

REVIEWS

Georgică Grigoriță, *Sfintele și Dumnezeieștile Canoane în Biserică: între tradiție eclezială și necesitate pastorală. O analiză a izvoarelor teologiei canonice în actualul context ecleziologic*, University of Bucharest Publishing House, 2017, 432 pag.

The reviewed work includes an introduction, six chapters, the list of abbreviations and bibliography. While in the introduction, Prof. Dr. Georgică GRIGORIȚĂ reviews the context of the appearance of the Holy Canons and their importance for the spiritual life of the faithful and of the Church, in the first chapter, *Ecleziologia ortodoxă: privire generală (Orthodox ecclesiology: general overview)*, he systematically analyses the orthodox ecclesiology, starting with the phrase “Orthodox Church”, explaining the term “orthodox” etymologically and underlining the essential elements of orthodox ecclesiology. The author reviews some canonical issues that are essential for the Orthodoxy, namely local and universal Church, the synod of bishops – the authority body of the Church, synodality and primacy in the Church, autonomy, autocephaly and synodality in the Church.

In the subchapter entitled *Ecleziologia Bisericii și unele propuneri ecleziologice (Church ecclesiology and some*

ecclesiastical proposals), the author analyses some phrases used in Orthodoxy, namely Eucharistic ecclesiology vs. Ecclesiology of communion, Eucharistic ecclesiology vs. the ecclesiology of open catholicity. Another subchapter, entitled *Sinodalitate și întâietate în Biserică: controversă și provocări actuale (Synodality and primacy in the Church: current controversies and challenges)*, he explains the relationship between synodality and primacy in the Orthodox Church while underlining that tensions that arose “between the autocephalous Churches, that wished to manifest their ecclesiastical freedom communally, and the ecumenical Patriarch that was concerned with retaining the administrative privileges acquired in the Ottoman Empire as a *millet bași* and with justifying them theologically” (p. 109). Moreover, the author argues, by way of example, that the granting of one-sided autocephaly by the Ecumenical Patriarchate is in disagreement with the traditional orthodox assumption

according to which granting autocephaly is within the competence of the Mother Church.

The author addresses the topic of *synodality* and *primacy* also analysing the official documents of the inter-Christian meetings based on the official Orthodox-Catholic dialogue, defining the terminology specific to both orthodox and catholic Canon Law and listing and analysing each meeting, such as the 2006 Belgrade meeting (Serbia), the meeting in Ravenna (Italy) in 2007, the meeting in Paphos (Cyprus) in 2009, the meeting in Vienna (Austria) in 2010, the meeting in Amman (Jordan) in 2014, the meeting in Chieti (Italy) in 2016.

The analysis of the topic of *synodality and primacy* also extends to the inter-Orthodox relations, thus expressing the positions of the Moscow Patriarchate, the reaction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church while the author concludes his research with a canonical evaluation of the three positions.

The chapter *Ecleziologia ortodoxă: privire generală (Orthodox ecclesiology: general overview)* includes a series of remarks regarding orthodox ecclesiology, namely that, according to the orthodox theology, the Church is a communion of local Churches that are in close dogmatic, canonical and worship connection that can be local autocephalous Churches and autonomous local Churches, having as governing body the synods of bishops presided over by a Primate hierarch. Then each local Church is registered in the Orthodox Church Dept., but the place it occupies in this Diptych does not create a prerogative of power imposing relations of subordination among these local Churches.

Thus, there have been misinterpretations of the place in the Diptychs, for example in the fifteenth century the Ecumenical Patriarchate tried to assign itself a jurisdictional primacy by the exclusive right to grant autocephaly and church autonomy while, in the twentieth century, it began to claim exclusive authority over the entire Orthodox diaspora as well (p. 151).

The subsequent chapter, *Sfintele și dumnezeieștile canoane (The holy and divine canons)*, defines the etymology and the current meanings of the term “canon” in the Orthodox theology and outlines the relation between the canons of the Church and the civil laws, the relation between the canons and the dogmas of the Church and, last but not least, the semantic shift of the term “canon”, i.e. canon as pastoral rule that is synodally approved and ecclesiastically received, canon as the epitimia of the spiritual father, canon as list of the Bible books, canon as the list of saints, canon as Eucharistic prayer, poetic canon as Christian worship chant.

Sfintele canoane ale Bisericii: alcătuire, aprobare și receptare (The holy canons of the Church: composition, approval and reception) approaches the canons not according to their authority, but to the time of their appearance, starting with the canons of the fourth century and ending with the canons of the ninth century, comprising the apostolic canons, the canons of the ecumenical synods, the canons of the local synods, the canons of the Holy Fathers and the canons of the Synod I-II of Constantinople in 861; the canons of the Synod of Constantinople (879-880); the Encyclical of Patriarch Tarasios of Constantinople († 806).

In the chapter *Canoanele „intregitoare” si prescriptiile canonice (The supplementary canons and canonical prescriptions)*, the author reviews the canons of St. John the Faster, the canons of St. Nicephorus the Confessor and the canons of St. Nicholas of Constantinople as well as the canonical prescriptions (3 of St. Basilus the Great; 3 of St. John Chrysostom; a prescription of St. Athanasius of Antioch). The subsequent chapter chronologically introduces the collections of canons: Consequentia canonum, Syntagma Antiochenae, Summa canonum; the African collections (Brevenium Hipponense, Codex Apiarii causae, Ecclesiae Carthaginensis excerpta registers); the Galician collections (colectio concili Arelatensis II, Statute Ecclesiae antiqua, Collectio Andegavensis); the Latin collections (Vetus romana, versio isidoriana or versio hispana, Versio itala or Prisca); the systematic collections of canons (The collection in 60 titles, The collection in 50 titles, The collection in 14 titles and the mixed collections - nomocanons (The nomocanon in 50 titles, The nomocanon in 14 titles).

In the last chapter, entitled *Sfintele și dumnezeieștile canoane azi (The holy and divine canons nowadays)*, the author mentions the fact that, in the Orthodox Church, the phrase “holy canons” implies the collection that includes the 85 apostolic canons, the canons of the ecumenical synods, the canons of the local synods and the canons of the Holy Fathers, that is to say, the canons of Photius’ Nomocanon, approved by the Synod of Constantinople in 920, and acknowledges throughout the entire Orthodoxy. Moreover, the author emphasizes that, up to the twentieth century, the role and value of the holy canons had not been challenged, having

enjoyed the same degree of authority as the Gospel. Taking into account the codifications of the Catholic Church, some Orthodox theologians have argued for the need to codify the canons of the Orthodox Church, claiming that some canons are outdated or have fallen into disuse. These proposals were not supported by the Romanian Orthodox Church; on the contrary, the Romanian canonists have always emphasized the topicality of the holy canons.

We welcome the publication of this remarkable work in the field of Church Law that highlights its quintessence, namely the Holy Canons, which are, as the author asserts, pastoral rules issued by church authority, whose fulfillment means following the exhortation of our Saviour Jesus Christ: “this do and thou shalt live” (Luke 10, 28) (p. 326). Moreover, “in the Orthodox theology, canon means a rule issued by church authority, under the action of the Holy Spirit, whose content includes provisions of a disciplinary, administrative-organizational, doctrinal, moral and / or liturgical nature, necessary for the pastoral care of the persons so as to achieve communion with our Lord Jesus Christ or for the elevation of ecclesial communion” (p. 326).

The importance of the reviewed work, *Sfintele și Dumnezeieștile Canoane în Biserică: între tradiție eclezială și necesitate pastorală. O analiză a izvoarelor teologiei canonice în actualul context ecleziologic (The Holy and Divine Canons in the Church: between Ecclesial Tradition and Pastoral Necessity. An Analysis of the Sources of Canonical Theology in the Current Ecclesiological Context)*, by Prof. Georgică GRIGORIȚĂ, is emphasized by a coherent and pertinent

exposition of the chosen topic as well as by bibliographical richness, proving mastery. Furthermore, the organization of the matter, the careful analysis and its systematic presentation make this paper a truly academic treaty of Orthodox Canon

Law in regard to the sources of canonical orthodox theology and their importance in guiding the faithful to the ultimate purpose, namely *salus animarum*.

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Deacon dr. Nicolae Preda, *PREGHIERE SALMICHE DI AUTORI VARI SECONDO IL CODICE “VATICANO GRECO 783”* (ff. 1-96r), (STUDIO LITURGICO), Granada Publishing House, Bucharest, 2016, pp. 504. [COLECȚIA LITURGICĂ (4)].

Deacon dr. Nicolae Preda's work, namely *PREGHIERE SALMICHE DI AUTORI VARI SECONDO IL CODICE “VATICANO GRECO 783”* (ff. 1-96r) is a “summary presentation of the manuscript from a paleographic and codicological point of view, given that the bibliography is rare and training in paleography is required for a detailed study; it also refers to a “liturgical” or “semi-diplomatic” edition of the text, that is, the presentation of the text found in the code, including its internal development or subsequent additions and corrections” (pp. 34-35).

The reviewed volume includes a preface, an introduction in which the author addresses issues related to dating, origin, historical approaches to the code, codicological and paleographic information, content and criteria in the field of ecdotics, the Greek text edition, text commentary and general conclusions.

The author argues that the prayers of the Gr. Vatican Code 783 could also be the result of an ancient practice dating from the 4th – 5th century, that is, the existence of the priestly prayers that interrupted the psalmody in various rites, both from the

East and from the West, the lack of references to their origin allowing us to identify them not as priestly prayers, but most likely as prayers reserved for private use. Moreover, Preda claims that the author of the two collections of the Gr. Vatican Code 783 prayers may be Nicetas of Heraclea (late 11th century –early 12th century) because, while “teacher of Psalter” at the patriarchal school of Constantinople, he compiled several collections of prayers, probably based on two different literary traditions: the Constantinopolitan and the Palestinian ones. The text of the Greek edition is reproduced from page 81 to page 412, followed by a consistent commentary of the text in 75 pages including the following subheadings: the title of the research paper and the two titles included in the Gr. Vatican Code 783; The prayers of the Gr. Vatican Code 783; anonymous compositions or works of “the Holy Fathers”?; Nicetas of Heraclea's book and collection from Heraclea; The two prayer collections of the Gr. Vatican Code 783; their division and the method of writing; The connection between Job's binding and the bindings of the Psalms and the meaning

of the presence of the interpretation of Job 38, 36 in the Gr. Vatican Code 783; The type of prayer of the Gr. Vatican Code 783; The liturgical psalm and its division; The collection of prayers of the famous print of the Coisl. Code 213 (a.1027) and its connection with the Gr. Vatican prayers 783; The prayers of the Gr. Vatican Code gr. 783: priestly prayers as paraphrases of certain psalms or prayers for monastic private use; The structures of the two collections of the Gr. Vatican Code 783: two different structures or one single book used in two types of holidays?; The moment of compiling the collections of the Gr. Vatican Code 783; The author of the two collections of Gr. Vatican Code 783; The similarity between the titles of the prayers of the Gr. Vatican Code 783 and "Tituli Psalmorum" from Eusebius of

Caesarea and, last but not least, the conclusions of the presented chapter.

The discovery of the prayers of the Gr. Vatican Code 783 represents an enrichment of the liturgical patrimony of the Universal Church, but also the possibility to make available for the faithful prayers, that, according to Professor Miguel Arranz, would be a true and authentic treasure of the Orthodox Church, given their beauty. Therefore, we welcome the publication of this remarkable work for liturgical research because, for practical theology in general and liturgical theology in particular, the discovery of Gr. Vatican prayers 783 is a step towards other research endeavours that could shed light on many other things related to the Liturgy.

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