

What are the passions and which are the worst of them all?

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Created as God-like from the beginning, man would not accept anything irrational in his thoughts and in his life. All his thoughts and his motions were proper since they had been illuminated by the divine Grace. As soon as he was deceived and severed himself from the origin of consummate perfection, man's personality was immediately crashed and his original 'simplicity' was followed by 'complexity'. Thus



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and deeds of the irrational are and are called passions, because they do not operate in accordance with rational laws and “needs” but in accordance with unnatural urges, in which brutality and demonism reign.

The starting point of a passion is found in the irrational use of thoughts, which causes the practical abuse of things. This is the so called irrational “performance” (κατ’ ἐνέργειαν), which is the practical perversion, condemned not only by the divine but also by human justice. That’s why courts and prisons were established.

The great ‘giants’ of passions, as our Fathers describe them, are: love of pleasure, love of money and love of glory (or ambition). If these three passions reign in the soul, they produce three other tyrants worthy of them, which crash the forces of the soul and the mind: negligence, forgetfulness and ignorance. Whoever likes to study more intensively the law of perversion, let him study our books “Askesis, the mother of Sanctification” and “Lessons from Vatopedi.” (Note: translations into English for both books is forthcoming).



Translated

from the Greek: Γέροντος Ιωσήφ Βατοπαιδινού, Συζητήσεις στον Άθωνα, Ψυχοφελή Βατοπαιδινά 13, Ιερά Μεγίστη Μονή Βατοπαιδίου, Έκδοσις Α΄, Άγιον Όρος 2003, by Olga Konari Kokkinou.