated in canon law and the Latin language to Lviv to help Pidoux with his work⁸⁶. Torosowicz was, however, not particularly happy with this development. He believed that dispatching two more monks would make the influence of the Theatines even stronger among the Armenians. Increasingly more suspicious, the Archbishop saw this move as a manifestation of Rome's scheming, too. In addition, he took every possible step with the secular authorities to ensure that the Theatines would be expelled from the city of Lviv and thus from the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth once and for all⁸⁷. An episode impacting this situation was the visit of the acting Rector Pidoux, as well as of his fellow monks and Archbishop Torosowicz, to Kamieniec-Podolski (now Kamianets-Podilskyi in Ukraine) one year after Galano's death, in 1667. Kamieniec-Podolski was a town the Armenian community of which had opposed the church-union from the outset⁸⁸. Nevertheless, the Armenian inhabitants of the town gave a hearty welcome to the Theatine fathers but not to Archbishop Torosowicz and his entourage, inflicting a major loss of respect on him. Moreover, Pidoux was successful in converting local Armenians and persuaded the Armenian Oriental parish priest, Step'an Step'anean-Sargisean Rōšk'ay (*Stefan Stefanowicz-Sarkisowicz Roszka*) (1631–1670), into celebrating the Eucharist according to the Latin Rite⁸⁹. At the

86 The two Theatine fathers were Francesco Davia CR and Angelo Peveratti CR from the centre of the religious order (i.e. its principal monastery) next to the Sant' Andrea della Valle church in Rome. On this subject, see: APF Acta SC. Vol. 35. Fol. 246r.; AGT CL. Portfolio 1. (Without folio numbers).

87 APF Acta SC. Vol. 35. Fol. 302r.–303v., Fol. 329r.–v.

88 *Bṛni Miut'iwn* 72, 89, 222; Xač'ikean, *Haykakan gatl'avayrerē*, 247, 254–255, 258.

89 This Armenian Apostolic (Oriental) priest was the father of the Uniate historiographer Step'an Step'anean Rōšk'ay. He died on 28 March 1670, a few months before the birth of the Armenian Uniate priest and historiographer. On this subject, see: Rōšk'ay, *Žamanakagrut'iwn*, 182.

same time, the Armenians of Kameniec, including the parish priest, did not officially pronounce church-union with Rome *in concreto*⁹⁰. At any rate, the Apostolic Holy See interpreted this as a success and emphasised Father Pidoux's merits. However, Archbishop Torosowicz blamed the father of French descent for his repeated humiliation and failure⁹¹.

However, the *Propaganda Fide* did not take such innuendos seriously and even intended to decide who Galano's official successor should be at the head of the Armenian College. Initially, an experienced ecclesiastical scholar, the Italian Theatine father Giuseppe Caracciolo CR, was selected as the new Rector of the Armenian College. The Apostolic Holy See considered Louis Pidoux highly talented but still too young for a leadership role⁹². In 1668, however, the Superior General of the Theatines, Carlo Maria Danesi CR, raised an objection to this position with the *Propaganda Fide* and convinced the leaders of the institution that, notwithstanding his young age, Pidoux was indeed eligible for heading the Armenian College in Lviv⁹³. As a result, in the course of the following year, the Cardinals of the *Propaganda Fide* appointed Pidoux as the new Rector and they re-affirmed the appointment in 1669⁹⁴.

However, it must be noted that Pidoux's succession at the head of the Armenian College happened in a difficult period. Between 1669

90 APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 3. Fol. 132/r.-v.; This conflict was also described in detail by Pidoux himself in his work. For more detail on this subject, see: Aloisius Pidoux, *Compendiosa relatio unionis nationis Armeno-Poloniae Sancta Ecclesia Romana ad annum Christi 1676*, Romae, 1676, 87-109; Pelusi, *Quel libro*, 143-144.

91 APF SOCG. Vol. 472. Fol. 492/r.-v.; Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 219; Rōšk'ay, *Žamanakagrut' iwn*, 182; Petrowicz, *La chiesa armena in Polonia*, 36-38.

92 Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 219, 231; Blažejovskij, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical*, 120-121; Nagy, *Az erdélyi örmények*, 55.

93 Pelusi, *Un Codice Marciano Armeno-Polacco*, 143-144.

94 APF Acta SC. Vol. 38. Fol. 404/-v.; APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 2. Fol. 75/r.-v.

and 1673, the teaching staff frequently fluctuated, not due to poor leadership but because of the prevailing health conditions. A number of instructors passed away from various diseases, while several monks returned to Rome on account of their compromised health⁹⁵.

Pidoux had clashes with the Archbishop virtually on a daily basis, while he was to face the consequences of the Ottoman-Turkish attacks of 1672 and 1673 as well. Podolia, along with the town of Kamieniec-Podolski, came under the Sultan's jurisdiction⁹⁶. The Armenian community of Podolia, regarded as a potential missionary target, was scattered. The majority escaped to Russia or to Transylvania⁹⁷. For this reason, the institution itself even suspended its educational activities between 1672 and 1673. Together with their teachers, some of the students fled to Krakow; the most talented ones were sent to Rome, to the Seminary of the *Propaganda Fide*, the Collegium Urbanum, to continue their studies. The other problem was that the instructors were also dispersed: Many of them would return to Rome⁹⁸.

Contemporaneously with the appointment of Pidoux, the Apostolic Holy See summoned Archbishop Torosowicz to Rome. The Archbishop was hesitant but, eventually, at the firm order of Galeazzo Marescotti (1627–1726), Apostolic Nuncio in Warsaw, he left for Rome in 1669⁹⁹. He entrusted the governance of the Diocese to one

95 APF Acta SC. Vol. 39. Fol. 182/r.–v.; AGT CL. Portfolio 1. (Without folio numbers).

96 Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 317.

97 APF SOCG. Vol. 572. Fol. 278r.–279/v.; APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 1. Fol. 535r.–526/v., Fol. 602r.–610/v.; APF SC Fondo Moldavia. Vol. 1. Fol. 155r.–156/v., Fol. 168r.–169r., Fol. 233r.–236/v., Fol. 257r.–259/v., Fol. 358/r.–v.; APF SC Fondo Moldavia. Vol. 2. Fol. 345r.–346r.; APF Fondo di Vienna. Vol. 8. Fol. 74r.–77/v.; ELTE EEK (= University Library and Manuscript Collection, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest). Coll. Hev. (= Collectio Hevenesiana). Cod. 16. Pag. 32.; ELTE EKK. Coll. Hev. Cod. 21. Pag. 81.

98 APF Lettere SC. Vol. 61. Fol. 149/v.

99 Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 246–247; Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 305.

of his men, Jan Kieremowicz (*Yovhannēs K'armatanenc'*) (1631–1678), who, shortly after his departure, challenged the Archbishop¹⁰⁰.

In light of the incoming reports, the *Propaganda Fide* sought to try Archbishop Torosowicz before a board of inquiry to testify about his idiosyncratic leading style. At this point, the possibility of replacing Torosowicz was also explicitly raised. Even the very appearance of the Archbishop astonished the authorities of the Apostolic Holy See. He arrived in Rome in a twelve-horse ornate carriage, accompanied by a grandiose escort. As for his conduct, it felt as though not a senior clergyman but a powerful secular ruler had appeared before them. The Archbishop stayed in Rome for seven years and, throughout the lengthy inquiries, he consistently denied reaffiliation with the Armenian Apostolic Church. He even considered it downright baseless hearsay that, in 1652, he had allegedly had a clandestine meeting with the Head of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Constantinople, repudiating ecclesiastical union in his presence. In addition, he labelled the charge that he sought the demise of the Armenian College of Lviv plain nonsense and insinuation¹⁰¹.

In the end, the Archbishop was not replaced. This was partly due to the efforts of John III (Sobieski), King of Poland (1674–1696), who, through his envoys, interceded with the Pope to ensure that Torosowicz would not be relieved of his church office. Actually, the Polish Monarch asked the *Propaganda Fide* to send the Archbishop

100 In co-operation with Pidoux, Kieremowicz had also invested a large amount of effort into creating a uniform Armenian Uniate Missal. Subsequently, as Titular Bishop of Hymeria, the *Propaganda Fide* intended to send him to Moldavia in order to Catholicise the Armenians living there, but his attempt failed in the absence of the necessary authorisations and money. APF SOCG. Vol. 120. Fol. 322r.; APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 2. Fol. 394r., Fol. 630r.–v., Fol. 631r.–v.; AGT CL. Portfolio 1. (Without folio numbers); Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 247–248; Rōšk'ay, *Žamanakagrut' iwn*, 182; Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 304; Nagy, *Az erdélyi örmények*, 116.

101 Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 255–256.

back to Poland so that he might be called to account over his misconduct there instead¹⁰². The trust of the Apostolic Holy See in him was irreparably eroded. Therefore, it was decided that, in 1675, two Armenian Uniate priests capable of keeping him under control would be assigned to Archbishop Torosowicz in episcopal rank. However, the official justification from the *Propaganda Fide* was that the elderly Archbishop was not to be overburdened on account of his health issues¹⁰³. One of them was Vardan Hunanean (1644–1715), a native Uniate clergyman from the Armenian Motherland, while the other was Theodor Wardanowicz (1652–1700) from Lviv. At the same time, this step proved humiliating for Torosowicz. However, as he had no choice, he could not but accept the decision. In fact, he was to attend the event when Pope Clement X (1670–1676) himself consecrated Hunanean as Titular Bishop of Epiphania in Syria¹⁰⁴. Along with his two companions, the Archbishop finally returned to Lviv in 1676¹⁰⁵.

102 Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 266–270; Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 305.

103 APF SOCG. Vol. 225. Fol. 37r.

104 Wardanowicz eventually failed to obtain episcopal appointment. APF Acta SC. Vol. 39. Fol. 207r.; APF Acta SC. Vol. 47. Fol. 210r.; APF SOCG. Vol. 225. Fol. 270r.; APF SOCG. Vol. 454. Fol. 53r.; APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 2. Fol. 209r.–211r.; APF SC Fondo Moldavia. Vol. 1. Fol. 287r.–v.; Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 295.; *Hierarchia Catholica medii et recentioris aevi* (eds. Remigius Ritzler OFM Conv., Pirminius Seffrin OFM Conv.), Vol. 5, (1667–1730), Patavii, 1952, at 196, 243; Rõšk'ay, *Žamanakagrut' iwn*, 183; Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 305; Petrowicz, *La chiesa armena in Polonia*, 1; Kornél Nagy, “Vardan Hunanean łwówi uniált érsek levele 1686-ból a lengyelországi és az erdélyi örményekről”, in *Századok* 140 (2006), No. 4, 1010–1011; Pelusi, *Un Codice Marciano Armeno-Polacco*, 145; Pelusi, *Quel libro*, 145–146.

105 According to Uniate Armenian historiographer Rõšk'ay, Vardan Hunanean was ordained bishop by Archbishop Torosowicz himself, though this has been controverted by latest research. APF CP. Vol. 22. Fol. 7r., Fol. 277r.; APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 2. Fol. 413r.; APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 3. Fol. 199r.–v., Fol. 200r.–v.; Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 266, 297; Rõšk'ay, *Žamanakagrut' iwn*, 183.

In the mid-1670s, Father Pidoux did everything to remedy the situation arising as a result of the events of the years 1672 and 1673. As the old teaching staff had disbanded, he requested new instructors from the centre of the Theatine Order in Rome¹⁰⁶. This had sparked tensions with the centre of the Religious Order because they wished to send inexperienced order members from Rome who did not meet the high expectations of the time. Among the new instructors, the only exception was Francesco Giambattista Bonesana CR (1649–1709), born in Milan, who would before long become Pidoux's deputy at the Armenian College¹⁰⁷. The majority of the new instructors did not speak Armenian, and their theological background also appeared to be problematic in some cases, while new seminars arrived at the educational institution¹⁰⁸. For this reason, Father Pidoux dispatched several requests to the centre of the Religious Order in Rome, as well

¹⁰⁶ Blažejevskyj, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical*, 125–126.

¹⁰⁷ APF Acta SC. Vol. 44. Fol. 247r.–v.; APF Acta SC. Vol. 45. Fol. 20r.–v.; APF Lettere SC. Vol. 64. Fol. 111v.–112v.; AGT CL. Portfolio I. (Without folio numbers).

¹⁰⁸ In 1675, the Armenian College welcomed among its students Oxendio Stefanowicz Virziresco (1654–1715), a native of Moldavia with Polish-Armenian roots, subsequently also holder of the title 'Titular Bishop', who would continue his studies at the Collegium Urbanum in Rome three years later, in 1678. In 1689, he would play a major role in achieving the church-union of the Armenians in Transylvania. APF Acta SC. Vol. 51. Fol. 114r.–v., Fol. 154r.–v., Fol. 232r.–v., Fol. 255r.–v.; APF Acta SC. Vol. 54. Fol. 207r.–v.; APF Acta SC. Vol. 55. Fol. 60r.–v.; APF SOCG. Vol. 490. Fol. 110r.; APF SOCG. Vol. 491. Fol. 12r.–v., Fol. 13v. APF SOCG. Vol. 492. Fol. 310v., Fol. 313r.–v.; APF SOCG. Vol. 493. Fol. 30r.+Fol. 31v., Fol. 376v.+Fol. 377v.+Fol. 378v.; APF SOCG. Vol. 495B. Fol. 232r.–234v.; APF SOCG. Vol. 497. Fol. 335r.–v.; APF Lettere SC. Vol. 70. Fol. 53r.–v., Fol. 54r.; APF Lettere SC. Vol. 72. Fol. 1v.–2r.; APF Lettere SC. Vol. 73. Fol. 252r.–v.; APF Lettere SC. Vol. 74. Fol. 19/–v.; APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 3. Fol. 417r., Fol. 419r., Fol. 434r.–v.+Fol. 435v., Fol. 457r., Fol. 462r.–v., Fol. 468r.–469v., Fol. 488r., Fol. 490r., Fol. 498r.–v.; APF Collegio Urbano (= Coll. Urb.). Vol. 1. Fol. 268r., Fol. 272v.; APF Coll. Urb. Vol. 3. Fol. 472r.–v.; ARSI (= Archivum Romanum Societatis

as to the *Propaganda Fide*, but his letters were met with silence or rejection¹⁰⁹.

Meanwhile, seeing Pidoux's predicament, Archbishop Torosowicz also mounted attacks. He let the Rector know that he intended to reclaim the building owned by the Archbishopric and loaned to the Armenian College. Furthermore, Torosowicz also turned against Bishop Vardan Hunanean, the new Archiepiscopal Coadjutor, who had developed friendly ties with Pidoux. He estranged his supporters from the Bishop and raised an objection to his person on grounds that he was not in reality a descendant of an Armenian family native to Lviv but he was from Armenia, and the Pope had appointed him to be by his side only to spy on him and undermine his archiepiscopal authority¹¹⁰. As for the other ecclesiastic who had been assigned to Archbishop Torosowicz as Vicar in Rome, Theodor Wardanowicz openly defied Hunanean and became a supporter of the Archbishop's¹¹¹.

The situation became so untenable for Bishop Hunanean in Lviv that, in 1678, he left for Armenian territories for missionary work via Constantinople¹¹². He was also accompanied by Father Pidoux, who had grown dissatisfied with the prevailing conditions in Lviv. In fact, having had his requests repeatedly declined and with Torosowicz aiming to render the Armenian College completely dysfunctional, he

Iesu, Roma) Fondo Austria. Historica. Vol. 155 Fol. 81r.-v.; ELTE EKK Coll. Hev. Cod. 21. Pag. 82.

109 APF SC Coll. Var. Vol. 2. Fol. 154r., Fol. 156r.; AGT CL. Portfolio 1. (Without folio numbers).

110 Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 300–301; Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 305.

111 APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 2. Fol. 448r.-v., Fol. 450r.-v.; APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 3. Fol. 100r.-v.; APF SC Fondo MPR (= Moscovia Polonia e Ruthenia). Vol. 1. Fol. 660r.-v.; *Litterae episcoporum historiam Ucrainiae illustrantes*, Vol. 3., (1665–1690) (ed. Athanasius Welikyj), Romae, 1974, 165–167.

112 APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 2. Fol. 413r.-417v.; Rõšk'ay, *Žamanakagrut' iwn*, 183; Petrowicz, *La chiesa armena in Polonia*, 1.

resigned from his office as a Rector¹¹³. However, he failed to consult the *Propaganda Fide* and sent the letter containing his resignation to Rome from Constantinople¹¹⁴. The *Propaganda Fide* would make a decision on his succession relatively rapidly. At the recommendation of Francesco Martelli (1633–1717), Apostolic Nuncio in Warsaw and Titular Archbishop of Corinth, Pidoux's former deputy, Father Francesco Giambattista Bonesana, was appointed as the new Rector of the Armenian College in 1678¹¹⁵.

The new Rector also had to face his predecessor's problems: the shortage of teaching staff at the Armenian College and the intriguing of Archbishop Torosowicz. First of all, he had to tackle the shortage of instructors as, apart from him, only one fellow monk of his was left. Thus, between 1678 and 1680, Father Bonesana urged the Apostolic

113 APF Acta SC. Vol. 47. Fol. 225r.; APF SOCG. Vol. 47I. Fol. 314r.; APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 2. Fol. 542r.-v., Fol. 556r., Fol. 557r.; Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 306–312. Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 313.; Petrowicz, *La chiesa armena in Polonia*, 68.; Father Pidoux spent as many as nine years as a missionary in Armenian territories. In 1687, Pope Innocent XI (1676–1689) appointed him Titular Bishop of Baghdad. He was ordained in Rome only in 1694 though. Simultaneously, he was made head of the Theatine Missions in the Middle East and Armenia as well. On this subject, see also: APF Lettere SC. Vol. 70. Fol. 10r.-11r., Fol. 107/v.-111r.; APF Lettere SC. Vol. 72. Fol. 49/v.-50r., Fol. 178/r.-v.; APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 3. Fol. 19r.-23r.; APF Coll. Urb. Vol. 2. Fol. 90/r.-v., Fol. 91/r.-v., Fol. 92r.; AAV ANV. Vol. 177. Fol. 8/v.+Fol. 9/v.; AGT CL. Portfolio I. (Without folio numbers); *Hierarchia Catholica*, 110.

114 APF Lettere SC. Vol. 67. Fol. 6/r.-v., Fol. 22/r.-v.; APF Coll. Urb. Vol. 2. Fol. 1r.

115 Father Bonesana was Rector of the Armenian College until 1691; subsequently, he became Bishop of Caiazzo (from 1691 to 1695), as well as Bishop of Como (from 1695 to 1709). In 1689, he was also interim Apostolic Nuncio in Warsaw for a short period. For more detail on Bonesana, see also: APF Acta SC. Vol. 51. Fol. 178/r.-v.; APF Acta SC. Vol. 61. Fol. 41/r.-v.; APF CP. Vol. 29. Fol. 332r.; APF Lettere SC. Vol. 67. Fol. 78/r.-v.; APF SC Coll. Var. Vol. 2. Fol. 162/r.-v.; AGT CL. Portfolio I. (Without folio numbers); *Hierarchia Catholica*, 134, 166.; Blažejovskyj, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical*, 150, 152.

Holy See repeatedly to send well-educated instructors to Lviv. At first, the Rector received only evasive replies from Rome, but, later instructors would be delegated to the institution slowly, one at a time¹¹⁶.

All the while, Archbishop Torosowicz sought to take the building housing the Armenian College in the city by force, arguing that he had given it to the Theatines in 1664 only temporarily. Bonesana would have many a row with the Archbishop, who still believed that the Theatines were after his archiepiscopate and they purposely incensed the students at the Armenian College against his person. The ageing Archbishop Torosowicz persisted in his attempt to expel the Theatines and to close the Armenian College¹¹⁷.

All along, Archbishop Torosowicz continued to say Mass according to the old, Oriental traditions, instead of the Uniate ones. This is also corroborated by Nuncio Francesco Martelli's report dated to 1680, the year immediately preceding his departure from office. As stated therein, following his return from Rome, the ageing Archbishop Torosowicz remained relentless in his 'destructive' activities. He permitted the administration of the Sacraments to the faithful in the traditional old Armenian way and did not really mind customs labelled 'heretic' by the Latin Church so to speak, whereas previously he had pledged to the Pope and the Cardinals of the *Propaganda Fide* otherwise¹¹⁸. Finally, in 1680, his intent to disable the operation

116 It was during this period that, among others, Father Sebastiano Maria Accorsi CR arrived, who would manage the Armenian College as Rector from 1691 to 1704. On this subject, see also: APF Acta SC. Vol. 49. Fol. 151r.-v.; APF Acta SC. Vol. 50. Fol. 27r.-28r.; APF Acta SC. Vol. 51. Fol. 28r.-v.; APF Acta SC. Vol. 53. Fol. 196r.-v.; APF Acta SC. Vol. 54. Fol. 153r.-155v.; APF Acta SC. Vol. 55. Fol. 1r.-2v.; AGT CL. Portfolio 1. (Without folio numbers); AGT CL. Portfolio 2. (Without folio numbers); Blažejovskij, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical*, 151; Petrowicz, *La chiesa armena in Polonia*, 71-74.

117 APF Lettere SC. Vol. 70. Fol. 10r.

118 APF Acta SC. Vol. 47. Fol. 225r.; APF SOCG. Vol. 293. Fol. 225r.; Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 307; Schütz, *An Armeno-Kipchak*, 313.

of the Armenian College was frustrated by the assertive intervention of Nuncio Martelli stepping down at the time, as well as of Opizio Pallavicini (1632–1700), Apostolic Nuncio in Warsaw and Titular Archbishop of Ephesus, taking office subsequently¹¹⁹. Accordingly, the Archbishop desisted from his original intention and gave his consent for the building to be purchased by the *Propaganda Fide* from the Archiepiscopacy¹²⁰. The act was finalised in December 1681¹²¹. Thus, from 1681, under the leadership of Father Bonesana and his fellow monks, teaching within the walls of the Armenian College could continue undisrupted¹²². Furthermore, the *Propaganda Fide* also determined that it would permanently guarantee the operation of the institution financially, thereby enabling full-scale development of the ecclesiastical union in Lviv, as well as in the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, begun by the wayward and noisome Archbishop¹²³. In Rome, it was also decided that, from 1681, graduates would be ordained in accordance with the Armenian Uniate Rite as prescribed by Clemente Galano or according to the established Latin Rite. The ceremony was conducted jointly by Konstanty Samuel Lipski (1625–1698), the Latin-rite (Roman Catholic) Archbishop of Lviv at the time, and Nuncio Pallavicini¹²⁴. Archbishop Torosowicz's machinations and intriguing against the Armenian College would be conspicuously discontinued from the end of 1680, primarily due to his increasingly deteriorating health condition. However, this also

119 APF Acta SC. Vol. 49. Fol. 27r.–28r.

120 APF Acta SC. Vol. 52. Fol. 155r.–156r.; APF SOCG. Vol. 484. Fol. 286r.;

Petrowicz, *L'unione*, 323; Blažejovskij, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical*, 155.

121 APF Acta SC. Vol. 52. Fol. 122/r.–v.

122 APF SOCG. Vol. 477. Fol. 150r.

123 APF SC Coll. Var. Vol. 2. Fol. 176r.; AGT CL. Portfolio 1. (Without folio numbers).

124 It is somewhat remarkable that this is only divulged in documents of Apostolic Holy See dated to six years later, i.e. to the year 1687. On this subject, see: APF Acta SC. Vol. 57. Fol. 126r.–127r.; APF Lettere SC. Vol. 76. Fol. 41r.

coincided with the evaporation of the *Propaganda Fide's* enduring patience.

During their respective tenures, Francesco Martelli and Opizio Pallavicini, Apostolic Nuncios in Warsaw, clearly urged Torosowicz's removal. They would justify their position by suggesting that the Archbishop's health prevented him from discharging the duties of his ecclesiastical office. Their other argument was that he had expelled Bishop Hunanean from Lviv. A third reason had to do with the claim that the Archbishop had done everything to banish the Theatines and to ruin the Armenian College, inflicting severe harm on the Church. The *Propaganda Fide* understood the Nuncios' reports. Therefore, at the turn of 1680 and 1681, it decided to remove the Archbishop permanently. As his successor, the aforementioned Bishop Vardan Hunanean, who at the time engaged in converting his own compatriots in Armenia, was named¹²⁵. Torosowicz, however, did not live to hear the decision. Prior to the arrival of the document with his dismissal from Rome, on 21 March 1681, he died at the age of 78 and was laid to rest in the Archiepiscopal Cathedral the next day¹²⁶. In an attempt to shirk accountability, his confidant, the troublesome

125 This was also communicated to Pidoux, who did not reside in Lviv then any more. APF Lettere SC. Vol. 70. Fol. 10r.-11r., Fol. 107v.-111r.; AGT CL. Portfolio I. (Without folio numbers).

126 Major works of church-history date the death of Archbishop Torosowicz to October 1681, though he already passed away in March. The *Propaganda Fide* would only conduct an extensive discussion on the Archbishop's death and its circumstances in August 1681, followed by another one in January 1682. APF Lettere SC. Vol. 71. Fol. 6v.-7r.; APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 3. Fol. 287r., Fol. 347r.-v., Fol. 353r., Fol. 361r.-362v.; According to Rōšk'ay, Nikol Torosowicz departed this life as a saintly archbishop of exemplary moral integrity, who was to be credited with the founding of the Armenian Catholic Church. In the light of the latest research findings, his assertions were unwarranted. On this subject, see: Rōšk'ay, *Žamanakagrāt' iwn*, 184; Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak*, 305, 313-314; Nagy, *Az erdélyi örmények*, 56.

Theodor Wardanowicz, fled to Constantinople¹²⁷. His death and its circumstances, along with his malfeasance and the question of his succession, were extensively discussed in the general sessions of the *Propaganda Fide* on multiple occasions between 1681 and 1684¹²⁸. At any rate, with the death of Archbishop Torosowicz, noisy conflicts subsided by the year 1681, and, a few years later – by the late 1680s –

127 After his departure from Lviv, Wardanowicz would have a rather particular career. It was not long before he renounced his Uniate faith and was appointed and consecrated Armenian Apostolic Bishop of Transylvania and Moldavia by the Armenian Catholicos Eleazar (*Eliazar Ayntapç'i*) (1682–1691). In the 1680s, he made several attempts to take office but he was effectively thwarted in doing so by the secular authorities and the Apostolic Holy See. Later, he changed his mind and left for Rome, where he abjured his Oriental faith and declared his adherence to Catholicism again. At the same time, he was made to relinquish his 'schismatic' episcopal title. Wardanowicz died in 1700 as a parish priest of the Armenian Uniate Church of Saint Mary of Egypt in Rome. APF Acta SC. Vol. 59. Fol. 78r.–81v.; APF Acta SC. Fol. 125r.–127v.; APF SOCG. Vol. 507. Fol. 87r.–88v., Fol. 93r.–94v.; APF SOCG. Vol. 509. Fol. 112r.–v.; APF Lettere SC. 72. Fol. 5v.–6v., Fol. 176v.–177r.; APF Lettere SC. Vol. 72. Fol. 177v.–178r.; APF Lettere SC. Vol. 73. Fol. 98v.–99v.; APF Lettere SC. Vol. 79. Fol. 129r.–132r.; APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 3. Fol. 282r.; Fol. 310r.–v., Fol. 434r., Fol. 469v.; APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 4. Fol. 51r.–v., Fol. 69r., Fol. 70r.–v., Fol. 71r.–72v., Fol. 82r.–83v., Fol. 86r.–87v., Fol. 100r., Fol. 129r., Fol. 174r., Fol. 555r.; On this subject, see also: *Kamenic'*, 257; Petrowicz, *La chiesa armena in Polonia*, 92–93; Nagy, *Az erdélyi örmények*, 126–130.

128 After Torosowicz's death, the Armenian Apostolic Church appointed and consecrated a new archbishop in the person of Jan (*Yovhannēs*) Bernatowicz. However, Nuncio Opizio Pallavicini and Rector Francesco Giambattista Bonesana succeeded in preventing the Armenian hierarch of the Oriental (Apostolic) faith from taking possession of his seat in Lviv. On this subject, see: APF SOCG. Vol. 488. Fol. 274r.–v., Fol. 285r.; APF CP. Vol. 29. Fol. 119r.–122r.+Fol. 122v.; APF Lettere SC. Vol. 70. Fol. 70v.–71r.; APF Lettere SC. Vol. 72. Fol. 217v.–218r., Fol. 223r.–v., Fol. 226v.–227r., Fol. 234r.–v.; APF Lettere SC. Vol. 73. Fol. 98v.–99v.; ASV ANV. Vol. 177. Fol. 144r.–v., Fol. 146v.; APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 3. Fol. 375r.–v.; Petrowicz, *La chiesa armena in Polonia*, 3–5; Nagy, *Az erdélyi örmények*, 93–94.

the documents of the Apostolic Holy See spoke of a well-functioning and efficient educational institution¹²⁹.

At the same time, Archbishop Torosowicz left behind an archiepiscopacy, completely disintegrated and tattered in organisation and authority, which could by no means be described as Uniate¹³⁰. Therefore, in no way may his person be seen as the founder of the Armenian Catholic (Uniate) Church. Not long after his death, the documents of the Apostolic Holy See continued to report chaotic conditions in the Uniate Church¹³¹. In 1681, Archbishop Torosowicz was succeeded by the aforesaid Vardan Hunanean, who, owing to his missionary work in Armenia, was able to take office as Archbishop effectively only in 1686 and, during his nearly 30-year long tenure, extended and consolidated the church-union of the Armenian community in the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Armenian Catholic Church. In this endeavour, he could always rely upon the leadership of the Armenian College as a partner and supporter¹³².

129 APF Acta SC. Vol. 59. Fol. 83r.; APF SOCG. Vol. 487. Fol. 64/r.-v.+Fol. 70/v.; APF Lettere SC. Vol. 77. Fol. 10r.; APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 4. Fol. 53r., Fol. 55r.; Blažejovskyj, *Ukrainian and Armenian Pontifical*, 161; Petrowicz, *La chiesa armena in Polonia*, 69-71.

130 APF CP. Vol. 29. Fol. 165/r.-v., Fol. 629/r.-v.; ASV ANV. Vol. 177. Fol. 161/v.-162/v.

131 APF Lettere SC. Vol. 70. Fol. 59/v.-60r., Fol. 61/r.-v.

132 APF Acta SC. Vol. 53. Fol. 248/r.-v.; APF SOCG. Vol. 484. Fol. 282r.-283/v., Fol. 285/r.-v.; APF Lettere SC. Vol. 71. Fol. 6/v.-7r., Fol. 83/v.-84r.; APF Lettere SC. Vol. 72. Fol. 57/r.-v.; APF Lettere SC. Fol. 123r.-124r.; APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 3. Fol. 318r.-319r., Fol. 371r.-372r., Fol. 378r.-381/v., Fol. 462r., Fol. 465/r.-v.; APF SC Fondo Moldavia. Vol. 2. Fol. 134r.-135r.; APF SC Fondo MPR. Vol. 2. Fol. 179/r.-v.; AAV ANV. Vol. 177. Fol. 126/v.-128r., Fol. 129/v., Fol. 131r.; AAV Segretaria di Stato. Polonia. Vol. 185. Fol. 6/v.-7r.; AGT CL. Portfolio 2. (Without folio numbers).

4. Summary

The foundation of this educational institution in 1664 undoubtedly signalled a turning point in the consolidation of the Armenian church-union in Lviv. Over time, the Armenian College came to be a steady and predictable counterbalance to Archbishop Torosowicz's erratic ecclesiastical policies. With its activities, it helped to buttress church-union and practically brought about the foundation of the Armenian Catholic Church. Besides theology, the Theatine fathers teaching there put a premium on the instruction of languages and history. Within its walls, monks of wide learning, such as Clemente Galano, Louis Marie Pidoux d'Olon or Francesco Giambattista Bonesana, taught – individuals who were not only involved in founding and running an educational institution but created a real scholarly workshop as well: They would publish academic works on Armenian language, history and culture, in line with the standards of their day¹³³. The foundation of the Armenian College would after a while also make its positive impact felt. The institution became an important initiator and supporter of Catholic missionary work commencing among the Armenians in the Armenian Motherland, Crimea, Transylvania, and Moldova¹³⁴. In addition, the Armenian College contributed to the foundation of the Uniate Mechitarist Order (also known as the Armenian Benedictines), as well as to the creation of the Armenian Catholic Catholicosate in the territory of the Ottoman Empire. In the 17th and 18th centuries, the Armenian College of Lviv provided a steady supply of the Armenian Uniate clergy in the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and in Transylvania and, from

133 *Inter alia*, see: Clemens Galanus, *Conciliatio Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana*, Vol. 1–2, Romae, 1661–1690.

134 APF Lettere SC. Vol. 72. Fol. 1/v.–2r.; APF SC Fondo Armeni. Vol. 3. Fol. 370/r.–v., Fol. 378r.–381/v.

1709, opened its doors to Greek Catholic Ruthenians, too¹³⁵. Thus, it also played a prominent part in educating new generations of Greek Catholic priests in Galicia and Transcarpathia. Therefore, it is safe to state that the Armenian College of Lviv not only became the cradle of the Armenian Catholic Church or of modern Armenology but stood firmly behind the Greek Catholic Church of Galicia and Transcarpathia (Upper Hungary) as well.

¹³⁵ Edward Tryjarski, “Ze studiów nad rękopisami i dialektem kipczakim Ormianpolskich III – Katalogi alumnów Kolegium teatyńs we Lwowie”, in *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* 24 (1961), No. 1, 43-96.

L'unità dell'uomo in Gregorio di Nissa. La distinzione corpo-anima nella dottrina della salvezza

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1. Introduzione 2. Immagine 3. Connaturalità 3.1 Or cat V 3.2 Infant 3.3 An et res
4. Corpo 5. Conclusione

1. *Introduzione*

La proposta che avanza sar  quella di leggere la distinzione e l'unit  dell'elemento corporeo con quello spirituale a partire da alcuni aspetti rilevanti della cristologia di Gregorio di Nissa¹.

- 1 Rimando pertanto solo ad alcuni cenni bibliografici sull'antropologia di Gregorio degli ultimi anni, per collocare la nostra indagine nel pi  ampio dibattito degli studi specializzati: Francisco Bastitta Harriet, "Ser lo que quieras: la libertad ontol gica en Plotino y Gregorio de Nisa", in *TjV* 58/4 (2017), 473-487. Eddie A. Cochran, "The Imago Dei and Human Perfection: The Significance of Christology for Gregory of Nyssa's Understanding of the Human Person", in *The Heythrop Journal* 50/3 (2009), 402-415. Kevin Corrigan, *Evagrius and Gregory: Mind, Soul and Body in 4th Century*, Aldershot, 2009. Tina Dolidze, "Der Inbegriff des Kinetischen in Menschen bei Gregor von Nyssa", in *Phasis. Greek and Roman Studies* 18 (2015), 66-87. Marta Przyszybowska, *We Were All in Adam, The Unity of Mankind in Adam in the Teaching of the Church Fathers*, Boston, 2018. Ilaria Ramelli, "Il logos umano in Origene e Gregorio di Nissa: il dibattito con il neoplatonismo 'pagano'", in *Il logos di Dio e il logos dell'uomo. Concezioni antropologiche nel mondo antico e riflessi contemporanei* (ed. Anna Maria Mazzanti), Milano, 2014, 247-274. Joseph Rivera, "Human Nature and the Limits of Plasticity: Revisiting the Debate Concerning the Supernatural", in *NZSth* 59/1 (2017), 34-53. Jerzy Swietochowski, "Paradoxe cosmique et  thique eucharistique chez Gr goire de Nysse", in *Revue des Sciences religieuses* 91/3 (2017), 359-378.

Ciò permette di scorgere due componenti, presenti e non contrapposte, del modo di incidere speculativo proprio del Padre cappadoce: se da una parte si evidenzia il suo legame con la tradizione filosofica greca, propria del suo *milieu* culturale, si può dall'altra, notare una forte esigenza di uscire dagli schemi delle ontologie a lui contemporanee per tenere il proprio ragionamento alla sequela di Cristo e, quindi, attinente alla fede degli Apostoli.

È proprio quest'ultima esigenza che porterà il Nisseno a rileggere la struttura duale e oppositiva tra anima e corpo, propria dell'antropologia greca, per riformularla alla luce dell'economia divina della salvezza; gli elementi oppositivi saranno infatti sostituiti con altri, poiché la materia verrà posta nell'alveo della creazione, cristianamente intesa come atto di amore di Dio per tutte le realtà, tanto corporee quanto spirituali. L'opposizione propriamente antropologica sarà, quindi, per Gregorio quella tra la vita e la morte, cioè tra la vocazione alla vita eterna e il peccato che, distogliendo l'uomo dalla relazione con Dio, lo distoglie dall'accesso alla vita. Tale opposizione vedrà il polo del bene e della vita come quello infinitamente più forte dell'altro, giacché il primo è divino e dunque infinito ed eterno, mentre il polo della morte e del peccato è inerente all'ambito del creato, e dunque è finito e temporale. Al contempo, le nuove opposizioni intra-antropologiche che si potranno scorgere nella opposizione tra vitale e mortale illumineranno sempre più il mistero della libertà dell'uomo e, nel paradigma della creazione dell'essere che è a immagine e somiglianza del Creatore (Gn I, 26-27), si potrà discernere la traccia della creazione in Cristo (Ef 2,10).

Tale operazione di ricomprensione delle polarità umane non è compiuta da Gregorio a partire da una nuova impostazione antropologica di marco speculativo, bensì dalla concretezza storica delle dispute sviluppatasi con Eunomio di Cizico e Apollinare di Laodicea. Esse produrranno nelle opere del Cappadoce lo sviluppo di un'epistemologia che è frutto della contemplazione meditata del dato puntuale e singolare dell'incarnazione del Logos eterno del

Padre, con il suo ingresso nella storia degli uomini, ed è secondo la vertente di questa cristiana capacità di visione che l'incedere riflessivo di Gregorio di Nissa porta il pensiero speculativo ad una concezione dell'essere umano capace di tenere insieme i due fatti più sorprendenti della storia dell'umanità, tramandati dagli Apostoli: (1) la verginità della Madre di Gesù, Maria di Nazaret e (2) la resurrezione del corpo di Cristo².

La considerazione di questi due luoghi della storia, che denotano il dominio del Logos sulla natura umana nel fenomeno dell'incarnazione, fa emergere delle novità interpretative dell'essere umano e, per la prospettiva adottata in questa breve ricognizione, potranno auspicabilmente costituire una luce per identificare quale messaggio per la teologia pastorale si possa ereditare oggi dai Padri.

2. Immagine

Gregorio parla compiutamente della distinzione corpo-anima nell'uomo in varie opere, sottolineandone l'unica origine nel medesimo atto creativo di Dio: si tratta del *De hominis opificio* (PG 44,236B e 282B e 276B); *Antirrheticus, adversus Apollinarem* (GNO III/1,133,26-28; 186,9 e 223,25); *In Sanctam Pascham* (GNO IX, 266,20); *Refutatio confessioni Eunomii* (GNO II,386,19); *In Ecclesiasten* (GNO V,281,I e 389,8)³.

Questo pone Gregorio in una tradizione che interpreta la differenza degli elementi che costituiscono l'umano diversamente da quella di Origene, ma non è su questo che ora vorremmo soffermare

2 Su entrambi si sofferma Gregorio, come vedremo, nella *Epistula* III: A Eustathia, Ambrosia e Basilissa. Cf. Anna M. Silvas, *Gregory of Nyssa: The Letters*, Leiden, 2007, 123-132.

3 Cf. Giulio Maspero, "Antropologia", in *Gregorio di Nissa. Dizionario* (eds. Lucas F. Mateo-Seco – Giulio Maspero), Roma, 2007, 79-88.

l'attenzione⁴. Centreremo infatti questa breve indagine su un altro aspetto che ci pare di interesse.

Sia nella *Epistula III*⁵, come nell'*Oratio catechetica magna (Or cat.)*⁶, l'unione di anima e corpo nell'uomo è presa come elemento di confronto per imparare a trattare l'incarnazione del Verbo.

L'esito sembrerebbe a prima vista scoraggiante, giacché Gregorio pone proprio la difficoltà che si incontra nel conoscere il modo dell'unione dell'elemento corporeo e dell'elemento immateriale nell'uomo a esemplificazione di come ci si debba mantenere in una disposizione apofatica anche riguardo alle nostre possibilità di conoscere il modo dell'unione di divinità e umanità in Cristo.

Se ti domandi in che modo la divinità si congiunge all'umanità, vedi prima di cercare in che consiste l'unione dell'anima con la carne. [...]

Ma come nel primo caso abbiamo ritenuto che l'anima è diversa dal corpo per la ragione che la carne una volta separata dall'anima è morta e senza attività, e noi non conosciamo il modo di quell'unione; così anche nel secondo caso riconosciamo che la natura divina differisce sul piano di una più eminente grandezza dalla natura mortale e peritura, senza però riuscire a comprendere il modo dell'unione fra Dio e l'uomo⁷.

4 Per una rassegna sulle diverse concezioni relative all'unione anima-corpo nel pensiero patristico si veda, *The Unity of Body and Soul in Patristic and Byzantine Thought* (eds. A. Usacheva, S. Bhayro, J. Ulrich), Brill, Leipzig, 2021.

5 Cf. *Gregorii Nysseni, Epistulae* (ed. G. Pasquali), Brill, Leiden, 1959 (GNO VIII/2), 3-95. L'*Epistola III* si trova alle pagine 25-26.

6 Cf. *Gregorii Nysseni Oratio catechetica. Opera dogmatica minora, pars IV* (ed. E. Mühlenberg), Brill, Leiden, 1996 (GNO III/4), 5-106.

7 Εἰ δὲ ζητεῖς πῶς κατακίρνᾶται θεότης πρὸς τὸ ἀνθρώπινον, ὦρα σοι πρὸ τούτου ζητεῖν τί πρὸς τὴν σάρκα τῆς ψυχῆς ἢ συμφυία. [...] ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ἐνταῦθα καὶ ἕτερον εἶναι τι παρὰ τὸ σῶμα τὴν ψυχὴν πεπιστευκάμεν ἐκ τοῦ μονωθεῖσαν τῆς ψυχῆς τὴν σάρκα νεκρὰν τε καὶ ἀνενέργητον γίνεσθαι, καὶ τὸν τῆς ἐνώσεως οὐκ ἐπιγινώσκομεν τρόπον, οὕτω κάκει διαφέρειν μὲν ἐπὶ τὸ μεγαλοπρεπέστερον τὴν θεϊαν φύσιν πρὸς τὴν θνητὴν καὶ ἐπὶ κληρον ὁμολογοῦμεν, τὸν δὲ τῆς ἀνακράσεως τρόπον τοῦ θεοῦ πρὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον συνιδεῖν οὐ χωροῦμεν. *Or cat.* XI, GNO III/4,39,11-22. Tr. it. Naldini (a cura di), *Gregorio di Nissa, La grande catechesi*, Città Nuova, Roma, 1990, 78.

Se dunque il fatto che il nostro intelletto non sia in grado di esprimere compiutamente il mistero dell'unione di divino e umano è assunto come un'evidenza, Gregorio lascia intendere che quanto abbia potuto dire precedentemente, al cap. V, in merito all'unione corporeo-spirituale nell'uomo, non è che una descrizione della realtà creaturale in ordine all'iniziazione degli uomini sulla via della salvezza. Ciò che, infatti, interessa al Vescovo di Nissa è di mostrare come la distinzione degli elementi nella unione delle differenze comporti però anche la comunicazione delle proprietà, e la mancanza di una conoscenza precisa del modo dell'unione, non comporti invece di non poterne partecipare.

Ma poiché l'essere umano è duplice, composto cioè da anima e corpo, è necessario che quanti sono oggetto della salvezza abbiano contatto mediante l'una e l'altro con Colui che conduce alla vita. Quando dunque l'anima si è congiunta a Lui con la fede, trova in Lui gli inizi della salvezza (perché l'unione con la vita comporta di avere la comunione della vita). Il corpo è in grado di partecipare e di congiungersi con il Salvatore in altro modo⁸.

Nel medesimo testo Gregorio afferma che l'uomo può rendersi conto di come il divino sia unito all'umano nel fare esperienza della propria umanità, quando nel suo corpo compie operazioni di tipo spirituale:

Perché neppure nella nostra vita la natura intellettuale è racchiusa dentro i limiti della carne. Mentre il volume del corpo è circoscritto dalle proprie parti, l'anima mediante i movimenti del pensiero a suo piacere si estende a tutto il creato, si eleva fino ai cieli, penetra negli abissi, per-

8 Ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ διπλοῦν τὸ ἀνθρώπινον, ψυχὴ τε καὶ σῶμα συγκεκραμένον, δι' ἀμφοτέρων ἀνάγκη τοῦ πρὸς τὴν ζωὴν καθηγούμενου τοὺς σωζομένους ἐφάπτεσθαι. οὐκοῦν ἡ ψυχὴ μὲν διὰ πίστεως πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀνακραθεῖσα τὰς ἀφορμὰς ἐντεῦθεν τῆς σωτηρίας ἔχει (ἡ γὰρ πρὸς τὴν ζωὴν ἔνωσις τὴν τῆς ζωῆς κοινωνίαν ἔχει), τὸ δὲ σῶμα ἕτερον τρόπον ἐν μετουσίᾳ τε καὶ ἀνακράσει τοῦ σώζοντος γίνεται. *Or cat.* GNO III/4,93,4-8 (Naldini, 131, con varianti).

corre tutta l'estensione della terra, scende con la sua attività fino nelle regioni sotterranee, e così giunge spesso a comprendere anche le meraviglie dei cieli per nulla appesantita dal bagaglio del corpo⁹.

Anche nel *De hominis opificio*¹⁰ Gregorio spiega come la dimensione corporale possa partecipare delle operazioni spirituali, per esempio amando. Dopo aver descritto gli attributi divini di Intelligenza e Parola, infatti, aggiunge:

Non lontana da questi attributi è la natura umana. Vedi in te stesso la ragione e il pensiero, immagine dell'Intelligenza e della Parola per essenza. Ancora, Dio è carità: così dice il grande Giovanni che «l'amore è Dio e Dio è amore» (1Gv 4,7-8). Colui che ha plasmato la nostra natura ha fatto nostro anche questo carattere: «conosceranno tutti che siete miei discepoli, se vi amerete reciprocamente» (Gv 13,35). Non essendoci l'amore si altera tutto il carattere dell'immagine¹¹.

In tal modo possiamo intendere che avremo la possibilità di partecipare agli attributi dell'eterno, non soltanto in virtù dell'immagine ma, più compiutamente, in virtù dell'unione del Verbo all'umanità intera.

9 οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῆς ἡμετέρας ζωῆς ἐντὸς κατακλείεται τῶν τῆς σαρκὸς ὄρων ἢ νοερὰ φύσις. ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν ὄγκος τοῦ σώματος τοῖς οἰκειοῖς μέρεσι περιγράφεται, ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ τοῖς τῆς διανοίας κινήμασι πάση κατ' ἐξουσίαν ἐφαπλοῦται τῇ κτίσει, καὶ μέχρις οὐρανῶν ἀνιῶσα, καὶ τῶν ἀβύσσων ἐπιβατεύουσα, καὶ τῷ πλάτει τῆς οἰκουμένης ἐπερχομένη, καὶ πρὸς τὰ καταχθόνια διὰ τῆς πολυπραγμοσύνης εἰσδύνουσα, πολλάκις δὲ καὶ τῶν οὐρανίων θαυμάτων ἐν περινοίᾳ γίνεται, οὐδὲν βαρυνόμενη τῷ ἐφορκίῳ τοῦ σώματος. *Or cat.* GNO III/4,XXXX (tr. Naldini, 76, cap. XI). Risuona in questo passo un richiamo a Plotino (Cf. *Enneades* IV,3,20).

10 Seguiremo per lo più la traduzione italiana a cura di Bruno Salmona in: *Gregorio di Nissa, l'uomo*, Città Nuova, Roma, 2000.

11 Οὐ πόρρω τούτων καὶ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον. Ὅρας ἐν σεαυτῷ καὶ τὸν λόγον, καὶ διάνοιαν, μίμημα τοῦ ὄντως νοῦ τε καὶ λόγου. Ἀγάπη πάλιν ὁ Θεὸς, καὶ ἀγάπης πηγὴ. Τοῦτο γὰρ φησιν Ἰωάννης ὁ μέγας, ὅτι «Ἀγάπη ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ;» καὶ, «Ὁ Θεὸς ἀγάπη ἐστὶ» τοῦτο καὶ ἡμέτερον πεποιῆται πρόσωπον ὁ τῆς φύσεως πλάστης. «Ἐν τούτῳ» γὰρ, φησὶ, «γνώσονται πάντες, ὅτι μαθηταὶ μου ἐστέ, ἐὰν ἀγαπᾶτε ἀλλήλους.» Οὐκοῦν μὴ παρούσης αὐτῆς, ἅπας ὁ χαρακτήρ τῆς εἰκόνας μεταπεποιῆται. PG 44,137,31-41 (Tr. it. Salmona, 38).

Possiamo dunque osservare che Gregorio, pur assumendo gli elementi antropologici descrittivi dalla filosofia greca tardo antica (da Aristotele a Galeno, da Platone a Porfirio)¹², l'*intentio* dell'antropologia del nisseno non pare essere di ordine noetico–gnoseologica, e neppure etico-politica, bensì catechetica e pastorale.

Una domanda pare allora legittima: è questa una strategia dovuta al genere letterario delle orazioni e delle opere catechetiche, o si può affermare che sia invero un carattere epistemologico dell'antropologia del nisseno a cui dare rilevanza?

3. Connaturalità

Per rispondere proveremo a mettere a confronto il capitolo V di *Or cat.* con alcuni tra i testi più speculativi dal punto di vista dell'indagine antropologica del Nisseno: il trattato *De opificio hominis* (*Op hom.*), il trattato *De infantibus praemature abreptis* (*Infant.*) e il dialogo *De anima et resurrectione* (*An et res.*).

3.1 *Or cat V*

Nel V capitolo della *Or cat.*, viene descritta la natura umana facendo un esplicito riferimento al *Timeo* di Platone (*Tim.* 45b) ma cambiando tutto l'impianto ontologico di riferimento: la conformazione dell'essere umano è infatti descritta non tanto nelle sue funzioni specifiche o in riferimento alla distinzione intelletto-corpo, ma in riferimento alla connaturalità con il divino ad esso affine in quanto essere umano.

Se dunque l'uomo viene alla luce per aver parte ai beni divini, deve avere una costituzione che lo renda partecipe di quei beni¹³.

12 Cfr. Mario Naldini, *Introduzione* in M. Naldini (a cura di), *Gregorio di Nissa, La grande catechesi*, 78.

13 εἰ τοίνυν ἐπὶ τούτοις ὁ ἄνθρωπος εἰς γένεσιν ἔρχεται, ἐφ' ᾧ τε μέτοχος τῶν θείων ἀγαθῶν γενέσθαι, ἀναγκάως τοιοῦτος κατασκευάζεται, ὡς ἐπιτηδείως πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἀγαθῶν μετουσίαν ἔχειν. *Or cat.* V, GNO III/4,17,7-11 (Naldini, 56).

e poco oltre:

Così dunque anche l'uomo, creato per il godimento dei beni divini, doveva avere qualche affinità di natura con l'essere al quale partecipa. Per questo fu dotato della vita, della ragione, della sapienza e di tutte le qualità proprie di Dio, affinché ognuna di esse generasse in lui il desiderio di tendere verso chi gli è affine¹⁴.

Dunque, il corpo e l'anima sono concepiti come un'unica realtà umana creata a immagine di Dio in cui la somiglianza si esprime nella connaturalità all'eternità divina e si manifesta come desiderio dell'eterno stesso.

Ora, è importante tenere in conto che la creazione dell'uomo è descritta da Gregorio come creazione per amore dell'uomo e non per necessità, elemento che non soltanto cambia l'attenzione sull'unità corpo anima (qui mai discussa) ma fornisce al desiderio dell'uomo la conoscenza della sua origine:

Questo Verbo di Dio che è sapienza e potenza, come è dimostrato dalla logica del nostro ragionamento, è creatore della natura umana, non indotto alla formazione dell'uomo da una qualche necessità, ma spinto alla creazione di una tale creatura dalla sovrabbondanza dell'amore¹⁵.

Il desiderio dell'essere umano per ciò che gli è connaturale (Dio), richiede in lui la presenza di elementi affini alla natura divina, come la vita, la ragione e la sapienza, e in genere gli attributi di Dio; come si nota, la distinzione è quindi data dalla connaturalità con il divino, richiesta dalla creazione per amore, a immagine e somiglianza

14 οὕτως οὖν καὶ τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐπὶ τῇ τῶν θεῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀπολαύσει γεινόμενον ἔδει τι συγγενὲς ἐν τῇ φύσει πρὸς τὸ μετεχόμενον ἔχειν. διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ζωῆ καὶ λόγῳ καὶ σοφίᾳ καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς θεοπρεπέσιν ἀγαθοῖς κατεκοσμήθη, ὡς ἂν δι' ἐκάστου τούτων πρὸς τὸ οἰκεῖον τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν ἔχοι. *Or cat.* V, GNO III/4,17,20-25 (Naldini, 56).

15 οὕτως τοίνυν ὁ θεὸς λόγος, ἡ σοφία, ἡ δύναμις, ἀπεδείχθη κατὰ τὸ ἀκόλουθον τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως ποιητής, οὐκ ἀνάγκη τινὶ πρὸς τὴν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου κατασκευὴν ἐνασθεῖς, ἀλλ'ἀγάπης περιουσία τοῦ τοιοῦτου ζῶου δημιουργήσας τὴν γένεσιν. *Or cat.* V, GNO III/4,17,1-4, (Naldini, 55).

(Gn 1,26-27), ma ciò che risulta sorprendente nell'antropologia qui prospettata è che il desiderio umano – di conoscenza, di piacere, di vivere – divenga il criterio ermeneutico per interpretare il senso della differenza tra gli elementi materiali e quelli immateriali che costituiscono l'essere umano, non più soltanto descritti, ma intesi nella loro origine e nel loro dinamismo, come tensione della natura creata verso quella increata, e in cui la dimensione più bassa, quella della percezione corporale, è integrata in quella più alta dello spirito, capace di intendere e di amare.

3.2 Infant

Nel trattato *De infantibus (Infant.)*, torna il tema della connaturalità della vita intellettuale umana con la vita divina: Gregorio entra nell'argomento antropologico a partire dall'eredità filosofica della mescolanza con i caratteri divini, per unirla al dato teologico. L'elemento della creazione *κατ'εικόνα θεοῦ* (Gn 1, 26) è anche qui sorprendente.

Gregorio introduce infatti un elemento per noi oggi estremamente significativo, e cioè afferma che ciò che dice la Scrittura è per l'essere umano la possibilità via per comprendere in che cosa consista il bene che lo *nutre*, ossia il bene che gli dà vita.

Non si tratta neppure qui di descrivere gli elementi costitutivi dell'antropologia se non per identificare che cosa dia all'essere umano la possibilità di vivere secondo il suo desiderio naturale.

Rimanendo nell'alveo della tradizione platonica e aristotelica l'argomento Nisseno è improntato sul desiderio della pienezza della vita, tradizione che intende la contemplazione di Dio come quell'attività propria dell'uomo (*ἡ δὲ τοῦ βλέπειν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ἐνέργεια*)¹⁶ che altro non è se non la vita corrispondente alla sua natura che è “natura mista”, dotata cioè di parte intellettuale (*οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἐστὶν ἢ ζωὴ τῆ*

¹⁶ GNO III/2,79,2.

νοερῆ φύσει εἰκνυῖά τε καὶ κατάλληλος)¹⁷, per cui si confà alla natura intellegibile di Dio, oltre che di parte corporale.

La novità dell'interpretazione del "composto" umano, sta nell'osservazione che affinché un nutrimento possa dare vita ci deve essere affinità (συγγενὲς)¹⁸ tra nutrimento e nutrito, giacché solo in tal modo la vita può passare da un elemento all'altro. Ora, per Gregorio l'affinità con Dio è proprio ciò che fa sì che la visione di Lui – come affermato dal discorso dei filosofi – possa nutrire, cioè far passare la Sua vita nell'uomo¹⁹, in senso proprio. Vediamo quindi nuovamente che l'essere umano è inteso nella sua composizione corporeo-spirituale in relazione alla vita eterna, e non per significare la differenza corpo-anima.

3.3 *An et res*

Nel *An e res.*, Gregorio tratta dell'unione corpo-anima citando lo schema classico del *Fedone* di Platone, per cui l'anima sarebbe l'essenza intellegibile e di natura opposta al corpo (*An et res.*, PG 46,36A13-14) e da cui verrebbe la necessità della separazione dei due elementi per poter contemplare le Idee (*An et res.*, PG 46, 88A4, 89C9-10). Ma la coerenza platonica è interrotta laddove Gregorio rifiuta la dottrina della preesistenza delle anime, che sono create contemporaneamente ai corpi (PG 46, 113D1-117C8; 125C1-128A10), e della metempsicosi (PG 46, 103B-121A).

Se anche compaiono elementi stoici in merito alla modalità secondo la quale avverrebbe la riunificazione dell'anima con il corpo al momento della resurrezione dei corpi, la parte più originale dell'opera in merito alla questione che ci interessa in questa sede viene con la quarta parte del dialogo.

17 GNO III/2,79,2-3.

18 GNO III/2,79,15.

19 Cf. GNO III/2,79,9ss.

La questione che inaugura l'andamento di quest'ultima parte del dialogo tra Gregorio e Macrina è se la facoltà desiderativa verrà meno nello stato della fruizione del bene. Se infatti è mediante il desiderio (ἐπιθυμία)²⁰ che veniamo innalzati verso Dio, e la passione (τὸ ἐπιθυμητικὸν)²¹ – che caratterizza il desiderio nei moti dell'anima – è ciò che ci accomuna agli esseri irrazionali, verrà meno anche il desiderio dei beni (πρὸς τὴν ὄρεξιν τῶν ἀγαθῶν)²² quando, mediante la virtù, sarà venuto meno ogni moto irrazionale (τῆς ἀλόγου πάσης κινήσεως)²³?

Per rispondere, Macrina si addentra nello spiegare la relazione dell'anima con il divino dopo la morte, utilizzando la terminologia apparentemente platonica dell'unione con il Bene. Anche in questo caso è possibile però soffermarsi sulle differenze tra la matrice filosofica e la matrice scritturistica del discorso del Nisseno, non avulso da richiami platonici, ma al contempo profondamente cristiano e perciò latore di una nuova concezione dell'essere.

Il fulcro della risposta è che “la perfetta assimilazione alla divinità consiste realmente in questo: che la nostra anima, in qualche modo, imiti la sostanza trascendente”²⁴; o, come dirà più sotto, che sia “conformata secondo le proprietà della natura divina”.

L'occupazione nella fruizione dei beni scaccia dalla mente il ricordo, ed essa, conformata come è stata secondo le proprietà della natura divina (τοῖς ιδιώμασι τῆς θείας φύσεως ἐμμορφωθεῖσα), imita la vita superiore a tal punto che non le è rimasto nulla delle altre se non la disposizione all'amore (τῆς ἀγαπητικῆς διαθέσεως), che naturalmente aderisce a ciò

20 GNO III/3,65,14 (Ramelli, 437).

21 GNO III/3,66,6 (Ramelli, 437).

22 GNO III/3,66,7-8 (Ramelli, 437).

23 GNO III/3,66,4 (Ramelli, 437).

24 Ἀληθῶς γὰρ ἐν τούτῳ ἔστιν εἰπεῖν τὴν ἀκριβῆ πρὸς τὸ Θεῖον εἶναι ὁμοίωσιν, ἐν τῷ μιμεῖσθαι πῶς τὴν ἡμετέραν ζωὴν τὴν ὑπερκειμένην οὐσίαν. GNO III/3,67,6-8 (Ramelli, 439).

che è bello e buono per natura. L'amore infatti è questo: la disposizione interiore a relazionarsi a ciò che sta a cuore (ἡ πρὸς τὸ καταθύμιον ἐνδιάθετος σχέσις)²⁵.

I due termini διάθεσις e σχέσις ricorrono lungo tutto il testo del Nisseno con valore sinonimo, e l'espressione ἐνδιάθετος σχέσις, che ricorre una volta anche nel commento al Cantico indica la relazione interiore, potremmo dire spirituale, con l'amato²⁶.

La risposta alla questione sollevata da Gregorio si trova in 1Cor 13, quando l'Apostolo afferma che l'amore non avrà mai fine²⁷, e Macrina conduce il fratello a capire come la conformazione dell'anima "secondo le proprietà della natura divina" sia causa del fatto che l'amore non cesserà e che dunque non verrà meno il desiderio seppure l'anima abbia abbracciato la pienezza e la beatitudine.

La spiegazione procede stringendo l'argomentazione sulla beatitudine divina e mostra in primo luogo il rischio di alcune interpretazioni:

Quando dunque l'anima divenuta semplice e uniforme (ἀπλῆ καὶ μονοειδής) e perfettamente simile a Dio (ἀκριβῶς θεοεἰκελος), abbia trovato il Bene veramente semplice e immateriale (ἀπλοῦν τε καὶ ἄυλον),

25 ἡ δὲ περὶ τὴν ἀπόλαυσιν τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀσχολία τὴν μνήμην ἐκκρούει τῆς διανοίας· καὶ οὕτω τὴν ὑπερέχουσαν μιμεῖται ζῶν τοῖς ιδιώμασι τῆς θείας φύσεως ἐμμορφωθείσα, ὡς μηδὲν ὑπολειφθῆναι τῶν ἄλλων αὐτῇ, πλὴν τῆς ἀγαπητικῆς διαθέσεως, φυσικῶς τῷ καλῷ προσφυομένης. Τοῦτο γάρ ἐστιν ἡ ἀγάπη, ἡ πρὸς τὸ καταθύμιον ἐνδιάθετος σχέσις. GNO III/3,69,10-16 pone delle varianti al testo di PG 46,93,27-34 (Ramelli, 443).

26 Cf. *Cant.* 2 (GNO VI,61,3). Si veda anche *agapetikē schesis* come *diathesis* in *Eccl.* 8 (cfr. *supra*, 4.3.1. Mi si permetta di rinviare al mio "Ontology and Existence: Schesis of the Soul in Gregory of Nyssa's In Canticum canticorum", in *Gregory of Nyssa: In Canticum Canticorum. Analytical and Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the 13th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa (Rome, 17-20 September 2014)* (eds. Giulio Maspero – Miguel Brugarolas – Ilaria Vigorelli), Leiden, 2018, 527-538.

27 1Cor 13,8.

quello solo che è veramente degno di essere diletto e amato (ἀγαπητὸν καὶ ἐράσιμον), sia aderisce ad esso, sia vi si mescola, in virtù del moto e dell'azione dell'amore (διὰ τῆς ἀγαπητῆς κινήσεώς τε καὶ ἐνεργείας), conformando se stessa a quello che è continuamente colto e trovato, e divenendo, grazie alla somiglianza con il bene (διὰ τῆς τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ὁμοιότητος), ciò che è la natura di Quello che viene partecipato (ἢ τοῦ μετεχομένου φύσις ἐστίν); ora, poiché in quest'ultimo non c'è desiderio, in quanto in esso non esiste nemmeno mancanza e bisogno di alcun bene, ne conseguirebbe che pure l'anima, una volta venuta a trovarsi in una condizione priva di mancanze e di bisogni, scaccia da se stessa anche il moto e la disposizione del desiderio (τὴν ἐπιθυμητικὴν κίνησιν τε καὶ διάθεσιν), che si ha soltanto nel caso in cui non sia presente l'oggetto della brama²⁸.

Il Nisseno mediante Macrina raccoglie l'incertezza dell'interlocutore che intenda il desiderio ancora secondo l'accezione dell'ἔπος platonico, e non del Cristo. In Dio, infatti, non può esserci povertà e mancanza, perciò la novità specifica cristiana è mostrata a partire, sorprendentemente, dalla presenza della *schesis* nella stessa divinità:

E infatti, la vita della natura trascendente è amore, poiché ciò che è bello e buono è amabile sotto ogni rispetto per quanti lo conoscono: ora, la divinità conosce se stessa, e tale conoscenza diviene immediatamente amore, poiché quello che viene conosciuto è bello e buono per natura, e a ciò che è veramente bello e buono non afferrisce l'insolente sazietà (ὁ ὕβριστής... κόρος), e poiché sazietà alcuna non interrompe la disposi-

28 Ὅταν οὖν ἡ ἀπλῆ καὶ μονοειδῆς καὶ ἀκριβῶς θεοεἰκελὸς ἡ ψυχὴ γινομένη εὗροιτο ἀληθῶς ἀπλοῦν τε καὶ ἁῦλον ἀγαθόν, ἐκεῖνο τὸ μόνον τοῖόν τι ἀγαπητὸν καὶ ἐράσιμον προσφύεται τε αὐτῷ καὶ συνανακινῶνται διὰ τῆς ἀγαπητῆς κινήσεώς τε καὶ ἐνεργείας, πρὸς τὸ αἰεὶ καταλαμβανόμενόν τε καὶ εὐρισκόμενον ἑαυτὴν μορφοῦσα καὶ τοῦτο γινομένη διὰ τῆς τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ὁμοιότητος, ὅπερ ἡ τοῦ μετεχομένου φύσις ἐστίν, ἐπιθυμίας ἐν ἐκείνῳ μὴ οὕσης διὰ τὸ μηδέ τις τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἔνδειαν ἐν αὐτῷ εἶναι, ἀκόλουθον ἂν εἶη καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἐν τῷ ἀνευδεεῖ γινομένην ἐκβάλλειν ἄφ' ἑαυτῆς καὶ τὴν ἐπιθυμητικὴν κίνησιν τε καὶ διάθεσιν, ἢ τότε γίνεται μόνον, ὅταν μὴ παρῆ τὸ ποθούμενον. GNO III/3,69,16-70,3 (Ramelli, 443).

zione ad amare ciò che è bello e buono (κόρου δὲ τὴν ἀγαπητικὴν πρὸς τὸ καλὸν σχέσιν οὐ διακόπτοντος), la vita divina si attuerà sempre attraverso l'amore: essa è sia bella e buona per natura, sia disposta per natura ad amare il bello e il buono (καὶ ἀγαπητικῶς πρὸς τὸ καλὸν ἐκ φύσεως ἔχει), e non ha sazietà dell'attività secondo l'amore, poiché non si può nemmeno cogliere un termine del bello e buono, in modo che insieme con il termine del bello e del buono cessi anche l'amore. Infatti soltanto ciò che è opposto al bello e buono è circoscritto, mentre quel bene la cui natura non è suscettibile di male progredirà verso l'illimitato e l'infinito²⁹.

Macrina illustra a Gregorio la vita divina come amore infinito immanente alla natura divina. Il fatto che utilizzi σχέσις proprio per indicare la disposizione all'amore immanente non pare secondario, perché ricorre l'espressione usata nel *Contra Eunomium* per indicare la relazione che unisce Padre e Figlio nell'unica sostanza divina.

La *schesis* trinitaria torna dunque a indicare, seppur in modo apofatico, la ragione del fatto che l'amore non ha termine di sazietà per la natura umana che si unisce al divino, poiché Dio è infinito. Si può intendere allora che per la natura umana, essere simile a Dio, secondo la Scrittura, non è dato soltanto dall'anima immateriale, né dal principio di autarchia, ma proprio dalla apertura della *schesis* umana, che può divenire a sua volta ἀγαπητικὴ πρὸς τὸ καλὸν.

29 Ἦ τε γὰρ ζωὴ τῆς ἄνω φύσεως ἀγάπη ἐστίν, ἐπειδὴ τὸ καλὸν ἀγαπητὸν πάντως ἐστὶ τοῖς γινώσκουσι· γινώσκει δὲ αὐτὸ τὸ Θεῖον· ἢ δὲ γνώσις ἀγάπη γίνεται. Διὸ τὸ καλὸν ἐστὶ τῇ φύσει τὸ γινωσκόμενον, τοῦ δὲ ἀληθῶς καλοῦ ὁ ὕβριστής οὐ προσάπτεται κόρος· κόρου δὲ τὴν ἀγαπητικὴν πρὸς τὸ καλὸν σχέσιν οὐ διακόπτοντος, αἰεὶ ἡ θεία ζωὴ δι' ἀγάπης ἐνεργηθήσεται, ἢ καλὴ τε κατὰ φύσιν ἐστὶ, καὶ ἀγαπητικῶς πρὸς τὸ καλὸν ἐκ φύσεως ἔχει, καὶ ὄρον τῆς κατὰ τὴν ἀγάπην ἐνεργείας οὐκ ἔχει, ἐπειδὴ οὐδὲ τοῦ καλοῦ τι πέρασ καταλαμβάνεται, ὡς συναπολήγειν τῷ πέρατι τοῦ καλοῦ τὴν ἀγάπην· μόνω γὰρ τῷ ἐναντίω τὸ καλὸν περατιοῦται· οὐ δὲ ἡ φύσις ἀνεπίδεκτός ἐστι τοῦ χειρόνος, πρὸς τὸ ἀπέραντόν τε καὶ ἀόριστον τὸ ἀγαθὸν προελεύσεται. GNO III/3,70,20-71,11 pone delle varianti (Ramelli, 445).

L'archetipo dell'anima umana è quindi lo stesso essere relazionale della natura eterna che caratterizza la relazione del Padre e del Figlio³⁰.

Al termine di questa breve carrellata di testi, possiamo ancora sostenere che l'*intentio* dell'antropologia del nisseno, specialmente della considerazione della duplicità del composto corpo-anima, non sia in Gregorio di ordine noetico–gnoseologica, e neppure immediatamente etico–politica, bensì catechetica e pastorale? Ci sembra proprio di sì, ma abbiamo anche raccolto dei dati che paiono suggerire come l'intento pastorale sia fondato su un'ontologia trinitaria che la supporta e la indirizza.

Torniamo dunque a vedere il secondo termine dell'analogia raccolta dall' *Oratio catechetica magna* per il nostro *incipit*, e proviamo a scorgere in che maniera l'unione del divino e dell'umano nel soggetto Cristo corrispondano per Gregorio alla unione dell'anima con il corpo per la natura umana.

4. *Corpo*

Sembra che l'elemento caratterizzante dell'analogia sia il fatto della libertà.

Come, infatti, l'anima si manifesta di natura trascendente rispetto alla natura materiale del corpo, ed è capace di superarne i limiti e

30 Ci troviamo qui a sostenere una posizione un po' differente da Ivanka, quando richiama il platonismo di Gregorio in quanto alla conoscenza mistica: qui non si nota più solo il riferimento ad una ontologia discendente-degradante, né alla natura umana come ricettacolo per il divino, bensì assistiamo ad una trasformazione importante dell'impianto platonico, giacché *agapetikē schesis* vuol dire essere nella posizione del Figlio che può ricevere amore dal Padre e a sua volta riamarLo. Il platonismo appare così più uno stile culturale di riferimento, ma la descrizione della realtà umana si può dire già radicata nella nuova teologia, ormai pienamente trinitaria. Cf. E. von Ivanka, *Plato christianus: la réception critique du platonisme chez les Pères de l'Église*, Paris, 1990, 137-172.

di attingere a ciò che è ad esso superiore; e come nell'uomo anima e corpo, pur essendo distinguibili e distinti dopo la morte, sono uniti in modo inseparabile nella vita (sia temporale sia nell'eternità, dopo la resurrezione dei corpi); e come la modalità propria dell'essere del corpo, con il suo desiderio e i suoi movimenti, pone l'anima in rapporto con gli altri e con le altre realtà create – il mondo e gli altri –, ma anche con Dio e i suoi attributi permettendo all'essere umano di acquisire le virtù che lo rassomigliano a Dio. Così in Cristo la divinità manifesta se stessa in quanto distinguibile dall'umanità per la capacità di trascendere le leggi di natura, quanto lo manifestano la nascita verginale e la morte senza corruzione; allo stesso modo però la stessa natura divina si sottomette alla condizione creaturale propria dell'infante e poi dell'uomo adulto e delle leggi della crescita, per tutti gli attributi dati dall'umana esistenza e solo mediante la natura umana la sua divinità può comunicare con il corpo e il linguaggio degli uomini entrando in relazione con essi.

L'una e l'altra trascendenza, dunque, manifestate dall'anima sul corpo e dalla natura divina sulla natura umana, sono accomunate, e allo stesso modo, risignificate dall'amore.

Per quanto riguarda l'unione dell'anima con il corpo, infatti, il senso di tale unione è inteso da Gregorio per giungere all'amore di Dio come unico nutrimento definitivo della vita a cui l'umanità tutta intera – anima e corpo – è chiamata. L'anima, nella sua condizione originaria di affinità agli attributi divini, eleva con sé il corpo a quel nutrimento che solo può salvare dalla morte, e che è la vita stessa di Dio comunicata all'umanità.

Per quanto riguarda l'unione del Verbo incarnato con la natura umana, la vita divina viene riversata nella umana esistenza in modo libero, andando a costituire una unità inseparabile, che neppure la morte più scinderà e né potrà mai mai vincere.

L'amore espresso da tale libertà (*philanthropia*) è proprio ciò che la vita del Cristo manifesta e che dona all'uomo come nutrimento nel suo corpo e nel suo sangue.

Ciò che è più sorprendente, dunque, e che deduciamo dallo studio dell'analogia proposta da Gregorio e sviluppata dallo stesso Gregorio nell'analisi comparata delle sue opere, è che proprio la dimensione che dell'umano deve essere "condotta in alto" al livello della composizione corpo-anima, il corpo pesante, è esattamente quella stessa dimensione dell'umano che nell'unione con il divino dà la vita all'uomo.

La condizione più elevata, che dà la salvezza all'intera natura umana è infatti, nella prospettiva cristiana, non quella delle idee e della conoscenza, bensì quella della carne e del sangue offerti da Cristo nella libertà dell'amore. Gregorio lo indica nell'affetto di Cristo per i suoi, dal momento che fu proprio il Figlio incarnato a manifestarlo quando ha istituito l'Eucarestia:

Chi lo biasimerà per aver detto: «desiderandovi ardentemente», espressione con la quale egli mostra la sua disposizione amorosa (τὴν ἀγαπητικὴν ἐνδείκνυται σχέσιν)?³¹

Nell'antropologia trinitaria di Gregorio di Nissa, il Cristo ribalta il valore della connaturalità, e l'affinità dell'uomo con Dio non passa più eminentemente dalla via dello spirito, ma dalla via del corpo, che significa storia, spazio, circoscrizione, limite, ma anche esistenza concreta, vita spesa, dono di sé.

5. Conclusione

In apertura consideravamo che il concepimento verginale della Madre e la mancata corruzione del corpo nel sepolcro sono stati considerati da Gregorio come due elementi discriminanti la natura umana del Verbo incarnato, e che denotano il dominio del Figlio di

31 τίς δὲ κρινεῖ αὐτὸν εἰπόντα ὅτι Ὁμειρόμενοι ὑμῶν, δι' ἧς λέξεως τὴν ἀγαπητικὴν ἐνδείκνυται σχέσιν; (GNO III/2,25,21). *In illud: Tunc et ipse filius* compare in traduzione italiana nel volume Ilaria Ramelli (a cura di), *Sull'anima e La Resurrezione*, Milano, 2007, 687-731, qui 717.

Dio sulla natura umana. Abbiamo visto anche come tale dominio si manifesti in termini di libertà e offerta del corpo, e come tale offerta di sé del Cristo spinga verso una reinterpretazione radicale del senso e del valore della composizione corporeo-spirituale dell'umano.

Quale messaggio possiamo assumere da questi elementi per la teologia pastorale odierna?

Un primo guadagno mi pare possa essere quello di recuperare la domanda sulla finalità del modo di darsi della vita umana.

L'interesse odierno per lo specifico umano che è spesso ridotto alla sua mente e alle sue prestazioni³², rischia di perdere di vista la domanda sul senso ultimo delle sue potenze e della loro configurazione.

Un secondo guadagno, unito al primo, è quello della consapevolezza del limite della conoscenza acquisibile riguardo al valore del corpo umano. Quello che per Gregorio è il limite apofatico sulla modalità dell'unione di anima e corpo non sembra legato solo allo schema interpretativo greco, ma si riflette su ogni antropologia che abbia la consapevolezza di non poter ridurre un principio di operazioni all'altro, di non poter risolvere lo spirituale nel materiale, ma neppure il viceversa. La resistenza operata dal corpo alla completa concettualizzazione delle relazioni (mentalizzate, virtualizzate), con i suoi bisogni di cura e nutrimento, in ultima analisi di amore concreto e materiale, è ciò che permette al soggetto contemporaneo di non essere completamente travolto dal flusso delle informazioni codificate e dunque manipolabili, dell'età della IV rivoluzione industriale.

Una teologia pastorale che voglia essere incisiva sul senso e il valore dell'umano, nella sua doppia vertente materiale e spirituale, potrà accogliere da Gregorio di Nissa un valido indirizzamento verso una ontologia che tenga conto della relazione libera, e perciò capace di amore, senza la quale qualsiasi considerazione sulla vita e sulla morte rimarrebbe immancabilmente appesa al filo della contingenza e della ripetizione.

32 Cf. Byung-Chul Han, *The Burn-out Society*, Stanford, 2015.

Tropari ai makarismì del venerdì santo nel Typikon dell'Anastasis

András DOBOS

1. Introduzione 2. L'uso delle Beatitudini nel rito bizantino 3. L'origine dell'impiego liturgico delle Beatitudini 4. Struttura e testo 5. I *makarismì* del venerdì santo 6. L'origine dei tropari

1. Introduzione

L'oggetto di questo breve lavoro è una sequenza di tropari che vengono cantati nell'ufficio dell'*orthros* del venerdì santo, e sono intercalati dai versetti delle Beatitudini (Mt 5,3-12a): Pertanto, sono conosciuti con il nome *makarismì*, o, più precisamente, tropari ai *makarismì*.

La prima fonte che riporta tali tropari nell'ufficio del venerdì santo sembra essere il cosiddetto *Typikon dell'Anastasis*. Questo testo, risalente al 1122, in realtà appare come un innario per la settimana santa piuttosto che come un *typikon* classico, ma riflette usi liturgici precedenti alle distruzioni provocate dall'invasione musulmana del 1009¹. Nello specifico, al suo interno viene descritto anche l'*orthros* del venerdì santo, in un ordine molto simile a quello che attualmente è in uso nelle Chiese di rito bizantino. Il *typikon* in parola indica anche i luoghi dove le singole parti della celebrazione si svolge. Le Beatitudini sono collocate dopo la lettura del VI° vangelo, e per l'esecuzione è

1 Cf. Daniel Galadza, *Liturgy and Byzantinization in Jerusalem*, Oxford, 2018, 81. Il testo fu pubblicato per la prima volta da Athanasios Papadopoulos-Kerameus: *Ἀνάλεκτα Ἱεροσολυμιτικῆς Σταχυολογίας*, τ. 2, Ἐν Πετρούπολει, 1894.

previsto il luogo detto ὀμφαλός, cioè “ombelico”, “in mezzo del sacro giardino” presso il Calvario².

2. *L'uso delle Beatitudini nel rito bizantino*

Michail Skaballanovič, illustre liturgista russo dell'inizio del novecento, conclude il suo trattato sulle Beatitudini nella tradizione bizantina affermando con un certo stupore: “È strano che la Chiesa latina non abbia usato questo brano talmente artistico e istruttivo del Vangelo”³. In realtà, anche la Chiesa bizantina ebbe bisogno di un lungo tempo per scoprire questo testo; esso risale sicuramente non prima del secolo VIII.

Oggi le Beatitudini appaiono principalmente in sei luoghi nel patrimonio liturgico delle Chiese di rito bizantino: due volte nell'*orthros* (giovedì della V^a settimana – detto del Grande Canone – e venerdì santo), nell'ufficio dei *Typiká*, nella Divina Liturgia,

- 2 Cf. Athanasios Papadopoulos-Kerameus, in *Ἀνάλεκτα*, 133. L'ombelico oppure *compas* prima della ricostruzione crociata fu un luogo coperto da un'edicola o ciborio, decorato da mosaici, con l'iscrizione: “La pianta del mio piede serve da misura per il cielo e la terra”; cf. Osvaldo Garbarino, “The Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. Historical background and documentary sources (IV-XII century)”, in *Jerusalem – The Holy Sepulchre. Research and investigations (2007-2011)* (ed. Grazia Tucci), Firenze, 2019, 83. Oggi come *omphalos* viene denominato il luogo che si trova esattamente al di sotto della cupola del Catholicon, e viene indicato da un emisfero marmoreo.
- 3 Michail Skaballanovič, *Толковый Типикон. Объяснительное изложение Типикона с историческим введением*, II, Kiev, 1915, 19. L'affermazione del liturgista russo va precisata, in quanto alcune tradizioni occidentali conoscevano e usavano il testo in questione. Secondo la testimonianza di S. Ambrogio, le Beatitudini facevano parte della preghiera mattutina della Chiesa di Milano, ed erano in uso anche nella tradizione mozarabica come canto di comunione, cf Michel Huglo, “Le chant des béatitudes dans la liturgie hispanique”, in *Hispania Sacra* 17 (1964), 135-140.

nei funerali e nel rito del *grande schima*⁴. È chiaro che i *makarismi* entrarono nella Liturgia bizantina dai *Typiká*, o, meglio, questi ultimi furono assorbiti nella Liturgia eucaristica⁵. I funerali si svilupparono secondo il modello dell'*orthros*⁶. In tal modo, secondo la provenienza, le Beatitudini sono legate a due campi d'uso: o alla celebrazione eucaristica, o al mattutino. A noi ci interessa innanzitutto quest'ultimo impiego, con particolare riferimento ai *makarismi* cantati il venerdì santo nel rito bizantino, tuttavia, non possiamo prescindere di fare una previa analisi più larga per poter chiarire — per quanto possibile — le origini dell'uso liturgico del testo biblico in questione.

4 Cf. Aleksandra Nikiforova, “Праздничные блаженны из греческих Миней IX-XII веков библиотеки монастыря великомученицы Екатерины на Синае”, in *Богословский сборник* (Православный Свято-Тихоновский богословский институт), 10 (2002), 155.

5 Per l'evoluzione del rito dei *Tipiká* cf. Stefano Parenti, “The Harvard Manuscript and the History of the Horologion of the Greek Liturgical Psalter”, in *A Byzantine monastic office, 1105 A.D. Houghton Library, MS gr. 3* (eds. Jeffrey C. Anderson – S. Parenti), Washington D.C., 2016, 83; Juan Mateos, “Un Horologion inédit de Saint-Sabas. Le Codex sinaïtique grec 863 (IXe siècle)”, in *Mélanges Eugène Tisserant*, vol. 3, Studi e Testi 233, Città del Vaticano 1964, 47-76; Robert F. Taft, *The Communion, Thanksgiving, and Concluding Rites, A History of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, vol. VI, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 281, Roma, 2008, 399-403; Stefanos Alexopoulos, *The Presanctified Liturgy in the Byzantine Rite*, Leuven, 2009, 180-190.

6 Per l'evoluzione dei riti funebri cf. Elena Velkovska, “Funeral Rites according to the Byzantine Liturgical Sources”, in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 55 (2001), 30-43. Nel più antico testo di rito funebre, tramandato a noi — che rispecchia una tradizione periferica dell'Italia meridionale — non si riscontrano le Beatitudini. Per la prima volta appaiono in un codice della Palestina che risale a cavallo tra il X e l'XI secolo, e da quel momento diventano elemento costante dell'Ufficiatura dei funerali, cf. Peter Galadza, “The Evolution of Funerals for Monks in the Byzantine Realm: From the Tenth to the Sixteenth Century”, in *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 70 (2004), 226-230.

3. L'origine dell'impiego liturgico delle Beatitudini

Secondo alcuni studiosi l'uso delle Beatitudini trae origine dalla tradizione siro-palestinese. In quest'area geografica appaiono nei manoscritti, unitamente ad altri cantici biblici, già nel V secolo⁷. Nel mattutino domenicale della Chiesa siro-antiochena fino ad oggi essi costituiscono un elemento permanente⁸. Sebastia Janeras suppone che da qui sia entrato il cantico neotestamentario anche nella liturgia bizantina. Egli, dopo aver analizzato una serie di manoscritti, sulla base al posizionamento delle Beatitudini — le quali appaiono spesso insieme al *kontakion* —, afferma che la loro funzione originaria fu probabilmente quella di colmare con la preghiera il tempo fra il notturno e il mattutino⁹, due parti di diverse provenienze che insieme costituiscono l'*orthros* odierno.

Aleksej Pentkovskij e Marija Jovčeva al contrario, attribuiscono alle Beatitudini un'origine prettamente eucaristica. Secondo la loro ipotesi, nei monasteri palestinesi i versetti delle Beatitudini, alternati con tropari, si adoperavano come rito di introduzione prima della Liturgia Eucaristica¹⁰. In tal modo, il canto delle antifone nella

7 Cf. Anton Baumstark, *Nocturna laus. Typen frühchristlicher Vigilienfeier und ihr Fortleben vor allem im römischen und monasterischen Ritus*, Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen 32, Aschendorff, 1957, 186-187; Alphonse Raes “Les deux composantes de l'office divin syrien”, in *L'Orient Syrien* 1 (1956), 167-169.

8 Cf. Juan Mateos, “Les matines chaldéennes, maronites et syriennes”, *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 26 (1960), 64.

9 Cf. Sebastia Janeras, *Le Vendredi-Saint dans la tradition liturgique byzantine: structure et histoire de ses offices*, Studia Anselmiana 99 (Analecta Liturgica 12), Roma, 1988, 161-167.

10 Cf. Aleksej Pentkovskij – Marija Jovčeva, “Праздничные и воскресные блаженны в византийском и славянском богослужении VIII–XIII вв.”, in *Paleobulgarica* XXV (2001), 32-34. Per proporre tale teoria gli autori mettono in evidenza che — eccetto le Beatitudini — tutti gli elementi del rito dei *Typiká*, contenuto nel codice Sinaiticus *Graecus* 863, si riscontrano nella Liturgia di S.

Chiesa di Costantinopoli e quello delle Beatitudini in Palestina si mostrano essere un fenomeno parallelo, servivano cioè per ambedue tradizioni come testi per accompagnare il radunarsi della comunità. Quindi, dalla *sinassi* eucaristica le Beatitudini passarono anche nel rito dei *Tipiká*, e con il tempo, grazie alla riforma studita, apparvero anche nella liturgia costantinopolitana, prima solo nel rito riformato dei *Tipiká*, e quindi anche come parte dell'*enarxis*, all'inizio della Liturgia eucaristica¹¹. Divenuto elemento della preghiera quotidiana dei monaci, le Beatitudini persero il loro rapporto diretto con la celebrazione eucaristica¹².

Dato questa possibile dipendenza delle Beatitudini dalla Divina Liturgia, come spiegare, dunque, la loro presenza nell'*orthros* del venerdì santo? Pentkovskij mette in evidenza che le Beatitudini con i makarismi appaiono nell'*orthros*, cioè in un contesto insolito, proprio nei giorni, in cui secondo il *typikon* agiopolita non era prevista né la Liturgia eucaristica né quella Presantificata¹³. Anche questo è un indizio per l'origine palestinese.

Giacomo, come anche nella Liturgia dei Presantificati di S. Giacomo, la quale è praticamente un'abbreviazione della Liturgia stessa. Visto tale dipendenza strutturale del rito dei *Tipiká* dalla Liturgia eucaristica, si può arrivare alla supposizione che nei monasteri della Palestina le Beatitudini, assieme ai *makarismi*, costituissero una parte stabile della celebrazione eucaristica.

11 Cf. Pentkovskij – Jovčeva, “Праздничные и воскресные блаженны”, 40-41.

12 J. Mateos osserva che nel monastero Evergetis la Liturgia era prevista per ogni giorno, ragione per cui il rito dei *Typiká* passò davanti alla divina Liturgia, subentrando alle antifone (cf. “Un Horologion inédit”, 69-70).

13 Cf. Pentkovskij – Jovčeva, “Праздничные и воскресные блаженны”, 35-36. Il *typikon* della Chiesa dell'Anastasis riporta le Beatitudini con tropari anche per la domenica delle palme; le colloca, però, non nell'*orthros*, bensì subito prima della divina Liturgia.

4. *Struttura e testo*

Va notato che nella tradizione bizantina le Beatitudini sono introdotte sempre da un versetto, ispirato alla supplica del buon ladrone sulla croce: “Ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου μνήσθητι ἡμῶν, κύριε, ὅταν ἔλθῃς ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου” – “Nel tuo regno ricordati di noi, Signore, quando verrai nel tuo regno”. Così si legge il versetto oggi nel *textus receptus* in greco e in slavo. In realtà, si tratta piuttosto di una parafrasi del sospiro del buon ladrone, perché la citazione più esatta sarebbe: “Ἰησοῦ, μνήσθητί μου ὅταν ἔλθῃς εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν σου” — “Gesù, ricordati di me quando verrai nel tuo regno” (Lc 23,42). Vi sono ovviamente alcune varianti conservate anche nei manoscritti del vangelo di Luca, tuttavia, nessuna di esse corrisponde alla formula liturgica¹⁴.

In un primo tempo questo versetto poteva fungere da ritornello, come lo è ancora nell’ufficio dei *Tipikà* durante i giorni della quaresima. Più tardi, al posto di questo primitivo refrain sono subentrati vari tropari, ed esso è rimasto solo all’inizio, come versetto introduttivo. Questo sviluppo viene dimostrato anche dal fatto che di detti tropari non vi è riscontro nei manoscritti anteriori al IX secolo¹⁵.

La prassi di intercalare i versetti biblici con tropari si sviluppò nella tradizione monastica palestinese. Nell’innografia risultarono due

14 Cf. Eberhard Nestle, *Novum Testamentum Graece. Apparatus Criticus*, Stuttgart, 2012²⁸, 284. Va notato che, mentre nei libri slavi usati oggi si legge la forma esattamente corrispondente a quella greca (Во Царствии Твоем помяни нас, Господи, егда приидеши, во Царствии Твоем), il testo precedente alla riforma del patriarca Nikon contiene una variante più breve: Въ царствии си егда приидеши, помяни насъ Господи (*Часовник*, Москва, 1640, 35). Anche la forma contenuta nell’*horologion* del manoscritto Harvard, risalente al 1105 e usato probabilmente in un monastero di Costantinopoli, è più vicino alla variante evangelica: μνήσθητί μου, κύριε, ὅταν ἔλθῃς εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν σου: “Ricordati di me, Signore, quando verrai nel tuo regno” (cf. Anderson – Parenti, *A Byzantine monastic office*, 130).

15 Cf. Maura R. Miglietta, “I makarismì nella tradizione liturgico-musicale del rito bizantino”, in *Rivista internazionale di musica sacra* 9/3 (1987), 305-306.

terreni ideali per comporre dei tropari ai *makarismì*. Fu composto un ciclo di tropari secondo l'*oktoichos*, cioè in ciascuno degli otto toni per le domeniche e per i giorni feriali. Inoltre, in numerosi manoscritti si sono conservati i *makarismì* per varie feste dell'anno liturgico; questi erano contenuti nei *minea*, e più tardi furono redatte anche collezioni a sé stanti, detti *makarismataria*¹⁶. Il *typikon* della Chiesa di Costantinopoli non conosceva l'uso delle Beatitudini nella Liturgia; al posto delle quali si cantavano le antifone. Le adoperava, invece, la tradizione studita. Difatti, nel *typikon* del monastero *Studion* la Liturgia eucaristica era introdotta sempre dal canto dei salmi dei *typiká*: 102 e 145, nonché dalle Beatitudini evangeliche¹⁷. Mentre, però, la tradizione monastica della Palestina prevedeva i *makarismì* anche per i giorni festivi, quella *studita* nei giorni di festa impiegava i tropari della III e del VI ode del canone, cantati all'*orthros*. In alcune tradizioni locali vi erano *makarismì* festivi, come dimostrano il *typikon* del monastero dell'Evergetis¹⁸ e i manoscritti dell'Italia meridionale¹⁹; tuttavia, il canto di *makarismì* speciali nelle feste non si è stabilito nel rito bizantino, e non è presente nella prassi attuale di alcuna Chiesa di rito bizantino.

5. *I makarismì del venerdì santo*

I versetti biblici e i *tropari* intercalati si trovano nell'*orthros* bizantino del venerdì santo, detto anche ufficio dei santi patimenti (ἀκολουθία τῶν παθῶν), e sono collocati tra il VI e VII Vangelo. Nelle edizioni stampate del *Triodion* troviamo diverse varianti. I versetti biblici, insieme alla supplica Ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου e la dossologia finale (divisa in due: “Gloria al Padre...” – “Ora e sempre...”) sono sempre tredici

16 Cf. Nikiforova, “Праздничные блаженны”, 155-157.

17 Cf. Pentkovskij – Jovčeva, “Праздничные и воскресные блаженны”, 40-41.

18 Cf. Pentkovskij – Jovčeva, “Праздничные и воскресные блаженны”, 43.

19 Cf. Pentkovskij – Jovčeva, “Праздничные и воскресные блаженны”, 46-49.

(anche l'ultimo versetto   suddiviso in due parti: "Beati voi quando vi insulteranno..." – "Rallegratevi ed esultate..."), ma non sono seguiti tutti necessariamente da tropari. Nel *triodion* edito a Roma nel 1879²⁰, per esempio, all'antico ritornello ( v τῆ βασιλεία σου μνήστητι) e alle prime due delle Beatitudini non si riallacciano tropari, esse si recitano di continuo, senza sosta, quindi, tutto sommato vi sono dieci tropari. In altri *triodia*, invece, risulta un altro ordine. Nell' *triodion* slavo, attualmente in uso nella Chiesa russa, i tropari cominciano solo dal quarto versetto, e si ommette un tropario (   ψωθεὶς  ν τῷ σταυρῷ), quello che nel *Triodion* greco segue il versetto "Rallegratevi ed esultate"²¹.

Il primo libro a contenere i *tropari* ai *makarism * per il venerd  santo sembra essere il *Typikon* dell'*Anastasis*. Tale sequenza di inni non si riscontra nel pi  antico *tropologion* conosciuto²², e non ne fa menzione nemmeno lo *Iadgari* antico giorgiano²³. Nel *Typikon* dell'*Anastasis*, invece, figurano tredici tropari – pi  che in qualsiasi libro stampato –; e seguono ad ogni versetto. Sebbene questo libro tace sulla supplica  v τῆ βασιλεία σου, e inizia subito con il primo tropario, possiamo supporre, con grande probabilit , che essa fosse anche prevista, poich  quasi ciascun tropario riprende la sua tematica, o, perfino, finisce con una sua parafrasi.

Janeras offre una tabella comparativa nella quale mette insieme i tropari contenuti nel *Triodion* edito a Roma nel 1879 e nel *Typikon* dell'*Anastasis*²⁴. Qui segue una tabella allargata con le varianti di altri

20 Cf. Τριόδιον Κατανυκτικόν, περιέχον  πασαν τὴν ἀνήκουσαν αὐτῷ ἀκολουθίαν τῆς  γίας καὶ μεγάλης Τεσσαρακοστῆς,  ν  ώμῃ, 1879, 673-675.

21 Cf. Триодъ постная, Москва, 1992, 441-443.

22 Cf. Aleksandra Nikiforova, Из истории Миней в Византии. Гимнографические памятники VIII-XII вв. из собрания монастыря святой Екатерины на Синае, Москва, 2012, 211-215.

23 Cf. Elene Metreveli – al., *Udzvelesi Iadgari*, Tbilisi, 1980, 798-828.

24 Cf. Janeras, *Le Vendredi-Saint*, 171-172.

due libri stampati: il *Triodion* di Roma del 1738, il *Triodion* di Venezia del 1586. Non siamo riusciti a verificare, ma supponiamo che l'ordine dei tropari contenuti in questo ultimo corrisponda al primo *Triodion* stampato in greco nel 1522 a Venezia²⁵. In ogni caso, la stessa sequenza si verifica anche nel *Triodion* slavo, corretto e stampato a Mosca nel 1656, sotto il governo del patriarca Nikon²⁶.

25 L'edizione del 1586 è la terza ristampa dell'edizione del 1522. Cf. Majja Andreevna Momina – Nikolaos Harmtmut Trunte, *Triodion und Pentekostarion. Nach slavischen Handschriften des 11.-14. Jahrhunderts. Teil I: Vorfastenzeit*, Paderborn, 2004, *91-92.

26 Cf Ivan Karabinov, *Постная Триодь. Исторический обзор*, Санкт-Петербург, 1910, 238.

	<i>Versetto delle Beatitudini</i>	<i>Typikon dell' Anastasis</i>	<i>Triodion Roma 1879</i>	<i>Triodion Roma (Grotta-ferrata) 1738</i>	<i>Triodion Venezia 1586 e le edizioni slave dopo la riforma di Nikon²⁷</i>
1	Ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου μνήστητι ἡμῶν	Τὸν τοῦ νόμου ποιητὴν²⁸	—	—	—
2	Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τοῦ πνεύματι	Τῶν θεοκτόνων ὁ ἑσμός²⁹	—	—	—

27 Le edizioni stampate prima della riforma di Nikon — praticamente ristampe della prima edizione slava, pubblicata intorno al 1492 a Cracovia (Karabinov, *Постная Триодь*, 230) — riportano gli stessi tropari, con una piccola modifica nella sequenza, e ne aggiungono uno in più, prima del versetto “Gloria al Padre..”: Возшедь на крестъ, и смертную державу разорилъ еси, и во гробѣ положень бысть, праведники вся воскресилъ еси. Былъ еси первенецъ изъ мертвыхъ, жизнь подая вѣчную. Тѣмже востаниемъ ти спасшеса, вопиемъ тебѣ избавителю Исусе: помяни насъ во царствии си (*Цветная триодь*, Москва, 1630, 126^v). Lo stesso tropario si trova nell'*oktoichos* di Cracovia del 1491 tra i tropari ai *makarismì* domenicali del 4° tono (fol. 55^r). Inoltre, nelle edizioni slave *prenikoniane* del *Triodion* figura un diverso *theotokion*: Кадилницу злату, ковчегъ и ручку и трапезу, дѣво поемъ тя, юже отъ всѣхъ родовъ избранную, едину зиждителю своему. Яко въ тебѣ содѣяшася яже выше чловѣка, огонь бо носила еси всего божества мати дево, радуйся убо сокровище животу нашему (*Цветная триодь*, Москва, 1630, 126^v). Non abbiamo potuto identificare l'originale greco di questo tropario.

28 Diamo anche i riferimenti nella raccolta degli *incipit* di Enrica Follieri: *Initia hymnorum ecclesiae graecae*, IV, Studi e testi 214, Città del Vaticano, 1963, 241.

29 Cf. Follieri, *Initia*, IV, 346.

3	Μακάριοι οἱ πενθοῦντες	Ἡ ζωηφόρος σου πλευρά ³⁰	—	—	—
4	Μακάριοι οἱ πραεῖς	Σταυρνόμενου σου, Χριστέ ³¹	Διὰ ξύλου ὁ Ἀδάμ	Διὰ ξύλου ὁ Ἀδάμ	—
5	Μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες	<u>Τὸν σταυρὸν τὸν τοῦ Χριστοῦ</u> ³²	Τὸν τοῦ νόμου ποιητὴν	Τὸν τοῦ νόμου ποιητὴν	Διὰ ξύλου ὁ Ἀδάμ
6	Μακάριοι οἱ ἐλεήμονες	Ἐσταρρώθης δι' ἐμέ ³³	Τῶν θεοκτόνον ὁ ἐσμός	Τῶν θεοκτόνον ὁ ἐσμός	Τὸν τοῦ νόμου ποιητὴν
7	Μακάριοι οἱ καθαροὶ τῆ καρδία	Προσηλῶθης τῷ σταυρῷ ³⁴	Ἡ ζωηφόρος σου πλευρά	Ἡ ζωηφόρος σου πλευρά	Τῶν θεοκτόνον ὁ ἐσμός
8	Μακάριοι οἱ εἰρηνοποιοί	Καθορῶσαι σε σταυρῷ ³⁵	Ἐσταρρώθης δι' ἐμέ	Ἐσταρρώθης δι' ἐμέ	Ἡ ζωηφόρος σου πλευρά
9	Μακάριοι οἱ δεδιωγμένοι	Ἐν Κρανιῷ ὑψωθείς ³⁶	Σταυρνόμενου σου, Χριστέ	Σταυρνόμενου σου, Χριστε	Ἐσταρρώθης δι' ἐμέ

30 Cf. Enrica Follieri, *Initia hymnorum ecclesiae graecae*, II, Studi e testi 212, Città del Vaticano, 1961, 21.

31 Cf. Enrica Follieri, *Initia hymnorum ecclesiae graecae*, III, Studi e testi 213, Città del Vaticano, 1962, 527.

32 Cf. Follieri, *Initia*, IV, 234.

33 Cf. Enrica Follieri, *Initia hymnorum ecclesiae graecae*, I, Studi e testi 211, Città del Vaticano, 1960, 538.

34 Cf. Follieri, *Initia*, III, 361.

35 Cf. Follieri, *Initia*, II, 249.

36 Cf. Follieri, *Initia*, I, 446.

10	Μακάριοι ἐστε, ὅταν	Τῆς σταθείτης ἀκρατῶς ³⁷	<i>Τὸ χειρόγραφον ἡμῶν</i>	<i>Τὸ χειρόγραφον ἡμῶν</i>	<i>Σταυρμέ- νου σου, Χριστέ</i>
11	Χαίρετε καὶ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε	<i>Τὸ χειρόγραφον ἡμῶν</i> ³⁸	‘Ο ὑψωθείς ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ	<u>Τὸν σταυρὸν</u> <u>τὸν τοῦ</u> <u>Χριστοῦ</u>	<i>Τὸ χειρόγραφον ἡμῶν</i>
12	Δοξα Πατρί. Τριαδικόν	<i>Τον πατέρα καὶ υἱόν</i> ³⁹	<i>Τον πατέρα καὶ υἱόν</i>	<i>Τον πατέρα καὶ υἱόν</i>	<i>Τον πατέρα καὶ υἱόν</i>
13	Και νῦν. Θεοτοκίον	Ἄναρτούμε- νον σταυ- ρῷ ⁴⁰	Τὴν μητέρα σου, Χριστέ	Τὴν μητέρα σου, Χριστε	Τὴν μητέρα σου, Χριστέ

In grassetto e corsivo sono gli inizi dei tropari che si trovano sia nel *Typikon* dell’Anastasis, sia nel *Triodion* di Roma (1879), e la sottolineatura designa l’unico tropario che si trova nel *Typikon* dell’Anastasis, ma è assente nel *Triodion* pubblicato a Roma nel 1879, lo contiene invece il *Triodion* del 1738. Notiamo che dei tredici tropari del *Typikon* dell’Anastasis solo sette si trovano nel *Triodion* romano del 1879. Un altro viene riportato dal *Triodion* romano del 1738.

Sorge la questione, se il resto dei tropari del *Typikon* dell’Anastasis sono testi unici, o appaiono altrove? Non è difficile identificare questi tropari nelle diverse edizioni dell’*oktoichos* ovvero nel *Paraklitiki*, proprio fra i tropari ai *makarismí*, sempre nel tono 4°. Nelle tabelle seguenti mostriamo le coincidenze tra il *Typikon* dell’Anastasis, il *Triodion* di Roma dal 1879 e la *Paraklitiki*, edita a Roma nel 1885.

37 Cf. Follieri, *Initia*, IV, 130-131.

38 Cf. Follieri, *Initia*, IV, 305.

39 Cf. Follieri, *Initia*, IV, 225.

40 Cf. Follieri, *Initia*, I, 99.

Tropari ai makarismì del venerdì santo

Inizia dei tropari propri del <i>Typikon dell'Anastasis</i>	<i>Paraklitiki</i> – Roma 1885
Προσηλώθης τῷ σταυρῷ	Tono 4, mercoledì, 2° <i>tropario</i> ai <i>makarismì</i>
Καθορῶσαί σε σταυρῷ	Tono 4, venerdì, 2° <i>tropario</i> ai <i>makarismì</i>
Ἐν Κρανιῷ ὑψωθείς	Tono 4, venerdì, 3° <i>tropario</i> ai <i>makarismì</i>
Τῆς σταθείτης ἀκρατῶς	Tono 4, mercoledì, 3° <i>tropario</i> ai <i>makarismì</i>
Ἀναρτούμενον σταυρῷ	Tono 4, mercoledì, <i>theotokion</i> ai <i>makarismì</i>

Inizia dei tropari propri del <i>Triodion</i> – Roma 1879	<i>Paraklitiki</i> – Roma 1885
Διὰ ξύλου ὁ Ἄδάμ	Tono 4, domenica, 1° <i>tropario</i> ai <i>makarismì</i>
Ὁ ὑψωθείς ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ	Tono 4, domenica, 2° <i>tropario</i> ai <i>makarismì</i>
Τὴν μητέρα σου, Χριστέ,	—

Tropari comuni nel <i>Typikon dell'Anastasis e Triodion</i> – Roma 1879	<i>Paraklitiki</i> – Roma 1885
Τὸν τοῦ νόμου ποιητὴν	—
Τῶν θεοκτόνων ὁ ἔσμός	—
Σταυρυμένου σου, Χριστέ	—
Ἡ ζωηφόρος σου πλευρὰ	—
Ἐσταυρώθης δι' ἐμέ	—
Τὸ χειρόγραφον ἡμῶν	Tono 4, domenica, 30° <i>tropario</i> ai <i>makarismì</i>
Τον πατέρα καὶ υἱόν	Tono 4, domenica, 70° <i>tropario</i> ai <i>makarismì</i>

Possiamo osservare che tutti i tropari del *Typikon* dell'Anastasis che non figurano in altri libri nel contesto del venerdì santo si trovano nell'*oktoichos* romano, tranne uno: “Τὸν σταυρὸν τὸν τοῦ Χριστοῦ...”. Tuttavia, come è stato già notato, neanche questo *troparion* è proprio del *Typikon* dell'Anastasis, perché lo si trova nel *Triodion* romano del 1738. Anzi, lo troviamo anche nelle edizioni moscovite dell'*oktoichos*, stampate prima della riforma di Nikon⁴¹. Alcuni di questi tropari sono presenti anche in un *horologion* di origine palestinese⁴², scritto in siriano. Nell'*horologion* summenzionato, che rispecchia la tradizione melkita e risale al secolo XI, una raccolta dei tropari ai *makarismì* è collocata dopo la parte che descrive il *mesonyktikon*, l'ufficio notturno. A quale scopo servivano questi tropari? L'*horologion* non dà alcuna indicazione al riguardo. Secondo Black, editore del manoscritto, i tropari erano inseriti nell'ufficio dei Tipiká⁴³. Comunque, lo stesso *horologion*, nella descrizione di tale rito, non menziona nulla sull'inserimento dei tropari⁴⁴.

È degno di attenzione che, tranne il *typikon dell'Anastasis*, in tutti i libri tra i tropari il primo posto è occupato da quello che ha l'incipit Διὰ ξύλου ὁ Ἀδάμ. Nei cicli dei tropari ai *makarismì* di solito il primo ha un ruolo simile all'*irmos* nei canoni⁴⁵, cioè serve come modello metrico per la poesia e come segnalazione del tono per l'esecuzione musicale. Il tropario Διὰ ξύλου ὁ Ἀδάμ compare come il

41 Крестъ Христовъ впомышлѣнїи вси имуще— топо 4, domenica, 2° tropario ai *makarizmi*; *Октоих*, Москва, 1594, 379^v; *Октоих*, Москва, 1631, 366. Non vi è, invece, il tropario nel primo *oktoichos* slavo, stampato a Cracovia nel 1491 (cf. fol. 54-55).

42 *A Christian Palestinian Syriac Horologion* (Berlin MS. Or. Oct. 1019) (ed. Matthew Black), Cambridge, 1954.

43 Cf. Black, *Horologion*, 6-7.

44 Cf. Black, *Horologion*, 81.

45 Nei manoscritti appare non di rado anche la denominazione *irmos* anche nel caso dei *makarizmi*, e non solo dei canoni, cf A.A. Lukaševič, “Блаженны”, *Православная Энциклопедия*, т. 5, Москва, 2009, 347-350.

primo tropario ai *makarismì* previsto per la domenica del 4° tono. Il *Typikon dell'Anastasis* lo menziona nella rubrica: “Subito [seguono] i makarismì, 4° tono: «Διὰ ξύλου»”. Quindi, non lo fa cantare, solo lo designa come modello per il canto.

In seguito saranno riferiti i tropari ai *makarismì* del venerdì santo: il testo greco, preso dal *Typikon* dell'Anastasis, e una traduzione italiana.

<p>Τὸν τοῦ νόμου Ποιητὴν ἐκ μαθητοῦ ὠνήσαντο ἄνομοι καὶ ὡς παράνομον αὐτόν τῷ Πιλάτου βήματι ἔστησαν κραυγάζοντες, “σταύρωσον τὸν ἐν ἐρήμῳ τούτοις⁴⁶ μανναδοτήσαντα”· ἡμεῖς δὲ τὸν δίκαιον ληστήν μιμησώμεθα· πίστει κράζομεν “μνήσθητι καὶ ἡμῶν ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου”.</p>	<p>I trasgressori della legge comperarono l'autore della legge dal discepolo, e lo condussero come un fuorilegge davanti al foro di Pilato, urlando: “Crocifiggi colui che nel deserto donava manna a questi!” Noi, invece, imitando il ladrone giusto, gridiamo con fede: Ricordati anche di noi nel tuo regno!</p>
<p>Στίχ: “Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι”.</p> <p>Τῶν θεοκτόνων ὁ ἔσμός, Ἰουδαίων ἔθνος τὸ ἄνομον, πρὸς Πιλάτον ἐμμανῶς ἀνακράζων ἔλεγεν “σταύρωσον Χριστὸν τὸν ἀναίτιον⁴⁷ Βαραββᾶν δὲ μᾶλλον οὗτοι ἠτήσαντο· ἡμεῖς δὲ φθεγζόμεθα ληστοῦ τοῦ εὐγνώμονος τὴν φωνὴν πρὸς αὐτόν· “μνήσθητι καὶ ἡμῶν ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου”.</p>	<p>Versetto: “Beati i poveri in spirito...”</p> <p>La turba deicida, il popolo trasgressore dei giudei, presso di Pilato infuriando gridarono, dicendo: “Crocifiggi Cristo” l'innocente. Costoro chiedevano piuttosto Barraba. Noi, invece, alla voce del buon ladrone, ci rammarichiamo a lui: “Ricordati anche di noi nel tuo Regno!”</p>

46 Nel Triodion 1879: τούτους.

47 Nel Triodion 1879: ἀνεύθυνον.

<p>Στίχ: “Μακάριοι οί πενθοῦντες, ὅτι”.</p> <p>Ἡ ζωηφόρος σου πλευρά ὡς ἐξ Ἐδέμ πηγὴ ἀναβλύζουσα τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν σου, Χριστέ, ὡς λογικὸν ποτίζει παράδεισον, ἐντεῦθεν μερίζουσα εἰς ἀρχάς,⁴⁸ εἰς τέσσαρα εὐαγγέλια, τὸν κόσμον ἀρδεύουσα, τὴν κτίσιν εὐφραίνουσα καὶ τὰ ἔθνη πιστῶς διδάσκουσα προσκυνεῖν τὴν βασιλείαν σου.</p>	<p>Versetto: “Beati coloro che piangono, perché...”</p> <p>Il tuo costato, vivificante come un fiume che scaturisce da Eden, abbevera la tua chiesa, o Cristo, come un paradiso spirituale, da lì diramandosi nei quattro vangeli, irriga il mondo, rallegra la creazione e insegna con fede alle genti a prostrarsi al tuo regno.</p>
<p>Στίχ: “Μακάριοι οί πραεῖς, ὅτι αὐτοὶ κληρονομήσουσιν”.</p> <p>Σταυρουμένου σου Χριστέ, πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις βλέπουσα ἔτρεμε, τὰ θεμέλια τῆς γῆς διεδονεῖτο φόβῳ τοῦ κράτους σου, φωστῆρες ἐκρύπτοντο καὶ τοῦ ναοῦ ἐρράγη τὸ καταπέτασμα, τὰ ὄρη ἐτρόμαξαν, αἱ⁴⁹ πέτραι ἐσχίσθησαν, ὁ⁵⁰ ληστής ὁ πιστός κράζει ⁵¹σοὶ σὺν ἡμῖν, Σωτήρ, τὸ μνήσθητι.</p>	<p>Versetto: “Beati i miti, perché erediteranno...”</p> <p>Quando ti crocifissero, o Cristo, la creazione, al vedere questo, i tremò, le fondamenta della terra si scossero dalla paura della tua potenza, le luci si nascosero, e la tenda del tempio si squarciò, i monti sussultarono, le rocce si schiantarono, il ladrone credente grida insieme a noi il “Ricordati”, o Salvatore!</p>

48 Nel Triodion 1879: ὡς ἐξ ἀρχῆς.

49 Nel Triodion 1879: καὶ.

50 Nel Triodion 1879: καὶ.

51 Nel Triodion 1879: κραυγάζει.

<p>Στίχ. “Μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην”.</p> <p>Τὸν σταυρὸν τὸν τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐν διανοίᾳ πάντες κατέχοντες τὰς τοῦ βίου ἡδονὰς ἀπονεκρῶσαι πάντες σπουδάσωμεν, ναὸν τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος καταρτίζοντες, φωνὴν ἀναμέλλοντες ληστοῦ τοῦ εὐγνώμονος οἱ πιστοὶ πρὸς αὐτόν· „μνήσθητι καὶ ἡμῶν ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου”.</p>	<p>Versetto. “Beati coloro che hanno fame e sete di giustizia...”</p> <p>Avendo in mente la Croce di Cristo cercheremo tutti di far perire i piaceri della vita, preparando le nostre anime come tempio dello Spirito Santo, e intonando la voce del buon ladrone, confidando in lui: “ricordati anche di noi nel tuo regno”.</p>
<p>Στίχ. “Μακάριοι οἱ ἐλεήμονες”.</p> <p>Ἐσταυρώθης δι’ ἐμέ, ἵνα ἐμοὶ πηγάσης ἀπάθειαν⁵² ἐκεντήθης τὴν πλευράν, ἵνα κρουνοὺς ζωῆς ἀναβλύσης μοι· τοῖς ἡλοῖς προσήλωσαι, ἵνα ἐγὼ τῷ πάθει⁵³ τῶν παθημάτων σου τὸ ὕψος τοῦ κράτους σου πιστούμενος κράζω σοί, “ζωοδότα Χριστέ, δόξα καὶ τῷ σταυρῷ⁵⁴ καὶ τῷ πάθει σου.”</p>	<p>Versetto: “Beati i misericordiosi...”</p> <p>Sei stato crocifisso per me, per far scaturire per me immortalità. Sei stato trafitto al costato, per far sgorgare per me le sorgenti della vita. Sei stato inchiodato, affinché io, tramite il patimento delle tue passioni, rassicurato dell’altezza della tua potenza, ti grida: “O Cristo, datore di vita, gloria alla tua Croce e alla tua passione!”</p>

52 Nel Triodion 1879: τὴν ἄφεσιν.

53 Nel Triodion 1879: βᾶθει.

54 Il Triodion 1879 aggiunge: Σῶτερ.

<p>Στίχ. “Μακάριοι οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ”.</p> <p>Προσηλώθης τῷ σταυρῷ διὰ πολλήν, Χριστέ, ἀγαθότητα ἐκεντήθης τὴν πλευράν, δύο κρουνοὺς πηγάζων ἀφέσεως· ἡ γῆ δὲ μὴ φερουσα καθορᾶν τὸ τόλημα ἐκυμαίνετο· αἱ πέτραι ἐρήγγυντο, ἐσβέννυτο ὁ ἥλιος, ἐσαλεύετο τὰ ὄρη καὶ οἱ βουνοί· δόξα τῷ κράτει σου.</p>	<p>Versetto. “Beati i puri di cuore...”</p> <p>Sei stato crocifisso, o Cristo, per la tua grande bontà; trafitto al fianco, effondi due fiumi del perdono; la terra non sopportò di vedere l’ardire e si scosse; le rocce si spaccarono, il sole si oscurò, tremavano i monti e le colline; gloria alla tua potenza.</p>
<p>Στίχ. “Μακάριοι οἱ εἰρονοποιοί”.</p> <p>Καθορῶσαί σε σταυρῷ τεταμένον, μόνε μακρόθυμε, αἱ δυνάμεις οὐρανῶν ἀποροῦσαι τρόμφ ἐξισταντο, ἡ γῆ ἐκυμαίνετο, τῶν φωστήρων κάλλος ἐναπεσβέννυτο· Ἄδαμ ὁ κατάκριτος ἀδίκως, φιλάνθρωπε, κρινομένου σου ἐδικαιοῦτο ὑμνῶν τὴν εὐσπλαγχνίαν σου.</p>	<p>Versetto. “Beati gli operatori di pace...”</p> <p>Quando ti videro crocifisso, o unico longanimo, le potenze celesti, sconvolte dal timore, rimasero stupefatte, la terra si scosse, la bellezza delle stelle si offuscò; Adamo, che era stato condannato per disubbidienza, tramite la tua condanna, si giustificò, cantando la tua compassione.</p>

<p>Στίχ. “Μακάριοι οί δεδιωγμένοι”.</p> <p>Ἐν Κρανίῳ ὑψωθείς τοῦ ἐχθροῦ τὴν κάραν συνέτριψας, ἐπὶ ξύλου δὲ θανὸν τοὺς καρποὺς τοῦ ξύλου τεθνήξαντας ἐζώσας, δέσποτα, καὶ παραδείσου πολίτας ἐδειξας, ἀπαύστως δοξάζοντας τὴν σὴν αγαθότητα καὶ κράζοντας “μνήσθητι καὶ ἡμῶν ἐν τῇ Βασιλείᾳ σου”.</p>	<p>Versetto: Beati i perseguitati...</p> <p>Innalzato sul Calvario hai fratturato il capo del nemico, morto sul legno hai vivificato coloro che erano morti a causa del frutto del legno, o Sovrano, e hai dimostrato cittadini del paradiso quelli che incessantemente glorificano la tua bontà e gridano: Ricordati anche di noi nel tuo regno!</p>
<p>Στίχ. “Μακάριοι ἐστέ, ὅταν”.</p> <p>Τῆς σταθείτης ἀκρατῶς πρὸς τὸν ξύλον πάλαι τῆς γνώσεως τοῦ πρωτοπάτορος χειρὸς ἀνορθῶν, Χριστέ, τὸ ὀλίσθημα ἐτάνθης θελήματι καὶ τὰς σὰς ἠλώθης χειρᾶς, μακρόθυμε, ὁ πλάσας τὸν ἄνθρωπον χειρὶ δι’ ἄμετρον ἀγαθότητα “δόξα τῇ ὑπὲρ νοῦν εὐσπλαγχνία σου”.</p>	<p>Versetto: “Beati siete, quando...”</p> <p>Il progenitore aveva steso le mani temerariamente verso l’albero della scienza, e tu, o Cristo, riparando la caduta, per tua propria volontà ti sei disteso, e ti sei inchiodato le mani, o longanimo, tu che dalla tua bontà infinita plasmasti l’uomo con la tua mano; “gloria alla tua compassione!”</p>

<p>Στίχ. “Χαίρετε καὶ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε, ὅτι ὁ μισθὸς ὑμῶν”.</p> <p>Τὸ χειρόγραφον ἡμῶν ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ καὶ λόγῃ διέρρηξας⁵⁵, καὶ λογισθεὶς ἐν τοῖς νεκροῖς τὸν ἐκείσε τύραννον ἔδησας, ῥυσάμενος ἅπαντας ἐκ δεσμῶν θανάτου τῆ ἀναστάσει σου, δι’ ἧς ἐφωτίσθημεν, φιλάνθρωπε Κύριε, καὶ βοώμέν σοί “μνήσθητι καὶ ἡμῶν⁵⁶ ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου”.</p>	<p>Versetto: “Rallegratevi ed esultate, perché la vostra ricompensa...”</p> <p>Hai strappato il documento scritto del nostro debito sulla croce con la lancia, e, annoverato fra i morti, lì hai incatenato il tiranno, liberando tutti dal carcere della Morte con la tua risurrezione, per mezzo della quale siamo stati illuminati, o Signore, per questo ti esclamiamo: „ricordati anche di noi nel tuo regno”.</p>
<p>Δόξα. τριαδικόν</p> <p>Τὸν πατέρα καὶ υἰόν καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα πάντες τὸ ἅγιον ὁμοφρόνως οἱ πιστοὶ δοξολογεῖν ἀξίως εὐξώμεθα, μονάδα θεότητος ἐν τρισὶν ὑπάρχουσιν ὑποστάσεσιν, ἀσύγχυτον μένουσαν, ἀπλήν ἀδιαίρετον καὶ ἀπόσιτον, δι’ ἧς λυτρούμεθα⁵⁷ τοῦ πυρὸς τῆς κολάσεως.</p>	<p>Gloria... <i>Triadikon</i>.</p> <p>Preghiamo, fedeli, in modo degno, per glorificare unanimemente il Padre e il Figlio e lo Spirito, l’unità della divinità che sussiste in tre ipostasi e rimane senza confusione, semplice, indivisibile e inaccessibile. Per essa siamo stati riscattati dal fuoco del castigo.</p>

55 Nel Triodion 1879: ἐν τῷ Σταυρῷ διέρρηξας Κύριε.

56 Il Triodion 1879 aggiunge: Σῶτερ.

57 Nel Triodion 1879: ἐκλυτρούμεθα.

<p>Καὶ νῦν καὶ αἰεὶ καὶ εἰς τοὺς: Θεοτοκίον.</p> <p>Ἀναρτούμενον σταυρῷ Ὁ ἔθειλουσίως βλέπουσα, ἄχραντε, τὸν υἱὸν καὶ Θεόν, Ὁ ἐκπληττομένη κλαίουσα ἔλεγες· „πῶς ἔδυν τὸ κάλλος σου Ὁ τοῦ τὰ πάντα, Κύριε, καλλωπίσαντος; τί ταῦτα ἀχάριστος Ὁ ἀπέδωκεν δῆμός σοι ἀντὶ τῶν ἀγαθῶν; Ὁ ὑμῶν σου τὴν ὑπὲρ νοῦν ἀγαθότητα”.</p>	<p>E ora e sempre e nei secoli...: <i>Theotokion.</i></p> <p>Quando vedesti volontariamente crocifisso, o Purissima, il tuo Figlio e Dio, facendo lamento dicesti: “come è tramontata la tua bellezza, o Signore, Tu che hai abbellito l’universo? Così ti ha ripagato il popolo ingrato per i benefici ricevuti? Inneggio la tua bontà, o Incomprensibile.”</p>
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6. L'origine dei tropari

Emerge la questione circa l'origine di questa serie di tropari. Innanzitutto ci interessa, se sono stati stilati proprio per tale occasione, cioè per il venerdì santo, oppure, sono stati scelti da altre ufficiature in cui già si adoperavano? Per quanto riguarda i *makarismi* festivi, tra i versetti delle Beatitudini e i tropari intercalati non occorre cercare un rapporto contenutistico. Infatti, di solito non appare alcun legame. I tropari trattano la persona del santo o il mistero della festa. Questo è il caso, ad esempio, nei *makarismi* che si cantano all'interno del grande canone di Sant'Andrea di Creta. Nel nostro caso, invece, non è così semplice trovare una risposta. Infatti, i tropari ai *makarismi* delle domeniche e dei giorni dedicati alla Santa Croce, cioè il mercoledì e il venerdì, il tema che ricorre solitamente — oltre a quello della Croce — è legato proprio al sospiro del buon ladrone. Solo che il tema del buon ladrone potrebbe avere luogo per eccellenza proprio nell'ufficio del venerdì santo. Ecco perché crea un problema verificare se la serie dei tropari in parola fu creata come unità letteraria per il

venerdì santo, oppure venne composta da tropari che facevano parte di cicli domenicali.

Semmai potessimo supporre un'unica opera, dovremmo pensare certamente alla variante del *Typikon dell'Anastasis*, e non a quella dei vari *Triodia*, visto che questi ultimi non prevedono tropari a ciascun versetto dei *makarismí*. Avremmo un compito più facile, se potessimo costatare un diretto legame di idee tra i versetti biblici e le susseguenti strofe inniche. Qua e là sembra come se i tropari avessero qualche pallida allusione al contenuto dei versetti precedenti. Sotto abbiamo raccolto le possibili corrispondenze tematiche:

Beati i poveri di spirito, perché di essi è il regno dei cieli. — Il motivo del regno si ripete nell'ultima riga del tropario: "Ricordati anche di noi nel tuo regno".

Beati coloro che piangono, perché saranno consolati. — Nel tropario risuona il tema della consolazione: il fiume dal costato di Cristo "rallegra la creazione".

Beati i miti, perché erediteranno la terra. — Il tropario descrive la reazione delle creature al vedere la mitezza di Cristo, a cui viene contrapposto implicitamente la crudeltà dei suoi nemici.

Beati coloro che hanno fame e sete di giustizia, perché saranno saziati. — La metafora del nutrimento potrebbe evocare l'invito del tropario all'ascesi: "cercheremo tutti di far perire i piaceri della vita".

Beati i misericordiosi, perché troveranno misericordia. — L'unico tropario che sta in prima persona singolare; mette in evidenza l'opera di Cristo proprio per la salvezza dei singoli.

Beati i puri di cuore, perché vedranno Dio — il motivo del cuore si cela nelle parole riferite a Cristo "trafitto al fianco". Inoltre, la terra che non sopportava più vedere il Figlio di Dio soffrendo sulla croce può alludere alla promessa di questo versetto delle Beatitudini: "perché vedranno Dio".

Beati gli operatori di pace, perché saranno chiamati figli di Dio — eventualmente si può trovare un nesso fra la promessa e l'immagine di Adamo, chiamato alla figliolanza divina, ottenuta tramite l'opera di Cristo.

Beati i perseguitati per amore della giustizia, perché loro è il regno dei cieli.

— In linea con la persecuzione sta il “nemico”, il cui capo fu fratturato da Cristo. Alla promessa “perché loro è il regno dei cieli” si accorda l’immagine della cittadinanza celeste.

Beati siete, quando vi insulteranno, vi perseguiteranno, e mentendo, diranno ogni male contro di voi per causa mia. — La perseveranza a cui invita Cristo trova eco nel tropario che lo intitola “longanime”.

Rallegratevi ed esultate, perché grande è la vostra ricompensa nei cieli. — Come antinomia della ricompensa nel tropario figura il documento di debito dell’umanità colpevole.

Il primo tropario non viene preceduto da alcun versetto, se non dalla parafrasi del sospiro del ladrone: Ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου, il che, tuttavia, non viene indicato nel *Typikon dell’Anastasis*. Si suppone, però, che questo primo versetto non fosse mai omesso. In questo caso nel primo tropario gli fa eco l’ultima riga: “Ricordati anche di noi nel tuo regno!”.

È lungi dalla nostra intenzione voler affermare che le presunte corrispondenze sopra elencate rappresentino il risultato di una redazione consapevole. Le somiglianze possono apparire anche forzate, comunque, siamo partiti dal presupposto che i tredici tropari formano un ciclo innografico originale. Ora possiamo solo constatare che dal punto di vista tematico non può essere mossa alcuna obiezione in merito all’ipotesi che i tropari in questione costituiscono un’unità letteraria. Bisogna, però, riconoscere che una correlazione contenutistica non è sufficiente per dimostrare la validità di tale ipotesi. Come ulteriori argomenti menzioniamo ancora due fatti già citati. Il primo è che insolitamente la serie dei tropari non racchiude quello che serve da modello per le strofe: Διὰ ξύλου. Se la serie fosse una compilazione di diversi tropari che originariamente facevano parte di altri cicli, perché il redattore avrebbe voluto escludere proprio questo tropario che sarebbe del tutto conforme alla tematica del venerdì santo? Il secondo argomento è l’anzidetta tematica stessa. La questione sul come sono entrati i *makarismi* nell’*orthros* del venerdì santo non è ancora chiusa: la forza ispiratrice della supplica del buon

ladrone, tuttavia, è evidente quasi in ogni strofa. Occorre aggiungere, comunque, che la pericope evangelica sul buon ladrone non è la sesta in ordine, cioè quella che precede i *makarismí*, bensì sta al decimo posto dei dodici brani evangelici, che si proclamano durante l'*orthros* del venerdì santo.

Un'analisi estesa anche sui manoscritti potrebbe condurre ad una migliore comprensione dell'evoluzione dei tropari, e, in genere, all'origine stessa dei *makarismí* nell'ufficio divino.

La *μετάνοια* come elemento della preghiera del corpo nell'*Apophthegmata Patrum* e nel *Pratum spirituale*

Atanasia Maria SMETANIAK

1. Introduzione; 2. *Apophthegmata Patrum*; 3. Giovanni Mosco; 4. Conclusione

1. Introduzione

Questo tema si basa sull'analisi della parola *μετάνοια* usata dai Padri della Chiesa e rappresenta due aspetti della *μετάνοια*: un lato *invisibile* ed un altro *visibile*. La *μετάνοια* è un elemento chiave della vita e della spiritualità cristiana. Nel greco classico il vocabolo denota il “cambiamento” di mente o di pensiero, che negli autori cristiani si attua non con la sola forza dell'individuo, ma “con” il Signore, come effetto della sua grazia e con la sottomissione della volontà soggettiva a quella divina. Tale “sottomissione” della volontà è, pertanto, l'obiettivo attuativo principale della *μετάνοια*: esso significa assumere la capacità di vedere e riconoscere il peccato davanti a Dio e penetrare attivamente nel proposito di non ripeterlo più non all'interno di una ottica progettuale, ma avviando un autentico processo di conversione interiore.

I Padri del monachesimo sapevano bene che la ‘conversione’ non è un evento compiuto una volta per sempre, ma è un itinerario continuo, di ogni giorno e di ogni momento, che si vive a stretto contatto con il ricordo di Dio e del proprio peccato.

Composto dalla preposizione *μετά* con il valore di “dopo”, “con” e dal verbo *voέω*, che indica il “percepire”, il “pensare” o il risultato stesso di tali azioni, il sostantivo *μετάνοια* esprime dunque il “pensare

in modo diverso dopo” un “dopo-pensiero”. La preposizione vi assume un’accezione intermedia tra il suo primario significato temporale e la nozione di “cambiamento” che essa tradizionalmente conferisce al vocabolo composto e che può riassumersi nei valori semantici del “dopo” e del “diverso”. La μετάνοια è, pertanto, la *mens* che scaturisce e si differenzia da un giudizio e da un’attitudine mentale ed etica antecedente; è un piuttosto un cambiamento di mentalità e, al tempo stesso, di condotta:¹ è il cambiamento della mente o del cuore, normalmente tradotto nel contesto della letteratura spirituale e monastica come “pentimento” e “rimpianto”².

Nell’ambito monastico o anche liturgico la μετάνοια viene usata con il significato di un inchino davanti a Dio o davanti ad una persona importante. La μετάνοια diventa la preghiera che richiede non soltanto il gesto fisico di una persona, ma coinvolge tutta la persona. Nel questo tema ci limitiamo ad esaminare due opere dell’ambito monastico *Apophthegmata Patrum* e *Pratum spirituale*, contenenti preziosi esempi da seguire.

- 1 Cf. Jürgen Goetzmann, μετάνοια, in *DNTT*, I, 357-359: *change of mind, repentance, conversion*; Geoffrey William Hugo Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, Oxford – New York, 1961-1968, μετάνοια, 855-858: I. *change of mind; after thought*. II. *repentance, penitence*. III. *prostration; Thesaurus graecae linguae*, I-IX, Graz, 1934-1964: *ThGL*, VI, μετάνοια, coll. 880-881: *mutata mens, sententia, alia mens quam antea*; William F. Arndt – Felix Wilbur Gingrich (eds.), *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, Chicago - Cambridge 1957, μετάνοια, 513-514: *a change of mind; remorse; repentance, turning about, conversion*.
- 2 Henry George Liddell – Robert Scott (eds.), *A Greek-English Lexicon*, Oxford, 1951, μετάνοια, 1115: I. *change of mind or heard, repentance, regret*. II. *afterthought, correction*.

2. *Apophthegmata Patrum*

La quiete è fondamentale per la vita monastica e, facendone la lode, l'autore dice che essa conduce al pentimento, o possiamo dire con altre parole, che senza quiete non c'è pentimento:

O quiete, progresso dei solitari! O quiete, scala celeste! O quiete, via del regno dei cieli! O quiete, madre di compunzione! O quiete, dispensatrice di penitenza! O quiete, specchio dei peccati che mostri all'uomo i suoi sbagli! O quiete, che non frapponi ostacoli alle lacrime e ai gemiti! O quiete, che illumini l'anima!³

Ci sono sempre più buoni esempi di pentimento vivente, come mostra il diacono, che ha guidato molti alla preghiera e al pentimento e, quindi, ha edificato altri:

Udito ciò, [tutti] restarono meravigliati e, andati, lo fecero uscire dal luogo in cui si trovava. Egli pregò e l'acqua risalì, e coloro che un tempo erano rimasti scandalizzati furono molto più edificati dalla sua penitenza e glorificarono Dio⁴.

Trattando delle passioni nella vita di monaco, l'autore insegna che ognuna di esse si può superare attraverso la penitenza, eccetto la fornicazione:

3 *Apophthegmata*, 2,35, Luigi d'Ayala Valva (ed.), *I Padri del deserto, Detti*. Collezione sistematica (*Apophthegmata Patrum. Collectio systematica graeca*), Qiqajon, 2013, 103): Ὡ ἡσυχία προκοπή μοναζόντων· Ὡ ἡσυχία κλίμαξ οὐρανία· Ὡ ἡσυχία ὁδὸς βασιλείας οὐρανῶν· Ὡ ἡσυχία κατανύξεως μήτηρ· Ὡ ἡσυχία μετανοίας πρόξενε· Ὡ ἡσυχία ἔσπυρον ἀμαρτημάτων ἢ δεικνύουσα ἀνθρώπων τὰ πλημμελήματα αὐτοῦ· Ὡ ἡσυχία ἡ δάκρυα καὶ στεναγμοὺς μὴ ἐμποδίζουσα· Ὡ ἡσυχία ἡ τὴν ψυχὴν λαμπρύνουσα. Jean-Claude Guy (ed.), *Les apophthegmes des Pères: collection systématique*, I-III, Paris, 1993, 2003, 2005 (= *SCh* 387, 474, 498), 144.

4 *Apophthegmata*, 5,30 (d'Ayala Valva, 2013, 182): Καὶ ἀκούσαντες ἐθαύμασαν, καὶ ἐξεληθόντες ἐξήγαγον αὐτὸν ἐκ τοῦ τόπου οὗ ἦν. Καὶ ἠῦξαστο καὶ ἀνέβη τὸ ὕδωρ, καὶ οἱ σκανδαλισθέντες ποτὲ πολλῶ μᾶλλον ὠφελήθησαν ἐπὶ τῇ μετανοίᾳ αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐδόξασαν τὸν Θεόν (Guy, I, 268).

...così è per il monaco: se è negligente nei confronti delle altre passioni, può sperare di sconfiggerle attraverso la penitenza, ma se una sola volta fa naufragio cadendo nella passione della fornicazione, arriva alla disperazione, perché la sua nave è colata a picco⁵.

In un altro passo, racconta della penitenza di due monaci. L'autore sottolinea che il pentimento ha valore in sé stesso quando si compie, e non dipende tanto dalle persone, quanto dalla grazia divina:

Allora gli anziani dissero: “La penitenza di entrambi ha lo stesso valore davanti a Dio!”⁶

Dio sempre accoglie il pentimento, ma chiede all'uomo di fare attenzione al suo comportamento:

Allora, dopo aver reso grazie a Dio, l'anziano disse al fratello: “Ecco, Dio ha accolto la tua penitenza: d'ora in poi fa' attenzione a te stesso!” E rispondendo il fratello gli disse: “Ecco, da questo momento starò con te, abba, finché non morirò”⁷.

Il pentimento ridona all'uomo la grazia che ha perso con il peccato. Come testimoniano gli anziani, possiamo osservare che non c'è peccato che Dio non abbia perdonato. L'unica cosa che si aspetta dall'uomo è passare il tempo nella penitenza, lasciare il vecchio pensiero peccaminoso e non ritornare ai peccati passati:

Sbarrata la porta, egli piangeva come si piange per un morto, supplicando Dio e vegliando con sincera penitenza. Il suo corpo ne fu sfi-

5 *Apophthegmata*, 5,34 (d'Ayala Valva, 2013, 184): οὕτως καὶ ὁ μοναχός, ἐὰν ῥαθυμῆσῃ εἰς τὰ ἄλλα πάθη, προσδοκᾷ διὰ τῆς μετανοίας περιγενέσθαι αὐτῶν· ἐὰν δὲ ἅπαξ εἰς τὸ πάθος τῆς πορνείας καταπεσὼν ναυαγήσῃ, εἰς ἀπόγνωσιν ἔρχεται, τοῦ πλοίου κάτω ἀπελθόντος (ed. Guy, I, 274).

6 *Apophthegmata*, 5,39 (d'Ayala Valva, 2013, 187): Καὶ εἶπον οἱ γέροντες ὅτι· Ἐπίσης ἐστὶν τῶν δύο ἡ μετάνοια πρὸς τὸν Θεόν (Guy, I, 280).

7 *Apophthegmata*, 5,43 (d'Ayala Valva, 2013, 190): Τότε εὐχαριστήσας τῷ Θεῷ ὁ γέρων εἶπε τῷ ἀδελφῷ· Ἰδοὺ ἐδέξατο ὁ Θεὸς τὴν μετάνοιάν σου· τὸ λοιπὸν πρόσεχε σεαυτῷ. Καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ ἀδελφὸς εἶπεν αὐτῷ· Ἰδοὺ ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν ἔσομαι μετὰ σου, ἀββᾶ, ἕως οὗ ἀποθάνω (Guy, I, 288).

brato, senza che egli però raggiungesse l'intima certezza di aver fatto pienamente penitenza. E quando spesso i fratelli venivano a visitarlo per propria edificazione e bussavano alla porta, egli diceva di non poter aprire: "Ho dato la mia parola – diceva – di fare sincera penitenza per un anno"⁸.

La consapevolezza e l'accettazione del senso di colpa davanti a Dio è la cosa più importante nella vita dell'eremita, perciò essi facevano tanta attenzione a questo aspetto, per vigilare sui peccati in futuro e giungere al pentimento:

Si è dissolto anche il mio corpo che ho contaminato e non riesco più a vivere, stretto come sono dal tuo timore, tanto più che non sono sicuro che la colpa mi sia stata perdonata grazie alla penitenza e così sono doppiamente disperato⁹.

Anche quando qualcuno vede il peccato di un altro, non lo può ritenere come l'unico peccatore, ma pensare a se stesso come il più grande peccatore bisognoso di pentimento:

Un anziano disse: "Se qualcuno in qualunque modo pecca davanti a te, tu non giudicarlo, ma ritieniti più peccatore di lui: hai visto infatti il suo peccato, ma non ne hai visto il pentimento"¹⁰.

8 *Apophthegmata*, 5,46 (d'Ayala Valva, 2013, 193): Αναφράξας δὲ τὴν θύραν, ὡς δεῖ κλαίειν ἐπὶ νεκρῷ, οὕτως ἔκλαιε ἰκετεύων τὸν Θεὸν καὶ ἀγρυπνῶν μετὰ ἀληθοῦς μετανοίας. Ἐλεπτύνθη δὲ τῷ σώματι πληροφορίαν μετανοίας οὕτω λαβών. Τῶν δὲ ἀδελφῶν πολλάκις πρὸς αὐτὸν παραβαλλόντων πρὸς ὠφέλειαν ἑαυτῶν καὶ κρουόντων τὴν θύραν, αὐτὸς ἔλεγε μὴ δύνασθαι ἀνοίγειν· Δέδωκα γάρ, φησί, λόγον ἕνα ἐνιαυτὸν γνησίως μετανοῆσαι (Guy, I, 296).

9 *Apophthegmata*, 5,46 (d'Ayala Valva, 2013, 194): Ἐτάκη δὲ καὶ τὸ σῶμά μου ὅπερ ἐμίανα, καὶ οὐκέτι ἰσχύω τοῦ ζῆν τῷ σῷ φόβῳ συνειλημμένος, ἀνθ' ὧν οὐ θαρρῶ συγκεχωρηθεῖ μοι διὰ τῆς μετανοίας τὸ πλημμέλημα, διπλὴν ἔχων τὴν ἀνεπιστίαν (Guy, I, 298).

10 *Apophthegmata*, 9,19 (d'Ayala Valva, 2013, 277): Εἶπε γέρων· Κἂν ὀπωσθήποτε τις ἀμάρτη ἐνώπιόν σου, μὴ κρίνης αὐτόν, ἀλλὰ ἔχε σεαυτὸν ἀμαρτωλότερον αὐτοῦ· τὴν γὰρ ἀμαρτίαν εἶδες, τὴν δὲ μετάνοιαν οὐκ εἶδες (Guy, I, 442).

La cosa importante è incoraggiare le persone a non cadere nella disperazione quando hanno peccato, ma aiutarle e mostrare loro la via per il pentimento:

Abba Poimen disse: “Se un uomo ha peccato e non lo nega, dicendo: Ho peccato!, tu non rimproverarlo, altrimenti gli mozzi il fervore. Se invece gli dici: Non ti scoraggiare, fratello, e non disperare di te stesso, ma da ora in poi sta’ attento, risvegli la sua anima al pentimento”¹¹.

Altrove, l’autore insegna come l’identificazione dei pensieri guarisca l’anima e il corpo, evitando i pericoli. Per coloro che ritornano liberatamente a Dio, il pentimento è preceduto dall’individuazione dei pensieri. L’unico avvertimento che i Padri danno è di discernere bene a chi rivelare i propri pensieri, a persone esperte:

Udito ciò, il fratello prese forza nell’anima, e ritrovata la speranza, gli rivelò anche ciò che aveva fatto. Ma il padre, udito anche ciò che aveva fatto, come un buon medico gli curò l’anima a partire dalle divine Scritture [mostrandogli] che c’è possibilità di penitenza per coloro che con coscienza ritornano a Dio¹².

Spesso gli uomini disperati a causa del peccato non hanno speranza nel pentimento, ma gli anziani ricordavano che Dio sempre perdona e aspetta uomo con amore:

Un soldato chiese a un anziano se Dio accoglie la penitenza. Ma l’anziano dopo averlo istruito con molti discorsi gli disse: “Dimmi, mio caro,

11 *Apophthegmata*, 10,68 (d’Ayala Valva, 2013, 301): Εἶπεν ἄββᾶ Ποιμὴν· Ἐὰν ἁμαρτήσῃ ἄνθρωπος καὶ οὐκ ἀρνήσῃται λέγων· Ἥμαρτον, μὴ ἐλέγξῃς αὐτόν, ἐπεὶ ἐκκόπτεις αὐτοῦ τὴν προθυμίαν. Ἐὰν δὲ εἴπῃς αὐτῷ· Μὴ ἀθυμήσῃς, ἀδελφε, μὴδὲ ἀφελπίσῃς ἑαυτοῦ ἀλλὰ φύλαξαι ἀπὸ τοῦ λοιποῦ, διεγείρεις αὐτοῦ τὴν ψυχὴν εἰς μετάνοια (Guy, II, 60).

12 *Apophthegmata*, 10,100 (d’Ayala Valva 2013, 308): Ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ ἀδελφὸς καὶ λαβὼν δύναμιν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ καὶ εὐελπίς γενόμενος ἀπήγγειλεν αὐτῷ καὶ τὴν πρᾶξιν. Ἀκούσας δὲ καὶ τὴν πρᾶξιν ὁ πατὴρ ὡς καλὸς ἰατρὸς κατέπλασεν αὐτοῦ τὴν ψυχὴν ἐκ τῶν θείων Γραφῶν ὅτι ἐστὶ μετάνοια τοῖς ἐν γνώσει ἐπιστρέφουσιν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν (Guy, II, 80).

se ti si strappa la mantella, la getti via?” E quello disse: “No, ma la cucio e poi la uso di nuovo”. Gli disse l’anziano: “Se dunque tu risparmi il tuo abito, Dio non risparmierà molto di più la sua creatura?” E quello, riacquistata speranza, pieno di gioia fece ritorno a casa sua¹³.

Il pentimento dunque non dipende dal tempo o da qualcos’altro. Esso è dato all’uomo da Dio, e solo coinvolgendo tutto il proprio essere, l’uomo può cambiare il modo di pensare e cambiare vita, rispondendo così alla grazia del pentimento, che può durare o tutta la vita o un breve momento:

Allora si alzò in piedi e andò a toccarla con il piede. Appena vide che era morta, si gettò con la faccia a terra supplicando Dio, e udì una voce che diceva: “Un’ora sola della sua penitenza è stata gradita più della penitenza di molti che passano molto tempo senza manifestare l’opera di una tale penitenza!”¹⁴

Alla domanda se il pentimento deve essere molto lungo, l’anziano non rispondeva nulla, ma ha portato l’esempio di Giosuè, un uomo che si pentì davanti a Dio. Così, l’anziano ha chiarito che il pentimento deve essere presente nella vita cristiana, ma Dio appare a tutti al di là del tempo della penitenza:

Un fratello interrogò un anziano dicendo: “È bene fare molte metanie?” Gli disse l’anziano: “Guardiamo a Giosuè figlio di Nun: Dio gli apparve

13 *Apophthegmata*, 10,176 (d’Ayala Valva, 2013, 327): Ἡρωτήθη γέρον ὑπὸ στρατευομένου εἰ δέχεται ὁ Θεὸς μετάνοιαν. Ὁ δὲ γέρον μετὰ τὸ κατηχήσαι αὐτὸν ἐν πολλοῖς λόγοις λέγει αὐτῷ· Εἰπέ μοι, ἀγαπητέ, ἐὰν σχισθῆ σου τὸ χλανίδιον ῥίπτεις αὐτὸ ἔξω; Ὁ δὲ λέγει· Οὐχί, ἀλλὰ ῥάπτω καὶ πάλιν χρῶμαι αὐτό. Λέγει πρὸς αὐτὸν ὁ γέρον· Εἰ οὖν σὺ τοῦ ἱματίου σου φείδεις, οὐ πολλῶ μᾶλλον ὁ Θεὸς τοῦ ἰδίου πλάσματος φείσεται. Ὁ δὲ εὐελπὶς γενόμενος ἀναχώρησεν μετὰ χαρᾶς εἰς τὰ ἴδια (Guy, II, 126.128).

14 *Apophthegmata*, 13,17 (d’Ayala Valva, 2013, 411): Ἀναστάς οὖν καὶ ἀπελθὼν ἔνυξεν αὐτὴν τῷ ποδί. Ὡς οὖν εἶδεν ὅτι ἀπέθανεν, ἔρριπεν ἑαυτὸν δεόμενος τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐπὶ πρόσωπον, καὶ ἤκουσε φωνῆς λεγούσης ὅτι· Ἡ μία ὥρα τῆς μετανοίας αὐτῆς προσεδέχθη ὑπὲρ μετανοίας πολλῶν χρονιζόντων καὶ μὴ ἐνδεικνυμένων τὸ ἔργον τῆς τοιαύτης μετανοίας (Guy, II, 248).

quando egli era disteso con la faccia di terra¹⁵.

Gli uomini spesso giudicano gli altri per le loro azioni. Ma gli anziani dicevano che è solo Dio colui che può giudicare la persona, perchè solo Egli vede la profondità del cuore e il suo pentimento:

Spesso infatti molti che compiono molti mali davanti agli uomini si sono pentiti in segreto davanti a Dio e sono stati accolti. Noi vediamo il peccato, ma solo Dio conosce tutti gli altri beni che essi hanno compiuto, tanto più che spesso molti, dopo aver vissuto nel vizio per tutta la loro vita, avvicinandosi alla morte e alla loro fine, hanno finito per pentirsi e si sono salvati; e inoltre è successo anche che dei peccatori siano stati accolti [da Dio] grazie alle preghiere dei santi. Per questo, un uomo non deve assolutamente giudicare un altro uomo, neppure se lo vede con i propri stessi occhi: uno solo è il giudice, il Figlio di Dio!¹⁶

Parlando della preghiera, gli anziani insegnavano che essa può essere o benedetta o maledetta, a causa del pentimento o della sua assenza:

Disse ancora: “Chi ruba o mente o compie qualche altro peccato, spesso, subito dopo aver compiuto il peccato, geme, accusa sé stesso e giunge al pentimento; ma chi serba rancore nell’anima, sia che mangi, sia che beva, dorma o cammini, se lo porta sempre dentro come un veleno. Non può infatti separarsi dal suo peccato e la sua preghiera diventa per lui una maledizione; e in breve, la sua fatica non conta nulla agli occhi

15 *Apophthegmata*, 15,75 (d’Ayala Valva, 2013, 451): Ἀδελφὸς ἠρώτησε γέροντα λέγων· Καλὸν ἐστὶν ποιῆσαι μετανοίας πολλάς; Λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ γέρον· Ὁρῶμεν Ἰησοῦν τὸν τοῦ Ναυῆ ὅτι κειμένῳ αὐτῷ ἐπὶ πρόσωπον ὤφθη αὐτῷ ὁ Θεός (Guy, II, 334).

16 *Apophthegmata*, 15,122 (d’Ayala Valva, 2013, 466): Καὶ γὰρ πολλοὶ πολλάκις ἐνόπιον ἀνθρώπων πολλὰ κακὰ ἐραζόμενοι κρυπτῶς τῷ Θεῷ μετενόησαν καὶ προσεδέχθησαν. Καὶ τὴν μὲν ἀμαρτίαν ἡμεῖς οἶδαμεν, τὰ δὲ ἄλλα ἀγαθὰ ἄπερ ἔπραξαν μόνος ὁ Θεὸς ἐπίσταται· πλὴν δὲ ὅτι πολλοὶ πᾶσαν τὴν ζωὴν αὐτῶν κακῶς ζήσαντες πολλάκις περὶ τὸν θάνατον καὶ τὰ τέλη αὐτῶν εἰς μετάνοιαν εὐρεθέντες ἐσώθησαν· ἔστι δὲ ὅτι καὶ δι’ εὐχῆς ἁγίων ἀμαρτωλοὶ ἐδέχθησαν. Διὰ τοῦτο οὐ χρὴ κἂν αὐτοῖς τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς αὐτοῦ ἴδῃ ἄνθρωπος μηδαμῶς κρίνῃ ἄνθρωπον· Εἷς ἐστὶν ὁ κριτὴν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ (Guy, II, 370-372).

di Dio. Anche se verserà il suo sangue per Cristo, la sua preghiera non è accolta¹⁷.

Abbiamo già detto che μετάνοια spesso si usava per indicare un inchino davanti ad una persona degna. Qui è usata quando l'anziano compie un segno di *metanoia* verso un suo discepolo, degno di riceverlo a causa della sua umiltà:

Un anziano aveva un discepolo provato e un giorno, per un moto di insofferenza, lo cacciò fuori. Il fratello rimase fuori seduto. E l'anziano, aprendo, lo trovò e gli fece una metanoia dicendo: "Pietro, la tua umiltà e la tua pazienza hanno vinto la mia insofferenza. Vieni dentro: da ora in poi sei tu l'anziano e il padre, io il giovane e il discepolo, perché con le tue opere hai superato la mia anzianità¹⁸.

Molta attenzione era data dagli anziani al pentimento. Se una persona si pentiva profondamente, l'anziano era disposto a ritenere suo il peccato del fratello:

Gli disse l'anziano: "Ne sei pentito?" Gli disse il fratello: "Sì, sì". Disse l'anziano: "Io porto con te la metà del peccato". Disse allora il fratello: "Adesso sì che possiamo stare insieme!" E abitarono insieme fino alla morte¹⁹.

17 *Apophthegmata*, 15,124 (d'Ayala Valva, 2013, 467): Εἶπε ἄλιν ὅτι Ὁ κλέπτων ἢ ὁ ψευδόμενος, ἢ ὁ ἄλλην ἁμαρτίαν ποιῶν πολλάκις εὐθέως τῇ τελέσει τῆς ἁμαρτίας ἢ στενάξει ἢ μέμφεται ἑαυτόν, καὶ ἔρχεται εἰς μετάνοιαν· ὁ δὲ μνησικακίαν κρατῶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ εἴτε τρώγει εἴτε πίνει εἴτε καθεύδει εἴτε περιπατεῖ ὡσπερ ἰὸν πάντοτε ἔλκει ἔσωθεν. Ἀχώριστον γὰρ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἔχει, καὶ ἡ εὐχή αὐτοῦ κατάρα αὐτῷ γίνεται, καὶ ὄλωσ ὁ κόπος αὐτοῦ εἰς οὐδὲν λογίζεται παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ. Κὰν τὸ αἷμα αὐτοῦ ἐκχύσει διὰ τὸν Χριστὸν ἀπόρροδεκτός ἐστιν ἢ προσευχὴ αὐτοῦ (Guy, II, 372-374).

18 *Apophthegmata*, 16,26 (d'Ayala Valva, 2013, 498): Γέρων τις ἔχων δόκιμον μαθητήν, καὶ ἀπὸ ὀλιγωρίας ποτὲ ἔβαλεν αὐτὸν ἔξω. Ὁ δὲ ἀδελφός ὑπέμενε ἔξω καθήμενος. Καὶ ἀνοίξας ὁ γέρων ἠῦρεν αὐτὸν καὶ ἔβαλεν αὐτῷ μετάνοιαν λέγων· Πέτρε, ἡ ταπεινώσις καὶ ἡ μακροθυμία σου ἐνίκησε τὴν ἐμὴν ὀλιγωρίαν. Δεῦρο ἔσω, ἀπὸ γὰρ τοῦ νῦν σὺ γέρων καὶ πατήρ, ἐγὼ δὲ νεώτερος καὶ μαθητής, ὅτι ἐν τῷ ἔργῳ σου ὑπερέβης τὸ ἐμὸν γῆρας (Guy, II, 408).

19 *Apophthegmata*, 17,18 (d'Ayala Valva, 2013, 509): Λέγει ὁ γέρων· Ἔστι μετάνοια; Λέγει ὁ ἀδελφός· Ναί, ναί. Εἶπε δὲ ὁ γέρων· Ἐγὼ βαστάζω μετὰ σοῦ τὸ ἡμισυ

La *metanoia* era un mezzo del ritrovare la pace tra i monaci. C'era un gesto importante da compiere con il cuore puro:

Dopo tre giorni poi, rientrati in sé, tornarono al comportamento di prima e, dopo essersi fatti l'un l'altro una *metanoia*, dichiararono ciò che ciascuno di loro aveva pensato in cuor suo, cioè di fare la volontà dell'altro. E riconosciuta la guerra del Nemico, rimasero insieme fino alla morte in completa pace²⁰.

Dio stesso perdona i peccati commessi e non li ricorda più, quando vede il cuore pentito:

Conoscendo dunque, o cristiani, dalle divine Scritture e dalle divine rivelazioni qual è la bontà che Dio mostra verso coloro che si rifugiano sinceramente in lui e che attraverso la penitenza correggono i loro errori passati, e sapendo che egli rende i beni promessi senza chiedere conto dei peccati passati, non disperiamo della nostra salvezza²¹.

L'amore di Dio, dunque, diventa più grande del peccato:

Sappi bene questo dunque: che nessun peccato umano vince l'amore di Dio per l'uomo, purché uno abbandoni per mezzo della penitenza i mali commessi in precedenza²².

τῆς ἀμαρτίας. Τότε λέγει ὁ ἀδελφός· ἄρτι δυνάμεθα εἶναι ὁμοῦ. Καὶ ἔμειναν μετ' ἀλλήλων ἕως τῆς τελευτῆς αὐτῶν (Guy, III, 22).

20 *Apophthegmata*, 17,33 (d'Ayala Valva, 2013, 513): Μετὰ τρεῖς οὖν ἡμέραις εἰς ἑαυτοὺς ἐλθόντες ἀνένησαν εἰς τὸ πρῶτον κατόρθωμα, καὶ ποιήσαντες ἑαυτοῖς μετάνοιαν ὠμολόγουν ἕκαστος ὃ ἐλογίσαντο ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτῶν ὥστε τὸ θέλημα ποιῆσαι τοῦ ἐτέρου. Καὶ γνόντες τὸν πόλεμον τοῦ ἐχθροῦ, μέχρι θανάτου ἔμειναν ὁμοῦ μετὰ πάσης εἰρήνης (Guy, III, 32).

21 *Apophthegmata*, 18,26 (d'Ayala Valva, 2013, 535): Γινώσκοντες τοίνυν, ὃ χριστιανοί, ἕκ τε τῶν θείων Γραφῶν καὶ ἕκ τῶν θείων ἀποκαλύψεως ὄσην ἔχει ὁ Θεὸς ἀγαθότητα πρὸς τοὺς εἰς αὐτὸν γνησίως καταφεύγοντας καὶ διὰ μετανοίας τὰ πρότερον αὐτοῖς ἐπταισμένα διορθουμένους, καὶ ὅτι ἀποδίδωσι πάλιν τὰ ἐπηγγελμένα ἀγαθὰ, οὐκ εἰσπραττόμενος δίκας ὑπὲρ τῶν προτέρων ἀμερτημάτων, μὴ ἀπελπίσωμεν τῆς ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίας (Guy 2005, 80).

22 *Apophthegmata*, 18,46 (d'Ayala Valva, 2013,547): Τοῦτο τοίνυν ἴσθι εἰδὸς ὡς οὐδὲν τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων ἀμαρτημάτων νικᾷ τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ φιlanθρωπίαν, μόνον ἐὰν τῆς μετανοίας ἢ πρότερον ἤμαρτέ τις ἀπολείψῃ κακά»(Guy, III, 110).

3. *Giovanni Mosco*

Giovanni Mosco, monaco vissuto tra il VI e il VII secolo, è noto per la sua opera *Pratum*, una raccolta di aneddoti edificanti, discorsi istruttivi e brevi notizie biografiche di monaci o altre figure, offrendo una rassegna della vita monastica di ambiente palestino-egiziano tra la seconda metà del VI secolo e la prima metà del VII e, descrivendo episodi da lui stesso visti o di cui ha sentito parlare. Ciò costituisce una raccolta di testimonianze di viaggio dell'autore, con descrizione dei luoghi visti e delle persone incontrate.

Nel libro *Pratum*, l'autore usa spesso la parola μετάνοια come un sostantivo che indica un gesto, entrato nella terminologia liturgica, col significato di fare il segno della Santa Croce, indicando la cintura o la terra. La parola va di pari passo con il verbo 'βάλλω'.

Con l'inizio della vita monastica, il soggetto si avvia a una vita nuova che spesso si identifica con la penitenza; e se anche la persona, prima di cominciare la vita monastica, ha trascorso una vita nel peccato, con la grazia di Dio ritrova il perdono e il ricordo del perdono la rende capace di compiere una penitenza dura e profonda. Il monaco, così, anche se ha compiuto un peccato grave, ritrova la pace con Dio e con se stesso.

Figlioli, siate coscienti di quanto impegno è necessario in questo momento. Cerchiamo di conoscere noi stessi nel raccoglimento e nel silenzio, perché adesso più che mai è necessario un vero ravvedimento, in modo da essere chiamati templi di Dio²³.

Il diavolo, cercando di allontanare l'uomo da Dio, fa cadere l'anima nel peccato o nelle tentazioni:

23 Ioannes Moschus, *Pratum*, 69 (Ricardo Maisano, *Giovanni Mosco, Il Prato*, Napoli, 2002, 106): Ειδόντες, τέκνα, τίνυν τον καιρόν, ποίας εργασίας δεΐται, επιγνώμεν έαυτούς διά τής ήσυχίας. Έν τούτω γάρ αναγκαΐον χρήσασθαι ήμās τή καλή μετάνοΐα, όπως ναοι Θεοΰ χρηματίσωμεν (Ioannes Moschus, *Λειμών*, in *PG* 87/3, Parisiis, 1865, coll. 2843-3116: *PG* 87/3, col. 2020).

“Padre mio”, diceva lei, “non fare così! Tu hai Cristo dentro di te! Pensa al tuo dolore ed alla penitenza che dovrai compiere nella tua cella, pensa ai lamenti, alle lacrime che dovrai versare!”²⁴.

Gli antichi padri sapevano bene che la penitenza non è un’azione che si compie una volta sola, ma è il persistere ogni giorno e in ogni momento nel pensiero di Dio e nel ricordo del proprio peccato. Per questo, gli anziani ricordano che la necessità di compiere la penitenza non è soltanto per i giovani, ma accompagna l’individuo durante tutto il suo percorso di vita. Le parole di abbà Menas riferite da Giovanni Mosco risultano, al riguardo, molto efficaci:

Ogni età ha bisogno di fare penitenza, i giovani, come i vecchi, se si vuole godere della vita eterna nella lode e nella gloria: i giovani curvando la testa sotto il giogo della disciplina quando si desta la passione, i vecchi in quanto possono cambiare le cattive tendenze cui si erano abituati da molto tempo²⁵.

Un momento determinante della vita monastica è tenere il peccato sempre davanti agli occhi, a ricordo della propria debolezza e, ancor più, dell’amore di Dio nel perdonare. Per questa ragione i monaci trascorrono tutta la vita nella continua penitenza che diventa vera e propria compagna della loro esistenza. I Padri ricordavano, infatti, che Dio dà sempre tempo per la penitenza, come diceva abbà Taleleo, che ha vissuto sessant’anni da monaco senza mai smettere di piangere:

24 Ioannes Moschus, *Pratum*, 204 (Maisano 2002, 219): Ἡ δὲ ἔλεγεν αὐτῷ· Μὴ οὕτως, Πάτερ, Χριστὸν ἔχης μνήσθητι τῆς μετανοίας, ἧς μέλλεις μετανοεῖν καθήμενος ἐν τῷ κελλίῳ σου μνήσθητι τῶν στεναγμῶν καὶ τῶν δακρύων, ὧν μέλλεις ποιεῖν (*PG* 87/3, coll. 3093-3096).

25 Ioannes Moschus, *Pratum*, 159 (Maisano, 2002, 175): Ἡλικία πᾶσα ὀφείλει μετανοεῖν νεωτέρων τε καὶ γερόντων, ὡς ζωῆς αἰωνίου ἀπολαύειν μετὰ ἐπαίνου καὶ δόξης πολλῆς μέλλουσα· οἱ μὲν νέοι, ὅτι ἐν ἀκμῇ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας τὸν ἑαυτῶν ἀγχένα ὑπὸ ζυγὸν ὑπέταξαν· οἱ δὲ γέροντες, ὅτι τὴν ἐκ πολλῶν χρόνων ἐθισθεῖσαν αὐτοῖς κακὴν πρόληψιν μεταθεῖναι δεδύνηται (*PG* 87/3, col. 3028).

Dio ci ha dato questo tempo per la penitenza, e noi dobbiamo metterci tutto il nostro impegno²⁶.

non un pianto di scoraggiamento o di tristezza, ma lacrime di ringraziamento a Dio che ha concesso la grazia della penitenza.

Spesso troviamo, soprattutto negli scritti monastici, l'uso della parola μετάνοια con un altro significato – fare *metanoia* è un atto di culto, di adorazione, ma anche segno di rispetto davanti a una persona. Nella pratica monastica spesso si faceva un inchino davanti l'igumeno o un altro confratello. Questo segno significava chiedere perdono:

In un'altra occasione uno dei suoi diaconi offese il divino Alessandro dinanzi a tutti i chierici, ma fu il patriarca a prosternarsi davanti a lui, dicendo: "Perdonami, fratello mio!"²⁷

Chiedere perdono significava anche chiedere una grazia o un permesso:

Il monaco rientrò in sé stesso e rinsavì. Uscì dalla casa del contadino e se ne andò al suo monastero, dove chiese perdono all'igumeno, pregandolo di non farlo uscire mai più dal monastero. Tre mesi dopo se ne andò dal Signore²⁸.

Giovanni Mosco, utilizza diverse volte l'espressione nel senso di chiedere o una grazia o il perdono davanti a Dio, o anche come un

26 Ioannes Moschus, *Pratum*, 59 (Maisano 2002, p. 101): τὸν καιρὸν τοῦτον δέδωκεν ὁ Θεὸς, εἰς μετάνοιαν, καὶ πάνυ ἔχωμεν αὐτὸν ζητῆσαι (*PG*, 87/3, col. 292).

27 Ioannes Moschus, *Pratum*, 34 (Maisano, 2002, 83): Ἄλλοτε εἷς τῶν διακόνων αὐτοῦ, ἐπὶ πάντων τῶν κληρικῶν ὕβριζεν τὸν θεῖον Ἀλέξανδρον· ὁ δὲ θεῖος Ἀλέξανδρος ἔβαλεν αὐτῷ μετάνοιαν, λέγων· Συγχώρησόν μοι, κύρι ἀδελφέ (*PG* 87/3, col. 2884).

28 Ioannes Moschus, *Pratum*, 39 (Maisano, 2002, 88): Ἐλθὼν οὖν εἰς ἑαυτὸν ὁ μοναχὸς, καὶ ἀνανήψας, ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ τοῦ γεωργοῦ, καὶ ἀπῆλθεν ἐν τῷ μοναστηρίῳ αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἔβαλεν μετάνοιαν τῷ ἡγουμένῳ ἵνα τοῦ λοιποῦ μὴ ἐξέλθῃ ἐκ τοῦ μοναστηρίου. Καὶ ποιήσας τρεῖς μῆνας, πρὸς Κύριον ἐξεδήμησεν (*PG* 87/3, col. 2892).

segno di adorazione:

L'anziano andò alla nave da solo. Si prostrò a Dio per tre volte, per tre volte segnò la nave col segno della croce nel nome del nostro Signore Gesù Cristo²⁹.

Quando si compiva un segno di prostrazione, questo indicava rispettare una persona o considerarla più degna di sé:

Segnò per tre volte la coppa col dito e disse: “Nel nome del Padre, del Figlio e dello Spirito Santo io bevo questo calice”. Bevve davanti a tutti e rimase incolume. Essi videro e si prosternarono davanti a lui³⁰.

La parola *μετάνοια* è usata anche nel senso di fare una penitenza volontaria, quanto compiere o meno qualcosa:

Attraversammo il santo Giordano, poi Pietro mi disse: “Fratello Teodoro, facciamo tutti e due la penitenza di non mangiare fino al Sinai”. “A dire la verità, padre mio”, risposi, “questo non sono in grado di farlo!” La penitenza la fece da solo, e fino al Sinai non prese niente. Quando sul Sinai ebbe ricevuto i santi misteri, allora prese anche del cibo³¹.

Spesso la *metanoia* si faceva con un inchino della testa o in ginocchio:

29 Ioannes Moschus, *Pratum*, 83 (Maisano, 2002, 19): Ἀπῆλθεν οὖν μόνος ὁ γέρων εἰς τὸ πλοῖον· καὶ βάλλει τρεῖς μετανοίας τῷ Θεῷ, καὶ σφραγίζει τὸ πλοῖον τρίτον τῷ σημείῳ τοῦ σταυροῦ ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (*PG*, 87/3, col. 2940).

30 Ioannes Moschus, *Pratum*, 94 (Maisano, 2002, 127): Καὶ σφραγίσας τρίτον τὸ ποτήριον τῷ δακτύλῳ αὐτοῦ, καὶ εἰπὼν, Ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος πίνω τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον, καὶ ἔμπροσθεν πάντων πῶν αὐτὸ ἀβλαβῆς διέμεινεν· καὶ ἰδόντες ἔβαλον αὐτῷ μετάνοιαν (*PG* 87/3, col. 2953).

31 Ioannes Moschus, *Pratum*, 100 (Maisano, 2002, 131): Ὡς οὖν ἐπεράσαμεν τὸν ἅγιον Ἰορδάνην, λέγει μοι ὁ γέρων· Ἀδελφὲ Θεόδωρε, δεῦρο βάλωμεν μετάνοιαν ἵνα ἔως τοῦ Σινᾶ μηδεὶς ἡμῶν φάγη. Λέγω αὐτῷ· Ὅντως, Πάτερ, τοῦτο ἐγὼ οὐ δύναμαι ποιῆσαι. Καὶ ἔβαλεν ὁ γέρων μετάνοιαν, καὶ ἕως τοῦ Σινᾶ οὐ μετέλαβεν τινος. Μεταλαβὼν δὲ εἰς τὸ Σινᾶ τῶν ἁγίων μυστηρίων, τότε καὶ τροφῆς μετέλαβεν (*PG* 87/3, col. 2960).

Si allontanò dalla via, tese verso il cielo la mano destra, che stringeva le monete, poi si inginocchiò al cospetto di Dio, posò a terra le monete e se ne andò³².

Fare una *metanoia* significava anche chiedere a un padre o a un anziano di pregare per qualcuno o qualcosa:

“Mi meraviglio che tu ti sia sobbarcato a tanta fatica, fratello, compiendo un viaggio tanto lungo per venire da me povero peccatore, mentre nella tua laura hai dei padri tanto grandi! Va’ da abba Andrea e supplicalo di pregare per te: lui ti guarirà subito”. Il monaco tornò a Raito e supplicò abba Andrea, come gli aveva detto Simeone: “Abba, prega per me!” “Abba Simeone ha ottenuto la grazia di questa guarigione”, rispose abba Andrea. Poi recitò una preghiera e subito il giovane fu purificato e rese grazie a Dio³³.

Il gesto di *metanoia* significava umiltà dell’uomo che la esercitava, perciò tale pratica era molto diffusa nella vita monastica:

Una volta, mentre mi trovavo al centro della città, vidi il papa Gregorio che stava per passarci accanto. Pensai di andarlo a riverire. Quelli del suo seguito, appena mi videro, cominciarono a dirmi, uno dopo l’altro: “Padre, non ti prosternare!” Io non capivo perché mi dicevano questo: mi parve comunque fuori luogo non rendergli omaggio. Quando il papa

32 Ioannes Moschus, *Pratum*, III (Maisano, 2002, 141): Ὁ δὲ ὡς ἔκαμψεν τὴν ῥύμην, ἐκτείνει τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ τὴν δεξιάν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν, ἔχουσιν καὶ τὰ φολερὰ, ἄνω εἰς τὸ ὕψος, καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο βάλλει μετάνοιαν τῷ Θεῷ, καὶ θεῖς τὰ φολερὰ εἰς τὴν γῆν, ἀπῆλθεν (*PG* 87/3, col. 2976).

33 Ioannes Moschus, *Pratum*, 117 (Maisano, 2002, 145): Θαυμάζω, ἀδελφὲ, πόσον κόπον ὑπέμεινας, καὶ τοσαύτην ὁδὸν ἤνυσας, ἵνα πρὸς με ἔλθῃς, εἰς ἄνθρωπον ἁμαρτωλὸν, τοιοῦτους Πατέρας ἔχων ἐν τῇ λαύρᾳ σου. Ὑπαγε οὖν πρὸς τὸν ἀββᾶν Ἀνδρέαν, καὶ βάλε αὐτῷ μετάνοιαν, ἵνα εὐξῆται ὑπὲρ σοῦ, καὶ εὐθέως θεραπεύει. Ὁ δὲ ἀδελφὸς ἀπελθὼν εἰς Ραῖθου, ἔβαλεν μετάνοιαν τῷ ἀββᾷ Ἀνδρέᾳ, καθὼς εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ ἀββᾶς Συμεώνιος, λέγων· Εὐξαι ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ, ἀββᾶ. Λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ ἀββᾶς Ἀνδρέας· Ἐλαβεν τὴν χάριν τῆς ἰάσεως ὁ ἀββᾶς Συμεώνιος. Καὶ ποιήσαντος αὐτοῦ εὐχὴν, εὐθέως ἐκαθαρίσθη ὁ ἀδελφὸς, καὶ ἠὲ χαρίστησεν τῷ Θεῷ (*PG* 87/3, col. 2982).

mi fu accanto, vide che mi accingevo a prosternarmi e – ve lo giuro davanti a Dio, fratelli! – lui per primo si prostrò fino a terra, e non si rialzò prima di me! Mi salutò con molta umiltà e di sua mano mi diede tre monete d'oro, ordinando che mi si desse un mantello e tutto ciò che mi poteva servire. Io resi gloria a Dio che gli aveva fatto dono di tanta umiltà, carità e amore per tutti gli uomini³⁴.

Un segno di prostrazione spesso è unito alla preghiera, quando l'uomo confessa davanti a Dio la sua umiltà e la grandezza di Dio:

Allora mi prosternai e rivolsi a Dio queste parole: “O nostro Salvatore, Signore Iddio, salva il tuo servo!” Subito i tre saraceni diventarono indemoniaci, snudarono le spade e si uccisero l'uno con l'altro³⁵.

La *metanoia* è gesto di pace nella comunità o tra confratelli:

Sentendo ciò, lasciai la mia cella e andai dal mio confratello, mi inginocchiai per chiedergli perdono e facemmo la pace. Al mio ritorno trovai che il demone aveva distrutto il mio lavoro e la stuoia sulla quale mi ero inginocchiato, invidioso perché avevamo fatto la pace³⁶.

34 Ioannes Moschus, *Pratum*, 151 (Maisano, 2002, 169): Καὶ ἐν μιᾷ, ὡς ἰστάμην εἰς τὸ μέσον τῆς πόλεως, θεωρῶ τὸν πάπαν Γρηγόριον δι' ἐμοῦ μέλλοντα παριέναι. Ἐλογισάμην οὖν βαλεῖν αὐτῷ μετάνοιαν. Ἰδόντες δέ με οἱ τοῦ ὄψικίου αὐτοῦ, ἤρξαντο ὁ καθεὶς αὐτῶν λέγειν μοι Ἀββᾶ, μὴ βάλε μετάνοιαν. Ἐγὼ δὲ ἠγνόουν διατί μοι τοῦτο λέγουσιν. Πλὴν ἄτοπον εἶναι ἐνόμισα μὴ βαλεῖν αὐτῷ μετάνοιαν. Ὡς οὖν πλησίον μου ἐγένετο ὁ πάπας, θεωρήσας ὅτι ὑπῆγον βαλεῖν μετάνοιαν, ὡς ἐπὶ κυρίῳ, ἀδελφοί· πρῶτος ἔβαλεν εἰς τὴν γῆν μετάνοιαν, καὶ οὐ πρότερον ἀνέστη, ἕως οὗ ἐγὼ πρῶτος ἠγέρθην. Καὶ ἀσπασάμενός με μετὰ πολλῆς ταπεινοφροσύνης, παρέσχεν μοι διὰ χειρὸς νομίσματα τρία, κελεύσας δοθῆναι μοι καὶ κουσσούλιν, καὶ τὰς χρείας μου πάσας. Ἐδόξασα οὖν τὸν Θεὸν, τὸν χαρισάμενον αὐτῷ τοιαύτην ταπεινώσιν πρὸς ἅπαντας, καὶ ἐλεημοσύνην, καὶ ἀγάπην (PG 87/3, coll. 3016-3017).

35 Ioannes Moschus, *Pratum*, 155 (Maisano, 2002, 173): Τότε βάλλων ἐγὼ μετάνοιαν τῷ Θεῷ, λέγω· ὦ Σωτὴρ ἡμῶν, Κύριε ὁ Θεός, σῶσον τὸν δοῦλόν σου. Καὶ εὐθέως οἱ τρεῖς Σαρακηνοὶ δαιμονισθέντες, καὶ τὰ ξίφη αὐτῶν ἐγύμνωσαν, καὶ ἀλλήλους κατέκοψαν (PG 87/3, col. 3024).

36 Ioannes Moschus, *Pratum*, 161 (Maisano, 2002, 176): Ὡς οὖν ἤκουσα ταῦτα ἐγὼ, ἐάσας τὸ κελλίον μου, ἀπῆλθον πρὸς τὸν ἀδελφόν, καὶ ἔβαλον αὐτῷ μετάνοιαν, καὶ ἐποιησάμην ἀγάπην, καὶ ὑποστρέψας εὗρον, ὅτι ἔκαυσε τὸν κονωπίωνα, καὶ

Nella vita monastica, spesso una persona non cerca la colpa negli altri, ma giudica se stessa colpevole. Chiedere perdono non significa necessariamente che il richiedente è colpevole, ma testimonia l'umiltà del cuore:

Preso da questi pensieri, mi alzai e andai a chiedere perdono al diacono. Volevo ringraziarlo, perché per mezzo suo avevo capito la mia colpa. Non appena ebbi bussato alla sua porta, egli aprì e per primo si prosternò davanti a me, dicendo: "Perdonami! I demoni si sono presi gioco di me e mi hanno indotto a sospettare di te per quell'azione! In verità, Dio mi ha assicurato che tu non hai fatto nulla!"³⁷.

4. Conclusione

Il pentimento è uno strumento necessario per cambiamenti radicali nella vita: il passaggio dall'autosufficienza dell'individuo, dallo stato del peccato e dell'egoismo alla vita secondo i comandamenti di Dio e l'amore per Dio. Questo non è il frutto dei poteri spirituali dell'uomo, ma è possibile solo attraverso la grazia di Dio. Dall'uomo si aspetta soltanto di fare la *μετάνοια* continua e questo diventa possibile attraverso le pratiche ascetiche, cioè attraverso la "*μετάνοια visibile*". Si tratta soprattutto delle pratiche ascetiche che aiutano a giungere all'integrità dell'uomo. Qui possiamo nominare la preghiera, le lacrime, il digiuno e le pratiche ascetiche che aiutano all'uomo di non perdere quella *humilitas* interna che aiuta all'uomo

τὸ ψιάθιον, ὅπου τὴν μετάνοιαν ἔβαλλον, διὰ τὸ φθονῆσαι αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ ἀγάπῃ» (PG 87/3, col. 3029).

37 Ioannes Moschus, *Pratum*, 219 (Maisano, 2002, 230): Ἄνασταξ οὖν ἐν τοιοῦτοις λογισμοῖς, ἦλθον μετανοῆσαι τῷ διακόνῳ, καὶ εὐχαριστήσαι αὐτῷ, ὅτι δι' αὐτοῦ ἔγνων τὸ σφάλμα μου. Καὶ ὡς ἔκρουσα εἰς τὴν θύραν αὐτοῦ, ἀνοίξας βάλλει μοι μετάνοιαν πρῶτος, λέγων· Συγχώρησόν μοι, ὅτι ἀπὸ δαιμόνων ἐχλευάσθην, ὑπονοήσας περὶ σοῦ εἰς τὸ πρᾶγμα ἐκεῖνο. Ἐν ἀληθείᾳ γὰρ ἐπληροφόρησέν με ὁ Θεός, ὅτι οὐκ ἔχεις πρᾶγμα (PG 87/3, col. 3112).

di riconoscere la sua dipendenza da Dio e riconoscere che solo Egli può donare la *μετάνοια* continua. Nella preghiera la *μετάνοια* diventa gesto dell'inchino davanti a Dio, nella vita quotidiana – davanti ad una persona importante, che nel caso dei monaci è un padre spirituale o anche confratello. E questo gesto visibile rappresenta l'uomo intero perché senza l'umiltà dell'anima non esiste l'umiltà del corpo e dunque non può essere l'unità dell'uomo che è possibile soltanto nel rapporto continuo con Dio. Chi vive la vita nella *μετάνοια*, visibile o invisibile, Dio stesso lo aiuta e guida nella vita quotidiana fino a ritrovare l'integrità umana.

The role of the function of the servant (δοῦλος) as the steward of the ἀπόφασις in the divine Liturgies of Byzantine origin

Evariszt URBÁN

1. Introduction: lifelong God visions; 2. The topicalness of the study; 3. The importance of the manager service (δοῦλος) function; 4. The advocating assignment and impact of the surrounding reality of apophasis; 5. Apophatism in the Liturgy; 6. Conclusions on apophasis existing in the Liturgy

The present lecture does not long for focusing on the historical considerations of the origin of the divine Liturgies (Byz-BAS, CHR, JAS)¹, but on a characteristic approach to the idealism of the sacred ceremonies already in our hands, namely on apophatism, in the correlation of the manager servant (δοῦλος).

An out-of-common and specific reason for this is that several Catholic and neo-Protestant studies seek to marginalize the significance of the function of apophatism today, or at least reduce its purpose both in theology and spirituality, especially in relation to human-scale statements brought into play in positive theology, with availing a particular emphasis on the former as though it regarded the relationship between God and man in a more ponderous disjunctive way.

In addition to this full many a time one-sided theological loquence, I would even like to highlight in this concise liturgical lecture the

1 Byz-BAS: Byzantine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great; CHR: Byzantine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom; JAS: Greek Liturgy of Saint James.

imposing and irresistible unifying power of apophatic vision in the contact of the Creator and the liturgical minister as divine creation, while also going quest of possible answers to whether the divine Liturgy is a merely sublimating image or an ontological reality of the mystical union generated by the two senseful paths of apophatism.

Furthermore, I also attempt to dwell on, in spite of the human endeavour permanently wishes to split them, the ever-present and continual fraction of the visible and invisible, otherwise inseparably unified worlds. Unfortunately, one heaps of times applies this odd process instead of shifting the apophatic experience of total ignorance relived in the divine Liturgy into the place of contemplation, or rather transfiguring the Byzantine-rooted worships into awareness of the presence of the Unknown.

1. Introduction: lifelong God visions

Guilelmus de Tocco (c. 1250-1323), a reliable biographer of Thomas Aquinas, who left a massive philosophical throwback, attentively noted that the otherwise book- and study-rich medieval theologian, after celebrating the Mass in the morning of the feast day of December 6, 1273, dedicated to Saint Nicholas the Archbishop of Mura, showed all of a sudden an unprecedented behavior. When the monk Reginaldus, the most attached fellow companion, asked his friend about the harsh change in behavior and why he did not long for describing and articulating any further scientific theological remarks in favor of the Church since the ceremony, Thomas replied: “[...] I cannot continue, for all that I describe seems like an empty quibbling compared to what I have seen so far, and which has been revealed to me [...]”².

2 David Berger, *Thomas von Aquin begegnen*, Augsburg, 2002 (Hungarian trans.: *Találkozás Aquinói Szent Tamással*, tr. É. Trauttwein, Budapest, 2008, 83).

But Tocco did not really covet to resolve whether or not Thomas had a direct experience of God at Mass because its reality was open-and-shut to him, but rather yearned for asking what might have been so shocking to a man who had invented such an intellectual inheritance that in his brief statement about the vision, he specifically reflected on the knowledge of God and insufficient linguistic transferability as well³.

2. The topicalness of the study

The subject of my survey closely related to the seemingly poignant “epistemological” end of the Thomas event, which took place hundreds of years earlier, for the topic of the title carries unusual current issues in several ways regarding both the possibility of getting to know the self-shown God in the pilgrim, therefore, variable world of the Church, namely in the most sacred Liturgy, and the vital conduct of the service provider (δοῦλος).

I wish to record now that in this essay I do not focus on the possible historical evolution of the Byzantine Liturgy as liturgical historians, by applying chiseled way, investigating the development of the Liturgy, but on the characteristic and unavoidable approach of the ἀπόφασις which tightly connected to the ideology of the already mature Byzantine Liturgy, nowadays seen as *standard*, precisely from the point of view of the service provider’s *habitus* (ἔξις).

As is the case with many treatises, this essay was rested on an uncomplicated outline mulling over an irregular phenomenon, which implied the following series of questions in the author of the study, without setting up any pragmatic order: for example, why can you

3 But Tocco, as an almost contemporary biographer, was in all likelihood aware that the Angelic Doctor had received many wonderful visions throughout his life as a gracious result of the Trinity. Cf. Pius Cavanagh – Charles Anatole Joyau, *The life of St. Thomas Aquinas*, London, 1890, 136-146.

notice in clerical society the growing rejection of negative theology as a method of cognition that is met with above-average skepticism and a kind of denial laden with pessimism? The second question refers to why is it possible for the divine minister to go through secularization and a certain spiritual decline? Furthermore, remaining in this specific group, why are there many who are outright indifferent to the theoretical and practical side of knowing God? Another question can also be asked: why can there be a fact that many people do not even perceive the supportive effect of the Liturgy itself as a definitive way of a dominant and, at the same time, possible path of spiritual life in their conception when they openly let it wither? Moreover, why is the following gospel sentence forgotten: “And eternal life is that they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent”⁴. The succeeding question that arises is why a highly reducing approach emerges towards the Liturgy among those who perform the ceremony, that is, as if it were just the sacramental environment of the Eucharist and nothing more, while the perception of union with God becomes, for example, almost invisible and intangible amidst them? Finally, why can both the prayer and the theologian and cleric come to the conclusion that the divine Liturgy is merely an image of the mystical union with God from a human point of view: in short, why the Liturgy leading to unity is taken only as a rationalizing analogy, that is, only a reasonable ascension to God?⁵

4 Jn 17,3.

5 Miklós Vassányi, in his own study on the liturgy commentary of Maximos the Confessor, concluded that there was no real mystical union with man during the most sacred ceremony, as evidenced by a thorough analysis of a pertinent Maxim place. Despite this firm resolution, it is encouraging for me in the teachings of Gregory of Nyssa and many patristic Fathers on this subject that the “path” is always the goal itself, so that in the divine Liturgy *the fullness* of everything *really takes place*, inasmuch as the sacrificial priest, in the prayer of Ambo, prays precisely in order that God preserve the fullness of His Church, which has already formed during the Liturgy (τὸ πλήρωμα τῆς ἐκκλησίας σου

All these warm and remarkable questions prompted me to examine the potentiality of a mystical union generated by *the two paths of apophysis*, namely, that the Divine Liturgy is really only a sublimating image or ontological reality of union with God on earthly existence.

3. The importance of the manager service (δοῦλος) function

Without being able to give accurate answers to every question asked, I will outline a possible solution that, I feel, can provide some responses to these problematic questions. This path is about the function of the ministers of the ceremonies and their inevitable connection of the true apophysis in the Liturgy.

As we know, apophysis is primarily a denial according to dictionaries, but also a statement and a special counter-response in political terms. This essay, in terms of its subject, obviously seeks not only to grasp the primary meaning, but also, as we shall see, the second, conceived in a religious sense. For the servant, he also totally *expresses* his *habitus* (ἔξις) during the Liturgy, which includes, on the one hand, his prepared spirit, and, on the other hand, the openness of his intellect to his divine reception, and even his bodily manifestations. Professor Renczes, who has been teaching at the *Pontificia Università Gregoriana* for more than a decade, similarly sees the Cappadocian Fathers' teaching on this issue: "In questa accezione, può significare semplicemente 'lo stato del corpo umano' in senso generale (o eventualmente riferito ad un'età specifica che caratterizza una condizione tipica del corpo) oppure, in modo più particolare,

φύλαξον). In my reading, not only is it necessary to protect the Church by God from possible deviating ruptures, but also to defend the mystical unity established during the syntax, as the priest leading the worship front of the Trinity requires additional divine care for the community of believers. Cf. Vassányi Miklós, *Hitvalló Szent Maximos teológiája. Értelmezési kísérlet történeti összefüggésben*, Budapest, 2017, 222-234.

può riferirsi al fenomeno dei legami tra disposizioni dell'anima e del corpo, [...]”⁶.

At the forefront of the survey, it can be said almost as a thesis that the minister must take upon himself *the characteristic behavior of the apophysis* in order to meet God in the Liturgy and to know Him in this experience. Furthermore, not only in his encounter with the Trinity possesses a paramount importance for his own ascension, but he is also able to visualize and communicate, through himself, this experience to the believers entrusted to him⁷. Clearly, if the minister does not sign up for the apophysis mediated by Liturgy, that is, the possibility of participating in the supernatural and unknowable God, he excludes, in a sense, not only himself but also the believers entrusted to him from the loving reality of God's self-communication.

- 6 Saint Basil, who, according to liturgical historians, was the brilliant inventor of the basic structure of Byz-BAS as well as his younger brother Gregory and the bishop of Nazianzos, made important remarks about ἔξις. All of the three often applied this term for the human body as a typical measure of its state, but also, of course, for the structural relationship between the soul and the body, expanding their concept all the way to describe the condition of a particular person. At a higher level rested on Scripture, the Church Fathers of Cappadocia meant primarily spiritual maturity: an advanced state (ἔξις) that can be attained by a virtuous life that already goes beyond bodily perception. The Cappadocians also pointed out that a virtuous life is necessary because the consequence of the fall of Adam is a sort of change in the original condition of man, namely the yoke of evil (ἔξις). In their view, in the difficult struggles of the work of a virtuous life, it is the Holy Spirit, who, taking up dwelling in man, consolidates the relationship between divine activity and the moral state already developed in man. Cf. Philipp Renczes, *Agire di Dio e libertà dell'uomo: ricerche sull'antropologia teologica di san Massimo il Confessore*, Roma, 2014, 227-237.
- 7 One of the central individuals in the sharing of experience between the leader and the community is the allegorical figure of Old Testament Moses, also elaborated by several eminent authors. Cf. Philo, *De vita Mosis, I-II* (introduction, traduction et notes par Roger Arnaldez), Paris, 1967; Grégoire de Nysse, *La vie de Moïse ou traité de la perfection en matière de vertu* (introduction, traduction et notes par Jean Daniélou), Paris, 1955.

In addition, it can also be taken for granted that there are *stout barriers* to step into apophysis from the side of the service provider. Beside the physical circumstances, I would like to refer, firstly, to the lack of the neat spiritual preparation of the minister, secondly to the renunciation of all ascension, rooted in one's own ideal, that is, the ubiquitous presence of reductionist symbolism based strictly on ration, which in reality sees only symbols in the sacred events of the Liturgy⁸. Yet the consecrated cleric who can present the Liturgy has a particularly enormous potential. The Jesuit theologian Jean Daniélou in his pioneer monograph of *Platonisme et théologie mystique; essai sur la doctrine spirituelle de Saint Grégoire de Nysse*, commenting on the idea of the 4th century patristic author he examined, summed up who is really the New Testament servant: the person who can *approach God with an uncovered face and confidence*⁹. Moreover, the

8 By influential physical conditions I mean the war environment, the captivity that results from it, the priest's illness, and even the weather hardship. An eclectic example of human-based conceptualization limited to "symbolize-type" awareness is the identification of the candle with the ever-presiding role of Saint John the Baptist when the light is carried around during the Little Entrance before the Gospel Book which refers to Jesus Christ and His works on earth, while this kind of theory categorically rejects any explanation based on a more mystical reality.

9 It is worth recalling the followings from Father Daniélou's book: "Parmi les biens qui faisaient partie du patrimoine du premier Adam et que la grâce du Christ restitue à l'homme, il faut donner une place spéciale à cette réalité que Grégoire appelle d'un mot difficile à traduire en français, la 'parrhésie', *παρρησία*. On sait que c'est le terme par lequel, dans le grec classique, on désignait la liberté de prendre la parole à l'assemblée du peuple, le franc-parler qui était le privilège du citoyen libre par opposition à l'esclave. Dans la langue chrétienne il marque *l'assurance* qui résulte pour l'homme, dans ses rapports avec Dieu, de sa qualité de fils. Grâce à elle, en effet, *il peut lui parler avec une certaine égalité* – et non comme un esclave s'adresse à son maître". Cf. Jean Daniélou, *Platonisme et théologie mystique; essai sur la doctrine spirituelle de Saint Grégoire de Nysse*, Paris, 1954, 104-105.

repetition of this “slave” word in the Liturgy seeks to lay stress on and, at the same time, keep in mind the person who has received the sanctity of the ecclesiastical order, giving him the strength (δύναμις) to move boldly toward God on the path of apophysis, an example of which is the following prayer:

Ὁ τὰς κοινὰς ταύτας καὶ συμφώνους ἡμῖν χαρισάμενος προσευχάς, ὁ καὶ δυσι καὶ τρισὶ συμφωνοῦσιν ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί σου τὰς αἰτήσεις παρέχειν ἐπαγγειλάμενος, αὐτὸς καὶ νῦν τῶν δούλων σου τὰ αἰτήματα πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον πλήρωσον, χορηγῶν ἡμῖν ἐν τῷ παρόντι αἰῶνι τὴν ἐπίγνωσιν τῆς σῆς ἀληθείας καὶ ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι ζωὴν αἰώνιον χαριζόμενος¹⁰.

On the top of it all, *the series of dialogues with the deacon* explicitly present in the Liturgy also support this authentic servant function (παρρησιαστικός) when called the chief celebrity as a despot, that is, a master in the event, for example, of the blessing of the chalice: “Εὐλόγησον, δέσποτα, τὸ ἅγιον Ποτήριον”¹¹. This encouraging aspect of the deacon is well-promoted by the passage of the famous liturgical commentary of the Patriarch of Constantinople of Germanus (715-730): “And the deacons, who represent angelic powers, surround

10 All the Greek liturgical quotations used in the study were taken from the edition of Η ΘΕΙΑ ΛΕΙΤΟΥΡΓΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΕΝ ΑΓΙΟΣ ΠΑΤΡΟΣ ΗΜΩΝ ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΧΡΥΣΟΣΤΟΥ published in Rome in 1950, while the Hungarian quotations were taken from A GÖRÖG SZERTARTÁSÚ KATHOLIKUS EGYHÁZ SZENT ÉS ISTENI LITURGIÁJA published in Nyíregyháza in 1920. The words, which appear five times in CHR, emerge in the following silent priestly prayers: the prayer of the 3rd antiphon, the prayer of the Trisagion Hymns, the series of prayers called “Let us all say” ectenia in the Hungarian Greek Catholic tradition, the prayer for the Catechumens, and finally the Nemo digmus prayer. In Byz-BAS, the word “slave” occurs with four more forms: during ectenia following the Great Entrance, twice in the Anaphora, and in the Epiclesis. From these data is tangible the invention of the editor of the Liturgy that he feels a need for keeping the minister in a state of apophysis spanning the whole Liturgy.

11 Η ΘΕΙΑ ΛΕΙΤΟΥΡΓΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΕΝ ΑΓΙΟΣ ΠΑΤΡΟΣ ΗΜΩΝ ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΧΡΥΣΟΣΤΟΥ, Rome, 1950, 51.

them, like their wings, with an orarion made of thin linen, helping the souls they are destined to serve”¹². The deacon’s patronizing position in the Liturgy can be traced back to the neoplatonic feature of the Greek world of ideas, which is tautly derived from the theory that the eligible members of higher order serves as mediators for the lower order to pass on the knowledge of becoming gods, while luring the gods out of their aboriginal silence. This can rightly be supplemented by the fact that the theory of the mobilization of divine activity, generally known as theurgy, formulates an intent that the praying service provider should cause God to function in the world. In the ideal notion of Denis Areopagita, the theurgical activities of God are accurately realized in the undertakings of Jesus Christ, which can be applied especially with his mystical revelations in the sacrament of the liturgical Eucharist. What is more, in one of his comments on *De Beatitudinibus*, Gregory of Nyssa reports: “He who is invisible by nature will be visible by his actions, and we see him in some of the things around him”¹³. I believe that it can be stated with certainty that the Holy Liturgy between earthly beings is in any case one of the things around God, since He is undoubtedly present in the visible world despite His transcendence, because God pervades the universe. The Liturgy is, by all means, in contact with God and takes an uninsulated position in its relationship with the Unspeakable. As a result, from the theurgical perspective, beings regain the ability to participate in the forces of God with the help of the divine movement that emerges from Himself in the direction of beings¹⁴.

12 PG 98,393 C: “Οἱ δὲ διάκονοι εἰς τύπον τῶν ἀγγελικῶν Δυνάμεων ταῖς λεπταῖς τῶν λεπτῶν ὠραρίων πτέρυξιν, ὡς λειτουργικὰ πνεύματα εἰς διακονίαν ἀποστελλόμενα προτρέχουσι”.

13 PG 44,1269 A.

14 Jean Meyendorff, *Le Christ dans la théologie byzantine*, Paris, 1969 (Hungarian trans.: *Krisztus az ortodox teológiában*, tr. T. Imrényi, Budapest, 2003, 151-179).

It is noticeable, then, that both the repeated use of the word servant (δοῦλος) and the communicative purpose of the deacon construct the greatest honor from God, from which one can guess who this minister really is and what glory he is meant to reward.

As a conclusion, the hindering realities at the human level can be broken by God's plan for fulfillment and control in the ascending motion of the Liturgy if it is coupled with the will of the minister's open and thus broader world of ideas¹⁵.

4. *The advocating assignment and impact of the surrounding reality of apophasis*

The conceptual "conversion" of the service provider is especially facilitated by the accurate identification and appreciation of the natural value of apophatism¹⁶. However, for the admiration evoked

15 At the same time, it should be noted that in church practice there is still the possibility of a deacon's wide-ranging ministry (such as the role of visiting the patient and caring for the elderly or performing various functions in educational institutions, or, in certain cases, having the position of sacrificial office permitted in specific churches: *CCEO can. 709. 1. §.*) but it already has less of a systemic character than it did centuries ago. (In the Roman Catholic tradition, the administration of the sacramentals to the deacon is also provided by the relevant ecclesiastical legislation.) It can be stated that the social mission of the deacon service based both on the Byzantine model among believers and the Holy Scripture (Cf. Acts 6,1-3) has been reduced, while the deacon's participation in the liturgies has been strengthened and increased, in my view, due to the wider spread of the *theurgical* concept.

16 Pierre Hadot (1922-2010), a contemporary philosophical historian of French descent, whose specialty was Neo-Platonism, discusses apophatism as a process that needs to be treated *only as a method*. Cf. Pierre Hadot, *Exercices spirituels et philosophie antique*, Paris, 2002, 239. However, I can only partially agree with his thoughts expressed in the introduction. First, the word theology means not only "speaking of God" to me, but "experiencing God (also) through a transcended human intellect in the gloom of sober ecstasy". The latter is

by the accurate identification and appreciation of values, one must be conscious of the real types of apophysis present in the Liturgy that effectively endorse and aggrandize the ascension of the minister.

The one better known layer is squarely anchored in the peculiarity of human language, the antonym word pairs: here is the point of a grammatical formation in which we may be capable of articulating *God's attributes* in this shape turning to account of qualificative markers constructed from noun or verbal phases conjoined tightly

another dimension in the encounter between God and man, as if it were merely cognitive insight. In my view, as long as we take *the reality* of mystical union with God out of the concept of theology and preserve the meaning of the idea only in the context of “talk about Him”, it will be impossible to present the significance of apophysis in a balanced way, as it must be preceded by *some* experience. Theology, then, is not only a speech about God, but at least so much a non-speech when we are unable to tell the absolute Transcendence in spite of the experience of the Presence. Second, when Hadot writes concretely that theology, if “negative”, should even deny its object, that is, the concept of divinity (and not the existence of God according to his article!), since it is (just) a perceptible definiteness – thus it cannot be denied because that we would run into a paradox – then, in my opinion, the extraordinary thinker is wrong again. For negative theology never claimed that divinity is its object, since *divinity* as an above-essential essence (ουσία) *was always demonstrated as ungraspable*, whether it was approached and advanced on a real or conceptual level. The theology, despite Hadot's suggestion, always argued that God himself as well as His inseparable concept, that is, divinity, is unknowable. Moreover, the Byzantine tradition does not define God as a subject at the time of the occurrence of the mystical union, according to the teachings of Denis the Areopagita, because He is beyond all: therefore, it cannot be asserted with testimony about Him that he is a subject at the level of human conception. Furthermore, it is with this very study that I would like to proclaim that *apophatism is not only a methodological tool* in the hands of theology, as it is shown by Hadot, but an *existential orientation on the part of man*, one of the most striking mediums of which is the divine Liturgy.

with a privative suffix¹⁷. From a theological and liturgical point of view, we perform this not only to draw attention to God's actual ignorance of His essence according to the decisive belief of the Byzantine theological world of notion, but also to inspire the soul, by employing atypical words to illustrate His impulsivity that uniquely affects human creation, to admire and adore Him¹⁸.

17 Of course, it seems impeccable on the part of the editors of the Liturgy to make a far-reaching commitment to maintaining balance in the Anaphoral prayer, which contains apophatic and cataphatic theological elements, when they sought to address the Creator of the universe, the Father. Cf. Robert Taft, *Byzantine Rite. A Short History*, Minnesota, 1992 (Hungarian trans., tr. F. Jeviczki, *A bizánci liturgia*, Budapest, 2005, 431). It is definitely worth recalling the privileged balance in the prayer as one of the thematic focuses of the Liturgy from the point of view of dogma history: “Ἄξιον καὶ δίκαιον σὲ ὑμεῖν, σὲ εὐλογεῖν, σὲ αἰνεῖν, σοὶ εὐχαριστεῖν, σὲ προσκυνεῖν ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ τῆς δεσποτείας σου. Σὺ γὰρ εἶ Θεὸς ἀνέκφραστος, ἀπερινόητος, ἀόρατος, ἀκατάληπτος, αἰεὶ ὢν ὡσαύτως ὢν· σὺ καὶ ὁ μονογενὴς σου Υἱὸς καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμά σου τὸ Ἅγιον. Σὺ ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος εἰς τὸ εἶναι ἡμᾶς παρήγαγες καὶ παραπεσόντας ἀνέστησας πάλιν καὶ οὐκ ἀπέστης πάντα ποιῶν ἕως ἡμᾶς εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀνήγαγες καὶ τὴν βασιλείαν σου ἐχαρίσω τὴν μέλλουσαν. Ὑπὲρ τούτων ἀπάντων εὐχαριστοῦμέν σοι καὶ τῷ μονογενεῖ σου Υἱῷ καὶ τῷ Πνεύματι σου τῷ Ἁγίῳ· ὑπὲρ πάντων ὧν ἴσμεν καὶ ὧν οὐκ ἴσμεν, τῶν φανερῶν καὶ ἀφανῶν εὐεργεσιῶν, τῶν εἰς ἡμᾶς γεγενημένων. Εὐχαριστοῦμέν σοι καὶ ὑπὲρ τῆς λειτουργίας ταύτης, ἣν ἐκ τῶν χειρῶν ἡμῶν δέξασθαι κατηξίωσας, καίτοι σοι παρεστήκασι χιλιάδες ἀρχαγγέλων καὶ μυριάδες ἀγγέλων, τὰ Χερουβείμ καὶ τὰ Σεραφεῖμ, ἐξαπτέρυγα, πολύμματα, μετάρσια, πτερωτά”. Cf. *Η ΘΕΙΑ ΛΕΙΤΟΥΡΓΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΕΝ ΑΓΙΟΣ ΠΑΤΡΟΣ ΗΜΩΝ ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΧΡΥΣΟΣΤΟΥ*, Rome, 1950, 47-48.

18 At the very start of the enarxial unity of the Liturgy, namely in the silent priestly prayer of the first antiphon, God, addressed with apophatic markers with a privative suffix, delivers to the minister the appeal of His own absolute transcendence. This outstripping transcendence, as an ontological dependence as well as plunging into the world experienced from man's point of view, does not remove δούλος from the Creator, but takes the form of creature admiration evoked by prayer: “Κύριε ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν, οὗ τὸ κράτος ἀνεκφραστον καὶ ἡ δόξα ἀκατάληπτος, οὗ τὸ ἔλεος ἀμέτρητον καὶ ἡ φιλανθρωπία ἀφατος· αὐτός, Δέσποτα, κατὰ τὴν εὐσπλαγχνίαν σου, ἐπίβλεψον ἐφ’ ἡμᾶς καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν ἅγιον οἶκον τοῦτον καὶ ποιήσον μεθ’ ἡμῶν καὶ τῶν συνευχομένων ἡμῖν πλοῦσια τὰ ἐλέη σου καὶ τοὺς

The second mark of apophasis, which is progressively fading in one of the theological horizons of Western culture (Roman Catholicism) and almost perfectly outlandish in the other (Protestantism), is *the existence-like constitutional attitude* that implies that knowing God is just the total unawareness of knowledge and, of course, its appalling effect recognized by human soul¹⁹.

This two-layered approach of apophasis, or its practical reality, pushes the minister into the privileged position of humility during the performance of the Liturgy. Furthermore, the experience of spirituality shows that in parallel with keeping the spirit of repentance on the horizon, the creature humility, in ceremony, will be exalted by the mystical self-communication of the Trinity. Thus, the objective apophasis, present with both layers and consciously incorporated into the Liturgy, implies a number of subjective results in the service provider: this includes the gradual formation of divine figure (θεοείδεια), which comes to be a precondition for contemplation in which God becomes known in a special way²⁰. Moreover, while the

οικτιρμούς σου”. Cf. *Η ΘΕΙΑ ΛΕΙΤΟΥΡΓΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΕΝ ΑΓΙΟΣ ΠΑΤΡΟΣ ΗΜΩΝ ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΧΡΥΣΟΣΤΟΥ*, Rome, 1950, 24-25. Immediately as the initial thrust of the mysterious union with the Trinity, the worshiper can begin to delight and extol his Creator with a joyful heart. Just as in a mathematical function the domain of interpretation defines the elements of a set of values with a clear assignment, so God has specifically defined the imagery type of *man as a creature*. The resulting ontological distance does not separate, but *connects*, given the existential projection of the meaning of apophasis for man. Exploring the world of thought of Gregory of Nyssa, von Balthasar, in his in-depth study of διάστημα through a subchapter, notices just that: by the apophatic medium we move far away from the world rather than from God. Cf. Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Présence et pensée: essai sur la philosophie religieuse de Grégoire de Nysse*, Paris, 1988, 1-10.

19 Vladimir Lossky – Saulius Rumsas, *Essai sur la théologie mystique de l'Église d'Orient*, Paris, 2006, 14-25.

20 It is a vision that no longer shines through the veil of existing things, but the uncovered (ἀπερικάλυπτος) God.

divine obscurity illuminates the governing mind, the human soul in the meantime longs to forget itself. However, in becoming familiar with the presence of the Absolute, in union with the Trinity, factual admiration and valid worship of God is established. As Lossky argues, apophasis becomes a criterion for thinking in accordance with the Truth²¹.

5. *Apophatism in the Liturgy*

The two typical species of apophasis mentioned above, that is, progress through denials and existential attitudes on the part of man, are present in the Liturgy at the same time: thus the head question of my research is how the ordained service provider can progress towards his πλήρωμα blossomed out in the Liturgy²².

It is known that the basis of negative theology is considered by scholars to be the Hellenic way of thinking, be it a diversified cogitative structure rested on the Platonic *oeuvre*, an approach

21 Vladimir Lossky – Saulius Rumsas, *Essai sur la théologie mystique de l'Église d'Orient*, 24.

22 As a matter of course, I am not emphasizing the quantitative aspect of the word *pleroma* at this point, when one would mean the totality of something, but *perfection in the qualitative sense*. The former 4th century bishop of Nyssa descried that God created the whole world (κόσμος), and thus man in it, with hidden abilities (δυνάμει) “in the beginning”, so he believed that the *pleroma* of all creation was immediately took into shape. This *pleroma* will then develop continuously according to a specific order (τάξις). This theory of Gergely's *pleroma* can also be demonstrated in the Holy Liturgy, because just as his worldview sees the world as a cosmos, that is, an order in which a beauty-making direction works (τάξις), so there is an order (τάξις) in the divine ceremony which unfolds in harmony with God the *pleroma* of the minister acting in the order (κόσμος) of the Liturgy. Cf. Lucas Francisco Mateo-Seco – Giulio Maspero, *The Brill dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa*, Leiden, 2010, 626-628. (It is probable that this is why the ceremonies are called *taxis* in the Byzantine tradition).

derived from the orientation of the Aristotelian course, or a non-contingent combination of these. Consequently, this form of thinking, which marks out the nuances of apophatism and their flourishing in the Liturgy, first of all instigated to pick up a quarrel with the philosophical surroundings and, at the same time, loosen the theological environment that had existed until then, entailing a weird transformation in them²³.

It is plain that the multifold milieu, later labelled as the Byzantine world order, and the Christians in its territory certainly did not initially incorporate this new set of concepts into liturgical gatherings (in the 2nd and 3rd centuries) with the aim of reckoning them as definitive and indissoluble elements in the construction of the liturgy in the broadest sense, but, in contrast, they relied much more on the cultured reality of the apostolic-biblical tradition in their region, while in the fourth century, following the *suggestive theological activity* of the Cappadocian Fathers, there was a turning point in this field.

This far-reaching modification meant that learning about God was not an end in itself, as in philosophy, but exponentially *a means* of learning and practicing of the Christian life: as to the subject of my survey, therefore, the primary purpose of the whole Divine Liturgy is to form and perfect the Christian man. This, however, promptly required the Liturgy to be progressively critical of the traditional way of thinking, for the Liturgy yearned for breaking it from ordinary, empirical knowledge as well as from the formal sense of Greek philosophy in order to bestow a newfangled approach through the more and more advancing apophasis. Apophasis, which takes a proactive disposition and progresses through denials, gradually led to a kind of demand for the stripping of human mind after the Christians became aware of the key physical and spiritual role of

23 Vanyó László – Tóth Judit, *Nüsszai Szent Gergely teológiai antropológiája*, Budapest, 2010, 66-76.

purification in their relationship with God (καθάρσις). This unique operation, in turn, involved not only a meaningful turn-away from the otherwise beloved created reality, but from a recognition that was always built on perception. In the formation of the stripping of the cognitively operated mind, a view of the major theorists of Christians changed, namely they did not covet God in an excessively material and objective state in the process of cognition and, at the same time, they began to abandon the importance of intellectual activity built on the human reason, so that instead of perceiving their own subjectivity, they would be led to cognition by a mystical revelation from God, increasingly seen as authentic.

The discovery of the joy of non-knowledge (ἀγνωσία) became a prerequisite for entering the mystical gloom, as they experienced that knowing the supersensible things radiates the human intellect. These observations with non-positive formulations had a repercussion on the innovative narrative of actual theological experience. For this reason, the personal encounter with the revelation of God intimately highlighted the essential assisting duty of divine grace in human apophatic learning.

In order for the now newly dreamed-up function to be fulfilled by the Holy Liturgy, many of the ideas that crystallized from these experiential processes also had to be planted in its core material.

One of these is the reasonable acceptance that the limit of human empirical knowledge is the space-time constraint, as a result of which the scope of knowledge can necessarily extend only to created things, but not to divine action, so bridging units, capable of positioning by the supporting apophysis, had to be implanted in the Liturgy to keep the service provider's attention vivid. Uncreated *divine activity* was therefore emphatically *accentuated* in the structure of the Liturgy, which is echoed in the Trisagion Hymn, at the beginning of the Holy Anaphora, and in the prayer of the Bowing of Heads before the glorious Body and Blood of Christ: “[...] who *brought* all things *from non-being* into being; [...] You brought us from non-being, and when

we fell you raised us up again, [...] who in your infinite power *created all things* from non-being into being”²⁴.

Both the producer of the core material of the Liturgy and their supplements rested on the standpoints of developed dogmatic features also perceived over the centuries that human cognition, in itself, distorts visible and supernatural realities, for it is a finite process of the acquisition of knowledge about man. This unavoidable deformation of finitude also applies to self-mapping. Thus, it is by the Liturgy which is capable of genuinely demolishing this kind of encircling barrier by transmitting, fixed as a starting point, an unmistakable knowledge of man himself, namely that he is a creature of God: “[...] who created humanity in your image and likeness and adored them with your every gift [...]”²⁵.

Furthermore, the divine message of being created, on the whole, also establishes a kind of tension in man’s mind and soul, for he too indefatigably craves after being like God, while he incessantly must live the opposite, that is, he cannot be God himself in any sense. The subsequent idea consciously inoculated in the Liturgy not only alleviates the experience of this very crestfallen hunger, but also conveys man straight out of himself in order to swing towards the Cause that exists on the contrasted side of creation. Twelve times in the CHR, the celebrant remembers the uplifting and indescribably joyful *attraction of the mystery of the altar*, that the attitude founded on the existential disposition from apophasis should be not only the chances of the six-winged seraphim but also the chances of man living in the tension of finality, prestigious examples of which are the following parts of prayer: “We give thanks to you, Lord God of Powers, *for making us worthy to stand now at your holy altar* [...]”; and grant that

²⁴ *The Divine Liturgy*, Sydney, 2005, 21.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

*we may stand at your holy altar without guilt or condemnation*²⁶. It is also exceedingly perceptible that the contact of this special scarcity advances man in everyday life, and in the divine Liturgy, too. Until he transcends the boundaries of present metaphysical deprivation and existential destitution, he *seeks to appeal true values* through the ritual and its promoting support, just as the minister has the believers prayed, “Τὰ καλὰ καὶ συμφέροντα ταῖς ψυχαῖς ἡμῶν καὶ εἰρήνην τῷ κόσμῳ παρὰ τοῦ Κυρίου αἰτησώμεθα”²⁷.

The good and useful things for the human soul also conveyed to the minister and the faithful by the apophysis working in the Liturgy is the redemptive *selflessness* experienced through divine activity, which can also crack the firm layers of human thought that encourage his ownership and non-release manner of all earthly creations: “[...] and when we fall *you* raised us up again, and *left nothing undone until you brought us up to heaven* and bestowed on us your kingdom to come”²⁸. Thus, this renunciation of God, stored in an unharmed pose, can initiate in man the imitation of the Trinitarian emptiness to more and more correspond to the reality of correct self-denial based on the idea of penetrating apophysis.

Overall, through the acknowledgment and acceptance of this non-knowledge, man is able *to give thanks* for invisible divine help through liturgical prayer. Moreover, by solely taking an animated part in renouncing human cognition in the scientific sense, one makes a momentous decision in the process of growth before God, which is well-illustrated by the phrase of the silent priestly prayer found in the inclination of head²⁹: “[...] Look from heaven, Master, upon those who have bowed their heads to you; for they have not bowed to flesh

26 *Ibid.* 43.

27 *Η ΘΕΙΑ ΛΕΙΤΟΥΡΓΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΕΝ ΑΓΙΟΣ ΠΑΤΡΟΣ ΗΜΩΝ ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΧΡΥΣΟΣΤΟΥ*, Rome, 1950, 56.

28 *The Divine Liturgy*, Sydney, 2005, 71.

29 Vanyó – Tóth, *Nüsszai Szent Gergely teológiai antropológiája*, 66-76.

and blood, but to you awesome God”³⁰. The consequence of this is that, on the one hand, he will see God in proportion to the power received, and, on the other hand, this man will have the right insight precisely communicated by divine *koinonia*: “The Body and Blood of Christ is given to (name), for the forgiveness of sins and eternal life”³¹.

The human insight restored in the Liturgy, which withdraw from all creation in its renunciation of everything, lands at a *state of heart function* (ἐνέργεια της καρδιάς), which is already free from all external influences, imbued with heavenly happiness: “Christ our God [...] *fill our hearts with joy and gladness*, always, now, and always, forever and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen”³².

6. Conclusions on apophasis existing in the Liturgy

My essay was primarily put down, despite the approaches that left ἀπόφασις behind, to explore the function of this entity actually present in the divine Liturgy in a two-layered way from the point of view of the consecrated Christian service provider (δοῦλος) entrusted with the leadership of believers gathering for synaxis.

Rather than contrasting opinions, which in many cases disagree with the Byzantine view, I argue in my research that the significant liturgical aspect of apophasis carries a unifying force for the minister that does not ultimately isolate him from the Transcendent, but connects with Him.

In my opinion, we must not sharply separate the coexistence of the visible and invisible world in the shadow of the danger of not being able to speak of the Liturgy in a balanced way. Hereat I see that the Liturgy is not simply a rationalizing image of the encounter with God

30 *The Divine Liturgy*, Sydney, 2005, 89.

31 *The Divine Liturgy*, Sydney, 2005, 101.

32 *Ibid.* 109.

on the ground of apophasis, but the ontological reality of the mystical union for man living in the obvious polar entity of body and soul. The Liturgy, which transmits an apophatic experience, is a place of delighted contemplation of the exact presence of the Holy Trinity, which does not lead to a conceptual end of faith according to the human imagination, but to its content-filled reality in the fullness of faith according to the Holy Spirit (“Ζέσις πίστεως, πλήρης Πνεύματος Αγίου”³³).

33 *Η ΘΕΙΑ ΛΕΙΤΟΥΡΓΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΕΝ ΑΓΙΩΣ ΠΑΤΡΟΣ ΗΜΩΝ ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΧΡΥΣΟΣΤΟΥ*, Rome, 1950, 60.