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## NOTES ON GEORGIAN TRANSLATIONS OF THE WORKS OF NICETAS STETHATOS

### INTRODUCTION

The recent publication of Epistle IX of Nicetas Stethatos to Basil the Monk<sup>1</sup> and the Georgian translations of works of Nicetas Stethatos that are included in Arsen Iqaltoeli's *Dogmatikon*<sup>2</sup> constitute important milestones in scholarship on the works of Nicetas Stethatos as well as for studies of Byzantine literary works in general. Nevertheless, some questions still remain unanswered or without sufficiently detailed analysis. It is unclear, for instance, why there is such a significant difference between the date of the colophon of the Georgian manuscripts (1030) and the date that is accepted nowadays in the scientific literature as the time, when the collection of Stethatos' epistles had to have been composed (c. 1080). It is not clear whether Basil the Monk, the addressee of Epistle IX, is the same person as Basil the Sophist, the addressee of Epistles V–VIII. The reason for the difference between the names of the Sophist in the Greek and Georgian

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(1) M. RAPHAHA, "Georgian Translations of Nicetas Stethatos's Epistles (According to Arsen Iqaltoeli's *Dogmatikon*) [with the *editio princeps* of a letter lost in Greek]," in: *Georgian Christian Thought and Its Cultural Context. Memorial Volume for the 125th Anniversary of Shalva Nutsubidze (1888–1969)*, ed. by T. NUTSUBIDZE, C. B. HORN, B. LOURIE, Leiden, 2014, pp. 244–282.

(2) [არსენ იყალთოელი,] *დოგმატიკონი*, II, ნიკიტა სტითათი, *თბზულეზანი*, ხუთი პოლემიკური სიტყვისა და ეპოსტოლეთა ტექსტები გამოსაცემად მოამზადა და გამოკვლევა დაურთო მაია რაფავამ, ტექსტები „აღსავალთათჳს“, „სულისათჳს“ და „სამოთხისათჳს“ გამოსაცემად მოამზადა და გამოკვლევა დაურთო მარიამ კასრაძემ, ლექსიკონი და საძიებლები მოამზადეს მაია რაფავამ და ნანა ჩიკვატიამ, თბილისი, 2013 [[Arsen Iqaltoeli,] *Dogmatikon: Nicetas Stethatos, Works*, vol. II, ed. by M. RAPHAHA, M. KASRADZE, and N. CHIKVATIA, Tbilisi, 2013].

versions also remains obscure. The same is true for the question of why no Greek manuscripts contain Epistle IX that is preserved in the Georgian version. In this article we study these issues together with some minor questions.<sup>3</sup>

### TOWARDS A RELATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF NICETAS STETHATOS' EPISTLES

According to subjects and dependencies, the treatises and the epistles of Stethatos can be grouped in three blocks:

- The first block includes the treatises "On the Soul" and "On Paradise," that had to have been written before any of the epistles.
- The second block includes (in chronological order):
  - a) Epistle K to Nicetas Chartophylax (also known as Nicetas Coronis), placed before both treatises, in which Stethatos presents the treatises to Chartophylax;
  - b) Epistle II to Nicetas Stethatos (Chartophylax' reply to Epistle K and the treatises); and
  - c) Epistle IV to Nicetas Chartophylax (Stethatos' reply to Epistle II).

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(3) In addition to numbering the letters as Epistles I–IX, introduced by Jean Darrouzès (see below), we will use the following identifiers for the individual epistles:

- **K** for the stand-alone epistle to Nicetas Chartophylax (also known as Nicetas Coronis; *Κορωνίδος*), which precedes the treatises "On the Soul" and "On Paradise";
- **E** for the epistle to Eusebius (*Ευσέβιος*), which follows Epistle K;
- **\*III** for an epistle to Nicetas Stethatos by Nicetas Chartophylax, which is not preserved nowadays in full and is partly preserved as Epistle III. References to the epistles are provided in the format *E.n*, where *E* is the identifier of the epistle (I–IX, \*II, K, E) and *n* is a paragraph number (if there are paragraphs in the epistle).

Unless otherwise specified:

- Epistle IX (both Georgian and English versions) is quoted from RAPHAVA, "Georgian Translations";
- The Georgian text of Epistles K, E, I–VIII is quoted from *Dogmatikon*, II;
- Greek quotations are taken from Nicéas Stéthatos, *Opuscules et lettres*, introduction, texte critique, traduction française et notes par J. DARROUZÈS (SC 81), Paris: Cerf, 1961.



The year AM 6538 of the Byzantine era (κατὰ Ρωμαίους) corresponds to 1030 CE,<sup>7</sup> which differs significantly from the conclusion of Jean Darrouzès that the epistles should be dated circa 1080, or, at least, should fit the period of 1075–1090.<sup>8</sup> Together with the year *Anno Mundi*, the colophon reports an indiction 3. Since in the Byzantine era an indiction number should be equal to the remainder from the division of the year *Anno Mundi* by 15,<sup>9</sup> the year AM 6538 corresponds to the indiction 13 and not 3, specified in the colophon ( $6538 = 15 \times 435 + 13$ ). Thus, there is an error in the colophon's date.

Here we should note that the date 1030 CE is unlikely, at least according to our current knowledge of the chronology of Nicetas Stethatos' life. Despite the general lack of clarity regarding the dates of his life, the year 1022 is accurately established as a reference point for Stethatos' youth,<sup>10</sup> whereas the letters to Nicetas Chartophylax should be dated after 1050, because this date limits the known period of holding the office of chartophylax for the latter.<sup>11</sup>

It is possible that the colophon renders with error either the indiction year (3 instead of 13), or the year *Anno Mundi*. In order to stay within the range of the eleventh century (AM 6508–6607), which has to be sufficient to cover the time of Nicetas Stethatos' life, a conjecture for the AM year number is possible in the last two digits only. There is no possible conjecture for the last digit for the range of years from 6530–6539, which corresponds to the indiction number 3, while among the digits marking the position of tens, there are three corresponding dates: AM 6528, AM 6558, and AM 6588. Let us study each possible conjecture in detail.

**Indiction 13 (AD 1030).** Since the indiction number is written out in words, the conjecture in the Georgian version is not possible, because *ლრძლრ* < \**ლრძჲლრ* (*third* < \**thirteen*) cannot be accepted. The usual rendering of the indiction 13 in Greek had to be *ἰνδικτιῶνος*

(7) V. GRUMEL, *La Chronologie*, Paris, 1958, pp. 128, 254; B. BLACKBURN, L. HOLFORD-STREVENSON, *The Oxford Companion to the Year*, Oxford, 1999, p. 766.

(8) DARROUZES, *Opuscules et lettres*, pp. 10, 24.

(9) GRUMEL, *La Chronologie*, p. 202; BLACKBURN, HOLFORD-STREVENSON, *The Oxford Companion to the Year*, p. 771.

(10) DARROUZES, *Opuscules et lettres*, p. 8.

(11) *Ibid.*, pp. 17, 20.

ιγ', or INΔ ιγ'.<sup>12</sup> In this case, we have to allow two assumptions at once to get *ლჳძლჳ* in the Georgian version: there had to have been an error in the Greek copies that would have led to the change of the indiction number (\*γ' < \*ιγ'), and Arsen had to have changed the way an indiction was rendered. If the indiction number was written out in words in the Greek version (\**ἰνδικτιῶνος δέκατης τρίτης*), which is unusual, then the omission of tens should have resulted in the attested form *ლჳძლჳ* < \**τρίτης* < \**δέκατης τρίτης*. However, rendering the indiction number in words rather supports the initial \**ἰνδικτιῶνος τρίτης* (*indiction third*) in the Greek text.<sup>13</sup>

**AM 6528, 6558, 6588 (1020, 1050, 1080 CE).** Let us account for all the possible variants to render the appropriate dates *Anno Mundi*:

	manuscript	AM 6528	AM 6558	AM 6588
Georgian	ⲜⲠⲪⲃ	*ⲜⲠⲃ	*ⲜⲠⲏ	*ⲜⲠⲤ
Greek	*ζφλη	*ζφκη	*ζφνη	*ζφπη

The errors \*ⲃ > Ⲫ (AM 6528) and \*ⲏ > Ⲫ (AM 6558) in Georgian are hardly possible. The error \*Ⲥ > Ⲫ (AM 6588) is certainly possible for the second half of the eleventh century, especially in the case of Nuskhuri hands (the assumption that Arsen's protograph could have been written in cursive hand is quite plausible).<sup>14</sup> The errors \*ⲕ > \*ⲗ (AM 6528) and \*ⲡ > \*ⲗ (AM 6588) are hardly possible in Greek, whereas the error \*ν > \*λ (AM 6558) is possible, but not likely.<sup>15</sup>

According to what is stated above, the possible retrieved dates of the colophon are 1080 CE (AM 6588, most probable), 1050 CE (AM 6558, less probable), or 1030 CE (AM 6538, unlikely). The most

(12) P. CANART, *Lezioni di paleografia e di codicologia Greca*, Citta del Vaticano, 1980, p. 96; Y. E. MEIMARIS, *Chronological Systems in Roman-Byzantine Palestine and Arabia*, Athens, 1992, p. 34.

(13) The rendering of an indiction number with words is not usual, and when we find this in the form "*ἰνδικτιῶνος ...*," it usually renders years from 1 to 10 (see MEIMARIS, *Chronological Systems*, pp. 156–157, 162–304).

(14) See ი. აბულაძე, *ქართული წერის ნიმუშები: პალეოგრაფიული ალბომი*, თბილისი, 1973 [I. ABULADZE, *Samples of Georgian Script: Paleographical Album*, Tbilisi, 1973], pp. XI (col. 7–9), XII–XIII (col. 4–9).

(15) See V. GARDTHAUSEN, *Griechische Paleographie, 2, Die Schrift, Unterschriften, und Chronologie im Altertum und im byzantinischen Mittelalter*, Leipzig, 1913, Taf. 6–7.

probable correction of the colophon's text (i. e. conjecture \***ԷՓՄԻ** in the Georgian version) fits the expected period of 1075–1092.

Thus, we assume that the conjecture \***Մ** > **Մ** for the Georgian colophon is plausible, the Georgian protograph initially rendered the year *Anno Mundi* as \***ԷՓՄԻ**, and the correct date of the colophon is AM 6588, i.e. January of 1080.<sup>16</sup>

## 2. THE COLOPHON AND MARGINAL NOTE

### 2.1. The Colophon

Here we would like to clarify one detail concerning the attribution of the colophon of the Georgian version. In all the Georgian manuscripts of the *Dogmatikon* the colophon has exactly the same marginal note:

“თვთ ამის ღირსისა მამისა,  
საკითხავთა ამათ გამომეტყუ-  
ლლისად, არს ანდერძი ესე”

“This addition belongs to this  
honorable father himself, to the  
author of these readings”<sup>17</sup>

The Georgian word **გამომეტყუწლი** (literally: *one who says out loud*, “teller”) does not refer to just the *author*, but to the person, who actually articulates a phrase or speech.<sup>18</sup> In the Georgian text **გამომეტყუწლი** cannot mean a compiler of the book, or a copyist, so the author of the note (Arsen?) directly points us to the fact, that the author (*teller*) of the epistles and the trilogy and the author of the colophon is the same person (i. e. Nicetas Stethatos).

### 2.2. The Marginal Note

After analyzing the *Dogmatikon* manuscripts K-23 and S-1463 we came to the preliminary conclusion, that they are independent and ascend to a common protograph. At the time of its initial description,

(16) GRUMEL, *La Chronologie*, p. 128.

(17) Ms. S-1463, fol. 281r; ms. K-23, fol. 335v; the same marginal note is present in later copies—ms. Q-50 (1777, National Centre of Manuscripts of Georgia) and ms. K-15 (17<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries, Kutaisi State Historical Museum).

(18) ი. აბულაძე, *ძველი ქართული ენის ლექსიკონი*, თბილისი, 1973 [I. ABULADZE, *Dictionary of Old Georgian Language*, Tbilisi, 1973], p. 43; *ძველი ქართული ენის შეერთებული ლექსიკონი*, თბილისი, 2008 [*The Joint Dictionary of Old Georgian*, Tbilisi, 2008], pp. 47–48.

S-1463 was widely dated to the twelfth–thirteenth century.<sup>19</sup> This question requires further detailed research, yet based on paleographical data we think that the manuscript S-1463 has to be dated preliminarily to the beginning of the twelfth century.<sup>20</sup> According to this assessment, a common protograph of the manuscripts S-1463 and K-23 should be chronologically very close to the autograph of the *Dogmatikon*, and it is unlikely that there was a considerable written tradition between the *Dogmatikon* autograph and the common protograph of the manuscripts K-23 and S-1464. Thus, the protograph had to have been either one of the first copies from the *Dogmatikon* autograph, or the autograph itself.<sup>21</sup>

Since the marginal comment is attested in all the Georgian manuscripts of the *Dogmatikon*, it should go back at least to a common protograph of K-23 and S-1463. The fact, that this marginal note is rendered in the same form in all the Georgian copies (including the ones from a later period) supports the assumption that the marginal note itself is an integral part of the *Dogmatikon*, and its author is Arsen Iqaltoeli himself.

### 2.3. The Purpose of the Marginal Note

The date in the colophon by Nicetas Stethatos perfectly matches the format that is typical for colophons of copyists (month, indiction number, and year *Anno Mundi*).<sup>22</sup> Thus, the purpose and necessity of the marginal note by Arsen Iqaltoeli are obvious: Arsen required it to indicate to his future readers that the colophon does not belong to the author of the *Dogmatikon* or one of its copyists, as one can assume

(19) ქართულ ხელნაწერთა აღწერილობა: ყოვლილი ქართველთა შორის წერა-კითხვის გამავრცელებელი საზოგადოების (S) კოლექცია, ტ. II, თბილისი, 1961 [Description of Georgian Manuscripts: The Collection of the Society for the Spreading of Literacy among Georgians (S), II, Tbilisi, 1961], p. 213.

(20) The hand of S-1463 reveals similarity with hands from the 11<sup>th</sup> century, in particular to the hand of ms. Q-37 (1091, National Centre of Manuscripts of Georgia). Cf. I. ABULADZE, *Samples*, Tab. XII–XIII, 106–109. An article by Alexey Ostrovsky on the dating of S-1463 is to be published in *Mravaltavi* (a journal of the National Centre of Manuscripts of Georgia).

(21) The final decision on this question depends on the results of the detailed study of the S-1463 and K-23 manuscripts and the relations between them.

(22) B. M. METZGER, *Manuscripts of the Greek Bible: An Introduction to Greek Palaeography*, New York, 1991, p. 49.

from the form of the colophon, but instead belongs to the author of the text himself.

### 3. ARE BOTH BASILS THE SAME?

Could it be the case, that the addressee of Epistles V–VIII and the one of Epistle IX is the same person? After a critical revision of the available evidence, we came to the conclusion that most probably Basil the Monk was the same person as Basil the Sophist.

#### 3.1. A Reference to Epistle IX in Epistle III

In Epistle I, Nicetas Stethatos wrote to Chartophylax:

“წარეკუეთა ვინმე ბრძენთაგანი სულისა და სამოთხისაძლითსა სიტყუასა ჩემსა. [...] ხოლო სათანადო ყოფად ვჰგონე ეგევითართა მათ ეპისტოლეთა წარმოცემად შენდა მომართ, ვინადთგან აღწერილნი იგი წარვიკითხვან სიტყუანი, რადთა [...] მოსწერო შენით ჩუენდა [...] ამათძლითი სათნო-ყოფად შენი, რადთა უმტკიცესი გუაქუნდეს ცნობად სიტყუათა ამათ შინა...”

“Somebody from the wise ones was unhappy with my speeches on the soul and on paradise. [...] And I realized that it is necessary to send those epistles to you, so you will read the words written there, that [...] you would write us [...] your decision on them, so we would have an opinion of greater authority on the contents of those speeches.” (I)

Answering to Stethatos in Epistle III, Nicetas Chartophylax wrote that he read the letters to the Sophist about paradise and the souls, residing in paradise (III.1), about the deacon’s words “The doors, the doors!” (III.2), and about the apostle’s words from 1 Cor 6:18 (III.3):

“წარვიკითხენ, უფროდსად პატიოსანო მამაო, მესობრძნისა ბასილისმიმართნიცა წინააღსადგომელნი ეპისტოლენი შენნი სამოთხისათჳს და სულთა აწ ქრისტეს თანა სამოთხეს შინა ყოფისათჳს და შემდგომთა...”

“I also read, oh highly honorable father, your objective letters to the sophist Basil on paradise and on the souls, residing in paradise with Christ, and others...” (III.1)

“ხოლო განსაბასრველ არს  
მეტყუელიცა, რომელი  
დიაკონისამიერსა მას ჳმობასა,  
ვითარმედ ‘კართა, კართა’ [...]”

“ხოლო თარგმანებისათჳს  
სამოციქულოდას სიტყჳსა [...]  
პატოისნებისა შენისა მიერცა  
აღწერილი განმარტებად მისი იყავნ  
სხუათავე წმიდათა მამათა  
ნამუშაკეჳსა თანა...”

“One, who says, that the  
deacon’s words ‘The doors,  
the doors!’ [...] is worth of  
derision.” (III.2)

“What about the treatment  
of the apostle’s words [...] the  
elucidation written by  
Your Excellency will also  
take its place among the  
works of other holy fa-  
thers.” (III.3)

There are no signs of a shift of subject or person being discussed in the letter by Chartophylax, which means that Chartophylax discussed Epistles VI, VII, VIII, and IX in the context of Stethatos’ epistles, sent to the Sophist. Moreover, the phrase “-ცა ... და შემდგომთა” (“also ..., and others <the following ones>”) in the Georgian version of III.1, which is absent in Greek, clearly indicates, that the introductory phrase III.1 also refers to the epistles, mentioned in the following paragraphs III.2 and III.3.

Thus, according to Nicetas Chartophylax, the “objective letters to the sophist Basil” include epistles to both Basil the Sophist and Basil the Monk, as they do not only include the epistles on paradise (Epistle VI) and on the souls, residing in paradise (Epistle VII), but also the explanation of the deacon’s words “The doors, the doors!” (Epistle VIII), and the explanation of 1 Cor 6:18 (Epistle IX).<sup>23</sup>

### 3.2. The Arrangement of Nicetas Stethatos’ Works in the *Dogmatikon*

The titles of Nicetas Stethatos’ works are rendered in the *Dogmatikon* as follows:<sup>24</sup>

(23) Epistle III exists in fragments only both in Georgian and Greek versions. We discovered another Georgian version of Epistle III, which differs from the known editions and allows us to establish a more complete version of Epistle III. We plan to publish the article on this new data as a follow-up to this article.

(24) *Dogmatikon*, II, pp. 6–7.

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| A1 | <p><u>ნიკიტა, მონაზონისა და ხუცისა სტუდიელთა მონასტრისა, სტითატისა</u> სიტყუად პირველი განსაქიქებელი მგმობრისა მის წვალებისა სომეხთადა</p> | <p>The first speech on that shameful [and] false Armenian heresy by <i>Nicetas, a monk and priest of the monastery of Studios, Stethatos</i></p> |
| A2 | <p><i>მისივე</i> დასამხოველად მგმობრისა წვალებისა სომეხთადა, განსაქიქებელი მეორე</p>   | <p>Destructively, on the false Armenian heresy, the second disgrace by <i>the same</i>.</p>  |
| A3 | <p><i>მისივე</i> განსაქიქებელი გ უმადიდებლობისა სომეხთადა სამწმიდაობისათს.</p>   | <p>The disgrace 3 on the Armenian Trisagion by <i>the same</i>.</p>  |
| A4 | <p><i>მისივე</i> განსაქიქებელი მეოთხე წვალებისა სომეხთადა.</p>   | <p>The fourth disgrace on the Armenian heresy by <i>the same</i>.</p>  |
| A5 | <p><i>მისივე</i> განსაქიქებელი მეხუთე წვალებისა სომეხთადა და უცომოდათს</p>   | <p>The fifth disgrace on the Armenian heresy and unleavened bread by <i>the same</i>.</p>  |
| E  | <p>მისივე, <u>ნიკიტა მონაზონისა და ხუცისა სტუდიელთა მონასტრისა</u> და სთნოებითა აღსავალთათს, ევსების მონაზონსა ნიკიტა მონაზონი.</p>        | <p>The same, <i>Nicetas, a monk and priest of the Monastery of Stoudios</i>, on the ladder of virtue; the monk Nicetas to the monk Eusebius.</p> |
| K  | <p>ნიკიტას ხარტოფილაკსა და სუნკელლოსსა, კორონიდსა <u>ნიკიტა უნდოდ მონაზონი და ხუცესი სტუდიელთა მონასტრისა</u>, სტითატი</p>                 | <p><i>Nicetas, a humble monk and priest of the Monastery of Stoudios, Stethatos</i> to Nicetas, a chartophylax and syncellus, Coronis</p>        |
| Ψ  | <p><u>ნიკიტა მონაზონისა და ხუცისა სტუდიელთა მონასტრისა, სტითატისა</u>; სიტყუად სულისათს კაცობრივისა, ქველმსიტყუე მამაო</p>                 | <p>The word on man's soul by <i>Nicetas, a monk and priest of the Monastery of Stoudios, Stethatos</i>, oh virtuous orator father</p>            |
| Π  | <p><i>მისივე</i> სამოთხისათს</p>   | <p>On paradise by <i>the same</i>.</p>   |

I	ნიკიტას ხარტოფილაკსა და სუნკელოსსა კორონიდსა ნიკიტა, უნდომ მონაზონი და ხუცესი სტუდიელთა მონასტრისად, სტითატი	<i>Nicetas, a humble monk and priest of the Monastery of Stoudios, Stethatos, to Nicetas, a chartophylax and syncellus, Coronis</i>
II	პასუხი ნიკიტა სუნკელოსისა და ხარტოფილაკისა კორონიდისად	Answer of Nicetas, a syncellus and chartophylax, Coronis
III	სხვსა ეპისტოლისაგან	From another letter
IV	ნიკიტა მონაზონი სტითატი ნიკიტას ხარტოფილაკსა და სუნკელოსსა კორონიდსა	<i>Nicetas, a monk, Stethatos, to Nicetas, a chartophylax and syncellus, Coronis</i>
V	ნიკიტა, უნდომ მონაზონი და ხუცესი სტუდიელთა მონასტრისად, სტითატი, ბასილის მესიზრძნესა. ბასილის მიმართ მესიზრძნისა ეპისტოლენი წინაგანსიტყუეთონი	<i>Nicetas, a humble monk and priest of the Monastery of Stoudios, Stethatos to Basil the Sophist. Epistles against Basil the Sophist</i>
VI	მისივე მისდავე მიმართ	From <i>the same</i> to the same
VII	მისივე მისდავე მიმართ	From <i>the same</i> to the same
VIII	მისივე მისდავე მიმართ	From <i>the same</i> to the same
IX	მისივე ბასილის მიმართ მონაზონისა. ბასილის მონაზონსა ნიკიტა მონაზონი	From <i>the same</i> to the Monk Basil. <i>The Monk Nicetas to the Monk Basil</i>

Here we can see, that not only Epistles I–VIII, but the whole set of Stethatos' works, collected in the *Dogmatikon*, follows the strict logic of the arrangement, when the first heading in a group contains a full title of Nicetas, i. e. "Nicetas, a [humble] monk and priest of the Monastery of Stoudios [Stethatos]," and subsequent headings within the same group contain just "the same," or the shortened form "the monk Nicetas [Stethatos]" (in any case, they do not contain "priest of the Monastery of Stoudios"). In line with this feature, the works of Stethatos are grouped in the following sets in the *Dogmatikon*:

1. Words against Armenian anti-Chalcedonianism;
2. Letter to Eusebius;

3. Letter to Nicetas Chartophylax;
4. The treatises “On the Soul” and “On Paradise;”
5. Correspondence between Nicetas Stethatos and Nicetas Chartophylax (Epistles I–IV);
6. Letters from Stethatos to Basil the Sophist (Epistles V–VIII) and Basil the Monk (Epistle IX).

Consequently, Epistle IX to Basil the Monk does not open a new group of Nicetas’ letters (i.e., a new addressee), but belongs to the same group as Epistles V–VIII to Basil the Sophist. It is worth mentioning here that the arrangement of Nicetas Stethatos’ works in the *Dogmatikon* matches the change of addressees.<sup>25</sup>

### 3.3. Formal Compliments and Stethatos’ Tone to the Addressee

With regard to Stethatos’ attitude to his addressees, we assume that, even if something would have happened in the course of the correspondence, it is unlikely that Nicetas Stethatos would have substantially changed his attitude and basic treatment of the same person. Thus, if Basil the Monk is the same person as Basil the Sophist, we should find traces of the same attitude in Nicetas’ letters, despite a possible change in his mood, in the course of the correspondence.<sup>26</sup> Let us examine Stethatos’ attitude to all his addressees.

Stethatos treated Nicetas Chartophylax quite frankly and friendly, placing emphasis on the clerical rank of the addressee:

I and IV.10	კურთხეულო მეუფეო ჩემო	my pious [Reverend] Lord
IV.Preamble	სასურველო მეუფეო	dear [Reverend] Lord
IV.Preamble	მეგობარმან ჩემმან და მეუფემან	my friend and [Reverend] Lord

With regard to Nicetas’ attitude towards Basil the Sophist, we observe that, despite all skepticism and even attacks, Nicetas treated him quite politely (at least formally), putting all the stress on the addressee’s intellect:<sup>27</sup>

(25) The same is not true for the Greek versions (see § 5.1 below).

(26) RAPHAVA, “Georgian Translations,” pp. 259–260.

(27) It does not matter here whether it was ironical or not.

I	ვინმე ბრძენთაგანი	somebody from the wise ones
V.2	შენისა გამოძკულებელობასა შინა საღმრთოთასა ... გონებისა	in your mind, [gifted in ability] to study [all the] divine
V.3	რჩეულო	one of the elite
V.12	უფროსად გამოძწულიველი გონებად შენი	your most refined mind
VI.1	ვინაითგან გამოძეძიებელი ხარ და უფროსად ბრძენი	who art researcher and the most wise one
VII.1	უფროსად ბრძენო	the most wise one
VII.6	რჩეულო, სიტყვერსა მაგას და ბრძენსა	one of the elite of speech and wisdom
VIII.1	სათნოებისა და მეცნიერებისა შენისა	to your virtue and knowledge

It is remarkable that there is no difference in Stethatos' attitude to the Sophist, regardless of whether a letter is addressed directly to the Sophist (V–VIII) or whether Nicetas discusses the Sophist with Nicetas Chartophylax (I).

Stethatos also treated Basil the Monk politely and underlined the addressee's intellect as he did with the Sophist: "thy prudence surprised me greatly" (IX.1), "thou, who art a servant of the Word" (IX.2).<sup>28</sup> With regard to the latter one, the phrase "a servant of the Word" also appears in Epistle IV, where Stethatos uses it for Paul the Apostle and Dionysius the Areopagite, emphasizing that "they possess precedence in theology, because they were taught from the Word of God" (IV.1). Since it is unlikely that Nicetas valued Basil the Monk's knowledge at the same level as that of Paul the Apostle and Dionysius the Areopagite, the phrase "servant of the Word," when applied to Basil, refers to his clerical rank, but should be considered as nothing more than formal politeness or even irony.

Stethatos' attitude towards Eusebius in Epistle E is neutral, without offering a specific treatment of the addressee. This differs from

(28) "მე ფრიად დამიკვრდა გულისწმიერებად შენი" (IX.1), "შენ, ვითარცა მსახური სიტყვსა" (IX.2).

his treatment of all other addressees—Nicetas Chartophylax, Basil the Sophist, and Basil the Monk.

Therefore, Epistles V, VI, VIII and IX contain similar formal compliments to the addressee and there is no sufficient contrast between Basil the Sophist and Basil the Monk with regard to the attitude shown to them by Nicetas Stethatos. Yet both can be clearly distinguished from Nicetas Chartophylax and Eusebius.

### 3.4. Conclusion

Our observations give us a plausible basis to conclude that the addressee of Epistle IX is Basil the Sophist, the same person as the addressee of Epistles V–VIII. Since Basil is mentioned as the Monk in the title of Epistle IX, we assume that Basil the Sophist took monastic vows during the period between the writing of Epistle VIII and IX.

## 4. THE SOPHIST: BASIL OR GREGORY?

The Greek name Γρηγόριος (*Gregory*) is rendered as გრიგოლი in the Georgian version (3×IV.1, IV.9, VI.8), and the Greek Βασίλειος (*Basil*) — as ბასილი (IV.9, 2×VI.8, VI.10). The only exception is the name of the Sophist, which is *Gregory* in the Greek editions (V.Title, VI.10), and *Basil* in the Georgian version (III, V.Title, VI.10).<sup>29</sup>

From a paleographical perspective, *Basil* instead of *Gregory* could appear in the Georgian version if it rendered გრიგოლ- with the contraction  $\overline{\text{ႵႵ}}$  — in this case we can assume a corruption of the text as follows:  $*\overline{\text{ႵႵ}} > *\text{ႵႵ} > \text{Ⴕ(ႵႵႵ)Ⴕ}$ . However, since both S-1463 and K-23 render *Gregory* and *Basil* in full, and the Sophist is named *Basil* everywhere (in the forms  $\text{ႵႵႵႵ}$ - and  $\text{ႵႵႵႵႵ}$ -), this would require multiple corruptions of contractions that happen not gradually, from one copy of the *Dogmatikon* to another, but already in the common protograph of S-1463 and K-23, which is unlikely.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, even if we accept such a possibility, the *identical* simultaneous corruption in *three different places* of the protograph, written in different scripts, seems to be completely impossible, especially counting the fact, that in all other places of the epistles (while mentioning the holy fathers) there are no problems with rendering *Basil* (four times) and *Gregory*

(29) RAPHAVA, "Georgian Translations," pp. 250–251.

(30) On the possible protograph of the manuscripts K-23 and S-1463, see above (§ 2.2).

(five times). Thus, the nature of this difference between the Georgian and Greek versions should be explained differently: either Arsen replaced *Gregory* with *Basil* intentionally, or the Sophist was called Basil in the Greek manuscript Arsen used.

We think that an intentional replacement of the Sophist's name by Arsen Iqaltoeli should be excluded, because such a handling of text is completely foreign to the translation principles of Arsen, who did not offer corrections even for obvious errors (or slips) in Biblical quotations.<sup>31</sup> It would be illogical to suppose that such a meticulous translator arbitrarily replaced the name of one of the correspondents, which would have to be regarded as less important than the correct rendering of biblical passages.

Therefore, we suppose that the variation in the Sophist's name between the Greek and Georgian versions had to have originated in the variation of the Sophist's name in the early Greek manuscripts. Since the Sophist and the Monk are the same person (see § 3), we assume that the variation of the names *Basil* : *Gregory* for the Sophist may reflect the use of his secular and clerical names.<sup>32</sup> All of these can shed some light on the figure of the Sophist and help to establish his identity.<sup>33</sup>

## 5. THE CORRELATION BETWEEN THE GEORGIAN AND GREEK EDITIONS

### 5.1. Arrangement of the Epistles in the Georgian and Greek Editions

Both the Georgian and Greek versions contain the epistles arranged not in true chronological order, but by addressee. However, there are some differences in the titles of Epistles I–VIII (IX) in the Greek and Georgian versions:

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(31) RAPHAVA, "Georgian Translations," p. 251.

(32) Another possibility, which we cannot exclude completely, is simply a variation in the attribution of the epistles in the Greek versions. However, this is unlikely, because the Sophist's name in Stethatos' letters to the Sophist matches his name in Chartophylax' letter to Stethatos.

(33) The recently discovered unknown version of Epistle III may help in establishing the identity of Sophist. This will be discussed in a forthcoming article (see n. 23 above).

Georgian <sup>34</sup>	Greek
I ნიკიტას ხარტოფილაკსა და სწკელოსსა კორონიდსა ნიკიტა, უნდომ მონაზონი და ხუცესი სტუდიელთა მონასტრისაჲ, სტითატი	Νικήτα χαρτοφύλακι καὶ συγκέλλω τῆς Κορωνίδος Νικήτας εὐτελής μοναχὸς καὶ πρεσβύτερος μονῆς τῶν Στουδίου ὁ καὶ Στηθαῖτος
II პასუხი ნიკიტა სწკელოსისა და ხარტოფილაკისა კორონიდისაჲ	Ἀντίγραφος Νικήτα συγκέλλου καὶ χαρτοφύλακος, τῆς Κορωνίδος
III სხვსა ეპისტოლისაგან	Ἐκ τῆς ἐτέρας ἐπιστολῆς
IV ნიკიტა მონაზონი სტითატი ნიკიტას ხარტოფილაკსა და სწკელოსსა კორონიდსა	Νικήτα χαρτοφύλακι καὶ συγκέλλω τῆς Κορωνίδος Νικήτας μονάζων καὶ πρεσβύτερος μονῆς τῶν Στουδίου ὁ καὶ Στηθαῖτος (marg. Ἀντίγραφος)
V ნიკიტა, უნდომ მონაზონი და ხუცესი სტუდიელთა მონასტრისაჲ, სტითატი, ბასილის მესობრძნესა. ბასილის მიმართ მესობრძნისა ეპისტოლენი წინაგანსიტყუვითნი	Τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἐπιστολαὶ πρὸς Γρηγόριου σοφιστῆν ἀντιρρητικαὶ
VI მისივე მისდავე მიმართ	Τῶ αὐτῶ
VII მისივე მისდავე მიმართ	Τῶ αὐτῶ
VIII მისივე მისდავე მიმართ	Τῶ αὐτῶ
IX მისივე ბასილის მიმართ მონაზონისა. ბასილის მონაზონსა ნიკიტა მონაზონი	—

As we can see, Nicetas Stethatos' full title can be found in the titles of Epistles I and IV in the Greek editions, and the titles of Epistles I and V in the Georgian version. Since Stethatos' full title opens a new block of works (§ 3.2), this textual difference points to a difference in the principles of the arrangement of the epistles between the Greek

(34) For the translation, see the full list of works of Nicetas in § 3.2.

and Georgian versions. In the Georgian edition, the epistles are grouped according to the addressee's identity: the first block includes the correspondence between Stethatos and Chartophylax (I–IV), while the second one includes letters from Stethatos to Basil (V–IX). In the Greek editions the epistles are grouped according to their didactic value: the first block includes the personal correspondence between Stethatos and Chartophylax (I–III), that does not deal with theological issues, while the second block includes all the didactic epistles by Stethatos (IV–VIII), regardless of the addressee's identity (Epistle IV to Chartophylax is grouped with Epistles V–VIII to Basil). The Greek title of Epistle V (the first letter to the Sophist) does not contain even the name of its author, and it cannot be attributed by itself, outside of the single block with Epistle IV.

Obviously, the arrangement of the epistles in the *Dogmatikon* should be primary, while the rubrication of the epistles in the Greek versions is a piece of evidence for their later rearrangement, retaining the same order of the epistles. This conclusion is also supported by the marginal note “ἀντίγραφος” (*response*) in the title of Epistle IV, found in the Greek versions only. Such a clarification, made by a scribe or an editor,<sup>35</sup> is excessive if Epistles III and IV belong to the same group of epistles. Yet it becomes necessary when Epistle IV is detached from Epistle III and placed in a different group.

## 5.2. The Nature of the Differences between the Editions

The difference between Georgian *δγλβδγλβ* (*third*) and Greek *πρὸ ταύτης* (*previous*) in the Epistle VIII to the Sophist<sup>36</sup> originates from the rearrangement of the epistles in the Greek edition. Chronologically Epistle VII is the third letter to the Sophist.<sup>37</sup> Thus, the word *third* in the Georgian text of Epistle VIII constitutes a completely natural reference to Epistle VII. However, such a reference back to Epistle VII does not cause confusions, only if this epistle is the third one in its group of letters. We have such a situation only in the Georgian edi-

(35) If the remark ἀντίγραφος was present initially, we should have had to expect it in a title and not in a marginal comment (cp. the title of Epistle II, containing ἀντίγραφος).

(36) RAPHAVA, “Georgian Translations,” p. 250.

(37) This follows from the order of the epistles, as well as from the direct words of Nicetas about Epistle VII as the *third* epistle to the Sophist (VII.1).

tion, while in the Greek editions Epistle VII is the fourth letter in its block and pointing to it with the word *third* from Epistle VIII had to cause confusion.

For the Georgian version there is no difference between the readings *previous* and *third*, as neither of the two requires any elucidations. The reading  $\pi\rho\theta\ \tau\alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\varsigma$  is obviously easier for the Greek version than a hypothetical \* $\tau\rho\acute{\iota}\tau\eta$ . Based on the principle of *lectio difficilior potior*, we can draw the conclusion that *third* in the Georgian version is a correct rendering of the original text of Nicetas Stethatos, while *previous* in the Greek version is a corruption of the text, which occurred after the epistles were regrouped in the Greek edition. This conclusion agrees with already existing studies of the *Dogmatikon*, which reveal that the Georgian version contained in the *Dogmatikon* is closer to the original text of Nicetas Stethatos than the Greek manuscripts known nowadays.<sup>38</sup>

### 5.3. Absence of Epistle IX from the Greek Editions

As pointed out above, Epistle IX chronologically precedes Epistles I–IV. Thus, it precedes the compilation of the collection of epistles as well as the creation of the colophon. Its absence in the Greek editions as well as its separate position in the *Dogmatikon* seem to be obscure, because the epistle's title implies its inclusion in one section with other epistles to Basil (see § 3.2 above). This question requires further research and could be connected to the identity of the Sophist and existing variations of versions of Epistle III.<sup>39</sup>

## 6. SUMMARY

Based on our study, we can draw the following conclusions:

1. According to the colophon that is retained in the Georgian translation, the collection of Nicetas Stethatos' treatises and epistles was compiled in January 1080 by Stethatos himself.

(38) M. KASRADZE-GIROD, *La traduction géorgienne ancienne des écrits de Nicéas Stéthatos dans le «Dogmatikon» d'Arsen d'Iqaltho, XI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, École pratique des hautes études, Section des sciences historiques et philologiques, thèse soutenue le 3 juillet 2001, p. 140; მ. რაფავა, *ნიკიტას სტიქოთატის ანტი-მონოფიზიტური სიტყვები*, თბილისი, 2013 [M. RAPHAVA, *Anti-Monophysite Speeches by Niketas Stethatos*, Tbilisi, 2013], pp. 30–31.

(39) See n. 23 and n. 33 above.

2. The marginalia at the colophon of the Georgian manuscripts of the *Dogmatikon* have to be attributed to Arsen Iqaltoeli himself.
3. Basil the Sophist and Basil the Monk is the same person, who, most probably, took monastic vows during the time between the writing of Epistle VIII and Epistle IX by Nicetas Stethatos.
4. The Greek versions of Nicetas' epistles show traces of the later work of the editor.

The cause for the absence of Epistle IX in the Greek versions and the identity of the Sophist continue to remain unclear.