

Coexistence and conciliation between Greek Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism in Venice

The case of Gerasimos Vlachos (1607–1685), Cretan
Metropolitan of Philadelphia

Dissertation im Fach Neogräzistik zur Erlangung des Grades des
Doktors der Philosophie (Dr. phil.) der Fakultät für
Geisteswissenschaften der Universität Hamburg

vorgelegt von

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Hamburg, 2021

Eidesstattliche Erklärung zur Dissertation

Ich, Dimitris Paradoulakis, geb. am 14.05.1992, erkläre an Eides statt, dass ich die Dissertation mit dem Titel „Coexistence and conciliation between Greek Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism in Venice: The case of Gerasimos Vlachos (1607-1685), Cretan Metropolitan of Philadelphia“ selbständig angefertigt und nur die angegebenen Hilfsmittel benutzt habe. Alle Stellen und sämtliches Gedankengut, das dem Wortlaut oder dem Sinn nach anderen Werken, gegebenenfalls auch elektronischen Medien, entnommen ist, wurden von mir durch Angabe der Quelle als Entlehnung kenntlich gemacht. Ich versichere, dass die Arbeit noch nicht in einem früheren Promotionsverfahren eingereicht, bzw. mit ungenügend beurteilt worden ist.

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Hamburg, 17. November 2020

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Datum der Disputation: 29.01.2021

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Acknowledgements

This PhD thesis was completed during the period April 2018 – January 2021, while I was working as a doctoral researcher in the Faculty of Humanities of the Universität Hamburg and a member of the Research Training Group “*Interconfessionality in the Early Modern Period*” [Graduiertenkolleg “*Interkonfessionalität in der Frühen Neuzeit*”], funded by the German Research Foundation [Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG)].

From this position I would like to thank the personnel and the Spokesperson of the Research Training Group, Prof. Dr. Johann Anselm Steiger (Universität Hamburg), for their support and trust through each stage of the process. Moreover, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisors, Prof. Dr. Ulrich Moennig (Universität Hamburg), Prof. Dr. Marc Föcking (Universität Hamburg) and Prof. Dr. Stefanos Kaklamanis (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens), for the guidance and support they provided me with in defining the path of my research and scientific approaches. I feel utterly grateful to my colleagues from the Research Training Group for our wonderful collaboration and our interesting and inspiring discussions.

In the context of my primary archive research, I feel indebted to everyone who contributed and enabled my research purposes during my archival research journeys. For the early phase of my research, I feel indebted to the personnel of the Archives in the Vikelaia Municipal Library in Heraklion, Crete, and especially to Mr. Stefanos Gratseas for his guidance and assistance to my early attempts of approaching the archival primary sources. Special thanks I owe also to the personnel of the Department of Manuscript Books in the National Library of Greece in Athens and particularly to Dr. Vasiliki Liakou for our collaboration and her willingness to provide me each time with the necessary primary material. Moreover, I would like to acknowledge the personnel of the Hellenic Institute of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Studies in Venice (*Istituto Ellenico di Studi Bizantini e Postbizantini di Venezia*) and its Director Prof. Vasileios Koukousas for providing me with digitized images from the archival collection of the Institute, along with its former Director, Prof. Georgios Ploumidis, for his hospitality and willingness to contribute to my research during my first archival trip to Venice on September 2018. Equally obliged I remain to the personnel of the Venetian State Archives (*Archivio di Stato di Venezia*) and of the *Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana*, for

their pivotal contribution to my researches. In similar context, I wish to thank the personnel of the State Archives of Corfu and its Director Sofia Aikaterini Pantazi for their willingness to guide me and assist me during my research in the local Venetian archives. Furthermore, I wish to personally thank Dr. Ovidiu Olar of the “N. Iorga” Institute of History of the Romanian Academy (Bucharest) and Dr. Christos Zampakolas of the Ionian University (Corfu) for providing or indicating useful primary material and for our highly interesting discussions on early modern Greek Orthodoxy and the Hellenism of the Venetian Republic. Finally, I would like to express my warm gratitude to my family and my friends for providing me with their cordial support, their stimulating enthusiasm, as well as with happy distractions to rest my mind outside of my research.

Funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation)
- GRK 2008 – 242138915.

Introduction: Research & Approach

As expected to an emerging research field, modern scientific approaches to the concept of the Early Modern World are characterized by a vivid and constantly updated variety and multiplicity. Central issues of identity and consciousness (both individual and collective), culture (spiritual, political, religious) and public expression are addressed and interpreted by a wide range of perceptions, trends, theories and methods. Therefore, distinct features, ideological and material boundaries and value factors are gradually proposed, used and established, in an effort to reflect and finally approach the form of the so-called early modern centuries and distinguish the latter from the earlier medieval and the later modern era. Aiming at the most comprehensive, objective and correct approach to the period from the late 15th to the early 18th century, modern scholarship tends to use the required and available scientific fields (historiography, political theory, sociology, economics, anthropology, philosophy, theology, literature, arts e.t.c.) in a connecting, creative and eventually productive way. At the same time, modern researchers do not hesitate to approach issues and ideological structures of different origins, proceeding to a parallel examination of phenomena in different time and geographical contexts, in different cultures, political and social realities, religious and ideological systems. These connecting and comparative approaches aim and make use of the highly productive concepts of trans- and interculturality, trans- and interreligiosity (along with trans- and interconfessionality), intertextuality e.t.c. Therefore, modern research approaches allow the emergence of diverse early modern worlds: the so-called Latin West (mean. Western Christian Europe), the Ottoman East in the Eastern Mediterranean (mean. the territories of the early modern Ottoman Empire in Eastern Europe, Minor Asia, the Levant and North Africa), but also Asia, Africa and the newly discovered Americas.

In this ideological and scientific context, a part of modern research has as its object the study and tracing of the early modern Greek world. The above term does not reflect an actual reality of an official state similar to Modern Greece, since during the early modern period the so-called Greek territories belonged either to the Ottoman Empire or the Venetian Republic. Regarding their population status, the two

aforementioned polities were multicultural, multireligious and multilingual. Within this true mosaic of people and tendencies, the Greek element was present and consisted of the Greek-speaking Christian populations that resided mainly in the lands of modern mainland Greece, the islands of the Aegean and the Ionian Sea, Crete, Cyprus, Constantinople and the west coast of Asia Minor. At the same time, Greek communities of the Diaspora were formed outside this context (Venice, Wallachia, Moldavia, Poland, Romania, Syria, Palestine and Egypt). These populations, subjects either to the Ottoman or the Venetian sovereigns, had as their main features the Greek language and the Orthodox faith under the highest jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Therefore, the Greek Orthodox world in the early modernity experienced and perceived a reality (socio-political, religious, intellectual and cultural) much different than the one in contemporary Latin Europe.

In the context of highlighting the ideological, socio-political and cultural realities that emerged and defined the Greek early modernity, scholars have systematically dealt with the preserved evidence of this specific era and have approached issues of identity and expression of the early modern Greeks through the relative literature, art, socio-political tendencies and religious culture. As far as the latter is concerned, the modern scientific perceptions to the concept of Greek Orthodoxy and the Eastern Church have already established some major and objective scientific interpretative factors; for example, the historical socio-political role of the Orthodox Church in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Balkan region, the social, cultural and ideological repercussions of the Greeks' religious identity to their political identity and their pre-national narratives, and mainly the existing, vivid and multifaceted interaction (religious-ecclesiastical, intellectual, cultural and economical) of the Orthodox Greeks with the so-called early modern Catholic and Protestant Latin Europe, but also with the systems and communities of Islam and Judaism. Therefore, modern scientific research that is either based on or aimed at interpretive approaches to religiosity in the early modern Greek world, examines and highlights issues of social and political nature in the Greek early modernity, expressions of a collective religious and, secondarily, pre-national identity, the early features of a modern "Greekness" based on recurrent historical narratives and the emergence of an early modern Greek consciousness and culture.

Deriving from and aiming to join the aforementioned scientific approaches, this research study aims to deal with matters of public religious expression and aspects of interconfessionality as they are portrayed in the case of the Orthodox clergyman and scholar from late Venetian-ruled Crete Gerasimos Vlachos (c.1607–1685). A distinguished figure of his contemporary Venetian and Cretan world, Vlachos earned his reputation as an erudite teacher, classical philologist, theologian and preacher in his homeland and, after the outbreak of the Fifth Ottoman Venetian War (1645–1669), in the city of Venice. Due to the high esteem and respect he enjoyed from his contemporaries, he achieved to take the reigns of the Orthodox Metropolis of Philadelphia in Venice, where he served as the Archbishop during the late years of his life.

The fragmentary study of Vlachos' work, the insufficient information about his life, as well as the lack of interest under which his name was found for about three centuries had prevented modern research from composing a complete picture of him. In the context of a general overview of the relative existing bibliography, one could detect, among others, numerous inaccuracies, omissions and misinterpretations, especially from the earliest scholars. The first scientific attempts to approach Gerasimos Vlachos and his contribution to the world of early modern Greek letters and religion, occurred in the mid. 19th century. Historians and bibliographers (Konstantinos Sathas,¹ Andronikos Dimitrakopoulos,² Georgios Zaviras,³ Margaritis Dimitsas⁴ and Émile Legrand⁵) offered the first information and testimonies about the Cretan scholar. Although the specialized research of the mid. 20th century partially revised those first initiatives, the latter did not cease to serve as basic sources for a biographical overview of Vlachos' life and work.

¹ Konstantinos Sathas: *Νεοελληνική Φιλολογία: Βιογραφίαι τῶν ἐν τοῖς γράμμασι διαλαμπάντων Ἑλλήνων, ἀπὸ τῆς καταλύσεως τῆς Βυζαντινῆς Αὐτοκρατορίας μέχρι τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Ἐθνεγερσίας (1453-1821)*. Κορομηλά. Athens 1868, p. 336-338.

² Andronikos Dimitrakopoulos: *Προσθῆκαι καὶ διορθώσεις εἰς τὴν Νεοελληνικὴν Φιλολογίαν τοῦ Κωνσταντίνου Σάθα*. Τύποις Μέντζερ & Βίττιγ. Leipzig 1871, p. 53-58.

³ Georgios Zaviras: *Νέα Ἑλλάς ἢ Ἑλληνικὸν Θέατρον*. Ἑταιρεία Μακεδονικῶν Σπουδῶν. Athens 1872, p. 218-219.

⁴ Margaritis Dimitsas: *Ὁ Ἑλληνισμὸς καὶ ἡ διάδοσις αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν Ἰταλίαν καὶ τὴν λοιπὴν Εὐρώπην κατὰ τὸν μέσον αἰῶνα*. Αποστολόπουλου. Athens 1900, p. 181-183.

⁵ Émile Legrand: *Bibliographie Hellenique, ou Description raisonnée des ouvrages publiés par des Grecs au dix-septième siècle*. Vol. 5 (Additions Notices biographiques). J. Maisonneuve. Paris 1903, p. 408-409.

Until the mid. 1940s, the scientific interest in the Cretan ecclesiastical scholar remained on the margins, while his name was mainly detected scattered in the numerous published catalogues of codices in Greek and non-Greek monastic, private and public libraries and archives. The research on Vlachos revived during the late 1940s and reached its first peak in the following thirty years. More specifically, the specialized scientific papers of contemporary historians, philologists and theologians (Konstantinos Mertzios,⁶ Georgios Spyridakis,⁷ Konstantinos Kourkoulas,⁸ Manousos Manousakas⁹) paved the way for the first and until today unique monograph on Gerasimos Vlachos by Vasileios N. Tatakis.¹⁰ From then on and until the end of the century, the numerous papers on the Cretan scholar (Ariadna Camariano-Cioran,¹¹ Vasiliki Bobou-Stamati,¹² Dimitrios Apostolopoulos,¹³ Linos Benakis,¹⁴ Athanasios Karathanasis¹⁵ and Boris Fonkič¹⁶) mainly dealt with the manuscript tradition of his unpublished philosophical commentaries and school manuals.

⁶ Konstantinos D. Mertzios: «Νέαι ειδήσεις περί Κρητῶν ἐκ τῶν ἀρχείων τῆς Βενετίας. Δ': Γεράσιμος Βλάχος». In: *Κρητικά Χρονικά* 2 (1948), p. 281-297; Konstantinos D. Mertzios: «Ἡ διαθήκη Γερασίμου Βλάχου τοῦ Κρητός». In: *Ἡπειρωτική Εστία* 7 (1958), p. 643-650.

⁷ Georgios Spyridakis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος (1607;-1685)». In: *Ἐπετηρὶς τοῦ Μεσαιωνικοῦ Ἀρχείου* 2 (1949), p. 70-106.

⁸ Konstantinos Kourkoulas: *Ἡ ἀνέκδοτος Ὀμιλητικὴ τοῦ Γεράσιμου Βλάχου*. Athens 1958.

⁹ Manousos Manousakas: «Δύο ἄγνωστα ἔργα τοῦ Γεράσιμου Βλάχου εἰς Ἀγιορείτικον κώδικα». In: *Κρητικά Χρονικά* 8 (1954), p. 55-60.

¹⁰ Vasileios N. Tatakis: *Γεράσιμος Βλάχος ὁ Κρης (1605/7 – 1685). Φιλόσοφος, θεολόγος, φιλόλογος*. Istituto Ellenico di Studi Bizantini e Postbizantini di Venezia. Venice 1973.

¹¹ Ariadna Camariano-Cioran: «Κώδικες περιέχοντες διδακτικά ἐγχειρίδια Γερασίμου Βλάχου τοῦ Κρητός ἐν τῇ Βιβλιοθήκῃ τῆς Ῥουμανικῆς Ἀκαδημίας». In: *Πεπραγμένα του Γ' Κρητολογικοῦ Συνεδρίου*. Vol. 2. Athens 1974, p. 16-28.

¹² Vasiliki Bobou-Stamati: «Παρατηρήσεις στὰ χειρόγραφα τῶν ἔργων τοῦ Γεράσιμου Βλάχου». In: *Ελληνικά* 28 (1975), p. 375-393.

¹³ Dimitrios Apostolopoulos: «Τὸ ὑπόμνημα τοῦ Γερασίμου Βλάχου στὰ “Φυσικά” τοῦ Ἀριστοτέλη καὶ ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος Μαυροκορδάτος ὁ ἐξ ἀπορρήτων». In: *Ερανιστής* 17 (1981), p. 187-195.

¹⁴ Linos Benakis: «Ἡ χειρόγραφη παράδοση τῶν σχολίων στὸ *Περὶ ψυχῆς* τοῦ Ἀριστοτέλη τῶν Νικολάου Κούρσουλα καὶ Γερασίμου Βλάχου: ἀπὸ ἀφορμὴ τὴν ἀνεύρεση τοῦ κώδικα ἄλλοτε Καλλιπόλεως 23 τοῦ Βησσαρίωνος Μακρῆ». In: *Δελτίον τῆς Ἰονίου Ἀκαδημίας. Ἀφιέρωμα στὴ μνήμη τοῦ Λίνου Πολίτη*, Vol. 2. Κέντρον Ἑρεύνης καὶ Διεθνούς Ἑπικοινωνίας «Ἰόνιος Ἀκαδημία». Corfu 1986, p. 141-167.

¹⁵ Athanasios Karathanasis: «Τα κεφάλαια ΜΒ', ΜΓ', ΜΔ', ΜΕ' του ἔργου του Γεράσιμου Βλάχου ‘Περὶ ῥητορικῆς δυνάμεως βιβλία τρία’». *Επιστημονικὴ Ἐπετηρίδα Θεολογικῆς Σχολῆς ΑΠΘ* (1990), p. 119-127.

¹⁶ Boris Fonkič: «Τρία αὐτόγραφα του Γερασίμου Βλάχου». In: Chryssa Maltezu, Theocharis Detorakis, Christophoros Charalampakis (eds.): *Ροδωνιά: Τιμὴ στον Μ. Ι. Μανούσκα*, Vol. 2. Πανεπιστήμιο Κρήτης. Rethymno 1994, p. 591-597.

During the first twenty years of the 21st century, the emergence of new methods, the discovery and publication of a multitude of primary sources mainly from the archives of Italy (Venice), France, Russia and Romania, but most importantly the vivid interdisciplinary and interactive relation between the various scientific fields (philology and history, philosophy and theology, political and social science) created a flourishing environment for new approaches in the field of early modern studies. In this context, Gerasimos Vlachos' ideological background, activity and writings were and still are studied by modern scholars and researchers (Christos Laskaridis,¹⁷ Ovidiu Olar,¹⁸ Asterios Argyriou,¹⁹ Stefanos Kaklamanis²⁰) not separately but in connection with the Cretan thinker's historical, socio-political, intellectual and cultural environment in late Venetian Crete and mid.-17th-century Europe.

Deriving from and aiming to join the aforementioned scientific approaches, the present study proceeds to a systematic interpretative approach to Gerasimos Vlachos' ideological, political and religious identity in all the phases of his life. As the principal factor that defines and determines this study, I promote Vlachos' perception and reaction towards his contemporary trans- and interconfessional tendencies and cross-cultural relations firstly within the Venetian circle (Venice, Crete, Corfu) and secondly in the wider European and Ottoman sphere (Rome, Paris, Wien, Moscow, Constantinople). My argumentation and methodology will focus on the independent but simultaneously comparative examination of specific written sources, mainly deriving from Vlachos' own pen. This text-centered approach to those writings that, in my opinion, reflect the scholar's aspects of interconfessionality, aims to interpret his attitude towards his contemporary theological controversies, the Venetian concept of socio-political tolerance and confessional conciliation, and Vlachos' personal perception on matters of multiconfessional coexistence and freedom of worship.

¹⁷ Christos Laskaridis: *Η στάση της Ρωσίας στον Πόλεμο της Κρήτης (1645–1669)*. University Studio Press. Thessaloniki 2002.

¹⁸ Ovidiu Olar: "The Sons of Lucifer and the Children of Neptune: The Anti-Ottoman and Anti-Islamic Polemical Works of Gerasimos Vlachos". In: *ARCÆVS: Studies in the History of Religions* XIX-XX (2016), p. 249-274.

¹⁹ Asterios Argyriou (ed.): *Γερασίου Βλάχου τοῦ Κρητός, Περὶ τῆς τοῦ Μωάμεθ θρησκείας καὶ κατὰ Τούρκων*. Εταιρία Κρητικῶν Ἱστορικῶν Μελετῶν. Heraklion 2017.

²⁰ Stefanos Kaklamanis: «Μὲ τοὺς Ὀθωμανοὺς καὶ τοὺς ἰησοῦίτες ante portas: ὁ Γεράσιμος Βλάχος στὰ χρόνια τοῦ Κρητικοῦ Πολέμου». In: *Κρητικά Χρονικά* 39 (2019), p. 69-162.

The main body of the study is divided into five chapters. In the first, I proceed to a detailed and as little as possible fragmentary biographical overview of Gerasimos Vlachos' life in Candia, Venice and Corfu. Due to the absence of a modern specialized and enriched biography on the Cretan scholar, this chapter will enable the reader to perceive the studied historical context and it will serve as a first indicative presentation of the persons, texts and socio-political conjuncures that will be studied in detail later.

In the second chapter I will develop an approach to Gerasimos Vlachos' identity as a conscious and loyal subject of the Venetian Republic. The historical context will be the early phase (1645–1657) of the War of Candia. Based on a corpus of his writings (ecclesiastical sermons, brief responses, consulting treatises and praising entreaties), I will examine Vlachos' activity and networks in warring Candia and then among the political circles of Venice. The main subject for interpretation will be the nature of the relations between the Orthodox clergyman and the Catholic Venetian political regime and the concept of *interconfessional tolerance* in direct contact with the contemporary pragmatic and political priorities.

In the third chapter I aim to study Gerasimos Vlachos' activity as a teacher of classical education and a Greek scholar in Latin Europe. My approach will be based on his relative written sources (correspondence, published works, official acts) during the late period of his life (1658–1662 and 1681–1683). In this context, I will study his initiatives in the service of education, his publishing activity in Venice and his networks with Catholic sovereigns and men of letters in Italy, France and the Holy Roman Empire. The main subject for interpretation will be the practical and theoretical parameters of his contact with the intellectual society of Latin Europe and the concept of *interconfessional conciliation* in connection with the promotion of both scholarly and political interests.

The fourth chapter will deal with Gerasimos Vlachos' perception of his personal faith and duties as an Orthodox clergyman, specifically in the final years of his life as a high cleric. Thus, focusing mainly in the period of his primacy in the Metropolitan Throne of Philadelphia in Venice (1681–1685), I will examine, through his preserved correspondence, his attitude and preferences towards the two ecclesiastical powers of his environment, the Orthodox faith and its center, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and the Catholic faith as represented by the authority of the Venetian Republic and the

papal environment in Rome. The main subject of interpretation will be his response to his duty as the religious leader of the Orthodox Christians in Venice and the concept of *interconfessional piety* towards the ecclesiastical environment of Venice, Rome and Constantinople.

In the fifth chapter I will examine Gerasimos Vlachos' identity as a reader of Greek, Latin and Italian literature, mainly related to the fields of theology, both Orthodox and Catholic, philosophy and philology. My approach will be exclusively based on the preserved and still unpublished catalogue of his personal library. Although the actual corpus of the library is today dispersed, the information preserved in his *Indice della Libreria* are nevertheless indicative of the Cretan thinker's intellectual, theological and cultural background. In this context, I will proceed to a detailed presentation and interpretation of the books recorded in the catalogue, while I will also deal with matters of perception of Vlachos' contemporary fields of theology and philosophy, his relation with the world of books and reading, his tendency towards the non-Orthodox ecclesiastical literature and his opinion on the changes and modernizations in his contemporary political, scientific and literary fields.

The present study was significantly based on i. published and unpublished archival sources; ii. a selection of Vlachos' extensive works; and iii. a revised and modern approach to the relative earlier bibliography. In addition to the available published primary sources, I also used unpublished material (official documents and notary records, early modern editions and codices, personal notebooks and correspondence). The aforementioned primary sources were detected and studied during archival researches in the National Library of Greece (N.L.G.), the State Archives of Corfu (I.A.K.), the State Archives of Venice (*Archivio di Stato di Venezia*, A.S.V.), the *Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana* in Venice, the Hellenic Institute of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Studies in Venice (*Istituto Ellenico di Studi Bizantini e Postbizantini di Venezia*, A.E.I.B.) and the Romanian Academy Library in Bucharest (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*).

The systematic and comparative study of all available sources and bibliography offers an approach to Gerasimos Vlachos' personality and attitude towards the political, religious and intellectual events and currents of his time. Depending largely on the primary original texts, I also wished to maintain a direct and critical contact with the

relevant scientific bibliography. My purpose was initially to examine efficiently the hitherto known to the research information on the Cretan thinker's socio-political, ecclesiastical – confessional and scholarly activity, and then to interpret his networks with pivotal historical figures, both of Orthodox and Catholic origins. By examining this specific case of an early modern Greek ecclesiastical scholar, I hope to provide the modern researcher and reader with a concise and vivid impression on some of the ways the people of early modernity perceived and interpreted the concepts of history, faith and morals; ways in which they defined the socio-political, collective and individual backgrounds and extensions of their contemporary Christian world and especially the pivotal role they kept for the concept of intellect, education and letters as the central criterion for the physical and spiritual freedom of man.

1. From Candia to Venice: A Life of Faith, Politics & Scholarship

1.1. The early years in Crete (1607–1645)

1.1.1. Family and studies

The beginning of the 17th century in Venetian Crete (*‘Regno di Candia’*) found the island and its inhabitants in the late phase of a general social, economic and intellectual restructuring, which derived from the profound changes that occurred in the Cretan society during the previous century. The development of trade and navigation by Cretans, the export of local products to Venice and the rest of Europe and the rise of a local nobility had contributed to the consolidation of a higher social class and a prosperous middle class (*‘cittadini’*). Both in the four major urban centers of the island (Chania, Rethymnon, Candia, Sittia), and in the villages of the interland, a flourishing, vivid and steady social life had developed. Moreover, the two confessional communities of the island, the Orthodox and the Catholic, had reached a level of relative cohesiveness and cohabitation. The latter had gradually de-escalated, to a certain point of course, the old religious disputes and political hatred between the two sides in the early centuries of the *Venetocrazia*. At the same time, the continuous intellectual influences from Latin Europe, mainly from Italy, in the field of arts, sciences and literature, which culminated in Crete during the years of the late Italian Renaissance, had gradually raised significantly high the level of the local literacy and erudition in the fields of classical studies, philosophy, theology and arts.²¹

In this context of political consistency, social and religious cohesiveness, and vivid intellectual activity, Gerasimos Vlachos lived and acted. For the first period of his life, for his family, even for the exact date of his birth or for the exact place of his origin, the present research has little to offer. For the first thirty-five years of his life, only scattered information and testimonies appear, composing an unclear and incomplete portrait. He

²¹ For a modern detailed study in the socio-political, cultural, intellectual and religious conditions of late Venetian Crete, see Stefanos Kaklamanis: *Η κρητική ποίηση στα χρόνια της Αναγέννησης (14^{ος}-17^{ος} αι.)*, Vol. 1 [Εισαγωγή]. Μορφωτικό Ίδρυμα Εθνικής Τραπέζης. Athens 2019, p. 143-172.

was born in 1607, taking into consideration an inscription in his unique post mortem portrait, now preserved the Archive of the Greek Community of Venice. Nevertheless, in the official entry of his death, found in the register of the church of Saint Antonino in Venice, on the day the Cretan cleric passed away (24. March 1685) he was “*de anni 80 incirca*”;²² hence, the date of his birth would be placed in 1605. However, the word *almost* (‘*incirca*’) meant that the validity of the aforementioned assumption should be doubted. Born and raised in the city of Candia, young Gerasimos came from a noble Cretan family, the Vlachi. In an anonymous praising speech in his honor, its author stated the following: “you were born nobly in renowned Crete”.²³ As far as the Vlachi of Candia is concerned, the evidence remains scattered in the records of the numerous Cretan notaries of the 16th and 17th century. Nevertheless, these primary sources actually form a fairly vivid and clear image of the family, in its generalized level of course, from which Gerasimos came from. A typical example of the late Venetian Cretan high classes, some of the members of the Vlachi were figures of prominent intellectual interests, highly ecclesiastical and religious activity, of central administrative and legal contribution, of large financial capacity and of wide social recognition and prestige.

According to a first introductory review of the relevant notary records, the Vlachi are presented to have been residents of the city of Candia and its suburbs, where they worked as lawyers, teachers and prelates, while a considerable core of its members lived or worked as land owners, clergymen and teachers in the wider province of Pediada, also in short distance from Candia to the east. Numerous members of the Vlachi are found to have proceeded to financial transactions with Venetian or Venetian-Cretan noblemen, usually on cases of purchase or sale of large areas of land in the wider region of Pediada and specifically in the local village of Kasteli. These primary evidence confirm and validate the hypothesis by earlier scholars who considered the province of Pediada and neighboring Mirabello as the most likely places of origin for

²² Chrysa Maltezou, Georgios Plumidis: *Οι αποβιωτήριες πράξεις Ελλήνων στο αρχείο του Ναού του Αγίου Αντωνίνου Βενετίας (1569–1810)*. Istituto Ellenico di Studi Bizantini e Postbizantini di Venezia. Venice 2001, p. 165.

²³ Konstantinos Dyonouniotis: «Μελετίου Μητροπολίτου Ἀθηνῶν, Ὁμιλία περὶ ἱερωσύνης». In: *Επετηρίς Εταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν* 14 (1938), p. 154; Konstantinos Th. Kyriakopoulos: *Μελέτιος (Μῆτρος) Ἀθηνῶν, ὁ Γεωγράφος (1661-1714): Συμβολή στή μελέτη τοῦ βίου καί τοῦ ἔργου του καί γενικότερα τῆς ἐποχῆς τοῦ πρώιμου Διαφωτισμοῦ*. Vol. 1. Athens 1990, p. 203-206. It is possible that we are dealing with a Cretan clergyman, since when he referred to Vlachos’ life and work in Crete, he defined the island as “the homeland”, mean. “our common homeland”.

Gerasimos Vlachos. Although that argument was not founded in primary evidence or testimonies, it had derived from the fact that during the War of Candia, Vlachos was sent by the Venetian authorities as a preacher in that region in order to encourage and hearten the local population, so that the latter would resist to the Ottoman army that had invaded the island. Indeed, it was considered essential in such cases of mass encouragement that the authorities would send individuals who originated from those lands, so that they would be familiar with the place and its people and gain their trust.²⁴

In an effort to trace evidence of Gerasimos Vlachos' close family environment, I consider as significant the detection of an extensive testament, preserved in the records of the renowned notary of 17th-century Candia, Giacomo Cortesan. The text, dated 6. May 1643, was composed by the wealthy Cretan from Candia Tzòrtzis Vlachos, son of late Konstantis and Eglia, and first uncle of Gerasimos Vlachos: "my nephew the preacher Gerasimos Vlachos, son of my brother Thodoris". From this valuable primary source we are informed that Gerasimos was the son of late Thodoris Vlachos, who also had a daughter named Elisabèta, called Marièta. In addition to Tzòrtzis, young Gerasimos had two more uncles from the side of his father: Manolàkis, who had two children, Konstantis and Èlena, and Nikolàkis. The latter was an ordained priest in the monastery of Saint Catherine of Sinai in Candia, for which special reference will take place later. According to the main text of the will, Gerasimos, together with his uncles Manolàkis and Nikolàkis, had been authorized by Tzòrtzis as the commissioners of his will. It is interesting that, among others, Tzòrtzis bequeathed large sums of money, fields and workshops to various churches and monasteries in Candia and the interland in memory of his name and for the salvation of his soul. As Tzòrtzis clarified, many of those lands and churches or chapels would pass after his death under the jurisdiction of his nephew "father Gerasimos", who was ordered to perform services in the memory of his uncle for as long as he wished; the Cretan scholar did not break his promise throughout his life.²⁵

A member of the Vlachi family that Gerasimos is presented to have maintained a close relation both during his life in Candia and after their mutual departure for Venice, was his first cousin and daughter of his uncle Manolàkis, Èlena Vlachou. The latter was

²⁴ Spyridakis, «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 70-71.

²⁵ Archivio di Stato di Venezia (from now on A.S.V.), Notarile (Notai di Candia), Busta 68 (Giacomo Cortesan), Libro 2 (1631–1648), ff. 499^r-504^r, 531^r; A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Candia), Busta 228 (Michiel Piri), Libro 6 (1651–1653), ff. 378^v.

married to Emmanuel Colonna di Pietro and had two daughters, Eleonora and Maria. According to a corpus of contracts and agreements Vlachos composed and signed in Candia and Venice during the 1650s, his cousin's family managed to find shelter in the city of Venice relatively early after the outbreak of the War of Candia, with him following them soon after.²⁶ Maybe the most notable relatives of the Cretan scholar and perhaps his most loyal disciples and followers throughout his life, were his nephews Grigorios Vlachos, possibly grandson of Tzortzis, and Arsenios Kaloudis, probably son of Gerasimos' sister, Elisabèta. They both studied under the supervision of their uncle and later followed, according to his example, the path of priesthood. As their uncle himself claimed later in his life, between the two, the "*monaco di San Basilio Magno*" Arsenios was always the most intellectual. Indeed, Kaloudis was an interesting case of a minor early modern Greek scholar; in addition to being an Orthodox prelate and preacher during his life in Candia, Venice and Corfu, he was also the author of educational textbooks, such as an introduction to Aristotelian Logic, while he also served for almost ten years as a rector in the Greek college of Padua known as the Cottunian, for which special reference will take place later.²⁷ For both nephews of Gerasimos Vlachos, the primary sources, mainly the notarial records, contain a multitude of evidence of their activity as clergymen in Venice and Corfu.

In the earlier scholarship on Gerasimos Vlachos, numerous opinions were formed on the question of the place in which young Gerasimos obtained his basic and higher education. To this day no primary evidence, archival testimony or historical confirmation has been detected on the scholar's early studies in Crete or abroad. Nevertheless, a vivid view on Vlachos' excellent performance as a student in the city of Candia is detected in the aforementioned anonymous praising speech in his honor:

“you obtained an education appropriate to your origins, since you came into contact with the most famous teachers in Crete, from whom you were taught the circular

²⁶ A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Candia), Busta 227 (Michiel Piri), Libro 5 (1649–1651), ff. 305^{r-v} & 350^r; A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Venezia), Busta 13563 (Nicolò Velano), Libro 1 (1655–1657), 44^{r-v}, 180^v-181^r.

²⁷ As an example, see the Greek codex no. 1294 at the National Library of Greece: «Εἰσαγωγή πάσης τῆς Λογικῆς συντεθεῖσα παρὰ τοῦ σοφολογιωτάτου ἐν ἱεροδιδασκάλοις καὶ κήρυξι κυρίου κυρίου Ἀρσενίου Καλούδη τοῦ Κρητός»; Ioannis Sakkelion: *Κατάλογος τῶν χειρογράφων τῆς Ἐθνικῆς Βιβλιοθήκης τῆς Ἑλλάδος*. Ἐκ τοῦ Ἐθνικοῦ Τυπογραφείου καὶ Λιθογραφείου. Athens 1892), p. 236; Emile Legrand: *Bibliographie Hellenique, ou Description raisonnee des ouvrages publies par des Grecs au dix-septieme siecle*. Vol. 2 (1645–1690). Alphonse Picard. Paris 1894, p. 166.

education, and in a short period of time you made such a progress to your lessons, that you surpassed all of your classmates. Since along with your remarkable intelligence, you obtained great diligence, you outstripped not only your coevals, but also you reached those older than you.”

*«ἔτυχες ἀγωγῆς προσηκούσης τῷ γένει, διατὶ ἀπὸ μικρὰν ἡλικίαν ἐσυναναστρέφουσιν μὲ τοὺς πλείοι φημισμένους διδασκάλους τῆς Κρήτης, ἀπὸ τοὺς ὁποίους διδασκόμενος τὴν ἐγκύκλιον παιδευσιν εἰς ὀλίγου χρόνου διάστημα τόσῃν προκοπῇν εἰς τὰ μαθήματα ἔκαμες, ὅπου τοὺς συμμαθητὰς ὅλους πολὺ ἐξεπέρασες. Ἐπειδὴ μὲ τὴν θαυμαστὴν σου ἀγχίνουσαν συντροφιασμένην εἶχες καὶ μεγάλῃν φιλοπονίαν, διὰ τοῦτο ὄχι μονάχα τοὺς συνηλικιώτας ὑπερέβηκες, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς μεγαλυτέρους ἔφθασες.»*²⁸

Thus, earlier scholars on Gerasimos Vlachos supported that the unknown school in which he completed his secular and sacred studies (grammar, rhetoric, theology, philosophy and possibly ecclesiastical music) should be defined as the dubious Sinaitic School. The latter possibly operated inside the walls of one of the most prominent spiritual and religious centers of Venetian Crete, the Orthodox monastery of Saint Catherine of Sinai in Candia. Enjoying the support and protection of the Venetian Doge and the Latin Archbishop of the city, the monastery was a place of considerable intellectual activity and, at the same time, a haven for the Orthodox faith, the principles and the tradition of the Orthodox Church. The hypothesis that Gerasimos attended this particular school was partly based on the fact that distinguished early modern Cretan clergymen and scholars were considered to be graduates of this school, including Maximos Margounios, Meletios Pigàs, Konstantinos Palaiokepas, Meletios Vlastos, Cyril Lucaris, Meletios Syrigos, Ioannis Matthaios Karyofyllos, Athanasios Patelaros, Bartholomeos Syropoulos, Frangiskos Skoufos, Nikolaos Kalliakis, Thomas Katanis, and Nikolaos Komninos Papadopoulos. However, until today the archives remain silent on the existence of the School, even more on the question of a possible tradition of extremely scholarly graduates from it.²⁹

In a similar context, earlier scholarship supported the opinion that Vlachos continued and completed his higher studies at the University of Padua, following the example of numerous of his compatriots, both secular and clergymen. Indeed, in the context of the general atmosphere of cultural and educational privileges and freedoms

²⁸ Dyounioutis: «Μελέτιος», p. 154.

²⁹ For the question on the Sinaitic School, see Nikolaos V. Tomadakis: «Ἡ δῆθεν Σιναΐτικη Σχολὴ Χάνδακος καὶ ἡ προσπάθεια τοῦ Μάξιμου Μαργουνίου πρὸς ἴδρυσιν Φροντιστηρίου διὰ τοὺς ὀρθοδόξους ἐν Κρήτῃ». In: *Πεπραγμένα τοῦ ΣΤ' Κρητολογικοῦ Συνεδρίου* (Chania, August 24–30 1986). Vol. 2. Chania 1990, p. 621-652.

enjoyed by the Greek subjects of the Serenissima during the late Venetian dominion, young Cretans mainly of the higher social classes had often taken the opportunity to travel to Venice and Padua either to acquire basic education or study Medicine, Philosophy or Law in the local University, a pivotal cosmopolitan center of Aristotelian philosophy, mathematics and science during the early modern centuries.³⁰ Nevertheless, Vlachos' name was not recorded in the registers of the University, while no other contemporary testimony has yet been found. It is actually interesting to note that in the already mentioned encomium, the unknown author did not make any reference to Vlachos' possible studies outside Crete, maybe in Venice or Padua; such an omission would seem rather odd in the context of a praising speech. One could conclude that young Gerasimos studied next to eminent teachers and scholars in the city of Candia. The reference of the anonymous speaker to the scholar's classmates allows a further assumption that he did not receive his education by a private teacher but in a still unknown to us school, located most possibly inside an Orthodox monastery of the city or the countryside.³¹

Indeed, during the *Venetocrazia* the education of the Cretans depended and was mainly under the supervision of the local Orthodox clergy. Inside their monasteries lettered priests, monks and nuns provided the young Cretans with a basic education. Moreover, especially in the urban centers of the island, private teachers undertook the education of children, Venetians and Cretans, mostly from the upper social classes. This supervision of the educational system by the Orthodox clergy of Crete enabled the latter to teach their pupils not just basic reading and writing, but also the religion of their fathers, the confessional doctrines and the ecclesiastical tradition of the Orthodox Church. That specific educational model operated as the rival awe in the initiatives of the Latin Church, sometimes prompted by the papal environment in Rome, to introduce a Venetian Catholic curriculum in Crete. Despite the fact that they were intensified during the years of the Catholic Reformation, such initiatives eventually remained of minor success. Nevertheless, especially during the last century of the *Venetocrazia* in Crete (1550-1645), the learning of ancient Greek, Latin and Italian language – or the

³⁰ Kaklamanis: *Κρητική ποίηση*, p. 154-157.

³¹ For the earlier assumptions, see Sathas: *Νεοελληνική Φιλολογία*, p. 336-337; Dimitzas: *Ὁ Ἑλληνισμός*, p. 181; Spyridakis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 73-74. For the modern contradiction, see Tatakis: *Γεράσιμος Βλάχος ο Κρης*, p. 5-6.

Venetian dialect – had been introduced and gradually established in the urban centers of the island.³² Taking into consideration this promising level of education, with the Cretans learning ancient Greek and Latin, attending courses of rhetoric, philosophy and theology, studying in one's homeland does not seem such a distant scenario for young Gerasimos.

1.1.2. Prelate and teacher in Candia

The first primary evidence for Gerasimos Vlachos' life in the city and provinces of Candia are detected decades after his birth, in the early 1640s. Mainly through a variety of notarial acts, archival reminders and official documents of the local Venetian administration, it becomes clear that after the completion of his studies, Vlachos chose to follow the path of priesthood, acquiring the identity of the Orthodox hieromonk and preacher in the wider area of Candia. It is important to clarify that, in case a young Cretan wished to follow the path of monastic life, his options were either to enter a period of training within one of the numerous monasteries in the island, or travel outside Crete, mainly in the Venetian-occupied Greek region (Ionian Islands, Peloponnese, Cytherra, or even Constantinople in order to attend the famous during the 17th century Patriarchal Academy, where he would become familiar with the principles, the tradition and the dogmas of the Orthodox Church. After the completion of this training period, the prospective clergyman was obliged to travel to Cytherra, Zante or the city of Monemvasia in southern Peloponnese in order to be officially ordained by the local Orthodox hierarchs. That was because of the dominant Catholic hierarchy in Venetian Crete and the simultaneous exclusion of the Orthodox clergy from higher ecclesiastical offices, a condition that was preserved until the end of the Venetian dominion on the island.

According to a series of notarial acts of his aforementioned uncle Tzòrtzis and although the exact date of Gerasimos' ordination remains undefined, at a time unknown to us in the 1630s, his wealthy uncle had granted him two monasteries that were in his possession, declaring him their abbot. The first, whose location is yet to be defined, was dedicated to Virgin Mary bearing the name Panaghia Strovilea, while the second was

³² Nikolaos Panagiotakis: *Η παιδεία και η μουσική κατά τη Βενετοκρατία*. Σύνδεσμος Τοπικών Ενώσεων Δήμων και Κοινοτήτων Κρήτης. Heraklion 1990.

dedicated to Saint George and was named Agios Georgios Skalotos; the latter church was located at the foot of mount Juktas, very close to the city of Candia.³³ With the earliest evidence confirming Vlachos' identity as a scholarly clergyman to be dated on 1. November 1640, the official archives of the ducal chancellery of Candia (*Duca di Candia*), contained several acts in which he participated as a hieromonk. It is interesting that the majority of these evidence present Vlachos to constantly act in the south-central part of Crete, more specifically in the Orthodox monasteries of the Asterousia Mountains; that region was, indeed, a pivotal center of Orthodoxy during the Venetian period, with numerous monks and prelates living, teaching and preaching inside their monasteries and in the neighbouring villages.

Indicatively, on 2. May 1642 Vlachos was among the witnesses to the ordination of an Orthodox clergyman named Christoforos Sakkorafos in the monastery of Panaghia Odigitria, an outstanding religious center of Orthodox faith on the Asterousia Mountains.³⁴ Two years later, on 26. April 1644 he was authorized by his friend Arsenios Gavalas, abbot in the Apezanes monastery located also on the Asterousia Mountains, to mediate so that a young monk named Nektarios Zen, son of Francesco, would receive permission to travel to the island of Zante in order to be ordained a priest and then return to Gavalas in order to perform his pastoral duties.³⁵ Even after the beginning of the War of Candia, Vlachos was still collaborated with the Orthodox clergy of the wider region of the Asterousia Mountains, as it is revealed by his transaction of icons in 1648 with a lettered monk named Emmanuel Dhepos from the renowned Vrontisi monastery.³⁶ Thus, during his early years in Crete Vlachos developed an interesting and very specific network consisting exclusively of further Orthodox clergymen of the monastic order. And although during the war he would be defined as a vigorous preacher inside the walls of the city of Candia, in his early life he is presented to have acquaintance and physical presence in the Orthodox monastical centers of the interland.

³³ For a historical approach to the now lost church of Aghios Georgios Skalotos, see Nikos Psilakis: «Ο Γεράσιμος Βλάχος και το μοναστήρι του: Άγιος Γεώργιος ο Σκαλωτός στα ριζά του Γιούχτα». In: *ΥΠΕΡ Χ* 76 (Christmas 2015), p. 54-60.

³⁴ A.S.V., *Duca di Candia*, Busta 13, Preti 2 (1640–1662), 52^v. For a copy of this act preserved in the Archive of the Greek Confraternity in Venice, see Tatakis: *Γεράσιμος Βλάχος*, p. 7.

³⁵ A.S.V., *Duca di Candia*, Busta 13, Preti 2 (1640–1662), 70^{r-v}.

³⁶ Manousos Manousakas: «Δύο άγνωστα έργα του Γεράσιμου Βλάχου εις Άγιορείτικον κώδικα». In: *Κρητικά Χρονικά* 8 (1954), p. 59-60.

In the aforementioned earliest evidence of Gerasimos Vlachos' identity as a prelate dated 1. November 1640, it is interesting to note that the information derived from a codex containing one of his numerous philosophical commentaries on Aristotelian natural philosophy.³⁷ As it will become evident later, in addition to his priestly duties inside and outside the city of Candia, Vlachos chose to follow yet another profession in his hometown, tightly connected to the traditional model of his own secular and sacred education; that of the public teacher and author of school textbooks and manuals. Occasionally found with slight changes in the numerous preserved copies of his manuscript and unpublished writings, the title Vlachos had chosen to define him as a tutor was the following: "public teacher of sciences in both languages" («κοινὸς διδάσκαλος τῶν ἐπιστημῶν κατ' ἀμφοτέρας τὰς διαλέκτους»).

In the context of 17th-century Greek intellectualism, the term *sciences* defined the pedagogical occupation and teaching of philology (mainly grammar, meter, and rhetoric), philosophy (Aristotelian Logic and Physics) and theology (studies on the Holy Scriptures and early Christian literature). Noteworthy is that Vlachos was entitled a teacher in both languages, offering the conclusion that he carried out his lessons both in ancient Greek and Latin. Such a reference confirms the argument that during the last century of the *Venetocrazia* in Crete, the young students of the urban centers had the advantage to obtain a circular education on the principal fields of knowledge and to perfect their training in the classical languages and literature. Moreover, the adjective *public*, defining the term *teacher* in the aforementioned title, allows the assumption that Vlachos did not perform his duties as a private tutor but worked in one of his contemporary schools firstly in Candia, possibly within the walls of a monastery, and after 1655 in the Greek Community of Venice. Nevertheless, in the question of defining the exact place, school or monastery, in which he offered his lessons and lectures, the primary sources remain silent at least to date; a possibility that he worked as a teacher in the environment of the monastery of Saint Catherine of Sinai in Candia remains a hypothesis that has not yet been confirmed. However, it gives a strong impression that the Cretan teacher had decided to work in his homeland (Candia and interland), and avoided to seek recognition or an eminent academic career in the Italian (Venetian and Paduan) highly intellectual environment.

³⁷ Sakkelion: *Κατάλογος*, p. 212.

Promoting the argument that Vlachos would have worked as a teacher in Candia already from the middle of the 1630s, we notice that he gradually became extremely prolific by composing numerous textbooks and commentaries on grammar, meter, rhetoric, epistolography, lexicography, logic and natural philosophy.³⁸ Praised by his contemporaries as an eminent classical philologist, he paid special attention initially to the teaching of grammar theory and its principles. Therefore, he composed brief textbooks in which he dealt with both the theory and method of ancient Greek and Latin grammar, while he was also the author of a bilingual dictionary of the classical languages. With the same eagerness he worked in the field of circular education by composing handbooks (*enchiridion*), introductions (*isagoge*) and summaries (*synopsis*) mainly on the art of classical meter and the method of epistolography.

The field, though, in which Vlachos employed all his knowledge and intellectual background should be considered that of rhetoric. In addition to a voluminous detailed treatise on the art of rhetoric, extending into three books, he also composed a concise version of his aforementioned work, along with his personal anthology with excerpts and major doctrines from the Aristotelian *On Rhetoric*. Finally, of high significance one could consider his eleven treatises and commentaries on the field of Aristotelian Physics, Metaphysics and Logic, with a series of introductions, paraphrases and exegetical questions on the entire Aristotelian corpus. This voluminous collection of works fulfilled without exception a common requirement for their author. They obviously served either as Vlachos' personal textbooks in the context of the curriculum he followed during his courses, or as manuals for school use that were copied and studied by his students in Candia and later in Venice. Through this extensive auxiliary material of introductions, summaries, compendiums, indexes, and anthologies, the Cretan scholar wished and worked in order to successfully transmit not just a basic general knowledge, but also his personal approach to a wide range of subjects and scientific fields.

Based on the few, nevertheless interesting, evidence that the present study took into consideration, we can proceed to the following conclusion. The gap of almost thirty-

³⁸ In addition to the multitude of autograph and copied codices of his works, preserved scattered and unpublished in numerous libraries and archives mainly in Greece, Italy, Romania, Russia and Turkey, modern research can study the catalogue of his main writings, which is preserved in the indice of his personal library.

five years between Vlachos' birth and his first known to us activity remains a serious limitation for the perception and evaluation of his identity as a religious man and thinker during his youth. From the scattered information on his family, studies, priestly activity and occupation with the field of education and scholarly writing, it can be assumed that we are dealing with a profoundly erudite person, a modest Orthodox representative of the Church and a central figure of his local Cretan society. In the eve of the outbreak of the War of Candia, which ended up catastrophically for him and the world he represented and came from, Vlachos had chosen a quiet modest life of contemplation, piety, intellectual pursuit and isolation from the worldly.

1.2 The warring years in Crete (1645–1654)

1.2.1. Initiatives for the defense of besieged Candia

Following the Treaty of Zuhab (17. May 1639), which ended a sixteen-year war between the Ottoman and the Safavid Persian Empire, Sultan Ibrahim (1615–1648) turned his attention once more to the west and specifically on the most precious territory of the Venetian *Stato da Màr*, the island of Crete. A relatively insignificant incident, the captivity of an Ottoman ship heading to Mecca by a naval force of Knights Hospitaller of Malta in September 1644, lighted the flame and offered the Sublime Porte the justification to proceed to reinforced war preparations. The Sultan proclaimed ostensibly war against Malta in retaliation for the pirate capture of the Ottoman ship and at the same time he accused the *Serenissima* for synergy, since the Knights had on their return been resupplied on the island of Crete. Although the Venetians tried in every way to avoid a possible war, on 30. April 1645 the Ottoman fleet came out the strait of Dardanelles and crossed the Greek Archipelagos, supposedly heading to Malta. After a misleading course (Chios, Tinos, Cytherra) the Armada changed direction and set sail for Crete, the real goal of the campaign. On 23. June the Ottomans invaded the north-west part of the island, besieging and conquering until 1648 one by one the urban centers and countryside both of western and eastern Crete (Chania, Rethymno, Sittia). Thus, during the first months of 1648 only few territories (the islet-forts of Souda, Gramvousa and Spinalonga) and the capital city of Candia were still under the control

of the Venetian Republic. On May 1648 the twenty-one-year (until 1669) siege of Candia began, inaugurating the beginning of the end for the Venetian dominion on the island.³⁹

The early phase of the war found Gerasimos Vlachos absorbed in his educational and ecclesiastical duties, both in the monasteries he held in the interland and within the walls of Candia.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, when the time came for the local Orthodox clergy to contribute to the resistance against the Ottoman invasion, Vlachos was immediately activated and took a series of pivotal initiatives. Following the relevant primary sources, it is now possible to define accurately the religious centers where the Cretan prelate lived and acted during the first years of the siege of Candia and until his final departure for the city of Venice.⁴¹ More specifically, after the loss by the Ottomans of the monasteries he owned in the countryside, Vlachos was confined within the city and initially resided in the aforementioned Orthodox monastery of Saint Catherine of Sinai in Candia. Indeed, a special relation between Vlachos and the specific Orthodox center is revealed. In addition to his uncle Nikolàkis who resided there as a monk at least since 1643, Vlachos had developed acquaintances with further members of the monastery, such as a monk named Beneto Barbarigo. Quickly he gained fame and prestige as an erudite theologian and eloquent preacher. In fact, it was in that monastery that on 25. November 1649, on the feast day of Saint Catherine, he had the chance to publicly deliver an Italian encomium in honor of the then Venetian Capitano Generale da Màr Alvise (Leonardo) Mocenigo (1583–1657), in the context of the latter's successful defense of the *Martinengo* bastion in the south-central part of Candia on August 1649.⁴²

³⁹ For a detailed narrative of the War of Candia, see Kenneth M. Setton: *Venice, Austria and the Turks in the Seventeenth Century*. American Philosophical Society. Philadelphia 1991, p. 104-243.

⁴⁰ For a series of archival evidence of Vlachos' transactions with his fellow Cretans during the first years of the war, see A.S.V., Notarile Testamenti (Nicolò Velano), Busta 1005, no. 171; A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Candia), Busta 86 (Agostino da Cipri), Libro 1 (1645–1650), 95^v-96^r.

⁴¹ For an overview of Vlachos' sermons in the codex BAR ms. gr. 889, see Dimitris Paradoulakis: «Απηχήσεις του Κρητικού Πολέμου στο Πρώιμο Κήρυγμα του Γεράσιμου Βλάχου. Ο Κώδικας BAR ms. gr. 889 της Βιβλιοθήκης της Ρουμανικής Ακαδημίας». In: *Κρητικά Χρονικά* 39 (2019), p. 163-216.

⁴² The encomium was published in Olari: "Gerasimos Vlachos", p. 261-265. For Mocenigo's achievements, see Stefanos Kaklamanis: «Ο Λέων της Βενετίας καὶ ἡ Ἡμισέληνος στὸ Ἀρχιπέλαγος. Ἡ ναυμαχία τῆς Παρωναξίας (8–10 Ἰουλίου 1651)». In: Giorgos Tolia (ed.), *Το Αἰγαῖο Πέλαγος. Χαρτογραφία καὶ Ἱστορία 15^{ος}-17^{ος} αἰώνας*. Μορφωτικό Ἰδρυμα Ἐθνικῆς Τραπέζης. Athens 2010, p. 63-91.

Although this interesting text will be discussed and interpreted further in the first part of Chapter II, it is noteworthy that the Cretan cleric wished to prove, promote and demonstrate in any occasion his direct contact and sincere admiration towards the representatives of the Venetian authority in Crete. In this way he aimed either to satisfy his personal interests, to create and expand his socio-political networks or to fulfill his internal duty which exhorted him to view the *Serenissima* as the unique alternative for the Orthodox Cretans against a possible Ottoman dominion.

Taking into consideration that the Cretan priest was forced to abandon his churches after the arrival of the Ottoman army in the provinces and outside the walls of Candia, he stayed and preached in the monastery of Saint Catherine, unknown under which position, from the spring of 1648 until the beginning of 1650. Then, on 24 February 1650 he was invited to settle and undertake the position of the chaplain in the renowned monastery of Panaghia or Kera Trimartiri.⁴³ As it turns out from the authentic administrative decisions of the ducal chancellery, after his settlement there, he was soon followed by his relative Euthimios Vlachos (16. November 1650), an hieromonk and his former assistant in his monastery of Panaghia Strovilea, and his two nephews, Grigorios Vlachos on 26. November 1650 and Arsenios Kaloudis three years later, on 23. April 1653.⁴⁴ Located in a central position in the city of Candia, Panaghia Trimartiri and its confraternity (*Scola et Fraternità di Santa Maria Trimartiri*) was indeed during the first half of the 17th century an exceptional meeting point of pious Orthodox clergymen, a praising and influential religious center, a spiritual haven during the disastrous years of the siege.⁴⁵ Therefore, for Gerasimos Vlachos it was a special honor by the monastery's confraternity in recognition to his until then contribution for the benefit of the Church of Crete and in the struggle for defense against the Ottoman invasion. In the deeply pious and intellectual environment of the Trimartiri monastery, the Cretan cleric had the opportunity for five years and until his fleeing to Venice, to coexist and interact with a

⁴³ Paradoulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 205-207.

⁴⁴ A.S.V., Duca di Candia, Busta 13, Preti 1 (1640–1653), ff. 116^r-117^v; both acts were cited in Anastasia Papadia-Lala: *To Monte di Pietà του Χάνδακα (1613 - μέσα 17^{ου} αιώνα). Συμβολή στην κοινωνική και οικονομική ιστορία της βενετοκρατούμενης Κρήτης*. Παρουσία. Athens 1987, p. 70. For Euthymios Vlachos, see A.S.V., Duca di Candia, Busta 13, Preti 2 (1640–1662), ff. 116^{r-v}.

⁴⁵ Angeliki Panopoulou: *Συντεχνίες και θρησκευτικές αδελφότητες στη βενετοκρατούμενη Κρήτη*. Istituto Ellenico di Studi Bizantini e Postbizantini di Venezia. Athens & Venice 2012, p. 270-298.

multitude of Orthodox ecclesiastics and scholars, to communicate and converse matters of faith, letters and even politics with eminent personages. Inside the circle he had formed around him, noteworthy is his close friendship with the learned prelates Ioannis Troulinos and Bartholomeos Syropoulos, who later both fled to Venice. Moreover, we have proof that he was acquainted with the noted nobleman and scholar Zuanne Papadopoli (c.1618–c.1699), author of two Italian memoirs on 17th-century Crete and the War of Candia and father of the later notorious Catholic lawyer and historian in Padua Nikolaos Komnenos Papadopoulos (1655–1740).⁴⁶

Holding a central position himself among the Orthodox clergy of the island, Vlachos participated in the first phase of the defense of Candia, fighting courageously among the rest of the clergymen and side by side with the Christian military forces, the Cretans, the Venetians and their Latin European allies. He himself described his achievements in two appeals to the Venetian Senate he composed in 1656 and 1662, that was after his departure from warring Crete. Thus, from the early years of the war in 1645 Vlachos offered his assistance and moral support to the Venetian authorities in various ways. Along with his personal contribution to the preparations of the battle and his physical presence during the defense against the invaders, he provided his meritorious financial support by volunteering to financially cover the salaries of two soldiers for a period of four months and by providing numerous residences he owned or rented in order to house soldiers. Moreover, on 25. June 1649 he lent the Venetian Fund of Candia one thousand silver scudi. His initiatives, though, were not limited only to financial aid towards the authorities. During the time when a plague spread within and outside the walls of blockaded Candia, he wandered the city – especially in the parishes of two churches which belonged to his family, the so-called Panaghia and Aghios Athanasios Palaios – offering help and support to the patients and those who were in need.

Being an eyewitness of the battles between the Christian and Muslim armies, Vlachos testified to the Venetian Senate that he even fought fully armed against the besiegers on the top of one of the city's main bastions, *bastione Jesu*. In his appeal of 1656, he characteristically stated that:

⁴⁶ Alfred Vincent (ed.): *Zuanne Papadopoli, L'Occio (Time of Leisure). Memories of Seventeenth Century Crete*. Istituto Ellenico di Studi Bizantini e Postbizantini di Venezia. Venice 2007.

“by exposing myself for the sake of the State to the risk of the infesting plague, disposing various houses I owned to shelter soldiers, paying four months’ earnings to two of them and providing many materials and other stuff necessary for the rapid fortifications that were taking place, for the progress of which I also worked intensively by impulse and constant help, while in the greatest risks the Fortress has gone through, I was always running fully armed in the positions that suffered the most, in order to defend them. [...] In such proofs of loyalty is added the actual defrayment from my side of one thousand scudi during the most critical need that the Fund had experienced.”

*“esponendomi per publico bene alli ardori della peste, assegnando diverse case (delle quale) conseguivo cento ducati d’affitto per quarterar soldati, corrispodendo le paghe per quattro mesi a duoi di loro et somministrando molto materiale et requisiti nelle premure della fortification, all’avanramento delle quali ho vivamente cooperato coll’ esortation et coll’ assistenza continue anco nelle contingenze più gravi della piazza alla difesa di cui sempre accorso con le armi nei posti più travagliosi. [...] Asi qualificate dimostranze d’ossequio ho anco l’effettivo esborso di mille scudi nell’urgenze maggiori che si provavano in quella Camera.”*⁴⁷

Such initiatives revealed the high sense of charity and social responsibility that characterized the Cretan prelate during those turbulent times. Moreover, they offer a clear image of his financial capacity, and the wideness of his property, both realty and personalty, since it would be rather impossible to proceed to such generous and large supports and charities if he did not originate from a wealthy and powerful family. The above testimony was certified in 1662 by eminent officials and commanders of the Venetian army and fleet during the first phase of the War of Candia; these were the Generals Andrea Corner, Marco Molin, Antonio Lippomano and Alvise (Leonardo) Mocenigo. However, his initiatives and patriotic activity had become known to the Ottoman officials who, in addition to the requisition of his monasteries, immediately proceeded to setting a price on his head: “although their machinations and ambushes came to the vertical, in order to take away my freedom or my life, through their munificent offers to the one who would bring me in front of them alive or dead”.⁴⁸ In conclusion, it becomes apparent that Vlachos obtained an innate tendency in favour of the Venetian authorities in Candia and of the supremacy of the *Serenissima* in Orthodox Crete. In this context, he did not hesitate, despite the clear confessional divergence, to cooperate with the local Venetian administrative and military authorities, to support their policies and tactics for the defense of Candia and all of them under his personal inclination for the benefit of the Republic.

⁴⁷ Mertzios: «Νέαι ειδήσεις», p. 282-283.

⁴⁸ Mertzios: «Νέαι ειδήσεις», p. 282.

1.2.2. Preacher of freedom in Candia

The years the Cretan cleric spent in the monasteries of Saint Catherine and Panaghia Trimartiri inaugurated a continuous, intense and fervent preaching activity inside and outside the city of Candia. Once more the content, style and purposes of his sermons were related, depended and described the warring conditions of the Ottoman presence in the island, the call for resistance, both military and spiritual, and a constant pastoral guidance in favour of a correct and pious Christian life. Indeed, under the warring circumstances, numerous Orthodox prelates and higher clerics had visited repeatedly the villages and urban centers of Crete preaching the Gospel and attempting to animate the Orthodox population against the Ottomans. Instructed by the Venetian authorities to do the same, Vlachos eagerly, tirelessly and keenly preached the Divine Word and the message of freedom and resistance both in the Orthodox churches and monasteries of Candia, sometimes in vernacular Greek and others in Italian. Moreover, he often undertook journeys mainly in his known provinces of Pediada and Mirabello and in the villages of the south-central part of the island, in his familiar monasteries of the Asterousia Mountains. His applications to the Venetian Senate offer a vivid description of the content, style and purposes of his preaching during wartime, along with the conditions under which his sermons were delivered. To start with, in 1656 he stated that:

“during the first years of this war I urged the residents of both the city and the provinces of Pediada and Mirabello through consistent and persistent sermons, for which I was sent by his excellency General [Andrea] Cornaro aiming to face the enemies in a more robust way.”

*“Nei primi anni di questa guerra, ho con predicationi assidue esortato le genti della città come pur quelle d’ambi li territori di Pediada e Mirabello ove espressamente fui spedito dall’Ecc.mo General Cornaro alla contraposizione più valida de nemici.”*⁴⁹

In his appeal of 1662 he became even more descriptive on the matter:

“at my own expense, not less by the foot than by the tongue, I impressed in this way the traces of my steps on the streets and my words in the souls, in order to keep the terrified crowds faithful; and in the city itself, [I continued] preaching for the courage and persistence against the enemies.”

“a proprie spese, non meno con piede che con la lingua, imprimendo del pari i vestigi nelle vie e le parole negli animi, per mantener in fede quelle genti sbigottite et nella

⁴⁹ Mertzios: «Νέαι εἰδήσεις», p. 282.

città medesima predicando di continuo il coraggio et la costanza contro de nemici.”⁵⁰

Vlachos composed the majority of his sermons in vernacular Greek, enriched in some points with neologisms, italics and words or phrases of the contemporary Cretan dialect. Thus, one could highlight the preacher’s conscious choice to use in his public speech the language that was widely used by his compatriots (Cretans, Venetians, Jews) not only in the urban centers but also in the interland of Crete. This linguistic choice seems to derive from a double purpose: to attract the interest and the careful attention of his flock and to attain admonition through the latter’s full comprehension of his words.⁵¹

In this context, Vlachos did not hesitate to collect, organize and bind his war sermons of the period 1652–1655 in three codices under the general title *Teachings* (*Didaches* = *Διδαχές*). Although the above sources are now possibly lost or at least remain unfound, we obtain some basic information on the size, time and place in which those sermons were delivered, following the corresponding entries in the aforementioned catalogue of Vlachos’ library: “i. Volume 1 of *Didaches* by Gerasimos of Philadelphia, containing sermons delivered in Candia in the year 1652 (ff. 124); ii. Volume 2 of *Didaches* by Gerasimos of Philadelphia, containing sermons delivered in the year 1653 and until August 15 1654 (ff. 171); iii. Volume 3 of *Didaches* containing sermons delivered in Candia in the years 1654-1655 (ff. 232)”.⁵² This conscious choice for the Cretan clergyman to preserve his sermons from the last four years of his stay in besieged Candia is closely connected to the pivotal content of those texts, their usefulness for the benefit of future Orthodox preachers, their ecclesiastical but also political interest. Indeed, the rhetorical method of their author, in co-operation with the historical need under which and for which they were created, definitely granted them the status of valuable teachings, beneficial to Vlachos’ compatriots, both laity and clergymen. Therefore, in their author’s mind, they were meant to serve as samples and testimonies of his contemporary historical events, a vivid portrayal of the turbulent conditions of a war between

⁵⁰ Mertzios: «Νέαι ειδήσεις», p. 286.

⁵¹ Stefanos Kaklamanis: «Ἡ χαρτογράφηση τοῦ χώρου καὶ τῶν συνειδήσεων στὴν Κρήτη κατὰ τὴν περίοδο τῆς Βενετοκρατίας». In: Stefanos Kaklamanis, Giannis Mavromatis (eds.), *CANDIA / CRETA / KPTH. Ὁ χρόνος καὶ ὁ χώρος. 16^{ος}-18^{ος} αἰῶνας*. Μορφωτικό Ἰδρυμα Ἐθνικῆς Τραπέζης. Athens 2005, p. 38; Konstantinos G. Kasinis: *Ἡ Πηγορικὴ τῶν Διδαχῶν τοῦ Μηνιάτη*. Vol. 1. Σύλλογος πρὸς Διάδοσιν Ὠφελίμων Βιβλίων. Athens 1999, p. 40.

⁵² Istituto Ellenico di Studi Bizantini e Postbizantini di Venezia (from now on A.E.I.B.), B’. Εκκλησία, 3. Μητρόπολη Φιλαδελφείας, Θήκη 2β’, Κατάστιχο 1 (*Indice della Libreria Monsignor Gerassimo Vlaco*), ff. 69^v.

Christians and Muslims and as indicative models of early modern Orthodox ecclesiastical homiletic.

1.2.3. Relations with the Catholics

During this early years of the war, Gerasimos Vlachos is presented excessively busy in the microcosm of besieged Candia. In fact, he was recognized and established as an eminent and erudite member of the city's Orthodox clergy, as it is revealed in the following excerpt from the already mentioned anonymous encomium in his honor:

“but you stood out greatly from everyone, since you combined your word with your life, that is the education with piety and ethics, for which you soon gained so much honor, so much glory and praise from the authorities and the people of the homeland.”

«ἀμ' ἐσὺ σμίγοντας τὸν λόγον μὲ τὸν βίον, τὴν μάθησιν δηλαδὴ μὲ τὴν θεοσέβειαν καὶ τὰ ἥθη, ὅλους πολλὰ ἐπερίσσευσες, διὰ τὰ ὅποια ὄσῃ τιμὴν, ὄσῃ δόξαν καὶ ἔπαινον ἀπόκτησες εἰς ὀλίγον καιρὸν καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦς προεστοῦς καὶ ἀπὸ ὅλον τὸν λαὸν τῆς πατρίδος.»⁵³

In this context, he undertook a leading role in numerous initiatives and official procedures for either the protection of the Christian faith – and the Orthodox confession – or for the promotion of the relevant cohesion between the ecclesiastical representatives of the two confessional communities. In that context, on 25. April 1653 he participated, as the chaplain of Panaghia Trimartiri, and undertook the duty to compose an official certificate in favor of the beneficial ecclesiastical activity of the then vicar in the Latin Archdiocese of Candia Francesco Zeno (1624–1680). The latter was a commendable Venetian Catholic clergyman and scholar who had just completed an utterly successful career in Crete. Due to the War of Candia, Zeno prepared his departure from the island in 1653 and put a candidacy for the office of bishop. In the context of the necessary support for his candidature, he requested and obtained the required certificates from Candia's Council of Nobles (*Università*), the local Venetian authorities, the Latin clergy of the Cathedral of Saint Titus, the representatives of the three Catholic monastic orders of Candia (Dominicans, Franciscans, Augustinians), and finally from the Orthodox clergy of the city.⁵⁴ The certificate that was composed by

⁵³ Dygouniotes: «Μελέτιος», p. 155.

⁵⁴ Nikolaos Panagiotakis: «Ἐρευνᾶ ἐν Βενετία. I. Περὶ Καλλεργῶν». In: *Θησαυρίσματα* 5 (1968), p. 88-94; Panagiotis Mastrodimitris: «Ἐπιγράμματα ἱερέων τοῦ Χάνδακα εἰς ἔπαινον τοῦ Δοῦκα τῆς Κρήτης Giovanni – Battista Grimani (1636)». In: *Κρητικά Χρονικά* 23 (1971), p. 391-393.

Gerasimos Vlachos and signed by all the twenty-five central Orthodox chaplains of Candia, confirmed the following:

“The most pious and most reverend canonical provost of this renowned Archdiocese of Apostle Titus of Crete Mr. Francesco Zeno is proved to be highly worthy, after excelling in the secular and in grace, and former procurator and vicar of the most glorious and most holy Archbishop of Crete Querini, he administered the issues of the Archdiocese with great knowledge, wise discretion and assistance to every pious Graikoi and Latins, doing everything sufficiently, leaving an eternal remembrance of his kind benignity and administration. [...] reverend Zeno prevailed on everybody concerning benefits, justice, goodwill, action and theory, word and work, for which the Greek clergy confesses to him the forever immortal thankfulness.”

«ὁ πανευλαβέστατος καὶ αἰδεσιμώτατος κανονικὸς πρεπόζιτος ταύτης τῆς περιφήμου μητροπόλεως Κρήτης τοῦ Ἀποστόλου Τίτου κύριος Φραγγίσκος Ζένος ἀνεφάνη ἀξιώτατος, κόσμῳ διαπρέπων καὶ χάριτι, καὶ πρώην ὑπάρχων ἐπίτροπος καὶ βικάριος τοῦ τῆς Κρήτης ἐκλαμπροτάτου καὶ πανιερωτάτου Κουρίνου ἀρχιεπισκόπου, μεγίστη γνῶσει, σοφῇ προαιρέσει, καὶ πάντων τῶν εὐσεβῶν Γραικῶν τε καὶ Λατίνων ἀρκέσει τὰ τῆς ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς διέταξε πράγματα, ἀρκετῶς ἐν τοῖς πᾶσι τὰ πάντα γενόμενος, ἀφίνοντας ἐνθύμησιν παντοτινὴν τῆς ἀγαθῆς καλοκαγαθίας καὶ διοικήσεως. [...] ὁ αἰδεσιμώτατος Ζένος μεγάλη φρονήσῃ εἰς αἶδιον αὐτοῦ μνήμην, εὐεργεσίαις, δικαιοσύνῃ, καλῇ διαθέσει, πράξει καὶ θεωρίᾳ, λόγῳ καὶ ἔργῳ τοὺς πάντας ἐκέρδησε, διὰ τὸ ὅποιον ὁ τῶν Γραικῶν κλῆρος διὰ παντὸς τοῦ ὁμολογεῖ ἀθανάτους τὰς χάριτας.»⁵⁵

Regardless if the heads of the Orthodox clergy of Candia were either urged or impelled to compose and sign the certificate to Zeno, some of them were indeed favourably inclined to the young vicar, either for opportunistic reasons or because they were sincerely feeling benefited by him. Such an argument derives from Zeno's decisions as an archbishopric vicar in favor of the Orthodox clergy of Candia. Indeed, as the supreme authority of the Catholic faith in Candia, Zeno was presented active and effective, since he managed to resolve numerous problematic matters during the siege of Candia, mainly related to cases of embezzlement against the Orthodox clergy by the then chief Orthodox priest, the so-called Protopapàs of Candia, Theodoros Palladàs.⁵⁶ More specifically, during spring 1652 the Orthodox clergy accused Palladàs twice for not distributing equally the money that were collected from litanies. In both cases Zeno intervened in the matter in favor of the lower clergy.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Panagiotakis: «Ἐρευναι», p. 93-94.

⁵⁶ For the effective control of the local Orthodox clergy, the four Cretan towns of Crete (Candia, Chania, Rethymno, and Sittia) had their Orthodox chief priests (*protopapàs*), each of whom had a deputy entitled chief cantor (*protopsaltis*). The protopapàs had under his jurisdiction the Orthodox clergy and answered to the local Latin bishops and to the Archbishop of Candia.

⁵⁷ Aspasia Papadaki: «Ὅψεις τῆς ζωῆς τοῦ βενετοκρατούμενου Χάνδακα». In: Nikos Gigourtakis (ed.): *Τὸ Ηράκλειο καὶ ἡ περιοχὴ του. Διαδρομὴ στο χρόνο*. Κέντρο Κρητικῆς

The next years, and in the context of a generalized long-standing theological and interconfessional discussion between Orthodox and Catholic clergymen in Candia and in the Archipelagos, mainly the island of Santorini, Gerasimos Vlachos became familiar and participated in conversations and sometimes disputes on the main differences between the Christian confessions. Sometimes in condescension and in a civilized atmosphere he explained the doctrines and rituals of the Orthodox Church to illustrious Venetians, such as the then *Provveditore d'Armata* Jacopo Barbaro Badoer (1616–1657). Rarely in a polemical and categorical tone he defended his faith and the teachings of the Greek Fathers against “ill-intentioned”, as he characterized them, representatives of Rome, such as his theological confrontation with the Jesuit monk and missionary in Santorini François Richard in 1653, against whom Vlachos composed a staid and firm treatise entitled “*Obfuscation of the False Believers*” («Σκοτοδίνη τῶν μὴ ὀρθῶς φρονούντων»⁵⁸).

Furthermore, the archives of the Russian State Library in Moscow contain the unique known codex of Gerasimos Vlachos’ brief treatise “*Study on whether the Helleno-Romaioi monks are allowed to compose a testament*” («Μελέτη περὶ τοῦ εἰ ἔξεστι τοῖς Ἑλληνορωμαίοις μοναχοῖς διαθήκην ποιῆσαι»), which he wrote in Candia during the period 1652–1655.⁵⁹ Although the work has not yet been studied, I will proceed to some first assumptions on the matter Vlachos dealt with, that is the conditions and the way under which the Orthodox monks were composing their will. Taking into consideration the established policy he used in his later theological manuals, we can assume that in the context of this specific study he would have firstly cited a model of expression, style and content that each monk would follow as a manual to write his own testament. The treatise would be possibly further imbued with the established during the 17th century custom of drawing one’s will, a practice of Catholic origins related to the teachings on the post-mortem salvation of the soul in the Purgatory. This standard custom of the “Latins” was largely transplanted in the Greek Orthodox communities of Venice and the *Stato da Màr* during the early modern centuries. Therefore, the Greeks of Venice, Crete, Cyprus and the Ionian Islands adopted the model of composing their own wills, in which among others, offered a part of their properties to churches and monasteries of

Λογοτεχνίας, Heraklion 2004), p. 212.

⁵⁸ For a critical publication of the work, see Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 69-162.

⁵⁹ Fonkič: «Τρία αὐτόγραφα», p. 595.

both Orthodox and Catholic confession, ordering bequests, posthumous charities and annual memorial services for the salvation of their souls. The future detailed study and publishment of the treatise will definitely shed light on Gerasimos Vlachos' perception of Christian doctrines, such as the Purgatory or the Last Judgement, and their relation with man's innate fear of death and hope for post-mortem salvation.⁶⁰

In addition to his written and oral production in the field of theology, ecclesiastics and homiletic, Vlachos continued his literal intellectual activity focused on his educational purposes as a professor of sciences. Indeed, as we conclude from a preserved Greek codex, he had completed a philosophical treatise containing questions and paraphrases on Aristotelian Logic already before the summer of 1653: "in the year of our Lord 1653, finished on 28. August inside the siege of poor Candia" (*κατὰ τὸ ,αχγν' ἔτος τὸ σωτήριον λαβὼν τέρμα Αὐγούστῳ μηνὶ δὴ ἐν τῷ περιφραγμῷ τοῦ ταλαιπώρου Χάνδακος*). The treatise was copied by Vlachos' close friend, pupil and monk Michael Agapitos, as revealed by the title of the codex: "*Paraphrases and questions on the whole treatise of Aristotle in Logic, written by the highly wise and highly intellectual sir Gerasimos Vlachos, hieromonk and public preacher of the renowned city of Crete*".⁶¹ Moreover, in the eve of his departure from Candia (August–September 1654), Vlachos began to write his philosophical commentary on the Aristotelian *De Anima* ("*Brief Paraphrases and questions on the books of Aristotle's On the Soul, [written] by the hieromonk Gerasimos Vlachos, public professor of sciences and humble preacher of the Holy Gospel*"). He completed his comments on the first book on 10. September 1654 and left the rest unfinished until his arrival in the Metropolis; in fact, he completed the commentary one year later (25. September 1655).⁶² Both treatises are added to his previous and later textbooks of similar nature, all of them used during his lessons and lectures as a public teacher in Candia and then in Venice.

⁶⁰ For the repercussions of such Catholic teachings in the Orthodox communities of the Venetian territories, see Sotiris Koutmanis: «Ἕλληνες στη Βενετία (1620-1710). Κοινωνικό φύλο – οικονομία – νοοτροπίες». PhD diss. National & Kapodistrian University of Athens 2013, p. 335-356.

⁶¹ «Εἰς ἅπασαν τὴν λογικὴν πραγματείαν τοῦ Ἀριστοτέλους παραφράσεις καὶ ζητήματα παρὰ τοῦ σοφωτάτου καὶ λογιωτάτου κυρίου Γερασίμου ἱερομονάχου τοῦ Βλάχου καὶ κήρυκος κοινοῦ τῆς περιφήμου πόλεως Κρήτης»; for the codex Graec. IV, 60 (col. 1149) of the *Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana*, see Tatakis: *Γεράσιμος Βλάχος*, p. 42-43.

⁶² «Εἰς τὰ περὶ ψυχῆς τοῦ Ἀριστοτέλους βιβλία. Σύντομος παράφρασις καὶ ζητήματα παρὰ Γερασίμου ἱερομονάχου Βλάχου τοῦ Κρητός τοῦ τῶν ἐπιστημῶν κοινοῦ καθηγητοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἱεροῦ εὐαγγελίου ταπεινοῦ κήρυκος»; see Fonkič: «Τρία αὐτόγραφα», p. 591-592.

1.2.4. Preparations for settlement in Venice

According to the available primary sources, during the period 1649–1654 Gerasimos Vlachos proceeded to a series of initiatives in order to prepare his safe and organized settlement away from his homeland's battlefield, in the calm and cosmopolitan environment of Venice and in the circles of the local Greek Community. But why Venice? During the early modern period the Republic had, indeed, obtained and maintained the role of the *communis patria*, in which individuals of different origin, language, culture, even religious tradition could coexist peacefully as citizens of a common polity; on the condition of course that this multi-culturalism did not disturb public order and did not arise severe internal social or political imbalances. Thus, the *Serenissima* always allured and attracted people from all over the world and, naturally, from the Greek territories that were under her jurisdiction.

Existing as an organized social and political entity since the 15th century, the Greek community of Venice was consisted of permanent members and occasional passing people (soldiers, sailors, merchants, lawyers, artists, artisans, printers, prelates and scholars). During the early period of their establishment in the City of the Doges, the Greeks gathered, lived and worked in the district of Castello, especially in the area around the city shipyard (*Arsenale*) due to most Greeks' occupation with sea trade and shipping. By the end of the 15th century until the Fall of Candia (1669), the consistent presence of the Greeks in the city was strengthened and eventually consolidated, with the arrival of refugees from Cyprus, Peloponnese and finally Crete due to the continual expansion of the Ottoman Empire in the Eastern Mediterranean.⁶³ In this context and already during the late 1570s, the Greeks gathered around their own confraternity (*Confraternità dei Greci* or *Confraternità di San Nicolò dei Greci*), established in 1498, constituted according to the Venetian laws.⁶⁴ The establishment of the Greek Confraternity belonged to the general policy of the Venetian state in favor of

⁶³ Giorgio Fedalto: "Le minoranze straniere". In: Hans-Georg Beck, Manoussos Manousakas, Agostino Petrusi (eds.), *Venezia centro di mediazione tra Oriente e Occidente*. Vol. 1. Leo S. Olschiki. Florence 1977, p. 143-163.

⁶⁴ For a historical review of the Greek Community and Greek Confraternity of Venice, see Manoussos Manousakas: «Βιβλιογραφία του Ελληνισμού της Βενετίας. Μέρος Α'. Γενικά. Συμπλήρωμα (1973-1980)». In: *Θησαυρίσματα* 17 (1980), p. 7-21; Manoussos Manousakas, «Επισκόπηση της ιστορίας της Ελληνικής Ορθόδοξης Αδελφότητας της Βενετίας (1498-1953)». In: *Ιστορικά* 6 (1989), p. 243-264.

confraternities for the foreign minorities of the city; it was considered a supportive method for the control, internal administration and social adjustment of those groups in the context of the Venetian multi-cultural polity.⁶⁵

Both in the Confraternity and generally in the Greek Community of the city the *Serenissima* had recognized, in addition to an internal administrative independence, several religious-confessional freedoms. Indeed, Venice enjoyed the reputation of being a religiously tolerant state both in its political center and its *Stato da Màr*. In the microcosm of the City of the Doges people of different faiths (Catholics, Lutherans, Calvinists, Orthodox, Muslims and Jews) were allowed to freely or relatively freely exercise their religious rituals and duties, always under the watchful eye of the city's secular and ecclesiastical authorities.⁶⁶ Such an initiative by the Venetian State is historically viewed as a conscious policy of political and administrative nature, since of outmost importance for the *Serenissima* during the early modern period was the preservation of public order in her territories but also the enhancement of loyalty by her non-Catholic subjects. Unlike Rome, Venice did not consider the defense of the Catholic doctrines and confession among her first priorities, with the latter being considered mainly political and economic. Therefore, all the foreign communities in her territories enjoyed the political protection and district religious support of the central authority; although still being considered “schismatics”, the Orthodox Greeks of Venice held the main position among those minorities.⁶⁷

In this context, the members of the Greek Community in Venice had obtained already before the end of the 16th century their own church dedicated to Saint George (*San Giorgio dei Greci*), a symbol of Orthodox faith for all the Greeks of the Diaspora in the years to come, an Orthodox cemetery, an Orthodox female monastery and a school. In the context of a decisive program for the socio-political, cultural and religious homogenization for all the Greeks who resided in Venice and for those to come as passers or refugees during the 17th century, the Greek Confraternity proceeded gradually to the purchase of a number of residences and buildings in the region around the church of San Giorgio, in the eastern part of the city, thus creating the so-called *Campo dei*

⁶⁵ Nicholas Terpstra (ed.): *The Politics of Ritual Kinship: Confraternities and Social Order in Early Modern Italy*. Cambridge University Press. New York 2000.

⁶⁶ Federico Barbierato: “Luterani, Calvinisti e Libertini. Dissidenza religiosa a Venezia nel secondo Seicento”. In: *Studi Storici* 46 (2005), p. 797-844.

⁶⁷ Chryssa A. Maltezou: *H Bevetia των Ελλήνων*. Μίλητος. Athens 1999.

Greci. Moreover, and opposing to the general conservative climate of the Catholic Reformation, Venice proceeded during the 1570s in a decisive step in an effort to strengthen even more and secure the loyalty of her Orthodox subjects. In 1577 and in the aftermath of the catastrophic for them Fourth Ottoman-Venetian War of Cyprus (1570–1573), the Venetians, with the eventual consent of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, worked as an intermediate agency so that the church of *San Giorgio* and its Orthodox bishop in Venice to be placed under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople.

Thus, the so-called Archbishop of Philadelphia, the only Greek Orthodox high cleric in Latin Europe, exercised his jurisdiction not only over the Greeks of the city of Venice, but also on the Greek Orthodox communities of the whole *Stato da Màr* (Dalmatia, Istria, Ionian Islands, Peloponnese and Crete).⁶⁸ The Archbishop was elected by the Greek Confraternity and his primacy was officially validated by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. Taking into consideration the growing number of the Orthodox in the city along with the fact that the *Stato da Màr* was in its majority consisted of Orthodox polities, an ecclesiastical office of the same confession but under the discreet inspection of the Republic would more easily guide and control those masses.⁶⁹ This initiative to establish an Orthodox high ecclesiastical office in the heart of the Republic, although eventually turned out to be insufficient, indeed led to a partial state of sincere appreciation and co-operation between the authorities and the subjects, mainly during the preparatory phase of the War of Candia.

In the eve of the latter and especially during the warfare, the Greek Community of Venice achieved a considerable blooming and prosperity, with a determinant increase in her population due to the refugees' arrival, a solid political administration, a powerful financial network, established and productive educational institutions and an independent religious hierarchy. Thus, through the contemporary Venetian reports and

⁶⁸ Manousos Manousakas: *Ανέκδοτα πατριαρχικά γράμματα 1547–1806 πρὸς τοὺς ἐν Βενετίᾳ Μητροπολίτας Φιλαδελφείας καὶ τὴν Ὀρθόδοξον Ἑλληνικὴν Ἀδελφότητα*. Istituto Ellenico di Studi Bizantini e Postbizantini di Venezia. Venice 1968; Manousos Manousakas: «Ἡ ἐν Βενετίᾳ Ἑλληνικὴ Κοινότης καὶ οἱ Μητροπολίται Φιλαδελφείας». In: *Ἐπετηρίς Ἐταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν* 37 (1969-1970), p. 170-210.

⁶⁹ Efsthathios Birtachas: “Un ‘secondo’ vescovo a Venezia: Il metropolita di Filadelfia (secoli XVI-XVIII)”. In: Maria Francesca Tiepolo, Eurigio Tonetti (eds.): *I Greci a Venezia: Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studio (Venezia, 5–7 Novembre 1998)*. Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti. Venice 2002, p. 101-121.

decrees, the *Nazione Greca di Venezia* was presented as a loyal subject and fervent supporter of the *Serenissima*,⁷⁰ becoming the most suitable destination for the Cretan refugees during the period of 1645–1669. Indeed, during the war the Venetian Senate allowed, organized and carried out the relocation of thousands of her subjects to destinations of their own choice (Aegean islands, Ionian Islands, Istria and Dalmatia, Venice and its provinces). In the eyes of the majority, though, the city of Venice was perceived as an actual haven, a new homeland or at least a temporary shelter away from the destruction and death that ravaged their island.⁷¹

Among those who decided to abandon Candia and flee to the Metropolis, Gerasimos Vlachos was definitely familiar with the environment and the society of Venice. Among his sources one can refer to the consistent and numerous descriptions and narratives of the city and its people spread by Cretans who had travelled there in the past for commercial or religious reasons. Furthermore, the scholar undoubtedly was informed in detail by the various Venetian noblemen, clergymen and officials in Candia who belonged in his personal circle of acquaintanceships. His choice seems indeed predestinate, since he had the opportunity to rely on the wide social, scholarly and religious network he had formed in Crete until then both with Cretans and Venetians. Also, he was a fluent bilingual speaker of the Italian language, even more the Venetian dialect, since this was the official language of the Republic. His final and strongest card that would ensure him the support by the Venetian State and a warm welcome by the local Greek Community must have been the respect and reputation he enjoyed in the political, ecclesiastical and cultural circles of his hometown, along with the appreciation by his compatriots, already relocated in Venice, for his patriotic activity during wartime. In the context of his preparations for a settlement in the city of the Doges, already from 10. September 1649 Vlachos authorized someone named Sozon Barbaro as his procurator and commissioner in order to arrange the transfer of his movable property from Candia to Venice.⁷² At the same time, he appointed two more commissioners,

⁷⁰ Athanasios Karathanasis: *Η Φλαγγίνειος Σχολή της Βενετίας*. Κυριακίδης. Thessaloniki 1986, p. 327.

⁷¹ Chryssa Maltezou: «Η τύχη των τελευταίων βενετών ευγενών της Κρήτης». In: Stefanos Kaklamanis, Athanasios Markopoulos, Giannis Mauromatis (eds.): *Ενθύμησις Ν. Μ. Παναγιωτάκη*. Πανεπιστημιακές Εκδόσεις Κρήτης. Heraklion 2000, p. 447-458.

⁷² For the original Italian act, see A.S.V., Notai di Candia, Agostino da Cipri (1645–1655), Busta 86, Libro 1 (1645–1650): ff. 215^v-216^r.

Marco and Hieronymo Corner on 28. July 1649 and 7. March 1651 respectively, who would be responsible of his personalty (clothes, books, icons, silver, tapestries, e.t.c.) during the time the latter would be stored in Venice.⁷³

In parallel with those preparations, Vlachos proceeded to brief scanning journeys to Venice during the period 1651–1653 in search for work and residence. More specifically, by using his profession as a renowned teacher in Candia, he persistently focused his efforts to support a candidacy for the position of the teacher at the School of the Greek Community in Venice, a public institution of basic education founded in 1593 and addressing young Greeks from Venice and the *Stato da Màr*. With its curriculum dealing with courses of basic knowledge in the fields of grammar, classical literature, practical arithmetic and preparatory lessons on rhetoric, philosophy and theology, the School of the Community had often become the center of work for eminent Greek scholars, before and after Gerasimos Vlachos, such as Theophilos Korydalleus, Metrophanis Kritopoulos, Nathanael Chikas, Michael Chortatzis, Aloisios Ambrosios Gradenigos and Matthaïos Typaldos.⁷⁴ Because of his two failed attempts on 22. January 1651 and 7. December 1653, Vlachos decided to hasten his departure in order to support his third candidacy more efficiently. Thus, after settling his financial and other backlogs towards fellow compatriots in Candia, he authorized on 20. October 1654 Zuanne Corner as his legitimate commissioner⁷⁵ and immediately departed to Venice, accompanied by his two nephews, Arsenios Kaloudis and Grigorios Vlachos. Near the age of fifty, in poor health and facing a severe financial destruction, he left behind, this time permanently, his homeland; the latter had generously offered him a large part of his intellectual equipment, of his religious piety, of his political acuity, but also of his balancing, mild character.

⁷³ A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Candia), Busta 227 (Michiel Piri), Libro 4 (1646–1649), 296^v-297^r; and A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Candia), Busta 227 (Michiel Piri), Libro 5 (1649–1651), 324^r-^v. For a series of acts during the period 1650–1651, in which Gerasimos Vlachos was authorized as commissioner of the property of fellow Cretan refugees, see A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Candia), Busta 227 (Michiel Piri), Libro 5 (1649–1651), 68^{r-v}, 124^r, 385^v-386^r.

⁷⁴ Athanasios Karathanasis: *Η Βενετία των Ελλήνων*. Κυριακίδης. Thessaloniki 2010, p. 92. It is noteworthy that three of the professors in the School of the Greek Community were later elected in the Metropolitan Throne of Philadelphia: Michael (Meletios) Chortatzis, Gerasimos Vlachos and his notorious successor Matthaïos (Meletios) Typaldos.

⁷⁵ A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Candia), Busta 228 (Michiel Piri), Libro 7 (1653–1655), 280^{r-v}.

1.3. The years of exile: Venice (1655–1665)

1.3.1. New life, old habits

The ship that transferred Gerasimos Vlachos and his nephews away from the war zone of Crete arrived in the port of Venice before 30. November 1654, date in which the Cretan clergyman participated as a godfather in a baptism that took place in the church of *San Giorgio*.⁷⁶ During the first months of 1655 he put his third candidacy for the position of the teacher in the School of the Greek Community and on 1. August 1655 he was eventually hired for the first time.⁷⁷ Despite his success though, he was still incapable to financially support himself and his nephews, since all his realty in Crete was lost due to the war. Therefore, on 1. June 1656 he proceeded to the already mentioned applications to the Venetian Senate asking for support and following the example of numerous Cretan refugees who had also become deprived of their properties and titles during the war. Taking into consideration his declared loyalty to the *Serenissima* and the patriotic activity he had developed during the first years of the war, the Senate responded favourably to his appeal and by decision of 4. November 1656, granted him a monthly and lifelong financial aid of ten ducats.⁷⁸ It is noteworthy that, regardless his financial difficulties, the Cretan scholar did not neglect to proceed to voluntary annual contributions of two or four ducats towards the Fund of the Greek Community, in which he usually signed as “the hieromonk Gerasimos Vlachos, teacher of the Nation”.⁷⁹

Along with the lectures and lessons at the School of the Greek Community, the Cretan thinker did not forget to reactivate his second favorite occupation, that of the preacher, this time from the pulpit in the church of *San Giorgio*. Indeed, during the 17th

⁷⁶ For Vlachos’ participation as a godfather in the aforementioned entry, along with six more during the period 1655–1662, see A.E.I.B., B’. Εκκλησία, 5. Ληξιαρχικές πράξεις, Κατάστιχο 1 (1599–1654), ff. 101^r; & Κατάστιχο 2 (1655–1701), ff. 3^r, 23^v, 86^v, 95^r, 105^{r-v}. Some of the entries are cited in Tatakis: *Γεράσιμος Βλάχος*, p. 14 and note 4.

⁷⁷ In the years to come, Vlachos achieved to be re-elected twice, on 24. October 1658 and on 21. January 1661; see Karathanasis: *Βενετία*, p. 219–220. For Vlachos’ first acts upon his arrival in Venice (12. March 1655), see A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Venezia), Busta 13563 (Nicolò Velano), Libro 1 (1655–1657), ff. 6^v–7^v.

⁷⁸ Mertzios: «Νέαι ειδήσεις», p. 281–285.

⁷⁹ For Vlachos’ entries on the years 1656, 1657, 1658, 1659, 1660, 1662, see respectively A.E.I.B., Οργάνωση 2, K 15, ff. 67^v, 68^r, 69^r, 70^r, 71^r, 72^r. Some of the entries were published in Tatakis: *Γεράσιμος Βλάχος*, p. 13 note 4.

century and thanks to the initiatives of the Greek Confraternity, a series of fervent Orthodox ecclesiastics were invited to preach the Divine Word, forming through the years a solid and pious ecclesiastical homiletic tradition in the Greek Community of Venice.⁸⁰ Although Vlachos did not serve as a chaplain in the specific church,⁸¹ he composed during the period 1656–1662 and delivered in *San Giorgio* a multitude of sermons on religious piety and anti-Ottoman rhetoric, which he then organized and bound in three codices: “i. Volume 4 of *Didaches* containing sermons delivered in Venice in the year 1656 (ff. 191); ii. Volume 5 of *Didaches* containing sermons delivered in Venice in the years 1658 and 1659 (ff. 186); iii. Volume 6 of *Didaches* containing sermons delivered in Venice in the years 1661 and 1662 (ff. 243)”.⁸²

Similar to his war sermons in Candia of the years 1652–1655, the Cretan prelate considered his preaching activity as a service for the common benefit of the Christians, regardless of their confession, of his Cretan compatriots and of the *Serenissima* herself, who anxiously watched the uncontrollable vehemence of the Ottoman attacks in her territories. Although the Venetian sermons have not been detected yet, it could be assumed that Vlachos used his preaching in Venice both as a means to raise public awareness on the war in Crete and as a spiritual guide to soothe and relieve the Cretan refugees who resided in the city. Indeed, the impact of his preaching in the church of *San Giorgio* was vividly described years later by the eminent scholar and clergyman of Cretan origin Markos Maximos Maràs (1665–1716).⁸³ The latter, in a praising speech in honor of Vlachos, stated the following:

“He [mean. Plato] taught the Ideas to the people, and you blared the Divine knowledge, the Holy Scriptures and the Gospel of Christ in the world all in one as a thunder, with your quick and God-motivated tongue never being ceased to preach the Word of Christ.”

⁸⁰ Athanasios Karathanasis: «Ἡ ἐκκλησιαστική ρητορική στὸν Ἅγιο Γεώργιο τῶν Ἑλλήνων τῆς Βενετίας (1534-1788)». In: *Θησαυρίσματα* 9 (1972), p. 137–179.

⁸¹ Tatakis: *Γεράσιμος Βλάχος*, p. 15 and note 1.

⁸² *Indice della Libreria Monsignor Gerassimo Vlaco*, ff. 69^v. It is noteworthy that Vlachos did not seem to have composed any sermons during the years 1657 and 1660, with the cause remaining unknown.

⁸³ Markos Maximos Maràs was the nephew of Vlachos' close friend, the vicar of the church of *San Giorgio*, Grigorios Maràs. Ordained from deacon to presbyter by Vlachos on 17. January 1684, he was later hired as a teacher in the School of the Greek Community of Venice and chaplain in the church of *San Giorgio*; see Athanasios Karathanasis: «Ο Κώδικας 410 της Βιβλιοθήκης της Ρουμάνικης Ακαδημίας και ο Κρητικός μητροπολίτης Ιεραπόλεως Μάξιμος (Μάρκος) Μαρὰς (17^{ος} αι.)». In: *Πεπραγμένα του Δ' Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου*, Vol. 3. Athens 1981, p. 107-120.

«Εκεῖνος [ὁ Πλάτων] ιδέας τὸν κόσμον ἐδίδασκεν καὶ σὺ τὰς θείας γνώσεις, τὰς ἱερὰς γραφὰς καὶ τὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ Εὐαγγέλιον εἰς τὴν Οἰκουμένην ἐβρόντισας καὶ ὅλον ἓνα βροντῇ ἢ γρήγορος καὶ θεοκίνητος γλῶσσα μηδέποτε πάβουσα τὸν λόγον διδάσκουσα τοῦ Χριστοῦ.»⁸⁴

1.3.2. Addressing the Tsardom of Russia and the Kingdom of France

According to the primary sources, Gerasimos Vlachos enjoyed a favorable treatment by the *Serenissima* throughout his preparations of his departure from Crete and during the first years of his settlement in the City of the Doges, all due to his services in favor of the defense of the besieged city of Candia. By their consistent method of ensuring the safe re-settlement of their war refugees, their financial aid and their social rehabilitation, the Venetian authorities invested in their subjects' loyalty and allegiance to them, becoming eager to contribute by any means to her interests. While living in Venice, Vlachos perceived more clearly the historical conjuncture and adopted the Venetians' aspirations. On the winter of 1657 he was called for the first time to undertake an important and high mission and to prove once again his sincere faith to the *Signoria*. During that period, the Venetians had turned to the Tsardom of Russia seeking of a powerful ally in their war against the Ottomans. In the context of the diplomatic contacts between the two parties, an embassy of Russian ambassadors visited Venice on early December 1656. In addition to their warm welcome by the Senate, the Russian embassy was also invited with honors by the Greek Confraternity in the church of *San Giorgio* on 24. December.⁸⁵

Among the numerous meetings between the Russians and the Greeks over the next two months, the latter offered to the Russian Ambassador Ivan Ivanovich Chemodanov two copies of a brief Greek entreaty in the form of a praising speech, composed by Gerasimos Vlachos on 20. February 1657. The work was dedicated to the Tsar of Moscow Aleksey Mikhailovich (1629–1676), as it is revealed already from its official title: “*Triumph Against the Reign of the Turks, that is an Encouraging Speech Addressed to the Highly Pious and Invincible King of Muscovy, sire Aleksey Mikhailovich, written by Gerasimos Vlachos the Cretan, Abbot and Chaplain of the Monastery of Honorable*

⁸⁴ Karathanasis: *Βενετία*, p. 389.

⁸⁵ Chryssa Maltezou: «Οἱ Αμπασαδόροι της Μεγάλης Μοσχοβίας στη Βενετία καὶ ὁ Κρητικὸς Πόλεμος». In: *Θησαυρίσματα* 30 (2000), p. 12; Laskaridis: *Ρωσία*, p. 240-258; Karathanasis: *Βενετία*, p. 420-423.

Saint Georgios Skalotos, Primate of the Monastery of [Panaghia] Strovilea, Preacher of the Holy Gospel and Public Teacher of Philosophy and Theology in the Greek and Latin Language in renown Venice". The fact that the Cretan professor was asked to officially address the Muscovite leader reveals the appreciation and admiration he enjoyed in Venice, with the Senate trusting him a venture of such seriousness. His profound knowledge of the ecclesiastical tradition, his rhetorical skills, as well as his piety and respect in the Orthodox faith, were virtues already apparent to his fellow Greeks and to the Venetian authorities, if one takes into account his intense pastoral activity in the church of *San Giorgio*. With his valuable experience on military issues obtained during his participation in the defense of besieged Candia, the elderly scholar was indeed ready to contribute to a possible alliance between the Muscovites and the Venetians for the abolition of the Ottoman dominion in the Eastern Mediterranean region.

In addition to his interests in the political and ecclesiastical developments of his time, Vlachos came into contact with his contemporary Latin intellectual circles. Although one can assume that he would have numerous acquaintances with scholars, ecclesiastics and artists in the cosmopolitan environment of Venice, a city of wide and various networks, the preserved primary sources offer us evidence for just one of them; his correspondence with the French Dominican theologian and patrologist François Combefis (1605–1679). The two men came into contact in the context of Combefis' forthcoming edition of the works by the Greek Church Father Saint Maximus the Confessor.⁸⁶ Admiring Combefis' publishing activity, the Cretan scholar undertook pro bono and sent to the Dominican patrologist on 13. June 1658 a codex containing the complete works of Saint Maximus, copied under his order by one of his nephews or some other unknown to us grammarian. In the letter that accompanied the codex, it is noteworthy that Vlachos addressed Combefis in the following way: "you, most reverend to me and most beloved among the fathers" («πατέρων αἰδεσιμώτατε μοι καὶ προσφιλέστατε»). In response to Vlachos' gift, Combefis praised the Cretan scholar's profound intellect, high education and philological acumen in the introduction of the first volume of Saint Maximus' *opera omnia*. More specifically, after expressing his gratitude towards the Cretan teacher for the latter's initiative to assist him in his publishing project, he defined the task of a meticulous transcription of an ancient codex as an outstanding achievement

⁸⁶ Legrand: *Bibliographie*, Vol. 2 (1645–1690), p. 310-315.

of great erudition.⁸⁷

1.3.3. Preserving old networks, promoting new acquaintanceships

Gerasimos Vlachos, as an eminent teacher in the School of the Greek Community and as a pious Orthodox prelate and preacher of the city, began in a short time to re-create his personal circle. The latter included older acquaintances from Candia who, like him, had eventually found shelter in Venice, along with prominent figures of the local ecclesiastical and administrative circles of the Greek Community. Mainly through a series of notarial records (transactions, financial agreements, contracts, testaments, bequests and certificates) from the period 1655–1664, we acquire a limited, nevertheless indicative image of Vlachos' social life in the circles of the School of the Community, the Greek Confraternity and the church of *San Giorgio*. Among the figures that he is presented to coexist, cooperate and interact with were old acquaintances from Candia, almost exclusively Orthodox ecclesiastics: learned prelates such as his nephews, Arsenios Kaloudis and Grigorios Vlachos who were working as correctors and editors of religious books in vernacular Greek, the elderly priest Parthenios Achèlis, the clergyman from Candia Ioannis Melissinos, the abbot of the renowned Orthodox monastery of Agarathos Meletios Kalonàs, the deputy of the Grand Chancellor of Candia Giovanni Aurelio Procaciantè, the prelate and collector of codices Bartholomeos Syropoulos, the scholarly teacher Frangiskos Skoufos, the vigorous copyist Grigorios Melissinos.⁸⁸ At the same time, Vlachos was eager to develop a new network, supportive to his old one, of pivotal members of the Greek community. During the ten years of his settlement in the city of Venice he would come into contact and cooperate with prominent figures of the church of *San Giorgio*, such as the chaplains Antonios Bouboulis, Theophylaktos Tzanfournaris and Emmanuel Zane Mpounialis, who was also a notable painter and poet of religious works in vernacular Greek, the hieromonks and authors of religious works Anthimos Akakios Diakrousis and Agapios Landos, the

⁸⁷ Legrand, *Bibliographie*, Vol. 2 (1645–1690), p. 311-312.

⁸⁸ For a series of acts during the period 1655–1662 in which Vlachos participated or signed as a witness, see A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Venezia), Busta 13563 (Nicolò Velano), Libro 1 (1655–1657), ff. 18^r-19^v, 29^r-33^r, 171^{r-v}, 185^v-186^r, 204^r-205^r; A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Venezia), Busta 13564 (Nicolò Velano), Libro 1 (1657–1659), ff. 97^{r-v}; A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Venezia), Busta 13566 (Nicolò Velano), Libro 1 (1661–1663), ff. 5^{r-v}, 270^{r-v}, 307^v-308^r.

wealthy and powerful merchant Panos Ierommimon, the Greek merchants and printers Nikolaos Glykis and Nikolaos Saròs.

Examining the aforementioned names more carefully, the interest of the research is raised by three cases in which Gerasimos Vlachos collaborated with members of his ecclesiastical circle for internal matters of the Community. More specifically, on 18. September 1655, the Cretan prelate, accompanied by his compatriots from Candia also clergymen Bernardo Mòro and Giorgio Venerando, confirmed by oath for the captivity by Ottoman pirates of a Christian woman named Agnese Boubouli. Her brother, Merkourios Bouboulis had decided to travel and work in England, in order to collect the necessary money for her release. Therefore, the three prelates from Candia validated and signed a certificate that Merkourios would present upon his arrival in England to the members of the local Greek community. Two years later, on 7. November 1657, another group of Orthodox clergymen from Candia (the aforementioned Ioannis Melissinos, Zuanne Lorando, Tomaso Musalo, Markos Maràs, Gerasimos Vlachos) guaranteed for the noble origin, the honest life and the piety of their compatriot Georgios Spanopoulos, former *canonico* in the region of Hierapetra and Sittia in eastern Crete. Some weeks later, on 2. December 1657, Vlachos was involved in a bequest by Margarita Querini, “*abbadessa delle Madri del monasterio di San Girolamo di Candia*”, towards the aforementioned Orthodox monastery of Agaratho, which was located in the known province of Pediada. In this context, Vlachos was authorized by his friend and abbot of the monastery, Meletios Kalonàs, and proceeded to a series of contracts with the deputy of the Grand Chancellor of Candia Giovanni Aurelio Procaciant. In the context of a similar case, on 24. May 1661, the Cretan scholar served as a representative of the church of *San Giorgio* and the Orthodox monastery of Noble Greek Women in Venice (founded in 1599),⁸⁹ in order to deliver to young Marko Ashà, son of Zorzi, a bequest from his late godmother, the eminent and pious Orthodox nun Teofanò Kalogerà, abbess in the monastery of Saint Basil in Rethymno.⁹⁰ In this context and

⁸⁹ For a historical overview of the monastery, see Eleni Koukkou: *Ἡ Ὁρθόδοξος Μονὴ Εὐγενῶν Ἑλληνίδων Βεβετίας (1599–1829)*. Athens 1965.

⁹⁰ For the aforementioned acts, see A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Venezia), Busta 13563 (Nicolò Velano), Libro 1 (1655–1657), ff. 68^r, 83^v-85^v, 111^v, 376^v, 389^r-390^r; A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Venezia), Busta 13564 (Nicolò Velano), Libro 1 (1657–1659), ff. 63^r; A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Venezia), Busta 13565 (Nicolò Velano), Libro 1 (1659–1661), ff. 379^r-380^r; this final act, dealing with the bequest by Teofanò Kalogerà, is also the unique official archival

urged by the confidence he certainly had gained due to the recognition and appreciation he experienced in his circle, Vlachos decided to test his strength by putting up a candidacy on 25. March 1657 for the office of the Archbishop of Philadelphia in succession of the late Athanasios Valerianos from Zante (c.1591–1657). Although he failed to be elected, he obtained the second place, an indicative evidence of the high esteem he enjoyed in general in both the Community and the Greek Confraternity.

The aforementioned cases reveal at first the wide and Orthodox-focused network Gerasimos Vlachos had developed during his life as a prelate and teacher in Crete. Figures such as Troulinòs, Achèlis, Kalonàs, Melissinòs and Maràs had indeed played a pivotal role to the ecclesiastical and intellectual history of their homeland, while after the Ottoman invasion they transferred their activities and cooperation to the welcoming environment of the Greek community of Venice. Thus, they all formed a steadfast and closely interdisciplinary network of people, who were united under the concept of common origin, common faith, common ideological motives and interests. In this way, Vlachos could actually feel secured by taking the decision to follow his fellow Cretan friends to the city of the Doges, where he immediately entered, adjusted and contributed to a purely Cretan core of Orthodox religious, intellectual and cultural expression. At the same time, the scholar from Candia did not hesitate to approach and interact with already distinguished ecclesiastical members of the Greek community in Venice. Therefore, one could conclude that the features of profound piety and scholarly erudition had quickly promoted Vlachos to a prominent figure of the community, a man who inspired trust and respect to those who knew him, talked with him or collaborated with him.

1.3.4. Publishing in the name of education

Motivated from the prestige he had acquired as a teacher of the Community and as one of the central scholars among his compatriots, Gerasimos Vlachos started to develop simultaneously with his religious-ecclesiastical networks, a promising intellectual system of acquaintanceships, specifically focused on the field of early modern Greek printing. Deriving from the 16th-century initiatives by pivotal Venetian printing houses

document detected, in addition to Tzòrtzis Vlachos' will in 1643, in which the name of Gerasimos Vlachos' father was recorded: "*abbate Gerassimo Vlaco di q. Teodoro*".

of Greek books, during the 17th century this production was mainly represented by four Venetian and two Greek printers: Antonio Pinelli and his successor Giovanni Pietro, Giovanni Andrea Giuliani and his successor Andrea, Orsino Albrizzi and Valentino Mortali, Nikolaos Glykis and Nikolaos Sàros. Their publishing activity mainly focused on books of religious and liturgical content, but also those of school use and popular readings.⁹¹

An early direct approach between Gerasimos Vlachos and the representatives of printing activity in Venice took place two years after his settlement in the city. More specifically, in the spring of 1657 he participated in the resolvment of a financial controversy (29. March–26. April) between two Orthodox hieromonks, prolific authors and translators mainly of religious works in vernacular Greek, Anthimos Akakios Diakrousis from Cephalonia⁹² and Agapios Landos from Crete.⁹³ As the judges (*'arbitri'*) of their dispute, the two prelates appointed at first the chaplain of *San Giorgio* Theophylaktos Tzanfournaris and the clergyman Ioannis Melissinos, while in the second level Gerasimos Vlachos was added as the third arbitrator.⁹⁴ The same act is of special interest since, in addition to the aforementioned eminent figures of the Orthodox ecclesiastical presence in Venice, among the witnesses were Vlachos' nephew, Arsenios Kaloudis, and the renowned Venetian printer of Greek books and Vlachos' later collaborator, Andrea Giuliani.⁹⁵ Indeed, both Diakrousis and Landos, but also Kaloudis and Grigorios Vlachos, had worked in one way or another as correctors and editors in the printing press of Giuliani. The benefits of this acquaintance did not take long to appear.

⁹¹ For an introductory overview of the printing houses of Greek books in Venice during the 17th century, see Nikolaos G. Kontosopoulos: «Τὰ ἐν Βενετία τυπογραφεία ἐλληνικῶν βιβλίων κατὰ τὴν Τουρκοκρατίαν». In: *Αθηνά* 58 (1954), p. 302-305; Aikaterini Koumariou, Loukia Droulia, Evro Layton: *Το ελληνικό βιβλίο 1476-1830*. Εθνική Τράπεζα της Ελλάδος. Athens 1986, p. 135-136, 157-158, 288-289

⁹² For a detailed study on Diakrousis and his chronicle in verses on the early phase of the War of Candia (Venice: 1667), see Stefanos Kaklamanis (ed.): *Ἀνθιμος Ἀκάκιος Διακρούσης, Ὁ Κρητικὸς Πόλεμος*. Μορφωτικό Ίδρυμα Εθνικῆς Τραπέζης. Athens 2008.

⁹³ Despoina Kostoula: *Ἀγάπιος Λάνδος ὁ Κρής: Συμβολή στη μελέτη του έργου του*. PhD diss. University of Ioannina 1983.

⁹⁴ The act was detected and studied in Kaklamanis: *Διακρούσης*, p. 54-61.

⁹⁵ For Andrea Giuliani, see Eirini Papadaki: «Ο αετός και οι κρίνοι: βιβλιακά αποθέματα και τυπογραφικός εξοπλισμός του Ανδρέα Giuliani». In: Chryssa Maltezou, Peter Schreiner, Margherita Losacco (eds.): *Φιλαναγνώστης. Studi in onore di Marino Zorzi*. Istituto Ellenico di Studi Bizantini e Postbizantini di Venezia. Venice 2008, p. 265-284.

In the context of a personal initiative for the development and promotion of his contemporary educational system in the Greek schools of Venice, Vlachos proceeded during the years 1659 to 1661 to the publishment of two rather innovative manuals. Firstly, he published in 1659 a quadri-lingual voluminous dictionary of vernacular Greek, accompanied by entries in ancient Greek, Latin and Italian language, entitled *Thesaurus Encyclopaedicae Basis*.⁹⁶ The Cretan scholar chose to dedicate his book to the Grand Duke of Tuscany Ferdinando II de' Medici (1610–1670), descendant of an illustrious House which were defined, among others, as fervent patrons of letters and arts. The work was corrected and edited by Arsenios Kaloudis and was printed in the Venetian house of Giovanni Pietro Pinelli.⁹⁷

Two years later (1661), he published his *Harmonia Definitiva Entium de mente Graecorum Doctorum*.⁹⁸ Written in parallel ancient Greek and Latin texts, the work was actually a meticulous anthology of definitions on all the subjects that, according to its author, consisted the human knowledge on man, the world and God. It is interesting that the definitions were collected by Vlachos from a multitude of writings composed by the so-called “Greek sages” dated in Greek antiquity, medieval times and early modern centuries. In its 172 chapters, the *Harmonia* contained numerous entries on the following fields: religion and theology, philosophy and medicine, cosmography and geology, mathematics and economics, politics and history, grammar and rhetoric, ethics

⁹⁶ The official Greek-Latin title was the following: «Θησαυρὸς τῆς ἐγκυκλοπαιδικῆς βάσεως τετράγλωσσος, μετὰ τῆς τῶν ἐπιθέτων ἐκλογῆς, καὶ διττοῦ τῶν λατινικῶν τε καὶ ἰταλικῶν λέξεων πίνακος, ἐκ διαφορῶν παλαιῶν τε καὶ νεωτέρων λεξικῶν συλλεχθεὶς παρὰ Γερασίου Βλάχου τοῦ Κρητός, καθηγουμένου τῆς μονῆς τοῦ Μεγάλου Γεωργίου Σκαλωτοῦ, τοῦ ἱεροῦ εὐαγγελίου καὶ τῶν ἐπιστημῶν κατ' ἀμφοτέρας τὰς διαλέκτους διδασκάλου»; “*Thesaurus encyclopaedicae basis quadrilinguis. Cum Epithetorum delectu ac duplici Latinarum, ac Italicarum dictionum Indice. De pluribus antiquis ac Recentioribus Dictionariis colectus a P. Gerasimo Vlacho Cretensi, Abbate D. Georgii Scalotae, Sacri Evangelii concionatore, ac scientiarum in utroque idiomate*”. Magistro. Ad Serenissimum Ferdinandum II. Magnum Ducem Hetrueriae. Venetiis, MDCLVIII. Ex Typographia Ducali Pinelliana. Superiorum Permisum.

⁹⁷ For the Venetian printing house of Pinelli, see Irene Papadaki: “Παρὰ Ἀντωνίῳ τῷ Πινέλλῳ: la fondazione dell’ azienda tipografica Pinelliana nel Primo Seicento”. In: *Θησαυρίσματα* 48 (2018), p. 231-320.

⁹⁸ The official Greek title was the following: «Ἀρμονία ὀριστικὴ τῶν ὄντων, κατὰ τοὺς Ἑλλήνων σοφούς, συντεθεῖσα παρὰ Γερασίου Βλάχου τοῦ Κρητός, καθηγουμένου τοῦ Μεγάλου Γεωργίου Σκαλωτοῦ, εὐαγγελικοῦ κήρυκος καὶ τῶν ἐπιστημῶν διδασκάλου»; “*Harmonia definitiva entium, de mente Graecorum Doctorum, auctore Gerasimo Vlacho Cretensi, Abbate D. Georgii Scalotae, Sacri Evangelii concionatori, ac scientiarum Magistro*”. Ad Leopoldum invictissimum Imperatorem semper Augustum. Venetiis MDCLXI, Typis Andrea Iuliani, Superiorum Permisum.

and metaphysics.⁹⁹ As far as the structure of each chapter is concerned, the main concept to be interpreted was first presented with an introductory phrase by the author himself, who then offered a series of brief interpretative definitions, deriving from the writings of one or more Greek authorities of the past.

Aiming to serve primarily educational purposes, Vlachos dedicated his anthology of definitions to the still young Holy Roman Emperor Leopold I (1640–1705), leader of the Habsburg Dynasty in Vienna. The work was corrected and edited this time by his second nephew, Grigorios Vlachos, and was printed in the house of Andrea Giuliani.¹⁰⁰ Based on the interesting for its details contract between the author and the printer (18. September 1660), we learn among others that the Cretan scholar had agreed to cover all the expenses of the edition, and Giuliani was obliged to follow a deadline of four months to complete the publishment and hand in to Vlachos 1.200 imprints on simple paper and fifteen more on royal paper (*'carta reale'*).¹⁰¹ One could note Vlachos' unwillingness or incapability to find a sponsor or contributor to the certainly high expenses the printing of his work required. Could we assume that he also paid for the publishment of his even more voluminous *Thesaurus*? Moreover, one should note that a few months later (10. March 1661) Vlachos again covered the expenses for the edition of a religious book in vernacular Greek written by his nephew Arsenios Kaloudis; the work was an imaginary travelogue of Jerusalem and the Holy Land entitled *Προσκυνητάριον ιερῶν τόπων, ὅπου εὐρίσκονται εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν πόλιν Ἱερουσαλήμ*, which was based on narratives by various Greek pilgrims the author had met in Candia and Venice.¹⁰² Therefore, the question rises on the actual financial capacity of the elderly scholar and the possibility he had in fact been supported by a third party, possibly a wealthy member of his circle in the Greek Community of Venice.

Although the cases of the *Thesaurus* and the *Harmonia* will be analyzed and interpreted in detail in Chapter III, it is interesting to note that the parameter of scholarly and ecclesiastical networks which Vlachos had developed in Candia and Venice are also

⁹⁹ Vaya Tokmaki: «*Ἡ Ἀρμονία ὀριστική του Γεράσιμου Βλάχου και το ζήτημα των πηγών*». Postgraduate Thesis. University of Ioannina 2001, p. 41-44.

¹⁰⁰ A.S.V., Notai di Venezia, Nicolò Velano, Busta 13565, Libro 1 (1659–1661), ff. 226^v-227^v. The contract was published in Giorgio Plumidis, “La stampa greca a Venezia nel secolo XVII”. In: *Archivio Veneto* 93^b (1971), p. 39.

¹⁰¹ Plumidis: “La stampa greca”, p. 39.

¹⁰² A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Venezia), Busta 13565 (Nicolò Velano), Libro 1 (1659–1661), ff. 322^v-323^r.

portrayed firstly in the introductory part of his dictionary. More specifically, in the section of the praising ancient Greek and Latin epigrams composed in honor of the Duke, his family and the author of the book, we detect the names of three close friends, colleagues and disciples of Gerasimos Vlachos. In addition to the contribution by Arsenios Kaloudis, two epigrams came from the pen of the prelate Bartholomeos Syropoulos from Rethymno, a famous copyist and collector of codices. The latter belonged to Vlachos' earlier Cretan network, sharing with him the same scholarly and religious interests. He also had fled from warring Crete and had resided to Venice, where he worked as a teacher and later as a chaplain and preacher in the church of *San Giorgio*.¹⁰³ In addition, the *Thesaurus* was further adorned from the compositions by two of Vlachos' most faithful disciples in Candia and Venice. First was the scholarly hieromonk Grigorios Melissinos from Candia who, among others, worked as a copyist of Greek codices; in fact, we know that he had copied two of his teacher's writings: a philosophical commentary on *De Anima* entitled "*Brief Paraphrases and questions on the books of Aristotle on the Soul*" (1658);¹⁰⁴ and his already mentioned *consulta* of 1653 entitled "*Obfuscation of the False Believers*".¹⁰⁵ The second disciple of the Cretan

¹⁰³ Angeliki Panopoulou: «Από τη ζωή του Βαρθολομαίου Συρόπουλου στην Κρήτη. Νέες αρχειακές μαρτυρίες». In: Chryssa Maltezu and Aspasia Papadaki (eds.): *Της Βενετίας το Ρέθυμνο. Πρακτικά Συμποσίου (Rethymno: 1–2 November 2002)*. Istituto Ellenico di Studi Bizantini e Postbizantini di Venezia. Venice 2003, p. 129-160; Karathanasis: *Βενετία*, p. 233-251.

¹⁰⁴ Athanasios Papadopoulos Kerameus: *Ιεροσολυμιτική βιβλιοθήκη, ἥτοι, Κατάλογος τῶν ἐν ταῖς βιβλιοθήκαις τοῦ ἀγιωτάτου ἀποστολικοῦ τε καὶ καθολικοῦ ὀρθοδόξου πατριαρχικοῦ θρόνου τῶν Ἱεροσολύμων καὶ πάσης Παλαιστίνης ἀποκειμένων ἐλληνικῶν κωδίκων*. Vol. 5. Culture et Civilisation. Brussels 1963, p. 52.

¹⁰⁵ In the beginning of his copy Melissinos noted the following:

“This book was written by our professor, the most intellectual and most wise Mr. Gerasimos Vlachos the Cretan, famous public preacher of the Divine and Holy Gospel, who immensely adorned Aristotle's Peripatetic School with his own philosophemes in the Greek and Latin language, aiming to the enhancement of the teaching of mellifluous rhetorics, philosophy and theology”

«Ἡ παροῦσα βίβλος παρὰ τοῦ λογιωτάτου καὶ σοφωτάτου κυρίου κυρίου ἡμετέρου καθηγητοῦ, κυρίου Γερασίμου Βλάχου τοῦ Κρητός, τοῦ θείου καὶ ἱεροῦ εὐαγγελίου περιβοήτου κοινοῦ κήρυκος, τοῦ ἰδίοις φιλοσοφήμασιν ὑπερφυῶς δι' ἐλλάδος ἅμα καὶ λατινίδος γλώττης τοῦ Ἀριστοτέλους περίπατον διακοσμοῦντος, πρὸς δὲ καὶ παντοδαπῇ διδασκαλίᾳ εὐκελάδου ρητορικῆς τε φιλοσοφίας καὶ θεολογίας ὑπερασπίζοντος, συνετέθη»;

see Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 119. For Melissinos, see Maria Chalvatzidaki: «Γρηγόριος Μελισσηνός, λόγιος, μεταφραστής καὶ κωδικογράφος τοῦ δέκατου ἑβδομοῦ αἰώνα». In: Elizabeth Jeffreys & Michael Jeffreys (eds.): *Neograeca Medii Aevi V*.

scholar was Stefanos Tzizaras from Ioannina (1637–c.1705), another prominent copyist of Greek codices in Venice.¹⁰⁶ Similar to Melissinos, Tzizaras had copied, unknown when, one of their teacher's philosophical manuals, this time an epitome of his *Introduction to Logic*.¹⁰⁷ As far as the *Harmonia Definitiva* is concerned, Vlachos' dedicatory letter and epigrams to Emperor Leopold I were also followed by two epigrams in ancient Greek, the first by Arsenios Kaloudis and the second by Grigorios Melissinos. Both were composed in honor of the Cretan professor, praising his intellectualism and spiritual virtue, along with the educational and scientific value of his work; specifically Melissinos defined the significance of *Harmonia* as following: "those who love the definitions should hold this book with both their hands".¹⁰⁸

In the context of Vlachos' familiarization with the world of Greek printing in Venice, it is significant to refer to a later case of contact between the elderly scholar and representatives of the blooming local Greek publishing activity. More specifically, on 16. July 1664, he participated as a witness in a certification of renunciation by the Jew from Ioannina Matathias, son of late Minaem Haim.¹⁰⁹ What interests the research is that in this specific act powerful Greek merchants of the town of Ioannina and Venice participated as witnesses and commissioners; those were Panos Ieromnimon, Nikolaos Glykis and Nikolaos Sàros, all recognized members of the Greek Community, with intellectual interests and, as far as the last two is concerned, with fervent and efficient contribution to their contemporary Venetian printing activity.¹¹⁰ Therefore, we can perceive a conscious effort by the Cretan prelate and teacher to be acquainted and

Αναδρομικά και Προδρομικά. Approaches to Texts in Early Modern Greek. Oxford 2005, p. 531-539; Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 104-110.

¹⁰⁶ Stefanos Bettis: «Ζώτος, Απόστολος και Στέφανος Τζίγαράδες». In: *Ηπειρωτική Εστία* 26 (1977), p. 208-212.

¹⁰⁷ See the Greek codex no. 5489. 1369 in Spyridon Lambros: *Catalogue of the Greek Manuscripts on Mount Athos*, Vol. 2. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge 1895–1900, p. 278.

¹⁰⁸ «ἄρ' ὁσάτιοί γε ὀρίσμονες ἀμφαγαπῶντες ἀμφοτέρης παλάμης τρίψατε τήνδε βίβλον»; Vlachus, *Harmonia Definitiva*, p. xii.

¹⁰⁹ A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Venezia), Busta 13568 (Nicolò Velano), Libro 1 (1664–1666), ff. 93^r-94^v. The act was published in Christos Zampakolas: *Η Ιστορική Παρουσία των Γιαννιωτών Εβραίων μέσα από την Εμπορική τους Δραστηριότητα. Ιωάννινα-Βενετία, 16^{ος}–18^{ος} αιώνας*. Ίδρυμα Ιωσήφ και Εσθήρ Γκανή. Ioannina 2013, p. 85-87.

¹¹⁰ Giorgos Veloudis: *Το ελληνικό τυπογραφείο των Γλυκήδων στην Βενετία (1670-1854). Συμβολή στη μελέτη του ελληνικού βιβλίου κατά την εποχή της Τουρκοκρατίας*. Μπούρας. Athens 1987; Angeliki Tzavara-Martinato: "Imprenditore e tipografo: tre lettere inedite degli agenti Rosa da Costantinopoli a Nicolò Glykis (1677-1683)". In: *Θησαυρίσματα* 31 (2001), p. 361-377.

cooperate or coexist with the main representatives of the Greek printing activity in Venice.

Without abandoning his steady and well-founded relations with the ecclesiastical parameter of the Community, Vlachos made constant and persistent efforts to expand his networks among the flourishing during the time world of Greek printing in Venice (Pinelli, Giuliani, Glykis, Sàros) coping into direct contact with the central houses of vernacular Greek editions in the city. His possible motives indeed vary and can easily be related to his personal interests towards the world of printing book, his familiarity with his contemporary bookstores and his networks which consisted, among others, Venetian and Greek booksellers, publishers and editors. Moreover, one could detect another one more selfless parameter. The bookstore was not only a meeting point for academics, scholars artists and men of letters. It was also the starting point of individual and collective initiatives related to the enhancement and propagation of literacy, culture and education. Since we are dealing with an erudite and simultaneously extremely concerned thinker, it is easily assumed that Gerasimos Vlachos saw a precious opportunity to promote his educational and intellectual projects through his scholarly network with the printing houses of Venice. In addition to the certain update he would receive for the literate and publishing activity and distribution both inside and outside the *Serenissima*, the Cretan scholar placed himself directly in the center of his contemporary vivid and blooming Greek book production and market.

1.3.5. Departing to Corfu

Despite Vlachos' ambitious career as a renowned scholar, despite his social recognition, appreciation and respect from his compatriots and the Venetian authorities, already from early 1662 this auspicious situation began to be reversed, a fact that forced him to follow the path of exile once more. More specifically, on January 1662 he failed to be re-elected as a teacher in the School of the Greek Community. Immediately (February 1662) he proceeded to an urgent appeal to the Venetian Senate asking for the first available Orthodox monastery in the island of Corfu; according to his own words:

“Realizing every day that our financial difficulties, which are constantly growing in size, increase on every level, I come again kneeling to the feet of Your Most Serene; addressing to your public gratitude, I implore the result of Your Paternal Majesty; I plead to be treated favourably and give me, in order to live, the first available monastery in Corfu, among those which are in the custody of Your Most Serene.”

*“Vedendo giornalmente crescer d’intorno le angustie nostre sempre maggiori, vengo di nuovo prostrato ai piedi di V.S. ad implorar dalla publica gratitudine gli atti della sua paterna munificenza, supplicando che mi sia benignamente destinato il primo monasterio vacabile di Corfù, jus patronato di V.S. che haverò dimandato per nostro sostegno.”*¹¹¹

Thus, six years after his relocation in the city of Venice and despite his intense intellectual and pastoral activity, the serious financial difficulties still existed, since his main and possibly only income, apart from the Senate’s support, came from his salary as a teacher in the School of the Community.

The Venetian government once more responded favourably to Vlachos’ request and agreed on 8. February 1662 to grant him the first available monastery in Corfu under the authority of the State (*‘di publico jus patronato’*).¹¹² Noteworthy is the closure of the Senate’s decision, which is indicative of her respect and appreciation towards the Cretan scholar, after the latter’s long-standing loyalty and service in favor of the *Serenissima*:

“with which [mean. the granting of an available monastery] he can be consoled and supported in order to continue, along with his nephews, to send fervent prayers to God for the prosperity of Our Lordship.”

*“con che consolato et suffragato possi continuare con li nepoti a porger preci ferventi a Dio, per la prosperità della Signoria Nostra.”*¹¹³

Almost a week later, on 16. February 1662 Vlachos gave special authority to his friend Nicolò Troulinos to deliver to the *Provveditore* of Corfu the official decision of the Senate.¹¹⁴ During the period February–October 1662 the monastery of Virgin Mary of Paleopolis (Panaghia Paleopolis or *Sancte Marie Paleopolitisse*) in the province of Garitsa south of the town of Corfu, became available after the death of its abbot, Nikodimos Balieris.¹¹⁵ Although Vlachos was to be automatically appointed the new abbot of the monastery, he and his circle were suddenly informed that the local

¹¹¹ Mertzios: «Νέαι ειδήσεις», p. 287-288.

¹¹² According to this first decision, the concession of the available monastery to Vlachos meant the automatic cancellation of his monthly financial support of the ten ducats.

¹¹³ Mertzios: «Νέαι ειδήσεις», p. 290-291.

¹¹⁴ A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Venezia), Busta 13566 (Nicolò Velano), Libro 1 (1661–1663), ff. 57^{r-v}.

¹¹⁵ For a detailed study of the history of the church of Panaghia Paleopolis, see Despoina Vlassi: «Η μονή της Παναγίας της Παλαιόπολης Κέρκυρας και η Μητρόπολη Φιλαδελφείας. Στοιχεία από το Αρχείο του Ελληνικού Ινστιτούτου Βενετίας (17^{ος}-19^{ος} αι.)». In: *Θησαυρίσματα* 43 (2013), p. 345-502.

Confraternity of the monastery had elected on 22. October a local prelate named Athanasios Bouas as the new abbot.¹¹⁶ Indeed, according to the Venetian laws and in response to a request by the residents of Corfu, the Senate had determined that the locals and not the foreigners were to be preferred on issues of ownership and operation of the Orthodox churches in Corfu, unless the members of the Venetian government decided differently. In order to confront Bouas' arbitrary election by the Confraternity of Paleopolis, Vlachos immediately informed the Venetian Senate. The latter proceeded to a new decision on 25. November 1662 ordering the authorities of Corfu to hand over the ownership of the monastery to Vlachos' nephew, Grigorios, who would soon arrive on the island as a representative of his uncle.¹¹⁷ The Senate's decision was eventually sent to Corfu after 16. December 1662¹¹⁸ by Vlachos' close friends, the aforementioned Nicolò Troulinos and Kalliopios Kallergis, the then abbot in the monastery of Agios Iason and Sosipatros, which was located inside the town of Corfu.¹¹⁹ The controversy between the Confraternity of Panaghia Paleopolis and Gerasimos Vlachos was permanently settled on 30. January 1663, when the Senate issued a third decree according to which Bouas' election was annuled and the granting of the monastery to the Cretan cleric was ratified, in order for the latter to "preserve in this pious place what by right awaits him" (*"conservare al detto luogo pio quello che di ragion se gli aspetta"*).¹²⁰

In this context, Vlachos adopted the title "abbot of the monastery of Panaghia Paleopolis" long before his final departure to Corfu; during his yearly contribution to the Fund of the Greek Community on 16. March 1664, he signed as "*Io, padre Gerassimo*

¹¹⁶ For the background of the election of Athanasios Bouas, see Vlassi: «Παναγία Παλαιόπολη», p. 361.

¹¹⁷ Copies of the Senate's two aforementioned decisions are preserved in the Historical Archive of Corfu; see State Archives of Corfu (from now on I.A.K.), Ενετοκρατία, Busta 54, Filza 20, ff. 21^r-22^r.

¹¹⁸ A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Venezia), Busta 13566 (Nicolò Velano), Libro 1 (1661–1663), ff. 372^v-373^r. It is interesting that among the witnesses of this act was the eminent scholarly ecclesiastic Filotheos Skoufos from Chania, the author of a widely read rhetorical manual.

¹¹⁹ During the period 1660–1671 the name of Kalliopios Kallergis is numerous detected in the records of the notaries of Corfu and in the marriage registers composed by the then Megas Protopapàs of Corfu Theodosios Floros; see indicatively I.A.K., Συμβολαιογραφικά, M 2 (Δημήτριος Μαζαράκης), Libro 12 (1664) & Libro 14 (1667); I.A.K., Συμβολαιογραφικά, M 3 (Εμμανουήλ Μαζαράκης), Libro 5 (1671); I.A.K., Μεγάλοι Πρωτοπαπάδες Κερκύρας, Busta 3, Filza 1 (Θεοδόσιος Φλώρος), Libri 6 (1657–1660), 8 (1664–1665), 9 (1665–1670).

¹²⁰ Mertziotis: «Νέαι ειδήσεις», p. 295.

Vlacho, abbate del S. Giorgio Scalotò et della Madonna di Paleopoli".¹²¹ Although few, through the available primary sources we can view one by one the levels of preparation the Cretan scholar proceeded to in order to create the most favorable conditions for his arrival in Corfu.¹²² To start with, he first sent his nephew, Grigorios, to officially undertake the ownership of Panaghia Paleopolis on his behalf (9. July 1663). Almost a year later, on 28. May 1664, he authorized his friend, Tomaso Maidioti, as the legitimate commissioner of his property, a policy he always followed whenever he was preparing to travel.¹²³ His final departure from Venice took place with a great delay, in the early spring of 1665.¹²⁴ This time he was not accompanied by his older nephew Arsenios Kaloudis, who already from 1660 had obtained the office of professor and rector in the renowned Cottunian College in Padua, a Greek institution of higher studies founded in 1653 by the Greek professor of Philosophy at the local University Ioannis Kottounios (1572–1657).¹²⁵ With his other nephew, Grigorios, ready to welcome him, Vlachos set sail for the island of Corfu inaugurating a new circle of pastoral activity, scholarly initiatives and even inter-ecclesiastical disputes.

1.4. The years of exile: Corfu (1665–1680)

1.4.1. Reconstructing the monastery of Panaghia Paleopolis

Arriving in Corfu and undertaking the ownership and operation of the monastery of Panaghia Paleopolis, Gerasimos Vlachos quickly realized that the church was in a state

¹²¹ A.E.I.B., Οργάνωση 2, K 15, ff. 75^r. The entry is also cited in Tatakis: *Γεράσιμος Βλάχος*, p. 13 note 4.

¹²² On the question of how Vlachos lived in Venice during the years 1662–1665, since he was no longer a teacher in the school of the Greek Community, the primary sources remain silent. A possible assumption could be that he worked as a private tutor in order to obtain a relative income; Athanasios Karathanasis: «Ιωαννίκιος και Σωφρόνιος αδελφοί Λειχούδη: Βιογραφικές σημειώσεις από νεώτερες έρευνες». In: *Κεφαλληνιακά Χρονικά* 2 (1977), p. 180.

¹²³ A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Venezia), Busta 13567 (Nicolò Velano), Libro 1 (1663–1664), ff. 58^v-59^v; 397^v-398^r.

¹²⁴ On 1. March 1665 Vlachos offered his voluntary contribution to the Fund of the Greek Community signing as "Gerasimos Vlachos, abbot of Paleopolis"; see A.E.I.B., Οργάνωση 2, K 15, ff. 76^r.

¹²⁵ Kottounios, his college and Gerasimos Vlachos' initiatives for its correct operation in its Greek Orthodox extensions will be the subject of an independent study in Chapter III.

of abandonment and collapse, while its real property had been encroached and at some points usurped. In late 1665 he once more applied to the Venetian Senate, presenting the monastery's poor condition and imploring for the authorities' support and assistance, so that he could proceed to the gradual reconstruction of the building and the recovery of its property. Similar to her previous responses, the Senate continued to treat the loyal prelate favourably and on 30. January 1666 the then *Provveditore Generale da Màr* and the Captain of Corfu were ordered to co-operate and enable Vlachos in his task.¹²⁶ Three years later (24. July 1670), the then *Provveditore Generale da Màr* Antonio Bernardo confirmed Vlachos' constant activity in favor of the restoration of the monastery, since he had signed a decree (3. June 1670) approving the return of a series of revenues that once belonged to the property of Panaghia Paleopolis and gradually had been usurped by laity and clergymen from neighboring monasteries.¹²⁷

This constant and close communication of Gerasimos Vlachos with the Venetian authorities both in Corfu and in the Metropolis put in a difficult position some circles on the island, mainly of the local Orthodox clergy. The latter eventually turned against the Cretan abbot during the years 1671–1672 and proceeded to a series of official complaints to the local Venetian authorities. More specifically, on 30. May 1671 the prelates Georgios Voulgaris and Antonios Manesis addressed to the Administrators of Corfu accusing Vlachos that, although a prelate and member of the Corfiot clergy, he preferred to address directly to the Venetian administration of the island, undermining the authority of the then Megas Protopapàs Theodosios Floros, who had under his jurisdiction the Orthodox prelates and their protopapàdes of all four provinces of the island.¹²⁸ The two clergymen also demanded the annulment of the already mentioned

¹²⁶ Mertziotis: «Νέαι ειδήσεις», p. 294–295. For an example of Vlachos' activity in favor of the recovery of the church's property, see the contract between him and a local, Stelios Planoudis, dated 20. January 1667, see I.A.K., Συμβολαιογραφικά, Μ 2 (Δημήτριος Μαζαράκης), Libro 14 (1667), ff. 46^r.

¹²⁷ For the copy of Antonio Bernardo's decision, see I.A.K., Έγγραφα Εκκλησιών, Busta 536, Filza 1 («Αυτά έγγραφα σχετικά με την Παλαιόπολη»).

¹²⁸ In the voluminous marriage registers that Theodosios Floros composed for thirty years as the Megas Protopapàs of Corfu, I detected 28 cases of marriages, in their majority between Cretans, that were performed in the monastery of Panaghia Paleopolis during the period 28. October 1665 – 26 October 1674; noteworthy is that Gerasimos Vlachos was the only clergyman in the register books that Floros did not mention by name but simply as the “abbot of the Monastery of Paleopolis”. Floros' policy was followed also by his successor, the eminent ecclesiastic Christodoulos Voulgaris (1638–1693) in the 12 cases of marriage addressed to the abbot of Paleopolis during the period 12 December 1675 – 12 July 1679;

decision by the *Provveditore Generale* Antonio Bernardo dated 3. June 1670. Eventually, their complaints and protests were rejected, with the Venetian authorities continuing to express their trust and support to Gerasimos Vlachos.

However, after the arrival in Corfu of the new *Provveditore* Antonio Valier in 1672, the accusers reappeared with more intense determination and with an enriched group of accusations against the abbot of Panaghia Paleopolis. Addressing Valier on 22. March 1672, they once more requested the annulment of Bernardo's decision, claiming that there had been a supposedly secret vote in favor of Vlachos on 14. May 1670. Although the validity of the accusation cannot be verified to date, the interest of the research is raised by a new argument against Vlachos' pastoral and preaching activity. The latter was defined as supposedly dangerous to the faith, due to the "neoterisms" it contained. As a result, the Cretan prelate's sermons were presented to "cause a scandal" to the Orthodox flock and clergy.¹²⁹ Despite those negligible reactions by some local clergymen, which could easily be related to purely financial interests and incentives than actual issues of protection of faith and piety, Vlachos continued to enjoy the support and trust of the Venetian *Provveditore*, to whom he even sent a report on 29. March 1673, informing him on the gradual improvements and restoration of his monastery and its property.

The aforementioned case, although at present its outcome and the parameters that brought it to the fore remain undetected most probably in the Venetian administrative records of Corfu, is indicative of the concept of superiority of the Venetian political officials upon the ecclesiastical authority of their Orthodox subjects. Although the *Serenissima* had indeed promoted and established a stable and efficient system of relative self-governance for the members of the Orthodox clergy in her territories, she always remained the ultimate power that determined the conditions, the terms and often the results of the official religious policies by either approving or

see I.A.K., Μεγάλοι Πρωτοπαπάδες Κερκύρας, Busta 3 (Θεοδόσιος Φλώρος), Filza 1, Libri 8-12 (1664–1675); I.A.K., Μεγάλοι Πρωτοπαπάδες Κερκύρας, Busta 4 (Χριστόδουλος Βούλγαρης), Libri 1-5 (1675–1680).

¹²⁹ For the copies of the two complaints against Gerasimos Vlachos see I.A.K., Ενετοκρατία, Busta 81, Filza 13, ff. 90^r-92^v. The latter's controversy and legal disputes with specific circles of the clergy in Corfu would not be resolved until the spring of 1679; due to Vlachos' earlier request dated September 1678, the Venetian Senate ordered the local authorities to immediately proceed to the resolution of the disputes in favor of the abbot of Panaghia Paleopolis (6. April 1679); see Vlassi: «Παναγία Παλαιόπολης», p. 364-365.

rejecting the choices and ambitions of the Orthodox high clerics. Therefore, the Megas Protopapàs of Corfu was indeed superior to the rest of the local clergy; nevertheless, he also remained under the jurisdiction and control of the central Venetian government and the latter's high representatives in the island. In this context, it is easily comprehended that the astute abbot of Paleopolis, who faced constant problems and intense conflicts with the higher and lower Orthodox clergy in Corfu, did not waste his time seeking to be vindicated by the system that was fighting him, but implored for justice and understanding by the Venetian political authority, which in any case had directly and continuously shown a sincere appreciation to Vlachos, recognizing him as its loyal subject.

In the context of an outbreak of a plague (*“il mal contagioso”*) that was spread in the island of Corfu during the summer of 1673,¹³⁰ Gerasimos Vlachos became extremely concerned and stoically perceived the possible danger for his own life. Having reached the 66th year of his age and haggard by the continuous and intense service to the Church and Letters, he sent a request to the Venetian Senate in order to secure the post mortem ownership of his monastery of Panaghia Paleopolis.¹³¹ In his appeal he promoted his two nephews, Arsenios Kaloudis and Grigorios Vlachos,¹³² as his successors in the monastery; in case the latter could not be bequeathed to both of them, Kaloudis was defined as the one with priority due to his age and his scholarly background;¹³³ It is noteworthy that in 1675 the “highly scholarly teacher” Arsenios would succeed his uncle's close friend, the late Kalliopios Kallergis, in the position of the abbot in the monastery of Agios Iason and Sosipatros. Responding to Vlachos’

¹³⁰ For the plague that struck Corfu in 1673, see the reports of the then *Provveditore Generale da Màr* Andrea Valier in Setton: *Venice, Austria and the Turks*, p. 253-255.

¹³¹ *“essendo avanzato in età senile e aggravato da crudelissima indisposizione [podagra] che ben spesso mi rende in istato di morte”*; see Mertziotis: «Νέαι ειδήσεις», p. 296.

¹³² For Grigorios Vlachos’ presence in Corfu as the chaplain of Panaghia Paleopolis, see I.A.K., Συμβολαιογραφικά, M 2 (Δημήτριος Μαζαράκης), Libro 12 (1664); I.A.K., Συμβολαιογραφικά, M 3 (Εμμανουήλ Μαζαράκης), Libro 11 (1665); I.A.K., Μεγάλοι Πρωτοπαπάδες Κερκύρας, Busta 3 (Θεοδόσιος Φλώρος), Filza 1, Libri 8 (1664–1665), 11 (1671–1674), 12 (1674–1675); I.A.K., Μεγάλοι Πρωτοπαπάδες Κερκύρας, Busta 4 (Χριστόδουλος Βούλγαρης), Libri 1–5 (1675–1680). For his final years, see Vlasi: «Παναγία Παλαιόπολης», p. 364 note 72.

¹³³ Mertziotis: «Νέαι Ειδήσεις», p. 297. For Kaloudis’ presence as abbot of the monastery of Agios Iason and Sosipatros, see I.A.K., Μεγάλοι Πρωτοπαπάδες Κερκύρας, Busta 4 (Χριστόδουλος Βούλγαρης), Libri 1–5 (1675–1680); Panagioti Tzivara: «Σχολεία και Δάσκαλοι στη Βενετοκρατούμενη Κέρκυρα (16^{ος}-18^{ος} αι.): Συμβολή στην Ιστορία της Εκπαίδευσης». PhD diss. Democritus University of Thrace 2000), p. 280 & note 403.

request, the Senate decided on 9. September 1673 to ratify that Arsenios Kaloudis would indeed be his uncle's successor, in case the latter would pass away; the only condition would be that until then both Arsenios and Grigorios would offer their support and company to their elderly uncle.¹³⁴ Eventually, Arsenios undertook the ownership of the monastery not because of his uncle's death but due to the latter's election to the Metropolitan Throne of Philadelphia and his return to Venice in early 1681.

1.4.2. Anti-Jewish and anti-Muslim rhetoric

On the occasion of the conflict related to the supposedly dangerous preaching activity of the Cretan prelate in Corfu, it becomes known that even in this period of his life Gerasimos Vlachos continued to preach relentlessly the Divine Word in the eve and afterwards of the final surrender of Candia to the Ottomans in 1669. Although, his Corfian sermons, along with the Cretan and Venetian ones, remain undetected, their content, style and purposes definitely followed and depended on the historical conjunctures of the time. In the context of the latter, a fundamental tribulation took place in the region of Eastern Mediterranean during the first period Vlachos had settled in Corfu. More specifically, in the years 1665–1666 a generalized crisis occurred in the Jewish communities in the Ottoman Empire and in Europe, founded in a deep eschatological expectation for the end of the world in the year 1666. More specifically, a messianic movement from the Sephardic ordained Rabbi and kabbalist Sabbatai Zevi from Smyrna (1626–1676) emerged in Constantinople. Recognized by a multitude of the Jewish communities as their prophet and Messiah, Zevi proclaimed himself the Jewish Messiah and prophesied the return of the Jews to the Promised Land. Mainly during 1665 numerous Jews abandoned their communities in Europe and the Ottoman Empire, sold their properties and travelled to Constantinople in order to meet Zevi.¹³⁵ Therefore, a generalized rampage broke out among the three religious communities

¹³⁴ Mertzios: «Νέαι ειδήσεις», p. 297.

¹³⁵ Cengiz A. Şişman: "A Jewish Messiah in the Ottoman Court: Sabbatai Sevi and the emergence of a Judeo-Islamic Community (1666–1720)". PhD diss. Harvard University Press 2004. The Greek bishop of Kastoria David of Mytilene († 1694) noted the following on the crisis: "Every Jewish genus and nation massively moved from the four corners of the Earth and were greatly confused; as a result, [...] they ran impetuously to him [mean. Sabbatai Zevi] along with their wives and children"; for the original Greek text, see Giorgos Koutzakiotis: *Αναμένοντας το τέλος του κόσμου τον 17^ο αιώνα. Ο Εβραίος Μεσσίας και ο Μέγας Διεργμηνέας*. Εθνικό Ίδρυμα Ερευνών. Athens 2011, p. 40-41.

(Jews, Christians and Muslims) both in the West and the East.

Caught in the middle of such a crisis, the Orthodox Greeks experienced an internal incertitude on the validity of their faith, something that Gerasimos Vlachos did not fail to perceive as a direct undermining of the very foundations of the Christian religion. In the years when Sabbatai's messianic movement reached its zenith (late 1665–1666) the Cretan prelate decided to write a long anti-Jewish treatise, entitled “*Against the Jews*” (“*Κατὰ Ἰουδαίων*”). By structuring his main argumentation on the different interpretation of the Bible by the Jewish and Christian tradition, he aimed to present the fundamental differences between Christianity and Judaism and to support with theological arguments the superiority of the first against the latter. In the sixteen chapters of his treatise the author argued that the expected from the Jews Messiah had already arrived personified in Jesus Christ. In this context, he argued that the Jewish religion was dispersed and a new religious reality, the Church of Christ, was established and prevailed. Therefore, Vlachos condemned Zevi as a false prophet, in fact self-proclaimed, and the hopes of the Jews for liberation as vain. Concerned for the consequences of that messianic Jewish events on the consciousness of his fellow Orthodox, Vlachos faced this urgent issue with a sense of pastoral responsibility, in an attempt to preserve and strengthen both theologically and morally the Christian doctrines against the teachings of the Jewish tradition.¹³⁶

In parallel with the existential crisis that the Christian communities in the Ottoman Empire and the Venetian State, thus his flock in Corfu, experienced, Gerasimos Vlachos found himself grieving for the loss of his homeland, Crete, due to the surrender of Candia to the Ottomans on September 1669, after a catastrophic siege of 22 years. In his thought, the last stronghold of Christianity, as presented mostly by the Venetians in their narrative, had fallen into the hands of the Sultan, who openly expressed his new aspirations for further expansion and the imposition of Islam on Christian Europe.¹³⁷ Following his innate duty as a Cretan and as a clergyman, the abbot

¹³⁶ For the conditions, argumentation, sources and purposes of the treatise, see Argyriou: *Μωάμεθ*, p. νδ'-νζ'; Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 88-91.

¹³⁷ For the arguments of early modern scholars [George of Hungary (1422–1502), Martin Luther (1483–1546), Guillaume Postel (1510–1581), e.t.c.] on the concept of violence and coercion as the main characteristics of the Muslim religion, see Noel Malcolm: *Useful Enemies. Islam and the Ottoman Empire in Western Political Thought, 1450-1750*. Oxford University Press. Oxford 2019), p. 35-36.

of Paleopolis intensified his preaching activity in his monastery, once more offering his rhetorical skill in the serve of the public benefit. More specifically, according to the *indice* of his library, during his stay in the island of Corfu Vlachos composed a multitude of sermons which he then bound in four and a half volumes: “i. Volume 7 of *Didaches* containing sermons delivered in Corfu in the year 1665 (ff. 90); ii. Volume 8 of *Didaches* containing sermons delivered in Corfu in the year 1666 (ff. 213); iii. Volume 9 of *Didaches* containing sermons delivered in Corfu in the years 1668 and 1669 (ff. 238); iv. Volume 10 of *Didaches* containing sermons delivered in Corfu in the years 1676, 1677 and 1678, (ff. 195); v. Volume 11 of *Didaches* containing sermons delivered in Corfu and Venice in the years 1680, 1681 and 1682 (ff. 187)”.¹³⁸ The interest of the research is raised by the absence of sermons in the years 1667, 1670-1676 and 1679. The hypothesis that Vlachos uninterruptedly worked for the reconstruction of his monastery and the restoration of its property, and therefore his time to preach was limited, is more or less rejected, since it does not respond to the sense of social responsibility and the principles of pastoral priorities the Cretan clergyman had set to himself already from the time he resided in Candia. The aforementioned controversies with a part of the Corfiot clergy may had played a more pivotal role in his voluntary or forced abstinence from ecclesiastical preaching.

In addition to the multitude of his sermons, Vlachos used his experience as an eminent Orthodox theologian in order to compose another brief refutation this time against the main doctrines of the Muslim religion, entitled “*On Muhammad’s Religion and Against the Turks*” (“*Περὶ τῆς τοῦ Μωάμεθ θρησκείας καὶ κατὰ Τοούρκων*”).¹³⁹ The author aimed to demonstrate the fundamental differences between the Christian and Muslim religions, and promote the superiority of the Christian teaching against the doctrines of Islam.¹⁴⁰ By structuring his main argumentation on the divinity of Jesus

¹³⁸ *Indice della Libreria Monsignor Gerassimo Vlaco*, ff. 69^v-70^r.

¹³⁹ Although Vlachos’ “*Against the Jews*” remains in manuscript form, the “*On Muhammad’s Religion and Against the Turks*” was published recently; see Eleni Balta-Xatzoglou (ed.): *Γερασίμου Βλάχου, Πραγματεία Περὶ τῆς θρησκείας τοῦ Μωάμεθ*. S@MIZDAT. Athens 2019; Argyriou: *Μωάμεθ*. The two treatises are preserved in a unique codex (no. 213) in Xenophontos Monastery of Mount Athos. Both were copied “from the original in everything” by the already mentioned friend of Vlachos and abbot in the monastery of Agios Iason and Sosipatros, Kalliopios Kallergis on 30. May 1671; see Manousakas: «Δύο ἄγνωστα ἔργα», p. 55-60.

¹⁴⁰ For the question on the sources, both Greek and Latin, that Vlachos used, see Asterios Argyriou: «Η ελληνική πολεμική και απολογητική γραμματεία ἐναντι του Ισλάμ κατὰ τους

Christ and the validity of the Christological dogmas, the clergyman from Candia rejected Muhammad as a true prophet and Messiah and the Muslim faith as valid. As he noted in the preface of his work:

“Our purpose is to understand the pointless religion of the Hagarenes and to prove those that they confess regarding our Orthodox faith, those they deny opposed to us; those which are legal, those which are worthy of laughter of the things written by the false prophet Muhammad and those that they bring as refutations against us. By the Grace of God, everything we will be able to confute and, if possible, resolve.”

«Σκοπὸς ἡμῶν ἐστὶ περὶ τῆς ματαίας τῶν Ἀγαρηνῶν θρησκείας διαλαβεῖν καὶ ἀποδειῖξαι ὅσα μὲν ὁμολογοῦσι περὶ τῆς ὀρθοδόξου πίστεως ἡμῶν, ὅσα δὲ ἐπαρνοῦνται ἀντικειμένως ὡς πρὸς ἡμᾶς· ὅσα τε ἐκείνων εἰσὶ νόμιμα, ὅσα τε ἄζια γέλωτος συνετέθη παρὰ Μωάμεθ τοῦ ψευδοπροφήτου καὶ ὅσα ἀντιρρητικῶς φέρουσι καθ’ ἡμῶν. Πάντα τῇ τοῦ Θεοῦ χάριτι ἀνασκευάζοντες καὶ ἢ δυνατόν λύοντες.»¹⁴¹

Based on the historical necessity and his contemporary critical conjunctures, Vlachos’ intentions on writing this particular refutation were not related to his intellectual interest to present as a Christian theologian and then reject the foundations of Islam. Indeed, his argumentation remained sharp, as if he was indifferent to comprehend in a profound and complete way the inner meanings of the Muslim religion. Instead, his motives are defined as purely socio-political. Confined in his monastery in Corfu, he had long witnessed the dramatic consequences of the War of Candia, with the massive islamizations of the Orthodox population in the territories of the Ottoman Empire, the captivity of Christians by Ottoman pirates, but mainly the continuous passing or anchorage of ships in Corfu full of Cretan refugees. Especially after the surrender of Candia in 1669, Vlachos, also a refugee, experienced the daily scene of his compatriots, who had found shelter in Corfu, devastated by the loss of their homeland and the collapse of their reality. At this critical moment they were in need not only of the state’s concern, but also of spiritual guidance and support of their religious sentiment. Thus, he decided to write a refutation against Islam of an aggressive style and of a simplified form, which did not respond to a purely theological and theoretical-academic treatise, but more to an extensive polemical sermon on a theological base. He aimed his work to be easily comprehended by the common people and concurrently to inspire to them aversion and odium against the Muslim religion, so that the

χρόνους της Τουρκοκρατίας». In: *Θεολογία* 84 (2013), p. 148; Argyriou: *Μωάμεθ*, p. ξξ'-πβ'.
¹⁴¹ Argyriou: *Μωάμεθ*, p. 15.

phenomenon of the islamizations would be confronted.¹⁴²

What becomes apparent from both polemical treatises is Gerasimos Vlachos' struggle to preserve and promote the Christian religious identity, without referring to its various confessions, against direct opponents and deniers of the Christian model of governance and faith. In his mind, both Jews and Muslims continued, in different ways, to pose a threat to Christian Europe, due to their immanent presence inside or around the Christian community. As a result, the composition of his refutations dealt with the critical historical conjuncture and the urgent need for the Orthodox to defend, secure and strengthen their faith, principles and tradition against the others, this time defined as the believers of the Muslim and Jewish religions.¹⁴³

1.4.3. Composing *Didaskalia*: A manual for Orthodox preachers

Unlike the scattered but at least preserved primary evidence on Gerasimos Vlachos' ecclesiastical and pastoral activity in Corfu,¹⁴⁴ the sources are still silent regarding a possible educational activity the former professor and teacher could have developed during his settlement in the island. Although at present no evidence has been found presenting Vlachos as a teacher either in the city of Corfu or in the monastery of Panagia Paleopolis, a small proof that he had not remained indifferent in issues of education is his acquaintanceship and collaboration with the eminent teacher and Orthodox ecclesiastic Bessarion Makris of Ioannina (1635–1699), a central intellectual figure and contributor to the establishment and renewal of education in the schools of Ioannina.¹⁴⁵ Through his initiatives for a modernized educational system, Makris had

¹⁴² For the purposes of Vlachos' treatise, see Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 92-95.

¹⁴³ For the different approaches against the so-called “infidels” or “unbelievers”, developed between the Greek and Latin early modern intellectual and ecclesiastical representatives of Christendom, see Benjamin J. Kaplan: *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe*. Harvard University Press. Cambridge, MA 2007, p. 296, 327-328.

¹⁴⁴ IAK, Μεγάλοι Πρωτοπαπάδες Κερκύρας, Busta 3 (Θεοδόσιος Φλώρος), Filza 1, Libri 7–12 (1660–1675); IAK, Μεγάλοι Πρωτοπαπάδες Κερκύρας, Busta 4 (Χριστόδουλος Βούλγαρης), Libri 1–5 (1675–1680).

¹⁴⁵ For the life and work of Bessarion Makris and his ferocious theological controversy during the period 1695–1699 with Vlachos' most distinguished student, the philosopher and scholar Georgios Sougdouris (1650–1725), see Vasileios Chalastanis: «Ο Βησσαρίων Μακρής και οι πνευματικές αναζητήσεις στα Ιωάννινα κατά τον ΙΖ' αιώνα, Μέρος Α'». In: *Θεολογία* 76 (2005), p. 277-367; Chalastanis: «Βησσαρίων Μακρής, Μέρος Β'». In: *Θεολογία* 76 (2005), p. 643-718; Chalastanis: «Βησσαρίων Μακρής, Μέρος Γ'». In: *Θεολογία* 77 (2006), p. 293-350. For Georgios Sougdouris, see Kostas Th. Petsios: «Γεώργιος Σουγδουρής (1645/7–

attempted to introduce aspects of Latin knowledge and methodology and put them in balance and combination with the principles and teachings of the Orthodox educational tradition. His model followed in its content and style that of earlier Greek scholars mainly from Venice and Padua; among them, Gerasimos Vlachos played a pivotal role.

In this context, the two scholars met in the monastery of Panaghia Paleopolis probably during the summer of 1673. In that meeting the teacher from Ioannina informed the elderly Cretan abbot of his aspirations for a renewal of the education system in his hometown and asked for his help. Two years later, in 1675 Makris contacted Vlachos from Ioannina, imploring him to send him copies of his school textbooks and manuals on grammar, rhetoric, natural philosophy and logic, along with a manual on ecclesiastical homiletics for the young Orthodox preachers.¹⁴⁶ In response, the abbot of Paleopolis sent to his friend a large corpus of his personal writings of school use and wrote a brief but comprehensive treatise on the composition of the Orthodox sermon, entitled “*Didaskalia on the Pure Way to Teach the Divine and Holy Gospel*” («*Διδασκαλία περὶ τοῦ ἀκραιφνοῦς τρόπου τοῦ διδάσκειν τὸ θεῖον καὶ ἱερὸν Εὐαγγέλιον*»), a product of his personal profound knowledge of the Christian homiletic tradition, his piety in matters of faith, and his simplified methodology deriving from his experience as a teacher.¹⁴⁷ The manual was accompanied by a letter, in which Vlachos addressed Makris in the following amicable and warm way:

“Accept my inclination, from me who loves you, in your sacred sermons; keep forever in your mind the prayers I send you; and consider a friend the one who considers you a friend.”

«Δέξαι οὖν τήν ἔφεσιν καί ἡμῶν τῶν ἀγαπώντων σε ἐν ταῖς σαῖς ἱεραῖς τελεταῖς καί διηγεγέσιν εὐχαῖς διὰ παντός μέμνησο καί φίλει τόν φιλοῦντά σε.»¹⁴⁸

Presenting his views both in detail and briefly in the ten chapters of his treatise, the author collected all his personal theories and techniques on the composition of an Orthodox sermon.¹⁴⁹ Firstly, he defined that a prospective preacher of the Holy Gospel

1725): Άγνωστα στοιχεία για τη ζωή, τη διδασκαλία και το φιλοσοφικό του έργο». In: *Δωδώνη* 31^ο (2002), p. 241-308.

¹⁴⁶ For the background of this second contact between Makris and Vlachos, see Bobou-Stamati: «Παρατηρήσεις», p. 393.

¹⁴⁷ Vlachos' manual was published in Kourkoulas, *Ομιλητική*.

¹⁴⁸ Kourkoulas, *Ομιλητική*, p. 5.

¹⁴⁹ In the field of ecclesiastical rhetoric and homiletic, the Orthodox sermon or teaching (“*didache*”), although originating from the early Christian and Byzantine homiletic tradition,

was obliged in each of his sermons to explain either a verse from the text of the Gospel, a citation from the Sunday mass or the various Christian Holidays (on Christ, Virgin Mary, the Apostles, the Saints and the Martyrs). Then he presented a specific structure of the Orthodox sermon, which he divided into three main parts: i. introduction, which included the preface and the preparatory, ii. arguments and iii. epilogue. In the introduction the preacher was to present the subject and his reasoning on it; this first part was completed with a direct question to the audience or further speculation on the matter. In the main part, he would proceed to a demonstrative argumentation based on logic and according to the doctrines of the Scriptures and the teachings of the Church Fathers. Moreover, the future preacher was advised to combine and adorn his narrative with vivid figures of speech, further explanations and teachings in order for his word not to become monotonous, complex and incomprehensible. The sermon was then to be completed with the summation of its main points and the conclusions in the epilogue. After a prayer and a praise to God, the preacher would proceed to blessings and admonishing invocations, encouraging his flock to repent. From the above overview it becomes clear that the abbot of Paleopolis portrayed the Orthodox preacher, based on his own relative identity, as the religious teacher and spiritual guider of his flock towards the correct Christian doctrines, a man of God who had the duty to clarify and explain the difficult or misinterpreted points of faith and promote the validity and superiority of Christian theology and Orthodox tradition.¹⁵⁰

How can one interpret Gerasimos Vlachos' concern and urgent interest to organize the teaching of the Orthodox preaching and distribute it among the Greek populations of the Venetian and Ottoman territories? Both the content and structure of the *Didaskalia*, along with the very idea of composing a brief and comprehensible manual on sermons, written in vernacular Greek, demonstrate the inner purposes of its pious author and his scholarly circle. The present study tends to connect Vlachos' work to the general initiatives by the Orthodox Patriarchates of Constantinople, Jerusalem

was formed and established by the Orthodox preaching activity of the 15th century; for its tradition in Crete, see Kaklamanis: *Κρητική ποίηση*. Vol. 1, p. 116-117.

¹⁵⁰ The preservation of a remarkably large number of manuscript copies of the *Didaskalia* (23 codices) all over the Greek Orthodox region proves the wide distribution the latter enjoyed and clarifies that it was used not only for the study of ecclesiastical rhetoric in the various schools in Ottoman-occupied Greek region, but also as a valuable handbook to many Orthodox preachers and teachers in the 17th and 18th century.

and Alexandria in the late 16th and the 17th century to confront the corresponding systematization of the teaching of ecclesiastical homiletic and rhetoric by the representatives of the Latin Christian confessions.¹⁵¹ Therefore, a wide religious and educational project in favor of the Orthodox was promoted. It included the establishment of schools of basic and higher education, the systematic composition of Orthodox polemical treatises against the Latin confessions and the appointment of renowned Orthodox ecclesiastics and scholars as professors, rectors and official theologians of the Orthodox Church. In this context of promoting the establishment of a steady and theologically valid base for the Orthodox faith, the ecclesiastical homiletic was largely reconsidered and renewed. Closely related with the already mentioned flourishing preaching tradition in the church of *San Giorgio* in Venice and the *Stato da Màr*, already from the mid. 16th century, Orthodox high clerics, priests and monks produced a vast amount of sermons and manuals on early modern Orthodox preaching (*artes praedicandi*), with many of them widely distributed either in manuscript or printed form. About seventy years after the first known brief “manual” in the form of a letter on the composition of sermons, written in 1587 by the Cretan scholar and bishop of Cytherra Maximos Margounios (1549–1602), Gerasimos Vlachos’ *Didaskalia* was the first genuine effort to delineate and determine the regulations and restrictions defining the art of preaching and the composition of the Orthodox sermon.¹⁵²

1.4.4. Elected Archbishop in the Metropolis of Phialdelphia

What Vlachos had not accomplished on March 1657, when he ran for the office of the Archbishop of Philadelphia, was achieved twenty-two years later, on 3. September 1679, when he succeeded in the throne the late Cretan Methodios III Moronis.¹⁵³ In a

¹⁵¹ Marc Fumaroli: “L’Âge de l’éloquence: rhétorique et «res literaria» de la Renaissance au seuil de l’époque classique”. In: *Hautes Études Médiévales et Modernes* 43 (1980), p. 135–142.

¹⁵² For the long publishing tradition of Orthodox sermons inaugurated in 1560 with the Great Protopapàs of Corfu Alexios Rartouros (c.1504–1574) and reaching its climax with the famous ecclesiastical rhetor in Venice Ilias Miniatis from Cephalonia (1669–1714), see Georgios Borovilos: «Η ορθόδοξη κηρυκτική γραμματεία κατά τον ΙΗ αι.: οι έντυπες συλλογές». PhD diss. Aristotle University of Thessaloniki 2001, p. 24–25.

¹⁵³ Among the other candidates, the names of Vlachos’ friend Bartholomeos Syropoulos and of the young ambitious, nevertheless baleful, teacher Matthaïos Typaldos, Vlachos’ successor in the Throne, stand out; see Manousos Manousakas: «Συλλογή άνεκδότων έγγράφων (1578–1685) άναφερομένων εις τούς έν Βενετία μητροπολίτας Φιλαδελφείας». In:

letter addressed to the then Patriarch of Jerusalem Dositheos II Notaras (1641–1707) on 1. July 1681, Vlachos referred to his election, claiming that he was initially unaware of his candidacy. Specifically, he wrote that while he was living peacefully in Corfu as an abbot of the monastery of Panaghia Paleopolis granted to him by “the Most Serene Prince of Venice”, he was informed of his election as Archbishop of Philadelphia by the members of the Confraternity.¹⁵⁴ However, the Cretan ecclesiastic did not depart from Corfu immediately, since he was unwillingly involved in a long dispute between the two main candidates of the Patriarchal Throne in Constantinople, James († 1700) and Dionysios IV Mouselimis († 1696). Indeed, the 17th century was characterized by the frequent changes in the Patriarchal Throne and the brief primacies of the Patriarchs, who were either deposed by rival circles inside the Church or executed by the Ottoman authorities as a result of machinations. Vlachos was found in the middle of such a controversy and for that he experienced a series of hardships during the first two years of his primacy which prevented him from officially obtain his office and return to Venice.

The background of this dispute and its aftermath on the early phase of Vlachos’ primacy was vividly described by the latter in his preserved correspondence with Mouselimis. More specifically, on September 1679 and in the context of his election and the official confirmation needed by the Patriarchate of Constantinople, Vlachos sent a warm letter to Dionysios, believing that the latter still held the Throne, in which he informed him of his office and requested the necessary patriarchal sigillum for his official ordination. However, he was unaware that Dionysios had been deposed by his rival James I; the latter would remain the leader of the Orthodox Church from 10. August 1679 until 30. July 1682, when Dionysios would depose him. Thus, the letter with the warm words and praises in honor of Dionysios was put on the hands of James. Obviously unwilling to satisfy the Cretan Archbishop’s fair request, since he considered him a friend and an ally of his enemy, James openly delayed Vlachos’ ordination by avoiding certifying his election and sending the required sigillum. In an attempt to cause the elderly high cleric further inconvenience, the Patriarch sent him the Archbishop of Nicomedia Neophytos († 1680) supposedly to settle the matter of his ordination.

Θησαυρίσματα 6 (1969), p. 94-95.

¹⁵⁴ A.E.I.B., B. Εκκλησία, 3. Μητρόπολη Φιλαδελφείας, Θήκη 2^β (Γεράσιμος Βλάχος), Filza 1, (from now on, *Codex Vlacho*), ff. 82.

Nevertheless, Neophytos appeared before Vlachos coercive and arrogant, opposing to the official procedure according to the doctrines and ritual of the Church, and asking for an exorbitant amount of money in return of his service:

“desiring Croesus’ treasures, he [mean. Neophytos] demanded not the things that were feasible and decent, but the impossible and the improper, willing to force me to go against the authorities.”

*«ἐπιτετυχηκότος τῶν τοῦ Κροίσου θησαυρῶν, ἤτεῖτο δὲ οὐ δύνατά, οὐ κόσμια, ἀλλὰ τὰ ὑπὲρ δύναμιν καὶ ἄκοσμα, ἀντερίζειν βουλόμενός με τοῖς κρατοῦσι.»*¹⁵⁵

Nevertheless, to all those excessive demands the newly elected Archbishop remained steadfast.

Moreover, Vlachos had to deal with the enticing incitement by the Venetian authorities to pretermite the traditional ecclesiastical procedure and, defying the Ecumenical Patriarchate, to be ordained by the Orthodox high clerics of the Venetian territories, possibly meaning the Megas Protopapàs of Corfu. However, by creating various excuses in order to postpone his ordination, the elderly Archbishop was instead presented unwilling to violate the rules and principles of his confession and Church, proving once more that in his late years he remained a pious and loyal follower and prelate of the Orthodox faith. More specifically, he noted that:

“the authorities were urging me to be immediately ordained by the high clerics of the Venetian provinces, not wishing for anything else; but I was avoiding the ordination by creating various postponements, unwilling to undermine the ecclesiastical laws.”

*«Παροτρυνόντων με τῶν κρατούντων εὐθέως χειροτονηθῆναι παρὰ τῶν ἐν Βενέτοις ἐπαρχιῶν ἀρχιερέων καὶ ἄλλως μὴ βουλομένων γενέσθαι, τοὺς ἐκκλησιαστικοὺς θεσμοὺς καταπατήσαι μὴ βουλόμενος, δι’ ἐφευρέσεων διαφορῶν ἀναβολῶν ἔφευγον τὴν χειροτονίαν.»*¹⁵⁶

Eventually and with the intercession of a wealthy merchant and benefactor in Constantinople named Manolakis Kastorianos († 1690), the coveted patriarchal sigillum arrived in Corfu on September 1680, exactly one year after Vlachos’ election. Between late September and middle November 1680 the Cretan Archbishop of Philadelphia was officially ordained.¹⁵⁷ During the next month he departed from Corfu and re-settled in Venice in early January 1681 in order to officially undertake his ecclesiastical duties in

¹⁵⁵ Manousakas: «Συλλογή», p. 100. For Vlachos’ long-time financial difficulties, also in the island of Corfu, see Tatakis: *Γεράσιμος Βλάχος*, p. 22-23.

¹⁵⁶ Manousakas: «Συλλογή», p. 100.

¹⁵⁷ For Vlachos’ first act as Archbishop (19. November 1680), see *Codex Vlacho*, ff. 5; cited in Tatakis: *Γεράσιμος Βλάχος*, p. 24.

the church of *San Giorgio*.¹⁵⁸

1.5. The late years in Venice (1681–1685)

1.5.1. Pastoral activity in the *San Giorgio dei Greci*

Most of our information about Gerasimos Vlachos' activity and administration during his primacy in the throne of the Metropolis of Philadelphia derives from the book of his official ecclesiastical acts, the so-called *Codex Vlacho*, which is preserved in the Archive of the Greek Confraternity of Venice.¹⁵⁹ The study of this particular primary source revealed that the Cretan Archbishop dealt with a multitude and a variety of cases of ecclesiastical, religious-confessional, educational and social-philanthropic content. More specifically, Vlachos and his ecclesiastical circle in the church of *San Giorgio* are presented extremely busy dealing with cases of ordination, recommendation and jurisdiction of a multitude of Orthodox prelates mainly in the city of Venice and the Ionian Islands. Moreover, the Cretan Archbishop was highly concerned and moved on matters of financial relief, since he had composed numerous appeals to his Orthodox flock for the collection of money in favor of Christians in need, either due to poverty or in cases of captivity by pirates from the Barbary region in the north-eastern part of Africa. Maintaining a vivid contact with the rest of the Community and following the social parameters of the Metropolis, Vlachos and the other representatives of the church paid a keen interest in cases of validation or annulment of marriages mainly inside the Community of Venice. It is noteworthy that the majority of those acts concerned Cretan refugees, in a lesser extent Greeks from the Ionian Islands and elsewhere; nevertheless, all belonging to the Orthodox faith.¹⁶⁰ Of particular significance is the fact that the

¹⁵⁸ As he characteristically wrote to Dionysios: "Being ordained after a delay of sixteen months, I have managed to arrive in glorious Venice and I reside in the most respected temple of the Great *San Giorgio* of the Greeks, obtaining the presidency of Philadelphia"; see Manousakas: «Συλλογή», p. 100.

¹⁵⁹ The *Codex Vlacho* consists of 423 pages, from which 375 are written. It includes a total of 393 acts for 283 cases covering the period 19. November 1680 – 15. May 1684. The acts were recorded on pages 5–352; the rest of the written pages contained notes, copies of previous acts and a series of calculations. The difference in amount between the 393 acts and the 283 cases under which they were recorded is justified by the fact that for some cases more than one acts were necessary.

¹⁶⁰ In the same context, Vlachos did not forget to activate a special bequest for the marriage of

Cretan Archbishop and former teacher in Candia and Venice had not seized to remain largely interested in the promotion of Greek students to higher levels of education in Venice and elsewhere. Therefore, he is presented to compose a multitude of certificates in order to confirm and validate the good studies of young Greeks in Venice, Crete, the Ionian Islands and elsewhere, or to guarantee for the admission of Greek students in the colleges of Venice and Padua or even the local University.

Lastly, of the outmost importance for an approach to Gerasimos Vlachos' identity and character as the leader of the Orthodox Greeks in the territories of the *Serenissima* is defined a small collection of letters, the Archbishop's official correspondence. As recipients and interlocutors are presented the following high clerics: the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople Dionysios IV Mouselimis, the Patriarch of Jerusalem Dositheos II Notaras, the Megas Protopapàs of Corfu Christodoulos Voulgaris. Moreover, a large amount of the letters concerned Vlachos' frequent correspondence with the abbots and chaplains of the Orthodox churches in the towns of Dalmatia (Šibenik, Zadar Hvar) and Istria (Pula). The contact of the two sides occurred in the context of the problems and hardships the local Orthodox communities were facing due to the constant and intense interventions of the local Catholic clergy.¹⁶¹ This indicative outline of Vlachos' occupations proves that the elderly ecclesiastic remained quite active in his office, fully aware of his duties as the shepherd of the Orthodox in the Venetian State, and as the religious leader of the Greek Community of Venice. Having as his main ambition the preservation, proper operation, strengthening and protection of the Greek Orthodox communities and monasteries in the territories under his jurisdiction, he worked closely with both the representatives of the church of *San Giorgio*, the protopapàdes, the abbots and the chaplains of the Orthodox communities in Dalmatia and Istria, Corfu and the other Ionian Islands, as well as with the political leadership of the Greek Confraternity in Venice and the administrative heads of the Greek communities in the *Stato da Màr*.

poor Greek women, established in the 1640s by the eminent and wealthy lawyer from Corfu, Thomas Flanginis, for whom special reference will take place in Chapter III.

¹⁶¹ Gerasimos Vlachos' acts in the *Codex* can be distinguished in the following categories: 50 acts on the ordination and recommendation of Orthodox priests; 36 appeals to the Orthodox flock for financial contribution to poor Christians; 51 requests for financial contribution for the release of Christians in captivity or for the relief of ex-prisoners; 45 cases of marriage; 21 applications for the bequest of 100 ducats for the marriage of poor women; 32 certificates for Greek students; 35 letters of correspondence; 13 miscellanea acts.

In addition to the administrative obligations of his office, Vlachos did not stop in the remaining years of his life to preach the Divine Word again from the pulpit or from his throne in the church of *San Giorgio*. Indeed in the *indice* of his library, he recorded his last one and a half volumes of his late Venetian sermons: “i. Volume 11 of *Didaches* containing sermons delivered in Corfu and in Venice in the years 1680, 1681, 1682 (ff. 187); ii. Volume 12 of *Didaches* containing sermons delivered in Venice in the years 1683 and 1684”. The respect, admiration and awe that the Archbishop’s ecclesiastical sermons caused to his audience in Venice are vividly portrayed in the following excerpt from the already mentioned anonymous praising speech in his honor:

“you [mean. his audience] listened his [mean. Vlachos’s] God-moving word on this pulpit to rejoice the ears like a trumpet and amaze the souls by urging the good people to actions that would please God, and the evil ones to redemption; he [mean. Vlachos] imitated not the ancient orators, these were Gorgias, Demosthenes and Pericles who was said to speak like thunder and lightning and confound the whole of Hellas, but the God-spirited Fathers, such as Chrysostom, Gregory, Basil; he preached not for ostentation but for teaching, not for gratitude but for salvation, not for his profit but for the benefit of his audience.”

«ἀκούσατε εἰς τοῦτο τὸ ἱερὸν βῆμα τὴν θεοκίνητον τοῦ γλῶσσαν ὡσὺν μίαν σάλπιγγα νὰ εὐφραίνῃ τὰς ἀκοὰς καὶ νὰ καταπλήττῃ τὰς ψυχὰς παρακινῶντας τοὺς καλοὺς εἰς τὰ θεάρεστα ἔργα καὶ τοὺς κακοὺς εἰς τὴν μετάνοιαν, βάνωντας ἐμπροσὰ τοῦ εἰς μίμησιν ὅχι τοὺς παλαιοὺς τῶν ῥητόρων, Γοργίαν δηλαδή, Δημοσθένην καὶ Περικλέα, ὁ ὁποῖος ἐλέγετο βροντᾶν καὶ ἀστράπτειν καὶ συγκυκᾶν τὴν Ἑλλάδα πᾶσαν, ἀλλὰ τοὺς θεοπνεύστους διδασκάλους, Χρυσόστομον, τὸν Γρηγόριον, τὸν Βασίλειον, διδάσκοντας ὅχι πρὸς ἐπίδειξιν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς διδασκαλίαν, ὅχι πρὸς χάριν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς σωτηρίαν, ὅχι πρὸς τὸ ἰδικόν του συμφέρον, ἀλλὰ πρὸς ὠφέλειαν τῶν ἀκουόντων.»¹⁶²

During the 1680s the subjects of the War of Candia and the messianic crisis of Sabbatai Zevi, central concepts in his previous preaching activity, would no longer find response among the Orthodox flock of Venice. Therefore, one could assume that the elderly Archbishop would structure his sermons either exclusively on matters of religious piety, Christian faith and fight against sin, or he would take the initiative and relate once again his religious Christian observation of the world with his contemporary historical conjunctures; let us not forget that during the first years of that decade the Latin Europe was preparing herself both psychologically and militarily for another long-standing confrontation with the Ottoman Empire, which began in 1683 in the context of the Great Turkish War (1683–1699) between the Sublime Porte and the Holy League (*Sacra Ligua*), the alliance organized by Pope Innocent XI and containing the Papal States, the

¹⁶² Dyovouniotis: «Μελέτιος», p. 155.

Holy Roman Empire under Emperor Leopold I, the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth of John III Sobieski, the Tsardom of Russia and the Venetian Republic.

1.5.2. Social recognition and death

In the final years of his life, Gerasimos Vlachos enjoyed the admiration, appreciation and respect of the members of the Greek Community in Venice. His already extensive circle, consisting mainly of scholarly Orthodox ecclesiastics, was enriched by the acquaintanceship with eminent members of the church of *San Giorgio* and his contemporary Greek Confraternity, such as the vicar of the Metropolis of Philadelphia Grigorios Maràs, the chief deacon Ambrosios Papadatos from Corfu and the scholarly physicians Georgios Zandiris and Georgios Palladas. Indicative of the profound respect and appreciation that Vlachos received from his compatriots are a series of initiatives in his honor by members of the Archbishop's circle, both secular and clergymen. More specifically, in early 1681, a little after Vlachos' arrival to Venice, his old friend and already mentioned Venetian printer Andrea Giuliani dedicated to him a Greek edition of the Holy Gospel, recently published by his press.¹⁶³ In the same year the praised poet from Rethymno, Marinos Zane Mpounialis (1613–1686), composer of an extensive description of the War of Candia in vernacular Greek verses, presented Gerasimos Vlachos as the most distinguished figure of the once cosmopolitan and scholarly flourishing city of Candia; in his brief poem entitled *Quarrel between Candia and Rethymno* (1681), he wrote the following:

“And now I must refer to you, Candia, / and knit to you a wreath of various flowers / for your brilliant sun and worthy Bishop / Gerasimos Vlachos, the modern Stagirites, / in order to be known here and there and in the whole world / that you have in Venice a great [mean. Archbishop of] Philadelphia.”

«Καὶ τὴν ὥρην πρέπει, Χάνδακα, μὲ σένα νὰ συντρέξω / μὲ ἄνθη πολυποίκιλα στεφάνι νὰ σοῦ πλέξω, / γιὰ τὸν λαμπρὸν σου ἥλιον κι ἄξιον μητροπολίτην, / Βλάχον τὸν κὺρ Γεράσιμον τὸν νέον σταγειρίτην, / γιὰ νὰ 'κουστῇ ἐδῶ καὶ κεῖ κ' εἰς τὴν κοσμογραφίαν, / πῶς ἔχεις εἰς τὴν Βενετιὰν μέγα Φιλαδελεφεία.»¹⁶⁴

In the eve of the Archbishop's death (1684), his close friend and then chaplain of *San Giorgio*, the poet and painter of icons Emmanuel Zane Mpounialis (1610–1690), brother of Marinos, dedicated to Vlachos his religious book, a hymn in verses to Virgin Mary

¹⁶³ Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 5 [Additions], p. 117.

¹⁶⁴ Stefanos Kaklamanis: *Η κρητική ποίηση στα χρόνια της Αναγέννησης*. Vol. 3 [Ανθολογία (περ. 1580–17^{ος} αι.)]. Μορφωτικό Ίδρυμα Εθνικής Τραπέζης. Athens 2020), p. 646.

written in vernacular Greek. In the beginning of the edition, Mpounialis had composed the following epigram in his honor:

“Most wise, renowned, prize of the high clerics / and fervent herald of the Hellenist Romaioi; / most illustrious authority of Crete, horn of Amalthea / and steadfast defender of the pious doctrines; / zealous with sciences, ocean of wisdom, / recognized in theology and astrology; / most excellent Exarch of everyone everywhere, / praise of the Dioceses elected by God; / expert of the Holy Scripture, staid in praises, / true shepherd and watchful guard of the flock; / illustrious and most reverend lord, my master, / my precious and most wise Gerasimos.”

«Πάνσοφε, περιβόητε, γέρας ἀρχιερέων, / καὶ κῆρυξ διαπρύσιε ἑλληνιστῶν Ῥωμαίων, / τῆς Κρήτης μέγιστε φωστήρ, κέρας τῆς Ἀμαλθείας, / καὶ κραταῖε ὑπέρμαχε δογμάτων εὐσεβείας· / πρόφρονε τῶν ἐπιστημῶν, ὠκεανὲ σοφίας, / θεολογίας ἔγκριτε καὶ τῆς ἀστρολογίας· / ἔξαρχε πανεξαίρετε τῶν νῦν ἀπανταχόθεν, / καύχημα μητροπόλεων ἐκλεχθεῖσων θεόθεν· / γραφῆς τῆς θείας ἔμπειρε, νηφάλιε ἐν ὕμνοις, / ποιμὴν ἀληθινώτατε, κὶ ἀγρυπνε φύλαξ ποιμνίης· / ἐκλαμπρε καὶ πανίερε δέσποτα, κύριέ μου, / Γεράσιμε πολύτιμε καὶ παμφρονέστατέ μου.»¹⁶⁵

Lastly, in the already mentioned anonymous encomium in his honor, the speaker adorned the Cretan Archbishop with a multitude of virtues in terms of his scientific training and his contribution to the field of philosophy and letters, he praised his sincere humility, his profound sagacity, his inexhaustible diligence, his admirable rhetorical skill, and his deep piety and steadfast faith in the Orthodox Church; Vlachos' overall contribution to the Orthodox priesthood and his worthiness as an illustrious Greek thinker of his time was vividly recognized as following:

“And only you were filled with the brightest light of all of Hellas [...] You the brightest light, you illustrious authority of our contemporary Hellas. [...] This is the kind of high cleric for us, the one who is an admiration for the flock, an honor for the high clerics, a praise of all the Greek nation.”

«Καὶ μόνον ἐσένα ἐκατάλαβε φῶς διανγέστατον ὅλης τῆς Ἑλλάδος [...]. Ὁ φῶς διανγέστατον, ὃ φωστήρ λαμπρότατε τῆς ἐσχάτης Ἑλλάδος μας. [...] Τοιοῦτος ἡμῖν πρέπει ἀρχιερεὺς, ὁ ὁποῖος εἶναι ἔπαινος τοῦ ποιμνίου, τιμὴ τῶν ἱερέων, δόξα τῶν ἀρχιερέων, καύχημα ὅλου τοῦ ἑλληνικοῦ γένους.»¹⁶⁶

His election to the Metropolitan Throne, in addition to the prestige and the wider social recognition, certainly improved the Cretan ecclesiastic's dire financial situation. Three months after he had official undertaken his duties in the church of *San Giorgio* (30. April 1681), the Venetian Senate granted Vlachos the income of the monastery of

¹⁶⁵ Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 2 (1645–1690), p. 422–423. For Emannuel Zane Mpounialis, see Nikolaos Drandakis: *Ὁ Ἐμμανουὴλ Τζάνε Μπουνιαλῆς, θεωρούμενος ἐξ εἰκόνων του σωζομένων κυρίως ἐν Βενετίᾳ. Ἡ ἐν Ἀθῆναις Ἀρχαιολογικὴ Ἑταιρεία*. Athens 1962, 1–5.

¹⁶⁶ Dyounioutis: «Μελέτιος», p. 156.

Agios Ioannis Moraïtis in Corfu.¹⁶⁷ A few months later, on 13. July, the Greek Confraternity assigned him the established annual salary of 114 ducats.¹⁶⁸ The aforementioned decisions enabled the Archbishop's gradual financial restoration, a late cure to his chronic difficulties already from the total loss of his fortune and property during the War of Candia. Indeed, the elderly ecclesiastic would spend the final years of his life in relative welfare in the safe environment of Venice.

Nevertheless, Vlachos could not actually enjoy the peace of his final days. The chronic arthritis that tormented him already since the time he was living in Candia had worsened in the years of exile; mainly during his settlement in Corfu he was often unable to stand or write due to the infection in both his hands and feet.¹⁶⁹ During his primacy he frequently referred to the deterioration of his health, mostly in his correspondence with Patriarchs Dionysios and Dositheos. Indicatively, in two letters dated 10. September and 10. October 1682, the Cretan Archbishop informed Dionysios that "due to the painful disease of arthritis which is intensified and tortures me greatly these days, I am forced to make this addition in strange characters and words" and that "being tormented by the dire arthritis, I write with great difficulty to your Holiness incomprehensible letters, and therefore, I ask for your forgiveness". Finally, on 31. May 1683 he bitterly confessed to the Ecumenical Patriarch that "from February and until now the arthritis in both my hands and feet has wearied me and I can neither walk nor write. Thank God! Nevertheless, I do not fail to administrate the affairs of the Church in my own weak powers".¹⁷⁰ Thus, it is interesting that during his primacy, most of the acts and decisions of the

¹⁶⁷ For the income of that particular church, located on the provinces of Benitses and Gastouri in central-eastern Corfu, see Manousakas: «Συλλογή», p. 96-97; Vlassi: «Παναγία Παλαιόπολης», p. 365.

¹⁶⁸ As evidence of his relatively enhanced financial capacity, see his annual entries in the Fund of the Greek Community during the years 1681–1684, in which he signed as "*Gerassimo Vlacho, humilissimo archivescovo di Filadelfia, offerisco alla Veneranda Chesia di S. Zorsi e S. Nicoló d. 10*"; see A.E.I.B., Οργάνωση 2, K 15, f. 90^v, 91^v, 92^v, 94^r; see Tatakis: *Γεράσιμος Βλάχος*, p. 13 note 4.

¹⁶⁹ According to a primary testimony (25. September 1679) by an anonymous student addressed to the ecclesiastical scholar and former professor in the Patriarchal School of Constantinople Ioannis Karyophilis († 1692), "the Confraternity elected Gerasimos Vlachos who now lives in Corfu; however, he also faces the same sickness [with you]; they even claim that he got worse after being informed of the unexpected news, and he now remains bedridden. His arrival seems doubtful"; see Ariadna Camariano-Cioran: «Κώδικες περιέχοντες διδακτικά έγχειρίδια Γερασίου Βλάχου τοῦ Κρητὸς ἐν τῇ Βιβλιοθήκῃ τῆς Ρουμανικῆς Ἀκαδημίας». In: *Πεπραγμένα του Γ' Κρητολογικῆ Συνεδρίου*. Vol. 2. Athens 1974, p. 18.

¹⁷⁰ *Codex Vlacho*, f. 217, 231, 276.

Metropolis, along with the correspondence of the Archbishop, were written or transcribed by Vlachos' secretaries or by the first chaplain and then vicar of the church of *San Giorgio*, Grigorios Maràs, a close and trustworthy friend of the elderly Archbishop.¹⁷¹ Nevertheless, a careful reader could actually detect brief notes, almost uncomprehensive, that most possibly derived from Gerasimos Vlachos' trembling hand.

More and more concerned that the end was near, the Cretan high cleric called on 20. December 1683 the notary Francesco Velano, son of Nicolò, and handed him his final testament, with the order that his commissioners, his "close friend" Grigorios Maràs and the governors of the church of *San Giorgio*, would follow his last will to the letter.¹⁷² According to the text, the main heir of the elderly Archbishop was indeed the church of *San Giorgio*, to which he bequeathed his personal library, in order to serve as a means "for the enlightenment of our Nation". Moreover, he left to the church an annual bequest. A part of it would be given to the already mentioned Orthodox monastery of Noble Greek Women in Venice; in fact the dying Archbishop implored the monastery to accept as nuns the daughters of his late cousin Èlena Vlachou, Eleonora and Maria Colonna. The remaining money were requested to cover the annual expenses for six services, in case the office of the Archbishop of Philadelphia remained empty after his death: i. in his memory on the day of his death; ii. on 3. November, the feast day of the Translation of the Holy Relics of Saint George; iii. on 26. December in memory of Vlachos' late uncle Tzòrtzis; iv. on 4. January in memory of his late nephew Grigorios Vlachos;¹⁷³ v. on 2. July, the feast day of the Placing of the Honorable Robe of the Most Holy Theotokos at Blachernae; and vi. on 31. August, the feast day of the Placing of the Honorable Cincture of the Most Holy Theotokos.¹⁷⁴ Finally, the Cretan Archbishop bequeathed to the church of *San Giorgio* numerous of his icons and 28 relics of Saints

¹⁷¹ In one of Vlachos' letters to the already mentioned Great Protopapàs of Corfu Christodoulos Voulgaris, the following note is found: "I, priest Grigorios Maràs, vicar of Philadelphia by the Grace of God and ordered by the most reverend Archbishop, sign in his place, since he is hindered by the disease arthritis"; see *Codex Vlacho*, f. 259.

¹⁷² For the commissioners of Gerasimos Vlachos' property and testament, see A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Venezia), Busta 13582 (Francesco Velano), Libro 1 (1681–1682), ff. 24^r, 65^v-67^r; A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Venezia), Busta 13584 (Francesco Velano), Libro 1 (1683–1685), ff. 22^r-23^r, 109^v-110^r.

¹⁷³ Grigorios' death occurred a little before 10 April 1681, when his uncle recorded a letter of indulgence towards his nephew; see *Codex Vlacho*, f. 22-23.

¹⁷⁴ In case, though, a new Archbishop was elected, Vlachos asked his bequest to cover only the three of the aforementioned services: the one in his own memory, in the memory of his uncle, and of his nephew.

that he had collected during his life. In the context of the historical conjunctures that had occurred in his homeland, one could expect that a part, if not the majority, of those sacred symbols of faith must have reached the hands of the Cretan clergyman, in one way or another, during the time he lived and worked in Candia; when the war came, he chose to transfer them to Venice, in order to save them from a possible destruction.¹⁷⁵

In addition to the bequests to the church of *San Giorgio*, Vlachos decided to include in his will the people of his close circle (relatives, friends, fellow clergymen, and servants), along with those who were still alive from his older networks of Candia, his early years in Venice and Corfu. To start with, his nephew Arsenios Kaloudis, then abbot in the monastery of Panaghia Paleopolis,¹⁷⁶ inherited among others a Greek-Latin four-book edition of Saint John Chrysostom's commentary on the New Testament. Vlachos' chief deacon Ambrosios Papadatos from Corfu received among others a corpus of printed ecclesiastical books of Orthodox Liturgy (Minaia, Triodia, Pentekostaria), along with a yet unbound imprint of the Greek edition of the Holy Gospel, which was later published by the printing house of Vlachos' friend Nikolaos Glykis.¹⁷⁷ In addition to some ecclesiastical objects that the Archbishop bequeathed to his long-standing friend, the also elderly Bartholomeos Syropoulos who then lived in Corfu, the first offered twelve imprints of his *Thesaurus* to the eminent Greek doctor in Venice Georgios Palladas in order to cover educational needs. The Archbishop completed his testament by instructing his friend and commissioner Grigorios Maràs to sell the rest of his property, guarantee the safe return of his servants to their homelands, and distribute any surplus to the poor.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁵ For the collection of relics in the Orthodox church of *San Giorgio* in Venice, see Chryssa Maltezos: "Nazione Greca και cose sacre. Λείψανα αγίων στο ναό του Αγίου Γεωργίου της Βενετίας". In: *Θησαυρίσματα* 29 (1999), p. 9-31.

¹⁷⁶ Arsenios remained in his place and a resident of Corfu until his death, which took place before 26. October 1700, date on which there is archival evidence that the abbot position of Paleopolis was empty; see Tzivara: "Σχολεία και Δάσκαλοι", p. 280 note 403.

¹⁷⁷ The book Vlachos bequeathed to Papadatos is identified as the 1687 Greek edition of the Bible entitled *Τῆς Θείας Γραφῆς Παλαιᾶς τε καὶ Νέας Διαθήκης ἅπαντα*, published in Venice by Nikolaos Glykis' printing house. For the relation between Gerasimos Vlachos and Nikolaos Glykis, see Chapter IV, p. 223.

¹⁷⁸ For the the original Italian text of Gerasimos Vlachos' testament, see A.S.V., Notarile Testamenti, Busta 1048 (Francesco Velano), no. 121. A copy is preserved in the Register of Testaments and Donations of the Greek Confraternity in Venice (1563–1743); see A.E.I.B., E'. Οικονομική διαχείριση, 1. Διαθήκες, κληροδοτήματα, διαχείριση, δωρεές, Filza 8, ff. 89^v-92^v. For a Greek translation of the testament, see Konstantinos D. Mertziος: «Η διαθήκη Γερασίου Βλάχου τοῦ Κρητός». In: *Ηπειρωτική Εστία* 7 (1958), p. 643-650.

Confident that he had fulfilled his duty as a man of God and letters, as a guider of the Orthodox flock and as a leader of the Greek Community, Gerasimos Vlachos passed away on 24. March 1685.¹⁷⁹ After his death, his name and fame did not disappear, at least not completely, mainly due to the wide spread of his writings. His textbooks and manuals on grammar, rhetoric, philosophy and theology became objects of use and criticism both in Latin Europe (mainly the Kingdom of France and the northern Italian states) as well as the Orthodox East (Tsardom of Russia, the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, Dalmatia and Istria, Ionian Islands, mainland Greece, Constantinople, Jerusalem, Alexandria, Crete). An indicative testimony to the value and appreciation Vlachos' thought and works enjoyed, at least until the early 18th century, is contained in a letter by the eminent teacher and prolific scholar Anastasios Gordios from Agrafta (1654–1729) dated 31. July 1692. Addressing to Vlachos' nephew Arsenios Kaloudis in Corfu, Gordios implored him to send him copies of the theological and religious writings composed by “late Mr. Gerasimos Vlachos, whose fame was wide (poetically speaking) among all wise men, unusually admired not only by the Greeks but also by the Italians”. In fact, Gordios argued that through a future systematic distribution of Vlachos' writings, “many more people with me and through me will obtain it [mean. Vlachos' wisdom], and they will be utterly inspired by his delightful [...] and God-spoken views”.¹⁸⁰

Equally noteworthy, though, is one of the very few cases of harsh criticisms against Vlachos' overall contribution as a thinker and author of theological, philosophical and philological works. Thirty-eight years after the Archbishop's death, the Greek Catholic Panagiotis Sinopeus [mean. from Sinop] (c.1670–1736),¹⁸¹ an interesting clergyman and teacher of ancient Greek in Brescia and Verona who was

¹⁷⁹ Maltezos, Ploumidis: *Αποβιωτήριες πράξεις*, p. 165. For the assumption that the Cretan Archbishop was treated by his godson, the eminent doctor from Corfu Georgios Zandiris (c.1662–c.1713); see Emmanuil Stavroulakis: «Το Ελληνικό Νοσοκομείο Φλαγγίνη της Βενετίας κατά την πρώτη (1666-1797) και κατά τη μεταβατική (1797-1845) περίοδο λειτουργίας του». PhD diss. University of Ioannina 2010, p. 129-130.

¹⁸⁰ «τοῦ μακαρίτου ἐκείνου κυρίου Γερασίου τοῦ Βλάχου, οὗ τὸ κλέος εὐρὺ (ποιητικῶς εἰπεῖν) παρὰ πᾶσι ἐπὶ σοφία, οὗ τοῖς τὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ τῶν Ἰταλῶν ἐκτόπως θαυμάζουσι» [...] «καὶ πολλοὶ ἄλλοι σὺν ἐμοί τε καὶ δι' ἐμοῦ ταύτης μεθέξουσι, καὶ τῶν ἐκείνου γλυκυρρόων [...] καὶ θεωρημάτων γνωμῶν δαψιλῶς ἐμφορηθήσονται»; see Chariton Karanasios, Ioanna Kolia (eds.): *Αναστάσιος Γόρδιος: Αλληλογραφία (1675-1728)*. Vol. 1. Ακαδημία Αθηνών – Κέντρον Ερεύνης του Μεσαιωνικού και Νέου Ελληνισμού. Athens 2011, p. 332-333.

¹⁸¹ Sathas: *Νεοελληνική Φιλολογία*, p. 456-457.

closely related to Vlachos' dubious successor in the Metropolis of Philadelphia Meletios Typaldos, composed in 1723 in Brescia two letters addressing a Catholic high cleric named Albertino. In those texts Panagiotis proceeded to an extremely vicious condemnation of Vlachos' value. Clarifying that he had the chance to read carefully and profoundly the Cretan scholar's writings during the period he studied in Venice and Padua near Typaldos, he claimed to be the most competent to express an opinion on them. Thus, on 2. May 1723 he wrote the following:

“I state that all of Vlachos' writings are nothing but vanities. Noone saw them better than me, since I studied them myself and thought about them carefully. Everything in them is said in a messy and confused way, with no rational and critical thinking; indeed, from them it is better to say that chaos emerges, than philosophical and theological lessons. I am well aware that my compatriots, the Graikoi, always claim that I am used to roar and hate Vlachos' wisdom, since I am an apostate of their faith. However, it is not so! It is not! Before Vlachos, there was another Photianos [mean. supporter of Photios] and defender of the God-hatred Schism, that was his compatriot Maximos Margounios; and before Margounios numerous others. But we do not deny that they were men of science, wise and educated, although they blackened their minds out of envy and unjust hatred against the Latins and brought disgrace in their doctrines, despite the fact that they thought they acted in piety.”

«Λέγω οὖν ὅτι πάντα τὰ τοῦ Βλάχου φιλοπονήματα οὐκ ἄλλο εἰσιν, ἢ ματαιοπονήματα. Οὐδεὶς κάλλιον ἐμοῦ οἶδεν, ἀνεγνωκότος ἤδη αὐτὰ καὶ κάλλιστα σκεψαμένον. Πάντα ἐκεῖ φύρδην καὶ συγκεχυμένως λεγόμενα, σὺν οὐδεμιᾷ ὀρθῇ καὶ κριτικῇ ἐπιστήμῃ. Ὅθεν καὶ χάος εἰσι μᾶλλον ἢ φιλοσοφικὰ καὶ θεολογικὰ μαθήματα. Οἶδα καλῶς ὅτι πᾶς τις τῶν ὁμοφύλων μου Γραικῶν πάντως ἐρεῖ ὅτι ἐγὼ, ὡς τῆς αὐτῶν πίστεως ἀποστάτης, βρύχων ἀπαρέσκομαι τῇ τοῦ Βλάχου σοφίᾳ. Ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔστιν οὕτως, οὐκ ἔστι. Φωτιανὸς γὰρ καὶ ὑπερασπιστὴς τοῦ θεοστυγοῦς σχίσματος ἦν, πρὸ τοῦ Βλάχου, καὶ ὁ συμπολίτης αὐτοῦ Μάξιμος ὁ Μαργούνιος, ἔτι δὲ καὶ πρὸ τοῦ Μαργουνίου μύριοι ὅσοι. Ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀρνούμεθα ὅτι ἦσαν ἄνδρες ἐπιστήμονες, σοφοὶ καὶ πολυμαθεῖς, εἰ καὶ ὑπὸ φθόνου καὶ τοῦ ἀδίκου κατὰ Λατίνων μίσους ἀμαυρωθέντες τὴν διάνοιαν, ἐνόμισαν εὐσεβέστατα δρᾶν, εἰ τοῖς τούτων δόγμασι μῶμον ἐντρίψαιεν.»¹⁸²

Moreover, in his following letter, dated 16. May 1723, Panagiotis added that:

“it is indeed to wonder that among his compatriots Vlachos is highly appreciated and respected; nevertheless, according to the saying in the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king.”

«Τι θαυμαστὸν εἰ παρὰ τοῖς ἐμοῦ ὁμογενέσιν ὁ Βλάχος περὶ πολλοῦ ποιεῖται καὶ σφόδρα τιμᾶται; ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ τῶν τυφλῶν βασιλεύει μονόφθαλμος, φησὶν ἡ κοινὴ παροιμία.»¹⁸³

Regardless his post-mortem perception by the following Greek scholarship, one could still focus on Gerasimos Vlachos' final wish through his testament. What

¹⁸² Pierantonio Barzani: *Βίος τοῦ Παναγιώτου Σινωπέως, μετὰ τινῶν αὐτοῦ ἐπιστολῶν / Vita del Panagioti da Sinope con alcune sue lettere*. Dalle Stampe di Giammaria Rizzardi. Brescia 1760), p. 80-81.

¹⁸³ Barzani: *Βίος*, p. 82.

becomes evident from the dominant ambitions and expectations by the dying clergyman is his persistent concern to leave a legacy for the future generations, both scholarly-educational and religious-confessional. The bequest of his library for the benefit of intellectuals and theologians, the donation of his manuals for the enhancement of the Greek education in Venice, the inheritance of religious and liturgical books, icons and relics to the Orthodox church of *San Giorgio* as the defined symbols of their common faith; they all reveal the Cretan ecclesiastic's ambition for a better, more auspicious future for the Community in the years to come, based on the flourishing of study and letters, social solidarity and culture, religious stability and piety. In the following chapters, the present study will attempt to interpret the ideological background and the multifaceted initiatives taken by Gerasimos Vlachos for the religious, socio-political and intellectual benefit of his compatriots, a way of life that prepared, promoted and eventually established his high aspirations in the end of his life.

2. A Loyal Subject to the Most Serene Republic of Venice: The concept of *Interconfessional Tolerance* in the context of the War of Candia

2.1. Introduction

In concrete terms of culture, life and history, the phenomenon of syncretism in the early modern centuries is studied under a multiple and multifaceted model of cultural and intellectual factors. Mainly detected in cases of multicultural, multireligious / multiconfessional societies and polities, syncretism derives and includes the condition of coexistence and conciliation among groups of different features (origin, tradition, faith, language, identity). Definitely not an ad hoc procedure, this long, lingering and constantly self-perpetuating approach between *us* and the *others* is meant to gradually confront and absorb a series of disputing and conflicting ideological disruptions. The latter are to be caused by the overtones of the early approach between the two sides; these are a passive inclination to introversion or a mutual competitive tendency to theoretical and practical predominance. Indeed, the phase of the early approach between two worlds of different but equally powerful and steadfast identity (culture, history, and tradition) is mainly characterized by a constant need of both groups to prevail and assimilate each other. Eventually, the coexistence and interaction of the two parties completes its cycle in its late phase either with the augmentation or decline of the one towards the other, or with the gradual and steady acceptance of their diversity as the key point for their joint cross-cultural socio-political renewal. Away from a hybridised environment of reality, the different groups maintain the fundamental characteristics which determine their independent existence, and simultaneously they search through interaction and integration for common points of contact and conciliation. In cases of a conscious and substantial approach, they eventually achieve coherence on certain key points of coexistence in socio-political, cultural and religious level. Fruit of this process is not a possible osmosis of the one side to the other, but their partial assimilation of

particular features and, thus, the emergence of a common identity founded on a genuine interaction.¹⁸⁴

A polity of the early modernity that fulfilled the requirements to experience a phase of a genuine cultural syncretism was the *Regno di Candia*. Following the aforementioned model, Venetian Crete was indeed the center of a long, systematic and eventually fruitful interaction and conciliation between two different groups: the local population, once under the authority of the Eastern Roman Empire and, therefore, Orthodox in its majority, and the representatives of the Republic, Catholic authorities and further colonists. Modern scholarship highlighted and promoted a model of two eras of Venetian-Cretan approaches, what I defined above as early and late phase.¹⁸⁵ Indeed, the *Serenissima* developed two policies towards her Orthodox subjects, with the point of intersection to be considered the response to a common need for reconsideration and reapproach. To start with, in the aftermath of the Fourth Crusade (1202–1204), a historical event that augmented the animosity of the “Orthodox Greeks” against the “Catholic Latins”, Venice emerged as the dominant naval power in the Mediterranean with its *Stato da Màr* including mainly territories previously consisting parts of the Eastern Roman Empire. The early phase of Venetian rule in those lands inaugurated a long series of revolts and resistance by the local Orthodox populations, who wished to return under the jurisdiction of Constantinople, reciprocated by severe retaliation from the Venetian colonists.¹⁸⁶ As a result, the Venetian sovereignty on these lands, and more specifically Crete, was established after a long period of military, social and religious conflicts between the conquerors and the subjects; the confessional divergence between the Catholic Venetians and the Orthodox Cretans prevented any attempt or initiative for de-escalation, even more for a mutual conciliation.

In matters of religion, Venice proceeded during the early phase of her dominion in Crete to a generally strict and intransigent policy in order to deal with the religious

¹⁸⁴ John Laursen, Cary Nederman (eds.): *Beyond the Persecuting Society: Religious Toleration before the Enlightenment*. University of Pennsylvania Press. Philadelphia 1998; Jerry Bentley: *Old World Encounters: Cross-Cultural Contacts and Exchanges in Pre-Modern Times*. Oxford University Press. New York 1993.

¹⁸⁵ For a detailed study, see Kaklamanis: *Κρητική ποίηση*, p. 77-172.

¹⁸⁶ Margit Mersch: “Churches as *Shared Spaces* of Latin and Orthodox Christians in the Eastern Mediterranean (14th to 15th cent.)”. In: Georg Christ Stefan Burkhardt, Roberto Zaugg et al. (eds.): *Union in Separation: Trading Diasporas in the Eastern Mediterranean (1200–1700)*. Springer. Heidelberg 2014), p. 498-524.

needs of her subjects.¹⁸⁷ Among the relevant measures the Republic recognized the autonomy of the Orthodox and allowed the flock and clergy to exercise their religious duties according to the Orthodox rite. Furthermore, the Venetians recognized the right to the Cretan prelates to celebrate holidays and organize processions, while the operation and the construction of Orthodox churches and monasteries were also tolerated by the authorities. Nevertheless, the Cretans were deprived of their former Orthodox senior ecclesiastical hierarchy. The latter included exclusively Catholic clergymen, the Archbishop and nine suffragan bishops, while any intervention or jurisdiction by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople was prohibited.¹⁸⁸ In addition, the Venetian calendar replaced the until then Julian calendar, an initiative that introduced in Crete a series of Catholic feasts and celebrations of notable events from the Venetian history [*Corpus Domini*, *Giovedì Grasso*, the *palio*, the anniversary of the Battle of Lepanto (7. October 1571) and the feast day of Saint Mark, patron saint of Venice, on 25. April]. Finally, the Orthodox clergy were obliged to formally pay their respects to the Pope and the Latin Archbishop of Candia three times a year during the official celebrations of the *Serenissima*.¹⁸⁹

The historical point of intersection that inaugurated a phase of gradual, nevertheless radical, changes in the socio-religious reality in the *Regno di Candia* was the Fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans in 1453; from that moment on, the conditions and priorities in the Venetian State changed course, a situation that brought numerous reconsiderations and revisions in the internal and external policies of the Republic. After four Ottoman-Venetian Wars (1463–1573), the *Serenissima* was ready to adjust her ambitions and abilities under the need of securing her interests in the Eastern Mediterranean and protecting her colonies in the *Stato da Màr*. In this context and

¹⁸⁷ Benjamin Arbel: “Roman Catholics and Greek Orthodox in the Early Modern Venetian State”. In: Nili Cohen, Andrea Heldrich (eds.): *The Three Religions, Interdisciplinary Conference of Tel Aviv University and Munich University*. Herbert Utz Verlag. Munich 2002, p. 73-86.

¹⁸⁸ Maria Chaireti: «Νέα στοιχεία περί της χειροτονίας ορθοδόξων ιερέων Κρήτης επί Βενετοκρατίας». In: *Πεπραγμένα του Γ' Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου*. Vol. 3. Athens 1974, p. 333-341.

¹⁸⁹ Romina Tsakiri: “L’istituzione della cessione dei monasteri ortodossi nella Creta dei secoli XVI e XVII ed il suo contributo alle attività economiche degli ambienti circostanti”. In: Francesco Ammannati (ed.): *Religione e Istituzioni Religiose nell’Economia Europea. 1000–1800: Atti della Quarantatreesima Settimana di Studi (8–12 Maggio 2011)*. Firenze University Press. Florence 2012, p. 511-527.

observing the expansive Ottoman Empire rapidly conquering her territories, the Venetian governments proceeded to a gradual change of policies and politics towards the social, educational and religious needs of the local population. Mainly after the Ottoman occupation of Cyprus in 1571 and with Venetians and Cretans comprehending that Crete would be the next target the Sultan would turn to, they both were activated in search of a relatively harmonious coexistence and effective cooperation between the authority and the subjects.

As a result, Venice adopted a more liberal and tolerant attitude towards the Orthodox, aiming to achieve the gradual but permanent mitigation of confessional conflicts, and in a lesser degree differences. In this context, the repressive until then intervention of the Latin Archdiocese of Crete against the local Orthodox clergy was discreetly abandoned, at least as the official policy. Concerned to create and maintain a peaceful or at least not divisive climate between Orthodox and Catholics in the island, the two parties learnt to cooperate constructively for their common goal. Internal tensions, mainly of religious and confessional nature, certainly still existed, with incidents of Catholic clergymen attempting to prevent or inconvenience the Orthodox to exercise their religious duties according to their faith, or with Orthodox prelates defying or refusing to recognize the official authority of the Latin Archbishop over them, to disturb this unofficial “confessional truce” in the *Regno di Candia*. Thus, during the late phase of the Venetian dominion in Crete, in which the Catholic presence had already decreased significantly due to the conversion of numerous Venetians to the Orthodox faith, the remaining Catholic believers maintained a relatively peaceful coexistence with their Orthodox fellow citizens. Venetians often attended the Orthodox liturgy, gave oblations to Orthodox priests and received sacraments according to the Orthodox rite; at the same time, they allowed the Cretans to attend their Catholic services, while in some certain points the two confessional communities even shared a common church, either with the same or with two different altars. Therefore, cases of joint processions and litanies, the veneration of common icons, the worship of common saints, the use of Greek and Latin in religious ceremonies and the common celebration of both Catholic and Orthodox feasts constituted a tangible reality.¹⁹⁰ Nevertheless, it is significant to

¹⁹⁰ Aspasia Papadaki: *Θρησκευτικές και κοσμικές τελετές στη βενετοκρατούμενη Κρήτη*. Νέα Χριστιανική Κρήτη. Rethymno 1995, p. 27-29; Aspasia Papadaki: «Η συνύπαρξη των δύο

clarify that, despite the advanced harmony between Catholics and Orthodox in late Venetian Crete, the Republic continued until the end to recognize the Latin Church as the only official and legitimate ecclesiastical authority in the island. All the aforementioned initiatives were considered focal points for the convergence of spiritual sentiments between the Orthodox and Catholics of Crete, in an attempt of both parties to steadily experience a sincere coexistence, to establish confessional tolerance, to find common points of contact and mutual conciliation in order to promote the narrative of a community not of two confessions but of one religion. A genuine and vigorous member of this environment, Gerasimos Vlachos formed his identity as a clergyman and scholar under the strong awareness of the historical necessity of his time, which required the constant conciliation of all members of the Kingdom, a coexistence that had to be secured and preserved in every way and no matter what.

In this context, the present chapter aims to develop an approach to Gerasimos Vlachos' identity as a conscious subject of the Venetian Republic, a genuine citizen of the *Serenissima*. The structure of the subject is based on the initiatives the Cretan prelate undertook during the first phase of the War of Candia both during the period he resided inside the besieged city and after his resettlement in Venice. Through the study and interpretation of a corpus of writings (ecclesiastical sermons, brief responses, consulting treatises and praising entreaties), the following aspects are to be studied and interpreted: i. his preaching activity in warring Candia as a means to promote the supremacy of the Venetian military forces and the restoration of the Republic's authority on the island; ii. his contacts and conciliatory approaches to representatives of the Venetian political regime in occasion of theological discussions between Orthodox and Catholics; iii. his reaction as an Orthodox clergyman to the missionary activity of Jesuit monks in the Aegean Archipelagos and the relation between pragmatic and political priorities and the concept of religious-confessional integrity; iv. his diplomatic role in the *Serenissima's*

δογμάτων και η διαμάχη για τον ναό του Σωτήρα στην Ιεράπετρα (1626-1627)». In: Ψηφίδες. Μελέτες Ιστορίας, Αρχαιολογίας και Τέχνης στη μνήμη της Στέλλας Παπαδάκη-Oekland. Heraklion 2009, p. 229-230. For the phenomenon of the gradual "hellenization" of numerous Latins in Crete during the first half of the 17th century, indicative are the contemporary reports to the Vatican by the bishop of Rethymno Gian Francesco Gozzadini (1641), and the Archbishops of Candia Leonardo Mocenigo (1637) and Giovanni Querini (1659); see Setton: *Venice, Austria and the Turks*, p. 134-135.

game of alliances through his entreaty to the Tsardom of Russia and the issue of the common faith in the service of politics.

2.2. Preaching piety and freedom in besieged Candia: A promoter of Venetian authority

The turbulent years of wartime in Crete during the Ottoman invasion gradually but rapidly exhausted the local population, both the Cretans and the Venetians. The continuous battles in the interland and after 1648 outside the walls of Candia had forced its residents to a daily arduous struggle for their survival; apart from the established reality of lack of supplies, the once wealthy and honored noblemen and landlords were eventually deprived of their large fortunes and realty, now facing deprivation and poverty. With a considerable part of the locals, mainly in the interland of Crete, to be either forced to submit to their new ruler, or consciously changing side due to their repulsion against the Venetians, the so-called “Latins”, the clergy of the urban centers, both Orthodox and Catholic, focused exclusively on an intense pastoral and preaching activity in the context of moral judgement and admonition of a misguided and timid flock. In addition to their other duties and initiatives for the defense of besieged Candia and the support of the Venetian authority, sometimes by their pen and others by their sword, warring Orthodox ecclesiastics proceeded to a tireless and fervent preaching inside and outside the walls of the city. Through their words and sermons on the Holy Gospel, prelates such as Aloisios Ambrosios Gradenigos, Bartholomeos Syropoulos and Gerasimos Vlachos struggled to strengthen their compatriots’ morale and urge them to resist “an infidel enemy in the name of Christ”.

Although it could be considered just a confined sample of his voluminous homiletic production during the siege of Candia, the collection of forty-five sermons composed by Gerasimos Vlachos during the period October 1649 – May 1650, and now preserved in the unique codex BAR ms. gr. 889 of the Library of the Romanian Academy in Bucharest, is indeed an indicative evidence of the reasons, the content, the style and the expectations of the Cretan prelate during his preaching activity in the warring environment of his homeland. As far as the causes of his preaching initiatives are concerned, they are defined in clarity firstly in sermon no. 10 (16. December 1649: On Sunday of the Forefathers). More specifically, Vlachos stated that his natural

eloquence and his preaching skill were divinely granted to him and, since he was not ungrateful, he used his abilities to obey God's will and lead his Christian compatriots to moral revival and natural freedom through rebuke and admonition. At the same time, the preacher did not avoid to harshly criticize his flock for their indifference towards his didactic sermons, their indulgence in his labors and their refusal to give up their sinful lives and passive fear:

“Indeed, I did not fail in any necessary time, impeded by myself and others, to invite you to the Sunday Supper [mean. the Mass], without any expenses from you, without knowing anything good from you, but only for the love of God. [...] But do not think that I preach the Gospel in this place for honor, since it is known that God taught it to me, or for profit, since you never gave me gifts, or for you, since you do not listen to me, or for any other purpose since my aim all along was for the love of God. I preach the Gospel as ordered by this Crucified Jesus, for the duty of our illustrious authority Christ the giver of life, from the authority who grants honors. I preach the Gospel for your control in this moment of Judgement, when you do not listen to my words, you do not think of my evangelical toils, and the sweats of my teaching.”

«πούρι δὲν ἔλειψα εἰς πάσα καιρὸν ἀρμόδιον ἀπὸ λόγου μου κινημένος καὶ ἀπὸ ἄλλους νὰ σᾶς κράζω εἰς τὸν κυριακὸν δεῖπνον δίχως δικὸ σας ἔξοδον, δίχως νὰ ἐγνωρίζω τίποτας ἀπὸ ἐσᾶς καλόν, μὰ μόνο διὰ τὴν ἀγάπην Θεοῦ. [...] Μὰ ὧ οἶμι, μὴν λογιάζετε πὼς κηρύττω τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον εἰς τοῦτον τὸν τόπον διὰ τιμὴν διότι γνωριστὸν εἶναι πὼς ὁ Θεὸς μοῦ τὸ ἐδίδαξεν, μήτε διὰ κέρδος διατὶ ποτὲ δὲ μοῦ ἐδώκατε χάρισμα, μήτε διὰ λόγου σας διατὶ δὲν μοῦ ἀκούετε, μήτε διὰ ἄλλον σκοπὸν διατὶ τὸ τέλος μου ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἦτον διὰ ἀγάπην Θεοῦ. Κηρύσσω τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον διὰ πρόσταγμα ὅπου ἔχω ἀπὸ τὸν ἐσταυρωμένον τοῦτον Ἰησοῦ, διὰ χρέος τῆς ἐκλαμπροτάτης μας Αὐθεντίας ἀπὸ τὸν Χριστὸν ὅπου δίδει τὴν ζωὴν, ἀπὸ τὴν Αὐθεντίαν ὅπου χαρίζει τιμές. Κηρύσσω τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον διὰ ἔλεγχον ἐδικόν σας ἐν ὥρᾳ κρίσεως ὅπου τὰ λόγια μου δὲν ἀκούετε, δὲν λογιάζετε τοὺς εὐαγγελικοὺς κόπους, μήτε τοὺς ἰδρώτας τῶν διδασκομένων.»¹⁹¹

It becomes clear from his aforementioned words that Vlachos first and foremost followed a personal need to fulfill his duty as a Cretan and as a clergyman.

The aforementioned selfness, simplicity and fervent loyalty to Orthodox preaching would be revealed almost two and a half decades later (1675), in his *Didaskalia*, the manual on ecclesiastical homiletic that Vlachos composed in Corfu. In his introduction the then elderly abbot of Paleopolis proceeded to an indicative definition of the Orthodox sermon:

“Just as the iron whets the iron, so the Word of God sharpens the souls through the *didaches*. And just as the body is nourished by bread, so the souls are supported by the

¹⁹¹ Paradoulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 201-202. Of similar content is an excerpt from sermon 43 (14. April 1650: On the Resurrection): “I worked as the laborer in the vineyard of our Lord, doing what I could with a lot of willingness and love” («ἔκαμα τὸν ἐργάτην εἰς τὸν ἀμπελῶνα τοῦ Κυρίου καὶ τὸ δυνατόν με πολλὴν προθυμίαν καὶ με ἀγάπην»); Paradoulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 193.

Divine Word. And just as doctors treat the wounds of the body with medicine, so the clergymen heal the passions of the souls with the sacred teachings.”

«Ὡςπερ γὰρ ὁ σίδηρος σίδηρον ὀζύνει, οὕτω καὶ ὁ Λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ διὰ τῶν διδασκῶν τὰς ψυχὰς ἀκονᾷ· καὶ ὥςπερ ἄρτῳ μὲν σῶμα τρέφεται οὕτω καὶ λόγῳ θείῳ ψυχὰι στηρίζονται· καὶ ὥςπερ οἱ ἱατροὶ τοῖς φαρμάκοις τὰ τραύματα τοῦ σώματος θεραπεύουσιν, οὕτω καὶ οἱ ἱεροφάντες τὰ πάθη τῶν ψυχῶν ταῖς ἱεραῖς τῶν διδασκῶν ἱατρεύουσιν.»¹⁹²

Indeed, in the fifth chapter of his treatise (“On the way the thesis is conceived in the *didaches*”) the author advised his reader to speak simply, in the easiest proof and with the most drastic and undeniable arguments. Therefore, he noted that both John the Baptist and Christ avoided the eloquent, complex word or speaking with a multitude of rhetorical schemes that only aimed to attract the attention of their listeners, “similar to the deeds of the Sirens, of the swans and of the cicadas”; instead, they spoke with emotion and their word was easily understood but at the same time utterly beneficial for the ordinary people. Moreover, in the end of his manual, the Cretan prelate proceeded to a firm criticism against those preachers who tended to deal in their sermons with the Gospel in total, by using a general view of its content and meanings. Vlachos accused the latter for acting weakly and arguing in vain, since it was not possible for a single sermon to include and interpret correctly and completely the multitude of meanings and teachings found in the Holy Gospel. The experienced Cretan clergyman added that such kind of management of the evangelical texts limited the preacher to a monotonous biblical exegesis and deprived his word from the rhetorical figures, the descriptive methods, the allegories and the rest expressive means necessary to the composition of a sermon. Therefore, the speaker failed to gain reputation and to bring delight and pleasure to his flock; on the contrary, “only useless labor is caused to him and disgust and obfuscation to his audience”. Addressing to the teachers of the sacred preaching, Vlachos urged them not to train their students in difficult and complex systems of argumentation aiming to fame and personal benefit; those preaching the word of the Gospel needed to treat the Holy Scriptures “not as rhetoricians but as grammarians, due to the humility of the saying and the simplicity of the meaning”.¹⁹³

¹⁹² Kourkoulas: *Ομιλητική*, p. 8-9.

¹⁹³ Kourkoulas: *Ομιλητική*, p. 25-26, 51-52. In his thanksgiving speech towards the Confraternity of Panaghia Trimartiri, the Cretan prelate stated the following:

“I do not know tricks; for one thing I can assure you, masters, and that is that I know how to comply to everyone.”

Naturally, in his sermons the Cretan prelate did not avoid to often address his audience with kindness and sympathy, mainly while he urged them to repent for their sins, to despise their cowardice, to seek piety and humility. For example, in his thanksgiving speech towards the Confraternity of the monastery of Panaghia Trimartiri (24. February 1650) and in his final sermon of Lent, no. 43 (14. April 1650: On the Resurrection of our Lord), he humbly spoke the following:

“I urge you, masters, since you have accepted me as your own and as your worker, to honor me by coming to your church according to the ancient custom, for the glory of our Virgin who protects us.” [...] “I thank you, masters, for your love. May God our Lord gives you your freedom. I offer you as a remembrance the joy of the sermons and farewell. And outright do the following in my memory: join the Liturgy every day.”

«Παρακαλῶ τὴν ἀφενδίαν σας ἐπειδὴ καὶ μὲ ἐπήρατε ὡς ἐδικόν σας διὰ δουλευτή σας, νὰ μὲ τιμήσετε μὲ τὸ νὰ ἔρχεστε εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν σας κατὰ τὸ πρὸ πάλαι ἔθος διὰ δόξαν τῆς Παρθένου ὅπου μᾶς σκέπει.» [...] «Εὐχαριστῶ τῆς ἀφεντίας σας εἰς τὴν ἀγάπην. Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς νὰ σᾶς δώσει ἐλευθερίαν. Αἰφύνη σας διὰ ἐνθύμησιν τῶν διδασκῶν τὴν χαρὰν καὶ χαίρεται. Καὶ εὐθὺς τοῦτο ποιῆτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν νὰ ἔρχεσθε εἰς τὴν Λειτουργίαν κάθε ἡμέραν.»¹⁹⁴

Nevertheless, this kindness and humility that characterized the previous cases should be viewed as an exception to the majority of the sermons recorded in the Bucharest codex. Under the urgent need for spiritual and practical awakening of the besieged, the experienced preacher chose to confront his audience with rigor, often approaching the limits of ferocity. Probably the most notable case of this rhetorical asperity is an excerpt from the already mentioned sermon no. 10 (16. December 1649: On Sunday of the Forefathers), in which Vlachos indignantly criticized his flock for unwillingness to repent and ingratitude towards God and towards himself as a preacher of the Holy Gospel:

“[Christ] sent His servant, me, the humble servant, the contemptible, the unworthy, the sinful, but worthy means of your salvation. He calls you, He just calls you to His Divine Supper; you ungrateful, why don’t you come? Why did you forget – and you still do – my sweats, my toils and you do not repent, and you do not seek for salvation? You ungrateful! Ungrateful, since you know neither the grace of God, nor the suitable time of your salvation.”

«Ἀπέστειλε [ὁ Χριστὸς] τὸν δοῦλον αὐτοῦ, ἐμένα, τὸν ταπεινὸν δοῦλον ἀχρεῖον, ἀνάξιον, ἀμαρτωλόν, μὰ ἄξιον ὄργανον τῆς σωτηρίας σας. Καλεῖ σας πούρι μόνο σᾶς καλεῖ εἰς τὸν δεῖπνον τὸν θεῖον. Ὡ ἀχάριστοι! Διὰ τί δὲν ἔρχεσθε; Διὰ τί ἐξελησμονήσατε καὶ

ἐγὼ δὲν κατέχω τζεριμόνιες· μόνον εἰς τοῦτο βεβαιῶνω τὴν ἀφενδίαν σας πὼς κατέχω ὁλονῶν νὰ ὑποτάσσομαι;» Paradooulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 207.

¹⁹⁴ Paradooulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 192, 207.

ξελησμονᾶτε τοὺς ἰδρώτας μου, τοὺς κόπους μου καὶ δὲν μετανοεῖτε εἰς τὸν Χριστόν καὶ δὲν βάνετε στὸν νοῦ σας σωτηρίαν; Ἀχάριστοι! Ἀχάριστοι! ὅπου δὲν γνωρίζετε τὴν χάριν τοῦ Θεοῦ, μήτε τὸν καιρὸν τὸν ἀρμόδιον τῆς σωτηρίας σας.»¹⁹⁵

Following a strict and ferocious attitude towards his listeners, Vlachos proceeded to an intense and rigorous criticism against them, accusing them of cowardice, remorselessness, insensitivity and ingratitude, all consequences of their sinful life. As a result, it was sin, according to the Cretan preacher, that had weakened his compatriots in their struggle against the Ottoman armies, making them unwilling to turn to God for mercy and salvation; as he wrote in sermon no. 23 (8. March 1650: On the second Friday of Fast):

“God gives us the illnesses so that we see Him, but we – I do not know – are under the sickness of frenzy due to our concerns of the Turks, which is similar to a famine since it is a fatal war; similar to a blade, since it is viewed as a sword; similar to arthritis since we cannot walk, being trapped inside [mean. the city]. But don’t we see God? A serious disease [is for us] that we do not open our eyes; [...] You sick people, half-dead by the deceitful poison of the snakes, the Turks, let us open our eyes and let us run to the mystical snake, God, in order to be healed.”

«Δίδει ὁ Θεὸς τὶς ἀρρώστιες διὰ τὸν θωροῦμεν, μὰ ἐμεῖς, δὲν κατέχω, ἔχομεν ἀρρώστιαν φρενίτιδα ἀπὸ τὶς ἔγνοιες τῶν Τουρκῶν, ἰσολοίμικον διατὶ εἶναι πόλεμος θανατερός, σπάντα διατὶ μὲ σπαθὶ θωρεῖται, ποδάγρα διατὶ δὲν ἐμποροῦμε νὰ περιπατήσωμεν εὕρισκόμενοι μέσα περιφραγμένοι. Ὅμως δὲν θωροῦμεν τὸν Θεόν; Μεγάλῃ ἀρρώστια νὰ μὴν ἀνοίγωμεν τὰ ἀμμάτιά μας. [...] Ὁ ἄνθρωποι ἄρρωστοι, ἡμιθανεῖς ἀπὸ τὸ δολερὸν φαρμάκι τῶν ὄφεων Τουρκῶν, ἃς ἀνοίξωμεν τὰ ἀμμάτιά μας καὶ ἃς τρέξωμεν εἰς τὸν μυστικὸν ὄφιν, τὸν Θεὸν διὰ τὸν ἰατρευθοῦμε.»¹⁹⁶

By presenting the picture of snakes attacking their victim with poison, the preacher defined the illness tormenting the besieged as frenzy of terror, caused by the continual attacks of the Turks. This warlike rhetoric is also present in Vlachos’ Italian encomium to the Venetian *Capitano Generale da Màr* Alvise Mocenigo, dated 25. November 1649, in which he characterized the invaders of his homeland as births “of the arid land of their impiety and products of the water of their own disorderly appetites [...] proud sons of Lucifer, the mystical Aeolus of the Ottomans”.¹⁹⁷ With his perception of the invaders as the *other*, the preacher aimed to vividly highlight his belief on the wicked nature and demonic

¹⁹⁵ Paradoulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 201.

¹⁹⁶ Paradoulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 183.

¹⁹⁷ “*Fumose essalationi (Illustrissimi et Eccellentissimi Signori) fumose (dico) essalationi sono li vasti delli infideli pensieri, nati dall’arida terra della di loro impietà, et prodotti dalle aque delli suoi disordinatissimi appetiti, i quali pervenuti verso la prima regione dell’aria serena della christiana pietà, subito li superbi figli di Lucifero mistico Eolo di Ottomani*”; see Olar, “Vlachos”, p. 264.

origin of the enemies of Christianity, in an attempt to activate and morally revive the defenders of Candia to fight with bravery “*il perfido Agareno*”. Vlachos’ dramatic call towards his flock to be extricated by their sickness becomes even more direct in sermon no. 20 (3. March 1650: On the first Sunday of Fast):

“And also, does Christ see us Cretans, is He watching us, is He turning his eyes upon us? Yes! Then why don’t we become strong like him but, being helpless, we are restricted like women and children by the Turks? [...] Cretan men, here God is watching us in a view of justice, that is why we are so subjugated. Let us repent so that He accepts us.”

*«Καὶ τάχα καὶ ἐμᾶς τοὺς Κρητικοὺς θεωρεῖ μας ὁ Χριστός; βλέπει μας, γυρίζει τὰ ὄμματα πρὸς ἡμᾶς; ναῖσκε· καὶ διατὶ δὲν γινώμεθα ὅμοιοί του δυνατοὶ μὰ ἀνήμποροι ὥστε ὅπου ὡς γυναῖκες καὶ παιδιὰ οἱ Τοῦρκοι περικεκλησμένους μᾶς ἔχουσι; [...] Ὡ ἄνδρες Κρήτες, ἰδοὺ ὁ Κύριος μᾶς βλέπει μὲ θεωρίαν δικαιοσύνης, διὰ τοῦτο εἴμεθα ἔτσι καταδασμασμένοι· ἃς κάμομεν μετάνοιαν νὰ μᾶς ἀποδεχθεῖ.»*¹⁹⁸

Among Vlachos’ war sermons, there are a few cases in which the rhetorical style became particularly sharp and the preacher extremely critical towards his flock, being unable to handle the piteous situation in which his homeland and his compatriots had come under. His rhetorical rigor turned into sincere indignation in the already mentioned sermon no. 10 (16. December 1649: On Sunday of the Forefathers). In an elaborate way, the preacher began his speech by likening the kingdom of heaven with an exquisite supper, in which God was the host, men were the guests and the preachers of the Holy Gospel were the servants. He then accused his fellow Cretans of ingratitude both towards God and the clergymen, the so-called “workers of Divine Providence”; in a style that revealed his intense dissatisfaction, the preacher addressed his audience in the following words:

“Alas! Christians, why do you show so much ingratitude to your Lord? He comes on His own and prepares supper, your salvation, through a multitude of gifts (immortality, joy, peace and eternity). But you do not respond to his call, you ingratitude! *Ingrati!* On the contrary, you forget! He sends His servants to invite you; His servants are the clergymen with the prayers and the liturgies. You do not obey the spiritual fathers and you are not soothed through correction. [You do not obey] the preachers of the Holy Gospel, the evangelical workers, those who in countless sweats serve the preaching of the Gospel and invite you with mercy, with love, with control, with ferocity. But nothing!”

«Ὡ οἱμοὶ χριστιανοί, διατὶ τόσῃ ἀχαριστίαν δείχνετε εἰς τὸν δεσπότην; Μοναχὸς του ἔρχεται καὶ παρασκευάζει δεῖπνον τὴν σωτηρίαν σας μὲ τόσα χαρίσματα ἀθανασίας, χαρὰς, εἰρήνης καὶ παντοτινότητος. Καὶ δὲν ἔρχεσθε εἰς τὸ κάλεσμά του, ἀχάριστοι! ἰνγράτι! μὰ ξελησμονᾶτε. Πέμπει τοὺς δούλους καὶ καλοῦσι σας. Δοῦλοι του οἱ ἱερεῖς του

¹⁹⁸ Paradoulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 184.

μὲ τὶς προσευχὰς καὶ ἀκολουθίας. Δὲν ὑπακούετε τοὺς πνευματικοὺς πατέρες μὲ τὴν διόρθωσιν καὶ δὲν καταπραΰνεσθε· τοὺς εὐαγγελικοὺς κήρυκας, τοὺς ἐργάτες τοὺς εὐαγγελικοὺς, τοὺς δουλεύοντες μὲ ἰδρώτας ἀμετρήτους εἰς τὸ εὐαγγελικὸν κήρυγμα καὶ καλοῦσι σας μὲ εὐσπλαγνίαν, μὲ ἀγάπην, μὲ ἔλεγχον, μὲ ἀγριότητα, καὶ οὐδέν!»¹⁹⁹

Those intense accusations were completed with a desperate urge from the speaker, in an attempt to remind his audience of the suffering and deprivation they had experienced until then within the besieged city, and of the disastrous consequences brought to them by the relentless war, these were famine, thirst, diseases and death:

“Cretans, I address to you. What are you doing? Christ is ready to offer you the supper of freedom. He called on you with famine, thirst, death, a formidable, difficult and terrible war against the Turks; but you failed to listen.”

«Ὡ Κρητικοί! γυρίζω πρὸς ἐσᾶς. Τί κάμνετε; Ὁ Χριστὸς εἶναι παρασκευασμένος νὰ σᾶς δώσῃ δεῖπνον τῆς ἐλευθερίας. Ἐκραζέ σας μὲ πείνα, δίψα, θανατικόν, πόλεμον φοβερὸν τούρκικον, δύσκολον καὶ τρομερόν· δὲν ἀκούσατε.»²⁰⁰

In fact, Gerasimos Vlachos shared the common concern found in the island's Venetian authorities and their local supporters that any upheaval of the Orthodox population of besieged Candia, deriving either from fear for the Turks or odium against the “Latins”, would endanger their resistance against the intruders, thereby the preservation of the Venetian dominion on the island.

With the accusations of sin, moral decline, and ingratitude hanging over their heads, the Cretans, in addition to sick and incapable, were compared and identified by Vlachos as a contemporary version of the Prodigal Son, deriving from the biblical parable of Christ. In sermon no. 34 (28. March 1650: On the fifth Friday of the Fast) he proceeded to a detailed interpretation of the parable based on his contemporary reality:

“Indeed, we are the prodigal sons, since we took from Christ our share of the inheritance (our free will), we departed to a sinful land, we wasted ourselves (our reason, emotion, desire) to the evils, we experienced the famine (our love for riches), we approached a cunning citizen (the world and its vanity), we were deprived of our clothes (our virtue), our ring (the Christian Republic), our shoes (the evangelical doctrines), we ended up raising swines (the pleasures), unable to satiate with the pods (the wealth we used to have). Therefore, we got deprived of everything, both joy and wealth, being enclosed to glory and fantasy. But, Cretan, you too come to your senses; raise from sin; abandon the citizen, the Devil; do not stand among the swines, the pleasures; but return

¹⁹⁹ Paradoulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 201.

²⁰⁰ Paradoulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 201. For an approach to the technique of invoking the fear of man for the salvation of his soul see Wietse De Boer: *The Conquest of the Soul. Confession, Discipline and Public Order in Counter-Reformation Milan*. Brill. Leiden, Boston, Cologne 2001.

resurrected to your father, Christ, who will offer you the ancient Justice through repentance.”

«Καὶ ὄντως ἄσσωτοι υἱοὶ ἡμεῖς, ἐπειδὴ καὶ ἐπήραμε ἀπὸ τὸν Χριστὸν τὴν κληρονομίαν μας τὸ αὐτεξούσιον, ἀπεδημήσαμεν εἰς χώραν μακρὰν εἰς τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, ἔδαπανήσαμεν τὸν ἑαυτὸν μας τὸ λογικόν, τὸ θυμικὸν καὶ τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν, εἰς τὰ κακά, ἔγινε λιμὸς εἰς ἐμᾶς τῆς φιλοπλουτίας, ἐσιμώσαμεν ἐνὸς πονηροῦ πολίτου τοῦ κόσμου καὶ τῆς ματαιότητός του, ἐχάσαμεν τὴν στολὴν μας τὴν ἀρετὴν, τὸ δακτυλίδι τὴν χριστιανικὴν πολιτείαν, τὰ ὑποδήματα τὰς εὐαγγελικὰς βουλάς, ἐκατεστάθημεν βόσκειν χοίρους τὰς ἡδονὰς καὶ μὴ χορτάζεσθε τῶν κερατίων εἰς τὸν πλοῦτον ὅπου εἴχαμεν. Διὰ τοῦτο ἡστερήθημεν τῶν πάντων, καὶ τῆς χαρᾶς καὶ τοῦ πλούτου, τῆς δόξης καὶ τῆς φαντασίας καὶ περισφαλισμένοι. Ἀλλ’ ὦ Κρητικέ, ἔλα εἰς τὸν ἑαυτὸν σου καὶ ἐσύ, σηκώσου ἀπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, ἄφησε τὸν πολίτην διάβολον, μὴ στέκεις εἰς τοὺς χοίρους εἰς τὰς ἡδονάς, μὰ ἀναστὰς ἔλα εἰς τὸν πατέρα τὸν Χριστὸν διὰ μετάνοια νὰ σοῦ δώσει τὴν ἀρχαίαν δικαιοσύνην.»²⁰¹

With this admittedly successful identification of the biblical prodigal son with the sinful Cretan defenders of Candia, the preacher invited the listeners to leave the path of sin and to find the necessary courage through repentance in order to face the enemies of their faith and freedom. The general rhetoric emerging from his sermons reveals Gerasimos Vlachos’ personal perception and interpretation of the moral decline of his contemporary Christian. Moreover, through his public speech he attempted to present the concept of war and the forthcoming defeat and disaster as a pure action of Divine Judgement, a punishment for the sinful life of the Cretans. Yet his later initiatives in favor of the *Serenissima* in the context of the latter’s search of allies compose Vlachos’ image as an utterly cautious observer and interpreter of the historical panorama of his time, the radical political and religious changes in the European continent, along with the continuously unstable balances in the Eastern Mediterranean region during the second half of the 17th century. Therefore, he could not but detect and understand the practical reasons and purposes of the war in his homeland, along with a multitude of drastic actions his compatriots and the authorities should immediately take in order to claim victory and repel the Ottoman peril.

This constant and severe moral control and firm criticism against his compatriots seem that at some point caused annoyance and disapproval from a part of Vlachos’ audience in besieged Candia. Indeed, in his closing sermon of Lent, no. 43 (14. April 1650: On the Resurrection of our Lord), the preacher felt the need to justify his behavior and rhetorical style, submitting to his own innate tendency to humility. More

²⁰¹ Paradoulakis: «Απηχίσεις», p. 185.

specifically, he confronted the negative reactions of his flock, which he defined as improper and preposterous; as he firmly stated:

“if someone was annoyed by my words, he does not think straight, since here the virtues are praised, the vices are inveighed, and therefore the virtuous ones are praised and the vicious are inveighed. When I praise the virtuous ones, each one shall rejoice; when I inveigh the vicious ones, the vicious shall rue, and first of all me. That is why I come up here [mean. the pulpit], that is why I labor. As God as my witness, I never speak aiming to vituperate anyone.”

«ἂν τινὰς ἐσκανδαλίσθη εἰς λόγον ὅπου νὰ εἶπα, δὲν ἔχει λογαριασμόν, διατὶ ἐδῶ ἐπαινοῦνται αἱ ἀρετές, ψέγονται τὰ κακὰ καὶ οἱ ἐνάρετοι ἐπαινοῦνται καὶ οἱ κακοὶ ψέγονται· ὅταν ἐπαινῶ τοὺς ἐναρέτους καθ' ἑνας ἅς χαίρεται, ὅταν ψέγω τοὺς κακοὺς ἅς λυποῦνται οἱ κακοὶ καὶ πρῶτος ἐγώ. Διὰ τοῦτο ἀνεβαίνω ἐδῶ καὶ διὰ τοῦτο κοπιᾶζω· μάρτυς Κύριος ποτὲ δὲν ὁμιλῶ διὰ νὰ ψέξω κανένα.»²⁰²

In the same sermon, he implored for the comprehension of his audience in case his word presented a lack of sympathy. Nevertheless, he defined himself as a steadfast and loyal believer of the Orthodox faith, a profound expert of the doctrines and teachings of the Christian tradition, a responsible and cautious theologian and preacher of the Divine Word.²⁰³

During this early phase of the War of Candia, the horrors of battle, the suffocating conditions of the siege and the increasing agony of an obvious future loss of their actual reality, had tortured the minds, bodies and souls of the Venetians and the Cretans who remained restrained inside Candia. In the eyes of Gerasimos Vlachos, a deeply pious clergyman and a consciously loyal citizen of the *Serenissima*, his world and its meaning was at the threshold of annihilation similar to that of the scriptural Revelation. In fact, in some of his sermons he tried to describe this pessimistic eschatological and dire image of his homeland. Following a long tradition on ecclesiastical rhetoric, which developed both in Orthodox and Catholic frames, Vlachos adorned his public speech in the pulpits of Candia with numerous depictions and personifications of his homeland, Crete, with figures and *loci* from the Scriptures.

²⁰² Paradoulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 192-193.

²⁰³ Also see Paradoulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 193:

“In case the sermons lacked of sympathy, a sin did not occur and will never occur against faith, since the teachings of the Saints do not allow anyone to abstain, and the art of the theology does not forgive the theologians for a sin.”

«Παρακαλῶ ἂν ἔλειψε εἰς τίποτας τὸ συμπάθειον εἰς τὶς διδασχάς, ἁμαρτία δὲν ἔγινε ποτὲ μήτε θέλει γενεῖ εἰς τὴν πίστιν, ἐπειδὴ καὶ αἱ τῶν Ἀγίων διδασκαλίαι δὲν ἀφήνουσι ποτὲ κανένα ν' ἀπέχει καὶ ἡ θεολογικὴ τέχνη δὲν συγχωρᾷ εἰς τοὺς θεολόγους ἁμάρτημα.»

In sermon no. 8 (9. December 1649: On the fourth Sunday of Christmas Lent), the preacher likened Crete to a sick woman, whose weakness had led her to the brink of death. By referring to Aristotle's *De Generatione Animalium*, as well as relevant texts by Origen, Cyril of Alexandria, John Chrysostom, Ambrose and Augustine, he proceeded to a detailed argumentation on the "pitiful" situation of woman, naming her "a woeful thing", and presented God as the only one capable of curing her from her illness.²⁰⁴ In his question on the identity of this sick woman, and after quoting five interpretations (allegorical, anagogical, exegetical, positive, ethical) all based on the sinful nature of woman and deriving from various medieval theological currents, the preacher developed his own interpretation, by linking a so far theoretical and theologically scholastic word to his contemporary reality:

"A sick woman is our miserable homeland, the renowned Crete, a woman for the cowardice she has, sick due to the wars, stooping because in many places she fell."

«Μία γυναίκα ἀρρωστημένη εἶναι ἡ ἀθλία μας πατρίδα, ἡ περιβόητος Κρήτη· γυναίκα διὰ τὴν δειλίαν ὅπου ἔχει, ἄρρωστος διὰ τοὺς πολέμους, συγκύπτουσα ἐπειδὴ καὶ εἰς πολλὰ μέρη ἔπεσε.»²⁰⁵

In his eyes, Crete was presented impoverished due to the catastrophic war, remaining in its majority under non-Christian rule. By referring to his compatriots as paralyzed by cowardice, Vlachos attempted to activate feelings of humility and repentance in the souls of his listeners and urge them to become aware of their relentless fate.

An equally vivid depiction of Crete, not as ominous as the previous but with different purposes was contained in sermon no. 27 (15. March 1650: On the third Friday of Fast). Based on the citation from the *Gospel of Matthew* "He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen" (Matthew, 21:41), Vlachos presented God as the householder of a fine vineyard with a round about, a winepress and a tower, whose husbandmen failed to show gratitude and for that they were expelled. By using a multitude of rhetorical questions, exclamations and

²⁰⁴ Gerasimos Vlachos was born and raised in a time when the position of women still remained extremely undermined in the general socio-political, educational and mainly religious contexts both in Latin Europe and even more in the Ottoman Empire. Being a member of the Orthodox ecclesiastical tradition – which was defined as conservative in its majority – Vlachos could not avoid but to view women, if not as the personification of sin and evil, at least as a creature of physical and mental weakness in comparison to men. Therefore, such an approach to the two sexes, although it cannot have an overtone to modern times, in the 17th century definitely found willing listeners and supporters.

²⁰⁵ Paradoulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 180.

flamboyant invocations to the flock, the preacher proceeded once more to an interpretation of the parable, firstly according to various theological teachings (mystical, allegorical, anagogical, tropological, ethical) from the patristic and early Christian literature (Origen, Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom and Augustine). Afterwards, he once more passed from the theoretical theological approach to his contemporary practical analogy; he defined God as the householder, the island of Crete as the vineyard, the Cretans as the husbandmen, the Venetians as the tower, the local clergy as a linen protective cloth above the vines and the repentance of his compatriots as the fruit of the vineyard.²⁰⁶ The aforementioned comparison revealed the main and established analogies that prevailed and guided Gerasimos Vlachos' thought and perception regarding his own identity as a Cretan and as a prelate, the identity of his compatriots as Christian believers and the Venetian authorities as the means of Divine Providence for the protection and prosperity of Christian life and worship on the island.

Directly related to the preceding case is the last representation of Crete in the sermons of codex BAR ms. gr. 889, detected in the Italian encomium Vlachos composed and dedicated to the Venetian *Capitano Generale da Màr* Alvise Mocenigo. At the beginning of his praise the preacher cited the gradual conquest of Crete by the Turks, accusing them that they invaded illegally the territories of the Republic; violating the peace treaty between the Doge and the Sultan, the Porte turned her war machines against the *Regno di Candia*, which Vlachos illustriously named "Royal Ship of this glorious *Centopoli*". Indeed, in his encomium he presented Crete as a ship sailing in the middle of a storm, but managed to escape oblivion thanks to the prudence, versatility and persistence of its captain. The loss of the town of Chania, due to the "barbarian" Ottoman captains' invasion, was compared to the cracking of the ship mast; the succeeding loss of Rethymnon with the torn sails; the conquest of the forts of the Cretan countryside with the breaking of the ropes, and the continuous onslaught of the Turks outside the walls of Candia with the ruthless water ripples striving to break the hull and sink the ship. Nevertheless, if the ship overcame the danger, this was because it was

²⁰⁶ «Καὶ ἄλλως, οἰκοδεσπότης ὁ Θεός, ἀμπελὼν ἡ Κρήτη, φραγμὸς ἡ τῶν πάντων ἀνάπαυσις, λινὸς ἡ εὐγένεια καὶ ἡ ἀξία τῶν τῆς Ἐκκλησίας, πύργος ἡ πρόνοια τῆς ἐκλαμπροτάτης τῶν Βενετῶν ἐξουσίας, γεωργοὶ ἡμεῖς οἱ Κρητικοί, καρποὶ ὁ σχολασμὸς τῶν σφαλμάτων»; see Paradoulakis: «Ἀπηχήσεις», p. 182.

governed by a ruler who defied the severity of the wind and resisted the hardness of the wave.²⁰⁷

In the same encomium, Vlachos made use of a heavily ominous eschatological rhetoric, based on chapter 12 of the *Book of Revelation*, in which a dragon threatened to kill a woman ready to give birth.²⁰⁸ Following his usual technique of recollecting images and symbols from the Scriptures, he connected the dragon with the Ottoman Empire and the threatened woman with Crete under siege. In the main features of the dragon, he recognized “an unholy enemy” who fought against Candia: huge beyond imagination, red as the fire, with seven heads and ten horns and with its tail dragging the third part of the stars of the sky. According to his words, the Sultan was mercilessly ruling the Earth by having under his control seven wealthy kingdoms with ten great provinces and by having conquered one third of the world with his hordes.²⁰⁹ It is noteworthy, that although the woman of the Apocalypse was commonly interpreted as the Church,²¹⁰ Vlachos chose to connect her with Crete, in order to serve the

²⁰⁷ “*sparsi per l’amplissimo di Nettuno senno delle terre possedute da Principi Christiani non a caso, ma a consiglio, non senza concerto ma con apparati d’ogni machina bellicosa alla regia nave di questa gloriosa Centopoli li confederati con la Serenissima Veneta Signoria come nimici approdano, et agaregiando li barbari capitani troncano il di lei albero la fortissima Citta di Canea, spezzano le velle della fortezza di Retimo, spazzano le corde tutti li Casteli di questo amplissimo Regno, levano occupando l’anchora tutta la Campagna, e finalmente tutti li esserciti amassati et assieme assieme ristreti girano, et rigirano, circondano d’ogni intorno, et assediano questa Metropoli, e con duplicati attachi, e molteplici assalti tentano quella preda del Maometo effettuare*”; see Olar: “Vlachos”, p. 264.

²⁰⁸ “And there appeared another wonder in Heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. / And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. // And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. / And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. / And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth”; see *Book of Revelation* (12: 3-4, 14-16) [King James Version].

²⁰⁹ “*Scorgo nella Sacra Apocalise al capitolo 12o esser stato apparso a San Gioanne uno dragone di spisurata grandezza, di color rosso, di sette teste, di dieci corni, la di cui coda tirava a proprio potere la terza parte delle stele del Cielo. Una regal donna a morte perseguitare, alla quale per liberarsi si concessero doi ale. Ma quel astuto dragone inviato un gran Diluvio d’aqua contro quella Regina ad abbisarla tentava, ma la terra havuta compassione a quella matrona diede agiuto con l’ingiotire di molteplici aque, et così fu quella donna maestosa dal periglio salvata*”; Olar: “Vlachos”, p. 266.

²¹⁰ See Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 97-98. For a systematic overview of the perception of Apocalypse as a means against Islam, see Asterios Argyriou: *Les exégèses grecques de l’Apocalypse à l’époque turque (1453-1821). Esquisse d’une histoire des courants*

argumentation of his encomium. Similar to the woman and her child, who were eventually saved by the celestial powers, so would his homeland find the salvation in the end, thanks to the Divine intervention and the guidance of its Venetian protectors. The preacher concluded this part of the encomium with a brief retrospective in patristic citations in order to describe the preciousness of Crete and how important it was for it to remain under the authority of a Christian force:

“the land had the appearance of Crete; and what a land! Such a land that my Father Basil the Great called it *terram sanctam*, Father Origen invoked it *terram viventium*, glorious John of Damascus named it *nuncupa sanctam terram*.”

“La terra hà havuto compassione di Creta: et quale terra. Quella terra, che il mio Padre Gran Basilio chiama terram sanctam, quella terra, che il Padre Origene invoca terram viventium, quella terra che il glorioso Damasceno nuncupa sanctam terram.”

In an attempt to unite the fate of the place with that of its inhabitants, both Cretans and Venetians, he adorned the land with the main virtues of its Christian defenders:

“This glorious mystical land had the appearance of the vigilances, labors, sweats and devotions of Your Excellency as well as the sufferings, afflictions and disasters of these devout people.”

*“Questa gloriosa mistica terra havuta compassione sì delle vigilie, fatiche, sudori, et divotioni di Vostra Eccellenza come delli patimenti, afflitioni, e disastri di questi divoti popoli.”*²¹¹

Following the common attitude to rhetorical exaggeration that dominated in the oral and written praising literature in Latin Europe and Orthodox East during the early modern centuries, Vlachos adorned Captain Mocenigo with the standard virtues that would characterize a higher officer of the *Serenissima*. Inspired by the ancient mythology of his island, the preacher portrayed Mocenigo as a modern Zeus, Rhadamanthus and Minos, who was defending not just Crete but the whole Venetian Republic “not from the Athenians or the Spartans, who are already our submitted subjects, but against the weapons of the most powerful of the Lords in the world”.²¹² Further models Vlachos used to praise the exemplary devotion of Mocenigo to his duty towards the State and the Christian religion, were taken from the Scriptures, since the officer was

ideologiques au sein du peuple grec asservi. Κρόνος. Thessaloniki 1982.

²¹¹ For the aforementioned two excerpts, see Olar: “Vlachos”, p. 267.

²¹² “*Consolati dunque ò Candia protetta da questo Giove nato à giovarvi, retta da questo Radamante che vi giustifica, et governata da questo Minos, che con armata mano vi diffende non dalli Atheniesi, ò Spartani già nostri sudditti, et soggetti, mà contra le armi del più potente del mondo Signore*”; see Olar: “Vlachos”, p. 264.

presented as another David, Abraham and Joachim, to whom God had given the responsibility to defend Jerusalem and its people, and in whom He would eventually show His favor, due to his virtues, his morality and his piety.²¹³ In the face of the General, the preacher saw indeed a man of duty, a pious Christian, the redeemer of Candia against the constant attacks, machinations and cruelty of the “infidel Turks”.²¹⁴ By highlighting to his audience the values and ideals for which Mocenigo was fighting for (the glory of God, the foundation of religion, the honor of Christianity, the preservation of the sacred virtues and the good morals, the exercise of the prayers and the fulfillment of the Divine Will), the Cretan prelate attempted to directly implant them in the souls of his listeners, Venetians and Cretans, in order to strengthen their military morale.²¹⁵

Starting from the early phase of the war and until the final surrender of Candia on 5. September 1669, Gerasimos Vlachos inextricably connected and depended the freedom of Crete and its inhabitants to the fate of the Venetian Republic. In his encomium, being encouraged by the so far successful defense of Candia and the fact that the siege was therefore temporarily lifted, he glorified God and praised Mocenigo for his *divota pietà* by the following words: “you recovered this city from starvation, plague and war, the people from death, the churches from desecration, and the whole Candia from a desperate slavery”.²¹⁶ This statement of gratitude towards the General is not to be perceived only as an acknowledgment of his determination to defend the city, but also he was viewed as the protector of the Orthodox Cretans in general, who had turned their eyes to the *Serenissima* searching for hope. Thus, in the officer’s heroism Vlachos

²¹³ “È solito Eccellentissimo Dittatore alla eterna di Dio Magestà per solo amore delli suoi Principi dalli pericoli soprastanti li popoli, et la vitta liberare. Così Gierusalemme con tutti li popoli suoi per solo amore del Regio Davide dalle forze potenti del Persiano Monarcha fù liberata. Così per solo amore del Principe Abramo dalle incursioni gravi di popoli innumerabili di Pentapoli si sollevarono. E per solo amore del Principe Gionacha all’essercito poderoso di Mediani fù dato scompiglio, et difesa suprema al popolo di Israele”; see Olar: “Vlachos”, p. 265.

²¹⁴ “Il quale hai Candia difeso dalle onde della turcha superbia, salvata dalli scogli artificiosi delle lor machinate mine, et brechie, et liberata dalle impetuose procelle della di loro crudeltà”; see Olar: “Vlachos”, p. 264.

²¹⁵ “La cui mira è la di Dio gloria, fondamento la religione, fine l’honore della christianità, mezzo le sacre virtù, scopo li buoni costumi, essercitio le divote orationi, et pensiero totale l’effetuatione del divino vollere, causa sola della nostra salvatione si sembra”; see Olar: “Vlachos”, p. 265. For a detailed approach see Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 98-99.

²¹⁶ “ricupero questa Città dalla fame, peste, e guerra, i popoli della morte, le chiese dalla profanatione, et tutta Candia da una disperata schiavitù”; see Olar: “Vlachos”, p. 265.

reflected the power and prestige of the Republic as a political entity. The restoration of the latter's military superiority on the island was promoted as the principal prerequisite for successfully tackling the Ottoman risk; and such a goal would have to become widely known among the local Orthodox population. An example of Vlachos' absolute trust and sincere loyalty to Venice is contained in sermon no. 30 (20. March 1650: On the fourth Wednesday of Fast). Paralleling the parable of the Good Samaritan with his contemporary reality in Crete, he proceeded to an extensive but conceptually perfect comparison in order to reveal through the catalytic role of Venice in eliminating the Ottoman peril:

“Therefore, it is we who met the robbers, we the Cretans; we were going down from Jerusalem, that is virtue, to Jericho, that is sin; we fell among robbers, the Turks; they stripped us by taking our belongings, they brought us wounds of fear and captivity; we were seen by a priest and a Levite, these are all the Christian princes; and they passed by and only this imaginable Samaritan, Jesus, saw us; came towards us; healed us; brought us to the inn host, that is the Most Serene Venetian Prince, by strengthening and invigorating him; He gave him two denarii, the withdrawal of the Turks firstly due to fear and secondly due to the shoot-out.”

«Καὶ οὕτως ἡμεῖς εἴμεθα ὁποῦ ἐσυναντήσαμεν εἰς τοὺς ληστές, ἡμεῖς οἱ Κρητικοὶ ὁποῦ ἐκατεβαίναμεν ἀπὸ τὴν Ἱερουσαλὴμ τὴν ἀρετὴν εἰς τὴν Ἱερὶχὼ τὴν ἀμαρτίαν, ἐπέσαμεν εἰς ληστίδες τοὺς Τούρκους, ἐγδύσασί μας παίρνοντάς μας τὸ πρᾶγμα μας, ἐφέρασί μας πληγὰς φόβου καὶ αἰχμαλωσίας, εἶδε μας ἱερεὺς καὶ Λευίτης ὅλοι οἱ χριστιανοὶ πρίντζιποι καὶ ἀντιπαρῆλθον, καὶ μόνον οὗτος ὁ νοητὸς Σαμαρίτης Ἰησοῦς μᾶς εἶδε, ἦλθε πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ἰατρεύει μας, ἔφερε μας τὸν πανδοχέα, τὸν γαληνότατον τῆς Βενετίας πρίγκιπα ἐνισχύοντας καὶ ἐνδυναμώνοντάς τον, ἐχάρισεν του δύο δηνάρια, τὸ μίσμα τῶν Τούρκων ἁ^{ον} ἀπὸ τοὺς φόβους καὶ β^{ον} ἀπὸ τὶς μπαταριές.»²¹⁷

At this point the preacher bitterly remembered the unkept promises given to Venice by various European sovereigns during the outbreak of the war. Indeed, the *Signoria* had sent word to the *Curia Romana* and to the courts of the other Christian princes urging to impress upon them the dire jeopardy that threatened Crete and the overtone its loss would bring to all Christians. Thus, the cause of the *Serenissima* was acknowledged to be that of all Christendom, with the siege of Candia being highlighted as a generalized Christian-Islamic conflict, the “theater of the collision between the Christian world and Islam”.²¹⁸ Nevertheless, the assistance that was eventually offered to the Republic

²¹⁷ Paradoulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 187.

²¹⁸ See Setton: *Venice, Austria, and the Turks*, p. 216. The siege of Candia, an incident of pan-European interest, rapidly attracted international attention. Indeed, the sovereigns of Latin Europe did not remain unmoved to the entreaties of the *Serenissima*, especially after the end of the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). Allies and non of Venice offered their financial and military support, mainly during the last phase of the war. Among the sovereign powers that

turned out to be inadequate compared to the necessities and the demands of the war. Following a pro-Venetian spirit, similar to his encomium to Mocenigo, Vlachos recognized in sermon no. 30 without hesitation the Venetians as the means of the Divine Providence for the protection and welfare of their subjects. It is interesting to note that in his 1656 appeal to the Venetian Senate for financial support, he addressed the Doge Francesco Corner (1585–1656), whose brief primacy lasted from 17. May 1656 until 5 June of the same year. In his text, the Cretan prelate expressed his obedience as a subject to the Doge and his fervent zeal to work in favor of the interests of the Republic:

“Most Serene Prince, contributing with my absolute self to the emergencies of the Public, I, father Gerasimos Vlachos, public teacher of sciences and preacher from Candia, demonstrated the struggles to be irreparable and respect them with my most devoted zeal in the service of Your Most Serene.”

*“Serenissime Principe, nella contribuzioni di tutto me stesso alle urgenze pubbliche, ho dimostrato io padre Gerasimo Vlacho lettor publico delle scienze e predicator di Candia, irrefragabili i concorsi e li ossequi di mio devotissimo zelo nel servizio della Ser.tà V.”*²¹⁹

This mental, rhetorical and ideological connection of the political-secular authority of the Republic with the purely religious-spiritual sphere is certainly not foreign to the historical tradition of the *Serenissima*, which not only accepted it during its millennial history, but also promoted it with every way and in every direction.²²⁰ In fact, in the critical years of the war in Crete, Venice reached her highest peak of self-promotion as the main defender of Christendom, the watchful guardian of Europe’s eastern gateway.

Gerasimos Vlachos’ decision during wartime to lean in favor of the Republic should be interpreted either from the perspective of an inherent duty or as a personal need to serve her interests, which in his thought were completely identified with those of his own and of his compatriots. His ideological and political inclination towards the Venetians was sincerely expressed in his aforementioned 1656 appeal to the Senate:

responded to the call of the Republic for help were the Papal States, the Knights of Malta, the Holy Roman Emperor Leopold I, the Teuton Knights, the Kingdom of France, Spain, Savoy and the Grand Duchy of Tuscany; see Kaklamanis: «Η χαρτογραφία», p. 39-40.

²¹⁹ Mertzios: «Νέαι ειδήσεις», p. 282.

²²⁰ More specifically, the Doge was defined as “head of the Church, head of the State” (*Princeps in Ecclesia, Princeps in Republica*); moreover, the basilica of Saint Mark was considered the Doge’s chapel; see William James Bouwsma: *Venice and the Defense of the Republican Liberty. Renaissance Values in the Age of the Counter Reformation*. University of California Press. Berkeley 1984, p. 72-73.

“With this act of the most benign grace, the souls of my people, who died in the service of Your Most Serene, will be benefited and the reasons, that by duty and by origin urge me to sacrifice my days in favor of the glories of this Most Serene immortal Republic, will be increased.”

*“Con questo atto di benignissima grazia, rimaneran beneficati le ceneri dei miei congiunti che sono morti nel servizio di V.S. et s’accresceranno i motivi che io tengo per debito et per origine di sacrificar tutti li miei giorni alle glorie di questa Serma immortal Republica.”*²²¹

Of great importance is considered the phrase “*per debito et per origine*”; indeed, for the pious ecclesiastic and loyal subject of the Republic, the defense of the interests of the *Serenissima* in Crete was an act not only imposed on him by his duty as a subject but also by his own Cretan origins. Therefore, the aforementioned phrase becomes the scholar’s political confession of loyalty, his genuine conscious expression of identity as a Cretan subject of the Venetian State; adapting his contemporary Veneto-Cretan identity in the context of the general Venetian conscience, Vlachos managed to find a point of the highest convergence between the fate of Crete and the status of Venice in the Mediterranean. In this climate, the closure of the appeal to the Senate is more cautiously justified:

“Under the auspices of public piety I would partially absolve my suffered shipwrecks and without deviation I would direct my sacrifices and most cordial and ardent vows to heaven for the happiness of this most venerable State [...] more and more in the burning devotion that will last with us even after our death in the ashes themselves.”

*“Sotto gli auspici della pietà pubblica assolverei in parte i miei patiti naufragi et indirizzarei senza deviamiento i miei sacrificii et voti più ardenti del cuore al cielo per la felicità di questo Augustissimo Stato [...] sempre più nelle effervenze di una divotione che durerà con noi anche dopo la nostra morte nelle ceneri stesse.”*²²²

2.3. “Response on the Terirem” (1649): A theological discussion with the Venetian Provveditore

Modern scholars on early modern Venice have argued on the subject of the conditions of confessional tolerance in the Orthodox territories of the Republic.²²³ According to the latest approaches, already from the 14th century and until the outbreak of the War of Candia, the confessional heterogeneity of the *Stato da Màr* gradually ceased to create deep internal divisions between authorities and subjects. Catholics and Orthodox

²²¹ Mertzios: «Νέαι ειδήσεις», p. 281.

²²² Mertzios: «Νέαι ειδήσεις», p. 288.

²²³ Arbel: “Catholics and Orthodox”, p. 73-86.

frequented one another and regularly collaborated. Differences in confession, and sometimes in religion, had become of less importance in everyday life in the early modern Republic, where religious and confessional pluralism had led to a relative but sincere tolerance of the different. Although the confessional differences continued to exist within the communities of the *Serenissima*, who never stopped to promote the Catholic Church as the highest religious authority in her territories, this did not constitute a barrier to cooperation among people of different confessional allegiances, with the non-Catholic subjects enjoying freedom both of worship and conscience. This tendency to occasional cooperation and mutual service was apparent in the socio-political, ecclesiastical and intellectual environment of Venetian Crete before and during the War of Candia. Particularly in the latter period, a relatively peaceful coexistence remained always a precarious achievement; indeed, it required an elaborate set of arrangements and accommodations for people of opposing faiths to live together in harmony, given how deeply religion was integrated into the social, cultural, and political life of early modern communities.²²⁴

Gerasimos Vlachos' contribution to this official confessional interaction between the Catholic Venetians and the Orthodox Greeks in besieged Candia lies in a brief theological treatise he composed on 15. December 1649, entitled "*Response on the Terirem*", addressing the then Venetian *Provveditore d'Armata* of the city, Jacopo Barbaro Badoer (1616–1657).²²⁵ In a five-point argumentation the Cretan prelate attempted to explain to Badoer the unknown to the Latin Church scheme of *terirem* (κρατήματα), a widely used method of chanting in the Orthodox ecclesiastical music.²²⁶ The *terirem* is a word without a meaning that is repeated by the chanters with variations

²²⁴ Kaplan: *Divided by Faith*.

²²⁵ Emmanouil Vamvoudakis: «Τὰ ἐν τῇ βυζαντινῇ μουσικῇ κρατήματα». In: *Ἐπετηρὶς Ἑταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν* 10 (1933), p. 353-361; Manousos Manousakas: «Ὁ ὑπ' ἀριθ. 1254 παρισινὸς ἐλληνικὸς κώδιξ καὶ ἡ χειρόγραφος παράδοσις τῶν ὁμιλιῶν τοῦ Μελετίου Πηγᾶ». In: *Ἐπετηρὶς Μεσαιωνικοῦ Ἀρχείου* 3 (1950), p. 13-14. The earliest known version of the *Response* is preserved in codex BAR ms. gr. 889; see Paradoulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 188-191 & 202-205. For Jacopo Barbaro Badoer, see Mario Nani Mocenigo: *Jacopo Barbaro Badoer provveditore d'armata (1616–1657)*. Ministero della Marina. Rome 1931; Setton: *Venice, Austria and the Turks*, p. 183, 188.

²²⁶ For a historical review on the ecclesiastical music in Crete, see Nikolaos Panagiotakis: «Ἡ μουσικὴ κατὰ τὴ Βενετοκρατίαν». In: Nikolaos Panagiotakis (ed.): *Κρήτη: Ἱστορία καὶ Πολιτισμός*. Vol. 2. Βικελαία Δημοτική Βιβλιοθήκη Ηρακλείου. Heraklion 1988; Emmanouil St. Giannopoulos (ed.): *Ἡ Ἀνθήση τῆς Ψαλτικῆς Τέχνης στὴν Κρήτη (1566–1669)*. Ἰδρυμα Βυζαντινῆς Μουσικολογίας. Athens 2004.

during the Orthodox church liturgy, independently from the liturgical text, creating pleasant sounds and rhythm. Deriving from the medieval Orthodox ecclesiastical musical tradition, it belongs to a group of similar artistic creations and compositions which were uttered during the chanting procedure; those words were defined as holdings (*κρατήματα*), that is because they serve to keep the rhythm of chanting. The tradition of Orthodox ecclesiastical music in Crete derived from the 15th century, with music teachers and composers working in the urban centers and the province of the island. Immediately after the Fall of Constantinople, a tendency in favor of the advancement of ecclesiastical music began with the arrival of prominent Greek melodists and composers in Crete. Significant hymnographers, music teachers and chanters of both Orthodox and Catholic faith, such as Ioannis Laskaris, Manuel Doukas Chrysaphes, Akakios Chalkiopoulos and Janus Plousiadenos settled in the island, established music schools and taught as private tutors. It is noteworthy that the aforementioned composers and their successors in the 16th and 17th century (Antonios and Benedict Episkopopoulos, Ignatios of Frielos, Emmanuel Dekarchos, Frangiskos Leontaritis, Dimitrios Damias) contributed to the renewal of Cretan ecclesiastical music by incorporating elements from both Orthodox and Catholic origin. This long and productive tradition was preserved at least until the final surrender of Candia to the Ottomans in 1669.

Curious to know the real meaning of the *terirem* – or maybe willing to undermine it – *Provveditore* Badoer addressed the eminent Orthodox melodist and protopsàltes of Candia, the aforementioned Dimitrios Damias.²²⁷ The latter, found himself incapable to answer properly and convincingly; therefore, he pleaded Gerasimos Vlachos as a recognized ecclesiastic of the city, to answer in his behalf. In the introduction of his *Response*, the latter firstly expressed his gratitude towards his “natural master”, and promised to answer his question with clarity and humility; two things compelled him to compose his treatise: “I am urged by the dept of obedience and by the benevolence you show to all the nation of the Romaioi, and particularly to me, your humble servant”.²²⁸ He then discreetly stated Badoer’s question, revealing the possible

²²⁷ For Dimitrios Damias, see Giannis K. Mavromatis: «Αρχαϊκές μαρτυρίες για τον μουσικό και πρωτοψάλτη του Χάνδακα Δημήτριο Νταμία». In: *Θησαυρίσματα* 34 (2004), p. 319-338.

²²⁸ «τὸ χρέος με βιάζει τῆς ὑπακοῆς καὶ ἡ καλοκαγαθία ὅπου ἡ ἀφεντία σου δείχνει εἰς ὅλον τὸ γένος τῶν Ρωμαίων καὶ ξεχωριστὰ εἰς ἐμένα τὸν μικρόν της δοῦλον με παρακινᾷ»;

confessional parameters in the latter's objectives. Indeed, the *Provveditore* appeared to have criticized the custom of the Orthodox Church to use the *terirem* during the Liturgy, characterizing it as insignificant and inappropriate for ecclesiastical music.²²⁹

In response and contradiction to this undermining approach of the Orthodox ecclesiastical tradition, Vlachos cited in composure and humility a brief argumentation of five points in order to attest the importance of the *terirem* in the Orthodox liturgy. First criterion presented was that of the inveteracy of the custom; more specifically, “the *terirem* was chanted, as it does now, also from the two illustrious authorities of the Holy Church, Saint John of Damascus and Saint Cosmas the Poet”. Since the two Saints participated in the 6th and 7th Ecumenical Councils, which “corrected the ecclesiastical morals in detail” and where the *terirem* was not considered “a modernism and inappropriate hymn”, its validity was certified.²³⁰ The second criterion was the value the *terirem* offered to the study of ecclesiastical music. Using citations from Origen's commentary to the *Book of Genesis*, Vlachos stated:

“the earthly Church of the *stratonomata* is the earthly sky; the latter obtains the seven sacraments of the Church as the seven planets, the twelve Articles of Faith as the twelve astrological signs, the Doctors of the Church as the suns, the hieratical and clerical ranks as the small and big stars, the melodists as the angels who praise God in Earth by imitating the heavenly angels”

in order to conclude to the connection of the angelic *hallelujah* with the ecclesiastical *terirem*:

“in the same way the angels praise God in voices firm and inconceivable to us such as the *Hallelujah*, so the melodists of the Church aggrandize God by using unknown voices such as the *terirem*.”²³¹

Paradoulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 203.

²²⁹ “Your Highness asked the reason why we, the Romaiot, are used to chant the *terirem*, a voice which is trivial and uncommon, since we should not praise God in insignificant voices” («Εζήτησε ἡ ὑψηλότης σου τὴν αἰτίαν διὰ τὴν ὁποῖαν ἐμεῖς οἱ Ρωμαῖοι ἔχομεν συνήθειαν καὶ ψάλλομεν τὸ τερερέ, τὸ ὁποῖον εἶναι μία φωνὴ ἀσήμαντος, ἀσυνήθιστος, πρᾶγμα ὅπου δὲν ἔπρεπε μὲ ἀσημεῖς φωνές νὰ γίνεται εἰς ὕμνον τοῦ Θεοῦ»); Paradoulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 203.

²³⁰ Paradoulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 203.

²³¹ «ἡ ἐπίγειος αὕτη τῶν στρατονομάτων Ἐκκλησία εἶναι οὐρανὸς ἐπίγειος, ἡ ὁποία ἔχει ἐπτὰ πλανήτας τὰ ἐπτὰ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας μυστήρια, δώδεκα ζώδια τὰ ἡ' ἄρθρα τῆς πίστεως, φωστῆρας τοὺς διδασκάλους τῆς Ἐκκλησίας, ἄστρα μικρὰ καὶ μεγάλα τοὺς ἀρχιερατικούς καὶ ἱερατικούς βαθμούς, ἀγγέλους τοὺς μουσικούς, οἱ ὅποιοι, μιμούμενοι τοὺς οὐρανίους ἀγγέλους, ὕμνοῦσιν τὸν Θεὸν εἰς τὴν γῆν. Ὅθεν καταπῶς οἱ ἄγγελοι μὲ φωνές ἄρρηκτες καὶ πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἀσήμαντες ὕμνοῦσιν τὸν Θεὸν ὥσάν εἶναι τὸ ἀλληλοῦν, ἔτσι καὶ οἱ μελλουργοὶ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας μὲ φωνές ἄγνωστες ὥσάν εἶναι τὸ τερερέ μεγαλῶνουν τὸν Θεόν· καὶ τοῦτο δίδει μεγάλην ἀξίαν τῆς μουσικῆς ἐπιστήμης»; see Paradoulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 203.

The third criterion, the privilege (*κατὰ προνόμιον*), was a prerequisite of Vlachos' profession as an eminent philologist, along with his profound knowledge of ancient Greek and Latin history. The very same word *terirem*, he noted, derived from the Greek *τερετίζω*, which derived from the Latin *terix-terentix*. Quoting Thucydides, he contrasted the ecclesiastical melodists who chanted the *terirem* with the ancient Athenian noblemen, who used to tie golden cicadas (*«χρυσὸς τέττιγας»*) on their hair; as the latter proceeded in this action as a symbol of their indigenous identity in order to stand out from the rest of the public, so the melodists of the *terirem* were presented as excellent in comparison with the others.²³² The fourth criterion was related to the moral nature of the *terirem* as feature of ecclesiastical hymnology. According to the author, by using the sound of the *terirem* the melodist was aiming to create with his voice a feeling of devotion and admonition to his flock, as if he was saying: "Oh Christian! Remember that according to the Scripture, the world along with its glory elapses; raise your mind to the sky as the earthly angels, the melodists, teach the solidity of the sky".²³³ As the last criterion Vlachos presented the so-called *on rhetorical moral* (*κατὰ ἥθος ρητορικόν*); according to it, the *terirem* was a categorical voice against the Devil. Using as authorities the teachings of Pythagoras and Saint Gregory of Nyssa on the human soul, the author concluded that through the *terirem* the melodists retract the immortal soul from delusion and sin, safely leading it to salvation.²³⁴ After completing his brief argumentation, Vlachos concluded his *Response* with the appropriate humility of a loyal subject of the *Serenissima*. Referring to his poor health due to his age and the tortures of his life, he declared his confidence that there were people in Candia who were to be considered experts to issues of Orthodox ecclesiastical music, and pleaded for Barbaro's sympathy if his response was possibly deficient.²³⁵

In the context of this theological discussion between Badoer and the Orthodox clergy of Candia, I also studied another version of the *Response on the Terirem*, this

²³² Paradoulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 203-4.

²³³ «ὦ χριστιανέ, τήρει, ῥέει, ἡγουν κάτεχε πῶς ὁ κόσμος παρέρχεται καὶ ἡ δόξα αὐτοῦ κατὰ τὰς Γραφάς, καὶ ὕψωσε τὸν νοῦν σου εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ὡσὰν ἐπίγειοι ἄγγελοι οἱ μουσικοὶ διδάσκοντες τὴν στερεότητα τοῦ οὐρανοῦ»; Paradoulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 204.

²³⁴ Paradoulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 204.

²³⁵ Paradoulakis: «Απηχήσεις», p. 204.

time anonymous.²³⁶ Although the structure of the text, the nature of the argumentation and the purposes of its unknown author appear to share numerous similarities with the brief treatise Vlachos composed, it is not possible to say with certainty if this second improved version was indeed written by the hand of the Cretan prelate. Nevertheless, the ideological background of both versions remains the same, namely that the *terirem* was a key characteristic of Orthodox ecclesiastical music and an integral feature of the Orthodox tradition. Thus, it is worthy to make an overview of its content and its argumentation. After the author briefly outlined the historical background of the case and the parameters of that particular theological discussion which took place in besieged Candia,²³⁷ he referred to his main position, which he kept repeating in numerous points of his text; that the *terirem* as a chanting piece in the Orthodox liturgy was neither simple or random, as Badoer claimed it to be, but “it was formed with a purpose and exists for a reason”. In this context, he made a firm condemnation against his contemporary dominant ignorance, since “nowadays most of the people hate the study and they honor nescience as knowledge and vice as virtue, and the wicked triumph against the prudent”; those wicked people he considered to be responsible for undermining the custom of the *terirem*.

The main argumentation in support to the *terirem* indeed presents common ground with Vlachos’ approach on the matter, both in its central positions and scattered in details. Firstly, it dealt with the aforementioned tendency of angels and men to sing their worship to God, along with the difference between the everlasting glorifications of the angels and the attempt of men to imitate them by worshiping God through an articulate voice (chants) and through an inarticulate one (*terirem*). Following Vlachos’ argumentation, the anonymous author also used the criterion of inveteracy, but this time

²³⁶ The official title of this posterior version of Gerasimos Vlachos’ “*Response on the Terirem*” is the following: “*Remarkable interpretation of the terirem and verification by various teachers that correctly and reasonably is chanted by the Greeks in the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, and be well careful*” («*Ερμηνεία θαυμάσιος τοῦ τερερέ καί ἀπόδειξις παρά διαφόρων διδασκάλων, ὅτι καλῶς καί εὐλόγως παρά τοῖς Γραικοῖς ᾄδεται ἐν τῇ ἀγία τοῦ Θεοῦ καθολικῇ καί ἀποστολικῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, καί πρόσεχε καλῶς*»); see Codex no. 129 in Kerameus: *Ιεροσολυμιτικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη*. Vol. 5, p. 452-453.

²³⁷ Ioannis Lambadarios, Stefanos Domestikos (ed.): *Πανδέκτης τῆς Ἱερᾶς Ἐκκλησιαστικῆς Ὑμνωδίας τοῦ ὅλου ἐνιαυτοῦ*. Vol. 4. Istanbul 1851, p. 885-891; it was re-published by I(kesio) G. L(atris) in *Σωτήρ* 5 (1881-1882), p. 216^b-221^a; for the reference, see Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 112 note 87. Since I did not have access to Latris’ article, I studied the version as it was first published by Lambadarios and Domestikos.

he referred not to the early Church Fathers, but to the Prophets of the Old Testament, who claimed that they heard voices in the sky like “the sound of a thousand waters flowing”. Similar to Vlachos’ reference to the use of the *terirem* by the melodist in order to rejoice his listeners, the anonymous author supported that the latter was a sound of rejoice for man, relevant to the joy one felt in the thought of God. Influenced by the latter’s reference to the confirmation of the *terirem* by the 6th and 7th Ecumenical Councils, the anonymous author stated that from its foundation the Orthodox Church did nothing invain, but the latter’s actions always obtained a purpose and a meaning, faithfully following the tradition and the doctrines of the ancient Church Fathers. In the context of a long and detailed theological interpretation of the word *terirem* and its meaning (symbolical, allegorical, metaphorical), noteworthy is that the author also used Vlachos’ reference to the cicadas (‘τέττιγες’), not in its historical context, but in its theological one; according to his words, as all the creatures of the Creation, and especially the cicadas, proceeded to constant singing while looking at the sun, that is the image of God, so men glorified God with their voices.

The most interesting argument of the anonymous author, which is not detected in Vlachos’ early version of the *Response*, is built upon and against the musical tradition of the ancient Greeks. The author supported that the Christian tradition marked the destruction of the musical instruments of “the arrogant and infidel [ancient] Greeks, who used lifeless instruments to honor their lifeless gods”. Nevertheless, he referred to Plato who, although a pagan, was mentioned as “divine”, and to his categorization of music in three kinds: i. by mouth, ii. by mouth and hands, iii. by hands. According to the author, the ancient Greeks used to glorify their gods by hands, the Jews by mouth and hands, but only the Christians chanted God orally and spiritually, that is with their soul and intellect. They used their voice and not lifeless instruments, since only the voice, being intangible, symbolized the Divinity. Quoting the 2nd-century Christian apologist Justin Martyr, the author strengthened his argument on the deceitful ceremonies of the Greeks, who failed to address to God because of their inappropriate dances and melodies. Eventually, the Orthodox Church banished such activities and followed the teaching by “wise Augustine”, who ordered the Christians to honor God only with their voice. He completed his argumentation with the conclusion that the Orthodox Church “cannot be wrong, according to the society of the theologians; man is capable to be

mistaken, the Church never”; this phrase is extremely reminiscent of an already mentioned citation in Vlachos’ closing sermon on Lent, no. 43 (14. April 1650: On the Resurrection of our Lord): “the teachings of the Saints do not allow anyone to abstain, and the art of theology does not forgive the theologians for a sin”.

Despite being an extremely short sample of his theological education, principles and beliefs, the study of the “*Response on the Terirem*” is indicative of the combination of religious faith and political loyalty in Gerasimos Vlachos’ thought and word. A noteworthy holder of a profound knowledge of the Orthodox ecclesiastical rite and the patristic tradition, Vlachos activated his Orthodox origins to search and detect those elements necessary from the history and teachings of the ancient Church that would assist him to build his argumentation and support the Orthodox side, in which he belonged. Mixing successfully sacred and secular knowledge, an initiative he would raise numerous times in the future, the Cretan prelate attempted to find common ground of contact and conciliation not with an ecclesiastic and not with an Orthodox. His effort was to persuade a Venetian military officer, without risking offending him, that each Christian tradition obtained its characteristic features in its doctrines, history, ritual and music. And although the two confessions had succeeded in coexisting and sometimes in transacting with each other, the limits were still visible and necessary for each faith to maintain its prestige and existence.

The “*Response on the Terirem*” is, therefore, considered a presumption for the religious and socio-political reality in late Venetian Candia. Regardless if Badoer planned to undermine the value and consistency of the Orthodox Church, the fact that a Catholic Venetian high official wished to be informed on the Orthodox ecclesiastical rite is alone of utter importance; it is perceived as an evidence of how an authority comprehended its subjects and *visé versa*. Moreover, this specific event, which one could place among the various others in a long theological discussion between Catholics and Orthodox specifically in the centuries after the Protestant Reformation, cannot be viewed outside its historical and political contexts. The year was 1649, the first wave of the Ottoman siege of Candia had just passed; all those interested in the defense of the city were ready to proceed to mutual initiatives for coexistence and cooperation, both practical (social-military) and spiritual (intellectual-confessional). Therefore, the role of Badoer but even more that of Damias and Vlachos reflect a sincere willingness by both

sides to achieve and preserve a relative conciliation in order to protect and gain back their common homeland.

2.4. “*Obfuscation of the False Believers*” (1653): A theological controversy with political parameters

“In the year 1658 the so-called *Targa* came from France to Constantinople and to the Eastern Church. After receiving permission from the Sultan, Patriarch Parthenius IV sent letters against it [mean. *Targa*] to Constantinople and Galata, but also to Smyrna and to every other Orthodox city and land. And by buying [imprints of] the *Targa*, the Orthodox burnt numerous of them in the markets, and a great shame occurred to the papists”.²³⁸

The *Targa tes Pisteos* (Τάργα τῆς πίστεως τῆς Ρωμαϊκῆς Ἐκκλησίας εἰς τὴν διεφένδουσιν τῆς Ὁρθοδοξίας) was published in Paris in 1658. Written in vernacular Greek by the French Jesuit monks François Richard (1612–1673)²³⁹ and François Rossiers, the book promoted the Catholic doctrines that came into controversy with the Orthodox teachings and ritual. *Targa* was written and published in the aftermath of a ferocious and long-lasting theological controversy that took place in the Aegean Archipelagos during the 1640s and early 1650s between the local Orthodox clergy and the missionary groups of the Society of Jesus, represented by François Richard. A Jesuit since 1629, Richard had arrived in 1643 in the Aegean island of Santorini, where he became an abbot in the monastery of Virgin Mary in Scaro; in 1658 he moved to the island of Negroponte (Euboea) until his death in 1673. As he supported in his *Targa*, already since the middle 1640s he had started to criticize and undermine publicly the doctrine of the Orthodox Church on the uncreated nature of the Tabor Light, mainly structured in the theology of

²³⁸ «Ἐν ἔτει δὲ χίλιοστῷ ἑξακοσιοστῷ πεντηκοστῷ ὁ γόδοφ ἦλθεν εἰς τὴν Κωνσταντινούπολιν καὶ ἀπλῶς εἰς τὴν Ἀνατολικὴν Ἐκκλησίαν ἀπὸ τὰ Φράντζας ἡ λεγομένη Τάργα. Καὶ λαβὼν θέλημα ἀπὸ τῆς βασιλείας ὁ Πατριάρχης Παρθένιος ὁ τέταρτος ἔγραψεν εἰς τὴν Πόλιν καὶ εἰς τὸν Γαλατᾶν, ἀλλὰ δὴ καὶ εἰς Σμύρνην καὶ εἰς πᾶσαν πόλιν καὶ χώραν Ὁρθόδοξων, κατ’ αὐτῆς. Καὶ ἀγοράσαντες οἱ Ὁρθόδοξοι τὴν Τάργαν, κατέκαυσαν πάμπολλα βιβλία αὐτῆς ἐν τοῖς φόροις, καὶ ἐγένετο τοῖς παπισταῖς αἰσχὺνη μεγάλη»; Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 2 (1645–1690), p. 100.

²³⁹ In addition to the *Targa*, Richard was the author of a memoir entitled *Relation de ce qui s'est passe de plus remarquable a Saint-Erini isle de l'Archipel*, (Paris: Chez Sebastien Cramoisy Imprimeur ordinaire du Roy & de la Reine, & Gabriel Cramoisy, 1657), in which he narrated his experience during his mission in the Aegean islands and his theological disputes with the local Orthodox clergy; see Markos N. Roussos-Millidonis: *Ἰησουῖτες στον ελληνικό χώρο (1560–1915)*. Κέντρο Εκδηλώσεων – Ομιλιών. Athens 1991), p. 35-36, 197-202; Anna Karamanidou: «Θεολογική προσέγγιση της χρήσεως των χρυσοστομικών χωρίων στην *Τάργα*». In: *Κόσμος* (2014), p. 35-86.

Saint Gregory Palamas (c.1296–1357); in its place, the Jesuit monk promoted the Catholic doctrine in favor of the created nature of the Light of Transfiguration.²⁴⁰ In the occasion of the discussions on the controversial matter of the nature of the Tabor Light, this specific confessional conflict in Santorini occurred.

The nature of the Tabor Light was indeed an old issue of dispute between Catholics and Orthodox. More specifically, during the hesychast controversies of the 14th century, Saint Gregory Palamas supported that God existed in two ways, as per His essence and as per His holy and uncreated energies; man could not meet God in His essence, but he could reach Him by prayer and bond with Him through His holy and uncreated energies. Therefore, the theory of the uncreated Light was the theosis of man, a state in which reason was subordinated to the mind, the spirit in the functioning of the heart, and man fully participated in the theory of divine energies as a psychosomatic entity. In the 17th century, the projection by the missionaries of a confessional difference of profound theological nature in order for olden disputes to return to the foreground was perceived by the Orthodox side of the Aegean islands and Constantinople as an attempt of the Jesuits to question, or at least undermine, the authority of the Orthodox Church in Eastern Mediterranean and its cohesion to the doctrines of the ancient Church and the pure meaning of the latter's teachings.²⁴¹

In the context of this generalized theological conflict between the two sides during the middle of the 17th century, a relevant incident occurred in 1653 in Santorini between François Richard and his disciples, all residing as missionary prelates in the island during that time, and the majority of the heads of the local Orthodox population. In order to deal with the Jesuit provocations against the Orthodox theology and its

²⁴⁰ For Gregory Palamas' teaching and its consequences, see Ettore Perrella: *Gregorio Palamas. Atto e Luce Divina, Scritti filosofici e teologici*. Bompiani. Milano 2003. For a modern approach to the issue of the palamic controversy in the early modern period, see Stavros Giagazoglou: «Ο άγιος Γρηγόριος Παλαμάς και η νεώτερη δυτική θεολογία». In: *Θεολογία* 83^c (July–September 2012), p. 23-53; Konstantinos Athanasopoulos: *Triune God. Incomprehensible but Knowable. The philosophical and theological significance of St. Gregory Palamas for contemporary philosophy and theology*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing. Newcastle upon Tyne 2015.

²⁴¹ For the role and activity of the Society of Jesus in the Venetian *Stato da Màr*, see Giorgio Hofmann: "Apostolato dei Gesuiti nell' Oriente Greco 1583–1773". In: *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 1 (1935), p. 139-163; Harro Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought. The Society of Jesus and the State, c.1540–1630*. Cambridge University Press. New York 2004; Paul V. Murphy: "Jesuit Rome and Italy". In: Thomas Worcester (ed.): *The Cambridge Companion to The Jesuits*. Cambridge University Press. New York 2008, p. 81-83.

representatives, the Greeks of Santorini firstly addressed the renowned theologian and physician Georgios Koressios of Chios (c.1570–c.1659),²⁴² who responded eagerly and was actively involved in the dispute. One could say that the latter's willingness to intervene in the discussion with the Jesuits portrays the general concern of Orthodox ecclesiastics and high clerics to confront the Catholic missionaries and strengthen the faith of the flock. For this purpose, eminent Greek scholars and prelates had taken initiatives for the development of education in the Orthodox communities, the emergence of prominent and well-trained theologians and the amplification of their preaching activity not only in the traditional centers of Orthodoxy (Constantinople, Jerusalem, Alexandria) but also in mainland Greece, the islands of the Aegean Archipelagos, up to the communities of Moldavia and Wallachia.

Nevertheless, Koressios' brief treatise in favor of Saint Palamas' theology caused the demeaning criticism of the Jesuit monks; mainly Richard in his memoirs portrayed Koressios simply as "a Greek physician, who pretends to be a teacher and a theologian".²⁴³ Indeed, the Jesuits publicly reprobated Koressios' positions, claiming that the latter had committed twelve blasphemes and more than fifty errors and delusions in his brief two-page response: "*dans un petit caïer de deux feüilles*".²⁴⁴ In great need for additional support and seeking for an argumentation that would be validated by the prestige of an authority, the residents of Santorini turned their hopes to Gerasimos Vlachos in besieged Candia; the latter was eventually persuaded to intervene with the composition of his *consulta* entitled "*Obfuscation of the False Believers*", aiming to put an end, temporal at least, to the turbulent situation in the Aegean Archipelagos.

Without any trace of polemical prejudice, at least obvious, Vlachos began his treatise with a reference to the contemporary dire historical conjuncture in his homeland. He stated that for six years he remained blocked within the walls of besieged Candia, becoming a first-eye witness of the Venetians hopeless effort to defend the city

²⁴² A noteworthy theologian of the Orthodox Church and former professor of ancient Greek in Pisa, Georgios Koressios developed a conservative theological model of thought based on the traditional Orthodox argumentation, although aspects of indirect influence from western medieval scholasticism are also to be detected in his writings; see Nikos Stoupakis: *Γεώργιος Κορέσιος (1570 ci.–1659/60): Η ζωή, το έργο και οι πνευματικές της εποχής του*. Ομήρειο Πνευματικό Κέντρο Δήμου Χίου. Chios 2000. For his contribution in the theological controversy of Santorini, see Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 80.

²⁴³ Richard: *Τάργα*. Vol. I, p. 268.

²⁴⁴ Richard: *Relation*, p. 363-364.

against the Ottoman invaders: “This happened to me also, me who suffer from numerous hardships in this long-lasting blocked region, and say nothing but only weep for this utterly tortured and renowned Crete, my very sweet homeland”.²⁴⁵ Being loyal to an internal personal tendency towards defining priorities and maintaining the balances required, he continued:

“I move the pen unintentionally, invited in such kind of disputes; because I consider the Latin masters and the believers of the Roman Catholic Church as my brothers, and their Doctors [I consider them] as my Doctors, when they consider me their genuine brother and disciple, but not an exiled.”

*«Εγὼ ἀκουσίως κινῶ τὸν κάλαμον προσκαλεσμένος εἰς τέτοιας ἀντιθέσεις· διὰτὶ ἐγὼ ὡς ἀδελφούς μου κρατῶ τοὺς αὐθέντας τοὺς Λατίνους καὶ τοὺς φρονοῦντας τὰ δόγματα τῆς Καθολικῆς Ρωμαϊκῆς Ἐκκλησίας καὶ τοὺς διδασκάλους τῶς διδασκάλους μου, ὅποιαν φερὰν μὲ κρατοῦσι γνήσιόν τῶς ἀδελφὸν καὶ μαθητὴν, μὰ ὅχι ἐξόριστον.»*²⁴⁶

For the Cretan clergyman, the invitation by the residents of Santorini and the challenge against the teachings of the Jesuits had to be managed with great care, political diplomacy, psychological composure and mental control, but also with confessional stability from his part. Indeed, the balances in the Orthodox Eastern Mediterranean had changed over the years, both politically-militarily and religiously-confessionally. Predicting that the *Serenissima*, in her urgent need for military support in the war against the Sultan, would turn almost unconditionally to any Christian force that would seem willing to support her, Vlachos could not help but realize that perhaps Venice’s main ally would be the Papal States. Nevertheless the Cretan prelate and along with him numerous Venetian authorities remained concerned on the political compromises and confessional concessions that the Pope would possibly request in exchange of his support. But what came first at that critical time of the siege of Candia was for a generalized spirit of diplomacy to prevail at all levels (political, military, intellectual, confessional) and a relative settlement, or at least a silent downplay, between the central Venetian government and the Papal Court, the local authorities and Orthodox population in Crete and the representatives of the Vatican in the Greek Archipelagos. In this context, Gerasimos Vlachos remained once more a loyal expressor of the Venetian pretensions and the Republic’s vital priorities during wartime. That is the reason why he

²⁴⁵ «Τοῦτο ἐσυνέβη καὶ εἰς ἐμένα τὸν πολλὰ δεινὰ πάσχοντα εἰς τοῦτο τὸ πολὺκαιρον περίφραγμα καὶ μηδὲν λέγοντα, ἀλλ’ ἡμόνον κλαίοντα τὴν πολυβασάνιστον ταύτην καὶ περίφημον Κρήτην τὴν γλυκιάτην μου πατρίδα»; see Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 123.

²⁴⁶ Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 123-124.

chose to soberly clarify in the introduction of his *Obfuscation* that he himself did not wish to participate in a theological conflict with the Jesuits; going even further, he unambiguously stated that during his whole life he had honored the Catholic Church, its doctrines and tradition and he had shown the necessary respect to the Catholics who were residing in Crete.

Despite the fact that Vlachos indeed tried to predispose his readers that he would remain acquiescent during this confessional controversy, he was presented unwilling to lean in favor of the Jesuit argumentation and chose consciously to firmly promote the doctrine of the Orthodox Church on the matter. Already in the introduction of the treatise, he felt the need to support and strengthen the prestige of the elderly Georgios Koressios. After explaining that the booklet he received in Candia, which seemingly included François Richard's repulse of Koressios' response on the nature of the Tabor Light, actually contained a series of blasphemies against Saint Gregory Palamas and numerous diatribes against Koressios.²⁴⁷ In an attempt to refute the Jesuit's arguments, Vlachos vividly described the great influence the theologian from Chios had on his contemporary Orthodox Christians:

“the fact that the renowned Koressios is wise is testified by everyone; the fruit of his wisdom are viewed by the whole of Asia and Europe, maybe the whole world; and the multitude of his disciples ascertain it; and the whole nation pays attention to him during his numerous, or better thousand, struggles in favor of Orthodoxy; and he is admired as an illustrious supporter of the Orthodox people; and he is avoided by and terrifies those who are against [Orthodoxy], just like the fire when it burns the thorns.”

«ὅτι ὁ περίφημος Κορέσιος εἶναι σοφός, ὅλος ὁ κόσμος τό μαρτυρεῖ τό ἀποτέλεσμα τῆς σοφίας του θεωρεῖ ἡ Ἀσία καί ἡ Εὐρώπη, μᾶλλον δέ ὁ τετραπέρατος κόσμος καί τό πλῆθος τῶν μαθητῶν του τό βεβαιώνει καί ὅλον τό Γένος τόν προσέχει ὡσάν ὁποῦ πολλάκις, μᾶλλον δέ μυριάκις διά τήν Ὁρθοδοξίαν ὑπερμάχησε καί ὡς φόβερός

²⁴⁷ Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 124:

“In which [mean. the booklet], to start with, the majority were diatribes against the highly wise Koressios and mockery on his supposedly lack of memory, old age, sickness due to his anility, reprobation of every virtue, irreverence, unworthiness of his name, vague meanings, wrong compositions, ignorance and its further products. In the end accusations against our holy Saint Gregory Palamas [...]. And finally, total rebuke of our nation and reprobation by naming us schismatics and heretics.”

«Εἰς τό ὁποῖον [βιβλιάριον] κατὰ τήν ἀρχήν τὰ περισσότερα ἦσαν ψόγοι κατὰ τοῦ σοφωτάτου Κορεσίου εἰς ἔμπαιγμα ἀμνημοσύνης, ἡλικία μακρά, γήρους ἀσθένεια, πάσης ἀρετῆς ἀποδοκιμασία, ἀσέβεια, ἀναξιότητος ὀνόματος, νοήματα ἀσαφῆ, σφαλερὰς συνθέσεις, ἀμαθία καί τὰ τούτοις (παραπλήσια) ἐπόμενα. Πρὸς τό τέλος κατηγορίαι τοῦ ἐν ἀγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Γρηγορίου τοῦ Παλαμᾶ: [...] καί πρὸς τό τέλος κατάκρισις παντελὴς τοῦ γένους ἡμῶν καί σχισματικῶν ἐπωνυμίας καί αἵρετικῶν κατακραυγή.»

αντιλήπτωρ παρά τοις Ὀρθοδόξοις θαυμάζεται· καί παρά τῶν ἀντικειμένων ὡς πῦρ φλέγον τὰς ἀκάνθας φεύγεται καί τρομάσσεται.»²⁴⁸

After, in his opinion, the restoration of Koressios' reputation and prestige as a theologian, Vlachos turned his attention to the Jesuit monk Richard, whom he considered to be solely responsible for the hatred and controversies in the island of Santorini. In fact, he proceeded so far as to exclude Richard from his Order. According to his own confession, Vlachos presented himself to be well acquainted with the principles and wisdom the members of the Society of Jesus obtained, while he had been a careful reader during his life of the Jesuit literature, mainly – as his library will reveal – in the fields of Aristotelian philosophy and scholastic theology; as he characteristically wrote:

“I was surprised to read and see such uncultivated writings, which were turning against a famous and respected man, as Koressios is, against Saint Palamas, against our nation, and against the correct Church. I was more surprised after realizing that they were written by a Jesuit, whose Order and Society are said to teem with wisdom. Thinking about it, I reached the conclusion that such words do not belong to a wise person and do not reveal the intention of a pious, virtuous and sacred man, but of a reckless and petty one.”

«Ἐγὼ δὲ ταῦτα διαβάζοντας καὶ θεωρώντας τέτοια ἄμουσα ἔπη, τὰ μὲν ἐναντίον ἐνὸς περιφήμου ἀνδρὸς καὶ σεβασμίου, οἷός ὁ Κορέσιος, τὰ δὲ κατὰ τοῦ ἁγίου Παλαμᾶ, τὰ δὲ κατὰ τοῦ γένους καὶ τὰ ἕτερα κατὰ τῆς ὀρθῆς Ἐκκλησίας, καὶ βλέποντας νὰ εἶναι γεγραμμένα ἀπὸ ἰησουίτην, ὁδία τὴν τάξιν καὶ συντροφίαν τοῦ ὁποίου φέρεται λόγος πολὺς περὶ σοφίαν, ἐθαύμασα στοχαζόμενος καὶ ἀποφάσισα εἰς τὸν ἑαυτὸν μου πῶς τέτοια λόγια δὲν εἶναι σοφοῦ, μηδὲ ἴδιον προθέσεως ἀνδρὸς εὐσεβοῦς, ἐναρέτου καὶ ἱεροῦ, μὰ κενόφρονος καὶ οὐτιδανοῦ.»²⁴⁹

The main text of the *Obfuscation* consisted of a long, detailed argumentation in favor of the Orthodox doctrine on the uncreated nature of the Tabor Light. In a context of twenty inductive syllogisms and five theological arguments, the Cretan prelate attempted to validate and promote the teachings of Saint Gregory Palamas not as the latter's independent personal perception of Divine energies, but as an integral element of the tradition and principles of the Orthodox Church, deriving to its ancient origin and

²⁴⁸ Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 124.

²⁴⁹ Vlachos' knowledge of the Jesuit intellectual activity is also evident in this brief excerpt taken from the *Obfuscation*: “the wise man is recognised not from insults and aspersion, but from the kind language and the correct orders; even more from the Fathers of the Society of Jesus, who are all examples of mildness and humbleness” («Ὁ σοφὸς ὄχι μὲ τὰς ὕβρεις καὶ τῇ κακολογίᾳ, ἀλλὰ τῇ ἀγαθῇ γλώσσει καὶ τοῖς καλοῖς ῥήμασι γινώσκεται καὶ μάλιστα ἀπὸ τοῦ πατέρας τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, ὅπου εἶναι ὅλοι λόγων γλυκύτης καὶ ταπεινώσεως»); Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 125.

the early Christian authorities and Fathers. Following the common and established policy in the Orthodox circles, Gerasimos Vlachos drew his main arguments directly from the texts of the Scriptures and the writings of the Church Fathers. In order to support and give validity to his argumentation, he quoted a multitude of citations from the Bible, the early Christian apologetic and exegetical literature, while he did not hesitate to use also some very specific Latin authorities, mainly belonging to the period before the Great Schism of 1054; among the authorities he cited were Athanasius of Alexandria, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, John Chrysostom, Maximus the Confessor, Andrew of Crete, John of Damascus, but also Ambrose of Milan, Jerome of Stridonium, Augustine of Hippo and Leo I of Rome. In fact, Vlachos considered necessary the systematic citation of a long and voluminous corpus of written testimonies and arguments from the era of the ancient Church, in an attempt to ground and link his theological thought to an unanimous authority.

Nevertheless, his profound knowledge of the Latin theological tradition and his conscious consonance with the early Latin authorities of the Church did not necessarily mean that he was leaning, at least theologically and confessionally, to the Catholic side. In his treatise he honored the Latin Fathers Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine and Leo, but at the same time he expressed his dissent against the later Latin Scholastics of the Middle Ages, particularly against Saint Thomas of Aquinas. It is interesting, though, that he did not proceed to a direct expression of condemnation or mockery against Saint Thomas, an act that would be welcomed by a hardcore anti-Catholic and especially in the context of a polemical treatise or a confessional dispute. On the contrary, Vlachos was limited to state that the teachings of the Latin scholastic tradition did not find a counterpart to the Orthodox faith, whose members continued to follow the doctrines and principles of the ancient Church Fathers and their early disciples.²⁵⁰ Therefore, the Cretan clergyman

²⁵⁰ The following citations from the *Obfuscation* reveal Gerasimos Vlachos' position towards the Latin theological tradition of the medieval and early modern centuries: i. "If the angelic Saint Thomas [...] defines (unfairly) the Great John of Damascus as a Nestorian, he also names him a holy Doctor" («Ἄν ἔναι καὶ ὁ ἅγιος Θωμᾶς ὁ ἀγγελικὸς [...] κρᾶζει (ἀδίκως) τὸν τε μέγαν Δαμασκηνὸν νεστοριανόν, ὅμως καὶ ἅγιον καὶ διδάσκαλον τὸν καλεῖ»); ii. "[your words (mean. Richard)] are things that oppose philosophy and theology, even more the scholastic one" («πράγματα ἐνάντια τῆς φιλοσοφίας καὶ τῆς θεολογίας, καὶ μάλιστα τῆς σχολαστικῆς»); iii. "But you cite your Saint Thomas to argue that the Apostles saw the divinity of Christ in the way we see with our own eyes; [...] but the word of Saint Thomas does not find a counterpart to us [mean. the Orthodox]" («Μὰ μοῦ λέγεις μὲ τὸν ἅγιόν σου Θωμᾶν πὼς οἱ Ἀπόστολοι εἶδαν τὴν θεότητα τοῦ Χριστοῦ μὲ τὸν τρόπον ὁποῦ καὶ ἡμεῖς

used his controversy with the Jesuits and the discussion on the nature of the Tabor Light as an occasion to highlight those points that both the “Eastern and Western” Fathers of the Church had managed to converge and agree. Through this model of theological conciliation among the Latin and Greek authorities of the ancient Church, Vlachos promoted the position that during that early phase of Christianity the true meaning of the religion was dogmatically and immutably established. His purpose to define and clarify the correct Christian doctrines, based on the teachings of both the Greek and Latin Fathers, is further revealed in the following citation:

“therefore, the whole specification and tribulation for us is to prove that the divine ecclesiastical Doctors of the Church, both Eastern and Western, consider this wondrous Light of Transfiguration to be uncreated.”

«Ὅλη λοιπόν ἡ ἐπίδειξις καὶ ἡ δοκιμασία εἶναι νά δείξωμεν πῶς καί οἱ θεῖοι τῆς Ἐκκλησίας διδάσκαλοι, τόσον ἀνατολικοί ὥσάν καί δυτικοί, κρατοῦσιν ἄκτιστον τοῦτο τό θαυμάσιον φῶς τῆς μεταμορφώσεως.»²⁵¹

Following that particular model of thinking, Vlachos stated that he had always remained a strong supporter of the tradition, principles and teachings of the Orthodox Church. Nevertheless, he felt the need to clarify that he did not defend uncritically any form of the Orthodox faith, but that he naturally leaned in favor of the “correct” Christian doctrines, and not exclusively Orthodox or Catholic; “thus, I move the pen in order to support the correct doctrines of the holy Church, revealing the appeal I have to the correct doctrines, and the odium which everyone should justly show against the prosecutors of Christians”.²⁵² Having proved in this treatise and in the rest of his writings (philosophical and theological textbooks, rhetorical and homiletic manuals, sermons) that he not only knew but also adopted the teachings of the early Latin Fathers, Vlachos remained steadfast in his responsibility as an Orthodox clergyman to safeguard and protect his faith and its elements from attempts of distortion and initiatives for extreme neoterisms, which were not founded or followed the firmly fixed doctrines of the early Church. His phrase “prosecutors of Christians” is indicative of his perception on the perils that threatened his contemporary Christianity. In addition to the non-Christian believers

θεωροῦμεν μὲ τὰ ἀμμάτιά μας: [...] μὰ δὲν ἔχει νά κάμει ὁ λόγος τοῦ ἀγίου Θωμᾶ πρὸς ἡμᾶς»); see Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 127, 129, 144.

²⁵¹ Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 132.

²⁵² *«Κινῶ, λοιπόν, τὸν κάλαμον εἰς ὑπεράσπισιν τῶν ὀρθῶν δογμάτων τῆς Ἁγίας Ἐκκλησίας, φανερόντων τὴν ἔφεσιν ὅπου ἔχω εἰς τὰ ὀρθὰ δόγματα καὶ τὸ μίσος ὃ δικαίως πρέπει καθένας νά τρέφῃ ἐναντίον τῶν χριστιανοκατηγόρων»); see Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 124.*

(basically the followers of Islam and Judaism), the Cretan prelate was also referring to internal “enemies” of the Church. Taking into consideration that in his lifetime Vlachos officially recognized as true Christians only the Orthodox and the Catholics, one can assume that he would express aversion against the confessions that had been born in the Protestant Reformation; the relatively conservative current of ecclesiastics he belonged to, his acquaintance with numerous Catholics but none Protestant, and furthermore, as it will become obvious later, the anti-Protestant character of his library justify his characterization if not as a conscious anti-Protestant, at least as not a compatible pro-Protestant.

However, Vlachos was not willing to show the same discreetness against the so-called Uniates, the Greeks who were in communion with the Catholic Church, although they continued to preserve the Orthodox rite and canon law.²⁵³ The model of Unia, first established in the aftermath of the Sack of Constantinople in 1204, was intensified after the Council of Florence in 1439 and during the Catholic Reformation it reached its highest point. Its members, although officially were presented to be Orthodox and followed the Orthodox liturgical rite, in reality they obtained a dual confessional nature, being also not mere Catholics. The Uniates were confronted by the Orthodox Patriarchates and flock as apostates in the service of the Catholic Church to distract the Orthodox of the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean region from their faith and gradually place them under the sphere of papal influence. During the 17th century the Unia expanded rapidly in the regions of Ruthenia (1646), Moldavia and Wallachia (1649), Dalmatia and Transylvania (second half of the 17th cent.). Moreover, cores of Uniates were formed in the Orthodox communities of the Ottoman Empire in mainland Greece and the Aegean Islands. A similar scheme of high aspiration took place also in the Greek Community of Venice during the period 1690-1710, when the Archbishop of Philadelphia Meletios Typaldos (1648-1713), successor in the throne of Gerasimos Vlachos, attempted without success to found a kind of Uniate Greek Church under his

²⁵³ Georgios D. Metallinos (ed.): *H Oυνία Χθες και Σήμερα*. Αρμός, Athens 1992; Bruce R. Berglund, Brian Porter-Szűcs (eds.): *Christianity and Modernity in Eastern Europe*. Central European Press. Budapest 2010, p. 215. For a modern approach to Meletios Typaldos' initiatives, see Theodoros Roussopoulos: “Identity disputes and politics at the end of the 17th century: the Archbishop Meletios Typaldos and his conflicting relations with the Greek Confraternity of Venice”. PhD diss. University of Edingburgh 2015.

authority, consisting of all the Orthodox communities of the Venetian Republic, and eventually become in full communion with the Catholic Church.

In his accusations against Unia, the Cretan prelate referred to three, notorious among the Orthodox, ecclesiastical figures who were either converted to Catholicism or remained fervent supporters of it. First was the Byzantine official and eminent scholar Demetrios Kydones (1324–c.1397). In the period of the great Ottoman expansion which threatened the survival of the Eastern Roman Empire, Demetrios Kydones promoted the support from Latin Europe, mainly from the papacy, as the only effective solution. In his attempt to obtain and promote a wider familiarity of his compatriots with the Latin theological tradition, he and his younger brother Phochoros proceeded to the Greek translations of works by Thomas Aquinas, Augustine and Anselm.²⁵⁴ Second case was the Catholic theologian Petros Arkoudios from Corfu (c.1562–1633), one of the first students in the Greek College of Saint Athanasius in Rome. In 1613 he was conversed to Catholicism, devoting his later life and voluminous works to the support of the Catholic Church and the promotion of its supremacy in the Christian world.²⁵⁵ Lastly, Vlachos did not neglect to mention his compatriot Ioannis Matthaïos Karyofyllos (1566–1633). Born in a province near Chania, Karyofyllos was also a student in the Greek College of Saint Athanasius in Rome and a fervent Catholic. Although he returned to his homeland working for the conversion of his Orthodox compatriots, the latter's ferocious reactions against him forced him to flee to Rome, where he eventually obtained the office of the titular Archbishop of Iconium.²⁵⁶ According to the *Obfuscation*, the aforementioned figures as members of a wider network of pro-Catholic or Catholic Greek scholarly ecclesiastics, had proceeded in unfair accusations and constant subversion of the Orthodox faith, its rite and its main medieval and early modern authorities, especially Saint Gregory Palamas. In absolute condemnation Vlachos did not hesitate to state that such kind of Christians were to be considered

²⁵⁴ Frances Kianka: "Demetrius Cydones (c.1324–c.1397): Intellectual and Diplomatic Relations between Byzantium and the West in the Fourteenth Century". PhD diss. Fordham University 1981.

²⁵⁵ Gerhard Podskalsky: *Griechische Theologie in der Zeit der Türkenherrschaft (1453–1821). Die Orthodoxie im Spannungsfeld der nachreformatorischen Konfessionen des Westens*. C. H. Beck. München 1988 (*Η Ελληνική Θεολογία επί Τουρκοκρατίας 1453-1821. Η Ορθοδοξία στη Σφαίρα Επιρροής των Δυτικών Δογμάτων μετά τη Μεταρρύθμιση*). Translated by Georgios D. Metallinos. Μορφωτικό Ίδρυμα Εθνικής Τραπέζης. Athens 2005, p. 212-216.

²⁵⁶ Podskalsky: *Ελληνική Θεολογία*, p. 241-243.

neither as Orthodox or Catholics, but confessional hybrids unwelcomed to both the Churches:

“the detestable apostate Arkoudios along with the obnoxious Karyofyllos had oftentimes expressed aspersions against this blessed Father [mean. Gregory Palamas] and had indited writings against him. [...] And do not refer to people like Arkoudios and Demetrios Kydones and Karyofyllos, whose mention seems repugnant due to their cunning, and who were neither Latins, nor Romaioi, but horse-centaurs and neutral; and in whom neither we Romaioi believe, nor you Latins.”

«καί ὁ τρισάθλιος ἀποστάτης Ἀρκούδιος καί ὁ πολυκάκιστος Καρυόφυλλος πολλές συκοφαντίας κατά τοῦ μακαρίου τούτου πατρός ἐπολλομελέτησαν καί διά γράμματα κατ' αὐτοῦ διετύπωσαν. [...] Καί μὴ μᾶς φέρνεις τοὺς Ἀρκουδίους καί τοὺς Δημητρίους τοὺς Κυδώνας καί τοὺς Καρυοφύλλους, ὧν ἡ μνήμη ἀἴδιος ἐπὶ πονηρία, ὅπου δὲν ἦτανε μήτε Λατίνοι μήτε Ρωμαῖοι, μὰ ἵπποκένταυροι καί οὐδέτεροι, τῶν ὁποίων μήτε ἡμεῖς οἱ Ρωμαῖοι πιστεύομεν, μήτε ἡ ἀφεντιά σας, οἱ Λατίνοι.»²⁵⁷

Having extensively and meticulously unfolded the positions of the Orthodox Church on the subject of the nature of the Tabor Light, along with his personal concern on the critical responsibility of the clergy of both the Catholic and the Orthodox side to maintain in their souls, minds and in their public discourse the correct doctrines, those that came from and had been established by the ancient Fathers of the Church,²⁵⁸ Vlachos did not hesitate to criticize Richard directly, accusing him for deliberate distortion of the teachings and principles of the Orthodox faith during his mission in Santorini. In this context, he firmly advised the Jesuit monk to avoid from then forward to revile “our nation, because it is respected and comes from ancient honors and modern praises”, but which “endures starvation, thirst, persecutions and sufferings, slavery and intolerable bondage for the love of Christ” and nevertheless remained loyal to “our holy Doctors’ doctrines, avoiding the scholastic queries”.²⁵⁹ Attributing to Richard an attempt to create, through a purely theological question, social and religious unrest in the small society of Santorini, a tactic that the Cretan scholar seems to have considered as well-established in the Catholic missionaries who acted in the Orthodox communities of the

²⁵⁷ Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 131, 151-152.

²⁵⁸ For the use of the patristic literal tradition in early modern theological argumentation, see Hans Urs von Balthasar: *Retrieving the Tradition: The Fathers, the Scholastics, and Ourselves*. Catholic University of America Press. Washington DC 1997; Esther Chung-Kim: *Inventing Authority. The Use of the Church Fathers in Reformation Debates over the Eucharist*. Baylor University Press. Waco, Texas 2011.

²⁵⁹ «τό γένος μας, διατί εἶναι τίμιον καί ἀπό παλαιᾶς τιμῆς καί καύχησης νέες, [...] ὑπομένει πείναν, δίψαν, διωγμούς καί πάθη, δουλείαν καί ζυγὸν ἀνυποφόρητον διὰ τὴν ἀγάπην τοῦ Χριστοῦ [...] εἰς τὰς ἀπόφασες τῶν ἁγίων μας διδασκάλων καί φεύγοντας τὰς σχολαστικὰς ἐξέτασεις»; see Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 127.

Eastern Mediterranean, Vlachos was presented extremely concerned that the Jesuits would soon drag the local population not only of Santorini but of the general Orthodox East into serious internal conflicts and inevitable disruption; that is why he firmly remarked addressing Richard that “I do not stop urging you to come to the side of the Saints and cease trying to distort God’s people and create confusion”.²⁶⁰ At the same time, he did not forget to address directly to the Orthodox flock of Santorini – but also in a wider range – in order to advise them to desist from being guided or controlled by people and situations that did not serve the Church but wished to divide its flock. To contradict the teachings of those “impostures and deceivers of faith”, Vlachos promoted the word of the ancient Church Fathers as the highest and only original authority of religion and faith. In an attempt to persuade his Orthodox readers to avoid the influence and argumentation of the missionaries, he vividly stated the following:

“As genuine children of the body of Christ, let us not listen to different voices but only to that of Sunday and of its imitators, these are the divine Doctors of the Church; let us be content to their word, let us hold them and believe them. Therefore, I, as the most humble servant of the followers of Christ, urge you for the love of God to avoid the sheep-looking wolves, who have the form of sheep but the temper of wolves; the latter murder not the bodies but the souls and, after luring the naive and simple sheep outside the modest paddock of the Holy Church, they strangle them. [...] Remain steady to the paternal doctrines; remain confident to Orthodoxy; love the sorrowful word of Christ; show reverence to His humble Church; worship the Saints whom your ancestors respected; honor the established fasts; do not turn away from the Holy Doctors of the Church; sing the Holy Triodion; anathematize those who are anathematized; remember those who are to be eternally remembered; send away the obfuscation of the false believers.”

«ὡσάν γνήσια τέκνα τοῦ πληρώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ νὰ μὴν γροικοῦμεν ἑτέρας φωνῆς, ἀλλ’ ἢ μόνῃς τῆς κυριακῆς καὶ τῶν αὐτῆς μιμητῶν, τῶν θείων τῆς Ἐκκλησίας διδασκάλων καὶ εἰς ἐκείνων τοὺς λόγους νὰ ἀρκοῦμεσθαι, ἐκείνους νὰ κρατοῦμεν καὶ νὰ πιστεύομεν. Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἐγὼ ὡς δοῦλος ἐλάχιστος τῶν μιμητῶν τοῦ Χριστοῦ διὰ τοὺς οἰκτιρμοὺς τοῦ Θεοῦ παρακαλῶ φεύγετε τοὺς προβατοσχήμους λύκους, οἱ ὅποιοι ἔχουσιν ὄψιν προβάτων, ἀλλὰ διάθεσιν λύκων φονευόντων ὄχι τὰ σώματα, μὰ τὰς ψυχὰς καὶ ἐβγάνοντας τὰ ἄκακα καὶ ἀπλὰ πρόβατα ἔξω τῆς ταπεινῆς μάνδρας τῆς Ἁγίας Ἐκκλησίας τὰ καταπνίγουσι. [...] Στέκετε στερεοὶ εἰς τὰ πατρικὰ δόγματα· στέκετε βέβαιοι εἰς τὴν ὀρθοδοξίαν· ἀγαπᾶτε τὸν τεθλιμμένον λόγον τοῦ Ἰησοῦ· εὐλαβεῖσθε τὴν ταπεινὴν τοῦ Ἐκκλησίαν· προσκυνᾶτε τοὺς ἁγίους ὅπου οἱ πρόγονοί σας ἐσέβουνταν· τὲς κατ’ ἔθος νηστεῖες τιμᾶτε· τοὺς ἁγίους τῆς Ἐκκλησίας διδασκάλους μὴν ἀποστρέφεσθε· τὸ ἅγιον Τριῶδιον ψάλλετε· τοὺς ἀναθεματισμένους ἀναθεματίζετε· τοὺς αἰωνίως μνημονεομένους μνημονεύετε· τὴν σκοτοδίνην τῶν μὴ ὀρθῶς φρονούντων ἀποδιώχθητε.»²⁶¹

²⁶⁰ «καὶ δὲν σχολάζω μὲ τὴν ὁρεξίν ὅλην νὰ τὴν παρακαλῶ νὰ ἐλθεῖ μὲ τοὺς ἁγίους καὶ νὰ μὴν γυρεύει νὰ διαστρέφει τὸν λαὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ νὰ κάμνει σύγχυσις»; see Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 151.

²⁶¹ Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 121-122.

In addition to the purely theological content and ideological endings that defined the *Obfuscation*, its author successfully attempted to supply it with yet another feature, that of the historical conjuncture and the political intervention. In his treatise Vlachos did not just worked in order to restore the prestige and theological authority of his Church, but also to highlight the unity of the faith that needed to define all the correct believers, Catholic and Orthodox, in the name of the ancient church principles and doctrines. Therefore, his treatise had many recipients; not only the Orthodox of Santorini or the local Jesuit missionaries, but also his own compatriots in Candia, both Cretans and Venetians. Similar to the causes and purposes that prompted him to compose his “*Response on the Terirem*” in the context of his theological discussion with the *Provveditore Generale* Badoer, and almost four years later Vlachos once more took a step and worked in the common service of the *Signoria* and his homeland. The siege of Candia was entering a cruel and long-lasting phase, the morale of the defenders had suffered numerous setbacks and Venice was already on the threshold of her religious and political submission to the Pope, almost half a century after her imposing severance from Rome during the Interdict of 1605.²⁶²

Indeed, already from the 1570s and due to the then intense developments in the Catholic world in the context of the Catholic Reformation, the Papacy firmly demanded to acquire the unconditional loyalty and compliance, ecclesiastical and political, of all Christian polities in Latin Europe. Unwilling to undermine her generally liberal policies or to endanger the relevant socio-political and confessional stability in her State, the *Serenissima* openly confronted the Pope’s aspirations in a controversy that lasted until the early 17th century. Among the numerous reasons for her insurgency (the authority of the State on ecclesiastical property, the trials of criminal clergymen under state courts, e.t.c.), the preservice of the confessional freedoms and tolerance the Orthodox subjects of the Republic used to enjoy was highlighted as a central factor. Considering Venice’s discreet detachment from the papal chariot as a direct act of disrespect to his supremacy and as a dangerous provocation, Pope Paul V (1550–1621) called upon the Venetian government in 1605 to officially submit to the Vatican’s demands or undergo excommunication and the imposition of an interdict. The negotiations that followed, in

²⁶² Bouwsma: *Venice*, p. 335, 383-387, 417-418, 568-569.

which the Servite priest Paolo Sarpi (1552–1623) was employed as the major spokesman and counselor of the Venetian government, failed and the ecclesiastical penalties went into effect. The *Serenissima* remained under excommunication and its territories under interdict from May 1606 to April 1607.

In retaliation, Venice expelled the papal orders from her territories, first the Jesuits and soon the Capuchins and the Theatines. The expulsion of the Jesuits was followed by a decree banishing them permanently from the Republic, while it became forbidden to any Venetian subject to maintain relation or contact with them. The Venetians were indeed convinced that a defeat in this controversy would mean the loss of their independence and the deprivation of their vivid and productive contact with the non-Catholic world, a dare scenario for their economy, culture, ideological identity and political existence. Nevertheless, Rome took a longer view of things, certain that she would prevail in the end. Indeed, half a century later, starting from 1656 and under the urgent pressure of the ongoing War of Candia, a series of demeaning negotiations between the Republic and the Apostolic See were inaugurated. In front of the visible peril to lose her most precious colony, the once irrevocable Republic chose to abandon her independent secular politics and subordinate her own interests to the general needs and aspirations of Christendom as perceived and interpreted by the Pope. Eventually, an agreement between the two sides was reached, paving the way for the reappearance of the Jesuit missionaries in the territories of the *Serenissima* in January 1657.

Not more than four years before Venice's official submission to the papal demands for influence and conversion in the Orthodox communities under her dominion, Gerasimos Vlachos could indeed foresee the *Signoria's* upcoming retreat and the inevitable Jesuits' systematic arrival in warring Candia. Above all, the Cretan prelate was deeply concerned about possible confessional contradictions between the missionaries and the Orthodox defenders of his homeland, which could easily lead to generalized social conflicts, military distraction and eventually utter chaos; such a dare condition would imperil the spiritual and military consensus among the Christians, both Orthodox and Catholic. Therefore, in an attempt to prevent his worst fears come true, he anxiously beseeched Richard to:

“teach, if you want, [in Santorini] the Holy Gospel with love, just like we do here [in Crete], and the Latin masters are aware of our teachings and we are aware of theirs, showing the most reverence and concord, and both communities praise God by one faith, by one baptism, abandoning the scholastic and political differences, which do not

give birth to concord, but to conflict and enmity, from which the sacred purpose of the Holy Gospel, that is peace and love, does not emerge, but separation and discord, whose conclusion is nothing more than hell and scandal.”

«Μὰ θέλει διδάσκει [στή Σαντορίνη] τὸ ἱερὸν εὐαγγέλιον μὲ ἀγάπην, ὡσὰν ἐδῶ [στήν Κρήτη] κάμνομεν, καὶ οἱ ἀφέντες οἱ Λατῖνοι γροικοῦσιν τὲς διδαχές μας, καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐκείνων μὲ πολλὴν εὐλάβειαν καὶ ὁμόνοϊαν, καὶ δοξάζεται ὁ Θεὸς καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦς δύο λαοὺς μὲ μίαν πίστιν, μὲ ἓνα βάπτισμα, ἀφήνοντας τὲς σχολαστικὲς καὶ πολιτικὲς διαφορὲς ὅπου δὲν γεννοῦσι συμφωνίαν, μὰ πάλιν καὶ ἔχθραν, ἀπὸ τὲς ὁποῖες δὲν τελειώνεται ὁ ἱερὸς σκοπὸς τοῦ ἁγίου εὐαγγελίου, ἡ εἰρήνη καὶ ἡ ἀγάπη, μὰ διαμερισμὸς καὶ διχόνοια, τῶν ὁποίων τὸ τέλος δὲν εἶναι παρὰ κόλασις καὶ σκάνδαλον.»²⁶³

By visualizing the social and religious coexistence of the two Christian communities in his contemporary city of Candia, by referring to the common worship and celebrations, by highlighting the mutual respect and cooperation of Orthodox and Catholics, the author of the *Obfuscation* wished to create an imitation model for the residents of Santorini, both the locals and the missionaries, to follow. In his effort to convince both sides of the sincere tolerance and mutual comprehension that was necessary to prevail in those turbulent and critical times, he did not hesitate to put himself as an example of a tripartite model of the early modern Christian, holder of deep religious piety, genuine interconfessional respect and acute political intuition: “I am Romaïos, pious and warm, but without distinction I worship both the Eastern and the Western Saints, as I do not want to have any of them opposing me during the Last Judgment”.²⁶⁴ Gerasimos Vlachos could indeed find the balance between his personal steadfast faith to the Orthodox Church, its Saints, doctrines and rite, the interconfessional respect and conciliation with the Catholic confession and its tradition, and finally the historical priority of his time, that was the defense of his homeland, and those factors (political and religious) that would determine it.

2.5. “*Triumph Against the Reign of the Turks*” (1657): The common faith in the service of diplomacy

“We put our faith to Spain / and in the massive ships of Venice / to come and with their sword to kill the Turk, / to recapture the Kingdom and return it to us. / We hope for the blond nations to save us / arriving from Muscovy to set us free. / We put our hope to the oracles, in the pseudo-prophecies / and we waste our time on empty talks. / We place

²⁶³ Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 152.

²⁶⁴ «Εγὼ εἶμαι Ῥωμαῖος εὐσεβὴς καὶ θερμός, ἀλλὰ ἀδιαφόρως προσκυνῶ καὶ ἀνατολικούς καὶ δυτικούς ἁγίους, δὲν θέλωντας νὰ ἔχω κανένα ἀντίδικον ἐν ὥρᾳ τῆς Κρίσεως»; Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 127.

our hope to the north winds / that they will relieve us from the trap of the Turks / and we have as our foundation the spider's web, / the snow and the sea and the water from the rime."

«Ὅπ' ἔχομεν τὸ θάρρος μας μέσα εἰς τὴν Σπανίαν / κ' εἰς τὰ χοντρά τὰ κάτεργα ποὺ 'ναι στὴ Βενετίαν / νὰ ἔλθωσι μὲ τὸ σπαθὶ τὸν Τοῦρκο νὰ σκοτώσουν / νὰ πάρουν τὸ βασίλειον καὶ μᾶς νὰ μᾶς τὸ δώσουν. / Ἐλπίζομεν κ' εἰς τὰ ξανθὰ γένη νὰ μᾶς γλυτώσουν, / νὰ 'λθοῦν ἀπὸ τὸ Μόσχοβον νὰ μᾶς ἐλευθερώσουν. / Ἐλπίζομεν εἰς τοὺς χρησμούς, σταῖς ψευδοπροφητείαις / καὶ τὸν καιρὸν μας χάνομεν σταῖς ματαιολογίαις. / Εἰς τὸν βορὰν, τὸν ἄνεμον ἔχομεν τὴν ἐλπίδα / νὰ πάρουν ἀπὸ πάνω μας τῶν Τούρκων τὴν παγίδα, / καὶ ἔχομεν θεμέλιον τὸ γνέμα τῆς ἀράχνης / τὸ χιόνι καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ τὸ νερὸν τῆς πάχνης.»²⁶⁵

In a biting and ironical way, the early modern bishop Matthaios Myreon (c.1550–1624) described in his 1618 *Lament of Constantinople* the high expectations the Orthodox subjects of the Ottoman Empire entertained during the early modern centuries addressing the Tsardom of Russia. Particularly during the outbreak of the War of Candia, numerous entreaties and appeals by Greek scholars and clerics addressed to Moscow, all remaining unanswered. Both Venice and the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople worked together during those turbulent times in an effort to approach the young, deeply pious Tsar Aleksey Mikhailovich and solicit his alliance. The *Serenissima* first approached the Tsar in spring 1647, when the Venetian ambassador in Warsaw, Giovanni Tiepolo, wrote to Tsar Aleksey informing him of the war in Crete and seeking for his military support; nevertheless, his appeal bore no fruit. Seven years later, in 1654, during the victorious war of Muscovy against the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Venice attempted once again through her representative, the ambassador Alberto Vimina da Ceneda, to persuade the Tsar to divert at least some of his military resources against the Turks, a task that again was abortive. Aleksey was however utterly interested in the case of Crete, even more in a scheme of a future alliance with Venice against the Sublime Porte, their common great enemy; therefore, he sent four diplomatic missions in the city of the Doges during the following fifteen years. Nevertheless, no alliance against the Turks was eventually concluded between Russia and Venice in Aleksey's lifetime.²⁶⁶

²⁶⁵ Stavros Gatsopoulos: «Ματθαῖος Μητροπολίτης Μυρέων, Ἑμμετρος Ἱστορία τοῦ Ματθαίου» στίχοι 2.318-2.765: «Θρῆνος τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως». In: *Ἡπειρωτικὴ Εστία* 116 (1961), p. 1061.

²⁶⁶ For the numerous diplomatic relations between Venice and Muscovy during the mid. 17th century, see Philip Longworth: "Russian-Venetian Relations in the Reign of Tsar Aleksey Mikhailovich". In: *The Slavonic and East European Review* 64^c (1986), p. 380-387.

In addition to the initiatives raised by the Republic, the Orthodox Church through various cases of eminent high clerics, contributed to the Russian interest in the Eastern Mediterranean region. In late 1649 the Patriarch of Jerusalem Paisios (in office 1645–1660) proceeded to an oral appeal to Aleksey urging him to intervene in the war in Crete. In 1653 the former Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople Athanasios Patellaros and his nephew Neophytos composed entreaties to the Tsar, addressing similar requests. One year before Gerasimos Vlachos undertook the duty to address to the Tsar, the scholarly ecclesiastic Paisios Ligarides (c.1610–1678) wrote in 1656 his own appeal to Aleksey. But Muscovy was not at all responsive at that time, due to the Tsardom's military engagement in the First (1654–1667) and the Second Northern War (1655–1660) against the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Swedish Empire respectively.²⁶⁷ When the time for Gerasimos Vlachos to contribute to this series of appeals arrived, the latter brought out all his skills and experience (diplomatic, military, rhetorical, intellectual, theological) in order to describe the dire conditions under which the Orthodox subjects of the Ottoman Empire lived and the great peril that his homeland, Crete, would soon suffer the same fate.

Although a detailed and systematic comparative study of the “*Triumph Against the Reign of the Turks*” with the earlier Greek entreaties and appeals to Moscow exceeds the scope of this study, a simple reading of that body of texts that compose and represent this specific literary tradition is enough to identify some common patterns used by their authors. These are the following: the placing of historical conjuncture in a broader ideological context at the limits of the early Christian historical view of the world; the interpretive question on the legitimacy of the Ottoman Empire as a world power in the context of a long, old but also modernized, eschatological tradition; the modern perspective and adaptation of a compact corpus of oracle-and-prophecy collections extending from the Book of Daniel to the collections of prophecies revised by Catholic and Orthodox scholars and ecclesiastics in the 16th and 17th century in Crete

²⁶⁷ For a historical overview of the entreaties and appeals sent to the Muscovite Court by Greek scholars during the 17th century, see Olga Alexandropoulou: «Το ρωσικό ταξίδι του Αθανάσιου Πατελλάρου και ο “Προτρεπτικός Λόγος” του προς τον τσάρο Αλέξιο (1653)». In: *Μνήμων* 21 (1999), 9-35. Unlike Paisios, Patellaros and Ligarides who all played a certain pivotal role in Russian-Greek ecclesiastical affairs, Gerasimos Vlachos did not have any further relations or contacts with the environment of Moscow. This may explain why his pamphlet did not raise the interest expected by its author; see Laskaridis: *Ρωσία*, p. 277.

and elsewhere; the still embryonic distinction and emergence of sacred-ecclesiastical and secular-political power as the earthly version of divine power, along with the connection of the two powers in the case of the Tsardom of Russia; the visualization of the declined position that the once mighty Eastern Roman Empire had fallen into, with the sins of the former Emperors, clergy and people having led their Orthodox descendants to be subjects of a non-Christian authority; the dire position of the Orthodox Church which from the high role of authority had been transformed into an administrative body in the service of the Sultan; the visualization of the Tsardom of Russia as the strongest Orthodox Christian military power; and the declaration of war against the Sublime Porte for the protection and preservation of Christian communities in the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean region. Particularly in the case of Gerasimos Vlachos, it is possible to detect a special initiative, not so common in the corpus of appeals to Russia at least by representatives of the Orthodox clergy; that is the issue of the alliances the Tsar was called upon to form in order to face the Ottoman threat. In this context, the superiority and priority of the Venetian Republic over the other Christian sovereigns of Latin Europe was to be highlighted, an initiative that reasonably derived from Vlachos' profound and consciously developed Venetian-Cretan ideological origins.²⁶⁸

Using his rhetorical skill, the Cretan scholar began his entreaty towards Aleksey with a series of inducements of a historical-theological nature in order to convince him of the appropriateness of the time to be activated and intervene in the affairs in the Eastern Mediterranean. More specifically, in the introduction of the *Triumph* and making use of his classical education, he paralleled himself with Isocrates and the Tsar with the king Philip of Macedonia; just as the ancient Greek orator had urged Philip to campaign against "the barbarian Persians",²⁶⁹ so Vlachos was to encourage Aleksey to

²⁶⁸ The original Greek copies of the *Triumph* remain undetected. A posterior copy, translated into Slavonic, is preserved in the Department of Manuscripts of the National Library of Saint Petersburg (Cod. 171, ff. 55-82). In this study, I relied on the Greek translation in Laskaridis: *Πωσία*, p. 303-324.

²⁶⁹ See Minor M. Markle: "Support of Athenian Intellectuals for Philip: A Study of Isocrates' Philippus and Speusippus' Letter to Philip". In: *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 96 (1976), p. 80-99. In his aforementioned manual on preaching (*Didaskalia*), Vlachos once more promoted the parallel knowledge of ancient Greek and Christian tradition; in a discussion on the power of speech, the Cretan prelate cited a series of sayings by Plato, Democritus and Iamblichus, confessing that he himself agreed with their views "despite the fact that they were pagans"; see Kourkoulas: *Ομιλητική*, p. 9.

“liberate the Helleno-Romans from the Ottoman oppression”. Through the dominant in the text religious-theological approach to both sacred and secular features that shaped the author’s contemporary reality, the latter argued that all things, including any form of earthly governance, authority and sovereign, derived and ended to God.²⁷⁰

Based on the model of the seven greatest empires in the history of the world, as described in the *Book of Revelation*, the Cretan scholar proceeded to his personal perception of the order of the world empires until his time: first he placed the Assyrian Empire of Tudiya, second the Persian of Cyrus II the Great, third the Macedonian of Alexander the Great, fourth the Roman of Ceasar Augustus, fifth the Eastern Roman of Constantine the Great and lastly, the Ottoman Empire of Mehmed the Conqueror; the latter held the reigns until Vlachos’ time. Therefore, the author’s conception of the history of the world was portrayed as a sequence of empires that reigned under God’s Will:

“Great was the power of the Assyrian dominion, but God gave it to Cyrus the Great who [...] established the great and powerful Persian Empire. However, God admirably favored Alexander the Great who led the united Macedonian army to a military campaign; thus, the Hellenes inaugurated the dominion of the great Hellenic Empire, which evolved into a world dominion. Then God favoured the Latins and confirmed to the Roman Caesar the authority of the great Latin Empire, which spread from the end of the East until the West. Then God made Constantine the Great, who was captivated by the faith of the fishermen and transferred the royal authority to Constantinople, the first king of the Christians; therefore, the Christian Empire of the Hellenes succeeded the powerful Helleno-Roman Empire. However, God granted the royal sceptre to Muhammad, coming from the House of Osman, who by holding the signs of reign extends and boasts.”²⁷¹

According to this model, the last ecumenical Empire – that of the Ottomans – was indeed established according to God’s will and it did not occur in contradiction to it, as an accomplishment, for example, of the Devil, an argument equally famous in the Orthodox entreaties. Therefore, Gerasimos Vlachos is presented to belong to those early modern scholars who had accepted the legitimacy of the Ottoman Empire as the

²⁷⁰ “God is the beginning of all things, that is why Gregory [of Nazianzus] exclaims in a multitude of his excellent orations: From God we begin and to God we end; because every kingdom derives from the Lord and every beginning from the Supreme Being. Everything starts from Him and to Him they head and end. He is the King of kings”; Laskaridis: *Πωσία*, p. 311.

²⁷¹ Laskaridis: *Πωσία*, p. 311-312. Apart from John’s *Revelation*, Vlachos’ approach was definitely influenced by the model of four ecumenical empires, described in chapters 10, 11 and 12 of the *Book of Daniel*, an utterly influential in early Christian, medieval and early modern centuries 2nd-century BCE biblical apocalypse; see John J. Collins, Peter W. Flint (eds.): *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception*. Vols. 2. Brill. Leiden 2001.

successor of the once omnipotent Eastern Roman Empire. This specific tendency culminated both in the Orthodox and Latin environment, mainly in the 16th and 17th centuries. European sovereigns such as the Kingdom of France, the Holy Roman Empire, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and more hesitantly the Republic of Venice had started gradually to view, if not the Sultan as the legitimate successor of Constantine the Great, at least the Ottoman Empire as their contemporary established ecumenical Empire.²⁷²

As modern scholarship proved, during the 16th and 17th centuries there were some Ottoman claims of imperial right, reinforced by the existence of underlying cultural or institutional continuities between the classical empires and the contemporary Ottoman one. Soon after the fall of Constantinople the Sultans were presented to claim to have inherited the rights of the Eastern Roman Empire. Regarding Süleyman the Magnificent, the eminent historiographer Paolo Giovio wrote in 1532: “I have heard from trustworthy people that he often says that the Empire of Rome and of the whole of the West belongs to him by right, as he is the legitimate successor of Emperor Constantine, who transferred the Empire to Constantinople”. Another testimony came from the political writer Scipione Ammirato who in 1594, addressing Pope Clement VIII, spoke the following: “the Ottomans claim that, because of the unbroken, uninterrupted succession of the Empire in Constantinople, they are the true successors of Caesar, the founder of the Roman Empire, and so they declare that the Empire of Rome, and of Italy, belongs to them by right”. Nevertheless, Vlachos rushed to justify his legitimization of the Ottoman Empire by expressing his certainty to the Tsar that the Empire, as all earthly sovereigns, had made her circle and that in the time of Aleksey she was in the threshold of her end:

“as God granted the Hagarenes the right to reign, according to His divine habits and His divine providence”, the time had come to deprive them of their sovereignty and offer the ecumenical power to “a new Empire and a Christian Emperor who would prevail over the Hagarenes [mean. the sons of Hagar, the Ottomans].”²⁷³

²⁷² For both citations, see Malcolm: *Useful enemies*, p. 67. For the issue of legitimacy of the Ottoman Empire, see Konstantinos Moustakas: “Byzantine ‘Visions’ of the Ottoman Empire: Theories of Ottoman Legitimacy by Byzantine Scholars after the Fall of Constantinople”. In: Angeliki Lymberopoulou (ed.): *Images of the Byzantine World: Visions, Messages and Meanings. Studies Presented to Leslie Brubaker*. Ashgate. Surrey & Burlington 2011, p. 215-229; Henry R. Shapiro: “Legitimizing the Ottoman Sultanate in Early Modern Greek”. In: *Journal of Turkish Studies* 42 (2014), p. 285-316.

²⁷³ Laskaridis: *Πωσία*, p. 312.

Therefore, the author of the *Triumph* did not hesitate to proclaim Aleksey as the new Christian Emperor and the Tsardom of Russia as the new ecumenical empire.

An heir of a long Christian tradition of oracles and prophecies, Vlachos then made an extended use of this practice in order to demonstrate to the Tsar the appropriateness of the time for the restoration of a Christian ecumenical empire in the world. This notion, sometimes exclusively prophetic and sometimes also eschatological, was an widespread *topos* already before the Fall of Constantinople in 1453, particularly common in both Latin and Greek literature. The ideological implications of those texts naturally reached the early modern centuries, and influenced the early modern perceptions of the historical course of the human kind, of the socio-political changes and the fragile balances of the secular and sacred sovereigns and authorities. It is particularly important that the prophetic Christian discourse had spread and flourished, among others, within the Tsardom of Russia, with Orthodox ecclesiastical and political circles increasingly referring to this tradition in an attempt to validate their narrative as successors and new leaders of Eastern Christianity. Especially in the Orthodox theological tradition, this corpus of writings derived from the ancient prophecies in the *Book of Revelation* and developed inside the Byzantine imperial environment as eschatological conceptions of the eventual fall of Constantinople, the rise and decline of the reign of “the sons of Ismael” (that is the Ottoman Empire) and the succeeding rise of the last Christian Roman (mean. Orthodox) King “who would hand the keys of the earth to Christ, inaugurating the end of the world and the beginning of the Last Judgement”.²⁷⁴ Vlachos focused on the last part of the oracle tradition, that was the rise of a new Christian King who would defeat the then ruling Ottoman Empire and reclaim the ecumenical authority of Christianity. Before entering his main six-prophecy line of argumentation, the Cretan scholar introduced his subject with the clarification to the extremely pious Aleksey that ever since the pre-Christian antiquity the kings never

²⁷⁴ See Paul J. Alexander, Dorothy deF Abrahamse (eds.): *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*. University of California Press. Berkeley 1985; Benjamin Lellouch, Stephanie Yerasimos (eds.): *Les Traditions Apocalyptiques au Tournant de la Chute de Constantinople, Actes de la Table Ronde d' Istanbul (13–14 April 1996)*. Paris 1999. Based on new evidence by modern scholarship, it is possible that Vlachos was familiar with the collections of oracles and prophecies composed in Crete during the 16th century by the eminent Veneto-Cretan scholar Francesco Barozzi (c.1537–1604) and his circle; see in detail Nikos Kastrinakis: «Εικονογραφημένοι χρησμοί του Λέοντος του Σοφού. Από τη βυζαντινή εποχή στην πρώτη έντυπη έκδοση (1596)». PhD diss. University of Crete 2018. Vol. 1: p. 449-532; Vol. 2: p. 720-808.

declared war without receiving a divine premonition and without invoking the favor of God. Therefore, the author of the *Triumph* intended to demonstrate to the Tsar the godly signs which confirmed that the time had come for a new Empire to lead.

As his first authority, Vlachos cited the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* (7th cent.).²⁷⁵ The *Apocalypse* had indeed shaped and strongly influenced the Christian eschatological tradition until the early modern period. The work had been known to the Russians fragmentarily already from the 12th and 13th centuries, while the whole text was introduced in their religious tradition during the following century. In his own version of the original text, the Cretan scholar firstly presented the catastrophic course of the descendants of Ismael who would declare a devastating war against the other kingdoms and would turn to the Eastern Roman Empire, finally conquering all her lands and establishing a long-time and dire siege against Constantinople. The residents of the city would address to God who would eventually sympathize with them; the “King of the Hellenes”, who Vlachos identified as Tsar Aleksey, would rise and defeat the “Hagarenes”, inaugurating the rebirth of the Christian Empire:

“Ishmael will come as fire burning everything. [...] he will loot islands and coasts, and then he will turn against Byzantium, whose cities he will destroy; and for the first time he will set his tent against you, Vize [mean. Constantinople], and start the war. [...] The City on the Seven Hills, tortured by Ishmael, will scream in pain, and then a voice from the sky will exclaim: your punishment is enough. And then the Lord will lift slavery from the Romaioi and put it in the heart of the Ishmaelites, and the Romaioi will punish their besiegers. [...] Then the King of the Hellenes, that is the Romaioi, will suddenly rise in great anger and, after his enthusiastic speech, the Hagarenes will be eliminated and the Christians will be reborn.”²⁷⁶

According to the second prophecy Vlachos used, known by the name of *The Red Apple*, the Ottomans would indeed rule Constantinople only for a certain period of time, which in the symbolic language of the prophecy was defined as twelve years. In his interpretation, the Cretan scholar linked the twelve years with the twelve Sultans that had ruled the Empire from the fall of Constantinople in 1453 until the author’s times.

²⁷⁵ Willem J. Aerts, Georg A. Kortekaas (eds.): *Die Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius. Die ältesten Griechischen und Lateinischen Übersetzungen*. Vols. 2. Peeters. Leuven 1998; Benjamin Garstad (ed.): *Pseudo-Methodius, Apocalypse. With an Alexandrian World Chronicle*. Harvard University Press. Cambridge, Massachusetts 2012. For a modern interpretation, see Nikolas Pissis: «Αποκαλυπτικός λόγος και συλλογικές ταυτότητες, 17^{ος}-18^{ος} αι.». In: Konstantinos A. Dimadis (ed.): *Ταυτότητες στον ελληνικό κόσμο (από το 1204 έως σήμερα)*. Vol. 3. Ευρωπαϊκή Εταιρεία Νεοελληνικών Σπουδών. Athens 2011, p. 687-695.

²⁷⁶ Laskaridis: *Πωσία*, p. 318-319.

He then firmly stated that during the reign of the thirteenth Sultan, that was Mehmed IV (1642–1693), the Christian forces would confront his armies and end victorious; among those forces the Tsardom of Russia would be expected, if not to lead, at least to participate:

“The twelve years stand for the twelve Turkish kings; during the reign of the thirteenth king, the sword of the Christians will rise against him and destroy him. Indeed, during our period, the thirteenth king of the Turks reign in Constantinople; to this day there were the following Turkish kings in Constantinople: first Muhammad, second Vayazit, third Selim, fourth Suleiman, fifth Selim, son of Suleiman, sixth Murad, seventh Mehmed, eighth Ahmet, ninth Mustafa, tenth Osman, eleventh Murad, twelfth Ibrahim, thirteenth Mehmed who now, according to Muhammad's prophecy, is time to be ceased.”²⁷⁷

The third prophecy derived from the oracles that were traditionally attributed to Emperor Leo VI the Wise (866–912),²⁷⁸ according to which the Ottomans would firstly occupy all the lands of the Eastern Roman Empire. Then a massive Christian army would declare war against them and eventually force them to retrieve in the East, while the “blond nation” would take over Constantinople. Vlachos identified the Muscovites as the popular in the oracle tradition “blond nation”, while depicting the Venetian Republic as the Tsardom’s most precious ally:

“In the eighth indiction, Ishmael will occupy Peloponnese; in the ninth indiction he will occupy the northern regions where he will show his entire wrath, and in the tenth indiction he will defeat the Dalmatians. After a long time once more he will raise a great war against the Dalmatians and will defeat them partly. Then a large crowd of men and races from the West will raise war from the sea and the land and defeat Ishmael. The descendants of Ishmael will reign for a while on very few territories, the blond nation and their allies will defeat Ishmael, and with all privileges they will occupy the City on the Seven Hills.”²⁷⁹

The fourth prophecy was taken from the Sibylline Oracles, and specifically from the eighth book of the Erythrean Sibyl. According to the ancient Greek and Latin mythological tradition, the name Sibyls defined a group of twelve women who lived in different times and with their oracles revealed the will of the gods to the people. Vlachos’ choice to use the Sibylline Oracles in his argumentation should not be viewed

²⁷⁷ Laskaridis: *Ρωσία*, p. 319. Vlachos’ knowledge of Ottoman history and religion would be presented clearly and in details during his stay in Corfu, when he composed his anti-Islamic polemical treatise “*On Muhammad’s Religion and Against the Turks*”.

²⁷⁸ Kastinakis: *Εικονογραφημένοι χρησμοί*. Part 2, p. 548-559.

²⁷⁹ Laskaridis: *Ρωσία*, p. 320. For the narrative of the blond nation, see Nikolas Pissis: «Χρησιμολογία και ρωσική προσδοκία». In: *Σλάβοι και Ελληνικός Κόσμος: Πρακτικά Α'. Επιστημονικής Ημερίδας Τμήματος Σλαβικών Σπουδών*. National & Kapodistrian University of Athens. Athens 2012), p. 149-168.

as an odd decision, regarding his Christian origins and his priesthood. In fact, he followed a long tradition consisting of eminent figures from the classic Antiquity and Christian history, who had made extensive use in their writings of the Sibyls' prophecies (Plato, Iamblichus, Porphyry, Cicero, Pliny the Elder, Tacitus, Virgil, Strabo, Justin, Eusebius of Caesarea, Clement of Alexandria, Jerome, Augustine of Hippo). Following the words of the Sibyl, a time of great turbulence would eventually threaten the Roman Empire, which would be forced to face a powerful enemy from Asia; the latter would at first stand out victorious; but afterwards a great beast would appear and the dog would devour the lion and deprive the shepherd of his scepter. Vlachos identified the Ottomans as the dog, the Venetians as the lion and the Tsardom of Russia as the great beast from the oracle:

“Woe to me, the cursed one, when I see the day which will turn against the Romans and much more against all Latins, who have obeyed the secret advice coming from the Asian land; the advice of those who, while climbing the stairs of Troy, will fall in wrath. And for the Isthmus that worthily flows will come a time when it will be blocked and will cease to take care of everything. And then the great beast will pass through the black blood, then the dog will exterminate the lion and will deprive the shepherd from his scepter and he will descend to Hades. [...] God will bring as the great beast, you, the great Tsar Aleksey. [...] The dog is the Hagarenes, who will eventually contribute to the emergence of the Lion, the serene Doge of Venice, in favor of whom a good omen is established.”²⁸⁰

The fifth prophecy was based on a marble inscription in the city of Trieste in northeastern Italy: “When the future supreme ruler comes, grief to you, City on the Seven Hills, since you will swim in your own blood, and the Lion will chase the Turk back to Jerusalem”. Once more the Cretan scholar recognized the aforementioned supreme ruler in the face of Aleksey and the *Serenissima* as the Lion that would hunt down the Ottomans. The last prophecy originated from Vlachos' homeland, since it was uttered by a 17th-century Orthodox Cretan monk named Daniel. The latter envisioned a terrifying fate for both Constantinople, whose “beautiful walls will fall, and the young man of the oracle will not reside within it because of the human stench”, and Crete where a series of natural disasters would take place and numerous people would suffer a cruel death. Nevertheless, according to Daniel, eventually the “sleeping snake” would awake and defeat the Ottomans, who would leave Constantinople by force in the year 1647, which

²⁸⁰ Laskaridis: *Πωσία*, p. 320-1. In this citation, Vlachos' persistent attempt to ensure the Tsar of the unambiguous final victory of the Venetians in the War of Candia becomes evident, since he presented himself as utterly confident to the outcome of the war.

was in the eve of the siege of Candia.²⁸¹ It is noteworthy that Vlachos corroborated his compatriot's vision, by stating to the Tsar that he himself had become a witness of the fulfillment of the prophecy during the early phase of the war in Crete: "this was the great elder's prophecy for the war of Crete, a prophecy I saw being fulfilled with my own eyes". Perceiving the invasion to his homeland as the beginning of the end for the Ottoman Empire, the Cretan scholar interpreted the war events in his homeland as the sign for the Christian forces to rise, unite and confront "their common enemy".

Following the established Orthodox tradition, that was founded on the Old Testament, on the close connection between sacred and secular power²⁸² and eager to present them separately only in technical terms, Vlachos continued his argumentation with promoting in clarity to the Tsar the bilateral earthly portrayals of God; the notion of the biblical King, which he identified with the concept of the State, and the notion of the biblical Patriarch, a personification of the Church. In an attempt to build his argument about the necessity of the two poles for the protection, longevity and sovereignty of the Christian polity in the world, Vlachos developed the position that while the two earthly authorities, the State and the Church, maintained their power, remained inextricably connected, cooperated and completed each other, they both served their duty to God as the protectors and glorious leaders of the Christians, accomplishing the elimination "of sin and infringements by the followers of the Devil". Presenting to the Tsar a plethora of examples from world history which proved the harmonious and beneficial coexistence and conciliation between the state and clergy, Vlachos concluded that any act, event or circumstance that would threaten to disrupt that special unity, would directly and fatally undermine the existence, the role and the dynamic of the Christian polity and would inevitably lead it to decline and fall.

Through this theoretical discourse of balancing lines and factors that maintained a strong and stable sovereign polity, it is almost expected that the Cretan scholar had in his mind the image of the once dominant Eastern Roman Empire, with the connection of the political governance of the Imperial Court and of the religious-ecclesiastical

²⁸¹ "In the midst of these miseries the sleeping snake will then awake and strike Ismael; the latter, in search of great vengeance, will organize a Ramadan; but in the fortieth year he will be expelled from the City on the Seven Hills; that will be in the year 1647"; Laskaridis: *Ρωσία*, p. 322.

²⁸² John D. Carlson, Erik C. Owens (eds.): *The Sacred and the Sovereign. Religion and International Politics*. Georgetown University Press. Washington DC 2003.

administration of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Evidenced by the citation on the world empires, Vlachos perceived what modern scholarship defines as Byzantine Empire as the first Christian ecumenical polity, entitled as the “Christian Empire of the Hellenes”; as the latter’s successors, in terms of historical, religious and cultural identity, the Cretan scholar did not hesitate to promote his contemporary Greeks, who were either subjects to the Ottoman Empire or the Venetian Republic. In an effort to describe to the Tsar the fate that awaited the once mighty Eastern Roman Empire, Vlachos referred extensively to its glorious millennial past, which was now lost “due to our sins” and proceeded to an open comparison of their ancestors’ sublime with the modern Greeks’ state of decline. More specifically, he presented the Christian Empire of the Hellenes as once powerful, ecumenical and glorious. From that polity prominent Emperors and an eminent Clergy emerged of venerable and “holy” representatives. At this point, the author vividly cited the names of numerous Eastern Church Fathers and additional central figures of early ecclesiastical and secular life:

“Of course there was the time of the Kings. An era when we, the eminent nation of the Helleno-Romans, were highly glorious, highly honorable, worthy of all praise, mighty with power and authority, obtaining a diadem that gained prestige and inspired trust and was strong like copper. It was the time when Daniel prophesied as the order of Melchizedek, when blessed Constantine reigned and Justinian legislated, when Theodosius obtained glory by accomplishing labors, when Marcian dogmatized, when Leo philosophized on piety and evangelism. It was then when the Clergy had a Patriarchate, adorned with brilliant wreaths of glory, such as Mithrophanes, Alexander, Athanasios, Basil, Gregory, Chrysostom, Cyril; everyone illustrious figures of the Clergy.”²⁸³

After offering to the Tsar the overview of the once dominant Eastern Roman Empire, Vlachos presented in the darkest colours the loss of the reign after the Fall of Constantinople. As the main setback of the change of powers on the line of the ecumenical empires, the author considered the elimination of the previous political authority, with the Christian Emperor being replaced by the Ottoman Sultan. Taking into consideration his argument on the necessary coexistence of secular and sacred authorities for the welfare of the Christian polity, after the loss of the first, the second was eventually undermined. Thus, the non-Christian identity of the new rulers of the world had forced the once distinguished Clergy to descend in obscurity and become corrupted:

²⁸³ Laskaridis: *Πωσία*, p. 307.

“However, today the once free Helleno-Roman nation has lost everything, just like its royal power, while the once honorable Clergy has been enslaved. The once reigning Constantinople, the old Savior of the cities, has been subjugated to the Hagarenes, who came from the genus of Ishmael, and the Christians’ pious authority has been submitted to the Turks. The Clergy has been subjugated to the Ottomans, who worship the false prophet Muhammad, and who [mean. the Ottomans], being corrupted and exterminators, have humiliated the Cross of Christ. [...] The Helleno-Roman nation reigned, but because of our sins, although in the past we were glorious, we all have declined so much, that now we have become inconspicuous; from deserving every praise [we have become] abject; from rulers [we have become] slaves, from free men we have become prisoners and from Hellenes we will meet the fate of the barbarians.”²⁸⁴

It is noteworthy that the *Triumph* was composed by Vlachos in order to be read not just by Aleksey but also the Patriarch of Moscow Nikon (1605–1681), an influential advisor of the Tsar. Although at first a promoter of the belief that the Greeks had lost their Orthodox faith, Nikon later reconsidered his views, due to his contact with the Patriarch of Jerusalem Paisios; his change of attitude was proclaimed by him himself in 1655, when he stated: “although of Russian origin, I am Greek in my faith and beliefs”. During his primacy, Nikon was responsible for the introduction in the Russian Church of numerous customs from the Greek Orthodox rite. More specifically, he adopted the pulpit, the despotic crutch, the hood of the monks, the crosier and the Greek chant. He proceeded to an ambitious project of correcting the liturgical books according to the Greek model, he ordered to build monasteries and churches according to the Greek rhythm, he invited Greek painters and formed around him a wide intellectual circle of Greek scholars and ecclesiastics. His aspiration was to gradually restore the relations between the Muscovite and the other Eastern Patriarchates and contribute to the renaissance of the Eastern Orthodox Christianity as a cohesive, stable power, that could proudly stand next to the Christian confessions of Latin Europe.²⁸⁵

Since the Patriarch was renowned to be a fervent supporter of the Greek Orthodox Church and its rite, it is only logical that Vlachos dedicated an individual part of his work in order to describe with details and gravely the state of decline the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople suffered from during the early modern centuries. Again he raised strong accusations against the “tyrannic despotism” of the

²⁸⁴ Laskaridis: *Πωσία*, p. 307-308.

²⁸⁵ For the case of Nikon and his relation with his contemporary Greek Orthodox ecclesiastical circles, see Christos Laskaridis: *Αρσένιος ο Γραικός και η Μόσχα του 17^{ου} αιώνα*. University Studio Press. Thessaloniki 2002, p. 189.

Sultan, who kept the Orthodox Church “in captivity” and had turned it to a thing of mockery from the other Christian and non-Christian sovereigns and states. As one of the most disheartening consequences of this conscious undermining and indifference against the Patriarchate from the part of the new political authority is defined the phenomenon of frequent changes and successions in the Patriarchal Throne of Constantinople, especially during the 17th century. Indeed, the Sublime Porte very often interfered in the internal affairs of the Orthodox Church, usually upon the request of certain circles of administration, both ecclesiastical and political, Greek and non-Greek. In addition to the fact that the Porte and its officials received a tax for every election of a new Patriarch in Constantinople, it is noteworthy that during those often changes in the Ecumenical Throne, the former Patriarchs usually did not accept the proclamation of their successors and worked secretly or openly for the latter’s immediate removal.²⁸⁶ Due to this political expediency or more often economic profit, the Patriarchate as an institution gradually lost its prestige and during the time of Vlachos and Aleksey it had found itself struggling for its survival:

“We are also in danger of losing the Clergy, for our Patriarchs ascended to the throne are persecuted in the marketplace as if they were captives, they lose the office as being dishonest, they are murdered as if they were thieves, they are replaced as if they were foolish leaders and the high priests are persecuted as if they were convicts. The Patriarchate, looking like a disreputable woman, is totally controlled by the despotic tyranny and has become a mockery to all nations. This is why it is spread out verbally and in paper that we no longer have a Patriarch appointed by God, but by the Hagarenes, as they define him depending on the money he obtains and do not choose him according to his virtue.”²⁸⁷

Through his narrative of a despotic non-Christian ruler, the scholar from Candia attempted to justify the picture of the Patriarchate in decay, a picture that numerous individuals and circles of the Muscovite court and church maintained already from the

²⁸⁶ Indicative is the fact that during the second half of the 17th century, twenty-seven different people were elected in the office of the Patriarch of Constantinople, most of the times more than once; during the same period Rome experienced only six successions on the Holy See; Pinelopi Stathi: «Αλλαξοπατριαρχείες στον Θρόνο της Κωνσταντινούπολης (17^{ος}-18^{ος} αι.)». In: *Μεσαιωνικά & Νέα Ελληνικά* 7 (2004), p. 37-66. Moreover, until the time the *Triumph* was written, three Patriarchs were dishonored and executed by the Ottomans: i. Kyrillos Loukaris († 1638), ii. Kyrillos Kontaris († 1639), iii. Parthenius II († 1650), followed very soon by a fourth execution, that of Parthenius III († 24. March 1657). On the functioning of the Orthodox Church under Ottoman rule, see Steven Runciman: *The Great Church in Captivity: A Study of the Patriarchate of Constantinople from the Eve of the Turkish Conquest to the Greek War of Independence*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge & New York 1968.

²⁸⁷ Laskaridis: *Πωσία*, p. 309.

late 15th century. Surviving until the mid. 17th century, those circles often and publicly expressed their belief that the Fall of Constantinople, a consequence of God's wrath against the Emperors' sins, had brought the final end to its political and ecclesiastical authority. From then on, the Ecumenical Patriarchate did nothing but corrupt the original Orthodox faith, since the until then head of Eastern Christianity was under the jurisdiction and control of a non-Christian ruler. In the context of the responsibility the Ottomans seemed to obtain for the contemporary decline of the "Nation of the Hellenes", Vlachos did not hesitate to refer to the phenomenon of massive islamization that was taking place in the Eastern Mediterranean region during his time:

"Because we are captives and slaves, we submissively obey to supreme Muhammad who offends Christ, our God. However, this insult does not touch Christ the King, but us who suffer because of our sins. And indeed we are the ones who sin, who disobey, who live without the truth and, therefore, we deserve to suffer".²⁸⁸

Evident in Vlachos' argumentation is his pejorative depiction of the *other*, the "enemy of faith", who in this case were the followers of Islam. The Prophet Muhammad was characterized as "pseudo-prophet" and to his name the epithet "Sardanapalus" was added, referring to the alleged last Assyrian king, who was notorious for his decadent, luxurious and orgiastic life. In the same climate that the Cretan prelate had composed his fervent war sermons in Candia during the period 1649–1650, he consciously continued to portray the Ottomans as tyrants of civilized polities and scandalous tempters, as barbarians and oppressors of the Christians, as the bringers of death and destruction; at this point, his aversion and hatred against the invaders of his homeland emerged in his word unrestrained, urged by his bitter memories of the monstrosities of the war.

In contradiction to the grave depiction of the Ottomans, Vlachos portrayed the Muscovite Tsar as the principal supporter, protector and defender of the Orthodox Church, and as the celebrated savior of the Greek subjects of the Ottoman Empire, the "Helleno-Romaioi". More specifically, the author of the *Triumph* presented the pious Aleksey as the one "being born to liberate those who follow the correct faith". Citing the noble origins of the Tsar, his deep Orthodox education and his God-fearing reign, the author emphasized to Aleksey's religious fidelity and piety towards the Christian

²⁸⁸ Laskaridis: *Πωσία*, p. 309.

faith.²⁸⁹ Since the Tsar regarded himself, indeed, as a fervent protector of Orthodox Christians and put his power in the service of the Church, Vlachos advised him not to despise his “enslaved Christian brothers” and his “mother, the holy Eastern Church which remains in mockery”; not to allow “the infidels to destroy the holy icons of Christ, our God”; not to tolerate “the scepter of Christ, the True Cross, to be humiliated”. In Aleksey’s face Vlachos could visualize not only the leader that would contribute to the defeat of the Ottomans in Crete, but also a staunch protector of all Orthodox believers, the one that would restore the Orthodox Church to her former glory:

“Give joy to the Hellenes, make the pious people happy, bring joy to the world, redeeming them from tyranny. Bring joy to Constantinople which is dedicated to Virgin Mary, Mother of Divine Word and let the Virgin help you. Bring joy to the renowned Church of Hagia Sophia and restore it again as a holy temple, for now it is a mosque of the Muslims, and take as your assistant the Son and the Divine Word which is wisdom. Bring joy to the Clergy, which was made a servant by the Turk, and be sure that the sacred prayers of all the priests will accompany you.”²⁹⁰

Having presented in detail to the Tsar a steadfast theoretical background of the contemporary state of the Orthodox communities in the Ottoman Empire and the timeline of Aleksey’s intervention firstly in the War of Candia and then in the general military conflict between Christians and Muslims, Vlachos continued with more practical advice. The latter was related to the organization and the formation of the alliances that the Russian Tsar had to claim during his military campaign, in order to accomplish “a glorious victory against the Hagarenes” and enter Constantinople victorious, where he would be crowned Emperor of the Orthodox Christians. The Cretan scholar initially reminded to the Muscovite ruler that the war he was urged to declare would be against a non-Christian enemy and not against fellow Christians. Therefore, the latter would immediately turn against their own “oppressors” and join the Muscovite armies. Indeed, already from the 16th century the majority of the sovereigns in Latin Europe who, in one way or another, confronted the Ottoman Empire considered the Christian subjects of the Balkan region and Eastern Mediterranean to be their potential allies against the Porte. Vlachos did not forget to highlight the definite alliance of Moscow, in addition to the other Balkan nations, with the so-called Helleno-Romaioi, those were the

²⁸⁹ “Most pious Aleksey, you who are good, since you come from honorable parents, good in your piety, since you are Orthodox, good in your honesty as favored by Christ [...], good in all things since you are devout and you fear God”; see Laskaridis: *Πωσία*, p. 314.

²⁹⁰ Laskaridis: *Πωσία*, p. 323.

Orthodox Greeks who lived in Macedonia, Thrace, Epirus, Thessaly, Continental Greece, and Peloponnese:

“Most supreme Tsar Aleksey, it will be a war against the Turks and not a conflict against Christians. Under the Lord’s roof and seeing the sign of the Cross hoisted in your undefeated army, the Christians will not pick up their weapons against your forces but, considering freedom and piety, they will turn armed against the Hagarenes [...] And when your massive armies reach Wallachia and Moldavia, not less than a hundred thousand well-trained, loyal and valiant warriors will be added to it; willingly and without ulterior motives they will follow triumphantly the Cross of Christ and you, the Orthodox Tsar. And they will be Serbs and Bulgarians [...] and Thracians and then they will be united with people from other parts of Macedonia, Epirus, Hellenes, Peloponnesians, Spartans and all the Helleno-Romaioi, enthusiastic and beloved children of the Eastern Church who will follow.”²⁹¹

What becomes obvious is that the author of the *Triumph* attempted to overcome the obstacle of the different nations that would form the Christian army under Tsar Aleksey and focus on their common and main feature of their unity, the Orthodox faith.

In the context of his argumentation about the necessary alliances the Tsardom of Russia was encouraged to form, Vlachos referred to the Venetian agenda of foreign policy. Therefore, he advocated a future Venetian-Muscovite diplomatic agreement for common confrontation of the Ottoman peril, in which both the *Serenissima’s* authorities and the latter’s Orthodox subjects in Crete, Dalmatia and the Ionian Islands would offer their military support to the Tsar’s ambitious campaign: “Significant will be the role of all those who have joined your kingdom and are allies of the undefeated Most Serene Doge of Venice, but also of all the Most Serene Venetian authority, whose prudence and power are undoubtedly well-known to our Community”.²⁹² This particular citation presents, indeed, numerous similarities with a circular letter (February 1625) by Kyrillos Loukaris, then Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, addressed to the dioceses of Albania, Bosnia and Peloponnese. In this document, Loukaris highlighted the significance of Venice and her principles for the Orthodox Greeks, in order to promote the recruitment of Orthodox volunteers to the Venetian army: “We, the Orthodox Hellenes, do not have another state that sympathizes so much with our nation than the glorious and most Christian Republic of Venice; only her [mean. Venice] opens her arms as a compassionate mother and considers the Hellenes and our whole nation as her own children”.²⁹³ Following once more his innate need and

²⁹¹ Laskaridis: *Πωσία*, p. 314-315.

²⁹² Laskaridis: *Πωσία*, p. 316.

²⁹³ Gunnar Hering: *Ökumenisches Patriarchat und europäische Politik. 1620–1638*. Steiner. Wiesbaden 1968 (*Οικουμενικό Πατριαρχείο και Ευρωπαϊκή Πολιτική 1620–1638*. Translated

duty as a loyal subject of the Republic, Vlachos ensured that the structure, content and style of his *Triumph* would indeed serve the Venetian interests in their approach to Moscow. Therefore, he focused his rhetoric on the implementation of this alliance as an one-way path for Christendom to resist against the Ottoman expansion in Europe.

Taking into account that Muscovy had been suspicious towards the Catholic sovereigns, Vlachos attempted to depict the *Signoria* as the state that showed the largest confessional tolerance and recognition to her Orthodox subjects, both in the city of Venice and in the *Stato da Màr*.²⁹⁴ Thus, he rushed to inform Aleksey on the Republic's interest in the welfare and religious freedom of her non-Catholic subjects; the Doge and the Venetian Senate were defined as generally unwilling to oppose the principles, tradition and rite of the Orthodox faith since they had established by law that their Orthodox subjects were free to exercise their religious duties inside the *Serenissima's* territories. Furthermore, Vlachos referred to the Venetian initiative to avoid any ecclesiastical or secular control on the pastoral activity of the Orthodox clergy, while they also used to enable the members of the Greek Community in the Metropolis and those in the *Stato da Màr* to build their own churches and monasteries according to their faith and perform the liturgy according to the Orthodox rite. Completing his praise in favor of the tolerant Venetian authorities, Vlachos mentioned the good relations the Republic maintained with the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, with her naval forces securing safe routes in the sea for the benefit of travelling Orthodox high clerics:

“It is true that of all Christians, the Venetians are those who assist us the most, as they do not oppose to the doctrines of the Eastern Church by themselves and they allow us, the Helleno-Romaioi, to freely preach our fathers' doctrines. They also help us to build churches in their own lands and perform the sacred liturgies according to our own rite.

by Demosthenes Kourtovik. Μορφωτικό Ίδρυμα Εθνικής Τραπέζης. Athens 2003, p. 172-173.

²⁹⁴ Indeed, during the mid. 17th century, the Tsardom of Russia expressed an intense interest regarding the large number of Orthodox living in the city of Venice and the *Stato da Màr*. In fact, six years after Vlachos had sent his entreaty to the Tsar, a Russian ambassador who had visited Venice, met with the then Archbishop of Philadelphia Meletios Chortatzis. During their discussion, the ambassador wished to know if there was still any kind of Venetian oppression, sacred or secular, against their Orthodox subjects, and Chortatzis informed him that, although in the city of Venice and the Republic's provinces in northern Italy, only one Orthodox church, San Giorgio, had been founded due to the small number of Orthodox in the region, there were numerous churches and monasteries in the Orthodox communities of Dalmatia, the Ionian Islands and warring Crete; see Longworth: “Russian-Venetian Relations”, p. 399.

Finally, it is they who invite our traveling Holy Patriarchs and facilitate them to move without fear, while they urge us to punish the Turks.”²⁹⁵

Of particular importance is the fact that Gerasimos Vlachos avoided to refer directly or name the Catholic confession as a feature of the Venetian identity; even the term *Catholic* or *Latin* is not to be detected anywhere in the *Triumph*. In fact, apart from the Venetian Republic, he avoided to make reference to any other Catholic sovereign of Latin Europe, even more to the Pope himself. Already in the part where he argued on the dire state of decline the Patriarchate of Constantinople had fallen into, the Cretan scholar limited himself to harsh accusations against the Ottoman authorities who corrupted, imprisoned and executed the Patriarchs. Despite the fact that he was aware of the Catholic intervention in the Orthodox communities of the Eastern Mediterranean region, either through the missionary activity of the papal Orders or the so-called “machinations” of specific Catholic circles in Constantinople, Vlachos opted to remain silent in front of the Muscovite Tsar; being himself raised in an environment where Catholic and Orthodox every-day life and tradition coexisted, he deliberately refrained from using a widely used policy of earlier anti-Catholic statements by eminent Orthodox high clerics and prelates. A possible discreet allusion against the papal intervention in the Venetian-Orthodox relations, so implicit that it could easily escape the eye of the reader, is nevertheless detected in the following phrase: “they [the Venetians] do not oppose to the doctrines of the Eastern Church *by themselves*”. Therefore, the main and practical goals that the *Triumph* served can be said to be similar to those of the “*Obfuscation of the False Believers*”. Since an attempt to highlight the confessional differences between the Venetians and the Muscovites would, indeed, be considered a diplomatic *faux pas*, Vlachos preferred to promote the common faith between the Russians and the Greeks and only the line of religious tolerance the Republic wished to follow. Being aware of that a possible Venetian-Muscovite alliance could not be justified on confession, the Cretan scholar brought the matter to a political-military level by proceeding to extensive references in favor of the Venetian naval and land forces and their numerous wars against the Sublime Porte. In the end, he predicted that a united campaign of Moscow and Venice in warring Crete would bring the final

²⁹⁵ Laskaridis: *Πωσία*, p. 317.

defeat of the “infidel tyrant”, who he considered as the common enemy of all Christendom.

3. A Greek Orthodox Intellectual in Latin Europe: The concept of *Interconfessional Conciliation* in the World of Letters

3.1. Introduction

The years Gerasimos Vlachos lived and worked in the city of Venice (1655–1664) were decisive for the formation of his profile, no longer as an elite figure of the Venetian-Cretan culture and the Orthodox ecclesiastical community, but as a trained European-type intellectual, who attempted or allowed himself to enter the circles of his modern Italian and European Republic of Letters. A key factor in the emergence of this new identity of the Cretan scholar was undoubtedly his decision to settle in Venice, a society that due to its multicultural character allowed its diverse groups, consisting of people from throughout the Mediterranean and from every corner of Europe, to come together and interact creatively without controversy. In the middle of the 17th century, Venice remained an active center in economic, commercial and intellectual terms. Despite her weakened resistance to her inevitable subjugation to Rome's political and ideological influence, the *Serenissima* was still the scene of action and interaction of a multitude of men of letters and arts; the latter lived or visited the city in order to benefit from the spirit of liberalism and religious tolerance which had not yet been extinguished. Scholars, ecclesiastics, artists, and merchants of different origins coexisted in the various bookstores, workshops, schools, libraries and courtyards of wealthy Venetian noblemen and patrons, becoming effective means for the distribution from and to Venice of the modern historical developments, the contemporary political reorganizations and the ideological movements in the West and the East.

That element of prominence that allowed the Republic, as well as many other polities in the early modern centuries, to develop and nurture this spirit of respect for diversity, good cooperation and creative communication between her citizens, is the concept of tolerance, a major subject of European thought during the 16th and 17th century.²⁹⁶ Not so much a policy but a form of behavior, tolerance was established as a

²⁹⁶ Peter Ole Grell, Robert Scribner (eds.): *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge, UK 1996.

dominant idea in the various polities of Latin Europe under the prevailing conditions of the Renaissance and aimed at the peaceful coexistence of the individual with others adhered to a different origin, religion or faith.²⁹⁷ The main product of the conscious mutual tolerance among members of political and intellectual circles during the early Renaissance period was the formation and consolidation in the European continent of an intellectual community which united scholars, in spite of their differing confessional identities, the so-called *respublica litteraria*. From the late 15th century onwards, this network of early modern humanist scholars, artists and ecclesiastics culminated in the scene of Latin Europe with its main goal to be the acquirement and transmission of learning. With its central representatives to be eminent intellectuals such as Erasmus of Rotterdam, Julius Caesar Scaliger, Juan Luis Vives, Justus Lipsius, Isaac Casaubon and Hugo Grotius, the Republic of Letters became widespread during the 17th and 18th century. By using Latin as the *lingua franca* of their community, its citizens encouraged through their correspondence and publications a free exchange of books, scientific observations, antiquities, arguments and ideas on literate-scholarly, socio-political and religious-ecclesiastical subjects. Most importantly, the notion of the Republic of Letters allowed scholars to rise above their political or religious commitments, comparing their fierce sense of obligation to the common rise and flourishing of learning. Therefore, the people who entered this community managed to transcend their differing confessional identities, despite the fact that they lived in an age of intense hostility and conflict between representatives of the competing Christian confessions.²⁹⁸

What was, indeed, the position of the early modern Greek scholarship in the broad and multicultural Republic of Letters? Furthermore, could modern research include Gerasimos Vlachos, if not among the regular members of this lettered community, at least to the friendly supporters of this model? Undoubtedly, the Greek presence among the scholars of the *Respublica* should be considered significantly low. The cause is not to be sought in some innate prejudice of Greek intellectuals towards

²⁹⁷ Kaplan: *Divided by Faith*, p. 8-11.

²⁹⁸ For the main features of the Republic of Letters during the 17th century, see Nicholas Hardy: *Criticism and Confession: The Bible in the Seventeenth Century Republic of Letters* Oxford University Press. Oxford 2017, p. 5-7; Peter Burke: *Languages and Communities in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge 2004, p. 43-60; Arjan van Dixhoorn: *The Reach of the Republic of Letters: Literary and Learned Societies in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*. Brill. Leiden 2008.

their Latin European counterparts, in their possible educational inadequacy or in their stubborn refusal to communicate and compromise with people of different confessional perceptions and spiritual tradition. As a proof of the above we consider the cases of the three most recognized Greek scholars of the 17th century: Ioannis Kottounios (1572–1657), Leon Allatios (c.1586–1669) and Leonardos Philaras (1595–1673); all three crossed paths and took the lead in the intellectual and political developments of their time in Padua, Rome and Paris respectively. Nevertheless, it is significant to clarify that the aforementioned scholars were trained and acquired their higher education in the scholarly environment of Catholic Europe. Thus, they obtained a characteristic Latin intellectual identity and a respective perception of their reality and contribution. On the contrary, Gerasimos Vlachos was raised as a clergyman and scholar not in a Latin European reality (for example Venice or Padua), but in the Orthodox Greek, nevertheless strongly Venetian-influenced environment of Candia. In his hometown he lived fifty of the totally eighty years of his life; it is there where he received his classical education and where he worked, among others, as a professor, philosopher and theologian. In addition, Venice offered him an unexpected gift, the wide networks with intellectuals and clergymen from all around Latin Europe; the always active and sagacious scholar did not fail to make the most of it, therefore obtaining high prestige, honor and great importance to his long-running course in the field of learning.

In this context, the present chapter aims to develop an approach to Gerasimos Vlachos' identity as an early modern Greek scholar and professor of sciences. The structure of the chapter is based on the theoretical triangle of Vlachos' pedagogical activity: i. his contribution to the development and renewal of education in the Greek schools of Venice and Padua; ii. his publishing activity in Venice as an author of school textbooks; iii. the emergence of his networks with scholars and sovereigns in his contemporary Latin Europe. Therefore, we will follow Gerasimos Vlachos' contacts and relations with eminent figures of the Italian and Latin European political, ecclesiastical and intellectual scene in the name of promoting the history, thought and literature of the ancient and medieval Greek scholarship. Then we will deal with the Cretan scholar's initiatives for the promotion of Greek education and training in early modern Venice and Padua. The study will present and interpret Vlachos' efforts, as a professor and later as the Archbishop of Philadelphia, to preserve and reinforce the active centers of

education and letters in the Greek communities of the *Serenissima*. Finally, we will approach his contribution to the early modern narrative of spiritual and secular continuity from the classical Greek antiquity to the medieval Byzantine Christianity and from there to the early modern Greek world.

3.2. Editing the Greek Church Fathers (1658). The project of François Combefis and the shade of Louis XIV

In the first half of the 17th century and in the context of the ongoing Thirty Years' War the Kingdom of France saw its power increasing, especially after the Treaty of Westphalia (1648). Mainly in the face of Louis XIV (1638–1715), the Kingdom found the most effective promoter of its narrative as a dominant sovereign in Latin Europe.²⁹⁹ In this rising power of France, a group of Greek scholars who had settled in Latin Europe gradually visualized a mighty protector of themselves and their compatriots who consisted the Orthodox communities of the Ottoman Empire. Although the figure of Louis XIV mesmerized the imagination and desires of many Catholic, pro-Catholic and French-educated Greeks, the first appeals to representatives of French hegemony had already begun during the turbulent period of the Thirty Years' War. The latter mainly addressed the prominent Cardinal Armand Jean du Plessis, Duke of Richelieu (1585–1642), chief administrator of French interior and foreign policy. The central purpose of those invocations was the promotion of the glorious civilization of Greek antiquity in contrast to the decline of the early modern Greeks.

Among the earliest Greek intellectuals who turned to Richelieu as a patron of letters, culture and religion was the versatile Athenean scholar, diplomat and later advisor to the French court Leonardos Philaras (c.1595–1673).³⁰⁰ Philaras had devoted

²⁹⁹ After a series of civil wars and wars against Spain, which ended with the Treaty of the Pyrenees (1659), Louis established an absolute monarchy and made the house of the Bourbons the most powerful dynasty in Europe; see Georgia J. Cowart: *The Triumph of Pleasure. Louis XIV and the politics of spectacle*. University of Chicago Press. Chicago 2008. At the same time, the ambitious king was a pious and devout Catholic, who considered himself the legitimate protector of the Gallican Church; see George A. Rothrock Jr.: "Some aspects of Early Bourbon Policy toward the Huguenots". In: *Church History* 29 (1960), p. 17-24; Henry Phillips: *Church and Culture in Seventeenth-Century France*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge, UK 1997.

³⁰⁰ For Leonardos Philaras, see Michail Mantzanas: "Byzantine Political Philosophy, Greek Identity and Independence in Leonardo Philara's Works". In: Georgios Steiris, Sotiris Mitralaxis, Georgios Arabatzis (eds.): *The Problem of Modern Greek Identity. From the*

much of his career to appeals towards Latin European intellectuals and sovereigns in the context of his personal ambition of liberation of the Greeks from the Ottoman dominion. In this context, he dedicated in 1633 to the French Cardinal a Latin translation of a previous vernacular Greek version of one of the principal works of the Catholic Reformation, Robert Bellarmine's *Doctrina Christiana*.³⁰¹ Of particular interest is Philaras' dedicatory letter to the Cardinal, written in Latin and vernacular Greek.³⁰² As part of his praise to Richelieu, Philaras highlighted the latter's greatness, kindness and his "admirable experience in political governing", virtues that urged the then King of France Louis XIII (1601–1643) to promote him to the office of the chief minister. Turning to Louis, Philaras cited the King's major achievements both in the internal affairs of France and his foreign policy:

"the most just King scattered with an extreme justice all the scoundrels who stirred up the homeland and its peace; once or twice he regained and subjugated all of France under his command, he tamed and almost managed to annihilate and expel the heresy from the whole dynasty [mean. the Huguenots]."

«μὲ μίαν ἄκραν δικαιοσύνην ὁ δικαιοτάτος βασιλέας ἐσκόρπισεν ὅλους τοὺς σκανταλιάρηδες ὅποῦ ἀνακατόνανε τὴν πατρίδα καὶ τὴν εἰρήνην της. Μία καὶ δυὸ φορὲς ἐξανακέρδισε καὶ ὑπόταξεν εἰς τοὺς ὀρισμούς του ὅλην τὴν Γαλλίαν· ἐκαταδάμεσε καὶ παρ' ὀλίγον δὲν ἐκαταχάλασε καὶ δὲν ἐδίωξεν ἀπ' ὅλην του τὴν δυναστείαν τὴν αἵρεσιν.»³⁰³

He then recounted Louis' military successes,³⁰⁴ and concluded his letter by praising Richelieu for his contribution to Louis' accomplishments:

"With your great administration, diligence, speed, and dexterity, without procrastinating, and without losing your temper, you preserved France unharmed, untouched and harmless, saved it and liberated it from all the misery that hung over it."

Ecumene to the Nation-State. Cambridge Scholars Publishing. Newcastle upon Tyne 2016, p. 255-263.

³⁰¹ Émile Legrand : *Bibliographie Hellenique, ou Description raisonnée des ouvrages publiés par des Grecs au dix-septième siècle*. Vol. 1 (1601–1644). Alphonse Picard. Paris 1894, p. 309-315.

³⁰² Philaras' technique to provide his writing in vernacular Greek-Latin editions, and especially his dedications to the members of the French sovereignty, reveals his ambition that his work, along with its political meanings and messages, would mainly be read and perceived by the Orthodox Greeks of the Ottoman Empire and the Diaspora.

³⁰³ Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 2 (1645–1690), p. 312-313.

³⁰⁴ Among those military successes, Philaras mentioned the victorious siege of La Rochelle (1627–1628), a city which "had always been a cave of cunning and a refuge for the enemies of your reign", the successful confrontation of the uprisings on the borders of his kingdom, Louis' victorious encounters with the British, his expeditions in Flanders and the numerous wars for the control of northern Italy, especially to the bloody Wars of Succession of Monferrato (1628–1631) against the Duchy of Savoy.

*«μὲ τὴν μεγάλην σου οἰκονομίαν, ἐντρέχειαν, σπουδὴν καὶ παιδεξισύνην, μηδὲν ἀναβαλλόμενος καὶ μὴ χασομερῶντας τίβοτα, ἐφύλαξεν ὡς τὸ τέλος ἀζήμιον, ἄγκιχτην καὶ ἀβλαβὴ τὴν Γαλλίαν, καὶ τὴν ἔσωσε καὶ τὴν ἐλευθέρωσεν ἀπ’ ὅλες τὰς δυστυχίας ὅποῦ τῆς ἐκρεμόντανε.»*³⁰⁵

Philaras’ dedicatory letter is also an indicative example of the author’s interdisciplinary attitude and his tendency to interconfessional conciliation. Indeed, the Athenian scholar expressed his ambition that his compatriots, the “Romaioi” would benefit from his work, since during his time, “they are in great need of education”. Moreover, he considered that, since that the translation took place in vernacular Greek, it would offer the Europeans an opportunity to become familiar with the natural and living language of the early modern Greeks, or at least

“to learn the difference in which our current dialect fell from that old and noble one after the barbarians’ invasions and the long time that devours all things.”

*«νὰ γνωρίσουσι μοναχὰ τὴν διαφορὰν εἰς τὴν ὁποίαν ἐξέπεσεν ἡ σημερινή μας διάλεκτος ἀπὸ κείνην τὴν παλαιὰν καὶ εὐγενεστάτην, ὕστερα ἀπὸ τὰς καταδρομὰς τῶν βαρβάρων καὶ τὸν πολὺν καιρὸν ὅποῦ κατατρώγει ὅλα τὰ πράγματα.»*³⁰⁶

In this context, he revealed as his main motive for proceeding to that specific translation his effort to confront “the stubborn heretics”, meaning mainly the supporters of the Protestant confessions, and in a lesser extent the theologians of the Orthodox faith. Addressing his compatriots, the Orthodox Greeks, Philaras promoted his belief that the latter would be able to understand through Bellarmine’s teachings that “God is simple, indivisible, one and only everywhere, with his spirit leading both the Eastern and Western Churches”. After presenting his narrative on the turbulent course of Christian confessions in early modern Europe, a course that in his times had fatefully led to the catastrophic Thirty Years’ War, the author concluded with a wish for harmonious conciliation among Christians, and mainly between the Catholics and Orthodox:

“by leaving all discrepancies and avoiding the grave winds of differences, [I wish to all Christians] to enter the safe meadow of the same faith and piety and for the Church of Christ to achieve the so much desirable union and unity.”

*«ἀφίνοντας ὅλοι τὰ μερικὰ μαλλώματα, καὶ φεύγοντας τοὺς κακοὺς ἀνέμους τῶν διαφορῶν, νὰ ἐμποῦσιν εἰς τὸν ἀσφαλὴ καὶ βέβαιον λιμῶνα τῆς αὐτῆς πίστεως καὶ εὐσεβείας, καὶ νὰ ἐπιτύχη ἡ ἐκκλησία τοῦ Χριστοῦ τὴν τόσον ἐπιθυμημένην ἔνωσιν καὶ ὁμόνοιαν.»*³⁰⁷

³⁰⁵ Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 2 (1645–1690), p. 313.

³⁰⁶ Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 2 (1645–1690), p. 310.

³⁰⁷ Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 2 (1645–1690), p. 311. In order to achieve the latter, he

In the epilogue of his letter to Richelieu, Philaras implored the Cardinal to turn his powers to the restoration of the Orthodox Church and the once mighty Greek nation:

“May through you that the Eastern Church will return and rise from its miserable corpse and that brave nation, which once was the salt and the sun of the world, will live again, by clearing and dissolving every difference, difficulty and ignorance of languages, which only divide the hearts of Christians, and by avoiding all kinds of passion and enmity.”

«διὰ μέσον τοῦ λόγου σου νὰ μετάρθῃ καὶ νὰ σηκωθῇ ἀπὸ τὸ ἐλεεινόν της πτώμα ἡ ἀνατολικὴ ἐκκλησία καὶ νὰ ζαναζήσῃ τὸ γενναῖον ἔθνος ἐκεῖνο, ὅποῦ ἦτον ἄλλες φορὲς τὸ ἅλας καὶ ὁ ἥλιος τῆς οἰκουμένης, ζαστερώνοντας καὶ ξεδιαλύνοντας πᾶσαν διαφορὰν, δυσκολίαν καὶ ἀμαθίαν τῶν γλωσσῶν, οἱ ὁποῖες μοναχὲς χωρίζουσι τὰς καρδιὰς τῶν χριστιανῶν, καὶ ἐβγάνοντας ἀπὸ τῆ μέσῃ πᾶσα λογὴς μερικὸ πάθος καὶ ἔχθρητα.»³⁰⁸

Heavily influenced by Philaras’ initiative both in content and purposes, the Catholic grammarian and eminent philologist Simon Portius, known as *Romanus*, published in 1635 a bilingual dictionary of Latin and vernacular Greek (*Dictionarium Latinum Graeco-Barbarum et Litterale*), which he also dedicated to Richelieu.³⁰⁹ In his dedicatory letter, written again in Latin-modern Greek parallel text, Portius praised the French Cardinal for his initiative to establish printing presses in France which would deal exclusively with the publication of the Greek patristic and early Christian literature:

“as soon as by order of your glorious and Christian piety, that renowned company of printers of ecclesiastical books appeared in the world, not just an infinite number of people in the East breathed vital air, but Hellas herself, which in ancient times was the salt and the brightest light of the world and the master of arts and sciences, flourished due to the eternal fountain of your magnificence and speaks proudly in prosperity.”

«παρενθὺς ὅποῦ μὲ τὴν ὁδηγίαν τῆς λαμπρᾶς σου καὶ χριστιανικῆς εὐσεβείας ἡ φουμισμένη ἐκεῖνη τῶν τυπογράφων τῶν ἐκκλησιαστικῶν βιβλίων συντροφία εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἐφάνη, ὅχι μόνον ἓνας ἄπειρος ἀριθμὸς τῆς ἀνατολῆς ἐκατάπιε καὶ ἀνέπνευσε

proposed that both sides proceed with the mutual translation of the sayings of the Greek (“Romaioi”) Fathers into Latin and of the Latin Fathers into vernacular Greek, “so that the truth will be revealed again”.

³⁰⁸ Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 2 (1645–1690), p. 311-312. In an attempt to justify and explain the existence and competition of the various Christian confessions, Philaras offered his personal interpretation of the theological disputes. For him, the central cause of the problem was to be detected in the different languages spoken by the various Christian nations; “From this did the enemies spring up and spread among us, and in time led to the darkening of the truth; from there the schisms and impurities of the heresies in all the nations grew, the reality of the Christians was disturbed and then the Christian kingdom was shaken and eventually completely uprooted”; Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 2 (1645–1690), p. 311.

³⁰⁹ Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 1 (1601–1644), p. 332-335. For Simon Portius, see Émile Legrand: *Bibliographie Hellenique, ou Description raisonnée des ouvrages publiés par des Grecs au dix-septième siècle*. Vol. 3 (1691–1700. Notices biographiques). Alphonse Picard. Paris 1894, p. 308-311.

ζωτικὸν ἀέρα· ἀμὴ ἡ αὐτὴ Ἑλλάδα, στὸν παλαιὸν καιρὸν τὸ ἀλάτι καὶ λαμπρότατον φῶς τῆς οἰκουμένης, τῶν τεχνῶν καὶ τῶν ἐπιστημῶν ἡ δασκάλισσα, ἀπὸ τὴν παντοτινὴν βρῦσιν τῆς μεγαλοπρέπειάς σου καρπησερὴ γνωρίζεται καὶ πλουτισμένη καυχᾶται.»³¹⁰

Three years later, Portius published a grammar of vernacular Greek (*Grammatica Linguae Graecae Vulgaris*), once more dedicated to Richelieu.³¹¹ This time the author advised the Cardinal not be surprised “to see Hellas bent at your feet, not that ancient one and famous for the books of so many wise men, but the modern, the sorrowful, which is still coarse and somehow trapped in its infancy”. By creating the illustrative image of a personified Greece that breaks her chains with the help of Richelieu as the official representative of France, Portius expressed his gratitude and respect to the Cardinal, since through him Hellas:

“faces a sweeter light and lives a happier life; she wishes to adorn you not with rhetorical and beautiful words but with the intense passion of her good heart. And happy that she is under the protection of such a great lord, she returns in order to live again by shaking her head out of the ashes in which she was buried due to the insult of the barbarians, and in order to breathe a more vital and pure air and sky. In fact, she is proud since she is enlightened and tied to the greatness of your name, she is not afraid of the black teeth of envy, she despises the insatiability of time, and she is not afraid to put herself in front of the sharp arrows of the critics.”

«βλέπει ἓνα γλυκύτερον φῶς, καὶ ζῇ μίαν μακαριώτεραν ζωὴν, ἐπιθυμᾷ νὰ σὲ στολίσῃ ὅχι μὲ ῥητορικὰ καὶ ὁμορφα λόγια, ἀμὴ μὲ πλούσιον πόθον τῆς καλῆς τῆς καρδιᾶς· καὶ χαρούμενη ὅτι εὐρίσκεται ἀποκάτω εἰς τὴν σκέπην τέτοιου μεγάλου ἀρχόντου, ἔρχεται σὰν νὰ ξαναζήσῃ τινάσσοντας τὸ κεφάλι τῆς ὅζω ἀπὸ τὰς στάκτες εἰς τὰς ὁποῖες εἶναι θαμμένη διὰ τὴν ὕβριν τῶν βαρβάρων, καὶ νὰ ἀναπνέῃ ἓναν ζωντικώτερον καὶ καθαρώτερον ἀέρα καὶ οὐρανόν.»³¹²

Portius concluded by urging the Cardinal to show sympathy and compassion to the Orthodox Greek subjects of the Ottoman Empire by presenting the latter as turing their eyes upon him awaiting redemption, so that Hellas “may return to her former splendor and freedom”.

When Louis XIV obtained the reign of the Kingdom of France, the first approaches by Greek intellectuals of Latin Europe did not take long to appear. In 1642 the eminent professor of philosophy in the University of Padua Ioannis Kottounios dedicated to the still young Louis his collection of hymns and sonnets entitled *Immortalitati Alcidii Philelleni ... Varij praeclarorum Virorum Applausus*.³¹³ In the

³¹⁰ Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 1 (1601–1644), p. 333-334.

³¹¹ Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 1 (1601–1644), p. 392-4.

³¹² Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 1 (1601–1644), p. 394.

³¹³ Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 1 (1601–1644), p. 432-8.

introductory preface, this time written in ancient Greek, the following excerpt is detected:

“Indeed, this once Hellas, now almost deserted, letting a great cry and begging her hands towards you, at once and greatly sings to you thanksgiving [hymns], for what the forthcoming century will bring you with all the honor and reverence. Moreover, she is admirably treated and bears fruitful hopes in you, to escape the yoke of the barbarians and be yours, thanks to the power and charity of God.”

«Αὐτὴ τῷ ὄντι γε ἥ ποτε μὲν Ἑλλάς, νῦν δὲ σχεδὸν ἐρημὰς, μονονουχὶ μεγάλην ἀφιείσα φωνὴν καὶ χεῖρας ἰκέτιδας ὡς ὑμᾶς αἶρουσα, ἐν τε τῷ παραυτίκα τρανῶς ὑμῖν ᾄδει εὐχαριστήρια, κὰν τῷ κατόπιν αἰῶνι διὰ πάσης τιμῆς καὶ εὐλαβείας ὑμᾶς ᾄξει· ἔτι δὲ ὑπερφυῶς περιθάλλεται καὶ χρηστὰς ἐφ’ ὑμῖν τὰς ἐλπίδας καρποῦται, ὡς ἰσχύϊ καὶ εὐμενεΐᾳ Θεοῦ τε καὶ ὑμετέρᾳ ἔστιν ὅτε τὸ τῶν βαρβάρων ζεῦγος ἀφ’ ἐαυτῆς ἀποσκορακίσει.»³¹⁴

Eleven years later, in 1653, Kottounios addressed once more to Louis, this time in his famous collection of Greek epigrams (*Ἑλληνικῶν Ἐπιγραμμάτων βιβλία δύο*). In the first part of his dedicatory letter to the King of France, the Greek scholar portrayed himself as a modern Aristotle and the young Louis as another Alexander the Great, to whom the Greek professor donated his work in a similar way that Aristotle offered his philosophical treatises to the King of the Macedonians.³¹⁵

Following this long tradition and imitating Kottounios, for whom it will later become obvious that remained Vlachos’ ultimate intellectual idol, the latter pursued to approach the lettered circles of Latin Europe already in 1658 through his contact with the French Dominican theologian and patrologist François Combefis (1605–1679) in the context of their common intellectual and religious interest in publishing the writings of the Greek Church Fathers. In the letter that accompanied the codex with the works of Saint Maximus, copied by his own hand, Vlachos initially addressed Louis XIV, praising his political virtues, military achievements and intellectual initiatives:

“As it is appropriate, I address to the invincible eternal and great leader of Celto-Gallia, the one who obtains wisdom and valor. The multitude of trophies against his enemies and his daily accomplished triumphs are considered as undeniable evidence of his bravery. For his wisdom, [evident is] the multitude high schools due to his royal benevolence, the academies with the professors of every scientific field, the oceanic

³¹⁴ Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 1 (1601–1644), p. 433-4.

³¹⁵ The original Latin citation is the following: “*idque exemplo ipsiusmet Aristotelis, conterranei mei, qui, praeter philosophicas contemplationes, Peplum homericum, cuius fragmentum etiamnum terimus, carminibus illigavit. Ille suos labores Magno Macedoni, regum tunc maximo, magna opum vi auctus obtulit: ego praesens opusculum Augustissimae et Christianissimae Maiestati tuae, regum vere maxime, sue alteri Alexandro Magno, humiliter offero sacroque*”; Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 2 (1645–1690), p. 57-70.

inundation of the published books for every science, the constant provision of collecting [the writings] of olden authors from all over the world and the editions of [the writings] of the holy Greek Fathers in both languages.”

«ἔγωγε προσηκόντως τὸν ἀήττητον τῆς Κελογαλλίας ἀεὶ μέγα κοιρανέοντα σοφία τε καὶ ἀνδρεία κεκοσμημένον ἐπάγαμαι. Μάρτυρες ἀψευδέστατοι τῆς μὲν ἐκείνου ἀνδρείας τὰ κατὰ τῶν πολεμίων πολυπλάσια τρόπαια καὶ οἱ ὁσημέραι ἐπιτελούμενοι θρίαμβοι· τῆς δὲ σοφίας τὰ ἐκ βασιλικῆς προμηθείας τοσαῦτα ἀρχιγυμνάσια, αἱ τῶν διδασκάλων κατὰ πάντα τὰ ἰδιώματα ἀκαδημαῖαι, ἡ ὠκεάνειος πλημμυρὶς τῶν ἐκδεδομένων περὶ πάσης ἐπιστήμης βιβλίων καὶ διηλεκτῆς τῆς τῶν πρόπαλαι συγγραφέων ἐκ παντὸς τοῦ περιγείου ἀθροίσεως πρόνοια καὶ ἡ τῶν ἱερῶν Ἑλλήνων πατέρων κατ’ ἀμφοτέρας τὰς διαλέκτους ἔκδοσις.»³¹⁶

Although in 1658, when Vlachos addressed him, Louis was still young at age, the intellectual and artistic blooming in France had already emerged; thus, the Cretan scholar is presented well-informed of the ambitions and initiatives by the King and his circle.

Vlachos’ reference to the “invincible” Louis, his military achievements and the leading power his kingdom had obtained in the general European field possibly contains a discreet appeal in order for the French king to support or contribute to the Venetian resistance in the War of Candia. Indeed, already from the early phase of the war, the Kingdom of France was not indifferent to its contemporary Christian-Muslim conflict. Richelieu’s successor, Cardinal Jules Mazarin (1602–1661) was a fervent supporter of anti-Ottoman actions. Therefore, he took many initiatives in favor of the *Serenissima* (considerable financial supports and recruitment of soldiers).³¹⁷ It is also a fact that during the 1660s a series of extended military struggles (Battle of Saint Gotthard and the Djidjelli expedition in 1664) escalated the relations between France and the Sublime Porte.³¹⁸ Nevertheless, Vlachos did not portray Louis only as a skillful political and military leader, but also as a protector and patron of letters and arts. He particularly highlighted the king’s initiatives to establish schools of higher education in the French urban centers, to enable developments in the fields of letters, science, architecture,

³¹⁶ Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 2 (1645–1690), p. 313.

³¹⁷ Malcolm: *Useful Enemies*, p. 113.

³¹⁸ In this context, ten years after Vlachos’ letter to Combefis, in 1668 and in the eve of the surrender of Candia, Louis XIV pledged his word to Pope Clement IX and sent as military support to Crete a strong force under the duke of Navailles and a large fleet under the duke of Beaufort; see Setton: *Venice, Austria, and the Turks*, p. 216, 222.

painting and sculpture, to promote a multitude of French scholars and artists and to support decisively a renewal in the publishing activity of the Kingdom.³¹⁹

Similar to his reference to Louis, the Cretan professor continued in his letter with a long praise in honor of François Combefis. In this case, Vlachos did not seem to be impeded by the confessional differentiation that characterized him as an Orthodox and the French patrologist as a Catholic. Thus, in his letter he did not hesitate to express his high respect, esteem and admiration to Combefis personally and to the Gallican clergy in general for their piety and their intellectual interests and activity:

“I bless the humble Gallican subjects, who are renowned all over the world for their wisdom and bravery; particularly, among them I admire the glorious and highly wise Gallican clergy, their great virtuousness, their honor and their vigor; their devout zeal for the divine, their willingness for our philosophy, their high provision for the revival of the olden books, and more importantly their great attempt in order to [bring] the resurrection of the Greek Fathers through the letters and their Divine-signed choice, by which the highly wise and highly beloved to me François Combefis, is established as an eminent translator of the Greek Fathers.”

«Τοὺς σεμνοὺς Γαλλικανοὺς ὑπηκόους ἐπὶ σοφία καὶ ἀνδρεία κατὰ πάντα τὸν κόσμον
φημιζομένους κατευλογῶ· ἐξαιρέτως δὲ διὰ πάντων καὶ μετὰ πάντων θαυμαίνει μου τὸν
νοῦν ὁ λαμπρότατος καὶ σοφώτατος γαλλικανὸς κληρὸς, οὗ καὶ μείζων ἀρετῇ, τιμῇ τε βίῃ
τε· ὁ ἔνθεος ἐκείνου ζῆλος περὶ τὰ θεῖα, τὸ πρόθυμον περὶ τὴν ἡμετέραν φιλοσοφίαν, τὸ
ἄκρον τῆς μελέτης περὶ τὴν τῶν παλαιῶν βιβλίων ἐπανάκαμψιν, καὶ μάλιστα τὸ πολὺ τῆς
σπουδῆς, περὶ τε τὴν τῶν Ἑλλήνων πατέρων διὰ τῶν τύπων ἀνάστασιν καὶ περὶ τὴν
νεύματι θεῖῳ ἐκείνων ἐκλογὴν, καθ’ ἣν ὁ σοφώτατός μοι καὶ κατὰ πάντα περιπόθητος
Φραγκῖσκος ὁ Κομβέφης μεταφραστὴς διαπρύσιος τῶν Ἑλλήνων πατέρων διεψηφίσθη.»
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His choice to define the French clergy as “glorious” and “highly wise”, along with his amicable attitude towards the representatives of the Gallican Church, could lead to the argument that Vlachos had started to lean in favor of the Catholic faith during his first years in Venice. Nevertheless, and following similar cases of him in Crete when he

³¹⁹ Among the Greek scholars who addressed Louis XIV after Gerasimos Vlachos, of special interest is the case of the Cypriot clergyman and Aristotelian philosopher in Paris Athanasios Rhetor (c.1571–1663), who published in 1662 a brief treatise on the Pope’s supremacy entitled *De summi pontificis sublimi supra omnes dominio*, and which he dedicated to Louis XIV; see Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 2 (1645–1690), p. 144-145. Finally, a noteworthy case is considered Kosmas Konstantinos Mavroudis (1643–1701), former Archbishop of Kitios, Cyprus, who composed a fervent praising letter towards Louis on 25 December 1675; Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 2 (1645–1690), p. 403.

³²⁰ Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 2 (1645–1690), p. 313. For a modern interpretation of the term *Gallicanism*, see Alain Tallon: “Gallicanism and religious pluralism in France in the sixteenth century”. In: Keith Cameron, Mark Greengrass & Penny Roberts (eds.): *The Adventure of Religious Pluralism, Papers from the Exeter Conference (April 1999)*. Peter Lang Publishing. Oxford, New York 2000, p. 15-30.

often came into direct contact and interaction with members of the Catholic clergy or the political authority without putting his own Orthodox faith in doubt, the assumption of a supposed pro-Catholic tendency seems to faint. According to the citation from his letter, Vlachos dealt with the Gallican clergy not so much from the perspective of their Catholic faith – although he never undermined or condemned it – but from the point of their intellectual activity as researchers and promoters of both the Latin and Greek patristic tradition. Therefore, the Cretan scholar's perception of a common ancient Christian foundation for both Catholics and Orthodox is presented to respond to the publishing initiatives of the Gallican clergy and François Combefis.

In his Gerasimos Vlachos noted that the assistance he offered to the French scholar was related to the latter's effort to familiarize the Catholic West with the word and teachings of the Greek Church Fathers. Moreover, he recognized that this project for the revival of the ancient Christian teaching and theology among the circles of the early modern Republic of Letters was not just Combefis' exclusive occupation; indeed, the latter belonged to a group of prominent and well-trained philologists, historians and editors based on the Kingdom of France [Charles Annibal Fabrot (1580–1659), Charles du Fresne, sieur Du Cange (1610–1688), Anselmo Banduri (1671–1743)] who aimed to promote through their publishing activity the writings and teachings of the Greek Christian literature, both of the ancient and the medieval tradition. Addressed directly to the Dominican scholar, Vlachos referred to him in the following way: “to the highly reverend and highly wise of the class of the preachers, father François Combefis, theologian and most fluent paraphraser of the Greek Fathers; prosper! [...] So as a miracle I consider your perfect scholarship, and your utter experience for which you are most component for the translations”.³²¹ According to the citation, after carefully examining Combefis' earlier published works and, being convinced about the validity and accuracy of the latter's method, he chose to assist him in his ambition for the publication of the patristic writings.³²² Following his general spirit of enthusiasm when addressing to Combefis,

³²¹ «Τῷ παναιδεσιμωτάτῳ καὶ σοφωτάτῳ τῆς τῶν ἱεροκηρύκων τάξεως κυρίῳ πατρὶ Φραγκίσκῳ Κομβέφισ, θεολόγῳ καὶ τῶν Ἑλλήνων πατέρων πανευφραδεῖ παραφραστῇ, [...] εὖ πράττειν [...] Διὰ θαύματος οὖν ἔχω τὸ κατὰ πάντα τῆς σῆς λογιότητος τέλειον καὶ τὴν ἄκραν ἐμπειρίαν ἣν περὶ τὰς μεταφράσεις ἐνδείκνυσαι»; see Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 2 (1645–1690), p. 312–313.

³²² Gerasimos Vlachos indeed obtained some of the printed works edited by the French patrologist. More specifically, in his *Indice della Libreria* the three following editions were recorded: i. *Sancti Ioannis Chrysostomi, De educandis liberis liber aureus* (Paris: Antoine

Vlachos constantly expressed his respect, recognition and admiration to the French patrologist's editorial activity. Indeed, dealing already from 1640 in Paris with the publication of works from the patristic literature, Combefis belonged to a circle of French scholars working on an ambitious publishing project with intellectual, religious and political implications. He published the writings of the Church Fathers following the scholastic method of critical and detailed examination of all available codices in order for their content to be confirmed and to reconstitute as much as possible the original text. In this context of Combefis' tendency to publish the patristic text while respecting its content, language and meanings, Vlachos praised him in the following way:

“I bless your God-favored purpose, I respect your work, I praise your hardships, I honor your labors, I admire your eagerness, I embrace your opinion, I extoll your achievement [...] I agree to your God-inspired zeal, I follow your call and I accomplish (as much as possible) your wish.”

«Μακαρίζω σου τὸν θεάρεστον σκοπὸν, τὸ ἔργον σεβάζομαι, τοὺς μόχθους ἐγκωμιάζω, τοὺς ἰδρωτάς τιμῶ, τὴν προθυμίαν ζηλῶ, τὴν γνώμην ἀσπάζομαι, τὸ κατόρθωμα ἐπαινῶ· [...] ὁμογνωμῶ τῷ σῷ ἐνθέῳ ζήλῳ, ἔπομαι τῇ σῇ προσκλήσει, καὶ τὸ ποθοῦμενον (ὅσον ἐφικτὸν) ἐκτελῶ.»³²³

As it becomes obvious, the Cretan teacher was particularly scholastic and attentive in matters of textual authenticity or distortion, especially in the patristic and early Christian literature. An indicative example is considered the diligence he showed to copy the works of Saint Maximus the Confessor for Combefis' project: “It was copied completely from the original, with no deductions or additions apart from the way its author composed it, as anyone can realize from the great oldness of the book; it is one of the most ancient, made by vellum and written with superfine handwriting”.³²⁴ Therefore, using as his

Bertier 1656); ii. the eight-volume *Bibliotheca Patrum Concionatoria* (Paris: Antoine Bertier 1662); iii. a collective edition of Byzantine texts entitled *Originum rerumque Constantinopolitanum manipulus* (Paris: Simeon Piget 1669).

³²³ Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 2 (1645–1690), p. 314.

³²⁴ «Ἀντεγράφη δὲ καθάπερ ἐν τῷ προτοτύπῳ κεῖται, ἀφαιρέσεως ἢ προσθήκης ἄτερ, οἷα περ συνέθετο ὁ συγγραφεὺς, ὡς ἔξεστιν ἰδεῖν ἐκ τῆς ἄγαν τῆς βίβλου παλαιότητος· ἔστι γὰρ τῶν ἀρχαιοτάτων ἐκ βεβραῖνου χάρτου χαρακτηρι λεπτοτάτῳ γεγραμμένη»; Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 2 (1645–1690), p. 315. An equally important information about the authenticity and antiquity of the codex is Vlachos' admission that the latter “came to me by good fortune from the Holy Throne of Constantinople; this feature validates the certainty of the letter and ensures, through its inveteracy, the authenticity of its author” («Ἐτυχε δὲ μοι ἀγαθὴ τύχη ἐκ τοῦ τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως ἀγιωτάτου θρόνου· ὅθεν ἐξ αὐτοῦ τοῦ χαρακτηρος τὸ βέβαιον γνησιοῦται, καὶ τὸ γνήσιον τοῦ συγγραφέως ἐκ τῆς παλαιότητος βεβαιοῦται»); Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 2 (1645–1690), p. 314.

source an ancient codex of Maximus' works, Vlachos proceeded to the copy of the original text with great care, faithful to his internal duty of responsibility as a contributor in the edition and distribution of early Christian Greek texts in Latin Europe. The cause of his intense persistence to the preservation and distribution of the works of early Christian literature in their "correct" original form is to be detected in the general climate of cautiousness and suspicion of the Orthodox world towards the systematic printing and publication of Greek texts in Latin Europe. Already from the 16th century, the scholarly circles of the Orthodox Church had become aware of an alarming phenomenon; that was the frequent interventions or even forgery in the Greek texts during the procedure of their publishing. The purposes could vary; from randomness and ignorance, the fragmentary manuscript tradition, possible financial benefits, but also for reasons of confessional disputes mainly between Rome and Constantinople.

The gradual increase in the intensity of these alterations and distortions during the 17th century had sensitized the intellectual Greek readers, and Gerasimos Vlachos among them, making them cautious and inquisitive. In this context, the publishing activity in Latin Europe, and especially the one that dealt with the writings of the Greek Church Fathers and early Christian authorities or with the liturgical and ecclesiastical books of the Orthodox Church, attracted the interest – and suspicion – of eminent Orthodox clergymen, scholars and printers. From the second half of the 17th century, the most eminent case was the Cretan prelate, teacher and editor Aloisios Ambrosios Gradenigos (1616–1679), a central figure in his contemporary printing production of Greek books in Venice. In a report to the Venetian authorities in 1671, Gradenigo pointed out a multitude of errors and typographical mistakes in the until then published Greek books, a situation that, in his opinion, posed many confessional and political perils. In fact, Gradenigos stated that he had studied most of the former and contemporary Greek publications and that he had realized two things: firstly, the perfection of earlier printing houses (Manuzio, Gioliti, Varischi, Giunta and others) on editions of Greek grammar and classical literature; secondly, the fact that due to the gradual decline of Greek studies in the 17th century and the lack of competent scholars, the publication of Greek books was confined mainly to ecclesiastical-liturgical books for the need of the Orthodox clergy. He then described the quality of those editions, claiming that they were full of unintentional and erratic mistakes that distorted the

original texts: “multiplicity of errors in prints that occurred with outrageous blasphemies”.³²⁵

Gerasimos Vlachos’ Venetian-Cretan origins, his political loyalty to the *Serenissima*, his wide networks with Catholic circles in Crete, Venice, Padua and Paris, certainly could not define him as a strictly conservative – in matters of contact though, not faith – member of the Orthodox clergy. However, he was also distrustful of the ecclesiastical-liturgical books that were published in Catholic Europe. In his letter to Combefis, he is presented to be interested and even interfere in the Greek editions, mainly of religious content, by Greek and non-Greek printing houses in Venice: “and due to your working harder, you most wise, than the others in order to translate verbatim the Greeks’ writings to your language, without distorting them”.³²⁶ The citation reveals the scholar’s profound knowledge of the patristic literature, since he claimed to be capable of detecting the alterations the various versions had caused to the original texts. At the same time, he firmly made an allusion against the editions that contained cases of distortion not by mistake but intentionally; at this point, Vlachos’ rigorous eye turned both to Venice but especially Rome. In this context, he had been attempting to secure his personal perception of his faith and then guide and support that of his compatriots. Therefore, as the years passed he became the owner of a vast corpus of codices containing the majority of the patristic and early Christian literature. It is interesting that in his letter, he informed Combefis that he and his codices remained in the latter’s disposal in order to enable him further with possible future editions of the Greek Fathers:

“In my possession are the writings of the divine Maximus, along with those of the rest of the Holy Fathers, which I keep for the glory and honor of the invincible King, for the claim of the brilliant Gallican clergy and for your requisition.”

«Ἰσθι τοίνυν, πατέρων αἰδεσιμότητε μοι καὶ προσφιλέστατε, καὶ τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ Μαζῖμου καὶ τὰ τῶν ἑτέρων θείων πατέρων τυγχάνοντά μοι συγγράμματα φυλάττεσθαι εἰς δόξαν

³²⁵: “*Moltiplicità degli errori nelle stampe occorsi con esecrande biastemme*”; see Karathanasis: *H Benetia των Ελλήνων*, p. 230-231; Triantafyllos E. Sklavenitis: «Η δυσπιστία στο έντυπο βιβλίο και η παράλληλη χρήση του χειρογράφου». In: *Το βιβλίο στις Προβιομηχανικές Κοινωνίες. Πρακτικά του Α' Διεθνούς Συμποσίου του Κέντρου Νεοελληνικών Ερευνών. Κέντρον Νεοελληνικών Ερευνών, Εθνικό Ίδρυμα Ερευνών. Athens 1982*, p. 283-293.

³²⁶ «καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸς, ὃ σοφώτατε, μόχθῳ ὅσον πλείστῳ ἐξ ἁλλοτριᾶς πρὸς ἰδίαν διάλεκτον κατὰ λέξιν τὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων συγγράμματα μεταστρέφων οὐ διαστρέφεις»; see Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 2 (1645–1690), p. 314.

καὶ τιμὴν τοῦ ἀηγιότητος βασιλέως, εἰς ἐπίταξιν τοῦ γαλλικανοῦ λαμπροτάτου κλήρου, καὶ εἰς αἵτησιν τῆς σῆς λογιότητος.»³²⁷

As it will be presented in detail in Chapter V, the study of his personal library revealed that Gerasimos Vlachos was indeed the owner of numerous codices and printed books containing the complete works (*opera omnia*) of the Greek Church Fathers and further early Christian authorities.³²⁸ Based on his erudition and constant theological training during his life, it is easy to assume that, although he obtained the early Christian literature in various forms and languages, the Cretan scholar would not proceed to a frivolous and confusing study of those texts. On the contrary, the common presence of printed editions and codices definitely served him to examine to which extent the first were or were not in contradiction with the second.

One cannot detect an explicit statement by Vlachos which would reveal his complete distrust to the western book production in general; nevertheless, the fact that he consulted and promoted the use of codices for the study and authentic interpretation of the Christian religion portrays a genuine Orthodox scholar who searched for knowledge not with an extreme and intransigent conservatism, but with a filtered and constantly self-criticized approach to the different, the new and the *other*. What becomes obvious from Vlachos' early approach to the scholarly circles of Latin Europe is that his identity as an ecclesiastic of the Orthodox Church did not prevent him from overcoming the narrow confessional boundaries and focus on an innate duty towards his contemporary intellectual activity, related or not with religion. Therefore, he consciously chose not to fall in introversion but to create paths of communication, interaction and conciliation with lettered communities of similar or different confessional nature. In all his references to the French King, the Gallican clergy and François Combefis, the Cretan professor did not concentrate on their Catholic identity but on their intellectual initiatives for the spreading of knowledge, the development of education and the emergence of the Greek letters. Thus, his words in the closure of his

³²⁷ Legrand: Bibliographie. Vol. 2 (1645–1690), p. 314.

³²⁸ Among the various names recorded in the *Indice della libreria*, we find the works of Philo Judaeus, Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Athanasius of Alexandria, Epiphanius of Salamis, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, John Chrysostom, Synesios of Cyrene, Cyril Alexandria, Basil of Seleucia, John of Damascus, and the Pseudo-Areopagitical Corpus. The aforementioned literature was recorded both in the collection of Greek codices and in the vast collection of printed books (Greek, Greek-Latin, Latin).

letter, “To the highly Christian Louis XIV, invincible King of the French, and the glorious Gallican Clergy, by whom Hellas blazes revived”³²⁹ is to be defined as the culmination of Vlachos’ interconfessionality, a tendency that emerged during his life in Crete and flourished in the cosmopolitan multi-cultural environment of Venice.

3.3. Between education and politics. *Thesaurus Encyclopaedicae Basis* (1659) and *Harmonia Definitiva Entium* (1661)

From the invention of typography in mid. 15th century until the early 16th century the project of publishing Greek books in Latin Europe mainly aimed to the emergence and distribution of works from the ancient Greek literature, early Christian tradition and in very limited cases of medieval and early modern works. Nevertheless, following the evolution of typography and the gradual establishment of printing houses all over the European continent, the first editions of early modern Greek works started to appear timidly already from the first decade of the 16th century. During the next hundred and fifty years the early modern Greek literature gradually began to emerge with the systematic publication mainly of religious works, manuals and textbooks for school use, more rarely vernacular Greek translations of classical works, and original literal compositions, both in prose and poetry. This new corpus of books differentiated from the one of the previous centuries in terms of subject matter, language and audience; the once dominant classical ancient Greek language gradually coexisted, if not replaced, with the vernacular Greek of the times and the authors, editors and printers placed their interest not so much at the Latin European market but in the Greek communities of the Venetian State and the Ottoman Empire. In the 17th century the well-established Venetian printing houses of Greek editions proceeded to a vast and extensive production of books, obtaining a central position in the local book market and cooperating with a multitude of eminent Greek authors, secular and ecclesiastical, who arrived in the Metropolis to publish their writings.³³⁰ Following the example of earlier Greek scholars

³²⁹ «τοῦ χριστιανικωτάτου Λουδοβίκου δεκάτου τετάρτου, τοῦ τῶν Γαλλιάων ἀητητήως βασιλεύοντος, καὶ τοῦ λαμπροτάτου γαλλικανοῦ κλήρου, ἐξ ὧν ἡ Ἑλλὰς ἀνανεουμένη ἐνθάλλεται»; Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 2 (1645–1690), p. 315.

³³⁰ For an overview of the early modern Greek literature (15th-17th century), see Linos Politis: *Ιστορία της Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας*. Μορφωτικό Ίδρυμα Εθνικής Τραπέζης. Athens 1985⁴, p. 47-82. Although this corpus of works has been repeatedly and systematically catalogued and bibliographed, its detailed and interpretative study has not yet been

and men of letters, Vlachos did not miss the opportunity to participate to this long tradition of early modern Greek literature. In this context, the two works he published as a teacher during his settlement in Venice, the *Thesaurus Encyclopaedicae Basis* in 1659 and the *Harmonia Definitiva Entium* in 1661, served as his personal contribution to the need of his times for more systematic and revised education among the Orthodox Greek communities in Venice and elsewhere.

To start with, Gerasimos Vlachos was recognized as the earliest Greek lexicographer of a vernacular Greek dictionary.³³¹ In his quadri-lingual *Thesaurus* the Cretan scholar placed as the base of his work the vocabulary of his contemporary vernacular Greek, which he then translated in the two classical languages (ancient Greek and Latin), and in his contemporary Italian, better to say the Venetian dialect. According to the official title of the work in its first edition of 1659, Vlachos had collected and studied his earlier relative linguistic material and then revised and modernized it in his own dictionary; “collected from various old and modern dictionaries”.³³² In an effort to map, briefly at least, the dictionaries and lexicons Vlachos could have used or be inspired from, it is worthy to refer to the main publishing initiatives for the promotion and systematic study of the vernacular Greek language, that occurred in the 16th and 17th centuries. Although there were numerous bilingual dictionaries of the classical languages, the first dictionary containing vernacular Greek words was published in Rome in 1523 and was written by the Bishop of Nocera Varinus Favorinus (1450–1537) entitled *Μέγα καὶ πάννυ ὀφέλιμον Λεξικόν* = *Magnum ac perutile Dictionarium*. Almost eighty years later, it was followed by the French classical scholar Nicolas Rigault’s (1577–1654) *Glossarium taktikon mixobarbaron*, which was published in Paris in 1601. Although both works contained mainly ancient Greek vocabulary, some words of vernacular Greek were also included, accompanied by their meaning in archaized Greek. Nevertheless, the first genuine dictionary of vernacular Greek was published in Lyon in 1610 and was composed by the Dutch classical scholar Johannes Meursius (1579–1639) under the title *Glossarium Graeco-Barbarum*;

completed, leaving ample space for future research.

³³¹ Tataakis: *Γερασimos Βλάχος*, p. 38-39, 58-61.

³³² «ἐκ διαφορῶν παλαιῶν τε καὶ νεωτέρων λεξικῶν»; see Tataakis: *Γεράσιμος Βλάχος*, p. 60. Only a specialized comparative study of the *Thesaurus* and its sources will define with accuracy Vlachos’ original intervention and contribution to the early modern field of Greek lexicography.

Meursius provided his vernacular entries with their Latin definitions and explanations in ancient Greek. Twelve years later in 1622 the *Vocabolario Italiano et Greco* was published in Rome by the Italian Jesuit missionary and philologist Girolamo Germano (1568–1632), followed in the second half of the 17th century from the work of another Catholic missionary, the Capuchin Alexis De Sommevoir, author of the *Tesoro della Lingua Greca-Volgare et Italiana*, published posthumously in Paris in 1709.³³³ In 1635 the already mentioned philologist Simon Portius published in Paris his *Dictionarium Latinum, Graeco-Barbarum et Litterale*, while the work with the widest recognition was the *Glossarium ad Scriptores Mediae et Infimae Graecitatis* by Charles du Fresne, Domini du Cange (1610–1688), which was printed in Lyon in 1688.³³⁴ A large number of dictionaries on vernacular Greek were published exclusively in the city of Venice aiming to familiarize their authors with the dominant language that was spoken in the *Stato da Màr*. In this context, the famous *Corona Preciosa* was published in 1527 by the Italian printer Stefano Nicolini da Sabbio (c.1500-c.1564), a lexicon-handbook of four languages (ancient Greek, Latin, Italian and vernacular Greek). Of equal editorial success was the *Vocabolario Nuovo* published in 1582 by Bernardino de Franceschi and containing a parallel vocabulary of Italian, German, vernacular Greek and Turkish.³³⁵

³³³ For an overview of the aforementioned works, see Geoffrey Horrocks: *Greek. A History of the Language and its Speakers*. Wiley Blackwell. Oxford UK 2014³, p. 384-385.

³³⁴ Praising Du Cange's work, the 18th century Greek scholar Adamantios Korais (1748–1833) wrote the following:

“It is right to confess that we owe him [mean. Du Cange] for the vernacular language maybe more than we owe to the lexicographer of the pure Greek language Henri Estienne, [...] since most of Du Cange's material was collected from vernacular poets and authors, yet unpublished and undermined due to their barbarism. There was no such dictionary before, apart from Meursius' utterly brief glossary and Vlachos' poor Lexicon”

«Τὸ δίκαιον ἀπαιτεῖ νὰ ὁμολογήσω, ὅτι χρεωστοῦμεν εἰς αὐτὸν διὰ τὴν βαρβαρωθεῖσαν γλῶσσαν, πλειότερον ἴσως ὅσου χρέους ἔχομεν εἰς τὸν λεξικογράφον τῆς καθαρᾶς Ἑλληνικῆς γλώσσης Ἑρρίκον Στέφανον [...] τοῦ Δουκαγγιανοῦ Λεξικοῦ ἢ πλειότερα ὕλη ἡρανίσθη ἀπὸ ποιητᾶς καὶ συγγραφεῖς βαρβάρους, ἀνεκδότους ἀκόμη καὶ καταφρονημένους διὰ τὴν βαρβαρότητά των. Λεξικὸν παρόμοιον ἄλλο πρὸ αὐτοῦ δὲν εἶχε παρὰ τὸ συντομώτατον τοῦ Μεϋρσίου γλωσσάριον καὶ τὸ πτωχὸν Λεξικὸν τοῦ Βλάχου.»

See Adamantios Korais: *Ἀτακτα ἤγουν παντοδαπῶν εἰς τὴν ἀρχαίαν καὶ τὴν νέαν ἑλληνικὴν γλῶσσαν αὐτοσχεδίων σημειώσεων καὶ τινῶν ἄλλων ὑπομνημάτων αὐτοσχεδίου συναγωγῇ*. Vol. 2. Ἐκ τῆς τυπογραφίας Κ. Ἐβεράρτου. Paris 1829, p. ις’.

³³⁵ On lexicons in vernacular Greek and in other languages printed in Venice until the 19th century, see Caterina Carpinato: “Appunti di lessicografia in greco volgare. Ine caliteri i praxi apo tin taxin”. In: Stefanos Kaklamanis, Athanasios Markopoulos, Giannis

The content of the *Thesaurus* and the method its author used for its composition reveal the latter's motives and ambitions. Gerasimos Vlachos was indeed aware of the educational necessities for his contemporary Greek professors and students in Venice and her territories in the Eastern Mediterranean region, along with the similar needs of the Orthodox Greek communities in the Ottoman Empire. Avoiding to compose his dictionary only for a specific highly intellectual audience and regardless if his book was studied in Latin Europe or Orthodox East, the Cretan scholar's main concern was to contribute to the systematic study of his contemporary vernacular Greek language in comparison and connection with the classical languages and his familiar Italian of the Republic. It is noteworthy that he did not place the ancient Greek as the base of his parallel presentation of the four languages, but the vernacular Greek which he then interpreted in the rest of the languages.³³⁶ Therefore, his work did not serve as a scientific, exclusively intellectual, treatise, but as a teaching manual for both the faculty and the students of the Greek schools in Venice and its territories.³³⁷ The use and service the *Thesaurus* would bring to his compatriots who would wish in the future to study their native language and contrast it with the classical languages or with their familiar Italian, was vividly portrayed by Vlachos himself in the introduction of his second published work, the *Harmonia Definitiva*: "Eorum usui, anno superiore Thesaurum graecae linguae volgavi, arbitratus non paucis id adiumento futurum qui parens illud litterarum idioma, veluti ab exilio revocatum, ea qua par est cupiditate sequantur".³³⁸

In addition to his aspiration that his *Thesaurus* would serve as a precious manual for his contemporary Greek education, Vlachos did not completely deprive his initiative

Mavromatis (eds.): *Ενθύμησις*, p. 107-139.

³³⁶ As Tatakis stated: "Gerasimos Vlachos begins with the vernacular as the linguistic reality of his time, with its abundant scholarly words, which almost everyone knows, and with the also abundant features of the Cretan dialect; [...] on it he establishes the modern Greeks' initiation in the ancient Greek and the other two languages"; Tatakis: *Γεράσιμος Βλάχος*, p. 60.

³³⁷ During his time as an abbot in the monastery of Panaghia Paleopolis in Corfu, Gerasimos Vlachos took the initiative to send copies of his *Thesaurus* to Flanginis College, a school of higher education which had been recently founded in the Greek Community of Venice; a detailed reference on the Flanginis College will take place in the final part of this chapter.

³³⁸ Vlachos: *Harmonia Definitiva*, 'Auctor Benevolo Lectori Salutem'. Due to its widespread distribution, Vlachos' *Thesaurus* was enriched and re-published four times: in 1723 in Venice by the printer Antonio Bortoli, who added a brief biographical note of the author, and three times by the printing house of Glykis in Venice in the years 1784, 1801 and 1820; see Georgios Ekkekakis: *Τα κρητικά βιβλία: σχέδιασμα κρητικής βιβλιογραφίας*. Vol. 1 (1499–1863). Γραφοτεχνική Κρήτης Α.Ε. Rethymno 1990, p. 68, 84, 90, 97 respectively.

of any higher intellectual motivation. One year after his contact with the scholarly circle of Combefis in Paris and his praise to the French King Louis XIV, the Cretan professor was once more eager to address a Latin European ruler in intellectual and political contexts. Therefore, the dedication of his work to the Grand Duke of Tuscany and leader of the House of the Medici in Florence, Ferdinando II (1610–1670)³³⁹ portrays his will to maintain or develop strong networks with his contemporary sovereigns near of far from the Venetian Republic. In the dedicatory letter to Ferdinando, Vlachos proceeded to an illustrious praise in honor of the Duke by naming him “the Zeus of Tuscany” and the respectful descendant of a magnificent House. Aiming to glorify the continuous care and contribution the Medici of Florence had shown to the development, support and propagation of letters and arts inside and outside their kingdom, the Cretan scholar composed his series of epigrams in Latin and ancient Greek, dedicated to the Duke and the closest members of his family. All of those epigrams, in addition to their author’s erudition with the classical languages and literature, also revealed his goal to achieve a sense of awe and grandeur by using an exuberant style of emphasis and excessive praise.³⁴⁰ More specifically, Vlachos dedicated his first epigram to Ferdinando, his second to the Duke’s wife, the Duchess of Tuscany Vittoria della Rovere (1622–1694) and the third to their son and successor of Ferdinando in 1670, Prince Cosimo III (1642–1723). The two following epigrams were dedicated “*ad eminentissimum S.R.E. Cardinalem Episcopum et Sacri Collegij Decanum Ioannem Carolum Medicæum*”; that was Giancarlo de’ Medici (1611–1663), one of Ferdinando’s brothers, who followed a successful career in the Catholic Church and from 1644 had obtained the office of Cardinal Bishop and Deacon at the College of Cardinals in Rome. Vlachos chose to compose his final two epigrams in honor of Ferdinando’s two other brothers, who were also eminent patrons of the arts and sciences in the Duchy of Tuscany: Prince Leopoldo de’ Medici (1617–1675), also an intellectual cardinal,³⁴¹ and Prince Matteo de’ Medici

³³⁹ “*Ad Serenissimum Ferdinandum II Magnum Ducem Hetruriae*”. Ferdinando II de’ Medici was the Grand Duke of Tuscany from 1621 until his death and, among others, was particularly known as a patron and protector of Galileo Galilei.

³⁴⁰ For the use of the epigram by the Greek scholars as a means to compose praising schemes during the early modern centuries, see Aristeidis Stergellis: *Τα δημοσιεύματα των Ελλήνων σπουδαστών του Πανεπιστημίου της Πάδοβας τον 17^ο και 18^ο αι.* Φιλολογικός Σύλλογος “Παρνασσός”. Athens 1970, p. 115-116.

³⁴¹ Prince Leopoldo de’ Medici was a disciple of Galileo and took great interest in science and technology. In 1638 he founded the Accademia Platonica and in 1657, along with his brother

(1613–1667), governor of Siena and patron of eminent artists in the Kingdom.

As one would expect, an issue is raised concerning the obvious confessional deviation between Gerasimos Vlachos as an Orthodox clergyman and teacher, and the members of the House of the Medici. Indeed, despite their great concern and involvement in the intellectual and scientific currents of their time, Ferdinando and his family did not cease to remain pious followers of the Catholic faith. Moreover, eminent representatives of the Dutchy such as Giancarlo de' Medici and Leopoldo de' Medici had obtained high ecclesiastical offices, becoming direct representatives of the Apostolic See and the Pope's interests in the Catholic Christendom. A question rises once more if Vlachos' choice to dedicate his dictionary to the Duke could be perceived as a pro-Catholic initiative and interpreted as the Cretan scholar's attempt to confess, or at least imply, his positive leaning towards the teachings and practices of the Latin Church. Following the content of his dedicatory letter to Ferdinando and the approaches Vlachos developed through his epigrams to the rest of the Medici family, the aforementioned assumption seems to faint. Similar to his approach and purposes during his contact with François Combefis, the Orthodox professor's choice to dedicate his *Thesaurus* to the Florentine ruler did not occur in the context of the latter's faith to Catholicism, but despite that. Indeed, according to Vlachos' personal point of view, Ferdinando, Giancarlo and Leopoldo were not highlighted as the legitimate representatives of the Pope, the defenders of his interests or the promoters of his religious and political agenda, but as the illustrious descendants of Lorenzo the Magnificent (1449–1492), the enthusiastic patron of the Italian Renaissance culture. Thus, the Medici were portrayed as a sovereign House of the early modern period with a long heritage on the support and expansion of letters, sciences and arts.

Certainly not unknown to Gerasimos Vlachos, the aforementioned intellectual contribution of the Medici was vividly presented and praised in his dedicatory letter to Ferdinando. The Cretan scholar referred in detail to the intellectual and educational initiatives the Medici had proceeded during the early modern centuries in the field of classical Latin studies, of their contemporary Italian literature and the emergence of science and art. In this context the author referred by name to the three main patrons of

Ferdinando, the Accademia del Cimento in order to promote observation of nature through the Galileian method. Leopoldo was also a great collector of rare books, paintings, statues and coins.

the House, the aforementioned Lorenzo de' Medici, the prominent Renaissance Pope Leo X (1475–1521) and Don Giovanni de' Medici (1567–1621), an eminent painter, architect and patron of the Italian theater. In addition, he made a special note to the Medici's contribution to the study and foundation of the ancient Greek literate heritage in Florence. Thus, he praised the establishment of academies and institutions in the city, such as the Neoplatonic Florentine Academy, which promoted the study of rational thinking through philosophy, based on the writings of the ancient Greek philosophers and historians, from whom Vlachos mentioned by name Plato and Plutarch.³⁴² It becomes evident that he viewed Ferdinando, the contemporary leader of a historic family that gradually headed towards its end, mainly as an illustrious patron ("maecenas") of the letters and arts. Being a moderate scholar himself, he did not allow the confessional differences to hamper his appreciation to the Medici. As a man of letters, he continued to wish and act in order to support and preserve a close contact with the intellectual people of his time, paying tribute to those who were recognized and praised as the promoters of culture and seekers of knowledge.

In addition to the dominant scholarly motives that impeded Gerasimos Vlachos to address to the House of Medici, a political factor could also be detected, similar in nature and discretion as the one found in the Cretan teacher's letter to Combefis. More specifically, one could assume that the dedication of the *Thesaurus* to an Italian ruler outside the Venetian Republic could belong to Vlachos' persistent and continuous efforts to raise the awareness of sovereigns in Latin Europe and urge them to support the *Serenissima* during her resistance in the War of Candia. Although a direct appeal to the Duke of Tuscany is not to be found in the dedicatory letter or the epigrams – apart from maybe a mere and brief reference to the political history and the system of government in the Duchy,³⁴³ the Cretan scholar was definitely aware of the Duke's military support

³⁴² "Præcipuum hoc Medicæ familiæ decus, ut digna litteris perpetuo faciat, litteras perpetuo foveat; & qui olim atavis Hetruriæ regibus editus, nomenque fortunæ magnum Mecoenas litterarium sæculum Romano Imperio dederat, singulis ætatibus subinde nasci, in singulis Medicæis credi possit. Quibus ut cæteros taceam nominibus de re litteraria meriti non fuere Laurentius, & Ioannes Medicæi? Quorum alter instituta Florentiæ celeberrima sæculorum omnium academia, Veteres Græciæ philosophos, atque Historicos Latio dedit. Platonem in primis, & Plutarchum latinè loqui docuit, ut quid quid Græcia saperet, Latium doceretur. Alter vero sacto in Leonem Decimum summum sacrarum rerum rectorem, & præfidem gradu totum penè orbem terrarum suo Imperio subditum, aut fecit litteratum, aut litteris sospitavit"; Vlachus: *Thesaurus*, p. 7-8

³⁴³ "Quatuor Respublicæ in unius Imperium coivere, quibus præter pereundi licentiam ad

to the *Signoria* during the first years of the war; indeed, in the outbreak of the war in 1645, Ferdinando was among those European sovereigns who hastened to send military forces to Crete, on the side of the Venetian authorities. Taking into consideration the already mentioned direct entreaty to the Muscovite Tsar Aleksey Mikhailovich, the discreet plea to Louis XIV and the later invocation to the Holy Roman Emperor Leopold I through the dedication of his *Harmonia*, Gerasimos Vlachos had definitely not stopped to hope for a Christian alliance against the Ottoman invasion in his homeland.

A project of similar motives, method and purposes with those of the *Thesaurus* is considered the composition and publishment of Vlachos' second educational manual, his *Harmonia Definitiva Entium*. The aim of the author this time was to collect and critically approach the contribution of Greek thought in the fields of philosophy, theology, science and arts. The result of this attempt was an imposing dictionary of terms which included a multitude of definitions of "all things that exist in the world", deriving from the writings of prominent figures of the Greek thought from the classical antiquity to the early modern centuries. One of the most central issues raised on the *Harmonia* and its ideological background is the question of the sources chosen and utilized by Gerasimos Vlachos. The formation and structure of the chapters reveals the influence which Vlachos seemed to have received by the two principal sources of Greek thought, ancient Greek philosophy and early Christian literature. The content of the work reflects the main approach the author used, based on his erudition in the classical studies and his profound knowledge of the early Christian theology. More specifically, he is presented to have studied and critically used the doctrines and teachings of the central philosophical currents of Greek antiquity, mainly the Pre-Socratics, Socrates and certain Socratic schools, Plato and the Platonic Academy, Aristotle and the Peripatetic School. From the Hellenistic and Roman period, the perception of the Stoic philosophy, Eclecticism, Neoplatonism and Neo-Pythagoreanism are strongly detected in the sources, while from the early Christian era representatives of the patristic and apologetic tradition were constantly recorded. Finally, noteworthy is the presence of the principal Greek philosophical and theological tradition established during the Middle Ages, as the connecting and inseparable link between the ancient classical and the contemporary to

summam libertatem nihil deest"; Vlachus: *Thesaurus*, p. 6.

the author Greek thought. Therefore, the totally 172 chapters of the *Harmonia* testify to the author's ability to connect in his thinking and writings two seemingly opposite worlds and cultures, the ancient Greek and the Christian, through historical figures that could be described as the pinnacle of Greek intellect over the centuries.³⁴⁴

As the visualized crowning of this coexistence in Gerasimos Vlachos' mind of the ancient Greek and Christian wisdom is considered the preface of the *Harmonia*, the so-called *Praemeditatio*. In this brief text, the author attempted to reconcile the ancient Greek with the Christian tradition in the context of the insurmountable need of man for complete knowledge and perception of the world. The *Praemeditatio* began with an interpretation of the aftermath of the Fall of Man. Due to the Original Sin, Adam "darkened the beauty of the Divine Image" and the unfortunate man, "fallen from the original innocence, filled his intellect with ignorance and illiteracy, and although dressed in rational pleasure, he chose to arm himself with irrationality". As one of the most serious consequences of the Fall, the Cretan scholar highlighted the condemnation of man by God "to eat the bread of the knowledge of beings through the sweat of his face and through the labor of teaching and learning", since "he clearly lost the tree of knowledge and life" along with "the gift of reason", that is his natural perception of the knowledge of beings.³⁴⁵ In his interpretation, Vlachos held the traditional thesis that the world was controlled by a certain order and harmony, which derived from God.

At this point, the scholar creatively integrated the philosophical and scientific course of man into the religious tradition. He associated and reconciled "the supremely wise Divine Providence of God" of the Christian teaching with the "wise Prometheus" of

³⁴⁴ The detailed study of the work offers to its reader an interesting conclusion as to the way in which Vlachos chose to distribute his numerous sources. Based on the existing bibliography and on my personal compilations, 72 chapters were based exclusively on sources of secular – mostly ancient Greek – wisdom, in 52 chapters the author used sources of religious wisdom mainly patristic and early Christian literature, while in 48 chapters the sources derive equally both from secular and religious Greek thought and literature. A relative quantitative balance between the three groups is evident, a phenomenon which cannot be related to luck but to a conscious choice by the author, thereby revealing his method for a combination and coexistence of the two traditions. For the question on the sources, see Tokmaki: *Αρμονία*, p. 46-62.

³⁴⁵ «τὸ τῆς θείας εἰκόνης ἀπημαύρωσε κάλλος»; «τῆς ἀρχαίας ἀθωότητος [...] οὐκ ἀγαθὴ τύχη ἐκπεπτωκώς, τὸν οἰκεῖον νοῦν ἀγνοίας τε καὶ ἀμαθίας ἐνεπληρώσατο καὶ τῇ λογικῇ πανδαισία καθωραϊσθεῖς, ἰδίᾳ προαιρέσει τῇ ἀλογίᾳ ἑαυτὸν καθωπλίσατο»; «ἐν ἰδρώτι τοῦ προσώπου καὶ τοῦ τῆς διδασκαλίας τε καὶ μαθήσεως μόχθου, ἐσθίειν τὸν ἄρτον τῆς τῶν ὄντων γνώσεως»; «τοῦ ζύλου τῆς γνώσεως καὶ τῆς ζωῆς ἀπεστηρήθη σαφέστατα»; «τὸ τοῦ λογικοῦ ἐξαπολέσας δῶρον»; Vlachos: *Harmonia Definitiva*, p. 1.

the ancient Greek mythology. As the latter contributed to the progress and evolution of human kind by offering to them the gift of fire, so the Divine Providence “provided to men with the fire of knowledge and science from the sky, with which it placed them to their prior worthiness and made them differ from the irrational animals”.³⁴⁶ Noteworthy in this excerpt is the line of communication Vlachos drew between the ancient Greek philosophical reasoning and the teachings of the Christian theology, connecting mythological Prometheus with Divine Providence. Indeed, Vlachos wished to create a mental unity between the two sides, aiming mainly to define as much as possible the various concepts that led to the interpretation of the world.³⁴⁷ Therefore, the *Praemeditatio* is indicative of the author’s affinity for learning and his firm confidence that for man knowledge and therefore wisdom is a necessary source of life and power, able to bring inner psychological balance and intellectual uplifting, aiming to upraise him from his earthly nature and bring him closer to God.³⁴⁸

The motives that impeded Gerasimos Vlachos to compose and publish his anthology of Greek thought and wisdom are to be detected to the author’s long occupation with the field of letters and the education of his compatriots, along with his vision of promoting and spreading Greek culture in Latin Europe. Given the role that all of his writings were meant to play, it becomes clear that the *Harmonia* was written in order to firstly serve as an educational manual for the students of the Greek schools in Venice and Padua. Its educational identity is evident in the *Praemeditatio*; after noting

³⁴⁶ «Ὁ σοφὸς Προμηθεὺς, ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ ὑπέροχος Πρόνοια, τὸ πῦρ τῆς γνώσεως τε καὶ ἐπιστήμης ἐξ οὐρανοῦ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις παρέσχετο. Δι’ ὧν τοὺς ἀνθρώπους εἰς τὴν κατ’ ἀρχὰς μετεστήσατο ἀξιότητα καὶ τῶν ἀλόγων ζώων διεννηοχένοι πεποίηκεν»; Vlachus: *Harmonia Definitiva*, p. 2-3.

³⁴⁷ Tokmaki: *Ἀρμονία*, p. 61-62. The dominant tendency of the scholar from Candia to connect and conciliate in his thought and word the ancient Greek tradition and the Christian teaching is portrayed in the ninth chapter of his later *Didaskalia*. As secular sages Vlachos presented the poets, the grammarians, the mythologists, the historians, the physicists, the metaphysicians, the philosophers and the mathematicians. Indeed, he urged the future Christian preachers to use the works and teachings of the aforementioned authorities in favor of the dissemination and establishment of the Christian doctrines and faith; see Kourkoulas: *Ομιλητική*, p. 48-51.

³⁴⁸ As a warm supporter of education and the search for knowledge, Vlachos expressed in his *Didaskalia* the opinion that as all courses, both theoretical and practical, served both the student and the teacher, the preacher had to acquire a complete circular knowledge, to obtain a practical comprehension of things and the world and to be the holder of a wide, profound and comparative way of thinking. In this way he would be well-trained and a specialist of logic, philosophy, rhetoric and scholastic theology, while he would gain experience in mathematics and medicine; see Kourkoulas: *Ομιλητική*, p. 11-12.

that the ultimate inspiration for him was “the narrow nature of our mind”, he explained that

“by selecting the definitions of beings from the secular and religious Greek teachers, and by filling their incomplete points, we have made the method of proof more uncomplicated and easier for the students.”

«ἐκ τε τῶν ἐξωτερικῶν καὶ ἐσωτερικῶν Ἑλλήνων διδασκάλων τοὺς ὁρισμοὺς τῶν ὄντων ἐρανισαμένοις, τὰ ἐλλείποντα ἐξ ἡμῶν αὐτῶν ἀναπληρῶσαι, τοῖς σπουδαίοις εὐχερεστέραν καὶ ραδιοτέραν τῆς ἀποδείξεως εὐρετικὴν ἐπιπροτεῖναι μέθοδον.»³⁴⁹

Following his method, it is evident that Gerasimos Vlachos proceeded to the quotation of brief definitions without developing or analysing further the various concepts. Moreover, the content of the *Harmonia* is presented relatively extensive with a variety of fields to be interpreted (theology, philosophy, philology and science), areas that responded perfectly to the educational needs of the students in the Greek schools of the *Serenissima*. Finally, as the Cretan scholar himself noted, he had not simply collected definitions deriving from Greek thinkers, which he included in his book uncritically, but he completed the points he believed to be incomprehensible, since his deepest desire was to promote and enable the educational parameters detected in his work and therefore making “the method of proof more uncomplicated and easier” for the young readers and their teachers. In this context, it is noteworthy to refer to a letter he wrote during the years he resided in Corfu and sent to the Reformers of the University of Padua, the primarily competent office in matters of education and book publishing. According to his testimony, he proceeded to the donation of fifty copies of his dictionary and a hundred of his *Harmonia* to the newly founded Flanginis College, in order to be used as educational manuals by the faculty and the students; in particular, he wrote:

“I have already given two of my works to the press: a lexicon concerning the four languages, the vernacular Greek and the scholarly, Italian and Latin [...] I offered fifty volumes of my work *Lexicon* and a hundred of my work *Harmonia Definitiva* in order to be used by the students of the mentioned College.”

“Già dedi alle stampe due mie faliche: un *Lexicon* concernete le quatre lingue, Greca volgare e litteraria, Italiana e Latina [...] ne esibisco dell’ *Opera Lexicon* volumi cinquanta e dell’ *Opera Harmonia Definitiva* volumi cento per uso delli scolari del

³⁴⁹ Vlachus: *Harmonia Definitiva*, p. 2-3. The Greek term *σπουδαίοις* bears two meanings: i. the significant or renowned historical figures; ii. those who study («τοὺς ἐν σπουδῇ ὄντας»); Vlachos used the term by its second meaning, clearly stating his intention for the school use of his work.

detto Collegio.”³⁵⁰

From another point of view, the *Harmonia* belonged to a multitude of writings by early modern Greek scholars serving for the promotion of Greek letters in Latin Europe. In the *Preface to the Reader*, the following excerpt reveals the level of Gerasimos Vlachos’ loyalty and reliance to the world of letters: “To my friends, to the number of whom I place everyone who deals with the letters, I hope to offer something through my work”.³⁵¹ Due to its form, its vast collection of subjects and its author’s use of both the ancient Greek and Latin language, the book was considered an excellent means so that the direct contact of the Latin world with both ancient Greek and Orthodox literature and cultural tradition could be succeeded. In the context of this approach, of special interest is considered Vlachos’ decision to dedicate his *Harmonia* to the still young Holy Roman Emperor Leopold I (1640–1705). In the introductory part of the work the reader first meets a dedicatory letter to the Emperor, written in Latin by Vlachos. The latter was accompanied by a Latin epigram composed by the author and addressed to Archduke Leopold Wilhelm of Austria (1614–1662), younger brother of late Emperor Ferdinand III and first uncle of Leopold I; the Archduke was a prominent supporter of the Catholic Reformation, but above all became known as a warm patron of the arts and letters.

In addition to potential similarities to the dedication of *Thesaurus* to Ferdinando II and the mainly scholarly motives of his action, the case of the *Harmonia* could also be connected to political factors, detected in the *Thesaurus* but mainly in Vlachos’ entreaty to the Tsar Aleksey Mikhailovich. The Cretan scholar’s affliction and grief for the fate of the Orthodox Greeks of the Ottoman Empire and for his own coercion to abandon his homeland which was under attack, is evident in the introductory part of his *Harmonia*. More specifically, he chose to begin the *Preface to the Reader* with a citation deriving from Cicero: “*non nobis solis nos esse natos, sed patrice et amicis*”. The purpose was to reiterate the serious issue of the Ottoman rule on the Greeks, a matter that, despite his expatriation to the safe environment of Venice, seemed to have always concerned him: “In my homeland, which is tortured by the inhumanity of the barbarians, I can

³⁵⁰ Karathanasis: *Φλαγγίνειος Σχολή*, p. 189 note 3.

³⁵¹ “*amicis, quorum in numero universos litterarum asseclas collo, me prosuturum spero, si aliquid subinde Typis sussiciam*”; the excerpt was firstly cited in Tatakis: *Γεράσιμος Βλάχος*, p. 134.

not offer any help, I am even exiled from it”.³⁵² By vividly describing his personal experience from the warfare in Crete, the author implored Leopold to put into action his concern on the truculent conditions, and campaign against the Sublime Porte: “*En Græcia, quam dudum ad nuissima verumnarum exempla Othomana barbaries vexat, a Te uno libertatem expectat, pristinumque decorum*”.³⁵³ In this context of direct supplication to the leader of the Holy Roman Empire against the Ottoman expansive policy in the Eastern Mediterranean region, the scholar from Candia proceeded to a numeration of the military confrontations Leopold’s ancestors of the House of the Habsburg had proceeded against the Ottoman Empire during the 16th and 17th centuries. Making special reference to the concept of *Türkenfurcht*, that was the general “fear of the Turks” in the Habsburg court, the author referred to the military achievements of the Emperors Charles V (1500–1558) and his younger brother Ferdinand I (1503–1564) as counterparts to the prominent reign of Sultan Suleiman I the Magnificent (1494–1566), along with the military successes of Emperor Rudolf II (1552–1612) in the Ottoman-Habsburg Thirteen Years’ War (1593–1606).³⁵⁴

Following his established policy of priorities and preconditions, Gerasimos Vlachos approached the Holy Roman Emperor and implored for his scholarly benevolence and military support, by emphasizing the glorious heritage of the ancient Greek civilization and comparing it with the declined state of his contemporary Greeks who resided in the Ottoman Empire. At the same time he discreetly and silently pretermitted the issue of the different Christian faiths between the latter and the Emperor. Easily detected is the fact that in this case he chose to consciously follow the opposite

³⁵² “*Patriæ a barbarorum immanitate iam dudum vexate, nullas possum ipse ferre suppetias, ad ea etiam propulsatus*”; see Tatakis: *Γεράσιμος Βλάχος*, p. 134. Vlachos’ tendency to follow and imitate the activities of his personal idol, Ioannis Kottounios, becomes evident even in the case of the invocations. Specifically, in the dedicatory letter of Kottounios’ already mentioned *Immortalitati Alcidi Philelleni ... Varij praeclarorum Virorum Applausus* (1642), the following excerpt presents obvious similarities with the style and purposes of Vlachos’ words in his letter to Leopold: “Truly all the Hellenes, who once formed Hellas (now almost a deserted place), praise you in a loud voice and raise their suppliant hands towards you. [...] It is possible that one day the yoke of the barbarians will be driven out of Hellas”; Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 1 (1601–1644), p. 433-434.

³⁵³ Vlachus: *Harmonia Definitiva*, p. 4.

³⁵⁴ It is noteworthy that the young Emperor Leopold I would be the one that in 1664, three years after the publication of the *Harmonia*, would sign a twenty-year peace treaty with the Ottoman Empire. For a detailed account of the turbulent relations between the House of the Habsburg and the Sublime Porte during the early modern centuries, see Malcolm: *Useful Enemies*, p. 66.

argument from the one he used in his *Triumph* to the Muscovite Tsar. In the latter's case, the Cretan scholar addressed an Orthodox ruler, therefore he preferred to highlight and raise as his main argument the feature of the common faith between him and the Orthodox Greeks. On the contrary, Leopold came from a fervently pious Catholic dynasty. More specifically, during the turbulent times of the Thirty Years War Leopold's grandfather, Ferdinand II (1578–1637), expelled with the Edict of Restitution (25. March 1629) all non-Catholics from the Empire and established the higher Catholic clergy as the dominant Estate in the realm.³⁵⁵

In his praises in honor of the Emperor, Vlachos made a detailed reference to the latter's victorious campaign against the Transylvanian army during the Second Northern War (1655–1660), in which King Charles X of Sweden attempted to obtain the reign of Poland with the aid of the Prince of Transylvania György II Rákóczi. Noteworthy is that the Cretan professor viewed and perceived the set of clashes and battles in the unruly district of Transylvania between the Habsburg army and the local Ottoman forces from the perspective of the dominant religious collision between Christianity and Islam. Aiming to promote and recognize the Emperor's warm Christian piety, Vlachos presented it as the reason of his military successes against the "Transylvanian tyranny" and Leopold's strong faith to Christ as his most effective weapon against the armies of the "Pseudo-Prophet Muhammad".³⁵⁶ What becomes obvious not only from the case of Leopold, but also from Vlachos' earlier approaches to his contemporary sovereigns, both of Catholic and Orthodox faith, is the Cretan scholar's advanced spirit of diplomacy; his ability to skillfully manoeuvre and bring to the fore each time those features required to achieve a convincing argument, a powerful invocation to emotion, logic or the historical conjuncture.

3.4. A fervent follower of Aristotle, a pious Orthodox Christian. Approaching the 17th-century Greek Aristotelianism

³⁵⁵ For Ferdinand's initiatives in favor of the Catholic faith in his territories, see Setton: *Venice, Austria, and the Turks*, p. 42-45.

³⁵⁶ "*Tuae pietati, qua (citra inuidiam dixerim) maiores tuos non provocas tantum, sed superas, Catholicae Religionis incrementa debemus, itaut vindicata in libertatem Christianam Ungaria, Thracia ipsa per Te Tartanorum tyrannidem exuat, totaque Asia pro Luna Aquilas veneretur, et Christi Crucem adorent, qui Pseudoprophetae Maumethi supplicia offerunt*"; see Vlachus: *Harmonia Definitiva*, p. 4.

Although it could be easily assumed from his multitude of philosophical commentaries, introductions, summaries and anthologies, the *Harmonia Definitiva* was the most indicative and official, since it managed to be published, evidence of Gerasimos Vlachos' strong and deep faith to Aristotle's thought, teachings and method. Both in the official title and the content of the book, the Aristotelian perception of the essence of all beings deriving from their definitions prevails. In the *Praemeditatio*, the author made explicit reference to the Philosopher and his influential theory of definitions:

“science is hexis which is obtained by evidence, and of which [mean. science] the definition is considered its most required means; considering the prior and the definitions as both necessary and useful to the mind, we have set as our purpose to collect (if it is possible) and publish all the definitions, which now lie scattered.”

«ἡ ἐπιστήμη ἐστὶν ἕξις δι' ἀποδείξεως τὴν ἐπίκτησιν ἔχουσα, κάκεινης μέσον ἀναγκαιότατον ὁ ὀρισμὸς πέφυκεν, οὗ δίχα ἐκ τε τῶν προτέρων καὶ τῶν ὀρισμῶν ἅμα ἀναγκαῖον καὶ χρήσιμον κατὰ νοῦν ἀναπολησάμενοι, ἅπαντες τοὺς σποράδην κειμένους τῶν ὄντων ὀρισμοὺς συναθροῖσαι (ἢ δυνατόν) καὶ ἐκδοῦναι ὠήθημεν.»³⁵⁷

The term “definitive” («ὀριστική») held two meanings in Greek: i. final and permanent; and ii. related to a definition. In this context and under the impact of the relative Aristotelian doctrine, the Cretan scholar defined the word “definitive” as following: “that is why we entitled the book *Harmonia Definitiva*; because we have collected in one text the wise men's definitions (which they have given to the beings), and we have subjoined what was necessary to them [mean. the definitions]”.³⁵⁸ According to the aforementioned excerpt, Vlachos' project aimed first and foremost at gathering and critically evaluating the principal definitions that the notable representatives of Greek wisdom bequeathed to the future generations and secondly, to complete or clarify with his personal definitions those entries that seem to be in need of adjustments.

Therefore, in his book the scholar from Candia expressed the following main arguments: i. that one can attain the ultimate and complete knowledge of the world and things only through obtaining the wisdom bequeathed by the authorities of the past; and ii. that the various concepts of human knowledge can and have already been defined either by human thought or by Divine Revelation.³⁵⁹ Following this course of thought,

³⁵⁷ Vlachus: *Harmonia Definitiva*, p. 2-3.

³⁵⁸ «διὸ καὶ τὸ βιβλίον Ἀρμονία ὀριστική τῶν ὄντων πρὸς ἡμῖν ἐπιγράφεται. Ὅτι τοὺς τῶν σοφῶν ὀρισμοὺς (οὓς περὶ τῶν ὄντων ἀποδεδώκασιν) εἰς ἓν συνάψαντες φέρομεν, καὶ τὰ πρέποντα τοῖς οὗσι προστιθέμενοι ἄγομεν»; Vlachus: *Harmonia Definitiva*, p. 2-3.

³⁵⁹ Noteworthy is the definition given by Gerasimos Vlachos himself to the term “dogma” in chapter 108 of his *Harmonia*, entitled “On the Habits of the Soul” («Περὶ τῶν τῆς ψυχῆς

what really existed could only be conceived and attributed by the definition of its meaning. In contradiction to the Renaissance way of thinking which did not seek to find coherence in the universe as a whole but discerned only such limited and transient patterns of order as could be devised by man himself, Vlachos is presented to follow the medieval vision of reality according to which every dimension of the universe and every aspect of human existence were seen as part of an objective and cosmic system of order. Furthermore, the medieval vision identified a definite pattern in the universal order; all things appeared to be arranged in a hierarchy of complexity and value, an arrangement whose basis was ideal and therefore utterly static, in comparison to the Renaissance one, which avoided distinguishing any hierarchy and, instead of stasis, it juxtaposed the incessant flux of things. Without following the tendency of the Renaissance vision or that of the early European Enlightenment in which man comprehended very little and was uncertain that anything had its definite place, the scholar from Candia remained loyal to the old medieval model, according to which reality was a system comprehending all things.³⁶⁰

Regardless if his philosophical commentaries remain scattered and in various versions in codices preserved in numerous European libraries and archives, the content, structure and meaning of his *Harmonia* is more than enough to place Gerasimos Vlachos in the 17th-century Greek offshoot of the dominant during the early modern centuries current of Paduan Aristotelianism. The latter was born and eventually established in 16th-century Italy and particularly in the University of Padua. Following the Renaissance humanistic occupation with the ancient Greek and Roman culture as well as with the ancient Greek and Latin language, the scholars of Padua held the view that one of the outstanding features of humanistic tradition should be the strengthening of research and knowledge. To achieve this, they gradually rejected the medieval scholastic philosophical tradition and turned to the ancient texts, directed to the original codices in an attempt to discover some brand new meanings, promoting in this way the study of ancient philosophy. At the University of Padua, a group of professors of

ἐξέων»): “Gerasimos on Habits: Dogma is a wise man’s opinion on matters of philosophy, certain and true, immutable by reason” (⟨Γερασίου Περὶ ἐξέων: Δόγμα ἐστὶν υπόληψις ἀνδρός σοφοῦ βέβαιος καὶ ἀληθὴς περὶ τῶν ζητούμενων ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ ἀμετάπτωτος ἀπὸ λόγου⟩; Vlachus: *Harmonia Definitiva*, p. 212-213.

³⁶⁰ For the distinction between the medieval and the Renaissance visions of reality, see Bouwsma: *Venice and the Defense of Republican Liberty*, p. 4.

philosophy, starting with Pietro Pomponazzi (1426–1525) and ending with Cesare Cremonini (1550–1631), adopted an unconventional way of perceiving and interpreting the Aristotelian corpus, criticizing or revising at the same time the method of the medieval Scholastics. Due to their tendency to move away from the exclusive study of the Aristotelian Logic and Rhetoric, those thinkers gave special focus on the Philosopher's writings on Physics and Metaphysics. Mainly counting on the approaches and interpretations of the ancient Greek commentators (Porphyry of Tyre, Alexander of Aphrodisias, Ammonius Hermiae, Simplicius of Cilicia), the representatives of the Paduan Aristotelian current aimed to discard the restrictions and limitations the medieval scholasticism had installed to the philosophical thinking.³⁶¹ In the context of their effort to create visible distinctions between early modern philosophy and theology, they introduced their famous theory of the double truth, according to which there were two separate fields of research; one used the rational method to the utmost degree and to its ultimate consequences while, in the second, faith held the dominant role.

The philosophical movement of Paduan Aristotelianism was introduced in the Greek region during the first three decades of the 17th century with the collaboration of two eminent figures of intellectual and ecclesiastical thought, the Athenian philosopher and professor Theophilos Korydalleus (1570–1645) and the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople Kyrillos Loukaris (1572–1638) respectively. The historical background upon which the aforementioned personages collaborated mainly in the environment of Constantinople were the turbulent years when the Orthodox populations of the Eastern Mediterranean and Balkan regions were dealing with the confessional interventions and educational initiatives of the Catholic missionary activity. In the context of the urgent need for the intellectual and educational development of his Orthodox flock, the Patriarch and his circle organized and promoted an ambitious project, which contained the establishment of schools of basic and higher education, secular and ecclesiastical, they supported and enabled the publication of books in vernacular Greek with religious and educational content and even worked for the establishment of the first Greek printing press in the Ottoman Empire, which nevertheless proved to be short-lived.³⁶²

³⁶¹ For the term “Paduan Aristotelianism” and its ideological parameters, see Michael Engel: *Elijah Del Medigo and Paduan Aristotelianism: Investigating the Human Intellect*. Bloomsbury Academic. London 2016.

³⁶² Born in Candia and obtaining his higher education in Venice and Padua, Kyrillos Loukaris

One of Loukaris' most active and efficient partner was Theophilos Korydalleus, a disciple of Cesare Cremonini in the University of Padua. The Athenian philosopher was invited in 1624 to undertake the reorganization of the Patriarchal Academy in Constantinople.

During his years in the capital of the Ottoman Empire, Korydalleus reintroduced courses and lessons of higher education and promoted the spread of the revised Paduan Aristotelianism among the scholarly Orthodox circles. Following Cremonini's philosophical method, he introduced a new educational system, whose main features were the independent study of philosophy from the learning of theology, the perception of the ancient Greek commentators, and not the early Christian writers, as the only competent authority, and the students' training to the Aristotelian doctrines on Physics, in addition to the traditional fields of Logic and Rhetoric.³⁶³ The project that Loukaris and Korydalleus promoted in the first thirty years of the 17th century combined the ecclesiastical-confessional context and goals of the first with the secular-intellectual background and ambitions of the second. The whole scheme derived, was based and promoted a movement of two central parameters: i. the contact of early modern Greek philosophical thought with the ancient classical tradition under the renewal prism of Paduan Aristotelianism; and ii. the mental coexistence and conciliation between Christian spirituality and ancient Greek thinking. This balancing relation between the ancient Greek and Christian traditions leading to a mutual interpretation of the world found a loyal and vigorous supporter in the case of Gerasimos Vlachos. Through his writings, at least those approachable to the research, the harmonious coexistence of the two traditions in the Cretan scholar's thought is utterly clarified.

Nevertheless, the name of the Athenian philosopher or any of his disciples were

followed the ecclesiastical path and was elected Patriarch of Alexandria (1601–1620) and later Patriarch of Constantinople (1620–1638). During his primacy he was dethroned and re-installed in the throne five times. In 1629 a brief pro-Calvinist treatise under Loukaris' name and entitled *Eastern Confession of the Christian Faith* was published in Geneva, causing a storm of protests from both Catholics and Orthodox. Eventually the Patriarch was accused of secretly preparing a revolution of the Orthodox population against the Ottoman regime and he was executed on 27 June 1638. From the voluminous bibliography on Kyrillos Loukaris, see Hering: *Οικουμενικό Πατριαρχείο*, p. 30-42.

³⁶³ For the reorganization of the Patriarchal Academy by Theophilos Korydalleus, see Charalampos A. Chronis: «Τα Μετά τα Φυσικά και η μεταφυσική του Αριστοτέλη στο έργο του Θεοφίλου Κορυδαλέως. Η συμβολή του Θεοφίλου Κορυδαλέως στην ερμηνεία του Αριστοτέλη». PhD diss. Aristotle University of Thessaloniki 2001, p. 35-36.

not to be detected in the sources of the *Harmonia*. Following the latent meanings and interests of this apparent depreciation of the early modern Greek philosophical thought, it is significant to clarify that Korydalleus' approach, teachings and models were widely and officially recognized by the Orthodox ecclesiastical and scholarly circles only during the late 17th century. Until then, and apart from very few and memorable exceptions, the Athenian philosopher was misperceived by his contemporaries, who hastened to condemn his doctrines mainly after Loukaris' execution; inevitably his contemporaries had connected Korydalleus with the late Patriarch and treated him with the same intransigence and aversion. Therefore, already from the early 17th century a strong and solid confrontation was established to Korydalleus' philosophical and educational project, consisting of eminent Orthodox ecclesiastics and scholars; the latter, although partially influenced by the Paduan Aristotelian approaches, remained persistently loyal to their religious beliefs, principles and education. According to the their point of view, the radical Paduan Aristotelianism, promoted by Korydalleus, brought to the fore the complete and immutable distinction between the concept and study of philosophy and theology; thereby, it undermined the central doctrines and ideals of the Christian faith and tradition.³⁶⁴

This peculiar philosophical current was mainly represented by scholarly circles of the Orthodox Church, with its most prominent members, except to Gerasimos Vlachos, to be Georgios Korressios († 1659), Nikolaos (Nikiphoros) Klarontzanos, Ioannis Kottounios, Meletios Syrigos († 1663), Nikolaos Koursoulas († 1652), Nikolaos Kerameus († 1663), Matthaios Meletios Typaldos († 1713) and Georgios Sougdouris († 1725). This group of thinkers, influenced by their status as clergymen or simply by their strong loyalty to the Orthodox faith, attempted to connect their contemporary revived perception of Aristotle with the tradition of early Christian and medieval theology. It is noteworthy that the aforementioned scholars proceeded to a relative distinction between the natural world where things (social and natural phenomena) could be explained based

³⁶⁴ Konstantinos T. Petsios: «Ο μεσαιωνικός – σχολαστικός άριστοτελισμός ως πλαίσιο της φιλοσοφικής διδασκαλίας στη Βενετία κατά τον 17^ο αιώνα: τὸ παράδειγμα τοῦ Ματθαίου (Μελετίου) Τυπάλδου. Μία (ἀνα)σύνθεση τοῦ Ὑπομνήματος τοῦ Νικολάου Κούρσουλα στοὺς Περὶ Φυσικῆς Ἀκροάσεως τοῦ Ἀριστοτέλους». In: Georgios N. Vlachakis, Thymios Nikolaidis (eds.): *Πρακτικά του Συνεδρίου Βυζάντιο-Βενετία-Νεότερος Ελληνισμός. Μία περιπλάνηση στον Κόσμο της Ελληνικής Επιστημονικής Σκέψης*. Εθνικό Ίδρυμα Ερευνών. Athens 2004, p. 245-281.

on physical operations and with the means provided by natural science, and the spiritual world where the interpretation of the divine phenomena is based on concepts that only theology could perceive and define; therefore, although they had listened carefully the new ideas deriving from Europe of the early Enlightenment, eventually they chose to maintain a more conservative and “pious” attitude. Knowing and understanding Korydalleus’ method, the members of that peculiar intellectual group chose not to follow it to the letter; instead they attempted to connect the revived way of interpreting the Aristotelian perception of nature with the Church Fathers’ teachings on man and the world, with their ultimate goal to be the strengthening and preservation of the Orthodox faith.

The philosophical approach Gerasimos Vlachos portrayed in his *Harmonia* and generally in his philosophical writings, from which very few have been studied and those not in detail, is indicative of his justified placement among the central and most prolific thinkers of the so-called Religious Greek Aristotelianism. Undoubtedly during his youth the Cretan scholar had studied Korydalleus’ philosophical work, along with the method and content of his commentaries, and he was aware of the educational goals that the Athenian scholar and his followers set on Greek letters. The question is whether he accepted this method, whether he set the same educational purposes and to what extent his philosophical thinking was similar to Korydalleus’. Deriving the information from indirect sources and his subsequent writings from the first period of his stay in Venice, Vlachos’ interpretation of the Aristotelian corpus can be partially conceived. Indeed, his method agreed in its main and external points with that of Korydalleus. First of all, Vlachos is presented to study the Aristotelian corpus directly from the Greek text, and not by using the Latin translations, a phenomenon most usual during the scholastic period. Furthermore, for the interpretation of the Aristotelian thought he, like Korydalleus, recruited the writings and doctrines of the ancient Greek commentators. However, it is necessary to clarify that he did not reject the use of the medieval scholastic commentators on the Philosopher, who he consulted and considered as an equally precious source of knowledge.

Of great significance, in order for Vlachos to be placed in a particular philosophical movement of his time, is the category of his writings related to the

Aristotelian corpus.³⁶⁵ The catalogue of his works reveals his conscious choice to write, in addition to the textbooks related to the Aristotelian Logic and Rhetoric, philosophical treatises on the Aristotelian Physics and Metaphysics. It is important to note that the Cretan scholar excluded from his occupation with the commentaries on Aristotle the latter's writings on Ethics and Politics, a typical attitude of Paduan Aristotelianist thinkers, Greeks and non-Greeks. Thus, at least on a first level the thought and models of Korydalleus had a considerable impact on Vlachos' philosophical quests, that is the direction and the subject he wished his occupation with philosophy to obtain.

While in a multitude of writings and letters, Gerasimos Vlachos often stated his opposition to the medieval and his contemporary Latin scholasticism, somehow he was a part of it.³⁶⁶ It is worthy to make this brief statement that the reading of his philosophical and theological writings creates the feeling that we are dealing with an ecclesiastical scholar who avoided – most of the times – to develop his personal thought through experience and scientific observation. He preferred to use the Aristotelian “wisdom and teaching” to define objectively and intransigently the “true knowledge”, an evidence of the scholastic perception of truth, according to which the latter can only be identified with the correct definition. The term “harmony” itself, chosen by the Cretan scholar as the title of his book, conceals within it his personal need, along with that of his contemporaries, to create a secure framework for the survival and revival of the Greek intellect, but more importantly of the concept of wisdom and authority. To the opinion of earlier scholarship that the term *harmony* “refers to that harmony that the obtainment of knowledge through definitions brings to the human mind”,³⁶⁷ one could add the argument that the Cretan scholar may also imply the harmonious coexistence between i. philosophy, mainly Aristotelian, with theological thought; ii. the secular (ancient Greek) and religious (Christian) tradition; iii. the need of the human intellect to seek knowledge, with the religious piety in which man should perceive the divinely

³⁶⁵ In the leaf 72^r of the *Indice della Libreria* the titles of the following works were recorded: i. “Paraphrases and questions in the eight books of De Physico Auditu”; ii. “On the three books of Aristotle’s Meteorologica”; iii. “Questions on the two books of Aristotle’s De Generatione et Corruptione”; iv. “Paraphrases and questions on the three books of De Anima”.

³⁶⁶ Of course, it is necessary to understand and determine the way Vlachos and the rest of his contemporary Greek thinkers used terms such as *scholasticism* and *modernity*, as very often the perception of such concepts changes over the centuries.

³⁶⁷ Tatakis: *Γεράσιμος Βλάχος*, p. 139.

revealed truth.³⁶⁸

In contradiction to Korydalleus, Gerasimos Vlachos did not aspire to become a founder of a new philosophical system or to claim a central position in the Greek philosophical and theological literature of his time. The entries of the *Harmonia*, especially those related to natural philosophy, make obvious that the scholar from Candia and his intellectual circle formed a group who, although influenced by the development of the new sciences, were opposed to their contemporary quantitative physics as well as the new cosmology.³⁶⁹ Moreover, neither in the *Harmonia* nor in the rest of his philosophical writings did Vlachos seriously attempt to disengage philosophy from the influence of theology and the tradition of the Church. The reason is, on one hand, his steadfast support to Aristotle's dogmatism and on the other, the fact that he remained faithful throughout his life to his belief that the authority of the Scriptures was superior to any other cognitive view of the world. Following his intellectual idol, Ioannis Kottounios, the Cretan scholar insisted on the geocentric model of the world – that the earth is at the orbital center of all celestial bodies, promoted by Aristotle in his *Physics* – since this was aligned, in his opinion, with the description given by the Bible.³⁷⁰ Being himself a pious Christian and moreover a warm Greek Orthodox clergyman – an abbot, as he entitled himself during the time the *Harmonia* was published – Vlachos believed that God is the initial source of the universal truths pertaining to the human being, something that is obvious by the author's choice to start and complete his work with two chapters related to God: i. *On God, the Beginning of Everything* and ii. *On God, as the End*. In the *Praemeditatio*, the scholar from Candia

³⁶⁸ Nevertheless, the development in Latin Europe of the field of natural sciences, along with the emergence of new inventions and the discoveries of new worlds had already shaped a modern pioneering setting. In this new order of things and in the questions about to be raised, the traditionally accumulated knowledge, the theory of definitions and the general interpretation of the world based on the Aristotelian philosophy would be proven incomplete and incapable of offering convincing arguments.

³⁶⁹ It is interesting that the main source in the chapters of the *Harmonia* on the universe and the beings, the sky and the order of the celestial bodies, but most importantly of Vlachos' personal definitions on these concepts, remains Aristotle's scientific discourse and its philosophical tradition.

³⁷⁰ An extensive and profound comparative study of Vlachos' philosophical writings will examine and evaluate our argument that his views coincided with the ones of Ioannis Kottounios and his posterior Matthaïos Typaldos, but mainly with those of Nikolaos Koursoulas, who insisted on the cosmological interpretation offered by Aristotle; according to his opinion, this was aligned with the description given by the Bible.

claimed clearly and undeniably the decisive factor that influenced and ultimately determined the character and the dynamics of the *Harmonia*: “From God we begin, and in God we end again. Therefore, we designate to define God Most High as the beginning and the end of our book”; completing his work, the author noted the phrase: “End and Honor to the Glory of God and the Mother of God”.³⁷¹ These words, though common to the ecclesiastical writers of the time, reveal the author’s identity as a clergyman, who dedicated his work to God and the Virgin Mary, placing the fate of his book to their hands.

What becomes obvious from Gerasimos Vlachos’ philosophical initiatives, arguments, method and conclusions is the Cretan scholar’s profound theological erudition, his strong Christian faith, and his unnegotiable piety. The chapters of his *Harmonia* that he dedicated to theology were mainly constructed upon the ideological base of Christian literature; that was the patristic and early Christian authorities with a selective use of medieval Greek literature. The final definitions that were included in the chapters all shared the common element of piety, religious orthodoxy and the suppression of alternative, therefore heretical, opinions. Throughout his literal work, Vlachos’ Christian and theological predisposition is evident and can be justified by the fact that he lived and worked under the auspices of the Church. Thus, he avoided to come in direct conflict with the Orthodox Church, which mostly interested him as proved by the life he led. In this context, he generally remained in line with the doctrines and purposes of the Church, unwilling to abandon his religious culture and his ecclesiastical education.

Therefore, it seems rather unlikely that his interpretation of the Aristotelian perception of the world would follow the same line with the one Korydalleus aimed to establish. Belonging to latter’s successors but not to his imitators, Gerasimos Vlachos placed, just like his predecessor Kottounios, limits to his philosophical method by hesitating to utterly reject the authority of his theological background. In contradiction to Korydalleus’ drastic distinction between the philosophical reasoning and the theological thought, Vlachos’ opinion was that the perception and interpretation of Aristotelian philosophy did not occur through its complete detachment from the Greek

³⁷¹ «Ἐκ Θεοῦ δ’ ἀρχόμεθα καὶ εἰς Θεὸν λήγομεν αὐτίς. Τὸν οὖν ὑψιστον Θεὸν ὡς ἀρχὴν καὶ τοῦτον αὐτὸν ὡς τέλος τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ βίβλῳ μεθαρμοττομεν ὀριζόμενοι»; «Τέλος καὶ τῷ Θεῷ δόξα καὶ τῇ Θεομήτορι κλέος»; see Vlachus: *Harmonia Definitiva*, p. 2-3, 322-323.

theological tradition, but through a fruitful conciliation of the two. Refusing at the same time to follow the standard practice of medieval thinkers and manipulate philosophy as something inferior to theology, he promoted both as equal agents of intellect, inseparably united and interdependent, but at the same time each one preserving its entity unalterable. In his point of view, it was intellectually and religiously permissible to examine his contemporary philosophical issues and questions by relying on his balancing knowledge of the ancient Greek philosophical and the early Christian theological traditions, and at the same time remaining faithful in his own perception of the spirituality and principles of the Orthodox faith.

Vlachos' loyalty to Aristotle, an aftereffect of the impact eminent Greek Paduan Peripatetics like Kottounios had on him, is to be perceived as a historical hiatus especially in this specific chronological period. While Galileo Galilei (1564–1642) and René Descartes (1596–1650) had laid during the previous decades the foundations of modern science and philosophical thinking, it is interesting that the Aristotelian outdated theories were so dear to a group of Greek intellectuals who continued to follow the Philosopher's doctrines in all fields of knowledge. Being in his time an outstanding thinker and one of the last major cases of Greek scholarship in the 17th century, Gerasimos Vlachos chose not to be an innovator of radical or provocative views, but to remain focused on promoting the study of the Greek thought and wisdom, both ancient Greek and Christian, by following the path of tradition. He believed that the latter, as the cradle of the old secular and religious wisdom, was still capable of providing answers to any question the human mind could raise. Therefore, he remained a man of the *old world*, of the world of Aristotle, vis-a-vis the world of Galileo and Descartes. The latter had used the concept of doubt as the driving force behind their quests for the meaning of existence, responding to the need of mankind to redefine their position in the universe, released from the authorities and dogmas of the past. On the contrary, Vlachos and the philosophical current he represented built a safe haven for the old knowledge by perceiving it as the unchanging wisdom of the ancestors, the precious heritage given to mankind by the authorities of the past. In short, Vlachos appears to be a genuine intellectual but a conservative thinker. Devout and God-fearing, the scholar from Candia interpreted the world according to God's Law at a time when human intelligence in Latin Europe had begun to take a different direction, a time which could

be characterized as an age of transition.

3.5. Contributing to the Greek schools of the *Serenissima*. Networks and initiatives.

“Plato came from the most wise city of Athens and you [come from] the adorned with virtues Athens of Crete [mean. Candia], our common homeland. He [was] the philosopher of the teachers, while you are considered the teacher of the philosophers. He philosophized in the Academy and then in the garden around Colonos, while you remarkably sowed seeds freely in every science and art in the academies of Crete, later in this flourishing garden of Venice and in the blooming garden of admirable Corfu.”

«Ὁ Πλάτων ἦταν ἀπὸ τὴν σοφωτάτην χώραν τῶν Ἀθηνῶν καὶ σὺ ἀπὸ ταῖς ἀρετοστολισμέναις Ἀθήναις Κρήτης τῆς κοινῆς μας πατρίδος. Ἐκεῖνος τῶν διδασκάλων φιλόσοφος καὶ σὺ διδάσκαλος τῶν φιλοσόφων ἀκούεσαι. Ἐκεῖνος ἐν Ἀκαδημία εἶτα δὲ ἐν τῷ κήπῳ τῷ περὶ τὸν Κολωνὸν ἐφιλοσόφησε καὶ σὺ εἰς ταῖς ἀκαδημαίαις τῆς Κρήτης, ἔπειτα εἰς τοῦτον τὸν ἐνανθέστατον κήπον τῶν Ἑνετιῶν καὶ εἰς τὸ ἀνθηρὸν περιβόλι τῆς περιβλέπτου Κερκύρας παντοδαπαῖς ἐπιστήμαις καὶ τέχναις ἐλευθέρως σπέρματα θαυμασίως κατέσπειρας.»³⁷²

Being quickly recognized as an erudite professor and an eminent classical philologist due to his occupation with the ancient Greek and Latin studies and with the Aristotelian philosophy, Gerasimos Vlachos enjoyed appreciation and respect from his compatriots both during his life in Candia and even more after his settlement to Venice. His already formed scholarly prestige, his constant six-year teaching in the School of the Greek Community, his publishing initiatives for the education of his compatriots and his final activities as the Archbishop of Philadelphia in favor and in support to the Greek students who arrived or left Venice for higher studies, all compose the portrait of a prominent man of letters, a tireless educator and a fervent promoter of Greek studies in the places where he occasionally lived. Mainly during the years of exile in Venice he followed a systematic educational model, introduced and supported basically by the Greek Confraternity. His teaching courses in the Greek School during the productive period of 1656–1662 responded directly to the needs and demands of the Greek youth as well as to the ambitions of the Greeks of the city, the representatives of political and ecclesiastical authority, along with the local scholarly circles. At the same time, the Cretan professor took initiatives to contribute to the operation of the other Greek educational institutions in the environment of Padua and efficiently used his personal networks for the benefit of the latter.

³⁷² Karathanasis: *Η Βενετία των Ελλήνων*, p. 389. The excerpt is detected in the aforementioned encomium in honor of the then Archbishop Gerasimos Vlachos, written by the clergyman from Candia Markos Maximos Maràs.

As a unique primary source, the *Codex Vlacho* contains a multitude of certificates on the good studies of young Greeks in Venice and the *Stato da Màr* and guarantees for the admission of Greek students in the colleges of Venice, Padua and Rome. Initially, it is necessary to make a reference to the state of education that characterized the until then unique Greek school in Venice, that of the Greek Community. Despite the fact that during the 17th century numerous of prominent scholars had acquired through their teaching a good fame for the school, the latter was eventually considered by the local Community as an insufficient institution, mainly in the middle of the century. Especially during that period the School suffered from the indifference and continuous internal conflicts between the members of the Greek Confraternity. The fact that the School, in the absence of sufficient financial support, lacked the high education, the wide range of courses and, thus, the reputation other schools in Venice enjoyed, was the cause of a private initiative by the highly esteemed lawyer and wealthy merchant from Corfu Thomàs Flanginis (1578–1648), for the change and development of the Community's educational system. According to his will on 11. September 1644, among others he left a bequest in order to establish a school of high education addressing exclusively to young Orthodox Greeks, in which a wider and more profound six-year curriculum would be promoted; the latter would include courses in grammar, classical philology, metric, rhetoric, logic, philosophy, theology and ecclesiastical music, with its graduates obtaining the right, if they wished, to continue their higher studies at the University of Padua.³⁷³

Noteworthy is the fact that the future school would provide education to Orthodox priests. Thus, among the main aspirations of Flanginis' project was the religious-confessional preservation and reinforcement of the Orthodox identity in the Greek Community of Venice and the *Stato da Màr*, against the influence and occasional interventions by representatives of the Catholic and Protestant confessions.³⁷⁴ One could argue that the Corfiot lawyer wished to promote the establishment of a school that would confront the principal Greek institution in the Italian peninsula during the early modern centuries, the Greek College of Saint Athanasius in Rome; the college was

³⁷³ Karathanasis: *H Βενετία των Ελλήνων*, p. 92.

³⁷⁴ For the interest of the *Serenissima* to form a secured social, religious and intellectual-educational environment for the Greek Community of Venice, see Tatiana Bovo: "Giovanni Cottunio e gli Intellettuali Greci a Padova nel XVII secolo. Dalla Matrice Accademica alla Prospettiva Panellenica". PhD diss. Università Ca' Foscari 2015, p. 98.

founded in 1577 by Pope Gregory XIII and was run by the Jesuits during the periods 1591–1604 and 1622–1773. Under the protective wing of the papacy, the College provided a high quality of classical and theological education to its Greek students. The basic part of the curriculum was constituted by grammar, rhetoric, philosophy and theology, according to the teachings of Aristotle and Saint Thomas Aquinas. In this context, the students of the college were eventually obtaining a profound piety and systematic erudition on the doctrines, tradition and ritual of the Catholic Church; in fact, a pre-condition for their admission to the school was that they were required at some point to proceed to a confession of faith to the Pope. Mainly those graduates who followed a priestly career later traveled to the Orthodox Eastern Mediterranean region as missionaries and promoters of the Catholic faith.³⁷⁵

From the beginning of its official operation in 1665, the Flanginis College (*‘Collegio Flanginiano’*) was about to claim a leading role in the intellectual achievements of the Greek Community and to personally concern Gerasimos Vlachos not as an active teacher anymore, but firstly as a retired educator and then as the Archbishop of Philadelphia.³⁷⁶ Following the example and the favorable treatment the then Archbishop Meletios Chortatzis had shown to the Flanginis College during its first years of operation, Vlachos proved his sincere interest towards the School in a direct way during the period of his primacy to the Metropolitan Throne. Among the certificates that he composed during the period 1681–1682, numerous dealt with the admission to the Flanginis College of Greek young pupils. The latter derived mainly from the city of Venice, the Ionian Islands, or came from families of refugees from warring Crete. According to the original certificates, composed in Italian, the candidates obtained adequate knowledge of the Greek and Latin language, a necessary precondition for their admission to the school.³⁷⁷ Moreover, Vlachos was obliged to fulfill his duty as

³⁷⁵ For the history of the College and the activity of its highly scholarly graduates, see Zacharias N. Tsirpanlis: *Το Ελληνικό Κολλέγιο της Ρώμης και οι μαθητές του 1576-1700. Συμβολή στη μελέτη της μορφωτικής πολιτικής του Βατικανού*. Πατριαρχικόν Ίδρυμα Πατερικών Μελετών. Thessaloniki 1980.

³⁷⁶ For the establishment and operation of the Flanginis College, see Karathanasis: *Φλαγγίνειος Σχολή*.

³⁷⁷ In the *Codex Vlacho* I detected certificates for the admission to the Flanginis College of the following: i. 15. June 1681: Piero Volo from Candia (f. 78-79); ii. 3. September 1681: Demetrio Palaiologo from Venice (f. 106); iii. 24. September 1681: Mario Christophoro from Candia (f. 110-111); iv. 1. November 1681: Zorzi Cavalli from Venice (f. 122); v. 2. November 1681: Zuanne Abramo from Venice (f. 122-123); vi. 3. November 1681: Pietro

the high cleric of the Community to certify the identity of newly-arrived Orthodox Greeks in Venice and Padua. In this context, he also composed certificates guaranteeing of the good studies of former students in the Flanginis College, in order to promote them as candidates in the higher educational institutions of the *Serenissima*, mainly at the University of Padua.³⁷⁸

During the long procedure for the establishment of the Flanginis College, the responsible Venetian officials, the *Riformatori dello Studio di Padova*, used as a model for the formation of the school's regulation the already founded Greek College of Saint Athanasius in Rome and the Greek colleges in the city of Padua, the Paleokapas College³⁷⁹ but mainly the famous Cottunian College (*Collegio Cottuniano*). Founded in 1653 by the already mentioned prominent professor of Philosophy in the local University Ioannis Kottounios, the College obtained a curriculum of higher education on ancient Greek and Latin literature, grammar, poetry, rhetoric, dialectics, philosophy, theology and even introductory lessons in medicine. During the time of its operation, distinguished Greek scholars and ecclesiastics, mainly of Orthodox faith, were educated there and later returned in order to work as professors and rectors.³⁸⁰ Due to the educational and religious concordance between the Flanginis and the Cottunian College, both under the protection and discreet control of the *Signoria*, Gerasimos Vlachos was urged to show his keen interest to the first, as he had done a few years earlier for the

Cartani from Canea (f. 123-124); vii. 3. November 1681: Constantin Cambani from Naples (f. 124); viii. 3. November 1681: Pietro Venerando from Candia (f. 125); ix. 25. January 1682: Dimo Ladoveti from Corfu (f. 140-141); x. 26. January 1682: Nicolò Girardi from Cephalonia (f. 141-142).

³⁷⁸ The *Codex Vlacho* contained, among others, a certificate of good studies at the Flanginis College concerning the already mentioned scholarly clergyman Markos Maximos Maràs, dated 24. February 1682: “*Gerassimus Vlachus, Dei gratia Archiepiscopus Philadelfia, Attestiamo à qualunque illustrissimo et eccellentissimo Magistrato che il Reverendo Don Marco Marà, sacro diacono, figlio del Aurelio di Candia ad messo dagli Illustrissimi et Eccellentissimi Riformatori dello studio di Padova nel Seminario del quodam eccellente Signore Tomaso Flangini sotto l’anno 1674, 28 Novembre è licenciato adi 30 Aprile 1681 aciò si fa a sua istanza per servirsene ove occoresse. In quorum fide.*” (f. 149); Karathanasis: *Φλαγγίνειος Σχολή*, p. 254-6.

³⁷⁹ Also known as *Collegio Veneto de Greci* or *Collegio di S. Giovanni*, the Paleokapas College operated during the period 1633-1784. It was founded due to the initiative of the Orthodox bishop of Kissamos, Crete Iosafat Paleokapas († 1583), who had left a bequest in his will for the education of twenty-four Greeks from the islands of Crete, Cerigo, Zante, Cephalonia and Corfu; see Bovo: *Giovanni Cottunio*, p. 82-104.

³⁸⁰ Karathanasis: *Φλαγγίνειος Σχολή*, p. 185 note 1.

second.³⁸¹ Returning back to 1662, during Vlachos' first settlement in Venice and a few months after his position in the School of the Community was not renewed, the Cretan scholar participated in a discussion on the operation of the Cottunian College, claiming religious freedoms for its faculty and students.

More specifically, already from 1660 his nephew Arsenios Kaloudis had obtained the position of the College's rector, succeeding the Cypriot scholar and ecclesiastic Hilarion Kigalas (1624–1682).³⁸² Kaloudis then took part in an ongoing series of negotiations among the faculty of the college, the Venetian government and the Holy See in Rome on a matter of religious-confessional nature, already inaugurated by the founder of the school, Ioannis Kottounios, in 1653. The latter wished to establish an Orthodox chapel within the school that would serve for the Greek students and teachers to perform their religious duties in the purely Catholic environment of Padua. Being responsible to follow and fulfill the late professor's ambition for a climate of relevant confessional freedom in the school, its rectors were then called to request and negotiate the necessary permission from the Pope in order to proceed to the construction of the Orthodox chapel. Nevertheless, after Kottounios' death, a series of intense controversies of administrative and confessional nature occurred between Rome and the first rector of the College, the aforementioned Hilarion Kigalas. As it turned out, the latter had promised in advance to the papal representatives that, after becoming the principal of the school, he would comply with the interests the Catholic Church and would establish to the College the administrative and religious model of the Greek College of Saint Athanasius. However, he did not manage to keep his promise, either due to his own second thoughts and reconsiderations, or because of the reactions his initiative would definitely raise from the faculty of the school and the Greek Confraternity in Venice. Even after Kigalas' dismissal from his office and his succession by Arsenios Kaloudis, the discussion on the confessional state in the school remained open and became even

³⁸¹ During his primacy in the Metropolis of Philadelphia, Gerasimos Vlachos composed three certificates for the admission of young Greeks, all from Candia, in the Cottunian College; in the *Codex Vlacho*, the following were detected: i. 30. March 1681: Francesco Hiadacha (f. 39); ii. 30. March 1681 Nicolò Cortesan (f. 39-40); iii. 4. July 1681 Bruto Palladas (f. 90).

³⁸² A graduate of the Greek College of Saint Athanasius in Rome, Hilarion Kigalas was an important ecclesiastical figure of the second half of the 17th century, a scholar and teacher in Venice, the Ionian Islands, Constantinople and Bucharest, and finally Archbishop of Cyprus from 1674 to 1679; for a detailed reference to Hilarion and his activity as a clergyman and scholar, see Chapter IV, 224.

more difficult to resolve, due to Rome's mistrust and suspicion towards the newly founded college and the intentions of its faculty.

After two years of unsuccessful approaches and negotiations between Kaloudis and the responsible papal committee, Gerasimos Vlachos undertook to mediate in order for this pending confessional situation to be permanently resolved. In this context he came into contact with the pro-Catholic Archbishop of Dyrrachium Simeon Laskaris,³⁸³ a close connection of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (*Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*) and its then prefect, the intellectual Cardinal and Archbishop of Reims Antonio Barberini (1607–1671). Indeed, in one of his letters to the Propaganda dated 30. May 1662, Laskaris stated that he had recently received an invocation by Gerasimos Vlachos and Arsenios Kaloudis to intercede to the Holy See for the favorable resolvment of the issue of the chapel in the Cottunian College. Noteworthy is the fact that Laskaris eventually induced the *Propaganda* to grant permission to the College in order for its students to perform their religious duties according to the Orthodox rite; he clarified that, in his opinion, the aims and interests of the institution did not differ so much from those of the Greek College of Saint Athanasius in Rome.

Four months after Laskaris' request to the papal environment to reconsider their attitude towards the Cottunian College, Vlachos contacted the Archbishop of Dyrrachium once more on 23. September 1662, imploring him to undertake the case as his personal matter. Moreover, what attracts the interest of the research is the compromise Vlachos and his nephew were ready to make so that their request would be heard. In his letter the Cretan scholar urged Laskaris to inform "His Holiness the Pope" that the faculty of the college and its rector accepted the condition to officially laud the name of the Pope in the future Orthodox chapel of the school during the relative feast days; even more, he highlighted that the Cottunian College would indeed generally operate according to the model of the Greek College of Saint Athanasius.³⁸⁴ Vlachos'

³⁸³ For Simeon Laskaris see Matteo Sciambra: "Clero di rito greco che ha servito la comunità greco-albanese di Palermo". In: *Bolletino della Badia Greca di Grottaferrata* 18 (1964), 132-157; Thomas I. Papadopoulos: «Βιβλία Καθολικῶν καὶ βιβλία Ὀρθοδόξων». In: *Ὁ Ἐπανιστής* 19 (1993), p. 48-49 note 27.

³⁸⁴ Under these circumstances, it is noteworthy that Gerasimos Vlachos composed certificates for the admission of two Greek students to the Greek College of Saint Athanasius (Benisello Beniselli from Athens and Andreas Aravandinos from Cephalonia), along with further

words indeed capture the interest of the research, taking into account the Cretan scholar's conciliatory attitude, his direct expression of respect to the Pope and his awareness of the priorities and educational initiatives that were at stake during this long and difficult discussion between the two sides:

“until your holiness [mean. Laskaris] returns to Rome, so that you will obtain the honor to contribute so that a church in Padua would operate according to the Orthodox rite. This is what we ask: His Holiness the Pope to grant us a license to obtain a chapel inside the Cottunian College, as it has already been located, and follow the bull of Pope Gregory XIII [mean. the *Inter Gravissimas*], with an eternal duty by the teacher and the students to perform occasionally a complete praise (“*laudo*”) in honor of His Holiness the Pope in all the central ceremonies, as it befits the highest cleric. Therefore, I implore your holiness to inform His Holiness the Pope and the Propaganda of this case, saying that in this way this college [mean. the Cottunian] could operate in the same way with that of Rome, obeying to the Apostolic Throne; and that your holiness always watching in favor of the increase of faith, you never stopped – even from these far away lands – to take action through your letters in order to gather the reasonable sheep towards the Apostolic fame.”

«ἕως ὅτου νὰ γυρίσῃ εἰς τὴν Ρώμην ἡ πανιερότης σου, διὰ νὰ ἀποκτήσῃ καὶ τοῦ λόγου τῆς καὶ ἐτούτῃ τὴν τιμὴν νὰ κάμῃ νὰ ἱερουργᾶται ἐκκλησία εἰς τὴν Πάντουβα ῥωμαῖκα. Ὁ τρόπος ὅπου τὸ ζητοῦμεν εἶναι ἐτοῦτος, νὰ μᾶς δώσῃ ὁ ἀγιώτατος Πάπας λιτζέντζια νὰ ἔχομεν καπέλα μέσα εἰς τὸ Κωτουνιανὸν Κολλέγιο, καθὼς ἀκομὶ τῶρα καὶ εὐρίσκεται, καὶ νὰ οἰκονομᾶται κατὰ τὴν βούλαν τοῦ Πάπα Γρηγορίου δεκάτου τρίτου, μὲ χρέος παντοτινὸν τοῦ διδασκάλου καὶ τῶν μαθητῶν νὰ κάνουσιν ὁλόκληρον λάουτον τοῦ κατὰ καιροῦς ἀγιωτάτου Πάπα Ρώμης εἰς ὅλαις ταῖς ἐξαιρέταις ἐορταῖς ὡς ἂν πρέπει εἰς τὸν ἄκρον ἀρχιερέα. Ὡς τόσον μοῦ φαίνεται ἡ πανιερότης σου νὰ δώσῃ εἶδῃσιν εἰς τὸν ἀγιώτατο Πάπαν καὶ εἰς τὴν Προπαγάντα διὰ τούτῃ τὴν ὑπόθεσιν, λέγωντας πῶς μὲ τέτοιον τρόπον μπορεῖ νὰ εἶναι καὶ ἐτοῦτο τὸ Κολλέγιο ὡς ἂν ἐκεῖνο τῆς Ρώμης, ὑπήκοον εἰς τὸν ἀποστολικὸν θρόνον, καὶ πῶς ἡ πανιερότης σου ἀγρυπνῶντας πάντα διὰ τὴν αὐξήσιν τῆς πίστεως δὲν ἔλειψες μηδὲ καὶ ἀπ' ἐδαντοῦ τοὺς μακροὺς τόπους νὰ ἐνεργᾷς μὲ γράμματά σου διὰ νὰ συναθροίζῃς εἰς τὴν ἀποστολικὴν φήμην τὰ λογικὰ πρόβατα.»³⁸⁵

Similar to the cases of François Combefis and Louis XIV, Ferdinando II de' Medici and his family, and the Holy Roman Emperor Leopold I, the aforementioned approach to Laskaris by Gerasimos Vlachos preserved the dominant features of

certificates in which the Cretan Archbishop guaranteed for the good studies of two other Greeks in the specific college (Ioannis Stais from Candia and Thomàs Kattanis from Corfu but originating from Chania). All four cases concerned eminent clergymen of the late 17th and early 18th century who were related to the scholarly and religious environment of Rome, Venice and Padua; Karathanasis: *Φλαγγίνειος Σχολή*, p. 100-101.

³⁸⁵ The letter was not written by Vlachos' hand but was dictated to someone else, possibly his nephew Arsenios Kaloudis, according to the following note: “I suffer from arthritis; therefore, I could not write it by myself” («*ῥεματικὰ ἔχω διὰ κεῖνο δὲν ἔγραψα μοναχὸς μου*»). For Gerasimos Vlachos' letter to Laskaris and an overview of the aforementioned case on the Cottunian College, see Zacharias N. Tsirpanlis: *Οἱ Μακεδόνες σπουδαστές του Ελληνικοῦ Κολλεγίου Ρώμης καὶ ἡ δράση τους στὴν Ελλάδα καὶ στὴν Ἰταλία*. Εταιρεία Μακεδονικῶν Σπουδῶν. Thessaloniki 1971, p. 157-159.

confessional conciliation, respect to the church hierarchy, recognition of the Catholic faith as a “legitimate” Christian confession, direct priorities of educational nature. To start with, both Vlachos and his nephew Arsenios were born and raised in late Venetian Candia, an environment of relative interaction and integration between Catholics and Orthodox. Naturally, this cohesion between the two sides is not to be largely detected in matters of pure theological nature or in discussions on the validity and supremacy of principles, traditions and doctrines of the two faiths. Nevertheless, as the already mentioned cases in Chapter II had revealed, Gerasimos Vlachos obtained an innate skill to distinguish his personal spiritual-theological integrity, which remained unnegotiable during his life, and the practical, social and intellectual conciliation, in the name of which he had chosen to comprehend, tolerate and even accept the element of different, even more of the traditionally inimical. Therefore, Vlachos’ aforementioned words to Laskaris could easily be misunderstood and mis-interpreted, if stopping at purely religious or confessional considerations.

In order to perceive the original meaning behind Vlachos’ letter as to the important ambition he wished to promote and accomplish, one must evaluate the balances (ideological, religious, political) under which intellectuals of different confessions had learnt to coexist and converse in early modern Venice. Having become familiar with the educational projects of the Greek Community during the 1650s and foreseeing the initiatives for the development of a stable and steady Greek educational system in the *Serenissima*, Vlachos chose to bring to the fore his concern as a scholar to contribute efficiently to this collective effort. Without pursuing his personal interests or ambitions for a further career as a professor or an academic in the, nevertheless, enticing environment of Padua, the Cretan scholar respected and was eager to fulfill the vision of his ideological model, Ioannis Kottounios, for a higher education, secular and sacred, granted to the young Greeks of the Diaspora. In this context, he followed the conciliatory spirit of the late professor, who did not wish to arise frictions either with Venice nor with Rome.³⁸⁶

Lastly, one must take into consideration the practical and urgent priorities a Christian of the time, regardless his Orthodox or Catholic faith, had to place to his life,

³⁸⁶ For Ioannis Kottounios’ ambitions related to his college, see Bovo: *Giovanni Cottunio*, p. 108-109.

work and word. Similar to the years 1658, 1659 and 1661 all key points to Gerasimos Vlachos' interaction with Latin Europe, the year 1662 was also defined by the continuation of the War of Candia. His political intuition that had urged him to address the Muscovite Tsar, the French King, the Duke of Tuscany and the Holy Roman Emperor as potential supporters and allies of Venice, most possibly exhorted him to avoid a turbulent contact or relation with the Holy See, under the specific historical circumstances. Indeed, it could not be considered irrelevant that during the time Vlachos and Laskaris exchanged their correspondence, the head of the Catholic Church was the particularly sensitized to the issue of Crete Pope Alexander VII (1599–1667). The latter had rendered the *Signoria* the highest assistance he could, both financial and military,³⁸⁷ and promoted the common narrative between the Republic and the Holy See of the allied protection of Christendom from “the armies of the infidels”.

In the previous chapter the study promoted a specific argument according to which the aspects of Gerasimos Vlachos' interconfessionality derived and were revealed by the use of his theological identity and background in the service of his personal pragmatic view of his world and the factors that changed or determined it. Those early evidence of an interconfessionality with political parameters from the period of Crete that were portrayed in his preaching sermons, his entreaties to Orthodox sovereigns and his theological discussions with the Catholics, even when the latter reached the limits of polemical literature, were confirmed and validated during the years of Venice. Even more, they were now enriched by another central factor of the Vlachos' identity, that of the intellectual man who, not only tolerated, but had learnt to accept and even use beneficially the confessional diversity in the early modern world.

³⁸⁷ Setton: *Venice, Austria, and the Turks*, p. 198. Nevertheless, Pope Alexander VIII eventually demanded and accomplished the political and religious subjection of the *Serenissima* under his will and interests.

4. Standing in Venice, staring at Constantinople. The concept of *Interconfessional Piety* in the Metropolis of Philadelphia

4.1. Introduction

The fall of Candia in September 1669 to the Ottoman armies and the surrender of the city by Francesco Morosini (1619–1694) to Grand Vizier Fazıl Ahmed Köprülü (1635–1676) shook the souls of the Orthodox in the Greek regions of the East and the Diaspora; especially of the subjects to the *Serenissima*. To the real and inevitable danger of mass islamizations which had already begun during the war in Crete, the Aegean islands and mainland Greece, was added the continuously intensifying activity of the Jesuit missionaries among the Orthodox populations of the Ottoman Empire and, already from the mid. 1650s in the remaining Venetian territories. A multitude of Greek pro-Catholic or Catholic priests and theologians, raised within the doctrines and environment of the Latin Church, were often added to the Italian and French representatives of the Order. During those pivotal historical conjunctures not only the confessional but more generally the religious identity of all Christians was tested and found exposed to an ever-increasing condition of questioning and undermining.

In post-war Venetian society, where a significant number of refugees had been added since the last long-running War of Candia, the balance of the presence of non-Catholic groups had been drastically disturbed by the city's now-strengthened Orthodox Greek community. This intense display of confessional heterogeneity in the metropolis itself, in its remaining territories in the Adriatic region (Dalmatia and Istria) and in the Ionian Sea increasingly provoked strong contradictions and serious disputes between the Catholic representatives of the Venetian Church and the Greek clergy of the city and the colonies. During this period, the Greek community was under the control of a puissant Confraternity with an institutionalized function of more than 150 years, financially robust, active and with a series of radical initiatives to promote and develop Greek education to its members. Having secured its political self-existence, the Confraternity had also managed through the office of the Archbishop of Philadelphia to shield and maintain the religious identity of the Orthodox subjects of the *Serenissima*.

Thus, until the election of Gerasimos Vlachos in the metropolitan throne, the prominent members of the community had achieved to choose carefully and with the appropriate piety their spiritual shepherds.

Nevertheless, despite the official pro-Orthodox activity of the Confraternity, the *Nazione Greca* had not so much avoided numerous leaks of its members in the 16th and much more in the 17th century; the latter either were directly converted to Catholicism or indirectly showed a willingness to follow the ritual and teaching of the Latin Church. At the same time, the Orthodox faith in the Republic was called upon to face a chronic, tolerable and, as history eventually proved, fatefully severe phenomenon, that of the confessional hybridity among its members; a kind of syncretism in which the Orthodox Greeks of Venice are presented to participate in the worship also of the Latin ritual in addition to the traditional so-called *rito greco*. Influenced by the surrounding religious atmosphere of their place of residence and in addition to the individual interests and their personal practical needs, the mentality of those who followed the hybrid way of worship encouraged them to preserve their Orthodox faith and simultaneously to participate, openly or not, in multiconfessional, mainly Catholic, practices and rituals.

Under his principal ecclesiastical identity, Gerasimos Vlachos considered himself a warm defender of the doctrines and integrity of the Orthodox Church, but at the same time maintained or cultivated relationships, direct or indirect, with people, Greek and non-Greek, of a different faith. In this context, one could wonder how he perceived the interconfessional and interdisciplinary conditions of his time. In this chapter I will develop and interpret the Cretan prelate's activity as the religious leader of the Greeks of the *Serenissima* during his primacy in the Metropolis of Philadelphia. More specifically, I will focus on the intense pastoral activity he developed as soon as he took the reins of the Metropolis in Venice (1681–1685). Based on his preserved correspondence from this period, an approach will be attempted to his continuous efforts for the preservation and strengthening of the Orthodox faith in the Greek communities of Dalmatia and Istria, his constant communication with the chaplains of the local Orthodox churches, with the Greek noblemen, governors and a multitude of clergymen who were active in those regions. Of special interest will be his preserved, nevertheless partial, correspondence mainly with the Patriarch of Constantinople

Dionysios IV Mouselimis († 1696), but also his letters of minor importance to the Patriarch of Jerusalem Dositheos II Notaras (1641–1707).

The corpus of these texts is indicative of the spirit of diplomacy that occupied the elderly Cretan Archbishop and which remained a central balancing factor in order for the good relations between Constantinople and Venice to be preserved. At the same time, it is a vivid proof of the strong bonds of dependence, respect and cooperation between the Metropolis and the Patriarchal Throne at a time when the Orthodox circles in Constantinople were increasingly expressing their intense concern about the spread of Catholic missionary activity within their sphere of influence. Moreover, Vlachos' correspondence remains a particularly important historical source on the way the Orthodox faced their identity crisis, being trapped in the crossfire between the escalation of Islam, the outbreak of the Jewish Messianic crisis and the Catholic missionary presence in their regions. In the previous chapter I studied whether Gerasimos Vlachos' occupation with the culture and language of his contemporary Greeks and their ancestors concealed a personal expectation for the promotion and dissemination of Greek education to his compatriots in Latin Europe. In this chapter my aim is to examine whether the Cretan scholar's responsible attitude and catalytic activity in favor of the protection of the Orthodox identity of his compatriots can ultimately be conceived as his personal conscious ambition for the latter's collective survival and future ideological awakening.

4.2. Matters of correct doctrine and religious decency: Correspondence with the Orthodox Greeks of Dalmatia and Istria

“The Archbishop of Philadelphia has been resided in Venice for a long time, depended on the Patriarch of Constantinople, and has been responsible for the spiritual care of all Greeks living in Venice and throughout Dalmatia, which is under Venetian sovereignty. [...] This Archbishop elects the priests of the Greek rite for the churches of Dalmatia, in which there are three churches, one in Hvar, one in Šibenik and another in Zadar, which take care of the souls of the Greeks.”

*“In Venetia risiede da gran tempo in qua l’Arcivescovo di Filadelfia dependente dal Patriarca di Costantinopoli, qual ha cura nello spirituale de tutti i Greci, ch’habitano in Venetia, e per tutta la Dalmatia sottoposto al Dominio Veneto. [...] Quest’Arcivescovo deputa gli Sacerdoti del rito Greco per le Chiese di Dalmatia, nella qual’hanno tre Chiese una in Liesena, una in Sebenico, e l’altra in Zara, ch’hanno cura dell’anime delli loro Greci.”*³⁸⁸

³⁸⁸ Tea Mayhew: *Dalmatia Between Ottoman and Venetian Rule: Contado di Zara, 1645–1718*.

As the religious leader of the Orthodox Greeks of the *Serenissima*, the Archbishop of Philadelphia had always been the connecting link between the Greek Confraternity of Venice, the Orthodox communities of neighboring Trieste and the Venetian-occupied northern Adriatic shores (Dalmatia, Istria and coastal Albania, then named Illyria); the present study places special emphasis mainly in the region of Dalmatia. The latter was a multicultural and diverse region, with its political situation never defined as steady during the early modern period. From the beginning of the 16th century it became the land where continuous and fierce battles took place among the then three superpowers, the Venetian *Signoria*, the Habsburg Dynasty and the Ottoman Empire. In the aftermath of the peace that ended the War of the Holy League in 1573 Venetian political power was effectively reduced to several small coastal port enclaves – chiefly centered in Zara (Zadar), Spalato (Split), Sebenico (Šibenik), Cattaro (Kotor), and several islands.³⁸⁹ After the division of Dalmatia due to the Venetian-Ottoman wars of the 16th century, the local communities that were formed were characterized by different origins and linguistic heterogeneity.

Thus, during the early modern period two were considered the main groups of the Orthodox population, the Greeks and the Slavs. Both coexisted under a common confessional orientation, which was formed through continuous movements and displacements of the population, a consequence of the constant wars and change of authority in the general region. With the first Greek establishments in the area dating back to the second half of the 15th century, a result of the conquest of the Greek peninsula by the Ottomans, their presence was further strengthened in 1540s by the movement of refugees from the recently Ottoman-ruled Peloponnesian towns of Monemvasia and Nafplio; another refugee wave came from Cyprus after the occupation of the island in 1571.³⁹⁰ The Slavs, Christian in religion with the majority belonging to

Viella. Rome 2008, p. 217.

³⁸⁹ Eric Dursteler: “Language and identity in the early modern Mediterranean”. In: John Watkins, Kathryn L. Reyerson (eds.): *Mediterranean Identities in the Premodern Era*. Ashgate. Farnham 2014, p. 38.

³⁹⁰ Karathanasis: *Η Βενετία των Ελλήνων*, p. 450-452. The Orthodox Greeks settled and organized their communities mainly in the regions of Parenzo, Pola and Peroi in Istria, Zara, Šibenik, Knin, Trau in Dalmatia, and Cattaro, Castel Nuovo and Split in Venetian Albania; for a historical overview, see Georgios N. Moschopoulos: «Οι Έλληνες της Βενετίας και Ιλλυρίας, 1768-1797: η μητρόπολη Φιλαδελφείας και η σημασία της για τον Ελληνισμό της Β. Αδριατικής». PhD diss. University of Ioannina 1980, p. 142.

the Orthodox faith, and a few to the Catholic one, were also immigrated from the Ottoman territories and were referred to the sources indiscriminately as “Maurovlachs” or “Morlachs” (*Morlacchi / Morlaci*).³⁹¹ Since both communities were under the same faith, nevertheless not always under the same confession or jurisdiction, the Greeks and the Morlachs of Dalmatia shared the identity of the subjects to the Most Serene Republic of Venice. At the same time they considered the Archbishop of Philadelphia as the patron and protector of their faith and their ecclesiastical ritual, and the official representative of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, under whose jurisdiction they officially or unofficially placed themselves.

As a matter of fact, these communities were actually established under the dual jurisdiction of the Orthodox and Catholic Churches. On the one hand, the Orthodox communities and churches of Dalmatia and Istria were under the jurisdiction of the local Catholic dioceses, to which they depended for their establishment and operation. Nevertheless, already from 1582 the Venetian Senate had issued two decrees guaranteeing the free exercise of the religious rights of all citizens of the Venetian Republic, including the Orthodox in the Adriatic region. Therefore and despite their semblance obedience to the representatives of Rome, the Orthodox populations in the Venetian Dalmatian shores in reality recognized the spiritual jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and its high cleric in Venice, the Archbishop of Philadelphia.³⁹² More specifically, already in 1582, in response to a plea from the Orthodox of Šibenik, the then Doge Nicolò da Ponte (1491–1585) ordered the local Duke Giovan Antonio Foscari to maintain between the city’s Catholic and Orthodox populations “a solid and lasting peace thanks to which all the monarchies of the world are preserved and on

³⁹¹ The term, already common in the 14th and 15th centuries, defined during the 17th century the Slavic-speaking, mainly Orthodox, and to a lesser degree Catholic people. Contemporary Venetian primary sources make no distinction between Orthodox and Catholics; on the contrary, they call all Christians as *Morlacs*; for the presence of the Christians in the region, see John Van Antwerp Fine Jr.: *When Ethnicity did not Matter in the Balkans*. University of Michigan Press. Michigan 2006.

³⁹² Indicative is the report of the bishop of Verona Agostino Valier (1565–1606), papal envoy to Dalmatia in 1579, who described his visit to the Orthodox temple of the Prophet Elias of Zadar. According to Valier, when the Greek priests of the church, Kosmas and Mitrofan, were asked if they believed in the Holy Catholic Church, they nodded and recognized the supremacy of the Pope; however, they stated that they did not owe him obedience, since they were under the jurisdiction of their own Orthodox Patriarch; Margarita V. Voulgaropoulou: «Η μεταβυζαντινή ζωγραφική εικόνων στην Αδριατική από το 15^ο έως το 17^ο αιώνα». PhD diss. Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki 2014, p. 248-9.

which the prosperity of the Most Serene Republic is based". Sixty years later, in 1641 and again after the activation of the Greek community of Šibenik, the then Doge Francesco Erizzo (1566–1646) issued a new decree in favor of the confessional protection of the Orthodox Greeks throughout the Venetian territories.³⁹³ The generally harmonious diplomatic relationship between the Venetian Senate and the Metropolis of Philadelphia, which was cultivated already from the time of Gabriel Seviros and was preserved until the death of Gerasimos Vlachos, had developed favorable conditions for the preservation of the Orthodox communities in Dalmatia and their protection from the interference and arbitrariness of the Latin Church.

During the War of Candia a rapidly increasing number of Orthodox subjects immigrated from the Ottoman lands to the *Serenissima's* territories in Dalmatia, a phenomenon that significantly changed the confessional situation in the region; the number of the Orthodox believers multiplied. These constantly increasing numbers of Greeks and the spreading of the Orthodox confession in the region caused great concern in the Catholic Church. Moreover, after the end of the war the confessional differences between Catholics and Orthodox were exacerbated and became a serious issue for the Venetian governors of Dalmatia. In order for the Vatican to counter the threat of the Orthodox, a multitude of Catholic clergymen, mostly military chaplains and missionaries, arrived in Dalmatia in charge to indoctrinate and eventually convert the Orthodox Christians to the Latin ritual or at least Unia.³⁹⁴ In 1678 the then *Provveditore Generale* Gerolamo Grimani mentioned the problem of predominately Orthodox immigrants who settled in the villages of Radovin, Crno and Krčina and he asked for Catholic missionaries to be sent for the conversion of the Orthodox. Furthermore, his intention was to stop any immigration of Orthodox monks who could encourage these people in their Orthodox religion. Similar actions were taken a little later by the warm Catholic *Provveditore* Pietro Valier (in office: 1678–1680, 1684–1686), who considered the Greek monks as responsible for the increasing number of Orthodox in the region; therefore, he issued a decree in 1686, ordering that all Orthodox priests would be ordained chaplains by the local Catholic bishops and would be under the jurisdiction of

³⁹³ Voulgaropoulou: *Zωγραφική*, p. 249.

³⁹⁴ Zadar's Archbishop Teodoro Balbi in September 1661 complained about the problem with Orthodox believers ('*Greci Scismatici*') who would take over the Catholics and the Greeks of Latin ritual ('*Greci del rito latino*') by seducing their young women, by abusing them and forcing them to secretly marry; see Mayhew: *Dalmatia*, p. 202 note 89.

their Catholic Dioceses. Thus, despite the official confessional tolerance by the Republic, the Catholic influence was growing over the years on the Orthodox communities of the Venetian Adriatic region, due to the unofficial support and initiatives of the local Catholic secular and ecclesiastical authorities. This phenomenon that gradually led to the weakening of the Orthodox element in the area.³⁹⁵

In this climate of intense interdisciplinary interaction and conversion, Gerasimos Vlachos as the seventh Archbishop of Philadelphia was especially concerned and active during his primacy for the preservation, the proper operation, strengthening and protection of the Orthodox Greek communities and monasteries in Istria and Dalmatia. His official *Codex* preserves his brief, possibly partial, correspondence (14 letters) with the secular and ecclesiastical authorities of the main towns of Dalmatia (Šibenik, Zadar Hvar) and Istria (Pola).³⁹⁶ As the two main subjects dealt in this corpus of letters are presented firstly Vlachos' constant attempts to support and protect the local Greek communities against the converting pressures by the Catholic political and ecclesiastical authorities, and secondly the continuous and persistent instruction and admonition by the pious Archbishop towards the chaplains of the local Orthodox parishes, who seemed to carry an immoral and scandalous life.

More specifically, the present study will firstly present four of the six letters from Vlachos' surviving correspondence with the chaplain of the Orthodox church of Theotokos in Šibenik Cyril during the period March 1681 – May 1682, as well as a posterior letter of the Archbishop to the later chaplain, the hieromonk Nicodemus. The central topics of discussion in those letters were the failure of the elderly and sick Cyril to function the church and administer the sacraments, the request of the local Orthodox for an assistant and the pressures and intrigues by the Latin clergy and especially the Bishop of the local Diocese Gian Domenico Callegari († 1722, in office 1676–1722), in order to undermine and weaken the Orthodox faith of the community. Then I will proceed to the distressing case of Athanasios Troilos, former chaplain of the Orthodox

³⁹⁵ For a detailed overview of the religious and confessional conditions in 17th-century Dalmatia, see Mayhew: *Dalmatia*, p. 217-226; Voulgaropoulou: *Ζωγραφική*, p. 249-51.

³⁹⁶ Thirteen of these letters were written in vernacular Greek and one in Italian. Gerasimos Vlachos noted the Archbishop's residence in the church of San Giorgio in Venice as the place where he wrote and sent all of his letters: "Delivered in Venice from my holy residence in the church of San Giorgio of the Greeks" («Εδόθη ἐν Βενεταίαις ἐκ τῆς ἡμετέρας ἱεροκατοικίας τῆς ἐκκλησίας τοῦ μεγάλου Γεωργίου τῶν Γραικῶν»).

church of Prophitis Elias in Zadar, through the warning letter sent to him by Gerasimos Vlachos on March 1681 accusing him of a profligate life. The Archbishop would return to the same issue a few months later with two letters to the governors of the Greek community in Zadar and to the new chaplain of the local church, Bessarion Tzalaitis; in these letters, he would attempt to settle permanently the issue of piety and correct pastoral life of the local Orthodox priests. The persistent phenomenon of immoral life is to be detected once more in the case of Dionysios Mazarakis, chaplain of the church of Agios Nikolaos in Pola, whom Vlachos called for repentance in a strict letter on February 1682. Perhaps the most interesting case of moral corruption and ungodly life by a clergyman is considered that of Dionysios, chaplain of Agia Paraskevi in Hvar (Lesina), to whom Vlachos addressed two long letters on July 1681 and April 1682. In them he harshly criticized the priest for his dissolute and licentious life and for a series of machinations and lies Dionysios used against both the Cretan Archbishop and the Admirals of the Venetian fleet of the Gulf.

Starting with the Orthodox community of Šibenik, the latter was one of the oldest and perhaps the most populous in northern Dalmatia. Although it enjoyed the protection of the local Venetian government, the Orthodox of Šibenik were in constant conflict with the local Catholic Diocese, which had been attempted to control and convert the Greeks since the establishment of their community. As early as 1580, on the occasion of Gabriel Seviros' visit to Šibenik, the chaplain of the local church of Theotokos Raphael Sigaras requested the mediation of the Archbishop to the *Signoria* against the continuous interventions of the Catholic clergy that aimed to the impeding of their religious duties. Furthermore, the fourth Archbishop of Philadelphia Athanasios Valerianos intervened in 1641 and on his request the Venetian Senate issued a decree to the Duke of Šibenik, Vincenzo Emo, in order to guarantee full religious freedom for the Orthodox subjects of the *Serenissima*, especially for the Greeks of Šibenik, and the direct placing of the particular parish under the jurisdiction of the Metropolis of Philadelphia. The culmination of the above actions of the Metropolis in order to protect and support the Orthodox of the city is considered the ordination in 1659 by the then Archbishop Meletios Chortatzis of the chaplain Cyril to high cleric and vicar of all the

Orthodox parishes of the region of Dalmatia, a state of recognition for the significance of the Orthodox community of Šibenik.³⁹⁷

According to the six long letters that Gerasimos Vlachos addressed to Cyril, the then elderly and dying chaplain of the church of Theotokos had become, due to a serious illness, incapable of performing his priestly duties. The first letter to Cyril was dated 25. March 1681. In a warm and cordial manner Vlachos expressed his sorrow and sympathy for the prolonged illness that afflicted the elderly clergyman and told him that he prayed for his quick recovery. He then drew attention to the fact that Cyril's inability to care for the needs and interests of his church had resulted in the latter having been deprived of the necessary function for years, a situation that had a direct negative impact on the local Orthodox flock. Reassuring Cyril that this daring issue had not been caused due to the latter's reluctance or negligence, Vlachos expressed his strong concern for the fate of the church and the souls of the Orthodox who "can no longer attend the services, to listen the divine Liturgy and benefit from the pastoral instruction of the chaplain during preaching". Thus, eager to protect their faith and ritual, the town's Orthodox Greeks had sent a series of letters to the Cretan ecclesiastic already from the time the latter was restrained in Corfu and also after his final settlement in Venice. Their only request was to ensure that a Greek assistant of the elderly chaplain would be sent immediately. In response to the persistent appeals of the Orthodox, and because he did not wish "to let the church perish", the Archbishop informed Cyril that he sent him a recently ordained hieromonk, Meletios Darodos from Candia, to work as his assistant.³⁹⁸ Assuring the chaplain that he had chosen an obedient, respectable and humble monk, he urged him to accept young Meletios with love and guide him so that he could be a worthy clergyman, both in terms of his ecclesiastical duties and of his pastoral activity towards the local flock.³⁹⁹

Despite the Archbishop's exhortations and friendly advice to the chaplain of Šibenik for humility and restraint since he was still the head of the Orthodox parishes in Dalmatia, an act of disobedience quickly came to shake the two men's relationship. More specifically, on 6. June 1681 Vlachos sent his second letter to Cyril, more detailed

³⁹⁷ For details on the Greek Orthodox community of Šibenik in the 16th and 17th century, see Voulgaropoulou: *Ζωγραφική*, p. 268-276.

³⁹⁸ The *Codex Vlacho* contains the act (no. 10, f. 12-13) of Darodos' ordination from deacon to hieromonk dated 24. March 1681.

³⁹⁹ For the original Greek letter, see *Codex Vlacho*, f. 13-15.

this time and in a stricter style, dealing with issues of proper functioning of the church and the utterly bad relationship between the vicar and his recently arrived assistant. Referring once more to the multitude of letters he had received from the Orthodox community of Šibenik, both Greeks and Slavs (*«Μορλάκους»*), Vlachos did not forget this time to directly highlight Cyril's own appeals for an assistant in order to "not to lose the church and put the Christians in danger".⁴⁰⁰ This letter reveals that in the Orthodox church of Šibenik no service had been held for two years since 1679, depriving the flock from participating in the holy sacraments, especially communion and confession. After making a brief reference to a late prelate in Corfu, a man of reverence and "completely devoted to the service of God" who had accepted before his sudden death to take up the post of Cyril's assistant, Vlachos clarified to his interlocutor that he chose to send him the recently graduate of the Flanginis College, Meletios Darodos, after an extensive investigation he conducted. In this context, he expressed his satisfaction since, according to Meletios' own testimonies, he was warmly welcomed by Cyril.

Nevertheless, in the second part of his letter, Vlachos dealt with Cyril's sudden complaints due to the limited income from the church of Theotokos, which the elderly vicar was unwilling to share with his young assistant. Eventually, Cyril did not hesitate to proceed to an actual blackmail against the Archbishop warning him that if Darodos did not leave his service immediately, he himself would resign from his office, which he had held since 1659, abandon his flock and settle in a community of the Ottoman territories, to which he would inherit his fortune. Without trying to hide his surprise and indignation, Vlachos firmly criticized Cyril's uncompromising attitude, claiming that "such obscene words do not belong to a holy soul". Highlighting that it was at least inappropriate for someone who worked for forty years in the service of God to abandon his flock and pastoral activity for his personal financial benefit, he harshly accused the chaplain of Šibenik for showing complete indifference for the fate of his church, which would remain closed and without services, and for refusing to think of "the perils for the Christians and the conversions they can cause".⁴⁰¹ Following an argumentation of personal

⁴⁰⁰ An interesting point is that the elderly vicar had actually assured Vlachos that in case his request was satisfied, he himself was ready to hand over all his power to the newly arrived clergyman and would leave him on total duty in order "to keep the church alive and the souls of Christians governed".

⁴⁰¹ In an attempt to terrorize Cyril, Vlachos reminded him that he was in danger of losing the salvation of his soul, if he abandoned his flock and community and die in a "foreign" (that is

and pastoral guilt, Vlachos warned Cyril for the final judgement of his soul and undelined the obfuscation of Cyril's thought "due to the interference of the devil and the temptation of greed". Revealing the long-term problems that the Orthodox populations of Venetian Dalmatia seem to have been facing due to the lack of priests in the local parishes, Vlachos made a clear reference to the difficulties he himself faced in order to find a willing and skilled clergyman to send. Describing a dramatic scenario with a future forced departure by Darodos, he ensured Cyril that the position of the chaplain would remain blank once more, condemning permanently the local believers of the Orthodox faith. The pivotal point of his argumentation was his advice to Cyril to avoid becoming a poor example to his flock, mainly "to the laymen", who would definitely mock and accuse him of expelling his assistant in order to gain profit. Disgracing the elderly vicar for collecting wealth which he would inherit to "people of sin, unworthy of any beneficence", the Archbishop urged Cyril to work piously in the service of his flock, so that "God may be glorified, the devil may be abolished, and the local Christians may rejoice, their souls may be saved and the church of Theotokos may operate in reverence".⁴⁰²

Despite the entreaties and words of admonition that the Cretan Archbishop humbly addressed to Cyril, the first did not achieve to cancel Darodos' departure from Šibenik. In his third letter to the vicar of the town dated 29. September 1681, Vlachos expressed his deep sorrow, but also his wrath against the young clergyman who was proved to be inferior to the circumstances and he abandoned the local Orthodox church and the flock "at the mercy of the Latins". It is interesting that as a response to Vlachos' persistent questions, Darodos seems to have claimed that he could no longer stand the persecutions («περσεκουτζίονες» = "*persecutione*") against him, machinated by the local Venetian authorities, these were the Catholic Archbishop and the Count. Reluctant to name Cyril as the main responsible for the turbulence, the young clergyman feared that the latter would use perjurers in order to sue him («κουερελάρετε» = "*querelare*") and eventually depose and expel him. Nevertheless, and despite Darodos' excuses, Vlachos criticized him for disobeying the direct orders he himself had given him; more

non-Christian) place, deprived of the priestly process of confession, communion and ritual; characteristically he claimed that Cyril's soul would be lost if "you surrender it not through a Christian priest and your body is buried not by priestly hands, thus not following the canon and custom of the clergymen, but on the contrary to be buried in the earth by unholy hands".

⁴⁰² For the original Greek letter, see *Codex Vlacho*, f. 68-73.

specifically, the determinant Archbishop had advised him “to remain there and if you face any aversion you should write to me; and if someone bothers you, you should not be afraid of anything and just write to me, and I handle everything”.⁴⁰³ Writing to Cyril less than he had actually comprehended for him and his relations with the town’s Catholic authorities, Vlachos maintained his diplomatic attitude and asked the vicar if he would be eager to accept Darodos back.⁴⁰⁴

In the second part of the letter, the Cretan Archbishop dealt with the intervening activity of the Archbishop of the Diocese of Šibenik Gian Domenico Callegari. The latter had personally addressed to the ecclesiastical circles of the town of Zadar in search of a priest who would be placed as a chaplain in the Orthodox church of Šibenik. His initiative came to Vlachos’ attention, who became seriously concerned and implored Cyril to send him immediately copies of the aforementioned Venetian *ducale* in favor of the religious freedoms the Orthodox of the town were supposed to enjoy. The Archbishop’s precautions mainly aimed to the protection and preservation of the local Orthodox community, since he was determined “not to leave the church perish”. Moreover, Callegari had addressed Vlachos himself, complaining that he did not follow the supposed tradition of his predecessors in the Metropolitan Throne by issuing an official order to the Orthodox chaplains of Dalmatia recognizing Callegari’s ecclesiastical supremacy; even more, Vlachos had not offered him the right to visit at his wish all the Orthodox temples and monasteries of his Diocese. Nevertheless, the Cretan ecclesiastic is presented to always remain steadfast to protect the rights and privileges of the Orthodox Christians in the lands of the *Serenissima*. Being an excellent connoisseur of the procedures and statutes of the Metropolis of Philadelphia, he had replied to the Catholic Archbishop that not only he had not disobeyed any ecclesiastical regulation, but on the contrary he piously followed the orders and decrees of the Doge, the “Most Serene Prince”, to the letter, similar to all his predecessors in the Throne. Discreetly but firmly, he noted to Callegari that he himself was also fully aware of the above. At this point, indicative is Vlachos’ covert concern and his determination to face any attempt by the Catholic high cleric of the Republic to delude him in order to

⁴⁰³ «ἄν ἔχει ντεσγοῦστο νὰ μοῦ γράψει, ἢ καὶ πείραζιν ἀπὸ κανέναν, νὰ μὴν λογιᾶσαι τίποτας, μόνον ὅς γράψει καὶ ἐγὼ ἀκουμαντάρω κάθε πρᾶγμα»; see *Codex Vlacho*, f. 118.

⁴⁰⁴ Meletios Darodos’ was later punished for “his disobedience and pride, the most hated vice of all”, since Gerasimos Vlachos forbade his candidacy for the position of the *prefetto* at the Flanginis College; see *Codex Vlacho*, f. 171.

voluntarily and officially hand in the jurisdiction of the Orthodox communities, creating fatal *faits accomplis* for their future in Dalmatia.⁴⁰⁵

The open issue of the Orthodox church in Šibenik was temporarily resolved on 15. May 1682, when Vlachos wrote to Cyril validating the initiative of the town's Greek community to invite a presbyter "from the land of the Turks" named Moses Voulgaris as the chaplain of their church. More specifically, after informing Cyril that he himself had granted Voulgaris every official authority to exercise his temporary pastoral duties in Šibenik,⁴⁰⁶ he ordered the vicar to send him the official document of the *Provveditore Generale* Corner's response; the latter was defined as necessary in order to secure "the foundation of our ritual, lest the Latins bother us", mainly meaning the sly Catholic Archbishop of the city.⁴⁰⁷ Simultaneously, Vlachos welcomed in relief Cyril's own initiative to call his foster son, named Nikodemos, to his aid; noteworthy is that the latter was until then living as an ordained hieromonk "in Germany".⁴⁰⁸ Until then, he advised the elderly vicar to remain humble and pious so that "the laity will not be offended and abandon reverence".

⁴⁰⁵ For the original Greek letter, see *Codex Vlacho*, f. 117-119. During the next months, Vlachos dealt again with the request by the "Graikoi Christians" of Šibenik who urged him to send a "Romaioi" priest to perform the services in the church of Theotokos. For this subject, both Vlachos and the governor of the Greek community in Šibenik, Konstantinos Mazarakis, are presented to address the highest Venetian authority in the province of Dalmatia, the *Provveditore Generale* Girolamo Corner (in the office April 1680 – June 1682); see Luigi Maschek (ed.): *Manuale del Regno di Dalmazia*. Anno IV. Tipografia Fratelli Battara. Zara 1874, p. 30.

⁴⁰⁶ It is interesting that the acute and practical Cretan Archbishop urged Cyril to advice the newly arrived Voulgaris to visit Callegari and pay his respects in order to gain the latter's favor.

⁴⁰⁷ Gerasimos Vlachos' official letter to Callegari, dated 28. May 1682, and in which he informed the Catholic Archbishop of Moses Voulgaris' election as the temporary chaplain in the church of Theotokos is the following: "*Al illustrissimo e reverendissimo mio signor monsignor Giovanni Domenico Vescovo de Sebenico. Per la lunga indisposizione del mro reverendo pre Cirillo officiatore di cotesta nostra chiesa della Madona Santissima, e per terminatione dell' illustrissimo et eccelentissimo signor Proveditor General di Dalmatia Cornaro, che concesse ai Morlachi Greci, di chiamar dalla Terra Turca un Religioso per officiar detta chiesa, sin che ho di qui provedessi d' un altro Capellano fù chiaamto il Reverendo Moisè Bulgari, e du me è stato ammesso per <...> provisionis acciò administri tutti i sacramenti, e supplisca all' impotenza del vechio Cirillo*"; see *Codex Vlacho*, f. 175-176.

⁴⁰⁸ A question is raised as to the way the two interlocutors define the geographical term *Germany*. Do they mean the territories of Dalmatia that at that time were under the control of the Habsburg Dynasty, or did Cyril's foster son reside in one of the states of the Holy Roman Empire? Unfortunately, Gerasimos Vlachos' preserved letters do not shed further light on subject.

In the same letter, Vlachos shared with Cyril a peculiar event that had recently taken place before him. More specifically, the elderly Archbishop was visited by an anonymous Greek prelate from the island of Naxos, willing to be sent as a chaplain in Šibenik. Concerned to examine his interlocutor's piety and morals, Vlachos asked him of his motives. As it turned out, the latter were strictly financial. After narrating his ecclesiastical career in Naples, Rome and other Italian cities as a priest and a preacher, the anonymous clergyman was presented dissatisfied with his until then income. Therefore, he wished to settle in Šibenik, where he believed the conditions would be more favorable for him; in fact he demanded that Vlachos would pay him in advance one hundred Venetian ducats before his departure. Definitely the most interesting part of their discussion was their reference to the Greek clergymen who resided and worked in the city of Rome. According to the astonished Archbishop:

“I told him that only those who sign to preserve the rite of the Latins are able to perform Mass in Rome, but he immediately answered me ‘this is nothing, since many Romaioi [mean. Greek priests] did it’; and that he would sign a thousand times if he was promised to receive tornese.”

«Ἐγὼ τὸν εἶπα πῶς δὲν λειτουργοῦσιν εἰς τὴν Ρώμην παρ’ ὅσοι ἀπογράφουσι νὰ φυλάττουν τὸ ριτὸν τῶν Λατίνων· καὶ εὐθὺς μοῦ εἶπε τοῦτον δὲν εἶναι τίποτας, διατὶ πολλοὶ Ρωμαῖοι τὸ ἔκαμαν καὶ πῶς ἤθελε κάμει χίλιες ἀπογραφὰς πούρι νὰ τοῦ δύνουν τὸρνέσα.»⁴⁰⁹

With a touch of bitter humor, Gerasimos Vlachos responded to the greedy priest as following: “I answered him nothing, but I told him to return to his homeland, because he was not right for me”. After urging Cyril to examine carefully all the Orthodox clergymen who arrived in Šibenik, their letters of recommendation and the validity of their certificates in order to uncover any possible fraudulent priests, the Cretan Archbishop confessed his deep concern that such cases of venal ecclesiastics could easily create serious turbulence in the Orthodox communities of Dalmatia, even “sell our churches and turn them into Latin”. This sad event was indeed indicative of the piteous state of the lowest Orthodox clergy in the lands of the Serenissima on the eve of the dire confessional and ecclesiastical controversy the metropolitan primacy of Vlachos successor Meletios Typaldos would bring during the next decades.⁴¹⁰

⁴⁰⁹ *Codex Vlacho*, f. 173.

⁴¹⁰ For the original Greek letter, see *Codex Vlacho*, f. 171-174.

In the context of the continuous turbulence created in the Orthodox communities of Dalmatia by Archbishop Callegari, Vlachos contacted the church of Theotokos for the last time on 26. October 1683. More specifically, in that period Cyril's foster son Nikodimos had undertaken the position of the chaplain and was facing intense hostility and pressure by the local Catholic ecclesiastical authorities. As it is revealed, Callegari had approached Nikodimos and suggested him to receive a Latin friar as his confessor, something that Vlachos firmly ordered his interlocutor to refuse. Moreover, the Catholic Archbishop had put pressure to the Orthodox chaplain in the context of the annual jubilee.⁴¹¹ Therefore, Vlachos instructed the chaplain of the church of Theotokos to respond to the Catholic Archbishop that:

“both your holiness [mean. Nicodemus] and the Romaioi performed the Jubilee by confessing and receiving the sacrament as the Church of the Romaioi is accustomed to and as our Most Serene Prince [mean. the Doge] commands through his *ducale* that the Romaioi would perform their ritual freely without being prevented by anyone.”

«ἔκαμες καὶ ἡ ἀγιωσύνη σου καὶ οἱ Ῥωμαῖοι τὸ ἱουβιλαῖον μὲ τὸ νὰ ἐξομολογηθεῖτε καὶ νὰ μεταλάβετε τὰ ἄχραντα μυστήρια καθὼς ἔχει συνήθεια ἡ Ἐκκλησία τῶν Ῥωμαίων καὶ καθὼς προστάζει ὁ γαληνότατος πρίγγιπές μας μὲ δουκάλε νὰ κάμνουσιν οἱ Ῥωμαῖοι τὸν ρίτον τους ἀνεμποδίστως παρ’ οὐδενὸς ἐμποδιζόμενοι.»⁴¹²

To Nikodimos' desperate appeals for help and guidance, Gerasimos Vlachos responded in sympathy. He encouraged him by assuring that his matter was particularly placed under the careful eye of the local Venetian Count, who had promised to Vlachos that he would personally guarantee for the safety and independence of the Orthodox church and its chaplain. For the case of the uncompromising Catholic Archbishop, who had refused to proceed to a similar commitment, Vlachos perceived it as “a proof that he desires to cause you [mean. Nikodimos] harm”. In the context of his numerous advice and instructions, he urged his interlocutor to clarify to Callegari that any form of authority Nikodimos enjoyed on the Orthodox community of his parish derived from Gerasimos Vlachos himself. The latter validated and authorized the chaplain's priestly and pastoral duties towards his flock through an official certificate, which Nikodimos was invited to

⁴¹¹ At this point the research is unable to determine exactly which ceremony Vlachos meant, since it is known that the official Jubilee of the Catholic Church took place eight years earlier, in 1675. Therefore, the Cretan Archbishop may have referred to another religious celebration of the *Serenissima*, that year's Pentecost (6. June 1683) or *Corpus Cristi* (17. June 1683); see Eleanor Selfridge-Field: *A New Chronology of Venetian Opera and related genres, 1660–1760*. Stanford University Press. Stanford 2007, p. 654.

⁴¹² *Codex Vlacho*, f. 310-311.

show to Callegari. In case, though, that the Latin Archbishop decided to keep this specific document, Nikodimos would need to address immediately the Venetian Count, that “commands us, the Romaioi, as a representative of our Most Serene Prince, who governs us both in the secular and the spiritual things”. Obtaining a strong sensory and perfect perception of his reality, Vlachos was certainly capable of conceiving the obscure meanings, the hidden facts, and the undertones behind the discussions and the words of a letter. Following his strong suspicions that behind Callegari’s pressure may be hidden Cyril’s personal interests and machinations, just as had happened in the case of Meletios Darodos, he concluded his letter to Nikodimos in the following indicative way: “If father Cyril is responsible for all your troubles, be patient because God will take His revenge soon”.⁴¹³

In addition to his continual correspondence with the Orthodox chaplains of Šibenik which mainly reflects the intense problem of Catholic intervention against the local Greek community, Gerasimos Vlachos developed a less frequent but equally serious correspondence with the high clerics of the three other major Orthodox parishes, the first being that of Zadar. The latter’s Greek community had become the largest in the Venetian-ruled Adriatic region during the 17th century, coming second only to that of Venice. This strong Orthodox presence, which was further strengthened by the arrival of numerous refugees during the War of Candia, alarmed the local Venetian authorities, both political and ecclesiastical, and caused the intense discontent of the Latin clergy and its missionaries.⁴¹⁴ In late 1681 Gerasimos Vlachos was called upon to deal with a critical and urgent situation in Zadar, concerning the local church of Prophitis Elias. As he was informed by the governors of the Greek community in the city, the chaplain of the church, Athanasios Troilos, had suddenly abandoned his priestly duties leaving the temple closed and causing “great damage to the faithful Christians”. In his place the Community had elected a monk who then resided in Venice, named Bessarion Tzalaitis, in an attempt to re-open the church and restart the services. In his response to the governors of Zadar, dated 28. November 1681, Vlachos confirmed Tzalaitis’ election and guaranteed for the latter’s devotion and obedience to his duty as a clergyman.

⁴¹³ For the original Greek letter, see *Codex Vlachos*, f. 310-312.

⁴¹⁴ During the period of his primacy in the Metropolitan Throne of Philadelphia, Gerasimos Vlachos had to face the initiatives and interventions of the Archbishop of Zadar Giovanni Evangelista Parzaghi (in office 1669–1688), aiming to the conversion of the local Greek and Slav populations into the Latin Church and ritual. For the Orthodox community of Zadar in the 16th and 17th century, see Voulgaropoulou: *Ζωγραφική*, p. 253-267.

Moreover, he implored them to warmly welcome their new chaplain, who he described as “a pious and virtuous man, an experienced clergyman, a skilled cantor and a magnificent priest”, who “had not given the slightest reason for a scandal” during his long stay in Venice.⁴¹⁵ A few years later, on 18. August 1683, and on the occasion of the aforementioned Nikodimos’ arrival to Šibenik, Gerasimos Vlachos remembered the pious Tzalaitis and sent him a brief letter full of praises for his activity in Zadar and the faithful life the latter was following. Always concerned about the piety and morality of the representatives of the Orthodox Church in Dalmatia, the Cretan Archbishop advised the chaplain of Prophitis Elias to remain humble and carefully avoid temptations and sin. In his argumentation, he involved the vices and miseries of the former chaplain of the church, Athanasios Troilos, whom he presented as an example to avoid. In fact, with a touch of mild strictness, he discreetly criticized Tzilaitis’ initiative to allow the then layman Troilos to reside inside his monastery. Considered this decision as arbitrary and irresponsible, Vlachos warned his interlocutor that it could jeopardize the reputation and prestige of the church, since “what is done cannot be undone, but remains as a reminder to the future”.⁴¹⁶

After Šibenik and Zadar, the third most important Greek church in Dalmatia was located on the Venetian-occupied island of Hvar (Lesina), a central station of the Serenissima’s fleet and merchant navy, as well as a strategic base in the Adriatic coastline. As early as the middle of the 16th century (1561) the Orthodox church of Agia Paraskevi was established in the capital town of the island, with the parish being under the jurisdiction of the Metropolis of Philadelphia.⁴¹⁷ During the time of Gerasimos Vlachos’ primacy in the Throne, the Orthodox church in Hvar was under the control of a cunning and profligate prelate named Dionysios. Forced by the same reasons that had made him contact the rest of the Orthodox chaplains in Dalmatia, these were impiety, greed and immorality, Vlachos addressed to Dionysios twice (6. June 1681 and 3. April 1682), as it is revealed by the two considerably long preserved letters to him. In the first

⁴¹⁵ For the original Greek letter, see *Codex Vlacho*, f. 128-129.

⁴¹⁶ For the original Greek letter, see *Codex Vlacho*, f. 304.

⁴¹⁷ Gabriel Seviros arrived in the town of Hvar on October 1616, after completing his journey in the parishes of Šibenik and Zadar. The already sick Archbishop passed away in the monastery of Agia Paraskevi, where he was temporarily buried, until the return of his remains to Venice. For details on the Greek Orthodox presence in Hvar in the 16th and 17th century, see Voulgaropoulou: *Ζωγραφική*, p. 277-283.

case, the Archbishop began his letter by strictly criticizing the chaplain of Agia Paraskevi for contempt and disrespect to his face. More specifically, it appears that Dionysios had continuously neglected to send an official letter of obedience to his Archbishop. In the context of the connection in Vlachos' mind of his ecclesiastical authority with the political power of the Venetian government,⁴¹⁸ he perceived Dionysios' act of omission not only as his refusal to recognize the authority of the Metropolis over him, but also as an action against the commandments and decisions "of our Most Serene Prince". Nevertheless, he once more chose to use his diplomacy and pastoral mildness, and forgave Dionysios, since he was also "a fellow Cretan". The main reason that urged the Cretan ecclesiastic to address the chaplain of Agia Paraskevi was related to a multitude of serious accusations and general outcry against him by the Orthodox Greeks of Hvar. According to the latter, Dionysios was indifferent in his duties as a priest and chaplain. The church was in poor condition, with limited property and crumbling buildings, while Dionysios constantly refused to perform the services and the sacraments and was only interested in collecting wealth for himself. According to Vlachos' letter, what had actually caused "a great scandal all over the land" was the fact that the chaplain of Agia Paraskevi was accused of living an immoral and licentious life, visiting "prostitutes and brothels" and allowing women to freely enter his monastery, "to eat, drink and sleep in his cell near his mattress, causing a scandal to everyone". By warning that they would also turn to the Venetian Council of Ten (*Consiglio de Dieci*), the Orthodox Greeks of Hvar addressed Gerasimos Vlachos with the request to remove Dionysios from his post and replace him with a pious clergyman who would restore the fame and prestige of their church.

The Cretan Archbishop is presented in his letter to comprehend and sympathize with the indignation of the Orthodox community of Hvar. However, he chose to address Dionysios not with extreme rigor; on the contrary he wished to advise, guide him and eventually warn him of the consequences of his sinful life. Clarifying that he was aware of Dionysios' vices already since the time he resided in Corfu, he followed a moderate but firm argumentation urging the chaplain of Hvar to take care of his church "as an

⁴¹⁸ At this point it is important to point out once again Vlachos' conscious and sincere loyalty and faith to the highest principles of the *Serenissima*: "Ordered by the Most Serene [Prince], I undertook the administration of all the *Romaikes* [mean. Orthodox] churches which are established in the provinces of his Serenity until the Gulf".

image of magnificent God” and use his income for the latter’s reconstruction and the support of his flock. Moreover, he implored him to acquire a spiritual father, an elderly Orthodox prelate who would guide and help him in the services of his church and parish. Finally, he ordered the chaplain with compassion but at the same time with intransigence to avoid the peasants’ festivities and the revelries with prostitutes, since such things “could cause a scandal and suspicions of evil”. An indicative example of the moderate way in which Gerasimos Vlachos generally handled the moral crises of the Orthodox communities under his jurisdiction is the following excerpt from his letter to Dionysios:

“Since I have compassion for the guilty and we keep a place of repentance for those who badly act, aiming to correct them and not create a scandal in the priestly and monastic order, I mostly desire to calm down the accusers, if they are rightly accusing, who will notice the change of a spiritual man towards godly actions and proper morals.”

*«Ἀλλ’ ἡμεῖς ὥσάν ὅπου ἔχομεν εὐσπλαχνίαν εἰς τοὺς πταίοντας καὶ φυλάγομεν τόπον τῆς μετανοίας εἰς τοὺς κακοποιοὺς διὰ τὸ διορθωθοῦσι καὶ τὸ μὴν γίνεαι σκάνδαλον εἰς τὴν ἱερατικὴν καὶ μοναχικὴν τάξιν, μᾶλλον δὲ διὰ τὸ ἡμερώσομεν τοὺς κατηγοροῦντας ἐάν δικαίως κατηγοροῦσι μὲ τὸ τὸ νὰ ἰδοῦσι μεταβολὴν εἰς ἔργα θεάρεστα καὶ εἰς ἡθὴ πρέποντα εἰς ἄνδρα πνευματικόν.»*⁴¹⁹

By giving him a thirty-day deadline in order to repent and be corrected, Vlachos warned the chaplain of Hvar that otherwise he would expel him and following “the orders of our Most Serene Prince”, he would send a temporary chaplain to his church until a new one would be elected “from the honorable counts and admirals who have the ownership [of the church]”. In the epilogue of his letter and in a final attempt to convince Dionysios of the seriousness of the situation, he informed him that he had in his possession official letters from the Orthodox of Hvar addressed to the Great Admiral of Venice, with the request to proceed, in co-operation with the Counts, to the election of a new chaplain. Nevertheless, out of compassion and sympathy, the Cretan Archbishop decided for the time being to keep those letters, giving Dionysios a chance to correct himself.⁴²⁰

Despite the advice and the mild treatment received by his Archbishop, it seems that the chaplain of Hvar not only disregarded Vlachos’ orders, but proceeded to even more scandalous activities and machinations in the coming months. More specifically, as Vlachos’ second letter to Dionysios reveals, the latter had secretly agreed with his cousin, a future nun named Adrianna, to live together in the monastery of Agia

⁴¹⁹ *Codex Vlacho*, f. 96.

⁴²⁰ For the original Greek letter, see *Codex Vlacho*, f. 95-99.

Paraskevi. In this context, he asked for the Archbishop's necessary permission, claiming that he had already ensured positive reactions and support by the vicar of Šibenik, the aforementioned Cyril, along with "the Admirals and the Count of the Armada of Levant and Venice", who not only agreed but were supposedly rather satisfied with such an initiative.⁴²¹ Once more astonished by the insolence of his clergy in Dalmatia, Vlachos firmly clarified that the Orthodox ecclesiastical rules and regulations explicitly forbid the cohabitation of male and female members of the monastic order, while he defined the infringement of this condition as "a reason for a great scandal to all Christians, and mostly to the Latin masters and the local clergy". He then drastically exposed Dionysios' machination in order to deceive not only Vlachos but also the Venetian authorities of Hvar, "the lords of the armada who were the masters of the monastery". Indeed, the Admirals of the Gulf and "our master the great Admiral of the State" had recently visited the elderly Archbishop in his residence in the church of *San Giorgio* in order to express their surprise and indignation against Dionysios' request. In the discussion that followed, it was proved that the chaplain of Hvar had sent simultaneously two letters to both sides; in the one he lied to Vlachos for the supposedly positive response of the admirals, while in the other he claimed that he had already obtained the Archbishop's approval. With the double fraud being revealed, Vlachos terrorized Dionysios by describing the wrathful reactions of the deceived "Latin masters" and the indignation of high members of the Greek Confraternity who were present in the meeting. All of them agreed that the chaplain of Hvar had to be severely punished, since he had defiled the church of Agia Paraskevi, "depriving it of every honor". To the ferocious outrage and resentment of all who participated in the discussion and who suggested the replacement of Dionysios and his report to the Council of Ten, Gerasimos Vlachos acted once again for the de-escalation of the situation. His suggestion, which eventually dominated,⁴²² was that for

⁴²¹ In his argumentation, the chaplain of Hvar also claimed that such cases of cohabitation of monks and nuns had occurred numerous times in the past in other Orthodox monasteries; as an example he mentioned the church of Agios Iason and Sosipatros in Corfu and its abbot, "the late Mr. Kalliopios". Although the present study cannot examine and confirm Dionysios' testimony, it is certain that in this case the chaplain of Hvar referred to the already mentioned Cretan clergyman Kalliopios Kallergis who belonged to Gerasimos Vlachos' close circle both during his first period in Venice as a teacher and later in Corfu; it was there that Kallergis copied in 1671 Vlachos' polemical treatises "*Against the Jews*" and "*On Muhammad's Religion and Against the Turks*".

⁴²² The Cretan Archbishop described the particular scene as following: "Although all the others were opposed, the Great Admiral sat next to me, agreeing on my opinion"; *Codex Vlacho*, f.

the time being he and the Venetian Admirals would send letters to Dionysios demanding that he immediately send away his cousin from the monastery and seek for a priest who would serve the church with piety and order. Nevertheless, he did not forget to warn the chaplain of Hvar that the Venetian Admirals were on their way to the island, being “fierce and relentless not out of a personal enmity against him but out of high zeal for honor”. Since he did not wish to portray himself as a ruthless punisher, Vlachos concluded in a more cordial manner, assuring Dionysios that he was eager to help him as a fellow Orthodox and Cretan. However, if he would be forced by the ecclesiastical laws and the political circumstances to decide with justice, he clarified that he would remain faithful and follow the necessary rules and procedures.⁴²³

Based on his preserved correspondence, Gerasimos Vlachos dealt with the issue of priestly impiety one last time in the case of Dionysios Mazarakis, chaplain in the church of Agios Nikolaos in the town of Pula in Istria, one of the central ports of the *Serenissima* and a highly strategic base of the Venetian fleet in the Adriatic. Similar to the communities of Dalmatia, Pula had received during the War of Candia, a multitude of Orthodox refugees, with the local church of Agios Nikolaos to remain under the jurisdiction of the Metropolis of Philadelphia.⁴²⁴ Nevertheless, in contradiction to the corresponding Orthodox communities in Dalmatia, the confessional aspect did not seem to have particularly concerned the local Greeks, most of who had already been converted to the Unia. Therefore, while their fellow Greeks in Venice and Dalmatia mainly claimed the protection of their religious rights and acted in favor of the preservation of their Orthodox ritual, the Greeks of Pula presented in general an indifferent, moderate and pro-Catholic attitude, which eventually led to their disperse and absorption within the Latin Church.⁴²⁵ In the context of this continuously increasing

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⁴²³ For the original Greek letter, see *Codex Vlacho*, f. 156-160.

⁴²⁴ The relations between Pula and Venice were definitely strengthened in the early 17th century. Noteworthy is that the Istrian town was the birthplace of the second Archbishop of Philadelphia, Theophanis Xenakis (1570–1632). Coming from a noble Cypriot family who had settled in Istria as refugees after the fall of the island to the Ottomans, Xenakis initially became the chaplain of the church of San Giorgio and in 1616 succeeded Gabriel Sevirus on the Metropolitan Throne.

⁴²⁵ According to the primary sources, due to the long-term and intensive converting activity of the Catholic missionaries in the diocese of Pula, during the late 1670s only 100 Greek “schismatics” resided in the town. For details on the Greek Orthodox of Pula community in the 16th and 17th century, see Voulgaropoulou: *Ζωγραφική*, p. 378-401.

conversion of the Orthodox of Pula during the 1680s, Gerasimos Vlachos failed due to the discouraging conditions to act systematically and persistently in favor of the local Greek community. Only once he addressed to the chaplain of Agios Nikolaos, named Dionysios Mazarakis; nevertheless, the text is largely indicative of the state of decline and abandonment that prevailed in the church and in a wider scale in the Greek community of Pula during the late 17th century.

Dated 16. February 1682, Vlachos' letter responded once more to the sinful life another Orthodox clergyman was presented to follow. More specifically, both the Orthodox and Catholic communities of Pula had indeed turned against Mazarakis due to the latter's flagrant lifestyle as a Christian priest. In addition to the accusation of negligence towards his pastoral duties and illegal financial transactions at the expense of the church, the chaplain was presented to dishonor and despise his parishioners, refusing to offer them the holy sacraments, baptize their children and offer them a basic education. Moreover, the accusers claimed that Mazarakis did not hesitate to appear in public accompanied by women – who lived with him in the monastery – and participate in folk festivals, debaucheries and dances, failing to show the slightest respect to his profession as a clergyman. As Vlachos characteristically noted, such an impudent behavior naturally “scandalized the local Romaioi parishioners of the church of Agios Nikolaos, causing also a scandal among the Latin lords who live there” and “gave reason to the lords the Franks to disrespect our ritual and our priestly order”. Demonstrating once again the necessary rigor that his office imposed, combined with a gentleness that derived from his personal moderate character, Gerasimos Vlachos urged Dionysios to repent of his mistakes: “My child, change your bad habits and become a new different man, obedient to Christ, the Church and my own inducements”. In addition to his advice to perform the church services with reverence and remain in the spiritual service of his flock, the Cretan Archbishop ordered his interlocutor to immediately send away any woman who resided in his monastery and avoid appearing in festivals and dances of the laity, events that were characterized as “acts of ungodly people”; otherwise, Vlachos would be forced to depose him according to the ecclesiastical laws. Also in this last case, what becomes obvious is the elderly Archbishop's intense concern to prevent the local Catholic clergy

and laymen from undermining even more the Orthodox faith and ridiculing the latter's representatives.⁴²⁶

The aforementioned cases of contact between Gerasimos Vlachos and the heads of Orthodox churches in Dalmatia and Istria, although a mere sample, remain indicative of first's innate spirit of responsibility towards his faith. Constantly concerned to preserve and secure the integrity and the correct operation of the Orthodox ecclesiastical and secular communities under his jurisdiction, he attempted during his brief primacy in the Metropolis of Philadelphia to control, enhance and rectify the errors, failures, omissions and even machineries of the Orthodox clergy in the Venetian-ruled Adriatic shores. Simultaneously, he maintained a discreet but official relationship with the local Catholic authorities, both ecclesiastical and secular, and made determinant use of his office and power, whenever it was necessary, in order to promote the interests and rights of the Orthodox believers. It is interesting to note that Vlachos remained throughout his life, and even more as an Archbishop in Venice, a loyal subject and a sincere citizen of the *Serenissima*, a result of his strong Venetian-Cretan identity and conscience. In his correspondence he often expressed his unequivocal trust and appreciation to the Venetian government and particularly the Doge, who he repeatedly defined as the merciful and just lord of the Orthodox Greeks of the Republic, both in the level of political (secular ruler) and of religious-confessional administration (spiritual legislator). Therefore, in the context of the general established religious-confessional freedoms the Greeks of Venice enjoyed, Vlachos did not hesitate to consider and promote the Doge and the Senate as his legitimate and sincere supporters and contributors to his religious administration; the latter ensured him on the one hand the favorable treatment by the Republic, and on the other the official obedience and cooperation of the Greek Confraternity and the church of *San Giorgio*.

4.3. Addressing the Orthodox Patriarchs: Credentials of piety, integrity and trust

⁴²⁶ An indicative evidence of the psychological manipulation that Gerasimos Vlachos seems to have handled so skillfully and diplomatically during the period of his primacy in the Metropolis of Philadelphia is the last sentence of his letter. Clarifying to Dionysios that for the time being he addressed to him as a father who wished to correct his son, he asked him to follow his orders to the letter; in case the chaplain of Pula decided to defy him, then: "I will stand in front of you not as your father, but as your righteous judge; and you will be sorry but it will be too late, since I will not be able to act otherwise than according to the divine rules". For the original Greek letter, see *Codex Vlacho*, f. 142-145.

From the time of its establishment and until the end of the 17th century, the Metropolis of Philadelphia in Venice remained an active religious center with the aim of preserving and strengthening the Orthodox communities in the Venetian territories. At the same time, the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople acted catalytically for the direct communication and efficient cooperation of the Greek confraternities of the *Serenissima* with the political and ecclesiastical authorities of the Republic, but also for the contact and diplomatic conciliation of these two forces with the central core of Orthodox Christianity. From Gabriel Seviros to Gerasimos Vlachos, the relations of the church of *San Giorgio* with the circles of Phanar and the heads of the other Orthodox Patriarchates, mainly of Alexandria and Jerusalem, were close, profound and extremely productive both in pure ecclesiastical and merely political-diplomatic and intellectual level. Therefore, the preserved archives of the Greek Confraternity of Venice and of the Metropolis of Philadelphia contain a multitude of official documents, acts and letters concerning matters of faith, ecclesiastical affairs, pedagogical initiatives and collaborations, but also completely practical or personal matters between the Greeks of Venice and the representatives of the Eastern Patriarchates, such as the exchange of gifts, icons and books, and the settlement of legal cases, mainly bequests of Greeks of the Diaspora to the Orthodox Church.

During his primacy as the seventh Archbishop of Philadelphia, Gerasimos Vlachos followed the example of his predecessors and maintained close contact mainly with the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Based on the preserved five letters he sent to Patriarch Dionysios IV Mouselimis during the period September 1681 – May 1683,⁴²⁷ the present study detects a personal relationship and a warm friendship between the two high clerics. The letters, characterized by sincere piety and high expressive style by their learned author, seem to consist, in their structure and content, of three main themes: i. the traditional eloquence in order for the Archbishop to praise the head of the Orthodox Christianity on the occasion of his ascension to the patriarchal throne of

⁴²⁷ Taking into account exclusively the preserved archival evidence, the strong bonds of friendship and mutual respect that connected the elderly Archbishop with the Ecumenical Patriarch are partially but indicatively illustrated in Vlachos' six high-style letters detected in the *Codex Vlacho*: i. 29. September 1681 (f. 114-116); ii. 10. September 1682 (f. 215-217); iii. 8. October 1682 (f. 226-231); iv. 10. October 1682 (f. 231-232); v. 15. November 1682 (f. 237-238); vi. 31. May 1683 (f. 275-277). Two of these letters (i and iv) were published in Manousakas: «Συλλογή», p. 98-105.

Constantinople; ii. some key central issues that had arisen regarding the Metropolis of Philadelphia and the conditions under which the latter remained a purely Orthodox ecclesiastical center in Latin Europe; iii. the discussion between the two highly scholarly clergymen on the evaluation and reliability of ecclesiastical books that at that time were published by the printing houses of Venice and elsewhere. In the *Codex Vlachos* two more letters are detected, this time addressed to the Patriarch of Jerusalem Dositheos II Notaras.⁴²⁸ The letters, as well as a sixth one to Dionysios, do not deal with purely ecclesiastical, religious or confessional issues. On the contrary, Vlachos seems to have been in contact with the Patriarchs exceptionally, in order to implore their help for the resolution of the cases of two prominent members in the Greek community of Venice.

Starting with Patriarch Dionysios, the latter was indeed a vigorous high ecclesiastic of Constantinople who dealt during his primacy with many religious and confessional matters, mainly on the position of the Orthodox Church against the Protestant confessions and theology. In the context of his acquaintanceship with Gerasimos Vlachos, what initially attracts the interest is the warm and encomiastic style that the Cretan Archbishop adapted during the composition of his letters. In the one dated 29. September 1681, he praised Dionysios in a high rhetorical style and archaic Greek language and confessed his sincere and unequivocal faith and obedience to him; more specifically, he described the Patriarch as:

“the common benefit of all the world, the eye of the pious men, the vital force of the sacred polity, the man of the highest prudence, the great trumpet of wisdom, the pillar and support of the catholic Church [mean. the Orthodox Church], the luminary of the world, the victor of the limits of human life and the unique preserved warm protector of the Greek nation.”

«τὸ κοινὸν ἀπάσης τῆς οἰκουμένης ὄφελος, τὸν ὀφθαλμὸν τῶν εὐσεβῶν, τὴν ζωτικὴν δύναμιν τοῦ ἱεροῦ πολιτεύματος, τὸν πλήρους φρονήσεως ἄνδρα, τὴν μεγάλην τῆς σοφίας σάλπιγγα, τὸν στύλον καὶ τὸ ἐδραῖωμα τῆς καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας, τὸν τοῦ κόσμου φωστῆρα, τὸν ζωῆς ἀνθρωπίνης μέτρα νικήσαντα καὶ τὸν μόνον ἐπιλειπόμενον τοῦ ἐλληνικοῦ γένους θερμὸν ἀντιλήπτορα.»⁴²⁹

⁴²⁸ The reader of these letters to Dositheos will notice that a possible personal relationship between the Cretan Archbishop and the Patriarch of Jerusalem was not implied at any point, either from a direct testimony by the author or from the style of his speech, which remained formal but always moderate and respectful.

⁴²⁹ *Codex Vlachos*, f. 114; see Manousakas: «Συλλογή», p. 99.

He concluded his eulogy with a silent reference to the primacy of Dionysios' predecessor James I and a bitter comment that during Dionysios' absence from the Ecumenical Throne "we did not see any benefit".⁴³⁰ As he had explained in detail in the first part of his appeal to the Tsar Aleksey Mikchailovich, Vlachos was particularly concerned for the worrisome phenomenon of frequent changes in the Ecumenical Throne of Constantinople long before his primacy in the Metropolis of Philadelphia. Indeed, he considered such a condition to be a great peril that weakened and undermined the Great Church and challenged the institution of the patriarchate. In an equally high style and perfectly archaic language, the Archbishop composed the encomium of the Patriarch and Constantinople in his letter dated 10. September 1682.⁴³¹ Specifically, he described Constantinople as "the land of the queen of cities, from where piety came, the multitude of the Fathers, the state of the Palace, the glory of the Patriarchs and the catholic Great Church, our common mother".⁴³² In this rhetorical context, the author concluded that Dionysios, originating from such an honorable and famous city, was "a virtuous man, a noble one, the wisest among all the people of their century, an eminent theologian and Ecumenical Patriarch". Except for the aforementioned virtues, Vlachos did not forget to express his admiration for the high level of Dionysios' education and intellectualism, something that, as he noted, emerged from the letters he had sent him in Venice. All his praising references to the Patriarch reveal his strong belief that Dionysios was meant to lead their contemporary Orthodox Christendom, despite the generally weak administration inside the Patriarchate. By artistically connecting his interlocutor with the sun, he proceeded to the following rhetorical scheme, in which a discreet hint against the frequent changes of Patriarchs was also implied:

"The sun does not envy the evening, nor does it care for a comet in the sky, as the latter quickly disappears. On the contrary, the sun, even if sometimes may be lost for a while

⁴³⁰ As it was presented earlier in this study, the aforementioned letter never reached Dionysios' hands. On the contrary, it was given to the latter's rival in the Throne, James I. Therefore, it is not without significance that in his later letter to Dionysios (8. October 1682), Vlachos avoided to mention the name of the Patriarch in the address of his text; at least, this is concluded by the copy contained in the *Codex Vlacho*. If the same was also true for the official document that was sent to Constantinople, this detail is utterly indicative of the uncertainty caused in the contemporary Orthodox circles by the intense fluidity on the patriarchal throne.

⁴³¹ Excerpts of this letter were published in Tatakis: *Γεράσιμος Βλάχος*, p. 25.

⁴³² «ὡς τὴν βασιλίδος τῶν πόλεων περιοχὴν ἐξ ἧς ἡ εὐσέβεια, τὸ τῶν πατέρων σίφορος, τὸ τῶν ἀνακτόρων κράτος, τὸ τῶν πατριαρχῶν κλέος, καὶ ἡ καθολικὴ μεγάλη ἐκκλησία, ἡ κοινὴ μήτηρ»; *Codex Vlacho*, f. 215.

behind small clouds, still shines even stronger and becomes extremely bright, bringing happiness to men and cherishing the whole Earth.”

«Ἡλῖος οὐ φθονῶν ἐσπέρας, οὔτε σοὶ μέλλει εἴτις κομήτης ἀστήρ ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, τάχιον γὰρ ἐκλείπειν, ὁ δὲ ἥλιος καὶ παρὰ μικρῶν ἐκ τῶν νεφελῶν καλυφθεὶς, μᾶλλον ἐκλάμπει καὶ ἐκθαμβεῖται, τοὺς πάντας εὐφραίνων καὶ θάλπων πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν.»⁴³³

In two letters firstly on 10. October and mainly on 15. November 1682, Vlachos expressed his relief and enthusiasm for Dionysios’ return to the Ecumenical Throne for his second term, which took place in July or August of the same year. Notifying that he was informed in Dionysios’ election by his nephew Arsenios Kaloudis from Corfu, the Cretan Archbishop congratulated the Patriarch warmly and informed him that upon hearing the good news, he thanked God and made the event public during Mass in the church of *San Giorgio*, where “the God-fearing Graikoi cheered in joy”. More specifically he wrote: “I, as a high cleric, exclaimed the legitimate fame to the name of the holy Dionysios and I preached, as it is accustomed, the praise of our highly wise Chief Shepherd, under the applause and joy of the pious flock of the Graikoi”. Referring to James’ “voluntary” resignation, the Cretan Archbishop expressed his wish that from then on Dionysios’ patriarchy would not be interrupted by future obstacles, but that “he would govern the scepter of the Church undisturbedly and imperturbably”.

Indicative in this specific correspondence is the inter-ecclesiastical dependency and obedience of the Metropolis of Philadelphia to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, a relationship that was founded, developed, established, maintained and finally collapsed after Gerasimos Vlachos’ primacy. In fact, although the limited number of archival evidence makes the perception of that relationship look partial and therefore provisional, the serious ecclesiastical and religious issues raised by the Cretan Archbishop utterly responded to the general historical conjuncture for the Orthodox Church in the aftermath of the recently completed War of Candia and in the eve of the forthcoming Great Turkish War. The first request raised by Vlachos was the issue of the official ecclesiastical title granted to the Archbishop of Philadelphia, which until then had been the following: “Honorable Exarch of all Lydia”. On 15. November 1682, the Vlachos implored the Patriarch to accept his suggestion for a change of the old title to “Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarch”. In fact, he urged Dionysios to recognize and confirm the relative privilege granted in 1651 by the then Ecumenical Patriarch

⁴³³ *Codex Vlacho*, f. 215.

Joannicius II († c.1660) to the then Archbishop of Philadelphia Athanasios Valerianos (c.1591–1656) and his successors, which was further confirmed by the Venetian authorities.⁴³⁴ What is evident at this case is Vlachos' persistence and concern to ensure the direct connection and dependence of his Archdiocese on the Ecumenical Throne, even at the level of formal address. Fearing a direct or covert subversion of his office by the representatives of the Latin Church in Venice or Rome, the Cretan Archbishop took numerous initiatives so that the Orthodox identity and prestige of the Metropolis would not be harmed or undermined in the future.⁴³⁵ As if he could foresee the aspirations of his successor in the Metropolitan Throne, Matthaios Meletios Typaldos, Vlachos characteristically wrote that his request to Dionysios mainly served his interest to avoid a future "depreciation of the privilege the Great Church had granted to the Metropolis of Philadelphia".

The main reason for Vlachos' justified concern about negative scenarios that would cause fatal consequences on the preservation of the Orthodox identity of the Greek communities in the *Serenissima* in general seems to be the serious reduction of the Orthodox flock, according to his own estimation. Indeed, in the same letter Vlachos informed Dionysios with bitterness and complaint about the rapid and irreversible reduction of the Orthodox in the city of Venice. In his opinion, that unpleasant and dire situation was the result of three main factors, all contemporary to the two interlocutors. The first two factors were related to the continuous and long-term conflicts in the Eastern Mediterranean region, mainly on the aftermath of the Fifth Ottoman-Venetian war in Crete and Dalmatia; the third one dealt with the activity of the Catholic and Protestant missionaries among the Orthodox populations. As he characteristically wrote to Dionysios, the main causes for the decrease of his flock were "the conquest of Greek

⁴³⁴ For Joannicius' II golden bull to Athanasios Valerianos, see Manousakas: *Ανέκδοτα πατριαρχικά γράμματα*, p. 63-69. At this point, it is possible that Gerasimos Vlachos humbly corrected a wrong address by Dionysios in one of his now lost letters to him. Despite the efforts of the Cretan high cleric, his request does not seem to have been fulfilled, since his successors in the Metropolitan Throne continued to be address under the title "Honorable Exarch of all Lydia".

⁴³⁵ It is important to note that the then Catholic Patriarch of Venice Alvise Sagredo (1617–1688) did not interfere in any way in the cases of the Greek Confraternity or the Metropolis of Philadelphia, in contrast to his predecessors and successors in this office. For the intense interventions by Venetian Patriarchs to the election of the Archbishops of Philadelphia during the 17th century, see Stavros D. Grimanis: «Ο Μεθόδιος Μορώνης και οι αιτιάσεις των καθολικών εναντίον των ορθοδόξων της Βενετίας (1677-1679)». In: *Θησαυρίσματα* 43 (2013), p. 298.

cities [mean. by the Ottomans]”, “the closure of the trade routes and the fall of trade in the Mediterranean”, and “the conversion of the Orthodox Greeks” to other Christian confessions due to the intense proselytisms and to other religions through the mass islamizations in the Ottoman-ruled Orthodox communities.⁴³⁶ Nevertheless, the elderly Archbishop reassured Dionysios that he remained committed to his pastoral duty and had not stopped to be in the service of his compatriots by working for their benefit as a careful and responsible high ecclesiastic and as a preacher of the Divine Word. Having as his strongest aspiration the preservation, protection and strengthening of the Orthodox faith, he never ceased to promote through his words the concept of genuine piety, spiritual loyalty and warm devotion to the Orthodox Church.

One last indicative case of Gerasimos Vlachos’ sincere religious loyalty to the Patriarch of Constantinople is detected in his last letter to Dionysios dated 31. May 1683. The main topic of discussion was the recent apostasy of the Orthodox Archbishop of the then Ottoman-ruled Crete, Nikephoros II Skotakis and his departure from the island. Nikephoros was eventually deposed by Patriarch Dionysios, who immediately informed the Metropolis of Philadelphia. Indeed, Vlachos was enraged by Nikephoros’ conceit and arrogance; the latter had defied the Patriarch’s order to visit him in Constantinople and, on the contrary, he fled Crete after usurping the incomes of his diocese. In his letter, Vlachos informed Dionysios in the “apostate’s” latest activity in the island of Zante, where he had found refuge, and where he collected wealth shamelessly acting “not as a high cleric, but as a banker”. In order to confront Nikephoros according to the Patriarch’s will, Vlachos had sent direct orders to the Orthodox ecclesiastical governors of Corfu, Cephalonia and Zante, notifying to them the unpleasant event, along with Nikephoros’ deposition. Moreover, and despite the fact that he was “extremely tormented by arthritis”, he took a series of initiatives and he publicly denounced Nikephoros inside the church of *San Giorgio* as an apostate of the Orthodox

⁴³⁶ «διὰ τε τὰς αἰχμαλωσίας τῶν Γραικῶν πόλεων, διὰ τὴν ἀνωμαλίαν καὶ πτῶσιν τῶν ἐμποριῶν καὶ διὰ τὴν διαστροφὴν εἰς ἐνάντια δόγματα». For the phenomenon of religious-confessional hybridity in the Venetian-ruled territories, see Anastasia Papadia-Lala: «Οἱ Ἕλληνες καὶ ἡ βενετική πραγματικότητα. Ἰδεολογική καὶ κοινωνική συγκρότηση». In: Chryssa Maltezou (ed.): *Ὅψεις τῆς ἱστορίας τοῦ βενετοκρατούμενου ἐλληνισμοῦ: Ἀρχεῖα τεκμήρια*. Ἰδρυμα Ἑλληνικοῦ Πολιτισμοῦ. Athens 1993, p. 177-185; Giorgio Fedalto: “La comunità Greca, la chiesa di Venezia, la chiesa di Roma”. In: Tiepolo & Tonetti (eds.): *I Greci a Venezia*, p. 83-102; Sotiris Koutmanis: «Το τρίτο εἶδος. Θρησκευτική υβριδικότητα καὶ κοινωνική ἀλλαγὴ στὴν ὀρθόδοξη κοινότητα τῆς Βενετίας (τέλη 17^{ου}- ἀρχές 18^{ου} αἰ.)». In: *Θησαυρίσματα* 37 (2007), p. 389-420.

Church and eventually achieved to prevent his forthcoming arrival to Venice. As he stated in his letter, urged by his profound zeal for piety and his sincere obedience to the Patriarchate of Constantinople, he did not limit to the public condemnation of the apostate, but he also praised the name and reputation of Dionysios, by promoting the latter's moral virtue and by urging his flock to faithfully follow the orders of their Patriarch in order to remain eminent and pious members of the Orthodox Church.

All the aforementioned five letters of Gerasimos Vlachos to the Patriarch of Constantinople included yet another common feature; they all dealt with a case of printed ecclesiastical books Dionysios was interested in finding in the European markets. In this context, he maintained a close contact with the Archbishop of Philadelphia, who was also known for his particular affection towards the world of book but also for his erudition as a scholar and as a clergyman. More specifically, from Vlachos' first reference to the matter, dated 29. September 1681, it is revealed that the Patriarch was interested in purchasing some editions all deriving from the French presses and book market: i. the 8-volume Latin edition of the *opera omnia* by the influential French Franciscan teacher and biblical commentator Nicholas of Lyra (c.1270–1349) («*Νικόλαος Λυρικός*»); ii. the 27-volume eighth re-edition of the Latin *Appendix Bibliothecae Sanctorum Patrum* (Paris: 1579), the first collection of the writings of the Church Fathers published in France by the eminent theologian and patristic Marguerin de La Bigne (c.1546–c.1595).⁴³⁷ In his letter Gerasimos Vlachos provided Dionysios with the necessary information on the price of the books and reminded him of the mission expenses and the custom duties between France and Venice. He did not forget to highlight once again his close contact and communication with the publishing houses and bookstores in Venice, who were in fact his informants of the availability and the cost of the two editions. Noteworthy is that the Cretan Archbishop proceeded to a brief praise in honor of the French editors, by stating that “the sages of the Latins interpret the writings of the Greeks in Latin and those of the Latins in Greek”, acknowledging the valuable contribution of European printers and their patrons. According to his words, the “kings of the Latins” contributed to the printing and

⁴³⁷ The monumental edition that interested the Patriarch was the largest re-edition of the work, published in-folio by Philippe Despont in 1677 in Lyon under the title *Maxima Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum et Antiquorum Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum*.

publishing of the works by the Greeks in bilingual Greek-Latin editions and “that is why they are considered by everyone as the reconstructors and restorers of the Greek language”.

Almost a year later, on 10. September 1682 the two high clerics communicated once more in the context of further ecclesiastical books Vlachos was eager to send to his Patriarch. To start with, he had taken the initiative to offer Dionysios an imprint of the famous *Bibliotheca* or *Myriobiblos* by the 9th-century Patriarch of Constantinople Photios I (c.820–893); the book was to be sent as a gift to Constantinople, along with two imprints of his *Thesaurus* and *Harmonia*, with the help of his friend and wealthy merchant, the already mentioned Panos Ierommimon from Ioannina (c.1616–1691), an eminent figure of the Greek Confraternity in Venice.⁴³⁸ The Cretan Archbishop also promised Dionysios that he would soon detect an edition of the famous *Novellae Constitutiones* with the legislative works of the Byzantine Emperors Justinian (482–565), Leo VI the Wise and his brother Alexander III (870–913). Moreover, he composed a list of Greek-Latin editions, guaranteeing for their high quality and textual accuracy and urging the Patriarch to purchase them. Apart from an edition of the Gospel decorated on the outside with gold dust («χρυσοτεύκτοις ψιμύθιοις»), all the other books he suggested included *catenae* from the biblical commentaries of the Greek Church Fathers on Job, the Psalter, the Gospel of Mark and the Gospel of John.

Although the limited recording of the aforementioned books in the letter do not allow the present study to identify them with specific editions, Vlachos was more detailed in the case of a two-volume catena in the Gospel of Matthew, composed by the 11th-century Metropolitan of Heraclea Nikitas of Serres. Vlachos referred to the 1647 edition of the work in Toulouse (*Symbolarum in Matthæum*) edited by the French Jesuit scholar Pierre Poussines (1609–1686) and interpreted by the Belgian Jesuit exegete and fervent editor of patristic literature Balthasar Cordier (1592–1650). It is noteworthy that, although the edition was a product of Jesuit theological and printing activity, this did not prevent the experienced Cretan clergyman from recognizing its value. Indeed, one could easily assume that before ensuring of its value, Vlachos had proceeded to a meticulous examination of the book in order to detect possible signs of deficiencies or errors to the original Greek text, that would derive from the hand of the Jesuit editors. On the

⁴³⁸ Konstantinos Mertziotis: «Τὸ ἐν Βενετία Ἑπειρωτικὸν Ἀρχεῖον». In: *Ἑπειρωτικὰ Χρονικά* 11 (1936), p. 111-135; Kaklamanis: *Διακρούσης*, p. 62-63 note 27.

contrary, he did not hesitate to prevent Dionysios from buying the two-volume *Bibliothecae Graecorum Patrum Auctarium Novissimum*, published in 1672 in Paris by Vlachos' corporate interlocutor François Combefis. Despite the appreciation on the face of the French patrologist which he had expressed twenty years ago, regarding this specific publication the Cretan Archbishop stated that he had examined it carefully as a faithful Orthodox and trained theologian, but had to eventually reject it: "I rejected it as an unworthy and repugnant book". Indeed, as he wrote to the Patriarch, he had realized that the first volume contained orations and treatises against Saint Gregory Palamas, while the second consisted of encomiums, panegyric and mystical speeches in honor of various saints composed by the still controversial in the Orthodox Church late Byzantine philosopher Georgios Gemistos Plethon (c.1355–c.1454).⁴³⁹

The aforementioned cases are indicative of my conclusion that throughout the years he spent in Venice as a teacher and mainly as the Archbishop, Gerasimos Vlachos carefully examined the editions of Christian – mainly Orthodox – works, regardless if they came from his contemporary Greek or non-Greek printing presses. It is noteworthy that on 16. June 1682, he signed a certificate in which he praised the accurate and unerring editions of Orthodox liturgical books by the press of his friend in Venice Nikolaos Glykis. In this brief text, Vlachos did not hesitate to make special reference to the numerous errors and deficiencies detected in the editions of earlier printing houses. Thus, he considered Glykis' corrections and revisions as necessary, confirming "the integrity of the meaning and appropriateness of the Greek language and spelling, because of the negligence done by the previous printing presses, lacking in all the others already printed, which are very defective and full of notable errors".⁴⁴⁰ With a professional eye, that of an experienced philologist and an erudite theologian and clergyman, he could easily decide on the integrity and reliability of those editions, always in close contact and communication with the main representatives of the Venetian bookmarket.

⁴³⁹ The contact between the two scholarly ecclesiastics continued during the next years, as it is revealed from Vlachos' letters on 10. October 1682, 15. November 1682 and 31. May 1683. Following Dionysios' will, he bought and eventually sent him some of the aforementioned books.

⁴⁴⁰ "l'integrità del senso e aggiustezza della lingua e ortografia greca, giachè per trascuratezza delle passate stamperie mancano in tutti gli altri già stampati che sono diffettosissimi e pieni di notabili errori"; see *Codex Vlacho*, f. 181-182; the certificate was cited in Konstantinos Mertzios: «Η οικογένεια τῶν Γλυκέων ἢ Γλυκῆδων». In: *Ἑπειρωτικά Χρονικά* 10 (1935), p. 39-40.

A different case of contact between Gerasimos Vlachos and Dionysios IV is to be found in a long letter dated 10. October 1682, in which the Cretan Archbishop served as a mediator between the Patriarch and an eminent member of the Greek Community in Venice. The subject of the letter was the settlement of an open issue regarding the fortune of the late Archbishop of Cyprus Hilarion Kigalas (1624–1682)⁴⁴¹ and his brother Dimitrios, who had both recently died in Constantinople due to a famine. According to Vlachos' detailed narration of the life of the two brothers, we learn that Dimitrios worked as a physician in Cyprus and Constantinople, where he eventually became the personal doctor of the former Grand Vizier Fazil Ahmed Köprülü, one of the main protagonists in the late phase of the siege of Candia. After the latter's death in 1676, Dimitrios travelled to Moldavia and Wallachia where he offered his service to the local ruler ("Prince Voivode")⁴⁴² and his court, collecting a large fortune until his return and death in Constantinople. For Hilarion, Vlachos claimed that he was forced to leave his office in the Metropolis of Cyprus due to the massive debts of his archdiocese. After travelling and working in various places, he arrived in a province of Wallachia, named Mugdania, where he worked as a teacher for the children of the local prince, and simultaneously he performed his priestly and preaching duties in the local Orthodox church. Leaving Wallachia, he had managed to collect enough money to pay his debt and he headed to Constantinople in order to receive the necessary official license from the Ottoman authorities, the so-called *berat* («μπαράτι» or «βεράτιο») which recognized and validated his office as the legitimate Archbishop of Cyprus; in fact, according to Gerasimos Vlachos, Kigalas was obliged to pay 2.500 Ottoman *kuruş* (*grosi*) for the *berat*.⁴⁴³ In the second part of the letter, the Cretan Archbishop informed Dionysios that

⁴⁴¹ Hilarion Kigalas has already been mentioned in this study, as the first rector of the Cottunian College. According to the numerous testimonies of his contemporaries, he was a vigorous clergyman, a scholar of profound erudition and a prolific author mainly of religious books. At this point it is worth mentioning that an imprint of Hilarion's religious work entitled *Il Panegirico è in lode di Sant' Alipio Stilite* (Venice, 1659) was recorded in the indice of Gerasimos Vlachos' personal library, a proof of the appreciation the latter had for the face of the Cypriot ecclesiastic; for a biographical overview of Hilarion Kigalas see Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 3 (1691–1700 Notices biographiques), p. 318–338.

⁴⁴² This was most likely either the Voivode George Ducas (c.1620–1685), who was three times prince of Moldavia (i. September 1665 – May 1666; ii. November 1668 – 20 August 1672; iii. November 1678 – January 1684) and one time prince of Wallachia (1673–1678), or his successor Șerban Cantacuzino (1634/1640–1688) who was Prince of Wallachia between 1678 and 1688.

⁴⁴³ The testimony contained in Gerasimos Vlachos' letter on the reasons that prompted Hilarion

the two Kigalas had a third brother, the prominent Aristotelian philosopher and academic in Padua Ioannis Kigalas (1622–1687). The latter had been already from 1666 appointed Professor of Philosophy at the University of Padua and was praised by his contemporaries as a man of high virtue, erudition, modesty and religious piety; as Vlachos himself defined him, “one of the most excellent professors of philosophy [...] an admirable man, a worthy Romaïos lord and a true child of our Holy Church”.⁴⁴⁴

As we read in the letter, Ioannis was informed for the death of his brothers by the Megas Oikonomos of the Patriarchate, named Theodotos.⁴⁴⁵ The latter also made a special reference to the Kigalas’ large fortune (more than 15.000 *kuruş*, books, ecclesiastical vestments and secular clothes, furs and other heirlooms) that remained in Constantinople. Nevertheless, Ioannis was forced to address Gerasimos Vlachos imploring for his help, when he was informed that the Megas Oikonomos claimed a considerable share from the fortune of his brothers, with the excuse that he had covered all the expenses for the hospitalization and burial of them and that he had lent Hilarion a large amount of money in order for the latter to pay the *berat*. Ioannis’ confusion reached its peak due to the sudden appearance of an unknown to him person who claimed that he was a relative of the late brothers, without though providing any tangible evidence. After describing the background of this complex legal case, Vlachos proceeded to his solid and logical argumentation in order to prove the absurdity of the claims by the people of Constantinople. In a humble and diplomatic way, the elderly Archbishop indirectly implied that both the Megas Oikonomos and the unknown prospective heir were actually lying in order to usurp part of the Kigalas’ fortune; the latter legally belonged to Ioannis “according to the divine, natural and political law”. In this context, he rejected Theodotos’ claim that Hilarion had borrowed money from him,

to leave his Archdiocese is significant, as it refutes the later claim that Hilarion was forced to abandon his office due to a secret agreement with the Catholic circles in Cyprus on the matter of Divine Baptism, an initiative that supposedly caused a general outrage and outcry of the local Orthodox flock. The aforementioned argument, although it was never confirmed by historical evidence, was supported by the 18th-century archimandrite Kyprianos in 1788 and was later established by the Greek historian Konstantinos Sathas (1842–1914); see Sathas: *Νεοελληνική Φιλολογία*, p. 300. However, based on Vlachos’ narration, it seems that the reasons that urged Hilarion to depart from Cyprus were not related to confessional disputes but to the exorbitant debts of his archdiocese, a common issue in the early modern Orthodox Church.

⁴⁴⁴ Legrand : *Bibliographie*. Vol. 3 (1691–1700 Notices biographiques), p. 315-318.

⁴⁴⁵ The ecclesiastical title of the Oikonomos was used for the manager or treasurer of the financial administration in the Orthodox Church.

since it would seem paradoxical for the Cypriot Archbishop to finish his long journey without acquiring the money that was necessary both for his debt and the impost to the Ottoman authorities. Proving the contradiction of Theodotos' arguments and characterizing them as irrational and reckless, Vlachos urged the Patriarch to examine the specific case very carefully and act with justice and prudence since, as he characteristically wrote, "a snake was hidden in the grass". In this context, the Cretan Archbishop highlighted the networks Ioannis Kigalas had developed both inside the Greek Confraternity but also in the Venetian political environment. In the end of his letter, he informed Dionysios of Ioannis' prestige and influence in the academic environment of Padua and the great reputation he enjoyed in Venice, where he obtained many friends and protectors, with the most important to be the members of the Venetian Senate themselves.⁴⁴⁶ After stating one more that he always recognized Dionysios "as his lord and master", Vlachos humbly urged the Patriarch to act wisely and objectively and to resolve the case of the Kigalas' fortune in a fair and commendable way, so that he himself might be considered as the "pride of our Nation".⁴⁴⁷

In the context of a bequest by a late Cypriot member of the Greek Confraternity, Gerasimos Vlachos contacted during the first months of his primacy in Venice the Patriarch of Jerusalem Dositheos II Notaras (1641–1707), a high ecclesiastic of profound theological erudition and fervent promoter and protector of the Orthodox faith in the Holy Lands.⁴⁴⁸ More specifically, on 10. June 1681, the Cretan Archbishop informed Dositheos that the recently deceased Cypriot nobleman Konstantinos Xenakis had requested in his testament that two icons he obtained, one depicting Jesus Christ and the other the Virgin Mary, to be donated to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, as a memorial service for his soul. Confirming the great value of the icons which he defined as "exquisite works of art, decorated with golden surroundings", Vlachos implored for Dositheos' consent so that he would trust the icons "in the hands of a high cleric, named Christophoros, of an unknown to me province"; the latter, a friend of late Xenakis, had undertaken the duty to bring the icons to Jerusalem. At this point it is noteworthy to

⁴⁴⁶ Indeed, it turns out that the latter had already informed the Venetian bailiff ("*bailo*") in Constantinople, ordering him to personally undertake the specific case and closely observe its progress and its management by the Patriarchate.

⁴⁴⁷ For the original Greek letter, see *Codex Vlachos*, f. 226-231.

⁴⁴⁸ Ioannis Duras: "Ο Δοσίθεος Ἱεροσολύμων καὶ ἡ προσφορά αὐτοῦ εἰς τὰς ῥουμανικὰς χώρας καὶ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν αὐτῶν". PhD diss. National & Kapodistrian University of Athens 1977.

refer to the background of the acquaintance between Gerasimos Vlachos and the otherwise unknown Christophoros, who was actually the Metropolitan of Hopel, a province of Upper Iberia in present-day eastern Georgia. The two ecclesiastics met for the first time in the church of *San Giorgio* immediately after Vlachos' arrival from Corfu on January 1681. Through their discussion, the Cretan Archbishop was informed that Christophoros had been residing in Venice already for four years. After recognizing the Metropolitan's "virtuous nature and his steadfast piety to the Orthodox faith", Vlachos cordially welcomed him "with the honor that befits a high cleric" and they together performed the Divine Mass "according to the Orthodox ritual and the doctrines of our Holy Church".⁴⁴⁹

Nevertheless, the legitimate commissioner of Xenakis' testament, the Cretan nobleman Iakovos Chalkiopoulos, "an admirable rhetor, one of the top of our nation", had expressed his hesitation to hand over the icons to a clergyman who was utterly unknown to the Confraternity. Therefore, he preferred to entrust them to the church of *San Giorgio* for safekeeping until the matter was settled by Patriarch Dositheos. Following his common tactic when he addressed Dionysios, the head of the Orthodox Church in Constantinople, Vlachos did not fail to express clearly, directly and repeatedly his steady, deep and sincere devotion and loyalty as the Archbishop of Philadelphia towards the face and authority of the Patriarch of Jerusalem. In this context he did not forget to mention with humility to Dositheos that he always made special reference to his name during Mass in the church of *San Giorgio*.⁴⁵⁰ Unfortunately, the present archival evidence does not imply a frequent contact and correspondence between Dositheos and Gerasimos Vlachos, neither before nor during the latter's primacy in the Metropolis of Philadelphia. Moreover, their limited correspondence did not address at any point pure theological, confessional or ecclesiastical issues related to the either calm or turbulent

⁴⁴⁹ For the aforementioned information on Christophoros, see *Codex Vlacho*, f. 102-103.

⁴⁵⁰ For the original Greek letter, see *Codex Vlacho*, f. 82-84. The final settlement of the issue took place no less than two years later, during summer of 1683, when a commissioner of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem in Cephalonia, named Dionysios Pitzis, visited the church of *San Giorgio* and received the two icons by the representatives of the Metropolis and the Confraternity; see *Codex Vlacho*, f. 294. It is noteworthy that among the eminent Greeks who signed their transaction with Pitzis was the prominent scholar and clergyman Matthaios Typaldos (1648–1713) from Cephalonia, then director of the Flanginis College and from late March 1685 Vlachos' successor in the Metropolitan Throne of Philadelphia.

coexistence of the Orthodox Christians with the Catholics and the Protestants in the Venetian territories and in the Holy Land.

The final case of interest from Gerasimos Vlachos' primacy in the Metropolis of Philadelphia is considered a brief certificate he composed and handed to a group of Greek noblemen from the island of Patmos on 7. November 1683. The document described the case of Nikephoros Fradelos, an Orthodox monk from the monastery of Saint John the Theologian in Patmos. The latter was sent by the abbot of Saint John to Rome in order to obtain official bulls from "His Holiness the Pope of Rome" Innocent XI (1611–1689) that would secure and ensure the integrity of the monastery and the safety of its monks against the frequent attacks by the corsairs of the Archipelagos. As Vlachos mentioned in his certificate, Fradelos eventually obtained the following official documents from the Vatican: two papal bulls in vellum («βέδρινον χαρτί») composed by Pope Pius II (1405–1464) and Pope Urban VIII (1568–1644), and another one printed in royal paper («εἰς χαρτὶ κάρτα ρεάλις σταμπάδα») by Pope Innocent XI himself;⁴⁵¹ all three bulls included the official condemnations of the three Popes against a possible slavery of Christians. After his successful journey, Fradelos arrived in Venice where he met Gerasimos Vlachos in person and entrusted him the papal bulls he had in his possession. After imploring the Cretan ecclesiastic to keep the documents under his personal jurisdiction and "not to hand them to anyone" until his return, Fradelos departed for an unspecified mission in the already mentioned highly dangerous coasts of North Africa, the so-called Barbary. As one could conclude from Vlachos' narration, Fradelos was eventually lost during his trip, either enslaved or killed, and he was not to be expected anymore. Therefore, the Archbishop came into agreement with the new commissioner of the monastery of Saint John, named Pothitòs Kalogeràs to hand him the papal bulls, in order to serve the practical interests of the Orthodox clergy and laity in Patmos.⁴⁵²

From all the aforementioned cases included in Gerasimos Vlachos' correspondence, one could conclude the latter's strong faith and obedience to the ecclesiastical rules, along with his sincere respect for the contact and relation between the Catholic and Orthodox Church during his time. Indeed, until now numerous

⁴⁵¹ Active and highly polemical, Pope Innocent XI took noteworthy initiatives in order to prepare a Christian confrontation of the Ottoman Empire. For the relations between Innocent XI and the Venetian Republic under the aforementioned circumstances, see Grimanis: «Ο Μεθόδιος Μορώνης», p. 284-5.

⁴⁵² For the original Greek document, see *Codex Vlacho*, f. 314-315.

evidence from his life as a subject of the *Serenissima* and as a man of letters in Candia and Venice have already been interpreted in the context of his flexibility and conciliation on matters of confession. From his correspondence, though, as the head of the Metropolis of Philadelphia, we conclude that the Cretan ecclesiastic remained a pious and faithful follower of the doctrines and teachings of the Orthodox Church. In contradiction to his successor, Meletios Typaldos,⁴⁵³ Vlachos remained reluctant to disturb the relationship of his Metropolis with the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Noteworthy is the fact that, although he always promoted the support and cooperation he had developed with the Venetian authorities and he showed the necessary respect to the Pope, this conciliatory tendency actually served the interests and rights of the Orthodox communities in the city of Venice and the *Stato da Màr*. Therefore, he is presented fully aware of his responsibility as the head of a Metropolis which was both institutionally and geographically between two powerful centers of Christendom, Constantinople and Rome, preferring to maintain a diplomatic attitude of confessional but also political motives. In this context, he wished to remain a pious servant of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, but also an ecclesiastic who would be favored by the Republic and who would maintain typical but peaceable relations with the papal court. To conclude with, one could say that during his primacy Gerasimos Vlachos kept one eye, active and confident, on Constantinople, and the other, careful and examining, on Rome. Nevertheless, in his mind the dominant position was always held by the *Serenissima* and the Greek communities under her jurisdiction, from which he himself originated and which he served in one way or another throughout his life.

⁴⁵³ A scholarly figure of profound and wide education and high administrative skills, Typaldos set as his ambitious political-ecclesiastical goal to gradually bring all the Orthodox communities of the Metropolis of Philadelphia in full communion with the Vatican as a Uniate Church. His controversial aspirations were eventually unsuccessful and Typaldos was deposed due to the general reaction from the Orthodox of Venice and the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the hesitation of the official Venetian authorities; see Vasiliki Bobou-Stamati: «Αναφορά Ἑλλήνων τῆς Βενετίας στὸν οἰκουμενικὸ πατριάρχη Καλλίνικο Β΄ γιὰ τὸν Μελέτιο Τυπάλδο (1700)». In: *Θησαυρίσματα* 15 (1978), p. 99-106; Stathis Birtachas: «Στὰ χνάρια ἐνὸς ὑποψήφιου Βησσαρίωνα. Οἱ θρησκευτικὲς καὶ πολιτικὲς ζυμώσεις στὴν Ρώμη καὶ στὴ Βενετία στὰ χρόνια τοῦ Μελετίου Τυπάλδου». In: *Περὶ Ἱστορίας* 4 (2003), p. 167-181; Vasileios Tsakiris: «Το ἔργο τοῦ Μεθοδίου Ανθρακίτη καὶ τα πολιτικοεκκλησιαστικὰ σχέδια τοῦ Μελετίου Τυπάλδου». In: *Εἰσὶν καὶ Εσπερία* 8 (2008-2012), p. 9-26; Roussopoulos: "Meletios Typaldos".

4.4. *Romaïos, Graïkos, Hellen*: An overview of Gerasimos Vlachos' perception on early modern Greek identity

Concluding this chapter, I will proceed to a special reference to Gerasimos Vlachos' perception of his individual identity and collective conscience. His case is placed in the general discussion on identity and the sense of belonging in the pre-national societies and more specifically in Greek Orthodox communities of the Venetian Republic. Therefore, I will attempt an overall critical assessment of Vlachos' attitude to defend and preserve the Orthodox identity of his compatriots in the Venetian territories. I will examine it in parallel lines with the effort by his contemporary Greeks of the Diaspora to understand and define themselves as individuals and as members of a common group, the so-called "Genos". By the interpretation of the Greek terms *Hellen*, *Romaïos*, *Graïkos* in the Cretan scholar's writings, I aim to detect the cultural and religious dimension of those terms and the level of connection in Vlachos' mind of three Greek traditions, the ancient, the medieval and his contemporary one.

Throughout his treatises, correspondence, speeches and sermons, as well as the multitude of preserved testimonies about his social life and his contacts with institutions and individuals in Candia and Venice, Gerasimos Vlachos is presented to perceive himself, in addition to a descendant of his homeland Crete, also as a member of a wider collective identity, what one could perceive in modern terminology as *Hellenism*. In order to define his identity, he seems to use the very common ethnonyms of his time. In cases when he addressed to non-Greek-speaking interlocutors, he used the dominant term *Graecus*, *-i* (mainly in its Italian version, *Greco-i*). On the contrary, when he addressed his Cretan compatriots and other Greeks, he chose to identify himself and them as *Romaïoi* or *Graïkoi*, and to a lesser extent as *Hellenes*. Indeed, modern scholars on Venetian-Greek studies detected a number of cases of simultaneous use of the terms *Romaïos* and *Graïkos*, and to a lesser degree the term *Hellen*, of course with quantitative imbalances. The preserved primary sources on the early modern Greek scholars and the Greek communities in the Venetian Republic and Latin Europe prove a dominant liquidity and conscious freedom in the alternative use of the three terms by the members of those communities.⁴⁵⁴ Those three terms corresponded relatively equally to the identification of the early modern Greeks of the Diaspora. In fact, the

⁴⁵⁴ Maltezou: *H Βενετία των Ελλήνων*, p. 54.

criteria for selecting each term and its relatively extended use by all social groups in the community as an expression of collective identity could vary, depending on the geographical location, the historical past and present, the level of literacy and education, the religion or confession, but also purely private and personal causes.⁴⁵⁵

Nevertheless, the ethnonyms used by the Greeks of the early modern centuries were directly related and most of the time inextricably linked to a long relevant tradition and coexistence of the terms *Hellen* and *Romaïos*. More specifically, during the Byzantine period the term *Romaïos* was used dominantly for defining the population of the Empire. The latter's political sovereignty and official historians defined and established their polity as Roman since they followed the narrative that the Eastern Roman Empire continued the reign of the ancient Romans. In this context, the Byzantine Emperors acted in favor of protecting the legacy of Constantine the Great, presenting Constantinople as the *Roma Nova* which guarded and preserved the sceptres of ancient Rome. Moreover, they respected and maintained the Roman tradition through their office position of the Emperor, who obtained the official title "King and Emperor of the Romans". As far as the ecclesiastical authority was concerned, the head of the Orthodox Church was titled "Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch".⁴⁵⁶

During the early modern centuries, *Romaïos* continued to be the most common term for the Greek-speaking populations both in the regions ruled by the Sultan and in the territories which were under the flag of Saint Mark. Nevertheless, mainly from the late 15th century and until the 17th century, the term *Hellen* gradually emerged in the contemporary Greek circles, as an aftermath of the corresponding Latin narrative. According to the latter, the contemporary Greek-speaking Christians were descendants of the ancient Hellenes and their civilization. In this context, the term gradually became a synonym of the widely used term *Romaïos*, and was mainly perceived in its cultural parameter by Greek scholars who lived and worked in Latin Europe and in the Venetian

⁴⁵⁵ For the discussion in modern scholarship on the terms *Hellen*, *Graikos* and *Romaïos* as indicative of the identity of the early modern Greeks see Manolis G. Sergis: «Οι όροι Έλλην, Γραικός, Ρωμαίος, Ελλάς, Μακεδονία, Ρωμανία, Αχαΐα και τα παράγωγά τους στο συγγραφικό έργο του Παχώμιου Ρουσάνου». In: *Proceedings of the International Scientific Symposium «Παχώμιος Ρουσάνος. 450 Χρόνια από την κοίμησή του († 1553)»* (2003). Ιερά Μητρόπολις Ζακύνθου και Στροφάδων. Athens 2005, p. 379-397.

⁴⁵⁶ Anthony Kaldellis: *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge UK 2008.

Republic (Nikolaos Sofianos, Antonios Eparchos, Michail Apostolis, Francesco Barozzi, Leonardos Philaras, Ioannis Kottounios, e.t.c.). These scholars, both secular and ecclesiastics, consciously considered their contemporary Greeks as heirs of a past more ancient than the Byzantine one. Identifying themselves as descendants of the ancient Hellenes, they promoted their Hellenic inheritance and considered their culture and language as a crucial feature of their identity. Therefore, they did not hesitate to refer to themselves and his compatriots as *Hellenes*, especially in those cases that they addressed to sovereigns and intellectual circles of Latin Europe. Regarding this conscious or unconscious awareness of their relation with a distant and a closer past and their connection with both the mythological or historical Greek antiquity and with the Byzantine Empire, these early modern Greek scholars concluded to identify themselves as *Romaioi* in the context of their political dependence from the Byzantines, and as *Graikoi*, an ancient name that identified the Greeks before the term *Hellenes*, in the context of their collective ancestry from the classical antiquity.⁴⁵⁷

The common use of the two terms in numerous primary Greek sources from the early modernity consists a tradition, both literal and ideological, in which Gerasimos Vlachos was raised and formed his personal point of view. The preserved sources for his life and work reveal his utter flexibility in the use mostly of the terms *Romaios* and *Graikos* both in Crete and in the city of Venice. To start with, a special reference should be made to the case of his polemical treatise “*Obfuscation of the False Believers*”. Through the pages of his brief *consulta*, the reader comes across excerpts like the following: “Therefore, hold your tongue and control your hand from writing against the Graikoi, who accept and respect the words of the Saints”; [...] “the one who would deceit the Romaioi has not yet been born”; [...] “I would prove to you that the poor Romaioi, with all their

⁴⁵⁷ An indicative example of the common use of the terms *Graikos* and *Romaios* is found in the poem *Lament and Grief of Constantinople* by the Greek bishop of Myra Matthaios (1550–1624):

“Just as it happened to us, the humble Romaioi, / who were enslaved, both young and elderly men, / due to our injustice and vanity / we lost our glory, our scepters and our Reign / [...] Oh blessed Death, now you seem so fine / to come at this hour to us all the Graikoi”.

«Ὡσὸν τὸ πάθαμεν ἐμεῖς οἱ ταπεινοὶ Ῥωμαῖοι / ὅπου ἐσκληρωθήκαμεν καὶ γέροντες καὶ νέοι, / ἀπὸ ταῖς ἀδικίαις μας καὶ τὴν κενοδοξίαν / ἐχάσαμεν τὴν δόξαν μας, σκήπτρα καὶ Βασιλείαν [...] Ὁ θάνατε μακάριε, καλὸς εἶσαι γιὰ τώρα / σ’ ἐμᾶς ὅλους τοὺς Γραικοὺς νὰ ῥθῆς τούτην τὴν ὥρα»;

see Gatsopoulos: «Ματθαῖος Μητροπολίτης Μυρέων», p. 1061, 1064.

torments, study in every method and every language”; [...] “I am Romaïos, pious and warm, but without distinction I worship both the eastern and the western Saints”.⁴⁵⁸ The above cases initially prove that the two terms were the two sides of the same coin, the identity under which Vlachos defined his compatriots. Indeed, they do not seem to present in his thought any central distinction or significant difference. Turning to the interpretation of the main criteria according to which someone could be identified by those terms, mainly the last of the aforementioned citations is indicative. In it, the scholar from Candia used the term *Romaïos* in addition with the adjectives “pious” and “warm”, in order to emphasize the religious-confessional aspect of his identity. In the context of an unofficial confession of faith, he promoted as *Romaïoi* those who were faithful to the Christian tradition and the Orthodox faith as it was established in the Byzantine period.

The aforementioned argument is confirmed through the detection of similar cases of use of the terms *Romaïos* and *Graïkos* in Vlachos’ preserved letters as the Archbishop of Philadelphia. In them he used to refer to the Orthodox Greeks of Dalmatia and Istria, as well as to the Orthodox of the Ottoman-ruled regions, both as *Romaïoi* and *Graïkoi*. In his first letter to the chaplain of Pula Dionysios Mazarakis (16. February 1682), he ordered his interlocutor to correct his mistakes noting that the latter “scandalize the local Romaïoi parishioners of the church of Agios Nikolaos, causing also a scandal among the Latin lords who live there”. Moreover, in the epilogue of this letter he invited Dionysios to create friendly relations with a local nobleman named Marti Lupotina, who he characterized as “the head of the Romaïoi”. In his letter dated 15. May 1682 to the vicar of Šibenik Cyril, Vlachos referred to the initiative by the “Graïkoi Christians” to invite a temporary chaplain for their church. Nevertheless, in the same letter he noted that he was asked by the Orthodox of Šibenik to send them a “Romaïos priest” as a permanent chaplain of their church. In the context of his correspondence with Cyril’s foster son Nikodimos (26. October 1683), he is presented to insist on the conscious use of the term *Romaïos* when referring to the local Greek Orthodox

⁴⁵⁸ «Σκόλασε, τὸ λοιπόν, τὴν γλώσσαν καὶ ἄργησε τὴν χεῖρα νὰ τὴν κινᾷς μὲ γράμματα ἐναντίον τῶν Γραικῶν, ὅπου τοὺς λόγους τῶν ἁγίων ἀποδέχονται καὶ σέβονται»; [...] «δὲν ἐγεννήθηκεν ἐκεῖνος ὅπου θέλει νὰ πλανέσει τοὺς Ρωμαίους»; [...] «ἤθελα δείξει τῆς λογιότητός σου πῶς καὶ οἱ πτωχοὶ Ρωμαῖοι, μ’ ὅλα τοὺς τὰ βάσανα, σπουδάζουν εἰς πᾶσαν μέθοδον καὶ πᾶσαν γλῶσσαν»; [...] «Εγὼ εἶμαι Ρωμαῖος εὐσεβὴς καὶ θερμός, ἀλλὰ ἀδιαφόρως προσκυνῶ καὶ ἀνατολικοὺς καὶ δυτικούς Ἁγίους»; Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 127, 132, 143.

community. Thus, on the occasion of the Catholic Archbishop Callegari's pressures on Nikodimos, Vlachos wrote the following: "Both your holiness [mean. Nikodimos] and the Romaioi performed the jubilee by confessing and receiving the sacrament as the Church of the Romaioi is accustomed to and as our Most Serene Prince commands through his *ducale* that the Romaioi perform their ritual freely without being prevented by anyone". Furthermore, he advised Nikodimos to address to the Count of the city, who "commands us, the Romaioi, as a representative of our Most Serene Prince".

In addition to his contacts with the Greek clergymen of Dalmatia and Istria, this alternation of the two terms is also detected in Vlachos' correspondence with the Ecumenical Patriarch Dionysios IV. In his letter regarding the case of the Kigalas' fortune (8. October 1682), he characterized the Cypriot professor in Venice Ioannis Kigalas as "an admirable man, a worthy Romaioi lord and a true child of our Holy Church". At the same time in his congratulating letters for Dionysios' return to the Ecumenical Throne (10. October and 15. November 1682), he informed the Patriarch that when he announced the latter's election during the Mass in the church of *San Giorgio*, "the God-fearing Graikoi cheered in joy" and "I preached, as it is accustomed, the praise of our most wise Chief Shepherd, under the applause and joy of the pious flock of the Graikoi". It is noteworthy that, although in general the use by the Cretan high cleric of the two terms seems to occur freely and equally, a preference for the term *Romaioi* is still detected, when he wished to emphasize the religious aspect of their compatriots' identity.

The focal point in comprehending and interpreting Vlachos' consciousness on his contemporary Greek's identity is considered to be his quadri-lingual *Thesaurus Encyclopaedicae Basis*. As far as the Greek terms *Hellen* and *Romaioi*, along with their derivatives, the reader of the dictionary detects the following entries in vernacular Greek and their corresponding translations into Latin, Italian and finally ancient Greek.⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁹ For the entries starting from the Greek letter «ε-», see Vlachus: *Thesaurus*, p. 216; for the entries starting from the Greek letter «ρ-», see Vlachus: *Thesaurus*, p. 549. Similar analogies with those of the *Thesaurus* seem to have been followed by Vlachos' prior early modern European lexicographers. More specifically, in his *Corona Pretiosa* (Venice: 1543), Stefano Nicolini da Sabbio translated the Italian term *Greco* as *Græcus* in Latin, *Ἕλληγν* in ancient Greek and *Ρωμαῖος* in vernacular Greek. Girolamo Germano (1568–1632) in his *Vocabolario Italiano e Greco* (Rome: 1622), translated the term *Greco* in vernacular Greek as *Ρωμαῖος*, *Ρωμηός*, *Γραικός*. Finally, Simon Portius in his *Dictionarium Latinum, Graeco-Barbarum, et Literale* – which also included a brief *Dictionariolum* – (Paris: 1635)

Vernacular Greek	Latin	Italian	Ancient Greek
Ἑλληνας	Graecus	Greco	Ἑλλην = Ἀχαιός, Γραικός
Ἑλληνίζω	Graecè loquor	parlar in Greco	Ἑλληνίζω, Ἑλληνίζομαι τὴν γλῶτταν
Ἑλληνικά	Graecè	alla greca	Γραικιστί, Ἑλληνιστί, Ἑλλάδι φωνῇ, Ἑλληνικῶς
Ἑλληνική γλῶσσα	idioma Graecum	lingua Greca	Ἑλλάδος φωνή
Ῥωμαῖος	Graecus	Greco	Ἑλλην, Γραικός, Ῥωμαῖος
Ῥωμαῖκα	Graecè	Grecamente	Ἑλληνιστί, Ἑλληνικῶς
Ῥωμαῖκος	Graecanicus	Grechesco	Ἑλληνικός, Γραικικός
Ῥώμη Νέα	Roma Nova	Roma Nuova	Κωνσταντινούπολις
Ῥώμη	Roma	Roma	Ῥώμη (adj. Παλαιά, Βασιλεύουσα πόλις)
Ῥωμαῖος	Romanus	Romano	Ῥωμαῖος

Interpreting the above table, a first conclusion is that during the early modern centuries the term *Hellen* existed under its ancient Greek meaning, being an indicative feature of the classical past and identifying the one with Greek origin. Furthermore, the Latin term *Graecus* and the Italian *Greco*, along with all their derivatives and versions in the rest of the early modern European languages, were used by non-Greek speakers and appealed equally to both the vulgar Greek terms *Ἑλληνας* and *Ῥωμαῖος*.⁴⁶⁰ It is noteworthy that Vlachos chose not to include in an independent entry the term *Γραικός*. A possible explanation would be that the word itself was of purely ancient Greek origin, although it was still widely used in the early modernity. Perhaps the scholar from Candia decided that it should not be placed in the vernacular vocabulary of his times. Nevertheless, as it is made obvious in the table, the word corresponded to the ancient Greek translation of both the terms *Ἑλληνας* and *Ῥωμαῖος*. Taking into account the dominant use in Latin Europe of the term *Graecus* and in the Italian regions that of *Greco*, one could assume that the ancient Greek term *Graikos* was eventually accepted as one of the two

translated the Latin term *Graecus* as *Γραικός* and *Ἑλλην* in ancient Greek, and as *Ῥωμῖός* or *Ῥωμαῖος* in vernacular Greek; respectively, in his *Dictionariolum* the vernacular Greek term *Ῥωμαῖος* / *Ῥωμῖός* was translated into ancient Greek as *Ἑλλην* or *Γραικός* and in Latin as *Graecus*.

⁴⁶⁰ Antonis Fyrigos: “Accezioni del termine ‘Greco’ nei secoli XVI-XVIII”. In: *Bollettino della Badia Greca di Grottaferrata* 44 (1990), p. 201-216; Anastasia Papadia-Lala: «Οἱ Greci στον ελληνοβενετικό κόσμο (13^{ος}-18^{ος} αι.). Ο λόγος των πολλαπλών εξουσιών». In: Olga Katsiardi-Hering (ed.): *Ἑλλην, Ῥωμηός, Γραικός. Συλλογικοί Προσδιορισμοί και Ταυτότητες, Proceedings of International Scientific Conference, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (19-21 January 2017)*. Ευρασία. Athens 2018, p. 165-180.

established names for the early modern Greeks, as a direct collective statement of a conscious origin from a distant and ancient Greek past. Nevertheless, it is significant that the use of the term did not silence or deactivate the Christian faith as a central feature of the early modern Greeks' identity, since Vlachos used the term *Graikos* also in his correspondence with Patriarch Dionysios.

A key point of the above table is considered the existence in it of two types of the vernacular Greek term *Romaïos*, which were treated and interpreted separately. It becomes obvious that the Cretan scholar perceived and used the word *Romaïos* in order to distinguish and refer to two different groups. The first type responded to the Latin *Romanus* of classical antiquity, the Latin-speaking and pagan citizens of ancient Rome and its Empire; according to the *Thesaurus*, to them Vlachos also added generally all the residents – ancient, medieval and early modern – of the city of Rome until his times. On the contrary, the second type of the term *Romaïos* was directly connected with the Christian Greeks of the medieval and early modern era.⁴⁶¹ Along with its clear dependence as a legacy from the Byzantine tradition, this second type of the term *Romaïos* also contained the feature of origin from the distant ancient Greek past. Indeed, in his dictionary Gerasimos Vlachos attributed the vernacular Greek term *Romaïos* to the Latin *Græcus* and to the ancient Greek *Ἑλλήν* and *Γραικός*.

Putting his theoretical background in practice, Vlachos had proceeded to a similar identification between the terms *Romaïos* and *Hellen* also in his *Triumph Against the Reign of the Turks*, his appeal to Aleksei Mikchailovich in 1657. In the first of the prophecies he cited to persuade the Tsar to declare war against the Sublime Porte, Aleksey was identified under the title “the King of the Romaioi”, an indicative title of the Roman and then of the Byzantine Emperors; the latter were the one that Vlachos had in mind, since he presented the crowned king as the reviver of all the Christians who lived in the territories of the once mighty Eastern Roman Empire. In fact, as the Cretan scholar noted, Aleksey would be crowned “King of the Hellenes, that is the Romaioi”; therefore, also in this case he presented the two terms if not identical, at least

⁴⁶¹ A similar distinction of the two types of *Romaïoi*, the Greek and the Latin, is found in the poem on the War of Candia by Vlachos' contemporary, the already mentioned Cretan poet Marinos Zane Mpounialis (1613–1686); see Maria Vlassopoulou: «Φιλονικία Ρεθύμνου και Χάνδακα και Κρητικός Πόλεμος του Μπουνιαλή: μια ματιά στη διαμόρφωση ταυτότητων στην Κρήτη του 17^{ου} αιώνα». In: *Πεπραγμένα του Η' Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου*. Heraklion 2000, p. 89-91.

synonymous, in an attempt to connect the culturally ancient Greek and political Byzantine past with the present of his contemporary Greeks.

The aforementioned case is of special interest for another reason. It is the unique direct reference by Gerasimos Vlachos to his contemporary open issue of the so-called successor of the Roman Empire. The title of the Emperor was claimed by many Christian sovereigns during the early modern centuries. Following his predecessors, Louis XIV promoted himself during his reign as the successor of the Latin Emperors of Constantinople after the siege of the city in 1204. Leopold I also claimed this title based on the argument that after the Fall of the Byzantine Empire in 1453 the Holy Roman Emperor was its legitimate successor since he was officially crowned by the Pope.⁴⁶² The interest of the research lies to the fact that Gerasimos Vlachos had addressed both Leopold and Louis. Although he proceeded to clear and warm references and praises to their military achievements and their political authority, he avoided to define or imply a possible connection of their reigns with the concept of succession of the Throne of Constantinople. On the contrary, he did not hesitate – or he was prompted – to promote the future crowning of Aleksey inside Constantinople as the new king of the Greeks (Romaioi). At this point, I assume that a pivotal factor that determined Vlachos' choice was the matter of confession. Although he was not by any means reluctant to approach and conciliate the Catholic political and ecclesiastical authorities of Latin Europe, he did not wish to put the fate of the Orthodox world in danger by aspiring a Catholic – Latin Emperor in Constantinople, after the possible fall of the Sultan.⁴⁶³ Therefore, he used the feature of Orthodox faith that defined the Russian Tsar and connected him in a

⁴⁶² For the imperial theme as a central point of the political things of 17th-century Europe and the claim by Christian sovereigns to the title of the Emperor, see Jean-Michel Spieser: "Du Cange and Byzantium". In: Robin Cormack & Elizabeth Jeffreys (eds.): *Through the Looking-Glass. Byzantium through British eyes. Papers from the Twenty-ninth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, King's College, (London: March 1995)*. Ashgate. Aldershot 2000, p. 199-210.

⁴⁶³ The entry in Vlachos' *Thesaurus* on Constantinople from vernacular Greek to Latin, Italian and ancient Greek is the following: «Κωνσταντινούπολις = Constantinopolis = Constantinopoli = Βυζάντιον, Πόλις, Νέα Ρώμη, Βασιλεύουσα τῶν πόλεων»; see Vlachos: *Thesaurus*, p. 360. An interesting detail is the different characterization by the author between the authority of Constantinople and Rome. Although he wished to grant both cities the feature of *caput mundi* («Βασιλεύουσα»), he distinguished Rome as the *Reigning City* («Βασιλεύουσα πόλις») and Constantinople as the *Reigning City of all cities* («Βασιλεύουσα τῶν πόλεων»). In this context, one could assume that Vlachos paid his respect to the Pope and his authority in Latin Europe, but recognized the Ecumenical Patriarch as the highest authority of his Orthodox Christian faith.

way with the religious tradition of the once Byzantine Empire and with the latter's descendants, his contemporary Orthodox Greeks.

This clear distinction in the thought and word of the Cretan scholar of the two types of *Romaioi* as different identities allows the argument that in Vlachos' consciousness the term *Romaïos*, in addition to its political significance as a feature of Byzantine heritage, was also inextricably linked to the Orthodox faith and the spiritual unity of the Christian Greeks under the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. Therefore, we deal with a case of an early modern perception of Christian identity with aspects of a fragmentary but recognizable Greekness, with common references to an ancient Greek and Byzantine heritage. Such terminological distinctions will, indeed, enable the future research to detect in pre-national times aspects of collective identity that directly referred to the Greek Orthodox faith and to the memory of the then lost Byzantine Empire, with the latter being perceived as the historical continuity of the ancient Greek civilization.

The concept of political and spiritual unity among the Greek populations in the early modernity is a wide in-progress discussion of political theory and the history of ideas. More specifically, a subject of systematic research has been the question of whether or not there was an indicative collective identity of early modern Greek societies, both under the Ottoman rule and of the Diaspora, during an unanimously defined pre-national era, when the nation-state was not yet established as a tangible and dominant polity. During that period, the existing collective identities were formed mainly on the basis of narratives related to a common ancestry and history, religion, language and culture. In the case of the Greeks of the Diaspora, this ideological, and after one point socio-political, search of a collective identity found its indicative expression in the Greek term *Genos*.⁴⁶⁴

Deriving from the ancient Greek language and preserved during the medieval period, the term was established and accepted as a means to express the collective identity of all Greeks mainly from the late 15th century onwards.⁴⁶⁵ Under the broad

⁴⁶⁴ For a detailed discussion on the concept of *Genos* and the question of collective identity among the Greeks in the early modern period see Roussopoulos: *Meletios Typaldos*, p. 128-134.

⁴⁶⁵ For a discussion on the concepts of *nation* and *ethnicity* in early modern Europe and the Ottoman Empire see Eric Dursteler: *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. John Hopkins University Press. Baltimore

term *Genos*, the Orthodox (but also the Catholic) Christian Greeks of the early modernity defined a highly unifying element which connected their collective present with the cultural traditions and political principles of the ancient and medieval past. Particularly in the case of the Greek subjects under the dominion of the *Serenissima*, they had officially translated the Greek word *Γένος* with the Italian *Nazione*.⁴⁶⁶ According to the primary sources, the concept of the Greek *Genos* as an association of individuals of Christian faith, Greek language and a perception of a glorious and unbreakable past and heritage was gradually introduced in the public sphere in the 16th and 17th century, only to be established as a dominant concept during the Greek Enlightenment of the 18th century.⁴⁶⁷

2006, p. 10-21.

⁴⁶⁶ Chryssa Maltezou: «Οι Έλληνες μέτοικοι στη Βενετία μετά την Άλωση. Ταυτότητα και εθνική συνείδηση». In: *Θησαυρίσματα* 35 (2005), p. 175-184. See for example the following excerpt from the already mentioned poem by the bishop of Myra Matthaïos:

“Alas! Alas to the nation of the Romaioi! / How they became unholy and despised! / Oh! How much the nation of the Hellenes degenerated / and you got in the middle of numerous perils. / From you all the prudence and wisdom / derived and was spread throughout the world. / And arms and letters and the Theology / came from you, along with great courage; / Grammar, Rhetoric, Poetry and many more, / so many fine subjects and great things; / you found them all and distributed them / in all the kingdoms as with the trumpet. / All the world used to praise you for your wisdom; / now how did you end up enslaved to the Turk?”

«Άλλοίμονον! Άλλοίμονον στὸ Γένος τῶν Ρωμαίων! / Πῶς ἔγινεν ἀνόσιον καὶ καταφρονεμένον! / Ὡ! πῶς ἐκαταστάθηκε τὸ Γένος τῶν Ἑλλήνων / καὶ ἐπεριπλεχθήκετε μέσον πολλῶν κινδύνων. / Ἀπὸ τ' ἐσὰς ἡ φρόνησις καὶ ἡ σοφία ὅλη / ἐβγήκε καὶ ἐξάπλωσε σ' ὅλη τὴν οἰκουμένη. / Καὶ ἄρματα καὶ γράμματα καὶ ἡ Θεολογία / ἀπὸ τ' ἐσὰς ἐφάνηκε καὶ ἡ πολλὴ ἀνδρεία. / Γραμματικὴ, Ρητορικὴ, Ποιητικὴ καὶ ἄλλα, / ὅσα λεπτὰ μαθήματα καὶ πράγματα μεγάλα. / Ὅλα ἐσεῖς τὰ βρήκατε καὶ ἐμοιράσατέ τα/εἰς ὅλα τὰ Βασίλεια ὡσὰν μὲ τὴν τρουμπέτα. / Ὁ κόσμος σὰς ἐπαίνεσεν ὅλοι εἰς τὴν σοφίαν. / τώρα πῶς ἐξεπέσατε στοῦ Τούρκου τὴν σκλαβίαν;»;

see Gatsopoulos: «Ματθαῖος Μητροπολίτης Μυρέων», p. 1062.

⁴⁶⁷ Dimitris Livanios: “The Quest for Hellenism: Religion, Nationalism, and Collective Identities in Greece, 1453–1913”. In: *The Historical Review/La Revue Historique* 3 (2006), p. 33-70. In this context, it is interesting to mention the popular chronicle in vernacular Greek written by an anonymous author known as Pseudo-Dorotheos of Monemvasia and entitled *Historical Book Including Briefly Various and Excellent Histories* (Venice: Andrea Giuliani, 1631). In the introduction of the work, its editor, the scholar from Epirus Apostolos Tzigharas urged in the following way all the Orthodox Greeks to buy his book: “Therefore, I advise all the Greeks and Orthodox Christians (Greeks from the nation, and Orthodox Christians from the faith) to spare a few money.” = «Συμβουλεύω λοιπὸν πάντας τοὺς Ἑλλήνας καὶ ὀρθοδόξους χριστιανοὺς (Ἑλλήνας ἀπὸ τὸ γένος καὶ ὀρθοδόξους χριστιανοὺς ἀπὸ τὴν πίστιν) νὰ μὴ λυπηθοῦν ολίγων ἐξόδων»; see Legrand: *Bibliographie*. Vol. 1 (1601–1644), p. 290-299 [297].

According to the available primary sources, it is interesting to study Gerasimos Vlachos' perception on the *Genos* of the Greeks and its main characteristics. As a member and representative of the *Genos*, the Cretan scholar did not fail to express directly and openly his esteem and respect for the history and the potentials of his compatriots. The first written evidence of his view on the Greek *Genos* is detected in his “*Obfuscation of the False Believers*”, in which he defended its prestige against François Richard's criticism as following: “Against the insults to our *Genos*, there is no need to answer, since our *Genos* is respected and comes from ancient honors and modern praises”, meaning the classical Greek antiquity and the mighty Byzantine Empire. Moreover, he notified the Jesuit missionary of the hardships and decline in which the Greeks had fallen under the Ottoman rule: “our *Genos* [...] endures starvation, thirst, persecutions and sufferings, slavery and intolerable bondage for the love of Christ”.⁴⁶⁸

The most indicative evidence for answering the question of how Gerasimos Vlachos perceived his *Genos* and the connection of his contemporary Greeks with their past and history is detected in his “*Triumph Against the Reign of the Turks*”. In the chapter entitled *On Empires*, a point of great significance is initially his unequivocal statement that “the Christian Empire of the Hellenes succeeded the powerful Helleno-Roman Empire”; in modern terminology this phrase would mean that the Eastern Roman Empire under Constantine I the Great (272-337), with its central characteristic to be the Christian religion, succeeded the once mighty Roman Empire. Indeed, he referred to the once glorious *Helleno-Romans* of the medieval period and placed them as the continuators of the ancient Romans, and at the same time as the descendants and heirs of the ancient Greek antiquity. He then presented the origins of the Byzantine Empire and its main features (Helleno-Roman identity and Christian faith), concluding that those constituted also the identity of the post-Byzantine and his contemporary Greek *Genos*. Perceiving the issue of his contemporary Greek identity as not a matter of doubt, hesitation or uncertainty, Gerasimos Vlachos promoted the Byzantines' strong connection with their direct descendants and heirs, these were the Orthodox Greeks of early modernity, by using the first plural person: “we all declined so much, that now we

⁴⁶⁸ The original Greek text of the aforementioned excerpts is the following: «Εἰς τὰς ὕβρεις τοῦ Γένους δὲν κάμει χρεῖα ἀπόκρισις, διὰ τὸ γένος μας εἶναι τίμιον καὶ ἀπὸ παλαιᾶς τιμῆς καὶ καύχησης νέες»; «τὸ γένος μας [...] ὑπομένει πείναν, δίψαν, διωγμοὺς καὶ πάθη, δουλείαν καὶ ζυγὸν ἀνυποφόρητον διὰ τὴν ἀγάπην τοῦ Χριστοῦ»; see Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 127.

have become inconspicuous". Thus, his aim was firstly to connect the ancient Greek past with the medieval Byzantine history, and then to claim that both of these traditions formed a collective heritage, which determined and defined his contemporary Greek identity.

Vlachos' tendency to strengthen and establish the narrative of the historical continuity of the Greek *Genos* from antiquity to the early modern period is evident in the content and methodology of his two published educational manuals. Through his quadri-lingual *Thesaurus* he made an indirect but still equally conscious reference to the question of the origin and evolution of the Greek language from the ancient dialects to his contemporary vernacular form. Through the combined quotation in the *Harmonia Definitiva* of the Greek sages, pagan and Christian, secular and ecclesiastical, for the definition and interpretation of the world, Vlachos formed the essence and continuity of the Greek spirit. In his narrative, the latter was born and flourished in the distant past of classical antiquity; it was enriched by the Church teachings and piety in the early Christian centuries; and finally it reached its zenith during the time of the Byzantine Empire. His argumentation to connect a prestigious past with a dreary but still existing present was completed in the dedicatory letter of the *Harmonia* to the Holy Roman Emperor Leopold I. As it was presented in the previous chapter, the Cretan scholar firstly emphasized, among others, the glory of classical Greece through its philosophical and intellectual heritage. He then continued by bringing this narrative in contrast with the state of political and cultural decline the early modern were facing. In this context, Gerasimos Vlachos promoted the concept of historical origin in order to create the model of the continuation for the Greek *Genos*, starting from the classical antiquity, passing to the Byzantine civilization and finally reaching his contemporary early modernity.

5. A reader of faith, a seeker of knowledge: Approaching interconfessionality in Gerasimos Vlachos' library

5.1. Introduction

The task of reconstructing a lost early modern library presents from the outset a reasonable amount of theoretical difficulties and practical obstacles. The reasons are numerous and vary; from the lack of a sufficient number of relative testimonies on the accumulation and fate of the library, the long period of time between modern research and the time the library operated, to the eventual total dispersion of the whole corpus of those books.⁴⁶⁹ In addition, the present research takes into account the fragmentation or even the silence of the primary sources, a catalytic factor for the phenomenon of private collections of books by intellectuals within the space-time limits examined. Nevertheless, during the last decades largely significant steps and initiatives have been taken by modern scholarship, in an attempt to inaugurate a systematic and meticulous scientific approach on the field of pre-modern private libraries (large, medium and small). Such initiatives have already highlighted the first important findings, with the discovery, study, interpretation and presentation of important libraries from the medieval and early modern period.⁴⁷⁰

Booklists or lists of books invite the researchers of the early modern studies to mentally reconstitute with their imagination the bookshelves of their subject, so that “they shall walk among the libraries of the dead”. The available bibliography informs us that filed away in archives, several hundreds of these book lists have survived to this day. Few of them were commented and published, with the majority remaining unnoticed. Although historians and bibliographers have certainly recognized the

⁴⁶⁹ Anna Giulia Cavagna: “Loss and Meaning. Lost Books, Bibliographic Description and Significance in a Sixteenth Century Italian Private Library”. In: Flavia Bruni, Andrew Pettegree (eds.): *Lost Books. Reconstructing the Print World of Pre-Industrial Europe*. Brill. Leiden, Boston 2016, p. 347-361.

⁴⁷⁰ Urs B. Leu, Raffael Keller, Sandra Weidmann, *Conrad Gessner's Private Library*. Brill. Leiden, Boston 2008; Gina Dahl: *Book Collections of Clerics in Norway, 1650-1750*. Brill. Leiden, Boston 2010; Daniele Danesi: *Cento anni di libri: la biblioteca di Bellisario Bulgarini e della sua famiglia, circa 1560-1660*. Pacini Editore e Regione Toscana. Pisa 2014.

importance of books as material objects and certain personal collections of distinguished individuals have been closely studied, the corpus of these primary sources has not yet been more systematically employed.⁴⁷¹ This bibliographic heritage, both at the level of Latin and Greek scholarship, offers a trustworthy scientific model of thought and research, through which I will attempt to visualize the content of the now lost extensive library Gerasimos Vlachos held firstly in Candia, then in Venice and Corfu. In this approach the main guide will be a relative primary source, the preserved booklist in which the elderly Cretan Archbishop recorded the content of his library on September 1683 (*“Indice della libraria monsignor Gerassimo Vlaco”*), an item of special interest and importance since it portrays Vlachos’ particular care of his personal readings.

In order to interpret the phenomenon of Greek private libraries in the 17th century, we should firstly refer to the corresponding tendency in 16th-century Italy. Influenced by the dominant spirit of the early and late Renaissance, early modern Italian noblemen, ecclesiastics, scholars and artists tended to create and maintain their personal collections of books, both in manuscript and printed form. This trend of bibliophilia and book collection became gradually an equally popular phenomenon, at least in qualitative terms, in the Greek territories of the Eastern Mediterranean region. The political and cultural dependence of areas such as the Ionian Islands, part of the Peloponnese, Crete and Cyprus with the Italian world, more specifically with the Republic of Venice, was the central factor for the transfer and establishment, among others, of the custom of collecting books. Among the communities of the so-called Venetian Arc, Greek noblemen, ecclesiastics, both Catholic and Orthodox, artists, lawyers, physicians and merchants formed their private libraries in the context of their general social status and the cultural conditions of their time. Modern scholars managed to detect and present a number of such cases, saved in various primary sources of early modern Greek history and culture (partial preservation of the genuine books, notary records, contracts, wills, inventories and correspondence). With their size ranging from small – almost negligible – to large, numbering hundreds of manuscript and printed items, these Greek book collections vividly reflect the highly intellectual and socio-economic status of the local nobilities and scholarship in the urban centers of the late Venetian territories in Eastern

⁴⁷¹ Malcolm Walsby, Natasha Constantinidou (eds.): *Documenting the Early Modern Book World Inventories and Catalogues in Manuscript and Print*. Brill. Leiden, Boston 2013.

Mediterranean. Although this particular pursuit of the Greeks extended during the 17th century in a largely wide space from Venice to Constantinople, from Rome to Jerusalem and from Alexandria to Bucharest, in the present study I am dealing with the phenomenon of book collecting in late Venetian Crete as it is portrayed in the case of Gerasimos Vlachos and his once praised library.

Modern scholarship provides us with testimonies, sometimes concise and sometimes detailed, about the habit by the Cretans of the higher social classes to collect books, codices along with printed editions, exploiting the open passage of information and knowledge between their island and the metropolis of Venice. More specifically, favorable conditions such as the regular transfer and trade of books from the main Italian printing centers (Venice, Padua, Rome, Florence, Bologna) and from the rest of Latin Europe, provided the literate and bibliophile local population with modern and earlier editions of popular readings from the field of literature, theology, philosophy, education, politics and science. At the same time, those local libraries were enriched and completed with manuscript items, due to the continuous and prevalent production and use of codices (Greek, Latin, Italian, e.t.c.), a profession extremely widespread in Crete already from the medieval times and during its late Venetian dominion. In this context, I start with the brief presentation of some 16th- and 17th-century private libraries on the island, mainly in the city of Candia, the formation of which is considered an important intellectual background for Vlachos to set up his own collection of readings. First presented is the content of the two local monastic libraries, the one belonging to the medieval Catholic monastery of Saint Francis, and the second to the Orthodox monastery of Valsamonero; both contained mainly ecclesiastical and liturgical books, works on canon law and theology. Furthermore, modern scholarship detected the presence of at least eight collections of Greek codices in Crete between the end of the 15th and the beginning of the 17th century. In the same period belonged the following ten collections of books and libraries, according to the relative archival records: i. a collection of 48 ecclesiastical and liturgical books held by the priest Manuel Damoros (1515); ii. the outstanding and multi-faceted library of the Kallergis family, consisting of almost 600 printed books and 57 codices and portraying the humanistic Renaissance identity of its main owner, the prominent intellectual Antionios Kallergis (1521–1555); iii. a collection of 10 manuscript and printed books of classical and early Renaissance

works held by the Veneto-Cretan nobleman Nicolò Bon (1549); iv. a collection of 23 mainly religious books held by the priest Michael Armakola (1566); v. a collection of medical but also controversial (“heretical”) Protestant books by the young physician Manousos Maràs (second half of the 16th cent.); vi. the library of more than a hundred books held by the eminent clergyman and scholar Maximos Margounios (1602); vii. the large library of the illustrious luminary of late Venetian-Cretan culture, the intellectual and prolific poet and historian Andreas Kornaros, whose readings were directly influenced by the cultural, political and religious conditions of the late-16th-century Crete in the general context of the Catholic Reformation (1611); viii. a collection of 117 printed books of legal context held by the lawyer Zuan Maria Bevardo (1638); ix. a smaller collection of books on law by another lawyer, Georgios Korinthios (1645); x. a collection of medical books held by the “dottore fisico” Zuanne Roditi (1647).⁴⁷²

⁴⁷² Already from the middle of the 20th century, the archival research in various Italian cities, mainly in Venice, discovered a noteworthy and valuable corpus of information and testimonies on private libraries in 16th- and 17th-century Candia. For the numerous cases of private and monastic libraries in early modern Crete, see Giorgio Hoffman: “La biblioteca scientifica del monastero di S. Francesco di Candia nel Medioevo”. In: *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 8 (1942), p. 317-360; Stergios Spanakis: «Η διαθήκη του Αντρέα Τζάκομο Κορνάρου (1611)». In: *Κρητικά Χρονικά* 9 (1955), p. 379-478; Deno John Geanakoplos: “The library of the Cretan humanist – bishop Maximos Margounios, especially his collection on latin books bequeathed to Mount Athos”. In: *Πεπραγμένα του Γ’ Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου*. Vol. 3. Athens 1968, p. 75-91; Christos G. Patrinelis: «Κρήτες συλλέκται χειρογράφων κατὰ τοὺς χρόνους τῆς Ἀναγεννήσεως». In: *Πεπραγμένα του Γ’ Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου*. Vol. 3. Athens 1968, p. 202-6; Panagiotakis: «Ἐρευναί», p. 54-55; Elpidio Mioni: “La biblioteca greca di Marco Musuro”. In: *Archivio Veneto* 93 (1971), p. 5-28; Herbert Hunger: “Markos Bathas, ein griechischer Maler des Cinquecento in Venedig”. In: *Festschrift für Otto Demus zum 70. Geburtstag*. Vienna 1972, p. 131-137; Nikolaos Tomadakis: «Η βιβλιοθήκη της Μονῆς Θεοτόκου Κερά-Καβαλαρέας μεταξύ 1555 και 1580». In: *Κρητολογία* 2 (January – June 1976), p. 76-80; Paul Lawrence Rose: “A Venetian Patron and Mathematician of the Sixteenth Century: Francesco Barozzi (1537–1604)”. In: *Studi Veneziani*, n.s. 1 (1977), p. 119–78; Stefanos Kaklamanis: «Το επιστολάριο του Κρητικού λογίου Αντωνίου Καλλέργη». In: *Πεπραγμένα του Ε’ Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου*. Vol. 2. Εταιρία Κρητικών Ιστορικών Μελετών. Heraklion 1985, p. 150-163; Giannis Mavromatis: «Η βιβλιοθήκη και η κινητή περιουσία της κρητικής μονῆς Βαρσαμονέρου (1644)». In: *Θησαυρίσματα* 20 (1990), p. 458-499; Annaclara Cataldi Palau: “La biblioteca di Marco Mamuna”. In: Guglielmo Cavallo, Giuseppe De Gregorio, Marilena Maniacci (eds.): *Scritture, libri e testi nelle aree provinciali di Bisanzio. Atti del Seminario di Erice (18-25 settembre 1988)*. Spoleto, 1991, p. 521-576; Paschalis M. Kitromilidis: “The making of a lawyer: humanism and legal syncretism in Venetian Crete”. In: *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 17 (1993), p. 57-82; Minos Hesychakis: “Humanist’s libraries in Candia”. In: *Πεπραγμένα του Η’ Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου*. Vol. B1. Εταιρία Κρητικών Ιστορικών Μελετών. Heraklion 2000, p. 233-242; Christos Zampakolas: «Η βιβλιοθήκη του κρητικού λογίου Μάξιμου Μαργούνιου μέσα από την απογραφή της κινητής του περιουσίας». In: *Θησαυρίσματα* 41/42 (2011/2012), p. 311-327; Kaklamanis: *Κρητική ποίηση*, p. 225-226.

Gerasimos Vlachos belonged to this scholarly circle, with his library to be considered as one of the last great Cretan libraries of his century.

In this context, the present chapter aims to develop an approach to Vlachos' identity as an erudite reader of Greek and Latin literature related mainly to the fields of theology, both Orthodox and Catholic, philosophy and philology. The structure of the chapter is based on the preserved catalogue of his library, and on the interpretation of its content, these are the works that were recorded in manuscript and printed form, in Greek, Latin and Italian language. Therefore, I will first proceed to a historical overview of the accumulation and dispersion of Vlachos' personal library and critically approach relevant issues of the time, the place and the way the Cretan scholar collected his books. After this introductory part, I will proceed to an indicative, nevertheless brief, presentation of the books themselves, organized into five main categories, always following Vlachos' thinking and classification: theological, philosophical, philological – educational, miscellaneous and personal compositions. The chapter will be completed with the development of my conclusions on the main features of the library. Did it portray the readings of an ecclesiastic, a philosopher, a teacher, a bibliophile collector, or just a peculiar seeker of knowledge? Could we perceive and define the books that were recorded in the *indice* as the spiritual, sacred and secular, background of Gerasimos Vlachos, and if yes, to what extent and to which period of his life? In the end, are we dealing with an admirer of the Latin European literature and the Catholic literal tradition, with a conservative and intransigent representative of the Orthodox clergy, or maybe with a situation somewhere in the middle?

5.2. The accumulation and the dispersion of the library

In order to approach this now totally scattered and lost early modern library, we need to start with a series of questions on its accumulation. To the central matter of how this specific library was put together, further issues are raised: in which degree did Gerasimos Vlachos take advantage of the networks of book distribution both in Venice and in his homeland? Did he bought some of his books in bookstores of Candia and, if so, what percentage did the latter cover compared to the overall corpus of the library? If he did not acquire his books in his homeland, did he order them from Venice or elsewhere? What role did his intellectual and social circle of Crete and Venice play in

the formation and enrichment of his library? Did parts of this library come into his possession as a result of inheritance? Did he acquire the majority of his books after his arrival to Venice in 1656? What would be the prices of those books and how did the Cretan scholar manage to cover the expenses?

Although the preserved information on Vlachos' library remain limited and scattered, we are able to answer, at least to a degree, to some of the aforementioned questions, following the relative primary archival sources. Nevertheless, most of the issues on the accumulation and course of the library still remain unclear or unanswered due to the absence or the non detection of the necessary testimonies and records. However, one could be certain that the main core of the library took place during the time Gerasimos Vlachos resided in Candia, that is the first half of the 17th century. At this point one should take into account that the Cretan scholar may have inherited a part of his library from his parents, who, as it was presented in his biography, had probably both passed away before he turned forty. Nevertheless, it is certain that a part of his library, unknown of which size, was inherited to him by his already mentioned uncle Tzòrtzis. According to the latter's testament in 1643, he bequeathed all of his books to his nephew, so that he would use them as he wished.⁴⁷³ Assuming that Gerasimos Vlachos purchased the majority of his books, a library of an extensive size, as the one he later recorded in his *indice*, could not have been formed in a short term. Therefore, a possible assumption that the Cretan scholar formed his library after his arrival in Venice, that is at the age of fifty, already starts to seem odd and lacking plausibility. Accepting the fact that his books functioned as necessary means to his various professions, it means that the majority of them stood by his side from the early years of his career as

⁴⁷³ The particular reference of Tzòrtzis Vlachos to his books and their bequest to his nephew Gerasimos is firstly detected in the text of his two-part will, that he composed on 6. May 1643: "I leave all my books to the aforementioned father Gerasimos Vlachos, my nephew" (*«Αφήνω τοῦ ἄνωθεν πατέρα Γεράσιμου Βλάχου τοῦ ἀνηψιοῦ μου ὅλα μου τὰ λήμπρα»*); A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Candia), Busta 68 (Giacomo Cortesan), Libro 2 (1631–1648), ff. 500^v. In the supplement of the next day, Tzòrtzis became even more detailed: "As above, I leave my books to the aforementioned father Vlachos, my nephew, in order for him to have them in his possession and use them as he wishes, as if he was their owner" (*«τὰ λήμπρα ὅπου ὡς ἄνωθεν ἀφήνω του ἄνω εἰρημένου πατέρα Βλάχου τοῦ ἀνηψιοῦ μου, νὰ τὰ ἔχει εἰς τὴν ἐξουσίαν του, νὰ τὰ ντισπονέρει (= 'disporre' – 'disponere') ὡσὰν θέλει, ὡσὰν νὰ 'ναι κύρης»*); A.S.V., Notarile (Notai di Candia), Busta 68 (Giacomo Cortesan), Libro 2 (1631–1648), ff. 504^r. Tzòrtzis repeated his wish in all his later versions and supplements.

an erudite professor of sciences, an eminent theologian and a fervent clergyman and preacher.

As no further information or testimonies have been found so far about the accumulation of the library, one could assume that in addition to any books he inherited by his relatives, he certainly enriched his collection during the first fifty years of his life in the context of his social, professional and intellectual networks in Candia, with Greek and Italian scholarly figures of the local community and of Venice. Particularly for his large collection of seventy-nine Greek codices, the present study promotes Crete as the most possible place of origin, production or purchase. Indeed, a landmark of manuscript culture, with a multitude of copying centers mostly based within local monasteries, the Venetian Crete still had not lost her prestige as a fountain of manuscript production and distribution during the first half of the 17th century. Moreover, the local noblemen and clerics of the urban centers were in open and direct communication with the bookmarket of Venice and other European cities through the numerous merchants that arrived in the island.⁴⁷⁴ Therefore, it would seem strange for a versatile and broad-minded scholar as him, not to be in close contact with his contemporary world of book, both manuscript and printed. More specifically, following the example of his compatriots, Vlachos would have purchased numerous of his books from the representatives in Candia of the major printing houses of Venice and other European publishing centers; the latter were permanently settled in the island already from the late 16th century, distributing a multitude of editions to the local population in order to satisfy their intellectual and educational needs.⁴⁷⁵ To the above one could also assume that Vlachos would certainly have ordered books directly from the fountain of publishing production, the metropolis of Venice, by charging members of his circle (relatives, friends, disciples) to purchase and send them to him.

In addition to ordering them from Candia, we can proceed to the hypothesis that the Cretan scholar might have bought some of his books during his two visits to Venice

⁴⁷⁴ Giannis Mavromatis: «Μοναστηριακές και Εκκλησιαστικές βιβλιοθήκες στην Κρήτη του 16^{ου} και 17^{ου} αιώνα». In: Stefanos Kaklamanis, Ioannis Vassis, Marina Loukaki (eds.): *Παιδεία και Πολιτισμός στην Κρήτη. Βυζάντιο –Βενετοκρατία*. Πανεπιστημιακές Εκδόσεις Κρήτης. Heraklion 2008, p. 277-287; Stefanos Kaklamanis: «Ειδήσεις για τη διακίνηση του έντυπου δυτικού βιβλίου στον βενετοκρατούμενο Χάνδακα (μέσα ΙΣΤ' αιώνα)». In: *Κρητικά Χρονικά* 26 (1986), p. 152-176.

⁴⁷⁵ Kaklamanis: «Ειδήσεις», p. 166.

in the first half of the 1650s in the context of promoting his candidacy as a teacher in the School of the Greek Community; a man of letters like him definitely would not have missed the opportunity to acquire readings of his interest, to which he did not have access in besieged Candia. In fact, in the introduction of his “*Obfuscation of the False Believers*”, the earliest testimony of his library is detected, offered by the Cretan scholar himself: “I became deprived of my books, as I have long sent my library of a thousand-name content in glorious Venice for safety [...] And I am sorry for not having my books here”.⁴⁷⁶ These excerpts clarify that, before his departure from Candia, Gerasimos Vlachos did obtain a library, which was neither minor nor trivial; the adjective «χιλιώνυμος» implied indeed an extensive and vast corpus of books. During the time the elderly clergyman resided in Corfu, he was visited in 1676 by two travel writers, the French scholar Jacob Spon (1647–1685) and the English prelate George Wheler (1651–1724); noteworthy is that Spon was of Calvinist German origins and a modest defender of Protestantism, while Wheler was an official Anglican clergyman. Spon and Wheler visited Corfu in the context of their travel to Dalmatia, the Greek peninsula, Constantinople and Asia Minor in order to gain first-hand experience of the local antiquities. On their return to their homelands, they both published their travelogues. In the part dealing with Corfu, they referred in detail to their meeting with Vlachos and his nephew Arsenios Kaloudis at the monastery of Panaghia Paleopolis. Among others, they noted that they saw and admired the Cretan scholar’s rich library, famous for its ancient codices:

“Hierassimo Vlachi, Abbot of Paleopolis, is also a Learned man, who retired hither from Candia, after it was surrendered to the Turks. He hath a Study of a great many M. SS; amongst which are twenty, never yet printed: as a Commentary of Origen upon the Gospel of Saint John, Saint Augustin de Trinitate translated out of Latin into Greek – one of which I bought afterwards at Athens among other manuscripts – and the Sermons of Ephrem, an ancient monk. He hath printed a Dictionary Tetraglot, Ancient and Vulgar Greek, Latin and Italian; as also a Systeme of Philosophy. He hath a newpew, named Arsenio Calluti, who is also Learned in Latin, Greek and Divinity, and is esteemed a good Preacher. He studied at Padua, and is now first Pappa of the Church Panthagii, or All-Saints in Palaipoli. Among his books he showed us a Manuscript of Saint John Damascen, never yet printed as I know of, and is a kind of Epitome of all his Works. And another, being a commentary of Ptocho-Prodromus on the Hymns of the Greek Church.”⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷⁶ «ἀπεστερημένος ἀπὸ τὰ βιβλία μου κατεστάθην, τὴν χιλιώνυμόν μου βιβλιοθήκην εἰς φύλαξιν καὶ διατήρησιν εἰς ταῖς κλειναῖς Ἑνετίας πρὸ καιροῦ ἀποστείλας [...] Καί λυποῦμαι πῶς ἐδῶ δὲν ἔχω τὰ βιβλία μου»; see Kaklamanis: «Γεράσιμος Βλάχος», p. 123, 132.

⁴⁷⁷ George Wheler: *A Journey into Greece, by George Wheler Esq; in Company of Dr Spon of Lyons. In Six Books*. Book 1. William Cademan, Robert Kettlewell & Awnsham Churchill. London 1682, p. 31. Jacob Spon referred to his meeting with Gerasimos Vlachos in Jacob

Lastly, during the final years of his life in Venice as the Archbishop of Philadelphia, Vlachos would have found an opportunity to complete his collection of books with modern editions.

In order to strengthen the argument that the library was created, if not in its whole, in its majority, in Candia, I proceed to an overall evaluation of Vlachos' financial condition and its fluctuations during his life. From his already mentioned requests to the Venetian Senate in 1656 and 1662, it becomes obvious that until the outbreak of the War of Candia, the Cretan scholar enjoyed a robust financial condition. Therefore, it would seem reasonable for a rich bibliophile to allow himself some often and wide purchases of books either in his hometown or ordered from abroad. On the contrary, the Ottoman–Venetian war and Vlachos' forced flee to Venice as a refugee led to his economical disaster, which was so complete that he was unable to meet even his basic needs. Moreover, the archive sources inform us that the elderly clergyman remained in the similar conditions of poverty during his voluntary isolation in the monastery of Panaghia Paleopolis in Corfu. Thus, it would be inconceivable for a prudent clergyman like himself to waste his already limited financial resources to buying books, regardless his indisputable love towards reading and knowledge. Of course, the aforementioned hypotheses remain to be confirmed or refuted by further research into archival primary sources or by the detection of relative evidence and testimonies.

Vlachos had decided that his work would be the creation of a library at the service of men of science and culture. For this reason, he wished the latter to be not just an admirable exhibit and an example of ingenuity of yet another scholar of the time. Taking into consideration the sad fate that waited earlier libraries owned by eminent Greek scholars of the *Serenissima* (Gabriel Seviros, Maximos Margounios, Thomàs Flanginis) with their partial or total sale or dispersion,⁴⁷⁸ Vlachos expressed his strong

Spon: *Voyage d'Italie, de Dalmatie, de Grece, et du Levant, fait és années 1675. et 1676.* Vol. 1. Chez Antoine Cellier le fils. Lyon 1678, p. 128.

⁴⁷⁸ Unfortunately, none of the libraries owned by eminent Greek intellectuals in Venice survives intact to our days. Although the available information on the content of those libraries, along with the testimonies on their fate that followed their owners' death, remain extremely limited, modern scholars have started to detect and combine the scattered evidence in order to create if not a lost world at least an approach to it. On cases of private libraries owned by Greeks in Venice see Aristidis Stergellis: «Η διαθήκη του Γαβριήλ Σεβήρου, 1616, και η ρύθμιση των χρεών του, 1617-1647». In: *Θησαυρίσματα* 6 (1969), p. 182-200; Susan Pinto

concern on the future of his own library in his will, which he composed on 20. December 1683. According to his final wish, his library was to be inherited almost to its whole to the Greek Confraternity of Venice and the Metropolis of Philadelphia, on the condition that the heirs would appoint one or more librarians for its correct function and security. The latter would take care of the books and would be responsible for lending them to the teachers and intellectuals, not more than one each time and not more than a month. The elderly scholar bitterly noted that he put a restriction of not lending his books to young students, since they had the tendency to destroy them. The future librarian was also required to keep a special register, in which the visitors of the library would sign and in which the number and the position of the book would be recorded.⁴⁷⁹ By donating his books to the Greek community of Venice, the Cretan Archbishop aimed to contribute to the development of a Greek education of high standards and the acquirement of specialized knowledge, mostly theological, from the future Greek intellectuals and ecclesiastics, thereby proving his genuine interest in the cultural rise and spiritual awakening of his compatriots.

Despite the fact that Gerasimos Vlachos bequeathed his library to the Greek Confraternity to form a strong foundation for the creation of a fountain of knowledge, intellectualism and research, his vision soon began to decay. Regardless how rich and famous it was while its owner was alive, the library eventually experienced a very

Madigan: "Gabriel Severos' private library". In: *Studi Veneziani* XX (1990), p. 253-271; Agamemnon Tselikas: «Λείψανα της βιβλιοθήκης του μητροπολίτου Φιλαδελφείας Γαβριήλ Σεβήρου στο σιναϊτικό μετόχι του Καΐρου». In: *Θησαυρίσματα* 34 (2004), p. 473-481; Eirini Papadaki: «Η απογραφή των βιβλίων του Μανόλη Γλυζούνη (Βενετία 1597): σημειώσεις για την παραγωγή και το εμπόριο του ελληνικού εντύπου στα τέλη του 16^{ου} αιώνα». In: Triantafyllos E. Sklavenitis and Konstantinos P. Staikos (eds.): *To Έντυπο Ελληνικό Βιβλίο. 15^{ος}-19^{ος} Αιώνας, Πεπραγμένα Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου, (Delphi 16-20 May 2001)*. Athens 2004, p. 117-128; Christina Papakosta: «Βιβλιοθήκες Ελλήνων στη Βενετία του 17^{ου} αιώνα». In: Maltezos, Schreiner, Losacco (eds.): *Φιλαναγνώστης*, p. 285-298.

⁴⁷⁹ Mertziotis: «Διαθήκη Βλάχου», p. 645. The original Italian text is the following:

“Lasso alla veneranda chiesa sudetta di San Zorzi di Greci tutta la mia libreria per honorevolezza della nostra Nazione, con questa conditione però che li medesimi signori fratelli metessero in luogo appartato la medesima libreria, dovendo creare un bibliotecario, o più, come gli parerà, per haver la cura di detti libri con autorità di poter imprestar di essi libri, ma a maestri e persone dotte, e maturi, ma non mai più libri ma un solo, et un mese tantum; e dopo, se dimandarà dargli un altro per un solo mese, e non più, ut supra, dovendo tenir il bibliotecario un libro, a posta per far cauzione, ognuno, che leva qualche libro il tomo in quello, et il numero, perchè penso di far l'indice chiaro, ma non imprestino libri a scolari perche li rovinano.”

A.E.I.B., Ε'. Οικονομική διαχείριση, 1. Διαθήκες, κληροδοτήματα, διαχείριση, δωρεές, Κατάστιχο 8, ff. 89^v.

unhappy fate. The beginning of the end occurred on 2. September 1685, when the Confraternity decided to place the library in the residence of the next Archbishop of Philadelphia, Meletios Typaldos, who would be responsible for it. Until the early 18th century, Vlachos' library still existed, according to reliable testimonies of the time. As an early evidence of the preservation and accessibility of the library is considered the reference on August 1698 by the French Benedictine monk, astute scholar and editor of the writings of the Church Fathers, Bernard de Montfaucon (1655–1741). The latter visited Typaldos and had the chance to examine the Greek codices included in the library.⁴⁸⁰ In the first years of the 18th century, the Dalmatian Benedictine scholar Anselmo Banduri (1671–1743) copied for the French historian and theologian Michel Le Quien (1661–1733) a codex from Vlachos' collection, containing the works of John of Damascus.⁴⁸¹ The latest testimony on the library as a whole derives from the already mentioned controversial Catholic Greek scholar Panagiotis Sinopeus (c.1670–1736), who during the years 1703–1710 resided in Venice and was under the protection of the also pro-Catholic Meletios Typaldos. In this context, he had the opportunity to see the library himself and study Vlachos' codices, printed books and his own writings; as it was presented in the end of Vlachos' biography, Panagiotis recollected that period of his life in his letter to the prelate Albertine dated 2. May 1723, claiming that “noone knows them [mean. Vlachos' works] better than me, since I have already read and examined them”.⁴⁸²

The first evidence on the dispersion of Vlachos' library came indeed very late. On 5. June 1724, forty years after the death of the Cretan scholar, a list of his remaining

⁴⁸⁰ Bernard de Montfaucon: *Diarium Italicum Sive Monumentorum Veterum, Bibliothecarum Musæorum, &c. Notitiæ Singulares in Itinerario Italico Collectae*. Apud J. Anisson. Paris 1702, p. 46-47

⁴⁸¹ In 1712 in Paris Le Quien proceeded to the fundamental two-volume edition of John's of Damascus complete works (*Sancti patris nostri Joannis Damasceni, monachi, et presbyteri hierosolymitani, opera omnia quae exstant, et ejus nomine circumferuntur. Ex variis editionibus, et codicibus manu exaratis, gallicanis, italicis & anglicis, collecta, recensita, latinè versa, atque annotationibus illustrata, cum praevis dissertationibus, & copiosis indicibus. Opera & studio P. Michaelis Lequien, Morino Boloniensis, ordinis FF. Praedicatorum*). In his introduction he made reference to the codex from Vlachos' collection: «*Similem Vaticano antiquioremque codicem asservant Venetis Graeci in bibliotheca illustrissimi Archiepiscopi Philadelphiensis, ex quo mihi quaedam transmissa sunt rogatu viri eruditissimi atque amicissimi R. P. Dom Anselmi Banduri*»; see Konstantinos Th. Dimaras: «Βενετία: 1477, 1828». In: *Θησαυρίσματα* 1 (1962), p. 10.

⁴⁸² Barzani: *Βίος*, p. 80.

books was compiled, since numerous thefts were revealed in the meantime. Modern scholars supported that in the first half of the 18th century old printed books and codices obtained by the Greek Confraternity were indeed destroyed, since they had been abandoned in unsuitable and damp places, while numerous of them had already been illegally sold in the book markets. The results of the recording of 1724 were heartbreaking, since the library had lost almost two and a half thirds of its initial corpus of books.⁴⁸³ It becomes obvious that the dispersion was not a gradual phenomenon; on the contrary, at some point before 1724 a great loss, most probably an appropriation, occurred depriving the Greek Community of its books. In 1740 the Confraternity was activated in order to secure what was left of the library. From the proceedings of that period we are informed that the place where the books were stored was dusty and many books were destroyed by the humidity and the woodworm. Therefore, on 1. December 1741 the removal of the damaged books was decided, those which were preserved in good condition to be registered, while the “worthless” would be distributed to poor Greek students.⁴⁸⁴ The conclusion of the sad story of Gerasimos Vlachos’ library was the following: in 1755 the books were transferred to the building of the Greek *Scoletta*, since in their previous place there was no guard. However, until the end of the century the books were in extremely bad shape, again due to humidity and the woodworm. Therefore, they were placed in the courtyard of the church of *San Giorgio*, where most of them were eventually stolen. Those that were preserved were handed to the last teacher of the Flanginis College, Spiridon Vlantis (1765–1830), who nevertheless failed to save them from total dispersion. Eventually, during the early 19th century, the then young scholar Andreas Moustoxidis visited Venice and saw codices from Vlachos’ library to be sold in extremely bad condition in open-air book markets.⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁸³ Even during that critical moment for Gerasimos Vlachos’ library, the dispersion continued, as it is revealed from a brief note in the end of the booklist of 1724: “The reverend priest Krassàs took a codex, entitled *Teachings (Didaches)* by Gerasimos Vlachos” («Ἐπῆρεν ὁ αἰδεσιμώτατος παπᾶ Κρασσᾶς ἓνα βιβλίον χειρόγραφον, διδαχαὶ Γερασίου Βλάχου»); the note was first detected in Karathanasis: *Φλαγγίνειος Σχολή*, p. 211.

⁴⁸⁴ Karathanasis: *Φλαγγίνειος Σχολή*, p. 213-215.

⁴⁸⁵ Andreas Moustoxidis: «Περὶ τῶν ἐν Κερκύρα Ἀκαδημιῶν καὶ τῶν συγχρόνων αὐταῖς λογίων». In: *Πανδώρα* 7 (1856), p. 294^b. For a detailed historical description of the events regarding the loss of the books of the Greek Confraternity of Venice during the 18th century, see Chryssa Maltezos: «Ανταλλαγή παπύρου με βιβλία. Μια ψηφίδα στην ιστορία της Βιβλιοθήκης του Φλαγγινιανού Σχολείου στη Βενετία». In: Maltezos, Schreiner, Losacco (eds.): *Φιλαναγνώστης*, p. 226-230.

5.3. The contents of the library

For centuries, all knowledge of Gerasimos Vlachos' personal library was either lost or neglected. The following overview of its content will hopefully bring this vast book collection back to virtual life, although the items which once consisted it appear to be either lost or at least unavailable for scientific research. As a multileveled source, the library can answer to questions about the Cretan scholar's high level of training, the depth and wideness of his multiple interests and his pedagogical initiatives for the benefit of his compatriots both in terms of identity and religious faith. Through the reconstruction of the content of this now lost collection of books, I will attempt to perceive and provide insights into Vlachos' religious and intellectual world and examine the interconfessional parameters and factors that eventually determined the presence or absence of specific readings from the shelves of his library.⁴⁸⁶

5.3.1. Theology: Books on ancient patristic tradition, medieval scholastic theology and early modern polemical literature

In the aftermath of the Catholic Reformation in the Orthodox ecclesiastical circles of the late 16th and 17th century, it is expected and easily assumed that the library of a representative of the Church, regardless the confession he belonged to, would be dominated by the presence of readings on his faith, the doctrines of the Church and the long and multifaceted Christian tradition. Indeed, a central position in Gerasimos Vlachos' library was obtained by an extensive corpus of books of religious and theological content; the latter are detected in Greek codices, Greek, Greek-Latin, Latin and Italian printed editions. The presence of a well-structured theological corpus ranging from the Holy Scriptures and patristic tradition to the contemporary to Vlachos theological conflicts and polemical issues proves the latter's careful and methodical obtainment of not only monumental but also controversial editions. The Greek and Latin theological sections were based almost exclusively on the written tradition of the

⁴⁸⁶ My approach combines a method of scientific classification and interpretation of the available primary and secondary material on the library and its content, with a parallel integration of the latter into wider contexts (intellectual, confessional, social, political, historical). For an earlier overview on the content of the library, see Tatakis: *Γεράσιμος Βλάχος*, p. 28-35. For a detailed approach to the content of Vlachos' library, I prepare a critical edition of his *Indice della Libreria*, about to be published in the future.

early Christian era and contained collective editions of the texts of the Holy Bible and a series of exegetical writings on the Scriptures. Therefore, the majority of his theological books were directly or indirectly related to the authority of the Bible and its commentary tradition in the early Christian, medieval and early modern period. In the same context, Vlachos was the owner of a multitude of codices and printed editions containing the complete works of the Church Fathers and early Christian authorities, both Greek and Latin, along with a meticulously formed collection of major and minor works, all indicative examples of the scholastic Christian current that dominated in Latin Europe during the Middle Ages, reaching also the 16th and 17th century. A considerable corpus of books in the section of theology dealt with dogmatical, theological and polemical issues of the Christian religion, mainly from early modern Catholic (and anti-Protestant) ecclesiastical authors. Finally, the Italian section was mainly defined by collections of Catholic sermons (*prediche*), manuals on preaching and religious works, in their majority contemporary to Vlachos.

5.3.1^a. Biblical and patristic tradition

The interest of the research is immediately captured by the fact that the Cretan prelate obtained the text of the Bible in its entirety in numerous and various forms and languages. In addition to a Greek codex of the Four Gospels, accompanied by various commentaries by “ancient Saints”, two different Greek and another two Greek-Latin editions of the complete Holy Scriptures, Vlachos was the owner of an edition of the *Vulgate*, the dominant Latin translation of the Hebrew Bible by Saint Jerome (c.347–420). He also obtained a number of manuals on the Bible, which would be definitely useful and indispensable tools in his extensive theological studies:⁴⁸⁷ i. the voluminous and ubiquitous 12th-century *Biblia Sacra cum Glossa Ordinaria*, including Jerome’s *Vulgate* and a set of marginal and interlinear mainly patristic comments and explanations;⁴⁸⁸ ii. a *Summariorum* for the training of clergymen and theologians in the

⁴⁸⁷ For the use of the biblical texts and the early Christian literature in the early modern centuries, see Thomas J. Heffernan, Thomas E. Burman (eds.): *Scripture and Pluralism. Reading the Bible in the Religiously Plural Worlds of the Middle Ages and Renaissance*. Brill. Leiden, Boston 2005.

⁴⁸⁸ The edition of the *Gloss* also contained the influential commentary on the Bible by the scholastic French Franciscan Nicholas of Lyra (c.1270–1349) entitled *Postillae Perpetuae in Universam S. Scripturam*; to the latter the *Additiones* to the *Postillae* were added by the

biblical text; iii. a two-volume index of *loci* from the Old Testament entitled *Concordantiae Veteris Testamenti Graecae* by the 17th-century preacher and theologian from Augsburg Konrad Kircher;⁴⁸⁹ iv. a relative work on the New Testament, the *Novi Testamenti Concordantiae Graecae*, composed by the also Augsburg-born philologist Sixtus de Bircken (1500–1554); v. another textbook on the New Testament entitled *Novi Testamenti dictionum* and composed by the contemporary to Vlachos eminent Zurich theologian and professor of Greek and Hebrew Johann Caspar Suicerus (1620–1684). The presence in the library of the aforementioned cases, all related directly to the text of the Bible, proves the Cretan scholar's meticulous care as a reader of the Scriptures and his intellectual need and desire to have at his disposal both the Greek and Latin versions of the Holy Texts and a considerable amount of manuals for his relative courses.

Gerasimos Vlachos' library was adorned by codices and printed books containing the complete writings of the majority of the Greek Church Fathers, along with the main Latin Fathers of the ancient Church. More specifically, we detect the *opera omnia* by totally eighteen Church authorities of early Christianity: Philo Judaeus (20BC–45AD), Justin Martyr († 165), Clement of Alexandria (c.150–c.215), Origen of Alexandria (c.184–254), Athanasius of Alexandria (c.298–373), Epiphanius of Salamis (c.315–403), Basil of Caesarea (329–379), Gregory of Nazianzus (c. 329–390), Ambrose (c. 340–397), Jerome (c.347–420), John Chrysostom (c.347–407),⁴⁹⁰ Synesios of Cyrene (c.370–c.413), Cyril Alexandria (c.376–444), Basil of Seleucia († c.458), Pope Gregory I († 604), Maximus the Confessor (c.580–662),⁴⁹¹ John of Damascus (c.675–749) and the late-5th-century Pseudo-Areopagitical Corpus, once attributed to the 1st-century Dionysius the Areopagite.⁴⁹² Apart from the aforementioned series of the

Spanish Jewish Christian Bishop Paul of Burgos (c.1351–1469), along with the *Replicae* by the German Franciscan Matthias Döring (1390–1469), a defence of Nicholas of Lyra and a rejection of almost half of Paul's *Additions*.

⁴⁸⁹ In his work, result of the author's seven-year painstaking effort, Kircher arranged the Hebrew words of the Old Testament in an alphabetical order, and in each one he added the corresponding Greek citations.

⁴⁹⁰ The personality and teaching of John Chrysostom strongly influenced Gerasimos Vlachos and contributed to his theological identity, since the Saint's name and works are massively detected in various records of the Cretan scholar's library in both manuscript and printed form.

⁴⁹¹ In the case of the complete works by Maximus the Confessor, we are dealing with the well-known to this study ancient codex that Vlachos copied for François Combefis in 1658.

⁴⁹² The edition Vlachos obtained also included the famous commentary on the *Corpus* by Maximus the Confessor and a paraphrase – in fact, an adaptation of Maximus's work – by

complete works by various Greek authorities of the early Christian period, the theological section was enriched by an extensive and profound group of biblical commentaries, catenae and anthologies by both Greek and Latin authors from the early Christian and patristic tradition until the late Middle Ages. Starting with the Greek books, among the shelves of the library we detect in both manuscript and printed form the exegetical works on the Old Testament by the influential theologian Theodoret of Cyrus (c.393–c.458),⁴⁹³ the exegetical homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa (c.335–c.395). In both Greek and Latin editions we find the main writings of i. the early Christian exegete, polemicist and Church historian Eusebius of Caesarea (c. 260–340),⁴⁹⁴ and the Christian sophist Procopius of Gaza (c.465–528), one of the earliest introducers of the genre of *catenae*; ii. the exegeses on the New Testament and the Apocalypse by the 7th-century eminent commentator Oecumenius⁴⁹⁵ and the 9th-century Archbishop of Caesarea Arethas respectively, and iii. the influential commentaries on the Gospels and on the Pauline Epistles by the Archbishop of Ohrid and prolific writer Theophylact (c.1055–after 1107).

In addition to the above cases, it is noteworthy that among his Greek codices the Cretan scholar had collected a vast number of exegetical works on the Old and New Testament. More specifically, the following cases of Greek biblical commentators were recorded: i. Origen with his monumental 32-volume commentary on the Gospel of John; ii. Eusebius of Caesarea with an exegesis on the Psalms; iii. Athanasius of Alexandria with two exegetical treatises on the Psalms and the Scriptures, along with a codex

the versatile scholar of the early Paleologian Renaissance, the Byzantine Georgios Pachymeres (1242–c.1310). The Cretan ecclesiastic also obtained a manuscript version of the Corpus followed by various “ancient comments”.

⁴⁹³ Gerasimos Vlachos also obtained in independent editions Theodoret’s writings on christology and heresiology.

⁴⁹⁴ More specifically, Vlachos obtained Eusebius’ *Evangelicae praeparationis*, his *De demonstratione evangelica* and his opus magnum, *Ecclesiasticae historiae*. The voluminous edition of Eusebius’ *History*, apart from including his famous eulogy on Emperor Constantine the Great *De vita Constantini*, also contained the historical works of his successors of the 5th and 6th century: Theodoret of Cyrus, Socrates Scholasticus (c.380–after 439), Salminius Hermias Sozomenus (c.400–c.450), the epitome of Theodorus’ known as *Tripartite History*, and the *Ecclesiastical History* of Evagrius Scholasticus (536–c.594). Vlachos obtained also the Latin version of these early Christian Church histories; in this context, it is worth referring to the translation of Eusebius’ *History* by Rufinus of Aquileia (c.345–411), along with the latter’s two-book supplement.

⁴⁹⁵ Although the authenticity of Oecumenius’ commentaries is now questioned, such an issue was absent during the early modern period.

containing the Saint's Life and his sermons; iv. John Chrysostom and a series of his famous homilies on the New Testament; v. Cyril of Alexandria with a collection of citations from the Scriptures; vi. the 4th-century clergyman and martyr Polychronios the Deacon with a commentary on the Book of Proverbs, on the Song of Songs and on the Ecclesiastes; vii. the eminent commentator Theodore of Antioch, known as the Interpreter (c.350–428) with his commentary on the Minor Prophets, accompanied by a mystical treatise by the Byzantine monk and poet Symeon the New Theologian (949–1022); viii. Theodoret of Cyrhus with a commentary on the Minor Prophets, a patristic catena on the Pentabiblos of Moses, and two commentaries on the Song of Songs and Daniel; ix. the 5th-century presbyter and prolific biblical commentator Hesychius of Jerusalem with an exegesis on the Psalms; x. the famous *Amphilochia*, a collection of a multitude of questions and answers on difficult scriptural passages, addressed to the Archbishop of Cyzicus Amphilochius by the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople Photius I (c.810/20–893); xi. a collective codex containing sermons on the Gospels composed by the Byzantine intellectual John Xiphilinos the Younger († c.1081) and the biblical commentaries of the prolific hymnographer and theologian Ephraem the Syrian (c.306–373), Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, John Chrysostom, John of Damascus and the 8th-century bishop of Euboea John; xii. the nowadays spurious Catena on Job by the 11th-century Byzantine bishop of Heraclea and prolific biblical commentator Nicetas; xiii. the 41 exegetical homilies on the Gospels by the celebrated theologian and bishop of Rossano, Calabria Theophanes Kerameus (1129–1152); xiv. an exegesis on the Psalms by the Byzantine clergyman and scholar Nikephoros Blemmydes (1197–1272); xv. the biblical commentaries of Emperor Matthaios Kantakouzenos (c.1325–1383); xvi. sixteen panegirical sermons on the Gospel of Luke, composed by the mid.-14th-century preacher and bishop of Philadelphia Macarius Chrysocephalus.

Entering the Latin biblical commentary tradition, the library contained the voluminous exegesis on the New Testament by Augustine of Hippo (354–430), who was particularly respected by Vlachos,⁴⁹⁶ the commentaries on the Revelation by the 6th-century bishop of Hadrumetum Primasius and the relative writings on the Old

⁴⁹⁶ Vlachos also obtained Augustine's collection of sermons *Ad Heremitas et ad Sacerdotes* and his widely influential *De Trinitate*; in fact, that edition also included the prior but of similar content *De Trinitate* by Hilary of Poitiers (c.310–367).

Testament by three Benedictine monks: the English Bede the Venerable (672–735), and two of the most prominent figures of the Carolingian Renaissance, the Frankish theologian Rabanus Maurus Magnentius (c.780–856) and the prolific teacher Remigius of Auxerre (c.841–908). Moreover, we detect a medieval collection of postills entitled *Postillae Maiores Totius Anni*, traditionally attributed to the French theologian and bishop of Paris William of Auvergne (c.1180–1249), the voluminous exegesis on the *Vulgate* by the French Dominican Cardinal Hugh of Saint-Cher (c.1200–1263), and the extensive *Ennarationes* on the New Testament, along with a commentary on Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, both composed by the German theologian and mystic Denys the Carthusian (1402–1471).⁴⁹⁷

A meticulous and systematic reader of the writings, doctrines and teachings of the Church Fathers, both Greek and Latin, Gerasimos Vlachos was the owner of numerous voluminous collections mainly of medieval Latin anthologies of patristic citations, the so-called *Catena*. More specifically, among the shelves of the library we find a collection of sermons by various Fathers composed by the 8th-century clergyman Alcuin of York, a luminaire of the Carolingian Renaissance, the *Catena Aurea* by Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), along with another renowned collection of excerpts by Greek Fathers on the Gospels of John and Luke composed by the Belgian Jesuit exegete Balthasar Cordier (1592–1650). Next to them were placed a widely read 16th-century commonplace book by the Italian scholar Serafino Cumirano, an anonymous alphabetical anthology entitled *Flores Bibliae*, and the *Aurea Rosa* by the Italian Dominican theologian Silvestro Mazzolini da Prierio (1457–1527), a work that contained rules of biblical interpretation and sermons on the pastoral exposition of the Gospel.

After these monumental biblical commentaries and the voluminous anthological and collective editions of the library, among its shelves we find a corpus of individual theological writings by early ecclesiastical writers dealing with matters of monasticism, Christian morals and apologetics. More specifically, the Greek section included the

⁴⁹⁷ Next to Denys' works we detect two more 15th-century works of the same context: i. a collection of 45 Lenten sermons, actually mere theological treatises in scholastic form with quotations from the Bible and the patristic writings entitled *Quadragesimale de Floribus Sapientiae* and composed by the Servite theologian and preacher Ambrosius Spiera da Treviso (c.1413–c.1454); ii. a commentary on the Psalms of David by the Augustinian theologian and Hebraist Jaime Pérez, known as Jacobus de Valencia (1408–1490).

influential works on monastic life by the Egyptian monk and hermit Macarius the Elder (300–391), Epiphanius of Salamis, the Christian philosopher Nemesius (fl. c.390) and the ascetic writer Nilus of Sinai († 430). Along with a collection of homilies and letters of the Church Fathers, Vlachos also obtained an anthology of early apologetic works, collected by Maximus the Confessor (c.580–662) and the 11th-century monk Antonius Melissa; both works contained extracts from the early Christian Fathers, but also quotations from earlier Jewish and pagan authors.⁴⁹⁸ Moreover, we detect interpretations on the Divine Liturgy by Basil of Caesarea, John Chrysostom and the Patriarch of Constantinople Germanus I († 740).

Similar cases of independent theological works by early and medieval Greek Christian authors are to be found among the Greek codices of the library. More specifically, the Cretan cleric owned a multitude of collections of sermons by Church Fathers, along with a multitude of Greek theological and mystical treatises, numerous *Lives of the Saints*, homilies and catecheses by various early and later Christian authors, such as: i. Origen's *Philocalia* compiled by Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nazianzus; ii. the widely read catechetical homilies by the 4th-century bishop of Jerusalem Cyril and the 5th-century ascetic writer Diadochos of Photiki; iii. the mystical treatise entitled *Ladder of Divine Ascent* by the 6th- or 7th-century Sinaitic monk John Climacus; iv. John of Damascus' dubious *Sacred Parallels* along with his liturgical *Octoechos*; v. the 6th- or 7th-century collection of the already mentioned *Sibylline Oracles*; vi. the also mentioned *Apocalypse* of Pseudo-Methodius (7th century); vii. the catecheses on spiritual life by the prolific monk Theodore the Studite (759–826); viii. the famous oracular poems and divinatory texts attributed to Emperor Leo VI the Wise (866–912); ix. the commentaries by the 12th-century scholar and poet Theodore Prodromos on the *Octoechos*; x. the chronographical works by the 8th-century ecclesiastic George Synkellos and the 12th-century historian Michael Glykas; xi. the lengthy polemical work on heresies entitled *Panoply of Doctrine*, composed by the 12th-century Byzantine monk Euthymius Zigabenus; xii. a collection of 49 theological discourses by the learned Byzantine theologian Joseph Vryennios (c.1350–c.1438).

⁴⁹⁸ In addition to the aforementioned collections, the edition owned by Vlachos also included the Christian apologist Tatian's (c.120–180) polemical treatise *Address to the Greeks* and the *Apology to Autolycus* by the 2nd-century Bishop of Antioch Theophilus.

In the voluminous collective Greek codices of the library, often consisting of forty and fifty works, we find the theological and religious writings by a multitude of authors from the early Christian to the late Byzantine period: from the 3rd century, Gregory of Neocaesarea and Nectarius of Constantinople; from the 4th century, the two main Desert hermits and mystical writers Amun and Macarius of Egypt, Epiphanius of Salamis, Amphilochius of Iconium, Nephon of Constantia, Aetius Presbyter of Constantinople; from the 5th century, Asterios of Amasea, Proclus of Constantinople, Basil of Seleucia, Antipater of Bostra and four ascetic writers: Nilus the Elder of Sinai, Mark the Hermit, Hesychius of Sinai and Diadochos of Photiki; from the 6th century, the hermit Barsanuphius of Gaza, the two Patriarchs of Antioch Gregory and Anastasios I; from the 7th to the 9th century, Germanus I of Constantinople, Andrew of Crete, Christopher I of Alexandria, Georgius of Nicomedeia, Philotheus of Sinai, the ascetic writers Isaac the Syrian and Thalassios; and finally from the 10th to the 11th century, John Mauropous, Theodore Daphnopates, Symeon Metaphrastes and Michael Psellos. Of special interest is the unique case of a sermon on repentance composed by the praised Cretan teacher and preacher Meletios Vlastos from Rethymnon (1576–1643), a leading figure in the religious and intellectual life of late-16th and early-17th-century Candia. The presence of Greek theological and religious books was completed with codices including collections of maxims from the Greek Church and Desert Fathers and the Holy Hermits, the so-called *Gerontikon* or *Paterikon*.⁴⁹⁹ As it becomes apparent, Gerasimos Vlachos obtained printed editions but mainly codices, complete or partial, of numerous works by Greek Church Fathers and later authors; to the above, a multitude of books including mainly early Christian homilies, catechisms and later Byzantine theological treatises was added.

From his contemporary authors and editors of Greek religious and theological works, Vlachos initially obtained three editions published by the already mentioned

⁴⁹⁹ It is noteworthy that among them we detect the extremely rare *Synagogue of the Divinely Sounded Rules and Teachings by the Divine Fathers*, composed in four books by the 11th-century monk Paul the Euergetinos, while in the third codex of a *Gerontikon*, the latter is accompanied by the widely read during the Middle Ages and early modern centuries *Life of Alexander*, a collection of legends concerning the exploits of Alexander the Great, written by an unknown author and meeting numerous expansions, revisions and translations. Finally, an early modern work of the library which was related to the collection of patristic teachings was the so-called *Thesaurus* which contained 36 moral and panegyric orations collected by the writings of the Fathers and translated in vulgar Greek by the high-ranking Greek ecclesiastic and writer Damaskinos Stouditis († 1577).

French Dominican patrologist François Combefis (1605–1679). The first item included a corpus of homilies by John Chrysostom, the work *On the Cross* by the 4th-century preacher and Bishop of Gabala Severian, Basil's of Seleucia writing on the protomartyr Stephanos and a historical work by the 7th-century Patriarch of Jerusalem Zacharias on his contemporary conquest of the city by the Persians. The second edition, entitled *Originum rerumque Constantinopolitanum manipulus*, contained a corpus of Byzantine writings on the history of Constantinople; these were a late 8th-century commentary on the topography of the city, two descriptions on the construction of the Temple of Hagia Sophia and another on the so-called Nea Ekklesia written by Patriarch Photius I (c.820–893), and finally texts from the 9th and 10th century supporting the veneration of icons composed by Patriarch Nikephoros I (c.758–828) and Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (905–959). The last item under Combefis' name was his monumental eight-volume collection of patristic homilies and sermons entitled *Bibliotheca Patrum Concionatoria*. Moreover, we detect the already mentioned imaginative description of the Holy Lands by Vlachos' nephew Arsenios Kaloudis and an oration in honor of the 7th-century Saint Alypius the Stylite, particularly celebrated in Venice, composed by the also mentioned Greek professor of philosophy in Padua Ioannis Kigalas (1622–1687). Finally, two Greek codices contained theological content not by any means older than a century from the time the Cretan scholar completed the recording of his books: i. a codex with the *Life of Saint Catherine* composed in verses by the Sinaitic monk and bishop of Rhodes Paisios Agioapostolites (1540/50–1609); ii. the Synodical Canonization in 1622 by the then Patriarch of Constantinople Kyrillos Loukaris of the 16th-century Greek prelate from Cephalonia Gerasimos known as the 'New Ascetic'.

One could conclude that the aforementioned works served as the Greek counterweight, confessional and theological, of the immense corpus in the library of printed Latin theological treatises and homilies by early and medieval Christian authors. More specifically, we detect among others the apologetic treatises by Cyprian of Carthage (c.200–258), the influential work on monasticism by John Cassian (c.360–c.435) entitled *De Institutis coenobiorum*, and the sermons on ecclesiology and against heresies by the so-called "Doctor of Homilies" Peter Chrysologus (c.380–c.450).⁵⁰⁰ In

⁵⁰⁰ An interesting case is the extremely famous, or rather notorious, late 13th-century anonymous treatise entitled *De Secretis Mulierum*, which was attributed until modern times to Albert the

the same context, the library contained the opera omnia by three central figures of the Latin Church: Pope Leo I (c.400–461), Fulgentius of Ruspe (c.467–c.527) and Innocent III (c.1160–1216). Among the medieval Latin authors we firstly find the sermons of the Italian Archbishop of Genoa Jacobus da Varagine (1228–1290), two manuals for the composition of sermons and moral teaching by the French Dominican preachers Joannes de Sancto Geminiano († 1332) and William Perault (c.1190–1271), along with the main authority on the medieval Latin Liturgy entitled *Rationale divinorum officiorum* by the canonist Guillaume Durand (c.1230–1296) and the widely read devotional work on the life and teaching of Christ *De gestis Domini salvatoris* by the Italian Augustinian ascetic and preacher Simeone Fidati, known as Blessed Simon of Cascia (c.1295–1348). Finally, a corpus of the most monumental medieval Latin summae contained the central theological dogmas of the Latin Church: i. the famous *Pantheology* composed by the Dominican teacher and preacher Ranieri of Rivalto († 1348); ii. the two-volume dictionary of moral theology known as *Summa Angelica* by the Italian Franciscan theologian Angelo Carletti (1411–1495); iii. the influential manual for confessors entitled *Summa Rosellae* by another Franciscan, Giovanni Baptista Trovamala (c.1435–c.1496); iv. the four-volume *Summae Fidei Orthodoxae* by Denys the Carthusian, the most eminent compilation of the scholastic theological thought and teaching.

5.3.1^b. Medieval and early modern Scholasticism

Scattered among Vlachos' books on theology, we detect a series of Latin writings deriving from the medieval and early modern scholastic tradition. The latter, regardless if they complemented or confronted each other, remained inextricably linked under the common basis of the medieval Latin need for a union between faith and reason. From the prominent thinkers of the 12th century to the modernists of the 16th and 17th century, the representatives of scholasticism considered as authorities the Aristotelian corpus, the text of the Holy Bible and the corresponding writings. Therefore, they created an elaborate system consisting of voluminous and complex commentaries, interpretations and treatises, the base of dominant reasoning and teaching. Thus, the library can be characterized as a microcosm of the scholastic theological literature, creating a system

Great. Dealing with women and human reproduction, the work contained views from Aristotle, Albert the Great and other 13th-century scholastics in order to present women as evil and lascivious creatures.

of synthetic links between the most famous works from medieval scholastic method to the late 15th century and to the revival of the current during the Catholic Reformation.⁵⁰¹ First chronologically is detected the famous *Four Books on Sentences* by Peter the Lombard (c.1095–1160), the framework upon which four centuries of scholastic interpretation of the Christian doctrines was based. Taking into consideration that Lombard was used as a starting point for a long series of discussions by later scholastic thinkers, Vlachos was also the owner of the *Summa theologiae* by the innovative Franciscan theologian Alexander of Hales (c.1185–1245), and of the most famous commentaries by distinguished medieval thinkers: i. the widely read textbook entitled *Compendium theologiae veritatis*, attributed to the German Dominican Albert the Great (c.1200–1280);⁵⁰² ii. almost the complete writings by the Italian Dominican and Latin Church Father Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274);⁵⁰³ iii. the major works by the Italian Franciscan and Latin Church Father Bonaventure (1221–1274);⁵⁰⁴ iv. the complete works of the eminent Augustinian archbishop of Bourges Giles of Rome (c.1243–1316), along with the *Quodlibet* by Giles’ disciple, the prolific Augustinian theologian Gerard of Siena († 1336); v. the *Quodlibeta septem* by the controversial English Franciscan theologian William of Ockham (c.1287–1347); vi. the highly influential commentary on Lombard’s *Sentences* by William’s rival, the distinguished Franciscan John Duns Scotus (c.1266–1308).⁵⁰⁵

⁵⁰¹ For the presentation of the writings of the scholastic tradition, I chose to use the tree system, that is from root to trunk, and from branches to flowers and fruits.

⁵⁰² Nevertheless, in modern times the work is attributed to the Dominican theologian from Strasbourg Hugh Ripelin (c.1205–c.1270).

⁵⁰³ In addition to the already mentioned two editions with the Saint’s *Catena*, we detect editions of all of his principal writings, organized by the Cretan scholar in a personal sub-category (“*Divi Thomae Aquinatis libri*”); in the latter he also collected the numerous works by Aquinas’ main commentators. In the long list of the Saint’s works we find his massive commentary on Lombard (*Scriptum super libros Sententiarum*) and his compendium of the main theological teachings of the Catholic Church entitled *Summa Theologiae*; the edition of the *Summa* that Vlachos owned also included Aquinas’ renowned *Quaestiones Quodlibetales*, along with the extensive commentaries on the *Summa* by the leading Italian theologians Thomas Cajetan (1469–1534), known as Thomas de Vio, and Crisostomo Javelli (c.1470–1538). Moreover, the theological group included a collection of Aquinas’ responses to various theological questions entitled *Summa Contra Gentiles*.

⁵⁰⁴ Moreover, we detect a paraphrases of Bonaventure’s devotional work entitled *Questiones disputatae de mysterio Sanctissimae Trinitatis*, composed by the Capuchin theologian Theodore Foresti da Bergamo († 1637).

⁵⁰⁵ Duns Scotus’ scientific objectivity and Ockham’s strongly developed interest in the logical method, led their works to conflict with the dominant thomistic ecclesiastical thinking and

The presence of the leading figures of medieval thought is emphatically strengthened by the works of later scholastic thinkers, who either belonged to the followers of Thomas Aquinas (Thomists), of Albert the Great (Albertists) or of Duns Scotus (Scotists): i. the influential Dutch Albertist theologian Heymeric of Camp (c.1395-1460); ii. the Italian Thomist Dominican theologian Paolo Barbo († 1494); iii. the Italian philosopher and Thomist commentator Thomas Cajetan (1469–1534); iv. the also Thomist Dominican Giovanni Crisostomo Javelli (c.1470–1538); v. three Thomist Dominican theologians of the 16th century: the disciple of Francis Vittoria at the University of Salamanca Bartolomé de Medina (1527–1581), the Italian professor Giovanni Paolo Nazari (1556–1641), the philosopher from Umbria and Inquisitor Hieronymus de Medicis (1569–1622); vi. the Barnabite theologian “ex mente D. Thomae” Filiberto Marchini (1586–1636). In addition to the aforementioned Thomistic authors, the library included a multitude of works by the rival Scotist school, for which the Cretan scholar did not fail to note in his recordings the phrase “ad mentem Scoti”: i. two cases of the 15th-century Parisian Scotism, the French theologians and professors at the University of Paris Nicolas d’Orbelles († c.1472) and Pierre Tartaret († 1522); ii. the commentary on Scotus’ *Quodlibeta* by Francesco Licheto († 1520), a combination between Scotist philosophy and the doctrines of Jewish Kabbalah; iii. the influential *Controversiae theologicae inter S. Thomam et Scotum* by the Spanish Franciscan theologian Juan de Rada (1545–1608). Finally, Vlachos also owned further commentaries on Peter Lombard composed by the already mentioned prolific theologian and mystic Denys the Carthusian, the Italian Carmelite theologian and preacher Christoforo Silvestrini Brenzone († 1608), and the Bolognese nobleman and scholar Giovanni Paolo Pallantieri († 1606), while of special interest is the twenty-two-volume editions of the opera omnia by the Spanish Jesuit philosopher and theologian Francisco Suárez (1548–1617), leading and influential figure of scholastic thought and literature in the early modern period.⁵⁰⁶

they were accused of inciting controversies inside the Church. Perhaps this is why the reader of the indice meets only one work by Ockham and two by Scotus in Gerasimos Vlachos’ library. Nevertheless, Scotus’ system eventually grew in Catholic Europe reaching its climax in early 17th century; one of the direct results of the Scottist thinker’s influence was the publication of his *omnia opera* by Laurent Durand in Lyon in 1639.

⁵⁰⁶ Among the Latin readings, we also detect the *Scholastic Biblioteca* by the late-16th-century professor of philosophy and theology in Bologna Daniel Malloni; a manual on scholastic

5.3.1^c. Early modern polemical theology

A catalytic factor in order to approach the identity of Vlachos' library, at least its theological section, is considered the scattered presence of a vast amount of Catholic polemical treatises mainly against the doctrines and teachings of the Protestant Reformation. The following works are indicative representatives of the contemporary initiatives by the Catholic Church for renewal and reform in the field of ecclesiastic administration, the training of clergymen, the Divine Liturgy and the forms of private devotion. In this context, Vlachos had collected an extensive corpus of major and minor works written by fervent Catholic authors – especially Jesuits and Franciscans and mainly originating from Italy, Spain and France. In addition to the various directly polemical anti-Protestant treatises, the category also included a group of extensive early modern biblical and patristic commentaries aiming to the support and accuracy of the Catholic theological positions against the controversy with the representatives of the Reformation.

Before proceeding to the 16th-century authors, a special reference should be made to the luminaire German Catholic Cardinal and humanist scholar Nicholas of Cusa (1401–1464), whose complete works are found among Vlachos' other readings. From Cusanus' numerous mystical writings, I merely note two renowned works which were certainly among Vlachos' favorite and most influential readings: i. the visionary *De Pace Fidei*, written in the turbulent times after the Fall of Constantinople in 1453 and which examined the truthfulness of the various religions along with the concept of religious and confessional tolerance, promoting the model of a single and universal religion ("*una religio in varietate rituum*"); ii. the *Cribatio Alcorani*, a detailed review of the Quran in which the concept of confessional and religious tolerance is discussed in the context of the relation between Christianity and Islam. Moreover, the interest of the research is raised by the fact that Vlachos obtained two works whose authors attempted to bring into contact their contemporary Latin Christian theology with the mysticism and hermitage of the Eastern religions. The first case was the extremely influential dialogue on Kabbalah entitled *De Arte Cabbalistica*, composed by the German humanist

theology entitled *Manuale Scholasticum de Vitiis et Peccatis* composed by the Greek professor in Padua Ioannis Kottounios (1572–1657) and a work of similar nature by the Polish Scotist philosopher Petrus Posnaniensis (c.1612–1658).

and Hebraist Johannes Reuchlin (1455–1522). The latter promoted his belief that mastering the mystical texts of Kabbalah could provide new exegesis and understanding of the divine meanings of the Hebrew Bible. The second book was the famous *Hieroglyphica* by the Italian humanist Pierio Valeriano (1477–1558), a concise Renaissance dictionary of symbols and their use in Christian allegorical interpretation. Similar to Reuchlin's tendencies, Valeriano argued that the symbolic wisdom of the Egyptians agreed with the fundamental teachings of Christian theology.

Inaugurating the circle of polemical works against the Protestant doctrines and literature, we detect the writings of eight Catholic ecclesiastical authors northern of the Alps: i. the complete works by the Belgian theologian Johannes Driedo (c.1480–1535), whose work reflected his concern of a correct interpretation of the Scriptures, his extensive use of patristic theology and his fervent refutation of the Lutheran doctrines; ii. the polemical *Compendium concertationis* by the prudent critic of Lutheranism and Calvinism, the Flemish Dominican Inquisitor Joannes Bunderius (1482–1557); iii. two biblical commentaries by the conciliatory German Franciscan theologian and preacher Johann Ferus (1497–1554); iv. the controversial *Collationes* on the Pauline Epistle to the Romans by the prolific Flemish Franciscan scholar and beloved of the Jesuits of Cologne, Franciscus Titelmans (1502–1537); v. the indicative anti-Lutheran *Enchiridion Christianae Institutionis* and *Institutio Catholica Elementa Christianae Pietatis* by the German theologian and fervent defender of the Catholic doctrines in the archbishopric of Cologne Johann Gropper (1503–1559); vi. the voluminous *Opus catechisticum* and *Mariology* by the influential Dutch Jesuit scholar and preacher Peter Canisius (1521–1597), a strong supporter of the Catholic faith in Germany; vii. the four-volume *Summa Theologiae Scholasticae*, the major work against the doctrines of Lutheranism, Calvinism and Anglicanism by the Dutch Jesuit controversialist Martin Becanus (1563–1624); viii. a mystical treatise entitled *Theologia symbolica* by the also Dutch Jesuit theologian and prolific author Maximilian van der Sandt (1578–1656); ix. the six dialogues against heresy (*Dialogi sex contra Summi Pontificatus, monasticae vitae, sanctorum, sacrarum imaginum oppugnatores, et pseudomartyres*) written by the English Catholic historian and apologist Nicholas Harpsfield (1519–1575), who had fled to the Continent during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1533–1603). Finally, it is of special interest that among the Northern scholars of the group we find two biblical commentaries by the Dutch

theologian Cornelius Jansen (1585–1638), an adopter of the Augustinian doctrine of grace in its strictest sense and a fervent opposer to the theological views of the Jesuits.⁵⁰⁷

Furthermore, Gerasimos Vlachos is presented to be the reader of six French theologians, all active during the time of the Catholic Reformation: i. the Catholic theologian and zealous controversialist Claude de Saintes (c.1525–1591) with his collection of early and medieval Christian Greek citations dealing with the controversial during the middle of the 16th century issue of the Mass, the Catholic response against the doctrines mostly of John Calvin (1509–1564) and Theodore de Beza (1519–1605); ii. the Carmelite theologian Thomas Beauxalmis (1524–1589) with his commentary *In Evangelicam Harmoniam*, which aimed to the defense of the doctrines and prestige of the Catholic Church against the Protestant teachings; iii. the Benedictine exegete and orientalist Gilbert Générard (1535–1597) with his commentary on the Psalms; iv. the French jurist Pierre du Faure (1540–1600) with his *Dodecamenon*; v. the Jesuit ecclesiastic and philologist Jean de Lorin (1559–1634) with two biblical commentaries; vi. the Jesuit – and former Lutheran – theologian from Trier Jodocus Coccus (1581–1622) with his *Thesaurus Catholicus*, a Catholic collection of material concerning the teachings of the Church Fathers and the Medieval Councils. Although it did not deal directly with the polemical tradition against the doctrines of the Protestant Reformation, the famous and authoritative work on sorcery and witchcraft persecution entitled *De la Demonomanie des Sorciers* (1580) by the influential French Catholic jurist and political philosopher Jean Bodin (1530–1596), was also contained in the library, translated into Italian.⁵⁰⁸

The intense polemical spirit of the Catholic Reformation is evident also in the theological and devotional works by scholastic ecclesiastics and scholars from Spain. In

⁵⁰⁷ As far as Cornelius Jansen is concerned, it is interesting that Gerasimos Vlachos avoided obtaining an imprint of his notorious *Augustinus*, in which the Dutch clergyman promoted a project for the reformation of his contemporary Catholic Church. The book released an outbreak of controversy to the ecclesiastical circles of France, inaugurating the theological movement later known as Jansenism; its consequences escalated in the second half of the 17th century, during Vlachos' time of maturity.

⁵⁰⁸ Gerasimos Vlachos chose to promote only one part of the French scholar's prominent personality, that of the fervent Catholic who chased and punished heresy, the deviation from Christian faith and the practice of black arts. Nevertheless, Jean Bodin was an illustrious and prolific author of works on history, economics and natural philosophy; most importantly he was the founder of political science with his famous and highly influential political treatises.

the library, we detect a multitude of such works, either written or translated in Latin: i. the opus magnum by the Franciscan humanist theologian and polemicist Miguel de Medina (c.1490–1578) in defense of the Catholic Church entitled *Christianae paraenesis*; ii. a collection of exegetical sermons by the Franciscan friar and influential author Francisco of Osuna (c.1492–1540); iii. a theological treatise entitled *De ratione tegendi et detegendi secretum* by the prominent Dominican Thomist Domingo de Soto (1494–1560); iv. the *Institutiones ad Christianam Theologiam* by the theologian from Granada Juan Viguier († 1550); v. a polemical work against the dissemination of the Protestant doctrines, written by the Franciscan friar and theologian Alfonso de Castro (c.1495–1558); vi. the catalytic *Sylva Allegoriarum*, on the interpretation of the allegorical meaning of biblical lexems composed by the Benedictine monk Jeroni Lloret, known as Hieronymus Lauretus (1506–1571); vii. a compendium addressed to priests entitled *Summa Conscientiae* and composed by the Spanish Jesuit theologian Francisco de Toledo (1532–1596); viii. the *Summa Conciliorum et Pontificum* by the Dominican theologian Bartolomé Carranza (1503–1576); ix. the introductory work on theology entitled *Locorum theologicorum* by the highly distinguished Spanish Dominican friar Melchor Cano (1509–1560); x. the *Advertentiae Theologiae Scholasticae* in John Chrysostom and four Latin Doctors (Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, Gregory I) written by the bishop of Lugo Fernando Vellosillo Barrio († 1587); xi. the four-volume *Epitome sanctorum patrum* by the Dominican bishop of Monopoli Juan López († 1632); xii. a homiletic commentary on the Scriptures by the Dominican friar and eloquent preacher Jerónimo Bautista Lanuza (1553–1624); and xiii. four voluminous biblical commentaries written by eminent Jesuit ecclesiastics: the theologian and philosopher Benedict Pereira (1536–1610), the theologian John de Pineda (1558–1637), the fervent preacher Diego de Baeza (1582–1647), the theologian and preacher Andreas Lucas de Arcones (1592–1658). Next to the works of the Jesuit Spanish exegetes, we find two commentaries of the also Jesuit Portuguese professor of the Holy Scripture Sebastião Barradas (1543–1615).⁵⁰⁹

⁵⁰⁹ The polemical spirit of the Catholic Reformation is evident also in the translated Italian editions of the main devotional writings on prayer and Christian morals by four eminent Spanish theologians of the 16th century: i. the Franciscan chronicler and preacher Antonio de Guevara (1481–1545); ii. the Dominican author of ascetical writings Louis of Granada (1504–1588); the Franciscan Diego de Estella (1524–1578); iv. the Jesuit Gaspar de Loarte (c.1498–1578).

As one could expect, the majority of polemical works in Vlachos' library belonged to the literal production of Italian clerics of the 16th and 17th century. To start with, we detect numerous biblical commentaries, anti-Protestant treatises and Catholic manuals by the following authors: i. the Dominican theologian Antonio de Ghislandis († 1507); ii. the Carmelite theologian and teacher from Ferrara Giovanni Maria Verrati (1490–1563); iii. the influential in the Jesuit circles spiritual writer and preacher Bonsignore Cacciaguerra (1495–1566); iv. the Florentine Dominican theologian and philosopher Giacomo Nacchianti (1502–1569); v. the eminent exegete Taddeo Guidelli from Perugia (1511–1606), Prior General of the Order of St. Augustine; vi. the devotional poet and fervent Catholic preacher from Venice Antonio Pagani (1526–1589); vii. the humanist and Patriarch of Aquileia Daniele Matteo Barbaro (1514–1570); viii. the Dominican preacher Giovanni Battista Corradi (c.1530–1606); ix. the reputed philosopher and scholastic theologian Girolamo Capredoni († 1621); x. the Theatine ecclesiastic Michele Ghislieri (1563–1646); xi. the Neapolitan friar in the Order of Minims Vincenzo de Via; xii. the Catholic Archbishop of Naxos Marco Antonio Quirino (1581–c.1630).

Moreover, the controversial between Catholics and Protestants issues of Christology and Mariology were the subject of the works by the following four authors: the Capuchin monk Gianmaria Zamoro (c.1579–1649); ii. the warm Catholic scholar from Milan Martino Bonacina (c.1585–1631); iii. the Dalmatian Jesuit theologian Lorenzo Crisogono; iv. the Franciscan theologian and preacher Francisco Quaresmio (1583–1650). Vlachos also obtained the famous *Disputations* by the prominent Jesuit Cardinal Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621), a major apologetic work in all matters of faith (Scripture, Christology, ecclesiology, sacramental theology, cult of saints and images) composed in defense of the positions of the Catholic Church. Finally, we detect four works on Catholic piety and morals deriving from the pen of eminent Jesuit scholars of the Catholic Reformation: i. the theologian Girolamo Piatti (1545–1591); ii. the consultant to the Holy Office Agostino Oreggi (1577–1635); iii. the scholar and member of the Accademia degli Umoristi in Rome Agostino Mascardi (1590–1640); iv. the prolific theologian from Verona Luigi Novarini (1594–1650).

From the Italian religious books first published during the 17th century, the library included a collection of prophecies by 11th-and-12th-century theologians

(Joachim of Fiore, Anselm of Marsica, Giovanni da Marcino, Aegidius of Poland) entitled *Vaticinia seu Praedictiones illustrium virorum*; the work was compiled by the Dominican prelate and scholar Girolamo Giovannini († 1604), a later Inquisitor in Vicenza. Moreover, in the Italian section of the library, a translated edition of the first systematic handbook of papal history was included, the influential collection by the Renaissance humanist Bartolomeo Sacchi known as Platina (1421–1481), entitled *Vitae Pontificum* (Venice: Johann of Cologne & Johann Manthen, 1479); his work was later revised by one of the most meticulous early modern church historians, Onofrio Panvino from Verona (1529–1568), into what became the official history of the Papacy during the Catholic Reformation. Of particular significance to Gerasimos Vlachos must have been the famous in its times *Dialogo fra il Cathecumino et il Padre Cathechizante*, composed by the Hebraist Fabiano Fioghi († c.1628). A principal work of the post-Tridentine literature, the *Dialogue* aimed to refute the teachings and doctrines of the Jewish religion and promote the principles and practices of the Catholic Church. Further studies on religious piety, the doctrines and morals of the Catholic faith that are detected on the shelves of the library are the following: i. the widely read *Concetti Scritturali* by the late 16th-century monk Cesare Calderari; ii. the two-part *Paradossi Morali* by the Archbishop of Gubbio and apostolic nuncio in Naples Alessandro Sperelli (1590–1672); iii. a series of discourses on the Dominican Orations by the Augustinian clergyman Giovanni Maria Lanci (1598–1670); iv. a treatise on Christian piety entitled *Il paragone dogmatico*, composed by the contemporary to Vlachos Venetian professor of Sacred Theology in Padua Innocenzo Pencini. All the aforementioned writers served the interests of the Catholic Reformation and fervently aimed to the strengthening of the Catholic theological argumentation against the Protestant ones, by making extensive use of the authority and unanimity of the ancient Church Fathers.

The Cretan scholar was also the holder of three monumental and widely read Latin collections of the lives of the Saints and Fathers. They all emerged from the dominant spirit of the Catholic Reformation, since due to the open front line with the Protestants, the Catholic circles tended to promote the orthodox foundations of their faith. In this context, we firstly detect the six-volume *Lives of the Saints* published by the German Carthusian monk Laurentius Surius (1523–1578); the latter's work supplemented the popular eight-volume *Sanctorum Priscorum Patrum Vitae* (1560) by

the Italian bishop Luigi Lippomano (1496–1559). Moreover, Vlachos obtained the nine-volume *Sacred Bibliotheca of the Holy Fathers* composed by the French anti-Protestant theologian and patristic editor Marguerin de la Bigne (1546–1595), who was already mentioned in Vlachos' discussion with Patriarch Dionysios IV. Last case was the Italian version entitled *Nuovo Leggendaro* of the original Spanish hagiographical work by the ecclesiastic Alonso de Villegas Selvago (1533–1603). Having Lippomano's and Surius' works as his model, Alonso revised the famous medieval *Flos Sanctorum* which was composed by the Italian theologian Jacopo de Varazze (1230–1298).

The immense popularity of those texts both to secular and ecclesiastical readers was due to the fact that they made readily available an otherwise scattered hagiographical material. Nevertheless, it needs to be clarified that the aforementioned authors and editors, loyal followers of the Tridentine doctrines, presented the legendary lives of the Saints of the Catholic Church with a more pious and rational approach, in order to defend the genre of the *legendae novae* against the Protestant contradictions and denunciations. The present study chose to view those hagiographical Catholic editions in comparison and connection with the numerous hagiographical works mainly on the Greek Fathers and Saints that were included scattered or collected in Vlachos' Greek codices, and were definitely among his most commonly read texts. Finally, a significant item which definitely served a special use in the library was the *Bibliotheca Selecta*, the popular bibliographic guide composed by the Italian Jesuit controversialist and bibliographer Antonio Possevino (1533–1611). Assembled in eighteen books covering the bibliography of the traditional scientific fields (theology, law, philosophy, medicine and the liberal arts), the *Bibliotheca* was defined as a response to the monumental Protestant *Bibliotheca Universalis* by the Swiss scholar Conrad Gessner (1516–1565), and served as a bibliographic canon to establish the model of the ideal Catholic library, avoiding any confessional perils for the Catholic orthodoxy. A genuine sample of the post-Tridentine cultural conditions in the Catholic West, the work was certainly among the catalytic factors upon which Gerasimos Vlachos' library was founded and enriched, at least as far as its massive and profound corpus of Latin books.

Another genuine product of the Catholic Reformation aiming to legitimize the medieval Church was the edition of the Proceedings of the Councils of the Church (*Conciliorum Omnium tam Generalium quàm Particularium*), from the early

Ecumenical ones through the Medieval and until the Council of Trent. In the same context, a monumental item is considered the early-17th-century Greek-Latin edition of the proceedings of all the Church Councils entitled *Concilia generalia Ecclesiae Catholicae*, produced in Rome under the auspices of Pope Paul V (1550–1621). The edition included the first eight early Ecumenical Councils, along with the ten medieval Councils of the Catholic Church and finally the Council of Trent. A genuine work in the spirit of the Catholic Reformation, the edition served for the justification of the accuracy of the medieval Councils as truly ecumenical, contradicting the arguments of the Protestant side, who spoke of aberrations from the medieval Church. The presence in the library of a work so indicative of the Catholic view on the ecumenical character of the Synods and the authority of Rome over Christendom raises the interest of the research. What remains is to define the role Gerasimos Vlachos had set for this particular book in shaping his confessional identity. Finally, the Cretan scholar was the owner of an epitome composed by the Jesuit Giovanni Gabriele Bisciola (1538–1613) of the monumental *Annales Ecclesiastici*, the eleven-volume unfinished history of the Church by the Italian Catholic Cardinal and historian Cesare Baronio (1538–1607), the definitive Catholic response to the Lutheran *Magdeburg Centuries*.

Completing the section of polemical theological treatises, I will refer to a small but utterly interesting corpus of polemical and anti-Unionist writings found among the Greek codices of the library. The latter came from the pen of high and late Byzantine scholars, along with Orthodox authors of the early modern centuries. More specifically, Vlachos obtained a codex with the Greek translation of Augustine's aforementioned *De Trinitate*, maybe related to the one composed during 1360s by the Byzantine theologian Demetrios Cydones (1324–1398). Nevertheless, we also detect the anti-Latin treatises by the scholarly monk Maximus Planudes (c.1260–c.1305), and by the eminent teacher in Constantinople Barlaam of Calabria (c.1290–1348). However, the dominant position in this group is held by the anti-unionist and unionist works in the context of the Council of Florence: i. numerous writings on the confessional differences between the Orthodox and Catholic Church, composed by the Byzantine theologian Mark of Ephesus (1393–1444); ii. theological treatises of similar nature by Mark's disciple and eminent polemical writer himself, the philosopher and theologian Georgios Kourtesios Scholarios (c.1400–c.1473), first Patriarch of Ottoman-ruled Constantinople as

Gennadius II;⁵¹⁰ iii. the three main works in favor of the *filioque* by the humanist scholar and later Catholic Cardinal Bessarion (1403–1472), all contained in their genuine Greek version, although Bessarion had eventually translated them into Latin.

Lastly, we meet a great amount of indicative readings dealing with the intense confessional conflicts between Rome and Constantinople in the aftermath of the Council of Trent. Particularly, Vlachos obtained an imprint of the anonymous Greek version of the proceedings of the Ecumenical Council of Florence, published by order of Pope Gregory XIII (1502–1585), and which also contained a corpus of three discourses and five doubtful treatises under the name of Gennadius II Scholarios. Of similar confessional background and purposes was the Greek version of the Pope Clement's I of Rome († 99) work entitled *Constitutiones Sanctorum Apostolorum doctrina Catholica*.⁵¹¹ What interests the research is the editor of the work and author of its introduction, the Spanish Jesuit Hellenist and famous polemicist Francisco Torres (c. 1509–1584) known as Turrianus; a warm supporter of the doctrines deriving from the Council of Trent, he defended passionately the authenticity of the Apostolic Canons against the numerous attacks by Protestant thinkers. Another case of a Jesuit editor is found in the 14th-century Byzantine scholar Georgios Kodinos' *De officiis*, a work on Byzantine rite and Orthodox ceremonies published by the Jesuit philologist Jacob Gretser (1562–1625). The 16th century is completed with two codices containing i. the inovative treatise *Three Books Concerning the Procession of the Holy Spirit* by the Cretan bishop of Cytherra Maximos Margounios (1549–1602),⁵¹² in which he attempted

⁵¹⁰ Apart from the anti-unionist writings of the above Byzantine authors, one of these specific codices contained the pro-Catholic works by Gregory III Mammas († 1459), Patriarch of Constantinople during 1443–1450: *Apologia contra Marci Ephesii Confessionem* and *Responsio ad epistolam Marci Ephesii*, along with his writing on the procession of the Holy Spirit (*Ad Imperatorem Trapezuntinum de additione facta in Symbolo per Latinos*).

⁵¹¹ This work was considered forged by heretics and was condemned by the Quinisext Council (692), a council though never recognized by the Catholic Church as authoritative or ecumenical.

⁵¹² Further codices under the name of Maximus Margounios contained i. a corpus of his philosophical commentaries on Aristotle's *Categories*, *On Interpretation* and the *Prior Analytics*; and ii. orations by various Church Fathers and early Christian authorities, all copied by the prolific bishop of Cytherra. Although I assume that these specific codices were autographs of Margounios, it remains a mystery how and when it came under Gerasimos Vlachos' possession. Nevertheless, modern scholarship detected evidence that Margounios had bequeathed a part of his library to the monastery of Iviron on Mount Athos, another part to the monastery of Agios Antonios of Savatiana in Candia, and a third one to the monastery of Saint Catherine of Sinai also in Candia, a place where Gerasimos Vlachos

to conciliate the confessional differences between the Catholic and the Orthodox theology, and ii. the responding refutation by the first Archbishop of Philadelphia in Venice Gabriel Seviros (c.1540–1616) with his fervently Orthodox treatise *On the differences towards the Latins*.

Dealing with the central figures of the 17th-century Orthodox-Catholic controversy following mainly the publishment of the pro-Calvinist *Eastern Confession of the Christian faith* (Geneva, 1629) under the name of Patriarch Kyrillos Loukaris (1572–1638), we firstly detect two polemical treatises by the controversial Cretan Catholic Ioannis Matthaios Karyophyllos (1566–1633) against the 14th-century Orthodox bishop of Thessaloniki Neilos Kabasilas († 1363) and against the *Confessio* attributed to Loukaris. Nex to the above works, Vlachos placed a famous refutation on the Byzantine ecclesiastical ritual entitled *Vera Utriusque Ecclesiae Sacramentorum Concordia* written by the Latinized Greek scholar John Baptist Catanziriti, known as Catumsyritus.⁵¹³ Finally, as the most persistent figure in this category I consider the eminent ecclesiastic and scholar from Chios Leo Allatius (1586–1669), with four of his numerous works to be included in the library: i. his treatise on the Orthodox ecclesiastical-liturgical books entitled *De libris ecclesiasticis Graecorum*; ii. his Latin biographical history of the most eminent Roman intellectuals during the years 1630–1632 entitled *Apes Urbanae*; iii. his treatise on Greek and Latin rhetoric entitled *De Erroribus magnorum virorum in dicendo dissertatio rhetorica*; iv. his monumental two-volume *Graeciae Orthodoxae Scriptores*.⁵¹⁴

spent his final years before settling to Venice. Moreover, in his will Margounios requested all the codices composed by his own hand to be given to “Mr. Manusso Moschioti from Candia”; see Zampakolas: «Μαργούνιος», p. 311-328. Both the name of this fellow citizen of Vlachos, along with his familiar monastery of Saint Catherine could be the starting points for a future archival research on the origins of this immense and multifaceted library.

⁵¹³ Catumsyritus composed his book in response to Petros Arkoudios’ (1562–1633) *Concordia Ecclesiae Orientalis et Occidentalis in Septem Sacramentorum Administratione*, which he urged the Inquisition to condemn as being influenced by the Lutheran doctrines. Although Vlachos made a direct condemnation namely on Arkoudios in his *Obfuscation of the False Believers*, the total absence of works by Arkoudios in the library certainly does not exclude the possibility the Cretan scholar to have studied Arcudius’ views from other sources, undetected from the present study.

⁵¹⁴ The book, which dealt with purely dogmatical and confessional subjects, mainly collected the writings of the Greek theologians who supported the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son. In its pages the author recorded the names and works of totally thirteen Byzantine ecclesiastical scholars: the 9th-century philosopher Niketas Byzantios, the 12th-century Archbishop of Mediolana Petros Chrysolanos, the cleric and scholar Nikephoros

5.3.1^d. Catholic sermons and manuals for preachers

As a pious clergyman and a fervent preacher of the Gospel, Gerasimos Vlachos was particularly interested in the homiletic literature, not only of the early Christian tradition but also of the medieval and early modern Latin eloquence. Therefore, in both the Latin and the Italian sections of his library we find an extensive corpus of items including collections of sermons and preaching manuals, mainly from the late 15th century and until the Cretan scholar's times. Indicative in all these works was again the spirit of the Catholic Reformation and a polemical tone against the Protestant doctrines and theology.⁵¹⁵

Before entering the purely homiletic part of the category, it is interesting to note that Vlachos was the owner of a small number of Latin devotional and spiritual works composed by 15th-century eminent authors: i. the anonymous *De imitatione Christi*, a widely read Christian handbook for spiritual life attributed at first to the French reformer and learned educator Jean Charlier de Gerson (1363–1429) and later to the German-Dutch canon regular Thomas à Kempis (c.1380–1471); ii. an equally popular religious treatise entitled *Destructorium vitiorum* by the otherwise unknown Alexander Anglus (Carpenter); iii. the fervent in polemical tone against the Islam *Contra Alcoranum* by Denys the Cathusian; iv. a mystical treatise entitled *Speculum Peregrinarum Quæstionum* by the theologian and philosopher from Bari Bartolomeo Sibilla († 1493); v. the devotional work *De reditu peccatoris ad Deum* by the famous Florentine preacher Paolo Attavanti (c.1445–1499), which he composed following his meditations on the cantas of Dante's *Commedia*; vi. the popular in the Middle Ages collection of prayers and psalms entitled *Book of Hours*, with this particular version containing the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Finally, special reference should be made to the presence in the library of some writings by the controversial Italian

Vlemmydis (1197-1272), the Patriarch of Constantinople Ioannis XI Bekkos (c.1225–1297), the ecclesiastical writer Konstantinos Melitiniotis (c.1240–1307), the philosopher and historian Georgios Pachymeris (1242–c.1310), the archdeacon in Constantinople Georgios Metochitis (c.1250–1328), the Patriarch Grigorios III [Melissenos] (†1459), the famous Cretan philosopher Georgios of Trebizond (1395–1486), his contemporaries monks Maximos Chrysobergis and Isaiah of Cyprus, the 15th-century scholar Hilarion, the émigré scholar and humanist Ioannis Argyropoulos (c.1415–1487), the Cretan Renaissance scholar and hymnographer Ioannis Plousiadinos (c.1429–1500).

⁵¹⁵ See Emily Michelson: *The Pulpit and the Press in Reformation Italy*. Harvard University Press. Cambridge, London 2013.

Dominican friar and preacher Girolamo Savonarola (1452–1498). In fact, three of his works are detected, all of them following the pious character of the library and its owner: i. his spiritual *Triumphus crucis*, a celebration of the victory of the Cross over sin and death and an encomium to the Christian faith; ii. his influential *Confessionale pro instructione confessorum*, a brief manual on confession and penance, presenting the church principles and procedures the confessors should follow; iii. his highly praised spiritual meditations entitled *Sopra il Salmo Miserere Mei Deus*. Although Vlachos was the holder of an extensive corpus of early modern Italian sermons, he avoided to obtain – or at least mention – Savonarola’s notorious sermons on the reform of the Catholic Church, works that eventually led to his execution. On the contrary, we detect only his devotional and less controversial works.

Four of the early modern authorities on Latin homiletic found in the shelves of the library are the pious sermons by the renowned preacher Roberto Caracciolo of Lecce (c.1425–1495), the Dominican preacher Gregorius Britannicus, the zealous Franciscan preachers Pelbartus of Timisoara (c.1435–1504) and Bernardino de Bustis (c.1450–1513). Passing to the 16th century, Vlachos obtained the voluminous collections and manuals of eleven distinguished Catholic preachers of different origin (Italy, Germany, England, France, Portugal and Spain), all fervent representatives of the anti-Protestant tradition: i. the German theologian and bishop of Vienna Frederick Nausea (c.1496–1552), a conciliatory but warm promoter of the Catholic doctrines during the Reformation; ii. the French eloquent preacher Pierre de Besse (1567–1639); iii. the pious English Catholic controversialist Thomas Stapleton (1535–1598), a similar case to Nicholas Harpsfield; iv. the skilled preacher Agostino Righini (1490–1583) and the celebrated clergyman Eleuterio Albergoni (1560–1636), both eminent Italian members of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual; v. the Franciscan theologian and preacher Felipe Diez (1550–1601); vi. five successful Spanish prelates and preachers of the post-Tridentine era: the Jesuit humanist professor of rhetoric Pedro Juan Perpiñán Esclapez (1530–1566), the Franciscan professor Juan Ovando Mogollón de Paredes (1532–1610), the Jesuit theologian Juan Osorio (1542–1594), the Dominican friar and professor of the Sacred Scripture Tomás de Trujillo (fl. 1590), the Franciscan and former Jesuit theologian Juan de Cartagena (1563–1617).

In the Italian section of the library, I also collected a considerable corpus of religious Catholic works exclusively on the occupation of Italian preaching, mostly sermons and instructional manuals from the 16th and 17th centuries. It is noteworthy that already during the late 15th century the Italian, more correctly the Tuscan dialect, had gradually replaced Latin as the language in which the preachers were addressing their flock. Having literally mastered their art, the later Catholic preachers of the early modern centuries were immensely admired, with the printed editions of their works to gain great popularity and to become widely read among the ecclesiastical and secular circles of the early modern Catholic Europe. In this context, some of them were eventually placed in the personal library of the Orthodox cleric.⁵¹⁶ Similar to the aforementioned cases of Latin preaching, the Italian works on homiletic also obtained a strong theological background, since they had adopted the spirit of the Catholic Reformation and the Tridentine doctrines. In this context, Gerasimos Vlachos owned numerous editions, sometimes more than two or three, of the sermons and manuals by the following early modern major and minor preachers of the 16th century: i. the distinguished Conventual Franciscan Cornelio Musso (1511–1574), whose fervent preaching activity mainly aimed to strengthen and promote the Catholic faith against the Protestant teachings; ii. the prolific author and leading Franciscan preacher Francesco Panigarola (1548–1594); iii. the Augustinian theologians and preachers Sebastiano Amiani (c.1503–1568) and Gabriele Fiamma (1533–1585); iv. the Cardinal of Florence Angelo Pientini († 1589); v. the already mentioned Spanish ecclesiastic Alonso de Villegas Selvago (1533–1603); the Dominican Vincenzo Ferrini (fl. late 16th cent.).

Nevertheless, the most indicative evidence of the Cretan prelate's preferences in the field of Italian ecclesiastical homiletic are considered the names of the following notable 17th-century preachers, with Gerasimos Vlachos owning the complete works by the most of them: i. the particularly loyal to the Tridentine spirit priest from Messina Alessandro Calamato († 1648); ii. the erudite Theatine prelates and preachers Paolo Arese (1574–1644) and Vincenzo Giliberti (1562–1656); iii. the Catholic prelate and preacher from Naples Giuseppe Mozzagrugno (fl. early 17th cent.); iv. the eloquent

⁵¹⁶ It is noteworthy that Vlachos obtained two collections of sermons in Italian with their authors dated before the 16th century, these were a collection of various sermons by the French Cistercian abbot Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153), and an anonymous pamphlet on spirituality entitled *Giardino de Oratione* and attributed to the Italian Franciscan preacher Nicholas of Osimo (c.1370–1453).

Carmelite preacher from Castile Christophorus de Avendano († 1628); v. the also Spanish priest and reader of Sacred Scripture in the College of St. Bernard of Alcala Lorenzo de Zamora; vi. the Spanish prelate Diego Nisseno (fl. middle 17th cent.); vii. the Conventual Minor preacher and Master of Sacred Eloquence Salvatore Cadana (fl. middle 17th cent.), a member of the Academia degli Incogniti in Venice and prolific author of religious and devotional works; viii. the Sicilian Franciscan preacher Benedetto Fedeli († 1648); ix. the Franciscan preacher Serafino Leggi (1619–1655); x. the Venetian Capuchin scholar Mario Bignoni (1601–1660). The aforementioned corpus of homiletic readings could be more confidently regarded as additions made consciously by Gerasimos Vlachos, in order to cover his pastoral needs as a fervent and vivid preacher of the Divine Word. Despite their Catholic background and content, the Cretan clergyman definitely studied those works, was inspired by their content and methodology, and eventually combined their technical features with his personal profound Orthodox faith and erudition.

5.3.1^e. The *Synagogues*. Readings on faith of personal choice and labor

The final items of the library containing purely religious and theological works were the so-called manuscript *Synagogues*. Following a profound Byzantine tradition of corresponding writing, Vlachos throughout his life made notes and recordings of a multitude of excerpts, quotations, maxims, sayings and whole passages deriving from all of his numerous and various readings. During a procedure of compilation of all of his recordings, he indexed and organized the latter according to their subject and type and then collected them into corresponding volumes. This occupation finally gave birth to 29 voluminous collective codices under the general title *Books of Synagogues*, which simply means “compilations”. Perfectly reflecting the identity of Gerasimos Vlachos as a cleric and theologian, his *Synagogues*, which in total exceeded 5,500 sheets, principally contained parts and excerpts from the early Christian literal tradition, the medieval Greek religious texts, the early modern Orthodox theological literature, and the field of preaching and sermons.⁵¹⁷

In this context, the first volume of the *Synagogues* contained a summary with

⁵¹⁷ During the presentation of the *Synagogues*, I did not follow the numerical order established in the catalogue of Vlachos’ library, but the thematic and conceptual connection among the codices, the same method I followed in the previous categories of the scholar’s readings.

passages from the Holy Scriptures along with relevant texts of biblical exegesis which unfortunately Vlachos did not name, while the third one consisted of interpretations of excerpts from the books of the Bible and various homilies on all Sundays of the year. The second book dealt with the life and the veneration of Saints, while the seventh contained mariological works. The sixth volume was entitled *Antidote* and contained early ecclesiastical texts against the heresies of Christianity, while the fifth collected excerpts from commentaries and interpretations in various terms, and the tenth dealt with interpretations of the parables and miracles of Christ. Three volumes of the *Synagogues* (no. IV, IX, XX) concerned exclusively the patristic literature, the commentaries, the allegories and the maxims by already mentioned Greek Church Fathers.⁵¹⁸ The twenty-eighth book dealt with the field of allegory, while in the eighth volume Vlachos collected maxims and quotes which were not limited to the ecclesiastical-theological field but “it contains various opinions on all the beings”; this comment allows us to assume that this specific collection should have been an important and valuable source and aid for the composition of Vlachos’ own published anthology of terms, his *Harmonia Definitiva*.

The following three codices included selective passages from the writings mainly of the patristic and early ecclesiastical literature. The thirteenth book contained excerpts from various books by early and later Christian writers. Among others we mention the works by the 2nd-century Church Father Athenagoras of Athens, the ascetic from Egypt Isidore of Pelusium († c.450), the brief parody of classical philosophers entitled *Gentilium Philosophorum Irrisio* and composed by an anonymous late-2nd-century author under the name of Hermias, and the treatise *Against the Armenians* by a 12th-century converted Christian writer named Isaac. The most extensive codex of the category, the twenty-ninth, included a collection of sayings and excerpts from the works of John Chrysostom, while the twenty-fifth bore the title *Melissa*, typical of the Orthodox tradition, and consisted of excerpts from mainly early Christian writers, whom we have met in previous sections of the library. The twelfth book was entitled *Historical* and contained excerpts from secular and ecclesiastical histories and

⁵¹⁸ The interest of the research is raised by the recording in the twentieth volume of the famous Hermes Trismegistus, the purported author of the *Hermetic Corpus*, a series of esoteric sacred writings which greatly influenced Latin and Orthodox tradition during the medieval and early modern period.

chronographies, the twenty-fourth was merely entitled *Mixed Issues*, while the twenty-sixth was named *Hierarchical* since “it includes texts related to high clerics”. The eighteenth *Synagogue*, under the name *Summary*, could be characterized as mixed in terms of its content, since it included concise versions of various works of ancient Greek (Aristotle, Theophrastus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus and the 1st-century Neophythagorean mathematician Nicomachus of Gerasa) and Christian literature (Origen, John Chrysostom, Asterius of Amasea). It is noteworthy that the collection also included a concise version of the already mentioned *Sibylline Oracles* and the *Life of Alexander*. Moreover, in the same codex Vlachos recorded two brief theological treatises composed by him, his polemical *On the Religion of Muhammad and Against the Turks* («Γερασίου Κατὰ Μωάμεθ») and his hitherto unknown work entitled *On Theological Numbers* («Γερασίου Περὶ θεολογικῶν ἀριθμῶν»).

A small group of six books of *Synagogues* was related to the so-called *Meanings* and consisted of works from early ecclesiastical literature to Vlachos time. In addition to the seventeenth volume, briefly recorded as *Study*, the nineteenth under the title *Scholastic Meanings*, and the twenty-first which contained a collection of patristic meanings, the interest of the research is raised in the case of the twenty-ninth book of *Synagogues* in which we detect a concise version of the history and events of the Council of Florence. In case the latter was indeed summarized by the Cretan prelate, it would reveal his perception and attitude against the central theological points during that confessional discussion between Orthodox and Catholics. In the twenty-third volume we find, among others, Vlachos’ already mentioned treatise *Didaskalia on the Pure Way to Teach the Divine and Holy Gospel* («Διδασκαλία περὶ τοῦ διδάσκειν Γερασίου»). The last item dealing with the subject of *Meanings* is the tenth book of the *Synagogues*, in which for the first time reference was made to the 10th-century *Suidae Lexicon*, a voluminous source of information for the intellectual, religious and political history from ancient antiquity to the author’s times. Maybe the most noteworthy points of this volume were the two 17th-century anti-Jewish treatises composed in vernacular Greek, the first by Patriarch Kyrillos Loukaris and the second by Gerasimos Vlachos himself.⁵¹⁹ The category of the *Synagogues* is completed with four books dealing with

⁵¹⁹ «Κυρίλλου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως Κατὰ Ἰουδαίων Γερασίου Φιλαδελφείας Κατὰ Ἰουδαίων»; it is interesting that Loukaris’ work was published in 1627 in Constantinople in the

the Cretan clergyman's favorite occupation, the art of preaching and the composition of sermons. First of all, he ensured the technical part of this particular profession by gathering in two volumes, the fourteenth and the twenty-seventh a large amount of various places ("loci") from the sacred texts of early Christian literature. In addition to those structural manuals which he considered utterly useful for ecclesiastical sermons, he also composed two equally vast collections of the most distinguished, in his opinion, sermons of the Orthodox Church (no. XI, XV). It is noteworthy that the eleventh volume contained also Vlachos' theological treatise from the time of Candia, which dealt with the question of whether and how Orthodox monks were to compose their testaments.

In case the modern reader is impressed by this persistent and painstaking activity by the Cretan scholar in selecting and copying with his own hand texts which for the most part had already been published in his time, one should bear in mind that the printed books were relatively inaccessible to the East during the early modernity. As far as the codices are concerned, Crete indeed obtained the fame since the medieval period of a pivotal center for the production and distribution of Greek codices. Nevertheless, the latter were not easily circulated among the general public, but rather to limited circles either of the local nobility or the Orthodox and Catholic ecclesiastical – monastic environment. Moreover, it was often similarly difficult for scholars, teachers and their students to obtain a significant amount of such manuscript books. In this context, it was necessary for those who were interested in reading and owning a specific work to find the most practical solution. Thus, they often proceeded to their personal copying of the codex or printed edition they were interested in, partially or in its whole. Taking that into consideration, we can assume that both the phase of selecting and copying the aforementioned works in his *Synagogues* reveal Gerasimos Vlachos' personal interests as a fervent reader and as a scholarly ecclesiastic. More importantly, this vast corpus of codices, although it remains undetected and possibly lost, compose the portrait of the owner of the library not anymore as a meticulous researcher of the Latin theological and philosophical thought, but as a steadfast and pious representative of his faith, strongly

ephemeral printing press by the Patriarch's disciple Nicodimos Metaxas. Since we obtain the information that Gerasimos Vlachos had indeed read and copied Loukaris' work, a future comparative study of the two anti-Jewish treatises will definitely contribute to the field of the early modern Orthodox polemical literature.

influenced and depended by the long religious tradition of the Orthodox Church.

5.3.2. Philosophy and science: Books on ancient Greek philosophy, medieval Aristotelianism and early modern science

Not as extensive as the theological section of the library, though highly acclaimed and organized with great care and meticulousness, the group of Gerasimos Vlachos' philosophical readings contained the central works on philosophy from the classical antiquity, the hellenistic period, the medieval Greek and Latin era and the Latin philosophical thought of the 15th, 16th and 17th century. Particularly for the period of the Middle Ages and the early modern centuries, it is necessary to view the philosophical reasoning in connection with the theological thought, mainly under the influence of the dominant scholastic current; it is noteworthy that numerous of the authors whose works were recorded in the theological section of Vlachos' library are to be re-detected in the philosophical section. Nevertheless, the Cretan scholar also obtained numerous writings of relatively pure philosophical nature, deriving from the early modern revival of philosophy in Latin Europe.⁵²⁰ Thus, in the library we will find a multitude of treatises and commentaries mostly on the Aristotelian Corpus (natural philosophy, metaphysics and logic) from both radical and conservative, nevertheless innovative authors originating in their majority from Italy, France and Spain. The category is completed with Latin and Italian anthologies and manuals for the study and teaching of Aristotle's doctrines.⁵²¹

Despite the fact that the overwhelming majority of the library's philosophical books dealt in one way or another with Aristotle and his multifaceted system, the equally pivotal classical Greek thinker, Plato (427–347) is not absent from this category.

⁵²⁰ Norman Kretzmann, Anthony Kenny (eds.): *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy: From the Rediscovery of Aristotle to the Disintegration of Scholasticism 1100–1600*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge 1982; Richard Sorabji: *Aristotle Transformed. The Ancient Commentators and Their Influence*. Bloomsbury Academic. London, New York 1990; Constance Blackwell, Sachiko Kusukawa (eds.): *Philosophy in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries. Conversations with Aristotle*. Routledge. New York 2016 [1999]; Craig Martin: *Subverting Aristotle. Religion, History, and Philosophy in Early Modern Science*. John Hopkins University Press. Baltimore 2014.

⁵²¹ For the presentation of the philosophical books, I will proceed to two succeeding distinctions of the works: i. according to the chronological criterio (Greek antiquity, Middle Ages, Early Modern Period); ii. according to the thematical criterio (Logic, Natural Philosophy, Metaphysics).

More specifically, Vlachos obtained two editions, Greek and Latin, with Plato's complete works,⁵²² and another Greek-Latin edition of the opera omnia by the Neoplatonist Plotinus (c.205–270).⁵²³ Both the Latin edition of Plato and the Greek-Latin edition of Plotinus were translated and published by the distinguished Florentine Renaissance humanist and philosopher Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499), the main promoter of Platonic and Neoplatonic thought in the Latin West during the 15th century. Noteworthy is that the Cretan scholar also had in his library the two-volume edition of Ficino's complete works, an indicative evidence of the possible influence the Ficinian philosophy and theology had on his thought and writing.

Next to Plato's works, we detect two different editions, Greek and Greek-Latin, of Aristotle's (384–322) complete writings, a starting point for a long series of further philosophical readings in the library. At first, Vlachos obtained the works by Aristotle's most influential Greek commentators: Theophrastus (c.371–c.287);⁵²⁴ Alexander of Aphrodisias (fl. AD 200); the Neoplatonist Syrianus († c.437); the Neoplatonist Ammonius Hermiae (c.450–c.517); Porphyry of Tyre (c.234–c.305); the Neoplatonist Simplicius (c.490–c.560); the Alexandrian philologist and Christian theologian John Philoponus the Grammarian (c.490–c.570).⁵²⁵ The vast and systematic presence of the writings and interpretation of the ancient commentators of the Philosopher were to be combined by Vlachos with the later Latin commentators of the medieval and early modern period and produce the Cretan scholar's personal genuine approach to Aristotle's philosophy and perception of the world and man.

Proceeding to the cases of books portraying the medieval scholastic Aristotelian tradition in the library (13th–14th century), we first find an extensive corpus of

⁵²² The Greek edition also contained the utterly influential during the Renaissance commentaries on *Timaeus* and the *Republic* written by the Neoplatonist philosopher Proclus Lycaeus (410–485), one of the last major classical philosophers and the most systematic exponent of the Neoplatonic doctrines.

⁵²³ This edition also contained the principal writing of the Neoplatonic philosopher Porphyry of Tyre (234–305) entitled *Life of Plotinus*.

⁵²⁴ Related to Theophrastus' work on *Metaphysics* is a commentary found in the library (*Commentariorum in primum metaphysices Theophrasti*), composed by the Italian Renaissance professor of philosophy in Bologna, Giovanni Battista Camozzi (1515–1581).

⁵²⁵ Before entering the Latin commentators of Aristotle, the last Greek cases of commentators on Aristotle included in the library was the bishop of Nicaea Eustratius (c.1050–c.1120) and his commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics* and the Byzantine philosopher and historian Georgios Pachymeres (1242–c.1310) with Vlachos obtaining his complete philosophical writings in manuscript form.

commentaries by the already mentioned German Dominican Albert the Great (c. 1200–1280) on Aristotle’s natural philosophy, metaphysics and ethics. Moreover, Vlachos obtained two commentaries on the Aristotelian metaphysics composed by Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274),⁵²⁶ along with the monumental *Ars Generalis* better known as *Ars Magna* by the Franciscan philosopher and logician from Majorca Ramon Llull (c.1232–c.1315).⁵²⁷ In the same context, we detect i. a commentary on the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Problems* entitled *Expositio Problematum* and composed by the renowned Italian philosopher and professor of medicine Pietro d’Abano (c.1257–1316); ii. the extensive commentary on Aristotle’s *Logic* by John Duns Scotus (c.1266–1308); and iii. the major work on *Posterior Analytics* by the prolific English scholastic philosopher Walter Burley (c.1275–1344).

Turning to the early modern centuries (15th–17th), Vlachos had collected numerous philosophical treatises of mainly Italian and Spanish thinkers, both secular and ecclesiastics. Starting with the works on logic and the Aristotelian *Organon*, we detect the commentaries of the following eminent philosophers: i. the Italian Renaissance philosopher and professor in Padua Agostino Nifo (1470–c.1540); ii. the already mentioned scholastic Spanish Dominican theologian Domingo de Soto (1494–1560); iii. the prominent Jesuit ecclesiastic Francisco de Toledo (1532–1596); iv. the also Jesuit scholastic philosopher and missionary Antonio Rubio (1548–1615). The category of natural philosophy is considered more extensive according to the books that consisted it. To start with, we find a commentary on *Meteorologica* by the nevertheless controversial Aristotelian philosopher from Mantua Pietro Pomponazzi (1462–1525),⁵²⁸

⁵²⁶ Vlachos had bound Aquinas’ commentary on *De Anima* with two other works on metaphysics: the influential commentary on Aristotle’s *De Caelo et Mundo* by the German logician and natural philosopher Albert of Saxony (c.1320–1390), a disciple of the French philosopher Jean Buridan (c.1300–c.1358), and the *Quaestiones subtilissimae super duodecim libris metaphysicae Aristotelis* by Antonio Andrés (c.1280–c.1320), one of the most eminent disciples of John Duns Scotus; the fact that Aquinas’ work is tied to another which was composed “ad mentem Scoti” is certainly interesting.

⁵²⁷ The treatise did not exclusively deal with logic but the author used it to combine theosophy with analytical philosophy in his pastoral effort to convert Muslims to the Christian faith. Next to it, Vlachos recorded another work by Llull, his influential instructory handbook on alchemy entitled *Liber qui Codicillus [...] in quo Fontes Alchimicae Artis & Reconditoris Philosophiae Traduntur*.

⁵²⁸ It is interesting that Gerasimos Vlachos avoided obtaining Pomponazzi’s provocative treatise entitled *De Immortalitate Animae* (1516); supporting the mortal nature of the soul, the treatise gave rise to an immense controversy, it was condemned by the Catholic Church and was burned publicly in Venice. Nevertheless, we can be certain that the Cretan scholar was

along with the influential *De Rebus Naturalibus* by the other great representative of Paduan Aristotelianism, the Italian philosopher Jacopo Zabarella (1533–1589). Moreover, Vlachos obtained the highly praised *De Subtilitate Rerum* by the Italian Renaissance humanist philosopher and mathematician Girolamo Cardano (1501–1576), in which the author dealt with the fields of cosmology, medicine, geometry, natural science, cryptography and mechanics, but also the famous treatise on natural philosophy by the Paduan Aristotelianist and physician Julius Caesar Scaliger (1484–1558) entitled *Exotericarum Exercitationum*; the latter served as a response to what Scaliger considered to be Cardano's misinterpretations and false accusations against Aristotle. Further authors with works on *Physics* were the following: i. the Renaissance humanist and philosopher from Siena Alessandro Piccolomini (1508–1579); the professor of philosophy in Padua Daniele Furlano († 1576), who was born and raised in Crete; iii. the Spanish scholar and philosopher Sebastián Fox Morcillo (c.1526–c.1559), a promoter of the conciliation between the Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy; iv. the already mentioned Spanish Jesuit philosopher and missionary Antonio Rubio (1548–1615); v. the Italian physician and natural philosopher Fortunio Liceti (1577–1657); vi. the controversial in his time Italian scholar Antonio Rocco (1586–1653), a disciple of Cesare Cremonini; vii. the already mentioned Greek professor of philosophy in the University of Padua Ioannis Kottounios (1572–1657).⁵²⁹

Finally, in the context of the ongoing early modern discussion and controversy in the scholarly and ecclesiastical circles on the issue of the immortality of the soul, Vlachos had collected a voluminous corpus of relative works by the following thinkers: i. the 15th-century professor of dialectics and theology Jacobus Brutus; ii. the prolific anti-Protestant theologian and Archbishop of Corfu Christophoro Marcello (1480–c.1527); iii. the Venetian patrician and humanist Pietro Duodo (1554–1611); iv. the already mentioned Antonio Rubio and Ioannis Kottounios; v. the friar Hieronymo

aware, if not had read Pomponazzi's work, but maintained his distance from its content, since the extensive collection of the relative treatises that he obtained, all followed the doctrine of the Church in favor of the immortality of the soul.

⁵²⁹ A holder of almost all the literal production by Kottounios, Gerasimos Vlachos is portrayed not only as a careful reader of the Greek professor's philosophical and theological treatises, but also a disciple of his scholarly and ideological identity. In this context he also obtained in numerous editions Kottounios' two highly praised collections of Greek and Latin epigrams (i. *Ἑλληνικῶν Ἐπιγραμμάτων βιβλία δύο*; ii. *Immortalitati Alcidii Philelleni, sive Loredani Philhymetti, Varii Praeclarorum Virorum Applausus*), along with his manual on the composition of epigrams entitled *Conficiendo Epigrammate*.

Onuphrio († 1639); vi. the Jesuit professor of Philosophy in Padua and Ferrara Giulio Clemente Scoti (1602–1669). Given the absence in Vlachos' library of famous but rather controversial writings whose authors argued in favor of the mortalism of the soul, one could conclude that the Cretan scholar wished to remain a pious reader, unanimously accepting and promoting the doctrine of the Church in favor of the immortality of the soul. In addition to these commentaries on the main categories of the Aristotelian Corpus, further philosophical books in the library dealt with the rest of the Philosopher's works. Two items dealt with the Aristotelian metaphysics: i. a treatise by the already mentioned Renaissance philosopher Agostino Nifo, and the influential commentary by the so-called "Portuguese Aristotle", the Jesuit philosopher and theologian Pedro da Fonseca (1528–1599). In the context of Aristotle's *Poetics*, we finally detect the widely read *Poetics* by the already mentioned Julius Caesar Scaliger (1484–1558).

In addition to the philosophical books that dealt exclusively with the interpretation of the Aristotelian Corpus, the library contained further works that mainly served educational purposes for the study and teaching of the Aristotelian philosophy. In this context, we detect: i. the scholastic collection of citations drawn from the Aristotelian Corpus entitled *Prepositiones ex Omnibus Aristotelis Libris*, composed by the Italian Dominican Teofilo Ferrari (c.1431-c.1492); ii. the innovative *Paraphrases on Aristotle's Natural Philosophy* by the famous French Renaissance humanist, philosopher and theologian Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples (c.1455–1536);⁵³⁰ iii. the *Theoremata* by the Italian philosopher and physician Marcantonio Zimara (c.1470–c.1532); iv. a 1530s collection of the main doctrines and principles of the classical philosophy under the title *Dicta Notabilia et in Thesaurum Memoriae Reponenda*; v. an index of the main terminology from the whole Aristotelian Corpus entitled *Index Rerum Omnium, quae in Aristotelis Operibus Continentur, Absolutissimus*; vi. a florilegium of the Aristotelian works compiled by the 16th-century French scholar Pierre Saint-Fleur, entitled *Thesauri Aristotelis Stagiritae*; vii. the treatise *De recta philosophandi ratione* by the Italian professor of moral philosophy in the Scuola di Rialto and bishop of Verona Agostino Valier (1531–1606); viii. the widely read philosophical textbooks *Universa*

⁵³⁰ It is interesting that Gerasimos Vlachos did not obtain Lefèvre's influential theological writings, which were in their majority condemned as heretical

Philosophia de Moribus and *De Rerum Definitionibus*, both written by the Italian philosopher and academic in Padua Francesco Piccolomini (1523–1607); ix. a Greek-Latin work that served as a school handbook on dialectics and entitled *Compendiaria Dialecticae Synopsis* written and published by the faculty of one of the leading schools in France, the College of Beauvais. Definitely a key point to the aforementioned collection of paraphrases, epitomes, introductions and manuals on Aristotelian philosophy is characterized the presence among the shelves of the library of the monumental *Coimbra Commentaries*, a series of eight volumes on the Aristotelian Corpus (i. *In octo libros Physicorum*, ii. *In quattuor libros Physicorum de Coelo*, iii. *In libros Meteororum*, iv. *In libros qui Parva Naturalia appellantur*, v. *In libros Ethicorum ad Nicomachum*, vi. *In tres libros De Anima*, vii. *In De Generatione et Corruptione*, viii. *In Universam Dialecticam*). Composed by the Jesuit professors of the University of Coimbra, the commentaries were published in five quatro volumes during the period 1592–1606 by eminent members of the Society of Jesus, such as Pedro da Fonseca and Claudio Acquaviva (1543–1615). The Cretan scholar certainly used those voluminous and detailed commentaries largely, since the latter were literally filled with citations and interpretations of the Aristotelian texts by a wide range of ancient, medieval and early modern Greek, Latin and Arab thinkers.

Gerasimos Vlachos is presented to be a systematic and meticulous researcher of Aristotle's philosophy and writings, along with an erudite reader of the long commentary Aristotelian tradition from the first ancient Greek commentators to the medieval scholastic Latin authorities, and from the early Renaissance philosophers to his contemporary modern Aristotelianists. As it was already examined in Chapter 3, the Cretan professor held a lifelong esteem for Aristotle, praising him as a preeminent philosopher. Taking into account that, apart from the early Greek writings, the perception of Aristotle that dominated in his library was that of the Latin scholastic tradition, a main question is raised on the influence the latter had on Vlachos' personal philosophical thinking and respectively in his word through his multitude of commentaries. Did he use as his models the arguments and approaches of the Latin authors? Did he reject them as a whole promoting a pure interpretation based on the ancient Greek commentators? Did he try to conciliate the latter with the Latin scholastic thinkers of the medieval and early modern period? Did he even attempt to combine

Aristotle's philosophy with the early Christian teachings and doctrines, following a long tradition of Latin and Greek scholars and ecclesiastics before him? Eventually, did the scholar from Candia consider the study of philosophy as totally or relatively distinguished from that of theology?⁵³¹

In addition to the philosophical books, Vlachos obtained a very limited collection of works on geography, cosmography, mathematics and astronomy. To start with, he owned in numerous editions the complete works of the two principal ancient Greek geographers, Strabo (64BC–c.24AD) and Ptolemy (c.100–c.170), along with the works on geography by eminent Greek and Latin authors from the 1st to the 5th century (Pomponius Mela, Dionysius Periegetes, Publius Victor, Gaius Julius Solinus, Emperor Antoninus, Vibius Sequester, Stephanus Byzantinus). Moreover, we find the most authoritative textbooks on geography and cosmography during the early modern period: i. the influential description of the world entitled *Cosmographia* by the German cartographer and cosmographer Sebastian Münster (1488–1552); and ii. the *Introductionis in Universam Geographiam* by the also German geographer and historian Philipp Clüver (1580–1622). In the field of mathematics and arithmetics the following three works were detected: i. the textbook entitled *Opus Dilucidum in Quattuor Mathematicas Disciplinas*, written by the Byzantine monk, philosopher and historian Michael Psellus (1018–1078); ii. the Italian translation of the *Elements* of Euclid by the Venetian Renaissance mathematician Niccolò Fontana Tartaglia (1499–1557), the first translation of the work in a modern European language; iii. the popular and widely used manual on practical arithmetics entitled *Biblion procheiron tois pasi, periechon tēn tetraktikēn arithmetikēn, ē mallon eipein tēn Logaristikēn*, written by the Greek merchant from Chios Emmanuel Glitzounis (c. 1530–1596).

⁵³¹ It is noteworthy that during the classification of his books Gerasimos Vlachos proceeded to a clear distinction between his philosophical (*philosophici*) and theological (*theologici*) readings, although the limits were still quite indistinct, at least among the ecclesiastical circles. From the above, the scholar's interest and eagerness to preserve a close contact with the occupation of philosophy, in connection of course with the promotion of his theological identity, becomes obvious. The dominant question on the nature, factors and features of Vlachos' personal philosophical thinking, the degree of its dependence from his theological and religious ideals and the possible connections and influence between his Orthodox Greek ideological and intellectual background and the Catholic Latin parameters of his cognitive and external reality will be hopefully understood and interpreted through a future critical study and publishment of his numerous philosophical and theological commentaries.

Vlachos' interest, although not profound, in astronomy is testified from the relative writings by Ptolemy but also from a small group of the following Latin works: i. the elementary presentation of the Ptolemaic astronomy entitled *Theoricae Novae Planetarum* and written by the Austrian mathematician and astronomer Georg von Peurbach (1423–1461); ii. the treatise *On the Judgement of the Stars* by the early-11th-century Arab astrologer Albohazen Haly filii Abenragel, first translated in Old Castilian in 1254 by Yehudā ben Moshe; iii. the strongly influential *De Sphaera Mundi*, a medieval introduction to the basic elements of astronomy written by the English monk, scholar and astronomer Johannes de Sacrobosco (c.1195–c.1256), along with a commentary on the latter by the German Jesuit mathematician and astronomer Christophorus Clavius (1538–1612); iv. two treatises on cosmology and geocentrism against the theories of Galileo Galilei, composed by the Italian physician and natural philosopher Fortunio Liceti (1577–1657); v. two works by the Croatian-born Italian Franciscan Matija Ferkić (1583–1669), an influential Scotist philosopher and professor of metaphysics and theology “in via Scoti” at the University of Padua; vi. a revised version from the Italian typographer Ottavio Beltrano (c.1598–1654) of the famous 1587 *Perpetual Almanac* by the astronomer and astrologer Rutilio Benincasa (1555–1626); vii. a brief treatise written by the 17th-century Florentine astronomer and prolific author Francesco Barzini examining the appearance of a comet in 1680.

Although this dominant presence of the Aristotelian doctrines and their commentary tradition in ancient, medieval and early modern period, proves Vlachos' profound erudition, it is also indicative of the obvious limitations regarding the flexibility of his philosophical thought at a time when in Europe modern currents in science appeared. Despite the fact that he could definitely comprehend the value of experience and observation in order for man to obtain the true meanings of the world, he also showed indifference to the new scientific stream that was emerging around him.⁵³² Mainly in the section of natural philosophy and astronomy, a conservative or just pious perception of knowledge becomes apparent. In this context, it is noteworthy that on the shelves of the library we find the radically skeptical satire on the poor state of 16th-

⁵³² Jonathan I. Israel: *Radical Enlightenment. Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650–1750*. Oxford University Press. Oxford 2001.

century science entitled *De incertitudine et vanitate scientiarum*, written by the German physician, theologian and occult writer Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa (1486–1535).⁵³³

In the corpus of Vlachos' theological readings, we were unable to detect any evidence of non-Orthodox or non-Catholic literature. In the case of his limited scientific books, the utter lack of works and interest in the spirit of the new science developed in the field of mathematics, physics and astronomy in France, England and northern of the Alps is not to be viewed simply as an indication of Vlachos' ignorance of the new current. On the contrary, it is a proof of his conscious opposition, both in his youth in Candia and in the later phase of his life in Venice, against the new ideological tendencies and movements, which were constantly gaining ground in the European thought. Indicatively portrayed in his *Harmonia Definitiva*, Vlachos' conservative reasoning, probably a consequence of his personal religious principles and priorities, is better understood if one takes into account that he was and always remained a pious man of God. Thus his ultimate aim, whether he was writing or preaching, was the strengthening of faith, along with his constant will to maintain a clear and firm respect for the principles and dogmas of the Church regarding the natural and spiritual worlds. As a result, his knowledge of astronomy did not serve a possible scientific engagement with celestial bodies, but it covered purely religious needs. More specifically, Vlachos used mainly the traditional ancient models and teachings on astronomy, cosmography and geography in order to compose rhetorical patterns in his preaching, or detailed arguments in his treatises on natural philosophy. By combining the ancient Greek scientific doctrines, corresponding maxims from the patristic and early Christian tradition, and above all rhetorical schemes from the 16th-and-17th century Catholic preaching literature, he aimed to interpret the natural phenomena in the world as divine signs through which God addressed to man, in order to warn, punish or reward him. Therefore, the works of natural philosophy, astronomy or cosmography that were detected in his library unanimously followed and served the interests and doctrines of the Church, without provoking any controversy in matters of the relation among God, man and the world.

⁵³³ Nevertheless, Gerasimos Vlachos did not obtain Agrippa's widely read and extremely controversial summa of the knowledge on occult and magic entitled *De Occulta Philosophia*. It is a fact that nowhere in his writings or correspondence the Cretan scholar presented himself as a supporter or a seeker of secret knowledge, mystical arts, magic or alchemy.

5.3.3. Philology: Readings on classical literature, grammar and rhetoric in the context of school education

Until this point, the library of Gerasimos Vlachos portrays a view of him as an eminent theologian and prelate and as a thinker of profound philosophical erudition. In addition, the catalogue of his books reveals the third largely efficient profession of the scholar from Candia, that of the teacher of basic and higher education, an activity that defined him during his life in Candia and then in Venice. Since the present study has already argued on the nature of the courses and lessons Vlachos offered and connected them with the so-called sciences (logic, natural philosophy, metaphysics, theology, biblical and patristic studies), it is reasonable to conclude that the aforementioned vast corpus of theological and philosophical books of the library had definitely been used or studied by their owner for the benefit of his educational activity and projects. In addition to the aforementioned sciences, though, the Cretan scholar dealt extensively with matters and fields of basic and higher education. More specifically, of equal significance with the other sciences were considered the teaching of the classical (ancient Greek and Latin) language and literature, grammar and syntax, the art of metre and rhetoric. Therefore, Vlachos ensured that he would have procured with the necessary material for his courses and textbooks. In this context, his library included a large collection of manuals, textbooks, dictionaries and treatises on grammar, vocabulary, epistolography, rhetorical compositions and the teaching of classical poetry and prose. To them, one should add the multitude of editions with the central works of classical Greek and Latin literature in the fields of poetry (epic and lyric), theater, historiography and morals. Therefore, I proceeded to the following internal categorization of this corpus: i. ancient Greek and Latin poetry; ii. ancient Greek and Latin prose; iii. ancient Greek and Latin rhetoric and early modern rhetorical manuals; iv. ancient Greek and Latin grammar and early modern manuals; v. ancient Greek, Latin and early modern dictionaries and vocabularies.

Starting with the editions of classical poetical works, Vlachos obtained editions of Iliad and Odyssey, along with the later epic poems *Posthomérica* by the 4th-century Greek poet Quintus of Smyrna, and the *Argonautica* by the 3rd-century Apollonius of Rhodes. Next to them were placed the works of the four main representatives of ancient

Greek lyric poetry [Pindar (c.522–c.443), Theocritus (fl. c.270 BC), Simonides of Ceos (c.556–468), Moschus (fl. c.150 BC), Bion of Smyrna (fl. 100 BC)], along with various editions of the classical Greek tragedians and comic playwrights [Aeschylus (c.525–c.455), Sophocles (496–406), Euripides (c.480–c.406), Aristophanes (c.446–c.386)]. The Greek group of poetical works is completed with a two-volume monumental collective edition entitled *Poetae Graeci Veteres, Tragici, Lyrici, Comici, Epigrammatici*.⁵³⁴ From the field of ancient Latin poetry, Vlachos obtained the writings of Virgil (70–19 BC) and Ovid (43 BC–17 AD). In the same context, we also find an edition of the influential works by Lucan (39–65 AD), along with Lucretius' (90–55 BC) *De Rerum Natura*.⁵³⁵ Finally, the Cretan scholar owned two collections with the works by various poets: i. the *Illustrium Poetarum Flores* by the 15th-century Augustinian Canonist Ottaviano Mirandola; ii. an edition of the *Priapeia*, the famous collection of anonymous short Latin poems pertaining to the phallic god Priapus.

Along with the poetical works from the classical period, the library also contained numerous writings on prose, starting with ancient Greek and Latin historiography.⁵³⁶ Firstly, we detect the two principal ancient Greek historians of the 5th

⁵³⁴ The Greek-Latin edition contained the preserved works by the central lyric poets and theatrical writers of Greek antiquity, a group of hymns, epigrams and poems composed by early Christian authorities [Clement of Alexandria, John of Damascus, Gregory Nazianzus, Synesius of Ptolemais, e.t.c.], along with Byzantine and post-Byzantine intellectuals [Georgios Pisides (7th cent.), Ioannis Geometres (10th cent.), Ioannis Tzetzes (12th cent.), Manuel Philes (1275–1345), and Maximos Margounios (1549–1602)].

⁵³⁵ Vanished during the Middle Ages, Lucretius' poem was discovered by Poggio Bracciolini in 1417. First published in Brescia in 1473, it was widely circulated among the humanists with a great impact to intellectual life and art. In opposition to the doctrines of the Church especially during the Reformation period because of the materialist interpretation of the world, the human civilization and the human soul, the work was banned from teaching in schools as early as the Fifth Council of the Lateran in 1517. So although 32 editions of the poem are bibliographically found, only nine of them took place in Italy; the first seven before 1515 and the next in 1647, that is 132 years later, followed by one more in 1657. It is important at this point to note that this philosophical poem was placed by Gerasimos Vlachos among the pedagogical readings of the library, rather than that of the *Libri philosophici*. Indeed, the Cretan scholar's choice is indicative of the purpose he wished Lucretius' work to serve. In the context of his personal philosophical thinking and his perception of the controversial ideological propensities and tendencies of the poem, the pious professor seemed to ignore Lucretius' philosophical and religious doctrines; on the contrary he focused on the literary artistry of the poem, which I assume he used as one of the models for the poetic metrics and style during his courses.

⁵³⁶ It is interesting to remember that Gerasimos Vlachos himself had noted in his manual on preaching, *Didaskalia*, that the study of history was considered of great benefit for the young pupils, as it contributed to the formation of their moral, religious and socio-political

century, Herodotus (c.484–c.425) and Thucydides (c.460–c.400). The group of Latin writers contained the works by Julius Caesar (100–44), Sallust (86–c.35) and the immensely influential during the early modern period Titus Livy (c.64 BC–c.12 AD). Among the later historians Vlachos obtained the following: i. the universal history entitled *Bibliotheca Historica* by Diodorus of Sicily (1st cent. BC); ii. the history of Rome entitled *Roman Antiquities*, the major work by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (c.60–after 7 BC); iii. the collection of historical anecdotes entitled *Factorum ac dictorum memorabilium* by Valerius Maximus (1st cent. AD); iv. the work on Jewish history by the Roman-Jewish scholar Titus Flavius Josephus (37–c.100); v. the biographies of the first Roman Emperors from Julius Caesar to Domitian, entitled *Duodecim Caesares* and composed by Gaius Suetonius (c.69–c.123); vi. a compilation of notes on various subjects (grammar, philosophy, history, antiquarianism) entitled *Attic Nights* and written by the Latin grammarian Aulus Gellius (c.125–c.181); vii. the *Roman History* by Cassius Dio (c.155–c.235); viii. the widely read miscellany of anecdotes, biographical sketches and descriptions entitled *Various History* of the Roman author and rhetorician Claudius Aelianus (c.175–c.235).⁵³⁷ In this section one could place a small corpus of scattered editions with works of philosophical content. These were i. the influential *Memorabilia* of the philosopher and historian Xenophon of Athens (c.430–354), an apologia in support to the author's teacher, Socrates; ii. the widely read during the early modern centuries major writings of the Greek biographer and moral essayist of late antiquity, Plutarch (c.46–c.120), his series of biographies of famous Greeks and Romans entitled *Parallel Lives*, and his influential collection of essays known as *Moralia*; iii. a biography of the eminent Pythagorean philosopher Apollonius (c.40–c.120) (*Life of Apollonius of Tyana*) by the Greek sophist Philostratus of Athens (c.172–250); iv. the famous *Deipnosophistae* meaning “dinner-table philosophers” by the late 2nd-century

identity.

⁵³⁷ The edition Vlachos obtained also included the following works: i. a commentary entitled *Peri Politeion* which although until the early modern period was under the name of the 2nd-century BC Greek statesman Heraclides Lembus, today it is attributed to the 4th-century BC Greek philosopher and astronomer Heraclides Ponticus; ii. a treatise *On Physiognomy* by Marcus Antonius Polemon (c.90–144), a rhetorician and prominent member of the Second Sophistic; iii. another treatise *On Physiognomy*, directly related to the one of Polemon, written by the physician Adamantius, iv. two works entitled *Peri Palmon Mantike*, a treatise on divination by twitches, and *Peri Elaion tou somatos*, also on divination by moles, both pseudepigraphal works surviving under the name of Melampus, the legendary soothsayer and healer from the Greek mythology.

AD Greek rhetorician and grammarian Athenaeus of Naucratis; v. the biographical *Vitae Philosophorum* by the 3rd-century AD biographer Diogenes Laërtius.⁵³⁸

Taking our cue from the latter case, we complete this group with a corpus of Italian translations of classical texts detected in the relative section of the library, all products of the dominant 16th-century Renaissance movement for the emergence of the Italian vernacular in the field of letters and scholarship.⁵³⁹ First recorded are an Italian edition of two comedies by Terence (c.185–c.159), the *Andria* and the *Eunuch*, translated by the eminent scholar born in Candia Giovanni Giustiniano (c.1501–1557), along with two commented translations under the name of Giovanni Fabbrini (1516–1580): i. his Italian edition of all six comedies by Terence; ii. his edition of the works by Horace (65–8 BC), which is considered one of the earliest commented editions of the Latin author, along with the one by Ludovico Dolce (c.1508–1568). Nevertheless, most widespread and popular both in Italy and the Stato da Màr, therefore also in the urban centers of Crete, was the Italian translation of the Ovidian *Metamorphoses* by the prominent Renaissance luminaire Giovanni Andrea dell' Anguillara (c.1517–c.1572), a book that Vlachos owned twice. Furthermore, the Cretan scholar obtained one of the last novels of Greek Antiquity entitled *Aethiopica* composed by the 4th-century poet Heliodorus of Emesa, translated in Italian by Leonardo Ghini. As the last case of this small corpus, I refer to the translation in Greek of one of the Ovidian *Heroides*, Paris' letter to Helen. The translation was undertaken by the prominent Cretan scholar and teacher from Candia Thomàs Trivizànos (c.1520–?) during his stay as a student of civil law in Padua.⁵⁴⁰

⁵³⁸ Noteworthy is that Gerasimos Vlachos obtained also a mid.-16th-century Italian translation of Laërtius' work by the brothers Bartolommeo & Pietro Rosettini entitled *Le Vite de gli Illustri Filosofi di Diogene Laertio. Dal' Greco Idiomate Ridutte ne la Lingua Commune d' Italia*.

⁵³⁹ These translating initiatives by the following Italian scholars were connected to the previous attempts by Pietro Bembo to raise the vernacular language to the dignity of the Latin by demonstrating the absolute interdependence between the two; for the latter, special reference will take place later.

⁵⁴⁰ From the multitude of manuscripts to which the *Heroides* is preserved, but also from the extensive publishing tradition of the text (detected in more than forty editions), it is evident that already from the early Middle Ages and until the end of the 18th century, the *Heroides* influenced to a great extent the Latin scholarship. First translator of the Ovidian work in Greek was the Byzantine scholar Maximos Planoudes (c.1260–c.1305). It is interesting that Vlachos owned in several editions Planoudes' famous seven-book collection of epigrams known as *Planudean Anthology*. About three centuries later, in 1550, Trivizànos proceeded to his own work; it is interesting to note that the edition of Trivizànos' translation also

Being himself an eminent teacher of rhetoric and a prolific author of voluminous manuals on this specific field, Vlachos ensured to form a vast corpus of Greek and Latin rhetorical textbooks, anthologies, in addition with an extensive collection of orations from the whole historical range of the rhetorical tradition. To start with, from the Greek rhetoricians he obtained in numerous editions the complete works by the central classical Greek orator Demosthenes (384–322), by the prime figure of the Second Sophistic School Aelius Aristides (117–181), and by the principal orator of late antiquity Libanius (c.314–392). Moreover, the library contained the widely popular compendium on basic rhetoric entitled *Progymnasmata* by the 4th-century rhetorician Aphthonius of Antioch, disciple of Libanius, and collective editions with the works by the principal Greek orators and various epistles, original or false, by eminent figures of classical antiquity and early Christianity. Turning to classical Latin rhetoric, we detect the works by the exponent authority Cicero (106–43 BC)⁵⁴¹ and the pivotal textbook entitled *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, formerly attributed to Cicero.

Starting from the ciceronian corpus, Vlachos consciously collected a series of early modern Latin works on rhetoric and the 16th-century orator, all parts of a contextual dialogue on the contemporary version of teaching rhetoric in Europe. Of the earliest cases of this scholarly dialogue was the relative best-seller textbook by the Dutch humanist Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466–1536) entitled *De Utraque Verborum ac Rerum Copia*, an indicative manual on rhetoric but also an influential treatise against the absolute strict attachment of scholars on Cicero, especially against the Italian imitators of the Roman orator. In the context of this controversy, we detect the voluminous Latin lexicon composed solely on the basis of the Ciceronian corpus entitled *Thesaurus Ciceronianus*, written by the Italian classical professor Mario Nizzolio (1488–1567). Nizzolio's initiative was contradicted by the Italian humanist and professor of eloquence in Milan Marcantonio Majoragio (1514–1555), who presented in

included some epigrams by the author.

⁵⁴¹ Vlachos obtained two commentaries on the works of Cicero, the first on his orations composed by the Austrian philologist Jacob Bedrott (c.1493–1541), and the second on his treatises on rhetoric by the French humanist Jacques-Louis d' Estrebay (1481–1550). Finally, Vlachos obtained a vulgarised critical Italian edition of Cicero's orations entitled *Le Orationi di Marco Tullio Cicerone*; the work was edited by the eminent Venetian humanist and prolific author Lodovico Dolce (c.1508–1568), one of the principal representatives of the movement in favor of the Italian translation and popularization of ancient classical literature.

his almost polemical works on rhetoric the crisis of ciceronianism; Vlachos obtained one of his writings entitled *In Tres Aristotelis Libros De Arte Rhetorica*. A rhetorical manual of different purposes recorded in the indice was the Latin translation of the principal work by the French humanist and professor of rhetoric Jean Tixier de Ravisi (c.1470–1522) entitled *Officina, Partim Historicis, Partim Poeticis Referta Disciplinis* (Paris: 1503).

Vlachos' keen interest on the art of rhetoric is further proved by a series of published Latin and Italian collections of numerous orations, lectures, compendiums and manuals by the following eminent 16th-century scholars: i. the Venetian physician Niccolò Massa (1489–1569); ii. the highly praised in his times Florentine nobleman and Renaissance scholar Bartolomeo Cavalcanti (1503–1562); iii. the 16th century scholar from Mantua Girolamo Mascher; iv. the Florentine Dominican Remigio Nannini, also known as Remigio Fiorentino (1518–1580); v. the prolific scholar Francesco Sansovino (1521–c.1586);⁵⁴² vi. the French humanist Marc Antoine Muret (1526–1585), a reviver of the Ciceronian Latin style; vii. the Italian Reader at the University of Padua Antonio Riccoboni (1541–1599); viii. the Italian poet, playwright, translator and orator Luigi Groto, also known as the Blind of Adria (1541–1585); ix. the Italian Jesuit Francesco Benci (1542–1594); x. the German humanist and rhetorician Melchior Junius (1545–1604); xi. the Carmelitan theologian from Siena Nicolò Aurifico de' Buonfigli; xii. the Venetian priest of the first half of the 17th century Antonio Alabardi; xiii. the Florentine scholar Jacopo Gaddi († 1668), a member of two prestigious Academies, the Svogliati in Florence and the Incogniti in Venice; xiv. the prelate and professor of theology in the Gymnasium of Bologne Girolamo Bendandi (1604–1659).

The category on the art and teaching of rhetoric is completed with a number of Latin and Italian books detected in the library and dealing this time with the field of epistolography. In the same context with the collections of orations, the following editions were widely used as models for the teaching of the composition of a letter,

⁵⁴² From Sansovino's numerous published works (on verse and prose, translations, historical writings, commentaries, orations, novellas, epistolography) Gerasimos Vlachos owned the following: i. his collection of vernacular orations by various illustrious men of Sansovino's times entitled *Diverse Orationi Volgaramente Scritte da Molti Huomini Illustri de Tempi Nostri*, which also included a treatise of him *Dell' Arte Oratoria della Lingua Volgare*; ii. the first book of a compilation of orations by various Venetian ambassadors addressed to the Doge.

official or personal. More specifically, Vlachos obtained the following works: i. the classical *Epistolarum* of the Roman lawyer and author Pliny the Younger (61–c.113), whose 247 letters were widely published during the Renaissance for their eminent literary style; ii. the highly successful letter-writing textbook of the Renaissance entitled *Ars Epistolandi* composed by the Venetian humanist Francesco Negro (1452–c.1524); iii. the *Epistolarum* by the learned Italian Paolo Saccati (1514–1590), a work of eminent rhetorical style and a wide range of subjects; iv. the Italian epistolaries of the Italian secretary Giovan Francesco Peranda (1529–c.1602) and the Genovese Benedictine author of sacred works and moral poems Angelo Grillo (1557–1629).

Finally, the Cretan scholar owned parts from a monumental five-part compilation of rhetoric and grammar entitled *Degli Autori del Ben Parlare per Secolari e Religiosi Opere Diverse*, compiled by the Italian physician and scholar Giuseppe degli Aromatari (1587–1660). With the volumes on grammar being discussed later, the parts on Latin and Italian rhetoric dealt with ancient Greek and Latin rhetorical writings (Cicero, Cassius Longinus, Hermogenes of Tarsus), along with works on ecclesiastical eloquence (Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana*, Venerable Bede's *De Schematibus et Tropis Sacrae Scripturae*, and *Il Predicatore* by Francesco Panigarola). An interesting case that was contained in this edition were the famous *Dieci Dialoghi della Retorica*, a firm criticism to the Aristotelian-Ciceronian view on rhetoric as the art of discourse, composed by the influential Venetian anti-Aristotelian philosopher Francesco Patrizi (1529–1597).⁵⁴³

Equally vast and profound with the corpus of rhetorical books in Vlachos' library were those works that dealt with ancient Greek and Latin grammar, the learning of the rules and vocabulary of the classical languages, but also the scientific foundations of the 16th-and-17th-century Italian language. Starting with the items on the field of grammar, we find the annotated editions of the major works by two 2nd-century Greek Alexandrian authors, the *Encheiridion* by Hephaestion of Alexandria, a textbook on

⁵⁴³ For such a meticulous collector of Latin commentaries on the Aristotelian philosophy and teachings, it is interesting that Gerasimos Vlachos did not obtain an independent edition of the extremely influential treatises by Francesco Patrizi entitled *Discussionum Peripateticorum* and *Nova de Universis Philosophia*. Taking into consideration that the Italian Renaissance scholar was known as one of the most vehement anti-Aristotelians of his century, one could comprehend why his name is detected almost accidentally in the multi-volume edition of *Degli Autori del Ben Parlare per Secolari e Religiosi*.

ancient Greek metric, and Apollonius Dyscolus' book on syntax,⁵⁴⁴ along with the famous Greek and Latin *centos* by the Christian poet Faltonia Betitia Proba (c.306–366), the Eastern Roman Empress Eudocia (c.401–460) and the 5th-century poet Nonnus of Panopolis.⁵⁴⁵ Moreover, Vlachos obtained the alphabetical collection of grammatical rules and remarks on the Greek language entitled *Thesaurus: Keras Amaltheias*, by the Italian grammarian Guarino Favorino, better known as Varino (c.1450–1537), along with the Greek grammars by the three leading Byzantine scholars on the revival of Greek learning in early modern Latin Europe: i. the professor of Greek in Florence, Bologna, Venice and Rome Manuel Chrysoloras (1350–1415); ii. the translator of Aristotle and eminent teacher in Pavia, Mantua, Ferrara, Rome, Naples and Calabria Theodore Gazis (c.1398–c.1475); iii. the Renaissance scholar and teacher in Milan, Rome, Naples and Messina Constantine Lascaris (1434–1501).

Lastly, from the late 15th and the 16th century, Vlachos obtained the works on grammar by the following Latin authors: i. the prominent Italian public teacher and a principal early modern grammarian Antonio Mancinelli (1452–1505); ii. the already mentioned French Renaissance humanist scholar and professor of rhetoric Jean Tixier de Ravisi (c.1470–1542); iii. the Portuguese Jesuit scholar Manuel Álvares (1526–1583); iv. the grandson of Aldus Manutius and last heir of his printing press, Aldus Manutius the Younger (1547–1597); v. the German physician and prominent alchemist Martin Ruland the Younger (1569–1611); vi. the 17th-century scholar Dominico Francisco Ragazio; the minor 17th-century Veronese grammarians Julianus Picolboni and Stephanus Plazo. A special reference is made to a compiled edition (*Ex Variis Libellis Eliae Grammaticorum Omnium*) by the Hebrewist John van Campen († 1538) of the 1528 Hebrew grammar by the Renaissance scholar, poet and grammarian Elia Levita (1469–1549). Despite its uniqueness, the work is indicative of Vlachos' reading tastes in a time when the Renaissance model of the so-called *homo trilinguis* continued to exist not only in the Latin *respublica literaria* but also among the Greek ecclesiastical and intellectual circles.

⁵⁴⁴ It is noteworthy that the edition Vlachos obtained also included a grammatical treatise entitled *De Grammatica Exercitatione* by Basil the Great. All the works by Apollonius are found collected in manuscript form in the section of the Greek codices of the library.

⁵⁴⁵ The *centos* were poems composed for educational purposes from various individual verses from classical authors, mainly Homer and Virgil. The Christian composers used the *centos* to describe or explain the life of Jesus and the content of the Gospels.

A small sub-group formed an interdisciplinary dialogue of their authors on the fiery issue during the 16th century of the comparison between Latin and vernacular languages, the origins and the nature of Italian dialects, and the latter's connection and comparison with the Latin as the official scientific and intellectual language. To start with, Vlachos obtained the work that inaugurated this discussion, the highly influential treatise on Italian (mainly Tuscan) poetry entitled *Le Prose della Volgar Lingua* and composed by the prominent humanist and poet Pietro Bembo (1470–1547); the latter based his argumentation for the Italian literary style to the works of Petrarch and Boccaccio, imposing them as archaizing models for his contemporary Italian. The following works were all products of the contemporary controversy between Latin and vernacular languages, and between the archaicizing model of Italian prose and poetry and a more modernised tendency: i. a collective volume of poems edited by the Italian humanist and poet himself Giovanni Cotta (c.1480–1510) and entitled *Carmina Quinque Illustrium Poetarum*;⁵⁴⁶ ii. the popular *Fifty Orations* by the Umbrian born in Candia secular cleric and former Jesuit Paolo Beni (c.1552–1627), a close friend and promoter of the pivotal poet Torquato Tasso (1544–1595); iii. the popular *Dialogues* and *Orations* by the Italian Renaissance humanist and Aristotelian philosopher Sperone Speroni degli Alvarotti (1500–1588); iv. the editorially successful *Specchio de la Lingua Latina* by the professor in Ferrara Giovan Andrea Griffoni (second half of the 16th century); v. an educational treatise on all the rules and principles of the Italian language by the prolific philologist and grammarian Giacomo Pergamini (1531–1615) entitled *Trattato della Lingua*; vi. the useful manual on composition both in Latin and Tuscan entitled *Eleganze con la Copia della Lingua Toscana e Latina* written by the already mentioned Aldus Manutius the Younger. Finally, special reference is made to the two volumes on grammar (no. III and IV) of the first and the second part of the already mentioned 17th-century monumental edition *Degli Autori del Ben Parlare per Secolari e Religiosi Opere Diverse*.⁵⁴⁷

⁵⁴⁶ The collection included poems by Cotta, Pietro Bembo, the Latin lyrics of his friend Andrea Navagero (1483–1529) and the Neo-Latin sacred, secular and pastoral poems by the humanist and purist poet Marcantonio Flaminio (1497–1550).

⁵⁴⁷ Its first part entitled *Alla Favella Nobile d'Italia* was dedicated to the dynamics of the vernacular Italian language and its grammatical rules and included the famous *Observations* of Ludovico Dolce on the issue, along with further treatises on the language of Boccaccio's *Decameron*; the second part of the edition was entitled *Al Barbarismo e Solecismo* and dealt

The category is completed with a corpus of vocabularies and dictionaries, all necessary means for the study of ancient Greek, Latin and Italian language and literature. To start with, Vlachos obtained editions of the *Onomasticon*, a thesaurus of Attic synonyms and phrases, composed by the 2nd-century Greek grammarian and rhetorician Julius Pollux, and the voluminous lexicon of unusual and peculiar ancient Greek words, forms and phrases entitled *Alphabetical Collection of All Words* and compiled by the 5th-or-6th-century Greek grammarian Hesychius of Alexandria. Next to it we find the popular *Dictionarium* by the scholarly Augustinian Ambrogio Calepino (c.1435–c.1510),⁵⁴⁸ along with five more cases all related to the aforementioned 16th-century discussion on the relation between Latin and Italian languages: i. the Latin-vernacular Neapolitan dictionary entitled *Spicilegium seu Thesaurus Latinae Linguae Atque Italicae*, composed by the Neapolitan humanist grammarian and rhetorician Lucio Giovanni Scoppa († 1543); ii. the early Tuscan dictionary entitled *La Fabrica del Mondo* by the lexicographer and grammarian Francesco del Bailo, better known as Francesco Alunno (c.1484–1556); iii. the Italian-Latin *Dittionario overo Tesoro della Lingua Volgare e Latina* by the Apostolic Pronotarius Pietro Galesino (c.1520–1590); iv. the similar *Dittionario Volgare et Latino* by the Italian grammarian and lexicographer Filippo Venuti (1531–1587). As the highest point of the language debate in 16th-century Italy comes the final item of the category, the *Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca*, the first vocabulary of the Italian (Tuscan) language, composed and published by the Academics of Crusca and based exclusively to the writings of the Florentine so-called *Tre Corone* (Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio).

As an overview of the pedagogical books the library contained, the intellectual background of Gerasimos Vlachos and his identity as a teacher of classical education is viewed and defined. The aforementioned works of the classical corpus portray the wide education the Cretan scholar had received as a young pupil himself, along with his tendency as a teacher to use those texts during his lessons as a training tool for his students. Secondly, the extensive collection of editions of the most pivotal works on

with the linguistic issues of barbarism and solecism.

⁵⁴⁸ Although Calepino's dictionary was first published in 1502 and met more than a hundred reprints until 1681, Gerasimos Vlachos obtained two very specific editions of it: the enriched seven-lingual version (Latin, Hebrew, Greek, French, Italian, Spanish, German), and one published by Aldus Manutius' son, Paulus; the Cretan scholar did not forget to make the relative note in his record: "*Ambrosii Calepini Dictionarium Pauli Manutii*".

grammar and rhetoric from classical antiquity to Vlachos' own time confirms his inclination to this particular occupation. His meticulous method and pedagogical training is even more strengthened by the equally important presence of ancient, medieval and early modern multi-language dictionaries and works on epistolography of Greek, Latin and Italian origin.

5.3.4. Miscellaneous: Readings on a quest for knowledge

In addition to his systematic and meticulous study of his numerous readings on theological, philosophical and philological subjects, Gerasimos Vlachos was a genuine man of his time and an utterly demanding seeker of knowledge. Therefore, he was the owner of a corpus of various books mainly dealing with encyclopedism and literature, history and law, medicine and pharmacology. Initially, I will refer to a small group of voluminous Greek and Latin works of encyclopedic nature, composed by ancient, medieval and early modern authors. From late antiquity and early Christian period Vlachos obtained i. the popular *Historia Naturalis* by the Roman author Pliny the Elder (23–79), a model for all the later encyclopedias both in matter of structure and method; ii. the vast collection of didactic and instructive extracts from Greek authors (poets, historians, orators, philosophers and physicians) compiled by Joannes Stobaeus (5th century) and entitled *Eclogues*;⁵⁴⁹ iii. the *Bibliotheca* or *Myriobiblos* composed by Patriarch Photios I and containing extracts and abridgements of 279 reviews of books from Christian patristic authors, rhetoricians, historians and grammarians. Moreover, among the scholar's other readings, we detect the standard Latin medieval and early modern encyclopedias: i. the voluminous compendium *Speculum Maius* composed by the French Dominican friar Vincent of Beauvais (c.1184–c.1264); ii. the alphabetical collection of the most famous pagan and Christian luminaires entitled *De viris illustribus et de originibus* by the Italian scholar and friend of Petrarch, Guglielmo di Pastrengo (1290–1362); iii. the mid.-15th-century encyclopedia on natural philosophy entitled *Liber De Omnibus Rebus Naturalibus Quae Continentur In Mundo*, a massive

⁵⁴⁹ The Greek-Latin edition of Stobaeus' *Eclogues* also contained two pamphlets dated 1418 (*Orationes duae, altera de rebus Peloponnesiacis*) written by the renowned late Byzantine philosopher Georgius Gemistus Plethon (c.1355–c.1452); strongly influenced by Plato's philosophy, Plethon addressed in his texts Emperor Manuel II and his son Theodore and promoted his aspiration for a revival of the Hellenic civilization in his contemporary Peloponnese.

summa of “almost all that exist in the world”;⁵⁵⁰ iv. the voluminous repertoire of ancient and modern myths and legends entitled *Genealogia deorum gentilium*, compiled by the Italian humanist Giovanni Boccaccio (1313–1375)

Turning to the 15th and 16th century, we detect the following voluminous works: i. the widely read anthology of quotations, definitions and etymologies on various fields of knowledge entitled *Florilegii magni, sev Polyantheae Floribus Novissimis Sparsae*, composed by the otherwise unknown scholar Domenico Nani Mirabelli; ii. the collection of famous sayings from the ancient Greek and Roman authors and from the early Renaissance poets (mainly Dante and Petrarch) entitled *De Dictis Factisque Memorabilibus*, by the Italian humanist Battista Fregoso (1452–1504); iii. the six-book *Geniales Dies* by the Neapolitan lawyer and Renaissance scholar Alessandro Alessandri, known as Alexander ab Alexandro (1461–1523); iv. the highly popular in its time compiled history of origins (religion, politics, law, sciences, arts) entitled *De Inventoribus Rerum* and composed by the Italian humanist and priest Polidoro Vergili (c.1470–1555); v. an Italian translation from Lucio Fauno of the influential ethnographic work *Omnium Gentium Mores, Leges et Ritus* by the German humanist Johannes Böhm (c.1485–1534); vi. the monumental repertoire by the Italian Jesuit diplomat Giovanni Botero (c.1544–1617) entitled *Relationi Universali*; vii. the widely read *La Piazza Universale di Tutte le Professioni del Mondo* by the Italian clergyman and preacher Tomaso Garzoni (1549–1589); viii. the collection of allegories and anecdotes by the Italian satirist and scholar Trajano Boccalini (1556–1613) under the title *Ragguagli di Parnaso*;⁵⁵¹ ix. the influential emblem book by the Italian iconographer Cesare Ripa (c.1560–c.1622) entitled *Iconologia overo Descrittione dell’Imagini Universali*.

Finally, of special interest are two alpine Latin editions of the *Adagia* (1500) by Desiderius Erasmus.⁵⁵² The first was the enriched authoritative version of 3.200 entries

⁵⁵⁰ Published in 1545, one century after its writing, under the false name of Pompilius Azzali Piacentino, a 16th-century naturalist, the work is attributed by modern scholarship to the Renaissance Aristotelian humanist and author of scientific treatises Giovanni da Fontana (1395–1454).

⁵⁵¹ Although the Cretan scholar chose to obtain an imprint of Boccalini’s *Ragguagli di Parnaso*, nowhere in the indice did we find his *Commentarii sopra Cornelio Tacito*, in which the Italian author praised Macciavelli and bitterly satirized the typical post-Tridentine dogmatism and the ruling classes of his time.

⁵⁵² It is interesting that Gerasimos Vlachos did not obtain Erasmus’ extremely influential works

published by Aldus Manutius (Venice: 1508). What captures our attention is the fact that Gerasimos Vlachos chose to record the book in his indice as following: “*Aldi Manutii Adagia sive Proverbia*”; that is by replacing the name of Erasmus with that of Aldus. Certain that the record is not mistakenly made, we interpret Vlachos’ choice with either a district attempt by a pious clergyman to silence Erasmus’ presence in the indice of his library or more possibly with his conscious initiative to promote the publishing contribution of the Aldine Press. The second case of the *Adagia* in the library was the revised and censured edition published in Rome in 1577 by Paulus Manutius. All the aforementioned works seem to respond to Gerasimos Vlachos’ desire to define and collect all the existing knowledge and wisdom of the world and things. His tendency was, indeed, particularly evident and popular among the circles of his contemporary intellectual and ecclesiastical environment both in the Orthodox East and Latin Europe.

Another field merely represented in the library is that of medicine and pharmacology consisting of works both from the ancient and medieval tradition and from the early modern period until Gerasimos Vlachos’ times. To start with, we detect the works of the authoritative ancient physicians and pharmacologists: Hippocrates of Kos (c.460–c.370), Nicander of Colophon (2nd cent. BC), Pedanius Dioscorides (c.40–90), Galen of Pergamon (129–c.200). From the medieval period Vlachos obtained firstly the medical treatise *De Conservanda Bona Valetudine Opusculum Scholæ Salernitanæ*, a series of commentaries and notes on Hippocrates and Galen by the distinguished Spanish physician and philosopher Arnaldus de Villa Nova (c.1238–1311), and secondly a commentary on Avicenna entitled *In Primum Avicenne Canonem Expositio* by the Italian scholastic philosopher and physician Giacomo della Torre, better known as Iacobus de Forlivo, (c.1360–1414). Entering the 16th century, we find the major works on medicine and botany by the following authors: i. the German physician and botanist Leonhart Fuchs (1501–1566); ii. the Sienese doctor and naturalist Pietro Andrea Mattioli (1501–1577); iii. the Italian physician and botanist Castore Durante’s (1529–1590); iv. the influential Flemish anatomist and physician Andreas Vesalius (1514–1564); v. the Swiss physician and prolific author Johannes Jacob Wecker (1528–1586); vi. the Paduan physician Girolamo Capodivacca († 1589); vii. the Spanish chamber

on the reform inside and outside the Church, such as his *Praise of Folly*, the *Sileni Alcibiadis*, or even his *Ciceronianus*.

doctor of King Philip II Louis Mercado (c.1525–1611); viii. the physician from Rome Emilio Parisano (1567–1643); ix. the Danish physician in Padua Johan Rhode (1587–1659); x. the Italian physician and disciple of Cesare Cremonini, Sebastiano Scarabicio (1609–1686). Uncertain of the way this corpus of medical works found their way in Vlachos' library, the present study solely notes that the Cretan scholar had definitely studied some of them, especially the ancient Greek physicians, whom he did not avoid to often mention as authoritative references in his treatises on natural philosophy, his appeals and his sermons. Moreover, the possibility the elderly clergyman to consult some of these texts, mainly his contemporary, for the benefit of his personal poor health should not be rejected.

As one could expect from a library of an ecclesiastic, Gerasimos Vlachos was the owner of a small, nevertheless indicative, collection of works on civil but mainly on canon law. In this context, we find the principal legislative writings of the Byzantine Emperors Justinian I (c.482–565), Justin I (450–527), Tiberius II (520–582) and Leo VI the Wise (866–912), along with the widely used *Hexabiblos* or *Promptuarium* by the late Byzantine judicial writer Konstantinos Armenopoulos (1320–1380). The interest of the research is raised from the early modern monumental edition of Byzantine legislative works on civil and canon law entitled *Iuris Graeco-Romani tam Canonici quam Civilis* and edited by the German jurist and orientalist Johannes Löwenklau (1541–1594) and the also German lawyer and philologist Marquard Freher (1565–1614). Turning to the relative Latin tradition, we firstly detect the authoritative *Decretum*, the standard schoolbook on canon law compiled by the 12th-century jurist known as Gratian, and a small corpus of works on civil law: i. the widely read treatise *Modus Legendi Abbreviaturas in Utroque Iure*; ii. a popular anonymous juridical medieval dictionary entitled *Vocabularium Utriusque Iuris*,⁵⁵³ iii. an influential commentary on Emperor Justinian's *Institutions* by the Belgian jurist Nicasiaus of Voerda (1440–1492); iv. a collection of legislative rules entitled *Flores Legum* and compiled by the late-16th-century Doctor of Law in Venice Thomas de Thomasettis; v. a commentary by the jurist from Ravenna Giulio Ferretti (1480–1547) entitled *Aureae Additiones ad*

⁵⁵³ According to the bibliographical research, the work was written by one of the following two possible authors: either the Spanish Renaissance scholar Antonio de Nebrija (1441–1522) or the German Catholic philosopher and theologian at the University of Erfurt Jodocus Trutfetter (1460–1519).

Bartholom de Saxoferrato and dealing with the legislative works of the influential medieval Italian professor of Law Bartolus de Saxoferrato (1313–1357).⁵⁵⁴

Since the question of the origins of Gerasimos Vlachos' library remains open to research, we could proceed to the hypothesis, similar to that concerning the medical books, that this small corpus of works could have been the core of the readings by a prior owner of the books, maybe an ancestor of Vlachos who had been working as a lawyer, a notary or a jurist in Candia or elsewhere. Despite the fact that we have no evidence that he had actually studied civil or canon law, since the issue of his higher education remains also open, I merely note that at least some of the aforementioned books, especially those focused on Byzantine ecclesiastical legislations, would not have been unknown to the Cretan clergyman. According to the primary sources, Vlachos made extensive use of such works during his primacy in the Metropolis of Philadelphia in order to resolve inter-ecclesiastical issues that emerged.

In the section of the Italian printed books of the library, a special category formed the extensive presence of works on early modern historiography. From the 16th century, we detect the major works by the following eminent authors: i. the historiographer Marco Guazzo (c.1480–1556);⁵⁵⁵ ii. the influential historian and ecclesiastic Paolo Giovio (1483–1552);⁵⁵⁶ iii. the Italian statesman and historian Francesco Guicciardini (1483–1540); iv. the Spanish Renaissance historian Pedro Mejía (1497–1551); v. the French humanist and formal historiographer in the court of Caterina de' Medici, Louis Le Roy (c.1510–1577);⁵⁵⁷ vi. the antiquarian Giovanni Tarcagnola (1508–1566); vii. the latter's imitator and indicative anti-Protestant scholar Cesare Campana (1540–1602); viii. the Florentine scholar and priest Girolamo Bardi (1544–1594). Since Gerasimos Vlachos was a loyal subject the Venetian Republic and a

⁵⁵⁴ A pivotal figure in Northern Italy and highly praised in the Republic of Venice, Bartolus' fame had even reached the urban centers of Renaissance Crete.

⁵⁵⁵ Due to the brief record in the catalogue of Vlachos' library I identified the item with either Guazzo's early *modern Historie di Tutte le Cose degne di Memoria nel Mondo per Terra & per Acqua Successe*, or his *Historie oue se Contengono la Venuta, et Partita d'Italia di Carlo Ottauo Re di Franza*.

⁵⁵⁶ Vlachos obtained the Italian versions of Giovio's *Historiarum Sui Temporis* and his *Elogia virorum bellica virtute illustrium veris imaginibus supposita*, both translated by Ludovico Domenichi (1515-1564).

⁵⁵⁷ The Cretan scholar owned the Italian version of Le Roy's universal history *De la Vicissitude ou Variété des Choses en l'Univers* translated by the poet from Ferrara Ercole Cato († c.1606).

fervent promoter of the narrative of the *Serenissima*, it is essential that he obtained, in addition to his other historical works, two renowned Venetian histories: a. the two-part *Historia Vinetiana* by the eminent statesman and historian Paolo Paruta (1540–1598), a work that covered the history of the *Serenissima* in the years 1513–1551; b. the two-part *Della Veneta Historia* composed by the Italian Aristotelian philosopher and scholar Giovanni Battista Contarini (1587–1671). Finally, from the 17th century we detect the Italian version of *Descriptio Orbis et Omnium Ejus Rerumpublicarum* by the Polish historiographer Lucas de Linda (1625–1660), translated by the famous scholar and librettist Maiolino Bisaccioni from Ferrara (1582–1663).

The interest of the research is also raised by the presence of a small corpus of books on early modern political thinking and theory. The following printed items also obtained a strong element of historical understanding but proceeded more systematically to a political approximation of the conjunctures and balances in the early modern Europe. In addition to the popular collection of ancient and modern constitutions and regimes entitled *Del Governo et Amministrazione di Diversi Regni et Repubbliche* by Francesco Sansovino (1521–c.1583), Vlachos was the holder of works related to the so-called “Reason of State” (*Ragion di Stato*). This theory of governing, which emerged during the late 15th century and until the 18th century, served to designate politics as a science, endowed with rules and internal logic of its own. As the inauguration of this long political discourse is considered Niccolò Machiavelli’s (1469–1527) *Il Principe*, which became both the subject of inspiration and imitation from later political thinkers, but also the reason for a systematic and fervent criticism by secular and ecclesiastical scholars northern and southern of the Alps.

In Vlachos’ library we do not detect Machiavelli’s controversial *Prince*. On the contrary we find a vast series of later works whose authors attempted to answer the central political problem of the Counter-Reformation, the crisis inaugurated by Machiavellianism by dissociating politics from morals and by defining religion as one of the means of power. First author recorded is the already mentioned Jesuit diplomat Giovanni Botero (c.1544–1617) and his influential treatise *Della Ragion di Stato*, in which he argued against the amoral political philosophy of *The Prince* and adapted the political realism of the Renaissance to the ideals and needs of the Catholic Reformation. Later leading political thinkers who followed the theories of Botero are the following: i.

the Italian politician and writer Ciro Spontone (c.1552–c.1610) and his refutation against the Macchiavellianists and in favor of the superiority of the Papacy entitled *Dodici Libri del Governo di Stato*; ii. the Italian scholar Girolamo Frachetta (1558–1616) and his voluminous treatise on the rules and principles of good political and military governing entitled *Il Seminario de' Governi di Stato*; iii. the Spanish Jesuit hagiologist Pedro de Ribadeneira (1527–1611) and an Italian translation of his anti-Macchiavellian work *Tratado de la Religion y Virtudes que debe tener el Principe Cristiano*, in which the author opposed to the principles promoted in *The Prince* as being in direct conflict with the Catholic doctrines on politics and morals;⁵⁵⁸ iv. the scholarly nobleman from Naples Ottavio Smmarco († 1630), a disciple of the Dominican philosopher and theologian Tomasso Campanella (1568–1639) and his philosophical-political treatise on the history of reigns and states entitled *Delle Mutationi de' Regni*; v. the Italian erudite ecclesiastic Leone Zambelli (c.1582–1656) and his voluminous *Il Savio Industrioso*.

The next group of the miscellanea consists of early modern advise books on the moral principles of the Renaissance sovereigns. Their authors mainly dealt with questions on the morality of the noble members of the upper classes, the social rules and the conditions in the Italian courts, and the contribution of the intellectuals in the service of the Christian rulers. In this context, we detect the following influential and largely successful works: i. the pivotal courtesy book entitled *Il libro del Cortegiano* by the Italian courtier from Mantua Baldassarre Castiglione (1478–1529); ii. the advice book for the proper husband written by the prolific Spaniard scholar and Renaissance humanist Juan Luis Vives (1493–1540);⁵⁵⁹ iii. a brief collection of quotations and anecdotes for the nobility of women entitled *La Nobilta delle Donne* and compiled by Ludovico Domenichi (1515–1564), editor of classical texts in vernacular Italian; iv. the educational manual on the ideal Renaissance aristocrat entitled *Moral Institute* and composed by the already mentioned Italian philosopher Alessandro Piccolomini (1508–1579); v. the *Difesa del Savio in Corte*, a response and defense by the Italian scholar Matteo Peregrini (1595–1652) of his widely discussed work on the debated issue of the

⁵⁵⁸ Vlachos obtained the Italian translation of the work, composed by Scipione Metelli.

⁵⁵⁹ Originally entitled *De los Debers del Marido*, Vives' work was translated in Italian by Pietro Lauro. Although a prolific and inovative author of numerous reforming works on education, political economy, philosophy and piety, Juan Louis Vives is nevertheless unevenly represented in the library only by the aforementioned manual.

role of intellectuals in the Italian court entitled *Il Savio in Corte*; vi. a post-Tridentine three-work guide of the artistic and ecclesiastical history of Rome and the papal court until the middle of the 17th century.⁵⁶⁰

Finally, the library contained a specific brief Italian category entitled *Belles Lettres*, with the works being related to the Italian and French Baroque literature (poetry, fiction, drama and essays). To start with, we detect a corpus of works, all representative of the movement known as *Secentismo* (Marinism), established by the illustrious Neapolitan poet Giambattista Marino (1569–1625); Vlachos obtained two of Marino's poetical works (*La Sampogna* and *La Strage degli Innocenti*) and his highly praised oratorical handbook *Dicerie Sacre*, which he placed among the *Belle Lettres* although it was actually a preaching manual. From Marino's imitators, we detect the works in verse and prose of the following largely successful authors: i. the Dominican preacher and sacred poet Tomaso Maria Caraffa (1557–1614), the Venetian nobleman and abbot Angelo Gabrielli; iii. the poet from Mirandola Nicolò Corradino (1573–1624); iv. the pivotal poet and diplomat at the court of Modena Fulvio Testi (1593–1646); v. the Italian Theatine sacred orator and theologian of the first half of the 17th century Giovanni Azzolini; vi. the Venetian senator, humanist and prolific author Giovan Francesco Loredano (1607–1661).

The category also included four authors who were related to the 17th-century novel, which at that period had already begun to develop as an autonomous and prestigious literary genre: i. the Bolognese scholar Giovanni Battista Manzini (1599–1664) and his romance novel *Il Cretideo*; ii. the Italian knight and papal soldier in the War of Candia Carlo della Lengueglia (c.1600–c.1682) and his *L' Aldimiro*; iii. the popular French author and ecclesiastic Jean-Pierre Camus de Pontcarré (1584–1652) and his major religious novel entitled *La Mémoire de Darie*, translated in Italian by Francesco Gentile; iv. his disciple and prominent Jesuit moralist Nicolas Caussin (1583–1651) and the monumental seven-volume edition of his complete works on morals,

⁵⁶⁰ The edition included the following works: i. the famous *Relatione della Corte di Roma* by the Italian diplomat and scholar Girolamo Lunadoro (1575–1642), a work of fervent Catholic spirit dealing with the pontifical court in Rome; ii. the imitation of Lunadoro's work by Francesco Sestini da Bibbiena entitled *Il Maestro di Camera*; iii. a panorama of all the sightseeing of Rome composed by Fioravante Martinelli (1599–1667) under the title *La Roma Ricercata*.

devotion and piety translated in Italian by Matteo Zuccati.⁵⁶¹ The final five items were all works by the prolific and celebrated Jesuit thinker from Ferrara Daniello Bartoli (1608–1685), an eminent and multifaceted scholar who dealt with the fields of grammar, rhetoric, morals, philosophy, theology and cosmology: i. his treatise on the definition of the modern and prudent intellectual man entitled *Dell' Uomo di Lettere*; ii. his religious work on the unmet need of the rich for wealth and pleasures entitled *La Pouertà Contenta, Descritta e Dedicata a' Ricchi non mai Contenti*; iii. his *L' eternità consiglia* on the greatness of God and on the destiny of man in life and after life; iv. his approach to the cosmic harmony of the world as a representation of the magnificence of God entitled *La Ricreatione del Savio*; v. a similar work on the Baroque representation of the world as an immense repertoire of religious symbols entitled *La Geografia Trasportata al Morale*.

One could assume that the presence, even mere, in the library of works under the category *Belles Lettres* seems if not alien, at least peculiar among the generally heavy theological, philosophical and scientific readings of the Cretan scholar. Indeed, it is considered a fact that due their extreme style, their taste for fantasy and the bizarre, their refined language, and their exaggeration in expression, the aforementioned literature was often harshly criticized and undermined mainly by the contemporary Catholic ecclesiastical circles.⁵⁶² Regardless its limited range, this collection of *Belles Lettres* reveals Gerasimos Vlachos' interest in his contemporary Latin literature, mainly Italian and French and focused on its religious and sacred parameters and content. At this point, an interesting question is if some of the aforementioned works were placed in the library simply by luck or accident, or at least not from Gerasimos Vlachos himself but before he became the owner of the books. Nevertheless, the presence of items which were published during the middle and the second half of the 17th century leads us to the assumption that some of those books were indeed consciously purchased by Gerasimos Vlachos and served as escapist reading during the scholar's pauses from his otherwise strict and demanding studying.

5.4. Conclusions

⁵⁶¹ Vlachos also obtained an individual edition of a section of Caussin's major work, his *Holy Court*, translated in Italian by the eminent scholar Carlo Antonio Coccastello.

⁵⁶² Bouwsma: *Venice*, p. 298-299.

The presentation of the manuscript and printed books which adorned the shelves of Gerasimos Vlachos' library until the time the elderly Archbishop began recording them in his *indice*, allows us to draw some main conclusions. Being indeed a corpus of readings with a firm character, tight structure, internal cognitive unity and coherence, the library attracts the interest of the research not only due to its remarkable size and notable content, but also for the commendable purposes its holder wished it to serve. Right from the start, we should note that Vlachos' classification of his books into thematological groups (theological, philosophical, grammatical & rhetorical), a classification that I chose to respect as much as possible, proves that the *indice* of the library is not to be viewed as a simple inventory, but as an interpretative catalogue. By carefully reading its pages, the modern scholar is able to distinguish, to the extent possible, the way in which the erudite owner of the library used his books: for his personal reading, for his profession as a teacher and a clergyman and for his perception as a man of his time, socially and politically aware of the historical conjunctures.

Initially, special mention should be made to the ideational and compositional part of this specific library, which emerges from its vast content in manuscript and printed form. Noteworthy is that in all sections of the *indice*, the presence of works on the Bible and its exegetical tradition is characterized as utterly strong. Such a condition reveals Gerasimos Vlachos' profound knowledge and interest, as a Christian believer and Orthodox theologian, in the foundation of his faith and theological discourse. Indeed, due to their chronological proximity to the ancient Church, Fathers and early Christian apologists who had gained their authority mainly during the Middle Ages, were brought back to the fore and their writings were re-examined and interpreted on a new base during the Protestant and Catholic Reformation in the context of the theological confrontation among Catholics, Protestants and Orthodox. As far as the latter is concerned, the study and teaching of the Fathers not only formed the voice and doctrines of the Orthodox Church but also strengthened the Christian faith of the Greeks. Especially during the 17th century, the Orthodox population had to face the missionary activity of the Catholic and Protestant representatives, the mass islamizations by the Ottomans and the turbulence by the Jewish messianic crisis of Sabatai Zevi. In this context, the section of the Greek codices responded to the ancient church tradition of the patristic and early Christian literature and to a great extent to the

later Orthodox theological thought. As a result, the corpus of 79 Greek codices, along with the 29 handwritten *Synagogues* recorded in the *indice*, can be interpreted as the one utterly accepted and authoritative theological foundation, necessary to the Cretan scholar for the formation and defence of his religious identity as a representative of the Orthodox faith.⁵⁶³

The question that is raised is why a Greek clergyman who constantly testified with his life and work his sincere loyalty to the Orthodox confession, wished to obtain as many theological works as possible which directly challenged and often contradicted the fundamental teachings and principles of his faith. The vast amount of printed editions with a predominantly post-Tridentine polemical Catholic orientation is indeed an established reality that deeply characterized Vlachos' reading interests in both theological and philosophical level. In this context, the Cretan scholar is presented to be fully informed and critically aware of the refutatory and conciliatory tendencies not only in Latin Europe but also among his fellow Greek ecclesiastical circles. His internal intellectual and spiritual need to know in depth and fully comprehend this particular literature, always in combination with his perfect erudition on the patristic and further early Christian literal tradition, is vividly portrayed by his meticulous search, acquisition and study of such writings.

At this point, one should underline the complete absence of the theological literal products of the Protestant Reformation and its branches in the Holy Roman Empire and the Low Countries, along with the non-detection of printed books deriving from the field of early modern English theology, philosophy, science and literature. In contradiction to the complete absence of Protestant theologians, the library is replete with works by hardcore and moderate Jesuits and other representatives of the Catholic faith. Thus, the modern reader views an extensive and detailed concentration of a corpus of books mainly of Italian, French and Spanish thought in theology and philosophy, deriving both from the Middle Ages and the early modernity. In this context, one should refer to the intense presence of Jesuit authors in all fields of knowledge (theological, philosophical, philological), along with further Catholic or pro-Catholic literal production, all composed in the spirit of the post-Tridentine Catholic Reformation.

⁵⁶³ For the role of the manuscript book as a counterweight to the printed edition in the early modern Orthodox East, see Sklavenitis: «Η δυσπιστία στο έντυπο βιβλίο», p. 283-293.

Therefore, and in addition to the safety of authenticity that his Greek codices offered in terms of the principles and doctrines of his faith, Vlachos, as a man of letters and an intellectual member of the cosmopolitan environment of Candia and later of Venice, was undeniably fascinated by the world of the Latin printed book. The latter contained a different kind of knowledge than the one born and flourished in the intellectual Greek East; by accepting to read and use the products of Western publishing production, Vlachos had the opportunity to become a member of a society, that of the Latin European thought, still unknown or misunderstood to him and his Orthodox circle.

Nevertheless, the reading of specific points in the *indice* left us with a strong impression of the critical way in which the Cretan ecclesiastic viewed the Latin scholarship of his time and, therefore, chose which readings actually met theological and religious preconditions to find a place in his personal library. This interesting tendency to selective *pious* reading became apparent in numerous cases that we met among the pages of the *indice*, mainly in the theological and philosophical sections (Girolando Savonarola, Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, Pietro Pomponazzi, Desiderius Erasmus, Niccolò Machiavelli, Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa, Juan Louis Vives, Francesco Patrizi, Jean Bodin, Trajano Boccalini, Cornelius Jansen). It is important to note that most of the above works had been characterized as heretical, anticlerical or immoral, while their authors had been mainly condemned or accused as blasphemers and enemies of the Church and the faith; in fact, the majority of them had been placed in the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* long before Vlachos' time. Therefore, the availability of the aforementioned controversial editions and others similar to them during the time Vlachos became the holder and continued to complement his library, should be taken into account as a catalytic factor for their absence from the *indice*. In conclusion, one could not neglect the fact that the library was indeed created in the island of Crete, then transferred by its holder to the city of Venice, to Corfu and again back to the Metropolis. In this context, throughout its existence the library and its owner remained within the socio-political influence and cultural privileges of the *Serenissima*. Of course, the religious and political censorship within the borders of the Republic continued to occur, perhaps more subtly than the other Catholic territories, but still strictly in order to maintain a relative socio-political order and religious-confessional balance among her subjects. In these conditions, within the boundaries and invisible barriers, but also in a

personal inner need for what he conceived as religious piety, Gerasimos Vlachos' tendency to a selective reading is fully interpreted and understood.

The existence of works of a specific ideological direction in the library, in combination with the complete absence of works of the opposite direction, testifies to the ideological climate in which Gerasimos Vlachos was intellectually raised and acted. On the same time, it portrays his aspirations for the future role of his library, which he wished to serve as a means for the improvement of education for his compatriots, a project which in his view would be based on the same principles and ideals he himself had once received. Combining all fields of knowledge to the extent that the latter had been developed in his time, the Cretan scholar attempted through his books to a system or a curriculum of education, as complete and contemporary as possible and extending to the teaching of classical languages and literature, grammar, rhetoric, natural science, philosophy and theology. The fact that some of these books were inherited by the Cretan scholar to the Greek Community of Venice, gives us the opportunity to point out their more general contribution to the cultivation of education and intellectualism in the Venetian-ruled Greek region.

The book, in manuscript or printed form, was indeed considered the means of expression of early modern Greek thought at that period. It is seen as a means of acquiring valuable knowledge, old and modern, and as an auxiliary instrument for the intellectual awakening of the Ottoman-dominated Greeks and Greeks of the Diaspora. The significance of this donation, regardless of whether it was ever implemented to the extent the elderly Cretan Archbishop wished, lies in the fact that his initiative aimed firstly to accessing and training young Greeks to a complete, thorough and multi-faceted early modern education, and secondly in bringing pre-Enlightenment Hellenism in contact not only with the religious ideas and teachings of the West, but mainly with the general spiritual climate in Europe and the movement of ideas, starting with the first emergence in the Middle Ages, passing to their culmination during the Renaissance and reaching the, although controlled, still rich and active scholarship of the Baroque. This conscious educational activity of the Greek scholars, ecclesiastical and secular, of the 17th century, descendants of the Greek scholarship of the previous century, equally active intellectually and equally significant culturally, paved the way for the arrival of the first illustrious figures of the Greek Enlightenment during the following century.

Final Conclusions

Gerasimos Vlachos through his life and work, through his choices and initiatives, through his response to the historical necessities and through the priorities he had set to himself, is eventually portrayed as a perspicacious observer of the ideological, political and intellectual changes and the historical conjunctures of his time. In my study I proceeded to a detailed and reconsidered approach to the Cretan thinker's political, intellectual and religious background along with his multi-levelled and multifaceted activity, his contacts and networks with key figures of the early modern Greek and Latin world. Mainly, this study attempted to promote an integral and as much as possible complete picture of Vlachos' perception, comprehension and final degree of acceptance towards his personal faith, his contemporary Latin Christian confessions and their parameters in the field of early modern European politics, the relations among the contemporary Christian churches and the scholarly and educational networks developed in the 17th century.

In the context of the War of Candia Gerasimos Vlachos, along with his Orthodox compatriots and the Catholic Europeans, realized that a gradual conciliation of all Christians in a confessional level would possibly bring a future successful confrontation of the Ottoman expansion in Christian Europe. Therefore, throughout his life the Cretan thinker remained loyal to his personal priorities, his sense of pragmatism and his perception of his contemporary historical conjunctures. As a result, he adopted a conciliatory and diplomatic attitude towards the non-Orthodox Christians firstly in Crete and then in Latin Europe. Towards the political and ecclesiastical authorities of the *Serenissima* he never failed to show his sincere respect, recognition and admiration by promoting the Republic as the protector and guarantor of political and religious order in the Eastern Mediterranean, in contrast with the model of despotism, intolerance and tyranny that, according to Vlachos' firmed view, defined the administration and way of life in the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, one could define Vlachos' tendency as a personal, natural sense of duty deriving from the thinker's Venetian-Cretan origins and identity. Having connected the fate of the Republic in the Mediterranean with the survival, physical and spiritual, of his personal world, Vlachos dedicated a considerable

part of his life in the support, defense and promotion of the prestige, principles and power of the *Signoria*.

Mainly after his settlement in Venice, a purely Catholic environment, the memory and the fate of his homeland never ceased to concern the Cretan thinker who continued to act for the promotion of the Venetian interests, which at that point were common with his own. In his long-standing search for possible alliances in the service of the Republic, it is noteworthy that the criterion of confession or origin was not enough to cause Vlachos' any discomfort or restriction. Therefore, his entreaty to Tsar Aleksey, the dedication of his books and praising encomiums to the Duke of Tuscany Ferdinand II and the Holy Roman Emperor Leopold I, along with his indirect approach to King Louis XIV are all indicative and genuine expressions of his diplomatic and political insight. In the context of his efforts to activate the consent and interest of his contemporary European sovereigns, both Orthodox and Catholic, the Cretan thinker promoted through his initiatives and networks his aspiration in favor of a future Christian alliance for the defense and survival of their religious and political existence. To conclude with, one could argue that Vlachos' skill to perceive the balances and the formation of new realities in his contemporary public sphere served as a key feature that allowed him to carefully and responsibly examine the political situation in the European continent during the second half of the 17th century and to proceed to methodical diplomatic movements based on the new circumstances that were established. Therefore, he was able to remain on good terms with the Italian and German Catholics, as well as with the Gallicans and the Orthodox Russians, an ability that places him among the group of the early modern politically committed Greek thinkers.

Gerasimos Vlachos' conciliation with Orthodox and Catholic representatives of Christianity was not limited to the diplomatic field and did not serve exclusively political purposes. In fact, his tendency to interact, participate and promote the development of networks was compatible to his intellectual nature, his identity as a man of letters, as a teacher and as a seeker of knowledge. Through his activity and teachings, he expressed his will for a sincere interconfessional dialogue between the Christian scholars and thinkers of his time, aiming to the strengthening and support of the unity of the Christian world as well as to the promotion and spread of letters and education. Mainly during his stay in the highly intellectual environment of Venice, he extended his

scholarly networks with both Orthodox and Catholic men of letters. It is noteworthy that the feature that prevailed in his mind during that period was not the obvious confessional differentiation of his acquaintances, but their common ambition in the search for knowledge. His tendency to enter and be established among the intellectuals of his time shall not be considered limited to a theological and pastoral level, since it was also extended to two principal scholarly fields: i. the promotion and spread of the (ancient and Christian) Greek thought and literature to Latin Europe, and ii. the establishment of a modern educational model in the Greek schools firstly of Venice and secondarily of the Ottoman-ruled Greek region. Already from his early years in Candia, he was persuaded of the significance and value his ancestor's philosophy, language and culture had and continued to enjoy in the Latin world. In this context, his co-operation with François Combefis and his appreciation for the activity of the French publishers, his praising words in favour of the Medici and his admiration to the educational initiatives of the Habsburgs were all consequences of his effort to support the promotion and dissemination of the Greek letters in the West.

As he wished to belong to a wide European scholarship, something that was most evident during his stay in Venice, Vlachos followed closely the progressive trends of his time at least in the field of intellectualism. In this context, he became familiar with the general atmosphere in the Republic of Letters, in which learned men and scholars of various religious faiths and different Christian confessions could in fact find common ground to exchange knowledge, opinions and discoveries. Moving, if not inside, at least around the spirit of confessional tolerance that was dominant in the scholarly and academic environment of Venice and Padua, Vlachos adapted a tendency for intellectual freedom and acceptance, not always obeying a particular necessity or a practical interest, but often in the name of his personal self-awareness that derived from his Venetian-Cretan origin and education. Following the example of a multitude of earlier Greek scholars who either studied, passed from, stayed or worked in Venice and Padua, he preferred to use his erudition and the social influence he had earned not to barricade himself in an ivory tower. His ultimate vision was the dissemination of the study of the Greek secular and religious spirit among his compatriots and the non-Greek literate circles of Latin Europe. In this context he was willing to create an amicable relation with the intellectual people of his time, who also wished the flourishing and

propagation of knowledge and education. To conclude with, one could define Vlachos as a highly intellectual figure (in the deepest sense of the word), superior to the typical model of his contemporary Orthodox Greek teacher, not so much judging from the content or the methodology of his writings, but based on his profound perception of the historical conjunctures and the balances required between one's personal beliefs and his actions for the benefit of the many.

The studied primary sources and their scientific interpretation reveal the special nature of Vlachos' theological thought and religious identity. In the context of his loyalty to the Orthodox confession, which he had taken sacred vows to serve as a clergyman, he is presented to remain pious and steadfast to the Orthodox teachings and traditions in matters of theology, canons and ritual. Throughout his life, choices and preserved writings, the prelate from Candia was constantly defined by a high sense of religious and ecclesiastical responsibility firstly as a simple hieromonk in Candia, Venice and Corfu and in his final years in the Metropolis of Philadelphia as the spiritual leader of the Orthodox subjects of the *Serenissima*. Unanimously in his theological treatises, his correspondence and the preserved testimonies of his clerical activity, we view a God-fearing Christian who literally followed and was guided by the doctrines of the biblical and patristic tradition. At the same time, he publicly showed the outmost respect for his Church and the latter's representatives in Crete, Venice and Constantinople. The crowning of his strong and indisputable compliance with the sacred laws and authorities of his faith is considered the time of his primacy in the Metropolitan Throne; an office of profound susceptibility during the second half of the 17th century that required exceptional skill and diplomatic ability to maintain a balance between the ecclesiastical and political interaction of the Catholic Venetian authorities and the Orthodox believers and their high clerics. From the standpoint of the role he obtained during his late years as the leading figure of the Greek Community in the Republic and its Church, Vlachos is to be perceived in the light of his relative commitments, requirements and vows. Judging in retrospect of his brief, nevertheless undisturbed and peaceful, primacy in the Metropolis, we could conclude that he managed to rise at least satisfactorily to the needs of his position as an Archbishop. Without his choices and decisions being influenced or burdened by his personal ambitions – if any – or his cultural and political priorities, he remained a faithful

representative of the Orthodox Church and a trustful means of the Ecumenical Patriarchate until the end.

Although fully established and structured in sincere and conscious Orthodox foundations, Gerasimos Vlachos' religious – and not ecclesiastical – identity cannot by any means defined by intransigence or kind of uncritical blind obedience to a typical and void form of faith, imposed to him by a vague duty to an obsolescent tradition. On the contrary, both his socio-political, intellectual and religious choices in his thought and word reveals a conscious Orthodox who also remained conciliatory to the presence and faith of the Catholic side in Candia, Venice and Corfu. It is significant to underline once more that Vlachos was born and lived exclusively under the political authority of the *Serenissima* and the ecclesiastical superiority of Catholicism. Moreover, he was raised and then participated in a society that the confessional controversies and enmities were if not perished, at least undermined to an extent that coexistence and cohesion had been achieved. In this context, the Cretan clergyman's familiarity with the Catholic customs, ritual, theology and authorities along with his convenience to discuss and interact with members of the Latin Church in Venice, Rome, Florence and Paris, is interpreted not as a covert and indirect confessional leaning towards the Pope but as a vivid and innovative expression of conciliation and sincere eagerness for interconfessional dialogue and coexistence of the two Christian faiths. As mentioned above, the Cretan prelate obtained an innate tendency to approach, discuss and cooperate not only with his fellow Orthodox clerics, but also with the representatives of the Latin Church in Candia, in Venice, in Rome and in the Venetian territories of Dalmatia. At the same time, he was firmly against any initiative, either Orthodox or Catholic, which could revive the old animosity and lead to divisive conflicts and tensions. To conclude with, through his moderate behaviour, Vlachos is presented to adopt a certain detachment from the religious and confessional fanaticism that was dominant during the 16th and 17th century in the socio-political and ecclesiastical hardcore circles in the Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox world. Although he respected the conservative and intransigent spirit of Rome and Constantinople, he chose to promote his familiar Venetian model of interconfessional freedom and acceptance of the different.

Finally, the personal library of Gerasimos Vlachos is defined as the most synthetic confirmation of his personality, character and confessional identity. His numerous and multifaceted books compose Vlachos' intellectual background, which is harmonized with his ideology, principles and multi-dimensional activity. More specifically, we view a careful and extremely pious reader, faithful to the religious and confessional identity that the Venetian Republic continued to promote during his time. The enumeration of the theological books recorded in the *indice* is enough to understand the broad and profound theological education and ecclesiastical thought that characterized the scholar from Candia. This range of theological thought from the Church Fathers to Byzantine writers, from medieval Scholastics to post-Tridentine Catholic theologians and Jesuit intellectuals, and from Greek Uniates to contemporary fervent Orthodox ecclesiastics, gives us the feeling that Vlachos wished to compose a historical overview of the course the Christian thought followed from the ancient Church to the 17th century, free from confessional boundaries and critically presented, so that its bright – according to Vlachos, of course – features would stand out exclusively. That is why he showed such meticulousness and systematic care to gather a variety of perceptions and interpretations of his faith from the whole spectrum of the ancient, old and modern Christian thought; at least that part which was not considered heretical and blasphemous both by him and the world he represented. Therefore, although the 17th century is generally defined as an utterly turbulent period in the field of confessional conflicts between Protestants and Catholics, but also Catholics and Orthodox, Vlachos chose to maintain once more a conciliatory attitude, this time concerning his personal readings.

During a period when adhering to the “right” religion or the “correct” confession was of the utmost importance, the Cretan clergyman chose to follow his Orthodox faith and its literal tradition to the end. At the same time, he showed an indicative respect towards the official religious and political line and doctrines of the Catholic Church and he opposed, although not in a severe and polemical way, to any anti-Catholic or anti-Orthodox teaching, either of Protestant or non-Christian origin. Therefore, it seems that his thought was not particularly open to compromise with the representatives of the early modern Christian confessions northern of the Alps; nevertheless, he remained flexible and informed about the evolution and the modern view of the theological

discussions in the Roman Catholic Europe of his time. Regardless of whether he was ultimately influenced by Western rational and innovative ecclesiastical thought, or whether he remained steadfast in the mysticism and tradition of his Eastern Christian faith, Vlachos tried to avoid the spiritual introversion and the uncompromising dogmatism, mainly practiced by his contemporaries under the authority of both Rome and Constantinople. In an attempt, ideological and practical, to unite or at least not further divide Christianity, he gathered in his work and readings a variety of tendencies from different space-time. In fact, in terms of his reading preferences, he took great care and respected the deep intertextual relations that united his books; this is also recognized as one of the central evidence of his intellectual interaction and his religious interconfessionality. In the context of this thematic and semantic conversation of the books he held in his library, the classical Greek and Latin thinkers converse with the medieval and Renaissance western humanists and scholars, the early Christian authorities are interpreted by the Byzantine theologians and the medieval Scholastics, the ancient philosophers, geographers, astronomers and physicians are renewed by the early scientists of the 16th and 17th centuries. Through this complete and unifying perspective of the library, which is based not only on the side-by-side presence of the books but also on the internal connections between each other and all together, Vlachos' tendency for an intertextual and interconfessional dialogue becomes obvious, not anymore among theologians, philosophers, preachers or citizens, but among readers, either of Latin or Greek origin, of Catholic or Orthodox faith.

A genuine representative of his contemporary biconfessional Venetian-Cretan society, Gerasimos Vlachos lived as a pious Orthodox and worked as an open-minded scholar. His intellectual nature, his rich literary work, his loyalty to the political regime of the *Serenissima* and his tireless initiatives for the enhancement and promotion of letters and education granted him a great reputation of an eminent man of wisdom and erudition. His profound training as a theologian, his extensive knowledge of the Christian religion and its Greek and Latin traditions, and at the same time his sincere and pious devotion to the Orthodox Church, offered him the opportunity to move freely among the various, numerous and often conflicting ideas and dogmas of his time. Without adopting radical thesis or proceeding publicly to provocative and inflammatory statements either by inaugurating or participating in theological disputes, he is presented

reluctant to get involved to open confrontations with representatives of the Catholic faith, self-controlled to a superior historical need and a set of practical priorities. Through his activity and writings, he expressed his will for a sincere interconfessional dialogue between the Christians of his time, aiming to the strengthening and support of the unity of the Christian world. In this context, he tended to avoid a divisive and conservative perception of his reality and his personal faith and chose to abstain from his contemporary religious-confessional fanaticism. Remaining calm and objective, he did not refuse the contact and communication with Rome and Constantinople, but clearly preferred to place himself in the service of Venice. Characterized by a deep and conscious interconfessionality, Gerasimos Vlachos attempted or wished to attempt to approach what for him and his world had prevailed to be defined as different, alien, foreign and hostile. Being familiar and interacting with the so-called *confessional other*, the Cretan thinker promoted a model of reconsideration, rapprochement and, at some points, conciliation among people of different origins, language, socio-political background, ideology and faith.

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