

From the Middle Ages to Modern Times: Development of Orthodox Church Structures

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Primary Sources: On the Balkan Churches and their relations with Constantinople, see V. Grumel–J. Darrouzès, *Les Régestes des actes du patriarcat de Constantinople* I–IV, Paris 1932–1977, with many texts, related to the 14th–15th cc. being published in F. Miklosich–J. Müller, *Acta patriarchatus Constantinopolitani* I–II, Vienna 1860; cf. also critical studies of these sources in J. Darrouzès, *Le registre synodal du patriarcat byzantin au XIVe siècle. Etude paléographique et diplomatique*, Paris 1971, and (for the period 1315–1331) H. Hunger–O. Kresten, *Das Register des Patriarchats von Konstantinopel*, I. Teil, Vienna 1981. Still irreplaceable is the publication by H. Gelzer, *Ungedruckte und ungenügend veröffentlichte Texte der Notitiae episcopatum*, *Abhandlungen der bayerischen Akademie d. Wissenschaften*, Phil. Kl. XXI, 1901. A.-E. N. Tachiaos, *Πηγές ἐκκλησιαστικῆς ἱστορίας τῶν ὀρθοδόξων Σλάβων* I, Thessaloniki 1984. For the Bulgarian church, see *Fontes Graecae Historiae Bulgariae* I, Sofia 1954, and Latinski izvori za Bŭlgarskata istoriya, Sofia 1986; P. Gautier, *Théophylacte d'Achrida. Discours, traités, poésies*, Thessaloniki 1980, and *Theophylacti Epistulae*, Thessaloniki 1986; A. Milev, *Grŭtskie zhitiya na Kliment Okhridski*, Sofia 1966. Sources on the origins of the Serbian church are primarily hagiographical, see particularly L. Mirković, *Zivot Sv. Save i Sv. Simeona*, Belgrad 1938, and Dj. Daničić, *Zivoti kraljeva i arhiepiskopa srpskikh*, Zagreb 1866; repr. London 1972; the letters of Demetrios Khomatianos are published by J. B. Pitra, *Analecta sacra et classica spicilegio solesmense parata* VII, Rome 1891.

For the period of the Tourkokratia, see M. Gedeon, *Πατριαρχικοὶ πίνακες*, Constantinople 1890; C. Delikanis, *Τὰ ἐν τοῖς κώδιξι τοῦ πατριαρχικοῦ ἀρχιεπισκοπικοῦ ἀρχειοφυλακείου σωζόμενα ἐπίσημα ἐκκλησιαστικὰ ἔγγραφα τὰ ἀφορώντα εἰς τὰς σχέσεις οἰκουμενικοῦ πατριαρχείου πρὸς τὰς ἐκκλησίας Ἀλεξανδρείας, Ἀντιοχείας, Ἱεροσολύμων καὶ Κύπρου*, Constantinople 1904.

Among the very vast materials available on the Russian church, particularly important are A. Pavlov (ed.), *Pamyatniki drevnerusskago kanonicheskogo prava* I, Russkaya istoricheskaya biblioteka VI, St. Petersburg 1880 (relations with Constantinople, Lithuania, and Poland in the 14th and 15th cc.); *Sobranie gosudarstvennykh gramot i dogovorov*, 4 vols., Moscow 1813–28 (vol. 2 contains the documents on the establishment of the patriarchate); C. Sathas, *Βιογραφικὸν σχεδιάσμα περὶ πατριάρχου Ἱερεμίου Β'*, Athen 1870 (text of a description by Arsenios of the establishment of the patriarchate).

Secondary Sources: On the Balkan churches, the old history by *E. E. Golubinsky*, *Kratky ocherk istorii pravoslavnykh tserkvei bolgarskoi, serbskoi i rumynskoi, ili moldo-valahskoi*, Moscow 1871, is the most comprehensive; *A. P. Vlasto*, *The Entry of the Slavs into Christendom*, Cambridge 1970. On the Bulgarian church, see the collective work *T. Sabev (ed.)*, *Bŭlgarskata patriarshiya prez vekovete*, Sofia 1980; *H. Gelzer*, *Das Patriarchat von Achrida*, Leipzig 1902; *I. Snegarov*, *Istoria no Okhridskata arkhiepiskopiya I*, Sofia 1924; *I. Kh. Tarnanidis*, 'Η διαμόρφωσις τοῦ αὐτοκεφάλου τῆς Βουλγαρικῆς ἐκκλησίας, Thessaloniki 1976; *A.-E. Tachiaos*, *Die Aushebung des bulgarischen Patriarchats von Tirnovo*, *Balkan Studies* 4 (1963) 67–82. On the Serbian church, see *Dj. Slijepicevic*, *Istorija srpske pravoslavne cerkve*, München 1962; also the chapter on St. Sava in *D. Obolensky*, *Six Byzantine Portraits*, Oxford 1988, pp. 115–172; and, particularly, *A. Karpozilos*, *the Ecclesiastical Controversy between the Kingdom of Nicea and the Principality of Epirus (1217–1233)*, Thessaloniki 1973, and *J. Erickson*, *Autocephaly in Orthodox Canonical Literature to the Thirteenth Century*, *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 15 (1971) 28–47.

For the origins of the Romanian dioceses, see *Istoria Bisericii Romine I*, Bukarest 1957, pp. 144–162; 171–190; *Arseny*, *Izslədovaniya i monografii po istorii Moldavskoi tserkvi*, St. Petersburg 1904; *E. Stănescu*, *Byzance et les pays roumains aux IX^e–XV^e ss.*, in: *Actes du XIV^e Congrès International des études byzantines I*, Bucharest 1974.

The best general treatment of the period of Turkish rule is by *S. Runciman*, *The Great Church in Captivity. A Study of the Patriarchate of Constantinople from the Eve of the Turkish Conquest to the Greek War of Independence*, Cambridge 1968.

The ecclesiastical relations between Byzantium and Russia in the 14th century are covered in *J. Meyendorff*, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia*, Cambridge 1981; repr. Crestwood, NY 1990; see also *The Byzantine Legacy in the Orthodox Church*, Crestwood, NY 1982. The classical comprehensive histories of the Russian Church are those of *Makary*, *Istoriya russkoi tserkvi*, 12 vols., St. Petersburg 1889; *E. Golubinsky*, *Istoriya russkoi tserkvi*, 4 vols., Moscow 1901–1904, and *A. Kartashev*, *Ocherki po istorii russkoi tserkvi*, 2 vols., Paris 1959; see also *A. M. Ammann*, *Abriß der ostslawischen Kirchengeschichte*, Vienna 1950. On the relations with the Eastern patriarch, see *N. F. Kaptelev*, *Kharakter otnosheniya Rossii k pravoslavnomu vostoku v XVI i XVII stoletiyakh*, Moscow 1885.

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The idea of symphony between a universal empire and a universal church remained the basic vision of the Christian world in Byzantium, right down to the fall of Constantinople in 1453. However, that vision was not supposed to contradict or eliminate the primitive ecclesiology, which remained »eucharistic«, maintaining, as we have shown earlier, the catholic identity of each local church, headed by its bishop, who in turn was a member of the world episcopate. The unity of the episcopate, in each geographic region, was manifested at synods of bishops, which were supposed to meet regularly around the

»metropolitan« of each province. On the universal scale, however, the emperor was the recognized coordinator and the convenor of ecumenical councils, which required a representation of five patriarchs. At least in principle, the »symphony« excluded »caesaropapism«, because the emperor did not claim doctrinal infallibility. The church kept a vivid memory of heretical emperors (Arian, Monothelite, Iconoclastic) and later opposed emperors for canonical reasons (the fourth marriage of Leo VI, 886–912) and for promoting unacceptable formulae of union with Rome (Michael VIII Palaeologus, 1261–1282).

However, this Byzantine system of church government was challenged by historical realities. Since the fifth century, Eastern Christians living beyond the imperial borders, particularly those who were threatened by Persia (Armenians, Syrians, Georgians), had no choice but to organize their life independently, and many of them preferred a Nestorian, or Monophysite, option rather than to appear to Persians or Arabs as the emperor's agents. With the Islamic conquest (seventh cent.), the limits of the Orthodox empire of Byzantium were further reduced, but soon, starting in the ninth century, the church of Constantinople expanded its missionary reach throughout Eastern Europe.

The principle, accepted by Byzantine missionaries, to translate Scripture and liturgical texts into the vernacular, was necessarily conducive to the creation of national churches. Actually, St. Constantine, Cyril and St. Methodios, the great missionaries to the Slavs, when they were struggling with German clerics and had to defend their translations from Greek into Slavonic, were referring to the example of the many Eastern nations, who represented ancient national Christian cultures with liturgy in their own languages: the Armenians, the Persians, the Abasgians (or Abkhazians), the Sougdaians (in the Crimea), the Goths, the Avars, the »Turks« (i.e. Hungarians), the Khazars, the Arabs, the Egyptians, the Syrians and others¹. Some of these examples may seem rather obscure, but some were very relevant to the cause, defended by Sts. Cyril and Methodios. The case of the Georgians in particular, a nation which possessed ecclesiastical independence (or autocephaly) since the fifth century, which was Orthodox-Chalcedonian (at least since 600–601) and which had even eventually adopted the entire Byzantine liturgical tradition (in Georgian translation)², could be seen as the clearest example to follow by the newly baptized Slavic nations. The latter, therefore, did have the model provided by ancient Christian kingdoms to use for their own political self-determination. But they were also inspired by the Byzantine system itself, whose principles were made available to them in translation: the principle of a universal Christian empire and the idea of a dyarchy of the emperor and the patriarch, ruling society in »symphony«. The difference, however, was

¹ Cf. Life of Constantine, 16; cf. a good discussion of this text in F. Dvornik, *Les légendes de Constantin et de Méthode vues de Byzance*, Prague 1933, p. 207.

² The conversion of King Miriam of Eastern Georgia occurred, through the preaching of St. Nino, around 330 A.D. Associated originally with the Armenian catholicosate of Dvin, the Georgians obtained the consecration of an independent »catholicos« (or patriarch) of Mtskheta by the patriarch of Antioch in 486–488. It is the catholicos St. Kyrion (590–604) who placed Georgia, in a definitive way, within the Chalcedonian camp. Its ecclesiastical independence was confirmed repeatedly by successive Orthodox patriarchs of Antioch. Cf. C. Toumanoff, *Caucasia and Byzantium, Traditio* 27 (1971) 167–169; M. Tarchnischvili, *Die Entstehung und Entwicklung der kirchlichen Autokephalie Georgiens*, *Kyrios* 5 (1940/1) 177–193; reprinted in *Muséon* 73 (1960) 107–126.

that the Roman empire of Justinian was, at least in principle, *universal*, whereas the new Slavic empires were, in fact, nation-states.

1. The Churches of the Balkans

The conversion of tsar Boris of neighboring Bulgaria appeared a major victory — spiritual, cultural, and also political — for Byzantium (864). But it soon became a challenge as well. On the one hand, Bulgaria welcomed the disciples of Sts. Cyril and Methodios — St. Clement of Ohrid, St. Naum — who were expelled from Moravia by the Franks, and continued translations from the Greek, so that Bulgaria became the main center for the expansion of Slavic Christianity. On the other hand, tsar Symeon (893–927), son and successor of Boris, bilingual in culture, but a true Byzantine in political views, began to cherish the dream of becoming emperor in Constantinople. He assumed the imperial title, and took control of most of the Balkan peninsula, but he failed to capture the city itself. As an alternative to his original plan, he established a patriarchate in his East Bulgarian capital of Preslav, which became the capital of an empire »of Bulgarians and the Romans«³. His political ideology thus remained universalist, but political reality reduced him to being the first national Slavic-Christian ruler. The Patriarchate of Preslav would be recognized by Byzantium only under the reign of Symeon's son, tsar Peter (927–969), who had adopted a more peaceful attitude towards the legitimate empire of Constantinople. Emperor John Tzimiskes, however, was eventually able to destroy the Bulgarian challenge altogether. Bulgarian patriarch Damian was dethroned in 971⁴. However, a Bulgarian primate, referred to as »archbishop« in Greek sources, and as »patriarch« in the Slavic documents, eventually settled in Ohrid, in Western Bulgaria (today's Yugoslav Macedonia), under the auspices of the resurrected Bulgarian empire of tsar Samuel. After the crushing of the latter by the armies of Byzantine emperor Basil II. (1014), the »archbishopric« of Ohrid was maintained as »autocephalous«, but with a Greek incumbent, appointed directly by the emperor, and a jurisdiction extending over the Eastern parts of the Balkan peninsula, i. e., territories inhabited by Serbs, Bulgarians, Albanians, »Vlachs« (the future Romanians), as well as Greeks and Magyars (or Hungarians, often designed as »Turks«). This »archbishop of Bulgaria« also began to use the rather fictional title of archbishop of *Justiniana Prima*, as a device to justify his autocephaly from Constantinople. Indeed, in 535 A.D. emperor Justinian had established under that label an autocephalous archbishop in the place of his birth near Skoplije in Macedonia⁵. Amidst various historical vicissitudes, the autocephalous archbishopric,

³ Symeon's was not the first attempt to establish another »Rome«. Charlemagne had also seen a »new Rome« in his capital of Aachen. Such initiatives, in »barbarian« lands, will be repeated, down to the theory of Moscow, the »third Rome«, to be mentioned below.

⁴ H. Gelzer, Ungedruckte und ungenügend veröffentlichte Texte der *Notitiae episcopatum*, in: Abhandlungen der bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil. Kl. XXI, 1901.

⁵ Cf. D. Döppman, Zur Problematik von *Justiniana Prima* (*Miscellanea Bulgarica* 5), Vienna 1987, pp. 221–232.

occasionally titled also as patriarch, of Ohrid, survived until 1767, when its autocephaly was suppressed and it was submitted to Constantinople⁶.

The Byzantine imperial and ecclesiastical control, established by Basil II, over the entire Balkan peninsula, would begin to disintegrate in the late twelfth century and disappeared completely, as the imperial capital itself was sacked by the Crusaders in 1204. In the eyes of many political leaders of the era, the Byzantine *oikoumene* was definitively overpowered by a monolithic Latin Christendom, headed by the pope. However, in the midst of this political collapse, the ecumenical patriarchate, exiled in Nicea, adopted a policy of realism and flexibility, which allowed it to keep and even to reinforce its position as center of a revived Orthodox world.

Already in 1185, a Bulgarian revolt led to the establishment of an independent «tsardom of Bulgarians and Vlachs» with capital in Trnovo in Eastern Bulgaria. Following the examples of Symeon and Samuel, the new tsar Peter Asen presided, on that same year, over the establishment of a patriarchate in Trnovo. Since this act was naturally rejected in Constantinople, tsar Peter's successor, tsar Kaloyan, began a shrewd diplomatic game, involving the papacy and aimed at obtaining the legitimization of his imperial title, as well as the recognition of his independent church. Soon after the capture of Constantinople by the Crusaders, a Roman cardinal crowned Kaloyan, anointed the Bulgarian bishops⁷ and established patriarch Basil of Trnovo as «primate» of the Bulgarian church (Nov. 8, 1204). However, Latin supremacy did not last in Bulgaria. Orthodox traditions were strong enough to provoke a quick reversal back to Orthodoxy. In the following year, the Bulgarian tsar gave refuge to the ecumenical patriarch John Kamateros, expelled by the Latins. Rejecting papal appeals to submission, he attacked the Crusaders and took Latin emperor Baldwin prisoner.

By 1235, all ambiguity concerning the relations between the Bulgarian church and Rome was ended. A matrimonial alliance between the courts of Nicea and Trnovo was concluded and the Bulgarian patriarchate Joachim was recognized by Constantinople⁸. In the succeeding century and a half, until the capture of Trnovo by the Turks (1393), the «second» Bulgarian empire and the restored patriarchate contributed immensely to the development of Slavic Orthodox culture in the Balkans and in Russia.

The overall political and religious scene, which determined the emergence of the Bulgarian patriarchate of Trnovo, was also decisive in the case of Serbia. The region known

⁶ On its history, see *H. Gelzer*, *Das Patriarchat von Achrida*, Leipzig 1902, and *I. Snegarov*, *Istoriya na Okhridskata arkhiepikopiya I*, Sofia 1924. The history of the see of Ohrid will serve the Bulgarians as an argument in their controversies with the Greeks. The establishment of the autocephalous Bulgarian church in 1870 will be seen by them as a «restoration», not a new foundation [cf. studies in *T. Sabev (ed.)*, *Bŭlgarskata patriarshiya prez vekovete*, Sofia 1980].

⁷ This anointment of Bulgarian Orthodox bishops by the cardinal is mentioned by pope Innocent III (*A. Potthast*, *Regesta pontificum romanorum VII*, 3: *PL* 215, 282 A). It witnessed to a distrust in the validity of Eastern ordinations, in which no anointment is practised, as it indeed is in the Latin rite.

⁸ On these proceedings see *A.-E. Tachiaos*, *Die Aufhebung des bulgarischen Patriarchats von Trnovo*, *Balkan Studies* 4 (1963); *G. Tsankova-Petkova*, *Vosstanovlenie Bolgarskogo Patriarsheshtva v 1235 g. i. mezhdunarodnoe polozhenie Bolgarskogo gosudarstva*, *Vizantiiski Vremennik* 28 (Moscow 1968) 136–150; *I. Kh. Tarnanidis*, *Ἡ διαμόρφωσις τοῦ αὐτοκεφάλου τῆς Βουλγαρικῆς ἐκκλησίας*, Thessaloniki 1976, pp. 132–177; *N. Krustev*, *Turnovskata Patriarshiya*, in: *T. Sabev (ed.)*, *Bŭlgarskata Patriarshiya prez vekovete*, Sofia 1980, p. 20.

as Raska — south of Belgrade — was christianized under the reign of Byzantine emperor Basil I (867–886), possibly as a consequence of the mission of Sts. Cyril and Methodios to central Europe. On the Adriatic coast, the country of Zeta (Gr.-Dioclea, also known later as Cerna Gora, »Black Mountain«, Montenegro) was under the Christianizing influence of the Greek episcopal see of Dyrrhachium. In the eleventh century, it was submitted to the Latin archbishopric of Bar (or Antibari). A ruler (or »Great Zupan«) of Raska, Stefan Nemanja, being himself originally from Zeta, succeeded in uniting the two countries under his rule. Having received a Latin baptism in his youth in Zeta, he converted to Orthodoxy in 1190.

In the midst of a very confused political and religious situation, the decisive role in determining the spiritual fate of Serbia was played by one of Nemanja's three sons; Rastko, who in 1191, aged 18, left his father's court to become a monk at the Russian monastery of Mt. Athos, under the name of Sava (Sabbas). Nemanja himself abdicated in 1196, left Raska and Zeta respectively to his other two sons, Stefan and Vukan, and joined St. Sava on Mt. Athos. Father and son together established there the monastery of Khilendar, which would become a major center of Serbian, but also generally Slavic monasticism and spirituality.

Returning home in 1207 from Mt. Athos (where his father had died), St. Sava faced his two brothers, who, following the Latin conquest of Constantinople (1204), were competing for papal favors. He did not protest against the crowning of Stefan of Raska by a legate of pope Honorius III (1217), but himself soon left for Nicea, where emperor Theodore I Lascaris (1204–1222) and ecumenical patriarch Manuel I Sarantos (1215–1222) granted Serbia the status of an »autocephalous archbishopric« with St. Sava as first archbishop (1219). After vacillating between East and West, as Bulgaria did, Serbia found its place within the Orthodox world thanks to the leadership of St. Sava, but also the diplomatic skill of the exiled patriarchate in Nicea⁹. Building up the new church, St. Sava, with its see set in Zica, remained a man of universal vision: he travelled again to Nicea, where he had kept friends and contacts, as well as to Jerusalem, and it is on one of his trips to the high places of Eastern Christendom, after resigning his see to return to monastic life, that he died in Trnovo (1237), where the new patriarchate had just obtained recognition from Constantinople.

Being a personal success of St. Sava, the establishment of the Serbian archbishopric was not an uncontroversial act. Indeed, the territory of Raska was in the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Ohrid, who protested the move. Did the ecumenical patriarch have the right to establish a new church on the territory of another autocephalous church? The challenge was made by Demetrios Khomatianos, a learned Greek canonist who occupied the see of Ohrid — a challenge which had also political background and implications. Demetrios was not challenging the legitimacy of the ecumenical patriarchate, exiled in Nicea, but that of the Nicean emperor, since he was supporting another claimant to the

⁹ On this policy of the patriarchate, which included also the appointment, in 1246, of a Russian, Cyrill, as metropolitan of Kiev, sponsored by prince Daniel of Galicia, an action which prevented the latter from entering the papal orbit, cf. my paper: *Ideological crisis, 1071–1261*, in: *XV^e Congrès des études byzantines. Crisis Idéologiques*, Athens 1976 (repr. in: *The Byzantine Legacy in the Orthodox Church*, Crestwood, NY 1982, pp. 72–77).

imperial throne, Theodore Angelos of Epirus, who controlled the city of Ohrid. The argument of Khomatianos was that only a legitimate emperor could modify the borders of churches — a legal principle stated by the code of Justinian. Neither Theodore Angelos — whom, however, he would eventually crown emperor himself in Thessalonica (1224) — nor Theodore Lascaris of Nicea, nor the ecumenical patriarch, were entitled to infringe upon the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Ohrid¹⁰.

The historical future, however, belonged to Serbia, not to Ohrid. Actually, the two sees would soon be reconciled, under Serbian aegis, and a Serbian empire would, for a time, dominate the Balkans and include Macedonia and northern Greece. In 1345, tsar Stefan Dusan (1331–1355), dreaming, as Symeon of Bulgaria, to capture Constantinople itself, was proclaimed »emperor and autocrat of Serbs and Romans«. In 1346, with the co-operation of the patriarchs of Trnovo and the archbishop of Ohrid, the archbishop of Pec, Joannikije, successor of St. Sava, was established as »patriarch of Serbs and Greeks« and crowned Dusan emperor in Skoplije. As in the case of the Bulgarians, this act provoked a schism with Constantinople, which lasted until 1375, when Constantinople recognized Sava IV, as patriarch of Peč¹¹.

Besides Greeks and Slavs, the Balkan peninsula was inhabited by two other ethnic groups, the Illyrians (or future Albanians) and the »Vlachs«. The latter group, by far the largest, was spread throughout the territories of the Bulgarian and Serbian empires, and spoke a language derived from Latin. In fact, the Vlachs were descendents of the ancient Dacians and the Latin colonists, who lived in the Balkans before the Slavic invasions of the seventh century. They played a leading role in the »second« Bulgarian empire of Peter Asen and his successors, and, in the second part of the fourteenth century developed independent principalities in the regions to the north of the Danube. Concerned with protecting these populations from strong pressures of the Latin church, coming from Hungary and Poland, and also desirous to limit the power of the patriarchate of Trnovo, the ecumenical patriarchate established a metropolitanate of »Ouggrovlachia«, with see in Arges (1359). Further to the northeast, in Moldavia, also designated as »Mavrovlachia« (»Black Valachia«), or »Rossovlachia«, the ecclesiastical situation remained fluid longer. Polish suzerainty over the local princes made it convenient for the metropolitan of Galicia who, since 1371, was the only Orthodox authority in Polish-controlled territories, to ordain bishops and clergy for the region. After various episodes involving the local princes, King Jagiello of Poland, Metropolitan Cyprian of Kiev, settlement came with the recognition of the Galician-appointed candidate, Joseph Musat, as »metropolitan of Mavrovlachia« with see in Suceava (1402)¹².

¹⁰ On this interesting debate, see A. Karpozilos, *The Ecclesiastical Controversy Between the Kingdom of Nicea and the Principality of Epirus (1217–1233)*, Thessaloniki 1973; cf. also G. Ostrogorsky, *Pismo Dimitrija Khomatjana Sv. Savi*, Svetosavski Sbornik II, Belgrade 1936; and J. Erickson, *Autocephaly in Orthodox Canonical Literature to the Thirteenth Century*, *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 15 (1971) 28–47.

¹¹ On these events, see G. S. Soultis, *The Serbs and Byzantium During the Reign of Tsar Stephen Dusan (1331–1355) and His Successors*, Washington, ED 1984, pp. 29–32, 104–106; see also V. Moshin, Sv. patriarkh Kallist I srpska tsrkva, *Glasnik srpskoi patriarshije* 9 (1946) 196, and V. Laurent, *L'archevêque de Peč et le titre de patriarche après l'union de 1375*, *Balkanica* VII, 2 (Bucharest 1944) 303–310.

¹² For a more detailed history of these events, see *Istoria Bisericii Romine*, Bucharest 1957, pp. 144–162, 171–190; *Arseny*, *Izsledovaniya i monografii po istorii Moldavskoi tserkvi*, St. Petersburg 1904; D. Nastase, *Les*

Surviving as semi-independent principalities, Valachia and Moldavia were rich enough to patronize Orthodox monasteries and institutions in all Turkish-dominated areas. With their two metropolitan sees of Arges and Suceava, using Church Slavonic as the language of state and liturgy, they were referred to by Romanian historian Nicholas Iorga as »Byzantium after Byzantium«.

In terms of ecclesiastical structures and their development, it is clear that the period between the ninth and the fifteenth century saw the disintegration of the old imperial system, which was taken for granted during the period of the first seven ecumenical councils. However, the idea itself of a world Christian »Roman« empire remained very much alive. Actually, it was used by Slavic rulers like Symeon of Bulgaria, Stephen Dusan of Serbia, and others in their hopes to assume the universal imperial throne of Constantinople. Failing in that, they established »imperial« capitals in Preslav, Ohrid, Trnovo or Skoplije, and appointed their own patriarchs, because the imperial and patriarchal dignities were seen as inseparable in virtue of the common Byzantine political theory. The Byzantines were, of course, reluctant to recognize such developments, and did so only under political or military pressure. However, the Roman imperial tradition was, since Diocletian's tetrarchy, compatible with the existence of several emperors within a single empire, so that an acceptable *modus vivendi* could be established between the legitimate emperor and the patriarch in Constantinople on the one hand, and the »emperors« of Bulgarians or Serbs and their patriarchates on the other. This *modus vivendi* was not a pure fiction, however. The Balkan nations were Orthodox. Liturgically, spiritually, artistically, and culturally, they were admirers and heirs of Byzantium, recognizing its primacy and prestige. It was natural for them, therefore, to constitute, what has been called a »Byzantine Commonwealth«¹³, as a working alternative to a monolithic imperial system.

It was the mission of the patriarchate of Constantinople — particularly as, in the thirteen-fifteenth centuries, the empire was becoming a shadow of itself — to maintain not only ecclesiastical unity, but also the cultural and spiritual identity of the »Commonwealth«. It did so successfully. But it remains that the emergence of the new national churches followed a new historical pattern. In the past, »the autocephalous churches ... were part of one empire and achieved juridical confirmation of their status by the unilateral decree of an emperor, or an ecumenical council. The new foundations came into existence as part of bilateral treaties between two civil governments. This reflects a tendency to regard autocephaly chiefly as the sign of an independent national state«¹⁴. They were certainly not cases of »phyletism« yet, but would be used as precedents, when in modern times secular nationalism (»phyletism«) unfortunately became widespread in the Balkans and the East European societies.

débuts de l'église moldave et le siècle de Constantinople par Bajazet I^{er}, *Σύμμικτα* 7 (1987) 205–213. For the connections with Galicia, see also J. Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the rise of Russia*, Cambridge 1981, repr. Crestwood, NY 1990, pp. 249–251.

¹³ Cf. D. Obolensky, *The Byzantine Commonwealth*, London 1974; repr. Crestwood, NY n.d.

¹⁴ J. Erickson, *Autocephaly in Orthodox Canonical Literature to the Thirteenth Century*, p. 40.

2. The »Tourkokratia«

The capture of Constantinople by the Ottomans in 1453 was the final blow inflicted upon a state which had barely survived in the preceding decades. A narrow circle of officials, responsible for the empire and the patriarchate in an embattled and half-deserted city, had made a last and desperate attempt to gain support from the West by signing the Union decree of the Council of Florence (1439). The result was only internal discord and a major loss of prestige, as the church of Russia seceded from Constantinople's jurisdiction (see below). This sad experience of Florence increased the church's defensiveness towards Western Christendom. But at the same time, the church of Constantinople acquired, within the framework of Islamic law and the Ottoman imperial system, a new position which will leave a strong imprint upon all the Orthodox churches of the Middle East and the Balkans.

Following the conquests of the seventh century, Islamic rulers developed a tradition in administering religious minorities. Since, in Islam, no real distinction was possible between »church« and »state«, or between secular and religious affairs, and since the Qur'an provided the only guiding principle for the Islamic society itself, the Christian (or Jewish) communities were allowed to administer their internal affairs themselves, with the clear requirement of loyalty and obedience to the paramount power of the Islamic Khalife. They constituted bodies of second-class citizens, paying special additional taxes, wearing a different and distinctive costume, allowed to ride donkeys, but not horses, and more than often prevented to worship in churches which presented traditional external appearance of Christianity. In Constantinople and other major cities, the old Byzantine temples, including particularly the Aghia Sophia, were transformed into mosques. New Christian churches were built, but they looked externally like ordinary houses. However, within the confinement of a humiliated and submissive minority-status, designated as a separate *milet*, or »nation-community«, the patriarch of Constantinople was invested with a power which extended not only upon the territories which were traditionally part of his realm, but upon all the Orthodox Christians of the Ottoman empire. As ruler of the *milet*, or »ethnarch«, he possessed personal inviolability and, together with a synod of metropolitans, controlled the administrative, judicial, and economic life of the church. And since no other administrative structure existed within the Christian community, except that of the patriarchate, his position could be and indeed was quasi-imperial, although this power was now bestowed upon him by the sultan. In the eyes of Orthodox Greeks, he was seen as a substitute-emperor and began to wear a crown and vestments reminiscent of the imperial dress¹⁵. Although the canonical status of the ecumenical patriarch, in relation to the other patriarchal sees of the East, or the newer Slavic patriarchates in the Balkans, remained the same in principle, the political power involved in his position as head of the entire Christian *milet* was overwhelming. He alone had direct access to the Sublime Porte, and the other patriarchs could solve their problems with the authorities

¹⁵ For modern discussions of the documents describing the status of the patriarch under Turkish rule, see N. P. Eleutheriadis, *Τὰ προνόμια τοῦ οἰκουμενικοῦ πατριαρχείου*, Smyrna 1909, and C. G. Papadopoulos, *Les privilèges du patriarcat oecuménique dans l'Empire Ottoman*, Paris 1924, pp. 27–41.

only through him. Patriarchal vacancies for Alexandria, Antioch, or Jerusalem, more often than not, were filled through elections held in Constantinople¹⁶. The patriarchs of Alexandria and Jerusalem generally resided not in their sees, but in the capital, and their power was almost exclusively titular. The patriarch of Antioch lived in Damascus since the time of the Crusades: his flock, made up of Orthodox Arabs in Syria, allowed him more economic independence, but he also was a part of the same *milet* system.

The same *milet* status covered the Orthodox Christian population of the Balkans, where the patriarchates of Trnovo and Peč as well as the archbishopric patriarchate of Ohrid had been in existence, as autocephalous church bodies, at the time of the Turkish conquest of the area. The patriarchate of Trnovo disappeared already in 1393, when the city was captured by the Turks, and the see was occupied by Greek bishops appointed from Constantinople. Ohrid and Peč kept a nominally autocephalous status with incumbents appointed by Constantinople, in accordance with the *milet* system. In 1766 and 1767, however, the autocephalous status of both sees was formally suppressed by ecumenical patriarch Samuel I Hancerli, one of the most prominent patriarchs of the period.

This practically total centralization of ecclesiastical power in the patriarchate of Constantinople in the seventeenth and, particularly, the eighteenth century received its legal foundation from the power over the entire Christian *milet*, bestowed by the sultan upon the ecumenical patriarch. But it was expressed in many patriarchal acts, as if they represented a canonically normal definition of primacy of the patriarch of Constantinople in the Orthodox Church. Thus, for instance, in the official act of election of the patriarch of Alexandria, Paisios II, by the Synod of Constantinople in 1746, the »holy Great Church« of Constantinople is described as »possessing, in addition to its other privileges, that very first privilege of caring for all the churches, as the common loving mother and head of its members and parts which are both close by and far away, exercising its providence over them with wisdom and authority«¹⁷. Obviously, the limits of the patriarchate's jurisdiction became practically indistinguishable from that of the Christian *milet* in the Ottoman empire. Even when the institutions of the other autocephalous churches were not suppressed — as became the case with the Balkan patriarchates — but maintained, as vestiges of the old *pentarchy*, they enjoyed practically no real power of influence except in the cases of personalities with great personal prestige like Meletios Pegas of Alexandria (1590–1601), or Dositheos Notaras of Jerusalem (1669–1707).

In practice, this supremacy of the ecumenical patriarchate implied that, more often than not, the position of power was occupied by Greeks, even in areas where the great mass of the faithful was of Slavic, Romanian, Albanian, or Arab origin.

Sultan Mehmed, the Conqueror of Byzantium, had shown interest and sympathy for Greek civilization. The formal investiture which he granted to patriarch Gennadios upon his election in 1453 and his meetings with the prelate undoubtedly meant not only an in-

¹⁶ Numerous cases of this sort are listed in *Maximos of Sardis*, Τὸ οἰκουμενικὸν πατριαρχεῖον ἐν τῇ ὀρθοδόξῳ ἐκκλησίᾳ, Thessaloniki 1972, pp. 296–305.

¹⁷ Πρὸς τοῖς ἄλλοις προνομίοις καὶ τὴν τῶν ἀπασῶν τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν μέριμναν πρώτιστον προνόμιον ἔχουσα οἷα κοινὴ φιλόστοργος μήτηρ καὶ κεφαλὴ οὐ μόνον τῶν ἐγγύς, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν πόρρω μελῶν τε καὶ μερῶν αὐτῆς, ed. K. Delikanes, Πατριαρχικά Ἐγγραφα II, Constantinople 1903, p. 39. Such formulations are standard in the patriarchal acts of the period.

stitutional recognition of the patriarchate, but also an acknowledgement of the role to be played by Greeks within a Muslim empire, as a special minority. As the patriarchate, deprived of its earlier residence at the monastery of the Pammakaristos (1586)¹⁸, was rebuilt in the quarter known as the »Phanar«, the Greek economic and intellectual elite became known as the Phanariots. To a large degree, this elite monopolized commerce, gained great wealth, and obtained leading posts at the sultan's court itself. One great Phanariot, Alexander Mavrocordatos (1642–1709) was made »Grand Dragoman«, or acting head of the empire's foreign policy. Related by marriage to princely families of Moldavia and Valachia, the Phanariot aristocracy was entrusted by the sultans with ruling the Romanian principalities under Turkish suzerainty. Of course, the rich and well-educated Phanariots also exercised a dominant influence in the affairs of the patriarchate¹⁹.

Since, as an institution, the patriarchate of Constantinople was integrated into the structure of the empire, it also suffered greatly not only from occasional arbitrary and repressive actions of the Turkish rulers, but also from the corruption which infected the Ottoman administration. In the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the requirement imposed upon each newly-elected patriarch to pay the *peshkesh*, or heavy and ever-rising tax, to obtain the *berat* (imperial decree) confirming him in his office, led to almost unbelievable abuses. Between 1595 and 1695, there were sixty-one changes on the patriarchal throne²⁰. The famous patriarch Cyril Lucaris was patriarch seven times, being deposed then reinstated, before dying a violent death. The funds necessary for the tax were often obtained from foreign embassies, with French and Austrian diplomats supporting candidates favorable to Roman Catholicism, and Dutch and British ambassadors assuring the confirmation of patriarchs who, like Lucaris, were sympathetic to Protestantism²¹. In general, it is the Phanariot Greek establishment which supported the Orthodox cause and resisted Western proselytism, but at a very high cost.

Interventions of Western political and religious interests were not limited to Constantinople. Thus, since the creation of the Congregation *De Propaganda Fidei* in Rome (1622), a network of French schools in Syria served as a tool for the creation of a pro-Roman party within the Orthodox Arab communities of the region. Following the death of the patriarch of Antioch Macarius III Zaim (1647–1672), each patriarchal election involved a struggle between rival candidates supported respectively by the *Propaganda* and the »Phanariot« power of the patriarchate of Constantinople. In practically each case, the pro-Orthodox claimant to the throne was a Greek, elected in the capital, whereas local pressures were able to promote Arab candidates, dependent upon French support. The re-

¹⁸ On this episode, see *O. Kresten*, *Das Patriarchat von Konstantinopel im ausgehenden 16. Jahrhundert*, Wien–Köln–Graz 1970.

¹⁹ For a recent comprehensive study of the »Phanariots«, see *S. Runciman*, *The Great Church in Captivity. A Study of the Patriarchate of Constantinople from the Eve of the Turkish Conquest to the Greek Wars of Independence*, Cambridge 1968, pp. 360–384.

²⁰ *S. Runciman*, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

²¹ The case of patriarch Cyril Lucaris illustrates well the tragic conditions of Orthodox survival in the Ottoman empire, see particularly *I. N. Karmiris*, *Ὁρθοδοξία καὶ Προτεσταντισμός I*, Athen 1937, pp. 193–237; *A. Malvy and M. Viller*, *La confession Orthodoxe de Pierre Moghila* (*Orientalia Christiana X*), Rome 1927, pp. XVIII–XXXIX; *K. Rozemond*, *Cyrille Lucar. Sermons 1598–1602*, Leiden 1974, which includes references to other studies.

sult, in 1724, was the permanent schism between the openly »uniat« Arab patriarch Cyril IV, consecrated locally, and an Orthodox Greek, Sylvester, elected in Constantinople. Eventually, patriarch Sylvester, supported by the Phanar and confirmed by a *berat* of the sultan, succeeded in occupying the patriarchate in Damascus²². Since 1724 and until 1898, the Orthodox patriarchs of Antioch would be Greeks, elected in Constantinople, whereas the French-educated »Melkite« hierarchy and leadership would be of Arab background.

These events were contemporary with the development in the Phanariot circles of what was called the »Great Idea« (Ἡ μεγάλη Ἰδέα) of a Greek revival »on two continents and seven seas«. It clashed with other national revivals — that of the neighboring peoples. The prevailing role of a Greek episcopate controlling the Serbian, Bulgarian, and Romanian Orthodox population in the Balkans explains the fact that the emergence of nationalisms which followed the French Revolution would be directed not only against Turkish power, but also, in the case of the Balkan Slavs, the Romanians, and the Arabs, against the ecclesiastical power of Constantinople. This led to the establishment of autocephalous national churches in the Balkans and the end of Greek monopoly in the Patriarchate of Antioch in the nineteenth century.

The accomplishments of the ecumenical patriarchate of Constantinople and of the Phanariot establishment during the Turkish rule are incalculable in terms of preserving Orthodox integrity. But the very nature of the *millet*-regime imperceptibly led to the emergence of what is called »phyletism«, or ecclesiastical nationalism, which will be condemned in 1872, but which remains the most negative legacy of the »Tourkokratia« and its aftermath.

Two Orthodox churches only remained outside of Muslim occupation. The first is the ancient church of Georgia, led by the autocephalous Catholicos of Mtskheta. Surrounded and threatened from all sides, the kingdom of Georgia survived until its annexation by Russia in 1801, and provided patronage and help to many Orthodox monasteries and institutions, particularly in Jerusalem and Mt. Athos. The second is the Church of Russia.

3. Orthodox Russia

Since the adoption of Byzantine Orthodox Christianity as the state religion of the principality of Kiev in 988 or 989, under prince Vladimir, the entire »land of the Rus« (in Greek Ῥωσία and in Latin *Russia*), extending from the Carpathian mountains to the Volga and from Novgorod to the steppes, had become an ecclesiastical province of the patriarchate of Constantinople. It was headed (at least since 1037) by a »metropolitan of Kiev and all Russia«. Before 1240, and with only two exceptions, the metropolitans were Greeks, appointed from Byzantium and exercising very wide powers in appointing all the

²² For a recent account of the origins of the »Melkite« schism (the term Melkite serves generally today to designate the Arab Christian community of Byzantine rite, united with Rome), see S. Dessey, *Introduction à l'histoire et l'ecclésiologie de l'église melchite*, Beyrouth-Jounieh 1986, pp. 17–38; for the social, political, and cultural background, see Robert Haddad, *Syrian Christians in Muslim Society. An Interpretation*, Princeton 1970.

local bishops of the country, which was politically divided into independent principalities, ruled by a family of princes, descendants of Rurik and Vladimir.

The sack of Kiev by the Mongol Khan Batu (1240) and the establishment of Mongol, or Tartar, rule over most of Russia created new conditions, which further enhanced the role of the ecumenical patriarchate, in spite of the conquest of Constantinople by the Crusaders (1204) and the exile of the patriarch to Nicea (1208–1281). Indeed, the Byzantines, whether in the Nicean exile, or when their power was restored in Constantinople, entertained good political and commercial relations with the huge Mongol empire, extending over Eastern Europe and most of Asia. Actually, the Mongols, by threatening the Turkish sultans of Asia Minor, were greatly helping Byzantium's survival. The metropolitan of Kiev often acted as the Byzantine emperor's diplomatic representative in Mongol-occupied Russia. He often travelled to Saray, on the lower Volga, where the regional Mongol Khan (who himself was under the authority of the »Great Khan« of Karakorum in Mongolia) had established his residence. An Orthodox bishop, suffragan of the metropolitan, resided in Saray since 1261²³. Thus, the church, under Constantinople's leadership, remained as the one single administrative structure extending over the entire »land of the Rus«. It also possessed spiritual prestige, wealth, and political leverage, which enhanced its role in a country humiliated by the conquerors.

Since the destroyed ancient capital of Kiev had ceased to serve as the metropolitan's permanent residence, metropolitan Cyril — a Russian appointed to the see by the Nicean patriarch (1242–1281) — travelled widely throughout the metropolitanate. Although the Mongols exercised sovereignty over the entire country, the southwestern principalities of Galicia and Volhynia were maintaining close ties with Western Europe, and in 1253 grand-prince Daniel of Galicia even received a king's crown from the pope. The northeastern great-principality of Vladimir-Suzdal was, on the contrary, under a much tighter Mongol rule. The dominant personality there was Alexander Nevsky, successively prince of Novgorod (1240–1252) and grand-prince of Vladimir (1252–1263), who had distinguished himself in fighting against the Teutonic knights and the Swedes, but showed himself later as very loyal to the Mongols. Metropolitan Cyril, while maintaining tight connection with Galicia (he was a Galician himself) spent most of his time in the northeast. It was already clear in his case that the Orthodox Church, led by Constantinople, was much more suspicious of the danger coming from the West — a danger to the Orthodox faith, represented by militant crusaders and the Latin papacy — than of Mongol rule, tolerant of Christianity, where the Byzantine influence and administration could continue without major obstacles.

Cyril's successor, the Greek metropolitan Maximos (1283–1305) transferred his permanent residence, as head of the church, to the northeast, while keeping the traditional title of »metropolitan of Kiev and all Russia«. All his successors followed his example, with the continuous support of the patriarchate and in spite of strong centrifugal trends developing in the southwestern and western parts of the ancient »land of Rus'«.

²³ On these developments, see *J. Meyendorff, Byzantium and the Rise of Russia*, Cambridge 1981, repr. Crestwood, NY 1990, pp. 36–47.

Indeed, as the northeastern grand-principality of Vladimir was gradually centralized by the skillful policies of the princes of Moscow — so that the »metropolitans of Kiev« would also reside in that city, destined to become the capital of an empire — the principalities of the West, including Kiev itself, fell within the rule of the pagan Lithuanian grand-princes Gedymin (1316–1341) and Olgerd (1345–1377). Galicia meanwhile was annexed by King Casimir the Great of Poland (1333–1370). Ecclesiastical centralization under a metropolitan residing in Mongol-dominated Moscow became increasingly difficult. Local political and ecclesiastical authorities secured the establishment of a separate metropolitanate of Galicia (1303–1305), which was later suppressed, reestablished in 1370, and suppressed again by 1414. A separate »metropolitanate of the Lithuanians«, also existed episodically with one of the incumbents, Roman (1354–1362), even claiming the see of Kiev, since the city was under Lithuanian rule. During this entire period, the support given by Constantinople to the metropolitans of Kiev and all Russia, residing in Moscow — Peter (1308–1326), the Greek Theognostos (1328–1353), and Alexis (1354–1389) — was continuous, and contributed greatly to the rise of Moscow's power. This support wavered only when external pressures were too strong (1352–1363; 1370–1375), or when general political confusion interrupted normal policies (1378–1389)²⁴.

The political leverage which belonged to the grand-princes of Lithuania in claiming a separate metropolitan disappeared in 1386, when the grand-prince Jagiello married the Polish Queen Jadwiga, and became a Roman Catholic. From now on, the western parts of the »land of the Rus'« — i. e. that which in modern times is known as the Ukraine and Byelorussia — would find themselves under a Roman Catholic monarchy. The metropolitans residing in Moscow — the Bulgarian Cyprian (1389–1406) and the Greek Photios (1408–1431) — would be clearly seen as the unimpeachable single leaders of the Orthodox church in Muscovy, as well as in Poland-Lithuania. Characteristically, they demanded from their Russian flock to be loyal not only to the canonical authority of the patriarch, but also to the largely nominal, but »God-established« universal power of the Byzantine »emperor of all Christians«. »For Christians«, wrote patriarch Anthony in a famous letter to grand-prince Basil I of Moscow, »it is not possible to have a Church and not to have an emperor ... Christians reject only the heretical emperors, who were raging against the Church and introducing doctrines which were corrupt and foreign to the apostles and the fathers ...«²⁵

These ideological — both religious and political — principles would be put to the test in 1441, when metropolitan Isidore, successor of Photios, would return to Moscow with the rank of a Roman cardinal, having been one of the main architects of the Union of Florence, signed by the Byzantine bishops. Was not the emperor now »heretical« and could the canonical dependence upon a patriarchate, headed by a »uniat« patriarch, be maintained? A negative answer was suggested not only by the principle, enunciated by patriarch Anthony in 1393, but also by information coming from Constantinople, where resistance to the decree of Florence, headed by Mark of Ephesus, was gathering strength.

²⁴ Cf. *Meyendorff*, op. cit., pp. 145–260.

²⁵ *Miklovich-Müller*, *Acta patriarchatus Constantinopolitani II*, Vienna 1862, pp. 188–192.

Were the Russians to accept Florence, when the majority of the Greeks themselves was rejecting it?

The Russian grand-prince took decisive action in the personal case of Isidore: the metropolitan was deposed, arrested, and allowed to »escape« into a Western exile. Further decisions were delayed for seven years, during which the Moscovite authorities, expecting perhaps the restoration of a normal state of affairs in Byzantium, acted as if union with Rome was only a personal initiative of Isidore, and requested permission to elect a new metropolitan locally²⁶. Not receiving any reply, they proceeded with the election of bishop Jonas of Ryazan' as »metropolitan of Kiev and all Russia« (1448). However, this action was not interpreted as a final assertion of ecclesiastical independence, as was the case in the establishment of the Bulgarian and Serbian patriarchates, in defiance of Constantinople. The Russian grand-prince promised the restoration of normal canonical dependence, once there would be again an Orthodox patriarch in Byzantium²⁷.

The independent election of Jonas met no opposition and was without delay recognized even in the areas belonging to Poland. The new metropolitan received an investiture from Polish King Casimir IV, who at that moment was a supporter of the Council of Basel against Rome. But the consensus did not last. In 1453, Constantinople fell to the Turks, an event which was interpreted in Russia as a divine punishment for the »betrayal« of Florence, and in 1458 pope Calixtus III issued a decree, dividing ecclesiastically »superior Russia«, governed »by the schismatic monk Jonas, son of iniquity«, and »inferior Russia«²⁸, where another »metropolitan of Kiev and all Russia«, Gregory Bolgarin, was consecrated by the uniat patriarch of Constantinople, Gregory Mammars, exiled in Rome. Gregory Bolgarin was, of course, recognized by the Polish king, who had made his peace with the papacy. By 1470, however, Gregory, following the mood of his Orthodox flock, defected from Roman obedience, and placed himself under the ecumenical patriarch in Constantinople, i. e., in the situation which was that of the entire Russian church before 1441. In practice, since Moscow was now »autocephalous«, this meant the division of the old »metropolitanate of Kiev and all Russia« into two ecclesiastical provinces, separated by the political borders of Poland and Muscovy. In Moscow, Jonas' successor Theodosius (1461–1469) still held the title of »Kiev«, but this nominal designation was dropped by Phillip I (1467–1473).

Under Polish rule, moral and social pressure was constant, in favor of union with Rome, in accordance with the decree of Florence and the original status of Gregory Bolgarin. But it was only in 1595 that all the bishops except two accepted union in Brest-Litovsk. The Orthodox church was outlawed by the Polish state, although the majority of the population remained faithful. An Orthodox hierarchy was restored only in 1620 by

²⁶ Letter of Basil to patriarch Metrophanes (1443), in A. S. Pavlov (ed.), *Russkaya Istoricheskaya Biblioteka* VI, St. Petersburg 1880, cols. 525–536.

²⁷ »It will be our duty to write to him — and ask his blessing in all things«, Letter of Basil to emperor Constantine (1451), ed. cit., col. 583–586.

²⁸ *Documenta Pontificum romanorum Historiam Ucrainae illustrantia*, no. 82, p. 46. The appointment of Gregory is often referred to as the origin of the »Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church«, although the term »Ukraine« was, of course, not used at the time.

the travelling patriarch of Jerusalem, Theophanes. It was formally recognized, side by side with the »Uniates«, under metropolitan Peter Moghila (1632–1647). In 1686, as a consequence of the expansion of the Moscovite empire over the Ukraine, the ecumenical patriarchate formally transferred its jurisdiction over the metropolitanate of Kiev, to the patriarchate of Moscow. This action ended the division of the »two Russias« by pope Calixtus III in 1458.

As these fateful events were unfolding in Kiev, the ancient cradle of the Rus', but held by Poland until the seventeenth century, the grand-prince of Moscow was assuming the role of sole patron of Orthodoxy. Soon after the election of Jonas, an anonymous author addressed Basil II of Moscow as the »new Constantine«, and »the great sovereign, God-crowned Russian tsar«²⁹. The monk Filofei of Pskov (ca. 1510–1540), predicting the imminence of the second coming, proclaimed that »both Romes (i. e. Rome and Constantinople — the New Rome) fell, the third (i. e., Moscow) endures, and a fourth there will not be«³⁰. Aside from the apocalyptic context, which was that of Filofei, the theory of a *translatio imperii* from Constantinople to a »third« Rome, Moscow, was endorsed — for obvious diplomatic reasons — by the Venetian Senate, on the occasion of the marriage of Ivan III of Moscow with Zoe-Sophia, the niece of the last Byzantine emperor in 1472³¹. Following the crowning of Ivan IV and his official assumption of the title of *tsar*, or emperor (1547), the patriarch of Constantinople, Joasaph (1555–1565) sent letters, welcoming the event, which could enhance the hopes for an anti-Turkish liberation campaign by the Russian successor of the Byzantine emperors³².

At no time, however, did the Muscovite empire formally assume the theory of »Moscow, the third Rome«. The Russian tsars, while building a nation-state, were subject to strong cultural influences coming from the West and were hardly interested by either the apocalyptic thought of a monk Filofei, or the Byzantine inheritance as such: they never assumed the traditional title of »Roman emperor«, which alone could signify a *translatio imperii*, and preferred the title of »tsar of all Russia«. Ecclesiastically, they were ready to legalize their relations with Orthodox Constantinople, which had become irregular at the time of the election of Jonas (1448).

The occasion for such a legalization came with the arrival of ecumenical patriarch Jeremiah II Tranos to Moscow in 1588. Deprived by the Turks of his patriarchal residence at the monastery of the Pammakaristos, Jeremiah was seeking moral and material support in Poland and Russia. He was initially offered the option of remaining in Russia himself and to take residence in the ancient city of Vladimir, with its magnificent twelfth

²⁹ Slovo Izbrano, ed. A. N. Popov, Istoriko-literaturny obzor dreunerusskikh polemicheskikh sochinenii protiv Latinyan, Moscow 1875, p. 113.

³⁰ Text in V. Malinin, Starets Eleazarova monastyrja Filofei i ego poslaniya, Kiev 1901, appendix, p. 45.

³¹ Quando stirps mascula deesset imperatoria ad Vestram Illustrissimam Dominationem jure vestri faustissimi conjugii pertineret (quoted in A. Ya. Shpakov, Gosudarstvo i tserkov' v ikh vzaimnykh otnosheniyakh v Moskovskom gosudarste I, Kiev 1904, pp. 43–48).

³² It is true that Joasaph also claimed that a legitimate imperial crowning could be performed only by the pope, the patriarch of Constantinople, or the latter's delegate, the metropolitan of Evripus, sent to Russia with that mission. But the Russians were hardly ready to accept a second coronation; cf. the texts recently reprinted with commentary by A.-E. Tachiaos, Πηγὲς ἐκκλησιαστικῆς ἱστορίας τῶν ὀρθοδόξων Σλάβων, Thessaloniki 1984, pp. 161–164.

century cathedral. If Jeremiah had accepted, a »third Rome« would indeed be established in Vladimir. His refusal, however, raised the question of the status of the metropolitan of Moscow, now an imperial capital. Following a year of negotiations, Jeremiah enthroned metropolitan Job as patriarch (1589). His action was later confirmed by synods, with participation of all the Eastern patriarchs, particularly the influential Meletios Pegas of Alexandria. The texts clearly imply that the election of the new patriarchate was a restoration of the ancient »pentarchy«, which had been transformed into a »tetrarchy« by the defection of Rome. There was a reference to the old Roman Justinianic principle guiding the authority of all five patriarchs, whose rights were defined by councils »for no other reasons than their place within the imperial system«³³, which required also that the name of the »most pious *basileus* of Moscow and *autokrator* of all Russia and the Northern parts: be included in the liturgy everywhere [i. e. not only in Russia; J.M.] at the required moments of imperial commemorations«³⁴. Patriarch Job, the »fifth« patriarch, was to be »counted« with the other four and share their dignity, while recognizing »the apostolic throne of Constantinople as its head and its primate, as the other patriarchs do«³⁵.

So Moscow, in a sense, was a »third Rome«, but not in every respect, since Constantinople was keeping its primacy. This paradoxical aspect of Moscow's status will be felt again in the big crisis of the seventeenth century. Trained in the idea that, since Florence, they were alone the guardians of true Orthodoxy, masses of Russian »old-believers« refused to accept the minor liturgical reforms introduced by patriarch Nikon (1652–1658), because he was following the models of contemporary Greeks, who since Florence were seen by the opposition as traitors to Orthodoxy. For Nikon, however, being the »third Rome« meant following the Greeks — »I am a Russian«, he was saying, »but my faith is Greek ...«

It is precisely the Byzantine roots of the Moscow patriarchate and the entire legacy of Byzantium in Russia, which Peter the Great intended to overturn, and replace by a controlled form of religion, patterned by the principles of the Enlightenment. Without any ecclesiastical sanction, in a purely arbitrary way, the patriarchate was suppressed and replaced at the head of the Russian church, by a »committee«, or »spiritual college«, whose members were appointed by the emperor (1720–1721). Eventually, the »college« adopted a more traditional designation, that of a Holy Synod. The Eastern patriarchs were informed of the reform as a *fait accompli* and gave it a perfunctory recognition. This essentially bureaucratic system lasted for almost two centuries.

Considered as uncanonical and, therefore, provisional by all enlightened churchmen, the »synodal« regime did not prevent the Russian Church from producing many saints — generally belonging to the monastic world —, from developing a remarkably rich system of theological education and from continuing the missionary expansion of the church. None of this could occur in the other Orthodox churches of the Middle East and the Balkans, whose possibilities for cultural development and missionary expansion were

³³ »Οὐδέ ... δι' ἄλλον τινὰ λόγον ..., εἰ μὴ πρὸς τὰ τῶν βασιλείων ... ἀξιώματα«, Tomos of 1593, in *Tachiaos*, op. cit., p. 218.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 210–211.

strictly limited by the Muslim rule. The inner vitality of Russian Orthodoxy allowed for a quick restoration of conciliarity, starting in 1907, and reestablishment of the patriarchate in 1917.