BYZANTIUM: THE SOCIAL BASIS OF DECLINE IN THE ELEVENTH CENTURY

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THE ELEVENTH CENTURY was a particularly critical period for both Byzantine and Islamic society, for the appearance of the Saljuk Turks in the Near East at this time profoundly affected both societies. In the year 1055 the Saljuk prince Tughril Beg entered Bagdad with his army where he was received by the khalifah, and soon after succeeded in resurrecting the Islamic Empire on a Turkish basis. In 1071 his successor Alp Arslan inflicted upon the Byzantine Empire the crushing defeat at Manzikert in Asia Minor. This marked the collapse of Byzantium as a great political power and the beginning of the Turkification of Asia Minor, the cradle of the future Ottoman Empire. Thus the appearance of the Turks in the Near East resulted in the re-invigoration of the political forces of Islam and accelerated the decline of Byzantine political power.

How is one to explain the sudden and complete collapse of Byzantium after the disaster at Manzikert? Byzantium had suffered severe military disaster in the past and yet had survived. The battle itself had occurred in the easternmost reaches of Asia Minor, far removed from the heart of the empire. But ten years after the battle of Manzikert, in 1081, on the accession of Alexius Comnenus, the condition of Byzantium contrasted sadly with its position in the early eleventh century, when it had been without a doubt the most powerful, the wealthiest, and the most civilized state in all of Christendom. On the death of the emperor Basil II in 1025 its boundaries stretched from the Euphrates to southern Italy, and from the Danube to the islands of Crete and Cyprus. The imperial treasury was full, and commerce flourished. The revival of classical art and learning had already gotten well under way in the tenth century, and the conversion of Kievan Russia to Orthodox Christianity had brought greater glory and influence to Byzantium. Thus the collapse of the Byzantine Empire in the latter half of the eleventh century seems startlingly complete and unexpectedly rapid.

A number of scholars have examined the course of Byzantine decline in the eleventh century and have clearly outlined its general path. They have described in detail the degeneration of the ruling dynasty; the absorption of the free peasantry by the great land owners; the diminishing of gov-

ernment revenue through grants of *pronoia, excuseia, charistikia;* the granting of privileges to Venetian traders; the debasement of the coinage; the sale of offices and farming of taxes; the civil wars; and finally the ethnic-religious difficulties.[1] There can be no doubt that all of these phenomena had dire consequences for Byzantium, but it can be argued on good grounds that two of these problems, the civil wars and the ethnic-religious difficulties in the provinces, were the key developments which led to the collapse of Asia Minor in the face of the Saljuk invasions and the resultant humbling of Byzantium from its position of power and glory.

The civil wars in Byzantium during the eleventh century took on the aspect of a contest for supreme power between the bureacracy and the army, and all the grandees of the empire took one or the other side in consonance with their interests. This struggle between the bureaucracy and the army had set in shortly after the death of Basil II when the succeeding weak rulers turned the direction of affairs and power over to the bureaucrats. Gradually their predominance in affairs of state became so overwhelming that the officers of the army were not only subordinated in all important matters, but severely persecuted by confiscation of property, exile, blinding, and execution. This persecution of the military aristocracy, coupled with the lack of an established succession,

[1] There is a considerable body of literature on the eleventh century, the important items of which are the following: N. Skabalanovich, Византийское государство и церковь в XI веке (St. Petersburg, 1884); P. Charanis, "The Byzantine Empire in the Eleventh Century," *A History of the Crusades,* I. ed. M. Baldwin (Philadelphia, 1955), 177-219, where one can find the lastest bibliography on the subject; R. H. J. Jenkins, *The Byzantine Empire on the Eve of the Crusades* (London, 1953), a short work but with remarkable insight into the internal evolution of Byzantine society; C. Neumann, "La situation mondiale de l'empire byzantin avant les croisades," *Revue de l'orient latin,* 10 (1905), 57-171; J. Hussey, "The Byzantine Empire in the Eleventh Century: Some Different Interpretations," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* 32 (1950), 71-87, is very provocative and stresses the important cultural achievements of the eleventh century; G. Schlumberger, *L'Epopée byzantine á la fin du dixième siècle,* 3 (Paris, 1905); C. Cahen, "La campagne de Mantzikert d'après les sources musulmanes," *Byzantion,* 9 (1934), 613-42.

presented both the instigation and the opportunity to the ambitious soldiers.

The socio-economic aspect of the civil war comes boldly into relief when one examines closely the make-up of the military and bureaucratic parties.[2] The military aristocracy consisted of the great landowning families commanding the armies in the provinces. By the eleventh century many of these families had acquired a long and glorious tradition which made of them a highly articulate and proud aristocracy. The most important group came from Anatolia and numbered about twenty families. The oldest of these, the Botaniates family, seems to go back to the late sixth century, while the bulk of these families from Anatolia had already risen to great prominence by the ninth century, the most important being the families of Phocas and Sclerus. The great wars in the east at the end of the tenth century added five more families, including those of Comnenus and Diogenes, while the addition of three more families in the eleventh century rounded out the ranks of the Anatolian aristocracy.[3] All twenty of these families, without exception, are prominent in the armies when they first appear in the sources.

There was a parallel development in the western provinces, though here the aristocracy developed on a much more limited scale. By the ninth century there appears in the sources a clearly formed aristocracy centering about the families of Rentacius, Tessaracontopechys, Bryennius, Choirosphactes, and Monomachus. This was enlarged in the tenth century by the five new families of Tornicius, Taronites, Curticius, Vatatzes, and Glabas. There was a great disparity between the eastern and western nobility and the Anatolians

[2] For the make-up of these two social groups and for what follows on the families see the unpublished Harvard dissertation, S. Vryonis, *The Internal History of Byzantium during the Time of Troubles* (1057-1081), (1956), 172-287.

[3] The families which had emerged by the ninth century were those of Phocas, Maleinus, Ducas, Argyrus, Sclerus, Musele, Botaniates, Melissenus, Tzimisces, Curcuas and Melias. By the end of the tenth century appeared the families of Bourtzes, Comnenus, Diogenes, Dalassenus, and Cecaumenus, while the families of Synadennus, Maniaces, and Palaeologus appeared in the eleventh century.

were highly conscious of their superiority, manifesting it on several occasions. Important factors in this disparity were the fact that Asia Minor could furnish unlimited land for the formation of great estates, and at the same time Asia Minor was more difficult to control than was the European section of the empire. Also the constant invasion of Bulgars and Patzinaks into the European provinces must have had some disrupting effect on land tenure.[4]

The sources of power of these great aristocrats were of course two, the huge landed estates which they possessed and their official positions as generals of the provincial armies. One family very often possessed vast lands in several different provinces, as in the case of the Maleinus family with its properties in the themes of Charsianon, Anatolikon, and Optimaton. One of these properties was over seventy miles in length and supported the entire army of Basil II at one point during his campaigns in the east. Thus it is obvious what the sustaining potential of these estates was, and the nobility not only possessed a great source of revenue but could and did support large private armies. This combination of estates and official military command was a dangerous threat to the central government.

Though this aristocracy was of a mixed ethnic background, including Greeks, Armenians, Bulgars, Georgians, Arabs, Italians, and Vlachs, eventually the non-indigenous elements were Byzantinized and absorbed. Amongst them arose a sentiment of nobility by birth, and a solidarity of feeling resulting from close intermarriage within the group. In general they were anti-imperial but not separatist, that is they generally aimed at replacing the ruling dynasty with their own family, rather than setting up independent states. In the tenth century their energies had been largely harnessed by the central government in the eastern wars against Islam. However, even in the tenth century they had been difficult to control. As the source of their wealth was land, their appetite for land was insatiable, and in the tenth century they had begun to absorb the free peasantry and peasant soldiery, the

[4] Vryonis, *op.cit.*, pp. 172-287.

source of the empire's financial and military strength. Here the government had only limited success against the magnates in its program of agrarian legislation.[5]

It is this landed military nobility which the bureaucrats or civil aristocracy attempted to control in the eleventh century, at first successfully, but finally giving in to their superior power. The civil aristocracy is somewhat more difficult to describe or define as it was not so homogeneous a group as its opponents the military aristocracy. This group consisted largely of the prominent families of Constantinople in the bureaucracy, such families as Monomachus, Argyrus, Ducas, and Cerularius. In addition this civil aristocracy included those persons of humble origin, such as the eunuch John Orphanotrophus and Philocales, who had been able to ascend the cursus honorum to the higher administrative posts. A third and new group which gave the civil aristocracy its peculiar appearance in the eleventh century was that of the professors and graduates of the refounded University of Constantinople. This group was made up of men, such as Psellus and Xiphilinus, for whom education was the key to a highly successful government career.[6]

The source of power of the civil aristocracy was the control of the imperial administration and finance, control of the capital city itself, and control of the imperial armies stationed in Constantinople. One readily sees how by this antagonism between the urban bureaucratic aristocracy and the provincial military aristocracy the energies of the Byzantine state were to be harnassed to a highly destructive and exhausting civil war. The two groups were extremely conscious of the struggle for power in terms of the civil and military elements, and each looked upon the other with great hatred

[5] G. Ostrogorsky, "Agrarian Conditions in the Byzantine Empire," *The Cambridge Economic History,* 1 (Cambridge, 1942), 194-233. His views are somewhat altered in, *"Quelques problèmes d'histoire de la paysannerie byzantine* (Brussels, 1956). P. Charanis, "The Monastic Properties and the State in the Byzantine Empire." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers,* 4 (1948), 53-118.

[6] For the refounding of the University of Constantinople and its personnel see J. Hussey, *Church and Learning in the Byzantine Empire* 867-1185 (London, 1937), 37-88.

and contempt. Psellus clearly distinguishes these two groups throughout his chronicle as τὸ πολιτικόν and τὸ στρατιωτικόν.[7]

The bureaucrats had great contempt for the rudeness of the provincials, considering them unintelligent boors. Psellus takes particular delight in describing the lack of education of these soldier-emperors by comparing them to his own highly educated person. In one of his letters the philosopher describes his brilliance with characteristic immodesty.

> The Celts and Arabs came under our sway, men from the other continent journeyed here because of the report of our fame. And as the Nile watered the land of Egypt, so our discourses refreshed the soul. And if you happen to talk with Persians or Ethiopians, they will say that they know and admire me, and have come in pursuit of me.[8]

The greatest moment of influence which Psellus and the bureaucrats enjoyed came when Psellus' pupil, Michael VII, ascended the throne in 1071. And of course Psellus had succeeded in communicating to his imperial pupil a great concern for literary form and composition. The military reaction against the over-refined manners of the court is sarcastically reflected in the chronicle of Cedrenus-Scylitzes.

> (Michael Ducas) busied himself continuously with the useless and unending study of eloquence and with the composition of iambics and anapests; moreover he was not proficient in this art, but being deceived and beguiled by the consul of the philosophers (Psellus), he destroyed the whole world, so to speak.[9]

Cecaumenus, the prototype of the rough but vigorous provincial magnate, exhorts his son:

> Do not wish to be a bureaucrat, for it is not possible to be both a general and a comedian.[10]

The civil wars between the bureaucratic and military parties were renewed with particular violence over the im-

[7] Psellus, *Chronographia,* ed. E. Renauld, 2 (Paris, 1928), 83, 86. Cedrenus-Scylitzes, *Historiarum Compendium,* ed. I. Bekker, 2 (Bonn, 1839), 634.

[8] C. Sathas, Μεσαιωνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη, 5 (Paris, 1876), 508.

[9] Cedrenus-Scylitzes, II.725.

[10] Cecaumenus, *Strategicon,* ed. Vasilievsky and Jernstedt (St. Petersburg, 1896), 20. See also pp. 8-9, 20, where he castigates the bureaucrats.

perial succession after the death of the last Macedonian in 1056. This lasted until the soldiers completely prevailed with the victory of Alexius Comnenus in 1081, success having alternated between both groups in the intermediate years.[11] In the civil strife and internal upheaval two other social groups clearly emerged as important factors, namely the church and the Constantinopolitans. Both soldiers and bureaucrats were anxious to secure the support of the church and of the capital's populace, and well they might have been. For the combination of these two, church and people, was responsible for the violent deposition of three emperors (Michael V, Michael VI, Michael VII). As a result the church received numerous concessions and the patriarch attempted to assert the supremacy of sacerdotium over imperium. This was the first appearance of the idea of the Donation of Constantine in Byzantium. The Constantinopolitans resumed political behavior of a nature recalling the violent disturbances in Constantinople of the fifth and sixth centuries. Their political activities seem to have centered in the guilds and corporations. They became such a powerful force in eleventh century politics that the emperor Constantine X Ducas attempted to obtain their support by admitting a great host of artisans and craftsmen into the ranks of the senate.[12]

During these civil wars arising from the contest for imperial power, the total energies of Byzantium, political, military, social, religious, economic, were completely absorbed and wasted at a time when the Normans, Patzinaks, and Saljuks were establishing themselves on the borders.[13] The participants in the civil wars eventually came to rely on these

[11] The accession of Isaac Comnenus, Romanus Diogenes, and Nicephorus Botaniates represented victories for the militarists, while the accession of Constantine Ducas and Michael Ducas represented temporary victories for the bureaucrats.

[12] Vryonis, *op.cit.*, pp. 51, 288-314. On the Constantinopolitans see also A. Rudikov, Очерки византийской культуры по данным греческой агиографии (Moscow, 1917), 120.

[13] On these, F. Chalandon, *Histoire de la domination normande en Italie et en Sicile,* 1 (Paris, 1907); V. C. Vasilievsky, „Византия и печенеги," Труды, 1 (St. Petersburg, 1908), 1-175; J. Laurent, *Byzance et les Turcs seljoucides dans l'Asie occidentale jusqu'en* 1081 (Paris, 1913).

foreigners for support in their factional strife, calling them into the empire and actually turning over considerable territory to them. The soldiers, of course, made use of the armies in the civil strife, and on the occasion of each revolt all the armies were removed from the frontiers and led to Constantinople. Consequently the borders were left unguarded, and in addition the armies themselves were subjected to intentional and systematic neglect. Inasmuch as the provincial armies were the main strength of the magnates of Asia Minor, the bureaucracy, and particularly Constantine Monomachus and Constantine Ducas, began to dismantle them. The general anti-military feeling became such that according to the contemporary sources,

> . . . the soldiers themselves, abandoning their weapons and the army, became lawyers and keen followers of legal questions and problems. . . . The army was unarmed and depressed because of the lack of pay and provisions; and only the barest section of it was present, for the bravest part of the army had been removed from the army cadasters. . . .[14]

The armies had been diminished already by the magnates' absorption of the free peasant soldiery throughout the eleventh century, but the effect of this process was not as widespread nor as decisive as was the studied bureaucratic program of demilitarization. The central government now came to rely more and more on foreign mercenaries, who brought with them the double liability of extremely high military expenditures and decreased loyalty of the armies. The Greek sources give a bewildering list of nationalities in the Byzantine armies of the eleventh century: Russians, Koulpings, English, Normans, Germans, Bulgars, Saracens, Alani, Georgians, Turks, Patzinaks, Armenians, Albanians, Scandinavians.[15] And it came to pass that Byzantium suffered almost

[14] Cedrenus-Scylitzes, II.652; Attaliates, *Historia,* ed. I. Bekker (Bonn, 1853), 79.

[15] G. Rouillard, and P. Collomp, *Actes de Lavra* (Paris, 1937), 83, 111; Attaliates, pp. 9, 18; Cecaumenus, pp. 95-6, exhorts the emperor to dispense with the foreigners and to depend more closely on the Greeks. So aggravated and widespread was this evil that the Muslim opponents of Byzantium were

as much at the hands of the mercenaries as at the hands of the Turks.[16] The Norman mercenaries Roussel and Crispin were almost successful in establishing a new Normandy on the northern coast of Asia Minor in the very face of the Turkish invasions.[17] With the disbanding of the indigenous armies, entire provinces were deprived of military defense, and the mercenaries were sufficient only for the border areas themselves. But even here it became painfully evident that Byzantium had not sufficint forces to fight on more than one frontier at a time, so that when the empire was faced by Normans in Italy, Patzinaks on the Danube, and Saljuks in Asia Minor, it could not oppose its enemies simultaneously on all three fronts.

The second great problem facing Byzantium in the eleventh century arose from its nature as a polyglot or multinational state.[18] Alongside the Greek element there were Slavs, Albanians, Vlachs in the European provinces; Latins, Jews, Syrians, Muslims, Armenians in the capital; Armenians, Syrians, Kurds, Jews, Georgians in Anatolia. And though the Orthodox Christians were in the majority, there were con-

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clearly aware of it, as is evident from the Arabic sources. Al-Bondârî, *Histoire des Seljoucides de l'Irâq,* ed. M. Houtsma (Leiden, 1889), 29; wa'l-rūm fī thalāth mi'at alf wa-yazīdūna mā bain rūmī wa-rūsī wa-ghuzzī wa-qafjāqī wa-kurjī wa-abkhāzī wa-khazarī wa-faranjī wa-armanī.

[16] On the difference in pay between native and foreign troops see Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Ceremoniis Aulae Bizantinae,* ed. J. Reiske and I. Bekker, 1 (Bonn, 1829), 655ff.

[17] L. Brehier, "Les aventures d'un chef normand en orient au XIe siècle . . . Roussel de Bailleul," *Revue des cours et conferences,* 20 (1911/12), 172-188; G. Schlumberger, "Deux chefs normands des armées byzantines au XIe siècle: sceaux de Hervé et de Roussel de Bailleul," *Revue Historique,* 16 (1881), 289-303.

[18] On the problem of ethnography see C. Cahen, "Le problème ethnique en Anatolie," *Journal of World History,* 2 (1954), 347-62; P. Charanis, "On the Ethnic Composition of Byzantine Asia Minor," Προσφορὰ εἰς Στίλπωνα Π. Κυριακίδην (Thessaloniki, 1953), 140-47; J. Starr, *The Jews in the Byzantine Empire* 641-1204 (1939); F. Tournebize, *Histoire politique et religieuse de l'Arménie* (Paris, 1910); M. Gyoni, "L'Oeuvre de Kekaumenos, source de l'histoire roumaine," *Revue d'histoire comparée,* 23 (1945), 96-180; also the numerous articles of N. Adontz on the Armenians.

siderable numbers of heretic Bogomils[19] in the western provinces and Monophysites and Gregorians in Asia Minor. The ethnic-religious problem was most pressing in Asia Minor in the eleventh century where the eastward expansion of Byzantium had brought within the empire large numbers of Armenians, Syrians, and Georgians. Of these only the Georgians were Orthodox, while most of the Armenians and Syrians had not accepted the Council of 451 at Chalcedon.

We do not know nearly as much as we should like about Byzantine Asia Minor, and this is particularly true concerning ethnic, religious, and linguistic problems. It has been maintained by a number of scholars that Asia Minor fell with such astounding rapidity to the Turks because the population had only been touched by a thin veneer of Hellenism or Byzantine civilization, and as a result the provincials were never assimilated. They were largely indifferent to the concept of the Byzantine Empire. As is the case with most generalizations, this statement errs in oversimplifying. For here we are dealing with an area of land which is larger in extent than modern France, and while it is true that large portions of Asia Minor were non-Hellenic, yet Asia Minor was the source of the spiritual and physical strength of Byzantium and the Orthodox Church during the reign of the Macedonian dynasty and its predecessors. It was from Asia Minor that came the leading lights of the Eastern Church, hosts of saints and patriarchs, imperial dynasties, the great aristocratic families, and the peasant soldiery. So that in one sense Asia Minor was the cradle of the Byzantine Empire's strength. It would be more nearly correct to say that while eastern Asia Minor was out and out Armenian, Georgian, Kurdish, Syrian, etc., western and central Asia Minor to the province of Cappadocia was greatly influenced by Hellenism. While it is true that colonies of Armenians and Jews were to be found in western Asia Minor, and colonies of Greek Orthodox in the eastern part, one may divide Asia Minor into Greek and non-Greek at Cappadocia. It was because of the conflict between the ethnic and religious groups of Asia Minor, rather than because of the absence

[19] D. Obolensky, *The Bogomiles* (Cambridge, 1948).

of a Greek ethnic group that the Byzantine collapse in Asia Minor was accelerated.[20]

The Armenians, located as they were in eastern Anatolia, had long been the bone of contention between the two great powers on their east and west. A gifted and courageous people they had vigorously resisted absorption by Byzantines, Sassanids, and Muslims, but at best their political position had always been precarious. The increase of internal strife amongst them and the expansion of Byzantium in the east during the tenth and eleventh centuries resulted in the wholesale incorporation of Armenian lands by the Byzantines. In the year 968 Taron was annexed, in 1000 Taiq, in 1021 Vaspuracan, and in 1045 Ani. The displaced Armenian princes were now given other lands within the empire at Lycandus, Cappadocia, Tzamandos, Kharsianon, Cilicia, and Mesopotamia. With these princes there came tens of thousands of Armenians as immigrants who now altered the ethnic and religious composition of these provinces. This, of course, led to bitter strife with the Greek Orthodox population already in the area.[21]

The central government in the eleventh century made strenuous but short sighted efforts to assimilate the Armenians and the Syrian Monophysites of the eastern provinces by forcing ecclesiastical union upon them. This religious tension, centering about the Council of Chalcedon and the nature of Christ, probably had more immediate disastrous results for Byzantium than did the split with Rome in 1054.

The persecution of these eastern subjects of the empire was renewed in 1029-30 when the Byzantine government summoned the Syrian ecclesiastics to appear before the synod in Constantinople. The Greeks failed to enforce union on the Syrians and the Jacobite patriarch was exiled to Macedonia. The newly elected Syrian patriarch as a result now fled the

[20] J. Laurent, "Les origines médiévales de la question arménienne," *Revue des études armeniennes,* 1 (1920), 35-54.

[21] Tournebize, *op.cit.,* pp. 118-126; R. Grousset, *Histoire de l'Arménie des origines à* 1071 (Paris, 1947), 493, 531-5, 553-5, 547-80. For the Chalcedonian Armenians in eastern Asia Minor, the so-called Tzatoi, see the interesting article of I. Doens, "Nicon de la Montagne Noire," *Byzantion,* 24 (1954), 134.

Byzantine Empire and henceforth took up his residence at Amida amongst the Muslims, where he would be free of the imperial authorities. This was followed by a persecution of the Syrians, particularly in the cities of Antioch and Melitene. At the same time, the transference of the Armenian Catholicus from Ani to Sebasteia after the cession of the kingdom of Ani to Byzantium brought the Armenians in for their share of imperial coercion. By 1040 the situation between Greeks and Syrians in the city of Melitene had become so tense that the patriarch in Constantinople issued a pronouncement on matters of inheritance in mixed marriages between Orthodox and Monophysites and on the testimony of Monophysites in court. These rulings of course favored the Greeks and constituted substantial limitations on the basic rights of the Syrians.[22]

The attempt to force union on the Syrians and Armenians reached a climax during the reign of Constantine X Ducas. In 1063 an edict was issued ordering all those who did not accept the Chalcedonian faith to be driven out of the Byzantine city of Melitene, and a few months later an order was issued to burn the holy books and the holy mysteries of the Armenian and Syrian churches. In 1064 the Syrian patriarch, Athanasius, was taken, along with his bishops, and imprisoned in the residence of the Greek metropolitan of Melitene. Then five months later they were ordered to proceed to Constantinople, Athanasius dying on the way. Among those led to Constantinople was his nephew Ignatius, metropolitan of Melitene. Here he was accused of spreading Monophysite propaganda, and when in defining his confession of faith before the synod he refused to recognize the council of Chalcedon and the two

[22] V. Grumel, *Les regestes des actes du patriarcat de Constantinople,* 1.2 (Paris, 1956), 253-5, 258; Michael the Syrian, *Chronique,* transl. J. Chabot, 3 (Paris, 1906), 140-5, 160-1. Michael, III.280, mentions that when the Byzantine general Maniaces took the city of Edessa the Syrian Christians fled along with the Muslim population from the advancing Greek army. Matthew of Edessa, *Chronique de* 952 *à* 1136, transl. E. Dulaurier (Paris, 1858), 95-8. The most detailed information is to be found in the Greek sources edited by G. Ficker *Erlasse des Patriarchen von Konstantinopel Alexios Studites* (Kiel, 1911), 8-42. Assemani, "Joannis Abdon Vita ex Michaele Episcopo Taneos," *Bibliotheca Orientalis,* 2 (Rome, 1721), 150.

natures of Christ, he was exiled to Mt. Ganos in Macedonia for three years. In 1060 Khatchik II, the Armenian Catholicus, and several of his bishops had also been summoned to Constantinople where they were held virtual prisoners until 1063. In 1065 the emperor ordered not only the Armenian ecclesiastics to present themselves at the court in Constantinople again, but this time he ordered also that the Armenian princes, Adom and Aboucahl Ardzrouni, should be present. These two princes were shortly joined by Kakig Bagratouni, the former king of Ani, who put an abrupt end to the theological discussions by refusing to adhere to the ecclesiastical union.[23] And though the Armenians seem to have been allowed to withdraw from the capital, they were no less embittered than the Syrians by the harsh treatment which they had received at the hands of the Byzantine clergy and emperor. In fact when the Bagratid prince Kakig returned to his estates in Cappadocia he began a persecution of the Greeks by slaying the metropolitan of Caesarea. The Armenian chronicler Matthew of Edessa records that the Armenian prince had the Greek metropolitan put into a sack with his large dog (nicknamed Armen because of the Greek's hatred for the Armenians) and had his men beat both the metropolitan and the animal until the enraged dog killed its master. After this the estates of the metropolitan were pillaged, and Matthew of Edessa relates that Kakig had the wives of the leading Greek nobles violated by his men. The Armenian chronicler adds that Kakig intended to desert to the Turkish sultan, however he was eventually slain by the Greek family of Mandale (Pantaleimon ?) in what had become virtually open warfare between the two peoples.[24] Some five years later when the emperor Romanus IV Diogenes passed through these provinces the Greeks complained to him that they had suffered more at

[23] Grumel, *op.cit.*, I.3.18-21. The Georgian monk George Mthatsmidel participated at this synod, M. Brosset, *Histoire de la Georgie,* 1 (St. Petersburg, 1849), 340; Peeters, *Histoires monastiques georgiennes, Analecta Bollandiana,* 36-37 (1917-19), 136ff. Matthew of Edessa, pp. 133-52, gives a long account of the theological points of dispute between Greeks and Armenians. Michael the Syrian, III.166-8.

[24] Matthew of Edessa, pp. 152-54, 183.

the hands of the Armenians than at the hands of the Turks. Because of this Romanus is reported to have sworn the destruction of the Armenian faith, and to have licensed his troops to sack the city of Sebasteia, new home of the Ardzrouni family. Further, the Greek chronicler Attaliates remarks that Romanus Diogenes had been forced to be extremely cautious to protect his troops so that they might not perish at the hands of the Armenians while marching in the eastern provinces.[25]

It is obvious what the exacerbated state of relations between Chalcedonians and non-Chalcedonians was. Michael the Syrian, a Monophysite, gives us an accurate picture of the latter's sentiments.

> The Greeks renewed their bad habits and began to persecute tyranically the faithful (in Syria, Palestine, Armenia, and Cappadocia). Thus God was justly irritated against them and because of this he sent the Turks to invade (their country).[26]

As a result of this religious persecution the eastern provinces were disaffected, and in some cases actually welcomed and led the Turks into Asia Minor. Michael further narrates that at the crucial battle of Manzikert,

> . . . the Armenians, whom (the Greeks) wished to force to adopt their heresy, were the first to turn their backs and to flee . . . all of them fled.[27]

In the breakdown of the imperial administration of Asia Minor just before and after Manzikert the Armenians began to form independent bands and to raid both the Greeks and Syrians, and to set themselves up independently in the Taurus mountains.[28]

But this tension between Greeks and Armenians was not merely religious nor was it of recent vintage. As the two leading ethnic groups in the Byzantine Empire they were often

[25] Attaliates, 135; Michael the Syrian, III.172-3.

[26] Michael the Syrian, III.154.

[27] Michael the Syrian, III.169; Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography*, transl. E. A. W. Budge, 1 (London, 1932), 217.

[28] J. Laurent, "Byzance et Antioche sous le curopalate Philarète," *Revue des études arméniennes*, 9 (1929), 61-72.

bitterly struggling for power and position. So that the petty religious issues merely covered deeper racial and cultural antagonism. And this was openly manifested not only between Greeks and Gregorian Armenians, but also between Greeks and Chalcedonian Armenians. One of the earliest and most graphic expressions is in a ninth century epigram attributed to the nun Casia.[29]

The most terrible race of the Armenians
Is deceitful and evil to extremes,
Mad and capricious and slanderous
And full of deceit, being greatly so by nature.
Once a wise man said of them:
Armenians are evil even when they are obscure.
On being honored they become more evil;
On acquiring wealth they (become) more evil on the whole;
But when they become extremely wealthy and honored,
They appear to all as evil doubly compounded.

This racial hatred is further reflected in the *typicon* of Gregory Pacurianus, the Georgio-Armenian general of the Chalcedonian faith, which was drawn up for his monastery at Bačkogo. In the *typicon* is included a chapter entitled, "Concerning the fact that there shall not be introduced a Greek presbyter or monk in my monastery, for the following reason." [30]

[29] Text in C. A. Trypanis, *Medieval and Modern Greek Poetry* (Oxford, 1951), 43. See also K. Krumbacher, "Kasia," *Sitzungsberichte der philos.-philolog. und der historischen Class der kayser. bayer. Akademie der Wissenschaft zu München* (1897), 336-7.

Τῶν 'Αρμενίων τὸ δεινότατον γένος
ὕπουλόν ἐστι καὶ φαυλῶδες εἰς ἄγαν,
μανιῶδές τε καὶ τρεπτὸν καὶ βασκαῖνον,
πεφυσιωμένον πάμπλειστα καὶ δόλου πλῆρες·
εἶπέ τις σοφὸς περὶ τούτων εἰκότως·
'Αρμένιοι φαῦλοι μέν, κἂν ἀδοξῶσι,
φαυλότεροι δὲ γίνονται δοξασθέντες,
πλουτήσαντες δὲ φαυλότατοι καθόλου,
ὑπερπλουτισθέντες (δὲ) καὶ τιμηθέντες
φαυλεπιφαυλότατοι δείκνυνται πᾶσι.

Krumbacher, *loc.cit.*, 336, also quotes a proverb attributed to Maximus Planudes expressing this hatred between Greeks and Armenians: "'Αρμένιον ἔχεις φίλον, χείρον' ἐχθρὸν μὴ θέλε·"

[30] Typicon of Bačkogo, ed. L. Petit, *Typicon de Grégoire Pacourianos pour*

Thus if one examines the problems of civil strife and ethnic-religious hatred with all their ramifications within Byzantine society, the defeat at Manzikert and the Turkish occupation of Asia Minor consequent to it seem less startling. The civil wars between bureaucrats and soldiers occupied all of Byzantium's energies in a destructive conflict. As a result of this strife the generals removed the armies from the borders and the bureaucrats replied by completely dissolving the Byzantine indigenous armies. In their place costly and disloyal mercenaries were hired, who, though they might be successful in patrolling the borders, were unable to protect the central provinces once the enemy had crossed the borders. The results of this strife were disastrous at Manzikert where the Armenian, Frankish, Uze, and Patzinak mercenaries deserted, and when the bureaucrats, led by Andronicus Ducas, intentionally deserted the general-emperor Romanus Diogenes in order to secure power at Constantinople. With the destruction and dispersal of the Byzantine armies on the eastern frontiers of Anatolia, there were no longer any provincial armies in the heart of the empire to defend the provinces against the Turks. These had for the most part been disbanded by the bureaucrats. But even after Manzikert the Turks were not essentially interested in a systematic conquest of Anatolia. It was thanks to the civil strife that they were able to occupy much of Anatolia quickly and easily. Both bureaucrats and soldiers called the Turks in for military aid during the civil wars so that the Turks were brought all the

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le monastère de Petritzon (Bačkogo) en Bulgarie (1904), 44-5. "Περὶ τοῦ μὴ καταπάσσεσθαι Ῥωμαῖον πρεσβύτερον ἢ μονάζοντα ἐν τῇ κατ' ἐμὲ μονῇ, καὶ δι' ἥτινα τὴν αἰτίαν·" Further incidents of this animosity are to be found throughout the chronicles. Philaretus, though a Chalcedonian Armenian, had the Greek troops of Antioch treacherously slain after they had handed the city over to him (Matthew of Edessa, 179). In the great revolt of Bardas Sclerus in the reign of Basil II, the Greek troops who seem to have had a particular dislike for the Armenian troops in the army of Sclerus, marked them out for special treatment and put them all to the sword (Cedrenus-Scylitzes, II.425-26). On the hatred between Greeks and Armenians in the beginning of the thirteenth century, see P. Charanis, "On the Ethnic Composition of Asia Minor," p. 144.

way to the Aegean and many walled towns and cities were willingly handed over to them.

The ethnic-religious problem received a disastrous solution at the hands of the empire, but perhaps it could not have been otherwise between the Greeks and the Armenians. The immigration of a great part of the Armenian nation with its strong culture into the Greek provinces produced a serious problem for the empire. The attempt of the Byzantines to assimilate the Armenians by a forced ecclesiastical union embittered the Armenians greatly, to the point that open warfare broke out between the two elements in the eastern provinces. The Armenians, who formed the most important element of the border guards, completely disorganized the border defenses, in some cases by actually bringing the Turks in, in other instances by setting up independent political entities in the wake of the Turkish invasions. There can be no doubt but that many of the Armenians and Syrian Monophysites saw in the Saljuks their deliverers from the hands of the Orthodox Greeks.

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