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ΠΕΡΙΟΔΙΚΟ ΜΕΣΑΙΩΝΙΚΗΣ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗΣ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΜΟΥ

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*Μελέτες στη μνήμη
του Benjamin C. Hendrickx*



ΕΚΔΟΤΙΚΟΣ ΟΙΚΟΣ
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ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗ

ΕΚΔΟΣΕΙΣ ΒΥΖΑΝΤΙΝΟΣ ΔΟΜΟΣ

ΠΕΡΙΕΧΟΜΕΝΑ

ΒΡΑΧΥΓΡΑΦΙΕΣ	V
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ΜΕΛΕΤΕΣ ΚΑΙ ΑΡΘΡΑ

Benjamin Hendrickx in memoriam-εισαγωγικό κείμενο (του επιμελητή έκδοσης)	1
Tabula Memorialis	3
Γεώργιος Χρ. Τσιγάρας, Ο καθηγητής Benjamin Hendrickx (1939-2021)	5
Efi Zacharopoulou, Publications by Benjamin C. Hendrickx in the period 1962-2020	13
Alexios G.C. Savvides, Benjamin Hendrickx (1939-2021): his contribution to medieval historical studies	29
Benjamin Hendrickx (†), Quelques notes à propos de l'investiture, du statut et des ceremonies des princes et princesses d'Achaïe: Des usurpateurs? Un prince couronne? Des princes tricheurs? Des princesses investies de la dignité princière? Des princesses-époux ou princes-consorts? Des princesses dupées?	39
Αλεξάνδρα-Κυριακή Βασιλείου-Seibt, Σχετικά με το πρόσωπο του Τατίκιου	93
Παναγιώτης Α. Γιαννόπουλος, Θωμαΐς, η συγγραφέας του μαρτυρίου της αγίας Φεβρωνίας (BHG 659)	99
Ηλίας Γιαρένης, Η επιστολή του Νικολάου Μεσαρίτη στον αρχιεπίσκοπο Προκοννήσου. Εισαγωγή, κριτική έκδοση και συνοπτικός σχολιασμός	105
Georgios Chr. Charizanis, Trebizond: centre of education and learning and birthplace of famous men (A.D. 7 th -11 th c.)	129
Georgios Gousgouriotis, Who was the greatest Church Father? A philosophical dispute of the 11 th century	145
Raita Hendrickx-Steyn, When history meets art in Africa: <i>The New Jerusalem</i> in the vision of King Lalibela and artist Jackson Hlungwani	163
Anna Kantika, Dioclétien, Théophane le Chronographe, Constantin VII Porphyrogénète et la début de l' Empire byzantin	185
Δημήτριος Ν. Κασαπίδης, Συμβολή στην εγκατάσταση του Τάγματος των Δομηνικανών στην Ανατολή: η περίπτωση της Κωνσταντινούπολης	195
Όλγα Χ. Κούρτογλου, Η γυναικεία παρουσία σε ιδιόμορφα φαινόμενα μοναχισμού στον ύστερο Μεσαίωνα: η περίπτωση των <i>beguinae</i>	221
Savvas Kyriakides, The use of oaths in the <i>Histories</i> of John VI Kantakouzenos (1347-1354)	227
Γεώργιος Α. Λεβενιώτης, 'Περίβλεπτοι κύριοι', 'ευγενέστατοι' και 'λογιώτατοι κριταί': συμβολή στη μελέτη της διοίκησης του Θέματος Οψικίου κατά τον 11 ^ο αιώνα	245
Ελένη Λιάντα, Η απεικόνιση των γυναικείων μορφών στα νομίσματα της υστεροβυζαντινής περιόδου (1204-1453)	263
Στέλιος Α. Μουζάκης, Καλαντάριο-βροντολόγιο-σεισμολόγιο-ευχολόγιο του 18 ^{ου} αιώνα – ανέκδοτος κώδικας	289
Χρήστος Π. Μπαλόγλου, Η γεωπολιτική σημασία της προτάσεως του Βησσαρίωνος περί ιδρύσεως πόλεως στον Ισθμό της Κορίνθου	305
Χριστίνα Μπουγά, Πολιτιστικές διαδρομές στην ύπαιθρο χώρα της Ζακύνθου: εκκλησίες της μεταβυζαντινής και νεότερης περιόδου	339

Βασιλική Νεράντζη-Βαρμάζη, Η εικόνα του 'άλλου' στους ιστορικούς συγγραφείς των τελευταίων βυζαντινών αιώνων (12 ^{ου} -15 ^{ου})	369
Photeine V. Perra, An entry on John Hunyadi heretofore unpublished	375
Κωνσταντίνος Χαρ. Πεσυρίδης, Αναφορές σε εικονογραφικά θέματα στους τρεις Απολογητικούς Λόγους υπέρ των εικόνων του Ιωάννη Δαμασκηνού	383
Λίνα Μ. Ποζίδου, Η εκστρατεία του αυτοκράτορα Ηράκλειου Α' (610-641) κατά των Σασσανιδών Περσών μέσα από τις γεωργιανές πηγές	401
π. Ευάγγελος Κ. Πριγκιπάκης, Ο Πατριάρχης Ισίδωρος Α' ο Βούχειρας (±1290-1350) έργο του Δημητρίου Κυδώνη	417
Panos Sophoulis, Shifting identities in the medieval Balkans: the case of Albania and Bosnia	441
Αλεξία-Φωτεινή Σταμούλη, Παρατηρήσεις για την εκπαίδευση σε υστεροβυζαντινά α-γιολογικά κείμενα	451
Γιώργος Εμμ. Τερεζάκης, Ο ρόλος της δημογραφικής κρίσης του 14 ^{ου} αιώνα στη σύνθε-ση και διασπορά του πληθυσμού στο θεσσαλικό χώρο	519
Χρήστος Αθ. Τερέζης, Φιλοσοφικές προβολές της τριαδολογίας και της ανθρωπολογίας στον άγιο Γρηγόριο Νύσσης	529
Μανόλης Γ. Βαρβούνης, Ο μητροπολίτης Τραπεζούντος Χρυσάνθος και ο τεκτονισμός	557
Αλέξιος Γ. Κ. Σαββίδης, Σημειώσεις για τις πηγές της ιστορίας του Βυζαντίου και για τα βασικά γραμματολογικά τους βοηθήματα	561

ΝΕΚΡΟΛΟΓΙΕΣ

ΠΙΕΤΡΟΣ ΓΙΑΚΟΥΜΕΛΟΣ, Ο Γέρων Μητροπολίτης Καισαρείας της Αφρικής από Α-ξώμης. Μία σεμνή, ταπεινή και αγλαόκαρπος διακονία στην Αφρική. IN MEMO-RIAM υπό Χρήστου Π. Μπαλόγλου	617
ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΣ Α. ΜΑΝΑΦΗΣ (1938-2021), του Στυλιανού Λαμπάκη	621
ΣΥΡΙΑ ΜΑΝΓΚΟ, Ένας πρωτοπόρος της Βυζαντινολογίας, του Στέφανου Ευθυμιάδη	623

ΒΙΒΛΙΟΚΡΙΣΙΕΣ

<i>Η Αντιρρητική Πραγματεία του Ιωάννου Στ' Καντακουζηνού κατά του Ιωάννη Κυπαρισιώτη</i> . Κριτική έκδοση Δήμητρα Ι. Μονιού, υπό Χρήστου Π. Μπαλόγλου	627
<i>Ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αθηνών Χρυσόστομος Παπαδόπουλος και η Εκκλησία Αλεξανδρείας</i> . Παναγιώτης Τζουμέρκας, υπό Χρήστου Π. Μπαλόγλου	632

ΑΝΕΚΔΟΤΑ BYZANTINA ΕΓΚΩΜΙΑ

<i>Εγκώμιον εἰς τὸν ἅγιον ἱερομάρτυρα τοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἐλευθέριον</i> , ἐπιμέλεια Γιώργος Τ. Τσερεβελάκης	633
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WHO WAS THE GREATEST CHURCH FATHER? A PHILOSOPHICAL DISPUTE OF THE 11th CENTURY

by

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The paper aims to offer an insight into a peculiar cultural event, the philosophical dispute of the 11th century. The lack of references to it in the extant sources indicates that this dispute surely was not the biggest one that ever happened in Byzantium and renders a detailed and complete reformulation of the dispute unattainable.¹ Nevertheless, taking the narrations of the extant Synaxaria for the 30th of January into consideration and focusing on specific strands of this conflict, such as the “sinner” John Chrysostom, the role of Michael Psellos and the curious vision of John Mavropous, I shed light over intriguing and heretofore unknown until nowadays aspects of this philosophical dispute. Furthermore, my research contributes substantially to the discussion about the reception of the Three Hierarchs and their works at the same time.

The 11th century is characterized by the development of a remarkable interest in the Three Hierarchs. In particular, “a sense among the faithful was taking shape that ... Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nazianzus together with ... John Chrysostom formed a ‘triad’, conventionally known as the Three Hierarchs ... We also know that there was a growing interest in the literary merits of the works of the three Church Fathers”.² During the days of the emperor Michael VII Dukas (1071-1078) this particular interest in the Three Hierarchs gradually developed into a philosophical controversy among the scholars of Constantinople, regarding a comparison of the Three Hierarchs’ rhetorical abilities, which possibly escalated during the first part of Alexios I Komnenos’ reign (1081-1083).

The dispute is described in two surviving versions of the Synaxarion for the 30th of January.³ The oldest one, dated to the end of 13th century, is partly published by Przychocki (henceforth SP)⁴ and the latest (14th century), and more extensive, is edited in *Patrologia Graeca*.⁵ Aside from these texts, though, there is also another Synaxarion for the same day, different from the two other versions, dated to the 14th century

1. Karpozilos (1982) 164-165.

2. Agapitos (1998) 187-188.

3. For their manuscript tradition, see Karpozilos (1982) 162.

4. Regarding the extent, its narration is half of *Patrologia*’s text.

5. *Historia Institutionis* (PG 29, CCCXC-CCCXCIII).

(henceforth SM).⁶ The present article is based primarily on *Patrologia*'s version, but it also discusses the other two texts and edits in its appendix the version of the *SM* as transmitted in the codex Vaticanus gr. 721 (14th-15th centuries).⁷

A general description of the dispute: cause, conventions and context

Historia Institutionis places the dispute chronologically in Constantinople during the first days of Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1083): "During the reign of Alexios ... a conflict took place in Constantinople among the educated and virtuous men".⁸ However, the dispute started during the reign of Michael VII Dukas (1071-1078).⁹ Perhaps, due to the chronological distance of this version (14th century) from the actual events of the dispute, it was probably unknown when exactly the beginning of the philosophical conflict took place. On the other hand, maybe the use of the word στάσις, which is conceptually deeply connected to the term coup, indicates that the writer refers to the start of a more polemical part of the dispute.¹⁰ Considering that the regular feasts for each of the Three Hierarchs were bounded on both sides by those in honor of John Chrysostom (13 November & 27 January—while Basil was commemorated on 1 January and Gregory on 25 January), Karpozilos naturally reasons that this inequity could have been the original impetus for the dispute.¹¹

Byzantine scholars of the capital divided themselves into three separate groups. Each of them supported one saint ("διαίρεθῆναι τὰ πλήθη, καὶ τοὺς μὲν Ἰωαννίτας λέγεσθαι, τοὺς δὲ Βασιλείτας, Γρηγορείτας δὲ τοὺς λοιπούς"),¹² and put forth numerous arguments regarding the special, rhetorical and theological, merits of their favorite Hierarch. Also, it is clear "*that their partisans supported opinions, which in the partisans' eyes corresponded to those of their particular hierarch*",¹³ a fact which shows that each party had an indissoluble bond with its Hierarch and, therefore, was totally connected

6. Agapitos does not mention this work (Agapitos (1998) 188, n. 84), but Linardos notes its existence (Linardos (2005) 126, n. 2). For the manuscript tradition of the three Synaxaria, see Linardos (2005) 126, n. 2.

7. Its sole difference with the other SM version is the word φιλονεικία (f. 16r): φιλονικία (SM 531).

8. "Ἐπὶ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ Ἀλεξίου ... ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει στάσις γέγονε παρὰ τῶν ἐλλογίμων καὶ ἐναρέτων ἀνδρῶν" (*Historia Institutionis CCCXC*). In contrast, SP (SP 133) does not mention either the social profile of the participants or the place of the dispute. However, the absence of any reference to the place's name can perhaps be justified: the writer may have taken for granted that the place could not be anywhere else but Constantinople, the capital of Byzantium.

9. Agapitos (1998) 188.

10. SP (SP 133) titles also the dispute στάσιν, while SM names it φιλονικία (SM 531) ("quarrel"), a term which on the surface seems to mitigate the gravity of the dispute. Nevertheless, a few passages later (SM 532) its writer notes that "οὐκ ὀλίγη τις ἦν αὐτοῖς ἡ περὶ τούτων ἔρις" ("the dispute about them was not insignificant"), a fact which is proved by the adoption of special names by each different party: "ὥς καὶ ἑαυτοῖς τὰ τούτων ὀνόματα ἐπιτιθέναι" ("since they adopted the names of the Hierarchs for themselves").

11. Karpozilos (1982) 162.

12. "the crowd was divided, and some of them were called Ioannitai, some others Basileitai and the rest of them Gregoritai" (*Historia Institutionis CCCXCI*).

13. Agapitos (1998) 189.

to him. Nevertheless, *Historia Institutionis* does not cite any names of individuals who took part in the dispute. In addition, due to the enormous lack of relevant sources it is still unknown what the actual social range of the participants was. Karpozilos complicates the situation by mentioning that the dispute was limited to the circles of scholars and exclusively in the context of philological discussions,¹⁴ but in the same monograph, only two pages later¹⁵ he states without enough evidence that the dispute started from the philological circles of Constantinople and then became so widespread that it gained a general character and disrupted the peace of the Church. On the contrary, Linardos' opinion is that the conflict was only philological in nature and did not concern the majority of the faithful.¹⁶

Although we do not know exactly who the participants were, it seems less possible that, apart from learned scholars, people from the lower social classes also took part in the dispute and shaped it, since they were usually illiterate and, as a result, incapable of participating in profound philological and theological discussions. The *SM* versions attest to the truth of that assumption, because both of them coalesce to the point that only scholars took part: “καί τινων μὲν τῶν ἐν μαθήμασι σπουδαζόντων”.¹⁷ However, it should be noted that these kinds of theological disputes were very popular among the lower classes.¹⁸ Thus, maybe their engagement with the event remained restricted to the level of rumours and hearsay about it.

The interest in these three Fathers expanded rapidly also in contemporary Byzantine iconography. Various “representations in illuminated manuscripts, mosaics and portable icons”¹⁹ testify to the interest of Church and artists in grouping together these three outstanding theologians²⁰ and the *Historia Institutionis* provides us detailed information about their depiction, which became established in the 11th century.²¹ The dispute ended suddenly during the first years of Alexios' I reign; the reason was an interesting vision. Specifically, the Three Hierarchs appeared to John Mavropous and asked him to intervene, in order to propose to the authorities the introduction of their common feast and, therefore, to end the somewhat long-standing philosophical dispute among the scholars of the capital.²² Indeed, John “appealed to Patriarch Eustratios and proposed to the Holy Synod to establish a joint feast for the three hierarchs ... The pa-

14. Karpozilos (1982) 162.

15. Karpozilos (1982) 164.

16. Linardos (2005) 126.

17. (“and these are scholars”) *SM* 531, f. 16r. This assumption is also confirmed by *Historia Institutionis*, see above n. 8.

18. Indeed, Gregory of Nazianzos tried many times in his work to prevent the majority of the flock from similar conflicts (Simelidis (2009) 122-123).

19. Karpozilos (1982) 165-166, n. 159, Linardos (2005) 152. See also Walter (1978).

20. See above n. 2.

21. *Historia Institutionis* CCCXCI-CCCXCII.

22. *Historia Institutionis* CCCXCI. *SM* version does not include in its narration the introduction of the feast and the passages of Patrologia regarding the three saints' depiction.

triarch and the Synod accepted the proposal".²³ Generally speaking concerning Byzantine disputes, in "*Constantinople, neither the patriarch nor the emperor exercised the authority in doctrinal matters ... theoretically church and state worked in 'symphony' to promote the Orthodox faith ... when a doctrine became a matter of dispute*".²⁴ Therefore, it seems that the philosophical dispute of the 11th century is an exception and did not ever take serious dimensions, since Mavropous met only with the patriarch and the Holy Synod, not with the emperor himself, too.

It became obvious to me from the start that previous scholarship on the conflict was too limited and its assumptions were mostly superficial, either avoiding or not managing to reach profound conclusions, which could help to reformulate individual (but significant) aspects of the dispute. For all these reasons I decided to focus on specific passages of the *Historia Institutionis*, taking also the narrations from the *SP* and *SM* versions into account, and attempting to view the conclusions of previous scholarship from a totally different perspective, appending to them my own assumptions, which I discuss in the next sections.

Aspects of the dispute

1. The term *ὕψιλλορος*

Βασιλείται, whose only member known to us was Michael of Ephesos,²⁵ used to praise their favorite saint by calling him *sublime* (*ὕψιλλορον*).²⁶ However, this label was not an invention of his supporters. It was attributed to Basil for the first time by Gregory of Nazianzos in a letter addressed to him: "*o you highly sublime and inventor of new names*".²⁷ A few years later, Gregory numbered *ὕψιλλορίαν* among the other virtues of Basil's teaching in his epitaph on the occasion of the loss of his beloved friend: "*and he taught sublimity*".²⁸ Although Basileitai used to attribute the nickname *ὕψιλλορος* to their own Hierarch, it is striking that this source is the only extant one that provides such information on him. We cannot exclude the possibility that the use of Basil's nickname by his party could have been only oral, namely in the context of possible philosophical and theological debates that took part during that period. This assumption is strengthened also by the fact that the *Historia Institutionis* mentions that this title was applied by Βασιλείται (*λεγοντων*), which on the surface does not refer to a written usage, and thus renders more possible a strictly oral application of *ὕψιλλορος* by his supporters.

23. Agapitos (1998) 189-190.

24. Russell (2019) 135-136. Typical examples are the conflicts between Eunomios and Basil the Great with Gregory of Nyssa, Hesychasm and Iconoclasm.

25. Agapitos (1998) 189. No version of the dispute provides us any information about the members of this party.

26. *Historia Institutionis* CCCXC.

27. "*ὁ λίαν ὕψιλλορε σὺ καὶ ποιητὰ καινῶν ὀνομάτων*" (Grégoire de Nazianze, *Lettres*, Let. 4 (4, 7)).

28. "*καὶ ὕψιλλορίαν ἐδίδαξε*" (Grégoire de Nazianze, *En l'honneur du Grand Basile discours funèbre*, 196, LXV.4).

On the other hand, we find derivative words of the term *ὕψιγορος*, concerning the Three Hierarchs, in only two edited texts of the 11th century. The intriguing fact is that they both refer not at all to Basil of Caesarea, but exclusively to Gregory of Nazianzos! Specifically, in his work *Εἰς τὴν ζώνην τῶν στουδιτῶν διακόνων*, the monk Niketas Stethatos uses the adverb *ὕψηλως*, in order to praise the theological teaching of the Cappadocian saint: “*Gregory, the flute of theology, teaches me by theologising so sublimely about the belt*”.²⁹ Also, the prominent scholar Michael Psellos uses in one of his doctrinal treatises, where he discusses some theological sayings, the participle *ὕψηγορῶν* for the purpose of praising the high rhetorical level of Gregory’s style: “*the mighty and in all ways great Gregory ... sublime*”.³⁰ These two passages may indicate that, apart from Psellos, whose admiration for Gregory’s rhetorical abilities has been expressed many times in his works,³¹ Niketas Stethatos recognised Gregory’s high rhetorical style and could be also numbered among the so-called *Γρηγορείται*, if his monastic treatise was written at the same time as the events of the dispute.³² Perhaps it is not a coincidence that a monk like Stethatos would be a fan of Gregory of Nazianzos, because Agapitos, referring to the Three Hierarchs, mentions that “*the three of them also had different social images: Gregory was seen as the solitary poet theologian*”.³³

29. “*Λιδάσκει δέ με καὶ Γρηγόριος, ὁ τῆς θεολογίας αὐλός, περὶ ζώνης οὕτω θεολογῶν ὕψηλως*” (Nicetas Stethatos, *Εἰς τὴν ζώνην*, 490, 3.9-11).

30. “*ὁ δὲ πολὺς καὶ μέγας ἐν πᾶσι Γρηγόριος ... ὕψηγορῶν*” (Michael Psellos, *Εἰς τὸ πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ εὐλαβεῖσθαι ἄξιον, μὴ φανοίμεθα τῆς θαυμασίας ἀρετῆς κακοὶ ζωγράφοι ... πρὸς τινὰς ἐρωτήσαντας*, 54, 30).

31. See Linardos (2005) 243, 253 and Agapitos (1998) 188-189. It seems possible that the scholars around him also belonged to the *Γρηγορείται* (Agapitos (1998) 189).

32. Apart from that fact, in his letter 4, addressed to the chartophylax and syncellos of Koronis Niketas but not dated yet, we learn that its recipient has asked Stethatos why he believes that the angels participate in the Holy Enlightenment and Grace according to their class, although Gregory of Nazianzos had expressed some doubts about it: Nicetas Stethatos, *Lettres*, Let. 4 (236. 1, 1-4): “*Μαθεῖν ἐρωτᾷς πῶς τοῦ φωτισμοῦ μετέχειν τοὺς ἀγγέλους καὶ τῆς χάριτος κατ’ ἀναλογίαν καὶ τῆς τάξεως εἶπομεν, τοῦ θεολόγου πατρὸς Γρηγορίου περὶ αὐτῶν ἀμφιβάλλοντος;*”. Stethatos answers that there were earlier writers, such as Saint Paul or (ps.)Dionysios the Areopagite, who were more competent on this subject, and advises him to follow their teachings. Darrouzès notes that Niketas of Koronis is aware of Niketas of Herakleia’s commentary on the oration *Εἰς τὸ ἅγιον βάπτισμα* (Oration 40), where the commentator marks this doubt of Gregory’s (Nicetas Stethatos, *Lettres* 237, n. 1.). Stethatos’ advice to the bishop of Koronis does not indicate a low estimate of Nazianzenos’ rhetorical work. This reference is a proof that Gregory of Nazianzos’ work should be considered even concerning issues that he was not an expert on. My conclusion is confirmed also by the rest of letter 4, where Stethatos beetles along to urgently clarify that he does not condemn Gregory Nazianzenos, because he takes more other writers’ works into more consideration upon this subject: “*Τοῖς ὑπηρεταῖς οὖν τοῦ Λόγου οὐδαμῶς ἀμφιβάλλουσιν, ὡς ὀρᾷς, περὶ τούτων, προσετησόμεθα οὐχ ὡς τοῦ θείου καταφρονοῦντες πατρὸς Γρηγορίου – ἅπαγε, μὴ οὕτω φρενῶν σχοίημεν! – ἀλλ’ ὡς τὰ πρεσβεῖα φέρουσι τῆς θεολογίας ἐκείνοις καὶ τῷ Λόγῳ μαθητευθεῖσι Θεοῦ καὶ μυσταγωγηθεῖσι τρανότερον ἐξ αὐτοῦ τὰ θεῖα τε καὶ ἀνθρώπινα*” (“*The fact that the servants of Christ have no doubt about them, as you can see, does not entail that we condemn the divine father Gregory – I am not mad enough to support such a belief! – but because they were great theologians, they had been taught the speech of Christ and been inducted through Him into the divine and human matters*”) (Nicetas Stethatos, *Lettres*, Let. 4 (238. 1, 46-52)).

33. Agapitos (1998) 189.

In addition, if we take into account that the use of *ὕψηγορος* by the *Βασιλείται* was probably exclusively oral, then we could assume that the use of *ὕψηγορος* by both Psellos and Stethatos is not coincidental, but rather reveals the existence of a deeper, common and long-term aim by their party. By taking advantage of the lacking, if not null, existence of written references regarding this term for Basil the Great by his fans, perhaps they wanted to identify *ὕψηγορος* from then on with Gregory of Nazianzos with the help of their texts, also looking forward to a continuation of this usage by successive generations through the manuscript tradition of their literary works.³⁴ The use of the term *ὕψηγορος* by the *Γρηγορείται* for their saint is also vicariously confirmed by some lines of the *SP* version, which are not cited in *Patrologia*. *SP* mentions that the *Γρηγορείται* supported Gregory because he “*talked highly about God*”,³⁵ which seems to refer allusively to the term *ὕψηγορος*.

2. Michael Psellos as critic and participant in the dispute

Michael Psellos was by far the most famous scholar of his time. As a result, he surely played a part in the dispute, but we cannot determine whether this was decisive or not. Papaioannou believes that his “*concentrated focus on this particular early Byzantine author [sc. Gregory of Nazianzos] therefore had significant social currency in a fervent cultural market — as one may infer from the disagreements among Gregory–, Basil–, and Chrysostom–fans mentioned by Psellos’ teacher Ioannes Mauropous*”.³⁶ Specifically, Psellos wrote three works of literary criticism: 1) a treatise on the rhetori-

34. I must note that Psellos and Stethatos were not the first writers who used this term for Gregory of Nazianzos; rather, Niketas David the Paphlagonian (10th century) was. In his encomium of Gregory Nazianzenos Niketas mentions that through the *ὕψηγορίαν* of his spirit Gregory destroyed the heretics and their teaching: “*ἡττώμενοι δ’ ἐξ ἀδρανεΐας, μάλλον δὲ συντριβόμενοι ... τῷ τῆς ὕψηγορίας αὐτοῦ πνεύματι*” (“*they are defeated by inactivity, they are smashed by the sublimity of his spirit*”) (Niketas Paphlagonian, Encomium, 51, 16.85-87). Taking into consideration that this reference is the only extant one about the term’s use for Gregory before the 11th century, we can assume that maybe Psellos and Stethatos knew this passage and both of them decided to continue Niketas’ literary (but possibly not intentional) “propaganda” regarding the term *ὕψηγορος* in their works. The only extant reference to the term after the 11th century and regarding the Three Hierarchs is cited in a treatise by John Kyparissiotis (14th century). It is striking that Kyparissiotis uses the word *ὕψηγορος* not for Gregory of Nazianzos, but for Basil the Great this time!: “*Ὁ ὕψηγόρος Βασίλειος ἅμα τῷ θεορρήμονι Γρηγορίῳ*” (“*The sublime Basil with Gregory the theologian*”) (John Kyparissiotis, *Adversus Cantacuzenum*, 85, 28.26-27). However, this reference is the only extant one of that kind after 11th century, and due to the lack of other relevant sources we cannot estimate or even speculate the actual success of the Gregoritian propaganda concerning the use of *ὕψηγορος* after the 11th century. Besides, Kyparissiotis’ passage does not reflect a deliberate intention to change of the term’s usage again. Since the writer lived in 14th century, it is impossible that he would like to “take part” in the discussions of a philosophical dispute which took place three centuries earlier. I think that his choice more reflects the fragmentary knowledge of the dispute in the Palaeologan era, as the turbid references of the *Historia Institutionis* and *SP* about the chronology and the place of the dispute may also indicate (see above n. 8).

35. “*ὕψηλῶς θεολογήσαντι*” (*SP* 134).

36. Papaioannou (2013) 63.

cal character of Gregory of Nazianzos,³⁷ 2) an essay about John Chrysostom, and 3) a treatise on the literary styles of the Three Hierarchs, including also Gregory of Nyssa.³⁸ The criticism of Psellos is not only important for the research regarding his literary taste, but also for the partial reformulation of the philosophical dispute.

In the essay about Chrysostom's literary style, Psellos not only does not accuse John in the entire work, but he also praises the special abilities of his style.³⁹ Apart from this, his work addressed to Pothos contains a lengthy judgment upon the rhetorical abilities of Gregory of Nazianzos.⁴⁰ However, this treatise was written maybe in the 1060s;⁴¹ thus, it cannot add any information about the conflict. There is no reference in it to the other two Fathers (Basil, Chrysostom) or any comparison between Gregory and them.⁴² Throughout the entire work there is immoderate and certainly unreasonable praise of Nazianzenos, since he is presented as the best writer of the whole of Greek literature, better even than famous classical authors such as Thucydides, Plato and Herodotos.⁴³ It is interesting that we may observe here a crucial change regarding the actual character of Byzantine literary criticism. The calm and fair judgments of Photios, who in his *Bibliothēke* evaluated each writer according to his merits and avoided ill-fated comparisons, are replaced now by Psellos' attempt to praise, without any kind of thoughtfulness or modesty, the literary abilities of his beloved Gregory Nazianzenos.⁴⁴

On the other hand, Psellos' *Χαρακτῆρες* is characterized by a totally paradoxical fact. Although its title renders clear that the text is supposed to be a comparison of four different Fathers' literary merits, Psellos chooses to discuss the rhetorical abilities of Basil, Chrysostom and Gregory of Nyssa just a few lines before the treatise's end. Until then, we observe a presentation of Nazianzenos' literary merits.⁴⁵ Although Gregory

37. Its title is *Τοῦ ὑπερίμου Ψελλοῦ λόγος σχεδιασθεὶς πρὸς Πόθον βεστάρχην ἀξιώσαντα αὐτὸν γράψαι περὶ τοῦ θεολογικοῦ χαρακτῆρος* (Michael Psellos, Rede).

38. The treatise is named *Χαρακτῆρες Γρηγορίου τοῦ Θεολόγου, τοῦ Μεγάλου Βασιλείου, τοῦ Χρυσοστόμου, καὶ Γρηγορίου τοῦ Νύσσης* (Michael Psellos, *Χαρακτῆρες*).

39. For a brief presentation of its content and edition, see Linardos (2005) 254-256.

40. Karpozilos (1982) 163.

41. Papaioannou (2021) 103.

42. Karpozilos (1982) 163. For a short presentation of its content, see Linardos (2005) 256-257.

43. The relevant passages are exhaustively many and a citation even of few of them would rather tire the reader.

44. See also Papaioannou (2021) 95, n. 17 and 103-131. Except for the above mentioned treatises, Psellos wrote also another two essays of comparative literary criticism which juxtapose Euripides with George of Pisidia and Heliodoros with Achilles Tatios. For their edition, see Michael Psellos, *Essays*.

45. For Psellos Gregory of Nazianzos is the Christian counterpart of Demosthenes: "*ὅπερ ἐστὶ Δημοσθένους τῇ ἐτέρᾳ μερίδι, φημὶ τῇ ἑλληνικῇ, τοῦτο τῇ καθ' ἡμᾶς ὁ θεολόγος Γρηγόριος*" ("just as Demosthenes is evaluated for the other part, the ancient Greeks, so too Gregory the theologian is for us (e.g. the Byzantines)") (Michael Psellos, *Χαρακτῆρες* 125), "*τὴν μὲν πανηγυρικὴν ἰδέαν, οὐ τὴν Δημοσθενικὴν μόνον γλῶτταν ὑπερηκόντισεν ... πρὸς δέ γε δικαστικοὺς ἀγῶνας καὶ ἐν οἷς τὰς συμβουλὰς διατίθεται, ἱκανὸς ἐκείνῳ διαμιλλήσασθαι*" ("regarding the panegyric genre, he did not only overpassed the language of Demosthenes ... regarding the litigations, he is capable of competing with him (e.g. Demosthenes)") (Michael Psellos, *Χαρακτῆρες* 126).

borrowed some of them from ancient writers (Lysias, Demosthenes, Thucydides, Isocrates), he managed to assimilate them harmoniously in his works and to differ perceptibly from his ancient Greek models.⁴⁶ Psellos' attitude towards Gregory is again prejudiced, but it is obvious that its message is not as exaggerated as in the previous work addressed to Pothos. The only accusation against another Hierarch is for Basil the Great, whose style is, according to Michael Psellos, unskilled: "*his language is unsophisticated, it sounds as horrible as thunder and it dissimulates every advantage*".⁴⁷ If we take into account that Psellos was a prominent Γρηγορείτης, it is possible that this reference may have been an accusation of the Γρηγορείται against the Βασιλείται. Thus, *Χαρακτήρες* is proof that the dispute occasionally included Gregory of Nyssa. In iconography before the 11th century, Gregory of Nyssa sometimes grouped with two of the other three Fathers, taking the place of one of them.⁴⁸ However, it still remains unknown why there was no party in the dispute that supported the brother of Basil the Great. One possible reason could be that Gregory of Nyssa had a small impact on the Byzantines, although his work was known by significant theologians, such as Maximos the Confessor. Considering that the treatise was written shortly before Mavropous' proposal of the feast to the Holy Synod (1082),⁴⁹ perhaps *Χαρακτήρες* reflects a mild atmosphere which characterized the dispute during that period.

Apart from his literary criticism, Psellos seems to consider the Three Hierarchs as equal in two of his poems, the first addressed to the emperor Constantinos IX Monomachos (1042-1055) and the second sent to a monk: "*The word praises the solid gold Chrysostom/and the teachers equal to him/the great Basil and Gregory*",⁵⁰ "*but neither Gregory the so-called theologian,/neither Basil the mystic of the arcane,/neither the sea of words, the great Chrysostom,/which have won all the previous writers*".⁵¹ We assume that Psellos, when he was comparing Gregory to the ancient writers, felt the need to enormously praise his literary abilities. On the contrary, when he compared the Theologian to other Fathers of the Church, he would be more careful and doctrinally appropriate, choosing to praise each writer for his merits.

46. Michael Psellos, *Χαρακτήρες* 127: "*ὥσπερ τὰ συγκεραννύμενα χρώματα ... οὕτω δὴ καὶ τὸ Γρηγορίου χρῶμα τοῦ λόγου διήνθισται μὲν ἐκ μυρίων χρωμάτων, ἔστι δὲ ἄλλο τι παρὰ ταῦτα καὶ κάλλιον ἐκείνων παρὰ πολὺ*" ("such as the mixed colours ... so the colour of Gregory's speech is dressed up with lots of colours, it is something different from them and extremely better than them"), Michael Psellos, *Χαρακτήρες* 128: "*οὐδὲ συναίρεμα ἄλλοτριῶν καὶ διαφόρων τὸν ἐκείνου λόγον φημί, ἀλλὰ μονοειδὴ μὲν τὴν φύσιν*" ("his language is not a sum of other and various writers, but a unique one").

47. "*ἔστι μὲν αὐτῷ ὁ λόγος ἀνεπιτήδευτος, βροντᾷ δὲ ἀτεχνῶς ὥσπερ ἐκ νεφῶν, καὶ πᾶσαν ἀποκρύπτει φωνήν*" (Michael Psellos, *Χαρακτήρες* 129).

48. Linardos (2005) 152.

49. See Karpozilos (1982) 163, Linardos (2005) 242.

50. "*Τὸν ἀγχνρσον αἰνίττειται Χρυσόστομον ὁ λόγος/καὶ τοὺς αὐτῷ τυγχάνοντας ἴσους καὶ διδασκάλους,/τὸν μέγιστον Βασίλειον, Γρηγόριον τὸν πάνν*" (Michael Psellos, *Poemata* 2, 1054-1056).

51. "*ἀλλὰ μὴδὲ Γρηγόριος ὁ κληθεὶς θεολόγος,/μὴδὲ Βασίλειος αὐτὸς ὁ τῶν ἀρρήτων μύστης,/μὴδὲ λόγων θάλασσα, Χρυσόστομος ὁ πάνν,/οἱ καὶ πάντας τοὺς πρὸ ὑμῶν σοφοὺς νενικηκότες*" (Michael Psellos, *Poemata* 68, 70-73).

The opinions and judgments of Michael Psellos partly reveal his literary taste, which entrained a significant change in the field of Byzantine literary criticism, further certifying his admiration for the work of Gregory Nazianzenos and letting us examine a few aspects of his attitude towards this philosophical conflict.⁵²

3. *A sinner saint*

According to the *Historia Institutionis*, the Βασιλείται downplayed John Chrysostom by stating that he was not a perfect man and was attracted to repentance: “ὕποβιβάζοντων δὲ τὸν θεῖον Χρυσόστομον ... κατὰ τὸ πρόχειρον εἶναι καὶ ἐλκτικὸν εἰς μετάνοιαν”.⁵³ On the surface, such a statement seems rather sacrilegious, because these characteristics were totally peculiar for a saint.⁵⁴ Perhaps, this thesis would have been expressed in a doctrinally more considerate way and exclusively within the bounds of a private discussion of scholars, who took part actively in the philosophical dispute and, therefore, knew exactly its frame and conventions. On the other hand, we can speculate that it is less possible the writer of this Synaxarion, in order to summarize some basic opinions of the Βασιλείται, mistakenly altered the accurate content of the statement.

If we take a look at the rest of the text, we read that Chrysostom’s fans praised him, because he invited the flock to repent.⁵⁵ As a result, the statement of the Βασιλείται is simply an intentional misunderstanding of John Chrysostom’s teaching, which was expressed in the context of a polemical dispute at various times.⁵⁶ Besides, Gazi mentions that possibly behind the dispute personal rivalries were hiding, a speculation which may justify the occasional acerbity of the conflict.⁵⁷ Karpozilos states that the fact the cycle of the Three Hierarchs’ started and ended with John Chrysostom (13th of November, 27th of January), may have been the impetus for the start of the dispute.⁵⁸ In this context, we can understand clearly why the accusation against Chrysostom is the only one of that kind that is cited in the *Historia Institutionis*, a fact that renders even more possible its actual existence and Karpozilos’ assumption.

4. *A curious vision*

The solution of the philosophical dispute’s unsolved problem came not from a sim-

52. Kustas (1962) 167-168. In parallel, his obsessive admiration of Gregory Nazianzenos renders even more possible my previous speculation about the existence of a deliberate change of ὑπήγορος’ use by Γρηγορείται, see above the relative section.

53. *Historia Institutionis* CCCXC.

54. Lamerand (1898-1899) 164.

55. “πρὸς μετάνοιαν ἐκκαλούμενον” (*Historia Institutionis* CCCXC). It is difficult to reconstruct even more information about the party of the Χρυσόστομείται, since we do not know any of its members.

56. Karpozilos (Karpozilos (1982) 163) and Sotiroudi (Sotiroudi (2012) 148-149) mention that in his speech regarding Three Hierarchs John Mavropous remarks that the dispute had a philological character and was not a theological one, a statement that is contradicted by references such as these of the *Historia Institutionis*.

57. Gazi (2004) 140.

58. Karpozilos (1982) 162.

ple human, but from the Three Hierarchs themselves. They appeared to John Mavropous in a vision and claimed to him that they constituted an undivided collectivity. In addition, they showed that there is no ranking between them and that they are all equal. At the end of the vision, the Three Hierarchs demanded from John that he must immediately propose the introduction of a common feast for the celebration of their commemoration: “*these great men appeared ... (in a vision, not a dream) to ... John ... and they said in unison to him: We are one person... towards God and there is no rivalry among us: ... no one of us could be considered as the first or the second ... For these reasons order ... and one day propose ... organize our feast*”.⁵⁹

At first, a vision is in all respects a metaphysical experience and it cannot be proved if it actually happened or if it was simply a figment of someone’s imagination. If, in parallel, we take into account that, just like dreams, visions in Byzantium are often false narrations which attempt to justify or to confirm events and decisions,⁶⁰ then we can speculate that behind this vision is hiding an actual meeting between Mavropous and the three different factions, where the parties asked of John to propose to the authorities the establishment of the common feast, perhaps because he was totally uninvolved in this and none of those involved would receive such favorable treatment from the Holy Synod due to the polemical nature of the dispute during some of its phases.⁶¹ It is intriguing that the account in *SM* also seems to assume that this meeting took place. The text notes that “*the conflict surrounding these matters was not a little one*”,⁶² a fact that is reflected in the adoption of special names by the three parties: “*ὥς καὶ ἑαυτοῖς τὰ τούτων ὀνόματα ἐπιτιθέναί*”.⁶³ Then, it continues by stating that “*αὐτοὶ τῷ τῆς πόλεως Εὐχαΐτων μητροπολίτη φανέντες*”.⁶⁴ From the context, we may surmise that the demonstrative pronoun *αὐτοὶ* does not refer to the Hierarchs, but to the three differ-

59. “ὁπτάνονται οἱ μέγιστοι οὗτοι ... (ἴπαρ, οὐκ ὄναρ) τῷ ... Ἰωάννῃ ... καὶ μὴ γλώττῃ φασὶ πρὸς αὐτόν· Ἡμεῖς ἔν ἐσμεν ... παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ, καὶ οὐδὲν ἡμῖν ὑπεναντίον, οὐδὲ μάχιμον· ... καὶ ὁ πρῶτος ἐν ἡμῖν οὐκ ἔστιν, οὔτε μὴν γε ὁ δεύτερος· ... Ὅθεν κέλευε ... καὶ ἡμέρα μὴ σῖναγον ... τὰ τῆς ἑορτῆς ἡμῖν ἐπιτέλεσον ... πάντως δὲ καὶ ἡμεῖς τοῖς ἐκτελοῦσι τὴν μνήμην” (Historia Institutionis CCCXCI).

60. For a bibliography regarding visions and dreams in Byzantine literature, see Oberhelman (2008) 219-232. Taxis examines a great number of such visions and dreams in historiographical works of the late Byzantine period (Taxis (2012) 51-140) and also provides a decent bibliography on this subject (Taxis (2012) 13-16). For dreams and visions in monastic literature of the early Byzantine period, see Krönung (2014).

61. Specifically, he “*lived withdrawn at the monastery of St. John the Forerunner at Petra in Constantinople, having resigned in 1075 from the bishopric at Euchaita*” (Agapitos (1998) 189). Saradi (Saradi (2014) 142-148) gives a general description of the relation between Mavropous and the introduction of the feast. It seems to me less possible that a scholar who contributed importantly to the configuration of the partly provocative intellectual atmosphere of the 11th century was offended by the polemics of the dispute and the possible progressive opinions which may have been expressed during some of its parts (see above the section about John Chrysostom). Besides, we must not forget that in one of his poems Mavropous asks God to save John’s beloved pagan writers, Plato and Plutarch, from his divine anger.

62. “οὐκ ὀλίγη τις ἦν αὐτοῖς ἡ περὶ τούτων ἔρις” (*SM* 532).

63. See n. 10.

64. “*they appeared to the bishop of Euchaita*”.

ent parties! In this version's vision the words of the three saints could have been related in all respects by the factions themselves: the only fact that reminds us that this is a scene of a vision and not an actual meeting is the word vision (= *ὄπτασις*).

We know with certainty that the philosophical dispute lasted for a long time ("*and these were being discussed for many years*")⁶⁵ and was characterized, at least in some of its parts, by a highly polemical atmosphere.⁶⁶ This meeting, if it actually happened, may have expressed the participants' desire to prevent potential oppositions by the Church, which was trying at the same time to circumvent the freedom of thought, as the case of John Italos proves, and could have been only a decision of the parties and not of Mavropous himself.⁶⁷ Furthermore, the fact that Mavropous, who was uninvolved in the dispute, introduced the feast perhaps indicates that he was especially interested in solving this problem, because he spent a part of his life in exile and he would not want some of his friends (Psellos), who were involved in the dispute, to have to face the possible consequences of their actions, such as a possible expulsion from the Church.⁶⁸ This assumption could explain why Mavropous was feeling sad because of the conflict: "*because he was sad over this specific dispute*".⁶⁹ In any case, the fact that this version of the *Historia Institutionis* is dated to the 14th century, namely three centuries after the dispute, ensures that during this time people had a fragmentary knowledge of many aspects of the dispute.⁷⁰

65. "*καὶ τούτων ... λεγομένων ἐπὶ χρόνοις ἐσώστερον*" (*Historia Institutionis CCCXCI*).

66. Typical examples are the accusation of the *Βασιλείται* against Chrysostom (see the relative section above) and the description of the dispute in the beginning of the text as *στάσις* (*Historia Institutionis CCCXC*), a word which in Byzantium was normally associated with coups.

67. Cf. Agapitos (1998) 188.

68. This may explain why Mavropous in his homily on the Hierarchs says that the dispute was only theological (Sotiroudi (2012) 148-149). If we view this statement from that point of view, we can assume that his extensive presentation of the parties' opinions (Sotiroudi (2012) 149, n. 610) does not entirely correspond to reality, because some of them, like the accusation of the *Βασιλείται* against Chrysostom, would seem too sacrilegious and would have caused the anger of the contemporary ecclesiastical authorities. On the other hand, Linardos' view (Linardos (2005) 135) that Mavropous wanted with the introduction of the feast to honour the three saints because of his admiration and respect for them seems to me too superficial. Furthermore, neither Mavropous' epigrams to Chrysostom (14), Gregory of Nazianzos (15), Basil (16), one dedicated to them as a triad (17) and to a picture which depicts them together (86) (John Mavropous, Epigrams 9-10, 86), nor the oration for the Three Hierarchs (178) (John Mavropous, *Λόγος* 106-119), which was possibly pronounced after the introduction of the feast (Linardos (2015) 127), reveal any special information about the dispute and Mavropous' particular involvement in it.

69. "*ἦνιᾶτο γὰρ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐπὶ τῇ τοιαύτῃ φιλονικίᾳ*" (SM 532).

70. Quoting one passage of Matthaïos Kamariotes' (15th century) encomium on Three Hierarchs, Sotiroudi (Sotiroudi (2012) 148, n. 603) assumes that Mavropous had the initiative for the introduction of the common feast. Then, although she recognizes that in this specific passage no name is mentioned and she also admits that her previous argument was mistaken, she remarks that the introduction of the feast was not a common decision of the Church but the suggestion of a specific person. I think that it is generally risky for someone even to base that kind of thought on the fact that Kamariotes uses the singular, since he refers indefinitely to the person who introduced the feast. On the one hand, this writer's choice could be possibly incidental and this vague reference, without specific evidence, may indicate that in the 15th century it was unknown who the person or the people actually were, who had had the initiative for the proposal

However, could just a simple sadness and anxiety about the fortune of his friends cause Mavropous' intervention in such a turbulent dispute,⁷¹ which could result for him personally in a possible punishment? The codex Vat. Pal. gr. 138 gives a legitimate answer to that question. This manuscript transmits, among other texts, two canons of John Mavropous addressed to Gregory of Nazianzos (ff. 311r-313v, 313v-316v). In the first canon John states that the teaching of the Theologian contains the fire of sublimity: “καὶ πῶρ ὑψηγορίας ἐκ ταύτης ἔπνευσας” (f. 311v). In the second text Mavropous refers to the strength of Gregory's speech and it seems that he implies the virtue of sublimity by stating that he elevates the doctrine with his voice: “Ἡ φωνὴ τῆς βροντῆς σου. .. ὡς ἐξ οὐρανοῦ μετεώρου. .. τῶν ὑψηλῶν σου δογμάτων. .. γρηγορῶν θεωρίας ὑποποιῶν, ὅσιε. .. ῥητορεύων τὰ θεῖα καὶ ὑψηλὰ δόγματα” (f. 314r). A few folios later in the same canon (f. 316r), John clearly defines Nazianzenos' speech as sublime: “θεολογικαῖς καὶ ὑψηγόροις φωναῖς σου”. All these references of Mavropous made it clear that he intervened in the dispute because he was probably a part of it, being on the side of the Γρηγορείται,⁷² together with Michael Psellos and Nicetas Stethatos, and contributing to the propaganda of the party regarding the term ὑψηγόρος. Therefore, the proposal of Mavropous for the introduction of the feast may have derived from a possible meeting of the three different parties, where all of them decided to send as their “ambassador” to the Holy Synod a scholar of great repute.

5. The Hierarchical scale

*“The Byzantines did not form a theological triad for the Three Hierarchs, but they offered them the most significant positions of a theological canon, to which other Fathers of the Church also belonged”.*⁷³ The Byzantines did not only give them three significant positions in the theological canon, but they also formed a possible hierarchical scale among the three of them, a choice which mirrors the literary preferences of contemporary scholars and also proves that the erudite authors of that time did not consider them as equal. The Three Hierarchs' claim in the vision that there is no ranking among them and that they are equal⁷⁴ renders even more likely the actual existence of the differentiation during the dispute. Besides, the SM versions state that each of the three different parties adopted its own nickname, the name of the saint which they considered a more prominent rhetorician: *“every party adopted the name of the Hierarch who they*

of the feast's introduction. The long chronological distance between the events of the dispute and the Palaeologan era is a possible reason for such a complicated situation regarding the knowledge of the conflict, which is also reflected in the passage from the *Historia Institutionis* about the chronological beginning and the place of the conflict (see n. 8), in a treatise by Kyparissiotis regarding the term ὑψηγόρος (see n. 34) and in the fact that the SM versions do not cite any statements or possible accusations among the three different parties.

71. Besides, Karpozilos notes that it is unknown if there were, apart from the vision, also other reasons which forced Mavropous to intervene and suggest the introduction of the feast (Karpozilos (1982) 165).

72. Gregory of Nazianzos was a rhetorical model for Mavropous (Papaioannou (2013) 63, n. 51).

73. Linardos (2005) 147-148, translation mine.

74. See above the relevant section.

thought was the best".⁷⁵ Specifically, Gregory obtained the first place, with Basil and Chrysostom being in the second and third places, respectively.

Gregory of Nazianzos was one of the most important theologians of the Orthodox Church. He contributed decisively to the development of Byzantine literature and formed, after the *Bible*, the most frequent model of imitation for later Byzantine writers.⁷⁶ The *Historia Institutionis* cites that the Γρηγορείται had the opinion that their saint was superior to all other writers: "*he surpassed every ancient Greek and Byzantine author*".⁷⁷ Furthermore, it informs us that Gregory of Nazianzos remained a bishop of Constantinople for twelve years.⁷⁸ At first, the word δώδεκα could be considered as a mistake by the scribe, since we know with certainty that Gregory was the bishop of Constantinople for three years (378-381). However, it seems that this mistake is not contemporary, but it originates from two older texts, the *Synaxarium Constantinopolitanum* and the *Vita Gregorii* of Gregory the Presbyter, since they both agree on the chronological period of Gregory's stay at Constantinople: "*the saint was bishop of Constantinople for twelve years until the second Council*" and "*he spent twelve years at Byzantium*", respectively.⁷⁹ The *Historia Institutionis* also continues by saying that Gregory of Nazianzos lived more than eighty years: "*he lived more than eighty years*".⁸⁰ Even though this information is false, because modern research has proved that the Cappadocian saint lived for about sixty years (ca. 330-390), it is truly interesting that after the 4th century people did not know the exact time period of Gregory's life and patriarchate.

Regarding the use of the term ὑψήγορος by the Βασιλείται,⁸¹ I think that this choice is surely not random. Apart from the obvious attempt to praise their "own" Hierarchy, I assume that here, an ulterior aim also appears: the use, whether oral or written, of the denomination attributed to Basil the Great by Gregory of Nazianzos may have been an attempt to showcase the recognition of Basil's spiritual dominance by Gregory himself, attempting, in parallel, the indirect degradation of Gregory in this informal hierarchical scale. In that case, it would be entirely reasonable for the Βασιλείται to try to defeat

75. "ἕκαστος γὰρ οὐ ἐνόμιζε μείζωνος, αὐτοῦ τούτου καὶ τὸ ὄνομα ἑαυτὸν ἐκάλει" (SM 532), f. 16v.

76. Noret (1983), Mango (2002) 103. During the 10th century there took place an "expansion of the canon", which from now on included "*Christian and later Byzantine authors ... Gregory of Nazianzos is the most important such rhetor*" (Papaioannou (2017) 106). He was regarded as a model for homiletics in various rhetorical treatises (Papaioannou (2017) 110-111) and his poems are transmitted in many manuscripts of the 11th century (Bernard (2010) 31). See also Papaioannou (2021) 95.

77. "πάντας τοὺς ἐπὶ τῇ Ἑλληνικῇ παιδείᾳ διαβοήτους, καὶ τοὺς καθ' ἡμᾶς ὑπερβάντι" (Historia Institutionis CCCXCI).

78. "προέστη δὲ καὶ τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως Ἐκκλησίας χρόνους δώδεκα" (Historia Institutionis CCCXCII).

79. "ὁ ἅγιος πατριαρχεῖον ὀρίζει εἶναι τὴν ἐκκλησίαν Κωνσταντινουπόλεως, ἧς καὶ προέστη ἔτη δώδεκα μέχρι τῆς δευτέρας συνόδου" (Synaxarium Constantinopolitanum 422, 26-29), "δύο γὰρ καὶ δέκα ἔτη λόγος αὐτὸν ἐν τῷ Βυζαντίῳ πεποιημέναι" (Gregorius Presbyterus, Vita Gregorii 196, 9-10).

80. "ὑπὲρ τὰ ὀγδοήκοντα ἔτη γενόμενος" (Historia Institutionis CCCXCII).

81. See above.

their Cappadocian “opponent” with his own tools, that is with a nickname which he himself attributed to Basil the Great. On the other hand, the text of the *Patrologia* states that John Chrysostom’s supporters used to praise him exceedingly due to his teaching and put him, because of his rhetorical skills, before Gregory and Basil: “*they elevate the divine Chrysostom ... due to the power of his speech they place him before Basil the Great and Gregory*”.⁸² The writer’s choice to use the particles *ὕψούντων* and *προτιθέντων* is interesting, because they strengthen the possibility that Chrysostom obtained the third position of this so-called hierarchical scale.

If we take into consideration all the above-mentioned information and the accusation of Psellos against the unskilled literary style of Basil the Great,⁸³ we observe that the first position (Γρηγορείται) is attacking the second (Βασιλείται) and the third one (Ἰωαννίται) the other two. If we understand the use of the word *ὕψήγορος* by the Γρηγορείται not as a direct attack against Basil of Caesarea, but simply as an attempt to re-identify the term with Gregory of Nazianzos from now on, perhaps this fact evinces that the Βασιλείται obtained second place after the Γρηγορείται, and that there were generally good relations between the top two parties.

Conclusion

This philosophical dispute of the 11th century did not constitute a major cultural event in the intellectual life of Constantinople. However, it was a distinct and long lasting conflict, which was marked by its peculiar context and conventions. Through the use of the term *ὕψήγορος* by both the Basileitai and the Gregoritai, we may conclude that the members of the parties took their participation in the dispute seriously, engaging in literary propaganda for the sake of their favorite Hierarchs. Furthermore, we conclude that the conflict was characterized in some of its parts by a more polemical atmosphere, as the accusation of Chrysostom for not being a perfect man proves. The greatest contribution of this article is that it traces the remarkable interest of the capital’s scholars (Michael Psellos, John Mavropous) in the works of the Three Hierarchs during the last part of the 11th century, highlighting some significant strands of this dispute and examining parts of its special framework.⁸⁴

Appendix

ff. 16r-v. Τῷ αὐτῷ μηνὶ λ’ μνήμην ἐπιτελοῦμεν τῶν ἁγίων τριῶν ἱεραρχῶν καὶ μεγάλων Βασιλείου, Γρηγορίου καὶ Ἰωάννου τοῦ Χρυσοστόμου.

Ἰστέον ὅτι κατὰ ταύτην τὴν ἡμέραν ἄγει ἡ τοῦ Χριστοῦ μεγάλη ἐκκλησία ἐορτὴν χαρμόσυνον τῶν ἁγίων πατέρων ἡμῶν ἱεραρχῶν καὶ οἰκουμενικῶν διδασκάλων Βασι-

82. “τὸν θεῖον Χρυσόστομον ὑψούντων ... καὶ τῇ κατ’ ἔννοιαν δεινότητι προτιθέντων τοῦ τε μεγάλου Βασιλείου καὶ Γρηγορίου” (Historia Institutionis CCCXC).

83. See above n. 47.

84. I am deeply indebted to Dr. Christos Simelidis for all of his helpful advice and suggestions about this article. All the shortcomings are my own fault.

λείου τοῦ μεγάλου, Γρηγορίου τοῦ θεολόγου καὶ Ἰωάννου τοῦ Χρυσοστόμου. Ἐπεὶ γάρ ποτε φιλονικία ἐπὶ τοῦ μέσου προήλθε καὶ τινῶν μεν τῶν ἐν μαθήμασι σπουδαζόντων μείζονα τὸν μέγαν Βασίλειον λεγόντων, [f. 16v] τινῶν δὲ τὸν μέγαν Χρυσόστομον, ἐτέρων δ' αὖ πάλιν Γρηγόριον τὸν θεολόγον, καὶ οὐκ ὀλίγη τις ἦν αὐτοῖς ἡ περὶ τούτων ἔρις ὥς καὶ ἑαυτοῖς τὰ τούτων ὀνόματα ἐπιτιθέναι, — ἕκαστος γὰρ οὗ ἐνόμιζε μείζονος, αὐτοῦ τούτου καὶ τὸ ὄνομα ἑαυτὸν ἐκάλει — αὐτοὶ τῷ τῆς πόλεως Εὐχαΐτων μητροπολίτῃ φανέντες (Ἰωάννης οὗτος ἦν) φασίν· «Ἀναστὰς πορεύου πρὸς τὸν λαὸν καὶ δεῖξον αὐτοῖς ὥς οὐδεὶς ἄφ' ἡμῶν τὰ πρωτεῖα κέκτηται, ἐπίσης γάρ ἐσμέν μυσταγωγοὶ καὶ ὑπηρέται τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τῶν αὐτοῦ ἀρρήτων ἀγαθῶν, καὶ τῆς αὐτοῦ δόξης ἐπίσης ἀπολαμβάνομεν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἡμῖν τις ὁ τὸ πρωτεῖον ἐπιφερόμενος· ἰδοὺ γάρ, ὥς ὁρᾷς, ἐν ἐσμέν». Ὅς παραχρῆμα ἐπὶ τῇ παραδόξῳ ταύτῃ ὀπτασία χαρὰς πλησθεῖς — ἡνιάτο γὰρ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐπὶ τῇ τοιαύτῃ φιλονικίᾳ — συναθροίσας ἅπαν τὸ πλῆθος ἐπ' ἐκκλησίας δημοτελῇ καὶ χαρμόσυνον ἑορτὴν αὐτοῖς ἐπετέλεσε κοσμήσας ταύτην διὰ φιλοπονηθέντων αὐτῷ κανόνων καὶ τροπαρίων καὶ λόγων ἐγκωμιαστικῶν. Κατὰ ταύτην οὖν τὴν αἰτίαν ἐπιτελεῖται ἕκτοτε μέχρι τοῦ νῦν εἰς δόξαν τοῦ φιλανθρώπου Θεοῦ.

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ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

ΠΟΙΟΣ ΥΠΗΡΞΕ Ο ΣΗΜΑΝΤΙΚΟΤΕΡΟΣ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΣΤΙΚΟΣ ΠΑΤΕΡΑΣ; ΜΙΑ ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΙΚΗ ΔΙΑΜΑΧΗ ΤΟΥ 11^{ΟΥ} ΑΙΩΝΑ

του Γεώργιου Γουσγουριώτη, υποψ. δρος Παν/μίου Θεσσαλονίκης

Το άρθρο ασχολείται με τη μελέτη ενός ιδιόμορφου πολιτιστικού γεγονότος, της φιλοσοφικής διαμάχης του 11^{ου} αι., η οποία τερματίστηκε με τη θέσπιση της εορτής των Τριών Ιεραρχών. Η έλλειψη αναφορών για τη συγκεκριμένη πολύχρονη διένεξη στις σωζόμενες πηγές υποδεικνύει πως δεν ήταν η μεγαλύτερη διαμάχη που συνέβη ποτέ στο Βυζάντιο και καθιστά αδύνατη την πλήρη ανασύνθεση της φυσιογνωμίας της. Εντούτοις, λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τις αφηγήσεις των παραδιδόμενων Συναξαρίων για την 30^η Ιανουαρίου και εστιάζοντας την προσοχή σε ενδιαφέρουσες πτυχές της διαμάχης, όπως ο «αμαρτωλός» Ιωάννης Χρυσόστομος, η συμμετοχή του Μιχαήλ Ψελλού και το αξιοσημείωτο όραμα του Ιωάννη Μαυρόποδα, τίθενται στο προσκήνιο άγνωστες όψεις αυτής της ιδιότυπης φιλοσοφικής διαμάχης. Επιπρόσθετα, το άρθρο συμβάλλει στη συζήτηση σχετικά με την πρόσληψη των Τριών Ιεραρχών και του έργου τους κατά τη διάρκεια του ύστερου 11^{ου} αι.

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BYZANTINIST – HISTORIAN, PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF PELOPONNESOS

Εξώφυλλο: Απεικόνιση της Παναγίας σε υστεροβυζαντινά νομίσματα.

Αριστερά: Λατινική Αυτοκρατορία (1204-1261), Ασπρον τραχύ κράμα (billon), Lianta 78, Ashmolean Museum.

Δεξιά: Θεόδωρος Κομνηνός-Δούκας (1224-1230), Θεσσαλονίκη, Ασπρον τραχύ από κράμα (electrum), Lianta 321, Ashmolean Museum.

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