

AMALARIUS OF METZ AT THE COURT OF LEO V: A NOTE ON IMPERIAL CEREMONIAL

Ivan Basić

I. Basić

10.1484/M.DEM-EB.5.121627

Filozofski fakultet Sveučilišta u Splitu
Odsjek za povijest
Poljička cesta 35, HR-21000 Split
E-mail: ibasic@ffst.hr

In 813/814 a Frankish embassy led by Amalarius of Metz arrived at the court of Leo V in Constantinople. An account (Versus marini) written by Amalarius not long afterwards described the meeting held during the official audience. The words spoken to Amalarius by the emperor are analyzed and found to be the conventional formula prescribed by the Byzantine ambassadorial protocol as evidenced by the Book of Ceremonies and other texts.

Key words: *Amalarius of Metz, Leo V the Armenian, Byzantium, imperial ceremonial, diplomatic protocol, Versus marini, De Cerimoniis*

Frankish liturgist, prelate and courtier Amalarius of Metz (ca. 775-850) is a well-known figure of the Carolingian Renaissance, and arguably one of the favorite personalities for the scholars of early medieval Mediterranean thanks to his extensive travels and a number of surviving sources that mention them. Although acknowledged long ago in international scholarship,¹ the texts regarding Amalarius' journey along the Adriatic entered medieval studies in Croatia only in 2005, when Trpimir Vedriš closely examined the extant sources on Amalarius' stay in Zadar.² This, in turn, promptly spawned a rich historiographic output.³ Finding it unnecessary to dwell on Amalarius' biography and

¹E.g. E. S. DUCKETT, *Carolingian Portraits: A Study in the Ninth Century*, Ann Arbor, 1969, pp. 96-97.

²T. VEDRIŠ, Još jedan franački teolog u Dalmaciji: Amalarije iz Metza i njegovo putovanje u Carigrad 813. godine, *Historijski zbornik*, 58, Zagreb, 2005, pp. 1-27. On the voyage itself, see *Amalarii Episcopi opera liturgica omnia*, vol. 1, (ed.) Jean M. Hanssens, Città del Vaticano, 1948, pp. 65-67, M. McCORMICK, *Origins of the European economy. Communications and commerce, A.D. 300-900*, Cambridge, 2001, pp. 139-143 (map p. 140); T. VEDRIŠ, Amalarius' stay in Zadar reconsidered, in: *Imperial Spheres and the Adriatic: Byzantium, the Carolingians and the Treaty of Aachen (812)*, (ed.) Mladen Ančić, Jonathan Shepard, Trpimir Vedriš, London - New York, 2018, pp. 288-311.

³E.g. M. ANČIĆ, Zadarska biskupija u okviru splitske metropolije do 1154., in: *Sedamnaest stoljeća zadarske crkve*, (ed.) Livio Marijan, Zadar, 2009, pp. 110-111; M. ANČIĆ, Church with incomplete biography: Plans for the consolidation of Byzantine rule on the Adriatic at the beginning of the ninth century, in: *Byzantium, Its Neighbours and Its Cultures*, (ed.) Danijel Dzino, Ken Parry, Brisbane, 2014, pp. 76-77; T. VEDRIŠ, *op. cit.* (n. 2, 2018); I. BASIĆ, Natpis nadbiskupa Ursa kao izvor za crkvenu povijest ranosrednjovjekovnog Zadra, *Starohrvatska prosvjeta*, ser. III, 44-45, Split, 2017-2018, pp. 153-179. Amalarius' text also caught the attention of Nikola Jakšić – see N. JAKŠIĆ, Kult sv. Petra u kasnoantičkom i srednjovjekovnom Zadru, in: *Scripta Branimiro Gabričević dicata*, (ed.) Josip Dukić, Ante Milošević, Željko Rapanić, Trilj, 2010, p. 308.

career here,⁴ we shall focus on his mission to Constantinople in 813/814; namely, a few details of his account that have been overlooked in previous historiography. These involve Amalarius' reception at court in particular, and the Byzantine imperial ceremonial in general.⁵

He and abbot Peter of Nonantola were selected to travel as ambassadors of Charlemagne to emperor Michael I Rangabe so as to obtain the Byzantine ratification of the Peace Treaty of Aachen (812).⁶ Amalarius of Metz, Peter of Nonantola and their entourage probably departed from Aachen soon after Easter 813, reached Zadar in late June (they were certainly there on 29 June, Feast of St Peter), and arrived in Constantinople some time before Christmas season.⁷ While en route, they made a stop at Dyrrachium, then continued across the Aegean towards Constantinople, making another stop at Aigina and Attica; once in the imperial metropolis, Amalarius mentions that the envoys' freedom of

⁴ For succinct overviews of Amalarius' life and works, see *Amalarii opera*, *op. cit.* (n. 2), pp. 58-82, E. S. DUCKETT, *op. cit.* (n. 1), pp. 92-120, J. H. EMMINGHAUS, Amalarus v. Metz, in: *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, Bd. 1, München, 1980, p. 505, F. W. BAUTZ, Amalarius von Metz, in: *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon*, Bd. 1, Hamm, 1990, p. 138, M. McCORMICK, Amalarius of Metz, in: *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, (ed.) A. P. Kazhdan, vol. I, New York - Oxford, 1991 (henceforth: *ODB*), pp. 72-73, M. McCORMICK, *op. cit.* (n. 2), pp. 138-143, T. VEDRIŠ, *op. cit.* (n. 2, 2005), pp. 3-4; N. DROCOURT, *Diplomatie sur le Bosphore. Les ambassadeurs étrangers dans l'Empire byzantin des années 640 à 1204*, tom. I-II, Louvain - Paris - Bristol, 2015, pp. 259-262; most recent monograph is W. STECK, *Der Liturgiker Amalarius: eine quellenkritische Untersuchung zu Leben und Werk eines Theologen der Karolingerzeit*, München, 2000. A. CABANISS, *Amalarius of Metz*, Amsterdam, 1954 is still indispensable.

⁵ A comprehensive work on Middle Byzantine imperial ceremonies is unfortunately still lacking, and there are significant disparities in the sources that cover ambassadorial protocol, cf. commentary in W. POHL, *Ritualized Encounters: Late Roman Diplomacy and the Barbarians, Fifth-Sixth Century*, in: *Court Ceremonies and Rituals of Power in Byzantium and the Medieval Mediterranean: Comparative Perspectives*, (ed.) Alexander Beihhammer, Stavroula Constantinou, Maria Parani, Leiden - Boston, 2013, pp. 70, 71 and J.-C. CHEYNET, *La diplomatie byzantine*, in: *Byzantine culture. Papers from the conference "Byzantine days of Istanbul" held on the occasion of Istanbul being European Cultural Capital 2010*, (ed.) Dean Sakel, Ankara, 2014, p. 324. For Late Antique ceremonial see A. GILLET, *Envoys and Political Communication in the Late Antique West, 411-533*, Cambridge, 2003, pp. 251-259. Cf. also A. CAMERON, *The construction of court ritual: the Byzantine Book of Ceremonies*, in: *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies*, (ed.) David Cannadine, Simon Price, Cambridge, 1987, pp. 106-136 and A. GILLET, *Advise the Emperor beneficially: Lateral communication in diplomatic embassies between the post-imperial West and Byzantium*, in: *Ambassadeurs et ambassades au cœur des relations diplomatiques: Rome - Occident médiéval - Byzance (VIII^e s. avant J.-C. - XII^e s. après J.-C.)*, (ed.) Audrey Becker, Nicolas Drocourt, Metz, 2012, pp. 257-285. The evidence of diplomatic ceremonies from the Middle Byzantine period is synthesised in several chapters of *Byzantine Diplomacy. Papers from the Twenty-fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Cambridge, March 1990*, (ed.) Jonathan Shepard, Simon Franklin, Aldershot, 1992; *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, (ed.) Henry Maguire, Washington D.C., 1997, and N. DROCOURT, *op. cit.* (n. 4). G. OSTROGORSKY, E. STEIN, *Die Krönungsordnungen des Zeremonienbuches: Chronologische und verfassungsgeschichtliche Bemerkungen*, *Byzantion*, 7, Bruxelles, 1932, pp. 185-233 is still fundamental. On the sources for the study of ceremonial see in general R. MACRIDES, J. MUNITIZ, D. ANGELOV, *Pseudo-Kodinos, The Constantinopolitan court, offices and ceremonies*, Birmingham, 2013, pp. 359-365. Short overview of court ceremonial: K. N. CIGGAAR, *Western Travellers to Constantinople. The West and Byzantium, 962-1204: Cultural and Political Relations*, Leiden - New York - Köln, 1996, pp. 53-57. Recently M. Featherstone has made a number of important advances: J. M. FEATHERSTONE, *Emperor and Court*, in: *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, (ed.) Elizabeth Jeffreys, John Haldon, Robin Cormack, Oxford, 2008, pp. 505-517; J. M. FEATHERSTONE, *De ceremoniis and the Great Palace*, in: *The Byzantine World*, (ed.) Paul Stephenson, London - New York, 2010, pp. 162-174; J. M. FEATHERSTONE, *Space and Ceremony in the Great Palace of Constantinople under the Macedonian Emperors*, *Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo*, LXII, Spoleto, 2015, pp. 587-607. Chapter »The Uses of Imperial Prestige« in E. N. LUTTWAK, *The Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire*, Cambridge, Ma. - London, 2009, pp. 124-136 is otherwise interestingly written, but a poor substitute to a synthesis on Byzantine diplomatic protocol. It is to be used with caution due to its many imprecisions and outdated state of the field.

⁶ See *Imperial Spheres* (n. 2).

⁷ According to McCormick's calculations, the embassy left Aachen between early February and early May, most probably during March 813: M. McCORMICK, *op. cit.* (n. 2), pp. 139, 900, 902; T. VEDRIŠ, *op. cit.* (n. 2, 2005), pp. 5-6, T. VEDRIŠ, *op. cit.* (n. 2, 2018), pp. 288, 292-293.

movement was restricted by the authorities for a period of time (*continuo statuunt vigiles, qui limina claudant, ne monachus forsitan per opaca evaderet urbis*); beforehand, they spent 80 days waiting for the emperor to receive them (*bisque quaterque decim hanc noctes possedimus ambo*)⁸; during their stay in the city, the Frankish liturgist witnessed the Epiphany liturgy performed in St Sophia on 6 January 814.⁹ Having completed their mission with success, the legates departed Constantinople in late January or early February (certainly prior to 13 April), reached Nonantola by late May or June,¹⁰ finally arriving at Aachen before 1 August 814.¹¹ On their return trip Amalarius and Peter were joined by two Byzantine envoys, *spatharios* Christopher and deacon Gregory.

The sixteen-month time-span of their trip thus allowed for a whole series of events to take place which the envoys couldn't have possibly foreseen: on 22 June 813 the Byzantines suffered a major military setback in the course of the war against the Bulgars (Battle of Versinikia), whose leader khan Krum in turn laid siege to Constantinople on 17 July; Krum's land blockade was to last – with one break between late August 813 and early January 814 – up until khan's sudden death in April 814, and overlapped with Amalarius' stay at the Byzantine court (though surprisingly Amalarius did not even mention the siege in his works). In the meantime, Leo the Armenian was moving against the incumbent emperor Michael I: after the defeat at Versinikia, Michael retreated to Constantinople, whereas Leo was proclaimed emperor by the troops; Rangabe agreed to surrender the throne, and duly abdicated in Leo's favor on 11 July 813; Leo was crowned the next day, and six days later he had to deal with the aforementioned Bulgar siege.¹² To sum up, neither were the Frankish envoys

⁸ M. McCORMICK, *Diplomacy and the Carolingian encounter with Byzantium down to the accession of Charles the Bald*, in: *Eriugena: East and West. Papers of the Eighth International Symposium of the Society for the promotion of Eriugenian Studies*, (ed.) Bernard McGinn, Willemien Otten, Notre Dame, 1994, p. 28 correlates the duration of Amalarius' stay with the »annual rhythms of the Byzantine court, which tended to cluster key social, ceremonial, and political activities around the great liturgical feasts of Christmas, Epiphany, and Easter«. Prolonged sojourns were in fact customary, because it often happened that the emperor would grant the ambassadors their first formal audience up to several months after their arrival – see J.-C. CHEYNET, *op. cit.* (n. 5), p. 325. The protracted stay of the Frankish legates is also pointed out by J.-M. SANSTERRE, *Les informations parvenues en Occident sur l'avènement de l'empereur Léon V et le siège de Constantinople par les Bulgares en 813*, *Byzantion*, 66, Bruxelles, 1996, p. 380. N. DROCOURT, *op. cit.* (n. 4), p. 625 noted that the close surveillance of Amalarius' embassy in Constantinople corresponds to Liutprand of Cremona's account a century and a half later.

⁹ Amalarius mentions this in his other work, *Liber de ordine antiphonarii*, XXI, 4 = *Amalarii Episcopi opera liturgica omnia*, vol. 3, (ed.) Jean M. Hanssens, Città del Vaticano, 1950, p. 57: *audivi Constantinopoli in ecclesia Sanctae Sophiae*. Cf. N. DROCOURT, *op. cit.* (n. 4), pp. 591, 714.

¹⁰ Since according to Amalarius' poem they have reached Italy »after spring« (*post vernum*), this must have happened sometime after 8 May – M. McCORMICK, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 902; N. DROCOURT, *op. cit.* (n. 4), p. 445.

¹¹ M. McCORMICK, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 902; N. DROCOURT, *op. cit.* (n. 4), p. 458. On 1 August 814 at Aachen abbot Peter of Nonantola received a charter from Louis the Pious.

¹² *Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit*, (ed.) Friedhelm Winkelmann et alii, Bd. 2-3, Berlin - New York, 2000, nos. 4244 (Leo V), 4989 (Michael I). P. A. HOLLINGSWORTH, A. CUTLER, Leo V the Armenian, in: *ODB*, II, p. 1209; P. A. HOLLINGSWORTH, Michael I Rangabe, in: *ODB*, II, p. 1362; J. HALDON, The blockade of Constantinople in 813, in: *Byzantion'dan Constantinopolis'e İstanbul Kuşatmaları*, (ed.) Murat Arslan, Turhan Kaçar, İstanbul, 2017, pp. 264-268. M. McCORMICK, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 138ff., T. VEDRIŠ, *op. cit.* (n. 2, 2005), pp. 4-6; L. BRUBAKER, J. HALDON, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era, c. 680-850: A History*, Cambridge, 2011, pp. 362-367, P. SOPHOULIS, *Byzantium and Bulgaria, 775-831*, Leiden - Boston, 2012, pp. 221-264, P. SOPHOULIS, A resurgent empire? Byzantium in the early 800s, in: *Imperial Spheres* (n. 2), pp. 75-83, A. NIKOLOV, Franks and Bulgars in the first half of the ninth century, in: *Imperial Spheres* (n. 2), pp. 84-92, T. VEDRIŠ, *op. cit.* (n. 2, 2018) and D. ZIEMANN, Dangerous neighbours. The Treaty of Aachen and the defeat of Nikephoros I by the Bulgars in 811, in: *Imperial Spheres* (n. 2), pp. 93-107 all provide a useful historical context for the embassy, as well as for Leo's takeover in 813 (with an overview of relevant scholarship). For the Western perspective cf. also P. CLASSEN, Karl der Grosse, das Papsttum und Byzanz. Die Begründung des karolingischen Kaisertums, in: *Karl der Große. Lebenswerk und Nachleben*, (ed.) Wolfgang Braunsfels, Helmut Beumann, Bd. 1, Düsseldorf, 1965, pp. 602-604 and J. M. SANSTERRE, *op. cit.* (n. 8), pp. 373-380.

hosted by the emperor they were supposed to meet (Leo V instead of Michael I Rangabe), nor did they return to the emperor that had sent them (Charlemagne died on 28 January 814, and was succeeded by Louis the Pious).¹³

Amalarius gave an account of his voyage in two texts, both of them of semi-private nature: a letter to abbot Hilduin of St Denis (*Epistula ad Hilduinum abbatem*)¹⁴ and a Latin poem entitled *Sea verses* (*Versus marini*) intended for his companion abbot Peter.¹⁵ These are the main, though not exclusive, sources recording his diplomatic mission. The embassy itself is corroborated by other contemporary sources (e.g. a letter of Charlemagne directed to Michael I, *Annales regni Francorum*), but these do not concern us here. Letter to Hilduin, its title notwithstanding, is actually a lengthy liturgical treatise written at least a decade after the mission (ca. 824), whereas *Sea verses* were certainly composed soon after Amalarius' return to Frankland, in 814.¹⁶ *Sea verses* is a short poem, comprising 80 lines of verses composed in hexameters. These are at times opaque; indeed, in the opinion of Max Manitius this is »one of the most obscure poems of the Carolingian Middle Ages«, written in most unclear and convoluted way.¹⁷ It is an erudite mixture of Carolingian scholarship and personal eyewitness account.

Along with commonplaces and Biblical *topoi*,¹⁸ there are many instances where the influence of Roman and Early Christian poetry is easily discernible: thus Amalarius abundantly borrowed from Virgil's *Aeneid* (four times), Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (two times) as well as *Tristia* (three times), Lucan's *Pharsalia* (one time), and Sedulius' *Carmen Paschale* (two times).¹⁹ This notwithstanding, the whole poem is replete with *realia* stemming from Amalarius' personal experience. For example, he narrates how one member of the entourage, a monk named Gregory, experienced seasickness and insomnia during the travel, which prevented him from joining his companions at dinner, whereas sea currents and bad weather tormented the entire embassy; further, their vessels were in danger of the Moors as well as the Slavs, and they equipped themselves with bows, arrows and other arms; he describes a kind of biscuits (hardtack) the passengers and the crew were eating, as well as animal skins they

¹³ Charlemagne's death is reflected in the last few verses of *Versus marini: Karoli quia morte fatigor (...)* *Cum Karolo quondam rege* (Amalarii versus marini, in: *MGH, Poetae Latini aevi Carolini*, tom. I, (ed.) Ernst Dümmler, Berlin, 1881, p. 428, v. 78-80).

¹⁴ Basic editions of *Epistula ad Hilduinum* are *Amalarii opera*, *op. cit.* (n. 2), pp. 341-358, and *Amalarii epistolae*, in: *MGH, Epistolae Karolini Aevi*, tom. III, (ed.) Ernst Dümmler, Berlin, 1899, no. 6, pp. 247-257.

¹⁵ So far *Sea verses* have been edited several times. All the editions of the text (by J.-P. Migne, E. Dümmler, and R. DÜCHTING) are listed in: *Repertorium edierter Texte des Mittelalters aus dem Bereich der Philosophie und angrenzender Gebiete*, (ed.) Rolf Schönberger et alii, Bd. I, Berlin, 2012, pp. 336-337. For the purposes of this paper I am using Dümmler's edition.

¹⁶ This is certain, since Abbot Peter asked Amalarius via letter to send him the treatise »he had expounded during the sea voyage«, which was duly dispatched to Peter with the poem attached – see *Amalarii epistolae* (n. 14), pp. 245-246; T. VEDRIŠ, *op. cit.* (n. 2, 2005), p. 7, T. VEDRIŠ, *op. cit.* (n. 2, 2018), p. 303 n. 8. On their correspondence, see M. S. ZOBOLI, *Il Monastero di San Silvestro di Nonantola all'epoca dell'abbaziato di Pietro (804-824/825)*, Nonantola, 1997, pp. 179-183.

¹⁷ M. MANITIUS, *Geschichte der lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters*, Bd. I, München, 1911, p. 399: »Ein schwerer verständliches Gedicht läßt sich in der karolingischen Poesie kaum finden, dem Dichter scheint es nicht nur an Klarheit über die Bedeutung mancher von ihm gebrauchten Worte zu fehlen, sondern der Ausdruck selbst läßt große Mängel erkennen«; Manitius quoted and paraphrased by S. BOBRYCKI, A Hypothetical Slave in Constantinople: Amalarius's *Liber Officialis* and the Mediterranean Slave Trade, *The Haskins Society Journal*, 26, Woodbridge, 2014, p. 49. R. DÜCHTING, Amalar, *Versus marini*, in: *Lateinische Kultur im VIII. Jahrhundert. Traube-Gedenkschrift*, (ed.) Albert Lehner, Walter Berschin, St. Ottilien, 1989, p. 48 concurs (»Schwerverständlichkeit der Verse«).

¹⁸ R. DÜCHTING, *op. cit.* (n. 17), pp. 53-56 noticed an influence of Gospel According to Matthew, and corrected some of Dümmler's parallels, pointing to Biblical paraphrases rather than Christian poets as the source of respective verses. DÜCHTING also re-edited the Latin text of *Sea verses* on pp. 57-58.

¹⁹ Dümmler subsequently detected twelve verses wherein Amalarius paraphrased or otherwise used the works of ancient Roman or Early Christian poets – see *MGH, Poetae Latini aevi Carolini*, vol. II, (ed.) Ernst Dümmler, Berlin, 1884, p. 694 [addenda ad tomum I], p. 694.

used to cover themselves.²⁰ Finally, it looks as if he has had some experience with slave trade while in Constantinople, since he drew on his experience there (supposedly witnessing enslaved captives) in an allegorical story he later used in his treatise *Liber Officialis*.²¹

This is why there is no reason to doubt what Amalarius has to say about his meeting with Leo V. However brief, his report stems from real events. Moreover, the mission was by all accounts a success, so the section of the *Sea verses* quoted below has been generally taken simply as an additional corroboration of otherwise known facts about the embassy.²² Consequently, this passage has never been seriously scrutinized:

*Tunc sero rediens basileus Leo mandat et ipse,
Ut veniant fratres ad summa palatia regis.
Hic loquitur, hic de Karoli orat vita per evum,
Ac natorum eius, sacri simul ordinis omnis,
Et populi memorans Francorum voce benigna.*²³

Then, returning late, emperor Leo himself ordered,
That the brethren should come to the most high royal palace.
He spoke, he asked about Charles' life and age,
And of his sons, as well as the entire holy order,
And remembering the people of the Franks in benign voice.

A striking feature of the conversation reported in *Sea verses* is its structure – Leo V's questions are posed in the following order: 1) Charlemagne's age and disposition (*Karoli vita per evum*), 2) his sons (*nati eius*), 3) the entire clergy (*sacer ordo omnis*), 4) the whole Frankish people (*populus Francorum*). The questions are ordered in strict hierarchy. The first impression, however, is of some sort of casual conversation struck up between the two men, ending amiably. But is this really so? Even a cursory look at Byzantine and external sources on imperial protocol casts a somewhat different light on Leo's and Amalarius' »small talk«.

There are two basic categories of evidence about imperial reception ceremonies: narrative sources (mostly written by observers, often foreign envoys themselves) and internal documents (produced at the Byzantine court) that prescribe or describe the staging of the actual ceremonies, such as the *Book of Ceremonies*. The latter provide all the technical details necessary for the successful performance of court rituals, with chapters typically beginning with the phrase: »What must be observed...«.²⁴ The former, on the other hand, act as a corrective to Byzantine normative documents and thus furnish additional evidence for the scholarly recreation of actual ceremonies.

²⁰ Amalarii opera, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 66; M. McCORMICK, *op. cit.* (n. 2), pp. 410, 424; N. DROCOURT, Entre facilités institutionnelles et réalités des déplacements diplomatiques: les voyages des ambassadeurs étrangers vers et dans l'Empire byzantin (VII^e-XII^e siècle), in: *Les voyageurs au Moyen Âge*, (ed.) Henri Bresc, Denis Menjot, Paris, 2008, pp. 17, 18; N. DROCOURT, *op. cit.* (n. 4), pp. 218-219, 433, 443.

²¹ S. BOBRYCKI, *op. cit.* (n. 17), pp. 47-67.

²² Mentioning this in passing T. VEDRIŠ, *op. cit.* (n. 2, 2005), p. 6 n. 31 assumed that »the sentence was not meant to simply describe 'small talk' with the envoys on the part of the emperor, but a predefined, protocolary formula in the pseudolitururgical ambience of imperial ceremonial whereby the ruler extends his good wishes for his co-ruler, his heirs, the clergy and the people«. Vedriš did not develop his argument further, but on the whole his assumption is correct, as will be shown below.

²³ E. DÜMMLER, *op. cit.* (n. 19), p. 428, v. 46-50. The translation is my own.

²⁴ M. McCORMICK, Analyzing imperial ceremonies, *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik*, 35, Wien, 1985, pp. 3-4. The latter may also include the detailed *procès verbaux* of the particular, unique ceremonies performed at some point in the past.

The reception of foreign envoys was by far the most grandiose of three main kinds of public audiences listed in *De Cerimoniis*.²⁵ This is what this treatise has to say about audience ceremonies involving direct speech to and from the emperor in chapters 89 and 90 of Book I (*What it is necessary to observe when a senior ambassador of the Persians comes*):

The following day, or the day after, the ambassador gives notice and goes and greets the *magistros*, and the *magistros* receives him with a kiss and the *magistros* asks him before all else about the health of his emperor, and then about the children of his emperor, and about the archons, and about his own health and that of his household, and about his journey, [trusting] that he had not been troubled at all on the way, and that nothing had been overlooked.²⁶

So the questions one was supposed to ask the Persian envoy consisted of the following: 1) health of the Persian ruler (περὶ τῆς ὑγείας τοῦ βασιλέως αὐτοῦ); 2) children of the Persian ruler (περὶ τῶν τέκνων τοῦ βασιλέως αὐτοῦ); 3) Persian archons (περὶ τῶν ἀρχόντων); 4) health of the envoy and his household (περὶ τῆς αὐτοῦ καὶ τοῦ οἴκου αὐτοῦ ὑγείας); 5) envoy's journey (πῶς).

Analogy with the questions posed to Amalarius is instantly apparent. It is, however, the *magistros*, not the emperor who makes these enquiries of the Persian ambassador; a few passages further an audience proper is described:

(...) As the curtain is raised, the ambassador outside throws himself on the ground where the porphyry marble slab is, and he makes obeisance and stands up. After he has gone in the door, he again throws himself down and makes obeisance on the ground and stands up. Again in the middle of the Consistory he makes obeisance likewise, and then he goes and kisses the feet [of the emperor] and stands in the middle and presents the letter and delivers his emperor's greetings. Then the emperor should ask, "How is the health of our brother in God? We rejoice at his good health," and he says to the ambassador such spontaneous words as he wishes.²⁷

The well-being of the Persian ruler is conventional, customary question here. It is to be asked about once more, during the subsequent receptions of the Persian envoys (these are dealt with in chapter 90: *What must be observed regarding the ambassador on the other days*):

The ambassador, if he wishes them to be received [formally], goes in and begs the ruler for his gifts to be received. If the ruler acquiesces, his men go in carrying his gifts, and the same procedure is followed as for the imperial gifts, and conversation takes place. The emperor should again, both frequently and politely, ask after the emperor of the Persians and his disposition, and if there is peace, talk also about such things; and the emperor dismisses him.²⁸

Monotonous repetition of uniform questions is incorporated in book II, chapter 47, as well (*The greetings to the emperor of ambassadors coming from various foreign nations*). It is expressly stated that the logothete is doing all the talking for the emperor:

The logothete's questioning of them [the ambassadors coming from Old Rome]: How is the most holy bishop of Rome, the spiritual father of our holy emperor? How are all the bishops

²⁵ M. McCORMICK, Audience, in: *ODB*, I, p. 231.

²⁶ *De Cerimoniis aulae Byzantinae* I, 89 = *Constantine Porphyrogenetos, The Book of Ceremonies*, (transl.) Ann Moffatt, Maxeme Tall, vol. 1, Canberra, 2012 (henceforth: *BOC*), pp. 402-403.

²⁷ *De Cer.* I, 89 = *BOC*, 1, p. 406.

²⁸ *De Cer.* I, 90 = *BOC*, 1, p. 409.

and priests and deacons and the rest of the clergy of the holy church of the Romans? How is the highly esteemed so-and-so, prince of Old Rome?²⁹

The papal legates are listed first. The logothete is to ask them for the well-being of the following people: 1) pope (ὁ ἀγιώτατος ἐπίσκοπος Ῥώμης); 2) bishops, priests, deacons, rest of the Roman clergy (πάντες οἱ ἐπίσκοποι καὶ πρεσβύτεροι καὶ διάκονοι καὶ ὁ λοιπὸς κληρὸς τῆς ἀγίας τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἐκκλησίας); 3) prince of Old Rome (ὁ ἐνδοξότατος ὁ δεῖνα πρίγκιψ τῆς πρεσβυτέρας Ῥώμης).

The same chapter holds the official style of address to be observed by the Bulgar ambassadors:

The greeting to the emperor of the ambassadors coming from Bulgaria: How is the divinely crowned emperor, the spiritual grandfather of the ruler of Bulgaria by the grace of God? How is the lady, the *augousta*? How are the imperial sons of the great and sublime emperor and the rest of his children? How is the most holy and ecumenical patriarch? How are the two *magistroi*? How is all the senate? How are the four logothetes?

The logothete's questioning of them: How is the spiritual grandson of our holy emperor, the archon of Bulgaria by the grace of God? How is the *archontissa* by the grace of God? How are the *kanarti keinos* and the *boulias tarkanos*, the sons of the archon of Bulgaria by the grace of God, and the rest of his children? How are the six great boyars? How are the rest of the boyars, both within [the court] and outside? How are the common people?³⁰

The formal questions of the Bulgars closely correspond to what we have already determined. One was to enquire about the health of: 1) emperor (ὁ θεοστεφῆς βασιλεὺς); 2) his wife (ἡ ἀυγούστα καὶ δέσποινα); 3) their sons [co-emperors] and other children (οἱ υἱοὶ καὶ βασιλεῖς καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ αὐτοῦ τέκνα); 4) patriarch of Constantinople (ὁ ἀγιώτατος καὶ οἰκουμηνικὸς πατριάρχης); 5) two *magistroi* (οἱ δύο μάγιστροι); 6) senate (ἡ σύγκλητος); 7) four logothetes (οἱ δ' λογοθέται).

Accordingly, the logothete's reciprocal questions, asked in emperor's stead, are of the same type, taking account of the hierarchy as established in Bulgaria: 1) archon of Bulgaria (ὁ ἐκ Θεοῦ ἄρχων Βουλγαρίας); 2) his wife (ἡ ἐκ Θεοῦ ἀρχόντισσα); 3) their sons [including titles conferred on the sons of the Bulgar ruler] and other children (ὁ Κανάρτι κείνος καὶ ὁ Βουλίας τάρκάνος οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ ἐκ Θεοῦ ἄρχοντος Βουλγαρίας καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ αὐτοῦ τέκνα); 4) six great boyars (οἱ ἕξ Βολιάδες οἱ μεγάλοι); 5) rest of the boyars (οἱ λοιποὶ οἱ ἔσω καὶ ἔξω Βολιάδες); 6) common people of Bulgaria (τὸ κοινὸν τοῦ λαοῦ).³¹

A pattern emerging is that of rigorous repetition of standard questions, in strict sequence: ruler, ruler's closest family and heir-apparents, clerical order (if there is one), nobles/officials of different ranks, common folk. This is remarkably akin to Amalarius' account. The wording is practically the same.

²⁹ *De Cer.* II, 47 = *BOC*, 2, pp. 680-681.

³⁰ *De Cer.* II, 47 = *BOC*, 2, p. 681. In the subsequent section (p. 682) there are changes mirroring the new status of the Bulgar ruler: the salutation is modified (e.g. the empress and imperial children have switched places, and the list was expanded by inclusion of proconsuls, patricians, *strategoí*, and the imperial troops; there is no mention of logothetes). The logothete's questioning of the Bulgars also changed (e.g. the Bulgar emperor advanced from being the »spiritual grandson« of the Byzantine emperor into his »spiritual son«), see E. N. LUTTWAK, *op. cit.* (n. 5), p. 134. But the structure is basically the same.

³¹ More or less the same structure is evident in the logothete's questioning of ambassadors from the Muslim countries (*De Cer.* II, 47 = *BOC*, 2, pp. 683-686: *The greeting to the emperor when ambassadors from the amermoumnes come from Syria; The greeting to the emperor of the ambassadors coming from a chief emir, whether of Egypt or Persia or Chorosan, that is to say, subject to the imperial power of the Romans and sending tribute; The greeting to the emperor of the ambassadors coming from a chief emir, whether of Egypt or Persia or Chorosan, that is to say, when he is not subject to the imperial power of the Romans, and indeed whether or not he is under the subjection of the amermoumnes*), adapted to local context and hierarchy (*amermoumnes*, emir, council of elders, people), and laying more stress on the travelling conditions of the envoys.

The hosting of embassies during the Middle Byzantine period, namely the most formal first audience of the legation before the emperor, retained many elements of Late Antique imperial receptions (*consistorium*).³² In these most formal of situations, the actual communication between the emperor and the envoys received at court was reduced to ritualized exchange of conventional formulas – and sometimes later dramatized in subsequently written narrative accounts – which Andrew Gillett recently aptly described as follows: »The strict control over visiting envoys, the intrusion into the envoys' business by senior palace officials (particularly the *magister officiorum*), the intimidating ceremonial, the extremely limited access to the emperor, and the highly regimented procedure of an imperial audience (known by the discouraging name of *silentium*) – all were designed to limit direct contact between the emperor and envoys, and to disadvantage the visitor.«³³ As evidenced by sources both normative and narrative, the real practice emphasized a totally different setting for one to really discuss matters with the emperor: actual opportunities for discussion, direct encounter with decision-makers and diplomatic exchange presented themselves during less formal events that followed the first audience, such as palace banquets, dinners, shows, etc. (*convivia*). It seems that these less formal meetings and *tête-à-tête* conversations were a convention (that usually followed an audience, especially if the host was pleased with the envoys), and also originated from the Early Byzantine period.³⁴ Then and only then was it possible to engage into direct conversation with the emperor.

In general, the solemn atmosphere of imperial audiences did not stimulate light conversation of any kind.³⁵ Demonstrably this came as no surprise to the envoys, since questions of ceremonial were arranged beforehand, briefing the legates about the protocol they were about to face, and sometimes preparatory missions concerning these formalities were organized ahead of the actual embassy.³⁶

³² A degree of continuity between these and Late Antique formal audiences is plausibly postulated by A. GILLETT, *op. cit.* (n. 5, 2003), pp. 252-253.

³³ IDEM, *op. cit.* (n. 5, 2012), p. 258.

³⁴ IDEM, *op. cit.* (n. 5, 2003), pp. 254, 256; N. DROCOURT, *Ambassadeurs étrangers à Constantinople: moyens de contacts, d'échanges et de connaissances partielles du monde byzantin (VIII^e-XII^e siècles)*, in: *Espaces d'échanges en Méditerranée: Antiquité et Moyen Âge*, (ed.) François Clément, John V. Tolan, Jérôme Wilgaux, Rennes, 2006 (<http://books.openedition.org/pur/7841>, accessed 19 May 2019), paragraph 15.

³⁵ J. C. CHEYNET, *op. cit.* (n. 5), p. 323.

³⁶ W. POHL, *op. cit.* (n. 5), p. 76. Liutprand's mission offers good evidence on this: *Antapodosis*, VI, 5 = *Die Werke Liutprands von Cremona*, in: *MGH, Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum*, tom. 41, (ed.) Joseph Becker, Hannover - Leipzig, 1915, p. 155 = *The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona*, (ed. & trans.) Paolo Squatriti, Washington, D.C., 2007, p. 198: *And when, upon my entry, the lions emitted their roar and the birds called out, each according to its species, I was not filled with special fear or admiration, since I had been told about all these things by one of those who knew them well.* Foreign courts and chanceries also had at their disposal sets of protocol stylesheets ready to use when meeting and addressing the emperor (written instructions to the legates included), see I. BASIĆ, *Imperium and Regnum* in Gottschalk's description of Dalmatia, in: *Migration, Integration and Connectivity on the Southeastern Frontier of the Carolingian Empire*, (ed.) Danijel Dzino, Ante Milošević, Trpimir Vedriš, Leiden - Boston, 2018, pp. 180-181, 185 n. 49; N. DROCOURT, *La place de l'écrit dans les contacts diplomatiques du haut Moyen Âge. Le cas des relations entre Byzance et ses voisins (de la fin du VII^e siècle à 1204)*, in: *L'autorité de l'écrit au Moyen Âge (Orient-Occident)*, Paris, 2009, pp. 29-30, 40. There is some evidence that these formulas may have been used as a standard greeting style during the audiences; see e.g. the instructions given to Charlemagne's envoys to Pope Hadrian I in ca. 785: the first two instructions run as follows: *Primo capitulo. Salutatio uos dominus noster filius uester Carolus rex et filia uestra domina Fastrada regina ac filii et filiae domni nostri, simul et omnis domus sua. 2. Salutatio uos cuncti sacerdotes, episcopi et abbates atque omnis congregatio illorum in Dei seruicio constituta etiam et uniuersus grex et populus Francorum – Memoratorium missis datum ad papam Adrianum legatis*, in: *MGH, Capitularia regum Francorum*, tom. I, (ed.) Alfred Boretius, Hannover, 1883, p. 225. Cf. R. DREILLARD, *Fidélité et protection. Le traitement des ambassadeurs dans le royaume des Francs et sur ses marges à l'époque carolingienne (VIII^e-IX^e siècles)*, in: *La mobilité des personnes en Méditerranée de l'antiquité à l'époque moderne: procédures de contrôle et documents d'identification*, (dir.) Claude Moatti, Rome, 2004, p. 609, no. 1 and 2. So the sequence is: king, king's wife, their sons and daughters, their entire household (family), the clergy in its entirety (priests, bishops, abbots), finally the entire people of the Franks. This corresponds closely to Amalarius' account of Leo V's words, and merits further research.

Narrative accounts of receptions of foreign envoys, generally written by envoys themselves upon return to their respective countries in languages other than Greek, are in most cases corroborated by prescriptive, normative Byzantine texts written in Greek, such as *De ceremoniis*.³⁷ As Jonathan Shepard pointed out long ago, Liutprand of Cremona's audience with Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus in 949, as recorded a decade later in his *Antapodosis*, is well matched with the norms for the reception of foreign ambassadors in chapter II, 15 of the *Book of Ceremonies*; furthermore, Shepard noted that the Logothete of the Drome acted as an intermediary between the emperor and Liutprand, putting questions in emperor's stead i.e. Porphyrogenitus did not speak at all:

Then, however, he did not speak at all for himself, since, even if he wished to, the great space between us would render it unseemly, so he asked about the life of Berengar and his safety through a minister. When I had answered him reasonably, and when his interpreter gave a sign, I left and was soon received in the hostel assigned to me.³⁸

Furthermore, the questions posed are conspicuously similar to the ones asked by Leo V in 813 (doings and health of king Berengar II). Finally, in chapter II, 15 of the *Book of Ceremonies* the questions posed by the logothete are enumerated in full detail, and explicitly designated as »the customary questions«, while the treatise clearly prescribes that the same order and sequence is to be applied to all foreign guests led into emperor's presence, regardless of their number or country of origin.³⁹

As outlined above, only after the first formal audience had ended did the opportunity arise for the envoy to speak with the emperor directly, as was the case with Liutprand in 949:

Once these things had been accomplished in this way, after three days the emperor ordered me to be called to the palace. And having spoken to me with his own mouth, he invited me to a meal, and after the meal he gave my retainers and me a great gift.⁴⁰

³⁷ M. McCORMICK, From one center of power to another: comparing Byzantine and Carolingian ambassadors, in: *Deutsche Königspfalzen: Beiträge zu ihrer historischen und archäologischen Erforschung. Achter Band, Places of power – Orte der Herrschaft – Lieux du pouvoir*, (ed.) Caspar Ehlers, Göttingen, 2007, p. 72 compiled a check list of Carolingian ambassadors to the Byzantine court. From 763 to 899 there were 21 known legates directed to Constantinople. Unfortunately, only Amalarius in 813/814 and Anastasius Bibliothecarius in 869/870 had left personal notes on their trips. On the correlation of this with McCormick's concept of »kinetic integration« see M. McCORMICK, The imperial edge: Italo-Byzantine identity, movement and integration, A.D. 650-950, in: *Studies on the internal diaspora of the Byzantine Empire*, (ed.) Hélène Ahrweiler, Angeliki E. Laiou, Washington D.C., 1998, pp. 31-45.

³⁸ *Antapodosis*, VI, 5 = *The Complete Works of Liudprand*, *op. cit.* (n. 36), p. 198 = *Die Werke Liutprands*, *op. cit.* (n. 36), p. 155: *Per se autem tunc nihil locutus, quoniam, etsi vellet, intercapedo maxima indecorum faceret, de vita Berengarii et sospitate per logothetam est percontatus. Cui cum consequenter respondissem, interprete sum innuente egressus, et in datum mihi hospitium mox receptus.* Another translation: *The Works of Liudprand of Cremona*, (transl.) Frederick A. Wright, London - New York, 1930, p. 208: *he did not address me personally (...) but by the intermediary of a secretary he enquired about Berengar's doings and asked after his health. I made a fitting reply and then, at a nod from the interpreter, left his presence.*

³⁹ J. SHEPARD, Byzantine diplomacy, A.D. 800-1204: means and ends, in: *Byzantine Diplomacy* (n. 5), pp. 48, 49. On this and other logothete's duties see J.-C. CHEYNET, *op. cit.* (n. 5), p. 323, J. M. FEATHERSTONE, Δι' ἐνδείξι: display in court ceremonial (*De Cerimoniis II, 15*), in: *The Material and the Ideal: Essays in Medieval Art and Archaeology in Honour of Jean-Michel Spieser*, (ed.) Anthony Cutler, Arietta Papaconstantinou, Leiden - Boston, 2007, p. 83, N. DROCOURT, *op. cit.* (n. 20), p. 15. M. McCORMICK, *op. cit.* (n. 25), p. 231 and N. DROCOURT, *op. cit.* (n. 34), paragraph 10 also point out that the emperor remained silent, with logothete doing all the (formal) talking.

⁴⁰ *Antapodosis*, VI, 7 = *The Complete Works of Liudprand*, *op. cit.* (n. 36), p. 199 = *Die Werke Liutprands*, *op. cit.* (n. 36), p. 156: *His ita gestis imperator me post triduum ad palatium vocare precepit proprioque mecum ore locutus ad convivium invitavit magnoque post convivium me meosque asseculas munere donavit.* Wright (*The Works of Liudprand*, *op. cit.* (n. 38)), p. 209 translates: *personally invited me to dinner with him.*

The first audience, most formal of all, was thus a highly ritualized ceremony during which stereotyped phrases were exchanged between the envoys and the Logothete of the Drome. Phrases fixed and invariable, aptly dubbed »symbolic communication«. ⁴¹ That this course of events was indeed a fixed feature of the first occasion a foreign embassy was led into the imperial presence, is evidenced by another source, as emphasized by Nicolas Drocourt: when an emissary from Baghdad, Nasr ibn al-Azhar, was presented to emperor Michael III in 860 in the Hall of Magnaura, the same solemn silence was maintained, with three interpreters acting as emperor's mouthpieces: *basileus* confined himself to simply nodding the head once in confirmation; Drocourt further relates al-Azhar's remark that he did not hear the emperor utter a word once during his four-month stay at Constantinople. ⁴² Although these accounts of 860 and 949 may be exaggerated in some narrative aspects, they nevertheless point to the conclusion that we must take into consideration substantial continuity in rules of imperial ceremonial, stretching back to (at least) Amalarius' mission of 813/814; accordingly, with these sources in mind, it is fair to say that the *Book of Ceremonies* faithfully renders the usual practice as performed during these audiences. Taking this into account, and adding that Drocourt likewise noted that chapter I, 89 of the *Book of Ceremonies* points to an enduring routine of imperial distance during receptions going back to 6th century, we conform to his conclusion that the verbal »exchange and contact between foreign ambassadors and Byzantine authorities, at least in the person of the emperor, seem very difficult, if not impossible«. ⁴³ Amalarius' account now renders this even more plausible.

This opens up the question of continuity of formulas employed in the *Book of Ceremonies* that cannot be dealt with in great detail here. Bearing in mind that »to interpret *De ceremoniis* requires knowledge of each section's origin because it compiles 5th–10th-c. records that document Byzantine government, diplomacy, prosopography, Constantinopolitan topography and historical events«, ⁴⁴ we would argue that what lies beneath the expressions used by Leo V is in fact codified, solemn ritual common to Byzantine court culture and recorded in treatises such as the *Book of Ceremonies*. A broad scholarly consensus has been reached concerning chapters I, 89, I, 90 and II, 47: chapters I, 89 and 90 are of antiquarian origin and ultimately derive from the Early Byzantine textual sources compiled by a 6th-century *magister officiorum*, Peter the Patrician (ca. 539-565). ⁴⁵ With five preceding and five following chapters, they form a distinct antiquarian dossier (chapters 84-95) of *De Ceremoniis*, prepared beforehand and then appended to the previous 83 chapters that formed the more or less completed treatise on the ceremonies of the Byzantine court. In other words, the last 12 chapters of Book I were put together by Porphyrogenitus' editorial team, but without being incorporated into the definitive arrangement of the Ceremonial Book; instead they were left in a somewhat unrevised form as a raw material added at the end of Book I, with some ambiguity as to whether this was done

⁴¹ N. DROCOURT, *op. cit.* (n. 36), pp. 41-42.

⁴² N. DROCOURT, *op. cit.* (n. 34), paragraph 11.

⁴³ N. DROCOURT, *op. cit.* (n. 34), paragraph 12.

⁴⁴ M. McCORMICK, *De Ceremoniis*, in: *ODB*, I, p. 595.

⁴⁵ Most recently: C. SODE, Historical-antiquarian texts in the Ceremonial Book of Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos, in: *Center, Province and Periphery in the Age of Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos. From De Ceremoniis to De Administrando Imperio*, (ed.) Niels Gaul, Volker Menze, Csanád Bálint, Wiesbaden, 2018, pp. 72-73, with a balanced overview of previous scholarship. Most of the conclusions regarding the sources of the aforementioned chapters were first expounded by J. B. BURY, *The Ceremonial Book of Constantine Porphyrogenetos*, *English Historical Review*, 22, London, 1907, pp. 212-213, and are still valid today. Although only chapters 84 and 85 are explicitly linked to Peter the Patrician (by means of the chapter headings: *From the works of Peter the magistros; From the same Peter*), conclusive evidence has been adduced by several generations of scholars to convincingly ascribe the whole group to Peter. See, e.g., A. MOFFATT, M. TALL, Introduction, in: *BOC*, vol. 1, pp. xxvi-xxvii; M. McCORMICK, *op. cit.* (n. 24); A. CAMERON, *op. cit.* (n. 5); L. BRUBAKER, J. HALDON, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era (ca. 680-850): The Sources*, Birmingham, 2001, p. 295; Z. A. WOODROW, *Imperial ideology in middle Byzantine court culture: the evidence of Constantine Porphyrogenitus's De Ceremoniis*, PhD, University of Durham, 2001, pp. 1-40.

by Porphyrogenitus himself or by the powerful court official Basil the Nothos during the reign of Nicephorus II Phocas (963-969). Be that as it may, there is no doubt that our chapters I, 89 and I, 90 belong to the section drawn from the works dating from the mid-6th century. As to the chapter II, 47, Bury hypothesized that this formed part of a subsequent addition made after Porphyrogenitus' death, under Nicephorus Phocas; the evidence, however, is inconclusive.⁴⁶ What is more certain is that chapter 47 dates from ca. 922-924, containing styles of address for Bulgar ruler which bear all the hallmarks of a revision in order to adapt them to current political situation.⁴⁷

The issues involving *Book of Ceremonies'* sources have still not been settled. Although the anti-quarian chapters in section 84-95 stand apart from the previous ones, because they concern obsolete institutions and realms that have ceased to exist long time ago (Persia, Western Roman Empire etc.), one is still inclined to at the very least accept the possibility that these sections of *De Ceremoniis* (that is, the formulas of diplomatic protocol) can be attributed to a period preceding Amalarius' attestations of ceremonial at Leo's court. To be sure, this is no proof, but it does offer potentially fruitful evidence for future research. Although the sources on this are scarce, they do occasionally crop up in the texts, and it is considered certain that »the general level of royal ritual was indeed high, and that ceremonies of roughly similar kind to those envisaged in the protocols laid down by Constantine had been performed more or less regularly since at least the fifth and sixth centuries«.⁴⁸

Given that Amalarius in all likelihood knew Greek very well,⁴⁹ he was presumably able to speak to the emperor directly, not needing an official interpreter, who was always at hand on these occasions. This notwithstanding, it seems that Leo deliberately chose not to engage in spontaneous conversation with the Frankish theologian, but to carry on with the exchange of formal questions stipulated by the official discourse of imperial ceremonial.

Michael McCormick surmised that Leo's enquiring about the health of Charlemagne's children was »perhaps an allusion to a marriage project with the recently deposed and castrated Byzantine co-emperor Ignatius«, adding that »Amalarius' phrasing seems to recognize that hearing the emperor's voice was a special favor«.⁵⁰ Both assumptions are now superfluous, since we can suggest a different common source: the phrases used were standard ritualized questions of imperial receptions. As to whether Amalarius actually heard Leo's voice, or rather the voice of the logothete in emperor's stead, it is difficult to say (one suspects that he didn't); but since the emperor posed the »customary questions« in the order predefined by protocol, there is no reason to assume that the practice differed from the one recorded by Nasr ibn al-Azhar in 860, Liutprand of Cremona in 949, and by the *Book of Ceremonies*. Rather than describing light talk, this was an instance of rigid court etiquette.

⁴⁶ J. B. BURY, *op. cit.* (n. 45), pp. 222-223, 418-420, 431, 434, 437; A. MOFFATT, M. TALL, *op. cit.* (n. 45), p. xxx. For possible dates for the sources of respective chapters, see McCormick's *Chronological Synopsis of the Sources of De ceremoniis*: M. McCORMICK, *op. cit.* (n. 44), pp. 596-597, and A. MOFFATT, M. TALL, *op. cit.* (n. 45), pp. xxvi-xxvii.

⁴⁷ M. McCORMICK, *op. cit.* (n. 44), pp. 596-597. However, J. B. BURY, *op. cit.* (n. 45), p. 226 thought that both chapters have been composed in the reign of Leo VI (886-912), having noticed several traces of Porphyrogenitus' editing.

⁴⁸ A. CAMERON, *op. cit.* (n. 5), pp. 121-122 (quote), 129. Cameron further points to traces of the continuity of court protocol in the 7th and 8th centuries as recorded in *Constantinople in the Early Eighth Century: the Parastaseis syntomoi chronikai*, (ed.) Averil Cameron, Judith Herrin, Leiden, 1984, pp. 170-171 (possible reference to early-8th century imperial acclamations derived from contemporary documentary source), 209-210, 212.

⁴⁹ *Amalarii opera*, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 86. R. DÜCHTING, *op. cit.* (n. 17), p. 49 agrees that both envoys (Amalarius and Peter of Nonantola) must have understood and spoken Greek. There is ample evidence that Liutprand spoke and wrote Greek as well – M. McCORMICK, Liutprand of Cremona, in: *ODB*, II, p. 1242.

⁵⁰ M. McCORMICK, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 141. McCormick inadvertently conflated Ignatius (originally named Niketas, who was never co-emperor) with another of Michael's sons, Theophylact, who ruled alongside his father (811-813) and was considered a suitable match for one of Charlemagne's daughters. Both were castrated and tonsured, whereas Ignatius eventually became patriarch of Constantinople (847-858, 867-877) and saint. See A. P. KAZHDAN, Ignatios, in: *ODB*, II, p. 983; *PmbZ*, *op. cit.* (n. 12), no. 2666.

Amalarije iz Metza na dvoru Lava V.: bilješka o carskom ceremonijalu

Franački liturgičar i klerik Amalarije iz Metza (o. 775.-850.) upućen je 813. godine s dvora Karla Velikog na poslanstvo k bizantskom caru Mihajlu I. s ciljem potvrđivanja mirovnog ugovora između dvaju carstava zaključenog u Aachenu 812. godine. Uz Amalarija, na čelu poslanstva se nalazio Petar, opat Samostana Sv. Silvestra u Nonantoli. Diplomatska misija realizirana je od Uskrsa 813. do konca srpnja 814., pri čemu su franački poslanici na dvoru u Konstantinopolu proveli minimalno tri mjeseca na prijelazu iz stare u novu godinu. Za trajanja putovanja došlo je do smjene na bizantskom prijestolju (12. srpnja 813. godine Lav V. je zamijenio Mihajla I.), kao i na franačkom (smrt Karla Velikog 28. siječnja 814. godine).

Poslanstvo je završeno uspješno, a dokumentirano je nizom suvremenih vrela, među kojima su najiscrpniji Amalarijevi *Morski stihovi* (*Versus marini*), spjev od 80 heksametara napisan nedugo po njegovu povratku, što podrobno opisuje tijek putovanja. Ovdje se raščlanjuje dio teksta u kojem autor prenosi susret s carem Lavom V. Armencem (813.-820.) na dvoru tijekom službene audijencije. Sintaksa i struktura teksta uspoređuje se s izvorima iste vrste iz traktata *O ceremonijama* (*De Cerimoniis aulae Byzantinae*) nastaloga sredinom 10. st. u krugu Konstantina VII. Porfirogeneta, kao i pisanim svjedočanstvima drugih inozemnih izaslanika o prijemu na bizantskom dvoru (Liutprand iz Cremona, Nasr ibn al-Azhar). Ustanovljena je istovjetnost formula izgovorenih u carevo ime (posredstvom logoteta) u svim tim prilikama; posrijedi su konvencionalni izričaji diplomatske uljudnosti, formulaično sročeni te hijerarhijski razrađeni. Zaključuje se da konverzacija franačkog poslanika s bizantskim carem nije bila spontana, već određena rigoroznim dvorskim ceremonijalom: Amalarije vjerno prenosi službeni diskurs carskog protokola propisan za prve svečane audijencije stranih izaslanika. Zaključno se upozorava na moguće posljedice ovakvoga zaključka po datiranje izvora i predložaka poglavlja I.89, I.90 i II.47 iz *De Cerimoniis*.

Ključne riječi: Amalarije iz Metza, Lav V. Armenac, Bizant, carski ceremonijal, diplomatski protokol, *Versus marini*, *De Cerimoniis*