

The Western Byzantium of Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos

Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos was the founder of Greek national historiography in the 19th century, and the man who consolidated the schema of the unbroken continuity of Hellenism from antiquity to the modern age, incorporating Byzantium – a Byzantium rejected by representatives of the modern Greek Enlightenment like Adamantius Korais – into this narrative framework¹.

Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos transformed the philosophical schema of the continuity of the Greek nation² proposed by Spyridon Zampelios³ into a unified historical narrative by incorporating into it the Greek Middle Ages, i. e. Byzantium. The tripartite scheme of Greek temporal continuity legitimized the mid-19th century demand for confirmation of spatial unity, and such unity could not be confirmed unless Constantinople replaced Athens as the capital city of Hellenism. However, manifestations of the Megali Idea during that era were extremely varied and frequently contradictory, running the gamut from »civilizing the East« to political irredentism. For this reason, perhaps, it was not sufficient for someone to be proclaimed the Greek »national historian« simply because he represented the visionary tendencies of the Megali Idea. And this was even more so if he remained the sole »national« historian even after the inglorious end of the dreams of the Megali Idea in the wake of the Asia Minor disaster in 1922. It is more probable, as shall be maintained here, that he met the qualifications for being proclaimed »national historian« only once he could be sufficiently all-encompassing so as to

include simultaneously both the dominant version of the national narrative as well as potential criticisms of this narrative.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate, as representing »living« Constantinople during the 19th century, and as a surviving element of Byzantium within the Ottoman Empire, would logically have formed one of the essential scholarly subjects for a »nationally thought-out« historical treatment. But was that true?

Constantinople against Athens?

Manuel Gedeon, one of the most important scholars of the 19th century Ecumenical Patriarchate and ideological proponent of a particular group of pro-Russian patriarchs in Constantinople (Joachim II, Joachim III) for half a century (1870-1921), would disagree. Gedeon was an expert at collecting sources, which he used to compose short stories of churches, monasteries, or prominent figures of the Greek community – but never a complete history of the Ecumenical Patriarchate⁴. In fact, the essential difference between the two men was that Paparrigopoulos invented a unified history of the Greek nation, while Gedeon offers us bits and pieces of the history – never the entire history – of the Orthodox (Rum) millet (rendered in Greek with the word γένος)⁵.

An ironic distancing from or even astrigent allusions to the work of Paparrigopoulos are often noticeable in Gedeon's

1 Dimaras, Paparrigopoulos. – Stamatopoulos, Ethnos.

2 Paparrigopoulos, Istoría ethnous 5.

3 The scheme of Zampelios was inspired by the Hegelian philosophical triad: if the antiquity played the role of »thesis« and the Byzantine Christianity represented its »antithesis«, modern Hellenism should be considered as their »synthesis«, the result of their dialectical confrontation. See especially the introduction to Zampelios, Asmata.

4 As early as the late 1980s, quite a number of historians in Greece had turned to the analysis of the process of nationalization of the Orthodox populations outside the borders of Greece but (primarily) within the Ottoman Empire, with the object of deconstructing the dominant narrative of the Greek national historiography. It was thus natural for them to discover the significance of Gedeon's work, though for many, its different theoretical aim was not apparent. The solution offered by most of them was to see different processes of nationalization related to the Christian Orthodox populations of the Ottoman Empire. In these accounts, Constantinople had taken its proper place next to Athens, and the identification of these populations with different aspects of the Ottoman imperial ideology was emphasized against the irredentist agenda of the Greek state. Expressed in works dealing with specific topics rather than in large synthetic works (here, I call to mind only the names of Veremis, Kingdom 203-212; Kofos, Joachim 107-120; and Kitromilidis, Communities 149-192), this historiographical tendency reserved a different treatment for the role of the patriarchate, and Orthodoxy in general, within the framework of the Empire. The patriarchate is now considered the successor to the Byzantine Empire and precisely for this reason does not represent the Greek

nation but instead the *Romaiko genos* (Rum millet). The meaning of *Romios*, however, is identified with the designation »Orthodox Christian«; in the same fashion, the meaning of *Romios* is distinguished from that of *Greek*, while Byzantium is »re-Christianised«, so that there is an emphasis on the religious and cultural dimension and not on the national or political. This historiographical tendency reached its zenith at the end of the 1980s with the works of Paschalis Kitromilidis. His 1989 article describes what he calls the »antinomy between Orthodoxy and Nationalism«, a contradiction which, in his view, was culminated with the proclamation of the 1872 schism (Kitromilidis, Communities 177-185). Later refinements include the suggestion that we understand the role of the patriarchate and the primary position it occupied within the framework of the »Orthodox commonwealth«, here referring not only to the Orthodox world of the Ottoman Empire but that of the rest of Eastern Europe and, above all, Russia. The term »Orthodox Commonwealth« was naturally inspired by the corresponding term »Byzantine Commonwealth« coined by Obolensky, Commonwealth. Thus, a bipolar historiographic schema was established: Athens-Constantinople, nationalism-ecumenism, and a place of honour for national identity's dominance over religious identity. The monolithic nationalist paradigm revealed its limitations within a process of its critical deconstruction. However, the bipolar scheme has been also criticized by a new generation of historians as encapsulated in the dominant paradigm of Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos (see Stamatopoulos, Historiographer).

5 Gedeon, Mneia 239: Let me add here that the word γένος should be considered the much more precise translation of the concept of »nation« than the word ἔθνος.

writing. There was something odd about this: Why would the most important intellectual in the patriarchate at the end of the 19th century look with suspicion upon the Greek »national historiographer«, from the moment that the latter was essentially performing the re-legitimation of the Byzantine past in Modern Greek history? Why would the representative of Constantinople oppose the narrative of embracing Constantinople/Byzantium?

He did so for the very simple reason that the Byzantium of Paparrigopoulos was turned towards the West. Normally, we think of Paparrigopoulos as a romantic who, like that other important antiquarian of the era, Spyridon Zambelios, sought to re-establish the unity of Hellenism that had been lost over time. However, although Zambelios was strongly influenced by Hegel, we could say that Paparrigopoulos retained something of the pragmatism of the Phanariote environment in which he grew up: He was born in Istanbul, his father was a banker who was killed by the Ottomans when the Greek Revolution broke out, and when he left Istanbul, he came to Greece as heterochton, without basic privileges like eligibility for tenure at the Greek University. The same of course was true of Gedeon, but from the early 1850s Paparrigopoulos fashioned a scheme of continuity for Hellenism that went as follows: In the course of its history, Hellenism had suffered two major conquests and discontinuities, that of the Romans and that of the Ottomans. The first of these Hellenism had confronted with (the Greek) language, while it had confronted the second with (the Orthodox Christian) religion: Antiquity – Byzantium – Modern Greece, interrupted yet simultaneously united. This schema led to the thought that, if the Greek language saved us from becoming Romans, then could not language itself – quite independently of religion – have been the basic characteristic of Hellenism under Byzantium? It was (the Christian Orthodox) religion that separated the Greeks from antiquity, but oddly enough the »heresies« that were condemned by the seven Ecumenical Councils are considered to connect them with the ancient world through paganism or better through different versions of the ancient philosophy! And strangely enough, the Byzantium of Paparrigopoulos was not only Phanariote, but also »heretical«.

On the Question of Iconomachy

Despite the fact that he was naturally very careful in his remarks about Orthodoxy, in many facets of his work Paparrigopoulos demonstrates an excessive affection for heretics, above all in his stance toward the Iconomachy and its emperors. According to Paparrigopoulos, the Byzantine Iconomachs had attempted to do what Luther and Calvin did in the West – six centuries earlier, however! The risk taken by the

Iconomachy was the same as that involved in the Protestant Reformation. Indeed, Paparrigopoulos employed this favourable approach to the Iconomachy as »Reformation« to distinguish his position from that of Zambelios, who considered the Iconomachy to have been a conspiracy of the monarchy against the people.

By 1853, in the abridged version of *The History of the Greek Nation*, Paparrigopoulos summarises his views on how Hellenism, in its centuries-long journey through history, had coped with foreign domination. Roman domination is offset by the superiority of the Greek education and, implicitly, language has an important role in this⁶. On the other hand, preserving its faith saved the Greek nation during the years of Ottoman rule⁷. Paparrigopoulos's judgment has two prerequisites, one implicit and one explicit. In both cases he admits that the means for the Greek nation's survival were accepted by each respective conqueror. They were not imposed upon the conquerors by sheer force of their cultural superiority but rather chosen by them: The Romans had begun to share in Greek learning before their conquest; the Ottomans, and particularly Mehmed II (the Conqueror) had set up the horizontal organization of the millet system. The final prerequisite for Paparrigopoulos's argument is not explicitly stated but can be inferred: The earlier conquests of the Greek nation are but the springboard for the new phase in the dynamic rebirth of the substantialized subject.

Byzantium and religion are inextricable. Thus the question is how the Eastern Roman Empire, as Paparrigopoulos described it early on in his writings, became gradually Hellenized. The answer is not as »easy« as it appears in Zambelios's account. Paparrigopoulos could not resort to a »philosophical« approach to the issue. And even though his approach is not philosophical, it can claim to be dialectical. This means that, for one thing, Paparrigopoulos realizes that Hellenism and Christianity coexisted within Byzantium in a contradictory manner. The initial solution he adopts is to frame Hellenism mainly through the philosophical and theognostic means provided by language.

But this solution does not suffice to explain the process of Byzantium's Hellenisation for one simple reason: Language may have been the solution to the problem of continuity in the case of the Roman conquest, but this makes it hard to re-employ it in order to Hellenize something that had already been »Hellenized« to whatever degree.

The Iconomachy is widely considered a key period for interpreting all of Byzantine history. It marks, among other things, the end of the war against »heresies«, that is, the ending of the Ecumenical Councils, the origin of the schism with the West, the beginning of Byzantium's civilizing work in the Slav world, and, primarily, the start of a new period which many historians compare to the »Hellenization« of

6 Paparrigopoulos, *Eikonomachoi* 89: »What saved the Greek nation is its exceptional diligence with the arts and letters.«

7 *Ibidem* 119: »What ultimately saved the Greek nation was its loyal devotion to its fathers' faith.«

the Roman period with regard to the empire's civil identity. Thus, all 19th-century historians and scholars seeking to take a position against Byzantium had to confront the Iconomachy.

Zambelios also views the Iconomachy within the framework of bolstering the Byzantine emperor's »absolutism«. For Zambelios, Iconomachy was only apparently a religious issue⁸. In actual fact, it was a political issue, in which what was at stake was precisely the curtailment of the absolutism that had peaked during Justinian's reign. The Roman monarchy in Constantinople had »forgotten« the tradition of »Latin liberty« as it had existed back in Rome. Understandably, resistance on the part of the demoi (δημοί) and Church continuously escalated. The monarchy responded with the Iconomachy. Yet in Zambelios's view, the Iconomachy – which marked Romanism's collapse and Hellenism's total dominance – was merely the result of an »abominable plan« aimed at »sowing discord« between the clergy and the people. This »malicious religious reform« was nothing but a contrivance by those in power aimed at weakening the other two members of the Holy Trinity. And the pretext for this: »the alleged abusiveness of the worship of divine images«⁹.

The Iconomachy appears merely as a heresy fomented by »malignant« emperors, starting with Leo III, the Isaurian. When analysing the basic coordinates along which Zambelios perceives Byzantium, reference was made to an excerpt from Hegel's Philosophy of History in which Hegel clearly joins the Gibbon camp. This excerpt is also cited by Zambelios. But further along in the same text, Hegel refers to Leo as »brave«¹⁰. Hegel juxtaposes the mystical and superstitious Byzantium with the historical trajectory of the West, comparing the Seventh Ecumenical Council, which vindicated iconolatry, with the Council of Frankfurt in 794, which censured »the superstitions of the Greeks«.

Paparrigopoulos's criticisms of Zambelios¹¹ in 1852 are the theoretical springboard for the tenth volume of his History,

which is dedicated in its entirety to the Iconomachy. This time Paparrigopoulos does not content himself with highlighting the positive characteristics of the iconoclast emperors' political administration, but defines the entire period of the Iconomachy as a »Reformation«. Here, too, Paparrigopoulos follows Gibbon, who believed that the efforts of the »brave« iconoclast emperors to lift Byzantium out of the »long night of superstition« had heralded, in a way, the 16th-century Reformation, when »liberty and knowledge spread through all aspects of human life«¹². There is no need to reverse Gibbon's line of argument this time – it had already taken a secular turn. Thus Paparrigopoulos does not limit his analysis to a single iconoclast emperor like Theofillos (829-645)¹³, who already enjoyed favourable reports from the iconolatric chroniclers (»[...] he was an iconomach but for political reasons, not by conscience [...]«)¹⁴, but focuses on the first generation of iconoclast kings like Leo III, the Isaurian, and his son Constantine V, who were iconomachs by conscience¹⁵.

In the third volume of his History of the Greek Nation (book ten), Paparrigopoulos attempts to highlight the Isaurian dynasty's work as the last significant effort to restructure the Byzantine state before it enters the phase of irreversible decline. It may not be an exaggeration to mention that the way Paparrigopoulos presents the Isaurians seems to be the ideal model on the basis of which he defends the institution of the Byzantine monarchy. To this end, however, he had first to adopt a secular perspective.

Indeed, the tenth book of Paparrigopoulos's History begins with a direct attack on what he calls the »ineptitudes« of Byzantine monasticism and its aberrant turns towards superstition and religious fanaticism¹⁶. He believes that Leo II did not seek confrontation but was forced into it by an already existing clash between the iconoclast minority and iconolatric majority. He thus found a historical opportunity to restructure the state and limit the powers of the Church, and especially the monks.

8 Here one sees the substantive difference between Paparrigopoulos and Zambelios in their historiographical approach to Byzantium. Zambelios strikes a rather ambivalent stance on the Iconomachy, on one hand calling it »religious reform« but on the other viewing the defeat of the iconoclasts as the climactic point of the Hellenisation process. Paparrigopoulos takes a clearly positive position, viewing it as »reform« while in reality seeking the prerequisites for Byzantium's inclusion into the West's dominant narrative; in Byzantium, efforts to secularize the state had preceded the Protestants' corresponding reform of Catholic Rome by seven centuries. Cyril Mango (Byzantinism 41) was of the first to highlight the importance of Paparrigopoulos's approach to the Iconomachy. Mango recognizes that such an approach to the Iconomachy would create uneasiness in a modern perspective trained to view it as »an Eastern movement« closer to Islam than to Western culture. To understand Paparrigopoulos's choice we must thus look at it in relation to the conditions set by the opposing force. In Fallmerayer, Elli Skopetea identifies two very important points: the Austrian historian's anti-Byzantinism did not oppose the growth of Byzantine Studies in the West but rather presumed it – anti-Byzantinism is not incompatible with the incorporation of Byzantium's history into the Western narrative (81 passim) – and, secondly, that Fallmerayer viewed the Iconomachy as a prospect for Byzantium's internal evolution that did not work out (»just like Paparrigopoulos!«, notes Skopetea, Phallmerayer 91). On this same topic, see also Kitromilidis, Nationalism 25-33.

9 Zambelios, Asmata 301.

10 »The brave Emperor Leo the Isaurian in particular, persecuted images with the greatest obstinacy, and in the year 754, Image-Worship was declared by a

Council to be an invention of the devil. Nevertheless, in the year 787 the Empress Irene had it restored under the authority of a Nicene Council, and the Empress Theodora definitively established it [...]«. See Hegel, Philosophy 357.

11 In an article published in the same issue of Nea Pandōra and immediately after Paparrigopoulos's book review, Papadopoulos-Vrettos underscores, albeit sympathetically, the most problematic element of Zambelios's attempt at narrating the history of Medieval Hellenism: »[...] and wishing to always appear, to the extent my meagre abilities allow, beneficial to my fellow Hellenes, I hasten to correct a very important bibliographic error of S. Zambelios; and I say very important error because correcting it will destroy from its foundations an entire chapter of his treatise«. What is this error? That »[his] apparently total reverence and piety offers a religious explanation of the eve of the Greek race's rebirth and attributes Greece's liberation from the [Ottoman] yoke to the Holy Mother of God« (author's emphasis). Papadopoulos-Vrettos refers to Zambelios's use of an excerpt from Ilias Maniatis's work. See Papadopoulos-Vrettos, Paratērēseis 403-406. What is of importance here is the theoretical position taken rather than the example cited.

12 Gibbon, however, does not abandon his interpretation of the Reformation as the result of the »West's strength in spurning the ghosts that dominate the sick and servile weakness of the Greeks«, see Gibbon, Decline 6, 186 f.

13 Paparrigopoulos, Eikonomachoi 15-21. 65-71. 130-137. 175-182.

14 Ibidem 176.

15 Ibidem.

16 Paparrigopoulos, Istoría ethnous 3, 406-409.

Paparrigopoulos had already criticized Zambelios for viewing the Iconomachy as an attempt by the monarchy to divide clergy and people with the ultimate goal of limiting the clergy's authority. But what does an interpretation of the Iconomachy as a proto-Reformation mean? While Paparrigopoulos had forced Zambelios to abandon his position (the reduction of the nation to religion), he himself approaches the period – and essentially of all of Byzantine history, for the reasons outlined earlier – from a »religious« perspective; having forced Zambelios to reconsider whether the Iconomachy was a conspiracy by the monarchy, Paparrigopoulos conceptualizes it in a way that effectively accepts that what was at stake in this confrontation was to secure the authority of Byzantine absolutism.

Was, then, Zambelios de-constructed for no reason? On the contrary. The difference between the two viewpoints is in their handling of the West. Zambelios's Hegelian scheme doesn't simply place Greek history outside History, but also in contradistinction to the West. Conversely, Paparrigopoulos's scheme is beset by the anxiety of inscribing Greek history into European history. This is why he demolishes the self-referential scheme devised by Zambelios. And he does not attempt this by relating the two sides in a »positive« manner, but rather in an »apophatic« way. For example, he compares the two cases not at the level of the Renaissance or the Enlightenment, but at that of the end of the Middle Ages, to the extent that it marked the eruption of religious wars in the West.

Paparrigopoulos addresses the following question: What allowed the emergence in the West of the »wonderful civilization of modern times«, despite the fact that both the West and the East witnessed the manifestation of heresies and great misunderstandings in the Gospel's interpretation. For Paparrigopoulos, the key to interpreting the different path followed by the West was the religious Reformation that took place in the 16th century. Long before Max Weber's Protestant Ethic and in the footsteps of Thomas Babington Macaulay's analysis of this historic event, he observes:

»And while the countries accepting reform – northern Germany, England, North America – continued advancing in the field of culture and to this day are leaders in this, those countries remaining under Papal dominance – southern Germany, Italy, Spain, and South America – rather lost, by and large, their edge, declined or even withered, like Spain«¹⁷.

It can easily be seen that such a view of Byzantium would have been unacceptable both to the patriarchate and to Gedeon. And it was not simply a question of interpreting the past, but also of political allegiances in the present. Someone speaking of »reform« in the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century would have been thinking of the Tanzimat reforms, and the patriarchate was extremely cautious both towards reforms that lessened its own influence as well as generally

towards the processes of Westernization and modernization the reforms sought to bring about. Gedeon understood that the assault against the Phanariote or Western Byzantium of Paparrigopoulos would have to be made at the same point that the latter had employed to distinguish his views from the philosophical or Hegelian Byzantium of Spyridon Zambelios, namely, the interpretation of the Iconomachy. It would seem that it was easier to discern the differences between the two founders of Greek national historiography from the vantage point of Constantinople.

Gedeon began his assault on Paparrigopoulos within a broader project of constructing an ideological schema for religious ecumenism. Gedeon's ecumenism had a strongly Pan-Orthodox dimension, and this meant that it was favourably disposed towards the Orthodox Slavs, i.e. the Serbs, Bulgarians, and Russians. He opposed the patriarchate's decision to condemn supporters of the Bulgarian Exarchate in 1872, and had entered into dialogue with the opposing side, members of the Bulgarian conservative faction like Marko Balabanov and Gavril Krstovic.

However, Gedeon's departure from Paparrigopoulos's historiographical scheme is not limited to his dim view of the latter's criticism of what he saw as the patriarchate's inability to promote the Hellenisation of the Balkan peoples in the 18th century. In other words, it was not limited to the years of Ottoman rule – which in any case, Gedeon viewed as a continuation of Byzantium – but to the Byzantine Empire itself and thus the manner in which Paparrigopoulos understood the inclusion of the »intermediate link« in the construction of the scheme of national continuity. Gedeon's disaffection with how the national historiography handled its medieval period would become evident through the differing approaches to the Iconomachy, which by the 19th century was considered a key issue in the internal evolution of Byzantine society and, ultimately, in its historiographical »Hellenisation«. In any case, for many historians the Iconomachy was not simply the peak of religious conflict in Byzantium, but also paved the way for the clash between the Byzantine East and the Catholic West over leadership of the Christian world and cultural influence over this delicate region of Eastern Europe.

The problem of the millet's multinational character

Moreover, it is well known that in volume five of his History of the Greek Nation, Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos accused the Ecumenical Patriarchate of not having fulfilled its historical mission, i.e. the Hellenizing of non-Greek speaking (primarily Slavic) populations in the Balkans. However, such a stance towards the patriarchate, despite the fact that it fell within

17 Paparrigopoulos, *Istoria ethnous* 3, 416. France was the only one among the Catholic countries that could be excluded from the rule. And yet, the authority

of the Catholic Church had already been severely curtailed there.

(or if you prefer, »helped to form«) the first stage of Greek historiography, with the patriarchate in the role of »ark of the nation«, is nonetheless based on an explicit admission: the recognition of the multi-national character of the millet. Supported by the narrative of Frantzis, Paparrigopoulos would maintain that Gennadios Scholarios (Gennadius Scholarius) became patriarch due to his anti-unionist beliefs, while at the same time he was the recipient of extensive privileges granted by Sultan Mehmed II, privileges that would finally make him the Ethnarch, i.e. the simultaneously religious and political ruler of all Romioi. Although Paparrigopoulos would employ the term *ethnos* to describe what we call the Rum millet, he nonetheless fully accepted its multi-ethnic character:

»And since that time, and in any case until recently, there was no differentiation into *ethne* of the non-Muslim subjects of the (Ottoman) state, and all of them were called Romioi, the patriarch's jurisdiction extended over the entire Orthodox Christian »congregation« of the East, including not only Greeks, but Albanians, Bulgarians, Serbs and the other Slavic peoples [...]«¹⁸.

At another point in his work, Paparrigopoulos, starting from the discussions among historians about the origins of Skenterbeğ (Skender Bey), would relate:

»We believe that it is truly unworthy of scholarship, as it is of no value, to transpose into earlier eras the racial passions that have been produced in our own time between the Slavs of the East on the one hand, and the native inhabitants on the other. In those times, these divisions did not exist; Slavs, Albanians, and Greeks were considered brothers, with a single common enemy and common desire and wish, their salvation from that enemy. Since such was the case, the historian of this age must approach them in this way. It is thus a matter of indifference to us whether Kastriotis was a Slav or an Albanian in origin; it is also a matter of indifference whether he was Orthodox or Catholic; it is sufficient that he was Christian, and as such was considered a brother [...]«¹⁹.

Of course, Paparrigopoulos would at the end point out that the unquestionably Greek etymology of the name Skenterbeu could be explained by the cultural dominance »in those countries« of Hellenism.

However, Paparrigopoulos's acceptance of the multi-national character of the millet had the peculiar result of undermining perceptions of the patriarchate as the »ark of the nation«, since in any case the nations of the millet not only were preserved through the course of history, but began to come into conflict with one another for the trophies to be had from the disintegration of the Empire. It is interesting that this undermining of the millet's »Greekness« (which certainly

existed for him at the level of language, i.e. »linguistic Hellenisation«), was connected with an undermining of the concept of the »privileges«. That is, Paparrigopoulos, while he accepted that these were awarded as early as the period after the fall of Constantinople, questioned whether they were actually in effect during the ensuing periods. This is because in his opinion, the unscrupulous and irresponsible policies of many patriarchs led to the betrayal or selling-out of many of these privileges – primarily in regard to the self-governance of the patriarchate, and to the adjudication of cases involving family law, which were assumed by Islamic religious courts. However, it was precisely this inability to maintain the privileges that corresponded (again, precisely) to an inability to fulfill the program of Hellenizing the non-Greek populations included among the patriarchate's Orthodox congregation. Thus, he observed: »We do not wish to return to the undisputed fact that many of our Church leaders personally did away with the various and important privileges that the conqueror had awarded the patriarchate. But how can we deny that this same authority [i.e. the patriarchate], particularly as it was during the 17th and 18th centuries, could still have offered services to Hellenism, which, alas, it did not take care to offer to the extent it ought?«²⁰. And he then continues in an even more scathing tone: »This is the greatest censure we could set forth against the patriarchate for the period from the time of the fall of Constantinople until our own day. As for ourselves, we can tolerate all its [i.e. the patriarchate's] other sins – the sacrifice of privileges, humiliation, greed – if it had [only] taken care to serve to its utmost the [best] interests of Hellenism [...]«²¹.

According to Paparrigopoulos, the patriarch should have employed whatever privileges Ottoman authority had granted him as »battle armour« to promote the Hellenisation of non-Greek speaking Christians in his flock. Control of Church governance, monastery properties, and the Church's wealth, in addition to the legal handling of family law cases, allowed the patriarchate to serve as the guarantor for all Christians in the Empire – Serbs, Bulgarians, Albanians, Armenians – before the Sublime Porte. According to Paparrigopoulos, all these were treated as a single body by the Ottoman administration, and a proof of this was that »they called them all Romious, indiscriminately«²². Indeed, again according to the historian, never had the Christian peoples of the East felt such unity and like-mindedness – not even in the era of the Byzantine emperors – as they had experienced under Ottoman rule, when even the racial conflicts among them had subsided or disappeared altogether. As proof of this, he offers the fact that the Serbs and Bulgarians accepted without complaint

18 Paparrigopoulos, *Istoria* 5, 510. A parenthetical observation may be permitted here: It is interesting that in all the relevant passages, Paparrigopoulos includes the Armenians among Christian populations subject to the patriarchate, while always omitting the Moldavians and Vlachs. We should recall that Paparrigopoulos was a type of Phanariot, familiar with Constantinopolitan reality during the 19th century, including the fierce economic rivalry between Romioi (Greek) and Armenian bankers (and besides this, his father, Dimitris, was a money-changer

and lender). On the other hand, the Romanians, Moldavians, and Vlachs were perhaps not so distant and foreign, in contrast to the Balkan Slavs, as to require »Hellenizing«. They were themselves bearers of medieval »Greekness«.

19 Paparrigopoulos, *Istoria* 5, 379.

20 *Ibidem* 538.

21 *Ibidem* 540.

22 *Ibidem*.

the abolition of the archbishoprics of Peć and Ohrid in 1766-1767.

That is, if one were to read Paparrigopoulos in reverse, one could produce the entire argumentation of the Balkan nationalists in the late 19th century, who in turn accused the patriarchate of being an agent of Greek irredentist policy. Besides, many of these individuals had read the historian, and a smaller number had attended his courses at the University of Athens. Except that here, as we said, we are confronted with the odd phenomenon of Paparrigopoulos also accusing the patriarchate of an inability to fulfil its ethnic role and of being incapable of taking advantage of the homogeneity imposed by Ottoman rule in administration as well as in the cultural and social life of Balkan Christians.

If Paparrigopoulos had stopped there, we could say that the pressure he was exerting on the world of the patriarchate should have been interpreted politically: Since the latter had failed in its historic mission, the only solution would have been its support for the cause of Greek nationalism. However, some of the positions he supported at various points in his History, with respect to both the Byzantine as well as Ottoman period, constitute more profound ideological differences with what the leading institution of the Orthodox East represented.

A brief reference to four examples from the Byzantine period of the patriarchate will suffice to clarify his distance from what the latter represented ideologically:

1. Paparrigopoulos would make extensive reference to the means by which the Patriarch of Constantinople – in this case, the 6th-century patriarch, John Nesteutes (the Faster) – pursued the title of »Ecumenical«. When John chose the title »Ecumenical Patriarch«, it was synonymous with »Christian« and was not an actual claim for »ecumenical« status vis-à-vis the pre-eminent role played by Rome, a view which Paparrigopoulos adopted from the works of Pichler, whom the Greek historian characterized as a »moderate Catholic«.

2. In referring to the differences between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches, he defended the model of the latter; in contrast to the former, which had been attracted by the exercise of political power, the Orthodox Church had attempted to situate itself in a collaborative relationship with the state. Paparrigopoulos responded to the arguments by Catholics that the Orthodox Church was dependent upon state authority in the following interesting fashion: if the Orthodox Church had been uncontrolled and beyond the jurisdiction of the Byzantine emperors, this would have resulted in the most unrelenting condemnation possible of the various heretical groups in the East, with incalculable consequences for the state's cohesion. In other words, it would have done what the Catholic Church had done to the Protestants during the 16th century. Thus, in an indirect manner he not only posed the issue of the Church's subjugation to the will of the state (here,

the presumably »romantic« Paparrigopoulos appears much closer to Pharmakidis than to Oikonomos) but also expressed his sympathy for the persecuted heretics of all eras, in a desire to impose a regime of religious tolerance.

3. This fondness for the heretics of Byzantium would reach its apogee with his favourable approach to the phenomenon of the Iconomachy, as I described above. Paparrigopoulos viewed the Iconomachy as a potential Reformation, and the Iconomach emperors as precursors of Luther and Calvin.

4. Finally, when he recounted the great controversy between Unionists and Anti-Unionists in the Late Byzantine period, he made it very clear that he took the part of the Unionists, i.e. the part of Constantine Paleologus, who opposed the Ottomans, against Gennadius Scholarius, who collaborated with them. And most importantly, he faulted the West for refusing at that eleventh hour to offer assistance in confronting the Eastern enemy. Indeed, he seriously considered the possibility that if the West had come to the assistance of the Byzantines, the new form of state emerging from this would have constituted an experimental laboratory for the gradual rapprochement and reunification of Catholic and Orthodox Christianity.

Conclusions

For all the above reasons, Paparrigopoulos's History was not simply a means of pressuring the world of the patriarchate to align itself with the new age; for it also established the dividing lines about how the representatives of religion should adjust to the new secular political regimes. As was natural, the patriarchate not only did not accept Paparrigopoulos's ideological arguments, it even refused to accept his narrative of Byzantium, since the Byzantium of Paparrigopoulos had one basic flaw: it was oriented towards the West²³.

And here is the point that interests us directly: If it is the case that Paparrigopoulos contributed to the creation of the first movement of Greek historiography that viewed the patriarchate as the »ark of the nation«, even if in an inconsistent way, what I would maintain is that Paparrigopoulos was also the source of inspiration for the second movement in Greek historiography. I believe that the two fundamental elements we saw in his work – an acknowledgement of the multi-national character of the Genos millet, and the secularized viewpoint from which he viewed the Byzantine past – exercised a very great attraction for representatives of this (second) movement, although this was never openly stated. I think the explanation for this attraction may be sought in the fact that most of the authors of this movement came from liberal backgrounds, both politically as well as theoretically. The explanation for their silence on Paparrigopoulos as their source of inspiration may be owing to the fact that they attempted

23 Stamatopoulos, Ethnos.

to compare Athens and Constantinople, not for the purposes of deconstruction, but in order to highlight the limits to the formation of national identity within the framework of the nation state. But Paparrigopoulos had discussed the relationship of Athens with Constantinople in terms of the Megali Idea, and at the same time in terms of a twin common denominator: the instrumental employment of national identity, and the secularized approach to the Byzantine past. It would thus seem that this double influence comprised a constant for the production of works that were at one and the same time a critique of Paparrigopoulos and a starting point for a series of critical approaches that would highlight the complexity of 19th century reality. For example, the genealogical descent of Paschalis Kitromilidis's expression in his article on the »Orthodox Commonwealth« during the period of Ottoman rule (an expression inspired by its correspondence to the »Byzantine Commonwealth« of Dmitri Obolensky) that »[...] the patriarchate of Constantinople became genuinely Ecumenical at the ideological level after 1453, while up until 1453 it was the Empire that was ecumenical« should be sought in passages of Paparrigopoulos such as the following:

»And so in general, the dignity with which the patriarch was surrounded immediately upon the fall [of Constantinople] was at least outwardly similar, and on occasion even

superior, to that which the patriarchs had had under the Byzantine emperors, as Meletios rightly observed in the 17th century. But the Patriarchal History has confirmed that people during the previous century also bowed before the patriarch as »master« and »king«²⁴. And in fact, Meletios Pigas would be one of Kitromilidis's citations on the following page.

In conclusion, we might say that the first and second major trends in Greek historiography reproduced the schema established by Paparrigopoulos, precisely because his treatment of the patriarchate had to do with an orientation towards the West, whether in the phase of creating the basic mechanism for founding the nation state, or in that of broadening its horizons within the framework of broader Europe and its fulfilment. And since Paparrigopoulos not only acknowledged the multi-ethnic character of the congregation of Ottoman Christians, but above all treated the patriarchate as a »flawed« ark, chiefly through the ideological prisms of Westernisation and modernization, he would also provide in essence the mold from which would arise criticisms of that which had been modelled as official historiography. Perhaps it is not so odd after all that conservative and liberal approaches to the Ottoman past have a common starting point, that of the »national historiographer«.

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24 Paparrigopoulos, Istoria 5, 510.

Summary / Zusammenfassung

The Western Byzantium of Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos

Paparrigopoulos's interpretation of the Iconomachy as a Reformation corresponds to a comprehensive reinterpretation of Byzantine history: what he describes as reform is no more than the need to make Byzantium palatable to the West. But such a perspective would retroactively vindicate the Iconomachy – not only on the issue of the icons but with regards to the hegemonic role accorded the clergy in Byzantine society after the Seventh Ecumenical Council – and wouldn't be acceptable to the Patriarchate. This is especially true given that what Paparrigopoulos dubs »reform« is a lot like what the Ottoman Empire tried to enforce during the Tanzimat in the 19th century. The article will deal with the Westernised perspective of Byzantium proposed by Paparrigopoulos as well as with the reaction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate's intellectuals, for example Manouil Gedeon and Ioakeim Foropoulos, to the re-interpretation of Iconomachy.

Das Westliche Byzanz des Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos

Paparrigopoulos' Interpretation des Bilderstreits als Reformation entspricht einer umfassenden Neuinterpretation der Byzantinischen Geschichte. Denn diesen als Reform zu beschreiben, entspringt lediglich dem Bedürfnis, Byzanz dem Westen schmackhaft zu machen. Da aber eine solche Perspektive rückwirkend den Bilderstreit verteidigen würde – und zwar nicht nur in der Frage der Bilder, sondern auch bezüglich der hegemonialen Rolle, die dem Klerus in der byzantinischen Gesellschaft nach dem siebten Ökumenischen Konzil zugbilligt wurde –, musste dies dem Patriarchat als inakzeptabel erscheinen. Insbesondere deswegen, weil das, was Paparrigopoulos »Reform« nennt, ziemlich genau dem entspricht, was das Osmanische Reich in der Zeit der Tanzimat-Reformen im 19. Jahrhundert durchzusetzen versuchte.

Der Beitrag befasst sich mit der von Paparrigopoulos vorgeschlagenen »verwestlichten« Sicht auf Byzanz sowie mit der Reaktion der Intellektuellen des Ökumenischen Patriarchats, namentlich Manouil Gedeon und Ioakeim Foropoulos, auf die Neuinterpretation des Bilderstreits.