

## A NOTE ON ANASTASIOS OF SINAI

BY

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The name of Anastasios of Sinai is not unknown among the theologians, and Anastasios of Sinai is well known as a theologian and an ecclesiastical writer of the 7<sup>th</sup> century by his works as «Odegos», «Scholia in Hexameron», «Answers to Questions», etc., all writings of first importance.

Under the name of an Anastasios monk of mount Sinai, certain «Stories» concerning the life and deeds of a number of monks who lived there, were discovered by F. Nau<sup>1</sup>.

The stories constitute a collection but there is another, a second collection of stories which were discovered by the same F. Nau.

This second collection concerns events and miracles, as well as works and deeds of clergymen, monks and laymen, who lived in Cyprus and the Middle East<sup>2</sup>.

This second collection bears also the name of an Anastasios, as author of the stories<sup>3</sup>.

F. Nau published a french translation of certain of those stories<sup>4</sup> but the greater part of them he gave in a french summary<sup>5</sup>

F. Nau is of the opinion that the authors of the first and second collections of the stories are different; and he identifies the author of the second one, with Anastasios of Sinai<sup>6</sup>.

He further explains that the «humble monk Anastasios» wrote at about 650—700 A. D., and he is not the same person as Anastasios

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1. «Text Grec de recits du moine Anastase» Oriens Christianus 1902 t. II. p. p. 58—87. There is also a translation of the «Stories» in french, in «Revue de l' Institut Catholique de Paris» 1902 Nos 1 et 2. The same translation has also been extracted from the mentioned «Revue» and separately published under the title «Recits inedites du Moine Anastase avec a resumé de Recits edifiants d' Anastase Sinaite». Paris 1902. p.p. 1—48.

2. Les Recits inedites etc. p.p. 49—67.

3. Ib. p. 49, where in footnote No 1, there is the title of the stories in Greek, as follows: «Ἀναστασίου μοναχοῦ καὶ ταπεινοῦ ἐλαχίστου διηγήματα ψυχοφελῆ καὶ στηρικτικὰ γενόμενα ἐν διαφόροις τόποις ἐπὶ τῶν ἡμετέρων χρόνων»

4. Ib. p.p. 52—59. The stories are numbered XLII—LI.

5. Ib. p.p. 60-67. The stories in the summary are numberd LII—LV.

6. Ib. p. 8.

of the first collection, because this second Anastasius, is a stylist and an orator and he introduces his stories with a long and poetic preface.

Anastasius of the second collection was an important person, he had a disciple called «abba» John, and he also had in his possession a silver cross containing a small piece of the real Holy Cross.

It is safe to say, continues F. Nau, that he could be identified with Anastasius of Sinai, the well known writer.

F. Nau can not say with entire confidence that Anastasius inhabited in Sinai.

He also supposes that this Anastasius in question was a cypriot, because he was associated with John the bishop of Amathonte at about 648<sup>1</sup>.

F. Nau goes on writing that the same story in pages 410—412 of the manuscript read by himself, is also found in Coislin No 283 fol. 253, under the title «Ἀναστασίου τοῦ Σινᾶ ὄρους ἀπόδειξις»<sup>2</sup>.

Then F. Nau continues, that the fore mentioned story has for its heading the words «Περὶ τοῦ λάρανακος». He also gives a short outline of the story<sup>3</sup>.

In the same story of manuscript 1596 are read, in Greek of course, the words «d' une certaine histoire».

The manuscript 283 is more explanatory on the matter and it begins with the words «ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησιαστικῇ Ἱστορίᾳ Φίλωνος τοῦ φιλοσόφου εὗρων τι τοιοῦτον» (sic).

It is noteworthy, concludes F. Nau that Anastasius of Sinai quotes Philon the Philosopher, but if one attributes to Philon a work on Ecclesiastical History, he is a different person from Philo the Jew, unless one would attribute to Philo the Jew, christian books which would allow him to be regarded almost as a father of the church.

Finally, he says that, out from this mention of Philo, which is of first importance, two results are reached, and they are as follows:

(I) The stories of chapters XLII—LI are only a weak part of Anastasius' work which is larger is manuscript 1596.

(II) The writer of the work is Anastasius of Sinai<sup>4</sup>.

1. Ib. p. 49 footnote No 2.

2. Ib. p. 50.

3. Ib. p. 50 footnote No 2.

4. Ib. p. 51. F. Nau mentions in page 51 footnote No 2, that Anastasius of Sinai has quoted in his Hexameron Philo the Philosopher (Migne P. G. Vol. 89 col. 96r.

F. Nau is entirely right in identifying the author of the second collection of the stories, with Anastasius of Sinai, because, there is indeed more evidence for such identification, other than that in the «stories» of the «humble monk Anastasius».

In manuscripts found in the Library of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Jerusalem, and published by A. Papadopoulos—Kerameus<sup>1</sup>, there is an Answer to a Question (= Πεῦσις), and it bears, as its author, the name of an «Anastasius monk of the Holy Mount Sinai».

One would have no doubt that the person who answered to «Πεῦσις» is Anastasius of Sinai, because:

(I) The Question and Answer in its shape and construction, reminds one of the 154 Answers and Questions, the work already mentioned, belonging to Anastasius of Sinai<sup>2</sup>

(II) There is a «Scholion» there, following the «Πεῦσις» where it is stated that the writer and the answerer to that Question was Anastasius, the «Abbot of the Holy Mount Sinai»<sup>3</sup>.

Further proof of such an identification, is definitely the name «Philon» the author of an Ecclesiastical History.

The name occurs, as already mentioned, in the second collection of the stories of Anastasius, as well as in the Answer to «Πεῦσις»<sup>4</sup>.

Of course, there should be no further explanation necessary to the problem regarding the matter of who was Philon the writer of an Ecclesiastical History if there were not another explanatory «Scholion» following the Answer to «Πεῦσις»<sup>5</sup>.

1. Ἀνάλεκτα Ἱεροσολυμιτικῆς Σταχυολογίας. St. Petersburg 1891. Vol. I p.p. 400—404.

2. Migne P. G. Vol. 89 col. 330—823.

3. Ἀνάλεκτα etc. p. 404. The «Scholion» corresponds to paragraph 4, 6 of the text of «Πεῦσις» and it reads as follows: «Καὶ τοῦτο τοῦ Παναγιωτάτου πάπα καὶ ἀρχιεπισκόπου Πέτρου ἐστὶ τὸ διήγημα· ὁ γὰρ Ἀναστάσιος ὁ ταῦτα λέγων καὶ γράφων πολὺ νεώτερος τούτου ἐτύγχανεν ὢν ἡγούμενος τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὄρους Σινᾶ». The heading of that Question and Answer is also a proof that Anastasius of Sinai is the writer of the whole of it.

4. The details, concerning the occurrence of the name of Philon, have already been given, and the text regarding that occurrence in the Answer to «Πεῦσις» reads as follows: «Αὕτη τοῦ μακαριωτάτου Πέτρου ἡ πρὸς τὸν ἀσκητὴν διήγησις ἦν ἐν τῇ συγγραφῇ Φίλωνος τοῦ Ἱστοριογράφου φερομένων εὐρήκαμεν» Ib. p. 404.

5. The «Scholion» reads as follows: «Ὁὗτος ὁ Φίλων ὁ ἀνωτέρω προμνημονευθεὶς ἐπίσκοπος ὑπῆρχε Καρπαθίου ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἀκρωτήριον τῆς Κυπριζούσης Κύπρου τὸ πρὸς ἀνατολάς· τὸ γὰρ πρὸς δυσμὰς Πάφου καλεῖται ὡς καὶ αἱ πράξις τῶν ἀποστόλων δηλοῦσιν. ἀναγθέντες δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς Πάφου οἱ περὶ τὸν Παῦλον

In this «Scholion» is written quite clearly that Philon the author of a work on Ecclesiastical History was the bishop of Karpation<sup>1</sup> which was a province and diocese on the eastern part of the island of Cyprus.

He was ordained bishop by St. Epiphanius of Constantia of Cyprus, to whom Philon was a very close friend, and when Epiphanius travelled to Rome to meet Honorius the Emperor, left Philon of Carpathion as his representative, to administer his diocese during his absence.

Therefore the remark «d' une certaine histoire» in manuscript 1596, and the more explanatory one in manuscript 283 can be clearly understood as referring, the first one of them to an Ecclesiastical History, written by Philon the bishop of Karpation and the second one, without leaving any doubt, as referring to the same person, who is Philon the bishop of Carpathion of Cyprus, and author of an Ecclesiastical History, who also in this second case, has been given the epithet «philosopher»<sup>2</sup>.

All the above evidence is easily leading to the conclusion that Anastasius of Sinai is the writer of the fore mentioned second collection of the «Stories» as well as he definitely is the writer and answerer of the Question (= Πεῦσις), and that the name of Philon which puzzled F. Nau so much, is the key to the identification of the author of the second collection of «Stories» with Anastasius of Sinai.

Furter more if we accept the suggestion made by F. Nau, that the writer of the second collection of the «Stories» was a cypriot,

(I) because, Anastasius was also associated with John the bishop of Amathonte, a cypriot bishop,

(II) because, as it is a fact that the events occurring in the «Stories» took place mainly in Cyprus,

we come to the very reasonable conclusion that the birth place of Anastasius of Sinai was the island of Cyprus.

ἦλθον εἰς Πέργην τῆς Παμφυλίας» (13, 13). Ἦν δὲ χειροτονία τοῦ μακαριωτάτου Ἐπιφανίου ὑπεραγαπώμενος ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ὃν καὶ κατέλιπεν ἀπὼν ἐν Ρώμῃ πρὸς Ὁνώριον τὸν βασιλέα ἀνέχεσθαι καὶ ἀντιλαβάνεσθαι τῶν ἀναφορῶν ἐκκλησιαστικῶν πραγμάτων» Ib. p. 404, «Scholion» corresponding to the text, Paragraph 4, 1-4.

1. Καρπάθιον (Karpation) is called to day Karpassion (Καρπάσιον or Καρπάσι) and it corresponds to the ancient province. There is up to day there, a village called Risokarpasso (Ριζοκάρπασο) and the whole province is called commonly to day, Karpassia (Καρπάσια), by the cypriots.

2. There is more evidence in a fragment attributed to Anastasius of Sinai, where the name of Philon the Philosopher and writer of a work on Ecclesiastical History, also occurs. Migne P. G. Vol. 89 col. 1281 (Fragment named «De dignitate Sacerdotali»).

Also in Migne P. G. Vol. 40 col. 14 B, there is a preface concerning Philon the bishop of Karpation and in the preface the words «Ἐν τῇ Ἐκκλησιαστικῇ Ἱστορίᾳ Φιλωνος τοῦ φιλοσόφου εὐθὺν τι τοιοῦτον» are cited, with other citations concerning the same person (P. G. 40, 12, 13, 14).