

TEZA DE DOCTORAT:

«Lumină spre descoperirea *Neamurilor*».

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S U M M A R Y / A B S T R A C T

The main issue of the present research is that of the origin and, in fact, the symbolism of the Matins service, of the ordinance with which the Church understands to welcome the coming of daylight, of the ritual with which it celebrates the passage from darkness to light. This is a survey of both the specialized literature and the vast field of liturgical texts, on the one hand, and, on the other, of its patristic background, in other words of the patristic literature related to this field. Our investigation aims to identify the sources that led to the constitution and establishment of this liturgical service and to determine more closely the typological framework in which the Church places the above-mentioned physical phenomenon, i.e. to detect notification of the possible typological tension thus typiconally generated between the here and the hereafter, by the selection and even the making of the typos which, in the bosom of the present age, shapes the future – the eternal Kingdom of God, the Eighth Day of the Lord, the unseen.

In the introductory part we review leading scholars of the general problematics and morphology of Byzantine Matins, focusing somewhat on the Catholic liturgical school of Rome and the Orthodox school of St. Petersburg. We broadly present the views on the origin of the service, of which we agree with that of Professor Taft, who supports its *ethnic*, and not Judeo-Christian origin.

Along with the presentation of the morphology of the morning ritual over the centuries, we point out in the early Christian literature of the pre-Constantinian era, the various typological valences of the Matins, of the liturgical greeting of dawn, within the framework of what we have called the pre-Byzantine Matins:

(1) the pan-human paschal symbolism ('resurrectional'), according to which the emergence of the day imagines – daily – the pan-human resurrection to be, whose beginning is the resurrection of the Lord (Clement the Roman);

(2) the worship facing the east (sunrise worship) – both *spatially* and *temporally* – imposed by the typological relationship between the solar day and the day of the baptismal knowledge of truth (Clement of Alexandria, Origen);

(3) the eschatological character of nocturnal prayer, marked by the spirit of expectation – by the servants – of the coming of the Master, of the expectation of His Day, of the light, whose sons are 'the enlightened', that is, the baptized (Clement);

(4) the resurrectional-Christological holiday symbolism, according to which prayer in the morning – understood as vigil early in the morning, or as vigil at daybreak – is imposed by the 'instinctive' need to celebrate the resurrection of the Lord from the dead (Cyprian of Carthage);

(5) the typological character: the vigil in the night is nothing else than the typos – the mimicry, the image – of what the baptised shall be in the future age (Cyprian of Carthage).

The latter character, the typological one, is also a baptismal argument of the Matins, a rather surprising argument, perhaps, for Christianity today. For the Christian writers of the first centuries, the vigil early in the morning – whether private or in community, especially to the Lord's Day, to Sunday – is a natural baptismal consequence, it is imposed by the very reception of the Mystery of Enlightenment, understood as a passage from the darkness of idols to the status of sons of the Light of the Unseen Day. By taking within himself the true Light, the baptized is no longer overcome by physical darkness, but, on the contrary, as image of the Angels in heaven, he watches over and praises God in the darkness of this world, mimicking his future state, anticipating typologically – that is, formally – his feast on the unending Day of the age to come.

We then review the order of Matins in the cathedral office in the fourth century East, mentioning the first testimony about this cathedral-type office, that of Eusebius of Caesarea and noting the cases of Egypt and Cappadocia. Primarily, we then make a brief presentation of Matins in the Egyptian monastic office from the 4th century, from the angle of the Skete tradition and that of the Pachomian typicon. We conclude the logical sequence with the presentation of the synthesis operated within the urban monastic office in the Orient, between

monastic practices and cathedral practices, interweaving 'continuous' monastic chanting with the cathedral liturgical elements proper to these services.

In the case of the Byzantine era itself, we review the order of Matins in various formulas – such as that of Abbot Nilus the Hermit, that of the old Constantinople Euchologion, that of the Typicon of the Great Church, that of St. Simeon of Thessalonica, that of Patriarch Alexius, that of the Sinai manuscript graecus 973, the one after the typicon of the Monastery of San Salvatore in Messina – and we point out, finally, the new Sabbaitic synthesis and the order of the current Orthodox Matins.

In Part I, we focus on the question of the *ethnic* identity of the Matins order, trying to see to what extent Professor Taft's aforementioned opinion is verified at the level of scriptural chant and church hymnography, both lexically and typologically. We probe not only the liturgical texts as such – namely the scriptural and poetic ones – but also the realm of the writings of the Fathers, always looking for the patristic key to the reading of the mentioned scriptural chants and the possible patristic background of the hymnographic texts.

We point out, in the first chapter, the ethnic character of the scriptural discourse on the coming of the Light into the world – both the Old Testament prophetic discourse and its New Testament fulfillment – a discourse in which, therefore, the biblical photonymic theonymy is conjugated with the remembrance of the Gentiles, giving rise to the semantic pair *Light-Gentile*. Scripture, old and new alike, marks the ethnic aspect of the coming of the Light into the world, the fact that it was not "His own" but the Gentiles – "those who served the stars" – who knew the Dayspring from on high, the God incarnate and then risen from the dead, empowering them to become sons of God, through the Mystery of Enlightenment with the Light that has come – and will come again – into the world. Thus, the first coming of the Light, baptismally received by the Gentiles, in the Mystery of Enlightenment, and again the coming of the Light on the Eighth Day, the one anticipated eucharistically, superimposed on the typos of the coming of physical light – these seem to be those celebrated in the service of Matins. The vigil of the Church of the Gentiles. We note, at the same time, the existence and the full perichoretic interweaving of the *ethnic*, *baptismal* and *paschal-transitory* aspects of Matins. This is a defining aspect for this service of the Gentiles – those who baptismally passed from the idolatry of this century to the Light of the Eighth Day, whose dawn is the resurrection of the Saviour.

In the second chapter we investigate whether the *ethnic*-baptismal character of Matins is confirmed by the actual contents of the service books, whether those spoken and sung in worship include explicit mentions of the Gentiles (idolaters), of their baptism and, possibly, even of the ethnic identity of to the cult, i.e. the statement that it is none other than the Gentiles — the converted idolaters — who bring the service of God. We investigate this in the case of a hymn book ‘of all time’: the Octoichos. The content of the Octoichos turns out to be unexpectedly rich in hymns with ethnic-baptismal content, which can be grouped into several categories, such as:

(I) hymns that show the almost exclusive connection between the *Cross* of the Lord and the *Gentiles*;

(II) hymns that show that those who make up the Church are none other than the *Gentiles*, the idolaters of old;

(III) hymns indicating that none other than the *Gentiles* are the object of the work of Christ, or of the Spirit, or of the Apostles, or of the Martyrs, or even of the Baptist [!];

(IV) hymns which point to the connection between the Mother of God and ‘*All Nations* (*πάντα τὰ ἔθνη*)’, both as nations and as generations;

(V) hymns that reveal the antithesis between *Israel* and the *Gentiles*, while illustrating the distinctly *ethnic* character of the cult;

(VI) hymns that mention the baptism of the *Gentiles*, these being those that make up the Church itself;

(VII) hymns referring to the Enlightenment (*Φώτισμα*) of the *Gentiles*;

(VIII) clearly baptismal hymns, ie mentioning the ‘pan-human’ Baptism;

(IX) hymns showing that the Church belongs to the *Gentiles*, with none but the Gentiles (idolaters) making it up;

(X) hymns about the need to renew baptism, about a certain ‘chronic baptism’;

(XI) hymns commemorating the repudiation of polytheism by the *Gentiles* and the scattering of polytheism by Christ, or by the Apostles, or by the Martyrs;

(XII) hymns which recall the idols and the idolatrous identity of the ‘pre-Church’, that is, of the Gentiles who later formed the Church.

We note, therefore, in the structure of the service with which the Church of the Gentiles welcomes the coming of the light, the existence of a rather strong *ethnic*-baptismal imprint, a

imprint that naturally breathes the atmosphere of the aforementioned baptismal argument of the vigil to the East, which textually confirms Professor Taft's thesis on the *ethnic* identity of the Office of the Hours, in which Matins is undoubtedly held at the forefront.

In Part III, before moving on to the typological investigation of the realm of hymnography, we make a preliminary hymnological excursus, in which we try to detect and present certain hymnographic techniques, indispensable for a minimum orientation in the space of ample depth of the service of the word offered to the Living God by the Church of the Gentiles.

Following the broad investigation of the realm of Orthodox hymnography, in an attempt to understand the sources and laws that have led to its configuration, we determine the method of hymnographic correlation, namely the custom of combining different places (scriptural in particular), different 'areas' or different images that have at least one element in common (word, meaning, structural element, etc.), giving rise to a concrete mutual relationship and, thus, to semantic coherence. We point out that this method is faithfully found on all levels of the hymnographic universe: both at the basic level, that of the *troparion* or *sticheron* (matching/pairing different parts of it), and at the higher level of the hymnographic whole of a Feast (matching aspects of the celebrated event) and at the broad level of annual liturgical cycles (structurally matching liturgical periods).

In the case of the correlation at the level of the *troparion/sticheron*, from a morphological point of view, we first present the case of the correlation by pairing, with the type of the monocouple and multicouple *troparion*, the latter presenting two forms, obtained by conjugation. The second case is that of the pivot-term correlation, where the common word connects not just two places, as does the correlation by pairing, but several, the whole stanza gravitating around a single term. Finally, we review mixed correlation, where the two cases are used equally.

Among the semantic consequences of the hymnographic correlation at the level of the *troparion*, we then point out the communication of the features – between the two hymnographically correlated half-couples – and the syndiasmic transfer, in which we are dealing with the passage of elements from one semi-couple to the other, the latter of which can be qualitative, but also temporal, in the form of synchronization. We also mention, in passing,

the spectacular case of transfer on the principle of transitivity, with the omission of the connecting link between the half-couples.

In the case of the correlation at the level of the feast, we present the hymnographic technique of superimposing the Old Testament typos on the New Testament print, focusing on the case of the feast of Theophany, in which we first observe the superimposition of the Old Testament 'encounter' of the Jordan with the ark of the Covenant, under Jesus of Navi, with the image of the New Testamentary 'meeting' of the Jordan with the incarnate God, at the Baptism of the Lord by John. In the Epiphany hymnography we also note the superimposition of the Baptism of the Lord by John on the Sacrament of Baptism and, thus, the creation of a synthetic event, the 'Baptism of the Lord', an event which carries the valences of both overlapping events and which makes up the actual content of the Feast.

Armed with the knowledge of these hymnographic techniques, we proceed, in Chapter I of Part Two, to the typological investigation of the hymnographic realm, techniques from the angle of which we have already pointed out the *ethnic*-baptismal aspect of the whole hymnography of the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, due to the synthetic event celebrated, the one obtained by superposing the Baptism of the Lord (by John) on the Sacrament of Baptism. We further point out the existence – in hymnography – of the *ethnic* typos. Thus, just as the event typified by the Old Testament typos can be biblical, but also extra-biblical, so the typos used in the hymnographic correlation can be extra-Judaic (τύπος ἔθνικός, *typus genticus*, pagan typos) and even extra-biblical, i.e. historical event or social/religious institution – or cultural/religious paradigm, etc. – which no longer necessarily belongs to the biblical area, but to the history of the heathen nations. This is because, in retrospect, the pre-baptismal history of the Gentiles is also the history of the pre-Church, since, in the end, it is predominantly not the ancient Israel that inherits the Kingdom, but ἡ ἐξ ἔθνῶν Ἐκκλησία, *Ecclesia Gentium*, that is *The Church of the Gentiles*, made up of former idolaters.

*Ethnic* typos turns out to be of two categories: scriptural and non-scriptural. In the case of the scriptural ethnic typos used in hymnography, we mention – at the Nativity of the Lord – the typos of the Magi, the monarchy of Caesar Augustus, the census; non-scriptural *ethnic* typoi are, for example, the *oracle*, the concept of τὸ θεῖον (the divine), the *cave* of the eponymous Platonic myth, the Platonic *tripartism* of the soul, etc. In the last part of the chapter we make some

observations on the typological polyvalence with which hymnography operates on the macro-level of structures.

The existence in hymnography of the *ethnic* typos confirms the awareness of the defining *ethnic* identity of the cult, the fact that the cult – eothinal, finally, morning vigil – is the service of the word brought not by the carnal Israel, but by the faithful, by the minded, by the baptized idolaters, by the Church (the Assembly, the ‘called ones’) from among the Gentiles, which through Baptism have come under the influence of uncreated Grace, not forsaking their pre-baptismal cultural heritage, but ‘enslaving’ its whole meaning in obedience to Christ and turning it into a new song, according to the words of the Psalmist: ‘Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise – in the Church of the pious’.

In Chapter II of the second part we continue the investigation of the Church’s hymnographic space from an ethnic angle, moving from the general investigation of the whole of hymnography to the particular investigation, of some autonomous hymnographic units in the realm of hymnography, namely, in the first part, of the hymnographic units constituted by the Canon of Pascha and the great Royal Feasts – in terms of the already known hymnographic techniques, including the use of ethnic typos – revealing their ethnic-baptismal aspect. The ethnic tone derived from the use of the ethnic typos with which the Canon of Pascha operates – such as the sacred night syntagma (ἱερόα νῦξ) and its adjacent paradigm (ἱερός γάμος, Νυμφίος) – is accompanied by a discreet baptismal one, such as the references to the luminous element (λαμπαδηφόροι, θεοφεγγεῖς φωστῆρες) and that of the binomial together-burial & together-sacrifice, but also of a manifestly baptismal one, of the remembrance of the mortal’s clothing in incorruption and even of the textual mention of the mystery of Baptism. As with the Feast of Epiphany – which operates with the image of a synthetic Baptism, obtained by superimposing the Sacrament of the Baptism of the Gentiles on the Baptism of the Lord, coinciding in the image of the immersing – the hymnography of the canon of the Matins of the Resurrection turns out to underline another synthetic event, obtained by superimposing on the Passover of the Lord from death to life the together-passage of the Gentiles from the darkness of death to the light of life, through the Sacrament of Baptism / Enlightenment. Similar synthetic events, with the same ethnic and baptismal connotation, also appear to be those praised by the Canons of the Nativity and Pentecost. Further proof of the ethnic-baptismal character of the synthetic events celebrated in all the great Royal Feasts is provided by the troparia of these

feasts. Finally, we show that, from the liturgical point of view, the ethnic-baptismal celebration of Easter is nothing other than the very epiphany of the passage of the ecclesiastical plenary to the Eighth Day, which denotes – at the liturgical level – a continuous aspect of the Mystery of Baptism, an underlying chronicization of it, as the need for its renewal, of the unceasing death – according to the spirit – in Christ, until the fulfillment of its typos, of the latter.

In the third part of the work, given, on the one hand, the ethno-baptismal connotation of the set of troparia interposed between the stanzas of the Scriptural Odes at the Easter Vigil – a connotation, first of all, observed by us in the Matins of the other three great Royal Feasts, and then, lasting in the Octoihos, Sunday of Sunday, in the bosom of the Anastasima and Stavroanastasima Canons – and, on the other hand, the thesis widely accepted by specialists about the Easter vigil as the origin of the Scriptural Odes as a liturgical element, we ask about the latter: Are the troparia of the canons sown on the verses of the Scriptural Odes in continuity – typologically, symbolically, semantically – with the stem on which they originated? Isn't their purpose also to initiate us somewhat into the primordial typological ethnic-baptismal use of the Odes? Do not the Odes, on the verses of which these troparia sprouted, have the same ethnic and baptismal character as the troparia on them? Is not the criterion for the selection of the nine Scriptural Odes from the structure of the Byzantine vigil an ethno-baptismal one? Does not their use scripturally and at the same time in a doxological manner, mark typologically the Passover/transition of the Gentiles to the light of the Eighth Day, taking into account that it is none other than the Gentiles who have believed – and praised – the 'coming of the Light into the world', i.e. the iconomy of God's coming, death, and resurrection, and have baptized themselves, forming the Church?

On the way to answering this question, we point out in Chapter I – in the case of the Ode of the Children in the Furnace, of the proto-ode of the corpus of the Scriptural Odes of Matins – a very interesting phenomenon of hymnographic marking of the typological use of the scriptural hymn text. This is the so-called Rite of the Furnace, once performed on the Sunday before Christmas, after Matins, before the Divine Liturgy, a rite which operates precisely such an initiation, not removing the veil of typos, but rather vigorously bringing it to light. The Rite of the Furnace is a hymnographic processing of the Ode of the Sons/Children, similar to that of the Byzantine Matins, namely by interweaving – between the verses of the Scriptural Ode – of the hymnographic material. The interruptions in the flow of the Scriptural Odes at a given verse



by the insertion of this material seem to mark the importance of that verse from the typological point of view, in fact the increased typological tension – compared to the other verses – that the verse itself shelters. In the final analysis, it is an ethnic tension, arising from the striking structural similarity between the case of the salvation of the children from the furnace of Babylon (through the coming of the Angel, the "Son of God") and the case of the salvation of the Gentiles from the 'furnace' of idolatry (through the coming in the flesh of the Angel of the Great Council). At this point, we formulate the hypothesis of the existence of a technique of clear propositional biblical typos. This is also exemplified by the odes' heirmos, which relates – in a doxological and concentrated way – the Old Testament event depicted by the Ode, without comment or specification of the actual typological meaning of the event evoked. The net heirmos does not inform, through any hermeneutic content, about the typological use of the Ode. However, by its position it reveals and potentiates the typological tension inherent in the Ode. Through its position, the present heirmos tacitly signals the existence of a typological key, in which the Ode is sung, but does not specify it. In addition to these Odic heirmoi, complementary to each other, we also note the existence of Odic-typological heirmoi, encompassing in them both the biblical narrative and the indication of the typological key of its reading.

The interweaving of the Ode of the Children – in the Rite of the Furnace – with the heirmoi that today belong to other feasts days than Christmas, leads us to suppose that their connection with the Ode they accompany is from a different typology than the one that 'works' in the case of the feast day in which they are included today. It seems that the heirmoi are linked to a deeper typological layer, prior to the typological layer of the Feast day they belong to today. This primordial typological layer we assume to be the ethnic-baptismal one, i.e. the ethnic-baptismal typological horizon in which the scriptural Ode in question will have been used initially – in the whole of Matins. Undoubtedly, this initial typological horizon – proper to the liturgical use of the Scriptural Ode – existed, since it was initially uttered without hymnographic additions.

The Rite of the Furnace turns out to be, therefore, a hymnographic processing of the Ode of the Children, a processing that hints at the ethnic key in which this Ode was once understood and used in the service of the word, in the Church of the Gentiles. We assume, therefore, that this key – namely the ethnic one, i.e. ethnical-baptismal key – will have been the key in which

the Ode was originally used, when its verses were chanted without heirmoi (or troparion) resting on them.

In passing, we then analyze the relationship of the Scriptural Odes with the heirmoi and troparia set on it in the case of the Matins Canon, attempting to reveal that – in the case of the great hymnographers – these heirmoi and troparia do not dissipate the typological-ethnic – tension inherent in the Scriptural Ode, but, unexpectedly potentiate it. This enterprise gives us the opportunity to observe the ethnic-baptismal character of the stavro-anastasima canons of the Sundays of the Octoihos, and even of the anastasimes themselves.

We then present the ethno-baptismal convergence – and the osmosis of structural and terminological frameworks – of the same Ode of the Children with the Eucharistic Anaphoras, from the earliest to the most widespread, and also with the first troparia in the history of the Church. A brief review of the characteristics of the Ode of the Children in patristic literature, noting the liturgical prerequisites of the ethnic-baptismal character, as evidenced, for example, by the typology of the Great Church and by St. Simeon of Thessalonica, concludes this part of the work.

Given this predominant ethnic-baptismal character of the proto-ode of the corpus of the Scriptural Odes of Matins, of the Ode of the Children, we then proceed, in Chapter II, to the ethnical-baptismal typological investigation of the entire aforementioned corpus. Since the corpus of Odes is a selection made by the Church from among the Gentiles, there is no doubt that there is also a criterion on the basis of which, from the multitude of scriptural hymns, the Church chose these, and not others. We are therefore looking for a possible semantic ‘common denominator’ of the Scriptural Odes, starting from modern times to the earliest times, from the contemporary approach to the Odes – perhaps symptomatic to the current liturgical consciousness – to their older reading keys, from the earliest interpretations. We analyse in detail, from a typological angle, the appreciations/theses on Odes of Fr. Gerasimos the Mikragiannanite, in the first part of the chapter and then in the second, those of St. Nicodemus the Agiorite, against the background of those of St. Simeon of Thessalonica, St. Neophyte the Recluse, St. Hesychius of Jerusalem, and later also to St. Gregory Thaumaturgus, Origen, Epiphanius of Salamis, Didymus the Blind, Athanasius the Great, Gregory the Theologian, Cyril of Alexandria, Anastasius of Sinai and others.

Father Gerasimos the Mikragiannanite, the hymnographer of the Great Church of Christ, undoubtedly the greatest contemporary hymnographer, surprises with his appreciations of the corpus of the Biblical Ode, to which he links the hymnography of the Church. His assessments illustrate very well the modern phenomenon of relative typological opacity of the text of the Scriptural Odes, of de facto ignorance of their capital and intrinsic typological values and valences, of the existence of a certain key of cultic reading, and of the Byzantine liturgical mentality of 'silently softening' the typological tension coming from the unmistakable proposition of the Old Testament typos, without the suggestion of the typological key. Due – perhaps – to the disappearance of the Scriptural Odes from the current Matins order, Father Gerasimos minimizes their typological vibrancy, tending to consider that, in the absence of hymns and hymnographic canons, the Biblical Odes remain rather "dry letter", apparently ignoring the fact that originally the Odes were used precisely unaccompanied by heirmoi or troparia, like other Old Testament texts assimilated to the cult and still in use to this day as such, such as the Polyeleos hymn, for example.

After a few objections that reveal an inaccurate consideration of the corpus of the Odes, we bring forward the thesis of St. Nicodemus the Agiorite regarding the relationship between the scriptural Odes and the hymnographic Odes written on it, noting the perichoretical connection between the Old and New Testaments, between the Odes of the Old and the troparia of the New, according to which the Old is not only a conglutinative of the New, but is also included in the New, "like a wheel in another wheel." The Old Testament is the icon, and the New is the very pattern (πρωτότυπον) that is painted in that icon; The Old is the shadow, and the New is the very body / truth that casts that shadow; except that the Old precedes, and the New follows: the former as a riddle, and the latter as a riddle in that riddle.

The scriptural Odes turn out, in the end, to be a unitary corpus, having no 'first-hand' texts, namely New Testament texts, and 'second-hand' texts, namely Old Testament texts. The hymnography of the Feasts, on the other hand, based on the Scriptural Odes, is not one based, in the Protestant sense, on New Testament texts, but deals with feast of the New Testament event (Nativity, Baptism, etc.) in a mysterious ecclesial way, that is, from the point of view of significance and structural correspondenceconvergence that the celebrated event presents for the whole body of the Church of the Gentiles, the one involved – through the mystery of Baptism – in the Transition to the Eighth Day, to the next age.

The composition of the heirmoi and troparia based on the Scriptural Odes was not done without considering the typological key in which the Odes were initially used, i.e. in the 'non-canonical' era. The existence of two categories of heirmoi – namely those of the Octoihos, and those of the Feasts – seems to prove two ways of writing heirmoi: (a) writing without stepping outside from the typological framework of the scripturistic Odes, so that the resulting heirmoi function typologically identically to the Odes themselves, and (b) the accommodation made between the scripturistic Odes – between their primordial key of liturgical reading – and the Feast of the Church, i.e. the ecclesiological imprint of that Feast.

Interestingly, however, Father Gerasimos records – theoretically, we would say – both the typological dimension that the Scriptural Odes entail in the hymnographic space (Odes in which “[...] the works of God in the Old Testament are sung, [works] which imagine and foretell those of the New Testament »), and the fact that the hymnography of the Church thus entails a transition from the Old Testament typos to New Testament antitypos; although, in practice, it operates a typological opacification/blurring of them.

After presenting the general vision of Fr. Gerasimos on the Biblical Odes and their relationship to the hymnography based on their verses, we proceed to consider his particular hermeneutics of the Odes – the Ode of Moses at the Exodus, the Ode of Moses in Deuteronomy, the Ode of Anna, the Ode of Avvacum, the Ode of Isaiah, and of the Ode of the Mother of God -, considering from the angle of the ethnicity of the patristic herminies and of the hymnographic texts and techniques, highlighting each time the typological ethnic-baptismal key of the respective Ode.

Taking a step backwards from the time of Fr. Gerasimos Mikragiannanitis, we present the interpretation that St. Nicodemus the Agiorite gives to the Odes of Matins. His hermeneutic is composed, more often than not, of an initial record of the patristic theses and, later, of a possible personal moralizing addition, brought to the mentioned theses. We emphasize that, with the exception of the First Ode and that of the Children, St. Nicodemus always records the ethnical-baptismal character that the Odes have in the patristic hermeneutics, even if this is not the axis of his personal explanation. St. Nicodemus' hermeneutic is tributary – perhaps – to the current situation, marked by the weakening of the Paschal and catholic identity of the Sacrament of Baptism and by the fading of the initial deep ethnic-baptismal imprint of the cult of the Church of the Gentiles. St Nicodemus' personal approach to the corpus of the Odes can

be seen from the very beginning, from the hermeneutic of the First Ode, where he seems to make not a liturgical-mystagogical hermeneutic, but a very general, soul-useful one, not putting forward the typological ethnic-baptismal key to the choice and reading of the Scriptural Odes in the cult of the Church of the Gentiles, but a predominantly moral vision. We are dealing – so to speak – with a hijacking of the ethnic aspect of the baptismal character of the Odes and with the introduction of a non-ethnic baptismal character. However, in the latter perspective, the Odes will be chanted more privately, individually, rather than publicly, and in a catholic way. The disappearance of the ethnic valence thus operates to 'hijack' of the initial nuance of the baptismal character of the Odes, to narrow the paschal-baptismal perspective, to blur the typology linked to the Eighth Day. The focus is on morality, with a greater or lesser reduction of the Baptismal Mystery to the frameworks of this age, with a relative ignorance of the vision of the Eighth Day - the passage of the whole of Adam, from corruption to incorruption, the day which began with the Sacrament of Baptism, and ended only with the Resurrection. St. Nicodemus operates this 'diversion' quite consistently in his interpretation of the corpus of the Scriptural Odes in the bosom of the public Liturgical Matins. St. Nicodemus' deletion of the patristic – namely ethnic – baptismal nuance of the First Ode is sanctioned by later shortcomings, such as the diminishing of the victorious (ἐπινίκιον, 'triumphant') character of the Ode and the unusual affirmation of the opposite.

We point out, then, in the interpretation of St. Nicodemus, his recording of the patristic ethnical-baptismal character of the Second to Fourth Odes, and of the ethnicity of the historical framework of the composition of the Sixth Ode. We also question – in passing – the ethnical-baptismal 'neutrality' of the Seventh to Eighth Odes which would emerge from St. Nicodemus' words and we end by marking the ethnical-baptismal culmination of the Ninth Ode.

In Chapter III we show that the anaphoral discourse and the extinct Scriptural Odes also confirm the hypothesis of the ethnic criterion for the selection of the Scriptural Odes from the bosom of Matins. Thus, the text of the anaphorals and their related texts indicate the ethnicity of the Prophets' discourse – that is, the fact that, diachronically speaking, the Prophets were addressing the Gentiles – and also mention the names of most of the authors of the Odes of Matins. The hypothesis of the ethnic criterion for the selection of the corpus of Scriptural Odes also covers the case of the Odes contained in corpora which are no longer in liturgical use: the Ode of Moses in Numbers 21:17-18, the Ode of Deborah in Judges 5, the Ode of David in II

Kings 22 and I Paralipomena 16, the Ode of Hezekiah in Isaiah 38:10-20, the Prayer of Manasseh, the Ode of Israel in Isaiah 5, the Ode of Jeremiah in Lamentations 5, and the Prayer of Simeon in Luke 2:29-32.

In Chapter IV we bring some other arguments in favor of ethnicity as a criterion for the selection of the Odes: the observation of the three types of thematic discourse of the Odes, converging in ethnicity, the co-existence – in the patristic hermeneutics of the Odes – of antithesis and synthesis of Jews-Gentile, and the ethnic coherence of the Psalter-Odes sequence within the Matins. We also mention here the phenomenon of diminishing the consciousness of the ethnic Odes, inversely proportional to the time factor. The ethnic character as a criterion for the selection of the Odes is also confirmed by the culmination and end of the Odes in the Ninth Ode, the initial everyday character of the Scriptural Odes and the ethnical character of the apparently strictly iconomic Odes. Finally, we affirm the non-penitential, but ethnic identity of Second Ode, a thesis/statement which in turn seals the ethnicity of the corpus of Odes.