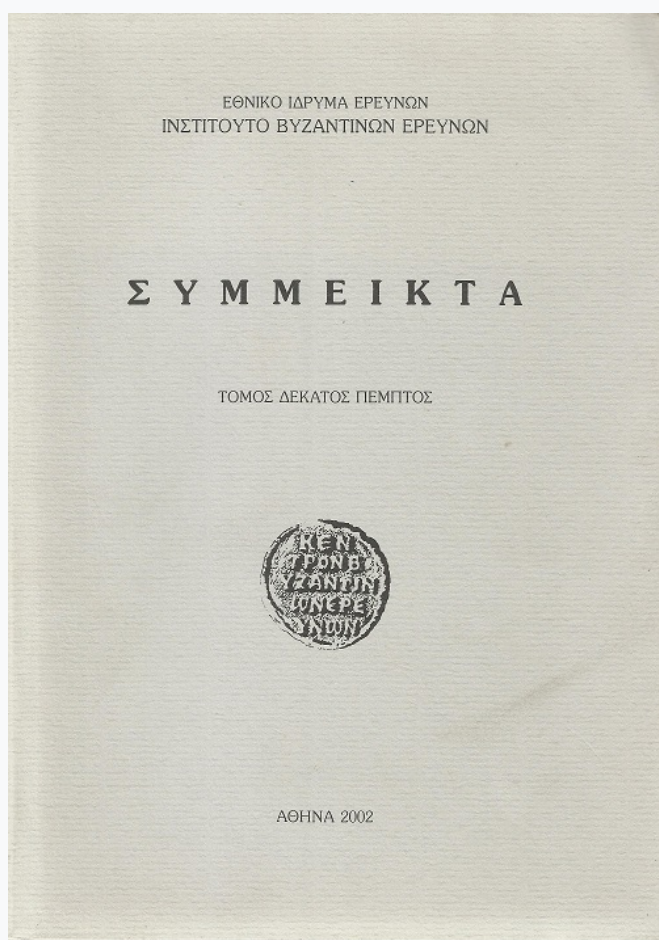


# Byzantina Symmeikta

Vol 15 (2002)

SYMMEIKTA 15



**Constantine V Kopronymos or Michael VIII Plaeologos the New Constantine. The anonymous Encomium of saint Theodosia**

*Eleonora KOUNTOURA-GALAKE*

doi: [10.12681/byzsym.896](https://doi.org/10.12681/byzsym.896)

Copyright © 2014, Eleonora KOUNTOURA-GALAKE



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).

## To cite this article:

KOUNTOURA-GALAKE, E. (2008). Constantine V Kopronymos or Michael VIII Plaeologos the New Constantine. The anonymous Encomium of saint Theodosia. *Byzantina Symmeikta*, 15, 183–194. <https://doi.org/10.12681/byzsym.896>

ELEONORA KOUNTOURA-GALAKE

CONSTANTINE V KOPRONYMOS OR  
MICHAEL VIII PALEOLOGOS THE NEW CONSTANTINE ?  
The Anonymous *Encomium* of Saint Theodosia

Several years ago, when I was working on my dissertation, Professor Oikonomides advised me to undertake the philological edition of and the comment on a hagiographical text pertaining to the Iconoclasm. Thanks to Professor Oikonomides' support and encouragement I started studying saint Theodosia's hagiographical corpus and I singled out the anonymous *Encomium* written in her honour and proceeded with an initial approach to the subject, which was included in my thesis as an Appendix<sup>1</sup>. My interest in the «mysterious» Theodosia and the texts written about her dates from that time<sup>2</sup>. Here I present a further examination of the text as an expression of respect and commemoration to Professor Nikolas Oikonomides.

The texts about saint Theodosia, the saint that led the people against the destruction of Christ's icon at the Chalke Gate of the Imperial Palace, provide scant and confusing information. The sources record the destruction as the first iconoclast act of Leo III<sup>3</sup>, and a hagiographical account that dates from the second half of the

1. Eleonora KOUNTOURA-GALAKE, *Η θέση του κλήρου στην Βυζαντινή κοινωνία κατά τους σκοτεινούς αιώνες. Έρευνες για την παρουσία και την επιρροή του κοσμικού και μοναστικού κλήρου στην βυζαντινή κοινωνία από τα τέλη του εβδόμου ως τα τέλη του ογδόου αιώνα* (doctoral diss.), Athens 1992, 347-369.

2. Under the title «Αμφίδρομες σχέσεις μύθου και πραγματικότητας στην περίοδο των πρώτων Παλαιολόγων ή το ανέκδοτο Εγκώμιον της σσίας Θεοδοσίας και ο 'οικουμενικός διδάσκαλος'», I presented a paper at the International Conference: *Αμφίδρομες σχέσεις λογοτεχνίας και τέχνης στο Βυζάντιο. Ιδεολογία, συμβάσεις και πραγματικότητα*, IBE/EIE, Athens 1998; I discussed there the content and context of John Stavrakios' *Encomium* of Theodosia. On this text see below, p. 184 with n. 10.

3. THEOPHANES, *Chronographia*, ed. C. DE BOOR, Leipzig 1883, 405; *Life of Stephen the Younger*, ed. Marie-France AUZÉPY, *La vie d'Etienne le Jeune par Etienne le Diacre. Introduction, édition et*

9th century presents a noble woman, named Maria, who acted as the leader of the opponents to the sacrilege and was put to death by Leo III<sup>4</sup>. The earliest evidence relating Theodosia to the Chalke Gate event is to be found in the Grottaferrata manuscript, a copy of the so-called *Menologium Basilii*, which is dated around the year 1000<sup>5</sup>. In the same context Theodosia is registered in the *Synaxarium minus* preserved in the ms. Parisinus gr. 1617, written in 1071<sup>6</sup>, from which derives the ms. Parisinus gr. 1587 of the 12th century<sup>7</sup>, as well as in the Sirmondianus gr. of the 12th century<sup>8</sup>. With regard of the saint's life and death these texts form two groups. The first, that consists of the Grottaferrata and the two Paris manuscripts, places Theodosia's activity and martyrdom in the reign of Constantine V. The second group, represented by the 12th century Sirmondianum manuscript and its later tradition, places the saint in the years of Leo III. From the latter group derives the Slavic *Life* of the saint<sup>9</sup>, as well as the two Encomia about her written in the second half of the 13th century and authored respectively by John Stavrakios<sup>10</sup> and Constantine Akropolites<sup>11</sup>.

*traduction*, Aldershot 1997, 100-101 and 193-194 (commentary). For a discussion of the sources see, EAD., La destruction de l'icone du Christ de la Chalce par Léon III: propagande ou réalité?, *Byzantion* 60, 1990, 445-492, who argues that the event was fabricated by the iconophile milieu after 814; see the reservations on this interpretation by Constantina MENTZOU MEIMARIS, Ο αυτοκράτωρ Βασίλειος Α' και η Νέα Εκκλησία (Αυτοκρατορική ιδεολογία και εικονογραφία), *Βυζαντικά* 13, 1993, 68-71.

4. *Passio ss. Martyrum Constantinopolitanorum*, AASS Aug. II, 434-448.

5. On the Cryptensis B.v.III, which dates after the completion of the manuscript of the Vatican Library, see H. DELEHAYE, *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae. Propylaeum ad Acta Sanctorum mensis Novembris*, Brussels 1902, XXVII. See also A. LUZZI, *Studi sul Sinassario di Costantinopoli*, Rome 1995, 139 n. 87. On the Vatican manuscript (= *Menologium Basilii*), see DELEHAYE, *Synaxarium*, XXIII-XXIV, and LUZZI, *Studi sul Sinassario*, 107-108; cf. R. CORMACK, Women and Icons and Women in Icons, in Liz JAMES (ed.), *Women, Men and Eunuchs. Gender in Byzantium*, London-New York 1997, 39.

6. *Synaxarium*, 828.55-56. On the manuscript, see *ibid.*, XXXVI.

7. *Synaxarium*, 828.40-52. See LUZZI, *Studi sul Sinassario*, 147.

8. *Synaxarium*, 828.11-829.10.

9. The Slavic translation of the saint's *Life and Martyrdom* has been preserved in the so-called *Uspenskii Sbornik*, which is dated to the end the 12th-early 13th centuries; see D. AFINOGENOV, A mysterious saint: St. Theodosia, the martyr of Constantinople, *Khristianskij Vostok* 2 (VIII), 2001, 2-13.

10. The 'Εγκώμιον τοῦ λογιωτάτου καρτοφύλακος Θεσσαλονίκης Ἰωάννου τοῦ Σταυρακίου εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν ὁσιομάρτυρα καὶ θαυματουργὸν Θεοδοσίαν, which is preserved in 18 manuscripts, is mentioned neither in the list of Stavrakios works cited in *PLP*, 11, No. 26708, nor by C. N. CONSTANTINIDES, *Higher education in Byzantium in the Thirteenth and early Fourteenth Centuries (1204-ca.1310)*, Nicosia 1982, 127 note 80. The text is registered in H. G. BECK, *Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reich*, Munich 1959, 689. An edition of the text is currently under preparation.

11. *PG* 140, 893C-936B; cf. D. M. NICOL, Constantine Acropolites. A Prosopographical Note, *DOP* 19, 1965, 249, and R. ROMANO, *Costantino Acropolita, Epistole*, Naples 1991, 24.

The anonymous *Encomium* of Theodosia, of which we presented a first approach in our dissertation, seems to rely on the 11th century tradition placing the saint's martyrdom in the reign of Constantine V. However, the author presents an original composition. Among other important points that we will discuss later, the author claims that Constantine V (741–775) deposed Patriarch Germanos I (715–730), appointing Anastasios (730–754) in his place, and refers with virulence to the Council of Hiereia summoned by Constantine V in 754<sup>12</sup>, without mentioning however its supporting the emperor's iconoclastic policy. Are these discrepancies due to erroneous information, ignorance, confusion, or to a deliberate falsification of events, according to a specific purpose? How can we explain the preference for Theodosia by the 13th century authors? Why does the anonymous author specifically choose this specific tradition, which he supplemented with further details?

The anonymous text is entitled *Ἐγκώμιον εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν καὶ ὁσιομάρτυρα καὶ θαυματουργὸν Θεοδοσίαν τὴν παρθένον* and it is conserved in two 15th century manuscripts: the Kutlunus 109, ff. 43–51<sup>13</sup>, and the Chalcensis 139, ff 33–47<sup>14</sup>. The *Encomium* must have been delivered on the saint's nameday (29th May), as indicated by the following phrase: *ἡ μνήμη πάντας ἐνθάδε συνήθροισε*<sup>15</sup>.

The work is structured as follows:

I (§1–4) The long introduction begins with the portrait of the «violent» and «ferocious» emperor (Kopronymos), who caused «many evils» and «innumerable hell temptations»; he persecuted not only men but also women, such as Theodosia. The author continues explaining that he was induced to write this work because he did not wish to suppress the truth, despite the obvious danger of rousing his enemies against him. He justifies why he should not keep silent and, then, specifies

12. THEOPHANES, 427: *Κωνσταντῖνος ὁ δυσσεβὴς κατὰ τῶν ἁγίων καὶ σεπτῶν εἰκόνων παράνομον συνέδριον τὴν ἐπισκόπων συνέλεξεν ἐν τῇ τῆς Ἱερείας παλατίᾳ.*

13. The mutilated codex is fully described by M. AUBINEAU, *Textes hagiographiques et chrysostomiens dans le codex Athous, Koutlounousiou 109*, *BZ* 68, 1975, 352. The lemma in Sp. LAMPROS, *Catalogue of the Greek Manuscripts on Mount Athos II*, Cambridge 1895, 284, runs as follows: *Ἰωάννου τοῦ Χρυσσοστόμου Λόγοι. Ἀκέφαλος καὶ κολοβός.*

14. Ios. BOYENS, *Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum graecorum bibliothecae monasterii Deiparae in Chalce insula*, *An. Boll.* 20, 1901, 68; cf. ATHENAGORAS, former Megas Protosynkellos, *Κατάλογος τῶν χειρογράφων τῆς ἐν Χάλκῃ Μονῆς τῆς Παναγίας*, *ΕΕΒΣ* 12, 1936, 310.

15. According to the *Synaxaria* and the *Menologium Basilii*, the saint's memory is venerated on 18th July; the sources of the Paleologan period place her on 29th May.

which Theodosia he is going to speak of: the one whom the «arch-sacrilegious Kopronymos» put to death.

II (§5-6) Description of the saint's virtuous character. She mortified the flesh and took care of the salvation of her soul.

III (§7) Envy was the root of the evil. Comparing the emperor to the Pharaoh, the author recounts the suffering and the ordeals to which the subjects of the «arch-cantankerous Kopronymos» were exposed because of the «evil», «betrayal» and the «novelties» he introduced, namely the banning of the worship of icons and also the introduction of the dogmatic deviation which refutes the «trinitarian nature of the consubstantial deity».

IV (§8) The imposition of the «impious» dogma resulted to the prevalence of «evil», the merciless persecution of «the pious», the «unjust» removal of the Patriarch Germanos and the elevation of the «extremely cunning» Anastasios. Evil deeds culminate in the removal of the icon of Christ from the Chalke Gate. All these were signs of the «vice» of the emperor and of his sacrilegious collaborators.

V (§9) Theodosia and other nuns prevent the emperor's bodyguard from removing the icon of Christ and kill him. The emperor is informed of the deed and he orders that they be beheaded. The author reverts to the persecutions of the Christians, to connect them with the impending martyrdom of the saint, who was secluded in the monastery near the Skoteinon Phrear, praying and conducting great acts of charity.

VI (§10-11) Spies of the emperor denounce Theodosia to be the sole «iconophile» to resist the emperor's official dogma and he immediately orders her arrest. She follows the emperor's emissaries peacefully, even though she is aware that she is treading the path of martyrdom.

VII (§12-16) The saint is brought before the emperor who at first tries to win her over. The section, which is in dialogue form, presents the two main charges levelled against the saint: her deviation from the emperor's «proper» dogma and her spurning of the Council's decisions. The emperor considers the decisions of his Council to be divine and holy, while the saint terms them «impious» and remains faithful to the «traditional canons (rules) and the true faith».

VIII (§17) Dramatic execution of the saint by the emperor's hand.

IX (§18) The saint's burial and miraculous acts of the relic.

The narrative develops the incident of the destruction of the icon of Christ in the Palace's Chalke Gate. In reading the text, one can easily discern that the author constructed a «peculiar» rhetorical piece, using the atticism adopted by orators in

the 13th and 14th centuries<sup>16</sup>. The *Encomium* is written with great animosity and contains elements of intense and violent invective on the one hand and of praise on the other. However, these elements are not distributed uniformly within the text: negative elements obviously predominate, since the anonymous author speaks more of the «tyrant» emperor and his immoral acts, which are directed against his subjects, and much less of the virtues of the saint. This disproportionate emphasis on evil, on the emperor's condemnation, and of the negative aspects of the emperor leads us to the conclusion that our text is not a mere piece of laudatory hagiography, as suggested by its title (*encomium*), but rather a text with caustic political allusions, directed against an emperor. We could therefore argue that the anonymous author penned a text primarily intended to criticize the emperor and his deeds, specifically his attitude towards monks.

Already in the introduction, the anonymous author predisposes his audience of his purpose: he starts his text not with the praise of the saint<sup>17</sup>, –the traditional introduction of an *Encomium*, used by both John Stavrakios and of Constantine Acropolites<sup>18</sup>–, but with insulting expressions directed against the emperor<sup>19</sup>. This introduction, which, to my knowledge, is not frequently encountered in Byzantine laudatory hagiography, is worth examining more closely. The very first phrase of the text: *Εἰ καὶ πολλῶν ἀφορμὴ πρὸς κακίαν ἐδείχθη Κοπρώνυμος καὶ τῶν ἀτελευτήτων κολάσεων πρόξενος, ὥσπερ καὶ τῆς ἐκείνου θηριοτρόπου καὶ βορβορώδους ψυχῆς ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ βασιλείας, ἧς ξένος ἐκεῖνος, πολλῶ πλεον αἰτία τις ἐγγέγονει* (ll. 3–7<sup>20</sup>), states that the emperor, who will be dealt with, «induced

16. H. HUNGER, The Classical Tradition in Byzantine Literature: the Importance of Rhetoric, in Margaret MULLETT and R. SCOTT (eds), *Byzantium and the Classical Tradition*, Birmingham 1981, 37; O. LAMPSIDES, Ὁ κλασικισμὸς καὶ αἱ λαϊκαὶ τάσεις εἰς τὴν Χρονογραφίαν τοῦ Ἐφραίμ, *Βυζαντινά* 9, 1977, 117–121.

17. Cf. Evelyne PATLAGEAN, Sainteté et pouvoir, in S. HACKEL (ed.), *The Byzantine Saint*, London 1981, 92.

18. For the unpublished text of Stavrakios, see mss Ivron 592, ff. 69v–70r and Lavra Γ 99, f. 135; for Acropolites, *PG* 140, 893C–896C.

19. For a similar introduction, cf. *Grégoire de Nazianze, Discours 4–5, Contre Julien*, ed. J. BERNARDI, Paris 1983 [SC 309], IV, 1.11–15: τὸν πολλὰ ἐπὶ γῆς μανέντα καὶ ἀπειλήσαντα, πολλὴν δὲ ἀδικίαν εἰς τὸ ὄψος λαλήσαντά τε καὶ μελετήσαντα. Cf. also the introductive sentence of Constantine's V reign in THEOPHANES, 413: ἄξιον δὲ λοιπὸν ἐφεξῆς καὶ τοῦ δυσσεβεστάτου καὶ παναθλίου παιδὸς αὐτοῦ τὰς ἀθεμίτους διεξελεῖν πράξεις ἀνοσιουργοτέρας καὶ θεομισήτους οὕσας.

20. The line numbering as in the typewritten edition of the text (as above, n. 1).

many to evil deeds»<sup>21</sup>, «caused incessant sufferings», and he was the instigator of many more «evils». Moreover, he is considered to be «alien to the rule of Christ (καὶ τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ βασιλείας, ἧς ξένος ἐκεῖνος [l. 6]), «ferocious» and his soul «plunged in mire». The text follows a similar narrative tenor: in order to demonstrate the extent of the emperor's «evil» nature and to render his narrative more dramatic, the author continues by saying that it was not only men who opposed to his τύραννον ἐκείνου καὶ θεόμαχον κακίαν (l. 8), but women as well. Saint Theodosia was one of them. All these accusations are concentrated in 15 lines, which constitute only the preface to the saint's impending dramatic end: her execution in an extremely hideous and violent way by the emperor's hand. We may thus suggest that the anonymous author applies here the rhetorical rule of augmentation to compose his rhetorical invective<sup>22</sup>. Therefore, the purpose of the text is to record and present the emperor's shortcomings. In this context, the saint, who throughout the narrative constitutes the personification of goodness and piety, is juxtaposed to the negative image of the emperor, the personification of «evil». Instead of a laudatory piece, the *Encomium* would constitute a castigation of the emperor. We may argue that we are dealing with a veiled imperial invective.

However, who is the emperor who is the object of such a virulent accusation? The anonymous author employs the surname Kopronymos to specify the emperor against whom the invective is directed, and, consequently, we can easily identify him with the iconoclast emperor Constantine V. Nevertheless, it is important to note the complete lack throughout the whole text of the emperor's Christian name, Constantine. The anonymous author seems to consciously avoid any reference to the emperor's Christian name, preferring instead the «impure name that befits his soul» (οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐὼ λέγειν τὸ τῆς ἐκείνου ψυχῆς ἄξιον ὄνομα μυσαρὸν, ὁ Κοπρώνυμος). The absence of the emperor's Christian name reflects a deliberate technique of the author, intending to stress the emperor's negative image. The invective in this text with the misleading title was drafted not only with the intention of praising Theodosia; it not only aimed at castigating the acts of the iconoclast emperor Constantine V; the Kopronymos of our *Encomium* can only in name be identified with Constantine V. In fact, the eighth century emperor constitutes a literary means by which the anonymous author refers to another emperor.

21. Evil, as noun and adjective, and the emperor's malevolence recur in several instances of the narrative: lines 3, 7, 28, 128, 137, 164, 178, 185, 249, 370.

22. H. HUNGER, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner* I, Munich 1978, 103.

Working on the texts written on Theodosia we were led to the conclusion that the saint was used by the various authors to express realities of their own time. When embarking on the research on saint Theodosia, we suspected that the anonymous *Encomium* would date several centuries after the events narrated<sup>23</sup>. In fact, we were led to the hypothesis it was composed at the same time as the texts by John Stavrakios and Constantine Acropolites, each of them serving a different purpose. It is possible to argue that the text was written in the early Paleologan period, and more precisely during the reign of Michael VIII Palaiologos. Moreover, we would suggest that the emperor dubbed Kopronymos, against whom the anonymous invective is directed, could be identified with Michael VIII Paleologos (1258-1282).

To substantiate his accusations, our anonymous author uses, in a metaphorical sense, several factual elements. First, the allusion to the emperor's Christian name, Constantine. It is known that following the recapture of Constantinople in 1261, Michael VIII aspired to be identified with the founder of Byzantium, Constantine the Great and that he adopted the surname of New Constantine<sup>24</sup>. It is plausible that in using the nickname of Kopronymos, and by implicitly referring to an emperor named Constantine, the author wishes, by association, to bring to mind to his contemporary audience, the emperor Michael VIII<sup>25</sup>. However, according to our author, neither Constantine V nor Michael VIII were worth, for different reasons, to bear the name of the founder of the Christian Empire.

To support his condemnation, the anonymous author stresses two further points. First, the allusion to the emperor's usurpation of the throne, and second, the

23. See note 1.

24. On the appellation of Michael VIII as Νέος Κωνσταντῖνος, see the inscriptions on his lead seals: K. CONSTANTOPOULOS, 'Η δίκη τοῦ Σεκρέτου, *ΕΕΒΣ* 10, 1933, 295, and the historical account of Pachymeres, II.21 (ed. A. FAILLER, *Georges Pachymères, Relations historiques*, Paris 1984, 391.5-12); cf. Ruth MACRIDES, The New Constantine and the New Constantinople-1261, *BMGS* 6, 1980, 13-41 and EAD., From the Komnenoi to the Palaiologoi: Imperial Models in Decline and Exile, in P. MAGDALINO (ed.), *New Constantines: the Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4th-13th Centuries*, Aldershot 1994, 270. For the representation of the concept in art, see T. ΠΑΠΑΜΑΤΟΡΑΚΗΣ, Ἐνα εἰκαστικό ἐγκώμιο τοῦ Μιχαὴλ Η' Παλαιολόγου. Οἱ ἐξωτερικὲς τοιχογραφίες στὸ καθολικὸ τῆς μονῆς τῆς Μαυριώτισσας στὴν Καστοριά, *ΔΧΑΕ* 15, 1989-90, 221-238.

25. For the familiarity of the late 13th century audience with the symbolic and prophetic discourse, see Angeliki E. ΛΑΪΟΥ-THOMADAKIS, Saints and Society in the Late Byzantine Empire, in EAD. (ed.), *Charanis Studies. Essays in Honor of Peter Charanis*, New Brunswick 1980, 84 ff. Symbols were widely used by the anti-Paleologan faction: see Ruth MACRIDES, Saints and Sainthood in the Early Palaiologan Period, in *The Byzantine Saint* (as above, n. 17), 68.



reversal of two fundamental elements of the imperial ideology: the *ἔννομον ἔπι-στασίαν* (ἀρχήν)<sup>26</sup> and the *εὐσέβεια*<sup>27</sup>. The «arch-cantankerous» emperor referred to in the text is described as a tyrant<sup>28</sup>, who had «unworthily and cunningly» assumed the crown and had not adhered to the traditional customs: ὃς, ἀναξίως καὶ πονηρῶς τῆς τῶν χριστιανῶν βασιλείας ἐπιλαβόμενος, οὐκ ἠθέλησεν εἶσω τῶν κανόνων μένειν καὶ παραδόσεων πατρικῶν (ll. 131–133). Thus, the anonymous author contests the emperor's legitimacy, a common feature used for emperors who reigned without maintaining the traditional customs<sup>29</sup>. Therefore, although the author does not mention Artabasdos, we may suppose that he refers implicitly to the latter's uprising<sup>30</sup>, considering him to have been «worthy» of reigning, instead of his brother-in-law Constantine V. However, Constantine V, to whom our text alludes, would not be accused of usurping the throne, since he was the legitimate successor of his father, Leo III, and inherited the throne in 741, after having been crowned as co-emperor since 720<sup>31</sup>. Iconophile tradition does not seem to contest Constantine's V legitimacy, although he is described as a lawless tyrant, who *τυραννικῶς καὶ οὐκ ἐννόμως τῷ κράτει χρυσάμενος*, to implement his iconoclastic policy. The charges of «unworthy usurpation of the throne» (ἀναξίως καὶ πονηρῶς)

26. H. HUNGER, *Prooimion. Elemente der byzantinischen Kaiseridee in den Arengen der Urkunden*, Vienna 1964, 120–121.

27. J. STRAUB, *Vom Herrscherideal in der Spätantike*, Stuttgart 1939, 128–129; G. RÖSCH, *Ὄνομα βασιλείας*, Vienna 1978, 41–43.

28. The term tyrant is commonly used to describe the unlawful and immoral emperor, who has recourse to violence and severe measures to impose his rule: Aikaterini CHRISTOPOULOU, Ἐνδείξεις διὰ τὴν χρονολόγησιν τοῦ Ἀκαθίστου Ὑμνου, *ΕΕΒΣ* 35, 1966–1967, 50, and G. PRINZING, Ein Mann tyrannidos ἄξιος. Zur Darstellung der rebellischen Vergangenheit Michaels VIII. Palaiologos, in I. VASSIS, G. S. HENRICH, D. R. REINSCH (eds), *Lesarten. Festschrift für Athanasios Kambylis zum 70. Geburtstag dargebracht von Schülern, Kollegen und Freunden.*, Berlin–New York 1998, 191.

29. The antithetical pair *ἐννομος βασιλεία* vs *τυραννίς* was formulated by SYNESIOS OF CYRENE, *Eis tōn aitokratōra Perí Basileias VI* (ed. N. TERZAGHI, *Synesii Cyrenensis Opuscula*, Rome 1944). With regard to Constantine V the scheme is applied in THEOPHANES, 413 (*τυραννικῶς καὶ οὐκ ἐννόμως τῷ κράτει χρυσάμενος*), and with regard to Michael VIII by PACHYMERES, I.11 (ed. FAILLER, 259.12–13: *Τοιοῦτον γὰρ τὸ μὴ ἐννόμως ἄρχειν, ἀλλὰ τυραννικῶς*).

30. The uprising of Artabasdos in 741 against Constantine V, legitimate heir to the throne, is narrated by Theophanes, 416–418; cf. P. SPECK, *Artabasdos, der rechtgläubige Vorkämpfer der göttlichen Lehren. Untersuchungen zur Revolte des Artabasdos und ihrer Darstellung in der byzantinischen Historiographie*, Bonn 1981.

31. NICEPHOROS, *Breviarium*, ed. C. MANGO, *Nikephoros Patriarch of Constantinople, Short History*, Washington 1990, 58; THEOPHANES, 401.

correspond better with the case of Michael VIII. It is not necessary to recount here the details of Michael's usurpation of the Lascarid heir to the throne, which begun with the «suppression» of the name of John IV Laskaris in Michael's coronation ceremony<sup>34</sup>, and was followed by the young emperor's blinding and, finally, by his exile<sup>35</sup>, to assume that the charges of usurpation of the crown are directed against Michael.

The challenge of the legitimacy of the emperor's authority by calling him a «tyrant» is not only developed in the preface (*καὶ τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ βασιλείας, ἧς ξένος ἐκεῖνος*: ll. 5–6), but also in several passages of the narration (*τὴν τύραννον ἐκείνου καὶ θεόμαχον κακίαν*: ll. 9–10; *Φαραὼ τὸν τύραννον*: l. 121; *τὸ ἀσεβὲς ὑπερίσχυσε δόγμα τυράννου*: ll. 163–164; *ἡ τοῦ τυράννου παράνομος ἐργασία*: ll. 201–202; *προσαγγέλουσιν ἅπαντα τῷ τυράννῳ*: l. 223). Such a repetition serves to create an intense climate against the emperor.

The emperor's impiety is emphasised in the narrative in order to denigrate him. Piety and God-fearing are two fundamental features of the ideal sovereign's portrait<sup>36</sup>. In our narrative, the emperor is presented as «alien to the kingdom of Christ» and described as «impious», in accordance with the dogmatic deviations he tried to introduce.

The manifestation of the emperor's impiety consists of the abolition of the worship of icons, commonly attributed to the iconoclast emperors<sup>37</sup>. In fact, our text quotes the best-known excerpts regarding the worship of icons (ll. 42–45). Among the charges against the «impious» emperor, the author introduces accusations that refer to the tentative of abolition of the trinitarian divinity, explaining how the «cursed one» *δόγμα καθολικὸν ἐδογματίσεν ὁ κατάρτος* (ll. 153–154) by *τὸ τρι-συπόστατον ἀναιρεῖται τῆς ὁμοουσίου θεότητος* (ll. 160–161). These charges, connected to the structure of the Holy Trinity, were among the burning issues in the aftermath of the Lyons Council of 1274 discussed between Unionists and anti-Unionists<sup>38</sup>. Thus, it is obvious that the anonymous author alludes here in the theological controversy of the late 13th century, and that, moreover, he himself be-

34. PACHYMERES, III.2 (ed. FAILLER, 233,26). For the rest of the official ceremonies, PACHYMERES, III.10 (ed. FAILLER, 257.2–5).

35. PACHYMERES, III.10 (ed. FAILLER, 257,15–26).

36. HUNGER, *Prooimion*, 49 ff., and especially pp. 57, 66.

37. The *Horos* of the 7th Oecumenical Council accuses the iconoclasts that *τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ κυρίου καὶ τῶν ἁγίων αὐτοῦ ὁμοίως τοῖς ξοάνοις τῶν σατανικῶν εἰδώλων ὀνομάσαντες*: MANSI, 13, 376

38. PACHYMERES, V.16 (ed. FAILLER, 491.5–24).

longed to the anti-Unionist party.

The accusation against Kopronymos, the emperor of the narrative, namely the forced resignation of Germanos I, constitutes a third element that may confirm the hypothesis that the text was in effect written against Michael VIII Paleologos. It is known that in January 730 Germanos I (715–730) was forced to resign by the emperor Leo III<sup>39</sup> and not by Constantine V, as inaccurately stated by the anonymous author: οὕτω δὲ τοῦ δυσσεβοῦς βασιλέως ἐκείνου πονηρῶς καὶ ἀθέως ἔχοντος πρὸς θεὸν τὸν ἀγιώτατον πατριάρχην, τὸν Γερμανόν, ἀδίκως τῶν πατριαρχικῶν οἰάκων ἀπήλασεν, ἀντ' αὐτοῦ δὲ τὸν πονηρότατον ἔρχεται χειροτονεῖν Ἀναστάσιον (ll. 167–170). The distortion of the chronology, the attribution to Kopronymos, that is Constantine V, of acts that cannot be connected with him, correspond to the author's contemporary reality. It seems that the anonymous seeks to stress similarities of names and of the fate of the two homonymous Patriarchs, Germanos I and Germanos III<sup>40</sup>. Furthermore, the author's statements would serve to remind the initiated audience of the deceitful attitude of Michael VIII on the issue of the resignation of Germanos III (1265–1266)<sup>41</sup> and the subsequent elevation of Joseph (1266–1275) to the patriarchal throne<sup>42</sup>. If we accept that the author refers to Germanos III and not to the homonymous Patriarch of the eighth century, we would assume that our text was composed in or shortly after 1266, that is, after the sudden end of Germanos' III patriarchate.

One more point confirms, in our view, the dating of the text in the second half of the 13th century, namely the passage in which the anonymous author provides some autobiographical elements<sup>43</sup>. Speaking of himself, he says initially that he is one of those who elected «the path of God»; consequently, we may suppose that he was a monk. He then expresses his fears about the double danger that his

39. THEOPHANES, 409; cf. See Eleonora KOUNTOURA-GALAKE, *Ο βυζαντινός κλήρος και η κοινωνία των «σκοτεινών αιώνων»*, Athens 1996, 144.

40. Since the former was transferred from the episcopate of Cyzicus and the latter from the episcopate of Adrianople to the Patriarchate of Constantinople. On the interdiction of transfer from one episcopate to another, see RHALLS-POTLES V, 391–394.

41. See P. GOUNARIDES, *Το κίνημα των Αρσενιατών (1261–1310), Ιδεολογικές διαμάχες την εποχή των πρώτων Παλαιολόγων*, Athens 1999, 83–87.

42. PACHYMERES, IV.17–18 (ed. FAILLER, 379–383); cf. PACHYMERES, IV.18 (ed. FAILLER, 381, 19–20) who asks: Ποῦ γὰρ καὶ εἰς νοῦν ἐκείνῳ ὥς καὶ βασιλεὺς ἐπινεύει πρὸς ταῦτα καὶ τὰ τῆς συμβουλῆς Ἰωσήφ ἐκείθεν προανακέκρουσται;

43. Cf. M. HINTERBERGER, *Autobiographische Tradition in Byzanz*, Vienna 1999, 156 ff.

statements might cause him, both to his soul and body, and says that he will dare to utter the truth. He then repeats that the danger from his undertaking is evident. It is obvious that his words reflect the concern, the anxiety of a person who fears persecution<sup>44</sup>. However, what sense would his fears have had, had he been writing of an emperor of the past and not for a contemporary one? It is known that, during the reign of Michael VIII, persecutions of those opposing the «royal laws»<sup>45</sup> were particularly violent<sup>46</sup>. The work exudes the fear of a person who dares to speak of issues engaging the attention of a contemporary audience in current problems; yet, through alteration and disguise he adjusts them to a corresponding but harmless past.

With carefully chosen stylistic devices the author expresses his views with reference to the Council of Lyons. It is only when he recounts Theodosia's punishment, with her being brought before the emperor, that he has the opportunity to speak of the Council: *διὰ πολλῶν δὲ τῶν ἐν μέσῳ τὸ παράνομον ἐκεῖνον τὴν ἁγίαν τοῦ βασιλέως εἶχε συνέδριον* (l. 290). Of course, the anonymous author could have been referring to the iconoclast Council of Hieria, which was convened by Constantine V<sup>47</sup>, and yet he supplements his text with a plethora of quotations from iconoclastic writings, to render his narrative more convincing. However, he never mentions that the Church was involved into this imperial initiative. Instead, he speaks of a mere «convention» related to the emperor, who on this occasion went beyond his jurisdiction: *περὶ τῆς κατ' ἐκεῖνον ἀνιέρου συνόδου* (ll. 307–308), *περὶ δὲ τῆς συνόδου σου, ταύτης ἦν καὶ ἱερὰν καλεῖν οὐκ αἰσχύνηι* (ll. 363–364). Therefore, the iconoclastic stereotypes inserted in the narrative function as a rhetorical device. The real argument refers to the 1274 Council of Lyons, and since the author cannot express himself openly against the Council out of fear, the fictitious iconoclastic background is used to illustrate contemporary events. 1274 would thus be the terminus post for the redaction of the anonymous *Encomium*.

In conclusion, let us sum up the main points of the study of the anonymous *Encomium*. Although referring explicitly to Constantine V and to Theodosia as a

44. Monks formed the nucleus of the opposition to Michael VIII, who imposed strict penalties on them: PACHYMERES, VI.24 (ed. FAILLER, 617.16–19).

45. PACHYMERES, VI.24 (ed. FAILLER, 619.3–10).

46. PACHYMERES, IV.28 (ed. FAILLER, 409.26–411.2).

47. See above note 12.

martyr of the first Iconoclasm, the text is in reality inspired by the situation of the late 13th century. The author made use of Theodosia's legend, as it was developed in former hagiographical texts. He composed an original work, selecting from his sources the narrative elements he considered fitting better to his own aim. The «patchwork» method he used seems to have been a characteristic feature of the hagiography by the troubled late 13th century, when words had a double significance, both literal and symbolic. Rewriting hagiography was a literary tendency of the time, and as a method is explicitly cited by Constantine Akropolites, who remodeled the earlier *Life* of John the Merciful, in order to compose the portrait of the «merciful» emperor John III Vatatzes: *καὶ γὰρ οὐκ οἶδ' ὅπως καὶ τῶν μοναστῶν οὐκ ὀλίγοι συνήθεις ἄνωθεν ὄντες καὶ τῶν τοῦ ἱεροῦ καταλόγου συχνοὶ ὁσίων τε καὶ μαρτύρων βίους ἄλλος μετ' ἄλλον ἀξιοῦσι συγγράφεσθαι*<sup>48</sup>.

48. D. I. POLEMIS, The Speech of Constantine Acropolites on St. John Merciful the Young, *An. Boll.* 91, 1973, 52-53; cf. MACRIDES, *Saints*, 69-71, and Alice-Mary TALBOT, Old Wine in New Bottles: The Rewriting of Saints' Lives in the Palaiologan Period, in S. ĆURČIĆ-Doula MOURIKI (eds), *The Twilight of Byzantium*, Princeton 1991, 18.

