New Europe College Yearbook 2023-2024

Volume 1

CĂTĂLIN CERNĂTESCU
OANA-MARIA COJOCARU
DARIA DROZDOVA
SIMONA GEORGESCU
MARIYA HORYACHA
SZABOLCS LÁSZLÓ
MARKENC LORENCI
RĂZVAN NICOLESCU
NICOLETA ROMAN

Editor: Andreea Eșanu

ISSN 1584-0298

New Europe College
Str. Plantelor 21
023971 Bucharest
Romania
www.nec.ro; e-mail: nec@nec.ro
Tel. (+4) 021.307.99.10

MARIYA HORYACHA

Gerda Henkel Fellow

Independent scholar
horiacha@yahoo.com
ORCID: 0000-0002-6585-5128

Biographical note

Mariya Horyacha holds her PhD in Political Sciences from the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Ukraine (2002) and PhD in Theology (S.T.D.) from the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium (2012). In 2013-2023, she was a Professor at the Ukrainian Catholic University, editor of the scholarly journal *Analecta of the UCU: Theology* and the book series *Sources of Christianity*. She has published books, articles and reviews in Church history and Patristics and participated in international conferences, workshops and colloquia in Ukraine, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria, Germany, Italy, Greece, and the United Kingdom.

THE MAKING OF MONASTIC HAMARTIOLOGY II: THE CONTRIBUTION BY EASTERN ASCETIC FATHERS OF THE FOURTH–SEVENTH CENTURIES TO THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF SIN*

Mariya Horyacha

Abstract

This article considers the theology of sin among Eastern ascetics of the early Byzantine period, exploring their theology's focus, key points, and terminology. It highlights the main stages in the formation and development of monastic hamartiology by examining the contributions of three major ascetic schools: the schools of Egypt, Palestine, and Mount Sinai. Consideration of their key representatives (Evagrius Ponticus, John Cassian, Barsanuphius and John, Dorotheus of Gaza, and John Climacus) provides a panoramic view of the main streams in the development of monastic hamartiology and assesses its significance for the broader Christian doctrine of sin.

Keywords: monastic hamartiology, sin, evil thoughts, passions, Evagrius Ponticus, John Cassian, Barsanuphius and John, Dorotheus of Gaza, John Climacus.

1. Introduction

Interest in monastic issues has never waned among scholars, and the current generation, with its interdisciplinary focus on social and psychological issues, is no exception. Ascetic writings of the early Byzantine period,

* This article is the second part of a larger study. The first part of this study is forthcoming in Collectanea Theologica. I would like to thank Dr. Richard Bishop and Dr. Catherine Brown-Tkacz for proofreading this text and their valuable comments and suggestions that made me improve this paper.

however, also contain theological ideas that deserve scholarly attention but are usually overlooked by systematic theologians. If we examine dogmatic textbooks, for example, we will rarely find mention of ascetic authors and their contribution to the Church's theology. And the same is true for the particular area of hamartiology. The root of this term comes from the Greek word *hamartia* (ἁμαρτία) which originally referred to missing the mark[1]. In Christian theology, this word has usually referred to any failure to adhere to God's law; hamartiology, then, is the theological study of the origin, nature, and consequences of sin.

Because they had to deal with it each day in their ascetic practice, sin was part of the early ascetics' inner drama; sin was an issue of paramount importance on their path to holiness. The realization of the radical persistence of evil in their lives and the search for ways out of this fallen state led ascetics to reflect on the problem of sin – its origin, nature, and effects on the soul – but they did so with special emphases that were typical of their monastic environment. The context of the formative relationship between fathers and disciples produced a characteristic approach to the problem of sin and spawned corresponding literary genres, such as apophthegmata, chapters, and other examples of paraenetic discourse.

In recent years, several scholars have studied aspects of monastic hamartiology, focusing on individual ascetic authors or the interdependence of their ideas (Brakke, 2006; Stewart, 2005; Villegas-Marín, 2013; Squires, 2013; Gravier, 2022). There have also been attempts to trace an evolutionary development from the Evagrian scheme of eight thoughts to the seven deadly sins proposed by Gregory the Great (540–604) (Tilby, 2009; Okholm, 2014). Still lacking is a synthetic study showing the trajectory and main stages of the development of monastic hamartiology and integrating it into the Church's doctrine of sin. The present article, therefore, undertakes such a synthesis, highlighting the contribution of early Byzantine monasticism to the developing Christian doctrine of sin.

This article addresses three main questions: 1) Can we speak of a contribution by ascetic authors to Christian hamartiology, and if so, what was the nature of that contribution? 2) What are the key points of the monastic doctrine of sin and the main stages of its development? 3) What is the specific focus of monastic hamartiology, and in what ways is it original? Exploring monastic hamartiology from a historical perspective, this article shows how attempts to solve the problem of sin in their daily life prompted the early monks to systematize their knowledge of sin, and how subsequent generations of monks sought to elaborate those early

views. The main sources for this exploration are the writings of important Eastern ascetic authors from the fourth through the seventh centuries. Since the ascetic literature of this period is quite extensive and diverse, I limit myself to the key writings of the Egyptian, Palestinian, and Sinaitic monastic schools of that era, such as the Apophthegmata Patrum, works by Evagrius of Pontus (345–399) and John Cassian (c.360–c.430), the correspondence of Barsanuphius the Great and John the Prophet (6th cent.), as well as writings by Dorotheus of Gaza (505–565) and John Climacus (7th cent.). Analysis of relevant passages from these monastic sources reveals a specific ascetic approach to the issue of sin as well as the main stages in the formation of monastic hamartiology. As a result, we gain a panoramic view of the development of monastic hamartiology and its significance for the broader Christian doctrine of sin.

2. The Egyptian School

The basic characteristic of monastic theology is the fact that it developed from the ascetic practice. Though monks sometimes engaged in theological discussions, such controversies have never been the seedbed of their theology but rather a manifestation and defence of monastic beliefs. In the development of monastic hamartiology, we can trace three stages, connected with the three important monastic centres settled in the region of Egypt and Palestine. Besides, there were also other ascetic settlements and communities with their ideas of sin but they did not influence the mainstream of this development as much as these three above-mentioned centres. The first of them was settled in the desert of Lower Egypt, mainly in the monastic sites of Scetis, Nitria and Kellia, where the apophthegms of the desert fathers originated.

2.1. The Desert Fathers

When reading the apophthegms, we usually do not find any explicit teaching on sin, because the main preoccupation of the Desert Fathers was very practical: they were striving for salvation, for which they needed to obtain forgiveness for their previous sins and by all means to avoid potential sins, temptations and worldly attractions. They tried to achieve this goal through the radical withdrawal from the world in order to escape its temptations and allurements. The withdrawal from the world created

favourable conditions for the forgiveness of sins, for it allowed the early ascetics to stay patiently in the cells, weeping for their sins (*AP*, Gelasius 6, John the Dwarf 12, Macarius the Great 27, 41; Milesius 2, Poemen 119, Pior 3).

It was a culture sine qua non, a constant practice of all the Desert Fathers, which they kept throughout their whole life, even if their sins were forgiven (*AP*, Dioscorus 2). On the one hand, it helped them to avoid unnecessary judgements on a brother's faults and kept them in humility (*AP*, James 2, Amoun of Nitria 4; Moses 2*;* Pior 3). Abba Sarmatas expressed this conviction in these words: "I prefer a sinful man who knows he has sinned and repents, to a man who has not sinned and considers himself to be righteous" (Sarmatas 1). Also, Antony the Great taught that the main task of the monk was "always to take the blame for his own sins before God and to expect temptation to his last breath" (*AP*, Anthony 4). On the other hand, weeping and compunction helped the ascetic to gain both deliverance from faults and the acquisition of virtues (*AP*, Poemen 97, 119, 162, 208). The penitential discipline of the Desert Fathers drastically differed from the ecclesiastical one and was considerably mitigated (Dörries 1962). When brothers asked abba Sisoes whether one who sinned must do penance for a year, six months or forty days, the old man answered, "No, he needs to do penance for a few days. But I trust in God that if such a man does penance with his whole heart, God will receive him, even in three days" (*AP*, Sisoes 20).

While one could easily and quickly receive forgiveness of his sins through repentance and weeping, it was much more difficult to preserve himself from future sins. The apophthegms contain diverse advice from the monks with regard to various kind of sins, including problems of anger and judging others, lust, fornication and other sexual temptations, love of money and greed, slander, hatred, heresy and idolatry, accidie, vain-glory and pride, etc. To deal with all these sins and temptations, the ascetic early or late had to enter into the twofold interior struggle: on the one hand, he was to master and control his passions and evil thoughts and on the other hand he was to fight the demons. From their experience of this struggle the desert fathers were well aware that "the demons attempt to capture a man's spirit through his own impetus", and "they draw him in this manner until they lead him to an invisible passion" (*AP*, Cronius 2). Therefore, "if anyone wants to drive out the demons, he must first subdue the passions; for he will banish the demon of the passion which he has mastered. For example, the devil accompanies anger; so if you control your anger, the

devil of anger will be banished. And so it is with each of the passions" (*AP*, Pityrion 1). So finally, a struggle against passions became central in the monastic routine as a prophylactic means for avoiding sins and as a precondition for overcoming the demons.

The constant struggle with passions does not mean that the desert father never enjoyed peace and freedom from passions. They certainly had such experiences too, as abba Joseph acknowledged this before his disciples, saying: "'I am a king today, for I reign over the passions" (*AP*, Joseph of Panephysis 10). However, this experience usually was temporary and short-lived, as abba Longinus clearly explained to abba Acacius with this example: "A woman knows she has conceived when she no longer loses any blood. So it is with the soul: she knows she has conceived the holy spirit when the passions stop coming out of her. But as long as one is held back in the passions, how can one dare to believe one is sinless? Give blood and receive the Spirit" (*AP*, Longinus 5). Most of the time the monks combined manual work with prayers and meditations which inevitably brought them to struggle against destructive thoughts as impediments to a pure prayer. The struggle against such thoughts became a basic daily routine of Egyptian monks as an effective prophylactic means to prevent falling into sins. It is in this context that the Evagrian teaching of eight generic thoughts (λογισμοί) appeared and became fundamental not only for monks but also for the entire Church.

2.2. Evagrius' scheme of eight generic thoughts

Evagrius Ponticus, one of the greatest intellectuals of the fourth century, summarized the desert experience and his own intellectual insights. On this basis, he developed a comprehensive list of eight generic thoughts (λογισμοί) as a pedagogical and diagnostic means to assist monks in their ascetical strivings[2]. He saw the goal of the monk as pure prayer and contemplation of God which can be tasted only after achieving *apatheia*, the state of freedom from tempting thoughts and passionate impulses and movements. As David Brakke pointed out, the goal of the Evagrian monk was "to become not merely a 'monastic man', that is, someone who has withdrawn from committing sins in action, but rather, a 'monastic intellect,' that is, someone who is free even from thoughts of sin" (Brakke 2009, 26). Since sin "arises from the thoughts that are in our intellect" (*Antirrh.* Prol. 5), Evagrius' main interest was not in sins but in thoughts and passions as the source and predecessors of sin. These terms became

predominant in the ascetic environment of the East and pushed aside the terminology of sin per se. Moreover, they became technical terms in the ascetic theology of Evagrius and acquired a specific meaning, somewhat distinct from their common use.

The concept of thoughts (λογισμοί) presupposes not purely intellectual or abstract ideas that take shape in the mind, but a mental phenomenon that allows for the presence of certain non-intellectual elements such as emotions and volitions. The λογισμός need not be necessarily an abstract idea; it can also be a certain image produced by the imagination (φαντασία) or a recollection evoked by memory (μνήμη). Moreover, Evagrius usually employs this term in a negative sense, associating it with the idea of "temptation" (πειρασμός). In the *Praktikos*, he defines temptation as "a thought (λογισμός) that rises up through the passionate part of the soul and darkens the intellect"[3].

The negative connotation dominating the term λογισμός brings it closer to the term "passion" (πάθος). In a narrow sense, thought is certainly not the same as passion. Evagrius clearly states that thought is the manifestation of the disorder in the soul (i.e., passion) and it can also be the source of passion (*Prakt.* 74; *Eul.* 2, 5, 8, 12, 21; *In Prov.* 6:19). However, in his writings, there are also statements that almost equate these terms and use them interchangeably as synonyms or rough equivalents[4]: he mentions once the thought itself, another time the passion associated with it, still another time the demon, responsible for the emergence of a certain thought or passion (*Prakt.* 7-14; *Ep.* 39:2). Such interchange does not mean that Evagrius confuses all these terms; rather he points to their close connection, which we will discuss below.

Though Evagrius typically used *logismos* in a negative sense (Guillaumont & Guillaumont 1971, 56), the term itself, as Columba Stewart rightly points out, "was not necessarily pejorative and was certainly less judgmental than 'sin' or 'vice'"; it was a technical term that allowed one "to distinguish between the source of a thought, which was often beyond human control, and its reception, which required human cooperation" (Stewart 2005, 17). It presupposed an element of moral evaluation and a possibility of longer duration. It is more about a certain process of thinking, considering, dissecting something rather than a single thought[5]. When such a thought persists in the mind, it inevitably engages passions and "bring[s] the *nous* down to ruin and perdition", for if the mind does not resist the harmful thought, "it becomes overwhelmed by passion and risks moving towards sin in action" (*Peri logismon* 22 I 24). Therefore, to

avoid sins, the monk needed to watch over his thoughts, discern among them the dangerous ones and cut them off. To help the monk to do this task effectively, Evagrius composed a list of the eight principal thoughts as a certain pedagogical and diagnostic instrument, providing a clear description of their symptoms and manifestations as well as supplying the means for overcoming them.

The list of the tempting thoughts includes: gluttony (γαστριμαργία); lust or fornication (πορνεία); avarice or love of money (φιλαργυρία); sadness or dejection (λύπη)[6], anger (ὀργή)[7], despondency or listlessness, also called accidie (ἀκηδία)[8], vainglory (κενοδοξία) and pride (ὑπερηφανία)[9]. The order of the thoughts in the list reflects the general idea of spiritual progress, when one is progressing from the fight against the more materialistic thoughts such as gluttony, lust, avarice; to the confrontation with the more interior temptations such as dejection, anger, despondency, and finally, when the former are tamed, to the more subtle intellectual thoughts of vainglory and pride. Sometimes Evagrius reduces this list of eight thoughts to the three primary and fundamental ones – gluttony, avarice, and vainglory – for they formed a front line behind which all other evil thoughts go: it is impossible for a man to fall under the power of any demon, "unless he has first been wounded by those in the front line". That is why the devil suggested these three thoughts to the Lord: "first, he exhorted him to turn stones into bread" (temptation by gluttony); "then, he promised him the whole world if he would fall down and worship him" (temptation by love of money); "and thirdly, he said that if he would listen to him he would be glorified for having suffered no harm from such a fall" (temptation by vainglory) (Lk. 4:1–13; *Peri logismon* 1).

The Evagrian list was not fully original. We can find similar lists and terms in Origen and in other Church Fathers. What was original and valuable in this scheme of eight generic thoughts is that Evagrius combined this list with the tripartite structure of the soul, which he borrowed from Platonic anthropology through his teacher Gregory of Nazianzus. Following Plato, he teaches that the soul consists of *nous* (νοῦς), desire (ἐπιθυμία) and indignation/aversion (θυμός). Like Gregory the Theologian, he also speaks of the threefold division of the soul into rational (λογιστικόν), concupiscible (ἐπιθυμητικόν) and irascible (θυμικόν) parts (*Prakt.* 89). This tripartite division of the soul became a basis for his instructions to the monks about ascetic practice but since he used the two similar schemes, his concept of the soul could acquire both a broad and a narrow sense: sometimes he speaks of the soul consisting of three elements: *nous*, *thumos*

and *epithumia*; sometimes he reduces the meaning of the soul to a narrow sense including only its irrational faculties subject to passions (*thumos* and *epithumia*), while the *nous* is considered as something separate (*In Prov.* 23:22)[10].

The *nous* is the rational part of the soul, while *epithumia* and *thumos* constitute its irrational and passionate part, which can be used according to nature or against it. The proper use of the *epithumia* is to desire virtue, while the *thumos* is meant to resist evil. Since these two faculties of the soul are irrational, they need to be guided by the *nous*, otherwise they easily deviate from their natural activity to the movement against nature. Being moved by memories, bodily senses and appetites, thoughts and demonic instigations, they tend to act against nature. When they do act according to nature, Evagrius names them the "powers" (δυνάμεις) of the soul, emphasizing their positive function; when they act against nature, they become "passions" (πάθη)[11].

The tripartite structure of the soul probably shaped the selection of the *logismoi* and their order in the Evagrian scheme. Thus, the first three thoughts (gluttony, lust and avarice) are connected with the concupiscible part of the soul as driven by desire and appetites (*epithumia*), anger and sadness are connected with reaction (*thumos*), and thoughts of vainglory and pride are connected with the rational part of the soul (*nous*)[12]. The place of accidie in the scheme is somewhat ambiguous: due to its complex character, it cannot be confined to a single part of the soul. On the one hand, it is connected with both concupiscible and irascible parts of the soul, as it can be of "animal" origin, having its roots in desire and reaction and being the prolonged movement of both (*In Ps.* 118:28); on the other hand, it is linked with the rational part of the soul, since it can also be of "human" origin, like vainglory and pride, arising from the intellect, affecting it and suffocating it (*Skemmata* 40)[13].

The eight thoughts make up a chain, in which every next thought is born from the previous one: gluttony opens the way to lust, avarice to anger, anger to sadness, prolonged combination of anger and sadness results in accidie and so on. Therefore, a monk who strives for spiritual progress should certainly conquer all these thoughts, and the struggle usually follows the same order: an ascetic begins to purify the concupiscible part of his soul struggling with gluttony, lust and avarice, then he needs to overcome the thoughts of the irascible part (anger and sadness) and accidie that affects both passionate parts of the soul, and finally, he passes to the struggle against more subtle intellectual thoughts of vainglory and

pride. In practice, this order is certainly not so strict and can vary, but the scheme clearly demonstrates the trajectory of ascetical practice toward the final goal of contemplation which cannot be achieved unless one purifies oneself from all these thoughts.

Since thoughts and passions are so closely connected, it is necessary to clarify the relationship between them. Evagrius points out: "One should pay attention to whether it is the thoughts that set the passions in motion, or the passions that set the thoughts in motion. Some people have held the first opinion, others the second" (*Prakt.* 37). He sides with neither of the two opinions but explains that both scenarios are possible, depending on the origin of the tempting thoughts– from within or from without.

The first scenario takes place when the tempting thoughts come from within, produced by bodily senses (αἴσθησις*),* memory (μνήμη) and temper (κρᾶσις) (*Prakt.* 38). The material human nature presupposes that through the act of perception by bodily senses the intellect receives the images and representations which, being preserved in memory, form the material for thoughts and memories that trouble irrational parts of the soul and the intellect. As Evagrius explains, sensation gives birth to desire and "desire is a source of every pleasure" (*Prakt.* 4). If the monk neglects to control the passionate part of his soul, the desire confines the intellect in sensual reality and activates the passions that produce passionate thoughts, imaginations and memories, affecting the soul. So, it can be said that perception is a source for the origin of passions (Pitrea 2019, 265).

The second scenario takes place when others (namely demons and people) implant tempting thoughts (λογισμοί) by affecting the body (*Prakt.* 35-36). In this case, the thoughts set the passions in motion in such a way. The demon introduces the tempting thought, representation or memory into the *nous* and as soon as the *nous* accepts it, the thought sets in motion the passionate parts of the soul – *epithumia* and *thumos* – then the passions reach the intellect, join the thought, making it passionate, and push the *nous* to concentrate on the sensitive things instead of the rational ones (Harrison 2021, 133–150).

Both scenarios are at work only when the *epithumia* and *thumos* are not healed. However, when love and abstinence are present, the passions are not set in motion; for love is the bridle for the passions of the irascible part of the soul as abstinence is for the concupiscible part (*Prakt.* 38). Both scenarios presuppose the responsibility for the monk but the difference is when the responsibility starts. In the first scenario, the monk is responsible for the presence of the passionate thoughts, while in

the second scenario, the monk is not responsible for the presence of the evil thoughts but becomes responsible for the state of his *epithumia* and *thumos* which are activated under the influence of the demonic thoughts (Harrison 2021, 150).

These two scenarios also shed light on why Evagrius uses such terms as thoughts, passions and demons interchangeably. When he describes the first scenario, he usually equates the thoughts with the passions, using them as synonyms; when he speaks of the second scenario, he interchanges the terminology of thoughts and demons[14], for here the λογισμός is simply a semantic abbreviation for a phrase "a thought coming from a demon" (Guillaumont & Guillaumont 1971, 57). Though Evagrius blurs the difference between δαίμων and λογισμός and speaks of them "as though they were synonyms", it does not mean that demons for him are merely a metaphorical reality or "a symbol for psychological dynamics" (Harmless 2004, 327). As Harmless points out, "'Thoughts' were simply the most common mechanism by which desert solitaries encountered demons" (*Ibid.*). Therefore, Evagrian teaching on the eight thoughts is closely connected with his demonology. Like Origen, Evagrius combines the psychological and demonological concepts of sin and internalizes the struggle against demons, locating it within the mind of a monk. Such combination of the psychological concept of thoughts with demonology allows him to emphasize the external origin of the thought, on the one hand, and to preserve the personal responsibility for welcoming these thoughts, on the other[15]. Evagrius often speaks of demonic tactics, means and crafty schemes in seducing people to sin and explains that the demons "war with seculars more through objects, but with monks they do so especially through thoughts" and "to the extent that it is easier to sin in thought than in action, so is the warfare in thought more difficult than that which is conducted through objects" (*Prakt.* 48). According to him, the demons are specialized in concrete vices and attack people successively with one after the other and the weaker is followed by the stronger. Their activity can also be mutually exclusive like, for example, fornication and vainglory.

There are two ways in which the demons attack the ascetics through thoughts: one is when the passionate part of the soul is not yet healed, and the other is when the person has been healed of the passions and has tasted contemplation. In the former case, the demons look for weaknesses in a person and plant related evil thoughts, which set the corresponding passions in motion. Usually, they stir up the passions through the bodily

senses (*Or.* 64) or memory (*Prakt.* 34). The latter comes into play when the passionate part of the soul is healed and a person has developed virtues and put the passions under control. In this case, because it is no longer possible to bring such a person down by the senses or memory, the demons try to distract him from prayer and contemplation through thoughts that bring false knowledge. Evagrius explains this figuratively in his interpretation of Psalm 143:7:

> "*Draw me up and deliver me from many waters, from the hand of foreigners*". The *foreign hand* is the tempting-thought (*logismos*) arising in the impassioned part of the soul and constraining the *nous*; but this *hand* touches the ascetical practitioners, while the hand that touches contemplatives is false knowledge of the objects themselves or of their contemplations, which suggests that their creator is unjust and devoid of wisdom. (*In Ps.* 143:7–8).[16]

According to the different ways in which demons affect a person through their thoughts, Evagrius proposes different remedies against them. In order to eliminate evil thoughts originating from the human senses and memory, one must get rid of passions and achieve *apatheia* through ascetic exercises (fasting, vigils, anachoresis, etc.) and training in virtue, while "[more] subtle [tempting-]thoughts [are laid aside] through endurance in prayer and spiritual contemplation" (*Peri logismon* 40). Since the assault of evil thoughts is so fierce, an ascetic cannot win it by his own power and needs to pray with endurance and call God who alone can silence the mind (*Cap. Tria* 3)[17] and brings victory over the thoughts, either calming them, as He calmed a great storm on the sea (*Peri logismon* 24), or completely destroying them, as Psalm 67 allegorically says: "God indeed crushes the heads of his enemies" (*In Ps.* 67:22)[18].

Evagrius distinguishes between imperfect *apatheia* and perfect *apatheia*. Christoph Joest has defined the difference between the two by stating that "imperfect *apatheia* belongs to a man who still experiences temptations, but once he has overcome all demons, then is perfect passionlessness attained" (*Peri logismon* 40)[19]. The experience of *apatheia* is not the goal but only the necessary precondition for the state of pure prayer (*Or.* 71). And even pure prayer is not the end of all efforts. The true end is the mind's ability to contemplate the mystery of the Holy Trinity, which is only made possible through *apatheia* and pure prayer. When this state is achieved, all internal and external distractions fail to disrupt the monk from his focus.

Evagrius offers a powerful image of a saint who had reached this state: "when the demons attacked him and for two weeks used him as a ball, tossing him into the air and catching him on his mat", nonetheless "they were not able even for a little while to bring his mind down out of his fiery prayer" (*Or.* 111). This saint was able to remain in prayer during this ordeal because his mind was no longer troubled by the impure thoughts and passions (*Or.* 71). However, the state of pure contemplation, and thus of perfect *apatheia*, cannot last infinitely, for it is not in the power of man to prevent thoughts from troubling our minds, and yet the monk always has the opportunity to maintain a state of imperfect *apatheia*.

Evagrius' scheme of eight generic thoughts came to exert a significant influence on many later monastic figures. It was further developed and popularized by his disciple John Cassian who brought the scheme to Gaul and made it known in the West.

2.3. John Cassian's elaboration

John Cassian is traditionally considered to be the disciple of Evagrius, or at least dependent on his thought and writings. The scholarly consensus concerning this dependence was firmly established in the 20th century[20] and still continues to prevail[21], though there are also voices, arguing that both Evagrius and Cassian independently relied on the same oral tradition of the Desert Fathers, according to their own witness in the writings[22]. Whatever were the sources of both authors, Cassian's teaching on eight principal vices basically reproduced and developed the Evagrian scheme of eight generic thoughts with some slight but important changes, which mostly concern the shift in terminology. While Evagrius preferred to speak of tempting or passionate thoughts (*logismoi*), sometimes interchanging them with passions and demons or spirits, Cassian consistently uses the term "*vitium*" (vice or fault) instead of the Latin equivalent "*cogitatio*" (thought) for the Greek *logismos*. By such change, he effected a subtle shift of emphasis from thinking to behaviour (Stewart 2003, 212).

Like Evagrius, Cassian also uses alternative terms for indicating tempting thoughts such as "passion" (*passio*) and "spirit" (*spiritus*), preferring the latter to the word "*daemon*", which is used in his stories rather than in his theoretical presentation of vices (*Ibid.*, 214). When he considers eight principal vices in his *Institutions*, naming them as the spirit of gluttony, the spirit of fornication, etc. (in the titles of the chapters), these are for him no more than figurative names for certain vices and refer not to the

demons of gluttony, fornication, etc., but to the passions that afflict the soul. While Evagrius classified demons into various categories according to their specialities, such as the spirit of gluttony, fornication, vainglory, etc. (Harmless 2004, 328), Cassian's approach is more nuanced. On the one hand, he acknowledges that "not all devils can implant all the passions in men but certain spirits brood over each sin", and "each one implants in the hearts of men that sin, in which he himself revels, and they cannot implant their special vices all at one time, but in turn, according as the opportunity of time or place, or a man who is open to their suggestions, excites them" (*Conl.* 7:17). On the other hand, Cassian never treats vices and demons as interchangeable synonyms but speaks of them separately and clearly shows the difference. Sometimes he even contrasts them, saying that "those men are more wretched who are possessed by sins than those who are possessed by devils" (*Conl.* 7:25) and "it is more wonderful to have cast out one's faults from one's self than devils from another" (*Conl.* 15:8).

In Conference 24, he explains that there is one source and origin of all vices, "but different names are assigned to the passions and corruptions in accordance with the character of that part, or member, which has been injuriously affected in the soul" (*Conl.* 24:15). Since its structure is tripartite – rational (*logikon*), irascible (*thumikon)* and concupiscible (*epithymitikon*) – the name of the vice is given to it in accordance with the part affected: "For if the plague of sin has infected its rational parts, it will produce the sins of vainglory, conceit, envy, pride, presumption, strife, heresy. If it has wounded the irascible feelings, it will give birth to rage, impatience, sulkiness, accidie, pusillanimity and cruelty. If it has affected that part which is subject to desire, it will be the parent of gluttony, fornication, covetousness, avarice, and noxious and earthly desires" (*Ibid.*).

Cassian knows that the source of evil attacks is the devil and his demons, whom he names respectively as "the pestilent blast of sin" (*Conl.* 24:17) and "spiritual wickednesses" (*Conl.* 4:13), tempting the soul with crafty malice, using evil thoughts as the main tool for their temptations. He describes the mechanism of their action upon the soul: evil spirits tempt the soul by laying insidious snares for those particular affections of the soul which they have seen to be weaker and feebler and unable to make a stubborn resistance to the powerful attacks of the foe and therefore susceptible to being taken captive by evil spirits (*Conl.* 24:17). Cassian points out that the enemies (demons) are constantly harming us, but they oppose us only by inciting to evil things, not by forcing. That is, their

evil cannot deceive us without our consent, since we have the power of rejection and the liberty of acquiescing. Therefore, if someone goes wrong, it is because he does not immediately meet evil thoughts with refusal and contradiction but allows the devil to overcome him (*Conl.* 7:8).

Another important shift in terminology concerns the Evagrian concept of *apatheia*, which Cassian replaced with the Latin phrase "purity of heart" (*puritas cordis*, or *puritas mentis*, or *puritas animae*). Some argue that he made this change intentionally to evade the doctrinal controversy (Sheridan 1997, 306). Others believe that the term "purity of the heart" (*puritas cordis*) was at that time a generally accepted equivalent of the Greek term "apatheia" and its use in the Latin terminology was already established (Raash 1966; Kim 2002, 88–89). Still others suggest that Cassian creatively reworked the teaching of Evagrius and adapted it to the ascetic context of the Latin West (Stewart 1998, 41 *and* 2003, 217–218). Without excluding any of the possible reasons, we can suggest that, writing in the aftermath of the Origenistic and Pelagian controversies, Cassian needed to adapt Evagrian teaching to the context, which did not welcome the concept of *apatheia* due to its misinterpretation by Jerome as insensibility or impassibility (Misiarczyk, 2021b). So, he replaced it with a more neutral Biblical term.

However, the "purity of heart" as Cassian's equivalent for Evagrian *apatheia* was not the only term to express the final goal of monastic life. In his *Conferences*, this goal shifts from purity of heart (*Conl.* 1:4) to unceasing prayer (*Conl.* 9:2; 10:7), to perfect chastity (*Conl.* 12), to constant rumination upon Scripture (*Conl.* 14:13), to distinct goals for anchorites and cenobites (*Conl.* 19:8), and finally to remembrance of God (*Conl.* 24:6). As Columba Stewart pointed out, "a traditional explanation for this variety would have been the attribution of the conferences of various elder monks" but, in fact, it reflects "Cassian's own pedagogical method at work as he offers several perspectives on monastic perfection" and his view of monastic life developed in the process of writing (Stewart 2003, 211).

One more change introduced by Cassian concerns the interpretation of the Gospel story about the three temptations of Christ (Mt. 4:1–10), which Evagrius associated with the front-line thoughts that open the way to all the others. As seen above, according to Evagrius, these were gluttony, love of money and vainglory. Cassian also refers to this account, when he speaks of three main vices among the eight, but he modifies the list of

main temptations into gluttony, vainglory and pride, and gives a somewhat different interpretation of this story.

On the one hand, he explains in detail why Evagrius singled out these three thoughts, but on the other hand, he modifies this list. For having vanquished gluttony, Jesus could not be tempted by fornication, "which springs from superfluity and gluttony as its root", and he "had no experience of the fiery darts of carnal lust, which in our case arise even against our will, from the constitution of our natures". Therefore, the devil did not venture to tempt the Lord to fornication, but passed on immediately to the temptation of covetousness, which he knew to be the root of all evils (1 Tim. 6:10), and when again vanquished in this, he did not dare attack Him with any of those sins which follow and spring from this as a root and source; and so he passed on to the last passion, pride, which affects even those who are perfect (*Conl.* 5:6). Here we see an essential change. Where Evagrius speaks of vainglory, Cassian speaks of pride.

Yet, even in this modified form, Evagrius' list did not suit Cassian. Whereas Evagrius was based on Matthew's Gospel, Cassian refers to Luke's version, where the order of temptation is somewhat different: after the temptation with hunger, the devil tempts Jesus with all the kingdoms, and only then says: 'If you really are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here' (Lk. 4:9) This sequence fits better with Cassian's idea of the three principal temptations, in which he replaces love of money with vainglory and vainglory with pride. According to Cassian, the Lord was tempted with gluttony when the devil said to Him: "Command these stones that they be made bread", with vainglory through the words of the devil: "If you are the Son of God, cast yourself down", and with pride, when the devil showed him all the kingdoms of the world (*Conl.* 5:6).

Cassian also gives an explanation for the number of "eight", using Origen's allegorical interpretation about seven hostile nations (Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, etc.) whom Israel had to defeat in order to possess the Promised Land of Canaan (Deut. 7:1–2). To these seven he added the Egyptians (representing gluttony) for a total of eight[23]. The reason why that nation is not commanded to be utterly destroyed, like the seven others, but only to have its land forsaken, is this: man cannot get rid of bodily needs, as it is said: "Do not abhor the Egyptian, for you were a stranger in his land" (Deut. 23:8); rather he can only separate himself from them in order to avoid lust[24]. The affections of the other seven faults, however, must be completely rooted out in every possible way as being harmful to the soul (*Conl.* 5:18-19).

Along with the allegorical interpretation of the seven nations and the Egyptians as the figures of the eight vices, Cassian appeals to other Scripture verses where God enumerates ten nations whose land He promised Abraham to give to his seed (Gen. 15:19-21; Ex. 3:17). Explaining the significance of these ten nations as figures of the ten vices, Cassian adds two more faults to the eight: "idolatry, and blasphemy, to whose dominion […] irreligious hosts of the Gentiles and blasphemous ones of the Jews were subject, while they dwelt in a spiritual Egypt" (*Conl.* 5:22). But when one has renounced these and conquered gluttony (the spiritual Egypt), then one will have to wage war only against those seven which Moses enumerates.

Introducing relatively slight changes, Cassian further developed and systematized Evagrius's teaching about the eight thoughts. Although in the writings of Evagrius the order of thoughts is not fixed[25] and their number sometimes varies[26], Cassian enumerates the eight vices in a strict order (*gula*, *luxuria*, *avaritia*, *ira*, *tristitia*, *acedia*, *vana gloria*, *superbia*), reversing the place of anger and sadness, and classified the vices according to different criteria. His basic distinction is made between *natural vices* (gluttony and fornication) and *unnatural vices* (avarice, anger, sadness/dejection, accidie, vainglory and pride) (*Conl.* 5:2)[27]. He also divided the vices into four couplets and classified them according to the way of their operation: gluttony and fornication operate in and through the body, while vainglory and pride do not require any bodily action; avarice and anger are excited outside us, while sadness and accidie are motivated by internal feelings (*Conl.* 5:3).

Depending on the nature and interrelations between the vices, Cassian divides them into six "former" (gluttony, fornication, avarice, anger, sadness, accidie) and two "latter" (vainglory and pride). The former are sequentially connected with a special affinity and form together a chain, so that the excess of the previous gives rise to the next. For from the superfluity of gluttony springs fornication, from fornication avarice, from avarice anger, from anger sadness, and from sadness accidie. Cassian teaches that it is necessary to contend with these vices in the same order, i.e. starting with gluttony and proceeding to accidie. As to the latter two vices (vainglory and pride), they are not connected with the former six, as they do not spring up from them, but, on the contrary, flourish after the former six have been eradicated (*Conl.* 5:10). Finally, Cassian divides the vices into carnal and spiritual.

In the *Institutes*, Cassian offered a more advanced and better classification of the vices according to their kinds. The division of thoughts into types had been started already by Evagrius and now brought to completion. Describing the nature of the eight principal vices, their origins, causes and manifestations, Cassian marks out the subdivisions of each. Of gluttony there are three kinds: the madness of the belly, which is the delight "in stuffing the stomach, and gorging all kinds of food", the madness of the palate, which is the pleasure in more refined and delicious meals, and eating outside meal-times (*Inst.* 4:23). The nature of fornication is twofold: that of the body and that of the soul (*Inst.* 6:1, 22). The disease of avarice is threefold: the first persuades the monks to covet and procure what they never previously possessed in the world (the example of Gehazi, 2 Kings 5:21–27); another forces them to resume and once more desire with excessive eagerness the possession of those things which they renounced (the example of Judas, Mt 27:5); a third does not allow the monks to strip themselves of all their worldly goods, and entices them to keep money and property which they ought to have renounced and forsaken (the example of Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5:1–10; *Inst.* 7:14). While Evagrius usually distinguishes between anger and indignation, Cassian speaks of three kinds of anger, naming them in Greek words: the one (θυμός) blazes up interiorly (Ps. 4:4); the other (ὀργή) breaks out in word, deed and action (*Conl.* 3:8); the third (μῆνις) lingers, simmering for days and long periods (Eph. 4:26; *Inst.* 8:9; *Conl.* 5:11)[28]. Sadness is twofold: one form is found to result from previous anger, the other springs from the desire of some gain which has not been realized (*Inst.* 9:4). Accidie is twofold: one sends the monk to sleep; another makes him forsake a cell and flee away (*Inst.* 10:2-5). Vainglory can take various forms and shapes but there are two main kinds of it: one is being puffed up about carnal and visible things; another is desiring vain praise for spiritual and invisible things (*Inst.* 11:1–2; *Conl.* 5:12). Similarly, pride can be carnal and spiritual: the former assaults even beginners and carnal persons, the latter particularly troubles the best of men and spiritually minded ones (*Inst.* 12:2. *Conl.* 5:12).

Cassian's writings contributed to the popularization of the Evagrian scheme of the eight thoughts so that it became firmly established in the West. Later, Pope Gregory the Great (c.540–604) transformed it into a list of seven deadly sins: vainglory (*inanis gloria*), envy (*invidia*), anger (*ira*), dejection (*tristitia*), avarice (*avaritia*), gluttony (*ventris ingluvies*), lust (*luxuria*)[29]. Inspired by the Vulgata text that *initium omnis peccati est superbia* (Sir 10:15), Gregory left pride off the list as a source of all sins

and reversed the order, putting vainglory at the beginning and gluttony and lust at the end of the list. He also added envy (*invidia*) and combined accidie with sadness (*tristitia*). Later, when *tristitia* was again replaced by *acedia*, and vainglory was merged with pride, the list took on the following form: pride (*superbia*), anger (*ira*), envy (*invidia*), sloth (*akedia*), avarice (*avaritia*), gluttony (*gula*), and lust (*luxuria*)[30].

3. The Palestinian School

While John Cassian brought Egyptian monastic tradition and adapted it to the Western context, there were also later, different Egyptian influences. The dramatic events in the Egyptian monastic sites in late fourth and early fifth century, such as the Origenistic crisis and the devastations of Scetis by the Mazices, resulted in the escape of many monks, and this led to the flourishing of another monastic centre in the fifth and sixth centuries. Some of these fugitives settled in the region of Gaza, trying to adapt their Egyptian tradition to a new context. The monastic centre of Gaza, reinforced by the Egyptian infusion, gave a new impulse to a further development of monastic theological thought, including that of sin. The school of Gaza covers three subsequent generations of monks with such prominent figures as Isaiah of Scetis/Gaza (+491)[31], Barsanuphius the Great (+543) and John the Prophet[32], and their disciple, abba Dorotheus of Gaza (505–565) who not only exercised spiritual leadership in their monastic community but also had considerable influence on a broader ecclesiastical and social context of the area. They left a massive trove of instructions concerning various aspects of spiritual life, including sin as the main problem of monastic preoccupation.

3.1. Isaiah the Solitary

Abba Isaiah provided a certain link between Egyptian and Palestinian monasticism. About 451 he left Scetis for Palestine and moved to the region of Gaza where he lived as a solitary offering his spiritual guidance for local ascetics. In his *Ascetic Discourses*, he discussed various aspects of the monastic life, including some theoretical and practical issues concerning sin and the passions. His concept of sin is closely connected with his anthropology and soteriology (Bitton-Ashkelony & Kofsky 2006, 131). He teaches that the passions were part of created human nature. Adam

in Paradise possessed several natural senses such as desire, ambition, anger, hatred and pride which were innate to humanity from creation but, after the fall of Adam, "all of his senses were twisted toward that which is contrary to nature" and "changed within him into shameful passions" so that instead of leading him to love for God they became a source of all sins and vices (*Log.* 2).

All monastic life and ascetic practices aim at returning to the natural state of the intellect and restoration of the counter-natural passions into natural senses. This can be achieved only with the help of the Lord. The task of the ascetic is "taking control of all our bodily members until they are established in the state that is according to nature" (*Log.* 2) and the former human integrity is renewed. To progress on this way toward the renewal of the natural human state is possible through an ongoing process of self-reforming, examination of consciousness, discernment of thoughts and memories, repentance, prayers and mourning. Isaiah believes that the best way to practice all this is detachment from the world and solitary life, which provide suitable conditions for constant vigilance, and avoiding not only small faults but also the very occasions or preconditions of sin. This process is so painful that abba Isaiah compares it to crucifixion, following that of Jesus Christ. His ascetic discourses contain various practical instructions and advice to help monks to proceed along this way of struggle against sins, passions and demonic machinations. While Isaiah's theoretical concept of sin betrays his Monophysite position, his practical theology is free from these traits and was adopted by subsequent generations of Gazan monasticism which gradually shifted from a solitary to a coenobitic type.

3.2. Barsanuphius the Great and John the Prophet

The two prominent leaders of the next generation were Barsanuphius the Great and John the Prophet. The two elders settled as recluses near the coenobitic monastery of abba Serid in the neighbourhood of Gaza, Tabatha, and functioned as the spiritual guides of its community. Barsanuphius, Egyptian by origin, was called the Great elder and the main leader, while John the Prophet was at first his disciple and then became "the other elder" of the monastery. Both, though living separately as recluses, preserved a deep spiritual connection with each other and communicated with the world through letters. Their extensive correspondence includes about 850 letters, addressed to hermits, coenobites, laymen, priests and bishops[33].

Later they were collected and edited by an anonymous monk and became the pearl of monastic literature in the Christian East. This correspondence strongly contrasts the apophthegms of the Egyptian desert fathers since it provides a detailed record of the process of spiritual guidance and monastic formation on a daily basis. Though the correspondence deals with a quite broad spectrum of daily monastic and secular problems, the main attention of the elders is always focused on the interior asceticism, and the problem of sin and the passions is one of the key issues of their letters.

In their instructions to the monks, the elders never discussed the theoretical foundations of their teaching on sin. Barsanuphius only mentioned Satan as sharing responsibility for the fall of humanity with humans (*Ep.* 69). His views on the former state of humanity are ambiguous. On the one hand, he states that humanity was created dispassionate and the passions are result of the fall (*Ep.* 246); on the other hand, he teaches that "there is anger that is natural (θυμός φυσικός), and there is anger that is against nature (παρὰ φύσιν) (*Ep.* 245). Schenkewitz considers that here Barsanuphius contradicts himself and his statement is reminiscent of Isaiah's teaching on positive and negative passions. However, it may be that Barsanuphius understands "θυμός" not in terms of passion but as the irascible faculty of the soul alongside the rational and appetitive ones.

In their instructions, the two elders preferred to focus on practical issues of daily ascetic routine, including the struggle against sins and the passions. In their letters Barsanuphius and John shared their thoughts and experience concerning various aspects of sinful behaviour, sexual temptations as well as potentially dangerous situations that could lead to sins including contacts with family and women, illness, food, prayers, etc. The correspondence reveals what the ascetics of Gaza considered to be sin or misconduct in their conscience. Practical advice of the elders also sheds light of some of their theoretical ideas of sin. Barsanuphius, for example, was well aware of how the process of falling into sin developed from the moment of temptation to a sinful action. He describes it in detail to a brother, suffering from the passion of fornication and wondering how he is to understand whether the temptation derives from his own desire or from the enemy. The old man instructed him that "when people are tempted by their own desires, this means that they have neglected themselves and allowed their hearts to meditate on deeds committed in the past" (*Ep.* 256). If one indulges the desire, then the process goes as follows:

> So the intellect gradually becomes blinded and begins unconsciously to heed or to speak to people with desire. And the intellect proposes excuses to itself about how to speak or sit with a particular person, and tries to fulfil this desire in every way possible. Now, if one allows the thought free rein in these matters, the warfare is increased to the point of falling into sin, if not in body, then at least in spirit through consent; as a result, one finds oneself adding wood to the fire that burns within. (*Ep.* 256)

Later John Climacus would summarize this knowledge by giving a clear name and definition to each of the stages in this process.

Being in full solidarity with Barsanuphius, John the Prophet often served as the interpreter of some rather obscure words of the Great elder. When one brother asked him what cutting off the root of the passions means, John explained that "this occurs by cutting off one's own will and by afflicting oneself as much as possible and by tormenting the senses in order to keep them disciplined, so that they may not be wrongly exercised" (*Ep.* 462). Another brother, troubled by his weakness and inability to follow the advice of the saints, asked him whether ignorance with regard to the passions could be better than the failure to fulfil the words of the saints, and John gave him this answer: "Such a thought is really terrible. So do not tolerate it at all. For if one learns something and then sins, one will surely incur condemnation. If one has not learned anything and still sins, then one will never incur condemnation; in this way, one's passions will continue to be unhealed" (*Ep.* 372). John's explanation turns the brother to his monastic vocation which is not to remain in ignorance in order to avoid condemnation but to seek healing from the passions. The inability to overcome passions by human efforts would lead to humility which enables God to heal the monk from all his passions. So the passions are afflictions (*Ep.* 304), a certain pedagogical means, by which God educates us in humility and, finally, he heals us from them (*Ep.* 109, 130). Therefore, both elders emphasize the role of invoking God's name as a remedy against sins and the passions, "for the name of God dispels all of the passions, when it is invoked, even without us knowing how this actually occurs" (*Ep.* 424).

3.3. Dorotheus of Gaza

Abba Dorotheus of Gaza represents the third generation of the Gazan monasticism[34]. Trained by the two elders, Barsanuphius and John, he

later became himself a prominent spiritual leader who summarised and systematised the teaching of his predecessors, adapting it to the needs of his coenobitic community. As Bitton-Ashkelony and Kofsky rightly pointed out, Dorotheus "integrated his ascetic teachings on sin into a patristic theology of salvation history" (Bitton-Ashkelony & Kofsky 2006, 142). He not only discusses particular questions pertaining to sin but also situated each problem within a broader framework of God's economy of salvation. In his Instruction 1, he explains its origin and how it can be overcome.

In contrast to Isaiah and Barsanuphius, Dorotheus teaches that the passions were alien to the humanity's created nature and entered it only after the fall. The natural state of humanity in Paradise was completely dispassionate and characterized by virtues, but after the transgression, Adam "fell from a state in accord with his nature (κατὰ φύσιν) to a state contrary to nature (παρὰ φύσιν), i.e. a prey to sin, to ambition, to a love of the pleasures of this life and the other passions; and he was mastered by them, and became a slave to them through his transgression. Then, little by little evil increased and death reigned" (Rom. 5:14; *Doct.* 1:1). After the fall, humanity became infected with the illness of the passions which could be cured by God alone. Dorotheus sees the reason for the first sin of humanity in pride (self-elevation and pretentions to superiority) and speaks of its three offshoots: self-justification, self-confidence and attachment to self-will. People justified themselves and did not want to correct. They turned away from God and followed their own judgement. So, God gave them over to their own will to walk the destructive path of evil so that they could wake up and repent, but people buried their conscience, that intrinsic natural law, and did not repent. In his mercy, God gave them the law of Moses and sent his holy prophets, but nothing could heal fallen humanity from its illness of the passions (*Doct.* 1:2-3). Finally, God sent His only begotten Son (τὸν μονογενῆ) who restored fallen human nature to its sinless state and through holy baptism delivered us from all sins. Taking into account that the tendency of humanity to sin still remained, God also gave us the holy commandments to discern the passions and become free from them through the cultivation of ascetic virtues (*Doct.* 1:5). By his commandments God intended to awaken our dormant conscience and bring it to life, rekindle this buried spark (conscience), and to teach us how to achieve dispassion through the observance of His commandments (*Doct.* 3:40)[35]. From that time on, it is our deliberate choice whether to listen to our conscience, letting it shine and enlighten us, or to put it to sleep again.

Dorotheus clearly distinguishes between sins and the passions as the root and cause of sin: "Sin (ἁμαρτίαι) is one thing but instinctive reactions or passion (πάθη) is another. These are our reactions: pride, anger, sexual indulgence, hate, greed, and so on. The corresponding sins are the gratification of these passions: thus, a man acts and brings into corporeal reality those works which were suggested to him by innate desires (passions)" (*Doct.* 1:5). In short, the passions are simply dispositions (διάθεσεις), sins are their actualization (ἐνέργειαι) in bodily actions. Everyone is subject to passions, but it is possible not to set them in action. Since the passions are alien to the human nature, to return to the former dispassionate state one needs not only to control the passions but fully uproot them. Yet, Dorotheus acknowledges that not all can achieve this level. For those incapable of achieving dispassion, he offers a more realistic ascetic goal of controlling the passions and not allowing them to be actualised in actual sins. Those who follow their passions generate evil and commit sins. Evil has no essence in itself but comes into existence due to the lack of virtue. Just as wood produces worms, cloth produces moths, and iron produces rust, and the latter (worms, moths, rust) spoil and destroy the former (wood, cloth, and iron); in the same way the soul, deviating from its inherent health, which is virtue, generates evil in itself and becomes sick and passionate (*Doct.* 10:106).

Therefore, gaining freedom from the passions should be the primary preoccupation of a monk. It can be achieved only with the help of God through fulfilling His commandments. This process is slow and requires much struggle and endeavour. However, not all people deal with the passions in a proper way. Dorotheus defines three categories of people based on how they deal with the passions. The first category includes those who do what the passions prompt them to do. Dorotheus likens them to a man, who, being attacked by the arrows of the enemy, catches an arrow and plunges it into his own heart. There are also others who resist the passions, not allowing them to become rooted (στερεωθῆναι), but they do not cut them off. Using their reason, they seem to bypass them, but still preserving them in themselves. Those are like a man who is shot at by an enemy, but, being protected with a breastplate, he receives no serious wounds. There are still others who uproot their passions. These are like a man who, being shot at by an enemy, strikes the arrow and turns it back into his enemy's heart, as the psalmist says: "Their own sword shall enter their own hearts, and their bow shall be broken to pieces" (Ps 36:15). As Dorotheus points out, these three states of the soul with regard to the

passions themselves have a wide spectrum of conducts and approaches. (*Doct.* 10:108).

Those who allow the passions to operate run the risk that they will develop into the passionate attachment (προσπάθεια) that leads to the evil habit (ἕξις). Passionate attachment is an intermediate state that develops as a result of our indulgence in passionate desires, when we succumb to evil inclinations and repeatedly fall into the same sins. This state signals a dangerous tendency to habituate the passions. Passionate attachment can be overcome by cutting off our self-will (κόπτειν τὰ θελήματα ἡμῶν) and by discipline, and one who progresses along this way can reach detachment (ἀπροσπάθεια) which opens the way to dispassion (ἀπάθεια, *Doct.* 1:20). However, if one does not resist passionate desires but indulges and fosters them, then the passionate attachment, finally, brings him into the state when the passions become bad habits, making him sin habitually. Dorotheus warns the ascetics against neglecting small things, which can lead to the development of bad habits:

> Let us not tread it under foot even in the least things, for you can see that from the smallest things, which of their nature are worth little, we come to despise the great things ... Let us live circumspectly, let us give heed to trivial matters when they are trivial, lest they become grave. Doing what is right and what is wrong: both begin from small things and advance to what is great, either good or evil. (*Doct.* 3:42)
>
> For if, as they say, we do not despise little things and think they are of no consequence to us, we shall not fall into great and grievous wrongs. I am always telling you that bad habits are formed in the soul by these very small things – when we say, 'What does this or that matter,' – and it is the first step to despising great things. (*Doct.* 6:69)

Dorotheus describes the danger of indulging and cultivating the passion in the metaphor of a small offshoot growing into a large tree with a strong trunk. When the passions grow to any degree of maturity and develop into bad habits, they become almost impossible to cure, so that "we shall no longer be able to remove them from ourselves no matter how we labour unless we have the help of the saints interceding for us with God" (*Doct.* 11:115). Therefore, everyone should discern his state and apply a proper remedy to his illness in order to walk the way back from the passion to dispassion: first, getting rid of evil habits, then, putting the passions under control, and, finally, uprooting them.

Dorotheus sees the way to sin and to virtue as our cooperation with demons or angels respectively: "For a man who harms his own soul, is working with, and helping, the devil, and a man who seeks to profit his soul, is co-operating with the angels" (*Doct.* 6:75). By his death Christ defeated the devil, so that the devil lost his power over the people. He can regain this power only to the extent that people surrender to their passions and own will (*Doct.* 1:5 and 5:62)[36]. To incline our will toward sin, demons use diverse machinations, sowing evil thoughts in our souls. As soon as we accept an evil thought, it, like combustible material, inflames sinful passions and prompts us to sin (*Doct.* 8:90 and 12:137). Therefore, it is necessary to fight against the passion and the best way to do so is to cut off thoughts and suggestions before they activate the passions (Doct. 10:108). Dorotheus explains this through the allegorical interpretation of the "Psalm of the exiles", praising those who pay back to the "daughter of Babylon" (that is, enmity or hostile malice of demons) what she has dealt them (namely, by leading them into sin): they take her infants (that is evil thoughts [λογισμοί]), and dash them against the rock, which is Christ (Ps 136:8–9, *Doct.* 11:116)[37]. Therefore, all efforts should be directed to resisting evil thoughts. Such strategy helps to avoid sins and control the passions but it is not sufficient to eradicate them, since they grow like weeds, and "if one does not pull out the roots properly but cuts off the tops only, they spring up again" (*Doct.* 12:130).

To get rid of the passions and prevent their returning and growing, we need to cultivate the opposing virtues, which are signs of the healthy soul (*Doct.* 12:134). This goal requires not only great efforts and struggle but also the divine action and God's medicine. Dorotheus teaches that Christ is the best physician who knows to give a proper prescription for every passion as well as provides more general medicine that can restore us to our former health. On the medicine, Dorotheus explains that, since pride has overthrown us, "it is impossible to earn mercy except by the contrary, that is to say, by humility" (*Doct.* 1:6). It is through humility, obedience to God's commandments and cutting off self-will that one can gradually reach freedom from desire and perfect dispassion (Bitton-Ashkelony & Kofsky, 2006, 144)[38].

The three generations of the monastic school of Gaza show some progress in the development of the idea of sin. On the one hand, they continue to preserve the former tradition of the desert fathers, and on the other hand, they adapted it to the local context and the coenobitic type of monasticism. As Bitton-Ashkelony and Kofsky pointed out, "they came

a long way in their existential science and definitions of sin, but they are still a world away from the academic preoccupations of scholasticism" (Bitton-Ashkelony & Kofsky, 2006, 144). However, their goal was not to articulate a definition of sin but to avoid it by all means. They saw that the best way to this aim lies in cherishing an acute sense of sin in their conscience that easily detect situations and conditions that would advance the operation of the passions and lead to the falling into sin. Their tactics were twofold: first, they cut off all external occasions and causes for sin and then concentrated their efforts on fighting the source of sin, which they saw in the passions and activities of demons. It was against these two causes that their ascetic strivings were directed. To eliminate these causes by human efforts was obviously not an easy, or even a possible, task. The attempts of the ascetics of Gaza to put those areas under control contributed to further deepening their knowledge of the psychological processes of falling into sins, developing sinful habits and strengthening the passions as well as the opposite processes of liberating from them. This knowledge was eventually summarised and systematised by the Sinai school of monasticism, particularly by John Climacus.

4. The Sinaitic School: John Climacus

The penetration of thought into the heart was most fully and profoundly described by the fathers of the Sinaitic monastic tradition, in particular John Climacus (7th century). In his work, the *Ladder of Divine Ascent*, he presents his doctrine, based on the sources of early monasticism – the Desert Fathers, Evagrius, John Cassian, Macarius, Mark the Monk, the school of Gaza (Barsanuphius and Dorotheus), while he also borrows thoughts from his contemporaries (such as Pope Gregory the Great)[39]. In his teaching, John Climacus without doubt depends much on Evagrius's teaching on the eight generic thoughts with the distinction between three principal thoughts and five derivative ones. Yet, he prefers Gregory the Great's shortened list of seven capital vices[40]. Being aware of both lists, he does not strictly follow either of them but borrows from both what suits his own ladder of vices and the virtues opposed to them. To reduce the number of sins to seven, he omits sadness from the Evagrian list. Following Gregory the Great, he brings together vainglory and pride as the beginning and the end of the same vice: "The only difference between them is such as there is between a child and a man, between wheat and bread…" (22:1), yet

he still distinguishes them. Nor does he follow the order of the Evagrian or Gregorian list. Instead, he intertwines the vices from the former lists with some additional vices which he believes are serious impediments in spiritual life. Among them he counts remembrance of wrongs (malice), slander or calumny, talkativeness, lying, insensibility, excessive sleep, unmanly and puerile cowardice. To each of these additional vices John dedicates a separate chapter in his *Ladder*. Moreover, he discusses some other sins and vices in passing, as for example, blasphemy[41]. His approach also differs from that of Evagrius as John refused to speak of any mystical experience and mainly focused on remedies against vices and the way of undoing them and transforming them into virtues. For this, it was necessary to understand clearly how passions appear, develop and get rooted in the soul. The detailed description of this process was John Climacus's main contribution to the monastic doctrine of sin. He makes out six stages in this process: 1 – suggestion (or attraction, or assault, προσβολή), 2 – coupling (or converse, or intercourse, συνδυασμός); 3 – consent (συνκατάθεσις), 4 – captivity (αἰχμαλωσία), 5 – struggle (πάλη), 6 – passion (πάθος) (15:74)[42]. This scheme was not John's invention but rather a synthesis of what was already known and tested by long experience. The elements of this scheme can be traced in the teachings of Evagrius, Mark the Monk, Barsanuphius and Dorotheus. Climacus's contribution is that he reproduced the process with its stages in the most detailed and explicit way. Let us have a closer look at the stages of this scheme.

The first stage, a suggestion (assault, attraction, προσβολή) is "a simple conception, or an image of something encountered for the first time which has lodged in the heart" (15:74). It does not arise in the mind (νούς), but in the lower part of the soul (διάνοια), which lacks intuition and is therefore exposed to contradictory arguments. The suggestion pops up in the soul and arouses interest and curiosity, like a thrown ball that can hit the wall and bounce, or be caught in the hands. It is the first trick of the evil one to attract the attention of a person. In itself, the suggestion – neither good nor evil – is independent of the individual. One has no power to stop the first appearance of such "thoughts", as it is impossible to catch the wind, but one can decide whether to accept or reject them. The suggestion is in fact a touchstone to test our will, whether it leans towards virtue or sin, manifested in the way a person reacts to this trick. If a thought lingers in the mind, it evolves a series of ideas, associations and recollections mixed with pleasure and gradually begins to displace all other thoughts in the mind.

If one does not divert one's attention from this chain of memories and associations by the effort of will but welcomes the thought into the mind, then a coupling (συνδυασμός) follows. The term συνδυασμός indicates a close connection between attention and thought, a strong predominance of thought in the mind, so that there remains no room for other thoughts. It is as if the mind starts a conversation with a thought, and therein lies the danger. For once the mind is coupled with the thought, it is no longer able to resist it and is increasingly inclined towards the passionate thought.

From that moment on, the process is difficult to control, because the balance of mental forces is disturbed and humans will become too weak to resist the thought. To stop the process of falling into sin, one needs additional energy – God's grace. If it is not received, then the mind acquiesces to the thought, and the third stage follows, which John Climacus names consent (συνκατάθεσις), "the bending of the soul to what has been presented to it, accompanied by delight" (15:74). This stage is crucial with regard to the responsibility for the consent to a tempting thought. Depending on one's spiritual condition, it can be sinful (for advanced ones) or not (for beginners). For those who are inexperienced in the spiritual struggle and not aware of this process of development such lapses are forgivable. Those who were conscious of the hostile suggestion, but did not resist, finding pleasure in it, have already committed sin in their intentions. For such combatants the responsibility for sin starts already in the previous state of intercourse, since they welcomed the thought and found pleasure in it. As soon as the mind gives its consent, the thought gradually transforms from being its companion into its master and tyrant, driving a person to commit a sinful act.

The mind, being unable to resist the evil thought that has already darkened and mastered it, falls into captivity (αἰχμαλωσία), which Climacus defined as "a forcible and involuntary rape of the heart or a permanent association (συνουσία) with what has been encountered which destroys the good order of our condition" (15:74)[43]. At this stage, it is very difficult to overcome the temptation which finally leads one to sin. Even so, such an outcome is not necessary and can still be avoided, if one continues to resist. Moral responsibility at this stage of captivity is judged differently "according to whether it occurs at the time of prayer, or at other times; it is judged one way in matters of little importance, and in another way in the case of evil thoughts" (15:74). The guilt is determined by the next stage.

The unrestrained desire to satisfy what has been suggested is confronted with the awareness of the sin involved, which gives rise to a certain

hesitation in the soul in choosing between the desire of pleasure and moral obligations, an experience which in ascetical literature is called struggle (πάλη). John Climacus defined struggle as "power equal to the attacking force, which is either victorious or else suffers defeat according to the soul's desire" (15:74). It is an important stage through which every ascetic has to pass, for "he who has never been struck by the enemy will certainly not be crowned" (26:157). If he falls, it is the occasion for punishment, but if he endures and withstands so that he does not commit sin, he will be rewarded by God, for "as our conflicts increase, so do our crowns" (26:157). John Climacus gives a prominent example of such a reward: "Just as a king orders a soldier who has received serious wounds in battle in his presence not to be dismissed from his service but rather to be promoted, so the Heavenly King crowns the monk who endures many perils from demons" (26:246). Therefore, "struggle is the occasion of crowns or punishments" (15:74). The peculiarity of this stage is that, unlike other stages, which follow in strict sequence, the place of the struggle can vary, depending on the state of the soul, or it can have no place at all. This is subject to the discernment of the experienced ones: "Sometimes the combat has earned a crown; sometimes refusal has made men reprobate. It is not feasible to lay down precepts in such matters, for we have not all got the same character or dispositions" (27:71). If one fails to resist the ensnaring thought and succumbs, the captivity of the mind finally results in a sinful action (ἁμαρτία). Repetitive lapses into the same sin eventually lead to developing a sinful habit (πονηρὰ ἕξις) and inclination (πρόληψις), that, finally, grows into the sixth and final stage, passion (πάθος), an illness of the soul due to the abuse of its natural faculties.

According to John Climacus, passion is "that which lurks disquietingly in the soul for a long time, and through its intimacy with the soul brings it finally to what amounts to a habit, a self-incurred downright desertion" (15:74). John Chryssavgis, trying to determine whether Climacus' idea of the passions is Aristotelian (passions are ethically neutral) or Stoic (passions are intrinsically evil), concludes that Climacus has no consistent view, defining passions as 'blind' (in the sense of being disoriented and misdirected) drives, which need to be re-educated and redirected towards God (2004, 191–192). However, it is more proper to analyse John's teaching on the passions within the framework of his ascetic background than those of the philosophical schools. The author of the *Ladder* clearly acknowledges that the passions are evil and are "unequivocally condemned in every case, and demand either corresponding repentance

or future correction" (15:73). They were "not originally planted in nature, for God is not the Creator of passions" (26:67), and "those who say that certain passions are natural to the soul have been deceived, not knowing that we have turned the constituent qualities of nature into passions" (26:156). Following Dorotheus of Gaza who taught that the passions are parasitic on our natural inclinations (properties) like rust on iron, Climacus similarly teaches that passion twines around natural virtue "just as bindweed twines round cypress" (26:161). Thus he, too, points to the parasitic nature of the passions, and his book is, in fact, a manual with instructions on how to get rid of them.

Like Dorotheus, Climacus also teaches that the passions have various degrees of rootedness in the soul and speaks of sinful habits that develop along with the passions and help them to take hold and firmly establish themselves in the soul. The process goes as follows: "Practice produces habit, and perseverance grows into a feeling of the heart; and what is done with an ingrained feeling of the heart is not easily eradicated" (7:63). The soul that has thoroughly acquired the habits of vice, becomes its own betrayer and enemy (19:2). The evil demons have no further need to tempt it as it is now used to sinning by itself (26:65). One who has contracted sinful habits comes under their tyranny and, lacking strength to bind the foe (26:171), is unwillingly carried away by him like "steel attracted to the magnet even without meaning to be" (26:ii, 26). Therefore, habits of vice are crucial in both ways: towards passions and from passions to dispassion. They pose a serious impediment to salvation and are not easily curable, if at all (5:30; 7:63; 19:2; 26:ii, 49, 55). One who has developed sinful habits needs much struggle and assistance to overcome them (26:ii,15). When passions become habitual, they cause severe punishment. Sometimes they can even be unforgivable, as was the case with one ascetic whose disciple learned a bad habit from him and "although he who taught came to his senses and began to repent and gave up doing wrong, his repentance was ineffectual on account of the influence of his pupil" (26:127). In this teaching, Climacus strictly follows Dorotheus.

In general, his six-fold scheme of the development of passion gathered and summarised all previous ascetic experience and knowledge, which can be traced in Evagrius, John Cassian, Macarius, Mark the Monk, Diadochus, Barsanuphius the Great and John the Prophet, and Dorotheus of Gaza (*Ware, 1965, 297–299;* Kordochkin, 2003, 79–82). A similar scheme is proposed by his contemporary Maximus the Confessor (thought – coupling with passion – assent – sin)[44]. From his time onward,

this scheme became traditional in the East[45]. We can find it with some variations in the writings of the later ascetic writers such as Theodore of Edessa (thought – coupling – assent – submission – sin)[46], Philotheus of Sinai (provocation – coupling – assent – captivity – passion)[47], Hesychius of Sinai (provocation – coupling – assent – sin)[48] and Peter of Damascus (provocation – coupling – assent – struggle – passion)[49].

The scheme reflects the interest of John Climacus in genesis and outcomes of the passions. Some steps of his Ladder finish with a dialogue in which a passion reveals its origins and its ways of strengthening, its interaction with other passions as well as the weapons which can overcome it. For example, he personifies the vice of insensibility, which says the following: "I have no single parentage; my conception is mixed and indefinite. Satiety nourishes me, time makes me grow, and bad habit entrenches me. He who keeps this habit will never be rid of me. Be constant in vigil, meditating on the eternal judgment; then perhaps I shall to some extent relax my hold on you" (18:6). Here, too, Climacus distinguishes six stages in the development of passion (conception – birth – strengthening – growth – affirmation – obsession), which perfectly correspond to the stages with the above presented scheme:

suggestion – conception
coupling– birth
consent – strengthening
captivity – growth
struggle – affirmation
passion – obsession. (Lepakhin 1998, 17)

No less is John Climacus interested in the process of liberation from passions, tracing its stages by means of personifications. For example, the passion of anger confesses: "If you know the deep and obvious weakness which is in both you and me, you have bound my hands. If you starve your appetite, you have bound my feet from going further. If you take the yoke of obedience, you have thrown off my yoke. If you obtain humility, you have cut off my head" (15:86)[50]. So one has to go the same way back from passion to suggestion, starting with the simple practice of controlling the passion in struggle (binding its hands), then gradually moving to actions opposite to the passion (binding its feet); then coming under obedience to someone more experienced (throwing off its yoke), and finally, obtaining a virtue that eliminates the passion (cutting off its head). We can visualise this process as follows:

possession by passion
struggle – binding its hands
captivity – bind its feet
consent – throwing off its yoke
coupling– cutting off its head.

This scheme does not deal with a suggestion which is sinless and impossible to avoid. That will remain as a test for human will and an occasion to earn crowns.

Climacus employed anthropomorphic symbols of personifications not only for the genesis of the passions but also to their interrelations. He presents passions in various types of relations such as marriage (26:151), friendship (26:50), mutual support (11:2; 16:2–3; 23:6; 26:50), mentoring and apprenticeship (22:45; 23:2). However, the predominant type of relationship is kinship, often combined with incest (Lepakhin 1998, 17–19). Passion has its father and mother, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters as well as many other offspring (9:29; 13:15; 14:36). Kinship relations between passions, however, should not be understood absolutely, for they are extremely complicated: the situation when a mother-passion gives birth to a daughter and then becomes the daughter of her own daughter is not uncommon (18:2). Furthermore, any passion may not always be born of the same passion, but at different times and in different people from different passions (8:28). Sometimes passions can have several fathers and mothers and be products of fornication. As Climacus points out, "the irrational passions have no order or reason, but they have every sort of disorder and every kind of chaos" (26:40).

Besides generic relations, the passions are also connected in their functions. They can affect a person both individually and jointly, fighting, waging war, seeking to completely subdue a person. In this aspect, the relations between them are no less complicated and have many variations. Passions can follow one after another (9:1; 25:5; 26:41–48, 64), sometimes they act in agreement, aiding each other (26:173), sometimes they compete among themselves (26:85) and even quarrel (4:33; 22:27; 26:151), they can withdraw temporarily to deceive the ascetic (8:9; 26:61) and return (3:7; 26:158) or leave a person irrevocably to deprive him crowns (4:27), sometime they remain forever due to one's evil habits (26:65) or according to God's dispensation (26:71); they rejoice in increasing vices and even virtues in order to open the way to vainglory and pride (7:68, 14:9; 22:3, 5, 35). Describing these various tactics and traps of the passions, Climacus further develops Evagrius' and Cassian's teaching of different tricks of

demons or passions. As in the case of these predecessors his teaching on passions is closely connected with demonology.

Climacus's scheme of the development of passion also helps to distinguish between sin and passion. While Evagrius spoke of eight evil thoughts in a monitory way as a prophylactic against sins, Cassian referred to eight vices and Gregory the Great to seven cardinal (or deadly) sins, they were all implying almost the same set of human misconducts. Such inconsistent use of terminology caused much confusion in understanding sins and passions, since these terms often overlapped and were interchanged as rough equivalents. John Climacus introduced precision into the terminology of sin and clearly distinguished between passions and sins. He said: "Sin is one thing, idleness another, indifference another, passion another and a fall another" (26:94). For Climacus, sin signifies any transgression of God's commandments in actions, words or thoughts. Passions are not sins or any kind of fall but a consequence of our consent to fall and to commit sinful actions. They are the wounds we inflict on ourselves when we sin. While this wound is still fresh and warm it is easy to heal, but if we persist in vices and repeatedly fall into the same sins, then the old wound, being neglected and festering, becomes hard to cure and requires for its care much treatment, cutting, plastering and cauterization. Moreover, as Climacus pointed out, many such wounds from long neglect become incurable, and yet "with God all things are possible" (Mt. 19:26) (5:30).

As soon as the passions get established in the soul, they provide favourable ground for new sins and the development of sinful habits. It is much more difficult to get rid of passions than of sins. Climacus clearly attests this: "Many have soon obtained forgiveness of sins, but no one has obtained dispassion quickly; this needs considerable time, and love, and longing, and God" (26:ii, 58). Nevertheless, passion does not necessarily close the way to salvation.

Perhaps the best explanation of how sin and the passions are interrelated is given in the image of the celestial palace, in which John Climacus figuratively describes the difference between the forgiveness of sins and the state of dispassion with its different degrees:

> Imagine dispassion as the celestial palace of the Heavenly King; and the many mansions as the abodes within this city, and the wall of this celestial Jerusalem as the forgiveness of sins. Let us run, brethren, let us run to enter the bridal hall of this palace. If we are prevented by anything, by some

> burden or old habit, or by time itself what a disaster! Let us at least occupy one of those mansions around the palace. But if we sink down and grow weak, let us make sure of being at least within the walls. For he who does not enter there before his end, or rather, does not scale the wall, will lie out in the desert of fiends and passions. (29:14)

This image clearly shows that the forgiveness of sins suffices for obtaining salvation, while dispassion is a part of a few true ascetics[51]. It also demonstrates that just as the obsession by passion has different degrees so also the state of dispassion does, for there can be one who is more dispassionate than others (29:6). Even a passionate soul can be saved and earn crowns, if one resists temptations and avoids sins, as it is seen from the example of Joseph who "is honoured for avoiding the occasion of sin, and not for showing dispassion" (26:166).

Besides sins and passions John Climacus also distinguishes idleness from negligence. The former is the state when a person is idle and does not do those works of God which he is obliged to do. The latter is when he does them, but carelessly, without love and diligence. It causes insensitivity, demonic attacks and sins (5:29; 18:1; 26:6). 37. As by nature we cannot live without food, so up to the very moment of our death we cannot, even for a second, give way to negligence. These two are not sins in a strict sense of the word but they create a suitable precondition that leads towards falling into sins. Therefore, one should not even for a second give way to them (26:ii, 37).

Moreover, among sins Climacus singles out a particular category of sins which he calls "falls". They concern different kinds of sexual immorality. He wonders: "Why in the case of every other sin do we usually say that people have slipped, and simply that; but when we hear that someone has committed fornication, we say sorrowfully: So and so has fallen?" (15:44). To answer this question, he refers to the words of a wise man in a dialogue with him:

> A certain learned man put a serious question to me, saying: 'What is the gravest sin, apart from murder and denial of God?' And when I said: 'To fall into heresy,' he asked: 'Then why does the Catholic Church receive heretics who have sincerely anathematized their heresy, and consider them worthy to partake in the Mysteries; while on the other hand when a man who has committed fornication is received, even though he confesses and forsakes his sin, the Apostolic Constitutions order him to be excluded

> from the immaculate Mysteries for a number of years?' I was struck with bewilderment, and what perplexed me then has remained unsolved. (15:48)

Although this explanation does not fully answer the question, it sheds light and provides hints as to where the answer can be found. Later commentators developed and explained this idea in their scholia to the *Ladder*, underlying different aspects of the sexual falls[52]. Without getting into these details we can see that John's approach to sexual sins, which are counted among the heaviest transgressions, is determined by his ascetic background and environment. Since virginity constituted the very essence of a monastic vocation and ascetic life, so whoever has defiled virginity and has truly fallen, was considered as having broken his monastic vows of chastity.

One more important aspect of Climacus' teaching on sin is his differentiation in the gravity of sins. While he believed that a fall is heavier than a sin, he also distinguished between degrees of responsibility for the same sins. He instructs that "one and the same sin often incurs a condemnation a hundred times greater for one person than for another, according to character, place, progress, and a good deal else" (15:59). What is considered sinless for one can be a serious sin for another. For example, speaking of the problem of the distraction during prayers, Climacus admits that it is the property only of an angel to remain undistracted, but this constant ascetic problem is judged differently for the beginners and the advanced monks: while it is forgivable for the former (4:92), it is never justifiable and, in the latter, deserves accusation: "Therefore we should unceasingly condemn and reproach ourselves so as to cast off involuntary sins through voluntary humiliations. Otherwise, if we do not, at our departure we shall certainly be subjected to heavy punishment" (25:55)[53]. This also makes apparent that, like John Cassian, Climacus denies the possibility of sinlessness, since there remain many secret and unconscious sins, of which one still needs to be purified through repentance.

5. Conclusion

Having passed through four centuries of monastic hamartiology, how can we assess the contribution of these early ascetics to the Christian theology of sin? Our investigation has demonstrated the high interest of monks in

this topic and their sincere desire, from the beginning of the monastic movement, to comprehend and cope with the problem of sin. As early as in the fourth century, monks formed an understanding of the causes and origin of sin, along with its nature and consequences, and they had more than one or two explanations for each of these important issues. Monastic views regarding the methods and means of overcoming sin were equally diverse. The different approaches were influenced by various external and internal factors, such as geographical conditions, cultural context and mentality, political, economic, and religious challenges, as well as personal background, temper, and limitations. In the monastic centre of Lower Egypt, where Evagrius and Cassian received their monastic formation from the desert fathers, the influence of Origen's theology and the Alexandrian school coloured the way the monks understood sin and sinlessness. The ascetics of this monastic centre elaborated the basic terminology of sin and built a framework for the further development of monastic hamartiology. Evagrius, for example, created a tool that became fundamental for subsequent monastic communities, indeed for Christian communities in general. His scheme of eight generic thoughts was also, through Cassian, accepted in the West; later, in slightly adapted form, this scheme formed the basis of Pope Gregory the Great's teaching on the seven cardinal sins, which is still foundational to Catholic doctrine. Likewise, in the East, the Evagrian scheme became firmly established, and remains a cornerstone of ascetic teaching in the Orthodox Church. Generations of ascetics have relied on it as a useful tool in ascetic practice.

Fighting against sin on a daily basis, falling and rising, at times defeated and at times victorious in their spiritual combat with evil, the early monks developed an acute sensitivity to sin and its various aspects, but they were still far from being able to give a clear definition of sin that would win widespread acceptance. Every ascetic environment forms its own idea of sin based on the actual context, methods of formation, prominent leaders, and the personal experience of the monks. The following generations of monks in the late fifth through the seventh centuries did not make much progress toward a unified concept of sin. The monastic centres of Gaza and Mount Sinai, following their Egyptian predecessors, focused more on the practical task of implementing prophylactics against sin and eliminating its consequences than on theoretical thought about sin. Indeed, to avoid potential sins it was necessary, on the one hand, to control one's thoughts by cutting off tempting thoughts that could lead to sin. On the other hand, after renouncing the world a monk needed to get rid of the consequences

of his former sins; those sins could result in evil inclinations and passions, which, once firmly rooted in the soul, would render the monk susceptible to sin. Eliminating passions and learning the discernment of thoughts were two crucial tasks for every ascetic who wanted to achieve *apatheia* and make progress on the way to perfection. For Evagrius, the state of *apatheia* was a necessary precondition, without which no spiritual growth in virtue or knowledge of God would be possible.

Therefore, early monks kept a careful watch over their minds, practicing discernment between the good and evil thoughts in order to protect themselves from potential falls. The problem of the passions was even more challenging, as it was not at all easy and sometimes even impossible to get rid of them. Through the experience of many falls and rises, monks discovered the ways in which the passions typically originated and worked, and the same monks invented diverse methods of dealing with them. Many of Evagrius' ascetic treatises resemble manuals for monks concerning the passions, with detailed treatment of their kinds, manifestation, and typical ways of operation, as well as the remedies by which a monk could more effectively overcome the passions and the temptations that activated them.

The intensive work of self-improvement sharpened the spiritual senses of the early monks so that they became extremely sensitive to the spiritual world of both angels and demons. Accordingly, they realized that the cause of sin lies not only in the fallen state of humanity but also in the hostility of evil spirits, which exploit human weaknesses and passions to entice people to evil. The Evil One (as Satan, or the devil, is sometimes called) and his subservient demons became enemy number one, and it was against them that the monks directed their spiritual weapons. The experience that the monks acquired from this hand-to-hand combat with demons led to the development of a monastic demonology, and many of our ideas about the world of evil spirits are shaped by the knowledge that the early ascetics transmitted. They taught, for example, that every Christian will sooner or later enter into a war with demonic forces, and that it is impossible to win the war by human strength alone. We must wage this war with varying success and inevitable defeat until by experience become tested warriors.

The knowledge and experience of early Egyptian monasticism underwent further development among the monks of Palestine and Mount Sinai. The Gazan school of monasticism, responsible for preserving and transmitting the Egyptian heritage, transferred the wisdom of the desert fathers to a new, quasi-urban context. The Gazan school was able to

advance some aspects of hamartiology; in particular, it articulated a deeper understanding of the origin and root of the passions. This development was summarized by John Climacus from Sinai, who described the main stages of the passions and added to the Evagrian scheme one more important pedagogical tool that helped monks to discern and resist tempting thoughts. To put this new tool into practice, monks had to carefully examine their souls, watch their mental processes, and unmask tempting thoughts, evil inclinations, and passions; it was in this way that the monks gradually learned to overcome sin. Climacus not only described the main stages by which thoughts (*logismoi*) developed into sinful actions and passions, he also evaluated each stage of this process with respect to the personal responsibility of the monks, which depended on their spiritual state. Considering his approach, we can only admire the differentiated way in which Climacus judged the gravity of sins and the unexpected explanations he gave for his judgment. Such an approach, however, was neither innovative nor extraordinary. The approach continued the long-established monastic tradition of a compassionate attitude to sinners and the willingness to judge each sin not simply by its matter and form, but also by the spiritual state of the sinner and other mitigating circumstances, such as the time, place, and conditions of a concrete sin.

Although many twenty-first century Christians might find John Climacus's *Ladder*, as well as the other ascetic writings analysed above, difficult to read, and in some respects perhaps even unbearable or insane, we feel compelled to acknowledge that, in their striving for freedom from sin, the early monks acquired a subtle knowledge of sin in its various aspects and transmitted that knowledge to us in their writings. Because it reveals the hardship and challenges of the seemingly endless fight against sin, monastic hamartiology may seem pessimistic and discouraging. The monks, however, encourage us to take up this challenge and to embark on the long path to perfection. They set before us a lofty ideal and, by showing us that we are still at the beginning of the journey, do not allow us to relax or indulge in self-satisfaction. Their writings help us recognize the depths of human sinfulness, which we might not have previously fathomed. Reading such literature broadens our understanding of sin's manifold nature and exhorts us to a radical opposition to evil, so that, in the words of the Apostle, we are determined to resist sin even to the point of shedding our blood (Heb. 12:4).

Abbreviations

AP	*Apophthegmata Patrum*
Antirrh.	Evagrius Ponticus, *Antirrheticus*
Cap. tria	Evagrius, *Capita tria de oratione*
Conl.	John Cassian, *Conlationes*
Doct.	Dorotheus of Gaza, *Doctrinae* (= *Instructions and Discourses*)
Ep.	*Epistula(e)*
Eul.	Evagrius Ponticus, *Tractatus ad Elogium*
In Ps.	Evagrius Ponticus, *Scholia in Psalmos*
In Prov.	Evagrius Ponticus, *Scholia in Proverbia*
Inst.	John Cassian, *Institutiones*
Gnost.	Evagrius Ponticus, *Gnostikos*
Log.	Abba Isaiah of Gaza, *Logoi*
Or.	Evagrius Ponticus, *De Oratione*
Prakt.	Evagrius Ponticus, *Praktikos*

CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
NPNF	Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers
PG	J.-P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*
PL	J.-P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*
SC	Sources chrétiennes
SP	*Studia Patristica*

Endnotes

1 The term *hamartia* was first introduced by Aristotle in his *Poetics* to describe the error of judgment which leads to the tragic hero's downfall or misfortune. Later it was widely used in dramatic literature. It can refer to an inherent flaw or defects of a character as the reason of a potential downfall, an error of judgment or discernment due to ignorance, a moral failure due to the weakness of a character, a wrongdoing or a mistake with devastating consequences. See Van Braam, 1912.

2 On the origin of the scheme and its possible sources and inspirations, see: Wrzoł, 1923, Hausherr, 1933; Stewart, 2005, Misiarczyk, 2018; Vazquez & Gargiulo, 2021.

3 See: Guillaumont & Guillaumont, 1971, 662; also: *In Ps.* 123:4; compare: *Peri logismon* 1.

4 See for example, *Peri logismon* 23: "A solitary should never withdraw into solitude [burdened] with anger or gloominess, nor flee from the brethren while perplexed by these [tempting-]thoughts. For madness can arise from such passions as these…". Also see: Crislip, 2005, 143, note 2; Elm, 1991, 109; Watson, 2016, 237.

5 For a detailed consideration of different aspects in the Evagrian concept of *logismoi* and their synonyms such as νόημα, φαντασία, λογισμός, δαίμων i πνεῦμα, see: Nieścior, 1996, 208; Tobon 2010, 96–101; Harrison, *2021*, 120–133.

6 On sadness, see: Burton-Christie, 2009; Macheta, 2017; Zecher, 2023.

7 On anger, see: Bunge, 2009; *Cattoi, 2019;* Gibbons, 2011, Gillette, *2010*; Louth, 2010; Nieścior, 2018; Rozumna, 2017; Stewart, 2000.

8 On accidie, see: Aijian, 2019; Bunge, 2012; Crislip, 2005; Gibson, 2018; Glangiobbe, 2016; Joes,t 2004; Louf, 1974; Macheta, 2017; Peretó Rivas, 2013.

9 On pride and vainglory in Evagrius, see: Paša, 2010. For a comprehensive study on all eight thoughts, see: Misiarczyk, 2021a.

10 Compare: *In Ps.* 107:3. I would suggest that when Evagrius uses this Platonic anthropological scheme, he can reduce the meaning of the soul to its irrational part, but when he uses Gregorian threefold division of the soul into rational, concupiscible and irascible parts, he usually treats the soul in a broad sense, embracing all three elements. More on the Evagrian anthropology, see: Gauillaumont, 1958, 37–39l; Gauillaumont & Gauillaumont, 1971, 105; Gravier, 2018; O'Laughlin, 1985 and 1988; Misiarczyk, 2016; Stewart, 2005 and 2012.

11 *Prakt.* 4, 6, 7, 34, 38–39, 51, 54, 87; *Peri logismon* 3, 17, 18, 34, 36, 40.

12 More detail consideration of the derivation of the *logismoi* from the parts of the soul and possible variations, see: Tobon, 2010, 122–128.

13 See also: *Chapitres des disciples d'Évagre* 177 (= Géhin, 2007, 244); Stewart, 2005.

14 See: Graiver, 2018a, 75 and 2018b, 50–51; Stewart, *2011*, 268.

15 See: Tobon 2010, 103; O'Laughlin, 1987, 268; Crislip, 2005, 143, note 2; Elm, 1991, 109; Watson, 2016, 237.

16 For the numbering of the scholia see Rondeau 1960.

17 Compare: *Peri logismon* 67.

18 Compare: *Or.* 94.

19 See: Joest, 2004, 280–281; Clark, 1992, 83; Tobon, 2010, 199–200.

20 See: Marsili, 1936, 81–87; Balthasar, 1939; Chadwick, 1968, 82; Stewart, 1997.

21 See: Harmless, 2008, 142; Tilby 2009, 4; Casiday 2013, 131; Stewart 2016, 226.

22 See: Weber 1961; Nichols, 2020, 31–32; references to this dependence of the two writers, see: Evagrius, *Prakt.* Prol. 9; John Cassian, *Conl.* 5:1 and 5:18.

23 Moses mentions seven nations, because at the time Israel has already left Egypt. Compare with Evagrius who in the Prologue to the *Antirrheticus* refers to gluttony and "the seven other demons", though this could be an allusion to Mt 12:43–45 (*Antirr.* 1:12–13).

24 Compare: Rom. 13:14; 1 Tim. 6:8.

25 Compare *Prakt.* 6, 10–11 and *De octo spiritibus malitiae* 4–5, where, the positions of sadness and anger are reversed.

26 In his treatise *On the Vices Opposed to the Virtues*, Evagrius inserts the thought of jealousy between vainglory and pride.

27 Abba Sarapion's scheme adapts the second and third Epicurean categories of desire: *natural but unnecessary desires* correspond to gluttony and fornication, whereas *unnatural and unnecessary desires* correspond to avarice, sadness, anger, accidie, vainglory and pride.

28 On anger in Cassian, see: Gillette, 2010, 51–57.

29 See Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Job* 31:87–88.

30 For a detail analysis of this transformation, see Bloomfield, 1967, 60–75.

31 On abba Isaiah see: Vailhé, 1906; Regnault 1970; Chitty, 1971. His writings see: Draguet, 1968; English translation by Chryssavgis & Penkett, 2002.

32 See: Hevelone-Harper, 2005; Bitton-Ashkelony & Kofsky, 2006. On the theological views of the two elders see: Hombergen, 2004, 173–181.

33 On the correspondance of Barsanuphius and John see: Hevelone-Harper, 2017, 418–432; Neyt, 1969. For the critical edition of the correspondence François Neyt, see: Barsanuphe et Jean de Gaza, 1997–2002; English translation by John Chryssavgis (2006–2007). Another edition by Derwas J. Chitty, based on *Coislianus* 124, *Vatopedi* 2, Nikodemos's edition, and

Sinaiticus 411, see: Barsanuphius and John, 1966. On this edition see: Chitty, 1966, 49.

34 On Dorotheus of Gaza, see: Hevelone-Harper, 2005, 61–78; *Spiridonova*, 2011a. On his theological views, see: Bitton-Ashkelony & Kofsky, 2006, 215–222; Canivet, 1965, 336–346; *Spiridonova*, 2011b, 140–144; Hombergen, 2009; Grillmeier, 2002, 113–117.

35 See: Bitton-Ashkelony & Kofsky, 2006, 143. On obedience and the conscience in Dorotheus, see Tomas Spidlík, *Le concept de l'obéissance et de la concience selon Dorothée de Gaza*, in *Studia Patristica* 11 (1972) 72–78.

36 See: *Bernatskyi & Shlenov, 2007, 38–39*.

37 Compare: 1 Cor. 10:4.

38 On healing from passions see also: Schenkewitz, 2016, 56–82. On ambiguity of Dorotheus's notion of humility and its connection with the fulfillment of commandments (humility either arises unconsciously in the course of fulfilling the commandments (2, 36), or it is a precondition for their fulfillment [*Doct.*1, 10]), see: Bulanenko, 2021, 82. A general study on Dorotheus' teaching on humility see: Faure, 2014.

39 For possible influences on John Climacus, see: Zecher, 2018; *Chryssavgis,* 2004, 183–193.

40 The source of Climacus' shorten list of seven cardinal sins is disputable. Some argue Climacus follows Gregory the Great (see: John Chrysavgis, 1988 and 1989, 32, note 117). Others point to the similarity with Gregory the Theologian's idea of seven evil spirits (*Oratio* 39:10, Kordochkin, 2003, p. 76, note 1).

41 On blasphemy in John Climacus's *Ladder of the Divine Ascent*, see: Pancerz, 2014.

42 Here and below John Climacus's *Ladder of Divine Ascent* is cited only by numbers.

43 Compare with Philotheus the Sinaite: "It is the stage when 'the object has taken the soul that desires it captive and leads it to do its work like a bound slave'" (*Nēptiká kephálaia*, 34, in *The Philokalia* (1986), vol. 3, 29).

44 Maximus the Confessor, *Capita de caritate* I, 84: "First the memory brings some passion-free thought into the intellect. By its lingering there, passion is aroused. When the passion is not eradicated, it persuades the intellect to assent to it. Once this assent is given, the actual sin is then committed".

45 In the West, a much simpler scheme was developed. On the basis of Augustine's interpretation of Ps. 143:6, the process was seen as consisting of three stages: suggestion (*suggestus*), delectation (*delectatio*), and decision (*consensus*). Although Augustine also spoke of struggle and sinful actions (*consuetudo*), the scheme was not elaborated further. – See: *Augustinus, Enarratio in Psalmum* 143:6; *Špidlík,* 1978, 237.

46 Theodoros the Great Ascetic, *A Century of Spiritual Texts* 19: "Every assent in thought to some forbidden desire, that is, every submission to self-indulgence, is a sin for a monk. For first the thought begins to darken the intellect through the passible aspect of' the soul, and then the soul submits to the pleasure, not holding out in the fight. This is what is called assent, which – as has been said – is a sin. When assent persists, it stimulates the passion in question. Then little by little it leads to the actual committing of the sin" (see: *The Philokalia* (1984), vol. 2, 17–18).

47 Philotheos of Sinai, *Nēptiká kephálaia*, 34: "First there is provocation; then a coupling with the provocation; then assent to it; then captivity to it; then passion, grown habitual and continuous" (*The Philokalia* (1986), vol. 3, p. 29).

48 Hesychius of Sinai, *Capita de temperantia et virtute* 46: "The provocation comes first, then our coupling* with it, or the mingling of our thoughts with those of the wicked demons. Third comes our assent to the provocation, with both sets of intermingling thoughts contriving how to commit the sin in practice. Fourth comes the concrete action – that is, the sin itself". (English translation: *The Philokalia* (1982), vol. 1, 170). See also: Kirchmeyer, 1963, 319–329; Völker, *1968, 291–314;* Waegeman, 1974.

49 Peter of Damascus, *A Treasure of Divine Knowledge*, Book I (see: Φιλοκαλία των Ιερών Νηπτικών (1986), vol. 3, 180–181; English translation: *The Philokalia*, vol. 3, 207).

50 On the struggle with the vice of anger, see: Nieścior, *2018.*

51 See also 26:82: "It is impossible for all to become dispassionate, but it is not impossible for all to be saved and reconciled to God".

52 Scholium 24 to the *Ladder* (attributed to Elias the Presbyter and Ekdikos, Metropolitan of Crete) explains: "If anyone sinned, by what way he was led astray, by that way he returns. For example, if someone has rejected God with his mouth, he can confess Him again with his mouth; if someone has stolen his neighbour's property with his hands, he can give his property to the poor with his hands. It is the same with other sins. But he who sinned against chastity does not return by the way he fell, but by another way, that is, by weeping, fasting and wailing. Therefore, the sin of fornication is called a fall…" (PG 88:912, see also the Russian edition: Ioann Lestvichnik, 2013, 212, note 1). Scholium 26 provides a similar explanation: "Heresy is a deviation of the mind from the truth and a sin of the mouth or tongue, whereas fornication is a sin of the whole body, which damages and depraves all the feelings and powers of body and soul, darkens the image and likeness of God in man, and is therefore called a fall. Heresy comes from presumption, while fornication comes from bodily comfort. Therefore, heretics are corrected by humiliation, and sensualists by suffering" (PG 88:912–913). On the basis of previous sources, Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos (1250–1330) explains: "The heretic is impious only with his words, which

is why he is treated with words. The fornicator, however, because they sin with their soul and body, needs plenty of time and strenuous asceticism to be purified of the illness of the sin. The heretic considered heresy good, which is why he chose it. While the fornicator, although knowing the act is wicked, overlooked this because of their sensuality". (His scholia were published in: Νικηφόρος Κάλλιστος Ξανθόπουλος 2002. See also: Anthonopoulou 2007. I cite according to: *A Conundrum in "The Ladder of Divine Ascent"*, https://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2015/03/a-conundrum-in-ladder-of-divine-ascent.html, March 28, 2015).

53 See also: John Climaus, *Liber ad pastorem* 12:7, where John Climacus acknowledges that "the mental sin of the pastor is heavier in the judgement of God than the sin actually committed by the novice, as the crime of the soldier is lighter than the malice of the commander".

Bibliography

Primary sources

Abba Isaiah of Gaza, *Logoi* – Draguet René (1968). *Les cinq recensions de l'Ascéticon syriaque d'Abba Isaïe* (CSCO; 289, 290, 293, 294. Syr.; 120–123), 4 vols. Louvain: CSCO.

Abba Isaiah of Scetis (2002). *Ascetic Discourses*. Translation, Introduction and Notes by J. Chryssavgis & P. Penkett (Cistercian Studies Series, 150). Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications.

Apophthegmata Patrum, in PG 65:71–440; English translation by B. Ward (1975): *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers: The Alphabetical Collection* (Cistercian Studies Series, 59). Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Pubications.

Barsanuphius & John (1966). *Questions and Answers*, ed. Derwas J. Chitty (Patrologia Orientalis, 31:3). Paris: Firmin Didot, 445–616.

Barsanuphius & John of Gaza. Epistulae = Barsanuphe et Jean de Gaza (1997–2002), *Correspondance*, ed. F. Neyt, P. de Angelis-Noah & L. Regnault, vol. 1:1–2; 2:1–2; 3 (SC 426, 427, 450, 451, 468). Paris: Cerf.

Barsanuphius & John of Gaza (2006–2007). Letters. Translation by John Chryssavgis, vol. 1–2 *(Fathers of the Church, 113–114). Washington, D.C.:* Catholic University of America Press.

Dorotheus of Gaza. *Doctrinae* – Dorothée de Gaza (1963). *Œuvres spirituelles*, ed./tr. L Regnault & J. de Préville (SC, 92). Paris: Cerf.

— (1977). *Discourses and Sayings*. Translation with Introduction by Eric P. Wheeler (Cistercian Studies Series, 33). Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications.

Evagrius of Pontus. *Ad monachos; Ad virginem; Institutio ad monachos* = Evagrius Ponticus (2012). *Der Mönchsspiegel; Der Nonnenspiegel; Ermahnungen an Mönche*, ed. C. Joest (Fontes Christiani, 51). Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder (English translation: A. Casiday (2006): Augustine. *Evagrius Ponticus*. London and New York: Routledge, 165–171).

—. *Antirrhetikos* – W. Frankenberg (1912). *Evagrius Ponticus* (Abhandlungen der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen. Philologisch-Historische Klasse, n.F. 13/2). Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 472–545.

—. *Capita tria de oratione* – Hausherr, I. (1933). *De doctrina spirituali christianorum orientalium: Questiones et scripta* (Orientalia Christiana 30:3, no. 86). Rome: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum; English translation by A. Casiday (2006). *Evagrius Ponticus*. London – New York: Routledge, 118–119).

—. *De octo spiritibus malitiae* – J. Muyldermans (1939). Une nouvelle recension du *De octo spiritibus malitiae* de S. Nil. *Le Muséon, 52*, 235–274.

—. *De oratione* – Évagre le Pontique (2017). *Chapitres sur la prière*, ed. P. Géhin (SC, 589). Paris: Cerf.

—. *Epistulae* – W. Frankenberg (1912). *Evagrius Ponticus*, 554–634; German translation by G. Bunge (1986): Evagrios Pontikos. *Briefe aus der Wüste*, Trier: Paulinus-Verlag.

—. *Gnostikos* – Évagre le Pontique (1989). *Le gnostique, ou, A celui qui est devenu digne de la science*, ed. C. Guillaumont & A. Guillaumont (SC, 356). Paris: Cerf.

—. *Kephalaia gnostica* – A. Guillaumont (1958). *Les six Centuries des «Kephalaia Gnostica» d'Évagre le Pontique*. Paris: Firmin-Didot (= Turnhout: Brepols, 1977).

—. *Praktikos* – Évagre le Pontique (1971). *Traité pratique, ou, Le moine*, ed. Claire Guillaumont and Antoine Guillaumont (SC, 171). Paris: Cerf.

—. *Skemmata* (= *Capita cognoscitiua*) – J. Muyldetmans (1931). *Note additionnelle à: "Euagriana". Le Museon,* 44, 369–383; J. Muyldermans (1932). *À travers la tradition manuscrite d›Evagre le Pontique: Essai sur les manuscrits grecs conservés à la Bibliothèque nationale de Paris* (Bibliothèque du Muséon, 3). Louvain: Bureaux du Muséon; also: L. Dysinger (1990). "St. Evagrius Ponticus (345–399)." Monastic Spirituality Self-Study. Website, 1990. ldysinger.com).

—. *Peri logismon* (= *De malignis cogitationibus*) – Évagre le Pontique (1998). *Sur les pensées* ed. Paul Géhin (SC, 438). Paris: Cerf.

—. *Scholia in Psalmos* – Évagre le Pontique (2021). *Scholies aux Psaumes I–II*, ed. by M.-J. Rondeau, P. Géhin, M. Cassin (SC, 614–615). Paris: Cerf (vol. 1: *Psaumes 1–70*; vol. 2: *Psaumes 71–150*); English translation: L. Dysinger (1990). St. Evagrius Ponticus (345–399). Monastic Spirituality Self-Study (Website), ldysinger.com.

—. *Scholia in Proverbia* – Évagre le Pontique (1987). *Scholies aux Proverbes*, ed. Paul Géhin (SC, 340). Paris: Cerf (English translation: Dysinger L. (1990). St. Evagrius Ponticus (345–399). Monastic Spirituality Self-Study (Website), ldysinger.com).

—. *Tractatus ad Eulogium* (= *De vitiis quae opposita sunt virtutibus*) – Évagre le Pontique (2017). *À Euloge. Les vices opposés aux vertus*, ed. Charles-Antoine Fogielman. Paris: Cerf.

— (2003). *The Greek Ascetic Corpus.* Translation, Introduction, and Commentary by R. E. Sinkewicz. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

— (2009). *Talking Back: Antirrhetikos. A Monastic Handbook for Combating Demons*. Translation and introduction by David Brakke (Cistercian Studies, 229). Trappist, KY: Cistercian Publications – Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press.

Géhin Paul (2007). *Chapitres des disciples d'Évagre* (SC, 514). Paris: Cerf.

Gregory of Nyssa. *De virginitate* – Grégoire de Nysse (1966). *Traité de viginité*, ed. M. Aubineau (SC, 119). Paris: Cerf.

Gregory the Great. *Moralia in Job*, in PL 76:9–782.

Hesychius of Sinai. *Capita de temperantia et virtute*, in PG 93:1479–1544; English translation: *The Philokalia*, vol. 1, 162–198).

John Cassian (1886). *Conlationes,* ed. Michael Petschenig (CSEL, 13). Vindobonae: Tempsky – Lipsie: Freytag.

— (1888). *De institutis coenobiorum*, ed. Michael Petschenig (CSEL, 17). Pragae – Vindobonae: Tempsky – Lipsie: Freytag, 3–231.

— (1894). *The Institutes of the Coenobia*. Translation by Edgar C. S. Gibson (NPNF, II, 11). New York – Oxford – London, 201–290.

— (1894). *The Conferences*. Translation by Edgar C. S. Gibson (NPNF, II, 11). New York – Oxford – London, 1894, 291–545.

— (2000). *The Institutes*. Translation and Annotation by Boniface Ramsey (Ancient Christian Writers, 58). New York, NY – Mahwah, NJ: The Newman Press.

— (1997). *The Conferences*. Translation and Annotation by Boniface Ramsey (Ancient Christian Writers, 57). New York: Paulist Press – Mahwah: The Newman Press.

John Climacus. *Liber ad pastorem*, in PG 88:1165–1210.

—. *Scala paradisi*, in PG 88:631–1164 (English translation: John Climacus (1959). *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, Translation by archimandite Lazarus Moore, Introduction by M. Heppel. New York: Harper & Brothers; Russian translation: Ioann Lestvichnik (2013). *Lestvitsa, vozvodiashchaya na nebo*. [8]Moscow: Izdatelstvo Sretenskogo monastyria).

Maximus the Confessor. *Capita de caritate*, in PG 90:960–1073.

Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos, *The Commentaries on the Writings of St. John Climacus* (Ἐξήγησις σύντομος εἰς τὴν βίβλον πᾶσαν τοῦ ἁγίου Ἰωάννου τοῦ τῆς Κλίμακος) – *Νικηφόρος* Κάλλιστος *Ξανθόπουλος (*2002*). Ἐξήγησις σύντομος εἰς τὴν Κλίμακα τοῦ Ἰωάννου*, ed. Meletios [Kalamaras], Metropolitan of Nikopolis, Archimandrite S. Dimitreas, Archimandrite B. Lampropoulos. Preveza (Πρεβέζης), 37–513.

Peter of Damascus. *A Treasure of Divine Knowledge – Φιλοκαλία των Ιερών Νηπτικών*, 1986, vol. 3, 68–182 (English translation: https://orthodoxchurchfathers.com/fathers/philokalia/st-peter-of-damaskos-book-i-a-treasury-of-divine-knowledge.html).

Philokalia – Nicodemus the Hagiorite and Saint Makarios of Corinth (1986). *Φιλοκαλία των Ιερών Νηπτικών*. Translation into modern Greek by Antonios G. Galitis (Αντώνιος Γαλίτης), vol. 2–3. Thessaloniki: Perivoli tis Panagias (Το περιβόλι της Παναγίας); English translation: G. E. H. Palmer, Ph. Sherrard, K. Ware (1982–1986). *The Philokalia: The Complete Text compiled by St. Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain and St. Makarios of Corinth*, vol. 1–3. London: Faber & Faber.

Philotheos of Sinai, *Nēptiká kephálaia* – Όσιος Φιλόθεος ο Σιναΐτης, *Νηπτικά Κεφάλαια*, in Φιλοκαλία των Ιερών Νηπτικών, vol. 3, 14–28.

Theodoros the Great Ascetic. *A Century of Spiritual Texts* – Όσιος Θεόδωρος Εδέσσης, *100 ψυχωφελή κεφάλαια*, in *Φιλοκαλία των Ιερών Νηπτικών*, 1986, vol. 2, 12–33.

Secondary literature

Aijian, J. L. (2019). Fleeing the Stadium: Recovering the Conceptual Unity of Evagrius' Acedia. *The Heythrop Journal, 62*, 7–20.

Anthonopoulou, Th. (2007). The "Brief Exegesis of John Climacus' Heavenly Ladder" by Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos. Remarks on its Nature and Sources. *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik, 57*, 149–168.

Balthasar, H. U. von (1939). Metaphysik and Mystik des Evagrius Ponticus. *Zeitschrift für Aszese und Mystik, 14*, 31–47; English translation: H. U. von Balthasar (1965). The Metaphysics and Mystical Theology of Evagrius. *Monastic Studies, 3*, 183–195.

Bernatskyi, M. & Shlenov, D. (2007). Dorofei Hazskyi. Pravoslavnaia entsiklopedia, 16, 32–43.

Bitton-Ashkelony, B. & Kofsky A. (2006). *The Monastic School of Gaza*. Brill.

Bloomfield, M. W. (1952). *The Seven Deadly Sins: An Introduction to the History of a Religious Concept, with Special Reference to Medieval English Literature*. Michigan State College Press.

Brakke, D. (2006). *Demons and the Making of the Monk: Spiritual Combat in Early Christianity*, Harvard University Press.

Brakke, D. (2009). Introduction. In Evagrius. *Talking Back* (pp. 1–40). Cistercian Publications –Liturgical Press.

Bulanenko, M. (2021). Paradoksy smirenia: uroki prepodobnogo avvy Dorofeia Hazskoho dlia sovremennoi etiki. Vestnyk Russkoi khristianskoi humanytarnoi akademii, 22(3), 63–82.

Bunge G. (2012). *Despondency: The Spiritual Teaching of Evagrius Ponticus on Acedia*. St. Vladimir Seminary Press.

— (2009). *Dragon's Wine and Angel's Bread: The Teaching of Evagrius Ponticus on Anger and Meekness*. St. Vladimir Seminary Press.

Burton-Christie, D. (2009). Evagrius on Sadness. *Cistercian Studies Quaterly, 44*(4), 395–409.

Byrne, R. (1987). Cassian and the Goals of Monastic Life. *Cistercian Studies Quarterly 22*, 3–16.

Canivet, P. (1965). Dorothée de Gaza est-il un disciple d'Évagre?: (A propos d'une édition de ses œuvres spirituelles). *Revue des études grecques, 78*, 336–346.

Cattoi, T. (2019). *Holy Anger, Holy* Wrath: The Role of Anger and the Emotions in Early Christian Spirituality and the Mahāyāna Buddhist. *Buddhist-Christian Studies 39*, 53–66.

Chadwick, O. (1968). *John Cassian*. Cambridge University Press.

Chitty, D. J. (1966). Towards an Edition of the Erotapocrises of Varsanuphius and John. *SP, 7*, 46–51.

— (1971). *Abba Isaiah. Journal of Theological Studies. New Series, 22*(1), 47–72.

Chrysavgis, J. (1988). The Sources of St. John Climacus (c. 580–649). *Ostkirchliche Studien, 37*(1), 3–13.

Chryssavgis John (1989). *Ascent to Heaven. The Theology of the Human Person according to Saint John of the Ladder*. Holy Cross Orthodox Press.

— (2004*). John Climacus: From the Egyptian Desert to the Sinaite Mountain*, London: Ashgate.

Clark, E. A. (1992). *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate*. Princeton University Press.

Crislip, A, (2005). The Sin of Sloth or the Illness of the Demons? The Demon of Acedia in Early Christian Monasticism. *The Harvard Theological Review, 98*(2), 143–169.

Driscoll, J. (1999). Apatheia and Purity of Heart in Evagrius Ponticus. In: H. Luckman & J. Raasch (eds.), *Purity of Heart in Early Ascetic and Monastic Literature: Essays in Honor of Juana Raasch, O.S.B*. (pp. 141–159). Liturgical Press.

Dörries, H. (1962). The Place of Confession in Ancient Monasticism. *SP, 5*(3), 284–311.

Elm, S. (1991). Evagrius Ponticus' "Sententia ad Virginem". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers, 45*, 97–120.

Faure, E. (2014). *Dynamique de l'humilité: La vie spirituelle selon Dorothée de Gaza* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Fribourg].

Gibbons, K.S.M. (2011). *Vice and Self Examination in the Christian Desert: An Intellectual Historical Reading of Evagrius Ponticus* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Toronto].

Gibson, F. R. (2018). *Overcoming Listlessness: Learning from Evagrius of Pontus*, in *Foundations, 74*(1), 45–58.

Gillette, G. (2010). *Four Faces of Anger: Seneca, Evagrius Ponticus, Cassian and Augustine*. University Press of America.

Glangiobbe, J. (2016). Le *péché* d'*acedia,* de l'*aversion* à l'*indifférence.* Une *réflexion* à partir d'*Évagre. Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques, 100*(2), 185–208.

Gravier, I. (2018). Possible Selves in Late Antiquity: Ideal Selfhood and Embodied Selves in Evagrian Anthropology. *The Journal of Religion, 98*(1), 59–89.

— (2022). Demonic Machinations and Cognitive Mechanisms: Cognitive Insights into Early Monastic Demonology. *The Journal of Religion, 102*(1), 1–26.

Grillmeier, A. (2002). Vacare Deo: Zur Christologie des Dorotheus von Gaza. In T. Hainthaler (Ed.), *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche*, vol. 2–3: *Die Kirchen von Jerusalem und Antiochien nach 451 bis 600* (pp. 113–117). Herder.

Guillaumont, A. & Guillaumont, C. (1971). *Introduction*. In idem (Ed.), *Évagre le Pontique. Traité pratique ou Le moine*, Vol. 1: *Étude historique et doctrinale* (pp. 21–125) Cerf.

Harmless, W. (2004). *Desert Christians. An Introduction to the Literature of Early Monasticism*. Oxford University Press.

— (2008). *Mystics*. Oxford University Press.

Harrison, K. E. (2021). *L'ivraie et les demons: Passions et rationalité chez Grégoire de Nysse et Évagre le Pontique* [Doctoral dissertation, Universitey of Fribourg].

Hausherr, I. (1933). *L'origine de la théorie orientale des huits péchés capitaux*, in *Orientalia Christiana Periodica, 30*(3), 164–175.

Hevelone-Harper, J. (2005). *Disciples of the Desert: Monks, Laity, and Spiritual Authority in Sixth-Century Gaza*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

— (2017). The Letter Collection of Barsanuphius and John. In C. Sogno, B. K. Storin, E. J. Watts (Eds.), *Late Antique Letter Collections: A Critical Introduction and Reference Guide* (pp. 418–432). University of California Press.

Hombergen, *D.* (2004). Barsanuphius and John of Gaza and the Origenist Controversy. In B. Bitton-Ashkelony & A. Kofsky (Eds.), *Christian Gaza in Late Antiquity* (pp. 173–181). Brill.

— (2009). The Question of Dorotheus of Gaza's Position in the Second Origenist Controversy. In E. López-Tello García (Ed.), *Church, Society and Monasticism*: *Acts of International symposium, Rome, May 31 – June 3 2006* (pp. 475–483). Pontificio Ateneo S. Anselmo.

Joest, F. (2004). The Significance of "Acedia" and "Apatheia" in Evagrius Ponticus: Part I–II. *The American Benedictine Review, 55*(1), 121–150; *55*(3), 273–307.

Kim, J. (2002). *The Spiritual Anthropology of John Cassian* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Leeds].

Kirchmeyer, J. (1963). *Hésychius le Sinaïte et ses Centuries*. In *Le millénaire du mont Athos: 963–1963: études et mélanges* (Vol. I, pp. 319–329). Éditions de *Chevetogne*.

Koch, A. (1895). *Lehre des Johannes Cassianus von Natur und Gnade. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Gnadenstreits im 5. Jahrhundert*. Freiburg im Breisgau.

Kordochkin, A. (2003). *John Climacus and the Spiritual Tradition of the IV–VII Centuries* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Durham].

Lepakhin, V. (1998). Strast i lestvitsa strastei. Le messager. *Vestnyk russkogo khristianskogo dvizheniya*, 179, 5-22.

Louf, *A,* (1974). L'acédie chez Évagre le Pontique. *Concilium, 99*, 113–117.

Louth, A. (2010). Evagrios on Anger. *SP, 47*, 179–186.

Macheta, L. (2017). *Acedia a lype w pismach Ewagriusza z Pontu. Teo-antropologia ontologiczna. Analecta Cracoviensia, 49*, 111–128.

Marsili, S. (1936). *Giovanni Cassiano ed Evagrio Pontico*. Herder.

Mathisen, R. W. (1999). Councils of Orange. In A. D. Fitzgerald (Ed.), *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia* (pp. 250–251). Eerdmans.

Misiarczyk, L. — (2016). The Relationship Between *Nous, Pneuma* and *Logistikon* in Evagrius Ponticus' Anthropology. *SP, 16*, 149–154.

— (2018). Origen as a Source of the Evagrian Eight Passionate Thoughts. *Seminare. Poszukiwania naukowe, 39*(4), 191–205.

— (2021a). *Eight Logismoi in the Writings of Evagrius Ponticus*. Brepols.

— (2021b). Impassibilitas et impeccantia: Jerome's misunderstanding of impassibility and sinlessness in Evagrius Ponticus. *Bogoslovni vestnik – Theological Quarterly, 81*(2), 271–281.

Neyt, F. (1969). *Les lettres à Dorothée dans la correspondence de Barsanuphe et de Jean de Gaza* [Doctoral dissertation, Université Catholique de Louvain].

Nichols, A. (2020). *Reassessing the Tradition of the Fathers in John Cassian and Evagrius Ponticus* [Master's thesis, Lincoln Christian University].

Nieścior, L. (1996). Kategorie myśli w nauce ascetycznej Ewagriusza z Pontu. *Roczniki humanistyczne, 44*(3), 205–230.

— (1996–1997). Pojęcie apathei w pismach Ewagriusza z Pontu. *Studia Paradyskie, 6/7*, 105–133.

— (2018). *Fight against the Anger* – the *Eighth Grade of the St. John Climacus's "Ladder of Divine Ascent". Verbum Vitae, 33, 343–364.*

Okholm, D. (2014). *Dangerous Passions, Deadly Sins: Learning from the Psychology of Ancient Monks*, Brazos Press.

O'Laughlin, M. W. (1988). Elements of Fourth Century Origenism: Anthropology of Evagrius Ponticus and Its Source. In: Ch. Kannengiesser & W. L. Petersen (eds.). *Origen of Alexandria. His World and His Legacy* (pp. 355–373). University of Notre Dame Press.

— (1987). *Origenism in the Desert. Anthropology and Integration in Evagrius Ponticus* [Doctoral dissertation, Harvard University].

Pancerz, R. M. (2014). *Demon bluźnierstwa w ujęciu Jana Klimaka. Vox Patrum 62*, 435–441.

Paša, Ž. (2010). *The Influence of Evagrius Ponticus on the Thought of Maximus the Confessor: A Comparison of Three Spiritual Struggles in the Works of Evagrius Ponticus and Maximus the Confessor*. Pontificum Institutum Orientale Studiorum.

Peretó Rivas, R. A. (2013). *La acedia y Evagrio Póntico. Entre ángeles y demonios. SP 47*, 239–245.

Pitrea, A. (2019). The Origin of Passions in Neoplatonic and Early Christian Thought: Porphyry of Tyre and Evagrius Ponticus. In P. G. Pavlos, L. F. Janby, E. K. Emilsson, T. Th. Tollefsen (Eds.), *Platonism and Christianity in Late Antiquity* (pp. 258–274). Routledge.

Raasch, J. (1966). The *Monastic Concept of Purity* of *Heart* and *Its* Sources. *Studia Monastica, 8*, 7–33, 183–213; *10* (1968) 7–55; *11* (1969) 269–314; 12 (1970) 7–41.

Regnault, L. (1970). Isaïe de Scété ou de Gaza?: Notes critiques en marge d'une introduction au problème isaïen. *Revue d'ascétique et de mystique, 46*, 33–44.

Rondeau, M.-J. (1960). Le commentaire sut les Psaumes d'Evagte le Pontique. *Orientalia Christiana Periodica, 26*, 327–348.

Rousseau, Ph. (1975). Cassian, Contemplation and the Coenobitic Life. *Journal of Ecclesiastical History, 26*(2), 113–126.

Rozumna, Y. (2017). 'Be Angry and Do Not Sin'. Human Anger in Evagrius of Pontus and Gregory of Nyssa. *SP, 83*(9), 103–114.

Schenkewitz, K. A. (2016). *Dorotheos of Gaza and the Discourse of Healing in Gazan Monasticism.* Peter Lang.

Sheridan, M. (1997). *The Controversy over ἀπαθεία: Cassian's Sources and His Use of Them. Studia Monastica, 39, 287–310.*

Somos, R. (1999). Origen, Evagrius Ponticus and the Ideal of Impassibility. In W. A. Bienert (Ed.), *Origeniana Septima: Origenes in den Auseinandersetzungen des 4. Jahrhunderts.* (pp. 365–373). Peeters.

Špidlík, T. (1972). Le concept de l'obéissance et de la concience selon Dorothée de Gaza. *SP, 11*, 72–78.

— (1978). *La spiritualité de l'Orient chrétien: manuel systématique.* Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum.

Spiridonova, L. (2011a). Zhyzn i tvorcheskoe nasledie avvy Dorofeia (Hazskogo) v kontekste istorii hazskogo monashestva [Doctoral dissertation, Sankt-Petersburg].

— (2011b). *Byl li avva Dorofei monofizitom ili evagrianinom? Vestnyk Tambovskogo universiteta. Seria: Humanitarnye nauki, 7*(99), 140–144.

Squires, S. (2013). *Reassessing Pelagianism: Augustine, Cassian, and Jerome on the Possibility of a Sinless Life* [Doctoral dissertation, Catholic University of America].

Stewart, C. (1991). *'Working the Earth of the Heart'. The Messalian Controversy in History, Texts, and Language to A.D. 431.* Oxford University Press.

— (1998). *Cassian the Monk.* Oxford University Press.

— (2000). Evagrius Ponticus on Prayer and Anger. In R. Valantasis (Ed.), *Religions of Late Antiquity in Practice* (pp. 65–81). Princeton University Press.

— (2003). John Cassian's Schema of Eight Principal Faults and His Debt to *Origen* and Evagrius. In C. Badilita & A. Jakab (Eds.), *Jean Cassien entre l'Orient et l'Occident, Actes du Colloque de Bucarest, 27–28 septembre 2001* (pp. 205–219). Beauchesne – Polirom.

— (2005). Evagrius Ponticus and the Eights Generic Logismoi. In R. Newhauser (Ed.), *The Garden of Evil. The Vices and Culture in the Middle Ages* (pp. 3–34). Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies.

— (2011). Evagrius Ponticus and the Eastern Monastic Tradition on the Intellect and the Passions. *Modern Theology, 27*(2), 263–275.

— (2016). Evagrius Beyond Byzantium: The Latin and Syriac Receptions. In J. Kalvesmaki & R. D. Young (Eds.), *Evagrius and His Legacy* (pp. 206–235). University Notre Dame Press.

Tilby, A. (2009). *The Seven Deadly Sins and Their Origin in the Teachings of Evagrius the Hermit*. Society for Promotion Christian Knowledge.

Tobon, M. (2010). *Apatheia in the Teachings of Evagrius Ponticus* [Doctoral dissertation, University College London].

Vailhé, S. (1906). *Un mystique monophysite le moine Isaïe*, in *Échos d'Orient, 9*(57), 81–91.

Van Braam, P. (1912). *Aristotle's Use of 'Αμαρτία*, in: *The Classical Quarterly, 6*(4), 266–272.

Vazquez S. H. & Gargiulo M. T. (2021). La concepción de enfermedad del alma en Evagrio Póntico. Una nueva síntesis y extensión del modelo teleológico de explicación de la medicina hipocrático-galénica. *Vox Patrum 78*, 207–238.

Villegas-Marín, R. (2013). Original Sin in the Provençal Ascetic Theology: John Cassian. *SP, 69*, 289–295.

—. (2017). Asceticism and Exegetical Authority in John Cassian's Conference 23. *Ephemerides Theologiae Lovanienses, 93*(4), 671–684.

Völker, W. (1968). Die beiden Centurien «De temperantia et virtute» des Hesychius. *In Idem. Scala Paradisi*: *Eine Studie zu Johannes Climacus und zugleich eine zu Symeon* dem *Neuen Theologen*, *Wiesbaden:* Steiner, *291–314.*

Waegeman, M. (1974). La structure primitive du traité «De temperantia et virtute» d'Hésychius le Sinaïte: deux centuries ou un acrostiche alphabétique? *Byzantion, 44*(2), 467–478.

Ware, K. T. (1965). *The Ascetic Writings of Mark the Hermit* [Doctoral dissertation, University of *Oxford].*

— (1985). The Jesus Prayer in St. Diadochus of Photice. In G. D. Dragas (Ed.), *Aksum-Thyateira. A Festschrift for Archbishop Methodius of Thyateira and Great Britain. Thyateira* House, 557–568.

— (1985). *Introduction*, in C.-A. Zirnheld (Ed.), *Marc Le Moine. Traités spirituels et théologiques* (pp. IX–LI). Bellefontaine.

Watson, A. J. (2016). *Evagrius. East of the Euphrates.* In J. Kalvesmaki & R. D. Young (Eds.). *Evagrius and His Legacy* (pp. 236–256).

Weber, H. O. (1961). *Die Stellung des Johannes Cassianus zur ausserpachomianischen Monchstradition*, Minister: Aschendorff.

Wiles, M. (1967). *The Divine Apostle: The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles in the Early Church.* Cambridge University Press.

Wrzoł, L. (1923, 1924). Die Hauptsündenlehre des Johannes Cassianus und ihre historisches Quellen. *Divus Thomas, 3*(1), 385–404; *3*(2), 89–91.

Zecher, J. L. (2018). *The Reception of Evagrian Psychology in the Ladder of Divine Ascent: John Cassian and Gregory Nazianzen as Sources and Conversation Partners. Journal of Theological Studies, 69*(2), 674–713.

— (2023). Evagrius of Pontus on Λύπη: Distress and Cognition between Philosophy, Medicine, and Monasticism. In: L. Ayres, M. W. Champion, M. R. Crawford (Eds.). *The Intellectual World of Late Antique Christianity: Reshaping Classical Traditions* (pp. 530–547). Cambridge University Press.