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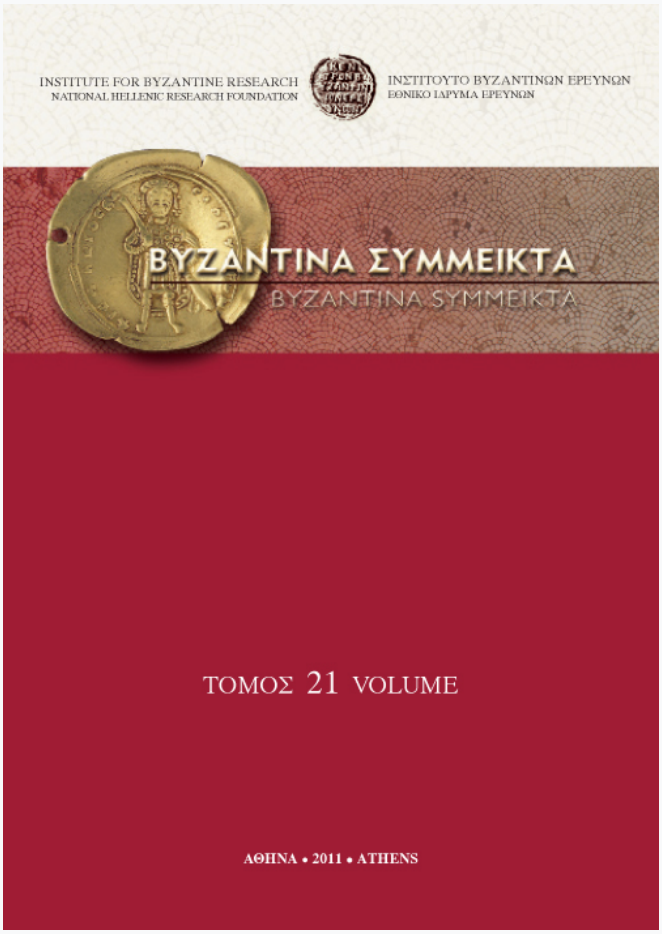

On the epistolography of Michael Glykas

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Eirini-Sophia Kiapidou

On the Epistolography of Michael Glykas

If Michael Glykas is well-known today, it is undoubtedly thanks primarily to the *Βίβλος Χρονική*, his 12th-century chronicle of events from the creation of the world to the death of Alexios I Komnenos (1118)[1]. Though the historical value of this work is somewhat undermined by the fact that all its main sources are basically known to us, the variety of the information it contains and the author's extensive commentaries on the creation of the world and various events of Holy Writ have preserved a special place for the *Βίβλος Χρονικὴ* in the framework of Middle Byzantine historiography.

Many questions concerning the identity and activity of Michael Glykas are still open to debate today. According to the epigram in the codex of the Klimadon Monastery that preserves his chronography[2], Glykas came from the island of Corfu[3] and was at the height of his career during the

1. *Michaelis Glycae Annales*, ed. I. Bekker [CSHB], Bonn 1836. On the text see S. Mavromati-Katsougiannopoulou, *Η Χρονογραφία του Μιχαήλ Γλυκά και οι πηγές της (περίοδος 100 π.Χ.-1118 μ.Χ.)*, diss., Thessaloniki 1984; Eadem, Η *Διδασκαλία παντοδαπή* του Μιχαήλ Ψελλού και η Χρονογραφία του Μιχαήλ Γλυκά, *Βυζαντινά* 15 (1989) 143-153; Eadem, Η *Εξαήμερος* του Μιχαήλ Γλυκά: Μία εκλαϊκευτική επιστημονική πραγματεία του 12ου αιώνα, *Βυζαντινά* 17 (1994) 7-70; more recently Ap. Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοὶ Ἱστορικοὶ καὶ Χρονογράφοι, 11ος-12ος αἰώνας*, v. III, Athens 2009, 585-624.

2. *Γλυκᾶς ὁ γράψας Μιχαὴλ τὸ βιβλίον... / Κερκύρας τὸ θρέμμα καὶ τοῦ κόσμου τὸ θαῦμα* (E. Th. Tsolakis, *Βυζαντινοί ιστορικοί και χρονογράφοι 11ου και 12ου αιώνα*, Thessaloniki 1974, 169, n. 2).

3. On the presence of elements of Corfiote dialect in Glykas' poetry see H. Pernot, Remarques sur quelques formes byzantines. La dialecte de Corfou chez Glykas, in: *Mélanges offerts à M. Gustave Schlumberger*, Paris 1924, 214-215. See also H. Eideneier, Zur Sprache des Michael Glykas, *BZ* 61 (1968) 5-9.

Επιμέλεια έκδοσης: Στυλιανος Λαμπακης, IBE/EIE

BYZANTINA ΣΥΜΜΕΙΚΤΑ 21 (2011) 169-193

reign of the emperor Manuel I Komnenos (1143-1180), whom he served as an imperial secretary. In addition, according to a bibliographical note in the codex *Marcianus gr. 402*, he lived until the fall of Constantinople to the Crusaders in 1204[4]. In the year 1159 he was sentenced to prison, and during his imprisonment in the Noumera of Constantinople he addressed at least two vernacular poems to Manuel I, begging for his release[5], as well as a collection of twenty proverbs[6]. The reasons for Glykas' incarceration are not known, as it is not clear yet whether his imprisonment and the following partial blinding were the result of his participation in Theodore Stypeiotes' conspiracy against Manuel I Komnenos in the winter of 1158/1159, as O. Kresten proposed in 1978[7], or should be connected with Glykas' severe criticism, in his Letter 40, of the emperor Manuel's passion for astrology, as was initially suggested by F. Chalandon[8] and later accepted by H.-G. Beck and H. Hunger[9]. In any case, Glykas remained in prison until, probably, the year 1164, as it appears from his second poem to the emperor, pleading for his release, and it is presumed that not long afterwards he regained his freedom and assumed the monk's habit. Despite being sentenced to blinding it appears that he was in a position to continue his work, and according to

4. Tsolakis, *Βυζαντινοί ιστορικοί και χρονογράφοι 11ου και 12ου αιώνα,* 169.

5. Poem 1: *Στίχοι οὓς ἔγραψε καθ' ὃν κατεσχέθη καιρόν*, ed. E. Th. Tsolakis, Thessaloniki 1959 (see also note 12). Poem 2: *Στίχοι πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα κυρὸν Μανουὴλ τὸν Κομνηνόν, ὅτε λαμπρὸς ἀπὸ Οὐγγρίας στεφανίτης ὑπέστρεψεν*, in: *Κεφάλαια* (as in note 12), v. I, ρνζ΄-ρξα΄. On Glykas' description of life in a Byzantine prison in Poem 1 see K. Bourdara, Οι βυζαντινές φυλακές, in: Sp. N. Troianos (ed.), *Έγκλημα και τιμωρία στο Βυζάντιο*, Athens 1997, 317-336 esp. 328-336. On the literary aspects of this poem rather than its biographical readings see more in E. C. Bourbouhakis, 'Political' personae: the poem from prison of Michael Glykas: Byzantine literature between fact and fiction, *BMGS* 31/1 (2007) 53-75.

6. *[Ἀναγωγὴ δημοτικῶν τινων ῥητῶν]*, in: *Κεφάλαια* (as in note 12), v. I, ρξβ΄-ρπγ΄.

7. O. Kresten, Zum Sturz des Theodoros Styppeiotes, *JÖB* 27 (1978) 49-103.

8. F. Chalandon, *Jean II Comnène (1118–1143) et Manuel Comnène (1143–1180)*, v. $II_{(I)}$, Paris 1912 (New York 1975), 204, n. 1.

9. H.-G. Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reich*, München 1959, 654 (later, however, he seems to maintain a more cautious attitude towards Glykas' identification with Sikidites; see Idem, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Volksliteratur*, München 1971, 109, note 1); H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, München 1978, v. I, 422-423.

the prevailing view his chronicle and most – if not all – of his letters were composed after his release[10].

Compared to the *Βίβλος Χρονική*, the two vernacular poems addressed to Manuel I and to a certain degree the collection of proverbs, Michael Glykas' epistolography is today the least studied part of his work. P. Magdalino referred briefly to Glykas' letters in his monograph on the emperor Manuel I Komnenos, as did more recently A. Karpozilos, while acknowledging the need for an extended special study[11].

More specifically, Glykas' epistolographic corpus consists of ninety-five texts of theological content, which cover a total of 967 pages in the old and unprocurable edition by Sophronios Eustratiadis[12], a generally satisfactory edition with a rudimentary apparatus criticus and apparatus fontium, but no obvious evidence of manuscript misreading. The Byzantine text is accompanied by an extensive introduction, which is a significant contribution to the study of Glykas' life and work, as it marks the first proposed identification of Michael Glykas with Michael Sikidites, the monk who in the late 12th century sparked the theological controversy on the corruptibility of the Eucharist[13]. Furthermore, Eustratiadis' edition also included Glykas' two poems, his collection of proverbs and two texts directly relevant to Glykas' life and work: a *πιττάκιον* of Manuel I, where the emperor defends his interest in astrology (Letter 40 is Glykas' answer to that letter)[14], and the twenty-seventh chapter of Nicetas Choniates' *Θησαυρὸς*

10. See indicatively Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοὶ Ἱστορικοὶ καὶ Χρονογράφοι, 11ος-12ος αἰώνας*, 586, 601.

11. P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel Komnenos, 1143-1180*, Cambridge 1993, 370-382; Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοὶ Ἱστορικοὶ καὶ Χρονογράφοι, 11ος-12ος αἰώνας*, 600-601.

12. *Μιχαὴλ τοῦ Γλυκᾶ, Εἰς τὰς ἀπορίας τῆς Θείας Γραφῆς Κεφάλαια,* ed. S. Eustratiadis, v. I, Athens 1906, v. II, Alexandria 1912. On previous editions of these letters see *Κεφάλαια*, v. I, ρε΄-ρστ΄ and N. B. Tomadakis, *Βυζαντινὴ Ἐπιστολογραφία (Εἰσαγωγὴ εἰς τὴν Βυζαντινὴν Φιλολογίαν 3),* Athens ^{3}1969-1970 (Thessaloniki 1993), 152, 167.

13. On this matter see more in the following pages.

14. On Manuel I's occupation with astrology see indicatively F. Evaggelatou-Notara, Ὁποῖόν ἐστι μέρος τῆς ἀστρολογίας κακιζόμενόν τε καὶ ἀποτρόπαιον (Αστρολογία - Αστρονομία και οι σχετικές αντιλήψεις κατά τον ΙΒ΄ αιώνα), in: N. Oikonomidis (ed.), *Το Βυζάντιο κατά τον 12ο αιώνα. Κανονικό Δίκαιο, κράτος και κοινωνία*, Athens 1991, 447-463; P. Magdalino, *L'Orthodoxie des astrologues. La science entre le dogme et la divination à Byzance (VIIe-XIVe siècle)*, Paris 2006, 109-132; Idem, Occult Science

τῆς Ὀρθοδοξίας, regarding the controversy that raged at the end of the 12th century over the corruptibility of the Eucharist[15].

The indisputably precious work of Eustratiadis suffers, however, from other problems in addition to the expected deficiencies of its time. I shall mention only the most obvious of these:

(I) Of the fifty-five manuscripts mentioned by the editor that preserve all or part of Glykas' epistolography under either his name or that of John Zonaras[16], Eustratiadis used only the seven codices (*Paris. gr. 228* and *Vind. theol. gr. 155*, 13th c.; *Marc. gr. 111*, 14th c.; *Vind. hist. gr. 28*, *Vind. theol. gr. 47*, *Vind. theol. gr. 67* and *Vind. theol. gr. 83*, 16th c.) that were accessible to him (five of them are held in the Austrian National Library in Vienna, where Eustratiadis served as deacon of the Orthodox Church), which in his estimation represent three successive revisions of the text[17]. However, among the forty-eight manuscripts that for practical reasons the editor was not able to take into consideration[18], there are two basic codices of the manuscript tradition, the *Athos Pantel. gr. 212* (13th c.) and the *Mosq. 230* (= *Mosq. Hist. Mus. Syn. gr. 219/230* Vlad., 1603), which preserve almost the whole of Glykas' epistolography[19]. And now a third manuscript, unknown to Eustratiadis at the beginning of the 20th century, the codex *Guelf. 73 Gud.*

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and Imperial Power in Byzantine History and Historiography (9th-12th Centuries), in: P. Magdalino-M. Mavroudi (eds.), *The occult sciences in Byzantium*, Geneva 2006, 119-162, especially 146-150; W. Adler, Did the Biblical Patriarchs Practice Astrology? Michael Glykas and Manuel Komnenos I on Seth and Abraham, in: *The occult sciences in Byzantium*, 245-263. On Letter 40 see more in the following pages.

15. *Τόμος εἰκοστὸς ἕβδομος. Τοῦ αὐτοῦ Χωνιάτου. Περὶ τοῦ δόγματος τῶν θείων μυστηρίων. Τὸ τοιοῦτον δόγμα ἐλαλήθη ἐπὶ τῶν ἡμερῶν τοῦ βασιλέως κυροῦ Ἀλεξίου τοῦ ἐξ Ἀγγέλων, ἐφ' οὗ καὶ ἡ ἅλωσις ἐγεγόνει τῆς πόλεως* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, κ΄-μ΄).

16. On the rich and complex manuscript tradition of Glykas' epistolography see *Κεφάλαια*, v. I, ριγ΄-ρλε΄ and K. Krumbacher, Michael Glykas. Eine Skizze seiner Biographie und seiner litterarischen Tätigkeit nebst einem unedierten Gedichte und Briefe desselben, *Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch –philologische Klasse* 3 (1894) 399-400, where three additional manuscripts are mentioned.

17. In his review on Eustratiadis' edition Kurtz rejects the editor's assumption that Glykas himself was aware of the various editions of his letters [see E. Kurtz, review on *Μιχαὴλ τοῦ Γλυκᾶ, Εἰς τὰς ἀπορίας τῆς θείας Γραφῆς Κεφάλαια,* ed. S. Eustratiadis, v. I, Athens 1906, in: *BZ* 17 (1908) 168].

18. *Κεφάλαια*, v. I, ρκστ΄-ρλε΄.

19. See Kurtz's review, 167.

*gr. (*15th c.), which preserves ninety-one of Glykas' letters, should be included among the best manuscripts of his work[20]. Today, therefore, it is questionable whether Eustratiadis' edition was based on the best manuscripts and thus many important issues as to the titles and the names of the addressees are still open to debate.

(II) The editor also admits that he was not always able to trace Glykas' sources, for many of them were still unedited in his time[21]. But even in the case of identified citations, quotation marks often open inside the text without ever closing and vice versa, which leaves the reader uncertain as to the exact beginning and end of a certain passage and, more importantly, whether Glykas copied the source texts faithfully or rephrased them from memory, a highly interesting distinction as regards his scholarship and method of composition.

(III) In the titles of Letters 86, 87 and 88[22] the recipient's name is replaced by the phrase *Τῷ αὐτῷ*, which is unsatisfactory since no addressee is specified in either of the two preceding letters (Letters 85 and 84), and while Letter 83 is indeed explicitly addressed to the monk Alypios[23], to me that is insufficient evidence for accepting Eustratiadis' assumption that Alypios was also the intended recipient of Letters 86, 87 and 88[24]. Given, moreover, that these three letters are preserved in the same order in the main codices of Eustratiadis' edition, a parallel study of the whole manuscript tradition is essential.

To sum up, despite the fact that Eustratiadis' edition seems to reproduce Glykas' text adequately and therefore permits a fairly safe study of his epistolographic work, it cannot be considered as the final edition. On the contrary, the need for a new modern edition of the text that takes into account the entire rich manuscript tradition, especially in reference to issues connected with the arrangement of the letters in the corpus, their superscriptions and the names of the recipients, is imperative.

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20. See L. Aviluškina, The Theological Chapters of Michael Glykas in the Codex Guelf. 73 Gudian gr., in: *Proceedings of the 22nd International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Abstracts of Free Communications*, v. III, Sofia 2011, 157-158.

21. *Κεφάλαια*, v. I, ϱ΄.

22. *Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 383-402.

23. *Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 346-347.

24. *Κεφάλαια*, v. I, νδ΄.

By far the largest group of these ninety-five letters correspond to the title of Eustratiadis' edition (*Μιχαὴλ τοῦ Γλυκᾶ, Εἰς τὰς ἀπορίας τῆς θείας Γραφῆς Κεφάλαια*), for they aim at providing persuasive answers to various theological issues that derive from the reading of the Old and New Testaments[25] or arise in the daily lives of monks and ordinary faithful Christians[26]. Thus, without ignoring the major controversial theological issues of the day (azymes[27], filioque[28], *ὁ πατήρ μου μείζων μου ἐστί*[29], corruptibility

25. See indicatively Letter 4 *Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ κυρῷ Μαξίμῳ τῷ Σμενιώτῃ. Εἰ χρὴ προσέχειν τοῖς λέγουσιν, ὅτι πρόσκαιρον εἶχε τὸ σῶμα καὶ κατ' ἀρχὰς ὁ ἄνθρωπος, καὶ ὅτι φυσικοῖς ὑπέκειτο καὶ πρὸ τῆς παραβάσεως πάθεσι, καὶ ὅτι βρῶσιν αἰσθητὴν ἐν παραδείσῳ ἤσθιε, καὶ ὅτι συκῆ τὸ ξύλον τῆς γνώσεως ἦν, ὡς ἐκεῖνοί φασιν* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 11-60); Letter 48 *Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ κυρῷ Νείλῳ. Εἰ χρὴ προσέχειν τοῖς λέγουσιν ὅτι μετὰ τὸ ἐξεικονισθῆναι τὸ ἔμβρυον τὴν νοερὰν ψυχὴν δέχεσθαι εἴωθε* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 46-51); Letter 51 *Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ κυρῷ Ἡσαΐᾳ. Περὶ τοῦ πῶς δεῖ τὸ εὐαγγελικὸν καὶ θεῖον ἐκλαμβάνειν ρητὸν τὸ λέγον «οὗτος ἥμαρτεν ἢ οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ, ἵνα τυφλὸς γεννηθῇ;»* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 62-68); Letter 54 *Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ κυρῷ Χαρίτωνι. Εἰ χρὴ προσέχειν τοῖς λέγουσιν ὅτι ἱερεὺς ὁ Χριστὸς παρὰ Ἰουδαίοις κεχειροτόνηται* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 92-107) etc.

26. See indicatively Letter 19 *Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ κυρῷ Ἡσαΐᾳ. Εἰ χρὴ προσέχειν τοῖς λέγουσιν ὅτι ὁ τὸ μοναχικὸν ἀμφιεννύμενος καὶ ἅγιον σχῆμα τηνικαῦτα τῶν πλημμελειῶν αὐτοῦ τέλεον ἀπαλλάσσεται, κἂν ἐν τῷ τέλει τῆς ζωῆς αὐτοῦ τὸ τοιοῦτον φθάσῃ λαβεῖν* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 225-239); Letter 46 *Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ κυρῷ Μελετίῳ τῷ Κριτοπούλῳ. Εἰ χρὴ προσέχειν τοῖς λέγουσιν, ὅτι οὐκ ἐπάναγκες ἡμῖν τὸ ἐν Τετραδοπαρασκευαῖς νηστεύειν, τοῦ Κυρίου λέγοντος ὅτι οὐ τὰ εἰσερχόμενα κοινοῖ τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλὰ τὰ ἐξερχόμενα* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 30-36); Letter 94 *Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ κυρῷ Ἰωαννικίῳ τῷ Γραμματικῷ. Εἰ χρὴ προσέχειν τοῖς λέγουσιν ὅτι καὶ σήμερον οἱ ἀψάμενοι νεκροῦ ἀκάθαρτοί εἰσι καθὰ καὶ τὸ πρότερον, καὶ ὅτι θρηνεῖν ἀμέτρως ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀποιχομένοις οὐκ ἔξεστιν* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 445-452) etc.

27. Letter 29 *Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ κυρῷ Μαξίμῳ τῷ Σμενιώτῃ. Εἰ χρὴ προσέχειν τοῖς λέγουσιν, ὅτι λαβὼν ὁ Χριστὸς ἄζυμον ἐν τῇ ἑσπέρᾳ τῆς μεγάλης Πέμπτης ὡς καὶ τῆς ἑορτῆς τοῦ πάσχα τηνικαῦτα δῆθεν ἐστηκυίας τὸ οἰκεῖον πάσχα ἐτέλεσεν* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 293-334).

28. Letter 30 *Τῷ αὐτῷ. Περὶ χρήσεών τινων, ὅτι ἐκ μόνου τοῦ πατρός, οὐ μὴν καὶ ἐκ τοῦ υἱοῦ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐκπορεύεται· καὶ ὅτι οὐ ταὐτὸν ἀποστολὴ καὶ ἐκπόρευσις* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 335-360).

29. Letter 79 *Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ καὶ στυλίτῃ κυρῷ Ἰωάννῃ τῷ Σιναΐτῃ. Εἰ χρὴ προσέχειν τοῖς λέγουσιν ὅτι τὴν εὐαγγελικὴν φωνὴν τὴν οὕτω λέγουσαν· «ὁ πατήρ μου μείζων μού ἐστιν», οὐ δέον ἐκλαμβάνεσθαι καὶ κατ' αὐτὸ τὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον, μιᾶς οὔσης τῆς ὑποστάσεως* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 275-315).

of the Eucharist[30]), Michael Glykas' epistolography mainly concerns the logical questions of ordinary Christians about life, death, sin and salvation after death, that arise as a result of certain obscurities and contradictions in the context of formal Church teaching. Glykas endeavours to solve these problems with the help of his deep knowledge of the ecclesiastical sources, interpreting them with a strong dose of common sense and good will. This is the main feature common to all his letters, which also display several similar principles of composition: for example, the subject of each letter is defined at the outset, often in a cautiously written preface, after which Glykas begins to develop his argument, quoting extensively, and chiefly, from Christian literature[31] and sometimes from various secular Byzantine sources as well[32].

30. Letter 59 *Ἔτι καὶ τοῦτο ἠπόρηται εἴτε φθαρτή ἐστιν ἡ ἁγία τοῦ Χριστοῦ μετάληψις εἴτε καὶ ἄφθαρτος* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 133-135); Letter 84 *Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ κυρῷ Ἰωαννικίῳ τῷ Γραμματικῷ. Ἀπολογητικὸν ἐκ μέρους πρὸς τὸν μοναχὸν ἐκεῖνον τὸν ἀποκαλέσαντα κακοδόξους ἡμᾶς, ἐπειδὴ λέγομεν ὅτι ὁ τῆς προθέσεως ἄρτος τοιοῦτός ἐστι κατὰ φύσιν, ὁποία ἦν ἡ ἁγία τοῦ Χριστοῦ σὰρξ ἡ ἐπὶ τοῦ μυστικοῦ δείπνου τοῖς μαθηταῖς εἰς βρῶσιν δοθεῖσα* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 348-379).

31. See for example Letter 8: *Ἐφ' οἷς ἠπόρηκας, ὁσιώτατε ἄνερ, πῶς ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστήσονται τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, λέγων, σώματα, καὶ ποίῳ τῷ σχήματι, καὶ εἰ ἔστι διαφορὰ ἄρρενός τε καὶ θήλεος, ἀμηχανία καὶ ἡμᾶς οὐ μικρὰ πολὺν ἤδη κατέχει καιρόν· ἐφ' ᾧ καὶ πρὸς ἰσχύος οὐκ ἔχομεν εὐχερῶς ἐπὶ τούτοις ἀπόκρισιν δοῦναί σοι... Ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ καταναγκάζεις τέως ἡμᾶς ἐπὶ μέσου προθεῖναί σοι τὰ τῶν διαληφθέντων ἁγίων ῥητά, ὡς ἐντεῦθεν ἐπιγνῶναί σε τίς τε ἡ δύναμις αὐτῶν καὶ ὅπως ἐκλαμβάνειν αὐτὰ χρὴ καὶ τί τὸ συναγόμενον ἐκεῖθεν ἡμῖν, ἰδοὺ καταπειθεῖς ἔχεις πρὸς τοῦτο, καὶ μὴ βουλομένους, ἡμᾶς. Καὶ εἰ βούλῃ, πρὸ τῶν ἄλλων αὐτῷ τῷ θειοτάτῳ πρόσχες Ἀθανασίῳ· ἐν γὰρ τοῖς πρὸς Ἀντίοχον Κεφαλαίοις οὕτω λέγων εὕρηται· «ὥσπερ ἕνα ἄνθρωπον ἐποίησεν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ὁ Θεός, οὕτως ἐν τῇ παλιγγενεσίᾳ πάντες εἷς ἄνθρωπος ἀνιστάμεθα»· τουτέστι πᾶσα ἀνθρώπου εἰκὼν ὁμοία ἔσται τότε τῆς τοῦ Ἀδὰμ εἰκόνος καὶ πλάσεως καὶ μεγέθους καὶ σχήματος. Διὸ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει ἄρσεν καὶ θῆλυ, οὐ μικρὸς καὶ μέγας, οὐ μέλας καὶ ξανθός, οὐ διάφορα πρόσωπά τε καὶ σχήματα». Σαφῶς μὲν οὖν ἐνταῦθα ὁ θεῖος οὗτος ἔδειξεν ἀνήρ ...* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 89,5-12).

32. For example in his Letter 56 (*Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ κυρῷ Νεκταρίῳ. Περὶ τοῦ Ἰούδα εἴτε τῇ ἀγχόνῃ ἐναπέψυξε, κατὰ τὴν εὐαγγελικὴν ἱστορίαν, εἴτε μετὰ ταῦτα ἐπιζήσας, ὥς φασί τινες, ὑδέρῳ περιέπεσε καὶ οὕτω τὸ τοῦ βίου τέλος ἐδέξατο*) Glykas cites the chronicle of George Kedrinos as well (*Historiarum Compendium*, ed. I. Bekker, Berlin 1838-1839, 345,14-20): *Πρὸς δέ γε τοῖς εἰρημένοις, ὁσιώτατε ἄνερ, καὶ τί περὶ τοῦ Ἰούδα φησὶν ὁ χρονογράφος ἐκεῖνος Γεώργιος ὁ Κεδρηνὸς εἰδέναι βούλομαί σε δι' εἴδησιν· λέγει γὰρ ὅτι πολλὰ παρακαλούμενος ὑπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων ὁ Ἰούδας, ὥστε προσελθεῖν καὶ βαλεῖν μετάνοιαν οὐκ ἠθέλησεν· ἐφ' ᾧ καὶ ἀκούσας ὅτι ἀνελήφθη ὁ Χριστὸς ἐπὶ*

Every time Glykas adds a new argument, citing the relevant passages, he also repeats his basic thesis (several repetitions of this kind can be traced in the text, especially in the longer letters)[33]. In addition, there are also continuously interjected forms of address to the correspondents (*ἄνθρωπε τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἀγαπητέ, θεοείκελε ἄνερ, ὁσιώτατε ἄνερ, ἠγαπημένε μοι πάτερ, ἀδελφέ, ὁσιώτατε ἄνερ, θεία καὶ ἱερὰ κεφαλή, τιμία καὶ ἱερὰ κεφαλὴ* etc.)[34], as well as exhortations to them not to let their thoughts stray (*μὴ θορυβοῦ, μὴ τοῖς ἔνθεν κἀκεῖθεν εὑρισκομένοις καὶ ἄλλ' ἄττα διηγουμένοις ἀπερισκέπτως ὑπάνοιγε σὰς ἀκοὰς* etc.), but to pay full attention to Glykas' words (*ὅρα νουνεχῶς, πρόσεχε, ἄκουε, πρόσχες τῇ ἀκολουθίᾳ τοῦ λόγου* etc.) and be totally persuaded by his arguments (*μὴ οὖν ἐπὶ πλέον ἀμφίβαλλε, μὴ ἀπίστει τοῖς λεγομένοις* etc.). These set phrases and many others (*δὸς ἐπὶ τούτοις ἀπόκρισιν, οὔμενουν πάντως οὔμενουν, ἀμήχανον πάντως ἀμήχανον* etc.) are constantly repeated in different letters, reinforcing the sense of unity of the epistolographic corpus. The letters usually conclude with a short epilogue, where Glykas restates his basic thesis, encouraging his correspondent to adopt it in the name of God. At this particular point in his letters he frequently refers to the illness that prevents him from continuing his writing (*Ἀρκεῖ τοσαῦτα· ἡ γὰρ τρύχουσα ἡμᾶς νόσος πλείω λέγειν οὐ συγχωρεῖ*)[35], most probably implying the health problems due to his partial blindness.

The most prominent feature of Glykas' epistolography, however, is the continuous citation of selected excerpts from Byzantine ecclesiastical and secular sources, most of the time direct (i.e. with acknowledgement of the author and sometimes the title of the work followed by the specific passage either copied verbatim or paraphrased), on rare occasions allusive (i.e. a whole passage or single phrase taken from an obviously specific source

τοσοῦτον ὠγκώθη, ὥστε καὶ μέσον λακῆσαι. Καὶ περὶ μὲν τῆς ματαιολογίας ταύτης οὕτως (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 117,1-7).

33. See indicatively *Καὶ εἴγε μὴ βαρύνῃ τὰς ἀκοάς, μικρὸν ἐπαναλήψομαί σοι τὸν λόγον* (Letter 8, *Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 113,16-17); *Εἰ βούλει δὲ καὶ αὖθις ἐπα[να]ληπτέον τὸν λόγον* (Letter 84, *Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 372,11) etc.

34. For the typical forms of address in Byzantine epistolography, including the letters of Glykas, see M. Grünbart, *Formen der Anrede im byzantinischen Brief vom 6. bis zum 12. Jahrhundert*, [WBS 25], Wien 2005.

35. See Letter 20 (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 246,24-25), Letter 67 (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 207,3-4), Letter 69 (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 229,5-6), Letter 91 (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 417,4-5) etc.

without, however, naming either the source or its author). Recording and studying all these passages in relation to those embodied in the *Βίβλος Χρονική* and to a minor degree the two vernacular poems is expected to complete our knowledge of Glykas' education and reading interests, that is, which texts he had studied and how he had evaluated, interpreted and, finally, used them in the context of his work – in other words his own method of letter writing. The systematic citation of certain excerpts or groups of excerpts in similar contexts in different letters indicates that Glykas based his argumentation concerning specific issues on specific texts and in the same circumstances was able to recall them verbatim (either the texts themselves or his paraphrase of them) and often in the same order[36]. It would therefore seem logical to assume that Glykas had arranged his own corpus of theological notes, which he consulted for his letters – and why not for his chronicle as well? Apart from this, his perception of Christian literature is clear and often repeated: one should read the Holy Scriptures carefully and receptively, always interpreting them with the help of common sense[37]. Glykas himself often tries to explain their various contradictions by enriching his argumentation with philological commentary[38].

36. See for example *Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 33,13-35,22 in Letter 46 (*Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ κυρῷ Μελετίῳ τῷ Κριτοπούλῳ. Εἰ χρὴ προσέχειν τοῖς λέγουσιν, ὅτι οὐκ ἐπάναγκες ἡμῖν τὸ ἐν Τετραδοπαρασκευαῖς νηστεύειν, τοῦ Κυρίου λέγοντος ὅτι οὐ τὰ εἰσερχόμενα κοινοῖ τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλὰ τὰ ἐξερχόμενα*) and *Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 322,18-327,11 in Letter 81 (*Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ κυρῷ Ἰωαννικίῳ τῷ Γραμματικῷ. Εἰ χρὴ προσέχειν τοῖς λέγουσιν ὅτι οὐκ ἔξεστι καταλύειν ἔν γε Τετράδι καὶ Παρασκευῇ τὰ τῆς νηστείας, εἰ καὶ τύχῃ συμπεσεῖν αὐταῖς οἱανδήποτε δεσποτικὴν ἑορτήν*).

37. See for example Letter 11: *μηδὲ κατὰ τὸ γράμμα μόνον ἐπέρχου τὰ θεῖα ῥητά. Ὅρα γὰρ νουνεχῶς, ὅτι καί τινες ἕτεροι τοῦτο παθόντες, εἰς λογισμοὺς ἀτόπους ἐξεκυλίσθησαν. Οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἐνσώματον εἶναι τὸν Θεὸν καθ' ἡμᾶς ἐδογμάτισαν· ἕτεροι δὲ καὶ τὰ θηρία νοερὰν ἔχειν ψυχὴν ὑπειλήφασι, τοῦ Θεοῦ δῆθεν ἀκούσαντες τὰ πετεινὰ καὶ τοὺς ἰχθύας εὐλογοῦντος ...* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 145,10-18); *Σὺ δὲ μὴ παροδευτικῶς τὴν θείαν ἐπέρχου Γραφήν, μηδὲ τοῖς μὲν τῶν διδασκάλων προσέχειν αἱροῦ, τοὺς δὲ παρορᾶν ἀπερισκέπτως καὶ ἀποστρέφεσθαι, —τοῦτο γὰρ οὐκ ἀκίνδυνον— ἀλλὰ πάντας ὁμοῦ σπούδαζε συμβιβάζειν καλοθελῶς, ὡς ἐν ἑνὶ καὶ τῷ αὐτῷ λαλήσαντας Πνεύματι. Εἰ δὲ καὶ διαφωνεῖν ἴσως πρὸς ἀλλήλους δοκοῦσι, μὴ τοὺς διδασκάλους αὐτούς, ἀλλὰ τοὺς καιροὺς αἰτιῶ καὶ τὰ πράγματα ... Κερδῆσαι γὰρ καὶ οὗτοι κατὰ τὸν μακάριον Παῦλον ἅπαντας μηχανώμενοι, οἰκονομικῶς τοῖς πράγμασι μετεφέροντο ...* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 147,10-17).

38. See indicatively Letter 29 (*Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ κυρῷ Μαξίμῳ τῷ Σμενιώτῃ. Εἰ χρὴ προσέχειν τοῖς λέγουσιν, ὅτι λαβὼν ὁ Χριστὸς ἄζυμον ἐν τῇ ἑσπέρᾳ τῆς μεγάλης

As a result, however, of his constant citations of other sources, most of Glykas' letters extend to numerous pages, despite the well-known precept that letters should be brief[39]. This is disorienting to the modern scholar, who is somewhat puzzled as to their genre: are they indeed letters or may they be considered as theological speeches/treatises in epistolary form?[40] The term "theological chapters" (obviously following the title of the modern edition) that often appears, without further clarification, in the limited secondary bibliography on Michael Glykas' epistolography is to me not particularly helpful in this regard.

It is undeniable that sixty-nine of the ninety-five texts comprising Glykas' corpus have the basic external features of a letter: the recipient's name is superscribed, the body of the letter contains repeated forms of address to him, stating his profession and often indicating Glykas' connection with him, while there are, moreover, a preface and a rather standard epilogue, written all in simple but definitely careful language. On the other hand, regardless of how strange such a systematic quoting of other texts in the context of a letter may seem to be, this method of writing is perfectly suited to Glykas' obvious aim: to explain to the recipients of his texts as comprehensibly and convincingly as possible all the issues they are interested in, most likely taking into consideration their level of education and

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Πέμπτης ὡς καὶ τῆς ἑορτῆς τοῦ πάσχα τηνικαῦτα δῆθεν ἑστηκυίας τὸ οἰκεῖον πάσχα ἐτέλεσεν): *εἰ γὰρ καὶ ὁ θεηγόρος Λουκᾶς οὐκ εὐπαράδεκτα δοκεῖ τὰ προειρημένα ποιεῖν —«ἦλθε, λέγων, ἡ ἡμέρα τῶν ἀζύμων ἡ καλουμένη πάσχα, ἐν ᾗ ἔδει τὸ πάσχα θύεσθαι»— ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐπὶ τούτῳ σε διαταράττεσθαι χρή. Τὸ γὰρ ἦλθεν ἐνταῦθα, θεοείκελε ἄνερ, ἀντὶ τοῦ ἐγγὺς ἦν, ἐπὶ θύραις ἦν, ὁ διαληφθεὶς ἐννόησε θεῖος πατήρ. Ὅθεν καὶ καλῶς τὴν τῶν ἀζύμων ἡμέραν, ἐπὶ θύραις ἐγγίζουσαν, ἐλθεῖν ὁ μακάριος εἶπε Λουκᾶς· φιλεῖ γὰρ πολλάκις τὰ μετὰ βραχὺ ἐφίστασθαι προσδοκώμενα ὡς ἤδη παρόντα κατονομάζεσθαι· καθὰ δὴ καὶ ἐπὶ γυναικὸς ὠδινούσης ἦλθεν ὁ τοκετὸς αὐτῆς λέγειν εἰώθαμεν, εἰ καὶ μήπω τὴν κυρίαν ἴδωμεν ὥραν ἐνστᾶσαν τοῦ τοκετοῦ αὐτῆς* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 296,1-11). And below in the same letter: *ἡ δέ γε τῆς ἁγίας Γραφῆς ἑρμηνεία τε καὶ ἐξήγησις ἡ ἐπὶ Πτολεμαίου τοῦ Φιλαδέλφου γεγονυῖα παρὰ τῶν ἑβδομήκοντα καὶ πλεῖόν τι τῶν εἰρημένων τῷ σκοπῷ ἡμῶν συντελεῖ· τὸν γὰρ ἄρτον ἄρτον ἐξέδωκεν ἑλληνικῇ φωνῇ· τὰ δὲ ἄζυμα ἄζυμα· καὶ τὸ ψωμίον ψωμίον· καὶ οὔτε τὸ τοῦ ἄρτου ὄνομα τοῖς ἀζύμοις ἔδωκεν ἐναλλάξ, οὔτ' αὖ τὸ τῶν ἀζύμων τοῖς ἄρτοις ἐπέθηκεν, ἄλλο πάντως εἶναι τὸν ἄρτον εἰδυῖα καὶ τὸ ἄζυμον ἕτερον* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 314,6-13).

39. See Tomadakis, *Βυζαντινὴ Ἐπιστολογραφία*, 89-94.

40. «ἐπιστολιμαῖαι θεολογικαὶ πραγματεῖαι» ἢ «κεφάλαια» in *Κεφάλαια*, v. I, α΄; «λόγοι ἐν εἴδει ἐπιστολῶν» in Tomadakis, *Βυζαντινὴ Ἐπιστολογραφία*, 25.

familiarity with the relevant texts[41], as well as their often limited access to most of them, for the recipients were usually simple monks[42]. If one accepts the assumption that Glykas' writings are basically letters, the next logical question is whether these are philological-didactic letters[43], namely texts written without necessarily a direct cause but intended later to be gathered into a single corpus, or whether they are private-philological letters that were composed for a specific reason and later incorporated into a broader corpus. Those of Glykas' letters that bear their recipients' names seem to belong to the second category, for they reply to a former letter[44] or discussion[45]. It also appears that Glykas maintained correspondence, or at least had frequent personal contacts, with most of his letters' recipients, as a result of which the preserved texts were composed. In several cases Glykas states that he is actually writing a letter[46] or that there will be soon a second letter on the

41. There is a sense that Glykas cites many more passages with specific references in letters he addresses to educated correspondents. See for example Letter 52 *Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ κυρῷ Λεοντίῳ τῷ ἐγκλείστῳ. Εἰ χρὴ προσέχειν τοῖς λέγουσιν ὅτι μετανοίᾳ περὶ τὸ τέλος ὁ Σολομὼν ἐχρήσατο* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 69-77), for whom Glykas says *πολυμαθῆ τε ἄνδρα ὄντα καὶ πεῖραν οὐ τὴν τυχοῦσαν ἐσχηκότα τῷ χρόνῳ* (69,13-14).

42. On the profile of Glykas' correspondents see more in the following pages.

43. See Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur*, I, 204.

44. See Letter 5: *Εἰ δὲ καὶ τοῦτο μαθεῖν ἐπιζητεῖς, ὁσιώτατε ἄνερ ...* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 61,6); Letter 29: *Ὁ περὶ τῶν ἀζύμων λόγος, ὦ θεία καὶ ἱερὰ κεφαλή, καὶ πολλοῖς ἔφθασε πρότερον καὶ πολλάκις ἐξετασθῆναι φιλοτιμότερόν τε καὶ ὑψηλότερον ... Ἐκεῖνα τοίνυν ἀνάγνωθι, καὶ τὴν γλῶτταν ἠκονημένην ἕξεις ὑπὲρ μάχαιραν δίστομον τὰς τῶν ἀντιδίκων σοι κεφαλὰς ἀποτέμνουσαν ... Ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ καὶ παρ' ἡμῶν συλλαβάς τινας ἐγχαραχθῆναί σοι περὶ τούτων ἠθέλησας ... ἀφ' ὧν ἐκεῖνοι τοῖς μεταγενεστέροις κατέλιπον ὀλίγα τινὰ συλλεξάμενοι, μετ' εὐλαβείας ὅτι πολλῆς στέλλομεν ἤδη τῇ θεοφιλίᾳ σου* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 293,8-294,8) etc.

45. See for example Letter 47*: Καὶ σήμερον ἐρωτηθέντες παρὰ τῆς σῆς ὁσιότητος, εἰ καταλύειν ἐν κρέατι συγχωρούμεθα παρεμπιπτούσης ἐν ἡμέρᾳ Τετράδι τυχὸν ἢ Παρασκευῇ τῆς ἁγίας τοῦ Χριστοῦ Γεννήσεως, ἢ καὶ ἑτέρας οἵας δή τινος δεσποτικῆς πανηγύρεως, τοιαύτην ἐπιφέρομεν, εἰ καὶ ἀμαθεῖς ἐσμεν, τὴν ἀπόκρισιν (Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 37,6-10).

46. See Letter 54: *Καὶ ταῦτα μὲν εἰς τοσοῦτον, ὦ θειότατε ἄνερ, ὅτι μηδ' ἐπὶ πλέον ἰσχύομεν τὸ ἱερὸν ἐπεξεργάσασθαι γράμμα τῆς θεοφιλίας σου· σάρκινοι γὰρ ὄντες ἡμεῖς καὶ χαμαὶ συρόμενον φέροντες φρόνημα, πῶς ὑψηλοτέρων ἁψόμεθα νοημάτων;* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 107,10-13).

same topic[47]. In addition to these particular points, if one reads in parallel Glykas' letters to different people on the same topic, small differences in the analysis may be detected, tailored to the particular recipient, his education, his emotional condition, and even his personal relationship with Glykas. The most characteristic example is of course his consolatory Letter 57 *Τῇ περιποθήτῳ ἀνεψιᾷ τοῦ κραταιοῦ καὶ ἁγίου ἡμῶν αὐθέντου καὶ βασιλέως κυρᾷ Θεοδώρᾳ ἀθυμούσῃ σφόδρα καὶ τὴν ἑαυτῆς ἀπογινωσκούσῃ σωτηρίαν δι' ὃν ἐτόλμησε φόνον ἐπί τινι γυναικὶ ζηλοτυπίας ἕνεκεν*[48], whose content is totally adapted to the particular case, as Glykas dwells on examples of Byzantine emperors involved in murders (John Tzimiskes, Theodosios, Maurikios) with the rationale that he is comforting a member of the imperial family, who may reasonably find the consolation more readily in the similar experience of former emperors. Equally interesting, however, is Letter 81, addressed to a beloved correspondent[49] (*Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ κυρῷ Ἰωαννικίῳ τῷ Γραμματικῷ*) on the question *Εἰ χρὴ προσέχειν τοῖς λέγουσιν ὅτι οὐκ ἔξεστι καταλύειν ἔν γε Τετράδι καὶ Παρασκευῇ τὰ τῆς νηστείας, εἰ καὶ τύχῃ συμπεσεῖν αὐταῖς οἱανδήποτε δεσποτικὴν ἑορτήν).* In its epilogue Glykas says that if the monks (of Ioannikios' monastery in particular?) wish to be proven *φιλάδελφοι μᾶλλον εἶναι καὶ φαίνεσθαι ἢ φίλαυτοι*, they should allow those among them who for health reasons are unable to remain totally without food until the ninth hour[50] to have a light

47. See again Letter 54: *Τί δὲ τὸ εἰλιτάριον καὶ ὅπως αὐτὸ κατέχει Χριστός, ἐν ἄλλῳ καιρῷ ταμιευτέον, εἴγε καὶ σθένος ἡμῖν παράσχῃ ὁ Χριστός* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 107,17-18). This second letter is not preserved. However, in his Letter 36 to Constantine Palaiologos Glykas says *Ὅτι δὲ ταῦτα οὕτως ἔχει καὶ ὅτι φυσικῷ λόγῳ πρόσεστι σήμερον ἡμῖν ἡ γέννησις, ἡ αὔξησις, αὐτὸς ὁ θάνατος, ἐν ἑτέρῳ λόγῳ, εἴγε καὶ δώσει σθένος ἡμῖν ὁ Θεός, δηλωθήσεταί σοι πλατύτερον* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 413,25-414,3) and he refers to the exact following Letter 37 (*Τῷ αὐτῷ. Εἰ χρὴ προσέχειν τοῖς λέγουσιν ὅτι ὅρῳ ὑπόκειται ἡ ἑνὸς ἑκάστου τῶν ἀνθρώπων ζωή*), where indeed he deals with this topic in forty-five pages (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 416-461).

48. *Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 118-127.

49. Five letters of Glykas' epistolographic corpus are addressed to him (Letters 78, 81, 84, 90, 94). It is obvious that there was a correspondence between the two men; see for example the prologue of Letter 81: *Ὅτι μὲν οὖν, ὁσιώτατε ἄνερ, ἐν νηστείᾳ διάγειν ὁ πιστὸς ὀφείλει λαὸς ἔν τε Τετράδι καὶ Παρασκευῇ, σύμφημι τοῦτο κἀγὼ καὶ οὐκ ἀντιλέγω τοῖς ἐπιφερομένοις ἤδη παρὰ τῆς σῆς ὁσιότητος...* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 322,7-10).

50. *Πολλοὶ γὰρ εἰ καὶ δοκοῦσι κατὰ τὸ φαινόμενον ὑγιῶς ἔχειν, ἀλλὰ τοσοῦτον ἐμπαθῆ σώματα φέρουσιν, ὥστε καὶ τῇ τυχούσῃ προφάσει μεταβάλλεσθαί τε καὶ μετατρέπεσθαι.*

meal, as was probably the case with Ioannikios himself[51]. Nevertheless, the fact that Glykas appears elsewhere to adopt a rather stricter approach to the Wednesday and Friday fasts shows that not all of his letters are equally impersonally didactic, but display shades of thought connected apparently with the situation of his correspondents[52]. To me, therefore, Glykas seems for the most part to have written original letters in real circumstances, replying to specific questions from specific people who apparently admired him and respected his theological education. He later gathered and revised all these letters in order to compile a handbook of popular theology, which is what his collection of letters actually is. In this context he must have formed the standardized superscription to each letter, naming it as *κεφάλαιον* of his book[53]

Οὐκοῦν δίκαιόν ἐστι τοὺς τοιούτους καὶ καταλύειν ἔστιν ὅτε τὴν ἐνάτην ὑπαλλάττειν τε τὴν δίαιταν, καὶ παραμυθίας, ὡς δύναμις, τὸ νενοσηκὸς ἀξιοῦν. Καὶ μὴ νόμιζε τοῦτο καταφρόνησιν εἶναι τῶν ἀποστολικῶν διατάξεων... Τί οὖν ἐπὶ τούτοις ἐστὶν εἰπεῖν; εἰ βούλονται μὴ ζημιοῦσθαι κατὰ πολύ, καὶ εἰ προαιροῦνται φιλάδελφοι μᾶλλον εἶναι καὶ φαίνεσθαι ἢ φίλαυτοι, στοιχήτωσαν τούτῳ δὴ τῷ κανόνι, ᾧ νῦν ὑποτίθημι· καὶ τί ἐστιν ὃ λέγω; τοῖς οὕτως ἀνεπιτηδείως περὶ τὴν ἄχρι τῆς ἐνάτης ὥρας νηστείαν διακειμένοις, ἵνα γίνηται περὶ τὸ μέσον τῆς ὥρας διάκρισις, ὡς διὰ κλύσματος δῆθεν τόπον ἀποσώζουσα καὶ οὕτω μικρῷ τινι ψωμῷ καὶ ὀλιγοστῷ πόματι ἑαυτοὺς οἱ τοιοῦτοι παραμυθησάμενοι χαίροντες τὴν τελείαν περιμένουσιν εὐωχίαν, ἵνα κοινῇ συνεστιαθῶσιν· καὶ πείθομαι ἐν Κυρίῳ ὡς ἐὰν ἀγογγύστως καὶ μετ' εὐχαριστίας ἀναμένωσιν, εἰ καὶ μὴ τῶν ἴσων ἐκείνοις, ἀλλ' οὖν μικροῦ δεῖν τῶν αὐτῶν ἐπιτεύξονται... (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 338,23-341,10).

51. I assume that the initial reason of Ioannikios' letter to Glykas was his disagreement with his monastery on how strictly one should fast on Wednesdays and Fridays; see *Εἰ δὲ ταῦτα τοῦτον ἔχει τὸν τρόπον, ἐπὶ τῇ γενεθλίῳ λοιπὸν ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ λυτρωτοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τί χρὴ καὶ λέγειν; ἐπειδὴ Τετράδι τῆς ἑβδομάδος ἡμέρᾳ συμπεσεῖν αὐτὴν ὡς ὁρᾷς ἔτυχε φυλάξομεν; ἆρα τὰ τῆς ἑνάτης ἐπ' αὐτῇ καὶ ἐν νηστείᾳ διατελέσομεν, εἰ καὶ δοκεῖ τοῦτο τοῖς ἡγουμένοις ἡμῶν; οὐκ ἔγωγε οἶμαι* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 332,3-8).

52. See indicatively Letter 46 *Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ κυρῷ Μελετίῳ τῷ Κριτοπούλῳ. Εἰ χρὴ προσέχειν τοῖς λέγουσιν, ὅτι οὐκ ἐπάναγκες ἡμῖν τὸ ἐν Τετραδοπαρασκευαῖς νηστεύειν, τοῦ Κυρίου λέγοντος ὅτι οὐ τὰ εἰσερχόμενα κοινοῖ τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλὰ τὰ ἐξερχόμενα* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 30-36), the single letter that Glykas addresses to him.

53. See Letter 59: *καθὰ δὴ καὶ ἐν ἑτέρῳ κεφαλαίῳ πρὸς τὸ τέλει τῆς βίβλου ταύτης ὄντι τὰ περὶ τούτου μαθήσει πλατύτερον* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 134,1-2); namely in the extended Letter 85 on the same topic (*Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ κυρῷ Ἰωαννικίῳ τῷ Γραμματικῷ. Ἀπολογητικὸν ἐκ μέρους πρὸς τὸν μοναχὸν ἐκεῖνον τὸν ἀποκαλέσαντα κακοδόξους ἡμᾶς, ἐπειδὴ λέγομεν ὅτι ὁ τῆς προθέσεως ἄρτος τοιοῦτός ἐστι κατὰ φύσιν, ὁποία ἦν ἡ ἁγία τοῦ Χριστοῦ σὰρξ ἡ ἐπὶ τοῦ μυστικοῦ δείπνου τοῖς μαθηταῖς εἰς βρῶσιν δοθεῖσα.* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 348-379).

and adding the name of its recipient and a synopsis of its content[54]. At this point, too, he must have incorporated the few internal references between different chapters[55], while he could have also deleted the most personal references in his letters – if there ever were such –, keeping only the frequent allusions to his illness.

This sense of Glykas' care for the composition of his epistolographic corpus is therefore to a point undermined by some basic issues in its organisation: for example, the fact that entire passages are repeated verbatim in different chapters, or even more that the criterion for the classification of the letters is unclear[56], since they are arranged neither by content or by recipient while it is also difficult to confirm the possibility of a chronological classification, customary in most Byzantine collections of letters[57], for only a few of Glykas' letters contain chronological indicators[58]. As I intend to examine the problems of dating Glykas' epistolography in a separate article, here I shall refer only to two highly interesting passages: (I) the epilogue of Letter 16 (*Τῷ αὐτῷ* – i.e. τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ κυρῷ Ἡσαΐᾳ–. *Περὶ τοῦ πῶς δεῖ πρὸς Ἰουδαίους ἁπαντᾶν, ἡνίκα καὶ μᾶλλον ἐκεῖνοι τὸ κατὰ Χριστὸν ἐπιχειροῦσι διαστρέφειν μυστήριον*) and (II) the prologue of Letter 43 (*Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ κυρῷ Ὀνουφρίῳ. Περὶ τῆς τετραμόρφου ὀπτασίας ἣν ὁ προφήτης εἶδεν Ἰεζεκιήλ, καὶ ὅπως αὐτὴν εἰς τοὺς τέσσαρας Εὐαγγελιστὰς ἐξελάβοντο*).

Passage I

Καὶ ταῦτα μὲν εἰς τοσοῦτον, ὦ θειότατε ἄνερ, ὅτι μηδὲ πλείω γράφειν ἰσχύομεν, πολλοῖς, ὡς οἶδε Κύριος, ἀθυμίας βελέμνοις κατακεντούμενοι.

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54. With the exception of Letter 57: the information in its title that Theodora committed a murder *ζηλοτυπίας ἕνεκεν* does not ensue from the letter itself.

55. Except from Letter 59 (see above note 53) see also Letter 21 (*ὡς ὁ λόγος ἐν τοῖς ἔμπροσθεν ἔδειξεν* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 248,23; namely in Letters 8 and 9) and Letter 91 (*εἰ βούλει, κεφάλαιον ἀνάγνωθι τὸ ὀγδοηκοστόν· καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖσε τὸν περὶ τούτου λόγον εὑρήσεις πλατύτερον ὁμοῦ καὶ σαφέστερον* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 417,2-4).

56. New evidence may come up from the study of the whole manuscript tradition, though such a prospect does not emerge in the relevant reports of Kurtz (review, 168-169) and recently Aviluškina (Theological Chapters, 158).

57. See Krumbacher, Michael Glykas, 441 and Kurtz, review, 168-169.

58. This is the reason why Eustratiadis speaks about the corpus' random arrangement. See more in *Κεφάλαια*, v. I, νε΄-ξζ΄and πθ΄- ϡστ΄ for the Letters 3, 4, 16, 23, 40, 53, 57, 59, 61, 79, 84 and 98.

Καὶ εἰ μὴ τὰς ἱερὰς βίβλους ἀνὰ χεῖρας εἴχομεν κἀντεῦθεν οὐ μικρὰν ἐτρυγῶμεν ἀνάψυξιν, τάχα ἂν ἀγχόνῃ χρησάμενοι καὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦ ζῆν κακῶς ἀπηλλάγημεν....[59]

Passage II

Ἔδει μὲν ἡμᾶς, ἀδελφὲ Ὀνούφριε, οἷς καὶ μᾶλλον γωνία καὶ σκότος τὸ ἐπιτίμιον, ἐγγωνιάζειν ἀεὶ καθ' ἑαυτοὺς καὶ συστέλλεσθαι καὶ κατὰ τοὺς ἐν Σερίφῳ βατράχους παντελεῖ ἀφωνίᾳ κατέχεσθαι. Εἰ γὰρ ἐκεῖνοι τῆς κατὰ φύσιν στωμυλίας παραδόξως ἐπιλανθάνονται καὶ ἄφωνοι γίνονται τέλεον, ἅτε τῆς τῶν ἐκεῖσε ὑδάτων μὴ ἀνεχόμενοι ψύξεως, πολλῷ μᾶλλον ἡμεῖς ἐπὶ πλέον ἄρτι σιγήσαιμεν κατεψυγμένοι τε τῷ τῆς ἀθυμίας ὄντες χειμῶνι καὶ νεκρῶν ἄμεινον ἐντεῦθεν οὐδὲν διακείμενοι[60].

Why are these passages important? Because in a letter collection totally devoid of personal references, the presence of these two passages and their clear confession of Glykas' poor psychological state is highly surprising. At the same time, we should also bear in mind that this explicit statement of *ἀθυμία* (the word appears in both these letters), which would have led Glykas even to contemplate death, did he not find consolation to his books, comes from the mouth of a monk, since according to the prevailing view these letters were written after his release from prison, when he had adopted the monastic habit. The same atmosphere, however, in a similar context of darkness and isolation, is described in detail in Glykas' first vernacular poem from prison[61]. If these two letters exude the same atmosphere of prison, which is vividly depicted in the two vernacular poems, and were therefore written during his incarceration, a new perspective on Glykas' life opens up, as they may indicate that Glykas had some theological education and renown even at that time, both of which were enhanced over the following years (more correspondents, deeper knowledge of the ecclesiastical texts, discussion of more difficult theological issues, etc.).

59. *Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 215,14-17.

60. *Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 12,6-13.

61. See indicatively *Ὁ δὲ βληθεὶς ἐν φυλακῇ πλήρει καπνοῦ καὶ σκότους / ἔχει τοὺς πόνους μετ' αὐτοῦ πάντοτε συνοικοῦντας* (*Στίχοι οὓς ἔγραψε καθ' ὃν κατεσχέθη καιρόν*, ed. Tsolakis, lines 109-110); *βλέπεις, ἀπῆρέ με ἡ χολή, τὸ τὶ λαλῶ οὐκ ἐξεύρω / ἔβρασεν ἡ καρδία μου, παρέκει οὐδὲν βαστάζω· / νὰ δώσω εἰς πέτραν καὶ λυθῶ, νὰ ποίσω θέαμα μέγα, / ἀπὸ στενοχωρίας μου νὰ πνίξω τὸν ἑαυτόν μου·* (lines 285-288*); Ὅπου δεσμὰ καὶ κάκωσις καὶ νέφος ἀθυμίας* (line 326). See additionally *[Ἀναγωγὴ δημοτικῶν τινων ῥητῶν]*, ed. S. Eustratiadis, no 16, line 350: *καὶ μηδὲ ζῆν νομίσαντες κείμενον ἐν γωνίᾳ.*

An equally important issue, however, as far as the structure of Glykas' epistolographic corpus is concerned, is the fact that interspersed among the sixty-nine chapters addressed to specific recipients there are also twenty-six others[62], mostly short and of various content, with no recipient named on their superscription and only the subject stated, usually after the opening phrase *Ἔτι καὶ τοῦτο ἠπόρηται*[63]. The forms of address in most of these letters[64] do not help us identify their recipients, presupposed merely by the common second-person verbal phrases present here as in the other chapters[65]. On the other hand, many of these texts close with Glykas' customary reference to his illness[66] or a similar excuse for his short treatment of the topic[67]. In short, with the exception of the absence of the recipient's name and their somewhat different titles, these texts are harmoniously incorporated into Glykas' corpus as far as their composition, content and language are concerned; and the question that naturally arises is whether they are actually letters, from the manuscript tradition of which the recipients' names were simply at some point omitted, or separate treatises that Glykas added later with a view to completing his theological handbook by covering issues that had not been raised by his correspondents but which he wished to analyse in a broader theological work. It is indeed a fact that several of these chapters deal with topics not treated elsewhere[68]; there are, however, also those which

62. Letters 12, 14, 17, 18, 27, 28, 32, 33, 34, 35, 41, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 64, 66, 67, 85, 89, 92 (?), 93, 96, 97, 98.

63. See for example Letter 14 *Ἔτι καὶ τοῦτο ἠπόρηται, εἰ κατὰ τὴν πρώτην ἡμέραν παρήγαγε τὸ φῶς ὁ Θεός, τίνος ἕνεκεν κατὰ τὴν τετάρτην τοὺς φωστῆρας ἐδημιούργησεν* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 167,2-4).

64. *τέκνον μοι φίλτατον* (Letter 67, *Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 201,8-9), *θεοείκελε ἄνερ* (Letter 34, *Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 373,3), *εὐγενέστατε ἄνερ* (Letter 58, *Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 132,3), *ἀγαπητέ* (Letter 59, *Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 133,4. 133,12; Letter 59, *Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 156,4), *ἱερὰ κεφαλή* (Letter 60, *Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 136,7) etc.

65. See indicatively Letter 59: *Εὑρήσεις γὰρ..., εἴγε καλοθελῶς ἐξετάσεις τοῦ λόγου τὴν δύναμιν* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 133,18-20), *Πλὴν μὴ ἐπιστυγνάσῃς τῷ λόγῳ μηδὲ βαρὺ δόξει σοι καὶ φορτικὸν τὸ λεχθέν* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 134,14-15) etc.

66. See for example Letter 67: *Ἀρκεῖ σοι τοσαῦτα· ἡ γὰρ τρύχουσα ἡμᾶς νόσος πλείω λέγειν οὐ συγχωρεῖ* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 207,3-4).

67. See for example Letter 85: *Ἀρκεῖ τοσαῦτα· πλείω καὶ γὰρ ὁ καιρὸς περὶ τούτου λέγειν οὐ συγχωρεῖ* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 382,25-26).

68. See Letter 18 *Ἐπεξήγησις τῶν ἐν τῷ θείῳ τελουμένων λουτρῷ* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 222-224) or Letter 64 *Καὶ τοῦτο πρὸς τοῖς ἄλλοις ἠπόρηται, εἰ κατὰ πάντα καιρὸν συναφείαις κεχρῆσθαι τοῖς ὁμοζύγοις οὐκ ἔξεστιν* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 175-179).

repeat issues already presented, possibly better and more extensively, in another letter[69]. Chapter 12, the only one in Glykas' corpus that corresponds to its title's question[70], may also be the only text for which we can assume with relevant certainty that its initial version was a rhetorical speech and not a letter, for Glykas declares from its beginning that he is recording the oral answer he gave in person to a question *τοῦ κραταιοῦ καὶ ἁγίου ἡμῶν βασιλέως*[71], while the emperor's reaction is described in the end of the text[72]. The above-mentioned evidence in connection with the absence of any form of address in Chapter 12 reinforces the assumption that the rest of the chapters in this category had initially been letters. This matter, however, needs further study on the basis also of the entire manuscript tradition.

Based on the other sixty-nine letters that name their recipients, we can say that Glykas had a circle of twenty-six correspondents. The great majority are monks, whose identification is rather difficult since most of them are mentioned in the titles of the letters by their first names alone (Alypios, Barlaam, Esaias, presumably a second Esaias[73], Leontios, Neilos,

69. See for example Letter 59 (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 133-135) compared with Letter 84 (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 348-379) regarding the corruptibility of the Eucharist, or Letter 93 (*Κεφάλαια*, v. II, 436-444) compared with Letter 37 (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 416-461) regarding Divine Providence.

70. *Τίνος ἕνεκεν ἐν ἐσχάτοις καιροῖς ἐσαρκώθη ὁ Κύριος καὶ διατί μὴ πολλῷ πρότερον εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἐλήλυθε· καὶ γὰρ εἰ προλαβὼν ἐποίησε τοῦτο, οὐκ ἂν ἐξ ἀγνοίας ὁ ἀπειροπληθὴς ἐκεῖνος λαὸς ἐν ἀσεβείᾳ κατέλυσε τὴν ζωήν* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 150-154).

71. *Καὶ τοῦτο τοῦ κραταιοῦ καὶ ἁγίου ἡμῶν βασιλέως ἐπαποροῦντος οὕτω καὶ λέγοντος· ἐὰν ἐπὶ σωτηρίᾳ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου γέγονεν ἐνανθρώπησις, διατί μὴ πολλῷ πρότερον αὕτη ἐγένετο, ὥστε καὶ αὐτοὺς ἐκείνους ἐπιγνῶναι τὸν Κύριον, ὅσοι δι' ἄγνοιαν ἐν ἀσεβείᾳ τὸν βίον κατέστρεψαν; τοιαύτην ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ τὴν ἀπόκρισιν ἐποιήσαμεν λέγοντες..* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 150,7-12). Glykas obviously refers to Manuel I Komnenos even though he does not name him (see also Letter 40 *Ἀνταπολογητικὸν ἐκ μέρους πρὸς τὴν ἐγχειρισθεῖσαν αὐτῷ γραφὴν τοῦ κραταιοῦ καὶ ἁγίου ἡμῶν βασιλέως κυροῦ Μανουὴλ τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ...*).

72. *Καὶ ἡμεῖς μὲν τοιαύτην ἐπὶ τῷ ἀπορήματι δεδώκαμεν τὴν ἀπόκρισιν· ὁ δὲ πλήρης πάσης συνέσεως βασιλεὺς οὐκ ἐπὶ πλέον ἀντέπεσε, μᾶλλον μὲν οὖν ὑπερηγάσατο τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦτο καθ' οὓς οἶδε τρόπους οἰκονομήσαντος* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 153,22-154,4).

73. I tend to consider that there are two different Esaias, as there are obvious stylistic differences between the eight mostly lengthy letters *Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ κυρῷ Ἡσαΐᾳ* (Letters 10, 11, 15, 16, 19, 47, 51 and 65 indicate a close relation and frequent correspondence between the two men) and the three shorter ones *Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ καὶ δομεστίκῳ κυρῷ Ἡσαΐᾳ* (Letters 20, 21 and 24). Moreover, if they were the same person there would

Nektarios, Nikolaos, Onoufrios, Myron Panagiotes[74], Stephen, Chariton). Even the five monks whose family names are given (Gregory Akropolites[75], John Aspiotes[76], Meletios Kritopoulos, John Sinaites, Maximos Smeniotes) and the one *γραμματικὸς*[77] (Ioannikios Grammatikos) are totally unknown to us from other sources. However, the great number of letters written to them, the warmth of the forms of address in the superscriptions and the body of these letters, as well as other references in the text[78], indicate that Glykas maintained close relations with all these men and was recognized as an important theologian of his time, despite his provocative position on the corruptibility of the Eucharist (if we accept his identification with Michael Sikidites)[79].

By contrast, it is considerably easier to identify the higher-ranking Byzantines who corresponded with Glykas. All of them belong to the upper class and are members of the restricted circle surrounding Manuel I Komnenos, to which Glykas was apparently close, despite having once fallen

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have been no need to add the recipient's name in the superscription to Letter 20 (i.e. *Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ καὶ δομεστίκῳ κυρῷ Ἡσαΐᾳ*), as Letter 19 is addressed *Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ κυρῷ Ἡσαΐᾳ* and therefore the phrase *Τῷ αὐτῷ* would have been enough.

74. He was presumably from the monastery at τὰ Παναγίου on the Golden Horn (Magdalino, *Manuel Komnenos,* 373).

75. Member of the Akropolites family, whose name probably derives from their place of residence, namely the acropolis in Constantinople; see *ODB,* v. 1, entry Akropolites (A. Kazhdan).

76. Or Aspietes, according to the codex *Taur.* 193. Member of the Aspietes family, an Armenian lineage in Byzantine service from at least the late 11th century; see *ODB,* v. 1, entry Aspietes (A. Kazhdan).

77. The term γραμματικὸς indicates an educated man, a scribe or secretary. It is possible that it replaced the term ἀσηκρῆτις in the Komnenian Era. It could also mean the the secretary of a monastery; see *ODB,* v. 2, entry Grammatikos (A. Kazhdan).

78. See for example Letter 30: *Ἔχεις τοσαῦτα καὶ παρ' ἡμῶν, ὦ θεία καὶ ἱερὰ κεφαλή, κατὰ σὴν μὲν ἔφεσιν οὐδαμῶς, ὅτι καὶ κατὰ πάροδον ἀντεγράφη ταῦτα τῇ θεοφιλίᾳ σου, πολλαῖς ὡς οἶδε Κύριος θλίψεσι κατατρυχομένων ἡμῶν, ἐφ' ᾧ καὶ οὐχ ἱκανὰ δόξειε διψώση τοσοῦτον ψυχῇ καὶ ἐκκαιομένῃ τῷ πόθῳ τοῦ Πνεύματος. Πλὴν οἶδε καὶ ἀπὸ μικροῦ σπινθῆρος ἡ σὴ μεγαλόνοια μέγαν ὑπανάπτειν πυρσὸν κἀντεῦθεν τὴν περικεχυμένην ἀπανταχοῦ διαλύειν ἀχλύν, πᾶσάν τε καταλαμπρύνειν ψυχὴν καὶ ἀρρήτου φωτὸς ἐμπιπλᾶν· οὗ γένοιτο καταπολαύειν ἐς ἀεὶ καὶ ἡμᾶς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ Κυρίῳ ἡμῶν, ᾧ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων· ἀμήν* (*Κεφάλαια,* v. 1, 360,7-16).

79. On this matter see more in the following pages.

foul of the emperor. Letter 40 is addressed to Manuel I Komnenos himself[80], Letter 57 to his beloved niece Theodora[81], Letter 63 to his nephew Alexios Kontostefanos[82], Letter 26 to his familiar Nikephoros Sinaites, Letters 23 and 53 to the *μέγας ἑταιρειάρχης* and *σεβαστὸς* John Doukas[83], Letter 44 to Andronikos Palaiologos[84] and four long letters (Letters 36, 37, 42, 76) to the *πανσέβαστος* and *σεβαστὸς* Constantine Palaiologos[85], whom Glykas admired for his powerful theological education and gentle soul[86].

The absence of the other known Byzantine scholars of the period and of any members of the civil bureaucracy or the ecclesiastical hierarchy is definitely curious and needs to be explained. P. Magdalino[87] gives a persuasive justification: the other scholars may have rejected him because of his plain

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80. On this letter see more in the following pages.

81. Manuel had at least five nieces with the same name (see Krumbacher, Michael Glykas, 425-433 and Magdalino, *Manuel Komnenos,* XV). Krumbacher and Eustratiadis (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, ϡα΄-ϡβ΄), assume that Glykas' recipient is Theodora Komnene, daughter of Andronikos Komnenos (the second son of John II Komnenos) and wife of Henry of Babenberg (see more in K. Barzos, *Ἡ γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν,* II, Thessaloniki 1984, 171-189). Magdalino (*Manuel Komnenos,* 548; see also Kurtz's review, 170), on the other hand, thinks she was the daughter of Manuel's sister Maria, while Barzos (*Ἡ γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν,* II, 417-434) identifies her with the daughter of Manuel's other sister Eudokia, who was also his mistress.

82. He was the son of Manuel's sister Anna and Stephen Kontostephanos. See more in Krumbacher, Michael Glykas, 435-437 and Barzos, *Ἡ γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν,* II, 222-248.

83. See Krumbacher, Michael Glykas, 424-425 and D.I. Polemis, *The Doukai. A Contribution to Byzantine Prosopography*, London 1968, 127-130; Polemis falsely identifies him with *ἔπαρχος* John Doukas Kamateros [see more in P. Karlin-Hayter, 99. Jean Doukas, *Byzantion* 42 (1972) 259-265; A.P. Kazhdan, John Doukas – An Attempt at De-identification, *Le parole e le idée* 11 (1969) 242-247 and A.F. Stone, The *Grand Hetaireiarch* John Doukas: The Career of a Twelfth-Century Soldier and Diplomat, *Byzantion* 69 (1999) 145-164].

84. See Krumbacher, Michael Glykas, 425.

85. He was the brother of George Palaiologos, Manuel's ambassandor in 1163 to the Hungarians. On his false identification with the emperor Constantine IX Palaiologos (1448-1453) see Krumbacher, Michael Glykas, 439-441.

86. See Letter 36: *ἀλλ' οὐχὶ καὶ σὲ τῷ πάθει τούτῳ συνέχεσθαι οἶμαι, πολυμαθῆ τε ἄνδρα ὄντα καὶ τοῖς ἱεροῖς τῶν Πατέρων ἐντεθραμμένον συγγράμμασιν* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 379,11-12), *εὖγε τῆς ἀγαθῆς σου ψυχῆς, ὑπέρευγε τοῦ ὀρθοῦ σου φρονήματος* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 380,1-2).

87. Magdalino, *Manuel Komnenos,* 374-375.

and unpretentious prose, which did not conform to their aesthetic ideal; the highly placed laymen may have avoided him on account of his imprisonment; while the ecclesiastical hierarchy was most probably angry with him because Glykas was usurping their function in interpreting Orthodox doctrine. To a degree, this logical argument explains Glykas' social isolation. At this point, however, another perspective should be considered: if Glykas has not incorporated all his correspondence in his collection, but only those letters with a specific theological content, our list of his addressees is incomplete and our conjectures become uncertain.

It is a fact that only four of Glykas' ninety-five letters have to date apparently been studied in terms of their special content: Letter 40, Glykas' famous refutation of Manuel I Komnenos' defence of astrology, Letters 59 and 84 on Glykas' position on the corruptibility of the Eucharist, and Letter 57 to Manuel's niece Theodora, whom Glykas tries to console for the murder she committed out of jealousy. Among other things this reality also causes misconceptions concerning Glykas' life, and in the following paragraphs I shall focus briefly on the most characteristic example, the famous Letter 40.

According to the prevailing scholarly view, Michael Glykas should be identified with the monk Michael Sikidites, who was responsible for the theological controversy in the late 12th century on the corruptibility of the Eucharist, for he argued that the Body and Blood of Christ offered during the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist do not contain Christ's soul and mind and are, therefore, corruptible, just like the body and blood of Jesus before the Resurrection. Though this identification fills in certain gaps in Glykas' biography, mainly for the period after his imprisonment, and is based on strong arguments (among them the above-mentioned Letters 59 and 84, which express precisely the theological position that led to Sikidites' condemnation by the Council of Constantinople in the year 1199/1200), it nonetheless raises certain other questions that need further discussion in the light of the entire corpus of Glykas' letters.

"The great problem", according to P. Magdalino[88], one of those scholars who maintain a rather cautious attitude towards Glykas' identification with Sikidites, without however rejecting it, "is how to reconcile the uncompromisingly Patristic theologian and critic of astrology" –namely

88. Magdalino, *Manuel Komnenos,* 380.

Glykas– "with the sorcerer who put a spell on an unfortunate boatman and conjured up demons in a bath-house to torment his fellow bathers", namely Sikidites. This is how Sikidites is portrayed in Nicetas Choniates' history, perhaps echoing distorted and fabricated evidence that was used in his trial[89]. "We could think", Magdalino proposes, "that after his trial Sikidites became a reformed character, rejecting his old interests with the zeal of a convert" and therefore later composed Letter 40.

From my point of view the key phrase is "uncompromising critic of astrology", which is based precisely on the well-known Letter 40, the third in a series of letters. More specifically, a monk from the Pantokrator Monastery accused Manuel of impiety because of his love of astrology (first letter, lost today). Manuel answers him with a second letter[90] and the third (Letter 40) is Glykas' answer to the emperor: *Ἀνταπολογητικὸν ἐκ μέρους πρὸς τὴν ἐγχειρισθεῖσαν αὐτῷ γραφὴν τοῦ κραταιοῦ καὶ ἁγίου ἡμῶν βασιλέως κυροῦ Μανουὴλ τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ, τὴν ἀπολυθεῖσαν πρός τινα μοναχὸν ἐπιμεμψάμενον οὐ μικρῶς αὐτῷ διά γε τὸ τῆς ἀστρολογίας μάθημα καὶ φιλονεικοῦσαν τὸ τοιοῦτον συστήσασθαι μάθημα φυσικαῖς καὶ γραφικαῖς ἀποδείξεσι*[91]. A number of different issues are associated with this letter of Glykas, the most significant of all being its dating. The superscription implies that Manuel is still alive, and nothing more, while the absolute lack of chronological evidence in the body of the letter leaves modern scholars a large margin of interpretation. Consequently, those who see in Letter 40 the reason for Glykas' imprisonment[92] date it before the year 1159, when Glykas was still a layman and most probably imperial secretary. Eustratiadis, on the other hand, places this letter at the end of Manuel I's reign (1143-1180), shortly before his death (24.9.1080), on the grounds that that was when the emperor finally renounced astrology[93]. To the logical

89. See *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, ed. J.-L. VAN DIETEN, Berlin-New York 1975, 148,14-149,16 ; MAGDALINO, *Manuel Komnenos*, 380.

90. *Πιττάκιον ἐκδοθὲν παρὰ τοῦ ἀοιδίμου βασιλέως τοῦ πορφυρογεννήτου κυροῦ Μανουὴλ τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ· γνώμη καὶ εἰδήσει καὶ τῶν ἐλλογίμων ἀρχιερέων καὶ συγκλητικῶν ἀρχόντων, πολλῶν γέμον ὑψηλῶν καὶ ἀναγκαίων θεωρημάτων, ἀπολογητικὸν πρὸς γραφήν τινος μοναχοῦ παλατίνου τῆς μονῆς τοῦ Παντοκράτορος, τὰ τῆς ἀστρονομικῆς τέχνης κακίζουσαν καὶ ἀσέβειαν ἀποκαλοῦσαν τὸ μάθημα* (*Κεφάλαια*, v. I, ξζ΄-πθ΄).

91. *Κεφάλαια*, v. I, 476-500.

92. See above notes 8 and 9.

93. See *Κεφάλαια*, v. I, πθ΄.

question that arises in this case, namely how Glykas dares to cross swords with the emperor again after having spent many years in prison and been released only with great difficulty, O. Kresten formulates a reasonable assumption: with Letter 40 Glykas finds the opportunity to revenge himself on the emperor for all the harm he had done him, while at the same time restoring his reputation, damaged after his imprisonment, with a written text[94]. In the same framework D. George underlines Glykas' methodical effort to demolish the emperor's argumentation, which sought to redeem his reputation in the eyes of posterity[95]. Nevertheless, after a careful reading of this letter one realizes that in fact Glykas is criticizing, in a highly ironic way, the misreading of sources on which Manuel bases his argumentation and not his occupation with astrology *per se*. I cite a characteristic excerpt: *Αὐτίκα γὰρ ἀπορίᾳ σύνειμι περὶ τοῦ Ἑβραίου ἐκείνου, ὃν ὁ μέγας Βασίλειος, ἡνίκα πρὸς Κύριον ἐξεδήμει, τῆς ἱερᾶς κολυμβήθρας ἠξίωσεν· ἡ γὰρ ἐμὴ βίβλος ἰατρόν τε διαγορεύει τὸν Ἰουδαῖον καὶ ὅτι τῷ σφυγμῷ τοῦ ἁγίου διὰ χειρὸς ἐκεῖνος προσσχών, τὸν τοῦ μεγάλου προέγνωκε θάνατον. Τὸ δὲ ἐγχειρισθέν μοι γράμμα μαθηματικὸν αὐτὸν ἀποκαλεῖ καὶ ὅτι ταῖς τῶν ἄστρων παρασημειώσεσι τὴν τοῦ ἁγίου προέγνω μετάστασιν. Καὶ οὐ τοῦτο μόνον, ἀλλὰ δὴ καὶ τὸν μέγαν αὐτὸν παρεισάγει συναινοῦντα τῇ τοῦ Ἑβραίου μαθηματικῇ ἐπιστήμῃ καὶ ἀληθῆ ταύτην ἀποκαλοῦντα, πλείονά τε τούτων ἄλλα καὶ ποιοῦντα καὶ λέγοντα, ὧν ἡ ἐμὴ βίβλος οὐδαμοῦ μεμνημένη εὑρίσκεται. Ἦ γοῦν ἐσφαλμένως ἔχει τὰ κατ' αὐτὴν καὶ πλέον οὐδέν, ἢ τὴν διαφωνίαν ταύτην θεραπευθῆναι παρακαλῶ*[96]. And the rest of the letter goes on in a similar way, to my mind indicating more a cautious reader and a well-educated, confident scholar than a theologian and sworn enemy of astrology. In this context I tend to accept an earlier date for Letter 40.

At the same time, however, in a second letter[97], Glykas appears to be more flexible towards astrology, even using an argument similar to the one

94. Kresten, Theodoros Styppeiotes, 93-95.

95. D. George, Manuel I Komnenos and Michael Glycas: A Twelfth-Century Defense and Refutation of Astrology, Part 1, *Culture and Cosmos* 5.1 (Spring/Summer 2001), 3- 48; see especially 36.

96. *Κεφάλαια,* v. I, 477,8-23.

97. Letter 39 *Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ μοναχῷ κυρῷ Ἀλυπίῳ τῷ ἐγκλείστῳ. Εἰ χρὴ τὴν μαθηματικὴν ἐπιστήμην ἀποτρόπαιον ἡγεῖσθαι παντάπασι* (*Κεφάλαια,* v. I, 468-475).

Manuel used in his own letter[98], namely, that medicine and astrology are alike instruments given by God to mankind for its survival after the Fall[99] and people should use them with measure[100], while if astrology is condemned by the Church Fathers it is because of people mostly make improper use of it[101]. In other words, in Letter 39 Glykas recognizes the value of astrology as a helpful tool for humankind, on condition that they use it wisely.[102] Thus the above mentioned reservation of P. Magdalino against identifying Glykas with Sikidites may to a degree be answered, for a careful reading of Letter 40 in connection with Letter 39 indicates that Glykas actually has not always rejected astrology as completely as we may think today[103].

To sum up, Michael Glykas' collection of ninety-five letters proves to be a core element of his work, and one that needs to be studied as a whole

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98. See for example *Ἡ γὰρ εὔκαιρος τούτων χρῆσις καὶ εὔχρηστος, ἐξ ἀπεριέργου γινομένη τρόπου πρὸς οἰκονομίαν τῶν καθ' ἑαυτόν, οὐκ ἔστιν ἀσέβεια, καθὼς σὺ εἴρηκας. Τάς τε γὰρ δεδομένας ὑπὸ Θεοῦ δυνάμεις τοῖς ἄστροις, τὰς κράσεις καὶ τὰς ποιότητας καὶ τὰ ἀπὸ τούτων προσημαινόμενα ἐπιγινώσκει. Ἡ μέντοι παράχρησις ἐν τούτῳ ἀναφαίνεται, ὅταν δι' ἐπικλήσεως τοῖς ἄστροις προσομιλῶσί τινες, ὡς οἱ τὰ στοιχειωματικὰ ποιοῦντες· καθ' ὃν δῆτα λόγον καὶ οἱ ἀστρολόγοι μάγοι λέγονται...* (*Κεφάλαια,* v. I, οβ΄, 12-19); *Οὕτω καὶ ταῖς τῶν ἀστέρων δυνάμεσιν εἰ χρήσεταί τις ἐνδεχομένως καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἐντολὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ ὑγιαίνοντι λογισμῷ... οὐχ ἁμαρτάνων ἁλώσεται* (*Κεφάλαια,* v. I, π΄, 1-5); *Ὁ γοῦν οὕτω νοῶν καὶ εὐσεβῶς ἐκλαμβάνων τὸν τῆς δημιουργικῆς προνοίας νόμον καὶ ὅρον, οὐδέν τι προσκρούει Θεῷ* (*Κεφάλαια,* v. I, π΄, 21-22).

99. *Οὕτω μὲν οὖν καὶ τὸ προφητικὸν ἐκεῖνο καὶ θεῖον χάρισμα τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἀπολέσαντα, σοφίαν τε καὶ γνῶσιν ἐκείνην ἀφαιρεθέντα μετὰ τὴν παράβασιν, οὐκ ἀφῆκε τοῖς ἀνοήτοις κτήνεσι τέλεον αὐτὸν παραβάλλεσθαι, ἀλλ' ὡς εἴωθε τὰ πάντα σοφῶς οἰκονομῶν, οὐ μικρῶς καὶ ἐν τούτοις τὸν ἐπταικότα παρεμυθήσατο διὰ τῆς τῶν ἄστρων κινήσεώς τε καὶ τάξεως* (*Κεφάλαια,* v. I, 474,18-23).

100. *Οἶδε γὰρ ἀκριβῶς ἡ σὴ μεγαλόνοια, ὡς ἡ τῶν πραγμάτων παράχρησις, οὐ μὴν ἡ εὔκαιρος χρῆσις αὐτῶν τοῖς ἱεροῖς κανόσιν ἠθέτηται. Καὶ τί χρὴ πολλὰ λέγειν; εἰ καὶ τὴν τοιαύτην θείαν εὐεργεσίαν πρὸς ἡμετέραν ἀσφάλειαν εἴχομεν καὶ οὐ πρὸς ἀθέτησιν τοῦ δεδωκότος αὐτήν, οὐκ ἂν ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον ἐφρόντισεν, ὡς ἐκεῖθεν ἡμᾶς ἀποσπάσειεν ὁ τῶν ἱερῶν Πατέρων κατάλογος* (*Κεφάλαια,* v. I, 473,10-16).

101. *προγνωστικὴν δε τινα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐνδεδόσθαι δύναμιν, καθὰ καὶ φθάσας ὁ λόγος ὑπέδειξεν, οὐ τοσοῦτον ἀπέοικε, δι' ἣν αἰτίαν εἰρήκαμεν, εἰ καὶ παρὰ τῶν ἁγίων Πατέρων ἐνασχολεῖσθαι τούτοις οὐ συγχωρούμεθα, ὅτι μηδὲ κατὰ λόγον ὀρθὸν αὐτοῖς ἀποχρώμεθα* (*Κεφάλαια,* v. I, 475,11-15).

102. See also Letter 36, *Κεφάλαια,* v. I, 394,6 and forth.

103. See also Magdalino, *L'Orthodoxie des astrologues,* 123-126.

and in conjunction with his better-known chronicle, so that more light can be shed on the ambiguous data of this scholar's highly interesting life and thought as well as the literary production of the Byzantine 12th century.

On the Epistolography of Michael Glykas

If Michael Glykas is well-known today, it is undoubtedly thanks primarily to the *Βίβλος Χρονική*, his 12th-century chronicle of events from the creation of the world to the death of Alexios I Komnenos. Compared to this chronicle as well as Glykas' two vernacular poems addressed to the emperor Manuel I Komnenos and to a certain degree his collection of proverbs, Glykas' epistolographic corpus is the least studied part of his work. It consists of ninety-five texts of theological content, which aim at providing monks or higher-ranking Byzantines with persuasive answers to various theological issues that derive from the reading of the Old and New Testaments or arise in the daily lives of monks and ordinary faithful Christians. Glykas' argumentation in all these texts is based on the constant citation of mostly ecclesiastical sources and their interpretation with a strong dose of common sense and good will.

The current paper focuses on Glykas' epistolography, wishing to emphasize that it is a core element of his work, and one that needs to be studied as a whole and in conjunction with his better-known chronicle, so that more light can be shed on the ambiguous data of this scholar's highly interesting life and thought as well as the literary production of the Byzantine 12th century.