

## 13 Travels in Europe and Asia

### 13.1 Sylvester's Travels in Epirus and First Visit to Wallachia

Patriarch Sylvester recorded the dates of his voyages in various places: in one of his manuscripts, in the codex of Gümüşhane, in the forewords of some of the books he published in the Romanian Principalities, on the icon of Saint Spyridon in Bucharest, and on the volumes of *Menologia* donated by him to a monastery in Iași.

In 1728, Sylvester of Antioch traveled “in the parts of Epirus [...] for alms” (“εἰς τὰ μέρη τῆς Ἠπείρου [...] χάριν ἐλέους”). The details of this journey are known from the letters he sent to Chrysanthos of Jerusalem and from his brief personal notes preserved in a manuscript.<sup>1</sup> For this journey, he obtained the permission of the Patriarch Paisios II of Constantinople (1726–1732).<sup>2</sup> Sylvester spent a year in Constantinople, visiting the churches there and trying to obtain donations for the Patriarchate of Antioch. On March 4, 1728, he was still in Constantinople, but on March 20 he reached Adrianople. He spent the Easter of 1728 (May 2) in Lititza, formerly Ortaköy (nowadays, Ivaylovgrad in Bulgaria), about 35 kilometers from Adrianople.<sup>3</sup>

Later that year, on August 2, he was in Philippopolis, from where he wrote a letter to the Patriarch of Jerusalem presenting the difficulties of his journey. The alms he had obtained were insufficient even to pay the interests for the debts.<sup>4</sup>

On January 17, 1729, the patriarch of Antioch was in Thessaloniki, where he stayed for a while, spending Easter there (April 17).<sup>5</sup>

In February 1730, Sylvester was in Ioannina, in the Epirus. In a letter to Chrysanthos of Jerusalem, he mentioned the reason for his presence in the city, asking him to explain it to the patriarch of Constantinople. Apparently, the latter was not pleased that the patriarch of Antioch was in the region asking for alms at the same time with a mission from the Constantinopolitan church of Eḡrikapı

---

1 In MS 124 Jerusalem, f. 19v, cf. Phirippidēs, “Επίσκεψις τῶν Ἰωαννίνων ὑπὸ τοῦ πατριάρχου Ἀντιοχείας Σιλβέστρου”, p. 117–118. The notes seem to be recorded later, in 1735, from memory or from earlier notes.

2 Papadopoulos, “Επιστολαὶ Σιλβέστρου Ἀντιοχείας”, p. 135.

3 Phirippidēs, “Επίσκεψις τῶν Ἰωαννίνων ὑπὸ τοῦ πατριάρχου Ἀντιοχείας Σιλβέστρου”, p. 118.

4 Papadopoulos, “Επιστολαὶ Σιλβέστρου Ἀντιοχείας”, p. 136.

5 Phirippidēs, “Επίσκεψις τῶν Ἰωαννίνων ὑπὸ τοῦ πατριάρχου Ἀντιοχείας Σιλβέστρου”, p. 118.

(Εγρικαπί).<sup>6</sup> Sylvester assured that he would not ask for any support while the mission was there, as he simply intended to spend the winter in the city.

After his experience in 1728–1730 touring Thrace, parts of Macedonia, and Epirus, where the outcome was not as fruitful as expected, Sylvester found another destination where he could look for help for the Patriarchate: the Romanian Principalities. He established contacts with the ruling princes, the Ghikas, the Mavrokordatos, and the Rakovitzas, and succeeded in reactivating the support gained by former heads of the Church of Antioch from these countries.

In 1730, Sylvester spent Easter (April 9) in Ioannina and then left for Wallachia.<sup>7</sup> There is no information on the route he followed. Most likely, he went by land, a rather long and trying journey. It is not clear whether on his way back he first spent time Constantinople. On May 23 he was in Wallachia, where he was well received (“άσπασίως καὶ χαρμονικῶς”) by Nikolaos Mavrokordatos.<sup>8</sup> It is possible that the visit was intermediated by Chrysanthos of Jerusalem, who had visited Bucharest in 1728.<sup>9</sup>

The reason for Sylvester’s presence in Wallachia was most likely the same as for the rest of his tour in the European provinces of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, namely, to get financial support to repay the debts of the Patriarchate of Antioch. Undoubtedly, Nikolaos Mavrokordatos helped Sylvester, since the patriarch mentioned him later. In the forewords of the Arabic books that he published and in certain notes, Sylvester refers to Mavrokordatos’s sons Constantine and John as “the sons of Nīqūlā bey”.

Sylvester later reported on his visit to Wallachia in 1730 in a letter to the Metropolitan Neophytos of Ungro-Wallachia written on February 10, 1739: “We stayed for a short while in Bucharest” (“διατρίψαντες ὀλίγον ἐν Βουκουρεστίῳ”) during the reign of Nikolaos Mavrokordatos.<sup>10</sup> He mentions that while he was there, he also met the metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia.<sup>11</sup>

Nikolaos Mavrokordatos had reconfirmed the sum of 300 *groschen*, granted by the princes Constantine Brâncoveanu and Stephanos Kantakouzēnos (Ștefan

6 The church of Egrikapi, Panagia tēs Soudas, was affected by a fire in 1728 and this was probably the reason for the fundraising. See K. Andrianopoulou, “Εγρί Καπού”, *Encyclopaedia of the Hellenic World*, Constantinople, 2008, accessible at: <http://www.ehw.gr/L.aspx?id=11076>.

7 Phirippidēs, “Επίσκεψις τῶν Ἰωαννίνων ὑπὸ τοῦ πατριάρχου Ἀντιοχείας Σιλβέστρου”, p. 118.

8 Papadopoulos, “Επιστολαὶ Σιλβέστρου Ἀντιοχείας”, p. 137.

9 He was there on June 12, 1728. See Papadopoulos, “Επιστολαὶ Σιλβέστρου Ἀντιοχείας”, p. 136.

10 Beza, “Biblioteci mănăstirești în Siria, Atena și Insula Hios”, p. 7–8. Neophytos had recently been elected metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia (1738). In the manuscript, the name of the metropolitan is omitted.

11 Named Daniel (1719–1731). His name is not mentioned in Sylvester’s letter.

Cantacuzino) to Sylvester's predecessor Athanasios Dabbās, as annual financial aid for the Patriarchate of Antioch. It is possible that this annual aid was offered to Sylvester during his visit in 1730. The aid of 300 *groschen* was certainly paid in 1737, when it is mentioned in a note as “αὐθεντικὸν ἔλεος” (“princely alms”).<sup>12</sup>

This annual contribution was initially offered for the Arabic press founded by Athanasios Dabbās in Aleppo. Later, its destination was changed to producing manuscript copies of books. No conditions were imposed when the financial support was reconfirmed by Mavrokordatos during a later visit of Athanasios to Wallachia, date unknown. The support was granted by Mavrokordatos although the source of the revenue, the salt mines in the Gorj region, was lost, as it had become a part of the province of Oltenia, temporarily annexed by the Habsburgs (1718–1739).

In 1731, Michael Rakovitzas issued a new *chrysoboullos* confirming the annual financial aid to the Patriarchate of Antioch, which mentioned the former rulers' decrees. Again, as in Nikolaos Mavrokordatos's text, no condition for the use of the grant was specified. Apparently, the 1731 document was issued at the request of Patriarch Sylvester. A Greek translation of the Romanian *chrysoboullos* of Rakovitzas was copied in a manuscript collection of documents and notes belonging to Sylvester of Antioch.<sup>13</sup> It is possible that the content of the document, transcribed by Sylvester or at his initiative, influenced the patriarch to some degree. Later, when he had the opportunity, he enlisted the help of the princes of Moldavia and Wallachia for printing Arabic books, as Athanasios Dabbās had done in the past.

For the moment, in June or July 1730, Sylvester returned to Constantinople, apparently after more than two years of absence from the city.<sup>14</sup> The patriarch remained there for some time and spent the Easter feast of 1731 (April 29) in the “imperial city” (“εἰς βασιλεύουσαν”).<sup>15</sup>

12 MS 124 Jerusalem, f. 141r.

13 *Chrysoboullos* of Mihail Rakovitzas, prince of Wallachia, mentioning the previous princes' donations to the Patriarchate of Antioch, in MS 210 Ḥariṣā, f. 21r–21v.

14 MS 124 Jerusalem, f. 19v: “Καὶ τῷ ἁπλ' ἐορτάσαμεν τὴν Ἁγίαν Ἀνάστασιν εἰς Ἰωάννινα καὶ ἐκεῖθεν ἐπήγαμεν εἰς Βλαχεῖαν, καὶ ἐπιστρέψαμεν εἰς Κωνσταντινούπολιν” (“And in 1730 we celebrated the Holy Resurrection in Ioannina and from there we went to Wallachia, and we returned to Constantinople”). See also Phirippidēs, “Ἐπίσκεψις τῶν Ἰωαννίνων ὑπὸ τοῦ πατριάρχου Ἀντιοχείας Σιλβέστρου”, p. 118.

15 Phirippidēs, “Ἐπίσκεψις τῶν Ἰωαννίνων ὑπὸ τοῦ πατριάρχου Ἀντιοχείας Σιλβέστρου”, p. 118.

## 13.2 The Aegean Islands

Sylvester of Antioch left Constantinople in 1731, sometime after Easter. He presumably secured a permit from the patriarch of Constantinople to collect financial aid from the eparchies of Asia Minor and the islands of the Aegean. He spent Easter of 1732 (April 20) in Kuşadası.

According to the patriarch's own notes, in 1732 he traveled from Kuşadası to the islands of Samos and Chios. Sylvester's presence on Samos is confirmed by a note written by Vasileios Grimanis of Patmos, the patriarch's secretary. The note was recorded on May 4, 1732, in the village of Pagon (or Pagontas) on the island of Samos.<sup>16</sup> Grimanis's note in the manuscript is followed by Sylvester's autograph signature: "Σύλβεστρος Πατριάρχης τῆς Μεγάλης Θεοῦ πόλεως Ἀντιοχείας καὶ πάσης Ἀνατολῆς" ("Sylvester, Patriarch of the Great City of God, Antioch, and of All the East").<sup>17</sup> The presence of the signatures of both individuals one after the other means that the patriarch and his retinue were on Samos at the time.

The same manuscript contains the copy of a letter of Makarios Patmios to Rowland Sherman dated March 28, 1731. Probably, the letter itself had been sent to Sherman, and Sylvester obtained a copy from Makarios, either in person or by correspondence. He may have met Makarios sometime between March 28, 1731, and May 4, 1732, as it seems that the patriarch visited Patmos during this period. A confirmation of this visit could be Sylvester's autograph signature on the above-mentioned manuscript containing the *Memoirs* of Sylvester Syropoulos about the Council of Florence now in the library of the Monastery of Saint John the Theologian in Patmos.<sup>18</sup> Also in Patmos, an icon of the *Holy Mandyllion* painted by Sylvester has been preserved, as mentioned in a publication of 1997 (see below, 19.4).<sup>19</sup>

16 Papadopoulos-Kerameus, "Ἀνέκδοτα Συμαϊκά", p. 191–192: "Ἐλαβε πέρας ἡ παροῦσα βίβλος διὰ χειρὸς ἐμοῦ Βασιλείου Πατμίου Γρημάνη, τοῦ καὶ γραμματικοῦ καὶ κατὰ πνεῦμα υἱοῦ τοῦ μακαριωτάτου, ἀγιωτάτου, καὶ θεοτιμήτου πατριάρχου τῆς μεγάλης Θεουπόλεως Ἀντιοχείας καὶ πάσης Ἀνατολῆς, κυρίου, κυρίου Σιλβέστρου ἐν τῇ νήσῳ περινοστοῦντες τῆς Σάμου εἰς χωρίον Παγόντα κατὰ ἀψλβ' ἔτος, Μαΐου 8'" ("This book was finished by my hand Vasileios Grimanis of Patmos, secretary and spiritual son of his Beatitude, Most Holy and God esteemed patriarch of the great City of God Antioch and All the East, kyrios kyrios Sylvester, traveling around in the island of Samos in the village Pagon [Pagontas] in the year 1732, May 4").

17 Papadopoulos-Kerameus, "Ἀνέκδοτα Συμαϊκά", p. 192.

18 Laurent, *Les "Mémoires" du grand ecclésiarque*, p. 78, no. 16.

19 M. Chatzidakēs, E. Drakopoulou, *Ἑλλήνες ζωγράφοι μετὰ τὴν Ἀλωση (1450–1830)*, vol. 2. *Καβαλλάρως – Ψαθόπουλος*, Athens, 1997, p. 349.

In September 1732, Sylvester reached “Tripoli of Syria”, a major city of the Patriarchate of Antioch (nowadays, Tripoli in Lebanon).<sup>20</sup>

The patriarch’s tour of the Aegean islands is also attested in a letter addressed to him by Theophanis, a former archdeacon of Alexandria, on January 29, 1733.<sup>21</sup> He wrote that Sylvester “passed through the cities and islands and villages of all the Cycladic islands and the White Sea, for charity and the faith”.<sup>22</sup> He is most likely referring to the patriarch’s travels in 1732.

### 13.3 The Archbishopric of Chaldia

Patriarch Sylvester visited the region of Chaldia at least two times, as recorded on two occasions in the codex of the church of Argyroupolis. During his first documented visit in Argyroupolis in 1735, Patriarch Sylvester celebrated the Christmas service in the church of Saint George and visited the other parish churches and the mines (ματένια). The first indication is a note which mentions his arrival on December 24, 1735.<sup>23</sup> The second is an official document signed by the patriarch that records his presence there during the Christmas of 1737. It also mentions his gifts to the church.

The Archbishopric of Chaldia is also relevant in the relations with the Patriarchate of Antioch and Patriarch Sylvester’s projects in another way. From 1717 to 1734, the archbishop of Chaldia was Ignatios Fytianos,<sup>24</sup> a renowned Greek scholar of the time. Fytianos founded a “school of Hellenic teaching” in his Archbishopric, a project very similar to the schools opened by Patriarch Sylvester in Damascus and Tripoli. Fytianos had yet another connection with the Patriarchate of Antioch, and especially with the printing works of the former patriarch, Athanasios III Dabbās. This connection dated from around 1701, in Bucharest, when Ignatios Fytianos was appointed as proofreader of the Greek and Arabic books printed by Athanasios.

<sup>20</sup> See the note on the year 1732 in MS 124 Jerusalem, f. 19v: “καὶ τὸ ἁψλβ’ ἐορτάσαμεν τὴν Ἁγίαν Ἀνάστασις εἰς Κουσάντασι, καὶ ἀπῆλθομεν εἰς Σάμον καὶ Χίον, καὶ τὸν Σεπτέμβριον μῆνα, ἀνῆλθμεν εἰς Τρίπολιν τῆς Συρίας” (“and in 1732 we celebrated the Holy Resurrection in Kuşadası, and we went to Samos and Chios, and in the month of September we went to Tripoli in Syria”). See also Phirippidēs, “Ἐπίσκεψις τῶν Ἰωαννίνων ὑπὸ τοῦ πατριάρχου Ἀντιοχείας Σύλβεστρου”, p. 118.

<sup>21</sup> Ms 233 Jerusalem, f. 92v, in Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Ἱεροσολυμιτικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη*, 1, p. 309, no. 233.

<sup>22</sup> Karnapas, “Ὁ πατριάρχης Ἀντιοχείας Σύλβεστρος”, *Νέα Σιών*, 5, 1907, p. 859: “διήρχετο ταῖς πόλεις καὶ τὰς νήσους καὶ κώμας πασῶν τῶν Κυκλάδων νήσων καὶ τῆς Ἀσπρῆς Θαλάσσης, ἐλεημοσύνης καὶ πίστεως ἕνεκα”.

<sup>23</sup> Papadopoulos, “Ἱστορικά σημειώματα”, p. 31.

<sup>24</sup> Papadopoulos, “Ἱστορικά σημειώματα”, p. 20.

Important data on this topic is preserved in a Greek letter contained in a miscellany consisting of fragments of manuscripts brought by Mynas Mynoides to Paris from libraries in Trebizond (and perhaps other areas of the Pontos) and currently held by the BnF in Paris. The letter is addressed to Anthimos the Iberian (Rom. Antim Ivireanul), the renowned typographer who supported Dabbās's initiative of Arabic printing in Wallachia. It is undated, but mentions the fact that Constantine Brâncoveanu, the prince of Wallachia, approved the printing of Arabic books requested by the patriarch of Antioch. This means that the letter dates from around 1700 or 1701, before the printing of the first Arabic book in Snagov.

Anthimos was the *hegumen* or superior of the Snagov Monastery, located on a lake island some 15 kilometers from Bucharest. The printing press was in the monastery and the Greek-Arabic *Book of the Divine Liturgies* was completed there in January 1701.<sup>25</sup>

The author of the letter is unnamed, but the fact that the document is preserved among other texts connected with Sevastos Kyminitis makes it possible that it was written by him.<sup>26</sup> The writer mentions that he met the former patriarch Athanasios (presumably in Bucharest) and that he would send a person competent in correcting books. He adds that books without printing mistakes are a cause of pride for typographers. The text also suggests that Dabbās resided close to Anthimos, perhaps at the monastery of Snagov, which makes sense, since the two were involved in starting the printing activity there. Anthimos's correspondent was located elsewhere, in the proximity of the court. At the time, Sevastos Kyminitis was a professor at the so-called Princely Academy, a higher education school in Bucharest.

The book corrector is not named in the letter, but books printed at Snagov at the time, such as the Greek-Arabic *Book of the Divine Liturgies*, identify *hieromonk* Ignatios Fytianos from Chaldia as the proofreader.<sup>27</sup> Kyminitis, a native of

25 See Feodorov, *Arabic Printing for the Christians*, p. 143-162, 256-260.

26 Its editor suggested that the letter was written by Chrysanthos Notaras, based on his rich correspondence with Anthimos. See Sfântul Antim Ivireanul, *Scrisori*, ed. by Archim. M. Stanciu, Acad. Dr. G. Strempel, Bucharest, 2016 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), p. 47-48 (the Greek text), p. 49-50 (Romanian translation). See also M.-A. Stanciu (Archim. Mihail), *Ο Ιερομάρτυρας Ανθιμος Ιβηρίτης, Μητροπολίτης Ουγγροβλαχίας (1708-1716). Ο βίος, η δράση και η ακτινοβολία του στην Ορθόδοξη Κοινοπολιτεία*, unpublished PhD thesis, Thessaloniki, 2018, p. 599-600. As the connection of the letter and the manuscript with Kyminitis are not traceable in Chrysanthos's correspondence, it is safer to suppose that they were not written by him, but by Kyminitis.

27 "Διορθώσει δὲ κατὰ θατέραν μόνην τῆς τῶν Ἑλλήνων διάλεκτον, Ἰγνατίου Ἱερομοάχου Φιτυάνου [sic] τοῦ ἐκ Χαλδίας" ("[The book was printed] with the correction in the two [languages], only for the language of the Greeks, by Ignatios Fityanos from Chaldia"), in the Greek and Arabic *Book of Liturgies*, *Kitāb al-quddāsāt al-thalātha al-'ilāhiyya*, Snagov, 1701, p. σνγ' (253). The name Fytianos

Trebizond in Pontos, a region close to Chaldia, was the most likely person to have recommend Fytianos to Anthimos.<sup>28</sup> Although, based on the information in the books, Fytianos only corrected the Greek text, it is likely that he interacted with the former patriarch of Antioch while the latter was supervising the printing of Arabic books at the monastic press in Snagov.<sup>29</sup>

At the time of Sylvester's visits in 1735 and 1737, the archbishop of Chaldia was another Ignatios, whose surname was Kouthouris.<sup>30</sup>

According to another document in the codex of the church of Saint George in Argyroupolis, the patriarch reached the eparchy again on December 24, 1737, to receive alms and aid for the "Apostolic and Patriarchal" throne of Antioch. He was well received by the archbishop Ignatios and the clergy, the notables, and the common people. The document also suggests that he visited the nearby villages. In any case, he succeeded in collecting a fair amount of alms.<sup>31</sup>

Sylvester made a donation of 250 *groschen* to the church, to be used for the mural paintings of the "Holy *Prothesis*, inside the Holy Altar".<sup>32</sup> As we previously mentioned, the names of Sylvester and his parents Geōrgios (Γεώργιος) and Phōteinē (Φωτεινή, as spelled in the text, instead of Φωτεινή) were added on a special panel (παράρησις) in the church, so they would be remembered for as long as the church would stand.<sup>33</sup>

Like other notes left by Sylvester in various places he visited, the document offers precious chronological information on the patriarch's stay in the region. As

---

is misspelled "Fytianos". See also *BRVI*, p. 432–433 (full description of the book, based on the Greek texts, on p. 423–433).

28 For the idea that Fytianos was recommended to Anthimos the Iberian by Chrysanthos Notaras, see also C. Papacostea-Danielopolu, L. Démeny, *Carte și tipar în societatea românească și sud-est europeană (secolele XVII–XIX)*, Bucharest, 1985, p. 175.

29 Fytianos appears as corrector in another Greek book printed in Snagov in 1701 (foreword dated in May), the *Proskynitarion of the Holy Mountain* by Ioannis Komninos, cf. p. 150: "Επιμελεία και διορθώσει Ἰγνατίου Ἱερομονάχου τοῦ Φυτιάνου" ("[The book was printed] with the care and correction of the hieromonk Ignatios Fytianos"). See *BRVI*, p. 422–423. For Fytianos, see also D. Bădără, *Tiparul românesc la sfârșitul secolului al XVII-lea și începutul secolului al XVIII-lea*, Brăila, 1998, p. 120, 167.

30 Papadopoulos, "Ιστορικά σημειώματα", p. 20. Ignatios Kouthouris was archbishop of Chaldia from 1734 to 1749.

31 Papadopoulos, "Ιστορικά σημειώματα", p. 31.

32 Codex of the church of Saint George in Argyroupolis, p. 47. See Papadopoulos, "Ιστορικά σημειώματα", p. 34: "καὶ ἐδόθησαν εἰς τὰ ἔξοδα τῆς ἱστορίας τῆς ἁγίας προθέσεως, ἔνδοθεν τοῦ ἱεροῦ βήματος, καὶ ἐγράφησαν τὰ ὀνόματα ἡμῶν ἐκεῖσε" ("and [the money] was given for the expenses of the Holy *Prothesis* inside the Holy Altar, and our names were written there").

33 The ruins of the church of Saint George in Gümüşhane are partially preserved, with some walls, including the altar's apse, still in place, but no traces of the frescoes.



the document is dated at the end of July 1737, it is probably safe to suppose that an error occurred at the beginning of the text and the date of the patriarch's arrival should be corrected to December 24, 1736. The error could be explained as a confusion with the Byzantine era used in the Church calendar, where the year begins on September 1.

The text suggests that Sylvester stayed in Argyroupolis for a long time, six to seven months, maybe due to the fact, mentioned above, that some of the workers in the area originated in the Patriarchate of Antioch and they were part of his flock.

On June 10, 1736, Sylvester had secured from Patriarch Neophytos VI of Constantinople a letter intended for three categories of addressees in the Pontos: two metropolitans (the one of Neokaisareia and Ineou, the other of Trebizond), the Archbishop of Chaldia, and the residents under their jurisdiction. The letter presented Sylvester's efforts to save the faithful in his eparchy from the enemies of the Church. The patriarch of Antioch is praised as "an ardent supporter of the Orthodox faith and a fervent defender of the holy doctrines of the Eastern Church of Christ" ("περὶ τὸ ὀρθόδοξον σέβας διάπυρος ζηλωὴς καὶ τῶν ἱερῶν δογμάτων τῆς Ἀνατολικῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἐκκλησίας δεφεντευτῆς προθυμότητος").<sup>34</sup> Even if one assumes that these appreciations were written in the beneficiary's circles and were only ratified by the Patriarchate and the Synod of Constantinople, they prove the extent of the support provided by the Ecumenical See to Sylvester's efforts. The ecumenical patriarch urged the recipients of the letter to provide every necessary support to the Patriarch of Antioch and allow him to lead church services in these eparchies. Such a permit was always requested for a bishop to travel and hold religious services in areas of another bishop's canonical jurisdiction. The surviving documents attest that Sylvester secured such permits for his travels, sometimes recording them in his notebooks.<sup>35</sup>

Earlier in 1735, Patriarch Sylvester was asked by the same Patriarch Neophytos VI of Constantinople and the Synod, in two letters, to allow the collection of alms in the Patriarchate of Antioch for the benefit of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which was in a difficult financial situation. The emissary charged to collect the financial aids was Kosmas, the metropolitan of Pisidia and *exarchos* of Side, Myra, and Attaleia.<sup>36</sup>

34 A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, "Συμβολαὶ εἰς τὴν ἱστορίαν τοῦ Ὁρους Σινᾶ, ἐκδιδομένα μετὰ προλόγου", *Православный Палестинский Сборник*, 58, 1908, 1, p. 239.

35 See, e.g., in MS 210 Ḥarīṣā, f. 67r–70v, a series of permits for services in several churches which Sylvester had obtained from the patriarch of Constantinople during his stay in the city.

36 Papadopoulos-Kerameus, "Συμβολαὶ εἰς τὴν ἱστορίαν τοῦ Ὁρους Σινᾶ", p. 241–250, no. 3 (dated 1735) and 4 (dated May 15, 1735). The two documents were therefore written before Sylvester's first voyage in Argyroupolis.



Returning to the relations between Patriarch Sylvester and the Archbishopric of Chaldia, several petitions lodged by both parties with the Ottoman government suggest that a dispute broke out between them, perhaps concerning the overlapping canonical jurisdictions. The dispute, which involved the metropolitan of Amida (dependent of the see of Antioch) and metropolitan Paisios of Chaldia, ended in a settlement.<sup>37</sup>

In 1755, a metropolitan of Tyre and Sidon whose name is not recorded visited Argyroupolis and collected alms, with the knowledge of the metropolitan of Chaldia.<sup>38</sup> The Metropolis of Tyre and Sidon was under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Antioch, so the good relations between the two eparchies were restored.

### 13.4 Sylvester and Cyprus after the Patriarchal Election

Sylvester remained in contact with the people on his native island after becoming patriarch. He exchanged letters with his brother Soloimanis and Dionysios, the metropolitan of Kition.<sup>39</sup> He asked the latter to procure books for him and asked his support in recruiting pupils for the school he had opened in Aleppo.

Sylvester visited Cyprus at least once as patriarch of Antioch. He recorded his travel in one of his codices (MS 124 in the library of the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem).<sup>40</sup> He sailed from Laodicea (Latakia) on December 27, 1735, and returned to the city in February 1736, on board of an English ship. The patriarch visited Alikas, Agios Lazaros, Nicosia (Lefkosia), Paphos, and other places on the island. He collected alms and received financial aid from the Archbishop of Cyprus. Sylvester also presented gifts to the Archbishop of Cyprus: among other items, a cloak (“ράσον”), a “κερμεσουτίον” (*kermesoution*),<sup>41</sup> a crozier, and Holy Chrism. Gifts were also presented to the metropolitans of Kition and Paphos. Also in Cyprus,

37 See Çolak, *Relations between the Ottoman Central Administration and the Greek Orthodox Patriarchates*, p. 211–212.

38 Mentioned in the codex of the church of Saint George in Argyroupolis (p. 8); see Papadopoulos, “Ιστορικά σημειώματα”, p. 33.

39 Dionysios was metropolitan of Cyprus from 1718 to 1726. See K. Kokkinoftas, “Το Πατριαρχείο Αντιοχείας και η Κύπρος”, in E. Balta, G. Salakides, T. Stavrides (eds.), *Festschrift in Honor of Ioannis P. Theocharides*, vol. I. *Studies in Ottoman Cyprus*, Istanbul, 2014, p. 139–158. If this chronology is correct, Sylvester’s letters to the metropolitan may be dated in 1725 or 1726.

40 MS 124 Jerusalem, f. 8v.

41 Probably a kind of vestment; see P. Stathē, “Το ανέκδοτο οδοιπορικό του Χρύσανθου Νοταρά”, *Μεσαιωνικά και Νέα Ελληνικά*, 1, 1984), p. 222, n. 166. Less likely, it could be an *engolpion*.

Sylvester met Iakovos of Patmos, the teacher and head of the schools founded later by the patriarch in Aleppo, Tripoli, and Damascus. Sylvester's visit to Cyprus in 1735 is attested by the traveler and pilgrim Vasily Grigorovich-Barsky of Kyiv, an older acquaintance.<sup>42</sup> Barsky mentions that his former teacher, Iakovos of Patmos, accompanied Sylvester. Based on Barsky's account, they probably met somewhere in, or in the vicinity of Larnaka. There is some confusion either in Barsky's notes or in Sylvester's. The traveler notes that he met Sylvester in November 1735, while the patriarch recalled that he reached Cyprus on December 27, 1735. Sylvester probably sailed to Cyprus.

The visit of the patriarch of Antioch to the monastery of Kykkos is also mentioned in the description of this monastery by Ephraim of Athens, published for the first time in Venice in 1751.<sup>43</sup> The patriarch's interest in this important monastery on his native island is proven by a document of a prince of Wallachia or Moldavia granting the sum of 500 *groschen* to the patriarchate of Antioch and 100 *groschen* to the Kykkos Monastery.<sup>44</sup> Both amounts were sent to Sylvester, who probably played a part in the prince's decision to send money to the monastery. It was probably a gift made by the prince, at Sylvester's request, for one of the most revered monasteries of the latter's native island. The proof that the patriarch was directly involved in securing the aid for the Cypriot monastery is that, at least on this occasion, the sums for the Patriarchate of Antioch and for the Kykkos Monastery were delivered together. Sylvester's reply to the prince was copied in MS 124 in Jerusalem, one of the miscellanies composed by the patriarch for his personal and institutional use. Other sources confirm the information and indicate that the aid was granted by John Mavrokordatos. It was decided that the sum would be paid from the customs' revenues. The official document establishing this arrangement was issued on May 3, 1745.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Barsukov (ed.), *Странствования Василья Григоровича-Барского*, 2, p. 326; Grigorovitch-Barski, *Pérégrinations (1723–1747)*, p. 509.

<sup>43</sup> *Ἡ περιγραφή τῆς Σεβασμίας καὶ Βασιλικῆς Μονῆς τοῦ Κύκκου ἣτοι Δίηγησις περὶ τῆς ἐν Κύπρῳ ἀποκομίσσεως τῆς Θαυματουργοῦ Ἀγίας Εἰκόνης τῆς Ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου τῆς λεγομένης Κυκκιότισσης*, Venice, 1751, p. 43.

<sup>44</sup> MS 124 Jerusalem, f. 82r. For the document, see Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Τεροσολυμιτική Βιβλιοθήκη*, 1, p. 212, no. 124/46 (the prince is presumed to have been Gregory II Ghikas). See A. Camariano-Cioran, "Contributions aux relations roumano-chypriotes", *RESEE*, XV, 1977, 3, p. 506.

<sup>45</sup> N. Iorga (ed.), *Documente grecești privitoare la istoria românilor*, II. 1716–1777, Bucharest, 1917, p. 1118, no. MLXXXIII; Păcurariu, "Legăturile Țărilor Române cu Patriarhia Antiohiei", p. 610.

Two other documents granting financial aid to the Kykkos Monastery were issued by Constantine Mavrokordatos as prince of Moldavia and Gregory II Ghikas as prince of Wallachia on June 5, 1748,<sup>46</sup> and October 5, 1749,<sup>47</sup> respectively.

The annual grant from Wallachia was 50 *groschen* from the revenues of the princely Customs, while the annual grant from Moldavia was also 50 *groschen*, from the revenue of the salt mines. Again, these grants were most likely intermediated by Sylvester of Antioch.<sup>48</sup> The princely document specified that the grant from Wallachia should be collected by the superior (ἡγούμενος) of the Saint Spyridon monastery in Bucharest, further proof of Sylvester's role. The grant from Moldavia was renewed in 1750 by Constantine Rakovitzas, and in 1753 by Matthaïos Ghikas.<sup>49</sup>

The Romanian original document is missing, but it may be preserved somewhere in Cyprus or in Romania, while a copy was probably transcribed and conserved in the official registers of the *great logothetes* of Wallachia.<sup>50</sup> As Romanian documents of the 18<sup>th</sup> century have not been published systematically, there is a good chance for the original documents to be found.<sup>51</sup>

### 13.5 The Metropolis of Ahiska

Several documents issued by Sylvester concern the Metropolis of Ahiska in Georgia, a metropolitan See dependent on the Patriarchate of Antioch. Ahiska (Ahiska in Turkish, Αχίσκα in Greek), nowadays Akhaltsikhe (in Georgian, ახალციხე), was an important border city with a fortress controlled by the Ottomans from 1578 to 1828. The Metropolitan See was not among those dependent on the Patriarchate of

46 MS 210 Ḥariṣā, f. 37v. See also G. Cioran, “Σχέσεις τῶν Ρουμανικῶν Ἡγεμονιῶν πρὸς τὰ Κυπριακὰ μοναστήρια Κύκκος καὶ Μαχαιρᾶ”, *Byzantinisch-Neugriechische Jahrbücher*, 13, 1935–1937, p. μθ’.

47 *Ἡ περιγραφή τῆς Σεβασμίας καὶ Βασιλικῆς Μονῆς τοῦ Κύκκου*, p. 68–71; M. Beza, “Biblioteci mănăstirești în Palestina, Chipru și Muntele Sinai”, *ARMSL*, series III, VI, 1932, p. 210–211; Cioran, “Σχέσεις τῶν Ρουμανικῶν Ἡγεμονιῶν πρὸς τὰ Κυπριακὰ μοναστήρια”, p. ν’.

48 K. Kokkinoftas, *Ἡ Μονὴ Κύκκου στο Ἀρχεῖο τῆς Ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς Κύπρου (1634–1878)*, Nicosia (Lefkosia), 2011, p. 56, 58–59, 61–62; Camariano-Cioran, “Contributions aux relations roumano-chypriotes”, p. 506; Kokkinoftas, “Το Πατριαρχεῖο Ἀντιοχείας καὶ ἡ Κύπρος”, p. 139–158.

49 Cioran, “Σχέσεις τῶν Ρουμανικῶν Ἡγεμονιῶν πρὸς τὰ Κυπριακὰ μοναστήρια”, p. ν’–να’.

50 By the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Romanian official documents were generally issued in Romanian, even if they concerned Patriarchates, monasteries, or churches in the Greek speaking areas of the Ottoman Empire. Old Slavonic was no longer in use as in the previous centuries. Greek translations of the official documents survive, as well as private correspondence in Greek.

51 The Romanian diplomat and historian Marcu Beza, who visited Cyprus in the 1930s to find documents and manuscripts related to Romanian history, presumed that John Mavrokordatos's grant act to the Kykkos Monastery was lost.

Constantinople. It was an Ottoman-ruled territory that the Georgian Church could not control. Therefore, the patriarch of Antioch and All the East was entitled by tradition to have canonical jurisdiction over it.<sup>52</sup>

According to a document written by Kosmas, the metropolitan of Pisidia, and issued on April 24, 1733, fifteen years earlier Kallinikos had held for a brief time the position of metropolitan of Ahiska. During that period, he paid off a debt of 90 *groschen* by pawning some old church artefacts and vestments pertaining to his ecclesiastical dignity (“μερικά ἀρχιερατικά παλαιά”). His sons, Ilias and Geōrgios, paid Kallinikos’s debt and recovered the items, listed in the document. They gave them to Kosmas of Pisidia in Trebizond, and he decided to send them with his deacon to Patriarch Sylvester in Constantinople, given that Kallinikos had been a metropolitan under the jurisdiction of the See of Antioch. In case the patriarch was in his eparchy of Syria, the deacon was instructed to give these objects to Sylvester’s representative in Constantinople (*kapikehaya*), the “wise teacher” Kritias. The document was deemed relevant enough to be copied in Sylvester’s multi-purpose codex for that period, the Greek MS 124 of the Library of the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, which possibly meant that the patriarch had indeed received the items.<sup>53</sup> The “wise teacher” Nikolaos Kritias was the representative of John Mavrokordatos at the Porte and, in 1733, also Patriarch Sylvester’s one.<sup>54</sup> In 1736–1737, Kritias was in charge of the financial affairs of the Patriarchate of Antioch in Constantinople.<sup>55</sup>

Patriarch Sylvester’s attention towards the Metropolis of Ahiska might well have related to the events described in the metropolitan of Pisidia’s letter. Shortly after that document was issued, the patriarch ordained at least two successive metropolitans of Ahiska. The first, also named Kallinikos, whose surname was Mantaris, different from the Kallinikos in the previously mentioned document (appointed around 1718), was ordained by Sylvester in 1733 in Damascus. A *berat* was obtained

52 For Ahiska, see H. Grégoire, N. A. Bees (Βέης), “Sur quelques évêchés suffragants de la Métropole de Trébizonde”, *Byzantion*, 1, 1924, p. 122 (117–137), based on the references by Athanasios Papadopoulos-Kerameus to the documents discussed here.

53 “Τσὸν τοῦ γράμματος τοῦ Πισσιδίας ὅπου ἔδωκε διὰ τὰ ἀρχιερατικά τοῦ Ἀχίσκας Καλλινίκου” (“Copy of the letter of [the metropolitan of] Pisidia who delivered the “archieratic” [items] of Kallinikos of Ahiska”, MS Gr. 124, Library of the Orthodox Patriarchate, Jerusalem, f. 16v. The document was published, without all the signatures and a different title than the one in the manuscript, in Papadopoulos-Kerameus, “Συμβολαὶ εἰς τὴν ἱστορίαν τοῦ Ὁρους Σινᾶ”, p. 250–251, no. 5. See also Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Τεροσολυμιτικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη*, 1, p. 206–207, no. 12.

54 E.-N. Angelomati-Tsongaraki, “Νικόλαος Κριτίας βιογραφικά καὶ ἐργογραφικά”, *Μεσαιωνικά καὶ Νέα Ἑλληνικά*, 1, 1984, p. 297.

55 MS 124 Jerusalem, f. 141r.

from the Ottoman authorities by Sylvester's representatives in Constantinople for his appointment as metropolitan of Ahiska.

In 1734, Kallinikos of Ahiska<sup>56</sup> was one of the three metropolitans to whom Patriarch Sylvester addressed a letter recommending them to avoid any contact with the *fratores* or "Frankish priests" (Φραγκοπατέρες) in their provinces and to advise the faithful not to listen to their words. The other two addressees were Parthenios of Mesopotamia and Azarias of Theodosiupolis. At the same time, the patriarch sent the monk Agapios to collect the *nuri* ("ἐφετεινὴν νουρίαν") and the residents' donations.<sup>57</sup>

Later, this metropolitan proved to be an impostor from a village around Trebizond, banished by the local metropolitan and illiterate. He used falsified documents as recommendation letters from the locals in Ahiska and, after his appointment as metropolitan, he had an abusive behavior. As a result, Kallinikos was deposed by Sylvester on February 2, 1737, most likely during his visit in the Pontic eparchies of Asia Minor, as revealed by the two signatories of the document, the *oikonomos* and the *logothetes* of [the Metropolis of] Chaldia.<sup>58</sup>

The next metropolitan of Chaldia, Makarios, was ordained by the patriarch of Antioch on July 17, 1737, in the church of the village of Karmut (historical province of Koas, today, Kocapınar, in the province of Gümüşhane, Turkey). The service was officiated by the patriarch alongside Azarias, the metropolitan of Theodosiupolis, and Sylvester, the bishop of Methone.<sup>59</sup>

The next mention of the metropolitan of Ahiska in connection with Sylvester of Antioch comes a decade later (1747–1748), when its metropolitan Makarios is attested as living in the Monastery of Saint Spyridon in Bucharest, in Wallachia.<sup>60</sup> The monastery was, as we mentioned above, a *metochion* of the Patriarchate of Antioch since 1746. There is no evidence regarding the length of Makarios's residence in Wallachia, and it is not clear whether it was just a visit, or a longer stay.

Information on the Christian Orthodox population in the Metropolis of Ahiska in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century is scarce. The two documents mentioned above prove

<sup>56</sup> Spelled Ἀκήσκα.

<sup>57</sup> MS 124 Jerusalem, f. 3r–5r. See Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Τεροσολυμιτική Βιβλιοθήκη*, 1, p. 204, no. 2; Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Ἀνάλεκτα Τεροσολυμιτικῆς Σταχυολογίας*, 2, p. 389–395.

<sup>58</sup> MS 124 Jerusalem, f. 85r–85v. Parts of the document were published in Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Τεροσολυμιτική Βιβλιοθήκη*, 1, p. 212–213, no. 48.

<sup>59</sup> MS 124 Jerusalem, f. 86r–86v. See also the note in Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Τεροσολυμιτική Βιβλιοθήκη*, 1, p. 213, no. 49.

<sup>60</sup> The fact is mentioned in a letter of Yūsuf Mark to Mūsā Ṭrābulṣī, both close collaborators of Sylvester. See Haddad, "La correspondance de Ṭrābulṣī", p. 276; Feodorov, *Arabic Printing for the Christians*, p. 239.

beyond doubt that a Christian population did exist in this eparchy. The metropolitan was not only a titular one, as in other cases when metropolitans were ordained for historical ecclesiastical provinces with no Christian population at the time of the ordination.<sup>61</sup> It may be assumed that the Orthodox population in the region of Ahiska was mainly Georgian-speaking and that Greek-speaking Christians were a minority, if any at all.

---

<sup>61</sup> For the titular metropolitans, see Țipău, "Titular Metropolitans of Asia Minor in Wallachia", p. 319–325.