

*THE «SAMPSON INCIDENT» (ca. 1215) AND THE DETERIORATION
OF EPIROTE-NICAEAN ORTHODOX ECCLESIASTICAL
RELATIONS*

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This article discusses the appointment of the clergyman Sampson as patriarchal ἑξάρχος to the western Greek monasteries, resorting under the Metropolis of Naupaktos, in the course of 1215. The immediate consequences of Sampson's presence in the west are also investigated, especially those for the renowned Metropolitan of Naupaktos, Ioannes Apokaukos.

The understanding of the as yet little-known events of Sampson's appointment to the western Greek territories of Epiros in 1215 in fact casts ecclesiastical relations between the fledgeling Byzantine Empire-in-exile of Nicaea and the western Greeks in new perspective. For the first time some of the attitudes underlying the western clergy's subsequent independent line of action is revealed. Similarly, due to the intimate links between Byzantine State and Church, new understanding of early Epirote politics appears possible.

Renewed investigation into this early stage of the relationship between the two parties has become necessary after the comparatively recent edition by Mrs. E. Bees-Seferles of unpublished documents from the collection of her father, the late Prof. Nikos Bees¹. Her publication comprises a number of private and official letters from the chancery of the Metropolitan Ioannes Apokaukos of Naupaktos, as well as Bees' description of the codex in the

* The research towards this article flowed logically from earlier research undertaken, with the aid of the Human Sciences Research Council of South Africa, for a D. Litt. et Phil. thesis, *The Byzantine Empire of Thessaloniki (1224-1242)* (Rand Afrikaans University, Johannesburg, 1983).

This article is dedicated with gratitude to my doctoral supervisor, and mentor, Prof. B. Hendrickx of the Department of Classical Languages in the Rand Afrikaans University.

Sources and modern studies are all referred to in this article in the footnotes by abbreviated titles. A comprehensive and explanatory list of the abbreviations employed, is provided as a postscript.

1. The documents in question were published in a separate appendage of 277 pages, titled «Aus dem Nachlass von N. A. Bees/Ἐκ τῶν καταλοιπῶν τοῦ Ν. Α. Βέη», to Volume 21 (1971/1974) of *Byzantinisch-Neugriechische Jahrbücher* (Athens, 1976).

autograph of Isaak Mesopotamites (i.e. the *Codex Petropolitanus Graecus 250*) through which the documents were transmitted². She added to her father's material an Introduction, her own observations and additions (mainly of import for the transmission of the text, and for the chronology of the documents), and an extensive bibliography³.

Apart from the wide significance of the whole collection of letters, Bees-Seferles also drew attention to four of these which specifically appertained to the events surrounding the appointment of Sampson as exarch to the western territories⁴. One of these letters, and in fact one of the most important, had been edited previously and had been available to the scholarly world⁵, yet it received no discernable attention from these quarters⁶. Bees-Seferles analysed the letters in question and convincingly placed them in the chronological framework as having been written during the very short term of office of the Nicaean patriarch Theodore II Eirenikos (i.e. between 28 September 1214 and 31 January 1216)⁷. Thus a considerable amount of evidence was rendered serviceable for the first time.

This information fits into the important early and formative part of western Epirote history. The Fourth Crusade, composed largely of «Frankish» knights, had conquered Constantinople in 1204 and sub-divided the territories of the old Byzantine Empire amongst the most influential parties in their ranks⁸. The Greek aristocratic refugees, driven before knights and monks eager to claim their spoils, congregated on the periphery of the Old Empire where defensible positions were to be obtained. By 1208 a Greek *imperium* and patriarchate had been resurrected in Bithynian Nicaea, slowly rebuilding the institutional fibre of Byzantine society⁹. In the western territories of mainland Greece, in Epiros, another section of the Greek aristocracy and clergy dug themselves in.

2. See Bees, Περιγραφή, pp. 8-54, and Bees, *Schriftstücke*, pp. 56-160.

3. See Bees-Seferles, Προλεγόμενα, σ. α'-κ'; Bees-Seferles, Προσθήκαι, pp. 161-243, and Bees-Seferles, Βραχυγραφίαι, pp. 1-5.

4. See Bees-Seferles, Προσθήκαι, pp. 201-3 and 204-6, which contain her comments to documents no. 51, 52, 53 and 57, edited in Bees, *Schriftstücke*, pp. 107-110 and pp. 112-114.

5. See Kerameus, *N. P.*, pp. 292-294, which had been published in St. Petersburg in 1913.

6. The ecclesiastical relations between the Greeks of the eastern and western territories during the years 1212-1217 were discussed comprehensively in Nicol, *Despotate*, pp. 76-112, more specifically, pp. 76-84; more recently a whole monograph was devoted to these matters, which also discussed the indicated period in considerable depth (see Karpozilos, *Controversy*, chapters II and III, and especially pp. 49-54). Nowhere however, does one encounter discussion of, or simple reference to Sampson, nor to his appointment as exarch.

7. See Bees-Seferles, Προσθήκαι, pp. 204-206 (on no. 57). We dwell more extensively on the actual grounds for this chronological determination below.

8. See Nicol, *Fourth Crusade*, pp. 285-290; Wolff, *Latin Empire*, pp. 187-99.

9. See Nicol, *op. cit.*, pp. 294-295, and Karpozilos, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-24.

Michael Doukas, military and political leader of the western Greeks, made his appearance on the scene more or less simultaneously, but was prevented by the exigencies of his position from immediately developing similar institutions¹⁰. Instead, he is found in a situation of permanent confrontation with Latin conquerors settling in Thraco-Macedonia, in Thessaly, in mainland Hellas itself, as well as in the peninsular Peloponnese; by 1209 Michael made himself felt as a diplomatic force to be reckoned with: during negotiations with Emperor Henri (d'Hainaut) of Constantinople, he seized the initiative and married off his eldest daughter to the emperor's brother, while he himself became his vassal¹¹. Thus Michael at least won some recognition as a political force in the region. Nor is it remarkable that he soon afterwards, in keeping with the general climate of vacillating political loyalties of his times, through another treaty also became the servant of the Doge of Venice (1210)¹². It was with the material aid of Venice that he could engage in war against the Latins and, by 1212, start regaining territories in Thessaly, and in Old Epiros (Dyrrachion and Kerkyra)¹³. When he was assassinated in 1215, he had built up a sound political and military base for further Greek expansion in the region.

The Orthodox ecclesiastical administration and organisation of the region remained largely intact throughout the aftermath of the Fourth Crusade: the high learning of Greek clergy, together with the high degree of continuity of ecclesiastical official appointments, ensured stable and effective institutional backbone to Greek provincial society¹⁴. The Metropolitan Ioannes Apokaukos of Naupaktos had been attached to that bishopric since as far back as 1199;¹⁵ when the bishopric of the illustrious Metropolitan Michael (Akominatos) Choniates of Athens fell into Latin hands (1205) forcing the latter into exile, the most senior Metropolitan in the region, and the one to whom the greatest personal deference accrued, was the erudite Ioannes Apokaukos¹⁶. This latter

10. See Nicol, *op. cit.*, pp. 296-297.

11. See Nicol, *op. cit.*, pp. 298-300; Wolff, *op. cit.*, pp. 208-9.

12. *Ibid.*

13. *Ibid.*

14. See Herrin, *Provincial Government*, pp. 258-261, and 282-3, who discusses these points for pre-conquest mainland Greece. After the conquest, in territories to which Latin occupation did not extend, such as Epiros, the ecclesiastical organization remained unharmed. While it may be said that provincial government largely collapsed with the disappearance of the Byzantine central government from the capital, the infra-structure of Metropolitan government stayed intact to provide the foundations for political revival in the provinces.

15. See Karpozilos, *Controversy*, pp. 57-58; Wellnhofer, *Apokaukos*, pp. 10-14, and Tomadakes, Λόγιοι, pp. 8-11.

16. See Stadtmüller, *Michael Choniates*, pp. 184-212 [62-90] and Wellnhofer, *Apokaukos*, pp. 6-11.

Metropolitan was to become the rallying-point for the resurgent forces of Greek nationalism.

Very little is known concerning the actual events which took place during Michael Doukas' rule of Epiros and which were of direct bearing upon the ecclesiastical relations between the western Greeks and those of Asia Minor. This is of course directly attributable to the general lack of documentation (ecclesiastical and otherwise) for the period (1205-1215). Thus scholarly reconstructions of these events, especially the ecclesiastical events, have had to be based on the inadequate account of them in the (by then) hostile correspondence between Apokaukos and the Nicaean patriarch Manuel I Sarantenos (1217-1222):¹⁷ nine years after the actual events had transpired, and shortly before Sarantenos' death in 1222, Apokaukos defended the Epirote clergy's line of conduct so many years ago¹⁸. In 1213 the Epirote clergy had gathered, at the probable request of their ruler, Michael Doukas, to discuss the vacancies which had arisen in the metropolitan sees of Dyrrachion and of Larissa¹⁹. With the full knowledge of that meeting the two senior clergymen, viz. Ioannes Apokaukos of Naupaktos, and the Archbishop of Gardikion, proceeded to ordain clergymen, with the names of Dokeianos and Kalospetes, to the respective vacant sees²⁰.

It is interesting to note that Michael Doukas had some appreciation of the canonical complications which the Epirote move had brought about vis-à-vis the Nicaean patriarchate: soon after the ordinations had taken place, Michael applied to Patriarch Manuel I for the condonation thereof²¹. The Epirote clergy felt that the ordinations had taken place contrary to the prescriptions of

17. See Nicol, *Despotate*, p. 79, and Karpozilos, *Controversy*, pp. 52-3 for accounts of these events. For the chronology of the patriarchal reign of Sarantenos, see Laurent, *Chronologie*, p. 136.

18. Sarantenos' accusation of Apokaukos and his clergy, as well as their defence before the Nicaean patriarch, are contained in the two letters published in Vasilievskij, *Epirotica*, as no. 16 (= Laurent, *Patriarcat*, N. 1230) and 17 on pp. 268-78. Apokaukos' reply must have been written some time between the patriarch's letter, dated February 1222 (= 10th Indiction, see Vasilievskij, *Epirotica*, no. 16, p. 269 11.27-8), and the patriarch's death in the autumn of that very year (see Laurent, *Chronologie*, p. 136). See Nicol, *Despotate*, pp. 40-41 and Karpozilos, *Controversy*, p. 52 (who is, to a considerable degree, guilty of misrepresentation in his note 21, on the same page, where he refers to the «detailed study» by Bees: that study does not discuss the appointments in question at all, except but briefly to allude to them).

19. Simple mention is made of this event in Vasilievskij, *Epirotica*, no. 16 p. 268 11.1-14 (= Laurent, *Patriarcat*, N. 1230). Michael Doukas' later appeal to patriarch Michael IV Autoreianos (also mentioned in the passage cited) presupposes his permission for such a meeting. See also Vasilievskij, *Epirotica*, no. 17 p. 270 11. 20-23.

20. See Vasilievskij, *Epirotica*, no. 16 p. 268 11. 1-14, as well as Apokaukos' reply *op. cit.*, no. 17 11. 20-23.

21. See Vasilievskij, *Epirotica*, no. 16 p. 268 11. 1-14.

ecclesiastical canon (i.e. ἀκανονίστως) and advised Michael to take the proper steps²².

The lack of a Nicaean response to this first approach from Epirote clergymen was to create a disastrous precedent for ecclesiastical relations between the Greeks of the west and of the east, especially in as much as the impression was created with the Epirote clergy that the Nicaean patriarchate did not deem their affairs of particular importance. Indeed, the Nicaean Patriarch Manuel I Sarantenos nine years later, in 1222, (ruefully) admitted that the patriarchate had refrained, until that very moment, to respond to Michael Doukas' application «because that Patriarch and those succeeding him, I think, were disinclined to condone the affair»²³.

The Nicaeans' failure to become actively involved in the reorganisation of ecclesiastical structures in the west, during Michael Doukas' rule, made its repercussions felt for at least the following fifteen years.

Within the next eighteen months or so (i.e. till the first months of 1215) key changes took place affecting these ecclesiastical relations directly. In 1214 the patriarchal throne of Nicaea changed hands as Michael IV Autoreianos died on the 26th of August, and was succeeded on the 28th of September by Theodore II Eirenikos²⁴. In Epiros, by 1215, Michael Doukas had been assassinated by a servant and supplanted by the successor which he had himself appointed sometime previously, his half-brother Theodoros Doukas²⁵.

From the very start Theodoros Doukas followed a policy of imaginatively and aggressively expanding Epirote interests²⁶. While Michael may previously have shrunk from openly pursuing local advantage at the expense of wider Greek interests, Theodoros had much more ambitious goals. And at this early stage of his rule, the so-called Sampson-affair intervened to give decisive direction to the course which ecclesiastical and political relations in the ranks of the Greeks were to take.

Details of the events of the Sampson affair have to be reconstructed from the four letters from Apokaukos, as has been stated²⁷. The events may then be

22. *Ibid.*

23. *Ibid.*

24. See Laurent, *Chronologie*, pp. 133-134.

25. See Nicol, *Fourth Crusade*, pp. 304-5.

26. See Nicol, *Fourth Crusade*, p. 305 and Karpozilos, *Controversy*, p. 39.

27. See our discussion above and our notes no. 1-6. The four letters in question are, briefly, the following:

1. *Bees, Schriftstücke, no. 51, pp. 107-8*: Πρὸς τὸν χαρτοφύλακα Νικαίας τὸν Μετρητόπουλον.

In the commentary to the documents Bees-Seferles, Προσθήκαι, p. 201 s.v. no. 51, dates this letter) 1215 on the basis of the evidence presented in this regard by Bees, *Schriftstücke*, nos. 52 and

placed in wider perspective and evaluated. Also, the only source for the events to be sketched is the correspondence of Apokaukos; while it may be valid to regard some of Apokaukos judgements and interpretations as being of subjective, and even prejudicial nature, the very consistency in his narration of the facts involved, to a variety of parties (mostly opponents), seems to guarantee its accuracy.

57. (Discussed below under 2 and 4).

2. *Bees, Schriftstücke, no. 52, pp. 108-109*: Without heading, but from the address (p. 108 ll. 1-2 and p. 109 ll. 35-37) it appears to be directed to a Nicaean bishop by name of Ioannes.

Bees-Seferles, Προσθήκαι, pp. 201-2 s.v. no 52, discusses the address of the document, and, on the basis of Apokaukos' reference in the letter (p. 108 ll. 1-2) to his own sojourn of sixteen years in Naupaktos, calculates that the letter was written) 1215.

3. *Bees, Schriftstücke, no. 53 pp. 109-110*: Πρὸς τὸν λογαριαστὴν τὸν Δισύπατον κῦρ Γεώργιον.

Dated) 1215 by Bees-Seferles, Προσθήκαι, p. 202, s.v. no. 53 on the grounds of its content clearly linking it to this group of documents describing the Sampson affair.

4. *Bees, Schriftstücke, no. 57 pp. 112-114 (= Kerameus, N. P., pp. 292-294)*: Πρὸς τὸν ἀγιώτατον πατριάρχην.

Due to the letter's reference to the lately appointed patriarch as ὁ φιλόσοφος (see p. 113 ll. 40-45), as well as the reference to Apokaukos' term of office as patriarchal notary sixteen years previously (see p. 113 and our discussion under 2 above), Bees-Seferles, Προσθήκαι, pp. 204-206 s.v. 57 dates it) 1215, similar to the three other letters in the group.

In addition to these four letters, made available by the manuscript tradition, it is also possible to reconstruct two other documents, now lost to us, but nevertheless certainly existing in those times, from mentions in the existent documentation:

5. *Mentioned in Bees, Schriftstücke, no. 53 p. 109 ll. 1-3 and no 57 p. 113 ll. 28-32*: Ἄν ἐνταλτήριος χάρτης, from Patriarch Theodoros II Eirenikos of Nicaea/Constantinople (1214-1216), commissioning the appointment of one Sampson as patriarchal ἑξαρχος in the West.

This letter may be regarded as emanating from the patriarchate during the (very short) term of office of Eirenikos (28 Sept. 1214-31 Jan. 1216) (see Laurent, *Chronologie*, pp. 133-134), shortly after his entry into office and shortly prior to the compilation of Apokaukos' four letters (discussed above) which have been dated to) 1215; a rough estimate may therefore be late 1214-early 1215.

6. *Mentioned in Bees, Schriftstücke, no. 57 p. 114 ll. 68-80*: Ἄν ἐνταλτήριος χάρτης, from Patriarch Theodoros II Eirenikos of Nicaea/Constantinople, authorizing the appointment of the monk Nikon as patriarchal ἑξαρχος of monasteries in the vicinity of Vagenitia, and ordering the bishop of Chimaras not to lay claim to that part of his parish. Instead, the ἑξαρχος Nikon is to exercise authority over the said region and over the parishioners residing there, but is to pay the monastic taxes due to the bishop of Chimaras.

Judging by the fact that there is only once made reference to this document in the whole group of four letters by Apokaukos, and, at that, in the letter addressed to the patriarch Eirenikos, it would seem that the document was issued in the interval between the appearance of the preceding charter (see our no. 5, above) and Apokaukos' letter to the patriarch. Like the other documents in this group, this charter was issued sometime in 1215.

The two recovered patriarchal charters in fact present us with as yet unrecorded evidence of *acta* of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Laurent's collection of *regestae* of patriarchal *acta* records for Theodoros II Eirenikos' term of office a single encyclical letter (see Laurent, *Patriarcat*, pp. 24-26, N. 1219) from Oct. 1214-Nov. 1215. Our two charters provide valuable additional information on this sparsely attested patriarch.

The Patriarch Theodoros II Eirenikos intervened in western ecclesiastical affairs soon after assuming office at the end of 1214. Without prior notification to the western clergy of his election to the patriarchal office²⁸, Eirenikos sought immediately to extend his sphere of influence to mainland Greece by stripping the metropolitan Apokaukos of his jurisdiction over the so-called patriarchal monasteries situated in the bishopric of Naupaktos, and then appointing a new ἔξαρχος to manage monastic affairs there to the Patriarch's personal satisfaction²⁹. Probably mindful of the necessity to appoint a person acceptable to the wider circle of western clergy, Eirenikos appointed the relatively young assistant notary of the Diakonissa monastery, Sampson, to the exarchate, through patriarchal edict³⁰.

The Patriarch's ἐνταλήριον was brought from Nicaea to Sampson by an official notary³¹. The appointment was proclaimed in Theodoros Doucas' administrative capital, Arta, from a platform in the market-place and before a large crowd, on a Sunday, by a member of the civil judiciary enlisted for this very purpose by the notary³². In the proclamation Sampson was hailed as someone very well suited to the position he was to hold from now on, viz. that of πατριαρχικὸς τοποτηρητής (litt. «patriarchal delegate» or «*locum tenens*») in the Naupaktos district³³. Thus was the new ἔξαρχος installed in office.

This move by Patriarch Eirenikos constituted an immediate curtailment of Apokaukos' authority. Further developments shortly afterwards clearly revealed the patriarch's true intention to get rid of the Metropolitan as soon as possible and through the active co-operation of his new ἔξαρχος. Soon after the latter's appointment, Apokaukos went down with one of his regular and severe bouts of illness, and the rumour soon circulated that the Metropolitan had indeed perished³⁴. When this story was brought as good news to the new

28. See Bees, *Schriftstücke*, no. 57, pp. 112-113, 11. 14-16, and no. 52, p. 108 11. 19-21, where Apokaukos complains of the patriarch's negligence in communicating his appointment and his policies to the western clergy. Apart from Laurent's dependable dates for Eirenikos' term of office (cited above in notes 18 and 24), a rather superficial account of Eirenikos' election and investiture has been given by Nikolaos Mesarites: see Heissenberg, *Neue Quellen III*, p. 18 l. 16-p. 19 l. 7, as well as pp. 55, 80-81.

29. See Bees, *Schriftstücke*, no. 52 pp. 108-9 11. 20-23, and no. 53 p. 109 11. 16-17; no. 51 p. 108 11. 35-36 and no. 57 pp. 112-113 11. 14-18.

30. See Bees, *Schriftstücke*, no. 5, p. 108 11. 35-40; no. 52 p. 109 11. 26-30; no. 53 p. 109 11. 15-17, and no. 57 p. 113 11. 21-25. We discussed in note 27 the now lost patriarchal ἐνταλήριον (see our document no. 5 there).

31. See Bees, *Schriftstücke*, no. 53, p. 109 11. 2-4.

32. See Bees, *Schriftstücke*, no. 53, p. 109 11. 10-14.

33. See Bees, *Schriftstücke*, no. 53, p. 109 11. 15-18 (11. 16-17: ... καὶ τετίμηται καὶ πατριαρχικὴν τοποτηρησίαν τοῦ Ναυπάκτου ἀντέλαβεν...). We discuss the particular influence of the patriarch's τοποτηρητής below, in note 36.

34. See Bees, *Schriftstücke*, no. 53, p. 110, 11. 24-26.

ἔξαρχος, he excitedly promised the bearer of the message the supposedly vacant episcopal see of Naupaktos³⁵. Promptly, also, the ἔξαρχος appointed the inexperienced Herakles as bishop, acting independently in his capacity as patriarchal representative and without taking the customary recourse of consultation with prominent civilians and clergy;³⁶ the new bishop paid the ἔξαρχος the customary obeisance (προσκύνησις)³⁷. Nowhere in the sources is the ultimate fate of this Herakles recorded; Apokaukos' return to health and to the ecclesiastical scene shortly afterwards, must have rendered his position rather ludicrous and the lack of further reference to him probably signifies his quiet exit from Epirote ecclesiastical life.

The metropolitan Apokaukos at first reeled in the face of this onslaught directed at his position and authority by the patriarch Eirenikos, but then he mustered all the forces at his disposal finally to weather the attack. Thus, having sufficiently recovered from the blows described above, he systematically set about activating his political contacts in ecclesiastical and civil circles to rally on his behalf.

While the top ranks of the patriarchate lately re-organized in Nicaea possibly contained any number of persons relatively unknown to the western clergy, Apokaukos approached Metretopoulos, the *chartophylax* (χαρτοφύλαξ) of Nicaea³⁸. Next to the patriarch himself there was virtually no one of greater personal influence than his *chartophylax* in ecclesiastical government³⁹. Traditionally this official occupied only the fourth position in the hierarchy of top ecclesiastical dignitaries, but in practice he wielded the greatest amount of influence⁴⁰. Always retaining his original function as director of the patriarchal archives and library, the *chartophylax* had in addition acquired important

35. See Bees, *Schriftstücke*, no. 53, p. 110 ll. 24-32.

36. See Bees, *Schriftstücke*, no. 53, p. 110 ll. 30-33. The due procedure for the election of bishops is discussed in Karpozilos, *Controversy*, p. 50 n. 14, and pp. 50-51. The ἔξαρχος apparently appointed the bishop in his capacity as patriarchal τοποτηρητής — he thus acted in accordance with either the *general* patriarchal powers at his disposal (i.e. on behalf of the patriarch and the permanent synod, who normally appointed metropolitans, archbishops and the more prominent bishops, according to Karpozilos, *Controversy*, p. 50 n. 14) or the *specific* patriarchal powers awarded him by charter.

37. This customary form of salutation signified the new bishop's loyalty to the patriarchate.

38. See Bees, *Schriftstücke*, no. 51, pp. 107-8 (our no. 1 in note above). The letter is headed Πρὸς τὸν χαρτοφύλακα Νικαίας τὸν Μετρητόπουλον. Apokaukos' address to the official (ἀγιώτατε δέσποτα καὶ πανυπερευτιμώτατε χαρτοφύλαξ) (op. cit., no. 51 p. 107 l. 2) and the general respectful tone of the letter in question leaves no doubt that the letter was in fact intended for the μέγας χαρτοφύλαξ of that city.

39. See Bréhier, *Institutions*, pp. 364-402, and in particular pp. 398-400, for a lucid account of patriarchal government and the position of the μέγας χαρτοφύλαξ. See also Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur*, pp. 109-114, as well as Angold, *Government*, pp. 275-276.

40. See Bréhier, *Institutions*, pp. 397-99, and Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur*, p. 109.

disciplinary authority over the widespread clergy of the Empire⁴¹. Thus he supervised the election and ordination of bishops and the clergy in general, especially through his control over the authenticity and flow of all patriarchal documentation; he normally supervised all clergy in Constantinople (presumably also in Nicaea) and further afield in all houses of worship as well as in monasteries; finally, he presided over a correctional court of justice with the competence to exact penitence from errant clergymen and with the right to impose the ultimate ecclesiastical penalty of excommunication; increasingly the *chartophylax* acquired the role of a judicial adviser whose pronouncements on legal matters carried considerable weight⁴².

Apokaukos' letter to Metretopoulos opens with a complimentary reminder of the friendship between the two of them some years previously in Constantinople, and with Apokaukos' congratulations to Metretopoulos on his attainment of the high position of *chartophylax*⁴³. Then he sketches, for the benefit of Metretopoulos, the uncanonical innovation (καινοτόμημα): the exarchate of the so-called patriarchal monasteries had been entrusted to him by the Patriarch Ioannes X Kamateros (5th August 1198-26th May 1206), and he had administered the office without inappropriately deriving profit from the monasteries and had carefully and discriminately ministered as regional bishop to the spiritual needs of the monks⁴⁴. Now the present patriarch has, rather brutally, transferred the position of honour to the inexperienced and inept Sampson⁴⁵. The total insignificance of this Sampson is indeed proved by the fact that he has not been thought worthy of election to even the most negligible office by local rulers, but has only come to public notice in the West after his elevation in status by the Patriarch in Nicaea⁴⁶.

41. See Bréhier, *op. cit.*, p. 399, and Beck, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

42. See Bréhier, *op. cit.*, p. 399, and Beck, *op. cit.*, p. 110-11.

43. See Bees, *Schriftstücke*, no. 51 p. 107 ll. 2-25.

44. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 51 pp. 107-8 ll. 29-35. For the chronology of Kamateros' patriarchate, see Laurent, *Chronologie*, p. 131 and p. 131 n. 2.

45. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 51 p. 108 ll. 35-42.

46. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 51, p. 108 ll. 42-44. Apokaukos here seems to take it for granted that the *local* political rulers had authority in the appointment of important ecclesiastical office-bearers. It would thus, furthermore, seem that just as the *archontes* of a city possessed some say in the election of bishop (see Karpozilos, *Controversy*, p. 50 n. 14), the highest political ruler in a territory, such as the emperor, also had substantial say in the election of higher ecclesiastical officials, such as metropolitans and archbishops (despite what Karpozilos, *loc. cit.*, avers in this regard). Even at this very early stage in the protracted unhappy ecclesiastical relations between the western and eastern Greeks, Apokaukos clearly defers to his local rulers on the issue of the legitimacy of ecclesiastical appointments. In the case of the Sampson affair, there is clearly no talk of the Epirote rulers leaning on any ecclesiastical instance in the west to make a partisan appointment. Rather, Apokaukos, caught up in an uncanonical situation, would seek amends by

That the Sampson affair elicited an unusual stir in the ranks of Greek clergy on both sides of the Aegean, is to be gathered from another letter addressed by Apokaukos to an unknown Nicaean bishop⁴⁷. Apokaukos displays a very keen joy an having recently received a very first letter from this bishop, well known to him for a considerable length of time, and indeed a namesake of himself⁴⁸. He states to the bishop his intention to send off the present letter by return of post to Nicaea, an urgency occasioned by the particularly harrowing turn of events in which he is involved and the fact that he has been stranded without help from any quarter;⁴⁹ but for the physical rift dividing the Greeks, the present spiritual disunity would never have arisen⁵⁰. Apokaukos is distressed that the present Patriarch has not deemed the western clergy worthy of notification of his appointment to the patriarchate and because the Patriarch has deprived him of the *ἐξαρχία* of local patriarchal monasteries awarded to him previously by Kamateros – the Patriarch has thus spurned ecclesiastical convention (τὴν ἐκκλησιαστικὴν συνήθειαν) by not making the proper announcement and by inopportunistically alienating an old friend and ally⁵¹. Judging by the ill-suited candidate appointed to the *ἐξαρχία*, the Patriarch has clearly displayed his prejudice against Apokaukos⁵². Indeed, a person thought more or less worthless by local Western rulers has been elevated to high office by the authorities in Nicaea, and of all the insults suffered by Apokaukos through the years, the latter has proved to be the most unpalatable⁵³.

The Metropolitan's problems were not simply and exclusively of Nicaean provenance. The patriarchate of Nicaea was regarded by many western Greek Christians as perfectly legitimate, hence the apparent lack of internal resistance to the appointment and installation of the *ἐξαρχος* Sampson. Apokaukos had also to rally the local political forces to resist the patriarch's interference. The Doukas family and the remnants of local government were the sole agents capable of stopping the patriarch's actions.

Apokaukos therefore approached the Doukas family, and, upon their instruction, also the civil administration under their control; his letter to the

approaching the only indispensable canonical element in the appointment process able to provide him with some relief. See below our discussion on Apokaukos' letter to the λογαριαστής.

47. See Bees, *Schriftstücke*, no. 52, pp. 108-9 (our no. 2 in note 27 above).

48. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 52, p. 108 ll. 1-9; and p. 109 ll. 36-37: εἶψ μοι πολυχρόνιος μεμνημένος τοῦ ὁμωνύμου, τοῦ πνέοντός σε ὡς τὸν ἀέρα.

49. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 52, p. 108 ll. 9-14.

50. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 52, p. 108, ll. 14-19.

51. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 52, pp. 108-109 ll. 19-26.

52. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 52, p. 109 ll. 26-30.

53. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 52, p. 109 ll. 30-37.

λογαριαστής Georgios Disypatos bears witness to his efforts on this internal level⁵⁴. Traditional assessments of the influence and function of the λογαριαστής have identified several applications of the title: a λογαριαστής τῆς αὐλῆς, a λογαριαστής τοῦ σεκρέτου τοῦ γενικοῦ (an official belonging to the central administration), a λογαριαστής belonging to the provincial administration, and an ecclesiastical λογαριαστής⁵⁵. The provincial λογαριασταί, of whom Disypatos probably was one⁵⁶, are viewed as chief financial advisers to regional governors, issuing documents of privilege, and supervising land transactions⁵⁷. However, in reviewing the evidence presented in the most knowledgeable discussion of the office⁵⁸, one is struck by the fact that, in a large number of the instances cited, monasteries are involved⁵⁹. Thus the λογαριαστής is regularly to be seen as an official with powers on the terrain of finances, indeed granting privileges and overseeing land transactions, but then with a sphere of jurisdiction extending as far as the monasteries, their integral position in regional economics, and their large land-holdings. In approaching Disypatos, Apokaukos was seeking the aid of a government official who, traditionally, exerted considerable influence over the monasteries and, in the case of Disypatos, had some say over the legitimacy of ecclesiastical appointments⁶⁰.

Apokaukos narrates to the λογαριαστής the installation of Sampson as patriarchal delegate especially from a legal viewpoint. He first sets out the legal procedures followed in the process, pointedly referring to the patriarch's written charter of commission for the ἔξαρχος⁶¹, and the proclamation made in the market-place on a Sunday by a local κριτής on behalf of the patriarch Eirenikos' νοτάριος to the effect that Sampson had been appointed patriarchal

54. See Bees, *Schriftstücke*, no. 53, pp. 109-110 (our no. 3 in note 27 above).

55. See Ahrweiler, *Administration*, pp. 1-109, esp. pp. 36-78; Guiland, *Logariaste*, pp. 101-113, and Herrin, *Provincial Government*, pp. 270-276, esp. p. 272. The other important work cited by Herrin, *Provincial Government*, p. 272, note 98, viz. Dölger, *Finanzverwaltung*, was unavailable.

56. See Bees, *Schriftstücke*, no. 53, p. 110 ll. 46-48, where Disypatos is reportedly described by the lady Doukaina (i.e. Maria Doukaina, the wife of Theodoros Doukas; see Nicol, *Despotate*, p. 215-6) as τὸν λογαριαστήν μου. As there can hardly be talk of any imperial organization for Theodoros Doukas at this stage of his career, it seems possible to rule out the existence of an official of the court, or of the central imperial administration.

57. See Herrin, *Provincial Government*, p. 272 (and note 98).

58. See Guiland, *Logariaste*, pp. 101-113, and especially pp. 101-108.

59. In a rough count of the single examples cited in Guiland, *Logariaste*, pp. 101-108, no less than twenty-five cases out of the forty-eight directly involve monasteries.

60. Apokaukos, in this very letter, recognizes the right of the λογαριαστής, as provincial official, to appoint clergy: ἐμηνύθη μοι γὰρ παρὰ τῆς κυρίας Λουκαίνης, ὡς εἰ μὲν καταδέχη τὴν παρὰ τοῦ λογαριαστοῦ μου αὔξησιν, ἔσο νομεύς, εἰ δ' οὐ, κατασταθήσεται τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ μου. (Bees, *Schriftstücke*, no. 53 ll. 47-49, p. 110).

61. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 53 ll. 3-11, p. 109.

delegate⁶². The metropolitan stands severely critical of the fact that Sampson, while he did not hold an episcopal see of his own, assumed the title of *ἐξαρχος* as direct address (i.e. as *κυριωνυμία*, or proper name, as specified by Apokaukos)⁶³. And not only did Sampson make presumptuous use of the title, he also abused his competence by prematurely promising Apokaukos' episcopal see to a most unsuitable candidate without as much as substantiating the (in the event false!) rumours concerning the former's death⁶⁴. From the local ruler's wife, the Doukaina, it had been confirmed that the *λογαριαστής* indeed possessed the right to ratify ecclesiastical promotions and appointments;⁶⁵ the long speech by the *λογαριαστής* in this regard, delivered in Angelokastron, has proved to be misleading and a virtual rejection of the long-standing friendship between Apokaukos and Disypatos⁶⁶.

Apokaukos' situation was, in fact, to worsen a lot more before taking a turn. His authority, and, by implication that of his synod, was to be severely tested by a local dissident monk. This Nikon originally lived in a monastery recently built by the previous ruler Michael Doukas, and his successor, Theodoros; this monastery had an adjoining church, which had apparently fallen into disrepair, and had also been rebuilt by Michael Doukas⁶⁷. The re-

62. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 53 ll. 11-17, p. 109.

63. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 53 ll. 20-23. Apokaukos clearly sees this departure from ecclesiastical custom as irregular, and therefore as untenable by the *λογαριαστής*. Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur*, p. 69 distinguishes between the bestowal of the title of *ἐξαρχος* on a sporadic basis as situations demanded, and that on a durable basis, for example, to metropolitans, with a considerable area of authority attached to it; from this latter usage the title developed into a regular and fixed attribute of metropolitans in the middle and late Byzantine periods. By the end of the Empire many metropolitans bore the title of exarch over provinces by then existing only in the imagination and in antiquated descriptions. In weighing Apokaukos' claim, it would seem fair to conclude that the title of *ἐξαρχος* had already turned into a more or less fixed attribute of metropolitans; in addition, when the patriarch made the *ad hoc* appointment of the monk Sampson to the exarchate, he acted perfectly within his right to use the official to monitor the satisfactory execution of his instructions especially with regard to the so-called patriarchal monasteries (see Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur*, p. 64, and p. 129). Apokaukos' consternation seems to arise from the fact that the patriarch has taken recourse to a procedure not in regular use, and, moreover, one which casts serious doubts over the metropolitan's competence as caretaker of patriarchal monasteries.

64. See Bees, *Schriftstücke*, no. 53 ll. 24-39, p. 110.

65. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 53 ll. 47-49, p. 110. This passage also provides evidence of an approach made slightly previously to this letter by Apokaukos to Maria Doukaina.

66. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 53 ll. 49-57, p. 110. The location of the (little) town of Angelokastron could not be identified.

* 67. See Bees, *Schriftstücke*, no. 57 (= No. 4 in note 27 above) ll. 49-80, pp. 113-114, where the whole incident is related; these specific details are to be found in ll. 49-55. (Of considerable interest for this very early period of western Greek political history are ll. 51-3: ... *ἐνοικεῖ μὲν τῆ παρὰ τῶν ἡμετέρων μεγάλων Κομνηνῶν, τοῦ τε κύρ Μιχαὴλ ἐκείνου καὶ τοῦ νῦν κρατοῦντος κύρ Θεοδώρου, νεουργουμένη μονῆ...*).

founding of the chapel had been carried out by Apokaukos' suffragan, the bishop of Chimaras, who said the prayers at the laying of the foundations; he controlled the placing of saints' relics in the chapel and fulfilled, in general, all his episcopal duties of supervision over it⁶⁸. The monk Nikon, unwilling to be subject to the local bishop, had the rebuilt chapel again taken apart and re-assembled elsewhere under the patronage of the Patriarch, thereby placing the chapel outside the jurisdiction of the local bishop⁶⁹. And because of the stalemate reached with the local ecclesiastical authorities, Nikon requested the Patriarch to appoint himself as ἑξαρχος of monasteries in the region of Vagenitia⁷⁰. The Patriarch acceded to the request and bestowed upon the monk the powers of supervision normally exercised by the local bishop; in yet another ἐνταλτήριον the Patriarch announced this latest appointment and ordered that the bishop of Chimaras exercise no say over the involved portion of his parish, but that Nikon be permitted to do so over the said portion of the parish, with the sole proviso that he ceded the monastic taxes accruing (i.e. the κανονικόν) to the bishop of Chimara⁷¹.

Apokaukos was now finally forced into direct confrontation with the Patriarch himself. He approached Eirenikos in a lengthy letter couched in a curious mixture of friendly terms dealing with unpleasant realities⁷². After appropriately addressing the Patriarch, Apokaukos reminded him of their friendship of old and chided him for neglecting to inform his old friend of his succession to the patriarchal throne, especially seeing that it had developed into some sort of ecclesiastical custom that new Patriarchs inform their colleagues of their progression and succession⁷³. While Apokaukos was eager to recognize the difficulties particular to the Italian occupation, he was almost

68. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 57 11. 54-58, pp. 113-114. The pre-conditions for the foundation of monastic institutions, such as the permission of the local bishop, his accord on the financial support for the establishment, and his setting up of a cross on the spot of foundation (σταυροπήγιον), are provided by Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur*, p. 29, who also discusses local bishops' rights and obligations vis-à-vis these monastic establishments. Nicol, *Despotate*, p. 222, provides a list of the suffragans of the Metropolis of Naupaktos.

69. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 57 11. 58-68, p. 114.

70. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 57 11. 68-71, p. 114. See Nicol, *Despotate*, p. 223 on the location of the theme of Vagenitia.

71. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 57 11. 71-83, p. 114. On the κανονικόν, see Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur*, p. 129. The patriarch's now lost ἐνταλτήριον is our no. 6 in note 27 above. The implications of these moves were, of course, that the monastery's chapel, which had been under its founder's patronage, in this case that of the ruler-family of Doukas, now became a patriarchal foundation (i.e. a σταυροπηγιακόν μοναστήριον) (see Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur*, p. 129) resorting under the personal patronage of patriarch Eirenikos. It is not difficult to discern the political implications of the move.

72. See Bees, *Schriftstücke*, no. 57, pp. 112-114 (= our no. 4 in note 27 above).

73. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 57, p. 112 11. 1-11.

persuaded by others that the Patriarch's silence in fact constituted a calculated omission⁷⁴. In addition, by taking away from Apokaukos the exarchate bestowed upon him by Kamateros, and in giving it to Sampson, Eirenikos was showing a callous disrespect for the ἐντάλματα of the deceased Patriarch;⁷⁵ and in his choice of Sampson for the position, considering the latter's inaptitude for it, the Patriarch clearly displayed his lack of good judgement and his personal bias against Apokaukos⁷⁶. Apokaukos had hoped, upon Eirenikos' succession, that the new Patriarch would, as ecclesiastical ruler, live up to his nickname as «the philosopher», and would effect through the superiority of his wisdom a drastic improvement in the dismal reigning circumstances⁷⁷. All hope for a wiser administration was dashed by the more recent developments involving the monk Nikon, whereby the Patriarch's rationality and canonical discretion was cast in a dubious light: Eirenikos not only permitted the lowly hermit to give free reins to his wayward desires, but also set the seal on it by awarding the monk the exarchate of Vagenitia⁷⁸. And in pursuing his objectives the Patriarch did not hesitate to rob the bishop of Chimaras of his rights of doctrinal and more general supervision over the monasteries in question; as a concession, and, at that, one which caused resentment, he permitted the bishop to retain the κανονικόν due from these monasteries⁷⁹. These actions by the Patriarch so clearly contradicted the standards laid down by canonical and secular law that it was unthinkable that a previous Patriarch would have undertaken such illicit innovation; Eirenikos is therefore requested to rectify the situation⁸⁰. If, however, the Patriarch chooses to ignore these representations and allows the situation to persist, Apokaukos gives him the categorical assurance that he will not be silenced and that he will not stop doing battle against this injustice, on a local level, together with his ecclesiastical colleagues⁸¹. At this point the direct, and contemporaneous, account by Apokaukos of the Sampson-affair and related events ceases. No more information, e.g. on the immediate outcome of Apokaukos' efforts, is to be gleaned from the «new» documents forthcoming from the Bees-collection. However, in reviewing the evidence presented by other documents from the same *Codex Petropolitanus Graecus 250*, and which have enjoyed circulation since their publication early this century, two as yet unnoticed *post eventum* references now gain significance

74. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 57, pp. 112-114.

75. See Bees, *Schriftstücke*, no. 57 11. 14-21, pp. 112-113.

76. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 57 11. 21-33, p. 113.

77. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 57 11. 38-46, p. 113, Bees-Seferles, *Προσθήκαι*, pp. 204-6.

78. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 57 11. 48-71, pp. 113-114.

79. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 57 11. 71-80, p. 114.

80. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 57 11. 80-83, p. 114.

81. See Bees, *op. cit.*, no. 57 11. 83-87, p. 114.

and shed new light on the matter.

Four years after the events discussed above, Theodoros Doukas' march on the Latin kingdom of Thessaloniki seemed unstoppable. As fast as he was liberating Greek territories from the weakened Crusader states, he had Orthodox clergy sympathetic to his cause appointed to the episcopal sees lately purified of Roman clergy. In September 1219 Theodoros wrote a letter to Apokaukos, instructing him, as most senior and most influential metropolitan of his territories, to convene a gathering of the bishops in question in Arta so that a new metropolitan could be elected for Kerkyra, its see having fallen vacant through the death of the previous Metropolitan, Padiadites; simultaneously he proposed the *chartophylax* of Athens, Georgios Bardanes, as his own candidate for the position⁸².

Bardanes had enjoyed a long-standing spiritual kinship with the widely esteemed Metropolitan of Athens, Michael Choniates⁸³, and had risen in the latter's administration to the very influential position of *chartophylax*⁸⁴. In the years 1214/15 he attended the negotiations in Constantinople with Cardinal Pelagius as Choniates' representative, and in the winter of 1215/16 he visited Nicaea⁸⁵. The Metropolitan Choniates was anxious to see his protégé settled in a suitable ecclesiastical position. In 1217 he heartily recommended Bardanes to the Nicaean Patriarch Sarantenos⁸⁶. Bardanes, however, showed more interest in western ecclesiastical affairs and took up the position of *διάκονος* of the bishopric of Grebena, a suffragan of the Archbishopric of Achrída; by 1219 he had already declined offers to accept the sees of Grebena, and of Bonditza (a suffragan of Apokaukos' Metropolis of Naupaktos)⁸⁷.

When he was offered the important see of Kerkyra late in 1219, Bardanes was not to let the sought-after position slip through his fingers. In a letter carefully composed in his Atticist style Bardanes eagerly informed the most venerable of the Orthodox clergy in the west, Ioannes Apokaukos, of the acceptability, to himself, of his nomination⁸⁸. In acceding to Theodoros Doukas' request, he was swayed by his convictions concerning the whole Sampson-affair: «My lord, it seems to me –even if others do not share my view-

82. See Vasilievskij, *Epirotica*, no. 7, pp. 252-3 (= 20-21). The letter is dated Sept. 8th Indiction (= 1219). For fuller discussion see Nicol, *Despotate*, pp. 82-3; Karpozilos, *Controversy*, p. 59, and Hoeck & Loenertz, *Nikolaos-Nektarios*, p. 120.

83. See Stadtmüller, *Michael Choniates*, pp. 208-210 [86-88]; Hoeck & Loenertz, *Nikolaos-Nektarios*, pp. 119-120.

84. See Hoeck & Loenertz, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

85. See Hoeck & Loenertz, *loc. cit.*

86. See Stadtmüller, *Michael Choniates*, p. 209; Hoeck & Loenertz, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

87. See Hoeck & Loenertz, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

88. See Vasilievskij, *Epirotica*, no. 11, pp. 256-257 (= p. 24-25).

fitting that the deceased Sampson's decrees not be fully implemented unless they were subject to the test of canonical law, nor that the holy customary practice in spiritual dispensations of this nature be ignored. In fact, contrary to dissident views, I maintain that what has been done, has been done with reason and sound judgement, and that what has been effected by the great father of Naupaktos has adhered to the more authoritative principle; moreover, nothing uncanonical has been wrought by him, unless it were inspired from on High – and from there the western dioceses of the Church also derive, in terms of their orderliness, their subjection to the faith, yes, their very participation in that faith, the right of ordination, and the Spirit, in a fashion that is pleasing to God»⁸⁹.

If Bardanes had thought that his comments, so loyal to Apokaukos, would move the respected Metropolitan to a demonstration of personal gratitude, it was a miscalculation. In his answer to Bardanes' letter, Apokaukos all but ignored these statements, choosing instead to dwell on the suitability of Kerkyra as Metropolitan see for Bardanes, the elegance of Bardanes' style of composition, and the difficulty of prearranging a meeting at which the ordination could take place⁹⁰. Having virtually concluded his letter with the customary greetings, Apokaukos brusquely closes off the Sampson-affair: «I am not intimately acquainted with the events concerning the Sampson referred to, as described by you, nor do I know whether there are those who disapprove of the event in question»⁹¹.

In looking, for the moment, beyond the obvious emotional interplay between the two letters, the following facts can be distilled: by late 1219 the *exarchos* Sampson was already deceased; before the latter's death, steps were taken against him by the western clergy, probably under the leadership of Apokaukos, to minimize the effectivity of the *exarchos*' measures in local context; the accountability of these steps, from the point of view of canonical law, was strongly contested from certain quarters in the west, as well as by the Nicaean Patriarchate.

It would therefore seem as if Apokaukos succeeded, within the relatively short four-year period of Sampson's occupation of his office, to muster sufficient support within both ecclesiastical and political circles in the western Epirote territories to ensure his continued occupation of his see and to maintain his influential position in general.



89. See Vasilievskij, *Epirotica*, no. 11, pp. 257 (= p. 25) l. 31-p. 258 l. 2.

90. See Vasilievskij, *op. cit.*, pp. 258-259 (= p. 26-27), especially ll. 30-31: Τὰ δὲ περὶ τὸν Σαμψῶν ἐκεῖνον, ὅπως ἐγράφη σοι, σάφα οὐκ οἶδα, οὐδ' εἶ πως εἶσι τὴν πράξιν ταύτην κακίζοντες.

The Sampson incident is a useful illustration of the methods employed by the Nicaean patriarchate, from an early stage of its existence onwards, of strengthening its direct control over the Church organization⁹². By delegating considerable powers to Exarchs spread over a number of regions, and by making them directly responsible to himself, the Patriarch ensured that his interests were properly served in the ecclesiastical organization, especially through the maintenance of the traditional disciplinary system. Due to the intimate links which had existed from the very beginning between the Nicaean emperor and Patriarch⁹³ the ecclesiastical and imperial administrations were hardly ever at cross purposes; but, as has been correctly pointed out⁹⁴, the greatest opposition to the Exarch's activities came from the episcopal (metropolitan) administration.

In the case of the appointment of the exarch Sampson by Patriarch Eirenikos, in 1215, conflict arose because the exarch's powers and duties directly intruded into the domain of the influential Metropolitan Apokaukos who enjoyed a canonically unassailable position thanks to his appointment and ordination by the pre-conquest Patriarch Kamateros. Apokaukos' strong position, and the pre-eminence he gained in the western (Epirote) territories with the waning of the personal influence of the Metropolitan of Athens, Niketas Choniates, ensured him the virtual leadership of the western clergy for as long as he cared or, indeed, was physically able to fill the requirements of that position. Under the circumstances, the Nicaean patriarchate had little other recourse but to attempt to tender the personal favour and friendship of every western bishop and thus to arouse pro-Nicaean feelings. And while there are indeed traces of a pro-Nicaean faction in the western territories, whose influence is tangible in the Sampson incident, the important western Metropolitans and their parishioners persisted in their staunchly regionalistic sentiments.

It was only upon Apokaukos' retirement from his see, shortly after the Emperor Theodoros Doukas' downfall in 1230⁹⁵, that the Nicaean Patriarch Germanos II was able to appoint a Metropolitan of his own approval to the see of Naupaktos, and to appoint an exarch who could bring the churches and clergy of the western territories into the orbit of the Nicaean patriarchate⁹⁶.

92. See Angold, *Government*, p. 58.

93. See Karpozilos, *Controversy*, pp. 18-27, for a clear and useful summary.

94. See Angold, *Government*, p. 58.

95. See Nicol, *Fourth Crusade*, pp. 310-11, and Karpozilos, *Controversy*, pp. 89-95.

96. Most of the documents attesting to the mission of Christophoros as exarch to the West are given in Kurtz, *Christophoros*, pp. 120-142. Discussion of the events of the mission are to be found in Nicol, *Despotate*, pp. 116-122, and Karpozilos, *Controversy*, pp. 90-93. However, see also

The rift in the ranks of the Orthodox clergy of the western and eastern territories was symbolically and actually healed with the appointment of a western clergyman to the Metropolitan see of Thessaloniki, one Joseph, who was simultaneously to act as patriarchal exarch for all the western territories⁹⁷.

The Sampson incident also reveals some interesting details concerning the early political life of the Epirote state under Michael (I) and Theodoros Doukas. It shows that first Michael, and then Theodoros, in continuation of his brother's ecclesiastical policies, considered the monasteries in their territories of sufficient (political) interest to patronize some of the repairs to these buildings. The Nicaean Patriarch's attempts to gain control of the monasteries in the western territories were as much aimed against the Doukai as against Apokaukos. For Theodoros, who succeeded to Michael's position of political leadership of the western territories only shortly prior to the Sampson incident in 1215⁹⁸, the incident itself provided a veritable crucible in which his attitude towards the Nicaean patriarchate was finally cast: never afterwards would he pursue a policy of subjection to the Bithynian prelate.

Apokaukos' epistolary lobbying also reveals the existence of a government for the western territories organized on the lines of the old provincial administration which centred on regional governors. Though the previous century had witnessed the decline of local government, especially due to the harshness of measures originating with the central government in Constantinople⁹⁹, local governors and administrators could hardly but gain in efficiency after the old capital fell in 1204. An efficient nucleus of administrators thus developed under Michael (I), to reach relative bloom under Theodoros. The Metropolitan Apokaukos could therefore seek official help in the particular emergency.

In the final instance it may be noted that the Sampson incident provided, for Bardanes, an important display of the true, and (for him) not so honourable political intentions of the Nicaean patriarchate. In commenting on these events some time after the exarch's death, in 1219, the shrewd Bardanes perceived that the incident marked a watershed in Epirote-Nicaean ecclesiastical relations. By 1219, too, Bardanes was very well-informed on the positions adopted by the parties involved, having gained first-hand experience of the

Laurent, *Charisticariat*, pp. 109-112, who most clearly discusses the matter of the stavropegiac status of the monasteries and Christophoros' activities, as well as Bredenkamp, *Thessaloniki*, pp. 198-207 and the relevant notes (nos. 72-129) on pp. 243-251, which attempts a slightly different political interpretation of the events concerned.

97. See Bredenkamp, *Thessaloniki*, pp. 211-3, and the relevant notes (nos. 151-159) on pp. 253-255.

98. See Nicol, *Fourth Crusade*, pp. 300 and 304, and Karpozilos, *Controversy*, pp. 38-39.

respective situations shortly before making his comments. His ill-received advice to Apokaukos also betrays his conscious and reasoned choice in favour of the Epirote faction which was, in 1219, seemingly inexorably destined to restore Orthodoxy to the old capital Constantinople*.

ABBREVIATIONS

All the sources, collections and registers of sources, and all the modern books and articles cited in the notes to the above discussion are referred to by the following abbreviations:

Ahrweiler, *Administration* = H. Glykatzi-Ahrweiler, Recherches sur l'administration de l'empire byzantin aux IXE-XIE siècles, *Bulletin de Correspondance hellénique*, LXXXIV (Athènes/Paris 1960) pp. 1-109.

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99. See Herrin, *Provincial Government*, pp. 270-276, and especially pp. 282-284.

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