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## ABOUT A HITHERTO UNKNOWN PRAYER TO ST. ANASTASIA

The theme of this article is the edition and the commentary of a hitherto unknown prayer to St. Martyr Anastasia, which belong to the collection of new found manuscripts of the monastery of St. Catherine in Sinai. Due to kindness of His Eminence Archbishop Damian and Fr. Justin, the librarian of the monastery, I had the possibility to work with the manuscripts and photos of uncial Greek manuscripts found in 1975 (so called Μεγάλη Γραφή. Νέα σειρά Uncial, New Series), described by Nikolopoulos<sup>1</sup>. Among them one manuscript attracted my attention.

### I. DESCRIPTION OF THE MANUSCRIPT

Its code is MG (Μεγάλη Γραφή)<sup>2</sup> Greek 104, New Series (further — MG 104). It is a parchment manuscript, 2 folios, its size is 195×174 mm. They were part of a book, perhaps a small euchologion. The handwriting of the manuscript is Greek uncial 8<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> centuries, so

<sup>1</sup> *Damianos S., Pelitkoglu B. I., Nikolopoulos P. G. The New Finds of Sinai / Ed. Holy Monastery and Archdiocese of Sinai. Athens: Ministry of Culture — Mount Sinai, 1999. P. 55.*

<sup>2</sup> In Greek uncial.

called slop style<sup>3</sup>. Some features of this slop style indicate northern regions (Balcans). The diacritic is not developed, there is only acute stress and no signs for aspirations. It makes us to date the manuscript rather with 8<sup>th</sup> than with 9<sup>th</sup> century.

The text is written in one column, according to classification of Leroi it is type of lining A2<sup>4</sup>. There are 14 lines on each page. Only first page verso contains 13 lines. There are certain mistakes, or rather phonetical peculiarities. Sometimes α is mixed with ε, for example ΠΡΟΕΡΕΣΕΩΣ instead of προαίρεσεως. Often η is mixed with ι. For example ΑΙΤΤΕΙΤΟΥΣ instead of ἀηττήτους, which shows the phonetical law of itacismus. However we never see here υ mixed with ι. All words with υ are written correctly. Therefore the manuscript MG 104 could be written not later the 9<sup>th</sup> century, which is terminus post quem for the process of changing of ü into i and its reflection expressed in mixture of υ and ι<sup>5</sup>. This is an additional argument for dating of the manuscript MG 104 with 8<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> centuries.

## II. THE PUBLICATION OF THE TEXT

It is a prayer to Christ in honour of St. Martyr Anastasia. We give below transliteration, transcription and translation. The letters in brackets are reconstructed.

F.2 recto<sup>6</sup>

1. ΚΕ ΙΥΧΕ Ο ΘΣ ΗΜΩΝ Ο ΔΙ
2. ΑΦΑΤΟΝ ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΑΝ
3. ΓΥΝΑΙΚΑΣ .ΕΠΙ ΤΗΣ ΓΗΣ
4. ΚΑΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΑΝΤΙΠΑΛΟΥ
5. ΔΑΙΜΟΝΟΣ. ΣΤΡΑΤΕΥΕΣ
6. ΘΑΙ. ΑΝΑΔΕΙΞΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΑΥ
7. ΤΑΣ ΑΙΤΤΕΙΤΟΥΣ ΜΑΡΤΥ
8. ΡΑΣ ΜΙΜΗΤΑΣ ΤΩΝ ΣΩΝ
9. ΠΑΘΗΜΑΤΩΝ. ΠΟΙΗΣΑΣ
10. ΠΟΙΗΣΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΗΜΑΣ ΣΚΕΥ
11. ΑΡΙΑ ΑΓΝΑ. ΠΡΟΣ ΥΠΟ
12. ΔΟΧΗΝ ΤΩΝ ΘΕΙΩΝ
13. ΣΟΥ ΕΝΤΑΛΜΑΤΩΝ
14. ΑΥΤΟΣ ΟΥΝ ΦΙΛΑΝΕ ΚΕ

F.2 verso

1. Ο ΕΚ ΡΙΖΗΣ ΣΕΠΤΗΣ ΤΗΝ
2. ΣΙΝ ΔΟΥΛΗΝ ΣΟΥ ΑΝΑΣΤΑ
3. ΣΙΑΝ ΒΛΑΣΤΗΣΑΣ ΑΥΤΗΝ
4. ΟΔΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΙΟΥ ΣΟΥ
5. ΒΑΔΙΣΑΙ ΚΑΤΑΞΙΩΣΑΣ
6. ΑΞΙΩΣΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΗΜΑΣ ΤΥ
7. ΧΕΙΝ ΣΥΝ ΑΥΤΗ ΤΗΣ ΑΠΕ
8. ΡΑΝΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΔΙΑΔΟΧΟΥ ΣΟΥ

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<sup>3</sup> *Barbour R. Greek Literary Hands. A. D. 400–1600. Oxford, 1981. P. 20.*

<sup>4</sup> *Leroy J. Le Types de réglure des manuscrits grecs. Paris: Éditions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1976.*

<sup>5</sup> *Browning R. Medieval and Modern Greek. London, 1969. P. 129.*

<sup>6</sup> The present numeration does not correspond to the real sequence of the text.

9. ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΑΣ. ΔΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΕΚ
10. ΧΥΣΕΩΣ ΤΟΥ ΤΙΜΙΟΥ ΑΥ
11. ΤΗΣ ΑΙΜΑΤΟΣ ΚΗΡΥΤ
12. ΤΕΙΝ ΕΙΣ ΠΡΑ ΚΑΙ ΥΝ ΚΑΙ Α
13. ΓΙΟΝ ΠΝΑ. ΤΗΝ ΟΡΘΟ
14. ΔΟΞΟΝ ΠΙΣΤΙΝ ΔΙΑ

F.1

1. ΤΗΣ (ΘΕΡΑΠΕ)ΝΗΣ ΣΟΥ
2. ΕΥΚΡΑΤΟΝ ΤΟΝ ΑΕΡΑ ΑΝΑ
3. Δ(ΕΙΞΟΝ)
4. ΕΙΡΗΝΙΚΟΝ ΤΟΝ ΥΕΤΟΝ ΕΠΟΜ
5. ΒΡΙΞΟΝ
6. ΤΗΣ ΓΗΣ ΤΑ ΓΕΝΝΗΜΑΤΑ
7. ΠΛΗΘΥΝΟΝ
8. ΤΟΥΣ ΚΑΡΠΟΥΣ ΕΠΙ ΕΥΦΟΡΙΑ
9. ΧΑΡΙΤΩΞΟΝ
10. ΠΑΝΤΑΣ ΗΜΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΑ ΗΜΕΤΕΡΑ ΑΙΣΙΩΣ ΚΑΙ
11. ΑΓΑΘΟΠΡΕΠΙΩΣ ΚΥΒΕΡ
12. ΝΗΣΑΣ
13. ΚΑΙ ΠΡΟΜΗΘΟΥΜΕΝΟΣ ΔΟΥΛΟΥΣ ΣΟΥ
14. ΑΞΙΟΥΣ ΚΑΙ

F.1 verso

1. ΙΚΕΤΑΣ ΑΚΑΤΑΙΣΧΥΝΟΥΣ
2. ΑΠΕΙΡΓΑΣΑΙ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΜΕ
3. ΧΡΙΣ ΑΙΜΑΤΟΣ . ΠΡΟΣ ΤΗΝ ΑΜΑΡΤΙΑΝ ΑΝΤΑΓΩ
4. ΝΙΖΟΜΕΝΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΣΟΥ
5. ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΟΜΟΛΟ
6. ΓΙΤΩΝ ΜΙΜΗΤΑΣ ΔΙΑ ΤΗΣ
7. ΠΡΟΕΡΕΣΕΩΣ ΑΝΑΔΕΙΞΟΝ
8. ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΑΥΤΟΥΣ ΗΤΟΙΜΑΣ
9. ΜΕΝΗΣ ΤΩΝ ΕΥΦΡΑΙΝΟΜΕ
10. ΝΩΝ ΚΑΤΟΙΚΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΑΓΑΛ
11. ΛΙΑΣΕΩΣ ΣΥΜΜΕΘΕΚΤΟ
12. ΡΑΣ ΠΑΡΑΛΑΒΕ. ΕΥΧΑΙΣ
13. ΚΑΙ ΙΚΕΣΙΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΥΠΕΡΕΝΔΟΞΟΥ

*Transcription*

Κύριε Ἰησοῦ Χριστέ, ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν, ὁ δι' ἄφατον οἰκονομίαν γυναικας ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς κατὰ τοῦ ἀντιπάλου δαίμονος στρατεύεσθαι ἀναδείξας, καὶ ταύτας ἀηττήτους μάρτυρας μιμητὰς τῶν σὸν παθημάτων ποιήσας, ποιήσον καὶ ἡμᾶς σκευάρια ἀγνὰ πρὸς ὑποδοχὴν τῶν θείων σου ἐνταλμάτων.

Αὐτὸς οὖν, φιλόνηρωπε Κύριε, ὁ ἐκ ρίζης σεπτῆς τὴν σὴν δούλην [σου] Ἀναστασίαν βλαστήσας, <καὶ> αὐτὴν ὁδὸν τοῦ μαρτυρίου σου βαδίσει καταξιώσας, ἀξιώσον καὶ ἡμᾶς τυχεῖν σὺν αὐτῇ τῆς ἀπεράντου καὶ <ἀ>διαδόχου σου βασιλείας. , διὰ τῆς ἐκχύσεως τοῦ

τιμίον αὐτῆς αἵματος κηρύττειν εἰς Πατέρα καὶ Υἱὸν καὶ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα τὴν ὀρθόδοξον πίστιν, διὰ τῆς θεραπαίνης σου. Εὐκρατον τὸν ἀέρα ἀνάδ(ειξον), εἰρηνικὸν τὸν ὑετὸν ἐπόμβρισον, τῆς γῆς τὰ γεννήματα, πλῆθνον, τοὺς καρποὺς ἐπ' εὐφορίᾳ, χαρίτωσον, πάντας ἡμᾶς καὶ τὰ ἡμέτερα αἰσίως καὶ ἀγαθοπρεπῶς κυβερνήσας καὶ προμηθοῦμενος, δούλους σου ἀξίους καὶ ἰκέτας ἀκαταισχύν<τ>ους ἀπέ[ι]ργασαι, καὶ τῶν μέχρις αἵματος πρὸς πρὸς τὴν ἀμαρτίαν ἀνταγωνιζομένων ἀγίων σου μαρτύρων καὶ ὁμολογητῶν μιμητὰς διὰ τῆς

προαιρέσεως ἀνάδειξον, καὶ τῆς αὐτοῦ {ι}ς ἡτοιμασμένης τῶν εὐφραινομένων κατοικίας καὶ ἀγαλλιάσεως συμμεθέκτορας παράλαβε, εὐχαῖς καὶ ἰκεσίαις τῆς ὑπερενδόξου (Θεοτόκου)

### **Translation**

O Lord Jesus Christ our God, who appointed (lit. showed) women on the Earth to struggle against the adversary demon and made them invincible martyrs and imitators of thy passions, make us too holy vessels for acceptance of thy divine commandments. Thou, men-loving Lord, who hast made grow thy maid-servant Anastasia from a honourable root and made her worthy to stride the way of martyrdom, dignify and us to gain with her thine endless and eternal (lit. succeeding) Kingdom through pouring of her precious blood, to preach the Orthodox faith in the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit for the sake of thy servant. Show the air good-mixed, pour the peaceful rain on births of the Earth, multiply the fruits in abundance, grant us to thy servants and supplicants to complete shamelessly their work and show us through the choice imitators of thy holy martyrs and confessors, who struggled against the sin up to blood and receive them as participants of exultation in the ready abode of the joyous through the prayers of the Most Glorious... (Theotokos).

### **III. COMMENTARY**

#### **Historical comments**

The historians, who studied the cult of St. Anastasia, had always difficulties with her identification<sup>7</sup>. There are several saints with the name Anastasia. One is St. Anastasia of Rome, a virgin, who suffered in time of Decius or Valerianus (250, or 256). She confessed Christ before the ruler of Rome, named Probus and she was severely tortured. Her teeth were crushed, her nails were torn off, her hands and legs were cut, eventually she was beheaded<sup>8</sup>. Another is St. Anastasia of Thessalonics, whose life and passion generally repeats that of St. Anastasia of Rome.

It seems that our text from MG 104 refers to St. Anastasia of Sirmium, who suffered during the reign of Diocletianus in 290 or more probably in 304. Her life and passion composed by St. Symeonus the Metaphrastes is rich with many surprising details, the earliest life, composed in the 5<sup>th</sup> century in Latin is more epic<sup>9</sup>. This type of the text is partially reflected in pre-Metaphrastic lives and in Menologion of Basil II. The earliest Latin Vita of St. Anastasia is connected with Lives of St. Chrysogon, St. Agape, Chionia and Irine. It tells, that St. Anastasia was the daughter of Roman citizens Pretextatus and Fausta. She

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<sup>7</sup> The tradition of study of St. Anastasia's veneration dates back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century (1668). See complete biography in the article: Михайлов П. Б., Лосева О. В., Герасименко Н. В., Зеленин Я. Э. Святая Анастасия Узорешительница // Православная энциклопедия. Т. 2. М., 2001. С. 259–261.

<sup>8</sup> About her life see: *Devos P.* Sainte Anastasie la vierge et la source de sa Passion (BHG 76z) // *Analecta Bollandiana*. 1962. P. 33–41.

<sup>9</sup> *Moretti P. F.* La passio Anastasiae. Introduzione, testo critico, traduzione. Roma, 2006 (text of Passio on P. 101–186).

was well educated and she believed in Christ. St. Anastasia became a spiritual daughter of St. Chrysogon. She was married to a pagan named Publius and she did not have conjugal intercourse with him, giving as an excuse her disease. Every night she secretly visited imprisoned Christians, taking care of them and healing their wounds. Eventually her husband learned about it and kept her under home arrest. However, after he had sunk in the sea, St. Anastasia continued her service to imprisoned Christians. Among them were Sts. Agape, Chionia and Irine, who were executed for their confession of Christ. Eventually St. Anastasia was arrested and she was demanded to give all her wealth to prefectus praetorii Lucillius. She did not yield to flattering and threats and she was stretched between four pillars and after that burnt<sup>10</sup>. Later lives add that before she was brought with other Christian women to a ship with a broken bottom, but she was miraculously saved from sinking. St. Anastasia is also called *φαρμακολύτριά* in later lives, but not in the early *Vita*.

Veneration of St. Anastasia can be traced back to the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century in her native city Sirmium, for a Croatian archeologist A. Hitrek found remnants of the church in Sirmium, which was possibly dedicated to St. Anastasia<sup>11</sup>. Later archeologists found inscriptions, where St. Anastasia is mentioned<sup>12</sup>. In 441 Sirmium was destroyed by Huns. Seventeen years later in the 458 holy relics of St. Anastasia were solemnly brought from ruins of Sirmium to Constantinople and posed to the Church of St. Anastasia, according to the testimony of Theodor the Lector<sup>13</sup>. This church existed already in 380, it was the only Orthodox Church before coming to Constantinople of St. Gregory of Nazianz, who glorified this church by his preaches. According to opinion of Trpimir Vedriš, it is difficult to judge, whether this church was dedicated to Resurrection of Christ<sup>14</sup>, but surely, it was not connected with memory of St. Anastasia.

As for my opinion, the Church Anastasia of Constantinople, just as the basilica Anastasia of Rome were connected with the basilica Anastasis in Jerusalem, for both the First and the Second Rome (Constantinople) tried to imitate Jerusalem<sup>15</sup>. Only later after translation of relics of St. Martyr Anastasia of Sirmium the basilica Anastasia of Constantinople and that of Rome took the name of martyr. It was a similar process, as the transformation of the Basilica Irene — church of Christ as our Peace (Irimi) into the Church of St. Martyr Irene.

<sup>10</sup> For detailed investigation see: *Delehaye H. Les legendier Romain. Les saints de Novembre et Decembre. Bruxelles, 1936. P. 151–171.*

<sup>11</sup> *Hitrek A. Starokršćansko grobište sv. Sinerote u Sirmiu. Ephemeris Salonitana. 1894. S. 5–10; Попович P. Рано хришћанство на Балкану. Београд, 1995. С. 45–46.*

<sup>12</sup> Let us mention for example this funeral inscription: «A [In dom]o beati[ssimae --- | --- nost]re Anast[asiae--- | --- in] hoc loco d[e]positus --- | ---]x qui conv[ixit] mecum annis». Translation: «My spouse (?) is posed in the house (or temple) of St. Anastasia, who lived with me ... years» (see: *Popovic I., Ferjančić S. A new inscription from Sirmium and the basilica of St. Anastasia // Starinar, LXIII. 2013. S. 101–114.*)

<sup>13</sup> Ἦνέχθη ἀπὸ Σιρμίου τὸ λείψανον τῆς ἁγίας Ἀναστασίας καὶ κατετέθη ἐν τῷ μαρτυρίῳ αὐτῆς τῷ ὄντι ἐν τοῖς Δομνίνου ἐμβόλοις. Translation: «The relics of St. Anastasia were brought from Sirmium and were posed in her temple, which is at walls of Domnin» (*Theodorus Lector. Historia ecclesiastica. Patrologia Graeca. T. 86. Pars 1. 1865. Col. 216 B.*)

<sup>14</sup> See: *Vedriš T. Štovanje sv. Anastazije u Sirmiju, Carigradu i Rimu u kasnoj antici i ranome srednjem vijeku (The Cult of St. Anastasia in Sirmium, Constantinople, and Rome in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages) // Diadora, 22. 2007. P. 197.*

<sup>15</sup> The literature on this theme is very numerous. Among the last works with complete bibliography see: *Guran P. The Constantinople — new Jerusalem at the crossing of sacred space political theology // Новые Иерусалимы. Иеротопия и иконография сакральных пространств. М., 2009. С. 22–55.*

The Church of St. Anastasia in Constantinople stood until the 16<sup>th</sup> century, it is mentioned in various pilgrimage narrations. As for relics of St. Anastasia (maybe part of them), they were translated to Zadar in 804 according to a local Latin tradition of Zadar<sup>16</sup>, which is confirmed by Constantinus the Porphyrogenites, who tells in his work «De administrando Imperii», that the holy body of St. Anastasia lies in Zadar<sup>17</sup>.

Later tradition, which comes back to the 8<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> centuries, names St. Anastasia Farmakolytria Φαρμακολύτρια. There are various explanation of this term, one is connected with medicaments, which St. Anastasia spent for imprisoned Christians, another comes from a legend, that the church of St. Anastasia was built on the place, where the house of a certain man named Pharmakos<sup>18</sup>. But the most usual explanation is, that St. Anastasia helps to cure diseases or saves from venom. The first evidence of faith in graceful help of St. Anastasia as a healer is seen in a prayer attributed to St. John the Chrysostomus, dated possibly of the 8<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>19</sup>.

As for Roman tradition of veneration of St. Anastasia, we should mention, that basilica Anastasia existed in Rome already before the pontificate of pope Damasus (366–384)<sup>20</sup>, who decorated its roof and left an inscription about it:

«Antistes Damasus picturae ornarat honore  
Tecta quibus nunc dant pulchra metalla decus  
Divite testatur praetiosor aula nitore  
Quos rerum effectus possit habere fides.  
Archpriest Damasus decorated with honour of painting  
The roof, to which they now give beautiful metal decoration,  
This luxurious hall is testified by rich splendour,  
for faith can have such effects»<sup>21</sup>.

However nowhere here is said that the Church was even called Anastasis. From the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century we have information about «titulus Anastasiae», connected with the Church<sup>22</sup>, for it is mentioned in connection with the council of Rome held in 499. However, we can speak about this basilica as dedicated to St. Anastasia only from the 6<sup>th</sup> century<sup>23</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> *Vedriš T.* Historia Translationis S. Anastasiae: kako (ne) čitati hagiografski tekst (Historia Translationis S. Anastasiae: How (not) to read a hagiographic text) // Marinković, Ana; Vedriš, Trpimir (eds). Hagiologija: Kultovi u kontekstu (zbornik radova). Zagreb, 2008. P. 39–55.

<sup>17</sup> *Constantinus Porphyrogenites.* De administrando Imperii. Moscow, 1991. P. 123.

<sup>18</sup> *Patria Constantinopolitana.* III. 103. 43; see: *Patria Constantinopoleos (= liber vi operis Historia Romana atque omnigena) (fort. epitome) // T. Preger (ed.).* Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum. Pt. 1. Leipzig: Teubner, 1901 (repr. New York: Arno 1975).

<sup>19</sup> ἄγια Ἀναστασία φαρμακολύτρια, ἄγια Βαρβάρα ἀπὸ Πάτρας ... προσπέσατε, δυσωπήσατε τὸν μόνον ὑπεράγαθον θεὸν ὅπως δωρήσητε τὴν δούλην τοῦ θεοῦ Μαρίαν ὑγείαν καὶ σωτηρίαν καὶ ἄφεσιν τῶν συνεχομένων κακῶν — St. Anastasia pharmacolytria (curing the wounds), St. Barbara of Patres, kneel down and plead the one Most-Good God, so that you give health and forgiveness of sins to the servant of the Lord Maria (see: *Johannes Chrysostomus.* In infirmos [Sp.] // Vassiliev A. (ed.). *Anecdota Graeco-Byzantina.* Vol. 1. Moscow: Imperial University Press, 1893. P. 345–346). The date of this prayer is uncertain. Geoffrey Lampe considered this prayer to be composed before the 9<sup>th</sup> century (see: *Lampe G.* *Patristic Greek Lexicon.* Oxford, 1961. P. 1472).

<sup>20</sup> *Whitehead P. B.* The Church of St. Anastasia in Rome // *American Journal of Archeology.* 1927. Vol. 31. P. 405–420.

<sup>21</sup> *Kirsch J.-P.* 1) Anastasie (1) // *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et Geographie Ecclesiastique.* T. 2. Col. 1484–1485; 2) Anastasie // *Dictionnaire d'Archeologie Chretienne et Liturgie.* T. 1. Col. 1919–1924.

<sup>22</sup> See: *Duchesne Sainte Anastasia // Melange d'Archeologie et d'histoire.* 1887. P. 400.

<sup>23</sup> *Vedriš T.* Štovanie sv. Anastasije... P. 204–205.

**Philological commentary**

If we return to our text of prayer from Sinaitic MG 104, (further Sin MG 104), we see, that nowhere St. Anastasia is called *φαρμακολύτρια*<sup>24</sup>. Moreover, there is not a slightest hint to St. Anastasia's care about imprisoned Christians and to the service of the Martyr as a healer. There is no even any prayer to Christ about healing through intercessions of St. Anastasia. We see here just requests to give good weather, a peaceful rain and abundance of fruits.

There are some points, where the text of prayer is crossed with life of St. Anastasia. First is the praise to the women martyrs, who struggled against demons. It can be connected with Latin *Passio* of St. Anastasia, which is an anthology of lives of women-martyrs — Irine, Agape, Chionie, Potamiene and a hymn to womanly martyrdom. However it can be a quotation from a general prayer to women-martyrs.

Second is the indication to the good and Christina origin of St. Anastasia: ὁ ἐκ ριζης σεπτῆς τὴν σὴν δούλῃν σου Αναστασίαν βλαστήσας, «who hast made grow thy maid-servant Anastasia from a honourable root».

Then it can be the death of St. Anastasia, which imitates Passion of Christ. We see this hint in the words of the prayer Κύριε Ἰησοῦ Χριστέ, ὁ Θεός ἡμῶν, ὁ δι ἄφατον οἰκονομίαν γυναικας ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς κατὰ τοῦ ἀντιπάλου δαίμονος στρατεύεσθαι ἀναδείξας, καὶ ταύτας ἀηττήτους μάρτυρας μιμητάς τῶν σῶν παθημάτων ποιήσας (who appointed (lit. showed) women on the Earth to struggle against the adversary demon and made them invincible martyrs and imitators of thy passions). Now let us remind that St. Anastasia was bound to 4 pillars, as if she were crucified between them and then she was burnt. However this hint is rather vague. Moreover, these words from the prayer about imitation to Christ can be can be a quotation from the Letter to Romans of St. Ignatius of Antioch to Romans: «Allow me to be an imitator of passions of my Lord»<sup>25</sup>. It can be a general reference to a martyrdom as such.

Reading the prayer from MG 104 one can get an impression, that its source, namely *Vita* or *Passio* of St. Anastasia was not very rich. It corresponds to the archaic epoch, namely from the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century to the 7<sup>th</sup> century. The text on which the author of the prayer is based could remind Latin *Passio* of St. Anastasia, written possibly between the middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century and the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century<sup>26</sup>. If we analyze the content of the prayer, we see, that in reality the intercession is directed not to St. Anastasia, but to Jesus Christ. It also shows the archaic characer of this prayer and purely Christological vision of saintity, which was typical for early Christian time and changed a bit in the Middle Byzantine period.

This type of prayer is very characteristic for Latin *prefatios*, which are always directed to Christ. Let us bring as an example the prayer in the day of St. Anastasia from *Sacramentarium Gregorianum*.

Vere dignum et iustum est aequum et salutare tibi semper et ubique gratias agere, Domine sancte, Pater omnipotens, aeternae Deus, qui ut de hoste generis humani maior victoria duceretur, non solum per viros virtute martyrii, sed de eo etiam per feminas triumphasti: et ideo cum angelis...

<sup>24</sup> There is a question, when the Roman tradition of St. Anastasia comes to Byzantium. Some scholars (e. c. Trpimir Vedris) think, that it is not earlier, than the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>25</sup> Επιτρέψατέ μοι μιμητὴν εἶναι τοῦ πάθους τοῦ θεοῦ μου. *Ad Romanos. Caput 6. Sect. 3* (see: *Ignace d'Antioche. Polycarpe de Smyrne. Lettres. Martyre de Polycarpe // Camelot P. T. (ed.). Sources chrétiennes, 10. Paris: Cerf, 1969. P. 110).*

<sup>26</sup> *Moretti P. F. La passio Anastasiae... P. 10.*

It is true and just and righteous and salvificial to thank you always and everywhere, O Holy Lord, Father All-mighty, Eternal Lord, Who triumphed by the strength of martyrdom not only through men, but also through women, so that the greater victory be led against the Enemy of human kind<sup>27</sup>.

The date of composition of this Sacramentarium is rather vague: the earliest manuscripts date back to the 9<sup>th</sup> century. Some scholars think, that really Sacramentarium was composed in the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> – beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century. However, it can contain an archaic material, which was not witnessed by Sacramentarium Leonianum et Sacramentarium Gelasianum.

At first let us see, that this prefatio has also a praise of braveness of women martyrs. That can be connected with the prayer of MG 104.

The prayers about good weather (ὑπέρ ευκρασίας τῶν ἀέρων) literary good mixture of the air) are rather common for Eastern Liturgies. Let us bring just one example from the Liturgy of St. Gregorius of Nazianz:

Χάρισαι τῷ λαῷ σου τὴν ὁμόνοιαν.

Τῷ κόσμῳ τὴν εὐστάθειαν.

Τῷ ἀέρι τὴν εὐκρασίαν<sup>28</sup>.

«Give to thy people the unity of mind

Give to the world stability

Give to the air good mixture».

However the phrase εὐκρατον τὸν ἀέρα ἀνάδ(ειξον) seems to be a hapax for liturgical texts, for we could see the examples of such an expression in narrative Christian texts, for example ἔχουσι δὲ ἀέρα λιγυρόν τε καὶ εὐκρατον καὶ πάννυ κάλλιστον<sup>29</sup> (they have fresh air, good mixed and the best).

We should add that prayers about good weather were very actual in the 4<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> centuries, when the climate changed and it became wetter and damper and it caused diminishing of harvests<sup>30</sup> due to improper rains, especially in the Balkans. The term εὐκρασία means the proper alteration of rains and sunny weather.

The prayer to St. Anastasia contains many parallels with Christian literature of the 4<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> centuries. Let us bring some examples. The prayer contains rather rare imperative χαρίτωσον from a rare verb χαριτώω, which is met in a work of St. John the Chrysostomus: «Χαρίτωσον, Κύριε, τὰ ῥήματά μου, ὁδὸς λόγον εὐρυθμον εἰς τὸ στόμα μου. Ταῦτα καὶ περὶ τοῦ διδασκάλου παρακαλῶμεν νῦν ἡμεῖς τὸν Θεόν». «Receive beneficially o Lord my words, give a well-rythmical word in my mouth»<sup>31</sup>.

There are also some other parallels with works of St. John the Chrysostomus, for example a comparatively rare verb ἀνταγωνίζομαι, which presents in the prayer to St. Anastasia. (see above). Καὶ καθάπερ στρατιώτης γενναῖος εἰς πολεμίους εἰσελθὼν, καὶ κατακόψας τὴν

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<sup>27</sup> Sacramentarium Gregorianum nach dem Aachener Urexemplar // Liturgiegeschichtlicher Quellen. Bd. 3. Muenster, 1921. S. 11.

<sup>28</sup> Liturgia Sancti Gregorii. PG 36, 717C.

<sup>29</sup> Palladius. De gentibus Indiae. De gentibus Indiae et Bragmanibus [Sp.] / Ed. by Berghoff W. Meisenheim am Glan: Hain, 1967. P. 18.

<sup>30</sup> McCormick M., Büntgen U., Cane M. A. et al. Climate Change during and after the Roman Empire: Reconstructing the Past from Scientific and Historical Evidence // Journal of Interdisciplinary History, XLIII: 2 (Autumn, 2012). P. 184–186.

<sup>31</sup> Joannes Chrysostomus. Ad populum Antiochenum. PG 49. 50. A.

φάλαγγα τῶν ἀνταγωνιζομένων αὐτῶ.. (As if a brave warrior who rushed into the crowd of enemies and cut in pieces the phalanx of those who resist him)<sup>32</sup>.

Another rare imperative ἀνάδειξον, which presents in the prayer to St. Anastasia, is contained in the kontakia written by St. Roman the Melodist:

μετόχους τε τοῦ δείπνου σου  
ἀνάδειξον ὡς τὸν ἄσωτον,  
ὁ τῶν αἰώνων δεσπότης καὶ κύριος.

Show us the participants of thy Supper  
just as the Prodigal Son,  
Oh, the Master and Lord of centuries<sup>33</sup>.

A kontakion dedicated to St. George is very characteristic.  
προσελθὼν οὖν τοῖς ρείθροις, παρ' αὐτὰ καὶ ὁ δράκων ἐπέβη, ὁ δὲ ἅγιος  
προσηύχετο: „Κύριε, ἐν σοὶ με ἀνάδειξον ὀπλίτην καὶ μάρτυρα<sup>34</sup>.

Having come to the stream, to which came up also a dragon,  
a holy man prayed. Lord, show me a warrior and a martyr.

Let us compare this verses with the words of the prayer: καὶ τῶν μέχρις αἵματος πρὸς τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἀνταγωνιζομένων ἁγίων σου μαρτύρων καὶ ὁμολογητῶν μιμητὰς διὰ τῆς προαιρέσεως ἀνάδειξον, ... And show us through the choice imitators of thy holy martyrs and confessors, who struggled against the sin up to blood...

We don't find words or expressions typical for Middle Byzantine period in this prayer from MG 104. So we may suppose that this prayer was composed in the 5<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> centuries, after translation of relics of St. Anastasia in 458. If we take in account the shape of prayer and its possible correspondence with prefatio of the Mass in honour of St. Anastasia, we may suppose that an author of the prayer could be a representative of the Roman Pope in Constantinople, who knew both Latin and Greek and both Roman and Constantinopolitan liturgical rite.

The composition and theological content of this prayer also seems to testify the early origin of the prayer. In spite of all researches we did not find a similar shape of prayer<sup>35</sup> in the liturgical sources. It is directed to Christ and it has eucharistic and Christological characteristic. The exploit of St. Anastasia is regarded from christological point of view: holy martyrs imitate Christ's passions and therefore they reveal His image and resemblance. The same task is posed before believers, who should imitate martyrs and through them — Christ himself. At the same time believers are asked to become holy vessels for receiving of commandments of Christ. We clearly see here the ideas of theosis or deification, connected with Christology of the 5<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>36</sup>. Even the request about rain have a certain Christological notion: a very rare verb ἐπομβριζῶ is used in the prayer, which meets also in the homily for Purification of Mary attributed (though with doubts) to St. Cyril of Jerusalem.

<sup>32</sup> *Joannes Chrysostomus*. In Sanctam Babylam. PG 50. Col. 530.

<sup>33</sup> *Romanus Melodos*. Hymnus in Filium Prodigalem. Hymnes // Sources Chretiennes. T. 114. Paris: Cerf, 1965. P. 258.

<sup>34</sup> *Romanus Melodos*. Hymnus in Sanctum Georgium. Hymnus 81. Proemium Sancit Romani cantica dubia / Ed. by Maas P., Trypanis K. Berlin: De Gruiter, 1970. P. 149.

<sup>35</sup> We thoroughly studied: *Lodi E*. Enchyridion fontium liturgicorum. Roma, 1979. — Database of Thesaurus Linguae Graecae and consulted with specialists and among them with a well known specialist in liturgics Fr. Michael Zheltov.

<sup>36</sup> About Christology of 5<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> centuries and its correspondance to veneration of saints see: *Meyendorff J*. Christ in the Eastern Christian thought of 5<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> centuries. New York, 1987.



параллели указывают на близость текста молитвы к византийским памятникам V–VI вв. и в то же время не отмечаются лексемы и фразеологизмы, типичные для средневизантийского периода (VII–X вв.). Исходя из исторических реалий (перенесения мощей св. Анастасии из Сирмия в 458 г.), можно предположить, что молитва была составлена после 458 г., но не позднее середины VII в.

**Ключевые слова:** почитание святых, мученичество, житие, молитва, св. Анастасия сирмийская, богослужение, рукописи, унциал

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**Title:** About a hitherto unknown prayer to St. Anastasia

**Summary:** The object of the article is the publication of the article in honour of St. Anastasia, which is contained in the uncial Greek manuscript of the Monastery of St. Catherine. The manuscript can be dated with the 8<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> centuries both because of archaic character of system of tones and aspirations and because of pronunciation of υ как ü. The prayer written in the manuscript has no analogies among the liturgical texts. It is directed to Christ and bears definitely christological character, where praise of martyrdom is connected with the idea of imitation to Christ and deification. We meet some points of correspondence of the prayer with early Latin Vita of St. Anastasia — the indication to her noble and Christian origin, to the link of her Life with Passion of Sts. Irene, Agape and Chionia and perhaps to the character of her death, which imitates Christ's death. The form and content of the prayer in honour of St. Anastasia reminds Latin prefatio in Masses dedicated to memory of martyrs and especially to that in honour of St. Anastasia. Lexical and phraseological parallels show the closeness of the prayer's text to Byzantine monuments of the 5<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> centuries. At the same time we did not find words and phrases characteristic for Middle Byzantine period. If we take in account translation of relics of St. Anastasia from Sirmium in 458, we may suppose, that the prayer was composed after 458, but not later than the middle of the 7<sup>th</sup> century.

**Keywords:** prayer, liturgy, martyr, manuscripts, uncial, translation, relics

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