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ÉTUDES

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ÉTUDES

ACADÉMIE BULGARE
DES SCIENCES

cinquantième année

L

2014/3

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ÉTUDES BALKANIQUES

- Revue trimestrielle éditée par l’Institut d’Études balkaniques & Centre de Thracologie (Académie bulgare des Sciences)
- Adresse : 45, rue Moskovska, Sofia 1000, BULGARIE
- Tél./Fax : (+ 359 2) 980 62 97
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- Département d’échange international de livres de l’Académie bulgare des Sciences : exch1@cl.bas.bg
- Bibliothèque en ligne : <http://www.cceol.com>

Mise en page : **FABER**

ISSN 0324-1645

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2014

ACADÉMIE BULGARE DES SCIENCES
INSTITUT D'ÉTUDES BALKANIQUES & CENTRE DE THRACOLOGIE

ÉTUDES BALKANIQUES

L / 3

Sofia · 2014

ÉTUDES BALKANIQUES*Sofia · 2014 · L · 3*ACADÉMIE BULGARE DES SCIENCES
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ANTI-ARMENIAN POLEMICS IN A SLAVIC CANON
LAW MISCELLANY

(Ms. Slav. No 461 from the Manuscript Collection of the Romanian Academy)

Desislava Naydenova

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Abstract: The article examines the Slavic compilation Сказаніе в арменскоу ересу “Tale about the Armenia” preserved in Ms Slav. 461 (ff. 378r – 379v), a Nomocanon from the manuscript collection of the Romanian Academy, written in 1651, in Bistrica, by hierodeacon Efrem. The linguistic evidence, the absence of South-Slavic copies and the position of the Tale among the Russian supplements in canon law miscellanies suggest that its provenance was most probably Russian. Identical Byzantine text has not been founded yet, but even if it is an original Slavic work, the analysis of the Tale shows its strong connection with the Byzantine tradition of anti-Armenian polemics. Even if the style of the compilation is pejorative and insulting, its contents demonstrate some parallels with canons of ecumenical councils and rules of penitentials.

Keywords: Armenian, Nomocanon, Byzantium, canon law, heresy.

The absence of Armenians from the ecumenical Council of Chalcedon in 451 A. D. set the religious seal upon the cultural and political differences that played such an important role in the Byzantine-Armenian relations. The highly individual character of the Armenian Church is evident in its doctrine about the nature of Christ. There were also Armenian rites and customs that were condemned by the ecumenical councils and provoked disputes hardly less divisive than the theological differences. For instance, the 32nd Canon of the Council in Trullo claimed that the Armenians performed a bloodless sacrifice bringing pure wine to the holy table, without mixing it with water; the 33rd Canon of the same council accused them that, following the Jewish tradition they admitted only persons coming from priestly families into the clergy; the 56th Canon deposed the clerics and excommunicated the laymen who, just like Armenians, ate eggs and cheese on Saturdays and Sundays during the Holy Lent; the 99th Canon referred to the Armenians who brought pieces of cooked meat into the holy sanctuary¹.

¹ G. Nedungatt, M. Featherstone (eds.), *The Council in Trullo Revisited*. Rome, Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1995 (Kanonika, 6), p. 106–111, 138–139, 179–180.

Byzantine anti-Armenian texts are very diverse. Their study showed that the most common element among many of them is the large number of patristic testimonies, various apocryphal motifs, and fabricated stories². In the present paper, I will draw the attention to one such text, which sources most probably originated in the Byzantine tradition. The text is entitled Сказаніе в арменской ереси “Tale about the Armenian heresy” (further in the paper, it is referred as *Tale*). It is preserved in Ms Slav. 461 (ff. 378r – 379v), a Nomocanon from the manuscript collection of the Romanian Academy (from now on *BAR 461*), which was written, as noted in a marginal note, in 1651, in Bistrica, by monk-deacon Efrem³. According to Radu Constantinescu, the

² P. Tekeyan, *Controverses christologiques en Arméno-Cilicie dans la seconde moitié du XII^e siècle (1165-1198)*. (Orientalia Christiana Analecta, 124). Rome, 1939; S. Vryonis, *Byzantium: the Social Basis of Decline in the Eleventh Century*, *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*, 1959, N 2, 159–175; S. Vryonis, *Byzantine Images of the Armenians*, In: R. Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian Image in History and Literature*, Malibu, California, Undena Publications, p. 65–81; P. Ermilov, “Satanic Heresy”: On One Topic in Anti-Armenian Polemic, In: A. Rigo, P. Ermilov (eds.), *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Byzantium. The Definition and the Notion of Orthodoxy and Some Other Studies On the Heresies and the Non-Christian Religions*, Rome, Università degli Studi di Roma, 2010, p. 79–90.

³ P. Panaitescu, *Manuscrisele slave din Biblioteca Academiei R. P. R.* Vol. II. Editura Academiei române, București, 2003, p. 284–289; *Vechiul drept românesc scris. Repertoriul izvoarelor. 1340–1640*. Intocmit de R. Constantinescu. Editorea lucrării s-a făcut prin Serviciul publicații și valorificare din Direcția Generală a Arhivelor Statului. București, 1984, p. 226. When I presented my observations about the anti-Armenian text in *BAR 461* on a scholarly meeting of the Bulgarian-Romanian Commission in Sofia (Colloque Bilateral de la Commission Bulgaro-Roumaine d’Histoire, 28 November, 2012), the Romanian colleagues drew my attention to the fact that copies of the text might have appeared firstly in Moldova in the 16th century, because of confessional persecution that happened at that time. Moldova was a multi-ethnic and multi-confessional society. There were numerous ethnical communities in this region. Armenian communities were living in Suceava, Botosani, Siret, Vaslui and Roman. Many Armenians came in the latter half of the 14th century which determined Petru I (1375–1391) in 1384 and Alexandr the Good (1401–1435) in 1401 to consent to the bishop of Armenian Church in Poland extending his authority over Moldavian Armenians, with a temporary residence in Suceava (R. Laurentiu, *At Europe’s borders: medieval towns in the Romanian principalities*, Hotei Publishing, Brill, 2010, p. 353). Armenians were persecuted in Moldavia since 1479, even during the supposedly tolerant reign of Petru Rareș (1527–1538; 1541–1546). The reign of Stefan Rareș (1551–1552) displayed a strong tendency to persecuting all non-Orthodox people in the land. The first incidents concerned the Armenians and were described in detail in the chronicle of Minas from Thokat, who had lived in Moldova and had witnessed the events (Călători străini despre țările române. Supliment I. Editura Academiei române. București, 2011, p. 46–58). The violence against

Nomocanon in *BAR 461* can be attributed to the Russian redaction of the Nomocanon XIV Titulorum⁴. The *Tale* was first published by archimandrite Leonid at the end of the 19th century according to a copy in a 16th century Russian manuscript No 739⁵ from the collection of Trinity-Sergius Lavra. However, it has not been studied in detail yet.

The Slavic text about the Armenians in *BAR 461* consists of five different stories, each of which discusses the faults of Armenians. The first one tells how, after being excommunicated at the Seventh (sic!) Council, the Armenians sent a legation to a certain Halep to ask for a “law”. Halep offered them a conversion to Islam but they refused. Finally, after being threatened to be killed if they did not accept his terms, the Armenians agreed to accept the

the Armenians (conversion to Orthodoxy, destruction of churches, religious art and liturgical objects and books) started on August 16, 1551 at Suceava and continued on August 19, 1551. It eventually spread to all Moldavian towns which had Armenian inhabitants. Moreover, the persecution targeted the clergy and the elite. This policy continued after the death of Stefan Rareș, under the reign of his successor. The hostility to competing confessions is further apparent in the theological production of the time, which might have been influenced by both the literary tradition of the Byzantine Commonwealth and Russian writings. One possible explanation of this intolerant policy is rooted in the ambition of the Romanian rulers to preserve the Byzantine heritage. The princes of Moldova wished to define Orthodoxy as the religion of the country following the model of Byzantium and its emperors (M. Crăciun, *Tolerance and Persecution. Political Authority and Religious Difference in late medieval Moldavia*, *Colloquia Journal of Central European Studies*, Vol. X–XI, 2003–2004, N 1–2, p. 5–58).

⁴ Constantinescu compared the Nomocanon with Novgorodskaya kormčaya (GIM. Sin. 123 from the collection of the State Historical Museum, Moscow) and argued that it was a special redaction of Novgorodskaya kormčaya (*Vechiul drept românesc*, p. 227–234). *The Tale about Armenian Heresy* however was not part of the content of Novgorodskaya kormčaya as pointed by Constantinescu (according to him it begins on f. 462v). The aim of the present study is not to determine the kind and redaction of *BAR 461*, but the juxtaposition with the text of Sin. 123 shows that it follows another Russian redaction of the *Kormčaya*.

⁵ Архимандрит Леонид, Греческие сказки об армянской вере, перешедшие в нашу русскую письменность (из рукописи конца XVI века Троице-Сергиевой лавры N 739), *Чтения Обществе истории и древностей российских*, 1879, N 1, с. 1–4. The *Tale* was included in the second volume of the publication of the Nomocanon XIV Titulorum as it is part of the Russian supplements to the Slavic translation. *Древнеславянская корчя XIV титулов без толкований. Труд В. Н. Бенешевича*. Т. 2. Подготовлен к изданию и снабжен дополнениями Ю. К. Бегуновым, И. С. Чичуровым и Я. Н. Щаповым, София, Издательство болгарской академии наук, 1987, с. 178–181.

following eight commandments to observe from then on: 1) To put a nail in the cross and to kiss the nail, but not the cross; 2) Armenian priests, just like Muslim sheikhs, should carry a piece of cloth (“ubrus”) around their necks; 3) The priest should not eat pork on the day on which he celebrates the liturgy; 4) The animal sacrifice should take place in the church and the heart of the animals (oxen and rams), divided into four, should be put into the *kutya* (dish made of grain mixed with walnuts, sugar, and raisins, and served at funerals as a dish of commemoration⁶); 5) The priest should read the Gospel facing South, not East; 6) The priests should be circumcised after their death. They should be buried in sitting position facing South with the Gospel on their knees; the cut foreskin also should be buried with them; 7) If a wife of a layman dies, she should not be buried until her husband had sexual intercourse with her; 8) The cult of the Theotokos is forbidden.

The second part of the *Tale* highlights the origin of the fast of Artzibouris, which was observed in the week following the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee. Armenians had a teacher named Arzi, who had a dog Urzi. Arzi had a habit of hanging his sermons on the neck of his dog and sending the dog ahead of him when he visited his disciples. One day, the dog was killed and eaten by wolves. In his grief, Arzi issued a commandment to the Armenians to annually mourn the loss of the pet and commemorate him by five days of fasting. The fast was named after his beloved dog – the fast of Artzibouris.

The third part tells the story of Armenian Lina, who was so virtuous that she was elected a patriarch. Everybody praised her virtues but one dared to doubt, saying that she was just a weak woman. To prove his word, he became a servant of Lina, seduced her, and she gave birth to his child. He then abducted the child, fled to the Greek land and wrote a book, which mocked the Armenian heresy and their female patriarch Lina.

The fourth part is about the Armenian communion. Its preparation was not an easy task because the water for the communion should be taken secretly at night in silence. If something broke the silence – barking of a dog or movement of a fish, the water had to be poured out and then the vessel had to be filled again. The dish for preparing the communion was never cleaned (the author claimed that the skull of a dog could be also used for this purpose).

⁶ For details about the animal sacrifice in the Armenian Church, see A. Sharf, *Animal Sacrifice in Armenian Church*, In: A. Sharf, *Jews and other Minorities in Byzantium*, Bar-Ilan University Press, Jerusalem, 1995, p. 190–222.

Armenians baked in it paste with butter, called loaves communion bread and ate them everywhere, even when they ploughed.

The last part portrays Armenians as unctuous and hypocritical people. They are easily converted into different religions according to the circumstances and they may pretend to have changed religion three or four times. If a Christian and an Armenian were on the road together and had only one glass, the Christian should not give it to the Armenian. If a Christian was passing by an Armenian Church, he should close his ears to avoid hearing their chants. If an Armenian entered a Christian church, the service should stop. The monk Sergius, friend of German, testified that the Armenians, being God's enemies, mocked the Christians by pissing on vegetables and serving them to the Christians afterward.

The *Tale* was widespread in the Russian manuscript tradition, it was found in different canon law miscellanies dated from the 13th to the 17th centuries⁷ and incorporated in the *Kirilova kniga* (a polemical miscellany, edited in 1644 after an order of the Russian king Michail Feodorovich (1613 – 1645))⁸. The linguistic evidence, the absence of South-Slavic copies and its position among the Russian supplements in canon law miscellanies suggest that its provenance was most probably Russian. Identical Byzantine text has not been founded yet, but even if it is an original Slavic work, *Tale* is strongly connected with the Byzantine tradition of anti-Armenian polemics. The *Tale* mentions that the story about the Armenian patriarch – Lina, was written in certain “Greek text”. Furthermore, the two first stories – the one about an Armenian delegation to Halep and the other about the fast of Arzibouris – are in fact distorted versions of Byzantine tales. The first one is similar to a beginning of a Greek text, published by Pavel Ermilov after two manuscripts – Mosquensis Synod. 298 from the 13th century, and Patmensis 450 from the 16th century. Not much is known about the literary tradition of the Byzantine text. Ermilov

⁷ Я. Н. Щапов, *Византийское и южнославянское правовое наследие на Руси в XI–XIII вв.*, Москва, Издательство «Наука», 1978, с. 229; *Древнеславянская корчя XIV титулов*, с. 178; М. В. Корогодина, «Сказание о арменской ереси» опыт изучения мифов об иностранных, *Человек*, 2012, 1, 132–137.

⁸ М. Каган, Кириллова книга, *Словарь книжников и книжности Древней Руси*, РАН, Санкт-Петербург, 1998, Вып. 3, Ч. 3, с. 163–166. About some copies of *Kirilova kniga* in Romania see: А. Николов, Два валашских списка «Кирилловой книги» с параллельным румынским переводом второй половины XVII века, *Славяноведение*, 2008, N 2, с. 62–69.

assumed that it had been composed towards the end of the 12th century as some kind of “academic version” about the split between the Armenian and the Roman Church⁹. After the Armenians split from the Romans on the dogma of the Council of Chalcedon, fearing that the Romans might come and lay to waste, they sent a delegation to the Persian King Hosrov to negotiate the terms. Hosrov gave the Armenians five commandments, which they should observe and keep as a testimony of their rejection of the Romans (according to the Slavic *Tale*, Armenians sent a legation to Halep after the Seventh Council). The commandments, they received are eight, with only one of them being the same with this, revealed by the *Tale*: during the whole day, on which the liturgy was celebrated, the priest should not eat pork. Another one is similar – the entire nation had to be circumcised, and in the Slavic text the priests were to be circumcised after their death; the priests had to pray without a belt, first prostrating three times to the South; in the Slavic text – Armenian priests should carry “ubrus” around their necks and read the Gospel facing south, not east. Some of the commandments in the Greek text as the one in the Slavic *Tale* are obviously fictitious and aim at humiliating and mocking the Armenians. For instance, according to the fourth commandment found in the Greek text, the Armenian monks had to eat meat, cut their hair and urinate in a sitting position.

The second story in the *Tale* is widely known. It is about a certain Sergius and his dog – Artzibouris (the Slavic author did not know their real names and named the teacher Arzi and his dog Urzi). In the 12th century it was included in *Panoplia* of Euthymius Zigabenus¹⁰, a much consulted handbook on heresies and the dogma, and by this the story has acquired “official” status¹¹. What

⁹ Ermilov, “*Satanic Heresy*”, p. 79–90.

¹⁰ On the Slavic translation of *Panoplia* see: К. Иванова, О славянском переводе «Паноплии Догматики» Евфимия Зигабена, В: Исследования по древней и новой литературе, Ленинград, Наука, 1987, с. 101–105; Н. Гагова-Георгиева, Н. Един вероятно преводачески автограф от първата четвърт на XIV в. (Още веднъж за ранния славянски превод на «Догматическо всеоръжие от Евтимий Зигавин»), *Palaeobulgarica*, 25, 2001, N 1, с. 79–94.

¹¹ Most probably, the story first appeared in the most important Byzantine anti-Armenian source – The Invective against the Armenians, created around the middle of the 11th century and attributed to a fictional author, a certain Isaak, the Catholicos of Greater Armenia. About the origin and literary tradition of this see the detailed analysis by A. Sharf (A. Sharf, Byzantine Orthodoxy and the “Preliminary fast” of the Armenians, In: A. Sharf, *Jews and other Minorities*, p. 223–246); cf. Ermilov, “*Satanic Heresy*”, p. 79–90.

is important for the present study is the obvious lack of authenticity of the story¹², as other stories incorporated in the Slavic text it is a fictitious legend. These narratives evidence for a biased hostile perception of the Armenians that does not seem to be grounded on religious differences only – Armenians are naturally mendacious and sly, impure, idolaters and ungrateful.

Even if the style of the *Tale* is pejorative and insulting, its contents demonstrate some parallels with canons of ecumenical councils and rules of penitentials. The excommunication and deposition of the clergy were foreseen for those who forswore Christianity (after the 1st Canon of the Council of Antioch and the 8th Canon of the Seventh Council in Nicaea), those who celebrated Shabbath and Passover, prayed and received communion with the Jews (the 7th, 65th, 70th and 71st Canons of the Holy Apostles, and the 29th, 33rd, 37th, and 38th Canons of the regional Council of Laodicea), those who married women of other faith, those who baptized their children in other faith or married them to Jews or heretics (the 14th Canon of the Fourth Council in Chalcedon), those who communicated with Jews, visited their healers and bathed together with them (the 11th Canon of the Sixth Council in Trullo). These regulations (as attested in the respective canons) of the ecumenical and regional councils were basic unit of different canon law miscellanies, including collections translated into Slavic such as the Synagogue among the 50 works of John Scholasticus¹³, the Nomocanon 14 Titulorum¹⁴, the Nomocanon 14 Titulorum with interpretations by Theodore Balsamon, John Zonaras, and Alexius Aristinus¹⁵, the Syntagma of Matheas Blastar¹⁶.

In most cases, however, these works had considerably poorer dissemination in the Slavic manuscript tradition, than other, smaller or larger, collections of penitential canons. Armenians were very rarely (hardly ever) mentioned in these miscellanies unlike the Latins and Jews. An exception from this is

¹² Ermilov, “*Satanic Heresy*”, p. 79–90.

¹³ Magnae Moraviae Fontes Historici. T. IV. Brno, 1971, 243–363.

¹⁴ В. Н. Бенешевич, *Древнеславянская кормчая XIV титулов без толкований*. Т. I, Санкт-Петербург, Типография Императорской Академии Наук, 1906 (= Subsidia Byzantina. Lucis opera litetrata. Vol. II b. Leipzig, 1974).

¹⁵ Законоправило или номоканон Светога Саве. Иловички препис 1262 г. Приредно и прилог е написао др Миодраг М. Петровић, Горњи Милановац, 1991.

¹⁶ Матије Властара Синтагмат. Азбучни зборник византијских црквених и државних закона и правила. Словенски превод времена Душанова, Издао С. Новаковић, Београд, Српска караљевска академија, 1907.

the *Nomocanon Cotelerii* (known in the Russian tradition under the name of Pseudo-Zonaras)¹⁷. This widespread collection¹⁸, along with the traditionally

¹⁷ At this stage, the scholarly investigation excluded detailed textual analysis of both the Greek and the Slavic text. The existing editions (Greek, J.-B. Cotelerius, *Ecclesiae Graecae Monumenta*, Vol. I. Luteciae Parisiorum, 1677, p. 68–158, and Slavic, cf. phototype edition of Ms. 1160 from the manuscript collection of the Archives of the Institute for Church History to the Bulgarian Patriarchate (further ЦИАИ) in А. Кръстев, Цв. Янакиева, *Архивски номоканон. Български ръкопис от XIV в.*, Фототипно издание, УИ „Епископ К. Преславски“, Шумен, 2007) can be only a tentative evidence for the composition of this Nomocanon. In fact, not much is known about this collection. The time of its compilation is not earlier than the first half of the 12th century and not later than the end of the 14th century (А. С. Павлов, *Номоканон при Большом Третьяковском*. *Его история и тексты греческий и славянский, с объяснительными и критическими примечаниями*, Москва, Типография Г. Лиснера и А. Гешеля. 1897, с. 40–42), and the emergence of the Slavic translation dated not later than the beginning of the 14th century, around the time at which the first Middle Bulgarian copies were dated (for more details about the Slavic copies and the history of the text, cf. Цв. Янакиева, Ю. Пандур, Палеографическое и графолингвистическое описание рукописи М 106/16 из Библиотеки Деврицского Университета имени Лайоша Кошута, *Palaeobulgarica*, XI, 1987, N 1, с. 86–94; Цв. Янакиева, Лингвистично определение на славянски ръкопис N 2617 от Историческия музей в Шумен, *Преславска книжовна школа*, 1998, N 3, с. 211–217; Цв. Янакиева, Среднобългарска рукопись N 1160 из ЦИАИ как вероятный протограф епитимийного номоканона Славия Ортодокса, В: *Русский язык и русская литература в современном обществе*, Шумен, УИ „Епископ К. Преславски“ 1999, с. 216–222 М. Райкова, За един югозападнобългарски паметник от XV в., *Македонски преглед*, XXXI, 2008, N 3, с. 29–46; Е. В. Белякова, О составе Хладовского номоканона (к истории сборника «Зинар»), *Старобългарска литература*, 2007, 37–38, с. 114–131; Д. Найденова, О работе над каталогом славянских юридических рукописей из собраний болгарских библиотек, В: *Современные проблемы археографии. Сборник статей по материалам конференции, проходившей в Библиотеке РАН 25–27 мая 2010 г.*, Библиотека Российской академии наук, Санкт-Петербург, 2011, с. 55–63; М. Цибранска-Костова, *Покаяната книжнина на Българското средновековие IX – XVIII в. (езиково-текстологични и културологични аспекти)*, Издателство Валентин Траянов, София, 2011, с. 259–380.

¹⁸ *Nomocanon Cotelerii* is largely distributed within the Romanian manuscript tradition. It has a couple of Moldavian copies: BAR 148, miscellany, end of XV c., ff. 111–118об. (P. Panaitescu, *Manuscrisele slave din Biblioteca Academiei R. P. R.* Vol. I, București, Editura Academiei române, 1959, p. 188–191); BAR 162, miscellany, XVI c., ff. 31–90об (P. Panaitescu, *Manuscrisele slave*, Vol. I, p. 244); BAR 636, miscellany, 1557 (*Vechiul drept românesc*, p. 111–114); BAR 661, prayer book, 1499 (*Vechiul drept românesc*, p. 53–54); BAR 685, miscellany, XVI v.; BAR 692, miscellany, 1581 (*Vechiul drept românesc*, p. 115–117); BAR 726, miscellany, 1618 (*Vechiul drept românesc*, p. 117–118).

found larger canon law miscellanies explicit prohibition for Christians to observe Artzibouris' fast¹⁹, contains two regulations related to Armenians:

1. If somebody eats together with an Armenian or a Paulician or any other heretic, and/or is in love with any of those infidels, he must stop at once and come clean to the Church. And if he unwillingly has done these deeds, the priest must sanctify him. If he willingly has done this, he must hear an admonition and be sanctified, after being given a small prohibitive penalty. If he does not obey the rule, but still wants to eat and drink together with infidels, he must not eat together with the Christians, and he must not be admitted into the Church but every Christian must turn away from him as if he is an idolater. And if he ever comes back for a confession, he must be separated in penance for three years; and neither communion bread, nor any other sacrifice coming from his home must be accepted for two years; then at the third year he may take communion bread in the Church and remain in penance during the third year²⁰.

2. Anathema to anyone who eats or drinks together with an heretic, or has a friendship, love or union [with such], i. e., with an Armenian, or a Jacobite, or a Muslim, or a Paulician or others such as Patarens and Bogomils²¹.

The prohibition on accepting food from pagans and infidels is often interpreted as an attempt to distinguish the Christian community because food

¹⁹ *Архивски номоканон*, л. 72v-73v, 86r. For Armenians in the canon law miscellanies, see Л. А. Герд, *Армяне и грузины в антиохийских монастырях XI в.* (по „Тактикону“ Никона Черногорца), В: В. М. Загребин (ред.), *Русь и южные славяне. Сборник статей к 100-летию со дня рождения В. А. Мошина (1894–1987)*, Санкт-Петербург, Издательство „Алетейя”, 1998, с. 198–203.

²⁰ Иже аще съ арменїиѿ гастѣ или съ павликіанинѿ или съ инѣмѣхъ еретикѿ каковѣмъ либо, и аще пауче любовь имѣ кто либо съ таковыми. сѣмъ глѣ да оставитъ сѣ сего и да приходитъ къ цркви чистѣ. и аще невѣнїемъ се сътворилъ еждѣ да оститъ его ѿерен. аще ли вѣдын оуслыши наказанїа, пакы да оститъ его давъ емъ заповѣдь малж ѿ запрѣшенїа. аще ли не послѣшае наказанїа нж хоше съ ними гастн и пити. таковыи съ хрїстїаны да не гастѣ. и въ цркви да не приметъ сѣ. нж ѿвращати сѣ ѿ него въ сѣбѣкомъ хрїстїанинѣ тако ѿ идолослужителѣ. да аще когда пакы прїидѣ къ исповѣди, да ѿлжчитъ сѣ на покаанїе лѣ.г. и въ двой лѣхъ да не прижто еждѣ ѿ дома его ни просфоры ни ино никаковоже приношенїе. а въ третїе лѣто да приметъ сѣ просфора его въ цркви. и тако да съвршши и третїе лѣто въ покаанїи, see *Архивски номоканон*, л. 68v.

²¹ Вѣсѣко гаджца съ еретїкѿ или пижца, или дрѣжвы дѣжца и любви и съединенїа. сирѣ съ арменинѿ. или съ іакввитѿ. или съ мѣсѣлманиномъ. или съ павликіаниномъ. или. иже сжтъ прочїи таковїи, иже сжтъ патерини и бѣгомилн, такового анафема. *Архивски номоканон*, л. 88v.

sharing could be interpreted as faith sharing²². The tradition of the sworn contracts established through food sharing was attested in the Old Testament. Eating from someone else's food was a symbol for participation in his fellowship. In most cases, this is common everyday (not religious) food²³. This is one of the reasons why sharing food with infidels was discussed in the canons of the Holy Apostles and the ecumenical councils. Food began to be an issue as soon as Christians started establishing their position. The food prohibitions became important due to a striving for separating the Christian community from the Jewish one (the last had a strict food regime). The Church also had to demonstrate a stance on sacrifice to the idols. Last but not least, various dualist sects had strict dietary regulations. It is worth mentioning that the works of Byzantine authors that discussed eating habits of some barbarian groups, considered the food not only in its religious aspect but as a distinguishing feature of civility. Byzantine historical literature shows that the people in the Empire were quite aware of the ethnic distinctions among them and important cultural overtones were attributed to these ethnic distinctions. The traditional division of the world into Byzantines and barbarians plays a crucial role in forming of Byzantine authors' specific view on the people living outside the borders of the Empire. All higher spiritual values, known to the Christians, are gathered within the borders of the Empire. The world beyond the borders was considered infidel, barbarian, and lawless²⁴. The historical texts indicate the existence of a particular, violently hostile perception of the "others", a perception that prima facie does not seem to be grounded on religious differences. The description of the eating habits of some "barbarian" groups tells us more about how Byzantines have pictured "the others" – as a caricature, with mockery and disregard²⁵.

²² There are a number of studies on the symbolism of eating habits and prohibited food, such as S. Kunin, *We think what we eat. Neo-structuralist analysis of Israelite food rules and other cultural and textual practices*, London, T&T International (*Journal for the study of the Old Testament. Supplement series*), 2004, where a discussion and an extensive bibliography on the issue can be found.

²³ Å. Vinberg, *Symbols of Law. A contextual Analysis of legal symbolic acts in the Old Testament*, Almqvist & Wiksell, Stockholm, 1992 (= *Coniectanea Biblica. Old Testament series*, 34), p. 70–76.

²⁴ For details, see D. Nicol, Byzantine Political Thought, In: J. Burns (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought c. 350 – c. 1450*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991, p. 62.

²⁵ T. Kolbaba, *The Byzantine Lists. Errors of the Latins*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana and Chicago, 2000, p. 145–161.

The texts included in the *Nomocanon Cotelerii* confirm that the prohibition on taking food from pagans and infidels should be interpreted as an attempt to separate the orthodox community. The punishment according to the Church canon involved both public and private penance²⁶. In the second regulation, the punishment is the hardest. The anathema is the hardest church sanction and one of the most often used formula for punishing the heretics. It is enforced by the bishop and is mostly public punishment. The anathema is equivalent to a curse but the sinner is not only expelled from the Church but his sins are considered unforgivable and his body is left without a chance to take its normal form after death²⁷.

Another two canons from the *Nomocanon Cotelerii* can be associated with the same rule of prohibition on sharing food and drinks with the infidels. Both involve a prohibition on eating and drinking everything that had

²⁶ Public penance involved prohibition on attending the Holy Liturgy, carrying certain garments or a haircut for a given period of time depending on the committed offense. The imposition of a public penance could be executed by the bishop, mainly for offenses affecting the whole community. The procedure and methods for it were determined by the church canons (J. Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law*, London and New York, Longman, 1995, p. 24–25). In the Eastern Church, the penitent passed through four consecutive stages, for which there was a certain period determined by the canon, as follows: 1. crying (προσκλαίοντες, flentes) – those who had to stand outside the church during the liturgy and ask the entering people to pray for them; 2. listening (ἀκροώμενοι, audientes) – those who were allowed in the church narthex where they could stay during the reading of the Gospel and then must leave the church; 3. fainting (ὑποπίπτοντες, genuflectentes) – those who could enter the church beyond the narthex but to stand on their knees all the time and after the Liturgy of the Catechumens they had to leave the church; 4. “standing with the faithful” (συνιστάμενοι, consistentes) – those who were allowed to attend the Liturgy but not to take communion. Between the 5th and the 6th centuries, the private penance was gradually replacing the public one. Its distinctive features were the primary role of the priest, the private and sacred nature of the confession and being forgiven after performing a kind of penalty such as fasting for a given period of time, bowing, reciting psalms, vigils, prayers, alms, among others (W. Plöchl, *Geschichte des Kirchenrechts*, Bd. 1, Wien-München, Verlag Herold, 1953, s. 78; J; К. А. Максимович, Византийская практика публичного покаяния в Древней Руси: терминология и проблемы рецепции, In: *Russica Romana*, 1995, 2, p. 7–24; Е. В. Крушельницкая, Епитимийник преп. Кирилла Белозерского как источник по истории духовнической практики, В: Е. Г. Водолазкин (сост.) *Монастырская культура: Восток и Запад*, Санкт-Петербург, РАН, Институт русской литературе (Пушкинский дом), 1999, с. 196–210).

²⁷ М. Krikorian, Anathema, Schisma und Häresie, *Kanon. Jahrbuch der Gesellschaft für das Recht der Ostkirchen*, 1974, 2, p. 143–153.

been desecrated by a hand of a Jew²⁸ (unless it had not been consecrated by the bishop afterwards), along with a prohibition to take bread and meat from the Jews and drink water from a vessel touched by a Jew²⁹. Similar canons can be found in other penitential compilations such as the Commandments of the Holy Fathers, found in a florilegium in the so-called *Berlinski sbornik* (*Berlin Miscellany*)³⁰, and the Rules of the Holy Fathers according to the Commandments of St. Basil the Great³¹, among others.

Similar compilations – Russian by origin, but comprising texts following the South Slavic tradition – order a three-day fast for a person who has eaten or drunk anything prepared by heretics; he could take communion on the fourth day after a prayer had been read for forgiveness³². Another canon postulates that a person who had tasted anything prepared by Jews, had to fast for ten days if he had not known that the thing he had eaten had been prepared by a Jew; if he had known it, he should fast for two years³³.

Other prohibitions, parallel to the ones in the discussed *Tale about the Armenian heresy* in *BAR 461*, can be found in another two Russian texts, namely *Zapovedi svyatih otec k ispovedayshtemysya sinom i dshterom*³⁴ and

²⁸ In penitential compilations, same prohibitions are often attributed to different confession communities. Therefore, some copies do not specify and give penalties for the heretics as a whole.

²⁹ The attitude toward Jews in the canon law miscellanies was discussed in: Д. Найденова, Евреите в каноничноправните текстове (Ръкописи З-І-63 и З-І-68 от сбирката на Груич в Музея на Сръбската православна църква в Белград), В: А. Николов, Г. Николов (съст.), *Средновековният българин и „другите“*. Сборник в чест на 60-годишнината на проф. дин Петър Ангелов, София, УИ „Св. Кл. Охридски“, 2013, с. 319–329.

³⁰ Х. Миклас, Л. Тасева, М. Йовчева, *Берлински сборник*, София, БАН, Кирило-Методиевски научен център, 2006, с. 56–76.

³¹ V. Jagić, *Opisi i izvodi iz nekoliko južno-slovenskih rukopisa*. 2. Sitna gradja za crkveno pravo, *Starine*, 1874, N 6, с. 133–146.

³² С. И. Смирнов, *Материалы для истории древнерусской покаянной дисциплины*, Москва, Синодальная Типография, 1913, с. 153. According to another version of this canon, the person who had shared his food and drink with the heretics must to observe a 12-days fast. However, if he had done that out of necessity, the fast continued only three days, cf. *Idem*. p. 74.

³³ *Ibid.* p. 126: латинскѡю църквѣ не подоваѣ вхѡити ни пити с ними ѥ единѡ чаши, ни гаси ни понагѣѣ имѣ дати; see also note 36 below.

³⁴ *Ibid.* p. 112–132; F. Thomson, The Ascription of the Penitential Заповеди святых отецъ к исповедующемся сыном и дъщером to metropolitan George of Kiev, *Russia Medievalis*, 1979, N 4, p. 5–15.

*Otvely Georgia, mitropolita Kievskogo na voprosy igumena Germana*³⁵ These texts contain prohibitions for entering a Latin church, drinking from the same glass as Latins, and eating together with Latins³⁶.

As regards the particular detail in the *Tale* that the vessel used by the Armenians for preparing the communion bread and that the food prepared by them are unclean, it is interesting that the *Nomocanon Cotelerii* has rules for those who ate and communicated with Armenians are quite inconsistently scattered among other diverse food prohibitions (on eating various animals and birds whose meat should not be eaten, and instructions on the procedures to be followed if an animal was drowned in a well, contaminated the wine or was born in the wheat). In some later copies of the Slavic translation of the *Nomocanon Cotelerii*, where a numbering of the regulations was introduced, the rules about the food, eating and communication with the Armenians, along with these dealing with issues around treating food and water that have been contaminated by an animal, form an entire paragraph under certain number. Here they are united also by the similarity of the measures to be taken in such situations – contaminated food should not be consumed until it had been sanctified by a priest. In the Commandments of the Holy Fathers³⁷ and the Rules of the Holy Fathers according to the Commandments of St. Basil the Great³⁸, anyone who had eaten or drunk food and water contaminated by an animal should be subjected to a five-day fast, and on the sixth day he could be purified after the priest read a prayer for cleansing³⁹.

Another motif found in the *Tale* – a warning for passing along an Armenian church with blocked ears, can be related to the penitential texts too. They prescribed excommunication from the Church of those who prayed

³⁵ А. А. Турилов, Ответы Георгия, митрополита Киевского, на вопросы игумена Германа – древнейшее русское «Вопрошение», В: *Славяне и их соседи. Т. 11. Славянский мир между Римом и Константинополем*, Москва, Индрик, 2004, с. 211–262.

³⁶ Латинскѣю цркви не подоваѣ вхѣдѣти ни пити с ними ѿ единѣ чаши, ни гести ни понагѣа ни гѣ дати. (А. А. Турилов, Ответы Георгия, N 31); Ящѣ вѣдѣть оу латынина пили. То мѣтвѣс створеше и пити из нѣ. (*Idem.* N 35) Не достоитъ в латынѣстѣи цркви стоати и пѣнѣа ѿ слѣшати. (*Idem.* N 39).

³⁷ Миклас, Тасева, Йовчева, *Берлински сборник*, с. 70, N 84; с. 72–73, N 91–97.

³⁸ V. Jagić, *Opisi i izvodi*, с. 140, N II.

³⁹ The real use of this canon is attested by the inclusion of a special prayer for cleansing for those who had eaten contaminated food, in the Euchologion, see J. Goar, *Euchologion sive Rituale Graecorum*, Graz, Akademische Druck und Verlagsanstalt, 1960, p. 670.

in the temples of infidels and heretics, prayed together with them, accepted their faith and then returned to the Orthodox Faith. Thus, the Slavic text of the *Nomocanon Cotelerii* contains a canon to sanction those who accepted the Judaism⁴⁰. The church punishment included both public (standing at the place of the catechumens), and private penance (fasting and prayers). Other penitential texts such as The Rules of the Holy Father according to the Commandments of St. Basil the Great, provided only a 40-day fast for those turned into heresy or Judaism and later returned to Christianity⁴¹. According to another canon, such person had to first damn the wrong doctrine in front of all the community, then fast for two years, during which no Christian was allowed to eat together with him⁴².

* * *

The Tale about Armenian heresy in BAR 461 attests for a powerful textual stereotypes, which were part of the official discourse concerning the image of Armenians in Byzantine and Slavic literary tradition. It preserves its main features, and evolves with time.

⁴⁰ *Архивски номоканон*, л. 69 в.

⁴¹ V. Jagić, *Opisi i izvodi*, p. 133–146, N III; cf. Миклас, Тасева, Ёвчева, *Берлински сборник*, 56–76, N 75–76.

⁴² С. И. Смирнов, *Материалы для истории древне-русской покаянной дисциплины*. Москва, Синодальная типография, 1914, с. 52, 74.

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