

Political Rehabilitation through Rhetoric: Psellos' *Funeral Oration for Patriarch Keroularios* and Its Ceremonial Context¹

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<https://doi.org/10.58377/byzslav.2025.7>

This study examines Michael Psellos' Funeral Oration for the Most Blessed Patriarch Kyr Michael Keroularios, delivered in 1060, one year after Keroularios' death. The oration, structured according to Menander Rhetor's encomiastic guidelines, presents Keroularios' life, virtues, and political career, portraying him as a martyr through rhetorical and ideological constructs. By glorifying Keroularios, the speech rehabilitates him and stands in contrast to Psellos' Indictment against Keroularios, produced just a year earlier, demonstrating the performative and political nature of east Roman funeral oratory. The Funeral Oration was delivered at the patriarch's foundation, the church of the archangel Michael west of Constantinople, in the presence of the emperor Constantine X Doukas, his wife and Keroularios' niece Eudokia Makrembolitissa, Keroularios' nephews, the new patriarch Constantine Leichoudes, and high-ranking clergy. The speech constructs Keroularios as a bloodless martyr, likening him to biblical figures and the Church Fathers. By analyzing Psellos' engagement with biblical and patristic sources, this study reveals how the oration functioned as both a political statement and an attempt at posthumous rehabilitation. The parallels between Psellos' oration and Gregory of Nazianzos' Funeral Oration for Basil of Caesarea suggest that Psellos' speech sought to elevate Keroularios' status, possibly even as a step toward canonization. Ultimately, this study positions Psellos' Funeral Oration as a key example of a politically engaged ceremonial oratory, demonstrating how funeral orations were used not only to eulogize but also to shape political and religious narratives in the eleventh-century east Rome.

Funeral Oration for Keroularios: general observations and rhetoric as part of the ritual

Michael I Keroularios, the notorious ecumenical patriarch between 1043 and 1058, mostly known for his involvement in the so-called schism of 1054 and

1 This article is based on a paper presented at the conference *Character Construction in Byzantium* held at the Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague, Czech Republic, on September 12 and 13, 2024. The author would like to thank the organizers of the conference – Markéta Kulhánková, Petra Melichar, and Florin Leonte – for the opportunity to present the work that is published here. This article has been written within the course of the RELEVEN project, supported by the European Research Council under the Horizon 2020 research and innovation program (Grant agreement #101002357).

for his conflict with the emperor Isaac I Komnenos, died in early 1059.² A year after his death, in 1060, the new patriarch Constantine III Leichoudes, in the presence of the new emperor Constantine X Doukas, established an annual service in the memory of his predecessor. For this occasion, Michael Psellos, a Constantinopolitan rhetorician, philosopher, and court official,³ produced and delivered the *Funeral Oration for the Most Blessed Patriarch Kyr Michael Keroularios*, his longest funeral oration. Even though its factual content is ‘of the dead nothing but good,’ the *Funeral Oration for Keroularios* offers an insight into a performative and occasional nature of east Roman funeral oratory, into political implications of such an oration as well as into the ideological role of identity building in eleventh-century east Rome.

The oration, divided into sixty-two chapters, presents Psellos’ philosophical tractate on virtue, rhetoric, soul, body, politics, and religion. The text follows the traditional structure of an encomiastic speech based on Menander Rhetor’s handbook for composing encomiastic speeches which was “the theoretical backbone of basic instruction in composition.”⁴ As such, the *Funeral Oration* offers a full-scale overview of Keroularios’ life and service under the rule of six emperors and empresses from 1034 to 1059, namely Michael IV Paphlagon, Michael V Kalaphates, Constantine IX Monomachos, Theodora, Michael VI Stratiotikos, and Isaac Komnenos. It discusses Keroularios’ ‘godlike’ soul and philosophical mind, his childhood, education, and family and his relationship with the emperors and empresses. It elaborates on Keroularios’ Christian humility and mercy, how he became a patriarch, his honest outspokenness or freedom of speech (παρρησία) on all occasions, and his ‘angelic’ nature, all of

2 For Keroularios’ patriarchate, political and ecclesiastical roles, and his biography in general, see F. TINNEFELD, Michael I Kerullarios, Patriarch von Konstantinopel (1043–1058): Kritische Überlegungen zu einer Biographie, *JÖB* 39, 1989, 95–127. For Keroularios’ conflict with Isaac Komnenos and Psellos’ role in this context, see A. ANĐELOVIĆ, Philosopher between Emperor and Patriarch: Michael Psellos’ Polemical Letter to the Patriarch Keroullarios, in: A. Jugănaru – L. Diaconu (eds.), *The Soul’s Communion with God in Western and Byzantine Christianity*, Bucharest 2024, 153–184.

3 Some major publications on Psellos are G. WEISS, *Oströmische Beamte im Spiegel der Schriften des Michael Psellos*, Munich 1973. U. CRISCUOLO, Πολιτικός άνήρ: Contributo al pensiero politico di Michele Psello, *Rendiconti della Accademia di Archeologia, Lettere e belle Arti* 57, 1982, 129–163. A. KALDELLIS, *The Argument of Psellos’ Chronographia*, Leiden–Boston 1999. J. Ljubarskij, *Η προσωπικότητα και το έργο του Μιχαήλ Ψελλού*, Athens 2004. E. PIETSCH, *Die Chronographia des Michael Psellos: Kaisergeschichte, Autobiographie und Apologie*, Wiesbaden 2005. M. Lauxtermann – M. Jeffreys (eds.), *The Letters of Psellos: Cultural Networks and Historical Realities*, Oxford 2017. S. ΠΑΠΑΓΙΑΝΝΟΥ, *Η ρητορική και ό λογοτέχνης στο Βυζάντιο*, Heraklion 2021.

4 E. BOURBOUHAKIS, *Not Composed in a Chance Manner: The Epitaphios for Manuel I Komnenos by Eustathios of Thessalonike*, Uppsala 2017, 100. For Menander’s instructions on funeral oratory, see *Menander Rhetor*, D. A. Russell – N. G. Wilson (eds.), Oxford 1981, 418.5–422.4.

which allegedly constitute his 'martyrdom.' Furthermore, it explores Keroularios' role in society, patriarchal policy, and both his and Psellos' philosophical worldviews. The content of the oration is the following:

- 1–6: Keroularios' origins and virtue
- 7–9: Education, scholarly pursuits, and bond with his brother
- 10–15: Involvement in the *coup* against Michael IV and first exile
- 16–18: Return from exile, Monomachos' rise, and favor toward Keroularios
- 19–23: Patriarchal appointment and ceremonial procession
- 24–30: Keroularios' virtues, duties, and achievements as patriarch
- 31–33: Humility, modesty, and reflections on the soul-body dualism
- 34–38: Outspokenness and acts of mercy, including saving Leo Tornikios
- 39–40: The Schism of 1054 and Keroularios' theological expertise
- 41: Description of Keroularios' nephews in attendance
- 42–45: Virtue, rhetoric, and philosophy in patriarchal service
- 46–48: Events during Theodora's and Michael VI's rule
- 49–55: Isaac Komnenos' rebellion, Michael VI's deposition, and conflict with Isaac
- 55–60: Final exile, visit to St. Euthymios' tomb, and death
- 61–62: *Ekphrasis* of the church where the commemoration took place, invocation of Keroularios' angel, and conclusion

Although labelled 'funeral' like the other two Psellos' patriarchal funeral orations for Leichoudes and Xiphilinos, Psellos' speech for Keroularios differs both in length and purpose from the other two orations. While all of them base their structure, as already mentioned, on Menander Rhetor, all three of them delivered over the actual graves, and all of them purely encomiastic in character,⁵ the speech for Keroularios is the 'most' encomiastic, i.e. it is the only one labelled in the manuscript as ἐγκωμιαστικός and not, as in the case of Leichoudes and Xiphilinos, ἐπιτάφιος.⁶ The speech for Keroularios was delivered roughly a year after the patriarch's death, a considerably shorter time than in the case of Leichoudes (at least twelve years).⁷ It is much longer than the other two, covering 82 pages in the modern edition while the other

5 See, for example, *Menander Rhetor*, Russell – Wilson (eds.), op. cit., 420.10-12: ἐγκωμιάσεις δὲ ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν τόπων τῶν ἐγκωμιαστικῶν, γένους, γενέσεως, φύσεως, ἀνατροφῆς, παιστικῶν, γένους, γενέσεως, φύσεως, ἀνατροφῆς, παιδείας, ἐπιτηδευμάτων. "You should base your encomium on all the encomiastic topics: family, birth, nature, nurture, education, accomplishments."

6 See Par. Gr. 1182, fol. 116.

7 The *Funeral Oration for Xiphilinos* was delivered between 1076 and 1078, that is, at least a year after Xiphilinos' death and Psellos' death around 1078, see A. SIDERAS, *Die Byzantinischen Grabreden: Prosopographie, Datierung, Überlieferung. 142 Epitaphien und Monodien aus dem Byzantinischen Jahrtausend*, Vienna 1995, 146.

two funeral speeches together make up 88 pages. This is all to signal that it is a worthwhile endeavor to explore the purpose and immediate significance of Psellos' speech for Keroularios.

As a proper enkomiastic speech, the *Funeral Oration for Keroularios* is marked by a complete absence of (overt) accusations and with an emphasis on praise. However, in his other works, for example in the *Chronographia* and in his letters to Keroularios, Psellos mentions the exact same Keroularios' characteristics, such as the patriarch's 'angelic' nature and outspokenness, yet with overtly sarcastic undertones, referring to the patriarch's inflexible personality and high-and-mighty attitude towards the imperial authority that he was known for.⁸ In other words, many terms with which Psellos praises the patriarch in the *Funeral Oration* are in fact sugar-coated versions of the criticisms expressed on other occasions, illustrating differing purposes and ideological nature of Psellos' works the subject of which was Keroularios.

A case in point is a stark antipode that was also addressed to Keroularios, namely Psellos' bitter invective *Indictment against Keroularios* that was produced only a year before the *Funeral Oration*.⁹ Although this piece never impacted Keroularios since the patriarch died before Psellos had a chance to deliver it before the Synod, the *Indictment* is a conspicuously politically motivated text aimed at discrediting the patriarch Keroularios by accusing him of impiety, tyranny, and other vices. Through this work, Psellos sought to justify Keroularios' deposition and assert the importance of *paideia* for ecclesiastical leadership, while also defending his own intellectual pursuits and courtly influence. More concretely, the *Indictment* should be seen through the lenses of the

8 Psellos used these primarily in a polemical letter to Keroularios, see *Epistulae*, S. Papaioannou (ed.), Berlin – Boston 2019, 239–252, henceforth abbreviated *Ep.* 111, followed by a line number of a quoted text, as is any other letter from this edition. On this controversial letter, see ANĐELOVIĆ, *Philosopher between Emperor and Patriarch*, op. cit. Skylitzes Continuatus also reports that the patriarch scandalously wore purple sandals, which were the exclusive symbol of imperial power, and he also recounts Keroularios' extremely arrogant behavior specifically towards the emperor Isaac I Komnenos, ascribing to him the words "I made you an emperor and I will destroy you," see *The Continuation of the Chronicle of John Skylitzes (1057–1079)*, E. McGeer (ed., tr.), Leiden – Boston 2020, 105.1–4: «Ἐγὼ σὲ ἔκτισα, φοῦρνε, καὶ ἐγὼ νῦν σὲ χαλάσω». Ἐπεβάλετο δὲ καὶ κοκκοβαφῆ περιβαλέσθαι πέδιλα τῆς παλαιᾶς ἱερωσύνης φάσκων εἶναι τὸ τοιοῦτον ἔθος καὶ δεῖν τοῦτοις κἂν τῇ νέᾳ κεκρῆσθαι τὸν ἀρχιερέα. Ἱερωσύνης γὰρ καὶ βασιλείας τὸ διαφέρον οὐδὲν ἢ καὶ ὀλίγον ἔλεγεν εἶναι: "I built you, oven, and I can take you apart." He took it upon himself to wear the purple boots, claiming that this had been the custom of the ancient clergy and that a Patriarch in the modern-day clergy should use them too. He said that there was little or no difference between ecclesiastical and secular authority, and that he held greater place in the ranks of honour and was to be the more highly esteemed."

9 The *Indictment against Keroularios* has been edited in *Orationes Forenses et Acta*, G. T. Dennis (ed.), Stuttgart – Leipzig 1994, 1–103. On the *Indictment* see also L. BREHIER, *Un discours inedit de Psellos : Accusation du Patriarche Cerulaire devant le Synode (1059)*, *REG* 16, 1903, 375–416, as well as P. MOORE, *Iter Psellianum. A detailed listing of manuscript sources for all works attributed to Michael Psellos, including a comprehensive bibliography*, Toronto 2005, 380–381.

patriarch's conflict with Isaac I Komnenos, whereby Isaac attempted to justify the deposition of a still very popular patriarch in 1059. For this purpose, Psellos with his *Indictment* scorning Keroularios attempted to influence public opinion on the controversial patriarch. While the subject of the present article is not the *Indictment* but the *Funeral Oration*, it was necessary to juxtapose the two texts in order to grasp the main rationale behind both – while in early 1059 Psellos was commissioned to scorn Keroularios to influence public opinion, in 1060 he was again commissioned to do the same, but this time in another direction, by praising the deceased patriarch.¹⁰ Both texts were pamphlets with an oral dimension of delivery as a part of a ritual. In other words, as Papaioannou noted, the *Funeral Oration* functions not merely as an encomium but as an apology,¹¹ as a deliberate rehabilitation and political exoneration of Keroularios' legacy.

While the *Indictment*, as mentioned above, was never delivered due to Keroularios' death, the *Funeral Oration* abounds in information on the immediate setting, venue, audience, and purpose of this speech. Despite this richness of information, however, the *Funeral Oration for Keroularios* has not received much scholarly attention, although it has been edited and translated.¹² The reasons for this might be the following. First, the very duality in Psellos' portrayal of Keroularios – fulsome praise in the *Funeral Oration* versus scathing critique in the *Indictment* and *Chronographia* – might raise the question of the ironic aspects and Psellos' 'honesty' in this text, leading to approaching the speech with suspicion; hence, Psellos' contradictory statements, in the words of Sideras, "contributed even more to the well-known negative character-image of Psellos."¹³ In addition to this, in modern scholarship on social history of the

10 This does not mean that it is just the convention of the funeral oratory that makes Psellos present Keroularios in a more positive light here. It is possible that his views on Keroularios became truly milder, after the situation between the two men had calmed down, Psellos had been reestablished at court, and Keroularios had died. Be that as it may, Psellos, as will be shown below, was most probably commissioned to publicly exonerate Keroularios and present him as a martyr by praising exactly those characteristics of the deceased patriarch that he was otherwise known for in contentious light.

11 ΠΑΠΑΙΟΑΝΝΟΥ, *Ἡ ρητορική καὶ ὁ λογοτέχνης*, op. cit., 194. Papaioannou's interpretation of the *Funeral Oration* discusses in depth the liberties Psellos took in describing the subject's bodily beauty, a feature quite intriguing as it was not present in previous tradition of the funeral oratory and that was even criticized, e.g. by Gregory of Nazianzos, see *ibid.*

12 The *Funeral Oration for the Most Blessed Patriarch Kyr Michael Keroularios* has been edited in *Orationes Funebres, volumen 1*, I. Polemis (ed.), Berlin – Boston 2014, 1–81: Εἰς τὸν μακαριώτατον πατριάρχη κῦρ Μιχαὴλ τὸν Κηρουλλάριον, henceforth abbreviated *Or. Fun.* 1, followed by a chapter and line number of a quoted text. The *Funeral Translation* was translated by I. Polemis in *Psellos and the Patriarchs: Letters and Funeral Orations for Keroullarios, Leichoudes, and Xiphilinos*, A. Kaldellis – I. Polemis (tr.), Notre Dame, Indiana 2015, 49–128. This edition and translation will be used throughout this paper.

13 SIDERAS, *Die Byzantinischen Grabreden*, op. cit., 134: „Diese widersprüchliche Haltung hat nicht wenig zum auch sonst bekannten negativen Charakterbild des Psellos beigetragen.“ SIDERAS, *ibid.*, dates the oration to 1063, while a much more likely date of its delivery is 1060, as will be discussed below.

empire, Psellos is first and foremost associated with a single work, *Chronographia*, translated in as many as thirteen languages – more than any other of Psellos’ works – to the extent that it is “the sole Byzantine text dating after the year 600 to have attracted such international interest.”¹⁴ *Chronographia* thus inevitably overshadowed Psellos’ other works and this is especially the case when it comes to Psellos’ funeral orations for highly positioned individuals in ecclesiastical hierarchy such as the three ecumenical patriarchs.¹⁵ Finally, Hunger’s categorization of funeral oratory as “rhetorical literature” caused subjects and surroundings of funeral oratory to be regarded simply as “a little more than a pretext for authorial exhibitionism.”¹⁶ As Bourbouhakis has most recently formulated it:

The greater ignorance about the performative setting only further encourages a tendency to read orations like *epitaphios* as “literature,” in the sense of texts whose significance derives from the words alone instead of the ritual or ceremonial settings which occasioned them in the first place.¹⁷

By contrast, considering the importance of tradition in the Church and the role of public oratory in the socio-political context, this article thus treats Psellos’ *Funeral Oration for Keroularios* by viewing funeral oratory not solely as a model of applied rhetoric but as part of a ritual with its public performance, audience, venue, and ecclesiastical and political implications. Instead focusing on Psellos’ sarcasm or honesty and personal feelings for the patriarch – a discussion that would always remain in the area of supposition – this study focuses on Psellos’ rhetorical maneuvering that suggests the oration’s deeper purpose of a commissioned political exoneration. The *Funeral Oration for Keroularios* offers fertile material for such an approach, as “funeral orations had an inevitable theatrical dimension” and *epitaphios* was certainly “a form of ritual expression.”¹⁸ This article thus approaches the content of Psellos’ *Funeral Oration for Keroularios* in its ceremonial setting between Keroularios the subject, Psellos the orator, and the audience as active participant in this ritual, and it does so in two ways. First, it will address the immediate and occasional setting of the oral performance of the oration in terms of the audience and venue. Second,

14 ΠΑΠΑΙΟΑΝΝΟΥ, *Ἡ ρητορικὴ καὶ ὁ λογοτέχνης*, op. cit., 14, n. 4.

15 That is – next to Keroularios – funeral orations for Constantine III Leichoudes and John VIII Xiphilinos. These orations have been edited and translated in the same editions used in the case of Keroularios quoted above. Apart from the patriarchal funeral orations, excellent scholarship has been devoted to Psellos’ funeral orations in less official and more private contexts, for instance for his mother and daughter, see P. A. AGAPITOS, *Public and Private Death in Michael Psellos*, *BZ* 101, 2008, 555–607, and A. KALDELLIS, *Mothers and Sons, Fathers and Daughters. The Byzantine Family of Michael Psellos*, Notre Dame, Indiana 2006.

16 BOURBOUHAKIS, *Not Composed in a Chance Manner*, op. cit., 45.

17 BOURBOUHAKIS, *Not Composed in a Chance Manner*, op. cit., 47.

18 BOURBOUHAKIS, *Not Composed in a Chance Manner*, op. cit., 58 and 69.

it will analyze the ways in which and why Psellos used ancient authors and sources for Keroularios' character construction and how this contributes to our knowledge of the intellectual and Church history of the period.

Ritual and ceremony at Keroularios' tomb: imperial couple, family, and clergy in the patriarch's foundation

That this was a public performance before a live audience is clear already from the first chapter, where listeners and their expectations are mentioned as Psellos uses an expected *topos* of humility, "afraid and not entirely confident in undertaking the present encomium (...) lest the speech appear inferior to the expectations of you, the audience."¹⁹ Psellos conveniently specifies who the audience consisted of; this, at the same time, helps us date the delivery of this oration. As mentioned above, the 'funeral' in the title is misleading, since this oration, in line with common practice for *epitaphioi*,²⁰ was not delivered at the patriarch's funeral – which took place probably in January 1059 – but at least a year later, in 1060. We know this because Keroularios' niece, Eudokia Makrembolitissa, as well as her husband, the emperor Constantine X Doukas (r. 1059–1067), are mentioned in this oration as present at the occasion standing on the sides of Keroularios' tomb:

You [Keroularios] go on guiding the emperor even more now that you are dead (...) You prepared the imperial crown for your niece and married her to that emperor (...) even now that they wear crowns, they approach you as a supernatural man and saint. They stand on either side of your tomb, approaching your body with fear and respect.²¹

After the *Indictment* which was produced under the military emperor Isaac Komnenos, here the emperor comes from the Doukai clan. The presence of the emperor Constantine X does not come as a surprise at such an event where the audience of the oration consisted of the highest imperial and ecclesiastical strata. Still, it is worthy of note that Psellos offers us in this oration an insight into the perception of the military scope of the empire and its borders current at the time when the empire increasingly faced excursions and conquests of other

19 *Psellos and the Patriarchs*, Polemis (tr.), op. cit., 53. *Or. Fun.* 1, Polemis (ed.), op. cit., 1.33-35: ὥστε με δεδιένα ἐντεῦθεν καὶ μὴ παντάπασι τὴν παροῦσαν εὐφημίαν θαρρεῖν, μὴ τάναντία μοι ὧν βούλομαι γένηται καὶ τῆς τε τῶν ἀκρωμένων ὑμῶν περὶ τὸν ἐγκωμαζόμενον ὑπολήψεως.

20 See *Menander Rhetor*, Russell – Wilson (eds.), op. cit., 419.1-6.

21 *Psellos and the Patriarchs*, Polemis (tr.), op. cit., 123, slightly altered. *Or. Fun.* 1, Polemis (ed.), op. cit., 60.127-137: νῦν τεθηκῶς οὐδὲν ἦττον ταῦτα εἰ μὴ καὶ μᾶλλον (...) καὶ τῇ ἀδελφιδῆ κόσμον βασιλείῳ προητοίμασας καὶ θεῖαν συζυγίαν (...) ἀλλὰ καὶ νῦν τοῖς βασιλείοις ἀναδούμενοι στέμμασιν ὡς ὑπερφυεῖ ἀνδρὶ προσίασι καὶ θεοειδεῖ καὶ σου τὴν σορὸν ἐκατέρωθεν περιίστανται καὶ σὺν αἰδοῖ καὶ φόβῳ τῷ σῷ παρίστανται σώματι. For the empress Eudokia, see <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Eudokia/1/> and for the emperor Constantine X, see <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Constantine/10/>.

peoples into its territory on several fronts. Namely, the emperor Constantine X's presence and expectations at the delivery of this oration are further confirmed by the fact that Psellos, in emphasizing Keroularios' grief after his brother died, makes a reference for the emperor's ears too:

I do not regard as most unhappy either a Scythian living beyond the Danube who has lost fifty sons, or a Persian living beyond the Euphrates who has seen his land devastated and his dearest and nearest taken prisoner. Nature has provided the Scythian with his own philosophy, while the Persian is accustomed to such misfortunes.²²

The reference to the Danube and Euphrates is not only an ininteresting testimony to what Psellos as a court official based in Constantinople considered the borderlands of the Empire – the Danube in the west and the Euphrates in the east. It is also, as mentioned above, a reference significant for the audience, considering the military and geopolitical situation in which the empire was during the reign of Constantine X, more specifically facing excursions of Oghuz Turks across the Danube and of Seljuks in Melitene and Edessa in the Euphrates basin.²³ The reference to the Danube and Euphrates ties in with a similar remark in two works by Psellos specifically addressed to exactly Constantine X. In a letter to him, Psellos mentions that the emperor is “sailing at the same time along the Euphrates and the Danube”²⁴ while in an encomium he composed for the same emperor Psellos combines biblical discourse with a focus on the enemy's invasions on the Danube:

And I wish I could say even more, but the Scythians of the Danube have deterred me by advancing against us with the whole of their people, drowning the land all at once with their entire populace. How you raised up your hands like Moses (Ex. 17:11), and though you did not make the sign of the cross, you showed them and waved from afar as if defending yourself unarmed.²⁵

22 *Psellos and the Patriarchs*, Polemis (ed.), op. cit., 67–68. *Or. Fun.* 1, Polemis (ed.), op. cit., 15.27-33: Οὐ γὰρ εἶ τις τῶν ὑπὲρ τὸν Ἰστρον Σκυθῶν υἱεὶς ἀποβάλοι πεντήκοντα, οὗτος ἐμοὶ βαρυσυμφορώτατος, οὐδ' εἶ τις τῶν ὑπὲρ τὸν Εὐφράτην Περσῶν δημομένην αὐτῷ ἴδοι τὴν γῆν ἢ τὰ φίλτατα δορυάλωτα, τοῦτον ἐρῶ πολυαλγῆ και βαρυδαίμονα (ἐκείνῳ μὲν γὰρ ἡ φύσις τὴν Σκυθικὴν φιλοσοφίαν ἐπεσχεδίασε, τοῦτῳ δὲ ἡ συνήθεια τῶν κακῶν τὴν συμφορὰν ἐξωμάλισεν).

23 For a short overview of Constantine X's reign, see A. KALDELLIS, *Streams of Gold, Rivers of Blood: The Rise and Fall of Byzantium, 955 A.D. to the First Crusade*, Oxford 2017, 231–238. See also Attaleiates' account on Constantine X and his policy: *Historia*, I. Pérez Martín (ed.), Madrid 2002, 54–69.

24 *Ep.* 83, Papaioannou (ed.), op. cit., 22–23: Εἶτα δὴ πρὸς τὴν ἐσπέραν χωρεῖς, ἢ μᾶλλον ἐν ταῦτῳ και περιπλεῖς τὸν Εὐφράτην, και παραπλεῖς ἀμεταθέτως τὸν Ἰστρον.

25 Καὶ βούλομαι τι και πλέον ἐρεῖν, ἀλλά με οἱ πρὸς τῷ Ἰστρῳ Σκύθαι ἀνθέλκουσιν, ὄλω μὲν ἔθνη ἐφ' ἡμᾶς συρρέοντες, ὄλω δὲ πλήθει τὴν γῆν ἐξάπινα ὑποδύντες. τινὰ τρόπον σοῦ Μωσαϊκᾶς χεῖρας ὑποῦντος και τὸν σταυρὸν οὐ προτυποῦντος μὲν, δεικνύντος δὲ και πόρρωθεν ἐπισειόντος ὡς ἄμαχον ἀμυντήριον. Translation and quotation from J. ŠARANAC STAMENKOVIĆ, Michael Psellus' Anonymous Encomium to Emperor Constantine X Doukas, *ISTRAŽIVANJA, Journal of Historical Researches* 32, 2021, 25.

Psellos' employment of the Danube and Euphrates in the *Funeral Oration for Keroularios* therefore perfectly ties in with his focus on these same rivers and regions in his works for this same emperor sitting in the audience of the *Funeral Oration*. This employment, as such, then constitutes imperial and political rhetoric *par excellence*, encapsulating, as Kaldellis has shown, the prevalence of borders as political demarcations and as intentional state constructs rather than fluid cultural zones in Byzantine imperial rhetoric.²⁶ Moreover, taking into consideration Psellos' role here before Konstantinos X, it is not unreasonable to assume that the *Funeral Oration for Keroularios* was commissioned by this emperor and his wife and Keroularios' niece, especially given this emperor's close ties to the Keroularioi brothers.²⁷ Psellos' speech thus aligns with Constantine X Doukas' likely efforts to reconcile factions still loyal to Keroularios after his clash with Isaac Komnenos.

Psellos provides additional information on the audience, who included some figures familiar from Psellos' letters to Keroularios. The patriarch's nephews, Constantine and Nikephoros, are mentioned prominently in this work. They are directly addressed as present at the performance, as "well aware"²⁸ of Keroularios' character, and as friends whom the patriarch introduced to Psellos:

Relating to the sons of his brother (...) they were both close friends of mine, I who am writing the present speech (...) Let me do his kinsmen some honor for the sake of him (...) He also brought them to drink at the fountains of my discourse, and they drank from its water abundantly. They learned the arts of speech, and they climbed up the mountain of philosophy (...) O my admirable and beloved man!²⁹

Psellos explicitly identifies himself as the teacher of the patriarch's nephews, addressing one of them as "my admirable and beloved man," again drawing attention to the most important feature of his own intellectual profile: rhetoric ("the fountains of my discourse") and philosophy ("the mountain of philosophy") that together form the political.³⁰ By referring to "the present speech" and

26 A. KALDELLIS, Byzantine Borders were State Artefacts, not "Fluid Zones of Interaction," in: D. G. Tor – A. D. Beihammer (eds.), *The Islamic-Byzantine Border in History: From the Rise of Islam to the End of the Crusades*, Edinburgh 2023, 100–124.

27 An example is their joint involvement in the 1040 *coup* against Michael IV, see J.-C. CHEYNET, *Par Saint Georges, par Saint Michel*, *TM* 14, 2002, 125.

28 *Psellos and the Patriarchs*, Polemis (tr.), op. cit., 55. *Or. Fun.* 1, Polemis (ed.), op. cit., 3.9-10: Λέγω δὲ ταῦτα (...) εἰδόσιν ὑμῖν ἄμφο ἐπιδηγούμενος.

29 Polemis (tr.), *Psellos and the Patriarchs*, op. cit., 96–97 and 124. *Or. Fun.* 1, Polemis (ed.), op. cit., 41.8-50 and 1.61.30. On the mixture of rhetoric and philosophy in Psellos, see Papaioannou, *Ἡ ρητορική καὶ ὁ λογοτέχνης*, op. cit., 60–73.

30 Psellos' 'political' life entailed the integration of philosophy and rhetoric. This mode of life reflected an intellectual striving for social and scholarly influence while engaging deeply in human affairs through eloquent discourse, see M. TRIZIO, *Forging Identities between Heaven and Earth: Commentaries on Aristotle and Authorial Practices in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century Byzantium*, in: B. van den Berg – D. Manolova – P. Marciniak (eds.), *Byzantine Commentaries on Ancient Greek Texts, 12th–15th Centuries*, Cambridge 2022, 61–99. On Psellos' identity and appreciation of the political as the middle ground between

emphasizing his role in the education of the members of the patriarch's family, Psellos for a moment jumps out of the subject-praising frame and shows pride in his abilities as a thinker and teacher, at the same time making contact with the first rows in his audience.

Having established that the imperial couple and members of Keroularios' family were in the audience, this oration informs us that representatives of the ecclesiastical elite were present at the occasion too. That this was intended as an annual event, that it was the first time it took place, and that it was the man who assumed the patriarchal throne after Keroularios, Constantine Leichoudes, who was present at this speech and who established the annual commemoration of Keroularios, all becomes clear from the following passage:

How may I describe the reverence that your successor holds for you, that great sacrificer who is also the sacrificial victim, that great trumpet that rings across the earth? Although his virtues surpass those of all other people, he recognizes that you are superior to him and honors you with annual feasts; he had established that practice and is the first who keeps that law.³¹

This is an important passage for understanding this oration in its ideological and social context. The new patriarch Leichoudes, in the presence of the new emperor and the deceased patriarch's family, establishes the commemoration of his predecessor at the patriarchal throne to maintain the patriarchal tradition within the Chalcedonian Orthodox Church.³² Psellos, positioning himself where the imperial authorities were intertwined with the clerical ones, played an integral role in the process of maintaining imperial propaganda and ecclesiastical tradition with his rhetorical and diplomatic skills.

Finally, in addition to the information on the audience, Psellos offers a glimpse into the venue of the delivery of his *Funeral Oration for Keroularios*. In aesthetically the most pleasant part of the oration, namely an *ekphrasis* of the physical space and of the nature outside the venue, Psellos describes the floral mosaics of the church where the commemoration took place:

philosophy and rhetoric, see D. JENKINS, Psellos' Conceptual Precision, in: C. Barber – D. Jenkins (eds.), *Reading Michael Psellos*, Leiden–Boston 2006, 146, as well as G. MILES, Psellos and his Traditions, in: S. Mariev (ed.), *Byzantine Perspectives on Neoplatonism*, Boston – Berlin 2017, 79–101.

31 Polemis (tr.), *Psellos and the Patriarchs*, op. cit., 123. *Or. Fun.* 1, Polemis (ed.), op. cit., 60.143-148: Τοῦ δὲ μετὰ σὲ θείου θύτου καὶ ἱεροῦ θύματος, τῆς μεγάλης τῶν κρειττόνων σάλπιγγος καὶ πάντα περιηχούσης τὰ πέρατα, πῶς ἂν τις τὴν περὶ σὲ μεγαλοφυχίαν καὶ φιλοτιμίαν ἐνδείξαιτο; Ὅς δὴ τῶν πάντων ταῖς ἀρεταῖς ὑπερκείμενος παραχωρεῖ σοι τοῦ πρωτείου καὶ τελευτήσαντι καὶ ἐτησίους τιμᾷ πανηγύρεσι, τοῦτο τοῖς πᾶσι νομοθετῶν καὶ πρὸ τῶν ἄλλων ποιῶν.

32 For this commemoration of Keroularios introduced by Leichoudes, see *Les regestes des actes du patriarcat de Constantinople. Vol. I*, V. Grumel (ed.), (revised ed. J. Darrouzès), Paris 1989, 887a, and TINNEFELD, Michael I Kerullarios, op. cit., 122–123.

The church has been awarded one special season of the whole year, the spring, just as heaven has received its supernatural prototype. But it has a defect if we compare it with its archetype, that is, true spring, even though it is still beautiful and supernatural. The grapes of the archetype are real, the branches too, the furrow is full of true ears of wheat, the plants have real flowers, the apples are real too. The grape offers its juice to anyone who wishes to drink it, and the ears of wheat are ready to be stored in the warehouse. All spectacles are true indeed, not mere images. Here too there are many grapes, and most are ripe; the flowers on the plants have a variety of colors, but if anyone wishes to touch them it is proved that they are mere images; he has been tricked by them (...) But the transparency of the curtains is such that they give the impression that spring has really come. The nature of the stones is equal to the art of painting and to the abundance and blossoming of spring. He [Keroularios] created all these adornments to such an excess that he was adorned by them too, because they proved that he was very clever indeed.³³

Psellos highlights the deliberate parallel between the church's floral mosaics and the spring landscape outside, framing the sacred space as an extension of nature's renewal, adding that these floral motives and mosaics in the church were commissioned by Keroularios. Psellos' detailed description of the church again ties in with a broader predilection of *ekphrasis* in east Roman literary culture and the manuals used in its educational curriculum, in particular Menander Rhetor's treatise *On Epideictic Speeches* and the *Progymnasmata* of Aphthonios, that discuss *ekphrasis* as one mode of discourse that a rhetor may adopt.³⁴ Yet Psellos does not simply give a description of the mosaics and directions around them but imbues his *ekphrasis* with philosophical depth resonating the Garden of Eden. By doing so, Psellos highlights the tension between reality and artistic representation, celebrating the human skill while also acknowledging its limitations in imitating the divine original.

Next to the beauty and philosophical depth of Psellos' *ekphrasis*, it is worthwhile addressing the question of which and where exactly was the church whose floral mosaics Psellos describes here. Polemis, the editor and translator

33 Polemis (tr.), *Psellos and the Patriarchs*, op. cit., 123–124. *Or. Fun.* 1, Polemis (ed.), op. cit., 61.6-25: Ὁ ἔαρινός βρῦει καρπός. Μίαν γάρ ὁ νεώς τὴν τοῦ παντός ὥραν ἀπεκληρώσατο, ὥσπερ ὁ οὐρανός τὴν ὑπερφυῆ, ἀλλ' ἔχει τοι τὸ παραβαλλόμενον ἐλάττωμά τι τοῦ πρωτοτύπου, πλὴν καὶ τοῦτο ὑπερφυῆς καὶ τοῦτο περικαλλές. Ἐκεῖ μὲν γάρ ὁ βότρυς ἴσως τὴν κλήσιν οὐ ψεύδεται, οὐδὲ τὰς κλιματίδας ἡ ἄμπελος, οὐδὲ ἡ αὐλαξ τὸν στάχυν, οὐδὲ τὰ φυτὰ τὴν ἄνθη, οὐδὲ τὸ μῆλον τὸ σχῆμα, ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν ταῖς χερσὶ τὸ γλεῦκος ἀποβλυστάνει τῷ τρυγᾶν βουλομένῳ, ὁ δὲ ταῖς ἀποθήκαις τοῦ σίτου παντάπασι γνώριμος, καὶ τῶν ὀρωμένων ἕκαστον οὐκ ἐσχημάτισται μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ οὐσίωται καθαρῶς. Ἐνταῦθα δὲ πολλοὶ μὲν οἱ βότρυες, καὶ πέπειροι ἴσως οἱ πλείους, τὰ τε τῶν φυτῶν ἄνθη ποικίλα τὴν θέαν, εἰ δέ τι τούτων τῇ χειρὶ τις ἐλεῖν βούλοιο, ὁ μὲν ἐξηπάτηται, αὐτὰ δὲ αὐτίκα ἐλέγχεται (...) τοσαύτη δὲ τῶν παραπετασμάτων ἡ διαφάνεια, ὡς ἐκκεῖσθαι δοκεῖν, ἴν' οὕτως εἴπω, τῶν πεφυτευμένων τὴν ὥραν. Οὕτως ἡ φύσις τοῖς λίθοις ἀντὶ γραφικῆς ἐπιστήμης, ἀντὶ εὐημερίας ἔαρινῆς ὑπερβαλλόντως ἐξήρκεσε καὶ οὕτως ἐκεῖνος ταῦτά τε εἰς ἄκρον ἐκόσμησε καὶ παρὰ τούτων ὅσον εἰς ἀγχινοίας λόγον κεκόσμηται.

34 See *Menander Rhetor*, Russell–Wilson (eds.), op. cit., 408.8-9: προσθήσεις δέ που καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ καιροῦ. “You should also add material based on the season.”

of this *Funeral Oration*, contends that the church in question is Hagia Sophia.³⁵ However, as much as the context of such an event involving the elite suggests a central public venue and although Hagia Sophia was indeed praised for its floral mosaics,³⁶ nothing in the text confirms that the venue in question was the Great Church; on the contrary, the patriarchs were not buried in Hagia Sophia. Even if the church of the Holy Apostles comes to mind due to the remains of several patriarchs having been deposited there,³⁷ this option should also be discarded: in this same oration, in describing how Keroularios himself celebrated the feast of the Holy Apostles in the famous Constantinopolitan church dedicated to them and how he admired the beauty of this church's icons, Psellos clearly refers to this church as "there" (ἐκεῖσε) and not "here."³⁸ Fortunately, other contemporary sources provide us with further information when they describe the finale of the conflict between Isaac Komnenos and Keroularios. Speaking of Isaac seizing Keroularios, sending him to exile to Prokonnesos and, after the patriarch's death there, bringing the patriarch's body back nearer to Constantinople, Attaleiates recounts:

In the month of November, when *the feast of the archangel* was approaching, *the patriarch Michael visited the monastery that he himself had commissioned to be built from its foundations, going outside the circuit of the large and impregnable city that God had built*, in order to diligently prepare for the festival in the western parts of the City (...) the archpriest passed away (...) The emperor was stricken with remorse and honored the man's virtue. Being unable to repair the damage wrought by his sin, he ordered that *the body be brought with pomp into the Reigning City. It was laid to rest in the place that he himself had designated while he was still alive, namely at the monastery that he had built.*³⁹

There is little doubt that the monastery Keroularios "had founded from its very foundations," just outside the walls of Constantinople, was dedicated to the archangel Michael, whose festival is mentioned in Attaleiates' account. The Keroularioi clan's devotion to the cult of this archangel is well attested in var-

35 *Psellos and the Patriarchs*, Polemis (ed.), op. cit., 124, n. 225.

36 Cf. the sixth-century *ekphrasis* of Hagia Sophia's floral decoration by Paul the Silentiary, *The Description of Saint Sophia*, O. Veh (ed.), Munich 1977, 306–358. For Paul's *ekphrasis*, see, e.g., R. MACRIDES – P. MAGDALINO, *The Architecture of Ekphrasis: Construction and Context of Paul the Silentiary's Poem on Hagia Sophia*, *BMGS* 12, 1988, 47–82.

37 E.g. Nikephoros I. On the church of the Holy Apostles more generally, see M. Mullett – R. Ousterhout – F. Gargova (eds.), *The Holy Apostles. A Lost Monument, a Forgotten Project, and the Presentness of the Past*, Washington, D.C. 2020.

38 *Or. Fun.* 1, Polemis (ed.), op. cit., 37.15–16: Καὶ γὰρ ἔστιν ἄλλως τὰ ἐκεῖσε θεάματα φιλοκάλων ψυχῶν ἐντροφήματα. "Truly, the contemplation of the icons of that church is a delight for anyone who loves beauty." *Psellos and the Patriarchs*, Polemis (tr.), 89.

39 *Michael Attaleiates, The History*, A. Kaldellis – D. Krallis (tr.), (Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library Series, 16), Washington, D.C. 2012, 115–119. *Historia*, Pérez Martín (ed.), op. cit., 48.15–50.26.

ious kinds of sources, such as seals and relics.⁴⁰ What is more, this connection might further explain Psellos' insistence on (oftentimes sarcastically) calling Keroularios an 'angel' so many times in his letters, matching his projections on Keroularios' (misplaced) 'divinity.'⁴¹ The main assertion of Attaleiates' account is thus that Isaac commanded that Keroularios' body be ceremonially brought back to the monastery of the archangel Michael which the patriarch had chosen as his final resting place. We saw above that Psellos specifies, first, that the imperial couple stands on the side of the patriarch's tomb and thus implies physical presence of the patriarch's body and, second, in the *ekphrasis* itself, that it was Keroularios that decorated the church where the oration took place. These two arguments suffice to safely assume that the church in question is the monastery of the archangel Michael west of Constantinople mentioned by Attaleiates.⁴²

40 Keroularios uniquely featured the archangel Michael on one of his patriarchal seals, a departure from the norm where patriarchs typically depicted the Virgin Mary, see J. W. Nesbitt (ed.), *Byzantine Lead Seals by G. Zacos, Volume 2*, Bern 1984, no. 15d. Keroularios' personal connection to the archangel is further suggested by the so-called Cross of Keroularios (BZ.1964.13), a Dumbarton Oaks artifact depicting scenes of the archangel's miracle in Chonae as well as his appearance and superiority to Joshua outside Jericho (from Joshua 5,13–16). These representations strongly suggest that this object was commissioned by Keroularios, as discussed by R. JENKINS – E. KITZINGER, A Cross of Michael Cerularius with an Art-Historical Comment, *DOP* 21, 1967, 233–249. This is especially the case given the troubling political dynamics between this patriarch (religious leader as the archangel) and the emperor Isaac Komnenos ('secular' leader as Joshua) over the supremacy of the imperial throne. For counter arguments that this cross should not be assigned to Keroularios, see C. MANGO, La croix dite de Michel le Cérulaire et la croix de Saint-Michel de Sykéôn, *Cahiers archéologiques* 36, 1998, 41–48. On the relationship between Keroularios and Isaac, see ANDELOVIĆ, Philosopher between Emperor and Patriarch, op. cit.

41 What is more, as CHEYNET, Par Saint Georges, par Saint Michel, op. cit., 124–128, suggested, it is not improbable that Psellos himself was also attached to the cult of the archangel Michael, judging by his *Oration to the Archangel Michael* and his monastic name Michael rather than a name starting with 'K' – as his lay name was Constantine – which would be a standard practice in Eastern Christian monasticism. For the discussion of Psellos' *Oration to the Archangel Michael* in detail, see B. CROSTINI, Another True Cross: Psellos, Herakleios, and the Cross of the Archangel Michael at Sykeon, *JÖB* 69, 2019, 99–112.

42 The exact name and location of this monastery are unknown. As to the name, TINNEFELD, Michael I Kerullarios, op. cit., 122, and Kaldellis – Krallis (tr.), *The History*, op. cit., 599, n. 109, contend that this was the monastery of the "Nine Orders," that is, of heavenly angels (ναὸς τῶν ἐννέα ταγματῶν). However, "τῶν ἐννέα ταγματῶν" is not attested in sources related to the eleventh century and there is no ground – despite Pseudo-Dionysios the Areopagite's nine-leveled angelic hierarchy – to claim that exactly this was the name of Keroularios's monastery. In fact, J. DARROUZÈS, Le mouvement des fondations monastiques au XIe siècle, *TM* 6, 1976, 162, rightly noted that this misattribution comes from a list of M. GÉDÉON, *Βυζαντινὸν Ἑορτολόγιον: Μνήμει των ἀπὸ τοῦ Δ' μέχρι τοῦ ΙΕ' αἰῶνος εορταζομένων ἁγίων ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει*, Constantinople 1899, 185–186, and that Keroularios' monastery must have borne the name of the archangel Michael or of the archangels like many others (more likely the former, given the patriarch's and his family's devotion to Michael's cult). Regarding the location, Attaleiates mentioned that the monastery was located a little west of the City, which would, as TINNEFELD, Michael I Kerullarios, op. cit., 122, noted, correspond

In sum, Psellos' *Funeral Oration* was not only part of a public event, but, as this discussion shows, it had a strong political dimension in a profoundly ecclesiastical context. More concretely, the two pillars of the political dimension in this oration are, first, political rhetoric resonating the agenda of the Doukas family and, second, upholding the patriarchal tradition by the new patriarch Leichoudes in his predecessor's foundation. Put differently, Psellos served the Doukas regime's need to stabilize ecclesiastical politics. In this context, another salient characteristic of Psellos' speech is his usage of ancient sources and figures in portraying Keroularios as a martyr and a spiritual leader.

Keroularios as a biblical figure and martyr

As in the case with Psellos' other texts, the exploration of citations and quotations in their intrinsic connectedness to both their original and new contexts brings fertile insights in the case of the *Funeral Oration for Keroularios* as well. The discussion of this aspect further reifies the reception of primarily biblical figures in this *Funeral Oration* with regards to the time, space, and the participants discussed in the previous sections. As mentioned earlier, the *Funeral Oration* follows a strictly chronological path, following the rule of the emperors during Keroularios' life while narrating Keroularios' involvement in all the uprisings and political turmoils during his career. On all these occasions, Psellos presents the deceased patriarch as a martyr and his life as martyrdom:

I consider those to be martyrs not only who, facing a Diocletian, Maximian, or Licinius for the sake of their faith in God, were tortured, beheaded, burned alive, cut into pieces, and eaten by wild beasts, or thrown alive into the sea, which gave them back safe, but also someone who was punished for his good conduct, or for not being ready to agree with bad people, or someone who is punished for a crime he did not commit, a crime committed by other people.⁴³

Psellos not only includes Keroularios among the martyrs recognizable to the east Roman Christian audience from hagiographical discourse, i.e., the early Christian martyrs who suffered under Diocletian, Maximian, and Licinius, but he also specifies that the patriarch's martyrdom was a 'bloodless' one, meaning that, although Keroularios was not violently killed for the sake of Christ,

to the region of Balıklı of modern Istanbul. No remains are known today and R. JANIN, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin. Première partie: Le siège de Constantinople et le patriarcat oecuménique, Tome III: Les églises et les monastères*, Paris 1969, does not mention this church and monastery.

43 Psellos and the Patriarchs, Polemis (tr.), op. cit., 65–66, slightly altered. *Or. Fun.* 1, Polemis (ed.), op. cit., 13.3-10: Ἐμοὶ γὰρ μάρτυς οὐχ ὅς μόνον πρὸς τοὺς Διοκλητιανοὺς ἐκείνους καὶ τοὺς Μαξιμιανοὺς καὶ Λικινίους ὑπὲρ τῆς εἰς Θεὸν εὐσεβείας διηγωνίσαστο, καὶ πολλὰ αἰκισθεὶς, εἶτα δὴ καὶ ξίφει τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀπετμήθη ἢ πυρὸς ἔργον ἐγεγόνει ἢ θήρες αὐτὸν διελιφότερες διεσπάραξαν καὶ κατέτεμον ἢ θάλασσα ζῶντα παραλαβοῦσα τοιοῦτον αὐθὺς ἀπέδωκε, ἀλλὰ καὶ εἴ τις ἐπιεικείας εἰσπράττεται δίκας ἢ τοῦ μὴ ἐθέλειν συνομολογήσαι τοῖς χείροσιν ἢ καὶ ὧν ἕτεροι ἡμαρτήκεσαν αὐτὸς μηδὲν εἰδὼς τιμοροῖτο.

he still suffered.⁴⁴ According to Psellos, the primary reason why Keroularios allegedly suffered and was even sent to exile several times was his honesty and outspokenness (*παρρησία*) on all occasions, Keroularios' main contentious trait met with criticism in Psellos' other works. Here, however, Psellos reframes the patriarch's controversial traits as marks of spiritual fortitude.

For the sake of character construction related to bloodless martyrdom and unjust suffering, Psellos asserts that, "as it was predestined for him to become a perfect athlete and a martyr, albeit without shedding his blood, God delivered him [Keroularios] to the temptations of the Evil One, who had asked for him to be tested, like the great athlete Job."⁴⁵ Although the choice of the figure of Job for presenting unjust suffering is not surprising in a Judeo-Christian context, portraying Keroularios as Job was, it seems, part of a widespread discourse: Psellos used it in his other works related to Keroularios,⁴⁶ while Attaleiates described Keroularios' exile and fall from favor as Job's misfortunes.⁴⁷ In this oration, however, Psellos not only mentions Job but stresses that Keroularios suffered even more than Job. Keroularios thus "surpassed Job, who raised his voice, by what he said and what he did,"⁴⁸ that "the only difference is that God gave to Job multiple herds of cattle and sheep, whereas he offered to him [Keroularios] hidden fountains of ineffable goods, which surpass the goods received by Job by far,"⁴⁹ and that "only three friends came to Job, that great athlete, but he [Keroularios] was visited by everyone."⁵⁰ Such comparisons that grant superiority to the present subject over the illustrious figure from the past is typical of *synkrisis* as prescribed in the manual of Menander Rhetor that

44 For the 'types' of Christian martyrdoms, see P. J. ALEXANDER, *Religious Persecution and Resistance in the Byzantine Empire of the Eighth and Ninth Centuries: Methods and Justifications*, *Speculum* 52/2, 1977, 252.

45 *Psellos and the Patriarchs*, Polemis (tr.), 60–61. *Or. Fun.*, Polemis (ed.), op. cit., 1.10.7-9: Ἐπει δὲ ἔδει τέλειον αὐτὸν ἀθλητὴν γεγονέναι καὶ στεφανίτην ἀναίμακτον, αἰτησαμένῳ τῷ πειράζοντι δίδωσι τοῦτον ὡς τὸν μέγαν ἀγωνιστὴν Ἰὼβ ὁ Θεός.

46 E.g. in *Ep.* 111, Papaioannou (ed.), op. cit., 140.

47 *Historia*, Pérez Martín (ed.), op. cit., 48.15: "The man was praised for surpassing Job by a wide margin in enduring this suffering." Kaldellis – Krallis (tr.), *The History*, op. cit., 115.

48 *Psellos and the Patriarchs*, Polemis (tr.), op. cit., 68. *Or. Fun.* 1, Polemis (ed.), op. cit., 15.47-48: τὴν τοῦ Ἰὼβ ὑπερβαλέσθαι φωνὴν οἷς τε εἶπε καὶ οἷς διεπράξατο.

49 *Psellos and the Patriarchs*, Polemis (tr.), op. cit., 72–73. *Or. Fun.* 1, Polemis (ed.), op. cit., 18.31-35: Ἐγὼ δὲ ταῦθ' ὀρῶν ἀνεμνησκόμεν [τῶν] τοῦ Ἰὼβ. Κάκεινον γὰρ οὕτω μετὰ τὰ δυσχερῆ μεταβαλὼν ὁ Θεός, κρείττοσι καὶ ὑψηλοτέροις προσῆγε, πλὴν ὅσον ἐκείνων μὲν βουκολίοις καὶ ποιμνίοις πολλαπλασίοις ἐπλάτυνε, τούτῳ δὲ κεκρυμμένης ἀρχᾶς ἀπορρητοτέρων ἀγαθῶν κατεβάλετο. Ὑπερβάλλουσι δὲ καὶ αὐταὶ μακρῶ τὴν παρὰ τῷ Ἰὼβ εὐκληρίαν. Cf. Job 42:12.

50 *Psellos and the Patriarchs*, Polemis (tr.), op. cit., 115. *Or. Fun.* 1, Polemis (ed.), op. cit., 57.3-4: οὐ τρεῖς μόνον τῶν φίλων, ὡς πάλαι τῷ μεγάλῳ ἀθλητῇ Ἰὼβ, ἦν' οὕτως εἶπομι, συνερράγησαν, ἀλλὰ σύμπαντες. Cf. Job 2.11.

features prominently in east Roman rhetorical education.⁵¹ Keroularios is not only compared to Job but also to other biblical figures, through which we can get a glimpse of Psellos' message:

The Apostle Paul, who became everything for everyone, [and] won over almost everyone. On the other hand, that man [Keroularios], though sometimes working against himself, attained the same end (...) he recognized no difference between a poor man and an oppressor. Like Phinees, he kept the same stance toward both. His ardor and passion were always undiminished. He did not yield even to the emperor, who sometimes fell into error, although he loved him: he fought against him for his own sake, appeasing his anger and mollifying his passions. If the emperor broke an agreement, the patriarch reproached him immediately: at first he invoked the law (which was a more suitable approach), then he reproached him, and finally he castigated him vehemently and openly. One cannot adequately praise his tendency to be inexorable and severe toward the emperor in correcting him (...) he went on resisting him, and his soul was upset because he had not accomplished his task completely. He suffered from a very painful wound that could not be cured, unless he had the opportunity to speak freely and accomplish his purpose.⁵²

It is only through an intertextual analysis that we can understand what Psellos intended to say here. In the New Testament, Paul was weak with the weak ones and adjusted himself to everyone to preach the Gospels properly,⁵³ while in the Old Testament, Phinees, Aaron's grandson, because of the worship of Baal of Peor, killed 'heretics' even among his own Israelites.⁵⁴ Psellos' choice of

51 See *Menander Rhetor*, Russell – Wilson (eds.), op. cit., 376.31-377.2. For *synkrisis* in east Rome in general, see H. MAGUIRE, *The Art of Comparing in Byzantium*, *Art Bulletin* 70/1, 2014, 88–103.

52 *Psellos and the Patriarchs*, Polemis (tr.), op. cit., 87. *Or. Fun.* 1, Polemis (ed.), op. cit., 34.1-24: 'Ὁ μὲν οὖν ἀπόστολος Παῦλος, τοῖς πᾶσι τὰ πάντα γιγνόμενος, μικροῦ δεῖν τοὺς πάντας ἐκέρδησεν, ἐκεῖνος δέ, καὶ τάναντία πολλάκις ἐαυτῷ ποιῶν, τὸ αὐτὸ τέλος ἠνέγκατο (...) ἐν τούτῳ οὐκ εἶχεν αὐτῷ διαφορὰν ὁ πένης καὶ ὁ δυνάστης, ἀλλ' ὁ Φινεὲς ἐκεῖνος ἐπ' ἀμφοῖν. Ἐνα τὸν ζῆλον οὐκ εἶχε καὶ τὴν θερμότητα, ὅς γε καὶ αὐτῷ τῷ βασιλεῖ, τᾶλλα οἰκειῶς ἔχων ἐκεῖνῳ καὶ εὐμενῶς διακείμενος, οὐχ ὑπεχώρει [κακῶς] ἔστιν οὗ πρᾶττοντι, οὐδ' ὑπεστέλλετο, ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ ἐκείνου πρὸς ἐκεῖνον διηγωνίζετο καὶ τὸν τε θυμὸν αὐτῷ κατέστελλε καὶ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας συνέστελλε, καὶ εἴ ποῦ τινα συνθήκη παραβεβήκει, ὁ δὲ αὐτίκα ἐξήλεγγε, τὰ μὲν πρῶτα [...] τὴν νομοθεσίαν ποιούμενος (οὕτω γὰρ εἰπεῖν οἰκειότερον), εἶτα δὴ ὄνειδίζων καὶ τέλος εἰς ἔλεγχον ἐκρηγνόμενος [...] οὐκ ἔχει τις ἐπαινεῖν ἀποχρώντως, ὅτι διορθούμενος μὲν ἐκεῖνον βαρῦς τε ἐδόκει καὶ δυσπαραίτητος (...) ἄρκούντως εἶχε τῶν ἀντιστάσεων, ἀλλ' ὅτι μὴ τὸ πᾶν ἐπεποιήκει, ἐσφάδαζέ τε αὐτῷ ἢ ψυχῇ καὶ δεινοῖς βέλεσιν ἐπιτρώσκετο καὶ οὐκ ἦν αὐτῷ τὸ τραῦμα ἰάσιμον, εἰ μὴ τὸ τῆς παρρησίας ἔργον ἐργάσατο.

53 1 Cor. 9,22–23: "To the weak I became weak, so that I might gain the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some. / I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I might become a partner in it."

54 Num. 25,7–9: "When Phinehas, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he got up and left the congregation. Taking a spear in his hand, / he went after the Israelite man into the tent and pierced the two of them, the Israelite and the woman, through the belly. So, the plague was stopped among the Israelites. / Nevertheless, those who died by the plague were twenty-four thousand."

Phinees was strategic. First, Aaron was a representative of the royal priesthood as religious authority and Psellos connected Keroularios to Aaron not only in the *Funeral Oration*.⁵⁵ Second, Psellos is saying that Keroularios was not entirely like the apostle Paul, “everything for everyone,” i.e. he did not adjust to every situation, but “he kept the same stance” like Phinees who was known for his excessive zeal for justice, so much that he went even after his own people. Paul is described as someone who “became everything for everyone,” winning people over through adaptability and empathy; Psellos contrasts Keroularios to this, who did achieve similar ends but through an opposite method – intransigence and moral strictness.

In other words, Psellos describes Keroularios as a complex figure through two biblical characters: strict but also kind, confrontational yet willing to forgive, and unyielding but focused on helping others to improve. By comparing him to Paul and Phinees, Psellos highlights his strong sense of justice (like Phinees) and his ability to guide and influence others (like Paul). However, Psellos' wording also hints at Keroularios' strong principles such as *parrhesia* which, while admirable, may have caused problems and conflicts, particularly in his dealings with the emperor(s). Thus, while Psellos extols Keroularios' virtues, there is an undercurrent of critique. Tacitly going over the rest of the biblical passage from the Book of Numbers that Phinees killed his own Israelites, Psellos subtly reminded the audience of Keroularios' controversial involvement in several coups d'état. This is far from a simple *synkrisis* and required more than only rhetorical education, primarily the deep familiarity with the biblical stories on the part of Psellos and his audience. This way of conveying a message – by first invoking the New Testament character and then comparing Keroularios with an Old Testament character from a priestly lineage – points to the shared deep knowledge of the Bible between Psellos and his audience. Moreover, this passage presents Psellos' skillful and non-liturgical usage of the Bible before an audience familiar with both the original and the new context.

Apart from this covert excursion into the dark parts of Keroularios' past, by stressing that Keroularios suffered even more than the early Christian martyrs, Psellos tried to exonerate Keroularios of any bad deeds or rumors related to his involvement in imperial and ecclesiastical affairs, justifying all of Keroularios' deeds by his tendency to be honest and outspoken. At the end of the oration, when describing how the patriarch died, Psellos praises him for his ‘ideal’

55 E.g. in the controversial letter *Ep.* 111, Papaioannou (ed.), op. cit., 120–121, Psellos writes to Keroularios that he “consecrated [your] hands with the victim” (τελειοῖς τὰς χεῖρας τῷ θύματι). This phrase goes back, through *Gregory of Nazianzos*, J.-P. Migne (ed.), PG 35, 1857–1866, *Orat.* 10.4: τελειοῖς τὰς χεῖρας τῷ Πνεύματι (Gregory delivered this speech on the occasion of his consecration as the bishop of Sasima and the main theme of the entire passage is priesthood and proper service), to the Book of Exodus, also known as the “Consecration of the Priests” (Ex. 29,10), where the key figures are “Aaron and his sons.”

service at the patriarchal throne despite several exiles and misfortunes. To underscore the patriarch's alleged efficiency as the patriarch for fifteen years, Psellos compares Keroularios to famous and authoritative figures of the Church:

You vied with the best of all men of the past: you became a martyr like them; you emulated their piety and their outspokenness (...) You too were dethroned from the patriarchal throne like the trumpet of the Theologian (...) You imitated the grace of Chrysostom, the great soul of Athanasios, and all the other bishops either before or after them who decided that it was better to abandon their thrones, which they had not, however, occupied illegally.⁵⁶

Psellos connected Keroularios specifically with the Christian figures who were either persecuted or who had to resign from their thrones – two archbishops of Constantinople, Gregory of Nazianzos and John Chrysostom, and the archbishop of Alexandria Athanasios. These figures were the leading torches of Chalcedonian Orthodoxy for Psellos and his contemporaries, which is exactly why Psellos named them here. By publicly placing Keroularios among the recognizable and authoritative Fathers of the Church, Psellos strengthens the deceased patriarch's – and therefore the contemporary Church's – association with the Orthodox canon and emphasizes his role as a leader and defender of the faith.

This analysis shows how Psellos employed some biblical and Church figures in fashioning Keroularios' identity during a public performance. Psellos learnt the art of comparing from rhetorical manuals such as those by Menander Rhetor and Aphthonios, yet a salient feature of the speech for Keroularios, unlike those for, for example, Leichoudes and Xiphilinos, is that its *synkriseis* involve exclusively biblical and patristic Christian figures, a feature that suggests that the purpose of this oration was rehabilitation and then veneration in the tradition of the Orthodox Chalcedonian Church. Through the combination of the audience's familiarity with Christian discourse and the employment of rhetorical devices such as *synkrisis*, Psellos' oration created its message about the deceased patriarch; in the immediate context of this oration, in the deceased patriarch's foundation, in the presence of the emperor and the new patriarch, the names of the early Christian martyrs, Job, the apostle Paul, Phinees, and the Church Fathers mattered. It was important to connect the contemporary Church, through Keroularios, with the biblical and patristic tradition. Constructing martyrdom for the deceased patriarch, therefore, served the purpose of placing the contemporary Church in the wider framework of the Orthodox Chalcedonian

56 *Psellos and the Patriarchs*, Polemis (tr.), op. cit., 121–122. *Or. Fun.* 1, Polemis (ed.), op. cit., 60.87-95: Ὡς κὰν τοῖς χείροσι τοῖς κρείττοσι παραμιλληθεῖς καὶ τοῦ μαρτυρικοῦ μετὰ τούτων κεκοινωνηκῶς ἀξιώματος, ὧν τὴν εὐσέβειαν καὶ τὴν παρρησίαν (...) Μετὰ τῆς Θεολογικῆς σάλπιγγος τῶν ἀρχιερατικῶν θρόνων ἀπόσθης (...) μετὰ τῆς Χρυσοστομικῆς χάριτος, μετὰ τῆς Ἀθανασίου τοῦ πάνυ ψυχῆς, μετὰ τῶν ὑπὲρ τούτους καὶ ἐπ' ἐκείνους, οἷς ἡδὺ τι χρῆμα ἢ τῶν θρόνων ἔδοξεν ἀναχώρησις, οἷς οὐδὲ ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐπεπῆδησαν.

Church in a *pars pro toto* style. Still, why was the deceased patriarch important in 1060 and why was there a commemoration in the first place? The next and final section will, hopefully, offer a piece of the puzzle.

Psellos' Keroularios and Gregory's Basil: attempting canonization

An author that Psellos was particularly fond of was Gregory of Nazianzos; as Papaioannou has shown, for Psellos, Gregory is the model of rhetorical mastery and theological depth and it is through Gregory that Psellos showcased his reverence for classical antiquity.⁵⁷ In the words of Agapitos, "Psellos practically identified himself with Gregory, a mental attitude consonant with the image of the polymath in some of his other works."⁵⁸ The *Funeral Oration for Keroularios* particularly showcases the reception of Gregory in Psellos. At least ten recognizable references in this oration come from Gregory of Nazianzos and some of the references that the modern editors recognized as coming from the Bible Psellos may have quoted because they also appear in Gregory's work.

For instance, in further *synkriseis*, Psellos portrays the deceased patriarch as both Samuel and Jeremiah to emphasize Keroularios' alleged preordination for the patriarchal throne. Keroularios thus "anointed both emperors and priests, not by pouring the oil from a drinking horn, but pouring it from his own much nobler source,"⁵⁹ he "devoted himself to God, although he had already been devoted to him before the time of his birth,"⁶⁰ and "it was God's work, who had preordained him as patriarch and had sanctified him in advance, even before his birth, like Jeremiah."⁶¹ While these references, together with the aforementioned reference to Paul "who became everything for everyone," indeed originate in the Bible,⁶² Psellos derived them from Gregory of Nazianzos' famous *Funeral Oration for Basil of Caesarea*, delivered in Caesarea in 382, which he quotes almost verbatim,⁶³ and where Gregory extensively used biblical references to compare Basil to the same biblical figures to whom Psellos compares Keroularios.

57 For Psellos' fascination with Gregory, see ΠΑΠΑΙΟΑΝΝΟΥ, *Ἡ ρητορική καὶ ὁ λογοτέχνης*, op. cit., 89–131.

58 P. A. AGAPITOS, *Ancient Models and Novel Mixtures: The Concept of Genre in Byzantine Funerary Literature from Patriarch Photios to Eustathios of Thessaloniki*, in: G. Nagy – A. Stavrakopoulou (eds.), *Modern Greek Literature: Critical Essays*, New York 2003, 8.

59 *Psellos and the Patriarchs*, Polemis (tr.), op. cit., 112. *Or. Fun.* 1, Polemis (ed.), op. cit., 54.5-7: χρίων βασιλείας καὶ ἱερέας οὐ διὰ τοῦ κέρατος, ἀλλὰ διὰ τῆς ἐκείνου ὑψηλοτέρας πηγῆς.

60 *Psellos and the Patriarchs*, Polemis (tr.), op. cit., 69. *Or. Fun.* 1, Polemis (ed.), op. cit., 16.2: ἀφιεροῖ Θεῷ ἑαυτὸν ὁ ἀφιερωμένος καὶ πρὸ γενέσεως.

61 *Psellos and the Patriarchs*, Polemis (tr.), op. cit., 73. *Or. Fun.* 1, Polemis (ed.), op. cit., 19.20-22: Τοῦτο δ' ἄρα Θεοῦ ἐγγόνει ἔργον, ὃς δὴ πρὸς τὸν ἀρχιερατικὸν τοῦτον προορίσας θρόνον καὶ πρὸς τοῦτο καθαγιάσας ὡσπερ δὴ τὸν Ἰερεμίαν καὶ πρὸ γενέσεως.

62 1 Sam. 16,13, Jer. 1,5, and 1 Cor. 9,22.

63 Cf. *Gregory of Nazianzos, Discours funèbres en l'honneur de son frère Césaire et de Basile de Césarée*, F. Boulenger (ed.), Paris 1908, (henceforth *Or.* 43), 73: χρίων βασιλείας καὶ

Together with obvious quotations from Gregory's oration in Psellos' text,⁶⁴ Gregory's *Funeral Oration for Basil of Caesarea* is by far the most frequently used source in Psellos' *Funeral Oration for Keroularios*.⁶⁵ Gregory's oration for Basil of Caesarea was a pioneering attempt at reconciling the monastic-ascetic ideal of withdrawal from worldly affairs and the active public life that priesthood required, a theme that permeates Psellos' oeuvre, including the *Funeral Oration for Keroularios*.⁶⁶ Gregory endeavored to "harmonize monastic ideals and practice with active service to the church," and thus "contributed to the spread of an ecclesiastical ideal that eventually won the day in the Christian East."⁶⁷ In other words, Gregory presents Basil not simply as a general model of virtue, but specifically as a model of Christian priesthood.⁶⁸

Next to many formal parallels between Psellos' speech from 1060 and Gregory's from 382, such as similar traditional structures of funerary orations and their public delivery some years after the subjects' deaths at a memorial ceremony,⁶⁹ the main purpose of the oration for Basil has to be taken into account in order to understand Psellos' reception here. Basil is extensively compared to biblical figures and is constantly presented as a 'bloodless' martyr, just as Psellos did with Keroularios; everything in Gregory's oration "serves to ensure the ongoing status of Basil within the community" and, therefore, "we are not far off the mark if we suggest that the *Funeral Oration* is, in many ways, an argument for canonization."⁷⁰ All the elements of Gregory's *Funeral Oration for Basil of Caesarea* eventually point to the process of establishing the memory of the subject as a saint, which Basil eventually became and remains to this day. Although Keroularios did not become a saint and despite almost seven centuries of distance, this does not prevent us from drawing parallels between the two

ιέρεας διὰ τοῦ κέρατος. Ibid., 73: Θεῶν δοτὸς πρὸ γενέσεως. Ibid., 81: πάντες τὸν πάντα πᾶσι γενόμενον ἵνα κερδάνη τοὺς πάντας.

64 For example, "is there anyone at all who did not know his father?" (*Psellos and the Patriarchs*, Polemis (tr.), op. cit., 55. *Or. Fun.* 1, Polemis (ed.), op. cit., 3.10-11: Τίς γὰρ τῶν πάντων οὐκ οἶδε τὸν τούτου πατέρα), cf. *Gregory of Nazianzos, Or.* 43, Boulenger (ed.), op. cit., 10: Τίς οὐκ οἶδε τὸν τούτου πατέρα, Βασιλείου, and "his entire life was a movement toward God" (*Psellos and the Patriarchs*, Polemis (tr.), op. cit., 68. *Or. Fun.* 1, Polemis (ed.), op. cit., 15.66-67: αὐτῷ ὁ βίος μετᾴθεσις ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν), cf. *Gregory of Nazianzos, Or.* 43, Boulenger (ed.), op. cit., 70: τοῦ δὲ ὅλος ὁ βίος μετᾴθεσις ἦν.

65 The *Funeral Oration for Keroularios* is not the only work by Psellos modelled on Gregory's *Funeral Oration for Basil*, as Psellos did the same with his *Funeral Oration for his mother*.

66 ΠΑΡΑΙΟΓΙΑΝΝΟΥ, *Ἡ ρητορική καὶ ὁ λογοτέχνης*, op. cit., 194–195, has pointed out the combination of the 'secular' charm and the Christian portraits in the *Funeral Oration for Keroularios*.

67 A. STERK, On Basil, Moses, and the Model Bishop: The Cappadocian Legacy of Leadership, *Church History* 67/2, 1998, 228.

68 M. CONSTAS, Gregory Nazianzus, Funeral Oration on Basil the Great, https://www.academia.edu/28333155/Gregory_Nazianzus_Funeral_Oration_on_Basil_the_Great, (retrieved January 27, 2025).

69 See the last section of Gregory's oration (*Or.* 43.81), where various members of the audience are mentioned.

70 CONSTAS, Gregory Nazianzus, op. cit.

orations and notice Psellos' reliance on Gregory's *Funeral Oration for Basil of Caesarea* to fully understand the context and purpose of Psellos's *Funeral Oration for Keroularios* and its wider political and ecclesiastical implications.

Conclusion

D'Alès, in discussing Psellos' public speeches related to Keroularios, posed a question that, it seems, comes naturally after the presentation of such contrasting contents of the *Indictment* and the *Funeral Oration*:

The *Indictment* from 1058 was turned into praises just a couple of years later in the *Funeral Oration*. What should we think about Psellos if he is capable of doing that and, even more so, what should we think about the society that is willing to applaud both speeches?⁷¹

This question is totally understandable. Numerous accusations from the *Indictment* turned into praise in the *Funeral Oration* and the audience of both consisted of more or less the same civic and ecclesiastical elite.⁷² But this is a problem only if we approach Psellos from a moralizing point of view addressing the question of the author's (dis)honesty. In order to understand both the *Indictment* and the *Funeral Oration* themselves and their contextual co-dependence,⁷³ it is necessary to single out that both the *Indictment* and the *Funeral Oration* were, first, produced at the time when Keroularios had been overthrown and was deprived of his religious and political power and influence and, second, they are marked with strong performativity. As such, they offer only a perspective on Psellos's public rhetoric without Keroularios being able to react and should therefore be viewed in the context of their public recital and political implications.

Psellos at the pulpit, the tomb with the deceased patriarch surrounded by the imperial couple, prominent family members, the new patriarch and clergy in the monastery and church of the archangel Michael as the patriarchal foundation, the construction of martyrdom, the comparison with numerous biblical figures, and the extensive use of a fourth-century authoritative funeral oration that served as a tool in the process of sanctification of the subject – all these aspects bring us to several conclusions about the wider role of the *Funeral Oration for Keroularios*. First, in the presence of the new regime of the Doukas clan and Keroularios' niece who did not cherish animosity towards the ex-patriarch, this was most likely Psellos' "apology for the *Indictment* against Keroularios that he

71 A. A. D'ALÈS, Byzance, Psellos et Cérulaire, *Études publiées par les R. P. de la Compagnie de Jésus*, 167, 1921, 192–193.

72 Of course, in the case of the *Indictment* it was only an intended audience, as the *Indictment* was never delivered.

73 The fact that in the manuscript transmitting both texts, Par. Gr. 1128, the *Funeral Oration* is followed by the *Indictment* (fol. 122r) might suggest that these texts between Psellos and Keroularios were viewed in the same context even in the twelfth century.

had composed earlier.⁷⁴ Second, the oration had a part in ensuring the status of the deceased patriarch, who participated in so many controversies both within the east Roman empire and in its relation to neighboring polities and clergy, for the community and for the Constantinopolitan Church. Third, reconstructing the immediate setting and purpose of Psellos' oration helps us understand the nature of commemoration and veneration of a contemporary public figure and its differences or, rather, similarities to our concept of 'canonization.'⁷⁵ These differences and similarities relate directly to the process of canonization itself. While there was indeed a ceremonial effort to proclaim someone a saint, as we see in this case, the process was not instantaneous or definitive; sainthood was not achieved through an 'overnight' proclamation but through a gradual recognition over time, which did not happen in Keroularios' case.

The discussion on the *Funeral Oration* highlighted the public and occasional character of Psellos' speech and the role of the construction of martyrdom for Keroularios in a memorial and ceremonial ritual with a strong political dimension. Psellos' speech was a calculated effort to exonerate and rehabilitate Keroularios at the memorial service that functioned as a quasi-canonization, echoing the known tropes of martyrdom and virtue to secure Keroularios' posthumous acceptance within the ecclesiastical and imperial memory. Hence, Psellos' philosophical and rhetorical prowess was not demonstrated only in classrooms and through letters but also in public rituals that served as tools for legitimizing authority and veneration.

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74 *Psellos and the Patriarchs*, Polemis (tr.), op. cit., 33.

75 For this argument, see C. CALENDINE, *Theosis and the Recognition of Saints in Tenth-century Byzantium*, (PhD thesis, University of Wisconsin 1998), 127–128. I thank Alexander Alexakis for this reference.