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Anger in Homiletic Teaching of Saint John Chrysostom. The Analysis of *Homilies on Matthew*²

The teaching of St. John Chrysostom on man's emotional reaction called anger has aroused interest for a long time. This is expressed in a collection edited by an outstanding Byzantine compiler Theodore Daphnopates (890/900 – after 963)³ of more than 30 eclogues⁴ on what he considered important issues and what are a compilation of Chrysostom's words taken from his speeches and homilies⁵. The latter includes a homily concerned

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³ More on Theodore Daphnopates, see: A. Kazhdan, *Daphnopates Theodore*, in: *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, v. 1, ed. A. Kazhdan, Oxford – New York 1991, p. 588; G. Fatouros, *Theodoros Daphnopates*, in: *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon*, v. 11, ed. F.W. Bautz, Herzberg 1996, col. 968-970.

⁴ The oldest preserved manuscript from the 1070s (Parisinus Coislinianus gr. 79) includes 33 eclogues (attributed to hardly known Theodore Magister, and not to Theodore Daphnopates). The dating of the manuscript: I. Spatharakis, *The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts*, Leiden 1976, p. 301. Nowadays 48 eclogues have been included within the collection since at the beginning of the 17th century. H. Savile added 15 which were not attributed to Theodore Daphnopates and did not appear in the oldest manuscripts. Cf. *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, v. 2: *Ab Athanasio ad Chrysostomum*, ed. M. Geerard, Turnhout 1974, p. 594, no. 4684.

⁵ On the circumstances of editing this selection, cf. J. Iluk, *Bizantyjskie eklogi z homilii św. Jana Chryzostoma i ich nowożytny losy*, in: *Magia Książki. Księgi Magii. Księga Jubileuszowa poświęcona Profesor Irenie Fijałkowskiej*, ed. D. Oboleńska – U. Patocka-Sigłowy, Gdańsk 2017, p. 41-43.

with anger. It is an eclogue published by W J.-P. Migne in *Patrologia Graeca* as the 20th entitled Περὶ ὀργῆς καὶ θυμοῦ (*De ira et furore*)⁶. In the contemporary literature the subject of emotions in the teaching of John Chrysostom also arouses lively interest of researchers⁷. Therefore, the present paper is a contribution to studies conducted on emotions and anger in the teaching of St. John Chrysostom. Blake Leyerle indicates that although Chrysostom did not write a treatise on anger, he speaks most of it in his homilies. For this reason, it was decided to choose as the source a collection of 90 *Homilies on the Gospel of Saint Matthew* said in Antioch⁸, which are a representative sample of his homiletic works. Therefore the ideas captured here in the teaching of Chrysostom on anger will be present in his other works. The present article will analyze what Chrysostom said about man's anger, completely omitting the problem of "God's anger"

⁶ PG 63, 689-694. Different kinds of numbering are used in different editions of eclogues. CPG gives a concordance of the two basic editions of eclogues: H. Savile and J.-P. Migne (PG).

⁷ Among the more important studies on his subject the following monograph should be mentioned: B. Leyerle, *The Narrative Shape of Emotion in the Preaching of John Chrysostom*, Christianity in Late Antiquity 10, Oakland 2021 – the author broadly discussed four questions: Anger (p. 21-62), Grief (p. 63-111), Fear (p. 112-149) and Chrysostom's Goal Stimulating Zeal (p. 150-182); P.C. Moore, *Bound Together for Heaven: Mutual Emotions in Chrysostom's Homilies on Matthew for Well-Ordered and Fruitful Community in Anxious Times*, in: *Revisioning John Chrysostom: New Approaches, New Perspectives*, ed. C.L. de Wet – W. Mayer, Critical Approaches to Early Christianity 1, Leiden 2019, p. 334-360 (in the article, the author does not refer to anger; turning his attention to the idea of mutual emotions in Chrysostom, Moore first defines "a community of emotional mutuality". He then offers a sketch of Chrysostom's attitudes to emotions overall, including his stance towards the stronger emotions or "passions". Next he explores the motivating power of emotions and then Chrysostom's ambitions for emotion in creating communities of emotional mutuality. Finally, Moore raises the possibility of a contemporary application for Chrysostom's pastoral strategy in our own complex and uncertain times). The following articles should also be mentioned: M.G. de Durand, *La colère chez S. Jean Chrysostome*, RevSR 67/1 (1993) p. 61-77 (although the title suggests a complex analysis of anger in the teaching of John Chrysostom, the author focuses on 20th eclogue on anger and *De inani gloria et de educandis liberis*), and F. Leduc, *Gérer l'agressivité et la colère d'après l'oeuvre de saint Jean Chrysostome*, POC 38 (1988) p. 31-63, as well as a special volume "Studia Patristica" 83 (2017), which was devoted to the teaching of the Fathers of the Church (mainly John Chrysostom) on emotions.

⁸ Scholars dealing with Chrysostom's homilies background since the 17th century point to Antioch as the place where they were given. Cf. W. Mayer, *The Homilies of St John Chrysostom: Provenance. Reshaping the Foundations*, OCA 273, Rome 2005, p. 258 and 267.

(which Chrysostom also refers to), which is a separate research problem. Therefore, the present paper will discuss the preacher's admonishments above all significant for the Christian asceticism.

1. The Question of John Chrysostom's emotions

An analytical approach to Chrysostom's statements on anger is also important because the preacher himself was a man openly expressing his positive and negative emotions. On the one hand, he knew how to sympathise⁹ and call for gentleness¹⁰, on the other he was impulsive and intransigent¹¹. He was rather hot-tempered. Although Chrysostom was assessed differently even by his contemporaries, arousing admiration and respect or disapproval and criticism, most of the opinions which seem honest point to straightforwardness and hot temper. Theophilus of Alexandria – one of the main enemies of Chrysostom, characterizes him as a man of many negative character flaws, to advance John's condemnation. He describes Chrysostom as violent by nature, reckless, insolent, and argumentative like no other. He also says that Chrysostom is easy-carried away by an irrational impulse and moves on thoughtlessly to get an approval of his point of view. He insists on what he has decided, he becomes violently angry with anyone with a different opinion¹². This statement by Theophilus seems to be partially correct, as Chrysostom himself admits to this type of flaw. In the *Dialogue on the Priesthood*, despite his criticism of a desire for ecclesiastical offices¹³, he admits that,

⁹ Chrysostom sympathized with Stagirus and Theodore, experiencing spiritual difficulties (cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *Ad Stagirium a daemone vexatum*, PG 47, 423-494; Iohannes Chrysostomus, *Ad Theodorum lapsum*, ed. J. Dumortier, SCh 117, Paris 1966), and with poor whose poverty he understood perfectly (this theme appears in many homilies) (cf. e.g. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *De Lazaro con.* 1-7, PG 48, 963-1054; Iohannes Chrysostomus, *De eleemosyna*, PG 51, 261-272).

¹⁰ Cf. e.g. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Genesim ser.* 3, 1, ed. L. Brottier, SCh 433, Paris 1966, p. 204-208.

¹¹ Cf. L. Brottier, *L'appel des demi-chrétiens à la vie angélique: Jean Chrysostome prédicateur, entre idéal monastique et réalité mondaine*, Patrimoines. Christianisme, Paris 2005, p. 210.

¹² Cf. Palladius, *Dialogus de vita s. Joannis Chrysostomi* 9, ed. A.-M. Malingrey – P. Leclercq, SCh 341, Paris 1988, p. 182.

¹³ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *De sacerdotio* 3, 10, ed. A.-M. Malingrey, SCh 272, Paris 1980, p. 166.

to a large extent, he falls under that desire¹⁴. he clearly says that he lacks many priestly virtues¹⁵. He confesses that as far as he almost contained the desire for vain glory, he cannot refer the same to the other ambitions, especially the anger¹⁶, which could be compounded by the power over the community of believers (for this reason, he was initially afraid of receiving priestly ordination)¹⁷. For this reason he expresses a desire to achieve the gentleness of King David¹⁸.

Chrysostom was aware of how much the priests needed the ability to control anger. He claimed that a priest who succumbs to this passion “will not live peacefully and will bring countless misfortunes to the souls entrusted to him”¹⁹. However, he was prone to this. Some of his character flaws were shown in his first sermon when he obtained priestly ordination. Speaking about of love for the community for which he was appointed presbyter, he emphasized that this was so strong, violent (βιαιότερον) and despotic(τυραννικώτερον)²⁰. These words indicate that in a ministry John is radical, uncompromising and intransigent. Socrates Scholasticus, who does not seem very fond of Chrysostom, characterizes him in the following way: “John is said to have been rather a rough man (πικρότερος)²¹ due to his eagerness in mortification and, as was said by someone who was very close to him since the early years, he devoted a lot of heart to angry fits (θυμῶ μᾶλλον) rather than to the spirit of forgiveness (ἢ αἰδοῖ)”²². In this opinion, Socrates introduces a very distinct opposition between a lack of self-control expressed by anger (θυμός) and complete composure expressed by forgiveness (αἰδώς)²³.

¹⁴ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *De sacerdotio* 3, 10, Sch 272, p. 172.

¹⁵ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *De sacerdotio* 3, 10, Sch 272, p. 166.

¹⁶ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *De sacerdotio* 6, 12, Sch 272, p. 342-344.

¹⁷ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *De sacerdotio* 3, 10, Sch 272, p. 176-178.

¹⁸ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *De Davide et Saule* 1, 1, PG 54, 677.

¹⁹ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *De sacerdotio* 3, 10, Sch 272, p. 342-344.

²⁰ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *Sermo cum presbyter fuit ordinatus* 1, ed. A.-M. Malinogrey, Sch 272, p. 392.

²¹ It deserves to be remarked that Socrates used the comparative form of adjective πικρός, while πικρία (bitterness) is a sign of anger (cf. Eph 4:31). Cf. G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, Oxford 1961, p. 1082, s.v. πικρία and πικρός; *Greek-English Lexicon*, ed. H.G. Liddell – R. Scott, Oxford 1961, p. 1403-1404, s.v. πικρία and πικρός.

²² Socrates, *Historia ecclesiastica* 6, 3, 13, ed. G.C. Hansen, GCS NF 1, Berlin 1995, p. 315. All ancient source texts are in the author’s own translation.

²³ Cf. *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 36, s.v. αἰδώς. It is worth mentioning that αἰδώς is a classical Greek virtue.

When Chrysostom was appointed bishop, he started by reforming the customs of the bishop's court and raising the level of the moral life of the Constantinople clergy. Despite his good intentions and his doings being reasonable, his decisions were considered negative as an expression of arrogance and pride²⁴, thereby alienating the clergy of the capital. Socrates notices that when Chrysostom became the bishop of Constantinople "at the very beginning he seemed to the people of the Church a rough man and he attracted their highest aversion and more than one started to hate him and avoid him as an impulsive crosspatch (ὀργίλον ἐξέκλινον)"²⁵. On the other hand, a historian Sozomenos says that "critically inclined out of nature and justifiably outraged by the wrong-doers, while performing his duties as bishop he gave way to this kind of inclinations and feelings (παθήμασιν). After all the inborn disposition together with the freedom to act easily made the tongue argue and even faster released a wave of anger (τὴν ὀργὴν) against those who sinned"²⁶. Hence a thesis can be put forwards that John Chrysostom perfectly knew the feeling of anger from his own experience.

2. The essence of anger

The title of the aforementioned 20th eclogue on anger and the analyses conducted clearly indicate that to refer to it Chrysostom uses two Greek nouns²⁷,

²⁴ However, Chrysostom was a strong supporter of humility, which he often glorified (cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 15, 2, PG 57, 224-225; 47, 3, PG 58, 485; 58, 2, PG 58, 568). Cf. Brottier, *L'appel des demi-chrétiens à la vie angélique*, p. 215-216.

²⁵ Socrates, *Historia ecclesiastica* 6, 4, 2, GCS NF 1, p. 315. Sozomen also claims that the Constantinople clergy and monks hated Chrysostom because of his violent anger; cf. Sozomenus, *Historia ecclesiastica* 8, 9, 5, ed. J. Bidez – G.C. Hansen, GCS 50, Berlin 1960, p. 362.

²⁶ Sozomenus, *Historia ecclesiastica* 8, 3, 1-2, ed. J. Bidez – G.C. Hansen, GCS 50, Berlin 1960, p. 353.

²⁷ Chrysostom uses two nouns to describe anger: ἡ μῆνις and ὁ χόλος, however, the first of them does not appear at all *In Matthaëum homiliae*, and the second only in medical meaning. Cf. also P. Moore, *Deploying Emotional Intelligence: John Chrysostom's Relational Emotional Vocabulary in his Beatitude Homilies*, *StPatr* 83 (2017) p. 134-136 (The author outlines Chrysostom's treatment of emotion and vocabulary of emotion in his expositions on Matthew 5:1-12 and 10:1-4).

namely ἡ ὀργή²⁸ and ὁ θυμός²⁹, which are in principle used interchangeably as synonyms, without emphasizing any special nuances in the meaning that would distinguish them. However, a thorough analysis of his words leads to the observation that ὁ θυμός is shown in a more positive light than ἡ ὀργή³⁰.

Although in *Homilies on the Gospel of Saint Matthew* Chrysostom does not give a definition of anger, he defines it as passion – τὸ πάθος³¹. This conclusion can be drawn from the preacher's following words: "[Christ] having begun by anger (τῆς ὀργῆς), and having cut out on every side the sinews of this passion (τοῦ πάθους); having said «he that is angry (ὁ ὀργιζόμενος) with his brother» (Mt 5:22) and he that calleth fool or Raca (cf. Mt 5:22) let him be punished"³². In his other homilies Chrysostom also clearly speaks both of anger and passion³³. Two fragments deserve to be quoted:

For he that is humbled, and bruised in heart, will not be vainglorious (οὐ κενοδοξήσει), will not be wrathful (οὐκ ὀργιέται), will not envy his neighbor (οὐ φθονήσει τὸν πλησίον), will not harbor any other passion (πάθος)³⁴; Again, the lowly man is seized by no passion (πάθους), no anger (οὐκ ὀργή) can much trouble this man, no love of glory (οὐ δόξης ἔρωσ), no envy (οὐ βασκανία), no jealousy (οὐ ζηλοτυπία): and what can be higher than the soul that is delivered from these things (ἀπηλλαγμένης)? But the boastful man is

²⁸ Cf. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, p. 970, s.v. ὀργή; *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 1246, s.v. ὀργή.

²⁹ Cf. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, p. 657, s.v. θυμός; *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 810, s.v. θυμός.

³⁰ Cf. M.G. de Durand, *La colère chez S. Jean Chrysostome*, p. 62, n. 3; Leyerle, *The Narrative Shape of Emotion*, p. 21. Noun ὁ θυμός reflects emotional state, and ἡ ὀργή leads to action; cf. W.V. Harris, *Restraining Rage: The Ideology of Anger Control in Classical Antiquity*, Cambridge 2001, p. 57.

³¹ Cf. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, p. 992-995, s.v. πάθος; *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 1285-1286, s.v. πάθος.

³² Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 18, 5, PG 57, 271.

³³ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 16, 7, PG 57, 248; 16, 11, PG 57, 254; 33, 6, PG 57, 395: "Also you follow them [the wrestlers preparing for the fight] and exercise in the struggles of virtue. Many arouse our anger (θυμόν), passion (ἐπιθυμίαν ἐμβάλλουσι) and great fire (πολλὴν ἀνάπτουσι φλόγα). Resist the passions then (τῶν παθῶν), bravely bear the sufferings of the soul so that you will also bear the sufferings of the body"; 54, 4, PG 58, 537: "So when you make the sign of the cross, remember the whole content of the cross, quench your anger (θυμόν) and all other passions (πάντα πάθη)"; 55, 5, PG 58, 546.

³⁴ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 3, 5, PG 57, 38.

held in subjection by all these things, like any worm crawling in the mire, for jealousy ζηλοτυπία), and envy (βασκανία) and anger (θυμὸς) are forever troubling his soul³⁵.

In the first of the fragments quoted above wrath was mentioned by Chrysostom beside vanity (κενοδοξία)³⁶ and jealousy (φθόνος)³⁷, whereas in the second of the homilies quoted above the preacher placed it next to the desire for glory (δόξη³⁸ ἔρως), envy (βασκανία)³⁹ and jealousy (ζηλοτυπία)⁴⁰. It deserves to be remarked that in accordance with the classification by Plato, Chrysostom includes wrath and other vices within passions, which clearly points out that he places it with them among the passions of wrathful (hot-tempered) soul⁴¹. It should be added that in another place he calls these passions tyrannical (πάθος τυραννικὸν)⁴², thus indicating that they arouse in man as a consequence of the action of the evil spirit and its inspiration. He also emphasizes that wrath, next to impudence, is the worst vice and he says: “For nothing is worse than wrath (ὀργῆς) and arrogance”⁴³.

A man possessed by wrath is called ill by Chrysostom and this means that wrath is an illness⁴⁴. Chrysostom also personifies wrath saying that wrath is the devil⁴⁵.

³⁵ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 65, 5, PG 58, 624.

³⁶ Cf. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, p. 741-742, s.v. κενοδοξία; *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 938, s.v. κενοδοξέω (κενοδοξία).

³⁷ Cf. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, p. 1474, s.v. φθόνος; *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 1930, s.v. φθόνος.

³⁸ Cf. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, p. 380-381, s.v. δόξα; *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 444, s.v. δόξα.

³⁹ Cf. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, p. 293, s.v. βασκανία; *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 310, s.v. βασκαίνω (βασκανία).

⁴⁰ Cf. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, p. 591, s.v. ζηλοτυπία; *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 755, s.v. ζηλοτυπέω (ζηλοτυπία).

⁴¹ Cf. Plato, *Phaedrus* 246a-254e, ed. H.N. Fowler, Plato, *Phaedrus*, in: LCL 36, London – New York 1913, p. 470-498; Plato, *Timaeus* 69d, ed. R.G. Bury, in: Plato, *Timaeus*, LCL 234, London – Cambridge 1961, p. 180. Cf. K. Bosinis, *Two Platonic Images in the Rhetoric of John Chrysostom: ‘The Wings of Love’ and the ‘Charioteer of the Soul’*, *StPatr* 41 (2006) p. 433-438.

⁴² Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 11, PG 57, 254.

⁴³ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 10, 6, PG 57, 191.

⁴⁴ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 18, 4, PG 57, 270.

⁴⁵ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 18, 4, PG 57, 270: “Free him the from heavy evil and make him give up wrath (τὴν ὀργήν), free him from the formidable devil (δαίμονος), from wrath (τοῦ θυμοῦ)”.

3. Causes of wrath

Chrysostom points to several causes of wrath⁴⁶. He corresponds with Aristotle's thought, who told a contempt for ourselves and others as a cause of wrath in his teaching. In general, wrath is aimed towards a particular person and a group of people – in such situations, it is more hatred than anger⁴⁷. Following the biblical text, he teaches that wrath is born of jealousy [ζήλος⁴⁸ (ζήλοσύνη), ζήλοτυπία] (cf. Prov 6:34)⁴⁹. Another time he expresses his conviction that power can induce evil⁵⁰. He also points to hunger and a need to satisfy it quickly⁵¹ and drunkenness as the cause of wrath⁵². He emphasizes that the situations in which a man feels threatened, for example because of groundless accusations, can also arouse anger. That is why the preacher speaks of the need to protect oneself in order not to yield to emotions and not to get angry⁵³. Chrysostom also points out that anger is incited and fanned by the devil⁵⁴, and a person conquered by anger is trapped by Satans⁵⁵. Comparing people possessed by Satan and those

⁴⁶ Cf. Aristoteles, *Rhetorica* 2, 2, 1-4 (1378a-b), ed. J.H. Freese: Aristotle, *The "Art" of Rhetoric*, LCL 193, Cambridge 1926, pp. 172-174. Cf. D. Konstan, *Aristotle on Anger and the Emotions: The Strategies of Status*, in: *Ancient Anger: Perspectives from Homer to Galen*, ed. S. Braund – G. Most, Cambridge 2003, p. 108.

⁴⁷ Cf. B. Leyerle, *The Narrative Shape of Emotion*, p. 22-31 (*The Origin of Rage*).

⁴⁸ Cf. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, p. 591, s.v. ζήλος; *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 755, s.v. ζήλος.

⁴⁹ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 4, 4, PG 57, 44.

⁵⁰ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 40, 4, PG 57, 444: "Such is power. That is why it drove many, even against their will, to insult, and aroused to anger (θυμὸν)".

⁵¹ Por. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 35, 5, PG 57, 411 – where Chrysostom says, that during the Lent the delay in setting the table or too slow service by slaves, the owners perceive as deliberate insolence. Cf. Aristoteles *Rhetorica* 2, 2, 9-10 (1379a), LCL 193, p. 178 – when the author says that people are prone to anger because of some shortage, e.g. hunger or thirst.

⁵² Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 70, 3, PG 58, 659: "A lot of heads sticking out from drunkenness can be seen: here, prostitution, there, anger (ὀργήν), still somewhere else, tardiness, or disgraceful satisfaction of lust".

⁵³ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 33, 2, PG 57, 390: "Can you see that it is necessary to protect oneself from each side in order not to fall and not to get angry (θυμὸν) in the face of dangers?".

⁵⁴ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 16, 10, PG 57, 251; 18, 1, PG 57, 265.

⁵⁵ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 15, 11, PG 57, 237.

conquered by anger he says that both should be bemoaned; however, the latter are more unhappy since their madness is conscious⁵⁶.

Referring to human activities, on the other hand, Chrysostom expresses his conviction that anger as a negative emotional reaction is a result of human tardiness. He specifies his standpoint in the context of some people excusing themselves and claiming that “evil things do not come from us”⁵⁷. He explains that if somebody gets angry with a servant, wife, children or villains, then by “reproaches and insults” he/she expresses their own emotions, which after all depend on him. Those who heard such words take offence at him who said those words. If anger did not depend on man, nobody would take offence having heard such words spoken in anger⁵⁸. To confirm this state of affairs, the preacher refers to how the possessed are treated while even when the latter beat others, they do not arouse anger but pity since the harmed ones do know that this behaviour does not follow from evil will⁵⁹.

Others, on the other hand, attributed their anger to the inner build of the body⁶⁰ and they justified it with a certain kind of pressure following from the weakness of their nature. That is the reason why the preacher warned against such an excuse and pointed out that actually each broken commandment could be justified in such a way. While formulating the possible content of the excuse expressed by somebody possessed by anger, Chrysostom says: “of our anger (ὀργῆς) against a brother [will you say], «what if I be hasty, and not able to govern my tongue»? and in general, all His sayings you may on this wise trample under foot”⁶¹. There were also those who put the blame for their own anger on people they were angry with, saying: “Such an one provoked me (ὀργῆς)”⁶². That is why the preacher explained to them that they could restrain being pro-

⁵⁶ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 18, 4, PG 57, 270: “Yea, for if we see persons possessed by devils, we weep for them; we do not seek to be ourselves also possessed. Now let us do this too likewise with respect to them that are angry (τῶν ὀργιζομένων); for in truth the enraged (οἱ θυμούμενοι) are like the possessed; yea rather, are more wretched than they, being mad with consciousness of it. Wherefore also their frenzy is without excuse”.

⁵⁷ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 59, 3, PG 58, 577.

⁵⁸ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 59, 3, PG 58, 577.

⁵⁹ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 87, 4, PG 58, 773.

⁶⁰ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 81, 5, PG 58, 736: “Many attribute lust, anger and impetuosity (καὶ ὀργῆς καὶ θυμοῦ) to the [inner] build of the body”.

⁶¹ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 17, 5, PG 57, 261.

⁶² Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 42, 3, PG 57, 455.

voked thus quelling their negative emotions⁶³. Thus Chrysostom rejects all attempts to justify anger⁶⁴.

Chrysostom, as an attentive observer of everyday life, notices that anger is such a widespread flaw that people succumb to it daily⁶⁵, while the matters that cause anger are mostly trivial and insignificant⁶⁶. Therefore, the anger caused by them does not have to last forever. Chrysostom remarks that “it happens you get angry without a cause (εἰκῆ ὀργίζεσθαι)”⁶⁷. This is how misers behave who get angry both with their household members and strangers⁶⁸, with the poor and the rich: with the poor because they come asking for support, and with the rich because they have not yet captured their property⁶⁹. This attitude of the greedy makes them a laughing stock for others and they give “countless occasions for anger (μυρίας ὀργῆς) against themselves”⁷⁰. Anger has the most pernicious influence on family and friendly relations. No one should get angry with a person who has done them some harm but with the devil that made that person do an evil thing⁷¹. One should not belittle the evil of anger since having anger in the heart one cannot say “Father” to God⁷² and one cannot receive forgive-

⁶³ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 42, 3, PG 57, 455.

⁶⁴ Cf. Leyerle, *The Narrative Shape of Emotion*, p. 29-30.

⁶⁵ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 19, 7, PG 57, 283: “Which [...] has not remembered things with hostile feeling, even till he made his heart swell?”.

⁶⁶ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 87, 3, PG 58, 772-773: “What hardship have you suffered? Have you been robbed? For this self-same reason should you endure it, so as to gain more amply. But were you deprived of character? And what is this? Your condition is in no way worsened by this, if you practice self-command. But if you suffer no grievance, whence are you angry (ὀργίζῃ) with him that has done you no harm, but has even benefited you?”.

⁶⁷ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 17, 2, PG 57, 257; cf. 41, 4, PG 57, 450: “Who has not got angry (οὐκ ὀργίσθη) with his brother without a cause? And a man angry without a cause should be tried by court”.

⁶⁸ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 81, 4, PG 58, 736.

⁶⁹ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 80, 4, PG 58, 728-729.

⁷⁰ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 83, 3, PG 58, 749.

⁷¹ It should be remarked that the preacher’s moral admonitions were sometimes based on the example of suffering Jesus. Shifting responsibility for an evil deed onto the devil also occurs in Chrysostom’s other homilies. Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In epistulam ad Romanos hom.* 8, 8, PG 60, 466; Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In epistulam ad Ephesios hom.* 2, 4, PG 62, 21; 14, 2, PG 62, 101.

⁷² Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 19, 7, PG 57, 283: “For this same cause again in every one of the clauses He commands us to make our prayers common, saying, «Our Father», and «Your will be done in earth as it is in heaven», and «Give

ness of guilt⁷³. The more so because in this way one insults God, who after all did not insult anybody.

The cause of anger among the inhabitants of Antioch could also be the subject of homilies said by Chrysostom. Wishing to bring up the subject which was not too pleasant to the listeners and which concerned profligacy and excess (specifically in footwear), the preacher said: “Will ye then that I let loose my tongue upon it, and show its unseemliness, how great it is? And will you not be angry (οὐκ ὀργιῖσθε)? Or rather, though ye be angry (ὀργίζησθε), I care not much”⁷⁴. Not only the listeners to his homilies, but also the preacher himself could submit themselves to anger. Speaking on the necessity of moderation in reproaching others, especially women inclined to excess, he admits unnecessary anger and says: “But stay: I have been led on unobserving, I know not how, into these expressions; and while admonishing another to teach with gentleness, I have been myself hurried away into wrath (ὀργήν)”⁷⁵.

It should also be mentioned that Chrysostom, following Aristotle, claims that the utterance of truth – even an unpleasant one – should not be a cause for anger. This attitude makes his comments on the Syrophoenician woman whom he praises. When Christ answered her request by calling her a dog, she was not upset by this offensive term, nor was she discouraged by the loftiness of his answer. Instead, she objectively assessed her situation, accepted the comparison, and submitted her request⁷⁶. Because her wrath was relieved by humility, Chrysostom suggests that everyone – considering the condition of one’s nature – can accept even the most humiliating insults by refraining from anger. Therefore Chrysostom’s listeners should follow it. When being insulted, they should think about what caused such accusation, and instead of planning retaliation, be grateful for pointing out the error⁷⁷.

us the bread», and «forgive us our debts», and «lead us not into temptation», and «deliver us»; everywhere commanding us to use this plural word, that we may not retain so much as a vestige of anger (ὀργή) against our neighbor”.

⁷³ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 19, 6, PG 57, 281.

⁷⁴ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 49, 4, PG 58, 501; cf. 61, 2, PG 58, 590: “Don’t get angry at my turning against sinners as I will accuse not only you but also me myself”.

⁷⁵ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 30, 6, PG 57, 369. Cf. Leduc, *Gérer l’agressivité et la colère*, p. 37.

⁷⁶ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 52, 2, PG 58, 520.

⁷⁷ Cf. Leyerle, *The Narrative Shape of Emotion*, p. 37-38. On Chrysostom’s role in prescribing acceptable emotions for his congregation see Y. Papadogiannakis, *Homiletics*

4. The consequence of anger

Chrysostom expresses his conviction that anger has a very negative effect in man since while governing the latter, it deprives them of the possibility to objectively perceive the surrounding reality⁷⁸. A man possessed with anger loses the sharpness and clarity of seeing both visible⁷⁹, and invisible things⁸⁰. That is why the preacher compares such a person to a drunkard dazed with excessive consumption of alcohol and he emphasizes that “For there is a drunkenness of wrath (ὀργῆς) too, and that more grievous than the drunkenness of wine”⁸¹ since “For anger (θυμὸς) and sin is a more frantic thing than any drunkenness, and puts the soul in greater distraction”⁸². A man seized with anger is not able to do anything good⁸³.

Anger destroys human relations⁸⁴. A man seized with anger magnifies the harms suffered from the enemy and the insults he heard from his mouth.

and the History of Emotions: The Case of John Chrysostom, in: *Revisioning John Chrysostom: New Approaches, New Perspectives*, ed. C.L. de Wet – W. Mayer, Critical Approaches to Early Christianity 1, Leiden 2019, p. 312-316 (part 4: *Emotional Regime*).

⁷⁸ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 60, 1, PG 58, 585.

⁷⁹ Chrysostom supports this statement, referring to medical knowledge, which indicated that anger is the source of various physical ailments, such as blurred vision, fever, convulsions, or insanity. Cf. Leyerle, *The Narrative Shape of Emotion*, p. 32.

⁸⁰ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 13, 5, PG 57, 215: “For whereas the eyes are often deceived, not in the things unseen only (for of those they do not so much as take cognizance), but even in those which men think they actually see, distance and atmosphere, and absence of mind, and anger (θυμῶν), and care, and ten thousand other things impeding their accuracy”. Early Christian thinkers fairly frequently point out that Christians have two “sets” of senses: bodily senses and spiritual senses. On the role of “spiritual sights” in patristic theology, see: M. Canévet, *Sens spirituel*, in: *Dictionnaire de spiritualité: ascétique et mystique, doctrine et histoire*, v. 14, ed. A. Derville – P. Lamarche – A. Solignac, Paris 1990, col. 599-617; B. Fraigneau-Julien, *Les sens spirituels et la vision de Dieu selon Syméon le Nouveau Théologien*, Paris 1985, passim; P. Szczur, *Rola „zmysłów wiary” w rozumieniu sakramentów inicjacji chrześcijańskiej według Cyryla Jerozolimskiego*, *VoxP* 61 (2014) p. 297-308; P. Szczur, *Rola postrzegania duchowego w nauczaniu katechetycznym Jana Chryzostoma*, *VoxP* 62 (2014) p. 493-504.

⁸¹ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 15, 10, PG 57, 236.

⁸² Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 60, 1, PG 58, 585.

⁸³ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 4, 9, PG 57, 50; 15, 10, PG 57, 236.

⁸⁴ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 15, 11, PG 57, 237-238: “And do you not think that you are yourself rather disgraced, imitating the violent passions of the brutes; nay rather, becoming even worse than they? For they have all things in common; they herd one with another, and go about together: but we have nothing in common, but all in confusion: fightings, strifes, revilings, and enmities, and insults. And we neither

Chrysostom says “that in the season of enmity, when wrath (τῆς ὀργῆς) is inflamed, and the soul kindled, even the least thing appears great, and what is not very reproachful is counted intolerable? [...] For just as where friendship is, even grievous things are light, so where enmity lies beneath, very trifles appear intolerable”⁸⁵. In this context Chrysostom compares the words uttered in anger to a spark which causes a formidable fire of quarrel and enmity⁸⁶, because the memory of insults can cause pain and indignation⁸⁷.

Moreover, anger leads to misunderstandings that frequently end with fisticuffs⁸⁸ and serious sins like murder⁸⁹ or perjury⁹⁰, which leads to hell. That is why the preacher recommends not to pass people possessed by anger indifferently but to help them with the voice of reason⁹¹.

It is interesting how Chrysostom describes the destructive effect of anger, which destroys not only the bonds between people (including the marital ones) but also the soul of the man submitting to it. In this description anger is compared to a wicked adulterer who can perfidiously seize man: “And like some wicked adulterer (πονηρός τις μοιχός), wrath (ὁ θυμὸς) dallies with us in great delight, casting into us deadly seed, and making us give birth to diabolical enmity, and doing all things in a way opposite to marriage. For whereas marriage causes the two to become one flesh (cf. Gen 2:2 = Mt 19:5), wrath (θυμὸς) severs into many parts them that were united, and cleaves and cuts in pieces the very soul”⁹².

reverence the heaven, unto which we are called all of us in common; nor the earth, which He has left free to us all in common; nor our very nature; but wrath (θυμὸς) and the love of money sweeps all away”.

⁸⁵ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 8, PG 57, 249.

⁸⁶ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 8, PG 57, 249: “And as in fire: if there be but a small spark, though thousands of planks lie by, it does not easily lay hold of them; but if the flame have waxed strong and high, it readily seizes not planks only, but stones, and all materials that fall in its way [...]; so is it also with anger (τῆς ὀργῆς); whatever any one may say, becomes food in a moment for this evil conflagration”.

⁸⁷ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 79, 5, PG 58, 722.

⁸⁸ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 15, 10, PG 57, 236.

⁸⁹ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 5, PG 57, 246: “For wrath is the root of murder (θυμὸς)”; 16, 8, PG 57, 249; 39, 1, PG 57, 433: “For he that studies to avoid murder will not refrain from it equally with him that has put away even anger (τὸν θυμὸν)”; this latter being further removed from the crime”.

⁹⁰ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 15, 10, PG 57, 237: “He forswears himself under the sway of his wrath, and that way falls into hell”.

⁹¹ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 15, 10, PG 57, 236-237.

⁹² Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 51, 5, PG 58, 516.

Chrysostom speaks in a similar spirit in the homily where he compared anger and other passions to a wild beast (θηρίον)⁹³, which “has grievous teeth and talons”⁹⁴ able to destroy everything, and the soul of such a person is “dragged down to the earth, and torn by so many wild beasts”⁹⁵. But in these words the preacher first of all draws attention to the harm done by anger to a concrete man who is angry because “it mars, we see, not the body only, but the very health likewise of the soul is corrupted by it, devouring, rending, tearing to pieces all its strength, and making it useless for everything”⁹⁶, thereby experiences different spiritual torments⁹⁷. Moreover, anger is the reason for bringing God’s punishment⁹⁸. While continuing his thought, a little further on the preacher compares anger to a serpent (ὄφις)⁹⁹ which lives inside a man making the latter incapable of good actions¹⁰⁰.

Chrysostom is confident that, regarding the medical knowledge of that time, wrath causes excessive bile production, which leads to even more agitation. For this reason, he suggests to his listeners that they should see people who are enraged as suffering from the disease of excess bile and that instead of insults and violence, they should be compassionate to them¹⁰¹. In his recommendations, he does not stop at the need to sympathize with people who are overcome by anger but goes further by recommending helping them, just as you help people who are sick¹⁰².

⁹³ Cf. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, p. 651-652, s.v. θηρίον; *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 800, s.v. θηρίον. Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 4, 9, PG 57, 50: “Thus, imagine, if you will, your wrath (θυμὸν) to be a kind of wild beast (θηρίον)”; 87, 4, PG 58, 773. Cf. B. Leyerle, *Animal Passions. Chrysostom’s Use of Animal Imagery*, *StPatr* 83 (2017) p. 193.

⁹⁴ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 4, 9, PG 57, 50.

⁹⁵ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 59, 6, PG 58, 582.

⁹⁶ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 4, 9, PG 57, 50.

⁹⁷ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 38, 4, PG 57, 534.

⁹⁸ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 61, 5, PG 58, 594.

⁹⁹ Cf. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, p. 989, s.v. ὄφις; *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 1279, s.v. ὄφις.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 4, 9, PG 57, 50: “[...] how shall we, having so large a serpent (ὄφιν), eating up all within us (it is wrath (θυμὸν), I mean), how, I say, shall we be able to produce anything noble?”.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 87, 4, PG 58, 773.

¹⁰² Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 18, 5, PG 57, 270.

5. A prohibition against anger and the necessity to fight anger

While speaking of a prohibition against anger and the necessity to fight it, Chrysostom¹⁰³ refers to the teaching in the Holy Scripture. Quoting the words of Christ: “But I say unto you. Be not angry (Μηδὲ ὀργίζεσθε) (cf. Mt 5:22)”¹⁰⁴, he emphasizes that the Saviour forbids anger. Whereas referring to the words of Christ concerning a prohibition against vengeance and even offering the other cheek to the wrongdoer (cf. Mt 5:39; Lk 6:29), he emphasizes that He orders to quench anger¹⁰⁵ since “to turn the cheek is, to him that gives heed, a less grievous thing than to smite another; for from this the contest has beginning, in that termination: and whereas by the former you have kindled the other’s pile too, by the latter you have quenched even your own flames”¹⁰⁶. That is the reason why the preacher encourages the listeners to his homilies to restrain anger¹⁰⁷ and dismiss it from human relations¹⁰⁸. Even if somebody is guilty of blasphemy against God, one should restrain anger and treat that person with calm¹⁰⁹. Chrysostom also sees a prohibition on anger in Christ’s indications included in the blessings from the Sermon on the

¹⁰³ Cf. Leduc, *Gérer l’agressivité et la colère*, p. 49-52; Leyerle, *The Narrative Shape of Emotion*, p. 31-47 (*Quelling Anger*).

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 16, 1, PG 57, 239; 16, 3, PG 57, 241; 16, 6, PG 57, 246; 16, 10, PG 57, 252. It should be remarked that the words of Christ quoted by Chrysostom are not present in the contemporary critical edition of the Gospel according to St. Matthew. This shows that Chrysostom used a different text. This is not a new problem. Cf. J. Krystyniacki, *Wstęp*, in: Św. Jan Chryzostom, *Wykład Ewangelii św. Mateusza*, v. 1, Lwów 1903, p. XI.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 18, 2, PG 57, 266: “He requires yet more entire self-restraint (μη ὀργίζεσθαι), commanding him that suffers ill not merely to be quiet, but even to be more exceedingly earnest in his turn, by offering the other cheek”.

¹⁰⁶ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 38, 4, PG 57, 432.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 41, 4, PG 57, 451-452: “Let us then attend, and let us every way cleanse out our wounds, showing mercy (cf. Mt 5:5); remitting our anger (ὀργήν) against them that have displeased us, giving thanks for all things to God (cf. Eph 5:20)”.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. B. Dunkle, *John Chrysostom’s Community of Anger Management*, StPatr 83 (2017) p. 223-230; D. Tonia, *Facing Down Fear: John Chrysostom’s Answer to Violence*, in: *The (De)Legitimization of Violence in Sacred and Human Contexts*, ed. M. Shafiq – T. Donlin-Smith, Cham 2021, p. 32.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 29, 3, PG 57, 361: “[...] entreat, advise, admonish, with meekness, not angry (ὀργιζομένου). For no harm at all ensues unto God by their blasphemy, that you should be angered (θυμωθῆς), but he who blas-

Mount (cf. Mt 5:3-11) and he ties one with this prohibition explaining that the words “Thus, Blessed are the poor, is the same as that we are not to be angry (μὴ ὀργίζεσθαι)”¹¹⁰ express the same as the commandment not to get angry. Summing up, he states that the aim of all blessings is in fact to root out human vices, anger including¹¹¹ since “a poor, quiet or mourning man deprives themselves of anger (τὴν ὀργήν)”¹¹².

Chrysostom relates the prohibition on anger to the commandment of not to kill and he expresses his conviction that when Christ spoke about the prohibition on anger he did not annul the commandment “You shall not kill” (cf. Ex 20:13; Deut 5:17) but He confirmed it¹¹³ and complemented it indicating that anger could also be “murderous”¹¹⁴: “Let us now ask those who reject the law, is, «Be not angry» (μὴ ὀργίζεσθαι), contrary to «Do no murder»? Or is not the one commandment the completion and the development of the other? Clearly the one is the fulfilling of the other”¹¹⁵. The preacher expresses the same thought in another homily where he emphasizes that “he who is not stirred up to anger (ὀργήν), will much more refrain from murder”¹¹⁶.

Therefore, one should restrain anger and fight it as Christ appeals to restrain anger and He promises a reward to those who will keep the commandment given by Him¹¹⁷. The preacher also sees a need to fight against anger encouraging the listeners of his homilies: “let us arm our-

phemed has himself also received the wound. Wherefore groan, bewail, for the calamity indeed deserves tears”.

¹¹⁰ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 3, PG 57, 242.

¹¹¹ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 18, 5, PG 57, 271: “Can you see Him rooting out anger (τὸν θυμὸν), lust, greed for earth and care for earthly things?”.

¹¹² Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 18, 5, PG 57, 271.

¹¹³ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 6, PG 57, 246: “But if He does not suffer one even to be angry (μηδὲ ὀργίζεσθαι), the mind of the law is established by Him more completely”.

¹¹⁴ Cf. A. Kubiś, *Morderczy gniew. Intertekstualna lektura Mt 5,21-22*, VV 34 (2018) p. 249-287.

¹¹⁵ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 3, PG 57, 241.

¹¹⁶ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 5, PG 57, 246; cf. 16, 6, PG 57, 246: „For he that studies to avoid murder will not refrain from it equally with him that has put away even anger (τὴν ὀργήν); this latter being further removed from the crime”; 16, 11, PG 57, 253: “For he who neither reviles, nor goes to law, nor prolongs enmity (ἔχθραν)?, how will he ever commit murder (ἔχθραν)?”.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 19, 9, PG 57, 286: “Let us, considering our own case, and the reward appointed us for this commandment, soften our anger (τὴν ὀργήν)”.

selves against all rage (κατὰ παντὸς θυμοῦ), against all anger (κατὰ πάσης ὀργῆς)¹¹⁸.

A ban on anger also follows from the fact that Christians are supposed to be more perfect than Jews and this is why Christ orders that the fairness of His disciples should exceed that of the Jews. For this reason he also forbids not only murder but even anger¹¹⁹: “But of what kind was the required «excess»? Not to be angry (μὴ ὀργισθῆναι) (cf. Mt 5:22)”¹²⁰. On the other hand, when he emphasizes how perfect, noble and superior Christ’s indications are in comparison to the Jewish law, he says: “Then murder was the destruction of him that committed it, but now even to be angry (τὸ ὀργίζεσθαι) (cf. Mt 5:21-22)”¹²¹. In this context the preacher explains that “Clearly the one [the commandment not to get angry] is the fulfilling of the other [the commandment not to kill], and that is greater on this very account”¹²².

Chrysostom understands Christian self-improvement as inner freedom from any passions, and not as mortification of one’s body¹²³. That is why controlling one’s passions, anger including, is one of the elements of the ideal promoted by Chrysostom, which he calls “angelic life”¹²⁴ and appeals to the faithful for its realization: “in whatsoever things we may have been injured, let us, considering our own case, and the reward appointed us for this commandment, soften our anger (τὴν ὀργὴν)”¹²⁵. Realizing this ideal in everyday life also has the evangelization dimension as pagans will admire Christians “when they see us gentle, pure from wrath (ὀργῆς), from evil desire, from envy, from covetousness, rightly fulfilling all our other duties, they will say, «If the Christians have become angels here, what will they be after their departure hence?»”¹²⁶. An important role is also played by

¹¹⁸ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 87, 2, PG 58, 771.

¹¹⁹ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 17, 4, PG 57, 259: “He [Christ] had taken away all wrath, having forbidden not murder only, but even the mere feeling of anger (θυμοῦσθαι)”.

¹²⁰ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 16, 3, PG 57, 243.

¹²¹ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 36, 3, PG 58, 417.

¹²² Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 16, 5, PG 57, 245.

¹²³ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 46, 4, PG 58, 480: “By practice I mean, not your fasting, nor yet your strewing sackcloth and ashes under you, but if you despise wealth, as it ought to be despised; if you be kindly affectioned, if you give your bread (cf. Mt 25:35) to the hungry, if you control anger (θυμοῦ), if you cast out vainglory, if you put away envy”.

¹²⁴ Cf. Brottier, *L’appel des demi-chrétiens à la vie angélique*, passim.

¹²⁵ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 19, 9, PG 57, 286.

¹²⁶ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 43, 5, PG 57, 463.

struggling against haughtiness and by meekness Since humble people do not get angry¹²⁷, while the haughty ones “easily fall into anger (ὀργήν)”¹²⁸.

Chrysostom advises that nobody should let anger get close to themselves; however, when under the effect of some excitement it seizes somebody, then it should be driven away like a dangerous “mad dog (κύνα λυττωντα)”¹²⁹. Calling anger a “rabid dog” is a rejection of the conventional association of anger with a wild animal and meant a rejection of the heroic code, according to which the citizen was obliged to retaliate for the insult he had suffered. The more powerful he was, the more vulnerable he was to insults. So the taunts were the prelude to the fight. Moreover, dogs were considered two-faced creatures. Although some of them, like Odysseus’ faithful hound Argus, had a heroic perfection like their masters, mostly they were figures of shame and shamelessness¹³⁰. The reason for their bad reputation is still discussed. The willingness of dogs to copulate in public places is often cited. Still, it is more likely that dogs’ partial savagery manifested in the fact that the same dogs that bravely fought alongside the heroes could fiercely turn against their owners. This potential hostility of the dog made him a figure of duplicity¹³¹.

In another place the preacher uses the opposition between wild animals, which can be easily tamed by man, and human nature – relatively gentle but distorted by anger. Comparing anger to a wild beast he recommends that it must be controlled. He says that like tamers properly train dangerous lions and make them meek, so anger can be controlled through work on oneself and one’s mind can be made gentle and quiet¹³².

It is interesting how Chrysostom interprets the words of St. Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians: “let not the sun go down upon your wrath

¹²⁷ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaicum hom.* 3, 5, PG 57, 38.

¹²⁸ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaicum hom.* 65, 6, PG 58, 625.

¹²⁹ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaicum hom.* 51, 5, PG 58, 516: “That you may therefore with confidence draw near to God, receive not wrath (θυμὸν), when it comes in upon you, and desires to be with you, but drive it away like a mad dog. For so Paul too commanded: his phrase being, «lifting up holy hands without wrath (ὀργῆς) and disputing» (1Tim 2:8)”. Cf. Leyerle, *Animal Passions*, p. 198-200.

¹³⁰ Cf. S. Braund–G. Gilbert, *The ABC of Epic „Ira”: Anger, Beasts, and Cannibalism*, in: *Ancient Anger: Perspectives from Homer to Galen*, ed. S. Braund–G. Most, Cambridge 2003, p. 256-257; C. Franco, *Shameless: The Canine and the Feminine in Ancient Greece*, tr. M. Fox, Berkeley 2014, p. 75-120 and 37-40 (for Argus).

¹³¹ Por. Leyerle, *The Narrative Shape of Emotion*, p. 34.

¹³² Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaicum hom.* 4, 9, PG 57, 50.

(παροργισμῶ)” (4:26). The preacher ties this recommendation with Christ’s indication that a person angry with their neighbour should be reconciled before the offering (cf. Mt 6:23-24) and he arrives at the conclusion that both appeal for the same. In the further analysis Chrysostom returns to St. Paul’s words and he emphasizes that his recommendations result from the fear of the night since at night, when “in the night, when he is alone, and is thinking it over by himself, the waves swell, and the storm becomes greater”¹³³. That is the reason why it is important for St. Paul that a man should go for a rest reconciled with his neighbour so that “the devil may after that have no opportunity, from his solitude, to rekindle the furnace of his wrath (τῆς ὀργῆς), and make it fiercer”¹³⁴.

Chrysostom knows perfectly well that anger is a very strong passion which is similar to the desire of the flesh. Although man can restrain blasphemy in the form of making blood offerings of sheep and calves to deities of stone or gold, it is difficult for him to restrain anger and in his weakness he can even make an offering of his soul to wrath¹³⁵. However, those who cannot control the desire for material goods will not be able to restrain any passion – including anger¹³⁶. This happens because man does not attach proper importance to guarding their souls against being sullied by passions and allows the latter to conquer them¹³⁷.

Chrysostom expresses his conviction that one of the effective methods to fight anger and other passions is turning to Christ for help. Even if a man is seized by lot of vices, He always gives help to those who ask Him for it. The preacher presents his viewpoint in the following words: “though thou approach Him angry (ὀργιζομένῳ), though much displeased; be willing only to pray, and to return, and you shall receive all, and shall quickly extinguish the wrath (τὴν ὀργὴν)”¹³⁸.

¹³³ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaem hom.* 16, 10, PG 57, 251.

¹³⁴ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaem hom.* 16, 10, PG 57, 251.

¹³⁵ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaem hom.* 55, 5, PG 58, 546: “For though thou sacrifice not to stone nor to gold, either sheep or bullocks, see lest to wrath (θυμῶ) thou sacrifice your own soul, lest to whoredom or other like passions (πάθεισι), thou sacrifice your own salvation”.

¹³⁶ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaem hom.* 81, 5, PG 58, 736. Cf. Leduc, *Gérer l’agressivité et la colère*, p. 33-34.

¹³⁷ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaem hom.* 42, 4, PG 27, 456: “And whether it be the love of covetousness, or that of luxury, or that of fair persons, or that of wrath (τοῦ θυμοῦ), or be it what you will else that is minded to come in, we throw open the doors, and attract and invite it, and help it to defile our soul at its leisure”.

¹³⁸ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaem hom.* 22, 5, PG 57, 306.

Another effective method to fight anger which is connected with the expression of faith in Christ's power is recollection of His Passion. Despite Christ having suffered much from His tormentors, He bore everything meekly and was not angry with them¹³⁹. That is why, in the context of commenting the events associated with the Lord's Passion, the preacher advises the following: "Call to mind some one of the things that then took place, and you will cast out as dust (θυσμὸν) all rage by the recollection of the things that were done"¹⁴⁰. The example of the humble attitude of Christ has great power and is an essential help in the fight against anger. Even the greatest public insult, mockery, and even a blow are nothing compared to Christ's suffering without ever reacting with anger¹⁴¹.

The sign of the cross on the chest is also recommended by the preacher as an effective way to fight anger¹⁴². This action reminds the content included in this sign of salvation and leads to soothing anger¹⁴³. An indication that the sign of the cross should be made "on the chest" could have followed from Chrysostom's conviction expressed in one of his *Homilies on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (also resulting from the belief of ancient philosophers) that God placed anger in the heart, which lies in the chest – like in a cage built of bones almost as hard as stone so that man could not be torn with the claws of this cruel wild beast. The preacher also adds that no other part of man would bear the violence and fire of anger¹⁴⁴.

An effective method to "fight" with a man seized by anger is humbly accepting unjust insult¹⁴⁵, and even blows by him¹⁴⁶, bearing misdemeanours and showing generosity in case of captured property¹⁴⁷. Such

¹³⁹ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 15, 10, PG 57, 236; 18, 4, PG 57, 270; 61, 5, PG 58, 595; 87, 2-3, PG 58, 771-772.

¹⁴⁰ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 87, 2, PG 58, 771.

¹⁴¹ Cf. Leyerle, *The Narrative Shape of Emotion*, p. 43.

¹⁴² Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 87, 2, PG 58, 771: "Should thou perceive your heart swelling, seal your breast setting upon it the cross".

¹⁴³ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 54, 4, PG 58, 537; 87, 3, PG 58, 773: "«And how is it possible, one will say, not to get angry?». Did anybody insult you? Place the sign of the cross on your breast; recall everything what happened then and all anger will go out".

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In epistulam ad Hebraeos hom.* 5, 5, PG 63, 53.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 87, 3, PG 58, 773: "For indeed it is more worthy of admiration to see a man insulted, and not moved, than beaten and smitten, and not falling".

¹⁴⁶ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 18, 2, PG 57, 267.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 18, 2, PG 57, 267.

an attitude means “smiting a greater blow than smiting with your hand”, and he will be put to shame and will become more gentle¹⁴⁸, and as a consequence freed from anger¹⁴⁹. What is more, the preacher emphasizes that when somebody suffers unjustly and gets enraged, they provoke the suspicion that they suffer rightly, but first of all they succumb to impetuosity and – as Chrysostom says – are “dragged captive by his anger (τῆς ὀργῆς), and losing his own nobility”¹⁵⁰.

Chrysostom wanted to reach everyone, especially the average Christian, not just a few educated elites, with his message of anger management. Therefore, in his proposed methods of fighting anger, there are references to the teaching of the Bible and simple psychology, not the achievements of ancient pagan thinkers. For example, he does not recommend a longer delay in response to an insult nor provides for the advice of a friend (except for children who should use the advice of those who educate them). However, given his fondness for asceticism, it is surprising that he does not usually recommend a temperamental lifestyle as a way to avoid anger.

Besides the formative values connected with self-improvement, controlling anger also has the evangelization dimension. Chrysostom expresses his conviction that when heathens see the Christians resist passions, anger including, they will not admire them but “they will look upon the very face of the kingdom of Heaven”¹⁵¹.

The model of how anger is quenched is Jesus Christ, who was sitting next to Judas – His traitor – during the Last Supper and though He knew that Judas would betray Him to the Jews (due to which he deserved “the largest anger”), He was not angry with him but he spoke to him with exceptional mildness. In this context the preacher relates to human behaviours and reactions, and asks: “who [...] would not put away all venom of wrath and anger?”¹⁵². Jesus, however, did not do so. Therefore, if man bears in mind the gentleness of Jesus, “wrath (θυμός) would find no place at any time”¹⁵³. On the other hand, he reminds all those who react to insult with anger that

¹⁴⁸ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 18, 2, PG 57, 266: “For thus, lost as he may be to shame, you will be able to smite him with a mortal blow, rather than if you had smitten him with your hand; or if his shamelessness be still greater, you will make him gentle in proportion”. Cf. Leyerle, *The Narrative Shape of Emotion*, p. 35-36.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 18, 4, PG 57, 270.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 87, 3, PG 58, 772.

¹⁵¹ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 43, 5, PG 57, 463.

¹⁵² Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 81, 2, PG 58, 732.

¹⁵³ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 81, 2, PG 58, 732.

their wrath has no justification since Christ, having suffered a lot, bore everything patiently and was not angry with His oppressors¹⁵⁴. The preacher also draws attention to the monks living in hermitages in the vicinity of Antioch and he gives them as an example to follow in restraining anger¹⁵⁵.

6. The fruit of freedom from anger

Chrysostom expresses his conviction that dismissing anger is not in fact difficult but very easy – it is easier than persisting in anger¹⁵⁶. It also brings spiritual fruit in the form of peace of the heart¹⁵⁷ and obtaining absolution of sins from God¹⁵⁸. At the same time Chrysostom doubts whether those who get angry, especially for trivial reasons, will be able to get forgiveness¹⁵⁹. The preacher emphasizes that freedom from anger is a condition of trustful approach to God¹⁶⁰. Following the teaching of St. Paul (cf. 1Tim 2:8), he notices that it is also a condition of a good and effective¹⁶¹ prayer¹⁶². In this context the preacher regards it as extremely bad to turn to

¹⁵⁴ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaicum hom.* 87, 1, PG 58, 769: “What plea shall we have after this for being moved by injuries, after Christ suffered these things?”.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaicum hom.* 70, 5, PG 58, 662.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaicum hom.* 19, 7, PG 57, 284: “For what sort of toil is it to forgive him that has grieved us? Nay, it is a toil not to forgive, but to keep up our enmity”; 42, 4, PG 27, 456: “What sort of toil is it not to curse, not to lie, not to swear, given up (τὴν ὀργήν) against your brother? But to do otherwise is something difficult and requires great effort”.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaicum hom.* 19, 7, PG 57, 284: “[...] to be delivered from the anger (τοῦ θυμοῦ), both works in us a great refreshment, and is very easy to him that is willing”.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaicum hom.* 61, 5, PG 58, 596: “And having considered all these things, cast away all anger (ὀργήν), that God may forgive us also all our trespasses”.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaicum hom.* 87, 3, PG 58, 772: “For tell me if you will get forgiveness if you get mad and angry?”.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaicum hom.* 51, 5, PG 58, 516.

¹⁶¹ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaicum hom.* 23, 4, PG 57, 313: “To seek the things spiritual, all of them; to forgive them that have trespassed (cf. Mt 6:12), and so to draw near asking forgiveness; to lift up holy hands without wrath (ὀργῆς) and doubting (cf. 1Tim 2:8). If we thus ask, we shall receive”.

¹⁶² Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaicum hom.* 19, 8, PG 57, 284: “Wherefore Paul also, making mention of prayer, required nothing so much as the observance of this commandment; for He says, lifting up holy hands without wrath (ὀργῆς) and doubting

God in a prayer against enemies, and to ask Him to direct His anger against them¹⁶³, while considering prayers for them to be spiritually useful¹⁶⁴.

Drawing attention to the fruit brought by patiently suffering harm and restraining anger with the perpetrators, the preacher enumerates those effects and says:

See then how much you gain, bearing meekly the spiteful acts of your enemies. First and greatest, deliverance from sins; secondly, fortitude and patience; thirdly, mildness and benevolence; for he that knows not how to be angry (οὐκ ὀργίζεσθαι) with them that grieve him, much more will he be ready to serve them that love him. Fourthly, to be free from anger (ὀργῆς) continually, to which nothing can be equal. For of him that is free from anger (ὀργῆς), it is quite clear that he is delivered also from the despondency hence arising, and will not spend his life on vain labors and sorrows. For he that knows not how to hate, neither does he know how to grieve, but will enjoy pleasure, and ten thousand blessings. So that we punish ourselves by hating others, even as on the other hand we benefit ourselves by loving them¹⁶⁵.

(1Tim 2:8). And if when you have need of mercy, not even then will you let go your anger (τὴν ὀργὴν), but art rather exceedingly mindful of it, [...] when will it be possible for you to become merciful, and to spew out the evil venom of this wickedness?"; 19, 9, PG 57, 286.

¹⁶³ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaem hom.* 19, 8, PG 57, 284: "As thus: should one approach you who are a man, seeking to obtain mercy, and then, in the midst of his lying on the ground, should see an enemy, and leaving off to supplicate you, begin to beat him; would you not make yourself more angry (τὴν ὀργὴν) with him? This do thou consider as taking place with regard to God also. For so thou likewise, making supplication unto God, leavest your supplication in the midst, and smitest your enemy with your words, and insultest the laws of God. Him who made a law to dismiss all anger (ὀργὴν), you are summoning against those that have vexed you, and requiring Him to do things contrary to His own commandments. [...] Yet some there are, who have come to such a point of brutishness, as not only to make intercession against their enemies, but even to curse their children, and to taste, if only it might be, of their very flesh; or rather they are even tasting thereof. For tell me not this, that you have not fixed your teeth in the body of him that vexed you; since you have done, at least as far as concerned you, what is much more grievous; in claiming that wrath (ὀργὴν) from above should fall upon him, and that he should be delivered over to undying punishment, and be overthrown with his whole house".

¹⁶⁴ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaem hom.* 24, 3, PG 57, 324: "But does he speak evil? Nay, from this pain also Christ has delivered you, by promising you without toil a great reward for the endurance of evil, and making you so clear from the anger (ὀργῆς) and vexation hence arising, as even to command you to pray for them (cf. Mt 5:44)".

¹⁶⁵ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaem hom.* 61, 5, PG 58, 594-595.

7. Justified anger

John Chrysostom was not only a moralist but an exegete as well and that is why the Holy Bible was the foundation of his teaching. He found certain texts in the Bible which made him restrict his criticism of anger. In *Homilies on St. Matthew* he refers to three of them: Ps 4:5 (LXX)¹⁶⁶, Mt 5:22a¹⁶⁷ and Eph 4:26¹⁶⁸. However, it is the words of Christ which are the crucial starting point for his teaching: “But I tell unto you, anyone whosoever is angry (ὁ ὀργιζόμενος) with a brother or sister without a cause (εἰκῆ)¹⁶⁹ shall be in danger of the judgment” (cf. Mt 5:22a)¹⁷⁰. The adverb εἰκῆ, which is of key importance in interpreting this text does not appear in the modern critical edition of the Gospel according to St. Matthew. Nevertheless, it does appear in the version of the Bible that Chrysostom used. The analysis of the patristic content shows that this version of the Gospel was also used by Eusebius of Caesarea¹⁷¹ Basil of Caesarea¹⁷², Gregory of Nyssa¹⁷³, Theodoret of Cyrus¹⁷⁴ and Cyril of Alexandria¹⁷⁵. Besides, the adverb εἰκῆ occurs in Romans 13:4, which verse was quoted by Chrysostom in homily number 16¹⁷⁶.

Chrysostom comments on the above quoted text of the Gospel (Mt 5:22a) and says that Christ

¹⁶⁶ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 16, 7, PG 57, 248.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 16, 5, PG 57, 245; 16, 7, PG 57, 248; 16, 8, PG 57, 249; 17, 4, PG 57, 259; 18, 5, PG 57, 271.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 16, 10, PG 57, 251; 16, 10, PG 53, 252.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 484, s.v. εἰκῆ.

¹⁷⁰ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 16, 5, PG 57, 245; cf. 16, 1, PG 57, 239; 16, 3, PG 57, 241; 16, 6, PG 57, 246; 16, 10, PG 57, 252; 18, 2, PG 57, 267.

¹⁷¹ Cf. Eusebius Caesariensis, *Demonstratio evangelica* 9, PG 22, 692A.

¹⁷² Cf. Basilius Caesariensis, *Regulae morales* 43, 1, PG 31, 761C.

¹⁷³ Cf. Gregorius Nyssenus, *Orationes de beatitudinibus* 6, PG 44, 1276A.

¹⁷⁴ Cf. Theodoretus Cyrensis, *Graecarum affectionum curatio* 9, PG 83, 1056C; Theodoretus Cyrensis, *De theologia sanctae Trinitatis et de oeconomia* (sub nomine Cyrilli) 7, PG 75, 1156A; Theodoretus Cyrensis, *Interpretatio in Psalmos* 9, 20-21, PG 80, 929C.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. Cyrillus Alexandrinus, *Commentarius in xii prophetas minores (In Zachariam prophetam)* 4, 83, PG 72, 197D; Cyrillus Alexandrinus, *Expositio in Psalmos* 36, 27, PG 69, 941D.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaëum hom.* 16, 11, PG 57, 253.

has not altogether taken the thing away [anger]: first, because it is not possible, being a man, to be freed from passions: we may indeed get the dominion over them (παθῶν), but to be altogether without them is out of the question. Next, because this passion is even useful, if we know how to use it at the suitable time (καιροῦ)¹⁷⁷.

In the text quoted above Chrysostom expresses two important truths concerning the passion of anger. The first refers to the impossibility of removing passions from man's life since "Yet surely both are naturally implanted, and both are set in us for our profit; both anger (ὀργή), and desire"¹⁷⁸, which is in agreement with the philosophical thought on any human passions. Although anger can be controlled, it cannot be dismissed completely. The other refers to the benefit that can be brought by anger expressed at the right moment¹⁷⁹. In this context Chrysostom emphasizes the good following from justified anger and refers to the attitude of St. Paul, who got angry with Corinthians and Galatians and reproached them, thanks to which he brought them back from the track of errors and sins¹⁸⁰. The interesting fact is, that while commenting Mt 21:12-13 (cf. Mk 11:15-17; Lk 19:45-46; J 2:13-16) about the expulsion of the money changers from the Temple, Chrysostom does not refer to the righteous anger with which Jesus exalted himself for the purity of the temple, but only speaks of the anger of the Jews, who were indignant at him, not because of the expulsion of the merchants, but because of the miracles performed in the temple¹⁸¹.

¹⁷⁷ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 7, PG 57, 248. Cf. Leduc, *Gérer l'agressivité et la colère*, p. 46-47.

¹⁷⁸ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 17, 1, PG 57, 256.

¹⁷⁹ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 17, 1, PG 57, 256: "[...] both are naturally implanted, and both are set in us for our profit; both anger (ὀργή), and desire". The statement that anger is useful reflects the influence of ancient philosophers, e.g. Aristotle; cf. J. Korwin-Łopuszański, *Gniew i strach w etyce Arystotelesa*, RF 29/2 (1981) p. 51; Brottier, *L'appel des demi-chrétiens à la vie angélique*, p. 213-214; Leyerle, *The Narrative Shape of Emotion*, p. 49.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 7, PG 57, 248: "See, for instance, what great good was wrought by that anger (ὀργή) of Paul, which he felt against the Corinthians (cf. 1Cor 3:1f; 5:1f), on that well-known occasion; and how, as it delivered them from a grievous pest, so by the same means again he recovered the people of the Galatians (cf. Gal 1:6-9), likewise, which had fallen aside and others too beside these".

¹⁸¹ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 67, 1, PG 58, 632-633. Chrysostom briefly discusses this episode only in *In Joannem hom.* 23, 2, PG 59, 140.

While pointing to the right time (καιρός)¹⁸² for anger, he emphasizes that it occurs “When we are not avenging ourselves, but checking others in their lawless freaks, or forcing them to attend in their negligence”¹⁸³. At the same time the preacher explains that the unsuitable moment for anger is “When we do so as avenging ourselves”¹⁸⁴, which “makes them [adversaries] worse, and their anger (τὴν ὀργὴν) heightens into a greater flame; yea, often no less than death itself is the end of it”¹⁸⁵. Expressing this thought, he refers both to Aristotle, who held that anger is a desire¹⁸⁶ for revenge, and to the teaching of St. Paul, who advises, saying: “Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath (τῆ ὀργῆ) of God” (Rom 12:19)¹⁸⁷. For as this last sort is superfluous, so “is the first necessary and profitable” while anger expressed at the unsuitable time is “superfluous”¹⁸⁸. Chrysostom, as a careful observer of the surrounding reality and at the same time a splendid moralist, notices that among the Antioch Christians

most men do the contrary; becoming like wild beasts when they are injured themselves, but remiss and cowardly when they see despite done to another: both which are just opposite to the laws of the Gospel. Being angry (τὸ ὀργίζεσθαι) then is not a transgression, but being so [angry] (ὀργίζεσθε) unseasonably. For this cause the prophet also said, “Be angry (ὀργίζεσθε, and sin not” (Ps 4:5)¹⁸⁹.

The preacher emphasizes that anger was given to man not to sin but to oppose the sins of others so that “we may chastise the evil, and correct those who walk disorderly”¹⁹⁰. Righteous anger should not provoke the anger of the person who has experienced it, because, as Aristotle says, what is just does not provoke anger¹⁹¹. That is why although Christ does not forbid

¹⁸² More on the meaning of the term καιρός in Chrysostom’s lecture, cf. Brottier, *L’appel des demi-chrétiens à la vie angélique*, p. 66.

¹⁸³ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 7, PG 57, 248.

¹⁸⁴ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 7, PG 57, 248.

¹⁸⁵ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 18, 2, PG 57, 266.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. Aristoteles, *Rhetorica* 2, 2, 1 (1378a), LCL 193, p. 172.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 7, PG 57, 248.

¹⁸⁸ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 7, PG 57, 248.

¹⁸⁹ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 7, PG 57, 248.

¹⁹⁰ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 17, 1, PG 57, 256. Cf. Leduc, *Gérer l’agressivité et la colère*, p. 52-56.

¹⁹¹ Cf. Aristoteles, *Rhetorica* 2, 3, 15 (1380b), LCL 193, p. 190; Harris, *Restraining Rage*, p. 61.

anger, “in the case of anger (τῆς ὀργῆς) He laid down a certain distinction, saying, «without a cause» (εἰκῆ), and for «nought» (μάτην)”¹⁹². Therefore, only anger without a reason is forbidden, what Aristotle clearly said¹⁹³, while justified anger is not only allowed but even recommended¹⁹⁴, which is confirmed for example by the reactions of St. Paul and St. Peter. Paul got angry with Elymas (cf. Acts 1:9-11), John called Mark (cf. Acts 15:38), high priest Ananias (cf. Acts 23:3), Imeneus (cf. 1Tim 1:20), Alexander (cf. 1Tim 1:20; 2Tim 4:14-15), Corinthian (cf. 1Cor 5:1-5; 2Cor 2:4-8) and Galatians (cf. Gal 1:6-9), while Peter got angry with Ananias and Sapphira (cf. Acts 5:1-11). Paul’s and Peter’s anger did not result from wrath but from their concern about those who sinned. It is just like a loving father, angry with his son, does not express his wrath but cares about his son. This is what Christ did. He “also was justly angered (ὀργίζετο) with us, yet nevertheless He gave Himself for us to be slain, not imputing those trespasses”¹⁹⁵. It follows from what Chrysostom says that Christ showing “great anger (τὴν ὀργὴν)”¹⁹⁶ with people who are angry with their brothers recommends the quickest possible reconciliation (cf. Mt 6:23-24) “by all these methods destroying both the root and the produce [of anger]”¹⁹⁷. While saying in the parable about a hypocrite who wanted to take out a speck of dust from the eye of a brother (cf. Mt 7:1-5), He showed “great wrath (τὴν ὀργὴν), which He has against them that do such things. For so, wheresoever He would indicate that the sin is great, and the punishment and wrath in store for it grievous, He begins with a reproach”¹⁹⁸. Although Chrysostom considers justified anger admissible, he points out that it would be better to do this – naturally, for justified reasons – gently and without anger, which is much easier and wiser¹⁹⁹.

¹⁹² Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 17, 1, PG 57, 256. The word μάτην appears in Mt 15:9 and in Mk 7:7. The phrase εἰκῆ καὶ μάτην appears once more in: *In Matthaeum hom.* 1, 1, PG 57, 15; 2, 2, PG 57, 26; 10, 4, PG 57, 188; 13, 3, PG 57, 211; 16, 6, PG 57, 247; 17, 1, PG 57, 256; 33, 2, PG 57, 389; 35, 3, PG 57, 409; 38, 7, PG 57, 428; 53, 5, PG 58, 532; 59, 7, PG 58, 583; 62, 3, PG 58, 600; 65, 3, PG 58, 621; 77, 3, PG 58, 706; 78, 3, PG 58, 714; 87, 4, PG 58, 774; 89, 4, PG 58, 786; 90, 1, PG 58, 787.

¹⁹³ Cf. Aristoteles, *Rhetorica* 2, 2, 1-2 (1378a), LCL 193, p. 172.

¹⁹⁴ Cf. Brottier, *L'appel des demi-chrétiens à la vie angélique*, p. 212-213.

¹⁹⁵ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 9, PG 57, 259.

¹⁹⁶ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 10, PG 57, 252.

¹⁹⁷ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 10, PG 57, 252.

¹⁹⁸ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 23, 2, PG 57, 309.

¹⁹⁹ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 87, 4, PG 58, 774: “For though it be necessary to retaliate, it is possible to do this without anger (χωρίς ὀργῆς), and it were more easy and more wise than with anger (ἢ μετ’ ὀργῆς) and to have no painful feeling”.

In the context of the words about justified anger, Chrysostom remarks that it follows from Christ's teaching that He threatens those who get angry for nought with judgment: "For observe: I bade you, says He, not be angry for nought (τὸν μὲν ὀργιζόμενον), (this is why He said: he who gets angry [ὁ ὀργιζόμενος] is in danger of the judgment [cf. Mt 5:22a]), [...] you have called your brother «Raca», again, I set another punishment, the council"²⁰⁰. Although Chrysostom speaks so decisively on the prohibition on unjust anger, he sums up his arguments, stating that "as yet these are no great things; for the punishments are here"²⁰¹. He also emphasized that Christ grades the infliction of punishment so that the sinner will come to their senses and lest they will commit a greater sin which could be punished with "an undying penalty of hell". At the same time Chrysostom indicates a certain chain of human improper attitudes: a person is first angry with their neighbour, next – by a spoken word²⁰² – they insult the latter and later on – if they cannot restrain anger – can even commit a murder²⁰³. Interestingly, Chrysostom is convinced that those who get unjustifiably angry are aware of doing the wrong thing, and they even themselves condemn their improper attitude, whereas those who do not get angry are conscious of good con-

²⁰⁰ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 8, PG 57, 249. It should be noted that the unclear Aramaic term "raka" was primarily an expression of humiliation and contempt.

²⁰¹ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 8, PG 57, 249.

²⁰² When Chrysostom draws attention to the words spoken in anger, he speaks of "angry words (ὀργίλα ῥήματα)", which – he says – are "the filth of the mouth". Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 51, 4, PG 58, 516: "For the filth of the mouth is evil speaking, blasphemy, reviling, angry words, filthy talking, laughter, jesting".

²⁰³ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 8, PG 57, 249: "And see how He proceeds little by little in His punishments, all but excusing Himself unto you, and signifying that His desire indeed is to threaten nothing of the kind, but that we drag Him on to such denunciations. For observe: «I bade you, says He, not be angry for nought (μὴ ὀργίσθῃς), because you are in danger of the judgment. You have despised the former commandment: see what anger (ἡ ὀργή) has produced; it has led you on straight-way to insult, for you have called your brother 'Raca'. Again, I set another punishment, 'the council'. If you overlook even this, and proceed to that which is more grievous, I visit you no longer with these finite punishments, but with the undying penalty of hell, lest after this you should break forth even to murder»; 16, 10, PG 57, 252: "That is why He mentions judgment, the Council and hell"; 16, 11, PG 57, 253: "Wherefore Christ also made mention, not of hell only, but also of a court of justice, and of being dragged there, and of the prison, and of all the suffering there; by all these means destroying the roots of murder"; 18, 2, PG 57, 266.

duct²⁰⁴. Anger, therefore, is most harmful to the one who has succumbed to it²⁰⁵.

John Chrysostom emphasizes that a Christian cannot get justifiably angry with people who aroused his anger, although it is them who directly caused a fit of anger²⁰⁶, but he can only – and even should – be angry with the devil²⁰⁷ since it is as a result of the latter’s scheming that people were provoked to act badly and to cause negative emotions in others by doing harm to them and upsetting them²⁰⁸.

Undertaking a struggle against Satan is a guarantee of getting support from Christ, who – having seen a man prepared for the war with the evil spirit – arrives immediately with rescue and – as Chrysostom says – “He by Himself brings all the war to an end”²⁰⁹. It should be noticed in this context that the preacher is of the opinion that passions, including anger, are born in man under the influence of the evil spirit. That is why Chrysostom calls them tyrannical passions (πάθος τυραννικόν):

He [Christ] requires of you one thing alone, that you show forth a sincere hatred against that foe. And if you contribute this to Him, He by Himself brings all the war to an end. Though thou burn with anger (ὀργή), with desire of riches, with any tyrannical passion (πάθος τυραννικόν) whatever; if He see you only stripping yourself and prepared against it, He comes quickly to you, and makes all things easy, and sets you above the flame, as He did those children of old in the Babylonian furnace: for they too carried in with them nought but their good will (cf. Dan 3:8f)²¹⁰.

²⁰⁴ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 87, 4, PG 58, 774: “For it is impossible that a man, who is angry (ἄνθρωπον ὀργιζόμενον), should not utterly condemn himself, even as on the other hand it is impossible for one who is not angry (μὴ ὀργιζόμενον) to be self-condemned”.

²⁰⁵ Cf. Brottier, *L’appel des demi-chrétiens à la vie angélique*, p. 212.

²⁰⁶ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 33, 6, PG 57, 395.

²⁰⁷ Cf. Brottier, *L’appel des demi-chrétiens à la vie angélique*, p. 212.

²⁰⁸ Cf. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 18, 1, PG 57, 265: “Having therefore mentioned the ancient law, and recognized it all, He [Christ] signifies again, that it is not our brother who has done these deeds, but the evil one. For this cause he has also subjoined, But I say unto you, that you resist not the evil one. He did not say, resist not your brother, but the evil one, signifying that on his motion men dare so to act; and in this way relaxing and secretly removing most of our anger (τῆς ὀργῆς) against the aggressor, by transferring the blame to another”.

²⁰⁹ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 11, PG 57, 254.

²¹⁰ Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum hom.* 16, 11, PG 57, 254.

Thus, anger is indicated and useful in three situations, when it is necessary to stand up for the injured person, when it is undertaken to fight against the attacking demons (in the form of internal voices encouraging wicked thoughts, sinful impulses, or submission to defects), and when efforts are made to correct the behavior of sinners.

8. Conclusions

It needs to be noticed in the conclusions that in his *Homilies on Matthew* John Chrysostom showed man's emotional reaction called anger with remarkable accuracy and mastery. In his homilies the preacher gave a multitude of examples to show the many aspects of anger, at the same time criticizing those of his listeners who behaved in an improper manner. This extraordinary knowledge of the problem was a result of a number of reasons. One of them was Chrysostom's knowledge of classical philosophy²¹¹, especially the philosophy of Aristotle (he drew abundantly from) and the stoic and epicurean systems, which he used in pointing out therapeutic remedies for anger. The second was the character of the preacher himself.

It follows from the analysis of what he said about anger that he did not try to show it in an original and systematic way but speaking about this subject he referred to the generally familiar content which he transferred but occasionally. That is why his statements on this subject are above all of moral character. As a moralist, he condemned anger and appealed to the faithful to suppress and control it since the effects may be serious, including a murder. Therefore, he pointed out methods (both behavioral and cognitive) to suppress one's own anger and to calm the anger of others. He also stressed that anger can be properly used to protect society from evil. Although he knew the teachings of the philosophers on this subject he

²¹¹ Little is known about Chrysostom's philosophical education. It is only known that he received such an education and his teacher was Andragathios; cf. Socrates, *Historia ecclesiastica* 6, 3, 1, GCS NF 1, p. 313. The scope of this education is still under discussion. A.-M. Malingrey (*Résonances stoïciennes dans l'oeuvre de Jean Chrysostome*, „Revue de Recherche Philosophique” 7 (1979) p. 116-121) suggests that it was quite good, P.-W. Lai (*John Chrysostom and the Hermeneutics of Exemplar Portraits*, Durham 2010, p. 47), G. Roskam (*Plutarch's Influence on John Chrysostom*, „Byzantion” 85 (2015) p. 341-363) and B. Leyerle (*The Narrative Shape of Emotion*, p. 22, n. 4), they suggest that it was superficial and did not result from the study of the works of ancient philosophers. Nevertheless, it is noticeable in the works of Chrysostom; cf. J.N.D. Kelly, *Golden Mouth. The Story of John Chrysostom: Ascetic, Preacher, Bishop*, Ithaca 1998, p. 7.

used primarily biblical arguments, not philosophical ones in persuading the faithful to fight it. For him, anger was primarily a reaction to certain situations that provoked it. This approach to the question of anger leads to the conclusion that most of the listeners of Chrysostom's homily did not belong to the intellectual elite. Chrysostom appeals not only to the emotions of angry people, but also to viewers of the angry confrontations of others clearly indicates that his homiletic teaching was aimed at a wider group of rather simple citizens²¹². His teaching on anger, especially indicating a need for constant self-improvement and control over any emotions, is a sign of courage and foresight as he places the Christian message of gentleness, forgiveness and love in the first place. The social program he proposed was deliberately very broad, because the preacher wanted to reform all his listeners, not just a few elites.

Anger in Homiletic Teaching of Saint John Chrysostom. The Analysis of *Homilies on Matthew*

(summary)

The article is a case study of Saint John Chrysostom's teaching on anger in his *Homilies on Matthew*. The author discusses only the wrath of a man, the question of God's anger as a different research problem was omitted. Saint John Chrysostom uses two Greek nouns while describing anger: ἡ ὀργή and ὁ θυμός, which are used as synonyms without distinguishing any semantic differences between them. The preacher does not give a definition of anger, but describes it as a passion (τὸ πάθος) and places it among other flaws – according to Plato's classification – to passion of the spiritual part of soul (*thymoeides*). He also describes anger as an illness, and by personalizing it, he says that anger is the devil. The preacher specifies many reasons for anger (jealousy, power, situation of a threat, tardiness, and devil's action). He also says about the fatal effects of anger, which above all destroys human relations, harms spirituality, and leads to more serious misdemeanors (i.e. perjury, enmity, insult, fist-cuff, and even murder). Because of that Chrysostom points out anger prohibition expressed by Christ and Saint Paul, as well as the necessity of combating anger, which is a crucial

²¹² Cf. Leyerle, *The Narrative Shape of Emotion*, p. 48. For an analysis of the diversity of Chrysostom's various congregations, see W. Mayer, *John Chrysostom: Extraordinary Preacher, Ordinary Audience*, in: *Preacher and Audience: Studies in Early Christian and Byzantine Homiletics*, ed. P. Allen – M. Cunningham, Leiden 1998, p. 105-137; W. Mayer, *Who Came to Hear John Chrysostom Preach?* EThL 76 (2000) p. 73-87; P. Szczur, *Problematyka społeczna w późnoantycznej Antiochii na podstawie nauczania homiletycznego Jana Chryzostoma*, Lublin 2008, p. 101-123; W. Mayer, *Audience(s) for Patristic Social Teaching: A Case Study*, in: *Reading Patristic Texts on Social Ethics: Issues and Challenges for Twenty-first Century Christian Social Thought*, ed. J. Leemans – B.J. Matz – J. Verstraeten, Washington 2011, p. 89-94.

element of the Christian self-improvement. These efforts give spiritual fruits in the form of peace of heart and absolution of sins. The final part of the article represents an issue of justified anger which is not prohibited but also advisable against sinners to improve their actions.

Keywords: John Chrysostom; Preaching; Emotions; Anger; Justified anger; Christian self-improvement

Gniew w nauczaniu homiletycznym św. Jana Chryzostoma. Analiza Homilii na Ewangelię według św. Mateusza

(streszczenie)

W artykule zajęto się opracowaniem nauczania Jana Chryzostoma na temat gniewu zawartego w jego *Homiliach na Ewangelię według św. Mateusza*. Omówiono jedynie gniew człowieka, całkowicie pomijając zagadnienie gniewu Boga, które stanowi zupełnie odrębny problem badawczy. Na określenie gniewu Chryzostom używa dwóch rzeczowników greckich: ἡ ὀργή i ὁ θυμός, które w zasadzie stosuje zamiennie jako synonimy, nie podkreślając żadnych szczególnych niuansów znaczeniowych wyraźnie odróżniających je od siebie. Chociaż kaznodzieja nie podaje definicji gniewu, to jednak określa go jako namiętność (τὸ πάθος) i umieszcza go wśród innych wad, tym samym zaliczając go – zgodnie z klasyfikacją Platona – do namiętności gniewliwej części duszy. Gniew określa też jako chorobę, a personifikując go, mówi, że gniew to diabeł. Kaznodzieja podaje wiele przyczyn gniewu (zazdrość, posiadana władza, sytuacje zagrożenia lub tematyka głoszonych kazań, a przede wszystkim ludzka opieszałość i działanie diabła). Mówi też o zgubnych skutkach gniewu, który przede wszystkim niszczy relacje międzyludzkie, ale też szkodzi duchowości człowieka i prowadzi go do poważniejszych wykroczeń (np. krzywoprzysięstwo, nieprzyjaźń, obelgi, rękoczyni, a nawet zabójstwo). Z tego też powodu Chryzostom zwraca uwagę na zakaz gniewu wyrażony przez Chrystusa i św. Pawła oraz konieczność walki z nim, co jest istotnym elementem doskonalenia chrześcijańskiego. Podjęcie tych wysiłków przynosi duchowe owoce w postaci pokoju serca i uzyskania odpuszczenia grzechów. W końcowej partii artykułu poruszone zostało zagadnienie słusznego gniewu, który jest nie tylko dozwolony, ale też wskazany wobec tych, którzy grzeszą, aby dzięki gniewnemu upomnieniu poprawili się.

Słowa kluczowe: Jan Chryzostom; kaznodziejstwo; emocje; gniew; słuszny gniew; doskonalenie chrześcijańskie

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