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**THE LITERARY HERITAGE OF GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS AS  
AN EARLY BYZANTINE CULTURAL HISTORICAL PHENOMENON  
(ADAPTED FROM THE TRAGEDY “CHRISTUS PATIENS”)**

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**ABSTRACT**

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Academic secretary of  
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## THE GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE WORK

**The timeliness of the research subject.** The end of XX century and the beginning of XXI century are especially remarkable by intense interest to the problems of studying of the history of Byzantium as a unique Christian empire founded on Roman statehood principles and the best achievements of Greek pagan culture. The complexity of compatibility of these superficially different components of the Byzantine society makes it necessary for the present-day researchers to review the old methods and approaches at studying of this historical phenomenon. The methods and concepts which concentrate more and more on the role of personality in history, analysis of its perception, psychology and inner world are replacing faceless social, economic and abstract socio-political models of the historical reality composition. Such methods make it possible both to deepen the subject of studying of a specific historical problem or phenomenon and to significantly expand the boundaries of an object in historical reality under research. As the result of that approach the history is understood as a dialogue of the modern age with the past and correlation of individuals and cultures in “a far cry”<sup>1</sup>. This leads a historian to the issue of overrunning the bounds of the common historical discourse and to constructive usage of the achievements from areas of expertise adjacent to historical science. The described approach to studying of the past in its integral connection with the present is becoming more and more popular and seems to be the most prospective and challenging<sup>2</sup>. Interdisciplinary researches which combine the effort of the specialists from various fields of the present social and humanitarian expertise give us a great push for both development of the humanitarian expertise in general and the historical science in particular. The interdisciplinary approach essentially enriches historian’s idea of a reality being reconstructed by him which makes it possible to create a more extensional picture of a phenomenon being studied and essentially increase the objectivity degree of our knowledge about the past.

This thesis research is an attempt to implement the approach like this, where historical, philological culturological and theological aspects of St. Gregory of Nazianzus’s (Theologian) [330-390] literary heritage – one of the outstanding Christian representatives in Early Byzantium who exerted a significant influence on the history of Christian Church and its doctrine development as well as on formation and genesis of the whole Byzantine culture are covered in totality.

The tragedy “Christus patiens” (“Χριστὸς πάσχων”, “Suffering Christ”) has a special place in this heritage as a record of historical cultural and theological polemic of the second half of IV century. This work has never been translated into Russian completely most likely due to certain doubts concerning its authenticity while extremely rare works based on thesis topics either did not overrun the

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<sup>1</sup> See: Гуревич А. Я. Исторический синтез и Школа «Анналов» / А. Я. Гуревич. – М.: «Индрик», 1993. – С. 16.

<sup>2</sup> See: Репина Л. «Вызов и ответ»: перспективы исторической науки в начале нового тысячелетия / Л. Репина // Ейдос. Альманах теорії та історії історичної науки. – К., 2008. – Вип. 3. – С. 11-25.

framework of the literature theory<sup>1</sup> or touched only very specific theological issues<sup>2</sup>. Such conditions finally stipulated the necessity of special researches which would represent overall historical, philological, culturological and theological analysis of this tragedy within the context of the Gregory of Nazianzus's literary heritage as well as the whole culture of Early Byzantium.

**Links of the work with scientific subjects.** The thesis research was performed at the Department of the History of the Ancient World and Middle Ages of Kharkov National University n.a. V. N. Karazin in the framework of the complex scientific subject "The History and Archeology of Mediterranean and Black Sea Region in the Ancient and Medieval Epochs" No. 79010965.

**The research object** is the literary heritage of Gregory of Nazianzus represented by the tragedy "Christus patiens".

**The research subject** is historical and cultural value of the tragedy "Christus patiens" within the context of the Gregory of Nazianzus's literary heritage as well as in the cultural history of Byzantium in the second half of IV century.

**Chronological framework** of the research enframes the period from 362 to 80's of IV century. The choice of the lower chronological limit is preconditioned by divulgation of the decree on prohibition of scholastic activity for Christian professors by emperor Julian on June 17, 362. The above mentioned edict served as the most powerful motive for creation of the literary works similar to the tragedy "Christus patiens" where the lexis of the Classical Greek authors was widely used. Such works could be *a priori* an alternative to the Classical Greek literature in the arising and already completely Christian school. Along with that, the selected lower chronological limit is synchronous with the beginning of Gregory of Nazianzus's literary activity: in 362 he wrote his first Orations (1-3, 15). The upper chronological limit corresponds to the time when Gregory left his active social activity and started his literary activity which ended with his death at the end of 389 or the beginning of 390. In the above mentioned period Gregory wrote the majority of his poetical compositions and letters to different people. It is exactly in that period a famous Gregory's opponent Apollinarios of Laodikeia wrote his theological treatises which became unacceptable for the official doctrinal statements using various poetical styles which was bound to provoke an appropriate reaction on the part of Gregory in the form of the cento drama "Christus patiens".

**The thesis purpose** lies in the attempt to determine the place and value of Gregory of Nazianzus's literary heritage in the historical and cultural context of the

<sup>1</sup> See: Алексидзе А. Д. Византийская литература XI-XII вв. / А. Д. Алексидзе. – Тбилиси: Изд-во Тбил. ун-та, 1989; Аверинцев С. С. Византийские эксперименты с жанровой формой классической греческой трагедии / С. С. Аверинцев // Проблемы поэтики и истории литературы: (к 75-летию со дня рождения и 50-летию научной деятельности М. М. Бахтина): сборник статей; [отв. ред. С. С. Конкин]. – Саранск: Изд-во Мордов. Гос. Университета им. Н. П. Огарева, 1973. – С. 255-270.

<sup>2</sup> See: Иларион (Алфеев), игум. Тема сошествия Христа во ад у восточных отцов Церкви IV-VIII веков и в западной богословской традиции / Иларион (Алфеев) // Церковь и время. – 2000. – № 4 (13). – С. 230-292; Спасский А. Историческая судьба сочинений Аполлинария Лаодикийского с кратким предварительным очерком его жизни / А. Спасский. – Сергиев Посад, 1895. – С. 445-451.

Early Byzantine society of the second half of IV century based on the complex historical-philological, culturological and theological analysis of the tragedy “Christus patiens”.

The following scientific and research goals of the thesis were defined according to the stated purpose:

- to generalize the state of the local researches in terms of attribution of the tragedy “Christus patiens” versus the foreign historiography of that issue;
- to emphasize the major points of Gregory of Nazianzus’s social activity in terms of historical context of the Byzantine society life in the second half of IV century;
- to characterize the Constantinopolitan period of his life (as the most relevant period in terms of church and society issues) and to clarify the jurisdictional status of Gregory of Nazianzus;
- to analyze Gregory’s literary heritage (especially his poetry) and to define a place of the tragedy “Christus patiens” in this heritage;
- to reveal the cultural-historical preconditions of creation of the tragedy “Christus patiens”;
- to determine the major purposes of creation of this tragedy;
- to analyze the literary value of the work and its structure;
- to track what happens to this drama later on in the history of Byzantine culture;
- to carry out complex analysis of the main theological (Christological, Triadological and Mariological) aspects of the work versus the other works by Gregory of Nazianzus;
- to evaluate the meaning of Gregory’s heritage in historical-cultural context of Byzantium in the second half of IV century.

**The scientific novelty of the thesis** is defined by the fact that it is the first attempt of the complex research of Gregory of Nazianzus’s heritage as a cultural-historical phenomenon (adapted from the tragedy “Christus patiens”) in the life of Early Byzantium and the novelty is also that:

- the native local literature in terms of attribution of the tragedy “Christus patiens” is systematized to the full extent and its comparison to the foreign historiography is carried out;
- the updated classification of the heritage of Gregory Nazianzus with allocation of his dramaturgic works to a separate class is suggested;
- the tragedy dating suggested by a French researcher named C. Magnin is reviewed based on which *terminus post quem* of “Christus patiens” is determined by the edict of the emperor Julian dated June 17, 362;
- the suggestion of phase-by-phase creation is grounded: the first revision – in 60’s (after the seventeenth of June 362), and the final composition of the tragedy – in 80’s of IV century;
- the cultural-historical preconditions for the cento poetry origin in general and namely for the tragedy “Christus patiens” are revealed;

- the purposes pursued by the author at creation of “Christus patiens” are represented and concretized;
- the semantics of the ancient reminiscences used at the tragedy creation is analyzed in details for the first time in our local native historiography and the way the author linked it with the New Testament paraphrase is revealed;
- the Christological, Triadological and Mariological aspects versus the other works by Gregory of Nazianzus are represented;
- the Prologue of the tragedy (verses 1-30) and the fragment “Crucified Jesus Christ on Calvary” (verses 727-842) were translated into Russian and analyzed for the first time, moreover the translation is performed in poetic form following the measures of the original Greek text.

**Scientific-theoretical and practical value of the research** lies in possibility to implement the principal provisions and conclusions of the thesis at creation of general and specific Byzantine history courses, at preparation of generalized and special works, textbooks, reference books and sites on the Late Classical and Early Byzantine history. The results obtained may be used in scientific, educational and Internet publications on the history of Christianity as well as for writing of articles, monographs and collective researches on the history of formation and development of Christian world view and culture in the Byzantine empire.

**Research findings approbation.** The main provisions and results of this thesis research work were discussed at the meetings of the Department of the History of the Ancient World and Middle Ages at Kharkov National University n.a. V. N. Karazin as well as presented as reports, materials and proceedings at six International scientific seminars and conferences held in Kharkov, Belgorod and Sevastopol in 2005-2007.

**Publications.** The thesis results are outlined in 15 scientific articles, eight of which are published in the editions recommended by the State Accreditation Committee of Ukraine.

**The structure of work.** The thesis is built up based on the problem principle and consists of the introduction, three chapters and conclusion. The total volume of the work makes 256 pages where the main text occupies 185 pages, the list of sources and references has 51 pages (448 positions) and three appendices (19 p.).

## **THE BASIC CONTENT OF THE THESIS**

The introductory part substantiates the subject timeliness and chronological limits for the thesis, represents the purpose and goals of the research and describes the scientific novelty of the results obtained and practical value of the work as well as informs about the approbation of the research and text structure.

**The first section “Historiography, sources and research methods”** is dedicated to the analysis of the scientific literature and review of the thesis subject

source base as well as to specification of the methodology and methods used in the thesis.

**Historiography.** Special studying of the tragedy “Christus patiens” started from the moment of its first critical edition and was linked with an attempt to identify (attribution) this work. It is the attribution which became the major problem which has been attracting careful attention of the researchers of that Byzantine literary work through the centuries. Starting from XVI century and up till now the animated arguments and discussions concerning the date and authorship of this work have been ongoing in the scientific community leaving neither historians nor philologists nor theologians nor ancient and Byzantine dramaturgy specialists indifferent to this issue.

The scholarly dispute itself on the issue mentioned above has started since 1542 when a Roman publisher A. Bladus published a Euripides’s cento “Χριστὸς πάσχων” under the name of Gregory of Nazianzus<sup>1</sup>. So if in the middle of XVI century L. G. Giraldi attributed the work to Gregory of Nazianzus then starting from the end of XVI century the identity of “Christus patiens” was left in doubt by critics. In 1588 Caesar Baronius expressed serious concern about this matter for the first time attributing this Christian drama to Apollinarios, bishop of Laodikeia (IV century). Later on, such researchers as A. Possevinus, J. Lipsius, R. Bellarmino, I. Casaubon did not recognize authorship of Gregory of Nazianzus in their works. In XVII century the situation was mostly the same. Thus G. Vossius, Ph. Labbé and L. De Tillemont denied the authorship of Gregory in terms of this work though finding it difficult to tell a possible author of the tragedy. However in 1671 P. Lambecius based on handwritten tradition made his attempt to protect the traditional authorship (i.e. attribution of the tragedy to Gregory of Nazianzus). This work being the first serious research which took into account a big number of narrative sources gave new momentum to studying of this issue. F. Combéfis, C. Oudin, J. A. Fabricius again restored the idea of traditional attribution and some Benedictines from St. Maurus congregation even planned to include “Christus patiens” into their edition of the works by Gregory of Nazianzus. However the French Revolution did not let these plans come true.

The attribution of the text to Gregory of Nazianzus was again questioned in the beginning of XVIII century under the influence of the works by German philologists and literature historians. The authorship of Gregory was denied in the research works of L. Valckenaer, H. Eichstädt and abbot A. B. Caillau while the work by J. Augusti and collective work by W. Kennedy, W. Blackwood, A. Brothers and others confirmed the authenticity of this work again.

In 1846 a new phase of scientific disputes around the work under research unfolded with the first edition of critical publication of the Greek text of the tragedy by Fr. Dübner<sup>2</sup>. This work was of big value from philological point of

<sup>1</sup> Bladus A. Τοῦ ἁγίου Γρηγορίου Ναζιανζηνοῦ τραγωδία Χριστὸς πάσχων. Sancti Gregori Nazianzeni...tragoedia Christus Patiens / A. Bladus; [impressum per A. Bladus]. – Rome, 1542.

<sup>2</sup> Dübner Fr. Christus patiens. Ezechieli et christianorum poetarum reliquiae dramaticae / Fr. Dübner; [ed. F. G. Wagner]. – Parisiis: Ambrosii Firmin Didot, 1846. – (Bibliotheca scriptorum graecorum).

view. Denying Gregory's authorship Fr. Dübner attributed the drama to John Tzsetzes (XII century), the author of the Book of Histories and extraordinary Homer's Iliad commentary writer. Dübner's innovative hypothesis faced just criticism from J. Donaldson, C. Magnin and J. A. Lalanne who conclusively protected the traditional attribution in their works. Nevertheless after the edition by A. Ellissen<sup>1</sup> published in 1855 repeating Dübner's text and his critical remarks almost nobody dared to protect the identity of "Christus patiens" but this situation did not last long. In 1863 a collection of Greek poems translated by H. W. Longfellow where the author refers the tragedy to the works by Gregory of Nazianzus and some time earlier abbot J.-P. Migne attributed the tragedy to Gregory, bishop of Antioch (VI century) at publishing the works by the Great Cappadocian. In 1866 a German dramaturgy history researcher J. Klein issued an essay of historical literature in one his works to protect the identity of the drama by Gregory of Nazianzus but in 1883 a researcher named J. G. Brambs published his work where he attributed the tragedy to another Byzantine encyclopedist scholar named Theodore Prodromos (1070/5-1153) based on studying of the text metrics<sup>2</sup>. Research works of a German historian and philologist J. Dräseke raise the issue of Apollinarios of Laodikeia authorship (IV century) again in 1884. In 1891 a famous Byzantinist K. Krumbacher in his fundamental "The History of Byzantine Literature" referred the time the tragedy "Christus patiens" was written to XII century without any arguments thus he finally fixed this hypothesis by his authority in the scientific community of that time<sup>3</sup>. Nevertheless already in 1893 A. G. Garbin places "Christus patiens" among the original works of Gregory of Nazianzus in his research work.

Therefore the critical researches of XIX century showed the entire ambiguousness and complexity of the tragedy identification with the name of any certain author. With this colour array of opinions and discrepant assumptions the scientific criticism entered XX century. Among the most prominent works of that period one should mention researches of K. Horna (who pointed at a new character in this issue as a possible author of the tragedy – Constantine Manasses (XII century))<sup>4</sup>, V. Cottas (a French researcher who protected the traditional authorship based on analysis of lexis and theology), F. Dölger (this prominent German Byzantinist attributed the tragedy to Gregory), C. Grande (in his monograph he made a guess concerning phase-by-phase writing of the drama: the first revision belongs to Apollinarios of Laodikeia, the second and final one completed by an unknown author at the turn of XI-XII centuries), H. Hunger (analyzing Byzantine

<sup>1</sup> Die Tragödie ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΠΑΣΧΩΝ angeblich vom heiligen Gregorius von Nazianz. Im Originaltext und zum ersten Mal in metrischer Verdeutschung, mit literar-historischer Einleitung und erläuternder Analyse; [hrsg. von A. Ellissen, O. Wigand]. – Leipzig: Berlag von Otto Migand, 1855. – (Analekten der mittel- und neugriechischen Literatur, herausgegeben von U. Ellissen).

<sup>2</sup> Brambs J. G. De auctoritate tragoediae christianae quae inscribi solet Χριστός πάσχων Gregorio Nazianzeno falso attributae / J. G. Brambs. – Munich: Eichstadii, M. Daentler, 1883.

<sup>3</sup> Krumbacher K. Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur von Justinian bis zum Ende des Öströmischen Reiches (527-1453) / K. Krumbacher. – München: Oskar Beck, 1891. – S. 356.

<sup>4</sup> Horna K. Der Verfasser des Christus patiens / K. Horna // Hermes Zeitschrift für klassische Philologie. – 1929. – №64. – S. 429-431.

literature of Komnenian period this specialist did not take a decision in terms of which side to choose) and etc.

In 1969 a fundamental work by A. Tuilier was issued in a famous series “Sources Chrétiennes” which made a certain revolution in the issue of attribution of the tragedy “Christus patiens”<sup>1</sup>. This specialist from France reviewed nearly all known historical sources for that moment with all his scrupulosity and high level of scientific conscientiousness and came to clear conclusion on relevance of tragedy attribution to Gregory of Nazianzus. A. Tuilier based his conclusions on results of philological, historical and partly theological analysis of the work. He managed to recompose the manuscript tradition stemma of the Christian tragedy with a possible archetype of V century based on detailed textological analysis. In 1978 J. Grosdidier de Matons published a critical article on A. Tuilier’s issue where he did not deny philological value of this work but pointed out some factual inaccuracies and errors stating that it was impossible to attribute the authorship of this Christian cento to Gregory.

An old theory on impossibility of creation of the drama in IV century and its possible creation in XII century is exposed in the works of the scientists in 80’s of XX century such as N. Kochev (Н. Кочев), K. Bone (Κ. Μπονῆ), hieromonk Athanasius Evtich (Α. Јевтић), C. Spell and S. W. Hörandner. N. Kochev brings the hardly probable opinion of a Greek scientist K. Mitsakis concerning the attribution of the tragedy to St. Gregory of Nyssa (IV century)<sup>2</sup>. A new dawn for the tragedy identification issue became an article by R. Dostalova in which this researcher refers the work to the clerisy of archbishop Eustathios of Thessalonike (XII century), a talented commentary writer for Iliad and Odyssey and also a famous Byzantine memoirist<sup>3</sup>. A completely unexpected version of the tragedy origin was represented by a researcher L. MacCoull in his article. On his opinion the drama was created in Egyptian environment in V or VI centuries<sup>4</sup>. The works of a famous Italian specialist and expert in Byzantine literature A. Garzya published in the middle and the end of 80’s appear to be quite deep. This researcher tends towards the earlier date of this tragedy than XI-XII century based on so-called palaeographic argument.

The attribution situation repeats in the beginning of 90’s: A. Tuilier, J. Bernardi and F. Trisoglio protect traditional authorship in their works while another researcher K. Pollmann throws doubt upon the traditional authorship again now based on nonconformity of the theology style in “Christus patiens” with Gregory of Nazianzus’s theology. An article by E. Follieri in which this Italian researcher came to conclusion that *terminus post quem* of “Christus patiens” might

<sup>1</sup> Grégoire de Nazianze. La passion du Christ. Tragedie / Gregoire de Nazianze; [introduction, texte critique, traduction notes et index de A. Tuilier]. – Paris: Cerf, 1969. – (Sources Chrétiennes; № 149).

<sup>2</sup> See: Кочев Н. Античната литературна традиция и византийските автори / Н. Кочев. – София: Наука и Изкуство, 1982. – С. 245.

<sup>3</sup> Dostalova S. R. Die byzantinische Theorie des Dramas und die Tragödie Christos Paschon / S. R. Dostalova // JÖB. – 1982. – № 32/3. – S. 73-82.

<sup>4</sup> MacCoull L. Egyptian elements in the Christus Patiens / L. MacCoull // Bulletin de la Societe d’Archeologie Copte. – 1985. – № 27. – P. 45-51.

go to VIII-IX centuries based on studying of the preserved manuscripts is not incurious. The thesis by G. Swart which includes detailed analysis of the parallels between “Christus patiens” and works by various Byzantine authors draws special attention<sup>1</sup>. The external evidence which is based on the above mentioned analysis looks more convincing – in G. Swart’s opinion – than the analysis of the work content itself or internal evidence. Thus he comes to conclusion that the point of view of K. Krumbacher and his followers concerning the tragedy dating to XI-XII centuries is not grounded and this work refers to IV century and belongs to Gregory of Nazianzus without any doubts. A new edition of the concordance for Gregory of Nazianzus’s poetry issued under the authoritative series “Corpus Christianorum” edited by a famous expert in nazianzanics J. Mossay who placed the tragedy among the real works by Gregory of Nazianzus was also a valuable event<sup>2</sup>.

The second half of 90’s XX century was marked by new works by F. Trisoglio and A. Tuilier. Thus in 1996 a monograph by F. Trisoglio is published in which this Italian researcher conclusively demonstrates that the literary structure of “Christus patiens” is incompatible with any of the Late Byzantine authors who this work was referred to by different editions after XVI century<sup>3</sup>. This work gave new momentum for grounding traditional attribution. The reaction for F. Trisoglio’s monograph was an article by A. Tuilier written in 1997. The French expert stated based on Trisoglio’s conclusions that neither Gregory of Antioch, nor Theodore Prodromos, nor John Tzsetzes, nor Constantine Manasses could be the author of this tragedy<sup>4</sup>.

Thus by the end of XX century the authorship issue reached its peak polarization: either the work belongs to Gregory of Nazianzus and refers to IV century or its author is unknown and the tragedy itself is written most likely in the period of XI-XII centuries. All other options were recognized as inconsistent due to weak argumentation<sup>5</sup>. It is clear that such “amplitude of oscillation” in the dating issue (almost 800 years!) may not be recognized as satisfactory in the eyes of our scientific community but the final solution to this undoubtedly complicated problem has not been found so far. A number of researchers refer “Christus patiens” to the Komnenian period most likely mechanically and with caution at K. Krumbacher ignoring palaeographic argument which gives direct evidence of authorship of Gregory of Nazianzus which in our opinion looks like a cliché and as a matter of fact is not correct. The confirmation is relatively recent works by a

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<sup>1</sup> Swart G. J. A historical-critical evaluation of the play Christus patiens, traditionally attributed to Gregory Nazianzus: diss. ... D. L. / G. J. Swart. – Pretoria, 1990.

<sup>2</sup> Thesaurus Sancti Gregorii Nazianzeni: enumeratio lemmatum carmina, Christus patiens, vita // Corpus Christianorum Thesaurus Patrum Graecorum / [by J. Mossay, B. Coulie]. – Turnhout: Brepols, 1991.

<sup>3</sup> Trisoglio F. San Gregorio di Nazianzo e il Christus patiens. Il problema dell’autenticità gregoriana del dramma / F. Trisoglio. – Florence: Le Lettere, 1996. – (Filologia: testi e studi. Università degli Studi di Torino, Fondo di studi Parini-Chirio; № 7).

<sup>4</sup> Tuilier A. Grégoire de Nazianze et le Christus Patiens: à propos d'un ouvrage récent / A. Tuilier // Revue des Etudes grecques. – 1997. – № 110 (2). – P. 632-647.

<sup>5</sup> See: Trisoglio F. Il Christus patiens. Rassegna delle attribuzioni / F. Trisoglio // Rivista di Studi Classici. – 1974. – № 22. – P. 351.

number of researchers who reconsidered in many respects the centuries-long attribution history of this Byzantine masterpiece. One should mark one of the latest researches by F. Trisoglio, issued in 2002. In this work the competent Italian scientist in his detailed studying of Byzantine names of Holy Virgin Mary in homilies, hymns and liturgies comes to conclusion that the time the tragedy “Christus patiens” was written may not be referred to the period of XI or XII centuries but the play rather corresponds to Gregory of Nazianzus’s theology and poetic style whose authorship is reflected in the manuscript tradition unfairly disputed only in recent times<sup>1</sup>. Later in 2004 there was another work by a Polish researcher A. Wojtylak-Heszen in which the work was again referred to the Late antique period, i.e. IV-V centuries. The research works by B. Groves and M. Veronesi published in 2006 refer the drama to IV century attributing it to Gregory of Nazianzus provided that the second author bases his point of view on the data of the recent research works by A. Tuilier. The work by M. Centanni published in 2007 already undoubtedly links the tragedy with the name of Gregory of Nazianzus. However in 2008 another researcher G. Most raised again the issue about the manuscript tradition of “Christus patiens” which seemed to be resolved. He questions inviolability of the palaeographic argument based on brand new analysis of the tragedy headings which are represented in the preserved manuscripts of this work<sup>2</sup>.

Therefore in the beginning of XXI century in the scientific community there is a sufficiently stable trend to return to traditional attribution of the tragedy “Christus patiens”. The described situation occurred in terms of the masterpiece identification issue refers first of all to research works of the Western scientists. As for our domestic researches of pre-revolutionary period as well as Soviet period the issues concerning this work were quite outside the discussion. The exceptions are the above mentioned article by S. S. Averintsev (С. С. Аверинцев), monograph by A. D. Aleksidze (А. Д. Алексидзе), work by metropolitan Hilarion Alfeev (Иларион Алфеев) and partly the research work by A. Spasskiy (А. Спасский). In these works they concentrated on the issues linked with the literature theory slightly touching the issues of history and drama theology. As far as the identification problem is concerned, our home scientists did not express any original ideas and used mostly the theories of Western origin at hand. In the pre-revolutionary literature they basically held to Baronius’s theory in this issue referring the tragedy to Apollinarios of Laodikeia or precariously denied the authorship of Gregory of Nazianzus referring the masterpiece to XI-XII centuries.

The Soviet and post-Soviet Byzantine studies has not gone too far in development of these topics. Thus such researchers as L. A. Freiberg

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<sup>1</sup> Trisoglio F. Datazione del Christus patiens e titolazione bizantina della Vergine / F. Trisoglio // Memoria di Francesco Trisoglio presentata dal Socio nazionale residente Eugenio Corsini nell’adunanza dell’11 dicembre 2001. – 2002. – P. 161-256.

<sup>2</sup> Most G. W. On the Authorship of the Christus Patiens / G. W. Most // Studien zu den geistesgeschichtlichen Beziehungen zwischen Antike und Christentum. Dankesgabe für Albrecht Dihle zum 85 / [eds. A. Jördens, H. A. Gärtner, H. Görgemanns, A. M. Ritter]. – 2008. – P. 239-240. – (Studien zur Kirchengeschichte; 8).

(Л. А. Фрейберг), М. Е. Grabar-Passek (М. Е. Грабарь-Пассек), А. Р. Kazhdan (А. П. Каждан), М. L. Gasparov (М. Л. Гаспаров) and E. G. Ruzina (Е. Г. Рузина), Z. V. Udaltsova (З. В. Удальцова) precariously deny Gregory of Nazianzus's authorship referring the tragedy to an unknown author from XI-XII centuries. The researchers A. D. Aleksidze (А. Д. Алексидзе), А. I. Ruban (А. И. Рубан), Y. I. Ruban (Ю. И. Рубан), hieromonk Dionysius Shlenov (Дионисий Шленов), А. N. Gluschenko (А. Н. Глущенко), А. G. Dunayev (А. Г. Дунаев), D. E. Afinogenov (Д. Е. Афиногенов) and А. S. Desnitskiy (А. С. Десницкий) are hesitating to accept the final solution due to complexity and ambiguousness of the problem.

All in all one should mark that despite quite a wide range of researches dealing with the problem of attribution of this Byzantine literary masterpiece only few of them probe in its historical-culturological and theological aspects which provides a wide space for comprehensive study of Gregory of Nazianzus's literary heritage represented by the tragedy "Christus patiens".

**Sources.** Due to specific character of our study we have to use exclusively the narrative sources. They may be figuratively divided into two groups: the primary ones, i.e. directly the works by Gregory of Nazianzus and the secondary ones – various testimonies of late antique and medieval authors on his literary heritage. The first group of sources consists of palaeographic material which became basis for further printed sources of the tragedy in Greek and translations of this Byzantine literary masterpiece into different languages as well as Gregory's testimonies included into the complete corpus of his works. The second group includes the hagiographical testimony by Gregory's biographer and prosopographical notes by St. Jerome of Stridon (more fully Eusebius Hieronymus) [347-419] and the Souda or Suidas (X century) as well as references and citations of the drama in the works by St. Romanos the Melode (VI century), St. John of Damascus (circa 675- circa 749), John Mauropous (XI century), Ebedjesus (Mar 'Abdišo, metr. Nisibis) [XIII-XIV] and other authors.

As for Gregory's biography reconstruction and presentation of events of Gregory's social activity the most informative and representative today are his own works especially taking into account the fact that he was one of the most productive Christian autobiographers among the Early Byzantine writers. However Gregory of Nazianzus himself by no means disclosed and detalized all to the extent required for historians from his biography. Therefore testimonies of Gregory's contemporaries and succeeding historians and writers are of certain interest. Unfortunately these messages about Gregory's life and activity leave much to contain sufficient information. Thus, the testimonies by St. Jerome, Rufinus of Aquileia (more fully Tyrannius Rufinus) [circa 345-410], Philostorgios (circa 368-circa 439) and the Souda have extremely generalized character. The hagiography written by Gregory the Caesarean Priest (Gregorius Presbyter) [VI-VII centuries] according to all laws of a classic panegyric gives little historical information as well following the autobiographic poem by Gregory of Nazianzus "Περὶ τὸν ἑαυτοῦ βίον" in its main guidelines. Ecclesiastical historians Theodoret of

Cyrrhus (393-457), Sokrates (Socrates Scholasticus) [circa 380-circa 450] and Sozomenos (V century) give information only about a few episodes of Gregory's life not going into details and circumstances. The corpus of Gregory's dogmatic poems (*Carmina dogmatica*) and his famous Theological Orations (27-31) for which he received a name "The Theologian" later on are of great importance as well.

This results in the fact that today the works written by Gregory himself remain the most informative for historical research the biggest part of which has not been republished on the up-to-date critical source studies level yet. In this regard the tragedy "Christus patiens" is in a better situation as its latest critical edition by A. Tuilier meets all the requirements of modern science and provides researchers with the richest material for further work in this direction.

***Methodology and methods*** of the research. The methodological foundation of the work is a combination of historicism, objectivity, consistency and complexity of historical phenomena studying which gives an opportunity to study Gregory of Nazianzus's heritage in the historical context and taking into account the whole complex of factors known to science which impacted on his creative work.

The work includes both the general scientific methods and special historical ones. The choice of methods is stipulated by the thesis research purpose formulation and specific heuristic task setting. Due to the fact that in order to define the place and value of Gregory of Nazianzus's literary heritage in the Early Byzantine history it is necessary to make a detailed analysis of his theological, socio-political and culturological judgments in the specific historical context, the historical-philological approach which implies the usage of linguistic analysis of terminology of this Byzantine intellectual became the primary one in our work. Moreover, the historical genetic method as well as historical comparative and historical typological methods are used in the work. The traditional historical chronological method accompanied by illustrative explications where necessary was chosen for material presentation.

The mentioned above methods gave an opportunity to carry out a complex analysis of Gregory of Nazianzus's literary heritage and first of all the materials of the tragedy "Christus patiens" and allowed to examine that phenomenon in its historical cultural context.

**The second section "Gregory of Nazianzus's social and literary activity"** represents the research of Gregory's role and value as a public figure as well as the clarification of his poetic heritage place in the history of the Early Byzantine society.

*The first subsection* contains characteristics of Gregory of Nazianzus as a Byzantine public figure in the second half of IV century. Big attention is given to literary polemics with Julian (Flavius Claudius Julianus) also known as "the Apostate" (361-363) as a result of which Gregory managed to elaborate and formulate the basic principles of the attitude of Christians towards the ancient world's cultural heritage based on which the best of this heritage became the foundation of the developing Christian culture. The issue of Gregory of

Nazianzus's canonical status is covered in this subsection. In specialist literature Gregory appears as bishop of Naianzus while officially he had never taken this position however in hagiography and hymnography his name is associated with Constantinopolitan cathedra which is well founded from canonical point of view. Special emphasis is also placed on the analysis of Gregory's role as an ideological stimulator, organizer and prolocutor of the Second Ecumenical Council. The information, first of all of historical character, about twists and turns of this council provided by him in his orations, letters and autobiographic poems is a precious and often the only source of information on this issue.

*The second subsection* analyzes Gregory's poetry as the most important part of his literary heritage. Classifications of Gregory's poetic heritage suggested by A. B. Caillau and A. Govorov (А. Говоров) are specified in this subsection. It is proposed to include a separate section into the existing classifications dedicated to Gregory's dramaturgical works which has to include the poem "Περὶ τὸν ἑαυτοῦ βίον" and the tragedy "Χριστὸς πάσχων". One of the main features of his poetry is the active usage of the rich ancient world's intellectual equipment. The Antique characters fill Gregory's homilies and they are widely spread in his early epigrams and poems. The main purposes of poetic works creation were represented by Gregory of Nazianzus in his poem "Εἰς τὰ ἔμμετρα" written in the last years of his life. In this peculiar poetic programme the first and the last clauses deal with Gregory himself, the second clause declares the didactic purpose of his creative work while the third clause represents the polemic-apologetic one which was achieved by creation of such a masterpiece as the tragedy "Christus patiens". The issue concerning the time when this unique masterpiece of the early Byzantine literature was created foresees at least two alternate approaches. The first one is based on C. Magnin's theory according to which the strictly scientific and grammatically correct form of the tragedy determines its reference to the poet's early youth, approximately from the time of his staying in Athens (350-358) and till the time when he was ordained presbyter, i.e. till the end of 362. The second one refers the tragedy to the time when Gregory lived in Nazianzus after his departure from Constantinople (i.e. after 381). Assessing both approaches to this issue one may state with certainty that each of them has quite solid arguments in its defense, but the second one looks more convincing taking into account the nature of tragedy theology. Most probably that phase-by-phase writing of this work took place: the first version – in 60's (after June 17, 362) and the final revision of the tragedy – in 80's of IV century. The suggested phase-by-phase approach is stipulated by domestic political events in the life of the Byzantine Empire as well as the reverses of fortune in Gregory's own life. The Edict dated June 17, 362 by means of which the emperor Julian (the Apostate) forbade Christian professors to teach in Byzantine schools caused immediate reaction on the part of the Church. Such prominent people of Christian party of those days as Gregory of Nazianzus and Apollinarios of Laodikeia created works in which the Greek literature classical material would be expertly disguised as Christian one and could be used as a study guide for schools replacing the ancient classical authors. However Julian's

unexpected death and drastic changes in Gregory's life were the reasons why completion of the tragedy was finished only after his retirement in 80's of IV century – the time when Gregory was basically occupied with his poetry. At the same period a famous heresiarch Apollinarios tried to implant his supporters everywhere while actively practicing exegesis and poetic activity. That is why Gregory being a zealous protector of Orthodoxy and excellent poet resisted that new heresy in all his ways and by means of poetry as well.

Thus Gregory of Nazianzus's social and literary activity encouraged formation of the ideological substrate which became the foundation of the whole cultural-religious policy in the Byzantine Empire where people even argued about the incarnation of Jesus Christ on markets and squares. One may state with a certain degree of confidence that thanks to homiletic literary and pastoral activity of the persons like Gregory of Nazianzus the epochal process which we call now Christianization of the empire was completed in Byzantine history.

**The third section “Historical Literary and Theological Analysis of the tragedy “Christus patiens””** contains detailed historical-literary and theological analysis of this Byzantine drama which not only clarifies that complicated issue on identification and dating but also helps in definition of its place in the history of Byzantine literature.

*The first subsection* contains detailed consideration of the cultural-historical preconditions for origination of the tragedy “Christus patiens”. After the period of persecution of Christians finished and the Roman state policy in terms of religion changed, the confrontation of the already dying but still really existing pagan party and Christians turned from purely political sphere into the cultural-ideological one. Absolutely new special genres of already Christian literature appear under such uneasy conditions of tough competition which are evangelic paraphrase and Christian centos. With their help Christian intellectuals managed to smoothly insert the best achievements of the pagan literature into the context of Christian evangelism, to bring them in their own reference system and apply to their missionary purposes. Therewith one of the main tasks set for Christian poets and literary men was to try to show that the creativity of Greco-Roman classical writers served some kind of preparation to the Christian literature itself filled with deeper world outlook content.

One of the most prominent representatives of the above mentioned genre is the tragedy “Christus patiens” which is practically all intertwined with the ancient reminiscences and evangelic allusions. By putting speeches of Euripides's Medea and Hecuba, Lycophon's Cassandra and other characters in St. Mary's mouth (drama protagonist) Gregory of Nazianzus wanted to show how the ancient theatre mask fatality was overcome by the Christian worldview. A mysterious metamorphosis bringing Euripides and the entire heritage of Ancient Hellas to Christianization takes place on the pages of the tragedy according to the author's plan. Readers are provided with the opportunity to see what Medea and Hecuba would do if they were Christians. This is where Gregory of Nazianzus's innovation as a dramaturge lies itself. He managed to demonstrate which role is played by the

ancient world's heritage in the new Christian mental outlook and how serious this new worldview is which so easily resolves the most complicated and thorny problems of all pagan philosophy. This was also one of the strategic purposes (historical-culturological one) to write this work. In parallel Gregory pursued polemic and didactic purposes in the course of creation of "Christus patiens".

Further in this subsection there is an analysis of literary value and structure of the work. The usage of the ancient reminiscences in the narrative structure and their link with evangelic allusions are also shown using the preliminary selected material. The analysis of usage pattern of these reminiscences gave the opportunity to fix quite a stable semantic scheme of the tragedy: Greek dramaturgy reminiscences with their pagan content and meaning → factual material of the tragedy itself with the new meaning providing evangelic and theological allusions → the evangelic paraphrase itself.

Thus it was demonstrated how the author links the meaning of the ancient reminiscences in the tragedy narrative structure with New Testament paraphrase by transforming the meaning of these reminiscences. Semantics of ancient reminiscences placed in a brand new Christian context helps to grasp the theological meaning of the work.

*The second subsection* represents theology analysis of the tragedy "Christus patiens" versus other works by Gregory of Nazianzus. The analysis of the selected drama fragments showed that the first priority subjects in Christology for the author are kenosis, theopaschism, recapitulation, deification, communication of properties or communication of idioms (*communicatio idiomatum*) which are well in line with other works by Gregory. Jesus Christ's names in the tragedy like "Θεηγενὲς φάος" ("God-born Light"), "Σωτηρῖος" ("Saviour") as well as the name "ὁ ὢν" ("The Being" ("I am")) are common point for the whole Gregory's Christological doctrine.

The drama Triadology analysis showed that even in the selected abstracts there are basic elements typical for the whole Gregory of Nazianzus's Triadology doctrine. According to Gregory's doctrine the Trinity is "Τρισσοφαοῦς Θεότητος" ("Three Shining God"). For him the fact of the Holy Trinity Persons identity is also obvious which also includes Their names and properties affinity. The Father and the Son are called "ὄλβιος" ("Blessed") and together with the Spirit – "Holy". The Son of God, Jesus Christ is named "The Being" ("I am") – the name used to call exclusively God in the Old Testament (יהוה). At the same time he is called "God-born Light" which is to emphasize not only His belonging to Divine nature but also His hypostatic property – to be born from God the Father.

The analysis of Mariology of the work finalizes the subsection. The first experience of analyzing the tragedy Mariology showed that this subject was closely linked with the Christological doctrine and could be considered only in direct entity with it. The analysis also revealed some unique characteristics of the tragedy Mariological doctrine based on which St. Mary was Holy Virgin who became Mother of God of the Word due to God's goodwill and Her personal

godliness. She is the first to gain insight into the greatest mystery of Her Son's God-man nature. The keynote of the whole work was depiction of St. Mary's soul drama sympathizing the passion of Jesus Christ. In the work, along with the theme of Holy Mother, the author also depicts all weaknesses, feelings and human maternity drama of St. Virgin Mary. A special theme of adoption of all believers in the person of Apostle John the Theologian is emphasized. The above mentioned provisions of Mariological doctrine of the tragedy coincide with similar provisions represented in other works by Gregory of Nazianzus.

Only based on complex comprehensive analysis of all the items planned for research it became possible to reveal the historical value of the work in the context of not only Gregroy's literary heritage but of the whole Early Byzantine culture.

**Conclusions** are to summarize the research results.

The events in IV century became a critical and significant phenomenon in a many ways in the history of the Byzantine Empire. This is the time of cultural-historical paradigm changing: the empire is changing its ideology refusing from pagan mysteries in favor of Christian doctrine and worship. This metamorphosis was reflected basically in all Roman society spheres of life: in politics, culture, cult, education, everyday life and etc. The leading role in this complicated process was taken by such Christian intellectuals as St. Athanasios of Alexandria, St. Basil of Caesarea, St. Gregory of Nyssa, St. Amphilochios of Ikonion, St. Jerome of Stridon, Apollinarios of Laodikeia, Synesios of Cyrene (bishop of Ptolemais) and others. A difficult task to synthesize the ancient culture and Christian worldview was set before them. The historical situation of that time got complicated due to both the conflict escalation with representatives of pagan ideology and dogmatic disputes inside the Christian Church. Nevertheless these thinkers managed to create a new model of Christian culture now which naturally included the best achievements of the ancient world.

St. Gregory of Nazianzus has a special place in this family. Being a very well educated man of his day, first-rate rhetor and poet, sage philosopher and theologian, excellent expert in the ancient culture and Christian dogmatics he became a flagman struggling against both the pagan ideology and occurrence of heresies. His clerical and social activity as an archpastor in the capital of Byzantium and prolocutor of the Second Ecumenical Council was so relevant in the eyes of his grateful descendants that he entered to hagiography and hymnography with his honorable title of Archbishop of Constantinople.

Gregory became one of the founders and ideologists of Christian culture which used the richest heritage of the ancient world actively and with maximum benefits for Christianity. Orations (homilies), poems, epigrams, messages – all this became a reference and incontestable authority for politicians, scientists, literateurs, students and common Byzantians of all succeeding generations. His poetic talent reached its plentitude in dramaturgy. Such fundamental works as the poem “Περὶ τὸν ἑαυτοῦ βίον” and the tragedy “Χριστὸς πάσχων” forming a separate class in Gregory's poetic heritage show the whole intensity and mastership of Gregory as a dramatist.

The tragedy “Christus patiens” has a special place in Gregory of Nazianzus’s literary heritage. This masterpiece represents the only example of a Christian drama itself in the history of Byzantine literature composed according to all canons of the ancient dramaturgy. The identification problem of this work with Gregory of Nazianzus’s creative works became a reason for century-long disputes on that issue. The scientific community was divided into two sides in the course of attempts to overcome this problem: some researchers recognize the traditional authorship of the tragedy i.e. they attribute it to Gregory and refer to the end of IV century while the others refer this work to XI-XII centuries and find it difficult to tell the author’s name hiding it behind the faceless “unknown”. The critical reissue of this work made by A. Tuilier played a significant role in solution to the attribution problem. The French scientist managed to prove demonstratively the relevance of attribution of the work to Gregory of Nazianzus based on comprehensive analysis of the whole range of narrative sources of the tragedy “Christus patiens”. Insufficient coverage in the works written by opponents of the work traditional attribution of the tragedy theological problematic restricted their insight of that problem in a many ways. It is this coincidence of the main theological ideas in “Christus patiens” with the same fundamental ideas in other works by Gregory of Nazianzus which gave a new strong argument in favor of the traditional authorship to the hands of the researchers like V. Cottas, F. Trisoglio and A. Tuilier. The point of view of these researchers seems to be the most grounded one on today’s stage of the attribution problem study.

In the course of this work creation, Gregory of Nazianzus pursued quite specific purposes: historical-culturological, polemic and didactic ones. There is also connection between the above mentioned purposes and quite a wide audience range for the Christian drama as it was intended not only for intellectuals-scholars but for everyone who has school education of that day and especially for the young generation. Herein we leave open the possibility that this work was used as a school guide or textbook.

Gregory borrowed his main ancient reminiscences from the tragedian Euripides as a dramatist who managed to escalate as much as possible the psychological conflict of collision of mankind’s free will and God’s plan inalterability. Transformation of the meaning of these reminiscences from pagan to Christian ones demonstrates overcoming of unresolved issues of the Greek tragedies in a brand new Christian drama content which should direct the reader to entirely definite evangelic allusions. That is the way the semantic scheme of the work closes on according to which the meaning of the ancient reminiscences leads to paraphrased evangelic narration transforming in the narrative structure of the Christian tragedy. Thus by placing the Classical dramaturgy in a row of evangelic preparations Gregory laid the basis for Christian dramaturgy itself.

The main Christological themes in the tragedy “Christus patiens” coincide with Gregory’s Christology main line represented in other works by him. This fact witnesses of the theological unity of the drama with all Gregory of Nazianzus’s literary heritage and emphasizes its polemic character directed against both Arius’s

system and Apollinarios of Laodikeia's doctrine. The drama Triadology analysis results show that even the selected passages of the work contain the main elements typical for the whole Gregory's Triadological doctrine. The tragedy Mariology analyses showed that this theme was closely related to Christological doctrine and might be considered only in direct unity with it.

Thus the thesis research allows to determine that Gregory of Nazianzus's literary activity became a link between the ancient world's heritage and Christianized Byzantine culture. The tragedy "Christus patiens" presented a new kind of Byzantine literature which is "Christian drama" by skillfully and smoothly joining all elegance of the Greek classical dramaturgy with the depth of the Orthodox doctrine. This tragedy belonging to the evangelic paraphrase genre which is performed as a cento was not designed for stage play but it was intended for reading where the principal value lies in its meaning. Similar works typical for the Early Byzantine period (IV-VI centuries) created the intellectual space which later on stipulated completion of historical transformation from pagan ideology to Christian culture and worldview in the Byzantine Empire.

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