R O M A N I A N
Thraco-Dacian and Byzantine Romanity of Eastern Europe and Asia Minor
M E D I E V A L I A

Vol. V, 2005
Vol. VI, 2006

Papers presented at the
40th and 41st International Congresses
on Medieval Studies
Western Michigan University,
Kalamazoo, Michigan
5-8 May 2005; 4-7 May 2006

The Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality
New York, 2006

The papers presented at the International Congress on Medieval Studies and published here do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality, New York.

Donations toward the cost of printing and mailing are welcome and tax-deductible, payable by check or money order to *Romanian Medievalia*. Send to Editor-in-Chief, George Alexe, 19965 Riopelle Street, Detroit, Michigan 48203-1249.

Correspondence concerning *Romanian Medievalia* should be directed to the Editor-in-Chief: George Alexe, 19965 Riopelle Street, Detroit, Michigan 48203-1249, E-mail: galexe25@yahoo.com or to the President of the Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality, Rev. Prof. Dr. Theodor Damian, 30-18 50th Street, Woodside, New York 11377, E-mail: DamianTh@aol.com

Editorial partners:
Ars Academica Press
FJCRP/Spiru Haret University

ISSN: 1539-5820
ISBN: 1-888-067-31-4; 978-888-067-31-6

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Volume V
40th International Congress on
Medieval Studies
5-8 May 2005

Volume VI
41st International Congress on
Medieval Studies
4-7 May 2006

Participiants

NICOLAE CONDREA

Dr. Nicolae Condrea is Archbishop of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese of the Americas (Chicago)

NICHOLAS GROVES

Dr. Nicholas Groves is professor at St. Sava Orthodox Theological Seminary (Chicago)

THEODOR DAMIAN

Dr. Theodor Damian is associate professor of Philosophy and Ethics at Metropolitan College of New Yokr and President of The Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality (New York)

DANIELA ŞOVEA FALCO

Daniela Sovea Falco, MA, is studying in the graduate program at The University of Connecticut

VICKI ALBU

Vicky Albu is studying in the graduate program at The University of Minnesota

EVA MIRON

Dr. Eva Miron is affiliated with The Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality

DANIEL TH. DAMIAN

Daniel Th. Damian is adjunct professor of Psychology at Metropolitan College of New York

40th International Congress on Medieval Studies 5-8 May 2005

The Sin of Acedia in the Ascetic Theology of Evagrius Ponticus

NICOLAE CONDREA

I would like to introduce a few ideas about *acedia*, one of the eight passions or thoughts that Evagrius Ponticus, the Greek monk who lived during the 4th century in the Egyptian desert, considered as a *complex* thought, the point of junction of all the thoughts. This is not an exhaustive study, but rather an introduction to the meanings of this passion in Evagrius' works.

Definition

The notion of *acedia*, as it was developed during the first Christian centuries, seems to have roots in different environments: Jewish or Christian ascetic movements, Gnosticism, Greek psychology, notably the moral stoic doctrines, epicurean and New Platonism, and even in the Babylonian and Eastern myths. The very term of *acedia* has a long history in the Greek literature from an attributed work to Hippocrates and continuing with the Greek writers, without knowing a frequent usage.

Lack of interest, its literal translation, can have a positive or negative direction: carelessness or liberty with respect to concerns, the two meanings being testified to. A second direction would be "tiredness, boredom, apathy" that is not without recalling the moral efforts proclaimed by Stoic philosophy. One of the more important appearances of the term is in the Septuagint. There it appears nine times and designates reduction, sorrow; the verb *akidian* means fainting heart, victim to sadness and despair; this is therefore despondency. Only in several passages from Origen, does the term receive a meaning that is closer to the one used by Evagrius. In the monastic literature previous to Evagrius, one finds the term *Acedia* as early as the first Anthony's sentence in the *Apophtegmata Patrum*: "When the holy abbot Anthony lived in the desert he was beset by

acedia and attacked by many sinful thoughts. He said to God: Lord, I want to be saved, but these thoughts do not leave me alone; what shall I do in my affliction? How can I be saved?"

Evagrius could therefore draw from the previous Christian literature about this temptation of *acedia*. Apparently, the monks from the desert of Nitria and Sketis have discovered this term: we saw Anthony using it, and also Macarius and Nilus, but because of the doubts regarding their works, it is difficult to say how much they influenced Evagrius. Evagrius marks the passage where the temptation of boredom, laziness, lack of interest, that knew a long history, becomes a technical term of the Christian Asceticism, after a semantic gradual change. What is important for the origins of this term and for its description by Evagrius is the fact that it is the fruit of the ascetic experience of these Egyptian monks, experience brought to light, in a detailed and systematic manner by our writer.

Let me try to give a definition of *acedia*, such as it is presented by our monk. "*Acedia* is a relaxation of the soul and a relation of soul which is not in accord with nature and does not resist temptations nobly".[1] And in the following chapter: "the person afflicted by *acedia*... has dissipated the exertions of his soul."[2] Evagrius finds very suggestive pictures to illustrate this relaxation that arises to the dead point of the day, between 10 am and 2 pm, the moment when heat becomes unbearable to such a point that the forces of the soul and body are weakened: "The demon of *acedia*, also called 'noonday demon', is the most oppressive of all the demons. He attacks the monk about the fourth hour and besieges his soul until the eighth hour. First of all, he makes it appear that the sun moves slowly or not at all, and that the day seems to be fifty hours long. Then he compels the monk to look constantly towards the windows, to jump out of the cell, to watch the sun to see how far it is from the ninth hour, to look this way and that lest one of the brothers..."[3] One can identify several signs of this temptation: first, deep boredom that makes the monk to ask himself questions on the traverses; than, contrary to the inactivity state suggested by boredom, there is an agitation without no goal (to jump out of the cell...).

The description of this passion in Evagrius' works seems different from the others. The reason is its special nature: if all the passions express a disturbance of either the irascible or the

[1] Eight thoughts 6, 1.
[2] Eight thoughts 6, 16.
[3] Prakticos 12.

concupiscible, *acedia* is "a simultaneous, long-term movement of the irascible and concupiscible, the first one being furious of what is at his disposal, the last one, on the other hand, languishing after what is not."[4] A passage of the work *Reflections* adds other elements to this description: "Among thoughts, some come to us as animals, others as human beings. Those that come as animals are all those that derive from the concupiscible and irascible; those that appear as human beings are all those that derive from sadness, vainglory and pride; those that derive form *acedia* are mixed, coming to us both as animals and as human beings."[5]

A third text sheds more light on the composite character of the passion of *acedia*: "...all day long they give rise to wars: it is by *thoughts* that the demons make us the war, by putting in movement sometimes desires, sometimes anger accesses, and other times *anger and desire at the same time*, from which is born what we can call the *complex thought*. This one does not arrive nevertheless in the time of *acedia*, while the others approach by intervals, succeed themselves mutually. To the thought of *acedia*, on the other hand, does not succeed in that day no other thought, first because it lasts, and then because it contains almost all the thoughts."[6] The latter text presents us three principal characters of this composed passion called *acedia*:

- the disturbance of the irascible and concupiscible at the same time;
- the length of this passion;
- a calm state, after the passion, shown by the absence of other thoughts.

Causes

The causes of this passion of the soul are situated at different levels. First of all, there are the concerns related to the anachoresis as lifestyle, especially the concern of physical health that, according to our monk, hides very often a temptation of *acedia*. Then, there are some doubts related to the monastic vocation. To these doubts, we can add as cause for *acedia*, the effort that is linked to the spiritual life, but the effort that surpasses the just measure or

[4] In Ps 118, 28.
[5] Reflections 40.
[6] In Ps 139.

the one having a bad motivation. In order to attain the goal of the ascetic life, the pure prayer, the monk must keep the just measure in his efforts; he must find his own ascetic "rhythm". Evagrius warns against performances to which one can be subject by oath, or other exaggerations against the monastic spirit. He warns against a destructive maximalism that pushes the monk to strive to imitate the athletes of the monasticism, as John the Baptist or St. Anthony. But Evagrius warns also against the minimalism that would be translated by negligence in the accomplishment of the duties of monastic life, and in first place the service.

Another cause for *acedia* is located at the level of the mechanism of thoughts that succeed one another, sign of disturbances that succeed one another. Since *acedia* is a 'complex' thought, it is a continuation of the thoughts of anger (sign of disturbance of the irascible) and fornication (sign of disturbance of the concupiscible): "do not give yourself to the thought of anger, fighting in your intellect with the person who hurt you, or to the thought of fornication by continually imagining the pleasure. The first brings darkness to the soul; the second invites it to experience the fires of passion: both leave your mind defiled. And when you entertain such images during the time of prayer and do not offer your prayer to God purely, you immediately fall prey to the demon of acedia, which leaps upon dispositions especially such as these and rips the soul apart as a dog would kill a fawn."[7]

Manifestations

According to the definition, the principal characteristic of this passion seems to be a certain internal instability, source of multiple manifestations: "The spirit of *acedia* drives the monk out of his cell, but the monk who possesses perseverance will always cultivate stillness. A person afflicted with *acedia* proposes visiting the sick, but is fulfilling his own purpose. A light breeze bends a feeble plant; a fantasy about a trip away drags off the person overcome with *acedia*. The force of the wind does not shake a well rooted tree; *acedia* does not bend the soul that is firmly established."[8]

We can see several concrete manifestations: the temptation to leave his cell; the temptation to visit the sick brothers under the

[7] Prakticos 23.

[8] Eight Thoughts 6, 5-9.

motivation of satisfying a divine order; boredom produced by his work; slanders against the brothers.

If a certain minimalism can cause negligence in the exercise of prayer, the passion of *acedia* got an increased attention from Evagrius because of disruption that it brings at the time of prayer: "whenever the spirit of *acedia* should fall upon you, it suggests to the soul that psalmody is burdensome, and it sets laziness as an antagonist against the soul, so that with unmatchable speed it gives the flesh over to the memory as though apparently wearied for some reason."[9] According to Evagrius, *acedia* would be an obstacle not only during the ascetic path of the monk, but a possible disturbance also for the one who attained the holy light during the pure prayer: "to the intellect which does not understand that the thoughts of *acedia*, when they last, perturb his state and obscure, at the time of prayer, the holy light."[10] The impassibility state revealed by prayer is not perfect; the thoughts of *acedia* unveil this instability and indicate that there is still a long way to the perfect impassibility.

The temptation is more and more subtle to the point of receiving as a principal characteristic the fact of hiding itself to the eyes of the one who suffers; according to Abba Poimen, it will be enough to unveil it in order to overcome it. This is precisely the difficulty: the one who suffers does no longer perceive it.

If after so many temptations the monk did not leave his cell, it follows a general despondency state. The monk dominated by this passion enters, little by little, in a tumultuous of manifestations more and more severe: the internal instability manifested either by boredom and loathing, or by an activism without goal, is followed by the temptation to leave the cell, slanders, the dark vision of an isolated life which does not delay lapsing into a deep nervous depression.

Surprising evolution of a passion different from the others that often leads to the last gesture of desperation: suicide. Evagrius explicitly rejects this pseudo-solution. The request to leave his body can be justified only in the case of those that traversed the whole ascetic trip and can devote themselves to the contemplation without the relief of their body. The one who is still under the mastery of the passions and asks to leave his body resembles the patient who asks the carpenter to break his bed.

---

[9] Eulogios 9.

[10] Antirr. VI, 16.

Remedies

After the description of so many manifestations of *acedia*, from more benign to the most serious ones, one can ask if there are remedies against such a subtle disease. This is the moment to recall Evagrius' optimism and of all the Fathers of the primary Church about the real possibilities to overcome the evil. Even if the passion of *acedia* represents, in a certain manner, the junction point of all the passions, the remedies are not lacking.

Like all other passion, *acedia* reveals a disturbance of the passionate part of the soul, therefore a first series of remedies are those that heal the irascible and the concupiscible. "In the intellectual part, the knowledge and the ignorance are united, the concupiscible part is susceptible of chasteness and luxury, and love and hate have accustomed to arrive to the irascible."[11] It results that "the science heals the intellectual part, love the irascible one, and chasteness the concupiscible."[12] The passions of the soul are more tenacious; they follow the man until the death. The irascible needs stronger remedies; for this reason S. Paul says charity is great. Knowledge, charity, gentleness more precisely in Evagrius' works, and abstinence, these are the remedies of the passion of *acedia*; indeed, these are the concepts that concern the whole spiritual life, such as our author understands it.

With regards to specific remedies, Evagrius introduces some. A*cedia* was defined as a relaxation of the soul proved by instability and tendency to flee. The monk must not give in to this sort of temptations, but must show himself perseverant. If *acedia* is a sort of fearfulness, the remedy consists of opposing to this functioning against nature of the irascible. Perseverance means retrenchment of *acedia*. The first remedy against this temptation to flee, as manifestation of *acedia*, is to hold fast, of all the forces, during the fight.

Not leaving his cell constituted a basic action for the monk. It was the point of departure for the whole spiritual fight that constituted the very goal of his presence in the desert. Evagrius transmits on this point a tradition well known among the Fathers of the desert: the monk must not give in to the instinctive impulse to take the escape. As remedy for *acedia*, the junction point of all the passions, the endurance in the cell is more important than all other ascetic

[11] KG I, 84.
[12] KG III, 35.

exercises. Perseverance in the cell would be the sign of a good comprehension of the meanings of these tests, especially with regards to *acedia*.

Against the continual agitation of the monk disturbed by *acedia*, Evagrius proposes consistency. Evagrius resumes here a well known rule among the Fathers of the desert, the one that aims to set up itself as a measure for the work, as for all things. For, as we have seen, *acedia* is also a temptation of excessiveness, either by negligence, or by exaggeration.

The guard of the cell, as a rule for behavior, was accompanied, in the works of the Fathers of the desert, by prayer and manual work. If boredom and disgust intervene during the service, Evagrius urges us to take up again and get ahead of the tricks of the demons. One finds at Evagrius a whole issue of the thoughts that cut one another: it would be enough to direct our attention at the moment of the service, to oppose therefore, in this manner a directed thought to the non directed thoughts that Evagrius attributes to the action of the demons.

Evagrius proposes also more powerful remedies when *acedia* is well installed; the first one would be the tears. The tears constitute a fitting method for us to take hold again of ourselves in the more difficult moments of the temptations. Of course, they must be accompanied by prayer and express thus our need of salvation.

We should consider some other elements of the teaching of Evagrius Ponticus in order to have a more complete vision of his understanding of the passion of *acedia*. But that is beyond the scope of this small presentation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. *On the Eight Thoughts,* in Evagrius of Pontus, *The Greek Ascetic Corpus,* Translation, Introduction and Commentary by Robert E. Sinkewicz, Oxford University Press, 2003, pp. 66-90.

2. *The Monk: A Treatise on the Practical Life,* in Evagrius of Pontus, *The Greek Ascetic Corpus,* pp. 91-114.

3. *Reflections,* in Evagrius of Pontus, *The Greek Ascetic Corpus,* pp. 210-216.

4. *Kephalaia gnostica*, ed. Antoine Guillaumont, *Les six centuries des "Kephalaia Gnostica" d'Evagre le Pontique,* Paris, 1958.

5. *Antirrhetikos*, ed. W. Frankenberg, Evagrius Ponticus (Abhandlungen der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaflen zu

Göttingen, Philol.-hist. Klasse, Neue Folge, Bd XIII, 2), Berlin,1912, pp. 472-545.

6. “To Eulogios. On the Confession of Thoughts and Counsel in their Regard,” in Evagrius of Pontus, *The Greek Ascetic Corpus,* pp. 12-59.

7. Bunge G., *Akèdia. La doctrine spirituelle d'Evagre le Pontique sur l'acédie*, Bellefontaine 52, 1983.

Waiting at the Cross and the Tomb: The Sorrows of the Theotokos in Orthodox Liturgy and Culture

NICHOLAS GROVES

Introduction

The essay that follows is an attempt to answer a question that has concerned me for some time. The question is: why does Orthodox theology and practice not emphasize the physical suffering of Jesus Christ in his crucifixion and death? Certainly his death and resurrection, his involvement in the raw details of history, are central to an Orthodox understanding of salvation. But as Orthodox we do not, and have not, dwelt on the horrific details of this death. Why not? Ours is not the refrain of the hymn of the Victorian composer John Stainer in his Crucixion: "Cross of Jesus, cross of sorrow, Where the blood of Christ was shed."[1] I found myself especially pondering this question in light of the enormous popularity of Mel Gibson's film, The Passion of the Christ (2004). My own reactions to this film were horror and revulsion. I do not find Gibson's Christ a figure I can relate to. At the risk of sounding almost blasphemous, I would even say I am repelled by such a Christ. Why and how was Gibson's vision and version so different? There have been some Orthodox who have found this film moving and helpful in their own lives.

While I would not want to judge anyone's own spiritual involvement with a film, I, for one, find such a portrayal of Christ dramatically at odds with my understanding of centuries of Orthodox theology and culture. So I needed to ask why and how I found this vision of the Passion so disturbing. My search led me into the liturgy and its history, always one of the most important sources for Orthodox teaching, particularly the liturgical texts for Holy Week. It also led me to the Theotokos, to a sorrowful mother weeping, and even arguing, with her Son. As with all Christian journeys, journeys into Incarnation and history, it led me to Jerusalem, to the cross and the tomb. A hesychast saint remarked centuries ago that the person

who understands the mysteries of the cross and the tomb, comprehends something of the meaning of salvation (if I can paraphrase St. Gregory of Sinai). It is here that our journey of scholarship and of discovery begins and ends. One circle of meaning leads into another: liturgy, death and resurrection, the Theotokos as witness of death and resurrection.

1. Liturgy as Drama

From at least the fourth century, when the emperor Constantine created a major pilgrimage center around the sites of Christ's passion and resurrection in Jerusalem, there has been a deliberate mimetic, if not theatrical, liturgy enacted at these sites. Scholars of early Christian liturgy have recognized since the discovery of the text of the pilgrim Egeria of Galicia that the roots of the celebration of the Paschal Mystery, both East and West, are stretched out firmly in this soil.[2] It is entirely possible that the earliest Christians celebrated these events, and that the passion records in the Gospels were shaped by these celebrations.[3] Central to this celebration has been a deliberate reliving, a representation *(anamnesis)* of life, death, and resurrection. Egeria tells us of the deep emotional involvement of the people: On arriving in Gethsemani a suitable prayer is first said, followed by a hymn, and then the passage from the Gospel describing the arrest of the Lord is read. During the reading of this passage there is such moaning and groaning with weeping from all the people that their moaning can be heard practically as far as the city. And from that hour everyone goes back on foot to the city singing hymns, and they arrive at the gate at the hour when men can begin to recognize one another. From there, throughout the center of the city, all without exception are already at hand, the old and the young, the rich and the poor, everyone (Gingras, ed., chapt. 36, p. 109).

The bishop, probably Cyril of Jerusalem, author of a set of Catecheses, needs to encourage his people to get some rest for the strenuous events that are to come, when they have arrived at the place of the cross: Afterwards, the bishop addresses the people, comforting them, Since they have labored the whole night and since they are to Labor again on this day, admonishing them not to grow weary, But to have hope in God who will bestow great graces on them For their efforts (Gingras, 36, p. 110). At the reading of the Passion accounts: At each reading and at every prayer, it is

astonishing how much Emotion and groaning there is from all the people. There is no One, young or old, who does not sob more than can be imagined for The whole three hours, because the Lord suffered all this for us. (Gingris, 37, p. 112) During the veneration of the cross: All the people pass through one by one; all of them bow down, Touching the cross and the inscription, first with their foreheads, Then with their eyes; and after kissing the cross, they move on. (Ibid., p. 111) Clearly we are involved here with an event of total participation, a liturgy which could hold the attention and the emotions of many, for many hours.[4] According to Egeria's account, as well as from other sources of approximately the same time, the Vigil ended with the announcing of the Resurrection at the Anastasis, or place where Christ appeared as risen. This practice was later to develop into a special rite of the Lucernarium, or the bringing of the light of the Risen Christ from the tomb.[5] Throughout her narrative, Egeria emphasizes the great involvement of the people, and their final exhaustion at the end of the commemoraton: On this day (Holy or Good Friday) no one raises his voice to say The vigil will be continued at the Anastasis, because it is known That the people are tired. However, it is the custom that the vigil Be held there. The greater part of the people keep watch, some From evening on, others from midnight, each one doing what he can. On Pascha: After the vigil service has been celebrated in the major church, Everyone comes to the Anastasis singing hymns. There, once Again, the text of the Gospel of the Resurrection is read, a Prayer is said, and once again the bishop offers the sacrifice. However, for the sake of the people, everything is done rapidly, Lest they be delayed too long (Egeria - chs 37 and 38- Gingris, pp.113-14).

What is of particular significance for us in Egeria's account, as well as in other descriptions of liturgical practices in Jerusalem in the fourth and fifth centuries, is the highly developed and dramatic character of this worship, and the intense participation of the people. Secular forms of drama would have a hard time competing with such liturgy in Late Antiquity. However much such theologians and preachers as St. John Chrysostom could condemn popular entertainment as such, Christian worship itself, with its varied festivals and processions often proved to be drama par excellence. Chrysostom's sermons are filled with statements about his audience's reactions to his preaching. They were by no means restrained. In many ways star preachers and orators in Late Antiquity were star actors, and were affected by the moods of a crowd.[6] The

entire liturgical environment, not just the celebration of the Paschal Mystery, was deliberate Christian drama. It only only needed certain historical conditions to develop into actual theatre as we know it.[7]

Liturgy was already drama with all of its characteristics in the ceremonies Egeria witnessed in Jerusalem. That is to say, there were characters, dialogue, an audience, a plot (the events of Christ's life), a script, and even a chorus at times to comment on the action. Thus liturgical poetry as it later developed in the sixth century in the East, especially that of Romanos the Melodist, if not earlier works by Ephrem, is often highly dramatic, whether or not particular pieces (such as the "Lament of the Theotokos") were ever actually performed. In the dramatic act of worship the participants, both celebrants and congregation, are invited into mimesis, a deliberate imitation of people and events. ("Do this to make me present." as Christ proclaims at the Last Supper.) Such mimesis or imitation calls for the transformation of those who take part through an act of living memory. In the technical terms of theological discourse, anamnesis and mimesis bring about the inner transformation within us, an act of theosis. Through liturgy and the drama of liturgy we regain our original condition of being sons and daughters, beloved children of God. Liturgy, literally the "people's work," is thus a reality sharing much with the production and veneration of icons, which also were developing in the Church at this same historical period. Both require that those who participate in acts of worship or veneration be transformed into the persons God had created them to be. The words, music, and texts of liturgy were to be ways of transformation just as much as were painted and mosaic icons. St. John of Damascus' and St. Nicephoras' logic of image could thus apply equally to the most basic acts of Christian worship.[8]

What we remember or "make present" *(anamnesis)* in our worship is what we believe, and what we celebrate. This act of transformation involves us in a community, a congregation concentrated in worship and mimesis. Christian worship is not to be a merely individual and devotional matter. In this particular case, in the liturgies of Holy Week we are to appropriate the Paschal Mystery into ourselves as we make it present here and now, and "pass over" from death to life in reliving Christ's victory. Our worship is even an act of exegesis, a reading and a descent into the depths of Scripture. This is the peculiar genius of Christian liturgy. We are "baptized" into Christ's life, death and resurrection (See Cor. 15: 12 ff.).

2. The Paschal Mystery as Drama

Let us now look briefly at the dramatic qualities of the Paschal Mystery as they appear in the Byzantine liturgy, the events of Holy Week that lead to the Resurrection. My purpose here is to outline what are the dramatic elements, or shape, the agon, of the events that are relived in this central kairos of death and resurrection in Orthodox liturgical texts.[9] What, we can ask, is the plot, and who are the characters as the liturgical texts present them? These texts provide us with the script of the drama, and announce and develop its themes. Particular themes and words interweave throughout Holy Week, at one moment stressing one part of the action, at another a different one. They all reach their climax, their resolution, in Pascha Matins and the proclamation before the doors of the church of "Christ is risen!" To understand the liturgy is to understand and participate in this drama.[10]

The first act, as it were, is the Saturday of Lazarus, where we witness Christ bringing his dear friend back to life. Life struggles against death, as the central theme of the drama is set forth. The events of this day both prefigure and announce the Lord's own resurrection: O Lord who workest miracles, standing in Bethany by the tomb of Lazarus, Thou hast shed tears for him in accordance with the law of nature, confirming The full reality of the flesh which Thou hast taken, O Jesus my God. Straightway Thou hast made the sorrow of Mary and Martha to cease, O Saviour, Showing Thy sovereign authority. For, as Thou hast said, Thou art in truth the Resurrection and the Life and the Lord of all. O Lord, from the ranks of the dead and the darkness of hell thou hast snatched Thy friend Lazarus, bound in his grave-clothes; and by Thine all-powerful Word Thou hast broken open the gates of the kingdom of death (Saturday of Lazarus, Matins, Canticle 3; Lenten Triodion, pp. 478-9).

As we arrive at Palm Sunday, and the Lord's entrance into Jerusalem, liturgical texts warn us of the fig tree that would not bear fruit, and in its barrenness was condemned to death. We are warned of the condition of our own souls, and told of the imminent coming of the Bridegroom: Behold the Bridegroom comes in the middle of the night; and blessed is the servant whom He shall find watching, but unworthy is he whom He shall find sleeping. Beware, then, O my soul, and be not overcome by sleep, lest thou be given over to death and shut out from the Kingdom. But return to soberness and cry aloud: Holy, holy, holy art Thou, O God: through the Theotokos have mercy upon us . . . I see Thy bridal chamber adorned, O my Saviour,

and I have no wedding garment that I may enter there. Make the robe of my soul to shine, O Giver of Light, and save me. We have come, O faithful, to the saving Passion of Christ our God: let us glorify His ineffable forbearance, that in His tender mercy He may also raise us up who have been slain by sin, for He is good and loves mankind (Texts from Bridegroom Matins of Holy and Great Monday; Triodion, pp. 511-515, adapted).

As we move closer to Christ's betrayal, a betrayal that the liturgical texts say we are all implicated in, we find the contrasts between sin and repentance heightened, as in the contrast of the harlot and Judas: The harlot drew near Thee, O Thou who lovest mankind, and poured out on Thy feet the oil of myrrh with her tears; and at Thy command she was delivered from the foul smell of her evil deeds. But the ungrateful disciple, though he breathed Thy grace, rejected it and defiled himself in filth, selling Thee from love of money. Glory be to Thy compassion, O Christ. (Mattins, Holy and Great Wednesday; Triodion, p. 535) Stressed throughout these days will be the saving contrast between Christ's humanity and humility, and his divinity and power; his kenosis: He who made the lakes and springs and seas, wishing to teach us the surpassing value of humility, girded Himself with a towel and washed the feet of the disciples, humbling Himself in the abundance of His great compassion and raising us from the depths of wickedness, for He alone loves mankind. (Mattins, Holy and Great Thursday, Triodion, pp. 549-550). The Creator is struck on the face, and all creation quakes because of this outrage against Him. By His own consent He is smitten with a reed, and the heavens are shaken. The Judge is spat upon, and all the foundations of the earth are moved. God who has adorned the whole earth with flowers is crowned with thorns; He is scourged, and patiently He endures mockery and wears the scarlet robe of disgrace. All these things He who is God accepts and suffers in His flesh. (Small Compline, Holy and Great Thursday; Triodion, p. 561) He who clothes Himself in light as in a garment, stood naked at the Judgement; on His cheek He received blows from the hands which He had formed. The lawless people nailed to the Cross the Lord of Glory. Then the veil of the temple was rent in twain and the sun was darkened, for it could not bear to see such outrage done to God, before whom all things tremble. Let us worship Him. (Service of the Twelve Gospels, Holy and Great Friday; Triodion, p. 582) … Today He who hung the earth upon the waters is hung upon the Cross. He who is King of the angels is arrayed in a crown of thorns.

He who wraps the heaven in clouds is wrapped in the purple of mockery. He who in Jordan set Adam free receives blows upon His face. The Bridegroom of the Church is transfixed with nails. The Son of the Virgin is pierced with a spear. We venerate Thy Passion, O Christ. Show us also Thy glorious Resurrection.

In the last days of Holy Week, the Theotokos moves to the front and center of the drama: Beholding Thee hanging on the Cross, O Christ, Thy Mother cried aloud; 'O my Son, what is this strange mystery that I behold? Nailed in the flesh, O Giver of Life, how dost Thou die upon the Tree? (Service of the Twelve Gospels, p. 587) This is to be the Mother's question, repeated in various forms throughout the liturgies of the Three Days: "What is this strange mystery that I behold?" There is a pathos and an urgency in her questions which draws us directly into the drama of her own soul, and of our own. The irony of her innocence stands out in words repeated later at the Compline of Holy Friday, where they form part of her lament: Seeing her own Lamb led to the slaughter, Mary His Mother followed Him with the other women and in her grief she cried: 'Where dost Thou go, my Child? Why dost Thou run so swiftly? Is there another wedding in Cana, and art Thou hastening there, to turn water into wine? Shall I go with Thee, my Child, or shall I wait for Thee? Speak some word to me, O Word; do not pass me by in silence. Thou hast preserved me in virginity, and Thou art my Son and my God. (Twelve Gospels, Canticle 5, Ikos, Triodion, p. 594)

In all its aspects, the drama of the week reaches its fulfillment in the great proclamations of the Eve of Pascha, where we relive and re-present Jonah in the belly of the whale, the three children in the fiery furnace, and Habakkuk's prophecies. Christ comforts his Mother, much as He does Within her laments on Holy Friday, but with greater insistence: "Do not Lament me, O Mother. . . for I shall arise." The liturgy of Holy Week ends in total darkness, after the epitaphion or image of the buried Christ has been brought back within the sanctuary. In silence we await the hymn that announces the Resurrection: "Thy Resurrection, O Christ Our Savior, the angels in heaven sing."

Although these are brief excerpts from lengthy services, they can give us some sense of the shape of the action, and the involvement of the varied characters. Most of these characters, including Judas, Peter, and the other Apostles, and the Theotokos, have traits that directly relate to us, to the audience and participants in the drama of betrayal, salvation, and redemption, of the struggle of

Life with Death. The ancient hymn writers who penned these texts had a sense of how to draw a congregation into liturgy as drama, alternating sharp and poignant portraits of the cast members with reflections on the state of our own souls as we observe them. (I am reminded very much of Bach's musical treatment of this same drama in his St. Matthew and St. John Passions, where scriptural texts alternate with meditative poetry.) The result is a gripping series of events, where we don't mind the hours spent standing and kneeling. In all of these we are surrounded by a "cloud of witnesses." During the last days of Holy Week we venerate an icon of Christ in his "utmost humiliation," set in the middle of the church, where his image is surrounded by a woven garland of flowers. This icon and its veneration set the theme for the last days, the "apocalypse" almost, of the Holy Week liturgies. While some recent scholars of these liturgies (especially R. Taft) have criticized their length and repetitiousness, and have suggested revisions, I sense that they have missed much of the drama, a drama built on mimesis and repetition.[11] However "correct" some of their textual observations might be, they miss a larger reality. Shaped over centuries by various historical and textual conditions, these liturgies work superbly as drama precisely because of their repetition. The celebrations recorded by Egeria in the fourth century, as well as the more elaborate ceremonies described by later Byzantine commentators, held congregations. Herein was their genius both as liturgy and as theatre.

As much as the liturgical texts we are examining portrayed the sufferings of Christ, unlike their counterparts in the medieval West, they did not dwell on these. As we read carefully over the Holy Week liturgies, or participate in them, we find that nearly every mention of suffering is counterbalanced by a statement about Resurrection. Throughout Christ is the lover of humanity. His death is a "life-giving sleep" more than it is an excruciating agony. He is often portrayed in Byzantine art as on the cross with his eyes closed.[12] He is also described as a "sleeping lion," waiting to pounce victorious to life.[13] In another important image, the event of the Resurrection is presented in the liturgical texts as a "Blessed Sabbath," where the rest of God after his labors, including Christ's labors for our salvation, gives life to a new creation. This "Blessed Sabbath" involves especially Christ's descent to the lower regions, and his release of all who are held captive there.

We should notice the interweaving of themes: life and death

in struggle with each other; Christ the Bridegroom, the Church as Bride; the wedding garment and our clothing of flesh. And throughout, the refrain, even in the saddest and most horrific events: “Glory to Thy passion. . . Thou who lovest mankind.” As we wait in anticipation for the outcome of these events, we know that it will be a victory - a victory of life over death, of love over the cruelty and smallness of a nature held captive in sin, of hope over despair. But it is a victory bought with a price.

3. The Lament of the Theotokos

The price involves the great human sorrow of many actors in the drama, and their sense of loss of the Beloved. For no one is this sorrow and anxiety deeper, according to both liturgical texts and popular traditions surrounding them, than for the Theotokos, Christ’s own mother. In the poem attributed to Simeon Metaphrastes, and used for Small Compline on Holy Friday (see Lenten Triodion, pp. 617 ff.) the Theotokos speaks her anguish: “When she beheld her Son and Lord hanging on the Cross, the pure Virgin was torn by grief and, weeping bitterly with the other women, she cried out; ‘Woe is me!’” Her lament follows, interspersed with Irmos verses, and takes up five pages. It appears that this text as we have it is a reworking of other texts, including the liturgical poem of Romanos the Melodist (sixth century) entitled: “Kontakion heteron te megale paraskeue eis to pathos tou Kuriou kai eis ton threnon tes theotokou.”[14]

In reworking the texts, the Metaphrastes version which is the one most commonly used in many Orthodox liturgies, provides for smoother reading and use by a congregation, but it loses something of the dramatic power of his sources. In contrast, for Romanos and for early Syrian texts, Mary’s grief is so overpowering that it can hardly be controlled, and Christ Himself needs to restrain her and explain why such suffering was necessary. It is the raw material of drama and theatre. There is some evidence that the earlier texts, especially that of Ephrem the Syrian, were arranged for theatrical presentation.[15] There is also agreement among several scholars of western medieval drama that the “lament” of the Theotokos served as a link bet ween Byzantine theology and culture and early liturgical theatre in the West in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The Greek monasteries and churches in southern Italy remained vibrant into the twelfth century. They were centers of influence, and important meeting points of Byzantine East and Latin West.[16] As we shall see,

iconographic portrayals of the Theotokos and her grief also were often present here.

If we look for the origins of the tradition of the Theotokos' lament, we find them in a very few verses in the New Testament: John 19: 25-27, and Luke 23: 27-31, where we learn of Christ entrusting his mother to John, and of her witness to her son's death on the cross. This is an important, but modest foundation for all later elaborations. The next textual witness is that of the so-called Acts of Pilate (Acts of Nicodemus), an apocryphal writing usually dated in the fourth century.[17] Many of the liturgical traditions relating to the Theotokos as well as to the saints have their source in this apocryphal literature. They seem to begin in an oral tradition. As with many writings of this sort in Late Antiquity, it is quite possible that the substance, if not all the exact details of such accounts, were verbal before they were written.[18] I would argue on the basis of evidence available to us that many traditions about the Theotokos may go back to very early Christian communities. Among important earlier accounts of Mary's grief were those of Ephrem the Syrian, as mentioned earlier, and James of Sarug (dates: 451-521), and other Syrian liturgical texts that are still in use.[19] Thus when Romanos the Melodist came to compose his Kontakia in a time not very distant from these, he had a rich mine of sources to work with.

In the study of the lament of the Theotokos that follows I shall use most closely the version worked out by Romanos, both because it has been widely adapted for other liturgical texts, and because it is the most deliberately dramatic. I find an interaction and dialogue of characters within it that gives the text rich theological significance, as we see both God and humanity standing before the mystery and horror of unjust suffering, a condition that accompanies each of us to the end of our lives. As in his other kontakia, Romanos begins "On the Lament of the Mother of God" by inviting us into the drama: "Come, let us all praise him who was crucified for us, for Mary looked upon him on the Tree and said, 'Though you endure the Cross, yet you are my Son and my God." (Lash trans., p. 143) Romanos' verses are a literary form of painting, and we would do well to consider them as verbal icons. "The icon does not illustrate, it invites prayer and veneration. Similarly with the kontakion: it does not simply tell a story, but draws us into the movement of God's love for us, and to worship."[20] The drama here takes the shape of a lament. As many students of lament traditions, Greek and otherwise, have pointed out the lament is not merely, or even mainly, a sad expression of

mourning. It is often just as much a protest, a form of argument, where someone who grieves deeply confronts the dead, or the person about to die, asking both in anguish and in anger: "Why do you do this to me?"[21] It has appeared in the form of choruses in Ancient Greek tragedies, and continues in the lament poems composed in folk traditions, such as those sung by women in rural Greece and the Balkans.[22] Such a lament is a statement of both powerlessness and power: powerlessness in the face of an event that must happen, or have happened; power, in that there is the overwhelming desire and belief that somehow or other the person who laments can turn back the event. Very often laments are the work of women, responding to death and violence inflicted on their loved ones. The Melodist's work incorporates many of these elements in its liturgical meditation and celebration of Death and Resurrection.

Romanos' "Lament" is set in the form of an argument of the Theotokos with her Son. The theology of the text is contained and worked out in the form of this argument. That argument is contained in the very first phrase: "Though you endure the Cross, yet you are my Son and my God." Christ's Mother cannot put aside her humanity and its sorrow, however much she knows that her Son's death is essential for the life of the world. (In many icons we see a foreboding in the eyes of the Theotokos as she holds her infant son. She knows only too well what is going to happen.) At his passion, she will argue with Him about what He is doing, and she will "win" some important points in her argument.

Mary the Mother stresses the loneliness of her Son in his offering of himself, a loneliness other liturgical texts of this week echo: You are on your way, my child, to unjust slaughter, And no one suffers with you. Peter is not going with you, he who said, 'I will never deny you, even though I die.' Thomas has left you. . . Not one of all of them, but you alone, my child, One on behalf of all, are dying. Instead of them you have Saved all. Instead of them you have Instead of them you have made satisfaction for all, My Son and my God. (#3, Lash trans., p. 144) In the verse just preceding this, Mary had asked whether her Son was "hurrying" to another Cana, to perform yet another miracle. This particular image as Romanos develops it is rich both in its dramatic irony, and in its scriptural associations. Several of the Fathers had commented at considerable length on the meaning of the wedding at Cana, an event that began the Lord's earthly labors. It stood at the beginning of his earthly ministry, as his death

stands at the beginning of a live-giving battle with the forces of death.[23] Here the expectant note of the Mother is one of both pathos and sadness: Should I go with you, my child, or rather wait for you? Give me a word, O Word. Do not pass me by in silence, You who kept me pure, My Son and my God. (#2, Lash trans., p. 143)

Christ's reply to his Mother then explains the basic reason for his suffering, which is not just to save those who live now, or are to come, but to liberate the entire human race - past, present, and future - from the bonds of death: As Mary from her deep grief And great sorrow cried out thus and wept, he turned To her, he that had come from her, and cried, 'Why are you weeping, Mother? Why are you carried away like the other women? Should I not suffer? Not die? How then shall I save Adam? Should I not dwell in a tomb? How then shall I draw to life those In hell? And indeed, as you know, I am being crucified unjustly. Why, then, do you weep, Mother? Rather shout out, 'Willingly he suffered, my Son and my God? The Son continues to explain his actions: You are at the heart of my bridal chamber. Do not, then, as though you stood outside, waste away your soul. Address those in the bridal chamber as your slaves; For everyone will come running with fear and will obey you, Honoured Lady, When you say, 'Where is My Son and my God?' (#4 and 5; Lash, pp. 144-5)[23]

In Christ's explanation of his redeeming act of saving those "in the tombs," Romanos describes a soteriology that had become prominent in the East by the fourth century and was expressed in such apocryphal works as the Gospel of Pilate. It is a comprehensive vision of redemption, one not based on a type of salvation as ransom, or of humanity as captive to the Devil that became normative for Latin theology.[24] In the Holy Week liturgy in current use the verse "Do not lament me O Mother" recurs, as well as its direct connection with the Resurrection: "For I shall arise.")[25] Christ's Incarnation as a wedding with humanity, represented by the banquet of Cana, in which He began his earthly ministry , as well as Christ's offering of himself for the Church as a husband does for his wife, are themes developed by several patristic authors.[26] (See Rev. 21:9; Ephes. 5: 25-33) (Note: See Matons ed., p. 166) Such an understanding of redemption or salvation as a marriage of God with humanity is also considerably different from emphases in Latin theology. It has deep echoes or resonances with the prophets of the Old Testament, especially with Amos and Hosea, where Israel is the wayward bride of God.[27]

Yet for all of her Son's profound theological arguments, arguments that are very much those of Christ's speech on the walk to

Emmaus (see Luke 24: 13 ff.), the Mother continues in her grief. She counters him, almost point by point, explaining that He had (after all) managed to heal and raise others, without going to his own death: "See, my child," she says, "I rub the tears from my eyes, And I rub my heart still more, But my thinking cannot be silenced. Why dost Thou say to me, Merciful One, 'If I do not die, Adam is not healed'? For indeed Thou hast cured many without suffering. Thou hast cleansed the leper and Thou didst suffer no pain but Thou Didst will it. Having given strength to the paralytic, Thou wast not harmed; Again, Thou didst give sight to the blind by a word, O Righteous One, And Thou didst remain without harm, My son and my God. "Raising up the dead, Thou didst not become dead Nor rest in a tomb, O my son and my life. Why, then, Dost Thou say, 'If I do not suffer, Adam is not redeemed' . . . All things serve Thee as the Creator of all. Why, then, dost Thou hasten, my child? Do not Hurry to slaughter; Do not court death, My son and my God. (strophes 7 and 8, Carpenter version, pp. 199-200)

There is strong human drama here, but there is theological teaching as well. In the dialogue of Christ and his Mother, there is an answer to some versions of Christology that were alive, if not always well, in Romanos' time, forms of docetism or monophysite interpretations that would minimize the full humanity of the Redeemer. Romanos' Christology is completely in accord with that of the earlier Cappadocian Fathers, especially St. Gregory of Nazianzus, who stressed that what had not been fully assumed could not be fully healed. A fully human as well as fully divine Christ needed to completely redeem or save humanity and the cosmos that had fallen with Adam.[28] A less than complete Christology was still an option in Romanos' time. Monophysite teachings stressed an overwhelming divinity at work in Christ, and remained a persistent challenge to Orthodox and Chalcedonian teaching.[29]

Romanos' understanding of sin is that it is a sickness for which only Christ can bring the complete medicine. This view of fall and redemption, that understands humanity more as the victim of immaturity, of illness rather than criminal behavior, of sin as sickness, had earlier been expressed by such teachers as Irenaeus of Lyons and Theophilus of Antioch, among others.[30] It has had a strong influence on subsequent eastern theologians, and on later Orthodox liturgical texts (note especially the texts for Great Lent). Sin as sickness and alienation has radically impaired our ability to reach the image and likeness of God that God has placed within each of us, of

our theosis. But it has not destroyed this image. As Christ describes his actions to his Mother: This wretched Adam, whom you spoke of before, is ill Not only in body, but in his soul too. He became sick by his own will. For he did not listen to me and is in danger. (#9; Lash, pp. 146-147)

It was by disorder and disobedience that Adam and Eve had come to this state: By intemperance, by gluttony Adam became ill and was borne down to the lowest hell. And there he weeps for the pain of his soul. While Eve, who once taught him disorder, Groans with him, for with him she is ill, That together they may learn to keep the physician's order. (#10, p. 147) Christ describes his cross and his death as a saving remedy: Bear up for a short time, O Mother, and thou shalt see How, like a physician, I strip and come where they lie dead And cure their wounds, Cutting their callousness and hardness with the spear; And I take the vinegar and use it as an astringent on the wound; And when I have opened up the cut with the surgical lancet of the nails, I shall use my cloak for a dressing, Using my cross as remedy, I use it, O Mother, so that thou mayest sing with understanding: 'He has redeemed suffering by suffering, My son and my God. (#13, pp. 201-202, Carpenter, ed. (See accompanying notes))

While the Mother can accept this mission of healing, she still gives voice to her deepest fears: "My Lord, if I speak once more, do not become angry with me. I shall tell you what is on my mind, so that I may learn from you All that I wish. If you suffer, if you die, will you return to me? If you treat Adam, and Eve along with him, shall I see you again? For this is what I fear, lest from the tomb You hurry straight on high, my Child, while I, seeking to see you, Weep and cry out, 'Where is My Son and my God?' (#11, p. 147) Amid all the deep theology and its cosmic as well as human dimensions, the Mother has argued her point: Please don't leave me behind! Her Son replies: When he heard this, the One who knows all things Before their birth answered Mary, 'Courage, Mother, Because you will see me first on coming from the tombs. I am coming to show you by how many toils I ransomed Adam And how much I sweated for his sake (#12, p. 148)

The Mother will even accompany her Son on part of his journey of redemption. In Romanos' drama, she dares to demand that much of him in her desire not to be left by herself in her grief. As He suffers: I am conquered, my Child, I am conquered by love,

And truly I cannot bear that I should be in my room, but you on The Tree, That I should be in my house, but you in a grave. Let

me come with you, for to see you heals me. ((#15, p. 149) The Son once again answers the Mother, and includes her as a first witness of his work: If then you come with me, do not weep, Mother. Do not tremble again with fear, if you see the elements shaken. For the outrage will shudder all creation. The sky will be blinded and not open its eyes until I speak. Then the earth with the sea will hasten to flee. (# 16; p. 149)

At the end of this dialogue between Mother and Son, Romanos makes it clear that the Mother's arguments have been heard, and that they in no way diminish her faith in her Son's actions, or her importance in the drama of salvation: Son of the virgin, God of the virgin, And Maker of the World, Thine is the suffering, Thine, the depths of wisdom. Thou knowest what Thou art and what Thou art to become. Willing to suffer, Thou hast deemed it of worth to save man. As Lamb of God, Thou hast taken away our sins; Thou hast destroyed them through Thy death; as Savior Thou hast saved all. (Note: Check the Greek. It seems that Romanos believes in at least the possibility of a universal salvation, much like Gregory of Nyssa.) Thou art, as a human, able to suffer, and as God, Thou knowest no suffering. Dying, Thou art saving. Thou dost grant to the holy virgin Fearless confidence to cry to Thee, 'My son and my God.' The Theotokos has the last words in this lament. The Mother remains deeply connected with her Son in his healing death for the world, as she was in his birth into the world. Here in liturgy and poetry, in the time of liturgy, birth and death are mirrors to each other, as many icons of the Theotokos show the sadness and apprehension of the Mother holding her Newborn Son.

And in the liturgy of Holy Saturday Christ replies: "Do not weep for me, O Mother . . . For I shall arise." Yet for Romanos in his "Lament" Christ's certain victory does not silence the Mother's real human grief, or keep her Son from listening to her sorrow. Much Orthodox iconography in the later medieval period, as well as popular devotion and poetry, will continue to honor and give voice to that sorrow. In many ways, Orthodox art and liturgy will emphasize the sorrows of the Mother, and the bond of sorrow and hopeful joy (the "bright sadness" of Great Lent) that unite Mother and Son, rather than the blood and anguish of the crucified Redeemer of the late medieval West.

4. The Sorrow of the Theotokos in Art and Culture

It was during the eleventh and twelfth centuries that the sorrows of the Theotokos became an important theme in both theology and art. This development occurred almost simultaneously in the Byzantine East and Latin West. There has been considerable speculation, but little conclusive evidence, of how thought and feeling may have spread from one center of influence to another. Since we lack precise information (if such would be available), we can maintain that there was a marked change in the spiritual sensibilities of both areas of Europe at this time.

A great interest in the human emotions of holy figures, of Jesus, of the Theotokos, and the saints, becomes a marked characteristic of theology, devotion, and the arts expressive of these.[31] It is important that this reality, what we might name as an "affective theology," crossed boundaries of East and West such as they were at this time. We witness here a common, truly ecumenical, Christian sensibility that survived and even triumphed over political and ecclesiastical divisions. What is equally remarkable, however, is the way in which these sensibilities were later to diverge. By at least the end of the thirteenth century in the Latin West the emphasis has shifted decidedly in the direction of a preoccupation with the sufferings of Christ, portrayed in increasingly more graphic and realistic fashion. There is more at work here than a shift of sensibilities. Rather, there is a marked difference in basic theological orientations. Yet this later period is not the subject of our present inquiry. For the purposes of this discussion, we are concerned with the earlier period of shared sensibility and consciousness of East and West, where the sorrows of the Mother in the earthly yet cosmic drama of the Passion of Christ were a common ground of devotion and meeting.

In early Christian and Byzantine art, portrayals of the crucifixion scene are rather basic, or even austere. Here we are witnesses to the dying Christ, who very often reigns triumphant from his cross with arms outstretched, surrounded by women and other figures who stand expressionless by his side. There is little, if any, visible emotion. We begin to see a change in these portrayals around the eighth century. Among the earliest representations of a dead Christ is an icon from Sinai from this period. Such a realistic portrayal may well be related to the Iconoclastic controversy of this time, as well as a desire to depict Christ in his full humanity to Monophysites. As art historian Henry Maguire explains this

development in relation to the Patriarch Nicephorus' struggle with heresy later on in the ninth century: "According to the Patriarch's reasoning, the Iconoclasts were guilty of denying Christ's human nature, for if Christ could not be represented in images he would not fully be a man. In his arguments, Nicephorus repeatedly returns to the Crucifixion as a proof of Christ's physical humanity, from which it followed that he could be portrayed in art."[32] In this manner of thinking, Nicephorus was following directly in the lines of argument developed earlier by St. John Damascene in his defense of icons. If for both Iconoclasts and Monophysites a depiction of Christ's human Suffering was problematic, a more realistic portrayal of such suffering was a direct refutation of their heresies.

I find it quite significant that these early portrayals of emotion surrounding Christ's death, especially those of the women surrounding the dead figure, relate to other pictures of Biblical women that date from as early as the sixth century, such as the mourners in the Vienna Genesis lamenting Deborah or Jacob, who wipe tears from their faces, hold arms outstretched in grief, and have clearly distressed facial expressions.[33] As was frequently the case in Byzantine art, changes in emphasis in pictorial form, such as the movement towards a more visible portrayal of grief, were at least partly based on rediscoveries of considerably earlier examples from Roman art.[34]

It was precisely during the period of the sixth and seventh centuries that the liturgical poetry of Romanos the Melodist and others, as in the Studium monastery outside of Constantinople, expressed emotion in the dialogues of the Theotokos and other Figures in the Gospel narratives. In doing this, they continued and enriched the portrayals of such earlier poets as St. Ephrem the Syrian. Increasingly through texts incorporated into hymnography, a highly studied yet deeply human emotion enters the liturgy, as it also entered visual art. Both text and pictorial expression were rooted deeply in Syrian and Palestinian soil.[35] Yet it was during the Middle Byzantine period, from the tenth through the thirteenth Centuries, that the sorrow of the Theotokos at the cross becomes most fully expressed. In Maguire's words, it is: "a widening refrain of mourning gestures to the Crucixion scene." (Maguire, p. 145) A twelfth century Greek poet, Eugenius of Palermo, thus describes heaven and earth as both attending at this event: "The pair of Virgins here stand with downcast eyes, bearing with pain the Passion, and the rank of angels laments with them." (Ibid.) Such a comment is typical of many

other verbal expressions related to this theme at this time, such as that of the shorter hymn of Simon Metaphrastes incorporated into the Good Friday worship. Once visual parallel to this poetic expression is the portrayal of the women at the cross, who openly show their grief as they embrace one another. Once again, a gesture bears with it a theological meaning: "For the Byzantines. . . the gesture (of embrace) had a more than merely sentimental significance, for it could be a way of demonstrating the reality of Christ's incarnation" (Maguire, p. 161).

Perhaps the most important "innovation" (if we can call it that) in the tradition during the Middle Byzantine period was that of adding to the established cycle of the Passion scenes new representations of Christ's body being taken down from the cross (the Deposition), and the lamentation of the Theotokos as she bends over the outstretched body of her Son. In such presentations Byzantine emotion is both at its most eloquent and most theological.

Of many expressions of these scenes, those from the Balkan regions are the most powerful. Both the Theotokos and Apostle bending over and embracing the body of the Lord from Kurbinovo (see Maguire, no. 72) are arresting in their simplicity. The characters in this drama seem to flow into each other, as if drawn by the magnetic power of the earth that is to be Christ's temporary resting place.

Some historians of Byzantine art have described the appearance of such portrayals as "sudden," almost as if they had no precedent. Commenting on such figures as the Theotokos and her attendants at Kurbinovo, Tania Velmans observes that we see around the '60s in the church at Nerezi: "a new phenomenon in Byzantine mural painting: the sudden appearance of affective values in the depiction of the sacred." Here we have "holy characters marked by their sadness, and Mary tenderly embracing the body of Christ."[36]

While I would agree that the appearance of such scenes at various places in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries may seem "sudden," it is not without deep wellsprings in earlier traditions. Such "new" manifestations of the old are the standard or norm in Byzantium, whether in liturgical poetry, pictorial or rhetorical art.[37] As we have seen, the liturgical poetry of Romanos and other monastic writers, building on Ephrem the Syrian among others, gives us a highly affective and yet contained portrayal of the Theotokos at the

cross, and her lament. We find the deepest human emotions grief, surprise, comfort, anxiety, and even anger. Whether the humanity of Christ and those who followed him was emphasized primarily to counter Monophysite Christologies and Iconoclasm, or developed more spontaneously, following other rhythms, we find a connecting logic of representation that links earlier Syriac poetry and art (e. g. the Vienna Genesis as represented in Maguire. #54, or the Rabula Crucifixtion scene in Maguire, #36 are notable examples) with the later mural paintings of these scenes in Greece, Macedonia, and other regions of the Balkans. Such representation is consonant with the governing principles of Byzantine art.[38]

Emotion is clearly present, but it is emotion directed towards the mysterion of God at work in the world. In marked contrast to much of later western medieval art picturing the same themes, especially the Pieta, emotion and naturalism do not overwhelm the sacred narrative. Rather Salvation History, the nature and mission of Christ, are always in control of the emotions presented, however gripping these may be.[39] But (at least in my view) the emotions do not lose out as a result. It is hard to find a more affective and affecting portrayal than in such words as these of Christ to his Mother as presented by Romanos: When he heard her words, the One who knows all things even before their happening, replied to Mary: 'Be assured O Mother, you will be the first to see me when I arise from the tomb. I shall show you with what pains I bought back Adam and what was the sweating labor I accomplished for him. To my friends I shall show my wounds, to them I shall show my hands. And then, O Mother, you shall see Eve living as before, and you will cry out in joy: 'He saved my parents, my son and my God!' (Romanos; stanza 12 in SC version, no.128, pp. 176-177, my translation from French version).

Centuries later, it is the same emotion grounded in faith that is evident in the lament and deposition scenes of such places as Nerezi or Kurbinovo, or the Pskov monastery (see "Lamentation," no. 63 in Maguire). It is also the sorrow turned into triumph of the Anastasis icon (sometimes known in the West as the "harrowing of Hell"), where the Lord coming from the tomb tramples on the instruments of his own death, and on the broken keys of Hell, as He vigorously leads forth both Adam and Eve. In such representations, poetry, visual art and theology are interrelated, each a reflection of the other.[40] Human emotion never loses sight of Anastasis, or Resurrection. The Theotokos is the fullest expression of this reality

where cosmos and threnos join together, as in the Pascha exclamation: “Rejoice, O Theotokos, in the Resurrection of Your Son.”

It would be going well beyond the boundaries of space in our present discussion if we were to consider how the sorrow and lament of the Theotokos have been presented in popular cultures, especially in Greece and other Balkan regions. Such a subject could well be the basis for at least one long and interesting monograph.[41] What I find significant in a brief overview of the popular traditions is the way in which they remain basically faithful to Orthodox Christian theology, while allowing considerable room for wide swings of emotion. They are not lugubrious or bloody portrayals, however powerful the human grief they convey. While the Church surely has not “baptized” all of these, it has not repressed them. It has given voice to the heart of many peoples.

Such grief speaks in the representations of Christ’s death, whether in formal liturgical poetry, pictorial art, and even in popular drama. It is the grief of all faithful Christians. But it is especially the sorrow of the Mother for her Son, for the “criminal” unjustly accused, tried, and executed. She mourns with and for us all, as well as for her own loss. Yet grief does not remain the final word for her, or for us. Nor does the agony of last moments. Rather Resurrection calls for surprise and joy. “Rejoice O Theotokos.” Such is the hymn of angels, and of men and women throughout the ages.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. For a scholarly account of the Passion by an Orthodox interpreter of Scripture, see V. Kesich. *The Passion of Christ*, (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2004.) This edition is a reprint of the original, written forty years earlier.

2. There are several editions of Egeria. One readily available version with introductory material is G. E. Gingras, ed. *Egeria: Diary of a Pilgrimage. Ancient Christian Writers*, no. 38. (N.Y.: Newman Press, 1970). See especially pp. 1-11. For the background of pilgrimage in fourth century Palestine, see P.W.L. Walker. *Holy City, Holy Places? Christian Attitudes to Jerusalem and the Holy Land in the Fourth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

3. Note as an example the comment of P. Maraval, a scholar of early Christian pilgrimage: “Il semble aussi que la communaute de Jerusalem, aux origins, ait attaché un souvenir pieux au tombeau du Christ: de nombreux exegetes considerent que la naissance et la transmission du

recit de l'ensevelissement, dans l'evangile selon Marc (15, 42-49), et de celui de la visite des femmes au tombeau, qui lui fait suite (16, 1-8), ne peuvent se comprendre qu'en reference au tombeau que l'on montrait alors a Jerusalem comme celui du Christ." Etc. Pierre Maraval. *Lieux Saints et Pelerinages d'Orient. Histoire et geographie des origins a la conquete arabe*. (Paris: Cerf, 1985), p. 23 and accompanying notes. What is important to recognize here is what people in this early environment believed about these sites. Whatever further archaeological evidence might uncover, popular beliefs were rooted in a developing tradition that was to identify particular locations with particular events of the Passion and Resurrection.

4. See S. Janeras. *Le Vendredi-Saint dans la tradition liturgique byzantine: structure et histoire de ses offices*. (Roma: Pontificio Ateneo S. Anselmo, 1988), p. 281. For the historical background of these rites, see Part I, chapter 2.

5. "As regards the Lucernarium, it seems most probable that it took place traditionally in the Anastasis. . . the Lucernarium was celebrated in Jerusalem on Holy Saturday in Egeria's time, she has nothing to say about the manner in which it was performed." – G. Bertoniere. *The Historical Development of the Easter Vigil and Related Services in the Greek Church. Orientalia Christiana Analecta 193*. (Roma: Pont. Institutm studiorum orientalium, 1972), pp. 28-9, as well as larger discussion in chapter 2, "The Paschal Vigil."

6. Two recent books examine Chrysostom in particular as a preacher who was very attentive to his surrounding culture, however much he criticized it.

See: Aideen M. Hartney. *John Chrysostom and the Transformation of the City*. (London: Duckworth, 2004), and Blake Leyerle. Theatrical Shows and Ascetic Lives: John Chrysostom's Attack on Spiritual Marriage (Berkeley: U of C. Press).

7. For the development of liturgy into drama in the Latin Church, see the classic account of O. B. Hardison. *Christian Rite and Christian Drama in the Middle Ages; Essays in the Origin and Early History of Modern Drama*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1965). There is a wealth of research on Latin liturgy and drama, beginning with the work of Karl Young. *The Drama of the Medieval Church*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933). Especially important for relations of the Byzantine Church in Italy and its influence on western liturgy is S. Sticca. *The Latin Passion Play*. (n.p.: State University of New York Press, 1970) and *The Planctus Mariae in the Dramatic Tradition of the Middle Ages*. (Athens, Ga.: U. of Georgia Press, 1988). Here liturgy is part of the spiritual process which St. Maximus the Confessor identifies as diabasis, the "passing over," or "carrying over," of one kind of understanding or experience into a deeper one. In one passage he describes this spiritual metamorphosis or transformation in these words: "So long as the soul makes the passage from strength to strength and "from glory to glory" (2 Cor. 3:18), progress from virtue to greater virtue, and makes the ascent from knowledge to higher knowledge it does not cease

being a sojourner. . . The one who prays ought never to halt his movement of sublime ascent toward God. . . This will enable him to follow the one who has "passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God (Heb.4:14), who is everywhere and who in his incarnation passes through all things on our account. If we follow him, we also pass through all things with him and come beside him if we know him not in the limited condition of his descent in the incarnation but in the majestic splendor of his natural infinitude." – Maximus. Cap. Theol. 2.18 (PG90, 1133A-B; trans. *Berthold. Maximus Confessor: Selected Writings*. (*Classics of Western Spirituality*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1985) Quotation in P. M. Blowers. *Exegesis and Spiritual Pedagogy in Maximus the Confessor. An Investigation of the Qaestiones ad Thalassium*. (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991). See chapter 2 of this work, concerning the principle of diabasis as an organizing principle for Maximus' vision of the world. Also valuable for an understanding of liturgy as mimesis is the classic work of Dom Odo Casel. *The Mystery of Christian Worship and Other Writings*. ed. B. Neunheuser (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1962).

8. For St. John of Damascus, see *On the Divine Images: Three Apologies against Those Who Attack the Divine Images*. Translated by David Anderson. (Crestwood, N.Y.: SVS Press, 1980). For the background and context of John's thought, as well as of the theology of the icon, of special value are: P. Evdokimov. *Art of the Icon: a Theology of Beauty*. (Redondo Beach, Ca.: Oakwood Pub.) and K. Perry.

Depicting the Word: Byzantine Iconophile Thought of the Eighth and Ninth Centuries. (Leiden: Brill, 1996). Also Theodore Damian. *Theological and Spititual Dimensions of Icons according to St. Theodore of Studion* (Lewiston, Maine: E. Mellen Press, 2002).

9. The agon, or dramatic quality, of the liturgies of Holy Week is the subject of chapters 2-4 of O. B. Hardison's book. See note 7 above. The principles Hardison discusses would apply equally well to Byzantine liturgy.

10. For the theology of the liturgies of Great Lent and Holy Week, see Alexander Schmemann. *Great Lent*. (Tuckahoe, N.Y.: SVS Press, 1974, and subsequent editions.) The liturgical text I am using in the following discussion is The Lenten Triodion. Translated by Mother Mary and Kallistos Ware (London: Faber, 1978).

11. See, for example, comments in Robert Taft's article, "In the Bridegroom's Absence. The Paschal Triduum in the Byzantine Church," no. 5, esp. pp. 91-95, in R. F. Taft. *Liturgy in Byzantium and Beyond* (Brookfield, Vt.: Ashgate, 1995).

12. See as examples figs. 39, 65 and 66 from Greek paintings in the article by Henry Maguire. "The Depiction of Sorrow in Middle Byzantine Art," in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, no. 31 (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1977), pp. 125-174. This is the standard portrayal of Christ's posture in Middle Byzantine art. There are no contortions of the body such as we encounter frequently in Western European art beginning with the thirteenth century.

13. On “life-giving sleep” and Christ as “sleeping lion” : H. Belting. *The Image and Its Public. In the Middle Ages: Form and Function of Early Paintings of the Passion*. (New Rochelle, N.Y.: A.D. Caratzas, 1990), chapter 5: “The Icon of the Passion in Byzantium,” pp. 91ff, especially pp. 101-3 and accompanying notes 42-44. Also the shorter version of this article, “An Image and Its Function in the Liturgy: The Man of Sorrows in Byzantium,” in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, nos. 34-5, 1980-81; pp. 1-16 and illustrations.

14. For versions of Romanos, see the Sources Chretiennes edition, vol. 128, (Paris: Cerf, 1964), p. 158 and Kontakia of Romanos, *Byzantine Melodist*. Translated and annotated by Marjorie Carpenter. (Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 1973), “On Mary at the Cross,” pp. 193-203. Also: *On the Life of Christ: Kontakia/St. Romanos the Melodist*. trans. Ephrem Lash. (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1995), pp. 141-150.

For Romanos and his work, see the extensive study of J. Grosdidier de Matons. *Romanos le Melode et les origins de la poesie religieuse a Byzance* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1977).

15. On Ephrem’s poetry, see essays in S. Brock. *From Ephrem to Romanos. Interactions between Syriac and Greek in Late Antiquity* (Aldershot-Brookfield: Variorum, 1999), essays IV, V, VI, VII. Brock discusses in particular the ways in which the Syrian tradition used forms of verse dialogue. This is the form of Mary’s lament in Romanos’ hymn text.

On the relation between Syrian liturgical poetry and Byzantine hymnography, especially in relation to Romanos, see J. Grosdidier de Matons. *Romanos le Melode et les Origines de la Poesie Religieuse a Byzance* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1977), chapters 1-3.

16. On Greek monasteries in Italy, see: J.M. Sansterre. *Les MoinesGrecs et Orientaux a Rome aux Epoques Byzantine et Carolingienne (Milieu du Vieme-Fin Ixieme s.)*. (Bruxelles: Palais des Academies, 1982), 2 vols. Also D.P. Hester. *Monasticism and Spirituality of the Italo-Greeks*. (Thessaloniki: Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies, 1991). For influence of the Theotokos lament on western liturgical drama, see S. Sticca. Planctus Mariae (note 7), especially pp. Much more research needs to be done on this subject, as well as on the interactions between Byzantine and Latin monasticism in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

17. Sticca. The Planctus Mariae, p. 33. *Concerning the Acts of Pilate*, see brief description in F.L. Cross and E.A. Livingstone, eds. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*. (N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 1287: “An apocryphal work giving an account of the trial, death, and resurrection of Christ In some mss.an independent treatise on the Descent of Christ into Hades is included. The first part, the “Acts” proper, is generally held to be no earlier in its written form than the fourth century. See bibliography accompanying Oxford Dictionary article for further details on this text.

18. The vitality and accuracy of oral traditions are still evident in folk poetry in many cultures. Of special note here are historical ballads preserved

in the Balkans, such as Serbian accounts of the battle of Kosovo. The classic work on this subject remains that of Albert B. Lord. *The Singer of Tales* (numerous editions, first published in 1960), who discusses oral transmission and tradition in Homer's poetry.

19. For "earlier accounts of Mary's grief": Sticca, pp. 37-39; see also D. Dahane, "La Passion dans la liturgie syrienne orientale," *L'Orient syrien* 2 (1957): 185-92, and G. Khouri-Sarkis, "La Passion dans la liturgie syrienne occidentale," *L'Orient syrien* 2 (1957): 193-204.

20. A. Louth introduction to Lash translation, *On the Life of Christ: Kontakia*, p. xx. Again, we are witnessing liturgy as mimesis.

21. Men and women may both weep for their dead, but it is women who tend to weep longer, louder, and it is they who are thought to communicate directly with the dead through their wailing songs. . . Since they are usually addressed directly to the dead, laments enable the members of the family or small community to tell the dead they are missed, sometimes to berate them for abandoning the living. Laments may also, by a sort of possession on the lamenter's part, enable the dead to address the living, and either assuage their grief or call on them to redress real or imaginary grievances suffered in life." – G. Holst-Warhaft. *Dangerous Voices*.

22. *Women's Laments and Greek Literature*. (N.Y.: Routledge, 1992), pp. 1-3. Holst-Warhaft's entire book is concerned with the rich nature of the lament form in Greek culture and literature. Her comments apply very well to Romanos' lyrics on the grief of the Theotokos, as well as to the Syrian poetry from which he developed his own forms.

23. Fathers on Cana wedding: See especially *Cyril of Alexandria's Commentary on the Gospel of John* (In Io. 2:11), PG 73: 223ff; Pusey edition of Cyril, I, 203.

24. On ransom and redemption, see the classic work of Gustav Aulen. *Christus Victor. An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of the Atonement*. (London: S.P.C.K., 1970), especially chapter 5. Aulen contrasts the Latin view which was the basis for Anselm's ransom theory in Cur Deus Homo with earlier understandings, such as of Irenaeus of Lyons, observing: "It must be strongly emphasized that it was on the basis of the penitential system that the Latin theory grew up. (p. 82) The Incarnation and Atonement are "not organically connected together, as they were in the classic view." (p. 87) In other words, the Latin model of sin and redemption is juridical, where the earlier and eastern view is therapeutic. The world in the condition of sin is a hospital, not a prison. Christ is the healer we encounter in Romanos' poetry.

25. See, for example, *Canticle Nine for Matins for Holy Saturday* (Irmos): "Weep not for Me, O Mother, beholding in the sepulcher the Son whom thou hast conceived without seed in thy womb. For I shall rise and shall be glorified, and as God I shall exalt in everlasting glory those who magnify thee with faith and love."—Lenten Triodion, p. 651.

26. See, for example, Cyril of Alexandria's exegesis given in note 23. Other central scriptural texts are Rev. 21:9 and Ephes. 5: 25-33. See also Matons edition of text of Romanos' hymn, p. 166.

27. This theme is especially developed in Hosea, where the entire theme of the discourse involves Israel as bride of the Lord.

28. Gregory of Nazianzen and full redemption: The most complete expression of Gregory's soteriology is in his Five Theological Orations, and especially, in a more concise form, in Two Letters to Cledonius. See the edition St. Gregory of Nazianzus. *On God and Christ. The Five Theological Orations and Two Letters to Cledonius*; F. Williams and L. Wickham, trans. (Crestwood, N.Y.: SVS Press, 2002).

29. On the persistance of Monophysite teaching: see Patrick T. R. Gray. *Defense of Chalcedon in the East* (451-553). (Leiden: Brill, 1979).

30. "Immaturity of Adam": The incomplete state of humanity, as well as our infirmity, is a central theme of the theology of Irenaeus of Lyons in the second century. See particularly Adv. Haer. 3, 23, 6, where Irenaeus describes God's love for human creation, not wanting the condition of evil to be "incurable." Also Adv. Haer. 4, 38, 2-3 : humanity "having just been created was incapable of receiving perfection. . . because of this the Word of God, who is perfect, becomes a little child with humanity, not for himself, but because of the infant that we are, becoming thus someone we can understand." See larger discussion in J. Fantino. *L'Homme image de Dieu chez saint Irenaeus de Lyon*. (Paris: Cerf, 1986), pp. 338 ff. Humanity's incomplete state is also a major idea for another second century theologian, Theophilus of Antioch, in his work Ad Autolycum, bk. II. For an analysis of this understanding of creation, see R. Rogers. *Theophilus of Antioch. The Life and Thought of a Second-Century Bishop*. Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2000), chapter 2. For an English translation of Theophilus, see: Robert M. Grant, trans. *Theophilus of Antioch: Ad Autolycum* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970.) This concept of human weakness and disobedience (or immaturity) is basic to the theological anthropology of the Eastern Fathers, and distinguishes them in many ways from St. Augustine and his understanding of sin, which became formative in the Latin West. For further details, see also the G. Aulen volume mentioned in n. 23 above.

31. There is an excellent and clearly written chapter on this phenomenon in its western manifestations in R. W. Southern. *The Making of the Middle Ages*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992, and earlier editions), chapter 5, "From Epic to Romance." Southern comments: "The change of emphasis from localism to universality, the emergence of systematic thought, the rise of logicto these we may add a change which in a certain sense comprehends them all: the change from Epic to Romance. . . Briefly, we find less talk of life as an exercise in endurance, and of death in a hopeless cause; and we hear more of life as a seeking and a journeying." (p. 222); "The theme of tenderness and compassion for the sufferings and helplessness of the Saviour and of the world was one which had a new birth in the monasteries of the eleventh century, and every century since then has

paid tribute to the monastic inspiration of this century by some new development of the theme." (p. 232) For Romanesque portrayals of Christ on the cross, see: *Christs en Croix Romans*. Textes Medievaux traduits par E. de Solms. (*La Pierre Qui Vire: Zodiaque, les Points Cardinaux*, 2e edition, 1995).

32. See H. Maguire. "The Depiction of Sorrow in Middle Byzantine Art," in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, no. 31, p. 162. (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1977).

33. See figure 54, "The Death and Burial of Jacob," in Maguire article.

34. See Maguire, p. 142 and K. Weitzmann. *Byzantine Book Illumination and Ivories*. (London: Variorum, 1980), no. 9: "The Origin of the Threnos," pp. 487ff.

35. On Byzantine hymnography and its roots in Palestinian and Studite monasticism see E. Wellesz. *A History of Byzantine Music and Hymnography*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1949), chapters I, VII- IX; and Thomas Pott. *La Reforme Liturgique Byzantine. Etude de Phenomene de l'Evolution Non-Spontanee de la Liturgie Byzantine*. (Roma: Edizioni Liturgiche, 2000), chapter 4: "Reforme monastique et evolution liturgique. La reforme studite," pp. 99-129.

36. See T. Velmans, "Les Valeurs Affectives dans la Peinture Murale Byzantine au XIIIe Siecle et la Maniere de les Representer," in *L'Art Byzantin du XIIIe Siecle. Symposium de Sopcani*, 1965. (Beograd, 1967), p. 47.

37. This is a major theme of K. Weitzmann's article cited in note 33, particularly how in the Middle Byzantine period themes from ancient Roman art were appropriated. Yet we need to be aware that a new period of inspiration did not follow models in a strict manner, but encouraged conscious adaptations. Maguire's long article cited in our text makes much the same point in describing Byzantine depictions of sorrow.

38. See, for example, the basic study of principles of Byzantine art in G. Matthew. *Byzantine Aesthetics*. (London: J. Murray, 1963). Matthew explains that in the art of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries there had been some dramatic developments that transformed more classic scenes. Monastic schools of painting in Cappadocia had a more gripping style of portrayal. "It is at times crudely emotional; it has its own rhythms; it is frequently marked by a vigorous brutal realism; by the decision to emphasize the dramatic and by the successful intentions to tell a clear story clearly." See p. 142. In Mathew's judgement, the affective portrayals of Christ, the Theotokos and the saints that developed into Cistercian and Franciscan forms of spirituality already had their beginning in this form of art.

39. This is especially evident in the development of the art expressing piety in the later medieval period in the West, where the natural often overwhelmed theological subjects. The sufferings of Christ and the saints, as well as the sorrows of the Virgin Mary, show this. See the treatment of these themes in J. Huizinga. *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*.

Trans. By Rodney J. Payton and Ulrich Mammitzsch. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), especially chapters 5- 6. Note the importance of a preoccupation with physical death and decay: “No other age has so forcefully and continuously impressed the idea of death on the whole population as did the fifteenth century, in which the call of the memento mori (“reminder of death”) echoes throughout the whole of life.” (p. 157) Although the fifteenth century had many expressions of this, the change in spiritual mentality in the West had begun as early as the thirteenth century. The physical nature of Christ, the Virgin Mother, and the saints note 39 (continued): becomes increasingly important. From this point to a fascination or preoccupation with mortality and decay is an easy step. There is a tradition of meditation in the West on the burial of Christ, and the depiction of this in art, with roots in the East. See: M. Martin. *La Statuaire de la Mise au Tombeau du Christ des XVe et XVIe Siecles en Europe Occidentale*. (Paris: Picard, 1997)

40. On the anastasis theme, see A. Kartsonis. *Anastasis: the Making of an Image*. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986).

41. The works of M. Alexiou and B. Bouvier are important beginnings in this study. See M. Alexiou. *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition*. (N.Y.: Cambridge University Press, 1974), pp.62-78; and B. Bouvier. *Le Mirologue de la Vierge: Chansons et Poemes Grecs sur la Passion du Christ*. (Geneve: Droz, 1976) Both these studies show that even in the case of a saint or holy person, such as the Theotokos, there is a sense that lament as argument (as well as grief) involves placing the person with their social structure. Thus in one Greek mourning ballad, Alexiou explains that the “essential point of theology is forgotten. . . Christ replies to her (the Theotokos’) threat that she will throw herself over a cliff or hang herself, that if she despairs and kills herself, the whole world will follow suit.” Instead, Christ instructs her “to return home, prepare the wine and rusk for the paregoria (funeral feast), so that the whole world may partake of it, thereby uniting mother and child, brother and sister, husband and wife.” (p. 71) Obviously we find here a considerable difference between formal theology and folk tradition. But it is the special genius of Orthodox cultures to find ways to relate these two, so that each reinforces the other. The Christian West has lost much of this interaction as the secular has displaced the sacred. Folk traditions of the Theotokos deserve much further attention by scholars of religion and culture. Another important study of women and the tradition of lament that gives much valuable context is C. Nadia Seremetakis. *The Last Word. Women, Death, and Divination in Inner Mani*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

Man's Deification in the Poetical Vision of Gregory of Nazianzus

THEODOR DAMIAN

St. Gregory's Personality

Even if one would put aside Gregory's theological discourses and other works and his significant contribution to the fight against the heresies of his time and to the cristallization of the Christian doctrine, and even if one would ignore his entire activity in the administration of the Church and would consider only his poetry, the bishop of Nazianzus and the patriarch of Constantinople would still remain in history as one of the main classics and luminaries in literature in general, and in Christian literature and philosophy in particular.

He was a lover of wisdom who reflected constantly on the human existence and condition in order to find the best way to travel the life's path in accordance with one's highest understanding of the human destiny and destination.

Being a meditative nature, Gregory loved solitude when he took extensive time to talk to him self and engage in conversation with God. His poetry, extremely elaborated compared with the poetic production of his time, unjustly given less attention than it deserves, illustrates his struggles, both philosophical and theological as well as the greatness of his critical thinking abilities and also, very well, his more human inquietude and humor.

Who am I?

This question, that appears frequently in his poetry, is asked by Gregory not just in order to have knowledge of him self as one wants to have about all other things, not just in order to raise his self esteem at the idea that he had found an appropriate definition for a complex reality, but in order to be able to harmonize being with doing or being with becoming since doing and becoming (by doing) is

man's responsibility and contribution in life, just as being is God's contribution.

"Who was I? Who am I? Who will I be?"the philosopher is asking but at the same time he confesses Socratically that he doesn't know clearly.[1] And not only that he doesn't know but more confusion is added to that when he notices the instability of his walks and actions and more particularly the distance between what he has and what he wants to have.[2]

Apparently he does not know who he is but at least he knows what he has and what he wants to have, even though Gregory can be, contrary to expectations from a theologian, very nihilistic like in those instances where overwhelmed with skepticism he declares: "I am nothing".[3]

However this skepticism is not a general characteristic of the bishop's philosophical thinking. It is rather, part of the struggle with the question. In other instances, in the same poem, *On the Human Nature*, Gregory suggests that being is like a miracle that he suddenly discovers and that challenges him: "I am. Think: what does this mean?" he acclaims in wonder and in quasi-cartesian manner, in order to come up with a Heraclitean response with nihilistic accents: "Nothing is sure I am, indeed, a troubled river's current."[4]

The type of struggle we are witnessing is, in fact, a reflection of the Theologian's existential dilemma. He is torn between life and death. Is it better to pray for life? In that case there is a perspective of more sins. Should he pray for death? In that option looms the judgment, as he puts it in *Lament to Christ*.[5] To opt for death implies also inability to do something to compensate for past offenses against God.[6]

It is very interesting to notice that while having such struggles and dilemmas and problems with being and becoming, and life in general, St. Gregory does not fall into despair, neither does he adopt a nihilistic point of view as ultimate response and position. On the contrary, as we see in his poems *Meditation on the Christian Doctrine* and *Weakness of the Human Nature*, he is in final analysis optimistic and demonstrates a healthy inner stability. In other words, his nihilistic skepticism is only a working tool in a major enterprise, expressed only rhetorically and strategically in order to be able to stress even more what seems to be his final conclusion which consists of a declaration of love for this life and for life beyond: "That is why I love this life because of the dust [in me], and I have in my heart the desire for the other life because of the divine part in me"[7] he

says referring to being created by God and having a promise from God for the other life as well.

Here the philosopher turns theologian and even a very devoted one, when he believes that no matter who you are, and what you know of who you are, you need to trust God and look towards His goodness.[8] One can believe that there is a contradiction here in Gregory's attitude: on the one hand he struggles with issues of life and being, on the other hand he finds the very simple solution, that of trusting God.

I do not think that trusting God and believing in Him is inconsistent with, and antagonistic to asking questions and thinking critically and analyzing and trying to understand and make sense as much as possible. In fact by asking questions and struggling hard with them one can give oneself another chance to discover God's since all ways lead to God anyway.

That is what he beautifully says in his poem *On the Human Nature* where he seems to turn back from his apparent skepticism and to give us a strong reason to believe in God and in His plans for us now and in the life to come: "Stop! Everything is secondary to God Give in to reason. God did not make me in vain."[9]

Reasons for a Theology of Deification

Deification is the ultimate goal God had in view when He created us. That is to be like God, not by nature but by grace, to share in the divine condition, to be in communion with God, to share His glory while praising him and giving Him glory like the angels, incessantly.

God created us in His image but with the possibility to become in His likeness, that is to reach the state of holiness and immortality: *posse non mori.* The fact that God did not create us in vain, as Gregory wrote, suggests already a very simple and logical reason for deification, which is at the same time solid ground for our hope in that direction.

On the other hand when Gregory affirms in *Hymn to God* that "all things run endessly to God who is the end of them all"[10] he is offering another natural reason to believe in the possibility of man's deification. In fact, God looks upon all things[11] because he is the Seer, as the term "God" indicates in Greek[12]; He sees everything and knows everything and power over everything.

In *Meditations on the Christian Doctrine*, like later Pico della Mirandola in his *Oratio de Hominis Dignitate*[13] Gregory of Nazianzus gives us another reason in favor of deification by speaking of how God created us a race that includes mortals and immortals, with an intermediary intelligence, enjoying the divine works and being initiated in heavenly things, being like angels but taken from dust and praising God's might and intelligence.[14]

There are two elements in this mini-discourse that indicate deification and represent reasons for such a doctrine: firs, the idea that we are initiated already in the heavenly things. We did not reach fulfillment but initiation points to it. The second one is the idea of praising God's might and intelligence or greatness. That indicates the doxological condition to which man is called, which according to Gregory's theology represents the deified state of being in God's Kingdom. As we are only initiated in the divine things while living here this life, we praise God's greatness in this life following that we do that fully in God's Kingdom.

Salvation, in the eschatological sense, and deification cannot be separated from each other. To be saved in Jesus Christ is to be in the Kingdom of God, in His communion, to be deified. In order to be saved in and by Jesus Christ one has to belong to Christ. That is why St. Gregory makes of belonging to Christ and to God another reason and ground for deification, all the more since deification is both what man desires and what God and Christ desire. "I am Yours, o Christ; then save me as it is Your heart's desire to do", the poet exclaims[15] just as when, in more general terms, he draws our attention: "from the beginning I belong to Someone Else"[16]

It is based on this sense of belonging that man longs for the release from this world[17] and strives to attain "that distant life" as Gregory calls the life eternal, but not after having fought here to the end and having won the athlete's crown to which St. Paul refers, in other words, not after having passed all the struggles of this life while always remaining totally dedicated to God.[18] In fact, all the trials of this existence, if it was devoted to God, amount to a cross that one bears while leaving this condition and "exchanging world for world" as Gregory puts it.[19] And even the trials that indicate imperfection also indicate perfection, just like instability over here indicate the stability in another place; thus stability and perfection become object of desire and love, ground for striving to reach higher and at the time an appreciation of God's economy of salvation, of His providence and love for us.[20]

Imago Dei

The most powerful reason yet on which the doctrine of deification is built in Gregory's poetry is man's creation in the image of God. It is *Imago Dei* that holds man into being even though that implies a paradox, that of the spiritualization of dirt which shows a radical change into the nature of the created order. "The dirt is made spiritual by the divine image", we read in the poem *Concerning Human Life.*[21] The image of God, according to Gregory, is all that counts in life. "Nothing is of any use to me"[22], declares the saint.

The *Imago Dei* is the source and ground for any hope and miracle. Not only that it changed the nature of dirt, but it can change the nature of man as a being the way we are here and now. Man's deification is rooted in the gift of the divine image to us. God might "perfect me as God by His human image"[23], that is by His divine image that was given to man, Gregory teaches.

Nothing can break this gift in man. Sin only darkens the image, it does not annihilate it. The Platonic opposition between flesh and soul in man[24], to which the poet subscribes, cannot break it either. It cannot be broken even by death.

Light is a metaphor at hand for deification in Gregory's vision. God is light. The image of God in man is the icon placed "here, below, of the brightness that is above so that man may see the light by light and thus become entirely light"[25] we read in *An Evening Prayer* by Gregory.

The doctrine of deification is related, in the context of the *Imago Dei theology*, to the idea of procession and return, found in the neo-Platonic thought and in the Christian mystical theology. Everything that originates in God has a powerful natural tendency to go back to God. Being God's great creature and image, Gregory writes, man proceeds from God and returns to God. Yet that process takes place under Christ's merciful guidance.[26]

The Christological Aspect of Deification

St. Gregory the Theologian, takes very good care to make sure that he stresses well enough the capital role that Jesus Christ has in the process of man's deification.

Against Appolinarius who taught that Christ was not in reality fully man, that His body was not a real human body but a kind of heavenly body, impassible, which could not suffer in the real sense of

the word, the bishop of Nazianzus elaborate son the full humanity of the Word incarnate and explains that has not been assumed by Christ has not been saved. Or, the Son of God came in order to save man fully, not partially, to save man in both dimensions, physical and spiritual. For that reason Christ must have assumed real human body and real human spirit, while remaining fully God as well.[27] This is what perfect work means and God works in this way because our salvation in Christ is our expression of God's love[28] and that is not a patial love. By assuming a human body to help the suffering creatures Jesus Christ did not lose anything from His divinity[29] that is why He had all the power to "wash all our passions away", and all our sins, to cleanse the entire world[30], to free us "from the bonds of death" so that we might "once again attain a better life"[31], writes Gregory in *Lamentations Concerning the Sorrows of His Own Soul*, and referring to the original condition in which man was created by God. In order to reach that state again one has to live in total faithfulness to Christ, that is why the poet says it loudly: "I, who have clung to Christ will never let go".[32]

However if it happens to fall from Christ's way there is hope that one can get back there through effort and prayer: "Rekindle my light, o, Christ, and shine on me again"[33] he prays. The bishop knows that the way to the Kingdom of God, to deification is difficult, it often requires sisyphic efforts, it often implies falls and risings, but faith in Christ and bard work on man's part gives one the chance to get back unto the right way, just as we say in one of the prayers from the service of the Holy Onction: "Every time you fall, get up and you will be saved."

Man's deification in Christ is expressed by Gregory aphoristically when he says that Jesus Christ offers us divinity in exchange for our mortality[34], a statement consistent with the well known patristic adage: God become man so that man can become God, idea particularly present in St. Athanasius's theology.

Homo Capax Infinity

Deification is understood by Gregory the Theologian as being the ultimate destiny of man.[35] Even though it starts here, as he emphasizes in the poem *Meditation on the Christian Doctrine*[36], in order to show the paradox, the miracle it implies, it is fulfilled in eschaton, in the Kingdom of God when we will forever praise God. This ontic capacity of man to become light and live forever is a gift

and a grace from God[37], according to St. Gregory, it is part of the divine likeness in which God created ma, that *posse non mori* he received initially and lost through the fall, but which could be regained in Jesus Christ.

Deification is not cheap grace, it is a great gift but man must pray for it, as Gregory does[38] and as he longs for it from the depth of his soul.[39] He ardently asks God to give him a portion of the heavenly glory, and, in general, "a greater share of the things of heaven above."[40]

This type of request, somehow similar to that of two of Christ's disciples who wanted to be at the right and left hand side of Christ when He was to be in His glory, indicates partially as well what deification consists of: it is doxological existence in God's Kingdom and communion.

Conclusion

Gregory the Theologian was an extremely eloquent rhetorician as he was a sensitive nature. His tendency towards mystical experiences together with the wealth of knowledge he acquired through an education of high quality and with his critical thinking ability and philosophical inclinations helped him become one of the most redoubtable representatives of Christianity in his time, a divine gift to the Church and a powerful guide of God's people in the footsteps of Christ.

His poetry, a wonderful mirror of his personality both at the personal and professional levels, is a great source of inspiration for anyone who needs to learn the Christian doctrine, to get strength in faith and to have a concrete example of how to struggle in the daily life and fight the good fight.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *On God and Man: The Theological Poetry of St. Gregory of Nazianzus* (transl. and introd. by Peter Gilbert), St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, NY, 2001, p. 132 (in future references: Gilbert).

2. *Saint Grégoire de Nazianze*, textes choisis et présentés par Edmond Devolder dans la traduction de Paul Gallay, Les éditions du Soleil Levant, Namur (Belgique), 1960, p. 76 (in future references: Gallay).

3. Gilbert, p. 133.

4. *Ibidem.*

5. *Saint Gregory Nazianzen: Selected Poems* (Translated with an Introduction by John McGuckin), SLG Press, Convent of the Incarnation, Fairacres, Oxford, 1995, p. 16 (in future references: McGuckin).

6. Gallay, p. 82.

7. *Ibidem,* p. 73.

8. *Ibid,* p. 82.

9. Gillbert, p. 136.

10. McGuckin, p. 7.

11. *Ibidem,* p. 7.

12. Theodor Damian, "St. Gregory of Nyssa on the Power of God", in *Romanian Medievalia*, vol. 3, The Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality, New York, 2005, p. 156

13. Pico della Mirandola, *Oration on the Dignity of Man*, Gateway Edition, Henry Regnery, Chicago, 1956, pp. 7-8.

14. Gallay, p. 72.

15. McGuckin, p. 15.

16. Gallay, p. 33.

17. McGuckin, p. 15.

18. *Ibidem,* p. 16.

19. Gilbert, p. 146.

20. *Ibidem,* p. 146.

21. *Ibid.,* p. 150.

22. *Ibid.,* p. 135.

23. *Ibid.*

24. *Ibid*., p. 159.

25. McGuckin, p. 11.

26. Gilbert, p. 157.

27. Gallay, pp. 74-75.

28. McGuckin, p. 5.

29. *Ibidem,* p. 4.

30. *Ibid.,* pp. 3-5.

31. Gilbert, p. 158.

32. *Ibidem,* p. 143.

33. McGuckin, p. 14.

34. *Ibidem,* p. 6; Gallay, p. 73.

35. *Ibid.,* p. 11.

36. Gallay, pp. 67, 73.

37. McGuckin, p. 13.

38. *Ibidem,* p. 9, Gilbert, p. 169.

39. Gilbert, p. 144.

40. *Ibidem;* see also p. 169.

Stances of Romanian Traditions in Captain John Smith's Literary Works: An Englishman's Way to Become American Goes (also) through Romania

DANIELA ŞOVEA FALCO, MA

I must admit that I might have never heard of Captain John Smith if it had not been for an unbelievable chance meeting that happened two years ago here, at Kalamazoo: the distinguished Director George Alexe and his wife, Mrs. Ruxandra Didi Alexe. This was an encounter that happens once in a lifetime, so when Professor Alexe suggested that I look into the writings of one English become American whose tales include chapters about travelling in Transylvania in the early seventeenth century, and we saw in this a way to bridge two cultures that at that time had no relations whatsoever, I happily undertook the task. Little did I know, at that time, that the actual passages dedicated to Smith's presence and living in Transylvania would be very little descriptive of the places and people living there (he actually dedicates more space to the Tartars that held him slave and describes their customs and dress in detail!), and that Transylvania itself was seen as a third part of Hungary, and not of Romania or the Romanian provinces. Nonetheless, Captain John Smith's observations comprise, next to lengthy battle descriptions—as befitting a soldier and an adventurer—some surprising social and political comments, as well as sympathetic feelings for the inhabitants of the places. Although rather brief and vague to some extent, Smith's images of Transylvania come to us, the readers of almost four hundreds years later, as strong and vivid as he saw them in 1601-1602 and put them on paper in 1622-29.

Due to the nature of the stories of his adventures—since Smith was a compiler and writer of exuberant travelers' tales, an explorer, a mapmaker, a geographer, an ethnographer, a soldier, a governor, a trader, a sailor, an admiral, and the editor of a seaman's handbook—there have been people who have doubted the truth of

his writings. Enormously energetic, with a restless temperament from a very early age, his adventures and travels touched Europe, Africa, and America, and matched the boldest exploits of fearless knight-errantry. In this hemisphere alone, he was an early explorer not only of the Chesapeake but also of New England's coast and, at home in England, an enthusiast in the cause of America's colonization. And, since one of his best known stories was that of his being saved by Pocahontas, King Powhatan's daughter—and this is also in bedtime tales for children and in cartoons—one may rightfully wonder where can the fine line be drawn between historic truth and Captain Smith's rich imagination in order to attain some valuable information on his earlier travels in south-eastern Europe.

A fine defender of the Captain's veracity in the twentieth century is Laura Polanyi Striker, who has helped restore Captain Smith's reputation by contributing to Brandon Smith's famous book, *Captain John Smith, His Life and Legend,* 1953. As she quotes Professor Channing commenting in 1905, "No fiercer controversy has ever raged around any character in American history than that which has been fought over the credibility of Captain John Smith," she also is a fighter for that credibility. In a special effort, she translates from Latin and edits the book of almost contemporary Henry Wharton (1664-1695), scholar and divine, *The Life of John Smith, English Soldier;* she concludes that the study must have been written in early 1685 and it is published by her for the first time in 1957. Striker strongly believes that Wharton himself, as a scholar and a divine, could have only said the truth, and therefore emphasizes the credibility of the latter's opening statement: "There are a few things about which I would like my reader to know: first of all, I pledge my honor that this entire story is true" (Striker 7). Who can resist such an argument? Joke left aside, Striker concludes, by comparing several documents, that Wharton's study, which tells the adventurer's life quite accurately and close to Smith's own account, is worth taking into consideration and that Captain Smith has spoken the truth.

Of the same opinion seems to be Philip Barbour, the editor of one of Captain Smith's modern *Complete Works* versions and the author of *The Three Worlds of Captain John Smith* (1964). He writes in his introduction to his latter book: "Every school child knows that Captain Smith was a hero, a historian, and Pocahontas's sweetheart—or that he was a *dastard,* a liar, and so far as Pocahontas was concerned, an ingrate. It depends on whose life of Smith you read" (ix). Indeed, one may say that this may be the case

with anything that has been written and is available for reading: how does the reader know for sure that what he or she reads is the truth? There may be as many truths as many books written. And then, why this endless passion for the truth? In the case of Captain John Smith, historic truth is at stake, particularly in his stories about his travels and military exploits in southeast Europe and then his years in the Virginia Colony; thus, the dispute about the veracity or unreality of his accounts that has been taking place for hundreds of years. Since he is the first American writer to mention in his works any of the Romanian provinces—little that he does—we shall choose to side with Striker and Barbour and the other critics in their camp and believe Smith to have recollected and written mainly the truth about his youthful adventures that took him that far in space from his own country and brought him into a geographic space that is so familiar to us.

But first of all, who was this John Smith? He was born on January 9th 1580 to George and Alice Smith in Willoughby by Alford, in England. His father was not a gentleman, but a "yeoman," a freeman with some money and a farm. The boy grew up in difficult political conditions and, as Barbour writes, "1593 was a fateful year for John Smith. According to his own account, he made his first bid for adventure in that year" (8). Indeed, as the title of his main book that we are interested in says, 1593 is the year that his adventures began: *The true travels, adventvres, and observations of Captaine Iohn Smith, in Europe, Asia, Affrica, and America, from anno Domini 1593, to 1629 [microform]. His accidents and sea-fights in the Straights, his service and strategems of warre in Hungaria, Transilvania, Wallachia, and Moldavia, against the Turks and Tartars; his three single combats betwixt the Christian Armie and the Turkes. After how he was taken prisoner by the Turks, sold for a slave, sent into Tartaria; his description of the Tartars, their strange manners and customes of religions, diets, buildings, warres, feasts, ceremonies, and living, how he slew the basnaw of Nalbrits in Cambria, and escaped from the Turkes and Tartars. Together with a continuation of his Generall history of Virginia, Summer-Iles, New England, and their proceedings, since 1624, to this present 1629; as also of the new plantations of the great river of the Amazons, the iles of St. Christopher, Mevis, and Barbados in the West Indies. All written by actuall authours, whose names you shall find along the history.* Whatever his intentions were, and how attracted by the sea he was, his schooling and his father delayed his actual leaving home for two

more years: in April 1596 his father died and John felt he was free to do what he wanted. So, with the help of his guardian George Metham, a friend of his father's, he terminated his apprenticeship to a merchant amicably and, as Barbour comments, "he had liberty enough, though no means, to get beyond the sea" (10). He did not go beyond the sea, though, but only in the Low Countries—The Netherlands—where he served under a certain Captain Duxbury for three or four seemingly obscure years, since he did not give much information about them.

Then he went back to England to live in Willoughby by Alford, being the most travelled member of the community and as restless as usual. He chose to live in "a little woody pasture" where he read Machiavelli and learned about Europe and the continuous fights between the Christians and the Ottomans from Theodore Paleologue, his riding instructor. Yet when he found out in the summer of 1600 that his former commander, Captain Duxbury, had been killed in the Battle at Nieuport in Flanders, he left England again—first for the Netherlands; there he met "the four French gallants" who talked of fighting the Turks in Hungary, but they cheated him and robbed him of his chest while still on the ship on the way to France. Smith nevertheless made it through France, Italy, and finally in 1601 to the Holy Roman Empire, in Vienna. He found his way to fulfill his dream of fighting the Turks by enrolling in the army of the Count of Modrucsh, locally pronounced Modritsch—Smith's "Earl Meldritch"—who was forming a regiment or battalion. [As a parenthesis, all names of people and places are almost unrecognizable because of his spelling or his writing down whatever he understood and remembered of them; also, I tried to make head or tails of his geographic details with the help of Barbour, but sometimes even he cannot be of much help: since Transylvania was considered to be a part of Hungary at that time, most all names are given in their Hungarian version, and very few in their present time Romanian version. Therefore, some of Smith's names of places still remain a mystery.]

Their first objective was to protect a fortified town called Olumpagh or Olimpach by Smith (Olimpac by Wharton); this, according to Barbour, could only be the place known in Latin as Olimacum and in German as Limbach. This battle also constituted the beginning of Smith's military career, since after it he was promoted to be captain of 25o horses under the command of "Earle Meldritch" in Smith's account—but by Barbour Count Modrusch, later

to be incorporated into the Duke of Mercoeur's army (relative of Emperor Rudolph II). His army happened to be the first one to move out (of the three the Emperor had) to march to Stuhlweissenburg or Alba Regia or Alba Regalis or Alba Iulia, then seat of the Magyar kingdom, on September 6th 1601. The city was to be under siege, because it had been occupied by the Turks. The battle lasted long and in the end, as Barbour commented, "The real victor was the rain and cold of the oncoming winter. As the Christians retired toward Palota, on the other side of Alba Regalis, the Turks sent a dignitary who gave notice that they would recapture the city the next year (which they did), and returned to his camp" (36). Apparently, this is the place and time in his story that John Smith seemed to spend a little more in detail on the Transylvanian (or, Romanian) land.

In an attempt to facilitate his readers' access to the story, Philip Barbour also explained to his readers some history of the Balkans thus: "More than a millennium after Trajan, when the Kingdom of Hungary had taken shape, Transylvania was virtually depopulated, from repeated barbarian inroads" (37) which was later populated by "Hungarians," "Szeklers," and "Saxons" or Germans. Thus Transylvania was a third part of the Hungarian kingdom, ruled by a "voivod" (no explanation to the Slavic origin of the word) to be appointed by the Hungarian king. At the time of these occurrences, Prince of Transylvania was Sigismund or Zsigmond Bathory, who had just abdicated the throne in favour of Emperor Rudolph II and threatened by Gyorgy Basta, the Emperor's Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Army.

After the battle at Alba Regalis, then, John Smith happened to walk and look at the places and people around him. His description of what he saw is quite unanticipated, as Barbour also expresses: "John Smith's account of what he saw and heard at that very time is surprisingly penetrating, considering his position of mere Captain of Horse, his presumable unfluency in Latin, and his ignorance of Hungarian and two varieties of German: Austrian and Transylvanian" (41). And the time has come to listen to John Smith himself:

Busca [Basta] having been all this time raising new forces, was commanded from the Emperour again to invade Transilvania, which being one of the fruitfullest and strongest Countries in those parts, was now rater a desart, or the very spectacle of desolation; their fruits and fields overgrown with weeds, their Churches and battered Palaces and best buildings, as for feare, hid with Mosse and Ivy; being the very Bulwarke and Rampire of a great part of *Europe*,

most ft by all Christians to have beene supplyed and maintained, was thus brought to ruine by the most fit concerned to support it. (18)

Besides his genuine dislike for General Basta, Smith expresses here several sentiments: he feels for the people living in the land; his heart seems to bleed on paper when he describes the fruits and fields overgrown with weeds which predict hunger and poverty, the churches and palaces battered and covered by moss and ivy that show no care for the people who lived and prayed in there. His comparison "as for feare" shows that he sensed well the atmosphere reigning in the land at that time: fear and destruction brought exactly by those "the most fit to support it", the country: its rulers. He even manages to see what most European princes and politicians had and have always avoided to seeing: "the very Bulwark and Rampire [rampart, fortification] of a great part of *Europe*, most fit by all Christians to have been supplied and maintained," that the Romanian provinces had been for Western Europe for hundreds of years. One hundred and more years earlier Stephen the Great and Vlad the Impaler and Matei Corvin had fought the same battles under the insensitive eyes of Western Europe—and here comes an Englishman to say these words after spending just a year or so on this land…

Interestingly, the next passage of his writing comes probably as a comment both to what he sees around him—and thus directed at General Basta and Emperor Rudolph II—but also as general comments at the estates that existed in society at his time. By reading them, one can almost see in Smith the future colonist of the New World, pleading for a place without such social strata: But alas, what is it when the power of Majestie pampered in all delights of pleasant vanity, neither knowing nor considering the labour of the Ploughman, the hazard of the Merchant, the oppression of Statesmen; nor feeling the piercing torments of broken limbes, & inveterated wounds, the toilsome matches, the bad lodging, the hungry diet, and the extreme misery that Soldiers endure to secure those estates, and yet by the spight of malicious detraction starves for want of their rewards and recompences; whilest the politique Courtier, that commonly aimes more at his owne honours and ends, than his Countries good, or his Princes glory, honour, or security, as this worthy Prince too well could testifie. (18)

Whether these social comments came from his long-wounded pride (for, after all, he was not born a gentleman) and his sufferings as a soldier, or were the results of the distress created by

the sights he was seeing, no one can know for sure. It might have been both.

His story continues with the battles that occurred between "one Ieremie" [Movila] sent by the Turke to be their "Vavoyd" or Prince after the death of Michael of Wallachia and "Lord Rodoll" [Radu Şerban]. All these happened in his account by the rivers *Altus* and *Argish,* "in the plaines of *Peteske*", and a battle took place at *Rottenton* (?!). Ieremia Movila fled to Moldavia, and Radu Şerban was seated as Voivod of Wallachia and subjected to Emperor Rudolph, but Captain Smith fell in battle and was left for dead. He was found by pillagers who, seeing his armour and habit, hoped in a rich ransome, but ultimately sent him with other prisoners to be sold as a slave in Axopolis, i.e. Hîrşova.

Even as a prisoner on the way to his new home as a slave, his keen eye found time to observe, and later on to describe, the places he went through on his way to Constantinople. Thus, he wrote about, his passing in this speculative course from *Constantinople* to *Sander, Strewe, Panassa, Musa, Lastilla,* to *Varna*, an ancient Citie upon the Blacke Sea. In all which journey, having little more libertie, than is eyes judgement since captivitie, he might see the Townes with their short Towers, and a most plaine, fertile, and delicate Countrey, especially that most admired place of *Greece*, now called *România.* (23-24)

Although it is south of the Danube România he is referring to—also known as Rumelia with the capital at Adrianopol or Edirne under the Turks—and if indeed in 1629-1630 when he was preparing his book for publication this was the name that the "delicate Countrey" was bearing, it is still the one and only time that the word "Romania" appears in his book. All the other chapters mention Transylvania, or Wallachia, or Moldavia—but it is only Chapter XII that has this word in it.

At this point the story verges the unbelievable and sounds like a standard romance: he was bought by a young gentlewoman, Charatza Tragabigzanda who took pity on him and, knowing a little Italian, even talked with him. Then she asked some people who knew English to inquire him, and upon finding out that he indeed was English, she sent him to her brother Timor in Tartaria, where he was supposed to learn the language and the customs of the Turks—but unfortunately was treated as the lowest of the slaves: his head and beard were shaven, he was fed on leftovers, and he had to work all the time. He nevertheless took his time to observe everything around

him, and he described at length and in detail (too bad he did not do that with Transylvania!) the Turks' diet and the slaves' diet, the attire of the Tartars and the manner of their wars and religions, their buildings and laws, and so on. He ultimately had to kill the Timor to free himself and escape, and he walked until he reached the river Don and Muscovites. The governor believed his story, took off his irons, and let him go on his way home—which happened to go through, among other places such as Lasco in Podolia or Collonia in Polonia, *Hermanstat* [Sibiu] in *Transilvania*. What impresses this man coming literally from hell is the poverty he sees again in a place continuously torn by wars and battles—Transylvania and its poor neighbours. His comments again demonstrate a sympathetic eye and a caring heart:

Through those poore continually forraged Countries there is no passage, but with the Caravans and Convoyes; for they are Countries rather to be pitied, than envied; and it is a wonder any should make warres for them. The Villages are onely here and there a few houses of straight Firre trees, laid points and heads above one another, made fast by notches at the end more than a mans height, and with broad split boards, pinned together with wooden pinnes, as thatched for coverture. In ten Villages you shall scarce finde ten iron nailes, except it be in some extraordinary mans house.

What a graphic image of the rural wood houses that maybe even toda*y*—*with* iron nails and all—are still built up in the mountains of Transylvania or Moldavia or Wallachia… Indeed, the poor country should have been pitied, and not made war for; it should have been protected, not attacked. It is Captain Smith still who gives a possible explanation to this, " Notwithstanding to see how their Lords, Governours, and Captaines are civilized, well attired and acoutred with Jewels, Sables, and Horses, and after their manner with curious furniture, it is wonderfull; but they are all Lords or slaves, which makes them so subject to every invasion" (33). Apparently, it was the lords of the land who by so ostentatiously displaying their richness made it appear richer than it was, more desirable than it was…

In Transylvania Captain John Smith met with many good friends; then in Prague Prince Sigismund Bathory gave him a pass that allowed him to arrive back in England unharmed—and thus ended the European adventures of the famous (and infamous, by others) captain.

One certainly wishes there had been more written material dedicated by the captain to Transylvania and Wallachia and

Moldavia. Although he spent little physical time on that land, and even less time writing about it—compared to the amount of his entire works—one important fact remains: Captain John Smith was the first Englishman, later to become one of the first American colonists, who lived on Romanian land and looked at it and its people with an understanding and sympathetic eye. He also put his thoughts and memories on paper, thus helping us build an early bridge between two nations who can now look back upon their ancestors and see that we have never been too far from each other.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Arber, E. and A. G. Bradley, eds. *Travels and Works of Captain John Smith*. Vol. 1. Edinburgh, UK: John Grant, 1910. 2 vols.

Barbour, P. *The Three Worlds of Captain John Smith.* Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1964.

Georgescu, V. *The Romanians: A History.* Columbus, OH: Ohio State UP, 1984.

Giurescu, C.C. *Transylvania in the History of Romania.* London: Garnstone.

Mehedinţi, S. *What is Transylvania?* Miami Beach, FL: Romanian Historical Studies, 1984.

Oţetea, A. *The History of the Romanian People.* New York: Twayne, 1970.

Smith, J. *The true travels, adventures, and observations of Captaine Iohn Smith, in Europe, Asia, Affrica, and America, from anno Domini 1593 to 1629: His accidents and sea-fights in the straights; his service and stratagems of warre in Hungaria, Transilvania, Wallachia, and Moldavia, against the Turks, and Tartars… After how he was taken prisoner by the Turks, sold for a slave…and escaped… […].* London: John Haviland, 1630.

Wharton, H. *The Life of John Smith, English Soldier.* Trans. Laura Polanyi Striker. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1957.

41st International Congress on Medieval Studies 4-7 May 2006

The Poetry of Gregory of Nazianzus in the Christian Poetical Context of the Fourth Century

THEODOR DAMIAN

Introduction

St. Gregory of Nazianzus was a personality of first rank in the complex world of the 4th Christian century[1]. A. Benoit is certain that he was one of the greatest orators that ever existed.[2] So much, in fact, Gregory was part of the life of his century, albeit his ascetic withdrawals, that studying his biography one will be well introduced to the life of his time and vice versa.[3] On one hand, as Paul Gallay notices, the 4th century was a century of fighting, both between Christianity and paganism and within Christianity between sects, heresies and orthodoxy.[4]

On the other hand this century was characterized by a strong admiration and enthusiasm for the classic Hellenic culture. That was true for the entire Roman Empire. Subjects taught in the Greek classic educational system were in fashion now, students would strive to learn more and better the Greek letters and philosophy, they would even go from school to school looking for new and better programs and professors in order to obtain this type of instruction.[5]

For all that excitement and lore of the old intellectual life and production the pagan writers of this century, in the Roman Empire were not able to generate anything comparable with the great works of the old Greek authors. It was the advent and the growth of Christianity that changed the landscape. Whatever was missing in order to achieve that comparability was given by Christianity, still a new religion to many; that is why, Paul Galley writes, the greatest authors in this period of time were the Fathers of the Church.[6] In other words, the profound originality of the Christian spirit found in the cultural background of the fourth century[7] the most appropriate condition in order for it to shock its force and potential. This was like a kairotic encounter. This was the time of Gregory the Theologian.

The Christian poetical context of St. Gregory's poetry in this time and part of the world is in particular and more precisely represented by the poetry of some heresiarchs who, in order to better spread their teaching to the public, put them in verses so that they can be easily memorized, recited, transmitted.

The most important of these heresiarchs are, chronologically and theologically speaking, the famous or infamous Arius and then the two Apollinaris: the Elder and the Young, and especially the last one.

Moving from theology to poetry, if we want to think of the most important poets of the above mentioned tradition in the fourth century, then Apollinaris the Young will certainly have to be named, and next to him, and more precisely above him, Gregory of Nazianzus.

It would probably be very interesting for us to have a chance to compare the works of the two poets, both theologically and at the level of their ars poetica. Unfortunately, the works of Apollinaris, as many as they were, have been lost and we know of his poetical elaboration only from references to them in other people's works.

In this very short paper I only intend to make the sitz im leben, in rather general terms, of Gregory's poetical production, that is, to try to recreate its context by looking in particular at the goal and intention of his poetry and at the heretical teachings that he argued against, that means, more precisely at Apollinarism. This will give one a chance to think of poetry and theology, even though Gregory's theological responses to heresy are not the subject of this paper.

Yet, before starting the presentation of the first of the two aspects named above, I will make some considerations on Gregory's poetry in general.

Gregory's Poetry: General considerations

Quantity

Apparently there is no total agreement as to how much poetry Gregory wrote. According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, Jerome and Suidas wrote that Gregory produced 30.000 verses, which seems not to be an exaggeration since a lot of them have been lost.[8] Louis Montaut mentions only 17.000 verses[9], Francesco Corsaro, 17.500[i], Vasile Ionescu and Nicolae Stefanescu, 18.000 (in 507 poems)[10], while Jean Bernard[11] raises the number to 20.000 (in

185 poems plus epitaphs).[12] It seems to me that Jerome's account has all the chances to be realistic. I am thinking first of Apollinaris. If he was able to write a vast amount of verses, why not Gregory as well? Gregory was as well extremely well educated, he had a passion for poetry since he was young, he had the same reasons at least as Apollinaris to write poetry, if not more, as I will mention later. We are reported that when Julian the Apostate forbade Christian professors to teach Greek letters, arts and philosophy in their schools, both Apollinaris, the Elder and the Young, began to versify entire books of the Old Testament and to produce all sorts of poetry in order to counter in this way the Emperor's order and to still teach to the students literature that was Greek in fashion, but Christian in context. We are also told that Gregory of Nazianzus not only encouraged the Apollinaris in their work but he himself started to do the same.[13]

In addition, Gregory and Apollinaris the Young were competitors and adversaries in the framework of the Christological doctrine. It is expected for Gregory to have written as much as the other in order to have countered his heretic propaganda. The capacity and the intellectual brilliance of Gregory, his inner burning bush for poetry, his love for the ancient works in general and literature and poetry in particular, his talent confirmed by many, all become reasons to believe that he wrote much more than we have now from him.

Classification

If scholars do not have a unified idea concerning the amount of verses Gregory produced, they do not come together concerning the classification of the poetry, either. The Catholic Encyclopedia on line for instance divides the Theologian's poetry in autobiographical verses, epigrams, and epitaphs.[14] I believe that the versified epistles should have been included here as another category.

Another source divides them in Dogmatical, Moral, Personal, Epistolary, Epitaphs, Epigrams[15], while a simpler more classical analysis indicates two categories: theological (that includes 38 dogmatic and 40 moral poems) and historical (that includes autobiographical, lyrical and other poems).[16] The name "historical" for the last category is considered by Jean Bernardi confusing and ambiguous[17] because that would indicate that the poems have a purely historical nature, which is not the case.

Both A. Benoit and M. Pellegrino believe that the classification of Gregory's poetry is not a very rigorous one since poems that belong to one division can easily belong to the other one[18]; it depends on how one assesses the content which is many times multi-faceted.

Time

There is disagreement among scholars with respect to the time when Gregory wrote his poetry. Some authors believe that he wrote poetry only in the last five years of his life[19], others that he wrote it in general at the end of his life; and according to J. Planche, that proves the force of his genius.[20] I believe that one can argue that on the contrary, if Gregory was a genius in poetry, he did not have to wait until the end of his life to write his beautiful poems but wrote them throughout.

Genius is passion and inspiration – and effort as well – and we know how passionate for literature and how cultured, educated and outspoken he was; it is easy to imagine him writing poetry even at a very early age. That would justify Jerome's affirmation that Gregory wrote 30.000 verses even if we don't have them all. In fact A. Benoit mentions for his part that Gregory started to write poetry since his young age, otherwise one could not explain the vast amount of literary works he produced.[21]

Gregory as Poet

Even though J. Bernardi writes that Gregory had two contradictory vocations, on the one hand he was an intellectual and an academic and on the other he was a Christian philosopher (and that he sacrificed the first one for the sake of the second)[22] looking closely at the life of the holy man, one can easily argue that these two aspects are not contradictory at all, on the contrary they wonderfully complement each other.

First of all, everything in Gregory's life was centered on Christ. When it comes to the world, Gregory tells that the one thing he clearly loved there was the glory of eloquence. When he obtained it he put it in Christ's service.[23] If one thinks of the desert and the harsh ascetical life, the theologian testifies that there, his only richness and consolation is Christ.[24] Every passion he had in life,

eloquence, literature, poetry in particular, philosophy, he brought before his Lord. That is why his Christocentric life is evident from every page of his writings.[25]

When it comes to poetry it has to be mentioned that Gregory of Nazanzus admired and imitated several poets of ancient Greece such as Homer, Hesiod, Pindar and others, while having special preferences for Callimahus[26]; evidently the imitations are only in form and not in content. The autobiographical poem is not a novelty in Gregory's time either. However, he is the first Christian writer who cultivates this genre[27], according to J. Bernardi.

The fact that in relation to the form Gregory continues older poetic styles does not diminish the value of his production. His poetry is characterized by pure diction, elegant style, and is even more elevated than that of Homer in J. Planche's view[28]; it is rich and harmonious in language, intimate in the type of information it discloses, very lyric and of an acute melancholy.This sentiment, according to M. Granier, is first introduced in poetry by Gregory[29]. In his writings it is authentic because it is in itself sincere, sober in expression and inspired by great causes.[30] He is considered to have been an extraordinary creator of words[31], just as his poems are highly elaborated and sophisticated.

What A. Benoit says about his epitaphs, that beyond the literary merit they are a treasury as far as religion, art and history are concerned, for the precious information in these fields there present[32], I believe one can say about Gregory's entire poetical production or at least most of it.

Even though there is so much appreciation for this poetry, there are others who do not seem so enthusiastic about it. G. Florovsky believes that Gregory's verses are rather exercises in rhetoric than true poetry, with the exception of the personal lyrics where genuine emotion is displayed.[33]

When he talks about another great poet and theologian of the 4th century, not in the Hellenistic world though, but in Syria, Ephraem the Syrien, Florovsky writes that St. Ephraem's talent as a poet accounts for his exceptional influence and great popularity of his works.[34] If that is the case one can argue that Gregory also enjoyed great popularity and had a very significant influence in the Christian life of his time and after. Then, he can be considered a talented poet too.

In his remarks on St. Gregory's poetry, M. Pellegrino goes beyond disputable definitions of whatever aspect of these works and

insists that no matter what kind it is, no matter how one classifies it, it is poetry, in the real sense of the term, and its author is a poet.[35]

Another source summarizes Gregory's poetic accomplishments as follows: He "was the first of the Greek Christian poets to approach even if at some distance, the poets of antiquity"; "no writer of verses ever surpassed Gregory in that elegant culture and that experience of the vicissitudes of life which are fitted to equip a poet".

Gregory had a true poetic fire; he inherited the Alexandrian and Athenian cultures but his being a Christian helped him bring into poetry new emotions of which the old poets never dreamed; Gregory created a new order of poetry: one of religious meditation and of philosophic reverie.[36]

The Goals of His Poetry

Even though it is said that Constantinople was the intended audience of Gregory's major poetry[37], keeping in mind one thing, for instance, that the Apollinarians invaded Nazianzus and that their leader was in Loodicea, and that Gregory wrote a lot in order to counter this heresy, even though we may not have today all his poems, one can conclude that Nazianzus, Loodicea and maybe other places where the heresy predominated could have been part of the destination of Gregory's major poetical works.

Several gools can be considered when it comes to the poetry of the holy man of Nazianzus and all of them help one to at least partially reconstruct the context in which he wrote at a personal, moral, theological, literary and even political level.

The Personal Purpose

a. As J. Planche indicates, Gregory considered that in doing poetry he imposed a penance on himself, which was normal part of the hardship that has to characterize one's ascetical life. Since he had a propensity towards writing, doing it in verse is harder than in prose[38] are thus consistent with his ascetic tendencies.

One might have the impression that this is only a pretext and since he had a real passion for poetry Gregory would have written it anyway, as a penance or as a hobby or as a need. However, one has to recognize that writing in prose on the topics that represented the content of his poetry would have been easier, and Gregory himself acknowledges that.

In fact, writing in verse in order to reduce the quantity of words, is in line with the vow of silence taken by the ascetic. Less words are intended to reduce the human word to its original role, that of being a humble auxiliary of the Word of God[39], A. Benoit observes.

So it could have been that Gregory wrote his poetry at the end of his life as a relaxation from the cares and troubles of life,[40] more than having been a serious pursuit, as one source indicates; however it is hard to speak for somebody else when it comes to how one writes his own poetry.

For if writing poems was for Gregory a simple way of relaxation, then one cannot easily explain why Gregory himself says that he writes in verse in order to impose a hardship on him unless it was a hardship and a relaxation at the same time.

b. It seems to me that due to the vocation and talent that Gregory had for literature in general and poetry in particular, due to the fire in him and love for letters and to his solid education, he wrote poetry for its own sake as well. I believe that to write poetry for the sake of poetry does not diminish the affirmation he made concerning poetry as an ascetic hardship.

c. It is clear from his writing that the Theologian wrote poetry in order to praise God in a special way. “I am God’s organ”, he says; “I write praises to Him, yet not like the pagan poets but with a Christian heart”.[41]

d. Poetry is written as a way of personal consolation when the author is in physical pain, as he often used to be, according to his own testimony, but also when he is taken by sadness at the thought of leaving soon the earthly life, when he looks at himself as to an “old swan” and writes verses on his past as a way to dignify the exit from the life’s scene.[42]

e. Finally, J. Planche says that Gregory writes poetry in order to destroy calumnies published against him by his adversaries, in other words, to defend his reputation[43].

The Moral Purpose

a. As G. Florovsky, McGuckin and several other scholars in Gregory the Theologian show, the ascet of Nazianzus wrote poetry with moral purposes in mind; he wrote to teach moral principles to people, youth in particular, hence many poems have a didactic character[44].

Through his poems, he wants to produce spiritual delight in the soul and mind of those young people and, in fact, of all those who took delight in art and literature, but who also needed spiritual guidance. Poetry would be a way to make the moral teachings of the Christian Church more readily acceptable[45].

J. Bernardi believes that through his poems Gregory also wanted to teach the youth the classic literary forms of poetical expression, while, of course, teaching them the new Christian values, and he does not exclude the possibility that some of Gregory's poems may have been used as collective recitations in the classroom, and even destined to be accompanied by musical instruments.[46]

b. It is known that St. Gregory also wrote poetry in order to criticize episcopal hypocrisy[47], or in general, inappropriate attitudes and behaviors from the part of the clergy.

Theological Purposes

It is evident from what he tells in his own writings that Gregory also wrote poetry for apologetic reasons, to defend the Christian doctrine against the false techniques of different heretics, such as Arius, Diodore of Tarsus but in particular Apollinaris.[48]

In some of his letters Gregory denounces the strategy used by Apollinaris whereby he tried to replace the Psalms with his own compositions in which he also used catchy slogans, in order to spread easier his teachings. McGuckin believes that this type of practice probably gave Gregory the idea for him to do the same thing.[49] It is obvious that the practice of putting one's teaching in verses was not invented by Apollinaris, it was used by Arius at the beginning of the century, by Ephraem in Syria and probably by others even before and after that. To put one's teaching in verses, might have, among others, three advantages related to the following aspects:

- The mnemotechnic aspect; verses can be learned and remembered, recited, repeated.

- The aesthetic aspect; because of its special styles, language, imagery, poetry is endeared by many.

- The psychological aspect; poetry reaches the mind and the heart of the reader because of its specific means of expressing ideas.

Consequently, since the idea was around already and since he had used poetry already for other practical purposes, such as, for instance, teaching or spreading the moral values specific to Christianity, he decided to respond to the Apollinarian propagandistic poetry with his own poems, like fighting his adversaries with their own weapons.[50]

Literary Purposes

As J. Planche explains, in writing poetry Gregory also wanted to show that poetry and music are not the exclusive prerogative of the pagans, but Christians can excel in them too.[51] Thus, many poems were written by the Theologian with the clear intention to have the work of pagan writers superseded.

Moreover, we are told that he even wanted to create a literary movement or school of Christian root and inspiration[52], a goal that he may have achieved without conscientizing its development.

Political Purposes

Louis Montaut thinks that Gregory wrote poetry in order to offer a solution to the law of Julian the Apostate, the emperor who forbade Christians to teach the classic Greek works in their schools.[53]

The Apollinarian Heresy

Before moving to a short presentation of the false teaching of Apollinaris I consider necessary to mention, at least, here a few other Christian names of people who wrote poetry in Greek in the 4th century, who are integral part of the poetical context of St. Gregory's poetical works.

Arius was the major Christian heresiarch of the 4th century; among other ways, he defended his theological positions in verse. Beyond other poems he wrote, the most known poetical production of him is named Thalia.[54] According to J. Bernardi, Dorotheus writes Christian poetry at the end of the 3rd or beginning of the 4th century. It is known that in 343 he wrote a poem in hexameters.[55]

Nicetas of Remessiana (today Bela Palanka, Serbia), was in the 4th century the bishop of the Dacians (ancestors of Romanians). St. Jerome indicates that Nicetas wrote "sweet songs of the Cross", and Paulims of Nola, a friend, praises Nicetas as a Hymn writer. Modern scholarship found out that the popular hymn Te Deum (Laudamus), attributed long time to Ambrose was Nicetas' work.[56]

Synesius of Cyrene, born in the 4th century, died about 414. In 409 he was elected Metropolitan of Ptolemais; he was disciple and friend of Hypatia of Alexandria. We have from him about ten hymns that talk about his theological and philosophical convictions. In the last of the ten he entrusts himself to Christ and asks for the forgiveness of sins.[57]

St. Ehpraem the Syrian. Even though St. Ephraem did not write in Greek but in Syrian, because he is an extremely prolific 4th century Christian writer, and because many of his poetical works were translated and circulated in Greek even during his life, I believe it is appropriate to include him here as well. Ephraem was born in Nisibis, Syria (date unknown) and died in 373. he was a hermit renewed for his severe ascetical life[58] but also for his "outstanding gift for lyricism".[59] He wrote sermons, hymns, and other works, mostly in the last ten years of his life while being in Edessa and fighting against heresies. G. Florovsky appreciates his theological works – most of them, even the orations, written in verses – as euphoric and melodious, sincere and intimate.[60]

Sozomen notes that he had written about three million verses and Theodoret of Cyrus calls him a "poetic genius".[61]

Ephraem's poetry was divided in memre, orations, homelies which might explain why his verses are so many, and madrase, hymns, which contain instructions written for choral singing and even to be accompanied by harps.[62]

In his about 1000 works[63] Ephraem basically intended to give moral instruction, to glorify God and the Theotokos and to fight heresy. He wrote against the gnostics, against Marcion and Manes

specifically, against the Arians and Julian the Apostate[64] and against Bardesanes (Bar-Daisan), and his son Harmonius.[65]

Bardesanes was the first Syrian poet and a heretic teacher; he used to spread his teachings in metrical forms in order to have better success with the public.[66]

As Greogory of Nazianzus did with his verses against the Apollinarians, so Ephraem, in order to fight the heretic with their own weapons, had put his theological doctrines in verses as well.

According to Florovsky "it is Ephraem's talent as a poet that accounts for his exceptional influence and broad and immediate popularity of his verses".[67]

Apollinaris the Elder was a Christian grammarian living in the 4th century, first at Berytus in Phoenicia, then in Laodicea, in Syria. When in 362 Julian the Apostate forbade Christian professors to teach the Greek letters in their schools, he and his son, Apollinaris the Young, started to replace the Greek literature with Christian and composed great works in verse and prose of Christian root and inspiration. Socrates, in his Ecclesiastic History mentions that Apollinaris the Elder put the Old Testament Pentatench in Greek hexameters, converted the first two books of Kings into an epic poem, wrote tragedies, comedies, odes, imitating the Greek authors. Sozomen in his history does not mention Apollinaris the Elder's works but indicates those of his son. All those works did not survive.[68] Apollinaris the Young, according to Charles Raven, "perhaps the most remarkable, as he is certainly the last, of the great Hellenic Students and thinkers who devoted their lives [...] to the pursuit of truth"[69], was born in Laodicea in 310. With an incontestable, profound and solid education, he was a brilliant rhetor who, just like Origen, earlier, "combined in himself off that is best in the culture of his time"[70], according to one testimony.

In 360 he was elected bishop of Laodicea; G. Florovsky mentions that he wrote "countless" works, most of which have been lost[71], and he certainly worked with his father at the creation of a Christian literature imitating the Greek models after Julian the Apostate's edict. Sozomen tells that Apollinaris's writings were of great elegance and at least equal to the originals based on which they were modeled[72]. His poetical works and as well those of his father enjoyed extreme popularity in their time. They were sang and recited, we are told, by people at work, at meals, at festivals, and many other events great and small.[73]

Apollinaris was a Nicene theologian, admirer and friend of Athanasius. For his friendship with the great Alexandrian bishop, in particular for having received him when Athanasius was traveling through Laodicea, Apollinaris was excommunicated by the Arian bishop of Laodicea, George.[74]

Before 362, according to G. Florovsky, apparently in order to counter the teaching of Diodore of Tarsus, leader of the Antiochene School, Apollinaris developed his own Christological views yet trying to stay faithful to Athanasius's Christology according to whom in Incarnation the Divine Logos took upon himself our flesh[75] (μία φύσις τοῦ λογοῦ Θεοῦ σεσαρκομένη). Florovskly explains that Apollinaris did not distinguish between nature and hypostasis; consequently, he saw in Christ one person with one nature and one hypostasis. In order for Christ to have been able to save us, He must have had a Divine Intellect, not a human one that is bound to weakness and cannot overcome sins. Hence, in Jesus Christ the Word of God had taken an animated body. The intellect was that of the Divine Logos itself. Consequently, the Word became flesh, but not fully human. It results that the two entities, divine and human, only coexisted in Christ's person.[76]

According to Florovsky, Apollinaris was a trichotomist. Jesus Christ had a flesh and soul that were human and a spirit or nous – The Divine Logos. The above mentioned author believes that based on the Apollinarian theology Jesus Christ's humanity is only similar to ours but not consubstantial with it[77] even though it is also said that Apollinaris made a "lasting contribution to the Orthodox theology in declaring that Christ was co-substantial with the Father as regarding His divinity and co-substantial with us as regarding his humanity.[78]

For their Christology, the Apollinarists were called "sarkolaters" or those who adored the flesh[79], because they refused to recognize the human spirit in Christ.

Paul Galley considers that Gregory had to get involved in the Apollinarian controversy. On his way to Constantinople, he tells us, he worried about it. He also had to write a professional refutation of the heresy at the request of Cledonius, the priest he installed at Nazianzus, since this city dear to the poet was invaded by adepts of Apollinaris.[80] Yet, his response, like his entire Christology, in Florovky's evaluation, in as much as it relates to this heresy is not elaborated like a theological system. It is rather a confession of faith in clear and precise language that anticipates the later Christological formulae relating to the two natures and one person of Christ.[81]

Conclusions

Gregory of Nazianzus, with his solid and vast knowledge in dialectic, philosophy, theology and scriptures, with his incomparable eloquence, and his talent as a writer, exercised a great influence on his contemporaries and on generations after him. These qualities made him win all the disputes where he had to defend Christian Orthodoxy, as A. Benoit notices.[82]

Gregory was a poet of first rank who surpassed all other poets in the first Christian centuries who wrote in Greek; he is rival to the greatest writers of the pagan antiquity. These classic writers were great and inimitable indeed. However, they addressed with their literary production people's imagination and spirit. Gregory's works yet, in no inferior position vis-à-vis the first ones, address not only the mind and spirit but the heart of the reader as well.[83]

Villemain considers Gregory of Nazianzus "the poet of Eastern Christerdom" per excellence, as he believes that poetry is the chief accomplishment of the saint.[84]

It is worthy to note that fifty years after Gregory's death his writings became normative and the Roman Church issued a declaration that his poetry was to be admitted entirely in the Church as works of greatest authority.[85]

For his import of great and exalted ideas from the theological science into poetry he was even liked to Dante and was suggested that he be considered on just ground the father of modern poetry.[86]

In summary, this is what Gregory's providential mission in the Church was, according to A. Benoit: to fight successfully against the great heretics of his century; to work towards the reform of the clergy's morality; to bring Constantinople to the Orthodox faith; to create a form of Christian poetry and use it in order to serve, defend, ornate and beautify the Christian truth.[87]

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. M. Pellegrino, *La Poesia de S. Gregorio Nazianzeno,* Societa editrice "Vita e Pensiero", Milano, 1932, p. 107.

2. A. Benoit, *Saint Gregoire de Nazianze,* Typographie Marius Olive, Marseille, 1876, p. 715.

3. M. Pellegrino, *op. cit.,* p. 6.

4. Paul Galley, *La vie de Saint Grégoire de Nazianze,* Emmanuel Vitte, Editeur, Paris, 1943, p. 8.

5. *Ibid.,* p. 4.

6. *Ibid.,* p. 6.

7. M. Pellegrino, *op.cit.,* p. 6.

8. *Catholic Encyclopedia,* vol. VII, "Gregory of Nazianzus", by K. Knight, updated Oct. 6, 2005, p. 8.

9. L. Montaut, *Revue Critique de Quelques Questions Historiques se Rapportant à Saint Grégoire de Nazianze et à Son Siècle*, Ernest Thorin, Libraire Editeur, Paris, 1878, p. 167.

10. Gr. Nazianzeno, *Poesie Scelte*, Introduzione e Traduzione di Francesco Corsaro, Centro di Studi Sull' Antico Cristianesimo, Università di Catania, p. XI.

11. V. Ionescu, N. Stefanescu, *Antologie din literatura patristica greaca a primelor secole,* Editura Institutului Biblic şi de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, Bucureşti, 1960, p.141.

12. J. Bernardi, *St. Grégoire de Nazianze. Le Théologien et son temps,* Les Editions du Cerf, Paris, 1995, p. 308.

13. A. Benoit, *op. cit.,* p. 147.

14. *Catholic Encyclopedia,* vol. VII, art. cit., p. 8.

15. *The Early Christian Literature Primers,* (http://www.earlychristian writings.com/jackson2/11_gre.html), "Gregory Nazianzen", p. 7.

16. Jean Bernardi, *op. cit.,* p. 308.

17. *Ibidem,* p. 309.

18. A. Benoit, *op. cit.,* p. 725; M. Pellegrino, *op. cit.,* p. 7.

19. Louis Montaut, *op. cit.,* p. 167; R. Radford Reuter, *Gregory of Nazianzus, Rhetor and Philosopher,* Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1969, p. 50.

20. Gr. Nazianzeno, *Poesie Scelte*…, p. X; J. Planche, *Choix de Poésies et de Lettres de Saint Grégoire de Nazianze,* Librairie de Gide Fils, Paris, 1827, p. V.

21. A. Benoit, *op.cit.,* pp. 82; 582.

22. J. Bernardi, *op.cit.,* p.320.

23. A. Benoit, *op.cit.,* p. 75.

24. *Ibid.,* pp. 74-75.

25. *Ibid.,* p. 76.

26. Gregorio Nazianzeno, *Poesie Scelte….,* p. X.

27. J. Bernardi, *op. cit.,* p. 319.

28. J. Planche, *op. cit.,* p. VI.

29. Gr. Nazianzeno, *Poesie Scelte ...,* pp. XIX, XI.

30. A. Benoit, *op. cit.,* p. 735.

31. J. Bernardi, *op. cit.,* p. 313.

32. A. Benoit, *op.cit.,* p. 84.

33. G. Florovsky, *The Eastern Fathers of the Fourth Century,* VII, Vaduz, Fl., Büchervertriebsanstalt, 1987, p. 69.

34. *Ibid*., p. 168.

35. M. Pellegrino, *op. cit.,* pp. 6-7.

36. *The Early Christian Literature Primers…..,* p. 7.

37. A. A. McGuckin, *St. Gregory of Nazianzus: An Intellectual Biography,* St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, New York, 2001, p. 375.

38. J. Planche, *op. cit.,* p. VII; Gr. Nazianzeno, *Poesie Scelte...,* p. X.

39. A. Benoit, *op. cit.,* p. 76.

40. *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, p. 8.

41. Gr. Nazianzus,"De se ipso", in Migne, P. G., 34: 69-72, in V. Ionescu and N. Stefanescu, *op. cit.,* p.170.

42. *Idem,* in Migne, P. G., 39: 25-27, in Vasile Ionescu, *op. cit,* p. 167.

43. J. Planche, *op. cit.,* p. 7.

44. G. Florovsky, *op. cit.,* p.69; McGuckin, *op. cit.,* p. 376.

45. V. Ionescu and N. Stefanescu, *op. cit.,* p. 167.

46. J. Bernardi, *op. cit.,* p 314.

47. McGuckin, *op.cit.,* p. 371.

48. *Ibidem,* pp. 371; 391.

49. *Ibid,* p. 394.

50. A. Benoit, *op. cit.,* p. 616; Louis Montaut, *op.cit.,* p. 169; Gregorio Nazianzeno, *Poesie Scelte….*, p. X.

51. J. Planche, *op. cit.,* p. VIII.

52. V. Ionescu and N. Stefanescu, *op. cit.,* p.167.

53. Louis Montaut, *op. cit.,* p. 169.

54. *Catholic Encyclopedia on CD-Rom,* "Arius".

55. J. Bernardi, *op. cit.,* p. 312.

56. *Catholic Encyclopedia on CD-Rom,* "Nicetas".

57. *Ibidem.*

58. *Catholic Encyclopedia on CD-Rom,* "St. Ephraem" (Life).

59. G. Florovsky, *op. cit.,* p. 168.

60. *Ibidem.*

61. *Catholic Encyclopedia on CD-Rom,* " St. Ephraem " (Poetical Writings).

62. *Ibidem;* Florovsky, *op. cit.,* p. 169.

63.*The Saint PachomiusLibrary*(http://www.voskrese.info/spl/XefremSyria.html).

64. Florovsky, *op. cit.,* p. 169.

65. *Catholic Encyclopedia on CD-Rom,* "St. Ephraem" (Poetical Writings).

66. Florovsky, *op. cit.,* p. 168.

67. *Ibidem.*

68. *Catholic Encyclopedia on CD-Rom,* "Apollinaris (the Elder)".

69. Ch. E. Raven, *Apollinarianism: An Essay in the Christology of the Early Church,* University Press, Cambridge, 1923, p. 127.

70. *Ibid.,* p. 153.

71. G. Florovsky, *op. cit.,* p. 16.

72. Ch. Raven, *op. cit.,* p. 137; *Wikipedia,* "Apollinaris of Laodicea".

73. *Ibid.,* p. 153.

74. *Ibid.,* p. 130.

75. Florovsky, *op. cit.,* pp. 16-17; Ch. Raven, *op. cit.,* p. 170.

76. Florovsky, pp. 16-17.

77. *Ibid.,* p. 85.

78. *Wikipedia, art. cit.*

79. A. Benoit, *op. cit.,* p. 605.

80. P. Galley, *op. cit.,* p. 217.

81. Florovsky, *op. cit.,* p. 86.

82. A. Benoit, *op. cit.,* p. 402; M. Pellegrino, *op. cit.,* p. 5.

83. A. Benoit, *op.cit.,* pp. 737; 741.

84. *Catholic Encyclopedia* vol. VII, *art. cit.,* p.8.

85. A. Benoit, *op. cit.,* p. 595.

86. *The Early Christian Literature Primers, art.cit.,* p.7.

87. A. Benoit, *op. cit.,* p. 743.

Reminiscences of Thraco-Dacian and Romano-Byzantine Culture and Spirituality as Reflected in Romanian Folklore, Popular Traditions, Literature, and Art: Medieval Continuity and Ethnic Unity of Romanian Folklore and Traditions

VICKI ALBU

I had supposed that the embroidery on decorative Romanian folk costumes was merely for ornamental purposes, but I was surprised to learn that it once had a purpose or message, as did the wearing of a lady's hat.

Three generations ago, my great-grandfather immigrated to the United States from the Romanian Banat, which was then a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Owing to the passing of our elders and the assimilation of my grandparents (the so-called American "melting pot" experience) most of my family's ethnic traditions were lost. As an adult, I've felt a severe disconnect, a longing for a sense of belonging to a culture. This led me to begin a search for my lost roots, an effort to reconnect with my Romanian ancestry.

In addition to the basic genealogical research which consists of documenting the names, dates and places of events in my ancestors' lives, I began to research published material on cultural traditions and folklore of the Romanian people. I interviewed other descendants of early 20th century immigrants to Minnesota in attempts to document their traditions and experiences. I was struck by the recurring similarities of the designs, patterns and stories which matched those I vaguely recalled from my childhood. Through my research I discerned a distinct connection between ancient Romanian traditions and the Romanian folklore and traditions that are preserved, although declining, in North America today. I realized that traditional folklore and folk art are the means by which Romanians and Romanian-Americans demonstrate their ethnic unity and

preserve and perpetuate their cultural and religious values to this day.[1]

My research shows that many aspects of Romanian folklore and traditions that were handed down through generations have remained largely unchanged since medieval times. The ancient foundations of Romanian folk art and traditions are preserved in a culture transported to America by Romanian immigrants in the early twentieth century. My research centers primarily on the transmission of culture through generations of Romanian women, because, in the words of theologian Charles Francis Potter, "Women have always been the savers and conservators of beliefs, rites, superstitions, rituals and customs." I will share examples of continuity in clothing, ornamentation, and folklore.

The primary reason for the strong continuity in Romanian costume and folk art is the rural, agrarian lifestyle of most Romanian people. For example, peasant costume changed very little, owing to the fact that it well suited the lifestyle of the farm worker.[2] People lived in isolated communities and seldom had the opportunity to travel distances or to meet people of other cultures.[3] What changes did occur took place through a very gradual process over a period of hundreds, if not thousands, of years. The strength of the Romanian tradition is evidenced by the fact that children over generations have been instilled with the belief that one's ancestry must be visually demonstrated through certain forms of folk art.[4]

There is evidence of historic continuity in the clothing worn by the people who have inhabited what is now Romania. The territory was inhabited by the Dacians, a Thracian tribe, since about 500 BC. The Dacians were conquered by the Roman emperor Trajan around 101 AD. Historians often cite the ancient origins of Romanian peasant costumes by noting the similarities with those of the Dacians depicted on the monument at the village of Adamclisi, which was built to commemorate the Roman victory over the Dacians.

Further evidence is found on the Column of Trajan in Rome.[5] This monument also depicts Dacian peasant men in long tunics, tight-fitting trousers, and heavy sheepskin coats, with women wearing smocks and chemises with wide wrap-around skirts, braided belts wrapped several times around the waist, and head veils.[6] Very similar clothing styles exist in similar forms in one or more of the modern-day Romanian folk costumes. According to a story on one British Council web site[7], "Romanians have been always proud of their Roman legacy. During the 19th century, a Romanian peasant

walked to Rome to see the Traian Column. A policeman who found him sleeping right next to the column exclaimed: 'A Dacian has descended from the Column!' The peasant was wearing the Romanian traditional costume."

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Bock, J., *Ethnic Vision: A Romanian American Inheritance*, Colorado: University Press, 1997, p. 1.

2. Harrold, R., *Folk Costumes of the World*, London: Cassell, 1999, p.11

3. Ibid., p. 11.

4. Bock, p. 94.

5. http://www.travelnet.co.il/ROMANIA and Stoicescu, N., *The Continuity of the Romanian People*, Bucharest: Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, 1983. "... It was also demonstrated that there is an element of continuity in Romanian folk ceramics, manifest in forms, decorations and techniques that have come down from the Neolithic age... The persistence of prehistorical elements was detected especially in the more secluded regions protected from outward influences." "In the domain of ornamentation there is also an eloquent continuity. An old motif in folk art is the 'tree of life;' as specialists have pointed out, there is a Thraco-Dacian local pattern of that tree which is the oldest and most widely circulated in Romanian folk art." "Another important group of ornamental motifs consists of solar motifs or signs, utilized from the Neolithic down to our days." "Let us also mention that numerous elements of the folk costume (the fur jacket, the fur bonnet, the hood, the fluffy woolen mantle, the *"opinca"* (peasant's sandal) originate in the Dacian garb..." See also P. Petrescu: *"Pomul vietii" in arta populară din România* (The "Tree of Life" in the Folk Art of Romania (SCIA, VIII, 1961, Nr. 1, p. 41 *et seq.),* pp. 266-267)

6. Oprescu, G., *Peasant Art in Romania*, London: The Studio, Ltd., 1929, p. 38.

7. http://www.britishcouncil.it/students/rome/Bucharest.htm (accessed April 29, 2006) And, with the passing of time and the advent of modern technologies, weaving and embroidery is no longer a community event; the creative arts are no longer necessary for utilitarian purposes. Hanganu-Bresch fears that the traditions have been "altered to the point where they've become symbolic and not lived." There is a risk that Romanian peasant art and folklore may become forgotten. G. Oprescu said, "Something of the ancient people is being lost irrevocably, and nothing can console us for it."

There is hope for preservation of our Romanian folk art and traditions, however. Since the 1970s there has been what some have called an "ethnic revival." Many new museums have been established throughout

the world to document ethnic folk art, as opposed to the work of the classically schooled artists. More and more, people are becoming interested in their ancestral origins. In this hectic age of rapidly changing technology and modern conveniences, we have begun to take comfort in the simpler things in life. As a people, we are more reflective and seek to understand how we came to be the way we are. While it may be unreasonable to expect many Romanians and Romanian-Americans to resume "living" our folk traditions, we can commemorate them. We have the opportunity to connect with our past, to educate others, and to preserve and continue the ancient traditions that have served countless generations of our Romanian ancestors.

Romanian-Byzantine Tradition of Church Hospitals in the Middle Age Romania

EVA MIRON

The first hospitals certified on the territory of Romanian Principalities belonged to monasteries and they were called “bolniţe”, world derived from the Slavic “bolnicia” which meant “hospital”. There are mentions about this kind of monastic settlements in the Xth Canon of Niceea (325 AD) and they appeared to be well established organizations of the monastic life during that time. The church-hospitals were called in Minor Asia and later in Western Europe “basilliadae” bearing the name of Saint Basil the Great who first built in Cappadocia a whole “city” for caring of travelers, as well as poor and sick people. The “basiliadae” served as hospitals, hostels and shelters.

Mandated by Jesus Christ himself as a fundamental condition for the acceptance of the Christians into The Kingdom of Heaven, the care for the persons in need generated an entire charitable pursuit, directed first by the Apostles (Saint James mentions in detail how the ill Christian should be cared for in his community James 5,14). The imperative of caring for those in need as parts as Christian religion was brought to the pontic Scythians and to Thracians by Saint Andrew.

The monasticism appeared early on the territory of Romanian Principalities. In Basarabi – Constanta county there are the vestiges of 6 rupestral churches (IXth century AD) with rooms and corridors that belonged to a monastic community. Some of that rooms seemed to be used for hosting ill people.

Because of the pressures of catholicization until the XIVth century, of calvinisation in the XVth-XVIIth century and of uniation (XVIIIth century), the development of the monastic life was very limited in Transylvania. The most of the monasteries (about 180) were made of wood and they had a few monks owning some land or living of villagers’ charity. Almost all of the monasteries were destroyed at the end of XVIIIth century by the austro-hungarian army commanded by General Nicolas Bukow acting at the orders of

Empress Maria Teresa; some of the surviving monks took refuge in Valachia or in Moldavia where they founded new monasteries (Cheia, Predeal, Suzana, Cocoş, Stânişoara).

So we lack information about church-hospitals in Transylvania. In Moldavia and Walachia, the major monasteries had besides libraries, printing presses, embroidery and workshops, also a church-hospital. This was a separated body of buildings situated by the monastery's walls, having some rooms, its own sanctuary and sometimes a cemetery or a place for depositing the bones of the deceased monks ("osuarul").

The church of the "bolniţa" smaller then that of the monastery was used for the funeral services of the deceased "brothers" which were farther laid to rest in the nearby cemetery. The memorial services (on Saturdays) and the healing services took place here as well. The liturgy was not celebrated in the "bolniţas" and there were neither tombs there.

The iconography is specific: there are images about the importance of praying for the dead, the pathway followed by the soul after the body's death, The Last Supper, The Crucification, the descent to the inferno, The Resurrection, The Dormition, scenes from Saint John's the Baptist life. Most often the rooms formed a perimeter including the church in one of its sides. In those rooms were hosted the frail or sick monks living by less rigorous monastic rules.

By the severity of their infirmities, they were exempted from the night vigils, they could rest more during the day, their fasting diet was less restrictive and they could easily access the services of a doctor or more probably of the monk expert in herbs treatment.

In the XIVth-XVIth century it is mentioned that the old monks were treated in specially designed rooms in the proximity of their monastery. There their physical pain was a little soothed but the emphasis was on celebrating of the last unction, vigils and hymn "acatists". For increasing the body strength they drank holly water sanctified at major feasts especially at Epiphany. When afflicted with incurable or chronic illness, the patient was allowed to touch the holly relics of a saint. Special hymns and canons dedicated to Saint Haralamb were read to those suffering from the plague.

In the XVth century, at Putna monastery the monks translated a Latin treatee of medicine "Principles of Medicine" employed as a protocol for diagnostic and treatment. On a hard cover of book there is a hand written note about the burning of the monastic hospital because of an endemy in 1536.

In 1652, in his writing “The Re-Shaping of the Laws” edited at Targoviste the ruler of Valachia, Matei Basarab, told to a monk to keep on researching the properties of the herbs and to select those that are good for healing or could be used against poisons; and in the document attesting the foundation of Campulung monastic hospitals the same ruler urged the monks to care in earnest for their sick fellows.

On one of Constantin’s Brancoveanu diary notes it is written that in the 1st of May 1699 he took herbs probably given by a monk for detoxification. In his treatee “Descriptio Moldaviae” (XVIIIth century) the prince Dimitrie Cantemir said that any travelers regardless their religion were hosted in special rooms in Moldavian monasteries.

We have little information about the activity of the church-hospitals usually there are mentions about them in the documents attesting their construction, destruction or endowment. Thus in Valachia we find about church-hospitals built at Bistriţa and Simirdeni (XVth century), Cozia (XVIth century), Sadova and Horezu (XVIIIth century), Brâncoveni, Negru Vodã, Polovragi, The Diocese of Râmnic, Saint Antim or All Saints, Colţea and Saint Pantelimon (the last three located in Bucharest). At All Saints Monastery, The Metropolitan Archbishop Antim Ivireanu gave a body of regulations pertaining to the management of the church-hospitals such as: free hosting of the travelers for 3 days and weekly charity for the needy or imprisoned people including money as well. The church-hospital of Colţea Monastery cared for poor people especially those with acute or severe illnesses. Its capacity was for 12 man and 12 women all treated by doctor-monks and in proximity of the hospitals there was a hostel for travelers.The hospitals from Saint Pantelimon’s Monastery (located near Bucharest in the XVIIIth century) was the largest one in the Romanian Principality. It was there where people suffering from plague, typhoid fever and chronic diseases were treated.

In the same time at the church-hospital of Cernica monastery, Nicanor, a medical monk, wrote “The Book for Doctors” dedicated to his fellows monks and the Archimandrite Dionisie translated from Greek “The Practical Medicine” in 2 parts; the book was printed later (in IXth century) in order to be used by the regular doctors too.

In Moldavia in the XVIIth century there are mentions about constructions of several church-hospitals such as: Saint Spiridon in Iaşi designated to people with acute disease, Saint Prophet Samuel

in Focşani, The Holy Virgin in Roman (this last one had its own pharmacy) Agapia and Vãratec.

In the XV-XVIth century the church-hospitals of Putna and Neamţ are built. At the “bolniţa”of Neamţ Monastery were brought the neurotic and psychotic patients and the monks had good knowledge of herbs. Their helpers were the students of the theological seminary and the candidates for monastic priesthood. Their knowledge about plant treatment was put in writing first just in the XVIIIth century in a book “The treatment of diseases” partially printed in XXIst century.

For Christians, physical health is a gift from God offered to those who live an authentic Christian life and suffering bared with patience and dignity is considered a way of atonement. The healers were seen as the messengers of Devine forgiveness; so it made sense the first hospitals appeared as churches too in monasteries – a place where God entirely hills.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Cincheza-Buculei E. (2002). *Iconographic Theme of the Moldavian “gropniţa” (XVIth century)*. *Romanian Art - European Art*, Oradea: Museum of Ţării Crişurilor.

2. Glazier M. & Hellwing M. (2004). *The Modern Catholic Encyclopedia*, Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press.

3. Plãmãdealã A. (1987). *The Monastic Life in the Romanian Orthodox Church. The Romanian Orthodox Church – Monography*, Bucharest: The Romanian Biblical and Missionary Institute, 1987.

4. Reli S. (1935). *The Monastic Medicine in Romanian Past*, Cernãuţi: Eminescu.

5. Scheau M. (1970). *History of Medicine*, Bucharest: University Publishing House.

6. Stãniloae D . (1992). *The History of Hesychasm in the Romanian Orthodoxy*, Bucharest: Romanian Biblical and Missionary Institute.

The Role of Thoughts in the Work of Evagrius Ponticus: Theological and Psychological Considerations

DANIEL TH. DAMIAN

The current paper, while not a comprehensive analysis of Evagrius Ponticus's theology about role of thoughts in the spiritual welfare of human beings, is intended to cast a new perspective on them through their reinterpretation and integration with the findings of cognitive psychology/psychotherapy.

Evagrius Ponticus was one of the most influential writers of the Early Christianity. He lived in 4th century as a hermit (solitary monk) in the dessert of Egypt. His writings, approaching the ascetic ideal of a monk, later became normative for the monastic community in the Orthodox Church.

An important theme of his theological legacy focuses on the spiritual "warfare" between hermits and demons, as an essential aspect of the ascetic purpose, ("praxis"), instrumental to the attainment of the purification of the soul ("apatheia") and contemplation of Holy Trinity. The spiritual "warfare" involves the demons' actions, manifested primarily as temptations which purport to turn the monk away from God, as well as the hermit's struggle to overcome them. This idea is not new for the Christian spirituality of the 4th century. St. Paul, in the first century, mentions in his Epistle to Ephesians that the struggle of the Christians is not against the people from this world, but against the angels of the darkness.

Expanding on this theory, Evagrius mentions that the demonic temptations take place at the psychological/mental level, through thoughts called "logismoi", meaning "evil thoughts". They have a well-defined goal: the arousal of sinful passions and the turning away of the mind from the pure prayer. The passion, in a strictly theological sense, is the result of the repeated committing of a sin; it is therefore a specific inclination of the soul that becomes habitual through sinful behaviors. The propensity for passions is innate for people, as a consequence of the primordial sin. However, it

is the evil thoughts that “activate” and make manifest this otherwise mere potentiality in human beings. How do the “logismoi” work? The Holy Fathers of the Early Church, and Evagrius among them, describe the mechanism by which thoughts cause sinful behaviors and subsequent passions: at the beginning there is a temptation in the form of an exterior evil thought “inspired” by demons; then, it is the linking or “the binding “of the mind to this thought, followed by a complete “consent” or “adhesion” of the willpower(and all psychological faculties) to the content of the thought; the last step is the committing of an behavioral act which transposes the original thought in outward sinful action. (Evagrius Ponticus, *Praktikos*, [after Romanian version Evagrie Ponticul, “*Tratatul Practic”*, 74-75, p.104]).

We notice the obvious similarity between Evagrius’s “theology of passion” and some perspectives largely held by the cognitive psychology, such as the preeminent role assigned to a cognitive component(thought, belief, etc) in the mechanism of carrying out an action. Therefore, the external behavior is not a response to a simple environmental stimulus (or “reinforcer”) but is initialized by a specific cognitive element. Albert Ellis, in “Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy” talks about the A-B-C of behavior, where “A” stands for environmental antecedent or circumstance, “B” stands for the resulting belief and “C” is the behavioral consequence of that belief. In both situations, it is the internal element that triggers the external behavior. (Albert Ellis, Rational *Emotive Behavior Therapy,* p.26-27).

Also, it is important to note the manner in which an evil thought, once taken in by the intellect, (“nous”) sometimes manage to “take over” the mental apparatus and produce a “consent” of the willpower, - in other words, permeates all other psychological functions (mood, affect, motivation, etc) ,- after which is enacted or “acted out” behaviorally.

In an almost similar way, according to the tenets of cognitive psychology, a dysfunctional thought or belief, if not discarded immediately, becomes dominant in the human mind (as an obsession, fixation, various ideations, etc) and compels outward behavior together with a corresponding alteration of the major psychological structures.

Clinical psychology laid out the cognitive vulnerability-stress model, according to which, peoples’ cognitive styles can be vulnerable to faulty thinking patterns (including perceptions and interpretations of events, expectations, worldviews and information-

processing) as a result of their childhood and/or previous learning experiences. When confronted with environmental stressors, these vulnerabilities ("distal" factors") lead to a dysfunctional analysis of events ("proximal" factors) and may ultimately result in dysfunctional behavior and mental illness. (L. Alloy, *"Abnormal Psychology",* p.91). Evagrius's theory about "logismoi" implies a certain inclination or "disposition" toward sin and passion, therefore a kind of ontological vulnerability (made manifest at the cognitive level as well) that appeared in human beings as a result of the original sin. This vulnerability, when under the influence of the demonic thoughts, can also turn into a "spiritual illness" - the committing of sin and the emergence of passions.

Evagrius contends that, once the passion has been aroused, the evil thoughts don't appear as an external, but as an inner temptation and somehow become inherent to the soul. Therefore we notice a kind of internalization of the "logismoi" as the passion grows. The evil thoughts become not only a cause, but also a consequence of the passion. In the field of cognitive psychology, psychotherapists (i.e.: Aaron Beck) point to the existence of the automatic thoughts, deemed as previously controlled and conscious thoughts that slipped into the unconscious mind (through ongoing use) and appear spontaneously, conditioning human behavior. In fact, dysfunctional automatic thoughts are considered one of the leading causes of the emergence and maintenance of mental disturbances.

According to Evagrius, a demonic thought will affect extensively an entire array of cognitive functions, including memory and imagination. Among the most affected element is the affective part of human psyche. The "logismoi" would leave their mark on human mood and affect by producing a "state of disturbance" and a disruption of emotional equilibrium. (Evagrius Ponticus, *Praktikos*, [Romanian version Evagrie Ponticul, *Tratatul Practic*, 80, p. 106]) In other words, we witness to the equivalent of subjective distress and the state of "imbalance" which is a hallmark of any psychological disorder. Evagrius, in full accordance with the findings of cognitive psychology, outlines the role of thought, as a leading cause in the dynamics of the emotional life.

Evagrius enumerates eight major "logismoi", each characteristic to a certain demon: the gluttony, fornication, avarice, sadness, rage, acedie, vainglory and pride. They all act as temptation by essentially distorting the view of the reality. For instance, the "logismos" of sadness features to the hermit his current life in the

most obvious pessimism, unlike his previous life, presented in rosy pictures. The "logismos" of gluttony presents the physical illnesses and helplessness due to the long-lasting ascetic life and fasting. The "logismos" of acedie features a life devoid of purpose and full of emptiness, desolation and indifference with respect to the ascetic ideal. On contrary, the vainglory demonic thought features an overly optimistic view of the monastic life and the monk's future personal deeds. (Evagrius Ponticus, *Praktikos*, [after Romanian version, Evagrie Ponticul, "*Tratatul Practic*", p.50, 52, 57]).

The distortion of reality pertaining to the self, others and the environment, both in the present and in the future is also a hallmark characteristic of most mental disorders as interpreted by cognitive psychology. This phenomenon, the result of flawed thinking patterns, is based on fundamental thought-processing biases. As an example, one of the most reputed researchers in the field, the psychologist Aaron Beck, mentions overgeneralization, magnification and selective attention as major cognitive biases in the development of depression. (L. Craighead "*Cognitive and Behavioral Interventions,* p.92-93). The mechanism of the thought-processing biases is accurately described (although the terminology is different) in the writings of Evagrius Ponticus as well, as the favorite "modus operandi" of the "logismoi" on the human mind.

Evagrius, in full consensus with the dessert Fathers of the Early Church, viewed the existence of sin and passion essentially as a "illness" of the soul, which required special types of spiritual "therapy". Evagrius's spiritual therapies bear striking similarities to a diverse body of modern psychotherapies, including the cognitive, behavioral, existential, experiential even Gestalt approaches. For the scope of our paper, we will focus on the "cognitive-oriented" strategies in the work of ponitic hermit.

The spiritual remedies against "logismoi" are given a special consideration in Evagrius's writings. The unifying purpose is to operate a purge of the evil thoughts in order to purify to mind. This concept is very similar in nature to the cognitive psychotherapy's highly-regarded technique of disputation and ultimately rejection of the dysfunctional thoughts. For uprooting the "logismoi" from the mind, the monk must be able to clearly identify them first in terms of the source (the specific demons that generate the evil thoughts). This identification is made on the basis of the effects of each "logismoi" at the emotional level (it's deemed that each demonic thought arouse a specific affective "state of disturbance") and implied thorough self-

analysis and introspection on the part of the monk. (Evagrius Ponticus, *"On Thoughts"* [after Romanian version, Evagrie Ponticul, Capete despre deosebirea patimilor…..20, p.90]).

Therefore, we recognize the modern technique of dysfunctional thought identification - as a critical component of the therapeutic approach (L. Craighead *"Cognitive and Behavioral Interventions,* p.95.) - embedded in Evagrian writings.

Thought monitoring, an important intervention modality of cognitive psychotherapy is also prescribed by Evagrius as a spiritual means for averting the "logismoi". When advising for the monitoring of the evil thoughts, Evagrius takes in consideration their order of succession, as well as the antecedents and the consequences that follow their occurrence. (Evagrius Ponticus, *Praktikos*, [after Romanian version, Evagrie Ponticul, "*Tratatul Practic*", p.50]) Guided imagery/reflections, as usual techniques employed by the cognitive psychotherapy are part of Evagrius's remedies against "logismoi". He contended that the ongoing thought about the imminence of death as well as the remembrance of the sins of the past weaken the passions and uproot the evil thoughts from our mind.

Overall, the spiritual remedies against the evil thoughts imply a psychological state of heightened awareness and enhanced attention called by Evagrius the "spiritual awakening" ("nepticos"). (Evagrius Ponticus, Praktikos, [after Romanian version, Evagrie Ponticul, "Tratatul Practic", p.103]).

All the above considerations highlight the convergence between Evagrian theological concepts and modern psychology and serve as new evidence about the actuality of Evagrius Ponticus's work in the 21st century.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alloy, L& Riskind, J. & Manos Margaret (2005) *Abnormal Psychology* (9th ed.) New York, NY: Mc.Graw-Hill.

Craighead, L. & Craighead E. & Kazdin A. & Mahoney M. (1994) *Cognitive and Behavioral Interventions*, Needham Heights, MA: Paramount Publishing

Ellis, A. & Mac Laren, C. (2005) *Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy* (2nd ed.) Atascaredo, CA: Impact Publishers.

Evagrie Ponticul (1997) *Tratatul Practic*, Iasi, Romania: Polirom Publishing House.

Evagrie Ponticul (1993) *Capete despre deosebirea patimilor si a gandurilor*, Bucuresti, Romania: Harisma Publishing House

Karapetyan, T. (2000-1) Kirakos Erznkaci's On the eight thoughts of Evagrius in *St. Nersess Theological Review* 5–6, 39–118.

Sinkewicz, R. (2003) *Evagrius of Pontus*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Tilby, A. (2005) *From Evil Thoughts to Deadly Sins: Evagrius of Pontus's Psychology of Sin in Wilderness: Essays in Honour of Frances Young*, London–New York: T & T Clark.