

***UCENICII LUI EVAGRIE, Capete filocalice (EVA-
GRIUS' DISCIPLES, Philocalic Texts), Traducere,
introducere, note și comentarii Ieromonah Agapie COR-
BU, Ediție bilingvă, Editura Sf. Nectarie, Arad, 2020,
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Particularly appreciated by the Romanian scholars for the professionalism and accuracy of his theological thinking, but also for the prolific activity of translation, Father Agapie Corbu brings to light one of the pearls of philocalic literature, essential in understanding the theology and the evolution of theological thinking of the Holy Fathers. It is an enigmatic writing, eluded for many years, and discovered in the manuscript collection of the Benaki Museum in Athens, bearing the name “Κεφαλαία των μαθητῶν του Ευαγγρίου”. The critical edition of this text appeared in 2007, in “Source chrétiennes”, the famous series of patristic texts, under the care of Paul Géhin. He takes over the valuable text from the Jesuit Joseph Paramelle (1925-2011), at an advanced stage of editing.

Discussions on the author, place and time of writing are in full swing. The content of the text dominates over all this, being so important that, over time, many Fathers referred to, quoting, copying, and paraphrasing it. Suffice it to say that Saint Maximus the Confessor took whole passages from this collection for the writing of his famous work “Texts on Love”. This gives the text a guarantee that goes beyond any criticism.

A careful reading of the text reveals its connections with the whole philocalic literature and with the great themes of spiritual theology. It is a fruitful text found for centuries in the writings and thought of the Church Fathers, a kind of theological and spiritual binder, from here deducing the amplitude of writing and the importance of its translation for Romanian theology.

In a highly refined graphic representation, the text is rendered juxtaposed, in Greek – the original language of the text – and Romanian – the language in which it was translated. It is organized in the original form, i.e., in 198 texts, according to the model of philocalic literature. The presence of footnotes that accompany the text reveals its connection with the Holy Scripture and the writings of the Holy Fathers. It is also noteworthy that the translation was made after the Greek critical text edited by Paul Géhin, at “Le Cerf” publishing house (Paris, 2007).

The translator does not just make an introduction with a systematic presentation, like a textbook. He leaves the text within the reach of the reader, of course “equipped” with an impressive critical apparatus which the reader can discover the text itself through, stripped of scholastic meanings, full of freshness, dynamic and extremely current.

The scientific notes summarize the entire philocalic tradition, which is unitary but has a diverse expression. Despite the shortness of the text, the notes are true theological, linguistic, and philocalic commentaries, the translator brilliantly showing the connection of the text with all philocalic literature and theology, with the ideas, perspective, and spiritual experience of the great Fathers of the Church. From the Fathers of the 5th century to the contemporary ones, the journey proposed by the author in order to explain some philocalic terms or notions, gives the reader a diachronic look at the philocalic literature and theology.

In addition to the 198 texts, the volume includes a section entitled “Texts from outside the Athenian Collection”, including “Texts from Nicetas’ chain to the *Gospel of Luke*”, “Texts from the Damascene Chrestomathy” and an Appendix under the title “Texts of Chrestomathy common to the Athenian collection and Nicetas’ chain”, which complete the valuable volume.

The edition ends with the academic requirements that Father Agapie has already accustomed us to, with no less than five appendices containing: 1. Scriptural index; 2. Index of patristic and classical quotations; 3. Concordance between *Texts on Love* of Saint Maximus the Confessor and *Texts of Evagrius’ Disciples*; 4. Greek word index; 5. Thematic index.

The entire achievement enjoys the intellectual and spiritual seal of the scholar monk Gabriel Bunge, a world-renowned name in the philocalic literature, its rediscovery and revaluation, with an intellectual and spiritual experience comparable to that of the Desert Fathers.

The Romanian theology and culture enjoy this translation for the first time, taking into account the importance of the text and the value of the translation. The volume invites theologians and people of culture, but also lovers of philocalic texts to explore its valences and to capitalize them in writings of a theological, cultural and spiritual nature. It is the gift that the translator gives us through this volume.

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