

This is an extract from:

*Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents:*

*A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments*

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## 51. *Koutloumoussi: Testaments* of Chariton for the Monastery of Christ Savior of Koutloumoussi on Mount Athos

*Dates:* *First Testament* [A]: January 1–August 31, 1370                      *Translator:* George Dennis  
*Second Testament* [B]: November 1370  
*Third Testament* [C]: July 1378

*Edition employed:* Paul Lemerle, *Actes de Kutlumus*, 2nd ed. (= Archives de l’Athos 2<sup>2</sup>) (Paris, 1988), pp. 113–16, 117–21, 135–38; cf. notes, pp. 370–76, 384–88.

*Manuscripts:* *First Testament:* Kutlumus archives, no. 37; *Second Testament:* Kutlumus archives, no. II B; *Third Testament:* Kutlumus archives, no. 98. Illustrations in Lemerle, *Kutlumus*, pls. 42b–47, 53–54. All three manuscripts are 14th-c. autographs.<sup>1</sup>

*Other translations:* None

### *Institutional History*

#### *A. Origins of Koutloumoussi*<sup>2</sup>

The origins of the monastery of Koutloumoussi, the only Athonite foundation bearing a Turkish name, are obscure. A chrysobull professedly of Alexios I Komnenos that is preserved at the monastery today and regarded as its founder’s *typikon* is in fact a forgery.<sup>3</sup> The first certain evidence of the monastery’s existence is the listing of its superior Isaias among the signatories of a document of 1169 from the Panteleemon monastery.<sup>4</sup>

Attempts to connect the monastery’s name with the family of Qutlumush I, founder of the dynasty of the Seljuk sultans of Rum, who perished in a revolt against Alp Arslan in 1063, remain conjectural. It is thought that perhaps one of his descendants defected to Byzantium, converted to Christianity, and concluded his life on Mount Athos where he might well have founded a monastery bearing his name, but there is no actual evidence as to who this Turkish renegade might have been or when he may have lived. Lemerle (*Kutlumus*, p. 5) nevertheless proposed a date in the first half of the twelfth century for the foundation of this monastery.

After a long period of obscurity, Koutloumoussi makes a reappearance in Athonite sources of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. An act of the Athonite *protos* Isaac donating the large property of Anapausa to Koutloumoussi in 1329 indicates that there were forty monks resident there, though much impoverished for lack of adequate resources.<sup>5</sup> At this time Koutloumoussi, a small establishment, ranked low among the monasteries of Mount Athos, placed with other obscure foundations that over time tended to be absorbed by the larger monasteries.

#### *B. Role of the Superior Chariton*<sup>6</sup>

It was due to Chariton, whose tenure as superior of Koutloumoussi must date back to circa 1355–56,<sup>7</sup> that the monastery achieved a solid structural and financial foundation that enabled it to

## 51. KOUTLOUMOUSI

survive down to our own times. He is eulogized in several documents preserved in the monastery's cartulary.<sup>8</sup> As indicated in his three testaments translated below, Chariton's greatest achievement was securing the patronal assistance of John Vladislav, *voivode* of Wallachia (Ungrovlachia), a relationship certainly not without its problems but one which led to an enduring tradition of assistance to the monastery by the rulers of this Roumanian principality that was to survive until 1863. As a price of gaining the prince's assistance, Chariton had to allow John Vladislav to place Vlach monks in Koutloumousi under a lenient idiorhythmic lifestyle at variance with the monastery's traditional cenobiticism.

Chariton himself was appointed metropolitan of Wallachia by Patriarch Philotheos in 1372, doubtless with John Vladislav's endorsement.<sup>9</sup> As early as 1376 Chariton had also become *protos* of the Athonite community.<sup>10</sup> Chariton claims both titles in his *Third Testament* of 1378. He survived an outbreak of the plague at the time of this *Testament* and lived to participate in the patriarchal synod of Neilos Kerameus (1380–88) in Constantinople in 1380. Lemerle (*Kutlumus*, p. 297) suggested that Chariton died in 1381, perhaps in Constantinople.

### *C. Subsequent History of the Foundation in Byzantine Times*<sup>11</sup>

During the last years of Chariton's superiorship, Koutloumousi was troubled by the raids of Turkish pirates who were able to abduct and hold for ransom many of the monastery's monks in spite of the fortification of the foundation financed by John Vladislav in the early 1370s. Koutloumousi's superior Jeremias had to be ransomed from pirates sometime before 1386.<sup>12</sup> In 1393, Patriarch Antony IV (1391–97) awarded Koutloumousi a patriarchal *stauropegion*.<sup>13</sup> In 1428, Koutloumousi was permitted to annex the neighboring monastery of Alypiou through an administrative union confirmed by Patriarch Joseph II (1416–39).<sup>14</sup>

### *D. Koutloumousi under Ottoman Rule*<sup>15</sup>

Shortly after its absorption of Alypiou, Koutloumousi, like the rest of Mount Athos, was incorporated into the Ottoman Empire. For a time it appears that both Koutloumousi and Alypiou were abandoned, then circa 1475 (so Lemerle, *Kutlumus*, p. 20), the foundation was repopulated for a time by a group of Bulgarian monks.<sup>16</sup> For the second half of the fifteenth century, the support of various Vlach *voivodes* was crucial to the survival of the monastery. They obtained for it firmans from the Turkish sultans Beyazid II (1491) and Suleiman the Magnificent (1527) ordering the protection of its properties.<sup>17</sup> Probably in the second quarter of the sixteenth century, a Greek community of monks had re-established itself in Koutloumousi, displacing the Bulgarians (Lemerle, *Kutlumus*, p. 21). The monastery then entered a new period of prosperity, and by 1574, it ranked sixth among the monasteries of Mount Athos.

### *E. Koutloumousi in Modern Times*<sup>18</sup>

The monastery continued to benefit from the patronage of the princes of Wallachia down to the middle of the seventeenth century, but in 1863, Prince Couza decided to confiscate all the properties in Moldavia and Wallachia previously dedicated to the support of Orthodox religious establishments on Mount Athos and elsewhere in the eastern Mediterranean.<sup>19</sup> Koutloumousi was able to survive its losses by relying on other properties it had acquired. A few years earlier in 1856, Patriarch Cyril VII approved the return of Koutloumousi to cenobitic life.<sup>20</sup>

## FOURTEENTH CENTURY

Rebuilt three times after devastating fires in 1497, 1767, and 1870, Koutloumoussi remains an active cenobitic monastery on Mount Athos, populated in 1980 by some fifty-five monks.<sup>21</sup>

### *Analysis*

This document is exceptionally valuable for what it reveals about the nature of the patron/client relationship in Palaiologan times. No other document in our collection illustrates so vividly the problem nearly all founders (except perhaps those of the imperial families) must have faced in raising the necessary funds to support their foundations. As this document shows, this support often had a burdensome, disruptive price in patronal privileges. Here even a patron's extension of a loan to the monastery led to expectations of patronal rights. The document is also useful for illustrating the difficulty of supporting more than one form of monasticism in a single foundation as well as the intense resistance by champions of cenobiticism like our author to proposed variations like the incorporation of imposed guests (*katapemptoi*) or internal monks (*esomonitai*) into their communities.

The document is made up of three versions of the author Chariton's *Testament* [A], [B], and [C]. There is a considerable amount of duplication among the versions,<sup>22</sup> but taken together they show the unfolding and resolution of the conflict between the author and his principal patron especially well.

### *First Testament [A]*

In this part of the document, the author identifies [A3], cf. [B2], [C3] a letter of concession from Theodosios, the Athonite *protos*, and Iakobos, metropolitan of Hierissos as the basis for his authority over the monastery. The award seems to have obliged (cf. technical vocabulary in [B4]) our author to improve and strengthen the monastery, much like contemporary patriarchal grants for improvement (*beltiosis*) and maintenance (*systasis*).<sup>23</sup> The author records [A4], cf. [B5], [C4] his efforts to fulfill the terms of the grant, including new properties and incomes obtained not only from Byzantine subjects but also from the rulers of other Christian peoples such as the Serbs and the Vlachs. When our author determined that the monastery needed to be fortified, he turned to John Vladislav, the *voivode* of the Vlachs, whose father Nicholas Alexander had already laid the foundations for a great tower that remained incomplete.

Persistent solicitation won [A4] the required support for the project. In exchange for his financial support of the fortification project (provided through a loan [A7]), the *voivode* obtained recognition as "founder" (*ktetor*) and then insisted [A5], cf. [B6], [B7] upon the traditional founder's right to dispatch a number of candidates (Vlachs) to be maintained at the monastery (as *esomonitai* or *katapemptoi*). He wanted [B16] his appointees to receive not only the special treatment customarily accorded notables (e.g., in (22) *Evergetis* [37]) but also an exemption from the requirement of observing the monastery's cenobitic lifestyle (as in (27) *Kecharitomene* [4]).

Our author, seeing a serious threat to the monastery's cenobitic constitution, prevented [A5] the *voivode*'s personal representative John Neagu the *vitezes* from instituting these disruptive changes. After learning of Chariton's defiance, the *voivode* summoned [A6], cf. [B8], [B9] him before a council of his own ecclesiastical officials who accused our author of disobedience to the founder. Chariton agreed to take the dispute to the Athonite fathers for arbitration and to abide by

their decision. The latter, concerned like the members of the *voivode*'s council that Chariton risked losing future patronal benefits, urged [A8] him to exercise a "certain economy" (*oikonomia*) and accept the ruler's appointees under the terms previously proposed. For his part, our author makes [A9], cf. [B13] a conditional agreement to tensure two of the *voivode*'s appointees provided additional benefits of patronage were in fact forthcoming.

As this *First Testament* was being written in 1370, our author has drawn up [A10], cf. [B15] a proposed compromise "written as though composed by him (the *voivode*) personally" that was to be dispatched to the founder for his signature. According to Lemerle (*Kutlumus*, p. 10), it is the monastery's copy of this document, also dated to 1370, that is preserved in Koutloumousi's archives.<sup>24</sup> Among other things, the document sought to show the diversity of the foundation's endowed properties and the many contributors (besides the *voivode*) who had donated them. Only the newly built fortification (*kastron*) is recognized (see also [A15], [B15]) as having been constructed at the *voivode*'s expense, and even for that project our author maintains that the monks contributed labor and income from other properties. Moreover, the monks had been required [A15] to deposit certain of the foundation's consecrated objects as security for the money loaned to them by the *voivode*.

As our author saw it, the *voivode*'s assistance with the financing of the fortification did not provide the foundation with the means to support the Vlach appointees "especially with [their] newly devised way of life," which suggests that the idiorhythmic lifestyle was not self-sustaining and had turned out to be more expensive to support than the cenobitic. To finance the newcomers, Chariton makes bold to propose [A12], cf. [B16], [B17] that the *voivode* cancel the monastery's indebtedness, erect a church large enough for all the brothers "present and yet to come" as well as a refectory of corresponding size, provide additional income-producing properties for the endowment, and formally acknowledge that the Greek monks were rightfully due "honor and precedence" over the Vlachs. Chariton and the brothers were to retain the right to choose [A13], cf. [B18], [C8] their own superior, but their choice would travel to the *voivode* to receive confirmation of office from him as founder. On the nominee's return, the *protos* of the Holy Mountain would bestow the pastoral staff. Our author makes [A14], cf. [B19] suspension of the cenobitic requirements for the Vlachs dependent on the *voivode*'s assent to these terms, while he himself reserves the right (exercised twice later in [B] and [C]) to make his own changes in the present document.

#### *Second Testament* [B]

The *Second Testament*, written some months later in 1370, provides [B5] more details on how the fortification project was carried out. There is the same attempt as in [A4] to emphasize the co-contributors (in addition to the *voivode*) to the project. The author is also much more critical of the *voivode*'s desire to alter the cenobitic constitution [B6], cf. [A5]: "while attentive to doling out funds, he paid little heed to the strictness of our way of life." He is equally harsh with the ruler's Vlach appointees, whom he claims wanted to live in a "relaxed, loose and irregular manner, inasmuch as they are mountain folk and unaccustomed to monastic continence and discipline." The discussion [B12] of the arbitration by the Athonite fathers is more nuanced and detailed than in the *First Testament* [A8]. Chariton records the praise he received as a true "founder" (*ktetor*) of his

monastery for instinctively resisting the *voivode*'s challenge to its cenobitic constitution, yet he also preserves his colleagues' argument for expediency in making concessions in common life and diet for "one who comes from a lordly and more luxurious way of living." Moreover, the fathers reminded [B13] Chariton that the last appointee sent by the *voivode* to Mount Athos had in fact been unable to persevere and eventually returned to his homeland.

The provisions of the document mentioned [A10] in the *First Testament* as having been drawn up by Chariton for the *voivode*'s signature appear to be incorporated in the *Second Testament* ([B15] through [B21]). Chariton insists [B16] that the Vlachs dispatched to his monastery be essentially self-sustaining, able "to regulate their manner of life as each is able from his own resources." The discussion of privileges to be enjoyed provides [B17] that a monk of either of the two nationalities is to "receive proper honor and reverence (i.e., preference) from his subordinates in food, drink, and seating, and, in corresponding manner, what is due to him according to the years and labors of each one." Thus this foundation appears to have been at this time a completely non-Evergatian, traditional monastic organization. In observance of traditional Byzantine piety towards the "first founder," the monastery was also to retain [B17] its name.

### *Third Testament* [C]

By the time he composed his third version of the *Testament* eight years later in 1378, Chariton, weakened by the plague [C1], had become [C5] both *protos* of the Holy Mountain and metropolitan of the Vlachs. The contentious negotiations over the *voivode*'s patronal rights over Koutloumousi had receded into the background. The *voivode*, along with his wife Anna, receives posthumous credit for rebuilding [C4] the monastery (not just the fortification), though the contributions of other benefactors are also duly noted. There is, however, no mention of any patronal rights accruing to the *voivode*'s successor.

Chariton reiterates his earlier discussions of the basis for his authority [C3], cf. [A3], [B2], of his fund-raising activities [C4], cf. [A4], [B5], and of the procedures for the election of his successor [C8], cf. [A13], [B18]. He omits his earlier concessions that the new superior should receive confirmation from the *voivode* and his pastoral staff from the *protos*. He adds provisions for his own memorial services [C6], prayers [C10] for the emperors and other (Christian) rulers that God might "subject the foe and every enemy under their feet,"<sup>25</sup> sale [C6], [C9] of his vestments to raise money to ransom monks from the Turks, and an injunction to preserve monastic poverty [C7]. This part of the text is described as a "secret testament" (like (52) *Choumnos* [A3]) and a codicil (like (24) *Christodoulos* [C]), implicitly recognizing the earlier versions [A] and [B].

### *Notes on the Introduction*

1. For details on these and other manuscript witnesses, see Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, pp. 110, 116, 134.
2. See Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, pp. 6–8, 292.
3. So Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, p. 1; ed. pp. 225–28.
4. Lemerle, *Actes de Saint-Pantéléemôn*, no. 8, line 57.
5. Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, no. 15 (1329), pp. 70–76.
6. See Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, pp. 8–13, 292–97.
7. He is mentioned first in Athonite documents of 1362 (see Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, p. 294), but his commission

## 51. KOUTLOUMOUSI

to maintain and improve Koutloumousi (mentioned repeatedly in the document below, [A3], [B2], and [C3]) from the Athonite *protos* Theodosios must date from the latter's first or second tenure of office, 1353 or 1355–56.

8. Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, nos. 25 (1369), pp. 99–102; 27 (1369), pp. 105–6; and 28 (1369), pp. 107–9.
9. Darrouzès, *Regestes*, no. 2654 (1372), pp. 547–48.
10. See Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, p. 296.
11. See Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, pp. 13–19, 297.
12. Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, no. 38 (1386), pp. 141–44.
13. Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, no. 40 (1393), pp. 147–48.
14. Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, no. 44 (1428), pp. 154–56.
15. See Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, pp. 19–22, 301–3.
16. Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, no. 48 (1501), pp. 162–63, with discussion, p. 301.
17. French translations by P. Wittek in Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, Appendix IV, pp. 234–39.
18. See Kadas, *Mount Athos*, pp. 70–73, and Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, pp. 23–25.
19. Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, p. 23.
20. Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, no. 80, pp. 222–24.
21. Kadas, *Mount Athos*, p. 73.
22. Meditation on death: [A1], [B14], [C1]; basis for Chariton's authority: [A3], [B2], [C3]; nature of the relationship with the patron: [A4], [B5], [C4]; patron's requirements: [A5], [B6], [B7]; conflict with the patron: [A6], [B8], [B9]; arbitration by the Athonite fathers: [A7], [B10], [B11]; their recommendations: [A8], [B12]; conditional acceptance of the patron's appointees: [A9], [B13]; sources of the monastery's endowment: [A10], [A11], [B15]; Chariton's proposal: [A12], [B16], [B17]; election of the new superior: [A13], [B18], [C8]; reservation of the right to make changes in the *Testament*: [A14], [B19]; condemnation of transgressors: [A15], [B20]; official confirmation: [A16], [B21], [C12].
23. For a discussion of these patriarchal grants, see Emil Herman, " 'Chiese private' e diritto di fondazione negli ultimi secoli dell'impero bizantino," *OCP* 12 (1946), 302–21, and my own *Private Religious Foundations in the Byzantine Empire* (Washington, D.C., 1987), pp. 249–62.
24. Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, no. 26 (1370), pp. 102–5, 367–68.
25. Prayers for military success are seen also in this era in (49) *Geromeri* [15], cf. (57) *Bebaia Elpis* [6], and earlier in (19) *Attaleiates* [43], (23) *Pakourianos* [18], and (33) *Heliou Bomon* [47].

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### *Translation*

#### *First Testament* [A]

[A1.] If man had remained in that condition in which he had been fashioned by the God of all and had kept his commandments, he would not have been given over to death, or be constrained by such a brief span of life. Things would proceed more in accord with his wishes, and no unyielding obstacle would block his path. But his transgression has made him subject to death, a cruel one at

## FOURTEENTH CENTURY

that, and one cannot even describe the turbulent mass of things lying in wait for him. Even in this state he ought to give thanks to God, for it enables him to be cognizant of his own nature and to recognize that nothing has ever happened or will happen apart from God's will. He should be humbled by the mortality of his nature and should in turn be comforted by [God's] providence.

[A2.] Born and raised, as I have been, in this unstable nature and having lived my life and advanced in years to the present and, although quite unworthy, having enjoyed many great gifts from Christ my Savior, fearing that my life will soon come to its end, I freely submit this present *Testament* of mine to those who are and who will be my fathers and brothers in the revered monastery of our Savior Jesus Christ, which is also called Koutloumousi, and which by the inscrutable judgment of God is now under my care.

[A3.] For my most holy fathers in this monastery, moved by him who disposes all things for our benefit, with the will, vote, and agreement of the then *protos* of the revered monasteries of this holy mountain, the ordained monk Theodosios,<sup>1</sup> and the all-holy metropolitan of Hierissos and of our holy mountain, lord Iakobos, have with much entreaty entrusted me with its care. This is made clear in the letter they have addressed to me. It is authenticated not only by their own signatures, but also by those of the blessed and revered lords my fathers, I mean the aforementioned *protos* and the all-holy metropolitan. They laid upon me the charge of doing all I should wish for it with the help of God. It was not my intention to fall asleep over suggested improvements and means of strengthening the monastery, but rather with my whole mind and body to be zealous and to get things done for the betterment of the monastery and the benefit of the brothers in it.

[A4.] On its behalf I not only appealed to prominent Romans<sup>2</sup> to support me in this endeavor, but also those of other nationalities, from whose donations I endowed this monastery with no small amount of possessions and funding, as well as a fair amount of property. Indeed, it seemed to me that this monastery should have strong fortifications constructed around it to ward off the peoples who, because of my sins, were assaulting it, and to provide security and freedom from fear for the monks practicing asceticism there. I therefore went off to the most fortunate, most valiant lord, my son, the ruler of Ungrovlachia, lord John Vladislav,<sup>3</sup> the *voivode*, and explained my plans to him. I also intimated that since his father, lord Nicholas Alexander<sup>4</sup> of blessed memory, himself lord of the same Ungrovlachia, had greatly cooperated in constructing the foundations for a great tower, even though its completion was left to others, he too ought to imitate his father. This would assure him of remission of his sins, good health of soul and body, and an enviable reputation among emperors and rulers, for he would not be inferior to them in his munificence and his offerings to this most holy mountain, the eye, so to speak, of the whole civilized world. All this would be his if he should choose to build fortifications in this monastery of Koutloumousi. Actually, I suggested this two and even three times and, by God's help, I convinced him to bring it to completion. But it meant that I had to put up with hardships on my many journeys, fraught with fear, as I traveled through provinces subject to many lords, as everyone knows who is aware of or has heard about that project. By dint of much hard work and suffering on my part and on that of my fathers and brothers in this monastery, as well as by the support and financial expenditure of the most

fortunate *voivode* himself, our patron,<sup>5</sup> this fortification now in view has been constructed. In this way, therefore, the construction of the fortification was accomplished with the help of God, who guides all things along the way “from non-being into being.”<sup>6</sup>

[A5.] The *voivode* then decided to bring about certain changes in the cenobitic constitution of this monastery, inasmuch as the Vlachs who were also intending to come were accustomed to a life of ease and not to the austerities of established cenobitic life, lived as God intended. In this monastery too he intended to have those customs put into practice which prevailed in the other revered monasteries. First, he entrusted the implementation of his plan to his personal official, the *zupan*, lord John Neagu the *vitezes*.<sup>7</sup> In fact, he arrived at this holy mountain just as I did, for at the time I had been away in Ungrovlachia. He “turned every stone,”<sup>8</sup> so to speak, but was unable to shake my resolve in this matter. This meant that he was unsuccessful, and he departed without having been able to accomplish anything. [p. 114]

[A6.] After a short time, while I was again journeying in Ungrovlachia, on my way to the most fortunate *voivode*, things did not go so smoothly for me. For I discovered that he was quite perturbed. He recounted what he had heard from that man the *vitezes*, and brought these matters to my attention again. It was clear that my views remained the same, and he realized that he would have to make a more concerted effort. To this end he summoned the most holy metropolitan of All Ungrovlachia, *hypertimos*, lord Hyakinthos,<sup>9</sup> the honorable *dikaiophylax* of the illustrious imperial clergy and of the holy Great Church of God, lord Daniel Kritopoulos,<sup>10</sup> his superior and spiritual father lord Dorotheos, the *logothetes*, lord Sabas, and others. Having assembled in council, they also summoned me. They devoted themselves to discussing the matters referred to them, looking at all possible aspects. On the one hand, they were accusing me of not obeying our patron and builder, who had provided so much support, and on the other advising me not to let myself be deprived of many and great things which the most fortunate *voivode* was determined to offer to the monastery in addition. All of these things, they said, would work out well for me if I would go along with his plans. At times they called it a matter of arrogance because, in their judgment, I did not want to follow the same course of action as the others. But I continued to argue against this reckless experiment, and I said that they must allow me to remain within the unchanging boundaries of the fathers (cf. Prov. 22:28), which had been transmitted to me as an inheritance, and that they should not attempt to alter the institutions of cenobitic life, which the holy fathers viewed as heaven on earth.

[A7.] Nonetheless, after a great deal of discussion, they too departed, having heard nothing else from me except: “For myself I do not wish to undermine those rules enacted by my most holy fathers which have come down to me, even if I should incur a greater debt, even one immensely greater than the twelve hundred ounces [of ducats] which I presently owe. But, if on returning to the holy mountain and communicating the proposed plan to the many holy and godly men whom that mountain nourishes, I should discover that they approve of it, I would also persuade my brothers and fathers in the monastery and then, although without pleasure, I too shall observe what is pleasing to the most fortunate *voivode*.” With this response, they went to communicate

## FOURTEENTH CENTURY

their findings to the lord who had sent them. But he was quite perturbed at not having achieved his aims and sent me away practically empty-handed. There was no thought of any obligation or of anything else that was really needed. But he gave me a rather small payment as I left, so it would not seem that he was simply dropping all concern for the monastery.

[A8.] I returned to the holy mountain and consulted, as I had promised, with those holy and heavenly men. After lengthy inquiry and consideration, and a thorough investigation of the proposal, they reached a solution, and addressed me: "You do well not to go ahead and boldly try this experiment simply on your own initiative. But, be assured that even those whom God has put in charge of spiritual matters often have to make use of a certain economy to allow for changes in accord with various conditions, as indeed has been done in the other, larger monasteries on this holy mountain. Those who began this practice did not do so out of bad will, but because of the anomaly of the situation. They made concessions lest, by being too rigid, they might be deprived of what was more important. You too must do as the fathers. Such condescension is the only way in which you will gain what may be needed for the souls and the bodies of the brothers."

[A9.] I yielded to these inspired words, and so persuaded my brothers, and I continued to commend the whole matter to Christ my Savior. After a short time had passed, the most reverend *protopapas* of Ungrovlachia, lord Michael, arrived here along with his brother, the ordained monk lord Iakobos, and others. They wanted to be tonsured and to be numbered among us, but sought to embrace the way of life approved by the most fortunate *voivode*. Then I, calling to mind the advice of the holy fathers, said to him that if the most fortunate *voivode*, our patron, should continue his support in its fullness, I myself would be prepared to do what he so eagerly desired regarding the way of life in the monastery. "But in the meantime you should enjoy every comfort until we shall have made our views clear to the *voivode* and arrived at a solution." This, therefore, is our situation at the moment.

[A10.] The points in question have been drawn up in chapter form in the memorandum to be presented to the most pious *voivode*, our patron, and written as though composed by him personally. We are sending them to him so he might confirm them by his own signature. We have also retained a copy of it here.<sup>11</sup> The points are summarized in the present testamentary set of instructions of mine and read as follows: Of the possessions presently belonging to our revered monastery, cattle byres, vineyards, sheep, yoked animals, and all the others which, by God's providence, plainly exist among us, some are gifts of the most fortunate [p. 115] despot lord John Ugleša,<sup>12</sup> some of his father the Caesar, some of Vulk,<sup>13</sup> and some were given by Romans such as the *mezas stratopedarches* Astras,<sup>14</sup> Hierakes,<sup>15</sup> and several others. Other possessions have been acquired by the manual labor and the individual expenditures of my fathers and brothers, those who have departed to the Lord and those still living. But the newly built fortification, which one can now see, and that alone, was constructed at the expense of the most fortunate *voivode*. The monks too contributed their share in the form of services and hard work, as well as the income from their possessions, which meant that they suffered being deprived of necessities for a great many years now.

## 51. KOUTLOUMOUSI

[A11.] The construction, therefore, of the fortified enclosing wall which one sees there, and only that, as I said, is the work of the *voivode*. In addition, there are certain sacred objects which are deposited as security for the twelve hundred ounces [of ducats] we owe, which were spent on its construction. As far as all the rest is concerned, some income was furnished by certain God-loving men, some from the labor and individual expenditures of the brothers. But they are not sufficient for both Vlachs and Romans, especially now with their newly devised way of life.

[A12.] Because of all this, I am requesting that he remit the debt of twelve hundred ounces [of ducats] expended in the construction of the fortification. I also ask that he erect a church large enough for all the brothers, present and yet to come, as well as a refectory of corresponding size. Let him make purchases and grant ownership of possessions, vines, animals, and other things, which will enable the brothers to enjoy some rest from their labors, those who have endured so much in its construction, as well as those yet to come. By his personal agreement and signature let him grant to the Romans, those now present and those by God's grace still to come, assurance that they will be accorded due honor and precedence by the Vlachs, that they will receive special treatment in matters of food and drink and all other things, and that they will not be harassed by the Vlachs in any way at all.

[A13.] Now then, regarding the person who shall become superior after my departure from this life, I have written down my preference, namely, that he be chosen previously by myself and by my brothers and should thus take on what we may call the promotion to the office of superior. Let him then go off to the most fortunate *voivode*, our patron, and receive his confirmation as superior. He should return again to the holy mountain and receive from the most holy *protos* the pastoral staff. He should then carry out the duties of superior, according to the custom of the fathers in force.

[A14.] I have, therefore, written these things, being sound in mind and healthy in body by the great goodness of God, and I submit it to my brothers in Christ. If, by the mercy of God, I remain among the living until the time comes for me to make any needed corrections to this *Testament*, thanks be to him who knows all things before they come into being. But if in the meantime I should pay my debt, those who reside or who shall reside after me in this revered monastery do not have my permission to try to dissolve the cenobitic institution established so well and in such God-loving fashion by our most holy fathers, unless the above matters compiled in chapter form should finally be confirmed by our patron, the most fortunate *voivode*.

[A15.] If anyone listed among the brothers of the monastery shows contempt for what I have laid down, no matter who he might be, he will be judged by God as having betrayed the holy canons handed down by our fathers and those given by me who am, by a judgment known only to God, his spiritual father. Those who shall do what is just and pleasing to God shall expel him from the monastery as careless and reckless.

[A16.] All of the above has been composed and written by me, Chariton, who by God's judgment

## FOURTEENTH CENTURY

have accomplished all that was written down and who am superior of this revered monastery, presently ordained monk and spiritual father. It has been approved and confirmed by the signatures of my most holy lord and father, the *protos* of the revered monasteries on this holy mountain, lord Sabas,<sup>16</sup> ordained monk, of the God-loved bishop of Hierissos and the holy mountain, lord David, and of others. In the year 6878, the eighth indiction [= 1370 A.D.].

+ By the mercy of God, *protos* of the holy mountain of Athos, the ordained monk Sabas.<sup>17</sup>

+ The humble bishop of Hierissos and of the holy mountain, David.

+ The ordained monk of Koutloumousi, Chariton.

### *Second Testament [B]*

[p. 117] + With my own hand I have prefixed my name, Chariton, ordained monk of Koutloumousi.

[B1.] To that ancient tabernacle of the law, which Moses had pitched at God's command and which had been fashioned by Bezalel (cf. Exod. 35:30), many people were called upon to make offerings, and many others on their own initiative made offerings, not only of gold and silver, scarlet and linen, but also of goat hair (cf. Exod. 35:6–7), the most common thing about. To my truly divine Savior Jesus even the offering of two obols from the widow (cf. Mark 12:42; Luke 21:2) appeared greater than what the wealthy people were depositing in the vaults of the treasury. Thus it is with those who set down the first foundations, the groundwork itself, and who built churches, revered convents, and monasteries, and who expended vast sums on them. All this involved a great deal of labor and care, but the effort demanded of those who assume the charge of ancient institutions which have grown old is no less. For their aim is to raise them up to great renown. They must bring unceasing concern and unending activity to the task of successfully completing their work.

[B2.] So I, Chariton, least among ordained monks and spiritual fathers, having enjoyed many great favors and benefactions, although truly unworthy, from our Lord Jesus Christ, our God and Savior, have not managed to accomplish anything good in his sight or to pay back even in the slightest way my many debts or to honor him with rich gifts and expenditures such as men look upon as proper. Instead, I clearly understood and believed that he did not attend to extravagant gifts but to rectitude of thought, and so I offered what I could. This is how it happened. The ineffable wisdom of God which governs and orders all things, whose "judgments are as the great deep" (Ps. 35 [36]:6), in ways known to his goodness, has moved the brothers then residing in this holy, revered monastery of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is also called Koutloumousi, so that they have, with much love and the greatest insistence, demanded that I assume the leadership over them. When I refused and objected that I was impractical and negligent, the monks did not believe they had to acquiesce, and they said they would not remain [p. 118] quiet until they achieved their aims. Indeed, they went off to the most holy *protos*, at that time the ordained monk lord Theodosios, as well as to the most holy metropolitan of Hierissos and of this holy mountain of ours, lord Iakobos, and they explained what they had in mind, and obtained their strong support. Motivated

## 51. KOUTLOUMOUSI

by divine zeal, by persuasion and entreaty, and even by censure, they convinced me to assume this position of authority. The letter, in fact, of these fathers, my lords, and of the fathers dwelling in the monastery authorizes me to carry out all that I desire in it, as anyone who wishes may learn by reading it.

[B3.] Indeed, with God supporting me in bearing the yoke of this monastery, I did not think I should permit myself any relaxation. Neither should I become absorbed in the table and in sleep, as might be expected of hirelings and not of shepherds (cf. John 10:12). Nor should I compromise the affairs of the monastery in any way at all and not employ all my strength and power even to giving up my own life. But whether, as the “good and faithful servant” (Matt. 25:20–22), I made full use of the talent given to me by God, I leave to others to investigate and discuss. But, without giving offense, I might tell my story, not taking any pride myself, but simply relating the wonders of God in my regard and attributing all successful accomplishments to the right hand of the Most High and his raised arm.

[B4.] The monastery expanded from a few, mediocre brothers to a large number of good ones; from some poor beggars to those who do not lack anything now; from those who owned very little to those who now possess much; from those with little equipment to those who now have a good deal of equipment, and good equipment at that; from those not protected by walls and easy to capture to those now safe within walls and not subject to capture. To put it simply, I did not compromise on anything at all which might adversely affect the maintenance and the betterment of the monastery. Anything of that sort I would fight with all the force of my body and my soul. In fact, it was for this reason that I did not spend much time in the monastery.

Practically my whole life was spent out in the open. I had to battle against winter with its snowstorms and downpours, summer with its scorching heat. There was the fear of being taken captive by the tribes. I encountered Romans, Serbs, and Vlachs, from whom I managed to acquire no small amount of money and possessions. Were the funds for the encircling wall, now clearly to be seen, obtained without any work? As the proverb says, “Did the grain come to use already ground?”<sup>18</sup> By no means.

[B5.] Observing how easily the monastery could be taken by the invading, godless tribes, and viewing with foreboding being taken captive, I found my whole life constrained. For the sake of the monastery I recked not of danger and raced off to the most pious and most noble lord of Ungrovlachia, lord John Vladislav, the *voivode*. I reminded him how his truly blessed father, also lord of Ungrovlachia, lord Nicholas, had taken very much of a leading role in the erection of the great tower, even though he did not see its completion. I intimated that he too could contribute toward it for the salvation of his soul and the forgiveness of his sins, as well as for those of his father who had passed on. It would redound to his own good fortune, praise, and glory if he should build upon the foundation laid by his father and carry to completion the work he had begun and for which he had already prepared the ground. This he could do by erecting over that area already excavated some fortifications to protect the souls dwelling there. To this end I used every means of persuasion to induce him, and I tried to win him over with apostolic and fatherly advice. I did

## FOURTEENTH CENTURY

not even hold back my tears, that very useful and most efficacious remedy. With the approval of heaven and guided by him who opens his hands and fills every creature with goodness (Ps. 103 [104]:28), his heart too was opened, and he agreed to carry out the proposal. As a result, with his support and financial contributions, and with the wearisome labors of myself and my brothers, which we endured in our many and rough journeys traveling through lands, cities, and provinces belonging to many rulers, as everyone knows, and even more by the labor of our own hands each day and by furnishing of food and drink from our estates, with God's help, the fortification now to be seen was built. I shall not even mention the contributions and payments of the monastery and the many brothers who became bored with the labor and ran away. Moreover, there were the exigencies of the debt and the harassment of the debtors which we endured in order to erect the fortification, so that we still owe a thousand *aspra*.

[B6.] Now, once the fortification had been completed, we faced another conflict, and greater struggles threatened our souls with destruction. For the above-mentioned *voivode*, while attentive to the funds he was doling out, paid little heed to the strictness of our way of life. Some of the Vlachs who were coming here and being tonsured wanted to live in a relaxed, loose, and irregular manner, inasmuch as they are mountain folk and unaccustomed to monastic continence and discipline. It was his intention to alter and to transform the rule legislated and defined by our holy, God-bearing, immortalized fathers, and that rule of common life [p. 119] which had been so well elaborated and observed by those founders and holy fathers of mine.

[B7.] He first raised this issue through the *zupan* lord Neagu, the *vitezes*, who was very close to him in all respects. Indeed, he arrived at the holy mountain at the same time as I was returning from those parts. He "left no stone unturned,"<sup>19</sup> as the saying goes, trying to convince me to give in to this way of life, unusual and foreign to true monks. But God from whom all good comes was on my side, and the *zupan* did not succeed in shaking my resolve or in changing the position I adhered to regarding our paternal, or if you will, divine inheritance. But he departed without having achieved anything.

[B8.] This was not the end of our trials, and the afflictions did not stop here. Once again there were other trials, and again onslaughts of evil worse and more extensive than the previous ones. As I appeared for the second time before the above-mentioned most pious *voivode* on matters of government, I found him ill-disposed and hostile toward me, not at all civil or gentle, and I was not able to relax even a little. He was very perturbed and angry, and he railed furiously at me for not having paid any heed to what Neagu had said. Once more, he carefully communicated his views to me, and on finding that I had not changed my views and was absolutely unyielding, he thought I should be forced to face another trial, a more persuasive and respectable one.

[B9.] The *voivode* then summoned the most holy metropolitan of all Ungrovlachia, the *hypertimos* lord Hyakinthos, the then most honorable *dikaiophylax* of the reverend clergy of the holy Great Church of God, lord Daniel Kritopoulos, who is himself now the most holy metropolitan of Ungrovlachia, his superior and spiritual father lord Dorotheos, the *logothetes* lord Sabas, and

## 51. KOUTLOUMOUSI

others, and he referred the matter to them. After they had assembled in council, they had me join them. They began by traveling down every sort of trail as long as it might aid them in meeting the wishes of the pious *voivode*. At times they were entreating me and claiming that good judgment was really a lack of judgment. At other times they were accusing me of being disobedient to the wishes of the patron who had been so very generous toward me. Sometimes they turned to giving me advice so that I would not be deprived of his future benefactions. They did not even refrain from accusations and insults. They accused me of being arrogant because I did not want to live in the same way as the others.

[B10.] On hearing these things, I was certainly hurt. How could I not be, unless I were made of stone or iron? It was because we were in such dire straits that I had taken the road. But the boldness of the proposed plan and the fact that so many fathers had measured out their lives in the same way of life, and from whom we have received this good heritage, gave me pause. I could not bear that the report should reach the monks, even on the tips of their ears, that I might be responsible for overturning what we had of the way of the life of the fathers. These considerations held me back and did not allow me to agree with what I was hearing. For I fear the judgment of God, I told them. I have no right to overturn what was well determined by the fathers, even if I should incur a greater debt than the present one of twelve hundred ounces [of ducats]. I recalled how our great and merciful father had acted. Not even in persistent want did he compromise on any of the holy canons or yield on anything, but commended the situation of the poor monks to the father of the orphans, to him who provided for all. Nonetheless, struck as I was by so many verbal arrows, I departed from what I really believed. "I shall refer this matter," I said, "to the most holy fathers and elders who are numerous on the holy mountain. If they make the judgment that it is a matter of economy and not of dissolution, then I too, albeit reluctantly, shall go along with the pious *voivode*."

[B11.] Those who had been commissioned then communicated my words to the person who had sent them. He was perturbed and took it hard that he had fallen short of his goal, and he dismissed me practically empty-handed, without even a thought for our debt or any one of our basic expenses. All I received was a pittance for my journey, enough so it would not seem that he was dropping all concern for the mountain.

[B12.] When I returned to our own holy mountain, I referred the whole matter to the esteemed, prudent, and saintly old men, begging them to determine what would be pleasing to God. "You did well," I heard from them, "and you did well not to take any bold action on your own initiative which might be contrary to the way of life of the fathers, but to cling to it with all your strength. For this reason you may accurately be called founder and successor, not overturner and destroyer, of the fathers before you. This is to share the same belief and the same throne, not to set up a rival belief and a rival throne. It is characteristic, however, of correct judgment to know how to make adaptations to the times and to persons if it is to convey anything necessary or beneficial to souls or bodies. For in the same way in which we declare that it is rash and lacking in judgment to overturn the excellent way of life of the fathers, so we repeat that it is also lacking in judgment not to compromise or make concessions to one who comes from a lordly and more luxurious manner

## FOURTEENTH CENTURY

of living, who is, moreover, unaccustomed to a harsh and rugged way of life, but who has taken action on a number of expenses for things which the monastery needs, or also to make concessions to others who are weak and, in addition, [p. 120] not capable of submitting to common life and to the seasonal diet provided for their table companions. But it is necessary to employ economy concerning the matters in question, otherwise, because of their inability to deal with things, they might turn back again to where they had been, and this crime will be greater than the correction.”

[B13.] With these words, those noble men convinced me. They also cited the case of one who had joined them a short time previously. The most reverend *protopapas*, lord Melchisedek,<sup>20</sup> had come from the most fortunate *voivode*, had been tonsured, and enjoyed a softer way of life. But he was still unable to persevere and returned whence he had come. I too yielded to their inspired words and admitted that their decision was a good one. I gave my assent to the views of the fathers, along with the proper affirmative counsel of the brothers residing with me. Now then, the points in question, those on which I yielded somewhat to the will of the pious *voivode*, have been arranged in chapters and written down in the memorandum addressed to him, so he might observe them, guarantee them with his own signature, and make them firm. They will also be written by me, who have put together the above account up to this point, and which by the grace of my Lord is a truthful one.

[B14.] Since I too am a man and subject to human and physical laws, I shall inexorably and in due course submit to the punishment of death for my disobedience, according to the divine declaration. I have, therefore, while still sound and in bodily health, deemed it necessary to make arrangements for the peace of the monastic community after my death to forestall any scandals which might arise if matters were to remain unsettled. With God's help, therefore, I make the following dispositions.

[B15.] First of all, I grant to all orthodox Christians and to the brothers with me, present and future, due forgiveness, which I in turn beg from all people. Next, concerning the institution of common life I make the following regulations. The possessions we can see which presently belong to our monastery, I refer to cattle byres, vineyards, sheep, yoked animals, and all the others, come from various benefactors. Some are gifts from the most pious emperors of the Romans and of the Serbians, some from the most fortunate despot, lord John Ugleša, and from his father the Caesar, some from Vulk, some from Radochna, from the *mezas stratopedarches* Astras, from Hierakes. The small monastery in Thessalonike was given by Chalkaiopoulos, and the rest was given by other Serbs and Romans. But most of the possessions about us derive directly from the manual labor of my fathers and brothers, those who have gone on before us and those still around. The newly built fortification, however, which can now be seen, and that alone, has been constructed at the expense of the most fortunate *voivode*, and certain sacred objects are deposited as security for the debt of a thousand *aspra* for its construction. Nor did the monks fail to contribute to its construction. From their possessions they paid some expenses, which made things difficult for them, so that they were hard pressed for necessities. Some of the actual labor was also done directly by them with their own toil and sweat.

## 51. KOUTLOUMOUSI

[B16.] Now, we would ask if the most pious *voivode* could remit the debt of a thousand *aspra* which had been paid out for the construction of the fortification, and if he could erect a greater church, large enough to accommodate the Roman brothers who reside here as well as the Vlachs who will be arriving. In addition, let him also erect a refectory of corresponding size for them, and let him purchase possessions and animals, set up vineyards and other things able to bring some relief to the brothers who have labored so much in supporting the monastery. In return, I exempt and permit the Vlachs who shall come from a lordly station and who provide the monastery with sufficient funds for their comfort, as well as those among them who may be infirm, to regulate their manner of life as each is able from his own resources, without requesting the monastery for more than their customary and assigned service.

[B17.] According to the blessed Paul, with God there is “neither Jew nor Greek” (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11), “but in every nation anyone who fears him is acceptable to him” (Acts 10:35). I, therefore, make this disposition concerning positions of honor and precedence among the brothers. On the pretext that the monastery and its possessions are Roman, the brothers who are Roman have no license to drive away or disparage the brothers who are Vlachs, and who have brought in certain necessities, or have worked hard. On the other hand, neither shall the Vlachs sit in judgment because of the fortification constructed by our patron, and refuse to contribute payments and labor. But as one people let each receive proper honor and reverence from his subordinates in food, drink, and seating, and, in corresponding manner, in what is due<sup>21</sup> to him according to the years and labors of each one, as is done in the rest of the hagioritic monasteries, who are at peace with the brothers of other nationalities living in them. Let the monastery be known as that of Koutloumousi, seeing as it was founded by the late holy founder<sup>22</sup> of ours, and let the Vlachs accord fitting reverence and honor to the Romans who have [p. 121] labored here. In this way let them live in peace and harmony as befits saints. To this end I requested the pious *voivode* to issue a letter guaranteeing precedence in all things to the Romans.

[B18.] In like manner I also make this disposition about the one who shall be superior after my departure from this life. Supplication should first be offered to God by the entire brotherhood that God should grant them a superior who will maintain the dignity of the title, who will be a shepherd, not a hireling (cf. John 10:12) who betrays the calling, unstable of character, always bent over the table, and unconcerned about spiritual matters. Let the monk elected by the brothers be chosen not just for his grey hairs but for his wisdom. For God does not look at the person as men do, but is pleased by the nobility of soul and looks kindly upon the meek, the gentle, and those who observe his commandments. After the election he should go off to the most fortunate *voivode*, our patron, and be formally installed by him as superior. Returning here to the holy mountain, he should receive the pastoral staff from the most holy *protos*. He may then function as superior of the monastery according to the ancient custom of the fathers still in vigor and the rule of common life.

[B19.] Now, therefore, while still of sound mind and in good bodily health, owing to God’s forbearance, I make this disposition, and I confirm it, and I formally present it to my brothers in

## FOURTEENTH CENTURY

Christ as a fatherly inheritance and rule. If, by the mercy of God, I should remain among the living long enough to make any needed corrections in all of this, thanks be to God. But if in the meantime I should pay my obligations, those who reside or shall reside in this revered monastery after me do not have my permission to try to destroy the constitution of common life which has been clearly set forth in a God-loving manner by my holy fathers, unless those points previously composed in chapter form should receive final confirmation by the most fortunate *voivode*. When that has been done, such concessions are to be made only to those whom I have mentioned above.

[B20.] If anyone listed among the brothers in the monastery shows contempt for the dispositions I have made, whoever he may be he will be judged by God as having betrayed the holy canons handed down by our forefathers and by me who am, by judgments known only to God, his spiritual father. He shall, moreover, incur the canonical penalties and curses and by those doing what is just and pleasing to God he shall, as a reckless person, a perverter, be expelled from the monastery.

[B21.] The above was written and composed by me, who by the judgment of God, have accomplished all that was written down, I, Chariton, ordained monk, spiritual father, and superior of the revered monastery of Koutloumoussi, have confirmed and signed as guarantee in my own hand. In the month of November, the ninth indiction, the year 6879 [= 1370 A.D.].

+ I, Chariton, ordained monk of Koutloumoussi, have signed with my own hand.

Since in the pious laws it appears that a general testament and the codicil following it should be verified by the signatures and witness of noteworthy men, and so receive confirmation, I request my holy fathers, the all-holy *protos* and the most holy bishop of Hierissos and of the holy mountain and the most holy superiors of the revered hagioretic monasteries, both in their capacities as officials and overseers of the holy mountain and also as trustworthy witnesses, to confirm by their own signatures this *Testament* of mine so it will be held as firm and unchallenged by all.

+ The *protos* of the holy mountain of Athos, the ordained monk Sabas.<sup>23</sup>

+ The superior of the revered and holy imperial monastery of Vatopedi, the ordained monk Joseph.

[On the verso:]

+ The present *Testament* was published in the month of November of the ninth indiction.

+ The humble bishop of Hierissos and of the holy mountain, David.

*Third Testament* [C]

[p. 135] + I, the humble metropolitan of Ungrovlachia, *hypertimos*, titular bishop<sup>24</sup> of Amaseia, and *protos* of the Holy Mountain, Chariton, have with my own hand prefixed my name.

+ In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. I, the humble metropolitan of Ungrovlachia, Chariton, *hypertimos*, and titular bishop of Amaseia, and *protos* of the Holy Moun-

## 51. KOUTLOUMOUSI

tain of Athos, publish the present testamentary document of my will and disposition executed and signed, and I do this willingly, with aforethought and freely, being sound and healthy of mind, by the grace of Christ, and able to speak without any impairment.

[C1.] I am fearful of the untimely onslaught of death, for my body is in poor condition, and very painfully tested by this pestilential disease that is now among us. For since, because of the disobedience of our ancestors, we share their curse, to the earth from whence we have been taken we again return, and since we have come into being, we are subject to destruction, and . . . we are subject to death. “There is no man who shall live and who shall not see death” (Ps. 88 [89]:48), even though he boast of being crowned with diadems, even though he rejoices in the delights of wealth and fame. In this regard even such a man as that shares exactly the same nature and is subject to the same ruin.

[C2.] Fearful of the untimely onslaught of death, I have again thought it necessary to make such arrangements as I prefer of my affairs and what I wish to be done after I depart this life. If indeed I had given myself up to the possession of money or material objects or any such thing, and had devoted my energies to concern for them, whether they had accrued to me from my fathers or I had myself come to own them and be anxious about them, as everybody else, . . . I would make my disposition and, as is customary, would divide them up in the hands of my relatives and the poor, in such a way that I would have been able to dispose of them according to my mind and preference. But since involvement with these things is of absolutely no interest to me, either because of God’s commandment or because of my own negligence, in this present testamentary document of mine I shall not discuss these matters. I do, however, make arrangements concerning that with which I have been particularly occupied through my life, and which I have held in the highest regard from the time when I first came in contact with it, I mean, the revered monastery of Koutloumousi on this Holy Mountain of ours, Athos.

[C3.] This monastery was at first renowned and well regarded, with many excellent features, housing holy, God-bearing men who sang hymns and devoted themselves to God. But at the repeated request and invitation [p. 136] of those holy fathers of mine who were giving themselves to asceticism in it, and in fact also at the request of those other holy, God-bearing fathers of mine, the most holy *protos*, lord Theodosios Alopous, the most holy bishop of Hierissos and of the Holy Mountain, the late blessed lord Iakobos, I yielded and received this position. It was not from my own resources that the monastery acquired its present status. For how could this be, since I noted above that I had absolutely no interest in acquiring gold or silver? But it was because of my eagerness, my efforts, and my concern, which I believe to be more important for the preservation of a holy house. For money, when given for such a purpose, is often only an indication of good will, but serious effort conjoined with eagerness and holy zeal is indisputable evidence of the fear and love of God. Having received this charge, therefore, as mentioned, I sought to put my zeal to use and bring about changes leading to the greatest improvements. But I discovered that its resources were absolutely tiny, it was oppressed by great want, and it was revered only for those men I mentioned who were outstanding for virtue.

## FOURTEENTH CENTURY

[C4.] Paying no heed, therefore, to old age or to illness and, as everyone knows, ignoring wintry weather and burning heat, in great haste and intent on nothing else, I departed from here on work for the monastery. I went off to the Romans, Serbians, and Bulgarians to request what was needed for its foundation and support. By my prayers and entreaties I persuaded them, with God graciously and kindly looking on what was undertaken for him. Thus I journeyed seven times to the late, blessed *voivode* Vladislav and his wife the lady Anna. By the providence of God, they presented me with funds for the rebuilding of the monastery. It was indeed rebuilt and beautified. They contributed to its improvement, as anyone can now clearly see, to the glory of God who disposes all things for our good. Not only that, but I was able to ransom some of the brothers from the monastery who had been taken captive and given into the hands of the godless Moslems, sometimes two, sometimes three, and once fourteen at one time. I was able to do this by going to visit the most pious and most blessed lady, Queen Elizabeth,<sup>25</sup> and others. Furthermore, I had also received a large contribution from Vulk for the governance of the monastery. It is, therefore, for this particular reason that I did not acquire, as I said, either silver or gold for myself, as all my dearest brothers in Christ Jesus, the children of my lowly self, know.

[C5.] But when, by a judgment known only to God, I entered upon the high priesthood and my service as *protos*, I did not lose thought of the life I had formerly led, and I remained concerned about my customary poverty. Now perhaps some might suspect that from both of these dignities and their revenues I acquired something for myself. I have gone into this in some detail so that people reading this present *Testament* of mine will not think I have set myself up as someone to be marveled at because of my lack of possessions. But I have done it so that they may know that my zeal for the protection of this same monastery has been so great that I took no thought for anything of my own but spent everything for its preservation. Those monks I have mentioned who are residing there should be aware of this, as well as those who later . . . and because of the labor I expended on it, and in proportion to that they should be kind enough to remember me after my departure from this earth. If as a father and counselor I may bequeath anything to them, let them receive it and guard it firmly and staunchly as beneficial and salutary to their souls.

[C6.] The *enkolpion* I wear I leave to my most holy lord the ecumenical patriarch. The *mandyon* I wear and the other vestments belonging to me I leave to the same monastery, so they may be sold to aid the captives. . . . expenses, as I may arrange concerning the obsequies and commemorations for me. I say that it was left to the decision and discretion of the brothers. . . . For I do not believe they shall neglect their obligations toward me, for they know that during my life I was always concerned about protecting their bodies and souls. For myself in particular I beg them, after my departure from this life, that each successive day up to forty days they should celebrate one liturgy for my soul.

[C7.] In like manner I beg them, call upon them, and as a father I advise them that they preserve poverty as the paternal inheritance we have received from those old monks whose memory is eternal. The monks are well aware of the benefits which derive from poverty; nonetheless there are a few points I would like to recall to their attention. If those words are true which come from

## 51. KOUTLOUMOUI

the mouth of the Lord, who does not lie, namely, that “where our treasure is there will our heart be also” (Matt. 6:21; Luke 12:34): since this is indeed true, it must follow that if we gather our treasure from the things of this earth which disappear like smoke, then our heart too will roll around here below and be tied to earth and have no [p. 137] inclination at all to rise to what is above and remains forever. But if we store up our treasure there, being mindful always of God and of the rewards he has promised, there is where our heart will be also. By as much difference, therefore, as there is between spiritual and bodily things, between heavenly and earthly, by so much does storing up treasure in heaven differ from storing it up on earth. Is there any way in which monks who have made promises to deny the world and what is in the world, can then justify betraying their promises? They turn back again “to their own vomit” (II Peter 2:22), and fall again into those very things they had promised to part from. Moreover, they have to face the wrath of God because not only have they not denied themselves, according to the commandments, and taken up their cross and followed (Matt. 10:38; Luke 14:27), but on the pretext of fulfilling the Savior’s command which forbids [giving] to God . . . they strive for something . . . commandment . . . they may be deprived of eternal rewards . . . of the old monks in this monastery whose memory is eternal, and who have illuminated the way of life . . .

[C8.] I make this disposition regarding the one who shall be appointed as superior after I depart this life and those who succeed him according to the instructions I give now. First, when the time is approaching for the leadership of the holy people to be bestowed in trust and the pastoral staff for the rational flock of Christ, especially the elect, to be handed over, let them beseech God that it be granted to this holy flock by him from whom comes “every good endowment and every perfect gift” (James 1:17). After an *ektenes* has been recited from the depths of the soul, have everyone, as by consensus, come to an agreement on one individual and choose the person they judge worthy of such service. First, he must be a disciple of the peaceful and meek Christ, proclaiming the good news of Christ’s peace to all and setting his light before everyone to declare the glory of our Father who is in heaven. He should lay claim to that marvelous possession, poverty, by which material beings seem to stand free of material needs. By means of the perfect square of virtue, as a four-horse chariot, they arrive at the innermost sanctuary of heaven, as did Elijah (4 Kings 2:11), “leaving this world before their bodies, with a certain wise madness they advance to concentrate on better things.”<sup>26</sup>

[C9.] Some time ago, by a judgment known only to God, or, to speak more accurately, because of our failings, some of our brothers, alas, have been given into the hands of the godless Achemenids [Turks], and it is our duty to ransom them. Since they have labored hard on our behalf and now suffer such a fate, I state, intend, wish, and dispose that, when the time comes for me to perform my obligatory service and to pay back my loan to the earth, then let them sell my vestments, my *mandyon*, and the other things, which I bequeath to this monastery for such a purpose and which were given by the above. . . . Let the brothers be ransomed. These matters then are covered in what I have written.

[C10.] Now with all my soul I pray for our powerful and holy rulers and emperors that God may

## FOURTEENTH CENTURY

grant them life, many years, and every other good and salvific gift. May they subject the foe and every enemy under their feet. To all . . . Christians to whom I have been a stumbling block of scandal, I [beg forgiveness, and those by whom] I have been scandalized in turn, . . . I grant pardon.

[C11.] I want the present testamentary document and what is contained in it to be in force as a clear and sealed testament, as secret, as a codicil, and as whatever else the divine laws require for a document to be recognized and for the intentions of the persons making the disposition to be approved as valid. Anyone who shall attempt to take any steps to dissolve or censure this document, render it imperfect or invalid, whoever he might be, shall first draw upon himself the divine wrath and that of the saints from eternity. He shall fall from the portion of the saved, and he shall be struck down by the curses of the holy men and of myself a sinner.

[C12.] I beg my illustrious fathers on this Holy Mountain of Athos, I mean all the superiors, and in the first place my lord, brother, and fellow minister, the most holy and God-loving bishop of Hierissos and of the Holy Mountain, that with their own hands they may sign and confirm the present *Testament* of mine, so it may thus be authenticated.

Written in the month of July, the first indiction, the year 6886 [= 1378 A.D.].

- + The bishop of Ungrovlachia and *protos*, Chariton.
- + . . . brother and fellow minister [p. 138] of the humble, most holy . . .
- + The humble bishop of Hierissos and of the Holy Mountain, Isaac.
- + The superior of the revered, holy, and imperial Great Lavra, the ordained monk Kyrillos.
- + The superior of the revered, holy, and imperial great monastery of Vatopedi, the ordained monk Theodoulos.
- + The superior of the revered, holy, and imperial monastery of Iveron, the ordained monk Kallistos.
- + The superior of the sanctuary and monastery of the most holy Mother of God, Hilandar, the ordained monk Sisoje.<sup>27</sup>
- + The superior of the revered, holy, and imperial monastery of Philotheos, the ordained monk Euthymios.
- + The representative<sup>28</sup> of the revered, imperial monastery of Docheiariou, the ordained monk M . . .
- + . . . the ordained monk . . . sios.

## 51. KOUTLOUMOUSI

### *Notes on the Translation*

*Editors' note:* The assistance of our translator, George Dennis [GD], is gratefully acknowledged for the notes to this document.

1. Theodosios is attested as *protos* in 1353 and again in 1355–56, for whom see Papachryssanthou, *Prôtaton*, p. 138.
2. Byzantine Greeks.
3. John Vladislav (1364–74), for whom see Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, p. 9.
4. Alexander Basarab (1352–64), for whom see Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, pp. 9, 294.
5. *ktetor*, “owner,” or, as *ktitor*, “founder,” but as the *voivode* was neither, the term is translated here as “patron.” [GD]
6. John Chrysostom, *Liturgia*, ed. F. E. Brightman (London, 1896), p. 369, lines 27–29, and p. 384, lines 27–28.
7. For the correct name of this official and his title which designates a “knight,” see Năsturel, *Mont Athos*, p. 44, n. 35.
8. Cf. Zenobius, *Centuria* 5.63, ed. E. Leutsch and F. Schneidewin, *Corpus Pseudoepigraphorum Graecorum*, vol. 1 (Göttingen, 1839–51; repr. Hildesheim, 1958), p. 146.
9. Hyakinthos, previously metropolitan of Vitsina, nominated by John Vladislav’s father Alexander Basarab to Patriarch Kallistos as metropolitan of “All Ungrovlachia” in 1359; see Darrouzès, *Regestes*, no. 2411, pp. 338–40, ed. MM 1.383–88, and Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, pp. 10–11, 295, 371–72.
10. Daniel Kritopoulos, who was shortly to be appointed under the name Anthimos as metropolitan of “part of Ungrovlachia” by Patriarch Philotheos in November 1370; see Darrouzès, *Regestes*, no. 2593, pp. 501–2, ed. MM 1.535–36, and Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, pp. 11, 372.
11. See Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, no. 26 (1370), pp. 102–5, 367–68.
12. Jovan Uglješa (1365–71), Serbian despot of Serres.
13. Vulk Branković, for whom see Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, p. 386.
14. George Astras Synadenos, for whom see Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, p. 372.
15. According to Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, p. 294, Michael Hierakes, an *oikeios* (for which see Alexander Kazhdan, “Oikeios,” *ODB*, p. 1515) of Emperor John V Palaiologos.
16. Sabas, attested as *protos* in Athonite documents from 1368 through 1371, for whom see Papachryssanthou, *Prôtaton*, p. 139.
17. The signature line is in Slavic.
18. Cf. Gregory of Cyprus, *Centuria* 1.21, ed. Leutsch and Schneidewin, *Corpus Pseudoepigraphorum Graecorum*, vol. 2, p. 94.
19. Cf. Zenobius, *Centuria* 5.63, ed. Leutsch and Schneidewin, *Corpus Pseudoepigraphorum Graecorum*, vol. 1, p. 146.
20. The *protopapas* Michael, known at Koutloumousi under his monastic name Melchisedek, who later returned to the monastery and in 1375 had become its second-ranking official after Chariton himself; see Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, no. 31 (1375), p. 124, with p. 11, n. 60.
21. *eisodemata*, which has a technical meaning here. [GD]
22. A reference to the shadowy Koutloumousi, reputed founder of the monastery; see above, Institutional History, A.
23. The signature line is in Slavic.
24. *topon epechon* designates a bishop who was given a vacant or defunct see in *epidosis*, for which see Darrouzès, Οφφικια, pp. 470, 477 and 478, n. 1.
25. Helen, daughter of the Bulgarian tsar Ivan Alexander and widow of the Serbian ruler Stefan Uroš IV Dušan (1331–55) for whom see Lemerle, *Kutlumis*, p. 386.
26. Theophylact Simocatta, *Historia* 1.14.8, ed. C. de Boor, rev. P. Wirth (Stuttgart, 1972).
27. The signature line is in Slavic.

## FOURTEENTH CENTURY

28. *Ho dikaiou*: the same as *ho dikaio*, i.e., a representative, an agent (*ho ta dikaia pheron*). See Darrouzès, Οφφικια, p. 131 and n. 1; 338, n. 4; 330, n. 1.

### Document Notes

#### 1. *First Testament* [A]

- [A1] Meditation on Death. See also the parallel treatment in [B14] and [C1] below, as well as in (49) *Geromeri* [1] and (50) *Gerasimos* [1].
- [A2] Dedication of the *Testament* to the monks of Koutloumousi.
- [A3] Legal basis for Chariton's authority. See also parallel treatments in [B2] and [C3] below.
- [A4] Chariton's enlistment of the *voivode* John Vladislav as patron; construction of the fortification. See also parallel treatments in [B5] and [C4] below. For a similar monastic fortifications, see (23) *Pakourianos* [1] and (24) *Christodoulos* [A12].
- [A5] The *voivode*'s attempt to alter the cenobitic constitution. See also parallel treatments in [B6], [B7] below. For the traditional hostility to such attempts, see (27) *Kecharitomene* [2] and, more recently, (47) *Philanthropos* [3], [4].
- [A6] Chariton's appearance before the *voivode*'s council of ecclesiastical advisers. See also parallel treatments in [B8], [B9] below.
- [A7] Chariton's promise to abide by the arbitration of the Athonite fathers. See also parallel treatments in [B10], [B11] below.
- [A8] Athonite fathers urge concessions. See also the parallel treatment in [B12] below.
- [A9] Chariton's conditional acceptance of Vlach postulants. See also the parallel treatment in [B13] below.
- [A10] Chariton's proposed compromise; contributions of other benefactors. See also the parallel treatment in [B15] below, and the probable text of the agreement drawn up for the *voivode*'s signature preserved in Lemerle, *Kutlumus*, No. 26 (1370), pp. 102–5, 367–68.
- [A11] Security deposit for the *voivode*'s loan; other sources of the endowment; insufficiency of support for both Vlachs and Romans. See also the parallel treatment in [B15] below.
- [A12] Chariton's requests to the *voivode*. See also parallel treatments in [B16], [B17] below.
- [A13] Procedures for election and confirmation of the new superior. See also parallel treatments in [B18] and [C8] below. For elections, patronal confirmations, and ecclesiastical installations in the Palaiologan era, see (37) *Auxentios* [2], [3]; (38) *Kellibara I* [18]; (39) *Lips* [5], [7]; (40) *Anargyroi* [5]; (48) *Prodromos* [13]; (54) *Neilos Damilas* [18]; (57) *Bebaia Elpis* [25], [26]; (58) *Menoikeion* [22]; (59) *Manuel II* [3]; cf. (60) *Charsianeites* [C18].
- [A14] Chariton's reservation of right to make changes in the *Testament*; constitutional changes dependent on *voivode*'s confirmation of Chariton's proposal. See also the parallel treatment in [B19] below. For an author's reservation of the right to make changes, see also (27) *Kecharitomene* [3], cf. her actual changes in [79] and [80].
- [A15] Condemnation of transgressors. See also the parallel treatment in [B20] below, and the use of curses in (35) *Skoteine* [46], (37) *Auxentios* [2], (45) *Neophytos* [22], (48) *Prodromos* [16], (49) *Geromeri* [16], (50) *Gerasimos* [5], (54) *Neilos Damilas* [21], (57) *Bebaia Elpis* [17], and (60) *Charsianeites* [B22].
- [A16] Confirmations. See also parallel treatments in [B21] and [C12] below.

#### 2. *Second Testament* [B]

- [B1] Direction of old monasteries equally as demanding as erection of new ones. See continuation of the argument in [B3] and [B4] below.
- [B2] Legal basis for Chariton's authority. See also parallel treatments in [A3] above and in [C3] below.
- [B3] Responsibilities of directing a monastery. Continues the argument of [B1] above.
- [B4] Expansion and improvements under Chariton's administration. Continues the argument of [B1] and [B3] above.

## 51. KOUTLOUMOUI

- [B5] Chariton's enlistment of the *voivode* John Vladislav as patron; construction of the fortification. See also parallel treatments in [A4] above and in [C4] below.
- [B6] The *voivode's* attempt to alter the cenobitic constitution. See also the parallel treatment in [A5] above, with cross-references.
- [B7] Role of the *zupan* Neagu the *vitezes*. See also the parallel treatment in [A5] above.
- [B8] Hostility of the *voivode* towards Chariton. See also the parallel treatment in [A6] above.
- [B9] Chariton's appearance before the *voivode's* council of ecclesiastical advisers. See also the parallel treatment in [A6] above.
- [B10] Chariton's promise to abide by the arbitration of the Athonite fathers. See also the parallel treatment in [A7] above.
- [B11] Chariton angrily dismissed by the *voivode*. See also the parallel treatment in [A7] above.
- [B12] Chariton's consultation with the Athonite fathers. See also the parallel treatment in [A8] above.
- [B13] Chariton's conditional acceptance of Vlach postulants; drafting of a memorandum of understanding. See also the parallel treatment in [A9] above.
- [B14] Prologue to the memorandum of understanding; meditation on death. See also the parallel treatments in [A1] above and [C1] below; the text of the memorandum is incorporated in [B15] through [B19] below.
- [B15] Sources of the monastery's endowment. See also parallel treatments in [A10], [A11] above.
- [B16] Chariton's requests and concessions to the *voivode*. See also the parallel treatment in [A12] above.
- [B17] Regulations governing the relations between Vlachs and Romans. See also the parallel treatment in [A12] above. For other ethnic restrictions and prejudices, see (21) *Roidion* [B3], [B4]; (23) *Pakourianos* [24]; (42) *Sabas* [2], [9]; and (50) *Gerasimos* [4]. Such monastic reform principles as those embodied in (22) *Evergetis* [9], [26] and related documents are here implicitly rejected.
- [B18] Procedures for election and confirmation of the new superior. See also parallel treatments in [A13] above, with cross-references, and [C8] below.
- [B19] Chariton's reservation of right to make changes in the *Testament*; constitutional changes dependent on *voivode's* confirmation of Chariton's proposal and limited to those mentioned. See also the parallel treatment in [A14] above, with cross-reference.
- [B20] Condemnation of transgressors. See also the parallel treatment in [A15] above, with cross-references.
- [B21] Confirmations. See also parallel treatments in [A16] above and [C12] below.

### 3. *Third Testament* [C]

- [C1] Meditation on death. See also parallel treatments in [A1] and [B14] above.
- [C2] Purpose of this *Testament*. For the author's lack of material possessions, see also [C5] below and the sentiment expressed in (1) *Apa Abraham* [9].
- [C3] Legal basis for Chariton's authority; true reason for monastery's prosperity. See also parallel treatments in [A3] and [B2] above.
- [C4] Chariton's enlistment of the *voivode* John Vladislav and others as patrons; rebuilding of the monastery and rescue of captives. See also parallel treatments of patronage in [A4] and [B5] above; for ransoming captives, see also [C6] and [C9] below.
- [C5] Use of Chariton's income as metropolitan and *protos* for the benefit of the monastery. See also (31) *Areia* [M10] for the use of another prelate's revenues to support his personal foundation.
- [C6] Disposition of Chariton's clerical vestments. For sale of vestments to ransom captives, see also [C9] below.
- [C7] Recommendation for the preservation of monastic poverty. This is meant as a counterbalance to the concessions agreed to for the sake of the Vlachs in [B16] above.
- [C8] Procedure for the election of a new superior. See also parallel treatment above in [A13], with cross-references, and [B18].
- [C9] Provision for sale of Chariton's vestments to ransom captives. See also [C6] above.

## FOURTEENTH CENTURY

[C10] Prayers for emperors and other rulers. See also similar provisions in these fourteenth-century documents: (49) *Geromeri* [15], (50) *Gerasimos* [1], and (58) *Menoikeion* [1], [16].

[C11] Validity of this “secret” testament. For other secret testaments, see (14) *Ath. Testament* [3]; (24) *Christodoulos* [B]; (29) *Kosmosoteira* [1], [96], [116]; and (52) *Choumnos* [A3].

[C12] Confirmations. See also parallel treatments in [A16] and [B21] above.