

Byzantine Policy in the North Adriatic Sea in the VIIIth Century

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The VIIIth century is one of the most tempestuous, but simultaneously glorious periods of Byzantine history. While the Empire of New Rome successfully deals with the continuous attacks by Arabs, Bulgarians, Slavs and other peoples, its domination in Italy weakens and the gap between East and West widens. To this, of course, contributes Iconoclasm, which troubles the Empire. The heresy of Iconoclasm, which was incapable of distinguishing between the original (*principale*) and the icon (*imago*), is not limited only to the veneration of the icons, but tries to impose other novelties, in general. As a consequence, serious disturbances take place, which have persisted for more than a century and dispersed across the Empire.

The penetration of various Slavic tribes into the area of Dalmatia during the previous century completed the disruption of many thriving local Churches of the first six centuries¹. Croats – who had moved from Western Galicia to the South – and a group of Serbs from White Serbia requested that the Emperor Heraclius (610-641 A.D.) allow them to settle in regions of the Empire and to send missionaries to convert them to Christianity. In response to their request, the Emperor allowed them immediately to settle in the south of the river, called Saboy², and asked

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1. See Vl. Phidas, *Εκκλησιαστική Ιστορία, Β', από την Εικονομαχία μέχρι την Μεταρρύθμιση*, Athens 1994, p. 65.

2. See J.-C. Cheynet, «Les Balkans» in *Le Monde Byzantin II, L'empire Byzantine (641-1204)*, J.-C. Cheynet (ed.), Paris 2006, p. 446.

Pope Honorius to send missionaries, as Eastern Illyricum was already – since 553 A.D. – under the spiritual supervision of the Pope by order of Justinian I (527-565 A.D.)³. Despite the fact, however, that the early and continuous interest of the Byzantines for the conversion of the Slavs to Christianity is confirmed, the fickle circumstances and the constant movements of semi-nomadic populations in the area make doubtful the fact that the missionaries' work had a direct or wide impact. The exception, of course, was the Byzantine cities on the Adriatic coast (Zara, Spolatio and Ragussa), which were capable of bearing the missionary burden to the Croats and the Serbs.

It is clear that until the beginning of the VIIIth century, the seat of Rome (which still belonged to the Empire), had ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the entire Balkan peninsula, which was called Illyricum and the Byzantines used to call it “Dysin” (the West)⁴. This area was divided into the Western Illyricum (which included Dalmatia) and the Eastern Illyricum (which included Albania, Western Bulgaria, Macedonia and the rest of Greece up to Crete) and was under the administrative jurisdiction of Constantinople.

At the beginning of the VIIIth century, the iconoclastic policy of Emperor Leo III (717-741 A.D.), burdened the already tense relations between the Emperor and Pope Gregory II (715-731 A.D.)⁵. But the most severe blow to the ambitions of the papal policy would come when the Emperor, making use of his rights⁶, removed the provinces of Sicily, Calabria and Eastern Illyricum from the throne of Rome and transferred them to the

3. Phidas, *Ἐκκλ. Ἱστορία*, Β', p. 42.

4. See Cheynet, «Les Balkans», p. 607.

5. See P. Tsorbatzoglou, *Εἰκονομαχία καὶ κοινωνία στὰ χρόνια τοῦ Λέοντος Γ' Ἰσαύρου, Συμβολὴ στὴν διερεύνηση τῶν αἰτίων*, p. 121-127; P. Llewellyn, “The Roman Church on the outbreak of Iconoclasm”, *Iconoclasm* (Papers given at the Ninth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies – University of Birmingham – March 1975) A. Bryer – J. Herrin (ed.), Birmingham 1977, p. 29-34; T. Noble, *The Republic of St. Peter, The Birth of the Papal State*, Pennsylvania 1991² (1984), p. 35-36; E. Lanne, “Rome et les Images saintes”, *Irénikon* 59 (1986), 163-188.

6. See A. Michel, *Die Kaisermacht in der Ostkirche*, 843-1204, Darmstadt 1959, p. 304.

Patriarchate of Constantinople⁷. It is understandable that this decision had an immediate impact on the dioceses neighbouring Dalmatia, as well, since it aimed to reinforce the influence of the Empire – through the Church – over territories where the spread of Slavs, Lombards of Benevento, and Arabs had cut off from Rome⁸. In addition to that, the conditions for the acme of the Church after the end of Iconoclasm were created, along with the great influence of the Church and its culture over the Slavic countries of the Balkans⁹, the territories of which it never abandoned.

The expansion of the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, however, coincided with the appointment of the first declared iconoclastic bishops and the simultaneous establishment of new thematic administrations¹⁰. It is now clear that the iconoclastic central Government

7. As for the time of the transfer of Eastern Illyricum, the prevalent view is that it took place in 732 a. D. (see M. Anastos, "The Transfer of Illyricum, Calabria and Sicily to the Jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in 732-733", *Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici* 9 (1957), 14-53; D. Pallas, «L'Illyricum Oriental. Aperçu historique. La problématique de son archéologie chrétienne» *Θεολογία ΝΑ'* (1980), p. 73; D. P. Hester, *Monasticism and Spirituality of the Italo-Greeks* [Ανάλεκτα Βλατάδων 55], Thessaloniki 1992, p. 38-48; M.-H. Congourdeau. – B. Martin – B. Hisard, «Les institutions de l'Église byzantine», in *Le Monde Byzantin II, L'empire Byzantine (641-1204)*, J.-C. Cheynet (Ed.), Paris, 2006, p. 90-91; N. Nicolaidis, *Ἡ εἰκονομαχία καὶ ἡ εἰκονολογία τοῦ ἁγίου Ἰωάννου Δαμασκηνοῦ*, Thessaloniki, 2007, p. 65-66; E. Christophilopoulou, *Βυζαντινὴ Ἱστορία*, v. Β¹, Thessaloniki 1998², p. 110; A. Aggelopoulos, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία. Ἡ Ἐκκλησία Θεσσαλονίκης. Διαχρονικὴ πνευματικὴ ἀκτινοβολία τῆς πόλεως στὴ χειρσόνησο τοῦ Αἴμου ὡς Ἐξαρχίας, Βικαριάτου καὶ Μητροπόλεως*, Thessaloniki 1984, p. 113-116; Vl. Phidas, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία*, Α', Athens 1994² (1992), p. 778; D. Tsougarakis D., *Ἡ Βυζαντινὴ Κρήτη*, Crete 1990, p. 15-16; 107-112. In the past, it was believed that the rearrangement of the limits of ecclesiastical administration took place in the reign of Emperor Constantine Vth. (See V. Grumel V., «L'annexion de l'Illyricum oriental, de la Sicile et de la Calabre au patriarchat de Constantinople», *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 40 (1951-1952), 191-200; G. Ostrogorsky, *Ἱστορία τοῦ Βυζαντινοῦ κράτους* (μτφρ. Ἰω. Παναγόπουλος), Β', Athens 1997, p. 37).

8. Cf. M.-H. Congourdeau – B. Martin B. – B. Hisard, «Les institutions de l'Église byzantine», in *Le Monde Byzantin II, L'empire Byzantine (641-1204)*, J.-C. Cheynet (Ed.), Paris, 2006, Congourdeau, Les institutions, p. 90-91.

9. Cf. Ostrogorsky, *Ἐκκλ. Ἱστορία*, Β', p. 37.

10. E. Kountoura-Galaki, *Ὁ Βυζαντινὸς κληρὸς καὶ ἡ κοινωνία τῶν «Σκοτεινῶν αἰώνων»*, Athens 1996, p. 127.

tried to take under its control dioceses of high importance, either by modifying old metropolises, or by introducing new metropolises to the region of Isauria and Illyricum¹¹. A specific example was metropolis Durazzo, which was listed – for the first time – in the list of Byzantine ecclesiastical hierarchy in the “Notitia episcopatum” of the iconoclasts (= Notitia 3)¹². Metropolitan Nicephorus of Durazzo participated in the iconoclastic Synod of Hieria (754 A.D.), but would later express his repentance during the VIIth Ecumenical Synod (787 A.D.)¹³. Unfortunately, we do not know of other bishops of Illyricum, who participated in the Synod of 754 A.D., but a significant number of seals without depictions from these specific regions leads us to the conclusion that several iconoclasts were appointed bishops from 732 A.D. onwards¹⁴. Despite the efforts of the central Government, however, it does not appear that the vast majority of metropolises of the old province of Illyricum accepted the iconoclastic notions, which were established as the official doctrine of the Empire after the Synod of Hieria¹⁵.

The above conclusion applies to a greater extent to the metropolises and dioceses of Dalmatia. The available sources confirm that the area of western Illyricum remained faithful to the iconophilic tradition of the Church, because there is no evidence of intervention, interference or communication whatsoever between the iconoclastic Patriarchs of Constantinople and the bishops of the region. This lack of communication within the years 730-780 A.D. does not imply automatically Dalmatia’s ecclesiastical dependence on Rome. On the contrary, the subsequent developments reveal the gradual reinforcement of the Patriarchate of

11. G. Konidaris, *Αί μητροπόλεις και ἀρχιεπισκοπαί του Οἰκουμενικοῦ Πατριαρχείου καὶ ἡ «τάξις» αὐτῶν* (Texte und Forschungen zur byzantinisch-neugriechischen Philologie, 13), Athens 1934, p. 12,23.

12. J. Darrouzès, *Notitiae episcopatum Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae*, Paris 1981, 32.

13. See Mansi 13, 61E: «Νικηφόρος ὁ ὀσιώτατος ἐπίσκοπος τοῦ Δυρράχίου εἶπε· δέει πολλῶ συνεχόμεθα δέσποτα, ὅτι πλείστα κακὰ διεπράξαμεν καὶ συντόμου μετανοίας καὶ ἐξαγορεύσεως δεόμεθα».

14. Cf. Kountoura-Galaki, *Ὁ Βυζαντινὸς κληρὸς*, p. 135.

15. Cf. Kountoura-Galaki, *Ὁ Βυζαντινὸς κληρὸς*, p. 142-143.

Constantinople on the dioceses of western Illyricum and substantiate the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Constantinople over these lands.

Channels of communication, which remained closed for the first fifty years of Iconoclasm, opened suddenly with the enthronement of Paul IV (780-784 a.D) to the patriarchal throne of the capital. Paul was a moderate personality and expressed the consensus of that time¹⁶; Petros, Archbishop of Spolatio (the current Split) (778-784 a.D), addressed a letter to the Patriarch of Constantinople, in which he welcomed with satisfaction and joy the end of persecutions and accusations against the Iconophiles¹⁷. It should be mentioned that Archbishop Petros had expressed himself openly in favour of the veneration of icons and – at the same time – had proceeded to similar actions that prove his commitment to the iconophile tradition of the Church¹⁸. Two monks from Constantinople delivered the letter in response from Patriarch Paul to Archbishop Petros. In this letter, the Patriarch thanked Petros for his commitment to the Orthodox faith, even though Iconoclasm had not yet ended and the Patriarch himself had signed his belief in the iconoclastic notions, along with his accession to the Patriarchal throne¹⁹. In addition, however, Patriarch Paul expressed his concerns about the papal throne's efforts to consist secular power, as he watched the Pope of Rome transforming into a secular "Prince"²⁰. We should keep in mind that the turn of the Popes of Rome towards the Frankish state, since the mid-VIIIth century, created a de facto new perspective for the re-evaluation of the relations between the papal throne and the Byzantine

16. P. Speck, *Kaiser Konstantin VI. Die Legitimation einer fremden und der Versuch einer eigenen Herrschaft*, v. I-II, München 1978, p. 99; T. Lougis, «Δοκίμιο γιὰ τὴν κοινωνικὴ ἐξέλιξη στὴ διάρκεια τῶν λεγομένων "σκοτεινῶν αἰώνων"», *Σύμμεικτα* 6 (1985), 181.

17. V. Grumel, *Les Regestes de 715 à 1043*, Paris 1936, 349; N. Milās, *Pravoslavna Dalmasja, istoriski pregled*, Beograd 1901, p. 48.

18. Cf. Milās, *Pravoslavna Dalmasja*, p. 48.

19. Theophanis, *Chronographia*, C. De Boor (ed.), Lipsiae, vols. I (1883)-II (1885), 457; *Georgii Monachi Chronicon*, C. de Boor (ed.) Leipzig 1904, 767. Cf. I. Rochow, *Theophanes: quellenkritisch-historischer Kommentar zu den Jahren 715-813* (BBA 57), Berlin 1991, p. 240; Phidas, *Ἐκκλ. Ἱστορία*, A', p. 788.

20. V. Grumel, *Les Regestes de 715 à 1043*, Paris 1936, 349; N. Milās, *Pravoslavna Dalmasja, istoriski pregled*, Beograd 1901, p. 48.

Emperors, especially in the sensitive area of the West²¹. It also demanded a reorganization of the ideological principles that dictated the Byzantine foreign policy on the whole so far. The facts that had occurred meanwhile were the following: a) Pope Stephen II (752-757A.D.) appealed to Pepin III (751-768 A.D.) for help because of the pressure of the Lombards and offered his papal approval to the power that the new king had usurped giving him a second coronation. In exchange, the Frankish King gave as a gift to the Pope (after two successful expeditions in Italy in 755 A.D. and 756 A.D.) the territories of ancient Latio, Southern Tuscany and the exarchate of Ravenna, which became the first nucleus of the future Papal State²². b) Charlemagne visited the Pope twice. During his first visit (774 A.D.), after celebrating Easter, he repeated his father's promise to transfer large parts of Italy to the papal throne. During his second visit (781 A.D.), he demanded from the Pope to crown his sons Pepin and Louis as kings of the Lombards and the Aquitans respectively.

Along with the exchange of letters between the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Archbishop of Split, there is a very frequent exchange of delegations between the Courts of the Franks and the Byzantines. Contacts began in 781 A.D. with the meeting of the delegates of Empress Irene with Charlemagne in Rome and continued more frequently after the conquest of Northern Italy by the Franks²³. The Byzantines were left without outpost in the region and – from then on – Charlemagne had under his control a region²⁴ from where he could threaten the Byzantine provinces in southern Italy, Sicily and, of course, Dalmatia.

21. Cf. Phidas, *Ἐκκλ. Ἱστορία*, Β', p. 318.

22. See Z. Tsirpanlis, *Ἡ Δοτική Εὐρώπη στους Μέσους χρόνους, (5ος-15ος αἰ.)*, Thessaloniki, 2000³, p. 53.

23. J. Herrin, *Γυναίκες στην πορφύρα. Ἡγεμόνες τοῦ Μεσαιωνικοῦ Βυζαντίου* (μτφρ. Ἄλ. Ἐμμανουήλ), Athens, 2002, p. 167. J. Herrin, "Constantinople, Rome and the Franks in the 7th and 8th centuries", *Byzantine Diplomacy. Papers from the Twenty-fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, F. Shepard, S. Franklin (ed.), Cambridge 1990, 91-107.

24. M. McCormick, «Textes, Images et Iconoclasme dans le cadre des relations entre Byzance et l'Occident Carolingien», *Testo e Immagine nell'Alto Medioevo, Settimane di Studio di Spoleto* 41 (1994), 95-158.

On August 31st, 784 A.D., the moderate Patriarch of Constantinople Paul resigned, claiming overtly his repentance²⁵. In that same year, Archbishop Petros of Spolatio passed away as well. However, channels of communication – instead of closing – were impressively widened. Leo (784-804 a.D) was elected as the Archbishop of the Dalmatian churches and at the same time Tarasios (784-806 A.D.) became the Patriarch of Constantinople. Patriarch Tarasios (who was the "architect" of the VIIth Ecumenical Council and “one of the brightest names in Byzantine intellectual history and literature”²⁶) was elected in order to convene an Ecumenical Synod which would put an end to Iconoclasm and would also produce the unity of the Church²⁷. The period, during which the Church remained “separated and divided”, needed to end²⁸. Despite the fact that Tarasios had a lot of priorities to take into consideration, he could not ignore the Slavs’ need for missionary planning, a fact that would benefit the diachronic consciousness of the Church so as to build the ecumenical vision of the Christian Empire. Indeed, in 785 A.D., Patriarch Tarasios sent a formal invitation to Archbishop Leo to participate in the VIIth Ecumenical Council²⁹, an act that confirms the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople over Dalmatia. Although Archbishop Leo finally did not take part in the Council, his delegation consisting of the Dalmatian deacon, Fausto and two monks (one from Dalmatia and another from Sicily)³⁰ – took action on diplomatic level in Constantinople. The participation of two monks should not be considered as surprising, since during the first half of the VIIIth century, when Iconophiles were ruthlessly persecuted, many monks left the monasteries in Constantinople and fled to monasteries either in the provinces of the northern borders of the Empire or in

25. Theophanis, *Chronographia*, 457; *Georgii Monachi Chronicon*, 768; *Vita Tarasii* (BHG 1698), ed. St. Efthymiadis, *The Life of the Patriarch Tarasios by Ignatios the Deacon* (BHG 1698), introduction, text, translation and commentary, Aldershot 1998 (Birgmingham Byzantine and Ottoman Studies 4), p. 79-80.

26. H.G. Beck, *Ἡ Βυζαντινὴ χιλιετία* (μτφρ. Δ. Κούρτοβικ), Athens, 2000³, p. 110.

27. Tarasios of Constantinople, *Ἀπολογητικὸς πρὸς τὸν λαόν*, PG 98, 1425^A-1425^D.

28. Tarasios of Constantinople, *Ἀπολογητικὸς πρὸς τὸν λαόν*, PG 98, 1425^B.

29. V. Grumel, *Les Regestes de 715 à 1043*, Paris 1936, 353.

30. Cf. Miläs, *Pravoslavna Dalmasja*, p. 50.

South Italy so as not to provoke the emperor's wrath³¹. Therefore, the Greek monasteries that existed in Dalmatia before the VIth century were strengthened and multiplied during the VIIIth century³². It is evident that this Dalmatian delegation not only confirmed their Christians' commitment to the iconophilic tradition of the Church but also informed the Patriarchate for the conditions (in ecclesiastical and political level) that were developed in the region³³. It is therefore clear that the links between the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Dalmatian churches have always been close. In fact, Tarasios and Leo played a key role in the strengthening of these relations. Apart from them, the VII Ecumenical Synod itself was decisive in its role as well, because it marked an era of general mobility from the Arabic East to Constantinople, on the one hand, and from and to the Latin West³⁴, on the other. Besides, this mobility, which is expressed by the presence of letter-deliverers, ecclesiastical or diplomatic delegates, was mostly dictated by the need of separating and – at the same time – uniting the Christian worlds.

Within the framework of brotherhood and unity based on true faith, Ecumenical Patriarch Tarasios and Archbishop of Spolatio continued having frequent communication through their letters and their delegates. From this continuous communication, a letter from Tarasios to Leo has been saved, translated in Croatian³⁵. This letter is particularly enlightening for the whole territory of Illyricum. With this letter, Tarasios replied to a previous letter by Leo, in which the latter had praised the prudence and the zeal of the Patriarch for the defence of Orthodoxy. Patriarch Tarasios thanked Leo for his respect and appreciation and also praised him for being on the alert for the canonical order of the clergy and monks he shepherded. However, he expressed his sadness and worry because Pope Leo III of Rome (795-816 A.D.) was not satisfied

31. Cf. Phidas, *Ἐκκλ. Ἱστορία*, Α', p. 786.

32. Cf. Milās, *Pravoslavna Dalmasja*, p. 50.

33. Cf. Milās, *Pravoslavna Dalmasja*, p. 50.

34. Cf. St. Efthymiadis, «Νοεροὶ καὶ Πραγματικοὶ ταξιδιώτες στὸ Βυζάντιο τοῦ 8ου, 9ου καὶ 10ου αἰῶνα», *Βυζαντινά* 20 (1999), 158.

35. V. Grumel, *Les Regestes de 715 à 1043*, Paris 1936, 373; Milās, *Pravoslavna Dalmasja*, p. 51.

with his relations with the Frankish state and was trying to expand his personal ambitions by disrupting the canonical order in regions where the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople was granted³⁶. At that same time – indeed – the relations between the Patriarchate of Rome and Charlemagne were even more reinforced and the Frank monarch took under his control Istria and Dalmatia with the Treaty of Köningshofen³⁷. Even more territories were under his protection and were considered as his protectorates (the Papal State, the State of Lombards, eastern parts of the old territories of the Avars, Celtic Brittany and the lands of the Basques in the Pyrenees)³⁸. In Dalmatia, in fact, Rome sent missionaries to the Slovenes, the Croats and the Serbs³⁹. Patriarch Tarasios protested to archbishop Leo against these actions which disrupted the ecclesiastical order. Besides, his reference to “the pious Emperor” indicates the time the letter was written⁴⁰ as well as the full support of Emperor Nicephorus I (802-811 A.D.) to him, since Emperor Nicephorus was very intolerant not only towards Charlemagne but also towards the Pope who stood behind him⁴¹. The unsuccessful outcome of the missionaries’ work and the return of Dalmatia under the spiritual and secular jurisdiction of Constantinople with the Aachen Treaty (812 A.D.) were the results of the consistency of both Tarasios and Nicephorus I. Finally, Tarasios’ conclusion that God did not justify the Pope’s provocations refers directly to the events of 799 A.D., when Pope Leo III was accused of treason and immorality; during a religious procession, a group of armed men attacked him, seriously injured him and put him in a monastery, from where he later managed to escape and fled to his protector, the King of the Franks⁴².

36. V. Grumel, *Les Regestes de 715 à 1043*, Paris 1936, 373; Miläs, *Pravoslavna Dalmasja*, p. 51.

37. Cf. Phidas, *Ἐκκλ. Ἱστορία*, Β', p. 43; Ostrogorsky, *Ἱστορία*, Β', p. 69.

38. Cf. Tsirpanlis, *Ἡ Δυτικὴ Εὐρώπη*, p. 55.

39. Cf. Phidas, *Ἐκκλ. Ἱστορία*, Β', p. 43.

40. Most probably by his reference to “the pious Emperor”, Tarasios means Emperor Nicephorus I, who was crowned on October 31st, 802 A.D.

41. Cf. P. Niavis, *The Reign of the Byzantine Emperor Nicephorus I (AD. 802-811)*, Athens 1987, p. 162-185; Ostrogorsky, *Ἱστορία*, Β', p. 69.

42. Cf. Tsirpanlis, *Ἡ Δυτικὴ Εὐρώπη*, p. 60.

The above facts allow us to conclude the following:

A) The subsequent and amazing missionary eruption of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople was founded (mostly by Patriarch Tarasios of Constantinople) during the last twenty years of the VIIIth century and the early years of the IXth century⁴³. This missionary action would be elaborated by Patriarch Photios of Constantinople a few years later, and would be sealed especially by the work of Constantine (Cyril) and Methodius, the apostles to the Slavs.

B) Apart from the bishops of Eastern Illyricum, who applied consistently to the Patriarchate of Constantinople⁴⁴, the bishops of Western Illyricum, as well, applied to the Patriarchate in the VIIIth century and at the beginning of the IXth century, with the exception of the first fifty years of Iconoclasm. Besides, the sources do not provide proof to the notion of more recent researchers that Western Illyricum followed the Latin tradition and that it was a part of the Western Empire⁴⁵. On the contrary, it is proved that the populations of the region were closer and more familiar – in every way – to the throne of Constantinople⁴⁶. Moreover, Serbs and Croats were thought to be loyal to the emperor, during the VIIIth century⁴⁷.

C) From mid-VIIIth century, the attitude of the Byzantine Government towards the western part of the Empire totally changes. The extreme power of the Frankish State and the reinforcement of its links with the Patriarchate of Rome forced the Byzantine foreign policy to consolidate

43. Cf. D. Obolensky, "Byzantium and the Slavic World" in: *Byzantium a World Civilization*, A. Laiou – H. Maguire (ed.), Washington D.C. 1992, p. 38-39.

44. Cf. A. Fliche – V. Martin, *Histoire de l'Église depuis les origines jusqu' à nos jours*, v. V, p. 297; J. Hajjar, *Le Synode permanent dans l'Église Byzantine des origines au XI siècle*, Rome 1962, p. 73; Maximos, Bishop of Sardis, *Τὸ Οἰκουμενικὸν Πατριαρχεῖον ἐν τῇ Ὀρθοδόξῳ Ἐκκλησίᾳ. Ἱστορικοκανονικὴ Μελέτη*, Thessaloniki 1972, p. 119.

45. Cf. Congourdeau, *Les institutions*, p. 90.

46. Cf. Maximos, Bishop of Sardis, *Τὸ Οἰκουμενικὸν Πατριαρχεῖον*, p. 119.

47. É. Malamut, «Les adresses aux princes des pays slaves, du Sud dans le Livre des cérémonies, II, 48: interpretation», *TM* 13 (2000), 595-615.

the Empire's prestige both on the coastal areas and the inland of Dalmatia. This policy would lead to the establishment of the theme of Dalmatia which included the byzantine cities and the islands of Dalmatia in the IXth century⁴⁸.

D) As it emerges from the sources, the Christians of Dalmatia did not adopt iconoclastic convictions. On the contrary, they remained – in their majority – fervent supporters of the iconophilic tradition of the Church, during the whole VIIIth century.

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Ἡ Βυζαντινὴ πολιτικὴ στὴ βόρεια Ἀδριατικὴ κατὰ τὸν 8ο αἰῶνα

Κωνσταντίνου Γούλα
Δρος Θεολογίας

Ἡ εὐρύτερη περιοχὴ τοῦ Ἰλλυρικοῦ ὑπῆρξε ἓνα μόνιμο πεδίο δι-
εκδικήσεων γιὰ τὴ Ρώμη ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν Κωνσταντινούπολη (ὡς γνω-
στόν, μὲ σχετικὴ ἀπόφαση τοῦ Λέοντα Γ' τοῦ Ἰσαύρου (732/3) τὸ Ἄνα-
τολικὸ Ἰλλυρικὸ καὶ ἡ Νότια Ἰταλία ὑπήχθησαν στὴ δικαιοδοσία τοῦ
Πατριαρχείου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως).

Ἡ ἐξαιρετικὰ ἐνδιαφέρουσα καὶ διαφωτιστικὴ γιὰ τὴν εὐρύτερη περιο-
χὴ τοῦ Ἰλλυρικοῦ ἐπιστολὴ τοῦ Ταρρασίου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως (784-
806) πρὸς τὸν ἀρχιεπίσκοπο Σπολατίου (Σπλίτ) Λέοντα δὲν μαρτυρεῖ
μόνο τὴν ἐκκλησιαστικὴ πρόνοια τοῦ θρόνου τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως
γιὰ τὶς ἐπισκοπὲς τοῦ Ἰλλυρικοῦ. Ἀποκαλύπτει ἐπίσης τὴν εὐελιξία καὶ
τὶς στοχεύσεις τῆς βυζαντινῆς διπλωματίας. Ὅπως ἀποδεικνύεται ἀπὸ
τὸ περιεχόμενον τῆς ἐπιστολῆς, ὑπῆρχε συχνότατη ἐπικοινωνία ἀνάμεσα
στὸν παραλήπτη καὶ τὸν ἀποστολέα. Τὸ ἴδιο ἀκριβῶς συνέβαινε ἀντί-
στοιχα καὶ μὲ τοὺς προκατόχους τους Πέτρο καὶ Παῦλο τὸν Δ'. Οἱ

48. Cf. J. Ferluga, *Vizantiska uprava u Dalmaciji*, Beograd 1958; J. Ferluga, *Byzantium on the Balkans, Studies on the Byzantine Administration and the Southern Slavs from the VIIth to the XIIth Centuries*, Amsterdam 1976, p. 76-149.

συγκεκριμένες ἐπιστολές, ὅπως καὶ ἡ πρόσκληση τοῦ Ταρασίου στὸν ἀρχιεπίσκοπο Σπλίτ νὰ συμμετάσχει στὴν Ζ΄ Οἰκουμενικὴ Σύνοδο (787), ἐπιβεβαιώνουν ὅτι οἱ ἐπίσκοποι τοῦ Ἰλλυρικοῦ ἐξακολουθοῦσαν νὰ προσφεύγουν συστηματικὰ στὴν Κωνσταντινούπολη.