Complaints and accusations in the works of Eustathios of Thessalonike

Critical edition, translation and commentary of the texts: *Epistola ad Thessalonicenses*, *De simulatione*, *Adversus implacabilitatis accusationem*, *Oratio anno auspicando habita*, *Ethopoeia*

Eustathios of Thessalonike was one of the most prominent Byzantine scholars. His surviving works belong to many literary genres (secular and ecclesiastical oratory, epistolography, historiography, commentaries in ancient authors) and have been studied since the 19th century. Starting in 1825 Stallbaum published the Homeric commentaries of Eustathios, in 1832 Tafel published his “opuscula” and in 1892 Regel presented the first edition of a series of rhetorical orations of the metropolitan. During the 20th and the first years of the 21st century most of the texts that are included in these first editions have been published critically and studied anew by other scholars.

The main subject of my thesis will be the new edition of some of the last texts that have firstly been published by Tafel and have not yet been re-edited. These texts will be the one that Tafel has named *Epistola ad Thessalonicenses*, *Oratio anno auspicando habita* (neither has a specific title in the manuscript, but they are both named “Τοῦ αὐτοῦ”), *De simulatione*, *Adversus implacabilitatis accusationem* and his sole surviving ethopoeia. These texts are preserved in three manuscripts, Parisinus gr. 1182, Scorialensis Y-II-10 and Basileensis A. III. 20.

The first text is a *διαπόμπιμος διδασκαλία* referring to the value of love and truth, and also containing a lot of details about Eustathios’ flight from Thessalonike, since the text was sent to his flock during his “exile”. The treatise *De simulatione* mentions that acting, which the ancient Greeks used as a means of teaching through theatre, has been rendered a tool of various crooks (mostly monks), persons that are strictly criticised in the present work. The text concerning implacability informs us that members of his flock had made a caricature of him with an inscription that called him implacable, thus he wrote this lengthy treatise, in which he refers to his behaviour towards the citizens of his bishopric and their behaviour towards him, while also trying to refute their accusations. An important element connecting these three texts is *hypocrisy*. Eustathios claims that he is honest towards every member of his flock. However, some people behave in a certain manner in front of him and totally differently behind his back. The oration about the beginning of the new year mentions various details, which highlight the tense relationship between him and some Thessalonians. Lastly, the *Ethopoeia* is a satirical work (the only of the aforementioned texts that is preserved in two manuscripts), in which a luxuriating monk, whom the author most likely knew since the period he himself was living in Constantinople as a deacon, is ridiculed through his own words. The texts will be accompanied by apparati, a translation in Modern Greek and a commentary.

In the group of texts against his opponents/ accusers are also included his memorandum to the Patriarch Michael III of Anchialos, where he complains about his demotion from his previous position of ranked deacon to an excess one (oration Ρ in Wirth’s edition), and also his speech about the Thessalonians who showed contempt for the new year’s liturgy (oration Δ in Wirth’s edition). If deemed necessary both works will be re-edited, otherwise they will be simply translated and commentated.

Other than the extensive study of the aforementioned texts, the complaints and accusations expressed by the erudite metropolitan in all his works will be researched as a whole. I will examine if he is a singular case or other contemporaries of his expressed themselves in a similar manner, thus insults and complaints were a motif of sorts. I will also attempt to present the author’s principles and values, which led him to a direct confrontation with the society of Thessalonike.

The many editions of Eustathios’ texts notwithstanding, a plethora of scholars have published articles concerning his life, his style, his opinions about various matters and in general issues that arise from his works. Especially his life has been an object of great debate among researchers. Eustathios lived through most of the 12th century (he was born around 1110 and died approximately in 1195), was a witness of important events (successions of emperors, campaigns, the sacking of Thessalonike by Normans) and was in friendly terms with many pre-eminent people of his time. Tafel and Regel place his election as metropolitan of Thessalonike in 1174/5 and his flight from the city in 1191, dates accepted by subsequent scholars (e.g. Bonis, Koukoules). However, the above dating has been questioned by Kazhdan and Wirth, who in their publications proposed the year 1178/9 as the year of his episcopal election, a proposition that has henceforth been accepted by the majority of Eustathios’ researchers.

The proposed doctoral thesis will commence with a detailed presentation of the bishop’s life, aiming to reconcile the conflicting views and to approach as accurately as possible the dates of important events of the author’s life and career with the help of his own texts. The dating of his flight from Thessalonike in 1191, that has been proposed by the first researchers, does not seem to be firmly founded on textual evidence, while the hitherto broadly accepted re-dating of the subsequent scholars can be challenged, since they did not take into account very important individual events. The life of Eustathios will be followed by a list of all his works, where a short summary of each one’s contents will be presented and a dating will be attempted based on the findings of research and on my own proposition about the author’s life.

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