

*ON THE QUESTION OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE BYZANTINE CHURCH
INTO
A National Greek Church**
by
PETER CHARANIS

A Dedication

This Study is dedicated to the following Junior Fellows of Dumbarton Oaks,
1978-79, who made my stay there that year most pleasant.

David Castriota / Flora Clancy / Elaine De Benedictis / Timothy Duket / Anna Gonosova /
George Gorse / Frances Kianka / Betsy Rosasco / Janet Timbie

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Christianity was, of course, a product of the Graeco-Roman world. In its growth and by the end of the political unity of the Roman world in the fifth century, it had spread into regions beyond the Graeco-Roman tradition, into Persia, to some extent into Arabia, and also into Ethiopia, but in none of these regions did it evolve into a force of consequence, affecting in any profound way its activities in the Graeco-Roman world. In time it disappeared or remained peripheral, as in the case of Ethiopia, with no general significance. And when the western Roman provinces ceased indeed to be Roman and new peoples established themselves throughout Europe, including those regions of it which had never been under Roman control, it was the Christianity which had evolved in the Graeco-Roman world that was disseminated, and came to prevail, among these peoples. A Graeco-Roman product, Christianity became a general European phenomenon, up to a point in the historical evolution of Europe, the principal underlying element of its culture.

Christianity had its origins, of course, in Judaism, but it soon abandoned the narrowness of its Judaistic basis and assumed a universal character. This development had taken place, of course, already during the apostolic age and sought to express itself in the formulation of one doctrine universally applicable. This last point is best illustrated perhaps by a statement of Irenaeus about the Christian church written sometime between 182 and 188 A.D.¹

«As I have already observed», wrote Irenaeus, «the Church, having received this preaching and this faith, although scattered throughout the whole world, yet, as if occupying but one house, carefully preserves it. She also believes these points [of doctrine] just as if she had but one soul, and one and the same heart, and she proclaims them, and teaches them, and hands them down, with perfect harmony, as if she possessed only one mouth. For, although the languages of the world are dissimilar, yet the import of the tradition is one

1. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, tr. by the Rev. Alexander Roberts, in the *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, American Reprint of the Edinburgh Edition, 1 (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1973 (Reprint), 331 (I, 2 of the original).

and the same. For the Churches which have been planted in Germany do not believe or have done anything different, nor do those in Spain, nor those in Gaul, nor those in the East, nor those in Egypt, nor those in Libya, nor those which have been established in the central regions of the world. But as the sun, that creature of God, is one and the same throughout the whole world, so also the preaching of the truth shineth everywhere and enlightens all men that are willing to come to a knowledge of the truth. Nor will any one of the rulers in the Churches, however highly gifted he may be in point of eloquence, teach doctrines different from these (for no one is greater than the Master); nor, on the other hand, will he who is deficient in power of expression inflict injury on the tradition. For the faith being ever one and the same, neither does one who is able at great length to discourse regarding it, make any additions to it, nor does one, who can say but little, diminish it».

The Universalism of the Church evolved no doubt out of the universalism of the Roman Empire and was in fact a function of it. But the universalism of the Roman world was in a sense superficial. The Romans had indeed built a political structure which included all the known Mediterranean world, the neighboring interior regions of Europe, parts of Great Britain and the upper regions of the Euphrates in the Middle East. They opened the way to the spread of general ideas, consolidated the general use of Greek in the eastern provinces and made possible the prevalence of Latin in the West, but the different cultural patterns which had already evolved in the different regions of the Roman world had not been eliminated. There is no question here, of course, of looking at the Roman Empire as a whole. The review is restricted to its eastern provinces because it is there that the development which is the subject of this paper took place.

The dominant cultural feature of the eastern regions of the Roman empire was the general prevalence of Greek and all that that prevalence implied. This prevalence, however, did not eliminate the various languages spoken by the native populations of these regions. In Egypt most people no doubt spoke Coptic² and in the Semitic provinces –Palestine, Syria, the Euphrates regions– they spoke Syriac³. In Asia Minor the various native languages continued to exist into at least the seventh century⁴ and in North Africa where Latin not

2. On Coptic and the beginnings of Coptic literature see the general account of Walter C. Till, «Coptic and Its Value», *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 40 (1957-58), 229-258. For a brief popular general account on the Copts see: W.H. Worrell, *A Short Account of the Copts* (Ann Arbor, 1945).

3. On Syriac literature the work of William Wright remains standard: *A Short History of Syriac Literature* (London, 1894). See also, Rubens Duval, *Litterature syriaque* (Paris, 1900); Jean B. Chabot, *Litterature syriaque* (Paris, 1934); A. Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur...* (Bonn, 1922).

4. Peter Charanis, «Ethnic Changes in the Byzantine Empire in the Seventh Century», *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 13 (1959), 25f.; Karl Holl, «Das Fortleben der Volkssprachen in Kleinasien in nachchristlicher Zeit», *Hermes*: 43 (1908), 243 ff.

Greek had become the general speech the native peasantry continued to speak Berber⁵. This was no doubt also true of Libya. The persistence of these languages had cultural implications. It meant that the universalism of the Roman world did not touch profoundly the peoples who spoke them and that these peoples continued to practice their ways of life. In time these peoples became Christians, but in the practice of their new religion they deviated from its universalism, being influenced in this by their own native ways. Donatism, which began early in the fourth century, in its theological essentials did not differ from Orthodox Christianity, but its continued persistence until the conquest of North Africa by the Arabs in the seventh century may be best explained by the fact that its adherents were the Berber peasants of the interior who had been very little influenced by the Latinity which had evolved in the country⁶. The various Christian heresies which arose early in Asia Minor were primarily local in character and derived their inspiration from local tradition⁷, but in one instance the persistence of a local language saved the people who spoke it from a certain heresy. The people were the Cappadocians and they were saved from this heresy because, according to Basil, «the grammatical structure of their native tongue did not permit the distinction between «with» and «and»⁸.

The great heresies of the fourth and fifth centuries relate directly to problems inherent in the nature of Christianity. In their origins, therefore, they cannot be associated with any particular ethnic or cultural group. In the course of the controversies which accompanied them, however, they identified themselves with certain groups and came to constitute essential elements in the culture of those groups. By the early years of the fourth century Arianism had ceased to be of any significance in the Roman empire itself, but in the meantime it had spread among the Germans and became an element of their culture until they were eliminated as vital political units in the Mediterranean world in the course of the sixth century. The Nestorians organized their own way of life in Persia and served often to promote the interests of the Persian kings against those of the Roman empire⁹. The view expressed long ago that in its origins Monophysitism was the product of sharp national and local cultural feelings which had come to develop in Syria and Egypt¹⁰ has been recently

5. For reference see note which follows.

6. This is the general thesis underlying the work of W.H.C. Frend, *The Donatist Church. A Movement of Protest in Roman North Africa* (Oxford, 1952).

7. Charanis, *op. cit.*, 26-27; W.M. Calder, «The Epigraphy of the Anatolian Heresies», *Anatolian Studies Presented to Sir William Mitchell Ramsay* (Manchester, 1923), 59-91.

8. Saint Basil, *De spiritu sancto*, Migne, P G., 32.208.

9. For an account of the Nestorians in Persia: Jérôme Labourt, *Le Christianisme dans l'Empire Perse sous la dynastie sassanide (224-632)* (Paris, 1904). This old book has remained standard.

10. Ernest L. Woodward, *Christianity and Nationalism in the Later Roman Empire* (London, 1916).

questioned¹¹. There can be no question, however, that in its evolution the controversy around Monophysitism led eventually in the course of the second half of the sixth century to the formation of the Jacobite Churches in Syria and Egypt¹². There already existed churches outside the borders of the Roman empire, in Ethiopia, in Armenia, in Georgia, but this is the first instance of the organization of significant separate churches made up of the natives of entire provinces long integrated into the empire. The period of evolution whereby the one church of the Roman world will be turned into a series of national churches has begun. The Monophysitic controversy also led to the first official schism between the Church of Constantinople and that of Rome and although that schism was eventually healed¹³, it may be said to mark the beginning of the alienation of the one section of Christendom from the other and the development of divergent practices, liturgical in particular, which will end eventually in the permanent separation of the two Churches.

On the evolution of the Later Roman Empire two periods of change may be said to have been decisive: (1) the changes which took place in the course of the third century and their consolidation by Diocletian and Constantine towards the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth century,¹⁴ and (2) the changes which took place in the course of the seventh century. The later changes had the effect of transforming the Roman empire, without, however, bringing about any break in its continuity, into what modern historians will

11. A.H.M. Jones, «Were Ancient Heresies National or Social Movements in Disguise?», *Journal of Theological Studies*, H.S. 10 (1959), 280-298. For a continuous account on Monophysitism covering the various problems to which it gave rise and extending in time from before 451 into the seventh century when Monophysitism as a political problem, because of the loss of the Monophysitic provinces, ceased to exist, see now, W.H.C. Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement. Chapters in the History of the Church in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries*. (Cambridge, 1972). Frend agrees with Jones that Monophysitism was not the product of any national feeling that might have come to exist in Egypt and Syria. But cf. Peter Charanis, *Church and State in the Later Roman Empire. The Religious Policy of Anastasius the First, 491-518*. 2nd Edition (Thessaioniki, 1974), 27-28.

12. On the rise of the Jacobite churches in Syria and Egypt, the role of Jacob Baradaeus in that development, and the struggle between the Monophysites and the Chalcaedonians throughout the sixth century for the control of the patriarchate of Alexandria the book by Jean Maspero still remains fundamental: *Histoire des patriarches d' Alexandrie depuis la mort de l' empereur Anastase jusqu'à la réconciliation des églises jacobites* (518-616) (Paris, 1923).

13. On the schism between Rome and Constantinople over Monophysitism see the book by Charanis, *Church and State in the Later Roman Empire...* (for complete reference see above, note 11). Cf. Eduard Schwartz, *Das acacianische Schisma. Abhandlungen der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften: Philosophischehistorische Abteilung*, new series, 10 (Munich, 1934).

14. For a brief statement on the changes of the third century: P. Charanis, «Observations on the Transformation of the Roman World in the Third Century and the Question of the Fall of the Empire», in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt. Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung* (Joseph Vogt Gewidmet), ed. H. Temporini, vol. II: Principat, Pt. 2 (Berlin, 1975), 551-59.

call the Byzantine empire. These changes included the loss of important provinces –Egypt, Syria, the Armenian and the Euphrates regions of the empire¹⁵. These regions were inhabited by peoples long integrated into the Roman empire but, with few exceptions, had not yet abandoned their own ways, including their native speech, to become thoroughly identified with the Graeco-Roman tradition¹⁶. At the other end of the empire, in the Balkan peninsula, as the result of the invasion and the settlement of the Slavs, the effective control of the empire came to be restricted to the coastal regions of the Aegean and the Adriatic and Latin, which had become the general speech of the interior of the peninsula was pushed in the background to reappear in the sources some three centuries later as the speech of the Vlachs¹⁷.

It has often been said that the events of the seventh century so altered the Roman empire that it became Greek in character. This may be true, provided it is not assumed that the society had resulted from these changes had become completely homogenous and entirely Greek in speech. This was not, of course, the case, for new peoples, notably the Slavs, had come into the picture, and old ones, including some Armenians, continued to live within its borders and to speak their native tongues¹⁸. Indeed, it was not until the end of the ninth century that in Byzantine Asia Minor, with few exceptions along its very eastern borders, Greek came to be the speech of virtually everybody¹⁹. By then Byzantium had also consolidated its position along the coastal regions of the Aegeans, and the Slavs within its effective borders in those parts had started on the road to complete Hellenization²⁰. The empire by this time had become or was on the verge of becoming an empire of Greeks, *i.e.*, of Christians whose speech was Greek.

The events of the seventh century affected also, and to a profound degree, the ecclesiastical and religious situation of the empire. Already by the middle of the fifth century, thanks to the twenty-eighth canon of the Council of Chalcedon, the official jurisdiction of the patriarchate of Constantinople

15. In addition to the loss of territory the events of the seventh century brought about, of course, other changes. On these changes P. Charanis, «Some Remarks on the Changes in Byzantium in the Seventh Century» *Recueil des travaux de l'Institut d'Etudes Byzantines*, VIII, 1 (=Mélanges G. Ostrogorsky, I) (Belgrade, 1963), 71-76.

16. For references see above notes, 2, 3, 4, 5.

17. On the Vlachs: Eugen Stanescu, «La population Vlaque de l'empire byzantin aux XIe–XIIIe siècles. Structure et mouvement», *XVe Congrès International d'Etudes Byzantines. Rapports et Co-Rapports*, I. *Histoire* (Athens, 1976), 1-20.

18. On this, Charanis, «Ethnic Changes in the Byzantine Empire» (for complete reference, note 4 above), 25-44.

19. On the eastern borders of Greek in Asia Minor see Charanis, «The Linguistic Frontier in Asia Minor Towards the End of the Ninth Century» *Actes du XIve Congrès International des Études Byzantines* (Bucarest, 1975), II, 315-319.

20. In general, Charanis, «The Slavs, Byzantium, and the Historical Significance of the First Bulgarian Kingdom», *Balkan Studies* 17, 1 (1976), 10 ff.

extended over Thrace, Asia, the Pontus, and the Patriarch was at the same time authorized to consecrate the bishops of the provinces of the empire then occupied by the barbarians²¹. Developments in the patriarchate of Antioch²², the rise of the Jacobite Church in Syria towards the end of the sixth century in particular, and the conquest of Antioch itself by the Arabs, lead inevitably to the inclusion of all the regions of the Asiatic territories of the empire in the jurisdiction of the patriarchate of Constantinople. And when towards the end of the sixth century the patriarch of Constantinople, John the Faster, assumed officially the title of «oecumenical» patriarch²³, his act was no empty gesture, for at that time the various regions under the effective jurisdiction of his patriarchate were more extensive than those of any other bishop, including the bishop of Rome, in all Christendom. In the empire itself only those regions of ancient Illyricum in the Balkan peninsula still in the hands of the empire, escaped his jurisdiction, but these too, together with what the empire still possessed in southern Italy and Sicily were turned over to him by Emperor Leo III not long after the official launching of iconoclasm in 730. The Byzantines never officially abandoned the theory of the pentarchy, the idea that the ultimate authority of the Church resides jointly in the five ancient patriarchates, but in actual fact the ecclesiastical authority which counted with them was that of the patriarch of Constantinople and his synod. Their effective territorial jurisdiction varied, of course, with the effective territorial jurisdiction of the empire itself. Their church was a national church, but not a Greek national church. The Church of the empire was, of course, from the very beginning, subordinate to the State, and as a consequence it was a state church, a feature which will characterize the various churches which in time will spring from it. They will all be national churches, provided, of course, the ruling element of each nation involved belonged to the church.

The extension and the consolidation of the effective territorial jurisdiction of the patriarchate of Constantinople did not, of course, bring about immediately religious homogeneity throughout the empire. The territorial losses which had resulted from the Arab advances in the seventh century did, indeed, eliminate the Monophysites as an element of the population of the empire and as a consequence brought to an end the Monophysitic controversy which had troubled the empire for so long. But the empire continued to be troubled by a number of other heresies.

21. Agapios of Demitzana, *Συλλογή πάντων τῶν ἱερῶν καὶ θεϊῶν κανόνων...* (Venice, 1787), 97 f.

22. On the patriarchate of Antioch from about the beginning of the fourth century to the conquest of Antioch by the Arabs: Robert Devresse, *Le Patriarcat d' Antioch depuis la paix de l' église jusqu'à la conquête Arabe* (Paris, 1945).

23. V. Grumel, *Les registes des actes du patriarcat de Constantinople*. Vol. 1: *Les Actes des patriarches*, Fase I (Kadiköy-Instanbul, 1932), p. 105, n. 264.

It has already been observed that early Byzantine Asia Minor was as much a mosaic of sects as of nationalities though, of course, sects and nationalities were not necessarily synonymous. Some of these sects in time disappeared, but some continued to exist for a long time. The Novatians, Montanists, and Tetradites are mentioned in canon 95 of the Council in Trullo (692)²⁴. The same canon refers to «many heresies whose origin was Galatia». The Montanists are said to have existed until the reign of Leo III, when they chose to destroy themselves rather than submit to the baptism which Leo III had ordered them to undergo²⁵. The Tetradites continued to exist much longer. They are mentioned by Theophanes²⁶, who says that they were tolerated by the emperor Nicephorus I, and again by Photios in one of his homilies where he speaks of their conversion to Orthodoxy²⁷. The Encratites and the Apotactites, though mentioned in canon 95 of the Council in Trullo, most probably had ceased to be active sometime before then. The Novatians apparently merged with the Montanists and disappeared with them early in the eighth century²⁸.

In the meantime, however, two new heresies made their appearance: the Athinganoi and the Paulicians. The Athinganoi, by virtue of their beliefs, constituted a strange sect, mentioned for the first time in the compilation of the presbyter Timothy at the beginning of the seventh century and again by the Patriarch Germanus in the first half of the eighth century²⁹. By the beginning of the ninth century, the Athinganoi, originally located in Phrygia, increased to such a degree, probably by merging with other sects, that they spread into Lycaonia³⁰. Michael II was said to have inherited from his parents the beliefs of the Athinganoi, and Nicephorus I was accused of being friendly to both them and the Paulicians³¹. During the reign of Michael I the imperial authorities were persuaded to take action against the Athinganoi; they were either exterminated or driven out of their homes, and some were settled on the island of Aegina where the natives referred to them as aliens, a term which in this

24. Mansi, XI, 984.

25. Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. C. de Boor (Leipzig, 1883) I, 401. For other texts, J. Starr, *The Jews in the Byzantine Empire* (Athens, 1939) 91-92.

26. Theophanes, *op. cit.*, 496.

27. Homily XVII (=C. Mango, *The Homilies of Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople*, DOS, III, Cambridge, Mass., 1958, p. 185 and note 3).

28. On these heresies, see further J. Gouillard «L' hérésie dans l' empire byzantin des origines au XIIe siècle» *Travaux et Mémoires*, I (1965), 299-312. Cf. Charanis, «Ethnic Changes», 26-27; S. Vryonis, Jr., *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth Century* (Berkeley-Los Angeles, 1971), 55-60.

29. Timothy, Presbyter of Constantinople, *De Receptione Haereticorum*, Migne, *Patrologiae... Graeca*, 86, col. 33; Germanus, Patriarch of Constantinople, *De Haeresibus et Synodes*, PG, 98, col. 85.

30. Theophanes, *op. cit.*, I, 495; Genesisius, *Historia*, Bonn ed. (1834), 32; Theophanes Continuatus, 42.

31. Theophanes, *op. cit.*, I, 488; Theophanes Continuatus, 42.

instance can only mean that they were not indigenous to Aegina³². The Athinganoi do not, thereafter, disappear entirely from the records, but as an active heresy they ceased to be of any significance³³.

The Paulicians constituted a sect which was brought to Byzantine Asia Minor from Armenia. There are points in the history of the sect and its beliefs which are by no means clear; scholars differ widely about these points and also about the nature of the sources³⁴. But on the salient points of interest to this discussion, there is general agreement both in the sources and among those who have studied them. The first Paulicians came to the Armenian regions of the Armeniakon theme, settling around Koloneia sometime during the second half of the seventh century. There they spread their faith, winning many converts. During the second half of the eighth century, one of their leaders moved to Antioch in Pisidia, where he possibly made converts to Paulicianism, but on this point the sources give no information. The Paulicians suffered persecutions under Constantine IV and Justinian II, and quite possibly also under Philippicus (711-13), but for the rest of the eighth century they were apparently tolerated. The sect spread throughout the districts of Koloneia and Neo-Caesarea, but under Michael I and perhaps also Leo V they were subjected to the same persecution which was directed against the Athinganoi: many were killed, but many more fled to the Arabs who permitted them to establish their own stronghold. The final blow was struck in 843 under Theodora, regent for Michael III. It is said that 100,000 died on that occasion, and their properties were confiscated; those who survived sought asylum among the Arabs, joining their coreligionists who had previously found refuge there. Thereafter, the struggle against the Paulicians became purely military, since by then they had become a foreign power. When in 872 Tephrike, their most powerful stronghold, was captured and destroyed by the Byzantines, their role in the life of Byzantine Asia Minor came to an end. «With the destruction of Tephrike», writes Nina Carsoian, «the history of the Paulicians within the imperial provinces of the East comes to an end, and the subsequent history of the sect must be sought in the Balkans or beyond the Euphrates in its

32. *The Life of Saint Athanasia of Aegina*. *Acta SS, August*, III (1867), 170E. On the Athinganoi, see J. Starr, «An Eastern Christian Sect: The Athinganoi», *Harvard Theological Review*, 29, 2(1936), 93-106; Gouillard, *op. cit.*, 304-7; 309-12.

33. Gouillard, *op. cit.*, 315-316.

34. For edition of the Greek texts on the Paulicians and a translation of them in French by Ch. Astruc, W. Conus-Wojska, J. Gouillard, P. Lemerle, D. Papachrysanthou, and J. Paremelle, in *Travaux et Mémoires*, 4(1970), 3-227. Nina G. Garsoian has analyzed the Armenian texts and reconstructed the history of the Paulicians in Armenia and Byzantine Asia Minor: *The Paulician Heresy: A Study of the Origin and Development of Paulicianism in Armenia and the Eastern Provinces of the Byzantine Empire* (The Hague-Paris, 1967). P. Lemerle has also reconstructed the history of the Paulicians in Byzantine Asia Minor. Lemerle gives also a summary of the literature on the subject: «Histoire des Pauliciens d'Asie Mineure d'après les sources grecques», *Travaux et Mémoires*, 5(1973), 1-144.

homeland of Armenia»³⁵. The appearance of the sect in the Balkan peninsula must be explained, of course, by the Byzantine policy of the transfer of peoples from one region of the empire to another³⁶. The particular transfers involved in this development were those affected by the emperors of the eighth and ninth centuries who removed numerous Armenians, many of whom were no doubt Paulicians, from the eastern regions of the empire and settled them in Thrace, whence they spread throughout the Balkan peninsula, its Bulgarian regions in particular, and reappeared later as the Bogomiles³⁷, whose essentially Paulician doctrine had been modified somewhat by certain beliefs, their attitude towards marriage, for instance, drawn from Massalianism, another heretical sect then rampant in Bulgaria and to a limited extent also in Asia Minor³⁸.

Bogomiles and Paulicians, the latter reinforced by new arrivals, transferred from the eastern regions of the empire and settled in the regions of Philippopolis in Thrace by the emperor John Tzimiskes towards the end of the third quarter of the tenth century³⁹, will in time, following the annexation of the Bulgarian regions of the empire early in the eleventh century, cause some problems. In the meantime, with the virtual end of Paulicianism in the empire itself soon after the suppression of Iconoclasm early in the fifth decade of the ninth century and the virtual disappearance of every other heresy Orthodoxy came to reign supreme throughout the empire. When, therefore, at the end of 858 Photios became patriarch of Constantinople two features characterized the inhabitants of the regions under the jurisdiction of his Church: they were Orthodox and they were Greek speakers. Photios himself as a result of the controversy with Rome has often been regarded as the man who established, defended and preserved the independence of the Greek Church. As a biographer of Photios in the nineteenth century put it, «nine popes, five councils have successively exhausted all the sources of their authority in order to check his [Photios] ambition and subdue his pride; and, despite their united efforts, they were neither able to make him yield nor prevent him from separating two great Churches by a fatal schism which still endures and which has been the source of great calamities»⁴⁰. And a modern scholar has written: «For the Orthodox, Photius is one of the greatest Eastern Fathers, the last

35. Garsoian, *op. cit.*, 130.

36. On this policy and the transfers effected by emperors of the eighth and ninth century see P. Charanis, «The transfer of Population as a Policy in the Byzantine Empire», *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, III, 2 (1961), 140-154.

37. The literature on the Paulicians and Bogomites in the Balkan peninsula is rather extensive. Here I cite only the work of Dimitri Obolensky, *The Bogomils. A Study in Balkan Neo—Menichism* (Cambridge, 1948), Pp. XIV + 317. According to Obolensky (p. 82) by the third quarter of the ninth century «the Paulician heresy was a strong and dangerous force in Bulgaria».

38. Cf. Gouillard, *op. cit.*, 322.

39. Charanis, «The Transfer of Population...» (see above note 36), 146.

40. Abbé Jager, *Histoire de Photius, patriarche de Constantinople* (Paris, 1845), v.

great doctor of the Greek Church, a saint officially canonised by all Eastern churches, the valiant defender of the freedom and autonomy of his church against all encroachment from the Papacy, a great teacher, and a great Prince of the Church»⁴¹. Contemporary scholarship has shown, however, that there is no basis in fact for the view that what Photios did indeed try to do was to establish the independence of the Greek Church⁴². Whatever the reason for the schism with Rome during his first patriarchate, Photios passed his second patriarchate in communion with Rome. Photios did not doubt the concept of the one church universal; he believed however, in the pentarchy as the final authority of that Church, but at the same time he did not seriously question the privilege of honor enjoyed by the See of Rome, going even as far as to concede to it its claim that it was the final court of appeals. Throughout the ninth century, including, of course, the two patriarchates of Photios, there was a tendency on the part of the Church of Constantinople to act, particularly in matters of discipline, independently of any other Church, but this within the general concept of the one Church Universal, and not as an independent national church. One cannot yet speak as of this period of a national Greek Church.

The period between the end of the ninth century and the middle of the eleventh century marks a brilliant stage in the history of the Byzantine Church. It witnessed some of its greatest triumphs as, for instance, the conversion of the Russians to Christianity, and it ceased to be interested in Rome. In actual fact the two churches had not been in communion with each other since before about 1024⁴³. In the meantime, however, as a result of the territorial expansion of the empire, its internal position became more complicated. The inhabitants of the regions under its jurisdiction were now not all Greek speakers. In the Balkan peninsula the Slavophones predominated, and in Asia Minor the movement of the Armenians westward affected seriously the ethnic complexion of that peninsula. Heresy was again rampant – Bogomilism, Paulicianism and Massalianism in the Balkan peninsula, Massalianism in Asia Minor and Monophysitism in the new eastern provinces of the empire.

41. Francis Dvornik, *Photian and Byzantine Ecclesiastical Studies* (London, Variorum Reprints, 1974), Study III, p. 19 (=«The Patriarch Photios: Father of Schism – or Patron of Reunion», *Report of the Proceedings at the Church Unity Octave, Blackfriars, Oxford, January 18th-25th, 1942*. Oxford 1942).

42. Consult in particular the work of Francis Dvornik, especially, *The Photian Schism: History and Legend* (Cambridge University Press, 1948); also by the same author, «The Patriarch Photios in the Light of Recent Research» *Bericht zum XI. Internationalen Byzantinisten-Kongress, München, 1958*, III/2 (Munich, 1958) (= *Photios and Byzantine Ecclesiastical Studies*, Study VI).

43. Cf. Charanis, «The Byzantine Empire in the Eleventh Century» in *A History of the Crusades*, vol. I. The First Hundred Years, editors: K.M. Setton and M.W. Baldwin (Madison, Wis., 1969) (=Charanis, *Social, Economic and Political Life in the Byzantine Empire. Collected Studies*, London, 1973, Study XVI), 207 f.

The revived religious diversity in the empire created new problems for its Church. One of these problems was its relations with Rome. The quarrel with Rome in 1054 was actually provoked by the arrogance of Cardinal Humbert, sent to Constantinople by the Pope to reestablish communion with that see⁴⁴, but the efforts of patriarch Cerularius to tone down the diversity which had come to characterize his church, its liturgical practices in particular, was an initial factor in the affair⁴⁵. That quarrel had virtually passed unnoticed⁴⁶, but in the long run it proved one of the most persistent sources of trouble for the Byzantine Church and threatened the very existence of the empire itself. For the quarrel with Rome was used as a pretext by the war lords of western Europe to carve out principalities for themselves at the expense of the Byzantine Empire and in this they were encouraged by the papacy. Whatever the original aim of the crusading movement may have been, it was not long before it began to be directed against the Byzantines on the ground that they were an heretical people⁴⁷. And it was this aggressive and hostile activity of western Europe against the Byzantines, together with the arrogance of the Italian merchants who became more and more dominant in the Near East which turned the quarrel of 1054 into a permanent schism. Under the circumstances the reaction of the Byzantines towards the Latins became more and more hostile. Their attitude was very well expressed by the contemporary Greek historian of the Fourth Crusade, Nicetas Choniates: «Thus», he writes, «between us and them [the Latins] a bottomless gulf of enmity has established itself; we cannot unite our souls and we entirely disagree with each other, although we keep up our external relations and often live in the same house»⁴⁸. When, beginning with the fourteenth century the Byzantine empire came to be threatened by the expansion of the Ottoman Turks, and the Byzantines repeatedly appealed to the western Christians for help they were told that they

44. Martin Jugie, *Le schisme byzantin. Aperçu historique et doctrinal* (Paris, 1941), 187 ff. On page 218 Jugie writes: Humbert and his associates «were under illusions concerning the sentiments of the Byzantines on the whole towards the Latins. They had wished to separate the cause of the patriarch and his clergy from that of the emperor and the people, to treat Cerularius like a black sheep of St. Peter's flock, to act in Constantinople as they would have acted in a city of the west. And they did not notice that in Constantinople they cut the figures of arrogant strangers with insupportable airs. It was enough for their sentence the sentence of excommunication which they directed against Cerularius to be known to provoke a popular tumult».

45. For a brief biographical sketch of Cerularius : J.B. Bury, «The Patriarch Michael Kerularios», in *Selected Essays of J. B. Bury*, ed. by H. Temperly (Cambridge, 1930), 210ff.

46. Cf. Charanis, «The Byzantine Empire in the Eleventh Century» (see above, note 43), 216p.

47. Cf. Charanis, «Aims of the Medieval Crusades and How They were Viewed by Byzantium», *Church History*, 21(1952), 123-134 (=Study XV of Charanis, *Social, Economic and Political Life of Byzantium*: see above, note 43).

48. Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, ed. by A. Van Dielen (Berlin, 1975), 301.

had first to subordinate their Church to the papacy before any help could be given. And in actual fact the Byzantine Church was twice officially subordinated to the papacy, once during the reign of Michael VIII Palaeologus when the danger to the empire came from the Normans of Sicily and again in the fifteenth century at the Council of Florence when the empire was about to be destroyed by the Ottomans. But in both instances, because of the popular outcry against it, the subordination hardly materialized.

In the meantime certain developments reduced, eventually to the vanishing point, the territorial extent under the effective jurisdiction of the Byzantine Church. First of all the imperial restoration effected by the Comneni did not include all the territories, certainly not in Asia Minor, which had been lost to the empire as the result of the disaster of the early part of the fourth quarter of the eleventh century. Then towards the end of the twelfth century the Bulgarian regions detached themselves from the empire to form the new Bulgarian kingdom and this included the revival of the independence of the Bulgarian Church. The empire organized by the Lascarids out of the ruins produced by the Fourth Crusade never came to include all the regions of the empire which the Crusades had destroyed, something which was also true of the jurisdictional circumscription of the reorganized patriarchate, whose seat was now at Nicaea. This circumscription did not even include all the Greek speaking lands, for Epirus was under a different jurisdiction, while other regions among these lands were still under the control of the Latins. The restoration under the Palaeologi was also partial, but such as it was, it was not long before its territorial position began to deteriorate. Already under Michael VIII Palaeologus it had begun to lose its hold on Asia Minor, and although for a time the empire was able to maintain its position, and even to expand somewhat, in the Balkan peninsula, the process of deterioration began there also. By the middle of the fourteenth century the actual territorial extent of the empire came to be restricted to Greek speaking lands, and not all the Greek speaking lands formerly in its possession. This was true also of its church which had suffered a serious blow in 1346 when Stephen Dušan created the independent Serbian patriarchate.

One viewing the situation of the Byzantine church as of the middle of the fourteenth century and perhaps somewhat earlier in perspective could very well say that by then it had evolved into the national Greek Church. But this is not what the Byzantines themselves of the period actually thought. In a letter addressed to Basil I, Grand Prince of Moscow, in 1393 the Byzantine patriarch Anthony IV wrote:

«If we, on account of our common sins, have lost cities and lands, it does not follow from this that we have to suffer disdain from Christians... With sorrow I also learn of some words spoken by Your Nobility about my mightiest and Holy Autocrat and Emperor. It is said that you do not allow the Metropolitan to mention in the diptychs the Holy Name of the Emperor – a

thing which has never been possible before— and you say: «We have the Church, but we have no Emperor nor wish to know him». This is by no means good... If, with the will of God, the pagans have surrounded the possessions and the land of the Emperor, yet up to this day the Emperor has the same coronation from the Church according to the same ritual and with the same prayers; he is anointed with great consecrated oil and elected Emperor and Autocrat of the Romans, *i.e.*, of all Christians... If the Great Emperor, the Lord and Master of the Universe, invested with such power, has been reduced to such straits, what might not other local rulers and small princes endure?... Thus, it is by no means good, my Son, if you say that «We have the Church, not the Emperor». It is impossible to Christians to have the Church, but not to have the Emperor... As the Holy Apostle foreseeing the future [says] that Christians shall have only one Emperor... If some other Christians assume to themselves the name of Emperor, all these things are abnormal, illegal, and more pertaining to tyranny and violence»⁴⁹.

Obviously the Byzantines even at this late date did not think of their Church as a Greek National Church. It was, of course Greek in that everything that had been associated with it, its theology, its liturgy, its hymnography, the records of its councils, its disciplinary codes, had been expressed in Greek and its constituents, at least at this late period, were all or virtually all Greek speakers. The Byzantines, however, continued to think of it in terms of the old concept of the one Church Universal and their mode of thinking will survive the empire. There will indeed be no National Greek Church until the nineteenth century when it will be officially created following the formation of the modern Greek state. Its creation, when viewed from the vantage point of the Greek world as a whole and Orthodoxy in general of the period, may have been a mistake. But as the patriarch Anthony IV had put it when he spoke of the inseparable existence of Church and Empire, the new Greek state had to have its official Church. The matter was determined by the tradition in which the Greek nation had been nurtured for centuries and that tradition, despite the then recent revival of aspects of ancient Hellenism, was Byzantine.

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49. Fr. Miklosich and J. Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevii*, II (Vienna, 1862), 189-192. I used the translation made by A. A. Vasiliev: «Was Old Russia a Vassal State of Byzantium?», *Speculum*, 7 (1932), 358 p.