

EPISTOLARY TOPOI IN THE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN BYZANTINE EMPEROR CONSTANTINE VII PORPHYROGENITUS AND THEODORE, BISHOP OF CYZUS

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The letters exchanged between Byzantine emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (913-959) and his close friend Theodore, Bishop of Cyzicus, are of the utmost importance, representing the only preserved example of authentic writings from the emperor. Other than the fact that the correspondence offers details concerning the relationship between Theodore and Porphyrogenitus and their personal lives, it also provides a good foundation for the study of Porphyrogenitus' style of writing, which is very useful considering that the authorship of the emperor's literary inheritance is still the object of scholarly discussion. The corpus of this study is made up of ten letters written by Theodore and addressed to Constantine (whose letters of reply have not been preserved) from the Vindobonensis Collection and correspondence between Theodore and Porphyrogenitus from the Athos Collection (ten of Theodore's and eight of Constantine's letters). Epistolary topoi found in the letters will be analyzed and divided into two groups: contemplative and linguistic. The aim is primarily to present the features of Porphyrogenitus' letter-writing style, but also that of his correspondent, with special reference to the extent to which rhetorical recommendations were followed when composing letters.

KEYWORDS:

*Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus,
Theodore of Cyzicus, Byzantine
epistolography, epistolary topoi,
Greek epistolary phraseology*

1. INTRODUCTION¹

The corpus preserved in literary tradition under the name of Byzantine emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (913–959), the central figure of the Macedonian Renaissance,² has attracted the attention of scholars for almost one and a half centuries.³ Throughout this period, various aspects of the emperor's writings were studied, but the question of authorship, still not completely clarified, remains particularly interesting.⁴ There are several reasons why it is still not possible to reach a consensus on what Porphyrogenitus actually wrote. Namely, it is known that the emperor did not engage research and literary work alone, but was assisted by learned associates gathered at his court.⁵ For this reason it is difficult to distinguish the extent to which

¹ The preliminary results of this study were presented at the 24th International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Venice and Padua, 22–27 August 2022. Further work on this research for the purposes of this paper was financed by the institutional grant from the University of Zadar through the project *Digitalizacija izvora za poznavanje ranosrednjovjekovne hrvatske povijesti I: Konstantin Porfirogenet, De administrando imperio* (IP.01.2023.19).

² The term appears for the first time in Weitzmann 1948. The alternate name *First Byzantine Humanism*, introduced by Lemerle in 1971, is also used to describe the same period, a period during which the strong cultural, political and economic revival of the Byzantine Empire that followed the dark period of iconoclasm occurred. Beginning about eighty years before the reign of Basil I (867–886), the founder of the Macedonian dynasty, its peak was reached in the 10th century during the reign of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus. A leading role in this cultural phenomenon was played by the Byzantine court with Porphyrogenitus and his assistants (cf. Weitzmann 1963: 22–29). Due to great attempts to proliferate literary production and systematically organize knowledge in all spheres of the arts and sciences, the same period is also called *Byzantine encyclopaedism*. For more on the first Byzantine Humanism and the concept of encyclopaedism in the 10th century see Lemerle 1971, Treadgold 1984: 75–98, Magdalino 2013.

³ An excellent review of Porphyrogenitus' literary and scientific activities is provided by Dagron and Flusin 2020: I, 16*–36*. From older literature, see: Lemerle 1971: 267–297; Toynbee 1973: 575–605; Hunger 1978: I/339–343, 360–367, 532–533; II/96, 265–266, 273, 305–306, 329, 334–335, 455–457; Moravcsik 1983: I/356–390, 540–544.

⁴ As literature on the emperor's works is quite extensive, we shall use this occasion to mention only a few key studies dealing with their authorship: Bury 1906; Moravcsik and Jenkins 1967: 7–14; Lemerle 1971: 267–297; Toynbee 1973: 575–605; Ševčenko 1978; Moravcsik 1983: I/356–390, 540–544; Markopoulos 1985; Signes Codoñer 1989; Ševčenko 1992; Signes Codoñer 1995; Anagnostakis 1999; Varona 2010; Ševčenko 2011: 3*–13*; Featherstone 2014; Featherstone and Signes Codoñer 2015: 14*–19*; Signes Codoñer 2017; Dagron and Flusin 2020: I, 16*–36*.

⁵ Several names are known from among the learned collaborators from Porphyrogenitus' circle. Josephus Genesisius is associated with the *History of the Emperors* (Βασιλευται) in four books, compiled on Porphyrogenitus' behalf between 944 and 959. Theodore Daphnopates, a high-ranking official during the reigns of Romanus I Lecapenus, Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus and Romanus II, is mentioned as a possible author of the second part of the sixth book of the chronicle *Theoph. Cont.*, favorable to the Macedonian dynasty, the oration *De imag. Edessena*, composed on the occasion of the transfer of the *acheioropoiotos* image of Edessa to Constantinople in 944, and an epistle composed on the occasion of the transfer of the relics of Gregory of Nazianzus from Cappadocia to Constantinople. In recent studies, Basil the Nothos, the illegitimate son of Romanus I Lecapenus, who served as *parakoimomenos*

the works were written by Porphyrogenitus himself, and the extent to which they may be attributed to his collaborators judging only by the titles of his works.⁶ The situation is further complicated due to different levels of style appearing in the corpus.⁷ More than three decades ago I. Ševčenko devoted special attention to the study of this issue, concluding that Porphyrogenitus used at least five different writing styles, provided that everything attributed to him is, indeed, authentic (Ševčenko 1992: 184,

and received the highest title of *proedros* during the reign of Emperor Nicephorus II Phocas (963-969), is identified as a possible redactor of the *De cerim.* and the final version of the chronicle *Theoph. Cont.* Porphyrogenitus entrusted Theodore, Bishop of the city of Cyzicus, with the writing of a speech (δημηγορία), as evidenced by their correspondence (cf. Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B1, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 84, l. 25–29). Another ecclesiastical author, Nicetas David the Paphlagonian, was also a member of Porphyrogenitus' circle of *literati*, composing the *Life of St. John Chrysostom* on Porphyrogenitus' behalf, likely during the reign of Romanus I. Theophanes Chrysobalantes, known as Theophanes Nonnus in previous scholarship, dedicated two medical works, an *Abstract of All Medical Art* (σύνοψις ἐν ἐπιτομῇ τῆς ἰατρικῆς ἀπάσης τέχνης) and a treatise *On Diet* (Περὶ διαίτης) in two books, to Porphyrogenitus.

⁶ For a clearer insight, the titles of some works will be listed here. The title of the *Vita Bas.* reads: Ἱστορικὴ δὴγησις τοῦ βίου καὶ τῶν πράξεων Βασιλείου τοῦ αἰοιδίμου βασιλέως, ἦν Κωνσταντίνος βασιλεὺς ἐν θεῷ Ῥωμαίων, ὁ τοῦτου υἱανός, φιλοπόνως ἀπὸ διαφόρων ἀθροίσεως διηγημάτων τῷ γράφοντι προσανέθετο (Const. Porph. *Vita Bas.*, ed. Ševčenko, p. 8, tit. 1–6.), transl. “Historical narrative of the life and deeds of Basil, emperor of glorious memory, which his grandson Constantine, emperor of the Romans by the grace of God, diligently collected from various accounts and submitted to the writer.” Chronicle *Theoph. Cont.* begins with a partially reconstructed title: Χρονογραφία συγγραφείσα ἐκ προστάξεως Κωνσταντίνου τοῦ φιλοχρίστου καὶ πορφυρογεννήτου δεσπότη ἡμῶν, υἱοῦ Λέοντος τοῦ σοφωτάτου δεσπότη καὶ αἰοιδίμου ἡμῶν βασιλέως... (*Theoph. Cont. I–IV*, ed. Featherstone and Signes Codoñer, p. 8, tit. 1–3), transl. “Chronicle written by order of Constantine, our Christ-loving lord born in the purple, son of Leo, our most wise lord and emperor of glorious memory.” Porphyrogenitus' role is explained in more detail in the subtitle: Ἦς τὰς τε καθ' ἕκαστα ὑποθέσεις ὁ αὐτὸς βασιλεὺς Κωνσταντίνος φιλοπόνως συνέλεξε καὶ εὐσυνόπτως ἐξέθετο πρὸς εὐκρινῆ τοῖς μετέπειτα δῆλῳσιν (*Theoph. Cont. I–IV*, ed. Featherstone and Signes Codoñer, p. 8, tit. 6–8), transl. “Of which (sc. narrative) the same emperor Constantine diligently collected and adeptly set forth the subjects in detail for clear demonstration to future generations.” In the prologue, there is an interesting note on the emperor's writing written with the hand of his assistant: Ἱστορεῖς δὲ αὐτὸς, χεῖρα μόνον λαβὼν ἡμᾶς διακουμένην σοι, ὅσα τοῖς πρὸ σοῦ βεβίωται (*Theoph. Cont. I–IV*, ed. Featherstone and Signes Codoñer, p. 10, l. 16–18), transl. “You narrate yourself, taking us simply as an assisting hand, about what your predecessors lived through.” A speech written on the occasion of the transfer from Cappadocia to Constantinople of the relics of Gregory of Nazianzus contains the following title: Ἐπιστολὴ ὡς ἐκ τοῦ βασιλέως Κωνσταντίνου τοῦ Πορφυρογεννήτου σχεδιασθεῖσα καὶ ἀποσταλεῖσα τῷ μεγάλῳ Γρηγορίῳ τῷ Θεολόγῳ, ἠνίκα ἀνεκομίζετο (Theod. Daph. *Ep.* 11, ed. Darrouzès and Westerink, p. 143, l. 1–4), transl. “An epistle as by the emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus improvised and sent to the great theologian Gregory, when he was delivered.” All quotes in the paper were translated by the author.

⁷ German philologist T. Mommsen, observing that the use of prepositions in *De adm. imp.* and *De cerim.* abounds in vulgarisms, while in *Vita Bas.* and *De them.* is classical in style, was the first to suspect that all works were composed by the same author (Mommsen 1895: 449, note 190; 522–523, note 41). Apart from Mommsen, valuable contributions to knowledge on Porphyrogenitus' language and style was made by Moravcsik 1939, Tartaglia 1982, Ševčenko 1992. See also recent research dealing with the stylistic peculiarities of some of Porphyrogenitus' works: Serreŕi Juric 2016; 2017; 2019; 2020; Lončar and Serreŕi Juric 2016; Serreŕi Juric and Jurišić 2023.

note 44).⁸ At the same time, Ševčenko (1992: 176, 182, note 40, 184–186, 187, note 49, 188) challenged the emperor's authorship of the most of the works,⁹ establishing that only the emperor's letters from the correspondence with Theodore, Bishop of the city of Cyzicus, and parts of the work *De adm. imp.* (Prologue, ch. 1.4–24, and ch. 13.12–200) can be considered the authentic writings of Porphyrogenitus.¹⁰

Since Porphyrogenitus' correspondence with Theodore is his most personal work, as noted by Ševčenko, the study of this corpus is of exceptional importance for research on Porphyrogenitus' writings.¹¹ The question of the authorship of Porphyrogenitus' literary inheritance is still discussed, so this material, in addition to providing us with important details about Theodore and Constantine's relationship and their private lives, also represents a good basis for studying and gaining knowledge on Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus' writing style and stylistic preferences.¹² In addition, considering that more case studies on individual authors and collections, on epistolary types, epistolary motifs and the formal elements of letters are needed to improve understanding

⁸ In the emperor's oeuvre, Ševčenko singled out the following stylistic levels: correspondence with Theodore of Cyzicus, *Vita Bas.* and the sermon *De imag. Edessena*, harangues to the army, prologue of the *De cerim.*, parts of the *De adm. imp.* (prologue, ch. 1.4–24, ch. 13.12–200), prologue of the *De them.*

⁹ According to Ševčenko, twenty-five lexical and phraseological parallels observed in the *Vita Bas.* and the *De imag. Edessena* are proof that Basil's biography was not written by Porphyrogenitus, but by the same person who composed the sermon on the transfer of the Christ's image from Edessa to Constantinople. In the *De them.* and the *De cerim.* only prologues can be attributed to the emperor, and the rest of the writings is based on different sources. Military harangues show only a few lexical and no stylistic similarities with Porphyrogenitus' authentic works. As for the other speeches, namely the sermon given on the transfer of the relics of St. John Chrysostom to Constantinople and a speech composed on the transfer of the relics of Gregory of Nazianzus from Cappadocia to Constantinople, it has already been pointed out in previous studies that their attribution to emperor is false.

¹⁰ Taking into account that Porphyrogenitus had collaborators, some of whose names are known to us and some of which remain unknown (Ševčenko uses the term *ghostwriters* for the emperor's assistants; cf. Ševčenko 1992: 186), it is necessary to observe the creation of the emperor's oeuvre in the context of the Byzantine literary production of the 10th century, realized through the emperor's cooperation with associates and scribes, as already highlighted by Signes Codoñer 1989: 27 (cf. also Ševčenko 1992: 187, note 49, and Dagron and Flusin 2020: I, 36*).

¹¹ The evaluation of Porphyrogenitus' letters by Joannes Zonaras, who was familiar with the emperor's works and correspondence, is interesting. According to him, although Porphyrogenitus did not follow the rules of rhetoric, he nevertheless adorned his letters with various figures of speech and types of style (cf. Zonar. *Epit. Hist.* 16.21, ed. Büttner-Wobst, vol. 3, pp. 482–483, l. 17–3: Ἦν δὲ ὁ Κωνσταντῖνος τὰ πρὸς θεὸν εὐσεβῆς καὶ λόγοις προσκείμενος, ὡς ἔστι καταμαθεῖν ἐκ συγγραμμάτων αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ μέντοι καὶ ἐξ ἐπιστολῶν, ἃ κἂν μὴ πρὸς τέχνην ἠκριβῶνται τὴν ῥητορικὴν, ἀλλὰ γὰρ σχήμασι ταύτης καὶ τισὶν ιδέαις ποικίλλονται.)

¹² Ševčenko points out that the emperor's letters should be the starting point for considering Porphyrogenitus' writing style and authenticating other writings attributed to the emperor, and that in recent scholarship (with a few exceptions, such as Darrouzès, 1960: 60, and Lemerle 1971: 268–269) too little attention is paid to this body of evidence (Ševčenko 1992: 176–177).

on epistolary culture in Byzantium and beyond, as already observed by Riehle 2020a: 22,¹³ we hope that the results of this research will contribute, at least to a small extent, to our knowledge of epistolary communication in 10th century Byzantium.

2. CORPUS AND RESEARCH SCOPE

The letters that form the corpus of the correspondence between Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus and Theodore, Bishop of Cyzicus, are preserved in two collections.¹⁴ Ten of Theodore's letters addressed to Porphyrogenitus, to which Porphyrogenitus' replies have not been preserved, can be found as part of the Vindobonensis Collection.¹⁵ In another collection, namely the Athos Collection, there are eighteen letters, i.e., ten from Theodore and eight from Porphyrogenitus.¹⁶ There are no common letters between them.¹⁷

The letters included in the Athos Collection (letters 1-18, as numbered in the Tziatzi-Papagianni edition) are dated during the reign of Romanus I Lecapenus, Porphyrogenitus' father-in-law and usurper of his throne, more precisely between 941 (the attack of Russian prince Igor on Constantinople) and the fall of Romanus at the end of 944 (Darrouzès 1960: 59; Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012: 4*). As for the letters from the Vindobonensis Collection, letters 1–4 undoubtedly date before the year 944 (the end of the rule of Romanus Lecapenus), while letters 5, 6, 17, 47, 51 and 52 follow the appointment of Constantine as sole ruler (Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012: 6*, 8*, 10*).

¹³ See also Hatlie 1996.

¹⁴ A complete edition of the letters of Bishop Theodore of Cyzicus, including the letters written by Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, was published in M. Tziatzi-Papagianni, ed., *Theodori metropolitae Cyzici epistulae. Accedunt epistulae mutuae Constantini Porphyrogeniti* (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2012).

¹⁵ The main manuscript of the Vindobonensis Collection is the Codex Vindobonensis phil. graecus 342, 11th century, parchment, kept in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna (59 of Theodore's letters addressed to various individuals: ff. 52v-71r (letters 1-23 in the Tziatzi Papagianni edition); 72v-80r (letters 24-32); 108r-111r (letter 33); 123v-125r (letters 34-35); 1r (letters 35-36); 202r-214v (letters 37-59); ten of Theodore's letters addressed to Porphyrogenitus are numbered as letters 1-6, 17, 47, 51 and 52 in the Tziatzi-Papagianni edition, with the note that in the 52nd letter, only the title and the end of the letter are legible).

¹⁶ The main manuscript of the Athos Collection is the Codex Athous Laura Ω 126, an 11th century papyrus kept in the Vlatadon Monastery in Thessaloniki (18 letters exchanged between Constantine and Theodore: ff. 230r l. 4 - 258r l. 7 (letters 1–18 in the Tziatzi Papagianni edition); 15 of Theodore's letters to various ecclesiastical people: ff. 258r l. 8 - 271v l. 7 (letters 19–33)). For a detailed study on the manuscript transmission and manuscript description see Tziatzi Papagianni 2012: 20*–51*.

¹⁷ On the creation of the two collections see Tziatzi Papagianni 2012: 18*–19*.

In his correspondence with Theodore, Porphyrogenitus often apologizes to his beloved friend for obvious mistakes in his letters and complains of his own lack of education, alluding to Romanus I Lecapenus as the main culprit. He also expresses his shame that he does not often send letters to his friend due to his boorishness and poor writing style:

“What prevents me from sending letters frequently is nothing more than lack of education and rudeness that has grown old with me. For I am truly illiterate, and I certainly haven’t tasted a bowl of Muses; for this reason, as if I am tightly bound by a rope of boorishness and ignorance, I somehow hesitate to write, and above all to send solecisms and reprehensible and non-Greek words to such a learned man.”¹⁸

“Forgive me, therefore, for my want of education and, if any solecism or non-Greek word is found in my letter, do not blame me, rather the one who is responsible for it and for all other evils.”¹⁹

Although Porphyrogenitus’ apologies can also be considered a conventional *topos* (*locus communis*), considering that expressions of humility and modesty were desirable and common in the letters of Byzantine writers (Koskenniemi 1956: 96),²⁰ the fact that the emperor really did not have the education he aspired to is confirmed by Theodore himself:

“I know clearly (I am not deceived by love) that although, due to murderous envy and insulting treatment, alas, you did not fully enjoy the milk of the Muses, nevertheless, your soul, watered by the heavenly and divine dew of the

¹⁸ Cf. Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B5, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 91, l. 17–23 (Constantine): Τὸ δὲ μὴ συχνῶς ἐπιστέλλειν οὐκ ἄλλο τι τὸ κωλύον ἡμᾶς ἢ ἡ συγγρασάσα ἡμῖν ἀπαιδευσία καὶ ἀμουσία. Αναγράφητοι γὰρ τῷ ὄντι ἡμεῖς καὶ μουσικοῦ κρατῆρος παντάπασιν ἄγευστοι· διὸ ταῖς σειραῖς τῆς ἀγροικίας καὶ ἀμαθίας οἶονεὶ περισφιγγόμενοι ὀκνηρότεροί πως πρὸς τὸ γράφειν καθιστάμεθα καὶ μάλιστα πρὸς οὗτω λόγιον ἄνδρα σόλοικα καὶ ἐπλήψιμα καὶ βάρβαρα ἐπιστέλλειν.

¹⁹ Cf. Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B1, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, pp. 84–85, l. 36–38 (Constantine): Σύγγνωθι τοίνυν περὶ τῆς ἀμουσίας ἡμῶν καὶ, εἰ τι σόλοικον ἢ βάρβαρον ἐγκείται τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ γραφῇ, μὴ ἡμᾶς αἰτιάσῃ, ἀλλὰ τὸν αἴτιον καὶ τούτου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων πάντων κακῶν. For more passages in which the emperor expresses the idea of his poor writing style, cf: Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B1, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 83, l. 5–11; B1, pp. 83–84, l. 11–16; B3, p. 87, l. 5–8; B7, pp. 93–94, l. 2–3, 5–15; B8, p. 108, l. 8–13.

²⁰ For example, cf. Basil. Caes. *Ep.* 344, ed. Courtonne, vol. 3, p. 210, l. 1–2: Τὸ μὴ συνεχῶς με γράφειν πρὸς τὴν σὴν παιδευσιν πείθουσι τό τε δέος καὶ ἡ ἀμαθία (transl. “Fear and lack of education urge me to not constantly write to your erudition.”). Darrouzès, 1960: 60, and Lemerle 1971: 268–269 consider Porphyrogenitus’ repeated references to his stylistic inadequacies as rhetorical exaggeration, and that the emperor’s letter-writing style contradicts his complaints.

Holy Spirit, speaks and thinks better than the wise, the doctors of the law and God's notaries. And, among the braying donkeys, or rather among the roaring beasts, you shine with your intelligence, language and voice inspired by divine wisdom."²¹

Given that Porphyrogenitus constantly points out the shortcomings of his letter writing, the aim of this paper is to analyze the peculiarities of the emperor's epistolographic style, that is, to determine to what extent he was influenced by rhetorical education and epistolary theory when writing, and whether his apologies were justified. Theodore's letters will also be analyzed correspondingly. Here, the emphasis will be on the presence of epistolary *topoi* in the letters, which will be divided into contemplative *topoi* (a conversation between absent interlocutors, presence in absence, the brevity of the letters, a desire for correspondence, complaints due to letters without reply, longing for reunion, concern for the addressee's health and well-being, mutual remembrance, etc.) and linguistic *topoi* (the use of friendly terms of address instead of the correspondent's name, the use of quotations and proverbs, various petitions to God, colloquial expressions, etc.). Since it is very likely that the epistolary form, taught based on the model letters of canonical authors, was a standard part of rhetorical education in schools, although it is still unknown to what extent exercises in letter writing were part of the school curriculum (Malherbe 1988: 6),²² there is a possibility that there will be fewer epistolary *topoi* in Porphyrogenitus' letters, considering that the emperor himself constantly draws attention to his lack of education. On the other hand, given that letters addressed to people of a higher hierarchical position were certainly written in a more elevated style compared to communication with those from the secular realm (Riehle 2020a: 9–10),²³ and that Theodore, being one of the most educated people in the Constantinople of his time, was praised by his contemporaries

²¹ Cf. Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B8, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 95, l. 9–16: Καὶ (οὐ γὰρ ἀπατᾷ με τὸ φίλτρον) οἶδα σαφῶς ὅτι, εἰ καὶ τῷ ἀνθρωποκτόνῳ φθόνῳ καὶ τῇ βασκάνῳ ἐπηρείᾳ, οἴμοι, δαυιλῶς τοῦ τῶν Μουσῶν οὐ κατετῤυφῆσας γάλακτος, ἀλλ' ὁμως τῇ οὐρανίῳ καὶ θεῖᾳ δρόσῳ τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος ἀρδευθεῖσά σου ἡ ψυχὴ κρείττω καὶ σοφῶν καὶ νομικῶν καὶ γραμματέων Θεοῦ χάριτι καὶ φθέγγεται καὶ φρονεῖ· καὶ μέσον τῶν ὄγκωμένων ὄνων, μᾶλλον δὲ τῶν ὠρουμένων θηρίων, τῇ θεοσόφῳ καὶ συνέσει καὶ γλώσσει καὶ φωνῇ διαλάμπεις αὐτός.

²² For more on training the letter writing in schools see Stowers 1986: 32–35, and Malherbe 1988: 6–7.

²³ Cf. Demetr. *Eloc.* 234, ed. Chiron, p. 66, l. 1–3: Ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ πόλεσιν ποτε καὶ βασιλεῦσι γράφομεν, ἔστωσαν τοιαῦτα [αἱ] ἐπιστολαὶ μικρὸν ἐξηρμένα πῶς. στοχαστέον γὰρ καὶ τοῦ προσώπου ᾧ γράφεται (transl. "Since we sometimes write to cities and kings, let such letters be composed in a slightly heightened tone. For it is necessary to pay attention to the person to whom the letter is addressed.").

for his elegant writing style,²⁴ it is expected that we will find a richer epistolary style and more epistolary topoi in his letters.²⁵ It should also be taken into account that more of Theodore's than of Porphyrogenitus' letters have been preserved in this correspondence, so due to this circumstance more examples from his letters will probably be present.

3. PORPHYROGENITUS' AND THEODORE'S RELATIONSHIP

Byzantine emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus is a well-known figure in Byzantine history as well as in Byzantine literature, but little information, based mainly on the preserved correspondence, is available on his close friend Bishop Theodore of Cyzicus. Nothing precise is known about the place and date of his birth and death. It can be assumed, based on information found in the letters, that he was originally from a city not far away from Olympos of Bithynia. Theodore grew up and was educated in Constantinople. He was a teacher to Theophylact (933-956), the Patriarch of Constantinople, to whom he was very loyal, and held a high ecclesiastical position during his patriarchate. At the end of his life and after the change of the Macedonian dynasty in 963 (the death of Porphyrogenitus' son Romanus II), Theodore was exiled to Nicaea due to a conflict with Polyeuctus (956-970), the Patriarch of Constantinople (Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012: 4*–5*).

He had a very close friendship with Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, resulting in him playing an important role in the history of the church of that time. Being highly educated and praised for his elegant writing style, he was included in Porphyrogenitus' circle of learned associates. Based on information from the correspondence, we learn that Porphyrogenitus often entrusted to him the compilation of various writings on his behalf. Theodore composed speeches in Constantine's name,²⁶ and later, when Porphyrogenitus became self-ruler, verses;²⁷ Romanus II also commissioned Theodore to write documents for him.²⁸ During the period when the emperor was going through a difficult time under the reign of Romanus I Lecapenus Theodore supported his friend by encouraging him and wishing that he take over the throne belonging to him and destined for him by God as soon as possible; in addition, he

²⁴ See Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012: 12*–14*.

²⁵ On Theodore's language and style see Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012: 52*–55*.

²⁶ Cf. Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B1, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 84, l. 26–29.

²⁷ Cf. Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* A51, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 73, l. 15–19.

²⁸ Cf. Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* A7, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, pp. 21–24.

also often expressed very negative opinions on the usurper Romanus Lecapenus and his rule (Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012: 5*–7*).²⁹

4. EPISTOLARY TOPOI IN THE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN CONSTANTINE VII PORPHYROGENITUS AND THEODORE, BISHOP OF CYZICUS

Epistolary theorists define the letter by means of formal and functional criteria.³⁰ In terms of functional features, the letter is a medium of communication, “one half of the dialogue”,³¹ or “a substitute for an actual dialogue”.³² Furthermore, it is “a written conversation of someone absent with another absent person and fulfills a practical purpose”.³³ From the basic purpose of letter writing (i.e. to bridge the gap between two physically separated people) a series of epistolary motifs and set phrases emerged which, due to their frequent and stereotypical use, are considered *loci communes* or *topoi*, such as presence in absence, the *unio mystica*, grief over separation, etc. (Riehle 2020a: 7–8).³⁴

Thanks to exhaustive research on the individual epistolary oeuvres of the Greco-Roman world, a number of epistolary *topoi* have been identified in Greek and Latin letters. In this context, the exhaustive monographs by H. Koskenniemi and K. Thraede

²⁹ Cf. Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* A2, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 12, l. 48–51; A3, p. 16, l. 61–68; A4, pp. 18–19, l. 28–33; B2, pp. 85–86, l. 9–16; B8, pp. 96–97, l. 28–36; B9, pp. 98–99, l. 27–32, 40–46; B11, pp. 101–102, l. 10–13, 30–33; B14, pp. 104–105, l. 13–23; B16, p. 106, l. 11–14. For more on the life and work of Theodore of Cyzicus see Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012: 3*–17*.

³⁰ A detailed introduction to Greek and Roman letter writing up to the fourth century AD is provided by Trapp 2003: 1–47. See also Klauck 2006, Petrucci 2008: 3–24, Ceccarelli 2013, Sarri 2018, and Bauer 2020. For general introductions to Byzantine epistolography see Grünbart 2004, Mullett 2008, Papaioannou 2010, and Riehle 2020a. For more about the various functions of Byzantine letter writing see Littlewood 1976.

³¹ Cf. Demetr. *Eloc.* 223, ed. Chiron, p. 63, l. 5–6: Εἶναι γὰρ τὴν ἐπιστολὴν οἶον τὸ ἕτερον μέρος τοῦ διαλόγου.

³² Cf. Cic. *Fam.* 12.30, ed. Shackleton Bailey, vol. 2, p. 286, l. 4–6: Aut quid mi iucundius quam, cum coram tecum loqui non possim, aut scribere ad te aut tuas legere litteras?

³³ Cf. Ps.-Liban. *Charact. Ep.*, ed. Weichert, p. 14, l. 1–2: Ἐπιστολὴ μὲν οὖν ἐστὶν ὁμιλία τις ἐγγράμματος ἀπόντος πρὸς ἀπόντα γινομένη καὶ χρειώδη σκοπὸν ἐκπληροῦσα; Cic. *Fam.* 2.4, ed. Shackleton Bailey, vol. 1, p. 107, l. 1–4: Epistularum genera multa esse non ignoras sed unum illud certissimum, cuius causa inventa res ipsa est, ut certiores faceremus absentis si quid esset quod eos scire aut nostra aut ipsorum interesset.

³⁴ For more on formal elements and set phrases in ancient Greek and Latin letters see Koskenniemi 1956, Cugusi 1983: 43–104, Trapp 2003: 34–42, Klauck 2006: 9–42 and 188–194, Sarri 2018: 40–52, Kotzabassi 2020.

and several valuable works on this topic should be singled out, which were of significant use when analyzing the corpus that is the object of this study.³⁵ In addition, the division of epistolary topoi into contemplative and linguistic, which was applied by P. Cugusi in his analysis of the letters of the most important representatives of Latin epistolary production, has proven to be effective because it enables a clear and systematic overview of the use of topoi;³⁶ thus, Cugusi's division model was applied in this study. According to Cugusi, contemplative topoi include motifs such as a conversation between absent interlocutors, the brevity of the letters, complaints due to letters without replay, the author's promise to write a letter or request for a letter, etc. Linguistic topoi refer to the use of colloquial expressions, invocations to deities, the insertion of quotations (from Greek and Latin authors) and proverbs into the content of the letter and the use of stereotypical formulations in official correspondence.

Byzantine scholars followed the rules of rhetoric when writing letters,³⁷ and aspired to imitate the style of canonical Greek authors, especially those of late antiquity,³⁸ in order to compose letters perfect in language and style.³⁹ An analysis of the corre-

³⁵ Koskenniemi 1956; Thraede 1970; Steen 1938; White 1978; Klauck 2006: 188-194; Kotzabassi 2020.

³⁶ Cugusi 1983: 73-104.

³⁷ Manuals on Greek epistolary theory are attested from the early imperial period (the first century BC/ first century AD), with the earliest being the treatise *On style* (*De elocutione*/Περὶ ἐρμηνείας), falsely attributed to Demetrius of Phaleron (letters are discussed in the section on "plain style", *De eloc.* 223-235). After Pseudo-Demetrius, a theoretical discussion on letters was written by Philostratus of Lemnos in the third century (*Letter against Aspasius* in *Soph.* 2.33.3), and by Gregory of Nazianzus in his letter addressed to Nicobulus (*Ep.* 51) in the fourth century. In addition to works on epistolary theory, two Greek handbooks have survived, containing collections of sample letters intended to serve as models for the composition of various types of letters. The first, older handbook, titled *Epistolary types* (Τύποι ἐπιστολικοί) and compiled by Pseudo-Demetrius, contained 21 types of letters, and the second, titled *Epistolary styles* (Ἐπιστολιμαῖοι χαρακτῆρες), preserved in two different versions, one under the name of Libanius and one under the name of Proclus, contained 41 types of letters (Bauer 2020: 54, 56). The text of the noted manuals and handbooks along with their translation and commentary can be found in Malherbe 1988; for descriptions of ancient epistolary theory and manuals for practical letter writing see Koskenniemi 1956: 21-47, 54-57, and Klauck 2006: 183-205.

³⁸ Along with handbooks containing collections of sample letters, the letters of famous epistolographers from earlier centuries were also used as models. For example, Patriarch Photius in a letter addressed to Amphilochius of Cyzicus (cf. Phot. *Ep.* 207, ed. Laourdas and Westerink, vol. 2, p. 107, l. 10-22) recommends the letters of Libanius, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus and Isidore of Pelusion, as well as letters attributed to Phalaris and Brutus, as patterns, and in *Bibliotheca* (cf. Phot. *Bibl.* 143, ed. Henry, vol. 2, pp. 109-110) he refers to Basil of Caesarea's letters as a model for the epistolary style (Kotzabassi 2020: 178-179; Riehle 2020a: 10).

³⁹ In the letter addressed to his nephew Nicobulus, Gregory of Nazianzus gives useful tips on letter writing (cf. Greg. Naz. *Ep.* 51, ed. Gallay, vol. 1, pp. 66-68). A letter should not be extensive, but of a length appropriate to its topic. It must be clear and equally comprehensible to both an educated and an uneducated person. It should not be dry and unadorned, however, rather the epistolographer should add charm to it by using maxims, proverbs or quips in a moderate way. The moderate use of figures

spondence between Theodore and Constantine shows that both correspondents sought to fulfill rhetorical demands and that they were influenced not only by the ancient, but also by the Byzantine epistolary tradition. Furthermore, given that these letters belong to *τύπος φιλικός*,⁴⁰ we find in them a number of typical phrases and motifs related to togetherness that are generally common in friendship letters.⁴¹

4.1. CONTEMPLATIVE TOPOI⁴²

4.1.1. A CONVERSATION BETWEEN ABSENT INTERLOCUTORS

The concept of the letter as a conversation between two absent people (i.e., spatially separated people) is considered one of the most frequent epistolary topoi (Thraede 1970: 27 and ff.). The author emphasises the pleasure he gets from writing or reading a letter when there is no opportunity for a face-to-face conversation with his correspondent. This topos is found in two of Constantine's letters, and in one of Theodore's letters:

“That is why you yearn for a very short letter, and want a short conversation, and often see in a dream the one you long for”⁴³ (Constantine).

“Although I have had enough of everything, both dreams and love for him men-

of speech is also recommended (but not antithesis, parison and isocolon), and the discourse should be as similar as possible to natural speech (Kotzabassi 2020: 178).

⁴⁰ A definition of friendship letters is given, among others, in Ps.-Demetr. *Epist.*, ed. Weichert, p. 2, l. 19–23: Ὁ μὲν οὖν φιλικός ἐστιν ὁ δοκῶν ὑπὸ φίλου γράφεσθαι πρὸς φίλον. γράφουσι δὲ οὐχ οἱ πάντως φίλοι. πολλάκις γὰρ ἐν ὑπάρχοις κείμενοι πρὸς ὑποδεεστέρους ὑπὸ τινῶν ἀξιούνται φιλικὰ γράψαι καὶ πρὸς ἄλλους ἴσους, στρατηγούς, ἐπιστρατήγους, διοικητάς (transl. “The friendly type of the letter is one that seems to be written by a friend to a friend. But it is by no means only friends who write (sc. such letters). Often those in prominent positions are expected by some to write friendly letters to subordinates and other equals, military commanders, viceroys, governors.”).

⁴¹ For more on friendship letters and general phrases and formulas of endearment in Greek letters see Koskenniemi 1956: 115–154.

⁴² Given that survey of epistolary topoi in the correspondence between Theodore and Porphyrogenitus is not intended to be an extensive catalogue of all topoi found in the letters, which would require a much more space than is available in this paper, selected examples are given below.

⁴³ Theod. *Cyz. Ep.* B5, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 90, l. 11–12 (Constantine): Διατοῦτο καὶ βραχυτάτης ἐπιστολῆς ὀρέγη, καὶ μικρᾶς ὁμιλίας ἐπιθυμῶ, καὶ ἐν ὄνειρῳ πολλάκις ἰδεῖν τὸν ποθοῦμενον. Another example is found in Theod. *Cyz. Ep.* B7, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 93, l. 2–4 (Constantine): Ἐπεὶ οὕτω τῇ περὶ ἡμᾶς δέδεσαι τῆς ἀγάπης χρυσοῦν σειρᾶ καὶ τοὺς ἐμοὺς ποθεῖς ἀμούσους καὶ ἀηδεῖς καὶ σολοίκων πληρεῖς λόγους, πάλιν διὰ τῆς παρουσίας γραφῆς προσφθεγγόμεθα ἡδεῖ καὶ γλυκυτάτῳ φίλῳ (transl. “Since you are so bound by the golden chain of love to me and long for my unrefined and unpleasant words full of errors, I address again my lovely and sweetest friend with this letter.”).

tioned (sc. emperor), still, the sweetest master I long for, I never have enough conversations with you”⁴⁴ (Theodore).

4.1.2. PRESENCE IN ABSENCE

The concept of the letter as a conversation between two correspondents is closely linked to the idea of presence. The letter provides a kind of substitute for an absent sender, making him present, in a certain way, by means of his letter. The writer usually expresses joy at the arrival of the letter and compares it with the personal presence of the sender. The idea of presence was especially widespread among epistolographers of the 4th century AD (Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil of Caesarea, Synesius of Cyrene, etc.) (Koskenniemi 1956: 173). The motif is found in the following example:

“Seeing that enchanting letter, Homer would have compared it to the shield of Zeus, or the horn of Amalthea, or the charmed girdle of Aphrodite, or the golden staff of Hermes, or something like that, which he especially exalts as miraculous and praises in songs. It was completely beautiful, shiny and truly golden, and the ending, by Heracles, as if I had seen you, as if I had enveloped you with my eyes and kissed you with my mouth, thinking that I was kissing the very hand that wrote, and that I was embracing incorporeally and spiritually the tongue that dictated and the mind that devised...”⁴⁵ (Theodore).

4.1.3. BREVITY OF THE LETTERS

Many epistolary theorists and epistolographers took special note of brevity as an important formal characteristic of letters.⁴⁶ As a man educated in rhetoric, Theodore

⁴⁴ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* A17, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 34, l. 2–4 (Theodore): Εἰ καὶ πάντων κατὰ τὸν εἰπόντα κόρος ἐστὶν καὶ ὕπνου καὶ φιλότιτος, ἀλλ’ ἐμοὶ τῆς πρὸς σὲ ὀμιλίας, γλυκύτατε δέσποτα καὶ ποθοῦμενε, οὐδέποτε κόρος ἐστίν.

⁴⁵ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* A2, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, pp. 9–10, l. 19–27 (Theodore): Ταύτην οὕτω θέλγουσιν ἐπιστολὴν ἰδὼν Ὅμηρος ἀπέειπεν ἂν τῆ τοῦ Διὸς αἰγίδι ἢ τῷ τῆς Ἀμαλθείας κέρατι ἢ τῷ τῆς Ἀφροδίτης κροσσῷ ἢ τῇ χρυσοῦ ῥάβδῳ Ἐπιμοῦ ἢ τινι τῶν τοιούτων, ἃ διαφερόντως ἐκεῖνος ὡς θαυμάσια τῶν ἄλλων ἐξαίρει τε καὶ ἀνομνεῖ. Καὶ γὰρ ἦν ὅλη καλὴ καὶ λαμπρὰ καὶ τῷ ὄντι χρυσή, τὸ δὲ ἀκροτελευτίον, Ἡράκλειος, ὅπως τε εἶδον καὶ ὅπως τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς περιέθηκα καὶ τῷ στόματι κατεφίλησα, αὐτὴν δοκῶν τὴν γράψασαν χεῖρα ἀσπάζεσθαι καὶ τὴν ὑπαγορεύσασαν γλῶσσαν καὶ τὸν γεννήσαντα νοῦν ἀσωμάτως καὶ νοερώς περιπτύσσεσθαι...

⁴⁶ It is preferable that the letters be brief (Demetr. *Eloc.* 228), but overly brief letters are not approved either (Greg. Naz. *Ep.* 51.1–5). The length of the letters is determined by the subject matter, and despite their brevity, the letters should be clear in what they say (Malherbe 1988: 13).

pays great attention to this epistolary postulate. In two of his letters, he apologizes to Constantine for the length of the letter, and in one he states that he will write a short letter to the emperor, aware of the fact that emperor as a sole ruler no longer has much time to listen to long letters:

“I’ve probably chattered too much and bored your ears, forgive me; the longing for you and the assumption that I will not write to you again in a short time caused the abundance of words”⁴⁷ (Theodore).

“Judging that it is good, longed-for master, to know the right moment for everything, I think that now it is not necessary to write extensively in the Attic style, but concisely in the laconic^{48,49} (Theodore).

4.1.4. *DESIRE FOR CORRESPONDENCE, IF SUCH IS LACKING / COMPLAINTS DUE TO LETTERS WITHOUT REPLY*

Complaints about the lack of a letter are encountered more frequently in Greek letters from the 2nd century AD onwards (Koskenniemi 1956: 64). The failure to communicate by letter was accompanied by feelings of disappointment, and the lack of a letter was often seen as a sign of the negligence and disrespect of the correspondent (Koskenniemi 1956: 66–67). We often find a writer who complains about a long pause in communication and a lack of desired news, mostly about the well-being of the addressee. Bearing this in mind, separated friends aspire to maintain correspondence through letters, not only to feel connected and close, but also to get some news from their interlocutors. This topos is found in one of Constantine’s and one of Theodore’s letters:

⁴⁷ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* A1, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 8, l. 49–52 (Theodore): “Ἴσως κατελήρησά σου καὶ τὰς ἀκοὰς παρηνώχλησα, ἀλλὰ σύγγνωθι; ὁ τε γὰρ πόθος καὶ ἡ ἐλπίς τοῦ μὴ συντόμως αὐθις γράψαι τὸ πλῆθος ἐποίησεν.

⁴⁸ Gregory of Nazianzus in his letter addressed to nephew Nicobulus explains the meaning of the word λακωνίζειν. Cf. Greg. Naz. *Ep.* 54, ed. Galloway, vol. 1, p. 70: Τὸ λακωνίζειν οὐ τοῦτο ἐστίν, ὅπερ οἶει, ὀλίγας συλλαβὰς γράφειν, ἀλλὰ περὶ πλείστων ὀλίγας (transl. “To be laconic is not what you think it is, to write few syllables, rather to say much while writing little.”).

⁴⁹ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* A47, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 68, l. 2–4 (Theodore): Καλὸν εἶναι κρίνων, ποθοῦμενε δέσποτα, παντὸς πράγματος εἰδέναι καιρὸν, οὐκ ἐν τῷ πολλὰ γράφειν ἀττικίζειν νῦν οἶμαι δεῖν, ἀλλὰ λακωνίζειν ἐν τῷ γράφειν μικρά. Another example is found in Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* A2, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 12, l. 51–52 (Theodore): ... ἐπεὶ τῶν ἀττικῶν τεττίγων λαλίστερος γέγονα διὰ σέ. Ἀλλὰ σύγγνωθι (transl. “... For I have become more talkative than Attic crickets thanks to you. But forgive me.”).

“I strongly resent my (sc. friend) and I think that I am rightly angry when I think about the length of his being abroad and that I was not considered worthy of even a short mountain letter from Olympus”⁵⁰ (Constantine).

“Now I realize that my stay in a foreign country has been extended because of the long absence of greetings (sc. letters) from my bound master and emperor”⁵¹ (Theodore).

4.1.5. REQUESTS FOR A LETTER

This topos is closely related to the previous one. From the 2nd century AD onward requests for letters become significantly more numerous. They mainly refer to news about the wellbeing of the addressee and his life circumstances (σωτηρία, namely both physical and spiritual wellbeing; from the 3rd century onwards the word *όλοκληρία* is used with the same meaning), as well as to all kinds of news about the addressee (Koskeniemi 1956: 70-71). Furthermore, they serve to maintain an interpersonal relationship between the correspondents. We find this topos twice in Theodore’s and once in Constantine’s letters.

“If he greets me by letter, he will quickly eat the fruits of his crops”⁵² (Constantine).

“Even though the letters that arrived during the winter still comfort me and make me happy, nevertheless, my insatiable mood also asks for spring letters to speak to me and enchant me, and to remove the winter of life’s turmoil, and make spring shine as the true light of life”⁵³ (Theodore).

⁵⁰ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B10, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 100, l. 8–10 (Constantine): Ἐγὼ δὲ πολλὰ μέφομαι τὸν ἐμὸν, καὶ οὐκ ἔξω δικαίας ἀγανακτήσεως εἶναι λογίζομαι τό τε χρόνιον τῆς ἀποδημίας ἐννοῶν καὶ τὸ μηδέ με γραφῆς μικρᾶς ὀλυμπιακῆς καὶ ὀρεινῆς ἀξιώθηναί.

⁵¹ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B17, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 107, l. 2–3 (Theodore): Νῦν ἔγνων ὅτι ἐμακρόνθη ἢ παροικία μου ἐν τῷ μακροθύηναι τὴν τοῦ παμποθήτου μου δεσπότου καὶ βασιλέως προσφώνησιν.

⁵² Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B7, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 94, l. 25–27 (Constantine): Εἰ δὲ καὶ δι’ ἐπιστολῆς οὗτος ἡμᾶς δεξιώσεται, τάχα ἂν τῶν αὐτοῦ σπερμάτων τοὺς καρποὺς φάγεται.

⁵³ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B17, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 107, l. 5–10 (Theodore): Εἰ γὰρ καὶ αἱ διὰ τοῦ χειμῶνος ἐπιτάσαι ἡμῖν καὶ ἐτι παρηγοροῦσι τε καὶ εὐφραίνουσιν, ἀλλ’ ἡ ἀκόρεστος διάθεσις καὶ τὰς ἔαρινὰς ἐπιζητεῖ περιφονούσας καὶ καταθελγούσας ἡμᾶς καὶ τὸν τῶν βιωτικῶν θορύβων χειμῶνα διαλυούσας καὶ ἔαρ ὡς ἀληθῶς τοῦ βίου περιλαμπούσας φαιδρότατον. Another example is found in Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B17, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 107, l. 12–13 (Theodore): ...ἡκέτω πάλιν ἡμῖν ἃ καὶ πρότερον καὶ παραμυθεῖσθω τὸν πόθον καὶ τὴν ἐκ τῆς διαστάσεως διαλυέτω κατήφειαν (transl. “...Let the letter come to me as before and comfort the longing and remove the grief due to separation.”).

4.1.6. MOTIVE FOR WANTING A LETTER

The letter requests were sometimes accompanied by motives through which the writer of a letter wanted to express what the desired letter meant to him. The most common is a reference to the writer's anxiety due to the lack of news from the addressee. Furthermore, we often find passages in which the letter is described as a cause of joy, and as a relief from the pain of longing caused by the physical separation of the correspondents (Koskenniemi 1956: 73–74).

Although it is not accompanied by a request for a letter, here we will single out one passage, embellished with rhetorical phrases, which vividly evokes the significance of the emperor's letters for Theodore:

“If my beloved master considers my slovenly and short letter sweeter than honey, how should I consider the letter of my master's desired soul? It's more valuable than mythical bliss, than immortality itself, than angel food, whatever it is. And while I am constantly unwrapping it with my hands and looking at it eagerly with my eyes and keeping it in my bosom, I pay no attention to anything other than that, neither the gold of Midas, nor the treasure of Croesus, nor Tantalus' torments, nor Peleus' sword, nor Chryso's speed, nor the strength of Polydamantus, nor the ring of Gyges, nor the Median gardens, nor the horses of Nisaea, nor anything else that is considered valuable by humans”⁵⁴ (Theodore).

4.1.7. MOTIVE FOR SENDING ONE'S OWN LETTER / *ἀφορμή*-FORMULA

In epistolary phraseology, phrases used by the writer to express what prompted him to write the letter are often encountered. A common type of motive is a reference to the opportunity that has arisen for sending the letter (Koskenniemi 1956: 79). Several forms of fixed formulas, including typical words like *εὐκαιρία*, *καιρὸς ἐπιτήδειος* or *ἀφορμή*, were used. From the beginning of the 2nd century the *ἀφορμή*-formula rapidly spreads, often including references not only to the occasion for sending a letter,

⁵⁴ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B6, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, pp. 91–92, l. 2–11 (Theodore): Εἰ τὰ λόγια τὰ ἐμὰ τὰ ῥυπῶντα καὶ μικρὰ ὑπὲρ μέλι λογίζονται τῷ φιλουμένῳ δεσπότη μου, ἐμοὶ πῶς εἰκὸς λογίεσθαι τὰ τῆς δεσποτικῆς καὶ ποθουμένης ψυχῆς; Ὑπὲρ τὴν μυθικὴν μακαρίαν, ὑπὲρ τὴν ἀθανασίαν αὐτὴν, ὑπὲρ τὴν τῶν ἀγγέλων, ἥτις ποτέ ἐστιν ἐκείνη, τροφήν· ἂ ταῖς χερσὶ συνεχῶς ἀνελίπτων καὶ τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἐπιτρέχων καὶ ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ φρουρῶν οὐδὲν ἄλλα πρὸς ταῦτα λογίζομαι, οὐ Μίδου χρυσόν, οὐ Κροίσου θησαυρούς, οὐ Ταντάλου τάλαντα, οὐ Πηλέως μάχαιραν, οὐ Κρίσωνος τάχος, οὐ Πουλυδάμαντος ῥώμην, οὐ Γύγου σφενδόνην, οὐ κήπους Μηδικούς, οὐ Νισαίος ἵππους, οὐκ ἄλλο τῶν παρ' ἀνθρώποις νομισθέντων τιμίων οὐδέν.

but also to the opportunity to greet the recipient. This popular motif often appears rhetorically embellished, especially in the letters of the great epistolographers of the 4th century (Koskenniemi 1956: 82-85). A type of the ἀφορμή-formula is found in the following letter by Theodore:

“Therefore using again the cheap gifts from Olympus as an opportunity,⁵⁵ I greet and I bow down and kiss your thrice longed-for head, crowned by God, and your soul, because I don’t expect to write to you from Olympus any more, considering the current situation”⁵⁶ (Theodore).

4.1.8. CONCERN FOR THE ADDRESSEE’S HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

It has already been previously discussed that concern for the health and well-being of the correspondent is a common motive for letter requests. Conventional phraseology in letters is most concentrated on this topic, something that is expected considering the fact that concern for the other person is one of the strongest expressions of mutual connection in interpersonal relationships (Koskenniemi 1956: 128). Surprisingly, this topos occurs only once in the correspondence, in one of Constantine’s letters:⁵⁷

“How is my Olympian friend doing, who is so far away from home?”⁵⁸ (Constantine).

⁵⁵ Letters were considered a gift (cf. Demetr. *Eloc.* 224, ed. Chiron, p. 63, l. 3–4: Ὁ μὲν γὰρ μιμεῖται αὐτοσχεδιάζοντα, ἡ δὲ γράφεται καὶ δῶρον πέμπεται τρόπον τινά.), and often together with the letter, presents such as foodstuffs, textiles, books, etc. were sent to the recipient (Riehle 2020a: 8). During his stay on Olympus, Theodore often sent Constantine fruits that grow there as a gift; on several occasions he mentions the lettuce from Olympus that he sends to the emperor (cf. Theod. *Cyz. Ep.* A47, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 69, l. 10–12; B11, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 102, l. 23).

⁵⁶ Theod. *Cyz. Ep.* A17, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 34, l. 4–8 (Theodore): Διὸ καὶ πάλιν τούτοις τοῖς εὐνόοις τοῦ Ὀλύμπου ξενίοις χρησάμενος ἀφορμὴ προσαγορεύω καὶ προσκυνῶ καὶ ἀσπάζομαι τὴν τριπλόητόν μου ἐκ Θεοῦ ἐστεμμένην σου κεφαλὴν καὶ ψυχὴν, ἐπεὶ μηδὲ ἐλπίζω ἔτι τό γε νῦν ἔχον ἀπὸ τοῦ Ὀλύμπου προσομιλῆσαι σοι.

⁵⁷ A kind of health formula, called *formula valetudinis*, was in general use in private letters. It is usually placed in the letter immediately after the prescript, with its basic type being εἰ ἔρρωσαι, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι, καὶ αὐτὸς δ’ ὑγίαινον. It has an equivalent in the Latin *si uales, bene est, ego ualeo*. This formula does not only refer to health, with other things particularly important for the addressee also considered. These types of formulaic expressions about the addressee’s health fell out of use in the 4th century AD. In Byzantine letters a corresponding formula is missing, as well as, usually, the prescript (Koskenniemi 1956: 131–132, 137). Accordingly, the *formula valetudinis* is not found in our corpus either.

⁵⁸ Theod. *Cyz. Ep.* B10, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 99, l. 2 (Constantine): Πῶς ὁ ἡμέτερος ἔχεις ὀλυμπιακὸς καὶ ἀπόδημος φίλος;

4.1.9. LONGING FOR A REUNION / HOPE FOR A FACE-TO-FACE MEETING

Expressions of longing for a reunion can also be considered one of the most popular epistolary motifs (Koskenniemi 1956: 171). Given that the separation was difficult for both Theodore and Constantine, this topos is often encountered in this corpus. Here are some examples:

“I wanted to be honoured with a face-to-face conversation, so that what is hidden in my heart and what oppresses and torments it, I could say to one who can cure it with the wisest medicines and make it better”⁵⁹ (Constantine).

“I pray and hope to be with you, God willing, in person soon, if possible, far from shadows and dreams...”⁶⁰ (Theodore).

⁵⁹ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B7, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 94, l. 16–19 (Constantine): “Ἐθελον δὲ καὶ τῆς αὐτοψηλὸς ὁμιλίας ἀξιοθῆναι, ἵνα τὰ κρύφια τῆς ἐμῆς καρδίας, τὰ θλίβοντα ταύτην καὶ κατατρύχοντα, ἀναγγεῖλω τῷ ταύτην δυναμένῳ διὰ τῶν σοφωτάτων καὶ ἀλεξητηρίων φαρμάκων ὑγιῶσα καὶ βελτίονα ἀπεργάσασθαι.

⁶⁰ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B9, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 99, l. 35–36 (Theodore): Εὐχόμεθα γὰρ καὶ ἐλπίζομεν καὶ αἰσθητῶς Θεοῦ διδόντος αὐθίς σοι συγγενέσθαι, εἰ μὲν οἷόν τε, τῶν σκιῶν καὶ τῶν ὄνειρων ἐκτός... For other examples, cf. Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B1, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 84, l. 32–35 (Constantine): Ἡμεῖς γὰρ τῷ περὶ σὲ φίλτρῳ ἐκκαυθέντες, μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ νῦν ἔτι καιόμενοι, τὴν συναυλίαν ἐπιζητοῦμεν, καὶ τὴν αὐτοψηλὴν προσλαλίαν οἰοεὶ τινα δρόσον πρῶινην ἐφιέμεθα, ἀποτυγχάνοντες δὲ κἂν κατ’ ὄναρ εὐχόμεθα σὲ τὸν ποθοῦμενον θεωρεῖν (transl. “Fired up with love for you and, better to say, burning even now, I’m looking for a dwelling together, and I want a face-to-face conversation like the morning dew, and I pray that I see the desired you in my dreams.”); B2, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 86, l. 26–27 (Theodore): Χαίρω σὺν τῇ ἑορτῇ ἑορτῆν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ λογιζόμενος, εἰ σε ἀξιοθῶ ἐν ταύτῃ κἂν ἀμυδρῶς καὶ ὡς ἐν παραπετάσματι κατιδεῖν (transl. “I am looking forward to the ceremony, considering that it is a real one, if I am honoured to see you even secretly and behind closed doors.”); B3, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 88, l. 26–30 (Constantine): Οὐ γὰρ καθ’ ὑπνοῦς ἀπολαύω καὶ ποσῶς τῆς ἐφέσεως ἐμφοροῦμαι, καὶ ἀφυπνισθεὶς μάταιος τῆς τοιαύτης ἡδονῆς εὐρίσκομαι, καὶ εὐχομαι Κυρίῳ τῷ Θεῷ μου δοῦνα καιρὸν φιλεῖν τὸν φιλούμενον καὶ ποθῆσαι τὸν ποθοῦμενον καὶ δακεῖν οὐχὶ πληκτικῶς ἀλλὰ φιλικῶς (transl. “What I enjoy in my dream and how full of desire I am, when I wake up I look for that pleasure in vain (sc. to see you), and I pray to the Lord to give me the opportunity to kiss the beloved, and long for the longed for, and to bite him not to give him pain, but in a friendly way.”); B4, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 89, l. 19–20 (Theodore): Ἡμᾶς δὲ εἴη τῆς ἀληθοῦς ἐμφορηθῆναι συνουσίας καὶ ὁμιλίας σου, ὦ Θεὲ καὶ Κύριε, ὁ πάντα μετασκευάζων ἐπὶ τὸ βέλτιον (transl. “Let me enjoy true company being together with you, oh God and Lord, who makes everything better.”); B6, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 92, l. 11–14 (Theodore): Ἐν μόνον μοι πλέον ἐράται, ἢ ἀληθῆς τούτων καὶ ἄμεσος ἀπόλαυσις, ἢ αὐτοπρόσωπος ὁμιλία, ἢ καθαρὰ τῶν ἐφετῶν μετοχή, ἢ κοσμικὴ ἑορτή, ἢ ὅμως τις καὶ βάσκανος κωλύει δαίμων (transl. “I only prefer one thing, the real and immediate enjoyment of it, face-to-face company, the pure communion of those who yearn for one another, a heavenly feast, prevented by some cruel and evil demon.”); B13, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 103, l. 8–11 (Theodore): Ἐπιθυμοῦμεν λαμπρότερον τὸν ἥλιον κατιδεῖν ταῖς ἀπὸ τῶν σῶν ἀκτίνων ἀντανάκλασσι φαίδρυνόμενον· μὴ σὺν ἀναβάλλῃ τὴν παρουσίαν σου καὶ ἀνέορτα <τὰ> τῆς ἑορτῆς ποιήσης ἡμῖν καὶ στυγνάζουσαν ὄψιν ἐπιβαλεῖς τοῖς ποθοῦσί σε (transl. “I want to see your brighter

4.1.10. JOY AT THE RECEIPT OF THE LETTER

Statements about the receipt of the letter have a special importance because they provide information about the meaning of the received letter for the recipient. Correspondents often express their joy at receiving the letter in a very direct manner (Koskenniemi 1956: 75). Byzantine epistolographers often use this opportunity to add rhetorical phrases, such as the “dew from Hermon”, a phrase borrowed from Psalm 133, which evokes the joy of companionship and expresses the happiness caused by receiving the letter (Kotzabassi 2020: 187). Such an example is found in one of Theodore’s letters:

“The only thing that can put out the fire in me, the only dew from Hermon, the only paradise, is now this honey-flowing letter of yours, and soon, God willing, an incomparable conversation and a viewing of you”⁶¹ (Theodore).

sun shining with the reflections of your rays; don’t delay your arrival, and make the festival inauspicious for me, and put a gloomy look to the one who longs for you.”); B16, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 106, l. 8–11 (Theodore): “Ἐν σβεστήριον ἐν ἐμοὶ καμίνου, μία δρόσος ὑπὲρ τὴν Ἀερμών, μία τε ἡ γῆ ἀναψύξεως, νῦν μὲν οἱ μελισταγεῖς οὔτοι καὶ μελίρρυτοι λόγοι σου, μικρὸν δὲ ὅσον Θεοῦ διδόντος ἢ ἀνυπέρθετος ὁμιλία καὶ θεωρία σου (transl. “The only thing that can put out the fire in me, the only dew from Hermon, the only paradise, now is this honey-flowing letter of yours, and soon, God willing, an incomparable conversation and a looking at you.”).

⁶¹ Theod. Cyz. Ep. B16, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 106, l. 8–11 (Theodore): “Ἐν σβεστήριον ἐν ἐμοὶ καμίνου, μία δρόσος ὑπὲρ τὴν Ἀερμών, μία τε ἡ γῆ ἀναψύξεως, νῦν μὲν οἱ μελισταγεῖς οὔτοι καὶ μελίρρυτοι λόγοι σου, μικρὸν δὲ ὅσον Θεοῦ διδόντος ἢ ἀνυπέρθετος ὁμιλία καὶ θεωρία σου. Other examples can be found in the few of Theodore’s letters, cf. Theod. Cyz. Ep. A2, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 8, l. 2–4: Πῶς σοι παραστήσω τὴν ἡδονὴν, γλυκύτατε καὶ ποθούμενε δέσποτα, ἦν μου πρὸς τὴν καρδίαν κατέσταξεν ἡ πάνσοφός σου καὶ μελισταγῆς τῶν λόγων σειρὴν (transl. “How to describe to you the joy, the sweetest and longed-for master, that the all-wise and mellifluous Siren of your letter brought to my heart?”); A4, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, pp. 16–17, l. 7–10: Ἄλλ’ ὅμως ἐμνήσθην ὑμῶν μετὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ εὐφράνθην καὶ τοῖς πανσόφοις ὑμῶν καὶ μελισταγέσι λόγοις ψυχαγωγηθεὶς τῆς ἀθυμίας τὸ νέφος ἀπεκρυσάμην... (transl. “But still I remembered you next to God and rejoiced, and gladdened by your letter, wise and sweet as honey, I rejected the cloud of dishonour...”); A51, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 72, l. 2–6: Ὡσπερ οἱ διὰ χρόνον φίλον ἰδόντες ἀπόδημον φιλοφρόνως τε καὶ περιχαρῶς ὑποδέχονται καὶ περὶ πολλοῦ ποιοῦνται καὶ κατασπάζονται, οὕτω δὲ ἐγὼ, ποθούμενε δέσποτα, διὰ χρόνον πάλιν τὸν συνήθη τῆς βασιλείας σου ἄγγελον, τοὺς ποθεινοὺς σου λόγους φημί, θεασάμενος ἡδέως τε διετέθην... (transl. “Like those who, after seeing a friend from abroad after a while, welcome him kindly and joyfully, appreciate him very much and embrace him, so I rejoiced too, longed-for master, seeing again after some time the usual messenger of your Majesty, your desired letter I say...”); B2, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 85, l. 2–7: Οὐχ οὕτω τις ἅπαντα κτησάμενος τῶν ὑπὲρ γῆς τε καὶ ὑπὸ γῆς πραγμάτων, εἴπερ οἶόν τε ἦν, οὐδ’ οὕτω μαργάρων τε καὶ σμαράγδων θησαυρὸν εὐρηκῶς, οὐδ’ οὕτω ἀπάσας τὰς παρ’ ἀνθρώποις τιμὰς ἐκ κοινῆς ψήφου δεξάμενος ἠυφράνθη ἄν, ὅσον ἠυφράνθη ἐγὼ τὰς τῆς μακαρίας καὶ γλυκείας καὶ τῷ ὄντι βασιλείου καὶ αὐτοκράτορος ψυχῆς σου εὐγενεῖς ἀγγέλους δεξάμενος (transl. “No one could be so happy, even if he had gained everything that is found above or below

4.1.11. GRIEF DUE TO PHYSICAL SEPARATION

Given the fact that the prerequisite for the realization of correspondence is the spatial distance between the two addressees, statements expressing the writer's painful feelings due to his deprivation of the correspondent's physical presence are a frequent motif in letters (Koskenniemi 1956: 169; Kotzabassi 2020: 188). This topos appears frequently in our corpus as well.

“What is more painful than a thorn or a double-edged sword, if not deprivation of the one you love, the absence and migration of a friend and such a faithful and wise person who is first in everything?”⁶² (Constantine).

“I am sending kisses and greetings from Cyzicus to the one who is dearest to me in all of Constantinople and for whom I yearn most of all, and I am sad because of many other things, all the more so because I am deprived of both your company and of our secret meetings”⁶³ (Theodore).

the earth, if it is possible, or discovered a treasure of pearls and emeralds, or had received all human honours unanimously, how happy I was when I received the noble letter of your blessed, sweet and truly imperial and sovereign soul.”); B4, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, pp. 88-89, l. 2–6: Τὴν ἐκ τῆς ἀπουσίας ὑμῶν χθελιστὴν κατῆφειαν ἢ σήμερον ἐλθοῦσά μοι τιμία καὶ πάνσοφος καὶ φρονιμωτάτη γραφὴ διεσκέδασε καὶ πρὸς εὐθυμίαν μετήμειψε, καὶ τὴν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ μου φλόγα τοῦ πόθου τῆς βασιλείου ὑμῶν στεφηφόρου καὶ θείας κεφαλῆς ἐπὶ πλείον ἀνήγνε τε καὶ ἐξέκαυσε... (transl. “The valuable, clever and most prudent letter that came today dispelled yesterday’s sadness due to your absence and turned it into joy, and flared up even more and kindled in my heart the fire of longing for my crown-bearer and divine emperor...”); B8, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 95, l. 2–4: Χαρὰ καὶ λύπη ἐμερίσαντό μου τὴν ψυχὴν, γλυκύτατε δέσποτα, διεξιόντι τὰ γράμματα: ἔχαιρον γὰρ ὅτι τῆς παρὰ σοὶ γνώσεως καὶ προσαγορεύσεως ἄξιόν με ἐποίησεν ὁ Θεός... (transl. “Joy and sorrow divided my soul, sweetest lord, while I was reading the letter; I rejoiced because God made me worthy of your acquaintance and greeting...”); B11, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 100, l. 2–6: Εἰ καὶ ὄρειοι αὔραι κρυεραὶ περιπνέουσι, καὶ ὑδάτων αὐτόβρυτος νυχρότης τὴν θέρμην ἀποσοβεῖ, καὶ θριδάκων χρῆσις παραμυθεῖται τὸν καύσωνα, ἀλλὰ τὸν περὶ σὲ διάπυρον ἡμῶν καὶ ἐγκάρδιον φλογμὸν οὐδὲν παρεμυθήσατο ἕτερον ἢ ἡ ὡσπερ ὄμβρος ἐπ’ ἄγρωσιν καταπεμφθεῖσα γλυκεία σου καὶ φιλουμένη φωνή... (transl. “Although the cold mountain winds are blowing and the coldness of self-springing waters dispels the heat, and eating lettuce relieves the summer heat, the burning fire in my heart for you will be quenched by nothing but your sweet and loving words, like the rain that fell on the grass of the field...”).

⁶² Theod. Cyz. Ep. B3, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, pp. 87–88, l. 16–19 (Constantine): Τί γὰρ ἀκάνθης ἢ ῥομφαίας διστόμου πληκτικώτερον, εἰ μὴ στέρησις ἐρωμένου καὶ φίλου ἀποικία καὶ ἀπουσία, καὶ τοιοῦτου οὕτω πιστοῦ καὶ φιλοσόφου καὶ κατὰ πάντα ἤδη τὸ πρωτεῖον ἔχοντος.

⁶³ Theod. Cyz. Ep. A1, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 5, l. 2–5 (Theodore): Ἐκ τῆς Κυζίκου προσκυνῶ καὶ προσφθέγγομαι τὸν πρὸ πάντων ἐν τῇ Κωνσταντίνου μοι τιμιώτερον καὶ παρὰ πάντας ποθοῦμενον ἀλγῶν μὲν καὶ ἐπ’ ἄλλοις πολλοῖς, πλέον δὲ ἐπὶ τῷ στερηθῆναι καὶ τῆς ἀμυδράς καὶ διὰ παραπετασμάτων ὀμιλίας καὶ θεωρίας σου. More examples can be found in Theodore’s and Constantine’s letters, cf. Theod. Cyz. Ep. B11, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 101, l. 8–13 (Theodore):

4.1.12. MUTUAL REMEMBRANCE

Affirmations of mutual remembrance and requests for it are frequently encountered in friendship letters. They play an important role in maintaining correspondence. The writer of the letter asks the recipient to think of him, and in return promises not to forget him (Koskenniemi 1956: 145–146). There are several examples of this epistolary motif in the correspondence between Constantine and Theodore:

“Farewell, and remember your Constantine, and don’t forget the one whom many have often forgotten, and whom his own, more appropriate to say, do not know”⁶⁴ (Constantine).

“If I forget the request not to forget you in this letter and if I do not make an effort to maintain it to the end, may my right hand wither and my tongue stick to my palate...”⁶⁵ (Theodore).

4.1.13. HUMILITY OF THE WRITER

The idea of the inferiority of the writer becomes especially popular in Byzantine letters (Koskenniemi 1956: 96). This motif is very common in the letters of Porphy-

Μάλλον δὲ οἷον ἔλαιον πυρὶ ἐποχτευόμενον πλείονα τὴν φλόγα ἀνάπτει, οὕτω δὴ καὶ ἡμᾶς μειζόνως διὰ γραφῆς εἰς τὸ περὶ σὲ φίλτρον ἐξέκαυσας καὶ ἐπὶ πλέον ἐξέτηξας ἐνθυμουμένους οἷου ἀγαθοῦ ζῶντες ζῶντος ἀποστερούμεθα... (transl. “Better to say, like the fuel added to the fire kindles even a stronger fire, that’s how you, through this letter, ignited an even greater love for you in me, and even more you have let me pain thinking of what good I am deprived of while I live...”).

⁶⁴ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B1, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 84, l. 30–32 (Constantine): “Ἐρρωσο τοίνυν καὶ μέμνησο τοῦ σοῦ Κωνσταντίνου καὶ μὴ ἐπιλήση τοῦ ὑπὸ πολλῶν πολλακίς ἐπιλησθέντος καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν οικείων, εἰπεῖν οικειότερον, ἀγνοηθέντος.

⁶⁵ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B2, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 86, l. 21–24 (Theodore): Εἰ οὖν ἐπιλήσωμαι τῆς ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ γραφῆ τοῦ μὴ ἐπιλανθάνεσθαί σε παρακλήσεως καὶ οὐ μέχρι τέλους σπουδάσω ταύτην διαφυλάξαι, ἐπιλησθεῖη μου ἢ δεξιὰ καὶ κολληθεῖη μου ἢ γλῶσσα τῷ λάρυγγι...; For other examples, cf. Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B10, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 100, l. 15–16 (Constantine): “Ἐρρωσθέ μοι καὶ μὴ λήθῃ τὸν ὑμέτερον ἐμὲ παραπέμψητε, αἱ μόνον καὶ μνημονεύομεναι ἡδοναὶ καὶ γλυκύτητες (transl. “Farewell and don’t leave me to oblivion, only joys and delights are to be remembered.”); B11, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 102, l. 21–26 (Theodore): Ὡς ἂν δὲ μὴ μόνον τῶν ὄρεινῶν εὐχῶν ἡμῖν κοινωνῆς, ἅς πολλὰς καὶ παρὰ πολλῶν σοι μνηστεύομεν, ἀλλὰ τινος μετέχοις καὶ τῶν ἐκτὸς, ἀπὸ τῶν ἐνταῦθα θριδάκων ὀλύμπια δῶρά σοι ἀπεστείλαμεν, ἵνα τούτων ἐν τῷ γλυκυτάτῳ σου συστρεφομένῳ στόματι καὶ ἡ μνήμη ἡμῶν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ θαλάμῳ τῆς διανοίας σου διαιτᾶται καὶ ἀναστρέφεται... (transl. “But so that you would not only have mountain requests in common with me, which I ask of you many times and for many things, but also enjoy a share of something other besides that, I have sent you gifts from Olympus, the lettuce that grows there, so that while your sweet mouth is biting it, the memory of me lives and dwells in the temple of your mind...”).

rogenitus, with eight examples occurring:

“I tremble and I’m pale, as God himself knows, as I send the letter to your love of God. For, knowing that you are so wise and beyond the wise, and knowing exactly my boorishness, I hesitate to write today’s letter as well”⁶⁶ (Constantine).

4.2. LINGUISTIC TOPOI

4.2.1. THE USE OF TERMS OF ENDEARMENT INSTEAD OF THE CORRESPONDENT’S NAME IN ADDRESS

Since the beginning of the Roman period various forms of address occur in Greek letters, depending on the type of letter and the relationship between the correspondents, characterized by the use of superlative adjectives, mainly based on the classical tradition, such as φίλτατος “dearest” and τιμιώτατος “most esteemed” (which do not occur in family letters), or γλυκύτατος “sweetest” or “dearest”, in addition to ἴδιος (Koskenniemi 1956: 96–97; Klauck 2006: 190). Among these, γλυκύτατος is used for an addressee who is in a significantly close relationship with the writer (Koskenniemi 1956: 103).⁶⁷

Byzantine letter writers strove to avoid addressing their correspondent by name, preferring to use other types of address and often including references to their correspondent’s capacity (τίμιε δέσποτα, θεσπέσιε δέσποτα, ἀνδρῶν σοφώτατε, ποθεινότητα ἀδελφὲ καὶ φίλε ἔρασμιώτατε, etc.) (Kotzabassi 2020: 189).⁶⁸ In our corpus various terms of endearment characteristic of friendship letters, used to express the close relationship and mutual affection of the correspondents, can be found.

Theodore uses the following phrases when addressing Constantine: γλυκύτατε καὶ ποθοῦμενε δέσποτα (“sweetest and longed-for master”),⁶⁹ κοσμοπόθητε

⁶⁶ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B7, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, pp. 93–94, l. 5–8: Τρέμομεν δὲ καὶ ὠχρῶμεν, ὡς οἶδεν αὐτὸς ὁ Θεός, πρὸς τὴν σὴν θεοφύλειαν ἐπιστέλλοντες· σοφὸν γάρ σε οὕτω γινώσκοντες καὶ σοφῶν ἐπέκεινα καὶ τὴν ἡμετέραν ἀγροικίαν ἀκριβῶς ἐπιστάμενοι, ὀκηρότεροι καὶ πρὸς τὰς καθημερινὰς γινόμεθα γραφάς. All examples of this motif are listed in the Ch. 3 in this paper.

⁶⁷ For more on forms of address in Greek letters up to the fourth century AD see Koskenniemi 1956: 95–104, and especially Zilliagus 1949 and Zilliagus 1964.

⁶⁸ On forms of address in Byzantine epistolography see Grünbart 2005, who provides an overview of formulas from the 6th to the 12th century.

⁶⁹ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* A2, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 8, l. 2; A17, p. 34, l. 3 (γλυκύτατε δέσποτα καὶ ποθοῦμενε).

δέσποτα (“master desired by the world”),⁷⁰ γλυκύτατε δέσποτα (“sweetest lord”),⁷¹ ποθούμενε δέσποτα (“longed-for master”),⁷² φιλανθρωπότατε βασιλεῦ (“most benevolent emperor”),⁷³ φιλάγαθε δέσποτα (“goodness-loving master”),⁷⁴ παμπόθητε καὶ παντέραστε δέσποτα (“longed-for and dearest master”),⁷⁵ ὃ δέσποτα φωσφόρε καὶ [...] μενε ἦλιε (“master, light bringing and ... sun”),⁷⁶ πανθαύμαστε δέσποτα (“all-wonderful master”),⁷⁷ ἄξιε τοῦ Θεοῦ (“worthy of God”),⁷⁸ γλυκύτατε ἦλιε (“sweetest sun”),⁷⁹ ποθούμενε καὶ ἀξιέραστε δέσποτα (“longed-for master, worthy of love”),⁸⁰ φιλανθρωπότατε δέσποτα (“most benevolent master”).⁸¹

Another way of avoiding the correspondent’s name in addressing, preferred in Byzantine epistolography, is the use of metaphorical wordplay (*paronomasia*) based on the person’s name (Kotzabassi 2020: 189). Such an example occurs in one of Porphyrogenitus’ letters, but attached to Theodore’s name:

“I know that you are God’s gift, o Theodore”⁸² (Constantine).

In other cases, when addressing Theodore, Porphyrogenitus uses expressions such as ἡδεὶ καὶ γλυκυτάτῳ φίλῳ (“my lovely and sweetest friend”),⁸³ ἡ ἡδίστη καὶ γλυκυτάτη καὶ ἐμοὶ φιλουμένη καὶ ψυχὴ καὶ καρδία (“my sweetest, dearest and beloved soul and heart”),⁸⁴ ὁ ἐμοὶ ἡγαπημένος καὶ πολὺ τῶν ἄλλων πλέον φιλούμενος (“my beloved, much more dear than the others”).⁸⁵ In addition, the emperor does not hesitate to mention Theodore’s name on several occasions: ὁ

⁷⁰ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* A3, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 14, l. 33; A47, p. 69, l. 14–15 (δέσποτα κοσμοπόθητε); B16, p. 106, l. 4.

⁷¹ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* A3, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 15, l. 48–49; B8, p. 95, l. 2.

⁷² Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* A5, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 19, l. 2, 14; A47, p. 68, l. 2; A51, p. 72, l. 4.

⁷³ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* A5, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 19, l. 10.

⁷⁴ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* A6, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 20, l. 2–3; B9, p. 97, l. 2–3 (φιλάγαθε δέσποτα καὶ βασιλεῦ).

⁷⁵ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B2, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 86, l. 17.

⁷⁶ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B2, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 87, l. 35–36.

⁷⁷ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B8, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 95, l. 9.

⁷⁸ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B8, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 97, l. 35.

⁷⁹ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B13, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 103, l. 6.

⁸⁰ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B14, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 104, l. 3.

⁸¹ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B14, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 104, l. 20.

⁸² Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B12, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 102, l. 2: Δῶρόν σε Θεοῦ ἵμεν, ὃ Θεόδωρε.

⁸³ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B7, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 93, l. 4.

⁸⁴ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B12, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 103, l. 11–12.

⁸⁵ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B18, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 107, l. 2–3.

ἐμὸς ὄντως ὑπέργλυκος Θεόδωρος (“my truly sweetest Theodore”),⁸⁶ τὸν ἐμὸν Θεόδωρον (“my Theodore”).⁸⁷

4.2.2. THE USE OF QUOTATIONS

Byzantine epistolographers, systematically seeking to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in composing letters in order to impress their correspondents, preferred the use of quotations and paraphrases, a device recommended by epistolary theorists. Quotations from ancient Greek literature, being a main element of mimesis as a reflection of the Atticism to which Byzantine authors aspired, were combined with quotations from Holy Scripture.⁸⁸ The passages copied from other authors are not based on direct quotation, but are rather paraphrased, with the name of the author being alluded to frequently omitted (Kotzabassi 2020: 189–191). In our corpus, quotations and paraphrases from the Bible mostly appear, in addition to quotations from classical and Byzantine authors, which are mostly integrated into the sentence structure without indicating their source. Some interesting examples are highlighted below.⁸⁹

As for allusions to classical authors, paraphrases are more frequent than direct quotations. In addition, phrases taken from classical authors are often incorporated into sentences.⁹⁰ Among the most cited authors we find Homer, Demosthenes, Diodorus Siculus, Aristophanes, Plutarch, Plato, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, etc. Allusions to classical authors are extremely frequent in the letters of Theodore, while in the letters

⁸⁶ Theod. Cyz. Ep. B5, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 90, l. 8–9.

⁸⁷ Theod. Cyz. Ep. B15, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 105, l. 4–5.

⁸⁸ The use of quotations, seen not as a slavish attempt of copying, but as a reflection of the author’s knowledge and education, is common in Byzantine literature. On the imitation (mimesis) of antiquity in Byzantine literature see Hunger 1969-70. On the use of quotations in Byzantine letters see Littlewood 1988.

⁸⁹ Given that the focus of our research is primarily on Porphyrogenitus’ epistolary style, a statistical overview of the use of quotations and paraphrases in the emperor’s letters will be provided. A small selection from Theodore’s letters, however, will be included due to the large number of examples found in the corpus. A detailed *Apparatus fontium* and the *Index locorum* of the critical edition of Theodore of Cyzicus’ *Letters*, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, were used for the search, with those examples singled out that, in the opinion of the author of this paper, reflect the strongest link with the source.

⁹⁰ Some examples of phrases taken from classical authors: φίλων χωρισμὸς καὶ συνήθων καὶ ὀμηλικῆς ἐρατεινῆς, εἶπεν ἂν Ὅμηρος (Theod. Cyz. Ep. A1, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 5, l. 7–8, Theodore), cf. καὶ ὀμηλικῆς ἐρατεινῆς (Hom. *Il.* 3.175, ed. Allen); γενοῦ οὖν μοι σὺ οὗτος, φίλτατε, ἐκείνος καὶ ἐπίτρεψον τῷ κόμητι τῶν ὑδάτων παρασχεῖν μοι ὕδωρ χειμέριον τὴν θερινὴν μου δίψαν παραμυθούμενον (Theod. Cyz. Ep. A5, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 19, l. 6–8, Theodore), cf. ῥωχμὸς ξὴν γαίης, ἢ χειμέριον ἀλὲν ὕδωρ (Hom. *Il.* 23.420, ed. Allen).

of Porphyrogenitus they rarely appear, with two examples found (one from Demosthenes and one from Diodorus Siculus).⁹¹

Εἰ καὶ πάντων κατὰ τὸν εἰπόντα κόρος ἐστὶν καὶ ὕπνου καὶ φιλότητος, ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ τῆς πρὸς σὲ ὀμιλίας, γλυκύτατε δέσποτα καὶ ποθούμενε, οὐδέποτε κόρος ἐστίν. (Theod. Cyz. Ep. A17, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 34, l. 2–4, Theodore)
Cf. Πάντων μὲν κόρος ἐστὶ καὶ ὕπνου καὶ φιλότητος. (Hom. Il. 13.636, ed. Allen)

Ἐν γὰρ ἀδυνάτῳ τοῦ μεταστῆσαι τι τῶν μὴ καλῶν, ἑαυτοῦ ἀφειδεῖν ἀλόγιστον ἢ μανικόν. (Theod. Cyz. Ep. A3, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 14, l. 31–32, Theodore)

Cf. Ἐν δ' ἀδυνάτῳ τῷ μεταστῆσαι τι τῶν γεγονότων ἀφειδεῖν ἑαυτοῦ παντάπασι ἀνόητον καὶ μανικόν. (Plut. Cat. Min. 32.8–9, ed. Ziegler)

Ψύλλαι δὲ καὶ νῦν εἰσι, μεσοῦντος ἤδε χειμῶνος, ὑπὲρ τὴν ἀπὸ Σωκράτους πρὸς Χαιρεφῶντα πιθήσασαν, ἧς αἱ ἐκ κηροῦ κατὰ τὸν παίζαντα περσικαὶ τὸ τοῦ ἄλματος ἀνεμέτρουν διάστημα. (Theod. Cyz. Ep. A1, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 6, l. 29–32, Theodore)

Cf. ἀνήρετ' ἄρτι Χαιρεφῶντα Σωκράτης
ψύλλαν ὀπόσους ἄλλοιτο τοὺς αὐτῆς πόδας.
δακοῦσα γὰρ τοῦ Χαιρεφῶντος τὴν ὄφρυν
ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν τὴν Σωκράτους ἀφήλατο.

{Στ.} πῶς δῆτα διεμέτρησε;

{Μα.} δεξιότατα.

κηρὸν διατήξας, εἶτα τὴν ψύλλαν λαβὼν
ἐνέβαψεν εἰς τὸν κηρὸν αὐτῆς τὴν πόδε,
κῆρα ψυχίση περιέφυσαν Περσικαί.

ταύτας ὑπολύσας ἀνεμέτρει τὸ χωρίον. (Aristoph. Nub. 144–152, ed. Dover)

When it comes to quotations and paraphrases from the Bible, in the letters of both correspondents the most numerous are allusions to Psalms:

⁹¹ Ὁ γὰρ παρὼν οὗτος καιρὸς τῶν σοφῶν ἐνδεῆς τυγχάνων (Theod. Cyz. Ep. B1, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 85, l. 38–39, Constantine), cf. ὁ μὲν οὖν παρὼν καιρὸς (Dem. Or. 1.2, ed. Butcher); καὶ τί τὸ πείσαν τὸν ἐμὸν Θεόδωρον τοιοῦτοις κακοῖς ἐλαττώμασι περιπεσεῖν (Theod. Cyz. Ep. B15, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 105, l. 4–5, Constantine), cf. τοιοῦτοις ἐλαττώμασι περιπετωκότες (Diod. Sic. 13.29.6, ed. Vogel).

Χαρίσαιτό σε ὁ Θεὸς τῇ οἰκουμένη πάσῃ καὶ ἡμῖν, δέσποτα κοσμοπόθητε, εἰς χρόνων περιόδους πολλῶν πρὸς τὸ ῥύσασθαι πένητα καὶ πτωχὸν ἐκ χειρὸς στερεωτέρων αὐτοῦ... (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* A47, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 69, l. 14–16, Theodore)

Cf. ῥυόμενος πτωχὸν ἐκ χειρὸς στερεωτέρων αὐτοῦ. (Ps 34, 10)

Τὸ δὲ διάκλυσμα ἀπελάβομεν μὲν, οὐκ ἀπηλαύσαμεν δὲ τῆς συνήθους γλυκύτητος διὰ τὸ μὴ ἀπὸ τῆς φιλτάτης χειρὸς τὴν κύλικα προσάγεσθαι, μηδὲ τὸν ὀφθαλμὸν ἐστιᾶσθαι τῇ ποθουμένη θέᾳ ἐνατενίζοντα· ὡς γλυκέα δέ, φησί, τὰ λόγια σου τῷ λάρυγγί μου, ὑπὲρ τὸ πάλαι νέκταρ λελόγισται. (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B5, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 91, l. 24–28, Constantine)

Cf. Ὡς γλυκέα τῷ λάρυγγί μου τὰ λόγια σου, ὑπὲρ μέλι καὶ κηρίον τῷ στόματι μου. (Ps 118, 103)

Οἱ γὰρ ἡμῶν δοκοῦντες εἶναι φίλοι καὶ πλησίον τούναντίον περὶ ἡμᾶς ἔχουσι· προφητικῶς γὰρ παροιμιάσομαι πρὸς αὐτούς· οἱ φίλοι μου καὶ οἱ πλησίον μου ἐξ ἐναντίας μου ἤγγισαν καὶ ἔστησαν, καὶ οἱ ἔγγιστα μου ἀπὸ μακρόθεν ἔστησαν. (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B7, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 94, l. 19–22, Constantine)

Cf. Οἱ φίλοι μου καὶ οἱ πλησίον μου ἐξ ἐναντίας μου ἤγγισαν καὶ ἔστησαν, καὶ οἱ ἔγγιστα μου ἀπὸ μακρόθεν ἔστησαν. (Ps 37, 12)

Νῦν ἐγενόμην ὡς στρουθίον μονάζον ἐπὶ δώμασιν ἐν τῷ μὴ ἔχειν με ταῖς σαῖς ἐνεαρίζειν χελιδόσι καὶ ἀηδόσι καὶ ὑπ' αὐτῶν κατατέρπεσθαι. (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B17, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 107, l. 3–5, Theodore)

Cf. Ἠγρῦνθησα καὶ ἐγενήθην ὡσεὶ στρουθίον μονάζον ἐπὶ δώματι. (Ps 101, 8)

It should also be singled out that in Porphyrogenitus' letters scriptural allusions are significantly more numerous than allusions to classical authors, with nine examples found (five examples from the Psalms, two from John's Gospel and one example from the Book of Daniel, including the *locus communis* Θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος).⁹²

⁹² Apart from the examples listed above, other biblical allusions found in the emperor's letters are: καὶ Θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος καὶ ἐγγίζων Θεῷ καὶ ἐπιθυμῶν ἀνὴρ τῶν κρειττόνων (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B1, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 84, l. 22–23), cf. ὅτι ἀνὴρ ἐπιθυμῶν σὺ εἶ (Dan 9, 23); ταῦτα δὲ κατελυμήνατο μονιὸς ἄγριος καὶ Σκυθῶν ἔφοδος (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B5, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, pp. 90–91, l. 16–17), cf. ἐλυμήνατο αὐτὴν σὺς ἐκ δρυμοῦ, καὶ μονιὸς ἄγριος κατενεμήσατο αὐτὴν (Ps 79, 14); τάχα ἂν τῶν αὐτοῦ σπερμάτων τοὺς καρποὺς φάγεται (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B7, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 94, l. 26–27), cf. τοὺς πόνους τῶν καρπῶν σου φάγεται (Ps. 127, 2); ἐγὼ δὲ τὰς ὄρεινὰς ἀπολαβὼν θρίδακας καὶ νοστήμους ταῦτα ὑπὲρ μέλι καὶ κηρίον λογισάμενος ἠχαρίστησα τῷ πεπομοφί (Theod. Cyz.

Considering the fact that Byzantine writers used the letters of renowned Byzantine epistolographers as patterns (Kotzabassi 2020: 178), interesting allusions to older Byzantine epistolographers such as Libanius and Theophylact Simocatta, as well as to highly educated church fathers such as Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil of Caesarea, etc., can be found in Theodore's and Constantine's letters. Here are some examples:

Οὐδ' οὕτω τέρπει ταῶς, ὁ μηδικὸς ὄρνις καὶ ἀλαζῶν, τὸ κάλλος θεατρίζων, ὅτ' ἂν κυκλοτερὲς τὸ πτερὸν περιστήσῃ τὸ χρυσαυγὲς καὶ κατάστερον, ὡς ἔτερον ἐμὲ οἱ τῶν λόγων ἀστερές σου καὶ εἰστία ὁ σὸς ὥρατος λειμών... (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* A2, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 9, l. 15–18, Theodore)

Cf. Πόθεν ταῶς, ὁ ἀλαζῶν ὄρνις καὶ Μηδικός, οὕτω φιλόκαλος καὶ φιλότιμος, ὥστε ..., ὅταν ἴδῃ τινὰ πλησιάζοντα, ἢ ταῖς θηλείαις, ὡς φασί, καλλωπίζηται, τὸν αἰχένα διάρας, καὶ τὸ πτερὸν κυκλοτερώς περιστήσας τὸ χρυσαυγὲς καὶ κατάστερον, θεατρίζει τὸ κάλλος τοῖς ἐρασταῖς μετὰ σοβαροῦ τοῦ βαδίσματος. (Greg. Naz. *Or.* 28.24.16–21, ed. Barbel)

Ἐξ ὧν λαμπρότερος ἐδείχθη παρὰ τοῖς πολλοῖς καὶ ἐρασιμώτερος ὡς καὶ υἱὸς φωτὸς ὑπάρχων καὶ Θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος καὶ ἐγγίζων Θεῷ καὶ ἐπιθυμιῶν ἀνὴρ τῶν κρειττόνων (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B1, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 84, l. 20–23, Constantine)

Cf. Εἰ δὲ καὶ υἱὸς φωτὸς, ἢ ἄνθρωπος τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἢ ἐγγίζων Θεῷ, ἢ ἀνὴρ ἐπιθυμιῶν τῶν κρειττόνων. (Greg. Naz. *Or.* 11.1.10–12, ed. Calvet-Sebasti)

Οὐχ οὕτω γὰρ φλέβα χρυσοῦ μεταλλουργοῖς ἀνιχνεύουσιν εὐρεῖν ἀναγκαῖον... ὡς ὁ ἐμὸς ὄντως ὑπέργλυκος Θεόδωρος πρὸς τὸ αἰεὶ συνεῖναι ἐμοὶ τῷ ποθουμένῳ καὶ διαπύρως ἔχεις καὶ ἐφετῶς ὑπὲρ παντοίας ὕλης εὐχροίαν καὶ τῶν τῆδε νομιζομένων τῷ βίῳ ἀναγκαίων. (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B5, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 90, l. 6–11, Constantine)

Cf. Οὔτε φλέβα χρυσοῦ μεταλλουργοὶ ἀνιχνεύοντες... οὕτω περὶ τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἐσπουδάκασιν τέχνην, ὡς ἐγὼ τὴν πόλιν ἐσκινδαλάμιζον ἅπασαν, εἰ ποὺ τὸν Ἀγησίλαον ἦν μοι θεάσασθαι. (Theoph. Sim. *Ep.* 24.2–5, ed. Zanetto)

Ep. B12, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 103, l. 5–6), cf. ὡς γλυκεὰ τῷ λάρυγγί μου τὰ λόγιά σου, ὑπὲρ μέλι καὶ κηρίον τῷ στόματί μου (Ps 118, 103); ὁ γὰρ ἀγρότης ὄχλος καὶ τὸν Θεὸν μὴ γινώσκων (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B15, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 105, l. 7–8), cf. ὁ ὄχλος οὗτος ὁ μὴ γινώσκων τὸν νόμον ἐπάρατοί εἰσιν (Io 7, 49); ὅτ' ἂν τις καὶ τοῦ φωτὸς τὸ σκότος προτιμήσειεν (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B18, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 107, l. 3–4), cf. ἠγάπησαν οἱ ἄνθρωποι μᾶλλον τὸ σκότος ἢ τὸ φῶς (Io 3, 19).

Τὸ δὲ μὴ συχρῶς ἐπιστέλλειν οὐκ ἄλλο τι τὸ καλύον ἡμᾶς ἢ ἡ συγγηράσασα ἡμῖν ἀπαιδευσία καὶ ἀμουσία. (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B5, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 91, l. 17–19, Constantine)

Cf. Τὸ μὴ συνεχῶς με γράφειν πρὸς τὴν σὴν παιδευσιν πείθουσι τό τε δέος καὶ ἡ ἀμαθία. (Basil. Caes. *Ep.* 344.1–2, ed. Courtonne)

Ἄ ταῖς χερσὶ συνεχῶς ἀνελίττων καὶ τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἐπιτρέχων καὶ ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ φρουρῶν οὐδὲν τᾶλλα πρὸς ταῦτα λογίζομαι, οὐ Μίδου χρυσόν, οὐ Κροίσου θησαυρούς, οὐ Ταντάλου τάλαντα, οὐ Πηλέως μάχαιραν, οὐ Κρίσωνος τάχος, οὐ Πουλυδάμαντος ῥώμην, οὐ Γύγου σφενδόνην, οὐ κήπους Μηδικούς, οὐ Νισαίος ἵππους, οὐκ ἄλλο τῶν παρ' ἀνθρώποις νομισθέντων τιμίων οὐδέν. (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B6, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 91–92, l. 5–11, Theodore)

Cf. Καὶ μικρά μοι πάντα ἤδη φαίνεται, Μίδου πλοῦτος, κάλλος Νιρέως, Κρίσωνος τάχος, Πολυδάμαντος ῥώμη, μάχαιρα Πηλέως. (Liban. *Ep.* 758.1, ed. Foerster)

Approximately twenty allusions to Byzantine authors found in the emperor's letters (nine examples from Ioannes Chrysostomus, five from Gregory of Nazianzus, two from Basil of Caesarea, two from Theophylact Simocatta, one from Libanius and one from St. Athanasius) confirm that Porphyrogenitus mostly relied on works from Byzantine literature when writing his letters.⁹³ Compared to the small number of allu-

⁹³ Apart from the examples listed above, other allusions to Byzantine authors found in the emperor's letters are: καὶ συνέσει τῶν πολλῶν διαφέροντα καὶ παιδεῖαν παντοῖαν πεπαιδευμένον (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B1, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 84, l. 18–20), cf. συνέσει τε γὰρ διαφέρων καὶ παιδείας γέμων (Lib. *Ep.* 948.2, ed. Foerster); τῷ περὶ σὲ φίλτρῳ ἐκκαυθέντες (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B1, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 84, l. 32), cf. ἐκκαίόμενοι τῷ φίλτρῳ τῷ περὶ σέ (Io. Chrys. *Ep.* 84, PG 52, 653.2); μανικὸς γὰρ ὄντως ἐραστὴς τυγχάνων πρὸς τοὺς ἐμὲ οὕτω φιλοῦντας (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B3, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 88, l. 19–20), cf. ὁ μανικὸς ἐραστὴς τοῦ Χριστοῦ (Io. Chrys. *De studio praesent.*, hom. 5, PG 63, 489.46); ἐπεὶ οὕτω τῇ περὶ ἡμᾶς δέδεσαι τῆς ἀγάπης χρυσεῖ σειρᾷ (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B7, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 93, l. 2), cf. οἱ ταῖς σειραῖς τῆς ἀγάπης συσφίξαντες (Io. Chrys. *In Ps.* 94 (sp.) PG 55, 617.3); καὶ τοὺς ἐμοὺς ποθεῖς ἀμούσους... λόγους (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B7, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 93, l. 2–3), cf. ἡ θεωρία ἀφίκετο... ἐνεγκαμένη λόγον οὐκ ἀμουσον (Theoph. Sim. *Quaest. phys.* 32.2–3, ed. Positano); δίδου συγγνώμην τῷ περὶλημένῳ διὰ τὸν πάντα τυραννοῦντα πόθον (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B10, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 100, l. 10–11), cf. ἔγνω τὸν πόθον τὸν γλυκὺν τύραννον (Greg. Naz. *Or.* 26.2.13–14, ed. Mossay-Lafontaine), ὄρα πόθου τυραννικοῦ μανίαν (Io. Chrys. *In Genes.* PG 54, 482.13); καὶ τὸ οὕτως ἐκκρεμάσασθαι τῆς ἡμῶν ἀγάπης (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B12, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 102, l. 3–4), cf. διὰ τὸ λίαν ἐκκρεμᾶσθαι τῆς ἀγάπης τοῦ Χριστοῦ (Io. Chrys. *De Babyla c. Iul.* 63.4, ed. Schatkin); ὁ περὶ ἐμὲ ἔρωσ διακαῆς καὶ ἐγκάρδιος (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B15, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 105, l. 6), cf. τὸν ἐκείνου πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐγκάρδιον διετράνωσεν ἔρωτα (Io. Chrys. *In catenas s. Petri* (sp.) 32.9–10, ed. Batareikh); οὔτε νόμους οἶδε φιλίας (Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B15, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 105, l. 8), cf. ἀλλ' εἰδέναι

sions to classical authors, this could indicate that the emperor was not deeply versed in classical literature.

4.2.3. VARIOUS EXCLAMATIONS

As previously mentioned, epistolographers from late antiquity recommended that letters be written in a style as similar as possible to natural speech.⁹⁴ As a feature of everyday speech, various exclamations can often be found in letters. Such examples are not numerous in this corpus, mostly appearing in Porphyrogenitus' letters: Ἡράκλεις ("by Heracles!"),⁹⁵ οἴμοι ("woe is me!")⁹⁶ μὰ τὴν σὴν ἀρετὴν ("by your virtue!"), μὰ τὴν φίλην καὶ καλὴν δωδεκάδα τῶν σοφῶν ἀποστόλων ("by the dear and noble twelve wise apostles!").⁹⁷

4.2.4. INVOCATIONS AND PETITIONS TO GOD

Different petitions to God or invocations of God are also very common *topoi* in Greek and Latin letters. In the correspondence between Theodore and Constantine, more often in Theodore's letters, a number of such examples is found, in accordance with the fact that religion played an important role in the life of the Byzantines. The following examples were found: ὁ Κτίστης καὶ Πλάστης ("Restorer and

φιλίας νόμους (Io. Chrys. *Exposit. in Ps. PG* 55, 82.2-3) ; καὶ φιλεργὸς ἡμῖν ἀναφανεῖσα μέλισσα, ἡ σὺλᾶν ἐπισταμένη τὰ καλὰ καὶ τὰ εὐώδη (Theod. *Cyz. Ep.* B15, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 105, l. 13–14), cf. ἡ φιλεργὸς μέλισσα... καὶ σὺλᾶ τὰ ἄνθη (Greg. *Naz. Or.* 44, *PG* 36, 620A); καὶ βοῦς πελάγιος γένηται καὶ δελφὶς χερσαῖος (Theod. *Cyz. Ep.* B18, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 107, l. 4–5), cf. εἰ μὴ καὶ τὸν δελφῖνα κακίζοιτό τις, ὅτι μὴ χερσαῖος· καὶ τὸν βοῦν, ὅτι μὴ πελάγιος (Greg. *Naz. Or.* 33.6.12–13, ed. Moreschini-Gallay); καὶ ἔτι περιφέρουσι τῆς ἀρρωστίας λείψανα (Theod. *Cyz. Ep.* B18, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 108, l. 8), cf. καὶ ἔτι λείψανα ἀρρωστίας περιφέροντες (Io. Chrys. *Ep.* 194, *PG* 52, 720.30); τῆς ἀγνωσίας σκότος βαθὺ (Theod. *Cyz. Ep.* B18, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 108, l. 9), cf. καὶ τὸ βαθὺ τῆς ἀγνωσίας σκότος (Io. Chrys. *In illud: Filius ex se nihil facit PG* 56, 252.37); καὶ ἄλλαι βιοτικά τρικυμῖαι καθ' ἐκάστην περικλύζουσαι τὴν ἡμῶν βιοτὴν (Theod. *Cyz. Ep.* B18, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 108, 10–11), cf. καὶ ταῖς παντοδαπαῖς περικλύζεται τρικυμῖαις (Athan. *Exposit. in Ps. PG* 27, 397B); καὶ τῆς φιλίας ἐμφορεῖσθαι (Theod. *Cyz. Ep.* B18, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 108, l. 12–13), cf. ἐμφορεῖσθαι τῆς φιλίας ὑμῶν (Basil. *Caes. Ep.* 109.1.3, ed. Courtonne); προειρησιασθαι τὴν σὴν ἀγχίνουαν καὶ τὴν κύλικα λαμπρῶς ἀποσημζάμενον ἐπ' ἄκρων δακτύλων εὐφυνῶς ταύτην τῷ ποθομένῳ προσαγαγεῖν (Theod. *Cyz. Ep.* B18, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 108, l. 15–17), cf. τοὺς δὲ τὰς κύλικας ἐπ' ἄκρων δακτύλων ἔχοντας, ὡς οἶόν τε εὐπρεπέστατά τε ὁμοῦ καὶ ἀσφαλέστατα (Greg. *Naz. Or.* 14, *PG* 35, 880A).

⁹⁴ Cf. *Greg. Naz. Ep.* 51, ed. Gallay, vol. 1, p. 68, l. 6–7.

⁹⁵ *Theod. Cyz. Ep.* A2, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 10, l. 24 (Theodore).

⁹⁶ *Theod. Cyz. Ep.* B1, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 84, l. 15 (Constantine); B8, p. 95, l. 11 (Theodore).

⁹⁷ *Theod. Cyz. Ep.* B18, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 107, l. 5–6 (Constantine).

Creator”),⁹⁸ Κύριε καὶ Θεέ (“Lord and God”),⁹⁹ Κύριε τοῦ ἐλέους καὶ οἰκτιρμῶν Θεέ (“Lord of mercy and God of compassion”),¹⁰⁰ Δέσποτα Κύριε καὶ Θεέ (“Lord and God”),¹⁰¹ Θεοῦ συνευδοκοῦντος καὶ ἐπαμύνοντος (“with God’s consent and help”),¹⁰² ὃ Θεὲ καὶ Κύριε (“God and Lord”),¹⁰³ φιλόανθρωπε καὶ ἀγαθοδότα Θεέ (“benevolent God and giver of good”),¹⁰⁴ ὡς οἶδεν αὐτὸς ὁ Θεός (“as God himself knows”),¹⁰⁵ Ἰησοῦ Χριστὲ ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν (“Jesus Christ, our God”),¹⁰⁶ Θεοῦ διδόντος (“God willing”).¹⁰⁷

4.2.5. THE USE OF PROVERBS

According to epistolary theorists from antiquity and late antiquity, although the epistolary style should be plain, it should not be dry and unadorned; therefore, letters should be enriched with the discreet usage of maxims, proverbs or quips, which add charm.¹⁰⁸ Proverbs are found in several of Porphyrogenitus and Theodore’s letters:

- a) Τῷ τῆς Ἀμαλθείας κέρατι (“cornucopia”).¹⁰⁹
- b) Τὸ γῆρας τῆς ἀσθενείας μὴ δυνηθέντες ἐκδύσασθαι (“not being able to escape the weakness of old age”).¹¹⁰
- c) Ἴν’ εἴη τὰ τῶν φίλων τῷ ὄντι κοινά (“that which belongs to friends should be

⁹⁸ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* A2, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 12, l. 47 (Theodore).

⁹⁹ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* A3, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 12, l. 6 (Theodore).

¹⁰⁰ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* A4, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 18, l. 31 (Theodore).

¹⁰¹ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B2, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 86, l. 14-15 (Theodore).

¹⁰² Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B2, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 86, l. 18 (Theodore).

¹⁰³ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B4, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 89, l. 20 (Theodore).

¹⁰⁴ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B6, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 92, l. 14-15 (Theodore).

¹⁰⁵ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B7, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 93, l. 5 (Constantine).

¹⁰⁶ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B9, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 99, l. 40 (Theodore).

¹⁰⁷ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B16, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 106, l. 10 (Theodore).

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Demetr. *Eloc.* 232, ed. Chiron, p. 65: Κάλλος μέντοι αὐτῆς αἶ τε φιλικὰ φιλοφρονήσεις καὶ πυκνὰ παροιμίαι ἐνοῦσαι· καὶ τοῦτο γὰρ μόνον ἐνέστω αὐτῇ σοφόν, διότι δημοτικόν τί ἐστιν ἡ παροιμία καὶ κοινόν, ὃ δὲ γνωμολογῶν καὶ προτρεπόμενος οὐ δι’ ἐπιστολῆς ἔτι λαλοῦντι εἰσικεν, ἀλλὰ μηχανῆς; Greg. Naz. *Ep.* 51, ed. Gallay, vol. 1, p. 67, l. 14-20: Τρίτον ἐστὶ τῶν ἐπιστολῶν, ἡ χάρις. Ταύτην δὲ φυλάξομεν, εἰ μὴτε παντάσῃ ξηρὰ καὶ ἀχάριστα γράφομεν καὶ ἀκαλλώπιστα, ἀκόσμητα καὶ ἀκόρητα, ὃ δὴ λέγεται, οἷον διὰ γνωμῶν καὶ παροιμιῶν καὶ ἀποφθεγμάτων ἐκτός, ἔτι δὲ σκωμμάτων καὶ αἰνιγμάτων, οἷς ὁ λόγος καταγλυκαίνεται· μὴτε λίαν τοῖσι φαινοίμεθα καταχρόμενοι.

¹⁰⁹ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* A2, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 10, l. 21 (Theodore); Diogen. I 64, ed. Leutsch and Schneidewin (CPG I, 191).

¹¹⁰ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B1, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 83, l. 11-12 (Constantine); cf. Zen. VI 18, ed. Leutsch and Schneidewin (CPG I, 166); Suda τ 578, ed. Adler.

shared”).¹¹¹

d) Ταντάλου τάλαντα (“Tantal’s wealth”).¹¹²

e) Γύγου σφενδόνη (“Gyges’ sword”).¹¹³

f) Ὅταν δὲ ἡ ὄνος ἢ κάρθαρος εὐωδίας αἰσθησιν λάβη καὶ ἐρασθῆ (“when a donkey or a dung-beetle smells something nice and starts to love it”).¹¹⁴

5. CONCLUSION

Research on the extremely rich epistolary culture of the Byzantine period demonstrates that Byzantine writers devotedly followed rhetorical rules in order to impress their correspondents, as well as a wider audience, with their letter-writing skills, especially if the correspondence was intended for publication. The extent to which the rhetorical rules were implemented by the person penning a letter depended primarily on the writer’s rhetorical education, but also on his stylistic preferences and personality. In the epistolary corpus considered in this paper, it is evident that both correspondents were familiar with the epistolary practice of the time, and that they followed the recommendations of epistolary theorists from antiquity and late antiquity in composing of their letters. Great skill in both composition and style is especially seen in Theodore’s letters, with a more elevated style appearing in them due to the fact that these letters were addressed to a highly ranked person.¹¹⁵ Still,

¹¹¹ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B1, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 84, l. 27 (Constantine); cf. Zen. *Prov. Ath.* 2.93, ed. Bühler.

¹¹² Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B6, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 92, l. 8 (Theodore); cf. Zen. *Prov. Ath.* 2.66, ed. Bühler.

¹¹³ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B6, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 92, l. 9–10 (Theodore); cf. Mich. *Apost. Coll. Paroem.* XV 85, ed. Leutsch and Schneidewin (CPG II, 649).

¹¹⁴ Theod. Cyz. *Ep.* B16, ed. Tziatzi-Papagianni, p. 106, l. 12–13 (Theodore). Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012: 106, in *apparatus fontium* states that a proverb is not included in the CPG edition. Cf. also: πρὸς μὲν τὸ μύρον ἔουκας ὥσπερ οἱ κάρθαροι διαφθείρεσθαι, Liban. *Decl.* 32.1.35, ed. Foerster; ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ τοὺς κανθάρους ὑπὸ τῆς τῶν ῥόδων ὀσμῆς (sc. λέγεται ἀποθνήσκειν), Arist. *Mir. ausc.* 845b2, ed. Bekker; ὥσπερ οἱ κάρθαροι λέγονται τὸ μὲν μύρον ἀπολείπειν τὰ δὲ δυσώδη διώκειν, Plut. *Stoicos absurd. poetis dicere* 1058A.7-9.

¹¹⁵ Although the focus of this study was primarily on the features of Porphyrogenitus’ epistolary style, and therefore Theodore’s letters were not subjected to a detailed lexical and stylistic analysis, nevertheless Theodore’s sublime letter-writing style can be observed even through a cursory reading of the letters. Cf. Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012: 53*-54*: “The epistolographer uses all the stylistic means at his disposal: In addition to the aforementioned special features of his use of language and his rich vocabulary, the long periods, the complicated sentence order, the parenthetical sentences, the countless hyperbata and the numerous rhetorical figures (especially asyndeta, polysyndeta, rhetorical questions, polypota, comparisons, metaphors, homoeoarkta, homoeoteleuta, isokola, antitheses, all kinds of puns), which give his letters a high aesthetic value, should be mentioned here.”

it cannot be claimed that Theodore's elegant style is only a consequence of this circumstance; it should also be taken into account that Theodore was one of the most learned and eminent citizens in Constantinople at that time, as evidenced by the fact that he was praised by his contemporaries for his linguistic elegance and that he was included in Porphyrogenitus' circle of *literati*. On the other hand, the conclusion that Porphyrogenitus did not have level of rhetorical education equal to that of his correspondent can be drawn based on some indications in the correspondence that will be highlighted below.

As for the epistolary topoi, in the correspondence analyzed in this paper almost all of the topoi that commonly appear in the classical and Byzantine Greek epistolary tradition are present, especially the motifs and phrases characteristic of friendship letters. Among contemplative topoi thirteen different motifs were found, some of them appearing frequently in the letters of both correspondents and some appearing only once. The most prevalent motifs, longing for reunion (six examples in the letters of Theodore, and three in the letters of Porphyrogenitus'), joy at the receipt of the letter (eight examples in the letters of Theodore), grief due to physical separation (two examples in the letters of Theodore, and one in the letters of Porphyrogenitus) and mutual remembrance (two examples in the letters of Theodore, and two in the letters of Porphyrogenitus), are evidence that both friends had a hard time coping with their physical distance. The topos of humility, otherwise very popular among Byzantine letter writers, is frequently represented in the letters of Porphyrogenitus (eight examples).

As for linguistic topoi, both correspondents prefer the use of terms of endearment instead of the correspondent's name in address, which is common in Byzantine epistolography. Also, both correspondents try, in accordance with the advice of eminent epistolographers, to add charm to the letters by using proverbs, quotations and mythological allusions. In this regard, Theodore's letters represent an excellent example of the discourse of learned Byzantine correspondence; they abound in rhetorical sophistication, numerous figures of speech and quotations from classical Greek authors (Homer, Aristophanes, Demosthenes, Diodorus Siculus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Plutarch, Thucydides, Aristotle, Plato, Pindar, etc.), combined with passages from Christian literature and earlier eminent epistolographers (Libanius, Synesius of Cyrene, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, etc.), confirming Theodore's excellent classical education and extensive knowledge of secular authors. On the other hand, in Porphyrogenitus' letters allusions to classical authors rarely occur (only one quote from Demosthenes and one from Diodorus Siculus was found); rather, scriptural quotations and allusions to Byzantine authors, such

as Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil of Caesarea, Theophylact Simocatta and especially St. John Chrysostom are preferred, although they are not nearly as frequent as is the case with Theodore's letters. Therefore, judging only by the letters, which are considered to be Porphyrogenitus' most personal writings, and without referring to the language and style of other works attributed to him, it may be concluded that the emperor was not deeply learned in classics, contrary to the statements of many modern scholars.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ Cf. Moravcsik and Jenkins 1967: 9 ("deeply versed in classical learning"); Lemerle 1971: 268 ("Byzantine encyclopaedism was largely an obsession with Hellenic past").

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PISMOVNA TOPIKA U KORESPONDENCIJI IZMEĐU BIZANTSKOG CARA KONSTANTINA VII. PORFIROGENETA I KIZIČKOG BISKUPA TEODORA

TEUTA SERREQI JURIC

SAŽETAK

Pisma razmijenjena između bizantskog cara Konstantina VII. Porfirogeneta (913. – 959.) i kizičkog biskupa Teodora, njegova bliskog prijatelja, iznimno su važna jer predstavljaju jedini primjerak carevih autentičnih zapisa. Osim što donosi detalje o Teodorovu i Porfirogenetovu prijateljskom odnosu i njihovim privatnim životima, sačuvana korespondencija predstavlja i dobar temelj za proučavanje Porfirogenetova stila pisanja, što je vrlo korisno s obzirom na to da je autorstvo careve književne ostavštine i dalje predmetom znanstvenih rasprava. Korpus istraživanja sastoji se od deset Teodorovih pisama adresiranih Porfirogenetu (na koja nisu sačuvani carevi odgovori) iz kolekcije *Vindobonensis* i korespondencije između Teodora i Porfirogeneta iz kolekcije *Athos* (deset Teodorovih i osam Konstantinovih pisama). U pismima se analiziraju pismovni topisi podijeljeni u dvije grupe, misaone i jezične. Cilj je prvenstveno prikazati obilježja Porfirogenetova epistolarnog stila, ali i njegova korespondenta, pri čemu se nastoji utvrditi u kojoj su mjeri korespondenti slijedili retorička pravila pri sastavljanju pisama.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI:

Konstantin VII. Porfirogenet, Teodor iz Kizika, bizantska epistolografija, pismovni topisi, grčka pismovna frazeologija