

Mikonja Knežević

Etnografski institut

Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti

mikonjaknezevic@gmail.com

Vladimir Cvetković

Institut za filozofiju i društvenu teoriju

Univerzitet u Beogradu

vladimir.cvetkovic@ifdt.bg.ac.rs

**FROM THE LIGHT OF CREATION
TO THE LIGHT OF CONTEMPLATION:
THE UNDERSTANDING OF LIGHT
IN THE 15TH CENTURY SLAVONIC TRANSLATIONS
OF HEXAEMERAL LITERATURE***

Abstract: *This paper investigates the conception of light in the fifteenth-century Slavonic codex Šestodnevnik (Hexaameron), preserved at the Savina Monastery in Montenegro. Compiled by Nikon of Jerusalem, the collection includes translations of Severian of Gabala's Hexaameron alongside writings by prominent hesychast authors such as Diadochos of Photiki and Niketas Stethatos. Through textual and comparative analysis, the paper explores how the theme of light bridges cosmological, theological, and mystical dimensions, reflecting both the Neoplatonic tradition and the Christian path of ascetic purification. The synthesis of Severian's cosmology with hesychast theology in the codex presents light as a metaphor for divine knowledge and spiritual enlightenment.*

Keywords: *Šestodnevnik (Hexaameron), Medieval Serbian culture, Hesychasm, Neoplatonism, Light*

The ancient Hellenic and Christian worlds were intricately interwoven within the hermeneutically rich and dynamic framework of the Byzantine cultural paradigm. While this synthesis was not without its tensions and contradictions, the Christian worldview ultimately asserted primacy. Nevertheless, the Hellenic element remained a constant presence—either through its reception and integration in the writings of the Church Fathers or as an independent current within the broader philosophical tradition of Byzantine thought. This tendency persisted until the fall of the Eastern Roman Empire, when—particularly in the 14th and 15th centuries—hesychasm emerged as a spiritual movement synthesizing Christian theological insight with philosophical elements of Aristotelian and Neoplatonic origin. While the initial phase of the hesychast controversy centered on the legitimacy of applying apodictic syllogism to theological debates—most notably regarding the procession of the Holy Spirit¹—subsequent developments

* Research for this article was supported by the Science Fund of the Republic of Serbia – IDENTITIES, #GRANT No 1554, Assessing Neoplatonism in the 14th and 15th Century Balkans – ANEB.

This paper is the result of work in the Institute of Ethnography SASA which is financed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia, and based on the Agreement

shifted the focus toward experiential and mystical dimensions, including the vision of divine light and the believer's union with God. In this later phase, the writings of Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite assumed a particularly prominent role, serving as a conduit through which key postulates of Neoplatonic metaphysics were introduced into an otherwise strictly theological discourse. By mediating between abstract philosophical principles and the experiential claims of hesychast practice, Dionysian thought helped to shape the intellectual framework within which debates about divine illumination and mystical participation were elaborated.

As medieval Serbian culture was fundamentally shaped by the Byzantine cultural paradigm, it witnessed a remarkable surge in translation activity, focusing not only on the principal figures of hesychasm but also on their spiritual and intellectual forerunners. Concurrently, a substantial number of manuscripts addressing hexaemeral themes were produced throughout the central Balkans. Most of these are Slavonic translations of key patristic texts, such as Basil of Caesarea's *Homilies on the Hexaemeron* and Gregory of Nyssa's *Apology of the Hexaemeron* and *On Human Nature*.² These works are sometimes transmitted alongside hesychast writings centered on prayer and the vision of the uncreated divine light, thereby establishing a symbolic link between the light created on the first day of creation and the divine light revealed to the hesychasts.

This paper explores the conception of light in a 15th-century Slavonic codex titled *Šestodnevik* (*Hexaemeron*), preserved at the Savina Monastery in Montenegro. After a brief overview of hesychast influences in medieval Serbia, we turn to Severian of Gabala's interpretation of light in his *Hexaemeron*, and explore related understandings of light in the writings of Diadochos of Photiki and Niketas Stethatos. The paper concludes by analyzing the concept of light that a reader of this codex might form by synthesizing Severian's hexaemeral cosmology with the mystical theology of the aforementioned hesychast authors.

1. The Transmission and Reception of Hesychasm in Medieval Serbia

Marked by a visible lag in relation to its Byzantine model, 14th- and 15th-century Serbian culture rapidly sought to catch up—primarily at the level of intellectual reception—with developments on the Byzantine intellectual scene. Following the translation of various monastic works into Church Slavonic—most notably John Climacus's *Ladder of Divine Ascent* and Maximus the Confessor's *Four Hundred Chapters on Love*—Serbian intellectuals soon began to engage with far more demanding philosophical material. By the mid-14th century, John of Damascus's *Dialectic* had been translated,³ and around the same period, various works by Gregory Palamas, the foremost representative of Byzantine hesychasm, were rendered into Serbian Church-Slavonic, along with some treatises of Barlaam of Calabria. Among several shorter dogmatic and confessional texts of Gregory Palamas,⁴ particular prominence is given to the translations of his *Apodictic Treatises on the Procession of the Holy Spirit*⁵ and the treatise *On the Divine Unity and Distinction*. The translation of this latter text—written in polemical opposition to Barlaam of Calabria and Gregory Akindynos—served as the main impetus for the complete translation of the works of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite into Serbian Church-

on the Realization and Financing of Scientific Research Work of a Scientific Research Organization in 2025 number: 451-03-136/2025-03/200173 from February 4th 2025.

¹ Gerogiorgakis 2010.

² See: Sels 2009.

³ Weiher 1969.

⁴ Knežević, Stefanović-Banović 2021; Jevtić 2013, 509–523.

⁵ Kakridis, Taseva 2014.

-Slavonic, a monumental task completed in 1371 by the learned Serbian monk and diplomat Isaija of Serres.⁶ This translation would play a key role in transmitting the content of Neoplatonic thought into Serbian culture.

The spread of hesychast ideas through the translation of works by key authors of this spiritual tradition coincided with the establishment of numerous monastic communities across Serbian territories in the 14th and 15th centuries. With the accession of Prince Lazar—a ruler marked by a keen ecclesiastical sensibility⁷—Serbia witnessed a profound spiritual revival, even as the state itself entered a phase of political decline. This renewal was due in large part to the influence of the circle surrounding Gregory of Sinai, one of the principal exponents of late Byzantine hesychasm.⁸ Although Serbia's connection to Sinaitic spirituality can be traced back to the time of Saint Sava and his journey to the East—as evidenced by Serbian recension manuscripts from the 13th century preserved at the Monastery of Sinai—the most significant impact of this tradition came through Gregory's immediate disciples. In the latter half of the 14th century, these "Sinaites" began migrating from Paroria, where Gregory had settled in 1331, to Serbian lands, seeking refuge from the advancing Ottomans. Serbia at the time remained a haven for many cultural and religious figures fleeing Byzantine territories.

Among the leading representatives of this Sinaitic movement were Romilo of Ravanica and Gregory the Younger, whose contributions were instrumental not only to the spiritual life of medieval Serbia but also to its diplomatic and literary development.⁹ Their work facilitated a convergence of Egyptian-Palestinian, Sinaitic, and Syrian hesychast traditions with the Athonite model of contemplative life—a moment described as "the most important event for the entire Byzantine-Slavic cultural world of the 14th and 15th centuries."¹⁰ Their efforts led to the founding of numerous monastic centers across the Serbian principalities, including "Mojsinje Holy Mountain" and the so-called "Serbian Holy Mountain". In these communities, hesychasm assumed the role of a spiritual and intellectual mediator, much like the Cyrillo-Methodian movement had in the 9th to 11th centuries.¹¹ Thanks to the labors of the "Sinaites," seminal works of hesychast theology were intensively translated and transcribed into the Serbian recension of Church Slavonic. Alongside practical monastic instruction, these texts introduced speculative and theological content into Serbian culture, thereby enriching its intellectual and spiritual horizons.¹²

The influence of hesychasm on Serbian culture—most prominently manifested in Chilandar Monastery and Moravian Serbia—also extended to medieval Zeta (present-day Montenegro), where, during the 14th and 15th centuries, a distinct monastic colony emerged under the name "Zeta's Holy Mountain". The origins of this Zetan monastic center can be traced to the first Metropolitan of Zeta, Ilarion, who founded the Monastery of Vranjina, and especially to the activity of Saint Jevstatije of Prevlaka. A former abbot of Chilandar, Jevstatije introduced some of the earliest elements of Athonite monastic life to Zeta.¹³ However, the decisive role in the revival and expansion of this monastic settlement—which by the 15th century encompassed over twenty monasteries in the Lake Skadar region—and in the broader dissemination of the hesychast worldview throughout this part of the Balkan Peninsula, was played by the

⁶ Fahl, Fahl, et alii. 2010.

⁷ Tahiaos 1975, 93–103.

⁸ Radović 2010, 207–261.

⁹ See: Radojičić 1963, 247–250. Basically same ideas one can find in Economou 1998, 103–110.

¹⁰ Radović 2010, 216.

¹¹ Strezova 2014, 27.

¹² Lazić 1999, 189–192.

¹³ Cf. Bogosavljević 2004, 113.

collaboration of two key figures of the era: Jelena Balšić (c. 1365–1443),¹⁴ the ruler of Zeta, daughter of Serbian Prince Lazar, a woman of pronounced spiritual curiosity and intellectual acuity, and Nikon of Jerusalem, an “extraordinary creative figure of the first half of the fifteenth century”¹⁵ and “one of the most learned monks of his time.”¹⁶

2. Nikon of Jerusalem and *Šestodnevnik*

Nikon of Jerusalem’s significance for the development of culture and literacy in the territory of modern-day Montenegro has only recently become the subject of more intensive scholarly study.¹⁷ There is only scant information about him in historical sources. It is known that he was born around 1380 and that he was Greek,¹⁸ although some interpretations suggest that he may have been of Serbian origin.¹⁹ He spent the early decades of the 15th century in Jerusalem, Sinai, and Egypt between 1398 and 1412,²⁰ as evidenced by his travelogue, which he included in the well-known collection called *Gorica Miscellany* (*Gorički Zbornik* [1442]). It is also known that he was the abbot of the Serbian Monastery of the Holy Archangels in Jerusalem during the time of Patriarch Dorotheos of Jerusalem and Patriarch Gregory IV of Alexandria.²¹ His name was first associated with “Zeta’s Holy Mountain”, specifically Brezovica, in 1441, when he appears as the spiritual father of Jelena Balšić. His name also appears in a document dated 4 April 1454, preserved in the Kotor Archive, where he is mentioned as the abbot of St. Nicholas Monastery on Vranjina. Nikon is mentioned for the last time on 23 November 1468, in a then-dated charter of Mataguž, where he is also referred to as the abbot of the Vranjina monastery.²²

As has been pointed out several times, the signature of the elder Nikandar at the end of Jelena Balšić’s testament belongs to the same Nikon, then a great schema-monk,²³ to whom Jelena entrusted the writing of her last will.

Two monumental works of Serbian medieval literacy are associated with Nikon of Jerusalem: the aforementioned *Gorica Miscellany*, “the most significant literary composition of medieval Zeta,” which “attests to the presence and consolidation of Byzantine spirituality in this territory,” and the *Hexaameron* (*Šestodnevnik*), “a typical hesychast late-medieval codex” and “perhaps the best-composed preserved hesychast Serbian anthology.”²⁴

The *Hexaameron* (*Šestodnevnik*) was created in 1439–1440, and it can be categorized as “miscellany of unstable content”.²⁵ Most of the Serbian hesychast codices belong to this group, meaning that they are freely composed and do not follow the order of an existing exemplar. This type of theological Orthodox-Slavic anthologies consists of codices with mixed

¹⁴ For a review of the literature on Jelena Balšić, see: Tomin 2011.

¹⁵ Lazić, 1999, 248.

¹⁶ Tomić 2012, 89.

¹⁷ Ćulibrk 2001.

¹⁸ Cf. Ikonomu 1981, 161; Radojičić, 1963, 248.

¹⁹ This position, aside from that of Trifunović 1972, 300–301, is also advocated by Jovan Ćulibrk, Milorad Lazić, and Svetozar Tomić, who romantically claims that Nikon was a „good Serb“ (95). A much more cautious view is taken by Radošević 1981, 171 and Jevtić 2004, 260.

²⁰ Radojičić, 1963, 248–250. Cf. Trifunović, 1972, 289–327.

²¹ Bojović 1987, 37.

²² Bogdanović 1970, 372–380.

²³ Cf. Stojanović 1929, 394–397 (доуховьникъ нникандаръ стараць ѱерузалѣмски [394]; доуховнига ѱи ѿца старца нникандра ѱерузалѣмца [396]).

²⁴ Lazić 2008, 513.

²⁵ Lazić 1999, 168–169, 175.

and varied content. Both Serbian and Bulgarian collections of this type represent the dynamic developmental arc of Byzantine hesychasm in the first half of the 14th century.²⁶ They encompass the theological reception of older patristic authors and their writings, as well as the creative possibilities and new editorial approaches to certain theological points emphasized by Byzantine hesychasm.

The manuscript of *Šestodnevnik* today belongs to the library of the Savina Monastery.²⁷ There is no doubt about the year of its creation or Nikon's authorship, since near its end (fol. 382v) there is an inscription written in Nikon's hand:

СЛАВА СВЕРШИТЕЛЮ БОГУ ВЪ ВЪСКИ ВЪКѢ АМИНЪ ∷ БЛѢ, ЗЪЦМЪ ∷ СМѢРЕНН НІКѢ ИРАМЪЦѢ ∷

According to some inscriptions, the creation of the *Hexaameron* (*Šestodnevnik*) can be linked precisely to the monastic settlement on the “Zetan Holy Mountain”—more specifically, to the island of Beška²⁸—and this interpretation is supported by the fact that Nikon himself explicitly mentions the monastic complex on Lake Skadar in the *Gorica Miscellany*, to whose monks the *Hexaameron* seems to have been intended:

НѢКОГДА ЖЕ, СЛЫШАХѢ, ПАЧЕ ЖЕ НѢ ОЧІМА ОУЗРѢХОМЪ. ЯКО ВЪ ЗЕМЛИ ДІОКЛІТСТЕН ТАМО, ВЪ ЪЗѢРѢ, РОСАВСКѢ, СОУ ОУСТРѢВЪ МНОЗЪ. МѢСТА КЛЮТИМА, СКУТЕНДОМЪ ПУСТЫНІЕ. ПАЧЕ ЖЕ НѢ МОНАСТЫРН ВЕЛИЦН, ЗАДАННЫ НЖЕ ОУ ПРѢЖЕ. Н ТЫ ГЛѢШИ, ЯКО ИНОКОМЪ ДОХВАЛА ЖІТІА ВЪ НИ НѢ ПРѢБЫВАНІА. АНЮВНН ВЪ ЛЮБВН ИСПЛНЕНН МІРА ГА НАШЕГО НУ ХА. Н ВЪ БѢМЛѢВН ВЕЛИЦѢ ПОСТННІСТЬСТВОУЮЩЕН. Н СЛАВЕЩЕ БЖІЮ БЛГОСТЬ. САМОДРЪЖЦА ИМОУЩЕ ОУМА, Н ЦРА ВЪ БЖІИ СЛОВЕЩЕ. Н НІЧЕССОЖЕ ОУНДУ ЛЮБЕЩЕ ЗЕМЛНННХЪ ВЕЩЕН. ПОИСТННѢ БЛГОУІСТІЕ ПОЗНАВАЕТ СЕ, РАЗОУМѢШІИМЪ ИСТНОУ. (85v–86r)

Once we heard, moreover [now] we see with our own eyes that in the land of Dioclea there, on Lake Rosava, there are many islands, places which turned out to be skete deserts, indeed even great monasteries built earlier. And you say how the life of the monks is worthy of praise in them and their dwelling is in love, filled with the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and they abide in great silence, fasting; and praising God's goodness, having their mind as a sovereign and emperor through the words of God; and therefore loving nothing of earthly things, true piety is known in them who have known the truth.

In any case, the content of the *Hexaameron* thematically corresponds quite well with the content of the *Gorica Miscellany*, although the hesychast component—in terms of both the variety of authors represented and the structure of their works—is much more emphasized in the *Hexaameron*.

The *Šestodnevnik* comprises 399 folios measuring 220 by 140 mm, a substantial portion of which was penned by Nikon of Jerusalem himself. The manuscript contains no ornamentation. From two inscriptions, we learn that it was donated to the “monastery of Trebinje” (i.e., the Tvrdoš Monastery) by the hieromonk Dionysius, and that, as noted by hieromonk Moses, the book belongs to the Savina Monastery.²⁹ Based on these inscriptions, and especially considering that the Savina Monastery was not historically recognized as a major scriptorium, we conclude that the *Šestodnevnik*, along with the majority of the current collection of Savina's manuscripts

²⁶ Lazić 2004, 239.

²⁷ See: Bogdanović 1978, 93.

²⁸ Vujošević 1989, 46.

²⁹ Bogdanović 1978, 93.

dating from the 14th to the 18th centuries, was brought from the Tvrdoš Monastery. This transfer likely occurred in 1693 when Bishop Savatije Ljubibratić, fleeing the Turkish invasion, took refuge in Savina along with thirty monks.³⁰

The first part of the *Šestodnevnik* contains the translation of the *Hexaemeron* by Severian of Gabala (1r–93v), a prominent exegete of the Antiochian school active between the 4th and 5th centuries. The second part of the collection is primarily devoted to writings reflecting the hesychastic vision of the world, including texts by Diadochus of Photike, Gregory of Sinai, Symeon the New Theologian, and Nicetas Stethatos, alongside shorter excerpts from numerous other proto-hesychast authors.³¹

Within these texts, the theme of light is marked by both biblical and (Neo-)Platonic influences. Due to the limited space available, we will focus our attention on three authors—Severian of Gabala, Diadochus of Photike, and Nicetas Stethatos—to illustrate the different contexts through which this theme reached the Serbian medieval reader.

2.1. Severian of Gabala's *In mundi creationem*

Severian of Gabala served as the bishop of a small town on the northern Syrian coast and as a revered guest preacher in Constantinople during the time when John Chrysostom occupied the episcopal throne of the capital, thus spanning the transition from the 4th to the 5th century. The events of his life that are known to us cover only a few years (398/399–404): he was born a Syrian and, with the support of the imperial family, presided over the church in Constantinople during Chrysostom's tenure in Asia. The relationship between the two bishops soon became strained, resulting in Chrysostom exiling Severian from Constantinople. Through the intercession of Empress Eudoxia, the gifted bishop was restored to the city, but subsequent turbulent events eventually led to Chrysostom's own exile on 20 June 404. After this, Severian elevated Porphyrius, Chrysostom's opponent, as the successor of Flavian in Antioch, which marks the last historical mention of Severian until his death around 408, during the reign of Theodosius II.³²

Severian left behind a substantial number of homilies delivered between 398 and 404. The irony of history placed many of these in the manuscript tradition under the name of John Chrysostom, a practice that emerged in the second half of the 6th century, likely due to confusion between Severian and Severus of Antioch, who had already been condemned. The homilies concerning the interpretation of the creation of the world—what we today call Severian's *Hexaemeron*—were probably delivered in 401, during the first week of Great Lent.³³ As has been repeatedly noted, they reveal the influence of Ephrem the Syrian and John Chrysostom himself, an influence that Severian openly acknowledged before his audience.³⁴

In comparison to the scant direct tradition in Greek, “where we have no more than ten manuscripts (of the 10th to 17th century) with a (near-)complete corpus of the six orations,” the Slavonic tradition is “rich and complex”,³⁵ since it incorporated fragments of Severian's homilies *On the Creation of the World* very early in its corpus.³⁶ Severian's name and work have been reliably present in Serbian culture since 1263, when the frequently interrupted and delayed

³⁰ Cf. Stanković 1998, 266–268; Ivošević 1999, 161, 169.

³¹ For a detailed description of the collection, including a reconstruction of its sources, see Knežević 2026.

³² Carter 2000, 1–4. For the conflict between Severian and Chrysostom, see in particular Van Nuffelen 2019.

³³ Carter 2000, 12, 14–16.

³⁴ Hill, 6–7.

³⁵ Sels, Van Pee 2019, 225.

³⁶ Radošević 2004, 169; Sels, Van Pee 2019, 229–234.

The translation of Severian of Gabala's *Hexaemeron* complements the corpus of Serbian theological translations related to exegetical works on the Book of Genesis, which includes corresponding texts by St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory of Nyssa, and St. John Chrysostom. These authors were certainly well known to Nikon of Jerusalem, an accomplished theologian. His reasons for including Severian's work in the anthology may have been twofold: either for practical reasons, as he may not have had access to a better source, or to achieve a more balanced diversity, enriching the anthology with Severian's presence in Serbian theological discourse.⁴⁰

Let us now turn to Severian and his treatment of the concept of light within the framework of the creation of the world. Following the exposition of the Book of Genesis, Severian divides creation into two stages. First, primordial matter was created from nothing and then God, according to His will, shaped this matter, taking care to form and adorn it. During this time, the four basic elements also came into existence. The light created on the first day, similar in composition to angels and the human soul, is brought closer to man, who was created on the last day. In fact, it is the human mind that further develops what appeared on earth thanks to the light:

³⁷ Radošević 2004, 170.

³⁹ Radošević 2004, 172; Sels, Van Pee 2019, 237, fn. 46.

⁴¹ Cf. Hill 2010, 13–17, 20–21.

47

Since light was God’s first work and the human being God’s final work, God first makes the light with a word and later the human being with an action, completing light with light. To learn how a human being is also light, listen carefully. Light shows what is in existence; the human being is the light of the world, and at his entrance he showed you a light of artifice, a light of knowledge. The light showed grain, intelligence made bread; the light showed grapes of the vine, the light of understanding showed the wine in the grapes; the light showed wool, the human’s being light showed clothing; the light showed a mountain, the light of understanding showed stonecutting. This is the reason why the Savior also calls the apostles light in saying, “You are the light of the world” [Matt. 5:14].⁴³

Severian provides a detailed explanation of the purpose of the upper waters. Firstly, they protected the firmament from being ignited and melted by the great heavenly lights (14r). Secondly, they prevented the light from passing through the otherwise transparent firmament, stopping it and returning it to earth (вѣды прѣвѣше нѣсъ, нѣ ѿ пламени свѣтоу ѿ лоуѣ ниспослѣтъ). When the Day of Judgment comes, the upper waters will part, the heavens will dissolve, and the stars will fall because they will no longer have a firmament to move upon (не ѿмѣше пѣти, нишѣствѣа) [14v]. Continuing his exposition, Severian says that one should marvel at and worship the Creator: God, like a world artist (мѣркын хѣдожнѣкъ), adorned the sky with the sun, moon, and stars, and crowned the earth with flowers and plants, diversifying all creation (20r).⁴⁴

On the third day, God gathered the waters and divided them into seas, rivers, springs, lakes, and wells (22v). Similarly, with the light, anticipating the works of the following day, Severian describes how the Creator shaped various lights from the light created on the first day, according to His will, “there light, here stars” (тѣмо свѣтъ вѣць, здѣже звѣзды). Just as one would divide a lump of gold into small coins, so did the Creator distribute the light of a unified essence into the sun, moon, and stars (тѣко ѿ свѣтъ ѣдинъ сѣ ѿ ѣдино дѣвнѣ. разсѣкъ хытрѣць, раздѣли, въ свѣцѣ въ лоуѣ, въ звѣзды [22v]).⁴⁵ Severian observes the problem that the heavenly lights illuminate the earth from above, while the nature of light and fire is to send their flames and rays upward. The solution to this problem lies in God’s decision. God imposed His command on the nature of the element. The heavenly lights shine upon the earth not according to their natural properties, but by Divine decree (ѣко да не по ѣствѣ сѣлѣтъ, нѣ по повелѣнѣю [23v]). The heavenly luminaries were created only on the third day, not because there was no firmament earlier to place them on or because there were no fruits yet to warm, but mainly to prevent the human error of attributing the role of the primary mover to the sun (да не ѿ пакѣ вымѣнитъ се ѣко ѣствома свѣтныма прозѣбоше [22r]). The poetic line тѣко ѿ бѣ прѣвѣе сътворишь свѣтила ѿзвѣнъ нѣа. ѿ тогдѣ въ дроуѣ ѿ гѣрѣ, ѣко хѣдожнѣкъ has a beautiful mystical tone and conveys an image of God as Creator, fashioning the luminaries (likely sun, moon, stars) outside the heavens, and then elevating them above the mountains like a painter or artist (22v). At the moment of its creation, the moon was full. It would not have been good for God’s work to immediately appear defective (23r).⁴⁶

Isidoros Katsos has argued that the Cappadocian interpretation of the hexaemeral narrative is shaped by a Plotinian metaphysics of light, wherein celestial light is conceived not as an incorporeal abstraction (ἀσώματον) but as a “hollow” or “tubular” light (ἄλυνον φῶς)—a subtle yet real ontological efflux that mediates between the divine source and the created

⁴³ Severianus, *De mundi creatione* I, 6, PG 56, 436 (tr. Hill).

⁴⁴ Radošević 2004, 173–174.

⁴⁵ Radošević 2004, 173–174.

⁴⁶ Radošević 2004, 175, 179.

cosmos.⁴⁷ In contrast, the exegesis of Severian of Gabala appears more aligned with post-Plotinian developments, particularly the Iamblichian doctrine of light, as articulated in the *De mysteriis*. Through detailed textual and terminological analysis, Katsos shows that Severian’s cosmology presupposes a more dynamic and quasi-material conception of celestial luminosity: not merely light (φῶς), but immaterial fire (ἄυλον πῦρ/ὠγνὴς ἡνεκμεστὶς βὴνὴς)—a formulation directly paralleled in *De mysteriis* V.11.6 and echoed in Severian’s *Cosmogony* (3r).⁴⁸ In this framework, the celestial element is no longer simply an image of divine intelligibility (as in Plotinus), but becomes a theurgically charged medium, resonating with the Iamblichian emphasis on embodied ritual and the descent of divine energy into material forms.

2.2. Diadochus of Photike

The issue of light in the *Gnostic chapters* of Diadochus of Photike,⁴⁹ an essential monastic text that also found its place in the *Philokalia*, primarily arises in the context of spiritual experience and the attainment of “true knowledge.” According to Diadochus, the human mind by nature is “mobile,” and this mobility can be of two kinds: either directed outward, toward objects of sensory experience, or inward, toward the mind itself. The initial step in the ascetic life involves turning the mind away from the objects of the external world, which means first closing its “exits” (πρόσῃτ ἡμῶν βύσακο ὁμῶς ἐστὶν τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς ἐκ τῶν ἑκτάων [...] ζατκωρημῶν) given by the five senses. This is an epistemological turning of the soul characteristic of the Platonic tradition: the soul turns away from immersion in worldly phenomena toward the vision of divine realities, or “true being.” However, since the mind is by nature in motion—even when turned toward itself—it must be given a specific activity. According to Diadochus, this activity consists in “remembering God” (πάμετ’ αὐτὸν ἐμνήσθαι), that is, the continual repetition of the name of Jesus (ἀλλὰ δὲ λησθῆναι τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ).⁵⁰ This practice is well known as the core moment of hesychastic experience and the “Jesus Prayer.” The constant invocation of Jesus’ name aims at gathering the mind and then elevating it toward the One on whom the mind is now focused. Thus, those who “constantly contemplate this word—the name of Jesus—in their inner sanctuary” (ἐν τῇ ἐκτίᾳ τῆς ψυχῆς, ὅπου ἐστὶν ἡ ἐκκλησία τοῦ κυρίου, ἀσπάζεσθαι τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου), that is, within the mind itself, and who have learned to “hold this holy and most glorious name constantly in the depths of their heart” (ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἡμῶν ἀσπάζεσθαι τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου), according to Diadochus, become capable of seeing the “light of their own mind” (ὁ φῶς τῆς ψυχῆς, ὁ φῶς τῆς ἐκκλησίας), thus gaining clarity regarding its thoughts and inner movements (166r).⁵¹

This revelation of the “light of the mind” suggests a profound affinity between the mind and its divine archetype, clearly reflecting (Neo-)Platonic mysticism. Light thus becomes an indispensable component of “true knowledge” (ὁ φῶς τῆς ἀληθείας), through which one attains “infallible discernment of good from evil” (ἡ ἀληθεία τοῦ καλοῦ καὶ τοῦ κακοῦ).⁵² When the immanent light of the mind is enlivened by invoking the divine name, the human “mind” ascends to the primal light—that is, to the “Sun of Righteousness” (ὁ ἥλιος τῆς δικαιοσύνης)—where it is “brought into the boundless illumination of knowledge” (ἐν τῇ ἀφύτῳ φωτὶ τῆς ἀληθείας).

⁴⁷ Katsos 2023, 118, n. 23.

⁴⁸ Severianus, *De mundi creatione* I, 4, PG 56, 434.

⁴⁹ Diadochus Photicensis, *Liber asceticus*, des Places 1955.

⁵⁰ Diadochus Photicensis, *Liber asceticus* 59, des Places 1955, 119.1–5.

⁵¹ Diadochus Photicensis, *Liber asceticus* 59, des Places 1955, 119.7–11.

⁵² Diadochus Photicensis, *Liber asceticus* 6, des Places 1955, 87.1–2.

According to Diadochus, the attainment of purification and “true knowledge” is preceded by ascetic effort, since the divine light in the mind only becomes manifest after the soul has gained mastery over the passions. However, Diadochus warns—following the Apostle Paul (1 Corinthians 11:14)—that on the ascetic path, a false light may also appear. This phenomenon, known in monastic literature as *prelest* (deception), occurs when the ascetic is at risk of mistaking a demonic light for a divine one:

If a light or a fiery figure appears to any of the warriors, do not accept such a vision. This is a clear deception of the enemy. Many have suffered from ignorance and have strayed from the path of truth.⁵⁶

The presence of the grace of the Holy Spirit and divine light is an essential prerequisite for receiving the greatest gift—the “gift of theology,” which, above all others, stirs the heart toward love of God (ни́тъже́ сѣ́е на́ше въспала́мьт ѥ́ движа́тъ сѣ́и въ лѣ́бовь то́го бл҃гѣн, ѥ́акоже́ еѣ́слова́нїе). This gift not only inspires us to “exchange perishable desires for the ineffable riches of God’s word” (ѥ́ако ѥ́моу́щїхъ вѣ́дѣ́тъ та́кѣннѣ́ жѣ́ланїи́ неї́згѣ́ланное́ богаты́ство́ слова́ бж҃їа), but also “illuminates the mind with the fire of transformation” (та́же о́гнемь о́умъ на́ше о́зара́мьт ѥ́змѣ́ненїа). Those who prepare themselves for this “virtue” (добра́е дѣ́ла́) are freed from all anxiety, for “in the radiance of ineffable light, the mind is nourished by the words of God” (вѣ́сакое́ бесчѣ́стїа́

⁵⁷ *Diadochus Photicensis*, *Liber asceticus* 28, des Places 1955, 99.6–21.

worldly reasoning” (172r, 174r, 182v)⁶⁴ signifies a fundamental change in cognitive perspective and a transformation of the mind, which in Christian experience is known as “conversion” or “repentance”, a key prerequisite for attaining “divine reasoning” (бжтвѣно мѡѹдрѡванїе) [172r] and receiving the rays of the Spirit (л҃хѣ д҃ха) [175v].⁶⁵ The visible world of phenomena and sensory data is in fact a world of “deception” (прѣлѣстн вѣщѣи) [178r, 188v],⁶⁶ which means that one must “relentlessly oppose the body” (и на плѣ нещїепо ѡстрѣмн се) and “turn the senses inward toward the soul” (ѡбратн своа чѡвѣства, къ вьноутрѣннѣ дшѣвнѣи) [188r],⁶⁷ so that the mind may approach supernatural realities (оѹмѡу соѹщала плѣче ѣства вьстоупнѣвшѡ) [177v].⁶⁸ To be freed from “captivity to the senses” (оуѡѹ сѡщїиць пѡ чѡвѣствѡ) and “bodily self-love” (самѡлѡбїе мѣ тѣлеснѣ), ascetic effort is necessary—that is, “the overcoming of passions” (прѣвѣлѡшх стрѣтн) [177v–178r].⁶⁹ This, in a sense, suspends the senses and “closes the entrance to oneself from outside” influences (вѣнѣшнѣе къ себѣ затворнѣх вѣхѡды). After this inward turn, “the mind begins to contemplate itself and its movements” (сѣматратн себѣ начїнаетѣ. и своа движенїа), enabling it to discern which thoughts lead to spiritual progress and which lead to regression and separation from the light—that is, from God [177v].⁷⁰

This is precisely the pattern we have seen in Diadochus of Photike, where liberation from bodily attachment, turning the mind toward itself, and awakening “the intellectual sense” are crucial steps on the path to the vision of God. However, spiritual struggles and solitude in the desert are not ends in themselves; rather, they serve as preparatory stages after which one must direct one’s intellectual eye toward the vision of God (вѣперн свое ѡмносе ѡко къ вѣдѣнїю бжтѡ) [188v]:⁷¹

Иже вестрѣта прїеблїжнѣ се прѣлѡ. прѣва оѹѡѹ ѡ вѣѣ и ѣство сѡщїи творе зрѣнїа ѡ добротѣ тваренїа по равнѣствѡх тѡ тѣоты вѣ творцѣ вьстнїе, прїеиметь свѣтолѣтїа д҃ха. бл҃гаа же ѡ мѡшлениа нѣмѣе къ вѣмѣ, прѣно помѣшлѣаѣ ѡ вѣѣ добраа. стѣх же вѣѣ зрнѣ и тѣѣхѡ. и ѡ бжтѣвнѣи и члѣвѣскѣи вѣщїи, и сѣ прѣвѣ изнѡстн. и желѣе оѹѡѹ ннѣсѡго же ѡ иже ѡ вѣщїе мѣрскѣи. и члѣкѡ тыщнмѣи. сѣ вѣкѣ же се оѹмѡмѣ вьсѣмѣрскѣаго чѡвѣства. кѣ нѣемѣ и бѣи вьстнѣе. чїстѣ вьсѣкоѣ тннїе, и вѣсѣкоѣ рабѡтѣи свобѡды. и вѣ бѣвѣаѣтѣ мѣсѣлнѣи бжтїи бл҃гѣи. вѣ ѣднѣѡ д҃сѣ. и бжтѣвнѡю добротѣ зрнѣтѣ. и вѣголѣпно лѡвѡвѣ мѣщѣаѣт се, вѣ бжтѣвнѣи мѣсѣтѣ бл҃женнѣе бжтїе сѣлѣкѣи. вѣ неїзрѣнїю мѣлѣанїи, и рѣдѡстн. и чѡвѣства вьсѣа измѣннѣи, ѣко аг҃лѣ вѣ вѣщїствнѣ тѣлѣсн невѣщїствнѣ сѣ члѣкѣи жнѣе. (191rv)

When you approach the frontiers of dispassion – attaining a right view of God and the nature of things, and according to your growth in purity ascending to the Creator through the beauty of His creatures – you will be illumined by the Holy Spirit. Entertaining kindly feelings about all men and always thinking good of all, you will look on all as pure and holy and will rightly esteem things both human and divine. You will desire none of the material things that men seek but, divesting yourself of worldly sense-perception by means of the intellect, you will ascend towards heaven and towards God, free from all impurity and from every form of servitude, aware in spirit only of God’s blessings and His beauty. Thus, full of reverence and joy, and in indescribable

⁶⁴ Nicetas Pectoratus, *Practicorum capitum centuria* I, 2, 13, 46, PG 120, 853A, 856D, 872C.

⁶⁵ Nicetas Pectoratus, *Practicorum capitum centuria* I, 17, PG 120, 860AB.

⁶⁶ Nicetas Pectoratus, *Practicorum capitum centuria* I, 19, 75, PG 120, 860CD, 884D–885A.

⁶⁷ Nicetas Pectoratus, *Practicorum capitum centuria* I, 74, PG 120, 885AC.

⁶⁸ Nicetas Pectoratus, *Practicorum capitum centuria* I, 22, PG 120, 861A.

⁶⁹ Nicetas Pectoratus, *Practicorum capitum centuria* I, 23, PG 120, 861BC.

⁷⁰ Nicetas Pectoratus, *Practicorum capitum centuria* I, 26, PG 120, 864AB.

⁷¹ Nicetas Pectoratus, *Practicorum capitum centuria* I, 74, PG 120, 885AC.

silence, you will dwell in the divine realm of God's blessed glory, all your senses transformed, and at the same time you will live spiritually among men like an angel in a material body.⁷²

Liberation from the passions leads a person to a twofold knowledge: on the one hand, he acquires a "right vision of God," but also a "right vision of the nature of beings." In speaking of attaining a "correct judgment about divine and human things," Niketas evokes the Stoic definition of philosophy: γνῶσις θείων καὶ ἀνθρωπίνων πραγμάτων.⁷³ In other words, the degree to which one contemplates "divine and human realities" depends on ascetic effort and purification—what Niketas refers to in several places as "practical philosophy" (ἀπὸ πρακτικῆς φιλοσοφίας) [191v]⁷⁴: the greater the purification, the more clearly the soul perceives "the rays of the Sun of Righteousness and her natural beauty." Yet this is not the only debt the eminent Christian author owes to antiquity. As we have already seen, Niketas stresses that following ascetic efforts, it is necessary to "direct the intellectual eye toward the vision of God" (ἐλπεῖν σὺν ὁμολογίᾳ καὶ ἐκείνῳ ἐκείνῳ) [188v]. This, as is well known, is a variation of the classical Platonic expression "the eye of the soul" (τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς ὄμμα), through which, as Socrates teaches in the seventh book of the *Republic*, man alone "can see the truth."⁷⁵ Speaking of "an organ of the soul" (ὄργανόν τι ψυχῆς)⁷⁶ by which one reaches the idea of the Good as "the highest being," Socrates also emphasizes that the Good is not only the cause of the intelligible objects as the supreme objects of knowledge, but also the power in the knower that enables one to know them.⁷⁷

This is a crucial point worth highlighting. In contrast to the modern Enlightenment conception, where epistemology is sharply distinguished from spirituality, ancient and medieval thought sees no true knowledge apart from two essential conditions: first, the moral purification of the knower, and second, the intervention of a transcendent presence.⁷⁸ That is to say, through ascetic purification the mind becomes receptive to a transformation granted by the highest "object" of knowledge—God himself—who, through ineffable light, bestows upon the ascetic the same immediate vision enjoyed by the highest angelic orders.⁷⁹

In Niketas' theology, the intensification of ascetic effort restores the "image of God" in the human person, preserving it "unmingled with anything material," and rendering the soul "worthy to behold God and to converse with Him" [210v].⁸⁰ This vision, as with Diadochos of Photiki, is not the product of rational speculation but the result of divine intervention—specifically, the operation of "the grace of the Holy Spirit," which, through the medium of light, reveals "ineffable insights" (ἡ σὺν ἐκείνῳ τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι καὶ τῷ φωτί, ἡ καὶ ὑπερβαίνει τὴν φωνήν, ἡ καὶ ὑπερβαίνει τὴν φωνήν) [192r]⁸¹ and "the mysteries of the Kingdom of God" (ταῖς μυστηρίοις τοῦ βασιλείου τοῦ Θεοῦ) [187r].⁸² Through the "noetic vision of the divine light, one receives knowledge of the hidden mysteries

⁷² Nicetas Pectoratus, *Practicorum capitum centuria* I, 90, PG 120, 893BD; Palmer, Sherrard, Ware 1995, 103.

⁷³ Cf. Diamantopoulos 2021.

⁷⁴ Nicetas Pectoratus, *Practicorum capitum centuria* I, 94, PG 120, 896BC.

⁷⁵ *Politeia* VII, 527de; 533cd; 519b.

⁷⁶ Cf. also *Politeia* VII, 518c.

⁷⁷ *Politeia* VI, 508e–509a.

⁷⁸ Cf. Gavriluk, Coakley 2012, 13.

⁷⁹ Cf. Sinkewicz 1999, 379.

⁸⁰ Nicetas Pectoratus, *Practicorum capitum centuria* II, 86, PG 120, 941D–944A.

⁸¹ Nicetas Pectoratus, *Practicorum capitum centuria* I, 94, PG 120, 896BC.

⁸² Nicetas Pectoratus, *Practicorum capitum centuria* I, 63, PG 120, 880D – 881A; III, 44, PG 120, 973CD–976A.

жѣвота прѣстѣрь) [173r],⁸⁸ lives, according to Niketas, an angelic life even while still on earth. In doing so, such a person already participates—within the limits of historical existence—in the state that will be fully realized only when the Kingdom of God comes in its plenitude.

3. Conclusion

The analysis of the 15th-century Slavonic Hexaameron codex from Savina Monastery reveals a synthesis of cosmological, theological, and mystical traditions that characterized medieval Serbian spiritual culture. At the heart of this synthesis lies the “circle of light”—a conceptual and experiential journey that maps the ascent from the created light of the cosmos to the uncreated light of divine presence and contemplation.

This circle begins with the Father of Light, the ultimate source and origin of all illumination, echoing both biblical and Neoplatonic traditions. The journey then unfolds through a series of stages that parallel the days of creation and the progression of spiritual life. The celestial light of the first day, as described in Genesis and patristic exegesis, marks the emergence of order and intelligibility from primordial chaos. This light is the foundation of all subsequent manifestations and is closely associated with the divine act of creation itself. On the third day, the divided light appears with the creation of the luminaries—the sun, moon, and stars. This light, now differentiated and distributed throughout the cosmos, governs time, seasons, and rhythms of life, symbolizing the divine wisdom that orders the universe. The sixth day brings the light of reason, bestowed uniquely upon humanity. Here, the *Hexaameron* codex highlights the gift of rationality and the capacity for discernment, which enables humans to recognize the divine imprint in creation and to aspire toward higher knowledge. Yet, the journey does not end with reason. Through prayer and ascetic practice, the soul is called to attain the light of an enlightened mind and a purified heart—the uncreated light of the seventh day. This stage, rooted in hesychast tradition, emphasizes the experiential knowledge of God, achieved not through intellectual effort alone but through inner transformation and direct participation in divine energies. The writings of hesychast authors, translated and transmitted in the Serbian context, provide the theological foundation for this ascent, teaching that the vision of divine light is both the goal and the gift of contemplative life. The circle reaches its eschatological fulfillment in Christ, the light of the world and the Holy Trinity, corresponding to the “eighth day”—a symbol of the new creation and the eternal Sabbath. In this final stage, the created and uncreated, the visible and invisible, are united. The believer, having traversed the stages of cosmological and spiritual illumination, participates in the unending light of Christ, which transcends the limitations of time and nature.

This “circle of light” thus serves as both a cosmological schema and a mystical itinerary. It reflects the creative adaptation of Byzantine and Neoplatonic thought within Serbian monastic culture, facilitated by the translation and integration of foundational texts. The *Hexaameron* codex stands as a testament to this intellectual and spiritual ambition, offering future generations a comprehensive vision that unites the light of creation with the light of contemplation. Ultimately, the codex not only preserves the theological legacy of its sources but also embodies the dynamic interplay between creation, illumination, and divine encounter. It affirms the enduring relevance of the “circle of light” as a paradigm for spiritual ascent, guiding the faithful from the first dawn of creation to the radiant fullness of union with God in Christ.

⁸⁸ Nicetas Pectoratus, *Practicorum capitum centuria* I, 8, PG 120, 853D–856A.

Primary literature (Sources)

Fahl, Sabine, Fahl, Dieter et alii (2010): *Das Corpus des Dionysios Areiopagites in der slavischen Übersetzung von Starec Isaija (14. Jahrhundert) = Дионисиѹ Ареопагитѹ в славянском переводе старца Исаиѹ (XIV век). Faksimile der Handschrift nr. 46 aus der Sammlung A. F. Hilferding der russischen Nationalbibliothek, Freiburg i. Br.: Weiher; St. Petersburg: Russische Nationalbibliothek 2010.*

Hill, Robert (2010): Severian of Gabala, *Homilies on Creation and Fall*, translated with an Introduction and Notes by Robert C. Hill, in: *Commentaries on Genesis 1–3. Severian of Gabala and Bede the Venerable*, translated by Robert C. Hill, Carmen S. Hardin, edited by Michael Glerup, Ancient Christian Texts, Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press 2010.

Jevtić, Atanasije (2013): „Ispovedanje vere Svetog Grigorija Palame – srpski prevod u Pećskom rukopisu 85 iz 1353. godine“, in: *Οὐσία, ὑπόστασις, ἐνέργεια. Aspekti misli Grigorija Palame*, priredio Mikonja Knežević, Beograd: Institut za teološka istraživanja 2013, 509–523.

Kakridis, Yannis, Taseva, Lora (2014): *Gegen die Lateiner Traktate von Gregorios Palamas und Barlaam von Kalabrien in kirchenslavischer Übersetzung.*, Freiburg i. Br.: Weiher 2014.

Palmer, G. E. H., Sherrard, Philip, Ware, Kallistos (1995), *The Philokalia. The Complete Text compiled by St Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain and St Makarios of Corinth*, volume four, translated from the Greek and edited by G. E. H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard and Kallistos Ware, with the assistance of The Holy Transfiguration Monastery (Brookline), Constantine Cavarinos, Dana Miller, Basil Osborne, Norman Russell, London: Faber and Faber 1995.

Places, Édouard des (1955): *Diadoque de Photicé, Œuvres spirituelles*. Introduction, texte critique, traduction et notes de Édouard des Places, Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf 1955.

Sels, Lara (2009): Gregory of Nyssa, *De hominis opificio. O образъ чловѣка*. The Fourteenth-Century Slavonic Translation. A Critical Edition with Greek Parallel and Commentary by Lara Sels, Leuven: Katholieke Universiteit Leuven 2009.

Weiher, Eckhard (1969): *Die Dialektik des Johannes von Damaskos in kirchenslavischer Übersetzung*, herausgegeben von Eckhard Weiher, Monumenta linguae slavicae dialecti veteris. Fontes et dissertationes VIII, Wiesbaden 1969.

Secondary literature

Bogdanović, Dimitrije (1970): „Gorički zbornik“, in: *Istorija Crne Gore. Knjiga druga. Od kraja XII do kraja XV vijeka. Tom drugi. Crna Gora u doba oblasnih gospodara*, Titograd: Redakcija za istoriju Crne Gore 1970, 372–380.

Bogdanović, Dimitrije (1978): „Inventar rukopisa manastira Savine“, in: Dejan Medaković, *Manastir Savina. Velika crkva, riznica, rukopisi*, Beograd: Filozofski fakultet, Institut za istoriju umetnosti 1978, 89–96.

Bogosavljević, Nikodim (2004): „Zetska Sveta Gora. Duhovni smisao i sadržaj“, in: *Nikon Jerusalimac. Vrijeme – ličnost – djelo. Zbornik radova sa međunarodnog naučnog simposiona na Skadarskom jezeru 7–9. septembra 2000. godine*, priredio jeromonah Jovan (Ćulibrk), Zbornik Zetske Svete Gore I, Cetinje: Svetigora 2004, 111–121.

Bojović, Boško (1987): „Žitije Svetoga Simeona Mirotočivoga od Nikona Jerusalimca“, *Bogoslovlje* 1 (1987), 37–45.

Carter, Robert E. (2000): “The Chronology of Twenty Homilies of Severian of Gabala”, *Traditio* 55 (2000), 1–17.

Ćulibrk, Jovan (2001): „Nikon Jerusalimac i isihastičko predanje“, in: *Sveti Grigorije Palama u istoriji i sadašnjosti. Međunarodni naučni simposion: 650 godina Saborskog tomosa (1351–2001), Srbinje – Ostrog – Trebinje, 19–21. oktobar 2001*, redakcija P. Puzović, M. Vasiljević, B. Brajović, Srbinje – Ostrog – Trebinje: Duhovna akademija Svetoga Vasilija Ostroškog 2001, 151–160.

Diamantopoulos, Georgios (2021): „Die zweite Definition der Philosophie der alexandrischen neuplatonischen Schule in den Werken des Niketas Stetathos“, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 114, 3 (2021), 1013–1036.

Economou, Eleni (1998): “Some Observations on the Hesychast Diaspora in the Fifteenth Century”, *Studi sull’Oriente Cristiano* 2, 2 (1998), 103–110.

Ermatinger, Cliff (2010): *Following the Footsteps of the Invisible. The Complete Works of Diadochus of Photikē*. Introduction, Translation and Notes by Cliff Ermatinger, Cistercian Studies Series 239, Minnesota, Collegeville: Liturgical Press 2010.

Gavrilyuk, Paul L., Coakley, Sarah (2021): “Introduction”, in: *The Spiritual Senses. Perceiving God in Western Christianity*, edited by P. L. Gavrilyuk, S. Coakley, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2012, 1–19.

Gerogiorgakis, Stamatios D. (2010): “The Controversy between Barlaam of Calabria and Gregory Palamas on Demonstrative and Dialectical Syllogisms Revisited”, *Philotheos. International Journal for Philosophy and Theology* 10 (2010) 157–169.

Hill, Robert C. (2010): “Translator’s Introduction”, in: Severian of Gabala, *Homilies on Creation and Fall*, translated with an Introduction and Notes by Robert C. Hill, in: *Commentaries on Genesis 1–3. Severian of Gabala and Bede the Venerable*, translated by Robert C. Hill, Carmen S. Hardin, edited by Michael Glerup, Ancient Christian Texts, Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press 2010, 5–22.

Ikonomu, Marija (1981): „Gorički zbornik – poreklo, sadržaj o kosmografiji“, *Cyrrillomethodianum* V (1981), 161–165.

Ivošević, Vaso J. (1999): „Biblioteka manastira Savina“, *Boka* 21–22 (1999), 157–184.

Jevtić, Atanasije (2004): „Ispovedanje vere Nikona Jerusalimljanina“, in: *Nikon Jerusalimac. Vrijeme – ličnost – djelo. Zbornik radova sa međunarodnog naučnog simposiona na Skadarskom jezeru 7–9. septembra 2000. godine*, priredio jeromonah Jovan (Ćulibrk), Cetinje 2004, 257–269.

Katsos, Isidoros C. (2023): *The Metaphysics of Light in the Hexaemeral Literature. From Philo of Alexandria To Gregory of Nyssa*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2023.

Knežević, Mikonja, Stefanović-Banović, Milesa (2021): *Gregorius Palamas & David Disypatos. Scripta minora. Versio Serbica*, Beograd: Etnografski institut SANU, Izdavačka delatnost Hrama Svetog Save 2021.

Knežević, Mikonja (2026): „Opis Zbornika 28 rukopisne biblioteke Manastira Savina (Šestodnevnik Nikona Jerusalimca)“, у припреди.

Lazić, Milorad (1999): *Isihazam srpske knjige*, Niš 1999.

Lazić, Milorad (2004): „Bogoslovska struktura zbornika Šestodneva Nikona Jerusalimca Manastira Savine iz 1439/40. godine“, in: *Nikon Jerusalimac. Vrijeme – ličnost – djelo. Zbornik radova sa međunarodnog naučnog simposiona na Skadarskom jezeru 7–9. septembra 2000. godine*, priredio jeromonah Jovan (Ćulibrk), Cetinje 2004, 239–255.

Lazić, Milorad (2008): *Srpska estetika asketizma (1375–1459)*, Sveti Manastir Hilandar: Sabor staraca Manastira Hilandara 2008.

Radojičić, Đorđe Sp. (1963): *Tvorci i dela stare srpske književnosti*, Titograd: Grafički zavod 1963, 247–250.

Radošević, Ninoslava (1981): „Kozmografski i geografski odlomci Goričkog zbornika“, *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta* 20 (1981), 171–185.

Radošević, Ninoslava (2004): „Nikonov Šestodnevnik u rukopisu manastira Savine 21. Spis 'O stvaranju sveta' Severijana episkopa Gavale u srpskoslovenskom prevodu“, in: *Nikon Jerusalimac. Vrijeme – ličnost – djelo. Zbornik radova sa međunarodnog naučnog simposiona na Skadarskom jezeru 7–9. septembra 2000. godine*, priredio jeromonah Jovan (Ćulibrk), Cetinje 2004, 167–184.

Radović, Amfilohije (2010): „Sinaiti i njihov značaj u životu Srbije XIV i XV veka“, in: *Isihazam. Osvajanje unutarnjih prostora*, Manastir Podmaine 2010, 207–261.

Sels, Lara, Van Pee, Sarah (2019): “The Slavonic Tradition of Severian of Gabala's 'De mundi creatione orationes' (CPG 4194)”, in: *John Chrysostom and Severian of Gabala. Homilists, Exegetes and Theologians*, edited by J. Leemans, G. Roskam, J. Segers, Leuven, Paris, Bristol, CT 2019, 225–244.

Sinkewicz, Robert E. (1999): “The Concept of Spiritual Perception in Gregory Palamas' First Triad in Defence of the Holy Hesychasts”, *Христианский Восток* 1(7) (1999), 374–390.

Stanković, Radoman (1998): „Rukopisne knjige Manastira Savine. Vodeni znaci i datiranje“, *Arheografski prilozi* 20 (1998), 265–367.

Stojanović, Ljubomir (1929): *Stare srpske povelje i pisma. Knjiga I. Dubrovnik i susedi njegovi. Prvi deo*, sredio Ljub. Stojanović, Beograd – Sr. Karlovci: Srpska kraljevska akademija 1929.

Strezova, Anita (2014): *Hesychasm and Art. The Appearance of New Iconographic Trends in Byzantine and Slavic Lands in the 14th and 15th Centuries*, Canberra: The Australian National University Press 2014.

Tahiaos, Antonios-Emil (1975): „Isihazam u doba kneza Lazara“, in: *O knezu Lazaru*, urednici I. Božić, V. J. Đurić, Beograd: Filozofski fakultet, Odeljenje za istoriju umetnosti, Kruševac: Narodni muzej 1975, 93–103.

Tomić, Svetozar (2012): „Predgovor“, in: Vladimir Balj, „Rad Svetozara Tomića na proučavanju i objavljivanju 'Goričkog zbornika'“, in: *Srpsko jezičko nasljeđe na prostoru današnje Crne Gore i srpski jezik danas. Zbornik radova sa Međunarodnog naučnog skupa održanog u Herceg Novom 20–23. aprila 2012. godine*, Nikšić: Matica srpska – Društvo članova u Crnoj Gori, Odjeljenje za srpski jezik i književnost, Matica srpska u Novom Sadu 2012, 77–96: 87–96.

Tomin, Svetlana (2011): „Bibliografija radova o Jeleni Balšić (između 1366. i 1371–1443)“, *Knjiženstvo. Časopis za studije književnosti, roda i kulture* 1 (2011), <http://www.knjizenstvo.rs/magazine.php?text=33>

Trifunović, Đorđe (1972): „Dve poslanice Jelene Balšić i Nikonova 'Povest o jerusalimskim crkvama i pustinjskim mestima'“, *Književna istorija* V, 18 (1972), 289–327.

Van Nuffelen, Peter (2019): “Boundless Ambition or a Friendship That Went Wrong? Narrating the Conflict Between John Chrysostom and Severian of Gabala”, in: *John Chrysostom and Severian of Gabala. Homilists, Exegetes and Theologians*, edited by Johan Leemans, Geert Roskam, Josien Segers, *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 282, Bibliothèque de “Byzantion” 20, Leuven, Paris, Bristol, CT: Peeters 2019, 245–257.

Vujošević, Rajka (1989): „Skriptorij Skadarskog jezera“, in: *Skriptoriji i manastirske biblioteke u Crnoj Gori. Zbornik radova sa naučnog skupa na Cetinju održanog 26. i 27. oktobra 1987. godine*, Cetinje: Centralna narodna biblioteka SR Crne Gore „Đurđe Crnojević“ 1989, 45–51.

Микоња Кнежевић
Владимир Цветковић

**ОД СВЕТЛОСТИ СТВАРАЊА ДО СВЕТЛОСТИ СОЗЕРЦАЊА:
РАЗУМЕВАЊЕ СВЕТЛОСТИ У СЛОВЕНСКИМ ПРЕВОДИМА
ШЕСТОДНЕВНИЧКЕ ЛИТЕРАТУРЕ 15. ВЕКА**

Овај рад испитује појам и симболику светлости у *Шестодневику* из XV века, сачуваном у манастиру Савина у Црној Гори. Зборник, који је саставио Никон Јерусалимац, обједињује словенске преводе *Хексамерона* Северијана Гавалског и списе истакнутих исихастичких аутора, као што су Дијадох Фотички и Никита Ститат. Кроз упоредно читање ових текстова, рад показује како тема светлости функционише као појмовни мост између космологије, теологије и мистике, повезујући новолатоновска космолошка схватања са исихастичким разумевањем природе божанске светлости.

Анализа открива да *Шестодневник* обликује духовни и космолошки „круг светлости“ — постепено успињање од створене светлости космоса ка нествореној божанској светлости. Ово путовање започиње од „Оца светлости“, извора сваког озарења, и развија се кроз ступеве који одговарају како догађајима у оквиру шест дана стварања, тако и фазама духовног узрастања. Од светлости поретка првог дана, преко светлости разума својствене човеку, све до нестворене светлости божанског сједињења, кодекс прати преображај светлости од физичке и интелектуалне манифестације ка мистичком учешћу у божанским енергијама. Завршна етапа, означена „осмим даном“, представља есхатолошко испуњење и јединство са Христом — вечној Светлошћу.

Синтетишући Северијанову космологију и исихастичку теологију светлости, *Шестодневник* сведочи о креативном пријему византијске и новолатоновске мисли у српској монашкој традицији. Он представља доказ динамичне повезаности стварања, просветљења и божанског сусрета у духовности позног средњег века на Балкану, нудећи кохерентну визију која води од светлости стварања до светлости созерцања Бога.