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The Textual Transmission of Palamas’ Epistula III to Akindynos

Abstract

Whereas the longer version of Palamas’ Epistula III to Akindynos, edited in 1962 by John Meyendorff and Panagiotis Chrestou, was handed down to us in five codices, we know only one manuscript, Monacensis graecus 223, which contains the shorter letter version published in 1974 by Juan Sergio Nadal. This paper examines to what extent the situation of the manuscript transmission and the codicological and palaeographical analysis of the textual witnesses can contribute to shed light on the occurrence of two versions of the Palamite letter and on the question of their authenticity or of the original version respectively, using the example of Monac. gr. 223, a manuscript predominantly containing texts composed by Akindynos.

A closer look at one of the main copyists of Monac. gr. 223 and at his copying activity – his hand has been identified in three other manuscripts – as well as at his procedure – particularly at the scribe’s intercalation of two refutations of Akindynos into the related texts of Palamas, among them the latter’s third letter to the former – reveals that we can neither presuppose a direct influence of Akindynos himself nor of persons opposed to him on the production of this manuscript. An autopsy of this still little-studied codex will be indispensable for further evidence on its origin and history which will eventually and hopefully allow us to better understand the phenomenon of and the relationship between the two versions of the third letter of Palamas to Akindynos.