Introduction to Part 2

In the verse quoted at the beginning of the previous section, the Greek *Panoplia* by itself is taking pride in the fact that it has remained buried “as gold” and is printed for the first time in Târgovişte. The benefactor of the edition—Metropolitan Athanasios of Silistra—also emphasized that this was the first publication of a hidden and long-forgotten treasure. It is known that during the seventeenth century most of the Orthodox mistrusted the Greek books printed by “the Schismatics” in the West. Thus, the emphasis on the fact that the *Panoplia* was printed on Orthodox soil certainly had value in the eyes of the people behind the Greek edition. For them, it was a book uncontaminated by the heterodox but the reality was different because texts from the *Panoplia* were included in the Catholic-Protestant controversies. Arguments from these controversies were later integrated in the Orthodox theology and in this way the Latin translation of the *Panoplia*, made in 1555, was indirectly connected with the Greek edition. This is suggested by the way the Orthodox theologians of the Early Modern time interpreted the anthology. They were interested in a chapter which is not often mentioned today; they also said that this chapter was used in the twelfth century to fight the eastern offshoots of the Berengarian heresy.

The chapter is entitled *About the Cross, About the Holy Baptism and About the Transformation of the Lord’s Body and Blood* (Περὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ, περὶ τοῦ ἁγίου βαπτίσματος, καὶ περὶ τῆς μεταλήψεως τοῦ Δεσποτικοῦ σώματος καὶ αἵματος) (the 25th chapter, PG 130, 1244C–1274B). The same entry of the *Panoplia* is mentioned in relation to the Eucharist and Berengar in the third edition of the Orthodox Confession by Dositheos, published in Bucharest in 1690. This part of the anthology will be the main subject of investigation here because it is central for the understanding of the *Panoplia* in the Early Modern period. However, the emphasis on this chapter should not give the impression this was the sole reason for the publication. As we shall see this entry did indeed receive considerable attention from the theologians, but it was by no means the only part of the anthology that was appreciated. It should be underlined that the entire anthology was estimated as a source of wisdom among the writings of the Church Fathers.

Initially the chapter *About the Cross, About the Holy Baptism and About the Transformation of the Lord’s Body and Blood* was part of the preceding chapter *Against the Paulicians*. In a group of the Greek manuscripts, it was split from this chapter and in this way became a separate entry. This was a later development in the contents of the anthology and a variant reading which the editors of the Târgovişte have accepted. When this change actually happened can be
established only after consulting all existing manuscripts. An early, indirect indication of an interest in this chapter is attested in the fourteenth century, in a Dialogue, which contains references to the entries on the Cross and the Baptism in relation to the heresies of the Paulicians and the Bogomils.¹

The evidence suggests that this rearrangement of the contents was introduced, or at least enhanced, in the Early Modern period, in order to form a part of the Panoplia dealing with the Sacraments, more specifically with dogmatic questions—Baptism and the Eucharist. This is implied by the historical background and is confirmed by the way in which this chapter was interpreted by the theologians. In this period questions on the sacraments required definition and the Orthodox Catechisms of the seventeenth century for the first time fixed the number of the sacraments to seven under Latin influence.² Moreover, for the Orthodox, Baptism and the Eucharist have always retained a special place among the other sacraments.³

The entry which became to be regarded as a separate chapter consists of seven fragments authored by Basil of Caesarea, Gregory the Theologian, Gregory of Nyssa and John Damascene. These fragments, initially intended against the Paulicians, are organized under three entries—on the Cross, on Baptism and on the Eucharist.

Fragment 1: PG 130, 1244c–1248d Τοῦ Δαμασκηνοῦ περὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ
Inc. Ὁ λόγος ὁ τοῦ σταυροῦ τοῖς μὲν ἀπολλυμένοις μωρία ἐστὶ ... Desinit
"Ὄψεσθε", βοῶν, "τὴν ζωὴν υμῶν ἐπὶ ξύλου κρεμαμένη ἀπέναντι τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν υμῶν [John Damascene, Expositio fidei, 84, 2]."

Fragment 2: PG 130, 1248d–1259d Περὶ τοῦ ἁγίου βαπτίσματος, τοῦ μεγάλου Βασιλείου ἀπὸ τῶν πρὸς Ἀμφιλόχιον τὸν Ἰκονίου τριάκοντα κεφαλαίων.

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¹ Antonio Rigo, “Gli ultimo giorni del dualismo bizantino? Un nuovo testo inedito e alcune questioni connesse,” in Orthodoxy and Heresy in Byzantium, ed. Rigo and Ermilov, 99–117. The participants in the Dialogue are a Christian and Koudougeros (a name of a group considered by some scholars to be related to the Bogomils). The author ascribes some characteristics of the Bogomil heresy to the group of the Koudougeros. For this reason the words of the two interlocutors are involved with quotes from the Panoplia’s Against the Bogomils and Against the Messalians. The dualistic views characteristic for the Bogomils are not discussed, but, among others, the dialogue includes reflections on the significance of the cross and the baptism.

² Kallistos Ware, The Orthodox Church (Harmondsworth: Penguin books, 1978), 281–314. (Henceforth: Kallistos Ware, The Orthodox Church).

³ Idem, 282.