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PATRIARCH PHOTIUS OF CONSTANTINOPLE
(858-867 AND 877-886)
AND
THE ECUMENIC RELEVANCE OF HIS WORK

SUMMARY

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
CHAPTER I. The present state of the research	6
I.1. Contemporary sources related to Photius.....	6
I.2. Writtings after Photius.....	11
I.3. The Romanian modern research.....	29
CHAPTER II. A short retrospective of the political and religious framework at the time Photius appeared	36
II.1. The internal religious and political situation of the Byzantine Empire at the beginning of the 9 th century.....	36
II.2. The cultural environment in which Photius developed.....	43
II.3. The Islam and The Byzantine Empire.....	48
II.4. The ascension of papacy.....	50
II.5. The Carolingian and Byzantine Empires	51
II.6. The Bulgarians' settlement in the Balkans and their relation to the Byzantine Empire	57
CHAPTER III. Photius. His personality and work.	61
III.1. Opinions concerning Photius's date of birth	61
III.2. Photius's family and childhood years.....	63
III.3. The society of Constantinople and young Photius's ascension.....	65
III.4. The religious and political framework preceding Photius's election as a patriarch	67
III.5. The Asbestos case.....	72
CHAPTER IV. Photius's first patriarchate (858-867) and his dispute with Rome	79
IV.1. Ignatius's removal from his clerical function.....	79
IV.2. The election of the new patriarch	82
IV.3. Photius's ordination and its problems.....	85
IV.4. Photius the patriarch and his feuds with the Ignatians	87
IV.5. The admission of the Byzantine delegation to Rome and Pope Nicholas I's answer.....	90
IV.6. The 861 synod from Constantinople.....	91
IV.7. The Constantinople's "delegation" and the Roman synod from 863.....	97
IV.8. Illyricum between Rome and Constantinople.....	101
IV.9. The dispute for Bulgaria.....	106
IV.9. a) The Bulgarians' orientation towards the Constantinople.....	106
IV.9. b) The Bulgarians' orientation towards Rome	110
IV.10. Pope Nicholas I's pressure on Constantinople for Photius's removal from clerical function.....	115
IV.11. Patriarch Photius's response to Pope Nicholas I's actions.....	119
IV.11. a) Patriarch Photius's encyclical letter from 867.....	120
IV.11. b) Short historical presentation of <i>Filioque</i> addition.....	123
IV.11. c) Western allies for Photius.....	126

IV. 11. d) The reaction of the western theologians against Photius's accusations	128
IV. 12. The synod from Constantinople (867) and its decisions.....	132
CHAPTER V. The first removal from clerical function and the exile	
of patriarch Photius (867-877)	138
V. 1. Changes on the political scene of Constantinople	138
V. 2. Pope Adrian II (867-872), the successor of Pope Nicholas I and brothers Constantine Cyril and Methodius, the Slavs' apostles	140
V. 3. The Roman synod from 869.....	145
V. 4. The anti Photius synod from Constantinople (869-870).....	151
V.4. a) The arrival of papal delegation at Constantinople	151
V. 4. b) The official opening of the synod and its works	152
V.5. The arrival of the Bulgarian delegation and the problems caused by it.....	163
V.6. The post synod correspondence between Rome and Constantinople.....	167
V.7. Photius's exile	170
CHAPTER VI. Photius's second patriarchate	175
VI.1. Photius's recalling from exile	175
VI.2. The correspondence between Constantinople and Rome for Photius's rehabilitation.....	179
VI.3. The synod from Rome (879).....	183
VI.4. The problems of the <i>Commonitorium</i>	186
VI.5. Preliminary preparations for the synod.....	191
VI.6. The works of the synod from Constantinople (879-880).....	193
VI.7. Photius and his opponents.....	212
VI.8. Photius's new removal from clerical function and his death	219
CHAPTER VII. Photius's work	225
CHAPTER VIII. The ecumenical relevance of patriarch Photius's activity	253
VIII.1. Did Ignatius resign?	253
VIII.2. Did Ignatius and Photius settle their differences after the latter's recalling from exile?	260
VIII.3. The first correspondence between Photius and Nicholas I.....	267
VIII.4. The second correspondence between Photius and Nicholas I	269
VIII.5. The post synod correspondence between Rome and Constantinople	273
VIII.6. Was there any other schism between patriarch Photius and Pope John VIII and his successors on the papal throne?.....	279
Conclusions	293
Appendix	301
Abbreviations	360
Bibliography	361

Key words: Patriarch, Photius, Constantinople, dispute, Pope Nicholas, schism, exile

INTRODUCTION

Photius reveals himself to the world as a complex personality, belonging to a very tumultuous period of history, the second half of the 9th century, period which, throughout his actions, he also influenced and dominated. Nowadays, his personality still stirs the curiosity, the admiration but also the opposition of the ones who are in search of a few things about the life and thinking of this great father of the post patristic Eastern Church. Within the Orthodox Church, he received, immediately after his death, the name the Great. Endowed with an exceptional intellectual ability, he managed to evince himself as being a great intellectual and bibliophile of his time, fact revealed also by the fact that, throughout his first exile, he constantly complained to the emperor of missing his dear books.

Generally speaking, patriarch Photius of Constantinople (858-867 and 877-886) is known as an opponent of Rome and implicitly of popes. The presentation of the events, regardless of where it comes and most often fervent, does nothing but bring about a vague understanding of a schism that practically lasted so little and judge the patriarch from this perspective. Most often the justifications of his actions are not taken into account, as they might have been taken to the extreme. Furthermore, ineptitudes diffused by Simon the Magus, such as: Photius's father, a pagan, his mother, a nun who left the church, or, that when Photius blessed the crowds, the cross in his hand turned into a snake, all these are most certainly exaggerations that need to be reviewed.

It can be further stated that, if historical sources weren't so subjective in presenting the facts, the picture of patriarch Photius, as it is sketched by these sources, would be closer to reality. The estimations related to Photius's personality varied from abundant praise (fewer also because the eastern Christianity favourable to Photius would be put to trials with the fall of Constantinople), but also aggressive invectives both in his time and especially from the 9th century until today.

Presented as an antagonist both internally as well as in his relation to Rome, it will be noted that especially in his second patriarchate (877-886), Photius was a pacifier. Thus, we will see that, as a response to the challenges coming from Pope Nicholas I, (858-867), but also when he was removed from his position in 863, Photius, at the beginning, remained

silent. He intervened and stopped the persecutions caused by Bardas against the population who had rebelled as a result of Ignatius's removal. He acted as an intercessor to improve Ignatius's situation after the latter had been removed and exiled. Photius's peace with Ignatius, as well as the latter's sanctification is a symbol of peace. Furthermore, he also, sought in a way to make peace with Rome through the letters he sent there. All these reveal another image of the patriarch, different from the one pictured by most historians.

CHAPTER I. THE PRESENT STATE OF THE RESEARCH

In the first chapter we have briefly inventoried the writings about patriarch Photius. We have started with writings by Photius's contemporaries. Their testimonials are contradictory as they can be divided into pro-Photius and anti-Photius writings. All these testimonials are sources of inspiration for all those who write about the events taking place during the great patriarch's lifetime. The large majority of these writings are kept in the Migne and Minsi collections. The second part of the chapter presents the post Photius writings that either deal with his written work or related to his activity as a patriarch. A remark for this part of the chapter is that there is a notable change in the attitude and the way the western historians starting with F. Dvornik perceive Photius's activity as a patriarch. The last part of the chapter presents the Romanian research related to the great patriarch. This is rather lacunose and deals with only some aspects from patriarch Photius's life and activity.

CHAPTER II. THE RELIGIOUS AND THE POLITICAL FRAMEWORK AT THE TIME PHOTIUS APPEARED

Even before he became known as a patriarch and erudite professor and scholar, patriarch Photius came into being in a historical and political period which had a great impact in young Photius's development as well as that of the family in which he was born. That is why the purpose of the second chapter of the thesis briefly presents the political and religious framework at the time young Photius appeared into this world. Speaking about the internal

level of the Byzantine Empire, two dynasties are to assert themselves: the Isaurian dynasty (717-802) and the Amorian dynasty (820-867). The emperors of these two dynasties are to influence throughout their actions the political, social and church life at Photius's time. As far as his erudition is concerned, Photius stirred everybody's admiration, of both opponents and supporters. This chapter deals with issues related to the cultural environment in which Photius developed, environment that certainly hallmarked the erudition of the future scholar. The culture that had previously been extremely low, would flourish, once emperor Theophilus came to power. The chapter also mentions the great cultural personalities of this period, specifically John of Damascus, Theodore the Studite etc.

Externally, great changes occur. While the Persian Empire was slowly disappearing, the world stage faced a new political and military power, that of the Islamic Empire. Mohammed managed to reunite most of the nomadic tribes which now possessed a new religion whose purpose was to conquer and convert the entire world to Islam. This new military and political force represented a threat for the Byzantine Empire, it would always be in military conflict with it and it would gradually conquer important parts from the oriental part of the Empire. Nevertheless, in the middle of the 9th century the Byzantine Empire managed to maintain its oriental territories, specifically those from Asia Minor. From here many raids were organised with the purpose of settling the accounts with the uncomfortable neighbours.

The relations between the Church from Constantinople and the Roman Church were practically non-existent largely due to iconoclastic disputes. On the background of many changes occurring in the western world, we now witness the ascension of popedom. Christianizing the Germanic populations, the return of the Aryan kingdoms to orthodoxism, the appearance of Franks' realm, the enthronement of Pepin the Short by Pope Zacharias, the appearance of the Papal State, the fact that emperor Constantine Copronymus separated Calabria, Sicily, Apulia, Crete and Illyricum from the Roman jurisdiction and places them under that of Constantinople, all these would eventually lead to the alienation between Rome and Constantinople. We now witness the appearance of *Donatio Constantini* (The Donation of Constantine) and *the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals*.

In the West, a new military and political power raises as a result of Charlemagne's conquests, that is, the Carolingian Empire. Pope Leo III will crown Carol the Great (Charlemagne) as king in the great St Peter's Basilica from Rome, on Christmas Day in the year 800. The new western establishment accomplished by Charlemagne is seen by Constantinople as being an usurpation of its power.

In the Balkans, the Bulgarians who had settled in this area, not only blotted out the Empire's process of assimilating the Slavic populations, but most frequently, they attacked the positions of the Empire, reaching even the walls of Constantinople. The antagonist parts eventually made peace for a period of 30 years.

CHAPTER III. PHOTIUS. HIS PERSONALITY AND WORK.

As far as Photius's date of birth is concerned, the opinions of the researchers are not unanimous. Largely based on connections made between different events from the patriarch's life, their proposals vary from 810 to 827. When it comes to the origin of Photius's family, the researchers are unanimous and state that the patriarch came from a noble family related to patriarch Tarasius and the imperial family. The issue of Photius's school education still remains a mystery, most opinions oscillating between the idea of him being a self-taught person and his development near a scholar. He became a teacher at a very young age and he taught Philosophy, Logic, Dialectics and Theology. He came to organise the courses of the Patriarchal Academy where he eventually taught Philosophy, Rhetoric and Grammar. In 856 he introduced the course of Religious Philosophy.

In this period of Photius's youth, the Byzantine society was divided around two parties that were fighting for supremacy not only in the imperial palace but also in the patriarchal one. The feuds between the two rival parties decisively influenced the events that took place during Photius's time.

At the palace, the imperial power belonged to Theodora, who, together with the Logothete Theoctist and the commander of armies Manuel, ensured the regency of her son, the underage emperor Michael III. Through her, the iconoclasm would be finally defeated through *The Sunday or The Triumph of Orthodoxy*. Still, within the leading structures, both imperial and those belonging to church, there still remained many advocates of iconoclasm, capable people whose replacement was a serious issue. The iconoclast patriarch John the Grammarian was removed from his clerical function and Methodius was placed on the patriarchal throne. The new patriarch came from amongst the liberals. For his ideas, the patriarch came into conflict with the Studite monks and eventually a schism took place between the patriarch and the monks from the Studion Monastery. This state of things was going to be maintained until patriarch Methodius's death.

At the imperial court, a most important part was played by Empress Theodora's brother, Bardas, who opposed the liberal party. Empress Theodora enjoyed the support of the hard-liners' group. The Logothete Theoctist, the second important person at the imperial court, would eventually lead the hard-liners' party. The metropolitan bishop of Syracuse, Gregorius Asbestas, was a refugee in the Empire's Capital because his diocese had been invaded by the Saracens. He also played an important part in the development of events taking place in Constantinople during Photius's time. Gregorius, the leader of the moderate party, was seen as the main candidate for the patriarchal chair of Constantinople remained vacant after Methodius's death. However, Gregorius having been involved in a scandal because he had ordained a priest in an area belonging to Constantinople, Empress Theodora interfered in the elections and as a result, monk Ignatius was appointed patriarch, Ignatius being the son of the former emperor Michael I Rangabe. Gregorius Asbestas wanted to take part in the new patriarch's ordainment, but he was stopped by Ignatius. This gesture of the new patriarch triggered an open conflict between him and Gregorius Asbestas and the liberal group. The reasons for the new patriarch's gesture of removing Gregorius Asbestas from his ordainment remain unclear. After his ordainment, Ignatius removed Gregorius Asbestas clerical function and did the same thing for the latter's supporters as well. Gregorius then addressed Pope Leon IV, but his case remained unsolved. We have many testimonials showing that, after becoming a patriarch, Ignatius condemned Asbestas.

CHAPTER IV. PHOTIUS'S FIRST PATRIARCHATE (858-867)

AND HIS DISPUTE WITH ROME

From his status as a scholar at the imperial Academy, Photius became the first imperial secretary and officer of the imperial guard, and later on, the leader of the imperial office. In this new position, Photius was sent as an ambassador to the Arabs. At least two embassies are mentioned. During the second embassy (855), major changes occurred at the imperial palace. Emperor Michael III came of age and gave up his mother's regency. The old leadership, governed by Empress Theodora, was removed and Bardas, Theodora's brother, became Caesar.

Following many rumours and events taking place in Constantinople, Ignatius came into conflict with Bardas and was accused of complicity and high treason. On November, 23rd, Ignatius was arrested and sent on Terebinthos Island, being also asked to resign. Eventually, Ignatius did resign and so a new patriarch had to be chosen. The fight between the two parties for the patriarchal throne was strong. A compromise between the two parties was eventually reached and the decision was to elect a neuter person as patriarch. The person put forward was scholar Photius.

Photius was accepted by the hard-liners' group as well, after they signed a commitment related to the former patriarch. The ordainment of the new patriarch took place in great rush, so that within six days Photius changed his status from a secular to the dignity of patriarch. The investiture of Photius as patriarch caused many problems because among the participants at his ordainment was also Greorius Asbestas. The peace brought about by the new patriarch within the Constantinople Church would last very little (40-60 days). It is surprising the change in the attitude of the Ignatians' group starting with the metropolitan bishop Mitrophan of Smyrna. These gathered in the Church Saint Irene from Constantinople, dismissed Photius's clerical function and appointed Ignatius as a legitimate patriarch. Following these actions, Photius called for a synod in the Church of the Holy Apostles from Constantinople. At the synod he also summoned the Ignatian group. After this, Ignatius was officially stripped out of his clerical function, the reason being the fact that he had not been chosen by the synod, but appointed by Empress Theodora.

In the spring of 860 a Byzantine delegation was sent to Rome with letters from the emperor and from the new patriarch. In his letter, after presenting the circumstances which brought him on the patriarchal throne, Photius made his statement of faith and, at the end, he asked Pope Nicholas I, to enter a communion prayer with him. The emperor Michael III also asked the pope to send delegates to Constantinople to re-discuss the issue of the icons workship. Pope Nicholas I was amazed by what had happened in Constantinople and, to everybody's surprise, he placed himself as arbiter in solving the issue. He sent the requested delegation to Constantinople for synod. This delegation carried two letters with it, one for the new patriarch and the other for the emperor. In the letter addressed to the patriarch, Pope Nicholas I criticized Photius for the way in which, from a secular, he managed to be placed on the patriarchal throne. However, the pope highly praised the patriarch's profound orthodox statement. Nicholas I, also informed the emperor that he wouldn't officially recognize Photius's appointment on the patriarchal throne until his delegates had investigated all the

events from Constantinople and until he had reached a decision. Likewise, in the letter, the pope asked the emperor to give back all the territories previously taken.

In May 861 the works of the synod from Constantinople began. The synod took place in the Church of the Holy Apostles and 318 bishops participated. The main goal of this synod was, for those from Constantinople, to re-establish the cult of the icons, and for those from Rome, to investigate Ignatius's case and Photius's appointment on the patriarchal throne. The participants from Constantinople agreed to re-discuss Ignatius's case, but only if the final decision was to be made by them and not Rome. The synod investigated the way in which Ignatius was dismissed and Photius enthroned as patriarch. Eventually, Ignatius's removal was acknowledged as being canonical and Photius was officially recognized as patriarch of Constantinople. The synod condemned the iconoclasm once more. 17 religious canons were given and the issue of giving back the confiscated territories was not put on the agenda.

The decisions of the synod, together with two letters, one from Patriarch Photius and the other from Emperor Michael were taken to Rome. After reading the letters, Pope Nicholas I declared that he didn't agree with the decisions of the synod and that he continued to recognize Ignatius as legitimate patriarch. Furthermore, he requested new evidence. In this regard, the pope wrote three letters dated March, 18th, 862, one for the emperor, one for patriarch Photius and the other for the oriental patriarchs, letters in which he communicated his decisions. Following the pope's decisions, Photius became silent and he didn't answer the pope's request.

In 863 hermit Theognostus arrived in Rome portraying himself as patriarch Ignatius's defender. As a result of what hermit Theognostus presented related to the events that had taken place in Constantinople, in the summer of 863, Pope Nicholas I summoned a synod in the Lateran Church from Rome. After this synod, Photius together with Gregorius Asbestas were excommunicated and Ignatius was recognized as a legitimate patriarch. The papal delegates that had been present at the synod from Constantinople were also excommunicated on the grounds that they had overstepped their bounds.

All these attempts were made by Pope Nicholas I to press Constantinople to give Rome back the jurisdiction of the Illyricum. If for Rome obtaining the Illyricum was a matter of honour, for Constantinople, maintaining the Illyricum under its influence and in its jurisdiction was vital. Christianising the Bulgarians became a priority for both religious centres. Following the pressures coming from the Frank missionaries, but also from the alliance between Tzar Boris and Ludwig II ("the German"), prince Rostislav of Great Moravia asked Constantinople to send Greek missionaries to Christianise the Moravians.

Patriarch Photius sent his apprentice and friend, Constantine-Cyril, together with his brother Methodius, to Christianise the Moravians. Tzar Boris of the Bulgarians also wanted his people's Christianisation, but the too closely neighbouring Constantinople frightened him and so he oriented towards Rome, hoping to get from there missionaries for his people. Realizing this, Emperor Michael III made a demonstration of military force at the Bulgarian border and as a result, Tzar Boris accepted to be baptized at Constantinople, also being given the name Michael by the Byzantine emperor. With this occasion, the Tzar accepted Greek missionaries for the Christianisation of his people. Patriarch Photius sent a Greek hierarchy to Christianise the Bulgarian people. Additionally, he sent the Tzar a long letter full of advice and teachings related to faith. Nonetheless, the patriarch didn't give Boris what he wanted the most, that is a patriarch or an archbishop for his church.

Disappointed by what Constantinople had offered, Boris turned towards Rome, sending there a delegation with a list of questions and asking the Pope for missionaries to Christianise his people. Pope Nicholas I sent the Tzar Latin missionaries together with the answers to the ruler's questions in the famous *Responsa ad Consultam Bulgarorum*. As a result of these actions, the Greek missionaries from Bulgaria were asked to leave. Although for the moment Boris was contented with the answers and the missionaries he received from Rome, he still dreamed of an autonomous church, dream that neither the Pope fulfilled.

In the meantime, on the background of Rome's interfering with the internal affairs of Constantinople and of Pope's intervention in Bulgaria, the relations between the two Churches became more and more tense. There were many exchanged letters between Rome and Constantinople. Through these letters Pope Nicholas I wanted to force the Orient to apply his decisions, that is, to remove Photius from the patriarchal throne and to rehabilitate Ignatius.

In 867 a local synod was organized at Constantinople in which the following were discussed: the Pope's intervention in the Bulgarians' Christianisation, the Pope's answer to Boris's questions related to the Church from Constantinople, the western innovations conveyed to the Bulgarians and most of all the *Filioque* addition. At Constantinople appeared a young man named Basil who would impose himself at the imperial palace and later on would become emperor, the founder of the Macedonian dynasty, one of the greatest of the Byzantine Empire. At that time Photius wrote an encyclical letter to all the eastern patriarchs through which they were informed of Rome's undiplomatic intervention in Bulgaria's Christianisation, of the cult innovations the Latin missionaries spread and mostly of the *Filioque* addition to the symbol of faith. In his encyclical letter, Photius advised the eastern patriarchs to investigate everything he exposed and then send representatives for the synod.

A short presentation of the Filioque addition is made. Its apparition and its support. The apparition of this addition does not have a theological motivation, but a practical one. The synods that promoted the addition were summoned by the western leaders. In his attempts set against the innovations spread by the Latin missionaries in Bulgaria, as well as against the *Filioque* addition to the symbol of faith, Photius sought support in the West as well. Therefore, the patriarch sent a delegation to Ludwig II's court, asking for support. At the time, king Ludwig was in conflict with Pope Nicholas I because of the divorce between king Lothar of Austrasia and his legitimate wife Teithberga. This conflict degenerated so much that the two kings set off with armies against Rome. Pope Nicholas I roused all the western theologians to answer the accusations brought against the Latin missionaries by Photius in his encyclical letter addressed to the oriental patriarchs. Thus, the Pope addressed these theologians in a letter in which he presented Photius's accusations and designated archbishop Hincmar of Reims to deal with all these. Among the most remarkable answers to Photius's accusations are those belonging to Aeneas, the bishop of Paris and to monk Retramn from Corbia.

In August and September 867 a synod took place at Constantinople, summoned by patriarch Photius following his encyclical letter. There were a large number of participants at the synod. There is little information about it and it comes only from anti-Photius's sources. All the oriental patriarchates sent representatives. Anastasius the Librarian is the one who offers some information related to the synod. He questions the large number of the participants. Western hierarchs also took part in the synod, for instance the exarch bishop of Ravenna and the archbishops of Treva and Colonia. The synod condemned the western innovations, as well as the *Filioque* addition. Furthermore, Pope Nicholas I was excommunicated. In the meantime, the enthusiasm shown by the Westerners who promised Photius help faded away. Pope Nicholas I died in 867 without ever finding out of his dismissal from Constantinople.

CHAPTER V. THE FIRST REMOVAL FROM CLERICAL FUNCTION AND THE EXILE OF PATRIARCH PHOTIUS (867-877)

The political scene from Constantinople met major changes. On the night of 23rd to 24th, September, after a party, Emperor Michael III was killed by Caesar Basil. The second day

Basil was proclaimed emperor. The first measure that the new emperor took, was to remove all those who belonged to the old regime. Photius was dismissed as well, sent to exile, Ignatius was brought to Constantinople and on November, 23rd, he was re-seated on the patriarchal throne.

At Rome, Pope Nicholas I died on November 13th, 867 and the papal throne was taken on December, 14th, the same year by Pope Adrian II. The second day from the new pope's enthronement the apostles of the Slavians, brothers Constantine-Cyril and Methodius arrived in Rome, bringing with them priceless gifts, the relics of Saint Clement, pope of Rome and the liturgical books translated into Slavic. They had been called by Pope Nicholas I to justify the use of Slavic in the church cult. Additionally, for their mission at the Moravians they greatly needed native clergymen and although they had apprentices, they didn't have anyone who could ordain them. At Rome they had to face the reserve of the Latin clergy concerning the use of the Slavic language in the church cult. Pope Adrian II issued a papal bull for the use of Slavic in the religious cult, disregarding the opposition of all the Latin conservatory clergy.

After the changes that had taken place at Constantinople, Emperor Basil I the Macedonian received a letter from Pope Nicholas I that was actually addressed to the former emperor, Michael III. The letter had a harsh tone and Pope Nicholas I suggested that he might agree to re-discuss the case of Ignatius and Photius. Emperor Basil I had already sent a letter through which he informed the pope of what had happened in Constantinople and next, in December 867, he sent a new delegation to Rome, delegation that had both Ignatian and pro-Photius representatives. They carried with them two letters, one from the emperor and the other from Ignatius. Both the emperor and the patriarch were not aware of Pope Nicholas I's death. As they set off in unfavourable weather conditions for a journey on the sea, the pro-Photius delegation had big problems and they shipwrecked. The result was that, from the pro-Photius representatives, only hermit Methodius reached Rome and he didn't even made his appearance at the trial.

Receiving the first letter, the new pope wrote, at his turn, two letters, one addressed to the emperor and the other to patriarch Ignatius. In these letters, he expressed his joy for the fact that the emperor applied the decision of his predecessor and he criticized Ignatius for not writing himself. What's more, he asked the emperor to receive with honour hermit Theognostus who was refugee in Rome.

After the arrival of the second Byzantine delegation to Rome, a synod was opened in Saint Peter's Holy Church in the spring of 869. The synod debated on Ignatius's dismissal and Photius's re-enthronement on the patriarchal chair of Constantinople. Ignatius was finally

acknowledged as legitimate patriarch and Photius was removed from his clerical function and excommunicated. The documents of the synod from Constantinople from 867 were declared null, torn to pieces and burned. Five decisions called *capitula* were made, these subsequently being supposed to be approved by the synod from Constantinople as well. The documents were signed by 30 bishops present at the synod. A papal delegation took to Constantinople the decisions of the Roman synod, two letters for the emperor and patriarch as well as a *libellus satisfactionis*, that is, an act of penitence because they had condemned Pope Nicholas I, act that was to be signed by all those who wanted to take part in the works of the synod. The papal delegation reached Constantinople on September, 25th, 869.

The synod from Constantinople opened on November 5th 869 in the Church Saint Sophia in the presence of 12 hierarchs (5 metropolitan bishops and 7 bishops). The works of the synod took place in 10 sessions and they ended on February, 28th, 870. The synod was ruled by the papal delegates. In the end 102 bishops gathered. The oriental patriarchates sent their representatives. Emperor Basil I also took part in the works of the synod. The synod condemned Photius and his supporters. It also condemned, annulled and burned the decisions of the synods from 861 and 867. It condemned the iconoclasm. Furthermore, it promulgated 27 canons of which the Eastern Church recognizes only 14. Two synodic epistles were written with all the works and the decisions of the synod. Nothing was discussed about the cult differences condemned by Photius, or about the *Filioque* addition to the symbol of faith. All the bishops hesitated to sign the documents brought by Rome and especially the *libellus satisfactionis*. Constantinople's trust in Rome was forever shattered after this synod. One thing to be remarked is that Ignatius, who was presiding over the synod together with the papal delegates, remained silent all through the synodic works. Three days after the works of the synod were over, a Bulgarian delegation sent by Tzar Boris-Michael arrived at Constantinople and they brought with them the following question: Who were they belonging to? To answer the Bulgarians' question, the emperor gathered the papal delegates, representatives of the Eastern churches and patriarch Ignatius to debate on the issue. During the debates, the papal delegates presented a letter from Pope Adrian II, letter that was supposed to be shown only if Ignatius claimed Bulgaria for his jurisdiction. In this letter the pope said that he would admit Ignatius's legitimacy only if he made no claims over Bulgaria. On the contrary, Ignatius was excommunicated. With all the papal delegates' opposition, it was decided that Bulgaria belonged to Constantinople. Ignatius ordained an archbishop - Joseph - and 12 bishops for Bulgaria.

On their way back to Rome, the papal delegates were taken hostages and robbed by the Bulgarian pirates. Thus, they arrived in Rome on December, 20th, without the synod's documents. Some information related to the works of the synod comes only from Anastasius the Librarian, representative of Ludwig II at Constantinople. At the same time, Ignatius faced great problems in managing the patriarchy because he stopped the pro-Photius clergy to officiate the religious service. To solve the matter, Ignatius as well as the emperor asked the pope to relent or even lift this interdiction. Pope Adrian II refused to do such a thing. He reprimanded the emperor for not ensuring a safe return to Rome for his delegates, as well as for his interference with Bulgaria. He threatened Ignatius with excommunication if his actions related to Bulgaria were not ended referring to the fact that, apparently, Ignatius had sent a pro-Photius clergy to Bulgaria, disregarding the decisions of the synod. Thus, in his second patriarchate Ignatius didn't adopt an extremist position.

Being dismissed, Photius was exiled at Skepi on the shore of Bosphorus. From there he would exchange many letters with his close ones. In a letter sent to the emperor he complained about the sufferings of the exile, about the shortages he endured, but mostly about missing his dear books. This rich correspondence is represented in pages of a rare sensitivity and exceptional beauty. Likewise, through it we discover that Photius had many friends in the administration and that the large majority of the clergy had remained loyal to him.

CHAPTER VI. PHOTIUS'S SECOND PATRIARCHATE

Emperor Basil I felt extremely discontented with the fact that the relations with Rome didn't change despite Photius's dismissal from the patriarchal throne and Ignatius's rehabilitation. Moreover, his internal alliance with the hard-liners' party proved totally inappropriate because of the extremist attitude of this group. Therefore he would show a benevolent attitude towards the moderate group, Photius included. Thus, in 873 Photius was brought back from exile at the imperial palace by Emperor Basil I. At the beginning, Photius would educate the emperor's children, Leon and Alexander, but then, contrary to canon 7 in the Constantinopolitan synod from 869 to 870, canon that forbade any excommunicated to work as a teacher, Photius was allowed to renew his didactic activity. This reconciliation between the emperor and Photius was largely attributed by Photius's opponents, to the fact that Photius was meant to design the emperor's genealogy. Once back from the exile, Photius

would also reconcile with Ignatius, as he himself acknowledged in the Constantinopolitan synod from 879 to 880.

A synod was needed to sanction Photius's rehabilitation as well as the peace restored between the two patriarchs. For this, both Ignatius and Emperor Basil I sent letters to Rome in which they invited the pope to send delegates for the synod. The papal chair was occupied by John VIII who was even more ardent than his predecessors in his threats concerning the Constantinople's interference with Bulgaria. Nevertheless, the pope accepted to send delegates for a new synod in Constantinople. Bringing letters from the pope, the papal delegation set off for Constantinople on April, 16th, 878. Ignatius died on October, 23rd, 877 and the patriarchal throne was taken again by Photius on October, 26th, 877. The papal delegation refused to bear any relation to the new patriarch, so another Byzantine delegation needed to be sent to Rome to present the changes that had occurred in Constantinople.

Once the second byzantine delegation got to Rome, in 879 Pope John VIII organised a synod of 17 bishops. The synod decided to acknowledge the new patriarch, but only if certain requirements would be met by Photius. Furthermore, a *Commonitorium* was compiled full of instructions meant to ensure the good development of the synod. The pope also wrote many letters to the emperor, to the patriarch, to the Constantinopolitan clergy, to the three oriental patriarchates, to Photius's opponents and to the papal delegates that were already in Constantinople in November 879.

Before the beginning of the synod, a special problem was that of translating the papal documents from Latin to Greek. Photius was accused that he mistranslated or that he omitted parts from both the *Commonitorium* and the papal letters. Many pros and cons were brought on this matter. The papal *Commonitorium* was kept only in Greek. Some of the requirements were omitted in the translation, for instance the fact that Photius had to apologize in front of the synod for his actions. All these omissions were made with the approval of the papal delegates so as to conform to the papal documents to the reality from Constantinople. The changes from the original documents highlight the fact that Rome wasn't aware of the real situation from Constantinople, reality of which the papal delegates became convinced of consequently they agreed to the adjustments.

After all these preliminary preparations, the works of the synod opened in the period of 1st to 15th of November 879 and had a total of 7 sessions, that last one taking place on March, 13th, 880. All the works were held in Saint Sophia Church, except for the sixth session that took place in a more confined environment, at the imperial palace and in the presence of the emperor. 383 bishops took part at the synod's sessions. All three oriental patriarchates sent

representatives. The emperor didn't take part in the works of the synod, his absence being somehow motivated by the fact that he had lost one of his dear sons. Photius was the one who presided over the synod. The works of the synod were presented together with the debates and the speeches delivered by the ones who were present. The sixth session was special because it took place at the imperial palace in the presence of the emperor, of Photius, of the papal delegates, of representatives of the three oriental patriarchates and of 18 more metropolitan bishops. The other participants at the synod were called 10 days later for the final session. The patriarch's opponents considered this session a mere invention of Photius. This session established the synod's testimonial of faith and the documents were signed by the emperor. The synod acknowledged Photius as legitimate patriarch. It was considered that the Bulgarian problem lay into the emperor's competence. Although the *Filioque* addition wasn't brought into question, the issue was solved by the testimonial of faith adopted by the synod, which is the Nicene – Constantinopolitan creed, condemning all those who would, later on, omit or add anything to the symbol. The Church received seven ecumenical synods and their teachings. After the works of the synod ended, the papal delegates returned to Rome with documents and two letters for Pope John VIII from Photius and the emperor. At his turn, after receiving the synod's documents and the two letters, Pope John VIII sent letters as well, one to the patriarch and the other to the emperor, acknowledging the legitimacy of Photius's patriarchate. However, the end of the letters allows many interpretations. The pope also thanked the emperor for the retrocession of Saint Sergius Church from Constantinople as well as for that of Bulgaria.

Despite the fact that the synod rehabilitated Photius on the patriarchal throne of Constantinople, he continued to have many opponents. These gathered around the metropolitan bishop Mitrophan of Smyrna and Stelianos of Neo-Caesarea, forming the so called Small Church. Throughout letters, Photius made serious efforts to reconcile with them. In the meantime, a conflict took place between Emperor Basil I and his son and heir to the throne, Leo. The result was that the young man was imprisoned for three months in the imperial palace and threatened with the removal of his eyes. The conflict started from the fact that Leo was forced to marry Theofana Martinakios, when he wanted to wed Zoe Zautzes. For this reason, Leon approaches the hard-liners' group who were opposing Emperor Basil I. The hard-liners' party took advantage of these misunderstandings and drew Leo into a conflict against the emperor. Nevertheless, Theodorus Santbarenos, the emperor's right-handed man and one of Photius's close acquaintances, let the emperor know in time of the situation. The emperor managed to foil the plot and punish the ones involved. Photius's opponents said that

Theodorus Santabarenos together with Photius were guilty of this conflict between father and son; there is also a legend speaking about this. Leo was saved from mutilation at both the patriarch's and the government's intervention.

The year 886 would be the last for Photius as patriarch. On August, 29th, 886, the emperor Basil I the Macedonian died and his son was placed on the throne, taking the name Leo VI the Wise or the Philosopher. The new emperor was enthroned on September, 29th, 886. Once with the new emperor's enthronement the hard-liners' party was put into power. The first victim of this new regime, Theodorus Santabarenos, was arrested and sent to Dalmata Monastery. The next aimed at was patriarch Photius, one of the reasons for his dismissal being the fact that the new emperor wanted to fulfil one of his father's old wishes. Understanding the importance of the patriarchal function for the empire, Emperor Basil I had wanted to reserve it for one of his own, but he hadn't had the time to do so. The one to fulfil Basil's desire would be his descendant, Emperor Leo who removed Photius from the patriarchal throne and enthroned his brother, Stephen, aged only 18. Therefore, Photius was forced to resign. His opponents put him and Santabarenos to trial at the imperial palace. After the trial, Photius was exiled to Hieria, particularly, to Gordon Monastery from Armenia. Here Photius would eventually pass away on February, 6th the exact year being unknown (891-897). Approximately 50 years after his death he would be sanctified and his name put in the Typikon of the Great Church from Constantinople. Photius's relics were brought to Constantinople at Saint John the Baptist's Church and then moved to The Monastery of the Holy Trinity on Harki island, his religious foundation. Nowadays, parts from his relics can be found at the Monastery of Saint Dionysius from the Holy Mountain.

CHAPTER VII. PHOTIUS'S WORK.

This chapter presents Photius's work that is both rich and complex. The Migne edition in *Patrologie Cursus Completus, Series Graeca (Pathrology, the Complete Course, the Greek Series)* dedicates volumes 101 to 104 to Photius's written work. A thorough analysis of this work is very difficult because a complete edition does not exist, because there is contradictory information of critics and historians and because there is the problem of ascribing some of Photius's works with questionable paternity. The chapter presents Photius's writings, the year when they were written, the content, the manuscripts and the critical editions in which they

appear. The presentation of Photius's work starts with his famous work *Myriobiblon* or *Bibliotheca* of the 280 Codices. Then the *Lexikon* or ΛΕΞΕΩΝ ΣΥΝΑΓΩΓΗ, *Amphilochia* or *Quaestiones ad Amphilochium* (Questions addressed to Amphilochius), Photius's correspondence, his poetic work, the *Treaty against the Paulicians*, *The Mistagony* or *About the Mistagony of the Holy Spirit*, canonical writings, Photius's *Homilies* and his *Biblical Comments*. At the end of the chapter there are short presentations of other writings ascribed to Photius: collections and proofs gathered precisely from the synodic and historical writings about bishops, metropolitan bishops and other such issues, as well as the *Admonitio et exhortatio per breves morale sententias – Opusculum pareneticum* or Παράινεσις διὰ γνωμολογίας. Likewise, he also composed a few lessons or a commentary to *The Stairway to Heaven* of Saint John the Stair man. We have also enumerated some works whose paternity attributed to Photius is questionable, as well as some of Photius's lost works.

CHAPTER VIII. THE ECUMENICAL RELEVANCE OF PATRIARCH PHOTIUS'S ACTIVITY

This chapter outlines issues related to Ignatius's resignation, his relation with Photius after the latter's return from exile, the correspondence between Photius and Pope Nicholas I from 863, the correspondence between Rome and Constantinople after Photius's removal from clerical function by Pope Nicholas in 863 and in the end, with the issue on whether there was or wasn't a schism between Photius's period and that of Pope John VIII and his descendants. The sources are contradictory when addressing the question of Ignatius's resignation. The Pro-Ignatian sources indicate that he didn't, whereas the pro-Photius ones say that Ignatius did resign and only afterwards was Photius appointed patriarch. Many contemporary testimonies lead to the conclusion that willingly or not, Ignatius really resigned.

There are many arguments that support the idea that, after his return from exile, patriarch Photius made amends with Ignatius. Photius himself would confess this during the Constantinopolitan synod from 879 to 880. Nicetas the Paphlagonian, Stelianos of Neo-Caesarea and the anti-Photius collection support the contrary. After presenting both sides of the argument, the conclusion is that Photius reconciled with Ignatius. Photius himself, would, later on, be sanctified.

The correspondence between patriarch Photius and Pope Nicholas I has the purpose of highlighting the tone used by the two in their letters and the different way of seeing the communion between the two religious centres. Additionally, the correspondence between Rome and Constantinople is meant to emphasize the highly-strung relations between Pope Nicholas I and the imperial palace. After his return on the patriarchal throne, Photius tried to reconcile with his opponents from both Constantinople and Rome. This is supported by the letters Photius sent in which he repeatedly asked for reconciliation. Thus he wrote to deacon Marinus, future pope of Rome, to Zacharias of Anagni and to bishop Gauderich of Velletri. Was there any other schism between Photius the patriarch and the papal chair after his second return to Constantinople? Photius's opponents say that Pope John VIII, with the Gospel in his hand and from the pulpit of Saint Peter's Church, launched an anathema against Photius and so did his followers to the papal throne. Still, recent research has demonstrated that Photius continued his communion both with Pope John VIII and with his followers, despite the fact that Pope Marinus never sent the letter of enthronement.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite the divergences arisen between the two religious centres, the willingness for communion was still alive. This desire generated made debates, required many efforts and made a lot of people gather in synods meant to restore harmony within the Church.

The feuds during the Iconoclasm prolonged even after this heresy, once defeated, took new forms of manifestation. The society of Constantinople was divided around two parties, one moderate and the other, hard-line. The two groups greatly influenced the political and religious life from Constantinople, generating dismissals of patriarchs and even Church schisms.

Patriarch Photius's written work is impressive and stirs the admiration of all the ones who loved and appreciated him, as well as of all those who opposed him. We consider that the work of patriarch Photius is the main source for a better acquaintance with his personality that was, so many times, presented in such dark shades.

The disputes between the two patriarchal chairs were extremely severe, bringing about many mutual excommunications. The reasons were many. Still, at the end of the disputes, the remaining people chose to continue to stay in communion, and, as a result, there was no other schism between Rome and Constantinople.