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The Catalogue of Virtues in the *Ecclesiastical History* of Sozomen of Bethelia

Hermias Sozomen, dedicating his *Ecclesiastical History* to Emperor Theodosius II, argued in the preface of his work that the true adornment of imperial dignity is piety. Addressing the emperor directly, he pointed out: “But you, most powerful Emperor, had gathered together all the virtues, and had excelled every one in piety (εὐσέβεια), philanthropy (φιλανθρωπία), courage (ἀνδρεία), prudence (σωφροσύνη), justice (δικαιοσύνη), munificence (φιλοτιμία), and a magnanimity (μεγαλοπνυχία) befitting royal dignity.” He thus created his own catalogue of virtues, and the order in which they are listed seems to reflect their hierarchy. Whether this was the case I will try to present in this research.

Writing about virtues, Sozomen did not refer to the cardinal virtues already known at the time and formulated by Christian theologians.

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2 Peter Van Nuffelen (*Un héritage de paix et de piété. Étude sur les histoires ecclésiastiques de Socrate et Sozomène*, Leuven 2004, p. 54) regards the said dedication as a masterful encomion.


4 The first of the Christian authors to use the concept of cardinal virtues (virtutes cardinales) was Ambrose of Milan (*De officiis ministrorum* 4, 15) including: prudentia, iustitia, temperantia i fortitudo. The virtues were also discussed by others, including Clement of Alexandria (*Pedagogus* II 4), who pointed out that the virtues proper to man are justice (δικαιοσύνη), reason (σωφροσύνη), fortitude (ἀνδρεία) and piety (εὐσέβεια). In his *Life of St. Anthony*, Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria also referred to the aforementioned virtues but in a different order: φρόνησις, δικαιοσύνη, σωφροσύνη, ἀνδρεία, and
This is all the more interesting because Socrates of Constantinople, on whose *Ecclesiastical History* Sozomen based his work, devoted considerable attention to them, although without using the term cardinal virtues. He included an extensive quotation from the work by Evagrius Ponticus entitled *The Gnostikos*\(^5\), where Evagrius wrote: “We have learned from Gregory the Just, that there are four virtues, having distinct characteristics: prudence and fortitude, temperance and justice” (φρόνησις καὶ ἀνδρεία, σωφροσύνη καὶ δικαιοσύνη)\(^6\). Evagrius explained that the property of prudence (φρόνησις) is to reflect on spiritual and holy powers based on the revelation of Divine Wisdom, and the expectation of fortitude (ἀνδρεία) is to persevere with the truth. Temperance (σωφροσύνη), on the other hand, is to persevere with the teachings of Christ (the First Farmer), while justice (δικαιοσύνη) commands adjusting one’s speech to the dignity of each interlocutor\(^7\).

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The virtues presented by Evagrius corresponded to those defined by Plato in the fourth chapter of his *Republic* (σοφία, ἀνδρεία, σωφροσύνη, δικαιοσύνη)⁸. Socrates of Constantinople does not mention this, but, as an educated person, he must have known about it. In fact, he considered pagan philosophy to be of great use to Christians. Sozomen, on the other hand, viewed classical philosophy as useless⁹, but listed Plato among the leading authors of antiquity alongside Homer, Symonides, and Theopompus, who all enjoyed the patronage of their contemporary rulers¹⁰. Plato’s teacher, Socrates of Athens, paid great attention to the virtues of justice (δικαιοσύνη), piety (εὐσέβεια), prudence-temperance (σωφροσύνη) and fortitude (ἀνδρεία). In doing so, he considered the first of these, justice, to be a more general category in relation to the other virtues, since, in his view, it encompassed all major moral behavior¹¹. According to Socrates of Athens, piety was closely related to justice¹². On the other hand, Plato’s student Aristotle of Stagira considered the following as individual virtues: justice (δικαιοσύνη), fortitude (ἀνδρεία), prudence-temperance (σωφροσύνη), dignity (μεγαλοπρέπεια), magnanimity (μεγαλοψυχία), generosity (ἔλευθεριότης), prudence (φρόνησις) and wisdom (σοφία)¹³. He believed that the first two listed, justice (δικαιοσύνη) and fortitude (ἀνδρεία), were the greatest because they were most useful to others. Justice fulfills such a role in times of war and in times of peace, and fortitude in times of war¹⁴.

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¹⁰ Sozomenus, *Historia ecclesiastica Dedicatio* 5.
¹¹ Cf. R. Legutko, *Sokrates*, Poznań 2013, p. 410-415. Gregory of Nyssa (*Orationes de beatitudinibus* 4, PG 44, 1244) thought similarly, according to whom „every virtue is indicated by the name of justice”.
1. The Catalogue of Virtues created by Sozomen

1.1. Εὐσέβεια

The meaning of this term is quite broad, from devotion, a sense of duty in secular affairs to devotion to God, piety. It was no accident that Sozomen listed piety first among all the virtues that Emperor Theodosius II was said to have embodied. It was the key to a proper relationship with God and guaranteed prosperity through His blessings, which suited the Roman mentality. In pagan Rome, *Pietas* (εὐσέβεια, εὐλαβεία) not only belonged to the core moral virtues and later became the cardinal virtue of emperors, but was also one of the most important ideas of the state. It was believed to be essential to both the prosperity of the state and the ruler himself.

According to Sozomen’s views expressed in *Ecclesiastical History*, with the example of Emperor Theodosius II, God himself “showed that to those who exercise imperial power, piety alone suffices for full success, and without it, the armies are nothing, and the power of the empire and all of its inventory are nothing”\(^{20}\). Sozomen was convinced that it was enough for an emperor to zealously worship God to retain power\(^{21}\), an example of which he also saw in the reign of Emperor Honorius, who fortuitously – as the historian argued – defeated all usurpers\(^{22}\). According to Sozomen, great

\(^{20}\) Sozomenus, *HE* IX 1, 2: ἃ μοι δοκεῖ μάλιστα τὸν θεὸν ἐπιδεῖξαι μόνην εὐσέβειαν ἀρκεῖν πρὸς σωτηρίαν τοῖς βασιλεύσαν, ἀνευ δὲ ταύτης μηδὲν εἶναι στρατεύματα καὶ βασιλείας ἰσχύν καὶ τὴν ἄλλην παρασκευήν.

\(^{21}\) Sozomenus, *HE* IX 16, 1: ὡς ἔχομεν εἰδέναι ἀρκεῖν βασιλεῖ τοῦ κράτους ἐπιμελῶς τὸ θεῖον πρεσβεύειν, ὡτιός καὶ οὐτος ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐγένετο.

\(^{22}\) Similarly, Augustine (Epistulae 185, 28) referred to Honorius as *religiosus imperator* in recognition of his merits against the Donatists.
piety and love for God (θεοφιλὲς)\textsuperscript{23} characterized Emperor Constantine, who without God (ἀνεύ θεοῦ) would not set about doing anything (οὐκ ἐπεχείρει)\textsuperscript{24}. This is best illustrated by a letter Constantine wrote at the end of his life to the Persian King Shapur II, paraphrased by Sozomen\textsuperscript{25}. In the letter, the ruler recapitulated his achievements, attributing them to Christ, the divine protector. Thus, he pointed out that thanks to his faith in Christ and His help, he united the Roman empire under his rule. Indeed, he was victorious in many wars against external enemies as well as usurpers. As Sozomen emphasized, he needed neither bloody sacrifices nor oracles for this. It was the sign of the cross, carried in front of the ranks of his own army, and prayer, free from blood and all filth, that brought him victory\textsuperscript{26}.

Elsewhere, Sozomen described God as a guide (ἡγεμών) and ally (σύμμαχος) of Constantine in the battle against the enemies\textsuperscript{27}. As Sozomen wrote, having recognized Constantine “as a suitable servant of his will, [God] led him from the sea flowing around Britain to the territories of the East, to fortify the Christian faith”\textsuperscript{28}. Thus, the ruler carried out God’s plan that was associated with him. The favor of the Christian God was secured by Constantine with appropriate prayer and reference to the sign of the cross, which he made into a military banner, while renouncing blood sacrifices and pagan oracles. Thus, the ruler created a new model of religiousness and piety, and his successes proved the validity of the applied measures.

Sozomen also drew attention to the piety of Constantine’s mother, Empress Helena, who in Jerusalem did not shy away from serving tables to

\textsuperscript{23} Sozomenus, HE II 3, 7.

\textsuperscript{24} Sozomenus, HE II 34, 4.


\textsuperscript{26} Sozomenus, HE II 15, 3-4. The indicated passage of Sozomen’s Ecclesiastical History was clearly based on the account of Eusebius of Caesarea, who quotes this letter, if not in its entirety, then at least significant portions of it (Vita Constantini IV 9-13). See also: Theodoretus, HE I 25.

\textsuperscript{27} Sozomenus, HE I 4, 2: μόνον δὲ τοῦτον ἤγεισθαι θεόν, ὁν καὶ βασιλεὺς σέβει καὶ ἤγεμόνι καὶ συμμάχῳ χρῆται κατὰ τῶν πολεμίων.

\textsuperscript{28} Sozomenus, HE I 8, 2: χάριν τε ὁμολογῶν, ὥσ κομπάζων λέγειν ἰσχυρίζετο, ὡς ἐπιτήδειον ὑπηρέτην ἀξίμικα αὐτὸν εἶναι ὁ θεὸς τῆς αὐτοῦ βουλῆσεως ἀπὸ τῆς πρὸς Βρεττανοὺς θαλάσσης μέχρι τῶν ἔφοι χωρίου προήγαγεν, ὅπως ἢ Χριστιανῶν αὐξηθεὶς θρησκεία.
maidens dedicated to divine service. She made votive offerings to churches, assisted the poor, and pardoned convicts\textsuperscript{29}. The historian even wrote about the piety shown by Julian the Apostate and his brother Gallus in their youth. It manifested as respect paid to priests and people of moral excellence and zeal for the faith, as well as frequent visits to the holy tabernacles (ἐὐκτηρίοις οἴκοις) and reverence shown to the tombs of martyrs\textsuperscript{30}.

According to Sozomen, God foresaw Theodosius II’s far-reaching piety (ἐυσεβέστατον)\textsuperscript{31}. Hence, when Theodosius was still a child, God assigned the future ruler’s elder sister Pulcheria – distinguished by her God-inspired wisdom – to be the protector of his person and governance\textsuperscript{32}. That wisdom helped her steer her brother on the path of piety. This virtue consisted primarily in fervent worship of God (πολλῷ τὸ θεῖον θρησκεύουσα)\textsuperscript{33} and constant prayer (συνεχῶς εὔχεσθαι)\textsuperscript{34}. It involved not only building new temples and endowing them with votive offerings and jewels, but also frequent visits to churches, erecting and maintaining asylums for the poor and pilgrims (καταγώγια πτωχῶν καὶ ξένων) and the monasteries (μοναστικὰς συνοικίας)\textsuperscript{35}. Finally, piety required respect for priests and other noble people, as well as for ascetics passionate about Christian wisdom\textsuperscript{36}.

1.2. Φιλανθρωπία

Another virtue attributed to Emperor Theodosius II was philanthropy (φιλανθρωπία), understood as love toward men, clemency and mercy shown to others\textsuperscript{37}. In the aforementioned preface to Ecclesiastical History, Sozomen distinguished between the outward signs of imperial power – the royal purple and crown, as well as the true imperial garb adorning

\textsuperscript{29} Sozomenus, \textit{HE} II 2.
\textsuperscript{30} Sozomenus, \textit{HE} V 2, 11.
\textsuperscript{31} Sozomenus, \textit{HE} IX 1, 2.
\textsuperscript{32} Sozomenus, \textit{HE} IX 1, 3: σοφώτατον καὶ θεῖον ἔλαβεν νοῦν.
\textsuperscript{33} Sozomenus, \textit{HE} IX 1, 10.
\textsuperscript{34} Sozomenus, \textit{HE} IX 1, 8.
\textsuperscript{35} Sozomenus, \textit{HE} IX 1, 10.
\textsuperscript{36} Cf. Sozomenus, \textit{HE} IX 1, 8-9: οὐχ ἥκιστα δὲ εἰς εὐσέβειαν αὐτὸν ἦγε, συνεχῶς εὔχεσθαι καὶ ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις φοιτᾶν ἑθίζουσα καὶ ἀναθήμασι καὶ καίμιλοις τοὺς εὐκτηρίους οἴκους γεραίρειν καὶ ἐν τιμῇ ἔχειν τοὺς ιερέας καὶ ἄλλους ἀγαθοὺς ἄνδρας καὶ τοὺς νόμῳ Χριστιανῶν φιλοσοφοῦντας. Elsewhere, Sozomen (\textit{HE} IX 3, 2) indicates that Pulcheria, along with her sisters, adored God day and night.
\textsuperscript{37} \textit{A Patristic Greek Lexicon}, s.v. φιλανθρωπία, p. 1475-1476.
the interior of the ruler (ἐνδοθεν ἀει τὸν ἀληθῆ κόσμον τῆς βασιλείας ἰμφείσσει), which consisted of piety and philanthropy. Once again, the historian lists philanthropy immediately after piety. In this case, however, he treats it almost on a par with piety. In his Ecclesiastical History, Sozomen referred to this virtue several times, aligning it with mercy modeled after God’s mercy. It is illustrated in his account of the proceedings of the Council of Nicaea (325), when the emperor reportedly set God’s mercy as a model for the assembled people to follow in forgiving each other’s offenses\(^\text{38}\), or when he wrote about the Novatians’ rejection of repentance and God’s mercy on men (θεοῦ φιλανθρωπίαν)\(^\text{39}\). However, most often, he mentioned philanthropy in the sense of a clement or affable attitude toward others\(^\text{40}\), as well as in reference to love for people\(^\text{41}\), and charitable work\(^\text{42}\).

### 1.3. Ἀνδρεία

The third place among the virtues attributed to Theodosius by Sozomen was taken by ἀνδρεία, translated as courage\(^\text{43}\). According to the historian, courage meant giving one’s life for faith in Christ\(^\text{44}\). Sozomen called courage the refusal of soldiers to offer sacrifice to the gods at the behest of Emperor Julian\(^\text{45}\), or Apollo writing the treatise “In Defense of Truth”, directed against Emperor Julian and pagan philosophers\(^\text{46}\). Interestingly, out of ten examples of courage mentioned by him, the historian ascribed this virtue to as many as six women: a certain virgin consecrated to God\(^\text{47}\); an unnamed resident of Edessa\(^\text{48}\); a certain Nikareta from Bithynia\(^\text{49}\); a deaconess of Olympias\(^\text{50}\).

\(^{38}\) Sozomenus, *HE* I 17, 4.

\(^{39}\) Sozomenus, *HE* VIII 1, 14.

\(^{40}\) Sozomenus, *HE* II 15, 2; II 27, 13; V 4, 7; V 9, 15; V 16, 6; V 16, 9; VII 23, 3; IX 5, 4.

\(^{41}\) Sozomenus, *HE* III 14, 16.

\(^{42}\) Sozomenus, *HE* V 16, 2.

\(^{43}\) *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, s.v. ἀνδρεία, p. 129-130.

\(^{44}\) Sozomenus, *HE* II 9, 13; V 4, 6.

\(^{45}\) Sozomenus, *HE* V 17, 7-9.

\(^{46}\) Sozomenus, *HE* V 18, 8.

\(^{47}\) Sozomenus, *HE* V 6, 5.

\(^{48}\) Sozomenus, *HE* VI 18, 7.

\(^{49}\) Sozomenus, *HE* VIII 23, 5.

\(^{50}\) Sozomenus, *HE* VIII 24, 4.
one of the residents of Rome besieged by Alaric\textsuperscript{51}; and Nunechia, the wife of Gerontius, the best of the commanders of the usurper Constantine, who acted against Emperor Honorius\textsuperscript{52}.

The first, distinguished by her beauty, gave refuge to the persecuted Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria\textsuperscript{53}. The second, aware of the danger, hurried with her child to where Orthodox Christians gathered to bear witness to the true faith\textsuperscript{54}. Nikareta and Olympias, on the other hand, were supporters of the dethroned bishop of Constantinople, John Chrysostom. According to Sozomen, Nikareta had been unjustly deprived of her wealth, yet she rose to the heights of moral strength, dignity and all other values, generously serving those in need\textsuperscript{55}. The affluent Olimpias brought before the prefect’s court showed courage and dignity\textsuperscript{56}. The aforementioned Roman woman was ready to die in defense of her honor\textsuperscript{57}. Nunechia, on the other hand, being a Christian, showed courage, as Sozomen emphasized, worthy of her faith, accepting death at the hands of her husband, in a house surrounded by enemies\textsuperscript{58}. It seems that all the examples of courage given by Sozomen were related to faith in Christ and were linked to enduring suffering for Christ. The case of Nunechia appears the least obvious here, but the historian stressed that she was Christian, and the bravery she demonstrated was worthy of her faith.

1.4. Σωφροσύνη

In the fourth place of this catalogue of virtues, Sozomen listed σωφροσύνη, translated as soundness of mind, prudence, discretion, moderation, temperance, modesty or a moderate form of government\textsuperscript{59}. The term is difficult to translate into modern languages. For the Greeks, σωφροσύνη was the realization of the fullness of humanity. It implied a good discern-

\textsuperscript{51} Sozomenus, \textit{HE} IX 10, 1.
\textsuperscript{52} Sozomenus, \textit{HE} IX 13, 7.
\textsuperscript{53} Sozomenus, \textit{HE} V 6, 5.
\textsuperscript{54} Sozomenus, \textit{HE} VI 18, 7.
\textsuperscript{55} Sozomenus, \textit{HE} VIII 23, 5.
\textsuperscript{56} Sozomenus, \textit{HE} VIII 24, 4.
\textsuperscript{57} Sozomenus, \textit{HE} IX 10, 1.
\textsuperscript{58} Sozomenus, \textit{HE} IX 13, 7.
ment of the essence of man, which involved the realization of high moral criteria. It also meant discipline and self-restraint. It indicated the harmony and integration of man and his mastery over himself. For Socrates of Athens, σωφροσύνη was knowledge of the self and, simultaneously, knowledge of good and evil 60.

In his Ecclesiastical History, Sozomen used the term several times, most often when describing male-female relationships, as was the case with the speech of Paphnutius, one of the Egyptian bishops, at the Council of Nicea (325) in defense of the marriage of priests who had entered into it before ordination. Paphnutius referred to their communing with their wives as σωφροσύνη 61, and thus considered it the same as the virtue of moderation. In Sozomen’s account, Eustathius, Bishop of Sebaste, was said to have delivered a speech on the subject of moderation (περὶ σωφροσύνης λόγους), by means of which he wanted to convince a couple who had previously vowed virginity to renounce intercourse 62. The aforementioned virgin consecrated to God, who gave refuge to Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, was distinguished not only by her beauty, but also by her modesty (σωφροσύνη) 63. Modesty also supposedly characterized the Egyptian ascetic Apelles. Put to the test by a demon manifesting itself in the form of a beautiful woman, Apelles burned its face with a kindling iron 64. Twice Sozomen mentioned σωφροσύνη in the case of the aforementioned Roman woman who defended her honor during the siege of Rome by Alaric’s troops. The historian first announced he would describe an event illustrating the bravery of this woman in upholding her modesty 65. Then he emphasized the barbarian’s admiration for her virtue in the face of the utter failure of his efforts to take the woman with measures that included threats to her life 66. It seems that the σωφροσύνη attributed by Sozomen to Emperor Theodosius II also applies to his sexual moderation, since in the dedication of his work addressed to Theodosius, the historian contrasted him with the biblical Solomon, pointing out that the latter had become a slave to pleasure and had not preserved his piety 67. The historian also employed it to the emperor’s

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60 See: Legutko, Sokrates, p. 420-427.
61 Sozomenus, HE I 23, 3.
62 Sozomenus, HE III 14, 37.
63 Sozomenus, HE V 6, 2.
64 Sozomenus, HE VI 28, 7.
65 Sozomenus, HE XI 10, 1.
66 Sozomenus, HE XI 10, 4.
67 Sozomenus, HE Dedicatio 10.
general attitude in life, remarking that the latter put temperate reason above
the easiness of entertainment\textsuperscript{68}, and that his nature was to control himself
(φύσιν ἐχειν νομίζῃ τὴν ἐγκράτειαν)\textsuperscript{69}. However, it seems that Sozomen
used σωφροσύνη primarily in reference to the emperor’s moderation in the
way he exercised power.

1.5. Δικαιοσύνη

In the fifth place of the aforementioned catalogue, the historian ranked
δικαιοσύνη, translated as justice or righteousness\textsuperscript{70}. In the entire Ecclesi-
astical History, Sozomen referred to this virtue only three times. The first
time, when he attributed it to Theodosius II; the second time, when he
wrote about the virtues of those who were devoted to a monastic lifestyle
(μοναστικὴν πολιτείαν) and their curbing of iniquity with the virtue of righ-
teousness (δικαιοσύνη δὲ τὴν ἀδικίαν κολάζει)\textsuperscript{71}; and the third time when
mentioning the death of Valentinian II. According to Sozomen, the latter’s
beauty and qualities of character made him unconditionally deserving of
the dignity of emperor, and his justice (δικαιοσύνη) was superior to his
father’s Valentinian I\textsuperscript{72}. It is puzzling why the historian placed the virtue of
justice only in the fifth place, after all, δικαιοσύνη was extremely important
to the ancient Greeks. They considered it the basic moral principle organizing
the world, society and human life\textsuperscript{73}. Justice was also the most important
virtue for Evagrius of Pontus and Gregory of Nyssa\textsuperscript{74}. Sozomen pointed out
that Theodosius II spent his day mainly handling the affairs of his subjects
either settling disputes in court and issuing appropriate laws, or reflecting
alone or in public what moves should be made\textsuperscript{75}. He thus dealt with justice
in practical terms. He also served it to his subjects by organizing literary

\textsuperscript{68} Sozomenus, \textit{HE Dedicatio} 11.
\textsuperscript{69} Sozomenus, \textit{HE Dedicatio} 12.
\textsuperscript{70} \textit{A Patristic Greek Lexicon}, s.v. δικαιοσύνη, p. 369.
\textsuperscript{71} Sozomenus, \textit{HE I} 12, 7.
\textsuperscript{72} Sozomenus, \textit{HE VII} 22, 3.
\textsuperscript{73} See: Legutko, \textit{Sokrates}, p. 410.
\textsuperscript{74} See: Evagrius Ponticus, \textit{Practicus} 89, 4; Gregorius Nyssenus, \textit{Orationes de
beatitudinibus} 4, PG 44, 1232-1248; E.D. Moutsoulas, \textit{Le Sens de la justice dans la qua-
trième Homélie sur les Béatitudes de Grégoire de Nyssa}, in: Gregory of Nyssa, \textit{Homilies
\textsuperscript{75} Sozomenus, \textit{HE Dedicatio} 8: καὶ τὰ τῶν ἀρχιμένων διατάττειν πράγματα,
δικάζοντα τε καὶ ἅ χρὴ γράφοντα, ιδίᾳ τε καὶ κοινῇ τὰ πρακτέα διασκοποῦντα.
competitions where he was the judge (λόγων κριτής) offering pure and clear (εἰλικρινῶς βραβεύεις) judgments.

1.6. Φιλοτιμία

Φιλοτιμία, understood as munificence, appeared in sixth place on the list by Sozomen. The historian referred to it several times in his Ecclesiastical History. He pointed out that the Cretans boasted of their generosity by rewarding Homer with the sum of a thousand coins and immortalizing this fact on a stone tablet. Emperor Severus stunned with his generosity by paying Oppian a piece of gold “for each line of mediocre poetry.” However, in Sozomen’s view, Emperor Theodosius II was not surpassed in generously rewarding literati in history to date. The historian also wrote about the imperial generosity with which Theodosius II reportedly rewarded a soldier for his concern when, during a heatwave, the warrior tried to offer him a goblet of cold drink. In the historian’s account, Constantine generously decorated and furnished Constantinople, which he founded, while its inhabitants showed their generosity to the poor. Similarly, the Iberians were said to have shown generosity in building a Christian temple, whereas the Caesars Galus and Julian outdid each other with largesse in erecting a temple at the tomb of the martyr Mamas.

Emperor Julian, according to Sozomen, honored Apollo generously with votive offerings and animal sacrifices when he arrived at the deity’s oracle in Daphne. The sisters of Emperor Theodosius II supposedly competed in generosity for the benefit of pilgrims and the poor who needed support.

Thus, Sozomen was referring to φιλοτιμία when he wanted to emphasize the generosity shown by rulers to their subjects, especially pilgrims and the poor.
poor, but also generosity toward the Church or traditional cults. In the dedication, he directly implied that Theodosius II emulated the heavenly King, who would send reviving rain on the righteous as well as the unrighteous, and gladden them with the sunrise and grant them countless other gifts.\textsuperscript{88}

1.7. Μεγαλοψυχία

Last among the virtues attributed to Theodosius II by Sozomen was μεγαλοψυχία, translated as greatness of soul, magnanimity, high-mindedness, lordliness, or generosity.\textsuperscript{89} For Aristotle, μεγαλοψυχία was an individual virtue that makes a person capable of great benevolence.\textsuperscript{90} Aside from Theodosius II, in his \textit{Ecclesiastical History}, Sozomen applied the term only once in reference to Valentinian II, emphasizing that the latter surpassed his father Valentinian I in this virtue.\textsuperscript{91} From the context of Sozomen’s account, it appears that μεγαλοψυχία was among the character traits of a true ruler, testifying to his eminence predestining him to the dignity of emperor. Thus, it seems perfectly understandable that the historian placed it last among the virtues adorning Theodosius II.

1.8. Φρόνησις i Σοφία

Sozomen did not include φρόνησις in his catalogue of virtues attributed to Theodosius II. On the other hand, the aforementioned Gregory the Just – cited by Evagrius Ponticus – listed it as first among the four cardinal virtues. Φρόνησις meant intellect, understanding, wisdom, or prudence.\textsuperscript{92} Throughout his work, Sozomen referred to this virtue only once, commenting on the previously mentioned virgin who gave shelter to Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria. The historian noted that she took the clergyman in thanks to her bravery, and saved him thanks to φρόνησις.\textsuperscript{93} Interestingly, although Sozomen did not include either φρόνησις or σοφία in his compila-

\textsuperscript{88} Sozomenus, \textit{HE Dedicatio} 9.
\textsuperscript{90} Aristoteles, \textit{Retorica} 1366b.
\textsuperscript{91} Sozomenus, \textit{HE VII} 22, 3.
\textsuperscript{92} \textit{A Patristic Greek Lexicon}, s.v. φρόνησις, p. 1490-1491.
\textsuperscript{93} Sozomenus, \textit{HE V} 6, 5.
tion of virtues, he did write about the extraordinary wisdom of Theodosius II. The historian pointed out that Theodosius’ day was filled with various state duties, while at night the ruler avidly immersed himself in books. He remarked on the learnedness (πολυμάθεια) of Theodosius, who was said to have explored the nature of stones, the hidden powers of roots, and even the effects of medicines on par with Solomon, who was famous for his wisdom. Sozomen emphasized that the source of this wisdom, as well as Solomon’s wealth, was their piety. A little further on, in the final part of the dedicatory speech addressed to the ruler, the historian equated piety with wisdom. Complimenting Theodosius II, he indicated that the latter not only “knows all” (ὁ πάντα εἰδὼς), but also possesses “all virtue” (πᾶσαν ἀρετὴν ἔχων), of which first and foremost was piety (εὐσέβεια), called in the Bible the beginning of wisdom (σοφία).

2. The best philosophy

This identification of piety with wisdom can be seen particularly clearly in Sozomen’s writing when he introduced his readers to monastic ideas. For the historian, these Christian ascetics were the true philosophers, that is, those who loved true wisdom. The historian pointed to the birth of a new philosophy, which he called ecclesiastical philosophy (τῆς ἐκκλησιαστικῆς φιλοσοφίας) – a philosophy that conforms to the laws of the Church and which he considered the best philosophy (τῆς ἀρίστης φιλοσοφίας). The historian identified it with monastic ideals, stressing that it had become a way of life for many (τοῦ βίου τὴν διαγωγὴν). He saw it as a gift sent to the people by God. Considering disputes as completely useless, this philosophy did not develop debating skills. Its goal was striving for moral goodness (κάλως), and a simple and righteous life, free from perversi-

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94 Sozomenus, HE Dedicatio 11.
95 Ps 110,10. Sozomenus, HE Dedicatio 18.
96 Sozomenus, HE IV 16, 11.
97 Sozomenus, HE VI 18, 2 – Gregory of Nazianzus and Basil of Caesarea had φιλοσοφεῖν ἐγνωσαν κατὰ τὸν τῆς ἐκκλησιασίας νόμον.
98 Sozomenus, HE I 12, 9.
99 Sozomenus, HE I 13, 1; IV 10, 12: ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ ὁ βίος αὕτως ἦν.
100 Sozomenus, HE I 12, 1.
101 Sozomenus, HE I 12, 2.
102 Sozomenus, HE I 12, 2: πρὸς τὸ βιοῦν ὀρθῶς.
ty. It taught people to put virtue into practice, to face weakness of spirit and body, to renounce all passions, to exercise moderation in everything, and to give up material things. It commanded to care for those in need. At the same time, it was completely God-oriented. It encouraged one to live close to Him, to worship Him day and night. The task of Christian wisdom was to propitiate the Creator of all things with constant prayers. It taught that purity of spirit and the performance of good deeds were necessary for a worthy profession of faith. Its primary goal was to share in the joy of heaven, and it made mortal life a means to that end.

There are a number of virtues in this description. Practitioners of this philosophy breathed piety or godliness \(\varepsilonυλάβεια\) constantly. Piety was thus the essence of the monks’ lives, since their entire existence was oriented toward God. Similarly, \(\sigmaφία\) was of the utmost importance to them, considering their love of wisdom \(\phiιλοσοφία\), based on the power of the mind deriving its strength from God \(\thetaείου\ \dε\ \nuοί\ \dύναμιν\ \kεκτημένη\). Their wisdom, therefore, did not come from them, but was a gift from God – to whom they were completely devoted – and thus resulted from their piety. Referring to the severe asceticism they practiced, Sozomen attributed them with the virtue of fortitude \(\ανδρεία\). It allowed them to face weakness of spirit, impotence of body or pressures from nature. Among the virtues imputed to them, Sozomen also included \(\sigmaωφροσύνη\), which enabled them to overcome intemperance, directly followed by \(\dικαίοσύνη\), by means of which they curbed iniquity. In Sozomen’s text on the aforementioned philosophy, one can also find the virtues \(\phiιλανθρωπία\) and \(\phiιλοτιμία\), not mentioned by name. The historian argues that the monks based the entire organization of their lives on harmony and unity with their neighbors, caring for friends and new-

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103 Sozomenus, \textit{HE} I 12, 3: \ανδρείως \dε\ \μάλα \ανθισταμένη \τοίς πάθεσι \τῆς ψυχῆς. Cf. also: Sozomenus, \textit{HE} I 12, 7-8.
104 Sozomenus, \textit{HE} I 12, 6: \ώς \ε\ ν παρόδῳ \dε\ \τῇ \παρούσῃ \ βιοτῇ \kεκρημένη \ουτε \περί \κτησιν \πραγμάτων \ασχολουμένη \διό\ ούτε \πέρα \τῆς \κατεπειγούσης \χρείας \τῶν \παρόντων \προνοεῖ, \ά\ \dε\ \τὸ \lίττον \και \ευξό\νον \τῆς \έντασθα \κατασκευὴς \έπαινο\ς \kαραδοκεῖ \τὴν \έκειθεν \mακαριότητα \και \sυν\τέ\τα\τα \ά\ \pρός \τὴν \eυδαίμονα \lή\ξε\ν.
105 Sozomenus, \textit{HE} I 12, 7: \άναπnέ\ου\ς \dε\ \dιά \pαnττό\ς \τήν \e\ τὸ \θεῖο\n \eυλάβε\ι\a\n.
106 Sozomenus, \textit{HE} I 12, 3.
107 Sozomenus, \textit{HE} I 12, 3: \άν\dε\ρείως \dε\ \μάλα \ανθιστάμε\νη \τοίς \pά\θε\σι \τῆς \ψυχῆς \ουτε \ταίς \άνγκα\κα\ς \τῆς \φύ\σε\ος \υπε\ικεί \ου\τε \ταίς \το\ῦ \sώ\μα\τος \υπο\κατάλ\ί\νε\ται \ά\sθε\nε\ν\ί\a\ς.
108 Sozomenus, \textit{HE} I 12, 7: \σωφροσύ\nη \mε\ν \τῆς \άκολο\s\a\i\a\ς \κρατε\ί.
109 Sozomenus, \textit{HE} I 12, 7: \dικαίο\ς\nη \dε\ \τὴν \ά\dικ\i\a\ι\a\n \kολά\ξε\i.
comers\textsuperscript{110}. They were thus guided by the love of neighbor, that is, they practiced philanthropy. Sozomen further asserted that they gave away all their possessions for the common use of the poor\textsuperscript{111}, and thus the virtue of generosity was close to them. Only μεγαλοψυχία, virtue referring to the eminence of the ruler, is missing from the catalogue of virtues attributed to Emperor Theodosius, which is perfectly understandable in the case of monks.

3. Conclusion

On the one hand, in his \textit{Ecclesiastical History}, Sozomen presented the qualities of the ruler he held in high esteem – Theodosius II; on the other, he listed characteristics of the ascetics he admired, the new sages, living – in his view – according to the principles of the best philosophy. Interestingly, in this presentation, he applied an almost identical set of virtues that he attributed to both rulers and monks. In both cases he equated piety with wisdom and made them the most important, leading virtues. They were the ones that conditioned the subsequent qualities. Thus, in Sozomen’s account, one can trace the theory of the unity of virtues characteristic of Socrates of Athens. It claimed that one cannot possess a particle of virtue without possessing the whole, nor can one possess one specific virtue without possessing all of them\textsuperscript{112}.

It seems that the order of virtues used by Sozomen in the catalogue of virtues ascribed to Theodosius II is not accidental, and reflects their hierarchy: εὐσέβεια-σοφία φιλανθρωπία, ἀνδρεία, σωφροσύνη, δικαιοσύνη, φιλοτιμία, and μεγαλοψυχία. This hierarchy stems from the Christian values adopted by Sozomen. Thus, in the first place was piety identified with wisdom – the central virtues determining a person’s character and the other virtues. Piety was the key to a proper relationship with God. In the second place was philanthropy – that is, love for people, or mercy, likened to God’s mercy. Sozomen treated philanthropy almost on par with piety, and therefore with wisdom. In the third place the historian lists fortitude, which was

\textsuperscript{110} Sozomenus, \textit{HE} I 12, 8: ἐν ὁμονοίᾳ τε καὶ κοινωνίᾳ τῇ πρὸς τοὺς πέλας τὴν πολιτείαν καθίστησι προνοητικὴ φίλων καὶ ξένων.

\textsuperscript{111} Sozomenus, \textit{HE} I 12, 8.

synonymous with enduring suffering for Christ, and in the fourth place was the virtue of temperance and self-control. It becomes obvious that the enumerated virtues – more than other ones – correspond to the Christian spirit. The last three places were taken by justice, generosity and dignity, which in Sozomen’s interpretation, were related more to temporal life.

Translated: Katarzyna Szuster-Tardi

The Catalogue of Virtues in the Ecclesiastical History of Sozomen of Bethelia

(summary)

On the one hand, in his Ecclesiastical History, Sozomen presented the qualities of the ruler he held in high esteem – Theodosius II; on the other, he listed characteristics of the ascetics he admired, the new sages, living – in his view – according to the principles of the best philosophy. Interestingly, in this presentation, he applied an almost identical set of virtues that he attributed to both rulers and monks. In both cases he equated piety with wisdom and made them the most important, leading virtues. They were the ones that conditioned the subsequent qualities. Thus, in Sozomen’s account, one can trace the theory of the unity of virtues characteristic of Socrates of Athens. It claimed that one cannot possess a particle of virtue without possessing the whole, nor can one possess one specific virtue without possessing all of them. It seems that the order of virtues used by Sozomen in the catalogue of virtues ascribed to Theodosius II is not accidental, and reflects their hierarchy: εὐσέβεια-σοφία φιλανθρωπία, ἀνδρεία, σωφροσύνη, δικαιοσύνη, φιλοτιμία, and μεγαλοψυχία. This hierarchy stems from the Christian values adopted by Sozomen.

Keywords: Sozomen; Ecclesiastical History; Cardinal Virtues

Katalog cnót w Historii kościelnej Sozomena z Bethelii

(streszczenie)

W swojej Historii kościelnej Sozomen przedstawił przymioty, z jednej strony władcy, którego obdarzał wielką estymą, a więc Teodozjusza II, a z drugiej podziwianych przez siebie ascetów, nowych mężczyzn, żyjących w jego przekonaniu według zasad najlepszej filozofii. Interesujące, że użył do tego niemal identyczny zestaw cnót, który przypisywał i władcy, i mnichom. W obydwu przypadkach pobożność utożsamiał z mądrością i czynił z nich najważniejsze, wiodące cnoty. To one warunkowały kolejne przymioty. Można zatem w przekazie Sozomena doszukiwać się teorii jedności cnót charakterystycznej już dla Sokratesa z Aten, wedle którego nie można posiadać cząstki jakiejś cnoty, nie posiadając jej całości, ani posiadać jednej konkretnej cnoty, nie posiadając wszystkich. Wydaje się, że zastosowana przez Sozomena kolejność cnót w katalogu zalet przypisa-
nych Teodozjuszowi II nie jest przypadkowa, a oddaje ich hierarchię: εὐσέβεια-σοφία φιλανθρωπία, ἀνδρεία, σοφροσύνη, δικαιοσύνη, φιλοτιμία, μεγαλοψυχία. Hierarchia ta wynika z chrześcijańskich wartości przyjętych przez Sozomena.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Sozomen; *Historia kościelna*; cnoty kardynalne

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