

The Ecumenical Patriarchate in the Ottoman Empire (1453-1923): Adaptation and Change

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There is already an authoritative account of the history of the Ecumenical Patriarch. Reputable scholars from Greece, eastern Europe and the Near East, from every corner of the Ecumene that is, have worked – and are still working – to disseminate an awareness of the Great Church's ministry on behalf of the Christian faith in times of adversity, as well as its contribution to the promotion of a sense of self-awareness and identity amongst the subject Christian peoples of the Ottoman empire, in particular its role in the formation and survival and of modern Hellenism. My own testimony consists in drawing attention to factors that have remained constant over time and to the changing conjunctures that have made the role of the Ecumenical Patriarch so dynamic. How was its role as the institutional instrument of the conqueror reconciled with the demands of the subject people? How were the organic needs of the State and society of the sovereign Osmanli Turks brought into harmony with those of the subjugated Christian flock? How were the difficulties overcome that were associated with pressure and change, both internally and internationally? How, within the ranks of the Orthodox themselves, was the ecumenical ideal that inspired the Mother Church successfully blended with the nationalist ideas that were gradually to inundate the lands of the empire? How, finally, did the Ecumenical Patriarchate manage to prevail against the tide of adversity and carry out its fruitful task?

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE ON THE
MORROW OF THE FALL OF CONSTANTINOPLE

"Having advanced its glory to the ends of the inhabited world, it now filled all the land and sea alike with its own misfortunes and filled them with its own glory," as Kritovolos writes.¹ Wailing and lamentation reflected the pain and grief felt at the capture of the *Basilevousa*, the fall of the Byzantine empire, and the fate of the "thrice-wretched Romaioi." Would the *Genos* be able to survive under the regime of conquest? Or would it simply provide confirmation for the axiom formulated by the Arab historian Ibn Khaldun who, after investigating the fortunes of the peoples subjected to Islam, reached the conclusion that when nations are defeated and pass into the power of a ruler of a different race, they ultimately lose their identity?² The answer was in the end supplied by Mehmet II the Conqueror himself. Christians – he declared – would be confirmed in their right to exist and would be allowed to retain their religious beliefs and freedom of worship, on condition that they remained subjects and discharged their tax obligations faithfully. The supreme representative of the Orthodox Christian flock, and at the same time the guarantor of its law-abiding behavior, was the Ecumenical Patriarch, the agent of the Sublime Porte.

From the 11th century and the earliest Turkish invasion onwards, compulsory conversions to Islam were a widespread phenomenon, particularly in Asia Minor.³ At the same time, however, toleration of the Christian religion was a principle steadfastly applied from as early as the 7th century by the various Moslem conquerors in the Near East and, from the late 14th century, in the Balkan peninsula. Characteristically, Joseph Bryennios wrote a few years before the capture of Constantinople that in the provinces captured by the Turks "the Church still retains its form unchanged, prelates, priests and deacons carry out the duties of their rank amongst the nations, and everywhere the divine sacraments are celebrated."⁴ From the very beginning, Mehmet II, despite having dissolved the Byzantine empire by force of arms, placed even greater importance on this practice and gave it a new dimension. The Patriarch was not only kept in office as the supreme spiritual leader of the

Christian subjects, but was also declared to be their highest political authority. His spiritual responsibilities were consolidated and he additionally acquired an extensive political jurisdiction. The reasons behind this choice – religious, political and economic – are familiar: accommodation to the dictates of the sacred Islamic law, comprehensive destruction of the Byzantine state, winning over of the Christian flock and maintenance of its opposition to the Papal West, facilitation of the task of administration, and enjoyment of economic benefits. We should not overlook, however, some of the particular features associated with the individual personality and education of the Conqueror, and even his personal view of the historical past: he is credited with a "sense of history" by Steven Runciman,⁵ and "acute political perspicuity" by D. Zakythinos.⁶

"Be Patriarch, with good fortune, and be assured of our friendship, keeping all the privileges that the Patriarchs before you enjoyed." So, according to Frantzis, spoke the conqueror, as he handed the patriarchal staff to Gennadios Scholarios. The legal status of the Ecumenical Patriarchate remained conventionally indeterminate down to the middle of the 19th century. It was defined, in effect, by the interpersonal relations between the Patriarch, as occupier of a public office, and other leading representatives of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and the Porte, which from time to time issued the necessary "imperial commands," or *berats*, to this end. It was recognized as a legal entity on the basis of the provisions of the Hatt-i Hümayun decree of 1856, mainly through the General or National Regulations which, from 1862 onwards, were invested with the force of State law.⁷ Already, however, the powers conferred by Mehmet on the head of the Church in practice exceeded even those he had enjoyed under the protection of the Byzantine empire. At the level of the Ottoman hierarchy, the Patriarch enjoyed a status equal to that of the Grand Vizier himself.⁸

Reliable conclusions based on Ottoman primary sources have revealed extensive areas of competence enjoyed by the leader of Orthodoxy, or "privileges" in the earlier, classical terminology. His jurisdiction extended to the administrative sphere proper – in another sense, the religious and political sphere – and also to the spheres of justice and legislation. In addition to having his "ancient" religious privileges confirmed and partially extended, the

Ecumenical Patriarch had already secured significant political power as "lord and despot" of the Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman empire. These powers overlapped with his exercise of judicial authority. In this sphere, his jurisdiction was gradually extended from differences between Orthodox Christians relating to religion, until it covered the entire breadth of civil law, through recourse to the Byzantine juridical tradition. Finally, the legal jurisdiction of the Church, which already existed, was also broadened as a consequence of the extension of the Patriarchate's competence to the political sphere. This found its most tangible expression in the field of family and inheritance law, and was imprinted in a series of enactments known as canonical edicts. In the exercise of his authority, the Orthodox leader was assisted by the Patriarchal Synod, and after the General Regulations were passed, increased competence was also granted to the twelve-man National Mixed Council, in which the popular element was strongly represented.⁹

These choices on the part of the conqueror were fairly well received by the Christian subjects. Gennadios Scholarios himself, in search of a "reflective reconciliation" with the fact of the fall of the empire, invoked "the most just visitation of divine justice upon our trespasses against it," and praised the charitable, wise behavior of Mehmet II, who guaranteed the unimpeded execution of the work of the subjugated Church.¹⁰ The reasoning of a wide range of clerics and laity set out from the same starting point. A factor in the adoption by them of this stance was distrust of the Church of Rome and its political satellites, as bearers of a spirit of religious intolerance. Certainly, alongside the main theological considerations, calculations of a more political nature operated in the same direction. To the question whether the overriding need for the Greek people to survive could best be served by adapting to the reality of conquest, a significant proportion of the subjugated Greeks gave an affirmative answer.

Despite the wresting from the conqueror of a number of fundamental guarantees, the Greek Orthodox population was still subjected to a regime of discrimination and oppression by a despotic State. The Ecumenical Patriarchate was called upon to struggle with a range of adverse circumstances and to overcome the negative consequences of its own weaknesses, both innate and acquired.

The position adopted by the immediate successors of Mehmet II was already perceptibly different from that of the conqueror of Constantinople. The bearers of the central authority came to be characterized increasingly by their arrogance, low level of education, and corruption. Violation of places of Christian worship, one after the other, arbitrary intervention and the use of violence against even the leading representatives of the Church, and widespread use of bribery, not only disturbed and debased the relations with the Sublime Porte, but often also reduced the Orthodox flock as a whole to the level of a socially inferior, second-class group. For their part, the subjects themselves were afflicted by a sense of insecurity, by internal conflicts and, like any conquered people, by poverty. From time to time the Phanar became a center of scheming and intrigues aimed at capturing the ecumenical throne, while financial distress and fateful over-indebtedness were chronic problems. "Penury was innate to this life of the Ecumenical Patriarchate" notes the Metropolitan of Ilioupolis.¹¹ When to these difficulties is added, as a factor of lesser but by no means negligible importance, the exercise of external pressure – by governments or propagandists for foreign creeds – the full extent of the problems with which the Great Church was faced becomes apparent.¹²

In following this course between clashing rocks, the Ecumenical Patriarch, and through it the Orthodox flock, succeeded not only in surviving but also in maintaining its spiritual character and strengthening its social cohesion, gradually increasing its strength until it became a means of imposing its will. This phenomenon is accounted for in part by its successful performance of its fundamental role as an institutional organ of the state and society of the Osmanli Turks. Initially, however, a number of questions of great gravity had to be posed: Would it be possible for the Great Church, which had for centuries performed a function focused exclusively on the spiritual sphere, to respond to the demands of a mission of political content? Would it in fact manage to meet the obligations it was called upon to assume against the *Devlet-i Osmanlye* and at the same time remain true to the traditions that bound together the *Rum milleti*, the leadership of which it was shouldering under dramatic circumstances? Would it prove possible for it to reconcile its ecumenical mission with its increasingly more obvious Greek char-

acter? The affirmative answers given to all these questions were not the product of short-term opportunistic adaptation, but stemmed from a successful alliance with the forces that were to define the historical process in the broader area of southeastern Europe and the Near East. The disturbance of this balance, after over four hundred years, was to be the product of political developments outside the control of the Ecumenical Patriarchate – mainly the wide predominance of nationalism.

*THE EXPANSION AND STRENGTHENING OF THE ROLE
OF THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE*

These were the foundations on which the Ecumenical Patriarchate was to stand, developing a strikingly dynamic activity that consolidated its power as a pan-Orthodox institution, promoted its ecumenical role and, finally, contributed to the molding of modern Hellenism as a unified, compact body. This unique phenomenon derived from a combination of the gradual extension of its jurisdiction, the close association of its activities with the intrigues and scheming to be found in the ranks of the subjugated Orthodox Christians, and the serving of the more profound needs of both rulers and ruled.

The canonical jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarch, the *klima* of the Patriarchate as it was called, was to cover a geographical area that varied in extent, and which revealed a clear tendency to expand down to the end of the 18th century. Immediately after the Fall of Constantinople it covered the former Byzantine provinces now under Ottoman rule. At the same time, the Orthodox Christians of the Greek areas under Venetian administration also came under its jurisdiction. After the conquest and annexation by the Ottoman empire of Syria, Palestine and Egypt, the three Patriarchates of the East – Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem – came *de facto* under the control of the Ecumenical Patriarch; later, in 1757, the metropolitan see of Aleppo became one of the areas to which his jurisdiction extended.

An important step was taken in the second half of the 18th century towards strengthening the administrative cohesion of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and extending its authority to the general area

of southeastern Europe as far as Bosnia: this was the decision taken by the Patriarchal Council, after a request from representatives of the *klimata* themselves, to abolish their autocephalous status, with the exception of the archiepiscopal sees of Tyrnovo, Ochrid and Pec. The metropolitan sees of the Danubian principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia remained under the jurisdiction of the Phanar.

In this way, the Orthodox Patriarch became as time went on the real leader of the Orthodox *millet* – the ‘head of the *Ethnos*’, the *Ethnarch*, or *Millet-bashi*, as he came later to be called. As a term in the Ottoman administrative vocabulary, *millet* designated a religious community recognized by the state and coming under the spiritual jurisdiction of a religious leader. In this sense, the Patriarch’s role as *ethnarch* related to all the Orthodox subjects of the Sultan. For its part, the Patriarchate translated the term *millet* into Greek as *Ethnos* or *Genos* in later documents.

According to recent research, the term first occurs in documents as late as the 18th century.¹³ Before this, instead of a unified religious community, ‘groups’ (*teva’if*) consisting of individuals sharing specific common features were consistent with Ottoman public order; in the case of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Orthodox flock consisted of several ‘groups of infidels’ (*teva’if – i kefere*) – a circumstance that is readily understandable both before and after the three Eastern Patriarchates were made subject to Constantinople and the autocephalous status of the Archbishops of Ochrid and Pec was abolished. The different terms used to denote the Orthodox flock, however, do not reflect corresponding differences in its identity, whether viewed as a single unit or as a number of parts. Whether described as infidels, down to the 17th century, or after that successively as *zimmi*, and finally as *Rum*, the Orthodox formed essentially the same population group amongst the subjects of the Porte.¹⁴ The change of name, however, is undoubtedly to be associated with the improved social, and in one sense political, status of the Greek element that was predominant in its ranks.

The dominant presence amongst the Orthodox population of the Ottoman empire in general was that of the Greeks, attested consistently from the Late Byzantine period onwards. Its manifest superiority was based on both quantitative and, mainly, qualitative fac-

tors. The education and cultural values that lived on in the ranks of the subject "Rum" carried associations with the Orthodox Christian faith and the centuries-old Greek intellectual tradition. It might reasonably be asserted that it was under the shelter of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, after the Fall of Constantinople, that the related Christian "nations," particularly those of southeastern Europe, were fully incorporated into the Greek cultural edifice.¹⁵ The treatment of the Orthodox flock as a homogeneous whole at the level of administrative terminology, however, also coincided with the social advance of the Greeks and the consolidation of the influence in public life of a ruling group of them, the Phanariots. On the morrow of the Ottoman conquest, the extermination of the manpower of Constantinople had gone hand in hand with the eclipse of the historical families of Byzantium. The reconstitution, two centuries later, of a class of Greek "notables" formed part of the process of the emergence of new vital forces in the ranks of the Orthodox Christians. The starting point for this process should be sought in the assumption by the Greeks of a leading role in the sphere of trade, after the abolition of the special privileges granted by the Ottoman administration to the Latins.¹⁶ The rise of this new class of wealthy Greeks is inextricably bound up with the penetration of the Ottoman public administration by its members, and with their more direct involvement in the affairs of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. This involvement had a number of negative consequences at the level of the administration of church affairs – badly timed initiatives, self-interested interventions, even in the procedure for the election of the Patriarch. At the same, however, the Phanariots' links with the central authority helped to extend the political field of the Great Church's competence and in general to strengthen its position within the Ottoman state; conversely, the particular historical juncture made a decisive contribution to the further increase and consolidation of the presence of active members of the laity in the management of the Church's affairs. The intervention of these, however, did not involve a contraction in the authority or a reduction in the prestige of the Ecumenical Patriarch. The coincidence of the rise of the power of the Phanariots and a corresponding rise in that of the ecumenical throne is the proof of this. The change of

name from "infidels" to "Romaioi," who were self-evidently heirs to the Byzantine tradition, coincided in time with what had hitherto been the most effective stage of the endeavor towards the creation of the *ethnarchousa* Church. This period has been called a "golden age" by a contemporary scholar.¹⁷

Identification of this dynamic relationship permits us to make a confirmation of the thesis that the Ecumenical Patriarchate, as formed and functioning under Ottoman rule, was not an artificial or static formation, based solely on the might of the conqueror. The initial, reciprocal relationship, with the sultan granting an extensive field of competence to the subjugated Christians, on the one hand, and on the other securing widespread acceptance of his contribution by the part of the latter, was accompanied by certain functional elements that emerged as the project was implemented. The fact that the Porte collaborated in strengthening the position of the ecumenical throne was not unconnected with the scale of the pressures or, at least the influence, that the representatives and supporters of the throne proved capable of exercising. At the same time, it reflected the belief by the bearers of the central authority that the strengthening of the Patriarchate, as the legitimate representative of its Orthodox subjects, would prove to be a factor for greater stability and would secure, when necessary, their cooperation in dealing with public crises. Consequently, the formation of the *ethnarchousa* Church introduced by the Conqueror not only survived but in the end functioned dynamically in the bosom of Ottoman society, at least down to the 19th century.

FROM THE RECONSTITUTION TO THE CHANGE OF STATUS OF THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE

The success of the institution of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and its performance should be attributed to the adoption of a model of which not only the roots but also its adaptation to contemporary reality held out the prospect that it would be fruitful. A decisive factor in this process was the development of an independent dynamic within the ranks of the broader section of the population that was called upon to implement the specific institutional formation. The Orthodox flock, which was subjected to the jurisdiction

of the ecumenical throne, was numerically strong and had the ability not only to survive as a distinct social entity, but also to give form to a specific cultural personality. The subsequent development of this phenomenon culminated in the definition of a self-contained political discourse.

What, however, was the cultural and, ultimately, political personality of the broader community of "infidels" or "Romaioi," to use the terminology of the Porte? Orthodoxy, as an ecumenical discourse, was its main feature. Alongside this, however, the Greek language was used as an almost exclusive means of expression, and Greek education – both secular and ecclesiastical – served as an instrument of intellectual formation; the Great Church made an essential contribution in this direction.¹⁸ Hellenism as an entity, before the concept of *Ethnos* (Nation) had acquired its full doctrinal content, had been dispersed in the last centuries of Byzantium over territories ruled by different overlords; after the Fall of Constantinople, it gradually took shape as a single entity under a single overriding authority, that of the Ottoman empire, and at the same time under the spiritual jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Under this regime, it extended its influence to an area that transcended its geographical borders. Spyridonakis considers this development entirely positive and compares it with the last period of the decline of Byzantium.¹⁹ Zakythinos refers to a "ruling initiative of the Greek Genos (People),"²⁰ and expands the idea, noting in particular the creation of 'an Orthodox ecclesiastical State of the Greek Nation, as a 'parallel formation' within the Ottoman empire: "an entire network of metropolitan sees, archbishoprics and bishoprics, and monastic communities covered the territories under Turkish rule, and this network was denser and fuller than the state network, which was based on the disruptive institutions of the timar system."²¹ In any event, the dynamic presence of the Great Church, founded on the unanimous consent of the Orthodox subjects of the Porte and on their sense of difference from the Moslems of the empire, gave these subjects an awareness of their own distinctive identity.

It is impossible to comprehend the functioning of the Ecumenical Patriarchate without taking note of the manner in which the timeless ecumenical aspect was interwoven with the latent national

factor. The organic link between the two is noted in epigrammatic manner by Runciman: "Orthodoxy ... preserved Hellenism through the dark centuries; but without the moral force of Hellenism, Orthodoxy itself might have withered."²²

The ecumenical view of the Great Church was in harmony with the political tradition represented by Hellenism; however, it could hardly be combined with the spirit of nationalism which gradually became predominant in southeastern Europe throughout the 19th century. Indeed, the view might reasonably be taken that henceforth two opposed currents flowed in the bed of the broader Orthodox community.

The first manifestation of the conflict between the ecumenical and the nationalist approach is to be seen in the unilateral proclamation of the Autocephalous Church of Greece on the morrow of the creation of the independent Greek kingdom. Is this the point at which we should stress the distance separating the Greece-centered nationalism inspired, in its dogmatic aspect, by the principles of the French Revolution, from the timeless perspective nourished by the historical tradition of the *Genos*, rallied around the Patriarchal throne?²³ Or could this distance still be regarded as the product of political opportunism – especially the entanglement of the question of the extent of the spiritual jurisdiction of the Patriarchate with the question of the competitive struggle between the new kingdom of Greece and the Ottoman empire? Even when, after twenty years, the ecclesiastical crisis had been settled and concord had been restored amongst the ranks of the broad Greek Orthodox community, the reverberations of the ideas that had provoked the crisis continued to be felt at the political, and by extension the spiritual level. Were Athens and Constantinople the poles supporting two different versions of the Great Idea: the creation, preferably, of an extensive Greek nation state or, failing this, the ruling hand of Hellenism in the ranks of a broad multinational state form – a developed form of the Ottoman empire? Down to the beginning of the 20th century, the Great Church, while not delivering any explicitly political speech, continued to offer fundamental support for the attainment of the second aim, through the emancipation and development of unredeemed Hellenism. Even when this further strategic goal had receded, however, this particular sense

of the national identity did not recede entirely. Addressing the most sorely tested section of the national family, the Greeks of Constantinople, the patriarch Athinagoras saw contemporary Hellenism as crowned "with the halo of the αἰπότε Γένους."²⁴

In the nineteenth century with the formation of the first nation states on Ottoman territory, and, after this, the adoption by the Porte of a radical modernization program known as the Tanzimat (1839-1876), the role of the Ecumenical Patriarchate within the bosom of the Ottoman state was undoubtedly subjected to a process of inevitable re-adaptation. The introduction of reforms at the internal administrative level led to the strengthening of the lay element at the expense of the ecclesiastical hierarchy in the bodies responsible for taking decisions relating to the Orthodox community. Despite the fact that after the issuing of the Hatt-i Hümayun, culminating in the passing of the General Regulations, the Patriarch and the Patriarchate did not lose the glory and the prestige they had enjoyed hitherto. In support of this view, P. Konortas lists the positive effects of the implementation of the Tanzimat: the recognition of the legal existence of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the widening of its independence and the consolidation, in its favor, of important and extensive jurisdiction in the context of the new public order, the erasing, as part of the implementation of the principle of equality between all the subjects of the Porte, of all derogatory references to the head of the Great Church and his flock, the promotion of the Patriarch to a "means of Government" in secular issues, and the participation *ex officio* of members of the Higher Orthodox Clergy in the new legislative councils, exemption from taxation and, in general, from all oppressive intervention by the administration, and finally, the upgrading of the Patriarchate as an institution of Ottoman public order, after the general strengthening of the central authority.²⁵ At the same time, the victory of the Church in its long dispute with Abdul-Hamit II, known as the Privileges Question, checked the extension of state control to its internal administration.²⁶ In these circumstances, in the context of the new reality, the Patriarchate maintained, possibly even more than in the past, its ability to link the protection of its ecumenical ideology with the advancement and faithful implementation of the idea of a constitutional, multi-national state.

Although the ecumenical perception of the Great Church could be combined, in principle, with the program of the Reforms, it could not be reconciled with the spirit of nationalism, which was destined to inundate the area of European Turkey. The reduction in the scope of this groundbreaking reform program, and its ultimate deviation from its original aims, combined with the ever-increasing intensification of nationalist pressures, were to limit the geographical extent of the Ecumenical Patriarchate's jurisdiction, disrupt its cohesion and, in the final phase of the life of the empire, lead to a change in its status within Ottoman society. The detachment of territories from the main body of the Ottoman state, and the formation on its still unified territory of independent or semi-independent nation states, resulted in the proclamation of autocephalous status for the local national churches, of Greece, Serbia, Romania and Montenegro. The new regime was consolidated by the publication of the Synodical Tomes by the Mother Church, designed to separate the jurisdictional relations of the churches, while preserving the overriding authority of the Phanar. At the same time, however, under the strength of nationalist feeling, the Bulgarian Exarchate was declared as a *fait accompli* on Ottoman territory before the foundation of the Bulgarian state. In this case, the opposition of the Patriarchate, in the name of its ecumenical mission, was unequivocal and final: "nationalism, or the creation in this place of individual national churches that accept all those of the same race but exclude all those of other races, and which are tended only by shepherds of the same race, is something unheard of and entirely without precedent."²⁷ On this occasion, the confrontation was twofold: with those desiring to establish the Exarchate and also with the Porte which issued a firman (1870) legalising the schism and in fact recognising the schismatic Bulgarian Church as equal to the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

From the middle of the 19th century onwards, after four centuries during which it had functioned as a formal body within the bosom of the Ottoman state, pursuing an independent course from time to time, the Ecumenical Patriarchate was subjected to factors that were to bring about a change in its position. Under the intensifying pressure of nationalism the Orthodox millet – the Rum millet – survived in institutional terms; as a unified entity, however, it

became fragmented.²⁸ Those who remained within its jurisdiction were persistently described as "Romaioi." The fact that the great majority were Greeks did not make the Patriarch an exponent or an instrument of the policy of the national centre Athens. The idea of exploiting the historical heritage of the *Genos*, both political and spiritual, was still alive at this phase, interwoven inextricably with a sense of the ecumenical mission that inspired the Great Church.²⁹ The serving of its current needs, too, and the advancement of its long-term interests, inevitably required conformity with Ottoman public order, as formed throughout the entire Turkish conquest down to the recent proclamation of the Hatt-i Hümayun. References to the *Ethnos* – the Patriarch was "leader of the *Ethnos*" – and the use of the cognate term *ethnikos* (national) – General or National Regulations; "Temporary National Council," "National Charity Institutions," all reflected at this period, if not the new embryonic concept of an "Ottoman nation," at least the whole of the Orthodox community that was subject to the jurisdiction of the Phanar. Reference to individual nations in the modern sense even at this date still involved the use of the term *Genos*.³⁰ According to official Ottoman documents, on the force of which the Ecumenical Patriarchate based its function and its existence as an institution, the *Ethnos* of the Romaioi was identified with the Church of Christ, formed "of all *ethne* that believe, without distinction of nationality, race, or social and political structure." The Church as *ethnarchousa* was charged with the role of trustee of the long, living tradition to which the term Romaioi had reference. The designation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate as Greek never issued from the Phanar, even at this period.³¹

The second phase of the change, this time a more rapid one, was inaugurated in 1908, when the Young Turks, through their new Constitution, in essence replaced the Church, as ruling representative of the Orthodox subjects, by elected popular representatives. The loosening of the organic bonds that had for four and a half centuries tied the Patriarchate to Ottoman public order was gradually accompanied by the exercise of political pressures against it by the Young Turk nationalists. Within the space of a few years, down to the Balkan Wars (1912-1913) and, above all, the First World War, this by now radical divergence in the strategic orienta-

tion of the two sides – State and Church – was fully confirmed. At the same time, efforts to "Turkify" the Empire lent strength to the idea entertained by Greeks of creating an extensive nation state to cover, as far as possible, all the territories in which a compact Greek Orthodox element survived. The prospects for the coexistence of Christians and Moslems on equal terms within the bosom of a unified empire reconstructed on the basis of a liberal constitution had vanished with the prevailing of a spirit of unbridled nationalism at the pinnacle of the Ottoman state hierarchy. By contrast, an ever-increasing circle of Greeks came to espouse the idea of Hellenism of the *Ethnos* as against that of the *Genos*. The consequences of this for the position of the Ecumenical Patriarchate were self-evident.

The final, irrevocable change in the position of the Ecumenical Patriarchate within the bosom of the Turkish nation state marked a new stage in its eternal history. The dynamic, multifaceted role it had played hitherto now belonged to the past. During the long centuries that preceded, the Church militant had stood firm, true to its spiritual heritage and, at the same time, playing a political role out of dire necessity. The Ecumenical Patriarchate had emerged stronger from this crucible: it had consolidated and expanded its presence, made a definitive contribution to the survival and formation of modern Hellenism, and spread the evangelical word. From this past, a past of great trials and major contribution, the Ecumenical Patriarchate drew strength, credibility and authority, on which to base its great mission today, the ever-greater dissemination of the Orthodox evangelical faith.

NOTES

¹ Kritovoulos, vol. 1, 62, 2

² See, Spyros Vryonis, "Hellenism Under Turkish Rule," in *Hellenism and the First Greek War of Independence (1821-1830) Continuity and Change*. Thessaloniki: 1976, 46

³ _____, *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth Century*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: 1971. See, Helen Zachariadou, *Ten Turkish Manuscripts on the Greek Church 1483-1567*. Athens: 1996, 54-60.

⁴ For a more detailed information regarding the function of the Patri-

archate in the Ottoman Empire, see Chris Patrinelis, *History of the Greek Nation* Vol. 1, 93-113; also vol. 11, 123-134. See also Phedias, "The Ecumenical Patriarchate and its Diachronic Ecclesiastical Deaconate," *The Ecumenical Patriarchate*. Geneva-Athens: 1989, 39-43.

⁵ St. Runciman, *The Great Church in Captivity. A Study of the Patriarchate of Constantinople from the Eve of the Turkish Conquest to the Greek War of Independence*. Cambridge: 1968, 168.

⁶ D. A. Zakynthinos, "Constantinople of the Genos. After the Fall," *Nea Estia* 1086 (Oct. 1, 1972) 6.

⁷ See Ch. K. Papastathis, *Regulations of the Greek Orthodox Communities in the Ottoman Empire. Nation and the 1st Diaspora*. Vol. 1 Thessaloniki: 1984, 10-14, 21-26, 78-110.

⁸ With regard to the Patriarch's jurisdiction in the Ottoman public administration see N. Sarris, *Osman Reality* 1. Athens: 273-275.

⁹ See, N. I. Pantazopoulos, "Church and Justice in the Aemos Peninsula During the Turkish Dominion," *Yearbook of N.O.E. School H'*. Thessaloniki: 1960-1963, 685-775. See also "The 'privileges' as a Cultural Element in the Relationship Between Christians and Muslims. Contributions to the Common Law of Near East and Southeastern Europe" loc. cit., vol. 8, 19, 3, 25-90.

¹⁰ For a more recent study see, Ath. Angelou, "Genadios Scholarios and the Fall," *The Fall of Constantinople*. E. Christos, edit. Athens: 1994, 99-132. See also El. Zachariadou, *op. cit.*, 23-4, 29-40.

¹¹ Gennadios of Eliopolis, "History and Position of the Ecumenical Patriarchate," *International Relations* 7 (1964-1965) 22; see also G. Patrinelis, (IEE, I') 102-3; (IA') 127-8. With regard to the ascent of Gennadios to the patriarchal throne as well as to a review of the nature of the 'privileges' see Zachariadou, *op. cit.*, 41-50. Regarding a review of the topic and the registration of the Metropolis during the first century of Turkish rule, see E. Zachariadou, *op. cit.*, 109-144, 157-162, 174-178.

¹² St. Runciman, *op. cit.*, 186-207

¹³ P. Konorta, *Ottoman Attestations for the Ecumenical Patriarchate, 17th to 20th cen.* Athens: 1998, 290 ff.; for an earlier perception of the issue see B. Braude, "Foundation Myths of the 'Millet' System," [Braude-Lewis,] *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire I*. New York-London 1982, 69-88

¹⁴ P. Konorta, loc. cit., 298-303

¹⁵ S. Vryonis, *op. cit.*, 47-49

¹⁶ R. Mantran, *Istanbul dans la seconde moitié du XVII^e siècle*, Paris: 1962, 53 ff. N. Todorov, *The Balkan City, 1400-1900*. Seattle and London 1983, 57-59

¹⁷ P. Konorta, loc. cit., 267-269, see also 219, 302

¹⁸ After the Great Fall, the Church had undertaken the educational responsibility of theological as well as Greek Studies. After the middle of the 18th century, many wealthy Greeks assisted the Church economically in fulfilling its educational mission. As evidence of this one can cite the establishment of the Great School of the Nation (Megali tou Genous Schole), the preservation of educational centers in the provinces, the establishment of the Athonias School as well as the School of Patmos and the Patriarchal Press. See Patrinelis, (IEE, IA') 1929-1930. With regard to Education as a Patriarchal responsibility during the last years of the Ottoman rule, see C. Svolopoulos, *Constantinople: 1856-1908*, Athens: 1995, 55ff.

¹⁹ B. S. Spyridonakis, *Essays on the Historical Geography of the Great War in the Balkans*, Thessaloniki: 1977, 151.

²⁰ D. Zakynthinou, *Political History of Modern Greece*, Athens: 1965, 40.

²¹ _____, *Turkish Rule*, Athens: 1965, 40.

²² St. Runciman, *op. cit.*, 410.

²³ See, N. Pantazopoulos, *Rigas Velestinlis. The Political Ideology of Hellenism a Forerunner of the Revolution*, Thessaloniki: 1964, 27ff.

²⁴ See, Evangelos Galanis (Metropolitan of Perg), "From Phanari...", B', Athens: 1997, 44.

²⁵ P. Konorta, *op. cit.*

²⁶ Ch. Exertsoglou, "The 'Preferential' Issue," in *Historica I*, 1992, 65-84.

²⁷ *Proceedings of the Great and Holy Synod and the Ecclesiastical Issue of Bulgaria*, Constantinople: 1872, 44. See also, Ch. Exertsoglou, *op. cit.* 77-78.

²⁸ Maximos (Metropolitan of Sardes), *The Oecumenical Patriarchate in the Orthodox Church. A Study in the History and Canons of the Church*. Thessaloniki: 1976, 300-309.

²⁹ Ch. Kardara, *Ioacim III - Charilaos Tricoupis: a Juxtaposition*, Athens: 1988.

³⁰ See, C. Svolopoulos, *Constantinople: 1856-1908*.

³¹ P. Konorta, *op. cit.*, 309.