

KONSTANTINOS EL. LIAKOURAS, Γεωργίου Μετοχίτου λόγοι πέντε περὶ τῆς ἐκπορεύσεως τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος, νῦν τὸ πρῶτον ἐκδιδόμενοι (Analecta Vlatadon 73). Thessaloniki: Πατριαρχικὸν Ἰδρυμα Πατερικῶν Μελετῶν 2023. 348 pp., 6 tables. – ISBN 978-960-8062-39-9

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When LEONE ALLACCI (1586–1669) published in 1659 a couple of polemical treatises by George Metochites (c. 1250–1328),¹ his intention was to print shortly afterwards two more texts by the same author: the so-called *Dogmatic History* (RAP G6820) and *On the Procession of the Holy Spirit* (RAP G3646). Even if ALLACCI did not manage to publish these before his death, the manuscripts Roma, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, Allacci LXIX (Diktyon 56198) and LXX (Diktyon 56199) bear witness to his preparatory work. The *Dogmatic History* was finally published by GIUSEPPE COZZA-LUZI between 1871 and 1905,² but *On the Procession of the Holy Spirit* long awaited its *editio princeps*.³ Thus, KONSTANTINOS LIAKOURAS, Professor Emeritus of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, meets with his new book a centuries-old research *desideratum*. His edition transforms *On the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, the sole still-unpublished work of George Metochites, into the first critically edited one.⁴

1. LEO ALLATIUS (ed.), Graeciae Orthodoxae tomus secundus, in quo continentur scriptores Ioannes Veccus patriar. Constantinop., Constantinus Meliteniota chartophylax, Georgius Metochita diaconus, Maximus Chrysoberga. Rome 1659, pp. 922–958 (*Against Maximos Planoudes*, RAP G1837) and pp. 959–1074 (*Against Manuel Moschopoulos*, RAP G1834). The same text has been reprinted in volume 141 of the *Patrologia Graeca* (PG), cols. 1275–1308 and 1308–1406.

2. GIUSEPPE COZZA-LUZI (ed.), Georgii Metochitae diaconi Historiae dogmaticae librum I et II. In: Novae Patrum Bibliothecae ab Angelo card. Maio editae tomus octavus, pars II. Rome 1871, pp. 1–228; IDEM, Georgii Metochitae diaconi Historiae dogmaticae librum III. In: Novae Patrum Bibliothecae ab Angelo card. Maio editae tomus decimus, pars I. Rome 1905, pp. 319–370 (hereafter abridged as Metoch., *Hist.*, I–III).

3. Before LIAKOURAS' edition, only a few excerpts of this treatise had been printed: PG 141, cols. 1405–1420; CIRO GIANNELLI, Le récit d'une mission diplomatique de Georges le Métochite (1275–1276) et le Vat. gr. 1716. In: MARIE-HYACINTHE LAURENT, Le bienheureux Innocent V (Pierre de Tarentaise) et son temps (Studi e testi 129). Vatican City 1947, pp. 419–443; repr. in CIRO GIANNELLI, Scripta minora (Studi bizantini e neoellenici 10). Rome 1963, pp. 91–111, at pp. 95 n. 5, 104–111.

4. For my PhD dissertation (2019–2023, University of Padua and École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris), I prepared the first critical edition of book I of the *Dogmatic History*. The edition will be published in the Series Graeca of the Corpus Christianorum.

LIAKOURAS' main goal was not to contextualise the treatise in its historical and religious environment, but to judge its validity in terms of orthodox theology: Metochites' argumentations in defence of the *Filioque* are systematically confuted and rejected. All in all, this work of the 'Latin-minded' (λατινόφρων) George Metochites – as he is called right from the back cover – is dismissed as a failed theological effort (p. 10).

George Metochites played in fact an important part in the political and religious history of the early Palaeologan period: together with John XI Bekkos (c. 1225–1297), patriarch of Constantinople from 1275 to 1282, and Constantine Meliteniotes (d. 1307), he was one of the most invested supporters of the union of Lyon (1274). The three of them were ultimately condemned as heretics and anathematised by the *Tomos* of Patriarch Gregory II (second synod of Blachernai, August 1285). Metochites' four preserved works were all written after his condemnation; their primary aim was therefore to defend the unionists' actions and their theology in favour of the *Filioque*.

LIAKOURAS' volume is divided into two parts: Prolegomena (pp. 25–165) and critical edition (pp. 167–327). At the end, readers can find an English abstract (pp. 329–331), two *indices locorum* (the first for the Holy Scripture, p. 335, and the second for ecclesiastical and patristic writings, as well as for ancient Greek texts, pp. 336–342) and an *index nominum* (pp. 343–348).

The Prolegomena are made up of two different chapters. The first one, 'The Life and Literary Works of George Metochites', briefly presents all the extant information about Metochites' biography (pp. 27–58), then offers an overview of his four works and their publishing status (pp. 59–61). The bibliography is generally complete and up-to-date. The historical and biographical reconstruction offered by LIAKOURAS summarises all the main findings from previous studies. Special relevance is given to two specific moments in Metochites' life, presented here with much more detail than in any other previous contribution. First, the autobiographical account inserted in the fifth *logos* of the treatise (pp. 314–321) gives precious information about Metochites' diplomatic mission of 1275–1276 (cf. pp. 31–34). Second, extensive reading of the third book of the *Dogmatic History* enables LIAKOURAS to thoroughly reconstruct the years of Metochites' imprisonment (1290–1328) after his return from the exile on the gulf of Nicomedia (1285–1290). In the footnotes, references are systematically given to the related autobiographical passages from Metochites' works (mainly the *Dogmatic History*), as well as to the official correspondence between

Michael VIII (and Bekkos) and the Papacy at the time of the union of Lyon. Concerning these diplomatic sources, however, it should be noted that LIAKOURAS has used rather dated editions (A. THEINER – F. MIKLOSICH 1872 and J. GAY 1898) instead of the more recent ones.⁵ The same goes for the *Tomos* of 1285, which LIAKOURAS cites according to the text in PG 142.⁶

The biography of Metochites outlined in this book has the undeniable merit of collecting all the extant information. The account, however, contains some inaccuracies that should be rectified. George of Cyprus, who became patriarch with the name of Gregory II in March 1283, is referred to as one of the anti-unionists responsible for the deposition of Bekkos, Meliteniotes, Metochites, and Theophanes of Nicaea in January 1283 (p. 40): the act of deposition of these unionists was actually issued by the entourage of patriarch Joseph I, and the sources do not mention any direct involvement of George of Cyprus in this decision.⁷ Moreover, LIAKOURAS writes that Bekkos, Meliteniotes, and Metochites attended the first synod of Blachernai in late April 1283 (pp. 42–43): the three were instead tried by the synod of Hagia Sophia, which took place in the first half of January of that same year.⁸ In fact, the first synod of Blachernai – the correct dating of which

5. FERDINAND M. DELORME – ALOISIE L. TĂUTU (eds), *Acta romanorum pontificum ab Innocentio V ad Benedictum XI (1276–1304)*. Vatican City 1954; VITALIEN LAURENT – JEAN DARROUZÈS (eds), *Dossier grec de l'union de Lyon* (Archives de l'Orient chrétien 16). Paris 1976, pp. 479–485; LUCA PIERALLI, *La corrispondenza diplomatica dell'imperatore bizantino con le potenze estere nel tredicesimo secolo (1204–1282): studio storico-diplomatistico ed edizione critica* (Collectanea Archivi Vaticani 54). Vatican City 2006, pp. 303–322, 349–357, 415–431.

6. See the critical edition by MICHEL STAVROU, *Une réévaluation du Tomos du Deuxième Concile des Blachernes (1285) : commentaire, tradition textuelle, édition critique et traduction*. In: CHRISTIAN GASTGEBER et al. (eds), *The Patriarchate of Constantinople in Context and Comparison* (Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung 41). Vienna 2017, pp. 47–94 at pp. 66–93.

7. See for instance the testimony of the historian George Pachymeres: ALBERT FAILLER (ed.), *Georges Pachymérès. Relations historiques. Vol. III: Livres VII–IX* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 24/3). Paris 1999 (hereafter abridged as *Pachym., Hist.*), VII 5–6, pp. 29–31. For a clear chronology of the events that followed the death of Michael VIII and led to the unionists' ultimate condemnation see ALBERT FAILLER, *La déposition de l'épiscopat unioniste après la mort de Michel VIII Palaiologos (mai 1283)*. *Revue des études byzantines* 71 (2013) pp. 173–186.

8. Cf. *Pachym., Hist.*, VII 10, pp. 45–47; *Metoch., Hist.*, I 69, p. 91; Iohanni Vecchi Constantinopolitani patriarchae de iniustitia quae affectus est, a proprio throno eiectus. PG 141, cols. 953–954 at col. 957b–d; MARKOS A. ORPHANOS (ed.), *Κωνσταντίνου Μελιτηνιώτου λόγοι ἀντιρρητικοὶ δύο, νῦν τὸ πρῶτον ἐκδιδόμενοι*. Athens 1986, pp. 116–

is 3–8 May 1283 – did not involve the three unionists (Bekkos had already been exiled to the Great Monastery of Prusa at the time), but proceeded to depose all the metropolitans and bishops of the permanent synod who had been appointed by Bekkos.⁹ Finally, the information regarding the imprisonment of Metochites and Meliteniotes in the Pantokrator Monastery between 1283 and 1285 is also incorrect (p. 44), since the former writes that he remained in his *κελλίον* without giving any further details, while the latter explicitly testifies that he was at the Monastery of the Holy Resurrection.¹⁰ Both of them were imprisoned in the Pantokrator after the second synod of Blachernai.¹¹

The second chapter of the *Prolegomena* ('The five *logoi* on the procession of the Holy Spirit', pp. 62–165) offers both an examination of the main features of the treatise (dating, sources, language, and content) and an analysis of its manuscript tradition. The work *On the Procession of the Holy Spirit* is divided into five sections (λόγοι α'–ε') and was written by Metochites late in life: on the basis of some internal clues, LIAKOURAS deduces that the author must have begun writing it round the age of seventy, thus c. 1320 (pp. 86–92).

The aim of this treatise is to refute the theological positions of George Metochites' opponents and to show that the hypostatic procession of the Holy Spirit is not from the Father alone. To achieve his goal, Metochites resorts to the traditional polemical method, based on the one hand on the

117, 158–160.

9. Cf. FAILLER, *La déposition* (cit. n. 7), pp. 177–181.

10. Cf. Metoch., *Hist.*, I 91, p. 126^{9–11}: ἐκάτερος γὰρ ἡμεν, ὁ μὲν ἐν τινὶ τῶν κατὰ τὴν Κωνσταντίνου φροντιστηρίων, ἐγὼ δὲ τῷ ἑαυτοῦ κελλίῳ, ἡρέμα καὶ καθ' ἑαυτοὺς ἐν-σχολάζοντες ('we were both in fact isolated and by ourselves, he in one of the monasteries in Constantinople, and I in my cell'). See also ORPHANOS, *Κωνσταντίνου Μελιτηνιώτου λόγοι* (cit. n. 8), pp. 132⁶–133²: μολεῖ τῶν οἰκείων τις τοῦ κρατοῦντος ἐνθα περ διετέλουν ἐγὼ καταλύων, φημὶ πρὸς τὴν τῆς ἀγίας μονὴν Ἀναστάσεως ('a man of the emperor's entourage comes to where I was staying, I mean to the Monastery of the Holy Resurrection').

11. Cf. Metoch., *Hist.*, I 118, p. 168^{10–14}: τὸν δὲ γε ἀληθῆ πατριάρχην καὶ τοῦ εἰρη-νάρχου Χριστοῦ μαθητὴν, ὃ καὶ πρῶην ὑπῆρχεν ἐγκεκλεισμένος σεμνείῳ, ἀσφαλέστε-ρον καθειργνύουσι, πλείονας τῶν προτέρων καὶ νηφαλεωτέρους ἐπιστήσαντες φύλακας, καὶ ἡμᾶς ἀμφοτέρους τῷ εὐαγεῖ φροντιστηρίῳ τοῦ Παντοκράτορος, τοῖς ἐκ τῶν ἀρχείων ὡσαύτως τηρουμένους φρουροῖς ('they locked up more securely the true patriarch and disciple of Christ the king of peace [i.e. Bekkos] in the monastery where he had previously been confined [i.e. the Kosmidion], placing there more guards than before and stricter ones; and the two of us [i.e. Meliteniotes and Metochites] were placed in the Holy Convent of the Pantokrator, likewise under the watch of sentinels from the palace').

quotation and the interpretation of scriptural and patristic passages, and on the other hand on the refutation of selected excerpts from the works of his opponents. The two main adversaries refuted by Metochites in this specific work are patriarch Gregory II and the *megas logothetes* Theodore Mouzalon (cf. p. 93).

The content of each of the five *logoi* is summarised, commented on, and briefly contextualised (pp. 105–164), which is very useful for understanding the main issues addressed by Metochites in his work. The doctrinal sections sometimes give way to digressions of a more autobiographical nature, as in the case, for example, of the account of the diplomatic mission in 1275–1276 mentioned above.

As far as the language used by Metochites is concerned (pp. 99–105), LIAKOURAS emphasises the presence of an atticising *Hochsprache*, the author's preference for very long and syntactically complex periods, the use of *iuncturae* inherited from the classical tradition, and a wide range of rhetorical figures (the most recurrent are presented in a list, accompanied by some examples). LIAKOURAS also underlines the highly rhetorical and openly polemical tone that characterises the narration of the events of the time (pp. 94–95): however, rather than a specific feature of Metochites' personal writing, this is a common characteristic of the polemical works produced within the context of the union of Lyon – an unquestionable consequence of the particularly tense climate of the time.

When examining the sources of the treatise (pp. 96–99), LIAKOURAS recognises in the works of John Bekkos and Constantine Meliteniotes an undoubted point of reference for the arguments presented in this treatise; nevertheless, the critical text does not regularly provide references to the *loci paralleli* of the works by Bekkos and Meliteniotes. The editor rightly stresses the originality of Metochites' argumentation: the latter certainly takes up Bekkos' doctrine in favor of the *Filioque* but is still able to rework the polemical demonstration in his own way, letting his personality emerge. In other words, Metochites proves to be not just a compiler of opinions and arguments offered by others, but an active writer of polemical literature.

The *Dogmatic History*, often referred to by Metochites himself in his narration, is also to be counted among the sources used by the author: Metochites, in fact, gets back several times to specific issues or arguments already tackled in his earlier work (the related passages of the *Dogmatic History* are indicated in the critical text's footnotes). Holy Scripture, as well as the patristic and conciliar texts, are other obvious sources of Metochites;

LIAKOURAS provides a list of all the books of the Bible and the Church Fathers cited in the five *logoi* (pp. 97–98). It is highly probable that Metochites did not have direct knowledge of these texts, but rather found the necessary quotations in some *ad hoc* dogmatic anthology, such as the *Epigraphai* attributed to Bekkos (RAP G5439). LIAKOURAS's footnotes (the numbering of which begins anew for each *logos*) provide references to the scriptural and patristic passages cited in the treatise, as well as references to *loci paralleli* in the *Dogmatic History* and to quotations from the works by Gregory II and Theodore Mouzalon.

The manuscript tradition of Metochites' *On the Procession of the Holy Spirit* is rather restricted. LIAKOURAS focuses on three manuscripts (pp. 62–84): the autograph codex Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1716 (Diktyon [68345](#)) and its two apographs Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Gr. 1260 (Diktyon [50869](#)) and Gr. 2751 (Diktyon [52387](#)). For each of these, LIAKOURAS gives a codicological and paleographical description, based partly on the existing bibliography and partly on an examination of reproductions: as he himself points out, he did not actually study any of the witnesses in the original, but made exclusive use of microfilm reproductions (cf. pp. 62–63 with n. 87). The three manuscripts under consideration are described individually ('general observations', 'handwriting', 'pagination', and 'contents'). The editor does not provide a philological study of their stemmatic relations; the presence of an autograph and of its two later apographs certainly makes this kind of examination superfluous for the *constitutio textus*. Nevertheless, it would have been useful to briefly address the philological matter in the introduction to the edition.

Metochites' treatise is also transmitted by two 17th-century witnesses, overlooked by LIAKOURAS. They are the two copies that ALLACCI made while preparing his never-published edition: Roma, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, Allacci CXLIII (Diktyon [56247](#)) and its apograph, the aforesaid Vall. All. LXX.

The critical text was exclusively reconstructed on the basis of the autograph Vat. gr. 1716 (cf. the edition criteria explained on p. 65). Metochites' spelling, accentuation and punctuation have been invariably normalised according to modern usage; however, the critical apparatus registers the forms found in the manuscript and thus illustrates the author's original spelling and accentuation. LIAKOURAS has retained the division into five *logoi* present in the autograph; the text of each *logos* has been divided – according

to a content-based criterion – into shorter, unnumbered paragraphs. Reference to the numbering of the folia of the autograph manuscript is given in the margin of the critical text and in the page header. The critical apparatus is rather slim: it comprises only readings of the autograph – in those cases when the editor has intervened to modify the original text.

LIAKOURAS' edition of the five *logoi On the Procession of the Holy Spirit* by George Metochites makes available an important text linked to the debates concerning the union of Lyon and allows to take a closer look into the further development of these debates over the first decades of the 14th century. The very existence of this treatise is a testament to the longevity of this kind of discussions, which did not end with the deposition of patriarch Gregory II (1289) or with the death of John Bekkos (1297), but remained vibrant even in the 1320s.

Keywords

Byzantine dogmatic theology; religious polemics; *Filioque*