BYZANTINE ORTHODOXIES
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Papers from the Thirty-sixth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, University of Durham, 23–25 March 2002

edited by
Andrew Louth and Augustine Casiday

ASHGATE VARIOURUM
In Memoriam

Sergeevich Averintsev (1937–2003)
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Preface

Andrew Louth

This volume arises from the Thirty-sixth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies held at the University of Durham in March 2002. The title of the Symposium itself posed the question: 'Was Byzantium Orthodox?'; but for the published proceedings it was thought that the title 'Byzantine Orthodoxies' would cause less confusion. The symposiarch was asked to organize the Symposium at barely twelve months' notice, and is grateful to all the help he received from 'old hands' in arranging such symposia. Speed in preparation has, however, been matched by extreme tardiness in publication of the proceedings, for which I apologize, though I could cast the blame elsewhere ...! Nothing, however, would have come of any of my efforts without help from others. For help in organizing registration, etc., I am indebted to Anne Parker, the Senior Secretary of the Department of Theology (as it then was) in Durham. My (then) graduate students were also unstinting in their help, especially Augustine Casiday, who has provided invaluable help in editing the proceedings, though his assistance extended well beyond that, and Adam Cooper, who more or less took over the welcome of the participants in his gracious Australian manner. The staff of Collingwood College, where the conference was held, was unfailingly helpful, coping without a word of complaint with the constantly fluctuating arithmetic for meals; Collingwood also proved to have an excellent wine cellar! I am also grateful to Canon David Kennedy, among his many duties chaplain of Grey College, for allowing us to use his chapel. The conference was made possible by generous help from a number of foundations. A grant from the British Academy enabled us to bring the Russian Academician, Sergei S. Averintsev, over from Vienna; both his lecture and his presence at the conference were deeply appreciated. As mentioned elsewhere, since the conference he has sadly died, and this volume is dedicated to his memory. We also received grants from the Leventis Trust, the Hellenic Foundation and the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies. These enabled us to contribute to speakers' travel costs and to the subsidies needed for students to be able to attend a symposium in today's market-driven world. The tangible, indeed potable, support from John Smedley and Variorum/Ashgate was also much appreciated.
Illness prevented a number of intended speakers being present, and it has not been possible to include here the papers given at the symposium by Glenn Peers and Małgorzata Dabrowska; we are nonetheless grateful for their contribution to the symposium. Two of the papers that appear here were presented to the symposium as communications; I am grateful to Caroline Macé and Dimitra Kotoula for reworking their communications into papers, and especially to Caroline and Fiona Nicks for agreeing at the conference, at a few minutes’ notice, to give their papers in the slot vacated by one of the speakers who was – fortunately only temporarily – taken ill. As ever, the communications given by other scholars were integral to the symposium, and abstracts can be found in the *Bulletin of British Byzantine Studies* 28 (2002), 65–71. There are, as is well known, different conventions for transliterating Greek and Slavonic words and especially names; no attempt has been made to impose an artificial uniformity.
List of Abbreviations

Acta Concilium OEcumenicorum
Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca
Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies
Byzantinische Forschungen
Byzantinische Zeitschrift
Corpus Christianorum Series Graeca
Clavis Patrum Graecorum, ed. M. Geerard
   (Turnhout: Brepols, 1974–1998)
Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium
Dumbarton Oaks Papers
Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik
Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio, ed. G.D. Mansi
Orientalia Christiana Analecta
Orientalia Christiana Periodica
Patrologia cursus completus ... series graeca, ed. J.-P. Migne
Patrologia cursus completus ... series latina, ed. J.-P. Migne
Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit, ed. Erich Trapp
Revue des Etudes Arménienes
Revue des Etudes Byzantines
Revue d'histoire des textes
Revue des sciences religieuses
Sources chrétiennes
Studia Patristica
Studi e Testi
St Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly
Texte und Untersuchungen
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Introduction

Andrew Louth

The notion of orthodoxy is one closely associated with the Byzantine Empire – the Christian continuation of the Roman Empire, as it thought of itself. It was through councils or synods called by the Byzantine or Roman Emperor that orthodoxy was defined and, so defined, it was the system of belief required for full membership of the Empire. Those who failed to subscribe to orthodoxy, thus defined, were scarcely even second-class citizens of the Empire, the only exception to this being the Jews, who had a clearly defined status as, precisely, second-class citizens: formally permitted to exist and officially free from persecution, they were allowed to practise their religion and continue to worship in their synagogues, but they were not allowed to have Christians as slaves, nor to proselytize, work for the government, teach in public institutions, or serve in the army; nor were they allowed to build new synagogues, or even (in practice) to make major repairs to existing ones – they were to exist, until the second coming of Christ, as a standing witness to the truth of the Gospel they had rejected. Other than the Jews, those who failed to embrace orthodox Christianity were not even granted such second-class status; they had no right to exist, and if they did exist, did so either clandestinely, or because the inefficiency of the Byzantine State was not able to close the gap between theory and reality. Nevertheless, it is generally accepted that no significant number of Manichees survived Justinian’s persecution of them in the sixth century. Even in the case of the Jews, there were periods, during which serious attempts were made to force on the Jewish community a choice between Christian baptism and death.

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The Byzantine Empire was, then, in aspiration at least, an oppressive regime, and if its record of oppression does not match that of such twentieth-century regimes as the Soviet Union under Stalin that may only be because it lacked the machinery of oppression open to modern governments. The place of orthodoxy in the Byzantine Empire raises many questions. There are questions specific to the Byzantine Empire itself: What was this orthodoxy? How was it defined? How did it function within that society? How did it affect relations between the Byzantine Empire and other societies with which it had to do? There are more general questions about why some societies come to value and embrace orthodoxy, while others do not (among which is included the very society of which Byzantium claimed to be the Christian continuation, namely the Roman Empire, which, though oppressive, was not prescriptive in matters of religious belief). The question of orthodoxy can also be subsumed under the question of the place of orthodoxy in Christianity: Why did Christianity come to evolve the notion of orthodoxy (not all religions do – in fact, most do not, including those religions most closely related to Christianity, namely the other great monotheistic religions of Judaism and Islam)? Is it an essential aspect of Christianity (as over the centuries Christians have believed), or is it something accidental that evolved in the peculiar circumstances of the development of Christianity in the Roman Empire of Late Antiquity? This latter question has been the subject of prolonged debate in recent decades, especially since Walter Bauer’s Rechtgläubigkeit und Ketzerei im ältesten Christentum, first published in 1934, suggested that most early forms of Christianity were heterodox by later standards, ‘orthodoxy’ being a response to the various forms of ‘gnosticism’ that prevailed in the second century. A recent collection of essays on the question of Orthodoxy in the early centuries of Christianity formed a Festschrift for Henry Chadwick (1989). Another collection on the subject of orthodoxy within Christianity, covering a somewhat wider field, forms the fruits of a collaborative venture between groups of French and American scholars. The present collection, consisting of papers given at the Thirty-Sixth Symposium of Byzantine Studies, held in Durham in the spring of 2002, concentrates on Byzantine Orthodoxy, principally in its historic form, that is, the Orthodoxy of the

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INTRODUCTION

Byzantine Empire, understood as existing from the beginning of Constantine’s sole rule in 324 until the fall of the city he founded, Constantinople, to the Turks in 1453, nearly eleven and a half centuries later, although a number of papers are either directly or indirectly concerned with the continued, and continuing, vitality of that tradition in the centuries after the fall of Constantinople, and indeed today.

The papers have been arranged in three sections: Defining orthodoxy, Orthodoxy in art and the liturgy, and Orthodoxy and the other. A defining moment in definition and proclamation of Orthodoxy for the Byzantine Empire, as well as in its own self-conscious sense of itself as an Orthodox society, was the promulgation of the Synodikon of Orthodoxy in 843, as part of the final repudiation of iconoclasm. This Synodikon — a formal declaration, issued by the Home Synod in Constantinople, presided over by the new Patriarch Methodios — reaffirmed the decisions of the Seventh Ecumenical Synod that a little more than half-a-century earlier had declared the making and veneration of icons orthodox. The Synodikon was largely based on the records of the Ecumenical Synod, and therefore, not only reaffirmed the veneration of icons, but set that affirmation in the context of a recapitulation of the whole sequence of orthodox definitions and declarations that had occupied those synods accepted as ecumenical, from the first held at Nicaea in 325 under the Emperor Constantine to the last, also held at Nicaea, in 787 under the Empress Irene. It was therefore as much concerned with the doctrines of the Trinity and of Christology, both of which had been expressly invoked in the debates about the icons, as with a true understanding of the icons themselves. Indeed the debate about icons during the period of iconoclasm had never been simply a debate about the legitimacy of icons. The very first response to the iconoclast edict of the Emperor Leo III — the work known as the first of St John Damascene’s treatises Against those who attack the holy images — seeks to present the position of the iconoclasts, not as a mere attack on icon-veneration as idolatry, which is probably what it was to begin with, but a much more comprehensive attack on the fundamentals of Christianity: undermining the key role played by the concept of image or icon in Christian theology, seeking to ignore the significance of the Incarnation, whereby God, in himself beyond any circumscription or depiction, took on a particular human form, which could be circumscribed and depicted, and, in bypassing God’s embrace of material, creaturely humanity, offering a purely spiritual conception of Christianity, which John argued concealed an underlying dualism comparable to that of the Manichees. The early iconodule emphasis on the Incarnation, which John made central to his attack on iconoclasm, provoked the rejoinder of the iconoclasts in the reign of Leo III’s son, Constantine V, that the very attempt to depict Christ the God-man
entailed Christological heresy: Nestorianism, if it was maintained that the icon depicted Christ’s humanity apart from his divinity, Monophysitism, if it was maintained that what was depicted was Christ’s humanity fused with his divinity. These arguments, found in Constantine V’s Peuseis or Inquiries and reaffirmed in the Horos or Definition of the iconclast synod of Hierenia (754), turned the question of the icons into a matter of Christology, and as such it was to be debated right through to the second period of iconoclasm, introduced in 815 by Leo V. Icons, then, are not just an aspect of what is, or came to be, distinctive about Byzantine Orthodoxy; rather, icons became an emblem of what is, on any reckoning, central to Christian Orthodoxy, namely the confession as Christ as true God and true man.

The articles in the first part address various questions raised by the notion of Orthodoxy and its definition. John Behr addresses the fundamental theological issue, arguing against what is becoming a commonplace among patristic scholars, namely that orthodoxy is something that can only be held to have evolved in the fourth century, and is dependent on methods of theological argumentation and, in particular, scriptural exegesis that find little echo in current ways of theological thinking. In a closely argued paper – which is an epitome of something set out on a much broader canvas in the second volume of his multi-volume project The Formation of Christian Theology 5 – John Behr argues that Christian orthodoxy is rooted in the acceptance of Scripture as the fundamental and indispensable witness to Christ, of which Christ himself is the final interpreter: an understanding – and acceptance – of Scripture, fundamental to Christianity from the time of the Apostles, only lost sight of in the excitement of the last couple of centuries of historical criticism, which still informs the criteria of much English-speaking patristic scholarship, though increasingly questioned by present-day biblical scholarship. In John Behr’s paper detailed historical analysis bears directly on issues of direct relevance for Christian theology today, and in particular on the appeal and challenge of Byzantine Orthodoxy in today’s world. For the rest of this volume the discussion is primarily historical, either uninterested with the continuing tradition of which Byzantine Orthodoxy formed a distinctive part, or leaving such concern for the most part implicit.

Caroline Macé’s paper addresses an issue that is likely to come to be seen as of defining significance as patristic scholarship seeks to understand the dynamics of theological reflection in the period after the Council of Chalcedon (451), a period that has been opened up by the

various parts of volume 2 of Aloys Cardinal Grillmeier's life work – still continuing and being brought to completion after his death by the devoted labours and fine scholarship of Theresia Hainthaler – known in English as Christ in Christian Tradition. For Caroline Macé is concerned with the way in which, in the sixth century, the works of Gregory Nazianzen, by then known as 'St Gregory the Theologian', came to acquire doctrinal authority. The wider significance of Gregory's growing authority, on which Caroline Macé's paper sheds signal light, lies in the fact that the central question for Orthodoxy, in the wake of the Council of Chalcedon, lay in matters of Christological definition, which had been defined at that council in the terms used in the debate between Cyril and Nestorius, terms rather different from those in which Gregory had discussed Christology. That council had, notoriously, settled very little with its Christological Definition, which left the Church in the Eastern provinces of the Empire divided, and also, because of the relatively uncomplicated support it found in the Church of the Latin West, made difficult to the point of impossibility any reconciliation of the Eastern Christians by attempts to reach back behind Chalcedon (such an attempt having provoked the Acacian schism that divided East from the West in the years 492–519). Gregory was also, perhaps more naturally, involved in the other great question that raised questions of orthodoxy in the sixth century, namely speculations, mainly about the origin of the created order and its final destiny (protology and eschatology), that were associated with the theological speculations of Origen, in which Gregory had interested himself. Gregory's growing authority – witness to which is found in various collections of scholia on his works, far more than are found with any other Father of the Church, beginning with the so-called Ambigua (or Difficulties) of St Maximus the Confessor, which themselves constitute a theological work of immense stature – had a profound effect on the shaping of later Orthodoxy, something that is still only imperfectly understood.

The events of the sixth century make clear the extent to which orthodoxy was defined, on the one hand, in relation to what can either be seen as heresies, or sometimes, more usefully, as competing definitions of orthodoxy, and, on the other hand, by imperial authority, often, though not always, through councils deemed ecumenical, convoked by Emperors. In the sixth century, both those whom the Orthodox called

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monophysites—those who regarded Chalcedon's language of 'two natures' as entailing a dangerously divided account of Christ and also, perhaps just as important, as constituting a betrayal of St Cyril of Alexandria, soon to be acclaimed throughout the East as the 'seal of the Fathers'—and also the Latins of the West represented alternative ways of defining orthodoxy. But with this difference: the monophysites were regarded as beyond the pale of orthodoxy, while the Latins were still regarded as within the pale, despite their different doctrinal emphasis (in the sixth century, their adherence to Chalcedon was unproblematic, in contrast to the qualified acceptance in the East, sometimes called Neo-Chalcedonianism, that represented the kernel of Justinian's religious policy, finding expression, for instance, in the 'Three Chapters controversy'—the condemnation of Theodore of Mopsuestia and the attacks on Cyril by Theodoret of Cyrus and Ibas of Edessa—that was scarcely controversial at all in the East). How very slowly the differences between 'Greek East' and 'Latin West' developed into something amounting to schism is one of the underlying themes in this volume. Norman Russell's paper on Prochoros Kydones shows how, even as late as the fourteenth century, there were those in the East whose openness to Latin ideas, by now the quite distinctive Latin ideas that found expression in Western Scholasticism, was not intended as any betrayal of Byzantine Orthodoxy, but rather a way of exploring its riches.

Byzantine Orthodoxy was, however, a matter for the Emperor. Patricia Karlin-Hayter's paper is concerned with the questions that lay behind the promulgation of the Synodikon of Orthodoxy, and in particular with how it functioned as a standard of Orthodoxy. Patriarch Methodius, who had supplanted the iconoclast patriarch, John the Grammarian, is often regarded as a moderate; he was certainly regarded by the Stoudite monks as not sufficiently rigorous in his orthodoxy. However, as Karlin-Hayter points out, his restoration of Orthodoxy was not in the least moderate. Unlike Tarasius after the second Council of Nicaea in 787, Methodius showed little or no mercy towards those who had compromised over iconoclasm; very many bishops and priests were deposed. Karlin-Hayter explores the extent to which Methodius' action was at the behest of the imperial throne, that is the Empress Theodora, acting for her infant son, Michael III. Though it was often maintained that the triumph of Orthodoxy, celebrated by the overthrow of iconoclasm, was a victory for the monks—an idea enshrined in the Triumph of Orthodoxy icon in the British Museum—the period of iconoclasm in fact saw a strengthening of the power both of the Emperor, despite the fact that iconoclasm had been an act of imperial policy, and also of the patriarchal court, which was closely allied with the imperial court. From 843 onwards, the celebration of the Triumph of Orthodoxy became an annual celebration on the First
Sunday of Lent, known as the Sunday of Orthodoxy, at first probably only in Constantinople, but later in all churches throughout the Byzantine world, and later still throughout the whole Orthodox world; it continues today. This celebration, with the crowds gathered in Hagia Sophia presumably joining in the roared responses of Anathema, in the case of the condemnation of heretics, named or described, and Eternal memory!, in the case of the acclamation of the Orthodox, must have constituted a kind of act of complicity in imperial Orthodoxy. For the first two centuries, the Synodikon of Orthodoxy remained largely unchanged, but with the accession of Alexios Komnenos additions began to be made to the Synodikon to bring it up to date. First, there were the additions made after the condemnation of John Italos in 1082. Later, further additions were made under Manuel Komnenos, concerning the various theological debates he had fostered during his reign. In both these cases, the additions to the Synodikon highlighted the claim of the Komnene emperors to be guardians of Orthodoxy: an area not covered in the papers of the conference, as it has been thoroughly dealt with in recent works by Paul Magdalino and Michael Angold. Still later, in the fourteenth century, final additions were made to the Synodikon, acclaiming the triumph of the Palamites over Barlaam and Gregory Akindynos in the hesychast controversy. The manuscripts Gouillard drew on in his edition of the Synodikon show, too, that there were local versions of the Synodikon in which other heretics, such as the Bogomils, were condemned. A point, relevant to the form of the Synodikon, is explored in Dirk Krausmüller’s paper. For the Synodikon was not simply a matter of doctrinal definition, it was a public dramatic event, involving directly those who participated. The extent to which late antique and Byzantine theological literature is self-consciously literary, deliberately adopting literary genres and employing rhetorical skills, is something that has only recently begun to attract scholarly attention. Krausmüller explores a particular case – the employment of the term Θεοτόκος by Theodore of Petrae in his Life of St Theodosius the Cænobiarch – suggesting that rhetorical forms are being used to undermine the surface meaning of the text. This is perhaps an example of something one needs to be more aware of in the Byzantine period, namely the use of the theological terminology of Orthodoxy as a disguise for expressing other concerns.

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6 By chance – or providence – the weekend of the conference in Durham was the weekend of the Sunday of Orthodoxy, and in the tiny chapel of Grey College, adjacent to Collingwood, the Divine Liturgy was celebrated on the Sunday morning by the Orthodox priests present, and a (truncated) form of the Synodikon of Orthodoxy declaimed.

The *Synodikon of Orthodoxy* was, then, more than a synodal document; as celebrated on the Sunday of Orthodoxy, it became a focus for expressions of Orthodoxy in which, at least in principle, all the citizens of the Byzantine Empire could participate. The second part of this book gathers together papers that discussed the expression of Orthodoxy in art and in the liturgy. One paper consists of a lively discussion by Archimandrite Ephrem (Lash) of the curious phenomenon among Byzantine liturgical songs of what he called ‘Hymns of Hate’, that is hymns in which heresies are attacked and heretics reviled: a phenomenon that seems to be unique to the Byzantines within the Christian tradition, neither the other Oriental Christians – neither those who rejected Chalcedon, now called the Oriental Orthodox family, nor those who refused to accept the condemnation of Nestorius at the synod of Ephesus in 431, the ‘Church of the East’ – nor the Christians of the West indulge in such ‘hymns of hate’. Fr Ephrem’s own invention of a Catholic ‘hymn of hate’, memorably set – and sung – to the tune of Tallis’s Canon, only demonstrated how incongruous such a song seemed in Western dress! It is, however, maybe the obverse side of another feature of Byzantine liturgical poetry that is uncommon in the West, at least, namely the precision with which many troparia express Orthodox doctrine. Take, for example, almost at random, the first *Theotokion* in the sixth tone:

Who does not bless you, All-holy Virgin? Who does not praise your giving birth without travail? For the only-begotten Son, radiating timelessly from the Father, the same made flesh proceeded ineffably from you the pure one, being God by nature, and for our sake having become human by nature, not divided into a duality of persons, but acknowledged unconfusedly in a duality of natures. Beseech him, august all-blessed One, to have mercy on our souls.

However, such a difference in content discernible between Eastern and Western hymnography took a long time to develop any strictly musical forms, despite the fact that the contrast between Byzantine chant and Western liturgical music is nowadays, perhaps, what most immediately strikes one about the two religious cultures. Alexander Lingas, in a lecture that cannot be represented in this volume with its full impact, as there were many musical examples, mostly sung by Alex himself, demonstrated how modern musical scholarship has discovered much greater commonality between the liturgical music of the Byzantine East and the Latin West than is suggested by the retrojection into the medieval period of assumptions about music that go back no further than the late eighteenth century – assumptions that see Western medieval music as part of a progression leading through Palestrina and Monteverdi to Bach.
and Beethoven, in contrast to Byzantine music where no such easy (though misleading) transition to classical and romantic music is possible. In fact, as Alexander Lingas demonstrates, even as late as the fourteenth century, the musical traditions of East and West were closely related and subject to mutual influence.

But it was art that provided the immediate occasion for the decisions proclaimed in the Synodikon of Orthodoxy, and a central part of the conference concerned the Byzantine understanding of religious art from the first official utterance on religious art, at the Synod in Trullo to the end of the Byzantine period. In three closely related papers, Leslie Brubaker, Liz James and Robin Cormack took their cue from the central affirmation of the relationship of the Word to God, found in the first verse of St John’s Gospel. Issues raised include the Trullan Synod’s concern for purity in art, which perhaps lay behind the concerns of the iconoclasts, the emphasis placed on tradition by the Seventh Ecumenical Synod and its implications for the role of the individual artist, and the way in which art expressed Orthodoxy in the context of the attempts to heal the schism in the late Byzantine period. The interaction of Orthodoxy and art was a mutual one, in which both sides were affected, for neither Orthodoxy nor artistic style were immutable. A further paper, by Dimitra Kotoula, discussed the Triumph of Orthodoxy icon in the British Museum and related it to traditions of illustration of the Akathist Hymn to the Mother of God, bringing out, amongst other things, something that will come as no surprise to the attentive reader of these papers, that the Orthodoxy proclaimed by the repudiation of icons was deeply bound up with the fundamental doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation.

The third section concerns ‘Orthodoxy and the other’. In preparing for the conference, the inclusion of such a section seemed obvious: orthodoxy is a way of defining a community or society through its beliefs in order to mark it off from ‘others’ or ‘the other’. The other could take various forms: Jews, as has been already remarked, constituted an other within Byzantine society; but there were also the ‘others’ beyond the frontiers of Byzantium. The most important of these was, doubtless, Islam, which in the seventh century had robbed Byzantium of its eastern and southern provinces, and destroyed its traditional ‘other’, the Persian empire. In supplanting Persia, Islam did more than replace it: its encroachment on traditional Byzantine territory altered the historical geography of the Mediterranean and the East in ways that still endure, as well as at least contributing to, if not (as Pirenne argued) creating, the division between eastern and western Christendom. Islam, as Byzantium’s ‘other’, is a theme worth a conference in itself, and could not have been done justice to in a single paper. There were, however, papers on other significant ‘others’ – the Latins and the Armenians – both of whom threatened
Byzantium’s claim to Orthodoxy by their own claims to a different understanding of such orthodoxy. But what was not anticipated, at least by the sympsiarch, was the way in which all the papers on ‘Orthodoxy and the other’ discovered an ‘other’ within, rather than without. Nicholas de Lange’s paper on ‘Judaism and Orthodoxy’ demonstrates how the Christian/Byzantine concern with orthodoxy rubbed off on the Byzantine Jews, who evolved their own notion of orthodoxy, almost as a kind of mirror image: something that seems to be true generally of Judaism within Christian societies. Igor Dorfmann-Lazarev’s paper – the fruit of his prolonged doctoral studies concerning the negotiations between Photios and the Armenians in the ninth century, the evidence for which is preserved much more fully in Armenian – shows how in these negotiations both Byzantines and Armenians were appealing to a largely common group of traditions, conciliar and patristic, in their attempts to express their understanding of orthodoxy, and, to a considerable extent, sought to highlight what they held in common. The Armenians were crucially, though episodically, important for the Byzantines: they were a Christian kingdom, or even empire, that constituted a kind of buffer-state between Byzantium and Islam, at one point reaching through Cilicia to the Mediterranean. Armenian bishops were present at the Council of Ephesus, but not at Chalcedon, and so although they accepted the Formulary of Union of 433, which had been agreed between John of Antioch and Cyril of Alexandria as representing the decision of Ephesus, they had not accepted the modification of this that formed the Definition of Chalcedon. Later they threw in their lot with the so-called monophysites (or ‘Oriental Orthodox’), but theirs was a tradition that did not so much reject Chalcedon, as one that had never reached it. The conciliatory attitude towards the monophysites found in such an Orthodox theologian as John Damascene, who maintained that, apart from their refusal to accept the Chalcedonian Definition, they were orthodox, paved a path for Photios to follow. It might almost be said that the aim was so to define orthodoxy that it included, rather than excluded, the Armenians.

Tia Kolbaba, who has done signal work on the way in which the Byzantines formulated the ‘errors’ of the Latins, is concerned in her paper to show how dangerous it is to speak too prematurely of any ‘anti-Latin’ movement among the Byzantines. Rather it is the case that the Latins were seen to constitute a position within Orthodoxy, though with differing customs on non-essential matters, at least until the twelfth century, when as a result of the crusades the Latin presence in the East made such largely liturgical customs a practical, rather than a merely theoretical matter.
INTRODUCTION

I have left to last mention of what for many was the high point of the conference in Durham: the lecture by the noted Russian academician, Sergei Averintsev. This is partly because it was a high point of the conference, but also because this introduction is being written within days of hearing of his tragic death. Just over a year after the conference – in May 2003 – Averintsev suffered a stroke and went into a coma. He never came out of that coma, and died in Vienna, where he had been living for some years, on 21 February 2004. His death is a great loss. Вечная Память! May his memory be eternal! During the Soviet period, through sheer scholarship, Averintsev kept the flame of the Orthodox faith alive at the heart of Soviet scholarship. He was primarily a literary scholar, with an astonishing range of learning from the classical literature in which he was trained through biblical and patristic literature to Byzantine, Western medieval and modern, especially, Russian literature; he was a pupil of Losev and Bakhtin, and like them intimations of his faith glimmered through his exacting scholarship (though in his case that glimmer was more a steady flame). His paper at our conference explored what he called, following Pavel Florensky, 'Orthodox taste', a sense, expressed in a predilection for certain themes or values, that seems to characterize the Byzantine articulation of Orthodoxy. For many, he managed, as so often in his articles, to capture the essence of the matter: it was this that lay at the heart of, in this case, the notion of Orthodoxy, something difficult to pin down, betrayed when turned into concepts, but evoked with seemingly unerring sensitivity by the precise examples and comparisons that Averintsev suggested we consider in his lecture.

The papers gathered together here represent a variety of very different perspectives, illuminating, it is hoped, the ways in which Byzantium conceived of Orthodoxy, and valued it, from various angles. It makes no claim to completeness: some of the more obvious gaps have been indicated in the introduction, but completeness in a matter so fundamental but elusive – elusive, perhaps, in fundamental ways – would be beyond the scope of a conference. If it raises questions and suggests different ways of approaching the subject and what it entails, it will have fulfilled its purpose.

Durham, 27 February 2004
Section I: Defining orthodoxy
The question of Nicene Orthodoxy

John Behr

Given that adherence to the Nicene Christianity became the imperial ecclesial policy after the Council of Constantinople, the question of what exactly constitutes Nicene Christianity is crucial, both then and in many ways even more so today. In fact, the question of Nicene orthodoxy seems to be increasingly urgent, yet ever more complex. Indeed, the very notion of ‘orthodoxy’, and, together with it, the idea of deviation or ‘heresy’, is continually difficult, even if it is the perennial issue for Christianity. Walter Bauer’s Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity, the book which revolutionized twentieth-century studies on orthodoxy in early Christianity (at least when it was translated into English!), was not nearly radical enough – not only, as Bauer claims, does ‘heresy’ precede ‘orthodoxy’ in some locations, but the earliest Christian documents we have address errors within the Christian communities. Orthodoxy, I will suggest, has less to do with recapturing a pristine past than envisioning the future.

The question of Nicene Orthodoxy is especially important today. Through the controversies of the fourth century the Council of Nicaea became the standard reference point, and remained so thereafter. The world of Nicene Christianity embraces not only matters pertaining to dogmatic theology (the use of the term homoousios), but also spirituality (liturgy, prayer, piety), and also includes both a history (marked by particular events) and a geography (with its own sacred centres) – all the things which make up a ‘world’. Over the last couple of centuries the foundations of this world have been steadily eroded, and a new world constructed, with a new geography and, especially important, a new sense of history. Christianity today, in all its various forms, clearly finds itself torn between these two worlds: the world in which it developed into its classical form and the world in which we, even Christians, now live. It is perhaps the relegation of this ‘Nicene world’ to books that stimulated

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the intense interest, in recent times, in the debates of the fourth century. The last decades of the twentieth century saw a number of excellent monographs published on various individual figures – Eusebius of Caesarea, Arius, Asterius, Marcellus, Athanasius, Eunomius, Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus. As yet only a few authors have sketched out in articles a revised history of the fourth century controversies, and even fewer have ventured to undertake a full survey of the fourth century debates, notably, Manlio Simonetti, *La crisi ariana*, and Richard Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God*.\(^1\)

The result of all this scholarship is that the whole question of Nicene orthodoxy is now much more complex than it was thirty or forty years ago. It is no longer possible to refer to the debates that resulted in the settlement of ‘Nicene Orthodoxy’ as the ‘Arian controversy’. It is not adequate to repeat the story of how the arch-heretic Arius perverted the originally pure faith, was condemned at the Council of Nicaea, yet established a movement that continued in opposition to Nicaea, reappearing hydra-like in a variety of forms (‘semi-arianism’, ‘neo-arianism’) until the Cappadocians took over the baton of Nicene Orthodoxy from Athanasius and finally defeated the heresy at the Council of Constantinople. This story simply does not hold up: the widespread support that Arius found indicates that he must have represented some aspect of traditional Christianity which others felt was now coming under attack; while those who opposed Nicaea explicitly deny that they were following Arius.

The description of those opposed to Nicaea as ‘arians’ belongs, of course, to Athanasius, though he didn’t really develop this rhetorical ploy until the 340s, suggesting that he perhaps learnt this tactic from Marcellus of Ancyra when they were both in exile in Rome in 340.\(^2\) If one looks at the non-Nicene sources, such as Philostorgius, it is clear that the opponents of Nicaea regarded Arius as being part of a much larger tradition of theology, not necessarily a tightly unified ‘school’, but rather a ‘loose and uneasy coalition’ of theologians who looked back to Lucian of Antioch as being their common teacher.\(^3\) This style of theology has been variously

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dubbed in modern scholarship: Rowan Williams refers to it as a 'pluralist eikon theology'; Joseph Lienhard describes it as being 'dyohypostatic' rather than 'miahypostatic'.\(^4\) As these designations indicate, the two key beliefs of those opposed to Nicaea were that, first, the Son is a separate hypostasis, distinct from, yet dependant upon, the Father, and that, second, the Son perfectly resembles, is the image of, the Father. It is the second belief, that the Son images the Father, that is generally the most important, but is threatened with being undermined by the first belief, that the Son is a distinct entity in his own right. The tension between these two beliefs eventually resulted in the break up of the coalition into the various trajectories of later non-Nicene theology (homoiousian and Eunomian). And, as Williams argues, it was the genius of Athanasius, and then the Cappadocians (though one must be careful not to postulate too close a continuity), to persuade those for whom the similarity of the Son to the Father was most important that Nicaea alone could do justice to this (and so maintain that God really is revealed in Christ), even if this required a certain amount of 'demythologizing' of the way in which the distinct subsistence of the Son is conceptualized.\(^5\)

The characteristic emphases of those opposed to Nicaea are best understood as a reaction against Paul of Samosata, following the lead of the Council of Antioch in 268.\(^6\) The issue involved here is one, I would suggest, that is vitally important to our understanding of the fourth century debates and also, and more importantly, for our appropriation of those debates today. The affair concerning Paul of Samosata is, of course, notoriously difficult to reconstruct; various charges are raised against him during the century and a half after his condemnation, charges usually reflecting contemporary interests (in the fourth century he is seen as a Sabellian; in the fifth as a Nestorian). However, there is one common thread running through all these charges, which is that Paul taught that Jesus Christ was only a man, that he thus denied the real ('hypostatic', to use the language of the fourth century) existence of the Word of God prior to the Incarnation. Paul's opponents presuppose that the Word of God must be understood as a distinct, personal, divine entity or agent, alongside or below God, with his own history or biography. To them it seemed that Paul considered Christ as a man united only externally to this Word, and, against what they perceived to be a weak doctrine of the unity of Christ, they argued for a substantial union, in which the Word takes the place of the soul in Christ. Thus, from their own theological pre-


\(^5\) Williams, Arius, 166.

suppositions, it seemed to his opponents that Paul taught ‘two sons’: the man Jesus, on the one hand, and the Word, on the other, as two separate entities.

However, in one of the most interesting fragments, Paul argues that it is in fact his opponents who separate Christ from the Word:

Jesus Christ, he who was born of Mary, was united with Wisdom, was one with her and through her was ‘Son’ and ‘Christ’. For one says that he who suffered, who endured stripes and blows, who was buried and descended into Hell, who is risen from the dead, is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. For one must not separate him who is before the ages from him who was born at the end of days; as for me, I dread to maintain two sons, I dread to maintain two Christs. 

Paul is appealing to what is probably a traditional, confessional statement (For one says ...), to explain how he understands Jesus being united with Wisdom to the point of becoming ‘one’ with Wisdom, and thus being the Son and Christ of God – that is, it is as the one who has undergone the Passion and Resurrection that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

At stake here seems to be two different ways of conceptualising the identity of Jesus Christ. Paul, following a venerable tradition of Christian theology, takes the identity of Christ to be that given in the proclamation of the Gospel of the crucified and exalted Lord, and argues that this identity would be sacrificed if a distinction were to be made between one who is from all eternity and another who is revealed at the fullness of time. Even if his opponents were to claim that the one who is from all eternity as the Word of God is the very same one as the one born of Mary, Paul would argue that on their own terms a distinction has been made: what is said of the one born of Mary, that he was crucified and risen, is not said of the Word in his eternal state with God and thus does not pertain to the actual identity of the eternal Word; the defining characteristics of the one are not the defining characteristics of the other, and so, for Paul, they proclaim two sons.

Paul’s opponents, on the other hand, seem to treat the identity of the Word in terms of the continuity of a personal subject, who at a certain point in time has become incarnate, animating a body by taking the place of a soul. This has the anomalous result that they are unable to call Christ himself the Word of God, for the Word dwells in him. Paul also was charged with asserting that the Word or Wisdom of God dwelt in Christ, but whatever he might have meant by this, rather than what his opponents understood him to have meant, Paul’s theological reflection turns

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upon the identical identity, as it were, of the beginning and the end, the alpha and the omega, the one Jesus Christ.

Echoes of this debate can be heard repeatedly in the decades before Athanasius launches his attack against the Arians. In the first decade of the fourth century, the charges raised against Paul — that of teaching that Christ is merely a man, of proclaiming two sons, and of affirming the presence of a human soul in Christ — recur in Pamphilus' *Apology* as charges raised against Origen, though as R. Williams notes, they are now put in the language of Alexandrine catechesis. Origen, whose work lies behind both sides of most later theological controversies, was also being attacked around this time by that 'turn-coat' Origenist, Methodius of Olympus, bringing up other issues that were to feed directly into the later debates. The issue of theological pluralism — asserting more than one divine being — also recurs in the years after Nicaea, when Eustathius of Antioch charged Eusebius of Caesarea with polytheism; Eustathius was soon thereafter deposed by a synod headed by Eusebius. Eustathius also accuses his opponents of teaching that the Word took the place of the soul in Christ, so that they can attribute passion directly to the Word and so argue for his lesser divinity; although his opponents remain nameless, Eusebius of Caesarea is known to have held such opinions. And then finally, in the 330s, the issue of theological pluralism reemerges in Marcellus of Ancyra's criticism of Asterius and the full-blown attack that this provokes from Eusebius of Caesarea.

In all of these debates, which turn upon how we are to think of Christ as God alongside the God of all, no mention is made of Arius. Arius is but one part of a larger tradition of theology, who acted as the catalyst, bringing all of these rumblings to a head. The later opponents of Nicaea did not look back to him as their founder; if anything they regarded him as being somewhat in error, though they maintained that he was unjustly persecuted and therefore they were not prepared to forsake him.

Similar observations can be made on the Nicene side. Athanasius mentions the term *homoousios* and the Council of Nicaea only once in his work *Against the Arians*, and then almost in passing. He defends the term fully in his work, *On the Decrees of Nicaea* (c. 345–55), though it is perhaps not until as late as his letter to the Emperor Jovianin (363) that Athanasius

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10 Cf. Eustathius, Frag. 17, in M. Spanneut, *Recherches sur les Écrits d'Eustathe d'Antioche, avec une édition nouvelle des fragments dogmatiques et exégétiques* (Lille: Facultés Catholiques, 1948); for Eusebius, see his *Ecclesiastical Theology*, 1.20.7.
11 Athanasius, *Orations Against the Arians*, 1.6.
regards Nicaea as being in itself an apostolic, catholic norm of faith. In other words, the qualification of Orthodoxy as Nicene Orthodoxy is a step which is not a given from the beginning, even for Athanasius. Nor is it definitively established by him; the continuity between his work and that of the Cappadocians raises yet further questions which, fortunately, I do not have to address here!

Given these fruits of recent work, it is not surprising that, having surveyed all the material in a weighty tome, Hanson concludes that: 'The story is the story of how orthodoxy was reached, found, not of how it was maintained.' It was, he asserts, 'a process of trial and error', error, he specifies elsewhere, not only on the part of the 'heretics' but also shared by the 'orthodox' too. More specifically, this process of trial and error involved a break with the past – with the theology of Irenaeus, Tertullian and Hippolytus – in the elaboration of 'a genuinely Christian doctrine of God'. This is done, he claims, in 'a return to Scripture', despite what he calls their 'inadequate equipment for understanding the Bible'. Through all these developments, or rather this 'discovery', there was established, as he puts it:

the shape of Trinitarian doctrine ... [that] was necessary, indeed we may say permanent. It was a solution, the solution, to the intellectual problem which had for so long vexed the church.

Such does indeed seem like a reasonable inference from the current state of historical scholarship as I have described it. It is, however, a deeply problematic conclusion. Can one really claim a permanent status for an explanation articulated for the first time, as Hanson claims, in the fourth century? Are the fourth-century figures even as fixated with the articulation itself anyway? It is noteworthy that the terms 'hypostasis' and 'ousia' do not appear in the Creed of Constantinople, while the formula 'three hypostases one ousia' appears in the pages of the Cappadocians perhaps only once. Trinitarian theology, let alone Nicene orthodoxy,

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13 Hanson, Search, 870.
14 Hanson, Search, 873; and idem. 'The achievement of orthodoxy in the fourth century AD', in R. Williams, ed., The Making of Orthodoxy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 142–56 at 153.
15 Hanson, Search, 873.
16 Hanson, Search, 872, 875.
17 Hanson, Search, 875.
18 Hanson, 'Achievement of Orthodoxy', 156.
19 Gregory Nazianzen, On the Great Athanasius, 35; this point is noted by J.T. Lienhard, 'Ousia and Hypostasis: The Cappadocian Settlement and the Theology of "One Hypostasis"',
cannot be reduced to this formula. Hanson's conclusion seems to have substituted the explanation for that which it is explaining, as if the theoretical edifice elaborated in the fourth century is itself the permanent point of reference in which the human spirit finds rest.

Part of the disquiet with Hanson’s conclusion can be alleviated by Vaggione’s recent observation that such investigations into the fourth-century controversies have begun from the wrong starting point, from that which is most abstract, and therefore most unlikely to have provoked the majority of Christians into action. What is more important, Vaggione argues, is the interpretative framework within which the dogmatic formulae are set or (using Newman’s distinction between ‘notional’ and ‘real’) the way in which these abstract propositions are apprehended as ‘real’ by the religious imagination: the world was not torn apart simply by a single ‘iota’, it was ‘not doctrine per se, but doctrine imagined’ that incited the Christian masses to take part in what would otherwise have been a barely intelligible controversy. This is an important point: at stake are different paradigms, within which doctrinal formulations take flesh. The similarity of terms and expressions, yet difference of paradigm or imaginative framework, explains why most of the figures in the fourth century seem to be talking past each other, endlessly repeating the same point yet perennially perplexed as to why their opponents simply don’t get it.

Once we enter into their own worlds, we find that very similar sounding formulae are used to tell very different versions of the ‘Christian story’. The non-Nicene insistence that Scripture is to be applied in a univocal manner to Christ, both those things which seem more divine and those which seem all too human, results in a very strong emphasis, well brought out by Vaggione, on an absolutely unitary subject: ‘If, as the non-Nicenes claimed, it was truly crucial that there be one and only one Christ, and that the Logos be a single subject throughout, then that unity had to extend to his entire history and not merely to its earthly portions.’ The Word of God is here understood, very much along the lines of the opponents of Paul of Samosata, as a distinct self-subsisting entity, with his own history, in which existence as Jesus Christ is but a phase. In this style of exegesis, Vaggione continues, the hierarchy entailed by this story ‘became not only narrative but a metaphysical reality’. And in this construction, the Logos unambiguously falls upon this side of the gap.


21 Vaggione, Eunomius, 127.

22 Vaggione, Eunomius, 128.
between God and everything else: he is a creature, even if not as one of the other creatures.

Vaggione has skilfully introduced us into the world of the non-Nicenes. But his sketches of what the Nicene world looks like are much less successful. In fact, with only a few exceptions, the 'Christian story' as told by the Nicenes has been very inadequately represented during the twentieth century. In Hanson's hands, for instance, Athanasius' Christ turns out to be no more than the Word of God wearing a 'space-suit' of human flesh, enabling him to be active within the world and its history, yet remaining untouched by anything that afflicts the flesh. This docetic charade is made complete, or completely unintelligible, when it is then claimed that, in this picture, the Word allows his flesh to exhibit the weaknesses proper to the flesh so that we might not think that he wasn't really a man!

The inadequacies of presupposing categories such as Word-flesh/Word-man have been noted and are increasingly realized. I would suggest, however, that a more fundamental reason for the difficulties of explaining Nicene Christianity is because of our own context, in particular, our own presuppositions about what Scripture is and how it is to be read. Until very recently, studies of Patristic exegesis have tended to operate with the assumption that Scripture is what we think it is, and that it is to be exeged in the way that we carry out scriptural exegesis – i.e. through historical-critical methods claiming to deliver the true (because original) meaning of the text of Scripture. Not surprisingly, given our own concern for history, investigations into patristic exegesis have usually proceeded by drawing up an opposition between Antiochene typology, based in a Semitic sense of history (and therefore good) and Alexandrine allegory, based in a Platonic escape from the history represented in the text (and therefore bad). Again, it is increasingly being realized that such facile contrasts say more about our own prejudices, and that they are simply inadequate as models for understanding patristic exegesis. This is also paralleled, and strengthened, by an increasing dissatisfaction among

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scriptural scholars with the historical-critical methodologies of exegesis that so fascinated twentieth-century scriptural scholarship.  

Nevertheless, this perception has not percolated into studies of patristic doctrine. A striking example of this is Hanson’s treatment of the way in which Athanasius uses Proverbs 8:22: ‘The Lord created me at the beginning of his ways’. Hanson notes that these words were applied by all sides to the Son, but that Athanasius followed the ‘peculiar views’ of Marcellus of Ancyra and Eustathius of Antioch in referring these words specifically to the human flesh of Christ, and that ‘Later pro-Nicene writers borrowed their very implausible practice of reading into the Old Testament references to the incarnate Word at places where before everybody had seen references to the pre-existent Logos’. Hanson’s overall conclusion is that, in this period

the expounders of the text of the Bible are incompetent and ill-prepared to expound it. This applies as much to the wooden and unimaginative approach of the Arians as it does to the fixed determination of their opponents to read their doctrine into the Bible by hook or by crook. Hanson clearly has no time for the style of exegesis practiced during this period. And a similar incredulity in the claims of such exegesis (that Prov. 8:22 applies to Christ as man) is tacit in most modern works on the period.

But then Hanson continues with this extraordinary statement:

It was much more the presuppositions with which they approach the Biblical text that clouded their perceptions, the tendency to treat the Bible in an ‘atomic’ way as if each verse or set of verses was capable of giving direct information about Christian doctrine apart from its context, the ‘oracular’ concept of the nature of the Bible, the incapacity with a few exceptions to take serious account of the background and circumstances of the writers. The very reverence with which they honoured the Bible as a sacred book stood in the way of their understanding it. In this matter they were of course only reproducing the presuppositions of all Christians

\[\text{28} \] Amongst the many works, see esp. L.T. Johnson, The Real Jesus: The Misguided Quest for the Historical Jesus and the Truth of the Traditional Gospels (San Francisco: Harper, 1997).

\[\text{29} \] Hanson, Search, 227.

\[\text{30} \] Hanson, Search, 234.

\[\text{31} \] Hanson, Search, 235.

\[\text{32} \] Hanson, Search, 848.

\[\text{33} \] The difficulty that Vaggione has in comprehending the Nicene world is perhaps because he takes the style of exegesis exemplified by Augustine as being normative for Nicene theology. Cf. Eunomius, esp. 84, fnns 34; 85; 135.
before them, of the writers of the New Testament itself, of the tradition of Jewish rabbinic piety and scholarship.\textsuperscript{34}

What they were doing is simply wrong, even if it is a practice going back to the apostles themselves and their proclamation of the Gospel! Recent work on the understanding and use of Scripture in antiquity, by scholars such as James Kugel and John Barton, confirm the general points made by Hanson.\textsuperscript{35} According to Kugel, four basic assumptions governed the understanding of Scripture in antiquity. First, that it is a fundamentally cryptic document, where the true meaning of the text is some hidden, esoteric message; from a Christian perspective, of course, it is Christ who unlocks the Scriptures so that his disciples see how it all speaks about him. Second, that it is a fundamentally relevant text, that it is not so much a record of things that happened in the past, but a text written down for us, now. Third, that it is perfect and perfectly harmonious; from a Christian perspective, again, it all speaks about Christ. And fourth, that, as a consequence of the first three assumptions, Scripture is therefore regarded as being divine or divinely inspired – the apostolic proclamation is what the prophets spoke by the Spirit.\textsuperscript{36}

Seen from this perspective, the issue between the Nicenes and the non-Nicenes is a matter of exegesis. Both sides took Scripture as speaking of Christ. The non-Nicenes, however, insisted on an absolutely univocal exegesis, which applied all scriptural affirmations in a unitary fashion to one subject, who thus turns out to be a demi-god, neither fully divine nor fully human – created but not as one of the creatures. And, at least in the modern reading of this, this demi-god is a temporal being, with his own history – the ‘preincarnate Logos’ who eventually, as one phase in his existence, animates a body to become the man Jesus Christ. For the Nicenes, on the other hand, Scripture speaks throughout of Christ, but the Christ of the kerygma, the crucified and exalted Lord, and so speaks of him in a two-fold fashion, a partitive exegesis: some things are said of him as God and other things are said of him as man – yet the same Christ throughout. Just as in the case of Paul of Samosata, considered earlier, the conflict turns upon two different ways of conceptualizing the identity of Christ.

If this is right, then, as Hanson notes, there is greater continuity with earlier Christianity than previously thought; the exegetical practice of the

\textsuperscript{34} Hanson, Search, 848–9.


\textsuperscript{36} Kugel, Traditions, 14–19.
Nicenes do indeed reproduce that of the writers of the New Testament itself: Paul proclaimed that Christ died and rose according to the Scriptures, and the four Gospels counted as canonical expand on this by expounding the Scriptures as speaking of Christ. If this is the case, then serious doubts must be raised regarding claims that Orthodoxy was discovered or constructed for the first time in the fourth century. As I suggested earlier, such claims seem to substitute the explanation for that which they are explaining. Certainly the formulae of dogmatic theology are expressed more precisely in the fourth century than earlier, in response to various questions, and they continue to be refined thereafter. In the following century, the question of partitive exegesis is made more precise when challenged by those who would take it as implying two subjects in the one Christ. But these formulae are not themselves the focal point of Christian faith, rather they express the parameters of the engagement with the Scriptures in the contemplation and worship of Christ. The Christian project, as it were, remains the same: its object is not to recover the historical Jesus on the basis of a historical approach to Scripture, but to contemplate the Christ who is still the coming one.

Maurice Wiles, in his *Archetypal Heresy: Arianism through the Centuries*, demonstrates quite convincingly how belief in a semi-divine mediator flourishes in contexts which assume that the gap between God and creation is populated by various levels or realms of such beings, combined with a belief in the pre-existence of souls. In such a world one can imagine great cosmological dramas, myths being played out in an almost Gnostic fashion. Wiles also suggests that the 'third and final death' of arianism in the late eighteenth century was due to a changing perception of the world. However, the ability of modern scholarship, with its historicist presumptions, to imagine how the non-Nicene world looked, and its inability to comprehend the Nicene world, suggests that 'arianism' has not yet been laid to rest. Rowan Williams described the creed of Nicaea as being 'the first step in the critical demythologising of Christian discourse'. It seems that this is a task that theology must continually undertake. As is proper, then, reflecting on the question of Nicene Orthodoxy compels us to re-examine our own theological discourse and its presuppositions.

Gregory of Nazianzus as the authoritative voice of Orthodoxy in the sixth century *

Caroline Macé

There were many factors involved in the formulation and defence of Byzantine Orthodoxy. Many of them were political and sociological, but these were mainly concerned with the pressures on the process of the formulation of Orthodoxy, not with the actual formulation itself. For that formulation took place in theological terms. Such theological expressions of orthodoxy were promoted and defended by appeal to authority. The principal authority was the Holy Scriptures themselves, but these were rarely directly concerned with the issues at stake in the sixth century; if they were to be brought to bear on such issues, they needed interpretation. The imperial synods themselves, that produced the doctrinal definitions, performed that role of interpretation to only a limited extent. Recourse was needed to earlier theologians whose growing reputation for theological insight had secured for them authority in these matters. Already in the Christological controversies of the fifth century, appeal had begun to be made to the 'Fathers'. This process grew apace in the history of the Byzantine Church, to such an extent that the Byzantine Church – and its continuation in the family of Eastern Orthodox Churches

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– came to be characterized by its appeal to the authority of the ‘Fathers’. One might have thought that in the selection of such Fathers, some care would have been taken to select those whose support for Orthodoxy was unequivocal. But this was, in the event, scarcely true at all. Cyril of Alexandria, the touchstone for Christological orthodoxy in the East in the sixth century, was appealed to equally by the principal opponents of this orthodoxy, the non- (or pre-) Chalcedonians, who, indeed, found in him less ambiguous support for their position than their opponents, the supporters of Chalcedonian orthodoxy. The same is true of the one who perhaps came to be conceded the greatest authority of all in Byzantine theology – Gregory of Nazianzus, the Cappadocian Father who came to be called ‘the Theologian’. How this was so in the sixth century, then his authority was on the way to virtual infallibility, is the subject of this paper.

‘God asks three things from any Christian: right faith, truth from the tongue, and purity from the body.’1 This sentence, that begins a homily wrongly attributed to Athanasius,2 was associated with Saint Gregory the Theologian in the *Apopthegmata Patrum*: ‘God asks three things from any man who has been baptised: right faith from the soul, truth from the tongue, and temperance from the body.’3 The *auctoritas* of the Church Fathers played a significant role in the sixth century, as P. Gray has emphasized.4 In this context, the case of Gregory of Nazianzus provides an interesting model through which to explore the way in which patristic texts were used by later authors.

Some passages of Gregory of Nazianzus’s homilies were quoted in the context of the ‘second Origenist controversy’. I will not deal here with the question of a possible influence of Gregory on Evagrius. Evagrius calls Gregory ‘our wise master’ and ‘the fair Gregory, who made me grow up’,5 however, it is difficult to assess what influence, if any, Gregory may have

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1 PG 28.1108–1109: Διὰ ἀπατεῖν θεὸς παρὰ τοῦ Χριστιανοῦ, πίστιν ὀρθήν, καὶ ἄλληθρον ἀπὸ γλύσης, καὶ ἄγνεον ἀπὸ σώματος.
2 Sermo exhortatorius (CPG 2282). The same text is also preserved in a recension of the homily De Die Dominica of a pseudo-Eusebius of Alexandria (CPG 5525.3).
had upon him. It is likely, however, that on some points the so-called Evagrian monks found a kind of guarantee in Gregory's works. A passage common to the homilies on Christmas (Or. 38) and on Easter (Or. 45) is referred to by the anti-Origenists in order to demonstrate that Gregory did not support the idea that souls pre-exist bodies. The same passage is quoted by Barsanuphius and John of Gaza as well as by Justinian.

In the Erot. 604 of Barsanuphius and John,⁶ one reads:

Those who have those thoughts about pre-existence are not afraid, Father, of saying about Saint Gregory of Nazianzus that he also publicly expressed himself about pre-existence, in the homilies that he preached for the birth of the Lord and for the day of Easter, interpreting some words according to their own opinion, and neglecting what he clearly said there about the first creation of man, his soul and his body, according to the tradition of the church: 'Wishing to show this, the Artificer Word creates one being from both, I mean, from invisible and visible nature – man, taking from pre-existing matter the body, and from Himself installing life, which, the Word knows, is the intellectual soul and the image of God.'⁷

In one fourteenth-century manuscript (Athos, Iviron 1307) and in the edition of S.N. Schoinas (Volos, 1960), installing life (ζωὴν ἐνθεσίας) is replaced by installing breath (πνεῦμα ἐνθεσίας). Gregory's text is carefully quoted (Or. 38, 11 [PG 36.321] = Or. 45, 7 [PG 36.632]) and ζωὴν is the reading of the most numerous family of Greek manuscripts and of the most ancient translations of the text.⁸ Or. 38 was edited in 1990 by C.

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⁶ I need to thank my colleague, Marc Dubuisson, who drew my attention to this text. The testimony has already been analysed by L. Perrone, 'Palestinian Monasticism, the Bible, and Theology in the Wake of the Second Origenist Controversy', in J. Patrich, ed., The Sahidite Heritage in the Orthodox Church, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 98 (Leuven: Peeters, 2001), 253.

⁷ Erot. 604, ed. F. Neyt and P. de Angelis-Noah, SC 450 (Paris: Cerf, 2001): Ὄνικ ὄκνοισι, Πάτερ, οἱ ταῦτα φρονοῦντες περὶ τῆς προοπάρξεως, λεγεὶ περὶ τοῦ ἄγιου Γρηγορίου τοῦ Ναζιάνζου ὅτι καὶ αὐτὸς ἐκτίθεται περὶ τῆς προοπάρξεως ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῦ συγγράμμασι τοῖς αὐτοῦ βιβλίοις, ἐν τοῖς τοῖς νεογενεῖς, καὶ ἐν τῇ τοῦ Πάσχα ἡμέρᾳ, ἐμφανεῖται τώρι ὡρᾶ κατὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ καρδίαν, καὶ παρατρέχοντες τὰ ἐκεῖ σαφῶς εἰρήμενα περὶ τῆς πρώτης τοῦ ἀνθρώπου δημιουργίας, τῆς τοῦ αὐτοῦ ψυχῆς καὶ τοῦ σώματος, κατὰ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας παράδοσιν. Λέγει γὰρ ὁ Πάτερ: 'Τοῦτο δὲ βουληθῆς ὁ τεχνιτὸς ἐπιθείμαθαι Λόγος, καὶ ζωὴν ἐν ἐξ ἀμφότερων ἁρατῶν τε λέγω καὶ ὁρατῆς φύσεως δημιουργεῖ, τῶν ἀνθρώπων. Καὶ παρὰ μὲν τῆς ὕλης λαβοὺν τὸ σῶμα ἥδι προοπάρξεως, παρὰ ἑαυτοῦ δὲ ζωὴν ἐνθεσίας, δὴ νοεῖν ψυχὴν καὶ εἰκόνα Θεοῦ ὃδεν ὁ λόγος'.

The Latin translation of Gregory's homilies was made by Rufinus of Aquilea around 400 A.D., and an anonymous Armenian translation was made around 500. For the importance of these two translations for the history of Gregory's text, see M. Dubuisson and
Moreschini, and the manuscript tradition was examined again, in a broader context, in an article published in 2001. On the basis of these results, \( \zeta \omega \eta \nu \) is certainly the correct reading.

In his edict against Origen, in 553, Justinian claims that it can be demonstrated that souls do not pre-exist and are not sent into bodies as a punishment: ‘Saint Gregory the Theologian’s teaching, in the discourse for holy Easter, agrees with what I am saying, when he says …’ Then comes the same quotation as above and Justinian continues with Gregory’s text:

He places him as a second world, as it were, great in small, another angel, a worshipper, a compound being: supervisor of visible creation, initiate into that of the mind, king of those on earth, subject of the Above, earthly and heavenly, temporary and undying, visible and object of thought, between greatness and baseness.

Justinian explicitly quotes the Or. 45 only. The text he quotes however is closer to Or. 38 than to Or. 45, because in the Or. 45 one reads κόσμον ἐτερον instead of κόσμον δεύτερον in Or. 38. Justinian’s quotation shows the same reading \( \zeta \omega \eta \nu \). Justinian paraphrases and explains Gregory’s quotation, prior to quoting it. This reference to Gregory seems to be significant in the context of the controversy about the pre-existence of souls.

Another of Gregory’s texts has been used in the same manner. According to the Vita Cyriaci, Cyril of Scythopolis affirms that the Origenist monks used Gregory’s authority in order to defend their freedom of thinking and talking. This quotation has been noted and discussed by other scholars.

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11 ACO, III, 195–196: Σύμφωνα δὲ τοῖς παρ’ ἡμῶν εἱρημένοις καὶ ὁ ἐν ἄγιοις θεολόγοι Γρηγόριος ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῷ εἰς τὸ ἄγιον πάσχα διδάσκει λέγων οὕτως: Ὅτι δὴ βουλήθης ὁ τεχνίτης ἐπιδείξασθαι Λόγος καὶ ζωὸν ἐν ἐξ ἀμφοτέρων ἀρότου τε λέγω καὶ ὀρατῆς φύσεως δημιουργεῖ τὸν ἀνθρώπον καὶ παρὰ μὲν τῆς ὄλης λαβὼν τὸ σῶµα ἢδη προύποστάσης, παρὰ ἑαυτὸν δὲ ζωήν ἐνεῖθες (οὐδὲ ὑπεχθεῖν νοεῖν καὶ εἰκόνα Θεοῦ οἶδεν ὁ λόγος) οἶδω τινα κόσμον δεύτερον ἐν μικρῷ μέγαν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἑστηκον ἄγγελον ἄλλον προσκυνησάν μικτον ἐπόστην τῆς ὀρατῆς κτίσεως μιστὴς τῆς νουμένης βασιλεία τῶν ἐπὶ γῆς βασιλευόμενον ἀνωθεύς) (Or. 38, 11 [PG 36.321–324] = Or. 45, 7 [PG 36.632]).
Father, what of the views they advocate? They themselves affirm that the doctrines of pre-existence and restoration are indifferent and without danger, citing the words of Saint Gregory, 'Philosophize about the world, matter, the soul, the good and the evil rational creatures, the Resurrection and the Passion of Christ; for in these matters hitting on the truth is not without profit and error is without danger.'

The quotation is shorter than the original text. To combat this appropriation of Gregory's thought by Origenists, Cyril uses Gregory against Gregory, as D. Hombergen showed, paraphrasing another passage of the Or. 27 without explicitly mentioning Gregory.

The same text is quoted again in the sixth century by Pamphilus of Jerusalem, in his Capitulorum diuersorum seu dubitationum solutio. J. Declerck has demonstrated, after M. Richard, that Pamphilus depends on Leontius of Byzantium. The two most ancient translations of Gregory's text omit 'the good and the evil' (βελτιώνων τε καὶ χειρόνων). Apparently, those translations, into Latin and into Armenian, preserve some good (presumably authentic) readings which completely disappeared in the Greek manuscripts of Gregory's text. The text of Pamphilus is closer to that of the ancient translations than to that of Gregory's manuscripts. The agreement between Pamphilus and the translations of Gregory's homily might be entirely coincidental, or it might be evidence that Pamphilus was still reading a text of Gregory that has been transformed in the mean time. It is rather difficult to understand the purpose of this quotation in Pamphilus's treatise. Quaestio XVI is about the union of natures in Christ, against the opinions of the Nestorians. Only the very last words of Gregory's homily 27 may be understood as having some christological content: 'But of God himself the knowledge we shall have in this life will be little, though soon after it will

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14 Φιλοσοφεῖ μοι περὶ κόσμου ἡ κόσμων, περὶ ὠλῆς, περὶ ψυχῆς, περὶ λογικῶν φύσεων βελτιώνατε καὶ χειρόνων, περὶ ἀναστάσεως, κρίσεως, ἀνταποδόσεως, Χριστοῦ παθημάτων. Ἔν τούτοις γὰρ καὶ τὸ ἐπιτυγχάνειν οὐκ ἄρηστον καὶ τὸ διαμαρτάνειν ἀκώδυνον (Or. 27, 10 [PG 36. 25]). See also P. Gallay, ed., SC 250 (Paris: Cerf, 1978). I gave a new edition of this homily, taking into account the whole manuscript tradition and the ancient translations, in my doctoral dissertation.
perhaps be more perfect, in the same Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be glory for ever and ever'.

Why does Pamphilus quote the whole passage?

The same text appears in a third instance. It is quoted again in 713, by the Patriarch John VI in his letter to the Pope Constantine. This letter is the only surviving document referring to the condemnation of the sixth council by Patriarch John VI, during the reign of Philippikos Bardanes. In this letter to the Pope the Patriarch attempts to erase the memory of his ‘mistake’ and to excuse himself, arguing that he was forced to compromise (οἰκονομία). Here, Gregory’s text is used in the very same way as Origenists allegedly did. Gregory of Nazianzus, who is indeed a specialist in self-apologising, is far by far the most often quoted Father in Patriarch John’s letter.

The purpose of the quotations of these two texts of Gregory the Theologian, in any case, was not to insist on what Gregory may actually have said or thought about the question under debate but rather to place the name and authority of Gregory on the author’s side.

The use of Gregory’s name is also visible in its association with that of Cyril of Alexandria. As it is well known, the figure of Cyril was central to the attempts to reconcile Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian (or pre-Chalcedonian) views in the sixth century. The link, artificially woven between the two Fathers, was a way of bringing the orthodoxy of the one to the other and vice versa. Both Justinian and Leontius insist on the fact that Cyril quoted Gregory during the council of Ephesus and they both quote Cyril quoting Gregory. This kind of squared quotation shows also

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19 ACO, Ser. II, II, 2, 905, 2–4: «φιλοσοφεί μοι περί κόσμου, περί θλησ, περί ψυχῆς, περί λογικῶν φύσεων βελτιώνων τε καὶ χειρώνων, περί ἀναστάσεως, Χριστοῦ παθημάτων: ἐν τούτους γὰρ καὶ τὸ ἐπιτυγχάνειν οὐκ ἄρχηστον καὶ τὸ διαμαρτάνειν ἀκώδυνον».


that Justinian’s and Leontius’s texts are quite closely dependant on one another.

Another application of Gregory’s work and image was to reuse his words without mention of his name. I have given an illustration of this phenomenon in Justinian’s theological works.23

Finally, in the context of Gregory’s use in a controversial situation, it should be noted that Gregory has been quoted by some other authors of the sixth century whose works are known only through Photius’s Bibliotheca. These writers are, for example, Job the monk, Eulogius of Alexandria and Ephrem of Antioch.24 One example of this, perhaps the most significant, can be found in the cod. 229 of the Bibliotheca. According to Photius, Ephrem quotes Gregory as follows: ‘As also Gregory said: “two natures, God and man”, interpreting himself he said: “so that if anyone says that Christ is God and man, he agrees that two natures have been unified according to the hypostasis”’.25 Indeed, the question is about the neo-Chalcedonian synthesis on the union of the two natures in Christ. The first quotation refers to Gregory, Ep. 101, 19, yet the last sentence is not to be found in Gregory. This expression, δύο φύσεις ἐνωθεῖσας καθ’ ὑπόστασαν, however, appears several times in theological literature.26 It might be that in the time of Photius what was at stake in the controversies of the sixth century did not seem as important as three centuries earlier. Consider how, for example, when commenting on a now lost book of Methodios, a work in which Methodios attacks an Origenist doctrine according to which the body is a hindrance (δεσμός) to the soul, Photius says: ‘But how can it be that Gregory the Theologian and many others had the same opinion?’27

To conclude, it can be stated that Gregory of Nazianzus’s work has been used at least from the sixth century onwards as an ‘argument d’autorité’, in different ways: quoted with his name, named but not

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Ephesus (ACO, I, 1, 2, 43–44 and ACO, I, 1, 7, 93) and in the Florilegium Cyrillianum (ed. R. Hespel, Bibliothèque du Muséon 37 [Louvain: Publications universitaires, 1955], 193).  
27 Phot., Bibli., cod. 234 (293a): 'Ἀλλὰ πῶς τὸ τοῦ θεολόγου Γρηγορίου νοητέων καὶ ἀλλων πολλῶν. The expression δέσμιος σαρκός can be found in Gregory’s Or. 38, 18 (PG 36.333) and Or. 24, 15 (PG 35.1188).
quoted, quoted without his name, and even falsely quoted. It does not seem however that Gregory's words have been altered, for we may compare his quotations with a rich manuscript tradition and very ancient translations. But obviously his words have been differently interpreted, as they probably allowed different interpretations. Averil Cameron wrote: 'There is no doubt that in Byzantine society religion had so far extended its domain that it constituted the single most important set of power relations (...) Why Orthodox Christianity became for Byzantine society the touchstone of all else has to be explained in relation to the Christianisation of late antiquity, and then especially with reference to the sixth and seventh centuries'.

In this process of byzantinization of orthodoxy, which P. Gray has shown took place in the sixth century, Gregory the Theologian surely played a pre-eminent role, as he was considered the βροντή τῶν δογμάτων throughout Byzantine history, even more than his more philosophical friends, Basil and Gregory of Nyssa.

Theotokos—Diadochos

Dirk Krausmüller

Greek Christians of the Late Antique period had a highly ambivalent relationship with their language. While they relied on it in their quest for an unequivocal definition of the Christian faith, they were at the same time only too aware of its slipperiness, which made it all but impossible to control the meanings of words. During the Trinitarian controversies mounting frustration therefore resulted in a shift from Scriptural phrases to the philosophical term δμοουσίος, which alone seemed to guarantee the required absence of ambiguity. The Christological controversies of the following centuries focused on a similar term, the θεοτόκος title for Mary. Like δμοουσίος, the compound theotokos is of non-Biblical origin and it is introduced into the creed for the same reasons. In the Gospels Mary is simply called ‘bearer of a son’, which could not distinguish her satisfactorily from any other human mother since it did not convey the divine aspect of the child. The term theotokos, on the other hand, did exactly that: by asserting that Jesus’ human mother Mary ‘gave birth to God’ it expressed in the most concise form possible the teaching of the communication of idioms, i.e. the process by which the human and divine natures in Christ exchanged their defining qualities. Therefore it acquired the role of a shibboleth of orthodoxy, which is neatly summed up in the statement of Patriarch Ephraem of Antioch ‘that it is enough for complete reassurance of sound worship to consider and call the all-holy Virgin God-bearer’.¹

But was the term theotokos indeed as unequivocal as Patriarch Ephraem’s assertion suggests? If we want to find a definite answer to this question the discussion cannot be limited to the blatantly obvious. As is


From Byzantine Orthodoxies, eds Andrew Louth and Augustine Casiday. Copyright © 2006 by the Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies. Published by Ashgate Publishing Ltd, Gower House, Croft Road, Aldershot, Hampshire, GU11 3HR, Great Britain.
well known most Late Antique Christian texts are written in an elaborate literary style. Brought up in the traditions of Greek rhetoric, their authors had at their disposal an impressive range of techniques, which allowed them to shade the meaning of their statements, and they could rely on educated audiences, which were able to recognise such subtleties.

In this paper I attempt to show how judicious use of such techniques could achieve the ambiguation of the conventional meaning of the term theotokos, 'God-bearer'. To make my case I focus on the Life of Theodosius the Coenobiarch, one of the leading figures of Palestinian monasticism in the late fifth and early sixth centuries. The author of this Life was Theodore, the Bishop of Petra, who purports to have written the text for the occasion of the saint's commemoration at his monastic foundation. I analyse one passage, a paraphrase of the Biblical narrative of the Adoration of the Magi, in which the term theotokos appears.

At first sight the Life of Theodosius seems an unlikely choice. It is a well-known fact that during the Christological controversies Theodosius sided firmly with the Chalcedonian party. Even more importantly, this is also how he is presented in the Life. His hagiographer Theodore puts into his mouth a long dogmatic speech, which rejects the heretical Christologies of the Eutychians and the Nestorians and affirms the validity of the formula of Chalcedon.

Such statements appear to rule out the possibility that the Life of Theodosius could contain the equivocation of one of the central terms of the Chalcedonian belief system. However, it would be wrong simply to assume that the text can only be read on one level. Of course, it is true that it presents itself as a biography of a saint and that as a consequence it offers a more or less continuous narrative containing many historical facts that can often be checked through a comparison with other sources. Nevertheless, without a thorough analysis one cannot safely say that writing a biography of an individual was the only or even the main aim of the hagiographer. The Life of Theodosius belongs to a type of hagiography that finds little favour with modern readers: its author often pursues his aim of presenting the spiritual progress of the saint through the use of

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3 V. Thds. 3.1–7.


5 Cf. esp. V. Thds. 53.13–70.24.

6 V. Thds. 63.8–68.19.
abstract formulae rather than through the narration of episodes from the saint's biography. Moreover, these formulae are usually borrowings from Scripture and older Christian writings and thus further 'de-concretise' the narrative. However, this loss, if indeed it is a loss, is counterbalanced with a substantial gain: quotations and allusions give the text a great density and create a vast realm of associations that go well beyond the particular circumstances of the saint's life.

As a hagiographer with literary ambitions Theodore also lavished much attention on the formal aspect of his text, which is replete with chiasms, parallelisms, rhetorical questions and assonances. With my analysis I hope to show that these features are closely related to the level of meaning and that it is therefore impossible to interpret the text without giving due consideration to its formal characteristics. I contend that rhetorical devices provided Theodore with a means to indicate and at the same time control the associations that he created through his use of quotations and allusions. Here I focus on assonance, since the use of similarly sounding words and phrases plays a central role in the ambiguation of the term theotokos.

Assonance is one of the most distinctive features of the Life of Theodosius. It is employed throughout the text and would have been particularly evident when the text was read aloud. To give one example: in the sentence κάτεισι τὰς ἐν τῷ καθίσματι καταλιπὼν διαπριβάς διὰ τρία ταῦτα ('he descends, having abandoned his abode in the kathisma for the following three reasons'), the sound pattern κάτεισι- is repeated in καθίσ-, and the first part κάτ- / καθ- then appears for a third time in καταλιπὼν, after which follows the even more obvious repetition of the sound pattern of διαπριβάς in διὰ τρία. Of course, the presence of such patterns alone does not yet prove the existence of a link with the content. They could be explained as a mere stylistic idiosyncrasy (and a rather tedious one at that!) and this view appears to be borne out by

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7 Cf. for example the description of the saint's spiritual development, V. Thds. 16.8–20.27.
8 The passage referred to in the previous footnote contains numerous quotations from Scripture, which are identified by the editor Usener. A typical example for Theodore's approach to the Fathers is a catechesis that he puts into the mouth of the saint. As he himself states, it is a text by Basil of Caesarea, which is only slightly altered to fit its new context, cf. V. Thds. 50.21–53.12.
9 Cf. e.g. the series of rhetorical question in V. Thds. 17.13–19.12, the chiasm in V. Thds. 7.5–6 and the parallelism in V. Thds. 7.16–20.
11 Modern scholars either ignore assonances, or when noting them, as Alexander Kazhdan did in his recent History of Byzantine Literature (650–850) (Athens: National Hellenic Research Foundation Institute for Byzantine Research, 1999), 46, they do little more than state that authors use such a device.
contemporary sources. Antique rhetorical handbooks classify assonance or παρήχησις as a rhetorical figure and define it as 'the beauty of similar words, which sound alike whereas their meaning is recognisably different'. However, rhetorical theory is not a reliable guide to the functions of assonance. A proper understanding can only be gained through analysis of its use in texts within specific historical periods.

When we turn to Late Antique Christian literature we find widespread use of parechesis. Ideally one would have to analyse a great number of texts in order to establish the conventions that guided the use of this figure. Here I can only present one instance, the assonance between the words τίκτειν, 'to give birth', and δέχεσθαι, 'to accept, to receive'. My example is taken from Cyril of Alexandria's Commentary of Isaiah:

Thus, she was a widow before the coming of the Saviour and therefore sterile and without giving birth; but when through faith she had accepted the bridegroom from heaven, many children of hers came into being.

οὐκοὺν χήρα μὲν ἢν πρὸ τῆς τοῦ σωτῆρος ἐπιθημίας ἁγιόνος τε διὰ τούτο καὶ ἄτεξ· ἐπειδὴ δὲ παρεδέξατο διὰ πίστεως τὸν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ νυμφίον πολλὰ γέγονεν αὐτῆς τὰ τέκνα.  

Here the adjective ἄτεξ, 'without giving birth', and the element -εδέξ- in the following verb παρεδέξατο, 'she accepted', form a clear parechesis, which is then extended to the noun τέκνα, 'children', in the second main clause.

The prominence of these assonances in Cyril's sentence becomes even more obvious when we compare it with his model, the prophecy in Isaiah 54:1:

Rejoice, o barren one, who does not give birth, break forth and cry aloud, you who have not been in travail, for the children of the desolate one will be many, more than those of her that has a man.

εὐφράνθητι στείρα ἡ οὖ τίκτουσα δήξεν καὶ βόησον ἡ οὐκ ωδίνουσα ὅτι πολλά τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἐρήμου μᾶλλον ἡ τῆς ἑχούσης τὸν ἄνδρα.

When he paraphrased the Biblical text, Cyril took over πολλά τὰ τέκνα without change whereas he replaced ἡ οὖ τίκτουσα with ἄτεξ and inserted as a new element the verb παρεδέξατο together with the subordinate clause in which it is found. This addition supplies Cyril's

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13 Cyril, Is. (PG 70.1193).
interpretation of the barren widow in Isaiah as an allegory of the gentiles who accepted Christ through faith.\textsuperscript{14} However, the context suggests that \textit{παρεδέξατο} conveys more than simple ‘acceptance’. Since Christ is identified as the heavenly bridegroom whose union with the barren widow results in her having children, it is clearly understood as a ‘conception’. As the link between ‘birth’ and ‘conception’ is reflected in the obvious similarity between the words \textit{ἀτέξ} and \textit{παρεδέξατο}, we can conclude that Cyril employs assonance to reinforce his interpretation on the formal level.

After this excursus on the function of assonance in Late Antique Christian literature we can return to the \textit{Life} of Theodosius the Coenobiarch and discuss the passage that contains the ambiguation of \textit{theotokos}. This passage is embedded in the account of the saint’s early monastic career. When the narrative reaches the point at which the saint moved to a cave in the desert, the author Theodore takes this as an opportunity for a digression: he adds that the cave in which the saint lived as a hermit was thought to have been the place where the Magi stayed overnight after their visit of the Christ child. This information is given in a single sentence, which consists of two parts, the narrative itself, and an introductory formula that identifies the story as an oral tradition:\textsuperscript{15}

But some unwritten story from the times above, which has come down to us through the succession of those who come later and which has arrived at us, hands down that those faithful Magi, the ones who came from the quarter of sunrise to Bethlehem through the guidance of the star and who brought to the saviour gold and frankincense and myrrh, when they accepted the birth according to the flesh out of the holy God-bearer, that these, having been informed by an angel to turn back to their home on a different road, on their return journey rested in this cave and that, having slept there during the night, they thus in the morning took to the road to the city, which had borne them.

\begin{center}
λόγος δὲ τὸς ἀγγέλου μετὰ τῶν ἁνωθεν χρόνων τῇ διαδοχῇ τῶν ἐπι-
γινομένων κατεληλυθώς καὶ ἔως ἡμῶν φθάνων παραδίδωσι τοὺς
πιστοὺς ἐκείνους μάγους τοὺς ἐξ ἀναπλασμῷ εἰς Βηθλείμ ἦκουσα τῇ
τοῦ ἀστέρου οὐδενία καὶ χρυσίων καὶ λίβανου καὶ σμύρναν τῷ σωτηρί
προσενέγκαντας ὥστε τὴν κατὰ σάρκα γέννησαν ἐκ τῆς Ἀθέτουκο
κατεδέξαντο\textsuperscript{16} τούτους ὑπὸ ἀγγέλου χρηματισθέντας δι᾽ ἑτέρας ὀδοῦ
\end{center}

\textsuperscript{14} Cyril, \textit{Is.} (PG 70.1192, 1193).

\textsuperscript{15} The story of the Magi’s stay at Theodosius’ cave was still told to visitors of the monastery in the early twelfth century, cf. B. de Khitrovo, \textit{Itinéraires russes en Orient}, 1.1 (Geneva: Fick, 1889), 33.

\textsuperscript{16} The manuscript has the singular \textit{kατεδέξατο}. However, the emendation proposed by Usener is clearly required by the context, the Magi’s acceptance of Christ’s status as
ἀνακάμψει εἰς τὰ ἱδα ἐν τῶ ὁμολογὸν ὑποστρέφοντας κατα-
λύσαι κάνταῦθα δὲ νύκτωρ καθευδήσαντας οὕτως ἔωθεν ἐπὶ τὴν
ἐνεγκοίσαν πόλιν ἔχεσθαι ὅδου.17

It is evident that the passage not only contains the non-Scriptural story
of the Magi’s stay in Theodosius’ cave but that it also reproduces the
Biblical account of the Adoration as it is found in Matthew 2:1–12.
Theodore quotes selectively and leaves out several stages of the story
altogether.18 However, in the parts that he presents he remains quite
close to the wording of his model so that his sentence is easily recognisable as
an adaptation of the Biblical text. This is especially so in the second part of
the story where we are told how the Magi gave their gifts, and finally how
they returned home on a different route.19

There is only one exception to this rule, the temporal clause ‘when
they accepted the birth according to the flesh out of the holy God-bearer’.
While it is evident that this clause corresponds to Matthew 2:11, ‘they saw
the child with Mary, its mother, and they fell down and adored it’, the
Biblical text has been replaced with an adaptation of the second part of
the Christological formula of Chalcedon, ‘and in the last days, <born> of
Mary the Virgin the God-bearer according to his manhood’.20 As I have
pointed out before, Theodore quotes this formula almost verbatim in a
speech that he puts into the mouth of the saint.21 However, whereas there
it is part of a doctrinal statement, it is now integrated into a narrative that
concerns Christ’s second, human birth.

A comparison with the formula of Chalcedon shows that Theodore has
again closely followed his model. Changes are limited to the substitution
of the prepositional phrase κατὰ τὴν ἄνθρωπότητα with κατὰ σάρκα,
and the replacement of the participle γεννηθέντα with the noun τὴν ...
γέννησιν, which permits the integration of the formula into the
subordinate clause ὅτε ... κατεδέξαντο. Thus, Theodore’s phrase appears
to convey the same meaning as the Creed of Chalcedon: it is a carefully
calibrated statement, in which τῆς Θεοτόκου complements τὴν κατὰ
σάρκα γέννησιν, with the element -τόκου providing a parallel for
γέννησιν and the element θεο- creating an opposition with σάρκα to

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17 V. Thds. 15.1–13.
18 Theodore omits the account of the Magi’s encounter with Herod in Matt. 2:2–8. V.
Thds. 15.4–5 is a conflation of Matt. 2:1 and 2:8–9.
19 V. Thds. 15.6–7, 8–10 is almost identical with Matt. 2:11b–12.
20 Concilium Universale Chalcedonense, ed. E. Schwartz, ACO II.1.2 (Berlin: de Gruyter,
1933), 129–130.
21 V. Thds. 66.4–67.1.
ensure the presence of the divine alongside the human aspect in the incarnated Christ.

This raises the question: why did Theodore in this instance depart from Matthew’s account that he follows so faithfully elsewhere? At the beginning of this paper I have pointed out that the ambiguity of Biblical phrases led to their replacement in doctrinal statements with unequivocal terms of non-Biblical origin. The content of the omitted sentence suggests that Theodore was motivated by similar concerns: in Matthew 2:11 Mary is called the mother of a child without any further qualification that would determine the status of this child. By comparison, the formula of Chalcedon that replaces this verse supplies a ‘correct’ understanding of the recipient of the Magi’s adoration and thus eliminates such ambiguity.

At this point one might be tempted to wind up the interpretation with the conclusion that like the Creed-makers Theodore was on a quest for univocity. However, such a conclusion would be based on the presupposition that the Life of Theodosius only contains explicit statements. Readers and listeners who engage with the text are rapidly disabused of such a view: they realise that it can be read in more than one way and that Theodore deliberately created the impression of univocity in order to show up its chimerical nature.

I start my analysis of Theodore’s techniques of ambiguation with his use of parechisis. When we scan the context for assonances, we find a striking resemblance between τὴν ... γέννησιν ἐκ τῆς Θεοτόκου and τῇ διαδοχῇ τῶν ἐπιγινομένων, which rests on the similarity between the elements διαδοχ- and θεοτόκ- on the one hand and γινομένων and γέννησιν on the other. Can one make a case that this similarity is a deliberate creation of the author? At first sight this may seem unlikely since the two phrases are found at some distance from each other. However, they are not the only assonance in the passage: with κατεξέαντο Theodore puts into the immediate vicinity of θεοτόκου a verb that is derived from the same stem as the noun διαδοχή. Thus, one can argue that this verb serves as a pointer to the even greater similarity between the more distant nouns theotokou and diadochē.

If one concedes that a formal link is intended, one is confronted with a much more serious problem. I have argued that in Late Antique Christian literature assonances between words and phrases can indicate connections in meaning between the words that are thus linked on the formal level. Such a function, however, seems to be ruled out for the parechisis between the two phrases. First of all, they appear to have radically different meanings: the former is a statement about Christ’s human birth and the latter refers to the transmission of an oral story. Moreover, the contexts in which they are found fall under different categories: the statement about Christ’s birth is part of a narrative,
whereas the reference to oral transmission appears in an authorial comment on this narrative.

However, these problems are only insurmountable in a straightforward narrative; in multi-layered texts the links and boundaries that create discrete units can shift from one level of meaning to the next. Through analysis of the sentence about the Magi’s visit to the cave of the saint I hope to show that the Life of Theodosius is such a multi-layered text. I start with an exploration of common themes in the two parts of the sentence.

It is evident that in order for an oral tradition to be handed down there must be a succession of generations and that such a succession takes the concrete form of conception and birth. Indeed, the abstract formula τῇ διαδοχῇ τῶν ἐπιγνωμένων chosen by Theodore is very rare in this context: usually oral transmission is expressed through the phrase ‘a son from a father’. Such a sequence from one generation to the next, however, is also found in the case of Mary and her son Jesus Christ.

In order to determine whether this parallel is intentional I will broaden the scope of the analysis to the author’s reference texts. I have already stated that the temporal clause about Christ’s birth in the Adoration narrative is an adaptation of the formula of Chalcedon. Ultimately, however, its literary model is the Bible. Two elements can be identified as of Biblical origin: ‘the birth from’ and ‘according to the flesh’. I now proceed to an analysis of their original contexts, starting with ‘the birth from’. The Bible contains only one instance where Mary is identified as the mother, ‘out of whom’ the Christ child ‘is born’. It is Matthew 1:16, ‘of Mary out of whom was born (ἐξ Ἰησοῦ τῆς ἀγεννηθῆς) Jesus who is called the anointed one’, the tail end of the genealogy of Christ, which precedes the

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22 Cf. e.g. Basil of Caesarea, Epistula 258, ed. and tr. R.J. Deferrari, Saint Basil: The Letters, Loeb Classical Library (London: Heinemann, 1950), IV, 46: παῖς παρὰ πατρός διαδεχόμενοι τὴν ἀνέβεβαι, ‘having received their impiety in succession, each son from his father’, about the Magi of Persia, Gregory of Nyssa, De deitate adversus Eunomium, ed. E. Gebhardt, Gregorii Nysseni Sermones, Opera, IX (Leiden: Brill, 1967), 334: τούτην τὴν κληρονομιὰν οἱ μὲν ἐφεξῆς διαδοχοὶ παῖς παρὰ πατρός ἐκδεχόμενοι, ‘the line of successors receiving this heritage, each son from his father’, and Leontius of Byzantium, Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos (PG 86.1280): ἀνωθεν παῖς ἦς φασὶν παρὰ πατρός διεδεξάμεθα, ‘we have received (sc. the use of the anthropological paradigm) from above, as they say, a son from his father’, where the parenthesis ἦς φασὶν indicates the proverbial status of this phrase. I have only found one parallel for the abstract formula used by Theodore of Petra, in the prologue to the fifth-century Life of Porphyry of Gaza. There the hagiographer Mark the Deacon points out that if it were not for the danger of adulteration it would be sufficient to pass on the story orally, ‘truth being always sown through succession into the ears of the men who come afterwards’, ed. H. Grégoire, M.-A. Kugener, Marc le Diacre, Vie de Porphyre évêque de Gaza (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1930), 1.13–15: τῆς ἀληθείας ἐκ διαδοχῆς δεὶς ἐπιστειρομένης ταῖς άκοαις τῶν ἐπιγνωμένων ἀνθρώπων.
narrative of the nativity. Thus, one can argue that through a Biblical reference the notion of the chain of generations is present in the narrative as well. When we now turn to the second Biblical formula, the qualification ‘according to the flesh’, we find that it has the same connotations. It repeatedly appears in Paul’s letter to the Romans where it is applied to Christ in order to stress his Jewish lineage. In Romans 9:5 Paul states that ‘out of them according to the flesh (ἐξ δύν ... τὸ κατὰ σάρκα) is the anointed one’ and in Romans 1:3 he speaks of Christ as ‘having come into being out of the seed of David (γενομένου ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυΐδ) according to the flesh’, thus linking him back to his ancestor David who is mentioned no less than three times in Matthew’s genealogy.\(^{23}\)

We can conclude that the Biblical elements in the subordinate clause are both taken from contexts that let the succession from Mary to Christ appear as the final stage in a long series of generations and that they therefore reinforce the parallel with the generations that passed down the tradition of the oral story about the Magi. Indeed, the term diadochē, ‘succession’, that is used in the introductory passage frequently appears in Patristic comments on the genealogies of Christ in the Gospels and on Paul’s statements about Christ’s Jewish ancestry. Basil of Caesarea, for example, states that according to the genealogy of Luke Christ ‘was born in the seventy-seventh successive generation’ after Adam;\(^{24}\) and Eusebius of Caesarea speaks of Christ as ‘the offspring that came to be according to the flesh out of the succession of David’.\(^{25}\) At this point it is worth remembering that in Theodore’s text κατὰ σάρκα replaces the more abstract phrase κατὰ τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα in the symbol of Chalcedon, which has no such connotations. We can conclude that far from being a simple substitution of synonyms the change serves to reinforce a particular aspect of the incarnation.

Now that it has become clear that the introductory passage and the passage about Christ’s birth are paralleled on the level of content, we can return to the formal level and explore how assonance is used to reinforce this parallel and to goad on the reader to explore its further implications.

I start with the correspondence between τῶν ἐπιγνωμένων and τὴν ... γέννησιν. When one compares the words ἐπιγνωμένων, ‘of those who come into being later’, and γέννησιν, ‘birth’, one can easily see that the parallel in meaning is as close as the formal resemblance. In the case of human beings the ‘coming-to-be’ of the future generations takes the concrete form of conception and ‘birth’. Therefore ἐπιγνωμένων can be

\(^{23}\) Cf. Matt 1:1, 6–7, 17.

\(^{24}\) Basil of Caesarea, Epistula 260 (Defferrari, 66).

\(^{25}\) Eusebius of Caesarea, Commentaria in Psalmos (PG 23.177–80).
paraphrased as ἐπιγεννωμένων, 'those who are born later'.

Conversely, Christ's 'birth according to the flesh' can be called a 'coming-to-be', as indeed it is in Romans 1:3, or from the perspective of his mother Mary, a 'coming-to-be later'. Formal analysis thus leads to the same conclusions as the previous interpretation of the content.

The second pair, 'succession' and 'God-bearer', presents greater problems to such an approach. There is an obvious connection between the meanings of δόξη, 'reception' and τόκος, 'birth', since in this context δόξη implies the reception of the seed during 'conception', which is the precondition for a subsequent 'birth'. Moreover, 'conception' is also the process by which the 'succession', διαδοχή, from one generation to the next is achieved. However, if parechēsis implies a link in content between the corresponding elements, such a link should exist between διαδοχή and the whole compound theotokos. This raises the question: could Mary be called διάδοχος, i.e. the last link in the long line of Christ's human ancestry, and still be theotokos, i.e. giving birth to something that can be considered divine? At first sight, a positive answer seems to be ruled out since the Christian belief system puts strong stress on the divide between God and creation.

In order to overcome this impasse we need to address a problem that has been excluded from the discussion so far. As I have pointed out before the two phrases that are linked through parechēsis not only seem to have different meanings; they are also integrated into different contexts: the

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26 Cf. e.g. Michael Psellus, Op. theol. 79: 'God ... brings about ... the additional births of individuals ... and he brings about the successions of the first species in those who are born afterwards', P. Gautier, ed., Michaelis Pselli Theologica, I (Leipzig: Teubner, 1989), 319.63, 66: ὁ θεὸς ... ἐφάνεται ... τὰς τῶν ἁτόμων ἐπιγεννησε ... ἐφάνεται δὲ τὰς τῶν πρῶτων γενών ἐν τοῖς ἐπιγεννωμένωσι διάδοχας.

27 We have already found a similar interpretation in Cyril's commentary of Isaiah, which was reflected in the parechēsis between δέχεσθαι and τίκτεναι.

28 The results of the two explorations are not exactly identical: the Biblical quotations identify Christ as διάδοχος and ἐπιγεννωμένος of Mary whereas the assonance between διάδοχη and θεοτόκος suggests an interpretation of Mary herself as διάδοχος. However, this discrepancy is easily resolved: Mary and Christ are only one link in a 'chain of generations', and if we go a step further back Mary can be called διάδοχος and ἐπιγεννωμένη in relation to her own father Joachim. We can conclude that assonance-relationships reinforce the theme of Christ's genealogy that had already been introduced through references to carefully selected Biblical passages.

29 Theodoret of Cyrus stressed in his Letter 131 that the genealogies in the Gospels did not imply that David and Abraham were forefathers of the Godhead since they were only the ancestors of Christ's humanity, Y. Azéma, ed., Théodoret de Cyr, Correspondance, SC 111, (Paris: Cerf, 1965), III, 116.1-4. However, not all Christian authors were as sensitive to this issue as the Antiochenes. Cf. the interpretation of the θεοτόκος title for Mary in the context of Christ's genealogy offered by the Neo-Chalcedonian Leontius of Jerusalem, Contra Nestorianos III 2 (PG 86.1608-09).
mention of Christ’s incarnation appears in the narrative about the Magi whereas the reference to the sequence of generations is part of a passage that defines the status of this narrative as an oral tradition. However, this distinction is not as unequivocal as it appears to be.

Here we need to consider that in the highly formalised literature of Late Antiquity individual terms and phrases tended to be linked to clearly defined contexts. However, this very conventionality gave authors scope for creating additional layers of meaning. By transplanting such terms into unusual contexts they could expand the realm of associations because they knew that their audiences would be aware of the norm. The abstract formula τῇ διαδοχῇ τῶν ἐπιγινομένων is a case in point. I have already mentioned that it was rarely used to express the handing down of an oral tradition. However, it regularly appears in statements about the propagation of species. A non-Christian example of this use is found in a rhetorical handbook attributed to Dionysius of Halicarnassus:

Being mortal, humanity (τὸ ἄνθρωπεον) has become immortal as a result of mingling and intercourse in marriage because of the succession of those who come afterwards (ἐκ τῆς διαδοχῆς τῶν ἐπιγινομένων), and like a light it is kindled and is always handed on to those who come afterwards through the birth of man (τοῖς ἐπιγινομένοις τῇ γεννήσει τοῦ ἄνθρωπου) without ever being quenched.  

In Late Antiquity this discourse was adapted by Christian authors such as Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nyssa who saw it as their task to give a Christian interpretation of the natural order.  

Thus, there can be no doubt that for educated contemporaries of Theodore of Petra the formula τῇ διαδοχῇ τῶν ἐπιγινομένων would have conjured up this context. Once this connection was made it provided a starting point for an alternative reading of the whole sentence. I begin my analysis with the subject λόγος ἀγραφος. Undoubtedly a reader will at first take this to refer to the ‘unwritten’ story of the Magi’s stay in the cave. However, the Greek term logos is extremely multifaceted, and in one of its meanings it also has a place in the discourse about procreation. There it denotes the basic ‘plan’ that fashions the successive generations of a species, as is evident from the following passage in Gregory of Nyssa:

32 Cf. Lampe, Patristic Greek Lexicon, s. v. λόγος, ‘the formative and regulative law of being, essential disposition’.
With the succession of those who come afterwards (τῇ διαδοχῇ τῶν ἐπηγενομένων) nature passes through (συνδειεξῆρχεται) in each species of animals insofar as that which has come to be is identical as regards the plan of nature (κατὰ τῶν τῆς φύσεως λόγον) with the one out of which it has come to be.\(^{33}\)

Such an alternative reading is also possible for the attribute ἀγραφὸς: Christian authors who presented the contemplation of creation as a way to gain knowledge of the existence of God juxtaposed reading the ‘word’ of nature with reading the ‘written word’ of the Bible as the other way of access to the divine.\(^{34}\)

This reinterpretation has a knock-on effect on the other parts of the sentence. The adverb ἀνωθεν, ‘from above’, then refers no longer to the time of the Magi but rather to the moment of creation: Gregory of Nyssa states that ‘through the passing on (διαδοχῆς) of the seed’, the permanence of species is assured ‘from initial creation until eternity’.\(^{35}\)

Most importantly, however, it also provides a framework for an alternative understanding of the title ‘God-bearer’. Following the lead of Middle Platonic philosophers, many Christian theologians interpreted the ‘plans of nature’ as the thoughts of God and creation as their projection onto matter.\(^{36}\) As these plans were pre-existent in God’s mind, they can therefore in a certain sense also be called θείος, ‘divine’.\(^{37}\) Such an interpretation had a Biblical justification in Paul’s statement in Romans 1:20 that God’s existence can be deduced from his eternal power and ‘divinity’, θεότητα, which is visible in created beings, a passage that was routinely quoted in treatises about the contemplation of nature.\(^{38}\)

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\(^{33}\) Gregory of Nyssa, Orationes de beatitudinibus, VI (PG 44.1273).

\(^{34}\) The parallel is set out at length in Maximus, Ambigua (PG 91.1128–29).


\(^{37}\) This is evident in the writings of Christian Platonists, for example a scholion of Theodore of Petra's contemporary John of Scythopolis on Pseudo-Dionyius' De divinis nominibus 26 (PG 4.296–97).

\(^{38}\) During the Arian controversy this passage created problems for the Nicene party. Athanasius of Alexandria, for example, warned against a confusion of ‘the imprint of wisdom in the works’, i.e. the λόγος in creation, with ‘Wisdom-itself’, i.e. the transcendent Word of God. Cf. Athanasius of Alexandria, Contra Arianos II. 80–81, W. Bright, ed., The Orations of St. Athanasius Against the Arians (Oxford: Clarendon, 1873), 150–52.
At this point we need to return to the formal level and consider the *parechésis* between *θεο*- and the prefix *δια-*. Assonances based on these two words are not uncommon in Christian texts: Gregory of Nyssa’s commentary on the Song of Songs provides a striking example with the sequence δι’ ὦν τὸ θείον.  

³⁹ Can one make a case that here, too, the formal link reflects the existence of a link on the level of content? In the compound *diadochē* the prefix *δια-* expresses the unbroken transmission of the characteristics of a species over time. When Christian authors spoke about God’s immanence in creation, they often used a similar phrase, ‘passing through everything’, which has not only a spatial but also a temporal dimension.⁴⁰ As this concept is closely related to the ‘plans of creation’, one can argue that the prefix *δια-* serves as a pointer to the particular aspect of the divine that permits its connection with the sphere of created being.⁴¹

To sum up: interpreted as *diadochos*, ‘successor’, the term *theotokos*, ‘God-bearer’ no longer expresses Mary’s motherhood of the transcendent *Logos* as the second person of the Trinity. Instead it refers to her motherhood of the human being Jesus, as derived from the ‘logos of humanity’, which God had infused into creation and which had then been passed on through the chain of conception and birth. If one conceives that such an interpretation is possible, the consequences are obvious: the author of the *Life of Theodosius* has succeeded in subverting the carefully calibrated formula ‘birth according to the flesh of the God-bearer’. In

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⁴⁰ Cf. Gregory of Nyssa, *De professione Christiana ad Harmonium*: ‘the divine is in equal degree in all things and it goes in like manner through all creation’, ed. W. Jaeger, *Gregorii Nysseni Opera Ascetica*, Opera, VIII.1, (Leiden: Brill, 1951), 139: τὸ θεῖον κατὰ τὸ ὦν ἐν πάσι ἐστι καὶ διὰ πάσης ὑπαύτως διήκει τῆς κτίσεως. While this is a paraphrase of Paul’s statement in Ephesians 4:6 that God is ‘above all and through all and in all’, it is evident that the interpretation is informed by the Stoic concept of the immanent λόγος σπερματικός, cf. the summary of Zeno of Citium’s teachings in Diogenes Laertius, VII.147, H.S. Long, ed., *Diogenis Laertii Vitae Philosophorum* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1964), II, 360: διήκειν διὰ πάντων. However, it needs to be pointed out that for Platonising Christians this λόγος was also paradigm and demiurge. This alternative interpretation is based on the formula ‘one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom everything’, δι’ οὗ τὰ πάντα, in I Corinthians 8:6. The two aspects are combined in Eusebius of Caesarea, *Demonstratio Evangelica* (PG 22.285): καὶ διὰ ... τοῦ σώματος ἀεὶ καὶ διὰ παντὸς ἥκων δι’ ὄλης τῆς τῶν στοιχείων ὦλης οὗ τὰς θεοῦ λόγους ὄν δημιουργὸς τῆς εἰς αὐτοῦ σοφίας ἐν αὐτῇ τούς λόγους ἀποσφραγίζεται, ‘and without ... the body he always and for ever passes through the entire matter of the elements and, as a λόγος of God, he is the creator who imprints onto it the λόγοι of the Wisdom out of him’.

⁴¹ Significantly, the Stoics saw their view confirmed in the alleged etymological link between the preposition *δια* and *Διά*, the accusative of the name Zeus, which they in turn linked to *θεὸς*, cf. Diogenes Laertius (Long, II, 360).
its conventional Cyrillian sense the compound *theotokos* guarantees that while the birth was one ‘according to the flesh’ Mary was still giving birth to ‘God’. However, once it is understood as a synonym of *diadochos*, it no longer counterbalances the phrase τὴν κατὰ σάρκα γέννησαν but simply reiterates its meaning so that the divine aspect is no longer present in the formula.

It is evident that Theodore intended his readers to recognise the ambiguity of the term *theotokos*. However, the context suggests a further dimension. We have seen that the formula of Chalcedon is not part of a doctrinal statement but that it is integrated into a narrative, the story of the Magi’s visit in Bethlehem, where it expresses their acceptance of Christ’s status. This means that the equivocation of the term *theotokos* first of all affects the Magi’s understanding of this status. What were the reasons for Theodore’s choice of this particular story?

I have already pointed out that the subordinate clause ‘when they accepted the birth according to the flesh out of the God-bearer’ replaces the sentence ‘they saw the child with Mary, its mother, and they fell down and adored it’ in the Biblical model. For Late Antique readers the significance of this sequence of events was evident: it was the first recognition of Christ’s divinity by men. However, the nature of Matthew’s account then posed a severe problem. Matthew states that astrologers from the East had come to believe that a new king of the Jews had been born but he gives no indication as to whether or how they recognised Christ’s real nature. This ambiguity was further exacerbated by the fact that among Jewish and Christian authors the Persian Zoroastrians were held in ill repute as worshippers of the elements. For an overview of Greek and Roman attitudes towards the Magi cf. A. de Jong, *Traditions of the Magi. Zoroastrianism in Greek and Latin Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 1997).


relics 'because they venerated fire and water, worshipping creatures instead of the creator'.

Christian exegetes were therefore at pains to remove ambiguity from the Biblical narrative. The sixth-century hymnographer Romanus let the Magi exclaim: 'This is the son whose genealogy is not to be traced', οὗτος νῦν ἂνεαλόγητος, thereby ruling out the possibility that they could have worshipped Christ's humanity, whose ancestors were listed at the beginning of the Gospel of Matthew. Romanus' contemporary Leontius of Constantinople took a similar line: he rephrased the Biblical text as 'they saw the Lord and recognised and adored him', and thus complemented sense perception with an explicit reference to the Magi's realisation of Christ's true nature. In addition, he explained to his audience how they could arrive at this conclusion when he then referred to the 'splendour of divinity' that radiated from the child. Leontius' modification of the Biblical text has a close parallel in a sermon attributed to Gregory of Nyssa where we find the formula 'through adoration and recognition of his Lordship'. The apologetic character of such statements becomes evident when we identify the Biblical source for this addition. It is without doubt Paul's statement in Romans 1:28 'since they did not see fit to recognise God', which takes up and varies the theme of creature-worship in Romans 1:25. By stressing that the Magi recognised the child's divinity these authors made it clear that their behaviour did not fall under Paul's verdict.

One can assume that Theodore's audience would have been familiar both with the problems of the narrative and with the solutions that were put forward by their contemporaries. As a consequence they would have understood the replacement of Matthew 2:11 with the formula of Chalcedon as another way of excising ambiguity. However, as we have seen the solution that is offered in the Life of Theodosius is only apparent: careful study of the passage reveals that this formula itself is no longer unambiguous. By introducing this ambiguity Theodore presented his audience with an interpretation of the story that is diametrically opposed.

48 Leontius of Constantinople, Homilia XII (Datema-Allen, 386.150–51). A similar explanation is found in Romanus' Canticum I.19 (Maas-Trypanis, 7.11–10), where the star is called 'light that gives knowledge of God' (θεογνωσίας).
49 Ps-Gregory of Nyssa, In occursum domini (PG 46.1165).
to the one offered in the sermons of the time: instead of seeing their doubts put to rest his listeners would have had to conclude that the Magi remained trapped in their misguided notions: since it was addressed to Christ’s humanity, their adoration of the child still fell into the category of ‘worship of created beings’.

Thus it has become evident that Theodore’s choice of context for his project of ambiguation is far from arbitrary. It allowed him to create a parallel between the Magi and his audience. Just as the Magi came from a tradition of creature-worship, which conditioned their interpretation of the Christ child in the specific context of the nativity, Theodore’s Christian readers and listeners had preconceived notions about doctrinal formulae, which conditioned them to recognise only one meaning in the term theotokos. However, as we have seen they could overcome their preconceptions through careful analysis of the context: the parechesis with diadochos pointed them to an alternative reading of the word.

To continue the argument we must return to the discussion of the formula that introduces the narrative about the Magi. In my reinterpretation of this formula as a statement about the passing on of the plan of nature from Adam to Christ’s humanity I did not consider the finite verb παραδίδωσι, which provides the link with the following story. In the translation of the passage I have rendered παραδίδοναι as ‘to hand down’, but this meaning is only suitable if one takes λόγος ἂγγελος to mean ‘oral account’ whereas it does not agree with the alternative interpretation ‘plan of nature’. However, παραδίδοναι can also mean ‘to give over, to betray’. Taken in this sense, it permits a translation of the formula as ‘an unwritten plan of nature (λόγος) from the times above, which has come down to us through the succession of generations and which has arrived at us, gives over (παραδίδωσι) those faithful magi’. If we accept the possibility of such a translation, the ‘plan’ becomes the cause of the Magi’s blunder, which indeed it is because they mistakenly relate the term theotokos to a product of divine activity that is immanent in creation and not to the transcendent God himself. This interpretation can be substantiated through analysis of the syntactical structure. The alternative meaning of the verb παραδίδοναι becomes possible only because it is construed with λόγος as its subject and because it takes an accusative and infinitive, into which all other information is then inserted in the form of participles. Such a construction, however, is extremely clumsy.\(^{50}\) This suggests that Theodore deliberately sacrificed stylistic perfection in order to achieve ambiguation.

\(^{50}\) Usually λόγος παραδίδωσι is construed with a simple accusative object, possibly qualified by an adjective or another noun, but not with an elaborate accusativus cum infinitivo.
This interpretation can be further corroborated through a comparison with the beginning of Paul’s letter to the Romans, which provided Theodore with the Biblical reference text for his theme of natural contemplation. I have already pointed out that Christian authors were troubled by the consequences for the Adoration of the Magi of Paul’s verdict about creature-worshippers in Romans 1:25 and that they therefore introduced a reference to the Magi’s ‘recognition’ of Christ’s divinity to counter any criticism based on Romans 1:28. These verses are each followed by statements, in which Paul spells out the consequences of a refusal to transcend the visible: ‘God gave them up to dishonourable passions’ in Romans 1:26 and ‘God gave them up to a base mind and to improper conduct’ in Romans 1:28. In both cases Paul uses the verb παραδιδόμαι, which as we have seen also appears in Theodore’s text, and he does so in the sense that is required by the reinterpretation of the introductory formula. This suggests that Theodore’s choice of the same verb is intended as a further allusion to Romans.

As before, this interpretation is not only suggested through Biblical reference texts but also reflected in patterns of assonance. Therefore I return one last time to the phrases τὴν διαδοχὴν τῶν ἐπιγινωμένων and τὴν κατὰ σάρκα γέννησιν ἐκ τῆς Θεοτόκου. Although they are connected through parechesis, complete correspondence is only achieved in the case of διαδοχή and θεοτόκος whereas γέννησιν does not have a prefix that would correspond to the first part of ἐπιγινωμένων. However, this does not mean that it would have been impossible to create a perfect match: I have already pointed out that Christ’s κατὰ σάρκα γέννησις, his ‘birth according to the flesh’, can be understood as an ἐπιγεννησις, a ‘birth’ that brings into being the next generation ‘after’ that of Mary. Thus, one can argue that the discrepancy is a sign of economy: since Theodore could expect his audience to recognise this link and to supply the assonance, he chose instead a synonymous phrase with additional Biblical connotations. Comparison of his paraphrase with the Gospel narrative suggests a further level of substitution. We have seen that the adaptation of the formula of Chalcedon replaces Matthew 2:11. However, this does not permit us to conclude that the Biblical verse would no longer have been present in the minds of his audience. Here we need to remember that the last part of the omitted sentence, ‘and they fell down and worshipped him’, is central to the story and that the whole episode derives from it its conventional name ‘the Adoration of the Magi’, ἡ προσκύνησις τῶν μάγων. I therefore argue that Theodore deliberately omitted the term προσκύνησις because its conspicuous absence allowed

Cf. the examples given in Liddell & Scott, Greek–English Lexicon, s.v. παραδίδωσι, I. 4, to hand down legends, opinions, and the like.
him to set in motion a complex play with assonances. It is evident that the second part of the word, -κύνης, bears a striking resemblance with γέννης. Moreover, in Greek the two prefixes ἐπι- and προσ- are interchangeable.\(^{51}\) Therefore it is possible to replace the participle ἐπιγενόμενος that appears in the text and the noun ἐπιγέννηςις that is suggested by it with the synonymous terms προσγενόμενος and προσγέννηςις. Theodore could count on his audience to recognise this similarity: as we have seen, contemporary sermons about the Magi contained the similar phrases ‘they saw the Lord and recognised and adored him’ and ‘through adoration and recognition of his Lordship’. Therefore he could take the play with assonances even further and set up a parechysis that his audience could only arrive at through a sequence of steps: taking ἐπιγενόμενων as their starting point, they were expected to recognise that κατὰ σάρκα γέννησιν can be understood as ἐπιγέννησιν and they were further asked to realise that its synonym προσγέννησιν forms an assonance with προσεκύνησαν in the Biblical model. Once they had performed these steps, they became aware of the implications that the alternative interpretation of theotokos had for the understanding of the Magi’s actions: their worship of the child is based on their acceptance of its birth ‘according to the flesh’ and not on their acceptance of the incarnation of the divine Word. Again we can conclude that formal correspondences reflect and highlight ambiguities arising from a Biblical reference text, namely that in Bethlehem the Magi merely continued their traditional ‘creature-worship’.

So far we have limited the discussion to Theodore’s strategies of ambiguation. However, it seems unlikely that his interest was purely academic. Is it possible to identify a contemporary context? Here we need to consider that the problems posed by Christ’s humanity for the worship of the incarnated divine Word also surfaced in the Christological debates of the time. In a treatise addressed to Theophilus of Alexandria Gregory of Nyssa defended himself against Apollinaris of Laodicea’s accusation that he taught ‘two sons’, of which ‘one was (sc. son) according to nature and the other had come to be in addition at a later stage according to appointment’.\(^{52}\) And Apollinaris himself pointed out in his Letter to the Emperor Jovian that there are not two natures, ‘one worshipped and one not worshipped’, but that the one nature of the incarnated Word is worshipped ‘through one worship’.\(^{53}\) This argument then reappears in the

\(^{51}\) Cf. Lampe, Patristic Greek Lexicon, s.v. προσγεννάω, beget in addition, and s.v. προσγενομαι, come into existence in addition.


\(^{53}\) Apollinaris of Laodicea, Epistula ad Joviamum, H. Lietzmann, ed., Apollinaris von Laodicea und seine Schule: Texte und Untersuchungen (Tübingen: Mohr, 1904), 251.3.
fifth and sixth centuries: since Nestorius and his followers stressed the
difference of the natures and at the same time accepted the adoration of
Christ’s humanity they were accused of being ‘worshippers of a human
being’ and ‘creature-worshippers’. Not surprisingly, the Biblical ref-
erece text for all these slanderous accusations is the beginning of Paul’s
letter to the Romans and thus the same passage that was used to
denounce the Magi as pantheists.55

Therefore one can argue that with his creation of an assonance-
relationship between προσκύνησις and προσγέννησις Theodore of Petra
targeted the ‘Nestorian’ belief in an autonomous human nature in Christ,
which would be προσγεννητός and therefore should not be προσκυνητός.
Such a connection may well have been evident to his audiences because
Nestorius had quoted Matthew 1:11 as a proof text for his Christology and
had concluded from the words ‘they saw the child with Mary his mother’
that the Virgin gave birth to a human child and not to God.56

In this paper I have argued that Late Antique Christian writings could
contain multiple levels of meaning. To make my case I have demonstrated
how Theodore of Petra, the author of the Life of Theodosius the
Coenobiarch, put the term theotokos into a carefully constructed context
which perfectly well accommodates the term in its conventional sense, but
in addition contains meaningful links between theotokos and other phrases
that suggest an alternative reading that is at complete variance with its
use in doctrinal formulae. This reading of the Life of Theodosius thus
challenges pre-conceived notions about the distinction between authorial
comments and narratives. I have attempted to show that with his creation
of alternative meanings Theodore transcends and subverts such
distinctions and thereby further erodes an understanding of the text as a
straightforward narrative of the life of an individual.

I do not presume that my interpretation solves all problems. However,
I hope to have shown that the term theotokos is open to interpretation,
because arguably Mary could be called ‘God-bearer’ not only as the
mother of God through the communication of idioms but also as the
mother of the man Christ, if we take ‘God’ to refer to the plan of human
nature that originates in the divine.

54 Cf. for example Cyril of Alexandria, De recta fide ad Pulcheriam et Eudociam, 42: ‘if they
say that he is a mere man, then they evidently worship a man when they adore him’, E.
Schwartz, ed., Concilium Universale Epeshinum, ACQ 1.1.5. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1927), 49.33: εἰ
ἀνθρωπον εἶναι φασι ψεύδων ἀνθρωπολατροῦν ὀμολογουμένως προσκυνοῦντες αὐτῷ.
Cf. also Timothy of Constantinople, De haeresibus (PG 86.58): κτισματολάτραι.
55 For the accusation of ἀνθρωπολατρεία cf. Romans 1:23.
Nestorius (Halle: Niemeyer, 1905), 247.3–5: ‘ubique pueri mater, non deitatis, virgo praedicatur’. 
This ambiguation has an effect both on the Magi who offered their worship to the Christ child in Bethlehem and on the Palestinian monks and laymen who listened to or read Theodore’s account of this interaction. In the case of the Magi it leads to the conclusion that, far from discerning the central mystery of the Christian faith, they may well have remained trapped in their ancestral worship of divinised creation. Theodore’s audience would have started from the opposite position, an understanding of the term *theotokos* in the sense that it was given in doctrinal statements of the time. However, once they realised that the Magi could interpret this term in a different way they also had to recognise that their own understanding was not the only one possible and that *theotokos* could equally well convey the meaning that the Magi gave it.

The distinctive character of Theodore’s position becomes even clearer when we compare it with the viewpoint of the Apostle Paul. I have mentioned that the criteria used to evaluate the actions of the Magi are taken from Paul’s distinction between correct and flawed contemplation of nature at the beginning of Romans. However, it is evident that Theodore’s adaptation diverges considerably from its model. For Paul the ‘giving over’ of the pagans is God’s punishment for the failure to see the invisible divine cause behind visible creation. Theodore, on the other hand, attributes the ‘giving over’ to the natural order, which thus becomes the cause for the ‘blunder’ of the Magi. This points to a fundamental difference between the two authors: Paul shows himself convinced that it is possible to ‘read’ creation unequivocally and therefore regards failure to do so as a perverse denial of the obvious, which triggers divine punishment. By comparison, Theodore does not believe that the visible signs found in nature and in texts allow a direct ‘reading’. For him such a direct approach leads to interpretations that merely reflect culturally determined preconceptions, and only through diligent analysis can obvious blunders be prevented. However, this analysis does not result in an affirmation of Paul’s belief but in its outright denial for it demonstrates that signs can never be unequivocal.

Thus one can conclude that Theodore of Petra used a biographical narrative, the *Life* of the monastic saint Theodosius, to engage his audience in a sophisticated discussion of epistemological problems. Through the judicious use of literary techniques he created a multi-layered text of great complexity, which allowed him to make his readers and listeners aware of their preconceptions, to subvert their belief that language could be harnessed for the expression of orthodox faith and to assert the fundamental openness of the written and spoken word.
Methodios and his synod

Patricia Karlin-Hayter

'Was Byzantium Orthodox?' Well, it couldn't be before 'Orthodoxy' was discovered, could it? The opposition, 'We are orthodox, they are heretics' went back quite a way, but after 843 'Orthodoxy' acquired an absolute character.

As far as the 'Restoration of Orthodoxy' goes, there are just two facts whose reality is not open to question: at Theophilos's death, in January 842, there is a Patriarch, John, and a functioning 'Home Synod' (Synodos endèmousa), both iconoclast.¹ Then, at some date previous to the first Sunday in Lent 843, everything has changed: John has been deposed, and his place taken by the saint and confessor Methodios, a famous fighter against Iconoclasm (no possible doubt about that, despite his having spent the last seven years in the palace, even going with Theophilos on campaigns). The iconoclast synod seems to have disappeared.

The sources present 'Restoration' as of purely religious significance, but reading them rather suggests it was essentially political.² Theodora had venerated icons, say most of them, even when Theophilos was alive – but secretly; Theophanes Continuatus is the exception, he shows her actually getting caught on occasion (in absurd stories obviously released when, as author of the Restoration, she had to be presented as committed to veneration). Thus, in his De Theophilo, and, then in the De Michaele, he

¹ John almost certainly believed that the religious problem was serious. Part, at least, of the episcopate saw acceptance, at least formal, of the Patriarch's and Emperor's line – unless it really was unacceptable – as going with the job.


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makes her threaten not to grant Restoration unless an important concession is granted her. Genesios actually makes her oppose it, and submit only under threat of a rebellion.\(^3\)

The vast majority of the upper ranks took the change, in either direction, in their stride. Theoktistos had been Theophilos' trusted collaborator in enforcing Iconoclasm; when Theophilos' widow decided to change the official line, he was no less hers in restoring veneration of images – it even turned out that he was an ex-crypto-iconodule, doubtless not the only one.

The popularity of the iconoclast emperors with the masses is unquestionable, but surely not theologically based. It suggests rather that the population felt they had shown that they knew their job (and doubtless enjoyed God's favour – whether 'because . . .' or 'in spite of . . .').

It is, of course, Iconodule sources that witness to this popularity – and they do not suggest it was anything to be proud of. Here is Nikephoros, the future patriarch:

I think this too worth mentioning, what sort of people [the iconoclast emperor's enthusiasts] are, where they come from, how they live, . . . their opinions and habits; and so, from their ways, their life and the rest of their confusion, the [nature of] their dogma will appear clearly . . . most of them have little claim to any knowledge or education, they don't even know the names of the letters of the alphabet, and sneer at and abuse those who do set store by [education] . . . The roughest and rudest of them are short even of the necessaries of life . . . coming as they do from crossroads and alleys . . . This beggarly rabble . . . ever rejoices in risings and revolts.

The chronicles record popular disorders under unsuccessful iconodule sovereigns, with the protesters calling on dead and lamented iconoclast emperors: the 'resurrecting' of Constantine V, and summoning him to halt Krum's advance in 812, is the one most often referred to.\(^4\) Further on Nikephoros writes:

As for their boasting of the years under [Constantine] – utter nonsense, worthy of their stupidity and muddled thinking; plenty can be heard from

\(^3\) Theophanes Continuatus, I. Bekker, ed. (Bonn: Weber, 1838): henceforth Theophanes Cont. De Theophilo, 91.13–92.17 (III 6); De Michaele, 152.13–16 (IV 4); Genesios, C. Lachmann, ed. (Bonn: Weber, 1834), 80.2–11.

The concession she demands is the post mortem pardon of Theophilos for his iconoclasm. I propose to go into the 'pardon' in a separate article.


\(^4\) Theophanes, Chronographia, C. de Boor, ed. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1883), 501. 3.
historians or handed down by word of mouth, for there are now still survivors who remember these things ... Through them, those who wish to can learn what terrible [judgments] took place then, because of God’s wrath ... [e.g., plague, earthquakes, shooting stars, civil wars, famine].

For Iconoclasm as it was in fact lived, Petros’ Life of Ioannikios is a suggestive source. The sincerity of Ioannikios’ icon veneration is attested less by his role in the Restoration, than by, e.g., his letter to the iconclast bishop Inger, warning him that he will soon die, and begging him not to lose the reward of his virtuous life by dying an iconclast. Two of his miracles are, if anything, even more revealing.

The monk Antony, who was careless of his soul, kept falling into the heresy ... Having already been subjected more than once to penance by the saint ... back he comes, like the dog returning to its vomit, with the same old story.

Ioannikios, ‘of his deep sympathy’, arranges a miracle: Antony, having been recovered for salvation, dies before he has time to relapse. ...

In the following case they rather doubt that the miracle took place: Drosos, spatharios and former antigrapheus of the Opsikion, comes to get the Father’s blessing. Ioannikios warns him that he is shortly to die, endeavours to persuade him and sends him off. News reaches the community that he has died – but no word of his having repented. Ioannikios hopes he has saved him, but doubts it.

So iconoclasts, even of high rank, come to get his blessing, and he is in a more general way in contact with quite a number of them. To those who venerate a holy man, whether they are on the same side over the icon question is apparently secondary: the holiness of the saint is what matters, and he may be holy, even if on the other side.

In 730, it was not only laymen who had taken Iconoclasm in their stride: most bishops and metropolitans had done the same. But for these, in 842–3, the situation had changed. Why? What prevented its being handled as in 787, penance followed by restoration to their sees? In his Vita of St Sabas, Ioannikios gives the answer: Tarasios had granted this on condition of their having

given written oaths to the effect that they would never go back to the heresy. Then, when it was brought back, under Leo, they, trampling on their oaths and anathematizing themselves, had returned to it. How could

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their likes, or those they had ordained, be regarded as priests by Christians? With due penance, they could be received back into the Church, but in no circumstance as clerics.\(^7\)

As it was in 787 that bishops and metropolitans had taken this oath, in 815 several will still have been alive, but in 843, fifty-six years later, very few of those who had actually themselves 'trampled on their oaths' will have survived, though others had of course been ordained by them. Who, then, in 843 reckoned it in their interest to introduce a complete new hierarchy – and had the power to bring it off?

Afinogenev puts an important question: did this policy of getting rid of the whole episcopate meet with 'unwillingness of the government of Theodora to destabilise society by such extraordinary measures'?\(^8\) Unfortunately he does not follow it up. In fact, two pages on, he writes: 'Since no source mentions the involvement of Theodora ... a government initiative is out of the question'.

Neither canonically nor in practice could a bunch of holy men, come in from the wilds, declare the official hierarchy heretical, and take their place, especially as, from the point of view of the established Church, they were the heretics. The majority of the chronicles, whether of the Logothete tradition or the one represented by Theophanes Continuatus and Genesios, converge in giving a double account of Restoration. 'Theodora expelled from the Church and the City the patriarch John with those who surrounded him ... and brought in Methodios'; this is followed, a few paragraphs on, by:

A synod of holy fathers, God's mouthpieces, gathered; by them this most evil heresy of the evil and ill-reputed Iconoclasts was brought to shame ... Orthodoxy and reason rose and shone like the sun ... And the leader and teacher [of the heresy] along with his like-minded violent persecutors [i.e. the Synodos endêmousa.] ... was driven out, and in his place was introduced, by universal vote and through divine mission, Methodios.\(^9\)

Action came from the Palace, and was 'canonized' by the newly established Church.

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\(^7\) *Vita Ioannicic a Saba 372A.*


Theophanes Cont. 151.20: 'God and the empress Theodora'. 
Over the centuries, the Synod took a number of forced changes of patriarch in its stride. The Emperor could change the Church; it was a question of backing. Furthermore, still at this late date the Patriarch of Constantinople was elected, ‘customarily’ – but uncanonically – not by the Synod, but by ‘the Clergy and People’ of the City, represented in Constantinople by the Senate and the clergy of the Great Church. Not till the patriarchate of Photios was election by the Synod introduced, though it was canonically required since Chalcedon, and consequently liable to provide an arm to any person or group out to attack a patriarch otherwise elected. In 843, the new patriarch and many of his supporters were convinced that the heretics who had been thrown out could not ‘be held by any Christian for priests’, and that the sovereign, far from doing wrong, had been God’s instrument. Expelling the whole Synod may complicate matters.

I have described the text from George Continuatus quoted above as the ‘joint bulletin issued by the victors after victory had been achieved’: for the Palace, ‘God and Theodora’ (so worded in Theophanes Continuatus’ parallel passage); for Methodios’ Church, ‘God and all the Orthodox’ or, in other texts, ‘the holy Fathers’. It presents a tidy situation, that could only be presented as such considerably later. The insistence on God’s participation shows up as impiety all the trouble-making over canonicity. Asinogenes’ suggestion that government and Theodora were uninvolved seems to me in contradiction with this text and with practically all the sources for the Restoration. Another passage, in a related but different context, is outright: Methodios’ *Vita* says (with reference to the depositions with which he met any opposition to his line in replacing the former hierarchy) that the Patriarch’s policy ‘won hands down, thanks to his status, especially as he had the support of the throne’.

Before going any further, it is perhaps as well to note that the sources more often than not say ‘Theodora’. Substituting ‘throne’, ‘palace’, ‘government’, avoids possibly misleading ‘personalisation’. In the Geo. Mon. passage quoted above (‘Theodora expelled ... the patriarch John ... and brought in Methodios’), ‘Theodora’ is glossed gnomē men heautēs, hypothēkē de kai parainesei Theoktistou, ‘of her own mind, but on the suggestion and advice of Theoktistos’. Obviously it is impossible to determine whether she was his mask or he her handyman (personally I feel that the sum of data is more favourable to the second), and, more

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12 Cf. parallelism with *Vita Theodorae*, 10 (1–19): ‘So the emperor Michael, having, with his mother, inherited his father’s empire, on the initiative, advice and instruction of his venerable and sainted mother’.
generally, whether she was politically active or simply signed the papers presented to her. In either case, only the crown could officially assume the exceptional decisions related.

For the decisions were exceptional, and raise questions: apart from the handful of extremists known as ‘martyrs’ or ‘confessors’, to whom did restoration of official icon veneration seem necessary? Another is a variant on the one fundamental to Afinogeyev’s article: what does this turning out of the whole hierarchy stand for? Others are merely formal: for instance, on what grounds was the synod eliminated? For Methodios’ ‘election’ the Palace had the support of the ‘holy Fathers’, but how was he ordained?

Restoring of icon veneration may well have been tied up basically with questions of power and public order.13 ‘Restoration’ was an obvious pretext for attempted usurpation: a threat to be taken serious account of, with a child on the throne, and the account of the situation in Genesios/Theophanes Continuatus suggests the danger was very present. And further, the iconodules sufficiently convinced to suffer for their convictions, the ‘martyrs’ and ‘confessors’, were not many, but determined they were, and out to make trouble. Iconodule zeal manifested itself through lawbreaking, up to and including treason. Nikephoros, already quoted, actually deplores those who remained law-abiding under Iconoclast emperors: too many of the clergy, he says,

as if utterly ... annulling all sacred and canonical legislation, and ob-livious of all ecclesiastical constitution and order, go by political laws and constitutions, recognize civil authorities, ... are ruled and guided by them in every aspect of life ... This is not Jacob’s heritage, nor are such the ways of those whose dogma and thinking are ordered by piety.

Iconoclasts seem to have seen it differently, and this may have further bolstered the idea of avoiding trouble with the iconodules. Though the winners termed the other side ‘heretics’, there is no trace of any need to stamp out an ‘heretical Church’. Of course, if there had been any iconoclast ‘martyrs’ and ‘confessors’ like St Stephen the Younger or Methodios, the iconodule propaganda represented by our sources would have presented them differently, but iconoclasts do not seem to have considered law-breaking the supreme way of pleasing God. In fact the Lives now generally considered to be iconoclast suggest a completely different view from that of the iconodules: instead of suffering as the greatest good – especially by causing disorders in a state governed by

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13 Gouillard, ‘Le Synodikon de l’Orthodoxie. Édition et commentaire’, Travaux et Mémoires II (1967), 1–316, at 121 – but, as I see it, far from one ‘parti monastique et sa clientèle’, there were two forms of monasticism, with, in both, very active leaders. See n. 16 and the text, ad loc., below.
impiety – the proposed iconoclast saints pursued charity and good deeds, helping the poor and the weak. From the Throne’s point of view this may have seemed a less alarming opposition.

But an imperial change in religious policy did not necessitate a complete change of the hierarchy, as had been clearly demonstrated in 730, again in 787 and again in 815. What then does this innovation stand for? What is the link with the ‘schism’ that immediately followed? Where did the initiative come from?

Obviously, if it was put into operation by the Palace, the idea must have come from some religious authority: an individual or a group. In the text of Theophanes Continuatus, Theodora’s message to the iconoclast patriarch John begins: ‘Many pious people and monks are come from all over the Empire requesting my Majesty to decree that the venerable icons be set up again’, and notifies him that unless he agrees he must leave ‘the throne and the City’ until ‘a gathering of holy Fathers’ can deal with his case. This reference to monks cannot be gratuitous. If they had played no role, what would be the point in making Theodora claim that it is they who are demanding that the icons be set up again, and say that ‘holy Fathers’ will settle John’s case? Though this is expressed as the ‘attempt’ they will make ‘to persuade him’, his case is put in their hands: they are being given the Synod’s role. Was the monastic element out to take over the episcopate? Remembering Nicaea II, that would hardly seem inconceivable, and they are certainly very present.

Monks, monachi, were of two kinds: the cenobites or cloistered, as against the hermits, open-air ‘holy men’, termed ‘monks of the mountains’ in Euthymios of Sardis’ rules for episcopal elections – i.e., the Stoudites versus Ioannikios and others. And when I say versus, I mean that the two bodies were not only distinct: they were most emphatically rivals. Methodios’ election made two losing parties: the iconoclasts, as all the sources proclaim, but also some of the cenobites, in particular the Stoudites, and they are going to fight back. Methodios, too, though he had spent the last six years in the palace, was a monk. George Monachos, in his account of the substitution of Methodios for John notes this, but he is definitely less a cenobite than a ‘holy man’. The text suggests that Theodora is referring, in both cases, to this category, not to the cenobites. The Stoudites had influence in political circles, but the ‘holy men’ could

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15 Theophanes Cont. 150, 12–19.
16 See n. 48.
sway the whole population. The more famous ones were constantly surrounded by people of all levels of society come, sometimes long distances, to obtain their prayers, blessings and miracles. They had a significance with which the hierarchy could not compete, and Theodora might well have considered that with their support she could better face the unstable situation. That might justify support of this action if it was proposed by a sufficient number of desirable allies.

At all events, she named Methodios patriarch and evicted John. With the Synod, however, Gouillard reckons that there was an "initial "reconciliation"."18 My impression is that the Synod was suspended, by the throne, along with John, before Methodios was made patriarch. Once he had been installed, he could and did pronounce the definitive kathairesis: 'overthrowing, all the enemies of the icon', as Ioannikios 'Life' puts it. That this stands in the first place for the former Synod is assured by the parallelism with the schism:19 ... he overthrew [kathairei] all the enemies of the icon, and separated [diairei] the schismatics [from the Church]. Furthermore this action was taken in response to Ioannikios' letter which says that he must 'refuse to receive [tên dochên apananinou] the bishops and priests enemies of the icon'20 – a wording that implies that they were not in function, had been suspended temporarily, and it is up to the Patriarch to decide whether to receive them back or not.

An important point is that, 'reconciliation' would almost necessarily mean that Methodios was enthroned by the synod. The extract from Ioannikios' letter to Methodios, quoted above, seems to me to exclude this possibility: 'how could any Christian hold them [the iconoclast synod] or those they had ordained for priests?' The words underlined suggest to me that Methodios cannot have been ordained by them. If he had, would such a comment be conceivable in the Life of Ioannikios, which is consistently supportive of Methodios (as cannot be said of his own Vita)? It is true that it is not found in the a Petro redaction, considered almost contemporary with Methodios, but only in the a Saba. But, apart from the Stoudite aspect, Petros is notoriously more interested in miracles than in Iconoclasm, but certainly Sabas would not have added it if it applied to Methodios.

He was apparently enthroned, as we saw above, while John, though suspended, was still patriarch. No source expresses more forcefully than Methodios himself just how untouchable the holder of that office is, and that inferiors may not even put the question whether he is right:

19 Vita Ioannici a Saba 376: 'he excommunicates all the iconoclasts, and those who made themselves separate he sets apart'.
20 Vita Ioannici a Saba 372A.
For priests, it is the bishops (the hierarchs that is)\textsuperscript{21} who give ruling, and for the hierarchs, the Apostles and their successors, the Patriarchs, as arises most clearly from [the works] of the admirable Dionysios and the words of the canons ... But those who succeed to the [Apostles] are also Apostles.

As for daring to take action against any of these:

The utterly reckless and out of hand will be saying: 'What, priests, convicted of impious or other improper behaviour, are not to be put right?' ... Here is the answer [quoting Ps.-Dionysios]\textsuperscript{22}: Each one of the orders about God is more divine and brilliant than one less near, and the nearer it is to the true Light the more enlightening that order.\textsuperscript{23}

(The letter in which this appears was written to the Stoudites, when he himself held the office.) The Patriarch, heir to the Apostles, himself in fact an Apostle, is nearer to God than those of lower rank, and consequently sees more clearly; it is not for them to question him. How can this be squared with his having taken the preceding patriarch's place? Answer: John was not a patriarch: he had been ordained by the 'forsworn and self-anathematizing' heirs of 787 and 815 whose ordinations were invalid; in fact, he was not even a Christian.\textsuperscript{24} Methodios' imperative duty was to furnish the Church with the patriarch they had been too long lacking.

The uncanonical form of his ordination answered to the same problem. The Church of God was in urgent need of a patriarch; as there was no synod he could only be ordained by 'holy Fathers'. Once this had been done, and there was again a Patriarch, his immediate duty was to replace the Synod. Methodios, 'entrusted with care of the affairs of the Church and of the world we live in [tès oikomenès], forthwith restored Canon Law that had been let fall'.\textsuperscript{25} This is how his supporters could see the situation, but every stage of his promotion gave those looking for grounds on which to attack him, canonical grounds that were canonically unanswerable.

\textsuperscript{21} Jean Darrouzès, 'Le patriarche Méthode contre les iconoclastes et les Stoudites', \textit{REB} 45 (1987), 15–57, at 44: 'Méthode ... ne conçoit que deux degrés fondamentaux parmi les évêques: le patriarche d’un côté, de l’autre, tous les autres, du métropolite au simple évêque'.


\textsuperscript{23} 'Second letter to the Stoudites', in Darrouzès, 'Le patriarche', 45.90–96 and 100–107.

\textsuperscript{24} Methodios, 'Letter to patr. Jerusalem' (PG 100.1292).

\textsuperscript{25} \textit{Vita Methodii} (PG 100.1257A).
In fact even iconodules did not all approve of John’s expulsion. The Sabas version of the Life of Ioannikios gives, as one element of the schism, opposition between those who (‘of their ignorance’) favoured a solution on the lines of Nicaea and those who, ‘rightly’, did not. ‘No little confusion ensued …’ (373). So far, the Church. But not only the Church reacted. People may not have held John as equal to the Apostles, but Patriarch he had certainly been. Already, by insisting that he was expelled ‘canonically’, Methodios’ Life suggests that there was contestation. The justifications found in the sources go further in the same direction. Ioannikios’ rhetorical question again gives an official answer: the iconoclast priests and bishops reintegrated into the Church by Tarasios had gone back on their oaths and relapsed into heresy: ‘how could any Christian hold them or those they had ordained for priests?’ That fixes John and his synod, and is canonically defensible. Methodios, in his letter to the Patriarch of Jerusalem, is rather vague: John had ‘never shown up as really Christian or ever possessed or developed the mentality (logos) of one in holy orders’. The following very different and differently presented justification suggests that neither of these satisfied everyone. Furthermore a minimum of three different variants lie behind it. It is found in Theophanes Continuatus and in the Acta SS. Davidis, Symeonis et Georgii, with differences. According to the chronicle, Theodora sends word to John, to the effect that he must either agree to restoration or retire to his country home until the matter can be settled in a meeting with the Fathers:

The messenger delivered the message to John ...who, having taken cognisance, dismissed him, saying merely that he must give the question some thought, then, in less time than it takes to tell, seized a knife and cut at his stomach, well aware that the flowing blood would cause widespread fear and pity [N.B. ‘widespread pity’: so the iconoclast patriarch is credited with at least a measure of popularity], but [taking care] there be no danger of death for himself. News reached the Church and the imperial ears too, of alarm and talk going round, to the effect that the drungarios had, on the Empress’s order, murdered the Patriarch.

Bardas was sent to clear things up. John maintained the drungarios had wounded him. Bardas naturally saw through his story, recognising straightaway that ‘the sinner’ had used the knife on himself, ‘and no one any longer [had any doubt] but that one guilty of such grievous sin’, convicted, that is to say, of attempted suicide, ‘should be expelled from the Church …’

26 Vita Methodii (PG 100.1253).
27 See n. 23.
In the Acta, neither the drungarios nor Bardas figures: John has been knifed, he says, by 'murderous icon-creatures [ikoniatōn]'. Looking for the murderers where he says they have gone, all that those who come in answer to his cries for help, find is his own bloody knife. The conclusion is obvious: 'it was his own hand, and [the motive], desire for power'.\textsuperscript{28} Even of the self-inflicted wound variant, Theophanes Continuatus gives two versions: (1) He meant it to impress, but took good care it should not be mortal. This is hostile to him, but (2) carried a step further, it becomes useful from the official point of view: John is guilty of attempted suicide, and it is obvious to all that 'guilty of such a sin' he must be 'expelled from the Church …' 

At all events John was out and Methodios patriarch. Methodios had not been the only candidate. There had been several: the hermit Eustratios says to Ioannikios that, because of 'the great glory with men' attaching to the Patriarch's office, 'such a one is out to get this man proclaimed and promoted, others that one'.\textsuperscript{29} One was proposed by the Stoudites. Methodios was preferred. He was certainly Theodora's choice. Immediately on his achieving the patriarchate a schism broke out. The pretext was undoubtedly canonical.

Our sources for the 'Restoration of Orthodoxy' are not only biased, cryptic and incoherent, but also evasive: where there is an awkward question they evade it. Methodios' suffering, asceticism, etc. are addressed with enthusiasm, but just how he became patriarch is passed over. If his promotion had not generated so many and such lyrical pages, totally unconcerned with trivial reality, would one be conscious of a problem? Consider the parallel case of Leo III and Anastasios (more often referred to as Leo and Germanos – but Germanos, like Methodios, was the orthodox one: they were the 'heroes' of the orthodox accounts).

In the Germanos story there is an initial ambiguity: was Leo able to unseat him for plotting against him, or was the patriarch only under suspicion? Did Germanos resign because Leo allowed him that way of avoiding trouble? Leo

watched the patriarch closely and tried to impune to him things [that had been/were being] said, so that, if he should catch him in action against his imperial Majesty, he might depose him from his throne as a mover of sedition and not as a confessor\textsuperscript{30} ... Germanos 'resigned from the

\textsuperscript{29} V. Ioannikii a Petro, 69. 431A.
\textsuperscript{30} Theophanes, 407.29–408.1. Cyril Mango's translation: 'He spied on the patriarch and tried to catch him speaking against his imperial Majesty, for if he should find him saying
episcopacy and surrendered his pallium. He retired to his family house having served as bishop 14 years, 5 months and 7 days. On the 22nd of the same month of January Anastasios, the blessed Germanus’ spurious pupil and synkellos, who had adopted Leo’s impiety, was ordained and appointed false bishop of Constantinople on account of his worldly ambition.\(^3\)

This precise dating of the end of Germanos’ tenure and beginning of Anastasios’ gives the act an aspect of legal validity. True, Germanos was ‘blessed’, whereas Anastasios was a ‘false bishop [pseudepiskopos]’ – though some iconoclasts will have seen it the other way round – but on both sides, for all but a few extremists, the emperor is the emperor; he had given Anastasios the place, and the Synod had consecrated him patriarch. In 843, John was demoted as Germanos had been, and Methodios promoted, like Anastasios, by the sovereign. But Germanos’ synod had not gone with him. Anastasios could be ordained and enthroned by the Synodos endēmousa. In 843, the Synod was thrown out. Whether performed by the Synod before they went – which, as aforesaid, I consider most unlikely – or without Synod, Methodios’ ordination laid him open to attack on canonical basis.

But was this the real problem, or was it just the perfect excuse for a schism? Among the candidates to whom Methodios was preferred was the Stoudites’ one, John Katasambas/Kakosambas.\(^3\) It was immediately on Methodios’ achieving the patriarchate that trouble broke out.

As in 843, so in 806 the Stoudites had had a candidate (almost certainly St Theodore himself), but Nikephoros had been preferred: ‘Plato and Theodore, the hegoumens of the Stoudiou monastery, did not accept the election of Nikephoros, but opposed it strongly, planning a schism.’\(^3\) In Methodios’ day as in Nikephoros’, the Stoudites replied with a schism to the failure of their candidate to achieve the patriarchate. The main sources for this affair are the Life of Methodios and his correspondence, and the Life of Ioannikios (in both versions, the Sabas and the earlier Petros one). An interesting point is the complete disappearance of any Stoudite source – going back, certainly, to destruction in the monastery itself when running down Methodios was ‘politically incorrect’. There is, on the other hand, a sample of the ‘propaganda’ they presumably released to refurbish their image after their lack of activity in the icon conflict after St Theodore’s death: an obvious part of their campaign to get the patriarchate. In

\(^{31}\) Mango and Scott, Chronicle of Theophanes, 564–65.

\(^{32}\) Vita Ioannikii a Petro 69.431A.

\(^{33}\) Theophanes 481.22.
Genesios’ account of the Restoration, Manuel compels Theodora to decree it, in gratitude to the Stoudites who have miraculously cured him of a deadly sickness.

If the schism was in reality almost certainly due to rivalry for mastery of the Church, obviously the Stoudites did not try to spark it off simply on the grounds that their candidate had not been elected. They will in general have supported and stimulated unfavourable reactions to any aspect of Methodios’ policy, but they themselves dwelt on his canonical position. Canonical rigour was their line.

Ioannikios wrote to Methodios:

... For the schismatics, grieve and sorrow: they are the Churches own members, but don’t bother about the fiends [the iconoclast heretical synod]
... Yet know this, schisms made on pretext of rigour and searching the canons are no better than heresy, heedlessly tearing limb from limb.\(^{34}\)

But specifying what were the canonical questions raised is avoided; for this and for the ostracising of the schismatics, Methodios’ two letters to the Stoudites are the only source.

That the Stoudites were out to invalidate his accession, and that this was no secret, is evident from these letters, though they avoid any explicit mention of it. How else explain the importance given to the irregularity of Naukratios’ hegoumenate?

Don’t be angry, I am going to put a rather personal question, not intellectual, just factual, not something we’ve thought up, simply a question of truth/fact: Who made hegoumens of you?\(^{35}\)

The other sources are only concerned with hostile reactions to Methodios’ policy as patriarch. It met, says his Life, with opposition from ‘some of the bishops and hegoumens’.\(^{36}\) References to bishops in the immediate post-Restoration period are rare and not always of certain

\(^{34}\) V. Ioannikii a Saba 373.

\(^{35}\) Methodios, ‘First letter to Stoudites’, lines 67–80, in Darrouzes, Patriarche, 34.

\(^{36}\) V. Methodii (PG 100.1257C)

Re: mentions of bishops, Gouillard (‘Synodikon’, 123) notes that Theophanes Presbyter knows only monks, and adds that, in accounts of the ‘synod’ of 843 only two thirds of the sources mention ‘bishops’, nor do those sources identify a single one of them.

I am less convinced than Gouillard of the exceptional reliability of Theoph. Presbyter. The arguments he advances – Theophanes ‘préside un sommaire des faits cohérent, dénué de merveilleux, bref, vraisemblable’ (122) – suggest to me the need for more caution rather than less.
interpretation. There were a small number in exile, either voluntarily or condemned to it. Or is the reference to those ordained by Methodios? A text from his pen has been advanced in support of this:

Therefore, if those who have partaken of the Spirit that we possess, through imposition of the hands and invocation of God, should object to what has already been said and to a number of other arguments, and reject acceptance [of iconoclasts] because they foresee that, should this be dared, the people will partly relapse, and if they solemnly testify that things could go even farther, they deserve to be preferred, as our own men to strangers, as unscathed parts to damaged members, for grace belongs not only to those of us who have been led to the altar and stand by it, but ... those in the desert ... and those in the city... are of the same opinion and suggest it, and communicate it in the most benevolent way.

Whether or not of his ordination, they are clerics and 'our own men', objecting to any reinstatement of iconoclast clergy.

In Theophanes Continuatus' invaluable patchwork on the Restoration there is a passage which originally must have belonged to another context, not that of the patriarch's generous attitude towards those who attacked him: 'And so the orthodox Church went ahead. All the heretics under the sun were overthrown along with their chief priest (archiereus John)'. There follows at great length the story of John pretending he had been wounded by the drungarius (see above) and his having originated the libel against Methodios, where he was accused of having had an affair with Metrophanes' mother. Those responsible:

were, thanks to the patriarch's sympathy and his appeal to the rulers, found worthy, not of the painful trials they deserved, but of forgiveness; all they were held to was, at the feast of Orthodoxy, to go yearly, bearing lamps, from the venerable shrine of God's mother at Blachernai to the divine and famous church of Divine Wisdom, and hear echoing in their ears the anathema [pronounced] on them for their aversion to the divine images.

Those the patriarch defends are here presented as those responsible for scurrilous attacks on him, but the story begins with John as the originator,

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37 Darrouzès ('Patriarche Méthode', 16) seems to me very convincing: 'Très probablement le patr. Méthode englobe tout le clergé iconocaste, évêques compris, dans le terme "prêtres et ministres" parce que l'épiscopat iconocaste n'avait à ses yeux aucune légitimité'.

38 Darrouzès, 'Patriarche', 54: frag. I. Correct interpretation: Afinogenev, 'The great purge'.

and there could have been no question of Methodios defending him. Nor is the anathema pronounced, though appropriate for ‘heretics’, in any way so for those the text presents as subject to it: ‘rigorists’ or ‘schismatics’. Some sources suggest the Stoudites were party to the scandal. More could be said, but I will simply quote Guillard:

Si nous comprenons bien les allusions des biographes de saint Joannice aux vieillards et à la chaste Suzanne, aux mauvaises histoires colportées par les Ariens au sujet de saint Athanase, nos rigoristes seraient allés loin. Et la chronique du Xe siècle est mal venue de prêter aux iconoclastes dépités l’accusation de fornication répandue à l’endroit de Méthode.

He adds, in a note, that Theophanes Continuatus and Genesios are decidedly pro-Stoudite. At all events, all three sources are evidence of deep divisions among the ‘orthodox’; his own Life is the one most critical of Methodios.

In Ioannikios’ two Lives, Petros says that the Stoudites are, as usual, stirring up trouble, but gives no detail. Methodios’ two letters to them, edited by Darrouzès, throw some light, however, and the fact that they are addressed to the Stoudites makes it easier to evaluate them. The first one, addressed to Naukratios and Athanasios, first develops the theme that the Church cannot not have a head; he who has no one above himself cannot rule over others; if they refuse to have a head, they cannot be heads themselves (lines 18–39); and secondly forbids them to leave the monastery. The monks subject to them they can send where they like, ‘except to archontes, religious establishments or the palace. You know the canon [Chalcedon 4] that does not allow you to come or go without our permission’ (lines 39–45). It also thirdly authorises monks of the monastery to leave it and rejoin the Church, and mentions one who already has done so (46–66). Fourthly, their higoumenate is irregular, self-conferred and unacceptable (67–104). Finally, they must anathematize and burn the books against Nikephoros and Tarasios written by St Theodore, ‘for your blessed higoumene and master ... at the end of his life in fact annulled his own words’.

The first point concerns the schism, as does the last. Obviously it was set off in much the same way as Theodore and his uncle Plato had started the one against Nikephoros, except that in 843 they were on better ground: Methodios’ patriarchate was against the canons. Though we only hear that the Stoudites made canonical objections, but never what these were, obviously they will have fastened on this. The fourth point is an indirect

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40 Gouillard, ‘Synodikon’, 129 and n. 86.
answer to this. The other two points specify the measures already taken by Methodios in response to the schism.

In the second letter, where canon four of Chalcedon is quoted in extenso; there are two main points. The first develops one of the principal points of the first letter: the canon is concerned with ‘... those who under cover of monasticism stir up disorder in ecclesiastical and public affairs ... circulating unimpeded in the cities’.

Methodios specifies that neither Naucratios nor Athanasios may leave their monastery, but they may send their monks anywhere – with three significant exceptions. One of Methodios’ conclusions is not in obvious correspondence with the text of the canon, but is certainly appropriate to the historical context:

So far are [monks] from having anything to say about the bishop, or in any way to wag their tongues about Church business that [the canon] does not even allow them to change place, but where they were shorn they must continue in the monastic life (hesychazontai). (59–62)

That the ‘keeping quiet’ root of the word had escaped Methodios seems unlikely. The second point is not, I think, known from any other source: the canon having also condemned those ‘out to set up monasteries for themselves’, Methodios pursues:

So the Sakkoudionites are Stoudites and the Sabatians from Kata Saba? Both of them are evil-doers and take their name from a place acquired illegally. Let them return where they belong ...

This implies that the transfer of Plato’s and Theodore’s community from Sakkoudion to Stoudiou could also be attacked canonically. Methodios does not dwell on this but returns to the real problem:

It will be utterly forbidden them to say or listen to anything involving anyone in holy orders, or ever to take action in secular affairs;

and, specifically, to the schism, quoting ‘Apostolic’ canon 31:

If a priest, in contempt of his bishop ... set his congregation apart and erect an altar, when he has nothing with which to reproach his bishop concerning piety and justice, he is to be deposed ...

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42 Further on in the letter Katasabatites (line 134). Nothing seems to be known about them. See Darrouzès, ‘Patriarche Méthode’, 42 n. 16.
These texts suggest a clue to the origin of the schism, and allow a glimpse at the canonical contest. Everything suggests that the Stoudites set it going.

They had a far sounder theoretical basis than in 806, and the context appeared more favourable: instead of a relatively homogeneous Synod, they faced groups with conflicting views. The authors of the schism could rope in as allies any who opposed the new patriarch’s policies, whether out of conviction or for less idealist reasons. Sabas, if his résumé is a little incoherent, is a witness to this side of events:

Some of the orthodox, possessed by love of glory or the urge for prominent position, spoke offensively about the first orthodox patriarch of our generation, the angel-like Methodios, poking into his life and fouling it (periergazomenoi kai kakizontes biôn), not in pursuit of canonical rigour, but out for their personal interests. And some said, out of ignorance, that the iconoclasts and those they had ordained could celebrate, while the others rightly protested at this and refused the restoring to them of clerical status. This led to no ordinary confusion.43

The opposition to any reinstatement of iconoclast clergy is presented this time without hostility to Methodios. Does ‘fouling his life’ refer to the low-level attacks that are said to have been made on him, the Metrophanes’ mother tale for instance?44

It is his ‘Life’ that gives the most specific information on the reproaches levelled at Methodios: he was ordaining at an unacceptable rate, ‘determined to get in first with restoration of the bishoprics’ (1257A), and also ordaining, ‘without examination’ – in theology, of course – anyone so long as he was ‘known to have been orthodox’ (1257C) – a policy that served as an excuse for insubordination [staseos] and division in the Church of the Lord. The war-loving fiend, defeated over the heretics, set the orthodox against one another,45 making some of the bishops and hegoumenes get above themselves, firing them with zeal to say that ordaining without any examination was wrong, in particular those who triumphantly proclaim their own errors.46

43 Vita Ioannikii 372B.

44 On the scandal of Methodios and Metrophanes’ mother, see above. Cf. also Ioannikios’ ‘Letter to Methodios’, Sabas version (373), urging him not to be depressed by the attacks made on him: ‘When Christ cast out demons he was accused by unbelievers of doing it through Beelzebub, jeered at as one gone astray, as a glutton and a wine-bibber, as friend of tax-collectors and sinners’.

45 Vita Methodii (PG 100.1257C).

46 Gouillard (128, n. 82) draws attention to the same words in Theophanes, where Constantine V puts to death the in pathe autou thriambeuontas (438.7–8). There, however it is
It goes on to say that among those so accepted, ‘many, overcome by the splendour of the rank, rushed for the thrones with no regard for their conscience’, and carries on:

For all these good actions, was he not going to be shot at by the envious? ... Was Methodios to win without enduring any trials? Or was he going to be wounded and not retaliate? On the contrary, he hit and threw down those who had wounded him.\(^{47}\)

After all, ‘he had the support of the throne’. Those who hit at him discovered that he definitely could retaliate: ‘bishops and hegoumens were deposed’. Far from abating, ‘the schism increased’ (1257D).

The picture of Methodios is hardly favourable: he has been packing the Synod in his own interest, with no estimable aim such as giving it a monastic orientation, let alone giving priority to accepting suitable persons. In favour with the crown he could get away with anything. Any who dared oppose his policy were made to pay. Could it be that the Life of Methodios, as it has reached us, has passed by a Stoudite edition, with the anti-Methodios slant disguised, in spite of a few acid comments but with deliberate misrepresentation of his ordination policy?

His options would not have been the same as the Stoudites’. There can be no doubt that any candidate of theirs would have been capable of taking the ‘examination’; but neither did Methodios accept his ones ‘unexamined’, only requirements will have been less concentrated in the field of learning. Euthymios of Sardis, in his rules for episcopal elections, shows the candidates being examined, and also what may have been Methodios’ criteria:

Among all the candidates the Synod must select the best and most fitted for the throne. If one of them, besides an irreproachable life, has a reputation as a good speaker, choose him; but one who speaks well and uses impeccable Greek, but is behind the others in leading a godly life is not to be preferred, because of his culture, to those who lead a better life.\(^{48}\)

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\(^{47}\) Vita Methodii (PG 100.1257B)

\(^{48}\) ‘Sur les élections épiscopales’ in J. Darrouzès, Documents inédits d’ecclésiologie byzantine (Paris: Institut français d’Études Byzantines, 1966). Headed Ὑπὲρ χρῆ τοῖς χειροτονοῦντας <...> in the MS, and attributed to Euthymios of Sardis, in whom Darrouzès recognises the ‘confessor’ of 831, who was also present in 787 at Nicaea II (Mansi XIII, 152–6). It would thus be datable to the end of the eighth century or the beginning of the ninth; 110.6, 9–11; 108.15; 108.18–110.2.
The ruling does not record an innovation, it is simply putting down in writing (not for the first time) the recognised rules and customs of the Church of Constantinople. Candidates are to be sought among ‘monks of the mountains [hermits and ‘holy men’] or the monasteries [cenobites], among leaders of the Church, priests, deacons et al., and among men of the world concerned to lead a virtuous and upright life’. Among those Methodios ordained there were, of course, ‘confessors’, but it might well be at ‘monks of the mountains’ that the accusation of ordination without examination is aimed. They had descended on Constantinople in considerable numbers during the period preceding the Restoration, say a number of sources, and few of them had much, if any, formal education. Methodios’ synod may well have had a considerable monastic element, but ‘monks of the mountains’, perhaps exclusively. The monks of Stoudios, at any rate, and perhaps of other monasteries, have simply disappeared without leaving any trace, as is suggested by the allusion to opposition to his policy coming from ‘some bishops and hegoumens’.

A relevant question also is how, exactly, ‘restoration of the bishoprics’ should be understood.

Gouillard reckoned there were some two to three thousand depositions, bishops and priests. Afinogenev quotes Methodios’ Vita: ‘O thou who hast offered to God an even holier sacrifice than Elijah in that thou ... hast hindered and prevented twenty thousand or more priests ... from impiously officiating’ and, commenting on the impressive number, says: ‘... for reasons not to be expounded here, I believe that it must be taken very seriously ... In fact, we are dealing with an un-precedented dismissal of maybe the majority of Byzantine ecclesiastics, from bishops down to humble parish priests!’ I regret that the reasons are not expounded, but I am not convinced. Dithyramb should not be treated as statistics, but even if the figure were presented in a factual context, it is not certain it should be taken at face value. Were all the bishops demoted?

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49 Darrouzès: see preceding n.

50 Raising laymen to the episcopate did not, at that date, pose a problem: the Roman Church forbade the raising of laymen to episcopal rank, but until Photius, aware of the trouble repeatedly stirred up by appeals to the First See, had his Church follow Rome in this, Euthymios’ ruling was the norm in the Eastern Church. P. Karlin-Hayter, ‘Notes sur quatre documents d’ecclésiologie byzantine’, RÉB 37 (1979), 249–58, at 249–53.

51 The ‘Second version of the Synodicon’: ‘... men came down from Mount Olympus, from Athos and Ida, even the congregation of Kyminas’; quoted by Cyril Mango in ‘The Liquidation of Iconoclasm and the Patriarch Photios’, in Bryer and Herrin, Iconoclasm, 133–40 at 134.

52 E.g., Vita Ioannikii 333B.

53 Vita Methodii (PG 100.1257C).

Suffragan bishoprics, if they were at any distance from Constantinople, were little affected by what went on there, nor had Iconoclasm been methodically imposed in the provinces. Even less likely is a systematic deposing of all village priests. There were priests deposed, but certainly not by the thousand. Even in Constantinople, were people suddenly to have no possibility of getting married, baptised, buried, while they waited for an orthodox priest to be given them? 'Bishops and higoumens were deposed', but the case of Ignatios, one-time higoumen of a monastery in communion with the iconoclast Church made patriarch, is sufficient proof that the cleaning-up was not radical.\(^{55}\)

It is not because he was a holy man and had suffered for his religion that Methodios was not a realist. The 'restoration of the bishoprics' may well have been concerned with the Synod almost exclusively, apart from a few suffragans and parish priests, visible for one reason or another. But even for the Synod more may have slipped through than the sources suggest. Another aspect of the Synod question is that it was composed at any time of the metropolitan bishops then in Constantinople. Metropolitan, at that date, were elected in the Capital, by the Synod, from among the Constantinopolitan clergy. The patriarch ordained the new metropolitan but did not participate in the election. The metropolitan then left for his see, from which canon law only allowed him to be absent for a limited time, and the data, though extremely limited, suggests that this was normally observed. If, however, enemies had invaded his eparchy, he was canonically free to stay in the capital. Consequently, in 843, replacing the Synod will have been a more visible operation than when metropolitans from the furthest parts of the Empire were constantly appearing and disappearing, and the Synod itself will also have been a more coherent body in support of its patriarch.

Then, in 847, Methodios died. Ignatios, higoumen of a monastery that had been in communion with the iconoclasts, was chosen to succeed him. Conflicts in the Church had not ceased, and eleven years later the situation again suggested to the Throne trying another patriarch; Ignatios was deposed, Photios appointed in his place, and again canons were brandished; the sources, here, are much more informative. And this time, as with Germanos and Anastasios, the Synod was not deposed.

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\(^{55}\) P. Karlin-Hayter, 'Gregory of Syracuse, Ignatios and Photios', in Bryer and Herrin Iconoclasm, 141–5, part 142.
Prochoros Cydones and the fourteenth-century understanding of Orthodoxy

Norman Russell

Since the great christological councils of the fifth century, orthodoxy has prided itself on fidelity to the tradition of the holy fathers. New ideas were measured against patristic teaching, and if they failed to conform with it were branded as heretical. In the first half of the fourteenth century many regarded the teaching of Gregory Palamas as dangerously innovative. Between 1337 and 1368 it was challenged by a number of theologians who refused to recognize it as representative of the authentic Greek Christian tradition. First Barlaam the Calabrian and Gregory Acindynus, then Nicephorus Gregoras, and finally Prochoros Cydones,

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3 These are the anti-hesychast leaders of the three main stages of the controversy according to John Cantacuzenus, Refutatio I, 1–2, E. Voordecker and F. Tinnefeld, eds, Johannis Cantacuzeni Refutationes duae Prochori Cydonii et Disputatio cum Paulo Patriarcha Latino Epistulis septem tradita, CCSG 16 (Turnhout, 1987), 3–5.

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argued that Palamas had compromised the divine unity and transcendence by introducing heretical distinctions into the godhead. In 1344, under the Patriarch John Calecas, a Constantinopolitan council, overturning a synodal decision of 1341, had upheld the objectors. But with the victory of John Cantacuzenus in the civil war of 1341–47 the Palamite party gained the ascendancy. The councils of 1347, 1351 and 1368, held under the hesychast Patriarchs Isidore, Kallistos I and Philotheos, respectively, judged Palamas to be orthodox and his detractors heretics. The voices that were silenced are nevertheless interesting for the insight they offer into the self-understanding of orthodoxy in the Palaeologan period. One of the most articulate was that of Prochoros Cydones. Overshadowed as a writer by his more famous older brother, Demetrios, and condemned as a heretic by the council of 1368, Prochoros has not had the recognition he deserves. Yet he merits attention, not only for his translations from the Latin, but also for his theological contribution to the last debates of the hesychast controversy. In this final phase the nature of the vision of God and the meaning of participation in the divine, largely in response to problems highlighted in Prochoros’s treatises, were subjected to detailed examination. Indeed the questions raised by Prochoros engaged some of the best Greek minds of the later fourteenth century and were thus instrumental in bringing hesychast teaching to its full maturity.

The Prochoros affair

Prochoros was born in Thessalonica in about 1335. The Cydones were an old family that had served the emperors for several generations. But after the Zealots seized power in Thessalonica in 1342, they were dispossessed. Prochoros’s father died soon afterwards, and his sons were obliged to fend for themselves. In 1347 Demetrios entered the service of John Cantacuzenus, beginning an illustrious political career at the capital that

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4 The chief sources for the council are the Synodal Tome of 1368, which was drawn up by the Patriarch Philotheos (first published by Dosithoios of Jerusalem in the Tomos Agapes [Jassy, 1698] and reprinted in PG 151.693–715), and the Letters (esp. Letters 129 and 151) and two Invectives Against Philotheos of Demetrios Cydones (Démétrius Cydonès, Correspondance I and II, R.-J. Loenertz, ed., ST 186 and 208 [Vatican: Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, 1956 and 1960], esp. I, 164–6; G. Mercati, Notizie di Procoro e Demetrio Cidon, Manuele Caleca e Teodoro Melitenioia ed altri appunti per la storia della teologia e della letteratura bizantina del secolo XIV, ST 56 [Vatican: Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, 1931], 296–338).

5 For a complete list, see n. 27 below.

6 For biographical sketches of Prochoros see Mercati, Notizie, 40–61; F. Tinnefeld, Demetrios Kydones. Briefe 1/1 (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1981), 237–44; cf. PLP VI, 13883. His date of birth has been calculated from the probable date of his ordination, 1365 (Mercati, Notizie. 43 n. 2).
was to span forty years and five reigns. Prochoros remained at first with his mother and two sisters at Thessalonica. Some three years later, at about the age of fifteen, he went to Mount Athos, where he became a monk of the Great Lavra.

On Mount Athos Prochoros pursued his studies with ability and passion. The Patriarch Philotheos says that he was 'the first and foremost' of those 'who applied themselves maniacally to the vanity of Hellenic studies and drank copiously of their errors'. What Philotheos means is that as a young monk Prochoros acquired the intellectual formation that enabled him after his ordination, probably in 1365, to become the leader on the Holy Mountain of the anti-Palamite faction. Endowed not only with a formidable intellect but also with an attractive personality (Demetrius calls him 'an artless siren'), he aroused strong feelings in both supporters and opponents. As his views became more widely known, a number of the monks of other houses broke off communion with the Lavriotes and denounced him to Philotheos. His superior, Jacovos Tricanas, despairing of him, also wrote to the patriarch. Tricanas asked for the Synodal Tome against Barlaam and Acindynus to be sent to the Lavra, and Prochoros was required to read it out at the synaxis and sign it. This he did under duress, but soon regretted his action and retracted. The response of his hegoumenos was to have his cell searched. The discovery there of works containing heretical doctrines, perhaps his own as yet unpublished writings, caused an outcry against him. Many of his own brethren now refused to have anything to do with him, isolating him within his own community.

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8 Philotheos, in the Synodal Tome of 1368, says that he had been a monk there 'from childhood' (PG 151.694A). Demetrius, in the *Second Insective Against Philotheos*, says: 'he went to live in the desert before he had begun to show a beard' (Mercati, *Notizie*, 316.16).


10 In a eulogy on Prochoros after his death (Mercati, *Notizie*, 347.29–30); cf. his description of Prochoros in the *Second Insective Against Philotheos* as a holy and Christian man whose chief concern was seeking after truth (Mercati, *Notizie*, 315.50–2).

11 Synodal Tome, 695A.


13 Synodal Tome, 695D. Philotheos mentions that this was read out annually on the Sunday of Orthodoxy. It was perhaps for the Sunday of Orthodoxy of 1367 that the Tome had been sent for.
At this point, perhaps the early summer of 1367, Prochoros himself wrote to the patriarch, complaining about the injustice and calumny to which he had been subjected. The reason for this, he said, was that tradesmen, cooks and actors, setting themselves up as novel experts in doctrine, had had the audacity to involve themselves in 'the great mystery of theology, which God wished to make inaccessible (abaton) to human beings'. If Prochoros was hoping to win the support of the patriarch, this was not a good start. The sarcastic reference to those whom Philotheos regarded as 'our people' was noted. And the dig at the lower orders involving themselves in theology, although not commented on by Philotheos, must have given offence. Prochoros was probably aware that as a young man Philotheos had supported his studies under Thomas Magistros in Thessalonica by serving as his cook. Nevertheless, Prochoros concluded by saying that he was sending under cover of his letter copies of his writings so that the patriarch could assess the orthodoxy of his opinions.

What were these writings that Prochoros sent to the patriarch? Philotheos reveals in his account of the events leading up to the trial that Prochoros had sent him two treatises. The title of one of them is mentioned: Refutation of the misinterpretation of texts quoted in the tome against Ephesus and Gregoras, a refutation, that is to say, of the Tome of 1351 that marked the victory of Palamism. The other is not named, but must have been Prochoros's treatise in six books, On Essence and Energy, passages from which are cited in the Tome of 1368.

Shortly after writing to the patriarch (unable, according to Philotheos, to bear the reproaches of the other monks and his exclusion from the common life), Prochoros presented himself at the patriarchate to argue his case in person. Philotheos had not yet had time to study the works which Prochoros had sent him. But with the help of the metropolitan of

14 A summary of the letter is given by Philotheos together with some fragments quoted verbatim (Synodal Tome, 696BCD). Another fragment has been preserved by Demetrius Cydones in Vat. gr. 678, f. 17' (text in Mercati, Notizie, 48).
15 Synodal Tome, 696C.
16 Synodal Tome, 696CD.
17 Synodal Tome, 708B.
19 Books I and II are in PG 151.1191–1242, where they are attributed to Gregory Acindynus. (For Prochoros's authorship see Mercati, Notizie, 1–13.) Book VI has been edited by M. Candal, 'El libro VI de Prócoro Cidonio (sobre la luz tabórca)', OCP 20 (1954), 247–96.
Ephesus, who happened to be present at the time, he put him through a preliminary examination on his attitude to the teaching of Barlaam and Acindynus and his opinion of the Synodal Tome of 1351. Prochoros confessed that he had doubts and reservations on these matters but declared that he was not going to insist on his own opinions. His only concern was to agree with the church and follow her teaching. Philotheos responded by requiring Prochoros 'for the present' to accept the Tome of 1351, where the correct faith was set out. He was instructed first to make a perfect confession of the faith and align himself with the church's teaching without any reservation. Then, if he still had any doubts, Philotheos was willing to resolve them for him. In other words, the orthodoxy of Palamite doctrine was no longer a matter for debate. The Tome of 1351 had made it de fide.

It was only afterwards that Philotheos began to peruse Prochoros's writings. What he discovered there shocked him deeply. First, he found the method of argumentation thoroughly alien. He protests that Prochoros does not expound the fathers 'in our manner' but subjects them to rational analysis by means of Aristotelian syllogisms. Secondly, Prochoros does not quote approved authorities. Thirdly, the writings were 'full of every kind of profanity' – worse than Barlaam and Acindynus, for by denying the divinity of the light that radiated from Christ at the Transfiguration Prochoros had lapsed into christological heresy.

It was understandable that Philotheos should have found Prochoros's writings alien. Their organization in articles, with the authorities on each topic arranged pro and contra and the solution given in a responsio, was based on that of contemporary western scholastic models. For like his brother Demetrius, Prochoros was a Latinist and an accomplished translator. Where he learned his Latin is difficult to say. We know that Demetrius engaged the services of a Dominican from Pera to teach him in the early 1350s, and that through him he was introduced to Aquinas. Prochoros is unlikely to have found a Latin teacher on Athos. And his

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20 Theodoret, Palamite successor to the Matthew of Ephesus condemned in the Tome of 1351.
21 Synodal Tome, 697A.
22 Synodal Tome, 697B.
23 Synodal Tome, 698B and 699B.
24 Philotheos would have noted the appeals to Boethius, Ambrose and Augustine (On Essence and Energy 1.3 [PG 151.1200CD], 1.5 [1208C, 1213BCD, 1217AB] and 6 [Candal, 'El libro VI', 264.9–26, 284.9–12]) but he is unlikely to have detected the unacknowledged quotations from Thomas Aquinas (on which see Mercati, Notizia, 15–18).
25 Synodal Tome, 700D.
26 Demetrius Cydones, Apologia I (Mercati, Notizia, 362.98–105).
visits to his brother seem to have been rare and relatively brief. But somehow he managed to acquire sufficient skill in the language to enable him to assist his brother with the translation of Aquinas and also embark on several projects of his own. Autograph copies of translations from Aquinas, Augustine, Boethius and a near contemporary author, Hervaeus Natalis, survive, not as published works but rather as a collection of texts useful to him in his researches.\textsuperscript{27}

When Prochoros returned to the patriarchate for a second interview, Philotheos was much better informed about his theological views. The metropolitan of Ephesus, who was again present, said that he too had read part of Prochoros’s writings and had found them full of error. He singled out especially the fact that Prochoros had stated explicitly that the light of deity shining in the face of Christ at the Transfiguration was created, a shocking claim, in his view, that went against all the fathers.\textsuperscript{28} As this teaching had been enshrined in a written text, it could only be retracted in writing - verbal qualifications would not do. The patriarch therefore forbade Prochoros to return to Mount Athos until he had refuted his earlier writings, instructing him to base his further study on the Acts of the Sixth Ecumenical Council (the anti-monothelete council that had defined two natures and two energies in Christ), Maximus the Confessor’s \textit{Dialogue with Pyrrhus} and John Damascene’s \textit{On the Orthodox Faith}.\textsuperscript{29}


\textsuperscript{28} Synodal Tome, 703A.

\textsuperscript{29} Synodal Tome, 703D. Mercati dates this meeting to 15 November 1367 (\textit{Notitie}, 25). Cf. Demetrius’s account in his \textit{First Invective against Philotheos} (Mercati, \textit{Notitie}, 297.15–17).
The prescribed course of reading shows that from the beginning of the process it was christological error (rather than criticism of the more esoteric doctrines of hesychasm) that gave the authorities most cause for concern. If Prochoros denied that the light radiating from Christ at the Transfiguration was divine on the grounds that such light issued from Christ's flesh, not his godhead, he was either denying the union of the two natures or guilty of subordinationism. Prochoros acceded courteously to the patriarch's request, but declared that he was already perfectly familiar with the contents of the set books. What he wanted was for the patriarch to resolve the aporiae discussed in his own writings.  

Prochoros's request was not ignored. A commission was set up, chaired by Theophanes, metropolitan of Nicaea, to examine his writings. These were principally the two treatises he had sent to the patriarch, namely, the Refutation of the Tome of 1351, and the six books of On Essence and Energy. Later at the trial select passages from them were read out and commented on. It is possible that Prochoros was invited to submit further writings. The Synodal Tome quotes from a work of Prochoros not otherwise known. All things considered, the commission was in a good position to make a fair appraisal of Prochoros's views.

The trial of 1368

Matters would have proceeded at their usual slow pace if Prochoros at this stage had not taken an initiative which raised a storm of protest against him and led directly to his trial for heresy. Probably in November 1367, around the feast day of Gregory Palamas, he sent a pittakion, or

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30 Synodal Tome, 704A.
31 This is implied by Demetrius Cydones in his Second Invective Against Philotheos (Mercati, Notizie, 322.2–3). Cf. Polemis, Theophanes, 75. Prochoros, of course, had powerful connections. Apart from any other considerations, it would have been unwise on these grounds alone not to have taken him seriously. On the broader context of the trial see my article, 'Palamism and the Circle of Demetrius Cydones', in Ch. Dendrinos, ed., et al., Porphyrogenita. Essays in Honour of Julian Chrysostomides (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 153–74.
34 We know of four other works not quoted in the Synodal Tome: (i) an opusculus On the divine fatherhood and sonship (Mercati, Notizie, 20–1); (ii) a reply to the Palamites of Mount Athos on the essence and energies, the Taboric light, etc. (Mercati, Notizie, 21–2; an extensive passage has been published by Polemis, Theophanes, 84); (iii) an opusculus On the cataphatic and apophatic modes of theology and the Lord's theophany on the mountain (Mercati, Notizie, 22–3); and (iv) a dogmatic anti-Palamite florilegium quoted by John Cantacuzenus (Voordecker and Tinnefeld, Refutationes, 109–12).
libellus, to Jakovos Tricanas denouncing the honouring of Palamas as a saint which so infuriated the Athonites that a local council was held, presided over by the bishop of Hierissos and the Holy Mountain, which anathematized Prochoros as an incorrigible heretic. When the patriarch received the council's report, together with a copy of Prochoros's pittakion, he decided that the matter had to be brought as soon as possible before the 'holy and great synod' of metropolitans and bishops resident at the capital. Up to this point Philotheos had been hoping to deal with the affair himself on an administrative level. Events now forced him to initiate a legal process.

The synod met in the spring of 1368. Philotheos presided and also led the interrogation of Prochoros. In response to the charge of heresy, Prochoros blamed the whole matter on the malice of the Lavriotes. He denied any intention of departing from the teaching of the church and, calling for his works to be produced and examined, declared: 'I stand by these writings of mine. If anyone wishes to dispute them let him come forward and propose solutions to the difficulties they raise.' At the proposal of Philotheos, the works were produced and the public reading of them was begun. Philotheos's account of the proceedings picks out some of the highlights. The first important difficulty was the temporary nature of the disciples' experience of the Transfiguration. Prochoros said that the light shining from the face of Christ was similar to that which had shone from the face of Moses. It came and went. It was not rooted in the divine essence 'but was attributed to the divinity through the divine soul'. It was therefore divine only in a manner of speaking. To this Philotheos replied that the glory of Moses was something external to him but the glory of Christ was not: it was from the ineffable Word within. When we contemplate it with an unveiled face, we are transformed into Christ's image, advancing from glory to glory. An external or accidental attribute could not do this. The light of his glory had to be divine in a full and proper sense.

A further reading from Prochoros's writings raised another important difficulty. If at the Judgement both the just and the wicked will see the

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35 Synodal Tome, 704A; cf. the passages quoted at 708AB and 710D–711A.
36 Synodal Tome, 704C.
37 This provoked a furious protest from Demetrios, who wrote warning Philotheos that he was breaking the condition on which he had been restored to the patriarchate (for his second term in 1364), that is, not to persecute the anti-Palamites (Loenertz, Correspondance I, 165.17–27; Mercati, Notizie, 293.14–19).
38 Demetrios Cydones berates him for acting as prosecutor, judge and jury (Mercati, Notizie, 297.38–42).
39 Synodal Tome, 705B.
40 Synodal Tome, 706A.
glory of Christ, how can it be divine? For seeing implies participation, and if the wicked saw the divine glory they would become participants in divinity. In support of this view Prochoros quotes from Augustine’s De Trinitate in the Greek translation of Maximus Planudes.41 In his response Philotheos disagreed with Prochoros’s interpretation. The wicked will see the Lord not in the divine glory that is common to the trihypostatic godhead, which shone in the face of Christ, but in a different glory, his glory as the judge of the living and the dead.42 It is interesting to see the patriarch and the hieromonk disputing the correct interpretation of St Augustine in a solemn session of the holy and great synod. Had Philotheos checked the reference in the De Trinitate? It must be admitted that he had understood Augustine correctly.

Then at Philotheos’s proposal the synod moved on to an examination of Prochoros’s pittakion and the report of the Hagiorites. Passages were read from the pittakion to show that in writing to his community Prochoros had claimed that he had received support from the emperor and the patriarch and that they believed that he had been treated badly by the Lavriotes.43 That Prochoros had received imperial support, at least informally, may well have been true. He is likely to have lodged with his brother at the palace, and John V was no friend of the hesychasts.44 Patriarchal support, however, was another matter. Prochoros had made his claim on the basis of his having given the patriarch two of his treatises a couple of months previously and not having received any contradiction.45 But Philotheos was incensed. The pittakion, in his view, was a pack of lies. It maintained precisely the opposite of what Prochoros had been saying to him previously. Moreover, it made the astonishing claim that the synod was against the Athonites. According to Prochoros, he had shown the synod a confession of faith drawn up by Tricanas (addressed by the abbot to Demetrius Cydones), and the synod had found ‘only’ four heresies in it, namely, that human beings become gods in a literal sense, that the prophets saw God in reality and truth, not typologically or symbolically, that the light of Tabor was not both created and uncreated, and that God’s energy was seen as light. ‘That is why, my Lord Abbot,’ Prochoros concluded, ‘your Holiness is upbraided as a heretic together

41 Synodal Tome, 707B, quoting De Trinitate I, XIII, 28.23–7 (Papathomopoulos, Tsavari and Rigotti, Peri Triados, I, 103). Polemis notes that the Tome ‘shortens the quotation to the disadvantage of the opponent’ (Theophanes, 77 n. 23).
42 Synodal Tome, 707D.
43 Synodal Tome, 708A.
44 At the time of the trial the emperor (conveniently for Philotheos) was away in Hungary seeking help against the Turks.
45 Synodal Tome, 708B.
with the whole monastery — not because of me. And the pit you have dug for me you have fallen into yourselves.  

This was a libel on the holy synod, said Philotheos. The synod had certainly not met, unless Prochoros called a ‘synod’ those of his own persuasion whom he had consulted. Then Philotheos read out the original Athonite text on which Prochoros had commented. Of the four so-called heresies, it was Tricanas’s anathematization of the novel view that the light of Tabor was both created and uncreated that particularly drew his attention. He cross-examined Prochoros closely on it:

PHILOTHEOS: With regard to the divine light, how can one and the same thing be both created and uncreated?

PROCHOROS: Because Christ is uncreated and created. Just as he is twofold, that is, God and man, so too the light which shone from the created and uncreated Christ must itself be created and uncreated.

PHILOTHEOS: But Christ is composite (synthetos) from deity and humanity, and since for this reason both of the idiomata are preserved, he is created and uncreated; but that light is one and belongs to Christ’s divinity, or rather is the radiance and illumination of the trihypostatic divinity, not of the flesh. Nor does the flesh possess light in its own right. So how can the light be both uncreated and created?

PROCHOROS: But I understand the light to be Christ himself, the only-begotten Son of God along with our humanity which he assumed. That is why I say it is both uncreated and created.

PHILOTHEOS: So, then, in your writings read out a little earlier, where you tried to maintain that that light was only created, you were referring to Christ himself, the only-begotten Son of God who became man for our sake. You were saying that in your view he was only created, not created and uncreated. Why, then, should we exclude only Arius when you blasphemously agree with him, or rather, when what you say is far worse and more absurd? You can’t deny that you said this. Your writings clearly demonstrate it.

PROCHOROS: [No reply].

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46 Synodal Tome, 708D–709A.
47 There were other dissident groups in Constantinople apart from the circle of Demetrius Cydones and the former pupils of Nicephorus Gregoras. A synod of clergy connected with Arsenios of Tyre, meeting at the Hodgoi monastery in about 1370, formally condemned the teaching of Palamas. See J. Darrouzès, ‘Lettre inédite de Jean Cantacuzène relative à la controverse palamite’, REB 17 (1959), 7–27.
48 Synodal Tome, 709BCD.
50 Cf. Synodal Tome, 707A.
51 Synodal Tome, 710AB. I have rendered the reported speech of the Tome as dramatic dialogue.
Philothoe's rested his case. After evidence was produced at some
length of the cult rendered to Gregory Palamas in various places, each of
the assembled metropolitans and bishops was asked his verdict. All found
Prochoros's writings heretical – worse than those of Barlaam and
Acindynus – and recommended his excommunication and deposition
from the priesthood.\textsuperscript{52} Prochoros asked for a day's adjournment to reflect
on the matter and prepare a defence, which was granted. But when the
synod was reconvened, he refused to appear. After the canonical two
summonses by the Great Church's legal officers, he was declared
obdurate and sentence was confirmed. In their statement the bishops said
that Prochoros, having stated that the flesh assumed by the Word was not
without sin, had propounded an entirely new heresy.\textsuperscript{53} Their \textit{psephos} was
drawn up and signed by the patriarch, six metropolitans and three
bishops in April 1368. On the reverse, the patriarchs of Alexandria and
Jerusalem, who were present in Constantinople but had been unable to
attend the council, also added their signatures, as did a number of
officials of the Great Church and other important ecclesiastics.\textsuperscript{54}

\textbf{The theological response}

Prochoros was formally condemned.\textsuperscript{55} But as Philothoe's had said, views
which had been committed to writing had to be refuted in writing. The
decision of the synod needed to be followed up by a more detailed
answer to Prochoros.\textsuperscript{56} Philothoe's had already written at length against
Gregoras and was probably too busy with ecclesiastical affairs to take up
the burden of a formal refutation himself. The task fell to two prominent
leaders of the Palamite party, the former emperor, John Cantacuzenus,
and the metropolitan of Nicaea, Theophanes.\textsuperscript{57} Both were well qualified to
answer Prochoros. Not only were they able theologians but through the

\textsuperscript{52} Synodal Tome, 712D.
\textsuperscript{53} Synodal Tome, 715A. Cf. the anathematization of Prochoros read out in Thessalonica
on the Sunday of Orthodoxy (Mercati, \textit{Notizie}, 60–1).
\textsuperscript{54} There was no signatory from the patriarchate of Antioch, which was preoccupied at
this time with its own troubles. It was in about 1368 that the anti-Palamite Arsenios of Tyre
seized the Antiochian throne (see Darrouzès, \textit{Lettre inédite}, 10–11).
\textsuperscript{55} He seems not to have been banished (cf. Demetrius's Letter 39 to him written from
Rome in 1370, Loenertz, \textit{Correspondance}, I, 72.4–10), an indication, perhaps, that the sentence
did not receive imperial confirmation.
\textsuperscript{56} The fact that Prochoros continued to reside in Constantinople engaged in study and
writing would have made a response doubly pressing.
\textsuperscript{57} For biographical studies see D.M. Nicol, \textit{The Reluctant Emperor: A Biography of John
Cantacuzenes, Byzantine Emperor and Monk}, c. 1295–1383 (Cambridge: Cambridge University
translations of Demetrius Cydones they were also acquainted with Thomas Aquinas.\textsuperscript{58}

John Cantacuzenus – since his abdication in 1354 the monk Joasaph, but still referred to as the emperor – was the first to respond. His two refutations of Prochoros were completed by the summer of 1369, and his copyist, Manuel Tzycandyles, was set to work producing copies for distribution.\textsuperscript{59} Ironically, Cantacuzenus has done more than anybody to preserve the memory of Prochoros’s work. He refutes him in the traditional way, working systematically through his text and quoting long passages verbatim, following each with his response. The work he focused on, as indeed the synod had done, was Book VI of \textit{On Essence and Energy}, the treatise on the light of Tabor. Almost the whole of \textit{Refutation I} is devoted to answering this work.\textsuperscript{60} \textit{Refutation II} comments on Prochoros’s fourteen arguments for the identity of essence and energy in God.\textsuperscript{61}

In spite of the synod’s unanimous verdict, Prochoros’s \textit{aporiae} made the hesychasts look carefully again at the whole question of how human beings can participate in the divine. Cantacuzenus’s treatment of the theme falls under two headings, first the understanding of the concept of light, and secondly the problem of the eschatological vision of light.\textsuperscript{62}

For Prochoros ‘light’ is an analogous term expressing the idea of divine causality. Just as light enables the eye to see, so God is the cause of knowledge in every rational and spiritual nature. The notion that the light of Tabor is some kind of separate entity in God’s \textit{ousia} is the result of a category error – endowing homonyms such as light, life, wisdom and goodness each with a distinct reality. It is this which leads to the invention of energies in God in which human beings can participate. Deified Christians, in Prochoros’s view, are simply gods by analogy.


\textsuperscript{59} Five copies, dating from summer 1369 to June 1370 are known to have been made by Tzycandyles (Paris gr. 1241, Vat. gr. 673, Vat. gr. 674, Mosc. gr. 143, and Meteora Hagias Triados 1). For the full list of MSS see Voordecker and Tinnefeld, \textit{Refutationes}, XLV–LXV.

\textsuperscript{60} He also cites the \textit{Refutation of the Tome of 1351}, at Ref. I, 6 (Voordecker and Tinnefeld, \textit{Refutationes}, 9–10).

\textsuperscript{61} This otherwise unknown work of Prochoros is quoted at Ref. II, 1 (Voordecker and Tinnefeld, \textit{Refutationes}, 109–12).

John Cantacuzenus denies this vigorously: 'O the impudence! O the shamelessness! O the madness!'\textsuperscript{63} He objects to Prochoros's concluding from 'I am the life' (Jn 14:6) that 'life' is the ousia of God. If that were so, the way, the vine and the resurrection would also be God's essence. These things are not essences but are about the essence.\textsuperscript{64} Each name implies the rest, but this does not give rise to any confusion because although all refer to God, each retains its own meaning. The hesychasts therefore do not endow the various homonyms with a distinct reality. They stand for the whole Christ as the cause of all life. 'We are not deceived in calling "light" the radiance that appeared in the Lord's face on Tabor,' John concludes. 'But in calling it "light" we conceive of it as transcending light and, following the theologians, call it "divinity" and "kingdom of God" and "natural characteristic" (idiōma physikon), as of the hypostasis of the Word and Son of God, and inaccessible to angels and timeless.'\textsuperscript{65} For there are no divisions within God.

On the question of the eschatological vision of God, Prochoros initiates a debate on how God will be seen: in reality (pragmati) or in the imagination (en tēi phantasiai).\textsuperscript{66} Drawing perhaps on St Augustine, he distinguishes between the historical ancestral sin (hē propatarikē hamartia) and the sin which is common to all nature (hē koinē tēs physeōs hamartia).\textsuperscript{67} Christ came to release humanity from both natural and ancestral sin. That is why he assumed human nature rather than a particular human being. He was able to transform this nature morally because there was nothing in his logos that was disobedient to God. Accordingly, the righteousness of Christ was twofold, not only common to human nature but also personal to him (idia autou). Insofar as it is common, all will rise again, the wicked along with the virtuous. But not all will rise in Christ's personal glory.\textsuperscript{68} In God's house there are many mansions. God will be seen differently, according to how well the powers of the soul have been subjected to the mind and those of the body to the soul (which attains natural righteousness), and how well each person has lived the moral life (which attains personal righteousness).\textsuperscript{69}

This leads Prochoros to a consideration of the eschatological deification of the just. Is theosis to be regarded as pertaining to God, or as a qualitative change in man? Prochoros defines theosis, in the Dionysian

\textsuperscript{63} Voordekkers and Tinnefeld, Ref. I, 36.1.
\textsuperscript{65} Voordekkers and Tinnefeld, Ref. I, 39.12–22.
\textsuperscript{66} Candal, 'El libro VI', 276.2–4.
\textsuperscript{67} Candal, 'El libro VI', 276.28–278.2.
\textsuperscript{68} Candal, 'El libro VI', 278.26–32.
\textsuperscript{69} Candal, 'El libro VI', 278.19–23.
manner, as ‘the movement by which we become gods’, that is to say, a change that takes place not in God but in us.\textsuperscript{70} It is therefore not uncreated. Even if theosis is not the process but the goal – to peras tès kinēseōs – it is still not uncreated.\textsuperscript{71} What has come about as a result of movement or change belongs to the contingent order. But if theosis is that which brings about the change in us, then it is uncreated and is nothing other than God himself. The theosis of the theoumenoi is thus twofold: both the cause, which is the divine essence and the effect, which is the raising of the mind towards that which truly exists (hè anaphora pros ta onta).\textsuperscript{72} These divine ascents are not pragmata but logoi only.

In reply Cantacuzenus denies that the ancestral sin is physikê – that it permeates human nature. For him sin is purely a matter of the will. It is not nature, he says, that is evil but deeds. Adam may have been expelled from Paradise, but everyone in the Old Testament who kept the commandments received forgiveness. The coming of the Saviour broke the power of Hades, dissolving ancestral sin not as natural sin but as volitional sin.\textsuperscript{73} The flesh and its impulses can be contained. And evidence of this is the fact that the saints who have purified themselves of passion have attained apatheia.\textsuperscript{74} They are sanctified by God, who makes them ‘partakers of the divine nature’ (2 Pet. 1:4). The well-known christological image of the red-hot iron can be applied to creatures who are raised to the life of God. ‘Without departing from its nature,’ says Cantacuzenus, ‘the fire communicates its energies to the iron. So too the divine and blessed nature, without abandoning its own inner unity and simplicity, sends out its own natural energies and makes us kings and lords and gods.’\textsuperscript{75}

This is a statement consistent with traditional ascetic theology. For a more innovative approach we need to turn to Theophanes of Nicaea.\textsuperscript{76} Theophanes was absent from Constantinople in 1368 on a mission to Serbia.\textsuperscript{77} He did not attend the council, but having chaired the commission that had examined Prochoros’s writings he was fully appraised of his views. In his Five Discourses on the Light of Tabor, written between 1369 and

\textsuperscript{70} Candal, ‘El libro VI’, 288.2–3; cf. Ps.-Dionysius, EH I, 2, 367A, 373A.

\textsuperscript{71} Candal, ‘El libro VI’, 288.8–9.

\textsuperscript{72} Candal, ‘El libro VI’, 290.2.

\textsuperscript{73} Voordecker and Tinefeld, Ref. I, 56.3–7.

\textsuperscript{74} Voordecker and Tinefeld, Ref. I, 57.63–5.

\textsuperscript{75} Voordecker and Tinefeld, Ref. I, 46.85–9.

\textsuperscript{76} On Theophanes see the excellent monograph of I.D. Polemis (bibliographical details in note 18). I am now persuaded by Polemis that Theophanes was much closer to the Palamite leadership than was formerly thought. Theophanes’ principal theological work has been edited by Ch. Sotiropoulos, Theophanous III episkopou Nikaias Peri Thabóriou Phōtios logoi pente (Athens, 1990).

\textsuperscript{77} Demetrius Cydones commends his sensible attitude (Mercati, Notizie, 322.321–4), but in fact he was away on official ecclesiastical business (cf. Polemis, Theophanes, 27).
1376, the sets out to answer the chief difficulties raised by Prochoros. His method is therefore different from that of John Cantacuzenus. Instead of working systematically through his opponent's text, he begins each discourse with an aporia. All of these relate to the central problem of how human beings participate in the divine. The two knottiest, with which the Discourses open and conclude, are: (i) If the Last Supper was more important than the Transfiguration, or at least of equal importance to it, why was Judas admitted to the former but excluded from the latter? (ii) If the light of Tabor is the divine glory which is visible only to the worthy after they have been spiritually transformed, how is it that Nebuchadnezzar saw the light of divinity with the three children in the furnace (cf. Dan. 3:19)?

In his response Theophanes develops Palamite teaching in a number of ways. To explain how Judas was excluded from the Transfiguration but admitted to the Last Supper he makes a distinction between participation (metousia) and communion (koinônia). Participation is a relationship between two subjects. Communion presupposes at least two subjects which participate in a third. Hippocrates and Galen, for example, each participate in medicine, becoming hen hypokeimenon with it (that is, acquiring some kind of identity with it) and thus also sharing in communion with each other. Theophanes applies this principle to our participation in God. On the basis that the participant becomes hen hypokeimenon with that in which he or she participates, he argues that we cannot participate in God's ousia, for to become one with the divine essence would make us homoousioi with God, which is impossible. We must participate in God's energy or glory. It is thus that we enter into immediate union with him and become gods by grace. The vision of the light of Tabor represents direct participation by grace in God's energy and glory. Judas was necessarily excluded from this. With regard to the eucharist, however, our participation in the divine is mediated through the symbols of bread and wine. Such participation is no less real, for Christ deified the flesh which he assumed through the hypostatic union and transmits it to us in the eucharist no longer as simple human flesh but as deified flesh. When we share in it with the right disposition, we share

78 The termini are provided by (i) the quotation of a passage from the Tome of 1368, and (ii) an indication that Philotheos, who died in 1376, was still alive. For a discussion of the dating see Polemis, Theophanes, 71–5.

79 Prochoros is never mentioned by name but Polemis has proved conclusively that it is Prochoros whom Theophanes seeks to refute (Theophanes, 74–82).

80 Sotiropoulos, Theophanous 1.79–105.

81 Sotiropoulos, Theophanous 5.8–29.

82 Sotiropoulos, Theophanous 1.264–5.

83 Sotiropoulos, Theophanous 1.332.
in Christ's divinity and are therefore deified ourselves and made gods by grace. But we share in it through symbols which are efficacious only for the worthy, which is why Judas could be admitted to the Last Supper.

What, then, was the status of the light seen by the disciples on Mount Tabor? Was it really existent (hyphestós) or merely the product of the mind's image-making (psilë phantasia)? Like Palamas, Theophanes holds that no one can see the light by nature. To enjoy the divine light one must have been changed in an appropriate way by the Holy Spirit. In that case, how did Nebuchadnezzar see the light? The answer is that when the mind remains wicked and impure, it receives the divine light and is changed, but the change is not from God. Only the imagination and senses of the wicked are affected. Indeed the divine light is experienced by the wicked as the fire of punishment. In his analysis Theophanes draws on Aquinas' tripartite division of knowledge attained on the level of the senses, the imagination and the intellect. Sinners, such as Nebuchadnezzar or the wicked at the Last Judgement, experience the divine light on the lower levels of the senses and the imagination, but their intellects remain in utter darkness. The treatise closes with Judas. He did not experience the light of Tabor because simply to have contemplated it on the sensory level would have been meaningless. On the other hand he was able to touch the flesh of the Saviour because this was a natural operation of the senses.

It is just possible that Prochoros may have read Cantacuzenus's Refutations (Demetrius did and was infuriated by them), but he is unlikely to have seen Theophanes' Discourses, for shortly after 1370 he suddenly died. His death greatly distressed his brother. There is no reason, however, to assume that he had followed him into the Latin church. To the end of his life Prochoros believed he was defending orthodoxy against innovators. Certainly his stand on deification, drawing on the Cappadocians, whose emphasis, like his, is on its ethical and analogous aspects, and on Ps.-Dionysius, who restricts his use of the technical language of theosis to the intellectual reception of symbols, has a

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84 Sотиropoulos, Theopanous 1.630–32: communion in the divine flesh = participation in the divine grace present within it = attaining likeness to God insofar as possible.
86 Polemis, Theopanous, 100–4.
87 Sотиropoulos, Theopanous 5.525–30.
88 Letter 400.4–6 (Loenertz, Correspondance II, 355).
89 Pace Candal, 'El libro VI', 257.
respectable Greek pedigree. His use of Augustine and Thomas Aquinas in support of this approach is striking. But although his appeal to Latin authorities and his adoption of the scholastic method of argumentation give his writings a foreign air, he does not argue from a western standpoint. His opponents too, though in a more discreet way, drew on the Latin insights made available through the translations of Maximus Planudes and Demetrius Cydones. The fundamental difference between the two sides is indicated, rather, by their attitude to Maximus the Confessor. Maximus is the Palamites’ single most important authority. His account of how the Spirit raises us up to God, so that as the human and the divine interpenetrate we lay hold of immortality and immutability, lies behind all their spiritual teaching. Prochoros, by contrast, appeals very infrequently to Maximus. The tradition he is at home in is altogether more Platonist and intellectualist. Yet he does not make use of the Platonic concept of participation, relying instead on the category of analogy.

If Prochoros had not antagonized the hesychast establishment or attacked the cult of Palamas so bitterly, he might have been allowed to live in peace. For in the end it was not his views on essence and energy or on the vision of the divine light that provoked his condemnation, but the christological implications of his exegesis of the Transfiguration. His sharp divide between the human and the divine in Christ proved to be his Achilles’ heel. We do not find in his writings any reference to the communicatio idiomatum, the Chalcedonian doctrine that what can be predicated of Christ’s divine nature can also be predicated of his human nature and vice versa without confusion. The divine and the human sit together somewhat uneasily in his christology. Philotheos seems to have sensed this very early in the affair. Hence the reading list which included the Acts of the Sixth Ecumenical Council. Until the clampdown on anti-hesychasts ordered by the Patriarch Antony IV in the last decade of the fourteenth century, orthodoxy in the Palaeologan period was more accommodating than might appear at first sight. But any apparent wavering on the fundamental doctrines of Christ was not to be tolerated.

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91 R.-J. Loenertz, Correspondance de Manuel Calécas, ST 152 (Vatican: Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, 1950), 23–6. The action against the anti-hesychasts, as Ch. Dendrinos has recently shown, was taken at the express wish of the Emperor Manuel II Palaeologus, who was alarmed at the level of Latin proselytisation (‘Hē epistolē tou autokratoros Manouēl B’ Palaiologou pros ton Alexio Iagoup kai hoi antilēpseis peri tēs spoudēs tēs theologias kai tōn scheseōn Ekklesiās kai Politeias’, Philosophia Analecta 1 [2001], 58–74, esp. 67–8).
Section II: Orthodoxy in art and liturgy
In the beginning was the Word: Art and Orthodoxy at the Councils of Trullo (692) and Nicaea II (787)

Leslie Brubaker

In terms of art and Orthodoxy, in the beginning there was no word at all: the earliest canonical legislation dealing with images dates to 691–2 and was proposed by the Quinisext Council (Council in Trullo). The Trullan Council did not focus on art, but three canons dealt in one way or another with images.

Canons 73 and 82 concern the status of symbolic representations. The first of these decreed that ‘signs of the cross’ should not decorate the floor ‘in order that the trophy of our victory may not be insulted by the trampling feet of those who walk upon it’. Anna Kartsonis reads this as part of a seventh-century movement ‘to enlist art officially in the service of the church’, and she is of course right. But the interest in the cross, specifically, is also significant. It is precisely in the seventh century that the anti-heretical dialogues and polemics begin to insert references to the cross, and start to defend its veneration. In these dialogues, a Jew or, later and less often, a Muslim condemns the Christian adoration of the cross as idolatry; the Christian responds that he is not worshipping the wood, but is glorifying Christ through the ‘life-saving’ cross. The anti-Muslim dialogues are more concerned with the Islamic belief that a likeness of Christ, not Christ himself, died on the cross; and here the Christian defends both the veneration of the cross and the reality of Christ’s death

5 Discussion in Corrigan, Visual Polemics, 40–41.

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(with, sometimes, an aside explaining that Christ died on the cross so that there were many witnesses – in contrast to Mohammed, whose revelation from God was seen by no one). In the context of these dialogues, we may see the cross as taking on special importance in the seventh century, and it is that importance that Canon 73 defends, promotes and protects.

Canon 82 is more radical. A major theme of Byzantine texts in the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries is the importance of tradition as the ultimate authority. No matter what side of what conflict one was on, the argument was framed in the same way – tradition validated practice. Canon 82 does not claim this. Unlike any other text of the period, Canon 82 explicitly requires artisans and viewers to reject the past.

The first section of the Canon describes the images in question: 'In some depictions of the venerable images, the Forerunner [John the Baptist] is portrayed pointing with his finger to a lamb …'

The Canon then explains what this means: '… and this has been accepted as a representation of grace, prefiguring for us through the law the true Lamb, Christ our God'. The image is legitimate; it has been accepted, and the author of the Canon is not going to tell his audience to destroy tradition.

Instead, the Canon continues: 'Venerating, then, these ancient representations and foreshadowings as symbols and prefigurations of truth handed down by the Church, nevertheless, we prefer grace and truth, which we have received as fulfilment of the law'. In other words, the Canon draws a line under the symbolic representation of Christ as a lamb: this was acceptable, but is not any longer the 'truth' (now, 'we prefer grace and truth').

'Therefore [the Canon continues], in order that what is perfect, even in paintings, may be portrayed before the eyes of all, we decree that henceforth the figure of the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, Christ our God, should be set forth in images in human form, instead of the ancient lamb …'. The old (the 'ancient') is rejected; the new, perfect image portrays Christ in human form, for, the Canon concludes: '… in this way we apprehend the depth of the humility of the Word of God, and are led to the remembrance of his life in the flesh, his passion and his saving death, and of the redemption which thereby came to the world'. In other words, Christ in human form – the incarnate Christ –

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An emphasis on the reality of Christ's human nature links into the Christological controversies of the seventh century, and its expression in Canon 82 plays to this concern. Canon 82 fits neatly, as well, into the assimilation of the cult of images into the cult of relics, which began around 670 – that is, about 20 years before the Council in Trullo. In the last third of the seventh century, a number of authors – ranging from Anastasios of Sinai, to Steven of Bostra and the pilgrim Adamnan – start to refer to panel portraits (icons) as if the person depicted was truly present in the image (just as, from the fourth century on, a saint was truly present in his or her relics). Images now, and not before, moved from being commemorative signs (symbols) to real presences. This is the same shift – from symbol to human reality – that Canon 82 records with respect to Christ. Twenty years on, theory follows practice. Canon 82 is also, of course, the basis for the classic Iconophile justification of religious portraiture developed in the eighth century; that is: Christ's incarnation meant that he was visible to humans; what is visible may be depicted; to deny images of Christ is to deny the incarnation.

These social and theological issues contextualise Canon 82. The importance of the Canon is, however, best brought out by its format. The rejection of ancient tradition expressed here is extraordinary: that the Trullan churchmen were willing to take this radical step indicates the immense importance of portraying Christ in human rather than in symbolic form. Why?

Canons 73 and 82 deal with Christian signs, one of which (the cross) was acceptable, while the other (the lamb) was not. This was because, unlike the lamb, the cross existed: it was the most important relic in Christendom. While its depictions functioned as signs of Christ and of Christ's death, they were also images of an existing relic. In contrast, the symbolic representation of Christ as a lamb was a visualisation of a figure of speech, John the Baptist's exclamation 'Behold the lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world' (John 1:29). To the churchmen at the Quinisext Council, the historical reality of the Orthodox past was more critical than the preservation of Christian symbols. This new attitude developed, in part, in response to a new pressure on the church, Islam.

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11 This point has been developed by, among others, J-M. Santerre, 'La parole, le texte et l'image selon les auteurs byzantins des époques Iconoclaste et posticonoclaste', Testo e immagine nell'alto medioevo, Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo 41 (1994), 197–240, at 208–9.
we have seen, the Orthodox were concerned to defend Christ’s real
human death, as opposed to the Islamic argument that a ‘likeness’ of
Christ died on the cross. To counter the claims of Islam, it was essential
that the Trullan churchmen validated the reality of Christ’s death, so
essential that they were willing to sacrifice tradition to do so.

Canon 100 pursues a somewhat different tack. It instructs ‘that those
things which incite pleasures are not to be portrayed on panels’. After a
paraphrased citation of Proverbs 4:23–25, it reads: ‘... for the sensations of
the body all too easily influence the soul. Therefore, we command that
henceforth absolutely no pictures should be drawn which enchant the
eyes, be they on panels or set forth in any other wise, corrupting the mind
and inciting the flames of shameful pleasures’. The standard excom-
munication formula follows.

Three issues are significant here. First, the Canon is concerned with
issues of corruption and purity, and the negotiation of power
relationships, that underlie many of the social tensions of the seventh and
eighth centuries; on this level, the churchmen used words about images to
talk about something else entirely. By the end of the seventh century,
Orthodoxy can use art as a metaphor; responses to art have been
assimilated into larger responses to the social fabric. Second, the Council
distinguished between types of images: good and bad. This is the same
theme that was the concern of Canon 82, where a portrait of Christ was
preferred to the symbolic lamb. Both Canons demonstrate that, for the
first time in Orthodox history, images were important enough to legislate
about. Third, corrupting images are those that incite pleasure. Good art,
orthodox art, has a different purpose, though it is only in writings of the
eighth century that we learn that this is to elicit the tears of purifying
sanctity, and to induce the emulation of saintly virtues.12

The relationship between art and Orthodoxy as expressed by the
Council of Trullo was, then, two-fold. For the first time, representation
was sufficiently important to the church that legislation about it was
drafted. This legislation provides the earliest indication of the
development of a Byzantine theory of images, a theology of icons.
Through its concern to restrict the use of representations to communicate
real presence (Christ as human, not as lamb), the Council in Trullo
legitimised the assimilation of the cult of images into the cult of relics.
That assimilation remains fundamental to Greek Orthodoxy.

The Second Council of Nicaea in 787, which temporarily restored the
veneration of images after the first phase of what we call Iconoclasm (the

12 See, e.g., Brubaker, Vision and Meaning, 19–58.
Byzantines, more accurately, usually called it Iconomachy, the 'image struggle'), elaborates at length on the real presence of saints, Christ, and the Virgin Mary in relics and, to a lesser extent, icons. The Council in Trullo legitimised the idea, but Nicaea II – ably seconded by John of Damascus – essentially created the theology of images as it is known today. But this does not mean that, after 787 (or even after the so-called Triumph of Orthodoxy in 843), images superseded relics as agents of intercession or as channels of access to divinity.

As Marie-France Auzépy has already observed, the Acts of the 787 Council attribute far more miracles to saints and their relics than to icons. Similarly, John of Damascus devoted a section of On the Holy Images to a discussion of relative worship, and gave first place to the Theotokos and the saints, noting the healing power of 'even handkerchiefs and aprons touched to them': contact relics, in other words, sat at the top of John's hierarchy. Saints' lives and miracle collections from the years of Iconoclasm attribute healings and miracles to the physical charisma of the saint at the tomb, in dreams or visions, or through the medium of holy oil sanctified by divine presence at the saint's shrine: even in the most pro-image of texts, healing is usually affected by the saint working through relics rather than through icons. For example, the panegyric on Theophanes the Confessor written by Theodore of Stoudion around 822, which includes a lengthy profession of the Iconophile position, does not mention images in connection with healings.

\[\text{\textsuperscript{13}}\text{The bibliography on Nicaea II, John of Damascus, and Byzantine attitudes toward imagery is voluminous. For an excellent overview, see M.-F. Auzépy, 'L'iconodoule: Défense de l'image ou de la dévotion à l'image?', in F. Boespflug, ed. and N. Lossky, Nícée II 787–1987, Douze siècles d'images religieuses (Paris : Cerf, 1987), 157–165. For part of the Council in translation, see D.J. Sahas, Icon and Logos: Sources in Eighth-century Iconoclasm, Toronto Medieval Texts and Translations 4 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986); and, for discussion and additional bibliography, Brubaker, Vision and Meaning, 19–58.}\]


\[\text{\textsuperscript{16}}\text{Interestingly, the first version of the Life of Peter of Atroa (d. 837) does not mention relics, but the second, written as the cult developed, does: M. Kaplan, 'De la dépouille à la relique: formation du culte des saints à Byzance du Ve au XIIe siècle', in E. Bozóky, ed. and A-M. Helvetius, Les reliques: objets, cultes, symbols (Turnout: Brepols, 1999), 19–38, at 23. This same source tells us that Prokopia, wife of Michael I, asked for a relic of James of Athos: M.-F. Auzépy, 'Miracle et économie à Byzance (VIIe–IXe siècles)', in D. Aigle, ed., Miracle et Karama. Hagiographies médiévales comparées, Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des hautes etudes sciences religieuses 109 (Turnhout : Brepols, 2001), 331–51, at 347.}\]
but attributes them to oil from a sanctified lamp and to contact with the saint's tomb.\textsuperscript{17}

A number of sources maintain that the Iconoclasts were opposed to the cult of relics. Theophanes, for example, claims of Leo III that 'Not only was the impious man in error concerning the relative worship of the holy icons, but also concerning the intercession of the all-pure Theotokos and all the saints, and he abominated their relics like his mentors, the Arabs.'\textsuperscript{18} At best, this is an overstatement: the benefits of intercession were in fact affirmed by the Iconoclast council of 754, and, in its many recitals of the wrongs of the anti-image faction, the Iconophile council of 787 never accused them of relic destruction.\textsuperscript{19} Further, we know that Leo V, who reinstated Iconoclasm in 815, sent relics to Venice; as, earlier, those in Zadar were said to have been sent by Nikephoros I (802–811).\textsuperscript{20} There is, in short, no contemporary evidence that the Iconoclast emperors were opposed to intercession, or that they destroyed relics.

The 787 Council also, however, castigated the Iconoclasts for consecrating churches without relics and, for the first time, made the earlier but unregulated tradition of placing relics in altars canonical.\textsuperscript{21} The issue was current: writing at about the same time, the author of the Barberini \textit{euchologion} presented the oldest known instructions for the use of relics in the dedication ceremonies of a new church.\textsuperscript{22} In the last quarter of the eighth century, it was evidently important to codify the role of relics in church settings. The evidence is complicated, but Auzépy's recent attempt to disentangle it is compelling. She argues that the Iconoclasts, in their quest for religious purity – which is, after all, one of the guiding tenets of

\textsuperscript{17} Paragraph 17: S. Efthymiadis, ed., 'Le panégyrique de S Théophane le confesseur par S Théodore Stoudite (BHG 1792b)', \textit{Analecta Bollandiana} 111 (1993), 259–90, at 282–83.


\textsuperscript{22} Discussion in Auzépy, 'Les Isauriens et l'espace sacré', 15–17.
the period – disapproved of relics in altars because the presence of saints polluted the sanctity of the Trinity to whom the altar was dedicated. Inevitably, the Iconophiles reacted against this, and, following a familiar pattern, recast the Iconoclasts' attempt to purify the consecrated space of the altar in negative terms by portraying them as opposed to relics and the intercession of saints.

This discussion of the relationship between icons and relics has taken us away from the topic of art and Orthodoxy. To conclude on a visual note, after Nicaea II, the canonically sanctioned role of religious images remained relatively stable throughout the remaining centuries of Byzantium's existence. Their actual use was less circumscribed, as we shall see in the following two chapters.

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25 Auzépy, 'Les Isauriens et l'espace sacré'. The rediscovery of the relics of St Euphemia during the reign of Eirene fed into the Iconophile rhetoric: see ibid., 18; Gero, Constantine V, 155–163; and Wortley, 'Iconoclasm and leipsanoclasm', 274–278. For a different interpretation, see G. Dagron, 'L'ombre d'un doute: l'hagiographie en question, VIe-XIe siècle', DOP 46 (1992), 59–68, at 65.
... and the Word was with God ... What makes art Orthodox?

Liz James

In considering the question of the relationship between Orthodoxy and art, Church Councils form an important starting point. Iconoclasm and the Union of the Churches form two points where it is possible to see doctrine and art coming close. The work of Hans Belting on the Man of Sorrows, and Henry Maguire, in particular, has shown how homilies might influence church decoration in the so-called Middle Byzantine period, but finding any direct influence of issues such as the Filioque dispute on art is less obvious.¹ However, maintaining the theme of councils, I wish to turn to one particular passage in the decrees of the Seventh Ecumenical Council, Nicaea II, and to consider what its effect on Orthodox art and the orthodoxy of art might have been.

The Second Council of Nicaea in 787, in restoring the place of images in religious worship after the period of Iconoclasm, stated that 'The making of icons is not the invention of painters, but [expresses] the approved legislation of the Catholic church ... The conception and the tradition [of painting, that is] belong to the [Holy Fathers of the church] and not the painter; for the painter's domain is limited to his art whereas the disposition manifestly pertains to the Holy Fathers'.²

What does this tell us about the relationship between the church and art or artists after Iconoclasm? Art historians have tended to take this statement made by the council as a general statement of the church's


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control over artists, even going so far as to see it as confirming an official censorship of art in Byzantium on the part of the church. The church prescribed the content of art, and artists were reliant on these prescriptions and prohibitions. In this way, art historians have argued that the Seventh Council decreed that, after Iconoclasm, the Church chose the content of art, and the artist was simply the vehicle to carry out this representation. Thus little is known about who made Orthodox art because, actually, it was the preserve of the church. This interpretation of the Council’s decree is also one that has also fostered the idea that there was a simple division between iconography, what was shown, as the preserve of the church, and style, the way in which it was drawn, as the preserve of the artist.

However, Robin Cormack has offered an alternative reading. By placing the quotation in its wider context, Cormack has shown how it is a text that deals not with procedures for the production of icons but with the context of the past production of icons. It is not about how art will be produced after Iconoclasm. Rather, the aim of this passage is to rebut a particular Iconoclast argument from the 754 Council in Constantinople. It serves to counter the argument that artists were the sole effective agents in the production of icons and the Iconoclast belief that in claiming to be able to make images of Christ, artists fell into heresy. It is a passage designed to counter Iconoclast statements such as: ‘The illicit craft of the painter is injurious to the crucial doctrine of our salvation’ and ‘How senseless is the notion of the painter who from sordid love of gain pursues the unattainable’. It forms a part of the Iconophile refutation of the Iconoclast belief that material arts and human artists could not convey divinity. For the Iconophiles, the artist was there to be ignored and so artistic creativity was not an issue. They saw the artist as the vehicle for the representation of the divine and so of little relative concern. Just as gynaecologically, woman was merely the vessel for man’s seed so, artistically, the painter was merely the vessel for the word of God.

Rather than a programme of censorship therefore, this passage can be read as a dismissal of Iconoclast attacks on artists. It is perhaps the Council’s declaration that painters were not responsible for the invention of icons (‘The making of icons is not the invention of painters’), but that icons are a long-standing tradition within the church, approved and indeed promoted by the Fathers (‘The conception and the tradition [of painting, that is] belong to the [Holy Fathers of the church] and not the

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5 Horos of the Iconoclastic Council of 754, Mansi, XIII, 240C and 248E. Tr. in Mango, Art, 165 and 166.
painter; for the painter’s domain is limited to his art whereas the disposition manifestly pertains to the Holy Fathers’). Thus, it is a passage that explains rather than prescribes.

Such an interpretation seems to fit better with Iconophile theories about the nature of art. Both sides in the Iconoclastic Dispute clearly stressed that ‘The making of icons is not the invention of painters’. The Iconoclasts argued that painters should not invent or make icons, that the human could not convey the divine. The Iconophiles said that painters were not inventors but merely maintained the traditions of the church. Here, what the passage goes on to say is significant. ‘The making of icons is not the invention of painters, but [expresses] the approved legislation of the Catholic church. Whatever is ancient is worthy of respect, as St Basil said. Our testimony is the antiquity of the objects and the teaching of our inspired Fathers that when they saw these icons in the holy churches, they were glad. When they themselves built holy churches, they offered up to the Lord of all their prayers that were pleasing to him and their bloodless sacrifices. The conception and the tradition [of painting, that is] belong to the [Holy Fathers of the church] and not the painter; for the painter’s domain is limited to his art whereas the disposition manifestly pertains to the Holy Fathers who built the churches’.

The emphasis here lies on the idea that artists are not the original creators of icons. This is a view that the surviving evidence about artists supports. Although traditional art history believes, with Ernst Gombrich, that ‘there really is no such thing as art, there are only artists’, little is known about the Byzantine artist. Next to nothing is known about workshop practices; it is not even certain that workshops existed. Much of what is said is deduced from workshop practices in the Renaissance. Nothing is known about master/pupil relations. Nothing is known about how long it took to make a mosaic, an icon, a manuscript, a wall painting, or how the making of each of these was organised. Very little is known about artists themselves. For a sense of how limited the evidence is, the Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium’s entry under ‘Artists’ selects about 100 artists from between the fourth and fifteenth centuries and offers brief snippets of information about them. It achieves this in something less than

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6 This translation comes from Cormack, Painting the Soul, 30.
four pages. Of these 100 artists, about thirty-five belong to the period from the fourth to the eleventh century; the remainder are twelfth to fifteenth century, and the majority of those belong to the fourteenth century and after. There is one seventh-century named artist (a silversmith), four eighth-century ones (two mosaicists from a church in Jordan, another mosaicist from Damascus and a silversmith from Constantinople), one, the celebrated Iconophile painter Lazaros, from the ninth century. The tenth century yields four names and the eleventh century seventeen, though eight of these come from the Menologion of Basil.

For the majority of the names between the fourth and fifteenth century, information is limited to their name appearing in an inscription or their signature on a work of art, such as John, a wall-painter who signed his name in Greek on the wall of the church of St. Demetrios at Peć. A handful appear in legal documents as witnesses of one form or another, implying that artists held respectable social positions. Some are known through their place in religious communities. George, a painter and monk, witnessed a charter of the emperor John I Tzimiskes, and founded a monastery. A very small number of artists appear in letters or epigrams. Others appear in more exciting contexts. John, a monk and disciple of St Symeon Styliste the Younger appears in the saint’s Life, as a man who, even though untrained, carved the capitals and columns of a church in Sykeon.

The eighth-century silversmith from Constantinople mentioned above features in the Parastaseis syntomoi chronikai as a man who used rigged scales and was trampled to death by an elephant. Considering the nature of the Parastaseis and its marvellous stories, it is unclear quite how this account should be taken. Silversmiths with rigged scales (money-lenders, in effect) feature in a variety of stories and, since money-lending was frowned on by the church, they usually get their deserved reward.

The material we possess about artists thus is sometimes very practical information: painters’ signatures on what we presume are their art-works, inscriptions naming painters, and artists fulfilling a variety of social and legal duties. There are also stories, often from the period of Iconoclasm,

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11 In the Miracles of St Artemios, for example, the son of a money-lender is afflicted with a hernia. The Miracles of St Artemios, Miracle 38, ed. and trans. V.S. Crisafulli and J.W. Nesbitt (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 197–201.
about miraculous artists. These include Lazaros, who had his hands seared by the emperor Theophilus but continued to produce art, and Methodios, who converted Boris I of Bulgaria through his painting of the Last Judgement in c. 864.12 Accounts of miracles connected with works of art carried out by unknown, anonymous artists are also concentrated in the seventh to ninth centuries.13

It seems fair to say, therefore, that the nature of the surviving evidence about artists appears to tell us that, certainly up until the twelfth century, the named artist was relatively unimportant as an artist per se. Some artists did achieve eminence: Lazaros went on two diplomatic missions to Rome, though this may well reflect his standing as a persecuted survivor of Iconoclasm. Some achieved wealth. However, there was nothing more special about being an artist than about being any other form of craftsman. To coin a phrase, 'the making of icons is not the invention of painters', and so the painter's name did not really matter.

The second part of the passage, however, claims a role for the Church Fathers in the production of art. The tradition of painting, of images being in churches, according to the Seventh Ecumenical Council, belongs to the Fathers. In this context, the views of both Iconoclasts and Iconophiles make perfect sense. Iconoclasm was the culmination of the rumblings about the validity of Christian images that had been present from before Constantine the Great.14 The question of whether the divine aspect of Christ was portrayable through material means and by base humanity (on other words, by artists in pictures), or whether this was a quality of his existence beyond the grasp of pictorial representation was one of the fundamental questions for theologians in Iconoclasm. The issue of how to portray the heavenly image underpinned the issue of the legitimacy of figural art, and was another reason to move art away from the artist. In constructing the image as holy, the human agent involved had to be played down.

In this context, as has been noted before, it is not surprising that the eighth and ninth centuries saw a boom in stories about miraculous images. Increasing emphasis is placed on acheiropoietai images such as

13 As with the apse mosaic at Hosios David in Thessaloniki, Ignatius Monarchus, Narratio de imagine Christi in monasterio Latomi, A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, ed., Varia graeca sacra (St Petersburg: Kirshbaum, 1909), and partial tr. in Mango, Art, 155–156. See also Cormack, Painting the Soul, ch. 3.
14 For a discussion of how far Iconoclasm really existed and how far it might have been an abstract theological dispute, see L. Brubaker, 'Icons before Iconoclasm?', Morfologie sociali e culturali in europa fra tarda antichità e alto medioevo, Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo 45 (1998), 1215–54.
the Mandylion and the Holy Tile, which established the veracity and lifelikeness of images of Christ.¹⁵ The idea that St Luke had painted the Virgin from life and that this image existed in ninth-century Constantinople created an important truth that an authentic picture of Mary was painted in her lifetime, that it existed in Constantinople and that it could be accurately reproduced in copies sent for prayer and contemplation all over the Orthodox world.¹⁶ Once it was established that all images came from originals taken from life, this then established their reliability. It also removed the need for an artist. If the original artist was divine – Christ himself – or holy – St Luke, then the human artist, who was essentially only basing his/her image on these (copyist perhaps has too many derogatory overtones), had little scope for claiming the work. Indeed, sometimes the artist was totally irrelevant. In the story told by Ignatios the Deacon about the mosaic of Hosios David in Thessaloniki, the artist returned to his unfinished work to find that it had miraculously changed completely from an image of the Virgin to one of Christ.¹⁷ From a theological perspective, these images disproved the Iconoclast claim that holy images were a result of the ‘injurious craft of the painter’. Perhaps one factor in the increasing appearance of named artists from the twelfth century onwards might be that once everybody knew that the original images were divine, there was increasingly less need to play down the human agency that copied them.

The nature of the image debate meant that artists had to be established, in theory at least, and perhaps only by theologians, as merely copyists or imitators. The role of creator, of original artist, was reserved for God. God was the original creator, making man in his own image. God was the first and last—the only—artist. In the words of Gregory of Nyssa, God ‘paints the image of man with various colours according to his own beauty’.¹⁸ Indeed, both sides in the Iconoclastic dispute could agree that because man was created in the image of God, then man as this image bore the nature of the archetype. Man, in turn, was a creative artist after God, and ‘shows the image of the creator (i.e. God) through the

¹⁵ For the Mandylion, see the collection of essays in H.L. Kessler and G. Wolf, eds, The Holy Face and the Paradox of Representation, Villa Spelman Colloquia 6 (Bologna: Nuova Alfa, 1998); also Cormack, Painting the Soul, ch. 3. For sources, see L. Brubaker and J. Haldon, Byzantium in the Iconoclast era (ca 680–850): the sources (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001).
¹⁷ See above, n. 13.
dignity of his works, imitating his master with his own actions as with colours' as Basil of Seleucia said.¹⁹

Emphasis among the Fathers seems always to have lain in models and the exact copying of these models. Basil of Caesarea used this as an image of the holy life: 'As painters when they paint icons from icons, looking closely at the model, are eager to transfer the character of the model to their own work, so he who strives to perfect himself in all branches of virtue must look to the lives of the saints as if to moving and living images and make their virtue his own by imitation'.²⁰ In a faith where all came from the original creator-artist, God, this stress on the importance of models in every aspect of life is not a surprise. Every artificial image was a likeness of what it was the image of, as Theodore of Stoudion put it and hence the ultimate justification for Orthodox art came from God.²¹ John of Damascus, as an Iconophile, brought both elements together in his definition of different types of images. The first kind of image was Christ as 'the natural and identical image of the invisible God'; the second was 'God's knowledge of what will be done by him'—God's idea of each thing that will occur at his bidding; 'the third kind of image is the one made by God by way of imitation, that is man'.²²

Within the context of art and orthodoxy, the question of the creator of art was a significant one. The issues of who made Orthodox art and what made art Orthodox was one of particular relevance during Iconoclasm; indeed, in some ways, it was one of the defining issues of the Iconoclastic dispute in the arguments about the role of the human and material in the depiction of the divine. Foucault, perhaps accidentally following Pseudo-Dionysios, pointed out that God is outside human language, unknowable but real, to the believer.²³ Byzantine art is about trying to reconcile the paradox of how the unknown real can be represented 'realistically', however one interprets that term. How is this reality itself constructed? Byzantine art and the Byzantines' discussions about their art always

¹⁹ Basil of Seleucia, Oratio 1 (PG 85.36).
²⁰ Basil of Caesarea, quoted in Cormack, Painting the Soul, 74.
essentially came back to one point: how could man represent God? 'And the word was with God': Byzantine art is indeed about ekphrasis, about picturing words, about picturing the Word, with a vengeance. This is what Byzantine writings on art make clear. They complement the work of art, aiming to convey the spiritual truths present in that work to the audience, enabling them to 'look at things with the eyes of sense and to understand them with the eyes of the spirit'. 24 This way, the viewer can 'understand ultimate things and enter secret places' for this is what art was about. Images after Iconoclasm, as a result of Iconoclasm, were accepted as a means through which one reached closer to an explanation of God than any verbal definition could allow. To rephrase the title of this paper, it is not what makes art Orthodox but who makes art Orthodox. Because the Word was with God, only God could ultimately portray the Word. Conceiving God as original genius, the story of Byzantine art could not be the story of artists. In Byzantium, there really was no such thing as art; there was only God, who made art Orthodox.

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... and the Word was God: Art and Orthodoxy in late Byzantium

Robin Cormack

Introduction

This paper looks at the period 1261 to 1453. Historically this means the time bracket which starts with the triumphant return of Constantinople from Frankish occupation to Byzantine imperial control and of the conversion of Hagia Sophia from Catholic cathedral to Orthodox worship and which ends with the Ottoman suppression of an East Christian empire in Constantinople and the conversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque (stimulating a debate about the role of Moscow as the third Rome and home of Orthodoxy).\(^1\) The Deisis mosaic in Hagia Sophia symbolically marks this restoration of Orthodoxy in the cathedral, if it is correctly dated as a work to enhance the coronation of Michael VIII in the autumn of 1261. Both its subject and style, then, as the first Byzantine mosaic in Constantinople for over fifty years needs to be seen as a declaration of Orthodox values – an enormous public icon combined with a personal devotional function.

Yet the key date in the interpretation of this period must actually be 1204 – the year of the Crusader conquest of Constantinople and the establishment of a number of long-lasting Frankish kingdoms and colonies in the east. No Byzantine after this date could be any less aware of western Christian ambitions, beliefs and even their artistic taste than they were of the Islamic threat to Orthodox society, both to its values and to its very existence.\(^2\) The closeness of eastern and western Christianity in

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the thirteenth century may be observed in the manner in which the Deisis mosaic matches contemporary Italian spirituality – where the scale of the enormous Rucellai Madonna panel made for S. Maria Novella in Florence shares with the Deisis the same kind of viewing circumstances: these icons both offer to the viewer a figure of the Virgin Mary which is at the same time both a monumental public cult icon and a personal devotional image.

This paper will treat the art of this period in terms of how it shows a response to topical threats. It sees art as both a defensive and offensive expression of Orthodoxy. It will also need to clarify whether the art of this period is to be viewed as art in the service of Orthodoxy or as art that represents Orthodoxy. I have assumed the latter, as otherwise it would be necessary to include all late Byzantine religious art. Of course, we might formulate an approach in a Foucauldian manner to the art of late Byzantium in order to examine the specific ways in which it represents Orthodoxy. This might try to look at art in the service of heresy or look for art which represented heresy and so aim to define the norms of Orthodox expression in art by contrast with the divergent and deviant in art. There is some encouragement to embark on such an exercise, for both the Orthodox and Roman churches were subjected in this period to major engagements with perceived heresy (such as catharism in the west and hesychasm in the east). But there is also a problem; for in the east no heresy was regarded as sufficient to merit an Ecumenical Council (and it was only on the western side that the idea was canvassed that the Council of Ferrara–Florence might be called the Eighth Council). An Ecumenical council was understood by the Orthodox Church only to be appropriate for the solution of major doctrinal disputes about the nature of Christ, not for the discussion of such questions as the dangers of pagan philosophy or the nature of the eucharistic sacrifice or methods of prayer. Of course the declaration of Orthodox Christianity in this period did involve the conspicuous statement of belief in the Trinity in order to differentiate and distinguish Orthodox faith from Islam and from the west (which adopted the filioque clause). No Ecumenical council was called by the Orthodox Church to re-discuss the Trinity, but the contemporary issues were conspicuously communicated visually on folio 123 verso of the manuscript containing the writings of John VI Kantakouzenos (Paris, bibliothèque nationale gr 1242). The emperor is seen on the right as a monk – he took the name Joasaph after his abdication on 4 December 1354 – holding a scroll which records the opening words of his polemic against Islam (for which he was assisted by the use of a Latin polemical text

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translated into Greek). At the top of the page the Trinity is represented through the iconography of the three angels at the table of Abraham. Art is exploited forcefully to communicate the Orthodoxy of the ex-emperor, and the artistic quality of the miniatures of this book show that the use of art for the display of Orthodox thinking in no way diminished its aesthetic qualities and powers.

The paper will be punctuated throughout by Councils (both local and in the west), but not as a way of setting deviancy against norms in a Foucauldian pattern (although the major councils of Constantinople, 1341, 1347 and 1351 were concerned with heresy). The first section will consider the visual issues which might be connected with Hesychasm; and the second part will ask how to interpret 'unionist' art around the times of the two major attempts in the west to solve the east-west schism of 1054 by the union of churches (Lyons in 1274 and Ferrara–Florence in 1438–9). The message that underlines this treatment is that art does indeed represent and publicise Orthodoxy, and it achieves this by encapsulating and so communicating social and ecclesiastical norms.

**Hesychasm and monastic art**

This paper will not challenge the current commonly-held view among art historians (but still hotly debated) that Hesychasm caused no significant elements of change in art. It accepts that the movement was rather a catalyst in the re-establishment of old values against the contemporary revival of interest in pagan philosophy and humanism. In other words, it argues that fourteenth-century monastic art maintained and continued the expressive spiritual values of the twelfth century (which are found in the well-known Kastoria double-sided icon of the Virgin and Christ of Pites and in the Sinai icon with the ladder of John Klimakos).¹ The Jesus prayer ('Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me') may have become particularly popular as a spiritual exercise in the fourteenth century but its passions can be traced back to early Sinaitic monasticism, and the term *hesychastes* for a hermit is equally early Christian. Certainly hesychasm became a slogan in the civil wars of 1341–7, but that is a complicated political issue, and not connected with art.² Fourteenth-century monastic art can be regarded as no more ethereal in character than that before, and even themes such as the Transfiguration – showing the source of divine

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light – which have been seen as particularly popular in Late Byzantium were also found prominently placed in church art earlier, as in the sixth-century apse mosaics of Sinai.\(^6\) It is true that the work of the travelling artist Theophanes the Greek appears to us to have an original personal and distinctive style (in the attributed Transfiguration icon in the Tretiakov Gallery, in his Trinity wallpainting in the church of the Transfiguration at Novgorod in 1378 and in the Koimisis painting on the second side of the icon of the Virgin of the Don in the Tretiakov).\(^7\) But the explanation is unlikely to be that he retreated from Byzantine Constantinople to far-away Novgorod in a quest to develop a Hesychast style in the freedom of the Russian lands.

From the point of view of late Byzantine artistic expression, the position can therefore be argued that the values of Hesychasm were smoothly absorbed into the traditional mainstream visual communication of monastic spirituality. The interest of Gregory Palamas (1296–1359) in light mysticism (with his aim of contemplative prayer as reaching out for a vision of the uncreated light of God, which shone around Christ on Mount Thabor) can be regarded as a further continuation of the Neo-Platonist tradition and does not conspicuously alter artistic interests in the late Byzantine period. Mystical writings such as those of St Symeon the Theologian (949–1022), which encouraged the individualistic path to salvation, remained influential in the late Byzantine period. Similarly the twelfth-century debates (for example at the Council of Constantinople of 1157) about the realism of the eucharistic sacrifice and the issue of the transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, and the symbolic nature of icons were not forgotten in the late Byzantine period. The emphasis on the body of Christ in church thinking in the twelfth century may have influenced visual forms in that century, stimulating increased realism and new subjects (rather than a return to classicism), and this would have continued as a factor influencing style in the late Byzantine period.\(^8\)

The luxury manuscript in Paris already mentioned, B.N. gr 1242, is a key representative of the art of Constantinople in the second half of the fourteenth century. It contains the writings of John VI Kantakouzenos (emperor 1347–1354) who died in Mystras in 1383. The first part of the manuscript is dated 1370, and the final colophon to 1375. The scribe was another monk called Joasaph, who between 1360–1405 wrote thirty signed and dated manuscripts and became abbot of the monastery of the

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\(^7\) The classic formal analysis remains that of V.N. Lazarev, *Feofan Grek i ego shkola* (in Russian), (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1961).

\(^8\) This is argued by R. Cormack, "'Living painting'" in E. Jeffreys, ed., *Rhetoric in Byzantium* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 235–53.
Hodegon at Constantinople. The painter of the miniatures has been identified by Buchthal (on the basis of style) as the same person who also painted in the Hodegon monastery a lectionary at Koutlounmousi (cod. 62) and a Gospels in the Vatican (cod.gr. 1160). For Buchthal this painter was as ‘one of the most renowned of his time’, one of a group whose Constantinopolitan style is also to be seen in the Perivleptos church at Mystras; and whose style emerges in a developed form in the work of Theophanes the Greek in Russia. Buchthal emphasized the important role of the Hodegon monastery in Constantinople as a centre of artistic creation in the third quarter of the fourteenth century. It was one place, in other words, where the art of Orthodoxy was defined in the period.

The theological climate of Byzantium is polarized in such events as the Council of Constantinople of 10 June 1341, which was convoked by Andronikos III but at which John Kantakouzenos was present. It was convened to debate the views of Barlaam of Calabria (1290–1348); he began his career as an opponent of the Latin Church and he expressed his opposition in treatises written in Latin, but he became a unionist and attacked the views of Gregory Palamas (arguing for example that the light on Mount Thabor was created and not eternal). Barlaam left Constantinople after his condemnation at the council and was received into the Latin Church at Avignon in 1342. Kantakouzenos had meanwhile presided at another meeting of this council in August 1341, and its decisions were reconfirmed in 1347 and again in 1351 at a further council convened by John Kantakouzenos. This council’s pro-Palamite decisions which were added to the Synodikon of Orthodoxy. Barlaam was anathematized in 1351 (after his death in the west).

The icon of Orthodoxy in the British Museum belongs to the period after 1351. Its precise dating (by style) is still under debate; a date of around 1400 has been suggested, but it may be earlier than this and belong to the same times as the icons of Maria Palaiologina (1367–1384). What is clear is that the icon is resolutely backwards looking both in

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10 Buchthal, ‘Towards a History’, 164ff. See also G.M. Proxorov, ‘A Codicological Analysis of the Illuminated Akathistos to the Virgin (Moscow, State Historical Museum, synodal gr.429)’, DOP 26 (1972), 239–52, for a discussion of another manuscript from the same scriptorium which shows the milieu out of which Theophanes emerged.

11 For further details, see J. Meyendorff, Byzantine Theology. Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes (London and Oxford: Mowbrays, 1975), 103ff.

12 See Vassilaki, ed., Mother of God, cat 32, 340; cat 30, 320 for the Cuenca diptych of Maria Palaiologina. For the panels still at Meteora, see M. Chatzidakis and D. Sofianos, The Great Meteoron. History and Art (Athens, 1990). I am assuming that the most likely provenance for the artists of these paintings is Constantinople.
its iconography and its style; it proclaims its image of Orthodoxy in the fourteenth century through the memory of the decisions of the council of Nicaea II as reaffirmed at Constantinople in 843. The victory of the Palamites and Hesychasts in the 1340s meant that Unionists were held up as Latinisers and as defilers of the tradition of Orthodoxy; the icon of the Triumph of Orthodoxy upholds this thinking by its traditional Byzantine appearance and, in particular, in its emphasis on the orthodoxy of the monks. The same visual emphasis on the traditional values of Byzantium and the power of Greek traditions is found in the illustrations of the manuscript of the writings of Pseudo-Dionysios which were sent to St Denis in Paris in 1408 by the emperor Manuel II Palaiologos (four years after his visit both to Paris and London).

Union of the Churches

In addition to the local councils of Constantinople, the spirituality of the late Byzantine period is further punctuated by the two Councils that directly addressed the issue of the union of the churches, officially in schism since 1054.

The first of these was the Second Council of Lyons, held from 7 May to 17 July 1274. The Byzantine delegation there agreed to Latin doctrine on papal primacy, purgatory and the filioque clause (the latter was for the first time pronounced dogma at this council). This agreement was immediately seen back in Constantinople as a political submission to Roman views. The council decisions were repudiated by the Orthodox church at the local council of Constantinople in 1285, and the first act of Andronikos II Palaiologos on his succession in 1284 (at the age of 24) was to renounce the Union of Lyons and to proclaim the restoration of Orthodoxy.

One of the first major decorations in Constantinople after this abortive attempt to reconcile the two churches was the Chora monastery of the second decade of the fourteenth century. The mosaics and wallpaintings convey the traditional themes of Byzantine Orthodoxy, despite (or because of) the fact that its patron, Theodore Metochites, was the son of a pro-unionist, George Metochites, and the family had suffered from exile in 1283. While some of its features have been paralleled in the west (such as the compositional layout of the domical vaults around a medallion which have been compared with the crypt of the cathedral of Anagni [south of Rome], its ornamental motives and its perspectival interest), the

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14 For an account, see Nicol, Last Centuries of Byzantium, 99ff.
ambivalence of the western reflections lead to similarly ambivalent interpretations. Either the parallels are not significant or if they are, they are too cautious to lead to Byzantine criticism.

The Council of Ferrara and Florence in 1438 and 1439 was indeed regarded by the western church as an Ecumenical event (the so-called Seventeenth Ecumenical Council). The fifteenth-century council on the union of the churches influenced Byzantine art in a clearer way than can be detected in the decoration of the Chora monastery. The visit of the Byzantine delegation is also reflected in Italian art, such as the representations of Byzantine imperial power in the wall paintings of the Medici chapel in Florence and in the Pisanello medals of John Paleologos. As for the octogenarian patriarch Joseph II who died in Florence on 10 June 1439, he is represented in a wallpainting above his tomb in the church of Santa Maria Novella. In Constantinople, the painting of tomb G in the narthex of the Chora monastery belongs to this period, and its representation of the dead standing in the presence of the Virgin and Child imitates Florentine style of the period of the council.

John VIII Paleologos and his retinue as well as the Patriarchal delegation attended the conference. At its conclusion the union of the churches was declared. The issues for theological discussion were clear-cut enough (the Filioque clause; the azymes; and Papal claims for authority). The council ended with apparent agreement on these issues, and on 6 July 1439, the Decree of Union was solemnly promulgated, starting with the words Laetentur caeli (‘the Heavens rejoice’). It was declared that both leavened and unleavened bread could be used in the eucharist, and there were three doctrinal statements: on the procession of Holy Spirit, on purgatory and on Roman primacy. The union was of course instantly challenged in Constantinople, and many bishops recanted; but it lapsed only on the fall of Constantinople in 1453.

A number of paintings have been directly connected with the debate on the Union of the Churches at the time of this council. In some cases the argument has been that the chosen iconography was intended to promote and support the message of union, as for example the combination of Byzantine iconography and western saints which is found in the fifteenth century Cretan triptych in the Pushkin Museum at Moscow with the Koinisis of the Virgin Mary and SS Francis and Dominic. A much more direct example is the icon with the monogram IHS by the artist Andreas Ritzos. The visual subject of this icon is

18 Cormack, Painting the Soul, plate 69, and 206–208.
remarkable: the sign IHS. This was the emblem of the preacher and reformer of the Franciscans, St Bernardino of Siena (1380–1444), a figure notable for his prominent (but unofficial) role in the attempt to unite the churches during the Council of Florence. This was his distinctive badge: the initials stand for Jesus Hominum Salvator (Jesus Saviour of Men). The icon represents the emblem in Gothic capitals exactly as St Bernard wore them. But within the letters the painter has included Christian scenes: a Crucifixion on the left and on the right two representations of the Resurrection of Christ – one the Catholic version, the other in the Orthodox version of the Anastasis. In addition to the imagery, the icon included a text chosen from the Orthodox liturgical book (the Paraklitiki); and consists of one of the troparia for the Orthros (matins) of Sunday: ‘You were crucified and died willingly. But resurrected as God, you will join the forefather. Remember me crying out when you enter your kingdom’.

What is perhaps most significant within the debate on uniting the churches is the emphasis on a Greek text. This may simply indicate that the intended viewers were Greek, but it certainly gives emphasis to Greek Orthodox traditions.

The Orthodox emphasis beneath the emblem in this icon offers a clue in the reading of another icon which has been even more directly linked with the Council events themselves, and seen as intending to support the unification of the Church. This is the icon of Peter and Paul in the Galleria dell’ Accademia (no. 9382) at Florence. It comes from the orbit of the Cretan painters Angelos and Ritzos, who have both been seen as possible personal supporters of the unification of the Churches. The two saints in this icon hold between them a miniature centrally-planned domed church; above in the segment of heaven is a figure of Christ with both arms outstretched in blessing. On the gold ground below is a Greek verse inscription. N. Chatzidakis has argued that the details of this text and the iconography of the figures link the imagery with the arrangements of the 1439 council venue, which was inside the Duomo of Florence (Santa Maria del Fiore). Its great dome had been newly completed by Brunelleschi, and inaugurated in 1436. For the session of the council in the cathedral a gospel was set on the altar and each side were small statues of Peter (with the keys of Paradise) and Paul (holding a sword, as in this icon). She concludes that the miniature church is indeed a representation of the Duomo of Florence with Brunelleschi’s dome, and that the whole icon acts as a pictorial declaration supporting the union of the two churches.

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While this case is well made, it can perhaps be refined a little more by looking at the way the interior of the duomo of Florence is represented. What we see is not a western altar arrangement, but a wooden carved shell-niched templon screen of a type that Chatzidakis closely parallels with fifteenth century screens on Crete and Patmos. It holds four large icons (Virgin Hodigitria, Christ Pantokrator, and two Seraphim), while on the altar seen through the opening is a Gospel, chalice and tongs. What is stridently shown in this icon is therefore a Latin church with the liturgical arrangements of a contemporary Orthodox church. It is a strong visual argument against the decisions of the Councils: that Byzantium was joining on Roman terms. If we read the writings of John VI Kantakouzenos in his illuminated manuscript of a century earlier, we find that he thought that the east could win over the west to its point of view. His aim was not strictly the unification of the churches. It was the return of the Latin church to Orthodoxy (with Orthodoxy as the dominant partner).

The intellectual atmosphere of the Greek delegation in Italy is in fact graphically recorded in the unofficial diary of the patriarchal official Sylvester Syropoulos. From this account of the delegation and its politics, it is clear that the notion of the conversion of the Latin Church back to Orthodoxy was the predominant aim. Probably the best-known statement for art historians in this diary is the recorded remark of Gregory Melissimos made at a church at Ferrara (included in his collection of sources and documents by Cyril Mango). The context was that Patriarch Joseph II in 1438 was negotiating with the Pope for the use of a church in Ferrara for the Byzantine delegation to use for the celebration of Easter. It is also useful to note the character of Gregory Melissimos as it emerges in the pages of the diary. He was throughout the whole journey one of the fanatical among the anti-westerners. In every situation where he appears in the diary, Gregory can be relied on to be mouthing some intransigent remark against the Latins – or, conversely, to be attempting to score a point in favour of Byzantine Orthodoxy.

This background helps to interpret the thinking in his remark: 'When I enter a Latin church, I do not revere any of the [images of] the saints that are there, because I do not recognize any of them. At best, I may recognize Christ, but I do not revere him either, because I do not know how he is inscribed (epigraphetai). So I make the sign of the cross and I revere this sign that I have made myself and not anything that I see there'.

21 See Mango, Art, 254.
We need to ask what exactly Gregory is complaining about, and I interpret his complaint along the following lines. Gregory is objecting not to the imagery itself or to its style; he is objecting to the use of Latin rather than Greek inscriptions, which he, he says, cannot read. This is not an aesthetic statement about the nature of Italian Renaissance art. It is a diatribe against the western use of Latin instead of Greek inscriptions on their images. This is not a view that could lead to unionist compromise; only a return to Byzantine tradition and Greek inscriptions could satisfy Melissenos. As such he must have appeared to the diarist less a fanatic than a representative of the norms of the delegation.

Looking at the icon of Peter and Paul from the context of the majority views of the delegation, it fits subtly into their mission. The icon communicates the idea that the churches of the west, including the Duomo of Florence in which the council met, should return to the tradition with Greek inscriptions and a proper developed Orthodox iconostasis. In other words, the icon is declaring through its style and its iconography that Orthodoxy, and the representation of Orthodoxy, was necessarily uncompromising. The union of the churches could be achieved if the west returned to Byzantine Orthodoxy.

In dealing with the question of art and orthodoxy, all three of these papers look to Councils of the Church, to the Council in Trullo (692), to Nicaea II (787) to Constantinople (1341), Lyons (1274) and to Ferrara–Florence (1438–9). A longer paper might well have brought in other Councils. In each of these Councils, the relationship between art and orthodoxy is confronted from a different perspective and with a set of different doctrinal issues. At Nicaea II, the bond between art and orthodoxy is perhaps most apparent; at Constantinople, it seems perhaps at first glance a more tenuous link, yet one which is there. At Ferrara–Florence, art highlights the gulf between Orthodox and Latin Christianity and plays its most overtly political role. Yet art was never divorced from ‘politics’ in Byzantium, for ‘politics’ too were Orthodox in their conception. What this paper demonstrates is how the changing nature of Orthodoxy influenced and was influenced by art. Orthodox art was not a static art for what was orthodox was not stationary. The tracing of this relationship between art and Orthodoxy offers insights into the nature of both in Byzantium.
The British Museum Triumph of Orthodoxy icon

Dimitra Kotoula

The British Museum Triumph of Orthodoxy icon (late fourteenth century) is the earliest known pictorial representation of the restoration of the holy icons, a feast first celebrated on 11 March 843 and commemorated by the Orthodox Church since then on the first Sunday of Lent. The purpose of this article is to present and discuss the iconography of the British Museum icon, proposing new ways of interpreting it.

The icon of Orthodoxy is a relatively small (39 x 31cm) panel divided into two horizontal zones (see frontispiece). Central to its iconography is the icon of the Virgin with Child in the upper register supported by two angels and flanked, according to the surviving inscriptions, by the Empress Theodora together with her young son, Emperor Michael III, on the left and the Patriarch Methodios with three monks on the right. In the middle of the lower zone, just below the Virgin with Child complex, Theophanes the Confessor and Theodore the Stoudite are depicted jointly holding an image of Christ. Five of the eleven figures in this zone are identified by severely effaced inscriptions. St Theodosia, the only female saint, is depicted holding an icon of Christ-Emmanuel while the bishop on the right and his companion must be the two Graptoi Brothers, Theodore

1 I am most indebted to my supervisor Prof. R. Cormack and to Prof. M. Vassilaki for their comments and suggestions concerning this article as well as to Prof. A. Louth for his most kind proposal to include it in the present volume. For the most recent publication of the Orthodoxy icon, see A. Weyl-Carr, 'Icon with the Triumph of Orthodoxy', in H.C. Evans, ed., Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261–1557) Exhibition Catalogue (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2004), 154–5; R. Cormack, 'Icon of the Triumph of Orthodoxy', in M. Vassilaki, ed., Mother of God: Representations of the Virgin in Byzantine Art (Milan: Skira, 2000), 340, no. 32. See also R. Cormack, 'Icon of the Triumph of Orthodoxy', in D. Buckton, ed., Byzantium (London: British Museum Press, 1994), 129–30, no. 140 and R. Cormack, 'Women and Icons and Women in Icons', in Liz James, ed., Women, Men and Eunuchs (London: Routledge, 1997), 25–27 fn. 8, where all the previous bibliography on the icon is sited.

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and Theophanes. Finally, the tenth and the eleventh figures are inscribed as St Theophylaktos and Arsakios. The identification of the saints depicted is further helped by a recently discovered, post-Byzantine (c. 1500) copy of the British Museum icon. Its publisher, N. Chatzidakis, identifies the first of the three monks in the upper zone as Bishop Theodore and the fourth figure from the left in the lower zone as St Ioannikios.

The Orthodoxy icon commemorates the triumph of the true faith (Orthodoxy: Ἰσότης πίστεως). Its iconography, mainly that of the upper register, has been related to council representations or to depictions of the veneration and the procession of the Hodigitria icon, in particular in cycles of the Akathistos Hymn. Both in iconography and meaning the Orthodoxy icon shares with these scenes specific and important characteristics. These characteristics, however, may also refer to the historical events and the liturgical practices that took place on 11 March 843.

In the text of the Life of Sts David, Symeon and George of Lesbos, there is preserved a detailed account of the celebrations held at the Blachernai church which officially declared the restoration of the holy icons on that day. The anonymous author of the Life centres his description on the 'all-holy icon of our Lord and of the Mother of God who bore him' which, at the end of a vigil, was carried on the initiative of Patriarch Methodios, and in the presence of the Empress Theodora and of the Holy Fathers, in a public ceremonial procession. The procession moved from the Blachernai church to Hagia Sophia (where a special liturgy took place) and, finally, to the palace via the Chalke Gate. The text, very likely a compilation of the eleventh century or later, was known to late Byzantium; it is preserved only in a late fourteenth century manuscript, the period to which the icon of Orthodoxy is also dated. The official establishment of the cult of the icon of the Hodigitria in the public life of the capital from the thirteenth century must have influenced the introduction into the iconography of a theme in which the role of icons in procession, and of an icon of the

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Theotokos Brephokratousa in particular, appears to have been central at least as early as the middle Byzantine period. 

A processional ceremony as the most important part of the celebrations for the restoration of the holy icons in 843 is also mentioned in the Narratio de Absolutione Theophili, a text which, of all the early sources on the event, is the closest one to the iconography of the British Museum icon. Its anonymous author does not identify a particular icon with it and mentions Saint Sophia and not the Blachernai church as the only place for the celebrations on the day, but clearly records that

the Empress Theodora called the most holy Patriarch Methodios to inform and gather every single Orthodox, bishops and archbishops and priests and monks and the laity, to the Great Church on the first Sunday of Lent holding crosses and icons; and, when that was done and a vast crowd of people did gather in the Great Church, the Emperor Michael himself along with his mother went there each one holding a candle in their hands and, having joined the Holy Patriarch and the crowd, processed together with them holding the holy icons in their hands even further, from the holy sanctuary (of the Great Church) to the imperial gates of Ktenario. 

A procession from the Blachernai church to Saint Sophia in the presence of the Empress Theodora, but without icons, is mentioned as the central part of the ceremonial commemorations for the restoration of the holy icons in 843 in the tenth-century text of the Life of St Irene of Chrysobalanton, as well as by Genesios and Theophanes Continuatus. On the other hand, in the majority of the later sources, from the eleventh century onwards, the central role of the icons and of the emperor in the ceremonial celebrations in 843 as well as in those performed by the Byzantines on the day of Orthodoxy ever since are strongly emphasized; however, no procession with the participation of a crowd is mentioned. 

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For the cult of the Hodigitria, see Ch. Angelidi, T. Papamastorakis, 'The Veneration of the Virgin Hodegetria and the Hodegon Monastery', in Vassiliki, Mother of God, 373–425.

Narratio de Absolutione Theophili in W. Regel, Analecta Byzantina-Russica (St Petersburg, 1891), 38–39.


This is the case, for example, in the histories of Cedr., vol. II, 149, Skylitzis, H. Thurm, ed., George Skylitzis, Synopsis Historiarum (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1973), 61 and 88 and in Zonaras, Zonar., Epitome Historiarum XVI, 1.30–45. It is in Pachymere's description of the ceremony, however, that a crowd of laities as well as of clergy and of monks is mentioned, Pach., V, 20.33–45. The above sources in which the icons play a central role challenge the discussion on the text of the Narratio de Absolutione Theophili as an anachronism by Abrahamse-Domingo-Foraste, 'Life of Sts. David...', in Talbot, 'Defenders', 223 fn. 398. For all sources on the feast see; BHG 1386–1394t.
By that time the feast of Orthodoxy must have attained, apart from its strong historical character, a more liturgical-symbolic meaning.

According to the anonymous *Narratio de Absolutione Theophili* already cited above, the processional celebrations on the day of Orthodoxy in 843 started from the holy bema of the Great Church. The tenth-century description of Constantine Porphyrogenetus as to how the feast was to be celebrated by the Byzantines mentions commemorations which included a vigil at the Blachernai church and a procession to the church of Saint Sophia, and ended with a special liturgical act which took place in the holy bema of the same church and included, among other liturgical practices, an imperial ceremonial proskynesis of the *podea* which covered the holy altar.\(^9\) Moreover, from the eleventh century onwards the feast of Orthodoxy was called the *enkainia*, the dedication of a new church – a ceremony in which both the holy bema and the altar were principal elements – and was incorporated as such in the monastic *Typica*.\(^10\)

This liturgical-symbolic meaning of the feast strongly reflected in the British Museum icon is what brings its iconography closer to the litany scenes of the veneration of the Hodigitria icon as depicted in the Akathistos Hymn cycles than to any other contemporary depictions of the same theme. The veil and the *podea* are two central iconographical elements strongly emphasized in the Mother of God with Child complex in the British Museum icon of Orthodoxy. The *podea*, in particular, the presence of which intensifies the liturgical meaning of the iconography, since it is the traditional covering tissue of the altar of the holy bema, is usually absent from depictions of the procession or the veneration of the Hodigitria icon – other than those included in the Akathistos Hymn cycles (e.g., those of the Blachernai monastery near Arta (1296), the Hamilton psalter cod. 78 A9, fol. 39v, (Fig. 1), about 1300, or the Moscow State Historical Museum textile, 1498.)\(^11\) However, it dominates the scene in the representations of the theme, mainly in the cycles of the Akathistos Hymn, oikos 23 and 24, in all the surviving relevant illuminated manuscripts as well as in the fourteenth-century fresco decoration of the Serbian monuments of Dečani (1348), Mateić (1355/60), and of the

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Markov Manastir (1376/77 or 1380/81) (see Fig. 2). The presence of a bishop honouring the Mother of God icon with a censor or standing in proskynesis in front of it, and of members of the imperial family in the majority of the aforementioned representations, intensify even further the links between the iconography of the Akathistos Hymn cycles and the British Museum icon of Orthodoxy. This is evident in particular from the representation of oikos 24 in the fresco cycle of the Akathistos Hymn in the mural paintings of Dečani. It is worth mentioning here that the actual text of the Synodikon of Orthodoxy served as an intercessory prayer for the salvation of the souls of the commemorated iconophile emperors and saints. Likewise, in the Akathistos Hymn oikos 24 the Mother of God is called to act as an intercessor for salvation.

The identification of the saints depicted in the Orthodoxy icon may support even further the liturgical character of its iconography, as well as its link with the ceremonial celebrations and the events during the council of 843. First, Patriarch Methodios, to whom a prominent place was given in the British Museum icon, played an instrumental role in the restoration of the holy icons. In the texts of the Life of St Irene of Chrysolambanton and of St Theodora the Empress, his role in the council, along with that of Ioannikios and Arsakios, is particularly emphasized. According to J. Gouillard, the first version of the Synodikon of Orthodoxy was written by him, and he is mentioned in the sources as the author of a hymn commemorating the day of Orthodoxy in which he is clearly referring to the historical events of 843. An important version of the Life of St Theophanes the Confessor is also attributed to him and under his initiative the relics of St Theodore the Stoudite were transferred to

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Constantinople in 844.\(^{18}\) Both saints have a prominent place in the iconography of the British Museum panel.

St Theodosia is the only saint of those identified so far who is not directly connected with the events of 843 and the feast of Orthodoxy. However, the representation of her holding the icon of Christ-Emmanuel strongly alludes not only to the protection of this icon by the saint at the cost of her life but, especially, to the Chalke Gate where the icon hung and through which the holy liturgical procession passed on the day of the restoration of the holy icons in 843.\(^{19}\) The icon of Christ-Emmanuel, which is depicted twice in the Orthodoxy icon, is furthermore commemorated in one of the most important of the kontakia of the feast.\(^{20}\) The kontakion was sung by fervent iconophiles such as Stephen the Younger and Theodore the Stoudite.\(^{21}\)

All the other saints depicted in the Triumph of Orthodoxy icon were venerated not only as defenders of the holy images but also for their crucial contribution to the historical events that led to the restoration of the holy icons in 843, e.g., Ioannikios and Arsakios in particular.\(^{22}\) Theophylaktos, a monk of the Agauroi monastery, was a disciple of Ioannikios, but his presence in the Orthodoxy icon is further explained by the fact that, according to the Constantine Porphyrogennitus’ Book of Ceremonies, the feast on the day of Orthodoxy ended with a ceremonial proskynesis at the chapel of St Theophylaktos.\(^{23}\)

Of the other saints depicted, Theophanes the Graptos wrote a liturgical hymn on the day of the restoration of the holy icons which proved crucial for the development of the Orthodoxy feast and in which he is referring to the ‘icon and the church of the Mother of God’ where the celebrations on 11 March 843 took place.\(^{24}\) While usually the saint is depicted as a monk, in the Skylitzis manuscript alone he is depicted as a bishop confronting the iconoclastic court of Theophilos and the emperor himself.\(^{25}\) Although

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\(^{18}\) BHG 1787z.


\(^{20}\) A. Baumstark, Liturgie Comparée (Chevetogne: Éditions de Chevetogne, 1953), 103 no. 3.

\(^{21}\) PG 100.1125a and M.-F. Auzépy, La Vie d'Étienne le Jeune par Étienne le Diacre, Birmingham Byzantine and Ottoman Monographs 3 (Aldershot: Variorum, 1996), 131, PG 99. 185.


\(^{24}\) J. Gouillard, ‘Deux figures’, Byzantion 31 (1961), 382–84; J Guillard, ‘Synodikon’ 134–35.

\(^{25}\) A. Grabar and M. Manousakas, L'illustration du Manuscrit de Skylitzès de la Bibliothèque Nationale de Madrid (Venise: Institut hellénique d’études byzantines et post-byzantines de Venise, 1979), fol. 51r.
Theodore and not his brother Theophanes is the second bishop depicted in the Orthodoxy icon, we consider that this iconography is reminiscent of the relevant illustration of the Skylitzis manuscript and thus, consequently, of the defence of the orthodox faith by the Holy Fathers during the council of 843.

This historical council must have deeply interested Byzantium in the fourteenth century, when the British Museum icon is dated. The middle years of the late Byzantine period were torn by the debate over Hesychasm and the relationship with the West. During the councils of 1341, 1347 and particularly 1351, which like the celebrations after the earlier one in 843 were held in the Blachernai church, the Synodikon of Orthodoxy was finally crystallized and signed. Hesychasm was accepted at last as a true Orthodox doctrine. During all that period the questions posed and the theological-cultural issues central to the iconoclastic controversy remained open and were vividly discussed. In fact, Byzantium never overcame iconoclasm. For four of the saints depicted in the Orthodoxy icon we have clear evidence that they, as fervent iconophiles, were of great interest to the Byzantines of the fourteenth century. The healing cult of St Theodosia’s relics flourished and a lengthy encomium was written praising the faith of the female iconophile saint. In the fourteenth century, Makarios Choumnos composed an encomium on Theodore the Stoudite, the ‘great defender of the images during iconoclasm’. Theodora Palaiologina rewrote the Life of the Graptoi brothers, Theodore and Theophanes, in the late thirteenth century. By comparing her mother’s struggle to influence Andronikos II against the union of the churches and the torture of her two brothers with the famous martyrion of the Graptoi, Theodora eloquently proves that in the consciousness of the Byzantines of the late period their cult and consequently their depiction bore clear up-to-date allusions.

St Ioannikios and Patriarch Methodios in particular were honoured as the ‘true defenders of the Holy Trinity’ according to the text of the Life of Saint Ioannikios and of Saint Theodora the Empress, while central to their anti-iconoclastic arguments were the dogmas both of the incarnation and of the trinitarian nature of God. In the iconophile saints depicted in the British Museum icon, the late Byzantine viewer venerated not only the

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28. B.H.G. 1759m.
main champions of the restoration of the holy icons, but also the most true confessors of the Orthodox dogma of the Holy Trinity – a crucial issue in fourteenth-century theological debates and central to the dialogue with the Western Church that further reveals the vital relevance that the iconography of the Triumph of Orthodoxy icon had for late Byzantium.
Figure 1  Miniature of the veneration of the Hodigitria icon, Hamilton Psalter 119, around 1300, Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Kupferstichkabinett, 78 A 9. (after Vassilaki, ed., Mother of God, 389 fig. 54)
Medieval Byzantine chant and the sound of Orthodoxy

Alexander Lingas

Orthodox Christian critics of Latin Christianity have rarely limited themselves to the complex theological and ecclesiological matters that have preoccupied official interchurch dialogues from the Council of Ferrara-Florence to the present. They have instead often attacked Westerners for diverging from their own received ritual or disciplinary practices, fidelity to which they have seen as markers of doctrinal orthodoxy. The Council in Trullo’s (691–2) pre-schism condemnations of mandatory clerical celibacy and fasting on Saturdays in the Church of Rome were, as Tia Kolbaba has recently shown, expanded during the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries to cover a broad spectrum of topics. These range from the moral failings of individuals to a host of customs that might arguably be classified more charitably as admissible markers of cultural difference: for example the liturgical use of unleavened bread, shaving by priests, the wearing of rings by bishops, and burial practices. Later writers drop some of these items, but more

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1 Eg, the Filioque and papal primacy.
2 Similar manifestations of intolerance, of course, were not unknown in the West. They also became an internal problem for Orthodoxy in the seventeenth century with Patriarch Nikon’s reforms of the Russian Church.

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than compensate for them by adding others, including liturgical drama, Gothic architecture and even the modern environmental crisis.  

Given this broadening over time of anti-Latin theological polemics into a more general anti-Westernism, it should not be surprising that some Orthodox view the ways in which their liturgical music differs from that of Western Christianity as theologically significant. Thus Orthodox writers today routinely chide Westerners for their introduction of 'worldly' instruments into Christian worship, innovations which they contrast with the heavenly sobriety of traditional a cappella singing. Partisans of monophonic chant often go a step further, adding to the lists of Latin Christianity's errors polyphony and harmony, techniques which

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4 Symeon of Thessalonica, *Dialogus contra haereses*, PG 155.112-17.


6 P. Sherrard, *The Rape of Man and Nature: An Enquiry into the Origins and Consequences of Modern Science* (Ipswich: Golgonooza, 1987). Robert Taft's observation (Beyond East and West, 2nd rev. edn. (Rome: Pontifical Oriental Institute, 2001), 69-70) about modern Orthodox writers making unfair comparisons between their own ideals and Roman Catholic realities would seem to apply also to environmental issues, especially when one considers the problem of pollution in Greece and the Orthodox lands of Eastern Europe.

7 Throughout this paper I will use 'Latin' and 'the Latins' as generic terms referring to pre-modern Western Christians of diverse ethnic origins that owed ecclesiastical allegiance to the Roman Papacy and whose worship (of whatever local rite) was conducted in Latin. I do so mainly for reasons of convenience (which also apply to my use of 'Byzantines' for people who called themselves 'Rhomaioi'), fully recognising that monolithic views of the Latin West were, as Alexander Kazhdan has noted, rare in Byzantium before the twelfth century. See 'Latin and Franks in Byzantium: perception and reality from the eleventh to the twelfth century', in Laiou, ed. and Mottahedeh, *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*, 83-100.

8 A good introduction to this topic is V.N. Makrides and D. Uffelmann, 'Studying eastern orthodox anti-westernism: the need for a comparative research agenda', in J. Sutton, ed. and W. van den Bercken, *Orthodox Christianity and Contemporary Europe* (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 87-120. Robert Taft has noted a tendency of some modern Orthodox writers to make unfair comparisons between their own ideals and Roman Catholic realities; see n. 6, above.

9 C. Cavarnos, *Byzantine Chant: A Sequel to the Monograph Byzantine Sacred Music containing a Concise Discussion of the Origin of Byzantine Chant, its Modes, Tempo, Notation, Prologoi, Prosomia Style and Other Features* (Belmont, MA: Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, 1998), 21-24. Most of Cavarnos' chapter consists of an extended quote from his own translation of selected writings of Photis Kontoglou (C. Cavarnos, *Byzantine Sacred Art: Selected Writings of the Contemporary Greek Icon Painter Fotis Kontoglou* (Belmont, MA: Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, 1985), 153-54), the flavour of which can be discerned from the following excerpt: 'The Western Church, in order to gratify people and flatter their tastes, put instruments inside the churches, disobeying what was ordained by the Fathers. ... They did this because they had no idea what liturgical music was and what secular music was, just as they did not know the difference between liturgical painting and secular painting' (22-24).

10 Eg. C. Cavarnos, *Byzantine Sacred Music: The Traditional Music of the Orthodox Church, Its Nature, Purpose and Execution* (Belmont, MA: Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek
traditionalist Greek cantors say stand in marked contrast to the musical traditions of medieval Christianity (if not ancient Greece)\(^{11}\) that they faithfully preserve.\(^{12}\) Echoes of these critiques may even be discerned in the quasi-oracular pronouncements of contemporary British composer Sir John Tavener, who regularly juxtaposes the music of a Western ‘culture in ruins’ with what he perceives, not always with the greatest discernment, to be the ancient repertories of Orthodox chant.\(^{13}\)

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\(^{11}\) As I have discussed elsewhere (A. Lingas, ‘Modern Greek sacred music and the invocation of the past’, unpublished paper presented to the IMS Intercongressional Symposium ‘The past in the present’ in Budapest on 26 August 2000), it has been common since the nineteenth century for Greek authors to trace their received traditions of Byzantine chanting to the music of ancient Greece. For an English version of this narrative, see P.S. Antonellis, Byzantine Church Music: Its History and Modern Development (Athens, 1956), 205.

\(^{12}\) One finds Greek (as well as Western) writers of the last 150 years expressing a variety of opinions regarding how much has been preserved unchanged. Some of the strongest survivalist claims have been associated with the ‘Stenographic Theory’ of medieval Byzantine notation. Articulated in its classic form by Konstantinos Psachos (d. 1949) in his monograph Η Παρασημαντική τῆς Βυζαντινῆς Μουσικῆς (Athens, 1917; 2nd edn, Athens, 1978), it attributes the apparent differences between medieval and modern neumes of particular chants to changes in notational conventions. Specifically, this theory holds that medieval scribes generally used notation in a stenographic manner to record only the intervalllic outline of a chant (its ‘metrophia’), while its melos or true melody as heard in performance was revealed only by post-Byzantine copyists who employed the same neumes in progressively more ‘analytical’ ways until definitive versions were recorded during the first decades of the nineteenth century in the reformed notation (the ‘New Method’) of the Three Teachers (Chrysanthos of Madytos, Chourmouzios the Archivist and Gregorios the Protopsaltes). On the debates between traditionalist Greek and (mainly) Western scholars, see A. Lingas, ‘Performance practice and the politics of transcribing Byzantine chant,’ *Acta Musicae Byzantinae* 6 (2003), 56–76. An accessible and more nuanced exposition of the stenographic theory by Grigorios Stathis, its leading contemporary champion, is ‘An analysis of the sticheron Τὸν ἡλιον κρύβαντα by Germanos, Bishop of New Patras (The old “Synoptic” and the new “Analytical” method of Byzantine notation’, in M. Velimirović, ed., *Studies in Eastern Chant* 4 (Crestwood, NY: SVS Press, 1979), 177–227.

For the modern historian seeking to locate medieval Byzantine chant culturally, the task of creating narratives unburdened by such confessional polemics is further complicated by the very nature of music. As a number of writers have observed, although a specimen of musical notation may be treated as an historical text subject to the usual philological methods of textual criticism, music also remains a performative activity physically producing sounds of finite duration. Prior to the invention of modern recording equipment, it was possible to reproduce performances only inexactiy through various combinations of musical notation and oral transmission. While the advent of recordings has not only created new questions surrounding musical works' ontology (e.g. 'what is the relationship of a particular recorded performance to "the work itself"?'), it has also exacerbated some of the problems surrounding the interpretation of pre-modern repertories for which contemporary sound documents are lacking. Confident, polished and (to their audiences) aesthetically satisfying performances by respected musicians that are disseminated through live repetition and mechanical reproduction can, as Richard Taruskin has observed, acquire a kind of spurious authority as the 'authentic' sound of a particular historical repertory regardless of interpretive choices that are at best speculative and at worst demonstrably anachronistic or otherwise historically inaccurate.

The relevance of Taruskin's observations on the dangers of aural presuppositions to questions of musical Orthodoxy will become apparent below as I reconsider medieval and modern views of the relative cultural positions of Byzantine liturgical music and its Western Christian siblings during the Middle Ages. Since the conclusions advanced by some of Byzantine musicology's modern pioneers continue to circulate widely in reference works and non-specialist literature, I shall begin by summarising their influential models of East-West musical relations. I will then briefly reconsider this question in the light of modern research, suggesting that Byzantine chanting through the end of the fifteenth century remained, broadly speaking, stylistically and aesthetically compatible with what were statistically the most common types of contemporary Western liturgical singing.

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Early Attempts to Locate the Cultural Position of Byzantine Chant

Despite their antipathy to obvious incursions of Western musical elements into their received traditions of chanting, even modern Greek Orthodoxy’s most committed opponents of polyphony have conceded that the musical traditions of Greek and Latin Christianity were originally compatible. Thus George I. Papadopoulos, who in 1890 ended his massive and still influential history of Byzantine music from ‘apostolic times to our own days’ with a chapter entitled ‘The Replacement of Our Ecclesiastical Music by European Tetraphony is Impossible’, not only affirms that the ‘earliest European music was closely related to the Greek’, but that it was actually of Greek origin.

Modern Western musicologists, as Leo Treitler has observed, generally prefer not to trace the origins of Western art music to ancient Greece in so direct a fashion as Papadopoulos. Nevertheless, even scholars whose views have conflicted strongly and publicly with those of Greek traditionalists – for example, the founders of the Monumenta Musicae Byzantinae of Copenhagen, Western academia’s flagship organisation for the scholarly study of Byzantine chant – have generally affirmed Papadopoulos’ point regarding the closeness of Greek and Latin liturgical singing during the first millennium and their divergence in the second. A particularly bold instance of such concurrence is found in H.J.W. Tillyard’s 1935 guide to medieval Byzantine notation, the first chapter of

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16 As Kaite Romanou has observed, certain key elements of the ‘New Method’ of Byzantine notation created in early nineteenth-century Constantinople by the ‘Three Teachers’ (Chrysanthos of Madytos, Chournmouzios the Archivist and Gregorios the Protopsaltes) were borrowed from the West but successfully disguised, thereby forestalling the intense opposition that had defeated two earlier attempts at musical reform by Agapios Paliarmos. See K. Romanou, ‘A new approach to the work of Chrysanthos of Madytos: the new method of musical notation in the Greek church’, in D. Comonom, ed., Studies in Eastern Chant 5 (Crestwood, NY: SVS Press, 1990), 90–94.

17 Συμβουλαί εκ τῆς παρά ἡμῖν ἐκκλησιαστικῆς μουσικῆς καὶ οἱ ἀπὸ τῶν ἀποστολικῶν χρόνων ἀχρί τῶν ἡμερῶν ἡμῶν ἀκμάσαντες ἐπιφανεστέροι μελῳδοὶ, μνημογράφοι, μουσικοὶ καὶ μουσικολόγοι (Athens, 1890; repr. 1977), 499–538.

18 Papadopoulos, Συμβουλαί, 174; and more recently, Ph. A. Oikonomou, Βυζαντινή ἐκκλησιαστική μουσική καὶ ψαλμοδία ιστορικομουσικολογική μελέτη (Aigion, 1992), 102 and 162.

which begins with the sentence ‘Byzantine Music in its main features resembles Gregorian’.  

Tillyard’s colleague and collaborator Egon Wellesz – whose *History of Byzantine Music and Hymnography* continues to be cited today as an authoritative reference-work despite the profound changes in scholarly perspective evident from the much shorter introduction to the field printed in the revised *New Grove Dictionary* – devoted an entire monograph to the question of Greek–Latin musical relations: the now largely outdated *Eastern Elements in Western Chant*. A Roman Catholic composer of polyphonic masses, Wellesz came closest to the views of his Greek antagonists when he conceded that the cultivation of multi-part singing – upon whose ‘development ... Western musicians concentrated their activity after the end of the eleventh century’ – constituted a departure from early Christianity’s shared inheritance of monophonic chant. Wellesz, however, also believed naïvely that Gregorian chant, despite its gradual replacement within worship by other forms of music, had ‘been kept unchanged by the Western Catholic Church’, when in fact its form and manner of performance had changed numerous times, most recently with the ‘restoration’ of medieval Gregorian melodies spearheaded by the monks of Solesmes.

The necessary corollary to Wellesz’s belief in the perpetual purity of Western plainchant was a typically Orientalist narrative of decline for its Greek counterpart. Wellesz therefore maintained that Byzantine chant

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23 Eg. the *Mass in F Minor for Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass with Organ Accompaniment*, op. 51 (London: Lengnick, 1949) and the unaccompanied *Missa Brevis*, op. 89 (Münster: Gregorius-Musikverlag, 1964).

24 *Eastern Elements*, 186.

25 Ibid., 186–91.


27 Wellesz was not unaware of change in Latin plainchant, but evidently viewed it as having been negated by the Solesmes’ restoration of the earliest recoverable melodies. This may be seen, for example, in his concurrence with Solesmes’ view that Gregorian chant had originally been sung in ‘free rhythm’ and his attribution of the decline of Latin plainchant to ‘the influence of rhythmical secular music’ (*Eastern Elements*, 190–91).
was beset by decadence during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when it was allegedly overcome by 'superficial figuration which completely obscured the original melodic structure'. What Tillyard called 'the growing influence of the East' throughout the late and post-Byzantine periods was seen as the primary agent in the creation of the received tradition of Byzantine chanting. Accordingly, the drone or ison heard in modern performances was probably also 'a late importation from the East' that represented a departure from an allegedly strict medieval tradition of monophony. Wellesz did not approve of these developments, indicating this most clearly by his unwillingness to apply the appellation 'Byzantine' to the received tradition, calling it instead 'Neo-Greek ecclesiastical music'.

As I have shown elsewhere in some detail, Tillyard and Wellesz's rejection of the received Byzantine tradition's authenticity and their decision to identify closely its medieval forebear with Gregorian chant as restored and sonically re-envisioned in the late nineteenth century by the monks of Solesmes was partially due to a series of methodological errors. Most of these, including confusion of Solesmes' palaeographic achievement with its aurally authoritative performing style, stemmed from their naïve approach to the gap between musical notation and its realisation in sound, which today is the focus of the musicological sub-discipline known as 'performance (or performing) practice'. Yet even

28 Wellesz, 'Music of the eastern churches,' 17.
30 H.J.W. Tillyard, Twenty Canons from the Trinity Hirmologium, MMB Transcripta IV (Boston: The Byzantine Institute, 1952), 5.
31 Wellesz, 'Music of the eastern churches', 17–18.
34 See Lingas, 'Performance practice', esp. 58–61 and 64–73. Thrasyboulos Georgiades was the first to criticise the founders of the MMB for their insensitivity to issues of performance practice in his devastating article 'Bemerkungen zur Erforschung der byzantinisichen Kirchenmusik', BZ 39 (1939), 67–88. On the current state of the field, see H.M. Brown, D. Hiley, et al., 'Performing practice', in S. Sadie, ed. and J. Tyrrell, New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, XIX, 349–88. In the portion of this article (I., 2) devoted to sacred Western monophony (350–52), David Hiley states categorically that 'there is no evidence that Latin singers ever used the ison or drone note of late Byzantine chant' (352), citing as evidence Nowacki's refutation of Jammers' earlier hypothesis that the 'paraphonistae' mentioned in Roman manuscripts might have been drone-holders. There is, however, later evidence from elsewhere in medieval Europe that drones were sometimes
more important for understanding early scholars’ views regarding the relative cultural positions through history of Byzantine and Latin church music, however, was the antipathy prevalent in Western (and Westernised Greek) musical circles of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries for the sound of traditional Greek chanting. Greek traditionalists, as we have already noted above, matched this negative sentiment by vigorously asserting the historical continuity of Byzantine chant and denouncing any attempt to reform or replace it as a betrayal of Hellenism and Orthodoxy.

The internal disputes between traditionalist and Westernising factions of the Greek Orthodox Church over liturgical music were frequent, public and bitter enough to receive the collective name of ‘The Musical Question’ (‘Τὸ μουσικὸν ζήτημα’). Abroad, where wholehearted defenders of the received tradition of Byzantine chanting were understandably fewer in number, negative appraisals of it appear to have been the norm. This can be seen, for example, in the following excerpts from commentary the scholar and Roman Catholic choirmaster Sir Richard R. Terry offered in 1909 to accompany a demonstration of Byzantine music by some of his singers:

I must ask you not to smile at the singing, because the effect of hearing this music for the first time with trained English voices is curious. When you hear the regular Arab singing it is much as if a person were holding his nose and howling. Even Dr. Fortescue, in his book, calls it caterwauling.

... My own experience is that when Oriental singers get to the upper notes of the scale, it is generally difficult to know what they are trying to sing. In any case the chromatic melodies sound weird when listened to for the first time. Most of my friends – after I have given them a bar or two – say ‘Thank you’ with such fervent emphasis that it clearly indicates they have had enough. The Gramophone Company asked me to give them three records of this Byzantine music, and when the first had been duly recorded, the courteous secretary also said ‘Thank you’ with equal

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35 Recent and relatively dispassionate historical surveys of these debates are Υ. Filopoulos, Εἰσαγωγὴ στὴν Ἑλληνικὴ πολυφωνικὴ ἐκκλησιαστικὴ μουσικὴ (Athens, 1990), 26–151; and K. Romanou, ‘Εθνικής Μουσικής Περιήγησις 1901–1912; Ελληνικά μουσικά περιοδικά ως πηγή έρευνας τῆς ιστορίας τῆς Νεοελληνικῆς Μουσικῆς (Athens, 1996), I, 31–95.
fervour, and opined that one such record in their catalogue would be as much as the philistine British public would stand.\textsuperscript{36}

\textbf{The Cultural Position of Byzantine Music in the Light of Recent Scholarship}

Many of the positions held by Byzantine musicology's founders have been modified in the light of investigations of previously understudied repertories and increasingly frequent contacts between Greek and Western scholars conducted over the last half century. Although a full account of these advances is beyond the scope of this present article,\textsuperscript{37} it is possible to provide here a brief account of their development. During the 1950s and early 1960s work began in earnest on the melismatic chants for the Byzantine Divine Office and eucharistic liturgies contained in the Psaltikon and Asmatikon, collections of, respectively, solo and choral chants employed both in the Cathedral Rite of Hagia Sophia and in monasteries of the Stoudite tradition.\textsuperscript{38} Studies of later counterparts to these 'classic' florid repertories in Akolouthia manuscripts paved the way for direct confrontations with the allegedly decadent music of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in the form of Edward V. Williams' surveys of St John Koukouzeles' music for vespers, which rehabilitated previously maligned works as harbingers of a 'Byzantine \textit{ars nova}'.\textsuperscript{39} Subsequent major studies of other neglected late Byzantine repertories by Conomos\textsuperscript{40} and Touliatos\textsuperscript{41} were complemented on the one hand by


\textsuperscript{37} For a brief account, see Lingas, 'Performance Practice', 74–76. An extensive general bibliography is appended to Levy and Troelsgård, 'Byzantine Chant', 748–56.


\textsuperscript{40} D. Conomos, \textit{Byzantine Chorobiaka and Trisagia in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries} (Thessaloniki: Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies, 1974); idem, \textit{The Late Byzantine and Slavonic Communion Cycle: Liturgy and Music} (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1985).

\textsuperscript{41} D. Touliatos-Banker, \textit{The Byzantine Anemos Chant of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries} (Thessaloniki: Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies, 1984).
continued work on the Asmatikon and Psaltikon, and on the other by systematic explorations of sources from the period between the Ottoman conquest of 1453 and the advent of the ‘New Method’, the reformed Byzantine notation of the ‘Three Teachers’ that was officially adopted by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1814 and still in use today. Greek scholars including Simon Karas, Markos Dragoumis, Manolis Chatzigiakoumis and the prolific Gregorios Stathis, who has also supervised a number of important doctoral theses at the University of Athens’ recently founded Department of Music, have done much to foster a better understanding of post-Byzantine chant. The extent of change in Byzantine music – especially with regard to rhythm, chromaticism and ornamentation, elements that were recorded with much less precision in pre-Chrysanthine notation – through the centuries remains in dispute, but it is now clear that the chanting heard in most parts of Greece, the Balkans and the Middle East is not an invention of the Three Teachers, but part of a continuous tradition reaching back into the Middle Ages.
Musicologists together with liturgists have similarly done much to refine earlier views of musical relations between the Byzantine East and Latin West, particularly during the first millennium A.D. The formation in Late Antiquity of the systems of Christian worship known today as 'rites' initially created a kind of unity in diversity, from among which scholars have discovered a host of variations on such archetypal forms and patterns as the Eucharist and the daily cycle of prayer that may be broadly distinguished from one another according to language, region of origin and suitability for urban or monastic use.\(^9\) Within these bounds, which were largely coterminous geographically and socially with those of the Roman Empire during the fourth and early fifth centuries, the practices of spiritually or culturally important centres often exercised a formative influence on worship elsewhere, leading to complex patterns of borrowing between rites. Items and practices of liturgical or devotional song were prominent among the elements of worship exchanged between monasteries and cities on the one hand, and different regions of the Empire on the other.

An outstanding example of such interchange is the rapid diffusion of biblical psalm-singing from the deserts of Egypt to urban and monastic communities throughout the Mediterranean basin, a process which McKinnon has characterised as a 'psalmodic movement'.\(^50\) Unfortunately, no instances of notated psalmody survive from this period, but the ease with which psalmodic practices spread across linguistic and geographic barriers – of which Augustine’s famous report in the Confessions of the Milanese church’s recent adoption of antiphonal singing ‘after the manner of the eastern regions’ is but a single instance\(^51\) – would seem to presuppose a certain level of musical compatibility across the empire’s Christian churches, something that should not be unexpected within the context of a politically unified Mediterranean. Such a conclusion is, at the very least, not contradicted by the fact that disputes over liturgical or devotional singing in Late Antiquity focused on such universal issues as


the spiritual utility of musically interesting psalmody, the need to keep order within the assembly, and the place of non-scriptural hymnody.

The degree to which the entire Mediterranean remained a culturally and socially distinct entity in the centuries after the fall of the Western Roman Empire is an issue that has been much debated in recent years. For our present purposes, it will be sufficient for us to note that the musical traditions of the Greek East and the Latin West evidently remained sufficiently compatible to allow for a modicum of exchange and even mutual appreciation well into the second millennium AD. This may be seen first in the Eastern hymns and responsorial psalms – mostly adapted to Latin, but in a few instances left in their original Greek – that were incorporated into the liturgical repertories of Rome, Milan, Benevento, Spain and Gall during the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries.

Western enthusiasm for Greek musical traditions seems initially not to have been affected significantly by the souring of relations between West and East during the later eighth and ninth centuries over such issues as political precedence and iconodule theology. Around the year 800, for example, Carolingian theorists adopted the Byzantine system of eight

53 In addition to Canons 15, 17 and 23 of the Council of Laodicea (MECL Nos. 255–57), see Niceta of Remesiana’s instructions for congregational singing in De utilitate hymnorum (MECL No. 311).
56 Eg., the Improperia for Good Friday, the Old Roman Alleluias for Easter Week and the bilingual Greek–Latin chants of the Beneventan repertory.
musical modes known as the Octoechos as a tool for the systematisation of Gregorian chant. Notker Balbulus reports in the *Gesta Caroli Magni* that Charlemagne, after hearing some Byzantine ‘antiphons’ for the octave of Epiphany, ordered their translation into Latin, a tale verified through comparative study with by Oliver Strunk. A further manifestation of Frankish interest in Byzantine liturgy was the compilation of the *Missagraeca*, a Roman mass with its ordinary and, in a few manuscripts, some of its proper chants in Greek.

Although Westerners evidently had ceased borrowing from Byzantine musical traditions by the end of the first millennium AD, the extant sources indicate that Byzantine and Latin Christians generally remained tolerant of – and, occasionally, even enthusiastic about – each other’s liturgical music. In the tenth century it is interesting to note that Liudprand of Cremona, while complaining about virtually every aspect of Byzantine society, did not object to the imperial acclamations he heard for musical reasons, but only to what he saw as the empty flattery of their texts. Odo of Deuil’s description of Byzantine singing in the mid-twelfth century is thoroughly positive, noting that the Greek clergy

... made a favourable impression because of their sweet chanting; for the mingling of voices, the heavier with the light, the eunuch’s, namely, with the main voice (for many of them were eunuchs), softened the hearts of the Franks. Also they gave the onlookers pleasure by their graceful bearing and gentle clapping of hands and genuflections.

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Appreciation for Byzantine chanting is also suggested by an episode in the vita of St Neilos the Calabrian (910–1004) describing the saint’s reception of an invitation to celebrate a Greek all-night vigil (agrypnia) in honour of St Benedict at the Abbey of Montecassino.63 Byzantine reports of musical contacts from the period between the mutual excommunications of 1054 to the Latin conquest of Constantinople in 1204 are generally free from the hostility to Western Christians evident in so much contemporary writing.64 The only complaint about music in the lists of Latin ‘errors’ studied by Kolbaba concerns the Roman practice of abstaining from the chanting of Alleluia during fasts, rather than Western liturgical music per se.65 A response by the canonist John, Bishop of Kitros (late twelfth-early thirteenth century) to a question about the propriety of Romaic Orthodox being buried in Latin churches or vice-versa with services chanted by both Greeks and Latins presents music, as Michael Adamis has previously noted,66 as still an area of agreement between the two Christian churches. Bishop John begins his answer by listing the Filioque and the use of unleavened bread as the two major points of dispute, after which he says that the chanted texts and their melodies (αἱ μελωδίαι) are held in common by the two traditions, noting further that Latin psalmody is not foreign (ἡ ἐπὶ αὐτῶς ψαλμωδία οὐκ ἔστιν ἑθνική).67 Another witness to musical compatibility from about the same time is the historian John Kinnamos, who reports in his chronicle that the Emperor Manuel Komnenos was received in Hungary by Latin clergy and laity that ‘in the most harmonious way (ἐμμελῶς) chanted a sacred hymn’ by one of ‘our composers’.68

The emotionally charged accounts of Latin conquest by Eustathius of Thessalonica and Nicetas Choniates include decidedly less happy musical


68 Historiae L. V, 8, quoted and translated in B. Schartau, “Testimonia” of Byzantine musical practice, chiefly collected from non-musical (literary) sources, III’, CIMAGL 68 (1998), 55. Schartau (61) has identified the hymn in question has a sticheron for the fourth week of Lent from the Triodion.
encounters with Western Christians. Eustathius’ description of the Norman sack and occupation of Thessalonica in 1185 includes passages recalling boorish attempts to disrupt Greek services, while Choniates’ account of the Fourth Crusade describes the conquerors as pitiless and unmoved by tears or sweet singing. Yet neither the further poisoning of Greek–Latin relations by the Crusades nor the increasing stylistic distance between the elite compositional genres of Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox liturgical music – measured polyphony and kalophonic chant, respectively – were apparently sufficient in and of themselves to bring about the total estrangement of the two musical traditions. Even a notorious Latinophobe like St Symeon of Thessalonica (d. 1429), whose critiques of a broad range of Roman Catholic practices display knowledge extending well beyond the usual Byzantine complaints about azymes and the recitation of the Filioque to encompass, among other things, liturgical dramas and baptismal formulas, never attacks Latin singing. This is even more remarkable when one considers that St Symeon possessed a level of musical sophistication sufficient to write hymns and mandate the chanting of settings by particular composers in his unpublished Typikon for Thessalonica’s cathedral.

Writing a couple of decades after St Symeon, Sylvester Syropoulos describes in his anti-unionist account of the Council of Ferrara–Florence (1438–39) numerous encounters with Western ceremonial and liturgical music, none of them unfavourable. The closest Syropoulos comes to

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70 Quoted in ibid., 58.
71 Contra haereses (PG 155.112–17).
72 De sacramentis (PG 155.228–30).
73 Eg. MS Athens 2047, f. 147v, where he requires the chanting of a Polyeleos by Koukoumas. For a general survey of Symeon’s liturgical works, see I. Phountoules, Τὸ λειτουργικὸν ἐργον Συμεῶν τοῦ Θεσσαλονίκης (Thessalonica, 1966). On Symeon and music see A. Lingas, Sunday Matins in the Byzantine Cathedral Rite: Music and Liturgy, Ph.D. diss., University of British Columbia 1996, 191–278 (a revised and expanded version of this study is forthcoming from Ashgate Publishing).
74 At first sight, this statement would appear to be contradicted by an extremely negative description of Latin music-making in a fifteenth-century Russian polemic against the Council of Florence quoted by Dimitri Conomos in two articles (‘Experimental polyphony’, 1–2; and ‘Music as religious propaganda: Venetian polyphony and a Byzantine response to the Council of Florence’, in J. Behr, ed., A. Louth and D. Conomos, Abba: The Tradition of Orthodoxy in the West: Festschrift for Bishop Kallistos (Ware) of Diokleia (Crestwood, NY: SVS Press, 2003), 114). Indeed, Conomos presents this passage – taken, with a few unnoted modifications, including the omission of the word ‘Emperor’ in the first sentence, from N. Zernov, Moscow the Third Rome, 2nd edn (London: SPCK, 1938; repr. New York, 1971), 37 – as ‘typifying[ing] the prevailing negative Orthodox attitude to Western Christianity’ (‘Experimental Polyphony’, 1). On the other hand, in both articles Conomos casts some doubt on the credibility of this source by remarking that one ‘can only wonder in which
criticism of Latin singing is in his description of the concluding service of union on 6 July 1439, in which he notes that the Latin cantors (ψάλται) at one point sang some celebratory songs (ἀσματαν τωλε εὐξαριστήρια) that seemed harmonious but incomprehensible to the Byzantines (ἡμίν δὲ ὡς ἄσημοι ἐδόκουν φωναὶ ἐμμελεῖς), possibly a reference to an elaborate polytextual motet or other advanced piece of mensural polyphony such as those written for Pope Eugenius IV by Guillaume Dufay. Although Vespasiano da Bisticci praises the dignified vestments of the Greeks in his rapturous account of the same event, none of the Western sources offer specific aesthetic judgements of the Byzantines’ musical contributions to the union service.

In the highly contentious atmosphere of the Paleologan period, the absence of Greek polemics against Latin liturgical music such as those advanced by modern Orthodox authors music is significant but obviously not sufficient to prove that the two musical cultures remained in some sense stylistically compatible. Positive proof, however, may be found in the existence of two-part polyphony in medieval Byzantine notation.

Florentine church the writer had such an experience!’ (‘Experimental Polyphony’, 2; ‘Music as Religious Propaganda’, 114).

The doubts implicit in Conomos’ latter comment are substantiated by further investigation. The attack on Latin liturgical music, which Zernov presented only in translation and without precisely identifying its source, does not appear in either of the two the Russian eyewitness accounts of the Florentine council: the anonymous and relatively even-handed Journa to the Council of Florence; and the polemical Tale of the Council of Florence by the Monk Simeon. It comes instead from pages 373–74 of the anonymous Oration Selected from the Holy Writings (Slavo izbrano ot sviatykh pisanii, in A.N. Popov, ed., Istoriiko-literaturny obzor drevenurusskikh polemicheskikh sochineni protiv Latiyian, XI–XV vv. (Moscow, 1875; repr. with an introduction by I. Dujčev, London: Variorum, 1972, 360–95), a mid-fifteenth century polemic combining elements of the Monk Simeon’s Tale with the accounts of Russian chroniclers who, according John Fennell (A History of the Russian Church to 1448 (London and New York: Longman, 1995, 181), were ’only too inclined to magnify the sterling Orthodoxy of [Grand Prince] Vasily [II].


77 Eg. the Diary of Geminiani Inghirami, which records only that ‘after the litany the Greeks chanted songs of praise according to their custom (Greci cantaverunt certas laudes more ipsorum)’, in G. Hofmann, ed., Fragmenta protocolii, diaria privata, Concilium Florentinum documenta et scriptores, series A, vol. 3, part 2 (Rome: Pontificium institutum orientalium studiorum, 1951), 36.
examples of which were first described in 1971 by Michael Adams. At first these were viewed as isolated compositional experiments by Latinophiles, but it has become increasingly clear that they represent written traces of the adoption by several prominent Byzantine musicians – including Manuel Chrysaphes, Lampadarios of the Royal Clergy and arguably the fifteenth century’s leading composer of Greek Orthodox chant – of contemporary Western forms of simple and usually improvised chant-based polyphony sometimes called cantus planus binatum. Virtually ignored in traditional progressivist narratives of Western art music’s development from allegedly ‘elementary’ monophony to Schoenberg, simple polyphony and the vast repertories of Western chant are now known to have been statistically much more prevalent in Latin Christendom during the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries than elite forms of notated mensural polyphony. Viewed in this context, Byzantine polyphonic practices of the fifteenth century may now be seen as forming the missing link between earlier traditions of medieval Byzantine chanting and the musical repertories and polyphonic practices of Venetian Crete, elements of which survive today in the chant traditions of the Ionian Islands.

79 Conomos, ‘Experimental Polyphony’.
Not only was the adoption of Western polyphonic practices by some Byzantine cantors during the fifteenth century apparently accepted without official protests, but also tolerance by ethnic Greeks for their use within Orthodox worship extends into at least the seventeenth century (and beyond it to the present day in the Ionian Islands). Thus in 1668 Patriarchs Paisios of Alexandria and Makarios of Antioch offered the following ruling about the liturgical propriety of Russian polyphony in Baroque styles (partesnoye penie):

Although it is not taken from the Eastern Church, but in this country [to which we have come] its use is disturbing to no one.\textsuperscript{84}

Western appreciation for Byzantine music may still be seen in the positive statements regarding Cretan chanting made by in the last two decades of the fifteenth century by a pair of German pilgrims on their way to the Holy Land.\textsuperscript{85} A fundamental change of musical tastes made possible by the advent of music printing and the wide dissemination of new forms of polyphony, however, was already evident by the end of the next century when the Spanish composer Francisco Guerrero (1528–99) described the Greek chant he encountered on the island of Zakynthos as ‘muy simple, e ignorante’.\textsuperscript{86}

Conclusion: Historical Narratives and the Sound of Orthodoxy

The preceding overview of musical relations between Greek and Latin Christians during the Middle Ages presents a picture that might be surprising to readers acquainted with the usual historical narratives of the two traditions’ development. Whereas Greek Orthodox traditionalists and Western church musicians of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries often found each other’s style of singing repulsive, medieval Byzantines and Latins who otherwise disagreed strongly on any number of theological or aesthetic matters were able to appreciate – or at the very least, refrain


\textsuperscript{84} Cited in A.V. Preobrazhenskii, ‘Iz perykh let partesnago peniia v Moskve’, 

\textsuperscript{85} Muzykal’nyi sovremennik 3 (Nov. 1915), 38–39; quoted and trans. in C. Jensen, Nikolai Diletskii’s ‘Grammatika’ (Grammar) and the Musical Culture of Seventeenth-Century Muscovy, Ph.D. diss., Princeton University 1987, 78.

\textsuperscript{86} Panagiotakes, ‘Mapropies’, 61.

\textsuperscript{86} F. Guerrero, \textit{El viaje de Hierusalem} (Seville, 1592), R.P. Calcraft, ed., Exeter Hispanic Texts 37 (Exeter: University of Exeter, 1984), 16 (my thanks to Michael Christoforidis for this reference). Of course, it is possible that Guerrero simply walked into a church on a day when the service was being sung by a poorly trained cantor, an experience that I myself have had not infrequently in Greek Orthodox churches both in Europe and North America.
from condemning – the liturgical music of the other. Even during the centuries between the mutual excommunications of 1054 and the Ottoman conquest of 1453, music seems to have remained largely exempt from the tendency to make observable differences in Greek and Latin practice theologically significant. Its position is thus in many ways comparable to that of visual art, which has historically provided a great deal of common ground between Eastern and Western Christians,\textsuperscript{87} but today is frequently the subject for Orthodox polemics launched by authors eager to repudiate the Italianate styles of iconography commonly used through the middle of the twentieth century to decorate Orthodox churches.\textsuperscript{88}

In the case of liturgical singing, we have observed significant areas of commonality through the end of the fifteenth century. Chief among these is that the divergence of styles employed in the most technically advanced works of Greek and Latin composers – respectively kalophonic chant and mensural polyphony – was long overshadowed statistically in the services of both traditions by the ancient central repertories of Byzantine and Gregorian chant. Furthermore, it seems probable that the two traditions not only shared similar musical forms, but also remained aurally compatible. Arguing in favour of this suggestion are the transmission from East to West of certain chants and the theoretical framework of the Octoechos in the first millennium, the adoption of Italian polyphonic practices by Greek singers during the second millennium, and the aesthetically favourable reports of the medieval eyewitnesses quoted above.

One can perhaps better understand the latter by shedding inherited preconceptions regarding the proper sound of Christian chant, the ideals for which have varied significantly according to place and time. This is, of course, easier said than done, particularly today when the vibrant received tradition of Byzantine chanting possesses sonic attributes that are immediately recognisable and increasingly being adopted even by non-Greeks as an aural badge of Orthodoxy.\textsuperscript{89} Fans of the testosterone-soaked

\textsuperscript{87} Particularly illuminating in this regard are the following essays (with appended catalogue descriptions of particular artworks from the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s recent exhibition) in H. C. Evans, ed., Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261–1557) (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2004): ‘Italy, the Mendicant Orders and the Byzantine Sphere’, 449–88; M. Georgopoulou, ‘Venice and the Byzantine Sphere’, 489–514; R.S. Nelson, ‘Byzantium and the Rebirth of Art and Learning in Italy and France’, 515–44; and M.W. Ainsworth, ”À la façon grèce”: The Encounter of Northern Renaissance Artists with Byzantine Icons’, 545–593.

\textsuperscript{88} T. Ware, The Orthodox Church, rev. edn (London: Penguin, 1993), 141–42.

\textsuperscript{89} Although this broadly based phenomenon has yet to be studied systematically, examples of it include the re-Grecification of Romanian chanting by the choir of the Stavropoleos church in Bucharest, the application of the Byzantine drone (ison) to Znamenny chant by the monks of Valaam and the ubiquity throughout the Orthodox world of the
modern Greek cantorial scene, for example, would undoubtedly be more than a little shocked to hear the 'patriarchal vocal style' ('patriarchiko yphos') of twelfth-century eunuchs.\textsuperscript{90} By the same token, not a few listeners whose conception of Gregorian chant has been determined by the ethereal style of performance pioneered by the monks of Solesmes have reacted strongly against the recordings of Marcel Péres,\textsuperscript{91} whose Ensemble Organum has taken seriously the scholarship suggesting that Roman chant and other music of the medieval West should be sonically 're-envisioned',\textsuperscript{92} perhaps even in the style of modern Greek Orthodox chanting.\textsuperscript{93} Still, much has been achieved in recent decades as globalisation and the advent of World Music as a commercially viable product have diluted the hegemony of Western music. The successful tours and recordings of such artists as Theodoros Vassilikos, the Greek Byzantine Choir, Soeur Marie Keyrouz, the Romeiko Ensemble and Cappella Romana, together with the work of contemporary composers including Tavener, Ivan Moody, and Christos Hatzis, have fostered for Byzantine music a degree of acceptance among the Western public that would have been inconceivable a century ago to Terry and the employees of The Gramophone Company.\textsuperscript{94}

\footnotesize{Marian carol ‘Ἕγνῃ Παρθένε’ on a text by St Nektarios of Aegina (1846–1920), originally set to music by Fr Gregorios Simonopetrites (Ὑπάρχειν τερτνὼν [Mt. Athos: Holy Monastery of Simonos Petras, 1991], 637–40) but since translated into many other languages.

\textsuperscript{90} A recent survey of eunuch singers in Byzantium is N. Moran, ‘Byzantine castrati’, Plainsong and Medieval Music 11, 2 (2002), 99–112. In recent years the website of the Association of Constantinopolitan Friends of Music in Athens (http://www.cmkon.org) has become a major promoter of the patriarchiko yphos.

\textsuperscript{91} Péres has frequently collaborated with the Byzantine cantor Lykourgos Angelopoulos in his controversial recordings of Western medieval chant and polyphony. For the views of Péres and several of his colleagues in other ensembles on the performance of medieval music, see B.D. Sherman, Inside Early Music: Conversations with Performers (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 23–95.

\textsuperscript{92} Eg. P. Jeffrey, Re-Envisioning Past Musical Cultures: Ethnomusicology and the Study of Gregorian Chant (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992). In The Sound of Medieval Song: Ornamentation and Vocal Style According to the Treatises (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), T.J. McGee argues strongly that Latin plainchant was for many centuries audibly Mediterranean in its vocal style and ornamentation, making it thus sonically more akin to the received tradition of Byzantine chanting than to the sound of singers trained in modern Western conservatories.

\textsuperscript{93} 'Furthermore, the guttural, forceful and vibrant delivery of Orthodox singers need not be ruled out as an impossibility for Western chant' (Hiley, 'Performing Practice, I, 2. Medieval Monophony', 352).

\textsuperscript{94} Research for this article was supported by an Elizabeth and J. Richardson Dilworth Fellowship in the School of Historical Studies of the Institute for Advanced Study, an American Council of Learned Societies NEH/SSRC International and Area Studies Fellowship, and the Katherine K. Herberger College of Fine Arts at Arizona State University.}
Byzantine hymns of hate

Archimandrite Ephrem (Lash)

The remote origin of this paper was a conversation I had nearly a quarter of century ago with a Coptic deacon in Oxford. He was optimistic about the prospects of an agreement being reached between the Chalcedonian and the non-Chalcedonian Churches. I remarked that one practical problem would be the fact that in a number of our liturgical texts we denounced by name some of the leading Saints of each others’ Churches. He said that the Copts had no such hymns. This is not however the case with the Churches of the Byzantine tradition, and I have vivid memories of the enthusiastic way the monks of the Holy Mountain sing hymns to lively and cheerful melodies denouncing leading heretics from Arius in the fourth century to John the Grammarian in the ninth.

On reflection I have come to the conclusion that such denunciatory hymns are a peculiarity of the Byzantine Orthodox tradition. I cannot recollect any such texts in the Latin missals and breviaries, while in the Book of Common Prayer I can only think of the splendid phrase in the Commination service for Ash Wednesday, ‘From the Bishop of Rome and all his detestable enormities’. This is quite general and can be applied to any Pope from Pius V to John Paul II, passing by Pio Nono and John XXIII.¹ The well-known English Catholic battle hymn, by Father Faber, ‘Faith of our Fathers’ merely alludes to ‘dungeon, fire and sword’ in so general a manner that it has even been adapted for use by Protestants, with the third verse,

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¹ I have been told that theological controversies between Congregationalists and Unitarians in the nineteenth century were sometimes alluded to in hymns on both sides; but again, this is done by allusion and by overt reference to individuals.

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Faith of our fathers, Mary’s prayers
Shall win our country back to Thee;
And through the truth that comes from God,
England shall then indeed be free,

altered to suit Reformation susceptibilities.²

We may see allusions to the Pope and his agents in Luther’s ‘Ein feste Burg’,³ as one English version has it,

Though devils all the world should fill,
All eager to devour us.
We tremble not, we fear no ill,
They shall not overpower us.
This world’s prince may still
Scowl fierce as he will,
He can harm us none,
He’s judged; the deed is done;
One little word can fell him.

Nowhere do we find the detailed ‘naming and shaming’ that characterises the hymnography of the Byzantine Orthodox. I find it hard, and I imagine you will also, to envisage a Catholic congregation today lustily singing something like this:

Let Luther, Calvin, Zwingli too
Be cast out from the Church with shame;
With Cranmer and his godless crew,
Who marred Christ’s glorious, holy name.⁴

As an example of this from Byzantine hymnography, here is a Vespers sticheron from the feast of the Fathers of the Seventh Oecumenical Council in October:

As true Shepherds
you bravely drove
far from the Saviour’s flock
the Macedionusses, and Nestoriusses,

² The Protestant version runs: ‘Faith of our fathers, we will strive//To win all nations unto Thee;//And through the truth that comes from God,//We all shall then be truly free’.
³ ‘Und wenn die Welt voll Teufel wär’//Und wollt’ uns gar verschlingen,//So fürchten wir uns nicht so sehr,//Es soll uns doch gelingen,//Der Fürst dieser Welt,//Wie saur er sich stellt,//Tut er uns doch nicht,//Das macht, er ist gericht’t,//Ein Wörtlein kann ihn fallen’.
⁴ To be sung to Tallis’s Canon.
the Eftychisses, and Dioscorusses,  
Apollinariususes and Sabelioseverusses,  
exposed as dangerous wolves  
in sheepskins, stripped of their fleeces,  
making them thrice-wretched;  
therefore we call you blessed.⁵

The liturgical celebration of the Councils of the Church and the detailed doctrines they proclaimed is also peculiarly Byzantine. The nearest thing in western liturgy would, I suppose, be Trinity Sunday, Corpus Christi and the Immaculate Conception, but I know of no offices to celebrate Florence, Trent or Vatican I.

In the Byzantine calendar there are four feasts that are specifically devoted to the Fathers who produced the conciliar doctrines and definitions. In the Greek tradition these are the Sundays of the First, Fourth and Seventh Councils together with Sunday of Orthodoxy.⁶ The Slavonic tradition makes the second of these the Sunday of the first Six Councils. Many of the texts for these days, apart from those for the Sunday of Orthodoxy, are anonymous and impossible to date precisely. Many are probably of monastic origin and suppose a fairly detailed knowledge of both theology and church history.

There is also a number of texts denouncing heretics in the offices of individual saints, like Saints Athanasios and Cyril of Alexandria, but I will limit myself to the four ‘conciliar’ feasts.

The Fathers of the First Council

The Sunday after the Ascension is celebrated as the Sunday of the 318 Fathers of the First Council of Nicaea, which means that the Fathers do not have a full office, since the Ascension is still being celebrated.

The four stichera for Great Vespers illustrate many of the characteristics of these offices. The principal villain in this case is, naturally, Arius, though on the ‘Widdecombe Fair’ principle common to many of these texts, other heresiarchs are not forgotten.

⁵ Τοὺς Μακεδονίους καὶ Νεστορίους//καὶ τοὺς Εὐτυχεῖς καὶ Διοσκόρους///'Απολλιναρίους τε Σαβελλιάσβητρους///λύκους βαρέας ἀποδειχθέντας///ἐν δέρμαις προβάτων///πόρρω τῆς ποίμνης τοῦ Σωτήρος///δύσ ἄληθεις Ποιμένες///ἀπηλάσατε γυμνοῖς κωδίων///τοὺς τρισαθλίους καταστήσαντας ἀριστα///δεκὲν ὅμως μακαρι̣ζομένεον.

⁶ The Ecumenical Patriarchate has recently added a commemoration of the Second Council of 381 on the first Sunday after Pentecost, the Sunday of All Saints, though this is not observed by all Greek Orthodox Churches, including the Church of Cyprus.
The first sticheron, grounding the Orthodox doctrine of the Word on Psalm 109, condemns Arius for making the Second Person of the Trinity a creature:

You were born from the womb before the morning star, without a mother from the Father before the ages, though Arius dares to call you a creature, and does not glorify you as God, insanely joining with the creatures you, the Creator, and laying up for himself as treasure the fuel of the eternal fire.

But the Council in Nicaea loudly proclaimed you, Lord, to be Son of God, equal in rank with the Father and the Spirit.7

The second recalls the famous vision of Peter of Antioch, in which Christ appeared to him as a young boy holding his tunic, torn in two, to cover his nakedness; a story is alluded to a number of times in these texts. Arius is also declared to theological mentor of Nestorios.

Who divided your garment, O Saviour?
‘Arius’, you said,
who cuts into divisions the Authority equal in honour of the Trinity.
He it was who denied that you were one of the Trinity.
He it was who taught Nestorios not to say ‘Mother of God’.
But the Council in Nicaea loudly proclaimed you, Lord, to be Son of God, equal in rank with the Father and the Spirit.8

In the third sticheron Arius’ death is described in language which recalls that of St Luke’s description of Judas’s death, with whom Arius is compared. Some icons of the First Council depict Arius in the privy with

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an allusion to the tradition of his death. There is also a play on the word ousia.

Arius fell into the precipice of sin, having shut his eyes so as not to see the light, and he was ripped asunder by a divine hook so that along with his entrails he forcibly emptied out all his essence [ousia] and his soul, and was named another Judas, both for his ideas and the manner of his death. But the Council in Nicaea loudly proclaimed you, Lord, to be Son of God, equal in rank with the Father and the Spirit.¹⁰

There are similar allusions in the sixth Ode of the Canon¹⁰:

Escape the mystery of providence he could not, the sower of tares, who was called by the surname Lunacy; for having rivalled Judas, like him the wholly evil one was split asunder.¹¹

Burst open was the belly, the source which poured out the foul and undrinkable water of impious heresies, by the ploughshare of the intercession of the inspired Priests.¹²

The doxastikon of the Liti is a general hymn for the Fathers, which is used in the same place in the office of the Fathers in July, and names a number of heretics condemned by the first four Councils:

You became strict guardians of the apostolic traditions, holy Fathers: for by teaching the orthodox doctrine that the holy Trinity is consubstantial, you overthrew in council the blasphemy of Arius; after him you refuted Makedonios, opponent of the Spirit, you condemned Nestorios, Eftyches


¹¹ The slightly artificial order of words in the translation is because my full translation preserves the acrostic in English.

¹² Λαβείν οὖ δεδώγαται, ζειζανίων ὁ σπορεύς, τὸ τῆς προνοίας ἄφατον, τῆς μανίας ἐπώνυμος ὁ κληθείς, Ἰούδαν χειλώσας γάρ, ὡς ἐκείνος ἐρράγη ὁ παραπόνηρος.

¹³ Γαστήρ διαρρήγνυτα, κατὰ λόγον ἡ πηγή, τὴν θολεράν καὶ ἀποτον, αἱρέσεων, πηγάσασα δυσσεβῶν, ἀρότρω δεήσεως, Ιερέων ἐνθέων προμηθήστατα.
and Dioscoros, Sabellios and the leaderless Severos; ask, we pray, that, delivered from their error, we may guard our life unsullied in the faith.

The canon at Matins is anonymous, despite its having an acrostic in the first person, I SING THE FIRST ASSEMBLY OF PASTORS. One of the troparia of the third Ode alludes to the traditional number of 318 fathers, who battled against the heresiarchs, by its reference to Abraham and his 318 servants who battled against the kings in Genesis 18:

The holy heralds of God, all marching to battle like godly Abraham of old, mightily destroyed your raving foes, O Good One, by your sovereign power.\(^{13}\)

The Fathers of the Fourth Council

The office for the Fathers of the Fourth Council, which is celebrated in July, includes within its scope not only the Monophysites condemned by Chalcedon, but also those condemned at the Sixth Council; Monothelitism being no doubt regarded as a by-product of Monophysitism by the author of the texts. According to a rubric in the Menaion, this was Philotheos, Patriarch of Constantinople in the middle of the fourteenth century. By this period the Great Church had abandoned the old asmatic office in favour of the Stoudite monastic one. The first Canon at Matins is ‘signed’ PHILOTHEOS in the acrostic of the Theotokia.

In the Slavonic use this Sunday is dedicated to the Fathers of the first six Councils. Here the first sticheron at Vespers is taken from the office for the first Council of Nicaea, the second and the third from the October feast. The first Canon, in Tone 6, which is not in the Greek books, is attributed to Germanos II of Constantinople\(^{14}\). That a Canon similar to this was written by Patriarch Germanos is bore out by the first sticheron for Vespers for the October feast of the Fathers:

The Patriarch Germanos the Younger collected together in one Canon the Seven Councils of the Fathers, which had taken place at different times, excellently writing together and strengthening their teachings; he also presents them to the Lord as unsleeping advocates of salvation and fellow-shepherds of the flock.\(^{15}\)

\(^{13}\) Ως πάλαι θείος Ἀβραάμ, στρατευόμενοι πάντες, οί σεπτοί θεγγόροι, τοὺς ἐχθροὺς, σοι ἀγαθὲ, τοὺς μανιωδεῖς τῇ σῇ, δυναστείᾳ κραταίως ἀπώλεσαν.

\(^{14}\) He was Patriarch from 1226 to 1240.

\(^{15}\) Τὰς ἐπτὰ Συνόδος τὰς τῶν Πατέρων, κατὰ διαφόρους καιροὺς συστάσας, εἰς ἑνὰ συνήθροισαν ἐνὶ Κανόνι τῷ δὲ μάλα καλῶς ὁ Πατριάχης, ὁ Γερμανὸς ὁ νέος,
The Canon by St Germanos, used for the feast of the first six councils in the Slav tradition, is in fact one for the Seven Councils, as a number of troparia make clear.

In the second sticheron of the Vespers prosomia for July the poet requires of his hearers a fairly intimate knowledge of church history, quite apart from theology, not to mention the legend of the Argonauts:

Glorious Fathers, you overthrew Pyrrhus and Sergios, with Honorious, Eftyches, Dioskoros and dread Nestorios, saving Christ's flock from both sheer cliffs by radiantly proclaiming Christ to one by hypostasis, but double in natures, revealed by energies alone; as we also worship him as man and perfect God, with the Father and the Spirit, we now glorify you.

The second canon at Matins, found also in the Slavonic, which is sung to what I can only describe as a rollicking set of melodies in Tone 8, not only trounces the heretics by name, but enshrines the technicalities of the Chalcedonian definition in a highly memorable way. The Church may have rejected Arius and Bardaisan, but it certainly learnt from them the pedagogic usefulness of a good tune.

γράφουν ὁμοι τε καὶ κρατῶν, τὰ δόγματα τὰ τοίτων, ὃς καὶ πρέσβεις αὐτοῦ ἀγρύπνους, τῆς σωτηρίας τῷ Κυρίῳ προβάλλεται, καὶ τοῦ ποιμνίου συμποίησεν.

16 Monothelite Patriarch of Constantinople from 638–641 and for the first six months of 654.

17 Patriarch of Constantinople from 610–638. Propounded the doctrine of Two Natures but only one mode of activity, ἐνέργεια, in Christ. He was the author of the Ekthesis which put it forward. His doctrine was condemned in 681.

18 Pope of Rome from 625–638. In a letter supporting Patriarch Sergios he used the expression 'one will' in speaking of Christ. This doctrine of 'Monothelitism' was condemned and Honorius anathematised at the Council of 681.

19 Archimandrite of a monastery in Constantinople, he taught that there was only one nature in Christ 'after the union'. This doctrine of Monophysitism was condemned at the 4th Council of Chalcedon. He also taught Christ's human nature was not consubstantial with ours.

20 St Cyril's successor as Patriarch of Alexandria from 444–451, he supported the doctrine of Monophysitism. He was deposed at the Council of Chalcedon.

21 Patriarch of Antioch 512–518, when he was deposed for denouncing the Council of Chalcedon as Nestorian. A moderate Monophysite, he condemned Eftyches. He died in exile in 538.

22 Presumably a reference to the 'Clashing Rocks' of the Argonaut legend (Apollonius Rhodios, Argonautica, II, 549–600).

23 Πύρρον τε καὶ Σέργιον, καὶ τὸν Ὀνόριον ᾠμα, Ἐυτυχῆ, Διόσκορον, καὶ δεινὸν Νεατόριον κατεστρέφατε, τῶν κρημνῶν ἐνδοξοί, τὸ Χριστοῦ πόμινον, ἐκατέρων διασώσαντες, διπλῶν τοὺς φύσεως, ἵνα τὸν Χριστὸν καθ' υπόστασιν, λαμπρὸς ἀνακριβῶς, μῦνας ἐνεργείαις δεικνύμενον, ὃς ἀνθρωπον, καὶ τέλειον Θεόν, σὺν τῷ Πάτρι καὶ τῷ Πνεύματι, νόν υμᾶς δοξάζομεν.
The devout gathering of the Fathers, which was welded together against Eftyches, following and abiding by the teachings of the godlike Father, Cyril, truly defined the Saviour with two undivided natures.

The three hundred and sixty most devout men overthrew the error of Eftyches and the heresy of Severos when they said: We proclaim Christ in two essences, following the words of the blessed Cyril.

Anyone who does not proclaim Christ, the Word of the Father, in the two natures and energies, let them be anathema; for the fourth Council of the Holy Fathers thus wisely laid down. Therefore let us all call them blessed.

The poets of the Canons not only denounce the heretics by name, but also remind their hearers of the principal texts on which the Fathers had relied in drawing up the conciliar definition, as the following troparia from Odes 5 and 6 of the second Canon make clear:

The fourth Council condemned Severos and Dioskoros, who blasphemed Christ, by confirming the Tome of Leo, Bishop of Rome, who most excellently defined the two natures of the Saviour without division.

The two letters of Cyril, once sent to Succensus, the leader of the East, refute all the error of Severos, as they devoutly proclaim Christ.

Ode 8 of the second Canon is particularly severe, and again supposes a good knowledge of history and theology.

25 The traditional number of the Fathers at Chalcedon.
26 Ἡ τῶν Πατέρων, εὐσεβῆς ὁμήγυρας, ἡ κροτηθείσα ποτέ, κατ’ Ἐω- τυχοῦς ὄντως, τὸν Σωτῆρα ἀρίστην, ἀδιάρέτους φύσευ, ἐν δυαῖ τοῖς τοῦ θείου Πατρὸς Κυρίλλου διδάγμασα, βαΐνουσα σαφῶς καὶ ἐμμένουσα.

Ὡς κρασίας, ὃ ἀρθροῖς τριάκοντα, εὐσεβεστάτων ἄνδρῶν, τὴν Ἐωτυχοῦς πλάνην, καὶ Σεβήρου ἀρίστην, καταβαλόντες ἐφάσαν, ἐν δυαί ταῖς οὐσίαις, Χριστὸν κηρύττομεν, βαΐνοντες ἐπεις Κυρίλλου τοὺς μάκαρος.

Ὁ μὴ κηρύττων, ἐν δυαί ταῖς φύσεις, καὶ ἑνεργείαις Χριστῶν, τῶν τοῦ Πατρὸς Λόγου, σχοίνῃ τὸ ἀνόθεμα, ἡ γὰρ τετάρτη Ἐὐνόδος, τῶν Ἁγίων Πατέρων, ἑμφρόνως οὕτως ἐθέσπια. Πάντες οὐν αὐτοὺς μακαρίσαμεν.

27 Τὸν Σεβήρου καθελεῖν, ἡ τετάρτη Ἐὐνόδος καὶ τὸν Διόσκορον, Χριστὸν βλασφημοῦντας, βεβαιοῦτα τὸν τόμον τοῦ Λέοντος, τοῦ Προέδρου Ῥώμης, πάνω καλῶς τὰς δύο φύσεις, τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἀτήμητος ὀρίζοντα.

28 Αἴ δόο ἐπιστολαί Κυρίλλου αἱ πρὸς τὸν Σύκενον, ἀποσταλείπα ποτὲ, Ἐφας τὸν πρόεδρον, ἐλέγχουσιν ἀπασάν, τὴν Σεβήρου πλάνην, εὐσεβῆς Χριστὸν κηρύττουσαι.
Let the faces be ashamed and the mouths be muzzled of those who do not proclaim one Son in two natures without division, without change and without confusion; for we Orthodox all agree in holding that Christ acts and wills not indeed by one and then another person, but in accordance with both natures.

You that bear the name of Jacob the Patchwork, inscribing his name on yourselves, tell us plainly: Were you of old baptised in his appellation in the font? Therefore, having deserted Christ for that man's sake, like him you rave, being clearly without shame.

The fourth Council in Chalcedon overthrew the dread Dioskoros, Eftyches and Severos, finally thrusting out of the Church of Christ the Master their thorny error that confounds the natures of the Saviour. Holding to right belief with it, let us then hate them.

The last troparion justifies what may appear as the somewhat extravagant title of this paper; it also raises acutely the problem concerning relations with the non-Chalcedonian Churches which I mentioned in my opening paragraph. For while the Oriental Orthodox would agree in the condemnation of Eftyches, both Dioscoros and Severos are among their leading Saints and Doctors.

The Fathers of the Seventh Council

The October feast of the Fathers celebrates the Seventh Council in both Greek and Slavonic traditions. The texts for Vespers, however, are ones that celebrate all seven councils, not just the Seventh, as the opening sticheron that I quoted earlier makes clear. The three Doxastika of Vespers are all taken from the office of the Fathers of Nicaea in the Pentecostarion. In other words, Vespers makes no mention whatsoever of the Seventh Council, except in references to the fact that there are seven councils.

The Canon at Matins, which is by St Theophanes, is however devoted to the Seventh Council, and this is clearly stated in the acrostic: I SING THE

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29 This epithet, using an otherwise unattested Greek word, κέντων, from the Latin cento, refers to Jacob's nickname, 'Baradæus', derived from the Syriac word for a horse blanket; an allusion to the rags in which he went about. Whether the poet intends an allusion to the other meaning in Latin of a collection of texts is not clear. Perhaps we might translate 'Jacob the Raggah'.

30 Ἐν Χαλκηδόνι Σύνοδος, ἡ τετάρτη Διώσκορον, Εὐτυχῆ, Σεβήρον, τοὺς δευτόρας κατεβαλεῖ, εἰς τέλος ἐξώσασα, τὴν ἀκανθώδη πλάνην αὐτῶν, τὴν συγχυτικὴν, τῶν οὐσίων τοῦ Σωτῆρος, τῆς θείας Εἰκκλησίας, τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ Δεσπότου, μεθ' ἡς ὀρθοδοξοῦντες, μισήσωμεν δὴ τούτους.
SEVENTH SYNOD OF THE BLEST. The kathisma of the Canon is taken from the office of the first council, as are the prosomia and the Doxastikon of Lauds.

St Theophanes links the first and second councils of Nicaea and, comparing the seven councils to the seven days of creation, notes that just as God ceased from his work on the seventh day, so the Seventh Council marks the cessation of all heresies:

Since the beginning the seventh is the best of numbers; for the complete rest from God’s creative work took place originally on the seventh day; and now the cessation of all heresies at the Seventh Council.

The tone of the Canon is very similar to that of his Canon for the Sunday of Orthodoxy. That is to say, the emphasis is on joy and thanksgiving for the restoration of the icons, rather than on the defeat of the heretics, though this is not forgotten entirely. On the other hand, unlike the canons of the other feasts, none of the leading iconoclasts, not even the Emperors, are denounced by name.

The Sunday of Orthodoxy

The First Sunday of Lent was originally devoted to the Old Testament prophets, in particular Moses, Aaron and Samuel. The Typikon of the Great Church for the First Sunday of the Fast written in the eighth or ninth centuries states:

On the Sunday of the first week of the Fast, the following is announced: We commemorate the holy Prophets Moses and Aaron, and Samuel.

There is a number of echoes of this in the current liturgy, notably the Apostle and Gospel readings, both of which belong to the older commemoration of the Prophets, but the hymnody for Vespers and Matins is overwhelmingly concerned with the Restoration of the Icons in 843. Because of its place in the office, the oddest survival of the older tradition is, perhaps, the final troparion that follows the canon for Synodikon:

The choir of the Prophets
gladly rejoices today
with Moses and Aaron,
because the Cross shines out,
by which you saved us,
bringing the end of prophecy.
At their intercessions, Christ our God,  
save our souls.

In the Slavonic Triodion a Canon in honour of the Prophets by St Theodore is given to be sung at Compline.

The texts for Vespers combine the two themes of the Prophets and the Icons and they are overwhelmingly positive with only a few references to 'the heretics', who are not named. The same is true of the texts of Lauds, which only contain one reference to 'God's opponents, the children of Mani' who hold that Christ was only manifested in 'appearance' and not in truth.

The Canon for Matins, composed by St Theophanes the Branded, is a joyful celebration of the restoration of the icons, and stresses the part played in this by the Empress. It also underlines the fact that harmony and reconciliation have been at last been achieved. The first troparion of the first Ode praises Christ who has brought about 'harmony' and 'concord' – in the words of the first troparion,

Leaping for joy, let us believers shout today with gladness, 'How wonderful are Your works, and great your power, O Christ, who have wrought our harmony and our concord!'

The third troparion takes up the same theme,

Let us clap our hands, as we behold a great blessing: the separated limbs of Christ brought together in unity; and let us praise God, the author of peace.

The whole Canon is carefully composed and in each ode the final troparion before the Theotokion celebrates the empress and her young son. The third troparion of the sixth ode runs,

The Orthodox people has acquired the glory of the ancient splendour by a decision of the Empress Theodora and of her son, the devout Emperor Michael.

The other Canon, connected in the Triodion with the proclamation of the *Synodikon of Orthodoxy*, is headed (in present-day editions) by the following rubric,

After the Dismissal of Matins, and before the Divine Liturgy, we make a general procession with the holy wood of the Cross and the revered Icons, and we leave for the appointed place, where the Synodikon is to be read.
As we go and return we sing the following Canon, a composition by our holy Father Theodore the Stoudite.

It is therefore considered as a separate ceremony, distinct from the preceding Matins; and it is altogether more polemical. The rubric of the Triodion quoted above attributes it to St Theodore; but this is impossible, since he was already dead by this time (having died in 826). The probable author is the new patriarch, Methodios. We do not know when it was originally sung, but it is tempting to suggest that it might have been chanted as the crowd of monks and others moved from the church of Vlachernae to the Great Church. On the other hand Nikephoros Xanthopoulos in his notice for the Synaxarion writes:

All were assembled in the [Great] Church with candles, the Empress and her son being present, and after a Procession [Liti] had taken place from there, with the holy icons, the divine and honoured relics of the wood of the Cross and the sacred and divine Gospel, as far as the place called the Millon, they went out shouting 'Kyrie eleison!'. And so they returned and celebrated the divine Liturgy in the Church, after the holy and revered Icons had been restored by the above mentioned\textsuperscript{31} holy men; those who were devout and gave right glory were proclaimed, while those who were hostile and impious and who did not accept the honour of the holy Icons were denounced and condemned by anathema.

This Canon, unlike the one for Matins, is overtly polemical and the leading heretics, like the deposed patriarch, John the Grammarian, and a certain Lezix, are denounced by name and with some frequency.

The following troparia give the flavour of the text. Except for Ode 3, all the Odes are to be sung to the same melodies as the Great Canon of St Andrew.

From Ode 1:

Let the raving madmen, dreadful Lezix and Antony with John and Theodore, both deniers of the faith, be ashamed and turned back. You tore apart the faction of God's foes, O Christ, and have now restored to the Church her robe, the Church for which you poured out your blood, as you are good.

\textsuperscript{31} The Greek has διειλημμένων, the meaning of which is not clear. The Slavonic has предреченныя.
From Ode 3:

Who would speak out the foul doctrines and lawless teachings of the insane John, expounding Delphic ways?
Anathema to Lezix and John, with Antony, Theodore the godless blasphemer, together with insane Theodotos!
The blood shed for the divine likeness of the incarnate Master cries out; blood that was shed by John.
The Lord has expelled the horde of aliens and has given back to his own what was theirs. Glory to his goodness!

From Ode 4:

Against the wild beasts and enemies of God, foul Antony, the traitor, John, of satanic mind and enemy of the Church, assembled like fierce wolves, let us believers shout out three times, 'Anathema!'

The heresiarchs are compared to Iannes and Iambres, to Annas and Caiaphas; John the Grammarian to Antichrist and, in a troparion from Ode 6, to Arius 'who rent Christ's tunic':

You ripped apart the divine robe, like Arius of old Christ's tunic, therefore you have been cast out of the Church like a dog!

From Ode 6:

Fellow workers of error, be ashamed! And let Theodotos and Lezix and Theodore, that abyss of destruction, be destroyed with Antony.

You opened your mouth, you wretch, not in spiritual songs, but in blasphemies against your Master, rejecting the honourable fashioning of Icons.

You overthrew the doctrines of the Fathers and the teachings of the Apostles, writing against them in accordance with your lawless cult, John, enemy of Christ.

One of the most curious features of this canon is the frequent mention of a certain Lezix. It is interesting to note that his name appears six times (second only to John 'the Grammarian', who is named seven times). It can therefore be said that the writer of the canon must have considered him to have been one of the principal heretics, especially since (apart from John) he is the only heretic to have a whole ode (the 5th) devoted to him – and, yet, his name does not appear in the Anathemas of the Synodikon itself.
Theodotus, Antony and John (whose names are linked with that of Lezix) are referred to as ‘procurers one for another of vices and false successors of impiety’ and of being ‘like Mani, Apollinaris and Eutyches, beholders of illusion and docetists’; while Theodore from Syracuse in Sicily, the so-called ‘Crithinus’ (also associated with Lezix), and those who apostatised with him, are referred to immediately after the second reference. According to the *Life of St Methodios*, written by St Gregory, archbishop of Sicily, Lezix (a leading official of the Imperial Court and possibly of Armenian origin) alleged that Christ was created, refused to acknowledge the Virgin Mary as Theotokos, and made fun of Holy Communion. However (and again according to the aforementioned *Life*), Patriarch Methodios convinced him of the truth of Orthodoxy (and, through him, his followers) and subsequently reconciled him to the Church by Chrismation with the holy Myron. This must have occurred after the Restoration of the holy Icons, with the result that his name which (one presumes) would have been included in the *Synodikon* was removed, although remaining in the Canon.

If we judge by the work of the hymnographers from the ninth to the thirteenth centuries, the answer to the question posed to us by the Symposiarch must be a strong affirmative.
Section III: Orthodoxy and the other
Can we speak of Jewish Orthodoxy in Byzantium?

Nicholas de Lange

Although the term ‘orthodoxy’ is attached today to a current, or group of currents, within Judaism, it does not have a long history in Jewish usage. First applied in the nineteenth century to the opponents of the Reform movement in Germany, it was used in a derogatory sense: the conservative opposition, in erecting credal barriers to change (specifically the sacred and immutable authority of both Scripture and the Oral Law), was introducing into Judaism, it was suggested, a characteristic element of Christianity that had no place within the Jewish religion. ‘Orthodox’ Jews have not always been happy with the label, and it has often been maintained in reply that what is characteristic of Judaism down the ages has indeed not been ‘orthodoxy’ but ‘orthopraxy’, adherence to norms of conduct, and that it is this, rather than any creed, that underpins ‘Orthodox’ Judaism. And yet the credal dimension will not go away, and the issue between Orthodoxy and the various progressive currents has often come to focus less on specific questions of practice than on the whole theological issue of ‘Torah from Heaven’, the divine origin of the Bible and, for the Orthodox, the oral traditions embodied in the Talmudic literature too.

Judaism today is pluralistic, in the sense that there are various more or less widely accepted forms of Jewish belief and practice, which tend to be organised into communities of individuals, the communities themselves being organised into larger structures, often national or international. Generally speaking there exists, in each city or country where Jews live, side by side with or over and above this pluralistic structure, something that may be called the Jewish community. (Confusing as it may be to use a single word, community, for two different things, that is the current usage, and I see no alternative but to follow it here.) Whether or not this community, in the large sense, is embodied or reflected in a visible and

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formal organisation, it exists in the minds of Jews and non-Jews alike. The members of the various currents or ‘movements’ (in Christian terms, denominations) generally speaking recognise the members of the other groups as Jews, whatever view they may hold about the others’ beliefs and practices. This outlook is sometimes formalised in terms of a family-based definition of Jewish identity, which is considered to be a matter primarily of birth (or in a minority of cases conversion) rather than belief or practice.

The degree of pluralism within the Jewish community varies from country to country. It is a visible but so far unexplained fact that by and large today the patterns of Jewish pluralism in a particular country follow those of the dominant religion. For example in Germany or Holland, where the Christian population is divided between Catholics and Protestants, the Jewish community is divided between Orthodox and Liberal Jews. In Poland, where Christianity takes a monolithic Catholic form, Orthodox Judaism too has been monolithic. In Britain, where an established state church co-exists with a variety of minority churches, a form of Orthodoxy enjoys a measure of establishment while a variety of minority groupings also thrive. And so forth.

The object of this essay is to consider the character of Judaism in the Byzantine Empire in the light of the elements just described. Granted that the term ‘orthodoxy’ was not used by Jews, is there a sense of orthodoxy among the Byzantine Jews? Did they maintain that there were right and wrong ways of being Jewish, and if so was the criterion identified as being one of belief or practice? How pluralistic were the Byzantine Jews, in other words how tolerant were they of religious difference, and did they recognise a Jewish community in the large sense outlined above? And, finally, how does the Jewish model compare to that of the Christian majority?

As the thousand-year history of the empire is too long to allow coherent generalisation, I intend to concentrate mainly on the period of the eleventh-twelfth centuries, because the sources for this period are particularly abundant. Good sources exist also for the Palaiologan period, but as the circumstances were somewhat different this period would require a separate study.

First, however, it is necessary to consider the earlier background. It is unclear to what extent Jewish pluralism existed or was tolerated in the later Roman Empire. Archaeological exploration in Israel has uncovered a good number of synagogue buildings, but so far it seems that in small towns and villages there was only one synagogue. This may be an indication of a monolithic religious structure, but is not in itself conclusive. The sites that have been exhaustively explored tend to be relatively small ones. Elsewhere we cannot be certain that a rival
synagogue did not exist. And the function of the synagogue is itself open to question. Can we be certain that those who gathered there shared the same norms of belief or practice? Is it not possible and indeed likely that small groups met for prayer or study in homes or in the open air? When we turn to large cities there are indeed signs of a plurality of synagogues. To take the extreme example, at Rome, at least eleven different names are attested, but they may well have been structured primarily around common origins of immigrants or areas of residence within the city rather than differing creeds.¹

Turning to literary texts, a key source is Josephus, who distinguishes three groups of Jews, the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes.² Josephus calls them ‘philosophies’ or ‘heresies’, and indeed classifies them according to their beliefs, particularly their beliefs about human free will and its limits, but also about the immortality of the soul and other issues. He also indicates, however, that there are differences of practice among the three groups, that are related to their understanding of law. The Pharisees are considered particularly skilful in the exposition of their own laws, and follow unquestioningly the prescriptions of their elders; the Sadducees, on the other hand, consider only the regulations of the Pentateuch as binding, and consider it a virtue to dispute with their teachers. As for the Essenes, they maintain very severe and distinctive practices of their own.

The rabbinic literature on the whole accords a much higher status to practice than to doctrine, and never promotes a particular system of beliefs. However it does polemise against certain specific beliefs, such as the assertion that there are ‘two powers in heaven’, or the denial of the divine origin of the Torah. One key passage in the Mishnah (Sanhedrin 10.1) asserts that all Jews have a share in the coming age except for anyone who denies the resurrection of the dead (or according to some texts who denies that it is taught in the Torah), anyone who denies that the Torah is from God, and an Epicurean.

This teaching is unfortunately cited out of context, so that we cannot discern either its precise meaning or the particular social and religious situation that gave rise to it. It is curious that it fails to condemn other beliefs that are strongly attacked elsewhere in the literature (such as the ‘two powers’ heresy already mentioned). The rabbinic texts refer quite often to minim, Jews who hold various false beliefs, and at one point it is asserted that there are as many as twenty-four different categories of


minim. Nevertheless, the conception of adherence to the Jewish community in the Rabbinic texts transcends all differences of belief or indeed practice, a view which is summed up in the aphorism ‘A Jew who sins is still a Jew’. At the same time a well-known maxim urges ‘Do not separate yourself from the community’, and one category of deviant is precisely one who ‘separates himself from the ways of the community’.

Various kinds of ban were available and indeed exercised. Josephus writes of the Essenes: ‘Those that are caught in any heinous sins they cast out of their society, and he who is thus separated from them often dies miserably.’ The rabbinic herem was a form of excommunication, that could be applied to individuals or to groups.

A key text, particularly interesting because it is not exactly an internal Jewish one, is Justinian’s Novella 146, dated February 553.³

In the Proem, the emperor grudgingly accepts that Jews do not recognise the Christian truth, but finds it intolerable that they should be tumultuously divided among themselves. The issue was whether the scriptures should be read only in Hebrew or whether translations were permissible. However in giving his judgment Justinian goes beyond this question. He gives express permission for the Bible to be read in Greek or in any other language that the hearers understand, and continues, ‘but we absolutely forbid what they call the deuterosis’: they are to read out what is actually written in the books, and not employ ‘unwritten inanities’. Nor may the Jewish elders and teachers prevent the use of translations by means of sophistries (perinoiai) or anathemas. And then, very remarkably, he continues: ‘And if anyone should undertake to introduce any godless inanities, by denying either resurrection or judgment, or that angels are made and created by God, we wish them to be driven out of every place and not to emit such a blasphemous utterance and one totally false to what we know of God. If they do attempt to pronounce anything of this kind we subject them to the most extreme punishments, thus cleansing the Jewish nation (ethnos) from an imported error.’

There are two interesting aspects of this text from the point of view of our investigation. One concerns the inner disunity of the Jewish community, the other the attitude to Jewish orthodoxy of the Christian state.

To start with the inner Jewish question: if we may take Justinian’s account at its face value there is a very serious division within the Jewish community, one which he says has been going on for some time. He speaks of approaches (proseleuteiseis) that have been made to him, i.e. one or

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both of the factions has invoked the authority of the state. Which side took
the initiative we cannot tell, but on the face of it we may suppose that it
was the Hellenists, who would surely have calculated that they could
count on the emperor's support. The hostility to the deuterosis (an
expression that has given rise to several different explanations, mostly
associated with rabbinic Judaism), condemned as a human invention
containing nothing divine, would then be derived from the represen-
tations submitted. So far so good: it is easy to envisage a
confrontation between the defenders of the Greek tradition and those
attempting to introduce rabbinic-style practices based on the Hebrew
language. But what of the condemnation of any attempt to deny the
doctrines of resurrection or judgment, or that angels are made by God?
Surely no such denial can be associated with rabbinic Judaism? On the
contrary, the rabbinic writings are themselves firm in their condemnation
of any Jew who would deny these beliefs, if we take it that the third
element refers to the subordination of angels to God. In fact if there were
such a thing as a rabbinic creed they would certainly constitute a
prominent part of it. A possible explanation is that both sides made their
approaches to the emperor, who, while rejecting the demand of the
rabbinical side to be allowed to insert non-scriptural readings or teachings
in the synagogue worship, willingly accepted the elements in their
principles of faith that resonated with his own Christian beliefs.

Which brings us to the second aspect of the text. The emperor has no
hesitation in accepting the role of arbiter of the beliefs as well as the
practices of the Byzantine Jews, just as he would have done for Byzantine
Christians. Indeed, those Jews who approached him for a ruling must
have attributed this role to him. Some historians have ascribed a sinister
motive to this intervention, maintaining that it represents an unwarranted
intrusion in the inner life of the Jewish community, and that its purpose
was to convert the Jews to Christianity. There is nothing in the text of the
novella to support this interpretation, nor are there any further examples
of such a trend in Byzantine legislation. Nevertheless it is noteworthy
that, in his judgment of what is true or false doctrine, the emperor invokes

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4 See N. de Lange, 'The revival of the Hebrew language in the third century', Jewish
Studies Quarterly 3 (1996), 342-58; 'The Hebrew language in the european diaspora', in B.
Isaac, ed. and A. Oppenheimer, Studies on the Jewish Diaspora in the Hellenistic and Roman
Periods (Te'uda, 12) (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1996), 111-37.

5 A. Sharf, Byzantine Jewry (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971), 30, refers to 'the
denial of angels', but this seems to be a misreading of the novella. Sharf implausibly sees in
the defence of judgment and angels a rejection of the views of the Samaritans.

6 Eg. Sharf, Byzantine Jewry, 25; Rabello, Giustiniano, Ebrei e Samaritani, 814-28, does not
go quite as far as Sharf, but insists throughout that the novella represents an unwarranted
and dangerous intrusion by the emperor into the internal affairs of the Jewish community.
a common and independent body of theological knowledge (\textit{aute he peri theou gnosis}). It is almost as if he treats Judaism as a misguided but in some sense legitimate form of Christianity. He clearly sees himself as doing the Jews a favour in 'cleansing them from an imported error'.

It is hard for us to assess the immediate impact of Justinian's ruling. In the long term, rabbinic Judaism came to gain the upper hand in Byzantium over the indigenous forms of Judaism, so that when the dark age ends and documentation becomes more abundant in the early eleventh century the written culture of the Byzantine Jews is much the same as that of Jews elsewhere in the world. It is based on the Hebrew Bible and the rabbinic teachings. However, it has certain distinctive features, that are the results of older Greek Jewish traditions and of the contemporary Byzantine environment.\footnote{See N. de Lange, 'A thousand years of Hebrew in Byzantium', in W. Horbury, ed., \textit{Hebrew Study from Ezra to Ben-Yehuda} (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1999), 147-61; 'Hebrews, Greeks or Romans? Jewish identity in Byzantium', in Dion C. Smythe, ed., \textit{Strangers to Themselves: The Byzantine Outsider} (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 105-18.}

From the eleventh century on there is a very sharp division within Byzantine Jewry between the Karaites and the Rabbanites. The origins of Karaitism have been traced back to various movements of protest against the consolidation of Rabbinic Judaism in Iraq after the canonisation of the Babylonian Talmud and the Arab conquest. Exactly when and how Karaitism arrived in Byzantium is unclear. A letter dated 1028 mentions seven Jewish merchants of Attaleia who were captured and held to ransom by Arabs; of the seven, four are identified as Rabbanites and three as Karaites.\footnote{Translation in J. Starr, \textit{The Jews in the Byzantine Empire} 641-1204 (Athens: Verlag der Byzantinisch-neugriechischen Jahrbücher, 1939), 190-91.} By this time, then, the split already existed. In another letter, unfortunately undated, a Rabbanite writer describes how the 'non-conformist Karaites – may they be accursed! – have desecrated the holy festivals', because the Karaites held to a different way of regulating the calendar from the Rabbanites. 'A violent enmity developed between us, and many disputes took place. They slandered the Rabbanites, and the congregation was fined almost a thousand dinars \textit{hyperpyra}.\footnote{Translation in Starr, \textit{Jews}, 182-83. See David Jacoby, 'The Jewish Community of Constantinople from the Komnenian to the Palaiologan Period', \textit{Vizantijskij Vremennik} 55 (80) (1998) [reprinted in his \textit{Byzantium, Latin Romania and the Mediterranean} (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001)], 32-33, situating the conflict in Constantinople between 1092 and 1096. For another document referring to a dispute between Karaites and Rabbanites over the calendar see Starr, \textit{Jews}, 208-209, Jacoby, 'Jewish Community', 34.} It was no doubt conflicts such as this, perhaps this very one, that resulted in the construction of a physical barrier dividing the two communities, as attested by a Spanish visitor in the 1160s, Benjamin of Tudela.\footnote{Translation in Starr, \textit{Jews}, 231; cf. Jacoby, 'Jewish Community', 33.}
The split in the community is attested, albeit not frequently, in Christian sources too. For example in a disputation between a Christian and a Jew datable c. 1220, the *Dialexis katabaion* of Nicholas of Otranto, the Christian interlocutor asks the Jew which ‘heresy’ he belongs to, the Rabbanites or the Karaite. He explains that the former generally interpret scripture by allegory and anagoge, while the Karaites cling to the letter alone, without employing allegory. The Jew furiously rejects the Karaite approach: one should adhere to the letter, while at the same time bringing out by means of allegory the ‘spirit’ that lies within. The practical issue of the determination of the dates of the festivals is also mentioned as a point of dispute between the two ‘heresies’.

We have a number of writings in Hebrew (or a mixture of Hebrew and Greek) by champions both of Rabbanism and of Karaism, and through these writings we can gain a first-hand impression of the actual points at issue. Some concern practices such as ritual slaughter and dietary regulations or the correct observance of the Sabbath, but what lies behind these disputes are the large questions about the correct ways to interpret the scriptures and the status of the rabbinic ‘Oral Law’. Naturally there is a direct relationship between the question of scripture and authority and the detailed observances. This point is made very clearly by one of the earliest and most famous of the Karaite polemists of Byzantium, Tobias son of Moses (eleventh century):

> God, exalted be He, imposed on us the obligation to study, that we may learn his Torah and store it up in our hearts, and that we may prevail *[ke na katakrisomen]*, for the Torah is true. And thus shall we know how to perform the commandments therein, and shall take care to avoid doing what should not be done...  

In language reminiscent of that of Justinian, Tobias insists that the texts embodying the ‘Oral Law’, the Mishnah and Talmud, are of human, not divine, origin. Apostrophising Saadya, the tenth-century champion of Rabbanite ‘orthodoxy’, he argues:

> But if you and your followers maintain that the Mishnah and Talmud were dictated word by word by God to Moses, than I say that you teach lies and you ignore or deny what is manifest and obvious, since these works

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contain the sayings of individuals and refer to events from the time of the Second Temple and even later.\textsuperscript{13}

The Rabbanites, for their part, did not necessarily claim that their Oral Law was directly revealed in the way they believed the Written Law was. Rather, its authority resided in authentic and uninterrupted tradition, in the manner of Muslim \textit{hadith}. As a leading Rabbanite polemist, Tobias son of Eliezer of Kastoria (c. 1100) put it:

The sages of Israel received (the tradition) from their ancestors and teachers generation after generation, each sage (receiving it) from his teacher and each teacher (receiving it) from his teacher back to the (last of the) prophets, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, who received it from the earlier prophets, who received it from the elders, who received it from Joshua son of Nun, who received it from the mouth of Moses, who received it from (God himself at) Mount Sinai.\textsuperscript{14}

Earlier in the same work he inveighs as follows:

Woe to those who do violence to themselves and utter arrogant words against Him who is the foundation of the world, and pride themselves so much that they dare to change laws and break the eternal covenant. Our ancestors were present when the Temple was established in the time of the last of the prophets, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, and saw the precise procedure of the burnt offerings and meal offerings and trespass offerings and peace offerings and all the (other) sacrifices, and they wrote it down in their teaching as a testimony for all Israel just as they had received it from the prophets. It was only later that a brood of sinful men arose who could not distinguish their right hand from their left, who were clever at evildoing but ignorant about doing good. [...] They did not rely on the pronouncements of our teachers about what was forbidden or permitted but wrote down and transmitted whatever came into their heads, causing many people to err and stumble. May they receive due punishment, but may we be deemed innocent!\textsuperscript{15}

Tobias son of Eliezer also accused the Karaites of being strangers and newcomers to Byzantium: 'The fools who came and changed the beliefs came recently, our fathers knew them not'.\textsuperscript{16} In this charge we hear the voice of native Byzantine Judaism faced with a challenge emanating from immigrants with an alien culture. However, while the roots of Byzantine

\textsuperscript{13} See S. Poznanski, \textit{The Karaite Literary Opponents of Saadia Gaon} (London: Luzac, 1908), 62–63.

\textsuperscript{14} \textit{Legah Tob} on Leviticus, 126.

\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Legah Tob} on Leviticus, 38f.; cf. Ankori, \textit{Karaite}, 361.

Karaism were in Iraq and in Jerusalem and their traditional literature was written in Arabic, they very soon adapted themselves to the Byzantine milieu. Tobias son of Moses, the first Byzantine-born Karaite leader, shows himself familiar with Byzantine Jewish tradition, and initiated a programme of translating the classical works of oriental Karaism from Arabic into the written language of Byzantine Jewry, Hebrew with a pronounced admixture of colloquial Greek.\(^7\)

Tobias son of Moses recognises that Karaism is an offshoot or breakaway movement from Rabbanism, but he rejects the view that it represents the wilful abandonment of an authentic and holy tradition. Rather it is a matter of sincere difference of opinion. In general, the Karaites were known for according an important status to individual reasoning and opinion, as well as to the catholic consensus of the community. He accuses the Rabbanites of disagreeing among themselves on many points. This was a charge that the Rabbanites in turn levelled at the Karaites, but it is advanced with greater force against a group that laid claim to a divine teaching than against one prizeing individual reasoning.

Byzantine Karaism adopted a far more positive attitude to Talmud and Midrash than the oriental Karaism out of which it grew. Indeed, Tobias son of Moses shows familiarity with the Talmud, quotes from Rabbanite homilies, and endorses some Rabbanite exegeses of scripture, even preferring them to accepted Karaite ones. This trend became even more pronounced in Byzantium from the thirteenth century on. Nevertheless, the dividing lines between the two groups remained sharply drawn, and the issue of the ‘Oral Law’ continued to figure prominently in mutual polemic.

The Karaites remained numerically the smaller group, and they never lost a sense of being rebels, and in some sense ‘unorthodox’. However, both Karaites and Rabbanites agreed that both were part of a single Jewish people.\(^8\) And both agreed too on a range of fundamental beliefs, including a common doctrine of God, man and the world, and a shared view of the character and destiny of the Jewish people.

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\(^7\) On his work as a translator see M. Steinschneider, *Die hebräischen Übersetzungen des Mittelalters und die Juden als Dolmetscher*, pp. 454 ff. and 940 ff. On the programme of translation, see Ankori, *Karaite, passim*. There is so much traditional Byzantine, and even Hellenistic, material in the writings of Byzantine Karaite authors that the contemporary Karaite scholar S. Szyszman has argued that Karaism was not a foreign movement in Byzantium at all, but represents an authentic Byzantine tradition: ‘Les karaites à Byzance’, *Revue des Études Karaïtes* 3 (1993), 55–75.

\(^8\) ‘And most of these [Karaite authorities down the generations] state that even though the Rabbanites differ over most of the precepts they are our brethren and co-religionists ...’: cited (in Hebrew) from a twelfth century Byzantine Karaite polemical work by Ankori, *Karaite*, 36 n. 26.
In real life there were many connections between the two sides: they intermarried, travelled and did business together, and members of each faction participated in the intrigues of the other. The state, too, recognised all Jews as constituting a single nation, and applied laws and taxes to all Jews without distinction.

The Karaites, however, were not the only minority Jewish group in Byzantium. Writing about Cyprus, Benjamin of Tudela mentions Rabbanites and Karaites, and adds:

In addition there are to be found Cypriot [Jews] who are Epicureans. They are anathematised by the Jewish community, because they desecrate the Sabbath Eve and celebrate the eve of Sunday as holy.\(^9\)

The term ‘Epicurean’ should not be taken literally: it can be used in Rabbinic Hebrew as a term for Jewish freethinkers in general. The reference to celebrating Saturday evening rather than Friday evening as part of the Sabbath, unlike the virtual entirety of the Jewish world, is reminiscent of the sect founded in the east in the ninth century by Mishaway or Meshwi al-Ukbari and hence known as the Mishawites or Ukbarites, which was distinguished for its heterodox views on the calendar.\(^20\)

We do not hear of this sect elsewhere in Byzantium, but Tobias son of Moses is outspoken in his attack on the Mishawites, whom he regards as undermining the primary and unchallengeable authority of the Bible (which was common ground between Karaites and Rabbanites). He sees the Mishawites as sceptics or freethinkers.

The immediate cause of this was a somewhat technical question: were thank-offerings offered in ancient times during Passover? The point is that thank-offerings have to consist of leavened bread, which is strictly prohibited during Passover. If, as the Mishawites claimed, thank-offerings were offered during Passover the Biblical revelation would be in contradiction with itself. Once this principle were admitted, it would be impossible to rely on any of the biblical teachings or commandments, and indeed God himself would be shown to be inconsistent and thus deprived of his authority.


\(^20\) Since Ankori, Karaites, 372 ff. it has become usual to identify the Cypriots with Mishawites, but Starr, Jews, 41, sounds a note of caution: the similarity may be accidental. On Moses of Cyprus, ‘who has since his childhood acquired such a vast erudition in the science of the calendar’, and was summoned by Basil II to give an expert opinion on the calendar, see the passage from Matthew of Edessa cited by Starr, Jews, 185; cf. Ankori, Karaites, 280.
Tobias, after explaining that thank-offerings could certainly not be offered during Passover, rails against the founder of the Mishawites as follows:

No one could impugn the principle I have enunciated in regard to this question except an impious, wicked infidel such as him of the stammering tongue, Mishaway of Baalbek, the accursed, may his bones be ground to dust, for his pride will descend to the netherworld, for he has lain with the uncircumcised, this detestable abomination and filth, who led Israel astray and all those who accompanied him ... He lightened the burden of the Torah upon them and permitted them the foods of the gentiles, the sacrifices of the dead, blood of pigs and (impure) wine, and permitted them forbidden sexual relations, (confounding) impure and pure, desecrating the Lord's sanctified festivals and sabbaths in the poverty of his intellect ... 21

There is a question of orthodoxy here, and not just orthopraxy, for while there is certainly a typical focus on practices, there is also a clear concern with broader issues of principle. Tobias perceives the question of thank-offerings during Passover as the thin end of the wedge that will lead to the abandonment of all the precepts of the Torah. His language contains elements derived from the arguments against the ancient Hellenists and the first Christians. Indeed, Tobias accuses the Mishawites of reading not only the apocryphal writings but even the New Testament. 'Woe to them,' he says of the Mishawites, 'woe to them! Whither shall they flee on the Day of Judgment? To whom will they resort for help? Will he of the stammering tongue (Mishaway) stand up to save them, along with Matthew and John, Father Saul (Paul) and Luke? 22

According to Benjamin of Tudela, the Cypriot Epicureans were anathematised by the whole of the Jewish community, Rabbanites and Karaites alike. This anathema on an entire group throws into relief the relatively mild nature of the rift between Rabbanites and Karaites, despite the highly coloured rhetoric they hurled at each other, and despite the wall or fence that was erected to separate them in Constantinople.

To conclude, we have seen that a certain measure of Jewish pluralism existed in Byzantium, and also that it had its limits. Can we speak of Jewish 'Orthodoxy' in Byzantium? The Rabbanites, who were more numerous, more deeply entrenched on Byzantine soil (in their own opinion at least), and more powerful politically, saw themselves as guardians of rabbinic tradition and hence of the true faith and practice. In relation to the Rabbanites, the Karaites always remained secondary,

21 Ankori, Karaites, 401 and n. 132.
22 Ankori, Karaites, 408, 413.
defining themselves in relation to the larger group. In this sense Ankori may be right in referring to Rabbanites as 'orthodox', and as the 'Mother Synagogue'.

We have noted that it is hard to disentangle orthodoxy from orthopraxy: they are intertwined. Throughout the mutual polemic of the various groups, an argument may easily begin with criticism of practice and move on to general condemnation of a belief, or vice versa. Since Judaism, unlike Christianity, had no official creeds (and indeed at this time no unofficial ones either), rifts between different groups could not be defined in relation to a systematic body of beliefs; rather, issues of belief tended to be raised in an ad hoc fashion in relation to specific groups, as for instance the issue of the divine authority of the Oral Law in Rabbanite polemic against Karaites. Precisely because of the uncodified nature of Jewish belief, as against the highly codified nature of Jewish practice, it was more usual to focus on differences of practice. The brief comment of Benjamin about the Cypriots is a good example: in calling them Epicureans he is alluding to an issue of faith, but he passes over this quickly to locate the cause of the anathema in an issue of practice.

In comparing Jewish with Christian pluralism we should always bear in mind that the status of a disadvantaged and often threatened minority imposes constraints on divisiveness. Rabbanites and Karaites at any rate reveal a consciousness of the need to present a common front, even if the façade occasionally crumbles sufficiently for either party to invoke the power of the state against the other.

To return now to the modern model described at the beginning of this essay, it is clear that the case of Byzantium is different. The relative tolerance of pluralism within the Jewish community in no way mimics or reflects the patterns of Christian pluralism. There are various reasons for this. One was mentioned in the preceding paragraph. Another important reason lies in the legal and social status of the Jewish community, which is quite different from that prevailing today. Nor was there a power structure within the Jewish community that could impose an orthodoxy along Christian lines. But the heart of the matter may well be the very different role ascribed to creeds and systematic theology in general in the two religions.

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23 E.g. Ankori, Karaites, 41, 293, 377, 399.
24 Ankori, Karaites, 37 and n. 29.
The Apostolic Foundation Stone: 
the conception of Orthodoxy in the controversy 
between Photius of Constantinople and Isaac 
Surnamed Mrat

Igor Dorfmann-Lazarev

The Arab expansion into the Byzantine east, reaching its limits towards 
the end of the 660s, cut off from the empire not only the predominantly 
'monophysite' regions, but also the intellectual centres which for four 
centuries had generated the reflection on the person of Christ, along with 
the Christological controversies. The sixth ecumenical Council of 680–81 
– at which the 'monophysite' communities now subjugated to the Muslim 
rule were not even considered – was to put an end to the era of 
Christological debate in Byzantium. The doctrinal debates that took place 
in the geographically reduced empire of the following period were to 
change their pattern. Later Byzantine religious thought, while resting on 
the acquisitions of the first six councils, had as its point of departure either 
liturgical rites and objects, or church discipline, or else ascetical practices. 
Yet each time the empire sought contacts with the east, its attempts 
towards church reunion inevitably took the form of Christological 
debates, which may seem anachronistic in the new intellectual context of 
Byzantium.

Was there any difference in the shape of these later Christological 
debates from those of the fifth–sixth centuries? The epistolary exchange 
between Photius and Isaac Mrat gives us a chance to examine how the 
Byzantine and Armenian churchmen approached each other more than 
two centuries after the Arab conquest. It also allows us to investigate how

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the Byzantines articulated their doctrinal positions in the period following the Triumph of Orthodoxy (843), that is in the context of the search for a new theological synthesis. As for Christological language of Photius and Isaac Mērut specifically, its analysis will enable us to check the authenticity of the ‘Letter to Catholicos Zachary’ ascribed to Photius.

Our scope is therefore to analyse the specificity of each one’s conception of orthodoxy, to elucidate its origins and to show in what political circumstances the Armenians shaped their singular understanding of orthodoxy. We shall also inquire into the impact of this conception upon the later Armenian church history.

I. According to Vardan of Ganjak (c. 1200–71), who drew on the chronicle of Šapuh Bagratuni, a contemporary of the events he described, Isaac (Sahak) Mērut was a mid ninth-century Armenian bishop of Ašunk in southern Tayk’, whence the persecutions against the monophysites caused him to take refuge further east. Isaac thus found a shelter in Širak where, by the beginning of the 860s, the Armenian Bagratid prince Ašot the Great (820–890) had restored an Armenian principality with Širakawan as its capital.

For centuries Tayk’ had constituted a frontier region between the lands inhabited by the Armenians and Georgians. Devastated during the eighth century by the Arab–Byzantine war, it was gradually resettled by the Georgian Bagratid princes from K’lardjeti, its northerly neighbour. Under the patronage of the curopalatai Ašot I the Great (813–26) and his son Bagrat’ I (830–76), and, thanks notably to the activity of Gregory the abbot of Xancta (759–861), a monastic revival took place in these two regions. The settlements began in the north of Tayk’, where the Georgian population was predominant, and thence proceeded towards the predominantly Armenian-populated south and south-west of the province. A number of monasteries that had been abandoned by Armenians during the previous century, were reconstructed under Georgian patronage; moreover, many new houses were founded. The new

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1 Near Lake Tortum.
2 Vardan Vardapet, Haawak’umn patmut’van [Collection of Histories] (Venice, 1862), 85.
3 Near the confluence of the Axurean and the Kars rivers.
cenobia became centres of literary activity and also of anti-monophysite propaganda.

Gregory’s Life was composed around 950–1 by George Merçule, a monk in the monastery of Xancta, who was acquainted with the disciples of its famous abbot. This text reveals the attitude adopted by the Georgian hierarchy towards the non-orthodox. According to the Life, Gregory urged the second baptism of all tainted with heresy; he excluded any social contact with them; he maintained that it was better to die unbaptized than to be baptized by heretics, and that such were unworthy of the name of Christians and were destined to eternal fire. The work of the Georgian bishop of T’beti, Stephen, dated c. 914–8, shows that ‘heretics’ (mçe’alebeli) in the context of K’lardjeti and Tayk’ meant precisely Armenian monophysites. Stephen’s polemics against Armenians are even more virulent than those of George; for him, Armenians are more perfidious than Muslims.

In the light of these two Georgian sources, Vardan of Ganjak’s notice on the persecution suffered by Isaac means that by the end of the 870s the Georgian Bagratids had already affirmed their control over the region of Ašunk’, and that the Georgian hierarchy had succeeded there in imposing Chalcedonian belief. Later Armenian historiography preserved the epithet attached to Isaac in his native country, but probably lost its pejorative meaning; Isaac had been surnamed Mrudi – ‘pervert’ or ‘impious’ in Georgian – because of his persistence in the Armenian ‘heresy’.

When Isaac approached Ašot of Shirakawans, the latter drew him into the Byzantino–Armenian controversy that had been rekindled at the initiative of Patriarch Photius of Constantinople. Here we shall examine the two letters exchanged between Photius and Isaac. Besides Isaac’s response to Photius, the authenticity of which will be shown below, two

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6 'Vie de saint Grigol', REB 59 (2001), 84–85.
8 For the dating of Isaac’s activity, see p. 188–9, below.
9 ‘Mrut’ in the local dialect, which belongs to the Western group of Armenian, probably sounded like [Mrud], with its sonorous occlusive.
other documents may be ascribed to the bishop of Ašunk'. These three edited texts represent apologetic treatises in defence of the monophysite confession of faith. A fourth text attributed to Isaac, preserved in a manuscript of 1682 and yet unedited, represents a defence of the Armenian sacrificial rite, the matal. II. Photius had already commenced negotiations with the Armenians during his first patriarchate (858–67), when, in 862, he sent an emissary to the Armenian catholicos Zachary of Zagk' (855–76). The patriarch sought, in the context of his conflict with Rome, which had developed since 860, to defy Roman claims of universal jurisdiction by presenting himself as a promoter of Christian unity. The council convened by Zachary the same year in Širakawan did not achieve the canonical union of the two churches, but it formulated an agreement that allowed for the peaceful coexistence of orthodox and non-Chalcedonians in the Byzantino–Armenian borderlands in Asia Minor. In this way, both the Armenian belief and the Byzantine mission to the Armenians were admitted. At the same time, the Orthodox church was secured against a possible influx of neophytes motivated by non-religious reasons. This settlement, achieved at the climax of the Byzantine general Petronas’s advance to the northern Euphrates, was apparently meant to prevent the emigration of Armenians from the territories conquered by the Byzantines and to provide bases for Armeno–Byzantine military collaboration against the Paulician state.

Soon after his return to the patriarchal see in 877, Photius renewed his attempts at gaining Armenians for imperial orthodoxy. Three documents exist that can be dated with certainty to this period: Photius’s letter to prince Ašot; Isaac’s response composed on Ašot’s instructions; and that of Nicetas the Philosopher composed, most probably on behalf of Photius, shortly after the reception of Isaac’s letter. Although none of these is preserved in both languages, the numerous exact quotations from Photius’s letter by Isaac and of Isaac’s letter by Nicetas certify the authenticity of the correspondence.

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11 Bac'ayayt'ium čėmarit ullah'ar dawanut'een Hayastaneayc' [Demonstration of the True Orthodox Confession of [the Inhabitants] of Armenia] and a fragment of a lost work, in Sahak Mṛut, Bac'ayayt'ium, N. Polarean, ed. (Jerusalem, 1994), 1–100, 100–3.
Photius's and Isaac's letters are to be found in several manuscripts of the Book of Letters, an Armenian collection of official ecclesiastical correspondence relating to doctrinal matters. The existence of this epistolary exchange between Photius and Isaac is certified also by Stephen of Tarôn,17 who compiled his chronography at the very beginning of the eleventh century, by Kirakos of Ganjak18 (1200–71) and, indirectly, by Mxit'ar of Ayrivank19 writing at the end of the thirteenth or beginning of the fourteenth century.

The internal evidence of these two letters enables us to date the beginning of the correspondence with a high degree of precision. It is the 'Prince of princes Ašot' to whom Photius's letter is addressed, and on behalf of whom Isaac wrote. Nicetas's letter is similarly addressed to Ašot as Prince. This means that the correspondence took place before the latter's coronation in 884–85.20 Photius refers in his letter to his recent return from exile, as well as to his restoration to the patriarchal title and responsibilities. He presents himself as 'Chief of the Bishops of New Rome and œcuménical Patriarch', and Isaac addresses him as 'High Priest [...] and Patriarch, Bishop of the great imperial city of New Rome'. Photius speaks of Rome in a conciliatory tone and, furthermore, allots a special place to the Roman see amongst the other patriarchates, thus acknowledging a certain Roman primacy. He also affirms that Rome accepted the seventh council as œcuménical.21

All these details suggest that the letter was written shortly after the Roman council of 879 and the 'Council of 393 bishops', which took place in 879–80 at Constantinople. The former granted conditional recognition to Photius22 and the latter confirmed his canonical restoration. The Roman legates to the Constantinopolitan council for the first time explicitly recognised the œcuménical status of the Seventh Council, which had not hitherto been acknowledged by Rome.23 This internal evidence of the letter is confirmed by that of the colophon attached to it in the manuscript

17 Step'anos, History, 158.
18 Kirakos Ganjak'ic'i, Patmut'iuyn hayoc' [Armenian History] (Erevan, 1961), 80.
19 Mxit'ar Ayrivanc'ic'i, Patmut'iuyn hayoc' [Armenian History] (Moscow, 1860), 55.
21 Handès, 441–42, 445–46.
of 1298–9,\textsuperscript{24} and which dates the reception of this letter to the twentieth year after the investiture of Ašôt as Prince of princes, that is between November 881 and October 882. This new undertaking ought to be viewed against the background of the successful military campaigns led by the Byzantine army beyond the Euphrates after the destruction of the Paulician state in 878–9.

III. This epistolary exchange between Photius, now restored to his patriarchal prerogatives, and Isaac provides evidence for the resumption of controversy concerning the Definition of Chalcedon, which had been avoided by the council of Širakawan. The attitude towards the Armenian confession of faith expressed in Photius’s letters however differs significantly from those of Gregory of Xancta and Stephen of T’beti. In his treatise ‘Against the Heresy of the Theopaschites’, addressed to Ašôt around 862,\textsuperscript{25} Photius draws a distinction between those whom he styles as ‘disobedient amongst the heretics’ (ἀπειθεῖς τῶν αἱρετιζόντων) and those ‘despaired of’ (ἀπεγνωσμένοι), on the one hand, and the Armenians on the other.\textsuperscript{26} In the letter sent to Ašôt about twenty years later, the patriarch declares that ‘Armenia is preserved in the sublime grace’; that the Armenians are the ‘people of Christ’, and that ‘they remain aloof from unworthy opinions’. According to Photius, the Armenian church is ‘in union with the holy Catholic church in every respect save one’, that is the rejection of Chalcedon, which hinders full communion between the two churches. Photius speaks of the Byzantines and Armenians as ‘fellow-disciples’ of Truth and fellows in preaching the Gospel and in accomplishing Christ’s will that his disciples should abide in unity.\textsuperscript{27}

In this appreciation of Armenian belief, Photius develops the position of John of Damascus (+749) who, in his systematic presentation of heresies, points to the rejection of the council of Chalcedon as the only ‘error’ of the ‘monophysites’, a group distinguished by him from the ‘Eutychians’. John also states precisely: ‘In all the rest they [i.e. the monophysites] are orthodox.’\textsuperscript{28} Because of the dominant impact of John’s work of systematisation, his evaluation of ‘monophysitism’ had become normative in Byzantium.

\textsuperscript{25} J. Darrouzès, ‘Deux lettres inédites de Photius aux Arméniens’, REB 29 (1971), 138–9, 156.
\textsuperscript{26} Photius: Epistulae et amphilochia 3, B. Laourdas, ed. and L. Westerink (Leipzig, 1985), 5.
\textsuperscript{27} Handês, 443–46.
\textsuperscript{28} Johan. Damasc., De haeresibus (PG 94. 739, 741a).
Gregory of Xancta’s concern was to impose a clear confessional identity upon the regions inhabited by populations that had been both ethnically and linguistically mixed,\(^29\) to distance his church from the Armenian hierarchy, which were still influential in the region, and to prevent the spreading of the Armenian ‘heresy’. By denouncing his neighbours in this way, Gregory meant to proclaim before the Byzantines – who had conferred the title curopalates upon the Georgian princes – the orthodoxy of the regions in which the Georgians had gained a foothold. Photius’s concern, on the contrary, was to bring the Armenians into the bosom of the imperial church; he was therefore inclined to minimize the divergences between Byzantines and Armenians. This is why he did not insist in his letter upon the recognition by the Armenians of the last three oecumenical councils. He must have judged that once the anti-Chalcedonian anathema was removed, the other councils would be accepted automatically.

IV. The terminology describing the union of the natures in the Incarnate Logos stood at the core of the debate between Byzantines and Armenians. Both Photius\(^30\) and Nicetas\(^31\) insist in their letters to the Armenians upon the formula ‘in two natures’ (ἐν δύο φύσεωι/γ-ερκυ bnut‘iwns). Isaac, on the other hand, affirms the union ‘from two natures’ (ἐκ δύο φύσεωι/γ-ερκυς bnut’eanc').\(^32\) He follows the logic of the Formulary of Reunion of 433 in its Cyrillian interpretation, and by the ‘two natures’ he designates the two origins of Christ, without specifically identifying them with the divinity and humanity in which Christ subsists.\(^33\)

It can be noted in this respect, that within the linguistic economy of the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed, the designation of origin is sufficient to express consubstantiality. When the Creed speaks of Christ as ‘God from God’ and as ‘light from light’, and of the Holy Ghost as ‘proceeding from the Father’, it affirms the consubstantiality of the Son and the Holy Ghost with the Father. In the same way, when it speaks of Christ as incarnate ‘from the Holy Ghost’ and ‘from the Virgin Mary’, it affirms his double consubstantiality. In the framework of the Creed’s language the origins, therefore, do not merely designate ‘points of departure’: the definition of the union ‘from two natures’, means that Christ cannot be

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\(^30\) Handès, 447–48.
\(^31\) Nicet. Byz., Refutatio et adversio 1 (PG 105. 589, 592, 636, 661).
\(^32\) Handès, 453–58.
\(^33\) The origin, expressed in Greek by the particle ἐκ followed by the substantive in the genitive, is rendered in Armenian by the particle i/y followed by the ablative case of the substantive.
thought of in discontinuity from them.\textsuperscript{34} On the contrary, to qualify Christ's divinity and humanity as 'two natures' and to speak of Him as subsisting or known 'in two natures' would mean, for Isaac, effacing their ontological difference and thus erasing reference to the Creed.

Isaac's Christological language enables him to maintain that in all his human manifestations Christ remained One of the Trinity. For him, as for the Armenian divines of the previous century John of Ójun (†728) and Xosrovik Vardapet (c. †730), the term 'nature' is linked to the identity of subject: 'Christ's nature' or 'his own nature' is divinity, because 'Christ' is the Only 'begotten before all ages'. When Isaac speaks of Christ's divinity and humanity as 'natures', in the plural, he necessarily specifies each: 'Christ has manifested to the world his paternal nature united to his maternal nature', that is the 'nature' whose subject is God the Father united to the 'nature' whose subject is the Theotokos. By differentiating their definitions of Christ's bond to the Father and that to the mother, Isaac and other Armenian divines link their Christological language to the Theologia prima of Nicaea and Constantinople I, which first defines Christ as the One 'begotten from the Father' and only later speaks of him as 'Incarnate from the Virgin'.

Unlike Photius's and Nicetas's letters, the 'Letter to Zachary', ascribed to Photius, on several occasions uses the language of the Formulary of Reunion of 433 while representing it as the Chalcedonian Definition.\textsuperscript{35} It is one more indication confirming the judgement of G. Garitte,\textsuperscript{36} B. Outtier,\textsuperscript{37} R. Thomson\textsuperscript{38} and N. Garoian,\textsuperscript{39} who reject the Photian authorship of this letter.

V. One of the constant features in Armenian Christological treatises from the Catechism of Saint Gregory\textsuperscript{40} (end of the fifth century) and other early texts was the definition of the union of natures in the Incarnation as 'com mingling'. The Armenian term \textit{xær-n-움} is the equivalent of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{35} 'T'ull P'otay patriark'i at Zak'aria kat'olikos Hayoc' mecac' [Letter of Patriarch Photius to Zachary the Patriarch of Greater Armenia], in \textit{Handès}, 93–94, 97–98, 129–30, 139–40.
\item \textsuperscript{36} Narratio de rebus Armeniae (Leuven: Peeters, 1952), 374–75.
\item \textsuperscript{37} Photius: \textit{Epistulae} 3. 11.
\item \textsuperscript{39} N. Garsoian, \textit{L'Église arménienne et le grande schisme d'Orient}, CSCO 574. Subsida 100 (Leuven: Peeters, 1999), 140.
\item \textsuperscript{40} 'Vardapetuiwn srboyn Grigori', in \textit{Agat'angelay Patmutiwn hayoc'} [Agat'angelos, Armenian History] (Tiflis, 1909), 134–372.
\end{itemize}
numerous Greek terms used by Gregory of Nazianzus,\textsuperscript{41} Gregory of Nyssa\textsuperscript{42} and Nemesius of Emesa.\textsuperscript{43} These terms derive from the root μύγνυμι: μίξις, ἐπιμίξια, and from the root κράπημ: κράσις, σύγκρασις, ἀνάκρασις, συνανάκρασις. All these terms express the intimate and irreversible character of the union of natures, as well as their interaction in the Incarnate Logos. They are used by these authors side by side with the terms συνάφεια (junction), περικροής (circumincession), συμφυτία (mutual coalescence) and συμπλοκή (interweaving). Cyril of Alexandria, the chief authority in Christology for the Armenians, while choosing other technical terms for the definition of the incarnation, justifies the traditional patristic use of ‘commingling’ as an appropriate metaphor.\textsuperscript{44}

The specific sense the terms designating the commingling acquire in the patristic thought of the second half of the fourth and the first half of the fifth century is different from the κράσις and μίξις of the Aristotelian and Stoic traditions. Aristotle defines these two terms as that kind of union which is reversible and in which only the predominant amongst the initial characteristics of the ingredients are preserved.\textsuperscript{45} On the other hand, Gregory of Nazianzus\textsuperscript{46} and Gregory of Nyssa explain that the commingling and mutual coalescence of natures do not cause the loss of the properties of either, and make possible the communicatio idiomatum of the two natures. According to the latter, the Logos ‘has commingled (ἀνακράπημενος) with our nature [and] he receives, by the means of all the properties of our nature, commingling (συνανάκρασις) with us.’\textsuperscript{47} That is, assuming human nature, God the Son makes his own all its properties; hence he shares human life in communion with other human beings.

Following this lead, Isaac, as well as his elder Syrian contemporary Nonnus of Nisibis (c. 790–865), who was also engaged in anti-Chalcedonian polemics in Syria and in Armenia, affirm that, because of the mutual coalescence of the natures, Scripture may name Christ by both divine and human names, as well as attributing to him human properties as to the true God and divine properties as to a true man.\textsuperscript{48} Isaac affirms that sometimes ‘Scripture designates [Christ’s] humanity while men-

\textsuperscript{41} Oratio 38.13, in Grégoire de Nazianze, discours 38–41 (Paris: Cerf, 1990), 132–34.
\textsuperscript{42} ‘Contra Eunomium’ 3.4.64, in Gregorii Nysseni Contra Eunomium libri 2 (Leiden: Brill, 1960), 158.
\textsuperscript{44} Cyril. Alex., Contra Nestorium 1.3.3, in ACO I.1.6, 22.
\textsuperscript{45} Aristotle, De la génération et de la corruption (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1966), 42–43.
\textsuperscript{47} Oratio catechetica 27, in Grégoire de Nyssse, Discours catéchétique (Paris: Cerf, 2000), 266.
\textsuperscript{48} Nanayi asorouc’ vardapatet Meknut’iwn Youhanu awetaranin [Commentary on the Gospel of John by the Syrian Vardapet Nonnus] 3, (Venice, 1920), 59'.
tioning [his] divinity, and designates [his] divinity while mentioning [his] humanity'. The result of the union of divinity and humanity is therefore their reciprocal 'transparency' allowing the beholder to observe one and perceive the other; to spell out one and imply the other.

The same terms also express the soteriological effect of the Incarnation: the entire humanity is 'commingled', that is intimately united with the divinity. Cyril follows Clement of Alexandria, Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nyssa when he considers the terms κράσις and ἀνάκρασις on using the analogy of the Eucharist: as the Word of God participates in our humanity through the Incarnation, so we participate in his divinity through eucharistic communion. In Armenian, the parallel between Incarnation and communion is strengthened because this language knows no distinction between 'body' and 'flesh': the word designating Christ's incarnation (marmnac'umn) stems from the word (marmin), which also designates Christ's (eucharistic) Body.

In Armenian, the term 'commingling', xairn-umn, is opposed to the terms designating 'confusion', xairn-ak-umn and ἕποτ'-umn, which correspond to the Greek σύγχυσις, ἀνάχυσις, φυρμός and φύρως. This distinction between the legitimate terms designating 'commingling' and the illegitimate terms designating 'confusion' has also been upheld in the Syriac tradition. What makes the Armenian case particular, however, is the biblical background of the term 'commingling'. In Armenian, the term xairnumn is used in the description of the assembling of the tabernacle of the sanctuary in Exod. 26.1–14.

In the Septuagint version of this passage, words of four different roots are used to describe the way the curtains of the tabernacle are to be coupled one to another, whereas in Armenian words of the same root xairn-em are found in every case – altogether six times – thus acquiring a distinctive tone. Here the Armenian text probably depends upon the Syriac version, which also uses words from the same root <dbk>, 'to attach, to join'. It is only to Armenian ears, however, that the terms describing the assemblage have direct Christological resonance. On the background of the Armenian discourse describing the commingling of natures can be found, therefore, the assembling of the tabernacle curtains, that is, a mechanical assembling of a unit whose constituent elements are integrally maintained.

Gregory of Nyssa and later Cyril of Alexandria saw in the tabernacle of Exodus the 'figure' (awrinak <τύπος, παράδειγμα) of Christ. The latter

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49 Handès, A69.
interprets this specific passage of Exodus in the Christological sense: the Word of God is like the 'fine spun linen', of which the curtains of the tabernacle are made, in his union with the flesh. The blue linen expresses the heavenly character, the purple the royalty, the scarlet the sacrifice of the Word. Cyril sees a prefiguration of the Incarnation in the assembling of the two sets of curtains to form one tabernacle.

The Chalcedonian Definition introduced antinomical language to protect, on the one hand, against 'confusion' and 'alteration' (seen as an excessive form of union) and, on the other, against 'division' and 'separation' of the two natures (seen as an insufficient form of union). As a result, the term 'commingling' became superfluous and even ambiguous: in the Chalcedonian perspective, this term seemed to orientate Christological discourse in one direction only, namely that of perfecting the union, without at the same time guarding against a blurred fusion of the natures. The acts of Chalcedon therefore assimilated the terms κράσις and σύγχυσις, rejecting both as implying a corruption of the natures that make up the union. After Chalcedon, the various terms stemming from the root κίρνημι were slowly ousted from Byzantine Christological discourse. John of Damascus forbade the term ἀνάκρασις, assimilating it with the terms describing confusion, thus confirming the Chalcedonian prohibition.

In the Armenian context also, the use of the term 'commingling' often became a point of contrast between monophysites and dyophysites. The Georgian catholicos Kyrian (598–609?), who had earlier adopted the Chalcedonian confession of faith, thus withdrawing his church from the Armenian sphere of influence, assimilated the Armenian term 'commingling' with the term 'confusion' in his controversy with the Armenian catholicos Abraham of Albal'ank' (607–15). Photius follows John Damascene's lead when, in his 'Against the Heresy of the Theopaschites', he assimilates several times the term ἀνάκρασις with 'confusion'. In his later letter to Ašot, he also contests the term 'commingling' (xar numérique).

In his Response to Photius, Isaac explains the term 'commingling' as 'unification without confusion'. He justly claims that the terms 'union' and 'commingling' were used by the Fathers as complementary terms:

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52 Cyril. Alex., Scholia de incarnatione (PG 75. 1380–81); The Armenian Version of Revelation and Cyril of Alexandria's Scholia on the Incarnation (London, 1907), 105.
53 Cyril. Alex., De adoratione et cultu in spiritu et veritate 9 (PG 68. 636).
54 Denzinger §300 (Freiburg: Herder, 1991), 141.
56 Cf. the second 'Patasxani i Kwırjon ar têr Abraham' [Kyrian's Response to Abraham], in Girk' t'it'oc' [Book of Letters] (Jerusalem, 1994), 353.
‘Why have the Holy fathers resorted to these two terms, sometimes speaking of “commingling” and sometimes of “unification”? asks Isaac. He then replies, ‘Because the commingling excludes division and the unification excludes destruction’.  

Similarly to the Chalcedonian Definition, in which two pairs of adverbs guarded against two opposite extremes, here, in Isaac’s mind, the two terms, ‘commingling’ and ‘unification’, mutually compensate each other, securing against ‘division’ on the one hand and ‘destruction’ on the other. The impression is given that Isaac was aware of Chalcedonian concern, and therefore adopted Chalcedonian logic in order to defend and justify the traditional vocabulary of his church.

Isaac proposes the ‘commingling’ of light with air, of fire with gold, and of soul with body as the images of the ‘commingling’ of the Logos with humanity. According to him, in each of these cases the ingredients remain ‘immutable’ and ‘inseparable’. These examples are opposed to the ‘confusion’ of water with wine, and to that of different metals, in which the ingredients are ‘dissolved’ or ‘corrupted’. In this exposition Isaac closely follows Nemesius of Emesa.

The quotations of Isaac’s letter in Nicetas the Philosopher’s response to Ašot offer us the chance to confirm that ninth century Byzantine theology did not distinguish between ‘commingling’ and ‘confusion’: the former is translated as μικεῖος, the latter as κραδασίας, and both are rejected. The term ‘commingling’ is also frequently used by Zachary of Jagk. The fact that the ‘Letter to Zachary’ admits the language of ‘commingling’ is another indication of its non-Photian authorship: most probably, it was composed by a Chalcedonian Armenian from Tarôn.

VI. To define ‘orthodoxy’, Photius and Isaac resort to the etymology of this word. For each it is the direct way of passing between two diverging extremes. This conception of orthodoxy, common to both the Chalcedonians and ‘monophysites’, explains also the genesis of Isaac’s pejorative sobriquet. The definition of the deviations to the right and to the left thus depends upon the doctrinal point upheld by the author.

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57 Handès, 461–64.
60 Zāk’arīa Ḥajjāq, Ĉa’iḥ [Sermons] (Venice, 1995), 4, 16, 22.
61 Handès, 135–36, 141–42.
64 For an attempt at reconstruction of the ‘Royal Road’ claimed by Vahan, the speaker at the council of Širakawan, cf. Dorfmann, Armenians, 70–71.
Isaac, the direct way of orthodoxy is that of the three œcuménical councils in rejecting three deviations, namely those of Arius, Macedonius and Nestorius. The number ‘three’ symbolises for Isaac the fullness of the dogmatic tradition of the Church, its sufficiency for the rejection of all heresies, past, present and future.

One of the criteria of orthodoxy to which Photius appeals is the unanimity of the patriarchal sees embodying the universality of orthodoxy. The patriarchal sees represent the ‘uttermost parts of the earth’ of Acts 1.8, to which the Apostles witnessed their faith. According to Photius, the faith professed by the patriarchs is the ‘Rock’ on which Christ’s ‘Church is built’, and ‘against which the gates of Hades shall not prevail’ (Matth. 16.18). Photius was to confirm this understanding of orthodoxy a year later, in his letter to the Archbishop of Aquileia, dispatched c. 883–4: ‘the tradition and teaching of the great high-priestly thrones is valid everywhere’.

This Photian conception of orthodoxy leans upon the conviction expressed by John of Damascus, a figure of immense authority in Byzantium after the Triumph of Orthodoxy. John states that the ‘Catholic Church cannot only be “apostolic”’. According to him, the ‘Church is “catholic” because the different races, divided and uncivilized, [coming] from all the [parts] of the world and speaking myriads of languages, abide there in one sole faith and [one sole] knowledge of God’. In the Church – claims John – all these races have ‘one sole manner of conceiving the most authentic faith’. Here universality and orthodoxy are intimately bound together: the universality of the teaching is seen as proof of its truth.

To this Photian conception, Isaac opposes his understanding of orthodoxy as faithfulness to the apostolic teaching of Gregory the ‘Illuminator’. We find the same understanding of orthodoxy also in the ‘Demonstration of the True Orthodox Confession of [the Inhabitants of] Armenia’, text of the end of the eighth or of the ninth century, probably also belonging to Isaac. The appeal to Gregory’s teaching ought to have been a powerful argument allowing to maintain, in dialogue with

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65 Handès, 445–46.
68 Cf. Vincent of Lérins, Commonitorium (PL 50. 640).
69 Handès, 467–68.
70 Sahak Mřut, Demonstration of the True Orthodox Confession, 3–6, 11.
71 This text is attributed to Isaac Mřut by its last editor, Norayr Bogharian (Polarean), cf. Demonstration of the True Orthodox Confession, b–g, which may be corroborated by J.-P. Mahé’s analysis, in ‘G. Nedungatt, M. Featherstone, eds, The Council in Trullo Revisited’, REArm 25 (1994–95), 473–74; numerous literal parallels between Isaac’s letter to Photius and the Demonstration point in the same direction.
Byzantines, the orthodoxy of the church he had established: the rediscovery of the relics of the Illuminator of Armenia in Constantinople several years before the correspondence between Photius and Isaac took place would therefore be interpreted in the sense of the recognition of the roots of the Armenian church.

The Armenian title *lusaworîk* (Illuminator) is to be traced back to the Greek φωτισμός, which implies both Baptism as illumination *(φωτισμός)*, and evangelization as — in Isaac’s words — Gregory’s ‘spreading of the light of the knowledge of God’ in Armenia. Isaac maintains that St Gregory literally ‘built’ his definition of faith ‘on the apostolic rock’ *(šineac* i veray arâk’elakan vimin)*. This affirmation has a double reference: one is to the same verse in Matth., and the other is to Ephes. 2.19–21: to Isaac’s mind, because of their steadfast attachment to Gregory’s teaching, the Armenians are rooted in Christ who is the ‘chief cornerstone’ of the Church. Therefore — Isaac states — ‘heresy could never and nowhere penetrate into this land of the Armenians’. Because of this attachment, says Isaac, ‘we have needed neither teachings [using] new words, nor the councils of all colours convoked here and there, whose innovations in the orders and definitions of the faith established by the power of the Holy Ghost are [well] known to us’.

St Gregory’s *Catechism* for Isaac therefore contains the fullness of truth; similarly for Samuel of Kamerdjajor (c. 940–1010) who, a century later (in 986, in his response to Theodore, the Byzantine metropolitan of Melitene, written at the order of Catholicos Xač’il Arşaruni) was to argue that Gregory’s *Catechism* is ‘equal to’ and ‘identical with’ the faith of three œcumcnical councils. Gregory’s preaching at the beginning of the fourth


73 The same in *Demonstration*, 3.

74 Illumination is used in both senses in the Catechetical instructions (c. 351) of Cyril of Jerusalem. The *Catechism* of Gregory in its final form was influenced by them; cf. R. Thomson, *The Teaching of Saint Gregory* (New Rochelle, 2001), 14–15, 45; F. Gahbauer, ‘Der “Leuchter” als Symbol für theologische und geistliche Aussagen der Kirchenväter’, *Orthodoxes Forum* 17/1 (2003), 25.

75 Similarly in *Demonstration*, 6, 99.

century had thus contained all that the oecumenical councils were to define throughout the century or more that followed.\textsuperscript{77}

Furthermore, according to Isaac, the deviation from truth that occurred at Chalcedon provoked a further series of erroneous ecclesial acts within the Empire. These acts were not empowered by the Holy Ghost, and hence distanced the imperial Church even further from orthodoxy. Isaac takes the prohibition of the council of Ephesus 'to propose, to write down or to compose'\textsuperscript{78} another definition of faith apart from the Symbol of Nicaea \textit{sensu stricto}: in his view, the third council closed the corpus of dogmas.

Thus, on the one hand, Photius maintains a diachronic, collective and spatial understanding of orthodoxy: it is entrusted to the patriarchs whose sees are spread throughout Christendom. These patriarchates perpetuate the orthodox faith across the generations, developing it by means of oecumenical councils.\textsuperscript{79} On the other hand, Isaac affirms the primordial importance of the roots of the Armenian church founded on the 'Apostolic foundation stone'. Both the vicissitudes of the Armenian church, which had had to transfer its patriarchal throne to a safer place on several occasions, and the destiny of Isaac himself, who had been forced to leave his diocese, did not allow him to conceive of orthodoxy in a spatial manner. Both obliged him to depend upon a principle other than that of the unanimity of bishops in different parts of the world, in order to defend the orthodoxy of his church.

Isaac's elder contemporary, Catholicos Zachary, also vindicates the orthodoxy of his church as that of St Gregory's disciples. It should be noticed that Zachary, like Isaac, conceives of St Gregory's importance in an explicitly 'geographical', not an 'ethnic', sense: Gregory is the 'Illuminator of all the Northern countries'.\textsuperscript{80} Hereby Zachary acknowledges the ancient ties uniting all the Caucasian churches.\textsuperscript{81} In this, both authors


\textsuperscript{78} Denzinger § 265, 128.

\textsuperscript{79} This conception of orthodoxy is developed by Nicetas Stithatos in his \textit{Discourse Against Armenians} written around 1114; in \textit{Monumenta graeca ad Photium pertinentia}, J.A.G. Hergenröther, ed. (Regensburg, 1869), 153.

\textsuperscript{80} Handès, 67–68; Zak'aria, \textit{Sermons}, 286, 341.

\textsuperscript{81} I.e., those of Armenia, Albania, Siwnik' and Iberia. This claim had been recognised by the Byzantines: in a letter sent by Nicholas Mystikos to Catholicos John of Drasxanakert (897–925/6) around 914, he declared that Armenians, Iberians and Albanians are a part of the spiritual flock of the Armenian catholicoi; Yovhannès Drasxanakertc'i, \textit{Patmut'iwn}, 266;
continue the tradition attested by Vṛt’ānēs the Scholar (locum tenens of the catholicsate, 604–7) who, in a letter to the clergy of Albania (Aṭuank’), exhorted them to remain faithful to the common confession of faith and upholding the orthodoxy of his church whose ‘foundation was laid by Gregory’. For the Armenian authors, the principles of apostolicity and catholicity thus converge in the figure of St Gregory.

Samuel of Kamerdjajor was to follow the same train of thought in his response to the metropolitan of Melitene. He defined the Catechism of St Gregory as the ‘pillar and ground of truth’ mentioned in 1 Tim. 3.15. Isaac and Samuel ought to have been familiar with Photius’s interpretation of St Peter from his ‘Against the Heresy of the Theopaschites’ addressed to Ašot: ‘Christ established the Church unshakeably upon the rock of Peter’s doctrines and especially of [his] piety’ (ἐπὶ τὴν πέτραν τῶν δογμάτων Πέτρου, μᾶλλον δὲ τῆς εὐσεβείας, ἀσάλευτων ἐστερέωσε [τὴν ἐκκλεσίαν]). In this definition of Petrine authority, Photius followed Nicephorus of Constantinople (750–829), but in the context of Photius’s controversy with Pope Nicholas I, the statement acquired a new urgency. This understanding of Peter was not accidental to Photius’s thought; he reaffirms it in another letter: ‘The Lord founded the Church on Peter’s confession’ (ἐπὶ τὴν αὐτοῦ ὀμολογία).

The Constantinopolitan patriarch thus upheld a doctrinal understanding of Petrine authority, which militated against the identification of St Peter with the bishop of Rome. In a parallel way, Isaac defends the authority of St Gregory, whose teaching is founded on the ‘Apostolic foundation stone’, against the Byzantine identification of Petrine authority with the pentarchy and, implicitly, against the Byzantine devotion to emperor as ἵσαπόστολος, promoter of missions.

Gregory’s Catechism is incorporated into the Armenian version of Agat’āngēlos’s Armenian History, which narrates Gregory’s life. The Armenian version of the History describes Gregory as ‘Christ’s confessor’ (xostovanol) and as ‘Holy martyr’. Catholicos Komitas (611–28) and, later, Catholicos Zachary and the Demonstration’s author also style Gregory as


83 Book of Letters, 555.

84 Photius: Epistulae 3. 8.

85 Niceph. Const., Antirrheticus 1.47 (PG 100. 320).


88 Handēs, 67–68.
'confessor' and 'martyr'. A century after Isaac, Catholicos Xač'ik Aršaruni (972–91), in his correspondence with the Byzantine metropolitan of Sebastia, was to vindicate Gregory's doctrinal authority as that of 'Christ's confessor'. Samuel of Kamerdjajor was similarly to affirm, in argument with the metropolitan of Melitene, Gregory's authority as that of 'true martyr and confessor; the apostle and the evangelist of the only-begotten Son, who illumined the inhabitants of Armenia'.

Gregory's confession (xostovianut'iwn) is therefore construed in both senses, that of the ὁμολογία, for which he was imprisoned by Tiridates according to Agat'angelas's History as had been the apostle Peter by Herod according to Acts 12.3ff, and that of the Catechism by which he instructed Armenia in the Christian faith. Armenian authors interpret Gregory's Catechism in the context of his life narrated in the History. Gregory's imprisonment and preaching, along with his episcopal ordination which initiated the apostolic succession in Armenia, together all explain the Illuminator as the Armenian 'Peter', or 'Rock'.

In Armenia, then, cut off from imperial Christendom first by dogmatic controversy and later by the Arab invasion, there can thus be seen, in the conception of the true doctrine, the growing importance of martyrdom on the one hand and of autochthonous origins on the other. The attachment to origins can be recognised as one of the characteristic features of later Armenian culture as well. Prince Gregory Magistros (+1058), for example, exalts the virtues of a recent martyr while evoking a whole series of national heroes. He mentions St Gregory's name in a single list along with the mythical ancestors of the Armenians: Aram, Ara and Anušawan from Moses of Xoren's History, and also beside the founder of the Armenian kingdom (c. 188–61 BC), Artaxias. He styles him as 'our ancestor Gregory, Illuminator and Parent'.

VII. An example from the later history may illustrate the continuity of the tradition that sees the Illuminator of Armenia as Peter. The main sanctuary celebrating St Gregory in Armenia is the monastery of the Deep Pit (Xor Virap) near the ancient capital Artaxata, founded by Artaxias,
cultic centre of the hellenistic Armenia. Although the actual constructions date from the abbot Davit’ Virapêci’s time (†1695), the monastery’s remoter origins go back to a seventh-century martyrium. The complex is built over the deep cave identified by tradition as the pit into which, according to Agat’angelos, St Gregory was thrown by King Tiridates for his refusal to worship the goddess Anahit and his profession of the Christian faith.

The monastery’s main church was constructed in the 1660s. Its foundation incorporates the rock containing the ‘Deep Pit’ together with an ancient chapel built inside. The rock interrupts the rectangular structure of the building, of which it is an integral part, forming literally its ‘corner stone’. Despite the abrupt and rocky surface of the country, this appears to be a distinctive feature of the Church of the Deep Pit. It seems that the rock, where Gregory had suffered at the hands of Tiridates, was integrated into the church’s structure as a constitutive element and intended as the architectural expression of the meaning of St Gregory’s person and feat in Armenian tradition.

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Our analysis of the epistolary exchange between Photius and Isaac Mrut of 882 shows that the Patriarch of Constantinople defined the status of the Armenian church in accordance with John Damascene’s systematization of heresies, whereas he articulated his Christological views in connection with his search for sources of doctrinal authority, a problematic characteristic of the iconoclast and post-iconoclast period. Both authors discussed the contents of orthodoxy in the context of the formal criteria of orthodoxy. While the origins of the Christological controversy between the Byzantines and Armenians go back to the differences between the exegetical schools of Alexandria and Antioch of the fourth–fifth centuries, the divergence between these two groups in their definitions of orthodoxy became particularly conspicuous during the following centuries. The criteria of doctrinal authority were defined in Byzantium and in Armenia in two different ways because of the different place occupied by the church in each of these two countries. In Armenia, which had lost its

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98 See the photograph on p. 203, below.
kingdom in the beginning of the fifth century, church hierarchs were, up until the Bagratid restoration in the end of the ninth century, subjects of non-Christian rulers. We have shown that in these conditions the Armenian authors stressed the value of martyrdom and of the attachment to the roots of their church. The examples from later Armenian church history show that the conception of orthodoxy shaped during this almost half-millenary period proved decisive.
Monastery of Xor Virap near the ancient Artaxata. View of the main church from the north-east.
The Orthodoxy of the Latins in the twelfth century

Tia M. Kolbaba

In previous research, I have dealt at length with those Greeks who knew – to the very depths of their being – that the followers of the pope, the Latins, were heretics. Interesting as it may be, however, the polemical output of these writers is not the whole story. To understand the continuous, plentiful flow of anti-Latin polemic, we must understand that works 'against the Latins' were hardly ever intended to convince or to convert Latins. The challenge confronting those who believed that the Latins were heretics and their rituals pollutions was a challenge within their own world – the Greek-speaking, Greek-rite world. As Paul Magdalino has put it, those who worked so hard in the twelfth century to define and guard the boundaries between 'us' and 'them', between heresy and orthodoxy, between 'orthodox' Greeks and 'heterodox' Latins, were setting up barriers 'across the main thoroughfares, and at the heart of the built-up area, of Byzantine culture. In other words, [the barriers] were going up at precisely those points where insiders and outsiders mingled and were therefore liable to become indistinguishable – points where forbidden zones look very accessible, familiar and safe .... In general, it can be said the guardians of Orthodoxy repressed tendencies to which they themselves were susceptible.¹ Among these outsiders who mingled with insiders were the Latins – Christian brothers, fellow adherents of the seven ecumenical councils, fellow readers of the church fathers, fellow heirs to the philosophy of classical and Hellenistic Greece. There was much about them that seemed 'accessible, familiar and safe'. So the Byzantines who wrote anti-Latin treatises and diatribes were addressing compatriots who believed in the orthodoxy of the Latins. To understand this is to get a fresh perspective on their arguments and the forms and

functions of the literature they wrote—a point I have argued at length elsewhere and do not want to belabour here. Instead, this paper focuses on those Byzantines who maintained that the Latins were orthodox. Given limits of time and space, it can present only a few examples of such authors, but there were many more. This paper is part of a larger project—a detailed study of those who argued in favor of the orthodoxy of the Latins in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

Throughout the early Middle Ages, most Byzantine writers who perceived errors in ritual or doctrine within the Latin Church were nevertheless not overly concerned with such matters. They exhibited a certain condescension about Latin culture and a belief that Latins would naturally adopt Greek practices and doctrines—which were, of course, superior—if they were only instructed by magnanimous, charitable Greeks. Among other things, the Greek-speaking Byzantines were certain that Latin was an inferior language, incapable of adequately expressing theological ideas. Thus, for example, the Patriarch Photius (858–67, 877–86) noted that one of the popes of Rome had required that the creed be chanted in Greek because Latin was often inadequate for 'expressing sacred doctrine'. In the eleventh century, too, such condescension was common, and many authoritative church figures considered the Latins to be orthodox or in error concerning only one crucial matter: the *Filioque*. If they were perhaps a bit out-of-line in their practices, they were certainly corrigeble. But in the twelfth century this position gradually became untenable, more Byzantines adopted the opinion that the Latins were heretics, and those who defended Latin orthodoxy often had to go beyond tolerance of Latin differences to acceptance of them.

Two eleventh-century figures, in particular, are famous for having continued the traditional condescension and tolerance toward the Latins: Peter III of Antioch and Theophylact of Ohrid. Peter III, Patriarch of Antioch (1052–56), is best known for his reply to a heated letter from Michael Keroularios, Patriarch of Constantinople (1043–58). In his letter, written shortly after the papal legates had delivered their bull of excommunication and left Constantinople in 1054, Keroularios had included an account of the legates' behaviour, had claimed that the popes had not been commemorated in Constantinople since the time of Vigilius (537–55), and had listed various Latin 'errors', such as clean-shaven

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priests. Peter corrected him and admonished him for writing 'before examination and complete understanding, from vain rumour', rebuking him also for his intemperate criticisms of 'errors' and begging him not to make the schism worse through his excessive rigor. In the end, Peter asserted that even the Latin use of unleavened bread, which he had earlier considered a crucial difference between the churches, was not important enough to dismember Christ's body, the Church.\(^4\)

Much more traditional than Keroularios's insistence that the Latin customs were serious errors, Peter's position was that of moderates throughout the history of Christianity. Confronted with the New Testament's distinction between cultural differences that could be embraced within a universal church and essential elements of the faith that could not be compromised, such moderates always needed to balance two truths – both important, but in constant tension with one another. Christ, they believed, was bigger than cultural differences, and did not care whether you were Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female. Nevertheless, Christ himself surely made distinctions between Jews and Greeks, men and women; and if the rituals of the 'old law' were superseded, there were nevertheless rituals of the 'new law', including the Eucharist. If some cultural customs were irrelevant to God, others mattered a great deal. For Peter of Antioch and others, the precise form of rituals was important – wrong ritual might endanger one's salvation – and there were marked liturgical differences between Greeks and Latins.\(^5\) Nevertheless, everyone also accepted that some differences in ritual were merely customary and could be accepted, so long as each ritual symbolized orthodox belief.

Peter of Antioch was certainly not the only person who held this position. Others in the later eleventh century agreed that Latin errors were not important – or at least that very few were (usually the Filioque and sometimes azymes). Theophylact of Ohrid insisted that only the Filioque was an issue worth dividing the churches over. To a correspondent who asked him about the Latin 'errors', he replied that only the Filioque mattered; the other differences were neither sufficiently numerous nor sufficiently important to divide the church. If there was strife between Latins and Greeks it was because of 'the cooling of charity which the present times have caused' and because everyone was in a rush to accuse his brothers of heresy.\(^6\) Theophylact mocked accusations similar

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\(^4\) PG 120.795–816.
to those in Keroularios’s letter to Peter of Antioch. On the other hand, the Filioque was an essential matter, but even here Theophylact tried to clear the Latins of blame for heresy. ‘You err’, he wrote, addressing the Latins, ‘not so much because of malignity of judgment as through ignorance of the truth. For because you believe that “to proceed” [ekporeuesthai] is the same as “to be provided” [choregeisthai] and “to be given” [metadidosthai], and since you find that the Spirit was sent [pempomenon], and provided [choregounemon], and given [metadidomenon] by the Son, you think that you commit no error even if you say that the Spirit proceeds [ekporeuesthai] from the Son.’ Theophylact speculates that this confusion results from the ‘poverty’ of the Latin language. Perhaps Latin has no way of distinguishing ‘proceeding’ from ‘being given’ and ‘being sent’. If so, Latins may allude to the Spirit’s procession from the Son in everyday speech, but they must not add this to the creed.⁷

It is as important to note what this opinion of the Latins is not as to note what it is. Theophylact and Peter are not ‘pro-Latin’; each assumes the superiority of the Greek church and Greek culture. Far from admiring Latin ritual or theology, they barely tolerate it. On the other hand, they also are not part of the ‘anti-Latin’ forces who consider the Latins to be obstinate heretics. They are, in short, the moderates in this debate.⁸

A meeting of the Constantinopolitan synod in 1089 reveals that this moderate position – that is, that the Latins erred in some matters, but were not heretical and were in communion with the Constantinopolitan church – was common. In 1088, Pope Urban II (1088–99) wrote to Alexios I and Patriarch Nikolaos III (1084–1111), seeking an explanation of why the pope’s name had been removed from the diptychs of the Constantinopolitan church. Urban seems also to have heard that Latins in Constantinople were being shut out of their churches, or at least that they were being forbidden to use unleavened bread.⁹ When Alexios received

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⁷ Gautier, Théophylacte, 247–57.
⁸ Although I have been accused of being judgmental by the mere use of the word—for in today’s academic circles, it seems, the connotations of ‘moderate’ are all favorable—I maintain that it is still the best term to describe people in the middle of a spectrum of opinion. I do not mean by this to praise or condemn their moderation; one man’s moderation may be another man’s lukewarm faith or politically inspired compromise.
⁹ The documents for this exchange were published by W. Holtzmann, ‘Die Unionsverhandlungen zwischen Kaiser Alexios I. und Papst Urban II. im Jahre 1089’, BZ 28 (1928), 38–67. Urban’s letter is extant, but Holtzmann, ‘Unionsverhandlungen’, doc. 2, records that he asked about commemoration and about the Latins in Constantinople being shut out of their churches, while the Latin chronicler Malaterra (cited by Holtzmann, ‘Unionsverhandlungen’, 47) records that Urban also reprimanded Alexios for forbidding Latins the use of azymes in their worship. In his reply (Holtzmann, ‘Unionsverhandlungen’, doc. 3), Patriarch Nikolaos III denies that the Latin churches had been closed. Other analyses and commentaries on these texts: P. Charanis, ‘Letter to the Editor of the American
Urban’s query, he investigated the matter. It was true that the pope was no longer commemorated in Constantinople, but the emperor could find only that ‘It was not from synodical judgment and decision that the church of Rome was cut off from us.’ So he called the bishops together in the patriarchal synod to ask them. As the emperor’s report of the proceedings later explains it,

I presented the letter of the pope to them and I asked whether there are in our most holy and great church any documents that declare decisively that the church of Rome is in schism and that, for this reason, the name of the pope is not to be commemorated in the diptychs. On the one hand, the archbishops concluded that there were no such documents. The removal [of the pope’s name] ... was not canonical, and yet for a long time it had been in force and existed among us. On the other hand, they said that there were canonical matters between the two churches and that these needed correction, since the Latins seem in these ways to stumble."

Given, then, that there was no record of why the pope’s name had been removed from the diptychs, Alexios argued that it had been removed in violation of canon law, and that it should be restored. But the patriarch and the synod, noting that the removal of the pope from the diptychs had been in force for a long time, continued to insist that the Latins needed correction of some ‘canonical matters’ before commemoration of the pope could be restored. In the end, they compromised: the emperor and patriarch would write to Urban and ask him to send a letter with his profession of faith. If that confession was orthodox, he would immediately be inscribed in the diptychs, but since the ‘canonical matters’ would still remain, he should also plan either to come to Constantinople himself or to send representatives to an ecumenical council that could render judgment about these matters. This council should be held within 18 months of the receipt of the pope’s letter. After the synod, Patriarch


Nikolaos III wrote to Urban, asking him to send his profession of faith and denying that the Latin churches in Constantinople had been closed.\(^\text{12}\)

Alexios I and Urban II each had pressing political motives for seeking peace in 1089,\(^\text{13}\) and most discussions of the synod's deliberations have focused on the political negotiations, rather than on the reasons the synod accepted this compromise. Here I want to focus, rather, on the metropolitans and archbishops gathered in the synod and their reasoning. All accounts agree that there was a schism between Constantinople and Rome, represented concretely by the absence of the pope's name from the diptychs of the Great Church. It seems, though, that the patriarch and metropolitans were open to friendly gestures from Rome that might heal the schism. Apparently, anti-Latin sentiment and knowledge of Latin deviance was at such a low ebb that they found Urban's question difficult to answer: Why and when had the pope's name been removed from the diptychs? To get an idea of the answers available to the synod in 1089, one could turn to a text written around the beginning of the twelfth century, probably by a chartophylax of the Great Church, and thus someone who had access to the archives of that church, which reports that there was a schism under Sergios II (1001–19), 'for what reason I do not know, but the quarrel was apparently over some sees.'\(^\text{14}\) The main purpose of this text is to produce a list of all of the previous schisms between Rome and Constantinople, and it concludes that 'the schisms mentioned above were brought about by our own people' — hardly a likely conclusion for someone who shared Keroularios' view of Latin errors. Although the printed edition of this text includes a paragraph about Keroularios and a


\(^\text{13}\) Holtzmann, 'Unionsverhandlungen', 50–52.

'final' schism of the churches, that paragraph is at odds with the rest of the text, leading to the conclusion that it is a later addition; Anton Michel argued that it must have been added in the twelfth century.\textsuperscript{15} Thus, although Alexios' account has rightly been viewed with some skepticism, we should perhaps believe him when he writes that the bishops in the synod had no evidence for the reasons for the current schism. They may have thought, as the emperor claimed, that the Latins were erring in certain 'canonical' matters (such as the unleavened bread), but that these matters were not serious enough to divide the churches.\textsuperscript{16} They therefore agreed that the pope should send his confession of faith and that if that confession was in accordance with apostolic canons and the decisions of the ecumenical councils, then his name should be restored to the diptychs 'kat' oikonomian' ('in accordance with oikonomia') until a council could be held regarding the other differences.\textsuperscript{17} Oikonomia, an age-old principle of the eastern church, literally means 'management' or 'administration', but had come to mean the management or guidance of individual souls or of Christ's body, the Church.\textsuperscript{18} Such management could involve a kind of mercy or compromise, within careful limits. In general, as John Erickson explains, 'By oikonomia a temporary concession can be made in matters of practice to avoid irremediably damaging the peace of the Church.'\textsuperscript{19} This idea precisely matches Alexios's account of what the synod did in 1089: they temporarily conceded that certain Latin practices could be overlooked for the sake of peace. They did not exonerate the Latin church, and they did not say that Latin errors could be condoned or tolerated for political reasons or even for the sake of

\textsuperscript{15} Michel (Humbert und Kerullarios, I, 30) based his argument on the manuscripts; the best ones do not have this final paragraph. Moreover, the final paragraph's message differs from the preceding text and is preceded by a paragraph that was evidently once the conclusion. Finally, the author of the final paragraph refers to westerners as 'Latins' – an ethnonym rarely used by Greeks before the crusades (A. Kazhdan, 'Latins and Franks in Byzantium: perception and reality from the eleventh to the twelfth century', in Laiou and Mottahedeh, The Crusades, 85–86) and never used by the author of the rest of the text, who refers invariably to 'Romans'.

\textsuperscript{16} The extant documents from 1089 contain no details about these 'canonical differences'. The main concerns of the Byzantines, c. 1060–1100, were azymes (Leo of Markianopolis, John II of Kiev, and others, as well as the reference in Malaterra, cited above) and the Filioque (John II of Kiev, Theophylact of Ohrid, and others). There is little radically anti-Latin polemic in this period, nor is awareness of papal primacy high. See H.-G. Beck, Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reich (Munich: Beck, 1959), 610; Leib, Deux inédits, 149.

\textsuperscript{17} Holtzmann, 'Unionsverhandlungen', 62.

\textsuperscript{18} For introductions to the history of oikonomia and its definitions, see J.H. Erickson, 'Oikonomia in Byzantine Canon Law', in K. Pennington, ed. and R. Somerville, Law, Church, and Society. Essays in Honor of Stephan Kuttner (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1977), 225–36, and ODB, s.v., 'Oikonomia'.

\textsuperscript{19} Erickson, 'Oikonomia', 231 (my emphasis).
Christian unity. Indeed, as we have seen, they insisted on an affirmation of the pope’s orthodoxy and a resolution of other differences in a council. This offer of a council was sincere, although there is also no doubt — as has often been pointed out — that the Greeks expected such a council to affirm their own ideas and condemn those of the Latins. In other words, the actions taken by the synod and patriarch in 1089 conform again to that condescending tolerance which characterized the middle Byzantine attitude toward the west in so many spheres. Even those who opposed the decision of the synod did so not because they considered the Latins heretics, but rather because they considered Urban II an anti-pope, put on the throne by the forceful and barbarous methods of the ‘godless Franks’ (i.e., the Normans), who had also stolen imperial territory in southern Italy and were ‘Latinizing’ the churches there.

In sum, those who think the Latins are not in error in any heretical way are still the dominant party in 1089. Not unaware of the complications caused by Norman conquests and papal pretensions, these churchmen maintain none the less that the differences between the churches are not sufficient to divide Christ’s body. In this, they are utterly traditional. Their attitude corresponds to the attitudes of previous generations.

It should be noted that there is a common opinion of the situation in 1189 and of Theophylact in particular that is diametrically opposed to what I have presented here. In this view, Theophylact wrote his treatise deriding the anti-Latin forces because the Emperor Alexios asked him to. Given that Theophylact ‘did not have the stuff of a polemicist’, as we know from the rest of his biography, he would not have written his piece about the Latins without outside intervention. In short, he would not have engaged in this battle unless asked to by someone he could not refuse. Given his close connections with the imperial family, the proponents of this view argue that Alexios asked him to write a piece to persuade the clergy that the Latins were not heretics. Alexios did this because he knew that the majority in the Church opposed his rapprochement with the Latins. In other words, there was a gap between imperial needs (especially Latin

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military help) and the rigid, uncompromising attitude of the vast majority of the Greek clergy.22

This argument makes many invalid assumptions, three of which are particularly important here. It assumes that Theophylact's treatise about the Latins is essentially polemic; it assumes that Theophylact had no opinions of his own that he would defend even if they went against the communis opinio; and it assumes that Theophylact's moderate position was a minority one.

On the first point, it is absolutely true that Theophylact 'did not have the stuff of a polemicist'. But, as Margaret Mullett has noted, 'the generic term "polemic" describes [the treatise regarding Latins] badly'. In its tone of moderation, it fits well with other things Theophylact wrote regarding variety in religious customs and beliefs. He consistently insisted 'on interpreting the spirit rather than the letter of the law' and 'was always prepared to show aikonomía where it would help'.23 It is not, then, 'hardly credible' that 'Theophylact could have expressed, sponte sua, a personal view of the problem' of union with the Latin Church.24 Quite the opposite, in fact; the treatise expresses views that fit well with Theophylact's other works.

On the second point, I cannot, of course, offer proof in any scientific sense. Nor, I think, will I persuade those who are determined to see the vast majority of Byzantine churchmen as lacking in backbone, performing proskynesis not only before the emperor, but before his opinions. This is fundamentally not my view of Theophylact and other secular clergy like him; it is a fundamental view of some western historians and of many Byzantine monks. What I know of Theophylact's character - and I acknowledge all the ways in which that knowledge is flawed and conditional - does not lead me to believe that he would have argued so eloquently and thoroughly for a theological position simply because the emperor asked him to. In fact, if he was writing at the emperor's request, Theophylact's insistence that the addition to the creed could not be accepted was probably not what Alexios had in mind. He was more his own man than the essentially negative view of Byzantine secular clergy will allow; in fact, I am willing to be incendiary and call that negative view a product of centuries of western prejudice. It seems that if Byzantine churchmen support union they are craven tools of the emperor, and if they oppose it they are heedless of the dangers that threaten the empire and hidebound in their conservatism. The idea that some of them

22 For the most recent expression of this view see M.D. Spadaro, 'Chiesa d'oriente e chiesa d'occidente sotto la dinastia dei Comneni', ByzF 22 (1996), 79–97.
23 Mullett, Theophylact, 239–40.
24 Spadaro, 'Chiesa d'oriente', 94.
might support union and even be responsive to a changing world for reasons which stem from genuinely Christian conviction is rarely expressed.25

Finally, we need have no difficulty with the thought of Theophylact suddenly swimming against the tide of anti-Latin opinion if we do not posit such a tide in the first place. My argument – again, I claim not proof, but persuasive evidence – is that there is no such tide of anti-Latin opinion in the late eleventh century. Instead, anti-Latin sentiment both changes its content and grows in intensity during the twelfth century. There are still Byzantines after 1100 who maintain roughly the position of the synod in 1089: namely, that the Latins are at least to be given a chance to explain themselves and to come to a council at which the differences can be resolved. This was allegedly the position of Niketas, Archbishop of Nikomedia, at the end of a public discussion with Anselm of Havelberg in 1136.26 But something has changed by 1136, as well, for Niketas seems to have accepted the Latin teaching about the procession of the Holy Spirit. Even if we doubt this – our only account of the debate was written by Anselm some years later – we know that around the same time Niketas of Maroneia, chartophylax of the Great Church and then archbishop of Thessaloniki, wrote dialogues defending the Latin teaching on the procession of the Holy Spirit. This position is unlike the one I defined as moderate earlier in this paper. Theophylact of Ohrid, Peter of Antioch, and others were neither pro-Latin nor anti-Latin, but tolerant and condescending, seeing the Filioque as an error, but perhaps an accidental one. Niketas of Maroneia and a few others in the twelfth century actually argue that the Filioque is acceptable; it is not an error at all. Latin reasoning on the matter and Latin theological understanding of the Fathers is, in this instance, superior to Greek reasoning and understanding. This is a position more easily labelled ‘pro-Latin’ than the opinions of the eleventh-century writers. Meanwhile, the arguments of the anti-Latin forces were growing in strength, coherence, and vehemence. Byzantine churchmen were therefore increasingly polarized and the moderate position less and less viable. There are several reasons for this.

The most important reason for increasing hostility toward the Latins throughout Byzantine society in the twelfth century is too well known to be belaboured here: the conduct of crusaders, who found it difficult to

25 Many scholars are not blinded by such prejudice and present much more nuanced views; see, for example, Joseph Gill, 'John Beccus, Patriarch of Constantinople, 1275–1282', Byzantina 7 (1975), 253–66; repr. in Church Union: Rome and Byzantium (London: Variorum, 1979), art. VI. But the older view which I have described here is still all too common.

26 For the context of this mission, the biography of Anselm, and a thorough exegesis of the debate, see N. Russell, 'Anselm of Havelberg and the union of the churches', Sobornost incorporating Eastern Churches Review 1:2 (1979), 19–41; 2:1 (1980), 29–41.
distinguish between Byzantines and infidels; the permanent presence of Italian merchants in the empire with their visible wealth and palpable arrogance; the Latin occupation of lands and cities that Byzantines considered rightly theirs – these and many other aspects of waxing Latin power and waning Byzantine power challenged and threatened the Byzantines on many levels. In the religious circles we are dealing with here, the vehemence of anti-Latin sentiment increased as the western threat increased. The anti-Latin faction among churchmen of all kinds – from the more worldly secular clergy of the imperial court and the Great Church to the monks of Athos, Galesios, or Olympos – grew and became dominant. In part, this response of churchmen was similar to that of their lay compatriots in both its causes and its expression. Clerics did not inhabit a separate world. They suffered from the same depredations of Normans and other crusaders; they chafed at what they considered western arrogance; they resented the influence of Latins at the imperial court.

But there were additional arenas of contact between Latin and Greek churchmen, as well – arenas where issues of particular concern to clergy and monks arose. The Norman conquest of southern Italy, all of the multitude of enterprises we call the crusades, a continuing Norman threat to both the German emperor and the Byzantine one, and a continuing and complex set of relations between Byzantium and the crusader states necessitated an unending exchange of embassies between Byzantium and various western powers. The ambassadors in these negotiations – especially on the western side, but also on the Byzantine side, at least when negotiations with the papacy were part of the project – were often men of the cloth.\(^{27}\) Their presence in Constantinople could and did inspire debates between Byzantine and western churchmen about their differing rituals and doctrines. So, for example, Niketas Stethatos represented the Greeks in debates about the use of unleavened bread in the Eucharist against the papal delegation led by Humbert of Silva Candida. He addressed his treatise against azymes to ‘men of Rome – both those who dwell among us and those who are travelling to our cities.’\(^{28}\) The travelling men were the members of the papal legation with whom he was in direct contact; the others would have included Italian merchants

\(^{27}\) Eg., a mission from Venice to Constantinople in 1112 was led by the Patriarch of Grado; Anselm of Havelberg led a mission from the German emperor to Constantinople in 1135–1136 and two other missions to the Byzantine emperor while he was in the Balkans and Greece in 1153 and 1155; William of Tyre travelled to Constantinople on behalf of King Amalric I of Jerusalem in 1168, and was again in Constantinople – this time for seven months – in 1179–1180. For almost every year of the twelfth century, one could cite one or more similar examples.

\(^{28}\) Michel, Humbert und Kerullarios, II, 321.
who lived in Constantinople. He also wrote, ‘I have often been questioned by various Romans who live among us about the azymes.’ Nor was Niketas unique. In 1112, Pietro Grossolano, Archbishop of Milan, part of a papal embassy, debated theology with several Greeks, while Anselm of Havelberg, leader of German imperial delegations, continued the tradition of discussing religious differences during his spare time on at least two missions to the east – one in 1135–36 and the other in 1155. There must be many more such occasions which left little or no trace in the records. Meanwhile, Latin churches and monasteries were established in Constantinople; there again the differences between Greeks and Latins could be noticed and debated – as, for example, when the Benedictine monks of St Mary of the Amalfitans complained that Byzantine clergy were putting pressure on them to abandon the use of unleavened bread in the Eucharist.

From southern Italy to the Holy Land, then, Greeks and Latins – including clerics – were living side by side and noticing one another’s customs. Probably many people cared little about those differences. Others, especially the clergy, who were more invested in the ritual forms and doctrines of their churches, did care and heatedly discussed and debated the differences between the Latin church and the Greek one. Emperors sometimes encouraged such discussion and sometimes tried to suppress it. Regardless, the evidence concerning twelfth-century Byzantine responses to the Latins indicates a murmur of conversation and argument both between Greeks and Latins and among the Greeks themselves.

Beyond these changes caused by the general increase in contact, there were changes within each church. While it risks distortion to extract

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28 Michel, Humbert und Kerullarios, II, 322.
29 For introductions to each of these occasions, see J. Darrouzès, ‘Les documents byzantins de XIIe siècle sur la primauté romaine’, REB 23 (1965), 42–88.
31 Niketas Seides, one of the Byzantine theologians who participated in the debate of 1112, mentions that ‘ten or twelve years ago’ a Latin – ‘one of your people, from among those you call cardinals’ was in Constantinople. This reference has led more than one scholar to seek evidence of an official papal legation between 1100 and 1102, but none has been found. If Seides debated with Latin churchmen a decade or so before 1112, they were not papal legates. J. Darrouzès then suggested that this ‘cardinal’ might be connected to a mission sent by Baldwin I of Jerusalem (1100–18) to Alexios (Darrouzès, ‘Documents’, 53). Albert of Aix tells us of this embassy: the ambassadors were the Archbishop Gerhard and the bishop of ‘Barzenona’ (a diocese, and therefore a bishop, which we cannot identify). The latter travelled on to Italy where he betrayed the confidence Alexios had in him and maligned the emperor to the pope. If Darrouzès is correct in connecting this mission to Seides’ reference, these bishops were emissaries of a secular lord, but that did not prevent them from discussing religious differences with Greek clerics.
analysis of the churches in either culture from the larger society, I do so here because three major changes – two in governance and one in theology – are among the necessary causes of the schism. For one might imagine a world in which hatred and mistrust could fester between Greeks and Latins without a permanent schism in the church. After all, the Germans and the Normans, the French and the English fought with, hated, and distrusted one another for decades at a time in the Middle Ages, but in the end remained in the pope’s fold. So it seems to me that we must look beyond the general increase in hostility to explain the schism between Rome and Constantinople: its depth, its finality, its perdurance. Here I think three church-specific changes are crucial.

First, there were changes in the ecclesiastical culture of the empire – changes detailed by V. Tifitxoglu, P. Magdalino, M. Angold, and others.\textsuperscript{33} In the early years of the Komnenian dynasty, the cathedral clergy of the Hagia Sophia and the bishops who made up the patriarchal synod had become the spokesmen of imperial orthodoxy, in large part by cooperating with Alexios I’s determination to wipe out heresy in his empire. Their position was powerful, but not secure, and it required a kind of constant maintenance – restricting the size of the group, protecting its special status, spreading its values to the rest of society. This group-maintenance led to a kind of narrowing of the scope of acceptable ideas. It is probably fair to call this narrowing repression; it certainly looked like repression if you were one of its victims, punished for advocating an idea that had been acceptable in earlier decades but was now anathema.\textsuperscript{34} Most importantly for this paper, much of the polemical writing that survives from the twelfth century is about this group maintenance among the ‘guardians of orthodoxy’ – about protecting their internal purity and their separate status from those within their own society who threatened it. In the case of the Latins, this is clear: ‘Anti-Latinism … was directed at a group with a foothold, and sympathisers, within the citadel of


Orthodoxy— not only Manuel I, a notorious Latinophile, but Niketas of Maroneia, Basil of Ohrid, and other churchmen.

Meanwhile, two other changes were taking place in the Latin world. In the twelfth century, the Latins were putting the finishing touches on a fully developed argument for papal plenitude potestatis, and the Greeks were becoming ever more aware of that Latin argument. To cite just one of many examples: in both of the debates between Anselm of Havelberg and Niketas of Nikomedia, the tone shifts from courteous to strident when the pope’s authority is the subject. Anselm insists on seeing the schism in terms defined by the papal reformers of the west: Constantinople, the daughter church, has wilfully separated herself from her mother. The Roman Church is first after God in authority. The pope presided over the councils, and his authority is the source of conciliar authority. Without his participation, a council is not valid; his authority is valid without a council. Niketas bridles and protests:

For if the Roman pontiff, sitting on his highest throne of glory, wishes to thunder at us and throw down his mandates from on high, and if he wishes, not with our counsel but of his own judgment and his own good pleasure, to judge us and command us and our churches, what kind of brotherhood, or indeed what kind of parenthood, can this be? Who would ever be able to bear this with equanimity? In such a case, we should be and be called slaves of the Church – not her sons.

Although Niketas and Anselm reach agreement on the procession of the Holy Spirit, they cannot agree on the pope’s role in the church. On this subject, compromise with Rome has become impossible, and the Greeks are starting to realize that it has.

Finally, in addition to the development of an ideology of papal primacy, the Latin Church was also changing in other intellectual realms. The twelfth century was a time of immense turmoil and creativity in Latin theology. This, too, the Greeks knew, for they both learned the substance of certain Latin theological positions that they could not accept and became aware of the new methods in Latin theological reasoning. That growing awareness of both substance and method manifests itself in three famous Greek–Latin disputes of the twelfth century. Pietro Grossolano, Archbishop of Milan, discussed the Filioque with Greek theologians in

35 Magdalino, Empire of Manuel I, 386.
36 Darrouzès, ‘Documents’.
1112. He seems to have had no surprises for them. Probably educated in a monastery, he knew his Scriptures, of course, but he quickly grew frustrated with the Greeks for their over-subtle (as he saw it) use of logic. He himself invoked Scripture and elaborate analogies to justify the Latin position, did not resort to logic, and showed no knowledge of the writings of the Greek fathers of the church. In contrast, Anselm of Havelberg, the Latin debater in 1136, had been educated at the beginning of the twelfth-century renaissance in the cathedral school of Laon and he was more than willing to use logic. Moreover, he was fascinated with the Greek fathers and quoted them at length in defence of Latin doctrine. Their writings were available to him because there were several important Latin scholars living in Constantinople in the 1130s, translating Greek texts and becoming ever more familiar with Greek theological traditions and reasoning. Niketas, Anselm’s interlocutor, was amazed and delighted at the Latin’s knowledge of the Greek fathers. He exclaimed, ‘I see that I have found a Latin man who is truly catholic! Would that [more] such Latins would come to us in these times!’

But this positive response to Anselm’s learning was not unmixed with dismay. The Greeks in 1112 had maintained the kind of condescension toward Latin learning that characterized earlier Byzantine attitudes. Like Theophylact of Ohrid, they assumed a low level of education in Latin lands and speculated that the Latin language was too impoverished to express theological ideas adequately. Latins could not be expected to understand theological subtleties. By 1136, such condescension was no longer an option. Now those who defended the orthodoxy of the Latins did so not as a matter of tolerance, but by actually claiming that the Latin use of the Filioque could be accepted.

A further step in Latin theological methods had been taken by the 1160s, when Hugo Eteriano, a Latin theologian who had studied dialectic in Paris, became one of Emperor Manuel I’s (1143–80) theological advisers. When a controversy imported from the west began to disturb the peace of the church, Manuel – himself not a bad theologian – intervened. There ensued several heated debates in the imperial palace. The controversy was about a Christological matter being hotly debated in the west at the time: what did Jesus mean when he said, ‘The Father is greater than I’ (John 14:28)? Seeking an explanation of the Latin position, Manuel summoned the best authority on Latin theology he could think of: his friend and adviser Hugo Eteriano. Hugo’s explanation so pleased the emperor that he adopted it as his own. Nevertheless, the controversy continued to divide the clergy of the capital. In the end, Manuel persuaded and/or coerced the members of the Constantinopolitan synod

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38 Anselm of Havelberg, Dialogi 2, De processione Spiritus sancti (PL 188.1204).
to accept the theological resolution he preferred. He had the resolution inscribed on plaques and placed in a prominent position on the walls of the Hagia Sophia.

Hugo’s learned explanations, the sophistication of Latin theology, and – perhaps most of all – the emperor’s support for the Latin position, caught many Greeks off-guard and put them on the defensive. Probably more people now found Latin ideas threatening and were prepared to resist them at all cost. It was bad enough that the Latins were ‘innovators’ and that they strenuously insisted that Greeks accept their ‘innovations’ because the pope commanded them to. It was even worse when they defended their innovations with a logical and sophistick skill that left the Greeks unable to answer. The only way to avoid their heresies was to utterly reject not only the innovations themselves but also the reasoning which led to them. Greeks did not stop talking about theology, of course, but they developed a tremendous suspicion of Latin methods and ideas, which led, in turn, to a rejection even of those Greeks who wished to use logic more intensively in defence of the eastern church’s position. In rejecting logic and dialectic as ‘Latin’, many Greeks rejected much of their own tradition. As Aristeides Papadakis puts it, ‘The rise of scholasticism has seldom been viewed as a cause of schism’, but it should be seen as ‘another alarming symptom of the disintegration of the common Christian tradition’. The intellectual traditions of Greeks and Latins were diverging in remarkable ways. Even without the resentments stirred up by crusaders and merchants, Latin ideas about papal primacy and Latin theological innovations were making it increasingly difficult for Greeks to believe in the orthodoxy of the Latins. As the elite of the church concentrated on building the barriers between insiders and outsiders, the few Greeks who continued to defend Latin orthodoxy were usually forced – both by Latin teaching and by the adamant resistance of their compatriots – to choose between the two churches and the two systems of theology, between the orthodoxy of the Greeks and the orthodoxy of the Latins.

39 Papadakis and Meyendorff, Christian East, 167.
Epilogue

Some constant characteristics of Byzantine Orthodoxy

Sergei Averintsev

It is absolutely obvious in theory, but maybe not obvious enough in the everyday contacts and conflicts of Christian communities, that there are two entirely different systems of confessional divergences (and respectively two systems of objections used in a polemic context). The first of them is related to the well-known doctrinal points, beginning with the *Filioque*. For the medieval mentality, the order of ritual usage belonged to the same system as well, and so long as the medieval mentality remained itself, it could be rather narrow-minded, but it was in a sense consequential and *bona fide*. The second system is related to the style of gestures, of behaviour, of sacred art, of the rhetoric of hymns and sermons, to the claims of the special *taste*, worked out by the centuries of the Orthodox cultural tradition. According to Father Pavel Florensky, the Russian grandmaster of late Romantic reflection on the reality of Orthodoxy, 'the Orthodox taste [...] can be felt, but cannot be a matter of arithmetical accounting'.

It remains certainly possible to make an objection: the Orthodox taste, for example, of Greeks is not quite identical with the Orthodox taste of Russians, not to mention such less known Orthodox areas as Romania or Georgia. Being myself a passionate admirer of the Greek liturgical chant, I cannot forget the cultural shock experienced in my presence by some Russian Orthodox believers in a Greek church; but it is not difficult to see some common traits in all Orthodox cultures, and they are without any doubt more important than any diversities.

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1 'Вкус православный [...] чувствуется, но [...] не подлежит арифметическому учету': *Смысл и утверждение истины* (Moscow, 1914), 8.

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Both species of contrasts have existed, to be sure, since times of old; but in the classic epoch of the confessional disputes it was only items of the first system which were explicitly named and discussed. We may consider Protopop Avvakum’s objections against some new ‘westernizing’ trends in the Russian icon-painting of his day as an anticipation from afar of the future explicit introduction of disputed topics from the second system; but such topics could become real only in modern times, in the context of Romantic interest in the national ‘spirit’ and couleur local. The proper theme for the Russian Orthodox philosophers and so-called lay theologians of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was not so much the doctrinal argument as the ‘spirit’ of Orthodoxy, and the same can be said about the contemporary Greek Orthodox philosopher Christos Yannaras and many other thinkers.

The question of ‘Orthodox taste’ as articulated by Florensky is an extreme expression of the same tendency. It is not for nothing that Orthodoxy in the twentieth century saw itself in the so-called ‘Theology of Icon’, as worked out by Leonid Ouspensky and others, or at least allowed it extreme importance. Although this phenomenon was involved in a lot of exaggerations – after all, such an ardent Russian Orthodox (and rather an intolerant one!) as Dostoevsky saw the image of Christian ideal in the Roman Catholic Madonna of Raphael – there may be some truth in this tendency, because it seems that cultural shock produces nowadays more real obstacles to mutual understanding than any doctrinal questions.

Now the worst that can happen (and does happen all too often) is confusion between both systems of divergences. A doctrinal argument as such can be an impulse to an authentic dialogue. A criticism of this or that concrete trait of some alien confessional culture as such can be examined, discussed and sometimes even be of some use for the criticized, because no Christian community is allowed to see itself as perfect before God. But a confusion of both attitudes, when this or that side accuses another one of being wrong in doctrinal questions, and moreover of being frivolous (or, on the contrary, repressive and servile) in their traditional gestures or in their sacred art, makes any reasonable discussion absolutely impossible.

Being an Orthodox believer, but by no means a theologian, I do not dare to mention once more the high doctrinal questions, well known to everybody, so I shall myself concentrate on cultural divergences. At the same time, I suppose that the style of dogmatic discourse as such, although different from the matter of those other discourses, can be examined together with other facets of ‘Orthodox taste’. So I begin with this theme.

The Byzantine system of theological reflection has a certain keyword, which seems to be quite untranslatable in any other language, including –
and this gives pause for thought – the languages of the Orthodox world, e.g., the Russian language (the intellectual elite of the Russian Orthodox Church has in fact adopted the Greek lexeme without translating it, an average Russian believer or even clergyman does not use it at all). This word is ἀκριβεία: literally, ‘exactitude’, ‘accuracy’, but also ‘scrupulousness’, ‘conscientiousness’, etc. Now, all these diverging concepts as such are in themselves universally known to the most diverse cultures: first, the exactitude of reasoning; secondly, the formal accuracy of technical or ritual proceedings; thirdly, the scrupulousness of ethical and religious behaviour.

What seems to be specific for the Byzantine akribeia is the fact that it unites all these semantic facets in a quite essential way, so that the correctness of the dogmatic concepts and of the ritual gestures appears somehow identical with the moral conscientiousness of one’s walking before God in truth. There is something in it that recalls to our mind some characteristic traits of the Jewish tradition of Talmud, in so far as that tradition creates a context in which the shrewd ingenuity and immense learning of a talmid chacham appear as a necessary instrument for the most minute observance of all complicated mizvot (commandments) and consequently as a matter of some supreme religious and moral value. I suppose there is in fact something common, determined by the fact that both traditions, the Greek Orthodox one and the Talmudic one, were created by very ripe, even overripe cultures: the Greek Fathers came after Plato and Aristotle, after Plotinos and Proklos, also after the Apostolic and Apologetic ages, the great Rabbis of the Talmud came after the generations of the Prophets and Scribes; and then the initiatives of the Fathers and of the talmudic Hahamim were century after century carried on in the context of extremely conservative traditions. But there exists also a great difference between these trends of thought: Rabbinical thought applied itself almost exclusively to the so-called halachic questions of the religious practice, not to speculative dogmatic problems. If Greek Christianity once began with the forging of the formulas of the Creed at the very dawn of its existence, so that this task was definitively fulfilled as early as at the end of the fourth century, the Jewish tradition created something like a Credo – that is, the thirteen principles formulated by Rambam, still far less worked out in its metaphysical aspects than the Christian Credo – only in the late Middle Ages.

The Byzantine passion for dogmatic speculation can be in itself compared rather with the intellectual climate of Roman Catholic Scholasticism; it was not for nothing that the attitude of scholastic reasoning nourished itself by the impulses given by such a typical Early Byzantine theologian as St John of Damascus, who puts at the head of all the dogmatic lucubrations of his principal work Ἡγησεως (The
Fount of Knowledge') a manual of logic, entitled *Dialectics*. But the degree to which Scholasticism was oriented towards the syllogistic treatment of so-called *quaestiones disputatae* and conditioned by the awareness of an autonomy of reason, subordinate to faith as an *ancilla theologiae*, nonetheless possessing some area of its own in the established university praxis of the obligatory disputationes held to obtain a degree, creates again some difference from the Byzantine type of *akrideia*.

As for younger Orthodox nations and cultures such as the Russian one, they did not in general inherit the Greek habit of dogmatic controversy. Up to the epoch of St Joseph of Volokolamsk, that is, to the end of the fifteenth century, there was no serious trouble with heresy in Russia, with the exception of some pagan or Manichaean elements in the subconscious of the rural people; and even the offensiveness of the so-called 'Judaizers', presumably connected with the Christian-cabballistic and protoprotestant European trends of those days, did not provoke a polemic with a sufficiently clear articulation of the contrasting theses. In Pre-Petrine Russia the concept of *akrideia* was mostly applied to ritual questions, as is typical with the so-called 'Old Believers'. If the Greeks in the epoch of St Gregory Palamas (fourteenth century) were absorbed by the question of whether the grace of God is some created object or the uncreated energy of His own Essence, the Russians in the great controversies of the seventeenth century were defending the Sign of Cross with two fingers (for the two Natures of Christ) against the use of three fingers (for the three Persons of the Holy Trinity); it is much more like the Jewish taste for halachic oversubtleties (and it has the same motivation, being rooted in the dramatic longing for a visible sign of being God's people ...). So the ultra-developed interest in abstract doctrinal metaphysics remains in the Orthodox world mostly a Greek speciality. (As for the higher theological controversies once provoked in the bosom of the Russian emigration, e.g. by the innovations of Father Sergii Bulgakov, they were rather an exception that confirms the rule.)

Having mentioned the Judaic paradigm, I should like to make some observations on the relation of the Orthodox religious culture to this paradigm.

In the context of Western 'Christendom', such trends as, e.g., the Christian Cabbalism of the Renaissance and Post-Renaissance epochs, the Hebraistic studies of some German humanists (such as Johannes Reuchlin), and the special passion for the Old Testament so typical for Classical Protestantism, helped to establish some possibility of a conscious reflection on the Jewish components of the Christian heritage. In the Byzantine tradition we mostly find nothing comparable. This difference can be traced back to the Patristic epoch: it is not a matter of chance that the formula *hebraica veritas* was used by Jerome, that is, by a Latin Father,
not by a Greek one. On the other side, the ultra-traditionalist orientation of Byzantine spirituality helped to preserve – not by special conscious efforts, but so to say de facto – some themes typical of the religious culture of ancient Israel which were lost in the Occident.

First of all, the Old Testament figures of the Ark, of the Tabernacle and then of the Holy of Holies in the Jerusalem Temple, that is, of the loci of the Divine Presence (postbibl. Shekhinah), remain much more actual and real for the mystical materialism of the Byzantine tradition than for the spiritualist rationalism of western theological trends. From the thirteenth century onwards Roman Catholicism more and more comes to reserve this Shekhinah-dignity for the (exposed and adored) Sacred Host; as for the world of Protestantism, it does not leave much place for any mystical materialism at all.

But, for the Orthodox liturgical sense, worship as a whole, not exclusively at the moment of Transubstantiation, is a mystery of the transcendent Presence. According to the Russian Primary Chronicle (Πορθή ἑρμηνευτῆρας ἀντί), the Russians sent by Prince Vladimir to attend the Divine Liturgy in Constantinople, expressed their experience in the following words: '... Only this we know, that God dwells there among men ...' (cf. the prayer of Solomon by the dedication of the Temple, 1 Kings 8.27: 'But will God indeed dwell among men2 on the earth?'). The Byzantine Liturgy emphasizes again and again this idea of the Earthly Heaven: 'Now the Celestial Powers are present with us, and worship invisibly.' The Old Testament attitude towards the Holy of Holies can be seen in the Orthodox manner of shaping the interior of a church, that is, of emphasizing the numinously momentous character of the sanctuary in the eastern part that corresponds to the Roman Catholic presbytery. Curiously enough, the whole space of this sanctuary is in Russian Orthodox usage named the 'altar', which goes back to the lexical function of the Greek word θυσιαστήριον, denoting already in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament and later in the Byzantine Greek, not only the 'altar', but also the 'altar precincts' of the Old Testament Temple and of each Christian church. Now, in the Old Testament there are notable mentions of the veils and doors which concealed from the eyes of the believers the Ark of the Testimony and the Holy of Holies, e.g., Exodus 26.33: 'And thou shalt hang up the veil [...] and the veil shall divide between the holy place and the Holy of Holies'; 1 Kings 6.31: 'And for the

2 'Among men' is absent from the Masoretic text and from most modern translations; but it is present in the Septuagint version (μετ' ἀνθρώπων) and consequently in the Old Slavonic translation (ср. άνθρωποι), that is, in both versions which were relevant for the Byzantine tradition in Kievan Russia.
entering of the debir [that is, the Holy of Holies] he made doors of olive tree'.

Hence the Orthodox custom of separating the sanctuary from the rest of the church interior by the so-called iconostasis. It was, to begin with, only a low screen, but the biblical idea of the veiled, unapproachable debir was still in evidence, and so encouraged the iconostasis in the proper sense to grow and grow further, till it concealed the sanctuary entirely. To be sure, it creates some problems, being a little bit too much in the tradition of the Old Testament to pass for the Christian liturgical mood. To quote the well known early book of our Δεσπότης, Timothy Ware, entitled The Orthodox Church: ‘Many Orthodox liturgists today would be glad to follow Father John of Kronstadt’s example, and revert to a more open type of iconostasis’.\(^3\) In the Russia of our days it is, among others, Father Georgi Kotshetkov who is very much concerned with this idea. But I am trying today to propose a merely ‘phenomenological’ description of traditional Orthodox culture, without a full discussion pro & contra.

Now, it is not only as a paradigm for the shaping of the real sacred space, but also in a metaphorical use, that the image of the Ark of the Covenant seems to appeal to the Byzantine mentality in a special way, much more than to the traditional type of the Occidental one. Such a great Roman Catholic Doctor Ecclesiae (and such an intelligent man!) as St Alphonsus de Liguori, when interpreting the Litany of Loreto in his ‘Meditations for the Novena’, either misunderstood the text where the Holy Virgin is named ‘Foederis arca’, or at least found this metaphor to be totally incomprehensible to his readers; in fact, he simply replaces the Ark of the Covenant in its symbolical function by the Ark of Noah: ‘... In the ark of Noah only two animals of every kind were received, but under the mantle of Mary the just and sinners find place’.\(^4\) By contrast, in Byzantine hymnography, e.g. in the most famous hymn called Akathistos, the Mariological images and metaphors referring to the Divine Presence in the Ark of the Covenant appear again and again: θεοῦ ἀχωρήτου χώρα (‘container of a God uncontained’, eighth oikos), άχιμα πανάγιον τού ἐπὶ τῶν Χερουβίμ (‘all-holy chariot of Him who is above the Cherubim’, ibid.), σκηνὴ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ Λόγου (‘Tabernacle of God and Word’, twelfth oikos), ἄγια ἅγιων μείζων (‘the greater Holy of holies’, ibid.), κιβωτε χρυσοβελόσα τῶ Πνεύματι (‘Ark, gilded by the Spirit’, ibid.).

It is very characteristic that in Orthodox lexical usage the traditional box-like frame containing a holy icon is named by the Greek word for the Ark: κιβωτός, Slav./Russ. київтъ. One feels oneself reminded of the Old

\(^3\) (London: Penguín, 1963), 276.
Believers represented by Nikola Leskov in his tale ‘The Angel Sealed’ ('Zapechatlenyy Angel'), who consider, according to their own words, the Icon of the Guardian Angel, which accompanied them in all their wanderings as their Ark of the Covenant, their Holy of Holies.

The Orthodox attitude towards the Icon belongs indeed to the most worked out themes. Maybe it is an acute danger for us Russian Orthodox to place excessive emphasis on the above-mentioned Theology of the Icon. Behind us are the decades when Florensky praised the icon of the Trinity of Andrei Rublev as the best proof of God’s existence, and when somewhat later the young intellectuals of the Soviet epoch were converted to faith by visiting the icon collection of the Tretyakov gallery in Moscow: so we are naturally prone to such exaggeration. And yet it is hardly possible to discuss the aesthetic atmosphere created by the Orthodox type of spirituality without mentioning some basic premises of this type of sacred image. The East Christian tradition of the Icon, created in Byzantium, cultivated and developed in the East European area from Macedonia to the monasteries of Northern Russia, represents a special vision mediating between the emotional and sensorial imagination of the West and the schematic and static fascination of some Hindu yantras or Islamic calligraphic designs. It is neither this nor that, and it combines some very essential elements of both; for example, some sacred monograms, \( IΣ XΣ \) for Jesus Christ, \( MP \ ΘY \) for the Mother of God, etc., remind us of the Oriental passion for calligraphy, belonging to its complex visual tradition as necessarily as the figurative representations. The traditional laws of the Icon permit neither the sweetness of the Renaissance Madonnas, nor the muscular corpulence of the Baroque Saints; but the avoidance of the sensual does not exclude the human Face and the human Form as the central reflection of the Divine, and despite all ascetical modification some aspects of the ancient Greek artistic attitude are retained, preventing any complete orientalization. Movement becomes augustly still, without being overcome by the total motionlessness of a Buddhist image; perception of the spatial is mystically modified without being eliminated; sentiment is governed by ascetic discipline without being replaced by some nirvanic absence of emotions.

This artistic and spiritual equilibrium precisely midway between the extremes of the Eastern non-humanistic sense of the sacred and Western humanism on the way to secularisation seems to have some special universal significance, transcending the limits of Art, even of religious Art. Of course, such equilibrium, like any equilibrium, is difficult to preserve; in the late icons we find scarcely more than a shadow of the ancient harmony. But even some shadows have the power to impress.

It must be remembered that Byzantine theology found itself confronted in a very serious manner by the Second Commandment of the
Decalogue: ‘You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or a likeness of anything that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath or that is in the waters under the earth’ (Exodus 20.4). The same Byzantium that created the Icon produced the most radical iconoclastic movement. For the centuries of the controversy the Orthodox were busy analysing, understanding, rethinking and transforming the reasons of the Iconoclasts and seeking an adequate response, that would not substitute the merely imaginative and sentimental for spiritual realism. In that way the acutest problem of the Icon as such was clearly understood to be identical with the central problems of Christian metaphysics in general: the reflection of the Transcendent in the Immanent as a mystery made possible by another mystery, that of the Incarnation, essentially connected with the maternal dignity of Mary the Theotokos. This connection is excellently epitomized in a Byzantine liturgical troparion from the epoch just after the Iconoclastic controversy:

The uncircumscribed Word of the Father has circumscribed Himself through His Incarnation from Thee, Mother of God; as He was restoring the stained image [that is, the human form] in its primeval archetype [in God], He has filled it with the beauty divine; and we, confessing the Redemption, reflect its reality in words and deeds.⁵

In a very meaningful way the text of the troparion includes an invocation of the Mother of God. She is represented in Byzantine theology and liturgy as the privileged point of the Universe where the transcendent Creator Himself enters the immanence of all created things, recreating them from within. Because of Her, as Byzantine troparia and hymns declare, ‘the things created are made new’; because of Her ‘the universal creation rejoices’ (the last of the above-named formulas, ‘ὅ Τῷ Θεῷ Ῥάγουτέρα ...’, is used in Russia to designate an important iconographic type, representing the Virgin Mary in cosmic contexts).

And now some observations concerning the phenomenon of ‘Orthodox taste’ in the area of literature. When we look for some occasion to track the very specificum of this taste in its difference from the Western one, of special interest for us are the Latin translations of the most typical Byzantine sacred poetry, and, vice versa, the Orthodox translations of the most typical Roman Catholic texts.

The above-mentioned Marian hymn, the Akathistos, belongs to the central symbols of the Byzantine Orthodox tradition; exactly because of that the history of its reception in the medieval West seems to be especially significant. Not later than the end of the eighth or the beginning

⁵ Kontakion for the Sunday of Orthodoxy.
of the ninth century there appears a Latin translation of the Akathistos. The so-called second koukoulion (Gk. Υπερμάχω Στρατηγῷ τὰ νικητήρια, Slav. ВЗКРЯННОЙ ХОЕВОДЪ ПОВѢДИТЕЛЬНАА) is translated in the following way:

Propugnatori Magistratui
victoriae,
sicut redempta a duris,
gratiarum actiones
rescribo tibi Civitas tua,
Dei Genitrix;
sed sicut habens
imperium inexpugnabile,
deo omnibus periculis me libera
ut clamo tibi:
ave, Sponsa Inconsponsata.

The fact that the manuscript tradition of this Latin version is connected precisely with the abbey of Sankt Gallen, that is, with the area that a little bit later produced such famous hymnographers as Notker Balbulus and Tuotilo, can scarcely be considered as accidental. From Sankt Gallen came the impulse determining for centuries the evolution of the hymnographical genre of the sequence. Some passages of the later Marian sequences remind us of the Akathistos, as, for example, the lines of the grand master of this genre Adam of St-Viktor: 'Imperatrix Supernorum,/ Superatrix infernorum'. A facet of the (indirect) influence of the above-mentioned Latin version of the Akathistos is connected with a text of special importance for the Roman Catholic tradition, that is, with the so-called Litany of Loreto (Litania Lauretana); this Litany was finally recommended for general use by the Pope Sixtus V only in the 1587, but it goes back to prayers that are several centuries older. We find there some verbal correspondences with the Akathistos (e.g. 'foederis arca' as translation of the ἀκηνή/κυβοτέ in the twelfth oikos of the Akathistos); but much more important are more general parallels in the structure of the appeals to Our Lady in the Akathistos and in the Litany of Loreto. Even the pairing of those appeals, emphasized by the use of rhyme or homoeoteleuta, being obligatory in the Akathistos, occurs now and then in the Litany: Mater purissima/Mater castissima; Mater inviolata/Mater intemerata; Virgo potens/Virgo clemens, etc. But the moments of difference

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are no less important. In a noteworthy way, these are not doctrinal discrepancies: the Mariological doctrine in the Litany remains the same, at least as far as the original text is concerned, and not additions from both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (*sine labe originali concepta, in coelum assumpta*). But the literary taste is very different. Neither rhyme nor pairing exercise in the *Litania Lauretana* the form-creating function that makes them obligatory in the Akathistos, their function remains merely decorative. In addition, the longest appeals in the Litany are much shorter than the shortest appeals in the Akathistos. These differences, being, as mentioned, non-doctrinal and related to literary form, are by no means 'merely' formal; they are conditioned by the traits of the different culture of prayer (a specialist of literary studies, e.g. your humble servant, can be tempted to call it a 'poetics of prayer'). The more detailed elaborating and much more complicated combination of the laudatory formulas, which in the Byzantine hymn create a very special 'cosmic' point of view, that sometimes makes us think of such an all-embracing perspective in *Yin* and *Yang* or similar subjects, are not absent from the Litany of Loreto, but they are not made explicit in even approximately the same measure as in the Akathistos.

Enough, then, about the Occidental transformation of an important Byzantine model. Now an example of a Russian Orthodox reception of a typically Roman Catholic prayer, which was paradigmatic in post-Tridentine devotion, especially among the Jesuits: the *Anima Christi*. This prayer was at the beginning of the eighteenth century translated into Church Slavonic by a famous saint of the Russian Orthodox Church, a man of Ukrainian origin called to be the bishop of an ancient Russian town, a great spiritual master who at the same time happened to be a very well-read and gifted man of letters, an important figure in the history of both Ukrainian and Russian culture: Dimitri of Rostov (1651–1709). It is remarkable that such a decidedly Roman Catholic text included for him obviously nothing that would require any corrections in the respect of doctrine; but the poetics, the rhythm, the verbal melody of the Latin sentences did not satisfy his ear, accustomed to the Byzantine periods. *Anima Christi, sanctifica me. Corpus Christi, salva me. Sanguis Christi, inebria me*, etc. – it was too laconic, direct and linear for an Orthodox (rather like the litany of Loreto, and contrary to the Akathistos). Therefore the translation of St Dimitri creates a different rhythm, with a lot of stylistic windings –

**Божество Христово! вспомни мя, помилуй мя!**
**Добавя Христова! милосердствуй в мил, спаси мя.**
'Divinity of Christ! Enlighten me, have mercy on me!
Soul of Christ! Be gracious to me, save me!
Body of Christ! Saturate me, make me strong!
Blood of Christ! Satisfy my thirst, sanctify me', etc.

It moves as a slow meditation, and the original Latin text is considerably enlarged (exactly as the Byzantine formulas appeared in the Litany of Loreto not less considerably abridged).

And now some more general considerations.

The Orthodox mystical vision of the Logos, while far from being pantheistical and impersonal, does not permit a reduction of the mysteries of Incarnation to any vision which would be merely emotional and psychological. The Roman Catholic classification of the events of the Incarnation in their connection with the practice of Rosary prayers in the ‘joyful’, ‘sorrowful’ and ‘glorious’ mysteries – mysteria gaudiosa, dolorosa, gloriosa – without being per se unacceptable to Orthodox mentality, seems to be a little bit too simplistic. The Western Christmas atmosphere for example runs the risk, from an Orthodox view, of being reduced to some sacred-cosy family idyll. To be sure, the Orthodox too cannot but consider the Nativity as a mysterium gaudiosum; at the same time, the fact, that the Child is predestined from the beginning to be a Victim at Golgotha, deprives the event of any cosiness. In all that is ‘joyous’, the ‘sorrowful’ is present; but even more important for the Orthodox mentality is the full mystical presence of the ‘glorious’ in the ‘sorrowful’. In the Occident, Christian art proceeds along a way that brings the emotional contrast of the Good Friday sorrow and the Easter triumph to extremes; examples of this attitude are the late medieval sculptures named Crucifixi dolorosi and especially the contrast between the horrors of Crucifixion and the glories of Resurrection in the pictures of the great German painter Matthias Grünewald. The same themes are treated in quite different ways in Orthodox sacred art. The images of the Crucifixion created by the Byzantine and Old Russian painters are very far from any naturalistic or expressionistic attitude; the outlines of the extended arms of the Crucified are, in their impetus of flight, already anticipating the free weightlessness of the resurrected Body. It is possible in these images of Golgotha to conceive of the entire paradox of the mystical perspective, in which Good Friday and Easter are experienced as absolutely inseparable facets of the

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7 Съчинения святаго Димитрия митрополита Ростовскаго. Part 1. (Kiev, 1856) 1. 171.
same entity. The Cross of Christ is His victory. This paradox becomes a formula in the great Greek Father, St John Chrysostom: 'I call Him king, because I see Him crucified.' 'Being lifted up on the Cross, Thou hast lifted up with Thyself all the mortals of the earth', sings the Orthodox Church on Good Friday. Once, in the rite of the disciples of St John the Apostle, the so-called Quartodecimans of the earliest Christian epoch, Good Friday and Easter were celebrated quite literally at the same night, the Passover night of the Jewish calendar; that practice was long ago abandoned, but the spiritual atmosphere of that Vigil is still alive in the tradition of the Orthodox sacred art.

Easter is clearly the peak and climax of the Orthodox ecclesiastical year, having priority even over Christmas. Anyone who has had a chance to experience Easter in a Greek or Russian cathedral or parish church will never have any doubt about this priority. Orthodox Easter cannot be too much identified with any date of the calendar, for it radiates its light on all the days of the year. Above all, to be sure, on each Sunday, in Russian called voskresenie, that is, 'Resurrection day'. Each parish sings at each Sunday matins: 'We, having seen the Resurrection of Christ ...' But it is not only Sunday that is allowed to appear as an image, an icon of Easter. Seraphim of Sarov, the great Russian saint of early modern times (1760–1833), had a habit of greeting his visitors on any day of the year with the Orthodox Easter greeting: 'Christ is risen!' Ergo, the whole time (and eternity!) of a Christian remains under the sign of Easter.

For the Orthodox mystical view, a name is a reality of sacramental rank. In this context it is especially important that Easter is the only feast, the designation of which belongs in Orthodox liturgical poetry to the names of Christ Himself. As you know, this feast is designated in the entire Orthodox world by the Greek word ΠΑΣΧΑ, present both in the Septuagint and in the New Testament and reflecting with sufficient accuracy the Aramaic lexeme for the Jewish Passover (Pesah). Now the same noun is used in the Bible for the Passover Lamb (e.g. Deut. 16.2); St Paul transfers the name to Christ (1 Cor. 5.7: 'Christ our Passover'). This formula is repeated in the ecstatic hymn of the Easter vigil: Πάσχα Χριστός ὁ Αυτρώτης, Πάσχα ἀμωμον ('Christ the Redeemer is the Passover, the Passover without blemish').

The cosmic dimension of the Orthodox concept of Easter, as represented in the magnificent masterpieces of Byzantine art, deserves our special attention. It arises from the fact that the anthropocentric iconography of the Resurrection, representing the Risen Christ as a heroic figure, remains sensu stricto forbidden within the realm of the Orthodox tradition: nobody has seen the Resurrection, hence it cannot be represented. Instead of that Byzantine and traditional Russian art develop two subjects that concern the universal vision in a direct way: first of all
Descensus ad Inferos, and also the meeting of Christ the ‘Gardener’ with Mary Magdalene (see below).

There is a short sermon (almost a hymn in rhythmical prose) preserved under the name of the Greek Father John Chrysostom and in any case belonging to the Patristic epoch, familiar to every practising Orthodox throughout the world, for it belongs to the prescribed texts for each Easter Vigil. Christ is praised and celebrated in that sermon as the final Conqueror of death in the sense of St Paul, 1 Cor 15:

Nobody must be afraid of death; the death of the Saviour has saved us all. Being held by hell’s grip, He has disarmed hell. Descending to hell, He has deprived it of its power. [...] Already Isaiah has prophesied it, saying: ‘Hell was embittered by Thy coming’. 8 Yes, it was embittered, being annihilated; it was embittered, being laughed at; it was embittered, having received the deadly thrust; it was embittered, being deprived of its power [...] ‘O death, where is thy sting? O hell, where is thy victory?’ (1 Cor. 15.55). Christ is risen, and thou, hell, art overthrown; Christ is risen, and the devils are fallen; Christ is risen, and the Angels rejoice; Christ is risen, and life resumes its course (ζωή πολιτεύεται); Christ is risen, and not one of the dead remains in his grave.

‘Life resumes its course’ – this refers quite especially to the human existence of the Christians, to be sure; but the Easter revival has no limits, and it is for nothing that the Gospel according to St John mentions ‘the garden’ (19.41) as the locus of the Resurrection. ‘O, it is a true mystery, that the story of salvation has its beginning and its consummation in a garden, the Garden of Eden and the Garden of the Resurrection. [...] But to any garden belongs a gardener. The Church, being a herald of the Resurrection, sees her Lord as the Gardener, the κηπουρός; mentioned by St John 20.15. 9

Easter as the consecration ceremony (ἐγκαινία) for all creation and springtime is a natural and cosmic parable and simile of spiritual revival: these are the key-notes of the marvellous sermon composed by the Greek Father Gregory of Nazianzus, called ‘the Theologian’ (†390). In the course of this meditation, considered with the Easter harmony of the elements, it is possible to experience – along with St Gregory’s distinctive characteristic as a poet among theologians – the Orthodox taste for the Easter-centred image of the universe:

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8 Isaiah 14.9 (trans. according to the Septuagint version, used by the author of the sermon.)
9 The source of this quotation has not been identified – the Editors.
Just look on things visible to your eye! The Queen of the seasons (ἡ βασιλίσσα τῶν ἡρων) escorts the King of days and presents with generous hand the most beautiful and joyous gifts that are in her possession. The sky gives now a light that is clearer, the sun ascends higher and has a glitter that is more golden. The disc of the moon shines now brighter, and the garland of the stars sparkles with purer beams. Now the shore is connected in harmony with the waves, the sun with the clouds, the air with the winds, the earth with the plants, and the plants with our glances.10

At the outset of Russian literature we meet a moving elaboration of the cosmic aspects of Easter; it belongs to the gifted preacher, Kirill, the twelfth-century bishop of Turov, in his sermon on the Sunday following Easter (and was obviously inspired by the above-mentioned text of St Gregory):

Last Sunday all things were transformed: earth became heaven, cleansed by God from the defilement of demons; angels and women humbly celebrate the Resurrection. Creation was renewed [...]. The heavens have stripped off the dark clouds like coarse garments and are filled with brightness, and with the bright air they proclaim the glory of the Lord.11

Curiously enough some analogies to the vision of spring as of cosmic, elementary Easter are to be found in Russian poetry of the twentieth century, that is, in Pasternak's poem, 'On Holy Week', from his novel Doktor Zhivago, where the most concrete details concerning the reality of spring weather and ecclesiastical usage at the transition from the Holy Week to the Easter Vigil melt together, in order to prepare together the event of Resurrection:

... At midnight all nature and all flesh become silent and listen to the rumours of spring, that if only the weather clears up a little, it is a sign that death yields to the effort of the Resurrection.

To be sure, the poetry of Pasternak does not set itself the task of reflecting in a strict manner any doctrinal message; but the decidedly cosmic character of the Orthodox Easter seems to be reproduced adequately enough.

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10 Or. 44.10 (PG 36.617C–D).
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