




# Nomokanones as a Forgotten Source for Liturgics: A Case Study of the Nomokanon Manuscript GR 14 (17th c.) of the Grabovac Serbian Orthodox Monastery (Hungary)

Nomokanony jako zapomniane źródło Liturgiczne: Studium przypadku rękopisu Nomokanon GR 14 (XVII w.) serbskiego klasztoru prawosławnego Grabovac (Węgry)

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Data przekazania: 23.06.2023

Data akceptacji: 11.07.2023

Data publikacji: 11.09.2023



**Abstract:** In this paper we present and analyze some selected liturgical rubrics from the Mount Athos and two titles of the two last chapters of the very important manuscript Nomokanon GR 14 (17th c.) of the Serbian Orthodox Monastery Grabovac (Hungary). These rubrics and also titles of the two last chapters, which we have found in already-mentioned manuscript, were being formed by translation from Greek into Church Slavonic language of the Serbian redaction. Selected liturgical rubrics were being translated from the relevant parts of Athonite Typicon and Canon Law Tradition, and two titles of the two last chapters of Nomokanon GR 14 from a work of Gabriel Seviros, Metropolitan of Philadelphia (c. 1540–1616). We have also explained the main theological motives for such a translation and redaction of these texts.

**Streszczenie:** W niniejszym artykule przedstawiamy i analizujemy wybrane rubryki liturgiczne z Góry Athos oraz dwa tytuły dwóch ostatnich rozdziałów bardzo ważnego rękopisu Nomokanon GR 14 (XVII w.) serbskiego klasztoru prawosławnego Grabovac (Węgry). Te rubryki, a także tytuły dwóch ostatnich rozdziałów, które znaleźliśmy we wspomnianym już rękopisie, powstawały przez tłumaczenie z języka greckiego na język cerkiewno-słowiański redakcji serbskiej. Wybrane rubryki liturgiczne zostały przetłumaczone z odpowiednich części Athonite Typicon i Tradycji prawa kanonicznego, a dwa tytuły dwóch ostatnich rozdziałów Nomokanon GR 14 z dzieła Gabriela Sevirosa, metropolity filadelfijskiego (ok. 1540–1616). Wyjaśniliśmy również główne motywy teologiczne takiego tłumaczenia i redakcji tych tekstów.

**Keywords:** Monastery Grabovac, Nomokanon, metropolis of Buda, liturgy, metropolitan Gabriel Seviros

**Słowa kluczowe:** Klasztor Grabovac, Nomokanon, metropolia Budy, liturgia, metropolita Gabriel Seviros

**Cite this article:** Ubiparipović, S., *Nomokanones as a Forgotten Source for Liturgics: A Case Study of the Nomokanon Manuscript GR 14 (17th c.) of the Grabovac Serbian Orthodox Monastery (Hungary)*, *Elpis*, 25 2023: 107-111.  
<https://doi.org/10.15290/elpis.2023.25.11>

## 1. Introduction

Taking into account the especial significance of liturgical studies as a fundamental part of Christian theology, we should not be surprised that newly discovered sources and the use of digital technologies literally have accelerated and enhanced the development of Liturgiology. At the same time, numerous researchers have focused much of their attention mostly on well-known liturgical sources. However, there are many other theological manuscripts that contain very important facts concerning the liturgical theory and practice of the Eastern Orthodox Church. Among these types of sources, we should mention nomokanones.

The theme of this article is devoted to select liturgical rubrics of interest from Mount Athos and parts of works of Gabriel Severos, Metropolitan of Philadelphia (c. 1540–1616), which we have found in the manuscript of the Nomokanon GR 14 (17<sup>th</sup> c.) of the Serbian Orthodox Monastery Grabovac (Hungary).

## 2. Nomokanon Manuscript GR 14 (17<sup>th</sup> c.) of the Grabovac Serbian Orthodox Monastery (Hungary): Its origin, place and time of writing

The Nomokanon Manuscript GR 14 belongs to the collection of manuscripts and printed books of the Serbian Orthodox Monastery Grabovac (Sindik, Grozdanović-Pajić and Mano-Zisi, 1991, 38–40), which is a part of the Museum of the Serbian Orthodox Eparchy of Buda in Szentendre (Hungary) that has been reconstructed

and opened on the 25<sup>th</sup> May 2019. Nevertheless, the origin of Nomokanon Manuscript GR 14 should be examined from the time of foundation of the Serbian Orthodox Monastery Grabovac.

Contemporary Hungary's oldest functioning Eastern Orthodox monastery is the Monastery of the Holy Archangels in Grábóc (Serbian name: Grabovac) in southern part of Hungary. The church of the monastery was built in 1741 in the arrangement seen today (Golub, 2017, 337), and the interior decoration and furnishings acquired their final and current form in the mid-1780s (Golub, 2017, 338–350; Golub, 2018, 417–428). However, monastery was founded by five monks from Serbian Orthodox Monastery Dragović (Croatia) in 1585/7: Abbot Paisos and his brotherhood - monks Evstasios, Seraphim, Gerasimos and Dionysios (Davidov, 1990, 303). The number of Grabovac monastic brotherhood had been increased up to 60 monks during the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Davidov, 1990, 303–304). Also, this monastery gave two Orthodox Metropolitans of Buda of Patriarchate of Pecs – Symeon (1649–1660) and Victor (1660–1684) (Davidov, 1990, 303–304).

One of two already-mentioned Metropolitans of Buda, most probably Symeon, was the person who has been ordered the writing of Nomokanon GR 14. According to some assumptions, it seems that Nomokanon has been written by hieromonk Orestos, former ekklysiarhys of Monastery Hopovo (Frushka gora near Novi Sad, Serbia) and later well-known spiritual father from Mount Athos, who had sent from Mount Athos to Hopovo's Monastery at least two manuscripts during the middle of 17<sup>th</sup> century (Ubiparipović, 2021, 186). Also, it should be noticed that GR 14 has been written in Church Slavonic language of the Serbian redaction and consists of 13 quaternions without some missing folios (Sindik, Grozdanović-Pajić and Mano-Zisi, 1991, 38). Above all, the time of writing of this manuscript was obviously the middle of 17<sup>th</sup> century (Sindik, Grozdanović-Pajić and Mano-Zisi, 1991, 38).

### 3. Selected liturgical rubrics from Mount Athos in the Nomokanon GR 14

Although the contents of Nomokanones are in the focus of interest of Canon and Church's Law (Troianos, 2012, 137–143), there are significant elements that should draw attention of liturgiologists. Manuscript Nomokanon GR 14 proves such a hypothesis.

For example, the folio 23r of Manuscript contains the next subtitle:

ВѢДОМО ДА Е КАКО ОБРѢТѢНОМЪ. ТЫПИКЪ ВЪ СѢТѢЙ ГОРѢ; ТАЖЕ ІЕРУСАЛѢМЪ ХОТѢЩИМЪ  
ВЗНИМАТЫ ИНОКОМЪ ИЛИ ВЪ СЕМЪ БОЕЩИМЪ СЕБѢ. (О ПРАВИЛАХЪ ДНЕВНОМЪ И НОЩНОМЪ. И КАКО  
ЕДИНЪ ЧЛѢВЪ МОЖЕТЪ СЪТВОРИТИ ВѢДѢНІЕ.

*It should be noticed how we have found in the Typicon of Mount Athos, and also in the Hierosolymitan [Typicon]: A monk, who is afraid of God and wants to pay attention to the Rule for daily and night [prayer] and how one man can make Vigil.*

The text of the Rule ends on folio 23v, but on the same folio 23v there is another, very interesting subtitle:

ИНОКЪ ИЛИ ИНОКІНА. ЯЦЕ НЕЗНАЮТЪ ПИСАНІ КНИГЫ: МОЖЕТЪ СЪТВОРИТИ ВѢДѢНІЕ [If a monk or  
a nun don't know the written books [are illiterate], [he or she] can make the Vigil].

Afterwards, all the rubrics of this Prayer Rule are written up to the folio 24r. In the same time, it should be stated that there are some similarities between the text of this Prayer Rule and another Prayer Rule for Illiterate Monks from the Manuscript Athonite Koutloumoussiou (Athon. Koutloum. 278, a. 1335, f. 201r), *Ἑτέρα διάταξις περὶ μοναχῶν τῶν μὴ γινώσκουσι γράμματα* [Hetera diataxis peri monakhōn tōn mē ginōskousi grammata] (Parpulov, 2014, 309).

Besides that, on the folio 77v we can read the next subtitle:

ΟΥΡΤΑΒΕΣ ΕΥΤΥΕ ΓΩΡΥ ΑΔΩΝΕΚΥΕ, Ω ΕΥΤΥΗΧ ΕΒΕΔΕΧ Η ΔΑΡΟ [Diataxis of Holy Mount Athos for  
Holy Vessels and Offerings (Gifts)].

The rubrics of this Diataxis are formulated up to the folio 78v. It should be noticed that these rubrics are mentioning the existence of Great one and Small one Antimins. Above all, the explanation of such a difference we find at the beginning of the folio 78v, where is written that Great Antimins is the one which has been consecrated in the new church. When the new church has been consecrated by the bishop, Great Antimins stays at Holy Table of new church for the seven days and should contain the holy relics (folio 78r). Exactly with the Great one Antimins should be celebrated Holy Liturgy in unconsecrated church (folio 78v), together with the Small one Antimins (folio 78r). Thanks to that, we can conclude that small one Antimins (fixed one) was used in the consecrated churches and hadn't contained Holy Relics. Also, these rubrics are convincing us that process of replacement of

eilleiton by antimins still didn't started during the 17<sup>th</sup> century and that just some antimisions had contained Holy Relics.

#### 4. Parts of works of Gabriel Severos, Metropolitan of Philadelphia (c. 1540-1616) in the Nomokanon GR 14

At the end of Manuscript Nomokanon GR 14 we have found two very interesting and inspiring texts for research. The title of the first one is on the folio 95r and says: Γαβριηλα μητροπολιτα γαβριηλα φιλαδελφεινικα ω μηρηδαχ ηλη χεστηχ [Work] of humble Metropolitan Gabriel of Philadelphia about particles (in original text about miridach or chestech)]; and text in a form questions and answers goes up to the folio 97v.

Also, at the bottom of folio 97v and on the next folio 98r we read the next title: Τογοζαδε γαβριηλα φιλαδελφεινικαγο ω κοληνη [Work] of the same one Gabriel of Philadelphia about kollyva]. Unfortunately, the text is ending on the folio 98v because the rest of the text has been lost. Who is this writer and what is the origin of these texts?

His Eminence Metropolitan of Philadelphia Gabriel Seviros or Sviros was, first of all, Metropolitan of Philadelphia in Asia Minor with seat in Venice, and afterwards Eastern Orthodox Metropolitan and spiritual leader of the Eastern Orthodox Christians from Northern and Southern Italy, Dalmatia, Sicily, Ionian Islands and Crete Island, with his seat in Venice, from 1577–1616. He was born in Monemvasia (Peloponesos) 1539/1540., grown up at the Crete Island and has finished his studies at the University of Padua (Phúka, 2008, 37–38. 40). Nevertheless, he was one of the most important Orthodox polemical theologians in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> and at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and the most distinguish person. He wrote significant number of works and formed very rich his own library with a precious collection of manuscripts (Elia, Piccione, 2021, 33–82).

The titles of two works with his name in the Manuscript Nomokanon GR 14 are the translated parts of his voluminous work. The exact title of that work is:

*Τοῦ ταπεινοῦ μητροπολίτου Φιλαδελφείας Γαβριὴλ καὶ ἐπιτρόπου πατριαρχικοῦ τοῦ ἐκ Μονεμβασίας Σεβήρου, κατὰ τῶν λεγόντων τοὺς ὀρθοδόξους τῆς Ανατολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας υἱοὺς κακῶς τε καὶ παρανόμως ποιεῖν τῶ τιμῶν καὶ προσκυνεῖν τὰ ἅγια δῶρα, ἠνίκα ὁ χερουβικὸς ἄδεται ὕμνος καὶ ὁ ἱερεὺς, φέρων ταῦτα, εἰσοδεύει εἰς τὸ ἅγιον βῆμα. Ἔτι περὶ τῶν μερίδων ἐν τῶ ἁγίῳ δίσκῳ ἐπιτιθεμένων. Ἔτι περὶ τῶν κολλύβων καὶ σπερμάτων, τῶν προσφερομένων ἐν ταῖς ἐορταῖς τῶν Ἁγίων καὶ ὑπὲρ τῶν κεκοιμημένων ὀρθοδόξων*

*[Toῦ tapeinoῦ mēropolitou Philadelphēias Gabriēl kai epitropou patriarkhikoῦ toῦ ek Monembasias Sebērou, katà tōn legóntōn toῦs orthodoxous tēs Anatolikēs Ekklēsiās huiou̓s kakōs te kai paranómōs poieîn tō timōn kai proskuneîn tà hágia dōra, hēnika ho kheroubikōs ádetai húmnos kai ho hierēús, phérōn taῦta, eisodeúei eis tò hágion bēma. Éti perì tōn meridōn en tō hagíō dískō epititheménōn. Éti perì tōn kollúbōn kai spermátōn, tōn prosperoménōn en taís heortaís tōn Hagíōn kai hupèr tōn kekoimēménōn orthodoxōn].*

However, we know and for the others Gabriel's polemical and liturgical works. For example:

*Τοῦ ταπεινοῦ μητροπολίτου Φιλαδελφείας Γαβριὴλ καὶ ἐπιτρόπου Πατριαρχικοῦ, τοῦ ἐκ Μονεμβασίας τοῦ Σεβήρου. Συνταγμάτιον περὶ τῶν ἁγίων καὶ ἱερῶν μυστηρίων*

*[Toῦ tapeinoῦ mēropolitou Philadelphēias Gabriēl kai epitropou Patriarkhikoῦ, toῦ ek Monembasias toῦ Sebērou. Suntagmátion perì tōn hagíōn kai hierōn mustēríōn];*

*Γαβριὴλ Σεβήρου τοῦ ἐκ Μονεμβασίας ταπεινοῦ μητροπολίτου Φιλαδελφείας. Περὶ τοῦ πότε ἀγιάζονται καὶ μεταποιοῦνται τὰ τίμια δῶρα καὶ κατὰ τῶν κατ' αὐτοῦ τὰς μιὰρὰς αὐτῶ κινησάντων γλώσσας*

*[Gabriēl Sebērou toῦ ek Monembasias tapeinoῦ mēropolitou Philadelphēias. Perì toῦ pōte hagíazontai kai metapoioῦntai tà tímia dōra kai katà tōn kat' autoῦ tàs miaràs autō kinēsántōn glōssas].*

The translation of the parts of already-mentioned Metropolitan Gabriel's work in the Manuscript Nomokanon GR 14 has been motivated by polemical reasons, because Nomokanon was truly and real Rudder for the Serbian Orthodox Metropolitan of Buda of Patriarchate of Pecs in the area where the Eastern Orthodox Christians were in a constant contact and relations with Roman Catholic Christians. Consequently, questions about

using of the particles at the Holy Liturgy (Bernatskii, 2006, 129–144) and preparing of kollyva (*Słownik polskiej terminologii prawosławnej*, 2022, 245) in the Eastern Orthodox Church demand the right answers. So, this was probably strong motive for integration of these texts into the Manuscript Nomokanon GR 14, as an appropriate lighthouse of liturgical and theological Tradition for the Metropolis of Buda of Patriarchate of Pecs.

## 5. Conclusion

The research of select liturgical rubrics of interest from Mount Athos and parts of works of Gabriel Severos, Metropolitan of Philadelphia, which we have found in the manuscript of the Nomokanon GR 14 (17<sup>th</sup> c.) of the Serbian Orthodox Monastery Grabovac (Hungary), had showed that the nomokanones are indeed theological manuscripts which contain precious and significant facts concerning the liturgical theory and practice of the Eastern Orthodox Church. Being neglected and overlooked by the liturgiologists, these recourses hide many elements that could help and improve current research in liturgical studies. Above all, it should be stated that there are much more reductions of Nomocanones then we have thought with some inevitable liturgical questions and answers from different periods of life and mission of the Eastern Orthodox Church. Exactly Nomokanon GR 14 of the Serbian Orthodox Monastery Grabovac provides an example of such a perspective.

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