

**AVVA EVAGRIE PONTICUL, *Monahul sau Făptuitorul (Praktikos) – o sută de capitole despre viața duhovnicească* [EVAGRIOS OF PONTUS, *Praktikos or The Monk – One Hundred Chapters on the Spiritual Life*],
Introduse și comentate de schimarhimandrit Gabriel BUNGE, Traducerea românească: diac. Ioan I. ICĂ JR., Editura Deisis, Sibiu, 2016, 347 pp.**

The prestigious publishing house Deisis, coordinated by Archdeacon Prof. Dr. Ioan I. Ică jun., included the present volume in its publishing projects from 2016, which in fact brings together two works: a patristic-spiritual work belonging to Evagrius of Pontus (345-399), a monk from the Egyptian desert Kellia, and the comments on this work belonging to the not less famous Schema-Archimandrite Gabriel Bunge (n. 1940) the best prepared connoisseur of Evagrian work and theology. The book sums up 347 pages in a modern and accessible language, but at the same time retaining its theological register, the merit belonging completely to the translator. It is noteworthy that the text of the Evagrian work is translated from Greek part of the series *Sources Chrétiennes*, vol. 171, and the rest of the text from German.

The book is opened by a laborious introduction signed by Gabriel Bunge, who deals scientifically and theologically with the author, his work and the one hundred chapters of the *Praktikos*, as well as the theological and spiritual teachings derived from them. Extremely analytical and clear, Father Gabriel Bunge manages to synthesize the whole teaching of this Evagrian treaty, which focuses on the first stage of the spiritual life, namely the practice (*praktikē*). In the last part of the introductory study, the author made some remarks on his own commentary on the one hundred chapters. The one hundred texts are presented independently, accompanied by his comments and explanatory notes, which include mostly biblical references and references to other Evagrian works.

Praktikos is part of the trilogy, which brings together three original independent writings – *Praktikos*, *Gnostikos* and *Kephalaiia Gnostika*—dedicated to his friend and benefactor Anatolius. Although *Praktikos* has a precise destination through the theme approached, namely the anachoretēs and hermits who lived in the desert, the work has only apparent limits. The man remains the same, whether he lives in the wilderness or in society, and he is tempted by the same demons and falls prey to the same vices. So, with all its seemingly esoteric character, this Evagrian work is addressed both to the modern reader, and to the common believer, and to the theologians. It contains fears, obsessions, defeats, but also ways and means of spiritual rehabilitation and equilibrium, extremely necessary to the present world. We can call this writing a handbook or guide meant to explain the ways and methods, the reason and the accomplishments of the first stage of the spiritual life, which is a part of the great process of deification which man is called to.

Gabriel Bunge's commentary completes, explains and clarifies *Praktikos*, and makes it more accessible to the reader. The genius of this commentary lies in the fact that its author explains Abba Evagrios by Abba Evagrios. That is to say, in order to clarify some terms or passages, the author uses fragments of other Evagrian works, demonstrating that the Evagrian work is a unitary corpus, explained and completed in the light of the other writings. Therefore, the footnotes refer to the works of Evagrios in particular. Through this method, the author provides a spiritual explanation, without neglecting the scientific part, such as the division of chapters and the scriptural references. However, the spiritual explanation was self-imposed, taking into account the spiritual character of the writing.

The scriptural references present both in the Evagrian work and in its commentary highlight the central idea of Abba Evagrios' thinking that the Word of God is our only sure source of knowledge. We also add that the scriptural interpretation is symbolic and typological, and the commentator follows this line. For Evagrios, the scriptural events are symbols of a spiritual reality that we can contemplate and transpose into our lives. Thus the word of Scripture is open to the work of the Holy Spirit in Christ.

Like many other translations of this type, this translation made by the tireless and sharp theologian, archdeacon Ioan I. Ică jun., greatly broadens the horizon of contemporary Romanian theology, facilitating access to the latest research and writings related to the work and teaching of Evagrios

AVVA EVAGRIE PONTICUL, Monahul sau Făptuitorul – o sută de capitole despre viața duhovnicească of Pontus. It also opens up perspectives and models for academic research in the theology faculties from our country; it provides a viable guide for monks, and a landmark for the common believer who loves Christ, the Philokalic writings and the perfection.

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