

**„ALEXANDRU IOAN CUZA” UNIVERSITY OF IAȘI
FACULTY OF HISTORY**

**THE SHIP SYMBOLISM IN THE
JOHN CHRYSOSTOM’S WORK**

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

**SCIENTIFIC ADVISER,
PROFESSOR NELU ZUGRAVU PhD**

**CANDIDATE,
TINCUȚA CLOȘCĂ (OJOG)**

**IAȘI
JUNE 2013**

CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----|
| LIST OF ABBREVIATION / | 1 |
| INTRODUCTION / | 8 |
| I. THE HISTORY OF THE RESEARCHES / | 12 |
| II. THE ISSUE OF THE METAPHOR AND OF THE SYMBOLISM IN ANTIC POETIC AND RHETORIC / | 27 |
| III. THE ATTITUDE OF THE GREEK AND ROMAN FATHERS OF THE CHURCH FROM THE II nd -IV th CENTURIES TOWARDS THE CLASSICAL RHETORIC DEVICES/ | 52 |
| IV. <i>ARS RHETORICAE</i> OF JOHN CHRYSOSTOM / | 86 |
| V. ASPECTS OF SHIP SYMBOLISM IN THE GREEK AND ROMAN PROFANE WRITINGS, IN THE BIBLE AND IN THE ECCLESIASTIC LITERATURE OF THE II nd -IV th CENTURIES / | 106 |
| 1. Aspects of ship symbolism in Greek and Roman profane writings / | 108 |
| 2. Aspects of ship symbolism in The Old and The New Testament / | 112 |
| 3. Aspects of ship symbolism in the ecclesiastic literature of the II nd -IV th centuries / | 114 |
| VI. ASPECTS OF THE SHIP SYMBOLISM (τὸ σκαφος; τὸ πλοῖον) IN THE CHRYSOSTOMIC WRITINGS/ | 126 |
| 1. The Church (ἡ Ἐκκλησία) / | 127 |
| 2. Virtues and vices / | 132 |
| 3. The soul (ἡ ψυχὴ) / | 141 |
| 4. Biblical characters and saints / | 144 |
| 5. The Universe (ὁ κόσμος) / | 148 |
| VII. THE SITUATIONS OF METAPHORICAL ISOTOPY OF THE SHIP IN THE CHRYSOSTOMIC WRITINGS / | 151 |
| 1. The sea (ἡ θάλασσα) / | 148 |
| 2. The pirates (οἱ πειραταί) / | 160 |
| 3. The shore or the harbor (ὁ λιμὴν) / | 163 |
| 4. The anchor (ἡ ἄγκυρα) / | 173 |
| 5. The sea commerce (ἐμπορία διὰ θαλάσσης) / | 175 |

CONCLUSIONS / 180
BIBLIOGRAPHY / 186

INTRODUCTION

By precisising though from the very beginning that it deals with the ship symbolism of John Chrysostom's writing, our undertaking aims to analyze just a few aspects of the ship symbolism, like comparisons, metaphors, and the situations of metaphorical isotopy of the ship, whereat John Chrysostom took refuge in underlining the importance of the precepts presented in the Bible and making more affordable to the faithful the fundamental truth of the new belief.

Our research was achieved by using the following documentary literary basis: The Old and The New Testament: the profane literary Greek and Latin sources (Aristotel, Eschil, Aristofan, Polybius, Flavius Josephus, Cicero, Pausanias, Quintilian etc), the Christian literary sources (Origen, Atanasie of Alexandria, Chiril of Jerusalem, Chiril of Alexandria, Clement of Alexandria, Grigore of Nyssa, Grigore of Nazianz, Vasile of Caesarea, Tertullian, Lactantiu, Augustin etc.), the writings of John Chrysostom.

Processing the literary sources which we boast of was possible due to the usage of the text analysis method and to the interpretative one, a fact calculated to increase the coherence of the paper.

We also bring into high relief that another element of methodological nature that guided us in our study is the comparative analysis. We issued from the premise that the ship symbolism is not a "revelation" of the oratorical chrysostomic art, but it also appears in the Old and the New Testament, in the Greek Latin laic literature and in the writings of others Christian writers. The comparative intercession helped us, on one hand, to explain the problem of the ship's origin in the chrysostomic rhetoric, and on the other hand, to highlight more explicitly the original significations that Chrysostom ascribes to the ship in this masterpiece.

By limiting his goals just on studying the metaphors, the comparisons related to the ship and the situations of metaphorical isotopy of the ship in the chrysostomic work, our paper achieved, to be in agreement with the aim and the methods of the research, the following structure.

In the first chapter our aim was to present a short historic of the researches concerning the problematic approached by us in the paper.

Being that the study analyses the metaphors and the comparisons regarding the ship, we considered it necessary that, in the second chapter, to generally present the main definitions of the tropes and figures, and especially of the metaphor enunciated by the most representative antic theoreticians of the century.

From the very same reason, in the third chapter, we aimed to evidence the attitude of the Greek and Latin Fathers of the IInd and IVth century Church, including the one of John Chrysostom, generally towards the rhetorical tradition and more precisely towards classical rhetoric devices. We considered necessary a chronological and spatial presentation of the opinions of the Church's Fathers, in order to seize the causes which lead, after a period of negation, to the proclamation of the rhetorical art's necessity for the Christian rhetorician after the development of the first generation of Christian intellectuals (the apologists) that was able to discuss on the same level with the irreligious intellectuals.

The next chapter was dedicated to John Chrysostom's *artis rhetoricae*. Here we focused on presenting some aspects regarding the education of the Antiochian writer, the sources of his rhetoric (the classical rhetoric and the biblical exegetics) and his rhetorical style.

As a consequence of the fact that the understanding and the examination of the origins of the ship symbolism could not have been done without taking into consideration the precursors of the Hrisostom, in the fifth chapter we submitted to identify the contexts where the metaphors and the comparisons regarding the ship came in sight in the previous Greek and Latin profane writings and contemporary with the Christian writings, in The Old and The New Testament and in the ecclesiastic literature of the IInd-IVth centuries, to illustrate its significations and to underline the possible influences on the Christian literature.

The proper analysis of the comparisons and metaphors of the ship in the chrysostomic work begins with the sixth chapter. The aim of this chapter has guided us towards rare aspects approached or neglected especially in the specialized

literature: identifying all the contexts of the chrysostomic literature where the image of the ship occurs, highlighting all the significations that the Christian author ascribes to the ship in his writings, accentuate the moral, practical and theological motivations of using the metaphor of the ship by the author in his work, establishing comparative frames between using the image of the ship at John Chrysostom and at the preceding and contemporary Fathers of the Church, establishing the functions of the comparisons and the metaphors of the ship in the chrysostomic work, highlighting the importance of the two classical rhetoric devices in the delivery work of the Christian message.

In the last chapter, we proceeded to analyze the situations of metaphorical isotopy of the chrysostomic work, through which we come to understand the metaphors interfacing to the one of the ship like: *the sea, the pirates, the anchorage or the haven, the anchor and the sea commerce*.

We believe that the importance and the originality of this work is assured not only by the subject itself but also by the detection of all the significations that John Chrysostom assigns to the ship, and by the moral, practical and theological intentionality wherefore he uses the ship with a metaphorical or allegorical sense, the results of such a methodic research complementing and shading the studies from the field of study. Moreover, pointing out the ship comparisons in the chrysostomic work represents another unprecedented term of our research.

CHAPTER I

THE HISTORY OF THE RESEARCHES

The influence of the classical rhetoric on the chrysostomic writings is a huge task, therefore we shall confine to some elementary indications. As a matter of fact, regarding this subject a lot of studies have been done, which lead to interesting results. But they are far from being exhausted. So far now, the majority of the studies on the expressivity and the style of Antioch writer's work chased especially the influence of the classical rhetoric on the chrysostomic style.

Aime Puech's work, entitled *St Jean Chrysostome et les moeurs de son temps*, published in 1891 presents John Chrysostom as being totally hostile towards Greek education and rhetorical art. The great classicist of German origin Eduard Norden estimated that Chrysostom was against using the rhetoric's embellishments because of his reluctance in what regards the Hellenistic culture.

But in the 1904, Anton Naegele contradicted these two by reasoning that the Christian rhetorician was himself a compromise made between the Greek culture and the Christian one. Also Thomas E. Ameringer highlighted in his writings that in the chrysostomic writings break through the same stylistic practices commune to the rhetoric of the second sophistry. His study set on Harry M. Hubell to examine, for the first time, the effect of the classical rhetoric not only on the chrysostomic style, but also on the argumentation and on the form of the literary work. Some researchers like S. Skimina, Marry A. Burns, Marius Soffray, William A. Maat, M. Zitnik, Manlio Simonetti, Robert E. Carter, Antonio Cioffi, J. Alissandratos, F. Asensio, J. P. Ryan demonstrated in their papers John Chrysostom's assumption of some forms, motives, licenses, technical actions specific to the classic rhetoric. Robert E. Wilken, in his study about Chrysostom, wherewith he criticizes the Jewish and the Judean, didn't see it necessary to fight against those who condemned the fact that a Christian bishop could make use of the elements of the profane rhetoric. The results of his studies are extremely convincing, purposely that the Christian rhetorician knew exactly what he is doing when he attacked his opponents by using common talking points, the attractions and the expressions absorbed from the Greek and Latin rhetoric.

Furthermore, Ottorino Pasquato, in one of his studies, presents some of the forms of the classical tradition in *De inani glori aet de educandis liberis*. Therefore, the idea that Chrysostom used the rhetorical terminology without understanding it is absurd, all the more so as the rhetorical education received from the famous antiochian rhetorician Libanius is well known. Janet Fairweather asserts that Chrysostom "makes use frequently of the rhetorical terminology" and that the language that the antiochian exegete uses in order to

explain the letter of the Saint Pavel towards the Galatians was the one he taught in the Greek paideea. Frances Young, at his turn, argues that the main rule of the antiochian exegesis was mainly the implementation of the critic and literary methods of the grammar and rhetoric schools on the biblical texts.

In their study, Margaret M. Mitchell and Blake Leyerle tackle the problematic of classic culture's inheritance from another angle. The first aims to demonstrate the importance of the Apostle Pavel's *encomium* not only in the chrysostomic exegetic interpretation, but also in his social and catechetic scheme, and Blake Leyerle does not make just another rhetorical analysis, but he enunciated his conclusions by taking into consideration the context of the contemporary society and at the same time, by taking refuge to other contemporary methodologies. Using other analytical contemporary methods was also debated by Alexandra Retzelff in her study about the aquatic metaphors for the theater, present in the VII homily *In Matthaem*. Classical studies regarding the symbolic images used by Chrysostom that came to light in the last two decades belong to Laurence Brottier and François-Xavier Druet. They can be ranked papers about the classic heritage in John Chrysostom's work set off by Adele Monaci Castagno, VappuPyykkö, Sherry Longosz, Fr. Panayiotis Papageorgiou, LauriThurén, G. Nataf and P. Sultan.

All these contributions, extremely suggestive under methodological, informational and interpretative reference were entirely valued in our paper.

CHAPTER II THE ISSUE OF THE METAPHOR AND OF THE SYMBOLISM IN ANTIC POETIC AND RHETORIC

Metaphorical motivation is so diffused in the field of the symbolism that creates the impression that any symbol is a metaphor. Such a perspective must not be ignored, forasmuch as in the case of the symbolism too, the image of a thing or its

representation is overlapping with the idea of the very thing. For the rhetoric or poetic metaphor, but also for the symbolic one, the cause of the closeness of two things or two realities is the analogy between them. But there is also an element that separates the metaphor of the symbol, because it closes in two common features, without suggesting that one of them belongs to another world. The symbolical image makes always use of a physical element in order to suggest a metaphysical sense. What is noticeable is the fact that both the metaphor and the symbolic image reflect the dynamics of the human mind from concrete to abstract, from the known to the unknown. Therefore, to the stylistic procedures have taken refuge not only the antic Jewish Talmudists in interpreting the *Torre*, Greek and Roman writers and philosophers meditating at the antic myths, but also, as we are going to see in the next chapters, the Greek and Latin Fathers of the Church from the IInd-IVth centuries, including John Chrysostom, in order to comment and explain various biblical fragments.

CHAPTER III

THE ATTITUDE OF THE GREEK AND ROMAN FATHERS OF THE CHURCH FROM THE II-IV CENTURIES TOWARDS THE CLASSICAL RHETORIC DEVICES

The Greek and Roman Fathers of the Church from the IInd-IVth centuries opposed to any attention regarding the language and the style. This attitude owes to many causes. Thence, the persecutions suffered by the Christians coming from the Roman state, were augmented by the hostility of the authors and the profane writers, who get under bitter attacks the writings of the new belief, through which the Christians were defending and sustaining the superiority of their religion. In the defense of their attitude, they also invoked the necessity of interspacing from the classical culture and the affirmation of the Christianity's specific compared to the antic philosophy and religion. In addition, the means and the methods of the rhetoric art could be

easily put in the service of other means: rhetoric was frequently used by the heretics in their proselyte propaganda. Therefore, most of the writers of the first three Christian centuries, admiring the writing style of The Old and The New Testament, sustained the truth's revelation of belief in a simple and elegant form. Hardly later, after the development of the first generation of Christian intellectuals (the apologists), that was able to talk at the same level with the pagan intellectuals, some of the analyzed Church's Fathers approved the utility of the rhetoric for the Christian rhetorician, which had this time an entirely new content: preaching the Christian truth. The impulse given by fallacies lead to the necessity of controlling them through pedant but also esthetic means consequently favoring the foundation and the development of the catechetical schools and of the biblical exegesis (alexandrine and Antiochian School). For others, rhetoric is legit and necessary, representing a true instrument of founding and thoroughness of the doctrine. The profane rhetoric art provided necessary means for the pagan rhetorician to express and sustain his faith beliefs, to convince the others of the legit and the truth of the Christian doctrine, of the spiritual benefit of the virtue, without ceasing to like and affect. The new interpretation given to the profane rhetoric art must be naturally preceded by a negation phase, in her quality of important compound of the Greek and Latin classical tradition. What strikes is the fact that although the majority was against the classical rhetoric devices, in their work, especially in praise words or in the saints panegyrics can be found a part of the stylistic procedures of the rhetoric tradition.

CHAPTER IV

ARS RHETORICAE OF JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

Patriarch of Constantinople, John later called for his eloquence, Chrysostom ("Golden Mouth") (349-407) is one of the greatest Greek Father of the Church and the only one who belonged to the Antiochian School.

In order to highlight the truth of the belief and to make them more accessible to his listeners, the exegete appealed to various procedures and means of style, specific to the classical rhetoric.

He was so familiar with these that he applied them incessantly and without a special effort. All readers have noticed the sound games and the levels of words whereat the sonority overlooks. He was doing nothing else than putting in practice the verbal procedures, classified as lexical figures. Equally frequently he was using the rhetoric figures, the rhetoric structures taught to know, classify and apply them from Libanius. There is not even one that does fall more or less in his biblical homilies and commentaries, and in so far as their application does not require an effort too conscious, all these have been abundantly adopted. In course of time, he gave up on the profane rhetorical rules, noticing that the adornment of his homilies and the embellishment of his style of writings with all kind of clerk quotes, absorbed from the Greek philosophers and poets, is an useless thing as he could not sustain his Christian beliefs on profane ideas.

This lead to the thoroughness of the teachings from the Scripture by John Chrysostom, which he knew to apply perfectly to the lives of the Christians, by acquiring the method of the biblical exegesis of the Antiochian School, that offered to Chrysostom the path of studying and understanding the holy writings, and later the method on the grounds of which he built his great homiletic activity.

As exegete, he did not have the deepness of Origene or Grigore de Nyssa, especially due to his preparation, which was that of the Antiochian School, channeled more towards “history” than to the “spirit” of the text. Therefore the interpretation of the antiochian exegete is abundant in moral motifs, psychological thoroughness, but essentially, poor in real exegesis. The text is interpreted verse by verse, whom he establishes the meaning and whereon he clarifies through other texts from the Scripture, when he has the impression that it is not very clear. The quotes from the biblical texts are made with a great psychological ability, considering the aptitude for understanding of the listeners. More than that, each idea is instantly clarified through multiple

examples, analogies, comparisons taken from the nature, from the world of the plants or of the animals, from human deeds and especially from the mores and the habits of the people of that time.

CHAPTER V

ASPECTS OF SHIP SYMBOLISM IN THE GREEK AND ROMAN PROFANE WRITINGS, IN THE BIBLE AND IN THE ECCLESIASTIC LITERATURE OF THE IInd-IVth CENTURIES

The Greek and Roman literature, especially poetry, abounds in sea images. The representatives of the literary-philosophic current, called “the second sophistic” inspire for their metaphors and comparisons from the navigation art. At the commentators of the Scripture in the Greek and Roman space of the IInd-IVth century, the image of the ship is not at all rare. The record of the sailing forms into a heritage of the Greek culture for indeed the Bible does not really contain maritime images.

Like John Chrysostom, the Fathers of the Greek and Roman Church from the IInd-IVth centuries were using the image of the ship to make the divine truth more accessible to those willing to listen it. In other words, the metaphors and the comparisons regarding the ship from their writings were committed to the needs of exposure; they serve, like the parables of the Messiah, to elucidate and facilitate the understanding of abstract and spiritual ideas of the Christian preaching. The usage of these two procedures becomes, for the Fathers of the Church, one of the most incisive means to carry the evangelic message, a very subtle way to bring into notice the requests of the Christian moral and to convince the believers practice them. Therefore, at the patristic analyzed writers, the ship does not only symbolizes the Church but its representation is a metaphorical or allegorical one, meaning that there are other elements too that play as comparison terms for the ship, like the cross, the Universe, the body.

CHAPTER VI

ASPECTS OF THE SHIP SYMBOLISM IN THE CHRYSOSTOMIC WRITINGS

What hits is that from all the metaphors and the comparisons, the ones regarding the ship are the most frequently used. Never, maybe, its ability of suggestion was bigger than in the writings of the Antiochian exegete, who assigned them the mission to serve not only as a mark for all the necessary factors for the abundance and the moral edification of the society he lived in, but also as a way of fighting flaws. In the chrysostomic masterpiece, the ship does not only stand for the Church, like the majority of the Fathers of the previous Church and contemporary to Hrisostom, but its representation is a metaphorical or allegorical one, in the sense that there is a multitude of elements that serve as term of comparison for the ship, like the alimentary or sexual abstinence, virginity, celibacy, asceticism, soul and the Universe.

The Christian rhetorician appealed to two procedures of the classic rhetoric in order to stimulate the believers to listen carefully and meditate to the texts of the Scripture presented by him; to eulogy the power of character of the virtuous confronted with obstacles and tests sent by God and to show God's mercy; to force them to do good deeds in the spirit of consciousness, to fast, to be righteous; to criticize the listeners when they deviated from the good faith, becoming greedy, drinkers, proud, unfaithful, miser; to encourage the Christians when they were tried by annoyances; to show the absence of knowledge and to capture the attention of the listeners; to show the thirst of knowledge of some of them, to sensitize and determine the others to change their immoral way of living, to highlight and to mold an abstract precept.

CHAPTER VII THE SITUATIONS OF METAPHORICAL ISOTOPY OF THE SHIP IN THE CHRYSOSTOMIC WRITINGS

By situations of metaphorical isotopy of the ship in John Chrysostome's work, we mean the metaphors connected to the ship like *the sea, the pirates, the anchor or the haven and the sea commerce*. All these are diffused in Chrysostome's entire work. Hence the sea and its auxiliary components may represent either the very image of the human existence and of the different stages of the life a human being needs to transit, or, through her continuous flow, that destructive force that leads the man to dying. The pirates signify the demon that allures the virtuous ones. The anchor is seen as a symbol of tranquility, no matter whether is the tranquility and inner peace of this life offered by some Christians, the church, the monasteries, the shrines and saints' celebrations, the Gospel, prayers, marriage, woman, or about the eternal life after death.

The anchor considered to be the one able to keep the ship in place, is considered to be a symbol of the single-mindedness, of solidity, of tranquility and of fidelity. It symbolizes the stable part of our being, which allows us to keep a bright lucidity when confronted with the life's waves. Being the last salvation of the sailor caught by the storm, the anchor is many a time tied either to the hope that remains a support against the difficulties of the life, or to the faith wherewith we can obtain the hearts promised by God. The metaphors and the comparisons borrowed from the lexis of the tradesmen typical activities aim to the highlighting of the spiritual benefit and the attainment of the eternal life as a consequence of the meditation and listening to the words of the Scripture.

John Chrysostom used the sea, the pirates, the haven and the anchor in a metaphorical sense, in order to convince the Christians to beware of the depravities typical to every age and to get closer to the virtue; to encourage those in troubles; to show that the devil knows who, when and how to attract the believers on his side; to determine the parents to assign their children to the

monasteries; to make them pray at the shrines of the saints and to honor them; to prevail on reading the Scriptures, to describe and present the advantages of the After Life; to move the rich people without soul; to calm down the discontent and furious citizen from Antiochia of his exile.

CONCLUSIONS

John Chrysostom tried in many ways to convince the Christians of changing their immoral way of life. As it results from Greek classic oratory's case, when the persuasion is required, the language and the arguments are generally set by the listeners. So being interested by the concerns of believers' life, with their needs and their concrete aspirations and respecting the principle that the diffusion of the evangelic message must be understood by everyone, John Chrysostom used the most adequate expressions and formulae without diminish the content of Christian message. He also realized that in order to acquire the public attention, he must appeal to their imagination, and that the comprehension of spiritual things must be done through images and symbols of the material world. Libanius' scholar disciple, the Christian rhetorician had an extraordinary technique of symbolic image control. But as some sophists, he didn't limit his ambition only to embellish the speech; the symbolic image becomes to him one of the integrants of his demonstration. Being so important, does Chrysostom identify exactly the true nature of symbolic image: powerful measure of conviction or stylistic ornament? The answer to this question is given by the distinction between the metaphor and the comparison approached by some linguists. If it is true that all symbolic images want to impress the imagination, the effects produced by both stylistic devices are not the same: the comparison addresses to the imagination through the reason and the metaphor wants to sensitize through the imagination. Applying indeed to a comparison developed in order to build a logic speech, Chrysostom expose himself to a rational critique from the listeners, who might deny the resemblance reference. The metaphor produces however a bigger effect concerning the persuasion because it brooks with the common

logic and it exerts its repercussions on the sensibility without the reason control. For this reason, the comparison is most of the time bore by a lot of metaphors, which come to maintain “the persuasion degree” to a high level, if we can say so.

Indeed a look through his writings shows us that the Christian rhetorician uses a lot the metaphors and the comparisons referring to the *ship*, to the *athlete*, *doctor*, *ploughman*, *fighter and soldier’s* specific activities and to the *gold extraction*. By all these, in this study we analyze those of the *ship* and the situations of metaphorical isotopy of the ship, the metaphors connected to the ship like *the sea*, *the pirates*, *the anchor or the haven* and *the sea commerce*.

As diffusion form of the Gospel which corresponds to his historic time, his purpose being to demonstrate and to convince the believers of doctrines Scriptures importance, the comparisons, ship’s metaphors and the situations of metaphorical isotopy of the ship are the most used. Maybe their capacity of suggestion was never bigger as in Chrysostom’s writings, who assigned to them the vocation of being a symbol of the elements which are required for the prosperity and moral edification of the society in which he lived and a way of controlling the vices.

On the paper we brought out the fact that the ship’s symbolism is not an oratory art “discovery” made by John Chrysostom, it is also found in The Old and The New Testament, in the Greek and Roman profane writings and in the writings of the Greek and Roman Fathers of the Church from the IInd-IVth centuries. In his homilies, but also in the agreements, catechism, biblical comments, Chrysostom’s letters, the ship does not symbolize only the Church, such as the majority of Christian authors anterior or contemporary to him, but its representation is a metaphorical or allegorical one, meaning that there are a lot of elements that play as comparison terms for the ship, like the alimentary or sexual abstinence, virginity, celibacy, marriage, asceticism, soul and the Universe.

Our demarche determined us to appreciate that the metaphors and the comparisons referring to the ship and the situations of metaphorical isotopy of the ship are presented in almost all chrysostomic writings with the same identity. Like this we could realize a typology of its presence according not only to

believers life's concerns but also to moral virtues spread in all chrysostomic writings.

Therefore the comparisons, the metaphors of the ship, the situations of metaphorical isotopy of the ship from chrysostomic writings were committed to the needs of exposure; they serve, just like the Messiah's parables, to elucidate and facilitate the understanding of spiritual and abstract ideas of Christian school, becoming one of the most incisive way to carry the evangelic message, a very subtle path to bring into notice the requests of Christian moral and to convince the Christians to put them into practice.