

A FRAGMENT OF DIDYMUS THE BLIND
IN THE *PANDECTS* OF NIKON OF THE BLACK MOUNTAIN

It has been known for almost three hundred years that a fragment of a work by the fourth-century Alexandrian theologian Didymus the Blind was extant in the *Pandects* of Nikon of the Black Mountain, an eleventh-century Melchite ecclesiastical writer. In 1715 Bernard de Montfaucon had noted the existence of this fragment in two manuscripts of the *Pandects* in Paris but did not publish or identify the fragment in question¹. Gustave Bardy, in his work *Didyme l'Aveugle* (1910), simply referred back to Montfaucon's notice without attempting to identify the fragment². To fill this lacuna, I will offer a preliminary edition and translation of this Didymus fragment and indicate its identity and origin.

Before the Didymus fragment is examined, Nikon's life and the nature of his *Pandects* will be briefly discussed. Little is known of Nikon's life, although it is clear from autobiographical references in another of his works (the *Taktikon*) that he was born in Constantinople c. 1025 and pursued a military career under the emperor Constantine IX Monomachos (1042-1055) before entering a monastery on the Black Mountain (Μαῦρον ὄρος) north of Syrian Antioch³. Under Theodosius III (patriarch of Antioch from 1057-1059), Nikon worked to restore monastic discipline in the Melchite

1. B. de Montfaucon, *Bibliotheca Coisliniana*, Paris 1715, pp. 111, 191 (regarding *Paris. Coislin. gr.* 117 and 296); idem, *Bibliotheca bibliothecarum manuscriptorum nova*, Paris 1739, p. 1051.

2. G. Bardy, *Didyme l'Aveugle*, Paris 1910, pp. 38-39.

3. On Nikon's life, see J. Nasrallah, «Un auteur antiochien du XIe siècle: Nikon de la Montagne Noire (vers 1025-début du XIIe s.)», *Proche-Orient chrétien* 19 (1969) 150-161 (reprinted in his *Histoire du mouvement littéraire dans l'église melchite du Ve au XXe siècle. Contribution à l'étude de la littérature arabe chrétienne. Vol. III, t. 1: 969-1250*, Louvain 1983, pp. 109-122); A. Solignac, «Nicon de la Montagne-Noire», in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique*, v. 11, Paris 1982, coll. 319-320; A. Kazhdan, «Nikon of the Black Mountain», in A. Kazhdan (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, v. 3, Oxford 1991, pp. 1484-1485; Theodoros Giangos, «Ἀποσπάσματα ἀγνώστου ἀγιορειτικοῦ τυπικοῦ στο ἀνθολόγιο "Ἐρμηνεῖα τῶν ἐντολῶν τοῦ Κυρίου"», in *Ἐπιστημονικὴ Ἐπετηρίδα Θεολογικῆς Σχολῆς Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλονίκης. Νέα σειρά: Τμῆμα Ποιμαντικῆς*, v. 1, Thessaloniki 1990, pp. 325-358; idem, Νίκων ὁ Μαυρορείτης. Βίος, συγγραφικὸ ἔργο, κανονικὴ διδασκαλία [Ἐπιστημονικὴ Ἐπετηρίδα τῆς Θεολογικῆς Σχολῆς Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλονίκης, Τμῆμα Ποιμαντικῆς. Παράρτημα Nr. 2], Thessaloniki 1991. I am indebted to Prof. Dimitrios Christidis and Dr. Evangeli Skaka for sending me copies of the Giangos article and monograph respectively. I was unable to consult Philippe Naba'a, *Influence du droit byzantin sur le droit melchite*, Lic. diss., Pontificum Institutum Orientalium Studiorum 1947, in which pp. 10-19 are devoted to Nikon.

monasteries of northern Syria. The restoration of monastic discipline continued to be one of Nikon's principal interests in subsequent decades and is the dominant theme in all of his extant works. After the capture of Antioch in 1084 by the Seljuk ruler Süleyman ibn Kutulmuş, Nikon took refuge in the nearby monastery of the Theotokos of the Pomegranate (Θεοτόκου τοῦ Ροῖδίου), which belonged to the Chalcedonian Armenians (Τζᾶτοι). Nikon apparently died shortly after 1100.

Nikon's *Pandects* – which in the manuscripts generally bears the title *Interpretations of the Divine Commandments of the Lord* (Ἑρμηνεῖα τῶν θεῶν ἐντολῶν τοῦ Κυρίου) – is a monastic florilegium, i.e. a collection of material excerpted from Scripture, patristic literature and the canons issued by church councils and organized topically for the edification of a monastic audience. Like other monastic florilegia, it represents an outgrowth of the encyclopedic tendencies found in tenth-century Byzantine literature⁴. The *Pandects* differs from other monastic florilegia by drawing quite heavily upon a collection of canonical and juridical materials and therefore having a pronounced emphasis upon the regulation of church life⁵. Nikon compiled the *Pandects* at the beginning of the reign of Constantine X Doukas (1059-1067). The work was translated into Arabic, probably within Nikon's lifetime, and in 1583 from Arabic into Ethiopic (Ge'ez)⁶. In the thirteenth century, the *Pandects* was also translated from Greek into Palaeoslavonic and enjoyed considerable popularity in Russian monasteries⁷.

A critical edition of the *Pandects* has never appeared, although the texts of some individual chapters have been published, often from a single manuscript⁸. Because a large number of manuscripts of the *Pandects* exist, it will

4. See P. Lemerle, *Byzantine Humanism: The First Phase* (trans. H. Lindsay and A. Moffatt), Canberra 1986, pp. 309-346; N. G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium*, rev. ed., London 1996, pp. 143-147.

5. M. Richard, «Florilèges spirituels grecs», in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité* 5 (1962), coll. 503-504 [= *Opera minora*, v. 1, Turnhout - Leuven 1976, no. 1]. Regarding Nikon's sources, see C. de Clercq, *Fontes iuridici ecclesiarum orientalium. Studium historicum*, Rome 1967, p. 64.

6. On the Arabic translation of the *Pandects*, see Nasrallah, «Auteur», pp. 153-154 (= *Histoire*, pp. 113-114). Regarding the Ethiopic translation, see H. Zotenberg, *Catalogue des manuscrits éthiopiens [...] de la Bibliothèque nationale*, Paris 1877, p. 106; C. Conti Rossini, «Aethiopica (Serie II)», *Rivista degli studi orientali* 10 (1923-1925) 502-505; G. Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, v. 2, Vatican City 1947, p. 66; E. J. Van Donzel, *Enbaqom Anqasa Amin (La porte de la foi)*, Leiden 1969, p. 30.

7. De Clercq, *Fontes*, p. 109; F. J. Thomson, «The Problem of the Reception of the Works of John IV Ieuniator of Constantinople among the Slavs: Nikon of the Black Mount and Circyus of Novograd», *Palaeobulgarica* 11 (1987) 23-45.

8. See J.-P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, v. 106, coll. 1360-1381 (list of the 63 chapter headings); v. 127, coll. 513-516 (prologue), 528-532 (ch. 57); v. 86, coll. 69-73 (last chapter); C. de Clercq, «Les *Pandectes* de Nikon de la Montagne Noire», *Archives d'histoire du droit*

not be possible here to provide a complete, critical edition of the fragment ascribed to Didymus⁹. Nonetheless, from the eight manuscripts of the *Pandects* that were available to me on microfilm, it is possible to offer a preliminary edition of the fragment, permitting its identification¹⁰.

- A = Athos, Megistes Lavras, *ms. B 108* (228), f. 170v. (saec. XII, membr.)
 B = Basel, Universitätsbibliothek *gr. 45* (A.III.5), f. 208r. (saec. XIV, bombyc.)
 C = Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, *Coislin. gr. 37*, f. 184r. (saec. XIV, membr.)
 D = Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, *Coislin. gr. 122*, f. 204v. (saec. XIV, bombyc.)
 F = Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, *ms. plut. VI.4*, ff. 172v-173r. (saec. XIV, membr.)
 J = Jerusalem, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, *Saba 365*, f. 274r-v. (saec. XIII, bombyc.)
 P = Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, *Ancien gr. 880*, f. 199r. (saec. XIII, bombyc.)
 V = Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, *Pal. gr. 357*, f. 150r. (saec. XIII, bombyc.).

Διδύμου ἐκ τῶν πράξεων τῶν ἁγίων ἀποστόλων

Αὐτοὶ γινώσκετε ὅτι ταῖς χρεῖαις μου καὶ τοῖς οὔσι μετ' ἐμοῦ ὑπηρετήσαν αἱ χεῖρες αὐταί. καὶ πάντα ὑπέδειξα ὑμῖν ὅτι οὕτως κοπιῶντας δεῖ ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι τῶν ἀσθενούντων· μνημονεύετε τῶν λόγων

5 τοῦ Κ(υρίου) Ἰ(ησοῦ), ὅτι αὐτὸς εἶπε· «μακάριόν ἐστι μᾶλλον διδόναι ἢ λαμβάνειν». τοῖς προϋσταμένοις τῆς ἐκκλησίας λέγεται ταῦτα, ἵνα πρὸς τοῖς ἄλλοις μιμηταὶ τοῦ λέγοντος κρίναντες εἶναι, λήψεως χρημάτων ἀπέχοντες [sic]· ἐμφαίνει γὰρ τοῦτο τὸ ἐπιφερόμενον ἐξῆς,

oriental 4 (1949) 187-203 (critical edition and translation of ch. 1). The *Pandects* have been analyzed in detail by C. de Clercq, *Les textes juridiques dans les Pandectes de Nikon de la Montagne Noire* [S. Congregazione per la Chiesa Orientale, Codificazione canonica Orientale, Fonti ser. 2, fasc. 30], Venice 1942.

9. Lists of the Greek manuscripts containing the *Pandects* can be found in Richard, p. 404 and R. E. Sinkewicz, *Manuscript Listings for the Authors of the Patristic and Byzantine Periods* [Greek Index Project Series, 4], Toronto 1992, fiche DTMBYZ 004, A 08-B08.

10. In mss. that divide Nikon's work into 63 chapters, this fragment is found in ch. 36 (cf. PG 106, 1372D6-1373A5). I am grateful to Prof. R. E. Sinkewicz of the Centre for Medieval Studies, Univ. of Toronto for lending me microfilms of Athos, Megistes Lavras, *ms. B 108* and Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, *Ancien gr. 880* and to the Library of Congress Photoduplication Service for sending me a microfilm of Jerusalem, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, *Saba 365*. The remaining mss. were consulted on microfilm at the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies Library in Toronto.

10 τὸ «πάντα ὑπέδειξα ὑμῖν ὅτι δεῖ κοπιῶντας ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι τῶν ἀσθενούντων», ἐπικουροῦντας αὐτοῖς. ὑπάρξεται δὲ τοῦτο, εἰ διὰ μνήμης οἱ λόγοι τοῦ Κ(υρίου)υ μένοιεν, εἰρηκότος· «μακάριον εἶναι μᾶλλον τοῦ λαμβάνειν τὸ διδόναι»· ὅθεν προκρίνεσθαι [sic] τοῖς ἐπισκόποις τὸ διδόναι.

1 Διδύμου: Διδύμω V τοῦ: τῶν J τῶν ἁγίων ἀποστόλων: om P τῶν ἀποστόλων J V || 2 γινώσκετε: γινώσκειται C J || 3 χεῖρες αὐται: χεῖραις αὐταῖς J χεῖραις αὐταῖς C || 3-4 κοπιῶντας: κοπιῶντες V || 4 μνημονεύετε: μνημονεύοντες C μνημονεύεται V τῶν: τὸν A B C F J P τοῦ D λόγων: λόγον A B C J P λόγου D || 5 ὅτι: ὄν B D P εἶπε: εἶπεν J ἐστι: ἐστὶν J || 6 λέγεται: λέγετε B D F J λέγε C || 7 ἄλλοις: om. B D F V μμηταί: μμείται B D F J μμηταῖς V λήψεως: λείψεως D V || 8 ἐμφάνει: ἐφ' ἐνὶ A B D F J P V τοῦτο: τούτω F τὸ: om. A B D F J P V ἐξῆς: ἐξ ἧς A || 9 κοπιῶντας: κοπιόντας V || 10 ἐπικουροῦντας: ἐπικουροῦντες C ὑπάρξεται: ὑπάρξετε F || 11 μένοιεν: μένειεν C μακάριον: μακάριος J || 12 τὸ: τὸν V post ὅθεν: add. δεῖ B D P προκρίνεσθαι: προκρίνεσθε V

An analysis of this fragment suggests that it consists of material excerpted from the ps.-Andreas catena on the Acts of the Apostles¹¹. After the lemma (line 1), Acts 20: 34-35 is cited (lines 2-5), followed by a comment of Didymus on those verses (lines 6-12). This comment of Didymus on Acts 20: 34-35 is also found (in a slightly less corrupt form) in the ps.-Andreas catena on the Acts of the Apostles¹². Since Didymus' commentary on Acts was known to Byzantine writers only through the fragments transmitted in that catena, the latter is likely to have been Nikon's source¹³.

The identification of the ps.-Andreas catena as Nikon's source is supported by an analysis of the text of the biblical citation (lines 2-5). Nikon's citation of Acts 20: 34-35 contains two interesting textual variants:

11. This catena has been discussed by R. Devreesse, «Chaînes exégétiques grecques», in: L. Pirot, *Dictionnaire de la Bible. Supplément*, v. 1, Paris 1928, coll. 1148, 1205-1209.

12. J. A. Cramer, *Catena graecorum Patrum in Novum Testamentum*, v. 3, Oxford 1844, p. 341, line 32-p. 342, line 6. Cramer's edition of the ps.-Andreas catena is not always reliable and must be controlled by reference to microfilms of the principal manuscripts in which the ps.-Andreas catena is extant, particularly Jerusalem, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, *Stavrou* 25 (9-10 c.). This Jerusalem ms. (hereafter, I), which was examined on a microfilm provided by the Library of Congress Photoduplication Service, is the oldest known witness to the text of the ps.-Andreas catena on Acts and should be used as the basis for all future editions of the latter work.

13. Since Didymus' comment on Acts 20: 34-35 is not found in the Acts commentaries of ps.-Oecumenius or Theophylact (both of which are dependent upon the ps.-Andreas catena), Nikon probably drew upon the ps.-Andreas catena directly, rather than through an intermediate source. Nikon also appears to have drawn on the ps.-Andreas catena for extracts from other writers. Clercq (*Textes*, p. 25) has noted that the fourth chapter of Nikon's *Pandects* includes a citation from Ammonius' commentary on the Acts of the Apostles; like Didymus' commentary on Acts, Ammonius' work appears to have been known to Byzantine writers only through the fragments transmitted in the ps.-Andreas catena.

- (1) the addition of καὶ before πάντα (line 3);
- (2) the reading μνημονεύετε (instead of μνημονεύειν τε) (line 4).

From a consultation of the apparatus of the various critical editions of the Greek New Testament, it appears that variants (1) and (2) are each quite rare and do not occur together in any extant biblical manuscript¹⁴. Both variants, however, are found in the citation of Acts 20: 34-35 given in the ps.-Andreas catena on Acts, suggesting that Nikon had copied the citation from the latter source¹⁵.

Unfortunately, both Nikon and Cramer's edition of ps.-Andreas present a corrupt text of Didymus' comment on Acts 20: 34-35. In Nikon's text of the first sentence (lines 6-7), ἵνα is not followed by a verb in the subjunctive; furthermore, ἀπέχοντες is manifestly wrong, since the middle voice is required here. Cramer's text of the first sentence is hardly better, since he prints the erroneous reading ἀπέχονται, while consigning the correct reading ἀπέχωνται to the *varietas lectionis* in the appendix¹⁶. Nikon's text of the last sentence is also corrupt, reading προκρίνεσθαι (line 12) instead of προκρινέσθω¹⁷.

With these errors corrected, Didymus' comment on Acts 20: 34-35 may be translated as follows:

These things are said to those governing the Church [cf. Acts 20: 28] so that, in addition to the other things, they may abstain from receiving money, deciding to be imitators of the one speaking [to them]. For he indicates this inference next: «In every way I showed you that by working hard one must help the weak», aiding them. And provision will be made for this, if through recollection the words of the Lord who has said, «It is more blessed to give than to receive», should abide; hence, let giving be preferred by bishops¹⁸.

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14. See C. Tischendorf, *Novum Testamentum graece [...] Editio octava critica maior*, v. 2, Leipzig 1872, pp. 185-186; H. Alford, *The Greek Testament*, v. 2, Cambridge 1886, p. 233.

15. Cramer, op. cit., p. 342, lines 7,14.

16. Ibid., p. 342, line 1; cf. p. 446. The reading ἀπέχωνται is found in the oldest known manuscript of the ps.-Andreas catena (I, f. 234v).

17. Cramer, op.cit., p. 342, lines 5-6. The reading προκρινέσθω is found in I (f. 235r).

18. In I (f. 235r), the text of the last sentence is ὅθεν προκρινέσθω τοῖς ἐπισκόποις τὸ διδόναι τοῦ λαβεῖν «Hence let giving be preferred by bishops to taking». In the absence of a critical edition of the ps.-Andreas catena on Acts, it is difficult to determine whether I's addition of τοῦ λαβεῖν represents the original form of the text or is a later scribal addition arising from either the careless reproduction of τοῦ λαμβάνειν in the previous sentence (line 12) or an attempt to make the final sentence grammatically parallel to the logion given in the previous sentence (where τὸ διδόναι is balanced by τοῦ λαμβάνειν).