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"MAKING THE LORD'S TABLE A TABLE OF DEMONS": ORTHODOXY IN FAITH, HETERODOXY AND ORTHOPRAXY IN THE WORKS OF PACHOMIOS ROUSANOS (1508–1553)*

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ABSTRACT. This paper discusses how the sixteenth-century Athonite monk Pachomios Rousanos (1508–1553) constructs his vision of "orthodoxy in faith," "heterodoxy" and "orthopraxy" in an age dominated by intense confessional polarization and adaptation of the Greek Orthodox to the Ottoman rule. Through his corpus of polemical works, the Greek theologian endeavoured to impose as authoritative his own vision about which beliefs and ritual practices are to be held correctly by the community of believers. In his attempt at social disciplining, Rousanos criticized what he considered "heterodox" religious practices, deviant teachings from the Orthodox norms, and deplored the low level of religious instruction among both the clergy and simple believers. As a tireless traveller into the Eastern Mediterranean lands, he was able to diagnose *in situ* many of the religious issues of the Orthodox during the first half of the sixteenth century and proposed remedies for the spiritual edification of the community of believers.

Keywords: Mount Athos, Orthodoxy, Orthopraxy, Heterodoxy, Pachomios Rousanos, Popular religion, Ioannikios Kartanos, Religious Instruction, Conversion, Social Disciplining, Vernacularization

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1. Preliminaries

> When I was on my way through Chrysoupolis, I entered the city. When arriving at the church, as it was the time of the divine liturgy, I saw an epileptic holding a sign on which was written what had to be done about his epilepsy. After reading the divine Gospel, the priest takes him, holding him by his right hand, before the holy Table [in the altar], reciting some things to him. When I saw this, I left the church, but they stayed until the end [of the liturgy]. And making some rope ties, they placed them under the Table, after which they greased them with tar. And pasting a shard of pot on them, they proceeded to make the Lord's Table a table of demons.[1]

It is through these harsh words that the sixteenth-century Athonite monk Pachomios Rousanos (1508–1553) denounced one of the many religious practices, which he considered "heterodox" rituals performed by members of the Greek Orthodox communities in the Ottoman times. At first sight, Rousanos' reaction is not at all unusual for a theologian and monk. Members of the clergy and the monastic communities constantly condemned pagan religious practices and non-Christian elements that survived and infiltrated the liturgical life of the Church and the Orthodox popular culture since the first centuries of Christianity.[2] But what makes Rousanos' criticism relevant is that it was voiced in a specific religious and cultural climate for the Orthodox Greeks of the Ottoman Empire.

The first half of the sixteenth century ushered in what was labelled by scholars as the "Age of Confessionalization" in the Eastern Mediterranean, which coincided with the state-building process of the Ottoman polity into a global

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1 Spyridon Lambros, ed., "Ἀνέκδοτος λόγος Παχωμίου τοῦ Ῥουσάνου περὶ δεισιδαιμονιών καὶ προλήψεων κατά τὸν ΙΣΤ΄ αιώνα," *Δελτίον τῆς Ἱστορικῆς καὶ Ἐθνολογικῆς Ἑταιρίας τῆς Ἑλλάδος* 1 (1883): 105–12, here 109.

2 From the large bibliography on the topic, see Demetrios J. Constantelos, "Paganism and the State in the Age of Justinian," *Catholic Historical Review* 50:3 (1964): 372–80; Arnaldo Momigliano, "Popular Religious Beliefs and the Late Roman Historians," in *Popular Belief and Practice: Papers Read at the Ninth Summer Meeting and the Tenth Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, ed. G. J. Cuming and Derek Baker (Cambridge: University Press, 1972), 1–18; Garth Fowden, "Bishops and Temples in the Eastern Roman Empire, A.D. 320–435," *Journal of Theological Studies* [NS] 29:1 (1978): 53–78; K. W. Harl, "Sacrifice and Pagan Belief in Fifth- and Sixth-Century Byzantium," *Past & Present* 128 (1990): 7–27; Ramsay MacMullen, *Christianity and Paganism in the Fourth to Eighth Centuries* (New Haven and Yale: Yale University Press, 1997); Fritz Graf, *Roman Festivals in the Greek East: From the Early Empire to the Middle Byzantine Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Maijastina Kahlos, *Religious Dissent in Late Antiquity, 350–450* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).

empire in a post-Mongol Eurasian context.[3] At the same time, the inter-imperial rivalry that emerged between the Ottomans and the Safavids of Iran led to new articulations of Ottoman Sunnism and Safavid Shiism.[4] Along with the incorporation of Egypt and Syria in 1516–17, which were perceived as the main areas of Sunni Islam in the Muslim world, the Ottoman sultans attempted to move away from what has been labelled by scholars as "confessional ambiguity," and initiated complex religious reforms to fashion their imperial Sunni religious ideology, which also affected the religious life of all the non-Muslim religious groups of the empire.[5] The Ottomans' adherence to the Ḥanafī School of Islamic law (*madhhab*) facilitated their task of incorporating and managing the non-Muslim people of the empire, as this particular school of law was more lenient and practical in the interpretation of Islamic law (*sharīʿa*).[6] Complex religious, cultural, and social processes, such as the Islamization and Turkification of the newly conquered territories, peaked during the early sixteenth century and changed the dynamics between non-Muslims and their rulers as conversion to Islam became widespread among the

[3] Tijana Krstić, "Illuminated by the Light of Islam and the Glory of the Ottoman Sultanate: Self-Narratives of Conversion to Islam in the Age of Confessionalization," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51:1 (2009): 35–63; Idem, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2011); Derin Terzioğlu, "Sufis in the Age of State-Building and Confessionalization," in *The Ottoman World*, ed. Christine Woodhead (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), 86–99; Tijana Krstić, "State and Religion, 'Sunnitization' and 'Confessionalism' in Süleyman's Time," in *The Battle for Central Europe: The Siege of Szigetvár and the Death of Süleyman the Magnificent and Miklos Zrínyi (1566)*, ed. Pál Fodor (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), 65–91; Guy Burak, "Faith, Law and Empire in the Ottoman 'Age of Confessionalization' (Fifteenth-Seventeenth Centuries): The Case of 'Renewal of Faith'," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 28:1 (2013): 1–23.

[4] Adel Alouche, *The Origins and Development of the Ottoman-Safavid Conflict (906–962/1500–1555)* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1983); Marcus Dressler, "Inventing Orthodoxy: Competing Claims for Authority and Legitimacy in the Ottoman Safavid Conflict," *Legitimizing the Order: The Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power*, ed. Hakan T. Karateke and Maurus Reinkowski (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2005), 151–76.

[5] Derin Terzioğlu, "How to Conceptualize Ottoman Sunnitization: A Historiographical Discussion," *Turcica* 44 (2012–13): 301–38; Idem, "Where *ʿİlm-i Ḥāl* Meets Catechism: Islamic Manuals of Religious Instruction on the Ottoman Empire in the Age of Confessionalization," *Past & Present* 220 (2013): 79–114; Tijana Krstić, "From *Shahāda* to *ʿAqīda*: Conversion to Islam, Catechization, and Sunnitization in Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Rumeli," in *Islamisation: Comparative Perspectives from History*, ed. Andrew Peacock (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 296–314; Tijana Krstić and Derin Terzioğlou, eds., *Historicizing Sunni Islam in the Ottoman Empire, c. 1450–c. 1750* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2021); Idem, eds., *Entangled Confessionalizations? Dialogic Perspectives on the Politics of Piety and Community-Building in the Ottoman Empire, 15th–18th Centuries* (Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press, 2022).

[6] Colin Imber, *Ebu's-suʿud: The Islamic Legal Tradition* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2009); Guy Burak, *The Second Formation of Islamic Law: The Ḥanafī School in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

Christian and Jewish communities.[7] As a corollary to the phenomenon of changing and defining faith, the main question of religious orthodoxy became a topic of paramount importance for scholars and religious officials from both Christian and Muslim polities. All these actions, religious changes and contexts fueled the production of texts by Ottoman and non-Muslims, which address questions of religious identity, belief and orthopraxy in the early modern Mediterranean.

In their quest to explore the heuristic usefulness of the "confessionalization" paradigm for the Ottoman context – a thesis fashioned in the early 1980s German historiography by Wolfgang Reinhard and Heinz Schilling to investigate the emergence and development of the confessional churches in the post-Reformation European context[8] – scholars of the Ottoman Empire argued that the concepts of "orthodoxy" and "orthopraxy" were instrumental in articulating religious identity in the Ottoman context. As Tijana Krstić stated, these concepts are not perceived as "fixed sets of beliefs and practices, but rather as discursive processes by which different social actors were seeking to impose as authoritative their own understanding of which beliefs and practices should be viewed as 'correct'."[9] Driven by the new challenges posed by these historiographical discussions, scholars of Greek Orthodoxy began to consider the empirical utility of talking about "confessionalization" in the Eastern Christian context, and even proposed to conceptualize it through "entangled confessionalizations" with Western and Islamic developments, and through the epistemic lenses of "knowledge

[7] From the large bibliography on the topic, see Michel Balivet, "Aux origins de l'islamisation des Balkans ottomans," *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 66 (1992): 11–20; Anton Minkov, *Conversion to Islam in the Balkans:* Kisve Bahası *Petitions and Ottoman Social Life, 1670–1730* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004); Heath W. Lowry, *The Islamization and Turkification of the City of Trabzon (Trebizond), 1461–1583* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2009); Krstić, "Illuminated by the Light of Islam"; Krstić, *Contested Conversions to Islam*; Philippe Gelez and Gilles Grivaud, eds., *Les conversions à l'Islam en Asie Mineure, dans les Balkans et dans le monde musulman* (Athens: École Française d'Athènes, 2016); Krstić, "From *Shahāda* to *'Aqīda*".

[8] Wolfgang Reinhard, "Zwang zur Konfessionalisierung? Prolegomena zu einer Theorie des konfessionellen Zeitalters," *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 10 (1983): 257–77; Heinz Schilling, "Die Konfessionalisierung im Reich: Religiöser und gesellschaftlicher Wandel in Deutschland zwischen 1555 und 1620," *Historische Zeitschrift* 246 (1988): 1–45; Wolfgang Reinhard, "Reformation, Counter-Reformation, and the Early-Modern State: A Reassessment," *Catholic Historical Review* 75 (1989): 383–404. For other discussions, see Joel Harington and Helmuth Smith, "Review: Confessionalization, Community, and State Building in Germany, 1555–1870," *Journal of Modern History* 69:1 (1997): 77–101; Heinz Schilling, "Confessionalization and the Rise of Religious and Cultural Frontiers in Early Modern Europe," in *Frontiers of Faith: Religious Exchange and the Constitution of Religious Identities, 1400–1750*, ed. Eszter Andor and István György Tóth (Budapest: Central European University, 2001), 21–36.

[9] Tijana Krstić, "Introduction," in *Entangled Confessionalizations?*, 5.

transfer."[10] As well, for early modern Greek Orthodoxy too, "orthodoxy" (to which one can also add "heterodoxy" or "heresy") and "orthopraxy" were crucial notions employed in crafting the religious discourse of theologians and literati in their attempts to define the boundaries and principles of their belief.

Without claiming any definite discussions on the topic, this essay takes the Athonite monk Pachomios Rousanos as a study case for the Greek Orthodox context and explores how he instrumentalizes the concepts of "orthodoxy (in faith)," "heterodoxy," and "orthopraxy" in order to construct his version of what Orthodoxy is and how its rituals should be performed. Rousanos is a relevant case as he is one of the few figures of sixteenth-century Greek Orthodoxy whose corpus of works allows discussions in this regard. He was a polemist animated by confessional fervour, who concentrated his career towards the moral reformation of his Greek Orthodox compatriots and, in the process, he polemicized not only against them, but also against other Christian confessions and other religions. Lastly, the travels he undertook within both the Ottoman-ruled lands and the Venetian-dominated territories allowed him to provide first-hand information about the social status and moral situation of the Orthodox too.

2. Prosopographical excursus

Pachomios Rousanos was a native of Pigadakia from the island of Zakynthos, which was under Venetian dominion.[11] He was born on November 11,

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[10] Mihai-D. Grigore and Florian Kührer-Wielach, eds., *Orthodoxa Confessio? Konfessionsbildung, Konfessionalisierung und ihre Folgen in der östlichen Christenheit Europas* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018); Kostas Sarris, Nikolas Pissis and Miltos Pechlivanos, eds., *Confessionalization and/as Knowledge Transfer in the Greek Church* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2021).

[11] On Rousanos, see Andreas Moustochydis, "Παχώμιος," in *Ἑλληνομνήμων ἢ σύμμικτα ἑλληνικά: Σύγγραμα ἑλληνικόν* 10 (1847): 624–32; 11 (1852): 633–96; 12 (1853): 697–712; Konstantinos Sathas, *Νεοελληνικὴ Φιλολογία: Βιογραφίαι τῶν ἐν τοῖς γράμμασι διαλαμψάντων Ἑλλήνων ἀπὸ τῆς καταλύσεως τῆς Βυζαντινῆς Αὐτοκρατορίας μέχρι τῆς ἑλληνικῆς ἐθνεγερσίας (1453–1821)* (Athens, 1868), 150–2; Ioannis Karmiris, *Ὁ Παχώμιος Ῥουσάνος καὶ τὰ ἀνέκδοτα δογματικὰ καὶ ἄλλα ἔργα αὐτοῦ* (Athens: Verlag der Byzantinisch-Neugriechischen Jahrbücher, 1935), 3–13; O. Lampsiadis, "Ὁ Παχώμιος Ῥουσάνος καὶ ὁ βίος τῶν συγχρόνων τοῦ," *Ἐπετηρίς Ἑταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν* 13 (1937): 385–92; Borje Knös, *L'histoire de la littérature néo-grecque: La période jusqu'en 1821* (Stockholm, Göteborg and Upsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1961), 281; George Maloney, *A History of Orthodox Theology since 1453* (Belmont: Nordland Publishing Company, 1976), 106–10; Gerhard Podskalsky, *Griechische Theologie in der Zeit der Türkenherrschaft, 1453–1821: Die Orthodoxie im Spannungsfeld der nachreformatorischen Konfessionen des Westens* (München: C.H. Beck, 1988), 98–101; Dimitrios Gonis, ed., *Παχώμιος Ρουσάνος: 450 χρόνια ἀπὸ τὴν κοίμησή του (†1553)* (Athens: Iera Mitropolis Zakynthou kai Strofadon, 2005); Manolis Sergis, *Εκκλησιαστικός λόγος και λαϊκός πολιτισμός τον 16ο αιώνα: Η περίπτωση του Παχωμίου*

1508, and took the monastic habit at the Monastery of St George of Zakynthos quite early in his life. Although information about his education is scarce, it is clear that he was trained as a theologian. It is assumed that he learned theology and Greek literature at the monastery of St George, while a later study sojourn in Venice is still a matter of discussion. Nevertheless, Rousanos was well acquainted with the humanist and Renaissance ideas that circulated in the Venetian sphere of influence. He taught at the popular schools organized around the monasteries of Lesvos and Chios, which counted for his subsequent works on grammar.[12] Around 1530, he moved from Zakynthos to Mount Athos and became a member of the monastic community of the Iviron Monastery. He transformed Iviron into his point of departure for the many travels he undertook around the Eastern Mediterranean territories and managed to visit most of Thessaly, Peloponnesus, the Aegean Islands, Constantinople, Palestine, Egypt, and parts of Anatolia. Because the monastic communities and monks of Mount Athos benefited from special status under Ottoman rule, being awarded a series of religious and fiscal privileges,[13] Rousanos was able to travel constantly into the Ottoman lands. To this one can add the *idiorrhythmic* monastic style adopted by the monasteries, which allowed monks to have personal property, travel more and live separately from the community.[14] It was at Iviron Monastery where Rousanos composed

Ρουσάνου (Athens: Ekdotikos Oikos, 2008), 23–38 [first published as Idem, *Ο Ζακύνθιος μοναχός Παχώμιος Ρουσάνος και ο λαϊκός πολιτισμός του 16ου αιώνα* (Athens, 2000), 23–36]; Octavian-Adrian Negoiță, "Discursul anti-islamic în tratatele apologetico-polemice grecești din perioada post-bizantină (secolele XVI–XVIII)," Phd Thesis (University of Bucharest, 2020), 26–31; Idem, "Pachōmios Rousanos," in *Christian-Muslim Relations, 1500–1900 [Online]*, ed. David Thomas and John Chesworth (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2022), http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2451-9537_cmrii_COM_33814 (Accessed April 17, 2023).

[12] Ioannis Karmiris, "Παχωμίου Ρουσάνου ανέκδοτος γραμματική συγγραφή," *Byzantinisch-neugriechische Jahrbücher* 14 (1937–38): 340–7.

[13] Nicolas Oikonomides, "Monastères et moines lors de la conquête ottomane," *Südost-Forschungen* 35 (1976): 1–10; Heath W. Lowry, "A Note on the Population and Status of the Athonite Monasteries under Ottoman Rule (ca. 1520)," *Wiener Zeitschrift für Kunde des Morgenlandes* 73 (1981): 115–35 [rep. in Idem, *Studies in Defterology: Ottoman Society in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 1992), St. XII]; Elizabeth Zachariadou, "'A Safe and Holy Mountain': Early Ottomans," in *Mount Athos and Byzantine Monasticism: Papers from the Twenty-Eight Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Birmingham, March 1994*, ed. Anthony Bryer and Mary Cunningham (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1996), 127–34; Elizabeth Zachariadou, "Mount Athos and the Ottomans c. 1350–1550," in *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, vol. 5: *Eastern Christianity*, ed. Michael Angold (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 154–68.

[14] This monastic style was opposite to the cenobitic one and became popular in Byzantium especially during the Palaeologan period. However, it has been criticized in the Eastern Church. See Alice-Mary Talbot, "Idiorrhythmic monasticism," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, vol. 2, ed. Alexander Kazhdan (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 981–2. See also the contribution by Zachary Chitwood in this volume.

most of his works, copied ancient and medieval Greek texts, and commented upon them.[15] While composing his works he benefited also from the impressive libraries of Athos, collecting and producing manuscripts from his own library. After his death, most of Rousanos' library was transferred from Athos to Venice, where his editions and manuscripts entered various repositories. Today, the manuscripts of his works are spread across Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean, from Oxford to Jerusalem *via* Berlin, Dresden, Venice, and Athos. Rousanos died in 1553 in the diocese of Nafpaktos (Epirus).

Rousanos was a theologian and a fierce defender of the Orthodox faith and practices, who left behind an impressive body of works composed in a wide array of literary genres (e.g., hagiography, homiletics, theological treatises, hymnography, epistolography).[16] Scholars argued that he theologized without any drop of originality but, as I will argue throughout the paper, it was his mindset not to deviate from the official teachings of the Greek Orthodox Church and place his discourse within its theological tradition.[17] As a consequence, Rousanos' originality should be observed in the way he organizes his polemical material and employs the corpus of Orthodox dogmas and teachings transmitted to his own times through theological texts. During his career, Rousanos strived to articulate the boundaries of Orthodoxy in the face of what he considered as religious challenges posed to the Greek Christian communities, whether by the Ottomans or Western influences. He was the first Greek theologian who wrote

[15] Carlo Castellani, "Pacomio Rusano, grammatico greco del secolo XVI e i manoscritti autografi delle sue opera," *Atti del Reale Istituto veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti* [Seria 7] 6 (1894–5): 903–10; Domenico Surace, "Copisti greci in tre codici sconosciuti della Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Roma (S. A. Valle 100, 102-103)," *Νέα Ῥώμη* 8 (2011): 219–304; Dionysios J. Mousouras, *Αι μοναί Στροφάδων και Αγίου Γεωργίου των Κρημνών Ζακύνθου (Μελέτη φιλολογική και παλαιογραφική)* (Athens: The Monastery of Strophades and Saint Dionysos, 2003), 192–207; Reinhart Ceulemans, "A Post-Byzantine Reader of Prokopios of Gaza: Pachomios Rousanos in MS Venice, Marc. gr. II. 105 [Diktyon 70267]," *The Byzantine Review* 2 (2020): https://www.uni-muenster.de/Ejournals/index.php/byzrev/article/view/2751/2662 (Accessed April 19, 2023).

[16] Karmiris, *Ὁ Παχώμιος Ῥουσάνος*.

[17] See, for instance, Anastasios Maras, "Ο Παχώμιος Ρουσάνος και η εποχή του: *Κατά Αγιοκατηγόρων*," *Μνημοσύνη* 13 (2013): 315–28. The dominating reductionist historiographical conception that the Greek Orthodox knowledge culture was static and ossified during the early modern period is currently challenged by scholars, who instead argue that it was in fact dynamic and ever-changing according to historical context(s). See Nikolaos A. Chrissidis, "The World of Eastern Orthodoxy," in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern European History, 1350–1750*, vol. 1: *Peoples and Places*, ed. Hamish Scott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 626–51; Tassos Anastassiadis, "Eastern Orthodoxy: An *histoire croisée* and Connected History Approach," *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique modern et contemporain* 2 (2020): https://journals.openedition.org/bchmc/463 (Accessed April 19, 2023); Sarris, Pissis and Pechlivanos, *Confessionalization and/as Knowledge Transfer*, 4–5.

a systematic treatise of the Orthodox dogmas under Ottoman rule, which the Athonite monk composed in five chapters and entitled *Syntagma or Dogmatical Discourses* (Σύνταγμα ἢ λόγοι δογματικοὶ) in which the accent falls on the Christological dogma.[18] Rousanos was a fervent reader of the Scriptures, the Fathers of the Church and classical literature, which transpire throughout his works. Due to his travels, he was able to observe directly many aspects of the Orthodox religious life during the first half of the sixteenth century, and he attempted to propose remedies for strengthening the spiritual and social status of the community of believers. As will be seen further in this essay, Rousanos did not refrain from harsh criticism against clergy and simple believers alike. His agenda for defending Orthodoxy spans from his attempts at social disciplining of his fellow Christians to polemical engagement with other Eastern Christian traditions (e.g., Monophysites), Latins (Catholics), and even Muslims, which makes him one of the most renowned Greek Orthodox polemists of the early modern period. Finally, Rousanos advocated against the use of vernacular Greek in ecclesiastical matters and for the benefit of using the Scripture as a valuable tool of learning. He himself constantly employed biblical Greek language often infused with archaic forms throughout his writings, which he considered fit to express the Orthodox tenets.

3. The Kartanites

In 1536, the Greek monk Ioannikios Kartanos (c. 1500–c. 1567) managed to publish in Venice his opus *The Old and New Testament, that is Florilegium and Its Necessity* (Παλαιά τε καὶ Νέα Διαθήκη ἤτοι τὸ ἄνθος καὶ ἀναγκαῖον αὐτῆς), which was also known as *Florilegium* (Ἄνθος).[19] Through this edition, Kartanos became the first Greek theologian who attempted to make the biblical text available in vernacular Greek for a larger audience, following thus a trend of vernacularizing the biblical texts that peaked in Western Europe also during the

[18] Karmiris, *Ὁ Παχώμιος Ῥουσάνος*, 81–162.

[19] Ioannikios Kartanos, *Τὸ παρὸν Βιβλίον ἔναι ἡ Παλαιά τε καὶ Νέα Διαθήκη ἤτοι τὸ ἄνθος καὶ ἀναγκαῖον αὐτῆς, ἔστι δὲ πάνυ ὠφέλιμον καὶ ἀναγγαῖον πρὸς πᾶσα χριστιανόν. Non sine Priuilegio* (Venice: In ædibus Bartholomæi Zanetti Casterzagensis, 1536). For the modern edition, see Eleni Kakoulidi-Panou, *Ιωαννίκιος Καρτάνος: Παλαιά τε και Νέα Διαθήκη [Βενετία 1536]* (Thessaloniki: Kentro Ellenikis Glosas, 2000). For presentations of the edition, see Émile Legrand, *Bibliographie hellénique ou description raisonnée des ouvrages publiés en grec par des grecs aux XVe et XVIe siècle*, vol. 1 (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1885), 226–33 (no. 95); Evro Layton, *The Sixteenth Century Greek Book in Italy: Printers and Publishers for the Greek World* (Venice: Hellenic Institute of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Studies, 1994), 160–161 (the *Florilegium*) and 513–21 (the publisher).

first half of the sixteenth century.[20] Kartanos was a Greek theologian living between two worlds. He was born around 1500 in Corfu under Venetian dominion, as the son of a shipbuilder, and undertook an ecclesiastical career early on in his life, being ordained a hieromonk (priest-monk) around 1524 at the Pantokrator Monastery (Kerkyra) and later received the monastic distinction of protosynkellos.[21] In terms of education, he might have received theological instruction at the monastery, but after he moved to Venice he definitely became acquainted with the humanist ideas and trends disseminated in the capital of the Most Serene Republic. He also made use of Venice’s impressive libraries and its importance as a hub of production and circulation of books. But as daring as Kartanos’ initiative of making available the Scriptures in the vernacular was for its own time and for the Greek intellectual history too, it did not escape harsh criticism, as his contemporary Orthodox theologians disapproved it on both linguistical and theological grounds.

The fiercest adversary of the “kartanite” movement was Rousanos himself. He even took a step further and called Kartanos and his followers heretics, thus inventing a heresy in sixteenth-century Orthodox context out of nothing.[22] Through his aggressive stance on “kartanism,” Rousanos even managed to have

[20] Eleni Kakoulidi-Panou, “Ο πρώτος μεταφραστής της Αγίας Γραφής στη δημοτική γλώσσα Ιωαννίκιος Καρτάνος 1536,” in *Εισηγήσεις Δ΄ Συνάξεως Ορθοδόξων Βιβλικών Θεολόγων* (Thessaloniki, 1986), 221–8. For the general topic of translating the Bible into Greek milieu, see G. Metallinos, *Το ζήτημα της μεταφράσεως της Αγίας Γραφής εις την νεοελληνικήν κατά τον ΙΘ΄ αιώνα*, 2nd edition (Athens: Ekdoseis Armos, 2004); Athanasios Despotis, “Orthodox Biblical Exegesis in the Early Modern World (1450–1750),” in *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 3: *From 1450 to 1750*, ed. Euan Cameron (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 518–31; Idem, “Theology, Philosophy, and Confessionalization: Eastern Orthodox Biblical Interpretation after the Fall of Constantinople up to the Late Seventeenth Century,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Bible in Orthodox Christianity*, ed. Eugen J. Pentiuc (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), 275–87.

[21] For Kartanos, see Sathas, *Νεοελληνικὴ Φιλολογία*, 147–50; Philipp Meyer, *Die theologische Litteratur der griechischen Kirche im 16. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig, 1899), 39–40; A. Palmieri, “Cartanos, Joannikios,” in *Dictionnaire de theologie catholique*, vol. 2 (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1908), 1805–6; Ch. Papadopoulos, “Ιστορικὰ σημειώματα: α΄. Ἰωαννίκιος Καρτάνος,” *Θεολογία* 4 (1926): 5–7; Takis Hristopoulos, “Καρτάνος, Ἰωαννίκιος,” in *Θρησκευτικὴ καὶ Ἠθικὴ Ἐγκυκλοπαιδεία*, vol. 7 (Athens, 1965), 373–4; Eleni Kakoulidi-Panou, “Ιωαννίκιος Καρτάνος: Συμβολή στη δημώδη πεζογραφία του 16ου αιώνα,” *Θεσαυρίσματα* 12 (1975): 217–56 [republished in Idem, *Συμβολές: νεοελληνικά μελετήματα* (Ioannina, 1982), St. II]; K. Zaridi, “Ioannikios Kartanos inconnu comme copiste,” *Biblos* 45:1 (1996): 49–54; Christian Gastgeber and U. Horak, “Nocheinmal der Diebzauber, nocheinmal Ioannikios Kartanos, II, Notitiunculae zum Theol. gr. 19: Der Restaurator Ioannikios Kartanos,” *Biblos* 45:1 (1996): 219–24; Knös, *L’histoire de la littérature néo-grecque*, 281–83; Podskalsky, *Griechische Theologie*, 99.

[22] Yorgos Tzedopoulos, “Orthodox Martyrdom and Confessionalization in the Ottoman Empire, Late Fifteenth-Mid-Seventeenth Centuries,” in *Entangled Confessionalizations?*, 335–381, here 355.

Kartanos anathematized by Athanasios, the bishop of Nafpaktos. All this polemic against Kartanos fueled furthermore the publication of an entire *dossier* by the Athonite monk, which comprises texts through which he dismantled Kartanos' teachings and discussed what he considered to be the proper approach towards the biblical texts: 1) *On the benefit gained from reading the Scriptures* (Περὶ τῆς ἐκ τῶν θείων γραφῶν ὠφελείας); 2) *Homily against those who slander the Holy Scriptures by ignorance* (Ὁμιλία πρὸς τοὺς ἀγροίκως τὴν θείαν Γραφὴν διασύροντας); 3) *On the Kartanite heretics* (Περὶ Καρτανιτῶν αἱρετικῶν); 4) *On the heresy of the Kartanites* (Περὶ τῆς τῶν Καρτανιτῶν αἱρέσεως); 5) *On the heresy of cursed Kartanos, its nonsense and followers* (Αἱ τοῦ καταράτου Καρτάνου αἱρέσεις καὶ φληναφίαι καὶ ἡ τούτων ἀνατροπὴ); 6) Letter to Athanasios of Nafpaktos (Ἐπιστολὴ Ἀθανασίῳ Ναυπάκτου); and 7) *Against the Venetian typographers* (Αἱ κατὰ τῶν τυπογράφων τῆς Βενετίας).[23]

Kartanos composed his *Florilegium* between October 10, 1534, and the end of September 1537, while he was imprisoned in Venice due to a quarrel with the Greek Catholic Metropolitan of Monemvasia, Arsenios (Aristoboulos Apostolis, 1465–1535).[24] The reason for his arrest was that he attempted to stop the metropolitan from preaching in the Greek church of Venice on one of the days of the Great Lent, although Arsenios had the permission of the Venetian authorities. Kartanos believed that the publication of the *Florilegium* would lessen his further ascension into the ranks of the Church hierarchy, so he went to Constantinople and asked Patriarch Jeremias I (1522–1524; 1525–1546) to ordain him bishop as a reward for this achievement. Contrary to his high expectations, the patriarch rejected his request and, after analyzing the *Florilegium*, Jeremias labelled Kartanos a heterodox along with his work and teachings.[25] Being remised, Kartanos took refuge in the diocese of Nafpaktos (Epirus) where he started to gather adherents and spread his teachings.

[23] The *dossier* is available in Ioannis Vasilikos, *Κανέλλου Σπανού, Γραμματική της κοινής των Ελλήνων Γλώσση; Παχωμίου Ρουσάνου, Κατά χυδαϊζόντων και αιρετικών και άλλα του αυτού* (Trieste: Typois tou Austriakou Loud, 1908); Spyridon Lambros, "Ἐκ τῶν Ὁμιλιῶν τοῦ Παχωμίου Ῥουσάνου," *Νέος Ελληνομνήμων* 13 (1916): 56–67.

[24] Besides his ecclesiastical career, Arsenios was a famous scholar and bibliophile, who composed prefaces to printed editions of ancient Greek authors and a collection of apophthegms of ancient figures, which he published in Rome in 1519. See Sathas, *Νεοελληνικὴ Φιλολογία*, 126–30; Legrand, *Bibliographie hellénique*, clxv–clxxiv; A. Papadia-Lala, "Ὁ Ἀρσένιος Μονεμβασίας ὁ Ἀποστόλης καὶ ἡ Ἑλληνική Αδελφότητα Βενετίας (1534–1535)," *Θεσαυρίσματα* 14 (1977): 110–26; Helene Perdicoyianni-Paleologou, "Famous Grammarians & Poets of the Byzantine Empire," *World History Encyclopedia*, https://www.worldhistory.org/article/1709/famous-grammarians--poets-of-the-byzantine-empire/ (Accessed April 13, 2023).

[25] Hristoforos Filitas, *Περὶ Ἰωαννίκιου Καρτάνου, Δαμασκήνου τοῦ Στουδίτου καὶ Παχωμίου Ῥουζάνου: Ἐπιστολιμαια διάλεξις* (Kerkyra: Typografias tis Kyverniseos, 1847), 7.

The publication of the *Florilegium* in Venice also inscribes itself in an emerging interest among the Greek intellectuals of the sixteenth century towards the vernacular language. It should be noted that shortly after Kartanos' *Florilegium* the *Grammatical Introduction* of the renowned Nikolaos Sophianos (c.1500–after 1551) was printed in 1544, which was, in fact, a compilation of vernacular Greek forms, dedicated to the Cardinal of Lorraine Jean de Guise (1518–1550).[26] In his attempt to provide Greek audiences with a tool to easily access the biblical text, Kartanos emulated the work *Anthology of the Virtues* (Ἄνθος τῶν χαριτῶν, *Fior di virtù*) published in Venice in 1529 – the first printed vernacular Greek text in prose – which was also one of the most circulated and translated pieces of pious content from the early modern Orthodox world.[27] With an impressive rate of success, Kartanos' work was successively reprinted at least five times between 1536 and 1567 (editions updated with corrections by Kartanos himself), and circulated widely among clergymen and simple believers alike. Its influence can be detected even after his death, as followers of his teaching can be traced in the Orthodox milieu and the *Florilegium* became a bestseller, being referenced until the eighteenth century.[28] Aware of its popularity, even the famous Tübingen professor and classicist Martin Crusius (1524–1607) acquired a copy of Kartanos' book in 1578.[29]

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26 For Sofianos and his grammar, see Sathas, *Νεοελληνικὴ Φιλολογία*, 141–3; Émile Legrand, *Νικολάου Σοφιανοῦ τοῦ Κερκυραίου Γραμματικὴ τῆς κοινῆς τῶν Ἑλλήνων γλώσσης νῦν τὸ πρῶτον κατὰ τὸ ἐν Παρισίοις χειρόγραφον ἐκδοθεῖσα* (Paris and Athens: Librairie Maisonneuve et Cie, 1870); Theodor Papadopoulos, *Νικόλαου Σοφιανοῦ Γραμματικὴ τῆς κοινῆς τῶν Ἑλλήνων γλώσσης* (Athens: Kedros, 1977); M. Vernant, *La Grammaire de Nicolas Sophianos (Transcription diplomatique du manuscrit gr. 2592 de la Bibliothèque nationale et établissement du texte)* (Paris, 1990); Layton, *The Sixteenth Century Greek Book*, 460–72; A. Koumarianos and G. Tolias, "Ο αναγεννησιακός Νικόλαος Σοφιανός," in *Βυζάντιο–Βενετία–νεώτερος ελληνισμός: Μια περιπλάνηση στον κόσμο της ελληνικής επιστημονικής σκέψης: Πρακτικά συνεδρίου, Αθήνα, 7-9 Νοεμβρίου 2003* (Athens, 2004), 147–58; George Tolias, "Nikolaos Sophianos's *Totius Graeciae Descriptio*: The Resources, Diffusion and Function of a Sixteenth-Century Antiquarian Map of Greece," *Imago Mundi* 58:2 (2006): 150–82; Marc. D. Lauxtermann, "The *Grammatical Introduction* by Nikolaos Sofianos: Manuscripts, Date, and Linguistic Models," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 44:1 (2020): 124–36.

27 Spyridon Lambros, "Τὸ *Ἄνθος Χαρίτων* καὶ τὸ *Ἄνθος* τοῦ Ἰωαννικίου Καρτάνου," *Νέος Ἑλληνομνήμων* 13 (1916): 329–33; Eleni Kakoulidi-Panou, "Fior di virtù – Άνθος Χαρίτων," *Ἑλληνικὰ* 24 (1971): 165–311 [rep. in Idem, *Συμβολές: νεοελληνικά μελετήματα* (Ioannina, 1982), St. I]; Eleni Kakoulidi-Panou and Komnini D. Pidonia, *Άνθος των Χαρίτων–Φιορ δε Βερτού: Η Κυπριακή Παραλλαγή* (Lefkosia: Kentrou Epistimonikon Ereunon, 1994); Stamatia Koliadimos, *Άνθος των χαρίτων: Παράλληλη έκδοση υστερομεσαιωνικών και νεότερων ελληνικών παραλλαγών με αντικριστή παράθεση του ιταλικού προτύπου* (Athens, 2022).

28 Asterios Argyriou, "La Bible dans le monde orthodoxe au XVIe siècle," in *Les temps des Réformes et la Bible*, ed. Guy Bedouelle and Bernard Roussel (Paris: Beauchesne, 1989), 385–400, here 396–7.

29 Martin Crusius, *Turcogreciæ libri octo* (Basel: Per Leonardvm Ostenivm Sebastiani Henricpetri Impensa, 1584), 48, 63, 195–196, 199.

The *Florilegium* was in fact, a paraphrase of the Bible, and it was structured into four large parts. The core is a compilation of Old and New Testament episodes Kartanos considered relevant for the history of the Church. This was prefaced by a summary of popular theology and followed by nineteenth homilies on various sins and vices. The last part was a brief explanation of the Liturgy followed by a paraphrase of the Lord's prayer. It seems that Kartanos did not have a theological reason in mind for composing the *Florilegium*, as he explains in the prologue:

> I did not compose it for the learned, but for the unlearned like me, so that all the craftsmen and the unlearned would understand the Holy Bible, the sailors and craftsmen, women and children and every little person, as long as they know how to read.[30]

He intended the *Florilegium* to be a manual of instruction for the simple people about the Scripture, popular theology, and the history of salvation in their own spoken language, which is a unique initiative for this period, considering that such attempts can be tracked in the Greek milieu mainly with the advent of Enlightenment.[31] However, scholars pointed out that the style and quality of the language and contents of the *Florilegium* were deficient in many regards.[32] Kartanos assembled diverse elements he borrowed carelessly from both Italian and Greek sources, which made scholars argue in favour of an Italian prototype for the *Florilegium*.[33] The *Fioretto di tutta la Biblia historiato* was a very popular book that circulated in Renaissance Italy, and was eventually condemned at the Council of Trent (1545–1563) for its theological imprecisions and usage of apocryphal material.[34] Kartanos used it extensively and extracted from it precisely biblical episodes also included in apocryphal materials, such as the Gospel of Thomas, that narrates the well-known episode about the child Jesus

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30 Kakoulidi-Panou, *Ιωαννίκιος Καρτάνος*, 103.

31 See, for instance, Paschalis M. Kitromilides, *Enlightenment and Revolution: The Making of Modern Greece* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2013); Idem, *Enlightenment and Religion in the Orthodox World* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2016).

32 Kakoulidi-Panou, *Ιωαννίκιος Καρτάνος*, 17–85; Yorgos Vlantis, "Ἡ κριτικὴ τοῦ Παχωμίου Ῥουσάνου στὸν Ἰωαννίκιο Καρτάνο," in *Παχώμιος Ρουσάνος: 450 χρόνια ἀπὸ τὴν κοίμησή του (†1553)*, ed. Dimitrios Gonis (Athens: Iera Mitropolis Zakynthou kai Strofadon, 2005).

33 Kakoulidi-Panou, *Ιωαννίκιος Καρτάνος*, 47–50.

34 *Fioretto di tutta la Biblia historiato et de novo in lingua Tosca corretto: Con certe predicationo tutto tratto del testamento Vecchio. Cominciando dalla creatione del mondo infino a la Nativita di Jesu Christo* (Venice: Nicolo Zopino et Vincentio Compagni, 1521); Graziano Ruffini, "Une vente de livres à Gênes en 1583," in *Selling & Collecting: Printed Book Sale Catalogues and Private Libraries in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Giovanna Granata and Angela Nuovo (Macerata: Università di Macerata, 2018), 79–144 here 98, 102 and 115.

breathing life into birds made out of clay. As such, Kartanos' *Florilegium* was not criticized only because of the vernacular, but it was its theological framework that attracted the attention of its contemporaries.[35]

In his polemic, Rousanos built the main argument specifically on Kartanos' usage of apocryphal texts. He argued that these altered the Orthodox teachings and even provided inaccurate and unsubstantiated images of crucial events of the salvation history. As a dogmatist, Rousanos awarded particular attention to deviations from the Orthodox dogma, and he criticized Kartanos over the way in which he presented the Trinitarian and Christological dogmas, accusing thus Kartanos of a form of Arianism and pantheistic tendencies.[36] Regarding the linguistical aspects, Rousanos dismissed the translation of the Scripture in any of the Greek dialects. He believed that archaic Greek is, in fact, the source of all Greek dialects spoken in the sixteenth-century Ottoman lands, and their usage in ecclesiastical matters damages, in fact, the correct expression of the Church dogmas and teachings, which are of vital importance for the survival of Orthodoxy in Ottoman context.[37] In this regard, Rousanos found Kartanos' vernacular unacceptable and the *Florilegium* infused with an Italian vocabulary.

But what made Rousanos polemicize in such a way against Kartanos? It is clear that throughout his writings, polemical attitudes, and criticism towards everything he considered foreign to the Orthodox dogma, as it was transmitted in the Church, Rousanos posed in a *fidei defensor* entitled to draw clear lines between the "true" Orthodox teachings and the "heretical" deviations. Secondly, his reticence towards printing is also noticeable. Rousanos argued that mistakes can infiltrate the printed text due to the negligence of typographers, who are not always familiar with the theological arguments (or even the Greek language), and, in their turn, these mistakes can affect the correct rendering of the dogmas. As Yorgos Tzedopoulos showed, Rousanos' arguments regarding the vernacularization of the Bible are similar to those of the Catholics who were discussing the issue for the Western Christian milieu at the Council of Trent, and ultimately favoured Latin over vernacular translations of the Bible.[38] Rousanos instrumentalized Kartanos' case to support his own views regarding the usefulness of the Bible for instruction, and follow his agenda on social

[35] Georgios D. Metallinos, *Παράδοση και αλλοτρίωση* (Athens: Ekdoseis Domos, 1994), 116.

[36] Vlantis, "Ἡ κριτικὴ τοῦ Παχωμίου Ῥουσάνου," 535–40.

[37] Vlantis, "Ἡ κριτικὴ τοῦ Παχωμίου Ῥουσάνου," 541–43.

[38] Tzedopoulos, "Orthodox Martyrdom and Confessionalization," 355. For general discussions, see Hubert Jedin, *A History of the Council of Trent*, vol. 2: *The First Sessions at Trent 1545–47*, trans. Dom Ernest Graf OSB (London, Paris and New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons LTD, 1961), 67–69; Wim François, "Vernacular Bible Reading in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe: The 'Catholic' Position Revisited," *Catholic Historical Review* 104:1 (2018): 23–56.

disciplining among the Orthodox by playing on the notions of "heresy" and "orthodoxy". Although Eleni Kakoulidi-Panou believed that Kartanos' theological errors were not heretical teachings but subtle deviations from the official dogmas of the Orthodox Church, which she assigns to Kartanos' ignorance and incapability to properly address his sources, it is clear that this opinion was not shared by Rousanos in the sixteenth century.[39] Kartanos removed the problematic passages from the 1567 edition of the *Florilegium*, but he still did not manage to obtain the desired position nor to rehabilitate his name among his adversaries. Nevertheless, his attempt to transpose the biblical text into vernacular Greek lay the path for later developments in Greek Orthodoxy, the first being the bilingual edition of the New Testament of Maximos of Gallipoli (d. 1633), printed in Geneva in 1638 under the patronage of Patriarch of Constantinople Kyrillos Loukaris (1572–1638), who became notorious in the Orthodox world because of his *Confession* of faith and connections with the Protestants.[40]

4. Priests, Monks, and Simple Believers

The polemic against Kartanos offered Rousanos the possibility to develop even further his adversity towards members of the clergy and the "heterodox" printed books that influenced them, considering the priests responsible for the poor moral situation of the believers:

> However, we should also talk about our own priests, considered all-knowing. They utterly reject both the Old and New Scripture, and not only these, but also any rational knowledge – God have mercy! – not

[39] Kakoulidi-Panou, *Ιωαννίκιος Καρτάνος*.

[40] See *Ἡ Καινὴ Διαθήκη τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, Δίγλωττος. Ἐν ᾗ ἀντιπροσώπως τό τε θεῖον πρωτότυπον καὶ ἡ ἀπαραλλάκτως ἐξ ἐκείνου είς ἁπλὴν διάλεκτον, διὰ τοῦ μακαρίτου κυρίου Μαξίμου τοῦ Καλλιουπολίτου γενομένη μετάφρασις ἅμα ἐτυπώθησαν* (Geneva, 1638). For the presentation of the edition, see Legrand, *Bibliographie hellénique*, 363–88 (no. 267). For discussions, see Nomikos M. Vaporis, "Patriarch Kyrillos Loukaris and the Translations of the Scriptures into Modern Greek," *Ἐκκλησιαστικὸς φάρος* 59 (1977): 227–41; Manousos I. Manousakas, "Νέα στοιχεία για την πρώτη μετάφραση της Καινής Διαθήκης στη δημοτική γλώσσα από το Μάξιμο Καλλιουπολίτη," *Μεσαιωνικά και Νέα Ελληνικά* 2 (1986): 7–70; Dimitris Livanios, "'In the Beginning was the Word': Orthodoxy and Bible Translation into Modern Greek (16th–19th Centuries)," *Mediterranean Chronicle* 4 (2014): 101–20; Ovidiu Olar, "« Un trésor enfoui »: Kyrillos Loukaris et le Nouveau Testament en grec publié à Genève en 1638 à travers les lettres d'Antoine Léger", *Cahiers du Monde russe* 58:3 (2017): 341–70. On Loukaris, see Ovidiu-Victor Olar, *La Boutique de Théophile: Les relations du patriarche de Constantinople Kyrillos Loukaris (1570–1638) avec la Réforme* (Paris: Centre d'études byzantines, néo-helléniques et sud-est européennes, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 2019).

> knowing how to bring any offering or perform any other sacrament. And how could they when they neither know how to write nor read, nor have they any books, but have borrowed from everywhere some which are corrupt in body, letters and conception?[41]

and he continues:

> "But why is it that Christ allows his holy churches and monasteries to be trespassed by unbelievers, [one may ask]?" "Why?" When you see them trespassed by the priests are you not upset? Nor do you cry too when you see how the monasteries and the flocks [of believers] are damaged by some questionable shepherds? For you might run away from war through cunning, but when your own companion becomes an adversary, what can you do?[42]

Regardless of the superior tone in which Rousanos voices his remarks, he managed to grasp some major aspects of the clergy's existence during Ottoman rule. Since the Byzantine times and well beyond in the early modern era, the Orthodox clergy experienced many periods of syncope in their existence due to political instability (or transition) in the territories. These periods affected not only the number of clergymen but also the competence of those who occupied the available positions.[43] As it was in the case of the high clergy, priests often paid amounts of money to their bishops in order to be ordained and given a certain parish, although such practices were in direct violation of the Church's canons and moral values. Later, even patriarch Loukaris will remark in his *Short dialogue* (Διάλογος βραχύς) of 1616 that takes place between two fictional characters, the Zealot and Philaleth ("lover of truth"), that the purchase of offices was damaging the Church life during the Ottoman rule, and this situation also lessened the

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41 Rousanos, "Πρὸς τοὺς ἐλληνίζοντας," 109.

42 Ioannis Karmiris, ed., "'Ο ἀνεκδοτος λόγος πρὸς τοὺς δυσανασχετοῦντας πρὸς τὰς ἐκ τῶν ἐθνῶν ἐπαγομένας ἡμῖν θλίψεις τοῦ Παχώμιου Ρουσάνου," *Ἐκκλησία* 16 (1938): 216–19 and 231–35, here 233.

43 There is a lot of research to be conducted on the Greek Orthodox lower clergy. From the available bibliography, see P. Akanthopoulos, "Η ιστορία των ενοριών του Οικουμενικού Πατριαρχείου κατά την Τουρκοκρατία," Ph.D. Thesis (Aristoteleian University of Thessaloniki, 1984); E. Papagianni, *Τα οικονομικά του έγγαμου κλήρου στο Βυζάντιο* (Athens, 1986); Eleonora Kountoura-Galaki, *Ο βυζαντινός κλήρος και η κοινωνία των « σκοτεινών αιώνων »* (Athens: National Hellenic Research Foundation, 1996); Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, "Glances at the Greek Orthodox Priests in the Seventeenth Century," in *Living in the Ottoman Ecumenical Community: Essays in Honour of Suraiya Faroqhi*, ed. Vera Constantini and Markus Koller (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2008), 307–16.

conversion of the Orthodox to other confessions or religions.[44] Along with the Ottoman conquests in Anatolia and the Balkans, members of the lower clergy (*papades*) were incorporated within the Ottoman administration too, but unlike the members of the high clergy (patriarchs, metropolitans, and bishops), they were not appointed through official documents (*berāt*s). Although they were directly under the jurisdiction of their appointed bishops or metropolitans, the Orthodox priests were still part of the Ottoman administration as "semi-official ecclesiastical figures, comparable to the agents who operated on the fringes of the Ottoman institutional system."[45] The priests were in charge of the religious and communal life of their parishes, performing the liturgical services and attending to the spiritual needs of the Orthodox while being responsible for the material assets of their churches.

What is alarming to Rousanos is that the priests would often deviate from the Orthodox praxis, especially regarding the performing of sacraments which ultimately transform into "heterodox" rituals. Besides the episode at the start of this essay, Rousanos recounts how during his travels he observed a priest who allowed a midwife to cast a handful of salt in the water prepared for performing the baptism. When Rousanos confronted him about the issue, the priest had no objections to the midwife's actions, although they were in direct violation of the Church's canons.[46] Rousanos instrumentalizes the "religious ignorance" theme to denounce the poor level of religious and theological instruction among the lower clergymen.[47] The lack of proper teaching manuals and unfamiliarity with the Bible – whose utility in education is constantly advocated by Rousanos – made the Athonite monk accuse such priests of the decadent moral status of the Orthodox communities.

But Rousanos was not the only early modern Greek theologian voicing criticism towards the clergy. Various theologians, such as Gennadios II Scholarios (c. 1400–c. 1472), the first patriarch of Constantinople after 1453, Theodore Agallianos (c. 1400–1474), an official of the Patriarchate, or the renowned theologian Damaskenos Stoudites (d. 1577) were critical about the situation of the Church and the Orthodox people under the Ottoman rule. In their writings, they sanctioned a series of issues that contributed to the decline of the Church,

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[44] For this text, see A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Ἀνάλεκτα Ἱεροσολυμιτικῆς Σταχυολογίας*, vol. 1 (Sankt Petersburg, 1891), 220–30.

[45] Zachariadou, "Glances," 311 who draws upon Gilles Veinstein, "Sur les *na'ib* ottomans (XVème–XVIème siècles)," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 25 (2001): 247–67.

[46] Rousanos, "Πρὸς τοὺς ἑλληνίζοντας," 109–10.

[47] On ignorance, see Matei Cazacu, "Moines savants et popes ignorants dans le monde orthodoxe post-byzantin," in *Histoires des hommes de Dieu dans l'Islam et le Christianisme*, ed. Dominique Iogna-Prat and Gilles Veinstein (Paris: Flammarion, 2003), 147–76.

such as the practice of office buying within the ecclesiastical system, the illiteracy that characterized most of the members of the monastic communities, or the absence of religious education among the community of the faithful. Writing in the immediate years after 1453, Scholarios complained about the apostasy of the faithful, the ignorance of the clergy, and the hypocrisy of the Orthodox, by pointing to the fact that all these are connected to the divine punishment (received through the Turkish rule) casted by God upon the Orthodox for their sins.[48] In his turn, Agallianos emphasized the decadence of the Church in the following years after the fall of Constantinople, and criticized the large influence that the *archontes* (laymen connected to the Patriarchate) had in the ecclesiastical affairs.[49] Stoudites, one of Rousanos' contemporaries, builds on Agallianos' ideas regarding the *archontes*, highlighting the destruction of the true monastic spirit by allowing lay people to build monasteries.[50]

Rousanos extended his polemics towards Church's hierarchy and to monasticism too. Being a monk, he was able to know from inside the monastic life and the theological ideas that circulated among monastic circles. Although the *idiorrhythmic* style adopted by most Athonite monasteries allowed Rousanos to travel constantly, he opposed it as he believed it encouraged the emergence of monastic vagabondage and disinterest towards the "true" values of Orthodox monasticism.[51] During Ottoman rule, monks began to wander around the Mediterranean and European lands to collect alms for their monasteries. They carried relics of saints, spread various ideas of Orthodox spirituality and even disseminated texts of theological content.[52] Moreover, monks became acquainted

[48] Gennadios Scholarios, "Lamentation de Scholarios sur les malheurs de sa vie," in *Oeuvres complètes de Gennade Scholarios*, vol. 1, ed. L. Petit, X. A. Sidéridès and M. Jugie (Paris: Maison de la Bonne Presse, 1928), 283–94 and Gennadios Scholarios, "Κατὰ τῆς σιμονιανῆς αἱρέσεως ἤ ἀπιστίας," in *Oeuvres complètes de Gennade Scholarios*, vol. 3, ed. L. Petit, X. A. Sidéridès and M. Jugie (Paris: Maison de la Bonne Presse, 1930), 239–51. On Scholarios, see Marie-Hélène Blanchet, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios (vers 1400–vers 1472): Un intellectuel Orthodoxe face à la disparition de l'empire Byzantin* (Paris: Institut Français d'Études Byzantines, 2008).

[49] Ch. Patrinelis, *Ὁ Θεόδορος Ἀγαλλιανὸς ταυτιζόμενος πρὸς τὸν Θεοφάνην Μηδείας καὶ οἱ ἀνέκδοτοι λόγοι του* (Athens, 1966). On Agallianos, see Marie-Hélène Blanchet, *Théodore Agallianos: Dialogue avec un moine contre les Latins (1442). Édition critique, traduction française et commentaire* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2013).

[50] E. Kakoulidi-Panou, "Δαμασκηνού Στουδίτη « Διάλογος »," *Δωδώνη* 3 (1974): 446–58. On Stoudites, see Lamprini Manos, *Δαμασκηνός ο Στουδίτης, ο βίος και το έργο του* (Athens: Syndesmos ton en Athenais Megaloscholiton, 1999).

[51] Sergis, *Εκκλησιαστικός λόγος*, 60–6. Another example of this dispute about the free movement of monks and vagabondage, see in the contribution of Taisiya Leber to this volume.

[52] Aleksandar Fotić, "Athonite Travelling Monks and the Ottoman Authorities (16th–18th Centuries)," in *Perspectives on Ottoman Studies: Papers from the 18th Symposium of the International Committee of Pre-Ottoman and Ottoman Studies (CIEPO)*, vol. 1, ed. Ekrem Čaušević, Nenad Moacanin and Vjeran Kursar (Berlin, Münster and Vienna: LIT Verlag, 2010), 157–65; Stefano Saracino, "Greek

with new ideas in the course of their travels, which they brought back to their homelands. In this regard, Rousanos penned a short treatise entitled *Against the Accusers of Sanctuaries or Hinderers of Those Who Depart for Worship of the Venerable and Holy Places and against Fra. Martin Luther* (Κατὰ ἀγιοκατηγόρων, ἤτοι τῶν κωλυόντων τοὺς ἀπερχομένους εἰς προσκύνησιν τῶν σεβασμίων καὶ ἱερῶν τόπων· καὶ κατὰ τοῦ Φρᾶ Μαρτὶ Λούτερι), in which he denounces those – Orthodox monks included – who opposed the spiritual utility of pilgrimage to the Holy land and Sinai.[53] Although the treatise mentions in the title Martin Luther's name, the work is not directed against the Protestant reformer, nor does it mention him once throughout the text, which can be understood, in fact, as a hint towards the Protestant stance on pilgrimage. Anastasios Maras argued Rousanos attempted to validate in this text the Christian pilgrimage through a theological framework,[54] but I will add that it is yet another attempt by the Athonite monk to discuss orthopraxy from a confessional perspective, as pilgrimage is an external manifestation of the faith, containing not only spiritual elements but also performative acts connected with biblical knowledge and meaning.

Not even the simple believers escaped from Rousanos' criticism. Scholars have noted Rousanos' adversity not only towards their limited understanding of the Orthodox faith and practices but also towards their language, as can be observed from the polemic against Kartanos.[55] In their case, Rousanos comments' upon the Jewish reminiscences that still survive in the rituals, namely the animal sacrifices performed on church's grounds during holidays, the pagan practices performed by the Orthodox on burials,[56] which reminds Rousanos of the ancient Greek manifestations described in the works of the Classics, or even the holy springs which are improperly used by the believers, who burn incense

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Orthodox Alms Collectors from the Ottoman Empire in the Holy Roman Empire: Extreme Mobility and Confessional Communication," in *Confessionalization and/as Knowledge Transfer*, 79–108; Idem, "The *Album Amicorum* of the Athonite Monk Theoklitos Polyeidis and the Agency of Preambulating Greek Alms Collectors in the Holy Roman Empire (18th Century)," in *Power of the Dispersed: Early Modern Global Travelers beyond Integration*, ed. Cornel Zwierlein (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2022), 63–97.

[53] Konstantinos Oikonomos, ed., *Σιωνίτης προσκυνητής, ἤτοι τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Γρηγορίου Νύσσης αἱ περὶ τῶν Ἱεροσολύμων διαλαμβάνουσαι δύο ἐπιστολαί, μετὰ σημειώσεων καὶ Παραρτήματος· ᾧ προσετέθη καὶ τὸ μέχρι νῦν ἀνέκδοτον Κατὰ ἀγιοκατηγόρων Παχωμίου μοναχοῦ τοῦ Ῥουσάνου* (Athens: Ph. Karampinis & K. Baphas, 1850), 141–51.

[54] Maras, "Ο Παχώμιος Ρουσάνος."

[55] Sergis, *Εκκλησιαστικός λόγος*, 73–122 and 139–169.

[56] Margaret Alexiou, "Modern Greek Folklore and Its Relation to the Past: The Evolution of Charos in Greek Tradition," in *The "Past" in Medieval and Modern Greek Culture*, ed. Speros Vryonis (Malibu 1978), 211–16; Idem, *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition*, 2nd edition revised by Dimitrios Yatromanolakis and Panagiotis Roilos (New York and Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2002); Idem, *After Antiquity: Greek Language, Myth, and Metaphor* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2002).

around them.[57] In Rousanos' work, *Against Those Who are Hellenizing and Desecrate the Divine Mysteries* (Πρὸς τοὺς ἑλληνίζοντας καὶ τοὺς τὰ θεῖα μυστήρια βεβηλοῦντας) – from which these examples are extracted – Rousanos invests in the heuristic utility of the term "hellenizing" to capture features of the popular culture of the Orthodox and its "heterodox" character. To him, the actual rituals and principles followed by the members of the community do not fit the "orthodoxy in faith" he envisions for the normative Orthodoxy. Rousanos did not perceive the popular culture of the Orthodox from a diachronic perspective as a "living demonstration of the continuity of the Greek nation",[58] but rather Orthodoxy was the binder that connected the Greeks with their religious tradition. His vision was not shared, for instance, by the renowned scholar of Chios and curator of the Vatican Library Leo Allatios (1586–1669), who gathered extensive material in his works about Greek popular culture.[59] Allatios took a sympathetic stand to the popular religion of the Greek Orthodox, voicing "neither the popular Orthodox perspective […] nor the official Orthodox view of popular religion," but an integrative part of the Orthodox religious tradition.[60]

Regardless of his harsh criticism of popular religion, Rousanos was aware, however, of the full spectrum of the confessional intricacies in which Greek Christians had to operate during Ottoman rule. His concern regarding the phenomenon of conversion to Islam drove him to compose around 1550 a treatise titled *On the Faith of the Orthodox and of the Saracens* (Περὶ τῆς τῶν ὀρθοδόξων καὶ τῶν σαρακηνῶν πίστεως) in which he approached religious difference between Orthodoxy and Islam by a thorough dogmatic argumentation (based on Byzantine anti-Islamic treatises) in a comparative approach, while understanding, at the same time, that both Muslims and Christians had to find ways to coexist.[61] Rousanos' arguments against the "heterodox" religious practices among the Orthodox found echoes in the Ottoman world too, where the renowned Muslim intellectual Birgivī Meḥmed Efendī (d. 1573) argued through his catechetical works for a reformation of Ottoman Ḥanafī piety;[62]

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57 Rousanos, "Πρὸς τοὺς ἑλληνίζοντας."

58 Margaret Alexiou, "Folklore: An Obituary?," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 9 (1985): 5.

59 Karen Hartnup, *'On the Beliefs of the Greeks': Leo Allatios and Popular Orthodoxy* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004).

60 Hartnup, *'On the Beliefs of the Greeks'*, 321.

61 Asterios Argyriou, "Pachomios Roussanos et l'Islam," *Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses* 51 (1971): 143–64; Idem, "Ἡ ἑλληνικὴ πολεμικὴ καὶ ἀπολογητικὴ γραμματεία ἔναντι τοῦ Ἰσλὰμ κατὰ τοὺς χρόνους τῆς Τουρκοκρατίας," *Θεολογία* 1 (2013): 133–65, here 134–136; Negoiță, "Discursul anti-islamic," 46–90; Idem, "Pachōmios Rousanos."

62 Katharina A. Ivanyi, Virtue, *Piety and the Law: A Study of Birgivī Meḥmed Efendī's* al-Ṭarīqa al-muḥammadiyya (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2020). See also Shaykh Tosun Bayrak al-Jerrahi al-Halveti, *The Path of Muhammad (al-Tariqah al-Muhammadiyyah), A Book on Islamic Morals and*

later, Birgivī's ideas were inspiring for the purist Muslim *kadızādeli* movement that was preoccupied as well with denouncing "heterodox" religious practices in Ottoman society.

5. Final Thoughts

Rousanos' discourse on "orthodoxy in faith," "heterodoxy," and "orthopraxy," as seen through the polemics he initiated against Kartanos or the Orthodox Greek clergy, monks, and simple believers, is not a solitary attempt of a common Greek Athonite monk to define and delineate the boundaries of belief during the sixteenth century Ottoman Empire. In fact, as scholars argued, it was around 1500 that discourses of orthodoxy and orthopraxy occurred and spanned from Europe to the Middle East, being "motivated by the calls for religious and moral renewal and implicated in the redefinition of communal and political authority that fueled the processes of state and community building in a competitive and mimetic fashion across large parts of early modern Eurasia."[63] By playing on these notions, Rousanos follows his reformist agenda that envisages the spiritual and cultural revitalization of Greek Orthodox communities during Ottoman rule.

Without any doubt, Rousanos' discourse is that of a systematic theologian, infused with copious biblical and classical references. He made use of the theological knowledge he acquired through reading foundational texts for the Orthodox faith, which he combined with his sharp observance as a tireless traveller. In this regard, even if Rousanos writes his works with special attention to the theological tradition forged in Byzantine times, he articulates his discourse to resonate with the religious challenges of his own time. Nevertheless, considering the level of Greek he employed in his polemical treatizes in which he criticizes both clergy and common folk on their ignorance and "heterodox" beliefs and practices, as well as the level of theological knowledge one should master to understand his arguments, it can be suggested that Rousanos' intended public is definitely not the simple believers. In fact, he targeted an ecclesiastical audience that could have validated his arguments and bestowed his works with authority among the clerical circles of his time. He was an active agent for observing and commenting upon a dynamic Orthodoxy in motion, an Orthodoxy *on the move*, which makes his works valuable pieces for reconstructing the religious life of his fellow Orthodox during the "Age of Confessionalization."

Ethics & The Last Will and Testament (Vasiyyetname) by Imam Birgivi, a 16th Century Islamic Mystic (Bloomington IN: World Wisdom, 2005).

63 Tijana Krstić, "Introduction," in *Entangled Confessionalizations?*, 4.

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