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Hypatios of Ephesos and Ps.-Dionysios Areopagites

Abstract: This article demonstrates, first, that Hypatios of Ephesos did not consider all the writings of Ps.-Dionysios the Areopagite to be forgeries, but only those citations from this author which the Syrian Orthodox (‘Severan’) bishops offered in support of their claims during the *Collatio cum Severianis* in 532. It then argues that Hypatios’ text Περί τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις οἴκοις, preserved in Cod. par. gr. 1115, should be considered an important testimony to the pre-Iconoclast reception of Ps.-Dionysios’ doctrine of images (in the sense of Biblical and liturgical symbols). Finally, it shows that this text was altered during the Iconoclast period in an attempt to use the statements that originally were not meant to refer to painted images (icons) in the new polemical context but was ultimately discarded because the arguments it contains appeared unsatisfactory both to the Iconoclasts and Iconophiles.

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Byzantine sources from the so-called “Iconoclast era” (c. 680–850)¹ are particularly unreliable witnesses: almost every single “fact” reported in them has been challenged by recent scholarship. To cite just a few, most vivid examples:² iconoclasm was not inaugurated by a symbolic act of taking down the icon of Christ from the Chalke-Gate and replacing it with a cross, as the Byzantine sour-

The main theses of this paper were presented during the biennial meeting of the Byzantine Studies Association of Germany in Cologne 2013.

1 Traditional dates are, of course, 726 to 787 for the First Iconoclast Period and 815 to 843 for the second Iconoclast period. In adopting these broader dates I follow L. BRUBAKER / J.F. HALDON, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era (c. 680–850): a history*. Cambridge 2011. A survey of the sources for the period is found in L. BRUBAKER / J.F. HALDON, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast era (c. 680–850): the sources*. Aldershot 2001.

2 On the subject of “inventing” Byzantine iconoclasm, cf. L. BRUBAKER, *Inventing Byzantine Iconoclasm*. London 2012.

ces, especially the accounts in the chronicles, seem to suggest.³ There is no sufficient evidence for any empire-wide edicts of the emperor Leo III against images, as many modern historians down to Ostrogorsky's time continued to sustain on the basis of Theophanes' testimony and a few lines in the *Liber pontificalis*.⁴ No large-scale destruction of images or covering them with white-wash actually took place, as the visual propaganda in the Byzantine psalters would have us believe.⁵

Moving from historical events to the texts related to the theory of image in the broadest sense of the word, the problems become even more complex. The writings composed or promulgated both by the "iconoclasts" and the "iconophiles" tended to represent their own, mutually exclusive positions as being orthodox, i.e., *inter alia*, as being in perfect conformity with the entire preceding theological tradition, which was usually demonstrated through citations from

3 Cf. BRUBAKER / HALDON, History (as footnote 1 above) 135: "We would argue, therefore, that ... there is no clear evidence that he took down an image of Christ from the Chalke gate. His actions *may* have involved removing a portrayal of Christ, but neither the textual nor the visual evidence offers confirmation of any such action" (italics by BRUBAKER / HALDON). A slightly more moderate position is found in G. DAGRON, Le christianisme byzantin, in J.-M. Mayeur / G. Dagron / P. Riché / Ch. Hannick / A. Vauchez (eds.), Histoire du christianisme des origines à nos jours IV: Évêques, moines et empereurs (610–1054). Paris 1993, 105 who believes that the reports of the sources are rather difficult to explain without some actual event in the background. Cf. also the discussion in M.-F. AUZÉPY, La destruction de l'icône du Christ de la Chalce de Léon III: Propagande ou réalité? *Byz* 60 (1990) 445–492.

4 Many accounts of Byzantine History prior to 1915 distinguished between the first edict of Leo III (726) and the second edict of Leo III against images. The "First Edict" was postulated on the basis of Theophanes' remarks and a short note in the *Liber pontificalis*. The "Second Edict" was postulated on the basis of the word *θέσιμα* mentioned in John of Damaskos. Ostrogorsky believed that Leo asked the silention of 730 to approve such an official edict, cf. G. OSTROGORSKY, Geschichte des byzantinischen Staates. München, ³1963, 137 note 17). The last of the modern historians in favor of the "Edict of 726" (the "First Edict") was M.V. ANASTOS, Leo III's edict against the images in the year 726–727 and Italo-Byzantine relations between 726 and 730. *BF* 3 (1968) 5–41. Against the Edict of 730 (the "Second Edict") on the basis of the vague reference in John of Damaskos, cf. D. STEIN, Der Beginn des byzantinischen Bilderstreites und seine Entwicklung bis in die 40er Jahre des 8. Jahrhunderts. *Miscellanea Byzantina Monacensia*, 25. München 1980, 204–211. Cf. BRUBAKER / HALDON, History (as footnote 1 above) 119 ff.

5 Cf. K. A. CORRIGAN, Visual polemics in the ninth-century Byzantine psalters. Cambridge 1992; in fact, very few cases of iconoclastic actions in the strict sense of the term (destruction of codices and images) are documented in the literary and archeological evidence, cf. BRUBAKER / HALDON, History (as footnote 1 above) 201.

and references to the scriptures and earlier authors.⁶ *Florilegia* containing the relevant quotations frequently accompanied polemical treatises (e.g. the ‘Speeches’ by John of Damaskos) or other authoritative or official documents (e.g. the *Peuseis* of Constantine V or the synodal acts).⁷ The need to demonstrate conformity with the past not only stimulated research,⁸ but also provided a formidable incentive to re-interpret earlier sources to meet new demands or even to fabricate or to modify the evidence in cases where it was missing or judged to be insufficient. Stated in more general terms, the need to demonstrate conformity with the past lead not only to serious distortions of the “historical memory” but even to the creation of “alternative versions” of the preceding theological and philosophical tradition. Depending on the prevailing policy (“iconophile” or “iconoclast”), one or the other of these “alternative versions” of the past was held to be officially valid, with drastic consequences for the historical documents that supported or seemed to support the contrary view of the past, which, at least to some extent, was equally distorted. Such documents were either withdrawn from circulation and locked up in the patriarchate or possibly underwent modifications to support the prevailing view.⁹

6 It appears that this practice was not widespread until the dispute between Cyril and Nestorios. Thereafter, it became a commonly accepted method in a doctrinal debate, cf. J. BEUMER, *Die theologische Methode*. Freiburg 1972, 58–60, and E. NACKE, *Das Zeugnis der Väter in der theologischen Beweisführung Cyrills von Alexandrien*. PhD thesis, Münster 1964.

7 On the history of these florilegia cf. TH. SCHERMANN, *Die Geschichte der dogmatischen Florilegien vom V.–VIII. Jahrhundert*. Leipzig 1904; cf. also P. VAN DEN VEN, *La patristique et l’hagiographie au concile de Nicée de 787*. *Byz* 25/27 (1957) 325–362.

8 A short passage in Scriptor Incertus referring to the beginning of the second Iconoclastic period illustrates the way in which John the Grammarian confronted the task of collecting material for the florilegium of 815: “Asking from the other license to search through old books wherever they might be deposited, in monasteries and churches, he set about the task together with certain other disorderly and uncultivated persons, and having gathered a great many books, they searched through them. But these fools found not what they wickedly sought, until they put their hands on the Synodikon of Constantine the Isaurian, also called Kaballinos; and taking from here the incipits, they began to find the passages in the books. They brought these forth, foolishly and mindlessly, putting marks in the places they had found, wishing to convince the foolish rabble that ‘we have found proof in old books that one ought not to venerate images’” (Scriptor Incertus de Leone (V), ed. I. BEKKER. Bonn 1842, 350, 6–18, translation from M. FEATHERSTONE, *Opening scenes of the second iconoclasm: Nicephorus’s critique of the citations from Macarius Magnes*. *REB* 60 (2002) 65–112: 65 f.

9 M.-F. Auzépy’s detailed research on the interpolated texts from the Iconoclast period should be mentioned here, as it provides an important model for the study of this material, cf. especially M.-F. AUZÉPY, *L’adversus Constantinum Caballinum et Jean de Jérusalem*. *Byzantinoslavica* 56 (1995) 323–338. Cf. in general the works assembled in M.-F. AUZÉPY, *L’histoire des iconoclastes*. Paris 2007.

It is not surprising, therefore, that all the texts relevant to the debates concerning images during this period that represent the previous tradition (or claim to do so) have been viewed with extreme caution by the scholarship. The most radical stance on the issue of the authenticity of these texts (especially of Eusebios' *Letter to Constantia* as well as the relevant fragments and/or texts which are traditionally ascribed to Epiphanius of Salamis, Leontios of Neapolis and Hypatios of Ephesos) was taken by Paul SPECK, who declared *all* these texts *without exception* to be of a later date.¹⁰ While the general thrust of SPECK's arguments, i. e. the skeptical tendency with which he approached these texts is undoubtedly correct, I would like to advocate a more differentiated approach. In particular, the following questions need to be addressed. Is the evidence sufficient to consider all these texts 'forgeries' in their entirety? Or do they possibly contain interpolated passages alongside original or "genuine" material? If authentic texts ever existed, could it be possible that their wording has been changed so significantly that they no longer convey significant traces of the original meaning, which now has to be considered lost beyond reconstruction?

While an attempt to answer at least some of these questions with respect to all the texts on images allegedly written before Iconoclasm is not possible within the scope of this paper, I would like to reconsider here the available evidence pertaining to one short text that is traditionally ascribed to Hypatios of Ephesos from the sixth century with the general aim of establishing a different and more nuanced picture of its authenticity.

This text, entitled *Περὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις οἴκοις*, was first published by Franz DIEKAMP¹¹ from a twelfth-century manuscript Cod. Par. gr. 1115.¹² This manu-

10 Cf. P. SPECK, Ich bin's nicht, Kaiser Konstantin ist es gewesen. Die Legenden vom Einfluß des Teufels, des Juden und des Moslem auf den Ikonoklasmus. *Poikila Byzantina*, 10. Bonn 1990, 33, note 30: "Alle Schriften ..., und zwar ausnahmslos alle, die sich mit der Bilderfrage beschäftigen und eine Gegnerschaft gegen die Bilderverehrung postulieren, sind später zu datieren, auch wenn sie ältere Autoren vorgeben, wie Eusebios, Epiphanius, Hypatios von Ephesos oder Leontios von Neapolis".

11 Cf. F. DIEKAMP, Hypatios von Ephesus, in idem (ed.), *Analecta Patristica*. OCA, 117. Rome 1938, 109–126; the text is edited on p. 127–129. A copy made from Cod. Par. gr. 1115 was also available to Diekamp but it is of no significance for the constitution of the text. The text was re-edited by H. G. THÜMMEL, Hypatios von Ephesos und Julianus von Atramyntion zur Bilderfrage. *Byzantinoslavica* 44 (1983) 161–170.

12 This manuscript is described in J. A. MUNITIZ, Le Parisinus graecus 1115: description et arrière-plan historique. *Scriptorium* 36 (1982) 51–67. Previous description was made by SCHERMANN, Geschichte (as footnote 7 above) 6–10. The entire debate on the subject of this manuscript is summarized in A. ALEXAKIS, Codex Parisinus Graecus 1115 and its archetype. *Dumbarton Oaks studies*, 34. Washington, DC 1996.

script has a colophon on folio 306v which states, among other things that “this manuscript was transcribed from a book which had been found in an old library of a holy church in Old Rome in the year 6276”.¹³ If a number of suspicious details in this colophon – Melioranskij was one of the first scholars to point them out¹⁴ – did not prevent us from taking these statements at face value, this would be the first piece of evidence to demonstrate that Hypatios’ text actually was in circulation during the Iconoclast era.

The need to demonstrate that this text was indeed in circulation during this period arises from the surprising fact that it is neither cited nor referred to in any of the official documents from the Iconoclast period (such as synodal acts and accompanying florilegia), and so it could even seem possible to assume that either this text had remained totally unknown during the Iconoclasm or, – if it had actually been read in the process of material selection for the synods – that it was judged to be useless both by the iconophiles and the iconoclasts alike and put aside.

However, some thirty years after DIEKAMP had published this text, Jean GOUILLARD¹⁵ discovered that one important passage from it was anonymously quoted and harshly criticized in a letter of Theodoros Studites to an otherwise unknown monk Niketas, who had previously asked Theodoros’ opinion on this passage.¹⁶ This discovery was significant mainly for two reasons. First, it provided solid evidence that this text was indeed known during the Iconoclast period, even if the number of people who can be demonstrated to have actually read it amounts to only two, Niketas and Theodoros Studites. If the text was known to them, it is likely to have been known also to their close friends and collaborators, though, in the absence of additional evidence, this must remain only a rather obvious supposition. The letter cannot be dated with precision. FATOUROS, who edited the Letters of Theodoros Studites, speaking on the authority of SPECK, remarks that the conditions under which this letter was composed imply a certain freedom of movement for the iconophiles, which makes a date during the reign of Michael II (821–829) very probable. The death of Theodoros

13 Full transcription of the colophon and a French translation in MUNITIZ, Parisinus (as footnote 11 above) 55f.

14 В. М. МЕЛИОРАНСКИЙ, Георгий Киприянин и Иоанн Иерусалимский: два малоизвестных борца за православие в VIII веке. St. Petersburg 1901, 81–88.

15 Cf. J. GOUILLARD, Hypatios d’Éphèse ou du Pseudo-Denys a Théodore Studite. *REB* 19 (1961) 63–75.

16 Cf. Theodoros Studites, *Ep.* 499 (Theodori Studitae epistulae, ed. G. FATOUROS. *CFHB*, 31. Berlin 1991); previously, this text was quoted from *PG* 99, 1537.

Studites in 826 provides the *terminus ante quem*.¹⁷ Second, the quotation in Theodoros Studites allowed one important emendation to an obviously corrupt passage transmitted in the Cod. Par. gr. 1115, which reads τοὺς ἱεροὺς τῶν ἁγίων εἰκόνας (where the article and the substantive do not agree).¹⁸ The quotation preserved in Theodoros' letter proved that the word εἰκόνας was a corrupt reading of ἁγῶνας. This fact is highly significant not only because it demonstrates that the text transmitted in Cod. Par. gr. 1115 is corrupt, but especially because it shows how easily an apparently small change can alter the meaning of the entire passage, and possibly even provide an entirely new semantic clue to the interpretation of the whole text. The question of whether this variant reading can help in some way to establish the fate of this text during the Iconoclast era will be briefly addressed later in this article. Other variant readings, such as ὑπό for ὑπέρ in line 35 (ed. THÜMMEL) are not as spectacular as εἰκόνας for ἁγῶνας, but nevertheless testify to the fact that many passages appeared difficult even to the Byzantine readers in the ninth century, which suggests that this text was in a rather bad condition already by that time. Theodoros Studites' letter does not provide any information about Niketas's source. It is not known whether Niketas had come across this quotation while reading Hypatios' book ("Σύμμικτα ζητήματα"), which is attested only though the title preserved in Cod. Par. gr. 1115 (Ὑπατίου ἀρχιεπισκόπου Ἐφέσου ἐκ τῶν πρὸς Ἰουλιανὸν ἐπίσκοπον Ἀτραμυτίου συμμικτῶν [sic]¹⁹ ζητημάτων βιβλίον α κεφαλαίου ε· περὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις οἰκοῖς), or – which is more probable – that he had found this quotation in a florilegium of some sort.²⁰ In fact, Theodoros does not even mention Hypatios by name.

In the same article in which Jean Guillard discussed the quotations from Hypatios of Ephesos in the letter of Theodoros Studites, he also pointed out a number

¹⁷ Cf. FATOUROS, *ibid.*, I 454*.

¹⁸ This corresponds to line 32 in Thümmel's edition, cf. THÜMMEL, Hypatios (as footnote 11 above).

¹⁹ Speck has rightly judged the reading συμμικτῶν to be impossible and emended it to συμμικτῶν cf. P. SPECK, ΓΡΑΦΑΙΣ Η ΓΛΥΦΑΙΣ: Zu dem Fragment des Hypatios von Ephesos über die Bilder, in *Varia I. Poikila Byzantina*, 4. Bonn 1984, 211–241, here 213.

²⁰ S. GERO, Hypatios of Ephesus on the cult of images, in J. Neusner (ed.), *Christianity, Judaism and other Greco-Roman cults. Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty*. Leiden 1975, II 208–216: 209 note 3 speculated that the florilegium through which Niketas could have come to know this quotation from Hypatios "contained material culled from the libraries by the emissaries of Leo V in preparation for the Council of 815" – cf. the obviously biased account of their activities in Scriptor Incertus quoted at the beginning of this article in note 8 above – "and subsequently found unusable".

of significant similarities between Hypatios' text and the teachings of Ps.-Dionysios Areopagites.²¹ However, while his discovery of Theodoros' knowledge of Hypatios had a lasting impact on scholarship, his thesis concerning the possible dependence of Hypatios on Ps.-Dionysios was quickly dismissed and presently does not play any role either in studies dedicated to the reception of Ps.-Dionysios in Byzantium²² or in scholarship on Hypatios.²³ The reason for the dismissal of his thesis was the criticism by Stephen GERO,²⁴ who not only pointed out some discrepancies between the views of Hypatios and Ps.-Dionysios, but also raised the following fundamental objection:

Another powerful argument against the dependence of Hypatios on Dionysius is the fact that Hypatios openly declared the Dionysiac writings to be forgeries.²⁵

When making this statement GERO had in mind one particular theory out of many that have been expressed with regard to the authorship of the Ps.-Dionysian corpus,²⁶ namely the thesis concerning the "Apolinarian forgery". The advocates of this thesis maintain that Hypatios of Ephesos considered *most* or even *all* writings attributed to Ps.-Dionysios to be Apolinarian forgeries.²⁷ Does the evidence actually support this assumption?

As the few surviving fragments attributed to Hypatios of Ephesos that have been published by DIEKAMP²⁸ do not mention Ps.-Dionysios at all, the only re-

21 Cf. GOUILLARD, Hypatios (as footnote 15 above) 72 ff.

22 The reception of Ps.-Dionysios in Byzantium is a relatively unexplored subject. Cf. G. MAKRI, Zwischen Hypatios von Ephesos und Lorenzo Valla. Die areopagitische Echtheitsfrage im Mittelalter, in C. C. Bojadžiev (ed.), Die Dionysius-Rezeption im Mittelalter: Internationales Kolloquium in Sofia vom 8. bis 11. April 1999. Turnhout 2000, 4–39. Even though Makris discusses the "Appolinarian forgery" thesis in some detail, he does not draw any conclusions with respect to Περί τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις οἰκοῖς. Cf. also TH. HAINTHALER, Bemerkungen zur Christologie des Ps.-Dionys und ihrer Nachwirkung im 6. Jahrhundert, in Y. de Andia (ed.), Denys l'Aréopagite et sa postérité en Orient et en Occident. Actes du Colloque International, Paris, 21–24 septembre 1994. Paris 1997, 269–292. Heintzhaler does not mention this text by Hypatios either.

23 In his extensive commentary on Hypatios' text, P. Speck only briefly mentions Gouillard's thesis as outdated, cf. SPECK, ΓΡΑΦΑΙΣ (as footnote 19 above) 240.

24 GERO, Hypatios (as footnote 20 above).

25 *ibid.* 212.

26 An impressive and rather comprehensive list of 22 hypotheses that have been formulated on the provenance of the corpus of Ps.-Dionysios is found in R. F. HATHAWAY, Hierarchy and the definition of order in the letters of Pseudo-Dionysius: a study in the form and meaning of the Pseudo-Dionysian writings. The Hague 1969, 31–35.

27 *ibid.* 11.

28 Cf. DIEKAMP, Hypatios (as footnote 11 above).

maintaining evidence²⁹ which permits an assessment of Hypatios' opinion on Ps.-Dionysios are the statements he made during a three-day encounter with five or more Syrian Orthodox ('Severan') bishops. This encounter is traditionally known as the *Collatio cum Severianis*;³⁰ it took place in Constantinople in the spring of 532, in the same year as Justinian put down the Nika Riot (beginning of the year) and signed the "eternal peace" with the Persian king (end of the year). The encounter with the "Severans", i.e. the followers of Severos, Patriarch of Antioch, who had been deposed in 518 by Justinos and was living in exile in Egypt, was an attempt on the part of Justinian to deal with the particular situation in Syria, where the anti-Chalcedonian Severans had been ordaining numerous clergy in opposition to the "imperial" pro-Chalcedonian Church.³¹ The efforts of Justinian were ultimately aimed at the re-union of the Churches following the disruptions caused by the Chalcedonian definition. Details about this encounter, including the statements which supposedly support the thesis concerning the Apollinarian forgery, are known for the most part from the Latin version of a report by Innocentius of Maroneia,³² who, like Hypatios of Ephesos, was one of the five bishops to represent the pro-Chalcedonian side at this meeting. The Latin text of his report is the most comprehensive protocol in existence; it is an official "imperial" version³³ written from a pro-Chalcedonian standpoint. Two other protocols survive which represent the Syrian Orthodox (i.e. anti-Chalcedonian) view of these events, namely the Syriac protocol of the meeting (= *Syr I*)³⁴ and a Syriac resume, which is a continuation of the *Syr I* version (= *Syr II*).³⁵ Even though the pro-Chalcedonian and the Syrian Orthodox pro-

²⁹ Cf. HATHAWAY, Hierarchy (as footnote 26 above) 32.

³⁰ A recent publication dedicated mainly to the religious policy of the Emperor Herakleios and the Patriarch Sergios of Constantinople has significantly contributed to our understanding of this encounter, as its author has evaluated a number of anti-Chalcedonian Syrian sources relative to this event, cf. CH. LANGE, Mia Energeia: Untersuchungen zur Einigungspolitik des Kaisers Heraclius und des Patriarchen Sergius von Constantinopel. *Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum*, 66. Tübingen 2012, 292–314.

³¹ Cf. J. SPEIGL, Das Religionsgespräch mit den severianischen Bischöfen in Konstantinopel im Jahre 532. *AHC* 16 (1984) 264–285.

³² Cf. Innocentii Episcopi Maroneae Epistula de collatione cum Seuerianis habita, in: *Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum* IV/2, ed. E. SCHWARTZ. Straßburg 1914, 169–176.

³³ Cf. LANGE, Mia Energeia (as footnote 30 above) 304.

³⁴ The text is edited, with an English translation, in S.P. BROCK, The conversations with the Syrian Orthodox under Justinian (532), in idem, *Studies in Syriac Christianity*, Aldershot 1992, 87–121.

³⁵ This text has been available since 1919, cf. F. NAU, Textes Monophysites No. 6. *PO* 13 (1919) 192–196. A revised translation is found in BROCK, *Conversations* (as footnote 34 above) 113–117.

ceedings agree with each other to some extent, it is hardly surprising, as Brock has already pointed out, “to find that each gives a rather slanted picture, passing over in silence developments in the discussions that proved embarrassing; likewise each gives proportionately more space to the speeches of their own side”.³⁶

The passages in which Hypatios of Ephesos disputes the authenticity of certain statements cited by the Severans are found only in the text of Innocentius of Maroneia, while neither *Syr I* nor *Syr II* contain any remarks to this effect. In particular, Innocentius of Maroneia reports that Hypatios pronounced the following statement:

quod autem prius dici debuit, hoc in ultimo dicimus: illa enim testimonia quae uos beati Dionysii Ariopagitae dicitis, unde potestis ostendere uera esse, sicut suspicamini? si enim eius erant, non potuissent latere beatum Cyrillum.

I am going to say at the end what should have been said earlier: those testimonies which as you say belong to the blessed Dionysius the Areopagite, how are you able to show them to be true as you allege? If they were from him, this would not have escaped the notice of the blessed Cyril.³⁷

The statement invites several observations. Hypatios uses the plural *testimonia* when referring to the passage or passages that allegedly supported the Syrian Orthodox point of view. Hypatios refers to both Cyril and Dionysios as *beatus*, which implies that he holds them both in equal esteem. The only argument which Hypatios brings forward against the authenticity of these *testimonia* is the fact that they were unknown to Cyril. He does not question here the authenticity of all writings attributed to “*beatus*” Dionysios, but only of those *testimonia* which had been adduced by the Severans.

Which *testimonia* were actually brought forward by the Severans? The text of the *Epistula de collatione* provides some additional but unfortunately not exhaustive information. Section 22 – which precedes the words of Hypatios cited above – reports that the following statement was made by the Syrian Orthodox representatives:

... beato enim Cyrillo et beato Athanasio Alexandrinae ciuitatis episcopis, Felice etiam et Iulio Romanae ecclesiae, Gregorio quin etiam mirabilium factore et Dionysio Areopagita unam naturam dei uerbi decernentibus post unionem, hos omnes transgressi illi prae-sumpserunt duas naturas post unionem praedicare.

³⁶ Cf. *ibid.* 118.

³⁷ Innocentii Episcopi Maroneae *Epistula* (as footnote 32 above) c. 26 (ed. 173, 12–14).

... the blessed Cyril indeed and the blessed Athanasios, bishop of the city of Alexandria, and also Felix and Julius of the Roman Church, Gregorius the worker of miracles and Dionysios the Areopagite proclaimed the one nature of the God-Logos after the union and considered all those who teach two natures after the union to be heretics.³⁸

This passage proves that the *testimonia*, the authenticity of which was questioned by Hypatios of Ephesos, must have supported the main doctrinal point that the Severan delegation was defending, namely the teaching about the “one nature of the God-Logos after the incarnation”. Unfortunately, Innocentius’ text does not cite any passages from Ps.-Dionysios nor does it provide any other references which would allow a secure identification of these passages.

However, yet another piece of evidence pertaining to the *Collatio* of 532 can be considered at this point, namely a “doctrinal statement” by the Syrian Orthodox bishops which presumably contained all the *testimonia* to which Hypatios of Ephesos’ allegation of forgery refers. This document is preserved in the *Chronicle* of Ps.-Zachariah Rhetor ix 15³⁹ and in the *Chronicle* of Michael the Syrian ix 22,⁴⁰ which reproduces Ps.-Zachariah’s account. Each source transmits a different name for the “doctrinal statement”, but all presumably refer to one and the same document: a *chartula satisfactionis* is twice mentioned by Innocentius,⁴¹ *deesis* or *pyasa* in Ps.-Zachariah and *diathesis dapyasa* in Michael the Syrian.⁴² The available information on this “doctrinal statement” (also called a “petition” by FRENZ and *plerophoria* by BROCK) can be sketched as follows. Its text was prepared by the Syrian Orthodox delegation in advance of the *Collatio* and given to the emperor and his officials. Justinian refused to read it by saying, “I will read them when I have time.”⁴³ The document[s] was then given to Hypatios of Ephesos and his “team”: Justinian’s intention was “that they should read and exam-

³⁸ *ibid.*, c. 22 (ed. 172, 3–7).

³⁹ Cf. the most recent translation by R.R. PHENIX / C.B. HORN in G. Greatrex (ed.), *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Zachariah Rhetor: church and war in Late Antiquity*. Liverpool 2011, 345–354. This text was previously known from a slightly different translation in W.H. FRENZ, *The rise of the Monophysite movement: chapters in the history of the church in the fifth and sixth centuries*. Cambridge 1972, 362–366. Cf. also *Historia ecclesiastica Zachariae Rhetori vulgo adscripta*, ed. E.W. BROOKS. CSCO, 84. *Scriptores Syri*, 39. Louvain 1953 (reprint of the edition Paris/Louvain 1921), IX, 15, p. 119 (Syriac text); and CSCO, 88. *Scriptores Syri*, 42 (reprint of the edition Paris/Louvain 1924), p. 82 (Latin translation).

⁴⁰ Michael the Syrian, ed. and tr. J.-B. CHABOT, *Chronique de Michel le Syrien, patriarche jacobite d’Antioche (1116–1199)*. II, Paris 1901, 195–205 [281–286].

⁴¹ Cf. *Epistula de collatione cum Seuerianis habita*, 9 and 10 (p. 170, 25 and 28), ed. Schwartz. ⁴² This information is provided on the authority of Brock 1992, as footnote 33 above, p. 88, note 7.

⁴³ Cf. *Syr. I*, Section 1, 93, tr. by BROCK, *Conversations* (as footnote 34 above), 92.

ine it minutely and prepare themselves for discussion.”⁴⁴ According to *Syr I*, this document played an important role during the negotiations and was read during the *second* day of the encounter:

The orthodox bishops asked for the statement they had given to the emperor to be read. They straightaway provided a copy and it was read out, after which they asked the opponents saying: ‘Say if you have anything you find fault with in this statement’. The opposing bishops replied: ‘We hold a moderate opinion about it’.⁴⁵

According to Innocentius’ report, however, the Syrian Orthodox opened the session of the *first* day by saying that they had handed over the *chartula satisfactio-nis* to the emperor; Hypatios replied that the pro-Chalcedonian delegation had indeed seen it.⁴⁶ These are the only two explicit references to the *chartula* in Innocentius’ text and both of them occur in sections which describe the events of the first day.⁴⁷ Even though the *chartula* is not mentioned explicitly after section 19, sections 21–27 – which contain both statements regarding Ps.-Dionysios Areopagites – presumably refer in some way to the discussion of this document.⁴⁸ The text of the doctrinal statement as preserved in Ps.-Zachariah’s *Chronicle* book ix, i.e. in a book which goes back to an unknown Justinianic source (this source must have been written during the reign of Justinian, as its anonymous author on more than one occasion refers to Justinian as the reigning emperor)⁴⁹ helps to clarify even further the reference to Ps.-Dionysios, as it not only refers to him by name but also quotes a single passage and explains how this was interpreted by the anti-Chalcedonians:

Dionysios the Areopagite, who from the darkness and error of being a non-Christian was guided and attained the primal light of knowledge of God ... said, “When we consider [the Trinity] as the lover of human beings, we say that it is the lover of humanity, as is appropriate, because it shared perfectly [and] in truth though one of its persons these things that are our own, while drawing to itself and raising the lowliness of our humanity, from which the simple [Syr. *peshitta*, as opposed to *meħalleŧta*, ‘compound’] Jesus was indescribably composed, ...”

⁴⁴ Cf. *Syr. I*, Section 2, 93, tr. by BROCK, *ibid*.

⁴⁵ Cf. *Syr. I*, Section 12–13, 97–99, tr. by BROCK, *ibid*. 96–98.

⁴⁶ Innocentii Episcopi Maroneae Epistula (as footnote 32 above) c. 9 and 10 (ed. 170, 25 f. and 28 f.).

⁴⁷ The transition to the second day is marked in section 19 on p. 171, 28 ed. SCHWARTZ.

⁴⁸ Cf. BROCK, *Conversations* (as footnote 34 above), 96 f., note 31: “On the second day *it would seem* that I 21–27 refer in fact to a discussion of the *plerophoria*” (italics are mine).

⁴⁹ On the “Justinianic source” for books viii–x cf. GREATREX, *Chronicle* (as footnote 39 above) 55 f.

Thus, ... it is evident that we must confess one nature of God the Word who become flesh and became perfectly a human being.⁵⁰

This passage from Ps.-Zachariah demonstrates that the Severan bishops used Ps.-Dionysios' *De divinis nominibus* I.4 (113, 6–12) and in particular the expression ὁ ἀπλοῦς Ἰησοῦς συνετέθη which corresponds to line 9 of SUCHLA's edition as patristic evidence in support of the *Mia-Physis* formula.

This means that Hypatios of Ephesos must have contested the attribution of this one specific passage to “beatus” Dionysios on the grounds that it was unknown to Cyril. However, Innocentius' text speaks of *testimonia* in the plural. The immediate context makes it clear that the word *testimonia* does not refer collectively to all the authorities which had been advocated by the Syrian Orthodox representatives, but to Ps.-Dionysios alone. This is confirmed, first, by the fact that several lines before Hypatios has already dealt in some detail with the letter of Julius to Dionysios of Corinth, alleging that it was an Apollinarian forgery, and, second, by the introductory statement “I am going to say at the end what should have been said earlier”, which functions as a semantic “boundary-marker” to introduce a new subject matter: the lines that follow are meant to be read as referring specifically to Ps.-Dionysios.

How should this plural be interpreted, since the doctrinal statement preserved by Ps.-Zachariah quotes only one passage from Ps.-Dionysios? Either the language of Innocentius' report (or of the Latin translation, since the Greek original is lost) is insufficiently precise and speaks of *testimonia*, even though only one testimony had in fact been adduced, or the text preserved in Ps.-Zachariah does not contain all the testimonies that were actually cited in the doctrinal statement. Given the discrepancies between *Syr I* and Innocentius' report, and considering the long transmissional history of all the documents that shed light on the *Collatio*, it is simply unreasonable to expect Innocentius or Ps.-Zachariah to be absolutely precise or completely exhaustive.

In either case, if one were to search for other testimonies which the Syrian Orthodox representatives could have quoted from Ps.-Dionysios, the list would not be very long.

A further citation from the corpus of Ps.-Dionysian writings is found in the *Contra Additiones Iuliani*⁵¹ and in *Adversus Apologiam Iuliani*.⁵² These texts had

⁵⁰ Translation from *ibid.*, 351 (emphasis is mine). The references to the Syriac terms in square brackets are given on the authority of GREATREX, *ibid.* 351, note 211.

⁵¹ Cf. *CPG* 7029. The text is available in R. HESPEL, *Sévère d'Antioche, La polémique anti-julianiste* IIA. *CSCO*, 295. Louvain 1968 (the Syriac text of the relevant passage is found on p. 157), and *CSCO*, 296. Louvain 1968 (French translation on p. 133).

been written by Severos of Antioch on another occasion several years before the *Collatio* took place. Severos himself was not present in Constantinople in 532, but was still alive and presumably even in contact with the members of the anti-Chalcedonian delegation, even though they openly declared that they were not aware of the place where Severos was to be found at the time of the encounter.⁵³ In both texts Severos quotes one and the same passage from *On the divine names* II 9, 5–9 (133, 5–9 ed. SUCHLA), in order to prove that Jesus was formed out of the blood of the Virgin Mary (ἐκ παρθενικῶν αἱμάτων) as opposed to the view that he merely passed through her as through a channel.⁵⁴ This Ps.-Dionysian passage, even though it was undoubtedly considered important by Severos and consequently must have been known to the members of the anti-Chalcedonian delegation and could be even interpreted in terms that are favorable to the Monophysites, does not provide any obvious evidence in support to the *Mia-Physis* formula and therefore it is rather unlikely that it was actually quoted in the doctrinal statement.

Yet another citation from Ps.-Dionysios needs to be considered. As LANGE pointed out, Severos used the expression καινὴ θεανδρική ἐνέργεια (“a new kind of divine-manlike activity”), which is found only once in the extant corpus of Ps.-Dionysios,⁵⁵ in order to develop his formula μία θεανδρική ἐνέργεια, which became very important to the later theologians.⁵⁶ The fact that Severos actually knew this Ps.-Dionysian passage is corroborated in his *Letter 3*,⁵⁷ which contains both the correct quotation from Ps.-Dionysios and his own interpretation of this quotation with regard to μία θεανδρική ἐνέργεια. Even though direct evidence is lacking, one could surmise that the passage quoted from Ps.-Dionysios in *Letter 3*

52 Cf. CPG 7030. The text is available in R. HESPEL, *Sévère d'Antioche, La polémique anti-julianiste IIB*. CSCO, 301. Louvain 1969 (Syriac text on p. 305), and CSCO, 302. Louvain 1969 (French translation on p. 267).

53 *Syr I*, section 4, 115f. in by BROCK, *Conversations* (as footnote 34 above). It was not until 535 that Severos would agree to come to Constantinople in person.

54 For the theological background of this question cf. HAINTHALER, *Bemerkungen* (as footnote 22 above) 285.

55 Cf. Ps.-Dionysios the Areopagite, *Letter 4*, 161, 9, G. HEIL / A.M. RITTER (eds.), *Corpus Dionysiacum II/1*. Berlin u. a. 1991; English translation in HATHAWAY, *Hierarchy* (as footnote 26 above) 133f.

56 On Severos' use and subsequent adaptation of this expression from Ps.-Dionysios cf. LANGE, *Mia Energeia* (as footnote 30 above) 159 and HAINTHALER, *Bemerkungen* (as footnote 22 above) 285. An overview of the subsequent significance of the expression the the pro- and anti-Chalcedonian theologians, cf. LANGE, *ibid.* 417–428.

57 Cf. CPG 7071, 28. The Greek text in F. DIEKAMP, *Doctrina patrum de incarnatione verbi: ein griechisches Florilegium aus der Wende des siebenten und achten Jahrhunderts*. Münster 1907 (second edition by E. CHRYSOS, Münster 1981), 309, XXIV.

could have been among the *testimonia* adduced in the doctrinal statement of 532, making it the second or, possibly, third and last citation from Ps.-Dionysios which the Severans either actually employed or at least might have employed in this document.

On the basis of all the available evidence that relates to the *Collatio cum Severianis*, and which has been examined above, one can conclude that Hypatios of Ephesos questioned the attribution of at least one quotation from the treatise *On the divine names* (II 9, 133, 5–9 ed. SUCHLA), and possibly of two other passages, to an author whose authority he manifestly acknowledged by calling him ‘beatus Dionysius’ and deeming him as worthy – at least potentially – of being quoted by ‘beatus Cyrillus’.⁵⁸ The available evidence does not, therefore, support the view that Hypatios considered most or even all of Ps.-Dionysian writings to be forgeries, as Gero believed.

This conclusion eliminates the fundamental objection raised by GERO and makes it necessary to re-consider the available evidence on the possible dependence of Hypatios’ *Περὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις οἴκοις* on Ps.-Dionysios.

The evidence in favor of this proposition is derived mainly from the following two passages:

Passage 1 (34–39, ed. THÜMMEL):

Συγχωροῦμεν δὲ τοῖς ἀπλουστέροις ἀτελεστέροις αὐτοῖς ὑπάρχουσιν ὑπὸ συμφυοῦς αὐτῶν ἀναγωγῆς καὶ ὅψει τῇ αὐτῆς συμμετρῷ τὰ τοιαῦτα ἐν εἰσαγωγῆς τρόπῳ μανθάνειν, καὶ αὐτὰς πολλάκις καὶ ἐν πολλοῖς τὰς θείας παλαιάς τε καὶ νέας διατάξεις εὐρόντες τοῖς ἀσθενέσι τὰς ψυχὰς ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας αὐτῶν συγκατακλινομένας.

As a means of initiation we permit simpler people to learn about such things in a way which better corresponds to their nature, [i.e.] by [the sense of] sight, which is more suitable for them, especially since we find that, often and in many respects, even old and new divine commandments make concessions to the people that are weak in their souls for the sake of their salvation.

⁵⁸ Cf. MAKRI, Hypatios (as footnote 22 above) 7, who considers at some length the fact that Hypatios named Dionysios “beatus” and believed him to be worthy of quotation by the blessed Cyril and Athanasios: “Die Anerkennung der Echtheit der Dionysiaca seitens des Hypatios ergibt sich zudem daraus, daß er vom “beatus Dionysius” spricht; daß er Dionysios an sich für geeignet hält, durch Kyrillos und Athanasios zitiert zu werden; und, nicht zuletzt, daß er unter den zitierten Vätern Dionysios den ersten Rang zuweist, auch wenn dies vermutlich wegen des angenommenen apostolischen Alters geschah.”

Passage 2 (57–63, ed. Thümmel):

Διὰ ταῦτα καὶ ἡμεῖς καὶ κόσμον ὕλικόν ἐώμεν ἐπὶ τῶν ἱερῶν οὐχ ὡς θεῶ χρυσοῦ καὶ ἀργύρου καὶ σειρικῆς ἐσθῆτος καὶ λιθοκολλήτων σκευῶν τιμίων τε καὶ ἱερῶν δοκούντων, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐκάστην τῶν πιστῶν τάξιν οἰκείως ἑαυτῇ χειραγωγεῖσθαι καὶ πρὸς τὸ θεῖον ἀνάγεσθαι συγχωροῦντες, ὡς τινων καὶ ἀπὸ τούτων ἐπὶ τὴν νοητὴν εὐπρέπειαν χειραγωγουμένων καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ κατὰ τὰ ἱερὰ πολλοῦ φωτὸς ἐπὶ τὸ νοητὸν καὶ αἴλλον φῶς.

For these reasons we, too, allow material adornment on the sacred objects, not because we believe that God considers gold and silver and silken vestments and gem-studded vessels venerable and sacred, but because we permit each order of the faithful to be guided and to be led up to the divine in a manner appropriate to each order, for some people are guided also from these things [i.e. from the material adornments] towards the intelligible beauty and from the abundant light in the sanctuaries towards the intelligible and immaterial light.

Before turning to the analysis of these two passages a short note on the translation is required, as Hypatios' text is notoriously obscure and difficult to translate.⁵⁹ In the translation of Passage 2 I follow SPECK's suggestion and understand ἐπὶ τῶν ἱερῶν as "on the sacred objects" and not "in the sanctuaries" (which is ALEXANDER's interpretation). With regard to Passage 1, in translating τοῖς ἀσθενέσι τὰς ψυχὰς I take τὰς ψυχὰς to be an accusative of respect (*accusativus graecus*)⁶⁰ and disagree both with ALEXANDER, who translates "to lower themselves to the level of weaker people and their souls" (a solution explicitly criticized by THÜMMEL) and with THÜMMEL himself, who conjectured that the word ψυχή here assumes a meaning which is not otherwise attested: "sense of a passage".⁶¹ The translation of συγκατακλινομένης remains problematic. The literal meaning of this verb is "to lie down together with someone, at a table or in bed"; I believe that the image evoked by this word can be interpreted along

⁵⁹ A translation of Hypatios' text into English was first provided by P.J. ALEXANDER, Hypatios of Ephesus: a note on image worship in the sixth century. *The Harvard Theological Review* 45 (1952) 177–184; 178–181. Many additional problems were uncovered and addressed in Thümmel's article, who also offered a German translation of the entire text (cf. THÜMMEL, Hypatios, as footnote 11 above, 169f.). Speck did not produce a new translation, but his detailed commentary on the text contains a number of helpful insights (cf. Speck, ΓΡΑΦΑΙΣ, as footnote 18 above).

⁶⁰ H.W. SMYTH, Greek grammar. ¹³Cambridge, Mass. 1984, § 1600–1605.

⁶¹ Cf. THÜMMEL, Hypatios (as footnote 11 above) 169 and footnote 29: "Ich habe dem Hypatios die Vorstellung untergeschoben, dass der Sinn (die Seele) der Vorschrift sich für die Schwachen herabneigend in nicht ganz adäquater Form verkörpert. Doch bleibt zu fragen, ob ψυχή diese Bedeutung annehmen kann." He translates: "... daß selbst die göttlichen Anordnungen des Alten und Neuen Testaments ihren Sinn zu den Schwachen um deren Heiles willen herabneigen."

the lines of “to adapt oneself [to the other’s position]” and therefore “to make a concession, to condescend”. Alexander translates “to lower themselves to the level of”, which is also possible, since the prefix -κατα- can point in this direction, though this translation leaves the component συγ- in συγ-κατα-κλινομένας unexpressed; THÜMMEL apparently follows ALEXANDER and translates “herabneigen”.

Even though these passages do not contain any extensive literal quotations from the extant corpus of Ps.-Dionysios, the similarities between Hypatios and Ps.-Dionysios on lexical and stylistic levels are considerable. Some of these striking similarities were briefly pointed out by KITZINGER;⁶² many more were noticed by GOUILLARD⁶³ and need not be rehearsed here in detail. The evidence cannot be dismissed as easily as GERO once attempted, by simply pointing out that it “could merely indicate Hypatios’ affiliation to late pagan Neoplatonism.”⁶⁴ The following two examples, which were mentioned by neither KITZINGER nor GOUILLARD, allow us to draw a clear borderline between Ps.-Dionysios and Hypatios, on the one hand, and the Neoplatonic authors, on the other hand.

The verb χειραγωγείσθαι, which occurs twice in passage 2, and words that derive from the same stem are virtually unknown to the Neoplatonic authors, but are, of course, rather common in patristic writers:⁶⁵ Plotinos and Proklos do not use these words at all, while the writings of Iamblichos contain only one instance.⁶⁶ Ps.-Dionysios, in contrast, not only uses these words 17 times,⁶⁷ but also assigns to them an important, if not a central role in his doc-

⁶² Cf. E. KITZINGER, The cult of images in the age before iconoclasm. *DOP* 8 (1954) 83–150, here 138 and footnote 239.

⁶³ Cf. GOUILLARD, Hypatios (as footnote 14 above) 72–75.

⁶⁴ Cf. GERO, Hypatios (as footnote 20 above) 212. This assumption was echoed in THÜMMEL, Hypatios (as footnote 11 above) 162, who, while commenting on passage 2, remarked, “Daß das sichtbare Licht zum geistigen Licht führt, erinnert an Neuplatonisches.”

⁶⁵ Cf. LAMPE, Patristic Greek Lexicon, *ad verbum*: this word was previously used by Clement of Alexandria.

⁶⁶ Cf. Iamblichos, *De vita Pythagorica* 3, 17, 9 (Iamblichi de vita Pythagorica liber, ed. U. KLEIN, Leipzig 1937).

⁶⁷ This total comprises all instances of words derived from the same stem which occur in the corpus, i.e. the verb χειραγωγείν and the substantives χειραγωγία and χειραγωγός. Cf. A. v. D. DAELE, Indices Pseudo-Dionysiani. Louvain 1941, 147, and *TLG* search. The comparison with the Neoplatonic authors similarly takes account of all the words derived from this stem and is based on the texts currently available in the *TLG*.

trine of the ecclesiastical hierarchy (the function of the hierarchies is, among other things, to lead the lower orders to the understanding of the higher ones).⁶⁸

A similar observation can be made about the usage of εὐπρέπεια (and cognate expressions) in passage 2. When speaking of the intelligible beauty towards which certain orders of the faithful are guided by means of material adornments, Hypatios uses the word εὐπρέπεια and not κάλλος or καλλονή. This is not an insignificant detail. When the Neoplatonic philosophers speak of the intelligible beauty, they always employ the term κάλλος and on some rare occasions καλλονή. This is true of Plotinos, whose theory of the intelligible beauty is chiefly found in *Enn.* V 8, and also of Proklos, e.g. in *Theol. Pl.* III 43, 19–22.⁶⁹ This is also true of John Philoponos, who comments on beauty in *De opificio mundi* 7,6 from a Christian perspective, and of subsequent Byzantine authors who showed an interest in Neoplatonic teachings on beauty, such as Michael Psellos⁷⁰ and, towards the end of the Byzantine period, Georgios Gemistos (Plethon).⁷¹ To be precise, Ps.-Dionysios is also an heir to this Neoplatonic tradition insofar as he uses the word κάλλος in chapter 4 of his treatise *On the divine names*, in which he discusses ‘Beauty’ as a divine name. However, the word εὐπρέπεια is relatively infrequent in the Neoplatonic authors, being used only once by Plotinos,⁷² three times by Proklos⁷³ and three times by Iamblichos.⁷⁴ The contrast with respect to Ps.-Dionysios is significant, since εὐπρέπεια occurs in addi-

⁶⁸ On the importance and function of hierarchies in the Ps.-Dionysian system cf. R. ROQUES, *L'univers dionysien: structure hiérarchique du monde selon le Pseudo-Denys. Théologie*, 29. Paris 1954.

⁶⁹ More on the Proklean theory of beauty in S. MARIEV, Proklos and Plethon on beauty, in S. Mariev / W.-M. Stock, *Aesthetics and theurgy in Byzantium. BA*, 25. Berlin 2013, 57–74. On the reception of these theories in Byzantium, cf. M. MARCHETTO, Nikephoros Chumnos' treatise *On Matter*, *ibid.* 31–55.

⁷⁰ Cf. Michael Psellos, *Philosophica Minora*, Op. 4, in J.M. DUFFY / D.J. O'MEARA (eds.), *Michaelis Pselli philosophica minora*. Leipzig 1992.

⁷¹ On the theory of beauty in Plethon, cf. S. MARIEV, Der Begriff des Schönen in der Philosophie Plethons. *Byz* 81 (2011) 267–287, and IDEM, Proklos and Plethon (as footnote 69 above).

⁷² Cf. Plotinos, *Enn.* VI 1, 27, 5, in P. HENRY / H.-R. SCHWYZER (ed.), *Plotini opera* III. Paris, 1973).

⁷³ Cf. Proklos, *In Parm.* 683, 29 (ed. V. COUSIN, *Procli philosophi Platonici opera inedita*, 3. Paris 1864, 617–1244); *In Rempublicam* I, 84, 4 (ed. W. KROLL, *Procli Diadochi in Platonis rempublicam commentarii* I. Leipzig 1899); *In Alc.* I 24, 7 (ed. L.G. WESTERINK, *Proclus Diadochus. Commentary on the first Alcibiades of Plato*. Amsterdam 1954, 1–158).

⁷⁴ Cf. Iamblichos *Theologoumena arithmeticae* 14,15 (ed. V. DE FALCO, *Iamblichi theologoumena arithmeticae*. Leipzig 1922, 1–87.); *De myst.* 2, 3, 58 and 3, 21, 5 (ed. É. DES PLACES, *Jamblique. Les mystères d'Égypte*. Paris 1966, 38–215).

tion to κάλλος 16 times in the extant corpus.⁷⁵ Ps.-Dionysios' use of the word εὐπρέπεια can best be illustrated by citing *Letter 9*, in which he explains the hermeneutical method he applies to Biblical imagery. In this letter Ps.-Dionysios admits that the Scriptures are often full of images of all sorts (τὰ παντοδαπὰ μορφώματα)⁷⁶ and contain incredible and fabulous nonsense (ἀπιθάνου καὶ πλασματώδους τερατείας).⁷⁷ The task of interpretation consists of stripping away this nonsense (ἀποδύντας)⁷⁸ in order to see the beauty which hidden within (τὴν ἐντὸς ἀποκεκρυμμένην εὐπρέπειαν).⁷⁹

Given the parallels between Hypatios' text and the extant writings of Ps.-Dionysios which have already been pointed out by KITZINGER and GOUILLARD, together with the additional evidence considered above, which, on the one hand, distinguishes the vocabulary used by Hypatios from that of the Neoplatonic philosophers and, on the other hand, establishes once again a close connection between Hypatios and Ps.-Dionysios, it now becomes possible to attempt a much more difficult task of confronting the ideas expressed in Hypatios' text with Ps.-Dionysian doctrine.

It is important to stress beforehand that Ps.-Dionysios does not consider "images" in the sense that became predominant some two centuries later during the Iconoclast controversy: nowhere in his writings – the ambiguous passage *On the ecclesiastical hierarchy* 82, 5f., when read out of context, is not an exception to this statement⁸⁰ – does he mention icons *stricto sensu* or indeed any painted material objects from Christian sanctuaries. The sense in which his writings do speak of "images", however, can best be explained with reference to the scope

⁷⁵ This figure comprises all instances of the noun εὐπρέπεια and the adjective εὐπρεπής in the corpus, cf. v. d. Daele 1941 as footnote 65 above, pp. 68f. and TLG search. The comparison with the Neoplatonic authors takes into consideration all the members of this lexical family.

⁷⁶ Ps.-Dionysios the Areopagite, *Letter 9*, 194, 6 (ed. HEIL / RITTER, Corpus, as footnote 55 above).

⁷⁷ *ibid.* 194, 7f.

⁷⁸ *ibid.* 193, 12.

⁷⁹ *ibid.* 196, 11.

⁸⁰ Cf. Ps.-Dionysios the Areopagite, *On the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* 82, 5f. (ed. HEIL/RITTER 1991), which mentions some "beautiful paintings in the entrance hall" (τὰ τῶν ἀδύτων προπύλαια καλῶς διαγεγραμμένα). In scholarship on Ps.-Dionysios this passage is interpreted almost unanimously as a metaphor, cf. P. ROREM, *Biblical and liturgical symbols within the Pseudo-Dionysian Synthesis*. Toronto 1984, 125. In older literature this passage was sometimes interpreted as a reference to contemporary architecture, cf. e.g. E. BOULARAND, *L'eucharistie d'après le Pseudo-Denys l'Aréopagite*. *Bulletin de Littérature Ecclésiastique* 59 (1958) 129–169. On Byzantine painting during the period that roughly corresponds to the much-debated date of composition of the Ps.-Dionysian writings, cf. C. A. MANGO, *The art of the Byzantine empire 312–1453*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 1972, 32–44.

and purpose of the individual treatises and texts that touch upon the subject, especially *On the celestial hierarchy*, *On the ecclesiastical hierarchy* and *Letter 9*.

Ps.-Dionysios defines his aim in writing *On the Celestial hierarchy* as follows: "... to praise the celestial hierarchies in accordance with the way in which they are revealed in the Scriptures".⁸¹ If we take into account the peculiar language of the Ps.-Dionysian writings, we discover that this remark actually gives a concise idea of the overall content of this treatise: In it, he gives an account of (or, to use his own words, "praises" or "extolls") the "celestial hierarchies" (i.e. principally angels of different orders) in accordance with the way in which they are depicted (or, in his own words, "revealed") in the Scriptures. The "images" which interest Ps.-Dionysios in this context are in fact the imagery used in the Bible. Ps.-Dionysios considers various instances of biblical imagery while addressing a more fundamental question, namely, in which way the immaterial "realities" which belong to the higher orders of being and even the supra-essential God himself can be represented by means of images that are derived from or rely on the "realities" of the ontologically lower, material realm.

The Ps.-Dionysian treatise *On the ecclesiastical hierarchy* seems at a first glance to be even further removed from the problem of images, since it mainly focuses on ecclesiastical rites. However, as previously indicated by Rorem,⁸² this assumption is misleading. In his consideration of ecclesiastical rites, Ps.-Dionysios pays close attention to "the actions, movements and events, and the sequence of activities". Liturgical texts, on the contrary, are not mentioned at all, which leaves the sacred objects and ceremonial activities at the center of his attention.⁸³ The discussion of the role of images, which is found in the introductory

⁸¹ Cf. Ps.-Dionysios the Areopagite, *On the Celestial Hierarchy* 9, 18f. (ed. HEIL/RITTER 1991): "... τὰς οὐρανίας ἱεραρχίας ὑμῆσαι κατὰ τὴν αὐτῶν ἐν τοῖς λογίοις ἐκφραστορίαν".

⁸² Cf. ROREM, Symbols (as footnote 80 above) 74ff., and W.-M. STOCK, Theurgisches Denken. Zur Kirchlichen Hierarchie des Dionysius Areopagita. *Transformationen der Antike*, 4. Berlin/New York 2008. Cf. also G. LETTIERI, It doesn't matter. Le metamorfosi della materia nel cristianesimo antico e nei dualismi teologici, in D. Giovannozzi / M. Veneziani (eds.), *Materia*. XIII Colloquio Internazionale Lessico Intellettuale Europeo – Roma 7–9 gennaio 2010. Firenze 2011, 75–173.

⁸³ Cf. ROREM, Symbols (as footnote 80 above) 74: "Even the casual reader of the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* can notice the persistent emphasis upon the actions, the movements and events, and the sequence of activities. In both baptism and the synaxis, the focus is on what happens, on the gestures and movements especially of the hierarch who processes, seals with the sign of the cross, anoints, consecrates the water and baptizes ... Throughout the discussion of synaxis, and indeed in the entire corpus, no specific liturgical words are ever considered. Not only is no homily ever mentioned, but the liturgical texts are never divulged, much less interpreted ... The de-emphasis of liturgical texts leaves two possible candidates for the attention of the author: the

sections of this treatise,⁸⁴ is again closely connected to the overall scope of the work. Ps.-Dionysios underlines here the anagogical role of material “images” and symbols and their appeal to the sense perception which are considered necessary for all human beings qua human beings, given the specific ontological stance of human beings within the universal hierarchical order.⁸⁵ The images are crucial for all human beings because only with their help can they obtain knowledge of the ontologically higher realities in a way which is appropriate to them.

Finally, in *Letter 9*, Ps.-Dionysios supplements these considerations with some methodological hints on how “images” should be interpreted. The letter contrasts the external, outward aspect of images (τὰ ἐκτός), which is full of incredible and fabulous nonsense, with their inner core, which is full of the light which speaks of God (τοῦ θεολογικοῦ φωτός ἀναπεπλησμένα).⁸⁶ The task of an interpreter of images consists of “stripping away” the fabulous nonsense in an attempt to see the truth which images are capable of revealing.

Following this short overview of some of the key aspects of Ps.-Dionysian teaching on “images” it becomes possible to identify not only close similarities between his views and the opinions expressed in Hypatios’ *Περὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις οἴκοις*, but also some differences.

One of the main features that characterize Ps.-Dionysian teaching on “images” is his constant preoccupation with the fundamental problem of the possibility of representing the higher orders of being and even the God who transcends all being by means of the ontologically lower realm.⁸⁷ A similar concern is repeatedly expressed in Hypatios’ text, as he stresses that “no being is similar, equal or identical to the Holy Trinity, the demiurge and cause of all beings” in three passages with almost identical wording.⁸⁸ Both Ps.-Diony-

sacred objects and the ceremonial activities ... Thus, the divine proceeds into the plurality of spatial and temporal symbols primarily to accommodate itself to the human way of knowing which is tied to the lower realm of sense perception.”

84 Cf. Ps.-Dionysios the Areopagite, *On the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 65, 8–15 (ed. HEIL/RITTER 1991).

85 On the position of human beings in the system of Ps.-Dionysios cf. the chapter “Die Menschen als Seinsstufe in der Hierarchie” in B. BRONS, *Gott und die Seienden: Untersuchungen zum Verhältnis von neuplatonischer Metaphysik und christlicher Tradition bei Dionysius Areopagita. Forschungen zur Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte*, 28. Göttingen 1976, 52–75.

86 Cf. Ps.-Dionysios the Areopagite, *Letter 9*, 196, 12 (ed. HEIL/RITTER 1991).

87 Cf. the short discussion of Ps.-Dionysian teaching on images in his treatise *On the Celestial Hierarchy* above.

88 Cf. Hypatios of Ephesos, *Περὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις οἴκοις*, ed. THÜMMEL, Hypatios (as footnote 11 above) 20–22, 29–31 and 81–83.

sios and Hypatios perceive the transcendence of the divine as the fundamental problem of religious images. However, the conclusions they draw from this consideration are rather different. Taking this fundamental consideration as his point of departure, Ps.-Dionysios formulates his paradoxical theory of the “so-called unlike likenesses” (τὰς λεγομένας ἀνομοίους ὁμοιότηας),⁸⁹ which allows him not only to endorse religious imagery but even to consider the worm mentioned in *Psalms* 21,7 to be a suitable image to represent the transcendent God.⁹⁰ Hypatios, in contrast, comes very close to rejecting images altogether precisely on the same grounds; in any case, he has recourse to divine transcendence in order to explain the prohibition of making images which is expressed in the Old Testament.⁹¹

Throughout his work, Ps.-Dionysios repeatedly stresses the anagogical function of images, which can even be considered their main function within his system.⁹² This is also the main reason why Hypatios argues in favour of the “material adornments” in the sanctuaries, which he is thus prepared to tolerate.⁹³ However, while Dionysios considers images to be of crucial importance in the process of *anagoge* of all human beings owing to their ontological constitution, Hypatios considers material adornments to be important only for some human beings, namely those who are weak in their souls, the view which was later criticized by Theodoros Studites in his letter to the monk Niketas.

Putting together various observations made in this article – especially the evidence that Hypatios of Ephesos was not only aware of the writings of Ps.-Dionysios but also held Ps.-Dionysios in great esteem and referred to him as “beatus” alongside Cyril; the numerous lexical parallels between the extant text of *Περὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις οἴκοις* and the Ps.-Dionysian corpus, and finally the striking correspondence between their respective views on “images” and “material adornments” – one comes almost inevitably to the conclusion that Hypatios of Ephesos must have had extensive knowledge of the Ps.-Dionysian doctrine.

⁸⁹ Cf. Ps.-Dionysios the Areopagite, *On the Celestial Hierarchy*, 14, 2 (ed. HEIL/RITTER 1991).

⁹⁰ Cf. *ibid.* 15, 20 (ed. HEIL/RITTER 1991): σκόληκος εἶδος αὐτὴν ἑαυτῇ περιπλάττουσαν: the divine principle takes on (literally: “smears over”) the form of a worm.

⁹¹ Cf. Hypatios of Ephesos, *Περὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις οἴκοις*, ed. THÜMMEL, Hypatios (as footnote 11 above) 9–24.

⁹² Cf. the short reference to this aspect of Ps.-Dionysian teaching on images in his work *On the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, which was briefly discussed above.

⁹³ Cf. Hypatios of Ephesos, *Περὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις οἴκοις*, ed. THÜMMEL, Hypatios (as footnote 11 above) 57–63; English translation is quoted above.

What of the differences between the two authors? I do not believe that the divergencies outlined above make the dependence of Hypatios on Ps.-Dionysios less likely. After all, the difficult Ps.-Dionysian thesis of the “unlike likenesses” did not enjoy a wide reception in Byzantium. Even such a multifaceted thinker as John of Damaskos, who integrated Ps.-Dionysian teachings on the possibility of representing the higher immaterial realities by means of the lower, material realm into his own theory of icons in the proper sense of the word,⁹⁴ made no use of this particular aspect of Ps.-Dionysian doctrine. As to the difference between the chosen few and οἱ πολλοί, which was so harshly criticized by Theodoros Studites, it should be noted that Ps.-Dionysios himself, a Christian heir to the pagan mystical traditions, placed great emphasis on knowledge that is available to the initiated few and should be kept hidden from the eyes of the world.

Having stated the case in favor of considering *Περὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις οἴκοις* as an important testimony to the reception of Ps.-Dionysios through Hypatios of Ephesos in the sixth century, I would like to return to the general considerations (outlined at the beginning of this investigation) with regard to the transmission of sources relevant to the problem of images, with a view to adding an important caveat to the conclusions reached in the present article.

As previously stated, the debates of the Iconoclast era stimulated a comprehensive re-fashioning of the historical memory in Byzantium. In many cases, theories formulated in preceding periods were re-interpreted or re-formulated in order to adapt them to the contemporary requirements. This process, even if it on some occasions undoubtedly led to an “adulteration” of the original theoretical positions and stimulated the falsification of historical documents, need not to be seen only in negative terms as a deliberate deceit. The new “mental setting”, i. e. the priorities and concerns of the moment, was sufficiently compelling to bring about a comprehensive re-interpretation of the entire preceding theological and philosophical tradition.

Perhaps the best illustration of this phenomenon could be the use John of Damaskos made of Ps.-Dionysios in his *Antirrhetikoi*.⁹⁵ In the new context of speeches in defense of icons, passages taken from Ps.-Dionysios, which were originally meant to be applied to Biblical imagery, suddenly acquire the power to testify in favor of the iconophiles. John of Damaskos was not consciously distorting Ps.-Dionysian teachings, but was looking – anachronistically, of course, if

⁹⁴ Cf. John of Damaskos, *Contra imaginum calumniatores* III 21, ed. B. KOTTER, Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos. III. Contra imaginum calumniatores orationes tres. PTS, 17. Berlin 1975.

⁹⁵ Cf. the passages mentioned in footnote 91 above.

one were to judge him by modern standards – for support of his views in ancient texts and created a reading and an interpretation of Ps.-Dionysios which were very different from the original.

In a recent article dedicated to the complex and even torturous problem of the authenticity of the *Epistula ad Constantiam*, SODE and SPECK hypothesized about another way in which the meaning of historical documents pertinent to the theory of images could have been altered or “distorted” during the Iconoclast era and which equally did not presuppose any intentional falsification on the part of the people involved.⁹⁶ They speculated on the possibility that some relevant material could have survived on papyrus well into the eighth or ninth centuries. New, modified or “adulterated” texts that emerged in the process of preparing material for important occasions such as synods could have been products of the activity of the scholars in the patriarchal library, who, *bona fide*, had been trying to extract a meaning from some hardly legible texts at their disposal.⁹⁷

The transformations of the florilegia or some other “open texts” (like the saints’ Lives) – the transmission of which can be likened in certain respects to modern internet resources like *Wikipedia* which are being constantly updated by anonymous collective users – could serve as yet another example to illustrate some possible ways in which texts on images could have undergone significant modifications during this period and which did not necessarily involve any intentional deceit on part of the people who participated in the transmission process.

These considerations should be taken into account with respect to the *Περὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις οἰκοῖς* of Hypatios of Ephesos, as it is equally erroneous, in my view, to consider this text in its entirety to be a product of the Iconoclast period, as did SPECK,⁹⁸ as it is, of course, to postulate on the basis of this text alone some sort of debate on religious images in Christian sanctuaries already in the sixth

⁹⁶ Cf. C. SODE / P. SPECK, Ikonoklasmus vor der Zeit? Der Brief des Eusebios von Kaisereia an Kaiserin Konstantia. *JÖB* (2004) 113–134.

⁹⁷ *ibid.* 133 f.: “Ja, man kann sogar auf die Vermutung verzichten, dass ein Ikonduler den Text bewußt als ein Werk des Eusebios ausgab. Denn mit der Hypothese der Wiederherstellung eines stark zerstörten Textes auf Papyrus ist es ohne weiteres möglich, dass der Entzifferer irrtümlich auf Eusebios kam; er erfand den Text ja nicht als Fälschung, sondern er glaubte in ihm wirklich ein Werk des Eusebios vorzufinden.”

⁹⁸ Cf. SPECK, ΓΡΑΦΑΙΣ (as footnote 19 above), who attributed the entire text to a certain Hypatios of Ephesos who lived in the eighth century: “Der Text gehört dem Hypatios von Ephesos aus dem achten Jahrhundert und ist ein weiteres Dokument für die theologische Diskussion in den ersten Jahrzehnten des Bilderstreits.”

century.⁹⁹ It is more prudent to suppose that some of the content or at least those passages on the anagogical role of material adornments in sanctuaries do in fact go back to Hypatios of Ephesos and the sixth century. The rest of the text – the exact boundaries are rather difficult to draw – is the result of a process of updating and transformation to which this text must have been subjected during the Iconoclast era.

This hypothesis could account, first, for the scriptural citations found in the text,¹⁰⁰ which, as SPECK convincingly argued,¹⁰¹ correspond to the “standard set” of biblical references that were repeatedly used during the Iconoclast era by iconophile authors. It is hardly a surprise to anyone familiar with the process of textual transmission in Byzantium that the scriptural references represent the most “fluid” element of a text, i.e. the constituent element that was being constantly modified over time.

Second, this hypothesis would help to explain the origin of some passages in Hypatios’ text that are notoriously difficult to understand, e.g. lines 25–28.¹⁰² The supposition brought forward by SODE with respect to the *Epistula ad Constantiam*, as briefly stated above, seems particularly applicable to these and similar passages: the obviously corrupted text at lines 25–28 (ed. Thümmel) cannot be explained as originating from scribal error, neither is it likely that such obscure nonsense could have been deliberately excogitated; it is possible, on the

99 Cf. ALEXANDER, Hypatios (as footnote 59 above), and G. LANGE, *Bild und Wort: die katechetischen Funktionen des Bildes in der griechischen Theologie des sechsten bis neunten Jahrhunderts*. Würzburg 1969.

100 Cf. Hypatios of Ephesos, *Περὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις οἴκοις*, ed. THÜMMELE, Hypatios (as footnote 11 above) 12 f., and Act. 17, 29 (and Sap. 13, 10); 14 f. and Rom. 1, 25; 17–20 and Deut. 4, 15 f.; 22 f. and Ps. 70, 19.

101 Cf. SPECK, ΓΡΑΦΑΙΣ (as footnote 19 above), 219 with references to the relevant passages in Germanos and John of Damaskos, who made extensive use of these scriptural quotations.

102 The difficulties involved in the interpretation of these lines need not be rehearsed here in detail, as almost the entire scholarly tradition that has grown around Hypatios’ text revolves around them. Cf. the opinion of DIEKAMP, Hypatios (as footnote 11 above), and later N.H. BAYNES, *The icons before iconoclasm*. The *Harvard Theological Review* 44 (1951) 93–106, who believed that Julian, whose opinion Hypatios stated here, was willing to allow painted images “höchstens auf den Türvorhängen”, but not on wood or stones, and did not allow any sculpture. Some other interpreters, e.g. ALEXANDER, Hypatios (as footnote 59 above) 179, note 16, tried to infer from these lines that Julian was in favor of paintings in general but opposed sculpture. Thümmel had to confess that it is hardly possible to understand this particular passage, cf. THÜMMELE, Hypatios, as footnote 11 above, 162: “Es ist kaum möglich, in diesen Satz einen Sinn hineinzubekommen”, echoed by SPECK, ΓΡΑΦΑΙΣ (as footnote 19 above) 221: “Das ist nun der Satz, der bisher allen Interpretationsversuchen erfolgreich widerstanden hat.”

contrary, to see in these lines the outcome of an attempt to decipher an almost illegible text.

Fortunately for modern scholarship, the tradition has preserved one small error which proves beyond doubt that this text was indeed read with the concerns of the Iconoclast era in mind and modified accordingly, at least in one minor detail, which is nevertheless of no little significance, given the relatively short of the text. This process of alteration is evident in the reading τοὺς ἱερούς τῶν ἁγίων εἰκόνας in Cod. par. gr. 1115, as briefly mentioned at the beginning of the article, which the quotation that was proved by the quotation in Theodoros Studites' letter shows to be a *corruptela* for τοὺς ἱερούς τῶν ἁγίων ἁγῶνας. Such an error could have originated only in the hands of someone who was absolutely convinced that he was dealing with a text on icons, or was determined to read or decipher it in this direction, and thus corroborates the view that this text was indeed modified during the Iconoclast era from a very specific perspective, in accordance with the hypothesis formulated above by analogy with other sources on images from the Iconoclast era.

The main aim of this article has been to demonstrate that the text of *Περὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις οἴκοις* can be considered testimony to the reception of Ps.-Dionysios during the sixth century. In order to achieve this purpose, it has been necessary first to overcome the general objection raised by GERO, who believed that Hypatios of Ephesos declared all the writings of Ps.-Dionysios to be Apolinarian forgeries. This was achieved through a careful examination of all the sources, especially the Syriac acts pertaining to the *Collatio cum Severianis*, and the “doctrinal statement” preserved in the *Chronicle* of Ps.-Zachariah, which lead to the conclusion that Hypatios of Ephesos actually questioned the attribution of only one specific passage to Ps.-Dionysios, whom in other respects he held in great esteem. The actual amount of material from Ps.-Dionysios which the Syrian delegation might have cited and which, consequently, could have been questioned by Hypatios of Ephesos, can be amplified by including two other citations that were known to Severos and, probably, to the members of the anti-Chalcedonian delegation. As a next step, the article has presented some lexical evidence, unknown to previous scholarship, which allows us to distinguish more clearly the vocabulary used by Hypatios of Ephesos from that of the Neoplatonic sources, thus further corroborating the hypothesis of Ps.-Dionysian influence on Hypatios. Comparison of the main theses of Ps.-Dionysios on images with the views expressed in Hypatios' text demonstrates that Hypatios must have had significant knowledge of Ps.-Dionysian teachings, even though his views on the role of material adornments in sanctuaries do not correspond in all respects to Ps.-Dionysian doctrine. This conclusion, however, does not imply that the text of Hy-

patios in its present state corresponds to the original document from the sixth century. Taking into consideration the specific conditions under which texts concerning subjects of interest during the Iconoclast era were transmitted, and examining the specific traces this process of transmission has left on Hypatios' text, it must be concluded that only a small portion of material in this text actually goes back to Hypatios of Ephesos in the sixth century, while the rest must have been added or significantly modified at a later stage.