

ACTA UNIVERSITATIS UPSALIENSIS

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ACTA UNIVERSITATIS UPSALIENSIS

Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia

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EUTHYMIOS THE IBERIAN

Theodore of Edessa

VOLUME I

Introduction

STRATIS PAPAIOANNOU

&

CHARIS MESSIS



UPPSALA
UNIVERSITET

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Preface

The two volumes of *Euthymios the Iberian, Theodore of Edessa* have been long in the making. They give concrete form to an idea first developed within the international research programme *Retracing Connections: Byzantine Storyworlds in Greek, Arabic, Georgian, and Old Slavonic* (<https://retracingconnections.org/>), submitted in 2019 to the Riksbankens Jubileumsfond by Ingela Nilsson, Christian Høgel, and Stratis Papaioannou; within this collaborative context, work on Euthymios' *Theodore* emerged as a sub-project proposed and overseen by Papaioannou. The programme was indeed financed by Riksbankens Jubileumsfond (M19-0430:1), with a generous grant, and thus dedicated work began in January 2020.

The support of the entire *Retracing Connections* group, and especially the guidance by Ingela Nilsson, made this volume possible. Drafts of the present general *Introduction* as well as the accompanying second volume, with the edition and translation of the *Life* of Theodore of Edessa, preceded by another introduction on the manuscript transmission of the text, were discussed at various stages within the frame of the above programme, and we have profited greatly from the input of all our colleagues in the various teams within it (in alphabetical order): Uffe Eriksen, Miriam Hjälml, Lilli Hölzlhammer, Sandro Nikolaishvili, Daria Resh, Dimitris Skrekas, Myrto Veikou, Milan Vukašinović, Marijana Vuković, and of course Christian and Ingela. More specifically, we are grateful to Miriam, Daria, and Sandro for further help regarding (respectively) the Arabic, the Slavic, and the Georgian versions of the *Life*.

We are, furthermore, immensely thankful to Byron MacDougall for his careful review of our English text. We also owe deep gratitude to Stephanos Efthymiadis who read closely both volumes and made important recommendations, as well as to André Binggeli who also read closely the first volume and provided similarly significant feedback. Nana Chikvatia and Lasha Tkebuchava shared their forthcoming work on the Georgian *Theodore of Edessa* ahead of publication, and we are very grateful for this. Thanks are owed also to Jost Gippert who helped us clarify matters that pertained to Georgian manuscripts and the Iviron library, to Eric Cullhed who prepared the volume for printing with great care, to Olof Heilo who created the map that accompanies the volume, and to

Viki Tasoula who prepared the *Index of Names*. Finally, we must thank the late Bob Ousterhout, who kindly provided the photograph from his collection that appears on the cover.

A remark about the making of the present first volume is also in order. Its preparation was carried out as follows:

Chapters 2 (Euthymios the Iberian and *Theodore of Edessa* in Context) and 4 (The World of *Theodore of Edessa*) were co-authored by Messis and Papaioannou.

Chapters 1 (First Questions), 3 (The Making of *Theodore of Edessa*), and 5 (The Reception) were written by Papaioannou.

The entire work was then jointly reviewed and discussed by both authors, and the final product represents their shared responsibility.

Athens, December 19, 2025

STRATIS PAPAIOANNOU
& CHARIS MESSIS

Technical Matters

We use the title *Theodore of Edessa* to refer jointly to the *Life* and the *Chapters* of Theodore of Edessa.

Numbers in bold indicate the sections of the *Life* as edited and translated in our *Euthymios the Iberian, Theodore of Edessa. Volume II. Theodore's Life: Critical Edition of Versions α and β , with Annotated Translation of β* itself abbreviated as **Vol. II**, whenever cross-referenced below.

Though we have not edited and translated the *Chapters* in full in Vol. II, we have given them the numbers **II6,1–II6,100**, as they form a unity with the *Life*.

Bold Latin letters refer to the *sigla* of manuscripts which transmit *Theodore of Edessa* (see the list at the end of this volume), and **bold small Greek letters** refer to the two main versions (α and β) of the Greek text, both edited in Vol. II and also discussed in chapter 3.3 below.

Unless otherwise indicated, all translations of the Greek texts are our own.

All English translations of the Georgian *Lives* of Euthymios (abbreviated as GRD) and George Hagiorites (GRD²) by Tamara Grdzelidze (2009) have been slightly revised, based on the French rendition of these same texts by Bernadette Martin-Hisard (1991 [M-H] and 2006–2007 [M-H²]).

If a Greek name has a common form in English, we have retained the anglicized form; otherwise, we have opted for a transliterated form.

I. First Questions

I.I. THE STORY

Symeon, a pious, noble-born, and wealthy man from Edessa in Syria is betrothed to the pious, noble-born, and wealthy Maria. Their first child, a girl whose name we never learn, is the mother of Basil; the latter is the narrator and author of our story. To Symeon and Maria—who desperately wants a male child as well—a son is eventually born, the result of intense prayer. He is a “true gift from God”, a δῶρον Θεοῦ, and is hence named Theo-dore, our protagonist (2–4,1).

Though the product of divine grace, Theodore has a bumpy start and is a slow learner at school, which he begins attending at the age of five. Through a miracle, his saintly life is quickly set on track. He attains the pinnacles of secular and Christian learning, before abandoning everything in order to visit the Holy Land and then join, at the age of about 20, the most famous among Byzantine monasteries of the Middle East, the Lavra of St Sabas (Mar Saba) near Jerusalem. Ascetic achievements of various kinds follow and eventually Theodore adopts a solitary life, attracting disciples, and performing traditional and less traditional feats of a Byzantine ascetic: fasting, all-night vigils, constant praying, but also the recital of sacred texts and the copying of holy books (4,2–18,1).

Here the story breaks off, for a long while (18,2–34,4), so that another, only loosely related tale about a young relative and disciple of Theodore can be told—“as a kind of sweetening”, we read. His name is Michael, he is also a Sabaite monk, and he suffers martyrdom, set in Jerusalem, ordered by the Muslim ruler, and incited by the false accusations of the ruler’s vicious wife. We shall return to the details of this tale later on, but it is important to note that within its telling, we abandon for the first time the somewhat *closed* time-frame of the protagonist’s spiritual biography. Up to this point, Theodore’s life had been punctuated *only* by specific moments in the ritual cycle of liturgical time.¹ Yet within the digression about Michael the martyr, an additional, larger socio-temporal

¹ Theodore’s mother Maria has the vision that announces her conception of her son “on the first Saturday of Lent, when the Church usually celebrates the memory of the miracle of the great martyr Theodore” (3,1); Theodore is miraculously cured of his ineptness in learning “during the time of the Divine Liturgy” (5).

setting is introduced (21,2–24,2)—even if, in this case too, the co-ordinates remain somewhat vague.

The main parameters of this historical framework are the following:

- *a post-traumatic period*: the time after the Byzantine loss of Syro-Palestine and, at that, the Christian Holy Land, which are now under the dominion of the “accursed and sacrilegious ... Saracens” (i.e. the Arabs joined by the Persians)—the origins of the loss are placed temporally and etiologically back to the heretic reign of Constans II (641–668 CE), who is mentioned by name;
- *a center of power*: Babylon, i.e. Baghdad;
- and *a king and a queen*: Adramelech, “the king of the Persians”, and his wife Seïs, said to rule “when the divine Theodore lived his ascetic life in the Lavra of Saint Sabas” (24,1).

When the narrative returns to Theodore, we find him pursuing his ascetic way of life in greater intensity—as a result of mourning for his martyred relative—and imparting ascetic knowledge to his fellow monks (35–40). A lengthy “spiritual homily” is cited in full (39,3–39,7) and the dictation of a “spiritual ... century of chapters” is reported, but its contents are not recorded. “I will insert,” our author informs us (40,1), “this century at the end of the present text, so that the narration of what is to be written next is not interrupted”; and, indeed, in several of the transmitting manuscripts such a century of chapters is appended right after the *Life* of Theodore, with the title “Chapters of Our Father, Saint Theodore the Sabaite” (116,1–116,100).

Back in the story, the period of tranquility is over for Theodore. By a request of the elites (clergymen as well as laymen) of the city of Edessa and by the decision of the holy synod of the two patriarchs of Jerusalem and Antioch and their bishops, the reluctant Theodore is appointed metropolitan of his native city (41–45)—the event takes place “during the very days when the venerable Passion of the Lord and his holy Resurrection were celebrated”. When installed in Edessa, Theodore quickly begins the work expected of a Christian bishop. First, he gives an inaugural sermon on matters of doctrine, a lengthy speech cited again in full (46–53). The sermon demarcates proper orthodox faith against all heresies, based on the declarations of earlier Ecumenical Councils, including the seventh Ecumenical Council in Nicaea (787 CE), “which took place a short time ago”—the first concrete event set not far from the supposed time of our story’s unfolding.

Then (54–67), Theodore seeks the spiritual guidance of a local ascetic elder, a stylite named Theodosios. Theodosios has lived on a pillar near Edessa for

95 years and was considered a “madman”. The stylite, we are told, is the single remnant of an earlier tradition of stylites in the region, residing on pillars “built during the days of the pious Emperor Maurice” (r. 582–602). This encounter takes our author to yet another extensive, indeed multilayered digression.

First, Theodosios himself narrates a story (55,7–61,2): about Ader, an Edessan nobleman who became a monk (Athanasios) in the Lavra of Sabas, and about what happened to his wife and sons as well as to a prostitute who came to the wife’s rescue (all these characters remain unnamed in the text). The mother becomes an abbess, the prostitute becomes a solitary ascetic, the first two children die, and the youngest son becomes a monk, also in the Lavra, and later patriarch of Jerusalem (at an unknown time). At the end of Theodosios’ telling of this story, Theodore meets the two women (now already 60 years in the monastery) (62–64). Then, Theodosios recounts the story of himself and his brother John, also a hermit, still living in the caves near Babylon (Baghdad), where their joint ascetic life had begun during their youth (65–67).

Once back in his metropolitan see, Theodore escapes an attempt on his life by local heretics (followers of Nestorius, Mani, and Severus). Frustrated, the latter turn to the help of the Muslim governors in the area, and they confiscate much property of the Orthodox church. Theodore must react, and so he does, taking the decision to go directly to the source of power and seek the intervention of the ruler in Babylon, named Mauīas (68–69)—also titled, like Adramelech before him (who is *tacitly* presumed to be dead by now), “the king of the Persians” (55,6 and 85,4).

With Theodosios’ blessing, Theodore arrives at Babylon together with our narrator Basil as well as an entourage of priests and deacons from Edessa. Upon learning that Mauīas is ill, Theodore volunteers to heal him, which he does with a miracle. An immediate, intense friendship between the two men ensues. The grateful king grants all the bishop’s requests for restoring the rights of the Orthodox church in Edessa, and also authorizes Theodore’s visit to Theodosios’ brother, the hermit John (70–77). Mauīas then confesses his desire to be with Theodore forever, in this life as well as the next, and Theodore takes the opportunity to convert him to Christianity. The conversion is described in detail; it concludes with the baptism of the king—along with three Alan men in his retinue—by the river Tigris in Mesopotamia. And the new name of the king is John (78–83).

It is time for Theodore to fulfill another desire of the king, by now a fully formed Orthodox Christian, who wishes to obtain a piece of the True Cross. A visit of Theodore to the Byzantine capital is planned and, subsequently, conducted (84–85). The ones who receive the Edessan bishop—carrying the king’s

request in writing—and grant him a piece of the True Cross are none other than the emperors Michael III (840–867) and his mother Theodora (c. 815–c. 867). The latter, we might note, was regent after the death of Michael’s father Theophilos, from 842 to 856. We are thus led to assume—and this is the last datum, most anchored in historical reality, provided in our tale—that this is the period (sometime in the 850s?) when Theodore visits Constantinople and when, what’s more, the culmination of our story takes place.

After the successful embassy to Constantinople, the bishop returns to Babylon, where he continues the king’s Christian education and performs miracles that provoke jealousy among the Jews and the Muslims of the city. A public debate—attended by Christians, Persians, Saracens, and Jews—is staged between Theodore and the leader of the synagogue. The outcome is again to be expected: the Jew is not only silenced (literally), but he also repents and converts to Christianity, taking the name Samonas (86–91).

The fulfilment of another desire, this time for both Theodore and John, follows. They go and meet the hermit John once more—this and all other related movements of the king are done under various pretexts, as his Christianity is kept secret from his subjects. The visit, rich in spiritual benefits, is concluded with a lengthy address by the hermit to the king, in essence an exhortation to ultimate devotion, which includes, “if necessary”, martyrdom (92–99).

The winter passes, and it is spring time. The king is anxious, as he tells Theodore, about his concealed Christianity; he does not wish to remain “faithful only at night”. He then provides Theodore with a large sum of money as a gift to the sacred sites and Christians in Jerusalem, to which the bishop is now sent off, in a departure full of tears. Theodore leaves, carries out his mission in the Holy Land, visits the Lavra of St Sabas and Antioch, and returns to Edessa, to the delight of his flock (100–105).

The narrative returns to Babylon. King John has decided to come out as a Christian. The declaration of his Christianity is staged as a momentous performance. He summons a gathering of all the citizens, and a large crowd of Persians, Ishmaelites, Jews, and Christians shows up. The king appears, dressed up in full gear on horseback, ascends a high platform, orders silence, announces his Christian faith, raises a golden cross to the East, and genuflects before it, giving glory to the triune God. The crowd erupts in rage and massacres the king along with his three Christian servants—who also confess their faith. The date is May 30th of an unspecified year (106–110).

All loose ends of the story are then tied up somewhat swiftly. The murdered king orchestrates his proper Christian burial through one vision, and informs his friend Theodore of his death through another. A third vision notifies the

Edessan stylite Theodosios of his brother John's peaceful death and Theodosios dies in peace as well. Bereft of his spiritual fathers and spiritual son, Theodore intensifies (as he did when losing Michael earlier) his ascetic life and his philanthropy, becoming famous not only among the Orthodox across Mesopotamia and Syria but also among Muslims and heretics. Three years later, King John appears once more to Theodore; the hour has come for them to "dwell together" indulging in the "sweetest light" of Christ. Theodore announces his imminent death to his flock, bids them farewell, travels to the Holy City, and returns to his monastic homeland. After spending three weeks in his ancient cell near the Lavra of St Sabas, Theodore finally departs to the Lord. It is the 19th of July, again of an unspecified year (III-II5).

1.2. A TRUE STORY?

A modern reader might first, almost instinctively, ask. Is Theodore's a *true* story? Did some of the narrated events actually occur? Did any of the mentioned persons (apart from the Byzantine emperors) ever exist in reality?

The title of the preserved, textual version of the story, summarized above, assumes, as is typical in Byzantine hagiography, historical veracity. We read:

Βίος καὶ πολιτεία τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Θεοδώρου, τοῦ διαλάμψαντος ἐν ἀσκήσει κατὰ τὴν μεγίστην Λαύραν τοῦ ἁγίου Σάβα, ἔπειτα γεγονότος ἀρχιεπισκόπου πόλεως Ἐδέσης, καὶ ἀξιομνημόνευτα κατορθωκός ἐργα· συγγραφείς παρὰ Βασιλείου ἀνεψιοῦ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐπισκόπου Ἐμέσης.

The life and conduct of our father among tWhen the narrative returns to Theodore, he saints Theodore, who became eminent for his asceticism in the Great Lavra of Saint Sabas, subsequently became archbishop of the city of Edessa, and performed deeds worthy of commemoration; written by Basil, his nephew and bishop of Emesa.

Following this title, Basil of Emesa, its presumed author, makes a conscious effort, as we have seen, to place his account in a historically recognizable reality. He is, after all, presented as an eye witness and an accompanying character in the events he describes—and this was the primary method of creating verisimilitude in Byzantine story-telling.

Basil does situate his geography within a landscape of genuine, knowable locations. Syro-Palestine offers the main theater of action. As expected from the supposed early ninth-century setting of the story, the region is under Islamic peace and is also the home of a multiplicity of Christianities, which are in conflict with each other. These are active in the major cities of Edessa, Jerusalem, and Antioch, cities and environs which are presented in rough sketches with

their well-known main churches and monasteries. The middle-Eastern environment is spatially book-ended by two capital cities, where important narrative action also unfolds: Constantinople and, especially, Baghdad. Both cities are, by comparison, less concretized in the narrative, yet they carry their distinctive traits: the former is Orthodox and Roman, the home of pious rulers, the latter is the heart of Muslim government, but has a multi-religious and multi-ethnic body of citizens living in relative harmony with each other, disrupted only when the faith of the ruler becomes undone.

Basil's chronology also explicitly evokes, as we have seen, fixed moments in known history: the glory years of the Byzantine past (by referencing the "pious emperor" Maurice), the subsequent crisis because of the Islamic expansion (unfolding after a heretical Roman ruler, Constans II), and then the post-iconoclastic present of "the orthodox emperor Michael" and "Theodora, the most pious empress", the time when, by a spectacular twist of history, the second main character of the story, the "king of the Persians", converts to Christianity, confesses his new faith in public, and dies a martyr's death.



We shall return to the contours of the depicted world and main actors of our story in chapter 4 below, but what quickly becomes clear and interests us now is that its historicity is full of fissures. Apart from well-known Church Fathers and the three emperors and one empress (Maurice, Constans II, and Michael III and Theodora; the latter couple is supposedly contemporary to Theodore of Edessa), no other named figure is reported in any other Byzantine text or source—except, of course, in texts that derive their information from our story. This includes all secondary characters—such as the ascetic brothers, Theodosios the Stylite and John the Hermit, Ader and his family, John, the abbot of St Sabas, etc. More importantly, the list of unattested figures includes both the author Basil and the protagonist Theodore, who, though they possess real-sounding Byzantine names, exist only in the textual world, namely in manuscripts, excerpts, and translations of, and later allusions to, the above story.²

In essence unreported anywhere else are also the two Muslim rulers, despite their (again) realistic sounding names: Ἀδραμέλεχ and Μαυῖας. There is no Ἀδραμέλεχ, "king of the Persians" in Babylon/Baghdad, mentioned anywhere

² See the relevant entries in PmbZ, where (with some hesitation only in the case of Michael the martyr) the apparent fictionality of *all* characters in the *Life* of Theodore of Edessa is highlighted: PmbZ 5003 (Michael), PmbZ 6526 (Seis), PmbZ 7877 (Theodosios), PmbZ 3116 (John the Hermit), PmbZ 86 (Ader and his family), PmbZ 3223 (John, abbot of St Sabas), PmbZ 10022 (the anonymous Abbess), PmbZ 6844 (Sophronios, the teacher of Theodore), and PmbZ 7683 (Theodore of Edessa), PmbZ 4729 and 7184 (Theodore's parents Maria and Symeon), and PmbZ 950 (Basil of Emesa).

else, at least within the Greek tradition; nor is any Mauīas, whose name is attested in other Byzantine sources, known to have followed an Adramelech shortly thereafter as another such king.³ And, certainly, no such personality could be placed within the historical framework of our story, if the latter is taken at face value. During the first half of the ninth century, there was a sequence of six Abbasid caliphs based in Baghdad, some of them well-known to contemporary Byzantines and later Byzantine Greek sources.⁴ None of them bear any resemblances, even name-wise, with the Muslim rulers of our story and none of them, of course, ever converted to Christianity or became a Christian martyr, as the glorious apex of our tale claims. No such ruler exists in medieval Muslim history anyhow, and it is here that the fictive dimension of our story rears its head most conspicuously.

Conversely, the fact that key ecclesiastical and monastic figures within the *Life* of Theodore—the patriarchs of Jerusalem, Antioch, and Constantinople, or the abbot that succeeds John in the Lavra of St Sabas—, remain without a name, personalities who could otherwise potentially be corroborated from other Byzantine sources by a Byzantine audience and help further establish Theodore’s biography in some historical “reality”, only adds to the suspicion of fiction or, at the very least, of historiographical haze.



We are dealing then, it seems, with a historical novel of the medieval variety, a *roman*, *légende*, or *mensonge hagiographique*, which offered a fantasy worth believing for an Orthodox, Greek-speaking audience: a tale, with some historiographical verisimilitude, from the primeval sacred lands of Syro-Palestine about a model monk who became an exemplary bishop, and about a Muslim ruler turned Christian martyr, a tale furthermore seasoned by sermons of doctrinal precepts and a series of additional micro-stories, beneficial tales of paradigmatic

³ The attempts in earlier scholarship, based on a series of ingenious yet acrobatic arguments (see especially Vasiliev 1942–1943) to link Mauīas/John with a real historical personality have been rightly met with universal disapproval; the relevant lemma in PmbZ (4875) is, correctly, authoritative in this regard: “Die ganze Geschichte ist zweifellos legendär”; see also Griffith 2001, 156–7 with Sahner 2018, 110 (n. 134).

⁴ These are, using information drawn from PmbZ:

- Hārūn ar-Rashīd (Ἀαρών in Greek sources; PmbZ 2541), who ruled from 786 to 809;
- al-Amīn (Μουάμεδ, Μοάμεδ; PmbZ 214): 809 to 813;
- al-Ma’mūn (Μαμούμ or Ἀβδελάς; PmbZ 4689): 813 to 833;
- al-Mu’tasīm (Ἰμβραήλ, Ἰσμαήλ, Ἰβραήμ, or Ἀβησάκ; PmbZ 5205): 833 to 842;
- al-Wāthiq bi-llāh (anonymously mentioned in Greek texts; PmbZ 8593): 842 to 847;
- and al-Mutawakkil (the least referenced, again anonymously, in Greek sources, PmbZ 5206): 847 to 861.

and somewhat exotic holy figures—another neo-martyr, a stylite, an extreme hermit in distant lands, a repenting wife and a repenting prostitute, etc.⁵ Yet where does this historical fiction come from? How did it come to be written down in Greek? By whom? Where, and when?

1.3. THEODORE OF EDESSA AND BARLAAM AND IOASAPH

Let us jump right into the middle of things, and present what we regard as a fact about the author of the Greek text of our story, preserved—partially or totally, in various versions, or in excerpts—in numerous manuscripts and three medieval translations (into Georgian, Arabic, and Slavic).⁶ In his monumental edition of the Greek version of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*—a Christianized life of Buddha, with wide circulation in the Middle Ages and the subject of robust, though usually specialized, modern scholarly attention—, Robert Volk was the first scholar to claim, though not entirely without hesitation and, essentially, as a side remark to his main subject, that the *Life* of Theodore of Edessa and *Barlaam and Ioasaph* were written by one and the same person.⁷ In that, Volk followed the lead of Lela Datiashvili who had earlier identified the author of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* with the author who composed a supposedly now lost Greek hypotext of those episodes interpolated in the *Life* of Theodore, pertaining to the martyr Michael the Sabaite, namely sections 18,2–34,4.⁸

The claim that the *Life* of Theodore of Edessa (BHG 1744)—as well as, we would add, the *Chapters* of Theodore—and *Barlaam and Ioasaph* (CPG 8120; BHG 224/224a; CPG 8120) were written by the very same person is correct, in our opinion. Let us thus review Volk's (and partly Datiashvili's) arguments, and

⁵ The designation “historical novel” is evoked in Rydén 2006, 268 and the phrase *roman hagiographique* is used in Vasiliev (1942–1943, 166), citing Peeters 1930, 82 and 93 (cf. also Volk 2009, 84). *Mensonge hagiographique* is how Gouillard viewed our text; he writes with militant historicism (1947, 137): “... l'un des meilleurs échantillons du mensonge hagiographique, sous sa forme la plus effrontée ...; ... l'auteur ... abuse vraiment du candide lecteur et souligne par trop sa mauvaise conscience avec un irritant cynisme”). For the more general term *légende hagiographique*, see Delehay 1927 (= 1998).

⁶ For a detailed discussion of the manuscripts and the translations, see chapter 5 below and the introduction to Vol. II. The first and only complete edition of the Greek text of the *Life* (though based on only two manuscript witnesses) is found in Pomjalovskij 1892. The *Chapters* have been published twice, though not in the form of a critical edition: Poussines 1684, 345–403 and in the *Philokalia* by Makarios of Corinth and Nikodemos Hagiorites, first published in 1782 (pp. 265–81) and republished several times afterwards.

⁷ Volk 2009, 81–6. For recent overviews and relevant bibliography on *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, see Cesaretti and Ronchey 2012, ix–cxx, Cordoni 2014, and Volk 2016 with Messis and Papaioannou 2021b, 201–3 (see also p. 199 on the *Life* of Theodore of Edessa and an affirmation of its common author with *Barlaam and Ioasaph*); for more recent studies, see e.g. Duceur and Tardieu 2024.

⁸ Datiashvili 1973, summarized in English in Khintibidze 1996, 162–3 and Khintibidze 2000, 17–8; see also Datiashvili 1967 and Pataridze 2020, 70–1. The same view, without reference to Datiashvili is repeated in Otkhmezuri and Raphava 2022, 223.

add several of our own, in order of increasing importance and with cumulative force, since perhaps no single argument in what follows would clinch the matter if isolated from the rest.

First in order are matters of content and form in regard to these texts.

Narrative World

From a relatively broad perspective, what is immediately noticeable about both the *Life* of Theodore and *Barlaam and Ioasaph* is that they share a similar novelistic flavor and fictive vision of the world. This commonality does not limit itself to the encased tale of Michael the martyr—who, just like Ioasaph in one poignant episode (*Barlaam and Ioasaph* 30,81-199), is tempted by a sexually aggressive woman (indeed a common hagiographical *topos*); this was Datiashvili's view, who regarded Michael's martyrdom account as a separate Greek text, an interpolation to the *Life* of Theodore. Rather, as Volk rightly observed, the shared fictiveness pertains to the larger make-up of the plot of both texts.⁹ After all, almost each and every main character, who populates either text, is not known from anywhere else—even if, as already noted, in the *Life* of Theodore the made-up nature of these characters is partially obscured by their realistic names, inviting readers and scholars (rightly or wrongly, this is not our concern for now) to find echoes in historical personalities.

Of course, fictive material is nothing new in Byzantine hagiography, and some degree of fictionality is innate to all storytelling in general. Nevertheless, there is a notable analogy in these two specific instantiations of hagiographical narrative. For the parallelism is, we believe, tangible between

- a story about a perfect Christian bishop (Theodore) who heals, befriends, and converts the Muslim Persian king (Mauīas>John), who then becomes a martyr,
- and a tale about a perfect Christian hermit (Barlaam) who converts the pagan Indian prince (Ioasaph), who then joins his spiritual father and becomes, like him and together with him, a Christian hermit of extreme asceticism.

Differences do exist, of course, in the degree of the exotic spatio-temporal setting and of the fictiveness of the plot. Both appear more pronounced in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*. Unlike, that is, the *Life* of Theodore of Edessa and its more immediate quasi-historical chrono/geography, *Barlaam and Ioasaph* is set in the

⁹ Volk 2009, 84 (on Theodore of Edessa in relation to *Barlaam and Ioasaph*): “viele deutet auf reine Fiktion hin, auf einen hagiographischen Roman, der aus mehreren bereits existenten Teilen zusammenkomponiert sei”.

distant land of India at a rather unspecified time after the supposed Christianization of India by Thomas the Apostle and the rise to power of a certain king called Abenner (Ioasaph's father). As for the magnitude of the fictive plot, in *Barlaam and Ioasaph* the success of Christianity is absolute, as eventually *every* Indian converts, including most militantly pagan characters, such as Abenner, who at the beginning of the story is depicted as a fierce persecutor of Christians. By contrast, in the *Life* of Theodore, conversion is limited to somewhat more plausible numbers: the foreign king (Mauñas), together with his three Alan servants, a Jew in his court (91,1-3), and "many" Muslims, Manicheans, and heretics in his kingdom (75, 85,8, 111,3, and 113,2).

Yet, such differences are a matter of proportion and accent, rather than essence; as a narrative text, *Barlaam and Ioasaph* is, let us not forget, twice as large, coming out to 64,899 words, as opposed to the 31,933 of the *Life* of Theodore.¹⁰ In essence, in both texts, a similar narrative chronotope is created—*both* sufficiently removed from historical reality *and* adequately fastened to it, happily for a Byzantine audience, and perhaps frustratingly for a modern one—where a similar Christian-Roman fantasy can be enacted: that of the conversion of a foreign, non-Roman ruler to Christianity. As Alexander Kazhdan rightly put it, "the problem for both texts is essentially the same."¹¹

Moreover, from a narrower perspective, the fiction-oriented, constructed worlds of the two stories appear as not simply analogous, but kindred to each other, as they are linked by an actual connecting thread. As was already noted by Paul Peeters, accepted by François Halkin, repeated by Kazhdan, and reinforced by Volk, there is a striking resemblance between two secondary, but important characters in both texts¹²:

- (a) the supposed transmitter of the story of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, who according to the most common version of the title of the text (Volk 2016, 417) is a certain "Ἰωάννης μοναχός" of the monastery of St Sabas, who brought the story to Jerusalem "ἐκ τῆς ἐνδοτέρας τῶν Αἰθιοπῶν χώρας, τῆς Ἰνδῶν λεγομένης" (*Barlaam and Ioasaph*, Tit. 1-2)
- (b) and the hermit Ἰωάννης (the brother of the Theodosios the Stylite), who at some point of the *Life of Theodore* calls himself "Ἰωάννης ἐλάχιστος μοναχός" from the caves of Babylon (77,2), and later briefly recounts about

¹⁰ The numbers come from the TLG, based on the edition by Volk (2006), and the version β of our text, as printed in Vol. II.

¹¹ Kazhdan 1988 (=1993), 1202.

¹² Peeters 1931, 296-8; Halkin 1953, 477; Kazhdan 1988 (=1993), 1201 and Kazhdan 1999, 99; Volk 2009, 83 and 85.

the extraordinary ascetic Christians whom he personally witnessed “ἐν τῇ ἐνδοτέρᾳ τῆς Ἰνδικῆς χώρας πανερήμῳ” (95,2).

Kazhdan, and partly Halkin before him, raised the possibility (without insisting on it) that the above two figures could be pointing to one and the same person, the one who actually composed *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, though Halkin and more so Peeters and Volk rightly acknowledged that *Barlaam and Ioasaph*’s John (and *Theodore*’s John, we might add) is an entirely fictive *persona*. However this might be, some kind of link between the two persons is there to see, as all aforementioned scholars agree.

Could we regard the two figures and indeed the partly similar representation of India, as a land of ultimate Christianity, not as an accident but as a kind of (conscious? sub-conscious?) cross-reference? That we may be dealing with precisely such a resonance is strengthened by the fact that it is not only the name “John, the monk” and the designation “interior Indian land” which appear in both texts—despite the obvious differences, since one John is from St Sabas and the other is in Babylon, and the Indians of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* carry the additional name “Ethiopians”. Upon closer inspection, one realizes that the very same Greek words and phrases are shared between the brief description of India by John the monk in *Life of Theodore of Edessa* (95,2–96) and various passages (some of them key ones, and many of them pertaining to India) in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*.

It is worth presenting this shared wording side by side¹³:

<i>Life of Theodore of Edessa</i> 95,2–96	<i>Barlaam and Ioasaph</i>
Ἐν γὰρ τῇ ἐνδοτέρᾳ τῆς Ἰνδικῆς χώρας πανερήμῳ ... In the interior , absolute wilderness of the land of India ...	- ... ἐκ τῆς ἐνδοτέρας τῶν Αἰθιοπῶν χώρας, τῆς Ἰνδῶν λεγομένης ... (Tit. 1–2) ... from the interior land of the Ethiopians, the so-called land of the Indians ... - ... τινες ἄνδρες εὐλαβεῖς τῆς ἐνδοτέρας τῶν Αἰθιοπῶν χώρας, οὕστινας Ἰνδοὺς οἶδεν ὁ λόγος καλεῖν ... (Prolog. 28–29) ... certain pious men from interior land of the Ethiopians, whom we call Indians ...

¹³ Volk 2009, 83 notes that the passage from *Theodore of Edessa* “weist ebenfalls einige auch im Barlaam-Roman vorkommende Wörter und Ausdrücke auf”, but does not go into detail nor does he record any of these phrases in his apparatus or index.

Life of Theodore of Edessa 95,2–96

Πολλοὶ τοίνυν τῶν κατ' ἐκείνην τὴν χώραν
[i.e. τῆς Ἰνδικῆς χώρας] Χριστιανῶν ... **καταλιπόντες κόσμον καὶ τὰ ἐν κόσμῳ** ...
Many Christians of that country ... abandoned the world and the affairs of the world ...

Barlaam and Ioasaph

- ... ἐν **πανερήμῳ** δέ τινα τῆς Σεννααρίτιδος
γῆς τὰς οἰκήσεις ποιούμενος (6,3–5, on the
ascetic dwellings of Barlaam)

... he made his dwelling in a certain absolute **wilderness** in the area of Senaar

- ... ἐν τῇ **πανερήμῳ** ταύτῃ ἀσκήσας ... τὴν
ὑπεράνθρωπον ἀσκησιν (40,63–65, on the
ascetic dwellings of Ioasaph)

... he led his superhuman ascetic life in that absolute **wilderness**

Ἦνίκα δὲ καὶ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ μοναστήρια ἤρξατο συνίστασθαι καὶ τὰ τῶν μοναχῶν ἀθροίζεσθαι πλήθι, καὶ τῆς ἐκείνων ἀρετῆς καὶ ἀγγελομιμήτου διαγωγῆς ἡ φήμη ... εἰς Ἰνδοὺς ἦκε καὶ πρὸς τὸν ὅμοιον ζῆλον καὶ τούτους διήγειρεν, ὥς πολλοὺς αὐτῶν πάντα **καταλιπόντας** καταλαβεῖν τὰς ἐρήμους καὶ ἐν σώματι θνητῷ τὴν πολιτείαν ἀνελιθέναι τῶν ἀσωμάτων ... (1,32–37, on the land of India)

When monasteries started to be established also in Egypt, and multitudes of monks began gathering, and the fame of their virtuous life and angelic conduct ... came to the **Indians**, and incited them too to the same zeal, so that **many of them abandoned** everything and took to the deserts and adopted the way of life of the incorporeal creatures, even though they were still in mortal bodies ...

Note also that the biblical phrase **κόσμον καὶ τὰ ἐν κόσμῳ** (1 Ioann. 2,15) is cited thrice also in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*: 2,138, 4,122–123, 12,18–19

Life of Theodore of Edessa 95,2–96

ἐκ τῶν βοτανῶν καὶ ἀκροδρῶν¹⁴, τροφήν πάνν¹⁵ βιαίαν καὶ ἀμυδρὰν πορίζόμενοι ...
sustaining themselves on a **very** austere and frugal **diet, consisting of herbs and acorns** ...

ὥς μηδενὸς ἔτι δεηθῆναι τῆς κοσμικῆς ὕλης, ἀλλὰ τῇ εὐτελεῇ ταύτῃ καὶ **πιναρᾷ** τροφῇ ἀρκεῖσθαι, καὶ ἐφῆδεσθαι αὐτῇ μᾶλλον, ἢ οἱ ἀβροδίατοι ταῖς πολυτελέσι τραπέζαις ...
that they had no need whatsoever of the materials of this world any more, but they were satisfied with this poor-quality, **squalid** food, and they took pleasure from it more than those who live in luxury and indulge in sumptuous meals ...

Οἱ τοίνυν ἄγριοι ἐκεῖνοι καὶ ἀνήμεροι θῆρες ... **συνδιαιτῶμενοι καὶ συναυλιζόμενοι** ...
Those wild and indomitable beasts ... **lived with them and became their companions** ...

Barlaam and Ioasaph

- ... βοτανῶν ἢ ἀκροδρῶν ἢ ἄρτου ξηροῦ καὶ πάνν σκληροῦ στοιχήσαντες διαίτη ...
(12,77–78, Barlaam speaking to Ioasaph about the ascetic life of the first monks)
... they embraced a **diet of herbs or acorns** or dried and **very** hard bread ...

- Ἡ μὲν διατροφή ἐκ τῶν εὕρισκομένων ἐστὶν ἀκροδρῶν καὶ βοτανῶν ...
(18,78–79, Barlaam speaking to Ioasaph about his and his fellow ascetics' life)
Our **sustenance** consists of **whatever acorns and herbs** we might find ...

- Ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς ἔφη: «Τοὺς δεινοὺς ὑμᾶς καὶ λαοπλάνους εἰκότως κολάζω, ὅτι πάντας ἀπατάτε, ὑποτιθέμενοι αὐτοῖς ἀπέχεσθαι τῶν τερπνῶν τοῦ βίου, καὶ ἀντὶ τῆς γλυκειᾶς ζωῆς καὶ τῆς ποθεινοτάτης ἐπιθυμίας καὶ ἡδονῆς τὴν σκληρὰν καὶ ῥυπώδη ταύτην καὶ **πιναρὰν** ἐκλέγεσθαι ἀγωγὴν ἐκβιάζεσθε ... (23,37–40, King Abenner arguing *against* asceticism in a debate with a monk)

The king said: “Rightly I punish you wily swindlers of the people, because you deceive everyone, by suggesting to them to abstain from the delights of life, and you force them to choose this rough, filthy, and **squalid** lifestyle in the stead of a sweet living and that most longed-for desire and pleasure ...”

- ... γυναῖκας δὲ εὐειδεῖς ... ποιήσον **συνδιαιτᾶσθαι** τε αὐτῷ καὶ **συναυλιζεσθαι** ...
(29,94–96, the evil magician Theudas is suggesting to Abenner to have his son surrounded only by beautiful women so that he can be led to temptation)
... make beautiful women ... **live with him and become his companions** ...

¹⁴ The same phrase is repeated later in the text (65,3: ἐκ τῶν φυσικῶν βοτανῶν καὶ ἀκροδρῶν τρεφόμενοι), when John's brother Theodosios the Stylite narrates his and his brother's joined ascetic practice.

¹⁵ “τροφήν πάνν βιαίαν καὶ ἀμυδρὰν” is the reading of version α, while version β reads βιαίαν καὶ ἀμυδρὰν τροφήν.

This identical diction speaks for itself and, if anything, points to some direct affinity between the two texts. It does not, however, determine the *exact* type of affinity. Are we dealing with the same author, or with two authors, one influenced by or copying the other, working on similar themes and with a similar imagination?

Forms of Composition

With the wording of the above passage, we have already entered matters of *formal* commonality between the two texts. Both texts are built in a similar “multi-discursive” fashion. The basic structure follows a double route. First, an extensive narrative frame for the execution of the text is set: the biography of Theodore of Edessa in his *Life* and the biography of Ioasaph in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*. Within this large frame, smaller textual units of various kinds are then included, switching between different discursive modes. This shared encasing “building-block” approach is evident not only at the level of narrative structure, but, more significantly for us here, at the level of textual rendition. That the Greek *Barlaam and Ioasaph* is expressed as a mosaic of quotations, smaller and sometimes larger textual bits, introduced verbatim or with minor alterations, from a large gamut of earlier Greek texts, especially from the *Menologion* of Symeon Metaphrastes, is by now an undeniable fact, as demonstrated in the edition of Volk and Johannes Grossmann’s review of it.¹⁶ That the *Life* and the *Chapters* of Theodore are *exactly* the same in this regard has not been noted previously, however.

This intertextual technique will be analyzed in greater detail below (chapter 3.2), and is evident in the apparatus of sources in our edited text. Here, we need only remark the following. In this regard, *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and the *Life* of Theodore and then the *Chapters* and the *Life* do not simply share the technique itself—which one could argue is present in a large majority of Byzantine Greek texts (though never, in our view, in this particular fashion). Rather, all three works and, especially *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and the *Life* of Theodore additionally share by and large the same referential canon of quoted, cited, or alluded texts.¹⁷ Metaphrastes’ *Menologion* takes up the lion’s share: nearly 450 cases in

¹⁶ Though in earlier studies (1996 and 2003) as well as in the introduction (2009) and the apparatus of his edition (2006) Volk posited that Metaphrastes was the one who borrowed phrases from *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, in his most recent overview of the text (2016, 415–6), he seems to rightly accept the thoroughly well-argued position by Grossmann (2009 and 2012) for the opposite traffic of influence, namely from Metaphrastes’ *Menologion* to *Barlaam and Ioasaph*.

¹⁷ For the few cases, where all three texts overlap, see Gouillard 1947, 143–4 (who, however, did not notice the similar usage in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*) and the relevant notes in the *app. font.* for sections 39,4 and 46,3, 39,7, 46,1, and 48,1 and 69,1. Two further previously unidentified instances, where

the *Life*, and more than 390 recorded in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, with a notable number of these borrowings being in both cases extensive quotations.¹⁸

Even more impressively, in great many instances the two works even share the very same textual bits. Here is just one typical example (not recorded in Volk):

<i>Menologion of Metaphrastes</i>	<i>Barlaam and Ioasaph</i>	<i>Life of Theodore of Edessa</i>
... ἐπιθυμίαν δὲ εἶχον ἀκόρεστον καὶ ἀκατάσχετον ἔρωτα τῷ ἐν βορβόρῳ κυλίσσθαι (Ps.-Sophr. Hieros. Vita Mariae Aegyptiacae [a Sym. Met. in menologium inserta] 2 [3712,1-3]) ... I had an unquenchable desire and an unrestrainable passion for wallowing in the mire.	... ἀκατασχέτῳ τινὶ πόθῳ κατείχετο γλιχόμενος ἐντυχεῖν τινὶ τῷ δυναμένῳ τὴν αὐτοῦ πληροφορησθαι καρδίαν καὶ λόγον ἀγαθὸν ταῖς αὐτοῦ ἀκοαῖς ἐνηχῆσαι (5,130-2) ... he was overcome by an unrestrainable yearning , longing to come across a man who could provide assurance to his heart and resound his ears with beneficial words. - ... πόθῳ τινὶ καὶ ἔρωτι ἀκατασχέτῳ ζητῶ λόγον ἀκούσαι καινόν τινα καὶ ἀγαθόν, καὶ πῦρ ἔνδοθεν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ μου δεινῶς φλέγον με ἐκκέκασται ... (6,83-5) ... I have a longing and an unrestrainable passion to hear some different and beneficial word, and a fire has been kindled in my heart, fiercely burning ...	... δεινῶ τινὶ ἔρωτι τρωθεῖσα τοῦ νεανίσκου, ἀκατασχέτῳ τῇ ἐπιθυμίᾳ ἐξεκαύθη (24,7) ... wounded by a fierce passion for the young man, she was consumed by unrestrainable desire .

Barlaam and Ioasaph and the *Chapters*, but not Theodore's *Life*, overlap, see chapter 3.2 (section "Borrowings as Style" below).

¹⁸ The number is certainly bigger, especially in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, since many have remained unrecorded in the edition of Volk. In the above number, we have counted not only rewritings and new compositions in the Metaphrastic *Menologion*, but also those texts which were inserted in it with little (if any) alteration and which are treated as separate, earlier texts in Volk's edition (though see the remarks in Volk 2009, 117-8).

The phrase “unrestrainable passion” comes from Mary of Egypt’s autobiographical narrative that occupies a large part of her popular biography, attributed to Sophronios of Jerusalem and inserted without intervention into Metaphrastes’ *Menologion*. The locution is employed, in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, in order to express Ioasaph’s ardent craving to listen to Barlaam’s teachings and, in the *Life* of Theodore, the sexual fervor of Seïs eager to seduce Michael, the later martyr.¹⁹ Such cases are numerous, pointing toward an identical intertextual habit and a near-identical corpus of citable texts and, indeed, toward a single creative agent, who in his display of a spectacular “textual memory” often returns to the same apparatus of borrowed words and phrases.²⁰

In fact, as we have already seen in the case of the description of India cited above, and even as displayed in an admittedly minute fashion in the just quoted passages on “uncontrollable desire” (note, that is, how the “δεινῶς φλέγον” of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* likely reverberates in the “δεινῶ τιτι ξρωπι” of the *Life* of Theodore), the referential game of the two texts in several cases includes mainly and, occasionally, *only* two players: *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and the *Life* of Theodore. Already Volk observed the many similar (often identical) shared phrases, and recorded nearly 50 such cases in his apparatus (Volk 2006, 491 and 2009, 83). In our edition, we were able to raise this overlap to a staggering number of nearly 400 instances, 25 of these are purely, let us say, “bi-textual” between only the two compositions.

Textual coincidences such as these can, one might argue, do occur elsewhere in Byzantine writing, but their sheer number unearthed in our edition is such that one cannot but conclude that either the author of the one text has copied the other in a thorough and unprecedented fashion or that both texts were composed by a single person. The degree and, as we shall see below, intricacy of the similarities point without doubt, in our view, to the latter rather than the former scenario. Yes, pre-modern writers could be exceptionally skilled in imitation, quotation, and even forgery, but the textual links between the two compositions are woven so deeply and so widely into their fabric that, unless we should imagine an author who has been cloned, they must be the product of one and the same mind.



But who could this discursively highly competent person be? So far, we have looked only at *intra*-textual features that unite both texts. Let us now examine the extra-textual ones.

¹⁹ It is irrelevant to our argument here if the author of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and *Theodore of Edessa* read the *Life* of Mary of Egypt in a manuscript of Metaphrastes’ *Menologion* (most likely) or not.

²⁰ For the term in quotes, see Messis and Papaioannou 2021a.

Date of Composition and Place of Early Circulation

There are some secure *post quem* and *ante quem* dates for both *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and the *Life* of Theodore. To start with, as is obvious from the above, both texts must post-date Symeon Metaphrastes' *Menologion*. We do not know exactly when the composition of this 10-volume work began or when it ended, under the direction of Metaphrastes—whose biographical bookends are also uncertain, though he likely died during the last decade of the tenth century. At least parts of his *Menologion* date certainly to after 976 and it seems that its creation ended sometime in the 980s.²¹

In the case of the *Life* of Theodore of Edessa an additional and most probably later *post quem* can be adduced from the fact that more than 10 of its passages (some of them quite lengthy) are copied directly from the *Life* of Symeon the Stylite the Younger, which was composed by a friend of Symeon Metaphrastes, namely Nikephoros Ouranos, who died not long after 1007.²² Ouranos too must have written his text *after* a time when Metaphrastes' *Menologion* was well underway or even had been concluded, since Ouranos too follows the same technique of his friend Metaphrastes, borrowing phraseology from Symeon's *Menologion*. Ouranos' late years, and more specifically the period of his stay in Antioch during the first years of the eleventh century, seem the most likely context for the composition of a text honoring a legendary figure of early Byzantine monasticism in the environs of that important Syrian city.²³

As for an *ante quem*, we possess fixed and strikingly close to each other dates for both texts. They derive from two early transmitting manuscripts:

- **May 1021** for *Barlaam and Ioasaph*: Kiev, National Library of Ukraine V. I. Vernadskyj, OTIC 3692 (Diktyon 37437); ms. B in Volk's edition;
- and **June 19, 1023** for *Theodore of Edessa*: Mosq. Synod. gr. 15 (Diktyon 43640); ms. A in our edition—A notably contains also a version of Ouranos' *Life* of Symeon the Stylite the Younger.

Both texts, therefore, were composed sometime after the 980s (and *Theodore of Edessa* likely after the early 1000s) and before the years 1021 and 1023, respectively.

²¹ The year 982 has been proposed by Christian Høgel as a possible date for the conclusion of work on the *Menologion*; see Høgel 2019, 256 with 2002, 61–88, 118–20, and 127–9. Magdalino (2013, 223 and 2017, 10) links the creation and abrupt end of the *Menologion* with the career and patronage of Basil Lekapenos, active from 959 to 985. On Metaphrastes and his *Menologion*, see also Beck, 1959, 570–5, PmbZ 27504, Papaioannou 2017, vii–xxvi, and 2021c, 502–11.

²² Cf. Binggeli 2010, 96 (the first scholar to notice this): “the beginning of the *Life* of Theodore of Edessa, which relates the saint's childhood, plagiarizes Nicephorus's text”.

²³ Cf. Van Den Ven 1962, 1:34*–45* (on p. 36* the text is dated “most likely during [Ouranos'] stay in Antioch”, namely the years 999–ca. 1006/1007).

Even if this time-span can be further reduced (as we shall argue below; 2.3), and even if there are further similarities in the manuscript transmission of the two texts, the above is enough for us here as we try to identify the possible candidate for their authorship.

To this purpose, we should also highlight the additional shared *geographical* provenance of the two aforementioned dated manuscripts that reveals to us the context of the first circulation, if not the creation, of both texts. Kiev Bibl. Acad. Scient. Ucrain. V 3692, copied by a certain Theodotos or Theodosios, comes from Mount Athos—possibly from the Great Lavra founded in 962/963 by Athanasios the Athonite (d. 1000/1001); and Synod. gr. 15 was copied by Theophanes, a monk of Μονὴ τῶν Ἰβήρων, the monastery of the Georgians that is, co-founded on Athos in the early 979/980 by a close associate of Athanasios, a nobleman from Georgia, John the Iberian (ca. 930–1005).²⁴

Georgian Hypotexts

The Georgian connection is crucial, as again each of the two Greek texts presupposes a distinct, earlier Georgian text, which was translated as well as revised in the Greek versions.²⁵

In the case of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, the Georgian hypotext is, as is well known, a relatively lengthy composition of the ninth century, titled *Life and Acts of the Blessed Iodasap', Son of Abenes, King of the Indians, whom the Blessed Father Balahvar the Teacher Converted*, usually referred to with the shorter title *Balavariani*.²⁶ The single manuscript copy of the *Balavariani*—namely, Jerusalem, Greek Patriarchate, *Georg.* 140—dates to the last decades of the eleventh century and was copied at a Georgian monastery near Jerusalem with strong ties to Iviron. Thus, the original Georgian manuscript which served as a model for *Georg.* 140 could likely have come from the Athonite monastery of the Georgians itself, even if the original Georgian text was most certainly not created on Athos.

²⁴ The Athonite context and dates of these manuscripts have been brought up as a significant argument for the shared authorship of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and *Theodore of Edessa* also in Datiashvili 1973 and Volk 2009, 84.

²⁵ The fact that both Georgian texts were *themselves* based on earlier Arabic hypotexts is not relevant to our discussion here.

²⁶ For the Georgian text, see Abuladze 1957 (edition), and also Chelidze 2007; Lang 1966 (Engl. trans.); Mahé and Mahé 1993 (French trans.). On the name *Balavariani*, see Volk 2009, 98. In general, regarding the relation between the Greek and its Georgian hypotext, see the overview in Volk 2009, 55–8 with 98–115; from the earlier bibliography, we may highlight Lang 1957, Kekelidze 1960, 41–71 (“ბალავარის რომანი ქრისტიანულ მწერლობაში [The Romance of Balavar in Christian Literature]”), and Abuladze 1966; see also recently Khintibidze 2024.

In the case of the Greek the *Life* of Theodore, the hypotext is, as has been well established, a martyrdom account titled *Passion of St. Michael who was in the Great Lavra of Our Holy Father Sabas*.²⁷ Its earliest copy (though again certainly not the text itself) comes again from Iviron, *Ivir. georg.* 8 (ff. 223rb–231rb), a manuscript dated to the end of the tenth century.²⁸

There is, of course, yet again an apparent difference between the two Greek texts in relation to their Georgian predecessors. Unlike the more or less full narrative correspondence between *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and the *Balavariani*, since the former follows the latter's overall base story from beginning to end, the Georgian *Passion* of Michael provides the basis for only a narrative segment of the Greek *Life* of Theodore, a total of ca. 15% of the text, and no other precise Georgian hypo-text or story has been so far identified for the rest of the main tale—we shall return to these complications below. Nevertheless, what is important for us here is that the author of both Greek texts *must* have known Georgian.

1.4. THE AUTHOR

The question then is: who lived between the 980s and the 1020s and was likely active on Athos and, indeed, in the monastery of Iviron specifically, was moreover a person well-read in Greek liturgical, hagiographical, theological, and monastic literature and able to imitate the relatively high-register Greek of Symeon Metaphrastes, and, finally, was someone who knew Georgian quite well, and could thus pen both *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and the *Life* of Theodore?

Readers have surely guessed the answer, just as Robert Volk did, who proposed the correct name, for *both* texts, a bit more than fifteen years ago (2009, 81–6): Euthymios, called “the Iberian” in Greek (Εὐθύμιος ὁ Ἰβήρ) and “the Hagiorite” in Georgian (Ep’twme Mt’ac’mindeli = “of the Holy Mountain”). Euthymios was born in Georgia in the 950s and spent time in Constantinople as a high-born hostage in the mid-960s. He then lived on Athos and in Iviron since that monastery's foundation in 979/980—the monastery was co-founded by the aforementioned John, who was none other than Euthymios' father—and served as its abbot from June 1005 to the summer of 1019. He died on May 13,

²⁷ We shall refer to this Georgian hypotext as the *Passion of Michael the Sabaite* or, simply, the Georgian *Passion* of Michael (or *Passio s. Michaelis* [iber.] in the *app. font.*): Kekelidze 1918: 165–73 (edition); Peeters 1930 (Latin translation, reproduced in our *app. font.*, and discussion); Blanchard 1994 (English translation, referenced in what follows, and discussion); see also Gabidzashvili 2004, 290 (no. 838) and Roggema 2009. That this Georgian text is the hypotext for the episode of Michael in *Theodore of Edessa*, see Peeters 1912a, 7 (citing a remark by R. P. Vailhé), Peeters 1930, and Kekelidze 1960, 18–40 (“რომანი აბუკურა და მისი ორი რედაქცია ძველ ქართულ მწერლობაში [The Novel Abukura and Its Two Redactions in the Old Georgian Literature]”).

²⁸ Datashvili 1973 also notes the Iviron connection of the Georgian *Passion* of Michael for establishing the authorship of *Theodore of Edessa*.

1028. He was bilingual and highly literate in both Greek and Georgian. He was well-acquainted with the Byzantine literary ecclesiastical canon, having written numerous translations of Greek texts (including hagiographies from Symeon Metaphrastes' *Menologion*). Not only was he active precisely at the time-span that concerns us here, but he was also well-connected to aforementioned personalities such as Athanasios the Athonite and Nikephoros Ouranos. In fact, to add the proverbial cherry on the cake, the also aforementioned Theophanes (who died sometime *after* 1028), the scribe of Synod. gr. 15 in June 1023, was a close associate of Euthymios. As is thus obvious, Theophanes copied *Theodore of Edessa* and another Athonite scribe copied *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, while their Athonite author was still alive and busy with his translations from Georgian into Greek and from Greek into Georgian.²⁹

We have kept the name of Euthymios unmentioned thus far because we wanted to offer a somewhat clean plate for the investigation into the author of the *Life* of Theodore even if, given the demonstrated above affinity of *Theodore* to the much better known *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, our discussion would by nature involve the issue of the latter's authorship as well.

Until very recently, that issue itself remained a thorny and hotly debated one. Yet it should be, we think, considered settled in a definite fashion. Though some of the details of the process by which Euthymios produced the Greek text of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* transmitted in manuscripts and later translations still remain unclear or understudied, Volk's extensive introduction to his edition of that work has fully put to rest any doubt that Euthymios was *indeed* its author.³⁰

There is thus no need to review here all the arguments and history of the scholarship on who penned the Greek *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, which have been after all conducted independently from any examination of the authorship of the *Life* of Theodore of Edessa (with the exception, as noted, of Datiashvili and Volk, both whom were nevertheless also primarily concerned with *Barlaam and Ioasaph*). We may, however, mention two last facts which have figured prominently in that scholarship about *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and are relevant to the authorship of the *Life* of Theodore as well.

Firstly, in the case of Theodore's *Life*, in all its transmitting manuscripts and translations, the text remained pseudonymous, attributed to the fictive Basil,

²⁹ For Euthymios' biography, all the information discussed above, and relevant bibliography, see chapter 2 below.

³⁰ Volk 2009, 1–95 (though see Volk 2016, 421 and n. 40 below). On the issue of authorship, see also most recently Shurgaia 2019 with much of the earlier bibliography, which points to some open questions, and Shurgaia 2020 which carefully reviews anew all the evidence and endorses further Euthymios' authorship. Of the earlier bibliography, essential remain the studies of Peeters 1931 and Lang 1957 and 1967; see also Khintibidze 1977.

bishop of Emesa. In the case of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* by contrast, a text which circulated predominantly *anonymously*—with only the aforementioned fictive John the monk of Saint Sabas presented as a transmitter (though *not* author) in the likely original title of the story in most of the manuscript tradition—the name of Euthymios did enter the transmission of the title of the text in some rare cases. It thus appears in two Greek manuscripts (both dating *after* the death of Euthymios, however) and in one fourteenth-century manuscript of the Latin translation (BHL 979b), itself made in 1048 in Constantinople.³¹ This most likely *posthumous* attribution (whatever its complications) cannot be coincidental and has thus been marshalled as an important proof for the Euthymian authorship of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*; as such, it has its place in our discussion as well.

Secondly, there are two instances where Euthymios is mentioned as the author of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* independently of its manuscript and translation transmission. The second mention is dated to 1048, when manuscript Kutaisi, Niko Berdzenishvili State Historical Museum, 20 was copied, containing a version of the *Preface* (itself dateable to ca. 1001/1002–June 1005) of Euthymios' father John.³² That version includes a reference to Euthymios as the author of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*. Yet this reference, as has been argued rightly in our view, is a later interpolation into the *Preface*, based on an earlier instance, dated to the early 1040s, where again the Greek *Barlaam and Ioasaph* is attributed to Euthymios.³³ In that second instance, also a reference to what appears to be *Theodore of Edessa* is brought up, and this makes it of more interest to us here.

Namely, in the hagiographical *Life* of Euthymios and his father John, a text composed in Iviron by George III Hagiorites sometime between December 1041 and September 1045, we read the following, cited here in English (GRD 1) and French (M-H 5) translation:

³¹ See Volk 2009, 87–92 with a new discussion of the evidence in Shurgaia 2022; cf. Shurgaia 2020, 921–6. The two Greek mss. are:

Marc. gr. VII. 26 (coll. 1431) (Diktyon 70543; siglum **M** in Volk's edition), dateable to the 12th/13th c. (so Volk 2009, 476–82, who dates, rightly in our view, the title to still a later, 15th-c. hand; Shurgaia 2022, argues for an 11th-c. date for both the ms. and the title), and

Paris. gr. 1771 (Diktyon *51397), dateable to the second half of the 14th c. (Volk 2009, 421–4; siglum **L**). Latin Ms.: Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele III, VIII.B.10, dateable to the 14th c. (Volk 2009, 32–3, 495–8; see also Martínez Gázquez 1997).

Unfortunately, the earliest dated manuscript of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, namely the aforementioned Kievan ms., copied while Euthymios was alive (May 1021), is missing the beginning pages of the text.

³² For the dating of the ms., see Nikoladze 1953, 95.

³³ See Peeters 1931, 284–5 and also Volk 2009, 81; Khintibidze 2021–2022, 80–4 and Shurgaia 2022, 339 consider the mention as original to the *Preface*.

... the sweetness of his translations reaches the land not only of Kartli [i.e. Eastern Georgia, *Iberia* in Greek sources] but also of Greece [i.e. Byzantium], because he translated *Balavariani* and *Abu Qurrah* and several other books from Georgian into Greek ...

... la suavité de ses traductions résonne partout ... non seulement au Kartli, mais aussi dans le monde grec, puisqu'il a traduit du géorgien en grec *Balahvar*, *Abukurra* et un certain nombre d'autres textes ...³⁴

There has been again some debate as to what these two names, *Balahvar* and *Abukuraj* (in transcribed Georgian), refer. The scholarly consensus is that they denote the Georgian hypotexts for the Greek *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and the *Passion of Michael the Sabaite*, the latter narrated by <Theodore> Abū Qurrah, the famous theologian of the second half of the eighth and the beginning of the ninth century.³⁵

Given everything which we have presented thus far, no doubt remains, in our view, that those two Greek works are indeed meant. It is noteworthy, we may add, that George, following medieval conventions in book designations, used the name of just one of the main characters in the works in question—*Balahvar* (for the *Balavariani*, i.e. *Barlaam and Ioasaph*) and *Abū Qurrah* (for the *Passion of Michael*, i.e. the *Life* of Theodore of Edessa). Moreover, for using the latter designation, George was further incited not only by the presence of Theodore Abū Qurrah as a character in the Georgian *Passion*, but also by the fact that in its Greek rendition the work focused on his double, Theodore of Edessa, and even included also a work attributed to him, namely the *Chapters*. It is also important to keep in mind the trustworthiness of George's testimony, as for all other texts he lists in the *Life*, namely the many translations by Euthymios from Greek into Georgian (GRD 13; M-H 25), we possess external evidence that confirms George's attributions.³⁶

In any case, George's testimony is ultimately not essential to establish that *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, the *Life* of Theodore of Edessa (which includes the *Passion* of Michael), and the *Chapters* of Theodore appended to the *Life* could only have been written by Euthymios the Iberian. That we have George's testimony is just another piece in a very long chain of clues.

³⁴ The statement is also echoed in the 11th-c. Georgian *synaxarion* entry on Euthymios (May 13) where we read that Euthymios translated "not only from Greek into Georgian but also from Georgian into Greek"; see Lefort, Oikonomidès, and Papachryssanthou 1985, 4–5 (with a summary of the text, including the just cited words in quotation).

³⁵ See Kekelidze 1960, 18–40 (cited above, n. 27) with Volk 2009, 43–83 (with a review of all the arguments); for *Abukuraj*, see also Ingoroqva 1938 (where also a discussion of the versified form of the prose of the Georgian *Passion*), Datashvili 1973, and Khintibidze 1996, 161–3.

³⁶ See the relevant notes in Martin-Hisard 1991, 103–8.



Let us recapitulate. That *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and the *Life* and the *Chapters* of Theodore should be read together and that Euthymios is their author must be the two starting points from which any interpretation of *Theodore of Edessa*, our subject here, can begin. All, that is, earlier close readings and overviews of the *Life* of Theodore (usually, we might add, read independently of the *Chapters*), which were based on various mistaken suppositions about the context of its creation, are therefore in need of re-examination.³⁷ Such a re-reading is offered in what follows.³⁸ Its aim is to reconstruct the socio-historical and literary world and also the literary modes in and with which the *Life* and the *Chapters* of Theodore—and by consequence *Barlaam and Ioasaph* as well—came into existence and, furthermore, retrace the fictional world that Euthymios' *Theodore of Edessa* created, the literary and cultural needs and expectations it satisfied or, in some respects, challenged or even disrupted, and finally its later transmission, circulation, and reception.

First and foremost, however, through all the above, our primary objective will be to establish Euthymios as an extraordinary literary author, firmly situated within the history of Byzantine Greek literature (and not only of the Georgian tradition, as has been the case thus far). For Euthymios remains an undeservedly overlooked figure. Histories of Byzantine literature leave him unmentioned or rejected, while encyclopedias of Byzantine history and culture ignore his Greek literary output.³⁹ Even defenders of Euthymios as staunch as David M. Lang and Robert Volk have not fully accepted his ability to be an accomplished Greek author on his own—Lang imagined some intervention of Symeon Metaphrastes in the creation of the preserved *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, while Volk, in closing his most recent overview of the subject, expressed a similar uncertainty: "... whether Euthymios only delivered a raw Greek translation from the original Georgian, and an unknown person then expanded it to create the Barlaam romance as

³⁷ For a comprehensive list of these studies, see the *Appendix* to this chapter below.

³⁸ See also our earlier Messis and Papaioannou 2021b, 199 (also 202 and 208); Papaioannou 2021c, 486; Caseau and Messis 2021, 245 and 268–9; Caseau and Messis 2024; Papaioannou 2026a and 2026b. In a forthcoming publication, Nana Chikvatia and Lasha Tkebuchava also confirm the attribution of *Theodore of Edessa* to Euthymios and point to some crucial affinities between *Theodore of Edessa* and some of Euthymios' translations from Greek into Georgian; we would like to thank the two Georgian scholars for sharing their research before publication.

³⁹ No mention of Euthymios as an author of Greek literature exists in Hunger 1978 and Rosenqvist 2007. He figures briefly in the discussion of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* in Beck 1959 (482–3, at 482), Beck 1971 (35–41, at 38–9), and Kazhdan 1999 (95–105, at 95–6), where the attribution to Euthymios is, however, either outright rejected (Beck 1959 and Kazhdan 1999) or seriously doubted (Beck 1971); similar is the attitude in the ODB entry on Euthymios (Kazhdan 1991a). For recent research that moves toward the re-habilitation of Euthymios, *also* as a Byzantine Greek author, see Papaioannou 2021a *passim*.

we have it, or whether he personally wrote the entire Greek text, we cannot be sure".⁴⁰ Accordingly, *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and also the *Life* of Theodore and the *Chapters* by Theodore—often cited without attribution beyond the pseudography of Basil of Emesa for the former and Theodore of Edessa for the latter—, occupy an uncertain place (*Barlaam and Ioasaph*) and a truly minor one (the *Life* and the *Chapters*), if they ever come into view at all. Indeed, beyond specialized studies, none of the three texts nor certainly their author Euthymios have been given the due attention they merit *within* the larger frame of Byzantine literary history.

In an attempt to partly fill this gap, let us proceed with our next step, which is to sketch out the bio-ergo-graphy of Euthymios within the context of late tenth- and early eleventh-century Byzantium.

Appendix: Earlier studies regarding the person and, primarily, the *Life* of Theodore of Edessa

The bibliographical items are placed in chronological order. We first present lemmas in encyclopedias and discussions in handbooks, general histories, and the like (A), and then stand-alone related articles and references in monographs (B). In parentheses, we note, eclectically, significant views:

(A) Lemmas in encyclopedias and discussions in handbooks, general histories, and the like:

Albert Ehrhard in Krumbacher 1897, 151–2; Gouillard 1946; Beck 1959, 558–9;

Papadopoulos 1965 (with a rightly very cautious attitude toward the historicity of the saint);

Spidlik 1965 (= 2000);

Angarano 1969;

Kazhdan 1991b ("Most probably the *vita* was an apologetic work produced in the 10th c. ... within the milieu connected with the St. Sabas monastery, or, less probably, in Constantinople");

DOHD (1998), 98–9;

Kazhdan 1999, 99 ("in Constantinople, in the milieu of Palestinian émigrés, as may well have been the case with the *Vita* of Theodore of Edessa");

Todt 2010 (dates the *Life* of Theodore to simply "before 1023", denies any historicity in its account, and claims that the text is "a hagiographical novel which was written by an author who had never been in the East and knew almost nothing about Islam");

Johnson 2015, 77–8 (follows Griffith 2001 [see below], but also proposes mid-9th-c. Edessa as another possible place of creation);

Tkachëv and Zvereva 2023, the most comprehensive lemma on *Theodore of Edessa* (Tkachëv, responsible for the textual part, wishes to retain the historicity of both Theodore—whose

⁴⁰ See Lang 1967, xxxi–xxxii and Volk 2016, 421; cf. Khintibidze 1996, 269–79 who reviews and rightly rejects the views of Lang, but also the related views of Kekelidze and Tarchnišvili (though some of the ideas put forward by Khintibidze are themselves rather questionable).

life he dates from 792/3 to 869—and his biographer and proposes the possibility that Basil's original work has been lost, and “an anonymous author [10th-12th centuries]” reworked it, adding all the novelistic elements).

See also: <https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/oeuvre/13490/> (*Pinakes*, entry of the *Life*, which lists 18 mss.).

(B) Articles and books:

Vasilievskij 1886, 263–5 (appendix); Ehrhard 1893, 53–4; Phokylides 1911;

Loparev 1912, 40–64 (the *Life* relates a true story, and a chronology for Theodore's biography is proposed: birth ca. 793, baptism in 795, beginning of education in 798, loss of parents in 811 [father] and 812 [mother], monk at St Sabas between 813 and 836, the year of his elevation to the episcopal seat of Edessa, trip to Constantinople between 850 and 856, and death in the 860s);

Bonwetsch 1921;

Peeters 1930 (p. 91, on the context of the creation of *Theodore of Edessa*: “l'époque où l'Église byzantine venait de reprendre pied dans l'ancienne province transeuphratesienne à la suite des campagnes victorieuses de Nicéphore Phocas et de Jean Tzimiscès”);

Vasiliev 1942–1943 (follows Loparev 1912 regarding the historicity of the tale and refines the chronology, linking Theodore's elevation to the Edessan bishopric with the supposed meeting of three Eastern patriarchs and the issuing of a letter to Emperor Theophilos in 836 [BHG 1386; with Munitiz et al. 1997]; a rather “unlikely presumption” as argued by Griffith [e.g. 1986, 132] and most other scholars [see e.g. Todt 2010 as well as the entries PmbZ 926, 1121, and 3397 on the relevant three Patriarchs, Basil of Jerusalem, Christopher of Alexandria, and Job of Antioch]);

Gouillard 1947 (the basic article on the *Chapters*, without attribution to any specific author; on p. 137, the following remark on the authorship and dating of the *Life*: “l'auteur, quelque moine sabaïte du Xe siècle”);

Abel 1949; Griffith 1986, 131–2;

Nasrallah 1987, 159–62 (believes in the historicity of Michael's *Passion*, and considers the Greek *Theodore of Edessa* the creation of a plagiarist, living in the 10th c. and using an Arabic original);

Kazhdan 1988 (=1993), 1201–3 and 1205 (*Theodore of Edessa* is modelled after *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, which Kazhdan positions to “the corpus of Sabaïte apologetic literature of around 800”);

Griffith 1994 (p. 132: “sometime in the second half or the tenth century”); Griffith 1998, 168–83 (p. 180: the *Life* of Theodore “in all probability dates in its present form from the second half of the tenth century ... in the Melkite circles in Antioch”);

Griffith 1999, 17–22; Griffith 2001 (p. 149: the *Life* of Theodore is “an important document illustrative of the religious thought of the ‘Melkite’ community in the world of Islam and of the role of Mar Saba Monastery in defining the ‘Melkite’ ecclesiastical identity”; and p. 154: the text was “produced in the émigré monastic milieu in Constantinople, not in the ninth century, but in the tenth century, by a now unknown writer who freely made use of information available to him from Palestine a century earlier”);

- Lamoraux 2002 (p. 28: “The hero of this *Life* is a [fictitious?] bishop of Edessa ... The account ... seems to have been drawn up no later than the tenth century, perhaps at the monastery of Mar Sabas”);
- Swanson 2003 (follows Peeters, Abel, and Griffith, and dates the text to the second half of the tenth century);
- Rydén 2006, 264–8 (264: “according to inner criteria it was written in the second half of the ninth century, but it may also have been written later [i.e. “tenth century”, citing Kazhdan’s ODB entry and Gouillard 1947]”);
- Signes Codoñer 2006, 98–103 (dates the text to the middle of the tenth century);
- Binggeli 2010 (p. 96: *Theodore of Edessa* “was composed in the first decades of the eleventh century in the region of Antioch after the Byzantine re-conquest”);
- Géhin 2013, 26–7 (see below Outtier and Géhin 2022);
- Signes Codoñer 2014, 415–20 (proposes that an earlier, “shorter version of the *Life of Theodore* existed before the present one”, and is also inclined some historicity behind the events narrated in the *Life*);
- Afinogenov 2015 (the only other scholar, along with Tkachëv 2023, to reintroduce the thesis of Loparev 1912 and Vasiliev 1942–1943, also in relation to the *Letter* of the three patriarchs [BHG 1386; cf. also Signes Codoñer 2014, 378–84 and 405–6], and accept fully the historicity of Theodore and his nephew Basil);
- Sahner 2018, 109–10 and 128–9 (p. 109, on *Theodore of Edessa*: “written in Greek in the ninth century in either Edessa, Palestine, or Constantinople and then translated into Arabic”);
- Mgebrishvili 2021 (considers *Theodore of Edessa* a narrative that mixes the story of two real historical figures, an early 8th-c. Sabaite monk named Theodore and Theodore Abū Qurrah, who lived a century later);
- Outtier and Géhin 2022, 405–14 (leaning toward, without expressly adopting however, the views of Volk 2009, 82–5 regarding the *Life* and also raise, rather hesitantly, the possibility that Euthymios was also the author of the *Chapters*).
- Labadie 2024, 310 (“X^e siècle ... d’un ... milieu melkite”).

2. Euthymios the Iberian and *Theodore of Edessa* in Context

We are foreigners, and you too are a foreigner
(John the Iberian to the brother of the duke of Benevento
as reported in the *Life* of Euthymios; GRD 14 = M-H 27)

*A certain distinguished man,
called Euthymios, adorned by a perfect life and perfect discourse*
(Athanasios of Panagiou,
Life of Athanasios of Athos 90,28–31)

*A luminous star of our nation,
the great Euthymios,
shone upon us, light and joy,
... It was because of our lack of education
and our ignorance that the Greeks called us barbarians,
but now, by means of his God-given wisdom,
he has elevated us to their level*
(*Life* of George Hagiorites; GRD² 1 = M-H² 3)

2.1. EUTHYMIOS' BIOGRAPHY

Euthymios was privileged enough to have his own biographer—someone who did not know him personally but who, despite being excessive in his praise in accordance with the conventions of the hagiographic genre, was able to create a biographical outline that appears to adhere closely to the historical facts. The latter is inferred from other texts of the time: contemporary documents, prefaces (most notably John's *Preface* of ca. 1001/1002–June 1005), notes and colophons of several manuscripts, copied while Euthymios was alive and soon thereafter, but also another hagiography, a Georgian *Synaxarion* dated to prior to 1044 and produced likely soon after Euthymios' death with entries for Euthymios and his father John.¹

¹ On the Georgian *synaxaria* concerning John (June 14; a very brief entry) and Euthymios (May 13, a more extensive lemma), see Lefort, Oikonomidès, and Papachryssanthou 1985, 4–5 with Volk

The biographer's name, already mentioned above, was George, known as George III Hagiorites (Giorgi Mt'ac'mindeli), born in ca. 1009 in Georgia.² In his early teens and until ca. 1034, George spent about 12 years in Constantinople, where he acquired an advanced Greek education. He then returned as a monk to Georgia before traveling to the Black Mountain near Antioch as well as Jerusalem. He arrived at the monastery of Iviron around 1040, twelve years after Euthymios' death in 1028, and he settled on Mount Athos for about fifteen years. He came there to fulfil a mission entrusted to him by his spiritual father, George the Recluse (d. 1068), a prominent figure of Iberian monasticism in Syria.³ The mission was to continue the work begun by Euthymios, namely the translation of Greek texts into Georgian. George became a priest in 1042 and abbot of Iviron in 1044, a position he held until 1054 or 1056, when he decided to return to the Black Mountain. He died in 1065 in Athens.

George was not just an ordinary monk. He was an important enough figure within the Georgian community in Byzantium to be entrusted with the leadership of Iviron, which until then had been led by members of the founders' family. Thus, the text he wrote, sometime between December 1041 and September 1045 (the oldest manuscript of the text dates to 1074 and was copied on Athos), about his predecessors and founders of the monastery was to serve as a kind of official history of Iviron.⁴ It includes the biographies of John, Euthymios' father, and

2009, 78–9 and 81 and Shurgaia 2022, 339; on the dating, see Kurtsikidze 2017 with Otkhmezuri and Raphava 2022, 187. Euthymios' *synaxarion* has been edited in Abuladze 1968, 331–40 and, now, Dolakidze and Chitunashvili 2018, and is preserved in “5 manuscripts of the 11th century ... and 11 manuscripts of the 12th–13th centuries” (so Kurtsikidze 2017); on this *synaxarion*, see also Samushia 2021. For the documents, see Lefort, Oikonomidès, and Papachryssanthou 1985 with the overview in PmbZ 21960. A later (15th-c.?) Greek *synaxarion* of Euthymios (BHG 653; text edited in Fonkič 1982) as well as a lengthier, 18th-c. *vita* of John, Euthymios, and George, founders of Iviron (BHG 2143) also exist. The latter, though wholly derivative from the earlier Georgian and Greek texts, is a delightful novelistic retelling of Euthymios' life. The former is based (as it appears) on the Georgian biographical tradition about Euthymios, but has its own inflections and makes minor revisions.

² On George, see PmbZ 22259 together with, especially, Martin-Hisard 2006–2007 and also Grdzelidze 2009, 35–44 and Otkhmezuri and Raphava 2022, 205–10, publications which we follow here in our very brief biography. See also Glynias 2020, 431–2.

³ Glynias 2020, 425, 431–2, and 450; see also Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 674–9.

⁴ For the date, see Noret 2020, 98; for the oldest ms., namely Tbilisi, Korneli Kekelidze National Centre of Manuscripts (hereafter, NCM), A-558 (a manuscript originating in Iviron and dated to 1074), see Shurgaia 2022, 339 (n. 29) with bibliography as well as Otkhmezuri and Raphava 2022, 252–3. For the text, see Abuladze 1967, 38–101 (edition of the Georgian text by Ilia Abuladze), Peeters 1917–1919, 8–68 (Latin trans. with introduction), Martin-Hisard 1991 [abbr. M-H] (French trans. with introduction and commentary) and Grdzelidze 2009 [abbr. GRD] (English trans. with introduction and commentary); for another rendition in English (though excerpted), see Walters 2021, 232–52. On the political significance of the text, which was written after the quarrels between Greek and Georgian monks and the imperial intervention in favor of the Georgians, see Martin-Hisard 1991, 70–6 with Otkhmezuri and Raphava 2022, 187–8.

Euthymios himself, along with the deeds of another George (George I; PmbZ 22180), the first successor of Euthymios as head of the monastery.

With the *Life* by George—with all its complications, motives, and accents—as our basis, supplemented by other related sources, and following closely in the footsteps of earlier scholarship, we present below a biographical sketch of Euthymios, making necessary adjustments and highlighting aspects that are of interest to the readers of *Theodore of Edessa* specifically.⁵



950S–1005

Euthymios was from a noble and wealthy family in Tao, a region of southwestern Georgia (modern-day northeastern Turkey), the Georgian territory closest to the Byzantine state.⁶ We do not know the precise date of his birth. He first appears in the historical record in 977, when he completed a translation of Basil of Caesarea into Georgian. The assumption in the scholarship, which we share, is that he must have been in his early 20s or so at that point, and would have been born sometime in the 950s, most likely somewhere toward the middle of that decade.⁷ During his youth, when his father John (ca. 930–1005)—known in the Georgian monastic tradition as Abulherit⁸—had already become a monk in Byzantium, Euthymios was under the care of his maternal grandfather Abuharb (PmbZ 20090) and was sent to Constantinople as a hostage; this was after an alliance treaty—according to the Georgian *synaxarion*—between the emperor Nikephoros Phokas and David, king of Tao from 961 to 1000 (PmbZ 21432), and took place probably in 964.⁹

When his father learned of his son's arrival at Constantinople, he went there and, according to his biography, “by divine providence and the decision of the imperial family, he brought his son back with him to Mount Olympus” in Bithy-

⁵ The most recent important contributions on Euthymios' biography, with all the earlier bibliography: PmbZ 21960 and Kurtsikidze 2017; see also Högel 2019 and Simelidis 2020. See further Otkhmezuri and Raphava 2022, 181–263 for the history of the Georgian presence on Athos and the literary activities of Euthymios. These studies as well as the relevant pages in Lefort, Oikonomidès, and Papachryssanthou 1985 and the text and notes in Martin-Hisard 1991 have served as our primary guides.

⁶ On this region, see Lefort, Oikonomidès, and Papachryssanthou 1985, 13–15; Mikaberidze 2007, 601–3; Grdzeldze 2009, 12–17; Kudava and Saitidze 2018.

⁷ Some representative datings: Kazhdan 1991a: years 955–960; PmbZ 21960: circa 955; Kurtsikidze 2017: the year 955.

⁸ Lefort, Oikonomidès, and Papachryssanthou 1985, 16–17; PmbZ 22942. On John, see also Raphava 2013.

⁹ The *Life* (GRD 2; M-H 7) does not specify the Byzantine emperor: “In those days the emperor of the Greeks granted the Upper Lands to David Kouropalates and asked in exchange the children of noble families as hostages”; cf. Lefort, Oikonomidès, and Papachryssanthou 1985, 20 with Martin-Hisard 1991, 87–8. On Nikephoros Phokas, see most recently, Theotokis and Tsurtsunia 2025.

nia, where he was settled as a monk and where, soon thereafter, his son too would be tonsured.¹⁰ The relevant brief passages in the *Life* (GRD 2; M-H 7) and the *synaxaria* imply that Euthymios stayed in Constantinople for only a short time, but it would be reasonable to assume that he spent perhaps a couple of years in the capital before being retrieved by his father and taken to Olympus, sometime after (though not long after) 964. This could explain Euthymios' later excellent mastery of Greek, apparently acquired very early in his life—though, in our view, we cannot claim much more about this Constantinopolitan stay and Euthymios' Greek contacts and education (if any) there.¹¹ According to the *Life* (but also the Georgian and the Greek *synaxaria* as well as John's *Preface*), it was indeed John the Iberian who secured his son's schooling, first in Georgian and then in Greek, *after* leaving Constantinople: "Father John brought his son Euthymios from the imperial city. He educated him first in Georgian but then gave him a full education in Greek" (GRD 13; M-H 23).¹² This suggests, in our view, that some education in Greek was available at Olympus also and, more generally, in the environment of Euthymios' wealthy father, wherever its whereabouts. This would fit the timeline of Euthymios' early years, as he must have been in his early teens (if that) when his monastic life began.¹³

After all, we are uncertain regarding how long John spent on Olympus together with his son—perhaps only a couple of years. Nothing is, moreover, explicitly said about the monastery where they stayed, but it was evidently that of Krania, a monastery that housed Georgians.¹⁴ We have a copy of Euthymios' translation of the book of *Revelation* and the commentary by Andrew of Caesarea, dating from 978 and copied at this monastery. The translation itself was most likely made on Athos, however, and then brought to Krania, given that another translation—Euthymios' first one, according to the information we have—was produced on Athos a year earlier, in the aforementioned 977.

¹⁰ The scene of reunion of father and son is greatly dramatized in the post-Byzantine Greek *Life* of John, Euthymios, and George, founders of Iviron (BHG 2143; pp. 59–61).

¹¹ See e.g. Nikolaishvili 2022, 71, with the hypothesis that Euthymios met Symeon Metaphrastes at this time.

¹² The relevant passage in the Greek *synaxarion* reads (Fonkič 1982, 573): "Ὁ οὖν μακάριος Ἰωάννης, ὡς ἐκ Θεοῦ τὸν ἴδιον παῖδα δεξάμενος, τὸ μοναχικὸν παραχρῆμα ἀμφιέννυσσι σχῆμα, καὶ παιδεία ἐκδοῦς, εἰς διδασκάλου φοιτᾶν παρεσκεύασεν. ὁ δὲ, σπουδῇ τε ὅτι πολλῇ, καὶ πτεροῖς φύσεως, ἐν βραχεὶ χρόνῳ πᾶσαν τὴν τε θύραθεν καὶ τὴν καθ' ἡμᾶς θεοσοφίαν ἐν τῷ τῆς ψυχῆς ταμείῳ ἐγκολπωσάμενος, ποταμὸς τῶν τοῦ Πνεύματος ὧφθῃ διδαγμάτων".

¹³ Additionally, George's *Life* (GRD 13; M-H 23) narrates a miracle that occurred during Euthymios' childhood, but when he was already with his father in the monastery; according to it, the Virgin opened Euthymios' mind and became able to speak Georgian fluently. The *Life* here clearly offers a retrospective account (it reports a story from the past, narrated by John) and does not necessarily indicate that Euthymios spoke Greek better than Georgian when his father took responsibility for him, as suggested in PmbZ 21960 and Simelidis 2020, 137–8.

¹⁴ On this monastery, Janin 1975, 156–7.

By that year, Euthymios and his father had already been on Athos for about a decade or so. They had come there to join “an almost fellow countryman”,¹⁵ Athanasios the Athonite, one of the major agents in a network which we can only faintly discern and which connected the Phokas family (to whom Athanasios was close) and certain other families from Asia Minor, such as that of Diogenes, with the Georgians who came to and settled in Byzantium.¹⁶ Athanasios (ca. 925-930-1000/1001) was born in Trebizond to a father whose family came from Antioch and a mother who was Georgian (from Lazike, western Georgia). He was brought to Constantinople and raised and educated there during the reign of Romanos I (920-944), spent time as a monk on Olympus in the 950s, and then late in that decade settled on Athos, where in 962 he began to establish the Great Lavra, with the support of his close friend, Emperor Nikephoros Phokas (r. 963-Dec. 969; PmbZ 25535).¹⁷

John’s and Euthymios’ move to Athos also happened during the reign of Phokas, thus before December 969, though we are again unsure of the exact date. John, as we learn from a document preserved in the Iviron archives, would travel to the capital for business related to the Lavra, and such travels, again according to the document, started at the time of Phokas’ reign and continued on into that of Basil II. Indeed, with the change of imperial power in 969 and the rise of John Tzimiskes (r. 969-976; PmbZ 22778), the presence of the two Georgian nobles by the side of Athanasios seems to have received confirmation, as John secured from Tzimiskes a chrysobull granting the Great Lavra an annual income of 244 *nomismata*.¹⁸

On Athos, in any case, Euthymios, in his teens or so, must have perfected his knowledge of Greek. His tutor at this time could have been none other than Athanasios himself, who, it should be remembered, was a highly learned man. In

¹⁵ Lefort, Oikonomidès, and Papachryssanthou 1985, 20.

¹⁶ On the links between the Phokades and the Georgians, see Whittow 1996, 363-5. We may note that Michael Attaleiates cites a legendary story according to which the origins of the Phokas family went back to the Flavii family of ancient Rome, so as to answer those who claimed that “an Iberian connection attaches on one side to the Phokades” (Attaleiates, *History* 170,12-13; trans. Kaldellis and Krallis 2012, 403). Attaleiates then expounds the view that the Iberians of Georgia originated from the land of the Celts, namely Spain, and were transferred to the Caucasus by Constantine the Great. He concludes that “If, indeed, it is from them (the Iberians) that the family of Phokas drew its origin, then, as they had once lived in the same land and became autochthonous based on their grafting onto Rome and cohabitation, there is no difference in nobility and courage between them, for they had come together into one harmonious and complementary union” (Attaleiates, *History* 171,20-5; trans. Kaldellis and Krallis 2012, 407). On John’s possible acquaintance with Athanasios *before* the former’s arrival at Mount Athos, see Grdzeldze 2009, 21-2.

¹⁷ For Athanasios’ biography, we have followed the entry in PmbZ 20670, where further references and bibliography are given.

¹⁸ For all this, see GRD 8 and M-H 16 with *Acts of Iviron* 6,6-16 (dated to 984) and Lefort, Oikonomidès, and Papachryssanthou 1985, 20-1.

the 940s, before becoming a monk, Athanasios had worked as a very successful teacher in Constantinople.¹⁹ In his *Testament*, composed in ca. 993–996, he calls Euthymios his “spiritual son” (“τὸ πνευματικόν μου τέκνον”) and insists not only on the spirituality but also the learnedness that was necessary for leaders of the Lavra, including Euthymios: “ἐὰν εὐρεθῇ λόγιος καὶ πνευματικός”, we read.²⁰

At the core of the Georgian group that formed around Athanasios on Athos, a new figure was added in the early 970s: John Tornikios (ca. 920–984), nephew of the aforementioned Abuharb, i.e. a first cousin of Euthymios’ mother.²¹ Tornikios already owned a monastery in Constantinople and another in Trebizond (St Phokas²²). Later, more Georgians joined them, soon establishing their own monastic settlement, dependent on the Great Lavra and located not far from it: a church dedicated to Saint John the Evangelist together with a number of cells.

The dates for these events can be placed sometime between 970 and 979, by which time (certainly by 977) Euthymios had already begun the translation project, which was initiated by his father and which was to transform the history of Georgian literature.²³ In his father’s own words (*Preface*, p. 102), “For our Georgian language, nobody had been found anywhere so far who might reveal (to us) these holy books, the explanations of the Holy Gospels, even though the churches of Greece and Rome are full of them while those of our country are lacking them, and not only these books are missing but also many others. — Therefore I, John, the wretched one and least among the monks, was bothered by the fact that the country of the Georgians was so deprived of books, and I invested great care and effort and instructed my son Euthymios fully in the Greek language and directed him to translate books from Greek into Georgian, and they were written down by us”.

In 979, John Tornikios made a second donation to the Lavra, the island of Neoi, which he had received through a chrysobull from Basil II (r. 976–1025; PmbZ 20838) (GRD 8,61; M-H 16,93). With the beginning of every new reign,

¹⁹ On Athanasios as teacher, see Lemerle 1971, 257–60 with Athanasios of Panagiou, *Life* of St Athanasios of Athos, 7–16; cf. also Anonymous, *Vita Σ Athan.* 122–44. See further *Life* of Theodore of Edessa 6,1–2 (and the relevant note).

²⁰ Athanasios Athonites, *Testament* 4 (125,2–7). For the text (introduction and Engl. translation), see Dennis 2000; the relevant passage reads: “the lord Euthymios, my spiritual son, ... When his turn comes to die, let him leave behind to succeed him as administrator a *learned* and spiritual man, whether he be found in this Lavra or elsewhere on the mountain. Let those who come after him do likewise”.

²¹ On Tornikios, see PmbZ 22926 with Otkhmezuri and Raphava 2022, 196–201. On the family of Abuharb and its power, see Grdzeldze 2009, 22–4.

²² See Janin 1969, 256 and Janin 1975, 293–4, respectively.

²³ On the project, see e.g. Metreveli 1983 = 2012 with Boeder 1983 and Otkhmezuri and Raphava 2022, 183–5 and 193–5; see also Khintibidze 1996, *passim*.

John thus obtained a gift from the incoming emperor. In this case, the donation coincided with the end of the revolt of Bardas Skleros (PmbZ 20785), which broke out in 976 and forced Tornikios—through the intervention of the powerful eunuch minister Basil Lekapenos, the *Parakoimomenos*—to abandon the monastic life and undertake a mission to David king of Georgia to request reinforcements to defend the young emperors Basil II and Constantine VIII.²⁴ At the head of twelve thousand elite cavalrymen, Tornikios defeated Skleros on March 24, 979, and kept for himself a rich booty of gold, silver, and precious fabrics (GRD 6; M-H 11), bringing part of this treasure to Athos.²⁵

This money would serve as the main funding for the establishment of the monastery of Iviron on Athos: “By God’s grace, they found a pleasant small piece of land in the middle of the Holy Mountain; with much sweat and toil, they built there a monastery and churches dedicated to the Holy Mother of God and to St John the Baptist. At their own expense, they bought numerous small-holdings, monasteries, and hermitages around the great monastery as far as the sea on the other side; the whole was beautiful, attractive, and conducive to the establishment of spiritual monks” (GRD 6; M-H 12). All these acquisitions were again confirmed by an imperial chrysobull, dated to 979/980.²⁶

Founded by the Georgian aristocracy, Iviron welcomed noble and wealthy Georgians, who often benefited from special treatment regarding service and food (GRD 7 and 11; M-H 13 and 19). By 984, it also hosted noble Southern Italians, who would create a monastic establishment of their own on Athos, the monastery of the Amalfitans, not much later—a connection that may be of some relevance also to Euthymios’ literary output.²⁷ The environment on Athos was, after all, “international” at that time. As the biographer of Athanasios of Athos put it, in admiration of the high class of the “foreigners” (in his eyes) who flocked his saintly hero (Athanasios of Panagiou, *Life of Athanasios of Athos* 158):

²⁴ Whitrow 1996, 361–5 and Kaldellis 2017, 94–102.

²⁵ The text of the *Life* specifies elsewhere (GRD 6; M-H 14) that this treasure was estimated at 12 *centenaria*, or 1200 pounds of gold.

²⁶ Lefort, Oikonomidès, and Papachryssanthou 1985, 24. On the history of the monastery from its foundation until the middle of the 11th c., see *ibid.* 3–46; also: Lefort and Papachryssanthou 1983; Martin-Hisard 1999 and 2012 (1983), 245–8; Pavlikianov 2001, 51–8 and 2017; Nastase 2004; Grdzeldze 2009, 29–35 also 2012; Hermay 2010; Nikolaishvili 2019, 21–30; Liakos 2024; Kaplan 2025, 95–8; Smyrlis *forthcoming*. For the wider context, see e.g. Magdalino 2019.

²⁷ On these relations, see GRD 14 / M-H 27–8 with Nastase 2004; cf. also Othkmezuri 2022c, 446–48. On Leo (*Leo the Roman*, according to the *Life* of Euthymios), brother of the *doux* of Benevento, a duchy neighboring Amalfi in southern Italy, who came to Iviron initially with six disciples, see PmbZ 24301. On the Benedictine monastery of Athos, see Merlini 2017 with Falkenhausen 2005 and 2017. For a Latin translation of a Pseudo-Dionysian work preserved in Georgian, which may have been created as a result of these relations, see Macé 2022.

“Ορα ... ἄλλου συνδρομὴν πλῆθους ἐκ παντοδαπῶν ἐθνῶν, γλωσσῶν, γενῶν, πόλεων συντρεχόντων, οὐ τῶν ἑγγιστα μόνον καὶ προσοικούντων, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν πόρρω καὶ ἀπωτάτω, ἀπὸ τε Ῥώμης αὐτῆς, Ἰταλίας, Καλαβρίας, Ἀμάλφης, Ἰβηρίας, Ἀρμενίας καὶ τῶν ἐτι τούτων ἐνδοτέρω, οὐδὲ τῶν ἀφανῶν μόνον καὶ δυσγενῶν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν περιουσίᾳ καὶ γένει σεμννομένων λαμπρῶν.

Look ... at that other crowd which gathered, everyone running to the same place, from all sorts of nations, tongues, clans, cities, not only from those that are near and close by, but even those that are far and indeed very far—from Rome itself, Calabria, Amalfi, Georgia, Armenia and from lands further than these—, and not only people of insignificance and low lineage, but also people reputed for their wealth and nobility.

Of course, Iviron also received Greeks, but, as we are told, of lower social origin. “It is difficult” we read in Euthymios’ *Life*, “to maintain such a large Lavra without blacksmiths, carpenters, builders, vineyard workers, shipbuilders, and others. Our holy fathers found all these people (Greeks) and, willingly or unwillingly, accepted them too” (GRD 7; M-H 13). The Greeks thus, if we are to trust George’s testimony, formed the monastery’s workforce, while the Georgians held real power, based on their class privileges. Such differentiation likely generated social tension which was translated into an ethnic one, leading to problems of coexistence between the two communities, well attested after Euthymios’ death.

Following the death of Tornikios in December 984 and the removal of Basil Lekapenos from power in 985, and the appointment of Bardas Phokas (PmbZ 20784), the nephew of emperor Nikephoros Phokas, as military governor of Antioch in 986, a new historical setback endangered Euthymios’ family and their presence at Iviron. This was the second revolt of Bardas Skleros against Basil II from 987 to 989. During Skleros’ first revolt in 976, Bardas Phokas, with the support of Lekapenos, had positioned himself as a defender of Basil II’s legitimacy against Skleros, and his main ally had been David, the Georgian king of Tao, along with Tornikios. This time, however, Phokas joined Skleros and moved *against* Basil II. After first eliminating Skleros in Asia Minor, he marched with his troops toward the capital. What interests us here is that in this military campaign against Basil II, the Georgians supported Bardas Phokas. The Georgians, that is, allied themselves with the Phokas family regardless of the role they played—whether as defenders or usurpers of the supreme power in Byzantium.²⁸ Basil II was forced to seek help from Vladimir I of Kiev, who, passing through Thrace, attacked Phokas and defeated him at Abydos in April 989; dur-

²⁸ Whitton (1996, 365) convincingly argues that any intervention by David and the Georgians in the Byzantine civil wars is linked to his connections with the family of Phokas and not with Basil II.

ing the battle, Phokas himself was killed. The Georgian troops were also defeated.²⁹ David was thus compelled to name Basil II as his successor and to cede his territories to him after his death.³⁰

The *Life* makes no reference to these events, but it presents John as being ready to leave, together with Euthymios and other disciples, for Spain—the land of origin of the Iberians (according to Strabo³¹)—in order to find compatriots. John and his companions, we read, were stopped at Abydos and returned almost by force to Athos, after the Byzantine emperors had reassured them of their safety. It is possible that behind this account lies an attempt by George Hagiorites to conceal John's and Euthymios' intentions to escape: to go first to Abydos, where Bardas Phokas had set up camp, support their compatriots, and then flee to Georgia.³²

We also do not know whether another piece of information from the *Life*—namely that Basil II offered Euthymios the episcopal seat of Cyprus (GRD 18; M-H 75)³³—might be related to these events, as part of Basil's effort to disperse the Georgians from Athos without completely depriving himself of their presence. If that is the case, it suggests that the Georgian aristocrats, whether monks or laymen, held a special status within the Empire. They were,

²⁹ Two authors explicitly speak of the presence of Georgians alongside the usurper:

(a) The first is contemporary to the events, John Geometres, who in a poem entitled *Regarding the Plunderings of the Iberians* (*Poem* 27) regrets the violence carried out by the Georgians, considered as “allies and friends,” a violence comparable to the “fire” of the Scythians. For Kazhdan 2006, 256, the poem refers to the events of the first civil war in Asia Minor during the early years of the reign of Basil II, while for Lauxtermann 1994, 153–4, whose interpretation seems closer to the reality, the poem speaks of the revolt of Bardas Phokas in 989. In our opinion, Geometres' *Poem* 28 also refers to the same events. The poet, addressing the inhabitants of Thrace, says, “Previously you had the friends as allies against the Scythians, now you have received the Scythians as allies against the friends”. In this poem, Scythians are the Russians and the former allies could be the Georgians.

(b) The second author is Psellos (*Chronographia* 1,15), who, in the 1060s or so, removed from the facts, describes the presence of Georgians around Phokas in epic terms: “The men I refer to were the finest fighters among the Iberians, all of them young men, just growing their first beards, in the flower of their youth, tall men and men of equal height, as though they had been measured off with a ruler, armed on their right with swords, and irresistible when they charged. With these warriors about him, under one standard, Phokas moved forward to attack in front of his army” (Sewter 1953, 18).

³⁰ On these events, see: Cheynet 1990, 31–4, 330–3 and *passim*; Whittow 1996, 361–73; Holmes 2005, 240–98; Kaldellis 2017, 94–102; Nikolaishvili 2019, 60–7.

³¹ On this idea, see Aleksidze 2014 and n. 16 above for the text by Attaleiates on this topic.

³² GRD 9,63 = M-H 18,96: “After the death of Tornike, our blessed father John decided to take his son and a number of disciples with him and flee to Spain ... because he had heard that there dwelt some nations related to the Georgians”. It is Nastase 2004, who makes the connection between John's journey and Phokas' revolt. On the silence of the *Life* in this regard, see Grdzelidze 2009, 26.

³³ Notably, Athanasios too had fled to Cyprus when he wanted to escape from the control of Nikephoros Phokas (cf. Athanasios of Panagiou, *Life* of St Athanasios of Athos, 92). The island thus seems to have played an important role, difficult to define precisely, between Athos and Syro-Palestine.

in effect, high-ranking hostages. In any case, Euthymios refused the bishopric of Cyprus and remained on Athos.

During all this period, while working as his father's right-hand man in the leadership of Iviron after Tornikios' death, Euthymios continued intensively his translations. To this purpose, his father had gathered at Iviron an atelier of scribes intended to copy Euthymios' works, and, after the events of Bardas Phokas, invited (with Euthymios) two Georgian intellectuals, a veritable ascetic couple, Iovane Grdzeliidze (PmbZ 23545) and Arseni Ninoc'mida (PmbZ 20596; possibly also 20595) to assist his son.³⁴ In the *Preface*, a final will and testament of sorts, John, "being old and feeble" (p. 127), details and pays tribute to his son's numerous translations as his own legacy to his offspring. After a long and painful suffering caused by gout (GRD 10; M-H 18), John died in his mid-70s, on June 14, 1005.

1005–1028

His father's death made Euthymios, now approaching his 50s, both the official guardian (ἐπίτροπος) of Athanasios' Great Lavra, as had been stipulated in Athanasios' *Testament* a decade or so earlier, and, more importantly, the abbot of Iviron itself.³⁵ Euthymios directed Iviron with strict discipline (paragraphs GRD 19 = M-H 34–70 offer us his rules), often instilling fear among the monks or expelling those who were most unruly. His intransigence provoked a backlash from the monastic community, leading to two assassination attempts against him by members of the monastery, according to his biography (GRD 21; M-H 73–4). Nevertheless, he ensured the monastery's economic prosperity, which grew at this time to be among the largest and wealthiest ones on Athos, relying on imperial grants, contributions from wealthy monks, and the agricultural exploitation of the monastery's *metochia* in and outside the monastic peninsula.³⁶ Several documents issued in Greek and preserved in Iviron's archives from this

³⁴ See GRD 11 = M-H 19. As Martin-Hisard remarks (98, n. 68), about Iovane and Arseni, "Leur arrivée sur l'Athos à la demande expresse de Jean et Euthyme marque donc, à notre avis, un tournant décisif dans la vie du monastère, qui, après la phase de fondation matérielle, s'oriente de manière plus délibérée vers une fonction intellectuelle que Jean avait jusqu'alors surtout dévolue à Euthyme ... La *Vie de Georges* ... évoque leur rôle en ces termes [M-H² 29 = GRD² 11]: «Ils avaient été de grands collaborateurs de notre saint père Euthyme dans la traduction des saints livres, ils s'étaient faits les émules et les imitateurs de ses saintes vertus, et ils avaient copié de leur main de nombreux livres durant leur vieillesse»".

³⁵ For Athanasios' *Testament*, see text and note 20 above.

³⁶ See Martin-Hisard 1991, 108 (n. 139): "... Iviron durant l'higouménat d'Euthyme ... avec ses 300 moines (contre 150 à Lavra, en 978) c'est un des monastères les plus peuplés de l'Athos." On the land property of Iviron at this time (680), see Lefort, Oikonomidès, and Papachryssanthou 1985, 25–32 with Smyrlis 2006, 47–8.

period detail these transactions, mostly with Greeks, and contain Euthymios' signatures and even handwriting.³⁷

Euthymios, having entered his 60s, resigned from the hegoumenate in the summer of 1019, though he remained *epitropos*, spiritual supervisor, of the Lavra), and the leadership of the monastery passed to the aforementioned George I (PmbZ 22180), a nephew of John and cousin of Euthymios, who was abbot until 1029, thereby keeping the monastery within the extended family of its founders.³⁸ The reasons behind the resignation are not entirely clear, yet literary production seems to have been crucial among them. Translation, after all, was an activity which had defined Euthymios' life and which before and, especially, after his father's illness and subsequent death was becoming more and more difficult; as his biographer informs us, Euthymios "stayed vigilant and carried out most of his translations at night by candlelight, because of the lack of time and the multitude of cares" (GRD 13; M-H 26); or, in Euthymios' own words, in a colophon dated to 1001/1002 (Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 130): "forgive me for having written moderately, for I was very busy and mostly writing by night". Having retired to an Iviron hermitage on the northern part of the Athos peninsula,³⁹ Euthymios could thus continue, now in a more dedicated fashion (GRD 22, M-H 75; also, GRD 24, M-H 80), the literary output, which he had practiced even during travels to the capital and elsewhere.⁴⁰

Some tensions within Iviron seem to have arisen during this time. George Hagiorites accuses Euthymios' successor, George I, of attempting, even during Euthymios' lifetime, to alter the communal rules established by Euthymios, according to "his own will" (GRD 24; M-H 80). George I is further charged with favoring the Greeks and seeking to limit the influence of the Georgians: "George

³⁷ See text and note 18 above with Kazhdan and Fonkič 1973, 53 and Fonkič 1995–1996, 44–5. For the Euthymian Greek autograph (dated to April 1012), see *Acts of Iviron* 17, redaction A. For likely traces of his Georgian handwriting, see Otkhmezuri 2017 with Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, xii, and Otkhmezuri and Raphava 2022, 257–8.

³⁸ Lefort, Oikonomidès, and Papachryssanthou 1985, 18.

³⁹ For the hermitage, called of "St Euthymios", see GRD 8 = M-H 17 with GRD 22 = M-H 75 and the relevant notes in the French translation with Lefort, Oikonomidès, and Papachryssanthou 1985, 41–2 (and map on p. 77) and *Acts of Iviron* 20 and 21.

⁴⁰ Cf. GRD 13 = M-H 24: "In fact, father Euthymios translated not only while he was on Olympus or the Holy Mountain, if we consider each translation, but *also when he was at the imperial court or travelling or at any other such place*". The allusion to translations carried out on Olympus is awkward. The dates, if Euthymios was born in the mid-950s and went to Athos in the late 960s, cannot correspond, unless we imagine that Euthymios began translating at a very young age or that he made later trips (unattested otherwise) to Bithynia. George seems to be misreading the colophon of the Krania book of 978 (mentioned above and included in our list of Euthymian translations below). Similar is said about George's own translations (GRD² 16 = M-H² 43: "on the Holy Mountain and the Black Mountain ... but also the imperial city and on the way to Selymbria, in Antioch, at St Symeon and Kalipos, and in other similar places").

showed much love for the Greeks and increased their number and showed preference for them, but he ignored and reduced the Georgians as incapable and unreliable” (GRD 24; M-H 80).

Similar tensions seem to have ensued in the Great Lavra, where Euthymios’ authority as *epitropos* was challenged, according to the *Life* (GRD 23; M-H 77). As a result, Euthymios was summoned to the capital in early 1028 to meet the emperor Constantine VIII (r. 1025–November 1028). That visit turned out to be fatal. On May 13 1028, Euthymios died following an accident on a street in Constantinople. George Hagiorites writes (GRD 23; M-H 77):

After that [i.e. the feast of St John the Theologian, celebrated on May 8] Euthymios broke his fast and abstained from work for a while. When he woke up, he remembered the icon of St John the Theologian which he intended to give to an artist to embellish. He therefore ordered a disciple to go and tell the artist how that icon should be embellished. But then he said: “And what if you will not explain properly, my son? Help me mount a mule, and I will go myself”. Yet the mule, recently acquired, was vicious, and no one knew of its unruliness and capricious stubbornness. After travelling a while, our holy father came across a poor man asking for charity and stopped to offer him alms.⁴¹ The poor man, dressed in rags, stood up and approached to receive his help. Confronted with his sight, the vicious beast, was suddenly frightened and began to flee, kicking so hard here and there that it seriously injured our holy and blessed father and threw him to the ground. A great crowd gathered around him, as everyone knew him, and they cried and mourned. Then he was taken to the monastery where he had stayed⁴² ... This is how ... he departed to God, to the light that knows no darkness ...

2.2. EUTHYMIOS’ WORKS

Ca. 170 Georgian texts and, at least, two Greek major compositions are attributable to Euthymios.⁴³ To this purpose, he collaborated with a significant number of scribes, some of whose names are known from his *Life* by George Hagiorites, and who also appear in notes and colophons of the numerous

⁴¹ The encounter happened in the *Plateia* district, according to the Greek *synaxarion* (Fonkič 1982, 579); on the location, see Janin 1969, 140.

⁴² Likely the *metochion* of Iviron in the City.

⁴³ For the Georgian translations, one might examine the comprehensive listing (though in need of updating) in Tarchnišvili/Assfalg 1955 = Kekelidze 1955, 126–54, to be read together with Bernadette Martin-Hisard’s excellent notes to her translation of the *Life* of Euthymios by George Hagiorites (1991, 101–8); see also Peradse 1927. For the figure “ca. 170”, based on Kekelidze’s survey, see Tarchnišvili 1954, 115; Kurtsikidze (2017) is more reserved: “known are more than 160 translations.”

manuscripts as well as in documents, which are preserved from Iviron and the related Athonite environment of this period.

Until 1004, these names are of Georgian collaborators—important ones, such as Iovane Grdzeliidze and Arseni Ninoc’mida (both of whom died between 1019 and 1028), have been mentioned above.⁴⁴ From 1004 onwards, however, we learn the names of also a few scribes who copied Greek texts.⁴⁵ A remark by Euthymios himself, as reported by his biographer (GRD 23; M-H 76), informs us that these copyists accepted commissions also from outside and thus generated income for the monastery and produced copies to be offered as gifts to other monastic communities.⁴⁶

Yet, a primary target of this Greek manuscript production was also the formation of a corpus of Greek texts to be used as a basis for Euthymios’ Georgian translations⁴⁷—as well as, we might add, the preservation of Euthymios’ new compositions in Greek, based on Georgian hypotexts. This is certainly the case, as we shall see in more detail below, with most of the surviving manuscripts copied by the aforementioned Theophanes who is called a “*μοναχὸς καὶ ἱερεὺς*” (d. sometime *after* 1028; PmbZ 28103; RGK I 136, II 180, and III 230). His earliest dated manuscript is that of 1004, a collection of hagiographical texts closely linked with relevant Euthymian renditions in Georgian; and his latest one from 1023 is, as already noted, none other than ms. A, which includes *Theodore of Edessa* and other hagiographical and monastic works.

It is worth pausing briefly on this Greek collaborator of Euthymios. In the latter’s *Life*, Theophanes is described as a man “for whom father Euthymios had great affection; he had been on Mount Athos since an early age and was adorned with every virtue. He was a Lord-pleasing priest, greatly learned, and skillful copyist of divine books ... After the death of Arsenios and John [i.e. Arseni Ninoc’mida and Iovane Grdzeliidze], our father consulted him on spiritual matters” (GRD 23; M-H 76). Euthymios, we also read, requested Theophanes’ blessing before his final trip to Constantinople, and the elder predicted Euthymios’ imminent demise (GRD 23; M-H 76). Apart from these remarks in the *Life* we know nothing further about Theophanes’ origins or standing. His handwriting as well as the codicology of his early manuscripts point, as has been remarked, to Southern Italian habits—and it is not unlikely that Theophanes learned or per-

⁴⁴ Cf. text and note 34 above with Martin-Hisard 1991, 98 (n. 68), 108–9 (n. 140), and 124 (n. 219).

⁴⁵ See Kazhdan and Fonkič 1973, 53–4 on scribes (attested in documents) in Euthymios’ context with Fonkič 1995–1996, 45–6 on Theophanes and other Greeks scribes. See further Lamberz 1991 (esp. 37–43).

⁴⁶ For books as gifts, see GRD 8 = M-H 16; cf. Otkhmezuri 2022c, 438–9.

⁴⁷ Cf. again Martin-Hisard 1991, 108 (n. 140).

fectured his skill in such an environment, either because he came from Italy or because he studied or practiced book production (also) under Italians on Athos.⁴⁸

Let us return to Euthymios. A large number of the manuscripts associated with Euthymios are either precisely dated or can be assigned an approximate date with reasonable certainty. This presents us with a rare—indeed, virtually unique—situation within the Byzantine literary tradition prior to the fourteenth century: we possess enough chronological evidence to reconstruct, with some degree of detail, the temporal sequence of a premodern author's literary activity—in this case, the literary works which Euthymios translated or had at his disposal from 977 to 1028, in a span of fifty years, from when he was in his (early?) twenties, until he died in his (early?) seventies.

With this aim, we present below a comprehensive list of Euthymios' *dateable* translations which, although not encompassing his entire corpus, nonetheless constitute a substantial portion—indeed, the majority—of his work.

Some clarifications are in order.

(I) Most of the Georgian texts survive in manuscripts copied on Mount Athos during Euthymios' lifetime, many of which are still preserved in the library of Iviron and most of which carry, as noted, a precise date. The latter, however, cannot always be taken as the exact moment on which a translation was completed, since many manuscripts copy or preserve work that was performed earlier (cf. e.g. the entries on **1001/1002** or **1014** below). Nevertheless, cumulatively, the manuscript evidence gives a rather informative sketch of the development of Euthymios' production of translations.

Bibliography: The catalogues of Otkhmezuri et al. 2018, Chkhikvadze et al. 2018, Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022 as well as the articles by Martin-Hisard 1991 and Skhirtladze and Kldiashvili 2022 were instrumental for our catalogue. For the early history of the Iviron library on the Georgian side, see Otkhmezuri and Raphava 2022, 185–6 and 251–63 and Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, xi–xii.

(II) The evidence from the Georgian manuscripts is coordinated with two principal documentary sources:

⁴⁸ For lists and discussions of Theophanes' manuscripts, see Irigoin 1958, 200–4; Fonkič 1969; Kavrus 1989; and Lamberz 1991, 37–41. For his hand-writing in the context of contemporary scribal habits, essential is also Canart and Perria 1991. Lamberz 1991, 37 and 41 discusses the Southern Italian connections of Theophanes' mss. and suggests that this may be explained by the close contacts of the Iviron and Amalfitan monasteries on Athos (rather than the Southern Italian origins of Theophanes; so Leroy 1978, 57); cf. also Galavaris 2002, 19 (with the further suggestion that Theophanes either was a student of the scribe John of Lavra, or that they collaborated).

(a) The first is a list of forty-one translated works (mentioned in thirty distinct entries) included in the *Preface* by Euthymios' father, John, to his son's translation of John Chrysostom's *Commentary* on the Gospel of Matthew—a text sometimes mistakenly referred to as John's *Testament*. Dateable between ca. **1001/1002** and **June 1005**, the *Preface* functioned, as we have seen, as a kind of manifesto for the translation project that John entrusted to his son.

We do not possess the original copy of the *Preface*. The earliest surviving manuscripts of the *Preface* derive from Euthymios' immediate circle and are preserved in two Ivron codices of **1008**: partly at the beginning of *Ivir. georg.* 13 and in full as a colophon to *Ivir. georg.* 10 (ff. 331r–337v). In the latter witness, the copy of the *Preface* is immediately followed on f. 337v by the copy of an earlier, brief colophon, also already mentioned above, that was composed by Euthymios and is dated to the Byzantine year 6510, which corresponds to the period **Sept. 1, 1001 to August 31, 1002**. The colophon contains the following words: “I beseech all of you who will be copying this book – copy it with *this colophon* in its entirety”—it is likely that by “this colophon” either Euthymios' own note or John's *Preface* is meant; if the latter, which seems likely, then the *Preface* is to be dated also in 1001/1002 or thereabouts.

Bibliography: See Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 164–5 and 118–30 with editions of the Georgian text of the *Preface* and Euthymios' colophon (dated in this publication to 1002), both followed by an English translation; for *Ivir. georg.* 10 and 13, see further below in our list, under the date **1001/1002**. The *Preface* is preserved in nine manuscripts (Khintibidze 2021–2022, 80); for the important later copy, Kutaisi, Niko Berdzenishvili State Historical Museum, 20, dated to **1048**, see 1.4 (text and note 32) above.

(b) The second source is the list of sixty-seven translations (mentioned in fifty separate entries) cited in George Hagiorites' *Life* of Euthymios and his father John (M-H 25; GRD 13), composed ca. 1041–1045. The first part of this list reproduces precisely the order and, almost entirely, the contents of John's *Preface* and the forty-one works mentioned therein. Only one additional entry appears—on the martyr Akepsimas—inserted between the corresponding items nos. 12 and 13 of the earlier list.

Given this correspondence, as well as the fact that the latter part of the catalogue in Euthymios' *Life* commences exactly with the work which John's text prefaces, namely John Chrysostom's *Commentary* on the Gospel of Matthew, it is reasonable to assume that the twenty-four additional Georgian texts cited only in Euthymios' *Life* date to *after* 1001/1002 or, at the latest, June 1005, and some of the manuscript evidence supports such a later dating (either explicitly

or *ex silentio*). That said, however, a now lost Georgian manuscript which carried the date 991 (see below in the relevant entry) contains two hagiographies (on Febronia and Antony) which are mentioned only in the latter part of the list in Euthymios' *Life*'s. Thus, the period "ca. 1001/1002–June 1005" can be regarded only as a *possible*, yet not a definite, *terminus post quem* for the texts cited there and presented below.

Bibliography: Martin-Hisard 1991, 103–8, text and, especially, notes, where one shall find information about any further, but undated Georgian manuscript witnesses of Euthymios' translations.

(III) In order to complete the picture of Euthymios' literary production, we have also included all known Greek manuscripts connected with certainty with Euthymios' milieu, transmitting texts which Euthymios had likely read, used or was planning to use for his Georgian translations, and, in at least two cases, written himself.⁴⁹ Since the *Life of Theodore of Edessa* is a hagiographical text, a single asterisk (*) marks all hagiographies that appear both among Euthymios' translations and in the manuscripts associated with Theophanes, even when the relationship between the Greek and Georgian versions cannot be established here with certainty.

Bibliography: for the listing and dating of the Greek witnesses, we have relied primarily on Fonkič 1969, Kavrus 1989, Lamberz 1991, 37–41, and Fonkič and Poliakov 1993. For the early history of the Iviron library on the Greek side, see Fonkič 1995–1996, 45–6 with Theologos Iberites 1998, 239–40.

(IV) The list is arranged chronologically, based on the dating of the transmitting manuscripts or, in four entries, on the mention of a translation in John's *Preface* and/or the *Life of John and Euthymios*, as well as Euthymios' colophon of 1001/1002.

For each entry, the date is followed by:

- information, with bibliography, on the relevant dated or dateable manuscript(s), the scribe(s) and also patron(s), if known, and any related significant later manuscript witnesses; and
- the texts—in some cases, a representative selection—contained in that manuscript or manuscripts.

⁴⁹ To the Greek mss. listed below, we should add the fragments of one further attributed to the hand of Theophanes, which has been identified (Fonkič 1969, 168–9) in four flyleaves added to *Mosq. Synod. gr.* 168 (Vladimir 362; Diktyon 43793; Ehrhard II 448); we have not been able to determine the textual contents of these flyleaves.

The dates of Euthymios' retirement and death supplement the list.

(V) A more complete survey of *all* the manuscripts which could be linked to the environment of Iviron (including, that is, the Great Lavra and other Athonite monasteries) in this period as well as of *all* Georgian texts attributed to Euthymios could yield an even better picture, but will unfortunately remain a desideratum for us here.

A Chronology of Euthymios' Literary Production

- 977:

Ms.: *Ivir. georg.* 32, copied by Saba (PmbZ 26913 likely Saba the Kakhian, scribe of *Ivir. georg.* 5, dated to 983), for the first Athonite Georgian community (Euthymios, his father, Tornikios, and others); Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 308–18. The manuscript served as a model (so Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 308) for another late 10th- or early 11th-c. manuscript copied, according to its colophon, on Athos by Iordane (PmbZ 23509), on commission by “David, King of the Georgians”: Tbilisi, NCM, H-2251; see Otkhmezuri et al. 2018, 66–7 with Martin-Hisard 1991, 102 (n. 84) and 103 (n. 87).

Texts: Homilies—the so-called *Ethika* (Fedwick 1981: 492–503; Kajaia 1992)—of Basil the Great, along with Gregory of Nazianzus' famous *Funeraral Oration* for Basil (*Or.* 43); works of Basil and this specific Gregorian oration are listed in both John's *Preface* and Euthymios' *Life*.

- 978:

Ms.: Tbilisi, NCM, H-1346, written, according to its colophon, on Olympus at the “Lavra of Krania” (on which see text and note 14 above); scribe: Saba K'uti (i.e. the Cripple; PmbZ 26914); Otkhmezuri et al. 2018, 64–5.

Texts: The book of *Revelation* with the commentary of Andrew of Caesarea, both works listed in both John's *Preface* and Euthymios' *Life*.

- 983:

Ms.: *Ivir. georg.* 5, copied for John Tornikios; scribe: Saba the Kakhian (PmbZ 26913; cf. above), active by this time in Iviron; Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 49–56.

Texts: John Sinaites' *Ladder* (listed in both John's *Preface* and Euthymios' *Life*) with prefatory material and *scholia*; cf. Otkhmezuri 2025.

- 991:

Ms.: Lost manuscript, whose copy is apparently preserved in the first codicological unit of *Ivir. georg.* 79, itself dated to ca. 1042–1055; Gippert,

Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 637–44: the date (991) of that lost manuscript is given in a colophon, which was copied on f. 97rv;

Texts: *Passion* of Febronia*, Athanasios' *Life* of Antony, and Michael Synkellos' *Confession of Faith* among others. Curiously, as noted above, the first two texts are not listed in John's *Preface* of 1001/1002–June 1005, but included in the second part of the catalogue in Euthymios' *Life*; meanwhile, both lists do contain Michael Synkellos' *Confession of Faith*, though (unlike the transmitting ms.) without the name of the author.⁵⁰

The second unit of *Ivir. georg.* 79, whose model cannot be dated precisely, contains the following texts by Euthymios:

- (a) the (in the translation of Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al.) "Passion and praise of the holy and glorious martyr of Christ George, written down by Symeon the Logothete, which is read in most of the glorious churches in Greece, because they esteem it (?) for its profoundness" (ff. 98r–112r)—this information has been wrongly interpreted as a witness to the early pre-occupation of Euthymios with the *Menologion* of Symeon Metaphrastes in Volk 2009, 142 (cf. also Høgel 2019, 358–9);
- (b) Andrew of Crete's *Encomium* of George the Martyr*, attributed here to Basil the Great;
- (c) a *Letter* by Euthymios to his "spiritual brother" Theodore of St Sabas, which dates after June 1005, as the father of Euthymios is mentioned as being no longer alive (published by Akhobadze et al. 1986, 121–3; German translation in Peradse 1936; cf. text and note 69 below);
- and (d) Cyril of Scythopolis' *Life* of Sabas.

- 980s–June 1005:

Ms.: Tbilisi, NCM, MS A-1104; scribe: Ioane Meli, active at the Constantinopolitan *metochion* of Iviron, and working for John the Iberian and his son Euthymios; Otkhmezuri et al. 2018, 80–1 and Skhirtladze and Kl-diashvili 2022, 312–3 (where the above information on the scribe is provided).

Texts: Collection of hagiographical and ascetic treatises, including the *Life* of Onuphrius (listed in both John's *Preface* and Euthymios' *Life*).

- late 10th c.:

Ms.: *Ivir. georg.* 68; Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 589–92.

⁵⁰ For another important early manuscript (11th c.) of the text, see Jerusalem, Greek Patriarchate, *georg.* 151 with Chkhikvadze et al. 2018, 130–1.

Texts: Gregory of Nazianzus *Oration on the Theophany* (*Or.* 38), a *doxology* = *Or.* 45,30, and the commentary on *Or.* 38 ascribed to Maximos the Confessor. Euthymios' Georgian translations of Gregory's *Orations* are listed in two separate entries, once in John's *Preface* as well as the first part of the list in Euthymios' *Life* and a second time in the second part of the latter list.

- late 10th / early 11th c. (?):

Ms.: *Ivir. georg.* 17; copied mainly by Basili; Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 185–94, who date the ms. to “ca. 10th–11th c.” before ca. 1001/1002–June 1005

Texts: Hagiographies (from the months July–December) on Pankratios* (July 9; listed in both the John's *Preface* and Euthymios' *Life*), Eustathios Plakidas* and family (included only in Euthymios' *Life*), Demetrios* (*Passion* and *Miracles*, listed in John's *Preface* and Euthymios' *Life*), Eustratios* (included only in the *Life*), Clement of Rome (listed in both the *Preface* and the *Life*), and an expanded version of the systematic collection of the *Apophthegmata* (Outtier 1977), “including quotations from John Chrysostom, Basil the Great, and other Church fathers”.

- before ca. 1001/1002–June 1005:

Mss.:

Greek text: Mosq. Synod. gr. 88 (Vladimir 74; Diktyon 43713), from Iviron; scribe: Theophanes; Lamberz (1991, 39) dates the ms. to “before 1020”; Kavrus (1989, 167) dates it to ca. 1006–1007;

Georgian text: two notable 11th-c. copies: (1) *Ivir. georg.* 16; Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 181–5 (“copied from a Jerusalem model”) with Chkhikvadze et al. 2018, 201; and (2) Jerusalem, Greek Patriarchate, *georg.* 32 with Chkhikvadze et al. 2018, 124 (“place of copying: Khakhuli Monastery”, in Georgia).

Text: John Chrysostom's *Commentary* on the Gospel of John, the first work listed in both John's *Preface* and in Euthymios' *Life*.

- before ca. 1001/1002–June 1005: Authors and texts included in John's *Preface* as well as the first part of the corresponding list in the *Life* of Euthymios — we cite only those texts which are not mentioned elsewhere in our catalogue as transmitted in a Georgian manuscript copied during Euthymios' lifetime.

Authors: Makarios of Egypt, Maximos the Confessor, Isaak the Syrian, Dorotheos of Gaza, Gregory of Nyssa, John of Damascus, Zosimas, Ephrem, John Chrysostom;

Liturgical books: the *Synaxarion*, the *Triodion*, and the *Menaia*;

Hagiographies on: Stephen the Younger, Clement of Ancyra, Akepsimas* (as an exception listed *only* in the first part of the catalogue in Euthymios' *Life*), Gregory of Nazianzus*, Menas and Hermogenes, Athanasios the Great, the three youths Alphius, Philadelphus and Cyrinus, Mary of Egypt, John the Theologian*, Prokopios.

- **1001/1002:** This date is derived from the aforementioned colophon by Euthymios contained in *Ivir. georg.* 10 (f. 337v).

Mss.:

Greek text (1006–1007):

March 1006: vol. 1: Mosq. Synod. gr. 75 (Vladimir 62; Diktyon 43700), from Iviron; scribe: Theophanes;

February 1007: vol. 2: Athos, Iviron 46 (Lambros 4166; Diktyon 23643); scribe: Theophanes; Soteroudes 1998, 85–6;

Georgian text (1008):

- “a triad of codices [in this order: *Ivir. georg.* 13, 4, 10] containing the complete translation”; scribes: Iovane Grdzelidze (PmbZ 23545) (for *georg.* 13, 4, and 10), Iovane Okrop'iri (for *georg.* 4 and 10), and Arseni Ninoc'mida (for *georg.* 4) (cf. NCM, A-1103 below); Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 164, with pp. 42–9, 115–33, and 164–9 (from where the note in quotation marks is taken).

Notably, the Georgian text quickly reached Jerusalem; see Jerusalem, Greek Patriarchate, *georg.* 12, dated to the first half of the eleventh century and copied at the Georgian Monastery of the Holy Cross, near Jerusalem; see Chkhikvadze et al. 2018, 23.

Text: John Chrysostom's *Commentary* on the Gospel of Matthew, the first work listed in the latter part of the catalogue in Euthymios' *Life*.

- **after(?) ca. 1001/1002–June 1005: Authors and texts not included in John's Preface, but mentioned in the latter part of the corresponding list in the Life of Euthymios**—again, we cite only those texts which are not mentioned elsewhere in our catalogue as transmitted in a Georgian manuscript copied during Euthymios' lifetime.

Authors: Cassian, Maximos the Confessor, Basil the Great;

Liturgical books: texts from the *Euchologion* (*Offices* for the monastic habit and the Midnight Service), and the *Horologion*;

Hagiographies on: Andrew* the Apostle, Anthimos of Nicomedia, Blasios of Sebasteia, Indes and Domna, Theodore Stratelates, Theodore of Perge, Eustratios* and his companions, and Nikolaos*.

- August 1004:

Ms.: Vatican, BAV, Ottob. gr. 422 (Diktyon *65665; Ehrhard II 311 and III 793–4); scribe: Theophanes.

Texts: A non-menological collection of hagiographical texts in Greek (both narrative and encomiastic); it includes: the *Miracles of Michael the Archangel** (BHG 1285/1288d) (a Georgian translation is listed in the latter part of the catalogue in Euthymios' *Life*), Metaphrastes' *Life of the Virgin** (BHG 1047–1048) (for the Georgian translation see the next entry), the *Encomium* by Andrew of Crete on Nikolaos* (copied a second time in 1011 by Theophanes; moreover, a Georgian translation of a *Life* of St Nikolaos is listed in the latter part of the catalogue in Euthymios' *Life*), and Metaphrastes' *Passion* of Artemios (BHG 172).

- early(?) 11th c.:

Ms.: Tbilisi, NCM, A-40; Van Esbroeck (1986, vi, with further bibliography), cites the first half of the 11th c. as the date of Tbilisi, NCM, A-40, while Simelidis (2020, 129) lists “c. 1000”. We think it reasonable to speculate that it may be linked chronologically with the above-mentioned Vat. Ottob. gr. 422, dated to 1004 and copied by Theophanes, which contains precisely one of the two texts used by Euthymios for the Georgian *Life*.

Texts: John Geometres' *Life of the Virgin* (BHG 1102g–1102h) and Symeon Metaphrastes' *Life of the Virgin** (BHG 1047–1048), jointly used (as demonstrated rightly by Simelidis 2020) for the production of a composite Georgian *Life* attributed pseudonymously to Maximos the Confessor, most likely an invention by Euthymios, as rightly argued by Simelidis (2020, 157–8).

- June 1008:

Ms.: London, BL, Add. 36751 (Diktyon 39134); scribe: Theophanes.

Texts: A Gospel lectionary in Greek.⁵¹

- October 1011:

Ms.: Athos, Koutloumousiou 25 (Lambros 3094; Diktyon 26050; Ehrhard II 311 and III 130–2); scribe Theophanes.

Texts: Menological collection (Sept.–Febr.) in Greek; it includes: hagiographies inserted in Metaphrastes' *Menologion* on Symeon the Stylite, Eustathios Plakidas* (a Georgian translation is listed in Euthymios' *Life*), Thekla, John the Theologian* (a Georgian translation is listed in both

⁵¹ This book may belong to those manuscripts created for the sake of procuring income for Iviron or destined as a gift of the monastery; cf. text and note 46 above.

John's *Preface* and Euthymios' *Life*), Gregory of Armenia, Thomas the Apostle, Sergios and Bakchos, Luke the Apostle, Arethas, Kosmas and Damian, Philip the Apostle, Matthew the Apostle, Catherine, Iakobos the Persian, Barbara, and Eustratios*; it also includes *Encomia* on: Nikolaos* by Andrew of Crete (also copied in 1004 by Theophanes; moreover, a Georgian translation of a *Life* of St Nikolaos is listed in the latter part of the catalogue in Euthymios' *Life*), the 40 Martyrs of Sebasteia by Basil the Great, and for Andrew* the Apostle by Niketas David the Paphlagonian.

- 1011–1019:

Ms.: Tbilisi, NCM, A-1103 (with a colophon that suggests the above date); scribes: the Athonites Iovane Grdzelidze, Iovane Okrop'iri, and Arseni Ninoc'mida (cf. *Ivir. georg.* 13, above); Otkhmezuri et al. 2018, 68–9.

Texts: The *Dialogues* by Gregory the Great and *Miracles of Michael the Archangel**. Both texts are listed in this order also in the latter part of the catalogue in Euthymios' *Life*; they thus likely post-date 1001/1002–June 1005. Regarding the translation of the former work, see Bruni 2008 with Otkhmezuri 2022c, 447–8.

- 1014:

Ms.: *Ivir. georg.* 33; scribe: Aġap'i; Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 319–23 (from where the quote in the next line).

Texts: “Commentary on the Psalms by Basil of Caesarea, consisting of 17 homilies ... donated to Mt. Athos by Guaranduxt', mother of Bagrat' III” (PmbZ 20740). Basil's work is mentioned also in John's *Preface* and in Euthymios' *Life*, thus likely predates 1001/1002–June 1005.

- before 1020:

Ms.: Mosq. Synod. gr. 176, ff. 231–388 (Vladimir 388; Diktyon 43801; Ehrhard II 238–9); scribe: anonymous (an associate of Theophanes?); Fonkič in Fonkič and Poliakov 1993, 127.

Texts: A *panegyrikon* of Niketas David the Paphlagonian, with his *Encomia* on the Apostles and Dionysios the Areopagite in Greek.

- before 1020:

Ms.: Vatican, BAV, Ottob. gr. 428 (Diktyon *65671), originally from Iv-iron (Wenger 1956, 34–6); scribe: Theophanes; Boudignon, Cassin, and Seguin 2018, 198–200.

Texts: Various works of John Chrysostom (not corresponding however with any of the Georgian translations of Chrysostom listed in John's *Pref-*

ace and Euthymios' *Life*), and Gregory of Nyssa's *Commentary* on the Lord's Prayer (mentioned in both the *Preface* and the *Life*).

- **Summer of 1019:**

Euthymios retires.

- **April 1020:**

Ms.: Paris. gr. 529 (Diktyon *50104; Mossay 1981, 52); scribe: Theophanes.

Texts: Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orations* in Greek, with marginal *scholia* (unedited?); for Euthymios' Georgian translation of Gregory, see the entry on the late 10th-c. *Ivir. georg.* 68 above.

- **after 1020 (?):**

Ms.: Mosq. Synod. gr. 176, ff. 1–230 (Vladimir 388; Diktyon 43801; Ehrhard III 29; Fonkič in Fonkič and Poliakov 1993, 127); scribe: Theophanes (1r–37v and 84r–230v) and another, anonymous copyist (38r–83v), who was also responsible (Kavrus 1989, 169) for Mosq. Synod. gr. 116 (Vladimir 31; Diktyon 43741); this latter ms., likely also produced in the environment of Euthymios, contains John Chrysostom's *Commentary* on the Genesis.

Texts: A shortened collection of texts in Greek from the Metaphrastic *Menologion* for the months of September, October, and November, including Niketas David the Paphlagonian's *Life* of Gregory of Agrigento (BHG 708) and the *Life* of Alypius the Stylite (BHG 64).

- **May 1021:**

Ms.: Kiev, National Library of Ukraine V. I. Vernadskyj, OTIC 3692 (Diktyon 37437); scribe: Theodotos/Theodosios(?); Fonkič 1995–1996, 44–5; for the Athonite and likely Lavran origins of the Kievian ms. see also Fonkič 1973; it is, nevertheless, impossible to know where exactly on Athos it was copied, but Iviron is certainly a possibility. Iviron seems to be the place of production of also another early *Barlaam and Ioasaph* ms., Iviron 462 (Diktyon 24059), which is related to the Kievian book in terms of its version of the text; Volk (2009, 87) places Iviron 462 in the exact same spatio-temporal context as the Kiev *Barlaam and Ioasaph*.

Text: *Barlaam and Ioasaph* (version: Familie a).

As noted earlier (1.3, section “Georgian Hypotexts”), the single manuscript copy of the *Balavariani*, the Georgian hypotext of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*—namely, Jerusalem, Greek Patriarchate, *Georg.*

140—dates to the last decades of the eleventh century.⁵² It was copied at the Georgian Monastery of the Holy Cross, near Jerusalem, a monastery with strong links to Iviron. We have interpreted this above as a likely indication that the original Georgian manuscript which served as a model for *Georg.* 140 could very likely have come from Iviron.⁵³ One could also hypothesize that an earlier original was preserved in a Sabaite environment and a copy was brought hence to Iviron and was then used as the base text for the Greek *Barlaam and Ioasaph*. This could possibly explain the fictive transmitter of the story, John *Sabaïtes*, of the text's title.

- February 1022:

Ms.: Mosq. Synod. gr. 162 (Vladimir 380; Diktyon 43787; Ehrhard III 170–1, 377, and 741–2); scribe: Theophanes; Fonkič in Fonkič and Poliakov 1993, 124–5.

Texts: Non-menological and almost exclusively non-Metaphrastic collection of hagiographical texts in Greek, several on the latter half of the liturgical year⁵⁴; it includes texts on: Demetrios* (*Encomium* and *Miracles*), Maximos* the Confessor (five texts), Akepsimas* (Georgian translation listed in Euthymios' *Life*), Gregory Presbyter's *Life* of Gregory of Nazianzus* (the only text which had been included in Metaphrastes' *Menologion*; a Georgian translation of this text is listed in both John's *Preface* and Euthymios' *Life*), George* (two *Encomia*, the first misattributed to Andrew of Crete, the latter anonymous), Febronia*, Gregory of Nyssa's *Life* of Makrina*, etc.

- June 19, 1023:

Ms.: Mosq. Synod. gr. 15 (Vladimir 381; Diktyon 43640), from Iviron, copied by Theophanes; ms. **A** in our edition (full discussion in 3.3 below)—for the post-Byzantine ms. **m** of the *Life* of Theodore as a copy of Mosq. Synod. gr. 15 *as well as* Mosq. Synod. gr. 162 (previous entry), see Vol. II, Introduction 1.1.

Texts: *Theodore of Edessa*, along with other texts such as, as noted earlier, a version of Ouranos' *Life* of Symeon the Stylite the Younger, the Greek ver-

⁵² For the manuscript (which, among other texts, contains also a Georgian version of the *Life* of Alexios the Man of God [ff. 185v-195v]), see Volk 2009, 99–100 with Lang 1957, 392–3 and Gippert 2025, 261–2.

⁵³ For the possible connection between Iviron and the *Balavariani* ms., see also Gippert 2013, 78.

⁵⁴ We may note, e.g., that the ms. contains (being the earliest testimony) three rare texts for August, on Laurentios (BHG 977c), Andrew Stratelates (BHG 118), and Agathonikos (BHG 41b); cf. Ehrhard III 170–1 (n. 1).

sion of a text which was also translated by Euthymios, the *Life* of Pankratios*, and a version of the *Life* of Alexios the Man of God.

Regarding the *Life* of Theodore, it is worth repeating here that the earliest extant copy of its Georgian hypotext, namely the *Passion of St. Michael who was in the Great Lavra of our holy father Sabas*, dates to the end of the tenth century and is preserved also in the library of Iviron: *Ivir. georg.* 8. The manuscript, however, was not copied there. As has been argued, the book, an old Georgian *homiliary-cum-menologion*, the so-called *Athos Mravaltavi*, originated in Tao and quite probably belonged to those books brought from the native land and endowed to Iviron during its early years of existence.⁵⁵ Furthermore, the Georgian *Passion* is transmitted (as noted in Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 88) by two further manuscripts, both later: the 11th-c. (latter half) Oxford, *Bodl. georg.* 1 (ff. 64v–78v) and Tbilisi, NCM, Q-843b (ff. 27r–32v), copied in 1897 from *Ivir. georg.* 8 (Bregadze et al. 1958, 253; we thank Jost Gippert for this reference). The Oxford ms. (on which see Peeters 1912b with Chkhikvadze et al. 2018: 80–1) seems to have originated in the same context as Jerusalem, Greek Patriarchate, *Georg.* 140, which preserves the *Balavariani*, namely in the Georgian Monastery of the Holy Cross, near Jerusalem.

- anywhere between 1004 (?) and 1028 (?), the years of Theophanes' attested activity:

Ms.: Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria, Taurinensis 25 C. III. 3 (Diktyon 63571), copied by Theophanes, but destroyed in 1904 by a fire; see Pasini et al. 1749, 94–6 with Lamberz 1991, 40 and e.g. Markesinis 2019, 256.

Texts: Works by Maximos the Confessor; Georgian translations of works from Maximos' corpus are listed in two entries, first in both John's *Preface* and the first part of the catalogue in Euthymios' *Life*, and then in the latter part of that second catalogue.

⁵⁵ See Chkhikvadze et al. 2018: 189 and 194 with Blake 1931–1932: 318–329 and Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, xi and 77–99. The manuscript is a “collection of 61 hagiographic texts in pre-metaphrastic shape arranged in near to chronological order, beginning with 27 December and extending up to 27 June” (Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 77). On the Georgian liturgical book called *Mravaltavi*, see van Esbroeck 1975, Samir 1976, and Gippert 2016a and 2020, with Aleksidze 2021, 624–5 and Galadza 2018, 232–3 (with further bibliography): “*Mravaltavi* (მრავალთავი), a Georgian calque of the Greek adjective *polykephalos* (πολυκέφαλος), which means ‘with many headings/chapters’, ... is a collection of texts designed to be read during the liturgical year at various church services. Initially the texts were exclusively homilies for feasts of the Lord or of the Theotokos and were predominantly connected to the movable cycle. Eventually the collections grew to include hagiography and the lives of saints.”

- May 13, 1028:

Death of Euthymios.

Related manuscripts, copied relatively early after Euthymios' death

- c. 1028:

Ms.: Tbilisi, NCM, A-92, copied at Iviron and Constantinople, for Zacharias, Bishop of Valašk'erti (PmbZ 28497); scribes: the Athonites Zakaria Mirdatidze (PmbZ 28498) and Arseni Mirdatidze (PmbZ 20597), and Basili Malušidze, a disciple of Zacharias; Otkhmezuri et al. 2018, 70–1 and Skhirtladze and Kldiashvili 2022, 319 (for the dating and locations) and 377–8.

Texts: Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orations*; for this corpus, see the entry on the late 10th-c. *Ivir. georg.* 68 above.

- 1030:

Ms.: *Ivir. georg.* 21; scribe: Isak' Mankaneli (Isaak of Mangana), monk in the Georgian monastery of the Mother of God in Olympus; Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 228–39; cf. Skhirtladze and Kldiashvili 2022, 330 (n. 58).

Texts: Homilies attributed to Makarios of Egypt and the *Passion* of Akepsimas* (listed in Euthymios' *Life*) as well as, again, the *Life* of Pankratios*.

- 1030:

Ms.: Tbilisi, NCM, A-648, richly illustrated, but preserved only in a fragmented state, copied also for bishop Zacharias; scribe: again Basili Malušidze; Otkhmezuri et al. 2018, 90–1 and Skhirtladze and Kldiashvili 2022, 322–9 (with rich bibliography) and 378–80.

Texts: *Synaxarion* (translated before 1001/1002–June 1005), a version, which according to van Esbroeck (1988a, 82) is closer to the Hagiopolitan than to the Constantinopolitan calendar.

- c. 1031:

Ms.: Tbilisi, NCM, Q-34, copied for the aforementioned Zacharias; scribe: again Isak' Mankaneli; Otkhmezuri et al. 2018, 98–9 and Skhirtladze and Kldiashvili 2022, 330–1 and 381–2.

Texts: The *Life* of Maximos* the Confessor, along with his writings.

- 1031:

Ms.: Tbilisi, NCM, A-1, copied also for Zacharias in Constantinople; scribe: again Basili Malušidze; Otkhmezuri et al. 2018, 92–3 and Skhirtladze and Kldiashvili 2022, 330 and 380–1.

Texts: Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orations*; for this corpus, see the entry on the late 10th-c. *Ivir. georg.* 68 above.

- 1030s (?):

Mss.:

- the earliest preserved copy, Tbilisi, NCM, S-143, is dateable to the 1020s (Skhirtladze and Kldiashvili 2022, 321, with the earlier bibliography) or, perhaps more reasonably, 1030s (Van Esbroeck 1988a, 77; though we do not share his more precise dating of the translation of the *Nomokanon* to the period between 1025 and 1028, following Giunashvili 1969, 203–4; cf. Nutsubidzé 2026, 52). The book was made in Constantinople for the aforementioned bishop Zacharias;

- the second earliest copy, Tbilisi, NCM, A-96 (illuminated), is dated to 1031, and was also copied in Constantinople, at the Chora monastery (associated with the Georgians in this period), for Gregory of Iviron (PmbZ 22478?).

Both manuscripts were copied again by Basili Malušidze; Otkhmezuri et al. 2018, 88–9 and 94–5 and Skhirtladze and Kldiashvili 2022, 319–22 (with discussion of the scribe as well), 376–7, and 381.

Text: The *Lesser Nomokanon* (Giunashvili 1972; Nutsubidzé 2026), a collection and set of excerpts based on four texts, the *Acts* of the Quinisext Council of Constantinople (year 692), the *Kanonarion* of John the Faster (cf. Van Esbroeck 1988, 76–80 and Van de Pavard 2006, 27, 193, 200–1; Mes-sis 2022a), Basil the Great's *Letters*, and the so-called *Synodikon* of Orthodoxy, pertaining to icon veneration. The *Nomokanon* and the *Synodikon* are mentioned only in the latter part of the catalogue in Euthymios' *Life*.

2.3. THE DATE OF *BARLAAM AND IOASAPH* AND *THEODORE OF EDESSA*

The above list raises a swarm of issues. For our present purposes, apart from its intrinsic value, the catalogue is important for deciphering and venturing an opinion about at least two things. The first is the possible time of creation of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and *Theodore of Edessa*, a matter already touched upon earlier (1.3), but which can gain further clarity in light of the above.

As we have seen, and as will be examined in detail later on, both *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and *Theodore of Edessa* depend heavily on texts from Symeon Metaphrastes' *Menologion*, whose production seems to have begun in the 970s and ended in the 980s (Symeon himself died likely in the 990s). The earliest manuscript with hagiographical texts listed above dates to likely 991 (though it

does not include a Metaphrastic text as has been previously assumed⁵⁶), and interaction with hagiographical texts seems to increase after 1004 (the date of Vat. Ottob. gr. 422, copied by Theophanes). The latter, is the latest securely confirmed date by which Euthymios must have been exposed to Metaphrastic texts, an exposure which, of course, could have occurred and most likely did occur earlier—when exactly we shall never know. It is thus reasonable to assume that since a deep engagement with the Metaphrastic *Menologion* is presupposed for the creation of Euthymios' two large Greek hagiographies, they therefore must post-date the 980s and indeed the year 1000 or so. That both of the two works were conceived (even if not yet executed), while Euthymios was reading and taking notes from Metaphrastes' hagiographies is also a likely possibility.

In the case of *Theodore of Edessa*, as again already noted, another hagiography is a prerequisite for its creation, namely the *Life* of Symeon the Stylite the Younger (BHG 1690), by Nikephoros Ouranos, most likely composed during the early years of the eleventh century in Antioch (we should also allow for some time to pass before the text reached Athos—via Constantinople? directly from Antioch? or from the monastery of Symeon near Antioch?).⁵⁷ The post-early-1000s dating of the two texts can be also suggested by the fact that by June 1005 at least, Euthymios was, as is obvious from the above list, fully engaged with his Georgian translations next to other obligations, which would presumably have left little time for his large compositions in Greek.⁵⁸

The *terminus post quem* can be pushed later still. Euthymios' administrative burden as abbot of Iviron and *epitropos* of the Lavra—roles he assumed in 1005—would have severely constrained his capacity for translation. In fact, although several of the twenty-four Georgian texts mentioned exclusively in Euthymios' *Life* (and not in his father's *Preface*) must postdate 1001/1002–June 1005, no major Georgian translation can be securely assigned following 1019. This is the latest possible date which has been suggested for the Tbilisi manuscript (NCM, A-1103, dated to the period between 1011 and 1019), which preserves his translations of the *Dialogues* of Gregory the Great and the

⁵⁶ Cf. the entry on *Ivir. georg.* 79 above.

⁵⁷ Cf. 1.3. (text and notes 22 and 23) above. Glynias 2020, 450 hypothesizes that the *Life* of Symeon could have been copied from a copy of the text deriving from the saint's monastery near Antioch.

⁵⁸ In this regard, we disagree with Volk (2016, 417) who dates the first version of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* to “the last years of the 10th century” and Høgel (2019, 357) who also dates the first version to before 1005, which, in this view, would explain the supposed “grammatical and idiomatic faults found in it”. Volk's dating, we should add, offers a slight revision from his earlier position that *Barlaam and Ioasaph* was composed “kaum nach 985” (2009, 86–7 and 630, n. 31), itself based on a misunderstanding of the relation between Metaphrastes' *Menologion* and Euthymios' text; in that regard, also the dating of some the witnesses used in Volk's edition and placed in the tenth/eleventh c. (see the table in 2006, 3; cf. also <https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/oeuvre/13526/>) requires re-thinking, in our view.

Miracles of Michael the Archangel. Indeed, the translation of the latter may have been commenced significantly earlier, given that a Greek version of the *Miracles* is found in Vat. Ottob. gr. 422, dated to 1004.

The years following 1019 therefore appear to constitute the most “open” and extended interval in Euthymios’ career as both translator from Greek and administrator. The summer of 1019 is especially significant, as Euthymios retired from the abbacy at that time and could devote substantially more attention to his writings (cf. GRD 13; M-H 26). The considerable length of the two Greek works in question implies that he had ample time at his disposal, a scenario consistent with the post-1019 period.

What about the *terminus ante quem* for the two Greek compositions? May 1021 and June 1023, when the earliest dated copies of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and *Theodore of Edessa* were produced give us the definite latest dates by which the two Greek texts had been composed. Indeed, this temporal sequence is a strong indication of their actual order of appearance. In other words, it is quite likely that *Barlaam and Ioasaph* was written first and *Theodore of Edessa* followed. This seems to be further supported by the fact that George Hagiorites also lists the two works in his biography of Euthymios in this sequence—his other list, we may note, of Euthymios’ *Georgian* translations, also seems to be arranged, at least partly, chronologically.

Might the years 1021 and 1023 mark the definitive completion not only of the manuscripts but also of the texts themselves? Is it possible to imagine that *Barlaam and Ioasaph* was composed between the summer of 1019 and May 1021, and *Theodore of Edessa* between May 1021 and June 1023? A complication to this postulate arises from the fact that the two dated manuscripts preserve—as we shall scrutinize in greater detail (3.3)—a second, slightly revised version of each work, attributable, in our estimation, to Euthymios himself. Consequently, it is conceivable that Euthymios had authored both texts at an earlier date, only returning to them in 1021 and 1023 to undertake their final revision. Given that both works are also based on translations from Georgian, one could further hypothesize that Euthymios may have started even earlier. Initially, he may have produced basic draft translations of the two shorter (in the case of *Theodore of Edessa* significantly shorter) Georgian hypotexts as a basis for his Greek compositions; and then he may have returned to create, in two separate phases, the monumental Greek works extant today, utilizing supplementary notes from translating other Greek authors, especially Metaphrastes.

We cannot be certain about the details of these scenarios. Nevertheless, we do not think it necessary to envision a decades-long process. Rather, assuming Euthymios was singularly devoted to these new compositions, a two-year span

seems sufficient for him to produce the initial translations-cum-recompositions of the Georgian originals and subsequently the second versions of each text. In our view, there are relatively compelling signals that—irrespective of their initial conception—dedicated work on *Barlaam and Ioasaph* began after the summer of 1019. Once that Greek composition and its rewriting were completed in May 1021, a similar effort of translation-cum-recomposition and then rewriting likely began on *Theodore of Edessa*, ending in June 1023, late in Euthymios' life and literary career.

2.4. NETWORKS AND AUDIENCES

The second and wider issue, into which the above list can help us delve, is the set of social networks that lay behind and beyond Euthymios' literary production (including his *Theodore of Edessa*), forming its primary origins as well as its primary targets. Based, that is, on the above catalogue of books—their dates and locations, the texts they included, the scribes who produced them, and the patrons who funded or inspired their making—, coordinated with information from George's biography of Euthymios and related sources as sketched out earlier, we can get a glimpse of the people and the web of relations that influenced Euthymios' formation as a writer as well as those that represented most likely his immediate intended audience as an author who was working under his father's mandate, by commission of Georgian elites, but also by his own accord. Some of these relations can be reconstructed with confidence, while others are the matter only of speculation.

Euthymios was, first and foremost, at the center of a *Georgian* network which facilitated communication between the kingdom of Georgia—with whose ruling elite Euthymios and his father were in constant contact—and Georgians who had settled in Constantinople and its monastic hinterlands both near and far, namely the holy mountains of Olympus in Bithynia and of Athos, as well as in the most important Byzantine Christian hub within Islamic ruled territories, namely Jerusalem and its own monastic hinterland, especially the monastery of St Sabas.⁵⁹ A Georgian presence and contacts with Iviron apparently also existed for Antioch, recently re-incorporated into Byzantine territory since the re-

⁵⁹ For Georgians in Palestine, see most recently Chronz et al. 2022 and also Tchekhanovets 2018; for the monastery of St Sabas (Mar Saba), located 14.5 km south-east of Jerusalem, see Patrìch 1995 and 2001, and Galadza and Verheyden 2025—cf. also Jotischky 2012 and the much earlier Ehrhard 1893; for the history of Melkite communities in Palestine, see Galadza 2018, *passim* with further bibliography. On Athos, see e.g. various contributions in Bryer and Cunningham 1994, Delouis and Smyrlis 2019, and Chitwood 2025. On Olympus and Bithynia in general, see Geyer and Lefort 2003 and Belke 2020; cf. also relevant chapters in Mango and Dagron 1995. For monastic foundations in this period in general, see Morris 1995.

capture of the city in October 969 and the re-establishment of Byzantine rule.⁶⁰ Such contacts with “Antiochian” Georgians were to increase after Euthymios’ death, as we shall see later on (5.1). But, during his lifetime as well, we have already alluded to the close ties of the Athonite Georgians with, at the very least, the Georgian-friendly imperial authorities in that region, most notably, the aforementioned Bardas Phokas in the 980s and Nikephoros Ouranos in the 1000s.

This Iberian network comprised nobles pursuing careers in Byzantium as well as erudite monks. Through their travels and settlements, they linked the various Georgian outposts situated within and beyond Byzantine lands, moving with remarkable ease across a vast geographical space—just like the main character in *Theodore of Edessa*, we might add. The network, moreover, was closely connected to certain Byzantine families of Asia Minor, the Phokades most notably. Were the Georgians in this context honored guests or, as we suggested above, high-profile hostages? Their status remains ambiguous, and must have fluctuated according to circumstance.

Whatever the case, they acted as energetic agents of and respondents to their Georgian kings’ interests—this included Euthymios’ translation project itself; according to his biographer, many of his texts were sent to David king of Tao (d. 1000): “Being a man of faith”, we read “David was filled with joy when he saw the texts, and said: ‘Glory to God who has revealed a new Chrysostom for our times’. And the king sent letter after letter with a plea to translate more books and send them to him” (GRD 13; M-H 24).⁶¹ Simultaneously, Euthymios, along with his father and other Georgians sought persistent ties with the highest levels of Byzantine power. Indeed, with the exception of the brief period between 987–989, during the revolt of Bardas Phokas against Basil II, imperial power protected this Georgian network, which was centered on Athos and had ramifications throughout the empire.

This was a period—in Byzantine, emperor-centric terms, from the death of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos (959) to that of Basil II (1025)—which coincided with a significant project (if we can call it thus) of territorial expansion for the Byzantine state, especially toward the south-eastern borders of the empire. With its relative success, the project brought with it some prosperity, which translated also into some notable flowering and consequent exportation of literary culture beyond Greek-speaking elites.⁶² The translation of mainly *Constanti-*

⁶⁰ On Antioch, see Todt 2020 and Todt and Vest 2014 with De Giorgi and Eger 2021.

⁶¹ Cf. the translation entry on the year 977 above on ms. Tbilisi, NCM, H-2251.

⁶² For overviews and discussions of the key issues in political and cultural history of this period (also from an international perspective), see Cheynet 1990; Crostini 1996; Treadgold 1997, 498–579; Magdalino 2002 and 2003a (various chapters); Lauxtermann 2003; Holmes 2005 and 2008; Tougher 2005; Cheynet 2006 (various chapters); Patlagean 2007; Kaldellis 2017; Magdalino 2017; Flusin and

nopolitan Greek literature by Euthymios and then his followers from the 1030s onwards—on the Black Mountain near Antioch, in Iviron, in Constantinople, and in Georgia—offers testimony to this,⁶³ while a similar venture, from Greek into Arabic, was initiated in Antioch and its environs roughly during the same period.⁶⁴ It is thus no accident that the Georgians often positioned themselves as insiders and allies to this Byzantine project. The pronounced Orthodoxy seen in *Theodore of Edessa*, confirmed by imperial power in our story, is indeed part and parcel of that Georgian self-positioning.

In any case, as becomes quite clear from the above catalogue of texts and manuscripts, thanks to the network of Georgians, Euthymios' translations quickly reached Constantinople and Olympus. The figure of Zacharias, a Georgian bishop of aristocratic descent, living as a high-class exile in Constantinople from 1022 to the early 1030s, a man with close ties to Iviron and instrumental for the diffusion of Euthymios' works, is prominent in this regard.⁶⁵ A *metochion* of Iviron existed, we should not forget, in Constantinople (likely in the Xerolophos quarter), the place where Euthymios himself might have stayed during his visits to the City and another place where his works were copied.⁶⁶

Euthymios' translations were also copied and brought to Georgia as well as, crucially for us here, Syro-Palestine. The links of Euthymios' biographer

Cheynet 2017 (various chapters); the chapters by Whittow, Shepard, and Loud in Shepard 2019, 465–582; and Kaldellis 2024, 559–87.

⁶³ For a brief overview and further bibliography, see Aleksidze 2021 with Otkhmezuri and Raphava 2022, 211–27. We may also cite Surguladze et al. 2023, which touches on several issues discussed in the paragraphs above.

⁶⁴ See Treiger 2021 with Glynias 2022, both with thorough overviews and further bibliography; some notable “Antiochian” figures, comparable to Euthymios, include the *protospatharios* Ibrāhīm ibn Yūhannā (early 950s–fl. ca. 1025; PmbZ 22706), Yūhannā ibn ‘Abd al-Masīḥ (“a priest and a monk in the region of Antioch”; first half of the 11th c.; responsible for the so-called “Antiochian Menologion”, which included also Metaphrastic texts; cf. Treiger 2017), Antonios (“abbot of the monastery of Saint Symeon the Wonderworker on the Black Mountain near Antioch”; first half of the 11th c.), and deacon ‘Abdallāh ibn al-Faḍl (fl. 1050). See further the relevant sections in Nasrallah 1983 and also Roberts 2020 (on pp. 110–12, a comparison of Euthymios' translated works and those of ‘Abdallāh ibn al-Faḍl) and Glynias 2020, 432–5.

⁶⁵ On Zacharias (*Ζαχαρίας* in Greek sources; *Zak'aria* Valaskerteli or Baneli or Svingelozi—namely bishop of Valashkert, archbishop of Bana, and *synkellos*—in Georgian sources) and his manuscripts, see the detailed discussion in Skhirtladze and Kldiashvili 2022, 315–32 with PmbZ 28497 (possibly also 28493) and Silogava 2013; see also Otkhmezuri et al. 2018, 21 and Papaioannou 2022, 156–7. To the manuscripts mentioned in the list above we might add a *Heirmologion*, annotated with neumes, *Ivir. georg.* 85 (Zacharias' father is mentioned in a prayer on f. Ir); see Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 679–83 with Skhirtladze and Kldiashvili 2022, 76. See also Kldiashvili and Mtchedlidze 2022, 395–9.

⁶⁶ On this dependency see Skhirtladze and Kldiashvili 2022, 313–5 and Oltean 2025, 22–6 with *Life of George Hagiorites*, GRD² 25 = M-H² 79 (and notes). See also the aforementioned (in the list of dateable translations) ms. Tbilisi, NCM, MS A-1104, copied sometime between the 980s and 1005 by Ioane Meli, active at the Constantinopolitan *metochion* of Iviron. For other Georgian monasteries in Constantinople, see Janin 1969, 256–7.

and main promoter with the monastic communities of the Black Mountain have already been mentioned and will occupy us again when we look at the posthumous reception of Euthymios' work in chapter 5. Regarding Palestine, we might mention a monk, called Hilarion (PmbZ 22613), who according to George Hagiorites was part of the Athonite Georgian monastic community before the foundation of Iviron, and who—with the blessing of John and Euthymios—spent “many years” as a deacon at the Church of the *Anastasis* in Jerusalem (a prominent *locus sanctus*, repeatedly mentioned in *Theodore of Edessa*), before returning to Iviron—after many letters and requests, again by John and his son (GRD 19; M-H 55).

Euthymios thus had contacts in the Holy Land, among the Georgian monks at least, who by the 1040s had their own foundation there, another outpost of Georgians and, indeed, of Iviron itself. This was the aforementioned monastery of the Holy Cross, established by the Sabaite Prokhore (985–1066)⁶⁷, a community that followed the rule of St Sabas and had a notable library.⁶⁸ We have also evidence of Euthymios' correspondence with at least one other Georgian monk in St Sabas, dating to after Euthymios' father's death in 1005.⁶⁹ That Euthymios thus helped promote the status of St Sabas among Georgians is to be expected⁷⁰; as is the fact that he did the same for his Greek readers, by the importance accorded to St Sabas and the “Holy City” in the alleged transmission history of his *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and, most conspicuously, by his biography of two Sabaite Saints, Theodore and his relative Michael, in *Theodore of Edessa*.

What about *Greek-speaking* networks and audiences then? In describing the death scene, cited above, George Hagiorites (GRD 23; M-H 77) mentions the reactions not only of Georgians but, explicitly, also of Greeks in the City: “When the emperor Constantine learned of the accident, he was greatly perturbed, and he sent one of his relatives to check on him. So also did the inhabitants of the City, noblemen, princes, and courtiers, who had great confidence in Euthymios

⁶⁷ On Prokhore, see Peeters 1950, 207 with Wardrop 1913, 401–2, Martin-Hisard 2006–2007, 67 (n. 676, where a direct relation between Euthymios and Prokhore is posited), Tchekhanovets 2018, 39–40, and Galadza 2018, 121–2 and 376–7. Cf. also text and note 53 above.

⁶⁸ For the monastery, see van Esbroeck 2000 with Khutsishvili 2006; also Janin 1913. For its Georgian manuscript collection, see Blake 1924 with Chronz et al. 2022, 31–4, 40–2, and 52–4 and also Pataridze 2019a and Garitte 1964a (for a specific example).

⁶⁹ Peradse 1936 and Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 641 (with further bibliography) and also Taft 1988, 184–6 and Galadza 2018, 136 and 160. For the text, preserved in *Ivir. georg.* 79, see the entry on the year 991 above.

⁷⁰ For Euthymios' Georgian version of the *Life* of Sabas by Cyril of Skythopolis, see ms. *Ivir. georg.* 40 (dated to the early 11th c.) with Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 378–88. Notably, the same text is preserved in a ms. commissioned by the aforementioned Prokhore in the monastery of Holy Cross, London, BL, Add. 11281, dated between 1034 and 1042; see Gippert 2016b.

and loved him. Everyone came, bathed in tears, and kissed him, before leaving again". There may be some hagiographical exaggeration in this statement, but it also seems reasonable to give credit to it. In his long career as one of the most prominent figures of Athonite monasticism and a mediator of its interests (as well as the interests of his fellow Georgians), Euthymios, fluent as well as learned in Greek, must have had developed numerous connections with Greeks in the capital and beyond its walls.

Such Constantinopolitan Greek connections of Euthymios must also have had a long history behind them. In this regard, we ought to return to Athanasios the Athonite and his network of powerful Greek-speaking nobles as well as, less discernibly, intellectuals. We have already mentioned the Phokades above, and Athanasios' and his fellow Georgian Athonites' close links with them. Yet the decisions recorded in Athanasios' *Testament*, produced sometime between the end of 993 and 996, bring to the foreground also the connections with the Constantinopolitan elite and its intellectual circles. For Athanasios not only named John the Iberian and, after John's death, Euthymios as the guardians of the Great Lavra, as already mentioned earlier, but also appointed as the monastery's lay overseer Nikephoros Ouranos to deal with all the monastery's affairs in the capital City.⁷¹

Ouranos (born likely between 940 and 950) was a man with a prominent career in the imperial court and much influence on emperor Basil II since the late 970s and early 980s, when Ouranos led embassies to the Emir of Baghdad (between 979 and 983), functioned as head of the imperial chancery in the 990s and then as military commander in Antioch in the 1000s.⁷² There, most likely, Ouranos composed the *Life*, which has been cited several times above and to which we shall return, of Symeon the Younger, also known as Symeon *Thaumastorites*, i.e. inhabitant of the Wondrous Mountain, near Antioch, where Symeon's monastery was located. Both the saint and monastery had risen in great prominence during the time of Euthymios, also among Georgians⁷³—it is notable, *à propos*, that (a) the protagonist of Euthymios' *Theodore of Edessa* makes a special visit to Antioch and then specifically to Symeon's monastery (104,4), that (b) manuscripts of the Georgian translation of the early Byzantine *Life* of Symeon

⁷¹ On the connections between Athanasios, John, Euthymios, and Ouranos, in relation to the Great Lavra specifically, see PmbZ 25617 (on Ouranos) with Athanasios Athonites, *Testament* 4 and 6 (pp. 125,21–126,7).

⁷² On Ouranos, see PmbZ 25617 with McGeer 1991 and Masterson 2019 (with further bibliography); see also Glynias 2020, 429–31 (on Ouranos in relation to Antioch) as well as Weller 2014, 115–54 and 2019.

⁷³ On Symeon *Thaumastorites* in his early Byzantine context, see Parker 2022; for his cult and monastery during the 11th c. and their importance for the Georgians, see Caseau and Messis 2021, with further bibliography, from which we may highlight Djobadze 1976, 63–107, Djobadze 1986, 57–116, Todt and Vest 2014, 1768–75, and Glynias 2020.

were in the Iviron library at the time of Euthymios (Kim 2016, 309–19), and that (c) Ouranos’ text pays positive tribute to the “Iberians” (chapters 101, 150, and 157).⁷⁴ The *Life* of Symeon was not Ouranos’ single literary work, however. For, importantly for us here, Ouranos was also an accomplished author in his own right, with several surviving works (including another Metaphrastic hagiography, a *Passion* of Theodore the Recruit), and a member of a network of Constantinopolitan scholars, which included Symeon Metaphrastes.⁷⁵

It is thus plausible to assume that Athanasios—who probably saw in Ouranos (after the fall of the Phokades and Basil Lekapenos) a powerful new patron or ally—was that person who facilitated or, at the very least, re-enforced any Constantinopolitan connections for Euthymios and his father John, connections which had a lasting impact on Euthymios, even after Athanasios’ death in 1000/1001 and John’s death in 1005. After all, we find not only a text by Ouranos (who died not long after 1007), written in Antioch in the early 1000s, but also other relatively recent Constantinopolitan literary productions in Euthymios’ library and/or among his translations. These texts were by prominent writers of the immediately preceding generations:

- Niketas David the Paphlagonian (ca. 880/885–ca. 950? PmbZ 25712; Paschalidis 1999), listed on several entries above;
- Theodore Daphnopates (c. 890/900–d. after 963? PmbZ 27694), whose anthology of John Chrysostom’s excerpts (Haidacher 1902; CPG 4684) is cited several times in *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and is preserved together with the *Life* of Theodore in ms. C, datable to the second half of the eleventh century;
- John Geometres (ca. 935–late 990s; PmbZ 23092), a prominent rhetorician, active in Constantinople from the 950s and especially in the court of Nikephoros Phokas in the late 960s—Euthymios translated Geometres’ *Life* of the Virgin, itself dated not long after 969/970⁷⁶—,
- and, of course, Symeon Metaphrastes (d. 990s?), Ouranos’ older friend.

This fact forces us to wonder who or what networks enabled Euthymios’ access to these relatively recent compositions, produced within the highest echelons of Constantinopolitan intellectual elite.

⁷⁴ On Symeon’s *Life* by Ouranos, see further Glynias 2022, 307–8 and Konstantatou 2025.

⁷⁵ On Ouranos as an author beyond the *Life* of Symeon, see Taragna 2017, and bibliography cited above. Ouranos composed a dirge on Metaphrastes (BHG 1675c), on which see Papaioannou 2021c, 502–4, 509, and 513–4. For his religious poetry (closely comparable to that of Metaphrastes), see Lauxtermann 2019, 175–9. For the *Passion* of Theodore (BHG 1762m), see Haldon 2016, 34–5.

⁷⁶ See Constan and Simelidis 2023 (pp. ix–xi, on the dating). On Geometres, see Papaioannou 2019, 677–82 (with further bibliography) as well as Mushinskaya 2022 (especially pp. 365–6).

It is impossible to know the exact relations between Euthymios and Ouranos, or whether Euthymios knew personally Metaphrastes or Geometres.⁷⁷ It is also impossible to ascertain, as has been suggested, whether we should consider Euthymios' literary production in light of some of these prominent writers' association with the confraternity of the Constantinopolitan church of *Ta Kyrou*, to which Geometres certainly belonged, but possibly also Ouranos and even Metaphrastes.⁷⁸ We are also unable to tell—to move a step even further—, where one should place the beginnings of Euthymios' initiative within the larger framework of the patronage of Basil Lekapenos (PmbZ 20925), a protector of the Phokas family and its Georgian allies and a patron of several intellectuals, including likely the very *Kyriotissa* circle itself.⁷⁹ As has been suggested by Paul Magdalino, also the beginning and end of work on Metaphrastes' *Menologion* coincided with the rise and fall (in 985) from power of Lekapenos—and perhaps profited from his patronage.⁸⁰ The indisputable closeness of Euthymios to Athanasios, on the other hand, allows us to speculate with much greater certainty that, as far as Euthymios was concerned, this traffic of relations and literary production was (at the very least, originally, in the 970s and 980s) filtered and mediated through the figure of the founder of the Athonite Lavra.

We should not forget, as noted above, that Athanasios had a career as a teacher in Constantinople in the 940s—an illustrious career, if we should trust his biographer—, that he was likely, as we also argued (text and notes 15 through 20 above), Euthymios' tutor in the late 960s and early 970s, and, moreover, that his Lavra was the first monastery on Athos where Greek book production was established, a model followed in Iviron. Athanasios himself had worked as a copyist—his books were “still preserved” in the early eleventh century, as his bi-

⁷⁷ As affirmed (with varying degrees of some hesitation) in Simelidis 2020 and 2023; see also Nikolaishvili 2022 on the supposed personal relations between Euthymios and Symeon Metaphrastes, reviving the earlier view of Kekelidze as reviewed and revised in Khintibidze 1996, 272 and 278–9; cf. Khintibidze 2021–2022, 94 (“Euthymios is one of Symeon's disciples and not just a follower”).

⁷⁸ See again Simelidis (2020, *passim*, as well as 2023, 207), following Magdalino (2018), who was the first to posit the existence of the *Kyriotissa* church (Janin 1969, 193–5) confraternity, with Geometres and Ouranos (and possibly also Metaphrastes) as its members. For a text on the history of the church (BHG 479i), originating likely in this context and notably transmitted in a manuscript preserved in Iviron (Iviron 428, ff. 175r–182v; Diktyon 24025), see Masaouti 2017.

⁷⁹ On Lekapenos and the *Kyriotai*, see Magdalino 2018, 123; on Lekapenos in general, see also Németh 2018, 36–46. Another (antagonistic?) contemporary network seems to have formed around Symeon the New Theologian (949–1022; PmbZ 27488), likely patronized by the powerful eunuch Joseph Bringas (PmbZ 23529 with Messis 2014a, 145, n. 105), an antagonist of Basil Lekapenos; it is worth noting that Symeon the New Theologian's fiercest opponent was Stephen of Nicomedia (d. after 1008/1009; PmbZ 27315), an intellectual associated with the *Kyriotai* group.

⁸⁰ See 1.3 (n. 21) above.

ographer reports, just like, we might add, those of one of Euthymios' heroes, Theodore of Edessa.⁸¹

Some (if not all) of the scribes, moreover, active in Lavra seem to have come from Constantinople and to be connected with learned circles, like their abbot.⁸² The most prominent among them, copying documents as well as manuscripts for Lavra, was John of Lavra, active in the mid-980s and mid-990s, precisely the time of Euthymios' own maturation as a Georgian translator.⁸³ Notably, the earliest dated document in his hand-writing is that aforementioned one which registered the gift-exchanges between the monasteries of Lavra and Iviron and that recorded John the Iberian's active mediation on behalf of Athanasios' monastery.⁸⁴ Equally notably, John primarily produced copies of John Chrysostom's texts, which were rewritten in the most recent Constantinopolitan fashion, and, as such, could have been among Euthymios' Greek models, not only for the purposes of translation (indeed, he translated a large part of the Chrysostomic corpus into Georgian⁸⁵), but also for how to write in Greek.

We shall, again, return to this in more detail below (3.3 [text and notes 150 through 153]). What commands our attention here is that in Euthymios' perspective and environment, both early in his career and formation as a translator and writer, and also later in his life, Greek-speaking and Greek-reading Byzantines (including bilingual Georgians like Euthymios, at home with both languages) must have mattered greatly: from Athanasios the Athonite, that is, and monastics of various origins to courtiers of Constantine VIII and many others, in Constantinople (to whose "imperial court", as noted earlier, Euthymios traveled apparently many times [n. 40 above]), in Thessalonike (to which Euthymios also traveled often [GRD 15; M-H 29]), possibly in distant Jerusalem and Antioch, where Euthymios had contacts, and of course on Athos, especially in the Great Lavra, which he supervised, and in his very own monastery, the Iviron, regard-

⁸¹ See Athanasios of Panagiotou, *Life of St Athanasios of Athos*, 53,7-14 with *Life of Theodore of Edessa* 16 (and relevant note); cf. Anonymous, *Life of St Athanasios of Athos (Vita B)* (BHG 188) 12.

⁸² Pérez Martín (2016, 570-3) has rightly remarked that "Athanasios de Lavra avait à son service des moines qui s'étaient probablement formés dans l'administration"; she has also pointed to two scribes active in the contexts of Lavra (year 1013; Diktyon 27284; Michael/Maximos, PmbZ 25356) and Iviron (year 1015; John, PmbZ 23356) who sign as *maistōr* and *grammatikos* respectively, likely alluding to their notarial training and functions as teachers/notaries when laymen.

⁸³ See D'Agostino and Degni 2020, 192-4 (on John having been trained in Constantinople [cf. Lambergz 1991, 34] as scribe of both mss. and documents, which affects also his writing style, ranging between formal and cursive). On John, see further PmbZ 23154 with <https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/copiste-possesseur-autre/1359/>.

⁸⁴ This is *Acts of Iviron* 6, dated to 984; cf. text and note 18 above.

⁸⁵ See the many Chrysostom texts listed in the catalogue of Euthymios' translations above. For the Chrysostomic codices of the John of Lavra, see Losacco 2007. For another likely related fragment of a Chrysostomic codex, see Otkhmeuri and Bezarashvili 2010.

less of the social differentiations and tensions there—as we saw, the number of Greeks apparently grew after 1019 (cf. GRD 24; M-H 80).

A prominent view regarding Euthymios' Greek translations has been that they represent a project distinct from that of Euthymios' father, whose aim was to contribute to the creation of a Christian literary culture for the Georgian people; Euthymios, by contrast, undertook the Greek translation as the spiritual guide of the Lavra, intending to provide the Greek monks with edifying narratives of Eastern origin.⁸⁶ Yet, it must not be forgotten that Euthymios was not only a Georgian or an Athonite author but also a Byzantine one, maintaining a dynamic and creative presence within a wider Byzantine Greek and Constantinopolitano-centric setting. His Greek works must be viewed against this larger backdrop. As George Hagiorites writes, reporting the words of the Georgian community of Iviron after Euthymios' death: "The fame of Euthymios' virtues and sanctity became known in all Georgia, and not only in Georgia but also in Greece as well" (GRD 25; M-H 83). Or we may turn to a learned Greek author, who was more or less contemporary with Euthymios and had very close ties to the Great Lavra environment. In a very rare mention of Euthymios in Greek sources, Athanasios of Panagiou, writing in Constantinople sometime between 1001 and 1025 and citing the words of Athanasios of Athos, remarks the following: "Euthymios" was "a distinguished man, adorned by a perfect life and a perfect discourse = Εὐθύμιον ... βίῳ δὲ καὶ λόγῳ λαμπρυνόμενον ἀρίστῳ".⁸⁷

⁸⁶ See Metreveli 1995, 35–40, a thesis repeated in Otkhmezuri and Raphava 2022, 223 and in Chikvatia and Tkebuchava *forthcoming*.

⁸⁷ *Life* of Athanasios the Athonite (Life A) 90,28–31, repeated verbatim in the later *Life* by an unknown author (Vita B 30); Euthymios is also mentioned in *Lives* A (94) and B (31), when "the emperor" (i.e. Basil II) appointed him as steward of the Great Lavra. For the dating and location of Athanasios of Panagiou's *Life*, see Noret 1982, cv–cxlv. For the two *vitae*, see also e.g. Efthymiadis 2013, D'Ayala Valva 2017, and Krausmüller 2020 with further bibliographies.

3. The Making of *Theodore of Edessa*

3.1. TRANSLATION

When Euthymios, likely in the early 1020s, started working on what eventually became the Greek text of *Theodore of Edessa*, he had in front of him, at the very least, the Georgian *Passion of Michael the Sabaite*. That text had been translated from a now lost *Passion* written in Arabic—as has been demonstrated by Paul Peeters, Monica Blanchard, and Sidney Griffith beyond doubt.¹ The Arabic original, likely based on an oral Sabaite tradition, and, then, the Georgian translation were composed sometime between the 830s, at the earliest (the historical Abū Qurrah, who supposedly narrates the tale, was active certainly until the 820s), and the late tenth century, at the latest (the date of the earliest transmitting manuscript, Ivron, *georg.* 8).² For both the Arabic and especially the Georgian version, we would favor a later placement over an earlier one within that period, so as to allow for some temporal distance between the allegedly “historical” personalities mentioned in the tale and the Georgian text we possess.

Both the Arabic and the Georgian version of Michael’s death at the hands of Muslims would have served the interests of St Sabas, assigning to that monastic community another glorious neo-martyr.³ The association with the most famous Arabic-writing Christian theologian of Syro-Palestine, namely Abū Qurrah, glorified as the most recent great scion of St Sabas toward the conclusion of the *Passion* (section 15), also boosted further the intellectual cache of the monastery—this claim is without any basis on historical reality, as has been convincingly argued by John C. Lamoreaux.⁴ In this respect, the (early tenth-

¹ Peeters 1930; Blanchard 1994 (esp. 159–163); Griffith 1994 (esp. 121 and 129–30). See also Graf 1947, 23 and Samir 1976, 226.

² The exact dates of Abū Qurrah are unknown; a native of Edessa, he was born in ca. 740/750 and died after 820, possibly even after 829, while at some point in his life served as bishop of Ḥarrān, a city near Edessa; see PmbZ 7627 with CPG 8075 and 8076 and the brief overview in Lamoreaux 2005, xi–xviii (with further bibliography); see also Markov 2012, Treiger 2016, Awad 2016 and 2022, and D’Agostino 2019.

³ On neo-martyrs (especially among Melkite Christians) in Syro-Palestine (including Mar Saba), see, e.g., Griffith 1998, Vila 1999, Binggeli 2010, 77–92, Sahrer 2014, 2018, and 2020, and Binggeli and Efthymiadis 2020. See also Hoyland 1997, 336–86 (pp. 379–81 on the *Passion* of Michael), and, recently, Parker 2025 (pp. 57–8, again on Michael).

⁴ See Lamoreaux 2002.

century?) legend of the *Passion* performed work that is in no way different to a similar legend which is first attested in a Greek hagiographical work composed most likely in the late tenth/early eleventh century in Antioch by Ioannes Polites—deacon and *chartophylax* of Hagia Sophia, and then (Oct. 996–July 1021) Byzantine patriarch of Antioch (PmbZ 23167).⁵ That work linked the most famous Greek-writing Christian theologian of Syro-Palestine, namely John of Damascus (fl. first half of the 8th c.; PmbZ 2969), with St Sabas, fabricating the legend that John had become a monk there together with his supposed spiritual brother Kosmas.⁶ Polites' *Vita* of the Damascene was based on a now lost, earlier (ninth-/tenth-c.?) biography of John in Arabic, which may indeed have been the origin of the Sabas link as well.⁷ This would make the creation of the *Sabaite* John of Damascus and the *Sabaite* Theodore Abū Qurrah roughly contemporary.

In any case, the tale of Michael, as conveyed in its early versions, belonged to a wider traffic of legends and texts, in which the Arabic Christian literary tradition often served as the intermediate between Syriac or Greek and Georgian.⁸ In some instances, a text composed in Christian Arabic was even the source text for the Greek or the Georgian versions, without an earlier hypotext in another language; this is most likely the case for our *Passion*, even if an ultimate Greek source cannot be excluded with absolute certainty.⁹ The *Balavariani* may belong to this context as well, if its Arabic hypotext was, in fact, also the first *Christian* version of the Indian story of Buddha, produced in Christian circles within the eight-century Umayyad Arab world,¹⁰ and if Syro-Palestine, rather than the Caucasus, was (as we are inclined to think) the place of the creation of the Georgian version.¹¹ In any case, we know that Christian Arabic texts were pro-

⁵ For the text's attribution to Polites, see Kontouma 2010; Volk 2023 (esp. 24–26) does not accept this attribution and argues for John VII (964–966 or 969), patriarch of Jerusalem. The issue of authorship does not affect our argument here.

⁶ BHG 884, section 22 (ed. Volk). For the fabricated association of John of Damascus with the Lavra of St Sabas, see Auzépy 1994 (esp. 183) and 2001 (esp. 305); cf. Lamoreaux 2002, 40 and Kontouma 2015, I.

⁷ For the history of John's biography in Arabic, see Flusin 1989 with Treiger 2013; cf. also Messis and Papaioannou 2021b, 200.

⁸ Overviews in Martin-Hisard 2009, Swanson 2009, Pataridze 2013 and 2020, and Treiger 2021; see also Nanobashvili 2003.

⁹ See Roggema 2009 (contra Vila 1999, 160–77) with Peeters 1930, 65, Peeters 1950, 210–11, Griffith 1994, 121 and 129–30, and Blanchard 1994, 159–163; the latter three publications place the *Passion* in the context of a wider set of similar texts translated from Arabic into Georgian; cf. also van Esbroeck 1988b, 142. The aforementioned *Ivir. georg.* 8, which contains the *Passion* of Michael, also includes other texts deriving from Arabic; cf. Pataridze 2020, 71 with 1.3 [text and note 28] and 2.2 [text and note 55] above.

¹⁰ See Genequand 2014 with Basso 2019, 324–30 contra Volk 2016, 409–11 and the earlier bibliography cited there.

¹¹ Again, contra Volk 2009, 80, 85, and 99.

duced mainly in the multilingual, multiethnic, and often tightly interconnected monastic communities in Syro-Palestine—such as that of St Sabas, the key locality in *Theodore of Edessa* and a monastery, as we have seen, with established contacts later on with Euthymios and Iviron—and also in another monastery with strong Palestinian connections, namely the monastery of St Catherine on Mt Sinai, during the centuries after the Islamic conquests.

The rapid Arabicization of large Christian populations in the Middle East necessitated the creation of such texts in the new dominant language, alongside both ancient and contemporary works in other Christian languages—the latter works were being read by or composed for the still many Greek- and Georgian-speaking Christians (among others) who remained active and preeminent or influential in the Christian monasteries as well as urban centers of the region.¹² From one perspective, Euthymios' own translation activity from Greek directly into Georgian, and from Georgian into Greek, stood at the end of this long line of textual trafficking, while marking a momentous turning point, shifting the center of gravity—in terms of the liturgical, literary, and ideological tradition—from Syro-Palestine to Constantinople.

This shift will become clear as we proceed. Let us return to the *Passion of Michael the Sabaite*, however. First, we must remind our readers that the *Passion* corresponds to only ca. 15% of the Greek text of the *Life* of Theodore of Edessa and that no other exactly corresponding text or story in Georgian (or any other language) has been identified as the basis for the rest of the main narrative of the *Life* as a whole. Direct correspondences between the existing Georgian and Greek versions of the *Passion* have led scholars to securely identify the former as the hypotext for the latter. However, we cannot be absolutely certain that these correspondences did not exist already between the preserved Georgian *Passion* and a supposed lost, *longer* Georgian text, a Georgian *Life* of Theodore of Edessa that is, in which the *Passion* was *already* incorporated, and which presumably would have served as the lost hypotext for the Greek *Life* as a whole, composed by Euthymios.

Looking only from the perspective of translation, we have one argument and one piece of evidence to marshal against this hypothesis. The argument—which will emerge in full in the analysis that follows—has to do with the fact that based on his other preserved translations, both from Greek and from Georgian, it appears that the elaborate and inventive combination of different texts or different segments of texts, both at the level of plot and at the level of discursive rendition,

¹² For overviews, see Binggeli 2015 and Pataridze 2019b, with the earlier bibliography, of which we may highlight: Peeters 1950; Blake 1965; Nasrallah 1987; and Griffith 1992. See also Bertaina, Toenies Keating, Swanson, and Treiger 2019 and Messis and Papaioannou 2021b (with further bibliography).

which we witness also in *Theodore of Edessa*, was Euthymios' *modus operandi* as an author. It is thus much more likely that it was he who incorporated Michael's *Passion* into the *Life* of Theodore in the intricate fashion, which we will demonstrate, than someone else before him. The many similarities which we shall observe between *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and *Theodore of Edessa* are especially strong indicators in this regard, since we would need to invent a second Euthymios, a Euthymios-look-alike author, who had already created, before Euthymios, the supposedly lost Georgian complete text of the *Life* of Theodore as a complex, composite story with the *Passion* of Michael inserted in it.

As for the piece of evidence, the earliest extant copy of the Georgian *Passion* of Michael, Ivron, *georg.* 8 mentioned earlier, dates paleographically to the lifetime of Euthymios, namely the late tenth century, and was housed in the very library of Euthymios' monastery since its early years of existence. In other words, Euthymios had direct access to it. Following the principle that the simplest solution is usually the best one, it would be more logical to imagine that Euthymios reworked the only extant Georgian *Passion*, preserved in a manuscript in his library, than to treat *Ivir. georg.* 8 as a mere coincidence, and postulate another lost manuscript available to him containing an otherwise unattested Georgian *Life* of Theodore, with the *Passion* included.

Considering Euthymios as the author, who (a) translated the Georgian *Passion* preserved in *Ivir. georg.* 8, and (b) incorporated this text into the *Life* of Theodore, cannot be more than a very strong supposition, but, in our view, it is the most plausible such supposition one can make with the facts available to us. We shall thus proceed with this premise, and go ahead and ask how Euthymios went about creating his *Theodore of Edessa*. And, first of all, how did he carry out his translation and incorporation of the Georgian *Passion*?



All earlier comparisons of the Georgian *Passion* and the martyrdom tale, as incorporated within the Greek *Life* of Theodore, have focused on establishing the dependence of the Greek upon the Georgian version and on dissecting the apparent fictionality of both accounts in order to "strip off the layers of legend and fairy tale", in an attempt to recover any debris of historicity that might reveal the historical contexts in which either text had been produced and "disclose the historical basis beneath the naive embellishments and pious ejaculations".¹³ From this historicist perspective, ignorant of Euthymios' authorship of *Theodore of Edessa*, the Greek account looks somewhat pale, and certainly paler than the

¹³ The phrases in quotes from Vasiliev 1942–1943, 166.

Georgian one; as Paul Peeters put it rather acerbically, “one feels as though one has taken many steps downward, from mediocre to worse”.¹⁴

From a literary perspective, however, creative ingenuity and elevation is at play, operating both at a micro level and on a broader scale. Often in the Greek text, as can be gleaned from our apparatus fontium, Euthymios replicated closely the original Georgian wording through his translation. He also remained in broad terms faithful to the narrative core of the *Passion* (*Passion*, sections 3–13 = *Life* 24,3–34,4): the description of Michael’s visit to Jerusalem to sell his “handiwork”, his fateful meeting with queen Seïs, and the lengthy dialogical encounter with the Muslim King and his Jewish expert in the Law; this encounter climaxes with the torture and martyrial death of Michael and then the burial of his body in the monastery of St Sabas.

In regard to this basic account, which he retains, Euthymios intervenes solely in the details. He reshapes elements that were topical either to the originally oral and folk modes of literary communication or to the immediate interaction between Christianity and Islam—both conditions defined, in our view, the creation of the Arabic and subsequent Georgian versions. Thus, the grand entrance of the king and queen “in a great throng with a select army in decorated chariots, on thoroughbred horses, colts, elephants, and camels, in a multicolor spectacle, in a variable, fleeting and forgettable display” (*Passion* 2) becomes a mere “along with a great crowd, men-at-arms, and pomp” (*Life* 24,1). The—typical of oral storytelling—witty exchange of riddles, posed by a person inferior in status to a king, is toned down. Of the three “riddles” (explicitly called thus in the Georgian version)—on (a) “the first, and the second, and the third” thing that kings must guard, on (b) what is the proper punishment of an adulterer, and on (c) the man who flees a serpent only to end up in front of “ferocious lion” (*Passion* 6)—, only the last one remains in the Greek explicitly a “parable”, a theologically more straightforward designation (*Life* 25,5).¹⁵

Euthymios also leaves out entirely a section where the sensual Paradise promised by Muhammad is compared to the superior Eternal Kingdom promised by Apostle Paul (*Passion* 6), an argument of urgency for ninth- or tenth-century Christians living among Muslims, the context of production for the original *Passion*, but with less interest for the distant, early eleventh-century

¹⁴ Peeters 1930, 81: “on se sent descendre de plusieurs degrés du médiocre au pire”. Other comparisons in Vasilev 1942–1943, 213–4; Nasrallah 1987, 160–1; Griffith 1994: 120–1; Griffith 1998, 168–83; Lamoreaux 2002: 28–9.

¹⁵ Euthymios also slightly rearranges the relevant section; in the Georgian version, the riddle test comes first and then the question about Michael’s actual origins and occupation (cf. *Passion* 6 with *Theodore of Edessa* 25,3–7), while some rearrangement occurs later as well (cf. 8 with 25,6). On riddles as they transition from oral to textual/literary modes of communication in Greek writing, see Konstan and Resh forthcoming a.

Athos.¹⁶ Moreover, Euthymios makes the Muslim King not an Arab, as one would expect, but a “Persian”, thus evoking the very rich hagiographical world of Christian martyrdom under Persian rulers. Simultaneously, Euthymios introduces a few “novelistic” brushes from the Constantinopolitan literary tradition to which the *Life* of Theodore as a whole belongs, evoking thus a more learned sentimentality. He thus enhances the crucial “erotic” scene, by amplifying rhetorically the beauty of Michael, the sexual advances made by the queen, his sturdy rebuff, and the torture that follows (*Passion* 4–5 = *Life* 24,8–24,18)—indeed, as we shall see in the next section, much of the wording for this and other parts of the Euthymian version of Michael’s *Passion* is borrowed from tenth-century Constantinopolitan texts.

Euthymios’ greater challenge lay in weaving this fundamentally independent narrative into the broader tapestry of the biography of Theodore of Edessa. In this regard, Euthymios took a series of daring inventive steps, dismantling and re-configuring almost all elements of historical verisimilitude in the discursive frame of the *Passion*, namely the introduction (sections 1–2) and the conclusion (14–15).

As is typical in texts that reflect oral storytelling modes, the *Passion* begins with a set of nested narrations, in which both the status of the narrators (all in the first person) and the length and detail of the discursive situation grow as we move forward, and in which no *author* whatsoever of the textual form of the tale is made visible. The story then closes in reverse order, though with some confusion of the boundaries between some of the encased units. Here are the specifics:

- An unnamed group of monks from the Great Lavra of “our holy father Sabas” narrates a story told to them by ... (section 1)
 - “Abba Basil, priest of Saint Sabas, an amazing man and a seer of wonders”¹⁷ who narrates an encounter “on the feast of the Annunciation” with “the famous abba Theodore *Abukuraj*”, living in a cell near the Lavra. After a brief delaying scene ... (section 1)
 - Abū Qurrah then tells them about ...
 - the old days of *Abdal-melik*, “son of Murvan”, when “great peace and calm” reigned, visitors of every faith came to Jerusalem, including the caliph himself, a good-hearted ruler who travels from Babylon to the Christian Holy Land in search of “a Christian

¹⁶ See, however, *Barlaam and Ioasaph* 9,96–104 (with no direct equivalent in the *Balavariani*), where an echo of these concerns is to be found.

¹⁷ On the possible historical personality echoed by this name, see PmbZ 891 with PmbZ 885; see also Nasrallah 1987, 160 (who believes in the historicity of the *Passion*).

man knowledgeable about the law (section 2). Then the story of a “certain Tiberian monk at Saint Sabas”,¹⁸ who had a “perfected and handsome” disciple, named Michael, also from Tiberias, and Michael’s martyrdom account begins (section 3 and onwards).

- Once Michael’s death and burial are related, the voice of Abū Qurrah is heard anew (end of section 13), relating how, seven days later, “we” buried Michael’s teacher together with his disciple—thus confusing the present of Abū Qurrah as narrator with the past of his narration.
- Then, we immediately return to Basil (section 14): “But I,” we read, “poor Basil, I recorded this for the benefit of writers and readers and listeners”. An extensive encomium of the monastery of St Sabas follows (14), along with a praise of its famous scions (15), last of which is Abū Qurrah, “the new one of Saint Sabas, the shepherd and priest-leader of Assyria, the miracle worker of Babylonia”.
- In the final words, which praise “our father” Saint Sabas, the “I” of Basil and the “we” of the initial anonymous narrators seem again to blend, though without clear indication of whose voice we hear.

This elaborate construct is reconfigured entirely in the *Life* of Theodore with remarkable freedom. This begins with the generic designation of the tale. While the *Passion* of Michael is explicitly termed thus in the Georgian title, the story is bookended within the Greek version as “something miraculous (τῶν παραδόξων), as a kind of sweetening for the story (ἡδυσμά τι ... τῷ διηγήματι) f, for the benefit (ὠφέλειαν) of those who shall read it, a miracle which God performed (θεοστυματούργηκεν)” in its introduction (18,2) and as a “story (διήγησιν) ... a long digression (παρεκβατικώτερον) for the sake of offering more benefit (ὠφελείας)” in its conclusion (35,1).

Then, the two main narrators, Abba Basil and Theodore Abū Qurrah are transformed as well as enlarged beyond recognition, *outside* the story of Michael. Theodore Abū Qurrah loses his identifying designation and becomes Theodore “of Edessa”, to whom an ample and complete biography as well as one text, the *Chapters*, are attached.¹⁹ From his former self, Theodore retains only three features; he is:

¹⁸ Later in the *Passion* (13), we hear of a certain abba Moses, which could likely be the name of this Tiberian monk.

¹⁹ In this regard, we may wonder if it is not simply convention that George Hagiorites, in his biography of Euthymios, chose the name of Abū Qurrah—the name of a famous theologian but only a main narrator and certainly not the protagonist in Michael’s *Passion*—in order to refer to the Georgian text that Euthymios used in order to create the Greek *Theodore of Edessa*.

(a) an ascetic in the monastery of St Sabas—a biographical detail in the profile of the historical Theodore Abū Qurrah, which among medieval sources is mentioned *only* in the Georgian *Passion* and, though most scholarship considers it true, is most certainly fictional²⁰—

(b) a leading bishop in Syria (without specification of the city)—notably, Abū Qurrah, though most likely born in Edessa, is never associated with that city in his sobriquets; in Greek specifically, he was usually identified either as “Θεόδωρος ἐπίσκοπος Καρῶν (rarely Χαρράν)” or as “Ἀβουκαρᾶς”²¹—

and (c) a man with miracle-working activity in Babylon (i.e. Baghdad)—again, another piece of information unattested elsewhere about Abū Qurrah.

Along the way, this new Theodore takes on also the attributes of the “Tiberian monk” and mentor of Michael in the *Passion*, since, in Euthymios’ text, it is Theodore who is the teacher and, even more significantly, the elder relative of Michael, with whom he is eventually buried (115,3, an incident which has been transposed and placed at the end of the *Life* of Theodore, much removed from the story of Michael).²² In order perhaps to single out his new Theodore, Euthymios also changes the name of the abba who is miraculously cured by Michael: the Theodore of the *Passion* (13) thus becomes George in the *Life* (34,2–34,3).

That Theodore of Edessa of the *Life* is the Theodore Abū Qurrah of the *Passion* is furthermore solidified by another clever transposition.²³ The encounter of the monks of St Sabas with Abū Qurrah living near their monastery (*Passion* 1) is transferred again outside the story of Michael and becomes a *later* episode in the *Life* of Theodore (38,1–40,1). During that episode, which takes place “on the venerable day of the Annunciation”, Theodore instead of the account about the martyrdom of Michael (as in the Georgian *Passion*) gives a speech to the Sabaite monks on proper Christian life and then dictates a “century of chap-

²⁰ See Lamoreaux 2002 and text and n. 4 above.

²¹ For examples of Abū Qurrah’s sobriquets in the Greek tradition, see further text and note 61 below. The only case that he was linked with Edessa is through pseudonymity, and this only in the Christian Arabic tradition; see Treiger 2016 on works of his, preserved under the name Thaddeus of Edessa.

²² Euthymios was apparently not the only person to link a “monk from Tiberias” with Theodore Abū Qurrah; in a version of the title of *The Disputation of the monk Ibrāhīm al-Ṭabarānī*, preserved in a ms., dated to 1539 (Vatican, Sbath 542), a 9th-c. Arabic text in the tradition of dialogues between Christians, Jews, and Muslims, the Christian protagonist of the story, the monk Abraham from Tiberias, is identified with Abū Qurrah; see Peeters 1930, 94–5; for the text, see Marcuzzo 1986 with Griffith 1999, 22–37 and Swanson 2009.

²³ Cf. Peeters 1930, 85.

ters” on asceticism, which are mentioned here but recorded in full as a separate text only *after* the conclusion of the *Life*.²⁴

As for Abba Basil of the Georgian *Passion*, he becomes “Basil, bishop of Emesa”, the supposed author and main narrator of the *Life* of Theodore, a secondary character whose presence spans the entire text (and the reader is reminded of this consistently: see e.g. 44,1, 55,3, 68,1, 70,2, 74, 82,3, 85,8, 92,2, etc.). Additionally, the new Basil happens to be a nephew of Theodore and his closest associate. The narrative proximity of the two narrators, Abba Basil and Theodore Abū Qurrah, in the original tale is thus reconfigured as *biological* affinity in Euthymios’ text. From his former self, the new Basil retains the agency of a narrator, now much amplified, as he becomes the *primary* narrator and, additionally, *the author* of Theodore’s biography. This elevated agency is boosted with additional authority, perhaps not needed as much in the original tale with its encasing structure. Thus, the new Basil is a bishop of a major city, and a relative and companion of the protagonist.

By enlarging the main characters in stature and narrative substance, by reducing them from four (Michael, Tiberian monk, Theodore Abū Qurrah, and Basil) to three (Michael, Theodore of Edessa, Basil of Emesa), and by turning them into biological relatives, Euthymios has also leveled narrative time. Michael, Theodore, and Basil become clearly synchronous in his text. So too is *Abdal-melik*, namely Adramelech of the Greek version. This synchronicity—with all the problems it carries for the historicity of the tale—is partly enabled by two “historiographical” slippages in the original *Passion*:

(a) informed readers of the Georgian *Passion*, especially in the environment of St Sabas and other Melkite Christians in the ninth century, would recognize *Abdal-melik* as a rendering of the Arabic ‘Abd al-Malik and as a reference to a famous caliph belonging to the Umayyad dynasty and ruling from Damascus, from 685 to 705 (PmbZ 18).²⁵ In the *Passion*, however, he is anachronistically linked with Baghdad²⁶;

²⁴ We should add that in the *Passion* (section 1), within the framing scene, it is a *disciple* of Abū Qurrah who is said to have not tasted anything at all “from the start” of the fast, while in *Theodore of Edessa* (38,1) all this is related about Theodore. Furthermore, in the *Passion*, Abū Qurrah asks, in a playful fashion, for bodily food to be served to him before he can offer spiritual nourishment, while in the *Life*, it is the visiting Sabaite monks who insist that Theodore has a meal.

²⁵ Cf. Bowman 2021, 123.

²⁶ On the discrepancy of location, see Griffith 1994, 131. For the identification of Ἀδραμελεχ with ‘Abd al-Malik, see also Vasiliev 1942–1943: 175 (with further references).

and (b) Theodore Abū Qurrah—whom again informed readers would know as an early ninth-century figure—is assumed, as we saw, to be present at the burial of Michael at the time of ‘Abd al-Malik, a century earlier.²⁷

Based on these slippages, an altogether new time frame is created in the *Life* of Theodore of Edessa. This frame is even more imaginary than the original one. Euthymios presents Adramelech (king of the Persians), Michael (a native of Edessa, not of Tiberias), Theodore (bishop of Edessa rather than of the nearby city of Ḥarrān, as was the historical Abū Qurrah), and Basil (likewise from Edessa and bishop of another major Syrian city, Emesa)—figures otherwise unattested in any Greek source—as active in a period stretching from after the Seventh Ecumenical Council of 787 (47,1) to the reign of Emperor Michael III and his mother Theodora, that is, the 840s and 850s (84,5).

Euthymios’ treatment of “Abdal-melik, son of Murvan” deserves a few more words in this regard. Euthymios first does away with the designation “son of Murvan” present in Georgian, which was an identifying reference to ‘Abd al-Malik’s *actual* father, caliph Marwan or Μαρουάμ in Byzantine Greek (PmbZ 4864). Then, “Adramelech”, the Greek form of the character’s name, is Euthymios’ invention, since the historical ‘Abd al-Malik is always referred to as Ἀβιμέλεχ in other Byzantine Greek texts (PmbZ 18). The new appellation is reminiscent of a biblical-cum-eastern-sounding characters, rarely used outside the Bible in Byzantine texts; in 2 Kings 17,31, Adramelech is the name of a pagan God venerated by the Sepharvites in Samaria and, in 2 Kings 19,37 and Isaiah 37,38, the name of an Assyrian king. The Adramelech of Theodore’s *Life* thus cannot evoke more than a legendary personality.

Meanwhile, as soon as Michael is introduced in the Greek *Theodore* (19,1–21,1) and before the Persian Adramelech from Babylon is mentioned (24,1), Euthymios interjects a relatively sizeable historiographical excursus (21,2–23), which is entirely absent in the Georgian and which fixes another temporal limit to the tale. There, we learn that the presence of Persian rulers in the Holy Land was occasioned by the takeover of Syria and Palestine by “Persians together with the Arabs” during and because of the heretic reign of Constans II (641–668 CE). Absent in the Georgian version, Byzantine rulers and, thereby, the historiographical horizon of Christian Constantinople become crucial in Euthymios’ transformed Michael tale.

At that, beyond creating new protagonists and a new temporal frame, Euthymios has remolded the narrative chronotope—time and space *as* situation, that is—as a whole. The original *Passion* had a provincial and, simultaneously,

²⁷ On these two slippages in the *Passion*, see also Peeters 1930, 77 and 80–1 (respectively); cf. also Lamoreaux 2002: 30.

universal color. Local “heroes” and local toponyms, that would be immediately recognized in the original Sabaite setting of the story, pepper the account. We read about: the cell of Abū Qurrah “beside the Lavra, in the rock face of a cliff on the way to Jordan and to the Dead Sea” (*Passion* 10); the city of Tiberias (3, 6, 13); the hill of St George (11) and the Ravine of Siloam (12) near Jerusalem; “the tomb of the martyrs” (13) in the Sabas monastery, where Michael is also buried; and, finally, the aforementioned famous scions of the monastery, listed in the epilogue of the *Passion* (15) and which include the Sabaite martyrs and confessors. At the other end of the spectrum, the whole ecumene is brought up as a world of twelve regions, corresponding to Christ’s twelve apostles; in this larger world, Christianity reigns supreme, while “the Saracens” are limited to their “island”, i.e. the Arabian Peninsula, and even there their dominion is not secure (*Passion* 9).²⁸

Neither the provincial nor the universal play any role in Euthymios’ Greek rendition, which omits every single one of the just mentioned details with the exception of the “the tomb of the martyrs”; and even in the case of the latter, the references in the *Life* of Theodore lack the more specific detail included in the *Passion*.²⁹ In the storyworld of the *Life*—just as in Euthymios’ real life, we might note—there is instead a balance of power between the king(s) of Baghdad and the ruler(s) of Constantinople. Except through brief mentions (in the excursus on the ecumene, that was just alluded to), both the Arabic caliphate—with its major cities—and the Byzantine empire—with its bad and good rulers—are essentially absent from the *Passion*. They form, however, the necessary stage on which both the martyrdom of Michael and then the biography of Theodore are played out in the *Life* of the supposed Edessan bishop.

The last but not least difference between the Georgian *Passion* of Michael and its Greek version is the placement of the story in the liturgical calendar. In *Ivir. georg.* 8, the *Passion* is assigned to March 20. This date (likely the original one³⁰) might be explained—as we would like to argue—by the fact that on the previous day, namely on March 19, as attested in Georgian, Arabic, but also Greek calendars, the monastic community of St Sabas commemorated the martyrdom

²⁸ The 12 regions are, in this order: Sind and Hind (India), Nubia and Africa, Gothia and Greece (namely, Byzantium), Bulgaria and Chersonese, Abasgia (namely, Georgia) and Khazaria, Daylam and the Farghana valley.

²⁹ Compare “The brothers of the Lavra ..., laid Michael’s venerable relics in the tomb of those fathers who had become martyrs before him in that same Lavra” (34,1) and “... his [i.e. Theodore’s] sacred body was deposited in the cemetery of the fathers, next to Michael, his relative and martyr” (11,3) with “the tomb of the martyrs, the fathers and the burned confessors” and “the martyred ones burned with fire and cut with the sword in the martyrium of the Lavra” (*Passion* 13).

³⁰ The second, but later transmitting manuscript, Oxford, Bodl. georg. b.1 (dated between 1038 and 1040), lists April 17 as the feast date; Peeters 1912b, 307, Garitte 1958, 340, and Sauget 1969, 412.

of the 20 Sabaite monks, killed by Arab Bedouin in the year 797.³¹ These martyrs are precisely the martyrs just mentioned above, which the *Passion* promotes; Michael is, after all, buried with them. It is reasonable to assume that the new Sabaite martyr put forward by the original account of Michael's martyrdom was considered as a kind of a sequel to that of the 20 martyrs. He was thus celebrated on the next day, namely March 20—this is a type of consequent celebration well attested in Christian calendars.³²

Whatever the roots of this original liturgical assignment, Euthymios seems indifferent to it, removed as he was from the immediate Sabaite setting and its commemorative traditions. In the *Life* of Theodore, Michael is said to have died on July 19 and, then, in perfect symmetry, the same date is cited for Theodore's own death. The latter information is provided, as one might expect, at the very end of the biography of Theodore (115,3), in wording that, as already noted, returns anew to the Georgian *Passion*. This may be regarded as a narrative gesture that closes all loose ends created by the encasement of Michael's essentially independent story early in the *Life* of Theodore. For it partly restores a narrative fact, defined by the original Georgian hypotext: as in the Georgian *Passion of Michael*, so also in the Greek *Theodore*, Theodore and Michael are the two original *main* saints of the story.

There is no means of knowing if Euthymios had encountered July 19 in pre-existing and now entirely lost legends about some Theodore (of Edessa? Abū Qurrah?) or if he invented it himself. He would, in any case, have had very good reasons for the latter. For, apart from the convenient narrative reconfiguration of the Georgian *Passion* just mentioned, the new liturgical date of July 19 places Saints Theodore and Michael, namely two novel saints for the Greek calendar, in a period which was somewhat empty in the Byzantine liturgical year of the early eleventh century in comparison to other months. In July, there was no clustering of major feasts and consequently no abundance of related readings.³³ July 19, specifically, was not the date of a major saint with an established related reading, even if Makrina, the sister of Basil the Great and Gregory of Nyssa, and

³¹ See Garitte 1958, 180 and Sauget 1969, 411–4 with *Synaxarion of Constantinople* March 19,3 (in the later, 12th-c. M* recension, their feastday is placed on the next day, March 20). See also BHG 1200 with Vila 2009 and Shoemaker 2016, xxx–xxxvii and 67–148.

³² See e.g. *Synaxarion of Constantinople* Oct. 26,1 (on Demetrios the martyr) and Oct. 27,1 (on Nestor, Demetrios' associate) or Febr. 27,1 (on Prokopios Dekapolites) and Febr. 28,1 (on Basil the "syn-athlete" [fellow martyr] of Prokopios).

³³ There are, for instance, only 4 readings for July, namely the *Passions* of Prokopios (Jul. 8), Pan-teleemon (Jul. 27), and Kallinikos (Jul. 29), and the *Life* of Eudokimos the Just (Jul. 31), in the relevant volume (vol. 10, May to August) of the *Menologion* of Symeon Metaphrastes; see Ehrhard II 614–56.

on whose *Vita* Euthymios had worked as well, was also celebrated on that day.³⁴ March 20, the date of the original *Michael Passion* by contrast, would always fall within the Lenten period and every so often within Holy Week, namely within periods heavy with Christian ritual discourse.

The temptation to adopt a new date for both Michael and Theodore was thus there, and would have well served both the narrative needs and the ritual demands of Euthymios' *Life* of Theodore of Edessa. Indeed, if we were willing to take this a step further, we might wonder if Euthymios was in a sense covering his tracks by disassociating his essentially *new* Michael and Theodore couple from the Georgian text he had translated. But this must remain speculation.



Such elaborate reworking of the Georgian *Michael Passion* into an essentially *new* Greek double text, the *Life* and the *Chapters*, though striking, is by no means unexpected if one gazes at the massive corpus of translated texts which Euthymios produced over the course of more than 50 years, from the 970s to the end of his life in 1028. No reader of Euthymios' translations from Greek into Georgian—from Ephrem Mc'ire (i.e., the Lesser), Euthymios' continuator, active on Black Mountain in the latter half of the eleventh century, to modern scholars—has failed to notice the great liberties taken by Euthymios as a translator. These are demarcated by rewriting on both small and grand scale, rephrasing, abridging, and expanding at will, re-arranging, omitting, and adding material, based on related texts by the same or other authors, often interpolated in specific segments of a larger textual framework or combined in complicated fashion, and along the way inventing smaller or larger biographical bits in hagiographical accounts, and even creating new texts, and so on and so forth.³⁵

³⁴ Only very few pre-metaphrastic *Menologia* contain Gregory of Nyssa's *Life* of Makrina* (CPG 3166; BHG 1012) as a reading for July 19 (Ehrhard I 432), a work which Euthymios nevertheless translated rather faithfully into Georgian (Baakashvili 1987); the Greek text is also included in a manuscript copied by Theophanes for Euthymios in 1022 (see the entry in 2.2 above). Makrina was celebrated on July 19 also in the Greek *Synaxarion* tradition (Ehrhard I 670) as well as in the related Georgian tradition, including the so-called *Lesser Synaxarion* (ძვირე სწავესარი) translated from Greek again by Euthymios (before 1001/1002–1005 and thus before the composition of *Theodore of Edessa*); there (Chitunashvili 2021, 156), Makrina is furnished with a brief entry, and mentioned along with another two saints, also usually celebrated on July 19, in this order: Dios (on whom see BHG 2105, a text transmitted in a single post-Byzantine manuscript), Makrina, and Gregory, bishop of [sic] Panedos—the latter saint is only known from *Synaxaria*.

³⁵ See especially van Esbroeck 1988a (who was, in some cases justifiably and in others not so much, too reticent to acknowledge Euthymios' translational creativity and too quick to suggest instead lost Greek originals) with Tarchnišvili/Assfalg 1955 = Kekelidze 1955, 126–54 and the relevant pages in Kekelidze 1980; see also Kurtsikidze 1978 and 2000, Metreveli et al. 1998, v–xxvi, Otkhmezuri 2002, xi–xiii, and Otkhmezuri and Raphava 2022, 264–84. For recent overviews of Euthymios' translation prac-

Among the most spectacular cases of the latter, maximally inventive translation, are Euthymios' Georgian *Passion*, *Miracles*, and *Encomium* on the martyr Demetrios (the first two texts predate, while the third likely post-dates 1001/1002–1005³⁶) and the *Life* of Maximos the Confessor, likely a text produced late in Euthymios' life, at the time he also probably composed *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and *Theodore of Edessa*—the relevant Greek texts on both Demetrios and Maximos are gathered in a collection copied by Theophanes in 1022 (Mosq. Synod. gr. 162).³⁷ In Maximos' *Life*, Euthymios not only included excursuses related to the history and definition of orthodox Christian doctrine, based on other texts, but also inserted narrative episodes unknown from any extant Greek version.³⁸ In Demetrios' *Passion* and his *Miracles*, Euthymios again inserted episodes, unknown in Greek, and then used this new *Passion* in combination with passages from Gregory the Theologian's *Orations* (24, 39, and 43) to create an *Encomium* of Demetrios falsely attributed to Gregory, of course with no equivalent in Greek.³⁹ Thus, in the case of Euthymios, the aphorism that the work of translation is *new* creation is much more than a mere truism.

Though it will remain impossible to have a full picture of Euthymios' creative genius as translator until *all* his Georgian works as well as all their exact Greek prototypes (to the extent that we possess them) have been edited properly, and thus studied, translated, and commented upon, it may suffice for our purposes here to point to a few translation tricks and techniques that underlie *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, the only other extant Greek text fashioned out of a Georgian hypotext by Euthymios, and that resemble what we see at work in *Theodore of Edessa*—forgoing any in-depth study, which is beyond the scope of the present discussion,⁴⁰ and leaving for now aside issues of textual form, to which we shall return below.

tices, the earlier bibliography, and the comments of medieval readers of the Euthymian corpus such as Ephrem Mc'ire, see Volk 2009, 85–6, Bezarashvili 2013, Otkhmezuri 2017, Kurtsikidze 2017, Aleksidze 2021, 626–7, and especially Otkhmezuri and Raphava 2022, 230–42; see also Bezarashvili 2004 (focused on the Euthymios' translations of Gregory of Nazianzus' *Orations*) and Tvaltvadze 2009 (for Ephrem's colophons). For one case of Euthymios' creative combination of Greek texts in an essentially "original composition", namely his *Life of the Virgin*, see Simelidis 2020 and 2023 (the quoted phrase on p. 205)—both articles with further reviews of Euthymios' translation practices based on related bibliography (see especially 2020, 139–44 and 147).

³⁶ See the relevant entry in the catalogue of translation in 2.2 above. Only two mss., both dated to the first half of the 11th c., transmit the full Demetrios dossier of Euthymios (*Passion*, *Miracles*, and *Encomium*): Tbilisi, NCM, H-341 and Sinai, Saint Catherine's Monastery, *georg.* 80; on the latter ms., see Chkhikvadze et al. 2018, 85.

³⁷ The earliest ms. Georgian testimony of Maximos' *Life* post-dates Euthymios' death (Tbilisi, NCM, Q-34, dated to ca. 1031)

³⁸ See Khoperia 2003 and 2005.

³⁹ Matchavariani 2004–2005 and 2006; cf. Otkhmezuri and Raphava 2022, 238.

⁴⁰ Cf. Høgel *forthcoming*.

For instance—to start with small-scale narrative readjustments—, just as the Georgian *Passion* of Michael becomes a “story” and a “miracle” for the “benefit” of readers in the *Life* of Theodore, so also the Georgian “Life” of the title of *Balavariani* is presented by Euthymios as a “Beneficial Tale”: Ἱστορία ψυχωφελῆς (*Barlaam and Ioasaph*, Title 1), ἐξήγησις ψυχωφελῆς (Prolog. 27), and διήγησις ψυχωφελῆς (Epilog. 4). Similarly, as with Basil of Emesa’s excursus on Syro-Palestine, which precedes the narration of the *Passion* of Michael in the *Life* of Theodore, Euthymios inserts a sizeable historiographical introduction about the Christianization of India by the apostle Thomas (1,1–39) before moving ahead with the story; such preface is absent in *Balavariani*. Comparable is also the treatment of names. As with *Abdal-melik* turned into a biblical Adramelech in *Theodore*, so also are two major characters in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, refashioned from *Balavariani*: Ioasaph’s father “Abenner” (Samuel, books 1 and 2, *passim*) and “Theudas” the magician (*Acts* 5,36).⁴¹

As his Greek text proceeds, Euthymios fine-tunes further his Georgian hypotext. For one, he changes small details, sometimes in fact with a problematic result. Anxious, for instance, to heighten the magnitude of Barlaam’s asceticism, he has the hermit say that he has spent “forty-five years” in the desert, while Ioasaph suspects that he is “more than seventy” in age (*Barlaam and Ioasaph* 18,9–20). In this way, however, Euthymios spoils the surprise of the young prince of the *Balavariani*, when the “about sixty years old” ascetic claims that he is “twelve years old”, referring to his life in the desert, namely the only part of his life properly so called (ch. 15 [p. 95]).

On a larger scope, Euthymios omits entire sections (some of them quite lengthy), and either moves forward with the narrative or replaces them with new material.⁴² Such omissions include three of the sixteen independent fables which are included in the *Balavariani* and are a hallmark within the original folk-tale ambiance of the tale in its various incarnations from one language to another.⁴³ The most notable omission in this regard is the elimination of the sexually crude fable of “the amorous wife” (ch. 48 [pp. 142–3]), which likely seemed too risky for Euthymios’ rewriting.⁴⁴

Both the Georgian and the Greek versions of the story dwell on the spiritual initiation of the main characters (such as the young prince or his pagan father,

⁴¹ Regarding the translation of Georgian names into Greek in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, see Lang 1957, 399.

⁴² For a quick overview of omissions and transpositions, both large and small, between the Georgian original and the Greek version, see the relevant pages in the “Index der nichtbiblischen Quellen” in Volk’s edition; Volk 2006, 478–82.

⁴³ On the omission (and re-arrangement) of the fables in the Greek version, in relation to its predecessors, see Lang 1957, 398, Khintibidze 1996, 249–69, and Lienhard 2003a and 2003b.

⁴⁴ For a similar cases in Euthymios’ translations from Greek into Georgian, see Otkhmeuri and Raphava 2022, 236–7.

by the hermit and the son respectively) which lead to their conversion to Christianity. In this respect, Euthymios treats the earlier text as a guide and as an inspiration, but not as a fixed authority. He abandons the particulars of the theological instruction as given in the Georgian, keeps some of the main themes, and invents an essentially new text so as to express them.⁴⁵ He thus re-structures the Georgian original, with several intricate transpositions and replacements.

Euthymios also enlarges, rhetorically and emotionally, scenes which are rather plain in the *Balavariani*: for instance, the martyrdom of the seventeen hermits (*Balavariani* 43; *Barlaam and Ioasaph* 23; indeed, the concrete number 17 is an invention of Euthymios), the sexual temptation and resistance of the young prince (*Balavariani* 49; *Barlaam and Ioasaph* 30), the separation of Ioasaph as king from his people (*Balavariani* 66; *Barlaam and Ioasaph* 36, 173–95), and the final reunion and subsequent death of the two protagonists of the tale (*Balavariani* 66–8; *Barlaam and Ioasaph* 38–40). Conversely, Euthymios decreases the intensity of certain themes found in *Balavariani*, most notably the affection between father and son.⁴⁶ In this regard, *Barlaam and Ioasaph* appears to place more emphasis, compared to the *Balavariani*, on the bond between the spiritual father (Barlaam) and the spiritual son (Ioasaph) than on the relation between Abenner and his biological offspring. In general, *Barlaam and Ioasaph* seems preoccupied with propagating the ideal of the perfect male ascetic somewhat more than that of the perfect male ruler, doubling as father and son, a key theme in the original tale.⁴⁷ In other words, what one might call the “ideological” weight is somewhat shifted, just as we observed about the *Life* of Theodore in relation to the Georgian *Passion* of Michael.



But let us return to our main question. How did Euthymios create *Theodore of Edessa*? We have established that he translated Michael’s *Passion* from Georgian into Greek and integrated it—quite masterfully, and in a manner consistent with his *modus operandi* elsewhere, particularly in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*—into

⁴⁵ At that several *Balavariani* chapters (27, 29, 31, 32, 39, and 40), which are part of the prince’s spiritual education by the hermit, are replaced by new theological discourse in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*; for a good example of theology in largely new Euthymian elocution, see *Barlaam and Ioasaph* 25, 103–90; see also the very extensive sermon in *Barlaam and Ioasaph* 7–12, which is absent in *Balavariani*. See further Høgel *forthcoming*.

⁴⁶ See e.g. *Balavariani* 51 and 62—where affectionate exchanges between the father and son—are reduced to a few lines in *Barlaam and Ioasaph* 33, 33–8 and 35, 56–82, respectively.

⁴⁷ See Martin-Hisard 2002 on the emphasis on kingship in *Balavariani* with Jouanno 2000 on the accent on the affectionate relation between the convert prince and his spiritual guide in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*. That the latter was promoting also the model of a king/ascetic is, of course, without a doubt; see Benic 2019; on the monastic ideals of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, which may have reached also an imperial audience, see Crostini 2017, 19–22.

the larger Greek text as it survives today. As we have also argued, no complete hypotext (with the *Passion* already incorporated) existed previously. It cannot be determined if Euthymios translated the *Passion* precisely with the intention of creating the longer *Life* of Theodore or if he first translated the *Passion* in some draft(?) form and then, at a later point, decided that it would fit well his plan for a full biography of Theodore. This issue shall remain unanswered, but it does raise a crucial question.

Was Theodore's fictive biography itself Euthymios' *own* creation? Or was it based on an earlier, unattested biographical legend which Euthymios either adopted (if this was transmitted in a Greek text or texts) or translated (if this was transmitted in Georgian)? Did, in other words, the nucleus of Theodore's story (*without*, that is, the Michael episode or indeed any or some of the other narrative and discursive insertions) exist prior to Euthymios, as the *Balavariani* preceded *Barlaam and Ioasaph*?

As already mentioned above, neither our exhaustive search for any earlier such source nor research by other scholars has uncovered any clear, *direct* source, in Georgian, Greek, or Arabic, for the full biography of Theodore. This does not mean that such a direct source did not ever exist, but if it did, it has left no trace in any Byzantine language ("Byzantine" understood here in cultural and not geopolitical terms). Moreover, beyond the *Life* of Theodore and the Georgian *Passion* of Michael the Sabaite, there is no evidence whatsoever, again in any Byzantine language, regarding hagiographical narratives or liturgical commemorations of either any Theodore bishop of Edessa or of his apparent "double", Theodore Abū Qurrah.⁴⁸

These facts force us to consider the possibility that Euthymios acted not merely as a translator (however free as in the case of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*), but fashioned something even more ambitious with *Theodore of Edessa*, creating content-wise much of what we find in it beyond Michael's martyrdom account. In order to explore this crucial matter, we must move to an assessment of the second type of discursive technique—after, that is, Euthymios' translation, adaptation, and incorporation of the Georgian *Passion of Michael*—that we can see at work in Euthymios' second large work in Greek. This second technique, which is an extension and amplification of the first, is what we would like to call "textual nesting".

⁴⁸ The first to rightly regard Theodore of Edessa as a "double" of Theodore Abū Qurrah was Paul Peeters (1930, 82); see further Griffith 2001, 152–3 and 169. For the absence of any commemorations of Abū Qurrah in Arabic Christianity, we would like thank Alexander Treiger who answered a relevant query of ours.

3.2. TEXTUAL NESTING: APPROPRIATION AND INVENTION

The Georgian *Passion* of Michael, as we saw, is layered in a way which is typical of texts with strong connections to orality, with multiple narrators, that is, embedded in sequence inside distinct narrative units, all encased in the form of Russian dolls.⁴⁹ The *Life* of Theodore of Edessa shows a different kind of nesting, reflecting more textualized forms of literary expression.⁵⁰ Here too we find embedded narrations: the story of Michael's martyrdom (18,2–34,4), the tale of Ader, his wife, and the prostitute woman (56,1–64,2), and then the story of Theodosios the Stylite and his brother John (65,1–67,3); also, the accounts of Theodore's visit to Constantinople (84,2–86,5), his dialogical contest with the Jew (86,8–91,3), and King John's martyrdom (106,1–111,3) may be regarded as additional stories.

In contrast to the encasing technique of the Georgian *Passion*, however, these supplementary narratives are introduced *paratactically*, one next to the other, marked clearly as digressions or as separate sections within the larger text determined by the author himself. The story of Michael's martyrdom as we saw is introduced as "a kind of sweetening" (18,2) and concluded with "I have inserted this story into my narrative as a long digression" (35,1); similarly, the tale of Ader commences as "a story beneficial to the soul" (55,7), while the narrative about John's martyrdom begins with explicit narratorial interventions (105,2–106,1; in italics): "*Here ends the narrative about the saint's journey and return. When the faithful King John (the course of the story leads us again back to him) ...*", etc. It is no coincidence, we may also note, that the three major digressions were excerpted by later readers and became independent texts within the manuscript transmission of the *Life* of Theodore: Michael's *Passion* in a¹; the story of Ader in a¹ and d¹⁻²; and the story of Theodosios the Stylite in a¹, d², and e¹⁻³.

The narrative structure of the overall story thus resembles a paratactic *collection* of texts in a fashion similar to what a medieval reader would have encountered in a miscellaneous manuscript or in numerous (many of them popular) anthologies of texts as well as large texts using extensively excerpts of earlier texts.⁵¹ After all, it is not only additional tales that are incorporated in our text. We also find speeches, sermons, prayers, dialogical exchanges, an exposition on dogma, etc. (which are also, in some cases, excerpted in later mss.; Theodore's monastic sermon in b¹; Theodore's dogmatic sermon in manuscripts c¹⁻⁹).

⁴⁹ For this kind of "narrative nesting" within the later Greek vernacular tradition, see e.g. Agapitos 1991, 124–8 and Krönung 2016, 432–33.

⁵⁰ For the distinction and interaction between orality and textuality in the Byzantine literary tradition, see Messis and Papaioannou 2021c.

⁵¹ For a list of such texts as well as manuscripts, see Messis and Papaioannou 2021a.

Below is a detailed list of these narrative subplots and discursive excursions and digressions (all highlighted in **bold** characters), as placed within the edifice of the text of *Theodore of Edessa*, enveloped inside the main biography of the protagonist saint:

Title–1,6: Author/narrator Basil's **introduction**

2–18,1: Theodore's birth, upbringing, and life as a monk in the Sabas Lavra;

18,2: *transitional paragraph*

19,1–34,4: Michael's *Passion*, which includes:

21,2–23: **historiographical excursus** on the loss of Syro-Palestine

24,5–24,20: encounter with Seïs (with **dialogical exchange**)

25,1–25,5: encounter with King Adramelech (with **dialogical exchange** and a **riddle** contest)

25,6–28,6: **dialogue** between Michael, the king, and his Jewish expert in the Law

29,1–34,4: martyrdom and burial of Michael; it includes:

31: his **final prayer**

35,1: *transitional paragraph*

35,2–37,2: Theodore's spiritual progress

38,1–40,2: Gathering on the Feast of the Annunciation (relocated from its original place in Michael's *Passion*): an example of Theodore's eloquence:

- **Theodore's monastic sermon**, a "**διδασκαλία**" (39,3–39,7)

- and mention of his "**spiritually edifying chapters**" (40,1), which are here signaled as being included *after* the end of the main text (116)

41,1–45,5: Theodore is elected bishop of Edessa; begin of his ministry

43,2: Theodore's brief **lament**

46,1: *transitional paragraph*

46,2–52,2: **Dogmatic sermon**, another "**διδασκαλία πνευματική**" by Theodore

53,1–53,2: *transitional paragraphs*

54,1–55,6: Theodore's encounter with Theodosios the Stylite

55,7: *transitional paragraph*

56,1–61,2: **the tale** of Ader, his wife, and the prostitute woman narrated by Theodosios

59,2: the prostitute's **prayer**

62,1–64,2: Theodore meets Ader's wife and the former prostitute

65,1–65,2: *transitional paragraph*

65,3–67,3: the **autobiographical story** of Theodosios the Stylite and his brother John

68,1–2: *transitional paragraphs*

68,3–75: Theodore as bishop; struggles’ against Edessan heretics; departure and travel to Baghdad to meet the king Mauīas and request help to restore orthodoxy in Edessa; encounter with the king; his healing by Theodore and subsequent granting of the latter’s request

76,1–78,1: Theodore’s visit to John the Hermit (Theodosios’ brother), which includes:

77,2: the recital of the **letter** from John to Theodosios

78,2–84,1: spiritual initiation, conversion, and baptism of the king and three of his servants by Theodore; this includes:

78,3–80,4: **three layered riddles**, in which each subsequent riddle is proposed as a solution of the previous one

83,2–83,4: **two model prayers**

84,2–86,5: Theodore’s visit to Constantinople, requested by John in his desire to obtain a piece of the True Cross

86,6–86,7: *transitional paragraphs*

86,8–91,3: **Dialogical contest** between a Jewish expert in the Law in Babylon and Theodore of Edessa, which results in the conversion in the latter

92,1–99,2: meeting of Theodore and the King with John the Hermit; which includes the following **two “spiritual” speeches** by John:

92,4–93,1: **benediction** of the king’s conversion

94,2–97,13: **exhortation** to martyrdom

100,1–103: New season (spring); separation of Theodore from the king; it includes:

101,1–101,6: final **exhortation speech** by Theodore

104,1–105,2: Theodore’s “journey and return” to Edessa

106,1–111,3: King John’s martyrdom in Babylon

111,3–115,3: death of Theodosios and Theodore

115,5–115,5: brief **epilogue** by Basil

116,1–116,100: after the “end of the *Life*”: the “**Chapters** of our father Saint Theodore the Sabaite”

The extent of additional material is extraordinary. If we made a relatively generous assessment of the size of the biographical core story (including, that is, Theodore’s trip to Constantinople, the episode with the Jew in Baghdad, and the martyrdom of John), this would leave us with just a little more than half of the total amount of the text. A stricter counting would bring the core story down to less than one-third of the whole. The rest is, structurally speaking, independent from it. And it stands out enough that one *almost* loses sight (at least temporarily, while reading the text) of what is primary and what is secondary. One begins to wonder: are the additional subplots and discursive parts simply de-

vices that support, bolster, and elucidate the main plot or is it, instead, a primary function of the latter to provide a narrative framing context for the presentation of the various textual—narrative as well as discursive—units contained therein and thereout?

Whatever the answer, at a closer look and as has already been observed in relation to *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, much of the above, whether narrative or discursive, is based indirectly, partly, or fully on earlier and mostly Greek texts. What are these texts and how do they fashion the content as well as form of *Theodore of Edessa*? To answer this question, let us create a map of such intertexts in four steps. We shall identify first the intertexts related to the discursive parts, then distant narrative influences and refractions, followed by direct narrative quotations, and fourthly modes of intertextuality that affect more the style than the structure of *Theodore of Edessa*. Once this survey is complete, we shall address the broader issue of Euthymios' creative agency in textual nesting.

Discursive Borrowings

The list of discursive borrowings is as follows—for exact references and *verbatim* correspondences, the reader might consult the relevant passages and their *apparatus fontium* in the edition of version β:

<i>Theodore of Edessa</i>	<i>Earlier texts</i>
Bits in Michael's theological instruction (27,3)	Gregory of Nazianzus' <i>Oration</i> on the Holy Baptism (Or. 40, sections 41 and 43)
Theodore's monastic sermon (39,3–39,7)	includes excerpts from Basil of Caesarea's epistles 295 (39,4) and 22 (39,5, 39,6), the latter usually transmitted with Basil's monastic treatises (= <i>De perfectione vitae monasticae</i> ; CPG 2900.22)
Theodore's dogmatic sermon (46,3–52,2)	- preface (46,3): includes the very same quotation from Basil's epistle 295 (46,3), thus linking the two sermons

Theodore of Edessa (cont.)

Earlier texts (cont.)

- creed (46,4–47,2):

(a) An expanded, but excerpted version of Michael Synkellos' (ca. 760/761 – 846; PmbZ 5059) *Confession of Faith*, titled in Greek “Λίβελλος περὶ τῆς ὀρθοδόξου πίστεως” (*Libellus de fide orthodoxa*).

Text edited by Barsov (1883)—for another edition, based on Paris, BnF, Coislin 34 (Diktyon *49176; ff. 20v–22r), dated to 1042, see Montfaucon 1715. We would like to thank Nana Chikvatia and Lasha Tkebuchava for directing our attention to this text.

(b) Toward the end of the *Confession of Faith*, Euthymios adds (and elaborates) also a line, regarding the Seventh Ecumenical Council (47,1) from Theodore the Studite's *Testament* (1816,3–5)

- ten *Anathemas* (47,3–47,12): based partly on earlier conciliar *Acts* and likely inspired by the 12 *Anathemas* of Cyril of Alexandria.

See the detailed discussion in Chikvatia and Tkebuchava 2022a (who note, among other things, Euthymios' reliance on the *Acts* of the Fifth and Sixth Ecumenical Councils).

- two brief transitional sections

(47,13–48,1): the first a quotation from Paul's *First Letter to the Corinthians* (1,10), and the second of Euthymios' own wording

<i>Theodore of Edessa</i> (cont.)	<i>Earlier texts</i> (cont.)
	- a presentation and refutation of early Byzantine Christological heresies put forward by Mani, Paul of Samosata, Apollinarius of Laodicea, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Nestorius, and Eutyches (48,2–5 and 50–52,2): (a) This presentation is based (usually verbatim, with minor alterations) on the first, theological part (pp. 185–92) of Theodore of Raithou’s (c. 600) Christological treatise titled <i>Preparation</i> (Προπαρασκευή = <i>Præparatio</i> or <i>De incarnatione liber</i>; CPG 7600). Text edited in Diekamp 1938, 185–222 with an introduction (pp. 173–85). For the text, see also Beck 1959, 382–3; on its latter, philosophical part, in the tradition of logical <i>compendia</i>, see Roueché 1974, 64. Gouillard (1947, 140–1) was the first to observe that this part of <i>Theodore of Edessa</i> copies Theodore of Raithou’s treatise (though not the “second” part, as Gouillard remarked); cf. also Papadopoulos 1965. (b) Within the <i>Preparation</i>, Euthymios has inserted an additional brief paragraph (49) of his own creation on Sabellius, Arius, and Macedonius, likely for the purposes of completion, as a response to the earlier list of anathemas on Sabellius, Arius, and Macedonius (47,3 and 47,11)
The beliefs of Manicheans in Edessa (68,6)	<i>Euchologion</i> (section 148)
The prostitute’s prayer (59,2)	includes bits from two works of Ephrem the Syrian (CPG 3926 and 3977)

<i>Theodore of Edessa</i> (cont.)	<i>Earlier texts</i> (cont.)
John the Hermit's exhortation to martyrdom (94,2–97,13)	includes, among its many intertexts, three more or less verbatim long quotations: - the first is attributed to "one of the fathers", namely Gregory of Nazianzus, from his <i>Oration</i> 19, <i>On his Sermons and to the Tax Adjuster Julian</i> (3) (97,3; also cited verbatim in <i>Barlaam and Ioasaph</i> 15,67–77, and attributed to "one of our wise teachers, a most theological man") - the second is a passage from the subsequent section (4) from the same <i>Oration</i> by Gregory, which this time is cited reworked and without acknowledgement (97,4) - and the third (97,11–97,13) is a passage from Theodore the Studite's <i>Brief Catechesis</i> 56,21–38
Theodore's exhortation to King John (101,1, 101,3–101,4, 101,6)	includes: - again, Gregory of Nazianzus, from his <i>Oration</i> 14, <i>On the Love of the Poor</i> (19) - John Chrysostom, from his <i>Homilies</i> on the Gospel of Matthew (PG 58: 540,43–49) - also, <i>New Testament</i> excerpts: I Petr. 1,13–19, Eph. 1,7, Rom. 8,35–39, and Eph. 3,14–21

<i>Theodore of Edessa</i> (cont.)	<i>Earlier texts</i> (cont.)
the <i>Chapters</i> (116,1–116,100)	inspired primarily by sections from the following works of Evagrius of Pontus (345–399): - <i>Paraenesis ad monachos</i> (CPG 2454) = 116,1–116,8 and 116,56 - <i>Practicus</i> I and II (CPG 2430) = 116,9–116,24 and 116,47, - <i>Sententiae ad monachos</i> (CPG 2435) = 116,25–116,40, - <i>Tractatus ad Eulogium</i> (CPG 2447) = 116,41–116,46 and 116,70–116,87, - <i>Rerum monachalium rationes</i> (CPG 2441) = 116,48–116,60 - <i>De malignis cogitationibus</i> (CPG 2450) = 116,61–116,69 The Evagrian texts are, furthermore, interwoven with quotes from other biblical and patristic texts, including <i>Apophthegmata</i>, Basil of Caesarea (<i>Sermo Asceticus</i> 12; CPG 2890), and Maximus the Confessor (<i>Centuries on Love</i>), the chronologically latest author to be cited. See Gouillard 1947, 143–9, Guillaumont and Guillaumont 1971, 313–4, and Géhin 2013, 26–7, 35, and 40 and also the overview in Tkachév 2023, 24–5. Géhin (2013, 26–7), furthermore, argues that the <i>Chapters</i> follow the order of one specific ms. with Evagrius' text, the early 10th-c. Athos, Protaton 26 (Diktyon 18055); for the anonymous scribe of this ms., see Kavrus-Hoffmann 2012, 64–7.

Similarly to what one observes in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, Euthymios thus incorporated small as well as large discursive borrowings also in his *Theodore*.⁵² In the latter case, the works utilized were popular ones in the ninth and tenth century as attested by their substantial manuscript transmission, cross-references in contemporary Greek texts, and also early Slavonic translations. Theodore of Raithou's treatise, for instance, was anthologized also in George the Monk's *Chronicle*, in the *Excerpta* of Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos, and in the *Suda* (as well as later in the *Chronicle* of George Kedrenos), and its second, philosophical part (not included in *Theodore of Edessa*) was translated early on into Slavonic.⁵³ Similar is the situation for Michael Synkellos' *Confession of Faith*⁵⁴—not to mention, of course, Maximos the Confessor and the absolute best-sellers, Ephrem the Syrian, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, and John Chrysostom.

It is thus no accident that some of these same works had already been chosen by Euthymios for translation in his project of creating a new Georgian canon of Christian Orthodox literature. Before composing *Theodore of Edessa*, he had translated major works of Basil, Gregory, and Ephrem.⁵⁵ He had also turned his attention to that favorite among ascetic writers, namely Evagrius of Pontus, an author who had been considered a heretic since the Fifth Ecumenical Council (Constantinople, 553), but who remained a popular author in monastic circles and was rehabilitated under pseudonyms, as works of his were deliberately misattributed not only to figures such as Neilos of Ancyra, but also Basil the Great and Maximos the Confessor. The latter two represented Euthymios' preferred aliases for disguising Evagrius, and indeed for the specific Evagrian texts that he translated, Euthymios was the first to utilize these aliases.⁵⁶ In the same discursive

⁵² The two most notable extensive discursive quotations inserted into *Barlaam and Ioasaph* are (a) the *Apology* of Aristides, a 2nd c. defense of Christianity against idolatry (CPG 1062 = *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, chps. 7 and 27) (Volk 2009, 122–35; Simpson 2017) and (b) the *Admonitory Chapters* to Justinian I by Agapetos the Deacon on ideal rulership (CPG 6900 = *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, chps. 33 and 36) (Volk 2009, 135–8).

⁵³ See e.g. *Preparation 2* with Constantine Porphyrogenetos, *De virtutibus et vitiis* (ed. Büttner-Wobst and Roos) 1,142,12–20, George the Monk, *Chronicle* 469,8–470,9, and *Suda* μ 147 (on Mani), George Kedrenos 286,1,31–9 (ed. Tartaglia). That Euthymios was using Theodore of Raithou directly can be proven by the fact that several sections on specific heresies and even the framing phraseology (52,2) are excerpted only in *Theodore of Edessa* (see the *app. font.* in sections 49, 51,2–3, and 52,2). For the Slavonic translation of the second, philosophical part, see Johannet 1991, 63–96. On the ms. transmission of the Greek text, see <https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/oeuvre/11553/>.

⁵⁴ For the reception of the *Confession of Faith* in Slavonic, see Thomson 1991 with Veder 2017; for its ms. diffusion in Greek, see <https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/oeuvre/2686/>. On Michael Synkellos, see most recently Brzozowska and Leszka 2025.

⁵⁵ Various examples in the catalogue of translations in 2.2; on Euthymios' translations of Ephrem specifically (including CPG 3926), see Peradze 1930, 82.

⁵⁶ On Euthymios' translations of Evagrius, see Tkebuchava 2023 along with her earlier work on the subject cited in that article as well as Outtier and Géhin 2022. We might add that “numerous teachings

sive setting, Euthymios had also worked on Theodore the Studite's *Brief Catechesis*, translated twice under the name of, again, Maximos the Confessor.⁵⁷

Euthymios was also very much attuned to texts coming out of the recent Syro-Palestinian tradition. There is, of course, the Georgian *Passion* of Michael. But there is also Michael Synkellos' *Confession of Faith*. This was a text that Euthymios had not only translated as an independent text into Georgian early in his career as a translator—likely in the year 991, and at least by 1001/1002–1005—but he had also incorporated an abbreviated version of it as an interpolation into his Georgian *Life* of Maximos the Confessor.⁵⁸ Moreover, the same *Confession of Faith*, along with the ten *Anathemas* that follow, formed an integral part of another Georgian work which Euthymios had created, based primarily on John of Damascus' *Expositio fidei* (CPG 8043), and which he titled the *Guide* (from Greek Ὁδηγός) in imitation of the famous work of Anastasios the Sinaite (d. after 700).⁵⁹ Euthymios' *Guide* in Georgian thus preserves the closest parallel to what we read in *Theodore of Edessa*.

The selection of material incorporated into *Theodore of Edessa* likewise does not seem to have been arbitrary. Although, as far as we can determine, Euthymios did not translate Theodore of Raithou's *Preparation*, this work—another text of Syro-Palestinian provenance—nevertheless circulated in certain Greek manuscripts alongside Michael Synkellos' *Confession of Faith*.⁶⁰ It is possible to imagine that some such Greek manuscript lay in front of Euthymios as well, who chose also the words of an author conveniently synonymous with the protagonist of his *Theodore of Edessa*.

of Maximus (the Confessor)" (based on Evagrius, on which see Tkebuchava 2022) are listed in both John's *Preface* and Euthymios' *Life*, and thus predate 1002–1005; see also Tbilisi, NCM, Q-34 of ca. 1031 and the relevant entry in 2.2 above, where also works of Basil and Gregory are mentioned. Euthymios, we should also note, had used Evagrius' *Tractatus ad Eulogium* (though different chapters than the ones used for the *Chapters*) twice in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*; see 22,86 with Evagrius' *Tractatus* 20, and 11,201–2 with *Tractatus* 23.

⁵⁷ See Chikvatia and Tkebuchava *forthcoming* as well as Outtier and Géhin 2022 (esp. 405–14; although considering the "milieu" of Euthymios as the most likely candidate for the Georgian translation of Theodore the Studite's text, in the context of appropriating Evagrius, and even linking the latter activity with *Theodore of Edessa* and the *Chapters* that follow, Outtier and Géhin are unaware that the Studite text is also included in *Theodore of Edessa*, and are thus hesitant to affirm Euthymios' authorship with certainty).

⁵⁸ See Khoperia 2005

⁵⁹ For the relation and differences between the *Creed* and *Anathemas* in *Theodore of Edessa* and the relevant sections in Euthymios' *Guide*, see Chikvatia and Tkebuchava *forthcoming* with Chikvatia and Tkebuchava 2022b (on the *Creed*) and 2022a (on the *Anathemas*). For Anastasios' *Guide* (Latin, *Viae dux*), see Uthemann 1981; for Euthymios' *Guide*, see Chkonias and Chikvatia 2007.

⁶⁰ See especially Paris, BNF, Coislin 120 (Diktyon *49264), originally from the Great Lavra on Athos, and dated to the 10th c.; see also the 9th/10th-c. Patmos 109 (Diktyon 54353) and the 10th-c. Vatican, BAV, Vat. gr. 423 (Diktyon *67054).

There is also another possibility, as, in one other instance, the *Preparation* is included in a collection where the Greek works attributed to Theodore Abū Qurrah feature prominently. Thus, in Milan, Ambros. Q 74 sup. (Martini-Bassi 681; Diktyon *43158), dating to the latter half of the tenth century, the *Preparation*, though attributed explicitly to Theodore of Raithou, is placed right in the middle of a series of texts by Theodore Abū Qurrah. More specifically, Raithenos' text, bearing the title Θεοδώρου πρεσβυτέρου τῆς Ραϊθού, *Προπαρασκευή* etc., is found on ff. 209r-214v and is surrounded by texts of Abū Qurrah (ff. 204v-227r), whose texts are found also elsewhere in the ms.; only some of these bear explicitly Abū Qurrah's name in the title, cited in the following way: Θεοδώρου ἐπισκόπου Καρῶν (151v), Θεοδώρου ἀγιοπολίτου (218v), Θεοδώρου τοῦ γεγονότος ἐπισκόπου Καρῶν (222r), and Ἀβουκαρᾶς (226r and 226v).⁶¹ Could it then be that Euthymios encountered some similar manuscript? Indeed, as Gouillard had already observed (1947, 141), *Theodore's* version of the text of Theodore of Raithou is closest to the Milan manuscript among those utilized in Diekamp's edition of the *Preparation*. Was Euthymios thereby prompted to place the words of *Theodore* of Raithou, linked with *Theodore* Abū Qurrah, in the mouth of his *Theodore* of Edessa, himself inspired by the fictionalized Abū Qurrah of Michael's Georgian *Passion*?

A link, we might add, existed in the Greek tradition between Michael Synkellos and Theodore Abū Qurrah as well. Among the works of the latter, we find a work titled, in the earliest manuscript that preserves it—Mosq. Sin. gr. 394 (Vladimir 231; Diktyon 44019), ff. 1r-9v, dated to 932, and copied by Stylianos *diakonos* for Arethas—, as follows: “Ἐπιστολή, περιέχουσα τὴν ὁρθὴν καὶ ἀμώμητον πίστιν, πεμφθεῖσα παρὰ τοῦ μακαρίου πάπα Θωμᾶ πατριάρχου Ἱεροσολύμων, πρὸς τοὺς κατὰ τὴν Ἀρμενίαν αἰρετίζοντας, ἀραβιστὶ μὲν ὑπὸ Θεοδώρου, τοῦ ἐπὶ κλην Ἀβουκαρᾶ, τοῦ Καρῶν ἐπισκόπου, ὑπαγορευθεῖσα, διὰ δὲ Μιχαὴλ ἐμοῦ τοῦ ἐλαχίστου πρεσβυτέρου καὶ συγκέλλου τοῦ ἀποστολικοῦ θρόνου Ἱεροσολύμων μεταφρασθεῖσα, μεθ’ οὗ καὶ ἀπέσταλται”.⁶² The letter, addressed to the Armenian Monophysites by Thomas, Patriarch of Jerusalem (PmbZ 8452), and composed in ca. 810 (cf. PmbZ 5059), is a theological defense of the orthodox faith in the same spirit as Michael Synkellos' own *Confession of Faith*. As the title cited above suggests, the letter was apparently composed in Arabic by Abū Qurrah

⁶¹ The manuscript also contains the so-called *Florilegium Coislinianum* as well as short texts of Evagrius, Maximos the Confessor, John of Damascus and others; for the ms., see most recently Maksimczuk 2022, XXXIX-XL; see also D'Agostino 2018 (with an important review of the manuscript, the relevant bibliography, and the authorship of two texts attributed to Abū Qurrah).

⁶² The text of this version of the title is printed in Vladimir 1894, 296; another version appears in the PG edition (97, 1504-1522); for a full list of transmitting manuscripts, see <https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/oeuvre/5722/>. For the text, see Beck 1959, 488, Mango 1991, 154-5, and especially Lamoreaux 2005, xxviii-xxix and 83-95 (with English translation and commentary).

and translated into Greek by Synkellos. Again, one wonders if it was from texts such as these that Euthymios somehow drew inspiration or any sort of justification for appropriating Michael Synkellos' original *Confession* under the name of Theodore of Edessa, Euthymios' version of Abū Qurrah.

What falls within the scope of the present discussion is the possibility of tracing Euthymios' working process. Any text that might become, in whole or in part, the object of translation could be broken down into discrete, movable units, capable of being transferred elsewhere and adapted to new textual settings. Such relocation and transformation concerned not only a newly produced Georgian version—whenever such a version was made—which, as Euthymios' own creation, might naturally be regarded as open to reuse. The same processes of dismantling, transposition, and reappropriation also could affect the original Greek source text itself, whether or not it was translated into Georgian. As the case of *Theodore of Edessa* shows, Greek texts too are taken apart, relocated, and appropriated by Euthymios. In his textual nesting, Michael Synkellos, Theodore of Raithou, Evagrius, and the rest relinquish their words to a new author/ity and his eloquence: Theodore of Edessa.

Refracted Narratives

When it comes to narrative intertexts, one is forced to distinguish at the outset between, on the one hand, more or less substantial narrative blocks which are appropriated wholesale and, on the other, more nuanced and refracted forms of appropriation, some more and some less tangible, which helped Euthymios articulate key narrative coordinates, in terms of persons and temporal referents as well as themes or plots, and which we would like to explore first.

We may begin with the *Chronicle* of George the Monk, in relation to which Theodore's *Life* in fact displays both types of appropriation. This very popular text was composed in the sixties or seventies of the ninth century (PmbZ 2264) and circulated widely: some 140 manuscripts in Greek, various recensions and excerpts, as well as translations into Old Slavonic and Georgian, the latter dating to the twelfth century.⁶³ Three passages from the *Chronicle*, notably in rearranged order (sections 717,11–20, 712,11–17, and 715,20–716,9), were excerpted almost verbatim by Euthymios in order to compose the historiographical preface to the story of Michael's martyrdom (21,2–23), an excursus, as we have seen, from the main narrative. One further passage (472,12–23) was also incorporated

⁶³ For the mss., see <https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/oeuvre/1284/>; for the text (with further bibliography), see Karpozilos 2002, 213–32 and Magdalino 2011; for the translations, see Kaukhchishvili 1926 (Georgian) and Istrin 1920–1930 (Slavic).

so as to present the anti-Chalcedonians causing trouble to Theodore and his Orthodox flock in Edessa (68,7).⁶⁴

Yet George's text was not simply used by Euthymios as incorporated excerpts, but also as a medium for constructing the identity of one of the new characters he invented in his tale. More specifically, in the immediate continuation of one of those passages culled by Euthymios, we read the following (*Chronicle* 716,5–13; in bold the phrases borrowed in the *Life* of Theodore, sections 21,4–22):

... τὴν ἱερὰν μητρόπολιν τοῦ Βασιλέως τοῦ Μεγάλου καὶ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἱερουσαλὴμ κατέσχον οἱ ἄγαν πονηροὶ καὶ ἀκάθαρτοι Σαρακηνοί. Ἐπεὶ οὖν περικρατεῖς γενόμενοι τῆς ἁγίας γῆς ἐκείνης καὶ σφόδρα πλεονάσαντες καὶ ὑπερισχύσαντες, ἐξώπλισε πλοῖα πολλὰ Μαυρίας ὁ τούτων ἀρχηγὸς κατὰ τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως, καὶ ἦλθεν εἰς τὸν λεγόμενον Φοίνικα τῆς Λυκίας, ἔνθα Κώνστας ὁ βασιλεὺς ἦν μετὰ τοῦ Ῥωμαϊκοῦ στόλου ...

... the very wicked and impure Saracens took possession of Jerusalem, the sacred mother city of our Great King and Savior. As they thus seized that holy land, and grew exceedingly in power, their leader, Mauřas armed a big number of ships so as to attack Constantinople, and he came to the so-called Phoenix in Lycia, where Emperor Constans was stationed with the Roman navy.

The passage discusses events dated to the year 655 and pertaining to the Arab general Mu'awiya—who was later to become founder and first caliph of the Umayyad Caliphate (661–680; PmbZ 5185)—and his dealings with Emperor Constans II (641–668 CE), whom Euthymios also mentions by name (21,3), attributing to him (following George the Monk) the Byzantine loss of Syro-Palestine (especially the Holy Land) to the Arabs.

Could it be that George's *Μαυρίας* was Euthymios' precise inspiration when, much later in his tale (70,2), he came to providing a name for the ruler whom Theodore was to meet and convert to Christianity, a clearly invented and otherwise unattested personality?⁶⁵ Though one cannot be absolutely certain about it, the facts that (a) Mu'awiya's name, as *Μαυρίας* or alternatively *Μαβρίας*, is found *only* in Byzantine historiographical sources and nowhere else in Greek literature and that (b) George's *Chronicle* is the only historiographical text about which

⁶⁴ Tkachëv (2023, 17), claims that “an excerpt from an unknown anti-Monothelite treatise of the late seventh century” lies behind the relevant passages in George the Monk, but makes no specific reference to support this claim. There are further echoes of other parts of George's *Chronicle* in Theodore's *Life*; see the relevant entries in the *Index of Intertexts* (Vol. II).

⁶⁵ We may note that, in the search for real historical antecedents behind *Μαυρίας* in the *Life* of Theodore, the name of the founder of the Umayyad Caliphate has also been put forward, though without reference to the passage in George the Monk; see Peeters 1930, 96 (who suggests also Mu'awiya II [r. 683–684]) and Binggeli 2010, 96; Vasiliev 1942–1943, 208–9, imaginatively but wrongly identifies *Μαυρίας* with al-Mu'ayyad (d. 866), son of the caliph al-Mutawakkil (847–861), and governor of Syria.

we are certain that Euthymios had perused—given the passages, from two different sections of the text, he utilized in *Theodore of Edessa*—, the probability that Euthymios indeed recalled this very particular instance of the name, when naming his Mauīas, is in our view rather high.

That Euthymios' Mauīas in the novel textual environment of *Theodore of Edessa* is, simultaneously, completely disassociated from George's Mauīas, stripped as the character is of all historicity and made to be a successor of Adramelech (when, in fact, the historical Mu'āwiya was a *predecessor* of the historical 'Abd al-Malik) as well as contemporaneous to emperors Michael III and his mother Theodora, who lived some two hundred years later, should cause no wonder. We have seen, after all, how creatively Euthymios reconfigured the various personalities of the Georgian *Passion* of Michael; and Euthymios would have good models for such temporal conflation in contemporary learned hagiography, most notably in Symeon Metaphrastes.⁶⁶ Euthymios' Mauīas is, in other words, a *new* Mauīas, borrowing his name and its Arabic identity from an earlier text, but set in a new temporal framework and invested with any entirely new biography.⁶⁷



Mauīas is a borrowed Arabic name for Euthymios' protagonist convert martyr. The next intertext likely provided support for the making of Euthymios' primary narrator. We saw above how "Abba Basil, priest of Saint Sabas" of Michael's Georgian *Passion* was transformed into "Basil bishop of Emesa". In this transformation, Euthymios possibly found assistance in a text which he knew very well: the Southern Italian fictive *Life* of Pankratios, likely written around the turn of the ninth century (BHG 1410).⁶⁸ Euthymios had translated the *Life* into Georgian before 1001/1002–June 1005; moreover, a reworked version of the Greek

⁶⁶ Metaphrastes' *Life, Conduct, and Passion* of St Eugenia (BHG 608), e.g., combines two separate hagiographies (BHG 607x and 607z) with the result that its first part (1–61) is set in Alexandria during the reigns of Commodus (180–192), Severus (193–211) and Caracalla (198–217), while its second part (62–87) takes place some forty or fifty years later under the rule of Valerian and Gallienus (253–260), while the main characters in the story do not advance in age accordingly; see Papaioannou 2017, 303–4.

⁶⁷ Another possible, yet more distant inspiration for Euthymios might have been, we may add, another story in George the Monk (*Chronicle* 555,1–22) about an earlier, 4th-c. Arab *female* ruler in Syria, named Mauīa, who took the opposite route of conversion, from Christianity to Islam; for the historical figure behind George's account (based on earlier Greek sources), see Bowersock 1999. Notably, the episode that immediately follows the story of Mauīa in George's *Chronicle* takes place in Edessa (555,23–557,6). Also notably, in an 11th-c. version of George's *Chronicle*, Mauīa becomes *Mauīas*, a *male* character (influenced by the Mauīas of our *Theodore*?); see PG 110, 681,52–684,22: chapter Π'E'. Περὶ τοῦ Μαβία καὶ τῶν ἑρθεοδόξων.

⁶⁸ For this text, see Stallman-Pacitti 2018, as well as the overview in Re 2011 for the Southern Italian hagiographical context.

text is found right before the *Life* of Theodore in manuscript A (ff. 122v-226r), copied by Theophanes in 1023. Unsurprisingly perhaps, a couple of phrases in Theodore's *Life* have parallels in the *Life* of Pankratios: the "box" that the emperor Michael has made so as to put the piece of the Holy Cross inside as a gift to King Mauïas (85,4), and then another cross, "made of gold and adorned with precious stones", which the King takes out from his bosom when outing his Christian faith before his martyrdom (108) echo phrases in a related scene in Pankratios' *Life* (ch. 10), when Pankratios presents a cross to Peter the Apostle and receives a box for its preservation; meanwhile, the place where Mauïas gathers the people of Baghdad and announces his faith (107,1) is also described with a term found in the *Life* of Pankratios (ch. 47).

Yet one further possible parallel stands out and is of interest to us here. It is to be found in the very title of each text, presented below. The heading of the *Life* of Pankratios is cited in its earliest, tenth-century attested form, as well as in a variation of it preserved in a manuscript of the latter half of the eleventh century:

<i>Pankratios (BHG 1410)</i>	<i>Theodore (version a)</i>
<i>Βίος τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Παγκρατίου ἀρχιεπισκόπου τῆς Ταυρομενιτῶν πόλεως, συγγραφεῖς ὑπὸ αὐτοῦ μαθητοῦ καὶ οἰκέτου (Cryptofer. B.β.5, f. 9r; Diktyon 17602; 10th c.)</i> <i>Βίος καὶ πολιτεία καὶ διὰ Χριστὸν ἀγῶνες καὶ ἄθλησις τοῦ ἁγίου Ἰσαποστόλου καὶ ἱερομάρτυρος Παγκρατίου προέδρου γεγονότος πόλεως Ταυρομενίας, συγγραφεῖς παρὰ Εὐαγρίου ἐπισκόπου τῆς αὐτῆς πόλεως (Vat. gr. 2010, f. 130r; Diktyon *68639, 11th [2/2])</i>	<i>Βίος καὶ πολιτεία τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Θεοδώρου, ... ἔπειτα γεγονότος ἀρχιεπισκόπου πόλεως Ἐδέσης ... συγγραφεῖς παρὰ Βασιλείου ἀνεψίου αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐπισκόπου Ἐμέσης</i>
<i>The life of our father among the saints Pankratios, archbishop of the city of Taormina; written by Evagrios, his disciple and servant</i> <i>The life and conduct and contests and martyrdom of saint Pankratios, equal to the Apostles and hieromartyr, prelate of the city of Taormina; written by Evagrios, bishop of that same city</i>	<i>The life and conduct of our father among the saints Theodore, ... who became eminent for his asceticism in the Great Lavra of Saint Sabas, subsequently became archbishop of the city of Edessa, and performed deeds worthy of commemoration; written by Basil, his nephew and bishop of Emesa</i>

The ploy of a person close to a saint presented as his biographer is, of course, common in Byzantine hagiography, and many other formulas of the titles above are common enough. Moreover, if we are right in regarding the title of Pankratios as one of Euthymios' models, he seems to have had in front of him a version, now lost, which combined elements from the two variations cited above.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, given the amount of common structural ingredients and, more to the point, the degree of Euthymios' engagement with that work and its co-presence in manuscript **A** with Theodore's *Life*, one cannot help but wonder if Evagrius, "bishop of Taormina" is echoed behind Basil, "bishop of Emesa" as a bolstering figure of narratorial authority.



A separate textual bit, also somewhat removed, may plausibly lie behind another detail, which is used by Euthymios as an anchor of historical verisimilitude for the fictive *Life* of Theodore. When Euthymios is about to introduce Theodosios the Stylite into his narrative, he adds the following remark (54):

Ἐν ἐκείναις τοίνυν ταῖς ἡμέραις, ἐγένετο τὸν ὅσιον ἐξεληθῆναι ἔξω τῆς πόλεως, καὶ ἰδὼν στύλους πολλοὺς καλῶς ὠκοδομημένους καὶ τερπνὴν τινα τὴν θέσιν ἔχοντας, ἐπυνθάνετο, τί ταῦτα εἴη. Οἱ δὲ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἱερεῖς συμπορευόμενοι αὐτῷ ἔφησαν, ἐπὶ τῶν ἡμερῶν τοῦ εὐσεβοῦς βασιλέως Μαυρικίου αὐτοὺς οἰκοδομηθῆναι, καὶ πολλοὺς ἐν αὐτοῖς στυλίταις κατὰ διαφόρους καιροὺς κατοικήσαντας, πάντα τὸν τῆς ζωῆς διανύσαι βίον.

In those days, it so happened that the saint went out of **the city** and, seeing several well-built **pillars** standing at a delightful site, he began asking what these might be. The priests of the church who were walking with him said that these pillars were built **during the days of the pious Emperor Maurice** and that several stylites had dwelt on them at different times, spending their whole lives in this way.

This reference to pillars outside the city of Edessa, built at the time of Emperor Maurice (r. 582–602), is found nowhere else in Byzantine literature, as far as we can tell—though some lost Georgian antecedent cannot be ruled out with certainty. Nevertheless, Euthymios could be echoing a passage from a Greek text certainly read in his time (and existing also in medieval Georgian transla-

⁶⁹ As far as we are able to tell (Stallman-Pacitti does not provide a critical apparatus for the title), at least two further, later simplifying variations of the original title exist, one in Vind. hist. gr. 3 (Diktyon *70880), and another in Theophanes' Mosq. Synod. gr. 15, on which see 3.3 below. For the hagiographical ploy, see text and note 177 below.

tion), Leontios of Neapolis' seventh-century *Life* of Saint Symeon the Holy Fool (BHG 1677).⁷⁰ There (84,20–28), we read:

Μέλλοντός ποτε τὴν πόλιν καταλαμβάνειν σεισμοῦ μεγάλου, ὅτε ἡ Ἀντιόχεια ἔπεν-
σεν, ἐπὶ τῶν χρόνων τοῦ ἐν ἀγίοις **Μαυρικίου τοῦ βασιλέως** (τότε γὰρ κατήντησεν
εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην ἐκ τῆς ἐρήμου ὁ ὁσιος), ἤρπασεν τὸν λῶρον ἐκ τοῦ σχολίου, καὶ
ἤρξατο τύπτειν τοὺς **στύλους**, καὶ λέγειν ἐκάστῳ: «Εἶπεν ὁ κύρις σου· ‘Στά’». Καὶ
ἐλθόντος τοῦ σεισμοῦ, οὐδεὶς ἐξ ὅσων ἔτυψεν στύλων ἔπεσεν. Ἦλθεν οὖν καὶ εἰς ἓνα
στύλον καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ: «Σὺ μὴδὲ πέσης, μὴδὲ σταθῆς»· καὶ ἐσχίσθη ἀπὸ ἀνωθεν
ἕως κάτω, καὶ ἔκλινεν μικρὸν καὶ οὕτως ἔμεινεν. Οὐδεὶς δὲ συνῆκεν ὃ ἐποίησεν ὁ
μακαρίτης, ἀλλ’ ἔλεγον ἅπαντες, ὅτι ἀπὸ παραφρονήσεως ἔτυψεν τοὺς **στύλους**.

Once, when a large earthquake was about to seize **the city** [i.e. Emesa], when
Antioch fell, **during the years of the** included among the saints **Emperor**
Maurice—for it was then that the saint [i.e. Symeon] came down from the
desert into the inhabited world—he grabbed a whip from a school and began
to strike the **pillars** and say to each one, ‘Your master says, “Remain stand-
ing!”’ And when the earthquake came, none of the pillars which he struck fell
down. However, he also went up to one pillar and said to it, ‘You neither fall
nor stand!’ And it was split from top to bottom and bent over a bit and stayed
that way. No one figured out what the blessed one had done, but everyone said
that he struck the **pillars** because he was out of his mind.’⁷¹

The episode regarding Symeon differs, as a whole, from what we encounter in the *Life* of Theodore: Symeon is in Emesa, and not in Edessa; the chronological reference to the reign of Maurice does not pertain to when the pillars were made, but when an earthquake shook Syria and the protagonist of the story commenced his life as a Holy Fool⁷²; and the pillars are not “well-built” nor subsequently become dwellings of stylites, but are objects of Symeon’s miracle, whipped so as to remain standing. Nor is there any direct lexical correspondence apart from words of little argumentative value, highlighted in bold in the two passages above.

Yet Euthymios’ and Leontios’ texts do share a significant detail, namely the reverence toward Emperor Maurice who is considered a pious figure by Eu-

⁷⁰ For the transmission in Greek (including late 10th- and 11th-c. copies), see <https://pinakes.iht.cnr.fr/notices/oeuvre/13486/>. For the Georgian translation, see Tarnišvili/Assfalg 1955 = Kekelidze 1955, 494 (without specification of the likely translator) and also Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 70–1. For discussions of the text, see Rydén 1970, Festugière in Festugière and Rydén 1974, 1–52, Déroche 1995, Krueger 1996, Ivanov 2006, 104–22, and Hofstra 2008.

⁷¹ The translation is by Krueger (1996, 155), slightly modified.

⁷² The reference to Maurice, we might note, creates chronological confusion within the *Life* of Symeon by Leontios; the problem is discussed in Mango 1984 and Krueger 1996, 22.

thymios and a saint by Leontios, a notion which is implied also in Maurice's treatment in Byzantine historiographical works (including George the Monk), but which rarely appears in Greek hagiography nor is made explicit in Greek historiography, by contrast to the Georgian tradition.⁷³ Could we see again Euthymios' creative reworking in action? Has he retained the positive reference to Maurice, so as to include yet one more historical fixed point into his tale, then turned Emesa to Edessa (and perhaps indeed also kept Emesa as the city of Basil, the narrator of Theodore's *Life*), and finally transformed the pillars made to endure by Saint Symeon into the "well-built" pillars for his stylites? Perhaps this is the case, especially if we keep in mind, as noted above, that Maurice and pillars are never linked in Byzantine writing elsewhere.

There is still more that can support this hypothesis, if we begin to zoom out of the specific episode. For instance, the concluding comment in Leontios' text, namely that "everyone said that Symeon struck the pillars *because he was out of his mind* = ἀπὸ παραφρονήσεως" has its correspondence to a passage that immediately follows the mention of Maurice's pillars in Theodore's *Life*. When Theodore, that is, enquires about Theodosios' life as a stylite, the priests guiding his tour describe the stylite's peculiar interactions with passers-by, and conclude: "Hence, he is considered a madman = ὅθεν καὶ ὡς ἐξεστηκῶς διὰ τούτων δείκνυται". Euthymios could thus have incorporated the main characteristic of Saint Symeon, namely divine madness—which in both texts is treated as *regular* madness by contemporary witnesses—into the portrait of his extreme ascetic.⁷⁴

Moreover, though Symeon's main activity takes place in Emesa, he is a native of *Edessa*, as Leontios writes in a side-note (73,20–22):

Καθήμενος ὁ Συμεὼν ἐν τῷ εἰθισμένῳ αὐτῷ τόπῳ θεωρεῖ ἑαυτὸν ἐν ἐκστάσει, ὥσπερ παρεῖναι πρὸς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ μητέρα ἀσθενούσαν ἐν Ἐδέσῃ (ἐκεῖθεν γὰρ ἦν).

Symeon, sitting in his accustomed place, saw himself in ecstasy, as if he was with his ailing mother *in Edessa* (for he came from that place).⁷⁵

Euthymios could thus be recalling a text belonging to *Edessan* hagiographical materials, while constructing the biography of his Edessan saint.

Finally, there is an even more extensive area of contact between the two texts. Leontios' story is about an ascetic pair, and of the two one ascetic abandons

⁷³ See Wortley 1980 (without mention of either the *Life* of Symeon or that of Theodore, however) as well as Garitte 1958, 398 (on the Georgian tradition). For the positive treatment of Maurice in George the Monk (though without stating explicitly that Maurice was considered a saint), following earlier historians, see *Chronicle* 659,20–664,6. For three rare mentions of Maurice's sanctity, see the 7th-c. *Miracles* of St Demetrios, sections 89,7–8, 112,11, and 134,5–6; this is a text which Euthymios also knew, as he translated it into Georgian (cf. text and note 36 above).

⁷⁴ This passage in Theodore's *Life* is discussed from the perspective of holy folly in Ivanov 2006, 140–1.

⁷⁵ Trans. in Krueger 1996, 146.

the other to return to the world, just like Theodosios and his brother John. In Leontios' version of this hagiographic motif, Symeon begins and then for a long time leads his life as a regular ascetic together with another man; as the story advances, however, Symeon abandons his ascetic friend in order to live as a Holy Fool in Emesa. Again, differences between this story and that of Theodosios and his brother John in Theodore's *Life* are notable: Symeon's abandonment and then life as a Fool in Leontios is not initiated by a sinful act of arrogance which is then punished by the extreme life of stylitism, as happens in our text, but is rather presented as an act fully blessed by God and, eventually, also Symeon's ascetic companion (*Life* of Symeon 76,10–78,16). Yet similarities also exist, not only in the larger scenario, but also in a detail within it: the ascetic who is left behind by Symeon is, as in Theodore's *Life*, called John.

Considering all of the above, the indirect inspiration of Euthymios' reference to Maurice may indeed have been the relevant passage in Leontios' popular tale.



Another indirect textual layer, again from hagiographical tales about Edessa, may have inspired, in an even more creative fashion, the intertwined stories of the two brother ascetics and Ader's family. The Edessan tale in question is a somewhat peculiar story that has survived both as a full-length biography (BHG 1785) and in the form of a relatively extensive *synaxarion*, likely a later version (BHG 1785e). The story pertains to a saint called Theodoulos the Stylite, a fictive character set in the time of emperor Theodosios I (r. 379–395).⁷⁶ The longer version is preserved in a single manuscript of the late tenth / early eleventh century (Florence, BML, Plut. 9.14; Diktyon *16102), a *Menologion* for the month of May likely linked to Italy,⁷⁷ while the *synaxarion* experienced a wider circulation from the eleventh century onwards—its likely earliest witness is dated to 1062/1063, a *Synaxarion* ms. of possibly Palestinian (Sabaite?) origins: Paris. gr. 1590 (Diktyon *51210; belonging to the recension F* in Delehaye's edition).⁷⁸

The story's protagonist is entrusted with the position of prefect of Constantinople by Theodosios, “the great and most pious emperor” (*synaxarion*

⁷⁶ For a discussion of the BHG 1785, see Kuper 2024 (though we remain unconvinced by the assertion that the text is intended as a parody) as well as Rizos, de Reichenfeld, and Cerioni 2018.

⁷⁷ The text is on ff. 138r–147v and 149r, and is assigned the liturgical date of May 28; for the ms., see Ehrhard I 632–5 with Cerno 2013, 994–1001 (especially regarding the likely Italian origins). BHG 1785 has been edited in *Acta Sanctorum*, Maii VI (1688), 756–765; Charles Kuper (2024, 70) has announced a new edition of the text.

⁷⁸ For the circulation of the *synaxarion*, see <https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/oeuvre/18041/>; for the Paris ms., see most recently Tucker 2023, 132–5. Theodoulos' *synaxarion* is usually placed on December 3 (as in the Paris ms., ff. 104r–106r), but occasionally also on December 2. The text is printed in the *Synaxarion of Constantinople* Dec. 3,6 (275,34–278,17).

275,36–7). Realizing the injustices committed by the powerful, Theodoulos decides to abandon everything and become a monk. In the *Life*, his undertaking is postponed by his wife's refusal—her name is Prokla. A debate which Theodoulos has with Prokla occupies a few paragraphs (2–4): he expounds on the vanity of life, and urges his wife to join him in renouncing this world, while she, in tears, laments his proposition, which shall leave her deserted. Then, though the emperor—presented in the best possible light—is ready to let Theodoulos follow his will (6), the wife prevents him once more, with a series of tearful speeches (7–8). A vision follows (9–10), in which Christ enjoins Theodoulos anew to asceticism and announces that he shall also “take” Prokla “who has pleased Him”. Her death follows—here, both textual versions of the tale join again—and Theodoulos sells all her property (worth 450 pounds of gold; in the *synaxarion*, 550), distributes the money to charity, goes to Edessa, and dwells as a stylite on a pillar near the city; he is, we are told, “42 years old”.

“Forty-eight” (i.e. “forty” in the *synaxarion*) “years and seven months” of rigorous asceticism later, Theodoulos asks God about whom he shall be positioned with in the kingdom of heaven. A voice announces to him that his place will be together with Cornelius, a musician (a mime according to the *synaxarion*) from Damascus.⁷⁹ Deeply scandalized by this news (Theodoulos' lament of protest is cited in the *Life* [13], a kind of mirror to the earlier outcry of his wife), Theodoulos descends from his column and comes to Damascus to meet his future partner in the afterlife—whom he finds, as we read in the *Life* (14), in the hippodrome, hand in hand with a courtesan (ἑταίρις) who slaps him around, making fun of him. After Theodoulos' insistence, Cornelius—who considers himself a worthless sinner—confesses the single virtuous act of his life: he provided all the means necessary to save from prostitution a noble woman turned destitute because of her husband's debts. Theodoulos, amazed at Cornelius' story, is restored to the proper stance—repeating a stock hagiographical motif about a non-monastic person who is proven to be spiritually superior to a high ascetic.⁸⁰ Theodoulos thus returns to the column, in gratitude toward God, and dies thereafter—in the *Life*, the end is described with some detail: Theodoulos spends another “five years” on the column, until he hears a voice calling him up to Heaven where angels, the righteous, prophets, saints, but also Cornelius (who had died a year earlier), shall receive him.

⁷⁹ Cornelius' exact profession in the *Life* is πανδούρος (i.e. a player of the string instrument called *pan-doura*), while the *synaxarion* treats the term as Cornelius' sobriquet and glosses it as μῦθος. The vernacular origins of the *Life*'s word reflect the likely oral or oral-like contexts of creation and/or circulation of the original tale, while its glossing in the *synaxarion* suggests that the latter is a later, more textualized version.

⁸⁰ See Wortley 1992 (on pp. 393–4 a discussion of Theodoulos).

Both versions of the story, in terms of their linguistic register but also narrative approach, bear traces of oral storytelling—including the nesting of autobiographical tales (Cornelius, and then the noble woman), similarly to what we noted in reference to the Georgian *Passion* of Michael. At that, there is little stylistic convergence between Theodoulos' story and Euthymios' text, not even on a lexical level—with the single exception of a significant word, namely, that of *ἐταπίς* (*Life* of Theodoulos 14 and *Life* of Theodore 58,6) and another example to which we shall return. In other words, Euthymios does not appear to have used in any direct and certainly not in a substantive way either of the Greek texts which have been preserved regarding Theodoulos in creating the two-part “dossier” of Theodosios—namely (a) the story of Theodosios the Stylite himself and (b) the story which Theodosios recounts, namely that of Ader and his family.

However, from a narrative perspective, there is an obvious intersecting element as well as some other affinities that unite the relevant tales. The intersecting element is the very presence of a stylite saint in Edessa. Apart from our two tales, there is no other Edessan stylite in Greek hagiography, as far as we know. Moreover, one could link the stylite's name “Theodosios” in *Theodore of Edessa* with the name of the saintly emperor in Theodoulos' story. The leap from “Theodoulos” of Edessa living at the time of pious Theodosios to “Theo-dosios” of Edessa in *Theodore* is not too large to imagine. Some link may also be seen in the concern to offer a precise number of years of asceticism and in the figures provided. Theodoulos' entire life lasts 95 years: 42 as a lay man; 48 and 7 months as an ascetic until the moment of illumination; and another 5 years afterwards. Theodosios' life as a stylite saint in Euthymios' text also lasts 95 years (55,2), until he meets Saint Theodore. That stylite life is, furthermore, also marked, like Theodoulos', by a significant turning point: Theodoulos has his illumination after 48 and 7 months, while Euthymios' Theodosios struggles “for forty-nine years” (66,2; cf. 65,5), and then, “in the fiftieth year” (66,3), his time of repentance is over and he finally gains the spiritual powers necessary to act as a proper saint.

There are also other, somewhat deeper similarities. Ader, of “noble” lineage and abundant wealth, who realizes the futility of this world, renounces it, leaves Edessa, arrives at Jerusalem, becomes a monk (re-named Athanasios) in the Lavra of St Sabas, and then sorts out his family situation (56,1–58,3), echoes Theodoulos the prefect and husband, his family “troubles”, and then ascetic conversion and departure to Edessa. Ader's wife too is given a similar prominent role and follows a similar narrative trajectory as Theodoulos' wife. Both women find fault with the sudden, unilateral decision of their husbands to abandon them

in order to become monks, and utter very similar complaints in speeches that decry their situation. Both women also eventually are transformed into saintly figures as their story progresses. Moreover, a similar vision announces the death of characters in each story: Christ appears to Theodoulos, urges him to “hurry” (*Life* of Theodoulos 9) toward the good path he has chosen, and declares that he shall “take” Prokla to Him (10), while Ader appears himself to his wife (58,2), stating that he shall “take” his children to him and urges her to “hurry” to save her soul—notably, λαμβάνω, in the first-person singular, and σπεύσον, in the imperative, are the precise words used respectively in both texts.⁸¹

Then, there is Theodosios, who abandons absolute solitude, takes the money he finds, goes on to perform a series of apparently good deeds, and as a result becomes arrogant in his mind, comparing himself to his brother John only to discover that his brother’s “leap” over the money was by far the superior spiritual act (65,5–65,9). This is similar to what happens to the hyper-ascetic Theodoulos, who, to his astonishment, learns that he is equal to Cornelius, a man of the stage, with only a single act of extraordinary charity in his list of virtues. That John dies first and Theodosios follows second (112,3) also mirrors the death sequence of Cornelius and then Theodoulos.

But could we regard the two-part dossier of Theodosios in *Theodore of Edessa* as a variation of Theodoulos’ story? Euthymios, as noted, does not seem to copy directly the Greek texts of Theodoulos—the above lexical echoes notwithstanding. Furthermore, Theodoulos’ story does not survive, as far as we can tell, in any other linguistic tradition nor do we encounter it in Georgian or Arabic *Synaxaria*.⁸² Of course, Euthymios could have had in front of him a Greek or a Georgian version of Theodoulos, now lost—he certainly knew, for instance, of a tale which included another variation of the motif of an ascetic who discovers his inferiority compared to a “secular” man (Sergios the *Demotes*; BHG 1449i, Wortley 2010, no. 716) and which existed in a Georgian translation of an Arabic version in a manuscript in the Iviron library at his time.⁸³ In any case, as we have observed in the way Euthymios handled the *Passion* of Michael, the *Balavariani*, as well as some of the Greek hagiographies which he translated into Georgian, he was certainly capable of the following procedure in narrative creativity. Assuming that he knew the tale of Theodoulos in some version (Greek

⁸¹ See 58,2 “Ἰδού, γύναι, ἐγὼ μὲν λαμβάνω πρὸς με τὰ νήπιά μου, σὺ δὲ σπεύσον σώσαι τὴν ψυχὴν σου, μηκέτι μου καταβοῶσα καὶ καταδικάζουσά με” with *Life* of Theodoulos 9–10 “Θεόδουλε, τὴν μερίδα ἣν ἐξελέξω, καὶ τὴν ὁδὸν ἣν ἡρετήσω, καλὴν οὖσαν καὶ εὐάρεστον, ταύτην σπεύσον βαδίσαι ... Πρόκλαν οὖν εὐαρεστήσασάν μοι πρὸς ἐμὰντὸν λαμβάνω· σὺ οὖν ὁ προέθου, τοῦτο ποίει”.

⁸² No *Life* of Theodoulos is included in the inventory of Tarchnišvili/Assfalg 1955 = Kekelidze 1955, 466–97; for the Arabic *Synaxaria*, see Sauget 1969, 127 and 247.

⁸³ *Ivir. georg.* 9, dated to 977 and co-commissioned by Euthymios’ father, John the Athonite; see Garitte 1966, 400–1 and Garitte 1964b, 183–5 with Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 99–115.

or Georgian), Euthymios could have been inspired in creating the set of subplots for his *Theodore of Edessa* and recompose it with inventively.

Thus, the character of Theodoulos is split into two personalities:

- (a) Theodosios the Stylite (who takes the name of the emperor in Theodoulos' story): like Theodoulos, Theodosios learns his true spiritual position by comparison with an "inferior" man in his eyes;

and

- (b) Ader/Athanasios the Sabaite: like Theodoulos, the socially prominent Ader must confront his wife in his flight from the secular world;

and Cornelius, together with the *ἐταίρις* with whom he associates, is also transformed into two characters:

- (a) the prostitute who, like Cornelius, is saved by performing a single act of charity in the story of Ader's wife (58,6–59,3);

and

- (b) Theodosios' brother, who, also like Cornelius to Theodoulos, is superior to Theodosios from a "heavenly" perspective.

All this must remain speculative. For it is ultimately impossible to know if we have discovered in Theodoulos a hypotext for part of *Theodore of Edessa*. Nevertheless, the reading offered above is, in our view, a very tempting one indeed.



A similarly tempting association can be made for the latter part in Theodore of Edessa's *Life*, which involves his debate with and conversion of the Jew at the court of king Mauiās in Baghdad (86,8–91,3). A Georgian manuscript, dated between 1034 and 1042, London, BL, Add. 11281, copied at the Georgian Monastery of the Holy Cross, near Jerusalem, and commissioned by the monastery's founder, Prokhore (d. 1066), whom we have encountered also previously, contains a text titled "The Life and Deeds of St John, Bishop of Edessa" (ff. 274v–285v).⁸⁴ Just like the *Passion* of Michael the Sabaite, John's *Life* is a fictional account, which was translated from Arabic sometime in the first half of the tenth century—John's name, as has been suggested, likely echoes a historical personality, a certain bishop John, addressee of Theodore Abū Qurrah's *Treatise on the Veneration of Icons*, composed in Arabic around the year 800.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ For the ms. see Wardrop 1913, 397–405 with Imnaishvili 1975; see also Chkhikvadze et al. 2018: 44–5 and Gippert 2016b. The text has been edited by Kekelitze (1913, 317–40 and 1961, 114–29). For discussions, see Lamoreaux 1999, Khairallah 2001, Rosenkranz 2004, 89–91, Lamoreaux 2009, and Labadie 2021 and, most recently, 2024 (with a French translation of the *Life*).

⁸⁵ See Dick 1986, 39–40 with Labadie 2024, 302–3. For the Arabic version, see Lamoreaux and Khairallah 2000.

The *Life* details a single episode in the biography of John: his debate with Phineas—a Jewish courtier, doctor, and a man learned in the Law—about the value of Christianity before the caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd (r. 786-809). Of course, John, like our Theodore, is victorious over his opponent, performing a series of miracles. Among them we find a miracle which is strongly reminiscent of the portrayal of Theodore. Phineas is temporarily deprived of, and then given back, his voice by John; indeed, by the end of the debate he converts to Christianity (chps. 13 and 19; Kekelitze 1914, 333 and 339–40), just like the Jew at Mauīas’ court, when confronted by Theodore. Moreover, after the final and most impressive miracle by John—the resurrection of the caliph’s daughter from the dead—, Hārūn al-Rashīd too is convinced of the validity of Christianity and eventually proceeds to do the following (ch. 18; Kekelitze 1914, 338–9):

Then, he [the caliph] ordered all hostilities to cease with the Romans. He also ordered for the Christians’ laws and all their customs to be made public, and for them to rejoice and gather for their services fearlessly and without hiding. He withdrew from Christians all taxes, burdens, and grievances for, in those days, nobody dared to denounce the hardships that befell Christians, because people feared for their blood and life. He ordered for churches to be built in all his realm and Abba John to be granted anything he desired.⁸⁶

An echo of this passage may exist in a scene in *Theodore of Edessa* (74) where Mauīas, after his miraculous cure by Theodore, proceeds to order that Orthodoxy be restored in the church of Edessa, saying to the bishop: “everything will be done according to your will”.⁸⁷

Could it be that Hārūn al-Rashīd, as depicted in the *Life* of John of Edessa, namely ready to change his mind in favor of the Christian bishop and, in a sense, at the very brink of conversion, was the one who provided some inspiration for Mauīas’ baptism in Euthymios’ *Theodore of Edessa*?⁸⁸ Could it also be that Phineas is echoed in the converted Jew at Mauīas’ court? And, ultimately, is John “*of Edessa*”—a figure likely linked, in the Arabic tradition at least, with Theodore

⁸⁶ Translation by Damien Labadie (2021, 53).

⁸⁷ The full passage (74) reads: “... the king ... immediately wrote to the administrators of Coele Syria and Mesopotamia that all the property of the church of Edessa be returned to it and that those among the so-called heretics who want to be part of the universal church be pardoned, while those who insist on their false views be punished: the Manicheans should have their tongues cut out and the Nestorians as well as Eutyches’ followers should be expelled from the city, and their temples should be demolished. So as to be certain about the outcome, he also sent another emir, ordering him to carry out exactly what he had written. And he said to the bishop: ‘Here, I have put in effect whatever you requested. Send your disciples along with the newly appointed emir, and *everything will be done according to your will* [our italics]’”.

⁸⁸ The same has been proposed in Signes Codoñer 2006, 101–2.

Abū Qurrah—the inspiration for Euthymios’ Theodore “*of Edessa*”? Theodore Abū Qurrah, the alleged double of our Theodore, figures prominently, let us bear in mind, in the wider literature of inter-faith dialogues that was produced in Arabic in the long aftermath of the Islamic conquests of Syro-Palestine, a tradition to which the *Life* of John of Edessa also belongs.⁸⁹ Finally, to add one more textual tradition into our picture, many of the Greek texts attributed in Byzantine manuscripts to Theodore Abū Qurrah are also of a dialogical character, with a Christian debating Muslims, Jews, heretics, and non-believers on matters of faith—though, we should acknowledge, such theological treatises never narrate a conversion scene, but simply record the dialogical exchange.⁹⁰

For all we know, Euthymios may have been aware (through Greek or Georgian texts that are now lost?) of legends about Theodore Abū Qurrah victoriously defending the superiority of Christianity in debate, and he may have even read some of the Greek dialogical texts attributed to Abū Qurrah—though no manuscripts of the latter’s Greek works can be linked to Ivron, as far as we can tell, and also the Georgian translations of Abū Qurrah’s corpus apparently post-date Euthymios.⁹¹ We cannot know for sure. Given, however, the origins of the single Georgian manuscript that transmits the *Life* of John of Edessa, the possibility that Euthymios knew this particular text at the very least is certainly strong, making a positive response to the speculative questions raised at the beginning of the previous paragraph possible.⁹²



Other textual parallels to the theme of conversion, materialized in the fully converted kings in *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and *Theodore of Edessa*, run even deeper—making it ultimately impossible to pin down the exact traffic and intensity of influence in this particular textual refraction.

Thus, the same scenario of the non-Christian king, ready to shift his allegiance toward the Christian leader in John of Edessa’s portrayal of Hārūn al-Rashīd, ex-

⁸⁹ On this genre of Arabic, essentially Christian apologetic texts, to which also the original *Life* of John of Edessa belonged, see Griffith 1999 (esp. pp. 38–48 on Theodore Abū Qurrah); see also Peeters 1930: 94–7 and Dick 1999, Swanson 2003 (on the caliph al-Ma’mūn in relation to Abū Qurrah), Lamoreaux 2005, 211, and Binggeli 2010, 97–8 (as Binggeli rightly remarks [p. 98]: “at least, the texts [i.e. texts in the relevant literature of disputation composed by Christians in Islamic settings] are trying to convey the idea that one of these debates could eventually lead to the conversion of the caliph himself”). See also Tamcke 2007 and Labadie 2024, 303–7.

⁹⁰ For these texts, see Glei and Khoury 1995, 47–58 and 85–165 with Swanson 2003 and Lamoreaux 2005, xxix–xxx and 211–54. See also Nasrallah 1987, 104–34, and Graf 1947, 7–26.

⁹¹ See Datiashvili 1980; see also D’Agostino 2018, 84.

⁹² Paul Peeters already in 1930 (1930, 85–91) had brought the *Life* of John of Edessa into conversation with the *Passion* of Michael in order to conclude that they both come from and reflect the same sociohistorical Arabic-speaking Melkite 9th-c. context. Cf. also Lamoreaux 2002: 29.

ists also among one further text which Euthymios certainly had read. The aforementioned historical preface in *Barlaam and Ioasaph* regarding the early Christian history of India (1,1–39)—imitated in Theodore’s *Life* by using George the Monk—was itself based directly on passages from an earlier text. This was the *Acts* of the Apostle Thomas by Symeon Metaphrastes (CANT 248; BHG 1835), a text also copied by Theophanes in Iviron in 1011 (see the entry in 2.2 above). In its concluding section, the king “of the Indians”—just like Hārūn al-Rashīd amazed with the resurrection of his daughter—seeks the help of the martyred Thomas and is granted the favor of a miracle, performed on his son by means of “dust” that had come into contact with the holy body of the Apostle. The king, we read, receives “a measured light of recognition”, while earlier he had rejected it, having ordered the death of the Apostle (section 18; ed. Ivanov). No conversion as such is narrated in the story, yet still a foreign king comes again close to Christianity and the possibility of conversion is left open. Has Euthymios found here another cue for his story?

One further text can be added to this mix: the fictive *Life* of Andrew the Holy Fool (BHG 117), whose composition has been rather convincingly dated and located to mid-tenth-century Constantinople.⁹³ The *Life* became very popular, with over 100 manuscript witnesses containing the total or excerpts of the text, and with translations into Slavic and, notably, into Georgian. The latter, the earliest one, was produced certainly before 1040, and some debate exists if it was actually made by Euthymios himself or, at least, someone in his environment.⁹⁴ Though we cannot solve this issue here, we have identified a few phrases in Andrew’s *Life* which are likely echoed in four passages of Theodore’s *Life*.⁹⁵ All are minor parallels, yet the two works possibly communicate in one crucial element of religious fantasy, which is at issue for us here. Namely, at some point within his story, Andrew’s *Vision* of the end of times is narrated (lines 3805–4131). In it, we encounter the following passage (3913–20; edition and translation by Rydén, the latter slightly modified):

⁹³ The best discussion of the text (including its dating and transmission) remains the introduction in Rydén 1995a and 1995b. See also Ludwig 1997, 220–90, Ivanov 2006, 156–68, Angelidi 2015, and Cesaretti 2016.

⁹⁴ Rydén 1995a, 186–9; as Lennart Rydén has further suggested, the long version of the Greek *Life* reflected in the Georgian translation “possibly ... itself also originates from Mouth Athos”.

⁹⁵ **24,16:** λίαν δυσειδής και δυσώδης: cf. Vita Andreae sali 34 (2325) δυσβάτους τόπους και λίαν δυσειδείς και δυσώδεις. **65,8:** βλοσυρῷ ἀτενίσας ὁμματι: Vita Andreae sali 7 (354) ὁξέως εἰς αὐτὸν ἀτενίζοντα βλοσυρῷ τῷ ὁμματι. **67,1:** περιβεβλημένους στολὰς ἀστρατημόρφους: Vita Andreae sali 22 (1765–1767) οἱ πόδες ὑποδεδεμένοι ἀστραπομόρφοις ὑποδήμασι, τὰ ἱμάτια ποικίλα ὡς ἀπὸ ἡλιακῆς ἀκτίνος ἢ ὡς ἀπὸ ἀστραπομόρφου ἀκτίνος και ἀστρατῆς κατεσκευασμένα. **86,3:** κλίνει δὲ γόνυ καρδίας και σώματος: Vita Andreae sali 36 (4341–4342) κλινόμεν τὸ γόνυ τῆς ψυχῆς και τοῦ σώματος και τῆς καρδίας και τοῦ πνεύματος.

Παρελεύσεται δὲ καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ σκήπτρον, καὶ ἐλεύσεται σκήπτρον ἕτερον ἀπὸ Ἀραβίας <ὅς βασιλεύσει>, ὡς φασι, χρόνον ἕνα. Καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς βασιλείας αὐτοῦ ἐνωθήσεται τοῦ τιμίου καὶ ζωοποιοῦ Ξύλου τὰ ἅγια τμήματα εἰς ἓν νέυσει τοῦ ἀοράτου Θεοῦ καὶ δοθήσεται τῷ βασιλεῖ. Καὶ αὐτὸς γενόμενος ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἐν τόπῳ οὗ ἔστησαν οἱ πόδες Χριστοῦ τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν οικείαις χερσὶν αὐτοῦ παραθήσει ἐκεῖ τὸ τίμιον Ξύλον καὶ τὸ τῆς βασιλείας διάδημα. Παραδώσει δὲ Κυρίῳ τῷ Θεῷ σὺν τούτοις καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ.

But this reign will also come to an end, and there will come from Arabia another King who will rule one year, as they say. In his reign, the holy pieces of the precious and life-giving Wood will be united and restored into one at the instigation of the invisible God and shall be given to the King. And he will go to Jerusalem, to a place where the feet of Christ our true God had trodden, and with his own hands he shall deposit there the precious Wood and the royal diadem. With them he will surrender also his soul to the Lord God.

The narrative, which presents the last Christian King of the *eschata*, has antecedents in Byzantine apocalyptic literature, with the exception, as noted by Rydén (1995a, 350; also 1974), of a single detail: the King is “from Arabia”. Could it be that this eschatological ruler, who unites the pieces of the Holy Cross and dies in Jerusalem, inspired or, so to speak, legitimized further Euthymios’ Christian King John, a martyr in Baghdad?

Wholesale Narrative Quotations

With the *Acts* of Thomas and the *Life* of Andrew the Fool, we have veered somewhat far in the search of the intertexts and textual nesting in *Theodore of Edessa*. We are on much firmer intertextual ground, when we look at other aspects of the Theodore’s story. When one, that is, examines more closely how Euthymios depicts various stages and events within Theodore’s biography, one realizes that many of these are constructed by means of relatively extensive, slightly reworked quotations taken from other, earlier hagiographical Greek texts, mainly from the corpus of Symeon Metaphrastes’ *Menologion*, a corpus with which Euthymios was closely engaged, as we can glean both from the Metaphrastic texts he did translate into Georgian and the Metaphrastic texts preserved in the hagiographical manuscripts copied by his close associate Theophanes—the just mentioned *Acts* of Thomas included.

The very first words and very first biographical bits of *Theodore of Edessa* are nothing other than borrowings from a text in the Metaphrastic tradition (though not by Metaphrastes), which has been mentioned several times above: the *Life* of Symeon the Stylite the Younger (liturgical date: May 24). The text

(BHG 1690), essentially a new version of the *Life* of Symeon, produced in a Metaphrastic style, was composed, as our readers already know, by Nikephoros Ouranos, in Antioch, sometime during the beginning of the first decade of the eleventh century. It was a text available at Iviron, as it was revised in a version preserved in manuscript **A** of *Theodore of Edessa*, dated to 1023 and copied by Theophanes.⁹⁶

Most of what transpires at the onset of Euthymios' *Theodore of Edessa*—from the initial “Blessed be God! = Εὐλογητὸς ὁ Θεός!” (1,1) to the fact that Theodore is literally a “gift from God” (1,4) and a subject that exceeds the capacity of the writer (1,5), to his mother who is resistant to marriage (2,1) and has a vision that announces the birth of the protagonist (3,2), to the conception of the child (3,3), to the miraculous vision of Theodore himself (5,1) and, then, his emotionally intense entrance into the Church of the *Anastasis* in Jerusalem (8)—replicates almost verbatim events narrated early on in Nikephoros' *Life* of Symeon. It is hard not to wonder, additionally, if the supposed name of Theodore's father, namely Symeon, is inspired by or hints at Symeon *Thaumastorites*, the protagonist of the text which offers the main intertext of this part of *Theodore of Edessa* (Symeon's own father in Ouranos' text is called John, and “comes from Edessa”).⁹⁷ Similarly, Theodore's mother's name **Maria** is also not far from Symeon's **Martha**.⁹⁸

Then, parts of the description of Theodore's supreme education (6,1–6,2) combine words from the *Life* of Alexios the Man of God (a story found also in manuscript **A**)(chaps. 2 and 6) and—as one might expect in this discursive situation in a Byzantine context—Gregory of Nazianzus' funeral eulogy for Basil the Great (Or. 43,12), another text which Euthymios had translated into Georgian (already in 977, the date of the earliest dated manuscript with Euthymian translations).⁹⁹

From chapter 9 onwards, Euthymios switches narrative hypotexts and turns to Metaphrastes' *Menologion*—with the exception of the aforementioned excursus based on George the Monk's *Chronicle* (21,2–23), itself modeled neverthe-

⁹⁶ On the Metaphrastic style of Ouranos, see Simelidis 2020, 127 and 142, with Van Den Ven 1962, 1:34* and Krausmüller 2001–2002.

⁹⁷ The wording, in the relevant passage, is taken up word for word; cf. “Ἀνὴρ τις, οὐ πολλοῖς ἐμπροσθεν χρόνοις, ἐξ' Ἐδέσης ὀρμώμενος, ὄνομα Συμεών (2,1)” with “Ἀνὴρ τις, ὀλίγοις ἐμπροσθεν χρόνοις, ἐξ' Ἐδέσης ὀρμώμενος, νέαν ἔτι τὴν ἡλικίαν ἀγων, ὄνομα Ἰωάννης” (Nic. Uran. *Vita Sym. Styl. iun.* 4).

⁹⁸ Notably, as far as we could tell, Euthymios does not use Ouranos' text as an intertext for *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, which might be one further indication that *Theodore of Edessa* follows chronologically Euthymios' other large composition in Greek.

⁹⁹ For the specific quotations from the *Life* of Symeon the Stylite, Gregory of Nazianzus, as well as the texts mentioned in what follows, see the *app. font.* of the edition of version **β** of *Theodore of Edessa*. For Euthymios' translation of Gregory's *Funeral Oration*, see the entry on the year 977 in 2.2 above.

less to similar historiographical prefaces in Metaphrastes.¹⁰⁰ Below is a table of these underlying Metaphrastic textual blocks again appropriated with only some minor variation. We indicate, as above, with a single star (*) all hagiographies which can be found among *both* Euthymios' Georgian translations *and* Greek manuscripts in his environment; and we use a double star (**), if a relevant Greek text (again regardless of the exact version) is included in one of the hagiographical collections copied by Theophanes but no Georgian rendition by Euthymios (as far as we know) is attested.

<i>Theodore of Edessa</i>	Texts from Symeon Metaphrastes' <i>Menologion</i>
Theodore's assumption of the monastic habit (9–10)	<i>Life</i> of Daniel the Stylite (4–5) (Dec. 11; BHG 490)
Theodore's ascetic conduct and progress in virtue I (11,1)	<i>Passion</i> of Anastasios the Persian (5) (Jan. 22; BHG 85)
Theodore's emulation of Abbot John (11,2)	<i>Life</i> of Gregory of Agrigento** (PG 116, 200, 10–13 and 217, 40–42) (Nov. 24; BHG 708)
Theodore's ascetic conduct and progress in virtue II (11,2–11,3), his becoming the right hand of Abbot John (12,1–13,1), his advancement to the eremitic life (13,3), followed by the appointment of another Sabaite to the abbacy (14,2), and his life as a hermit I (15,1–15,2)	<i>Life</i> of Alypios** the Stylite (3–5, 11, and 13–14) (Nov. 26; BHG 64)
Theodore's life as a hermit II (16–17,1)	<i>Life</i> of Eusebia/Xene (9–10) (Jan. 27; BHG 634)
Theodore's allure to his disciples and transitional paragraph to the <i>Passion</i> of Michael (18,1–18,2)	again, <i>Life</i> of Alypios** the Stylite (20–21)
Michael's appearance and Theodore's support of him (19,1–19,2)	<i>Life</i> of John the Theologian* (5) (Sep. 26; BHG 919–919b)
various moments in Michael's <i>Passion</i> story (24,9, 24,13, 24,17–24,18, 25,2–25,3, 25,6–25,8, 29,1)	again, <i>Passion</i> of Anastasios the Persian (10, 12–13, 23, 9–10, 13)
Michael's final moments, including his final prayer (30,2–32,1)	<i>Passion</i> of Tryphon (15–16) (Feb. 1; BHG 1857)

¹⁰⁰ See, for comparison, the prefatory treatment that Metaphrastes reserves for an Edessan story, that of Euphemia and the Goth, concerning the Huns; see Messis and Papaioannou 2013, 38–9.

<i>Theodore of Edessa</i> (cont.)	Texts from Symeon Metaphrastes' <i>Menologion</i> (cont.)
Theodore's virtues I (37,1)	<i>Life</i> of Melania (18) (Dec. 31; BHG 1242); bits of it also later in 63,1 and 63,2
Theodore's virtues II (37,2)	<i>Life</i> of Timothy (6) (Jan. 22; BHG 1848)
Theodore's ordination, emotional departure from the Lavra and then Jerusalem, and arrival in Edessa; also, the preface in his first sermon and the reaction of the people to his sermon (42,2–42,3, 42,5, 42,7–43,1, 45,1, 45,5, 46,2–46,3, and 53,1)	<i>Life</i> of John Chrysostom (15, 11, 16, 17, 16, 17, and 26) (Nov. 13; BHG 875); the phrases from sections 17 and 26 are repeated twice: in 45,5 and 53,1, and in 53,1 and 68,5, respectively
	also <i>Life</i> of Ioannikios of Bithynia (8) (Nov. 4; BHG 937) for 43,1 (repeated in 85,5)
Theodore's virtues as bishop (68,3–68,4), and the heretics become envious (68,5)	again, <i>Life</i> of John Chrysostom (4, 19, and 26)
the heretics' attack on Theodore (69)	<i>Miracle</i> of Michael the Archangel* at Chonae (6–7) (Sept. 6; BHG 1284)
Theodore commences his trip to Babylon and heals the Persian king (70,2, 71,5–71,6)	again, <i>Life</i> of Daniel the Stylite (9 [twice] and 13)
Theodore's ritual of farewell to Constantinople (85,5)	<i>Life</i> of Ioannikios of Bithynia (8) (see also above for a similar scene in 43,1)
Theodore bids his final farewell to the Edessenes (114,2)	<i>Life</i> of Ioannikios of Bithynia (57; toward the conclusion of the <i>Life</i>)
Theodore's death and burial (115,1–115,3)	again, <i>Life</i> of John Chrysostom (60–1; again, from the conclusion of the <i>Life</i>)

Various aspects of detail in the above table could be discussed—and some will emerge as we proceed. For our purposes here, it may suffice to bring up once more a single obvious dimension. This particular kind of nesting of selections from various texts from mainly Metaphrastic hagiography in building the narrative skeleton in a saint's biography has its closest parallel, as far as the Greek literary tradition is concerned, in Euthymios' *Barlaam and Ioasaph*. There too, size-

able segments from texts from the *Menologion* are employed to carry the story forward and, also, create its content.¹⁰¹

Borrowings as Style

Beyond the macro-level of discursive and narrative borrowings and refractions, intertexts play one last fundamental role in Euthymios' writing in Greek. On the micro-level of nesting, that is, again Metaphrastic texts, peppered however also with biblical and other patristic and monastic intertexts—a full list regarding the *Life* of Theodore is given in the relevant *Index* in Vol. II—provide not only much of the content of *Theodore of Edessa*, but also a primary tool for the main language, style, or register of expression, the textual *idiom* of the text as a whole.

This latter form of intertextuality is not restricted to various parts or specific scenes, but is omnipresent, and we encounter it, of course, in a similar fashion in *Barlaam and Ioasaph* as well (a look at the relevant apparatus and Index of, in this case, Volk's edition would suffice to prove the point).¹⁰² For Euthymios was clearly capable of—or, to put it better, he pursued with extraordinary dexterity—the use of a consistent rhetorical style, also deeply interlaced with embedded quotation and allusion.¹⁰³

Let us make three observations in this regard.

First, we should note that the horizon of these intertexts in both Euthymian Greek compositions is purely Christian in origin.¹⁰⁴ Any phraseology that could ultimately be traced to a pre-Byzantine, non-Christian, *Hellenic* text, finds its place in Euthymios' Greek only after having been appropriated by his Greek models.¹⁰⁵ Euthymios' Greek rhetoric, in other words, though not devoid in learning (even “secular” learning), is devoid of any explicit Hellenism, and one might assume that this was an emphasis in the kind of education he had received.¹⁰⁶ Similar absence of direct Hellenism is after all discernible also in Eu-

¹⁰¹ Cf. 1.3 above with Högel 2019, 361–4 (p. 362 offers a list of 15 Metaphrastic texts used for *Barlaam and Ioasaph* “which stand out ... in terms of amount of quotations but also thematic weight”); also Högel *forthcoming*.

¹⁰² Cf. again Högel 2019, 362–4.

¹⁰³ Indeed, the deeply intertextual nature of Euthymios' style of Greek makes his Greek morphology and syntax resistant to any easy description from a linguistic perspective, and we have refrained from providing such a description in the present volume; a proper such analysis would have required a thorough engagement with other texts (especially by Metaphrastes) which surpasses the bounds of our endeavor.

¹⁰⁴ Volk (2009, 98) is of a different opinion in this regard.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. 58,5 (Achilles Tatius through Metaphrastes), 59,3 (Demosthenes through, likely, Metaphrastes) and 101,1 (Aelius Aristides through Gregory of Nazianzus) and the relevant apparatus for examples.

¹⁰⁶ For “secular” learning in *Theodore of Edessa*, see his rudimentary dictionary and medical knowledge; cf. the *app. font.* in 81,6 and 95,2 with similarities to *Suda* entries and 71,1 with a direct citation of Paul of Aegina.

thymios' *Georgian* discourse, if we judge from the Greek texts he chose to translate.¹⁰⁷

Secondly, Metaphrastic texts form the main bulk of his intertextual horizon also on this micro-level. Smaller bits from the *Menologion*, together with the fewer longer quotations detailed in the table above, comprise the aforementioned (1.3 [text and note 18]) total of nearly 450 Metaphrastic intertextual instances in *Theodore of Edessa*, and more than 390 recorded in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*.

We can make a further distinction among these smaller intertexts. There are small phrases, which can reach the size of a couple of clauses, from a *specific* Metaphrastic text which Euthymios either appropriates verbatim or (in the cases of slightly longer adoptions) reworks and weaves into his text. Then, there are common locutions (comprised of only a few words, sometimes only a pair) which appear in one or several Metaphrastic texts but often also in the intertexts of the latter or other related texts, and whose precise origin in Euthymios' text cannot therefore be determined with certainty.

In many of the latter instances, if one were to look at them in isolation, one would rightfully claim that Euthymios adopted them from some other text and not from Metaphrastes or even that they are not borrowings at all. Yet the impressive frequency with which a locution is found in the *Life* of Theodore (and/or *Barlaam and Ioasaph*) as well as in one or several Metaphrastic texts suggests that the latter were, usually, the most immediate source. In this respect it is important to note that, while in the case of longer quotations, whether narrative or discursive, *Theodore of Edessa* and *Barlaam and Ioasaph* do not overlap (with only few exceptions, to which we shall return below), in relation to smaller Metaphrastic borrowings, the two texts share an astounding number, which certainly exceeds 150 instances. The Metaphrastic texts thus operated almost as an instinctive recourse for Euthymios, a stock of phrases that provided discursive solace, as it were, a reliable matrix of expression.

Thirdly—and in this regard our analysis invites more detail—, an interesting further feature, observed also in relation to Metaphrastic small-scale borrowings, is that they often interrupt a longer quotation from another (usually even an-

¹⁰⁷ Among them, the closest in exposure to Hellenism (again thoroughly filtered through its Christian appropriation) is a work, popular in 10th- and 11th-c. Constantinople, Pseudo-Nonnos' commentaries on four of Gregory of Nazianzus' *Orations* (CPG 3011). The Euthymian translation survives only in a somewhat fragmented fashion, suggesting that he worked on the commentaries of *Orations* 39 (on the Epiphany) and 43 (*Funeral Oration* for Basil); see Otkhmezuri 2002, xix–xxii; cf. also Coulie 1998, 117–8.

other Metaphrastic) text.¹⁰⁸ This use of intertextuality is again widespread in Euthymios' Greek texts.

The composition of Theodore's *Chapters* is instructive in this regard. That text belonged to a different genre than the *Life*, structured as it was around brief, independent paragraphs, each elaborating on a single idea related to ascetic discipline. Here too Euthymios depended on earlier texts for his creation. Take the first paragraph of the *Chapters*, which is typical of what happens in the rest of the text. The three quotes that Euthymios anthologized for *Chapter* 1, taken from Evagrius' collection of pithy statements in his *Παραίνεσις πρὸς μοναχούς*, are the following (CPG 2454; sections 27, 28, and 30 = PG 79: 1240,6-7, 1240,1, and 1237,53-56):

- Εἰ γὰρ συνετάξω τῷ Χριστῷ, τήρει τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ.

- Ὁ παρὰ φύσιν βιών, οὐ τηρεῖ ἐντολὰς Θεοῦ.

-(a) Οὐδὲν μέγα, εἰ γινόμεθα δίκαιοι· (b) ὁ γὰρ ἐκτίσθημεν ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ πρῶτον, «καλοὶ λίαν», τοῦτο γενησόμεθα.

If you have joined Christ, keep His commandments.

The one who lives contrary to nature, does not keep God's commandments.

(a) It is nothing great, if we become righteous; (b) for we shall become what we were created by God originally, namely "very good" [cf. Genesis 1:31].

Here is Euthymios' version (in a provisional edition, based on manuscripts **A**, i.e. version **β**, and **B**, **N**, and **K**, i.e. version **α**; we give preference to version **β**):

Ἐπειδὴ¹⁰⁹ Θεοῦ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ χάριτι, ἀποταξάμενοι τῷ σατανᾷ καὶ τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ, τῷ Χριστῷ συνεταξάμεθα, ἐν τε τῷ λουτρῷ τῆς παλιγενεσίας καὶ νῦν αὖθις διὰ τοῦ μοναδικοῦ ἐπαγγέλματος, τηρήσωμεν αὐτοῦ τὰς ἐντολὰς· τοῦτο γὰρ ἡμᾶς ἀπαιτεῖ, οὐ μόνον τὸ διπλοῦν ἐπάγγελμα, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡ φυσικὴ ὀφειλή, καθ' ἣν κτισθέντες ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ πρῶτως¹¹⁰ «καλοὶ λίαν», τοῦτο καὶ¹¹¹ εἶναι ὀφείλομεν. Κἂν γὰρ ἡ ἁμαρτία, ἐπεισελθοῦσα ἐξ ἀπροσεξίας ἡμετέρας, τὸ παραφύσιν παρεισήγαγεν, ἀλλὰ πάλιν ἀνεκλήθημεν διὰ σπλάγχχνα ἐλέους Θεοῦ ἡμῶν, καὶ ἀνεκαινίσθημεν τῷ πάθει τοῦ ἀπαθοῦς, τιμῆς τὲ ἡγοράσθημεν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ,

¹⁰⁸ For instance, when Theodore first encounters the cathedral of Edessa during his first trip as its bishop, a narrative which is largely based on Metaphrastes' *Life* John Chrysostom, Euthymios employs a short phrase from a similar scene in Metaphrastes' *Acts* of John the Apostle; Cf. 45,2 ἐκκλησίαν ... εἰς κάλλος τε καὶ μέγεθος εὖ ἔχουσιν with Sym. Met. *Commentarius in apostolum Ioannem* (BHG 919-919b) ὁ τούτου ναὸς ἱδρυται, πρὸς τε κάλλος καὶ μέγεθος εὖ ἔχων. The translation of the Georgian *Passion* of Michael is equally embellished with Metaphrastic quotations.

¹⁰⁹ ἐπειδὴπερ **α**

¹¹⁰ πρῶτον **K**

¹¹¹ καὶ om. **B**

λυτρωθέντες τῆς ἀρχαίας παραβάσεως πατροπαραδότου. Λοιπόν, εἰ **γενόμεθα δίκαιοι, οὐδὲν μέγα** · ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον τὸ ἐκπεσεῖν δικαιοσύνης, ἔλεινόν καὶ καταγνώσεως ἄξιον.

Since by the grace of the good God with have renounced Satan and his works, and have **joined Christ**, both during the washing of regeneration and now again through our profession as monks, let us **keep His commandments** [Evagrius 27]. For this is a demand placed upon us not only by our double profession, but also by our natural debt, according to which, since **we were created by God originally to be “very good”, that is what** we also must be [Evagrius 30b]. And even if sin, which intruded through our inattention, introduced a state of being **contrary to nature** [Evagrius 28], yet again we were summoned back through the tender mercy of our God, and we were made new again by the passion of the passionless One, and we were bought with a price by the blood of our Christ, redeemed from our ancient fall inherited from our fathers. Therefore, **if we were to become righteous**, this would be **nothing great** [Evagrius 30a]; rather, to fall from righteousness, that is pitiable and worthy of castigation.

The quotes from Evagrius (in bold letters above) have been slightly rearranged and thoroughly interwoven and reinterpreted into Theodore’s *Chapter*.

To this latter effect, Euthymios has employed a series of other quotations. Here is the same passage with these further borrowings (placed in bold and in italics):

Ἐπειδὴ **Θεοῦ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ χάριτι** [cf. Bas. Caes. e.g. De fide (Prologus 8) PG 31:676,38],

ἀποταξάμενοι τῷ σατανᾷ καὶ τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ, τῷ Χριστῷ συνεταξάμεθα [cf. Const. Apost. 7,41 Ἀπαγγελλέτω οὖν ὁ βαπτιζόμενος ἐν τῷ ἀποτάσσεισθαι: “Ἀποτάσσομαι τῷ σατανᾷ καὶ τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ ...” Μετὰ δὲ τὴν ἀποταγὴν συντασσόμενος λεγέτω, ὅτι: “Καὶ συντάσσομαι τῷ Χριστῷ” etc.],

ἐν τε τῷ λουτρῷ τῆς παλιγγενεσίας [Tit. 3,5 διὰ λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας]

καὶ νῦν αὖθις διὰ τοῦ **μοναδικοῦ ἐπαγγέλματος** [a common expression, e.g. in Theodore the Studite],

τηρήσωμεν αὐτοῦ τὰς ἐντολάς [Evagrius 27].

τοῦτο γὰρ ἡμᾶς ἀπαιτεῖ, οὐ μόνον τὸ διπλοῦν ἐπάγγελμα, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡ **φυσικὴ ὀφειλὴ** [cf. *Barlaam and Ioasaph* 39,103–4 τὴν ὀφειλὴν ... τῆς φύσεως, directly from Sym. Met. *Vita Pauli Thebaei* 16],

καθ’ ἣν **κτισθέντες ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ πρῶτως καλοὶ λίαν**, τοῦτο καὶ εἶναι ὀφειλομέν [Evagrius 30b].

Κἂν γὰρ ἡ ἁμαρτία, ἐπεισελθοῦσα ἐξ ἀπροσεξίας ἡμετέρας [cf. *Barlaam and Ioasaph* 19,62–8 Πίστευε μὴ οὐσίαν τινὰ εἶναι τοῦ κακοῦ ... ἀλλ' ἡμέτερον ἔργον τοῦτο καὶ τοῦ διαβόλου, ἐκ τῆς ἡμετέρας ἀπροσεξίας ἐπεισελθὼν ἡμῖν διὰ τὸ αὐτεξουσίους ἡμᾶς γεγενῆσθαι καὶ αὐτοπροαιρέτῳ βουλήσει ἐκλέγεσθαι εἴτε τὸ ἀγαθὸν εἴτε τὸ φαῦλον, based on Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or.* 40,45 Πίστευε, μὴ οὐσίαν εἶναι τινὰ τοῦ κακοῦ ... ἀλλ' ἡμέτερον ἔργον εἶναι τοῦτο καὶ τοῦ πονηροῦ, ἐκ τῆς ἀπροσεξίας ἐπεισελθὼν ἡμῖν, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ τοῦ κτίσαντος],

τὸ παραφύσιν [Evagrius 28] παρεισήγαγεν,

ἀλλὰ πάλιν ἀνεκλήθημεν διὰ σπλάγχνα ἐλέους Θεοῦ ἡμῶν [cf. *Barlaam and Ioasaph* 16,132–3 καὶ ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου πρὸς ζωὴν ἀνακλήθημεν διὰ σπλάγχνα ἐλέους Θεοῦ ἡμῶν, based on Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or.* 45,12 ἔδει πάλιν ἀνακληθῆναι, καὶ πρὸς τὸ ἀρχαῖον ἐπαναχθῆναι, διὰ σπλάγχνα ἐλέους Θεοῦ Πατρὸς ἡμῶν with *Luc.* 1,78 (= *Odes* 9,78) διὰ σπλάγχνα ἐλέους Θεοῦ ἡμῶν, a phrase itself used several times further in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*: 11,128–9; 19,49; 20,14–5; 32,85–6; 32,140]

καὶ ἀνεκαινίσθημεν τῷ πάθει τοῦ ἀπαθοῦς [frequent in Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orations* 5,9, 17,2, 30,5, and 39,13 echoed also in *Barlaam and Ioasaph* 34,105 πάθεσιν ὁμιλήσας ὁ ἀπαθής and 39,51–2 ἔπαθεν ὁ ἀπαθής],

τιμῆς τὴν ἡγοράσθημεν [I Cor. 6,20 ἡγοράσθητε γὰρ τιμῆς]

τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ [Eph. 2,13 ἐγενήθητε ... ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ],

λυτρωθέντες τῆς ἀρχαίας παραβάσεως [a common expression] πατροπαραδότου [I Petr. 1,18 ἐλυτρώθητε ἐκ τῆς ματαίας ὑμῶν ἀναστροφῆς πατροπαραδότου].

Λοιπόν, εἰ γενόμεθα δίκαιοι, οὐδὲν μέγα [Evagrius 30a].

ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον τὸ ἐκπεσεῖν δικαιοσύνης [a common expression, especially in John Chrysostom], ἐλεεινὸν καὶ καταγνώσεως ἄξιον [a common expression].

Quotes from the Bible and Gregory of Nazianzus (already used in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*), and further allusions to common Christian discourse (including a notion again already borrowed from Symeon Metaphrastes in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*), are used to express in a novel perspective the nucleus of an idea found in the three relatively distinct Evagrian maxims, now jointly read. With a new layer of borrowings Euthymios thus gives new form to the substance provided by a former set of anthologized quotations.

Such magisterial weaving of textual components is on display throughout *Theodore of Edessa*. The prefatory paragraph of the *Life*, a place where Byzantine rhetoricians and writers often would put on a show of their skill, is another fine specimen of this:

Base Intertext: Nikephoros Ouranos, <i>Life of Symeon</i> <i>Thaumastorites</i>	Additional Intertexts	<i>Theodore of Edessa</i> β, Preface
1 <u>Εὐλογητὸς ὁ Θεός!</u>	Greg. Nyss. De vita Gregorii Thaumaturgi, a Sym. Met. in menologium inserta (Nov. 17; BHG 715), 17,23-18,25 (ed. Heil) Εἰς Θεὸς Λόγου ζώντος ... Πατὴρ Υἱοῦ μονογενοῦς. Εἰς Κύριος ... Θεὸς ἐκ Θεοῦ ... σοφία τῆς τῶν ὄλων συστάσεως περιεκτική, καὶ δύναμις τῆς ὄλης κτίσεως ποιητική, ... Καὶ ἐν Πνεῦμα Ἅγιον, ἐκ Θεοῦ τὴν ὑπαρξίν ἔχον· καὶ δι' Υἱοῦ πεφηνός, δηλαδὴ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις. ... Τριάς τελεία, δόξη καὶ αἰδιότῃ καὶ βασιλείᾳ μὴ μεριζομένη, μηδὲ ἀπαλλοτριουμένη cf. Barlaam et Ioasaph 7,7-9 ἕνα θεὸν γινώσκω ... ἐν μιᾷ δόξῃ καὶ βασιλείᾳ μὴ μεριζομένη Bas. Caes. De fide, PG 31,465,41-42 τὸ δεσποτικὸν ἀξίωμα, ἡ φυσικὴ ἀγαθότης Ps.-Greg. Nyss. Liber de cognitione dei, PG 130,313 καὶ δημιουργόν, καὶ προνοητήν, καὶ συνοχέα. cf. Barlaam et Ioasaph 7,97 δημιουργόν τοῦ παντός καὶ συνοχέα et 18,4 δημιουργόν μὲν πάντων καὶ συνοχέα τὸν Θεὸν Dan. 2,21 διδούς σοφοῖς σοφίαν καὶ σύνεσιν cf. Nicet. Dav. Paphl. Εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν μεγαλομάρτυρα ... Ἀναστασίαν (372,39-42) (Oct. 28; BHG 78) ... ἣν ἀγγέλων ὕμνοῦσι στρατιαί, πᾶσαι τῶν οὐρανῶν δυνάμεις ἐπαινοῦσιν; cf. Ps.-Sophr. Hieros. Vita Mariae Aegyptiacae (a Sym.	1.1 Εὐλογητὸς ὁ Θεός, ὁ Πατὴρ ὁ παντοκράτωρ, ὁ ποιητὴς οὐρανοῦ τε καὶ γῆς, ὁράτων τε πάντων καὶ ἀοράτων. Εὐλογητὸς ὁ μονογενὴς Υἱὸς καὶ Λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὁ ἀνάρχος τε καὶ ἀχρόνως ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς γεννηθεὶς, Θεὸς ἐκ Θεοῦ, σοφία τῆς τῶν ὄλων συστάσεως περιεκτική, καὶ δύναμις, τῆς ὄλης κτίσεως ποιητική. Εὐλογητὸς ὁ Παράκλητος, τὸ Ἅγιον καὶ ζωοποιὸν Πνεῦμα, τὸ ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον, καὶ δι' Υἱοῦ πεφηνὸς τοῖς ἀνθρώποις. 1.2 Ἡ τρισυπόστατος καὶ ὁμοούσιος Ἁγία Τριάς, τελεία δόξη καὶ αἰδιότῃ, καὶ βασιλείᾳ μὴ μεριζομένη· ἡ ἀναρχος φύσις, τὸ δεσποτικὸν ἀξίωμα, ἡ φυσικὴ ἀγαθότης, ὁ ἐν Τριάδι εἰς Θεός· ὁ δημιουργὸς καὶ συνοχεὺς καὶ προνοητὴς πάντων· ὁ διδὼς αἰτοῦντι σοφίαν καὶ σύνεσιν, καὶ μὴ παρορῶν ἁμαρτάνοντα, ἀλλὰ θέμενος ἐπὶ σωτηρίᾳ μετάνοιαν· ὃν εὐλογοῦσιν οὐρανῶν αἱ δυνάμεις, καὶ δοξάζουσι στρατιαὶ τῶν ἀγγέλων. 1.3 Αὐτὸν οὖν τὸν ἀγαθὸν καὶ πανοικτίρμονα Θεὸν εὐχαριστῶ

Met. in menologium inserta)
(Apr. 1; BHG 1042; CPG 7675)
Proem. (3697,9) Ὅθεν *κἀγὼ*
φύβῳ τοῦ σιωπᾶν ...

cf. Barlaam et Ioasaph Prolog.

24 Τούτῳ *οὖν κἀγὼ* στοιχῶν τῷ
κανόνι ...

Bas. Caes. Constit. I 3 (1329 C
11-14) *εὐχαριστῶ σοι, εἰ καὶ μὴ*
τυγχάνω αὐτάρκης πρὸς
εὐχαριστίαν τῆς σῆς ἀνεξικακίας·
καὶ ὅταν τὰ δύο μέρη
ἀποπληρώσης τῆς δοξολογίας καὶ
ταπεινοφροσύνης, τότε λοιπὸν
αἵτησον ὃ ὀφείλεις αἰτῆσαι
cf. Barlaam et Ioasaph 34,45-47
εὐχαριστῶ σοι ὁ εὐτελής ἐγὼ καὶ
ἀνάξιος, εἰ καὶ μὴ ὑπάρχω
αὐτάρκης πρὸς δοξολογίαν τῆς
σῆς ἀγαθότητος.

Ps. 103,2 *ἐξομολόγησιν καὶ*
μεγαλοπρέπειαν ἐνεδύσω

Ps. 101,3 et 137,2 *ἐν ᾗ ἂν ἡμέρα*
ἐπικαλέσωμαί σε

Eph. 6,19 *ἵνα μοι δοθῇ λόγος ἐν*
ἀνοίξει τοῦ στόματός μου

cf. Sym. Met. Passio s.

Theodori stratelatae (Feb. 7;
BHG 1752) 6 *πηγασάτω ἐν ἐμοὶ*
τὸ σὸν ἀλλόμενον ὕδωρ καὶ
δοθῇτω μοι λόγος ἐν ἀνοίξει τοῦ
στόματος καὶ νοῦς καλῶς
ἡδρασμένος ἐν σοὶ τῷ
ἄκρογωνιαίῳ λίθῳ

cf. Barlaam et Ioasaph 34,57-60
πηγασάτω ἐν ἐμοὶ τὸ σὸν
ἀλλόμενον ὕδωρ δοθῇτω μοι
λόγος ἐν ἀνοίξει τοῦ στόματός
μου καὶ νοῦς καλῶς ἡδρασμένος
ἐν σοὶ τῷ ἄκρογωνιαίῳ λίθῳ

κἀγὼ ὁ εὐτελής καὶ ἀνάξιος, εἰ
καὶ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἱκανὸς πρὸς
δοξολογίαν τῆς αὐτοῦ
ἀγαθότητος.

Αὐτῷ προσφέρω *ἐξομολόγησιν*
καὶ μεγαλοπρέπειαν, καὶ δέομαι
ἐπακούσάι μου, *ἐν ᾗ ἂν ἡμέρα*
αὐτὸν ἐπικαλέσωμαι, καὶ δοῦναί
μοι λόγον, ἐν ἀνοίξει στόματός
μου, ὅπως διηγήσωμαι βίον
ἐνάρετον, καὶ ὠφελείας ψυχικῆς
πεπληρωμένον.

αὐτὸν γὰρ αὐτὸν εὐλογεῖν
ἄξιον καὶ εἰς μνήμην
ἑαυτοῦς τοῦ θείου Συμεῶν
καθιέντας, καὶ τὰ κατ'
αὐτὸν ἤδη συγγράφειν
προηρημένους—Συμεῶν
ἐκεῖνου τοῦ κατὰ τὸ
Θαυμαστόν Ὅρος
ἀγγελικὴν διαγωγὴν
μετελθόντος ...,

1.4 Τῷ ὄντι γὰρ αὐτὸν εὐλογεῖν
ἄξιον καὶ ἐπικαλεῖσθαι, εἰς
μνήμην ἑαυτοῦς τοῦ μεγάλου
καθιέντας Θεοδώρου, καὶ τὰ κατ'
αὐτὸν ἤδη συγγράφειν

... ἐπεὶ καὶ Θεοῦ δῶρον
ἀνθρώποις οὗτος σαφές,
τοῦ καὶ πρὸ διαπλάσεως
αὐτὸν ἐκλεξαμένου, καὶ
πρὸ συλλήψεως
ἐπαγγειλάμενου καὶ πρὸ
γεννήσεως ἀγιασσαντος#,
ἵνα οὐ πρεσβευτὴν αὐτὸν
μόνον ... ἔχοιμεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ
βίου τύπον ἐρημικοῦ, καὶ
φιλοσοφίας πρακτικῆς
ὑπόδειγμα...

Greg. Naz. Or. 18,14 ὁ
δὲ πρὸ τῆς διαπλάσεως
γιγνώσκεται, καὶ πρὸ
γεννήσεως ἀγιάζεται

3 εἰ καὶ κρεῖττον ἢ κατὰ
λόγον δύναμιν τὸ
ἐγχείρημα#, ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν
τι συλλήψεται πάντως
ἡμῖν ἢ θεία καὶ συμπαθὴς
ἐκείνη ψυχὴ ... τὸ δὲ καὶ
συγγνώσεται.

Συγγνώσασθε δὲ καὶ
πάντες ὅσοι τῆς
ὑπερφυῶς ταύτης καὶ
καινῆς πολιτείας ἀκροαταί,
μηδὲν τοῦ πρὸς δύναμιν
ἐλλειπούσιν, εἰ καὶ τοῦ
πρὸς ἀξίαν πλείστον
ἀπολειπόμεθα. Δεῖ δὲ
μικρὸν ἀνωτέρω τὸν λόγον
ἀναγαγόντας, οἷων ὁ
τοιούτος ἔφω γονέων, καὶ
ὅστις ὁ τῆς συλλήψεως
τρόπος αὐτῷ, πρότερον
παραστήσαι

cf. Sym. Met. Passio s.
Marciani presbyteri (Jan.
10; BHG 1034) 5 ἐπὶ νοῦν

Barlaam et Ioasaph 40,65-67
πολλὰς μὲν πρότερον ψυχὰς
ἀνθρώπων τοῦ ψυχοφθόρου
δράκοντος ἀφαρπάσας καὶ τῷ
Θεῷ προσαγαγὼν σεσωσμένας,
καὶ ἀποστολικῆς ἐν τούτῳ
χάριτος ἀξιωθεῖς
cf. e.g. Greg. Naz. In
theophania = Or. 38,11
διαπρύσιοι κήρυκες
2 Tim. 2,15 ὁρβοτομοῦντα τὸν
λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας

προηρημένους—Θεοδώρου φημί,
τοῦ κατὰ τὴν μεγίστην Λαύραν
τοῦ θείου Σάβα ἀγγελικὴν
πολιτείαν καὶ

διαγωγὴν μετελθόντος, εἴτα τὸν
ἀρχιερατικὸν θρόνον
κοσμήσαντος πόλεως Ἐδέσης,
πολλὰς τε ψυχὰς σεσωσμένας
τῷ Θεῷ προσαγαγόντος, καὶ
ἰσαποστολικὴν χάριν ἐκ Θεοῦ
δεξαμένου, κηρύττειν
διαπρυσίως τὸν λόγον τῆς
ἀληθείας, καὶ ὁρβοτομεῖν τὴν
πίστιν τῆς Ἁγίας Τριάδος —,
ἐπεὶ καὶ Θεοῦ δῶρον ἀνθρώποις
οὗτος ἀληθῶς, τοῦ καὶ πρὸ
διαπλάσεως αὐτὸν ἐκλεξαμένου,
καὶ πρὸ γεννήσεως ἀγιασσαντος,
ὡς ἂν καὶ βίου τύπον ἔχοιμεν
αὐτὸν μοναδικοῦ, καὶ ἱερωσύνης
ἀληθοῦς ὑπόδειγμα.

1.5 Εἰ γὰρ καὶ κρεῖττον ἢ κατ'
ἐμὴν δύναμιν τὸ ἐγχείρημα, ἀλλὰ
τὸ μὲν τι συλλήψεται πάντως μοι
ἡ θεία καὶ συμπαθὴς ἐκείνη ψυχὴ,
τῷ ἀδελφιδῷ αὐτοῦ καὶ οἰκέτῃ· τὸ
δὲ καὶ συγγνώσεται.

Συγγνώσασθε δὲ καὶ πάντες οἱ
τῆς ψυχωφελοῦς ταύτης
πολιτείας ἀκροαταί, μηδὲν τοῦ
πρὸς δύναμιν ἐλλείποντι, εἰ καὶ
τοῦ πρὸς ἀξίαν πλείστον
ἀπολείπομαι.

1.6 Δεῖ δὲ μικρὸν ἀνωτέρω τὸν
λόγον ἀναγαγόντας, οἷων ὁ
τοιούτος ἔφω γονέων, καὶ ὅστις ὁ
τῆς συλλήψεως τρόπος αὐτοῦ
[αὐτῷ vers. α], πρότερον
παραστήσαι· εἴτα, καθ' εἰρμὸν τὰ
λοιπὰ τῆς διηγήσεως ἐπισυνάψαι

θέμενος, οὐθ' ὅτι μείζον ἢ
καθ' ἑαυτὸν τὸ ἐγγείρημα,
τῇ πάντα δυναμένη πίστει
τὸ πρᾶγμα πιστεύσας,
ἔργου εἴχετο

Euthymios takes as his base intertext Ouranos' *Life* (underlined), itself written in Metaphrastic style, with silent appropriation of Gregory of Nazianzus and a Metaphrastic *Passion* (both signaled with the sign # in the text of Ouranos cited above). Euthymios follows the sequence and wording of Ouranos' text, but he is also selective, as he borrows passages from the first and then the third paragraph of Symeon's *Life*. His intervention, however, does not stop there. The mere "Εὐλογητὸς ὁ Θεός" at the beginning of Ouranos' text inspires Euthymios to produce a stream of eloquence that runs for almost twenty lines (1,1–1,3) before he picks up the first paragraph of Ouranos' text again (1,4, first part). Once embedded, the few lines from Ouranos inspire Euthymios once more for some lines of his own (1,4, latter part), before he turns to the third paragraph in the *Life* of Symeon, some forty-five lines later in Ouranos' text, so as to complete his poem (1,5–1,6).

As in the *Chapters*, the embellishment of the blocks from Ouranos' *Life* is conducted by means of borrowed phrases from a series of other intertexts (*in italics*), traces of which (*in bold and italics*) can be found also in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, while in some cases phrases (only **in bold**) are shared with the latter text alone. The result is a complex mosaic, a *cento* of sorts, and yet an original text, where quotations serve the elaboration of two anthologized longer quotations. Plagiarism, so to speak, is used against itself: for the purposes of creating a unique text.

Excursus: Metaphrastes, *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, and *Theodore of Edessa*

Before we address textual nesting in the creation of *Theodore of Edessa* in a more general fashion, a remark is here apposite regarding one key issue raised by the self-evident close relation between Euthymios' two Greek compositions and the Metaphrastic *Menologion*—a relation which has come up several times above and which will still occupy us again also below. One wonders, in this regard, whether the many shared borrowings between these works can shed any light on the question as to which of the two Euthymian texts was written first. As we have already argued (2.3), the manuscript evidence and the reference in George Hagiorites point to the precedence of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*. The same seems to

be the implicit view of Volk, who placed *Theodore of Edessa* in the second apparatus of his edition, namely the one which indicates works that copy *Barlaam and Ioasaph*.

Now, the numerous short or slightly long *common* Metaphrastic phrases in the two Euthymian texts may be regarded as Euthymios' usual Metaphrastic style in Greek and would thus be of little help in trying to establish chronological precedence, except to note that they are significantly more in number in the less extensive of the two texts, namely the *Life* of Theodore; what this suggests is unclear—perhaps, that Euthymios was engaging more and more with Metaphrastic texts in his Georgian translation project.

More illuminating might be a closer look at that single *extensive* Metaphrastic passage which the two texts share with each other: a section from Symeon Metaphrastes' *Life* of John Chrysostom, describing a scene of separation, as John departs Antioch (BHG 875, ch. 11).¹¹² Though we have no evidence that Euthymios prepared or was planning a Georgian translation of this specific text, Chrysostom's *Life* in general seems to have been among Euthymios' favorites, if we judge by its usage in his two Greek works. In *Theodore of Edessa*, especially, the *Life* provided the model and the template for Euthymios' representation of Theodore as a bishop (see the table above). Even Theodore's extensive dogmatic sermon, his first sermon as a bishop, based on Michael Synkellos and Theodore of Raithou, is nothing but a replacement of a sermon that Chrysostom gives upon his arrival to Constantinople as its bishop in the Metaphrastic *Life* (16–17). Notably, George of Alexandria's earlier text on Chrysostom (BHG 873; CPG 7979) was also available to Euthymios in Georgian translation in an Iviron manuscript dated to ca. 980, and as far as we are able to say, he seems to cite that Greek version as well.¹¹³

Let us return to the passage in question, however. Here are the relevant sections—we underline all phrases which derive from the Metaphrastic text and appear in both Euthymian texts; we place in *italics* those Metaphrastic phrases which we find *only* in *Theodore of Edessa*; we put in **bold** letters those words or phrases which the two Euthymian works share with each other, though not

¹¹² The intertextuality of the passage in question has already been closely examined by Volk, yet from the perspective of Euthymios' influence on Metaphrastes, rather than the correct *vice versa* appropriation; see Volk 2003, 163–6, where it is argued that both *Theodore of Edessa* and *Barlaam and Ioasaph* are utilized *in combination* by Metaphrastes. We may add that the same Metaphrastic passage was utilized in Athanasios of Panagiotou's *Life* of Athanasios of Athos (Vita A, 62, 4–8; BHG 187), composed before 1025; Polemis (2022, 436–7) wrongly considers the passage in *Barlaam and Ioasaph* either as influenced by or as an influence on the *Life* of Athanasios of Athos. Finally, on the pre-history of the Metaphrastic *Life* of Chrysostom, see Schiffer 2021.

¹¹³ For the ms., *Ivir. georg.* 3, see the entry in 2.2 above. For passages from BHG 873 in both Euthymian compositions, see the relevant part of the Index in our edition as well as that of Volk.

while copying Metaphrastes; and we indicate with Latin letters and Arabic numbers smaller units:

*Menologion of
Metaphrastes**Barlaam and Ioasaph**Theodore of Edessa β*

Sym. Met.* Vita
Ioannis Chrysostomi
(Nov. 13; BHG 875) II
(a1) τῷ ἱεράρχῃ
μέλλοντος
συναποδημεῖν, (a2)
γίνεται τι πρᾶγμα
δακρύων ὡς ἄληθῶς
ἄξιον. Περιστάντες γὰρ
αὐτὸν ἅπας ὁ τῶν
μοναζόντων χορός, (a3)
ὥσπερ τῷ ἐκείνῳ
συνεῖναι ζῶντες, καὶ τῇ
διαίρεσει μέλλοντες
συναφαιρεῖσθαι καὶ τὰς
ψυχὰς, (a4) τί μὴ πρὸς
οἶκτον ἔλεγον, ποῖαν
θρήνων ὑπερβολὴν
ἀπελίμπανον; (a5)
περιέψων αὐτόν,
περιέβαλλον, ἑαυτοὺς
τοῖς τούτου μέλεσι
συμπαρέβαλλον.
Παραφρονεῖν αὐτοὺς
ἐποίει τὸ πάθος ἐνόν,
ἡγοῦντο συνάψιν αὐτῶ
καὶ τὰ σώματα, (b1)
τὴν ὑποστροφὴν
ἀπηγόρευον, τὴν μονὴν
ὡς μηκέτι δυνατόν
δμμασιν ὀφθῆναι τοῖς
ἑαυτῶν ἀπεδιδρασκον.
(b2) Ὡς δὲ μόλις ποτὲ
τῇ τομῇ τοῦ λόγου, καὶ
τοῦτο μὲν τοῦ μεγάλου,
τοῦτο δὲ τοῦ ἀρχιερέως
παραινοῦντος καὶ
δριμυτέραν που καὶ τὴν
ἐπιτίμησιν ἐπιφέροντος,
ἀπ' αὐτοῦ διερράγησαν, (b3)
οἱ μὲν ἄκοντες

36,172-176
Τότε δὲ (a2) γίνεται πρᾶγμα
δακρύων ὡς ἄληθῶς ἄξιον.
Περιστάντες γὰρ αὐτὸν ἅπαντες,
(a3) ὥσπερ τῷ ἐκείνῳ συνεῖναι
ζῶντες καὶ τῇ διαίρεσει
μέλλοντες συναφαιρεῖσθαι καὶ
τὰς ψυχὰς, (a4) τί μὴ πρὸς
οἶκτον ἔλεγον. Ποῖαν θρήνων
ὑπερβολὴν ἀπελίμπανον. (a5)
Κατεφίλουν αὐτόν, περιέβαλλον.
Παραφρονεῖν αὐτοὺς ἐποίει τὸ
πάθος. «Οὐαὶ ἡμῖν», ἐβόων,
«τῆς χαλεπῆς ταύτης
δυστυχίας». Δεσπότην αὐτόν
ἀνεκαλοῦντο, πατέρα, σωτήρα,
εὐεργέτην. «Διὰ σοῦ», φησί,
«τὸν θεὸν ἐγνώκαμεν, τῆς πλάνης
λελυτρώμεθα, τῶν κακῶν
πάντων ἀνάπαυσιν εὑρομεν. Τί
λοιπὸν ἔσται ἡμῖν μετὰ τὸν σὸν
χωρισμόν; Ποῖα οὐ καταλήψεται
κακά;» Τοιαῦτα λέγοντες τὰ
στήθη ἔπαιον καὶ τὴν
κατασχούσαν αὐτοὺς
ἀνωλοφύροντο συμφορὰν. Ὁ δὲ
λόγοις αὐτοὺς παρακλήσεως τῶν
πολλῶν κατασιγᾶσας οἰμωγῶν
καὶ συνεῖναι τῷ πνεύματι
ἐπαγγεῖλάμενος, ὡς τῷ γε σώματι
ἀδύνατον ἤδη τοῦτο γενέσθαι,
τοιαῦτα εἰπὼν πάντων ὁρώντων
ἐξέρχεται τοῦ παλατίου.
Καὶ εὐθὺς πάντες συνείποντο,
(b1) τὴν ὑποστροφὴν
ἀπηγόρευον, τὴν πόλιν, ὡς
μηκέτι δυνατόν δμμασιν ὀφθῆναι
τοῖς ἑαυτῶν, ἀπεδιδρασκον. (b1)
Ὡς δὲ τῆς πόλεως ἕξω γεγόνασι
μόλις ποτὲ, τῇ τοῦ λόγου τομῇ,
παραινοῦντος αὐτοῦ καὶ

42.7 ... (a1) ἐμελλεν ἀποδημεῖν.
Τότε δὲ (a2) γίνεται πρᾶγμα
δακρύων ἄξιον. περιστάντες γὰρ
αὐτόν ἅπας ὁ τῶν μοναζόντων
χορός, (a4) τί μὴ πρὸς οἶκτον
ἔλεγον, ποῖαν θρήνων ὑπερβολὴν
ἀπελίμπανον; Ἐνθεν οἱ μοναχοί,
ἐκείθεν ὁ μέγας Θεόδωρος,
περιέβαλλον ἀλλήλους,
περιέψων, (b1 + a3) τὴν
διαίρεσιν ἀπηγόρευον. Οἱ
πατέρες ἐθρήνουν, τὸν χωρισμόν
τοῦ καλοῦ συνασκητοῦ, (a3)
ὥσπερ τῷ ἐκείνῳ συνεῖναι ζῶντες.
Ὁ ὁσιος ὠλοφύρετο, τὴν
στέρησιν τῆς καλῆς ἡσυχίας, καὶ
τῶν ἴσα ψυχῆς φιλουμένων αὐτῶ
πατέρων καὶ ἀδελφῶν. (b2)
Μόλις δὲ ποτε τῇ παραινεῖσει καὶ
τοῖς παρακλητικοῖς λόγοις τοῦ
προεστῶτος διαιεθέντες, (b3) οἱ
μὲν ἐπανήρχοντο εἰς τὴν Λαύραν,
ὁ δὲ τίμιος Θεόδωρος (b4) τῆς
ὁδοῦ εἶχετο, ἕνα τῶν αὐτοῦ
μαθητῶν εἰς τὴν αὐτοῦ κέλλαν
καταλιπὼν, προτροπῇ καὶ
συναίνεσι τοῦ καθηγουμένου.
43.1 Εἰσελθὼν δὲ αὐθὺς τὴν Ἀγίαν
Πόλιν, καὶ τὴν νέαν Κυριακὴν
ἐκεῖσε τελέσας, ταῖς ἀγίαις τε
ἐκκλησίαις μετὰ πολλῶν
συναζάμενος δακρύων, καὶ τοὺς
τιμίους ἀσπασάμενος πατριάρχας
καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἐπισκόπους, (b3)
ἄκων καὶ μὴ βουλόμενος ἤρξατο
τῆς πρὸς Ἑδεσσαν πορείας, πυκνὰ
στρεφόμενος

<u>ἐπανήρχοντο πυκνῶς</u>	<u>δριμυτέραν που τὴν ἐπιτίμησιν</u>
<u>αὐτοῖς τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν</u>	<u>ἐπιφέροντος ἀπ' αὐτοῦ</u>
<u>ἐπιστρεφόμενων καὶ</u>	<u>διερράγησαν καὶ (b3) ἄκοντες</u>
<u>τὴν πορείαν τοῖς ποσὶν</u>	<u>ἐπανήρχοντο, πυκνῶς αὐτοῖς τῶν</u>
<u>ἐγκοπτόντων, (b4) οἱ δὲ</u>	<u>ὀφθαλμῶν ἐπιστρεφόμενων καὶ</u>
<u>περὶ τὸν μέγαν τῆς ὁδοῦ</u>	<u>τὴν πορείαν τοῖς ποσὶν</u>
<u>εἶχοντο, εὐθὺ τῆς</u>	<u>ἐγκοπτόντων. Τινὲς δὲ τῶν</u>
<u>ἐκκλησίας ἐλαύνοντες</u>	<u>θερμότερων καὶ ὀδυρόμενοι</u>
	<u>μακρόθεν ἠκολούθουν αὐτῷ, ἕως</u>
	<u>ἢ νῦξ ἐπελθοῦσα διέστησεν</u>
	<u>αὐτοὺς ἀπ' ἀλλήλων</u>

The dependence of Euthymios, in both of his texts, on Metaphrastes is unmistakable. Just as obvious is the fact that, again in both of his texts, Euthymios also creates independently of Metaphrastes, elaborating the relevant scenes, adding to and omitting parts from Metaphrastes' description. Yet what may be also clear from the above parallel table is that *Barlaam and Ioasaph* displays the more straightforward appropriation of the Metaphrastic *Life*, since in this case Euthymios copies two sections in bulk, retaining their original order. In *Theodore of Edessa* by contrast, we witness a more complicated process. In it, the sequence of the various units is partly mixed up, and then again certain Metaphrastic words and phrases, missing from *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, are incorporated. Moreover, the two Euthymian works, in elaborating the scene, share a couple of words and phrases, which do not appear in the Metaphrastic text; these do remain in the same order of appearance.

The comparison cannot be entirely conclusive, yet it seems more likely that the somewhat more intricate intertextual work of *Theodore of Edessa* follows temporally that of *Barlaam of Ioasaph*. For it can best be understood as the result of borrowing from the Metaphrastic *Life* and simultaneously recalling *Barlaam of Ioasaph*, perhaps in an attempt to create a new, somewhat differentiated text from the earlier *Barlaam and Ioasaph* passage, already based on Chrysostom's *Life*.¹¹⁴ But, of course, nothing precludes us from imagining Euthymios as having first created a complicated passage in *Theodore of Edessa* and then turning to a more straightforward copying of the same scene from Metaphrastes in

¹¹⁴ A similar case, is found in section 70,2, where Euthymios seems to interweave an expression from *Barlaam and Ioasaph* with a slightly reworked Metaphrastic text: 'Ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ ὁ τῶν ἐωθινῶν ὕμνων ἐνειστήκει καιρὸς, τὰς εἰωθυίας ἦσεν ὥδ' αὖ. Καὶ συνταξάμενος πᾶσιν, εἰρήνην τε καὶ σωτηρίαν αὐτοῖς ἐπευξάμενος, ἐξεληθὼν [Barlaam et Ioasaph 21,170-171 εἰρήνην τε αὐτῷ καὶ σωτηρίαν αἰώνιον ἐπευξάμενος, ἐξῆλθε τοῦ παλατίου] ἤψατο σπουδαίως = Sym. Met.* Vita Danielis Styl. (Dec. 11; BHG 490) 9 ὁ Δανιὴλ εἰρηκῶς, ἐπειδὴ τὰς νυκτερινὰς ἦσεν ὥδ' αὖ, συνταξάμενος πᾶσι καὶ ἐξεληθὼν ἐπὶ τὴν Κωνσταντινούπολιν σπουδαίως ἐχώρει.

Barlaam and Ioasaph, while bringing to mind also the passage in *Theodore of Edessa* he had created. The latter chain of sequences seems to us less probable, yet we cannot be certain.

A bit more conclusive is an instance of a bi-textual intertext which we have just cited in analyzing the introductory sections of Theodore's *Life*, where Euthymios employs wording found also at the concluding sections of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*. Let us cite the specific passage anew:

<i>Barlaam and Ioasaph</i> 40,63–67	<i>Life of Theodore of Edessa</i> 1,4
... πολλὰς μὲν ... ψυχὰς ἀνθρώπων τοῦ ψυχοφθόρου δράκοντος ἀφαρπάσας καὶ τῷ Θεῷ προσαγαγὼν σεσωσμένας, καὶ ἀποστολικῆς ἐν τούτῳ χάριτος ἀξιωθείς ... he [i.e. Ioasaph] snatched many human souls away from the soul-devouring dragon, brought them to God and thus saved them , and in this was deemed worthy of the grace of the Apostles ...	... Θεοδώρου ... πολλὰς τε ψυχὰς σεσωσμένας τῷ Θεῷ προσαγαγόντος, καὶ ἰσαποστολικὴν χάριν ἐκ Θεοῦ δεξαμένου Theodore who ... brought many souls to God and thus saved them, and received from God a grace equivalent to that of the Apostles ...

One could imagine that while closing his *Barlaam and Ioasaph* Euthymios returned to a phrase he had used to open *Theodore of Edessa* some time ago. Yet this scenario (perhaps anyhow less reasonable than its opposite) is brought into doubt by a small detail, which seems hardly accidental. The notion of the “grace of the Apostles” is already there in the Georgian hypotext of the Greek *Barlaam and Ioasaph*.

In the relevant passage, that is, of the *Balavariani* (ch. 67, p. 179,17–18), Barlaam upon dying addresses Ioasaph with the following words: “Be glad ... for you have become worthy of apostolic grace!” Euthymios was thus apparently first prompted to include a common enough idea in Christian discourse by the wording of *Balavariani* and then recalled this and the rest of the description of Ioasaph (namely, the phrase “ψυχὰς ἀνθρώπων τοῦ ψυχοφθόρου δράκοντος ἀφαρπάσας καὶ τῷ Θεῷ προσαγαγὼν σεσωσμένας” which was his elaboration of the Georgian *Balavariani*) in putting forward an image of his new protagonist, Theodore. Indeed, to spice things up a bit more and innovate against his own earlier creation, Euthymios created a new word “ἰσ-αποστολικός”.

Invention

Given all of the above, how exactly did Euthymios go about in creating his multi-nested text? Did he gather the various textual units—including what was the re-

sult of translation, namely the *Passion* of Michael—in draft notes which he then put in a certain order so as to create the full content of *Theodore of Edessa*? Had he assembled these notes—at least with respect to the Greek textual units—over the course of several decades preceding his Greek compositions, while reading or translating Greek texts into Georgian? Did he also have several books in front of him while writing? Did he compose his text by reading from manuscripts and/or from re-arranged textual notes, and dictating to a scribe¹¹⁵? Did he cite much from memory, especially when it comes to the shorter quotes which create the *style* we have observed and which permeates both *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and *Theodore of Edessa*? Or was there an intermediary “collection(s) of excerpts”, likely produced by Euthymios himself, from which he then borrowed the minor quotations¹¹⁶?

These questions are as crucial as they are resistant to exact answers. In our view, some combination of most—if not all—of the practices mentioned above is the most plausible scenario, even if we cannot determine with any certainty where memory gives way to copied citation, where reading shades into excerpting, or where recollection overwhelms composition, writing, or dictation in the making of *Theodore of Edessa*—and likewise in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*. Still, it is worth examining—by way of conclusion—Euthymios’ textual nesting less from the perspective of the borrowings themselves, but more from the vantage point of the creativity to which they were submitted, and thus highlight Euthymios’ authorial agency amidst the dense intertextuality of *Theodore of Edessa*.



We have identified a historical figure, Theodore Abū Qurrah, who appears as a shadow in *Theodore of Edessa* behind a series of textual screens, whether as character, name, or role: the real Theodore, a native of Edessa and most prominent Syrian theologian whose discourse could plausibly be associated with that of Michael Synkellos and Theodore of Raithou; the legendary debater in Muslim contexts associated with Arab rulers; and, above all, the fictionalized Sabaite Abū Qurrah of Michael’s Georgian *Passion*. These earlier threads provided the inspiration behind the most basic creation of Euthymios, that of a fictive saint, a bishop of Edessa and monk of St Sabas named Theodore.

Yet in order to construct the extensive *Theodore of Edessa* out of this fictive hero, Euthymios proceeded, as is obvious from the above, by means of further extensive and intricate textual appropriation. Euthymios borrowed discursive as

¹¹⁵ For the issue of dictation, cf. Simelidis 2020, 147.

¹¹⁶ This is a view put forward in Høgel 2019, 362 (from where the quoted phrase) in reference to *Barlaam and Ioasaph*.

well as narrative materials, which enabled him to assemble most of the essential components of the deeds and words—including the *Chapters* appended at the end of the *Life*—of his fictive saint. Whether directly or obliquely, earlier texts were appropriated and thus provided much of the *substance*, the ontology as it were, of the story.

To help visualize this process, let us join *all* definite as well as distant inter-texts in the following final table, setting aside, with few exceptions, the shorter borrowings that appear throughout the work:

<i>Translation from Georgian</i>	<i>Incorporation from Greek</i>	<i>Refraction</i>	<i>Theodore of Edessa</i>
Georgian <i>Passion of Michael the Sabaite</i> 1: “Abba Basil, priest of Saint Sabas” meets “abba Theodore Abū Qurrah”		<i>Life</i> of Pankratios*, Title	Title: <i>The life and conduct of Theodore, our father among the saints, who became eminent for his asceticism in the Great Lavra of Saint Sabas, subsequently became archbishop of the city of Edessa, and performed deeds worthy of commemoration; written by Basil, his nephew and Bishop of Emesa</i>
	Ouranos’ <i>Life</i> of Symeon the Stylite the Younger (1–7, 10, 17) includes phrases from <i>Life</i> of Alexios the Man of God (2 and 6) and Gregory of Nazianzus, Or. 43 (12)		1–5: Preface and Theodore’s birth and upbringing 6,1–6,2: Theodore’s education
	Ouranos’ <i>Life</i> of Symeon the Stylite the Younger (5) Metaphrastes’ <i>Life</i> of Daniel the Stylite (4–5)		7: Theodore buries his parents, sells everything, and visits the Holy Land 8: Theodore at the Church of the <i>Anastasis</i> in Jerusalem 9–10: Theodore’s assumption of the monastic habit

	Metaphrastes' <i>Passion</i> of Anastasios the Persian (5)	11,1: Theodore's ascetic conduct and progress in virtue I
	Metaphrastes' <i>Life</i> of Gregory of Agrigento** (200,10-13 and 217,40-42)	11,1-11,2: Theodore's emulation of Abbot John
	Metaphrastes' <i>Life</i> of Alypios** the Stylite (3-5, 11, and 13-14)	11,2-15: Theodore's as a monk and ascetic
	Metaphrastes' <i>Life</i> of Eusebia/Xene (9-10)	16-17,1: Theodore's life as a hermit
	Metaphrastes' <i>Life</i> of Alypios** the Stylite (20-21)	18,1-18,2: Theodore's allure to his disciples and transitional paragraph to the <i>Passion</i> of Michael
19-34 Georgian <i>Passion of Michael the Sabaite</i> (slightly re-arranged) 3, 2-8 and (again) 6-8, 10-13	Metaphrastes' <i>Life</i> of John the Theologian* (5)	19,1-19,2: Michael's appearance and Theodore's support of him (no exact correspondence in the Georgian text)
19-34 Georgian <i>Passion of Michael the Sabaite</i> (cont.)	George the Monk's <i>Chronicle</i> (717,11-20, 712,11-17, 715,20-716,9)	21,2-23: historiographical excursus (no correspondence in the Georgian text)
19-34 Georgian <i>Passion of Michael the Sabaite</i> (cont.)	Metaphrastes' <i>Passion</i> of Anastasios the Persian (10, 12-13, 23, 9-10, 13)	24,9, 24,13, 24,17-24,18, 25,2-25,3, 25,6-25,8, 29,1: various moments in Michael's <i>Passion</i> story (no exact correspondence in the Georgian text)
19-34 Georgian <i>Passion of</i>	includes phrases from Gregory of Nazianzus'	27,3: Michael's theological instruction (no correspondence in the Georgian text)

<i>Michael the Sabaite</i> (cont.)	<i>Oration</i> on the Baptism (Or. 40,41 and 43)	
19–34	Metaphrastes' <i>Passion</i> of Tryphon (15–16)	30,2–32,1: Michael's final moments (no exact correspondence in the Georgian text)
Georgian <i>Passion of Michael the Sabaite</i> (cont.)		
	Metaphrastes' <i>Life</i> of Melania (18)	35–36: Theodore in the aftermath of Michael's martyrdom
	Metaphrastes' <i>Life</i> of Timothy (6)	37,1: Theodore's virtues I
		37,2: Theodore's virtues II
<i>Passion of Michael the Sabaite</i> 1–2		38,1–40,2: Gathering on the feast of the Annunciation
<i>Passion of Michael the Sabaite</i> 1–2	includes phrases from Basil of Caesarea's <i>Epistles</i> 295 (39,4) and 22 (39,5, 39,6)	39,3–39,7: Theodore's monastic sermon
	Metaphrastes' <i>Life</i> of John Chrysostom (15, 11, 16, 17, 16) and <i>Life</i> of Ioannikios of Bithynia (8)	40–42,1: Holy Week in Jerusalem; the Edessenes request a new bishop, and the holy synod elects Theodore.
		42,2–42,3, 42,5, 42,7–43,1, 45,1, 45,5, 46,2–46,3: Theodore's ordination and emotional departure from the Lavra and then Jerusalem, and arrival in Edessa; the preface in his first sermon
	includes the same excerpt from Basil's <i>Epistle</i> 295	46,3–52,2: Theodore's dogmatic sermon (some transitional sections are by Euthymios)
	Michael Synkellos' <i>Confession of Faith</i> (excerpts)	46,4–47,2: the Creed
	Theodore Studites, <i>Testament</i> (1816,3–5)	47,1: Seventh Ecumenical Council
	conciliar <i>Acts</i> (partial selection)	47,3–47,12: ten <i>Anathemas</i>
		47,13 brief transitional section
		48,2–48,5 and 50–52

Paul's *First Letter*
to the *Corinthians*
(1,10)

Theodore of
Raithou's
Preparation
again
Metaphrastes' *Life*
of John
Chrysostom (17
and 26)

53,1: The people's reaction to his sermon

Leontios, *Life* of
Symeon the
Holy Fool
(84,20–28)

53,2: *transitional paragraph*
54: *transitional paragraph*; the pillars from the time of Maurice

excerpts from two
works of Ephrem
the Syrian (CPG
3926 and 3977)

Life of
Theodoulos,
Stylite in Edessa

55,1–55,6: Theodore's encounter with Theodosios the Stylite
55,7: *transitional paragraph*
56,1–61,2: **the tale** of Ader, his wife, and the prostitute woman narrated by Theodosios

59,2: The prostitute's prayer
62,1–64,2: Theodore meets Ader's wife and the former prostitute

Life of
Theodoulos,
Stylite in Edessa

65,1–2: *transitional paragraph*
65,3–67,3: **the autobiographical story** of Theodosios the Stylite and his brother John
68,1–68,2: *transitional paragraphs*

Metaphrastes' *Life*
of John
Chrysostom (4, 19,
and 26)
includes
phraseology from
Euchologion
(section 148)
George the Monk's
Chronicle
(472,12–23)
Metaphrastes'
Miracle of the

68,3–68,5: Theodore's virtues as bishop, and the heretics become envious

68,6: Manicheans in Edessa

68,7: the anti-Chalcedonians in Edessa

69: the heretics' attack on Theodore

Archangel Michael
at Chonae (6–7)

Metaphrastes' *Life* George the
of Daniel the Monk's
Stylite (9) *Chronicle*
(716,5–13)

Metaphrastes' *Life*
of Daniel the
Stylite (9 and 13)

Life of John of
Edessa (ch. 18;
Kekelitze 1914,
338–9) ?

(*Life* of
Pankratios*, 10)

70,1: Theodore prepares for the
trip to Babylon

70,2: Theodore commences his
trip to Babylon to meet King
Mauïas

70,3–71,4: Theodore arrives in
Babylon

71,5–71,6: Theodore conducts
the healing miracle on king
Mauïas

71,7–73,3: Mauïas is healed,
organizes a public celebration;
three days later he summons
Theodore and inquires about his
visit

74: Mauïas grants Theodore's
request and orders the restoration
of Orthodoxy in Edessa

75: The king's orders are carried
out in Edessa

76,1–78,1: Theodore's visit to
John the Hermit (Theodosios'
brother), which includes:

77,2: the recital of the **letter**
from John to Theodosios

78,2–84,1: spiritual initiation,
conversion, and baptism of the
king and three of his servants by
Theodore; this includes:

78,3–80,4: **three layered**
riddles, in which each
subsequent riddle is proposed as a
solution of the previous one

83,2–83,4: **two model prayers**

84,2–85,4: Theodore's visit to
Constantinople, requested by
John in his desire to obtain a
piece of the True Cross

(**85,4** the box for the True
Cross)

Metaphrastes' *Life*
of Ioannikios of
Bithynia (8) (cf.
above for 43,1)

Life of John of
Edessa (chps. 13
and 19; Kekelitze
1914, 333 and
339–40) ?

includes phrases
from Gregory of
Nazianzus,
Oration 19,3 (97,3)
Gregory of
Nazianzus,
Oration 19,4 (97,4)
Theodore the
Studite's *Brief*
Catechesis 56,21–38
(97,11–13)

includes phrases
from — again,
Gregory of
Nazianzus,
Oration 14, *On the*
Love of the Poor
(19)

85,5: Theodore's ritual of farewell
to Constantinople

85,6–86,5: Theodore's return to
Baghdad via Edessa, and the
welcome reception by the King

86,6–86,7: *transitional*
paragraphs

86,8–91,3: **Dialogical contest**
between a Jewish expert in the
Law in Babylon and Theodore of
Edessa, which results in the
conversion of the latter
92,1–99: meeting of Theodore
and the king with John the
Hermit; which includes the
following 2 “spiritual” speeches
by John:

92,4–93,1: **benediction** of the
king's conversion

94,2–97,13: John the Hermit's
exhortation to martyrdom

100,1–103: New season (spring);
separation of Theodore from the
king; it includes:

101,1–101,6: final **exhortation**
speech by Theodore

101,1: Theodore's exhortation to
King John

— John Chrysostom, from his <i>Homilies</i> on the Gospel of Matthew (540,43-49)		
	<i>Life</i> of Andrew the Holy Fool 3913-20?	104,1-105,2: Theodore's "journey and return" to Edessa 106,1-112,2: King John's martyrdom in Babylon (107,1: the place of assembly) (108: the King's cross) 112,3-114,1: death of Theodosios; Theodore's last years 114,2: Theodore bids his final farewell to the Edessenes
	(<i>Life</i> of Pankratios*, 47 and 10: 107,1)	
	Metaphrastes' <i>Life</i> of Ioannikios of Bithynia (57)	
<i>Passion of Michael the Sabaite</i> 13	Metaphrastes' <i>Life</i> of John Chrysostom (60-1)	115,1-115,3: Theodore's death and burial
<i>Passion of Michael the Sabaite</i> 14-15	Gregory of Nazianzus' Funeral Oration for Basil* (Or. 43,80, 25, and 82) and texts in Metaphrastes' <i>Menologion</i> sections primarily from works by Evagrius, interwoven with quotes from other patristic and biblical texts	115,4-115,5: brief epilogue by Basil 116,1-116,100: "Chapters of our father Saint Theodore the Sabaite"

The collage is striking in visualizing the sheer number and range of appropriated and interwoven materials in *Theodore of Edessa*. Yet it still does not fully reveal Euthymios' intricate creativity.

To begin with, the reader of the continuous text from beginning to end cannot but observe its artful cohesion, both in narrative structure and rhetorical execution. Euthymios makes sure to orchestrate the varied components of the tale into a tightly knit whole. He invents place-holders for all additional discus-

sive material—for instance, ritual settings for Theodore’s two extensive speeches and for the *Chapters* (announced within the *Life* but cited at its conclusion). He then links all embedded narrative units through flashbacks and flash-forwards. Thus, the Persian king’s conversion is revealed through Theodosios the Stylite’s prophecy (55,6), well before Theodore’s embassy to Babylon (69,3), and again by John the Hermit (77,2), before the conversion commences; similarly, the king’s martyrdom (109–110) is foretold by John (92,4). Theodosios and John’s origins in the “desert close to Babylon” (65,3) and the former’s move to Edessa while the latter stays in Babylon (66,1) provide shared locations linking their story to Theodore and King John. Indeed, while protagonists of an embedded tale, Theodosios and John act as spiritual fathers to the protagonists of the framing tale, Theodore and John; the latter even miraculously recalls another subplot in the framing tale, the conversion and baptism of the Jew (91,1–3 with 93,3). Meanwhile, Ader’s doubly embedded story (55,7) is entangled with the main narrative through Theodore’s later meetings with *its* protagonists (62,1–64,2; 68,2; 85,7).

More fundamentally, at the level of rhetorical execution, Euthymios adds a great amount of narrative and discursive “flesh”. Through careful restructuring and sustained rewriting—at times reinforced by additional borrowings, as noted above—he reshapes the appropriated material from within, while also framing and extending it from without. This process unfolds both inside integral units and across the “transitional” sections, creating new text, the product of his own pen. At that, with very few exceptions of small discursive borrowings, none of the interpolated texts is presented as a citation.¹¹⁷ Similarly, virtually no interpolated text is left untouched of some rewriting—the degree of such intervention, we may observe, is higher in narrative appropriations as opposed to the discursive ones.

Last but not least, such rhetorical and, to some extent, improvisatory invention extends quietly into invention at the level of content, which increases as the text progresses, with a concentration in the latter half of Theodore’s *Life*, namely the sections about Theodosios and John (roughly: 53–67, 76–78, and 92–99) and those about King’s Mauīas (roughly: 78–91 and 100–111). In this creative invention content-wise—to add a last remark here—Euthymios seems to turn from intertextuality also to *intra*-textuality. Namely, his earlier *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and then the first part of Theodore’s *Life*, based on the Georgian *Passion* of Michael, are used as springboards for new content.

¹¹⁷ See e.g. 25,10 (φησὶ γὰρ ὁ ἡμέτερος διδάσκαλος Παῦλος) and 97,3 (τις τῶν πατέρων, citing Gregory of Nazianzus). On the typically “silent” appropriation of quotations in Byzantine literature in general, see Messis and Papaioannou 2021a, 146–50; for the same approach in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, see Volk 2009, 97–8.

Isn't Theodore as master—both bishop and ascetic, and with not just one, but with *two* disciples, a monk and a King—an improved *alter ego* of Barlaam the spiritual father of Prince Ioasaph? What is the converted King Mauias but another instantiation, as already noted earlier, of the converted rulers (father and son) of India in the *Balavariani*, and moreover a better version—a king with no evil wife, a convert, and a Christian martyr—of the *Passion*'s Adramelech, already benevolent toward Michael and interested in the Holy Land?¹¹⁸ In this regard, is Theodore's successful conversion of Mauias not an improvement of Michael's attempt to persuade Adramelech, and the deep admiration felt by the latter for the young monk Michael (25,6) not a premonition for the affection which Mauias exhibits for Theodore (78,2)? Similarly, as has been remarked by Mark Swanson, the converted Samonas is the perfection of the anonymous Jew at the court of Adramelech, and King John the martyr a mirror of Theodore's other disciple, Michael the martyr.¹¹⁹ The former scene, moreover, could have additionally been inspired by a debate at court staged in *Balavariani* (ch. 47 = *Barlaam and Ioasaph* 26,37f.) as well as by another interaction, not present in the original Georgian but invented by Euthymios, where the aforementioned Theudas the magician becomes temporarily speechless, and then immediately repents, converts, and eventually is baptized, all preceded by a long and persuasive sermon by Ioasaph (*Barlaam and Ioasaph* 32,94–9)

Through diction, Euthymios has, after all, left visible to the reader the tracks of these scaffolds that hold the narrative together, reflections of the mirror-tales of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and Michael's *Passion* on the hand, and *Theodore of Edessa*, on the other. Theodore's visions of Michael (36,1) and John (111,4) after their death as well as the two scenes of interfaith dialogue (25,6 and 28,4 with 86,8 and 71,1) share cross-references in phrasing. The just mentioned conversion of Theudas (31,41–2 and 32,94–9) carries several lexical and structural analogs with the passages on Samonas in the *Life* of Theodore (90,1 and 91,1). Similar lexical echoes link the joint burial of the protagonist couples, Barlaam/Ioasaph (40,108–110) and Theodore/Michael (115,3), the miracles performed by the relics of Barlaam and Ioasaph (40,117–119) and those of King John the martyr (111,3), and the portrayal of ascetic couplets: Barlaam/Ioasaph (30,257–258 and 33,35) and Theodore/Michael (19,2), and Barlaam/Nachor (22,85–86) and Theo-

¹¹⁸ Detail in Euthymios' Greek rendition of the relevant section of the Georgian *Passion* of Michael are revealing when it comes to Euthymios' reworking of the figure of the original Adramelech. While in the *Passion*, e.g., during the scene of Adramelech's attempted poisoning of Michael, when everyone present started to weep, we read that "he [i.e. the king] too wanted to weep" (10), Euthymios' Greek version reads "also the king himself shed a tear out of sympathy" (29,5). We elaborate further on the correspondence between the two characters in 4.2 below.

¹¹⁹ Swanson 2003, 75–6. See again further 4.2 below.

dosios/brother John (76,1). Most notably of all, the very first (1,3) and the very last time (115,5) that we hear Basil, the purported author/narrator, in the *Life* of Theodore, we encounter words and expressions by the narrator in *Barlaam and Ioasaph* in similar moments of that text (Prolog. 24 and, especially, Epil. 1-2). Comparably, when Theodore enters the stage of the *Life* (1,4) he is described, as if on cue, in the very same words with which Ioasaph is portrayed toward the conclusion of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* (40,63–67). In this intra-textual light, Basil is an extension of the narrator of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and Theodore is a reversion of the Indian prince turned ascetic.



The degree to which these intertextual and intra-textual procedures of Euthymios reflect deliberate artistic design or the operation of a naturalized habit remains somewhat undecipherable. For at what point habit recedes and conscious craft assumes control is ultimately beyond our grasp. Nevertheless, with all the above, we hope that some considerable light has been shed both on Euthymios' indebtedness to a wide textual tradition and on his creative agency—a double condition of textual nesting which, in our view, has very few rivals in earlier hagiography.¹²⁰ And, indeed, the layers of Euthymian authorship did not end here. In *Theodore of Edessa*, a third and final discursive mode was superimposed upon the creative process. This was an additional re-phrasing, which the Byzantines would have called *metaphrasis*, a type of rewriting.¹²¹ To this matter we now turn.

3.3. REWRITING: THE TWO VERSIONS

Versions α and β

While preparing the edition of Theodore's *Life*, it quickly became evident that the Greek text, which we possess today, is preserved in two basic versions, both of which date to Euthymios' life time. The chronologically first version is the one which circulated widely, becoming the "vulgate" one, or version α , as we

¹²⁰ The most remarkable case, somewhat comparable to what we observe in Euthymios' work, is Stephen the Deacon's early 9th-c. *Life* of Stephen the Younger (BHG 1666), a text which was incorporated after rewriting and shortening in Metaphrastes' *Menologion* (BHG 1667); see the comprehensive discussion of BHG 1666 in Auzépy 1999, 93–176. For other, less spectacular examples of recycling, see: the works of the 6th-c. Cyril of Skythopolis and the discussion of Flusin 1983, 41–86; the 9th(?) -c. anonymous *Life* of Prokopios Dekapolites (BHG 1583) with Efthymiadis 1990, and the late 10th-c. *Life* of Phantinos the Younger (BHG 2366z) with Follieri 1993, 282–92, and Krausmüller 2008.

¹²¹ The term is used here in the grammatical and rhetorical sense, and not in the more specific sense of *Metaphrasis* as a hagiographical genre; for all this, see Resh 2015, 2018, and 2021; on rewriting in Byzantium, see further Alwis, Hinterberger, and Schiffer 2021a, Constantinou and Högel 2021, Efthymiadis 2021, and most recently Signes Codofier, Hinterberger, and Pérez Martín 2026.

have termed it. Version α is attested in eleven Byzantine manuscripts; and the four post-Byzantine copies along with the numerous manuscripts, preserving excerpts in Greek and medieval translations of the work in its entirety—in Georgian, Arabic and Old Slavonic—, are all descended from this version as well. Version α in its post-Euthymian transmission was treated as a partly “open text”. In all of its Greek witnesses and in all medieval translations, it was subject to minor or major revisions by scribes and translators; two of the post-Byzantine revisions in the Greek realm indeed reached the level of creating even further, new versions of the text.

The second version (β) is preserved essentially in a single manuscript, which is none other than Mosq. Synod. gr. 15 (A), copied by Theophanes in 1023 and mentioned several times above. Its text contains over 1000 unique variants, recorded in the critical apparatus of our edition; the nature of a great number of these (to which we shall return below) suggests that they could only be innovations in relation to an earlier version than the other way around. Notably, this second version includes re-writing not only of the *Life* but also of Theodore’s *Kephalaia* (also preserved in A), a text which Euthymios himself had created and appended to the end of the *Life*, and which is preserved in few cases transmitted jointly with the *Life*, but also circulated (more widely) as an independent text. The fact, we might add, that A includes the *Kephalaia* and that the re-writing was applied to this text as well solidifies the view that the *Life* and the *Kephalaia* were always intended as one, whole composition. In any case, apart from a single post-Byzantine manuscript (m), which is a direct apograph of A made in Iviron, no other Greek manuscript, nor excerpt nor any of the medieval translations can be traced back to version β .

In the introduction to volume II, we discuss in detail the relations between the two versions from the perspective of their manuscript transmission, their chronological sequence, and the precedence of version α , while in chapter 5 below we cover all other related aspects of reception. Here, however, three other, fundamental questions serve our analysis. What form do the changes take from the first to the second version? Given that these changes were produced when Euthymios was alive, are they his own creation? And what is their purpose?

First, however, let us state one further important fact. In general terms, the transmission and minor or major rewriting history, which we have just described briefly, is not so uncommon for Byzantine texts, especially popular hagiographic ones.¹²² What is rather particular, nevertheless, is the existence of two versions which can be dated with certainty to the time of the author and are likely created by him or her. The only other confirmed case of which we are

¹²² See the bibliography cited in the previous note.

aware is none other than Euthymios' *Barlaam and Ioasaph*. As Robert Volk has demonstrated in discussing the transmission history of that text, a branch of manuscripts, which he has termed "Familie c"—we shall call it too "version α " of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* (represented by mss. L, M, N, and O in the apparatus of Volk's edition)—, preserves a version of the text which is prior to all others and more widespread in terms of circulation.¹²³ Another branch, "Familie a"—we shall call it "version β " of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*—, whose redaction Volk chose to publish as the main text in his critical edition, is a revision which was produced at the time when Euthymios was still alive, preserved in the earliest dated manuscript of the text, Kiev, National Library of Ukraine V. I. Vernadskyj, OTIC 3692 (Diktyon 37437), dated to May 1021 and copied on Athos, as well as in another early Athonite witness, Ivron 462 (Diktyon 24059), likely copied in Ivron in the same period (ms. B and A, respectively, in Volk's edition).¹²⁴ As we shall see below, the kinds of changes introduced into version β of *Theodore of Edessa* are the same as the ones introduced into version β of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, which point yet again to the closeness of the two projects.

What kind of changes are we talking about? The modifications pertain solely to rephrasing, and in no way affect the content. No episodes are added or removed, no details in the tale are altered. There are, in other words—and to use modern terminology—, neither omissions, reductions, and condensations, nor extensions, expansions, and additions, nor substitutions and replacements at the level of the plot.¹²⁵ Rather, in the new versions of both texts, we encounter such changes (often in combination) at the level of the sentence, namely substitution,

¹²³ - N: Oxford, Magdalen College, gr. 4 (Diktyon 48697), dated to 1063, scribe Leontios (RGK I 235);

- O: New York, Columbia University, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Plimpton MS 9 (Diktyon 46599) / Cambridge University Library, Add. 4491 (Diktyon 12129) / Ioannina, Ζωσιμαία Δημόσια Κεντρική Ιστορική Βιβλιοθήκη, 1 (Diktyon 32798), Cyprus or Syria-Palestine (?), late 11th / early 12th c. (so Kavrus-Hoffmann 2005, 194–7);

For L (Paris. gr. 1771; 14th [2/2]) and M (Marc. gr. VII. 26; 12th/13th c.), see 1.4 [text and note 31] above.

¹²⁴ See Volk 2009, 86–7 and 583–90, on versions α ("Familie c") and β ("Familie a") and the temporal priority of α ; cf. Volk 2003, 148–51 and Volk 2016, 417–20; see also Shurgai 2019. We should note, that Volk's reconstruction of the early transmission history of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* is further complicated by his placement of a third family of manuscripts ("Familie b") between the original "c" (our version α of this text) and the revised "a" (our version β)—see Volk 2009, 590–1 and 2016, 419. This reconstruction, which in our view requires re-thinking that we cannot offer presently, does not affect our interest here in the variation between Volk's versions "c" and "a" whose relation and temporal sequence appear to be beyond doubt.

¹²⁵ See Alwis, Hinterberger, and Schiffer 2021b, 10–11 (from whom we have borrowed the terms above), citing Gérard Genette and Roman Jakobson and several related studies on Byzantine hagiographical texts.

addition or omission, and minor re-ordering of either words or small phrases. Here are some characteristic examples:

substitution

α (78,2): Ἐνδελεχῶς δὲ ἀφικομένου

β: Πυκνότερον δὲ ἀφικνουμένου

Barlaam and Ioasaph **α** (5,41–2): Συχνῶς ... ἐρχομένου

Barlaam and Ioasaph **β:** Πυκνότερον ... ἐρχομένου

addition

α (93,5): προσταχθέντες

β: προσταχθέντες καὶ κεῖνοι

Barlaam and Ioasaph **α** (15,68): ἀνὴρ συνάδων, καὶ τινα παρ' ἑαυτοῦ προστιθείς

Barlaam and Ioasaph **β:** ἀνὴρ συνάδων τῷ αὐτῷ προφήτῃ καὶ τινα παρ' ἑαυτῷ προστιθείς

omission

α (95,2): τροφήν πάνυ βιαίαν καὶ ἀμυδράν

β: βιαίαν καὶ ἀμυδράν τροφήν

Barlaam and Ioasaph **α** (9,123): διὰ τοῦ ἐλαίου τὴν τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἔργων κτήσιν σημαίνων

Barlaam and Ioasaph **β:** διὰ τοῦ ἐλαίου τὴν τῶν ἀγαθῶν κτήσιν σημαίνων

re-ordering

α (79,1): βουλόμενος σαφηνίσαι μοι παραβολήν

β: παραβολήν βουλόμενος σαφηνίσαι μοι

Barlaam and Ioasaph **α** (15,79–80): εἰς τὴν τῆς ἀρετῆς συνωθούντων ἡμᾶς ἀπλανεστάτην ὁδόν

Barlaam and Ioasaph **β:** εἰς τὴν τῆς ἀρετῆς ἀπλανεστάτην ὁδὸν συνωθούντων ἡμᾶς

As far as *Theodore of Edessa* is concerned (though the same can be said of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* as well), such modifications pertain to the *entire* text and are not concentrated only in specific sections, even if in certain parts (especially some discursive segments) changes are applied less frequently than in others.¹²⁶ A consistent revision from beginning to end is thus evident. Consistent in *Barlaam and Ioasaph* (at least as far as we can tell, given the limitations of Volk's edition), in the *Life of Theodore*, and in the *Kephalaia*, this mode of rewriting must thus be the work, most likely, of one and the same person.

¹²⁶ Very little rewriting is present in e.g. Michael's prayer before his execution (31) or the sermon of Theodore as bishop of Edessa (46,3–52,2); less intensive is also the rewriting in the *Chapters*.

Who could this be? We have enough evidence to be to a considerable degree certain about his identity. To begin with, that the manuscript which preserves version β of *Theodore* is the work of Euthymios' main collaborator, Theophanes, suggests that the revision was performed in Euthymios' environment. The same can be said about version β of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*. In this case, however, a certain Theodotos/Theodosios(?), another Athonite scribe from the same network of the Lavra and Iviron—in which, as we have already seen, several scribes were active, working on Greek as well as Georgian manuscripts for Euthymios and his patrons—was employed to do the copying. This latter fact, namely, the employment of two separate scribes, yet the production of the same rewriting result, already reduces the likelihood that it was the scribes of the manuscripts of the versions β of the two texts who were responsible for the revision. In any case, we have no evidence from which to judge whether Theophanes or Theodotos/Theodosios were learned enough as writers as would be necessary to produce the stylistic changes we encounter—even though, as we saw above (GRD 23 = M-H 76 and 2.2 [paragraph and note 48] above), Euthymios' biographer praises the learnedness of Theophanes. Of course, we can also imaginatively postulate another Greek-speaking monk or other monks in the Athonite community, within the Iviron network, who might have been employed by Euthymios with the task of revising his two Greek translations. If such collaborator(s) ever existed, all available sources are again silent in this regard. They can thus remain merely a quite speculative possibility.

By contrast, Euthymios' skill in Greek composition and, especially, his thorough involvement precisely when it comes to the process of rewriting is a given, as is evident both in the first versions of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and *Theodore of Edessa* and in the Georgian translations that he had composed—full of minor stylistic rephrasing, and in the case of the Georgian texts also major rewriting of the contents. Thus, Euthymios appears to be the most plausible candidate for the revision of the two Greek works. Indeed, it seems as if, in some instances, the wording of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, occasionally even already reworked from its own version α to β , served as a model for version α of *Theodore of Edessa*, which was then further revised into version β of *Theodore of Edessa*.¹²⁷ This procedure

¹²⁷ Note the following examples:

1) *Barlaam and Ioasaph* (both versions) 16,156 χρημάτων ἀναριθμητον ὄγκον

Theodore of Edessa 60,4 (α) χρημάτων ἀναριθμητον ὄγκον

> *Theodore of Edessa* 60,4 (β) χρημάτων δὲ πολλὸν ὄγκον

2) *Barlaam and Ioasaph* 25,21 (α) εὐχόμενος ὄλην διετέλεσεν τὴν νύκτα

> 25,21 (β) διετέλεσεν ὄλην τὴν νύκτα εὐχόμενος

Theodore of Edessa 66,3 (α) ὄλην διετέλεσα τὴν νύκτα ἐν κατανύξει καρδίας εὐχόμενος

> 66,3 (β) διετέλεσα παρ' ὄλην ἐκείνην τὴν νύκτα ἐν κατανύξει καρδίας εὐχόμενος

(if we are reading the sequence correctly) seems to strengthen further our earlier strong supposition that *Theodore of Edessa* was written second.

But what could the purpose of creating a second version be? Let us attempt a typology of the changes which we have observed in *Theodore of Edessa* and which may reveal the intentions behind them. Often, the rudimentary re-ordering, omission, or addition of words and phrases are in essence undulations of style, with no particular effect: the same content is simply conveyed in a slightly different form. In several cases, however, version β offers an improvement of α in terms of diction, grammar, syntax, or, in general, style, by for instance fixing the prose-rhythm, by choosing a more archaizing (or, at least, archaizing-looking) expression, or even by restoring a quotation. Here are some examples:

diction:

78,4: ὠδευεν ὁδὸν εὐρύχωρον ὁ δὲ πένης (οἱμοί!) στενήν καὶ τεθλιμμένην

α :

ὠδευεν ὁδὸν εὐρύχωρον ὁ δὲ πένης, οἶμον στενήν καὶ τεθλιμμένην β

41,5: ἐπιτεταγμένον τῷ πράγματι ἡμῶν versio α :

τῷ πράγματι ἐπιτετευγμένον β

grammar:

24,17: παρασκεύασο α : παρασκεύασαι σεαυτόν β

syntax:

4,2: Πενταετούς δὲ ἤδη γεγονότος τοῦ παιδός, διδασκάλῳ παραδίδοται α :

Πενταέτης δὲ ἤδη γενόμενος ὁ παῖς, διδασκάλῳ παραδίδοται β

68,2: Εἰσελθὼν δὲ ἐν τῷ ναῷ τοῦ ἁγίου μάρτυρος Γεωργίου καὶ εὐξάμενος, προσελθοῦσα ἢ προσετώσα τῆς γυναικείας μονῆς μετὰ τῶν λοιπῶν τιμίων μοναζουσῶν, καὶ εὐλογηθεῖσαι ὑπ' αὐτοῦ, ἐξενεγκοῦσα ἐκείνην χρυσίνους πεντακοσίους, δίδωσι τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ εἰποῦσα α :

Εἰσελθὼν δὲ ἐν τῷ ναῷ τοῦ ἁγίου μάρτυρος Γεωργίου καὶ εὐξάμενος, προσελθούσης τῆς ἡγουμένης μετὰ τῶν λοιπῶν τιμίων μοναζουσῶν, ἡυλόγησεν αὐτάς. Ἡ δὲ προσετώσα δίδωσι πεντακοσίους χρυσίνους τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ εἰποῦσα β

prose-rhythm:

65,9: ὑπερήλατο σωρόν α : σωρόν ὑπερήλατο β

3) Barlaam and Ioasaph 30,113-114 (α) τὰ ῥήματα ἐκεῖνα τὰ πάσης πεπληρωμένα φιλοσοφίας

> 25,21 (β) τὰ ῥήματα ἐκεῖνα τὰ πάσης πεπληρωμένα σοφίας

Theodore of Edessa 85,8 (α) λόγοις παρακλητικοῖς θείας σοφίας πεπληρωμένοις

> 85,8 (β) λόγοις παρακλητικοῖς καὶ θεοδιδάκτοις

4) Barlaam and Ioasaph (both versions) 30,174-175 τὸν πύργον αὐτοῦ τῆς ψυχῆς

Theodore of Edessa 93,1 (α) τὸν πύργον τῆς ψυχῆς σου

> Theodore of Edessa 93,1 (β) τὸν οἶκον τῆς ψυχῆς σου.

archaizing:

37,2: γλώσσαις α: γλώτταις β

restoring a quotation:

101,3: τὴν ἄφεσιν τῶν πταισμάτων α: τὴν ἄφεσιν τῶν παραπτωμάτων
β

(cf. Eph. 1,7: τὴν ἄφεσιν τῶν παραπτωμάτων)¹²⁸

However, such stylistic refurbishing is not consistently enforced throughout *Theodore of Edessa*. Some clumsiness in syntactical and stylistic choices in version α remains untouched,¹²⁹ some learnedness is “lowered down” or simplified,¹³⁰ and several new slips are even introduced in version β.¹³¹ In fact, in several instances, version β contains clear errors, which were instrumental in establishing the primacy of version α. Some of these may have been authorial mistakes, the work of Euthymios; others may have been scribal blunders, the work of Theophanes. In the latter case, the mistakes must have been occasioned either at the moment of dictation or at the moment of creating the final, “authorized” manuscript copy. For we can imagine that Euthymios either dictated the second version to Theophanes, or gave him a draft copy from which to create the book copy of version β—the former process being perhaps the most probable. If so, the revision could have been improvised on the spot—which may explain some of the inconsistencies we have observed.

In any case, the pursuit of a slightly higher register, though present, does not seem to be the unambiguous single goal. Still the revision is thorough and thus Euthymios appears determined to change the textual appearance of the first version of his Greek compositions. Why? If we bring to mind the fact that an overwhelming portion of *Theodore of Edessa* is based on textual nesting, then

¹²⁸ For a few further examples of this, see the note “cf. vers. β” added to citations in the *app. font.* of version β in our edition. For similar examples in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, see the remark in Grossmann 2009, 94 (n. 43) with Høgel 2019, 355 (n. 15).

¹²⁹ See the following hanging nominative preserved in both versions (76,3): Εἶξας οὖν ὁ μέγας τῇ ἀξιώσει τοῦ γηραιοῦ, τῆς προσηκούσης ὑπηρεσίας ἐνεχθείσης, τελεῖται ἡ θεία μυσταγωγία etc.

¹³⁰ See e.g.:

15,1 πρὸς τοῖς τέσσαρσι διετέλεσε χρόνους (α) > εἴκοσι τέσσαρας διετέλεσε χρόνους (β)

18,1 χαίρειν εἰπόντες κόσμῳ τε καὶ τοῖς ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ (α) (cf. a marginal note added in ms. J χαίρειν εἰπόντες: τούτέστιν ἀποταξάμενοι) > καταλιμπάνοντες κόσμον καὶ πάντα ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ (β)

24,4 κάτεισιν αὐθις (α) > κατέρχεται πάλιν (β)

32,1 ἀπέτεμεν τὴν τιμίαν αὐτοῦ κάραν (α) > ξίφει ταύτην ἀπέτεμεν (β)

41,4 Θεουπόλεως (α) > Ἀντιοχείας (β)

76,2 ὀνησιφόρα (α) > ψυχωφελῆ (β)

110 ἀνταλλαγῆς (α) (the word appears in monastic documents of the period, also on Athos) > ἀνταλλαγῆς (β), etc.

¹³¹ For a list, see vol. II, Introduction 2.1. The same is observed in version β of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*; see Volk 2016, n. 62 with Volk 2009, 588–90.

another motivation comes into view. Very often, that is, the rewriting disguises the borrowing. The cases, for instance, where the text of version β rephrases—often simplifying—Metaphrastes or another non-biblical citation are multiple; we have noted at least 100 such instances.¹³² Indeed, the very fact that the text of version α is, in the overwhelming majority of these instances, closer to the original source is our strongest indication that version α precedes version β . Identical is the situation in regards to the two main versions of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*.¹³³ Could it be that Euthymios, in the mode of a good Byzantine rhetorician, was after stylistic individuality amidst his intensive borrowing? Is he making his textual loans *his own*? This seems plausible to us, and such intentions appear to be among the driving forces behind his rewriting.



Yet there may be more motives for the rewriting, as a crucial question remains unanswered. If its purpose was solely to create a somewhat better version in terms of style and a more autonomous version in terms of authorship, why then, we might ask, were these second, “cleaner” and more “Euthymian” versions of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and *Theodore of Edessa* not the ones to circulate widely beyond the library of the monastery of Iviron? Why did they not function as the “official”, “authorized” versions? One might, of course, attribute this situation to chance and speculate, for example, that the first versions of the two works were already in circulation *before* Euthymios undertook his revisions, or that—more plausibly, if both versions were completed within two-year periods as argued above—the monks of Iviron, by some accidental choice, circulated the first versions after Euthymios’ death. Yet the fact that this occurred in almost exactly the same way with both works makes it more likely, in our view, that the limited circulation of the second versions was *intentional*. At that, understanding the reasons behind the revisions requires us to look beyond *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and *Theodore of Edessa*.

Euthymian Rewriting beyond *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and *Theodore of Edessa*

Greek Texts in Manuscript A. A careful reader will discover that several more Greek texts on which Euthymios worked have undergone a similar kind of rewriting. Let us start with the immediate manuscript context of *Theodore of Edessa*, namely the texts included in manuscript A copied by Theophanes. Here are its contents, in detail:

¹³² They are marked in bold letters and indicated with “cf. vers. α ” in the *app. font.* of the edition.

¹³³ See Grossmann 2009, 94 with Volk 2009, 583–4 and Volk 2016, 419, and our discussion in Vol. II, Introduction 2.1.

- 1) 1r-7v: Basil of Caesarea, *De fide* 1 (a homily) (CPG 2859; PG 31, 464–72); Greek title: Λόγος εἰς τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα. Liturgical rubric: on the **Monday after Pentecost** (τῇ ἑπαύριον τῆς ν')
- 2) 7v-16v: four *Miracles of George the Martyr* (ed. Aufhauser, pp. 2–42), the earliest copy of this text in the Greek tradition; Greek title: Διήγησις θαυμάτων τοῦ ἁγίου καὶ ἐνδόξου μεγαλομάρτυρος τοῦ Χριστοῦ Γεωργίου. Liturgical rubric: **April 23**.

The four miracles are copied as a single continuous text with a unique introduction and conclusion (to which we shall return):

- a. 8r-9r: *de columna viduae* (BHG 691a)
 - b. 9-10: *de imagine perfossa* (BHG 690i)
 - c. f. 10-11 *de iuvene Paphlagonensi* (BHG 691m)
 - d. 11r-16v: *de filio ducis Leonis* (BHG 688c)
- 3) 17r-111v: <Nikephoros Ouranos'> *Life of Symeon the Stylite* the Younger (BHG 1690; PG 86: 2987–3216, revised version, unedited, to which again we shall return); Greek title: Βίος τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Συμεών, τοῦ ἐν Θαυμαστῷ Ὁρει. Liturgical rubric: **May 24**
 - 4) 112r-122r: *Passion and Miracles of Modestos*, bishop of Jerusalem (BHG 1299; Loparev 1892, 15–55); Greek title: Ἀθλησις καὶ θαυμάτων διήγησις τοῦ ἁγίου ἱερομάρτυρος Μοδέστου, ἀρχιεπισκόπου Ἱεροσολύμων. Liturgical rubric: **December 17**
- The text is followed by a prayer to the saint (preceded by instructions) in the case that “some illness befalls your animals” (ed. Loparev 1892, 54–5).
- 5) 122v-226r: Evagrius, *Life and Miracles of Pankratios*, archbishop of Taormina (second recension, unedited); Greek title: Εὐαγρίου ἐπισκόπου εἰς τὸν βίον καὶ τὰ θαύματα τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Παγκρατίου ἀρχιεπισκόπου Ταυρομενίας (notably revised from the usual title of BHG 1410; cf. 3.2 [text and note 69] above). Liturgical rubric: **July 9**
 - 6) 227r-285v: *Life of Theodore the Sabaite*, archbishop of Edessa (BHG 1744, version β); Greek title: Βίος καὶ πολιτεία τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Θεοδώρου, τοῦ διαλάμπαντος ἐν ἀσκήσει κατὰ τὴν μεγίστην Λαύραν τοῦ ἁγίου Σάβα, ἔπειτα γεγονότος ἀρχιεπισκόπου πόλεως Ἐδέσης, καὶ ἀξιωματικῶν κατωρθωκότος ἔργα, συγγραφείς παρὰ Βασιλείου ἐπισκόπου Ἐμέσης. Liturgical rubric: **July 19**

- 7) 285v-297v: the *Chapters of Theodore the Sabaite* (ed. *Philokalia* 1, 304–24); Greek title: *Κεφάλαια τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Θεοδώρου τοῦ Σαβαΐτου*
- 8) 297v: Here begins without title, for which empty space has been left, a redaction of the *Miracles of Elijah and Elisha the prophets* (BHG 573d ?; unedited); the text is interrupted mid-sentence (“ἦσαν δέκα ἕτεροι προφῆται πολλοί ...”), as apparently a folio or folios have fallen out
- 9) 298r-313r: *Life and Miracles of Elijah and Elisha the prophets* (BHG 577e; unedited); Greek title: Ὑπόμνημα εἰς τὸν ἄγιον ἐν προφήταις Ἡλίου, καὶ εἰς τὸν ὁπαδὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ φοιτητὴν Ἐλισσαίῃ τὸν προφῆτην, καὶ μερικὴ διήγησις τῶν τερατουργιῶν αὐτῶν καὶ θαυμάτων. Liturgical rubric: **July 20**
- 10) 313r-320r: *Life of Alexios, Man of God* (BHG 56d, unique version, at least in mss. of the Byzantine period; ed. Halkin 1980; for the versions of the story, see Papaioannou 2023, x–xiii and 284–5); Greek title: Βίος Ἀλεξίου τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τοῦ Θεοῦ. Liturgical rubric: **March 17**
- 11) 320r-324r: *Neilos the Monk* (in fact, Evagrius of Pontus), *De octo spiritibus malitiae* (CPG 2451; PG 79, 1145–1164); Greek title: Περὶ παθῶν
- For the very large ms. transmission of this text (85 codices), see Muyldermans 1939 with <https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/oeuvre/3336/>.
- 12) 324r-331v: *Maximos the Confessor, Orationis Dominicae expositio* (CPG 7691; PG 90, 872–909); Greek title: Ἑρμηνεία εἰς τὸ “Πάτερ ἡμῶν”, πρὸς Σέργιον μαγίστρον, αἰτήσαντα περὶ τούτου
- For the ms. transmission of this text, which is also large (43 codices), see van Deun 1991, lxxviii–clxvi; our ms., unfortunately, does not figure among the witnesses examined by van Deun.
- 13) 331v-366r: *Olympiodoros of Alexandria, Catena in Ecclesiastes* (CPG 7454; PG 93, 477–628); Greek title: Ὑπόμνημα εἰς τὸν Ἐκκλησιαστήν
- 24 ms. witnesses for this text are listed in <https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/oeuvre/1219/>. The recent edition of Boli 2004 does not use ms. A.

This is not a random selection of texts. There are some thematic links, such as the interest in Syro-Palestine (*Miracles* of George the Martyr: Palestine [Miracles 1 and 2], Syria [Miracle 3]; Symeon the Stylite: Antioch; Modestos: Jerusalem; Pankratios: Antioch and Jerusalem [though the main story focuses

on Italy]; *Theodore*: St Sabas and Edessa; Alexios: Edessa), in the confrontation of Byzantine Christians with the Arabs (*Miracles* of George the Martyr 2 and 3; *Theodore*), in short legends (Modestos and Alexios)—we may note here that the story about the Sicilian Saint Pankratios might have reached Euthymios through his Italian contacts on Athos, and a similar link may be envisioned for Alexios, whose cult and Greek textual tradition seems to have been established first in Rome.¹³⁴

Moreover, one can detect also strong liturgical links, as the hagiographical readings included in the manuscript carry liturgical rubrics. There exists, to begin with, a large (in terms of pages) cluster of readings for the month of July: the hagiographies on Pankratios (July 9), Theodore of Edessa (July 19), and two texts on Elijah and Elisha (July 20). More generally, one notices the gathering of readings for saints which had *not* been included in the most important menological collection of the time, with which Euthymios had already been preoccupied, namely the *Menologion* of Symeon Metaphrastes—*Menologia* being, after all, the most appropriate type of manuscript for the copying of such hagiographies by the early eleventh century. Such readings are the texts on the July saints just mentioned and then also (though in no strict chronological order) stories about Saints George (his *Miracles*; April 24), Symeon the Stylite the Younger (May 24), Modestos (December 17), and, after the July section, Alexios (March 17).¹³⁵

For George, additionally, Euthymios had Theophanes copy two further texts on this popular saint—namely, two *Encomia*, the first misattributed to Andrew of Crete (CPG 8186; BHG 681) and the latter anonymous (CPG 8194; BHG 682)—just a year earlier. They are transmitted in the aforementioned Mosq. Synod. gr. 162, copied in 1022, an entirely hagiographical collection, but almost exclusively *non*-Metaphrastic (see the entry in 2.2 above). Manuscript A then could be regarded as a repository of stories for the purposes of expanding, revising, or completing (however one might want to see it) the *Menologion* of Metaphrastes.

¹³⁴ Cf. 2.1 (text and note 27) above on Pankratios with Papaioannou 2023, x–xiii, on Alexios’ cult in Rome. On Modestos’ legend, see Sauget 1967. On other commonalities in the texts of the manuscript, see Caseau and Messis 2024, 168.

¹³⁵ The texts on Prophets Elijah and Elisha, and the *Miracles* of George the Martyr did not enter the *Metaphrastic* Menologion. Ouranos’ rather rarely transmitted *Life* of Symeon Stylites (Konstantatou 2025, 71–83) appears only once in such a *Menologion*, in the very particular, likely Southern Italian, 11th-c. ms. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Gr. 1° 17 (255) (Diktyon 9090); cf. Caseau and Messis 2021, 268 with Patterson Ševčenko 1990, 72–82. The *Life* of Pankratios entered some menological volumes, including the aforementioned Vind. hist. gr. 3 (Diktyon 70880; cf. n. 69 above). A is the only Byzantine ms. transmitting the text on St Modestos. Finally, versions of the *Life* of Alexios did enter the ninth volume (Febr. – April) of *Metaphrastic* collections, but only after our ms. A; for examples of such mss., see Ehrhard II, 592–614.

We shall return to this thought, but first we must remark that, in this regard, the most important link between the hagiographical texts included in **A**, is the fact that all of them seem produced in a similar style and, crucially, some of them have clearly undergone re-writing, indeed re-writing in the same mode, namely the sort of minor paraphrasing we outlined above in relation to *Theodore of Edessa*:

- 1) the *Passion and Miracles of Modestos* is written in a Metaphrastic style. Similarly, the second text on the *Life and Miracles of Elijah and Elisha the prophets* (BHG 577e) is furnished with, at the very least and as far as we could tell, a high style preface and a comparable peroration. Given that we have no earlier versions of these texts against which the ones in **A** could be judged, we cannot say if these are indeed re-writings by Euthymios. For the latter of the two texts, however, there is an indication that we could be dealing with a work from the wider Euthymian environment, as the only other early manuscript that transmits the text, Lavra K 122 B (Diktyon 28431), derives from mid-eleventh-century Athos and also contains *Life* B of Athanasios the Athonite, preceded by his (likely earliest) portrait.

For some similar expressions, see e.g. *Passion and Miracles of Modestos*, section 1 “λεγέσθω τὰ αὐτοῦ ... καὶ φιλοθέων ἀκοῶν προτιθέσθω εἰς μέσον” with, for instance, the *Life* of Luke Steiriotes 37 (BHG 994, inserted in Metaphrastes’ *Menologion*) “ἄξιον δὲ καὶ τοῦτο φιλοθέων ἀκοῶν τὸ διήγημα” and also section 3 “τὴν θαυμασίαν ἐκείνην καὶ ὑπερφυῖ δέχεται χειροτονίας” with *Life* of Theodore of Edessa 42,4 “τὴν τῆς ἀρχιερωσύνης δέχεται χειροτονίαν”.

- 2) As noted above, the four *Miracles of George the Martyr* are furnished with a unique introduction (edited in the critical apparatus of Aufhauser 1913: pp. 2-3) and a unique conclusion (edited in the main text in Aufhauser, pp. 40-42). These two additional textual units differ in style from the rest of the text (which is written in a somewhat lower register). More importantly, their style points to Euthymios’ Metaphrastic diction. See e.g.:

- *Miracles of George the Martyr*, prol. “ἀδιστάκτῳ πίστει καὶ στοργῇ ἑορτάζειν” with *Theodore of Edessa* 84,2 “ἀδιστάκτῳ τῇ πίστει καὶ πόθῳ θερμῶ προσῆλθον” and *Barlaam and Ioasaph* 39,10 “ἀδιστάκτῳ γνώμῃ”;
- *Miracles of George the Martyr*, prol. “πρόκειται ... ἱερὰ πανδαισία καὶ τρυφὴ ἀδάπανος” with *Barlaam and Ioasaph* 18,82-83 “ἀφθόνως πᾶσι πρόκειται ἀνήροτος τροφή καὶ αὐτοσχέδιος τράπεζα” and *Theodore of Edessa*

113,2 “ἀφθόνου τε καὶ ἀμίσθου τῆς θεραπείας ἀπήλαυον”, both inspired by Niketas David the Paphlagonian, *Laudatio in Gregorium theologum* (BHGN 725) 15 “ἄφθονός τε καὶ ἄμισθος πρόκειται τοῖς καλῶς πεινῶσι πανδαισία”;

- *Miracles of George the Martyr*, epil. “πολύχουν γεώργιον” with the *Life of Luke Steiriotēs* 12 (BHG 994, inserted in Metaphrastes’ *Menologion*) “πολύχουν ἦν τὸ γεώργιον”;
- *Miracles of George the Martyr*, epil. “τοῦ παμβασιλέως Χριστοῦ” with *Theodore of Edessa* 97,4 “τὸ μὴ μεταπίπτον ἄξιωμα”, both inspired by Niketas David the Paphlagonian, *Acta Andreae apostoli* (BHG 100) 54 “παρὰ δὲ τοῦ αἰώνιου τοῦ παμβασιλέως Χριστοῦ αἰώνιον καὶ μὴ μεταπίπτον ἄξιωμα”.

- 3) The *Life of Symeon the Stylite the Younger* is also re-written in distinctly Euthymian fashion.

For a discussion and parallel edition of several passages of Ouranos’s version and the version in ms. A, see Konstantatou 2025, 103–III and 285–324, with no mention, however, of the fact that A derives from Euthymios’ environment or the likely Euthymian origin of the stylistic changes observed in A.

- 4) The *Life and Miracles of Pankratios* is a second recension of the work which, in the words of Cynthia Stallman-Pacitti (2018, 27; cf. also 24–5), “represents an abbreviation and substantial stylistic improvement of the first recension. It appears to have been restricted to Mount Athos”.
- 5) Finally, the *Life of Alexios* has also been furnished with a new, unique preface that culls a Metaphrastic text and a text of Gregory of Nazianzus, weaving and rewriting them in the manner of Euthymios.

See *Vita Alexii* (BHG 56d) (*e cod. Mosq. 15, Vlad. 381*), Prol. Διὰ ταῦτα δίκαιον ἡγοῦμεθα μὴ σιωπῇ παραδραμεῖν τὰ ἐπὶ τῶν δωματῶν κηρύττεσθαι πρὸς σωτηρίαν ὀφείλοντα τῶν ἀνθρώπων, προθύμως δὲ μᾶλλον καὶ σπουδαίως ἐπὶ τὴν διήγησιν ἔλθειν τῆς οὐρανοφοίτου διαγωγῆς τοῦ πάντων ὑπεριδόντος τῶν φθαρτῶν καὶ Χριστὸν μόνον κερδήσαντος καὶ βίον ἀγγελικὸν ἐπὶ γῆς μετελθόντος πατὴρ ἡμῶν Ἀλεξίου, θεοῦ δηλαδὴ πρὸς εὐφημίαν τοῦ αὐτοῦ θεράποντος τὰ ἡμέτερα χεῖλη ἀνοίγοντος, οὐχ ἵν’ ἐκεῖνῳ τι εἰς εὐδοξίαν προσθήσω—τί γὰρ ἂν καὶ εἴη ὁ ἐκ τοῦ λόγου πρόσκαιρος ἔπαινος τῷ τῆς αἰδίου καὶ ἀκηράτου δόξης κληρονόμῳ; —ὠφελήσων δὲ μᾶλλον τοὺς ἀκρωμένους ὡς εἰκός, εἰ πρὸς τὸν ὅμοιον ζῆλον τῶν ἀρετῶν διαναστῆναι θελήσοιεν. Οὐ μὲν

νον γὰρ τοῖς σπουδαίοις καὶ τῆς ἀρετῆς ἐργάταις ὠφέλιμος ἡ διήγησις, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς βαρυκαρδίους ἡμᾶς καὶ ματαιότητα ἀγαπῶντας, ζητοῦντάς τε ψεῦδος, ὡς ὁ θεὸς λέγει Δαυῖδ, δύναται ὥσπερ τινὰ πέτρων τῷ συνεχεῖ σταλαγμῷ κοιλᾶναι καὶ πρὸς πόθον τινὰ θεῖον κατάνυξιν διεγείρει. Ἄρξομαι τοίνυν ἐντεῦθεν, θεὸν ποιούμενος προοίμιον τοῦ λόγου. (1) Ἐγένετο τις ἀνὴρ etc.

with:

- Sym. Met. *Passio sancti Charitonis* (BHG 301) 1: ... δεῖν νενόμικα μὴ παντελεῖ παραδοῦναι σιωπῇ τὰ ἐπὶ τῶν δωματῶν κηρύττεσθαι ἄξια, τοῦ θεοῦ φημί καὶ μεστοῦ χαρίτων *Χαρίτωνος*. Εἰ γὰρ καὶ βαρυκάρδιοι ἡμεῖς διὰ τὴν πρὸς τὰ γήϊνα τῆς καρδίας ροπὴν ἀγαπῶντες ματαιότητα, καὶ ζητοῦντες ψεῦδος, ὡς ὁ θεὸς λέγει Δαυῖδ, ἀλλ' οὖν, καθάπερ τις πέτρα, τὸν πυκνὸν καὶ ἀδιάπαιστον τοῦ λόγου σταλαγμὸν ἢ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου δεχομένη ψυχὴ πλήττεται πάντως πόθῳ τινί, καὶ τοῦ τὰ αὐτὰ γενναίως ὑπενεργεῖν διανίσταται, ἅπερ οἱ ἅγιοι πρὸς τῶν ἀοράτων τε καὶ ὁρατῶν ὑπομεμενῆκασιν πολεμίων. Ἄρξομαι γοῦν ἐντεῦθεν. Β'. Ἦν ὅτε οἷόν τις etc.
- and Greg. Naz. *Funeris oratio in laudem Basilii Magni* = Or. 43,8 τοῦτο διήλθον, οὐχ ἵν' ἐκείνῳ προσθῶ τι τῆς εὐδοξίας.

Such consistent nodes with the Metaphrastic style as well as the evident rewriting recommend Euthymios as the figure behind these texts as well. That is, it is very probable that, just as he revised Theodore's *Life* and *Chapters* for the creation of A, so he also worked on the Greek of the other hagiographies of the manuscript. If so, we need to add the new versions of (at the very least) the *Miracles* of George, the *Life* of Symeon the Stylite the Younger, and the *Life* of Alexios, to Euthymios' Greek literary hagiographical production. To put it differently, *Theodore of Edessa* and *Barlaam and Ioasaph* are *not* his only extant Greek works, and, in this regard, the earlier cited statement of Euthymios' biographer that he translated not only *Balavariani* and *Abu Qurrah* but also "several other books from Georgian into Greek" (GRD 1; M-H 5) may have some truth to it.¹³⁶

¹³⁶ It is beyond the scope of the present discussion to examine the following four-part problem:

- (a) if the Georgian translation of a *Life* of Athanasios included in John's *Preface* and the relevant list in Euthymios' *Life* by George Athonites refers to a *Life* of Athanasios of Athos and not of Alexandria (more likely, in our view);
- (b) if the newly edited fragment of a *Life* of Athanasios Athonites (Vita Σ; ed. Manaphes and Pitsineles 2018–2019), which differs from his *Lives* A and B (ed. Noret 1982), is the Greek version of that supposed, now lost Georgian text;
- (c) if Euthymios is perhaps the author of that Greek version;
- and (d) if the preserving ms. of Vita Σ, namely the 11th-c. Sinai, NE gr. M 63 (Diktyon *60890), is in fact to be associated with scribal activity at Iviron.

For discussion of some of these issues, see Manaphes and Pitsineles 2018–2019 with Noret 2020.

And there is more. We know that some of the texts included in **A** were used for Euthymios' translation projects, into Georgian as well as into Greek. With respect to the latter, we must highlight the fact that several of the texts (hagiographic as well as non-hagiographic) included in **A** were cherry-picked by Euthymios while he was composing Theodore's *Life*. We have already recorded his extensive debts to the *Life* of Symeon the Stylite. But there are parallels also with phrases from Basil of Caesarea's *On Faith* (or *On the Holy Spirit*, as it is titled in **A**) and the hagiographies of Alexios and, as we have seen, Pankratios.¹³⁷

In this regard, we may offer three comments. Firstly, no allusions to these Greek texts are found in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, which may once more suggest that *Theodore of Edessa* followed in temporal sequence. Secondly, and with respect to the debts to the *Life* of Symeon the Stylite specifically, it is notable that the quotations incorporated in the *Life* of Theodore are based on the original version of Ouranos and not on the text after its revision for **A**.¹³⁸ Apparently, Euthymios first used Ouranos while preparing version **a** of *Theodore of Edessa* and then also decided to incorporate Ouranos' text in his collection, simultaneously rewriting or having re-written his source text anew, but without re-adapting the *Life* of Theodore accordingly.¹³⁹ Thirdly, again in respect to Ouranos' text, it is remarkable that Euthymios removed the name of Ouranos from the title of the text. Should we see in this some kind of antagonism toward the earlier author, apparently a close acquaintance of Euthymios, or should we consider it as simply common practice in the rewriting of *recent* hagiographies (Symeon Metaphrastes too removed the name of Niketas David the Paphlagonian, when appropriating his texts for the *Menologion*)? Perhaps both processes are at work.

As for Georgian, is it a mere coincidence, we might ask, that several texts in **A** exist in Georgian translation, and at least two were certainly translated by Euthymios into his native tongue? The two Georgian texts about which we are certain of their Euthymian authorship are: (a) Basil of Caesarea, *De fide* 1 (Kurtsikidze 1983, 1–11); and, as already mentioned, (b) Pankratios (Stallman-Pacitti 2018, 26 with Khakhanov 1904). We are less sure about the texts of Evagrius/Neilos and Maximos the Confessor—though Euthymios might, in fact,

¹³⁷ See the relevant parts in the *Index of Intertexts* (vol. II), and 3.2 above for Pankratios. It is also likely that there are further intertextual links between Theodore's *Chapters* and the texts of Evagrius/Neilos, Maximos the Confessor, and Olympiodoros transmitted by **A**. Only a full new edition of the *Chapters* could clarify the matter further.

¹³⁸ For this, see the relevant notes in the *app. font*.

¹³⁹ A similar process is likely reflected with respect to the title of the text on Pankratios; cf. 3.2 (text and note 69) above.

be behind their Georgian versions.¹⁴⁰ There is, furthermore, some indication that the Georgian translation of the four *Miracles* of George could be linked to a Euthymian environment. Ms. Oxford, Bodl. georg. b.1, dated between 1038 and 1040, which derives from the aforementioned Jerusalemite Georgian monastery of the Holy Cross with strong ties to Iviron and which contains also the *Passion* of Michael the Sabaite, has among its contents the four (and only these four) *Miracles* of George, in the sequence of our ms. A.¹⁴¹ Is Euthymios, who was interested in St George in general, behind this translation too?¹⁴²

The first text in manuscript A, we should add, namely Basil's *On Faith*, was also used by Euthymios so as to create an interpolation into his translation of Gregory of Nazianzus' *Fifth Theological Oration* (Or. 31), while passages from Gregory's *Third* and *Fourth Theological Orations* (Or. 29 and 30) were employed in Euthymios' revised translation of Basil's *On Faith*.¹⁴³ More notably, it is no accident that, for at least one of these translations, namely, the *Life* of Pankratios, it has been established that the re-written Greek version preserved in A is close to one reflected in Euthymios' Georgian rendition. In other words, the Greek text on Pankratios in A and the Georgian version are related.¹⁴⁴ As we would like to argue, *both* the new Greek and the Georgian texts could very likely, in fact, be Euthymios' *own* work.

Greek Rewritings, Georgian Translations, and Metaphrasis on Athos. Manuscript A seems to reveal Euthymios' wider laboratory of translation, which consisted of extra-linguistic as well as intra-linguistic re-writing: translation into Georgian, preceded by or coextensive with *metaphrasis* within Greek. Is A a *unicum* for Euthymios, we might ask? A closer look, jointly, at the corpus of texts he translated into Georgian and those Greek manuscripts definitely pro-

¹⁴⁰ For the Georgian translations (by Euthymios?) of (a) Evagrius/Neilos' text CPG 2451, see Garitte 1956, 102 (no attribution), and (b) Maximos the Confessor's CPG 7691, see van Esbroeck 1988, 97 (by Euthymios) and van Deun 1991, cxliii (not by Euthymios).

¹⁴¹ On Oxford, Bodl. georg. b.1, see n. 30 above. On the four *Miracles*, see Tuite 2025, 256 (we would like to thank Prof. Tuite for sharing this article prior to publication).

¹⁴² We may furthermore note that, as Sergey Kim has demonstrated (2016, 309–19; cf. above 2.4 [text and note 74]), the early Iviron library possessed also a Georgian translation of the earlier base text (BHG 1689) for Ouranos' rewriting (BHG 1690) of the *Life* of Symeon the Stylite the Younger; the text survives in fragments of an 11th-c. ms., preserved as flyleaves added to other mss. (the fragmented ms. contained also a Georgian version of the *Life* of Symeon the Elder), and is a slightly revised version of an earlier Georgian translation—also preserved, we might add, in the Iviron library in the 10th-c. (latter half) Iviron, georg. 25 (Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 256–61). Could this revising be the work of Euthymios or someone in his environment? And could the fragmented Georgian manuscript be linked to Euthymios' interest in Ouranos' relevant text in ms. A?

¹⁴³ On this, see Kurtsikidze 2017.

¹⁴⁴ Stallman-Pacitti 2018, 27–8; of course, the exact relation between the version of Pankratios in ms. A and the Georgian translation of the story can be established only once the version of A is edited separately.

duced in Iviron, namely those ascribed to Euthymios' collaborator scribe Theophanes, can help us identify further similar cases—though we should note that, given the earlier, nearly strict bifurcation in the relevant scholarship, with Georgianists focusing only on the Georgian translations and Byzantinists focusing only on the Greek manuscripts and/or the Greek texts, there is plenty that remains to be discovered in this regard and many open questions have not met their answers nor can be offered here.¹⁴⁵

Below are, in any case, two definite instances of hagiographical texts, in regard to which we were able to establish direct links between Euthymios' Georgian renditions and the relevant Greek re-written versions, preserved in manuscripts copied by Theophanes:

(1) Sometime between 1011 and 1019, a trio of Euthymios' Georgian collaborators copied Tbilisi, NCM, A-1103 (see the relevant entry in 2.2 above). The manuscript includes Euthymios' translation of the *Miracles of Michael the Archangel*, which contains several departures from the mainstream relevant Greek version (BHG 1285). Korneli Kekelidze (1945, 237–68) had regarded these departures as creative inventions of Euthymios, acting independently from the Greek tradition. As Michel van Esbroeck (1988a, 98–102) was able to ascertain, however, there is a Greek version (BHG 1288d), which remains unedited and is quite close to the Georgian version. The two versions are not exactly identical and the Greek transmission of the text presents further complications—which do not concern us here.¹⁴⁶ Nevertheless, van Esbroeck regarded all this as evidence for the likely dependence, at the very least, of Euthymios on a pre-existing Greek model and thus questioned Kekelidze's enthusiastic endorsement of Euthymios' creative translation.

What van Esbroeck failed to notice, however, was that the manuscript which preserves BHG 1288d is Vatican, BAV, Ottob. gr. 422 (Diktyon *65665; ff. 265r–294r), completed in August 1004, and copied by Theophanes, Euthymios' Greek scribe (see the entry in 2.2 above). The manuscript contains also at least two further Greek hagiographies on which Euthymios worked for his Georgian translation project: Metaphrastes' *Life of the Virgin* (ff. 48v–68v; BHG 1047–1048), and Andrew of Crete's *Encomium* for Saint Nikolaos (ff. 324r–328v; BHG 1362–1362c). To what extent these latter Greek texts as they appear in Vat. Ottob. gr. 422 are themselves re-writings is unclear, as the matter remains unstudied. What is quite possible, nevertheless, is that the Greek version of the *Miracles of Michael the Archangel* included in Vat. Ottob. gr. 422 is a rewriting by Eu-

¹⁴⁵ Fonkič 1969 was the first to call attention to the link between the Greek manuscripts produced in Iviron and Euthymios' translations.

¹⁴⁶ The relation between BHG 1288d and a Metaphrastic text, BHG 1284, in the dossier of Michael the Archangel, a text used by Euthymios for *Theodore of Edessa* (section 69) is, for instance, unclear.

thymios himself, which was then used as a basis for his Georgian (itself partly free) translation.

(2) The manuscript Tbilisi, NCM, Q-34 is dated to ca. 1031 and was thus copied after Euthymios' death, yet still within his network of close ties between Iviron and Constantinople. It includes Euthymios' Georgian *Life* of Maximos the Confessor, a text already mentioned above (3.1) as a notable case of creative Euthymian translation-cum-composition techniques. Once again, van Esbroeck identified a Greek version (BHG 1233m) as the closest—though not identical—to Euthymios' Georgian rendition. However, the differences between these two texts have led scholars to conclude that Euthymios must have been working from another Greek version, now lost, which was itself closely related to BHG 1233m.¹⁴⁷

What has escaped notice, however, is that again the earliest manuscript, which preserves BHG 1233m, was copied by Theophanes; it is the aforementioned Mosq. Synod. gr. 162, completed in February 1022 and indeed forming yet another repository of texts which could be used for the expansion of Metaphrastes' *Menologion*.¹⁴⁸ Euthymios, we would like to claim, prepared a new version of the Greek *Life* of Maximos and then, on the basis of that, created a further revised Georgian *Life*.

To these two cases, we can add at least one more Greek hagiographical text, in this case definitely Metaphrastic, a version of the *Passion* of Barbara (BHG 216), which in the form copied by Theophanes and preserved in Athos, Koutloumousiou 25 of October 1011 has undergone stylistic revision, most likely, as has been convincingly argued, by Euthymios himself—though for Barbara we do not know if a Georgian translation was made by Euthymios.¹⁴⁹

Furthermore, we can point to a series of texts in the Metaphrastic *Menologion*, which can be found among (a) the texts translated into Georgian by Euthymios, (b) the Greek manuscripts copied in Iviron at his time, and (c) those texts culled

¹⁴⁷ See van Esbroeck 1988a, 80–2 (with comments on Kekelitze's view on the text) with Khiperia 2003 and 2005, and also Khiperia 2009, and 2015 (esp. pp. at 446–7). For the Greek dossier of Maximos, see also Roosen 2010.

¹⁴⁸ Apart from Maximos the Confessor and St George, Mosq. Synod. gr. 162 contains dossiers (including often rare texts) on Saints Demetrios, Cyrus and John, and Gregory of Nazianzus. The dossier on the latter saint is a case in point, since the manuscript contains the following two texts in sequence: first (ff. 252r–274v), the widely circulating *Life* by Gregory the Presbyter (the *only* text in the volume which was also included in Metaphrastes' *Menologion*); and second (ff. 252r–274v), a *Discourse* on the return of Gregory of Nazianzus' relics to Constantinople (BHG 728), produced at the court of Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos and for which Mosq. Synod. gr. 162 is the earliest of only two copies (Flusin 1999; esp. pp. 37–9).

¹⁴⁹ See Daria Resh on the Greek redaction of BHG 216 in Konstan and Resh *forthcoming* b. For existing Georgian translations of Barbara's *Passion* (without attribution of authorship, however), see Tarchnišvili/Assfalg 1955 = Kekelidze 1955, 471.

for phrases in creating *Theodore of Edessa* and *Barlaam and Ioasaph*—we have identified these texts above (3.2) as far as *Theodore of Edessa* is concerned, and a similar list could be drawn for *Barlaam and Ioasaph*. Could it be that also some of these Greek works have undergone minor rewriting in the process of being copied down and then used for the Georgian translation? For instance, to name one example, the version of Gregory of Nyssa's *Commentary* on the Lord's Prayer (CPG 3160), preserved in Theophanes' Vatican, BAV, Ottob. gr. 428, appears also to be the result of rewriting¹⁵⁰



Before every single text, Greek and Georgian, and related manuscript has been studied, we cannot say if most of the Greek texts—hagiographical as well as non-hagiographical—in the Euthymian environment went through Euthymian re-writing, or if any such re-writing was performed in a Euthymian fashion, or if in every case the re-writing was done for the purposes of translation into Georgian. Nor can we claim with any certainty whether the above re-writing activity was because Euthymios was influenced by, or even belonged to, the intellectual circle of Symeon Metaphrastes as well as Nikephoros Ouranos, as has been suggested—for Euthymios could have actually operated in part antagonistically to them. As suggested earlier in our discussion (2.1 and 2.4), and as we wish to revisit here, there remains an alternative—or perhaps complementary—possibility. If Euthymios received or, at the very least, completed his training in discursive culture on Athos under Athanasios, he may also have continued a discursive practice reflected in manuscripts of John Chrysostom copied on the holy mountain by Athanasios the Athonite's close associate and scribe, John of Lavra, in the mid-980s and mid-990s.

These manuscripts follow the most recent Constantinopolitan trends. This applies not only to John's Constantinopolitan scribal habits, which, as has been demonstrated by Marco D'Agostino and Paola Degni (2020), are fine specimens of *Perlschrift*, a formal book-script developed precisely in this period in the capital. It pertains also, we would argue, to the form of the texts included. For in these manuscripts, many (if not all—the matter has not been thoroughly investigated) of Chrysostom's works are *re-written* in procedures which partly resemble what we encounter in Euthymios' Georgian translations and Greek works.¹⁵¹ Euthymios, we should remember, early on in his translation project worked pre-

¹⁵⁰ See Boudignon, Cassin, and Seguin 2018, 198–200, yet with no discussion of the likely Euthymian connections.

¹⁵¹ On the 10th-c. revision of Chrysostomic works, see most recently Konstantinidou 2022, who mentions two mss. of John of Lavra among the earliest specimens of the revision: Paris, BNF, Coislin 75 (Diktyon *49219) and Mosq. Synod. gr. 100 (Vladimir 108; Diktyon 43725), dated to 993 (in the arti-

cisely on John Chrysostom (perhaps using the relevant Lavra manuscripts or copies from them?), before turning later on, in a more concentrated fashion, to hagiographical texts, including Metaphrastes.¹⁵²

These re-writings of Chrysostom, attested in the manuscripts in question, must have been very recent products and one could even speculate that either Athanasios himself or, at the very least, the intellectual environment to which he belonged or in which he was formed, was behind their making. Athanasios, as our readers recall, had been an accomplished teacher in Constantinople at the time of Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos (945–959), a period when interest in John Chrysostom as well as Gregory of Nazianzus, that other favorite of Euthymios, was remarkably concentrated and promoted not only by the emperor himself but also by rhetoricians including (but not limited to) Theodore Daphnopates (for Chrysostom) and, a bit earlier, Niketas David the Paphlagonian (for Gregory), themselves protagonists in the gradual rhetoricization of Byzantine hagiography which culminated in Symeon Metaphrastes.¹⁵³ If Euthymios completed his discursive schooling with Athanasios and his learned scribes, he may thus have learned the trade of rewriting and certainly its legitimacy and cultural cache on Athos.



The questions that remain open are many. Nevertheless, whatever the intellectual origins of Euthymios' rewriting, the above is, in our view, sufficient to justify the following proposition which we would like to put forward here. Namely, what we witness in *A* or, more specifically, the stylistic revision done in relation to Theodore of Edessa (the *Life* and *Chapters*) was *possibly* conducted also for the purposes of preparing the basis for a Georgian translation, and, as far as one can discern this, the same might apply to the second version of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* as well. Euthymios' sudden death may perhaps have prevented him from proceeding with these further possible translation projects himself, yet the re-written versions offer us traces of what might have been in the making.

cle, this ms. is mistakenly cited as Mosq. Synod. gr. 101 [= Vladimir 102; Diktyon 43726]). For these revisions, see further Gignac 1998 with Konstantinidou 2006, 69–71 (with further bibliography).

¹⁵² No study exists, as far as we know, regarding the Greek versions of the Chrysostomic texts used for Euthymios' translations.

¹⁵³ On Daphnopates and Chrysostom, see Haidacher 1902. On Niketas and Gregory, see Rizzo 1976 and Moreschini and Costa 1992. On Constantine VII and Gregory, see Flusin 1998 and 1999. On rhetoricization in relation to Gregory of Nazianzus in this period, see further Papaioannou 2021d, 83–7 and 95–102.

3.4. CONSTANTINOPOLITAN CANON, EUTHYMIAN INNOVATIONS

It is time to summarize our observations and articulate some broader inquiries. The composition of the *Life* and *Chapters* of Theodore of Edessa, similarly to the composition of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, went through a complex multi-stage process. First, a Georgian hypotext, the relatively short *Passion* of Michael the Sabaite as preserved in a manuscript in the Iviron library, was rendered into Greek by Euthymios. The first draft translation (if it ever existed) does not survive. What is preserved in Greek is a much larger text, most probably composed after the completion of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* in May 1021. Within this text, the story of Michael is embedded, in a restructured, creatively reconfigured, and expanded form, within a new story. The latter is the biography of a fictive saint, Theodore of Edessa, a distant double of a real personality, Theodore Abū Qurrah, a leading figure of ninth-century Syro-Palestinian Christianity. This larger work was inspired by the *Passion* of Michael and, partly, Euthymios' earlier work *Barlaam and Ioasaph*. As conceived by Euthymios, the dossier of this invented Theodore included also the recording of the Edessan bishop's ascetic teachings, the *Chapters*, appended as a separate textual unit right after the end of the *Life* of its supposed author.

In composing Theodore's *Life* and *Chapters*, Euthymios culled a series of earlier Greek texts, mostly verbatim—without attribution, but instead thoroughly appropriated—so as to produce large and small building blocks that would make up the words, deeds, and text of his new saint. Expectedly, these earlier texts were discursive and narrative in nature. The former derived mostly from the Syro-Palestinian intellectual environment and relevant theological canon popular throughout the Byzantine world by Euthymios' time, while the latter came primarily from the most recent Constantinopolitan hagiographical production, exemplified by Symeon Metaphrastes' *Menologion* and some related compositions. The latter textual corpus, along with star-rhetoricians from the early Byzantine homiletic canon, such as Gregory of Nazianzus and others, and also Euthymios' own *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, were furthermore employed on a more minute level, so as to generate the style and linguistic register of the narrative and framing parts of the *Life* and the *Chapters* of Theodore as a whole.

Once the full text was composed, through a creativity that radiates from every contour and fold, and once it was copied, Euthymios returned to it one last time. This process, likely through dictation, was completed by June 1023, when a slightly paraphrased *Life* and *Chapters* was written in a manuscript in Iviron. This more Euthymian and, at that, "authoritative" version in terms of style was perhaps created also with the intention that *Theodore of Edessa* would be trans-

lated in the future into Georgian as well—though this last point can only remain a speculation.



For anyone familiar with Euthymios, it is perhaps no surprise that extra-linguistic translation, textual nesting, and intra-linguistic re-writing were the composition techniques employed for *Theodore of Edessa*—and *Barlaam and Ioasaph*. Scholarship on Euthymios' better studied *Georgian* translations has identified all three procedures as being at work in the corpus of texts he had created for his Georgian-speaking audience.¹⁵⁴ To this earlier image of Euthymios, we were able to add a detailed view of the same techniques, this time applied to his Greek compositions: not only as translations from Georgian—as has been gradually, though hesitantly, accepted about *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and only rarely about *Theodore of Edessa* in earlier scholarship—, but also as products of textual nesting as well as textual re-writing, which was applied, as we also argued, beyond these two texts into other *Greek* hagiographies produced in the context of Iviron.

What motivated Euthymios to create these two large compositions in Greek and, especially concerning us here, *Theodore of Edessa*? Why did they take this specific form? And what is their place in the history of Byzantine Greek literature? The answer to these questions partly lies in Euthymios' socio-historical context, which we have outlined earlier in this introduction, as well in the cultural premises and intentions that the story of *Theodore of Edessa* could unfold before Euthymios' readership, premises and intentions which we shall explore in the next chapter. Here, we would like to survey these issues from a *literary* historical perspective.

The Literary Context

The scene must be first set briefly of the major literary trends within the social contexts in which Euthymios was formed as a reader and writer—namely the networks of monastic and lay audiences between Athos, Constantinople, Syro-Palestine, and, perhaps also, Southern Italy. Our focus shall be the two discursive fields which were crucial for the composite nature of Euthymios' two Greek texts: narrative hagiography and theological literature, including homilies, dogmatic treatises, and monastic/ascetic advice texts.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁴ See 3.1 (text and note 35) above.

¹⁵⁵ General overviews of Greek literature in this period: Kazhdan 2006, 133–336; Flusin 2006; Agapitos 2020, 19–33; on hagiography specifically (highlighting the 10th-c. systematization efforts which we shall also discuss): Efthymiadis 2011; Paschalidis 2011; and the joined papers of Ivanov 2016a and 2016b,

What one first observes is that the weight—which attracted financial and social capital—for both fields in Euthymios’ time fell on texts intended and suitable for public recital in liturgical settings. Nevertheless, these same texts were also read beyond strictly speaking ritual contexts—in lay and monastic education, pious aristocratic households (including the imperial palace), monastic refectories and gatherings, and in public, semi-public, or private, communal or solitary settings. Second, both fields were being extensively *systematized* in Constantinople, often through imperial initiatives, on the basis of earlier authoritative texts—a process peaking in the mid-tenth century. In the following decades, these systematized corpora began to be “exported” or “imported” (depending on how centripetal this activity may be seen) throughout the Byzantine world, in Greek and in Georgian, Arabic, and Slavic.¹⁵⁶

The protagonist texts in the systematization of theological discourse, beyond the aforementioned Syro-Palestinian textual tradition, which boasted a series of texts produced from the sixth into early ninth century, were a few early Byzantine homiletic corpora (with partly hagiographical content as well) by authors whom we have encountered many times above, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, and John Chrysostom. In hagiography, the systematization of which seems to have been slower in the making, the most recent watershed moments had been the formation of the *Synaxarion of Constantinople* in the 950s—whose impact was steadily increasing at the time of Euthymios, who produced a Georgian version, and beyond—and then the new *Menologion* put together by Metaphrastes and his team in the 970s and 980s.¹⁵⁷

Given the fact that the generic identity of Euthymios’ two texts was hagiographical, and that Euthymios was, above all, indebted to Metaphrastes for his prose, one is obliged to first juxtapose *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and *Theodore of Edessa* to this last and most recent canonical corpus, Metaphrastes’ *Menologion*. The latter, as is well known, had introduced certain innovations. It established a specific selection of saints and feasts, for most of which specific earlier versions were selected from a large corpus of related hagiographical texts, while for some saints and feasts new compositions were put forward. Moreover, as far as we can tell, for the first time in the history of the *Menologion*—whose beginnings

Flusin 2016, and Déroche 2016; on the relevant compilation practices: Holmes 2010 and Van Deun and Macé 2011. For some discussions pertinent to what follows, see also Papaioannou 2024a, 29–40, 2026a, and 2026b.

¹⁵⁶ On these translation movements, in Georgian and Arabic, see 2.4 (text and notes 63 and 64) above; on translations into Slavic, see Ivanov and Turilov 2021.

¹⁵⁷ On the *Synaxarion of Constantinople*, see Luzzi 1995 and 2014 with Papaioannou 2022 and 2026b (with further bibliography). For details of the Metaphrastic *Menologion*, presented in this and the next two paragraphs, see the authoritative treatment in Høgel 2002; see also Høgel 2014. For another overview and further bibliography, see also Papaioannou 2017, vii–xxvi.

as a liturgical collection can be traced back to the eighth/ninth centuries¹⁵⁸—, Metaphrastes' collection also aimed at a consistent unity of style and linguistic register across the *entire* corpus, based on the style of a few hagiographies incorporated within it with virtually no alteration as well as the aforementioned late ancient homiletic corpora—along with a more recent one, namely the tenth-century hagiographical homilies of Niketas David the Paphlagonian. To this stylistic yardstick, all incorporated texts had to conform, whether these were the few new compositions or the many anonymous earlier ones, which were revised through *metaphrasis*, namely re-writing.

The *Menologion* thus created a canon of liturgical feasts, a canon of authoritative texts, a canon of some authoritative writers (for those few texts that were incorporated *eponymously* in the collection), and a canon of style. But it was also left incomplete, in its coverage of the full ecclesiastical year, especially its second half (March through August).¹⁵⁹ Furthermore, though the initial impetus and the eventual function of the project were certainly *canonical*, there are indications that some time had to pass before this canonization gained full force in the Byzantine world, a development that would be completed by the 1030s at the latest. Between the 990s and the 1030s—a period which coincides with Euthymios' literary activity—it is unclear how much, in what form, and with what status Metaphrastes' *Menologion* did circulate, a problem which cannot be treated here.¹⁶⁰ Regardless of the exact details, both the incompleteness and the fluid status of the *Menologion*, early in its history of transmission, invited completion as well as adaptation, reconfiguration, and even deviation, as all literary canons do, especially in the context of literature produced primarily for usage in ever-evolving practices associated with ritual and devotional life.



Whatever the actual connections that Euthymios had or did not have with the author of that *Menologion*, it is beyond doubt that this new liturgical collection was very much in his mind—after all, as Christian Høgel has rightly observed, Euthymios' monastic library, collaborating scribes, and translation activity provide the only securely dated and localized evidence of Metaphrastes' influence

¹⁵⁸ See Ehrhard 1937 (namely, vol. I) and the discussion in Høgel 2002, 20–60; more work needs to be done in this regard. See also recently the overview of the relevant hagiographical manuscripts/collections in Høgel 2025.

¹⁵⁹ See Høgel 2002, 113–20; cf. also Høgel 2024, 141–2.

¹⁶⁰ The fluid status of the *Menologion* applies to the very text itself, as at least two recensions (with minor variations) can be observed early on in the transmission history; see Papaioannou 2017, 266–7. In this regard, a further problem which we are unable to address now—as most of the related texts remain without a proper critical edition—is which recension of the Metaphrastic texts was followed by Theophanes for those Metaphrastic texts that he copied and consequently which recension is the basis for the borrowings in Euthymios' compositions.

from the 990s to the 1030s.¹⁶¹ Indeed, as we would like to argue, something larger was at stake for Euthymios. In our view, Euthymios was actively and consciously engaged in a project of creating a new, Georgian corpus of hagiographical texts based *also* on the most recent such corpus coming out of Constantinople of his time, namely Metaphrastes' *Menologion*.

The undertaking makes good sense in the context of Euthymios' larger translation project. From the surviving Euthymios' Georgian translations, it is clear that he was targeting first and foremost canonical corpora¹⁶² with the intention of replacing, updating, and expanding the relevant earlier Georgian tradition, most of which derived from a Syro-Palestinian environment and often translations from languages other than Greek. Thus, he proceeded with the completion of the canon of the New Testament (translation of the book of *Revelation* early on, in 978), the establishment and partly creation (because of his inventive and compilatory translations) of major homiletic and ascetic collections—especially by Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus (complete with relevant *commentaries*), John Chrysostom, and Maximos the Confessor—, and of course the translation of the *Synaxarion* and the major hymnals which had been put together over the course of the ninth and tenth centuries in Constantinople.

His longer-term target seems to have been a *Menological* collection in Georgian. This is apparent from both the Greek hagiographical texts Euthymios did translate into Georgian (the earliest dated relevant such translations are from 991), and the several Greek hagiographies he had Theophanes and others copy for the library of Iviron from 1004 (at the latest) and onward, from which point both the Greek and the Georgian hagiographical evidence in Euthymios' textual environment in fact increases. This was a corpus where the Metaphrastic *Menologion* was central but did not constitute the totality. Many more hagiographical texts were included, often dossiers with multiple texts pertaining to a saint, and certainly some new versions of earlier texts, even Metaphrastic versions, were created. Unlike his other works, this enormous project for Georgian audiences, like that of Metaphrastes himself, was never completed—perhaps interrupted by Euthymios' sudden death in 1028.

What is pertinent to the present inquiry is that a *byproduct* of Euthymios' gradually intensifying collection and production of hagiography were the two texts which targeted Greek audiences as well, on Athos, Constantinople, and possibly beyond. Euthymios, that is, while gathering and revising more and more Greek hagiographies and preparing translations of such texts into Georgian, took the step of also composing two extensive, fictive Greek hagiogra-

¹⁶¹ Høgel 2019, 359.

¹⁶² Cf. Bezarashvili 2013, 104–5.

phies, based partly on Georgian hypotexts, both unknown to the Greek tradition. Though, as we have speculated above, both texts, in a rewritten form, could have possibly been destined eventually also for a Georgian-speaking audience, Euthymios must definitely have been thinking also of a Greek audience—otherwise why would he invest such an immense and ingenious effort in composing them? And, indeed, his two texts gained precisely such an audience, and quickly a very devoted one at that—especially in regard to *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and later on with respect to Theodore the Sabaite's *Chapters*.

The issue of the intended audience is crucial. Euthymios' place as a hagiographer in front of this Greek audience was somewhat precarious, we might say. A partly integrated outsider, a bilingual person, and a dedicated Georgian, actively engaged in constructing Orthodoxy in that language, Euthymios was likely anxious—to put it in rather simplified, but hopefully not too simplistic “psychological” terms—to gain authorial respectability and, as it were, to fit in within also Greek-speaking/reading settings, when creating such large compositions in Greek. Along the way, consciously or unconsciously, with his two compositions, Euthymios over-achieved and partly over-stepped, maximized and partly renovated the literary canon that he was at such pains to re-create in Georgian and imitate in Greek.

Beyond the Metaphrastic Menologion

These Euthymian innovations took various forms. Let us begin with the *liturgical* perspective. At the most basic level, what Euthymios—drawing on his own Georgian tradition—introduced to his Greek-reading audience were several entirely new saints, presumably intended also for liturgical veneration: Barlaam the ascetic, Ioasaph the Prince turned ascetic, Theodore, a Sabaite monk and then bishop of Edessa, Michael the Sabaite martyr, and John, the Persian King, former Muslim, and then also a martyr.

In this regard, *Theodore of Edessa* seems more in line with a *Menologion* that completes Metaphrastes within the larger framework of menological readings. It provides dates of commemoration and insists on the list of saints it puts forth to the reader. It was based, as we saw earlier, on a Georgian menological text, the *Passion* of Michael. Moreover, as we have also seen, in its second, final version β in the essentially authorial manuscript (A), the text was preserved in a partly menological, liturgical collection. As a matter of fact, near the middle of the text of Theodore's *Life* (section 45,4), on the margin of ms. A (f. 248r), one reads, in Theophanes' handwriting, the word “Στάσις = Pause”. The note addressed the lector and perhaps signaled the end of one session's (a day's?) reading portion.

The picture is, nevertheless, complicated. Though Euthymios' new saints did become known and venerated in some circles, the *Life* did not enter consistently or decidedly *Menologia* manuscripts nor, we might add, were the saints of *Theodore of Edessa* ever included in the related Greek *Synaxarion* tradition, as far as we are able to tell. This is partly to be expected. Euthymios' work on Saint Theodore did not simply consist of a short or medium-sized *Life*, with a straightforward biographical narrative, which could fit a typical *Menologion*. Rather, Theodore's biography is an extensive and composite text of 31,933 words. Moreover, it includes a second textual unit, the *Chapters*, as an integral component, a clearly non-hagiographical work, destined to be read both independently and also *together* with the *Life*, thus raising the number of words to almost 40,000. A few extensive texts were occasionally incorporated in *Menologia* and, more specifically, the Metaphrastic *Menologion*, but they were rarely as extensive or as composite as *Theodore of Edessa*.¹⁶³ *Theodore of Edessa* could work, that is, simultaneously as a menological *and* as a non-menological text.

This ambiguous status is reflected in the manuscripts of version *α*. The twelfth-century Athonite manuscript *F* contains a fragment of a hagiographical collection, where the *Life* of Theodore (whose beginning is unfortunately missing) is followed by two Metaphrastic texts for Eustathios Plakidas (Sept. 20) and John Chrysostom (Jan. 27)—both texts notably used and likely re-written in the context of Euthymios' translation project—and then, as if as an appendix, Theodore's *Chapters*. The thirteenth-century (also likely Athonite) *G* transmits only the *Life* of Theodore, which is missing its end and thus any likely other texts possibly contained within it originally; the *Life* nevertheless carries the liturgical designation of July 19, so we may be dealing with a fragment of a book with a menological function. The same could likely apply to the eleventh(2/2?)-/twelfth(1/2?)-century *E*, a manuscript mutilated both at its beginning and at its end, and whose title page for the *Life* of Theodore is faded. Finally, the sixteenth-century manuscript *m*, created in Iviron, follows (though in a reworked fashion) our manuscript *A*, and thus retains its menological character.

All other manuscripts, however, place the *Life* among *non*-liturgical readings, whether as a single text (mss. *N* and *L*) or as part of a small (*B*, *C*, *J*, and *K*) or bigger collection (*D*, copied by the same scribe as *G*); three of these manuscripts include the *Chapters* right after the *Life* (*B*, *N*, and *K*), one (*D*) includes them in a separate segment of its collection of ascetic texts, while the *Chapters* also

¹⁶³ In general, very few texts exceed a 10,000-word count in Metaphrastes' original *Menologion*. Among the most extensive ones were the epitome of the *Clementine Homilies* (BHG 345–347; CPG 1015.7; CANT 209.7) of 25,310 words, followed by the 17,928 words of the aforementioned (n. 120) *Life* of Stephen the Younger (BHG 1667). On the (related for us here) *Lives* of Pankratios and Symeon the Younger by Ouranos, see note 135 above.

survive in numerous further codices independently. The transmission behavior of the excerpts from the *Life* is similar, as they are part of anthologies or miscellaneous collections. Since thus we have no manuscript of version α which goes back to Euthymios' life-time or immediate environment, it cannot be established whether it was originally part of a hagiographic (as is the case with version β and manuscript A) or a non-menological collection. Nevertheless, the later manuscripts suggest that the text did assume also the latter status, and this must have translated into recital settings and functions which were *outside* those usual for menological hagiographies.

This situation is even more accentuated in *Barlaam and Ioasaph* which, as far as is possible to know, was never provided a liturgical rubric in the manuscripts that transmit the text—the two saints themselves were given liturgical dates (though no narrative *synaxaria*) only in the twelfth-century Greek *Synaxarion* tradition, within the context of so called M* recension.¹⁶⁴ This definite non-liturgical placement of the text can be explained by two factors: (a) unlike the Georgian hypotext of *Theodore*, the original Georgian *Balavariani* apparently did not have a liturgical designation (even if the two saints had entered the Georgian liturgical calendar by the tenth century)¹⁶⁵; and, perhaps more importantly, (b) *Barlaam and Ioasaph* comes to an immense size (64,899 words), a length that exceeds by far what can be contained in a *Menologion* volume—it follows naturally that it is usually transmitted in single-text manuscripts.

Though both texts, that is, were fully immersed in Metaphrastic style and were likely created as byproducts of Euthymios' larger project of creating new hagiographical collections in Georgian (and perhaps also in Greek), they also operated—one of them completely—*beyond* the limits of menological collections and their most recent Constantinopolitan standardization effort.



At that, both texts satisfied yet another strand of hagiographical literary tastes evident in this period. These tastes were partly distinct from the hagiographical canon which was being formed in Constantinople of the latter half of the tenth century—indeed, some of the saints which such texts celebrated either did not make it into the *Synaxarion of Constantinople* or were included only later, sharing the similar fate of Euthymios' new saints.¹⁶⁶ We are referring to the Middle Byzantine interest in *Lives* which were very lengthy and partly composite, and which were written in a style resistant to high, learned aspirations.

¹⁶⁴ See Papaioannou 2022, 174, and 2026b—contra Volk 2009, 146.

¹⁶⁵ Volk 2009, 58. See also Sakvarelidze 2014, 285–6 for the 11th-c. evidence.

¹⁶⁶ See Papaioannou 2026b (specifically, on Sts Andrew the Fool, Basil the Younger, and Nephon of Konstantiane).

This is a “group” of hagiographical texts which has been discussed in scholarship from different perspectives, though never treated comprehensively in depth.¹⁶⁷ The list of texts which might be said to belong to this “group” has not been fully settled and the (sometimes excessive, in our view) tendency has been to assign all potential members to the latter half of the tenth century, and even in the same social circles.¹⁶⁸ The matter cannot be resolved here, but texts of this “group”—such as the *Life* of Andrew the Holy Fool, the massive dossier of Gregentios of Taphar (BHG 705; CPG 7009; Berger 2006), Basil the Younger’s *Life* (BHG 263; Sullivan, Talbot, and McGrath 2014 and Pentkovskaia, Shchegoleva, and Ivanov 2018), and the *Life* of Nephon of Konstantiane (BHG 13712; Rys-tenko 1928; Ivanov 2006, 168–72, Marinis 2017)—, all extensive and partly composite have often been brought up in connection to either *Barlaam and Ioasaph* or *Theodore of Edessa* or both.¹⁶⁹

And, rightly so. At least one among them, namely the *Life* of Andrew the Holy Fool, certainly both pre-dates the making of *Theodore* and can be linked, as we have seen, with it.¹⁷⁰ To Andrew the Fool, which is a mid-tenth-century

¹⁶⁷ Rydén 1990; Ivanov 1996; Magdalino 1999 and 2003b; Kazhdan 2006, 185–210; Berger 2006, 40–5; Efthymiadis 2011, 125–8; Flusin 2016, 28–29 and Déroche 2016 with the comments by Ivanov 2016b; Flusin 2018, 12–13.

¹⁶⁸ See the critical remarks in Messis 2012, 208–16 and 2014a, 204–6; also, Timotin 2006.

¹⁶⁹ See the aforementioned studies of Efthymiadis, Flusin, and Déroche in n. 167 above, as well as the following remarks: Høgel 2012, 236 (in relation to Euthymios’ *Barlaam and Ioasaph*): “... the strategy of Euthymios was to make the new text appear in the Greek world as a specific type of hagiography that was becoming widespread, perhaps even popular, in Byzantium at the end of the tenth century, namely the saint’s life of a type that included whole treatises and extensive documentation, in some cases approaching historiographical dimensions. These texts, such as the *Life* of Gregentios, the *Life* of Basil the Younger, and to some extent also the *Life* of Andrew the Fool, were lengthy texts (more than one hundred pages in modern editions), which despite their clear mirroring of ordinary saints’ lives took the genre beyond its liturgical limits, and instead focused on convincing its reader through narrative inventiveness (as in the *Life* of Andrew the Fool) and massive documentation (as in the *Life* of Gregentios)”.

And Tkachëv 2023, 21–22 (in reference to the *Life* of Theodore, though not in connection to Euthymios): “[Theodore’s] *Life* is indeed one of the striking examples of the genre of *Lives* of the so-called framed or novelistic type (see the *Lives* of St. Gregentios the Homerites, St. Andrew, Fool for Christ, St. Nephon of Constantiane, St. Basil the Younger, etc.), whose heyday in Byzantium occurred in the 10th century. Texts of this kind are characterized by common features: a fictitious hero and narrator (allegedly an eyewitness); anachronisms; a large volume due to the inclusion in the *Life* of texts in various genres, indirectly related to the hero of the narrative; literary entertainment. Many of these elements are also found in the *Life* of Theodore, a person who is undoubtedly real”.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. 3.2 above. We cannot claim the same with any certainty about the hagiographies on Gregentios, and Basil the Younger, and Nephon, the latter two of which may in fact be 11th-c. compositions. The earliest preserved manuscripts of all three texts date to the 12th c., while the earliest evidence for the existence of the stories of Gregentios and Nephon date to the mid-11th c. (Berger 2006, 163 on Gregentios, and Rydén 1990 on Nephon). Moreover, for what it is worth, no Georgian translation of any of these three texts is listed in Kekelitze’s relevant catalogue; Tarchnišvili/Assfalğ 1955 = Keke-

Constantinopolitan product, we would like to also add a related text of Southern Italian origins. Though it has not been studied together with the aforementioned “group” in this regard, it shares some of its key features (namely size and composite nature) and was certainly crucial for Euthymios. This is no other than the *Life* of Pankratios, mentioned many times above and dateable to around the turn of the ninth century.¹⁷¹

Unlike common *menological* texts, yet similar to other texts in the above “group”, the *Lives* of Andrew and Pankratios could hardly be read within one liturgical service or in one reading session. They were both quite extensive (Andrew: 45,558 words; Pankratios: 66,371 words), and both included slightly independent textual units: a section with *Questions and Answers* (lines 2893–3460) and an apocalyptic *Vision* (3805–4131) in Andrew’s *Life* and an autonomous fictive story on Tauros and Menia (sections: 280–302) in Pankratios.¹⁷² Moreover, both were also composed in a style that is somewhat removed—in varied degrees, of course—from the Metaphrastic, high-register style of Constantinopolitan literature of Euthymios’ time.

A thorough comparison of Euthymios’ Greek compositions with these and other similar (earlier, contemporary, later?) works is beyond the scope of our study—just as it would far exceed the limits of our present work to conduct a full-scale comparison with *menological* collections with which Euthymios might have been familiar. Nevertheless, if we were to set, in general terms, Euthymios against contemporary Greek mainstream Constantinopolitan hagiography and alternative trends, we could venture the following opinion.

Euthymios’ most basic departure consisted in adopting the parameters—length and composite nature—of “oversized” texts like those on Pankratios and Andrew, while he simultaneously introduced into their “genre” (if we can call it thus) a distinctly Metaphrastic, Constantinopolitan style. The effect was thus double, and partly paradoxical. The “genre” was fully

lidze 1955, 465–97. Thus, while the following distant connections to Euthymios may be pointed out, they are far from conclusive on whether Euthymios knew these texts: (a) The oldest manuscripts of Nephon (44031, dated to 1126: Lavra) and Basil (Diktyon 24075: Iviron) are likely Athonite; (b) the *Life* of Gregentios (5,306–14) and our *Theodore* (5,1) share a similar—though more elaborate in the former text—vision where the saint is handed honeycomb to eat; (c) similarly, there exists a minor convergence between passages in the *Life* of Theodore 77,2, *Barlaam and Ioasaph* 18,142–143, and the *Life* of Basil the Younger (6,16), but the direction of the relation is unclear and likely *Barlaam and Ioasaph* is the model; see also 67,1 where a word (*ἀστραπήμορφος*) is shared between the *Life* of Basil the Younger and that of Andrew the Holy Fool, which is perhaps the ultimate source.

¹⁷¹ Notably, a manuscript dated to the latter half of the eleventh century and originating in the monastery of St Mary of Patir at Rossano, Vat. gr. 2010 (Diktyon 68639), contains in sequence both the *Life* of Andrew (ff. 11r–129v) and that of Pankratios (ff. 130r–206v).

¹⁷² That the composite and fictive nature of *Life* of Pankratios may have served as a model for the *Life* of Theodore, see Datashvili 1973 with Kekelitze 1945, 23–33.

“Constantinopolitanized”, while the Constantinopolitan canon was infused with the delights of the alternative “genre”. With respect to the latter, and more specifically, with respect to textual length, Euthymios was preceded and likely inspired also by Nikephoros Ouranos’ rewriting of the *Life* of Symeon the Stylite the Younger, a less composite and less fictive, but certainly Metaphrastic in style text, which runs to ca. 115 pages in the relevant *Patrologia Graeca* volume (86), based as it was on an already very extensive early seventh-century version (BHG 1689; 51,885 words). While, however, Ouranos’ text experienced a limited circulation, Euthymios’ works—even if the Constantinopolitan canon remained, in some respects, hesitant also toward them—resembled the transmission history of similar texts within the corpus of large tales and, in fact (especially, *Barlaam and Ioasaph*), superseded all of them in terms of popularity, also in Constantinople, as evidenced by manuscript transmission and translation into contemporary languages.

Euthymian Fictions

Beyond their size and mainly non-liturgical function, the hagiographies of Pankratios and Andrew the Holy Fool shared with Euthymios’ two compositions one further feature: a protruding fictionality, where invented saintly characters are set in a quasi-historical past. Like Euthymios’ Theodore, a supposed bishop of a major city at the time of Michael and Theodora, Pankratios is a supposed disciple of Peter the Apostle who preaches Christianity in Sicily, and Andrew lived his life of holy folly supposedly at the time of Leo I (457–474). This feature is not, of course, absent from the *Metaphrastic* corpus or, more generally, *menological* texts or, of course, other “oversized” hagiographies associated in scholarship (rightly or wrongly) with the tenth century, and the issue is again too large and complex to be treated here with any detail—there are, after all, variations and degrees of hagiographical fictionality, and certainly different perspectives.¹⁷³

What is germane to our analysis here is that, by indulging in such fictive creation, Euthymios found himself in a common predicament of other hagiographers. A key issue, that is, in the handling of fictive imagination in hagiographical discourse was its authorization and the various methods adopted in order to secure it. For, however fictive, Christian hagiography needed to raise high truth-claims so as to attain maximum recognition. Hagiographical stories, in a sense, were obliged to “authenticate” the truth of any fictional contents and thus the sainthood of their main characters.

¹⁷³ For overviews of the relevant issues, see Delehaye 1927 (= 1998) with Messis 2014b (and further bibliography); also, Van Pelt and De Temmerman 2023.

In this regard, Euthymios, in our view, maximizes—to what degree intentionally or instinctively is irrelevant—methods of authorization or authentication. One such method was the incorporation of the new tale or text within the tradition. Reference, allusion, and borrowing of previous, already authoritative or, otherwise, authenticated texts, thematic motifs, and even style was key to this incorporation, a method which in Euthymios takes the form of what we have termed “textual nesting” and described in detail above. That is, his consistently mosaic-like and indeed excessive intertextual composition could help Euthymios not only “invent” *Theodore of Edessa* and *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, but also “authenticate” them.

All the previous texts that Euthymios culled already possessed an authenticated status, and this they transferred into the new text. To put it differently, speaking with the already “true” words of other Greek texts, Euthymios could also speak “truth” about the new saints he introduced to his Greek readers. Along the way, he turned another contemporary discursive habit, that of anthologizing and creating partly composite texts, into the main composition technique. The practice of *ekloge* and *sylloge*, of selecting and collecting, is transformed by Euthymios into the central mode of literary narrative creation, on all its aspects.

At that, *Theodore of Edessa* is even more audacious, one might claim, than *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, which served partly as its inspiration. For from the first words in the title of the *Life* to the last words of the *Chapters* of Theodore, Euthymios has incorporated most genres of contemporary Constantinopolitan ecclesiastic and monastic canon, narrative as well as discursive: the *Life and Conduct* of a monastic/ascetic/bishop (Theodore), two *Passions* (Michael and King John; the former rebranded as a “beneficial” narrative), inter-faith *Dialogues* (especially the first one within the context of Michael’s *Passion*), two further *Beneficial Tales* (the two brother ascetics, and the story of Ader), a monastic sermon, a church homily, a *Creed* and a list of heresies, an epistle (77,2), model prayers, and, finally, *Chapters* of ascetic advice.¹⁷⁴ Within a single work, the reader is faced with a concise panorama of contemporary Byzantine ecclesiastical and monastic literature, and that panorama in turn supported the fiction of *Theodore of Edessa*.



Another method of authorization or authentication, common again in Byzantine hagiographies, was the handling of the person who utters or produces the

¹⁷⁴ It is no accident that some of these genres are often marked with rubrics on the margins of the transmitting manuscripts—a most notable case is ms. r (see the relevant entry in Vol. II, Introduction 1.2).

tale. Authentication in this regard was guaranteed by the figure of the author and/or the narrator. Once more, the matter is extremely complex.¹⁷⁵ Euthymios' approach, our concern here, seems to again draw on every possible resource and to some extent maximize what was made available to him by the earlier tradition.

In *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, based on a pre-existing full Georgian hypotext, Euthymios introduced a first-person perspective, an "I" that speaks in the prologue and the epilogue of the text, not present in the original *Balavariani*. This narrator, who remains extraneous to the story, can be taken by the reader to be anonymous or identical to the invented "John, monk of the monastery of St Sabas, who transferred the tale to the Holy City (Jerusalem)"—as is given in the most commonly preserved title. The latter, in our view (to pick up a line from a query earlier in our introduction), was indeed the original, since it seems more likely that Euthymios followed also in this text his usual *modus operandi* and invented an agent of discursive authority rather than that he signed his work with his own name, as has been claimed recently. The scattered later evidence to the contrary belongs, in our opinion, to later attempts to keep the memory of Euthymios alive among Georgian-friendly communities and neither records nor retains his original intention.¹⁷⁶

However this might be, within the parameters of Euthymios' text, in the prologue (27–30) the narrating "I" is presented as the last transmitter of the tale in a long list of testimonies, both oral and textual. " . . . ἐξήγησιν ψυχωφελῇ . . . οὐδαμῶς σιωπήσομαι, ἥνπερ μοι ἀφηγήσαντό τινες ἄνδρες εὐλαβεῖς ... ἐξ ὑπομνημάτων ταύτην ἀψευδῶς μεταφράσαντες = . . . by no means will I remain silent . . . about a beneficial story which certain pious men ... recounted to me after they translated it from written records, containing no lies", we read. And when the narrator's voice returns for a second and last time in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, he declares himself as the person who recorded in writing (though not exactly *authored*) the tale (Epil. 1–3): "Ἐως ὧδε τὸ πέρας τοῦ παρόντος λόγου, ὃν κατὰ δύναμιν ἐμὴν γεγράφηκα, παρὰ τῶν ἀψευδῶς παραδεδοκότων μοι τιμίων ἀνδρῶν = Here ends the present story, which I have written to the best of my ability, by the honorable men who delivered it to me with no lies".

In *Theodore of Edessa*, Euthymios places a stronger emphasis on authorship. He invents Basil, a hagiographer, invested with all vestiges of textual authority (a bishop, a relative of the protagonist saint, and eyewitness narrator); a relatively

¹⁷⁵ See Papaioannou *forthcoming* b with further bibliography.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. 1.4 above. The evidence—namely the presence of Euthymios' name in the title of the Latin translation, as well as in the title in two post-Euthymian Greek witnesses and the ascription of the translation of the *Balavariani* by George Hagiorites to Euthymios—is marshalled by Gaga Shurgaia (especially, 2022) so as to advance the theory that the name of Euthymios appeared in the original title of the Greek *Barlaam and Ioasaph*.

common hagiographical stratagem, present also in the aforementioned “oversized” hagiographies.¹⁷⁷ And then he invents a second, even more important author. For his saintly hero, Theodore, is an author too. The reader learns as much in the title of the *Chapters*, “Τοῦ δσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Θεοδώρου ἐπισκόπου Ἐδέσης τοῦ Σαβαΐτου, κεφάλαια πρακτικά” (116), while the more inferior role of publishing this work, based on a “stenographer’s” copy (40,1), is left for Basil. Indeed, from a certain perspective, one might regard the *Life* which precedes the *Chapters* as a typical introductory biography to an authoritative text—something like the *Life* of John Sinaites, preceding copies of his *Ladder*, texts that Euthymios had translated back in 983. From the multiple authorial (oral as well as textual), but ultimately anonymous agency behind *Barlaam and Ioasaph*,¹⁷⁸ we are thus confronted with the unabashed doubly pseudonymous, emphatic authorship in *Theodore of Edessa*.

Euthymios was used to this kind of brazen pseudonymity in his Georgian translations, though not by inventing new authors, but by appropriating authoritative names—his treatment of the name of Maximos the Confessor is the most notable in this regard.¹⁷⁹ We may also observe that, whenever Euthymios would “sign” a translation and thus appear explicitly as its creator, this would occur in colophons and not, as far as we can tell, in the titles of texts. Within the symbolic economy of Byzantine manuscript books, this positioning of Euthymios’ name in the colophon would place the translator in the company of the commissioner/patron and the scribe, but not of the author of a book, and in a hierarchy of (in order of importance) commissioner/patron, translator, scribe. Take, for instance, the following colophons in Euthymios’ own voice (Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, pp. 51 and 117 respectively):

year 983, John Sinaites’ *Ladder* (*Ivir. georg.* 5, ff. 1va–2rb):

“I, wretched Euthymios, have translated this by command of my holy father John, such as it had been spoken in Greek by the saint himself, because he was Greek by origin. — Now, however, you who will read this holy book, pray for our holy fathers, for John and for John the Synkellos, and also for me, sinful Euthymios. And you who will copy it, copy it just as you find it here”.

¹⁷⁷ For the stratagem (with antecedents in the early Christian tradition), see: Efthymiadis 1996; Rydén 2002 (on pp. 547–9, discussion of the texts of Andrew the Fool and Theodore of Edessa); Hinterberger 2009 and 2014 (on p. 214, a joint reference to the *Lives* Basil the Younger, Andrew the Fool, and Theodore of Edessa); Alwis 2020.

¹⁷⁸ A similar anonymous “I”, we might add, is inserted by Euthymios in the preface (“διὸ δὴ παρακαλῶ”) and peroration (“ἀλλὰ μοι, ὦ μαρτύρων καὶ ἀθλητῶν ἐγκαλλώπισμα, τὸ ἐμὸν εἶπερ τινὸς ἀγλαΐσμα καὶ μελέτημα”) he added to the *Miracles of George*; for these textual additions, see 3.3 above.

¹⁷⁹ See the overview in Simelidis 2020, 143 with Otkhmezuri 2016. For another example (regarding the authorial names of Neilos, Maximos, and Basil of Caesarea), see Tkebuchava 2023. Cf. also Chikvatia and Tkebuchava *forthcoming* (with comments on Euthymian “pseudepigraphs”).

year 1008, Chrysostom's *Commentary* on the Gospel of Matthew (*Ivir. georg.* 10, f. 159vb):

"Holy ones in God, whoever reads this holy book, offer a prayer for my father John and commemorate me, too, sinful Euthymios, in your prayers, who by his order and tribute translated this holy book from Greek into the Georgian language. Offer your prayers for (my) effort and forgive me for having written moderately".

By contrast, and crucially for us here, in the case of translations of hagiographical texts into Georgian and certainly the more daring ones, Euthymios' agency—either as translator or, much less so, as creator—is not visible at all in the Georgian versions, causing much confusion and debate among scholars: these are the aforementioned cases of the hagiographies on Maximos the Confessor which is left anonymous; on the Virgin Mary, attributed to "Our blessed father Maximus the Philosopher and Confessor"); and, above all, on Demetrios, for which Euthymios invented both an author, Gregory of Nazianzus, and a plausible discursive situation: "Sermon by Our Holy and Blessed Father Gregory the Theologian. Praise of the Great Martyr Demetrios which he Delivered upon Returning to Constantinople a Day after the Saint's Feast".¹⁸⁰

It may be that, in the field of Georgian texts, the corpus of earlier and canonical works was significantly smaller than in Greek, and this could have given Euthymios more space for such liberties with falsifying authorial signatures, which seem to appear or, alternatively, disappear at will.¹⁸¹ The Greek tradition, on the other hand, had a stronger and more pronounced tradition of "authentic" texts and canonical authors—as Euthymios himself acknowledges in an aforementioned letter to his "spiritual brother" Theodore of St Sabas, written sometime after 1005, where he offers a list of apocrypha and pseudonymous works to be rejected and decries falsifiers of texts.¹⁸² Yet the Greek tradition too, of course, also allowed bold forgeries before Euthymios. One need only think of the Pseudo-Dionysian corpus—which we can safely assume that Euthymios knew—and its invented biblical author based on the name of a character which appears in the *Acts*—like Euthymios' Theodore based on the Abū Qurrah of Michael's *Pas-sion*.¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ See further pp. 3.1 above; the English translation of the titles follows Matchavariani 2024, 328 and Shoemaker 2012.

¹⁸¹ See e.g. his treatment of Michael Synkellos' *Confession of Faith*, on which see the entry on the year 991 in 2.2 above.

¹⁸² For this text, preserved in *Ivir. georg.* 79, see the entry on the year 991 in 2.2 and 2.4 (text and note 69) above. The relevant passage can be read in German translation in Peradse 1936, 75–6.

¹⁸³ Though Euthymios did not translate the Greek Pseudo-Dionysian corpus, he may well have read two pseudo-Dionysian works: *Autobiography* (CPG 6633; Macé and Muthreich *forthcoming*) and

That Euthymios creates a double pseudonymity, of a saint's biographer and "publisher" as well as of an ecclesiastical and monastic authority, in his Greek *Theodore of Edessa* and that he hides behind his creation may thus be a convention based on antecedents. The existence of prior examples in his Georgian translations and in his Greek as well as Georgian readings does not, nevertheless, remove from the capacious force of his use of pseudonymity. This was *not*, we may confidently say, a conscious literary play—a post-modern jest before post-modernity. Nor was it merely an act of self-imposed censure, prompted solely by the conventional humility of Byzantine (especially monastic) writers, by Euthymios' possible anxieties as a partial outsider, or by any desire to conceal his tracks as a masterful appropriator of the texts of others. Rather, it also constitutes a striking instance of a freedom acquired through a deeply traditional habit, ingrained in medieval literary creation. For Euthymios and his audiences, Georgian as well as Greek, saints and their biographers but also authoritative voices were so important, needed, and desired, that they *could*—indeed, even *should*—be, at times, invented. Euthymios enacted this invention of the discursive self and performed the rituals of medieval authorship superlatively well.

Whose Double?

We would like to finish this section with one last thought. The textual world of *Theodore of Edessa* is founded, as we have seen, upon a series of doubles, which construct its spectrum of fictive truth: Basil in the *Passion* of Michael and Basil of Emesa, Adramelech and King John, Theodore and Theodore Abū Qurrah, and several others. There is, however, one further curious mirroring that we have not discussed thus far. Several features and events attributed to Theodore of Edessa and also Michael the Sabaite resemble those of Euthymios the Iberian himself, as we know him through the narrative of his biographer, George Hagiorites. Like Michael, Euthymios has a "pleasant" face (19,1 with GRD 22/M-H 74) and, like Theodore, he has learning difficulties, which are cured miraculously (4,2–6,2 with GRD 13/M-H 23), he is entrusted with the "stewardship" of a monastery (12,1 with GRD 27/M-H 58), he retires to adopt a more eremitic way of life (14,1 with GRD 22/M-H 75), he gathers fellow brethren and delivers spiritual teaching (38,1–40,2 with GRD 19/M-H 49), he abstains from wine (39,1 with GRD 14/M-H 43), and murderous attempts are made on his life (69,1 with GRD 21/M-H 73–4; indeed, in one of the instances the prospective murderer's

Letter to Timothy on the Death of the Apostles Peter and Paul (CPG 6631; Macé et al. 2021; cf. also 2.1 (n. 27) above). Both were not preserved in Greek, but their Georgian translation was included in the same late tenth-century manuscript in Euthymios' library that contained the original *Passion* of Michael, namely Iviron, *georg.* 8 (ff. 51rb–64ra); see Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 80–1. On pseudonymity in Byzantine literature, see Papaioannou 2021c, 494–6.

hand is rendered motionless as in Theodore's *Life*). More importantly, just like Michael (25,6–28,5) and then Theodore (86,8–91,3), Euthymios engages twice in a public debate with a Jew (GRD 15/M-H 29–30); notably, in both cases the Jew is rendered mute, as in the *Life* of Theodore (90,1), and then on the first occasion (GRD 15/M-H 29) Euthymios successfully converts his opponent and also cures his muteness like Theodore (91,2), while in the second one (GRD 15/M-H 30), the opponent remains, like Michael's adversary (28,4), stubbornly defiant of Christianity.

There are at least three ways by which one can read this correspondence between *Theodore* and Euthymios. A simple view would be to regard it as a parade of commonplaces of hagiographical discourse. It seems equally plausible to imagine that George, who definitely knew *Theodore of Edessa*, used Euthymios' created fictive hero in order to boost the portrait of his predecessor and simultaneously secure his own claims for the authenticity of his story and the sanctity of his subject. Could it be, however, that some, at least, of the above commonalities were—consciously or subconsciously, based on personal myths or projections, it does not matter—Euthymios' signature of his pseudonymous tale, traces of a semi-fictional self-portrait within *Theodore of Edessa*? Whatever the response, Euthymios' creation would not have achieved the reception it enjoyed without the imagined world it fashioned, to which we move next in order to retrace the appeal of *Theodore of Edessa* to its audience, when the work was read in its own right, beyond its literary tricks of translation, nesting, and rewriting.

4. The World of *Theodore of Edessa*

4.1. SPACE AND TIME

The geography of the narrative is structured as a succession of sites and itineraries. Edessa, St Sabas, Jerusalem, Babylon/Baghdad, Constantinople, and the briefly mentioned Syrian cities of Emesa, Antioch, and Harran, as well as the exotic “interior, absolute wilderness of the land of India” (95,2) constitute stable points on the map delineated by Theodore’s biography, while the saint himself is frequently in motion, often accompanied by the narrator Basil. He travels between Edessa and Palestine five times, and four times between Edessa and Baghdad. Others travel as well. King Adramelech has traveled from Baghdad to Jerusalem together with his wife, and John the Hermit, it is implied, has traveled to India, while his brother, Theodosios, took the journey of exile, from the desert of Babylon to Edessa. When one adds to all this Theodore’s journey to Constantinople and the frequent movements between the monastery of St Sabas and Jerusalem, the *Life* constructs a noticeably wide geographical space characterized by relatively free and frequent movement.

This space is shared between Romans and non-Romans, Christians and non-Christians, Orthodox and non-Orthodox—we shall return to these groupings below. Such a wide, traversable, and multicultural space does reflect Euthymios’ own realities, as delineated elsewhere in this book. It would also be present in many of Euthymios’ readings, especially other relatively recent hagiographies, such as the legendary biographies of Gregory of Agrigento—a version of which was copied in Euthymios’ *Iviron* and also culled for the *Life* of Theodore, and where travel between Italy, Jerusalem, and Constantinople is portrayed—and of our usual suspect, Pankratios of Taormina—where travel between Antioch, Jerusalem, Pontus, Sicily, and Rome is envisaged.

The descriptions of cities and sites within the main narrative of Theodore’s *Life* are generally minimal, as space is often reduced to a few emblematic monuments, with the immediate goal of either constructing the protagonists’ character through spatial references or creating recognizable images of distant locations for the reader and thus boosting the verisimilitude of the story. To the latter kind belong also a few further placenames mentioned within the brief excursus on the loss of Syro-Palestine (21,2–23) and, especially, the longer deviation on

Christian dogma (46–52), which populate the map of *Theodore of Edessa* with basic referents in the geography of orthodoxy. Thus, we read: of Nicaea (twice), Constantinople (thrice), Ephesus (twice), and Chalcedon (twice) as the localities of Ecumenical Councils, of Antioch, Syrian Laodicea, Cilician Mopsuestia, Samosata, Alexandria, Libya, and Syrian Germanicia as the place of origin or activity of heresiarchs, and also of Rome (twice: once in connection with Pope Martin I, and once in connection with the heretic Honorius), Damascus (conquered by the Arabs), and Cherson (the place of exile of Pope Martin).

In the narrative itself, a privileged position is occupied by the Lavra of St Sabas.¹ There are references to its main church (39,1), the cell of Theodore (14,1), the cell of Ader, the Edessan aristocrat who renounced his wealth to become a monk (58,3; 60,8), the cells of hesychasts and anchorites (38,1), the cemetery of its recent martyrs, “fathers” of the monastery (14,1; 34,4; 115,3), the surrounding desert of the Jordan (15,1), as well as an allusion to the monastery’s book collection (16). The author emphasizes Theodore’s connection to the Lavra even after his death by referring to his cell and to the books he copied as being “preserved until now” (14,1; 16).

The depiction of Jerusalem centers on the Church of the *Anastasis* (8; 24,1; 42,6; 60,4; 100,3; 103; 104,1; 115,1)—a monument, we should note, which had been destroyed in 1009 by the Fatimid caliph al-Ḥākim (r. 996–1021), a little more than a decade before the likely time of the composition of *Theodore of Edessa*.² We also find references to the city market where monks could sell their artisanal goods (24,4), Golgotha (8; 43,2), the Mount of Olives (25,1; 43,2), and the hospice maintained in the city by the Lavra for visiting monks (20; 24,4; 32,2; 33,1).³ The description of Edessa (modern-day Urfa) is similarly concise, focused primarily on its “cathedral of Our Lord”, which receives a brief ekphrasis that links it to the Church of the *Anastasis* (45,2), but includes also references to the Church of the Holy Apostles (3,1), the *Martyrion* of Gourias, Samonas, and Abibos (45,3), the bishop’s residence (45,3; 68,3; 70,2), the Church of St George (66,1; 68,2; 85,7; 112,3), and a nunnery (58,3) near the column of Theodosios the

¹ The “famous Lavra of divine Sabas” (9,1; 57,3), the “Great Lavra of the divine Sabas” (58,3), or simply the “sacred Lavra” (11,2); for bibliography on the monastery, see 2.4 (n. 59) above; see also 2.4 (text and note 70).

² On this event, see Canard 1965 with, more generally, the studies in Pratsch 2011; see also the recent overview of the events of 1009, their prehistory and their aftermath, in Shawcross 2024, 118–21 and 162–66. On the caliph al-Ḥākim, see Walker 2012.

³ On Jerusalem’s actual topography, see e.g. Wagner-Lux and Brakmann 1996. Mar Sabas’ hospice and guesthouse (ξενοδοχεῖον) was founded by Sabas himself in 494; see Voltaggio 2011, 201–2 as well as Binggeli and Efthymiadis 2020, 155–6 with further primary and secondary references.

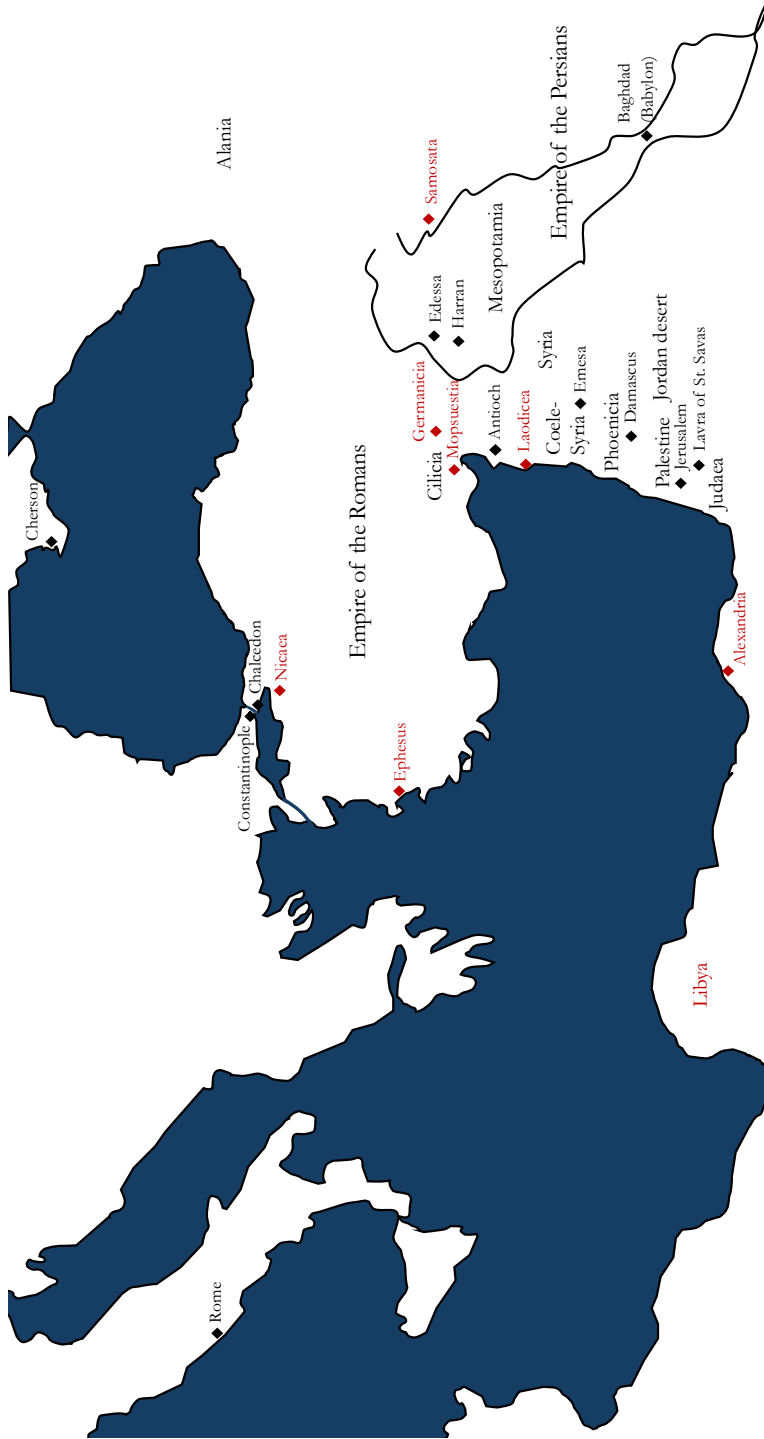


Figure 4.1: The world of Theodore of Edessa; in red, cities mentioned only in Theodore's dogmatic sermon (46–52). Created by Olof Heilo.

Stylite, at the outskirts of the city, along with other stylite columns said to date from the reign of Maurice (54).⁴

On the map of Syria, Emesa (modern-day Homs) appears only in the title of the text, as the bishopric of Basil. Antioch is mentioned in relation to its patriarch's visit to Jerusalem for the sake of electing a new bishop of Edessa (41-42), and then again when the saint, traveling from Jerusalem to Edessa after his return from Baghdad, stops there and visits some of its churches—among them the main church of the city, which remains unnamed—and then nearby monasteries, including that of St Symeon the Younger on the Black Mountain (104,4). The Syrian city of Harran (modern-day Turkey), the episcopal seat of Theodore Abū Qurrah, is also deemed worthy of a reference as a waypoint on the journey to Edessa (45,1). Both references, to the Black Mountain and to Harran would have been inessential to the main narrative, but they may have served as nods, respectively, to the growing presence of Georgians on the Black Mountain, contemporary to Euthymios, and to the distant link between the fictive Theodore of Edessa and the real Theodore Abū Qurrah.

Regarding Babylon/Baghdad, the text creates a plausible sketch, but (perhaps understandably for a Byzantine writer) with little spatial specificity, as no monument in the city is named. Euthymios refers to the rivers (73,1; 82,2: the banks of Tigris), nearby caves (70,1; 76,1: the cave of John the Hermit, situated “at a distance of a hundred stades” from the city), and the surrounding desert (65,3), as well as the Christian church and the metropolitan seat (70,2; 70,3).⁵ The text also mentions the palace hospice where the saint resides (71,6; 73,1; 78,1; 81,3; 86,1; 86,6; 103), the royal palace (71,4; 73,1; 78,2; 86,1), and especially its innermost chambers (81,1-81,3), where the king's treasures are hidden, as well as the royal court (86,9). When the narrative reaches its climax, the author mentions the place of *adnoumion*, a gathering site for the army, inspired by a similar passage in the *Life* of Pankratios (107,1; cf. 3.2 (text and notes 68-69) above).

To be expected is also the exoticized image of distant India, incorporated in our text, likely, as we have suggested, as a cross-referential gesture to Euthymios' other composition, *Barlaam and Ioasaph* (see 95,2 and 1.3 (section “Narrative World” above): “The interior, absolute wilderness of the land of India,” we read “towards the shores of the Red Sea, where the river Ganges mingles with it, where dwellings of elephants exist, tents of unicorns, folds of lions and panthers, nests of asps and serpents, at the bordering territory of those two immense mountains,

⁴ On Edessa in this period, see Segal 1970, 213–9 and the relevant notes in our translation. On its Christian monuments, see Guidetti 2009; on the monuments cited in the *Life*, see also Vasiliev 1942–1943, 179–80.

⁵ This church is apparently unrelated to the one constructed within a walled monastic complex by the stylite Theodosios in the “city” (65,6), after finding the money abandoned by his brother.

the Arkanos and the Hyrkanos, it is there that colossal jars are found, works of ancient people, not placed upright but lying on one side.”

Apart from *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, we have been unable to identify any single, precise textual source upon which Euthymios may have relied. Rather, this geographically confused description seems to be constructed out of a series of textual fragments and echoes from biblical, historiographical, and hagiographical texts, though not every single bit can be located elsewhere in the written tradition.⁶ No mountains Arkanos and Hyrkanos, for instance, are mentioned anywhere else; indeed, as far as we can tell, the name Arkanos is not attested at all, and may be simply a creation of Euthymios based on the similar sounding Hyrkanos. Our author would, at the very least, have encountered the ethnic name *Hyrkanoi* (in the plural) in a passage from Epiphanius of Cyprus on the genealogies of humankind, which Euthymios had inserted in his Georgian translation of Maximos the Confessor’s *Questions to Thalassios*.⁷ Similarly, any precise reference regarding the “colossal jars ... lying on one side” eludes us, even if much has been made of it.⁸

On a general level, the passage places the Indian desert near the Red Sea, the estuaries of the river Ganges (in this context referring actually to the Indus, often conflated with the Ganges⁹), and the Caspian Gates.¹⁰ It thus belongs to a wider strand of stories which combined apocalyptic narratives with mythologies concerning the Brahmins on the one hand and Gymnosophists on the other,¹¹ as well as reverberations from the *Alexander Romance*¹² and certain hagiographic accounts set at the edges of the known world, such as those of Zosimos on the Rechabites¹³ and, especially, Makarios the Roman.¹⁴ And though the rele-

⁶ See the relevant *app. font.* where (in order of appearance) the *Lausaikon*, texts from Metaphrastes’ *Menologion*, Philostorgius, the *Psalms*, *Genesis*, the *Song of Songs*, *Deuteronomy*, the *Life* of Makarios the Roman, the book of *Wisdom*, Gregory of Nazianzus, and George the Monk are listed.

⁷ See Holl 1915, 113,2 (Epiphanius) with Pataridze 2016, 165 (with further bibliography).

⁸ According to Vasiliev 1942–1943, 203, “this rather puzzling passage at once suggests the Indian *stupas*, *topes*, or sacred cupolas, a specific type of Buddhist religious building, consisting of a solid mass of masonry, built above a receptacle containing a sacred relic”. On ascetics in Central Asia who lived in barrel-shaped buildings, see Abdullaev 2019; for an Early Byzantine saint living in a jar, see de Stoop 1911, 677—but Euthymios most likely was not aware of this specific, rare text.

⁹ On the two rivers and their perception by the Mediterranean world, see Schneider 2018. Ganges is often identified with the Pheison River, one of the four rivers coming from Paradise, according to Genesis 2:11; on this identification, see Jouanno 2011, 58.

¹⁰ On the Caspian Gates, see Standish 1970.

¹¹ Robiano 1992; Dorival 1993; Jouanno 2010; Stoneman 2015.

¹² Especially the ε version which dates from the 8th–9th c., where the Brahmins rub shoulders with the dog-headed and other mythical peoples.

¹³ On this text, see Jouanno 2010, 62–7.

¹⁴ On this text and its fantastic world of the distant East, see Papaioannou 2023, xvi–xx with 77–127 (and the relevant notes). The text exists also in Georgian; see Tarchnišvili/Assfalğ 1955 = Kekelidze 1955, 484.

vant passage shares many cross-references with *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, as a whole it partly differs from the fuller (though no less invented) image of India presented in *Barlaam and Ioasaph* or, its hypotext, the Georgian *Balavariani*.¹⁵ Euthymios thus expressed in Theodore's *Life* a slightly different view of the exotic land in a synthesis of multiple readings and possibly even also—to add one further likely source—oral traditions circulating in Georgia and Byzantium at the time. In any event, we encounter an author who does not appear to obsess about *total* or fully fortified verisimilitude, and thus does not worry about harmonizing the representation of space between his two works, while simultaneously cross-referencing them.

One might detect a similar lack of concern for decided verisimilitude in the presentation of Edessa as well as of Constantinople. References to the *queen of cities* (85,1; 85,5) in our text are rather abstract. Though a small portion of the narrative is dedicated to Theodore's embassy there (84,2–86,5), the Byzantine capital, contrary to what one might expect, is given no geographical substance. There is no mention of *Hagia Sophia* or the beauty of the city's other churches and monuments, imperial or otherwise. The city is reduced to being the site of the highest power and the place where one can obtain access to it: a piece of the True Cross directly from the hands of the emperors (we shall return to this episode below).¹⁶

As for the description of Edessa, though its image is fuller, there is still a notable absence, as there is no mention of the so-called *Image of Edessa*, Christ's alleged real portrait, a most important relic which the Byzantines, and the Georgians among them, associated with that city—in the very few mentions of Edessa in the *Chronicle* of George the Monk, for instance, the story of the relic takes center stage (320,9f.; 740,16f; 785,1f.). The *Image* had been transferred to Constantinople in the mid-tenth century (944) and the relevant texts would have been available to Euthymios, along perhaps similar accounts of the acquisition of a related Syrian relic by Nikephoros Phokas in the late 960s, the Holy Tile (*Keramion*).¹⁷ Thus, had our author wished to maintain historical plausibility

¹⁵ The two versions seem to reflect even two different "Indias", one located in Ethiopia and the other in Asia. On the confusion between Ethiopia and India in the Greco-Roman world as well as on the fauna and flora of exotic countries, see Schneider 2004; also Mayerson 1993. On the relations between Georgia and India, see Martin-Hisard 2002.

¹⁶ On relics of Christ's Passion (including the True Cross) kept in the imperial palace in Constantinople, see Magdalino 2004 and, especially, Klein 2004; cf. also Frolov 1961, 76 and 238.

¹⁷ Notably, one of the Georgian translations of the *Letter of Abgar*, the basic source on the *Image of Edessa*, is attributed by some to Euthymios (Skhirtladze 1998, 69), although it is possible that the corpus of these translations dates to the eleventh century (Orthkmezuri and Raphava 2022, 216, reject the attribution of the translation of Abgar's letter into Georgian to Euthymios, considering that this translation was created in Syria); see also Karaulashvili 2004. Symeon Metaphrastes dedicates an oration for the *Translation* of the Mandyliion; on this text, see Høgel 2002, 63, 124, and 204 and Kazhdan

in a more committed fashion, he would have ignored neither the *Image of Edessa* nor the Edessan church that housed it at the time in which his narrative is set.

Such seeming indifference to the cityscape of the Byzantine capital and the historical “absent-mindedness” regarding Edessa could raise questions regarding whether the geography, as represented in the *Life*, implies Euthymios’ actual knowledge of the terrain he describes, reflects the sources on which he was based, or is a “literary” geography, created so as to serve narrative needs. The answer, in our view, lies somewhere among all three options. At that, Euthymios seems to display more detailed knowledge of Jerusalem, Edessa, and especially the Lavra of St Sabas than of Constantinople. However, this does not necessarily indicate a closer familiarity with the former places. After all, Euthymios should have known Constantinople quite well, having travelled there on multiple occasions; thus, the depiction of the City could simply be the depiction needed for the tale. Correspondingly, though he most likely lacked direct experience of Syria and Palestine, monks at the Iviron who hailed from, or had travelled to, those regions could have provided Euthymios with the necessary information. Similarly, Euthymios certainly knew about the *Image of Edessa* and could have made a reference to it, but perhaps the relevant Edessan material he was using for this particular part of his text did not include a reference to it. In any case, we should also allow for a degree of freedom and accident in literary creation.

Euthymios was not in the process of writing a historiographical account of either the premodern or the modern variety. We may be addressing, that is, historicist questions to a text and an author who have had other priorities, and whose background in the worlds of texts and oral stories sufficed to provide the pieces for constructing a literary space in a story that roughly corresponded to “reality”. And the story was more important than that “reality”.



How about narrative time? In the *Life* of Theodore, three temporal dimensions coexist: (a) ritual, ecclesiastical time, (b) cyclical, natural time, and (c) historical time, the sequence of historical events. Let us look at each closely.¹⁸

2006, 237. On this relic and its use in the 10th century, see further Engberg 2004, and Guscini 2009, 2016 and 2022. On the narrative and iconographic cycles of this episode in the Georgian tradition, see Karaulashvili 2007 and Aleksidzé 2016. On the *Keramion* and Phokas, see Sullivan 2012.

¹⁸ On the subject of time in Byzantine culture, see e.g. Sarante, Dellaporta, and Kollyropoulou 2018. For an introduction to the topic of narrative time (and space) in relation to Byzantine literature and further bibliography, see Nilsson 2021, 278–81.

Ritual Time

This type of time is organized around Sundays and liturgical feasts, and it is the first one to make a strong and then consistent presence in the story. It was “on the first Saturday of Lent, when the Church usually celebrates the memory of the miracle of the great martyr Theodore [the Recruit]” (3,1) that Theodore’s mother Maria had the vision that announced her conception of her son. It was on a Sunday that Theodore, still a boy, sought refuge in the church of Edessa (4,3) and was then miraculously cured of his ineptness in learning “during the time of the Divine Liturgy” (5). It was on Sundays that he was consecrated as archbishop (45,4), gathered the people of Edessa to offer spiritual instruction (46,2), and again, following his return from Baghdad, “summoned to a feast all the Christian people, priests as well as monks, together with all the laity, the rich as well as the poor ... provided everyone with spiritual as well as material nourishment, and thus filled their hearts with true joy” (85,7). On a Sunday, again in Baghdad, Theodore addressed the Christian congregation of the city after the liturgy, recounting his difficulties with the heretics in Edessa (70,3) and, on yet another Sunday, “the king feigned an outing for hunting wild beasts” in order to meet his namesake ascetic in the desert (92,2). Sundays were also the days when monks and nuns broke their strict dietary regime and were to receive more substantial food (62,1; 64,1). Saturdays and Sundays were, moreover, the days when Theodosios would join his brother John for prayer and shared meals during their stay in the desert near Babylon (65,3).

Religious feasts that bear significance in the narrative include the aforementioned feast of Theodore the Martyr, the Annunciation, Easter, the days of Holy Week, and the days following Easter. The Feast of the Annunciation is cited (following, but restructuring the original Georgian *Passion* of Michael) when Theodore, after a procession in honor of the Virgin, offers his spiritual instruction to his fellow monks (38,1). The Easter season is a particularly active time in Theodore’s life, as it marks his ordination: on Holy Thursday, “the day when also the sacrament of the Holy Myrrh is performed, and the churches of Christ commemorate the Last Supper”, Theodore was ordained bishop of Edessa in Jerusalem (42,4); in the days that followed, he celebrated the liturgy with the patriarchs, before departing for Lavra on the Monday of Bright Week (42,6), returning to Jerusalem only a week later, on “the new Sunday” (43,1). Thus three feasts—indeed consecutive in the ecclesiastical calendar—are closely tied to the fulfilment of the hero’s mission: the feast of Saint Theodore foretells his birth;

the Annunciation exemplifies his spiritual maturation; Easter marks his consecration.¹⁹

Natural Time

Natural time is defined by the succession of hours, days and nights, and seasons, a succession that underscores the cyclical nature of time and action: “Our fortunes run in a cyclical pattern that brings changes, one after another, frequently within the space of a single day, sometimes even of an hour” (101,1).²⁰

Day and night function sometimes as a temporal unit, and sometimes as opposing temporal instances. During both day and night, Theodore’s mother implores God to grant her a male child (2,2), and during both day and night the demons assail the monks (96). More frequently, however, day is the time of action (e.g. 11,1), while night is reserved for meditation. In fact, it is the night that plays a more significant *narrative* role. It is often associated with divine visions (3,2; 36,1; 58,2; 60,2; 60,3; 111,1; 111,4) or with illusory apparitions (101,1). Night is also the time when the saint engages in pious discourse or exchanges beneficial stories (64,2; 68,1), prayers (15,2; 70,2; 107,1; 113,1), or participates in nocturnal celebrations (11,1; 16; 78,1). It is also during the night that one keeps vigils for the dead (33,3).

Sometimes, night absorbs the day, completely replacing it, as in the case of the repentant prostitute who “has locked herself up in a dark cell, seeing neither the light of the sun nor the moonlight, except when sometimes, during some pitch-black and moonless night, she comes out of the cell, looks up toward the heavens, and gives thanks to the Lord, before re-entering quickly into that dark dwelling” (62,2). In the framework of the narrative, night is fully tamed by asceticism and holiness; it remains threatening only in parables that illustrate the dangers of spiritual inertness—for instance, the rich man who followed the royal road but arrived late at the city walls and “perished, attacked by brigands as well as beasts” (78,4; 78,5). Conversely, the night is replaced by day in the case of King John, who decided to cease being “a believer only at night” (100,2: νυκτερινὸς θεοσεβῆς) and to publicly affirm his Christian identity in the daylight.

¹⁹ Easter also plays a crucial role in the life of Theodosios the Stylite, as it is the time when he receives the divine confirmation of his forgiveness for the sin of vainglory (66,3).

²⁰ The term hour (ῥα) bears three distinct meanings in the narrative. First, it can denote a vague and imprecise moment of a span of time (6,1: Ἐξ ἐκείνης δὲ τῆς ῥας / from that time on; 16; 60,6; 78,4; 83,3; 92,2; 94,2). Second, it can refer to a specific division of time comparable to our modern understanding of the hour (e.g. 16: ῥας ἐνδεκάτης ..., τῆς ἑκτῆς καταλαβούσης ῥας, εἴτα τῆς ἐννάτης; 66,4). Finally, it can signify a determinate or indeterminate duration (16: Ἐπὶ μίαν δὲ ῥαν ἢ δύο τὸ πολὺ / one or, at most, two hours of sleep; 24,18; 64,2; 101,1).

While day and night define natural time, the role of the seasons remains extremely limited. They are mentioned once in a parable (ὑπόδειγμα) referring to spiritual blooming (97,8), and on another occasion to situate King John's decision to dismiss Theodore and declare himself a Christian (100,1); the latter reference may in fact be regarded as a ritual marker, commencing the narrative of the King's passion during the period (Spring) when the Passion of Christ is also celebrated. Natural time is thus restricted to elementary signposts that frame and color the action but possess no autonomous function in the unfolding of the narrative.

Historical Time

The text navigates several layers of historical time, reaching well beyond the time of its composition in the early eleventh century—which permeates the narrative only very obliquely. Among these temporal strata, two are somewhat inconspicuous: namely, a distant and only sporadically evoked past, bordering on the mythical, associated with the jars set up by “ancient people” (95,2) in the Indian desert and with the reference to “ancient” Babylon (65,3); and then a timeless, eschatological future—the destiny of the saints in the presence of God—conjured in the concluding paragraphs (115,4–5). Instead, the tale draws more attention to three other distinct historical horizons:

First, on occasion, it evokes the glorious early Byzantine past: the age of the “ancient saints” of asceticism (95,2) and, above all, of patristic doctrine—the era of “the holy fathers of the past” (e.g. 46,4; 47,1; 47,2; 101,1) who contended with “ancient heretics” (e.g. 47,11). The same vision of the past, we may add, is invoked in Euthymios' father John's Preface of 1001/1002–1005 (pp. 125–6).

Second, the narrative gestures at key moments toward a more recent historical past, alluding in sequence to the “Persian” conquest of Palestine, the Seventh Ecumenical Council, and the enduring imprint of Emperor Maurice's earlier reign on the region of Edessa.

Finally, and more importantly, the tale unfolds during a more diffuse narrative “present,” broadly corresponding to the first half of the ninth century, yet populated by figures who could be placed nearly two centuries earlier.

Let us examine these latter two historical layers more closely.

As we have seen, the story of Michael is prefaced by the description of the Byzantine loss of Syro-Palestine, which establishes the most important event in the pre-history of Michael's and, consequently, Theodore's story. That historical precision appears with some significant delay: in the first 20 paragraphs,

where Euthymios follows closely the tale of Symeon the Stylite by Nikephoros Ouranos, texts from Metaphrastes, and then the Georgian *Passion*, the reader is offered *no* historical coordinates whatsoever—perhaps an indication that “historical time” is not first in order of significance.

In any event, a central figure in the Christian defeat to the Muslims—and in this Euthymios replicates his source, George the Monk—is Emperor Constans II (641–668; PmbZ 3691), who, since Byzantine times, has often been confused with his son, Constantine IV (668–685; PmbZ 3702).²¹ This gives Euthymios the opportunity to evoke the biography of a favorite author of his, since Constans II is charged with numerous crimes, including the torture of Maximos the Confessor (21,2). There is also mention of Heraclius’ victories over the Persians and the defeat of the Eastern generals, Baanes and Basiliskos, by the Saracens (21,3).²²

Then, when listing (following Michael Synkellos) the Ecumenical Councils in Theodore’s dogmatic sermon, Euthymios adds a reference to the Seventh Ecumenical Council, missing from Synkellos’ list, and notes that the Council “took place a short time ago in the metropolis of Nicaea”, thus bringing the recent past of our story to 787 (47,1); for this addition, Euthymios used and elaborated wording from Theodore the Studite.²³ A bit later in our text, the past is further populated with a reference to the reign of “the pious Emperor Maurice” (582–602) (54). The choice of Maurice is at first glance strange. As we argued earlier (3.2), Euthymios might have been inspired by a passage in the *Life* of Symeon the Holy Fool. But he also might have had further motives for bringing up this emperor, who enjoyed a somewhat ambiguous reputation in Byzantine Greek writing, but was considered a saint in Euthymios’ Georgian tradition.²⁴

Regarding the time with which the narrative is co-extensive, things are a bit more muddled. Taken at face value, the immediate past-and-present of the story is spread across what would in reality be almost two centuries, bookended by the mid-seventh and the mid-ninth century: (a) the reigns of Adramelech and then Mauīas in Baghdad, echoing in a very distant fashion the names of two historical personalities, namely those of, respectively, ‘Abd al-Malik (r. 685–705; PmbZ 18)

²¹ On Euthymios’ dependence on George the Monk, see the relevant section in 3.2 above. On Constans II and Constantine IV and their religious policy, see ODB 496–7 and Leontsini 2006, 158–84; also Vasiliev 1942–1943, 174.

²² For these seventh-century events, see most recently Kaldellis 2024, 347–404. For Baanes (known from Theophanes the Confessor’s Chronicle), see Vasiliev 1942–1943, 174; no Basiliskos is known from any related Byzantine source.

²³ See 3.2 (section “Discursive Borrowings”) above and the relevant note to the translation.

²⁴ Vasiliev 1942–1943, 182–8 makes much of the mention of Maurice in Theodore’s *Life* and discusses various hagiographic legends surrounding that emperor, though none of it, in our view, is directly relevant to the mention of Maurice in *Theodore*.

and Mu'āwiya, the first Umayyad caliph (r. 661–680; PmbZ 5185), and (b) the joined rule (842–856) of emperors Michael III (840–867; PmbZ 4991) and his mother Theodora (c. 815–c. 867; PmbZ 7286).

Of the two book-ends the latter would be the only one securely identifiable for Byzantine readers. Yet it is not as straightforward as it first appears. The mention of the two emperors gives the impression of being almost an afterthought—introduced when the narrative is three-fourths underway (84,5). This late introduction of such a crucial dating point begs reflection. Was it conceived only when Euthymios decided to include the story of the visit to Constantinople? Are there other motives? Did Euthymios wish, for instance, to introduce some dating reference that would approximate the time-period of the activity of his protagonist's *alter ego*, Theodore Abū Qurrah—though the real Abū Qurrah must have been dead already for a couple of decades by the 840s (a fact that Euthymios may or may have not known)? Was Euthymios also drawn to Theodora, a figure of some interest to the Georgians, and thus felt obliged to mention her?²⁵ Or did he, alternatively, feel compelled to place the story just after the end of iconoclasm in 843 so as to provide context for his already cited references to the veneration of icons (46,9, from Michael Synkellos; 47,12, a Euthymian addition) and to the Seventh Ecumenical Council of 787 (47,1), all of which allowed him to complete the all-comprehensive tapestry of Orthodox doctrine which his Theodore propagated?

As for the former temporal limit of Theodore's "present", this would simply be hazy as a historiographical referent for the Byzantine reader. We have already discussed how Adramelech and Mauias are products of intertextual tricks and that neither could be in any way identified with the relevant historical personalities known from other sources, 'Abd al-Malik and Mu'āwiya. One might again still wonder. Should we expect Euthymios to worry about the historiographical confusion that his references (however refracted) could cause?

Once again, we may be raising historicist questions in regard to a text which, despite its exceptionally composite nature, is quite seamless in its construction of a plausible tale. After all, it seems that distance *within* the narrative—Adramelech in 24,1, the "recent" Seventh Ecumenical Council in 47,1, Mauias in 70,3, and Michael and Theodora in 84,5—is enough to allow contemporaneous narrative co-existence.²⁶ Such co-existence facilitates the kind of verisimilitude, a

²⁵ Cf. Martin-Hisard 2004 that discusses a Georgian hagiographic piece containing a letter by Theodora, in which we read: "... the honor in which we hold your country ...; it is not only to you, but to all the Kartvelians [i.e. Georgians] who are on our side and under our power that we say this, for I consider them all with you as friends of Christ, given by God to our kingdom and as my own children" (§§ 27 and 28).

²⁶ We may remark that, as happens with other *later* versions of Byzantine hagiographical tales, the later Arabic version of Theodore's *Life* tries to correct some of the historical anomalies and thus tone down

fictive verisimilitude, aimed at by Euthymios. For it is neither chronology nor a fully concretized space, but the figures themselves and the themes they embody that serve as links between various spaces and temporalities, and confer coherence and “truth”, one might say, to the story:

- kinship ties unite Michael and Basil to Theodore, all natives to Edessa;
- Michael’s martyrdom under Muslim hands necessitates the historical *excursus* on the loss of Syro-Palestine;
- internal strife among Christians brings Theodore to Mauïas, from Edessa to Baghdad, and then friendship, transformed into a spiritual bond, links them forever;
- the need to obtain an authentic piece of the True Cross introduces Constantinople as well as the temporal reference to Michael and Theodora to the story;
- the stylite Theodosios, who reactivates the vestiges of Maurice’s era, is linked to John the Hermit, his brother, who embodies two distinct spatio-temporal dimensions—a past and present of traditional eremitism in the deserts of Persia as well as the unusual asceticism of the Christians inhabiting the wilderness of India.

Historical time and geography thus become subjacent to and are transposed into interpersonal relationships, creating not a precise biography, but rather a multi-dimensional and multifunctional edifying tale, bolstered by a pastiche of theological and moral instruction, and framed by a hagiographical narrative that could serve the liturgical commemoration of the new saints it introduced to its audience. All things considered, the only *precise* chronological markers—indeed markers where “ritual”, “natural”, and “historical” time converge fully—are the death dates of the principal figures: King John suffers martyrdom on May 30 (110), while Michael and Theodore share the same date of death, July 19 (34,4; 115,3), anticipating future commemoration among Orthodox believers.²⁷ That is to say, in *Theodore of Edessa*, it is the saintly characters, representing archetypal human figures, who envelop the chronotope created by the story.

the “more fanciful” elements of the original; cf. Griffith 2015, 158 and 162 (where the quoted phrase); most notably, the Arabic reviser leaves the Persian ruler in the martyrdom of Michael unnamed, and then identifies the future martyr King with the Arab ruler al-Ma’mūn (r. 813–833; PmbZ 4689), in fact contemporary with the historical Abū Qurrah; cf. Swanson 2003, 82–3.

²⁷ For the aftermath of the commemoration of Theodore and Michael in Byzantine times, see chapter 5 below. King John is celebrated only in modern times; see Vasiliev 1942–1943, 209–10.

4.2. COMMUNITIES AND PERSONS

Theodore of Edessa, if imagined as a theatrical performance, is a grand spectacle. In addition to the main plotline and its chronotope, which mobilizes a large number of individuals, several further characters—themselves often avatars or echoes of characters of earlier texts and tales—enter, exit, and, sometimes reenter the narrative stage. Meanwhile, the protagonist's (and John the Hermit's) extensive discursive excursions, including a whole separate textual unit, the *Chapters*, appended at the conclusion of the *Life*, introduce yet another, almost independent, rhetorical tableaux, like arias, one might say, in an opera. At that, communities and persons, including their discourses, interchange as the medium through which the "truth" of *Theodore of Edessa* is staged and mediated. Though we shall treat them in sequence below, they are simply different perspectives onto the same narrative world.

Communities

All characters participate, to varying degrees, in different kinds of "communities", which project distinct identities. The most basic, a rather inconspicuous *given*, one might say, is the community of gender. The majority of *Theodore of Edessa* focuses on male persons, doing male things and carrying male designations in an androcentric society. Nevertheless, unlike Euthymios' *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, which creates an almost absolutely male world, female characters do make their appearance in *Theodore*.²⁸ As one might expect, while ordinary women remain largely invisible, the women of *Theodore* represent universal types of the Byzantine imagination, behind which lies a long tradition of hagiographic literature: the saint's exemplary mother, more devout than his father (2–4); Seïs, the wife of King Adramelech, who assumes the role of the biblical temptress and exercises undeniable influence over her husband (24,5–20)²⁹; the repentant prostitute living in seclusion near Edessa and Ader's wife, an aristocratic woman who renounces the worldly life and becomes a nun, after being abandoned by her husband (56–64); and finally the pious Byzantine empress Theodora, who receives a miracle from Theodore (84,5; 85,3).³⁰

Notably, women are absent from the court of Babylon/Baghdad. Whereas Adramelech's wife plays a key role in the *Passion* of Michael, being the cause of his martyrdom, Mauïas is not associated with any woman or indeed family

²⁸ On the fully masculine world of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, see Papaioannou 2024b, 353.

²⁹ On Seïs, see also Kazhdan 1990, 138.

³⁰ On female sanctity in Byzantium and the depiction of women in Byzantine hagiography, see the latest contributions, which include previous bibliography: Delierneux 2014; Efthymiadis 2019; Messis 2024. More generally, on gender stereotypes in Byzantine literature, see Papaioannou 2024b.

and behaves like a celibate monarch—much like, one might observe, Basil II, reigning at the time the *Life* was written. More generally, with the exception of Theodora, no female characters are mentioned in the latter part of the *Life* (from section 68,3 onwards, when Theodore returns to his bishopric, after meeting with Theodosios the Stylite). As we have seen, the latter part of the *Life* is based less and less on concrete intertexts and is generated by Euthymios' creativity. Should we thus see in this climax of the tale a more Euthymian conception of world, which came closer to *Barlaam and Ioasaph*? Possibly.



Other fundamental communities follow distinctions of religious-cum-social class—between laypeople and monks, ascetics, and archpriests, and between rulers and commoners—and ethnic as well as religious identity—between Romans (cf. 21,2) and non-Romans, and between Orthodox Christians and heretics as well as non-Christians, where the Orthodox indicate the “we” and “us” of the story.

The group of monks, which includes Theodore, Michael, and Basil, also encompasses other Sabaites: John the Abbot (13,2–3; 14,1–2), the monk George (34,2), Ader and later his son (57,3; 58,3; 60,4), and a number of unnamed monks who assist the protagonists. Next to these, we also encounter ascetics who practice more solitary ways of life. Theodore is, for a long period (14,1–18,1; 35,2–40,2), one such solitary hermit himself before being elected bishop—though first he has spent, as proper Orthodox practice required, a considerable amount of time as an obedient monk in a monastery³¹—, but there are further important figures: John the Hermit and his brother Theodosios the Stylite (to whom we shall return) and, of course, the anonymous inhabitants of the Indian wilderness (95,1–97,1). Such monks and, especially, the ascetics guarantee orthodoxy from the perspective of the proper way of life, representing an expressly higher, exemplary class of Christians.³² The brief monastic sermon (39,3–39,7) by Theodore, the lengthy exhortation by John the Hermit (94,1–97,13), and, more notably, the *Chapters* (116,1–100) set out the tenets for such a way of life.

Next to monks and ascetics there is the high clergy, who usually come from the ranks of the former group and who safeguard orthodoxy from the perspec-

³¹ On this, see for instance Pahlitzsch 2019, 251 with Papachryssanthou 1973, 160–2.

³² As we read in the account of Michael's passion (25,10), marriage and the consumption of meat divide Christians into two distinct categories: those who partake of both, though in a regulated manner (lower clergy and, mainly, laity) and those who abstain from both (prelates and monks); the dietary regime of the latter is extremely frugal, consisting, in exceptional cases, of olives and fruits, bread and vegetables (93,2; cf. 65,3 and 95,2).

tive of doctrine and ritual. To this group belong again Theodore and (when the *Life* is supposedly being written) Basil, bishops of major cities, along with a number of unnamed persons: the patriarchs of Jerusalem and Antioch, who elect Theodore to the metropolitan see, the patriarch of Constantinople and the bishop of Baghdad, who provide hospitality, and, finally, Ader's son, who also becomes patriarch of Jerusalem for seven years, after being a Sabaite monk (60,8).³³

Monks, ascetics, and bishops are surrounded by "the Orthodox" people, present throughout the text and the geography wherever the saint travels; they live among heretics and other non-Christians "like sheep among wolves" (22)—correspondingly, when the heretics convert to Orthodoxy, they are transformed "from wolves into sheep" (85,8). Their role is to act collectively on various occasions, to serve as witnesses to events, and to express their emotions.³⁴ They are especially present in Jerusalem, where they support Michael during his debates with the Jews. They express joy (28,4), cry out in despair when the future martyr Michael drinks the poison (29,5), and glorify God on two occasions: first when Michael miraculously escapes death by poisoning (30,1), and then when he is ultimately executed (30,2). They also contend with the monks of St Sabas for Michael's body (32,2). Harran and Edessa are presented as predominantly Christian cities (45,1), particularly after the heretics' reconversion to Orthodoxy (75), while Christians also represent a significant portion of the population in Baghdad (88,1; 107,2). There, they participate in official gatherings, and fear the anger of the Muslim populace when the king reveals his conversion and makes his confession (111,1). Among the Christian population, a distinct subgroup acts as the community's liaison with the authorities, "the scribes and the doctors" (28,4); they are found in both Jerusalem and, then in the story's mirror-city, Baghdad, namely wherever the court is present, reflecting distant realities.³⁵

Opposite these Orthodox communities stand primarily heretics and dissidents—presented especially in relation to Theodore's city, Edessa (68,4–68,7)—as well as non-Christians, namely Muslims and Jews. The community of non-Orthodox comprises the Manichaeans and the followers of Nestorius and Eutyches. The term "followers of Eutyches" refers to the Monophysites, who were indeed prevalent in Syria, while Nestorianism was

³³ Lower clergy (priests and deacons) also make an appearance, but play little role in the story; see e.g. 4,3; 19,2; 23; 68,2; 70,2 etc.

³⁴ On the role of the people, as a group, in hagiographical narratives, see Koutrakou 2004.

³⁵ On Christians and other non-Muslims active in Islamic courts within the time period of our tale, see Massignon 1942 with Gutas 1998, 127–41; also Yarbrough 2019. On bishops who were part of the royal entourage as physicians or confidants, constituting the bureaucracy of the Sassanid courts, see McDonough 2008.

also a highly influential form of Christianity in the region. The Manichaeans, however, pose a small definitional challenge. Within the setting of *Theodore of Edessa*, the term may refer both to the followers of Mani and, more broadly, to anyone who rejects the fundamental tenets of Christianity, or, in the context of sixth- to ninth-century Syria, to pre-Islamic Persian religion (indeed, in 81,6, the teachings of Islam are seen as a mixture of the views “of the Arians and the Manicheans”). The punishments meted out to them also differ from those inflicted on other Christian dissidents, and appear to be harsher (74).³⁶ Whatever the reasons of this differentiation—Euthymios might be simply replicating the logic of his hypotexts,³⁷ or might have even had in mind contemporary dualist, neo-Manichean heresies such as the Paulicians and the Bogomils³⁸—, our text spends a considerable amount of discourse on describing in great detail the doctrinal deviations of the non-Orthodox. He does so through Theodore’s long sermon in Edessa, which replicates verbatim earlier texts (46,2–52,2) and which provides a complete catalogue of heresies—including iconoclasm, as we saw—for an Orthodox reader of the 1020s.



The opposition with non-Christians, which has attracted much attention by modern readers of the *Life* of Theodore, is operative in the narrative of Michael’s martyrdom in Jerusalem and, less strongly, in the mirroring account of the events in Baghdad and the martyrdom of King John. We meet mostly Muslims, as well as Jews, and then, in the immediate entourage of the second Persian king, three Alans, who join him first in his Christian baptism and then in his Christian martyrdom. Let us look at these communities and their designations in some detail.

Regarding Muslims, the text refers to Saracens (11 times), Hagarenes (7 times), Ishmaelites (6 times), Arabs (2 times), and, most frequently, to Persians (27 times). The first four designations (a total of 26 times) refer to the Arab people before and after the advent of Muhammad, without much differentiation.

³⁶ “The Manicheans”, we read, “should have their tongues cut out, and the Nestorians as well as Eutyches’ followers should be expelled from the city, and their temples should be demolished”. For the harsh punishments for Manicheans in Byzantine state law, see e.g. *Ecloga* 17,52, where Manicheans and Montanists are the only heretics to be mentioned (cf. Goria 2025, 238) and corporal punishment is stipulated: “Οἱ Μανιχαῖοι καὶ οἱ Μονταννοὶ ζῆφει τιμωρεῖσθωσαν”; cf. also *Appendix Eclogae* 3,46–7: “Ὁ ἔχων βιβλία μανιχαῖκα καὶ μὴ φανερῶν αὐτὰ ἐπὶ τὸ καυθῆναι τιμωρεῖται”.

³⁷ Notably, (a) following Theodore of Raithou’s *Preparation*, Euthymios lists *first* the heretical views of Mani in his catalogue of heresiarchs (48,2); and (b) the closest parallel to (and most likely source of) Euthymios’ presentation of the beliefs of the “Manicheans” in the narrative part of *Theodore* (68,6) is a passage from the *Euchologion* (section 148, ed. Parenti and Velkovska; see our *app. font.*).

³⁸ On which, see Hamilton and Hamilton 1998, with further bibliography.

Thus the basic distinction (if it is one) is that between the Arab people (however they are called) and the Persians.

Saracens first appear in a historical excursus describing the loss of Syria and Palestine, as subjects of the Persian king (21,2). “Saracens” is, it’s worth noting, the term used consistently in the original Georgian *Passion* of Michael in reference to the group that opposes Christians (the “us” vs. “them”), while “Persians and Arabs” are mentioned only once, as the pagans who are defeated by Muhammad. Thus, Saracens appear also more often in the relevant pages of Theodore’s *Life* (21,2–30,2); they are a fanatical crowd demanding punishment for the Christians (30), but they are also mentioned twice alongside Christians and Jews as part of Baghdad’s population (88,1; 90,1). While narrating the episode of Michael, Euthymios also repeats, albeit in a jumbled fashion, the just mentioned distinction of Saracens from Persians (26,2) and also from Arabs (27,2).

The same group is referred to as “Hagarenes” in the speeches of the king of Baghdad to his people, where again a clear distinction is also made between them and the Persians (107,4; 111,3)—among many other places, Euthymios would have encountered the term in reading one of the *Miracles* of George the Martyr, which recounts the miraculous salvation of a young Christian captive from the hands of the “Hagarenes” (*de iuvene Paphlagonensi*; BHG 691m).³⁹ The Hagarenes are also present in Edessa as a distinct segment of the population (75). In another context, the term refers to a religious rather than an ethnic group: thus, Mauïas is described as moving from the group of the Hagarenes to that of the Christians upon his conversion (81,6). The language of the Hagarenes is Arabic (69,2), as is the language of the “Ishmaelites” (81,1). The latter term replaces “Hagarene” when referring to the population of Baghdad and is listed alongside Persians, Jews, and Christians (107,2). The Ishmaelites also appear as a group who, along with the Jews, are consumed by envy at the miracles performed by Theodore in Baghdad (86,7), but some of whose members eventually are converted to Christianity in Mesopotamia and Syria (113,2).



The Persians form an ethnically distinct group from other Muslims, appearing in the narrative *alongside* Arabs in both Jerusalem and Baghdad (88,1; 88,2; 90,1; 107,2; 107,4; 111,3). They are the ones who practice prostration as a custom (25,1), who rename Babylon as Baghdad (69,3), and who execute their king upon discovering his conversion to Christianity (111,4). Persians are notably absent

³⁹ On the *Miracles* of George, see p. 3.3 above. In another miracle in the same group, the term used is “Saracens” (*de imagine perfossa*; BHG 690i).

from the Georgian hypotext, except in that single borrowing previously mentioned—notably, they are also absent from the Georgian *Life* of John of Edessa, which may have also been an influence for Euthymios, as we suggested above (3.2, section “Refracted Narratives”). Their strong presence in *Theodore of Edessa* is thus Euthymios’ intervention. This may reflect an understanding of the actual presence of Persians in the Islamic Arab world or, alternatively, the ideological perspective of Christians for whom “the kingdom of the Arabs, the reign of Islam, is nothing more than the temporary refflorescence of an already defeated kingdom of Persia”, as suggested by Sidney Griffith.⁴⁰

They may also be, however, the result of a further exoticization of the textual world created by Euthymios who invoked, perhaps unwittingly, a pre-Islamic period, and thus—as he did with heretics—wished to produce a larger, more complete, and universal image of the Eastern religious as well as ethnic “other”. Within the ranks of the Persians, for instance, we encounter a distinguished upper class composed of “chief *satraps*” (ἀρχισατράπαις [72,1; 86,9; 102,2; III,1]) and “chief *magi*” (ἀρχιμάγοις [86,9]). Both terms—the former borrowed from Symeon Metaphrastes and used also in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, and the latter common, for example, in *Synaxarial* entries on martyrs in Persia—and, especially, their base words σατράπης and μάγος would belong to a pre-Islamic world in Euthymios’ readings.⁴¹ After all, Persians in our story seem to dominate the other groups, largely due to the fact that the king himself is of Persian origin. Although the population is Arab, that is, the king is consistently referred to as Persian (21,2; 23; 55,6; 85,4), even though he bears an Assyrian and then an Arabic name, Adramelech and then Mauīas. Indeed, the term “Persian” frequently substitutes for the king’s proper name, especially in the episode of the confrontation between Adramelech and Michael (24,20; 29,1). Persian is made into a synonym for royal authority, giving further the appearance of predating the full Arabization of the region, and our story is thus aligned *also* with narratives of Christian martyrdom in the earlier Persian world, thereby producing the same effect of paradoxical verisimilitude we have observed in regard to other aspects of *Theodore*.



There is a further distinct, non-Christian group, the Jews, referred to in the *Life* by two denominations, Hebrews and Jews, both used interchangeably (86,7; 107,2; 107,4).⁴² They are not so much a group, but a community represented by

⁴⁰ Griffith 2015, 166–7; cf. also Griffith 1994, 133.

⁴¹ For ἀρχισατράπης, see Symeon Metaphrastes, *Life* of Stephen the Younger, ll. 2007 and 2277 with *Barlaam and Ioasaph* 2,4; in the latter work, the aforementioned Theudas is a “magician” (29,8).

⁴² Notably, also *Barlaam and Ioasaph* includes a short exposition about them; see 27,234–48.

specific individuals, who come to the forefront and engage in debates with Christians before Muslim authorities. Two such debates, as we have seen, are incorporated. The first takes place in Jerusalem before Adramelech and involves Michael and an anonymous Jew (25,6), who is a member of the king's entourage. The Jew enters into a dialogue already initiated by the king in an effort to reinforce the latter's arguments. However, proving of little use, he incurs Adramelech's humiliating wrath (28,5). At that, this first debate is not a direct confrontation between a Jew and a Christian, but rather between a Muslim, assisted by a Jew, and a Christian.

The second debate involves the head of the synagogue in Baghdad, a mirror figure of the earlier Jewish "expert in the Law" (86,8). Motivated by envy and possessed by a demon, he bribes the chief judge in order to provoke a debate between himself and the city's Christians. This debate never exactly happens; faced with the Jew's accusations, provocations, and insults, Theodore responds with a miracle: he renders his opponent mute (89,4). As with Adramelech, the king reacts with anger: "the king ordered that he should be lashed with whips made of ox tendon and then imprisoned"—a punishment extended to the entire Jewish population (90,2). However, the narrative does not end there. The Jew repents and appeals to Theodore for help in being released from prison. Upon his release, he converts to Christianity, regains his speech, and is rewarded by the king. By converting, the Jew receives a name, Samonas, after one of the saints of Edessa (91,2 with 45,3)⁴³; from an anonymous Jew he becomes an eponymous Christian, and thus yet another minor character in our story.

Such debates, and such characters, are a rather common pattern in Christian hagiography in various Byzantine languages—we have identified a very likely *direct* precedent to Euthymios' version, the Georgian *Life* of John of Edessa (3.2, section "Refracted Narratives"), and we may additionally point out here a "Jew" doctor and his bad influence at court, mentioned in Ouranos' *Life* of Symeon the Younger (190f.; PG 86: 3160D) and Saint Pankratios' own strong confrontations with the Jews (*Life* 183–186).⁴⁴ They would have been not merely narrative and ideological *tropes*, however, either for the audience or for the author

⁴³ For a famous Samonas in what would have been recent history for Euthymios, namely an influential eunuch of Arab descent at the court of Leo the VI, see PmbZ 26973 with Rydén 1984. Notably, Rydén (1984, 107–8) has connected the figure of the last Christian ruler "from Arabia" (cf. 3.2, section "Refracted Narratives" above) with this specific Samonas.

⁴⁴ On debates between Christians and Jews in hagiographic texts, see further: Peeters 1930, 91–8; Külzer 2004; Déroche 2010; Moiseeva 2010; Morlet 2020; De Ridder 2021 and 2022. On the 'adversus Iudaeos' dialogues and anti-Jewish polemics, more generally, see: Olster 1994; Külzer 1999; Morlet, Munnich, and Pouderon 2013; Déroche 2024. See also Rosenkranz 2004.

of our story in the early eleventh century.⁴⁵ Euthymios, we should remember, may have had direct contacts with Jews in his own environment, if there is some truth to the two aforementioned (3.4, section “Whose Double?”) tales of debates in which he engaged with Jews in Thessalonike recounted in his own *Vita* by George Hagiorites.



A distant reference to Euthymios’ own origins may also explain the mention of the three Alans, the servants and close confidants of Mauïas, who are essentially (in the conspicuous absence of any women or other relatives), the King’s “family unit”. Their otherwise “unnecessary” presence in the narrative may be explained as a distant reminiscence of a folktale convention, that of the king (or male protagonist) and his three companions.⁴⁶ Yet, more immediate concerns may also be at stake. The Alans were allies and mercenaries in Byzantium, the Caucasus, and Sasanian Persia. At the time that the *Life* was written in the early eleventh century, Georgian kings and Alania enjoyed a close relationship; its Christianization, which began in the late ninth century, occurred under Georgian influence.⁴⁷ In Byzantium, from this period onward, the term *Alanoi* becomes conflated with Iberians and Abasgians. As John Tzetzes wrote a century later: “Iberians, Abasgians, and Alans are but one people: / the Iberians come first, the Abasgians second, / the Alans rank third among the three”.⁴⁸ One people, but hierarchically divided into three subcategories. It may be, in any case, tempting to see behind the seemingly minor detail regarding the ethnic origin of King Mauïas’ guards and closest confidants, a hidden clue to the world of Georgians, as perceived by Greek readers of *Theodore of Edessa* or, even (if we were to extend our purview), an indirect praise offered by Euthymios—who had passed through Mount Olympus in Bithynia *en route* to Mount Athos—to his namesake Euthymios, that monk of Olympus who, a century earlier, had evangelized the kings of the Alans.⁴⁹

Persons

With the two Jewish experts and the three Alans, we have already moved beyond communities to the persons who spearhead our tale. How are these portrayed?

⁴⁵ On Jews in Byzantium, see e.g. de Lange 2022 (with further bibliography). For the increasing “anti-Jewish” sentiments one observes in the aforementioned *Lives* of Symeon and Andrew the Holy Fools as well as that of Basil the Younger, see Krueger 2018.

⁴⁶ See e.g. ATU 513 or ATU 550 in Uther 2004.

⁴⁷ For the Byzantine conception of Alania in the 10th c., see Martin-Hisard 2000, 466–79. On Alan-Byzantine relations, see the recent Latham-Sprinkle 2025.

⁴⁸ Tzetzes, *Histories*, v. V. 588–590; see also Gautier 1970 and Martin-Hisard 2006/2007, 180.

⁴⁹ On this Euthymios, see PmbZ 21926 and *Letters* 9,264–9 and 135,86–99 by Nicholas Mystikos.

Before looking at the central figures, we may remark on those personalities that emerge out of the two apparently independent yet interpolated subplots within Euthymios' text: the brothers Theodosios the Stylite and John the Hermit and then Ader and his family. The possibility that these may derive, though heavily reworked, from earlier (to some extent) *Edessan* stories—the complex story of Theodoulos the Stylite and the *Life* of an ascetic pair, Symeon the Holy Fool and his fellow John—has been explored earlier (3.2, section “Refracted Narratives”).

What is of relevance here is that these stories, as reworked by Euthymios, provided him with themes, all of which could expand the canvas of ideal Christian models he put forward for any Byzantine audience, and some of which could again convey resonances to his own immediate situation:

- the importance of family ties, even within extreme ascetic practices (Theodosios the Stylite and his brother John the Hermit);
- the theme of a wealthy man, but beneficent man, who renounces worldly life and riches to become a monk (Ader);
- and the topic of the dangers which would be inherent in reversing proper order, by abandoning the promise of extreme asceticism and returning to the world (Theodore the Stylite as opposed to his brother).

Regarding the first theme, we may note that the motif of an ascetic pair, of which one member spends a life also *in* the secular world, appears in yet another text which belongs to the hagiographic tradition of Edessa: the early Byzantine *Life* of bishop Paul Qentos and priest John of Edessa.⁵⁰ Notably, as in the *Life* of Symeon the Holy Fool and our *Theodore*, “John” is the name of the character who is “abandoned”, whereas the first member of the pair, in this case named Paul, engages in extraordinary forms of asceticism: among other things, Paul renounces his episcopal seat and pretends to be a mason in order to earn money that he then distributes to the poor. What concerns us here—apart from the very distant possibility that also this Edessan tale, with minimal diffusion, was in Euthymios' mind⁵¹—is that, in relation to this motif as manifested in both

⁵⁰ The text survives in Syriac (likely the original language) (Arneson et al. 2010) as well as in Greek (Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1898, 368–83), yet in the latter language it is preserved in a somewhat fragmentary fashion within a single and very particular tenth-century manuscript, Paris, BNF, Coislin 303 (Diktyon *49444), with a collection of Syro-Palestinian hagiographies which came from Palestine to Constantinople, in the monastic environment of either the Stoudios monastery or the Chora, but experienced no diffusion either in Constantinople or elsewhere in the Byzantine world (see Binggeli 2018). No trace of the *Life* in question is to be found in Georgian either directly from Greek or (a much rarer circumstance) directly from Syriac. On this text, see also Smith 2009 and Binggeli 2023.

⁵¹ There are some further similar motifs/theme, though in all cases the details in the *Life* of Paul and John are very far removed from our *Theodore*: conversion of an Arab king (Papadopoulos-Kerameus

this text and the story of Symeon the Holy Fool, Euthymios innovates by making the ascetic pair be siblings, highlighting the importance of kinship, a theme which we find often in Byzantine hagiography more generally, but which had an apparent urgency for Euthymios, a prominent member of the Georgian aristocracy whose power was founded on family ties.

Regarding Theodosios, we might additionally wonder why Euthymios chose a stylite so as to depict the tension between pure eremitism (exemplified by John the Hermit) and a solitary life meshed with urban society (exemplified by Theodosios who builds a monastery in the city, and later becomes a stylite at the outskirts of Edessa).⁵² By the tenth and eleventh century, the golden age of stylites was already gone for Byzantine Greeks; except for Lazaros of Galesion, there are no known stylites of significant visibility from this period. However, numerous cases of Georgian stylites active in Syria and Palestine are documented.⁵³ Stylitism thus appears to have been a form of asceticism particularly cherished by the Georgians during the period in question, holding undeniable relevance in their monastic spirituality.⁵⁴ With Theodosios, Euthymios re-introduces their importance to an audience of Greek readers.



How about the protagonists? In terms of narrative content, the main person is of course Theodore, the axis around which all other persons and groups revolve and through whom they interconnect. His character is constructed from a composite of diverse texts, as we saw in greater detail above. As a whole, they serve a series of hagiographic common places: “miraculous” birth to a noble and rich couple, following a period of sterility or the inability to have a male child; miraculous education; involuntary elevation to the episcopal see; foretold death. Theodore is both an exemplary monk—early withdrawal to the monastery, extraordinary asceticism, miracles, gift of foresight, moral instruction—, and an effective bishop who cares for his flock, communicates across various ethnic groups through his polyglotism, and most importantly makes a Christian martyr out of a foreign king. He also reveals himself through (his) learning and words: after attaining the pinnacle of Christian *and* secular edu-

375,20–32; Arneson et al. 52–6); a cave near Edessa which shelters troglodyte ascetics and which will be the last refuge of John (Papadopoulos-Kerameus 372,11–22 and 383,13–18; Arneson et al. 36–42); encounter of the protagonists with a dendrite monk (Papadopoulos-Kerameus 376–7; Arneson et al. 58–60); healing of a demoniac woman from Edessa who, after her healing, becomes a nun, while her husband follows suit (Papadopoulos-Kerameus 380–2).

⁵² Notably, in the Arabic version, Theodosios is presented as a hermit and not as a stylite; see Griffith 2015, 150 and 162.

⁵³ Djobadze 1976, 69–70; Loosley Leaming 2018, 85–102.

⁵⁴ See further Caseau and Messis 2021 and, especially, 2024.

cation, and being multilingual, he also becomes a most skillful calligrapher and public reader of Christian books (skills especially favored in hagiography of the tenth and eleventh centuries), and then an effective preacher, a voice denouncing heresy, affirming orthodoxy, converting both heretics and non-Christians, instructing monks and, through his *Chapters*, future lovers of ascetic life.⁵⁵



Euthymios surrounds Theodore with a series of characters who in a sense multiply his saintly status and cover almost every other major type of Byzantine sanctity. First, there is Basil. He is the person who in terms of narrative form holds the story and text of *Theodore of Edessa* together not only as its narrator, but also as the designated “biographer”, writing down the *Life*, and the implied posthumous “publisher” of the *Chapters*. His status as bishop is indicated solely in the title, granting authority to the text, whereas throughout the narrative he is portrayed as a monk, a faithful companion of the saint, and as his nephew—the son of his sister (2,2)—a kinship repeatedly noted in the text (1,5; 7,2; 74).⁵⁶ Portraying Basil as a nephew of the principal hero is a useful narrative device, as it can explain the narrator’s continual presence in the saint’s entourage, his involvement in the action, and his later position as an intra-diegetic author. But it also provides Euthymios with yet another opportunity to exalt the importance of kinship.

Beyond his rhetorical apostrophes concerning the quality and organization of the narrative (the *topos* of humility: 1,3; authorial affirmations and subject organization: 35,1; 40,1; 106,1), and beyond the expression of his feelings when he seeks to draw the reader’s or listener’s attention to a fact or a situation that he deems important (17,1; 21,4; 34), Basil actively participates in the life of his protagonist. He is there to listen to and record Theodore’s monastic sermon and *Chapters* (40,1) and he accompanies him to Edessa with two other monks—an opportunity to emphasize once again that he is the author of the story (44,1)—and to Babylon with a limited number of other companions (70,2).

It is in Babylon that Basil begins to become far more visible than before. After the caliph’s healing, he is among those who receive abundant gifts (73,1), but above all he is the sole witness to the baptism of the King (82,2) and his three Alan companions; he even becomes the godfather of the King (82,3) and of one of the three Alans. Once Theodore’s mission in Constantinople is accomplished, Basil is sent directly to the King (85,8). During the hunt organized by the King

⁵⁵ For calligraphy and public recital specifically, see the relevant notes to the translation (chaps. 11,1 and 16).

⁵⁶ It should be noted that, apparently for reasons of historical plausibility, Basil’s kinship or non-kinship to Michael, himself also a “blood relative” of Theodore (19,1), is left unmentioned.

as a pretext to visit John the Hermit in the neighboring desert, Basil twice emphasizes his presence alongside Theodore (92,1; 93,2), as well as the preparations he made for the return to Edessa (103) and his participation in Theodore's final journey to Jerusalem (104,1).

Basil, as Theodore's closest confidant, participates in and thus becomes the sole witness to the most secret moments of the story. He functions as the *alter ego* of the real author, a persona useful for structuring a narrative that manages a dual focalization: external during moments when the narrator is absent, and internal when events demand a higher degree of authentication and plausibility. Basil assists Euthymios in crafting a story that bears the seal of verisimilitude by being presented as the account of a lived experience.



Even closer to Theodore are two eventual martyrs, Michael and King John. While Theodore is not a martyr himself, as he suffers no harm, not even from his enemies, his two spiritual children unfold this side of sainthood as well. Michael, an elaborate new version of the protagonist in the original Georgian *Passion*, like Theodore, combines within himself several archetypal figures of the Byzantine literary imagination: the handsome, simple, gentle, and extremely pious young devotee; the new Joseph, tempted by another Potiphar's wife, who falsely accuses him of sexual violence; the confessor of the faith, who publicly demonstrates the futility of Jewish and Muslim theological arguments through debate; and the classical figure of the martyr, whose death is followed by miracles.⁵⁷ He is also a blood "relative" (19,1; 35,2; 115,3), originating from Edessa, a disciple of the principal hero, a source for deep mourning and inspiration upon death (35,2–37,1), and a co-habitant after death (115,3), thus again allowing for narrative cohesion as well as the promotion of kinship, boosted by spiritual ties.



Mauias/King John also draws to himself a series of commonplaces related to Christian martyrdom. An invention of Euthymios, inspired by Adramelech and other intertexts, he deserves a bit more of our attention than his earlier counterpart in the story. The qualities that distinguish him are those of being (a)

⁵⁷ For Michael's beauty specifically, to which our text returns twice (19,1 and 24,7), we might cite one parallel, out of many, among Euthymios' readings in the context of ms. A, namely the *Miracle* about the young man saved from the Hagarenes (BHG 691m) where St George is described as "extremely beautiful in his appearance". The theme is present also in *Barlaam and Ioasaph* where we read about Ioasaph's (2,170–173; 5,3–8), but also his father's, Abenner's, beauty (1,42). See also Euthymios' Georgian *Life* of the Virgin 62, on the exceptional corporeal beauty of Christ.

Persian and Muslim, (b) a king, and (c) the closest friend of the saint protagonist. The first two qualities and, to some degree also the third one, are shared with Adramelech. After all, both of the two kings are benevolent, gentle, and well-disposed toward Christians, especially *extraordinary* Christians (Adramelech toward Michael; Mauïas toward Theodore), in contrast to their own people, echoing hagiographic accounts that describe the symbiosis between Christians and Sassanids or Christians and Muslims and where one often encounters this implicit or explicit opposition between the “good king” and the “evil populace”.⁵⁸ Yet Mauïas is nevertheless a hugely improved Adramelech; the latter, though at root a positive figure, is marked by two flaws: a minor one—his lack of firmness toward his wife—, and a major one—the wrath of a *tyrannos*, another hagiographical commonplace, that he displays when intellectually bested by Michael.⁵⁹

By contrast, the portrayal of Mauïas is unequivocally favorable, unmarred by any fault. He first appears indirectly, in the prophetic vision of Theodosios the Stylite (55,6), while his Arabic-sounding name is revealed when Theodore arrives in Baghdad (70,2). Theodore finds Mauïas to be ill and, through his miraculous intervention, provides the king with a renewed legitimacy, since a sick—and especially a blind—king is one ripe for replacement.⁶⁰ The miracle, one of the few to be described in detail in the *Life*, enables Euthymios to showcase his medical knowledge, cite an illness (eye disease) often associated with intellectuals like himself and, in our text, reserved for kings destined to become idealized rulers (Theodora suffers a similar illness and is cured again by Theodore [85,3]), but also to speak about a remedy, the dust from the Holy Sepulchre, another miraculous *eulogia* like others traded between Palestine and the rest of the Orthodox world.⁶¹ In any case, quickly, a close relationship develops between the king and the bishop, one that instantly takes on the character of a deep affection (78,2): “for my soul is bound to you with an ineffable bond”—words that also Ioasaph addresses to Barlaam, in Euthymios’ other tale (18,10–12).

The first step toward conversion is thus set and it is a personal one, to which Theodore responds cautiously by explaining the impossibility of such a bond between individuals of different faiths (78,3). Skillfully guiding the king to the

⁵⁸ On the image of the “good” Persian king, see Jullien 2009.

⁵⁹ On the portrait of *tyrannos* in hagiographical narratives, Follieri 1972–1973; Messis 2022b; more generally, Cresci 1990.

⁶⁰ This new legitimacy must be affirmed publicly in two steps, both accompanied by celebration: the first, his appearance before the magistrates on the day following his healing: “He then sat down on a high platform and showed everyone that he was free from all disease and had all the limbs of his body intact” (71,9; see also 72); the second, his appearance before the assembled people on the banks of the two rivers on the second day after his healing (73,1).

⁶¹ For examples of other antecedents of this miraculous “dust”, see our note to the translation (71,7).

intended conclusion, the bishop presents the Gospel as the sole source of immortality (81), and transforms the king's personal motive into a religious imperative—true friendship exists only among co-religionists. Along the way, Euthymios gestures toward another common theme in Byzantine hagiographical imaginary—Euthymios returns to it in the scene of final separation of Theodore from John (100,1–103) as well as of Basil from Theodore (115,4)—, namely the kinship of feeling and affectionate ties, which often unite saintly (usually male) couples.⁶² Euthymios had greatly elaborated on this kind of spiritual kinship and affection while re-writing the *Balavariani* in Greek (as noted above; 3,1 [text and notes 46 and 47]), but the topic had resonances also in Euthymios' own immediate circle, if we think of the close friendship that united, according to Euthymios' *Life* (2,1 [text and note 34]), Iovane Grdzeldze and Arseni Ninoc'mida, Euthymios' closest collaborators and advisors at Iviron.

From this point, the path to conversion is short. A targeted catechesis follows, culminating in a full reading of the Gospel within the innermost room of the palace, where the conversion itself takes place: “he converted Mauias from a Hagarene to a Christian” (81,6) ... “giving him the name John” (82,3). The name, borne also by the abbot of the Lavra who instructs Theodore, and by the hermit, Theodosios' brother, who lives in the Baghdad desert—and, we might add, by the supposed Sabaite monk who transmitted the tale of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*—, might signal another acknowledgement to exemplary asceticism, both coenobitic and eremitic. The name, one might furthermore speculate, possibly also evokes, albeit very distantly, the legendary figure of Prester John, the priest-king said to reside somewhere in the East, who plays a role in Christian eschatology—the legend certainly circulated in the East (Syria, Mesopotamia, Ethiopia) before being disseminated in the West from the twelfth century onward, and Euthymios may have been aware of it.⁶³ However, a simpler explanation might suffice: the name John may represent an homage by Euthymios to persons in his own circle, above all his own father.

Yet what motivated the theme itself of the conversion of the foreign king, an episode unique within Greek hagiography? Earlier, we looked at various possible antecedents in Syro-Palestinian (in Georgian) and Constantinopolitan (in Greek) literature. If we were to widen our perspective, we would notice other similar, earlier tales in Greek—one story (BHG 690–690c) within the cycle of *Miracles* of George the Martyr (though not included in the group of four aforementioned miracles transmitted by ms. A and likely translated by Euthymios)—,

⁶² On this theme, see e.g. Messis 2008, 33 with Krueger 2011.

⁶³ There is a wide bibliography on King/Prester John. We only cite here the titles we have consulted: Richard 1957; Beckingham and Hamilton 1996; Bejczy 2001; Taylor 2011; Thomaz 2013; Sheir 2022.

in Arabic—to which also the original Arabic version of the *Life* of John of Edessa belongs—, and, at a more distant level, in Syriac. These refer mostly to Muslim rulers, though those in Syriac pertain also to an earlier substratum of stories about Christian conversion occurring in the immediate context of Sassanian pagan kings—a crucial substratum for *Theodore of Edessa*, given the Persian overtones we identified above.⁶⁴

In all these stories the possibility of conversion looms large, and when it happens it pertains to members of the royal family but *not* the monarch himself. These hagiographical pieces have generated a substantial scholarly literature cataloguing all preserved examples. Their common thread is that this theme “conveys the ultimate hopes of the Christians living in the caliphate and those in Byzantine territory”, or that “behind these literary devices and hagiographical tropes lies the disappointment of a community subjected to discrimination, minority status, and isolation, projecting its desire to see the known world won over to its faith”, or that such stories “express a common eschatological hope, namely, a desire to see pagan society transformed from the top down by converting its ruler”.⁶⁵ Such statements thus rightly highlight a concern among local Syro-Palestinian communities—the immediate context of the creation of most such stories—, expressing either aspiration or despair regarding their political situation and articulating a desire for restoration.

Though Euthymios’ context was slightly removed from such immediate concerns, the conversion, a crowning achievement of Theodore’s mission, could also, at least on an immediate level, express a similar wish: the peaceful triumph of Christianity in the East, a utopian view also at work in Euthymios’ *Barlaam and Ioasaph*. We might even detect other utopias as well. For the conversion may also be grounded in a commonly held premodern belief that all kingship, even that of those who adhere to a religion other than one’s own, is willed by God and serves His purposes; the *Life* of Theodore is not exempt also from such a sacralization of kingship, in our view.

⁶⁴ See Schilling 2008 and Jullien 2009 and 2021 (primarily on the Syriac texts), and especially Binggeli 2010 and Sahner 2018, 105–17 (with thorough overviews, including a discussion of our *Theodore*, and further bibliography). For the *Mirades* of George the Martyr, see also Hoyland 1997, 383–6 and Papaconstantinou 2012. To the related circle of Arabic works, we may also add a text, which was contemporaneous to Theodore’s *Life*: Ibrāhīm ibn Yūḥannā’s *Life* of St Christopher, apparently first composed in Greek, but only preserved in its Arabic translation, dated to “around the late 1020s” (Mugler 2021). Though no conversion is narrated, and the text’s key event is the *martyrdom* of Christopher—patriarch of Antioch (ca. 960–967) and native of Baghdad (PmbZ 21277)—under Muslim hands, attention is given also to the patriarch’s close friendship with Sayf al-Dawla, the powerful emir of Aleppo (944–967; PmbZ 26998). On this text, see Mugler 2021 and, for its context, 2.4 (text and note 64) above.

⁶⁵ See, respectively: Binggeli 2010, 79 and 99; Jullien 2009, 130; Sahner 2018, 112.

In any case, Euthymios does not stop here, but brings such utopias to their logical conclusion. As he knew well, a Christian king could not plausibly exist in a Muslim empire, unless, that is, his conversion remained secret and was revealed only indirectly through acts of benevolence toward Christians, the approach adopted in the aforementioned hagiographic accounts. What is novel in the *Life* of Theodore is Euthymios' decision to portray the king as a martyr, thus adding further dramatic intensity which culminates with the spectacular moment of the king's dismemberment by his own people (109,3). Euthymios, once more, takes an undercurrent of hesitant motifs to an extreme. It is as if the tale itself, with all its fictionality, driven by the desire to create an idealized world where everything is possible, brings the author to conceive its content.

However this might be, before the reader reaches the climactic scene of martyrdom, Euthymios makes sure to vest King John with the traditional Byzantine apparatus of royal authority. The Persian King meets and receives the blessing of an ascetic—an encounter which occupies several pages in Euthymios' account (92,1–99,1)—and also obtains confirmation by the imperial authority that resides in Constantinople—hence Theodore's trip to the City to obtain a piece of the True Cross (84,2–86,5).⁶⁶ Some details in the latter account deserve one last comment here. The emperors commission the creation of a richly decorated *staurotheke* for the precious relic: “So the emperor made a *box* of gold, adorned it with precious stones and pearls, and put a golden lock on it” (85,4). Euthymios had certainly read, as we have already seen, about a similar box in the *Life* of Pankratios, but he may have also seen such a *staurotheke* at Lavra on Mt Athos, donated by Nikephoros Phokas.⁶⁷ Furthermore, the emperors accompany the relic with a diplomatic letter, “written with gold letters and sealed with a gold seal,” an “imperial *sakra*” (85,5). The letter's paraphrased contents reflect Byzantine political ideology. That a Muslim Persian king becomes Chris-

⁶⁶ For a similar story of desire to acquire a piece of the True Cross and subsequent travel to Constantinople set in “the sixth-century Roman-Persian frontier”, see the middle Byzantine Syriac *Life of Aḥā of Rīšʿaynā*; see Durmaz 2022 (the quote on p. 377). Notably, also in the *Life* of Saint Martha, “a hagiographic text reworked probably in the Georgian environment of Syro-Palestine in the tenth/eleventh century” another similar episode is related (chs. 52–70), where a piece of the Holy Cross arrives, through the intervention of Georgian monks, at the monastery of Symeon Stylites the Younger at the Wondrous Mount—this time, however, from *Jerusalem*; see Caseau and Messis 2024, 179 with Djobadze 1976, 65–6. In the aftermath of Euthymios, the Georgian interest in the Cross may have been further excited by the fact that the aforementioned Monastery of the Holy Cross (cf. 2.4 [text and notes 67 and 68] above), near Jerusalem, was built on the site where the supposed tree was cut from which the Cross was made.

⁶⁷ On Phokas' *staurotheke* and its unfortunate fate, see Grabar 1969 and Mathews and Dandridge 2004. On the *staurotheke* in the *Life* of Pankratios, see 3.2 (section “Refracted Narratives”) above and Frolow 1961, 64. For another famous *staurotheke*, known as the *Limburg Staurotheke*, belonging to Basil Lekapenos the *Parakoimomenos*, see Koder 1985 and 1989, Sevckenko 1994, and Bevilacqua 2012. On the role of the cross in the *Life* of Theodore, see also Abel 1949, 235 and 239–40.

tian, the letter suggests, signifies a fundamental transformation of his biblical genealogy: he is no longer to be considered a son of Ishmael and Hagar, but rather a son of Abraham and Sarah, “a new Isaac” (85,4). Such change of status necessitates official and, at that, *Constantinopolitan* legitimization and, notably, Euthymios’ Theodore—and by extension also our author—is presented as a mediator of such legitimization.⁶⁸

4.3. A STORY FOR WHOM? AUDIENCE RECONSIDERED

For all we know *Theodore of Edessa* might have been a work commissioned, ordered, or suggested by some specific person or persons within Euthymios’ close or wider circle of Greek-reading friends, associates, and contacts, perhaps from the Great Lavra, perhaps from Constantinople, or even from Saint Sabas or elsewhere. Such concrete details, however, escape us. What we are left with is the context, form, transmission, and content of the text itself, all of which we attempted to retrace in what has preceded.

Earlier, we tried to reconstruct Euthymios’ likely and intended audience based on his biography and social positioning and identified a large set of possibilities, from the immediate Athonite monastic community to related networks far from Athos. The form of *Theodore of Edessa* and his earlier *Barlaam and Ioasaph* points us also toward an audience which, in order to comprehend and appreciate the two texts, would need to be exposed to works such as the Metaphrastic *Menologion*; they should, at the very least, value its rhetorical idiom, namely the elevated Greek of Constantinopolitan ecclesiastical and lay elite. This audience would apparently be also avid for large hagiographic tales, flirting with imaginative fictionality, a “genre” which was to become popular, broadening the corpus of storytelling in parallel to two sizeable, newly established collections of different types of hagiographical narrative, Metaphrastes’ *Menologion* as well as the slightly earlier *Synaxarion*. In the same vein, and following the manuscript transmission of *Theodore of Edessa* and the development of Euthymios’ translation production at Iviron over the course of the first three decades of the eleventh century, we suspected that Theodore’s *Life* seems to be addressing the needs for

⁶⁸ This whole staging recalls the role of the Cross in the oath between opposing parties or as a safe conduct. For examples, see Frolow 1961, 77–8. One such example is cited by John Skylitzes, *Synopsis of Histories* (ed. Thurn, 394; tr. Wortley 2010, 371), and dated to 1034 concerning Constantine Dalassenos and the guarantees he received to return to the capital: “Constantine Phagitzes, a eunuch from Paphlagonia, closely associated with the emperor, was now sent bearing the Wood of the True Cross, the holy Impression, the autograph letter of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to Abgar and an icon of the more-than-holy Mother of God”. The notable absence in Theodore’s similar list is any reference to the legend of Abgar, as we have already noted. On the use of Christian ambassadors by Muslim rulers, see Krönung 2019 and Drocourt 2019.

additional reading materials in monastic and related settings, within as well as outside liturgical services, commemorating saints and feasts during the year.

What can the world of generous geography, concrete as well as hazy temporality, and a multifaceted population of insiders and outsiders created by *Theodore of Edessa* tell us further about the audience in Euthymios' mind, his ideal readers, and thus also the motives behind his creation?

We have firmly situated the composition of *Theodore of Edessa* on Mount Athos, in particular in connection to the monastery of Iviron, its abbot and his networks after the beginning of the eleventh century and more specifically in the early 1020s (most likely). As such, the *Life* of Theodore (usually, as we have noted, read in scholarship separately from the *Chapters*) loses its unmediated relevance to tenth-century Middle Eastern realities that proponents of a Syro-Palestinian origin of the *Life*—produced, in this view, either locally or within an “émigré monastic milieu” in Constantinople—had previously attributed to it: intra-Christian disputes in Syria and Palestine, conflicted relationships between Melkite Christians and Muslim authorities, the significant position of the monastery of Saint Sabas and Jerusalem, often to the detriment of the Patriarchate of Antioch, and the ideological and cultic needs of the Melkite community in that region.⁶⁹

If we are to search for possible ideological incentives, these should rather be sought among those who, in the first decades of the eleventh century, continued to have their eyes toward Syria and Palestine, in the reverberation of networks of the latter half of the tenth that originated in the circles around Athanasios the Athonite (who had once attempted to travel to the Holy Land, yet remained on Cyprus, prohibited by “what the godless Hagarenes had dared to do during that time”) and Nikephoros Ouranos (who had been on embassies to Baghdad), supporters of emperors Nikephoros Phokas and, then, Basil II. Indeed, by the beginning of the 1020s, relations between Byzantium and the new Muslim dynasty, the Fatimids ruling over Syro-Palestine out of Egypt since the 970s, though generally stable in the beginning of the eleventh century, were under some strain, and Christians did seek refuge in Byzantine territory.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ See the Appendix to chapter 1 above for this earlier bibliography; for a succinct summary of the major themes, see also Griffith 2001, 155: “Principal ... for strengthening the sense of identity of the Christians of the ‘Melkite’ communities were: the memory of martyrdom in the Islamic milieu; the spiritual authority of the church of Jerusalem, ‘the mother of the churches,’ along with the associated monastic communities, particularly Mar Saba monastery; ‘Byzantine’ orthodoxy in faith; and the need to respond to the ever-present call to Islam”.

⁷⁰ On these relations, see most recently Kaldellis 2017, 127–30 and 2024, 584. For the waves of such refugees, see Dagron 2012. On Athanasios’ failed trip to Jerusalem, see Athanasios of Panagiou, *Life* of St Athanasios of Athos, 92; on Ouranos’ embassy, see John Skylitzes, *Synopsis of Histories* 327 (ed. Thurn; tr. Wortley, 310–11).

In this reading, the text could represent a kind of militant “archaeology”. For one, it could function as an ideological reclamation of Syrian cities and lands, some of which had recently been reconquered by the Byzantine troops—Edessa, we might add, a city which had fallen to the Arabs in 639, continued to be, as in the *Life* of Theodore, under Arab rule during Euthymios’ time, though it was besieged by Byzantine armies in 944 and, likely, in the late 960s, and thus remained a potential object of imperial desire.⁷¹ At the same, the text could activate a renewed assertion of claims to the Holy Land, a destination of pilgrimage with immense appeal for Christians of every background throughout the Middle Byzantine period—the destruction of the Church of the *Anastasis* had occurred all too recently in 1009, as we noted earlier, and its rebuilding would not be fully underway before the 1030s.⁷² Euthymios, that is, revised as well as invented narratives about Syria, Palestine, their Christian inhabitants and their Muslim rulers, crafting a tale of epic proportions of Byzantine glory. With his tale, as we remarked earlier, Euthymios could position himself as an insider to this Byzantine, Constantinopolitano-centric glory. Along the way, he could also introduce to Greek-reading audiences some stories and themes that preoccupied more specifically his Georgian fellow countrymen and that even pointed to himself, his own situation and interests.

Simultaneously, however, Euthymios’ creation had all the necessary ingredients to become a bestseller for an even wider Greek-reading audience, especially monastics and laymen with monastic aspirations or predilections. Not only was it written according to the contemporary standards of style, offering a tapestry of almost every genre of contemporary ecclesiastical and monastic literature, thus introducing unknown saints and unknown stories in a most convincing way. It also presented, in a single package, a paradigmatic and programmatic panorama of Byzantine Orthodoxy: its main types of saints, its ecclesiastical hierarchies, ritual, and dogmas, its primary ethnic and religious opponents, both contemporary and more ancient (Persians, Arabs, and various kinds of heretics), its emphasis on high class, family ties, and spiritual bonds, its ascetic practices and tenets, and its double center, in the Holy Land (and its wider Syro-Palestinian “hinterland”) and in Constantinople. Readers could pick and choose on which element

⁷¹ See Zorzi 2021 for an overview of the related events.

⁷² See text and note 2 above and the bibliography cited there. For a discussion of the political—less militant and more pragmatic—context of the interest in the Holy Land as well as Syro-Palestine for the Byzantines during the lifetime of Euthymios, see Shepard 2012 (with earlier bibliography; pp. 527–35 also deal with the destruction of the *Anastasis* and its aftermath). For a similar “rallying cry for intervention in the Holy Land”, partly at work at the decorative “language” in the more or less contemporary church of Hosios Loukas in Boeotia in central Greece, see Walker 2019 (the quote on p. 184). For a general overview of Byzantine pilgrimage to the Holy Land, see Talbot 2001; see further Patlagean 1998, Jacoby 2005, and, again, the studies in Pratsch 2011.

to focus—indeed, for some readers the discursive parts were likely of more interest than the stories around them (the early excerpting, as we shall see, of the dogmatic section and the higher transmission of the *Chapters* confirm this). Yet all of these readers were offered a *single* text that collected and expressed a cultural *koine* of Orthodoxy.

5. The Reception of *Theodore of Edessa*

After Euthymios' death, as his biographer George Hagiorites informs us, the Iviron monastery entered a period of instability due to the decisions of Euthymios' successor abbot, George I, who severed the strong ties previously maintained with the Constantinopolitan throne under Romanos III Argyros (1028–1034) and supported the rebellion of the *doux* of Thessalonike, Constantine Diogenes, a member of a family with long-standing connections to the Iberian aristocracy. Following George's condemnation and exile, the Greeks of the monastery, assisted by the new abbot George II (1029–ca. 1035) and supported by other monks of Athos, “applied all their effort towards the extinction of the Georgians” in Iviron (GRD 24–25; M-H 80–1).¹ The tension was not alleviated until the reign of Michael IV (1034–1041), and later—following a second wave of Greek opposition—under Michael V (1041–1042), both moments ultimately turning in favor of the Georgians.² Around the same period, tensions between Greeks and Georgians were transferred to Antioch and its monastic communities, as a rapid Georgian expansion in the Antiochene region began in the early eleventh century and continued apace in the following decades.³ The tensions in Antioch were provoked by accusations of heresy, i.e. Monophysitism, directed at the Georgians, due to their close association with the Armenians. These events are documented in the biography of George Hagiorites himself and in the letters of an important Greek writer, Nikon of the Black Mountain, a figure to whom we shall return shortly. The crisis lasted from the patriarchate of Theodore III (1034–1042) until that of Theodosios III Chrysoberges (1057–1059); the latter, after discussion, acknowledged the validity of the Georgian position. In this case as well, the ten-

¹ On these events, see Lefort, Oikonomidès, and Papachryssanthou 1985, 43–4 as well as the bibliography cited in Shurgaia 2019, 590; cf. also Kaldellis, 2017, 159, on the rebellion of Diogenes; on his family, see Cheynet 2003. Martin-Hisard (2006–2007, 136) proposes dating the crisis, not to the time of Romanos III, but to the first years of the reign of Michael IV.

² See *Life* of George Hagiorites, GRD² 23, 25–6, 29, 137–41, 145–6, and 154–5 = M-H² 64–9, 79, 81, 91–2, 86–91, 97, 99, 108–10; see also Grdzeldze 2009, 37–8. For the history of Iviron after the mid-11th c. in general, see Lefort, Oikonomidès, and Papachryssanthou 1985, 45–9.

³ For the evidence, see Djobadze 1976; see also Otkhmezuri 2022b.

sions were thus resolved in favor of the Georgians, with the recognition that they were not heretics.⁴

Mount Athos and the monastic environs of Antioch, but also Constantinople, as we saw earlier, with the continued strong presence and simultaneously ambiguous position of Georgians in relation to Byzantine Greeks, as well as the ever-expanding cultural transfers from Greek into Georgian, provided the contexts for the circulation and reception of Euthymios' works and set the tone for what was to follow in subsequent centuries.⁵

In the Georgian tradition, Euthymios immediately attained the status of a saint, as his Georgian *synaxarion* and *Life* attest, along with other testimonies of commemoration, such as chants and visual depictions⁶; he was a "vir sanctus", as we read in the title of the Latin translation of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, produced in a Georgian-friendly environment in Constantinople in 1048, as preserved in a fourteenth-century manuscript.⁷ In fact, veneration seems to have been expressed already when Euthymios was alive. "[We] have become worthy to write down by our own hands these holy books, translated by the enlightener, our holy father Euthymios, from Greek into Georgian, for the consolation of the Georgians and for praying and for exalting father Euthymios, who has appeared in these late times to be *equal to the ancient saints*", wrote the scribes Arseni Ninoc'mida, Iovane Grdzeldze, and Iovane Okrop'iri in 1008, when Euthymios was in his mid-50s.⁸ In such an environment, Euthymios' Georgian works and Euthymios' name as a translator and author were secured wide recognition, and multiple copies of his literary production exist from his lifetime onwards.⁹

In the Greek tradition, by contrast, Euthymios at first disappeared almost completely. With the exception of the two Greek *Lives* of Athanasios of Athos, examined earlier, there is no reference to him in Greek sources until sometime in

⁴ See Djobadze 1976, 63–74, Giangou 1991, 158–64, Martin-Hisard 2006–2007, 132–6 and 161–74, and Todt 2020, 355–8 and 453–61. On Nikon and his probable Georgian source, see also Walbinder and Nanobashvili 2008.

⁵ On these contexts and processes, see 2.4 above. Regarding the Syro-Palestinian contexts, in relation also to Georgians and to Constantinople, to the bibliography cited in chapter 2.4, we might add the following important studies: Pahlitzsch 2003 and 2019, Saminsky 2006, 2007, and 2013, Dagron 2012, and the more general Ciggaar and Metcalf 2006, MacEvitt 2008, Ciggaar and van Aalst 2013 and 2018, and Otkhmezuri 2022a.

⁶ See the overview in Kurtsikidze 2017; cf. also Gippert 2013, 75–9. Important in respect to the establishment of the veneration of Euthymios is the aforementioned (cf. 2.1 [n. 4] above) ms. Tbilisi, NCM, A-558 (originating in Ivron and dated to 1074); cf. Otkhmezuri and Raphava 2022, 252–3. For the iconography of Euthymios, see Chichinadze 2017 with Burtchuladze 2013.

⁷ See 1.4 [text and note 31].

⁸ Colophon for Chrysostom's *Commentary* on the Gospel of Matthew (*Ivir. georg.* 13, f. 259ra–259va) in Gippert, Outtier, Kim, et al. 2022, 166.

⁹ See Chkhikvadze et al. 2018, *passim*, and Otkhmezuri et al. 2018, *passim*.

the second half of the fourteenth century.¹⁰ It was then that his name and possible sanctity surface in the much-discussed title of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* in Paris. gr. 1771, where we read: “Εὐθυμίου τοῦ ἁγιωτάτου μοναχοῦ τοῦ Ἱβηρος τοῦ καὶ γεγονότος καθηγητοῦ τῆς Μεγάλης Λαύρας τοῦ ἁγίου Ἀθανασίου τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὁρους = by Euthymios the *most holy* monk, the Iberian, the one who also became leader of the Great Lavra of St Athanasios of the Holy Mountain”, a miniature discursive portrait which likely revived Euthymios’ portrayal in the *Life* of Athanasios the Athonite, cited earlier.¹¹

In any case, a hundred or so years later, at a time when Iviron’s Greek book production was experiencing a renaissance,¹² an *Office* for Euthymios’ commemoration as a saint on May 13 was composed, likely for the needs of the monastery. It was written by the patriarchal rhetor Manuel the Corinthian, active from the late fifteenth to the middle of the sixteenth century; the *Office* included a *synaxarion* (BHG 653), a text which has been referenced a few times in our earlier discussion.

The *Office* is preserved, as far as we can tell, in three manuscripts, all most likely originating in Iviron:

- Iviron 512 (Lambros 4632; Diktyon 24109), a 16th-c. manuscript entirely consisting of Manuel the Corinthian’s works; for the attribution of the *Office* to Manuel the Corinthian, based on this ms., see Polemis 1992. Nikodemos Hagiorites, we might add, was already aware of Manuel’s authorship (1868, 149, where also epigrams in honor of John, Euthymios, and George the Iberians). For Manuel, see Förstel 1999 and Anagnostou 2012–2013 (with further bibliographies);
- Tbilisi, NCM, gr. 24 (Diktyon 63018) (16th-c.? from Iviron?); see Dugashvili 2023 (who advances compelling arguments in support of a Georgian patronage for Manuel’s *Office*);
- Iviron 530 (Lambros 4650; Diktyon 24127), copied by Antonios of Xeropotamou in 1640; cf. Lang 1957, 406.

¹⁰ Volk 2009, 63–4 and 2016, 416–7 and, even more so, Shurgaia 2019, 590 regard the disappearance of the name of Euthymios as a conscious erasure on the part of the Greeks (inside and outside Iviron), which may have affected the transmission history of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and the erasure of any authorial attribution to Euthymios in the Greek tradition.

¹¹ See 2.4 (text and note 87) above. On the Paris ms. and its title, see also 1.4 (text and n. 31). In the related, though likely still later, Venice, BNM, gr. VII. 26 (1.4 [text and n. 31]), Euthymios is called more simply “ἄνδρὸς τιμίου καὶ εὐσεβοῦς τοῦ λεγομένου Ἱβηρος.” For these mss. and other evidence of a revival in interest in Euthymios starting in the 14th c., see Fonkič 1982, 567–8.

¹² See Theologos Iberites 1998, 241–2 with Chryssochoidis 2000.

The *synaxarion* (but not the *Office*) is copied also in Samos, Βιβλιοθήκη της Μητροπόλεως, 66 (Diktyon 56608; Anastasiou 1973, 52–4) (18th c.), pp. 1–15, on which the edition by Fonkič 1982 is based (in that same article, Fonkič rightly argues that the ms. derives from Iviron); by a strange (?) coincidence, we might add, the Samos ms. includes also the *Theoretikon* (pp. 267–89), a pseudepigraphic text of Theodore of Edessa (on which, see 5.2 below).

To the manuscripts listed above, we can also add the mid-18th-c. (“ca. 1740”, according to Stathis) *Meteora*, *Metam.* 190 (Diktyon 41601), which on ff. 270r–273r contains four troparia (most likely from the Vespers of the aforementioned *Office*), furnished with musical annotation, “In Commemoration of Our Holy Father Euthymios the Iberian, Founder of the Monastery of Iviron”—the composer is likely Germanos, bishop of Neopatras (fl. 1660–1685); see Stathis 2006, 58–60.

Other, post-Byzantine Greek texts associated with Iviron followed suit, mentioning Euthymios as a saintly founder of the monastery,¹³ before two other *Vitae*, both in early modern Greek were composed. The first, of which only the beginning survives, was written in the 1650s on Mt Athos by Agapios Landos, an author to whom we shall return below.¹⁴ The second (BHG 2143), an eloquent account about the three founders of Iviron “John, Euthymios, and George”, was composed in Iviron in mid-eighteenth century and appeared in print a century later as part of a *Proskynetarion* (a pilgrims’ book, that is) for the monastery of Iviron¹⁵—it is unclear if this latter narrative was related to Landos’ version, which, in his usual practice, must have been a re-writing of an earlier text (BHG 653?). In any case, beyond the context of Iviron, Euthymios never really became a household name among readers of Greek,¹⁶ even if Manuel’s *synaxarion* was reworked in the late eighteenth century by Nikodemos Hagiorites (1749–1809)

¹³ See the list and bibliography in Fonkič 1982, 567–8 and Fonkič 1995–1996, 46; cf. also Lang 1957, 406. From the related texts, we might mention epigrams, by Pachomios, likely a monk in Iviron in the 17th c., composed in honor of John, founder of Iviron; Halkin 1972. On the post-Byzantine local historiographic monastic traditions on Athos (including Iviron), see now Livanos 2025.

¹⁴ The mutilated *Life* by Landos is preserved on f. 84v of his autograph Jerusalem, Patriarchal Library, Sabas 567 (Diktyon 34824), a manuscript that contains a revised, unpublished version of Landos’ *Καλοκαιρινή* (on which see text and note 61 below). The *Life*, unknown to Fonkič and other bibliography on Euthymios, was identified in Kostoula 2005, 500, and highlighted recently in Paschalidis and Kaklamanos 2014, 129–31.

¹⁵ BHG 2143 is preserved in two manuscripts, copied by Kosmas, a monk of Iviron (Kosmas), active in mid-18th c.—Iviron 453 (Lambros 4573; Diktyon 24050) and Vat. gr. 2613 (Diktyon 69244)—and was first printed in *Προσκυνητάριον τοῦ βασιλικού, πατριαρχικοῦ, σταυροπηγιακοῦ τε, καὶ σεβασμίου ἱεροῦ μοναστηρίου τῶν Ἱβήρων, τοῦ ἐν τῷ ἀγιωνύμῳ ὄρει τοῦ Ἀθωνος*. Athens 1857, 49–75; new edition in Mac’haneli 1982. The *Proskynetarion* contains also a full *Office* for the three saints; pp. 27–49.

¹⁶ As rightly remarked also in Fonkič 1982, 568.

and was published in Venice as part of his hagiographical collection, titled *Νέον Ἐκλόγιον* (1803, 218–22).¹⁷



Nevertheless, Euthymios' major compositions in Greek experienced, for centuries, notable circulation, which was extremely wide for *Barlaam and Ioasaph* (more than hundred and fifty manuscripts), very wide for the *Chapters* of Theodore of Edessa (at least seventy-four manuscripts, with the total or specific chapters), and relatively wide for the *Life* of Theodore (seventeen manuscripts with the full *Vita*, eight of which contain also the *Chapters*, fifteen manuscripts transmitting three separate excerpts, and several more manuscripts with one further excerpt included in a popular anthology, itself preserved in ca. sixty witnesses), along with multiple translations into various medieval, early modern, and modern languages. This occurred, as already noted above, disassociated from Euthymios' authorship, with only two exceptions in relation to *Barlaam and Ioasaph*—which even in its latest edition (2006) is not credited to Euthymios in the title of the publication.

- For the mss. of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, see Volk 2009, 240–495 and those of the *Life* of Theodore, see the introduction to Vol. II.
- For all manuscripts, transmitting the *Chapters*, cf. Vol. II, 1.4 and see:
 - (a) <https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/oeuvre/1001/> (61 witnesses, including our **A, B, D, F, K, and t**)
 - (b) <https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/oeuvre/10758/>.

Of the thirteen items listed in the latter list, titled “Theodorus Edessenus ep. Opera”, five definitely (Diktyon numbers 12018, 31671, 40509, 47405, and 65065) and another six most likely (Diktyon 944, 25939, 31664, 45400, 58298, and 61683) contain the *Chapters*; one manuscript (Diktyon 57538) is not related to Theodore of Edessa at all and should be removed from the list, while another (Diktyon 46034) preserves Theodore's dogmatic sermon (our ms. c⁴).

To narrate the history of reception of Euthymios' literary production in full would require a separate study or studies. Here, we shall focus on what is relevant to *Theodore of Edessa*, in chronological order.¹⁸

¹⁷ Nikodemos' text is also transmitted in ms. Ivron 347 (Lambros 4467; Diktyon 23944); cf. Fončić 1982, 571.

¹⁸ What follows is meant to be read jointly with the introduction to Vol. II, where the reader shall find a more detailed presentation of the manuscripts and their relations.

5.1. ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH CENTURIES

The earliest testimony of *Theodore of Edessa* is manuscript A, copied while Euthymios was still alive by his close associate Theophanes of Iviron in 1023. The manuscript contained the rewritten version β of the text, which did not circulate at all beyond Iviron, very similarly to what happens to version β of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, which “hardly circulated beyond Athos”; such restrained circulation of the second versions suggests, as we argue above, that it was intended.¹⁹ Relatively soon after Euthymios’ death, we find the earliest post-humous trace of *Theodore of Edessa*. Sometime between December 1041 and September 1045, that is, when the *Life* of Euthymios and his father was composed by George Hagiorites, we read that Euthymios “translated *Balavariani* and *Abu Qurrah*”, the latter being a reference to the *Life* as well as, likely, the *Chapters* of Theodore.

The audience of George’s text were the “Iberians everywhere”, not only on Mt Athos, at Iviron where George wrote his biography of Euthymios, but also “those in the East, on the Black Mountain and in Jerusalem” (GRD 25; M-H 88). George himself (ca. 1009–1065) traversed these very same realms, having come to Iviron from Syro-Palestine in the early 1040s, and having returned to Jerusalem and the Black Mountain in the mid 1050s.²⁰ It is thus no accident that we can best reconstruct the reception of *Theodore of Edessa* in precisely these Iberian contexts.

We may start with Jerusalem and its monastic environs. Copies, as we have seen, of the Georgian hypotexts of *Theodore of Edessa* as well as *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, namely the *Passion* of Michael and the *Balavariani*, were produced in the Georgian Monastery of the Holy Cross, near Jerusalem in respectively the latter half (Oxford, *Bodl. georg.* 1) and the last decades (Jerusalem, Greek Patriarchate, *Georg.* 140) of the eleventh century (see the entries for the years 1021 and 1023 in 2.2 above). By the beginning of the twelfth century, also the Greek *Life* of Theodore was certainly read in the region, at the monastery of St Sabas most notably. For it is then and there that we find the joint liturgical commemoration of “τῶν ὁσίων πατέρων ἡμῶν Θεοδώρου τοῦ Ἐδεσηνοῦ, καὶ Μιχαὴλ ἀνεψιοῦ αὐτοῦ τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς Λαύρας τοῦ Ἁγίου Σάββα = our holy fathers Theodore of Edessa and Michael, his nephew, who were both from the Lavra of St Sabas”, set for July 19th and preserved in a *typikon* of the Lavra, copied in the twelfth-century manuscript Sinai gr. 1096 (Diktyon *59471; f. 118v, ed. Dmitrievskij 1917, 52).²¹ The commemoration, in our view, is clearly the result of reading the Greek *Life*—or, at

¹⁹ See 3.3 (section “Versions α and β” above). The citation from Volk 2016, 416.

²⁰ For George’s travels, see Martin-Hisard 2006–2007 with p. 2.1 (text and notes 2–4) above. See also Caseau and Messis 2021, 246–8.

²¹ See also Sauget 1969, 411–14 with Galadza 2018, 282–3, where seven later (13th c. and onwards) Melkite Arabic *Synaxaria* that contain the same commemoration for July 19.

the very least, its eleventh-century Arabic or Georgian translations, since the designation of a blood relation between Theodore and Michael is only attested in the Greek *Life* and then its non-Greek versions.

Indeed, from the same context and period and again as a result of reading the *Life* of Theodore, we have evidence of relics of our two saints being venerated at the monastery of St Sabas. According to the Russian pilgrim Daniel's account, who in the early twelfth century (ca. 1106–1108) visited the tomb of St Sabas at the monastery, there lay “many holy fathers, their bodies as if still alive: the bishop St John the Silent, St John Damascene and St Theodore of Edessa and Michael his nephew lie here, and St Aphroditian and many other saints, their bodies as if still alive and exhaling an ineffable perfume”.²² A cult of Michael the martyr alone probably existed in the monastery already in the late ninth(?) / early tenth(?) century, when the original Arabic and then Georgian versions of his *Passion* were composed—as our readers might remember, according to the original *Passion* (section 13), Michael is said to have been buried together with famous earlier neo-martyrs of the monastery. By the twelfth century, however, the reliquary of the monastery apparently had expanded to include the legends of two further local saints, apparently of even greater prominence, namely John of Damascus and our Theodore of Edessa (the latter taking precedence over “his nephew”).²³

By the same period, most likely again in a Syro-Palestinian environment, an excerpt from the *Life* was made. The manuscript Sinai, gr. 455 (Diktyon *58830) (c'), is a collection of ascetic writings (including Evagrius under the name of Neilos) likely copied in the last quarter of the eleventh somewhere in the region, perhaps in St Sabas.²⁴ Folios 191v–199r, which mark a new segment in the manuscript, copied by a second scribe, contain a text titled “Ἐκθεσις πίστεως τοῦ ἁγίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Θεοδώρου τοῦ ἀσκήσαντος ἐν τῇ Λαύρᾳ τοῦ ἁγίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Σάβα, καὶ γεγονότος μητροπολίτου Ἐδέσης = Exposition of Faith by our holy father Theodore, who led an ascetic life in the Lavra of our holy father Sabas and became metropolitan of Edessa”.

The title mimics that of Theodore's *Life*, indicating that we are dealing with an excerpt. Indeed, the contents correspond to the sermon of Theodore that included the Creed based on Michael Synkellos and the lists of heresies by Theodore of Raithou (46,4–52,2). In terms of its text, the excerpt follows,

²² We copy the translation of Wilkinson et al. 1988, 140, as cited in Griffith 1994, 127. There exists also a Greek translation of the Russian account (Koikylides and Phokylides 1912, 283–350) as well as an earlier French one (Khitrowo 1889).

²³ On the parallel creation of the legends of John and Theodore (Abū Qurrah, *aka* of Edessa), see 3.1 above.

²⁴ For the ms., see further the relevant description in Vol. II, Introduction 1.2.

rather faithfully, version α , with very few errors and only a very small number of variations. Early on, Theodore's long dogmatic exposition thus became an autonomous unit, an expression of Orthodox Faith by a distinguished Holy Father of the East. The whole or parts of the sermon are excerpted in eight later manuscripts (from the twelfth to the sixteenth century), though in most cases it seems that we are dealing with *new* excerpts, based on the *Life* and created *ad hoc*, rather than copies of a text circulating independently.²⁵

During the second half of the eleventh century, also the early translations of the *Life* of Theodore, first in Arabic and then back into Euthymios' native tongue, were produced. We do not know the exact location where the Arabic version was made, but the multilingual monastic Syro-Palestinian networks seem the most likely context, either St Sabas or, more probably, some monastery in the monastic hinterland of Antioch, especially on the Black Mountain.²⁶ The earliest dated copy of the Arabic version, a relatively free translation/adaptation of the Greek version α of the *Life* of Theodore, dates to the year 1068, and a few further witnesses of the Arabic text exist.²⁷ Notably, we might add, 1065 is the year when also the earliest witness of the Arabic translation of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* is dated (BHO [= Peeters 1910] 143), perhaps produced in the same environment.²⁸

We are better informed about the Georgian version, also based on the Greek version α of the *Life* of Theodore. Though the two manuscripts that preserve it are later (from the thirteenth/fourteenth and the seventeenth century), its author is none other than the second most famous translator from Greek into Georgian in the Middle Ages, Ephrem Mc'ire. His activity dates to the second half of the eleventh century on the Black Mountain, where he was a monk.²⁹ Ephrem was acutely aware that he was a continuator of the work of Euthymios in creating a full Georgian canonical corpus of Orthodox texts, based on the Greek tradition.³⁰ That he chose to translate also his Athonite predecessor's

²⁵ On the transmission of excerpts from the dogmatic sermon, see Vol. II, Introduction 1.3.

²⁶ As suggested by Hjälm *forthcoming*. For St. Sabas, cf. Swanson 2010, 590 "probably produced at the Monastery of Mar Sabas", citing Griffith 2001, 155 and Swanson 2003, 80.

²⁷ For the innovations in the text as well as its transmitting manuscripts, see now Miriam Hjälm (*forthcoming*), who has prepared the first edition of the Arabic version (which in her estimation is based on version α), with an extensive introduction. For an earlier overview see Swanson 2010, with further bibliography—most notable earlier scholarship: Vasiliev 1942–1943, 192–8, Graf 1947, 24–5, Meimaris and Selim 1983, and, especially, Swanson 2003. As far as we know, no Arabic translation of Theodore's *Chapters* exists, though four homilies are attributed pseudonymously to Theodore, in an Arabic ms. dated to 1252; see Graf 1947, 25 (on British Museum, *Arab. christ.* 25, ff. 169v–196v).

²⁸ On this translation, see Volk 2009, 498–502 (with further bibliography) and Graf 1944, 546–8 with Kanaan and Ibrahim 2023.

²⁹ On Ephrem, see Khintibidze 1996, 64–68, Doborjiniže 2009, 156–93, and Bezarashvili 2015, with Aleksidze 2021, 630–1, all with further bibliographies.

³⁰ See the various colophons by Ephrem, on which see 3.1 (n. 35) above.

Greek work into Georgian may thus not be an accidental choice, and he may have even been familiar with Euthymios' authorship of the *Life*, even if, following the Greek text, he preserved the authorial façade of Basil of Emesa.³¹

A famous Greek acquaintance of Ephrem is also part of the reception history of the *Life* of Theodore in the latter half of the eleventh century in Antioch: Nikon “ὁ Μαυρορείτης, of the Black Mountain” (ca. 1025–between ca. 1100/1110), a Constantinopolitan who settled in Antioch and its ecclesiastic and monastic world in the 1050s.³² Nikon anthologized the story of Theodosios the Edessan Stylite and his brother John the Hermit (65,1–68,1) and included it as an excerpt, titled “Ἐκ τοῦ βίου τοῦ ἁγίου Θεοδώρου τοῦ Ἐδεσσηνοῦ”, in his first major work, the so-called *Pandektes* (the usual title in the bibliography) or, better, *Interpretations of the Lord's Commandments* (the original title; *Ἑρμηνεῖαι τῶν ἐντολῶν τοῦ Κυρίου*), a compilation divided in 63 chapters and created gradually from ca. 1060 to 1080, most of which remains unedited.³³ Nikon culled mostly patristic and monastic classics, such as (especially) John Chrysostom, Basil of Caesarea, John Sinaites, Barsanouphios, and various *Gerontika*, but occasionally included passages from hagiographical texts; among them, the *Life* of Theodore of Edessa is the most recent one.³⁴

The story of Theodosios forms part of chapter 34 (λδ', unedited) “Περὶ ἀκτημοσύνης ... etc.” which responds to the ninth Commandment “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth” (Matthew 6:19). It is prefaced with the rubric “Ἐκ τοῦ βίου τοῦ ἁγίου Θεοδώρου τοῦ Ἐδεσσηνοῦ” followed by the text “Στυλῖτης τις ἦν ἐν Ἐδέσση τῇ πόλει, ὃν καὶ παραλαβὼν ποτὲ ὁ ἐν ἁγίοις Θεόδωρος ὁ ἀρχιεπίσκοπος τῆς αὐτῆς πόλεως, μετὰ καὶ ἐτέρων ὁμιλιῶν, ἐν ὑστέροις τοῦτο αὐτὸν ἐπηρώτα” before citing sections 65,1–68,1—as, for instance, in the twelfth-century (latter half) Vienna, ONB, theol. gr. 84 (Diktyon *71751), ff. 169v–171r (e').

The popular *Pandektes* was widely read; around 60 Greek copies are preserved, mostly of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and a few of them

³¹ The first ever edition of the full text of Ephrem's translation of the *Life* of Theodore is in preparation by Nana Chikvatia and Lasha Tkebuchava (Tbilisi). An excerpt (pertaining to the *Passion* of Michael) has been previously edited by Kekelidze (1960, 18–41); based on it, Sandro Nikolaishvili was able to identify version α of the *Life* of Theodore as the base text for Ephrem and we are grateful for his help. As far as we know, no Georgian translation of Theodore's *Chapters* was ever made.

³² On Nikon, see Nasrallah 1969, Giakou 1991, Hannick et al. 2014, xxv–lvii, Glynias 2022, 147–213, and Oltean 2022; also, Caseau and Messis 2021, 250–66. On Nikon and his relations with the Georgians and especially Ephrem Mc'ire, see Othkmezuri 2022c, 440–1 and Glynias 2022, 128–9.

³³ On the *Pandektes*, see Giakou 1991, 56–92; for its table of contents, see PG 106: 1360–81, based on the 14th-c. Florence, BML, Plut. 6.4 (Diktyon *15991), and Sophianos 1986, 213–59, based on Metehora, Hagiou Stephanou 83 (Diktyon 41340) and 84 (Diktyon 41341). For editions of a few further excerpts (Chapter 1 and parts of Chapters 29, 57, and 63), see Giakou 1991, 62; cf. Hannick et al. 2014, xxxiv–xxxix.

³⁴ Not noted in Giakou's otherwise excellent survey (1991, 70–81).

dating to the twelfth, such as Vienna, theol. gr. 84 (Diktyon *71751; e¹).³⁵ Thus the excerpt, whose text is based again (as we were able to ascertain) on version *α*, experienced a wide diffusion—indeed, in a few later cases (*a*¹, *d*², and *e*²), it circulated in an excerpted fashion as a separate unit outside Nikon’s anthology.³⁶ Furthermore, the *Pandektes* exercised considerable influence in the Slavic world through its almost immediate translation.³⁷ As a result, Theodosios’ story circulated also in Slavonic and was also turned into a calendar entry for January 7 incorporated in the Slavic *Synaxarion*, namely the *Prolog*, sometime between the twelfth and the fourteenth century—sections from the Slavic version of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, we might add, had a similar fate, being incorporated as separate tales in the *Prolog*.³⁸ Nikon’s *Pandektes* was, finally, translated also into Arabic (most probably in the Black Mountain, already when Nikon was still alive) and thence into Ethiopic in 1582, securing yet other avenues of circulation for the story of Theodosios.³⁹



Back in Byzantine lands, the transmission and reading history of *Theodore of Edessa* is slightly more difficult to retrace with precision. The text, of course, existed and was known in Iviron and most probably elsewhere on Athos—as was the case with *Barlaam and Ioasaph*. The early manuscripts of version *α* point to this direction. The scribe of the *Life* and *Chapters* in manuscript *B*, Mosq. Synod. gr. 18 (Diktyon 43643), was Nikolaos, a monk whose script displays features that can be found in Athonite documents of the 1060s and 1070s. Around the year 1500 or so, the manuscript was certainly in the library of the Great Lavra. Nikolaos could thus himself have been a Lavriot, but it is beyond our knowledge if his manuscript was intended for an Athonite audience or not. The same applies to manuscript *E*, Philotheou 24 (Diktyon 29388), copied sometime in the latter half of the eleventh or the first half of the twelfth century and nowadays preserved in a Athonite library (an indication of its origins?), and manuscript

³⁵ We combine here the information given in Giagkou 1991, 57–60 and <https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/oeuvre/11338/>. The above data are given with some hesitation, as both lists require careful revision.

³⁶ The full text of the *Pandektes* remains unedited, so it is likely that other excerpts from *Theodore of Edessa* are part of the anthology.

³⁷ Pavlova and Bogdanova 2000 (who date the translation to the late 11th/early 12th c.). For Nikon’s other major work, the *Taktikon*, in the Slavic world, see Hannick et al. 2014.

³⁸ On Theodosios’ story in the *Prolog*, see Prokopenko 2006–2009, 268 and 2011, 415–6 with Tkachëv 2023, 19; on the *Prolog* in general, see Prokopenko 2008 and 2012. For the Slavic *Barlaam and Ioasaph* in relation to the *Prolog*, see Prokopenko 2006–2009, *passim*, with Turilov 2009.

³⁹ For the Arabic, see Graf 1947, 64–6 and Nasrallah 1969, 154; for the Ethiopic, see Gebremedhin 2005.

F, Lavra Δ 1 (Diktyon 27312), copied probably in the latter half of the twelfth century and also preserved and likely copied in an Athonite library.⁴⁰

Constantinople, where also *Barlaam and Ioasaph* was being read in the eleventh century, could also be the setting of the production of these or similar, but now lost manuscripts.⁴¹ In any case, *Theodore of Edessa* was certainly available in Constantinople during this period, as borrowings and citations by Constantinopolitan writers attest. In the *Life* of Symeon the New Theologian (BHG 1692), Niketas Stethatos (ca. 1005–ca. 1090), writing sometime in the second half of the eleventh century, highlights his spiritual father’s calligraphic skills, “as the books copied by him clearly verify” (*Life*, ch. 2), just as we read about Theodore and his early monastic years in St Sabas in Euthymios’ text (16): “He was a very gifted scribe of divinely-inspired books—these books of his are preserved until now, as a great treasure, in that holy Lavra”. When Niketas returns to the same subject later in the *Life* (chs. 26–7), he uses more or less the same words as the ones employed by Euthymios in his description. Here are the two passages side by side:

Euthymios, <i>Life</i> of Theodore of Edessa 16	Niketas Stethatos, <i>Life</i> of Symeon the New Theologian 27
... ἔργου ἤπτετο χειρῶν, εὐφυστάτος ὧν γραφεὺς θεοπνεύστων βιβλίων	... ἤπτετο τοῦ ἐργοχειροῦ γράφων τὰς δέλτους τῶν θεοπνεύστων γραφῶν· ἦν γὰρ ἄγαν εὐφυνῶς γράφων
... he would begin his manual labor, as he was an exceedingly gifted scribe of divinely-inspired books	... he would begin his manual labor, copying volumes of the divinely-inspired scriptures; for he used to write in an exceptionally gifted fashion

Niketas seems to have been reading the *Life* of Theodore.

Some hundred or so years later, again in Constantinople, Michael Glykas provides us with an acknowledged reference to Euthymios’ *Theodore*. In one of his letters on religious subjects, having cited various authorities (including Basil of Caesarea) on the subject of eating meat on Wednesdays and Fridays “when they coincide with feasts of the Lord”, we read (*Kephalaia* 47 [43,24–44,2]):

⁴⁰ We would like to thank also here Inmaculada Pérez Martín for her help in dating B and Nadia Kavrus-Hoffmann for dating F. The other 11th-c. (second half) ms., Angelic. gr. 86 (Diktyon *55993) (C) cannot be located with any precision.

⁴¹ For *Barlaam and Ioasaph* in mid-11th-c. Constantinople, see e.g. the famous illustrated copy of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, Ivron 463 (Lambros 4583; Diktyon 24060; see the relevant *Pinakes* entry for further bibliography) and the Latin translation of 1048, on which see Peeters 1931 with 1.4 (text and note 31) above.

Τούτοις οὖν ἀκολουθῶς διείληφε καὶ ὁ ὁσιώτατος ἐπίσκοπος Ἐδέσσης Θεόδωρος, «Τὰς ἑορτὰς» λέγων «μὴ οἰνοποσίαις ἐκτελεῖν ἐννοοῦ, ἀλλ' ἀνακαινίζει νοὸς καὶ ψυχῆς καθαρότητι· γαστριζόμενος γὰρ παροργίσεις μᾶλλον τὸν προεξάρχοντα τῆς πανηγύρεως».

In agreement to these, also the most holy bishop of Edessa Theodore has stated: “You should comprehend that the feasts should be celebrated not by drinking wine, but by renewing your mind and purifying your soul; for if you gorge yourself, you will incite more anger in the leader of the festival”.

The citation is from the *Chapters*, section 33, a phrase most likely culled by Euthymios from a scholion to the *Ladder* of John Sinaïtes (PG 88: 873A; *scholion* ε to chapt. 14 of the *Ladder* on gluttony), a text which he had translated into Georgian, including the *scholia*.⁴²

Thus, by the latter half of the twelfth century, “the most holy bishop of Edessa Theodore” had become a citable authority—just like well-known church fathers as well as “the divine Symeon” Metaphrastes or even “the most divine Barlaam, addressing Ioasaph”, figures whom Glykas also cites.⁴³ Indeed, Glykas was not the first to be drawn to the *Chapters*, or this quote specifically. We find the same citation in Nikon of the Black Mountain’s late eleventh-century *Taktikon* (1,53,5–8)—though Nikon presents the citation as a quote from the *Gerontikon*, and does not give an author’s name. We also encounter this as well as the next section from Theodore’s *Chapters* (33 and 34) embedded and without attribution in the *Life* of Kyrillos Phileotes composed by Nikolaos Kataskepenos in the 1140s.⁴⁴ Around the same period, we also find another excerpt of the *Life*, once more the dogmatic sermon (46,2–52,2) (BHG 1744g), preserved within a miscellany, of likely Constantinopolitan origins, with the title “Ἐκ τοῦ βίου Θεοδώρου Ἐδέσσης λόγος διδασκαλικὸς καὶ περὶ τῶν συνόδων” (Athos, Lavra B 43 [Diktyon 27095], dated to the latter half of the twelfth or, possibly, the thirteenth century; c³).

The compiler of c³ had apparently a copy of the *Life* before him, but it is unclear if Glykas or Kataskepenos had read the *Chapters* in manuscripts that did or did not contain also the *Life* of Theodore. Nikon’s citation points to the latter scenario, as his mention of a *Gerontikon* suggests that he had found the

⁴² For Euthymios’ translation of the *Ladder*, see year 983 in the catalogue of 2.2 and also 3.4. (section “Euthymian Fictions”) above. In citing the *scholion*, Euthymios expressed differently an idea already found in his base text for this part of the *Chapters*, namely Evagrius’ *Sententiae ad monachos* (CPG 2435) 39, 42, and 44 (cf. Gouillard 1947, 146).

⁴³ On Symeon Metaphrastes and *Barlaam and Ioasaph* in Glykas, see Papaioannou 2021c, 510 and Volk 2009, 142 respectively.

⁴⁴ See Kataskepenos, *Life* of Kyrillos Phileotes 3,8,17–20 and 3,9,18–25 with Theodore of Edessa, *Chapters* 33 and 34, respectively. For Cyril’s text in general, see Mullett 2002 and 2004.

Chapters in a manuscript collecting other similar ascetic texts and not the full *Life*. Already in the eleventh century, the *Chapters* (in their version *α*) were, it seems, circulating also in this fashion, as an autonomous text, that is. Likely the earliest such preserved copy of the *Chapters* (with actually an even further revised version *α*), Athos, Koutloumousiou 12 (Lambros 3081; Diktyon 26037) (*w*), commences with Isaak the Syrian, followed by authors such as Cassian, our Theodore of Edessa, Neilos, and Evagrius (falsely attributed to Neilos).⁴⁵ The manuscript dates to the first half of the eleventh century and was possibly copied on Athos, likely even reflecting one of those manuscripts, which belonged to Euthymios' laboratory of translations; Isaak and Cassian were indeed among the authors whom Euthymios did translate into Georgian.⁴⁶ If our opinion is correct, then the independent circulation of the *Chapters*, anthologized in ascetic collections, which became popular in the late thirteenth and fourteenth century, was already at work early on, even in Euthymios' environment.⁴⁷

In any case, the *Life* of Theodore too had made its entrance into the canon of monastic readings by the end of the twelfth century. The Patmos monastic library inventory of the year 1200, lists a small book, a “βιβλιδάριον” which contained Theodore's *Life*, followed by his *Chapters*: ἕτερον βιβλιδάριον ὁ βίος τοῦ ἁγίου Θεοδώρου Ἐδέσης ἔχον καὶ πρὸς τὸ τέλος κεφάλαια πρακτικὰ ποιήματα αὐτοῦ (Astruc 1981, 23,75); notably, “Barlaam & Ioasaph” follows one entry down in the inventory (23,76). Unsurprisingly perhaps, by this time, also a Slavic version (based, once more, on the Greek version *α*), arguably made in Kievan Rus' in the late eleventh / early twelfth century (though further research may recal-

⁴⁵ For the further revised version of *w*, one might e.g. compare the first chapter with version *α* (in italics, we highlight the differences; in bold are words borrowed from Evagrius):

Version *α* (as edited above, in 3.2 [section “Borrowings as Style”]): Ἐπειδὴ περ Θεοῦ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ χάριτι, ἀποταξάμενοι τῷ σατανᾷ καὶ τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ, τῷ **Χριστῷ** *συνεταξάμεθα*, ἐν τε τῷ *λουτρῷ τῆς παλιγγενεσίας* καὶ νῦν αὖθις διὰ τοῦ μοναδικοῦ ἐπαγγέλματος, **τηρήσωμεν αὐτοῦ τὰς ἐντολάς**. τοῦτο γὰρ ἡμᾶς ἀπαιτεῖ, οὐ μόνον τὸ διπλοῦν ἐπαγγέλημα, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡ φυσικὴ ὀφειλή, καθ' ἣν **κτισθέντες ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ** *πρώτως «καλοὶ λίαν»*, *τοῦτο* καὶ εἶναι ὀφείλομεν. *Κἂν γὰρ ἡ ἁμαρτία, ἐπεισελθοῦσα ἐξ ἀπροσεξίας ἡμετέρας, τὸ παραφύσιν παρεισῆγαγεν, ἀλλὰ πάλιν ἀνεκλήθημεν διὰ σπλάγχχνα ἐλέους Θεοῦ ἡμῶν, καὶ ἀνεκαινίσθημεν τῷ πάθει τοῦ ἀπαθοῦς, τιμῆς τὴν ἡγοράσθημεν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ, λυτρωθέντες τῆς ἀρχαίας παραβάσεως πατροπαραδότου. Λοιπὸν, εἰ **γενόμεθα δίκαιοι, οὐδὲν μέγα**· ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον τὸ ἐκπεσεῖν δικαιοσύνης, ἐλεεινὸν καὶ καταγνώσεως ἄξιον.*

Ms. *w*: Ἐπειδὴ περ Θεοῦ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ χάριτι, ἀποταξάμενοι τῷ σατανᾷ καὶ τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ, τῷ **Χριστῷ** *διπλῶ συνεταξάμεθα*, ἐν τε τῷ *βαπτίσματι*, καὶ νῦν αὖθις διὰ τῆς μοναδικῆς πολιτείας, **τηρήσωμεν αὐτοῦ τὰς ἐντολάς**. τοῦτο γὰρ ἡμᾶς ἀπαιτεῖ, οὐ μόνον ἡ διπλὴ κλήσις, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡ φυσικὴ ὀφειλή, καθ' ἣν *ἐπ' ἔργοις ἀγαθοῖς ἐκτίσθημεν κατ' εἰκόνα Θεοῦ. Εἰ γὰρ καὶ κατὰ ἀπροσεξίαν παρεπέσαμεν, ἀλλ' αἵματι τιμῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν ἡγοράσθημεν.*

⁴⁶ See 2.2 above.

⁴⁷ Gouillard 1947, 143, posits the 12th c. as the beginning of the independent circulation of the *Chapters*. For an early 12th-c. ms., similar to the Koutloumousiou ms. in terms of contents (including the *Chapters*), see Vatican, BAV, Barb. gr. 522 (Diktyon *65065; ff. 206v-211r), a book copied in Calabria.

brate this hypothesis), of the *Life* had been created.⁴⁸ After all, the Slavs were quite receptive to texts circulating in Byzantine monastic contexts, especially “rather long *Lives* of exotic saints”—a translation of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* is also placed in that same period and context.⁴⁹ Where (on Athos? in Constantinople?) the Greek originals for these Slavic translations were obtained is unclear.

5.2. FROM THE THIRTEENTH TO THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, interest in Theodore’s *Life* and, even more so, in the *Chapters* increased, if we judge by the more than thirty manuscripts of the *Chapters* and the seven manuscripts with the full *Life* (three of them also with the *Chapters*) copied in this period: mss. **N** (contains also the *Chapters*), **D** (contains also the *Chapters*; written on Athos?), **G** (written on Athos?), **L, J** (with an extensively revised version), **h** (a direct apograph of **B**), and **K** (contains also the *Chapters*); we may note here that **D** (Athos, Vatopediou 472; Diktyon 18616) has been wrongly dated to the twelfth century, but is in fact written in a thirteenth-century (latter half?) archaizing hand by the same scribe as manuscript **G** (Istanbul, Patriarchal Library, Panag. 82; Diktyon 33727).⁵⁰

The settings for the reading of Euthymios’ *Theodore* (just as for his *Barlaam and Ioasaph*) appear to be, once more, primarily monastic, within and outside the ever-shrinking empire’s borders—though, of course, “monastic” in Byzantine and post-Byzantine contexts comprised a wider world of monastic-*as-well-as*-lay spirituality⁵¹:

- The Athonite manuscripts, Athens EBE 322 (Diktyon 2618) and Athos, Philotheou 56 (Diktyon 29421), both completed in 1292 by the scribe Αβ-βακούμ (RGK I 34), are a typical example of the readings with which Theodore’s *Chapters* are associated from this period onwards: John Sinaites, Isaak the Syrian, Evagrios, Neilos of Ancyra, John of Karpathos, Mark the Hermit, as well as Symeon the New Theologian (whose works are also primarily transmitted in manuscripts of this time⁵²), etc., authors who were very popular among the late Byzantine Hesychasts and, later, the

⁴⁸ See Vershinin 2021. For translations among the Kievan Rus’ in general, see Pichkhadze 2011. We would like to thank Daria Resh for help in regards to the Slavic versions of *Theodore of Edessa* and their dependence on version **α**. For the *Chapters* in Slavonic, see Miltenova 2025.

⁴⁹ See the overview in Ivanov and Turilov 2021, 666–7 (where the quoted phrase); for the Slavic *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, see Lebedeva 1985.

⁵⁰ For details on these mss., see further the relevant descriptions in Vol. II, Introduction 1.2.

⁵¹ Cf. Crostini 2017, regarding *Barlaam and Ioasaph*.

⁵² For a quick overview, see <https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/oeuvre/1035/>.

late eighteenth-century Athonites who created the modern version of the *Philokalia*.⁵³

- The thirteenth-century (latter half?) manuscript **L** of Theodore's *Life* (Sinait. gr. 544; Diktyon *58919) is a product of the Lavra of St Sabas in Palestine. Notably, on f. 74v, at the beginning of Michael's martyrdom account the scribe added a title that highlights the martyr saint of his community, "the nephew" of Theodore, following the wording of the aforementioned calendar entry, also written in the Lavra (p. text and note 21 above): Περὶ τοῦ ὁσιομάρτυρος Μιχαήλ τοῦ ἀνεψιοῦ τοῦ ἁγίου Θεοδώρου.
- A painted portrait (likely the earliest one) of our saint is included in the thirteenth/early fourteenth-century visual program of the church of the *Protagon* in the Karyes of Mt Athos—Theodore is depicted as a bishop, holding a gospel book, and, notably, is paired, in the related wall of the church, with the other famous saint from Syria, the stylite Symeon *Thaumastorites*.⁵⁴
- An inventory of books, listed in an Athonite monastic final testament dated to 1330/1331, includes "Saint Theodore of Edessa" among its holdings, next to other ascetic readings: [βιβλί]ον ἔχων κεφάλαια διάφ[ορα· βιβλ]ίον ὁ ἅγιος Μακάριος (καὶ) ἕτερον ὁ ἅγιος Μάρκος· βιβλί(ον) ὁ ἅγιος Θεόδωρος Ἐδέσσης (*Acts of Docheiariou* 17,78–79).
- And a Sabaite monastic *Typikon* from Southern Italy, dated to 1335/1336, again commemorates "Our holy fathers, Theodore of the metropolis of Edessa, and his disciple Michael, the martyr" on July 19th: Florence, BML, Plut. 10.15 (Diktyon *16137), f. 107r.⁵⁵

Notably, unlike the aforementioned Sinait. gr. 1096, the text in the Florence manuscript mentions Theodore and Michael, *before* Sts Dios and Makrina for July 19th (cf. text and note 21 above). It currently defies determination, we might add, if the commemoration of Theodore and Michael ever entered any of the hundreds of manuscripts of the post-12th-c. M* recension of the *Synaxarion of Constantinople*, as happened regularly with *Barlaam and Ioasaph* (see 3.4 [text and note 164] above); our preliminary search into the poorly studied corpus of M* recension has yielded no results.

⁵³ See De Ridder 2019 for a full description and discussion of the Athens ms., with a reference also (and further bibliography) to the Philotheou ms.; for the connections to the late 18th-c. *Philokalia*, see De Ridder 2019, 194–5; cf. n. 62 below. For another similar example, see the late 13th-c. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Barocci 118 (Diktyon *47405) (on ff. 193v–197r, Theodore's *Chapters*).

⁵⁴ Kanonides and Nastou 2015, 349–50; we would like to thank Stephanos Efthymiadis for bringing this to our attention.

⁵⁵ For the ms. and its *Typikon*, see Parenti 2017, 52–3; also Baldi 2008.

As far as we are able to tell, Athonite and, in general, Hesychastic circles, following trends already present earlier as we saw, apparently discovered in Theodore an authority on proper ascetic practices and Orthodox doctrine. This incited an interest in his words and, consequently, also his biography. The thirteenth manuscript **D** (see above), a collection of ascetic texts, which includes first the *Chapters* (with some eloquent minor additions to its title: Θεοδώρου τοῦ μεγάλου ἁσκητοῦ καὶ ἐπισκόπου Ἐδέσης· κεφάλαια ψυχωφελῆ πάνυ ρ') and then later on, *after* other similar treatises, the *Life*, may be a good example of this joined interest.

Further excerpts with the dogmatic sermon (46,1–52,2) and the story of Theodosios and his brother John (65,1–68,1) are copied in this period, while a few more echoes of the *Life* can also be found in contemporary texts.

For the excerpted dogmatic sermon (overview in Gouillard 1947, 139–42 and Tkachëv 2023, 23–24), see the following mss., all based on version **α**: **c**⁴ (13th c., a theological compendium; text similar to **c**³) = 46,2–48,2 (des. mut.), **c**⁶ (13th c., a *Psalter* with additional texts) = 46,4–52,2, and **c**⁷ (dated to 1281, a composite collection of mainly heresiological texts) = 46,4–50;

Echoes: see the notes to sections 17,1 (Philotheos Kokkinos) and 96 (Nikephoros Blemmydes) of the translation.

Finally, as noted above, the manuscripts listed as containing “Theodorus Edessenus ep. Opera” in <https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/oeuvre/10758/> in fact usually preserve the *Chapters*.



The Athonite/Hesychastic tradition became the norm from the mid-fourteenth century and onwards among Orthodox readers. Take, for instance, Meteora, Metamorphoseos 197 (Diktyon 41608) (**c**⁸), a collection of ascetic texts, dated to ca. 1380s–1410s and made likely in (or for) the relatively recent Meteora monastic community. Its contents are to some extent similar to the two Athonite manuscripts, Athens EBE 322 and Philotheou 56 mentioned above, which contain Theodore’s *Chapters*, though the anthology in **c**⁸ includes instead an abridged version of the dogmatic sermon of Theodore (46,4–47,2, 47,13–47,14, and 46,3).

This kind of reception of *Theodore of Edessa* persisted within Greek monastic communities of the Ottoman world and, especially, among the orthodox Slavs. In the latter realm, the *Life* was reworked a second time and its influence extended beyond the texts of and about Theodore, while the *Chapters* were also translated by the thirteenth century, and are again preserved in at least two redac-

tions.⁵⁶ We even encounter instances, we might add, where the *Life* of Theodore is transmitted together with *Barlaam and Ioasaph* in the same book, as in a manuscript dated to 1444.⁵⁷ During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, multiple examples of visual depictions of the saint were created, including four illustrated manuscript copies of his *Life*—Saint Petersburg, Russian Academy of Sciences (BAH), Π I A 34, dated to the 1560s, seems to be the earliest among them.⁵⁸

In Greek manuscripts, the text of the *Life* was treated with more and more freedom, as is already the case with the just mentioned Meteora book (c⁸). Thus, Iviron 424 (Diktyon 24021; **m**), a menological collection dateable to the latter half of the sixteenth-century and produced at the Iviron monastery, contains a new redaction of version **β**, based on manuscript **A**, as well as other hagiographies copied directly from another earlier Iviron book, Mosq. Synod. gr. 162 copied by Theophanes in 1022. Similarly, two hundred or so years later, a new redaction of version **α** was made (extant in manuscripts **r** [*Life* and *Chapters*], **s** [*Life*], and **t** [*Life* and *Chapters*]). That redaction was produced by a very active reader, likely the Athonite copyist of Σκήτη Αγίας Άννης 67 (Diktyon 31561) (**r**), who added identificatory rubrics to most embedded textual units of the *Life* as well an encomiastic epigram to preface the *Chapters*, praising Theodore's eloquence and wisdom.

New excerpts also are created or re-copied in this period.

1) Michael's *Passion* (excerpt previously unidentified in scholarship):

– **a**¹ (late 15th / early 16th c., an expanded *Gerontikon*): **19,1–34,4**.

2) Theodore's monastic sermon:

– **b**¹ (late 16th c., a monastic anthology): **39,3–39,7**.

3) The dogmatic sermon:

– **c**⁸ (c. 1380–1410, Meteora): **46,4–47,14** and **46,3**;

– **c**² (14th c. [?]) a miscellany of various ascetic and patristic texts, likely of Athonite provenance): **46,1–52,2**;

⁵⁶ See Tkachëv 2023, 18–19 (on the two versions and later readings of the *Life*), 23 (on the veneration of Theodore—to the present day) and 24–5 (on the versions of the *Chapters*). On the second Slavic version of the *Life*, see also Hristova 1994, 254 (she dates the version to the second half of the 14th c. “in Tarnovo, in all probability”).

⁵⁷ Ms. Moscow, RGB, Φ.304/I №687. See <https://lib-fond.ru/lib-rgb/304-i/f-304i-687/#image-2>; we would like to thank Daria Resh for this reference.

⁵⁸ See Zvereva 2023 for all images pertaining to Theodore, including the illustrated mss. of the text.

- c⁵ (15th c., latter half, a theological compendium): 46,2–48,3 (same text as c⁴);
 - c⁹ (year 1514, an impressively voluminous theological miscellany, created at the monastery of Iviron): a highly revised redaction of 46,7–47,13.
- 4) The story of Ader, all manuscripts with different text:
- d¹ (late[?] 15th c., a mainly Chrysostomic volume): 55,7–64,1;
 - d² (dated to 1616-1618, another expanded *Gerontikon*): 56,1–64,2;
 - and, again, in a¹: 56,1–60,8.
- 5) The story of Theodosios (65,1–68,1), in the version of the *Pandektes*, but transmitted independently from Nikon’s full anthology:
- yet once more, in a¹;
 - e² (copied in 1609/1610, a miscellany);
 - and, again, in d².
- 6) The story of Theodosios (65,1–67,1), yet excerpted directly from the *Life*:
- e³ (late 14th / early 15th c., another expanded *Gerontikon*).

Furthermore fakes, namely texts misattributed to Theodore, also begin to prop up.

Pseudepigrapha (overviews in Gouillard 1947, 149–57 and Tkachëv 2023, 25–27):

- 1) *Theoretikon* (Θεωρητικόν), possibly dated to the 14th-15th c., though transmitted in later mss. (see <https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/oeuvre/12997/>).
- 2) *Περί Ἀζύμων*, transmitted in a 15th-c. manuscript with anti-Latin treatises. Oxford Bodleian Library Canon. gr. 21 (Diktyon 47571), 149r-153v.

In relation to *pseudepigrapha*, we might also include here the correct remark of Kazhdan (1991b; cf. Gouillard 1947, 157) that Theodore’s “identification with the homonymous author of *heirmoi* in Florence Laur. B 32 (13th C.), proposed by S. Eustratiades (*Nea Sion* 34 [1939] 43-45), is based only on the similarity of names”; for “Florence Laur. B 32”, however, one should read Athos, Lavra B 32 (Diktyon 27084), dated to the second half of the 10th c.



It was not long before *Theodore of Edessa* interested the world of the printed book. A printed edition of the original *Life* of Theodore was apparently the target (this was the opinion of Krumbacher [1897, 152], which we share) behind an exact copy of the eleventh-century manuscript Rome, Biblioteca Angelica, gr. 86 (Diktyon *55993) (C), which has been preserved in the seventeenth/eighteenth-century Paris, BnF, suppl. gr. 441 (Diktyon *53173) (p). Angelic. gr. 86 was certainly, by the time of the creation of p, among the holdings of a Western library collection. But it was also a mutilated copy, offering only an incomplete *Life* of Theodore, that stops mid-sentence at 85,3. This might be the cause why any planned edition did not materialize at that point.

Another such endeavor was initiated on Mount Athos in the mid-seventeenth century. The aforementioned Agapios Landos (ca. 1595–after 1656/1657), a Cretan scholar who settled on Athos, rewrote and adapted into post-Byzantine Greek a number of hagiographical texts drawn primarily from the *Menologion* of Symeon Metaphrastes, which he published across several collections. These reworkings circulated widely throughout the Greek-speaking world and remained influential until the nineteenth century.⁵⁹ They included the two major Greek works of Euthymios—of course, neither of them attributed to him. A simplified and abridged version of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, titled “Βίος καὶ Πολιτεία τοῦ Ὁσίου Πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ Ἰσαποστόλου Ἰωάσαφ τοῦ βασιλέως τῆς Ἰνδίας” was part of Landos’ first hagiographical collection, the *Παράδεισος* printed in 1641.⁶⁰ A similar version of the *Life* of Theodore of Edessa, under the title “Τοῦ ἐν ἀγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Θεοδώρου, τοῦ διαλάμψαντος ἐν ἀσκήσει κατὰ τὴν Λαύραν τοῦ Ἀγίου Σάββα, ἔπειτα γεγονότος ἀρχιεπισκόπου Ἐδέσης, οὗ τὸν βίον ἔγραψεν ὁ Επίσκοπος Ἑμέσης Βασίλειος” was included in Agapios’ last volume, dedicated to the summer months, called *Καλοκαιρινή*, whose printed version was published in Venice in 1656.⁶¹

Similarly, the original text of Theodore’s *Chapters* was published twice: once, edited by the French Jesuit scholar Pierre Poussines (1609–1686) (*Thesaurus asceticus*, Paris 1684, 345–403, with a facing Latin translation), and then, more importantly, incorporated in the *Philokalia*, the popular anthology-cum-manual for Orthodox spiritual practice which was put together by Makarios of Corinth (1731–1805) and the aforementioned Nikodemos Hagiorites (1749–1809) and first published in Venice in 1782, followed by multiple new editions and trans-

⁵⁹ On Landos, see Kostoula 1983 and Paschalidis and Kaklamanos 2014 (where also further bibliography).

⁶⁰ See Klein 1997; for an overview of post-Byzantine rewritings of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, see Vasileiou 2004 (on pp. 33–8, a presentation of Landos’ version with further bibliography).

⁶¹ Landos 1780, 222–38, reprinted in Doukakes 1893, 263–82 and its own reprints.

lations in numerous languages.⁶² Among Greek-reading audiences in the post-Byzantine Orthodox East, *Theodore of Edessa* was thus at the forefront of popular narrative and spiritual literature.

The last chapter of our story is the critical edition of the original Greek *Life* of Theodore (still, of course, under the name of Basil of Emesa) by the exceptionally gifted Ivan Pomjalovskij (1845–1906), a Latinist turned Byzantinist, professor at Saint Petersburg.⁶³ The edition appeared in 1892, for which Pomjalovskij used manuscripts **A** and **B**, both located in Moscow in the collection of Государственный Исторический Музей, usually giving preference to the text of the former witness.⁶⁴ We owe to him, as to many a philologist of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the retrieval from obscurity of a story that fascinated readers for centuries. *Theodore of Edessa*, we hope, has not said its last words.

⁶² Text in pp. 265–81 (modern edition: *Philokalia* 1, 304–24), followed by the pseudonymous *Theoretikon*, on pp. 281–7. For an English translation of the *Philokalia* version of the *Chapters*, see Palmer, Sherrard, and Ware 1981, 14–37 with a useful brief introduction (p. 13). For the pre-history and making of the *Philokalia*, see Rigo 2016 and Paschalides 2016 (with further bibliography).

⁶³ On Pomjalovskij, see Loparev 1906.

⁶⁴ Pomjalovskij also collated the 13th-c. ms. **G**; see Pomjalovskij 1892, viii–xviii. As far as we are aware only one review of Pomjalovskij's edition was published at that time: Nikitin 1895; for two earlier Russian editions of passages from the *Life*, see Vol. II, ix. A Russian translation by D. E. Afinogenov, based on Pomjalovskij's edition (though in some cases, following the readings of ms. **B** in Pomjalovskij's apparatus), was published in 2015. Also, a modern Greek paraphrase based on ms. **m** was published in 2005 by Σταυροπηγιακή και Συνοδική Ι. Μονή Όσίου Συμεών του Νέου Θεολόγου: *Άγιοι Ἐξ Ἀγαρηῶν Β', Ἰωάννης ὁ Βασιλιάς τῶν Περσῶν* (Kalamos); the book includes also a modern Greek translation of 50 sections from Theodore's *Chapters*.

Abbreviations and Bibliography

FREQUENT ABBREVIATIONS

app. font.

apparatus fontium

Balavariani

trans. D. M. Lang, *The Balavariani (Barlaam and Josaphat). A Tale from the Christian East translated from the Old Georgian by D. M. Lang, introduction by I. V. Abuladze.* Berkeley and Los Angeles 1966.

Barlaam and Ioasaph

by Euthymios the Iberian, ed. R. Volk, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos VI/2: Historia animae utilis de Barlaam et Ioasaph (spuria). Text und Zehn Appendices.* Berlin 2006.

BHG

Halkin, F., *Bibliotheca hagiographica graeca*, with an *Auctarium* and a *Novum Auctarium*, 5 vols. Brussels 1957–1984.

BHL

Socii Bollandiani, Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina. SH 6. Brussels 1898–1901; Fros, H., *Novum Supplementum.* SH 70. Brussels 1986.

CPG

Geerard, M., *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, 6 vols. Turnhout 1974–1998; vol. 5, eds. M. Geerard and F. Glorie; and vol. 6, eds. M. Geerard and J. Noret.

Diktyon

Listing in the database *Pinakes: Textes et manuscrits grecs* (Institut de recherche et d'histoire des textes, Paris: <http://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/>). The identifying Diktyon number is provided for all Greek manuscripts; that number is marked with an asterisk (*), if the relevant Pinakes entry contains a URL where images of the manuscript are available in digitized form.

DOHD

Dumbarton Oaks Hagiography Database; Co-directors: A. Kazhdan and A.-M. Talbot. Washington, D.C. 1998.

Ehrhard I, II, and III

Ehrhard, A., *Überlieferung und Bestand der hagiographischen und homiletischen Literatur der griechischen Kirche, von den Anfängen bis zum Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts*, 3 vols. Leipzig and Berlin 1937, 1938, and 1939–1952.

George Hagiorites, *The Life of Our Blessed Fathers John and Euthymios*

GRD Engl. transl. Grdzelidze 2009, 51–94.

M-H French transl. Martin-Hisard 1991.

Georg. Iber. Vita Ioannis et Euthymii (iber.) Latin trans. Peeters 1917–1919, 13–68.

Life of George Hagiorites:

GRD² Engl. transl. Grdzelidze 2009, 95–162.

M-H² French transl. Martin-Hisard 2006–2007.

Mosq.

Moscow, State Historical Museum (ГИМ)

ODB

The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium. Ed. A.-P. Kazhdan et al., 3 vols. New York and Oxford 1991.

Passion of Michael the Sabaite

Transl. (Engl.) M. J. Blanchard, “The Georgian Version of the Martyrdom of Saint Michael, Monk of Mar Sabas Monastery”, *Aram* 6 (1994) 149–63, at 149–58.

PG *Patrologiae cursus completus, series Graeca*. Ed. J.-P. Migne, 161 vols. Paris 1857–1866.

Philokalia

Φιλοκαλία τῶν ἱερῶν νηπτικῶν, 5 vols. Athens 1957.

PmbZ

Lilie, R.-J., et al., *Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit. Abt. 1 (641–867) and Abt. 2 (867–1025)*. Berlin 1998–2013. Also searchable through: <https://www.degruyter.com/database/pmbz/html>

RGK

Gamillscheg, E., D. Harlfinger, and H. Hunger, *Repertorium der griechischen Kopisten 800–1600*, 3 vols., Vienna 1981–1997.

Synaxarion of Constantinople

ed. H. Delehaye, *Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae: Propylaeum ad Acta sanctorum Novembris*. Brussels 1902.

TLG

Thesaurus Linguae Graecae, at <http://www.tlg.uci.edu/>

ABBREVIATIONS OF JOURNALS

AB *Analecta Bollandiana*.

BZ *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*.

DOP *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*.

ΕΕΒΣ Ἑπετηρίς Ἑταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν.

GRBS *Greek Roman and Byzantine Studies*.

JÖB *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik / Journal of Byzantine Studies*.

REB *Revue des Études Byzantines*.

RSBN *Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici*.

TM *Travaux et Mémoires*.

SIGLA OF THE MANUSCRIPTS (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)**Conventions:**

- “11th,” etc., denotes the **eleventh century**. The fraction in parentheses indicates the subdivision of the century into equal parts (e.g. “11th (2/2)” = **second half of the eleventh century**; “14th (2/4)” = **second quarter of the fourteenth century**).
- All manuscripts contain either the complete text, fragments, or excerpts of *Theodore’s Life*; the designation “**Life**” is thus used only when a manuscript also transmits the *Chapters* of Theodore—otherwise, it is implied.
- With the exception of manuscripts **A** and **m**, which are related to **version β** (**indicated**), all other manuscripts preserve variants of **version α** (**implied**).

- Unless a manuscript transmits the complete text of the *Life*, **bold numbers** in parentheses indicate the sections of the text attested therein.
 - Finally, for all manuscripts the identifying **Diktyon number** is provided, so as to help readers find further information in the ever-evolving *Pinakes: Textes et manuscrits grecs* (Institut de recherche et d'histoire des textes, Paris) at <http://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/>. If a *Pinakes* entry contains a URL where a manuscript is available in digitized form, the Diktyon number is marked with an asterisk (*).
- A** Moscow, State Historical Museum, Synod. gr. 15 (Vladimir 381; **Diktyon 43640**), 227r-285v (*Life*, version β) and 285v-297v (*Chapters*, version β), June 19, 1023, copied by Theophanes (RGK I 136, II 180, and III 230; PmbZ 28103)
- B** Moscow, State Historical Museum, Synod. gr. 18 (Vladimir 126; **Diktyon 43643**), 112r-181v (*Life*) and 182r-199v (*Chapters*), 11th (2/2), copied by Nikolaos (μωναχός)
- C** Rome, Biblioteca Angelica, gr. 86 (**Diktyon *55993**), 219r-265r (-85,3, des. mut.), 11th (2/2)
- D** Athos, Vatopediou 472 (**Diktyon 18616**), 242v-319r (*Life*) and 167v-185r (*Chapters*), 13th (2/2?), copied by the same scribe as **G**
- E** Athos, Philotheou 24 (Lambros 1787; **Diktyon 29388**), 11r-105v (11r-27v: 1,1-30,2; 28r-86v: 34,3-82,2; 87r-102v: 86,5-100,2; 103r-105v: 110-114,1, des. mut.), 11th (2/2?) / 12th (1/2?)
- F** Athos, Lavra Δ 1 (Eustratiades 377; **Diktyon 27312**), 57r-64v (inc. mut.: 56,2-65,4) and 89r-114r (85,6-115,5) (*Life*) and 167r-197v (*Chapters*), 12th (2/2?)
- G** Istanbul, Patriarchal Library, Panag. 82 (**Diktyon 33727**), 32r-87v (1,1-92,3) and 88r-93v (93,3-101,2, des. mut.), 13th (2/2?), copied by the same scribe as **D**
- J** Athens, EBE, 270 (**Diktyon 2566**), 140r-192v (-115,2, des. mut.), late 13th (?) / early 14th (?)
- K** Athens, EBE, 230 (**Diktyon 2526**), 228r-303r (*Life*) and 303r-322v (*Chapters*), 14th (1/2?)
- L** Sinai, Monastery of Saint Catherine, gr. 544 (**Diktyon 58919**), 59r-206v, 13th (2/2?)
- N** Turin, BNU, C. III. 16 (Pasini 147; **Diktyon 63869**), 196r-283v (*Life*) and 284r-309v (*Chapters*), 13th (1/2?)
- a¹** Venice, BNM, gr. II. 77 (coll. 998; **Diktyon 70239**), 179r-181v (65,1-68,1, excerpt from Nikon's *Pandektes* 34), 183r-186v (19,1-34,4), and 271r-273r (56,1-60,8), 15th (5/5?) / 16th (1/5?)
- b¹** Jerusalem, Patriarchal Library, Panagiotou Taphou 215 (**Diktyon *35452**), 229v-231v (39,3-39,7), late 16th
- c¹** Sinai, Monastery of Saint Catherine, gr. 455 (**Diktyon *58830**), 191v-199r (46,4-52,2), 11th (4/4)
- c²** Moscow, State Historical Museum, Synod. gr. 494 (Vladimir 415; **Diktyon 44119**), 114r-119r (46,1-52,2), 14th (?)

- c³ Athos, Lavra B 43 (Eustratiades 163; **Diktyon 27095**), 105v-111v (46,2-52,2), 12th (2/2) (?) / 13th (?)
- c⁴ Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele III, II B 18 (**Diktyon 46034**), 97v-102v (46,2-48,2, des. mut.), 13th
- c⁵ London, Lambeth Palace Library, Mss. 2794 (**Diktyon 39902**), 220r-232v (46,2-48,3), 15th (2/2)
- c⁶ Jerusalem, Patriarchal Library, Hagia Saba 409 (**Diktyon *34665**), 318r-332r (46,4-52,2), 13th
- c⁷ Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale Albert Ier (KBR), gr. II 4836 (**Diktyon 10018**), 78v-84v (46,4-50, des. mut.), year 1281, copied by the priest Leon (ὁ ἀπὸ τῆς Κεράμου)
- c⁸ Meteora, Metamorphoseos 197 (**Diktyon 41608**), 176r-177v (46,4-47,2, 47,13-47,14, and 46,3), c. 1380-1410
- c⁹ Athos, Iviron 382 (Lambros 4502; **Diktyon 23979**), 663v-664v (46,7-47,13), year 1514, copied by Dionysios of Iviron
- d¹ Paris, BnF, gr. 776 (**Diktyon *50360**), 25r-29v (55,7-64,1), 15th (4/4?)
- d² Venice, BNM, gr. VII. 45 (coll. 1469; **Diktyon 70562**), 100v-107r (56,1-64,2) and 267r-271r (65,1-68,1, excerpt from Nikon's *Pandektes* 34), in the years 1616-1618, copied by Anthimos Logothetes
- e¹ Vienna, ONB, theol. gr. 84 (**Diktyon *71751**), 169v-171r (65,1-68,1, excerpt in Nikon's *Pandektes* 34), 12th (2/2?)
- e² Meteora, Metamorphoseos 357 (**Diktyon 41767**), 187r-189v (65,1-68,1, excerpt from Nikon's *Pandektes* 34), 1609/1610, copied by Metrophanes (θύτης ἐκ Βάρνης)
- e³ Paris, BnF, Coislin 378 (**Diktyon *49519**), 141r-143v (65,1-67,1), 14th (4/4?) / 15th (1/4?)
- h Vatican, BAV, Ottob. gr. 151 (**Diktyon *65393**), 1r-119v (inc. mut. 24,16-115,3, des. mut.), 13th (2/2?) / 14th (1/2?), an apograph of B
- m Athos, Iviron 424 (Lambros 4544; **Diktyon 24021**), 312v-348v (*Life*, version β based on A, further revised), 16th (2/2?)
- p Paris, BnF, suppl. gr. 441 (**Diktyon *53173**), 1r-58r (-85,3, des. mut.), 17th / 18th, an apograph of C
- r Athos, Σκήτη Αγίας Άννης 67 (**Diktyon 31561**), pp. 1-191 (*Life*) and 277-317 (*Chapters*), 18th
- s Athos, Σκήτη Καυσοκαλυβίων, olim Κοίμησις τῆς Θεοτόκου ἐν τῇ καλύβῃ τοῦ ἁγίου Ἀκακίου 6 (Kourilas and Eustratiades 203; **Diktyon 31789**), 15r-30v, 18th, apograph of r (?)
- t Athos, Panteleimonos 865 (Lambros 6372; **Diktyon 23004**), 109r-167r (*Life*) and 167r-181v (*Chapters*), ca. 1850-1860, copied by the monk Dionysios Agiartemites, an apograph of r (?)

- w Athos, Koutloumousiou 12 (Lambros 3081; **Diktyon 26037**), pp. 184-202 (*Chapters*), 11th (1/2)

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John Polites, *Life of John of Damascus* (BHG 884)

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