

## *Original Paper*

# Testimonies for the Protection of Flocks, but also the Abusive Actions among Cattle Breeders and the Relevant Reports to the Nomocanons (Canons in Law)

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### **Abstract**

*In this study we will refer very briefly to what has to do with attitudes in general, of the world of cattle breeders between the 17th and 18th centuries, as they appear through the records in the Vrontologia the Seismologia books, the Lunar Roads (Selinodromia), regarding the exploitation, the better protection and development of the herds, through the characteristics of the popular meteorology as well as the corresponding customary law as mentioned and attributed to the Nomocanons, and especially regarding its abusive deviations during their management. Through these texts it is possible to follow both the linguistic continuity in terms of the formation of the text itself, but especially the corresponding ruptures in rural societies as they appear through the years.*

### **Keywords**

*Vrontologia, Sismologia (books), Selinodromia (Lunar Roads), Nomocanons, Customary law, Livestock, Folk meteorology, Confession Book, Tseligata*

## **1. Protection of Flocks**

People in general and cattle farmers in particular, in order to harness the elements of nature, so that they could protect, ensure or even increase self-sufficiency in the products produced, within the framework of the closed traditional agricultural society, proceeded to extreme behavior, often intervening or believing that they could manage to intervene for this purpose, in natural phenomena. The Vrontologia and the *Selinodromia* provide evidence that echoes very old - totemic - beliefs, which come from the time when the productive agricultural and pastoral economy had to deal with a multitude of mediating forces between man (Lekatsas, 1957, pp. 337-339) and nature (Polyhistor, VIII, p. 32), which are also

of interest to cattle farmers.

It is known that from 23 April, the feast of St George, the seasonal movements of the herdsmen begin, when the herds of companion-relative aggregations, the tseligata-defined a peculiar social and productive mechanism, consisting mainly of related families-(Arsenios, 1972, p. 16; Nitsiakos, 197, p. 278) start from the winter fields for the summer pastures on the mountains. An “institutionalized phenomenon” with ancient origins both in the Balkans and in the Mediterranean in general (Braudel, 1991, pp. 119-121). A system generally known as *transhumance* (Goltsiou, 2011, pp. 31-35).

Around the end of April until mid-May, the shearing of the animals, i.e., the shearing of the sheep and goats, takes place in the tseligata on the route. “It being neither winter nor summer time, but in the middle of the spring time the sheep are sheared this is the best time to graze or shear the sheep”, as is mentioned in the Agricultural Books (Vassos, 1930, p. 18. 8.). Eustathius of Thessaloniki also notes the same (Eustathius, 1832, p. 140, p. 40). It is known that if they do not remove the rich wool, grazing animals will become entangled in the thorns of trees and become trapped. This work is carried out by special shearers in the context of the tseligato (Giolias, 2004, pp. 132-133).

Therefore, especially for livestock farming, if strong winds blow during the months of April and May when the Moon is in Aries and Taurus, i.e., at the beginning of summer, and find the animals naked, then there will certainly be damage to the herds. This is also pointed out by an 18th century Sismologio book: «Μάρτιος εάν σεισμός γένηται εν ημέρα ίπων και βοών απώλεια και πάντων των τετραπόδων φθορά, το γέννημα συν τοις δέντροις ευφορήσονται και αν γένη αβροχία τον αυτόν μήνα έσται λιμός.», that is “March if there be an earthquake in the day, the loss of horses and oxen, and the destruction of all four-footed animals, the birth and the trees shall be blessed; and if there be rain in that month, there shall be a famine.”, (Economou-Agorastos, 1984, p. 93, Codices Mediolanenses, 1901, p. 25). Similarly, in a Vrontology book it is mentioned: «.εάν εν τω Ταύρω βροντήση...νόσον ολίγον και τετραπόδων απώλειαν..», that is “.. if it thunders in the Taurus...minor disease will occur and the loss of four-legged animals...”, (Codices Bononienses, 1903, pp. 128-129). CCAG (1901), 25, 26. CCAG (1903), 129).

In an unpublished Calendar -an annual calendar of the good and bad things that will happen according to the respective position of the planets and signs- (Mouzakis, 2021, pp. 289-304), we read, roughly : «ο κυριεύων τον χρόνον είναι ο πλανήτης της Σελήνης με το ζώδιον του τοξότου, κατοικία του Διός, τότε...τα μικρά ζώα θέλουν είναι ευτυχισμένα εις τα μεγάλα δυστυχία, μάλιστα εις τα βόδια..», that is “the ruler of the time is the planet of the Moon in the sign of Sagittarius, the dwelling place of Zeus, then...the small animals will be happy with the big ones, and even the oxen will be unhappy...” (Calendario, 18<sup>th</sup>, p. 2), it continues “by the sun being in the house of heaven, it is therefore closed to great sickness and death of animals...” and further, “The time under the sign of Aquarius...the autumn with sickness and pestilence brings death to animals and to the human race...” (Calendario 18<sup>th</sup>, 4).

## 2. «Magically Binding» of Wolves

Harmful to humans but especially dangerous for small animals, are various beasts and birds. The worst of all is recognized as the wolf, which devours flocks, the fox, which drowns domestic birds, but also various predatory vultures, eagles, hawks, vultures, which often grab hold of them (Mouzakis, 1995, p. 51). For this reason, «αποδένουσι τον αετόν εις το να μην αρπάζη τας όρνιθας,...ή αποδένουσιν και άλλα θηρία και ερπετά», that is “magically bind the eagle not to let it grab the hens, ...or magically bind more beasts and reptiles”, as Nomocanon states from the Iberian monastery (Politis, 1911-1912, p. 386; Velephontis, 1978, pp. 40-41).

Thus, in the Nomocanons reference is usually made to those “...who magically bind the wolf, so that it does not eat their animals” (Library C31: f.37v, 62r. C59, f.178v. Historical C205: f.93r. National C673: f.186r-v). From a 16th century manuscript, we learn that for this purpose they also wrote magic letters on a lead plate, which they then buried in the ground in the pen where there were animals (Pradel, 1907, p. 270).

There are numerous reports even today about the way of magically tethering or binding of wolves, about eagles or hawks (Koukoules, 1928, pp. 483-490; Almazov, 1901, p. 114,#65) and especially humans (Mouzakis, 2022, pp. 109-309). The procedure of magically binding wolves and other beasts seems to have been a phenomenon very widespread in rural and mountainous areas, since a relevant mention of it is entered even the Confession books of the time (Anecdote 17<sup>th</sup>: f. 2,6). This evidence confirms the constant effort of the church to prevent or even eliminate any deviation from the ecclesiastical rules by imposing harsh reprimands. In another Nomocanon, those who magically disable it are regarded as heretics because they are recognized as offering sacrifice to Satan and not to the beasts of God, for which they are punished with an ecclesiastical fine of 6 years and 90 penances daily (Ecclesiae, 1677, p. 117, § 275). As for the punishment in another text it is mentioned: «.. ο αποδένων ζώα να μην τα φάγη ο λύκος οι τοιούτοι, χρόνοις η΄ μη κοινωνήσουν... κατά τον ξε΄ κανόνα και τον οβ΄ του Μεγάλου Βασιλείου » that is “..those who magically bind lest the wolf eat animals them these people years 9 may they not commune... according to the 65th rule and the 72th rule of the Saint Basil the Great” (Anecdote 17<sup>th</sup>: f. 6). Zonaras, interpreting the 36th canon of the Synod in Laodicea, says “that is, they magically disable the wolves, so that they may not be able to harm the animals which stay outside the buildings” (Rallis-Potlis 1859: 203)

Even more, the magical binding of the wolf is one of the elements that, according to the rules of the Church, forbid the person who does this to be anointed a priest, since the penalty for this is eternal fire. In fact, if anyone «εάν είναι ιερεύς και αποδένει τους λύκους ίνα μη φάγωσι τα ζώα του...καθαιρείσθω», that is “if is a priest, and if he magically binds the wolves so that they do not eat his animals...shall be excommunicated”, (Anecdote 17<sup>th</sup>: 26). Of course, the eagle, the hawk, the magpie, among others, are considered useful for the environment and are protected, since, as noted, it is forbidden to eat their meat (Anecdote 17<sup>th</sup>: 27).

### 3. Protection of Flocks from Theft as well

The most basic functional prerequisite of semi-nomadic animal husbandry, already from antiquity, and the primary obligation of the cattlemen of tseligato, was always the provision of pastures, meadows, both during the winter and the summer period. Among their duties is the identification and leasing of seasonal pastures. The quality as well as the quantity of grazing grass of the rented area, the meadow, are the main elements of separation for which of the animals will graze in the specific area or part of it (Mouzakis, 2015, p. 26). In a few Nomocanons, a chapter on prairie is found, which states: «φ χλγ': Εάν δε και τόπους λιβάδιν, ή λόγκον εξαγοράσω από τινάν ότι βόσκω τα πρόβατά μου και από τα βότανα του τόπου κακά φθαρούσιν τα πρόβατά μου, ...εξαγοράν δεν τον δίδω», that is “cap.633: And if I rent land of meadow, or forest, from someone to graze my sheep, suffers damage from its herbs, I shall not pay him out”, (Nomocanon, 1668, p. 549). It highlights the relationships of honesty and trust imposed by the applicable customary law and confirms the necessity of transactional loyalty. Of course, if one fraudulently gives herbs to foreign sheep or leaves them to die of hunger, he is condemned to pay double (Nomocanon, 1668, p. 470).

In each tseligato there is a group that is engaged in castrating, that is mutilating the males, keeping only a few for breeding. This ancient procedure (Papadopoulos, 1981, p. 260), performed with the *tsocono*, a type of forceps, required surgical knowledge and was particularly complicated and painful for large animals. However, priests had to refrain from these specific actions because they were subject to a punishment rule, which reached up to deposition. But if it should happen that: «Ιερέας κυνηγός ή καταδιώχτης ή ευνουχίζει ζώα ή ιατρεύει να αργήται μήνες τρείς της ιερωσύνης, ει μεν μεταμεληθεί και παύσει να κανονίζεται. Ει δε δεν παύσει να καθήρεται...», that is “If a priest is a hunter or stalker or castrates animals or practises medicine to be disqualified for three months of the priesthood, unless he repents and ceases to be canonized. And if he does not cease then to be deposed...” (Nomocanon, 1668, p. 158).

In another chapter provision is made for accidental death in the case where the owner of a property found a shepherd grazing foreign sheep on his property and angrily beat him (MIET 17<sup>th</sup>: f. 114v). In the event that he died within the first eight days, then ecclesiastical punishments were imposed (Ecclesiae, 1677, p. 104).

An old pastoral law convention is often found in Nomocanons, whereby instructions are given to solve certain problems arising from the circumvention of its provisions. «Όστις εξαγοράση τινάν να βόσκη αγέλην αλόγων βοών ή πάρουσιν λησταί... πλατήζω την, ή εγώ, ή άτις με εγγυήθη.», that is “Whosoever redeemeth anybody to graze a herd of horses and oxes, if it is stolen by robbers...the persons liable is himself or the person who bailed for him...” (Nomocanon, 1668, p. 549).

This contract deals with the cases that arise when for some reason, intentionally or unintentionally, the hired shepherd does not return the flock to the owner. Indeed, we learn that often in order to take charge of another owner's herd of animals, one was obliged or requested to put up a surety, most likely for the value of the herd. Until the last years of the 19th century, similar contracts for the keeping of livestock

were found.

This is a convention that was particularly well known in Ptolemaic Egypt. A practice directly related to sheep farming, which was introduced and spread by the Greek settlers. The procedure is mentioned in Hellenistic papyri (Papyri, 2.59195), According to which the owner leases his sheep to a professional shepherd, generally for a specific period of time and on mutually acceptable terms. The shepherd is obliged to deliver to the owner at regular intervals a goat, cheese, sometimes money, sometimes the precious hair. Basically, however, at the end of the contract he is obliged to return an equal number of animals, immortal, perfect, i.e., “live animals” to the owner. In fact, there is a related saying in Cyprus “You should feed the oxen you work for yourself”. That is, do not trust your farm animals to others to feed them (Xioutas, 1985, p. 4260)

Particular importance in the Nomocanons is attached to the animals for plowing, of course we are talking about oxen. In addition, the ecclesiastical, apart from criminal, punishment imposed for this was harsh: «ο κλέπτων ζῶα ἤγουν ἄλογα, βοῖδια, πρόβατα και ἕτερα τετράποδα χρόνοις στ’ μη κοινωνήση και μετανοίας καθ’ ἐκάστην τ’ (300)», that is “..the thief of animals such as horses, oxen, sheep and other four-legged animals should be deprived of communion years 6 and be subjected to repentance every day (300)” (MIET 17<sup>th</sup>: f.154r).

There is also a report which points out the sanctity of oxen to be plowed: «κεφ.124’. Ἱερεὺς εἰάν κατά τυχόν, βοῖδιον θνήσκον ἐν ἀπόρῳ τόπῳ, οφείλει στριγγίσει, οὐκ ἐνὶ ἀνθρώπος σφάζει το βόδι και εἰ μὲν ἀνθρώπος εὐρεθῆ, ἔστω εἰ δ’ οὐ μὴδὲ αὐτῷ μετὰ μαχαίρας. πρῶτον δε οφείλει εἰπεῖν το Κύριε ἐλέησον, λ’ (30) και μετὰ ταῦτα σφάζει το βόδι, και εσθιέσθω. Αὐτός δε μόνον μὴ εσθιέτω ἐξ αὐτοῦ, δουλευσάτω χρόνον α’, μετανοίας ρ’ (90)», that is “cap. 124. If a priest comes across a dying ox in an unknown place, he must call someone by shouting if he has no man to slaughter the ox, and if a man is found, even if he does not give him the knife, he must first say the Lord’s Mercy (30) times, and then the ox must be slaughtered and eaten. But only he must not eat from it, otherwise he will do 90 penances a day for a year” (Ecclesiae, 1677, p. 89).

Occasionally, however, the oxen fight with each other and their horns get involved to the point that many times they even reach the death of one of them. For this reason, «Ἐάν δυο ταύροι παλαίοντες, σκοτωθεῖ ο εἷς, μεριζέσθωσαν οἱ δυο οἰκοκυροί, και τα ζώντα και του τεθανατωμένου...», that is “..If two bulls wrestle, and one of them is killed, then the two householders of the living and the killed bull shall share its meat...”. But then he distinguishes a peculiarity when the cow is the one who drags the bulls towards her and an animal is killed, then: “law thou hangest only the damage remains to him who had the animal which was cut down” (Nomocanon, 1668, p. 470).

In some Nomocanons there is a chapter detailing the punishments of those who repeatedly steal animals. According to the practice suggested, the first time they should be beaten and pay half the value of the stolen goods, and if it so happens that they cannot afford to pay, let them have their left arm cut off. The second time, beat them, banish them and confiscate their property. Finally, if they are caught the third time, cut off both their hands, beat them and banish them. These are certainly suggestions

influenced by Islamic law.

#### 4. Protection against Rabies in Humans

But when a man eats an animal that is: «θηριάλωτο, ήγουν λυκοφάγομα ή άλλου θηρίου...αν εναι ιερεύς καθήρεται και λαϊκός χρόνους δυο μη κοινωνήση και κανόνα να έχει νηστεία και ελεημοσύνη...», that is “..bitten or of wolverine or other beast...if he be a priest, he is deposed and a layman two years not to take communion and a rule to have fasting and alms...”. With these references to the Nomocanons, an effort is made to protect man from rabies, but mainly because of the beliefs about vampires (Mouzakis, 2018, pp. 349-375). In a Nomocanon of 1668 there is a less severe punishment for the laity only “to be deprived of communion for two years”. On the contrary, in another Nomocanon of the late 16th century, time distinctions are recorded for those who eat animals that have been bitten by beasts, as well as harsh punishments for this: «ει μεν αυτή τη ώρα, μονομερώς ευρεθή, εσθιέτω κατά βίας εί ή δυο ημερών ή τριών ευρεθή και εσθιέτωσαν αυτόεπιτιμάσθησαν οι τούτο εσθιόντες χρόνους γ'. μετανοίας σ'», that is “If at the same time that it was bitten is accidentally found, it is difficult but can hardly be eaten, if after two or even three days it is found and eaten; int such a case, those who have eaten it are punished spiritually for three years to do 200 penances a day”, (Ecclesiae, 1677, p. 125). The same is mentioned in a confession book of 1820, where the Confessor closes the questionnaire with: «...Ειπέ μου τέκνον μη να έφαγες ψόφιον κρέας ή αίμα ή πνικτόν ή λυκοφάγομα ή ορνεοπάτακτον ήγουν από σταυροαετού ή από άλλου ορνέου ή μη έφαγες κρέας ή τυρί την αγίαν τεσσαρακοστήν...», that is “Tell me, my son, whether you have eaten dead meat or blood or a drowned animal or with a wolf bite or struck by vultures, that is, by a cross-eagle or another vulture, or whether you have eaten meat or cheese during Lent...”, (Mouzakis - Kalai-Mouzaki, 2008, p. 330).

#### 5. Hunting of Wild Animals

Even for the free animals that are hunted by the hunters, provisions are made, but mainly some rules are set regarding who the prey belongs to: «Περί ζώων αγρίων κφ. χη'. Όλα τα άγρια ζώα, ήγουν αλώπεκες, έλαφοι, λαγωοί, και τα όμοια, όστις τα πιάσει αρχήν εκείνου είναι. Το τρωθέν παράτινος άγριον ζώον και διαφυγόν μεν τας εκείνου χείρας...τούτον το ειρημένον θηρεύσεις ζώον...», that is “On wild animals cap.608. As far as wild animals are concerned, that is, foxes, deer, hares, and the like, belong to the person who originally caught them. The wild beast that is beaten by any man, and escapes from his hand...this animal that is beaten may be taken...”, (Nomocanon, 1660, f.532-533).

But often animals caught in nets are found drowned in them. In this case, “It is customary for those who watch them ... to throw these away as dead..” (MIET 17<sup>th</sup>: f.145v-146r). It is slaughtered and eaten only when the beaten animal is still warm, otherwise it is discarded to the dogs.

In another text there are additional exhortations for protection concerning, for example, the fowls of the sky, where it states: “the birds caught by the hunter in the wet (rain), if they have eaten them secretly, let them make repentances 90 for 1 year “(Ecclesiae, 1677, p. 125). There are even more reports about

those who catch wild birds and do not slaughter them but keep them as decoys so that they can catch other birds and then eat them all together, they are subject to an ecclesiastical reprimand for two years and do 90 penances every day (Ecclesiae, 1677, p. 141).

In particular for the protection of animals, it is stated: «αν ιερέας κτυπήσει πτηνόν χωρίς βία, κατά τύχη, να μη λειτουργήσει. Εάν δε με βία το κάνει, επί σκοπού, να κάμει μετάνοιες εκατό ημερησώς ψάλλοντας τας ώρας αυτού το Κύριε Ελέησον, και εκατόν φορές Συγχωρήσατέ μοι αδελφοί, ότι φόνον επόησα και αφού λάβει συγχώρησιν να λειτουργήσει», that is “if a priest strikes a bird without violence, by chance, not to minister. But if he does it by force, on purpose, he shall make penance a hundred times a day, chanting the Lord have mercy, and a hundred times, brothers, forgive me for the murder I have committed, and after he has received forgiveness, he shall minister.” (Ecclesiae, 1677, p. 75). Of course, hunters often asked astrologers about which are the appropriate days to hunt, but also which is the best method to use for that particular day or even week to be more efficient.

## 6. Offences Committed by Livestock Farmers

### 6.1 Unacceptable Actions to Increase Flocks

In many Nomocanons we also find wishes for blessing, protection and increase of the flock (Pradel, 1907, p. 32). But in a Nomocanon of 1799 it states: “...read and with the black-sleeved knife crucify whatever evil...from a bird or from a fountain...or a mill ditch...or a goat or a sheep...” (Rouse, 1899, pp. 151-152). In order to increase the number of animals, specific magical actions are also mentioned «την ημέραν του Μεγάλου Βασιλείου ζυμώνουν κάποια ψωμιά κουλούρες και τα βάλλουσιν εις τα κέρατα των βοδιών αυτών για να ιδούσι, να βγάξουν καρπούς τα χωράφια αυτών και κάμνουσιν οι τάλανες ελληνισμόν», that is “on the day of Saint Basil the Great they knead some bread buns and put them on the horns of their oxen to see that their fields bear fruit and the unfortunate practice Hellenism (paganism)”, (Politis, 1911-1912, p. 387).

Occasionally there are cases where the breeder offers to help his flock the *metallavia* (Holy Communion) that he kept in his mouth: «κεφ. σογ'. Ο δε μεταλαμβάνων, και κρατήση την αγίαν δωρεάν εν τω στόματι αυτού, πτύει ταύτην επί το ζών αυτού, ή επί μελυσίον, ή επί προβάτων αυτού, επιτιμάσθω χρόνοις δ' μετανοίας ρ'(100)», that is “cap.273. But he who takes communion, and holds the Holy Communion in his mouth, and spits it on his animal, or in his beehives or on his sheep, he shall be punished by the church for 4 years of penance and 100 penances each year” (Ecclesiae, 1677, p. 117).— Among other things, however, we also encountered an unknown practice, the sacrifice for the pleasure of the Divine this is related to the so-called *courbani* (Aikaterinidis, 1979). Thus Nomocanon of the 17th mentions: ““+Wish on Sacrifice of rams. Almighty God Almighty ...and you who gave the good things to our fathers Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, accepting sacrifice and offerings and full burnings in soul and spirit ...and in honor and memory of Saint Demetrius, whose memory we also keep ...” (MIET 17<sup>th</sup>: f.9[116r]).

From the reading of the blessing it is clear that the sacrifice is performed on the feast of St Demetrios

on 26 October, when the flocks come to the fields. That is, the period when, as a rule, most of the sheep and goats were ready to give birth. In this way the ignorance, and the constant effort of the farmers to multiply their flocks, often leads them to reprehensible excesses.

### **7. Deceipfulness of Shepherds in the Sale of Livestock**

It is known that the sale of animals was generally carried out in specific regional weekly markets, the “*pazaria*”. Many of them, due to their large grain production and their geographical location, were important trading centers, such as Velestino in the Thessaly region (Leake, 1835, p. 436). Since the Ottoman period this market had served as a market for agricultural products and livestock at both local and regional level. Thus, in the short time of negotiation and examination for the purchase of an animal, it was not possible to tell whether the sold animal had a more significant defect (Nomocanon, 1668, pp. 470-471). It was natural to include in Nomocanon that if the defects were proven within four days, then the animal was returned. But if 15 or 40 days pass then it is not returned (Ecclesiae, 1677, p. 104).

### **8. Bestiality, Sexual Intercourse with Birds**

In an unpublished Confession Book, where advice is given “on how Confessors should save those who confess to them” we read: «κεφ. ροστ’ ο ζωοφθόρος και ο πτηνοβάτης, χρόνους ιε’ να μη κοιτωνήσουν κατά τον ξγ’ κανόνα του Μεγάλου Βασιλείου», that is “cap. 176. He who makes sexual intercourse with animals and birds 15 years not to take communion according to the 63rd rule of saint Basil the Great” (Anecdote 17th, f.88). This is also pointed out in an unpublished codex where those who have sexual intercourse with beasts and birds are placed as to punishment in the ο’ years, together with the adulterers and those who have sexual intercourse with males (MIET 17<sup>th</sup>: f.134r). Here now the question of social, family morality and even personal hygiene is raised. Concerning the fulfillment of their specific desires, as far as marriage is concerned, in relation to the Moon, Maximus is mentioned where he develops three different perspectives on marriage, depending on the position of the Moon, first the positive perspective, then that which leads to quarrels and separation, and finally that which perverts the morals of the wife and dishonors the marriage (Maximus, 1820, V, 59-95).

In a code of the year 1650, from Pontus in the ecclesiastical laws, a distinction is found for specific acts. If the person performing the act is under twenty years of age and unmarried, and has done the act once and seeks cure, he is punished for 15 years not to leave the place where the act took place, not to marry, and is sentenced to five more years if he is found not to have repented. Of course, he is also to abstain from the Divine gifts (Communion-holy bread). But if he is married then he is punished for five times five years, i.e., 25 years and five years deprivation of Divine gifts. Finally, if he is an old man, for the rest of his life he is to abstain from Holy Communion and to receive Communion only when he dies. Saint Gregory of Nyssa lowers their punishment to 19 years. In the civil laws, however, he mentions that those who have sexual intercourse with horses, were to be cauterized, that is, to have their penis cut off (Codex, No. 575, pp. 117-118). However, practices and actions that were widespread during this

period in the agricultural world, not only in Greece but also in the wider Balkan area, were abhorrent and, unfortunately, can sometimes be found even today.

## 9. Epilogue

As is natural, over time, in these numerous Nomocanon texts, we could accept that active oral knowledge of societies is incorporated, while a ritual discourse often emerges through them. This is clearly evident especially from the Nomokanons of the Ottoman period, but not exclusively (Mouzakis, 2022, 120ff) where the relevant information provided is rich. At the same time, I believe that within the texts, a broad, transcendental, esoteric knowledge is found, which condenses experiences and passions of many years (Mouzakis-Kalai-Mouzaki, 2008, p. 330), while at the same time it was a necessity which was applied and seems to have been observed. An indispensable aid is of course the knowledge of current Greek superstitions, preconception and magical methods, which helps us to learn and compare how in earlier times magical acts were performed and with which aspects of life certain superstitions are associated (Mouzakis, 2018, pp. 113-213).

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