

## Κωνσταντινούπολις ἐπίσκοπον ἔχει

### Part II

#### From the Second Outbreak of Iconoclasm to the Death of Methodios

The reign of Michael I Rhangabe entailed considerable setbacks for Patriarch Nicephoros personally as well as for his see. The decisions of the Council of 809 had to be abandoned for the time being and the patriarch's attempts to use secular authorities against the enemies of the Church failed because of the Studites' counteraction<sup>1</sup>. However, the latter's victory was by far not complete. Nicephoros kept his rank, the "moechian heresy" was quickly pushed aside and Theodore was forced to use all his authority to persuade his followers not to insist on the deposition of the patriarch<sup>2</sup>. The late Emperor Nicephoros was used as a convenient scapegoat –rank-and-file supporters of Theodore, who were certainly not aware of the complicated court intrigues of 808-811, could very well buy it. Of course, the leaders of both sides did not mean it too seriously, so there was no *damnatio memoriae*<sup>3</sup>.

The compromise achieved under Michael I was certainly a consequence of a certain balance of influence between Theodore and Nicephoros. As we can gather from Theophanes, the patriarch was loyal to Staurakios, the son and heir of Emperor Nicephoros, until it became dangerous for everybody<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> *Theophanis Chronographia*, ed. C. DE BOOR. Lipsiae 1883, p.495.

<sup>2</sup> *Theodori Studitae epistulae*, ed. G. FATOUROS. Berlin-N.Y. 1992, Ep.56 - cf. Ep. 269; P. ALEXANDER. *The Patriarch Nicephorus of Constantinople*. Oxford 1958, p.97.

<sup>3</sup> See the first part of this paper: D. AFINOGENOV. "Κωνσταντινούπολις ἐπίσκοπον ἔχει: "The Rise of the Patriarchal Power in Byzantium from Nicaenum II to Epanagoga. Part I: From Nicaenum II to the Second Outbreak of Iconoclasm." *Erytheia* 15 (1994), p.45-65, p.61.

<sup>4</sup> *Theophanis Chronographia*, p.492. The chronographer tries to dissociate Patriarch Nicephoros from Emperor Nicephoros and his son, whom he cordially hates, but the indirect evidence is quite inambiguous.

Only then Nicephoros' relations with magister Theoktistos, who advocated the overthrow of Staurakios from the very beginning, changed from "great enmity" to "friendship"<sup>5</sup>. It is hard to believe that this friendship persisted after the coup which put Michael on the throne. Michael, in his turn, "slavishly obeyed" Theoktistos<sup>6</sup>, so it is no wonder that he supported the Studites and not the patriarch. On the other hand, Michael partly owed his ascension to Nicephoros, so, weak as he was, he probably did not dare to alienate such a powerful figure.

As for the Church-State relations, the reign of this emperor offered unique opportunities to the Church leadership, since they could now exercise direct influence on both home and foreign affairs<sup>7</sup>. The opportunity, however, was squandered largely due to the continuing discord between the patriarch and the Studites and to Theodore's political incompetence. Admittedly, they were not given much time, for the shift of the power balance in favour of the Church was too steep and could not but provoke a reaction very soon. Iconoclast sentiments among the populace of Constantinople were already on the rise<sup>8</sup>.

The crisis finally broke out in 813 when the Byzantine army suffered a severe defeat at the hand of the Bulgarians at Versinikia. Emperor Michael fled to the capital, while Leo the Armenian, strategos of the Anatolikon theme, was proclaimed emperor by the army. It is remarkable, that at this point both sides recognized Nicephoros as the only arbiter. Michael asked for his advice concerning the abdication and Leo sent him a letter with assurances of orthodoxy and requested his prayers for coming to the throne<sup>9</sup>. The question now was, whether Leo, once emperor, was going to tolerate such a powerful source of political influence beside himself.

The very first political move of Leo V in my view was meant to show the Byzantine society the prevalence of the Empire over the Church in the language of symbols and ceremonies. The move in question concerned the pledge of orthodoxy that Leo was supposed to subscribe before his coronation. Though this is one of the most obscure and confused questions in the Byzantine history, it is essential to elucidate it in order to get a better idea of Leo's political motives.

First of all, there is no evidence that any of Byzantine emperors after Leo III (717-741) gave a pledge like that. Therefore the re-establishment of

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p.492,28 sq.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p.500,1: δεδουλωμένος Θεοκτίστῳ μαγίστρῳ.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p.498.

<sup>8</sup> For details see ALEXANDER, p.111-125.

<sup>9</sup> *Theophanis Chronographia*, resp. p.339,19 sq. and p.502,20.

the practice by Patriarch Nicephoros in 811 when Michael came to power must be regarded as a conscious measure that had some definite institutional aims, all the more so as there could be no doubt about Michael's right beliefs. As for Leo, some of our sources pretend that Nicephoros was suspicious about his evil intentions and wanted to get some guarantees in advance<sup>10</sup>. As a matter of fact, however, the demand of a written oath not to change anything in the church was but an outward sign and confirmation of the gains that the Church had made in her relationship with the secular power by that time.

There is no reason to question Theophanes' account of the letter with assurances of orthodoxy that Leo sent to Nicephoros while still outside Constantinople, though no other source mentions it. It is also very probable that the patriarch dispatched to Leo a delegation of bishops with a prepared text of the oath even before the coronation<sup>11</sup>. From this point on, however, a complete confusion sets in. Some texts maintain that Leo signed the document on the spot. Others simply say that Leo gave the oath *when* he ascended the throne (ἐν τῷ βασιλεῦσαι αὐτόν), without specifying, was it before or after that<sup>12</sup>. Still others insist that the emperor at first promised to sign the oath after the coronation but then refused to do it at all<sup>13</sup>. The reconstruction of J. Bury, accepted also by V. Grumel and W. Treadgold, does not look particularly successful<sup>14</sup>. The point is that one of the best sources on this period available, the so called *Scriptor Incertus*, in his mentions of Leo's oath uses technical terms καθυπογράψαι, ἰδιόχειρον and πῆξαι σταυρόν<sup>15</sup>, which could hardly be applied to a simple letter. Moreover, the same writer, as both Bury and Treadgold fail to mention, says inambiguously that Leo deemed himself to be bound by the oath and therefore did not sub-

<sup>10</sup> *Ignatii Diaconi Vita Nicephori*. In: *Nicephori opuscula historica*, ed. C DE BOOR. Lipsiae 1880, p.139-217, p.163, 26 sq.; *Theophanes Continuatus*, ed. I. BEKKER. Bonnae 1838, p.29,2 sq.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, cf. *Iosephi Genesii Regum Libri Quattuor*, ed. A. LESMÜLLER-WERNER et J. THURN. Berlin 1978, p.20,4-9.

<sup>12</sup> *Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio*. In: *Leonis Grammatici Chronographia*, ed. I. BEKKER. Bonnae 1842, p.335-362; p.340,19-341,3. This edition is used with corrections of R. BROWNING, "Notes on the Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio." *Byzantion* 35 (1965), p.389-411.

<sup>13</sup> *Symeonis Magistri Annales*. In: *Theophanes Continuatus...*, p.601-760, p.604, 1-2; *Georgius Monachus Interpolatus*, *Ibid.*, p.761-924, p.763,5; *Leo Grammaticus*, p.207,8-10; cf. J.-M. FEATHERSTONE, "The Praise of Theodore Graptos by Theophanes of Caesarea." *AB* 98 (1980), p.93-150, p.100.

<sup>14</sup> J. B. BURY. *A History of the Eastern Roman Empire from the Fall of Irene to the Accession of Basil I (AD 802-867)*, L. 1912, p.56-57; V. GRUMEL. *Les Regestes des actes du Patriarcat de Constantinople*, Chalcedon 1936, No.389; W. TREADGOLD. *The Byzantine Revival 780-842*. Stanford 1988, p.199, n.266.

<sup>15</sup> *S.L.*, resp. pp.360,21; 340,19 et 349,17; 349,17.

scribe a solemn pledge of loyalty (πῆξαι σταυρόν) to the decisions of the Council of 815, which in fact was convened by his own order<sup>16</sup>. There are no grounds to assume that *Scriptor Incertus* invented this information. Furthermore, there are some hints that the letter and the oath had different contents. Theophanes speaks of "assurances of orthodoxy" (τὰ περὶ τῆς ἐαυτοῦ ὀρθοδοξίας διαβεβαιούμενος), while the only word that can be with any probability reconstructed from Nicephoros' text indicates that the patriarch's demands were more radical. The word is παρασαλεύειν, used by *Scriptor Incertus* in his both mentions of Leo's oath<sup>17</sup> and on several other occasions, all connected with the emperor's ecclesiastical policy<sup>18</sup>. This same word is also repeated several times in different sources that quote the speeches of Orthodox prelates at the famous meeting in the palace on the Christmas Day of 814<sup>19</sup>. It is quite possible that Leo was supposed to swear not only to keep the true faith, but also to refrain from any innovation in the Church affairs, and it is unlikely that such a pledge was included already in his first letter to Nicephoros.

Proceeding from these considerations I come to the conclusion that Leo did bring the oath, but did it *after* the coronation. This is actually what the Continuator of Theophanes says<sup>20</sup>. Because of the ensuing Iconoclast turmoil the original meaning of this delay was lost even for the contemporaries, let alone the posterity, but certain details stuck in memory –some remembered that the emperor refused to bring the oath at some point, whereas others, that he did bring it, but then broke. Hence the incompatible versions we have in our sources. Yet the reason behind the emperor's behaviour is quite understandable –the message was that the legitimation of the imperial power did not depend on the sanction of the Church and that the pledge of Orthodoxy or the promise not to alter ecclesiastical practices could not be a prerequisite for coronation of an emperor who has already been pro-

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 360,20 sq.

<sup>17</sup> *S.I.*, p.341,1 et 360,22.

<sup>18</sup> τὰ καλῶς... ὀρισθέντα ὑπὸ τε τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ τῶν πατέρων οὔτε παρασαλεύομεν (352,18-20); μόνον τὴν πίστιν μὴ παρασαλεύσητε (357,6).

<sup>19</sup> Theosterictos has it (twice) in the speech of Euthymios of Sardis (*Theostericti Vita Nicetae*, Acta Sanctorum, Aprilis vol.I, p.XXII-XXXII, cap.35, p.XXXa); George the Monk (*Georgii Monachi chronicon*. Ed. C. DE BOOR. Editio stereotypa correctior, cur.P. WIRTH. Stuttgart 1978, p.779,20), Leo Grammaticus (p.209,8) and Symeon Magister (p.608,18) –in the speech of THEODORE Studite. Cf. also *Vita Nicephori*, p.169,29: Leo denies that he διασαλεύει true and ancient doctrines.

<sup>20</sup> P.29,2-7: ὁ μὲν γὰρ Νικηφόρος... ἐζήτηε τὴν διὰ τοῦ ἱεροῦ συμβόλου πρὸς τὴν θεῖαν πίστιν συγκατάθεσιν· ὁ δὲ οὐκ ἔφη νῦν τοῦτο ποιήσειν, ὑπερθέσθαι δὲ μέχρις αὐτῆς βασιλείας αὐτῷ τελείως ἀνάρρησις γένηται, δηλοῦσθαι τῆς ἀναβολῆς ὡς καὶ αὐτοῦ γε προεισχημένου τῆ τῆς αἰρέσεως μακρὰ ἐκ γενετῆς.

claimed. This had nothing to do with Iconoclasm so far, but Nicephoros obviously had to realize what a formidable adversary he was going to have in the coming years.

The question, what exactly was Leo's main reason for re-introducing Iconoclasm will probably remain without definitive answer forever, because it is impossible to evaluate precisely the relative importance of subjective and objective motives. On the other hand, it appears from the oath affair that one of Leo's primary goals was to reverse the shift of power balance from the State to the Church and to eliminate the Patriarchate of Constantinople as an independent source of political influence. In any case it is just that political influence that made the emperor's task so complicated. Leo certainly commanded a firm support in the army and probably among the populace, but if he had acted by force only, the new order would have been deprived of any legitimacy. Yet it is well known that Leo intended to found a dynasty that would rule for generations, so in the long term he needed solid legal foundations for his ecclesiastical policy. Therefore the best solution for the emperor was to create an apparent internal conflict about images within the Church, then to act as a mediator and to decide the matter in favour of the Iconoclasts. In this case the restoration of Iconoclasm would have entailed the decline of the prestige of clergy and the rise of the imperial authority. It can be safely assumed that Leo, perfectly aware of the discord between Nicephoros and the Studites, reckoned that a certain part of the Orthodox would by all means engage in discussion with Iconoclasts thus supplying him with the necessary pretext for legitimate interference.

The difficulties of the emperor's undertaking are well illustrated by the fact that the commission of clerics who were supposed to find the patristic evidence against the images had to be accommodated in the palace. Later the Orthodox used this to question the emperor's neutrality<sup>21</sup>, so this was either a gross miscalculation (which is unlikely, considering Leo's "shrewdness") or a forced decision. It may well be, that the palace was simply the only safe place for this commission while they were not yet openly supported by the emperor. In the latter, more probable, case it was one more indication of the patriarch's power.

Another difficulty was that Leo had at all costs to prevent the deposition of his aides before the planned discussion about the images. Of this we are much better informed, since we know that the members of the Iconoclast commission had to work secretly<sup>22</sup> and that their leaders on different occa-

<sup>21</sup> *Vita Nicetae* p. XXIXe (see below the words of Michael of Synada to Leo at the Christmas meeting of 814); *Nicephori Apologeticus de sacris imaginibus*, PG 100, 544D-545A; 568C.

<sup>22</sup> *S.I.*, p. 352,8 sq.

sions had either to deny everything and swear allegiance to icons<sup>23</sup> or even to repent before the patriarch and to ask for forgiveness<sup>24</sup>. This is just one more proof that it was internal dissense in the Church that the emperor needed so badly. The way Leo looked for supporters is vividly described in the Life of Euthymios of Sardis written by the future Patriarch Methodios. Since Euthymios was ousted from his see in 803 and could not recover it even under Michael Rhangabe, he obviously seemed to the emperor an easy prey. So Leo invited him to the capital and for three months tried to lure him over to his side by promising the patriarchal throne and other rewards – admittedly, to no avail<sup>25</sup>.

The only option Nicephoros was left with was to prevent in every possible way any discussion on the matters of faith, in which the Emperor could play a mediator. At the same time he had to be very cautious in order not to give Leo a pretext to eject him for *crimen laesae majestatis*. Therefore the patriarch steadfastly refused to talk to the Iconoclasts, but not to the emperor himself. Nicephorus' attempt to depose or excommunicate the members of the Iconoclast commission failed, as it seems, just because at this point he could not go too far, but he continued to form a support base among the clergy and probably the monks. A good example of this is provided by the Life of Bishop George of Mitylene. The hero of this Life came to the capital under Michael I to settle a dispute with the local governor. Meanwhile Leo V took power, and the patriarch asked George to stay because he needed his help against the resurgent heresy<sup>26</sup>.

By December 814 Leo decided that the necessary amount of evidence had been collected and asked the patriarch to apply "economy" by removing low-hanging icons, for the populace was scandalized and said that barbarians vanquish Romans because of the image worship. May be the emperor believed, as many modern scholars do, that the "economy" was one of the principles of Nicephoros' policy. If so, he overlooked the fact that Tarasios and Nicephoros applied economy when it suited *them*, and not whenever the emperors wished. This time the patriarch replied that there was no question of economy with regard to ancient practices of Apostles and Holy Fathers. Then Leo invited him to talk to "his people" (τοὺς κατ'ἐμὲ), who had allegedly found in old books some statements that for-

<sup>23</sup> *Epistula ad Theophilum*, c.21. In: H. GAUER, *Texte zum Byzantinischen Bilderstreit. Studien und Texte zur Byzantinistik 1*. Frankfurt a.M. 1994, S.110-112 (PG 95,372C-373A).

<sup>24</sup> *Photii Homiliae*. Ed. B. LAOURDAS. Thessalonica 1959, Hom.15, p.140. *Ep. ad Theophilum*, c.20, S.110.

<sup>25</sup> J. GOUILLARD, "La vie d'Euthyme de Sardes." *TM* 10 (1987), p.1-101, p.31-33.

<sup>26</sup> I. M. PHOUNTOULES. Λεσβιακὸν ἑορτολόγιον. Α΄: Οἱ ἅγιοι Γεώργιοι, ἀρχιεπίσκοποι Μυτιλήνης. Ἀθήναι 1959, σ.36.

bade the veneration of icons. Nicephoros sent to the emperor a delegation of bishops and hegumeni who answered Leo's own questions but flatly refused to speak with John the Grammarian, Anthony of Syllaion and other members of the Iconoclast commission. No insistence or arguments of the emperor could persuade the Orthodox ecclesiastics (who clearly had very strict instructions on that matter) to change their mind<sup>27</sup>. So the gradual approach was leading Leo nowhere.

Then the emperor, having achieved very little at the first step, proceeded straight to the second. He made his soldiers insult the icon of Christ on the Chalki Gate and then removed it, ostensibly to prevent desecration. This was a symbolic gesture of prime importance, since the destruction of this icon by Leo III was officially recognized in Byzantium as the starting point of the first Iconoclasm<sup>28</sup>. Leo V also permitted John and Anthony to disseminate their Iconoclast views openly. Now Nicephoros saw that it was his turn to act. On the Christmas eve of 814 he gathered in the patriarchal palace an assembly of 270<sup>29</sup> bishops and numerous priests and monks. This was a very impressive number and I believe that the patriarch prepared the meeting well in advance<sup>30</sup>. The already mentioned account from the Life of George of Mitylene is a good example of this preparation. It is also worth noting that Joseph of Thessalonica was also present, which was hardly accidental, considering that a land route to this city was not yet open while the sea communications during the winter were dangerous. The timing chosen for this major demonstration of the Orthodox opposition was perfect, since it was out of question that the emperor would use violence against the highest clergy during one of the greatest Church feasts.

Nicephoros, who chaired the meeting, emphasized the need for unity more than anything else<sup>31</sup>. The contents of the solemn oath that all the par-

<sup>27</sup> This paragraph is based on *S. I.*, p.352-355.

<sup>28</sup> *S.I.*, p.354,15-355,6; *Ep. ad Theophilum*, c.24, S.114.

<sup>29</sup> *Epistula ad Theophilum*, c.22, S.112,11. I follow W. TREADGOLD (p.210, n.283), who thinks that two accounts of *S.I.* (p.354,355) deal with one and the same event.

<sup>30</sup> The text of *Epistula ad Theophilum* is quite clear as far as the number is concerned: *σύνοδον ἁγίων πατέρων συναθροίσας τὸν ἀριθμὸν σο' καὶ πάντων τὰς ἱερατικὰς στολὰς ἀμπεχομένων ἐν τῇ μεγάλῃ Ἀγίᾳ Σοφίᾳ, τῆς δὲ πληθῆος τῶν ἱερέων καὶ μοναχῶν τῆς βασιλίδος πόλεως ὁμοῦ συναθροισθέντων...* V. GRUMEL is therefore right when he speaks about 270 bishops (*Régestes*, No 393), but one may wonder what makes him think that the number at the meeting reported by *Scriptor Incertus* and Theosterictos (No 391) was "peu considérable." Treadgold apparently ignores the possibility that Nicephoros was planning the event for a long time ahead, so he believes that 270 bishops is too many and accepts this figure "for all those present" (p.418, n284).

<sup>31</sup> *S.I.*, p.355,16-20: *λοιπὸν οὖν, ἀδελφοί, ἐν ὁμοιοῖα ἐσώμεθα καὶ συνημμένοι ἀδι-αρέτως, καὶ μὴ εὐρωσίν τινα ἐξ ἡμῶν ἀποχωρῆσαι οἱ τῆς ἐναντίας μοίρας, καὶ οὐ μὴ ἰσχύσωσιν· πλείους γὰρ αὐτῶν ἔσμεν χάριτι Χριστοῦ.*

ticipants signed included a pledge not to get separated from one another (μη χωρίζεσθαι). This was in perfect accord with the general tactical line pursued by Nicephoros, which envisaged that no Orthodox churchman should engage in discussions with heretics. It was therefore extremely important that the leaders of the Studite party attended the assembly and signed the oath. This time the patriarch probably also deposed the only bishop who had so far embraced the Iconoclasm, Antonios of Syllaion, and "all who hold communion with him,"<sup>32</sup> which, if *Epistula ad Theophilum* deserves credit, effectively meant an automatic deposition of all clerics who would join the heretics in the future.

After the meeting everybody went next door to St.Sophia and celebrated a litany, praying for the designs of the heretics to be dissipated. When Leo learnt about it, he expressed his displeasure to the patriarch, to which the latter replied that they were just asking God to preserve the Church undisturbed (ἵνα τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἀσάλευτον φυλάξῃ –possibly an allusion to the promise "not to παρασαλεύειν")<sup>33</sup>. Then the emperor summoned Nicephorus and his supporters to the palace. The meeting in the palace was the culmination of the drama, and the Orthodox already had a well-prepared script to follow. Our main and best source, the author of the Life of Nicetas of Medikion, monk Theosterictos, leaves no place for doubt about that. Here is what he says: [after a conversation with the patriarch tête-à-tête Leo invites the others], "unaware of what they have said among themselves separately" (ἀγνοῶν... τὰ μετὰ αὐτῶν κατ' ἰδίαν εἰρημμένα)<sup>34</sup>. Then once more: "and in accordance with the plan they had discussed among themselves separately, the patriarch said..." (ὡς εἶχεν πρὸς τὸν σκοπὸν τοῦ <read τῶν> μετὰ αὐτῶν ἰδία ῥηθέντων, ἔφη ὁ πατριάρχης)<sup>35</sup>. And again: "the most holy Peter said this not without purpose" (οὐκ ἄνευ σκοποῦ εἶρηκεν τοῦτο ὁ ἀγιώτατος Πέτρος)<sup>36</sup>. The Orthodox churchmen had no illusions: they "knew exactly" the emperor's aims and did not hope to convince him with their arguments<sup>37</sup>. This means that the entire dialog was nothing but a show

<sup>32</sup> *Epistula ad Theophilum*, c.22, S.112,30. Unlike GRUMEL, *Régestes*, No.393 and TREADGOLD, p.418, n.284, I do not find it impossible that Antonios was deposed after he went public with his Iconoclast views, thereby violating his written oath. The gathering itself was a much greater "challenge" than this deposition, which is also mentioned in *Synodicon Vetus*. Ed. J. DUFFY and J. PARKER. Washington 1979, No 155,4-5, p.130.

<sup>33</sup> *S.I.*, p.354,10 sq.

<sup>34</sup> *Vita Nicetae*, c.32, p.XXIXc.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, c.33.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, c.34, p.XXIXf.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p.XXIXD-E: ἔτι δὲ ἀκριβῶς ἐπισταμένων τὸν σκοπὸν τοῦ βασιλέως... καὶ ὡς οὐ μεταπειθήσεται, κἀν πᾶσαν τὴν γραφὴν εἰς μαρτυρίαν αὐτῷ φέροιεν.

of Nicephoros' tactical brilliance. *Scriptor Incertus* reports that the patriarch at first offered Leo to depose him but to leave the faith alone. If this information is correct, the emperor's answer sounds very clever too: "Who is it who dares to depose or oust the patriarch, our father, or disturb (παρᾶσα-λεῦσαι) the Church? We have conducted a small investigation because there are talks, but my beliefs are the same as those of the Church." Leo's plans apparently went much farther than the removal of an influential patriarch—he wanted institutional changes. The speeches of the Orthodox prelates form a perfect climax, so it makes sense to reproduce the most characteristic passages from the *Life of Nicetas* in Paul Alexander's translation<sup>38</sup>. This is by far the best source of all available, since Theosteriktos' hero did not participate in this meeting, so the biographer had no need to ascribe to him other people's words (as other hagiographers do).

Aimilianos of Cyzicus: "If... this is a Church inquiry, oh Emperor, let it be inquired into in the Church as is the custom, for from old and from the beginning Church inquiries are inquired into in the Church and not in the Imperial Palace."

Michael of Synnada: "If you are a mediator, why do you not do the job of a mediator? [I say this because the one side you shelter in the Palace and even assemble and encourage, even giving them permission to teach their impious doctrines; whereas the other side does not dare to utter a sound even on the streets and crouches down everywhere before your decrees. This is characteristic not of mediation, but of dictation (τυραννίς)."

Theophylactos of Nicomedia: "...There are innumerable pieces of evidence in support of this, and we are not at a loss as you suspect, but there are no ears to listen, and we could not be very useful if we stated our case, for we are waging war against the government (τῷ κράτει ἀντιπολεμούμεθα)."

Now the Orthodox do not wait for Leo's answers any more and Peter of Nicaea comes forth immediately after Theophylactos:

"How can you ask us to talk to them? Behold you are fighting on their side. Don't you know that even if you introduced the so-called Manichaeans and protected them, they will overpower us because they are supported by you?"

This already might be a distant allusion to St. John of Damascus<sup>39</sup>.

Up to this point it were acting metropolitans, the highest hierarchs of the Church who did the speaking. Now Nicephoros introduces persons noto-

<sup>38</sup> ALEXANDER, p.130-132.

<sup>39</sup> Μανιχαῖοι συνέγραψαν τὸ κατὰ Θωμᾶν εὐαγγέλιον· γράψατε καὶ ἡμεῖς τὸ κατὰ Λέοντα εὐαγγέλιον. *Contra imaginum calumniatores oratio* II,16, 62sq. *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*. Besorgt von B. KOTTER. Berlin-N.Y. 1975, Bd.III, S.113.

rious for their conflicts with the government. Theosterictos pertinently remarks: "Thereupon Euthymios, Bishop of Sardis, also replied to the Emperor in a bolder way (παρρησιασάμενος πλειόνως)." Euthymios asks rhetorically: "And who is the arrogant (αὐθάδης) who would dare to disturb (παρασαλεύσαι)... the tradition so many years old...?" and answers: "So whoever will dare to disturb [again παρασαλεύσαι] or alter anything of it [Nicaenum III], be he anathema". He also quotes Gal.1,8-9, which may also be an allusion to St.John, who used it in the following way: "And if an angel or an emperor should preach to you against what you have received, close your ears. For I do not dare say as Saint Paul did: be he anathema."<sup>40</sup>

This, however, was not yet enough to provoke the emperor, who "so far had pretended to be forbearing." So Nicephoros deploys his mightiest weapon –Theodore the Studite, whom Theosterictos pointedly describes as "the zealous teacher of the Church." This time St.John is quoted directly: "...the Apostle spoke thus: "and he gave some apostles, some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints (Eph.4,1 + 1 Cor.12,28)", but he did not speak of emperors."<sup>41</sup> Alexander has pointed out the explosive nature of St.John's writings on images, created outside the Empire, for the Byzantine practice<sup>42</sup>, so it is easy to understand why Theodore's utterance was too much for Leo to tolerate. But two other sources report that the Studite higumenos did not stop there. He added: "And if you wish to be as her [sc. of the Church] child, nothing hampers. Just follow your spiritual father in everything."<sup>43</sup> With these words he pointed with his finger at the Patriarch Nicephoros. If Leo was indeed counting on the discord between the patriarch and the Studites, this was a serious blow, especially as Theodore's arrogance could not be imputed to Nicephoros, because everyone knew that Theodore used to say only what *he* deemed right. So the only thing the emperor could do in this situation was to burst out with rage and chase the stubborn ecclesiastics away, thereby "acknowledging his complete defeat."<sup>44</sup> It does not seem correct to say, as Alexander does, that "the discussion certainly did not produce any re-

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., II,6 (=III,3), 18-20, S.73:Κἀν ἄγγελος, κἀν βασιλεὺς εὐαγγελίζεται ὑμᾶς παρ' ὃ παρελάβετε, κλείσατε τὰς ἀκοὰς ὑμῶν. Ὅκνῶ γὰρ εἰπεῖν, ὡς ἔφη ὁ ἅγιος Παῦλος, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., II,12,2-7 (S.102).

<sup>42</sup> ALEXANDER, p.132.

<sup>43</sup> I prefer the version of the Life of Theodore by Michael (PG 99, 284B) to that of the Life of Euthymius of Sardis by Metrophanes (A. PAPAΔAKIS, "The Unpublished Life of Euthymius of Sardis: Bodleianus Laudianus Graecus 69." *Traditio* 26 (1972), p.63-89, p.78), quoted by Alexander.

<sup>44</sup> *Vita Nicephori*, p.188, 28.

sults". For Leo, it certainly did, and quite negative ones at that, for now he was left with the sole option –to introduce Iconoclasm by force, forfeiting the hope for a plausible legitimation.

The subsequent actions of the emperor are described in detail by Alexander and recently Treadgold<sup>45</sup>, so I will emphasize only the most important points in Nicephoros' tactics. When Leo demanded his resignation, the patriarch answered with a letter that said: "Oh Emperor, I shall not descend in this casual way, for I gave you no reason to depose me. If, however, I am forced (τυραννοῦμαι) because of my orthodoxy, or piety, either by yourself or by one of your imperial officers - send him and I shall descend."<sup>46</sup> It almost looks like Nicephoros invited Leo to use force, which actually made a good sense, because an uncanonical deposition of the legitimate patriarch would put his successor and consequently the entire Iconoclast hierarchy in a very awkward position.

Shortly thereafter the patriarch fell ill. This illness appears to have been either a piece of good luck or a very skillful tactical move –it gave Nicephoros an excuse to refuse any contacts with the Iconoclasts<sup>47</sup> who now had an official imperial support and at the same time instilled in Leo a vane hope, that the natural demise of the patriarch would solve most of his problems<sup>48</sup>. Meanwhile the emperor tried to woo to his side as much clerics as was possible. Although the assertion of *Scriptor Incertus* that almost all who earlier promised to die for the truth, changed their minds<sup>49</sup>, is rather a rhetorical exaggeration (there were quite a few bishops-confessors, including many metropolitans), he had a considerable success. It must be kept in mind, however, that the price for that success had already been paid, for the emperor had to give up his "neutrality" and thus the possibility to act as mediator. This was still the weak point of the Patriarchate –many Byzantine clerics believed that they could turn against their patriarch inasmuch as the imperial sanction granted them impunity. As will be seen further in this paper, this time they proved wrong (albeit with a delay of 28 years).

The so called *σύνοδος ἐνδημοῦσα*<sup>50</sup> that was gathered by Leo specifically to depose Nicephorus according to the customary procedure summoned the allegedly ill patriarch three times<sup>51</sup>. Ignatios the Deacon quotes only two answers of the patriarch (p.191-195). Perhaps the first time he gave

<sup>45</sup> ALEXANDER, p.133-135; TREADGOLD, p.211-213.

<sup>46</sup> *Vita Nicetae*, p.XXXb, c.36.

<sup>47</sup> *Vita Nicephori*, p.191,6.

<sup>48</sup> *S.I.*, p.357,19.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p.357,8 sq.

<sup>50</sup> *Vita Nicephori*, p.192,25.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 193,4: ἦδη γὰρ τρίτην ταυτηλὴν προτροπήν πεποιήμεθα πρὸς αὐτόν.

no answer at all. At first Nicephoros offered his conditions. These conditions were absolutely unacceptable not because they included the release of prisoners and freedom of speech for the Iconodules, but because even if they were fulfilled, the patriarch agreed to speak only with those, whose episcopal rank he recognized as valid<sup>52</sup>. The third time patrikios Thomas, an imperial official temporarily in charge of the Patriarchate, forced Nicephoros to receive the Iconoclast delegation. The fact that Leo's synod did not want to simply condemn the patriarch *in absentia* suggests that they felt quite uneasy as far as their legitimacy was concerned. When the bishops appeared before Nicephoros he declared them all deposed for violating the canon that forbade to convene ecclesiastical assemblies without the approval of the ruling bishop<sup>53</sup>. Remarkably, Nicephoros finished his career as patriarch applying the same canon with which Tarasios began to raise the prestige of the see of Constantinople<sup>54</sup>.

This move deprived the heretics of any canonical support they could hope for, since at that time Nicephoros undisputably was the ruling bishop of Constantinople. The only means they could now use was direct government coercion, as the patriarch had envisaged from the very beginning. In the long-term perspective it made the Iconoclast chances to win very scanty, because Nicephoros did not yield a single foot of the institutional ground acquired by Tarasios or himself. Now, having done everything possible, he could step down in the way that would not allow his opponents to talk about a voluntary resignation. His last letter to the emperor was formulated with admirable skill and precision:

...Until now we have been struggling... for the truth and piety. And in our opinion we have not defaulted on any of our duties. ...But since we have suffered because of that all kind of affliction, distress and ill-treatment... and finally came some people who consider themselves bishops and did to us even greater disgrace than the preceding one [follows a lengthy description of mob fury] ...And after all these evils we heard that the enemies of the truth are plotting an ambush against us, wanting to attack us and perpetrate either a murder or a violent and deadly discharge. So lest something unacceptable happens and the sin is imputed to your govern-

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 191,29: the patriarch would not talk to τῶν μηδὲν τῆς ἱεροσύνης ἐπιφερομένων λείψανον - i.e. probably to those affected by the deposition and anathematization of Anthony of Syllaion. In *S.I.*, p.357,14, Nicephoros calls the deserters ἐπόρκους <καὶ> σταυροπάτας, which could imply a deposition on the ground of perjury.

<sup>53</sup> *Vita Nicephori*, p.195,18 sq.

<sup>54</sup> J.D. MANSI, *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*. Vol.XII, Florentiae 1766, Col.990 D. See the first part of this paper, p.48. For the canons in question see Alexander's references: p.134, n.6.

ment (for it is impossible to invent a graver persecution against us), it is absolutely necessary that we, against our will and involuntarily, persecuted by the wrongdoers, step down from our throne...<sup>55</sup>

It is easy to understand why Ignatios called this document "the last blow".<sup>56</sup>

Before going to the exile, anywhere between late December, 814 and March 13, 815, Patriarch Nicephoros published an appeal to the Church known as *Apologeticus Minor*<sup>57</sup>. There he laid out the principles of his policy with regard to the Iconoclasts. Chapter 3 of this work puts all the blame for the heresy on emperors and is worded so as to provoke inambiguous allusions: [Constantine V] "following his impious will, or rather displaying a tyrannical arrogance, with the help of unholy priests he shamelessly gathered, arranged, insofar it was up to him, their [i.e. of the icons] overthrow." The main point of the document is that no discussion with Iconoclasts is possible (841B, 845A,B) with the exception of the emperor himself (845B). It is clearly stated that "whoever discusses with them the dogmas of the Church, draws the same anathemas upon himself" (841B). The heretics are deposed for perjury, because they broke the oath they brought at their ordination (840D-841E) and for gathering illicit conventicles (841C). Foreseeing the persecution the patriarch declares to all the Orthodox: "even if but very few remain in the Orthodoxy and piety, it is them who are the Church"(849D). As has been demonstrated, this program was carried out by Nicephoros to the last point, although it remained 28 years to wait for the results.

Theodore of Studiou, whatever his personal views might have been, also followed the tactical line drawn by the patriarch. At this point he

<sup>55</sup> *Vita Nicephori*, p.197,21-198,18: "Ἔως τοῦ νῦν ἠγωνισάμεθα... ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ τῆς εὐσεβείας· καί, ὡς δοκοῦμεν, οὐδὲν παρελίπομεν τῶν κεχρεωστημένων ἡμῖν... Ἐπειδὴ δὲ διὰ τοῦτο πᾶσαν θλίψιν καὶ στενοχωρίαν καὶ κάκωσιν ὑπεμείναμεν· τὸ τελευταίων ἡλθόν τινες δοκοῦντες εἶναι ἐπίσκοποι καὶ πλείονα τῶν προλαβόντων τὴν ἀτιμίαν ἡμῖν προσήγαγον... Μετὰ ταῦτα πάντα τὰ κακὰ ἤκουσαμεν, ὅτι οἱ τῆς ἀληθείας ἐχθροὶ ἔνεδρα καθ' ἡμῶν συσκευάζουσι βουλόμενοι ἐπιθέσθαι ἡμῖν, καὶ ἡ ἀναίρεσιν ἢ κατένεξιν βιαίαν καὶ θανατικὴν ποιήσασθαι εἰς ἡμᾶς. Ἴν' οὖν ἄσποιν μὴ γένηται μηδὲ ἄμαρτία ἀναδράμη εἰς τὸ κράτος ὑμῶν (ἐπειδὴ πλείονα διωγμὸν ἐπινοήθη· καθ' ἡμῶν οὐκ ἔστιν), ἀκοιντες καὶ μὴ βουλόμενοι καὶ διωκόμενοι ὑπὸ τῶν ἐπηρεαζόντων, ἀναγκὴ πᾶσα μεταστῆναι ἡμᾶς τοῦ θρόνου ἡμῶν... Basing on Ignatios' expression διὰ λέξεως and on stylistic grounds this text can be safely attributed to Niccphoros himself.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p.198,19.

<sup>57</sup> PG 100, 833-850. Contrary to ALEXANDER (p.164), I believe that the epithete "most pious" applied to the ruling emperor (845B) does not prove that December 25, 814 is *terminus ante quem*. The general very sharp tone was hardly suitable before the open breach.

understood that the emperor would use the slightest discord between the Studites and Nicephoros to a great detriment to the Church as a whole. Therefore when he was summoned to the Iconoclast Council of 815, he replied with a letter in which he refused to appear saying that the canons forbade to discuss matters of ecclesiastical discipline, let alone of dogmatics, without the approval of one's bishop, and that he recognized Nicephoros as his legitimate superior<sup>58</sup>. Since Theodore in the past had been doing and writing just the opposite, it may be assumed that this time he was wise enough to accept the way of behaviour toward Iconoclasts offered by the patriarch. Whether he actually came to believe that a strong patriarchal authority within the Church was absolutely indispensable to withstand the encroachments of the State, is another question. The important thing is that he had to say it publicly on many occasions<sup>59</sup>, which later enabled the protagonists of the "patriarchal party" to claim his authority in support of their position<sup>60</sup>.

When Leo V was slain by conspirators on the Christmas of 820 and Michael II ascended the throne, the persecution ended and the Orthodox received a relative freedom. They immediately used it to re-activate the resistance movement. In 821 several metropolitans, bishops and hegumeni, including Theodore Studite, gathered at the place of Nicephoros' exile and unanimously decided to approach the emperor<sup>61</sup>. The delegation was granted an audience and tried to persuade Michael to abandon Iconoclasm and to reinstate Nicephoros (earlier Theodore sent a letter to the emperor with similar suggestions<sup>62</sup>). The same delegation possibly delivered Nicephoros' letter mentioned by Ignatios<sup>63</sup>. It deserves attention that the Orthodox synod did not approve of the deposed patriarch's personal visit to the emperor. The reason might have been, that the emperor was to invite Nicephoros back himself, whereupon the patriarch could return under the condition that the Orthodoxy be restored and the apostates punished. Anyhow, after 815 Nicephoros never did anything that could be interpreted as concession.

<sup>58</sup> *Theodori epistulae*, Ep.71,3 sq.: ἡ καθ' ἡμᾶς εὐτέλεια] οὐκ ἐτόλμησεν ἔξω τι τῶν νενομισμένων πράττουσα παραγενέσθαι ὡς ὑπὸ τὴν ἱερὰν χεῖρα Νικηφόρου τοῦ ἀγιωτάτου πατριάρχου πνεύματι θεῖῳ τελούσα.

<sup>59</sup> See ALEXANDER, p.150-154.

<sup>60</sup> DARROUZÈS J., "Le patriarche Méthode contre les iconoclastes et les Stoudites." *RÉB*, 45 (1987), p.15-57; p.37,116-120; p.55,4-6.

<sup>61</sup> *Vita Theodori*, 317AB; *Vita Nicolai Studitae*, PG 105, 892A; *Theodori Epistulae*, Ep.429,3 sq.

<sup>62</sup> *Theodori Epistulae*, Ep.418,40sq. where he says, that it is time to be re-united with the four other patriarchates. In a letter to Leo the Sakellarios (Ep.478,80sq.) Theodore explains that the reinstatement of Nicephoros is a necessary prerequisite for that.

<sup>63</sup> *Vita Nicephori*, p.209, 12-24.

This was not a blind intransigence, as I. Ševčenko thinks<sup>64</sup>. To accept the throne unconditionally or on Michael's conditions effectively implied at least a partial recognition of the institutional change that Leo was trying to bring about. Moreover, now the patriarch had one more concern –the punishment of those who apostatized in 815. It was about that time that Nicephoros wrote his *Twelve Chapters*. There he declared openly for the first time that the heretical clerics would not get back their ranks under any circumstances, even if they repent.<sup>65</sup> He also took care of confirming this decision by a representative Orthodox synod<sup>66</sup>. According to Ševčenko, "the author's self-assured tone and the intransigence of the proposed punitive measures indicate that he felt victory within his grasp."<sup>67</sup> I am more inclined to believe that Nicephoros was betting on the discontinuity of the Byzantine imperial policy, so the assassination of Leo and the immediate change of the official line after the ascension of Michael proved his bet to be entirely justified. In fact, from this point of view the victory had been already achieved under Leo, so the objective was to preserve the gains for the right moment and not to squander them by premature compromises. This moment did not come during Nicephoros' lifetime (he died in 828), but his patience and wisdom secured for the Byzantine church and the Patriarchate of Constantinople the triumph of 843. This is in my opinion the correct interpretation of the events of 821.

There was a certain ambivalence in Michael's actions. Ignatios says that he offered Nicephoros the throne of Constantinople (which at that point was vacant after the death of Theodotos Cassiteras) on the condition that the problem of icon worship would not be raised at all, which Nicephoros, of course, found unacceptable<sup>68</sup>. The sources almost unanimously report that the emperor wanted to avoid or suppress any discussion on images while keeping the church in the same status as before him<sup>69</sup>. However, it seems that the aims of Michael's ecclesiastical policy remained pretty much the

<sup>64</sup> ŠEVČENKO I., "The Anti-Iconoclast Poem in the Pantocrator Psalter." *Cabiers Archéologiques* XV (1965), p.39-60, p.55 and n.40. It is always very strange to see that such terms as "intransigence", "extremism" or "rigorism" are employed to characterize people like Nicephoros or Theodoros who amply demonstrated an ability to change their standpoint depending on the circumstances. May be it is just the best way to spare oneself the effort of looking for the real aims and motives behind their actions.

<sup>65</sup> *Nicephori Capitula duodecim adversus Iconomachos*. In: A. MAI. *Spicilegium Romanum*. Romae 1844, Vol. X,II, p.153-156.

<sup>66</sup> *Theodori Epistulae*, Ep.545, 16-20.

<sup>67</sup> ŠEVČENKO, *ibid*.

<sup>68</sup> *Vita Nicephori*, p.209,29-210,12.

<sup>69</sup> *Theophanes Continuatus*, p.47,20sq.; *Symeon Magister*, p.620,16-20 (=Leo Grammaticus, p.211,13-17); *Georgius Monachus*, p.792-793(=*Vita Nicephori*, loc.cit.).

same as Leo's, though he pursued them with different means. The emperor continued to propose the Orthodox a discussion with the heretics<sup>70</sup> with secular officials as mediators. Michael was well aware of Leo's experience, so he did not even try to address Nicephoros, but concentrated entirely on the Studites. The first letter of Theodoros of Studiou that mentions this proposition is dated 821 (Ep.429) while the last one 826 (Ep.532), the year when Theodore died, which means that it was not a casual move, but a consistent policy. From this point of view, Michael's lenience toward the Orthodox opposition might be regarded as a proof that Leo's persecution had failed and that the Iconoclast government was desperate to find a solution that would restore status quo without giving the Church an outright victory over the State. Anyhow, Michael did not manage to achieve anything more than his predecessor, while the Orthodox patiently waited for their time to come.

\* \* \*

This happened in 842 when emperor Theophilos died and his wife Theodora became the sole ruler with her two-year-old son Michael III as a titular emperor. After about a year of hesitation she allowed a synod of Orthodox clerics and monks to convene in the residence of her "Prime Minister" Theoktistos, in the palace τοῦ Καυκκλείου. I will not now dwell on the nature and composition of this synod<sup>71</sup>. Its purpose was limited - to re-establish Nicaenum II as the official creed and to elect a new patriarch, Methodios, who was a close associate and former archdeacon<sup>72</sup> of Nicephoros. Although the Iconoclast Patriarch John the Grammarian was prepared to offer a resistance, he found no support and was eventually ejected. No one rallied around him, obviously because there were very few convinced iconoclasts, while for the others John lacked legitimacy. Nicephoros' policy began to yield results.

Now, did the choice of Methodios really so much depend on the government, as is sometimes maintained<sup>73</sup>? Theoretically speaking, it does not look probable. Metodios was persecuted by both Michael II and Theo-

<sup>70</sup> See, for instance, *Theodori Epistulae*, Ep.429,30-34 and Ep.532,10-31; *Theodori Studitae Parva Catechesis*. Ed. E. AUVRAY. P.1891, Cat.127.

<sup>71</sup> See J. GOUILLARD, "Le Synodikon de l'Orthodoxie, texte et commentaire." *TM* 2 (1967), p.1-316, p.125-127.

<sup>72</sup> According to *Acta Graeca SS. Davidis, Symeonis et Georgii*. AB 18 (1899), p.237,6.

<sup>73</sup> GOUILLARD, *Synodikon*, p.126; P. KARLIN-HAYTER, "Gregory of Syracuse, Ignatios and Photios." In: *Iconoclasm. Papers given at the Ninth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*. Birmingham 1977, p. 141-145, p.141.

philos and could never be forced to make any concessions, so it would have been strange to expect that he would do what he was told by the Palace. Emperor Theophilus was so afraid of his influence among the highest officials, that he made Methodios accompany him in military expedition, because, according to the Continuator of Theophanes, "all chosen and god-loving citizens seemed to pay great honour and respect to the man."<sup>74</sup> In fact, Theoktistos and Theodora displayed their preferences only four years later, when they picked Ignatios as Methodios' successor. In that case the role of the government was beyond any doubt, and the appointee turned out to belong to the opposite group within the Church. In fact, there is very little evidence that the Palace influenced the decision of the synod and none at all that Methodios was elected on any conditions except the absolution of Emperor Theophilus. It seems that he was simply the most distinguished and politically influential leader of the Orthodox opposition as well as a symbol of continuity, in his capacity as Nicephoros' archdeacon.

Even this sole condition that Theodora was able to put up, namely that *damnatio memoriae* of here husband would be officially disclaimed, could be implemented only with considerable effort. Three sources name three different associates of Methodios, all venerable confessors, who protested against this action in this way or another<sup>75</sup>. J.Gouillard is only partly right when he writes: "Non qu'elle prétendît soustraire Théophile à l'anathème, comme cela s'écrit généralement. Les Pères de 787 n'ont pas condamné les empereurs isauriens, et le VI<sup>e</sup> concile n'a pas anathématisé les empereurs monothélites. Le défunt ne risquait que l'omission de son nom dans les diptyques, silence fort inopportun pour le crédit du petit et unique héritier de la dynastie amorienne."<sup>76</sup> First, events of 787 cannot be automatically extrapolated to 843, as I tried to demonstrate in the paper dealing with the Great Purge<sup>77</sup>, and second, at least one source directly mentions an anathema<sup>78</sup>. Be it as it may, the important thing is that the very idea of anathematizing an emperor did not seem absurd to the Byzantine mind any more,

<sup>74</sup> *Theophanes Continuatus*, p.116, 18-19. The same way Michael II recalled Theodore of Studiou to Constantinople not because he favoured him, but out of fear that he would join Thomas the Slav. See *Vita Theodori*, 320A.

<sup>75</sup> Theophanes Graptos: *Theophanes Continuatus*, p.161 et al.; Symeon of Lesbos: *Acta Davidis...*, p.244-245; Hilarion of Dalmatou: *Sabae Vita Hilarionis*, Vat.gr. 984 - see T. MATANTSEVA. "La Vie d'Hilarion, higoumène de Dalmatos, par Sabas (BHG 2177)." *Rivista dei Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici*, N.S. 30 (1993), p.17-29, p.22.

<sup>76</sup> GOUILLARD, *Synodikon*, p.125.

<sup>77</sup> D. AFINOGENOV, "The Great Purge of 843: a Re-Examination." In: ΑΕΙΜΩΝ. *Byzantine Studies presented to Lennart Rydén on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*. *Studia Byzantina Upsalienica* 6. Uppsala 1996 (in print).

<sup>78</sup> *Acta Davidis...*, p.224,23: ἀναθεματισμῶ καθυποβαλεῖν.

and the accents of Methodios' propaganda that accompanied the restoration of image worship must have played here a major role.

Here are some interesting pieces of this propaganda. In the homily on the holy icons delivered by Methodios as patriarch we find the following passage:

And if an angel or an emperor should preach to you against what you have received, close your ears. For I do not dare say as saint Paul did: be he anathema<sup>79</sup>.

This is the instantly recognizable quotation from St. John of Damascus to which Euthymios of Sardis made an allusion at the Christmas debate of 814! And in the prologue of the so called "Decree of the Synod held under Michael and His Mother" it stands:

Our Lord Jesus Christ... upon becoming the head of the Church, appointed (ἔθετο) in her first, apostles, second, prophets, third, teachers, for the perfecting of the saints<sup>80</sup>.

As we have already seen, this particular combination of Eph.4,1 and 1 Cor.12,28 was associated with the passage from John that Theodore Studite quoted at the same meeting<sup>81</sup>! So what was perceived as something daring and perhaps subversive 30 years before became now a kind of official ideology.

The patriarch also took care of expressing his and his "party's" view of Iconoclasm as an illegitimate encroachment of the State upon the ecclesiastical domain in the solemn rite of the Feast of Orthodoxy. It is well known that according to Constantine Porphyrogenitus the ancient rite of this feast envisaged that the emperor did not enter the altar, as was otherwise customary, attended the entire liturgy in the so called "metatorion" and received communion also outside the altar<sup>82</sup>. The publisher and commentator of this text, A. Vogt, interprets this as a symbolical gesture of penitence of the State for the Iconoclast wrongdoings<sup>83</sup>. Another explanation, which Gouillard

<sup>79</sup> J.-B. PITRA, *Iuris ecclesiastici graecorum historia et monumenta*. Roma 1868, II, p.360.

<sup>80</sup> GOUILLARD, *Synodicon*, p.293,2-12.

<sup>81</sup> Gouillard demonstrates that the text is a later compilation (p.161-163), but does not indicate any sources of the "préambule théologique banal" except the Synodical Letter of Eastern patriarchs to Emperor Theophilus, where the same quotation introduces a lengthy elaboration on the duties appropriate for secular rulers on the one hand and for priests on the other: *Epistula Synodica*. In: GAUER, *Texte...*, S.12,27f. In any case the very "banality" of this quotation in such context is quite remarkable and could not appear in the official use before Methodios.

<sup>82</sup> CONSTANTIN PORPHYROGÉNÈTE. *Le Livre des Cérémonies*, I, 37 (28). Éd. A. VOGT. P. 1935, p.147, 2-5.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, *Commentaire I*, p. 162-164.

finds "plus séduisant,"<sup>84</sup> was proposed by A. Grabar<sup>85</sup>, who maintains that the ancient rite exactly reproduced the events of 843, when the Empress as a woman could not enter the altar. Grabar also thinks that it was for the same reason that Nicaenum II was chaired by the Patriarch Tarasios and not by the emperors as was the custom before that. I had to deal with the latter case in the first part of my paper (p.48). The same arguments are perfectly applicable here, since in both cases there was a male emperor who could perform ceremonial functions regardless of the age. In fact, the Orthodox Church does not know any age limitations with regard to communion or entering the altar. In the rite of "Introduction into Church" (Slavonic and Russian: *vocerkovlenie*) which in the current practice immediately follows the baptism, male infants are carried into the altar by the priest. Moreover, for the ninth century we have a precedent when the eleven- or twelve-year-old Symbatios-Constantine, son of Leo V, presided over the Iconoclast Council of 815, and this fact did not provoke any critical comment from the Iconodule historian who reported it<sup>86</sup>. Therefore while Theodora could not enter the altar, the three-year-old Michael III perfectly could<sup>87</sup>, and Grabar's theory has no foundation. So Vogt is probably right and we can regard the ceremony in question as one more propagandistic measure destined to raise the status of Church at the expense of the imperial power.

As has been already mentioned, one of the major concerns of Nicephoros and his followers after 815 was not to let the apostate clergy to avoid due punishment. As I am dealing with this matter in another paper<sup>88</sup>, it will be sufficient to briefly summarize the conclusions. They are as follows: Methodios organized the Great Purge of the Byzantine clergy in the course of which all Iconoclast bishops, priests and deacons, numbering more than 20 thousand men, were permanently and irreversibly deposed regardless of their original ordination or conversion to Orthodoxy. The contemporaries perfectly understood that in doing so the patriarch was carrying out the measure which his Orthodox predecessor Nicephoros declared but could not put into practice. As the canonical ground for the deposition of clerics of legitimate ordination Methodios used perjury: these people were accused of violating the profession of faith they signed at their appointment.

<sup>84</sup> GOUILLARD, *Synodikon*, p.130, n.103.

<sup>85</sup> A. GRABAR, *L'icoclasmé byzantin*. Paris 1984<sup>2</sup>, p.216-217.

<sup>86</sup> *S. I.*, p.360,16sq.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. the wording in *Narratio historica in festum restitutionis imaginum*. Ed. F. COMBES-FIS. *Bibliothecae Patrum Graeco-Latinae Auctarium Novum*. P. 1648, Vol.II, col.715-743, col. 738C: [to St. Sophia] παραγίνεται δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ βασιλεὺς Μιχαὴλ, μετὰ τῆς ἁγίας καὶ ὀρθοδόξου αὐτοῦ μητρὸς, καὶ πάσης τῆς συγκλήτου...

<sup>88</sup> APINOGENOV, *The Great Purge*.

Just as vigorously as the patriarch vindicated Nicephoros against the Iconoclasts, he attempted to finally turn the "Moechian affair" into a complete victory for the Patriarchate. This, however, proved to be a more complicated task. Unfortunately the sources provide very scanty information on this episode, probably due to its embarrassing nature. However, what is available is quite illuminating as far as the aims of Methodios ecclesiastical policy are concerned.

The first question to be answered is, as always, about the active side of the conflict, i.e. about the initiative. Who was on the offensive and who on the defensive? Both von Dobschütz and Grumel<sup>89</sup>, the discrepancy between their theories notwithstanding, believe that the strife was started by the Studites, who protested against "uncanonical ordinations" by the patriarch who opinion was allegedly appointing unworthy men to some of the numerous vacant sees. This is the version offered by the sole source, the Life of Methodios<sup>90</sup>. It seems, however, somewhat hasty in this particular case to take everything this text says at face value, before a satisfactory answer can be found to the question, why in the surviving polemical works of the patriarch himself that pertain to the Studite schism there is no mention of ordinations or of objections against them. Such objections *per se* would have been pretty logical and natural, especially if we assume with Grumel and others that the Studites wanted episcopal sees for themselves and their partisans. Yet there is no apparent reason why Methodios should keep silence on this problem in his invectives against Naucratis and Athanasios, or why later canonists (who have preserved these invectives) should omit the corresponding passages. On the other hand, the information of the Life inspires doubt because it does not mention one of undisputably most important issues in this conflict, namely the works of Theodore of Studiou directed against Tarasios and Nicephoros.

Now, this omission can be explained fairly easily. The Life of Methodios we possess now either comes from a Studite milieu or has undergone a tendentious editing. So the same thing could happen here as in the case of Sabas' remodeling of Peter's Life of Ioannikios<sup>91</sup>. Ioannikios supported Methodios against the Studites; Sabas wanted to keep the support but leave out the Studites, so he made Ioannikios help the patriarch against some purported opponents of the Great Purge. Now, the authority of Patriarchs Nicephoros and Tarasios only grew with the time (Ignatios, for instance,

<sup>89</sup> V. DOBSCHÜTZ, S.46-47; GRUMEL V. *Exposé sur le schisme studite. Régestes*, No.436 (V.II 2-3, p.81).

<sup>90</sup> *Vita Methodii*, 1257C-D.

<sup>91</sup> See AFINOGENOV, *The Great Purge*.

could not omit from *Synodicon* the clause that declared anathema 'to everything that had been written or said against holy Patriarchs Nicephoros and Tarasios'<sup>92</sup>), therefore it was certainly awkward for a hagiographer of Studite orientation to write that the schism broke out because Naucratiotios et al. refused to condemn Theodore's pamphlets against these patriarchs. So he, just like Sabas, replaced the true matter of the dispute with another, which also reflected real events and therefore would not seem questionable to the contemporaries. Moreover, the mention of unworthy hierarchs ordained by Methodios might have evoked an allusion to concrete persons active at the time when the *Life* was written or edited - e.g. to Bishop Gregory Asbestos of Syracuse, the main enemy of Ignatios during the latter's first patriarchate.

Thus the only reliable source for the reconstruction of the events are the texts of Methodios himself, and primarily his two letters to (resp. about) the Studites. Before proceeding to their examination, however, a chronological outline has to be made. As is well known, the solid *terminus post quem* is 24.01.844, the day of the translation of relics of St. Theodore of Studiou and their deposition in this monastery, in which the patriarch took an active part. No less solid *terminus ante quem* for the outbreak of the conflict is November 846, when Methodios visited Ioannikios for the last time just before the latter's death and the passions were already running high. Grumel proposes the date of 845-846, but we cannot exclude the second half of 844 as well.

From Methodios' first letter to the Studites the development can be traced as follows: at first the patriarch publishes a certain document where he defends his way of governing the church and orders Theodore Studite's works written against Nicephoros and Tarasios to be burnt and anathematized<sup>93</sup>. Darrouzès proposes a correction of text which is to my mind superfluous: in the sentence *καθὼς ἀπολογούμενοι ἐν ταῖς περὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας διοικήσεσι γεγραφήκαμεν* he changes *περὶ* to *πέριξ*, although the text can be understood as it stands if *διοικήσεις* is interpreted metonymically. Neither Grumel nor Laurent felt any need to correct this passage<sup>94</sup>. This order was valid for the Studites as well, since the first mention of the writings to be anathematized in the surviving letter to Naucratiotios and Athanasios begins with *ὁν τρόπον εἴρητο*<sup>95</sup> (*Plusquamperfectum!*). It is also pos-

<sup>92</sup> GOULLARD, *Synodicon*, p.53,114-116.

<sup>93</sup> DARROUZÈS, p.37,113.

<sup>94</sup> GRUMEL, *Régestes*, No 427: "le gouvernement de l'Eglise"; V. LAURENT: "pour justifier son administration" (*Méthode de Constantinople. Dictionnaire de la théologie catholique* X, col.1602).

<sup>95</sup> DARROUZÈS, p.37,109.

sible that Methodios wrote to them separately, but this letter has not been preserved. So everything looks very consistent - in the first letter Methodios simply demands the condemnation of Theodore's pamphlets, in the second one (surviving) he threatens the Studites with punishment for disobedience and imposes preliminary sanctions and finally in the third one (partly surviving) carries out the repressive measures by declaring the Studites anathematized if they do not comply immediately. Yet in this sequence the monks' role is fairly passive, for they refuse to condemn Theodore's writings and nothing more. As a matter of fact, neither Methodios accuses them of anything besides that. To prove it, let us take a closer look at the only phrase in the first of the surviving letters which might be interpreted as ascribing the initiative to the Studites.

...ὡς ἡγαπᾶτε, διέρρηχθε, καὶ ὡς φιλεῖτε ἀπέσχιθε, καὶ ὡς οὐ συναγελαζόμενοι μόνιοι πεφύκατε, χλοῦναί τινες ὄντες καὶ τῆς ἡμεροτήτος ἀπεστερημένοι, ὡς ἡγαπᾶτε ὑμεῖς, ἵνα μὴ λυμαίνηται ἡ τῶν ἀνθρώπων πληθὺς τῇ ὑμετέρᾳ καταφθορᾷ....<sup>96</sup>

Although Methodios' style is notoriously obscure, from these words we can gather that they pertain to the isolation of the Studites as a result of the "house arrest" imposed by the patriarch with this same letter. I believe that the repetition of the clause "ὡς ἡγαπᾶτε" indicates that the condition of *διέρρηχθε* and *ἀπέσχιθε* is not meant here as a unilateral action on the part of the monks who have severed the communion with the patriarch, but as the latter's natural reaction to their behaviour. Consequently, these verbs have to be interpreted not as *Media* (Darrouzès translates *ἀπέσχιθε* as "vous avez fait schisme"), but as *Passiva*. In other words, the contextual meaning of the sentence should be approximately as follows: "You would like to have a special status, to be different from the others? Behold, I confine you to your monastery." Hence the final subordinate clause with *ἵνα* which is appropriate only if the action in the main sentence originates from the patriarch.

As for the self-proclaimed hegumenate of the Studite leaders, it must be observed that Methodios questions the rank of Naucratiōs and Athanasios not because he regards its usurpation as one of their punishable misdeeds, but in order to release their subordinates from the duty of obedience prescribed by the monastic discipline. Nevertheless, at the first stage of the conflict, to which this text pertains, there is still no schism in the technical sense of the term –the Studites are neither deposed nor excommunicated.

<sup>96</sup> Darrouzès, the first letter, 198-101. I do not dare to produce a translation of this passage into any language other than my own.

The subsequent course of events can be tentatively reconstructed in the following way: The monks of two closters closely connected with the Studion, Sakkudion and Kata Saba seem to have approached the patriarch as mediators on behalf of the Studites. In the second letter, which was probably meant as encyclical, Methodios says: "This is about the Sakkudionites and Katasabatites, whom the aforementioned canon does not allow to act as mediators (μεσάζειν) either in ecclesiastical or in secular affairs" (lines 134-136). Methodios refuses to have any contacts with them whatsoever (οὔτε ἐρωτήσεως οὔτε ἀποκρίσεως - 1.68-69;139), let alone to meet them personally (συλλόγου - 1.69). This time, however, the patriarch encountered a much stronger opposition, since several bishops also sided with the studites. We know only one of them, a deposed metropolitan of Nicomedia by nickname Monomachos<sup>97</sup>. Another is described as "the eunuch of the church of Cyzicus."<sup>98</sup> It is not possible to say what rank had John Katasambas who is mentioned as Methodios' supporter in the Life of David, Symeon and George and as his adversary (with a characteristic alteration of the name: "Κακοσάμβας") in the Life of Ioannikios by Peter<sup>99</sup>. Proceeding from Methodios' statement that the bishops who opposed him "ἐξ ἑνὸς πλείους γενόμενοι" (I.195) we can assume that there were more than two of them. The Life also uses the word ἐπίσκοποι in Plural<sup>100</sup>. It should we noted, though, that the patriarch does not consider these prelates main culprits, as he describes them as "deceived" (ἐξαπατηθεῖσι, I.158-159). It is interesting that the patriarch acted exactly like Nicephoros during the Second Moechian schism—he refused to make any compromise and turned for support to the secular authorities<sup>101</sup>. The Life says that "the imperial hand assisted the verdict"<sup>102</sup> which implied deposition<sup>103</sup> and anathematization<sup>104</sup> of the recalcitrant bishops and hegumeni. Further on I will try to draw a comparison between these two conflicts within the Byzantine church, but first it is

<sup>97</sup> *Petri Vita Ioannicii*, p.432B.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid. It is not improbable that he is identical with John of Cyzicus, the addressee of the letter of Graptoi brothers: *Vita Theodoris Grapti*, PG 116, 669D.

<sup>99</sup> *Acta Davidis...*, p.254,18; *Petri Vita Ioannicii*, p. 431A,B; p.432B. May be this John was the abbot of Kata Saba? Anyway, in Peter's text John Kakosambas and Monomachos of Nicomedia are two different persons.

<sup>100</sup> *Vita Methodii*, 1257D.

<sup>101</sup> See AFINOGENOV, ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΥΠΟΛΙΣ (I), p.58-59.

<sup>102</sup> *Vita Methodii*, 1257D, cf. the references to the secular power in the second letter, I.129-131.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., I.157-163. Cf. fragments 4 and 6 and the Testament, I.20-27 (DARROUZÈS, p.55-56).

<sup>104</sup> Fragment 4 (Darrouzès).

necessary to outline the conclusions concerning the causes and motives of Methodios' clash with the Studites.

The condemnation of Theodore's pamphlets in my opinion was not a pretext, but the actual core of the whole affair. Nicephoros and Methodios, once they came to power, used the first opportunity to eliminate the damage that the Patriarchate in the person of their predecessors suffered from the opposition inside the Church. And in both cases it was the patriarchs, not their adversaries, who attacked first. In the second letter of Methodios we read that the Studites maintained that the patriarch was searching for the pamphlets and got hold of them with the help of his agent. Methodios replies that the agent in question was a "double" one from the very beginning and that the Studites deliberately made him deliver the writings to the patriarch in order to "intimidate" the latter (I.217-220). Whatever version is correct, it is quite obvious that the texts which criticized Nicephoros and Tarasios *were not disseminated or advertised* by the monks, which means that the first step towards the open clash was not made by the partisans of Naucratis and Athanasios.

The comparison of the balance of power and the development of events in 808-811 on the one hand and in 844-847 on the other reveals some very significant differences. By all objective criteria Methodios' situation was much more difficult than Nicephoros'. The latter was firmly supported by such a strong and capable ruler as the Emperor Nicephoros I. On the contrary, Methodios' relations with the court seem to have been far more complicated. There is a mention of secular officials siding with his opponents in Methodios' second letter (cf. I.205-206: ἐπικλυόμενον αὐτοῖς ἄρχοντα), but the most eloquent is the story with the accusation of adultery brought against the patriarch. Von Dobschütz was absolutely right, I think, when he linked it to the conflict with the Studites<sup>105</sup>. The personalities of the accusers (Metrophanes, future metropolitan of Smyrna, and his mother) as well as of the investigators (protomagister Manuel) confirm this point of view. Metrophanes was to become one of the fiercest enemies of Photios, the continuator of Tarasios-Nicephoros-Methodios line in the Byzantine church, while Manuel was known for his close connections with Studiou. Furthermore, Patriarch Nicephoros was opposed by only one bishop, Joseph of Thessalonica, whereas Methodios had to deal with several high hierarchs. And despite all that Methodios acted much more drastically and went considerably farther in his demands. Whilst Nicephoros only wanted the Studites to keep silence on the restoration of Joseph and not to break commu-

<sup>105</sup> v. DOBSCHÜTZ, *op.cit.*, S.46.

nion with the patriarch, Methodios demanded that Theodore's behaviour in the Moechian affair be unequivocally condemned (it is especially remarkable since he unearthed that old strife himself). The gravest punishment decreed by the Council of 809 was the deposition of John of Thessalonica to the rank of a simple priest<sup>106</sup>, whereas Methodios not only deposed, but also anathematized his opponents.

How can this difference be explained? The key, to my mind, is provided by the following utterance from the Life of Methodios: "However, the patriarch's will and verdict had the upper hand, because his rank allowed that"<sup>107</sup>. In fact, it is not the variance of personal temperament or political skill that caused the difference between Tarasios' Nicephoros' and Methodios' actions in analogous situations, but the real rise of the institutional power and influence of the Patriarchate of Constantinople from 784 to 843. The theoretical foundation of this rise is emphatically expressed in Methodios' ecclesiology.

The predominant idea of Methodios' writings against the Studites is that the patriarch is not just the first among the bishops, but possesses another, higher grade of priesthood, namely that of the Apostles. Here are some quotations:

And the works of the divine Dionysius and canonical prescription will manifest with all evidence that the bishops, that is the hierarchs, define for the priests what befits their status, and the patriarchs for the bishops. For what is appropriate according to the status is defined by higher ranks for lower ones, up to the Apostles - and their successors, that is the patriarchs, are also Apostles... (Letter 2,90-96, Darrouzès)

For bishop is a common (πολλοστόν) name and thing, whereas that of the Apostles and their successors is rare and very infrequent, masterful and sovereign. (Ibid., 167sq.)

The patriarchs are called successors of the Apostles in one more place (ibid., 1.113-114) and three more times are directly equalled to them (ibid., 1.145,161,181). This is, as far as I know, the first time when the doctrine of apostolicity is formulated in such a radical manner on the Byzantine soil<sup>108</sup>. To realize the progress the patriarchal ideology made over sixty years it is

<sup>106</sup> HENRY P. "The Moechian Controversy and the Constantinopolitan Synod of January A.D. 809." *JThS* 20 (1969), p.495-522, p.518.

<sup>107</sup> Ὑπερικῆ μέντοιγε ἡ τοῦ πατριάρχου βουλή τε καὶ κρίσις τῆς ἀξίας τοῦτο ἐπιτρεπούσης (1257D).

<sup>108</sup> Cf. P.O'CONNEL, "The Ecclesiology of St.Nicephorus I." *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 194, Rome 1972, p.29-37 and 151-159. F. DVORNIK (*The Idea of Apostolicity in Byzantium and the Legend of Apostle Andrew*. Cambridge (Mass.) 1958) has no mention of it.

enough to recall Tarasios' appeal which stands in the title of this paper. Tarasios said: "Constantinople has a bishop"<sup>109</sup> - Methodios is not afraid to say something like "I am your Apostle." Theodor Studite's reaction to the attempt to confirm the episcopal authority by the Council of 809 was: "...if this be allowed, in vane is the Gospel, useless the canons, and let everyone during the time of his archpriesthood be a new Evangelist, *another Apostle*."<sup>110</sup> Now, however, a pro-Studite hagiographer writes: "τῆς ἀξίας τοῦτο ἐπιτρεπούσης." Meanwhile Methodios goes even farther and identifies his predecessors with the Church herself: "as they were the Church, they who had gathered her"<sup>111</sup>. The source of these ideas is easy to guess - the years Methodios spent in Rome probably played their role.

One more important motif to be observed in the Methodios' writings is the description of continuity between the Orthodox patriarchs in terms of parenthood. This is perhaps why his biographer addresses him with a following exclamation: "Oh thou who hast honoured as fathers Orthodox patriarchs and confessors, both living and deceased!"<sup>112</sup> The patriarch himself says that he had transcribed the pamphlets detracting Nicephoros and Tarasios "not because I allowed my parents to be dishonoured, as parricides (πατραλοῖαι) do" (Letter 2,200-201). Photios later used the same word "parricide" to characterize Ignatios' attitude towards his predecessor<sup>113</sup>.

An important feature of Methodios' ecclesiastical policy was the combination of practical measures and ideologically motivated symbolical actions. As has been already demonstrated, these actions were primarily aimed at raising the status of the Constantinopolitan see by glorifying its triumphs over the heretics (the Feast of Orthodoxy), the internal opposition (condemnation of Theodore's pamphlets) and even over the imperial power. May be the most conspicuous presentation of the latter kind, of which we fortunately possess a detailed account, was the translation of relics of St. Patriarch Nicephoros<sup>114</sup>.

<sup>109</sup> See AFINOGENOV, Κωνσταντινούπολις (I), p.48.

<sup>110</sup> *Theodori Epistulae*, Ep.24,92: ἐπεὶ, εἰ τοῦτο δοθεῖη, κενὸν τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, εἰκὴ ὁ κανόνες, καὶ ἕκαστος κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν τῆς οικείας ἀρχιερωσύνης... ἔστω νέος εὐαγγελιστῆς, ἄλλος ἀπόστολος... At the end of his life Theodore changed his opinion and acknowledged the patriarchs as successors of the Apostles: Ep.478,61-64. (dated 823 ).

<sup>111</sup> Fr.4.5 (Dairouzès): ἐκένοι γὰρ ἦσαν ἡ Ἐκκλησία, οἱ καὶ ταύτην συνάξαντες. The text in PG 100,1294A has στροβίξαντες instead of συνάξαντες.

<sup>112</sup> *Vita Methodii*, 1261B.

<sup>113</sup> Mansi, vol.XVI, col.2-3.

<sup>114</sup> *Theophanis Presbyteri Narratio de translatione Nicephori*. Μνημεῖα ἀγιολογικά. Εκδ. ὑπὸ Θ.Ψάωνη, Βενετία 1884, σ.115-128.

One observation has to be made before we move on to the analysis of this document. The translation of St. Theodore Studite and St. Joseph of Thessalonica took place in January, 844, while that of Nicephoros - in March 847. That means that precisely the time span between the two events saw the eruption of the Studite schism, which by 847 was certainly in full swing. This context must be by all means kept in mind, so it is necessary to summarize the contents of the account of the translation of Theodore<sup>115</sup>:

1. Naucratiot of Studiou and Athanasios of Sakkudion approach the patriarch and the Empress and get the permission to transport Theodore's relics from the island of Principi to Constantinople (p.55-56).
2. A large crowd of monks from different monasteries headed by both hegumeni arrives to the Saint's tomb and pray him to return to his city and monastery (p.56-57).
3. Theodore's relics arrive to Constantinople received by a cheerful multitude of monks, clerics and laymen (p.57).
4. The relics are carried to the monastery of Studiou. There they are visited by some dignitaries and the Patriarch Methodios with his clergy. The empress does not come personally but sends gifts (p.58).
5. Theodore and Joseph are solemnly interred by the patriarch himself.

Now let us look at the account of Theophanes Presbyter:

1. The patriarch approaches Theodora saying that "it does not befit the government and the state" (οὐ προσήκον τῷ κράτει καὶ τῇ πολιτείᾳ) to leave the glorious Patriarch Nicephoros, who was banished for the true faith, "under the same condemnation of exile" (τῇ αὐτῇ καταδίκῃ τῆς ἑξορίας) - p.124-125.
2. Methodios arrives to the monastery of St.Theodore with a throng of priests, monks and laymen. There he addresses St.Nicephoros with a prayer in which he compares him to St.John Chrysostom as "ἐφ' ὁμοίῳ ζήλῳ... παρρησιασάμενος" and says:

Erstwhile the emperor alienated from God opposed thee in thy lifetime and improvidently expelled thee from the Church. He received the retribution that his outrage deserved, when he was in his turn expelled by his miserable death from power and life... Today the emperors attached to God by their pious disposition give thee back the Church even after thy death, and as if adopted by thee through the Gospel together with me pre-

<sup>115</sup> C. VAN DE VORST, "La translation de S. Théodore Studite et de S. Joseph de Thessalonique." *AB* 32 (1913), p.50-61.

sent it to thee... Let thy city have... thy blessed body, ...boasting of it more than of the imperial majesty<sup>116</sup>.

3. Nicephoros' relics are carried by the priests to the specially prepared *dromon* (i.e. military ship of the imperial Navy). In the harbour of Constantinople they are received by emperor Michael and the highest officials who carry them on their shoulders to St. Sophia "from which he was chased away, deprived of the archpriesthood" (p.126).
4. On March 13, the day of Nicephoros' exile in 815, the relics are transferred from St.Sophia to the church of St.Apostles to be interred. The procession is so sumptuous that none of the previous solemnities of this kind dedicated to emperors or priests (ἐπί τε βασιλεῦσι καὶ ἱερεῦσι) can rival it.

There is hardly any need to explain that the whole ceremony was designed to demonstrate the triumph of the Church as personified by the deceased patriarch, over the State. But the comparison of the two accounts reveals another aim of Methodios - all the pomp and splendour was probably supposed to dwarf the importance of Studiou and its glorious hegumenos. The patriarch obviously endeavoured to present the translation of his predecessor as a matter of state importance in contrast to the essentially private nature of Theodore's translation.

It is of course very tempting to include in this outline of Methodios' propagandistic activities the series of ninth century illuminated Psalters with marginal illustrations glorifying Nicephoros as the victor over Iconoclasm. However, as their date is not certain<sup>117</sup> and the subject deserves a much more detailed examination than could fit in the framework of this paper, I am leaving it out for now and pass to the general conclusions.

The consistent policy and ingenious tactics of the Orthodox resistance to the Second Iconoclasm, organized and directed mainly by the Patriarch Nicephoros and later by the future Patriarch Methodios, eventually brought about a complete victory over the heresy, which was presented by the patriarchal "party" as a triumph of Church over State. The prestige and influence of the see of Constantinople had grown enormously both at the

<sup>116</sup> Πρώην ἠλλοτριωμένους τοῦ θεοῦ βασιλεῖς ἀντικατέστη σοι ζῶντι καὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἀπερσικέπτως ἐκβέβληκεν, ὃς καὶ δικὴν ἀξίαν τῆς παροινίας ἐκτέτικεν, ἀντεκβληθεὶς δυστήνῳ τέλει τῆς ἀρχῆς καὶ τοῦ ζῆν... Σήμερον βασιλεῖς ὤκειωμένοι θεῷ δι' εὐσεβείας τρόπων καὶ τεθνεῶτί σοι τὴν ἐκκλησίαν διδόασιν, οἳ καὶ οἰοεὶ διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου υἱοποιηθέντες σοι, ταύτην σὺν ἐμοὶ παριστάσι... Ἐχέτω ἡ πόλις σου... τὸ πανόλβιον σικῆ νός σου... πλέον τῆς βασιλικῆς μεγαλειότητος ἐπὶ τούτῳ βρέθυμένη (p.125-126, cap.11).

<sup>117</sup> See ШЕНЧЕНКО, *The Anti-Iconoclast Poem*, p.57-58.

expense of the imperial power and of the oppositional groups within the Church. At the same time Methodios' effort to subdue the Studite opposition for good failed. After his death in 847 the government, reacting to the rise of the patriarchal power, sided with the Studites and appointed their ally Ignatios as Methodios' successor. However, although Ignatios attempted to undo some of his predecessor's achievements, the major part of them remained with the Byzantine church to the very end of the empire and possibly even beyond it.

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