

### III

## BYZANTIUM AND THE CRUSADES, 1354–1453

---

With the retirement of John VI Cantacuzenus in 1354, John V Palaeologus ruled alone. He did not underestimate the gravity of the situation, and like his predecessor, soon after his accession made an attempt to save the empire by the usual device of seeking western aid. Half-Latin himself, and inspired by his mother Anna of Savoy with what seems to have been a certain devotion to the Latin church, he set to work to bring about religious union. On December 15, 1355, one year after his accession, he sent Innocent VI at Avignon a very detailed but surprisingly naive letter containing a series of astounding proposals for the effecting of union.<sup>1</sup> To begin with, he requested the pope to aid in the defense of Constantinople by sending five galleys and fifteen transport vessels with a thousand foot soldiers and five hundred horsemen. All these were to be placed under the command of the emperor, but their expenses for six months were to be borne by the pope. In exchange John committed himself to some remarkable concessions. He pledged to convert his subjects within six months to the faith of Rome. To convince the pope that he would carry out the terms promised, he offered remarkably far-reaching guarantees, more than the direst need of any empire could justify on the part of its ruler. First of all John promised to receive the papal legates with respect and accord them the authority to appoint to ecclesiastical benefices in Constantinople whomever they wished. To disseminate a knowledge of Latin culture the papal ambassadors would be permitted to found colleges in Constantinople for the teaching of Latin.<sup>2</sup> John even promised to send his second

For bibliography, see preceding chapter.

1. See Halecki, *Un Empereur de Byzance*, pp. 17 ff. and 31 ff., who probably over-emphasizes the significance of negotiations with the pope under Cantacuzenus (Gay, *Clément VI*, pp. 111 ff. is more reserved); see also Viller, "La Question de l'union," *RHE*, XVIII, 26 ff. On John's letter to the pope, see Halecki, *loc. cit.*

2. During the Latin occupation of Constantinople the Latin emperor had sought to found a Latin college in Constantinople, but the papacy and especially the University of Paris had blocked it. But events had so changed that crusader theoreticians like Raymond Lull and

son Manuel, then a child of seven, to the papal court to be educated by the pope in the Latin faith. The emperor went so far as to pledge that, should these promises for some reason not be fulfilled, he would himself abdicate the throne. In that case control of the empire would be left to the papal ward, Manuel, or if he were still a minor, to the pope.<sup>3</sup>

Not surprisingly, Innocent replied enthusiastically to this astonishing letter. No less understandably, he apparently had some reservations about the seriousness of the proposals, for in his reply he made no reference to anything specific; rather, in general but warm terms, he praised the imperial sentiments. At the same time he wrote letters to the Byzantine patriarch Callistus and to the principal Greek bishops, while dispatching two nuncios to Constantinople, one of them the famous Carmelite Peter Thomas.<sup>4</sup> Though the pope himself was guarded in his approach, news of the proposals was received in other western quarters with distrust mixed with gratification. Characteristically, Philip of Mézières, a propagandist for the crusade in the court of king Peter of Cyprus, wrote, "The news of John V's desire for conversion was very difficult to believe, because it had been so long that the Greeks were separated from the church, and because in previous negotiations they had so often deceived the Roman church."<sup>5</sup>

Wishing nevertheless to capitalize on the opportunity offered, Innocent made overtures to Venice, Genoa, the king of Cyprus, and the Hospitallers of Rhodes in order to secure ships to send to Constantinople, but he failed in his efforts. No one would furnish the contingents requested; papal plans were also set back by the hostilities of the Venetian-Hungarian war. As for the Byzantine emperor, seeing no help forthcoming from Rome, he was obliged to write to Innocent that he was in no position to win the Greek populace over to his policy,<sup>6</sup> since their inherent suspicions were now magnified by the west's failure to send military aid. Negotiations for union were ended for several years.

Yet the case for Greco-Latin rapprochement found its defenders also in the west. And the thought planted in the mind of the pope by

---

William Adam now sought to "Latinize" the Greeks, forcibly or otherwise, by compelling many to learn Latin (Geanakoplos, *Byzantine East and Latin West*, p. 2, note 3, and p. 103, note 74).

3. Halecki, *op. cit.*, pp. 31 ff.

4. Iorga, *Philippe de Mézières*, pp. 137-138; at Constantinople Peter Thomas instructed John in the Catholic faith.

5. Smet, *Life of Saint Peter Thomas*, p. 74.

6. Iorga, *loc. cit.*

young John V bore fruit in the pope's dispatch again to Constantinople, in 1361, of the Latin archbishop of Crete, Peter Thomas, to look more carefully into the question of a possible union. Peter had lived for years in the east and, experienced in its problems, was a most suitable person to entrust with the delicate task of converting the Greeks to Catholicism.<sup>7</sup>

John V listened patiently to the arguments of the papal nuncio and showed signs of willingness to accept the creed of Rome. According to Philip of Mézières, John was even ready to depose the incumbent anti-unionist patriarch of Constantinople, Callistus, and replace him with a Catholic ("patriarcham Graecum perfidum, et unitatis Ecclesiae inimicum promisit deponi et unum alium Catholicum eligi debere").<sup>8</sup> In spite of the favorable motives of both pope and emperor the mission seems to have come to nothing. Though it was clearer than ever that any efforts to obtain western aid could succeed only as a result of papal influence, the difficulty was that, as a consequence of its experience at Lyons, the papacy always demanded as a precondition that military aid follow the Greek abjuration of schism. On their side, the Greeks, reversing these conditions, insisted that aid should be sent before conversion as a sign of papal good faith. An impasse accordingly resulted in which each side waited for the first long step to be taken by the other. Of course what blocked even an initial advance was the suspicion underlying the attitude of each side. Contributory too was the rapid succession of popes, each one having to assess the situation anew for himself before he would act. There was also a misunderstanding in the west regarding the efficacy of imperial power. For in the west, where the Byzantine emperor was—erroneously—believed to have complete power over church and state (Caesaropapism, that is), the fact that he was unable, as we have seen, to force union on his recalcitrant clergy and people was usually misinterpreted as insincerity on his part.<sup>9</sup> Barlaam's words quoted above are especially appropriate here.

In the mid-fourteenth century, under the shadow of the Ottoman

7. Another example besides Peter Thomas, who died in 1396 as titular Latin patriarch of Constantinople, is his predecessor Paul of Smyrna; also the archbishop of Thebes, Simon Atumano. See G. Mercati, *Simone Atumano arcivescovo di Tebe* (Studi e testi, 30; Rome, 1916); K. M. Setton, "The Byzantine Background to the Italian Renaissance," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, C (1956), 51; and G. Fedalto, *Simone Atumano, monaco di studio, arcivescovo latino di Tebe (secolo XIV)* (Brescia, 1968).

8. Philip of Mézières, *Vita S. Petri Thomasii*, p. 616 (Acta Sanctorum, III [Paris, 1863], 605 ff.); Atiya, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

9. Geanakoplos, "Church and State in the Byzantine Empire and the Problem of Caesaropapism," in his *Byzantine East and Latin West*, pp. 57 ff., and "The Council of Florence and the Problem of Union . . .," *ibid.*, p. 94, note 41.

advance, two parties emerged in Byzantium with different views as to the source of succor against the Turks. The overwhelming majority of the masses and the clergy, always steadfastly Orthodox, were against any rapprochement with the Latins. The opposing party, the chief spokesman of which was the grand logothete, the scholar Demetrius Cydones, looked to the west as the only effective source for aid against the Turks. In this view the Christians of both east and west should unite in a common front against the "infidel" Turk.<sup>10</sup> For the salvation of the state they were willing, though reluctantly, to pay the price of ecclesiastical subordination to Rome, the *sine qua non* of such an alliance.

The Orthodox party, however, had other ideas. It envisioned a pan-Orthodox coalition of the Balkan Slavic states against the Turks, a proposal which came to have no little appeal to many at this time. The policy came to the fore in 1355 when a preparatory meeting of Orthodox clergy sat at Constantinople and drew up provisions for an Orthodox league. For a time John V himself was, or seemed to be (perhaps owing to popular pressure), interested in the proposal. He even married his son Andronicus to a Bulgar princess in order to strengthen the ties between the two Orthodox states.<sup>11</sup> But so desperate had John now become that, in the same year, he wrote his famous letter to Rome with its sensational proposals. His ardor for a pan-Balkan alliance cooled, though patriarch Callistus of Constantinople continued the negotiations with the Slavic churches. In 1363 he even visited Serres, then under Serbian control, where he made an attempt to persuade the Serbian prelates of the great benefits to be derived from such an alliance, but died before he accomplished this. Under his successor-patriarch the effort was carried on, with the suggestion for the participation of Russia in the proposed alliance.<sup>12</sup>

The influential Demetrius Cydones, however, grand logothete of the empire and intellectually sympathetic toward the Latins, severely criticized the movement for a pan-Orthodox confederation. Emphasizing the futility of such an alliance, he pointed out the weakness and fickleness of the Slavic states as well as their traditional hostility toward Byzantium.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, the project did not die until the

10. See D. Cydones, "De subsidio Latinorum" and "De non reddendo Callipoli," in *PG*, CLIV, cols. 961-1008 and 1009-1036. D. Zakythinus discusses his views in *La Grèce et les Balkans* (Athens, 1946), pp. 52-56.

11. On this pan-Orthodox union see Zakythinus, *Byzantion, State and Community* [in Greek] (Athens, 1951), pp. 140-141.

12. Nicephorus Gregoras, XXXVII, 16 (*CSHB*, III, 537); cf. Ostrogorsky, *Byzantine State*, p. 479.

13. Cydones, *PG*, CLIV, cols. 973, 976.

battle of Kossovo in 1389 and the capture of Tirnovo in 1393, when both the Serbian and the Bulgarian states fell irrevocably under the hegemony of the Ottomans. The destruction of these two states ended any hopes for a Balkan Orthodox alignment against the Turk.

Following in the steps of Innocent VI and his predecessor Clement VI, the new pope Urban V worked toward the formation of a Greco-Latin coalition against the Turks. In 1363, at papal urging, Louis I of Hungary and the Serbs united in an attempt to capture the Turkish-controlled fortress of Adrianople in Thrace. The Greeks seem to have held aloof from this expedition, which, because of the large number of forces involved (some say twenty thousand men), has sometimes been termed a crusade. One modern historian believes that had the Greeks been able to overcome their fear of Turkish reprisals and participated, the Turkish threat might have been completely destroyed.<sup>14</sup> At any rate, the campaign ended in a surprise attack and a massacre of the Christians by the Turks.

By this time opinion in the west had changed direction; an expedition against the Turks was no longer viewed as merely the prelude to a crusade to the Holy Land but, because of the increasing Turkish danger to Europe, in itself constituted the crusade. Western Europe had finally begun to realize that a Christian Constantinople, even though Greek, was necessary for the defense of all Christendom. Thus in 1363 pope Urban V preached a crusade against the Ottomans to take place under the leadership of Peter I, king of Cyprus. Although not specifically planned to relieve Constantinople—it aimed ultimately at conquering Palestine by attacking Egypt<sup>15</sup>—this expedition was important as representing the first support, however indirect, given by the west to Byzantium.

Evidence indicates that the pope appealed strongly to emperor John V to participate in the expedition. John's initial reaction was, however, one of fear of retaliation from the Turks, and he was therefore reluctant to join. But upon hearing of the vast preparations being made and the size of the forces involved he changed his mind. Accordingly, he wrote to Urban that as soon as the Turks were expelled from Thrace he would join the crusade, meaning of course that once the westerners had aided the Greeks to recover Thrace he would join in ousting the Turks from Asia Minor and the Holy Land. From John V's viewpoint, with the objective of the expedition Egypt instead of Thrace or Asia Minor, his hope of profit from the crusade

14. H. Gibbons, *The Foundation of the Ottoman Empire* (Oxford, 1916), pp. 22–23.

15. Peter de Lusignan's crusade was the last with Jerusalem as its aim.

was shattered, and he offered no help to Peter.<sup>16</sup> But that John entertained hopes of deflecting the aim of the crusade from Alexandria to Asia Minor is indicated by the appearance at Avignon, in 1365, of a Latinophile friend of Demetrius Cydones, John Lascaris Calopherus, with instructions to that end.<sup>17</sup>

Peter I de Lusignan, king of Cyprus, was a fiery paladin who had, in 1361, taken from the Turks the city of Adalia, situated in Asia Minor across from Cyprus.<sup>18</sup> To defend this new possession and simultaneously to loosen the Moslem stranglehold around his kingdom, which since the fall of Acre constituted the most advanced western outpost in the east, Peter had gone to Avignon to meet Urban V and the king of France, John II the Good. It was not unduly difficult to persuade them to provide support, given the precarious position of Cyprus, the most important Latin base in the east, and on March 31, 1363, a full-fledged crusade (*passagium generale*) was proclaimed with the French king as captain-general.<sup>19</sup> But there was the difficult problem of persuading the western princes and knights to participate. The pope wrote everywhere, to all the Catholic rulers of the west, and, for reasons of propaganda, the king of Cyprus himself undertook a great tour across France, England, Germany, and even Poland. Despite the cordiality of his reception on all sides almost nothing concrete resulted. Only the king of Hungary, Louis I, and the count of Savoy, Amadeo VI, showed any willingness to follow.<sup>20</sup> Peter, who had no particular interest in Byzantium, left for the east before the arrival of these potential allies. In 1365 his forces sacked the rich port of Alexandria, and raided other coastal cities of the Levant. But the crusaders withdrew from Alexandria when the main Egyptian army approached, and in the long run little was accomplished. In 1370 a truce was signed with the sultan to maintain in effect the status quo as it was before the expedition to Alexandria.<sup>21</sup>

With the appearance of Amadeo VI, count of Savoy, however, Byzantium became more closely involved with the crusade. Amadeo, called the Green Count (*Conte Verde*), was the cousin of John V through John's mother, Anna of Savoy. John's initial lack of enthu-

16. Iorga, *Philippe de Mézières*, pp. 280–283, saying that a few Greeks (John Lascaris Calopherus and John Angelus) joined Peter's army. Most Greeks showed no interest.

17. G. Mercati, "Per l'epistolario di Demetrio Cidone," *Studi bizantini e neoellenici*, III (1931), 215–216.

18. On Peter I, see below, pp. 352–360.

19. Raynaldus, *Annales ecclesiastici*, ad ann. 1363, no. 4.

20. Iorga, *Philippe de Mézières*, pp. 172–204.

21. Atiya, *Crusade in the Later Middle Ages*, pp. 345–378.

siasm for the expedition gave way to readiness to participate when he heard of the magnitude of the preparations, which seemed to guarantee results. It seemed possible that he could even redirect the crusade to aid Constantinople. Accordingly, in 1364 he sent as his envoy to Urban the Genoese Michael Malaspina, offering the aid of Byzantine forces for the projected crusade to the Holy Land. He prescribed, however, that the Turks first be ejected from Thrace. As we have seen, this was his way of emphasizing the need to alleviate the pressure on Constantinople. The pope responded prudently, in his reply including a pledge that Michael VIII had much earlier demanded from pope Gregory X: namely, that while the Byzantine emperor was away on the crusade the western crusaders would promise to do no damage to his empire.<sup>22</sup> For the pope evidently realized that even as late as a century and a half after 1204 the Greeks still feared a repetition of that catastrophic event. The aims of John V seemed finally about to be realized.

But the pope on his side had further demands to make. In February 1366 Urban wrote to John V promising to induce count Amadeo (“consanguineus tuus”), as well as king Peter of Cyprus and king Louis of Hungary, to come to the rescue of Byzantium if John would renounce the schism and submit to Rome in full sincerity (“in sinceritate cordium”). Louis meanwhile wrote to Urban that he had promised to send aid to John V, but Urban wrote him to postpone his crusade until the union of the churches had been accomplished.<sup>23</sup> So even Louis thenceforth insisted on the papal principle of first union, then assistance.

Byzantine diplomacy was in the meantime not inactive. In the spring of 1366 John V, alarmed at the Turkish capture of Adrianople and Philippopolis, decided to go to Hungary to appeal personally for aid and remove Louis’s scruples about aiding a “schismatic.” Entering a foreign country, a Byzantine emperor thus went for the first time not at the head of an army but almost as a beggar seeking help. There was, however, little profit to either the Byzantine or the Hungarian side; the demeanor of both men was cold.<sup>24</sup> According to

22. P. Lecacheux, ed., *Lettres secrètes et curiales du pape Urbain V* (Paris, 1902), p. 211, no. 305; see also K. Kerofilas, *Amedeo VI*, and Cox, *The Green Count of Savoy: Amadeus VI*.

23. See A. Theiner and F. Miklosich, eds., *Monumenta spectantia ad unionem ecclesiarum graecae et romanae*, II (Vienna, 1872), 74–75; cf. Halecki, *Un Empereur de Byzance*, p. 129; and Norden, *Papsttum und Byzanz*, p. 703. But the events are not clear. On January 25, 1366, the pope had sent another letter to the emperor announcing that a combined expedition (of Cyprus and Hungary) would attack the Turks (Raynaldus, ad ann. 1366, no. 2). Cf. Iorga, *Philippe de Mézières*, p. 331, notes 7–9.

24. Halecki, *Un Empereur de Byzance*, pp. 129, 134.

the contemporary source, John offended Louis by his arrogance, refusing to doff his hat to the king. In any case, Louis of Hungary did not join the campaign, and later even became hostile to Byzantium.

On his way home from Hungary John encountered a new difficulty. Arriving in Hungarian-occupied Vidin, he was forced to interrupt his journey, as the Bulgars would not permit him to pass.<sup>25</sup> It was only the exertions of his cousin Amadeo that enabled him to return safely home. The Green Count was on his way to the east to join the crusade of Peter I of Cyprus when he was—falsely—informed by the Venetians, who usually opposed new crusades because of the resultant damage to their eastern trade, that a treaty of peace had been signed between Cyprus and Egypt. Thereupon Amadeo, perhaps at the suggestion of the pope, sailed with his troops and ships to Constantinople. With no more than 1,800 men he attacked and took Gallipoli, which he promptly handed over to the Byzantines. Then, leaving some of his forces to strengthen the garrison at Gallipoli, he proceeded to Constantinople, where he was welcomed with great joy by the populace. Learning of the plight of his unhappy cousin, he left a garrison to guard Constantinople and sailed along the Black Sea coast seizing Bulgarian cities.<sup>26</sup> At Varna, which he besieged, he forced the release of his cousin on December 21, 1366, and then lifted the siege.

An agreement was then reached between Amadeo and John. For the sum of 15,000 florins Amadeo handed over to the emperor the cities he had taken in Bulgaria, including Mesembria and Sozopolis. During his stay with the emperor in Constantinople the recurrent problem of ecclesiastical union was discussed, and Amadeo, a forceful personality, succeeded in persuading John that the emperor should go personally to Rome to seek aid.<sup>27</sup> An interested participant in the discussions was Paul of Smyrna, the Latin patriarch of Constantinople, who, according to one Greek source not previously used, had brought to the emperor letters from the pope concerning union.<sup>28</sup>

25. Iorga, *Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches*, I (Gotha, 1908), 224, note 2, and 230; and Ostrogorsky, *Byzantine State*, p. 479. Several authors, however, believe (probably erroneously) that John V was actually seized by the Bulgars. (Delaville Le Roulx, *La France en Orient*, p. 152, following P. Datta, *Spedizione*).

26. For Amadeo's motives in aiding Byzantium, see Delaville Le Roulx, *La France en Orient*, pp. 141–142, and Atiya, *op. cit.*, pp. 380–381. On Amadeo's expedition, see *Chroniques de Savoye*, in *Historiae patriae monumenta*, III: *Scriptores*, I (Turin, 1840), cols. 5–382; cf. Datta, *Spedizione*, and M. Canale, *Della Spedizione in Oriente di Amadeo di Savoia* (Genoa, 1887).

27. *Chroniques de Savoye*, p. 314; Delaville Le Roulx, *La France en Orient*, pp. 156–157; Ostrogorsky, *Byzantine State*, p. 480.

28. *Synodicae constitutiones* [in Greek], 58, in *PG*, CLII, cols. 1410–1412.



The conversations held at this time and the new western proposal for union are reported in a letter of the patriarch of Constantinople, Philotheus, which he addressed to the Greek bishop of Ochrida: "Most blessed bishop of Prima Justiniana [Ochrida], and of all Bulgaria: The cousin of my emperor, the count of Savoy, having come to Constantinople with ships and having with him a western bishop, Paul, conveyed the letters of the pope to the emperor concerning the unity and peace of the churches, that is, of ours and that of the Latins. The . . . emperor showed the letters to me and to the most holy patriarchs of Alexandria and Jerusalem and then to the members of the holy synod, the most holy bishops. After assembling, we unanimously voted to hold an ecumenical council, according to the example of the other seven ecumenical councils." Philotheus's letter goes on to say that all the eastern patriarchs were instructing their subordinate bishops to come to the council in order to uphold the faith. The council was to be held in June of 1369. He continues: "We have thus agreed with the representatives of the pope. If in the council our faith is proved by the holy scriptures to be stronger than that of the Latins, they shall come over to us and confess as we do."<sup>29</sup> The information provided by this letter is significant because it indicates that the papal emissary as well as Amadeo and the emperor had all finally agreed with the Greek clergy that an ecumenical council should be held—the date was even set—in which once and for all doctrinal differences would be resolved.

Whether the pope, as seems likely, rejected his envoy Paul's agreement as exceeding the authority delegated to him we are in no position to judge. At any rate, despite the fixing of a date, the council was apparently not convoked, and henceforth the Greek clergy would take no further part in the negotiations. Moreover, the Greek clergy now took a position in opposition to John's projected journey to the west. John himself became reluctant to leave because of the worsening condition of his empire. We probably need not accept the report of the *Chronicles of Savoy* that count Amadeo, in order to force the ecclesiastical submission of the emperor to Rome, abducted and held as hostages the Greek patriarch and four Greek noblemen.<sup>30</sup> In the chronicles it is also affirmed that, just before this, the patriarch had warned Amadeo that the emperor could not possibly go to Rome because the populace would depose him.<sup>31</sup>

Two Greek ambassadors now accompanied Amadeo to the west, and it was understood in Constantinople that as soon as they re-

29. *Ibid.*, *loc. cit.*, dated c. 1366.

30. *Chroniques de Savoye*, pp. 318–319; cf. Atiya, *op. cit.*, pp. 395–396.

31. *Chroniques de Savoye*, pp. 316–317; Atiya, *loc. cit.*

turned John V would depart for Italy. But John's trip was delayed. On June 4, 1367, Amadeo and the two Greek envoys left Byzantium from Pera, the Byzantine envoys not returning until over a year later, on September 20, 1368. The letters from the pope were then read publicly in the Hippodrome.<sup>32</sup> Thus ended the crusade of Amadeo, the Green Count. It was an expedition of a kind the Byzantines would have welcomed more often. For though it was not decisive in results, it was at least helpful. Most important, it showed that coöperation and understanding between crusaders and Byzantines was possible if the Byzantines could be made to realize that, as in the case of the mild and unambitious Amadeo, not every western leader intended to carve out a state for himself in the east.

In 1369 John himself finally undertook his journey to the west. At the request of the pope his trip was facilitated by both Venice and Genoa. With him John took many high state dignitaries, but, revealingly, not a single ecclesiastic accompanied him. In Rome John met the pope, who had himself come down from Avignon, and in October of 1369 John presented his confession of faith, abjured the schism, and attended mass at St. Peter's with the pope and the cardinals. This act of submission to the Roman church, dramatic as it was, was nonetheless only a personal, individual act and could not really be binding on his Greek subjects. Urban did, however, write at once to the Greek clergy and urge them to follow John's example.<sup>33</sup>

While John was renouncing his Orthodox faith in Rome, the anti-unionist patriarch Philotheus was taking measures in Constantinople to strengthen the cause of Orthodoxy. He issued hortatory letters not only to all the Orthodox within the empire but also to those of Syria, Egypt, and Balkan Slavic territories, and even Russia. The pope, on his side, issued an encyclical announcing the great news of John's conversion to the princes of Europe. Jubilant, the pope loaded the emperor with presents and encouraged John to negotiate with English mercenaries then in Italy for service in Byzantium.

The way finally seemed open for collaboration between John V and the western powers for a joint crusade. It had already been foreseen that Amadeo's expedition would be only the forerunner of

32. S. Lampros and K. Amantos, "Brachea Chronika" [in Greek], *Mnemeia tes Hellinikes historias*, I (1932), no. 47, pp. 25-30, and Atiya, *op. cit.*, p. 396. Cf. P. Charanis, "Les 'Brachea Chronika' comme source historique," *Byzantion*, XIII (1938), 339, note 6. Strangely, the best 15th-century Greek historians omit mention of John's trip to Buda and even of Amadeo's expedition.

33. A. Vasiliev, "Il Viaggio dell' imperatore bizantino Giovanni V Paleologo in Italia," *Studi bizantini e neoellenici*, III (1931), 151-193. Cf. Ostrogorsky, *Byzantine State*, p. 480, and Halecki, *Un Empereur de Byzance*, p. 205.

a vast expedition to follow John's conversion. And now pope Urban V preached a new crusade.<sup>34</sup> At the start of 1370 he wrote to Venice, Genoa, and Savoy not only informing them of John's abjuration but exhorting them to prepare a new expedition. Moreover, he requested queen Joanna of Naples to accord free passage to the troops of the various nations that John V, "the Catholic prince," was to lead against the Turks.<sup>35</sup> Despite all the papal exhortations there was as usual little response from the west, since the Hundred Years' War had started again after a brief pause. To cap it all the pope himself died shortly thereafter.

John V did not at once return to Constantinople but proceeded to France with money borrowed from the Venetians. Later, unable to pay his debt, he was actually imprisoned in Venice, as an "insolvent debtor."<sup>36</sup> How low the might of Byzantium had fallen! He was freed only through the efforts of his son Manuel, who raised the necessary sums. In October 1371 John was once again back in Constantinople, his exertions having accomplished nothing except to induce him to renounce his own faith. In these hopeless circumstances he could not, understandably, attempt to persuade his countrymen to accept the union of the churches. There was in fact an Orthodox reaction in Constantinople. Yet John's conversion does not seem to have aroused the intensity of feeling that Michael VIII's signing of the union at Lyons had done a century before. This may reflect the engrossment of the clergy of Constantinople in the last stage of the hesychastic controversy. No doubt constant harping on the theme of religious union, together with the actual Turkish inroads, played some part as well.

The new pope, Gregory XI, however, did not mean to lose this opportunity for converting the Greeks to Catholicism, so in 1373 he organized a congress at Thebes to plan a crusade; to it he invited the titular Latin emperor, the Venetians, the Genoese, the Hospitallers of Rhodes, the vicar of the duchy of Athens, the kings of Cyprus, Hungary, and Sicily, and—most important for us—the Byzantine emperor. Despite these grandiose preparations, nothing seems to have been accomplished. Louis of Hungary, whose participation was indispensable, was involved in a dynastic conflict of his own, and

34. Raynaldus, ad ann. 1369, no. 4; cf. Pears, *Destruction of the Greek Empire*, p. 92.

35. Lecacheux, *Lettres secrètes d'Urbain V*, no. 3040, p. 524.

36. F. Dölger proves this in his "Johannes VII., Kaiser der Rhomäer," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, XXXI (1931), 22, note 2, in contrast to Halecki, *op. cit.*, pp. 335 ff., who considers it legend; cf. Ostrogorsky, *Byzantine State*, p. 481, and R. J. Loenertz, "Jean V Paléologue à Venise (1370–1371)," *Revue des études byzantines*, XVI (1958), 217–232.

Venice and Genoa, instead of fighting the Turks, had provoked a new war between themselves.<sup>37</sup> In 1374 Gregory dispatched four legates to Constantinople, to promote conversions.

John V's envoys vainly scoured Europe for help, extracting only vague promises from king Charles V of France. Abandoned by everyone and realizing that he could no longer effectively resist the Turk, John, cut off from the rest of Europe by a large strip of Turkish territory, with no fleet and almost no army, took the supremely humiliating step of acknowledging himself the vassal of the Turks. To Murad I, the Ottoman sultan, he even handed over his favorite son Manuel as a hostage for his conduct. Later Manuel and his nephew John VII actually had to assist the Turks in besieging the last Greek stronghold remaining in Asia Minor, Philadelphia,<sup>38</sup> the inhabitants of which only a few years before had, as we have seen, vainly pleaded for protection from the pope.

In both east and west events forced the abandonment of any further attempts at a crusade—the renewal of the Hundred Years' War between France and England and especially the conflict that erupted between Venice and Genoa over possession of the island of Tenedos at the mouth of the Dardanelles. In Byzantium itself, as if things were not bad enough, a new civil war broke out between John V and one of his sons, Andronicus (IV), and later between John and his grandson John (VII). In view of these new preoccupations Byzantine hopes for a crusade had to be put off. A glimmer of hope for succor appeared however in 1388, when pope Urban VI sent to the east two armed galleys for the defense of Constantinople. The pope even issued indulgences as for a crusade.<sup>39</sup> But once again nothing came of this.

In 1382 a compromise, arranged at Turin through the mediation of count Amadeo VI of Savoy, finally settled the Veneto-Genoese war over Tenedos.<sup>40</sup> But the Turks continued to advance, Thessalonica even falling temporarily to them in 1387. With the battle of Kossovo in 1389 and the capture of Tirnovo in 1393 the fate of the Slavic

37. See Halecki, *op. cit.*, pp. 289–319, who does not believe that the congress was ever actually convened. Incidentally, the Genoese of Pera refused to break their treaty with the Turks to enter into the league being formed by the pope (Délaville Le Roulx, *La France en Orient*, p. 159).

38. On this, see Barker, *Manuel II Palaeologus*, pp. 22, 79.

39. On the complex Italian rivalries, see Delaville Le Roulx, especially on Venice's tergiversations. At one point Manuel, discouraged, even offered to hand Constantinople over to Venice to defend, under certain conditions (Heyd, *Histoire du commerce*, II, 264).

40. On the Tenedos war, see F. Thiriet, "Venise et l'occupation de Ténédos au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle," *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire*, LXV (1953), 219–245.

nations of the Balkans was sealed.<sup>41</sup> The last center of Slavic resistance had been crushed and the Turks now cast their shadow rapidly over all the Balkans.

The civil war between John V and his grandson John VII continued. The grandson was supported by the Turks, who hoped thereby to take the first step toward the occupation of Constantinople. John V's turbulent reign, spanning—with interruptions—half a century, at last came to an end in 1391. Luckily for Byzantium his able son Manuel II, at the news of his father's death, was able to escape from the Turkish camp where he was still held hostage and to reach Constantinople to assume the imperial throne. But Manuel's empire was now but a shadow of its former self, consisting only of the city of Constantinople, Thessalonica, and the outlying despotate of the Morea, which, though itself prosperous enough, was distant and unable to communicate with the capital except by sea.

The tremendous Ottoman successes in the Balkans made a great impression on the west. With the Ottoman crossing of the Danube, Hungary was directly threatened, and the Latin principalities in Greece also began to feel the pressure of the Turks.<sup>42</sup> Until this time Byzantine appeals for western aid, as well as papal admonitions to western princes, had generally fallen on deaf ears. But at last the west was shocked enough to feel that drastic, concerted measures were imperative. King Sigismund of Hungary in particular, fearing for the safety of his country, was spurred into action. And so in 1393-1394 Hungary, which had long shown scant concern for Christian solidarity, sought to assemble a great Christian army to oppose the Turkish advance. Sigismund's appeal was answered by the chivalry of several western nations, by German, French, and Burgundian knights;<sup>43</sup> by the Burgundians, especially, the old chivalric ideal of a crusade was still held in esteem. Even usually aloof Venice joined the coalition, sending a small fleet to patrol the Dardanelles and keep open the line of communications between Byzantium and the crusading forces assembling in Hungary.<sup>44</sup>

Sigismund could not have overlooked the strategic importance of

41. On Kossovo, see H. Grégoire, "L'Opinion byzantine et la bataille de Kossovo," *Byzantion*, VI, 247 ff., and Ostrogorsky, *Byzantine State*, p. 486.

42. See below, pp. 245-247.

43. See especially R. Rosetti, "The Battle of Nicopolis (1396)," *Slavonic Review*, XV (1937), 629 ff. Cf. Atiya, *Crusade in the Later Middle Ages*, pp. 435-436; Ostrogorsky, *Byzantine State*, p. 490; and above, pp. 21-25.

44. Venice, to protect her interests, was then preparing to send an embassy to Bayazid to reconcile him with Byzantium, a fact which provoked a protest from Sigismund (document

Constantinople and the possibility of securing assistance from the nation most threatened by the Turks. The Greek emperor Manuel, however, was caught on the horns of a dilemma. To be sure, Byzantium's rescue from the Turk might be forthcoming from this expedition if it were to turn out successfully. But in the event of failure, encircled as his capital was by Turkish territory on all sides, he would have to risk the severe retaliation of the Turks, who in fact only a short time before had begun a blockade, though not systematic, of Constantinople. Despite this pitfall, Manuel, with the best interests of his empire at heart, courageously prepared to cooperate as best he could with the crusaders without arousing Turkish suspicions. According to the Greek historian Ducas, it was in fact Manuel whose appeals for aid to the pope, the king of France, and the king of Hungary had originally aroused Europe to organize this crusade. The passage of Ducas is vague (he does not even give a date), and the Hungarian chroniclers, perhaps more correctly, ascribe instigation of the crusade rather to Sigismund.<sup>45</sup> Whatever the truth of Ducas's assertion, we know that Hungarian envoys had been in Brusa, attempting to negotiate with the Turks, and it is not improbable that on their return to Hungary they stopped in Constantinople and discussed a possible alliance with the Greeks.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, in May 1395 a Greek envoy of the emperor was in France, and although we are not certain of the specific aim of his mission, it is most probable that the projected crusade was under discussion. Greek embassies to the west in this period were frequent, but it is difficult to assign any specific significance to each one with respect to imperial policy toward the crusade. At any rate, whatever Manuel's actual role in the launching of this western expedition, known to history as the Crusade of Nicopolis, it seems correct at least to affirm that during this period the Byzantines, mindful of their extreme weakness, showed no little indecision for fear of severe Turkish retaliation.

A congress of states interested in stopping the Turkish advance convened at Venice in the spring of 1395, where Greek envoys had been present since December of the previous year. We do know that Manuel's representatives participated in the negotiations. Manuel in fact undertook to equip ten galleys and to pay the salary of the crews for a month, Sigismund for three months. For this purpose

ed. S. S. Ljubić in *Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum meridionalium*, IV [*Lis-tine . . .*, 1358–1403; Zagreb, 1874], 360–361).

45. Ducas, I, 13 (*PG*, CLVII, col. 813). Cf. "Sphrantzes," I, 14 (ed. Papadopoulos, p. 64). Atiya, *The Crusade of Nicopolis*, pp. 34–36, Ostrogorsky, *Byzantine State*, p. 490, and Vasiliev, *Byzantine Empire*, p. 630, seem to think Sigismund began the crusade.

46. See Atiya, *Crusade of Nicopolis*, p. 35, and p. 173, note 1.

30,000 ducats were given by Manuel to the imperial envoy Manuel Philanthropenus.<sup>47</sup> Meanwhile, Manuel seems to have entered into a league with the Christian outposts of the Aegean, the Genoese of the islands of Lesbos and Chios, and also the Knights Hospitaller of Rhodes.<sup>48</sup> Manuel's actions reveal his desperation and willingness to risk all to save his empire. There is an interesting passage in the *Chronicon maius* ascribed to George Sphrantzes, a work which has been shown probably to be a later compilation by Macarius Melissenus and therefore to be used with extreme caution. It states that on Sigismund's arrival at the city of Nicopolis in Bulgaria, he sent a messenger secretly to Manuel to inform him "to be ready to destroy the enemy of the faith. . . . As the thirsty land receives the shower, the Greeks joyfully received the envoy and secretly made preparations for war."<sup>49</sup>

The ensuing battle of Nicopolis (September 25, 1396), which had apparently held such great promise, ended in complete failure, the motley western host being completely routed by sultan Bayazid and his Turks. The reason for the western failure lies primarily in the lack of coöperation between the Hungarian and French troops.<sup>50</sup> Sigismund himself escaped capture by flight, and with Philibert of Naillac, the grand master of the Hospitallers, went by sea to Constantinople on vessels which had been mere onlookers at the battle; thence, by way of the Aegean and Adriatic seas, he finally arrived home. His passage through the Dardanelles was made to the accompaniment of piteous cries of Christian captives lined up by Bayazid along the shore to humiliate him.<sup>51</sup>

According to Jean Froissart, the French chronicler of the Hundred Years' War, Manuel II Palaeologus played the role of informer to Bayazid regarding the movement of the western crusaders. But his testimony is probably false, irritated as he was at the deaths of so

47. Delaville Le Roulx, *La France en Orient*, p. 243.

48. Silberschmidt, *Das orientalische Problem*, p. 119, and A. Mompherratos, *Diplomatic Activities of Manuel II* [in Greek].

49. I, 14 (ed. Papadopoulos, p. 64; *CSHB*, p. 59). On the authenticity of the *Chronicon maius*, see Ostrogorsky, *Byzantine State*, p. 417, note 2, and R. J. Loenertz, "Autour du *Chronicon maius* attribué à Georges Phrantzès," in *Miscellanea Giovanni Mercati*, III (Studi e testi, 123; Vatican City, 1946), 273–311.

50. Kling, *Die Schlacht bei Nikopolis*; Rosetti, "The Battle of Nicopolis," pp. 629 ff.

51. Report of the Bavarian John Schiltberger, *Reisebuch*, ed. V. Langmantel (Tübingen, 1885), p. 7. Barker, *Manuel II Palaeologus*, pp. 482 ff., quotes a letter of Sigismund to Philibert of Naillac, showing that Sigismund conferred with Manuel in Constantinople after the battle (first published by H. V. Sauerland as "Ein Brief des Königs Sigismund von Ungarn an . . . Philibert von Naillac," *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde*, XXI [1896], 565–566). In this letter, dated November 11, 1396, Sigismund mentions a league including Manuel, the Genoese of Pera, and the Hospitallers.

many western knights, and, in the "best" western tradition, looking for a Greek scapegoat. Another western historian lays the blame on a letter of Manuel which was intercepted. Still other historians consider John Galeazzo Visconti, duke of Milan, a possible traitor, for he had reason to be hostile to the French, who had kept him from attaining his goals against the Genoese.<sup>52</sup> That Manuel, a genuine Byzantine patriot, was a traitor is very hard to believe, in view of the fact that nothing would have augured better for the safety of his empire than a successful crusade.

After the catastrophe at Nicopolis the situation worsened even further for Byzantium. For, according to the *Chronicon maius*, the Turks had discovered the secret alliance of Manuel and the western crusaders, and therefore resumed their blockade of Constantinople both on land and sea "for a long period of time."<sup>53</sup> Turkish armies also crossed the isthmus of Corinth and defeated Theodore, the Byzantine despot of the Morea, temporarily occupying the lower city of Athens, plundering and devastating everything in their path.<sup>54</sup> The plight of Constantinople seemed hopeless; the capture of the blockaded capital seemed imminent.

In the west the reaction to the debacle of Nicopolis—which is often taken to be the last great crusade of the medieval period—was one of utter dismay. The wholesale massacre of so many members of prominent noble houses made it virtually impossible to rouse the nobles again for common action in defense of the east. Crusading expeditions were, more than ever, considered in the west to be expensive and futile schemes. Eastern Europe and Hungary were therefore left alone to cope with the Turks as best they could.<sup>55</sup>

But the impression the defeat at Nicopolis made on the Byzantine mind was even graver. As we have seen, the *Chronicon maius* affirms that Bayazid, having discovered Manuel's negotiations with Sigismund, besieged the city by land and sea "for a long period." The

52. See Delaville Le Roulx, *La France en Orient*, p. 258.

53. "Sphrantzes," I, 14 (ed. Papadopoulos, p. 65).

54. Zakythinos, *Despotat grec de Morée*, I (Paris, 1932), 156 ff.

55. Powerful Burgundy had connections with Byzantium even after Nicopolis. In 1421, duke Philip III the Good (and king Henry V of England) charged Gilbert of Lannoy with a mission to the east. In 1433 another Burgundian envoy, Bertrand of La Broquière, went to the east, perhaps with reference to plans for a crusade. And in 1442, when the small flotilla of Geoffrey of Thoisy sailed to the east, an envoy of John VIII Palaeologus appeared at the Burgundian court to seek aid against the Turks. The Burgundian *Chronicle of Wavrin* (ed. and trans. Wm. and E. L. C. P. Hardy as *Recueil des chroniques* . . . [Rerum britannicarum medii aevi scriptores, nos. 39, 40; 8 vols., London, 1864–1891]) affirms that Waleran and John of Wavrin had gone to Constantinople to aid the Greeks before the battle of Varna (1444). Also it is stated in the *Annales veneti* of Stefano Magno that 300 Burgundian



people within the city, according to Ducas, were so discouraged that many lost their courage and even began to show a tendency to betray their country to the Turks. Emperor Manuel now clutched at any straw, sending envoys to beg assistance at practically every court of the west. Bearing fresh appeals, his ambassadors appeared not only before the pope, the doge of Venice, and the kings of France, England, and Aragon,<sup>56</sup> but even before Basil I of Muscovy.<sup>57</sup> From some of these rulers Manuel collected money; from France in particular he had the hope of securing men-at-arms.<sup>58</sup> According to the French chronicler of St. Denis, Charles VI of France was particularly flattered because "it was the first time the ancient emperor of the world had appealed for help to such a remote country."<sup>59</sup> Charles, to be sure, refused to allow his brother Louis, the duke of Orleans, to go personally to aid the east, but implementing his pledge, he sent to Constantinople twelve hundred well-trained mercenaries, men who had little feeling for a crusade but were eager for booty. These were put under the command of marshal Boucicault, the valiant, chivalric survivor of Nicopolis, whose career and personality, especially his sincere lack of desire for personal aggrandizement, remind one of Amadeo VI of Savoy.<sup>60</sup> It is of interest that at this time Charles VI refused to buy the claim to the empire of Constantinople offered to him by Manuel's nephew and rival John VII, who wanted in exchange a castle in France and an annual income.<sup>61</sup>

Meanwhile pope Boniface IX had responded favorably to Manuel's pleas and in April 1398, and again in March 1399, preached a holy war against the "infidels." We can hardly describe this as a crusade,<sup>62</sup> for the western princes, discouraged and wholly occupied

---

soldiers went in 1445 to aid the despot Constantine in the Morea. See C. Marinescu, "Philippe le Bon duc de Bourgogne," in *Actes du VI<sup>e</sup> Congrès International d'Études Byzantines*, I (Paris, 1950), 152-162.

56. On Manuel's diplomacy see Delaville Le Roulx, *La France en Orient*, pp. 355-358. Cf. Ducas, I, 13 (*PG*, CLVII, col. 813).

57. *Nikonovskaya letopis*, in *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisei (Complete Collection of Russian Annals)*, XI (1897), 168, as cited in A. Vasiliev, *Byzantine Empire*, II (1961), 632.

58. Delaville Le Roulx, *La France en Orient*, p. 363.

59. *Chronique de religieux de St. Denis*, ed. Bellaguet, II, 562.

60. On Boucicault's expedition to Constantinople, see especially *Livre des faits du maréchal Boucicault*, II, 205-232. Cf. Delaville Le Roulx, *La France en Orient*, pp. 359-375.

61. In 1397 Manuel sent his brother to Paris to appeal for aid, as Manuel mentions in his funeral oration on Theodore, referring to his brother's trip to England, France, and Italy (S. Lampros, "John Palaeologus . . ." [in Greek], *Neos Hellenomnemon*, X [1913], 248 ff.). Theodore Cantacuzenus, called "an uncle of the emperor," in 1398 went to ask aid of the king of France (Iorga, *Philippe de Mézières*, pp. 504-505).

62. Atiya, *Crusade in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 465.

with their own affairs, would not respond to the pope's appeal. Manuel's request to Moscow for help was supported by a patriarchal appeal as well. Though the Greek embassy was favorably received in Moscow, the Russian ruler, like most of the westerners, was not disposed to send men but only money, "granting alms," as he put it, "to those who are in such need and misery besieged by the Turks."<sup>63</sup>

Bayazid attempted to oppose the approach of marshal Boucicault and his French troops through the Dardanelles to Constantinople.<sup>64</sup> But Boucicault managed to reach the capital safely, to the great joy of the populace. Leaving his lieutenant John of Châteaumorand to protect the capital, Boucicault, together with Manuel and his Greek troops, made a number of attacks on the Turkish-held Asiatic coast of the Marmara and Bosphorus areas, extending their patrols even into the Black Sea. But despite the considerable moral stimulus afforded the Greeks, the modest allied forces were insufficient to alter the situation radically. Boucicault therefore decided to return to France, but only after persuading his good friend Manuel to accompany him in order to lend the weight of his prestige to a new, personal attempt to induce the western rulers to take more decisive steps in his favor.

Leaving his son John in Constantinople to rule in his stead, and in the company of Boucicault, Manuel set out, on December 10, 1399, on his celebrated journey to the west.<sup>65</sup> His first stop was Venice, where he was magnificently received and where, like his successor John VIII, he probably viewed in St. Mark's the rich loot taken two centuries before, in 1204, from the altar of Hagia Sophia. Everywhere Manuel was paid honors and accorded lavish receptions, his bearing and noble demeanor deeply impressing all the westerners with whom he came in contact. In Paris he even participated in theological disputations with theologians of the university. In Paris also, perhaps at Boucicault's initiative, it seems to have been suggested that Manuel do homage to king Charles VI, as his vassal, and thereby receive the right at feudal law to French military aid; the

63. See note 57 above, *loc. cit.*

64. The Gattilusi, Genoese rulers of Lesbos, kept Bayazid informed as to Boucicault's movements (Delaville Le Roulx, *La France en Orient*, p. 365).

65. On Manuel's journey, see especially A. Vasiliev, "The Journey of the Byzantine Emperor Manuel II Palaeologus in Western Europe (1399-1402)" [in Russian], *Journal of the Ministry of Public Instruction*, n.s., XXXIX (1912), 47-78, 260-304; M. Jugie, "Le Voyage de l'empereur Manuel Paléologue en Occident (1399-1403), *Échos d'Orient*, XV (1912), 322-332; H. Luke, "Visitors from the East to the Plantagenet and Lancastrian Kings," *Nineteenth Century*, CVIII (1930), 760-769; and Barker, *Manuel II Palaeologus*, pp. 167-199. On John of Châteaumorand, see G. Schlumberger, *Byzance et Croisades: Pages médiévales* (Paris, 1927), pp. 84-147.

Venetians, Genoese, and Hospitallers of Rhodes are supposed to have seconded this proposal. But Charles does not seem to have acceded to this remarkable suggestion of a non-Latin emperor's swearing allegiance to a western king.<sup>66</sup>

Manuel was momentarily moved enough by the king of England's easy promises to write that "The king gives us help in warriors, marksmen, money, and vessels to carry the troops where we need."<sup>67</sup> But Manuel spoke too soon, for Henry IV was too busy consolidating his recently acquired throne to be of any real help. One Englishman, Adam of Usk, however, moved by the incongruity of Manuel's noble demeanor and his tragic plight, wrote, "How cruel it is that this great Christian prince from the distant East has been compelled by threats of the infidel . . . to supplicate for help against them. My God, where art thou, ancient glory of Rome!"<sup>68</sup> But Manuel's efforts accomplished little except to secure for him many vague, ultimately unfulfilled promises.<sup>69</sup>

After more than two years abroad Manuel was suddenly recalled home by the wonderful news of the annihilation of the Ottoman armies of Bayazid by Timur Lenk (the Lame) at the battle of Ankara on July 28, 1402.<sup>70</sup> This critical battle, which struck down Ottoman power and led to dynastic discord among Bayazid's sons, was to prolong the life of Byzantium for another half-century. Utter confusion reigned among the Ottomans, and for two decades they were unable to reorganize their forces to resume the attack on the Byzantines.

The Byzantines on their part, however, were unable to take full advantage of the unexpected respite afforded, in order to prepare a new crusade in collaboration with the west, which was at this time wholly distracted by the Great Schism in the Latin church. France, in particular, the traditional home of the crusaders, was rent by civil war. Moreover, Manuel's successes in promoting intrigues among the rivals to the Ottoman throne seem to have slaked whatever thirst he

66. Delaville Le Roulx, *La France en Orient*, 377–378; note the suggestion that Manuel hand the empire over to Charles, provided Manuel gets aid to guard the city.

67. *Lettres de Manuel Paléologue*, ed. E. Legrand, I (Paris, 1893), 52.

68. Adam of Usk, *Chronicon*, ed. E. M. Thompson (London, 1904), p. 57.

69. Almost the only real subsidy Manuel received was 3,000 marks from Richard II of England, which Richard had raised earlier to aid Constantinople (Delaville Le Roulx, *La France en Orient*, p. 382).

70. G. Roloff, "Die Schlacht bei Angora," *Historische Zeitschrift*, CLXI (1940), 244 ff. D. Cantemir, trans. N. Tindal, *History of the Growth and Decay of the Othman Empire* (London, 1734–1735), and Giorgio Stella, *Annales genuenses* (RISS, XVII), p. 1194, affirm that Manuel was in contact with Timur as a potential ally against the Turks, which is quite possible.

may have had for religious union with the Roman church. Consequently, from 1402 to 1417 he took no important action in the west.<sup>71</sup> Nor did he even send a special representative to the opening session of the Council of Pisa, although his trusted envoy-at-large, John Chrysoloras, was in the area; when Manuel II learned in 1409 that his Cretan-born friend Peter Philarges, who had been a professor at the University of Paris, and later archbishop of Milan,<sup>72</sup> had been chosen pope (Alexander V), he wrote him that he was sending John to Pisa.<sup>73</sup>

Manuel meanwhile recovered Thessalonica from the Turks, as well as a few other areas on the Aegean and Black seas. He also took measures to strengthen his empire internally. He went to Mistra, the capital of the Byzantine Morea, and rebuilt the Hexamilion, the wall across the isthmus of Corinth. The Greek forces in the Morea continued their long-lasting campaign against the Latins of the area, to be climaxed, ironically just before the fall of Constantinople in 1453, with the Byzantine seizure of practically all the Morea.<sup>74</sup>

Manuel wrote unceasingly to the princes of the west imploring aid—men, money, anything that could be spared. Thus he addressed two letters to the kings of Aragon, Martin I (1395–1410) and Ferdinand I (1412–1416). In the first, which was delivered by the famous Byzantine humanist Manuel Chrysoloras, the emperor wrote that at Martin's request he was sending some precious relics, and begged him to send to Constantinople the money collected in Spain to aid the Greek empire. In the second, Manuel appealed to Ferdinand to implement his previous promises to come to the aid of the despotate of the Morea against the Turks.<sup>75</sup>

More work must be done in the archives of western Europe before we know the full story of Manuel's many negotiations with the Latin rulers. One item that has usually been overlooked is the apparent intention of Alexander V to launch a crusade to save his compatriots in the east from the Turks. Evidence indicates that he at once sent a

71. L. Bréhier, in *Cambridge Medieval History* (1927 ed.), IV, 619.

72. Geanakoplos, *Byzantine East and Latin West*, pp. 153–154. Alexander V was the conciliar rival to the Roman pope Gregory XII (1406–1415) and the Avignonese Benedict XIII (1394–1423); his successor was John XXIII (1410–1415).

73. Letter in H. Simonsfeld, "Analekten zur Papst- und Konziliengeschichte im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert," *Abhandlungen der philosoph.-histor. Classe der bayer. Akad. der Wissen.*, XX (1893), 45–46.

74. Zakythinos, *Despotat grec de Morée*, I, 180 ff.

75. C. Marinescu, "Manuel II Paléologue et les rois d'Aragon," *Bull. de la section hist. de l'Acad. roumaine*, XI (1924), 194–195, 198–199. On Manuel's career, see Berger de Xivrey, "Mémoire sur la vie . . . de l'empereur Manuel Paléologue," *Mémoires de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*, XIX-2 (Paris, 1853), 1–201, and Barker, *Manuel II Palaeologus*, with particular reference to these letters on pp. 183, 333–334.

deputation to Constantinople to discuss the question of union, a project always connected for the papacy, as we have seen, with the question of military aid to Byzantium.<sup>76</sup> But his disputed pontificate of less than a year was too brief to produce genuine results, though if any pope could have aided Constantinople in this it was he.

It should be noted that in the course of Manuel's many attempts to secure aid from the west he tried as much as possible to avoid the question of religious union. In Paris, to be sure, he debated publicly the question of the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Son (the *filioque*) with the most celebrated French theologians and acquitted himself well. But Manuel knew the dangers inherent in a proposal of union and preferred not to antagonize the west further by futile negotiation. If we can believe the account of the *Chronicon maius*, Manuel on his deathbed warned his son and successor, John VIII, not to consider the union as anything but a weapon against the Turks. "Always keep the light burning for union but never bring it to a conclusion. Propose a council, open negotiations, but protract them interminably. The pride of the Latins and the obstinacy of the Greeks will never agree. By wishing to achieve union you will only widen the schism."<sup>77</sup> Whether or not these words were actually uttered, they seem to characterize well the policy followed by Manuel toward the west.

With the accession of sultan Murad II the Byzantine breathing space was over and a period of Ottoman aggressiveness began. On June 8, 1422, Murad laid siege to Constantinople,<sup>78</sup> but his lack of a fleet and artillery saved the city. The last phase of the Byzantine death struggle had begun. In 1423, the Turks broke into southern Greece and destroyed the Hexamilion wall. The entire Morea was now devastated. Thessalonica was threatened in the summer of 1423. The despot Andronicus finally handed it over to Venice, which promised to defend the city while respecting the rights and customs of the people. After seven years of Venetian rule, however, the Turks under Murad seized Thessalonica in 1430.<sup>79</sup>

76. Sermon of John Gerson before the king of France, 1409, *Opera omnia*, II (Antwerp, 1706), col. 144: "[Petrus] . . . jam commisit legationem." F. Dölger, *Regesten*, part V, ad ann. 1409, p. 97, no. 3326. See Barker, *Manuel II Palaeologus*, p. 269, on Manuel's idea of a Christian league against the Turks after Ankara.

77. "Sphrantzes," II, 13 (ed. Papadopoulos, p. 178). On its authenticity see above, note 49.

78. Account of the siege by John Cananus, in *PG*, CLVI, cols. 68–81. At this time pope Martin V, to aid Byzantium and negotiate union, sent the Franciscan Antonio of Massa as his legate to Constantinople (Barker, *Manuel II Palaeologus*, p. 327).

79. K. Mertzios, *Mnemeia Makedonikes historias* [in Greek] (Salonika, 1947), pp. 34 ff.; P. Lemerle, "La Domination vénitienne à Thessalonique," *Fontes Ambrosiani*, XXVI (=

Once the Turkish menace was renewed, Manuel II almost inevitably turned again to the papacy for aid. Thus in 1417, he sent to pope Martin V an embassy headed by Manuel Chrysoloras which appeared at the Council of Constance. And again with Murad II's siege of Constantinople in 1422, Manuel sent to the west his son and heir, the future John VIII. Accompanying the latter as interpreter was the emperor's secretary, the Italian humanist Francis Filelfo. The two visited successively Venice, Milan, and Hungary in order to negotiate for union and military aid.<sup>80</sup> Manuel was at the same time in contact with the western emperor Sigismund, who was one of the promoters of the Council of Constance.<sup>81</sup>

The new pope elected at this council, Martin V, was strongly in favor of union with the Greeks, and he made a series of conciliatory proposals that he thought would induce them to accept union. He even suggested that an ecumenical council take place in Italy, and, in 1423, went so far as to offer a large sum to the emperor to defray the expenses of the Greeks who would appear at the council. Showing an unexpected willingness to compromise, the pope, in 1425, authorized Latin-Greek mixed marriages, nominated a cardinal as his legate to Constantinople, and granted indulgences to anyone who would go east to aid Byzantium.<sup>82</sup> These concessions fitted in well with the terms the Greek east had long been demanding, especially the convocation of an ecumenical council. Nevertheless, the thought of concluding a religious union with Rome was probably far from Manuel's mind. He knew the temper of the Greeks regarding union and of course the attitude of the Turk, and therefore had to temporize.

In 1425 Manuel II died, a broken man suffering from epilepsy. His successor was his son John VIII, whose brothers Constantine and Theodore, ruling in the Black Sea area and the Morea, were virtually independent rulers. The dismembered empire was now nothing but a ruin.

---

*Misc. G. Galbiati*, III, Milan, 1951); G. Tsaras, ed., *Hioannou Anagnostou Diegesis peri tes teleutaias haloseos tes Thessalonikes* [in Greek] (Salonika, 1957).

80. C. Marinescu, "Deux empereurs byzantins en Occident: Manuel II et Jean VIII Paléologue," *Comptes-rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres* (Paris), 1957, pp. 23-35.

81. On Sigismund see below, chapter XVII. On unionist matters then see also R. Loenertz, "Les Dominicains byzantins Théodore et André Chrysobergès et les négociations pour l'union des églises grecques et latines de 1415 à 1430," *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*, IX (1939), 12-15. S. Syropulus, *Vera historia unionis non verae inter Graecos et Latinos* (The Hague, 1660), pp. 8-9, refers to Sigismund's offer to make John his heir to the Holy Roman empire in return for healing the schism (cf. Barker, *Manuel Palaeologus*, p. 372).

82. Bréhier, in *Cambridge Medieval History* (1927 ed.), IV, 619. By now Manuel's power was so weak that he had to acknowledge himself tributary to the sultan.

Sentiment for an ecumenical council was inevitably growing in both east and west as a solution to more than the narrowly theological problem. After persistent papal refusal of a general council with the Greeks, the papacy finally, beginning with the pontificate of Martin V and especially that of his successor, Eugenius IV, more or less accepted the conditions insisted upon by the Greek clergy and people. At this point a new phase in the ecclesiastical relations of east and west may be said to have begun. Certain popes, to be sure, had earlier seemed to lean toward calling such a council, but they never gave it full support until their bitter enemies, the western conciliarists—who of course favored a council—forced the papacy's hand. For over a century many Greeks had insisted that an ecumenical council was the sole means of ending the schism between east and west: Barlaam perhaps the first,<sup>83</sup> then Nicephorus Gregoras, John Cantacuzenus, Joseph Bryennius, and others.<sup>84</sup> Even earlier than this, late in the thirteenth century, the Latin Humbert of Romans, who had himself lived in the east and knew intimately the Greek psychology, had proposed to the pope the calling of an ecumenical council in the east as the only solution.<sup>85</sup> With the decline of papal prestige in the west as a result of the Great Schism and of the increasing emphasis in responsible western quarters on the theory of a council's supremacy over the pope, the Greeks found support for their thesis. The popes were thus induced to view the Greek proposals in a more favorable light. One qualification was made, however, in acceding to the Greek demands—namely, that the council be held somewhere in the west, instead of in the east as the Greeks had been demanding.

But the situation between east and west had become very complex, in fact three-cornered. For besides the holy see and the Greeks, there was also involved the rival of the papacy, the conciliarist party sitting in council at Basel. The Byzantine emperor was now in the advantageous position of being courted by both pope Eugenius IV and the fathers of Basel,<sup>86</sup> each side trying to outbid the other in offering concessions to the Greeks—military aid for the capital and the payment of all expenses for the journey of the Greek delegation to the west. The emperor exchanged a series of embassies with both

83. Giannelli, "Un Progetto di Barlaam Calabro," p. 171.

84. See Viller, "La Question de l'union," *RHE*, XVIII, 20 ff., for these.

85. Mansi, *Concilia*, XXIV, col. 128. Quoted in Viller, *op. cit.*, *RHE*, XVIII, 23, note 1: "Papa in Graeciam deberet descendere, si spes esset probabilis quod propter hoc reuniretur ovile."

86. On the preliminaries to Florence, see Geanakoplos, *Byzantine East and Latin West*, chap. 3, and especially the monograph of Gill, *Council of Florence*, with full bibliography.

parties, the Greeks for a time still insisting on the convocation of the council in beleaguered Constantinople. One of the western ambassadors, the pope's legate Christopher Garatoni, sent to Constantinople in 1434, in fact accepted the proposal to hold the council in the imperial capital, but the Council of Basel, through its envoy John of Ragusa, refused to agree to this.<sup>87</sup> Both western envoys returned again to Constantinople in order to bring back the Greek envoys, the tenor of whose instructions from the Greek emperor was to extract the broadest possible concessions. At Basel violence had in the meantime broken out over the choice of a site for the council—whether it should be held at Avignon, Florence, or Udine.

After some complex maneuvering—for a time it seemed that the Greeks would never make up their minds—the emperor finally chose to go to the papal rendezvous of Ferrara rather than to the cities selected by the conciliarists. Why did the Greeks prefer the papacy when their own tradition seems essentially conciliar in nature? One reason was the Greek insistence on the presence of the pope at the council, a prescription the fulfillment of which was unlikely at Basel. Then, geographically, the Greeks preferred the papal choice of Ferrara as the site for the council rather than more distant Basel, Avignon, or Savona. Moreover, the Greeks were more familiar with the traditional papal prestige than with the new phenomenon of western conciliarism, and indeed conciliarism as a movement soon proved to be ephemeral. Finally, we must not overlook the role of the Greek emperor himself; despite his somewhat decreasing power over the Greek church, in comparison with the rising power of the patriarch, he was still of great influence, and doubtless preferred to negotiate with a single absolute authority rather than the factious fathers at Basel.<sup>88</sup> According to the Greek historian Sylvester Syropulus, a factor which contributed to John's decision to go to the pope was his expectation of military aid from his colleague, the western emperor Sigismund, but Sigismund died at about this time. It is an irony of history that the Greek preference for the pope over the conciliarists was a major factor in the subsequent triumph of the pope over the western conciliarist movement.<sup>89</sup>

On November 24, 1437, the huge Byzantine delegation of seven hundred ecclesiastics and laymen, including emperor, patriarchs, and papal representatives, set out for Venice. At Venice, according to

87. John's report is found in E. Cecconi, *Studi storici* (Florence, 1869), pp. 487 ff., and that of Garatoni, *ibid.*, p. DLXXVII.

88. Geanakoplos, *Byzantine East and Latin West*, pp. 92–94.

89. Cf. Gill, *Council of Florence*, p. 411.



Syropulus's intimate account, the Greeks became emotional when they saw exhibited before them at St. Mark's the treasures of their cathedral of Hagia Sophia.<sup>90</sup> We need not discuss the questions of protocol which immediately arose between pope and patriarch and pope and emperor over the problems of kissing the pope's foot or the question of precedence in the seating in the cathedral.<sup>91</sup> Nor is this the place to discuss the complex theological and liturgical questions that were debated for over one and one-half years. We should note briefly, however, that on the most basic doctrinal question, that of the *filioque*, Greek conservatism opposed what might be termed the more flexible western attitude toward the problem of development in the doctrine and institution of the church. The Greeks insisted on absolute adherence to the doctrine and traditions of the first seven ecumenical councils, while the Latins equally insisted on the correctness of their addition to the original creed, the *filioque* clause. The fundamental anxiety of the Greeks, as Syropulus clearly implies, prejudiced as he is against the Latins, was the sometimes unconscious Greek fear of Latinization. As one Greek bishop at Florence insisted, "I prefer to die rather than ever to become Latinized."<sup>92</sup> This is one of the basic reasons why the Greeks, despite the clear implication that Constantinople would fall to the Turks without western aid, so intransigently opposed the western innovation to the creed. They feared not only that this would lead to loss of the independence of their church but that from this it would be a short step to political subjugation as well.<sup>93</sup> As Bryennius had said at the beginning of the fifteenth century to the Greeks of Constantinople, "Let no one be deceived by delusive hopes that Italian allied troops will come to save us. If they pretend to rise to defend us they will take arms only to destroy our city, our faith, and our name."<sup>94</sup>

Some Greeks, especially among the upper classes (and possibly under the influence of Greek translations of Latin scholastic works, especially of Thomas Aquinas), were ready to accept union as a lesser evil than Islamization. On the other hand some anti-unionists had become so extreme in their fear of Latin penetration that they openly declared their preference for the "turban of the Turk to the tiara of the pope." The supposedly enlightened humanist Petrarch

90. Syropulus, *Vera historia*, pp. 80 ff., especially p. 87.

91. See Geanakoplos, *Byzantine East and Latin West*, pp. 95–96.

92. *Acta graeca*, ed. J. Gill (Rome, 1953), p. 400.

93. On this problem of Latinization see Geanakoplos, *Byzantine East and Latin West*, pp. 104–107, especially notes 81 and 84.

94. Quoted, *ibid.*, p. 106.

himself had said in 1366, "The Turks are our enemies but the Greeks are schismatics and worse than enemies. They hate us in their guts."<sup>95</sup> And John Gerson, chancellor of the University of Paris, in an address to the king of France delivered shortly after the Council of Pisa (1409), had affirmed that the Greeks "prefer the Turks to the Latins."<sup>96</sup>

This Greek feeling of ethnic difference from the Latins had of course already been manifested even before the eleventh century. But the movement of the crusades with the accompanying western aggressions against the Greeks had transformed it into a sharp hostility, even an implacable hatred for the Latins. Thus the question of the *filioque*, so bitterly debated at Florence, may be said in one sense to have masked the underlying antagonism of Greeks and Latins for each other. To many Orthodox, submission to papal authority meant the prelude to assimilation by the Latins. As George Scholarius, only a few years later, was in effect to say to those Greeks who inclined toward the west, "By accepting the union you will submit yourselves to shame and the Latin church, and God's punishment through the Turks will not be averted."<sup>97</sup>

As the deliberations proceeded the Greek emperor took special care that the theological discussions would not push into the background the plan for a crusade to save Constantinople. The pope on his part pledged to preach a crusade for Constantinople's defense, to maintain a permanent force of three hundred men as a guard at Constantinople, and to supply galleys in the event of a siege. In the meantime, after long, repetitious, and heated arguments, the Greeks, influenced by the ever-deteriorating military situation of Constantinople and the persuasiveness of the emperor and the pope, surrendered. The pope won on all the major points at issue, though the important question of papal supremacy was solved by a kind of compromise, a marvelously ambiguous definition proposed by the Greek unionist Bessarion to the effect that while the universal authority of the pope was recognized in his capacity as the "vicar of Christ," at the same time the "rights and privileges of the eastern patriarchs were reserved."<sup>98</sup>

95. Ducas, 37 (*CSHB*, p. 264); Petrarch, *Lettere senili*, ed. G. Fracassetti, I (Florence, 1869), 422-424.

96. A. Galitzin, *Sermon inédit de Jean Gerson sur le retour des grecs à l'unité* (Paris, 1859), p. 29; cf. Manuel Calecas, IV (*PG*, CLII, col. 239).

97. A. Demetropoulos, *Historia schismatis quod intercedit inter ecclesiam occidentalem et orientalem* (Leipzig, 1867), pp. 163 ff. Cf. Geanakoplos, *Greek Scholars in Venice* (Cambridge, 1962), p. 77, and I. Ševčenko, "Intellectual Repercussions of the Council of Florence," *Church History*, XXIV (1955), 294, quoting Ubertino Puscolo.

98. *Acta graeca*, ed. Gill, p. 464 (Mansi, *Concilia*, XXXIA, col. 1032); Syropulus, *Vera*

At the council the Greeks had finally been able to debate openly with the Latins and Mark of Ephesus, the most obdurate, to bring his objections into the open. It seemed that at last after centuries of schism and so many false starts regarding union, Christendom was once more to be united and would now be able to devote itself to the long-wished-for crusade against the Turk. But the people of Constantinople, on whom in the last analysis the success of union depended, had yet to make themselves heard.

When the delegates sailed into the Golden Horn the city was in an uproar against them. Ducas tells us that the population of the capital greeted them with insults and cries of betrayal of the Orthodox faith.<sup>99</sup> The people based their opposition to union on the belief that the Greek representatives had signed only under duress, that the military aid agreed to by the pope, like previous promises, would be ineffectual—as one person rather logically emphasized, “If the pope has been unable to aid the Latin states in the east how can the Latin princes aid Constantinople?”<sup>100</sup>—and, finally, on the conviction that the Byzantine people themselves would suffer the “judgment of God” if the purity of the faith were altered. The Greek legates, on their part, maintained that they had been coerced into signing the document of union. A veritable rebellion broke out led by the monks, especially Mark of Ephesus, who for many became the hero of the hour, the focus of anti-Latin resistance. On his side were ranged the monks of Constantinople and Mount Athos, all of whom refused to communicate with the unionists. The expected crusade from the west did not materialize and the tremendous exertions of the Greek politicians to save Constantinople by bowing to Rome were a failure.<sup>101</sup>

The direct effect of the council on the question of the crusade was minimal. Before the council began its actual discussions the Greek emperor had insisted on postponement of deliberations until the expected arrival of the western lay princes or their representatives. For him overriding all other considerations was the defense of Constantinople and therefore, more forcefully than ever, he adhered to the old Byzantine principle of aid first and ecclesiastical union later. It was a matter of profound disillusionment for John, however,

---

*historia*, pp. 293 ff.; cf. Geanakoplos, “Edward Gibbon and Byzantine Ecclesiastical History,” *Church History*, XXXV (1966), 179, and *Byzantine East and Latin West*, p. 108.

99. Ducas, 31 (*CSHB*, p. 216).

100. Geanakoplos, *Byzantine East and Latin West*, p. 111, notes 113 and 109.

101. “Sphrantzes,” II, 13 (ed. Papadopoulos, pp. 178–180); Ducas, 37 (*CSHB*, pp. 259–260); Marcus Eugenicus (Mark of Ephesus), ed. L. Petit in *Patrologia orientalis*, XVII (1923), 456.

that in the end, except for duke Philip of Burgundy, no secular prince sent representatives to Florence. That no considerable aid could be expected even from Burgundy must have been evident to the emperor from the attitude of the Burgundian envoys, who on their arrival approached the pope and in the prescribed papal protocol kissed his right knee, while completely ignoring the Greek emperor. John was so chagrined that he refused to continue at the council unless he was properly saluted.<sup>102</sup>

In the meantime Murad II, who had been watching the Florentine negotiations with more than a little interest, was told by the Greek emperor that the *pourparlers* were purely religious in character. We may be sure, however, that the sultan fully understood the political implications involved. Pope Eugenius attempted to implement his promise to aid Byzantium by issuing bulls directing the preaching of a crusade, by imposing a tithe upon the whole church to be paid as quickly as possible, and by assigning part of his own income for the raising of an army and fleet.<sup>103</sup> But the western powers were still in no position to lend aid. France and England were at each other's throats in the very climax of the Hundred Years' War, there was strife over the succession to the western imperial throne, and the selfishness of the Italian mercantile states remained stronger than ever.

The only nations to respond to the papal appeal for a crusade were the Balkan peoples who now found themselves directly in the path of the Ottoman advance: the Poles, the Rumanians, and especially the Hungarians.<sup>104</sup> Advancing against the Turks the voivode of Transylvania, John (Corvinus) Hunyadi, managed to secure some minor victories. And soon, after making considerable preparations, a motley force of some twenty to twenty-five thousand men was assembled in southern Hungary under three rulers, king Vladislav III of Poland and Hungary, the voivode Hunyadi, and the Serbian ruler George Brankovich. Advancing, the allied army managed to defeat the Turks in 1444 on the heights above Nish in Serbia. On June 12 of the same year, however, a truce of ten years was signed at Adrianople between Hungary and sultan Murad II, apparently without the knowledge of the papal legate cardinal Julian Cesarini. Upon being apprised of the treaty cardinal Cesarini, who was then with the crusading army, absolved king Vladislav of his oath to the "infidel." By September of 1444 the crusading army was again on the march.

102. Syropulus, *Vera historia*, pp. 175-177; cf. *Acta graeca* (ed. Gill), pp. 212-213.

103. Gill, *Council of Florence*, pp. 328-329.

104. Atiya, *Crusade in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 467; Gill, *Council of Florence*, pp. 332-333.

Intending to follow the Black Sea coastline to Constantinople and expecting promised Venetian naval aid, which did not arrive, the army was weakened by the defection of the Serbian ruler Brankovich, who was evidently satisfied by the ten-year agreement. The Turks, enraged by the breaking of the pact, in turn moved rapidly against the Christians and on November 10, 1444, annihilated the crusading armies at the famous battle of Varna.<sup>105</sup>

The defeat at Varna meant the beginning of the end for Constantinople as well as for the Latin union with the Greeks, for there was little chance that any pope for many years could again mount such a large crusading expedition. The Turks had shattered the last Christian attempt at concerted action against them, the result being that Constantinople was more than ever exposed to attack. The Balkan Christians were in despair, and the Byzantine emperor had even to welcome the victorious Murad back with congratulations and gifts.<sup>106</sup>

Before the battle of Varna the Greek emperor had learned of the treaty signed between Murad and the Hungarian crusaders, probably through the Italian archaeologist Cyriac of Ancona, who was then traveling in the area. The emperor had evidently even been convinced by Cyriac that the Greeks should at least indirectly intervene in the campaign.<sup>107</sup> John himself seems to have gone, in strictest secrecy, to Mistra, in the despotate of Morea; thence, before the battle of Varna, he probably sent a letter to king Vladislav in which he appealed to him not to disappoint the hopes of the east by making peace with the Turks and abandoning the plans for a proposed crusade, thus leaving the Greeks in a very risky position.<sup>108</sup> Though

105. On the confused sequence of events of the Varna crusade, see also letters of the humanist Cyriac of Ancona, in F. Pall, "Ciriaco d'Ancona e la crociata contro i Turchi," *Bull. de la section hist. de l'Acad. roumaine*, XX (1938), 9–68, and Pall, "Autour de la croisade de Varna," *ibid.*, XXII (1941), 144 ff.; O. Halecki, *The Crusade of Varna* (New York, 1943), pp. 25–26; F. Pall, "Un Moment décisif de l'histoire du sud-est européen: la croisade de Varna," *Balkanica*, VII (1944), 102 ff.; and F. Babinger, "Von Amurath zu Amurath: Vor- und Nachspiel der Schlacht bei Varna," *Oriens*, III (1950), 229 ff.

106. On the battle of Varna there is a poem written in Greek by Zoticus, a Greek witness to the battle; see K. Krumbacher, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Literatur* (2nd ed., Munich, 1897; repr. New York, 1958), p. 832; and N. G. Svoronos, "To peri tes maches tes Varnes poiema" [in Greek], *Athena*, XLVIII, 163–183; cf. A. Turyn, *Byzantine Ms. Tradition of Euripides*, pp. 390–391. Text in G. Moravcsik, *Görög Költemény a Varnai Csatáról* (Budapest, 1935); see especially p. 24, lines 140 ff.

107. See above, note 105.

108. See Ostrogorsky, *Byzantine State*, p. 503, note 1, on the question of whether a peace treaty was signed. Ubertino Puscolo, a contemporary Italian living in Constantinople, says the grand admiral of Constantinople, Lucas Notaras, believed Vladislav's crusaders were more interested in conquering Byzantine lands than in liberating the Greeks (Puscolo, *Constantinopolis*, ed. A. Ellissen, I, 464–491, 518–520, in *Analekten der mittel- und neugriechischen Literatur*, III [Leipzig, 1857]; cf. Halecki, *Crusade of Varna*, pp. 26 ff.).

the authenticity of this letter has recently been cast into doubt, it seems clear that if John VIII had in fact planned to aid the crusading armies he could have best done so from the Morea rather than from Constantinople, which was then tightly encircled by Turkish territory.

Without awaiting the crusaders' arrival, the Greek military forces had moved from the Morea, attacking the Turks and gaining several successes. Byzantine hopes in Constantinople were raised by the arrival of an allied crusader-fleet of twenty-four Venetian, papal, and Burgundian ships mobilized in the summer of 1444 and joined by two Byzantine galleys but not including the ships promised by the duke of Milan and king Alfonso V of Aragon. The fleet remained for about a year and then sailed back to the west, leaving behind only the Burgundian ships to defend the city.<sup>109</sup> It is curious how little reference there is in the Greek polemical literature of the time to the campaign at Varna. Perhaps the Greek anti-unionists did not wish to emphasize the papal efforts or were so immersed in their own squabbles that they thought the Latins, as usual, would provide little aid.<sup>110</sup>

Hunyadi made one more desperate attempt to come to the aid of Constantinople, but he was defeated at the (second) battle of Kosovo in October 1448, largely because of the treachery of the Wallachians, who went over to the Turks. But it was not only the hostility of the Byzantine people to religious union which militated against more western aid for Constantinople. Effective coöperation on the part of the western states themselves was difficult, as we have seen, because of their conflicting interests and the ambitions of western monarchs.

Some justification for the suspicions of the Byzantines as to the motives of the Latins, so often expressed in the polemical and historical literature of the period, is clearly seen in the aspirations of king Alfonso V of Aragon and Naples. In regard to Byzantium, this most powerful prince of the Mediterranean was motivated by the same aggressive designs as were his Norman predecessors in Sicily. True, his aim was to wage a vast campaign in the east against the Turks, but it was not to aid the Greeks but rather to reëstablish the old Latin empire with himself as emperor.<sup>111</sup> His grandiose schemes were never realized, but they deprived the humanist pope, Nicholas

109. Grunzeweig, "Philippe le Bon et Constantinople," pp. 47-61.

110. Bertrandon of La Broquière, the traveler who visited the east in 1432, opined (ed. T. Wright, p. 366) that it would be easy to defeat the Turks, but that the Greeks, having suffered long from crusaders, soldiers, merchants, and clergy, could not trust the Latins.

111. Cerone, "La Politica orientale di Alfonso di Aragona."

V, who was sympathetic to the Greeks, of some much-needed resources just before and after Constantinople's conquest.<sup>112</sup> After the Slavic-western alliance had been defeated at Varna, the anti-unionist Greeks could point the finger of scorn at the Greek unionists and ask how much western help was really worth.

The disaster and disappointment of Kossovo hastened the end of emperor John VIII, who died October 31, 1448. He was succeeded by his younger brother Constantine, despot of the Morea, who had managed to aggrandize the Greek territory in the Morea at the expense of the Latins and even to win several battles against the Turks. But Constantine XI, a worthy successor to his original namesake, had the misfortune of being opposed by a terrible adversary, the youthful sultan Mehmed II, whose obsession it had become to seize at any price the imperial city of Constantinople. It is not our intention to narrate the details of what was to be the most famous siege in history. We shall concentrate rather on the western attempts to aid beleaguered Constantinople within the framework of crusading ideology.

Constantine, realizing the religious sensitivity of his subjects, followed a moderate policy and at first avoided coming openly into contact with the west. Thus, under Greek anti-unionist pressure, he tolerated the deposition, or rather removal from his throne, of the unionist patriarch Gregory II Mammas in 1451.<sup>113</sup> But after 1451, when Mehmed succeeded the more pacific sultan Murad, Constantine felt he could no longer continue his isolation from the west. In the spring of the same year Constantine sent a special envoy to Rome, but the papal answer was as much discouraging as cynical: "Now pursuing political projects, you are willing to apply for the holy union but know that a bad intention is punished by destruction from God."<sup>114</sup> The climate of opinion in Constantinople turned violently against any support for union. Conflict broke out in the streets, placards were posted everywhere by the new leaders of the anti-

112. C. Marinescu, "Le Pape Nicolas V et son attitude envers l'empire byzantin," *Bull. de l'Institut archéologique bulgarien*, IX (1935), 331 ff. Also R. Guiland, "Ai pros ten dysin ekklesis Konstantinou" [in Greek], XI, *Epeteris hetaireias Byzantinon spoudon*, XXII (1952), 60 ff.

113. It has been shown that the synod supposedly convoked in 1450-1451 is only a fiction; see *Religious and Ethical Encyclopedia* [in Greek], (Athens, 1964), IV, 735. Also cf. *Tusculum Lexicon*, ed. W. Buchwald, S. Hollweg, and O. Prinz (Munich, 1963), citing the date 1451.

114. Letter in G. Hofmann et al., eds., *Concilium florentinum: Documenta . . .*, ser. A, III (Rome, 1953), 135-138.

unionists, and the fiery George Scholarius proclaimed the "judgment of God" if the people accepted the union.<sup>115</sup>

Meanwhile the pope, increasingly disturbed at the reception of the union in Constantinople, declared that military aid depended on acceptance of two terms: official recognition of papal supremacy, and restoration of the deposed unionist patriarch Gregory. He said nothing about dogmatic questions, which he considered either too ticklish or, more probably, now of secondary importance. Constantine, not without reason, hesitated to accept the papal terms and instead tried to convince other western princes to intervene in order to rescue Constantinople. He appealed successively to practically all western rulers, to the doge of Venice Francis Foscari, whose daughter he had negotiated to marry (Constantine broke off the attempt because of the opposition of his Greek subjects), to the duke of Milan Francis Sforza, to the French king Charles VII, to the duke of Burgundy Philip the Good, to the German emperor Frederick III, to the king of Aragon and Naples Alfonso V, to the government of Genoa, and to the king of Hungary Ladislas (László V). But the results again were only some kind letters expressing sympathy.<sup>116</sup> Finally Constantine, anxiously observing Mehmed's massing of troops around his capital, yielded to the pope and requested the dispatch of a capable legate who could make the union acceptable to the Greek clergy. The pope sent Isidore, former metropolitan of Kiev, and a Greek himself, who entered into negotiations with the anti-unionists, lavished promises and made threats, and ended by winning over part of the higher clergy. Among those who sided with Isidore were a circle of intellectuals including humanists like John Argyropulus, Michael Apostolius, and the learned monk Isaac, all of whom later became important for the dissemination of Greek learning to Renaissance Italy.<sup>117</sup> According to the historian Ducas a number of Greek priests joined the pro-unionist party.<sup>118</sup> A part of the population, until then opposed to union, now also followed the example of the emperor. This is interesting because the union of 1452 is generally portrayed as lacking all popular support—a view evidently not corroborated by the sources. Submission of this group was aided by a promise of future revision of the terms of union. When pressed by the reproaches of the uncompromising anti-unionists, the new unionists, who were generally motivated only by expe-

115. Gill, *Council of Florence*, pp. 383 ff.; Pears, *Destruction of the Greek Empire*, p. 204.

116. R. Guiland, "Ai pros ten dysin ekklesis Konstantinou," pp. 60–74.

117. Geanakoplos, *Greek Scholars in Venice*, pp. 78–79.

118. Ducas, 36 (*CShB*, p. 253).



diency, answered, "Wait until God shall have delivered the city from the great dragon who seeks to devour us. Then you will see whether we are truly reconciled with the Azymites [Latins]." <sup>119</sup> Others in Constantinople said that they preferred to hand over the city to the Latins, who at least believed in Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary. To these the grand admiral Lucas Notaras gave answer with his now famous words: "Better to see in the city the Turkish turban than the Latin tiara." <sup>120</sup>

At the eleventh hour several western monarchs seemed to conclude that they might do something more to aid Byzantium than write sympathetic letters to its emperor. Thus it is known that emperor Frederick III of Germany in 1453 sent to sultan Mehmed II a bombastic letter in the form of an ultimatum, ordering Mehmed to leave Constantinople, which he had already begun to besiege. <sup>121</sup> And in 1453 Hunyadi and Ladislas V of Hungary sent a letter to the pope indicating that they were now ready to take part in a crusade against the Turks. <sup>122</sup>

Venice at this critical hour in Byzantium's history finally broke off relations with the Turks. She made some attempt to coöperate with the pope and openly with the Greeks by arming a small fleet which she intended to send to Constantinople. But when it was ready it came too late to be of any use. In the hope that Mehmed II would not harass its colony at Galata, Genoa made no effort to aid the Greeks, though the Genoese lord of Lesbos, John Giustiniani, in contrast, made a personal contribution to Constantinople's defense of a 700-man force, two ships, and finally his own life. <sup>123</sup> The only official contingent of papal-financed troops that actually participated in the defense of Constantinople seems to have been the 200 archers from Crete that went to Constantinople with the papal legate cardinal Isidore. <sup>124</sup>

When Isidore arrived at Constantinople on October 26, 1452,

119. Ducas, 36 (*CSHB*, p. 256). Scholarius, ed. L. Petit, X. A. Siderides, and M. Jugie, *Oeuvres complètes* (8 vols., Paris, 1928-1936), III, 173, 177, 184; Puscolo, *Constantinopolis*, III, 654 f., 668 f., 723, 729 ff.

120. Ducas, 37 (*CSHB*, p. 264).

121. Gill, *Council of Florence*, p. 382; Guiland, "Ai pros ten dysin ekklesis Konstantinou," pp. 60 ff.

122. On Hunyadi and Ladislas, see R. Guiland, "Les Appels de Constantin XI Paléologue à Rome et à Venise," *Byzantinoslavica*, XIV (1953), 226-244.

123. On the actions of the Greek emperor and Giustiniani see, in *Le Cinq-centième anniversaire*, G. Kalias, "Constantin Paléologue, le dernier défenseur de Constantinople," pp. 41-54; and K. Amantos, "La Prise de Constantinople," pp. 9-22; also D. Zakythinos, "Ideological Conflicts in Besieged Constantinople" [in Greek] *Nea Hestia*, XLVIII (1950), 749-799.

124. Gill, *Council of Florence*, p. 383. On Cretans who aided in the siege of 1453 see M.

Mehmed was already preparing for the siege. Isidore's presence and propaganda disconcerted the anti-unionists and they rushed to the cell to which their leader George Scholarius had retired, to ask his advice. His answer, put in writing, was that they should depend on help only from God, not the Franks. What the anti-unionists had tried to prevent now came to pass. On December 12, 1452, a solemn liturgy celebrating the union was held in Hagia Sophia, before the officials and the people, with the reading of the Florentine decree of union and the commemoration of the pope and the (exiled) unionist patriarch Gregory in the diptychs.<sup>125</sup> Scholarius and others took no part in the ceremony. This act produced an explosion of fanaticism and agitation among the population of the city, so much so in fact that all or most of the Greeks deserted their cathedral, refusing to attend any further services there as if it were polluted.<sup>126</sup> They then rushed to Scholarius's cell to seek his reaction, only to see a placard he had put there: "Oh miserable Romans . . . why have you abandoned the truth and why . . . have you trusted in the Italians? In losing your faith you will lose your city." On the day of the proclamation of union many worshipers in the cathedral refused to take the *antidoron* (holy bread) as a sign of disapproval. Scholarius's manifesto was posted everywhere in the city, and a riot followed. The devout Orthodox besought aid from the Virgin against the Turks, recalling how in centuries past she had saved them from the Persians, the Arabs, and the Slavs.<sup>127</sup>

It would seem that Scholarius and his circle preferred to surrender to the Turks while remaining faithful to Orthodoxy, rather than to defend the city with Latin help. And prophecies were quoted which predicted the inevitability of the city's fall. But Constantine had other ideas as to his duty and honor. Thus while the Turks besieged Constantinople, the emperor had to face almost a kind of fifth column which undermined the defense of the city by spreading defeatism.<sup>128</sup> Leonard of Chios, the Catholic archbishop of Myti-

Manousakas, "Les Derniers défenseurs Crétois de Constantinople d'après les documents vénitiens," *Actes des XL. Byz. Kongress 1958* (Munich, 1960), pp. 331 ff.; these Cretans were inspired by Greek patriotism. Also see N. Tomadakes, *On the Capture of Constantinople* [in Greek] (Athens, 1953), p. 145, note 2, and R. Browning, "A Note on the Capture of Constantinople," *Byzantion*, XXII (1952), 379-386; cf. Gill, *Council of Florence*, p. 383.

125. The failure at Varna was evidently the turning point for John VIII, who adopted a moderate attitude to the anti-unionists though keeping Gregory on the patriarchal throne.

126. Ducas, 36 (*CSHB*, pp. 252-253).

127. Ducas, 36 (*CSHB*, pp. 253-254).

128. Ducas, *loc. cit.*; cf. K. N. Sathas, ed., *Mesaionike bibliotheke*, VII (Paris, 1894), v; Scholarius, IV, 217.

lene, who took part in the city's defense, informs us that during the siege the people of Constantinople were divided into two opposed camps, those who followed the emperor, and the partisans of Scholarius, who refused to fight the Turks.<sup>129</sup> But Constantine continued the hopeless struggle, steadfastly opposing the Turks until the last moment of the siege. Abandoned by western Europe and even by a part of his own people, Constantine fought bravely in the streets until his death, as the Turks poured through the gates of the last bastion of the thousand-year-old empire. The empire had finally fallen and the crescent banner now waved above Constantinople's walls.

In the centuries-long duel between Christendom and Islam, the fall of Constantinople may in one sense be taken as marking the end of the great movement of the medieval crusades. It is in fact evidence of the inflexible persistence of the original crusading ideal. For instead of saving eastern Christendom from the Moslems, the western crusades, despite repeated expressions of immense concern, did virtually nothing to help avert the final destruction of the eastern Christians' principal bastion, Constantinople. Despite centuries of ecclesiastical and political negotiations, of ambitious plans partially fulfilled or more often completely rejected, the Greek and Latin halves of Christendom were never able to coöperate successfully with each other. And it is this lack of coöperation, based essentially on an inability or even a refusal to understand each other's needs and mentality, that was in large part responsible for the failure of the crusading movement to respond effectively to the Turkish threat. For in the last analysis, though the popes in the latter part of the fourteenth century were able, finally, to transmute the original purpose of the crusade from reconquering the Holy Land to rescuing Constantinople from the Turk, most westerners were unable to accept this shift in emphasis. Nor, on the Byzantine side, were the Greeks as a whole willing to believe that the west would come to save them except to reimpose Latin hegemony in the guise of a new crusade. If, as many western leaders must increasingly have come to think, the Christian Greeks themselves would rather see in Constantinople the Turkish turban than the Latin tiara, why should they launch a crusade to save Byzantium?

129. Leonard of Chios, *Historia*, in *PG*, CLIX, col. 926.