ΙΔΡΥΜΑ ΜΕΙΖΟΝΟΣ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΣΜΟΥ

Συγγραφή : *Μακρυπούλιας Χρήστος*
Μετάφραση : *Κούτρας Νικόλαος*
Για παραπομπή : *Μακρυπούλιας Χρήστος , "Iconoclasm in Asia Minor", Εγκυκλοπαίδεια Μείζονος Ελληνισμού, Κωνσταντινούπολη*
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Περίληψη :

The prohibition against icon veneration was the cornerstone of the religious policy of the Isaurian dynasty in the 8th century and of the Amorion dynasty in the 9th century, provoking intense conflict within the empire. Asia Minor, the then most important part of Byzantium, became the focal point of the Iconoclasm, where the supporters of the imperial iconoclastic policy, but also many iconophiles seeking for the restoration of the icons, developed their activity.

Χρονολόγηση

726-843 AD

Γεωγραφικός εντοπισμός

Asia Minor

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1. Historical framework

Already in the first centuries of the Christian predominance (4th -7th c.), there were certain religious movements which condemned all artistic representations of Jesus Christ and other holy figures. Even some eminent Orthodox hierarchs had at times expressed their views against the abuse of icon veneration. Nonetheless, their use in the everyday cultic practices had become widespread in the Byzantine Empire, especially after the 6th century.

The dispute over the propriety of materialy depicting Christ and venerating icons had its roots in the East (where many religions prohibited the artistic representation of the divine), and the Christological debates that troubled the Eastern Church. In the 7th century, the major dispute concerning the nature of Christ revolved around the heresy of monophysitism and monotheletism. Byzantium had lost a large part of its eastern possessions to the Arabs who had adopted Islam, an aniconic religion par excellence. In the early 8th century, the caliph Bayezid II (720-724) had prohibited the use of icons in Christian churches located on lands controlled by the Arabs.

In the beginnings of the 8th century, Byzantium was under the constant threat of the Arabs, eventhough Emperor Leo III the Isaurian (717-741) had succesfully repelled the arab siege of Constantinople (717-718). This threat, along with the volcanic eruption in Thera in 726 were considered as manifestations of the anger of God, which, as it had always been the case in the Old Testament, was incited due to his people's fall to idolatry.[1] This had created a context that favoured the predominance of radical ideas, especially in Asia Minor, which was afflicted the most by the Arab raids. In his attempt to rally the empire’s forces, the emperor took measures that were bound to have long-lasting consequences for Byzantium.

2. The first phase of Iconoclasm in Asia Minor

2.1. The measures of Leo III

In 726 Leo III publicly announced his iconoclastic beliefs, ordering the removal of the icon of Christ from its place above the Chalke gate of the Great Palace of Constantinople,[2] while in 730 he forbade the public veneration of icons. The emperor hoped that through his iconoclastic measures he would regain the public’s trust and strengthen the authority of central administration, in a period when the empire’s external policy was weak and the internal political scene was rather unstable.

Earlier scholars, based upon the rapid reaction of the people of mainland Greece, who in 727 rebelled against Leo, thought that the attitude of the Byzantines towards Iconoclasm could be defined in geographical terms: the western provinces remained faithful to orthodoxy, while Asia Minor sided with the central administration.[3] Modern research has rejected this view, for the attitude of the

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populations of Asia Minor towards the central administration was determined by a series of factors, not all of which were religious.[4] Nevertheless, the ones concidered as the instigators of Leo's iconoclastic policy were Thomas, the metropolitan of Claudiopolis, and Constantine, the bishop of Nakoleia, who were also well known for their teachings against the excessive veneration of icons.[5]

Apparently, Leo's iconoclastic policy did not have any immediate consequence in Asia Minor, seeing as there are no reports of systematic persecutions of iconodules, but only sporadic incidents, like the case of a soldier in the garrison of Nicaea who, during an Arab siege in 727,[6] threw stones to an icon of the Virgin in one of the city's churches. There are also several legends, like the one about the destruction of the famous relics of St. Euphemia in Chalcedon.[7]

2.2. The rebellion of Artavasdos (741-743)

In Asia Minor, the first major clash that revolved around the iconoclastic policy of the Isaurian dynasty came after the death of Leo III. In June 741, the new Emperor Constantine V was attacked, while in the area of the Opsikion theme, by Artabasdos, comes of the Opsikion and an old associate of Leo. The forces of Artabasdos forced the troops of Constantine to retreat and entered Constantinople, where Artabasdos was proclaimed emperor, whereupon he ordered the restoration of the icons. Constantine sought refuge in the Anatolikon theme, where he regrouped. After two years of military struggle in Lydia and Bithynia, he finally recaptured Constantinople in November 743.

These incidents indicate that the issue of the influence of Iconoclasm in the eastern Byzantine provinces is complex. During the rebellion, the troops of Asia Minor were divided, with the soldiers of the Opsikion and the Armeniacon themes siding with Artavasdos, while Constantine V counted on the loyalty of the the themes of Anatolikon and of Thrakesion. Although the usurper opposed Iconoclasm, and the legitimate emperor remained loyal to his father's policy, we are not entitled to assume that the people embroiled in the clash were respectively iconodules and iconoclasts. Other factors proved more important in the decisions of the army: Artavasdos was count of the theme of Opsikion and former strategos of the theme of Armeniakon, while Constantine was the son of the former *strategos* of the Anatolikon and the Thrakesion themes.[8] In any case, the ease with which the icon veneration was restored –if for a small period of time– and the near loss of his throne to an avowed iconodule, led the emperor to take stricter measures against the veneration of icons, measures which affected Asia Minor directly.

2.3. The persecution of the iconodules in Asia Minor during the reign of Constantine V

In 754 (February to August), Constantine V summoned a council in the palace of Hieria, close to Chalcedon, which was attended by 388 bishops.[9] The emperor had himself written theological treatises against icon veneration, cooperating with members of the upper clergy of Asia Minor: the synod was presided over by Theodosius, metropolitan of Ephesus, son of the former Emperor Tiberios II Apsimaros, while the main supporters of Iconoclasm were the metropolitans of Pergis (Sissinios Pastillas) and of Antioch of Pisidia (Basileios Trikakkabos). The synod banned the veneration of icons and ordered their destruction.

The attitude of the populations of Asia Minor towards Iconoclasm during the reign of Constantine V was not uniform. Most men of the tagmata, who fervently supported the religious beliefs of Constantine V, had been enlisted in Asia Minor. Bithynia on the other hand harboured many iconodules, like the monk Stephanos, founder of a male monastery on Mt Skopos (aka Hagios Auxentios), close to Chalcedon. A bastion of iconodules until Stephanos' execution in November 765 in Constantinople,[10] the monastery was destroyed on the behest of the emperor. Judging by Stephanos' advice to the monks to seek refuge in the Pontus and Lycia, it appears that other areas of Asia Minor were used too as shelters by the iconophiles.

The most systematic persecutions in Asia Minor were conducted after the exposure (in 766) of an iconodule plot within the circle of the emperor's closest associates, a plot in which even the *comes* of the Opsikion was involved. In 766/7 the emperor appointed new *strategoi* to some themes of Asia Minor, chosen for their loyalty to his cause. Most important among those was Michael Lachanodrakon, the *strategos* of the theme of Thrakesion.[11] In 771 he gathered in Ephesus all the monks and nuns of the theme and threatened them with blinding if they did not abandon the monastic habit to marry. In the next year Lachanodrakon seized the

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property of the area's monasteries and punished harshly those who possessed holy relics. These actions constitute the sternest persecutions of iconodules in Asia Minor up to that date.

All in all, it seems that iconoclast persecutions against iconodules amount to very little and were aimed mainly against monks. Constanine's V policy aimed to the centralisation of power and so it attacked local patriotism which, having a centrifugal character, was menacing the consistency of the Empire in the 8th century. The emperor's theologic oeuvre was asserting that only a limited number of symbols were invested with the idea of the holy: the sign of the Cross and the Eucharist; it denied on the other hand the holiness of the icons, which were connected with local cults and local saints. Constantine's V policy similarily amounted to strengthening the backbone of the Byzantine church by attacking the centrifugal ideology of local saints. Thus, while the bishops, officials of the ecclesiastic hierarchy, generally sided up with the imperial policy, the target became the monks, whom the ranks the local saints came from and functioned in the margin or even outside the vested structure of the church and its collective rites.[12]

3. The end of the first phase of the Iconoclasm

3.1. Ascension of Eirene Athenaia to the throne

A new period was inaugurated with the rule of Leo IV (775-780); all persecutions of iconophiles ceased and some cosciliation was reached, although Iconoclasm continued to be the empire's official policy. A true change came about after the premature death of Leo IV. His iconodule wife Eirene Athenaia (780-802) assumed power, acting as regent of her underage son. Having appointed an iconophile patriarch of her choosing and several new metropolitans, and having ousted Constantine's old associates, like Michael Lachanodrakon, Irene decided to summon an Ecumenical Council in Constantinople in the summer of 786, aimed at the restoration of icons. The reaction of the soldiers in the *tagmata*, most of which had been enlisted during the reign of Constantine V and remained loyal to the emperor's memory, forced her to postpone this council.

In the spring of 787, on the pretext of preparations for a campaign against the Arabs, the Empress ordered the *tagmata* to move to the camp of Malagina in Bithynia. She then installed in Constantinople a garrison made up of troops from the eastern themes that had been relocated to Thrace in order to participate to military operations against the Bulgars. The events of 786-787 prove once more that the views asserting the full identification of Asia Minor with the iconoclastic policy is not self-evident: although most of the soldiers in the *tagmata* that opposed the restoration of icon veneration came from Asia Minor, Eirene also relied on troops from the themes of Asia Minor to secure her hold over Constantinople. It should be obvious that there was no clear distinction, in geographical terms, iconoclasts and iconophiles.

3.2. The first restoration of the icons (787-815)

With the capital under her control, the empress moved to purge the *tagmata* in Malagina of the supporters of the Isaurian policy; then, in the fall of 787, she summoned the Seventh Ecumenical Council in Nicaea of Bithynia.[13] Like in the case of the council of Hieria, the debate between iconoclasts and iconophiles at Nicaea was dominated by the upper clergy of the bishoprics of Asia Minor. Apart from the patriarch Tarasios, the most important figure among the iconophiles was Euthymios, the new metropolitan of Sardis, who came from Lycaonia. On the side of the iconoclasts (who were, however, eventually dissuaded by their opponents), the most prominent ones were Gregory, metropolitan of Neokaisareia, Theodose of Amorion, Basil of Ancara, the metropolitan of Myra Theodore, and the metropolitan of Nicaea Hypatios. The last session of the Council took place in Constantinople: Iconoclasm was condemned and a decision to restore icons was taken.[14] In Asia Minor there was virtually no reaction to the decisions of the Seventh Ecumenical Council, further evidence that Iconoclasm was not deeply rooted in the local population. Even in 790, when the troops of the theme of Armeniakon and then of all the other themes of Asia Minor rebelled against Eirene and managed to have her removed by Constantine VI (780-797), the issue of returning to Iconoclasm never came up, even though the most important associate of the emperor during this period was Michael Lachanodrakon, and many of the soldiers discharged in 787 had enrolled in the units of the theme of Anatolikon. In 792 the troops of the Armeniakon theme rebelled once again, this time against the Emperor, but in this case, as during the rebellion of Bardanes Tourkos against Nicephorus I in 803, a condemning of icon veneration was not even mentioned. It appears that in their majority, the people of Asia Minor now sought peace and internal stability.

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Μετάφραση : *Κούτρας Νικόλαος*
Για παραπομπή : *Μακρυπούλιας Χρήστος , "Iconoclasm in Asia Minor", Εγκυκλοπαίδεια Μείζονος Ελληνισμού, Κωνσταντινούπολη*
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4. The second phase of Iconoclasm in Asia Minor

4.1. The revival of Iconoclasm during the reign of Leo V

The external policy of the iconophile emperors of the period between 802 and 813 was marked by catastrophic failures, especially in facing the threat of the Bulgars. Leo the Armenian, *strategos* of the theme of Anatolikon, exploited this political instability and seized power in 813. Although he had originally commited to the decisions of Nicaea, in 814 Leo V commissioned some of his associates to investigate the issue of icon veneration. In the following year he summoned yet another council in Constantinople.

As in the earlier councils, the hierarchs of Asia Minor played a leading role in the debates of 814-815. The iconodules were led by Peter the metropolitan of Nicaea, Theophylaktos of Nicomedia, Aimilianos of Cyzicus, Michael of Synada, Eudoxios of Amorion, Euthymios, the former metropolitan of Sardis, and Theodore of Stoudios, who came from Asia Minor. One of the most important figures among the iconoclastic delegates of 814 was Antonios Kassimatas, metropolitan of Syllaeum. The Emperor could also rely on the support of the strong families of Asia Minor, like the Melissenos lineage from the theme of Anatolikon. In 815, Leo V appointed Theodotos Melissenos a Patriarch; Theodotos was the son of an old *strategos* of the Anatolikon theme in the years of Constantine V. The iconodule monks of northwestern Asia Minor suffered persecutions during the reign of Leo V. Asia Minor was also used as a place of exile for some iconophile leaders, like Theodore of Stoudios, who in 815-819 was exiled to the theme of Opsikion, then to the theme of Anatolikon and finally in the theme of Thrakesion (and more precisely in Smyrna).

In the Christmas of 820, Leo V was murdered by a former associate of his, Michael Traulos, who came from Amorion of Phrygia. Shortly after his ascension to the imperial throne, Michael II was called upon to face the rebellion of Thomas the Slav (821-823). Like Artabasdos before him, Thomas now emerged as an opponent of Iconoclasm to win the people's favour. Only the Opsikion and Armeniakon themes remained loyal to Michael II, but again, we should take other factors into consideration before drawing any conclusions regarding the influence the iconoclasts and the iconodules had over the provinces of Asia Minor.

4.2. The end of Iconoclasm

Although one of Michael's II first actions in 821 was appointing Antonios Kassimatas, the iconoclast metropolitan of Syllaeum, a patriarch, his policy towards the iconophiles was rather temperate, especially in Asia Minor. Iconodule monastic communities prospered on Mt Olympos of Bithynia. This is where Theodore of Stoudios sought refuge upon returning from exile, while no systematic persecution of iconophiles are reported.

In 829 Michael II was succeeded by his son Theophilos. At first his iconoclastic policy was also moderate, the only notable exceptions being the exile of Theophilos, the iconodule former metropolitan of Ephesus, and the temporary incarceration of Antonios, an iconodule monk on Mt Olympos of Bithynia and former officer of the theme of Kibyrraioton. Euphrosyne, his mother in law, was an iconodule and so was his wife Theodora, a descendant of a prominent iconophile family of Paphlagonia.

Theophilos' attitude became tougher when an iconodule conspiracy was exposed in December of 831. Euthymios, the former metropolitan of Sardis (who died a few days later from the hardships of exile) and members of Theodora's family where involved in it. In 833 Theophilus issued an edict with which he reinstated the decisions of the iconoclastic council of 815. Many iconodules were forced to flee the capital and seek refuge on Mt Olympos of Bithynia. In 838 the new patriarch, John Grammatikos, summoned a council in Constantinople which condemned by anathema the iconodules and ordered the destruction of all icons.

Theophilos' iconoclastic policy, like that of his predecessors, did not manage to gain the support of the people. In March of 843, one year after his death, the Empress Theodora summoned another council in Constantinople aimed at restoring icon veneration. Facing only minimal reaction, the empress managed to put a final end to Iconoclasm, which had afflicted the Empire for over a century.

5. Consequences

Συγγραφή : *Μακρυπούλιας Χρήστος*
Μετάφραση : *Κούτρας Νικόλαος*
Για παραπομπή : *Μακρυπούλιας Χρήστος , "Iconoclasm in Asia Minor", Εγκυκλοπαίδεια Μείζονος Ελληνισμού, Κωνσταντινούπολη*
URL: <http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=7880>

Iconoclasm caused great upheaval in Asia Minor, especially during the reign of fervent iconoclast emperors (Constantine V, Leo V, Theophilos). The monasticism in the region received a serious blow, as many monasteries were closed down or destroyed and many monks were forced to flee to other areas of Asia Minor or seek refuge in Greece and Italy.

Iconoclasm also had some consequences in the domain of art. We cannot know to what degree was the decoration of churches altered during Iconoclasm, neither the extent of the destruction of portable icons. In some cases, however, the traces of iconoclast intervention was visible, as is the case with the Dormition Church in Nicaea, where the mosaic of Theotocos in the apse was replaced with a cross[15] (about the middle of the 8th century), and in Hagia Sophia in Vize; as for the tradition of aniconic decorations with painted and relief crosses, which can be seen in many churches featuring provincial art in Asia minor, is usualy considered as deriving from the iconoclastic era. In any case, and other than Christian iconography, the artistic production probably never ceased in the iconoclastic period.[16]

The most long-term consequences of the Iconoclasm are not limited to the area of Asia Minor, but affect the Byzantine Empire as a whole. These include the strengthening of the Eastern Church at the expence of Rome[17] (especially after the bishoprics of Greece and South Italy were removed from the Pope became the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, in the mid-8th century) and the cultural renaissance that occurred in Byzantium in the 9th cent., which was a result of the literary, theological and historical research that was conducted in the context of the ideological confrontation between iconoclasts and iconophiles.

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1. P. Brown, «A Dark age crisis: Aspects of the Iconoclastic controversy» *English Historical Review* 88 (1973), p. 1, 27. M.-F. Azépy, «Les enjeux de l'Iconoclasme» in *Cristianità d'Occidente e Cristianità d'Oriente (secoli VI-XI)* [=*Settimane di studio sull'alto medioevo* 51] (Spoleto 2004), p.143-4.

2. This event, which is usually regarded as the outbreak of Iconoclasm, is not attested in all the sources and is even doubtful if it has ever taken place, see M.-F. Auzépy, «La destruction de l'icône dy Christ de la Chalcé par Léon III: propagande ou réalité?» *Byzantion* 55 (1990), σελ. 445-492.

3. See, among others, Bréhier, L., *La querelle des images* (Paris 1904), and Martin, E. J., *A History of the Iconoclastic Controversy* (London 1930).

4. Ahrweiler, H., "The Geography of the Iconoclast World", in Bryer, A. A - Herrin, Judith (ed.), *Iconoclasm. Papers given at the Ninth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies* (Birmingham 1977), pp. 21-27, challenges earlier views that treated the populations of Asia Minor as wholly favourable to Iconoclasm, as well as the interpretation of the rebellion of the Helladikon *theme* as a purely iconodule movement. See also P. Brown, «A Dark Age crisis...» *English Historical Review* 88 (1973), p. 3-5.

5. These two hierarchs from Asia Minor were in Constantinople when the Emperor first proceeded to take iconoclastic measures and it is believed that they influenced him in his decision. See Ostrogorsky, G., "Les débuts de la querelle des images", in *Mélanges Charles Diehl*, 1 (Paris 1930), pp. 233-255. Furthermore, John, the metropolitan of Synada, should be added to the list of the iconoclast bishops of Asia Minor. We should not, however, overestimate the role of these bishops, see J. Herrin, «The Context of Iconoclast Reform» in A. Bryer - J. Herrin, (ed.), *Iconoclasm* (Birmingham 1977), p. 15-20.

6. According to the Byzantine chronicler Theophanes, the name of this soldier was Constantine and he belonged to the circle of Artabasdos, who was the Byzantine military commander of that area. His death by an Arab missile while he was on the ramparts of the city's walls was interpreted as a divine punishment for his sacrilegious act.

7. The removal and later the destruction of the holy relics was ordered by Leo III, but later sources attribute these actions to Constantine V. Wortley, J., "Iconoclasm and Leipsanoclasm: Leo III, Constantine V and the Relics", *Byzantinische Forschungen* 8 (1982), 274-277, doubts the historicity of this event.

8. Kaegi, W. E., "The Byzantine Armies and Iconoclasm", *Byzantinoslavica* 27 (1966), pp. 48-70.

9. The iconoclasts considered this council to be an Ecumenical one, while the iconodules characterized it 'unpresided', for no delegate of the pope or of the eastern patriarchates was present - even the patriarchal throne in Constantinople was at that time temporarily vacant.

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Μετάφραση : *Κούτρας Νικόλαος*
Για παραπομπή : *Μακρυπούλιας Χρήστος , "Iconoclasm in Asia Minor", Εγκυκλοπαίδεια Μείζονος Ελληνισμού, Κωνσταντινούπολη*
URL: <http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=7880>

10. For the political character of Stephen the Younger's persecution see P. Kalrin-Hayter, «Iconoclasm» in C. Mango (ed.) *The Oxford History of Byzantium* (Oxford-New York 2002), p. 157-8.

11. Apart from Michael Lachanodrakon, among the newly appointed associates of the Constantine V where also Michael Melissenos, *strategos* of the theme of Anatolikon, and Manes, *strategos* of the theme of Boukellarion.

12. P. Brown, «A Dark Age crisis...» *English Historical Review* 88 (1973), p. 26-31.

13. The choice of the location was not coincidental, as Nicaea was the administrative centre of the Opsikion theme, and its *strategos*, Petronas, with his troops, were loyal to Eirene, thus assuring the security of the Council.

14. From a theological point of view, Iconoclasm has been considered a continuation of the Christological debates in Byzantine theology from the 4th to the 7th century, see J. Meyendorff, *Christ in Early Christian Thought*, (Crestwood N.Y. 1975), C. von Schönborn, *L'icône du Christ. Fondements théologiques élaborés entre le Ier et le IIe concile de Nicée (323-787)* (Fribourg 1976), p. 142-235. For the theology of Iconoclasm see also, suggest., G. Ladner, « Origin and Significance of the Iconoclastic Controversy», *Medieval Studies* 2 (1940), p. 127-149; G. Ladner, «The Concept of the Image in the Greek Fathers and the Byzantine Iconoclastic Controversy», *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 7 (1953), p. 1-34; P.J. Alexander, «The Iconoclastic Council of St Sophia (815) and its Definition (Horos)», *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 7 (1953), p. 35-66; L. Barnard, «The Theology of Images» in A. Bryer - J. Herrin, (ed.), *Iconoclasm* (Birmingham 1977), p. 7-13; S. Gero «The Eucharistic Doctrine of the Byzantine Iconoclasts and its Sources», *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 68 (1975), p. 4-22.

15. After 843 the Cross was in its turn replaced by a new mosaic representation of Theotokos. Underwood, P. A., "The Evidence of Restorations in the Sanctuary Mosaics of the Church of the Dormition at Nicaea", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 13 (1959), p. 235-243.

16. For the arts in the iconoclastic era see A. Grabar, *L'Iconoclasme. Dossier archéologique* (Paris ^{2}1984), p. 164-263· R. Cormack, «The Arts during the Age of Iconoclasm» in A. Bryer - J. Herrin, (ed.), *Iconoclasm* (Birmingham 1977), p. 35-44· A. Cutler, «The Byzantine Psalter: Before and after Iconoclasm», *id.*, p. 93-102· A. Wharton Epstein, «The 'Iconoclast' Churches of Cappadocia», *id.*, p. 103-111· C. Barber, *Figure and Likeness. On the limits of representation in Byzantine Iconoclasm* (Princeton - Oxford 2002)· L. Brubaker, «The artisanal production of second Iconoclasm (815-843)» in M. Kaplan (ed.) *Monastères, images, pouvoirs et société à Byzance* (Paris 2006), p. 135-152. See also «Icons: The evidence from Mount Sinai, The Icons, Icons of questionable assosiation with Iconoclasm, The evidence from texts, Conclusions» in L. Brubaker - J. Haldon (ed.) *Byzantium in the Iconoclastic Era (ca. 680-850): The Sources. An annotated survey* (Aldershot 2001), p. 55-74.

17. For the Papal attitude towards Iconoclasm, which marked a distinctive point between Eastern and Western Church, see suggest. P. Llewellyn, «The Roman Church on the Outbreak of Iconoclasm» A. Bryer - J. Herrin, (ed.) *Iconoclasm* (Birmingham 1977), p. 29-34; J. Gouillard, «Aux origines de l'Iconoclasme: le témoignage de Grégoire II?» *Travaux et Mémoires* 3 (1968), p. 243-307.

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Συγγραφή : *Μακρυπούλιας Χρήστος*
Μετάφραση : *Κούτρας Νικόλαος*
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URL: <http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=7880>

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Γλωσσάριο :

caliph

The supreme religious and political authority of Muslims, considered successor of Muhammad (Arabic: khalifa = deputy). He was the head of the Caliphate, the religious state of the Arabs.

comes

1. A title in the Roman and the Byzantine Empires, designating an official with political but mostly military jurisdiction. Especially the *comes Orientis* held the position corresponding to that of a vicar in Early Byzantine period. In the years of Justinian I, the comes in head of wider provinces assumed political and military powers, while in the Middle Byzantine period the Opsikion theme was one of the few themes which was the jurisdiction of a comes instead of a strategos.
2. A nobility title in medieval Europe.

monophysitism

A Christian heresy which developed in the 5th cent. Contrary to the orthodox dogmas, it argued that Christ did not possess two natures, but only one – a human nature. This heresy became widespread in the eastern provinces of the Byzantine Empire (mainly in Egypt) and in Armenia.

Συγγραφή : *Μακρυπούλιας Χρήστος*
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	monotheletism
Doctrine developed in the 7th century by Patriarch Sergios, who wanted to reconcile the Orthodox with the monophysites of the Byzantine Empire. Monothelitism supported that Jesus had two natures but only one will. Despite the efforts of Emperor Herakleios (610-641) to impose the new doctrine, monothelitism, was renounced as a heresy in 680.	
	strategos ("general")
During the Roman period his duties were mainly political. Office of the Byzantine state´s provincial administration. At first the title was given to the military and political administrator of the themes, namely of the big geographic and administrative unities of the Byzantine empire. Gradually the title lost its power and, already in the 11th century, strategoi were turned to simple commanders of military units, responsible for the defence of a region.	
	tagmata (pl.)
Military units stationed in Constantinople and its outskirts during the Middle Byzantine period. The most important tagmata were that of the Scholae, the Excubitors (these originated from respective units of the Early Byzantine period and were organized into an imperial guard and a central strike force by Constantine V), the Vigilia (established by Irene the Athenian) and the Hikanatoi (established by Nicephorus I).	

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Two letters Pope Gregory II to Leo III: J. Gouillard, "Aux origines de l'Iconoclasme: le témoignage de Grégoire II?" *Travaux et Mémoires* 3 (1968), p. 243-307, esp. 276-307.

Παραθέματα

The perplexity of the question on Iconoclasm in the sources

Συγγραφή : *Μακρυπούλιας Χρήστος*
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Primary sources betray the construction of competing and overlapping narratives that identify a series of possible origins and identities for Iconoclasm. Nikephoros, Theophanes and George the Monk focused on the imperial role of the crisis. For Nikephoros, who probably wrote in the 780s, Leo III was moved to attack the cult of icons in order to appease the divine wrath, expressed in a massive volcanic explosion on the island of Thera, awakened by this cult. By slightly altering the chronology, Theophanes, writing about 813, argued that Leo's iconoclasm was influenced by Jewish ideas imported from an iconoclastic islamic world. George the Monk, whose *Chronicle* probably dates to the 860s, expanded on his discourse of outside influence, adding a vivid picvture of Leo's destruction of knowledge within the Empire, marked by his closure of the school at the Chalkoprateia church. In contrast, the Seventh Ecumenical Council, held in 787, built a narrative of iconoclasm that was primarily ecclesiastical. It is notable that in this account it was a bishop, Constantine of Nacoleia, who disseminated alien ideas.

The very earliest witnesses to iconoclasm are similarly divided. *The Three Orations on the Images* by John of Damascus, of which the first two were certainly composed about 730, portrayed iconoclasm as an imperial adventure. This point was also apparent throughout the heavily interpolated letters of Pope Gregory II to Leo III (perhaps about 800 in the form we see them today). In contrast, the letters of Patriarch Germanos to three of his bishops, written between 726 and 729, suggest that iconoclasm was a matter that has arisen within the church itself – a point that Pope Gragory's letter to Germanos does nothing to contradict. Our sources, therefore, find several causes for iconoclasm: it can be ecclesiastical and it can be imperial, it can be a Christian heresy and it can be a set of alien ideas infecting the body of the Christian church. The implications of these broad definitions were expanded upon – a work that has continued to occupy modern historians.

C. Barber, *Figure and Likeness. On the limits of representation in Byzantine Iconoclasm* (Princeton – Oxford 2002) p. 8-9.

The question of outside, oriental influence on Byzantine Iconoclasm

Quant à l'influence de l'Islam comme du judaisme, proposée par les sources et par certains historiens modernes, on peut être sceptique: Leon II qui a, plus qu'aucun autre empereur, combattu sans relâche les troupes arabo-musulmanes, n'avait aucune raison d'imiter le pouvoir califal, cette imitation ne pouvant lui être d'aucun profit; de même, on ne voit guère cet empereur, qui avait imposé aux juifs la conversion forcée, appliquer les préceptes vétérotestamentaires par imitation ou contagion. En revanche, judaisme et islam ne sont pas sans relation avec le déclenchement de l'iconoclasme, mais d'une façon indirecte, autre que celle, caricaturale et polémique, mise en avant par les sources.

M.-F. Auzépy, "Les enjeux de l'Iconoclasme" in *Cristianità d'Occidente e Cristianità d'Oriente (Secoli VI-XI)* [=Settimane di Studio della Fondazione centro italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo 51] (Spoleto 2004) p.141.

Iconoclasm and artistic production

It is worth stressing that the Byzantines themselves rarely used the word *Iconoclasm*; instead they preferred iconomachy (image struggle) a term that more accurately responds to the period as we now understand it: there is remarkably little evidence for any actual iconoclast destruction; and as the often-cited letter sent by the emperors Michael II and Theophilos in 824 to Louis the Pious admits, the iconoclast emperors continued to allow «those images that had been placed higher to remain». This is important, not only because it demonstrates that Byzantine Iconoclasm was more flexible than later, European iconoclast movements, but also because it means that the context for works produced during Iconoclasm was predetermined: anything produced during Iconoclasm had to be seen within a framework created long before it, and in a framework that was not, on the whole, visibly affected by Iconoclasm.

L. Brubaker, «The artisanal production of second Iconoclasm (815-843)» in M. Kaplan (ed.) *Monastères, images, pouvoirs et société à Byzance* (Paris 2006), p. 136-7.

Theologic views of Iconoclasm

The iconoclast theology of Constantine V: The icon is not a likeness, but of the same *ousia* as the prototype

(332 B) «Ὁ εἷς ἐκεῖνος ὁ ἐξ ἀμφοῖν εἰς ἓν πρόσωπον λήξας, πῶς ἔχει εἰκονισθῆναι, τῆς μιᾶς φύσεως μὴ περιγραφομένης;» (332 D)

Συγγραφή : *Μακρυπούλιας Χρήστος*
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[…] Πλὴν ταῦτα λιπὼν ἐντεῦθεν, ἐφ' ἕτερον μετέρχεται λόγον, καὶ ἄγει εἰς μέσον τὸν ἄρτον καὶ τὸν οἶνον, ἅπερ εἰς τὰ θεῖα παραλαμβάνεται μυστήρια, καί φησιν, ὅτι «Κατὰ τὴν θεότητα αὐτοῦ, προγνοὺς τὸν θάνατον καὶ τὴν ἀνάστασιν αὐτοῦ, καὶ τὴν εἰς οὐρανοὺς ἄνοδον, καὶ ἵνα τὸ μνημόσυνον τῆς ἐνανθρωπήσεως αὐτοῦ διηνεκῶς ἔχωμεν οἱ πιστεύσαντες εἰς αὐτὸν, νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν.» (333 B) […] «Ἐκέλευσε τοῖς ἁγίοις αὐτοῦ μαθηταῖς καὶ ἀποστόλοις παραδοῦναι δι' οὗ ἠράσθη πράγματος, τύπον εἰς σῶμα αὐτοῦ· ἵνα διὰ τῆς ἱερατικῆς ἀναγωγῆς, κἂν εἰ ἐκ μετοχῆς καὶ θέσει γίνηται, λάβωμεν αὐτὸ ὡς κυρίως καὶ ἀληθῶς σῶμα αὐτοῦ.» (336 A) […] «Καὶ κἂν ὡς εἰκόνα τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ θελήσωμεν λογίσασθαι ὡς ἐξ ἐκείνου παραχθὲν, ἔχομεν αὐτὸ εἰς μόρφωσιν τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ.» Ὥσπερ ἀνωτέρω ἔλεγεν ἁπατώμενος ὁ σοφὸς, εἰκόνα καὶ πρωτότυπον εἰς μηδὲν ἀλλήλων διαφέρειν· οὕτω δὴ κἀνταῦθα περὶ αὐτῶν ἀποφαίνεται.

Constantine V cit. by Nikephoros (Patriarch of Constantinople), *Antirrheticus secundus* 2-3, *PG* 100, col. 332 B-336 A.

The Platonic background of the iconodule theology of icons

This difference between Iconoclast and Iconodule is fundamental to the understanding of the apologetic of the controversy. The Iconoclast held that a material object could be the habitation of a spiritual being - that the *οὐσίαι* of both coalesced into one *οὐσία* - so any worship of the image was in the nature of idolatry. Against this the Iconodules laboured to show that, however close the connextion between the image and original, their *οὐσίαι* were different - hence the worship of images was legitimate as this worship could be referred to the prototype. Essentially this was a Platonic view.

L.W. Barnard, *The Graeco-Roman and Oriental Background of the Iconoclastic Controversy* (Leiden 1974), p. 93.

The soteriologic dimension in iconodule theology of icons

[... Methode] concède aux iconodules que Dieu ne saurait être «décrit», c'est-à-dire défini par une image, parce que l'image ne reproduit que ce qui est matière. Mais [...] representer l'une seulement des deux natures du Christ n'est pas nier son autre nature. C'est plutôt apprendre quelque chose sur cette nature divine [...]: pour [les iconoclastes], pas de représentation du Christ, parce que son image apparente, en matière terrestre, n'est qu'un objet sans vie; pour [les iconodules], au contraire, la même image matérielle du Christ est réalisable (ou alors il n'y aurait pas eu d'oeuvre de salut), et quoiqu'elle ne figure que le Verbe *incarné*, elle sert justement à comprendre l'autre nature du Christ, sa nature divine, et notamment le fait qu'elle ne peut être representée. [...] C'est une rehabilitation systématique de la chair, en ce qui concerne le Christ, et bien entendu, cette attitude est l'antithèse au dénigrement de la matière par les iconoclastes. Or cette tendance à réhabiliter la chair dans le corps du Christ signifie qu'on était devenu conscient d'un fait qui allait être essentiel pour le sort ultérieur des images saintes à Byzance: que le Christ par son incarnation très effective a conféré au corps humain un prestige qui, depuis ce temps, lui restera acquis. S'il reste vrai que le divin n'est pas représentable, le corps matériel, qui chez le Christ fut habité par Dieu, cesse d'être cet objet muet et sans vie qui ne pouvait rien apprendre sur Dieu.

A Grabar, *L'iconoclasme byzantin. Dossier archéologique* (Paris ^{2}1984), p. 192-3.

Χρονολόγιο

726: Emperor Leo III publicly professes his opposition to icon veneration.

January 730: An imperial edict against icon veneration is issued.

February-August 754: Iconoclastic council of Hieria

771-772: Persecution of iconodule monks in the theme of Thrakesion by the *strategos* Michael Lachanodrakon.

fall of 787: The Seventh Ecumenical Council in Nicaea restores the icons. The end of the first phase of the Iconoclasm.

815: A council in Constantinople bans icon veneration once again. Second phase of the Iconoclasm.

833: Theophilos issues a new iconoclastic edict.

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838: The iconodules are anathematized by the patriarch Ioannes Grammatikos.

March 843: Empress Theodora finally restores the icons. Iconoclasm comes to an end.