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AUTOPROSCOPTAE, BOGOMILS AND MESSALIANS IN THE 14TH CENTURY BULGARIA

The mentions concerning the heresy of autoproscoptae in Bulgarian texts from the 14th century have recently been noted by scholars¹. Its name was used as a synonym for messalianism in one Bulgarian Nomocanon (MS kept in Църковно-исторически и архивен институт (CIAI) in Sofia under catalogue number 1160)². The characteristic of the autoproscoptae heresy brings new light to the obscure phenomenon from the late medieval Bulgarian spiritual culture denoted in the sources by the synonymous (in some contexts) names “messalianism” and “bogomilism”.

The three pointed heresies were apparently different in their early history, which contrasts with the use of their names in the later period. The first heresy to appear from those mentioned above was messalianism. Heresy originated in Mesopotamia and Syria in the 4th century and later spread to Asia Minor³. Messalianism was condemned by many local councils and in 431 at the Council of Ephesus. The most characteristic for its dogmas is the belief that the human soul is inhabited by the demon and God’s presence could be perceived sensually. They rejected the sacraments of Orthodox Church, including baptism, they practiced austere asceticism and constant prayer which could expel the demon from the soul.

¹ М. ЦИБРАНСКА-КОСТОВА, М. РАЙКОВА, *Богомилите в църковноюрдическите текстове и па-метници*, СЛ 39/40, 2008, p. 197–219.

² А. КРЪСТЕВ, Ц. ЯНАКИЕВА, *Архивски номоканон. Български ръкопис от XIV век. Фототипично издание*, Шумен 2007, f. 200v–201r.

³ Д. ДРАГОЈЛОВИЋ, *Богомилство на Балкану и у Малој Азији*, I. *Богомилски родоначалници*, Београд 1974, p. 25–123; A. GUILLAUMONT, *Messaliens. Appellations, histoire, doctrine*, [in:] *Dictionnaire de spiritualité, ascétique et mystique*, vol. X, 1979, p. 1074–1083; C. STEWART, “Working the Earth of the Heart”: *The Messalian Controversy in History, Texts, and Language to AD 431*, Oxford 1991; K. FITSCHEN, *Messalianismus und Antimesalianismus. Ein Beispiel ostkirchlicher Ketzergeschichte*, Göttingen 1998; D. CANER, *Wandering, Begging Monks. Spiritual Authority and the Promotion of Monasticism in Late Antiquity*, Berkeley–Los Angeles–London 2002, p. 83–125.

The second heresy – autoproscoptae is mentioned by only one source – John of Damascus' *On Heresies*⁴. However the authorship of the fragment devoted to this heresy is dubious⁵. We do not know when and where the heresy appeared. An inexact clue gives us the title of the section containing the description of the heresy in the Damascenus' work – *from Heraclius to the present time*⁶ that dates the appearance of the heresy from the beginning of the 7th century to the middle of the 8th century. Their beliefs are as obscure as their history. Pseudo-Damascenus described them as *orthodox in every respect*.

They themselves offend in the very things of which they accuse others. Thus, they openly cohabit with women [...] They are addicted to [...] worldly affairs. [...] For, although they are monks and organized under a clergy, they honour God in word but indeed dishonour Him. Those that follow them are exalted and walking in their own simplicity. On the contrary, the sane members of the Church respect the sacred canons [...].⁷

A wider presentation of bogomilism is unnecessary here, I shall just recall the basic facts⁸. The heresy appeared in the 10th c. Bulgaria, later it spread especially to Byzantium, it had some influence on the development of western dualistic heresies. The most comprehensive description of its dogmas can be found in *The Sermon Against the Heretics* by Cosmas the Priest⁹ and in two well-known works by Euthymius Zigabenus¹⁰. The descriptions are not fully coherent, but they are similar in many points. The base of bogomils' dogmas is a dualistic worldview. The characteristic beliefs are the identification of Yahweh with the Devil, rejection of Old Testament, Church hierarchy and sacraments, a negative attitude to cult of saints, relics, practicing ascetic way of life¹¹.

The heresy of autoproscoptae became forgotten until a certain moment while messalians and bogomils can be met throughout the medieval history of the Balkan Peninsula and Asia Minor. However, the existence of these two heresies in the later period should be discussed. The question is: does the appearance of these names in

⁴ IOHANNES DAMASCENUS, *De Haeresibus*, C, [in:] PG, t. 94, col. 761–764 (cetera: DAMASCENUS). All the quotations are taken from the English translation: JOHN OF DAMASCUS, *Writings*, trans. F.H. CHASE, New York 1958.

⁵ A. LOUTH, *Saint John Damascene. Tradition and Originality in Byzantine Theology*, Oxford 2002, p. 55.

⁶ DAMASCENUS, C, col. 761; trans. F.H. CHASE, p. 152.

⁷ DAMASCENUS, C, col. 761; trans. F.H. CHASE, p. 152.

⁸ From the literature devoted to this topic I would mention just a few studies: D. OBOLENSKY, *The Bogomils: A Study in Balkan Neo-Manichaeism*, Cambridge 1948; A. SOLOVJEV, *Svedočanstva pravoslavnih izvora o bogomilstvu na Balkanu*, GIDBM 5, 1953, p. 1–103; M. LOOS, *Dualist Heresies of the Middle Ages*, transl. I. LEVITOVÁ, Praha 1974; Д. ДРАГОЈЛОВИЋ, В. АНТИЋ, *Богомилството во средновековната изворна граѓа*, Скопје 1978; Д. АНГЕЛОВ, *Богомилството*, Софија 1993.

⁹ Ю. БЕГУНОВ, *Козма Пресвитер в славянских литературных*, Софија 1973, p. 297–392.

¹⁰ EUTHYMIUS ZIGABENOS, *Panoplia dogmatica*, [in:] PG, t. 130, col. 1289–1332; EUTHYMIUS ZIGABENOS, *De haeresi Bogomilorum narratio*, [in:] G. FICKER, *Die Phundagiagiten: ein Beitrag zur Ketzengeschichte des byzantinischen Mittelalters*, Leipzig 1909, p. 87–111.

¹¹ Cf. Д. АНГЕЛОВ, *Богомилството...*, p. 125sqq.

sources means the heresies continued to exist or did these names change into a label used to mark new religious movements?

The messalian heresy most probably disappeared before the 6th or 7th century, however some scholars claim it existed for much longer¹². The revival of messalianism in Byzantium in the 10th–12th century, beginning with the trial of Eleutherius of Paphlagonia, should be considered to simply be the reuse of the old name to label a new phenomenon. This phenomenon is considered to be a type of monastic mysticism, close to the spirituality of Symeon the Stoudite and Symeon the New Theologian¹³.

The case of bogomilism is more complex. Several years ago I tended to doubt in the existence of bogomil dualism in 14th century Bulgaria, but this view is hard to sustain. The documents concerning the Franciscan mission in Tsardom of Vidin in the 1360s seems to be a good evidence of dualists' presence there (however, we cannot be sure whether they were bogomils or paulicians)¹⁴. What is more the letter of Euthymius of Tarnovo to Nicodemus of Tismana¹⁵ and the speech by Theodosius of Tarnovo to his disciples, recorded by Callistus I¹⁶, proves that the theological problems raised by bogomils were still current. On the other hand, the term "bogomil" was often used as a label, to mark, or rather to depreciate, religious movements or some individuals who had nothing common with dualism. The most evident examples of such a use came from Byzantium the 1140s. Then Constantine Chrysomallus, cappadocian bishops Leontius and Clement, Niphon and patriarch Cosmas II were accused of being adherents of bogomilism¹⁷. One of Constantines statements, according to the synodal act, was *explicitly taught as doctrine by the foul heresy of the Messalians or Bogomils*¹⁸. Charges brought against

¹² Д. ДРАГОЛОВИЋ, *Богомилство...*, p. 96–97; K. FITSCHEN, *Did 'Messalianism' exist in Asia Minor after A.D. 431?*, SP 25, 1993, p. 352–355.

¹³ J. GOUILLARD, *L'hérésie dans l'empire byzantine des origines au XIIe siècle*, TM 1, 1965, s. 319; IDEM, *Constantine Chrysomallus sous le masque de Syméon le Nouveau Théologien*, TM 5, 1973, p. 313–327; M. LOOS, *Dualist Heresy in the Middle Ages*, Praha 1974, p. 96–97; J. GOUILLARD, *Quatre procès de mystiques a Byzance (vers 960-1143). Inspiration et autorité*, Paris 1978, p. 5–39, 43–45; M. LOOS, *Courant mystique et courant hérétique dans la société byzantine*, JÖB 32.2, 1982, p. 237–246; A. RIGO, *Messalianismo = Bogomilismo. Un'equazione dell'eresiologia medievale bizantina*, OCP 56, 1990, p. 59–60; K. FITSCHEN, *Messalianismus...*, p. 321–323.

¹⁴ I. DUJČEV, *Il francescanesimo in Bulgaria nei secoli XIII e XIV*, [in:] IDEM, *Medioevo bizantino-slavo*, vol. I, *Studi di storia politica e culturale*, Roma 1965, p. 395–424.

¹⁵ Сѡ-иѡнїѡ, патрїарха Трънѡвскаго, къ Никѡдиѡу, свещенноиѡкоу иже въ Тисменѣ, въпросившоу о нѣккихъ главизнахъ црковныхъ ноуждныхъ, [in:] E. KAŁUŻNIACKI, *Werke des Patriarchen von Bulgarien Euthymius (1375–1393)*, Wien 1901, p. 209–211, 212–214.

¹⁶ KALLISTOS I, *Житїе и жизнь преподобнаго отца нашего Θεοδοcїа*, ed. В. ЗЛАТАРСКИ, СЛУНК 20.2, 1904, p. 27–30 (cetera: Kallistos I).

¹⁷ J. GOUILLARD, *Quatre ...*, p. 56–81; J.D. MANSI, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova, et amplissima collectio*, t. XXI, Venetiis 1776, col. 597–604, 701–705.

¹⁸ J. GOUILLARD, *Quatre ...*, p. 64; *Christian Dualist Heresies in the Byzantine World c. 650–c. 1450*, trans. et ed. J. HAMILTON, B. HAMILTON, Y. STOYANOV, Manchester 1998, p. 214.

him put this affair in the context of mystical monasticism¹⁹, while the dossier of Leontius and Clement reveals grave disorders and the lack of church discipline in the remote dioceses of the Byzantine Church²⁰. The affairs of Niphon and Cosmas II should be considered just as a part of the struggle for authority in the Patriarchate of Constantinople²¹.

As we have seen the names bogomil and messalian were used as synonyms in the acts of the trial of Constantine Chrysomallus and we have more examples of such a use from late medieval Bulgaria²². Can we assume that these two names were thought to be identical? If we take the changed title of the antimessalian fragment by Demetrius of Kyzikos placed in some slavonic nomocanons²³ or the text of the life of Theodosius of Tarnovo under consideration, we could answer “yes”. However, if we pay attention to the fact that the texts, which clearly underline the differences between both the heresies, were well known: they were translated into Old Bulgarian or just copied then (e.g. *Panoplia Dogmatica*, by Euthymius Zigabenus²⁴), the answer should be “no”. Hence, what was then the meaning of these names?

There are two possible phenomena which could be understood under the name/label “bogomil” in 14th century Bulgaria: 1. dualistic heresy, 2. a deviation from the orthodoxy in *doxia* or *praxis* arose in the monastic sphere, expressing a mystical, “enthusiastic” tendency in the monastic life (in this case the equivalence of the terms “bogomil” and “messalian” seems to be full). A brief review of the sources can reveal a manner how the term “bogomil” was used in the both meanings.

The Homily of John Chrysostom on the canons of the Church presents a dualist understanding of the heresy²⁵. The homily partly confirms what is known about bogomils beliefs from the *Sermon* by Cosmas the Priest or Euthymius Zigabenus’ works. However, this shortened characteristic of heretics may be also interpreted

¹⁹ Cf. M. ANGOLD, *Church and Society in Byzantium under the Comeneni 1081–1261*, Cambridge 1995, p. 487–490 and the literature pointed out in the note 13.

²⁰ Cf. J. GOILLARD, *Quatre...*, p. 39–43.

²¹ M. ANGOLD, *Church...*, p. 77–82.

²² Vide: KALLISTOS I, p. 26, 33. In the slavonic translation of hagioretic gramma from 1344 ἡ Ποιοῦμένων ἀρεσις (A. RIGO, *L'assemblea generale athonita del 1344 su un gruppo di monaci bogomili* (ms Vat. Gr. 604 ff. 11r–12v), CS 5, 1984, p. 505) is replaced with *масалианската ересъ* (И. БИЛЯРСКИ, *Палеологовият синодик в славянски превод*, София 2013, p. 89). Cf. A. RIGO, *Messalianismo...*, p. 53–82.

²³ V. JAGIĆ, *Opis i izvodi iz nekoliko južno-slovenskih rukopisa*, Star 6, 1874, p. 100–101.

²⁴ К. ИВАНОВА, *О славянском переводе „Паноплии догматики” Евфимия Зигабена*, [in:] *Исследования по древней и новой литературе*, ed. Л.А. ДМИТРЕВ, Ленинград 1987, p. 101–105; Н. ГАГОВА, *Владетели и книги*, София 2010, p. 132–139.

²⁵ Homily of Pseudo-John Chrysostomos was composed in Serbia or Bulgaria, 12th–14th c. It is preserved in several copies dating from the 14th and 15th c. Cf. V. JAGIĆ, *Opis...*, p. 149–150; A. SOLOVJEV, *Svedočanstva...*, p. 33–37; М. ЦИБРАНСКА-КОСТОВА, *Кратки сведения за богомилите в южнославянски текстове на църковното право*, БЕ 51.1, 2004, p. 44–49; М. ЦИБРАНСКА-КОСТОВА, М. РАЙКОВА, *Богомилите в юридическите текстове и паметници*, СЛ 39/40, 2008, p. 212–213.

as a sign of radical ascetic *enkrateia*. Bogomils according to this pseudepigraph do not eat meat nor drink wine, they reject marriage, Eucharist and the cult of the Cross.

The most important source on heretical movements in 14th century Bulgaria is *The Life of Theodosius of Tarnovo* by Callistus I²⁶. Theodoret is the first heretic to appear in the life. According to the text he was supporter of Barlaam's and Akindin's teachings, which he mixed with some magical, pagan rituals²⁷. Such a presentation of Theodoret's beliefs and practices seems to be unreliable. Pagan rituals are incompatible with barlaamism²⁸. This case has nothing to do with bogomilism/messalianism but it reveals customs of antiheretical writers who were inclined to embroider the facts in order to make their accusation graver, to discredit and eventually to infrahumanise or dehumanise their opponents, which is well known from the other sources²⁹.

The case of Irene of Thessaloniki is more interesting from our point of view. She was accused of licentious conduct and messalianism³⁰, identified with bogomilism by Callistus on the other place³¹. Her disciples Lazarus and Cyril reached Tarnovo after a three year stay at Mount Athos, where they *insulted the monks a lot* and devastated some olive gardens and vineyards. Lazarus finally occurred to be a holy fool, while Cyril – an iconoclast and drunk. He taught that night dreams are God's revelations and that marriage is evil³². A synod was convened against them in Tarnovo. When asked about their teachings, the heretics confessed that they do follow God's words, they love poverty, they pray constantly and they do not rise against nature. Responding to their declaration, Theodosius accused them: that they believe that human nature is subjected to the Devil, that there are two Gods – good one and bad one. Afterwards Theodosius noted that the messalians usually

²⁶ В. КИСЕЛКОВ, *Житието на Теодосий Търновски като исторически паметник*, София 1926; Δ. ΓΟΝΗΣ, *Τὸ συγγραφικὸν ἔργον τοῦ οἰκουμενικοῦ πατριάρχου Καλλίστου*, Αθήναι 1980, p. 69–134; K. MARINOW, *Między Bułgarią, Bizancjum a Serbią – mnisze peregrynacje św. Teodozjusza Tyrnowskiego i św. Romiła Widyńskiego*, BP 15, 2009, p. 99–111.

²⁷ KALLISTOS I, p. 19. For English translation see: K. ПЕТКОВ, *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria, Seventh-Fifteenth Century. The Records of a Bygone Culture*, Leiden–Boston 2008, p. 287–314.

²⁸ Cf. Д. АНГЕЛОВ, *Богомилството*, p. 442.

²⁹ An example of an infrahumanisation is the blood accusation raised against messalians (called in the text with their Greek name “euchitai”) in PSEUDO-PSELLOS, *De operatione daemonum* (P. GAUTIER, *Le “De daemonibus” du Pseudo-Psellos*, REB 38, 1980, p. 141). For analyses of parallel problem of demonization of heretics, based mainly on the sources concerning early Christianity and medieval Western Europe, see: N. СОHN, *Europe's Inner Demons. An Enquiry Inspired by the Great Witch-hunt*, Sussex 1975, p. 16–59 (esp. p. 54–55); E. PAGELS, *The Origin of Satan*, New York 1995, p. XVIII–XIX, 149–177. On the mechanism of the infra- and dehumanisation see e.g. P. HOLTZ, W. WAGNER, *Dehumanization, infrahumanization, and naturalization*, [in:] *Encyclopedia of Peace Psychology*, vol. I, ed. D.J. CHRISTIE, Malden 2012, p. 317–321.

³⁰ KALLISTOS I, p. 19.

³¹ KALLISTOS I, p. 26.

³² KALLISTOS I, p. 19–20.

reject accusations³³. Whom we should believe? the accused or rather the accuser? Taking under consideration the low credibility of the other passages concerning heretics from the *Life* we should refrain from answering the question.

Heretics and other “erring” people appear several times more in the *Life of Theodosius*. Theodosius, the false monk practiced some orgiastic rites with his followers³⁴. The monk Job, possessed by the Devil, worshipped him, calling himself Christ³⁵. The bogomils/messalians were condemned at the second synod in Tarnovo together with Jews and barlaamites³⁶. Several years later, on his deathbed, Theodosius warned his disciples to avoid any heresies including *the heresy of the Bogomils, that is the Messalians*³⁷. In the last two cases nothing is said about the beliefs or the practices of the heretics.

Some additional information on Irene of Thessaloniki and her group can be found in Byzantine sources. Gregory Palamas, one of the most famous hesychasts, was accused of contacts with sister Poirini, who could be identified with Irene³⁸. Her followers, expelled from Mount Athos, are probably identical with group of bogomils expelled from the Holy Mountain in 1344 known from *Roman history* by Nicephorus Gregoras. Dragoljub Dragojlović considered this group to be hesychasts³⁹. The act of Protaton published after Dragojlović wrote his paper make this interpretation less credible but it still fails to clarify the identity of the group⁴⁰.

If we gather all the accusations brought against the group of Irene of Thessaloniki from different sources, it gives us a puzzling picture of the heresy. The heretics are promiscuous, they perform acts of vandalism, they drink the urine of their master, they eat disgusting things and abuse alcohol, they destroy icons, they reject the sacraments of the Church, they believe that the God of the Old Testament was bad, just to enumerate some of their “delinquencies”⁴¹. If we accept these accusations, we should admit that the heretics were possessed by the Devil

³³ KALLISTOS I, p. 20–22.

³⁴ KALLISTOS I, p. 23–24.

³⁵ KALLISTOS I, p. 30–31.

³⁶ KALLISTOS I, p. 26. On the Synods of Tarnovo see e.g. Й. АНДРЕЕВ, *Две хронологически изправки към епохата на цар Иван-Александър: кога Иван-Александър е стъпил на българския престол и през коя година се е състоял съборът против богомилите*, [in:] ТКШ 4, p. 302–309; Й. АЛЕКСИЕВ, *За мястото и датата на църковните събори в Търново*, [in:] *Бог и цар в българската история*, ed. К. ВАЧКОВА, Пловдив 1996, p. 140–144; П. СТЕФАНОВ, *Danse tascav-re: Нов поглед към църковните събори в Търново през XIV в.*, [in:] *Теодосиеви четения. 640 години от успението на преп. Теодосий Търновски*, ed. Д. КЕНАНОВ, Велико Търново 2005, p. 75–88.

³⁷ KALLISTOS I, p. 33.

³⁸ M. LOOS, *Dualist...*, p. 330–331, Д. ДРАГОЈЛОВИЋ, *Исихазам и богомилство*, Valc 11, 1980, p. 20–21.

³⁹ Д. ДРАГОЈЛОВИЋ, *Исихазам...*, p. 27–28.

⁴⁰ A. RIGO, *L'assemblea...*, p. 504–506.

⁴¹ For the full review of their beliefs and practices see A. RIGO, *Monaci esicasti e monaci bogomili. La accuse di messalianismo e bogomilismo rivolte agli esicasti ed il problema dei rapporti tra esicismo e bogomilismo*, Firenze 1989, p. 187–214.

as well, and they did everything, what seemed to be wrong, just to delight their Master⁴². Another solution to the problem is to select reliable accusations and to reject others as heresiological *clichés*. How should such a selection be conducted? Every method would be controversial and could be criticized for its arbitrariness. For me, the fact that the monks which formed a group around Irene-Poirini were excluded from the Church due to some disciplinary matters seems to be the most likely. A dualist worldview was ascribed to them as a result of their condemnation and naming them as bogomils/messalians on the basis of some distant analogies⁴³ to their austere way of life or disrespectful attitude towards the Church authorities⁴⁴.

To make my deliberations more probable I would like to draw your attention to two texts previously neglected in the historical studies. These testimonies bring us more examples of the lack of monastic discipline and show how they were labelled.

The first one is an excerpt from Bulgarian Pseudo-Zonaras Nomocanon from the second half of the 14th century (CIAI 1160)⁴⁵. The short passage is directed against monks who do not have spiritual father. Even though they observe canons concerning fasting and prayer they are accused of being heretics. The heresy in which they fall into was defined as messalian or euchitae or just autoproscoptae (самопрѣтикателна ересь).

ѡще которыи инокъ хѡдѡ въ самоволи, не имѡѡ наставника или игѡмена, или монастырь, или келі или съдружіа нѡкоего дѡхвнѡи ѡцѣ и братіи, или правило свое дръжка, или прилежѡ пост и млтвѡ и хранѡ неразорно срѣ и пѡтѣ и пнѡелнѡ и прѣданныѡ постѡи въ общинѡ ѡ срѣи аплѡ и срѣи ѡцѣ • нѡ тако хѡдѡ въ ереси самопрѣтикателнѡи глѡмѡи евхѡите сиѡѣ мѡсалиане, нѡ се исправленіѡе братіѡе нѡ пагѡба и погивѡѡѡ • и еже не имѡѡти ѡ сѡи въ срѣи нѡже прѣѡ написахѡѡ еще же и рѡкодѡѡліѡе • нѡ тако гѡсти и пѡти и спѡти довоѡно • таковыи прѣѡстѡилѡ сѡ юѡ и заблѡднѡлѡ ѡ праваѡго пѡти • и съ таковоѡи не съвѣѡѡплѡѡти ѡ ѡнѡдѡѡ никакоже, нѡ вѡгѡти ѡ него тако же въ срѣкоѡ мѡсалианѡи и въ ереси сѡѡѡѡѡ :-⁴⁶

⁴² To this conclusions came e.g. КОНСТАНТИН РАДЧЕНКО (*Религиозное и литературное движение въ Болгаріи въ эпоху перед турецким завоеваніем*, Кіевъ 1898, p. 204–211).

⁴³ JEAN GOUILLARD (*L'hérésie...*, p. 302–303; cf. IDEM, *Quatre...*, p. 18) showed how worked this principle of analogy. For parallel observations concerning western Christianity see T. MANTEUFFEL, *Narodziny herezji*, Warszawa 1963. Some examples coming from 5th c. Byzantium were collected by T.E. GREGORY, *Vox Populi. Popular opinion and Violence in the Religious Controversies of the Fifth Century A.D.*, Columbus 1979, p. 88, 176, et al.

⁴⁴ ANTONIO RIGO (*Monaci...*, p. 214–220) who analysed the sources concerning this heretical controversy very studiously did not rejected the accusation of libertinism or satanic tendencies. However he admitted the possibility that they were just clichés.

⁴⁵ On Pseudo-Zonaras Nomocanon see М. РАЙКОВА, *Един югозападнобългарски номоканон от втората половина на XV век*, МПР 20.1, 1997, p. 69–92, Е. БЕЛЯКОВА, *О составе Хлудовского номоканона (К истории сборника Зинар)*, СЛ 37/38, 2007, p. 114–131; М. ЦИБРАНСКА-КОСТОВА, М. РАЙКОВА, *Богомилиите...*, p. 197–219; М. ЦИБРАНСКА-КОСТОВА, *Славянският Псевдозонар*, Рbg 22.4, 2008, p. 25–52.

⁴⁶ А. КРЪСТЕВ, Ц. ЯНАКИЕВА, *Архивски...*, f. 200v–201r.

We should here recall, that the autoproscoptae were heretics *orthodox in everything*, falling into errors of which they accused others⁴⁷. Hence, they were ascetics accusing others of *idiorythmia* (self-direction, lawlessness) and consequently accused of it.

The second text is an excerpt from *Rule for hermits*⁴⁸. There appears only the one name “messalianism”, but the accusation brought against these heretics is very familiar to the one from the Pseudo-Zonaras Nomocanon (CIAI 1160). It denounces monks who do not care about their rule, do not have icons in their cells and do not use incense.

Подобаетъ же въскромѣ братѣ имѣти въ келии своен иконоста. аще не възможно е комѣ стѣхъ ико стажати. а шнѣ крѣтъ. и тако при не пѣти ставлени канѣ въ келии своен. и кадити иконоста по обычаю въ врѣмя пѣтти съборнѣ. аще ли комѣ не възможно е кадити по ставленѣ. а шнѣ понѣ единоа днѣ не побаетъ ставлѣти не покладивъ. кромѣ великы нжѣж иже по прилѣчу згажѣетъ са нѣкога. аще ли не имѣ кто в келии своен такового строения. какъ рѣ са и попечениа ш своемъ ставѣ. ꙗ прѣданню да е вѣдомо таковома тако потѣкнѣлъ са е въ ерѣ масалианскѣа или потѣкнѣти са имѣ въскромѣ.⁴⁹

The picture of the heteropractical demeanour of monks which emerges from the *Life of Theodosius*, *Rule for hermits* and the quoted excerpt from Pseudo-Zonaras Nomocanon (CIAI 1160), can be confirmed and complemented by further fragments of CIAI 1160 and other texts of a canonical nature. The lack of moral discipline and disregarding the rules are condemned there in many detailed epithimias e.g. against those who sleep with another monk in one bed, who stare at the intimate parts of their body, who fail to fast, who eat between meals, who are late for prayer, who do not ask hegumen for a blessing before falling asleep, who leave the monastery without permission, who quarrel or chat⁵⁰. The value of the aforementioned epithimias as a source of knowledge on the late medieval Bulgarian monk's spirituality is not equal. Some parts are taken directly from Byzantine col-

⁴⁷ Bulgarian author of the quoted passage probably knew this characteristic of the heresy of autoproscoptae by John of Damascus – it was translated into Slavonic, H. MIKŁAS, *Zur kirchenslavischen Überlieferung der Häresiengeschichte des Johannes von Damaskus*, [in:] *Festschrift für Linda Sadnik zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. E. WEINER, Freiburg 1981, p. 323–387; cf. M. ЦИБРАНСКА-КОСТОВА, М. РАЙКОВА, *Богомилите...*, p. 209.

⁴⁸ The Rule for hermits was probably translated from Greek in the second half of 14th c., the original text remains unknown. Cf. K. IVANOVA, P. МАТЕЈИС, *An unknown work of St. Romil of Vidin (Ravonica)*, Pbg 17.4, 1993, p. 3–14; E.V. БЕЛЯКОВА, *Славянская редакция скитского устава*, ДРВМ 3.4, 2002, p. 28–36.

⁴⁹ Преданіе оуставомъ иже на вѣнѣшнѣи странѣ прѣбывающимъ инокомъ. рекше скітскаго житіа правѣло. ш келиномъ трѣзвеніи и катадневномъ прѣбываніи, ed. E.V. БЕЛЯКОВА, *Устав по рукописи РНБ Погод. 876 (разночтения даны по спискам ЯГМЗ 15479 – Я и РНБ КБ XV – К2)*, ДРВМ 4.1, 2003, p. 76–77.

⁵⁰ *Berlinster Sbornik. Ein kirchenslavisches Denkmal mittelbulgarischer Redaktion des beginnenden 14. Jahrhunderts ergänzt aus weiteren handschriftlichen Quellen*, herausg. von H. MIKŁAS, L. TASEVA, M. ЈОВЧЕВА, Sofia–Wien 2006, p. 84–85, 139–150; А. КРЪСТЕВ, Ц. ЯНАКИЕВА, *Архивски...*, f. 101r–101v, 103r–106r, 128v–130r, 133r–136r, 145v–149r, 157r–158r, 181v–189v, 193r–194v.

lections of regulations for monks dating back to 4th century, and may have nothing in common with the realities of the much later monasteries from Bulgaria, some of them were amended in some manner and some parts are original⁵¹.

The texts from 14th century Bulgaria concerning spiritual life present a broad panorama of diverse phenomena even if we just focus on the heterodox movements or borderlands of the orthodoxy. Bogomil dualism and hesychast controversy are usually put in the foreground by the scholars⁵². However it seems that we should pay more attention to the phenomena, which I would describe with the collective name “monastic heresy”. By this I understand enthusiasts neglecting church authorities (as are monks condemned in the *Rule for hermits*), monks disregarding their rules (of which many examples were brought here), various manifestations of extreme austerity and piety (I would ascribe the holy foolery of Lazarus to this category). The two source texts recalled above bring new light on these complex problems and makes it more obvious that not every time we come across bogomils or messalians in sources from the late medieval Bulgaria we should think of them as dualist heretics. Some well-known sources as *Life of Theodosius of Tarnovo* or *Life of Hilarion of Moglena* by Euthymius of Tarnovo⁵³ for example should be reinterpreted in this spirit.

Abstract: This paper discusses the use of the names of heresies: bogomilism, messalianism and the heresy of autoproscoptae in 14th century Bulgarian sources. The author underlines that the names of bogomilism and messalianism do not always refer to dualism. Two wider unknown examples of such use of the name “messalinism” are recalled. In the Pseudo-Zonaras Nomocanon (CIAI 1160), the name “messalianism” is treated as being equal to the “heresy of autoproscoptae”. In the *Rule for hermits*, messalians are presented not as heretics, but as monks disregarding their rules.

Keywords: bogomilism, Bulgaria, monasticism, monastic rules.

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⁵¹ For some preliminary remarks on the history of the epithimias see commentary of the editors of CIAI 1160 and Berlinski sbornik, and also my paper: J.M. WOLSKI, (*Pseudo-*)*Basilian Rules for Monks in Late Medieval Bulgaria. A Few Remarks on a Bulgarian Nomocanon from the End of the 14th Century*, Pbg 36.2, 2012, p. 39–44.

⁵² Г. ДАНЧЕВ, *Отношение Евфимия Тырновского к еретическим учениям, распространившимся в болгарских землях*, ВВг 6, 1980, p. 95sq; Д. АНГЕЛОВ, *Богомилството*, p. 425–454; Y. STOYANOV, *The Other God. Dualist Religions from Antiquity to the Cathar Heresy*, New Haven 2000, p. 228–232.

⁵³ Cf. Я.М. ВОЛСКИ, *Богомилите в светлината на Житието на св. Иларион Мъгленски от Патриарх Евтимий Тырновски*, Pbg 37.4, 2013, p. 74–81.