

DIRK KRAUSMÜLLER

From Individual Almsgiving to Communal Charity: the Impact of the Middle Byzantine Monastic Reform Movement on the Life of Monks

Abstract: The topic of this article is a change in attitudes towards private almsgiving in Byzantine monasteries of the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries. Originally individual members of monastic communities were permitted or even encouraged to give some of their food and clothing to the poor. However, with the rise of the coenobitic reform movement this practice increasingly came to be regarded as problematic. Now it was demanded that monks leave the distribution of alms to the monastery as an institution. This change appears to have caused great anxiety since private acts of almsgiving were traditionally regarded as an indispensable precondition for salvation.

In Byzantine monasticism almsgiving played a central role. Virtually all rules stipulate that the gatekeeper or the cellarer should distribute goods among the poor. These were, in a true sense, communal alms since they came directly from the stores of the monastery. Individual members of the community were not involved. Yet this does not necessarily mean that a personal element was always absent. It is true that the coenobitic ideology outlawed private possessions. Even in strictly coenobitic monasteries, however, monks were given things for their personal use, namely the food that was served to them in the refectory and the clothes that were dispensed to them at regular intervals by the cellarer. Monks who decided not to eat all of their daily rations and to do without some of their clothes could claim that the items thus saved were theirs to dispose of and that they could legitimately be given away as alms. Drawing on evidence from monastic rules and saints' lives, this article seeks to show how attitudes towards such 'private' charity changed in the course of the eleventh century when a powerful reform movement left its mark on monastic communities in Constantinople and its hinterland.¹

In Byzantine Christianity almsgiving was considered to be the royal highway to salvation, not only for laypeople but also for monks.² This is evident from monastic rules and saints' lives. In the typikon that the general Gregory Pakourianos composed for his monastic foundation at Petritzos in the year 1083 we read:

¹ The topic of this article is not monastic charity as such but a shift in attitudes towards monastic charity. Therefore it does not discuss the material foundations of monastic charity or its impact on the poor. On monastic charity in the eleventh and twelfth centuries see R. VOLK, *Gesundheitswesen und Wohltätigkeit im Spiegel der byzantinischen Klostertypika (MBM 28)*. Munich 1983. For a general overview see D. J. CONSTANTELOS, *Byzantine Philanthropy and Social Welfare*. New Brunswick, New Jersey 1991. The classic treatment of poverty in Byzantium is É. PATLAGEAN, *Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale à Byzance: 4e–7e siècles (Civilisations et sociétés 48)*. Paris 1977. On the material situation of monasteries see K. SMYRLIS, *La fortune des grands monastères byzantins (fin du Xe – milieu du XIV siècle)*. Paris 2006.

² See R. JORDAN, *Greek Monastic Charity: '... to one of the least of these my brothers ...'*, in: *The Kindness of Strangers, Charity in the Pre-Modern Mediterranean*, ed. D. Stathakopoulos. London 2007, 37–48.

Ἐν δὲ τῷ πυλωρῶνι τῆς μονῆς ἐκάστη ἡμέρα δεῖ διατροφὰς διανεμηθῆναι τοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ ἀδελφοῖς, τουτέστι τοῖς πένησιν· αὐτοὶ γάρ εἰσιν τῆς ἡμετέρας σωτηρίας αἰτιοὶ τε καὶ πρόξενοι τῶν μελλόντων ἀγαθῶν.³

In the gateway of the monastery each day sustenance must be distributed to the brothers in Christ, that is the poor. For they are the means of our salvation and secure the good things which are to come.⁴

This passage creates a direct causal relationship between charity and salvation, which is evidently derived from the Last Judgement scenes described in the Gospels, where acts of charity are rewarded with an eternal abode in the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Petritzos-Typikon declares that the alms should consist of foodstuffs but does not explain how these foodstuffs were dispensed. Other rules are more forthcoming with information. The typikon for the Constantinopolitan monastery of St Mamas, which dates to the middle of the twelfth century, has the following to say:

Ἐχέτω ἐπ' ἀδείας ὁ κατὰ τὴν ἡμέραν πυλωρός ... ἀπέρχεσθαι πρὸς τὸν κελλαρίτην καὶ λαμβάνειν ψωμίον καὶ διδόναι τῷ ἀπαιτοῦντι ἀόκνως καὶ ἀγογγύστως ἵνα μὴ αὐτὸς τὸ κρῖμα βαστάσῃ.⁵

Let the gatekeeper at the time have it in his power ... to go to the cellarer and get bread and give it to the beggar without hesitation and complaint in order that he himself may not suffer judgment.⁶

Here we can see how the distribution of food was organised. It lay in the hands of two officials: the gatekeeper, who liaised between the community and the outside world, and the cellarer, who was in charge of the monastery's stores. Both were appointees of the abbot, who delegated this particular task to them. Other members of the community were not involved. This, however, does not necessarily mean that individuals could not also engage in acts of charity. The rule of the state official Michael Attaleiates for the Panoiktirmon monastery in Constantinople, which dates to the year 1077, contains the following instruction:

Ἔχει δὲ πρὸς ἀνάγκης ἕκαστος μοναχὸς ἡνίκα ἐσθίει ἐν μεσημβρία μεταδιδόναι πένητι ὅσον ἔχει προαιρέσεως κἂν βραχύτατον ἢ εἴτε ψωμὸν ἢ ποτὸν καὶ μὴ παρέρχηται ἡμέρα ἄνευ ἐλεημοσύνης ἀλλ' ἀνοίγῃσι καὶ πυλῶνα καὶ σπλάγχνα ἐκάστῳ πένητι ἄχρι καὶ ἐνὸς θρύμματος.⁷

When he takes his midday meal, each monk of necessity will have to share with a poor person whatever he chooses, even if it is very small, either bread or drink, and no day should pass without charity, but they should open the gate and their hearts to each poor person, even if only with a single morsel of bread.⁸

³ Petritzos-Typikon 10 (ed. P. GAUTIER, *Le typikon du sébaste Grégoire Pakourianos*. *REB* 42 [1984] 5–145, esp. 71, 850–853).

⁴ Pakourianos: Typikon of Gregory Pakourianos for the Monastery of the Mother of God Petritzonitissa in Bačkovo, in: *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents. A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments*, ed. J. THOMAS – A. CONSTANTINIDES-HERO – G. CONSTABLE (*DOS* 35). Washington, D.C. 2000, II 507–563 (no. 23), esp. 535 (translation by R. JORDAN).

⁵ Mamas-Typikon 13 (ed. S. EUSTRATIADIS, *Τυπικὸν τῆς ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει Μονῆς τοῦ ἁγίου μεγαλομάρτυρος Μάμαντος*. *Hell* 1 [1928] 245–314, esp. 271, 33–272, 6).

⁶ Mamas: Typikon of Athanasios Philanthropenos for the Monastery of St. Mamas in Constantinople, in: *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents III* 973–1041 (no. 32), esp. 1004 (Translation by A. BANDY).

⁷ Panoiktirmon-Diataxis (ed. P. GAUTIER, *La diataxis de Michel Attaliate*. *REB* 39 [1981] 5–143, esp. 61–63, 746–750).

⁸ Attaleiates: Rule of Michael Attaleiates for his Almshouse in Rhaidestos and for the Monastery of Christ Panoiktirmon in Constantinople, in: *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents I* 326–376 (no. 19), esp. 347–348 (translation by A.-M. TALBOT).

In this passage individual monks are encouraged to distribute the leftovers from their meals in direct interactions with the poor. The small amounts of food used for this purpose leave no doubt that this custom is intended to benefit not so much the recipient as the giver. It is hoped that through being compelled to undertake this action individual monks will gradually become more willing to part freely with their food. The importance of this strategy to the author can be gauged through a comparison with II Corinthians 9:7, where Paul speaks about voluntary donations for the Christians in Jerusalem: ‘Each as he wishes in his heart, not out of grief, nor out of force: for God loves the joyous giver’, ἕκαστος καθὼς προήρηται τῇ καρδίᾳ μὴ ἐκ λύπης ἢ ἐξ ἀνάγκης· ἰλαρὸν γὰρ δότην ἀγαπᾷ ὁ θεός. It is evident that this passage provides the model for Attaleiates’ statement, but at the same time one detects a slight shift in meaning: whereas Paul juxtaposes free will and force, Attaleiates makes force a precondition for free will.

Attaleiates’ text gives the impression that this was standard behaviour in Byzantine monasteries at the time. This, however, was not the case. At this point we need to return to the Mamas-Typikon. Having spoken about charity dispensed from the monastery’s stores, the author of this text, the abbot Athanasius Philanthropenos, continues:

Μετὰ τὸ ἀριστῆσαι τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς τὰ περιττεύσαντα μαγειρευτὰ ἐδέσματα διδόσθωσαν καὶ αὐτὰ παρὰ τοῦ αὐτοῦ πυλωροῦ τοῖς ἐν τῷ πυλῶνι εὕρισκομένοις πένησιν ὡς ἂν διὰ τῆς πρὸς τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς ὑμῶν ἰλαρᾶς ἐλεημοσύνης καὶ μεταδόσεως ἰλαρὸν καὶ ὑμεῖς καὶ δαψιλῆ τὸν ἐκ θεοῦ ἔλεον ἀπολάβοιτε.⁹

But after the brothers have eaten, let the leftover cooked dishes be given, too, by the aforesaid gatekeeper to the poor who are found at the gate in order that, through the joyous almsgiving and distribution to your brothers you, too, may receive in return joyous and abundant mercy from God.¹⁰

Here we find the same allusion to II Corinthians 9:7 as in Attaleiates’ text and there is still a link between almsgiving and salvation. However, the procedure described is radically different. Now the leftovers are not given to the poor by individual monks but are handed over to the gatekeeper, who then distributes them in the name of the whole community. Thus there is no longer any difference between alms given from the monastic stores and alms given from the ‘possessions’ of the monks.

The Mamas-Typikon is rather laconic about the mechanism by which the leftovers ended up in the gatekeeper’s hands. Further details are furnished by the typikon of the Constantinopolitan monastery of Stoudios, which replaced the older Stoudios-Hypotyposis and was most likely written in the late tenth century. This text is now lost but can be reconstructed through comparing later adaptations.¹¹ The regulations about communal meals appear in two of these adaptations; the Pantokrator-Typikon from the middle of the twelfth century, and the Church Slavonic translation of a rule that Patriarch Alexius Stoudites gave to a monastery of the Virgin which he had founded in Constantinople in the second quarter of the eleventh century. Comparison of the two versions permits us to recover the original text:

⁹ Mamas-Typikon 13 (271, 33–272, 6 EUSTRAIADIS).

¹⁰ Translation by BANDY (see above note 6).

¹¹ See D. KRAUSMÜLLER – O. GRINCHENKO, *The Tenth-Century Stoudios-Typikon and its Impact on Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century Byzantine Monasticism*. *JÖB* 63 (2013) 153–175.

възмѣ же игоумен(ъ) избывъшии сѧ ѿмоу оукроухъ положить на мисѣ . гла сице . ги бл(с)ви . и абиѣ начинають оубо старѣи вельгла(с)но съде . бл(с)нѣ бѣ питаяи на(с) . поють же съ нимъ и прочии . полагающе по обычаю избывающая сѧ оукроухы на мисѣ . ниѣдиномоу оубо достоить понѣ мала оукроуха възати ѿ трапезы . или иномоу дати . или въ свою келию нести . нѣ ѿ келаревъ все прилѣжно събирають (с) . и въ глемоую дробильницу расходить сѧ . ѿ тѣхъ бо ничьсоже ни на вечери ни на обѣдѣ мьнихомъ не прѣдълагають (с) . на всѧкъ же днь избывающеѣ брашьно . прѣдѣ враты просащии братии нашеи . келарьмъ да прѣдано боудеть.¹²

Then the abbot, after having taken the part (sc. of food) that was left over by him, puts it on a plate, saying the following: ‘Bless, oh Lord!’ And immediately the senior (sc. brother) begins with a high voice the following: ‘Blessed be God who feeds us...’ And the others sing together with him, when putting, according to order, the leftover parts (sc. of food) on a plate. Nobody has the right to lift even a small part from the refectory, neither to give (sc. it) to anybody else nor to bring it to his own cell, but all (sc. the parts of food) are carefully collected by the cellarers and spent in the so-called grinder (?). Nothing from these (sc. parts of food) is to be given to the monks at either dinner or lunch, but let the leftover food be handed out by the cellarer every day before the gates to the begging brothers.¹³

Here monks are expressly forbidden to take any food away from the refectory, which rules out the possibility of private almsgiving. Instead, the leftovers are collected at the end of the meal by a monastic official, the cellarer, who is also responsible for distributing them to the poor.

Αὐτίκα τιθέσθω τὸ κανίσκιον εἰς ὑποδοχὴν τῶν περιττευμάτων καὶ πρῶτος ὁ ἡγούμενος ἐμβαλλέτω τούτῳ τὸν περιτεύσαντα αὐτῷ ἄρτον, εἶτα καὶ πάντες ψαλλομένου μεταξὺ τοῦ Εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεὸς ὁ τρέφων ἡμᾶς·

τὰ δὲ κλάσματα διδόσθωσαν τοῖς πρὸ τοῦ πυλῶνος ἀδελφοῖς.¹⁴

Immediately afterwards let the basket be set down for receiving the leftovers, and let first the abbot put inside his leftover bread, then all (sc. others), while in the meantime ‘Praised be God who feeds us’ is sung.

Let the pieces of bread be given to the brothers before the gate.¹⁵

¹² Typikon of Alexius (ed. A. M. PENTKOVSKII, *Typikon patriarcha Aleksija Studita v Vizantii i na Rusi*. Moscow 2001, 233–420, esp. 370, 20–28). According to the Typikon of Alexius the food was prepared in a communal kitchen. On this topic see D. KRAUSMÜLLER, *Multiple Hierarchies: Servants and Masters, Monastic Officers, Ordained Monks, and Wearers of the Great and the Small Habit at the Stoudios Monastery (10th–11th Centuries)*, forthcoming in *BSI*.

¹³ I would like to thank Basil Lourié for translating this difficult text for me.

¹⁴ Pantokrator-Typikon (ed. P. GAUTIER, *Le typikon du Christ Sauveur Pantocrator*. *REB* 32 [1974] 1–131, esp. 51, 352–365).

¹⁵ Pantokrator: Typikon of Emperor John II Komnenos for the Monastery of Christ Pantokrator in Constantinople, in: *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, II 725–781 (no. 28), esp. 745 (translation by R. JORDAN).

It is evident that we are in the presence of two radically different visions of monastic charity. Whereas Attaleiates considers personal almsgiving to be laudable behaviour, the practice is rejected by the authors of the Stoudios-Typikon and the Mamas-Typikon. In order to explain this discrepancy we need to consider that the late tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries were a period of intensive debate about what constituted ‘proper’ monasticism. An influential group of reformers sought to implement the coenobitic ideal as it had been defined in Late Antiquity. They insisted that individuals should do nothing on their own initiative but efface themselves and leave all decisions to the abbot as the embodiment of the communal will. The stipulation found in Attaleiates’ rule suggests that this was an uphill struggle. Although it is without parallel in other monastic texts of the time we can assume that it reflected a wide-spread custom. The communities that followed it were as yet untouched by the coenobitic reform movement. Yet this does not mean that their members were less concerned about the salvation of their souls. As we have seen, they claimed that a place in heaven could only be secured through direct interaction with the poor. There can be no doubt that for a brother who had been socialised in such a milieu the new coenobitic ideology could be a source of great anxiety. Unable to identify completely with the community as a whole, he may well have regarded communal almsgiving as charity done by others and thus without any effect on himself. The stipulations of the Stoudios-Typikon suggest that these concerns were not left unaddressed. As we have seen, the taking away of the food in baskets by a monastic official and the subsequent distribution at the gate ensures that charity comes from the community as a whole. Yet the author has also taken care to involve the individual monks: the prayer and the hymn remind them that charity is an essential part of Christian life; and the fact that they themselves put their leftovers into the baskets makes it clear to them that this communal charity is the aggregate of their individual charitable acts.¹⁶ Moreover, there are still clear differences between individual monks. Some may eat almost all of their food, whereas others may decide to abstain so that their share in the communal charity will be greater. Later rules are not always so accommodating. In the Testament of John the Faster for the Constantinopolitan monastery of Petra, which dates to the early twelfth century, monks are told to eat from all dishes.¹⁷ It is evident that this stipulation considerably narrows the scope for individual behaviour. Here one can see how the demand for strict conformity overruled the wish of the monks to make a personal contribution.

So far we have focused on the distribution of food as alms. However, this was not the only context in which there was tension between individual and communal almsgiving. Similar problems arose in the case of clothing. In Byzantine monasteries monks were given a number of garments for their personal use. Lists of these garments can already be found in the earliest rules such as Athanasius’ Hypotyposis for the Lavra monastery on Mount Athos, which dates to the middle of the tenth century:

Χρὴ γινώσκειν ὅτι ὀφείλει ἕκαστος ἀδελφὸς ἔχειν ὑποκάμισα β’ ἐπανωφόρια β’ μαλωτὸν ἐν κουκούλιον μανδύα β’ ἐν μικρὸν τῆς διακονίας καὶ ἕτερον βαθύτερον ὥσπερ νόμος ἐστὶ κεχρηῆσθαι ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ βαρυμάνδῳ ὑποδήματα καλίγια καὶ τὸ ἔγκοιτον αὐτοῦ.¹⁸

¹⁶ A similar stipulation is found in the Iviron-Hypotyposis, see K. KEKELIDZE, *Liturgiĉeskie gruzinskie pamjatniki v oteĉestvennykh knigochraniliščach i ich nauĉnoe znaĉenie*. Tblisi 1908, 228–313, esp. 307–308. This text dates to the years 1038–1042, see PENTKOVSKII, *Tipikon* 154.

¹⁷ Testament of John (ed. G. TURCO, *La diatheke del fondatore del monastero di S. Giovanni Prodromo in Petra e l’Ambr. E 9 Sup. Aevum* 75 [2001] 327–380, esp. 357, 256–260). See D. KRAUSMÜLLER, *The abbots of Evergetis as opponents of ‘monastic reform’: a re-appraisal of the monastic discourse in eleventh- and twelfth-century Constantinople*. *REB* 69 (2011) 111–134, esp. 122.

¹⁸ Lavra-Hypotyposis (ed. Ph. MEYER, *Die Haupturkunden für die Geschichte der Athosklöster*. Leipzig 1894, 130–140, esp. 140, 16–20).

One must know that each brother should have two undergarments, two outer garments, one sheepskin, one cowl, two frocks, a small one for work and another longer one, as it is law, to be used in the church, a heavy frock, shoes, boots and his mattress.¹⁹

The Hypotyposes of Stoudios and Lavra are silent about the mechanism by which monks obtained these items. Later rules give much more detailed instructions. The typikon of the Constantinopolitan monastery of Evergetis, which dates to the second half of the eleventh century, has the following to say about the topic:

Ὅταν γοῦν σχοίη τις ἀναγκαίως καινότερόν τι τούτων ἀπολαβεῖν τὸ παλαιὸν κομιστέον ἄρα ἐν τῷ δοχείῳ, δοτέον τε αὐτὸ τοῦτο καὶ ἕτερον ἀποληπτέον εἰδήσει τοῦ προεστῶτος.²⁰

So whenever anyone has a pressing need to receive a new item of these articles, he must bring the old one of course to the storehouse and hand this over and receive another one with the knowledge of the superior.²¹

This passage shows that there was a fixed procedure for acquiring clothes.²² We learn that the monks were only given new garments after they had handed in their old ones. The reason for this arrangement becomes clear when we turn to another passage in the Evergetis-Typikon:

Παρεγγυώμεθα τοὺς ξένους ... γυμνητεύοντάς τε καὶ ἀνυποδητοῦντας ἐνδιδύσκειν τε καὶ ὑποδύειν τοῖς παλαιοῖς ὑμῶν χιτῶσι καὶ ὑποδήμασιν, οὐκοῦν οὐ παρ' ὑμῶν αὐτῶν διδομένοις – τοῦτο γὰρ οὐκ ἐπιτρέπομεν – ἀλλὰ παρὰ τοῦ προεστῶτος.²³

We enjoin you to provide strangers ... when they are naked and unshod, with garments and shoes from your old tunics and shoes, distributed not by you yourselves – for we do not permit that – but by the abbot.²⁴

Here it is stated that the old clothes are handed out as charity to the poor. However, we also learn that only the abbot has the right to distribute them. The two passages clearly complement one another. The monks are told to hand in their old clothes not only because otherwise the abbot could not organise their distribution but also because they are thus prevented from interacting directly with the poor. This is a clear reference to an alternative behaviour, which would be analogous to the distribution of leftovers by the monks themselves in Attaleiates' rule. That the Evergetis-Typikon outlaws such behaviour is not surprising since the monastery for which it was composed played an important role in the monastic reform movement.²⁵

¹⁹ Ath. Rule: Rule of Athanasios the Athonite for the Lavra Monastery, in: *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents I* 205–231 (no. 11), esp. 228 (translation by G. DENNIS).

²⁰ Evergetis-Typikon 25 (ed. P. GAUTIER, *Le typikon de la Théotokos Évergétis*. *REB* 40 [1982] 5–101, esp. 69, 935–937).

²¹ Evergetis: Typikon of Timothy for the Monastery of the Mother of God Evergetis, in: *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents II* 472–500 (no. 22), esp. 490 (translation by R. JORDAN).

²² Indeed, some texts specify that clothes are to be distributed only on particular days in the year. See below note 50.

²³ Evergetis-Typikon 38 (81, 1168–1171 GAUTIER).

²⁴ Evergetis 495, with slight changes (translation by JORDAN).

²⁵ The 'reformed' character of the Evergetis monastery was highlighted by J. P. THOMAS, *Documentary evidence from the Byzantine monastic typika for the history of the Evergetine Reform Movement*, in: *The Theotokos Evergetis and eleventh-century monasticism*, ed. M. Mullett – A. Kirby (*Belfast Byzantine Texts and Translations* 6, 1). Belfast 1994, 246–273. See, however, the qualifications in KRAUSMÜLLER, *Abbots of Evergetis* 114–116.

As in the case of food, the conflict between the old and the new understanding of monastic life had already surfaced several decades earlier. This can be seen from the rule of the Constantinopolitan monastery of Panagios, which dates to the first years of the eleventh century and is thus roughly contemporary with the Stoudios-Typikon.²⁶ The Panagios-Typikon is lost and its existence is only known to us because it served as the model for the Petritzos-Typikon. Fortunately, however, it is possible to recover much of the original text through comparison of the Petritzos-Typikon with Vita A of Athanasius the Athonite whose author, Athanasius of Panagios, integrated several passages from the rules of his monastery into his narrative.²⁷ The Panagios-Typikon contained a section about the coenobitic lifestyle, which paid particular attention to the custom of giving away one's clothes to the poor. This section is of great significance because it contains evidence for conflict within a community whose leaders subscribed to the coenobitic ideal. The different versions of the text read as follows:

Petritzos-Typikon:

Ποῖος δὲ λόγος ἐλεημοσύνης ἔσται τούτῳ ἢ φιλοξενίας, ὅταν τις μῆτε τῶν σμικροτάτων τὸ ὑστέρημα ὑπενέγκῃ, ἀλλ' ἀντὶ τοῦ χρήματος οὐ παρέξει τῷ πένητι ἕτερόν τι ζητήσῃ παρὰ τοῦ προεστῶτος, ἀντὶ τοῦ παλαιοῦ οὐ τῷ πένητι δέδωκε νέον, τὸ χρειῶδες τὸ ἄχρηστον ἀνταλλάττων κακῶς· καὶ κινδυνεύει ὡς οὐχ ἔνεκεν φιλοξενίας καὶ φιλοπτωχίας ἔργου, ἀλλ' ἔνεκεν φιλοκερδίας καὶ πλεονεξίας, ὅταν καὶ τὸ ἐκείνων ὑστέρημα αὐτὸς σὺν ὁ καινὸς φιλόπτωχος καὶ φίλοικτος ἔστεργε καὶ ψύχεσθαι καὶ γυμνητεύειν ἐδέδεξο διὰ τὴν τοῦ πλησίον ἀγάπην, καὶ οὕτως οὐκ ἐτύγχανε τοῦ τῆς καταδίκης σκοποῦ.²⁸

What meaning of almsgiving or love of strangers is there in this if he does not bear the lack even of the smallest things, but will request from the superior another one for that which he will hand over to a poor person, a new one for that which he has given to a poor person, exchanging wrongly that which is useful for that which is

Vita A of Athanasius the Athonite:

Ποῖος δὲ καὶ λόγος—ἔλεγεν—ἐλέους ἢ φιλοξενίας ἐν τούτῳ θεωρεῖται τῷ λόγῳ, ὅταν τις μηδὲ τῶν μικρῶν τούτων στέρησιν στέρῃ, ἀλλ' ἀντὶ τῶν σαθρῶν ὧν παρέχει τῷ πένητι ἄλλα πάλιν αἰτῇ καινά, καινὰ παλαιῶν ὡς εἰπεῖν ἀνταλλάττων καὶ ἀχρήστων εὐχρηστα κακῶς ἀντωνούμενος, ὡς κινδυνεύειν μὴ φιλοξενίαν ἀλλὰ πραγματείαν ἢ ἀνταλλαγὴν ἐπικερδῆ τὸ πραττόμενον εἶναι, ὅποτε εἰ καὶ τὴν τούτων στέρησιν ὁ καινὸς οὗτος φιλόπτωχος καὶ φιλόστοργος ἔστεργε καὶ ῥιγοῦν ἠνείχετο καὶ γυμνητεύειν ὑπὲρ γε τῆς τοῦ πλησίον δῆθεν ἀγάπης καὶ οὕτως τοῦ σκοποῦ ἀπετύγχανε.²⁹

What meaning – he said – of mercy or love of strangers is in such talk if someone does not welcome even a small lack of these things but again requests new things in place of the threadbare ones, which he gives to a poor person, exchanging new for old as the saying goes and wrongly buying useful things in exchange for useless

²⁶ Our knowledge of the history of this monastery and its property is very limited. The sparse evidence is discussed in D. KRAUSMÜLLER, *Saints' lives and typika: the Constantinopolitan monastery of Panagios in the eleventh century* (unpublished PhD thesis, Queen's University Belfast). Belfast 2001, 27–70.

²⁷ For the dates and the complex interrelation of these texts see D. KRAUSMÜLLER, *On Contents and Structure of the Panagios Typikon: A Contribution to the Early History of 'Extended' Monastic Rules*. *BZ* 106 (2013) 39–64. The two extant Lives of Athanasius the Athonite, Vita A and Vita B, have been edited by J. NORET, *Vitae duae antiquae sancti Athanasii* (CCSG 9). Turnhout – Leuven 1982, 1–126, 127–213.

²⁸ Petritzos-Typikon 4 (49, 505–513 GAUTIER). What follows is a literal translation that reflects the corrupt nature of the Greek text. This text cannot be emended since the original version composed or commissioned by Pakourianos was most likely already riddled with mistakes.

²⁹ Vita A 182 (87–88, 17–30 NORET).

useless? And there is a danger that the work is done (?) not out of love of strangers and love of the poor, but out of love of gain and greed, when you yourself, the new-fangled lover of the poor and lover of mercy, accepted the lack of these things and were willing to feel the cold and to be naked because of the love for his neighbour, you would even so not attain the goal of condemnation.

ones? So that there is a danger that what is done is not love of strangers but a business transaction and a profitable exchange, when even if this new-fangled lover of the poor and lover of mercy bore the lack of those things, and endured cold and nakedness supposedly for the love of his neighbour, he would even then not attain the goal.

It is evident that these two passages resemble each other very closely. Comparison shows that only Vita A contains a coherent text. By contrast, the Petritzos-Typikon is riddled with mistakes: in the first part the finite verb is missing,³⁰ and in the second part the conjunction *εἰ* is omitted after *ὅταν*, which obscures the meaning of the sentence. The discussion must therefore be based on the version in Vita A, which reproduces the content, even if not the exact wording, of the Panagios-Typikon.³¹ From it we can see that the author of the Panagios-Typikon attacked the behaviour that the abbots of the Evergetis monastery had forbidden their flock to engage in. Monks give away their old clothes to the poor and then ask the abbot to give them new ones. The author is scathing about this practice, which undoubtedly was widely regarded as an acceptable way for a monk to fulfil Jesus' commandment to give alms. Rejecting the notion that the monastery should facilitate private almsgiving through a regular supply of clothes, he insists that all charity in a coenobitic monastery must come from the community as a whole and must be organised by the abbot himself.³² This, however, is not all the author has to say. At the end of the passage he envisages another case, namely that monks give away their clothes and then do *not* ask for a replacement. Here the element of gain is absent and the practice is turned into an ascetic activity. Yet this does not mean that such behaviour finds favour with the author. For him it is just as reprehensible because any kind of private almsgiving is, by definition, wrong: deciding what to do with one's clothes is a sign of disobedience, and differentiating oneself from others in outward appearance is a sign of sinful pride, which can only be overcome through the strictest adherence to the common dress code.³³ How revolutionary and counter-intuitive contemporaries found this conceptual framework can be seen from the adaptation of the passage in the Petritzos-Typikon. The author of this text, whether Pakourianos himself or a ghost-writer, clearly could not understand why the latter practice should not be laudable and therefore rephrased the original 'you would even so not attain the goal (sc. of salvation)', *καὶ οὕτως οὐκ ἐτύγχανες τοῦ σκοποῦ*, as 'you would even so not attain the goal of condemnation', *καὶ οὕτως οὐκ ἐτύγχανες τοῦ τῆς καταδίκης σκοποῦ*, so that wandering around naked becomes a means of escaping eternal punishment.³⁴

³⁰ Comparison with Vita A suggests that we must change *ἔργου* to *ἐργάζου*; see Vita A 182 (88, 23–24 Noret): *μη φιλοξενίαν ... τὸ πραττόμενον εἶναι*; see also Vita B of Athanasius 49 (esp. 185, 30–31 Noret): *μη δὲ φιλοξενίαν ἐργάζεσθαι*.

³¹ In Vita A we find features such as the sequence *στέρησιν ... φιλόστοργος ἔστεργε*, which are most likely introduced by its learned author. On the role of wordplay in Vita A, see A. Kazhdan, *Hagiographical notes. 1. Two versions of the Vita Athanasii. Byz 53* (1983) 538–544.

³² Petritzos-Typikon 4 (49, 516–51, 517 Gautier); Vita A 182 (88, 30–32 Noret).

³³ For this latter point see Petritzos-Typikon 15 (81, 1042–1043 Gautier); and its counterpart in Vita A 159 (75, 12–14 Noret).

³⁴ The extant Greek version of the Petritzos-Typikon is a later reworking of Pakourianos' original text. However, we can be sure that the element *τῆς καταδίκης* was already added in the original Petritzos-Typikon because it also appears in the Georgian version, which was made at the behest of Pakourianos and did not undergo later changes. See Petritzos-Typikon (Georgian version) (tr. M. Tarchnishvili, *Typicon Gregorii Pacuriani [CSCO 144, Scriptores Iberici 4]*. Louvain 1954, 13): '*Nonne ergo hoc modo <agens> puniendus eris?*'; (tr. A. Shanidze, *Kartvelta monasteri Bulgaretsi da misi tipikoni, Tipikonis kartuli redakcia. Tbilisi 1971, 291*): 'чтобы таким образом избежать наказания сознательно.'

So far we have used Vita A of Athanasius the Athonite in order to reconstruct the original wording of the Panagios-Typikon. Yet Vita A is an important text in its own right. Its author, Athanasius, does not merely quote the passage from the Panagios-Typikon but integrates it into the narrative. We are told that once, when Athanasius was outside the Lavra, he met a vagrant monk. Athanasius pretended to be a vagrant himself and asked whether the monks of Lavra were generous. The vagrant replied that this was indeed the case since various members of the community had given him garments. Athanasius then returned to Lavra where he delivered a catechesis on this topic to his monks. This catechesis is the passage from the Panagios-Typikon that we have just analysed. In order to understand this link between life and rule we need to consider that the monks of Panagios regarded themselves, and not the monks of Lavra, as the true heirs of Athanasius' monastic vision. Contemporaries who knew both Vita A and the Panagios-Typikon, not least among them the monks of Lavra, were meant to come to the conclusion that the stipulation in the Panagios-Typikon reflected Athanasius' teachings.³⁵ Yet the fact that this particular passage from the rule was replicated in the life is significant in itself. It shows how concerned the leaders of the Panagios monastery were about the custom of giving away one's clothes to the poor. The normative and the narrative text were clearly meant to reinforce one another.

From our discussion so far it appears that the author of Vita A was responsible for this cross-over between the two literary genres. Yet matters are considerably more complex. There exists another Life of Athanasius, Vita B, which, in its present form, is the work of a member of the community of the Lavra.³⁶ There the same episode appears. How closely the two Lives resemble each other can be seen from the reply that the vagrant monk gives to Athanasius:

Vita A:

Ὡς πολλή τις καὶ φιλότιμος ἡ τῆς φιλοξενίας ἐκεῖσε χάρις καὶ πολλῶν τῶν ταύτης ἀπήλαυσε καλῶν ... τὸν μὲν γὰρ μανδύαν αὐτῷ, τὸν δὲ κουκούλιον, τὸν δὲ τι τοιοῦτον ἕτερον ἐπληροφόρει φιλοτιμήσασθαι.³⁷

(He said) that the grace of hospitality there was considerable and liberal and that he had benefited from its many good things ... For he assured him that one had bestowed on him a frock, another a cowl, and yet another something else of the kind.

Vita B:

Καὶ πολλή ἐστὶν ἡ φιλοξενία καὶ ἡ χάρις ἐκεῖ, πατήρ μου· καὶ γὰρ πολλῶν ἡξιώθην ἐκεῖ τῶν ἀγαθῶν· ἄλλος γὰρ μανδύαν μοι δέδωκε καὶ ἄλλος κουκούλιον καὶ ἄλλος ἄλλο.³⁸

(He said:) 'The hospitality and the grace there is considerable, my father; for I, too, was there deemed worthy of many good things. For one gave me a frock, and another a cowl, and yet another something else.'

Two explanations have been offered for this striking resemblance: firstly, that Vita B is based on Vita A, and secondly, that both extant Lives go back to a now lost common model, the Vita prima, which was written by Anthony, the founder abbot of the Panagios monastery.³⁹ A comparison of the

³⁵ See D. KRAUSMÜLLER, The lost first Life of Athanasius the Athonite and its author Anthony, abbot of the Constantinopolitan monastery of Ta Panagiou, in: *Founders and Refounders of Byzantine Monasteries. Papers of the fifth Belfast Byzantine International Colloquium, Portaferry, September, 1999*, ed. M. Mullett (*Belfast Byzantine Texts and Translations* 6, 4). Belfast 2007, 63–86.

³⁶ See P. LEMERLE, La vie ancienne de saint Athanase l'Athonite composée au début du XIe siècle par Athanase de Lavra, in: *Le millénaire du Mont Athos, 963–1963*. Chevetogne 1963, I 60–100.

³⁷ Vita A 180 (87, 22–30 NORET).

³⁸ Vita B 49 (185, 13–18 NORET).

³⁹ The first hypothesis was put forward by the editor Noret in the introduction to his edition. The second hypothesis was first formulated by Kazhdan and then substantiated by Krausmüller in the articles mentioned above (see notes 27 and 35).

two texts and the Panagios-Typikon shows that the second hypothesis is correct. In the first part of Athanasius' catechesis against private almsgiving, which I have not reproduced here, Vita B shares words and phrases with the Petritzos-Typikon that are not found in Vita A. Since it is highly unlikely that the Lavriot author of Vita B consulted the Panagios-Typikon in order to adopt a few stray phrases, we can conclude that Vita B is dependent not on Vita A but rather on the Vita prima. Of course, this does not rule out the possibility that the Lavriot author introduced changes when he adapted the Vita prima for use in his own monastery. The relevance of these considerations for our topic becomes evident when we turn our attention to Vita B's version of the catechesis. Its second part reads as follows:

Εἰ δὲ καὶ ποθεῖτε οὕτως ποιεῖν, δέον ἐστὶ μὴ ζητεῖν ἕτερα ἀλλὰ ῥιγᾶν τὴν σάρκα καὶ ὑπομένειν τὴν γυμνητείαν, ἵνα καὶ ἑαυτὸν τις πληροφορῇ καὶ τὸν ποιμένα ὅτι πάσχει ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ πλησίον ἀγάπης· εἰ δὲ καὶ τοῦτό ἐστι καλόν, ἀλλὰ τῷ ἀρνησαμένῳ τὸ ἑαυτοῦ θέλημα ἀνοίκειον καὶ ἀνάμυστον ἐστὶ καὶ ἄμισθον.⁴⁰

But if you desire to act in this way, one must not seek other things but freeze in the flesh and endure nakedness, in order that one reassures oneself and the shepherd that one suffers for the love of one's neighbour. However, even if this is laudable, it is unfitting and inappropriate and unprofitable for one who has renounced his will.

Here a situation is envisaged where a monk gives away his clothes and does not ask for replacements. This scenario is already familiar to us from our discussion of Vita A. However, whereas the version in Vita A is scathing about this practice, regarding it as hypocritical, the version in Vita B is much more accommodating.⁴¹ It is admitted that such behaviour can truly be motivated by love of one's neighbour and that it is meritorious. Nonetheless, in a coenobitic monastery it is not appropriate because it is trumped by the requirement to obey the abbot in all things. At this point we need to return to our discussion of the texts and their relationship to each other. Two scenarios can be envisaged: the second part of the invective in Vita B could reproduce the text of the Vita prima (in this case we would need to argue that the author of Vita A consulted the Panagios-Typikon when he rewrote the Vita prima, bringing it into line with this rule); or the text of the Vita prima could have been modified by the Lavriot author. Unfortunately it is impossible to come to a definite conclusion since the second half of the invective in Vita B does not contain elements that are found in the Petritzos-Typikon but not in Vita A. If the former scenario were correct, the stance of the leaders of the Panagios monastery would not have been as clear-cut as it has seemed so far. If the latter scenario applied, the invective in Vita B would constitute a response by the monks of Lavra to the radical coenobiticism of the Panagios monastery: they would have preferred their founder saint to express an opinion that was more in keeping with their own, rather more traditional customs. Regardless of which scenario is true, there can be no doubt that the coenobitic reformers met with a great deal of resistance.

So far we have limited the discussion of the Lives of Athanasius to the episode about the vagrant monk. This is, however, not the only instance in the texts in which the giving away of clothes by

⁴⁰ Vita B 49 (185, 32–37 Noret).

⁴¹ In Vita A the notion of hypocrisy is expressed through the adverb δῆθεν (in the prepositional phrase ὑπὲρ γε τῆς τοῦ πλησίον δῆθεν ἀγάπης). This detail is missing in the extant Greek version of the Petritzos-Typikon where we read διὰ τὴν τοῦ πλησίον ἀγάπην. As has already been pointed out, however, this version is the result of a later reworking of Pakourianos' original text. The Georgian translation, which was made from the original text, retains the notion of hypocrisy. See Petritzos-Typikon (Georgian version) (13 TARCHNISHVILI): *'cum eorum iactura pie mentiris et ob fictum proximi amorem simul quasi frigans ac famem patiens'*; (291 SHANIDZE): *'когда их нужду принимаешь как бы сердобольно и показываешь внешне будто <готов> перенести холод и иаготу из-за любви к ближнему.'*

individuals is mentioned. It also surfaces in the narrative of Athanasius' life before he became a monk. This narrative is found in both Vita A and Vita B and can therefore be claimed for the Vita prima. We are told that when the young Athanasius lived with his relatives in Constantinople he already behaved like an ascetic. This point is emphasised through the following story, which I quote from Vita B:

Ἄ γὰρ ἐδίδοτο τούτῳ παρά τε φίλων καὶ συγγενῶν εἰς τὰς χεῖρας ἐτίθει τῶν πενήτων καὶ τῶν πτωχῶν· ὅτε δὲ οὐκ εἶχεν, εἴ τις τῶν ἐνδεῶν συναντήσας ἐδέετο τούτου, ἐκεῖνος φλεγόμενος σφόδρα τῷ πρὸς αὐτὸν οἰκτιρμῷ ἐχώρει εἰς μέρος ἀπόκρυφον καὶ ἐξεδιδύσκετο τῷ ἐνδεεῖ τὰ ἱμάτια κἂν χειμέριος ᾗν ὁ καιρός, μόνον ὑποκρατῶν τὸ ἐπανωφόριον διὰ τὴν ἀναγκαίαν σκέπην τοῦ σώματος· ... οἱ συγγενεῖς δὲ ἐλεοῦντες αὐτὸν καὶ μάλιστα διὰ τὸν τοῦ ψυχῆς καιρὸν ἐδίδουν μὲν αὐτῷ ἱμάτιον, διὰ πολλῆς δὲ ἀνάγκης ἔπειθον αὐτὸν καὶ βίας τοῦτο ἐνδύσασθαι.⁴²

For what he was given by friends and relatives he put into the hands of the poor and of beggars. But when he did not have (sc. anything) and one of the destitute approached him and entreated him, he was greatly inflamed by compassion for him. He went to a secluded place and took off his clothes for the destitute one even if it was in the season of winter, only keeping the outer garment because it was necessary in order to cover the body. ... His relatives pitied him and especially because it was the cold season gave him a cloak, and applying much pressure and force persuaded him to wear it.

It is evident that here Athanasius behaves in a way that resembles closely the behaviour of the monks of Lavra which incurred the saint's criticism. In order to gauge the significance of this parallel we need to consider hagiographical convention. The claim that saints engaged in charitable acts even before they became monks was an innovative feature at the time. Missing from earlier hagiographical texts, it is also found in the contemporary Lives of Luke of Hellas and Nicephorus of Miletos.⁴³ This does not mean, however, that Athanasius' hagiographers slavishly followed the new trend. The author of the Life of Nicephorus lets his hero continue with this behaviour after he has become abbot: the saint gives away to the poor whatever he has at his disposal.⁴⁴ By contrast, Athanasius does not act in this fashion, either as a monk or, later, as abbot. This is highly unusual since such passages are found in virtually every saint's life. Here I will give only one example, from the ninth-century Life of Eustratius of the Agauroi.

Καὶ γὰρ ἀπὸ τοῦ πλησιάζοντος μετοχίου τῷ ἄσκει τῆς Προυσαέων πόλεως ἀνερχομένου αὐτοῦ πρὸς τὸ μοναστήριον ὑπαντᾷ αὐτῷ ἀνήρ τις αἰτῶν ἐλεημοσύνην· ὁ δὲ συμπαθέστατος οὗτος

⁴² Vita B 7 (132, 31–42 Noret). The version of Vita A is considerably shorter, see Vita A 14 (9, 10–12 Noret).

⁴³ Life of Luke of Hellas 10–11 (ed. D. Z. SOPHIANOS, Ὁ βίος τοῦ ὁσίου Λουκᾶ τοῦ Στειριώτη. Προλεγόμενα – μετάφραση – κριτική ἔκδοση τοῦ κειμένου. Athens 1989, 163–164); Life of Nicephorus of Miletos 5 (ed. H. DELEHAYE, Vita S. Nicephori. *AnBoll* 14 [1895] 123–166, esp. 137). Nicephorus, a former bishop of Miletos, founded the monastery of Xerochoraphion in Western Asia Minor in the second half of the tenth century. See S. PAPAIOANNOU, Sicily, Constantinople, Miletos: The Life of a Eunuch and the History of Byzantine Humanism, in: Myriobiblos. Essays on Byzantine Literature and Culture, ed. Th. Antonopoulou – S. Kotzabassi – M. Loukaki (*Byzantinisches Archiv* 29). Boston – Berlin – Munich 2015, 261–284. Luke of Hellas or Steiris lived as a hermit in Central Greece in the first half of the tenth century. His Life was most likely written during the reign of Basil II. See S. EFTHYMIADIS, Hagiography from the 'Dark Age' to the Age of Symeon Metaphrastes (Eighth–Tenth Centuries), in: The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography, I: Periods and Places, ed. S. Efthymiadis. Farnham – Burlington 2011, 95–142, esp. 125.

⁴⁴ Life of Nicephorus of Miletos 20 (151–152 DELEHAYE). The Life of Luke of Hellas contains no further passage of this kind. However, this saint never lived in a monastery or became abbot.

πατήρ κατοικτεΐρας αὐτὸν καὶ μηδὲν ἕτερον ἔχων δοῦναι τῷ αἰτοῦντι λύσας ὃ περιεβέβλητο παλλίον δίδωσιν αὐτῷ τὴν τοῦ κυρίου φωνὴν ἐκπληρώσας.⁴⁵

For when he went from the metochion near the city of Prusa to the monastery, a man approached him and asked for alms. And this most compassionate father took pity on him and since he did not have anything else to give to the beggar he loosened the cloak that he wore, and gave it to him, fulfilling the word of the Lord.

It is not difficult to see why Athanasius' hagiographers transposed this type of episode to the time when the saint was still a layman. By doing so they could drive home the general point that what was licit for a layman was illicit for a monk and even for an abbot, who was supposed to delegate this task to the cellarer and the gatekeeper, thus carefully avoiding any personal involvement. At the same time, however, they clearly wished to show that Athanasius was capable of spontaneous almsgiving and that he did not engage in it only because it was prohibited by the coenobitic ideal. Without doubt they felt constrained to construct their narratives in this manner because personal acts of charity were regarded as an essential marker of sainthood.

There is only one episode in the texts that seems to deviate from the strictly coenobitic line. In this episode we are told that a group of Athonite monks resented Athanasius' growing influence. They set out for Constantinople in order to present their grievances there but were immediately attacked by barbarians, who stripped them of their clothes and left them naked. Under these circumstances they were forced to turn to Athanasius, who happened to be in the vicinity. Confronted with their plight the saint then took pity on them:

Vita B:

... διενέμει αὐτοῖς ἱμάτια ἀφ' ὧν ἐφόρουσιν οἱ ὑπ' αὐτὸν μοναχοὶ καὶ τὴν τῆς ὁδοῦ χρεῖαν παρέσχευ αὐτοῖς.⁴⁶

... he distributed among them cloaks from those worn by the monks under his rule, and he gave them what they needed for the journey.

Here the almsgiving, though mediated through the abbot, is not anonymous since each monk sees that his cloak is given to one of the naked Athonites. The hagiographers give the impression that this was an exceptional case, necessitated by extraordinary circumstances. This impression, however, may well be deceptive. At this point we need to turn to the Life of Lazarus of Galesion, which dates to the later eleventh century.⁴⁷ Lazarus' hagiographer places great emphasis on the charity of the saint, who had founded a monastery on a mountain near the city of Ephesus. When poor people came to him he is said to have reacted as follows:

Οὐ κεναιῖς τούτους ἀφίει ἀπιέναι χερσὶν ἀλλ' ἐξ ὧν εἴτε αὐτὸς ἦν ἔχων εἰς χεῖρας εἴτε παρά τινος ἀδελφοῦ ἐκεῖ παρατυχόντος λαμβάνων εὐθέως τῷ αἰτοῦντι παρεῖχευ.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Life of Eustratius of the Agauroi 13 (ed. A. PAPADOPOULOS-KERAMEUS, *Ἀνάλεκτα ἱεροσολυμιτικῆς σταχυολογίας*. St. Petersburg 1897 [repr. Brussels 1963], IV 367–400, esp. 376, 21–377, 3). On Eustratius see EFTHYMIADIS, *Hagiography* 110–111. Eustratius lived in the ninth century. The monastery of the Agauroi was situated in Bithynia.

⁴⁶ Vita B 58 (191, 48–51 Noret); Vita A 211 (102, 25–27 Noret).

⁴⁷ On Lazarus, see R. GREENFIELD, *Drawn to the blazing beacon: visitors and pilgrims to the living holy man and the case of Lazarus of Mount Galesion*. *DOP* 56 (2002) 213–241. Lazarus died shortly after the year 1054. His Life seems to have been written soon afterwards.

⁴⁸ Life of Lazarus of Galesion 145 (ed. H. DELEHAYE, *Vita S. Lazari auctore Gregorio monacho*, in: *AASS Novembris III*. Brussels 1910, 508–588, esp. 551C).

He would not let these people go away empty-handed, but would either (sc. pick out something) from what he himself had to hand, or else would take something from a brother who happened to be there, and would immediately present it to the person who was begging.⁴⁹

Here we are clearly in a radically different milieu. Lazarus is depicted as an abbot who does not dispense charity through the official channels but engages in personal almsgiving. Yet there is one feature that is also found in the Lives of Athanasius: Lazarus takes items from his monks in order to give them to the indigent. Unlike Athanasius, however, Lazarus is not responding to extraordinary circumstances but acts like this on a regular basis. There can be little doubt that contemporary audiences were aware of this custom. Thus one can argue that Athanasius' hagiographers adapted it, in a watered-down version, because they felt that they had to acknowledge the alternative ideal in some way.

Another passage from the Life of Lazarus shows the gulf that separated Lazarus' hagiographer from the authors of the Lives of Athanasius and other champions of the coenobitic life-style. We are again told that the saint took items from his monks in order to give them to the poor. In this case, however, further details are added:

Ὁ δὲ τὸ ἱμάτιον ἀπολέσας εἰ καὶ λύπη πρὸς τὸ παρὸν συνεῖχετο ἀλλ' οὖν ἐν τῷ καιρῷ πάλιν τῆς τῶν ἱματίων διανομῆς εἰ ἦδει ὁ πατήρ ἐνδεῶς αὐτὸν ἔχοντα ἀνθ' οὗ ἀπώλεσε τετριμμένου καινὸν παρείχεν αὐτῷ.⁵⁰

As for the (sc. monk) who had lost his garment, he might be distressed for the moment, but then, at the time of the (sc. annual) distribution of habits, the father would provide him with a new garment instead of the worn-out one he had lost, if he knew that he needed one.⁵¹

Here the focus is on the monk whose clothes are being used for charity. His loss is interpreted as a personal sacrifice. There is a clear pedagogical component, which is not dissimilar to the stipulation that we found in Attaleiates' rule: the monks learn to be charitable by being forced to behave in a particular manner. Significantly, the monk does not remain scantily clad for a long period of time because at the next distribution he receives new clothes which are less worn than the ones he had to part with. The bestowal of new clothes is then interpreted as a reward for previous suffering. This practice evidently resembles closely the custom that had been excoriated by the authors of the Panagios-Typikon and the Lives of Athanasius: there, too, old clothes are given away as alms and new clothes are acquired in due course. There is only one difference. Whereas in the latter texts the monks act on their own initiative, Lazarus' hagiographer lets the abbot intervene. Significantly, the Life of Lazarus contains no story in which a monk gives alms directly to the poor. This could be taken as an indication that Lazarus' hagiographer, too, was influenced by the new coenobitic discourse, where only the abbot can dispense charity, although it must be admitted that the way in which Lazarus acts differs starkly from the depersonalised manner of almsgiving demanded in contemporary monastic rules. At the same time, however, one gets the impression that Lazarus' hagiographer wished to salvage as much as possible of the old custom. Although he only speaks of a monk who was unwilling to give away his clothes, one can easily imagine a scenario in which a monk cooperates with the abbot. In this case the abbot becomes a facilitator who ensures that old patterns of personal almsgiving

⁴⁹ Translation by R. P. H. GREENFIELD, *The Life of Lazaros of Galesion: An Eleventh-Century Pillar Saint (Byzantine Saints' Lives in Translation 3)*. Washington, D.C. 2000, 232.

⁵⁰ Life of Lazarus of Galesion 145 (551A DELEHAYE).

⁵¹ Translation by GREENFIELD, *Life of Lazaros* 233.

survive in the changed world of eleventh-century monasticism. The discrepancy between the two monastic milieus may be explained by the fact that Panagios was an urban monastery, whereas Lazarus' foundation was situated in the countryside. It seems likely that the new coenobitic ideology was first formulated in Constantinople and then spread, in a somewhat diluted form, to the provinces.

The discussion so far has shown that the late tenth and eleventh centuries saw a move from private to communal almsgiving. In its pure form the new ideal demanded that all charity should be given by the abbot and his delegates, the cellarer and the gatekeeper, who should not act as individuals but exclusively as representatives of the community as a whole. This was without doubt a momentous change. Yet it can be argued that the reformers went even further, redefining the very purpose of charity. Here a comparison between the Life of Paul of Latros and the Lives of Athanasius is instructive. In the former text we find the following statement:

Τὴν περὶ τοὺς δεομένους τοῦ μεμακαρισμένου συμπάθειαν πῶς ἂν τις παραστήσειε λόγος; οὐ γὰρ τῶν ἐν τῇ λαύρᾳ περιττῶν μόνον εἶ γέ τι καὶ περιττὸν ἦν ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ἀναγκαίων οὐδαμῶς ἐφείδετο οὐδὲ αὐτῆς δῆπου τῆς ἐφημέρου τροφῆς, ἀλλ' ἀφειδῶς ἐσκόρπιζε καὶ ἀμφοτέραις ἐδίδου πένησι.⁵²

But as for the blessed one's compassion for those who were in need, how could any account do it justice? For he in no way spared not only the superfluous things in the monastery, if indeed there was anything superfluous, but also the necessary things and even the daily food itself, but scattered it unsparingly and gave it to the poor with both hands.

Here the focus is exclusively on the saintly abbot. The poor are only bit players who enable Paul to show his charity. Nothing further is said about them or about their fates. The Lives of Athanasius present us with a radically different picture. They begin quite conventionally with a stock phrase that resembles closely the introductory sentence in the Life of Paul of Latros.⁵³ However, the hagiographers then express startlingly new ideas. They claim that Athanasius was concerned about the moral improvement of the people who came to his monastery and that he saw it as his most important task to cure thieves, drunkards and layabouts of their dissolute ways.⁵⁴ The following passage then explains how the saint achieved this aim. Since the two extant *Lives* have a very similar text I will only quote from Vita B:

Ἔλεγε γὰρ ἀεὶ ὅτι τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ ζητούμενον παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ δυναμένῳ, τὸ περιποιῆσθαι σῶμα καὶ ἀνακαλεῖσθαι ψυχὴν ἐκ βυθοῦ καὶ ἐξ ἀναξίων ἐξάγειν τίμιον· εἰδῶς γὰρ ὅτι ἡ ἀργία πάθη πολλὰ κινεῖ τῇ ψυχῇ οὐκ ἠφίει αὐτοὺς ἐσθίειν καὶ ἀναπαύεσθαι, ἀλλ' οἷα σοφὸς ἰατρὸς τοὺς μὲν αὐτῶν ἐν τῷ μαγειρίῳ προσέταττεν εἶναι ὥστε συγκόπτειν λάχανα, τοὺς δὲ ἐν τῇ τραπέζῃ διαθρύπτειν τὸν ἄρτον, τοὺς δὲ εἰς τὸ χαλκεῖον παρέπεμπεν ἵνα τοὺς φυσητῆρας κατέχωσι καὶ

⁵² Life of Paul of Latros 41 (H. DELEHAYE, Monumenta Latrensia Hagiographica, in: Milet. Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen und Untersuchungen seit dem Jahre 1899, III.1: Der Latmos, ed. Th. Wiegand, Berlin 1913, 105–135, esp. 129, 1–4). Paul founded a monastery in Southwest Asia Minor in the first half of the tenth century. On Paul's Life see A. KAZHDAN – Ch. ANGELIDI, A History of Byzantine Literature (850–1000) (Hellenic Research Foundation. Institute for Byzantine Research. Research Series 4). Athens 2006, 211–218.

⁵³ Vita B 40 (172, 23 NORET): Τὸ δὲ συμπαθὲς ὅπερ εἶχε πρὸς τὸ ὁμόφυλον, πόσα ἂν τις εἰπὼν ἐπαινέσοι ἀξίως; Vita A 136 (63–64, 1–3 NORET): Τὸ δὲ συμπαθὲς αὐτοῦ καὶ φιλόστοργον καὶ περὶ τὸ ὁμογενὲς οἰκονομικόν τε καὶ προμηθέστατον, πόσα ἂν τις εἰπὼν ἀξίως ἐπαινέσεται.

⁵⁴ Vita B 40 (172, 4–6 NORET); Vita A 137 (64, 16–19 NORET).

ὑπηρετῶσι τοῖς ἐργαζομένοις ὡς ἂν ἀπὸ τοῦ προσέχειν ἐκεῖ λυτρῶνται τῶν πονηρῶν λογισμῶν καὶ εἰς μετάνοιαν ἔρχονται.⁵⁵

For he always said that this is what is asked of every human being who is capable of doing it: to care for the body and recall the soul from the abyss and to bring forth a worthy one from unworthy ones. For, knowing that idleness breeds many passions in the soul, he did not let them eat and rest but, like a wise physician, he ordered some of them to be in the kitchen that they might chop vegetables and others to break bread in the refectory and yet others he sent to the smithy that they might hold the bellows and assist the workers in order that, through paying attention there, they might be ransomed from the evil thoughts and arrive at repentance.

This passage consists of two parts. The hagiographer first lets Athanasius make a brief statement about the need to help others, which has a counterpart in the Petritzos-Typikon, and then explains how the saint put his teachings into practice: layabouts and drunkards who come to the monastery are given various tasks to do.⁵⁶ These men are introduced as ‘brothers in Christ’, ἐν Χριστῷ ἀδελφοί, which is a standard term for beggars, and they are clearly distinguished from the monks for whom they are said to have become a lesson.⁵⁷ Thus they must be identified with the poor who came to the Lavra in order to benefit from the monks’ charity. It is immediately evident that this passage contrasts starkly with the traditional model of spontaneous charity. Moreover, Athanasius’ hagiographers are not content with presenting an alternative. They also insinuate that this alternative is superior. Athanasius’ reasoning focuses on the possible negative effects that spontaneous responses to obvious needs have on the recipients – when they are given food and clothes they are, at the same time, abandoned to dangerous idleness – and thus points to a shortcoming of the traditional model of almsgiving, in which the focus on spontaneity precludes any considerations of its effects and the recipient is little more than a cipher that disappears immediately after the interaction. There can be little doubt that Athanasius’ hagiographers considered this argument to be effective because Athanasius was primarily concerned with the salvation of the souls of the poor, which contemporary readers would have regarded as far more important than material well-being.

To conclude: Byzantine monks were not supposed to have private possessions. Yet this does not mean that they did not have personal items at their disposal. Chief among those were the food that was served to them in the refectory, and the clothes that were distributed to them from the monastery’s stores. According to a widespread custom, both were used for private almsgiving. Monks would personally give the leftovers from their meals and their old clothes as charity to the poor. Such behaviour was regarded as entirely laudable and as a means to secure one’s salvation. This custom can be encountered as late as the late eleventh century. At that time, however, it was decidedly old-fashioned. By then a powerful monastic reform movement had come into existence whose proponents insisted that all charity had to be communal. The new status quo is reflected in monastic

⁵⁵ Vita B 40 (172, 8–19 NORET). See also Vita A 138 (65, 7–13 NORET): τοὺς μὲν γὰρ τοῖς ἐν τῷ μαγειρείῳ τελοῦσι συντελεῖν ἔταπτεν, ἄρτους τε διαθρύπτειν καὶ λάχανα συγκόπτειν ...

⁵⁶ This passage, too, had a counterpart in the Panagios-Typikon. See Petritzos-Typikon 28 (111, 1521–1528 GAUTIER): Καὶ γὰρ τοῦτό ἐστιν ἐν ᾧ χαίρομεν ... καθὼς ὁ προφήτης λέγει ὅτι ὁ ἐξάγων τίμιον ἐξ ἀτίμου. The relative clause is a secondary modification as can be seen from the Georgian versions (40 TARCHNISHVILI): ‘*Hoc enim est quaesitum*’; (316 SHANIDZE): ‘это есть именно’. See also Vita A 137 (64, 24–33 NORET): τοῦτο γὰρ τὸ ζητούμενον ... ὁ τοιοῦτος ἐξάγων ἄξιον ἐξ ἀναξίου.

⁵⁷ See Vita B 40 (172, 19–23 NORET).

rules and saints' lives. From these texts we learn that at the end of communal meals the monks were to put their leftovers in a basket, which was then taken to the poor by representatives of the community such as the cellarer and the gatekeeper. Old clothes also had to be delivered to the stores of the monastery when one wanted to be given new ones and were distributed in the same way. In the latter case we notice an interesting shift. Originally the prohibition of private almsgiving seems to have been directed at those who asked for replacements immediately after they had given away their old clothes. Eventually, however, even those who did not ask for replacements and were prepared to go around half-naked were considered to be sinners because their self-willed behaviour clashed with their vows. This shift can be seen from texts produced at the monastery of Panagios in the early eleventh century, a monastic rule and two Lives of Athanasius the Athonite. Significantly, Athanasius' hagiographers did not even claim that their hero engaged in personal almsgiving during his time as a monk and as abbot. Instead, they transposed this traditional hagiographical topos to Athanasius' pre-monastic life, thus indicating that Athanasius was capable of personal charity and that he did not engage in it later on only because it clashed with the coenobitic ideal. In other hagiographical texts the impact of the reform movement is much less visible. The hagiographer of Lazarus of Galesion lets the saint himself give his own garments to the poor. Moreover, he tells his audience that Lazarus took clothes directly from his monks and, after a while, gave them new ones as a reward. Here the interaction between monk and beggar is mediated through an intervention by the abbot. Yet the monk still knows that the clothes were originally his, so that a personal element is safeguarded even as lip-service is being paid to the coenobitic ideology. This practice seems to have been widespread since it is obliquely alluded to even in the hard-line Lives of Athanasius the Athonite. Finally, there are signs that a whole new understanding of charity had come into existence. Whereas earlier abbots had spontaneously given away items to those who needed them and then let them leave, Athanasius is said to have taken a more considered approach, extending his care to the spiritual well-being of the beggars. He would not let them have food if they did not work to earn it because he believed that idleness breeds vices. In this stern morality there is more than a whiff of the Victorian workhouse.