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## DOES THE *GREAT CANON OF ANDREW OF CRETE* SPEAK ABOUT THE HERESIES AND THEIR COMBATING?

### Brief Remarks

If the literature dedicated to Saint Andrew of Crete (ca. 660-740) was concerned at the beginning of the twentieth century with the investigation of the biographical aspect of the Byzantine Hymnographer<sup>1</sup>, the literature of the last decades has been concerned with the recovery of various hymnographic<sup>2</sup> and homiletic<sup>3</sup> productions, alongside with analysis from theological (-spiritual)

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<sup>1</sup> See the *Vita* of Andrew written by the Patrikios and Quaestor Niketas and published in 1898 by Ἀ. Παπαδοπούλου-Κεραμέως: Βίος τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἀνδρέου τοῦ Ἱεροσολυμίτου, ἀρχιεπισκόπου γενομένου Κρήτης συγγραφεὶς παρὰ τοῦ περιφήμου πατρικίου καὶ κυέστορος, “Ανάλεκτα Ἱεροσολυμίτικῆς Σταχυολογίας” 5 (1898) 169-179; second edition: Νικήτα τοῦ πανευφήμου πατρικίου καὶ κυέστορος, Βίος τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἀνδρέου τοῦ Ἱεροσολυμίτου, ἀρχιεπισκόπου γενομένου Κρήτης, in: Ὁ Ἅγιος Ἀνδρέας ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Κρήτης ὁ Ἱεροσολυμίτης, πολιοῦχος Ἑρεσοῦ Λέσβου, Πρακτικά Ἐπιστημονικοῦ Συνεδρίου (1η-4η Ἰουλίου 2003), ed. Π.Ι. Σκαλτσῆ, Μυτιλήνη – Λέσβος 2005, 365-402; and the studies of S. Vaillhé, *Saint André de Crète*, EO 5 (1901-1902) 378-387; C. Émèreau, *Hymnographi Byzantini quorum nomina in litteras digessit notulisque adornavit*, EO 21 (1922) 127-128 and 258-279 (*Andreas Cretensis*, ibidem, p. 267-271); A. Vinogradov, *Viața Sfântului Andrei Criteanul, Arhiepiscopul și Mitropolit al Cretei (Schiță aghiografică)*, “Luminătorul” 72 (1932) 114-120 (part 1), 147-153 (part 2).

<sup>2</sup> See, as example: G. Schiró, *Caratteristiche dei canoni di Andrea Cretese. Studio su alcune composizioni inedite del Melode*, “Κρητικά Χρονικά” 15-16 (1961-1962) 113-139; S.G. Mercati, *Nota a due passi del canone di Sant’Andrea per San Giorgio*, “Byzantion” 32 (1962) 311-312; M.A. Magri, *L’inedito Canon de Requie di Andrea Cretese*, “Helikon” 9-10 (1969-1970) 475-513; E. Follieri, *Un canone inedito di S. Andrea di Creta per l’Annunciazione (Vat. gr. 2000 e Crypt. Δ. α. VII)*, in: *Collectanea Vaticana in honorem Anselmi M. Card. Albareda*, Studi e Testi 219, Città del Vaticano 1962, 337-357; Ἀ. Δελεόγλου – Ἀ. Ζερβουδάκη, Δύο ἄγνωστοι κανόνες στὸν ἅγιο Θεόδωρο τὸν Τήρωνα (πιθανῶς ἔργα τοῦ ἁγίου Ἀνδρέου Κρήτης), “Παλίμψηστον” 16 (1996) 113-148.

<sup>3</sup> See, as example: M.B. Cunningham, *Andreas of Crete’s Homilies on Lazarus and Palm Sunday: a Critical Edition and Commentary*, Birmingham 1983; idem, *Andreas of Crete’s homilies on Lazarus and Palm Sunday: the Preacher and his Audience*, StPatr 31 (1997) 22-41; idem, *Andrew of Crete: A High-Style Preacher of the Eighth Century*, in: *Preacher and His Audience: Studies in Early Christian and Byzantine Homiletics*, ed. M.B. Cunningham – P. Allen, Leiden – Boston – Köln 1998, 267-293; *Andrew of Crete’s Homilia de exaltatione s. crucis (CPG 8199; BHG 434f)*. *Editio princeps*, ed. M. de Groot, HTR 100 (2007) 443-487; Χ.Γ. Αγγελίδη, Ἀνδρέας Κρήτης: Ὁμιλίες

point of view of the *Great Canon*<sup>4</sup>. However, studies that reflect the situation of the polemical intentions of the *Great Canon*, fundamental work of the Cretan author<sup>5</sup>, still remained unwritten. Where should such a study start from? We believe that from the Βίος itself of the Cretan author, given by the fact that in 712, under the usurper Emperor Philippicus Bardanes (711-713), Andrew of Crete will sign the acts of the Monothelism Council. The *Chronographia* of Theophanes the Confessor is the only official source which is reminiscent of the signature of the official act by Andrew<sup>6</sup>; the remaining of the official sources in relation with the life of Cretan author's passing off this event in the shadow<sup>7</sup>. The following interrogation is brought fourth: is it possible that the *Great Canon* reflects those polemical intentions of Andrew's period and strikes on various heresies, even on Monothelism, which has been approved by the Byzantine Hymnographer himself for a very short period? Is it possible

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εις Γενέθλιον τῆς Θεοτόκου. Μία ἀνάγνωσις, in: Ἐνθύμησις Νικολάου Μ. Παναγιωτάκη, ed. Σ. Κακλαμάνης – Ἄ. Μαρκόπουλος – Γ. Μαυρομάτης, Ἡράκλειο 2000, 1-11.

<sup>4</sup> See, as example: O. Clément, *Le chant des larmes. Essai sur le repentir. Suivi de la traduction du poème sur le repentir par saint André de Crète*, Paris 1982; Ἰ.Μ. Φουντούλη, Λογική λατρεία, Θεσσαλονίκη 1984, 54-58; Θησαυρὸς Μετανοίας. Κατανυκτικὴ ἐρμηνεύα τροπαρίων τοῦ Μεγάλου Κανόνος τοῦ ἁγίου Ἀνδρέου Κρήτης ἀπὸ τὸν ἀρχιεπισκόπου Μύρων Ἰωάννη τὸν Λίνδιο († 1796), Ὁρωπὸς Ἀττικῆς 2003<sup>2</sup>; Σ. Κούτσα, Ἀδαμιαῖος Θρήνος. Ὁ Μέγας Κανὼν Ἀνδρέου Κρήτης, Εἰσαγωγή – κείμενο – μετάφρασις – σχόλια, Αθήνα 2009<sup>4</sup>; D. Krueger, *The Great Canon of Andrew of Crete, the Penitential Bible, and the Liturgical Formation of the Self in the Byzantine Dark Age*, in: *Between Personal and Institutional Religion. Self, Doctrine, and Practice in Late Antique Eastern Christianity*, ed. B. Bitton-Ashkelony – L. Perrone, Turnhout 2013, 57-97; A. Prelipcean, *From Adam to Moses: the Typology of the Old Testament characters from the Kontakia of Romanos the Melodist and its Assessment on the Great Canon of Andrew of Crete*, "Review of Ecumenical Studies" 7 (2015) 388-421.

<sup>5</sup> For the text of the *Great Canon*, I used – in the absence of any critical editions – the official text included in PG 97, 1329D - 1386C.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Theophanes, *Chronographia*, PG 108, 736C. 773B - 776A.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Παπαδοπούλου-Κεραμέως, Βίος τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἀνδρέου, p. 169-179 [second edition Σκαλτσῆ, Νικητὰ τοῦ πανευφήμου πατρικίου καὶ κνέστορος, p. 365-402]; Β. Λαοῦρδα, Βίος τοῦ ἁγίου Ἀνδρέου ἀρχιεπισκόπου Κρήτης, τοῦ Ἱεροσολυμίτου, "Κρητικά Χρονικά" 7 (1953) 66-74 [second edition Α. Αργυρίου, Μακαρίου τοῦ Μακρῆ Συγγράμματα, Κέντρον Βυζαντινῶν Ἐρευνῶν, Θεσσαλονίκη 1996, 131-139 (republished by Ἄ. Αργυρίου: Μακαρίου τοῦ Μακρῆ, Βίος καὶ πολιτεία τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἀνδρέου ἀρχιεπισκόπου Κρήτης, τοῦ Ἱεροσολυμίτου, in: Ὁ Ἅγιος Ἀνδρέας, p. 437-453); [Anonymus], Βίος καὶ πολιτεία τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἀνδρέου ἀρχιεπισκόπου Κρήτης, τοῦ Ἱεροσολυμίτου, in: *Menologii Anonymi Byzantini. Saeculi X Quae Supersunt*, ed. V.V. Latyšev, Subsidia Byzantina XII, vol. 2, Leipzig 1970<sup>2</sup>, 136-137 (republished by Ἰ.Μ. Φουντούλη, Συναξάρια ἁγίου Ἀνδρέου Κρήτης, in: Ὁ Ἅγιος Ἀνδρέας, p. 463-465); Θ.Ε. Δετοράκη, Ἀνέκδοτον ἐγκώμιον εἰς τὸν ὅσιον πατέρα ἡμῶν Ἀνδρέαν, "Ἐπετηρὶς Ἐταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν" 37 (1970) 85-94 (republished in: Ὁ Ἅγιος Ἀνδρέας, p. 403-415); Δ.Γ. Τσάμη, Λόγος εἰς τὸν ἐν ἁγίοις πατέρα ἡμῶν ἀρχιεπισκόπον Κρήτης, Ἀνδρέαν τὸν Ἱεροσολυμίτον, in: Ἰ. Καλοθέτου, Συγγράμματα, Κέντρον Βυζαντινῶν Ἐρευνῶν 1, Θεσσαλονίκη 1980, 435-451 (republished in: Ὁ Ἅγιος Ἀνδρέας, p. 417-436).

that Andrew of Crete be interested in his fundamental work to develop the Church's speech against heresies, which has been arisen over time inside of it, and present the *Great Canon* as a summary of the Church's fight against heresies and heresiarchs? There are some questions whose answer was not offered in the Byzantine literature dedicated to our Hymnographer. This very fact should not surprise us at all if we take into account the opinion of Father George Florovsky. According to his point of view, in the *Great Canon* the dogmatic themes are few<sup>8</sup>. The Florovsky's opinion could be supported today by other numerous ideas, which analyze the *Great Canon* (only) from a spiritual perspective<sup>9</sup> rather than the dogmatic intentions from a Byzantine period, where the heresies were beginning slowly *to turn off*.

**1. The heresies against to the Trinity doctrine.** In all stanzas (*troparia*) dedicated to the Holy Trinity (δοξαστικόν), the Byzantine Hymnographer develops the theological reality that God is Trinity of Persons, three consubstantial Persons: "I confess Thee as undivided in Essence, unconfused in Persons, One Triune Divinity"<sup>10</sup>, "I am the Trinity, simple and undivided, yet divided in Three Persons; and I am the Unity, united by Nature, says the Father and the Son and the Divine Spirit"<sup>11</sup>, "O Trinity, Who surpasses all creation and is adored in Unity"<sup>12</sup>. Although Saint Andrew mentions some Trinitarian aspect (the birth of the Son without beginning<sup>13</sup> and the procession of the Spirit<sup>14</sup>), concrete and direct references to anti-Trinitarian heresies are quite missing.

However we can talk about some allusions with polemic intentions. First of those, identified and recorded for the first time by the Greek theologian Athanasios Glaros, in his doctoral thesis dedicated to the *Divine Pedagogy in Great Canon*<sup>15</sup>, refers to the use of the verbs εἰμί and ὑπάρχω from the *troparion*:

"I am the Trinity, simple and undivided, yet divided in Three Persons; and I am the Unity, united by Nature, says the Father and the Son and the Divine Spirit (Τριάς εἰμι ἀπλή, ἀδιαίρετος, διαιρητὴ προσωπικῶς, καὶ Μοναὰς ὑπάρχω τῇ φύσει ἡνωμένη, ὁ Πατήρ, φησὶν, ὁ Υἱὸς καὶ Πνεῦμα)"<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Γ. Φλορόφσκη, *Οι βυζαντινοὶ Πατέρες τοῦ ἔκτου, ἑβδόμου καὶ ὄγδοου αἰῶνα, μετάφραση Π.Κ. Παλλή, Θεσσαλονίκη 2007*, 25.

<sup>9</sup> See the footnote 4.

<sup>10</sup> Andreas Cretensis, *Magnus Canon*, PG 97, 1353A. All English translation of the *Great Canon* of St. Andrew of Crete is taken from: [https://www.antiochianladiocese.org/files/service\\_texts/great\\_lent/great\\_compline/Repentance-Canon-MONDAY.pdf](https://www.antiochianladiocese.org/files/service_texts/great_lent/great_compline/Repentance-Canon-MONDAY.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Ibidem, PG 97, 1380C.

<sup>12</sup> Ibidem, PG 97, 1336B.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. ibidem, PG 97, 1345B, 1377D.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. ibidem, PG 97, 1368B.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Α.Β. Γλάρος, *Θεία παιδαγωγία. Παιδαγωγικά στοιχεία στο Μεγάλο Κανόνα του Ανδρέα Κρήτης, Ψυχολογία, Παιδαγωγική, Ποιμαντική 10, Αθήνα 2000*, 74-75.

<sup>16</sup> Andreas Cretensis, *Magnus Canon*, PG 97, 1360D - 1361A.

The meaning of this different use of verb (εἰμί, ὑπάρχω), which holds the same hermeneutical value, it seems to be – in Glaros’s opinion – the visible sign of an East climate, which, in the period of Byzantine poet, was opposing to the Western space which considered the nature (*substantia*) superior to the hypostases. The Byzantine melodist apparently tried to warm his audience by the danger of considering nature as the fourth Person of the Trinity<sup>17</sup>.

The second allusion with polemical purpose concerns the Pneumatological heresy. Throughout the *Great Canon*, the Byzantine author draws attention to the veneration of the Holy Spirit, saying that “I sing praises to the Holy Spirit Who shines forth with the Father and the Son”<sup>18</sup>. Obviously such an expression reflects the very teaching of the Church against to the Macedonian heresy, according to which the Holy Spirit was created by the Son of God and was thus subordinate to the Father and the Son. Of course, because of this reason the Holy Spirit does not get the same honor as the other two Persons of the Trinity. In another stanza Andrew does not forget to emphasize the doctrinal truth that the whole Church glorifies the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit<sup>19</sup>. Other theological issues which concerned or made allusions to the anti-Trinitarian heresies are missing.

**2. The Christological heresies and their combating.** Even in the case of Christology we couldn’t find, in the fundamental work of Andrew, clear indications regarding the various heresies. The Byzantine Hymnographer sketches the doctrinal truth that, in Christ, we find two natures united perfectly<sup>20</sup>, that He voluntarily assumed all human except the sin<sup>21</sup> and, through Him, the laws of nature are renewed<sup>22</sup>. Andrew does not mention the name of any heretic explicitly condemned by the Church, as Romanos the Melodist does, for example, in his remarkable *kontakia*<sup>23</sup>, as neither intends to draw the attention to the theological currents of his period. Obviously we have in our mind the Monothelism doctrine, which returned to the forefront by the usurper Emperor Philippicus Bardanes, hence contemporary with Andrew. We might expect probably that after the retraction of the official act signed in 712, Andrew reflected at least in part, in the text of the *Canon*, at the Church’s teaching regarding this doctrine. He was not doing it at all<sup>24</sup>, and the explanation could be given by the contents of the letter dedicated to Archdeacon Agathon (in

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Γλάρος, *Θεία παιδαγωγία*, p. 75.

<sup>18</sup> Andreas Cretensis, *Magnus Canon*, PG 97, 1368B.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. *ibidem*, PG 97, 1385C.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. *ibidem*, PG 97, 1381B.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. *ibidem*, PG 97, 1381A.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *ibidem*, PG 97, 1353A.

<sup>23</sup> See, for example, the kontakion 8 (1στ<sup>3</sup>) of Romanos, where the Hymnographer calls Arians directly and their erroneous points of view: “καὶ οὐ φρίττουσιν οὐδ’ οὕτως Ἀρειανοὶ τὴν δεσποτείαν” (cf. P. Maas – C.Y. Trypanis, *Sancti Romani Melodi Cantica. Cantica genuina*, Oxford 1963, 62).

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Ν.Γ. Πολίτου, Ἐκτασις καὶ ἀνάστασις κατὰ τὸν Μέγαν Κανόνα. Φιλοσοφική

original Greek: “Ἀνδρέου, τοῦ ἁγιωτάτου ἀρχιεπισκόπου Κρήτης Ἰαμβοί, γραφέντες πρὸς τὸν ὀσιώτατον Ἀγάθωνα ἀρχιδιάκονον καὶ χαρτοφύλακα τῆς ἐνταῦθα ἁγιωτάτης τοῦ Θεοῦ μεγάλης Ἐκκλησίας, ὅτε λαβὼν τὴν παροῦσαν βίβλιον, μετέβαλε καὶ πάλιν ἀπέστειλε”)<sup>25</sup>. The content of this *letter-confession*, written shortly after the removal of Philippicus (ca 714), proves the Orthodox adherence of Andrew<sup>26</sup>, adherence expressed, moreover, in some personal homilies<sup>27</sup>.

Within thought and anti-heretical polemics could be evaluated nevertheless the *troparion* 10 of the first ode and the first *troparion* of the nine odes:

“As a potter molds his clay, Thou hast fashioned my flesh and my bones, giving me breath and life. Now accept me in repentance, O my Maker and Redeemer and my Judge (Τὸν πηλόν, ὁ κεραμεύς, ζωπλαστήσας ἐνέθηκάς μοι, σάρκα καὶ πνοὴν καὶ ζωὴν. Ἄλλ’ ὦ Ποιητά μου, Λυτρωτά μου καὶ Κριτά, μετανοοῦντα δέξαι με)<sup>28</sup>.”

“My mind is wounded, my body is feeble, my spirit is sick, my speech has lost its power, my life is ebbing, and the end is at the door. What shalt thou do, O miserable soul, when the Judge comes to examine thy deeds? (Ὁ νοῦς τετραυμάτισται, τὸ σῶμα μεμαλάκισται, νοσεῖ τὸ πνεῦμα· ὁ λόγος ἡσθένησεν, ὁ βίος νενέκρωται, τὸ τέλος ἐπὶ θύραις· διὸ μοι, τάλαινα ψυχή, τί ποιήσεις, ὅταν ἔλθῃ ὁ Κριτῆς ἀνερευνήσαι τὰ σά;)<sup>29</sup>.”

We may wonder: why the Byzantine poet prefers a chain of four elements (two for each human component)?<sup>30</sup> Could we talk here about any polemic intention against Apollinarism and Trichotomist thought, initially promoted by Origen? As Nikolaos G. Politis<sup>31</sup> emphasizes, in this reference of Andrew, who synthesizes the thinking of Church against Trichotomist, the theme of man’s salvation is emphasized?: “As is accepted, Christ became man and deified the

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προσέγγισης, “Ἐπετηρὶς Ἐταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν” 47 (1987-1988) 164: “τὸ σύνολο τοῦ Μ. Κανόνος ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ πεζὸν τοῦ ἔργου δὲν περιέχει στοιχεῖα μονοφυσιτισμοῦ”.

<sup>25</sup> Andreas Cretensis, *Magnus Canon*, PG 97, 1437C - 1444B. For the critical edition and a short introduction about this *letter-confession*, see: A. Heisenberg, *Ein jambisches Gedicht des Andreas von Kreta*, Byz 10 (1901) 505-514.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Heisenberg, *Ein jambisches Gedicht des Andreas von Kreta*, p. 511 (110-111. 113-118): “Συμφύρσεως γὰρ οὐχ ἐνώσεως τρόπος· ἡ σύνθεσις πέφυκεν ἢ κατ’ οὐσίαν [...] Ἐντεῦθεν ὡσπερ ἐνθέῳ παρρησία· Χριστοῦ νοεῖσθαι τὰς ἐνεργείας δύο· καὶ τὴν αὐτῷ προσφυῶς νοουμένην· διπλὴν θέλησιν δογματίζεις, συνδέων· ἀλλ’ οὐ διστῶν ἡμερίζων ἰδίως· τοῦτων ἐκάστην θεωρίαν μόνῃ”.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Andreas Cretensis, *In circumcisionem Domini et in S. Basilium*, PG 97, 929C-D: “καὶ εἰς Κύριος ἐν δύο φύσει γινώριζεται, τῷ Πατρὶ καὶ τῷ Θεῷ Πνεύματι συμπροσκυνούμενος. Ὅ τὰς δύο θελήσεις καὶ ἐνεργείας φέρων”.

<sup>28</sup> Idem, *Magnus Canon*, PG 97, 1332C.

<sup>29</sup> Ibidem, PG 97, 1380D.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Θησαυρὸς Μετανοίας, p. 42-43; Κούτσα, Ἰαδαμιαῖος Θρησκός, p. 53.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Πολίτου, Ἑκτασις καὶ ἀνάστασις, p. 161-163.

human nature. If in the human the mind it's brought from outside, then the salvation of man is not complete"<sup>32</sup>. Also, the terminology related to εἰκών word has no reference to the Iconoclastic movement, which was unleashed in the year 726 by Byzantine Emperor Leo III the Isaurian<sup>33</sup>. All Andrew's mentions to the εἰκών theme refer, in particular, to the theological and the anthropological content of them and certainly not to the crisis of destroying icons, that Andrew wasn't unfamiliar with in his period<sup>34</sup>. In many stanzas Andrew laments the dark situation in which the sin has brought the man, but we should not understand, that, through these texts, the author aims to combat the iconoclastic crisis and to support the icons: "I have defiled that which was made in Thine image and likeness, O, Savior"<sup>35</sup>, "I have adorned the idol of my flesh with the diverse clothing of my shameful thoughts"<sup>36</sup>.

**3. The Mariological problem.** Regarding the Mariological problem we should consider here two major terminological aspects: one related to the use of the Nestorian term θεοδόχος<sup>37</sup> and the second related by using of Cyrillian term θεοτόκος (Birth-Giver of God). It's possible that by inserting of the Nestorian term θεοδόχος – *in facto*, met only once in the text of *Great Canon*<sup>38</sup> – Andrew fights against Nestorianism itself? We do not think so! The argument is based on the historical fact that the Nestorian concept with a double

<sup>32</sup> Ibidem 162.

<sup>33</sup> The problem of rejection of the Holy icons causes to Ioannes Fountoulis to declare that, in consonance with the expression "ἐν σοὶ γὰρ αὐτῇ πιστῶς βασιλεύσα", the *Great Canon* was not written in the city of Constantinople and, therefore, not even in the Leon's III period. His assumption would be based on the interrogation: how is possible for Andrew to mention a Christian emperor since Leon III the Isaurian was iconoclast? See more details at: Ἰ.Μ. Φουντούλη, Ἡ τιμὴ τῶν λειψάνων καὶ τῶν τάφων τῶν Λεσβίων ἀγίων, Μυτιλήνη 1965, 12-13.

<sup>34</sup> How Andrew sees the Iconoclastic crisis from his period, see in his own short *homily De SS. Imaginum Veneratione* (PG 97, 1302D - 1304D), where the authour gives three historical examples (ὑπόδειγμα) about the presence of icons in the Church's life. For more informations about this subject, see: A. Kazhdan, *A History of Byzantine literature (650-850)* (in collaboration with L.F. Sherry – Ch. Angelidi), The National Hellenic Research Foundation, Institute for Byzantine Research, Athens 1999, 39-40.

<sup>35</sup> Andreas Cretensis, *Magnus Canon*, PG 97, 1337B.

<sup>36</sup> Ibidem, PG 97, 1337B.

<sup>37</sup> See F. Loofs, *Nestoriana. Die Fragmente des Nestorius*, Hale 1905, 263, v. 11-13: "Formativ deus [...] intremiscamus itaque dominicam incarnationem, τὴν θεοδόχον τῷ Θεῷ λόγῳ συνθεολογῶμεν μορφήν" and 276, v. 1-6: "dominicæ itaque humanitatis susceptionem colamus, incarnationis sacramentum hymnis incessabilibus extollamus, τὴν θεοδόχον τῷ Θεῷ λόγῳ συνθεολογῶμεν μορφήν, τὴν θεοδόχον τῷ Θεῷ λόγῳ μὴ συνθεολογῶμεν παρθένον: θεοδόχον dico, non θεοτόκον, ὃ litteram, non κ' exprimi volens".

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Andreas Cretensis, *Magnus Canon*, PG 97, 1341D.



meaning<sup>39</sup>, against which Basil of Seleucia<sup>40</sup> and Proclus of Constantinople<sup>41</sup> showed so much adversity, has become accepted from the sixth century by the Orthodox thinking. We cannot forget here, moreover, the significant contribution of Romanos the Melodist, used in his (supposed) *Akathist Hymn*, when he proclaims the doctrinal truth that “having received Virgin to God in her womb (ἔχουσα θεοδόχον, ἡ Παρθένος τὴν μήτραν)”<sup>42</sup>. In other words, through his using, Andrew wants to emphasize not only the reality of “filling” of the Nestorian term with Orthodox connotation, but even the Ecumenical reality of the two Theological traditions (Antioch and Alexandrian) who meet in a perfect *symphony* in the Byzantine hymnography. The reality that Andrew of Crete, after four centuries, uses this term doesn’t imply directly that he is aiming at the polemical intensions. We believe that it remains anchored in the Church’s Tradition, which sees in the Virgin Mary “the womb” who contained Him Who by nature cannot be contained<sup>43</sup>. Regarding the θεοτόκος term, used in four contexts<sup>44</sup>, Andrew develops the hermeneutical meaning of the Church and therefore the Cyrillian Theology imposed in the early of the fourth century: the Virgin Mary is Mother of God (θεοτόκος) because Who was born from her is not a simple man or a bearer of God (θεοφόκος), but the God himself made man<sup>45</sup>. In the womb of the Mother of God flesh was made and the Son of God himself was born, according to His human nature<sup>46</sup>; for this reason the Church glorifies the Mother of God which “has given birth to Christ God, One of the

<sup>39</sup> For Nestorius, the θεοτόκος term refers such to the human nature of Christ, where lived (ἐνοίκησε) the Divine Logos, although to the Virgin Mary who accepted inside her, through the Incarnation, the Word of God. See: Γ.Δ. Μαρτζέλου, Ἡ Χριστολογία τοῦ Βασιλείου Σελευκείας καὶ ἡ οἰκουμένη σῆμασία της, Θεσσαλονίκη 2006, 220, footnote 247.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Basilius Seleuciensis, *Oratio* 39, PG 85, 437C: “Διόπερ ὁ πάντων Ποιητῆς καὶ Δεσπότης, ἐκ τῆς Παρθένου καὶ Θεοτόκου τεχθεὶς, τῆς μὲν φύσεως τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐκοινώνησε: σάρκα γὰρ ἀληθῶς ἐφύχωμένην ἐφόρεσε: τῆς δὲ πράξεως τῶν ἀνόμων οὐ μετέλαβεν: [...] Ὡ γαστρὸς ἀγίας καὶ θεοτόκου ἐν ἧ τὸ τῆς ἀμαρτίας διεῖράγη χειρόγραφον”.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Concilium Universale Ephesenum, *Sermo Procli* (Ὁμιλία Πρόκλου, ἐπισκόπου Κυζίκου λεχθεῖσα καθεζομένου Νεστορίου ἐν τῇ μεγάλῃ ἐκκλησίᾳ Κωνσταντινουπόλεως), ACO I 1, 1, p. 104, v. 12-16: “ὦ γαστήρ ἐν ἧ τὸ τῆς κοινῆς ἐλευτερίας γραμματεῖον συνετάγη ὦ κοιλία ἐν ἧ τὸ κατὰ τοῦ θανάτου ὄπλον ἐχαλκεύθη [...] ὦ ναὸς ἐν ᾧ θεὸς γέγονεν ἱερεὺς, οὐ τὴν φύσιν μεταβαλὼν”.

<sup>42</sup> A.C. Trypanis, *Fourteen Early Byzantine Cantica*, vol. 5, Wien 1968, 31.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Andreas Cretensis, *Magnus Canon*, PG 97, 1373C.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. *ibidem*, PG 97, 1336B, 1340A, 1361A, 1377D. Apart from these four uses, Andrew uses two synonyms, namely: Θεογεννήτορ (three times: PG 97, 1341B, 1368B, 1373A) and Θεομήτορ (once: PG 97, 1345B).

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Cyrillus Alexandrinus, *Epistula* 17: *Cyrelli ad Nestorium de Excommunicatione*, PG 77, 120B-C: “Ἐἴ τις οὐχ ὁμολογῆι Θεὸν εἶναι κατὰ ἀλήθειαν τὸν Ἐμμανοῆκ, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο θεοφόκον τὴν ἀγίαν Παρθένον (γεγέννηκε γὰρ σαρκικῶς σάρκα γεγονότα τὸν ἐκ Θεοῦ Λόγον), ἀνάθεμα ἔστω”.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Andreas Cretensis, *Magnus Canon*, PG 97, 1377D.

undivided Trinity, and has opened the Heavens to us on earth<sup>47</sup>. In the thinking of Andrew the person who rejects the attribute of Virgin Mary of being θεοτόκος, rejects even the Incarnation of the Son of God and the reality that He became for us a real man, wearing all of us, apart from our sin: “Christ became man by assuming my flesh and He willingly experienced all that belongs to our nature apart from our sin”<sup>48</sup>.

But this poetic record of dogmatic truth does not imply that the Byzantine Hymnographer aims at polemical intentions, given the reality that, in his period, the Cyrillian term did not raise any problem with his acceptance.

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We must point from the beginning that in the entire *Canon* does not exist any direct mention about various heresies or polemical implications. We believe that this reality exists because of the simple reason that the Byzantine Hymnographer didn't intended to compose a work, which would argue and develop the anti-heretical fight of the Church, although in that period the Monothelitism problem still born controversy. Contrariwise *the Great Canon* is a prayer-text illustrating and dramatizing the way of turning toward one's self in a dialectical and typological relationship with biblical narratives<sup>49</sup>. Perhaps the deficiency of such polemical intentions and passing over of heresies (regardless of their nuance) could be explained through the desire of the author to provide a prayer for worship, in which the ecclesiastical congregation was invited to the meditation and the deep search of the creature's Creator.

#### (Summary)

It is known that the fundamental work of Andrew of Crete, probably written in the early of the eighth century, is penitential one, indicating continuing human need for repentance. Beyond a systematic exposition of Holy Scripture and its models (negative and positive), the *Great Canon* calls for deep meditation about life and its transience. Even the Byzantine author herself testifies this fact, saying: “Where shall I begin to lament the deeds of my wretched life? How shall I begin, O Christ, to relieve my present tears? But as Thou art deeply compassionate, grant me forgiveness of sins” (*Ode* 1, 1). But can we speak in the text of the *Great Canon* about polemical intentions against heresies? Can we find passages to develop the theological opinion against various heresies arisen within the Church over the eight centuries? If so, which ones and what heresy combat? This essay is at stake we want to present it.

<sup>47</sup> Ibidem, PG 97, 1373A-B.

<sup>48</sup> Ibidem, PG 97, 1381A.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Krueger, *The Great Kanon of Andrew of Crete*, p. 63.



CZY „WIELKI KANON” ANDRZEJA Z KRETY  
MÓWI O HEREZJACH I ICH ZWALCZANIU?  
KILKA KRÓTKICH UWAG

(Streszczenie)

Powszechnie jest wiadome, że fundamentalne dzieło Andrzeja z Krety, napisane prawdopodobnie na początku VIII wieku, jest penitencjałem wskazującym na nieustającą potrzebę ludzką do skruchy. Oprócz systematycznego wykładu Pisma Świętego i typów tego wyjaśniania (negatywny i pozytywny), *Wielki Kanon* wzywa też do głębokiej medytacji na temat życia i jego krótkotrwałości. Nawet sam autor bizantyński świadczy o tym fakcie, mówiąc: „Od czego zacząć mam opłakiwanie czynów nędznego życia mego? Jakiż początek skargi żalostnej dzisiaj uczynię, o Chryste? O miłosierny, udziel win moich odpuszczenia!” (*Oda* 1, 2). Czy możemy jednak mówić o obecności w tekście *Wielkiego Kanonu* polemicznych akcentów przeciw herezjom? Czy możemy znaleźć fragmenty przedstawiające poglądy teologiczne sprzeciwiające się różnym herezjom powstałym w Kościele w ciągu ośmiu wieków? Jeśli tak, to które z nich i jakie herezje zwalczają? Niniejsze opracowanie próbuje przedstawić to zagadnienie.

**Key words:** Andrew of Crete, hymnography, hymnographer, heresy, heretics, θεοτόκος.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Andrzej z Krety, hymnografia, hymnograf, herezja, heretycy, θεοτόκος.

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