The Exception or the Rule? Historical Survey and Analytical Breakdown of Constantinople's Missionary Work 398-1453

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INTRODUCTION

During the period 398-1453, Christian missionary work proceeded from central episcopal sees at Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria/Antioch, and Ctesiphon-Seleucia. These came to represent four communions: Western Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox (also known as "Monophysites"), and the Church of the East (also known as "Nestorians"). The missionary history of three of these is extensively researched, but Constantinople less so.[1] Ševčenko writes, "The full story of Byzantine religious missions is still to be written."[2] Shepard observes, "Unlike economic affairs, Byzantine missions received limited scholarly attention in the twentieth century. Sergei Ivanov's chapter is the first survey in English of the full sweep of missionary activity from Justinian's time to the Palaiologan period."[3] Ivanov writes, "Overall the missionising of the western church has been researched immeasurably more deeply than that of Byzantium."[4] Sterk notes, "The subject of eastern mission has been less studied, although the tide is beginning to change."[5]

[1] G. W. Houston, "An Overview Of Nestorians In Inner Asia," *Central Asiatic Journal* 24 (1980): 60-68; P. Jenkins, *Lost History of Christianity* (Oxford: Lion Hudson, 2009); K. S. Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity* (New York: Harper & Bros, 1945); D. MacCulloch, *A History of Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years* (London: Allen Lane, 2009); Jeanne-Nicole Mellon Saint-Laurent, *Missionary Stories and the Formation of the Syriac Churches* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015); S. Moffett, "The earliest Asian Christianity," *Missiology: An International Review* 3 (1975): 415-430; Stephen Neill, *History of Christian Missions* (London: Penguin, 1990); P. C. Phan, ed., *Christianities in Asia* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011); P. Schaff, *A History of the Christian Church* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1960); J. Schmidlin, *Catholic Mission History*, trans. Matthias Braun (Techny: Mission Press, 1933); John Stewart, *Nestorian Missionary Enterprise* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1928); A. Yannoulatos, *Monks and Mission in the Eastern Church during the 4th Century* (Athens: Porefthendes, 1966), 208.
[2] I. Ševčenko*, "*Religious Missions Seen from Byzantium," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 12-13 (1988-89): p. 7 n. 1.
[3] J. Shepard, "Introduction," in *Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire* (Cambridge: CUP, 2018), 37.
[4] S. Ivanov, *Vizantiiskoe missionerstvo* (Moscow: Iazyki slavianskoi kul'tury, 2003), 173.
[5] A. Sterk, "Mission from Below: Captive Women and Conversion on the East Roman Frontiers," *Church History* 79 (2010): 4.

In the nineteenth century Stephens claimed, "Missionary enterprises have not proceeded from the Eastern church… but *rare exceptions… prove the rule*."[6] Glazik, Treadgold and, to an extent, Ivanov, are representative of many who, more recently, likewise consider Eastern Orthodoxy's "mother church" largely "non-missionary".[7] Yannoulatos, and also Bosch, are critical of this, ascribing such conclusions to imposition of western standards on Eastern Orthodox mission.[8] The two-fold aim of the present work is to *demonstrate the fact of consistent missionary work from Constantinople throughout the period 398-1453*, based on a joined-up historical survey of six successive periods, and, likewise based on historical data, to produce an *analytical breakdown* of the constituent elements of Constantinople's missionary work, dividing it up into "initial Christianisation" and subsequent ongoing Christianisation.

Various historical surveys of Constantinople's missionary work have been undertaken. These include H. G. Beck, S. Ivanov, G. Moravscik, H. Hannick, D. Obolensky, I. Ševčenko, J. Shepard and A. Yannoulatos.[9] The present work seeks to build on these existing surveys, also seeking to fill in gaps in the narrative.[10] Citing a specific example, Vásáry observes, "…much has been written on the

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[6] W. Stephens, *Saint John Chrysostom, his Life and Times* (London: John Murray, 1872), 250 (emphasis mine).
[7] J. Glazik, "Die Russisch-Orthodoxe Heidenmission seit Peter dem Grossen," in Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 294; W. Treadgold, "The Formation of a Byzantine Identity," in *Culture and Identity in Eastern Christian History*, ed. R. E. Martin and J. B. Spock (Bloomington: Slavica Publishers, 2009), 337; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 294.
[8] Yannoulatos, *Monks and Mission*, 211; D. J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission* (New York: Orbis Books, 1991), 206.
[9] H.-G. Beck, "Christliche Mission und politische Propaganda im byzantinischen Reich," in *Ideen und Realitäten in Byzanz: gesammelte Aufsätze,* ed. H. G. Beck (London: Variorum Reprints, 1972), 649-676; C. Hannick, "Die Byzantinischen Missionen," *Kirchengeschichte als Missionsgeschichte*, ed. K. Schäferdiek (Munich: Kaiser Verlag, 1978); Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*; Obolensky, *Commonwealth*; J. Shepard, "Spreading the Word" in *Oxford History of Byzantium,* eds. C. Mango et al. (Oxford: OUP, 2002); Ševčenko, "Religious Missions," 7-27; A. Yannoulatos, *Dazhe do kraia zemli* (Moscow: Poznanie, 2018); A. Yannoulatos, "Les Missions des Églises d'Orient,*"* *Encyclopaedia Universalis*, vol. 11 (Paris: Encyclopaedia Universalis France, 1972): 99-102.
[10] E.g., A. Yannoulatos, "The Missionary Activity of the Orthodox Church," *Syndesmos Sixth General Assembly* (Punkaharju, 1964): 3; Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (London: Pelican, 1993).

Western Catholic mission among the Qumans and Tatars in the 13th-14th centuries, but little attention has been paid to the conversion to Orthodoxy of Qumans in that period… [T]he Byzantine mission in the Crimea in the course of the 13th and 14th centuries has practically remained hidden in darkness."[11] Hussey considers that most missionaries from Constantinople "remain anonymous or, like the eleventh-century John of Euchaita's uncle who worked in the Balkans, are only known by chance reference buried in a sermon or funeral oration."[12]

Similarly, there are several existing analytical breakdowns of Constantinople's missionary work. Bosch, Bria, Ivanov, Stamoolis, Ševčenko, Sullivan and Yannoulatos constitute a representative sample from a variety of perspectives. [13] There is also a one-paragraph breakdown on features of "Byzantine mission to the nations of Eastern Europe" by Obolensky.[14] The strength and weakness of Sullivan's approach is to view the issues through the prism of a contrast between Western Catholic and Eastern Orthodox. In the case of Yannoulatos, Bria and Stamoolis, from an Eastern Orthodox perspective, and of Bosch, from a Protestant perspective, characteristics identified may express more theology and aspiration than historical data. For example, they appear, somewhat uncritically, to assert "use of the vernacular", failing to engage with a more nuanced picture emerging from historical data. Writing from a secular historical perspective, Ševčenko and Ivanov's conclusions are more critical, arguably unduly so, in respect of, for example, "use of the vernacular", or of

[11] I. Vásáry, "Orthodox Christian Qumans and Tatars of the Crimea in the 13th-14th centuries," *Central Asiatic Journal* 32 (1988): 260-71.
[12] J. Hussey, *The Byzantine World* (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1967), 103.
[13] D. J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission* (New York: Orbis Books, 1991), 205-213; I. Bria, "On Orthodox Witness," *Ecumenical Review* 69 (1980), 527-528; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 295-397; Ševčenko, "Religious Missions," 7-27; J. J. Stamoolis, "Eastern Orthodox Mission Theology," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 8 (1974): 59-63; Sullivan, R. E. "Early Medieval Missionary Activity: A Comparative Study of Eastern and Western Methods" *Church History* 23 (1954): 17-35; Anastasios Yannoulatos, "Orthodox Mission—Past, Present, and Future," in *Orthodox Perspectives on Mission*, ed. Petros Vassiliades (Oxford: Regnum, 2013), 15-33.
[14] Obolensky, *Commonwealth*, 88.

Constantinople's missionary teaching being "complicated and boring" for Barbarians.[15] Other papers and books cover specific missionary roles, such as polemicist and holy man.[16] However, there is scope for more research into the characteristics of Constantinople's missionary activity, breaking it down into its constituent parts, in logical order, and supporting assertions with historical evidence.

The principal primary sources on Constantinople's missionary work may be divided into two groups: the main historiographical tradition(s), and more particular sources. The former is represented by (1) the *Eusebian tradition*, including Eusebius of Caesarea, Sozomen, Socrates Scholasticus, Theodoret, Theodor Lector and ending with Evagrius Scholasticus (d. 594); (2) an overlapping *secular historical tradition*, represented by Procopius and others, also touching on church historical matters, (3) a "*Dark Age*" running from the first half of the seventh century for more or less a hundred years, during which "no extant Greek chronicle [was] composed"; followed by (4) resumption of the secular historical tradition of Procopius, starting with Theophanes the Confessor, who retrospectively covers the intervening period, writing in the years 810 to 815, now merging church and state historiography, and representing an almost unbroken succession of histories and chronicles, for example, John Scylitzes or George Pachymeres.[17] Schaff refers to these "later Greek historians, from the seventh century to the fifteenth" as *Scriptores Byzantini*.[18] Besides this main historiographical tradition, there is also a plethora of more particular sources. The starting point for research has been an extant sermon and selected letters in the corpus of Chrysostom's writings, identifying

[15] Ševčenko, *Religious Missions*, 23; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 7.
[16] E.g. J. Meyendorff, "Byzantine Views of Islam," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 18 (1964): 113-132; R. M. Price, "The Holy Man and Christianization from the Apocryphal Apostles to Stephen of Perm," in *The Expansion of Orthodox Europe,* ed. J. Shepard (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 215-238.
[17] W. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); W. Treadgold, *Middle Byzantine Historians* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); C. Mango, "The Tradition of Byzantine Chronography," *Harvard Ukrainian studies* 12/13 (1988/89): 360-372. The difference between "histories" and "chronicles" is outlined in *The Chronicle of Theophanes: Anni mundi 6095-6305 (A.D. 602-813)*, ed. H. Turtledove (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), xi.
[18] P. Schaff, *A History of the Christian Church* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1960).

Constantinople's missionary interests in his time. These have led to other sources, including other ecclesiastical histories (for example, John Malalas), other secular historical sources, over a dozen hagiographies, a number of letters, particularly by bishops of Constantinople or by Emperors, encomia, epitaphs and similar eulogistic texts, *Notitiae Episcopatuum Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae* (lists of bishoprics, in ranking order, under the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Constantinople), and acts of ecclesiastical councils. In some cases, such as Chrysostom's letters, sources are contemporary, and provide reliable and precious insight. Other sources, such as Anna Comnene's *Alexiad*, are contemporary, but liable to distortion for political reasons (e.g. magnifying her father's reign).[19] In many other cases, histories, such as the *Chronicle of Monemvasia*, were composed some time after events described, and are prone to inaccuracies. This is even more true of hagiographies, e.g. *Life of Fantinus the Wonderworker*, which, in some cases, appear to include legendary elements.[20] Nevertheless, some factual basis will be assumed to underlie even such "hybrid" sources.[21]

Geography and migration history represent important considerations for the present study. At the start of the period under review, the Eastern *pars* (half) of the Roman Empire stretched around the Mediterranean with a frontier (*limes*) to the south (Sudan), east (Arabia and Mesopotamia), north east (Caucasus), north (the Danube Basin and the Pontic Steppe) and north west (Central Europe); to the west lay the Empire's western half and later its successor states. Particularly significant was the arc-shaped area stretching over Constantinople from Colchis in the east, across the Pontic Steppe and Danube basin (together known as "Scythia"), to the Balkans in west. Frontier areas provided the front-line for missionary work from Constantinople. When reading of unexpected missionary

[19] Anna Komnene, *The Alexiad*, trans. E. R. A. Sewter and Peter Frankopan, (New York: *Penguin, 2009*), p. ix.
[20] "Vita s. Phantini Confessoris," in Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 115-139.
[21] Ševčenko, "Religious Missions," 23.

endeavours, such as Nubia (sixth century), the Mongols (thirteenth century), or Lithuania (fourteenth century), geographical and migration considerations provide insight; Constantinople missionised its neighbours, especially if they threatened or encroached.[22]

What is the correct designation for the political entity and civilisation centred in Constantinople? Its population referred to themselves as Romans, to their ruler as *Basileus* (King or Emperor), and to their state as the *Basileia* (Kingdom or Empire) of the Romans. Ruled autonomously as the eastern *pars* of the Empire from 395, and then, following western Rome's fall in the fifth century, constituting a successor state to the Roman Empire, with its capital at Constantinople ("*Nova Roma*"), the Empire of the Romans thrived under Justinian the Great (sixth century), and the Macedonian dynasty (ninth-eleventh centuries), was temporarily toppled by western Crusaders in 1204, only to recover in 1261, and later experienced political decline but cultural revival, continuing as a political entity before defeat by Osmanli (i.e. Ottoman) Turks in 1453.[23] Missionary work reflected these political developments, experiencing two "peaks" of intensity in the sixth and ninth-eleventh centuries respectively, coinciding with the Justinian and Macedonian eras, as confirmed by Ševčenko, Ivanov, Yannoulatos and others.[24] While the Empire did continue the political tradition of the "Roman Empire", it became a regional power less connected with its Latin past, and was officially Greek-speaking from 610.[25] Later historians called it "Byzantium", but the present thesis will refer to the "Empire of Constantinople".

[22] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 73-114.
[23] T. E. Gregory, A History of Byzantium (Chichester, Wiley-Blackwell, 2010).
[24] Ševčenko, "Religious Missions", 11; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 251; Yannoulatos, "Past, Present, Future", 16.
[25] Harris, *Lost World*, 82-104; P. Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1971), 137-188.

Secondly, what is the correct designation for Constantinople's ecclesiastical body? Referring to the "Eastern Church", particularly in missiology, risks confusion. The "Church of the East" refers to a church body, also known as "Nestorians", or "East Syrians", holding to the theology of Theodore of Mopsuestia. There was also another rival communion, the Oriental Orthodox churches, confessing "one nature in Christ", with two centres at Alexandria (Copts) and at Antioch (West Syrians or Jacobites), known as "Monophysites". Both the Church of the East and the Oriental Orthodox constituted rival communions active in missionary work.[26] By contrast, "Eastern Orthodox" shall designate the church communion holding to the 451 Council of Chalcedon, and in communion with the see of Constantinople, including the Melkite Sees of Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria.[27] In the light of the 1054 schism, "Eastern Orthodox church" shall be deemed not to include the Latin-speaking church under the See of Rome. Moreover, the focus shall be on missionary work directly from Constantinople, rather than from Melkite Sees, or secondary work from, for example, Russian or Bulgarian churches.

Thirdly, concerning the terms "missionary", and "Barbarians". Primary sources use the term "missionary"; Ivanov and others date its use to recent times.[28] Following Stanfill, Sterk and Wood, missionary work (missions) is defined as "evangelization of pagans across cultural or geographical boundaries".[29] This corresponds to Yannoulatos' term "external mission".[30] Missionary work is

[26] Jenkins, *Lost History*; MacCulloch, *First Three Thousand Years;* T. Dowley, *Atlas of Christian History* (Oxford: Lion Judson, 2016).
[27] "Melkite" sees were associated with the Emperor ("*Melek"*), and subject to Patriarchs at Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem. They represented a Chalcedonian minority in majority Oriental Orthodox regions.
[28] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 9-11; P. Kollman, "At the Origins of Mission and Missiology: A Study in the Dynamics of Religious Language," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 79 (2011): 425-458.
[29] A. Sterk, "Bishops and Mission Beyond the Frontiers: From Gothia to Nubia," in *Episcopal Networks in Late Antiquity*, ed. C. Cvetković and P. Gemeinhardt (Berlin: DeGruyter, 2019), 314; J. Stanfill, "John Chrysostom and the Rebirth of the Antiochene Mission in Late Antiquity," *Church History* 88 (2019): 900 n. 5.
[30] Yannoulatos, "Orthodox Mission—Past, Present, and Future," 15.

synonymous with Christianisation, comprising a range of activities, with a view to those missionised being and remaining Christians in Constantinople's cultural orbit.[31] "Barbarians" shall designate those not sharing Constantinople's civilisation and Eastern Orthodox faith. In the present thesis non-Chalcedonian Christians, such as the Church of the East or Oriental Orthodox, do not class as "Barbarians". Nor is Jewish mission covered, simply noting attempts to convert Jews in the seventh and ninth centuries, and the existence of Jewish converts, such as Leo Mung, Archbishop of Ochrid 1108-1120.[32]

Established Latinised spellings, such as Chrysostom (*Chrysostomos*), Cyril (*Kyrillos*) and Chazar, shall be used, following historians such as Hussey, Norwich and Cameron.[33] Non-English terms and spellings are italicised.

[31] Stanfill, *Rebirth of Antiochene Mission*, 900.
[32] Ševčenko*, "*Religious Missions," 12; Harris, *Lost World,* 114.
[33] J. Hussey, *Byzantine World*; John Julius Norwich, *A Short History of Byzantium* (London: Penguin, 2013); A. Cameron, "Christian Conversion in Late Antiquity," in *Conversion in Late Antiquity: Christianity, Islam, and Beyond*, ed A. Papaconstantinou, A. and D. L. Schwartz (Oxford: Routledge, 2015), 1-20.

CHAPTER 1. PRE-JUSTINIAN BARBARIAN MISSIONS FROM CONSTANTINOPLE

The present chapter aims to demonstrate, based on historical data, missionary work from Constantinople prior to the Justinian era (518).

The see of Constantinople and missionary work

The see of *Byzantion* was held to have been founded by the Apostle Andrew at least since the ninth-century *Life of Andrew*.[1] The see of *Byzantion* was one of several in Thrace under the Metropolitan of Heraclea when the city was re-founded by Constantine I as *Nova Roma* in 330. Then the 381 Council designated Constantinople (as it became known after Constantine's death) "second to Rome". Next, the 451 Council at Chalcedon ruled that "the metropolitans – and they alone – of the dioceses of Pontus, Asia and Thrace, as well as the bishops of the aforementioned dioceses who are among the barbarians, shall be ordained by the aforesaid most holy throne of the most holy Church of Constantinople."[2] Thus, Constantinople's status was raised to a rank later known as "Patriarchate", ruling over the metropolitan bishops of Pontus, Asia and Thrace. Ivanov understands the wording "bishops of the aforementioned dioceses who are among the barbarians" to refer to Constantinople's jurisdiction over missionary bishoprics on the Danube (Thrace), the Black Sea

[1] F. Dvornik, *The idea of Apostolicity in Byzantium and the Legend of Saint Andrew* (Cambridge, MS: Harvard University Press, 1958).
[2] *The Seven Ecumenical Councils of the Undivided Church*, ed. P. Schaff and H. Wace (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1899), 178; *Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, trans. R. Price and M. Gaddis (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2005), canon 28.

(Pontus) and in the Caucasus (Asia), while Bedouin and Persian missionary bishoprics remained under the Antiochene Patriarch, and those in Arabia and Ethiopia under Alexandria.[3]

Constantinople's missionary work predated 398. For example, according to ecclesiastical historian, Rufinus, Nino the Enlightener of Georgia arrived there, about 320, via *Byzantion*.[4] Emperor Constantius II (r. 337-361) sponsored Arian missions from Constantinople, in particular Ulifas.[5] According to Yannoulatos, Archimandrite Alexander left Constantinople in 380 – first for the desert, and then for decades of missionary work in Mesopotamia, accompanied by four hundred "Vigilants".[6]

John Chrysostom

Aside from these isolated cases, Constantinople's millennium of missionising can be said to begin with John Chrysostom, formerly of Antioch, consecrated Archbishop of Constantinople in 398.[7] De Wet writes, "Chrysostom is well known for his missionary activity and is quite unique in his status as bishop-missionary."[8] Stanfill traces Chrysostom's interest in missions beyond Constantinople's

[3] P. L'Huillier, "L'économie dans la tradition de l'Église Orthodoxe," *Jahrbuch der Gesellschaft für das Recht der Ostkirchen* 6 (1983): 19-38; S. Ivanov, *Vizantiiskoe missionerstvo* (Moscow: Iazyki slavianskoi kul'tury, 2003), 53-55.
[4] Rufinus of Aquileia, *Church History*, trans. P R Amidon (Oxford: OUP, 1997), bk. 10 ch. 11.
[5] H. Sivan, "Ulifa's Own Conversion," *Harvard Theological Review* 89 (1996): 373-86.
[6] A. Yannoulatos, *Monks and Mission in the Eastern Church during the 4th Century* (Athens: Porefthendes, 1966), 221-222.
[7] "Nicene" refers to the theology of the Councils of 325 and 381. F. H. Chase, *Chrysostom – A Study in the History of Biblical Interpretation* (Cambridge: Deighton, Bell and Co, 1887); "A brief historical note about the Ecumenical Patriarchate," The Ecumenical Patriarchate, https://www.ec-patr.org/patrdisplay.php?lang=en&id=5 (accessed 20 June 2019); D. Attwater, *St John Chrysostom Pastor and Preacher* (London: Catholic Book Club, 1960), 80-81.
[8] Stanfill, *Rebirth of Antiochene Mission*, 901,910,911; C. L. De Wet, "John Chrysostom and the mission to the Goths: Rhetorical and ethical perspectives," *HTS Theological Studies* 68 (2011): 256-266; K. Baus, "The Inner Life of the Church between Nicaea and Chalcedon," in *The Imperial Church from Constantine to the Early Middle Ages*, ed. K. Baus et al. (London: Burns & Oats, 1980), 181-239.

jurisdiction, including Phoenicia, to Antioch's missionary legacy.[9] Incidentally, Chrysostom mainly supported existing work, not new projects.[10] Chrysostom's Sermon to the Goths references the mission field of "Scythians and Thracians", and in *Letter 221*, dating to his exile 404-407, Chrysostom urged Constantius "not to cease having a care for the Churches of Phœnicia and Arabia and the east."[11] These four mission fields in the period 398-518 are all referenced by ecclesiastical historians Socrates Scholasticus, Sozomen, Theodoret and Evagrius.[12] For his part, Mark the Deacon, a contemporary of the events he describes, whose contested historical accuracy is upheld by Trombley, sheds light on missions in Phoenicia.[13] Cyril of Scythopolis, writing mid-sixth century, is the main source on the desert saints who worked among Arabs in the period 450-600.[14]

"Scythians and Thracians"

"Scythians and Thracians" refers to inhabitants of Scythia and Thrace, two geographical areas near to Constantinople with significant populations of Barbarians. These including the Goths, a Germanic people, who inhabited areas along the Danube (*Scythia Minor*), where they were *foederati* ("tribes allied to the Empire"), and in the Crimea, where they were under partial Hunnic domination. The

[9] Stanfill, *Rebirth of Antiochene Mission*, 899-924.
[10] A. Sterk, "Bishops and Mission Beyond the Frontiers: From Gothia to Nubia," in *Episcopal Networks in Late Antiquity*, ed. Carmen Cvetković and Peter Gemeinhardt (Berlin: DeGruyter, 2019), 314; Stanfill, *Rebirth of Antiochene Mission*, 919.
[11] Chrysostom, "Letter 221," in *Patriologia Graeca,* vol. 52, ed. J.P. Migne (Paris: Imprimerie Catholique, 1857-1866) (emphasis mine).
[12] *NPNF2-02. The Ecclesiastical History of Socrates, The Ecclesiastical History of Sozomen,* trans. P. Schaff, https://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf202 (accessed 27 January 2022); Theodoret, "Ecclesiastical History," in *NPNF2-03. Theodoret, Jerome, Gennadius, & Rufinus: Historical Writings*, trans. P. Schaff, https://ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf203/npnf203 (accessed 27 January 2022); Evagrius Scholasticus, *Ecclesiastical History*, trans. M. Whitby (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000).
[13] David Frankfurter, "Review of Trombley, Hellenic Religion and Christianization," https://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/1995/1995.02.15 (accessed 10 December 2021).
[14] Cyril of Scythopolis, *The Lives of the Monks of Palestine,* trans. R.M. Price (Collegeville: Cistercian Publication, 1991), xi.

Goths were Chrysostom's best-known missionary interest.[15] Bishops from "Scythia", Theophilus at Tomi (modern-day Constanța) and Cadmus at Bosporus (modern-day Kerch), attended the 325 Council.[16] Their flocks, however, were very possibly Greek. Work among Goths themselves began no later than 341 with Arian missionary, Ulifas (c. 311-383). Later, heretical monk Audius, banished to Scythia, also had a following.[17] As for Nicene missionary work, Theodoret, writing circa 450, corroborates Chrysostom supporting Gothic work in three locations.[18]

The first location for Chrysostom's Gothic mission was Constantinople itself, where there were many Gothic mercenaries and settlers. Many were Arians, holding meetings outside the city walls, and also gathering in public places. Gainas, a powerful Arian Gothic general, requested a church for Arian worship, but Chrysostom resisted. He made available St. Paul's church for Nicene Goths, appointing presbyters and deacons, and, Theodoret claims, regularly visiting to preach.[19] One sermon by Chrysostom, delivered sometime between 398 and 400, has been preserved.[20] Chrysostom, speaking through an interpreter, compared his hearers, favourably, with pagan Greeks, used Biblical examples to demonstrate the gospel is for both Greek and Barbarian, and encouraged his hearers to

[15] A. J. Prince, "Contextualisation of the Gospel: Towards an evangelical approach in the light of Scripture and the church Fathers," (PhD diss., Australian Catholic University, 2015); Harris, *Lost World*, 248.
[16] *The Seven Ecumenical Councils of the Undivided Church,* ed. P. Schaff, P. and H. Wace (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1899); A. Yannoulatos, *Dazhe do kraia zemli* (Moscow: Poznanie, 2018), 59; A. von Harnack, *Expansion of Christianity in the first three centuries* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1904), 397.
[17] Sterk, "From Gothia to Nubia," 313-332; Epiphanius of Cyprus, "Panarion," in Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 42.
[18] Theodoret, "History," bk. 5 ch. 32; Attwater, *Chrysostom,* 91; Sterk, "From Gothia to Nubia," 322.
[19] Theodoret, "History," bk. 5 ch. 30; De Wet, "Rhetorical and Ethical," 256-266; T. Venning and J. Harris, *A Chronology of the Byzantine Empire* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 38.
[20] Chrysostom, "Homilia habita postquam presbyter Gothus," http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/1004/1003__Ioannes_Crysostomus_010/0345-0407,_Iohannes_Chrysostomus,_Homilia_habita_postquam_presbyter_Gothus_concionatus_fuerat,_MGR.html (accessed 26 February 2019); A. A. Vasiliev, *The Goths in the Crimea* (Cambridge: The Academy, 1936), 32.

read the Gothic Bible.[21] Stephens recounts, "The Archbishop… rejoiced in the occurrence as a visible illustration of the diffusion of the Gospel among all nations and languages… *Scythians, and Thracians,* Sauromatians, Moors, and Indians, and those who inhabit the extremities of the world, possess this teaching translated into their own language…"[22] Shortly afterwards, in summer 400, actions by Gainas led to a massacre of seven thousand armed Goths, and the Gothic church was destroyed by fire.[23] Goths were subsequently expelled from the city, which may have been the end of the Gothic congregation, although later, from exile in 404, Chrysostom corresponded with Gothic monks in Constantinople living on the former estate of Promotus, possibly a "training-school for Gothic clergy".[24]

Secondly, Chrysostom supported Gothic work along the Danube river (*Scythia Minor*). Theodoret records missionaries being recruited and dispatched to this area in Chrysostom's time.[25] This work, under the Tomi bishopric, predated Chrysostom, and is referred to in *The Passion of St. Saba the Goth*, martyred in 372, and in letters from bishop Basil of Caesarea.[26] While many Goths migrated

[21] Baus, "Inner Life," 181-239; Theodoret, "History," bk. 5 ch. 30.
[22] W. Stephens, *Saint John Chrysostom, his Life and Times* (London: John Murray, 1872) (emphasis mine).
[23] Socrates, "History," bk. 6 ch. 6, in *NPNF2-02. The Ecclesiastical History of Socrates, The Ecclesiastical History of Sozomen,* trans. P. Schaff, https://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf202 (accessed 27 January 2022); Sozomen, "Ecclesiastical History," bk. 8 ch. 4, in *NPNF2-02. The Ecclesiastical History of Socrates, The Ecclesiastical History of Sozomen,* trans. P. Schaff, https://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf202 (accessed 27 January 2022).
[24] Also known as the "Marsian" monks. De Wet, "Rhetorical and Ethical," 256-266; J. Stanfill, "Embracing the Barbarian: John Chrysostom's Pastoral Care of the Goths," (PhD dissertation, Fordham University, 2015); Stanfill, "Gothic Parish," 899-924; Chrysostom, "Letter 207 to Gothic Monks", http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu (accessed 23 December 2020); Sterk, "From Gothia to Nubia," 323.
[25] Theodoret, "History," bk. 5 ch. 31; Attwater, *Chrysostom,* 91-92.
[26] "The Passion of St. Saba the Goth", in *The Goths in the Fourth Century*, ed. P. Heather (Liverpool, 1991), 109–17; Basil of Caesarea, "Letter to Ascholius," https://restart.typepad.com/my_weblog/2015/04/basil-of-caesarea-letter-to-ascholius-bishop-of-thessalonica-374.html (accessed 15 December 2021); Sterk, "From Gothia to Nubia," 317.

en masse into western Europe during the fifth century, some remained in the Danube area, many of them Nicene Christians.[27]

Chrysostom also supported pre-existing work among Goths at a third location: on the northern shore of the Black Sea (*Scythia Major*). In *Letter 9 to Olympias* Chrysostom refers to consecrating Unila as bishop, with his see at Doros (modern-day Mangup).[28] Later, in *Letter 207*, written to Gothic monks, Chrysostom expresses concern about appointment of Unila's successor, fearing "all his work for the Goths might be undone". "The church of the Goths" he refers to is probably this one.[29] Subsequently, a Patriarch of Constantinople, Fravitta (r. 489-490), was of Gothic heritage.[30] Later, in 548, contemporary secular historian Procopius recorded a group of "Tetraxitae Goths" residing east of the Azov sea, who "reverence and observe the rites of the Christians as carefully as any people do," and their request to Justinian for a bishop.[31] Centuries later, Bishop John of Gothia (d. 791) noted the presence of Christians reading and praising in Gothic, although the area was "far from uniformly Gothic-speaking".[32]

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[27] R. W. Mathisen, "Barbarian Bishops and the Churches 'in barbaricis gentibus' during Late Antiquity," *Speculum* 72 (1997): 664–97; Vasiliev, *Goths*, 37.
[28] Also spelt "Wunila". Chrysostom, "Letter 9 to Olympias," https://ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf109/npnf109.xvii.vi.html#fna_xvii.vi-p14.1 (accessed 14 January 2022); S. V. Yartsev et al., "The Christian Goths at the Bosporus in the 4th and 5th Centuries AD," *Journal of Social Sciences Research* 3 (2018): 375.
[29] Chrysostom, "Letter 207"; Mathisen, "Barbarian Bishops," 664-697; Attwater, *Chrysostom,* 92.
[30] Mathisen, "Barbarian Bishops," 677.
[31] Or, alternatively, "Trapezite Goths". Procopius, *History of the Wars (Gothic War),* trans. H. B. Dewing (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1928), bk. 4 ch. 4-5; Yartsev et al, "Christian Goths," 375.
[32] "La Vie de Jean de Gothie (BHG 891)," trans. M.-F. Auzépy, in *La Crimée entre Byzance et le khaganat Khazar*, ed. C. Zuckerman (Paris, 2006), 77–85; R. Loewe, *Die Reste der Germanen am Schwarzen Meere* (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1896), 114.

The Goths (the "Scythian throng") were not, however, the only residents of Scythia. Sozomen also refers to work among "nomadic Scythians" i.e. Huns.[33] Thompson identifies Theotimus, Chrysostom's friend and bishop of Tomi, as first missionary to Huns.[34] Theotimus, a "Scythian", wrote Sozomen: "had been brought up in the practice of philosophy [i.e. monasticism]; and his virtues had so won the admiration of the barbarian Huns, who dwelt on the banks of the Ister [i.e. Danube], that they called him the god of the Romans, for they had experience of divine deeds wrought by him."[35] Moravscik writes, "As seen from several miraculous contemporary stories, [Theotimus] tamed the wild, fierce Huns, and he probably won many of them for the Christian religion."[36] Thompson is more cautious: "throughout the fifth century the Huns as a whole remained pagan and the few individuals whom we know to have been converted appear to have had particularly close relations with the Romans."[37] After Attila's death in 453, the Hunnic Empire fell apart, and peoples previously subjugated to the Huns, such as the Gepids in the Balkans, and others, such as the "Oghur tribes" in the Pontic steppe, took over control.[38]

There was also missionary work among Barbarians, around 400, in nearby mountainous Thrace. "Abbot Jonas of the monastery of Halmyrissus… with his monks evangelized the inhabitants in the vicinity," writes Baus, "his fight against pagan idols reminds one of the procedures employed earlier in Gaul by Martin of Tours."[39]

[33] Sozomen, "Ecclesiastical History," bk. 7 ch. 26; P. Golden, "The peoples of the south Russian steppes," in *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia*, ed. D. Sinor (Cambridge: CUP, 1990), 256-284.
[34] E. A. Thompson, "Christian Missionaries among the Huns," *Hermathena* 67 (1946): 73-79.
[35] Sozomen, "Ecclesiastical History," bk. 7 ch. 26.
[36] Moravcsik, "Byzantine Christianity and the Magyars," 35.
[37] Thompson, "Missionaries," 73-79.
[38] Golden, "The peoples," 256-284.
[39] Baus, "Inner Life," 194.

Phoenicia

A second missionary field in this period, referred to by Chrysostom, was Phoenicia. "Numbers of missionaries," writes Attwater, were sent "to the Phoenician coast, from Berytus to the Palestinian Caesarea, where the cult of Atargatis and Baal in various syncretistic forms was powerful, and the mission seems to have been fairly successful".[40] The Church was active in enforcing anti-pagan legislation by Emperor Theodosius, removing paganism from public life and space and replacing it with Christianity.[41] Mark the Deacon, contemporary to events, records that, in 398, facing vilification by local pagans, Porphyry, Bishop of Gaza, wrote to Chrysostom "urging him to obtain an order from the Emperor for the destruction of Pagan temples in that city."[42] One such pagan temple was the *Marneion* temple, dedicated to Phoenician god Dagon (*Zeus Marnas*).[43] In 402, supported by Empress Eudoxia, an order was obtained for its destruction.[44] The *Marneion* was subsequently "set afire with pitch, sulfur and fat; it continued to burn for many days; stones of the Marneion were triumphantly reused for paving the streets." By 407, a church, built from Imperial funds, stood in its place, bearing the name *Eudoxiana*.[45] Similarly, Chrysostom refers to sending monks to Phoenicia to destroy similar temples dedicated to the "mysteries of demons", replacing them with churches, occasioning injury and even death of some of the monks.[46]

[40] Attwater, *Chrysostom,* 92.
[41] Stanfill, *Rebirth of Antiochene Mission*, 907. A later phase of depaganisation occurred under Justinian (see Chapter 2).
[42] Mark the Deacon, *Life of Porphyry, Bishop of Gaza*, trans. G.F. Hill (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), 66.
[43] S. Itamar, "Towards the image of Dagon, the god of the Philistines," *Syria* 69 (1992): 431-450.
[44] Theodoret, "History," bk. 5 ch. 30.
[45] Mark the Deacon, *Porphyry,* 66.
[46] Stanfill, *Rebirth of Antiochene Mission*, 899-924.

Arabs

In his letter to Constantius, Chrysostom also identified "Arabs" as a mission field.[47] Arabs at this time were spread across a broad area, including the East Syrian frontier, the wilderness near Jerusalem, the South Arabian desert and the Hira area adjacent to the Sasanid Persian Empire.[48] Arab tribes included the Tanukhids, Salihids, Nabataeans, Ghanassids, Himyarites, Lakhmids, and there were others. While many spoke various dialects of Arabic, some Arabs were Aramaic-speaking.[49] Trimingham notes that Arabs practised different forms of economic existence, not solely a nomadic lifestyle.[50]

Missionary work among Arabs predated 398. Bostra had a bishop by the third century, and bishops from Arabia attended the 325 Council.[51] Missionary outreach in non-Roman Arabia apparently began in the mid-fourth century when Arian Theophilus Indus "[introduced] Christianity to South Arabia".[52] In terms of Nicene Christianity, Jerome describes the ministry of Hilarion (d. 371) to Arabs in the Gaza area.[53] Moses the Arab (d. 389) ministered to the Arab Tanukhid tribe, becoming their first bishop under Queen Mavia; this tribe became the region's dominant *foederati* in the fourth century.[54] Shahîd concludes, "An examination of the constituent elements of an Arab church leads to

[47] Chrysostom, "Letter 221".
[48] J. Retsö, *Arabs in Antiquity: Their history from the Assyrians to the Umayyads* (London: Routledge, 2003).
[49] Jerome, "Life of Hilarion," in *Early Christian Lives*, ed. C. White (London: Penguin Books, 1998), 85-115; Bishop Nathanael, "Orthodox Bible," *Orthodox Life* 27 (1977): 18-23.
[50] S. Trimingham, *Christianity among the Arabs in pre-Islamic times* (London, Longman, 1979).
[51] Eusebius of Caesarea, *Ecclesiastical History*, trans. Williamson (London: Penguin, 1989), bk. 6 ch. 33; Eusebius of Caesarea, *Life of Constantine* (Scotts Valley: Createspace Independent Pub, 2013).
[52] The terms 'Arab' and 'Saracen' can be interchangeable. 'Saracen', synonymous with 'Bedouins', is an exonym possibly referring to wilderness-dwellers. Arab is a self-designation. Baus, "Inner Life," 181-239.
[53] Jerome, "Life of Hilarion," 85-115.
[54] Rufinus, *History*, bk. 11 ch. 6; P. Mayerson, "Saracens and Limes," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 262 (1986): 35-47.

the conclusion that [an Arab church] did come into existence in the fourth century, forming an Arab component within the Patriarchate of Antioch."[55]

Yannoulatos observes, "Many Byzantine clerics were interested in the spread of the gospel among the Arabs."[56] This would appear to refer to the holy men or "philosophers" (charismatic solitary monks with a following), who, in the fifth century, were particularly important in Christianising Arabs, who often approached the imperial *limes* searching for water.[57] A "monk of great celebrity" prayed for childless Saracen, Zocomus, to have a son. "When this promise was accomplished by God, and when a son was born to him," reports Sozomen, "Zocomus was baptized, and all his subjects [i.e. his tribe] with him."[58] Sozomen likewise mentions various "philosophers" who ministered to Arabs in the Syrian wilderness at this time: "I am convinced that God added to the length of their days for the express purpose of furthering the interests of religion. They were instrumental in leading nearly the whole Syrian nation, and most of the Persians and Saracens, to the proper religion, and caused them to cease from paganism."[59] Nonnus of Heliopolis (d. 458) reportedly had thirty thousand Arab converts.[60] Euthymius the Great (d. 473), based in the wilderness east of Jerusalem, reports hagiographer Cyril of Scythopolis, received a group of Arabs led by Aspebetus, teaching and baptising them. Encampments were set up near local monasteries and a church built. For a time Euthymius visited converts, later delegating this responsibility to others. Eventually, around 427, bishop Juvenal appointed Aspebetus, who took the baptismal name Peter,

[55] Shahîd, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fourth,* 556.
[56] Yannoulatos, *Dazhe,* 68 (my translation).
[57] Theodoret, "History," bk. 4 ch. 25; P. Brown, "The Rise and Fall of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity," *Journal of Roman Studies* 61 (1972): 80-101; Shahîd, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fourth,* 152; Yannoulatos, *Dazhe*, 68.
[58] Sozomen, "History," bk. 6 ch. 38; I. Shahîd, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fifth Century* (Dumbarton Oaks, 1989)*,* 256.
[59] Sozomen, *History,* bk. 6 ch. 34.
[60] Baus, "Inner Life," 181-239; Shahîd, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fifth*, 17-19.

"Bishop of the Encampments".[61] Peter Aspebetus participated in the 431 Council of Ephesus.[62] Incidentally, there was also another Arab tent-bishopric at *Phoenicia Secunda*.[63] Euthymius' disciple, Sabbas the Sanctified (d. 532), later inhabited an area south of Jerusalem, ministering to the needs of Arabs, who thanked him with gifts, but failed to thank God.[64] In the fifth century, the Salihid tribe became the dominant *foederati*; Dawud was their Christian king; Eustathius their bishop.[65] In all, there were twenty Arab bishops in attendance at the 451 Council of Chalcedon, including Eustathius. The later Chalcedonian patriarch of Jerusalem, Elias (d. 516), was also Arab.[66]

Over time, different Arab tribes became dominant *foederati.* In the sixth century it was Amorcesus's Ghanassid tribe. Malchus of Philadelphia, a fifth century historian, records how, in 473, under Emperor Leo I, he was received at Constantinople and recognised as *phylarch*, like Peter Aspebetus before him.[67] While Amorcesus was apparently Chalcedonian, later Ghassanids were Oriental Orthodox. As Shahîd confirms, "In the sixth century… the [Arab] *foederati* became Monophysites."[68] Indeed, Ivanov observes, "As for the Arab tribes immediately bordering Byzantium to the east, conversions of pagan Bedouin to orthodox Christianity [i.e. Eastern Orthodoxy rather than the Church of the East, or Oriental Orthodoxy] were rare."[69] There was a

[61] Cyril of Scythopolis, *Lives*, 20-21*;* J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *East and West in* Late *Antiquity: Invasion, Settlement, Ethnogenesis and Conflicts of Religion* (Leyden: Brill, 2015), 247. Bishoprics, particularly within the Empire, should have a geographical see (i.e. seat); in the case of the nomadic Arabs this was their encampment (*πἄρεμβολή*).
[62] Cyril of Scythopolis, *Lives*, 1-83; Shahîd, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fifth,* 424.
[63] Beck, "Early Byzantine Church," 505.
[64] E.g. Cyril of Scythopolis, *Lives, 105-107*.
[65] Shahîd, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fifth*, 557.
[66] *Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*.
[67] Malchus of Philadelphia, "Byzantiaka" in Liebeschuetz, *East and West,* 248-255.
[68] Shahîd, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fifth,* 227-228.
[69] Ivanov, "Religious missions," 305-332.

sizeable community of Oriental Orthodox Christians at Najran.[70] Likewise, the Church of the East was represented at Hira and also Najran.[71]

"The East"

A final fifth-century mission field identified by Chrysostom was "the East", which is taken as a reference to Persia.[72] Work likewise predated 398; Eusebius traced missionary work in Persia to the Apostle Thomas.[73] There is hard evidence of Christians in Persia around 233, namely the *Domus Ecclesiae* (house-converted-into-a-church) at Dura Europos.[74] During the subsequent Sasanid period, the Church spread throughout the Persian Empire. The See of Merv (modern-day Turkmenistan), for example, was founded in 334.[75] The churches used the Syriac language. A combination of factors led to Syriac Christianity developing under patronage of the Sasanid state. It would seem that Chrysostom's protégé, Maruthas of Martyropolis (d. approx. 420), was a leading figure. Despite Maruthas' involvement in deposing Chrysostom, the latter wrote to Olympias, "Do not cease to pay attention to Maruthas the Bishop, as far as it concerns you, so as to lift him up out of the pit. For I have special need of him on account of the affairs in Persia."[76] Socrates Scholasticus recounts how Maruthas later successfully acted as liaison between Constantinopolitan Emperor and the Persian Shah, Yazdegerd I, winning the latter's respect. Maruthas's prayer healed the king's chronic headache and cast out a demon from his son. Maruthas also outwitted the scheming magi opposing his ministry and was permitted to build churches. The shah was almost converted, but his successor

[70] R. F. Holtzclaw, *The saints go marching in* (Shaker Heights: Keeble Press, 1980), 64.
[71] Shahîd, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fifth,* 175, 363.
[72] Chrysostom, "Letter 221".
[73] Eusebius. *Ecclesiastical History*, trans. Williamson (London: Penguin, 1989), III.1,10.
[74] J. Baird, *Dura-Europos* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), 87-122.
[75] K. S. Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity* (New York: Harper & Bros, 1945), Vol. 2 p. 273
[76] John Chrysostom, "Letter 9 to Olympias," https://ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf109/npnf109.xvii.vi.html#fna_xvii.vi-p14.1 (accessed 14 January 2022).

Vararanes broke off relations with "the Romans".[77] As events developed, and tension between Constantinople and Persia increased, the Persian state acted to bring the church under its control. For example, "Maruthas in turn became instrumental in the development of a distinct Sasanian Christian church."[78] Prior to this, the Syriac churches had "traditionally [been]… under Antiochene jurisdiction."[79] Maruthas played a leading role at the 410 Ctesiphon Council, convened by the Shah, at which the presiding bishop, Mar Isaac, was acknowledged as "Grand Metropolitan", and thus autonomous; this trajectory continued at the 424 Markabta synod.[80] After the deposition of Nestorius at the 431 Ephesian Council, in 486, the Church of the East officially adopted the Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia, and relocated its theological school from Edessa to Nisibis (inside the Sasanid Empire).[81] The Church of the East was the official Christian church in the Sasanid Empire and had a vigorous missionary tradition. Prior involvement of the See of Constantinople is noteworthy.

[77] Socrates Scholasticus, "History", bk 7 ch. 8; W. Stevenson, "John Chrysostom, Maruthas and Christian Evangelism in Sasanian Iran," *Studia Patristica* 47 (2010): 301-307.
[78] Stevenson, "Maruthas," 301-307.
[79] Sterk, "From Gothia to Nubia," 320.
[80] A. Fortescue, *Lesser Eastern Churches* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 1913).
[81] W. Baum and D. Winkler, *The Church of the East: A Concise History* (London*:* Routledge Curzon*,* 2003).

Chapter conclusions

Thus, it has been demonstrated, based on direct references by Chrysostom, that, in the pre-Justinian period, Constantinople was involved in Christianising Barbarians on at least four mission fields: Scythia and Thrace (reaching Goths, Huns and others), Phoenicia (challenging worship of the local pantheon), Arabs, and "the East", taken to refer to the Sasanid Empire, where Constantinople was supportive of influential churchman, Maruthas. There appears to be less evidence of missionary work between Chrysostom's death in 407 and the advent of the Justinian dynasty in 518. This may be confirmed by Moravcsik, who writes, "In the fifth century the work of conversion was for a while impeded by conflicts with the barbarians, but the next century saw great progress."[82]

[82] G. Moravcsik, "Byzantine Christianity and the Magyars in the Migration Period," in *American Slavic and East European Review* 5 (1946): 32.

CHAPTER 2. PEAK IN MISSIONARY ACTIVITY UNDER JUSTINIAN DYNASTY (AD 518-602)

This second chapter aims to demonstrate missionary work from Constantinople during what is acknowledged as a "peak" in Constantinople's missionary activity, namely the Justinian period, beginning in 518 with the reign of Justin I.[1]

Justinian-style mission

The Justinian dynasty marked a new departure; Ivanov goes as far as to say that "Byzantine missioning proper begins in the sixth century as a state undertaking by the emperors Justin I and Justinian I."[2] He writes, "During the sixth century Christian space was very significantly expanded, thanks above all to centralised missionary policies. Emperors began to receive state visits from barbarian rulers, showering them with gifts and baptism… Justinian was also active beyond the empire's borders, and his missionary initiatives extended in several directions."[3] Besides Barbarian mission, Justinian continued the suppression of paganism and assertion of Christianity begun in the fourth century, seeking to stamp out residual "Hellenistic paganism" within the Empire, for example, closing the Academy at Athens in 529. Teams of missionaries went "from place to place and tried to compel such persons as they met to change from their ancestral faith".[4] Barbarian mission in this

[1] I. Ševčenko, "Religious Missions Seen from Byzantium," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 12–13 (1988–89): 11; S. Ivanov, *Vizantiiskoe missionerstvo* (Moscow: Iazyki slavianskoi kul'tury, 2003), 251; A. Yannoulatos, "Orthodox Mission—Past, Present, and Future," in *Orthodox Perspectives on Mission*, ed. Petros Vassiliades (Oxford: Regnum, 2013), 16.
[2] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 332 (translation mine).
[3] J. Shepard, "Spreading the Word" in *Oxford History of Byzantium,* eds. C. Mango et al. (Oxford: OUP, 2002), 306.
[4] P. Christou, "The Missionary Task of the Byzantine Emperor," *Byzantina* 3 (1971): 279-286.

period will now be considered, focusing on six locations. A key source on the Justinian period is Procopius, a contemporary witness of the events he records.[5]

Balkans

Firstly, in 527, Justinian sent missionaries to the Balkans, and baptised Grepes, ruler of the Germanic Herules who had settled in the middle Danube region, west of the Arian Gepids.[6] Evagrius, writing that century, commented, "they all turned Christians, and embraced a more mild and regular course of life."[7] By contrast, about this same time, Slavs, known as "Antes" and/or "Sclaveni", were also moving into the Balkans. By 518 they crossed into Imperial territory, and by 615 the whole southern Balkans area, referred to as "Sclavinia", was occupied by *sclaviniae* (Slav tribal communities). From 567, the Slavs were subjugated by Avars, who had earlier subjugated Sabirs, Oghurs and Cutigurs in the Pontic Steppe. (Although, after 635, the Avars were absorbed by their Slavic subjects) [8] This led to collapse of the previous system of Christian bishoprics in the Balkans, although many Christians remained.[9] Constantinople was unable to Christianise Avars, some sources suggesting no evidence for missionary work from Constantinople until the seventh, or ninth century.[10] Curta likewise refers to a lack missionary activity among Sclavene populations from either Rome or Constantinople.[11] In

[5] Procopius, *On the buildings*, trans. H B Dewing (Cambridge: Loeb, 1989); Procopius, *History of the Wars (Gothic War),* trans. H. B. Dewing (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1928).
[6] H. G. Beck, "The Early Byzantine Church," in *The Imperial Church from Constantine to the Early Middle Ages*, ed. K Baus et al. (London: Burns & Oats, 1980), 507.
[7] Evagrius Scholasticus, *Ecclesiastical History*, trans. M. Whitby (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000), bk. IV ch. 20.
[8] D. Obolensky, *The Byzantine Commonwealth: Eastern Europe, 500-1453* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971), 64-98.
[9] J. Harris, *Lost World of Byzantium* (London: Yale University Press, 2015), 62-68; J. Hussey, *The Byzantine World* (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1967), 22; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 161.
[10] Obolensky, *Commonwealth*, 183; G. Kardaras, *Byzantium and the Avars, 6th-9th Century AD: Political, Diplomatic and Cultural Relations* (Brill, 2018).
[11] F. Curta, "Before Cyril and Methodius: Christianity and barbarians beyond the sixth- and seventh-century Danube frontier," in *East Central and Eastern Europe in the Early Middle Ages,* ed. F. Curta (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005), 181-219.

any event, Slavs at this stage were, like Avars, "largely impervious to the influence of Christianity".[12]

Pontic steppe

A second area where there was missionary work at this time was the Pontic Steppe, where, following break-up of the Hunnic Empire, control had passed to a patchwork of ethnic groups, including Herules and Gepids, Huns, and also "Oguric peoples" , such as Cutrigurs, Utigurs and Onogur Bulgars, who moved into the area from 463.[13] In 527 Justinian baptised Grod, prince of the Bosporan [i.e. Crimean] Huns.[14] Moravcsik, relying on sources such as ninth-century Theophanes the Confessor, records, "He returned to his country where he, as godson and ally of the Emperor, was to represent the interests of the Byzantine Empire and to defend the town of Bosporus [modern-day Kerch]." However, "as soon as he returned, Gordas tried to convert his people by force. In order to wipe out all traces of the old faith, he had the pagan idols melted down and the metal was changed for Byzantine money in Bosporus. The heathen priests were revolted at this procedure and murdered him in connivance with his brother Muageris, who afterwards became their prince."[15] While Gordas was unable to convert his Bosporan Hun people, other individual Huns with "particularly close relations with the Romans" did become Christians, such as "Sunicas [fl. c. 530]… a general [in Justinian's army], who was a Hun, and, having taken refuge with the Romans, had been baptised." [16]

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[12] Obolensky, *Commonwealth*, 83.
[13] P. Golden, "The peoples of the south Russian steppes," in *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia*, ed. Denis Sinor (Cambridge: CUP, 1990), 256-284; F. Curta, *The Making of the Slavs: History and Archaeology of the Lower Danube Region, C.500–700, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought: Fourth Series* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 206.
[14] S.A. Ivanov, "Religious Missions," in *Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire*, ed. J. Shepard (Cambridge: CUP, 2018), 305-332.
[15] G. Moravcsik, "Byzantine Christianity and the Magyars in the Migration Period," *American Slavic Review* V (1946): 29-45.
[16] E. A. Thompson, "Christian Missionaries among the Huns," *Hermathena* 67 (1946): 73-79.

Moravcsik writes, "Many foreigners voluntarily joined the Byzantine forces, and after being christened, often rose to high positions in the army or at the Imperial court. There were some Huns among them… for example Akum."[17] Half the soldiers fighting Belisarius' campaign against the Vandals were Barbarian mercenaries, "mostly Huns," writes Norwich.[18] There were also Oriental Orthodox missionaries working among Huns in the Crimea and north of the Caucasus mountains.[19]

Colchis

Thirdly, looking further east, another strategic neighbouring area was Colchis, the eastern littoral of the Black Sea, home to several peoples mentioned below. This represented the "Pontic *limes*" where Constantinople and Persia competed for influence. There had been Christian communities and bishops in coastal towns and fortresses such as Pityus and Sebastopolis from Constantine's time, attested by fourth-century Gregory of Nyssa. Khrushkova holds that it was the sixth century when local, non-Greek populations, living in mountainous areas inland, were evangelised or won back to the faith.[20]

Already in 522, under Justinian's predecessor, Justin I (r. 518–27), Damnazes, king of the Laz people, and his heir, Tzath, had been baptised, as recorded by contemporary historian John

[17] Moravcsik, "Byzantine Christianity and the Magyars," 29-45.
[18] J. J. Norwich, *A Short History of Byzantium* (London: Penguin, 2013), 67.
[19] G. Greatrex, "Flavius Hypatius, quem vidit validum Parthus sensitque timendum," *Byzantion* 66 (1996): 120–142; Ševčenko, "Religious Missions," 7-27; Thompson, "Missionaries," 73-79.
[20] L. Khrushkova, "The Spread of Christianity in the Eastern Black Sea littoral (written and archaeological sources)," *Ancient West and East* 6 (2007): 177-219; A. Vinogradov, "Some Notes on the Topography of Eastern Pontos Euxeinos in Late Antiquity and Early Byzantium," *Higher School of Economics Research Paper* No. WP BRP 82/HUM (2014): 1-20; Gregory of Nyssa in Khrushkova, "Littoral," 177-219.

Malalas.[21] Ivanov writes, "Justin I… baptised Tzathus, king of Lazica, gave him a Byzantine bride and declared him his own son."[22] Two Laz bishops attended the Ecumenical Council in 681.[23]

South of Lazica lived the Tzani people.[24] Shephard writes, "The Caucasian Tzani also became the targets of a state mission. The principal agent of the dual policy here – combining threats and Christian proselytism, church building and deforestation – was the Byzantine commander Sittas." Deforestation, according to Procopius, made the Tzani homeland accessible, and thus minimised chances of reversion to former isolation from the Empire.[25]

North of Lazica were the Apsilians, with their capital at Sebastopolis, and the Abasgians, with their capital at Pityus. Procopius recounts how Justinian, in the 530s or 540s, dispatched Euphantas, an Abasgian-heritage court eunuch, persuading the ruler to embrace Christianity. Baus describes how "[Justinian] was especially interested in the Abasgi, to whom he sent priests as missionaries, and these discharged their commission so thoroughly that the Abasgi expelled their pagan prince and oriented their policy entirely according to instructions from Byzantium."[26] Imperial troops were stationed in Abasgia after a revolt in 550. In 551 the Emperor had a church built, dedicated to the *Theotokos*, presumably the one at Tsandrypsh [27] Other churches were constructed further inland. The mission sought to stop the practice of castrating young males (Abasgia was the main source of

[21] John Malalas. *Chronicle*, trans. E. Jeffreys et al. (Leyden: Brill, 1986), bk. 18.
[22] Ivanov, "Religious missions," 307.
[23] Vinogradov, "Topography of Eastern Pontos Euxeinos," 1-20; *Notitiae episcopatuum ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae,* ed. J. Darrouzès (Paris: Institut Etudes Byzantines, 1981); Yannoulatos, *Dazhe*, 49-71.
[24] Moravcsik, "Byzantine Christianity and the Magyars," 33.
[25] Procopius, "On the Buildings," in Ivanov, "Religious missions," 306.
[26] H. G. Beck, "The Early Byzantine Church," in *The Imperial Church from Constantine to the Early Middle Ages*, ed. K. Baus et al. (London: Burns & Oats, 1980), 504-508.
[27] Beck, "Early Byzantine Church," 504-508; L. James, *A Companion to Byzantium* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 551; Moravcsik, "Byzantine Christianity and the Magyars," 29-45; Khrouskova, "Littoral," 117-219.

eunuchs for Constantinople), and a school in Constantinople educated the Abasgian nobility.[28] Moravcsik writes, "Abasgia became a stronghold of Christianity and took an active part in converting other peoples."[29] Procopius claims the Apsilians were Christianised "in antiquity", but may refer to Greek-speakers in coastal areas.[30] Based on archaeology, Khroushkova places the "spread of Christianity amongst the Apsilians in the first half of the 6th century".[31] Baptisms were performed at Tsibilium by bishop Constantine. Abasgia absorbed neighbouring Apsilia in the eighth century, becoming the kingdom of Abkhazia, its church also becoming autocephalous, with a *Catholicos* appointed by the Patriarch of Antioch.[32]

North of Abasgia was Zichia. Moravcsik writes, "The Zikhi lived north of the Abazgians by the furthermost hills of the Caucasus, on the shore of the Black Sea. Evidence for the spread of Christianity is provided by the fact that the bishop of Zikhia was present at the Council of Constantinople in 518 as well as at that of 536. His residence was the seaside town of Phanagoria on the Taman Peninsula. This bishopric was to do the work of converting the peoples living at the foot of the Caucasus and by the river Kuban."[33]

Thus, Colchis was thoroughly missionised by Constantinople in the Justinian era, with major Imperial intervention.

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[28] Evagrius Scholasticus, *Ecclesiastical History*, trans. M. Whitby (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000), book IV, chapter 22; Shamba, "Track," 37-58.
[29] Moravcsik, "Byzantine Christianity and the Magyars," 29-45.
[30] Procopius, *History of the Wars (Gothic War),* trans. H. B. Dewing (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1928), 73.
[31] Khroushkova, "Littoral," 117-219.
[32] Shamba, "Track," 37-58.
[33] Moravcsik, ""Byzantine Christianity and the Magyars," 29-45.

Arabia

Fourthly, in Arabia, a mission field that pre-dated the Justinian era, Constantinople found itself in missionary competition with the Church of the East, and the Oriental Orthodox communion. During the 530s, the Himyarite Kingdom may have "broke[n] free of Egyptian patronage and established close links with Byzantium." A church was built at Sanaa in Constantinople's style, and Gregentius (died 560), may have become bishop.[34] His "Laws of the Himyarites", described by Ivanov as a "missionary utopia", imposed on converts far stricter standards than for believers in Constantinople.[35] In 563 king Al-Harith ibn Jabalah of the Oriental Orthodox Arabic Ghanassid tribe was welcomed at Constantinople.[36]

Nubia

Fifthly, another area missionised under Justinian's reign was Nubia, on the southern edge of the Empire, in 540, as recorded by contemporary John of Ephesus.[37] Nubia was sandwiched between Egypt and the kingdom of Axum – both Oriental Orthodox. There were three Nubian kingdoms: Nobadia, Macuria and Alodia. Two rival missions were dispatched: one from Oriental Orthodox Alexandria, sponsored by Empress Theodora, and a mission from Constantinople, sponsored by the Emperor. The Oriental Orthodox arrived first; the king and princes of Nobadia converted, and later rejected the Emperor's envoy. Alodia likewise converted to Oriental Orthodoxy. However, Macuria, with its capital at Dongola, converted to Chalcedonian Christianity around 569, as attested by Catholic historian John Biclarum (d. 610), and in 573 a delegation from Macuria came to

[34] Ivanov, "Religious Missions," 305-332.
[35] P. Kouřil, ed., *The Cyril and Methodius Mission and Europe* (Brno: Institute of Archaeology of the Academy of Science of the Czech Republic, 2014), 201; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 75-81.
[36] I. Shahîd, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Sixth Century* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1995).
[37] John of Ephesus, *Ecclesiastical History*, trans. R. Payne Smith (Oxford: OUP, 1860), pt. 3 bk 4.

Constantinople, gifting a giraffe and ivory.[38] By 710, however, Macuria had adopted Oriental Orthodoxy. Nevertheless, Ivanov, refers to evidence that a Chalcedonian minority remained until the area was Islamised around the fourteenth century.[39]

Tripolitania

A sixth Barbarian area which saw missions work under Justinian was Tripolitania, incorporated in the Empire of Constantinople when, in wars lasting 533 to 548, Justinian overthrew the Vandal state in North Africa. Tripolitania refers to the "three cities" (Tripolitania), Oea, Sabratha and Leptis Magna, inhabited by the indigenous Berbers.[40] Yannoulatos writes, "There is evidence… a noticeable number of Berber groups chose the Christian faith."[41] One such group was at Leptis Magna. Procopius recounts, "[Justinian] induced the neighbouring barbarians, named Gadabitani, who up to this time were entirely given up to the Greek form of paganism, to become zealous Christians, as they are at this day."[42] Wright notes, "According to the historian Procopius, the Emperor planned to Christianise the whole of Tripolitania."[43]

After Justinian

Justinian died in 565. His dynasty, however, continued until 602 under Emperors Justin II, Tiberius and Maurice (d. 602) – as did several missionary initiatives. It was under Justin II (r. 565-578) that the Macurites were converted to Chalcedonian Christianity in 569, as were Berbers called

[38] Macurites were also called Marusians. John of Biclarum, "*Chronicle*," in *Victoris Tunnunensis Chronicon,* ed. Cardelle de Hartmann (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001), 59-83.
[39] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 73-114.
[40] Harris, *Lost World*, 47-48.
[41] Yannoulatos, *Dazhe,* 49-71 (translation mine); Ševčenko, "Religious Missions," 7-27.
[42] Procopius, *Buildings*, bk 6 ch. 4.
[43] J. Wright, *A History of Libya* (London: Hurst, 2012), 50.

Garamantes living at the city-oasis of Cydamus (modern-day Ghadames) far inland, where a bishop was installed, as attested by John of Biclarum.[44]

Interestingly, historian Menander Protector, a contemporary and reliable source, reports diplomatic contact and military alliance between Constantinople and the Göktürk Empire 563-579, i.e. during the Justinian era, however, apparently, with no missionary element. The only Christian presence was the Church of the East on Hephthalite territory, and at Suyab (modern-day Ak-Beshim), where a church and cemetery date from the seventh century.[45]

Later, Emperor Maurice (582–602) was involved in attempts to Christianise neighbouring Persia. Ivanov writes, "Imperial Byzantine mission made some progress in converting Persian aristocracy by the end of the sixth century."[46] When the Shah was deposed in 590, his son, Chosroes II (r. 590, 591–628), fled to Constantinople. He regained the throne with the help of Maurice's troops. According to Persian poem, *Shahnama*, the Emperor sent Chosroes "a cross ornamented with jewels" and garments embroidered with crosses.[47] For a brief time, Chalcedonian Christianity was in favour and active, even aggressive, in mission, for example Stephen, bishop of Harran.[48] The name of one Chalcedonian believer was Golinduc (d. 591).[49] However, this time was short-lived; in 602, when

[44] John of Biclarum, "*Chronicle*," 59-83; L. P. Kirwan, "Christianity and the Ḳura'án," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 20 (1934): 201-203; Wright, *History of Libya,* 50.
[45] Menander Protector, *The History of Menander the Guardsman*, trans. R. Blockley (Liverpool, 1985); L. Tang, "Turkic Christians in Central Asia and China (5th – 14th centuries)," in *Studies in Turkic Philology: Festschrift in Honour of the 80th Birthday of Prof. Geng Shimin,* ed. Zh. Dingjing and A. Yakup (Beijing: Minzu University Press, 2009), 435-449; A. Kitaeva, "The Christian Church At The Ak-Beshim Settlement (Site Iv): New Archive Data And Their Interpretation," *Journal of historical philological and cultural studies* 3 (2019): 246-266.
[46] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 106-114.
[47] "Shahnama," in Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 110
[48] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 110.
[49] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 106.

Maurice was murdered, Chosroes II attacked the Empire of Constantinople, and "from the Euphrates to the east, the memory of the Council of Chalcedon was obliterated utterly".[50]

Chapter conclusions

Thus, it has been shown that, during the Justinian era 518-602, a recognised "peak" in missionary activity, work to Christianise Barbarians is attested in at least seven geographical areas: the Balkans, the Pontic Steppe, Colchis, Arabia, Nubia and Tripolitania, and, under Maurice, short-lived missionary success in Sasanid Persia. Peoples missionised included Herules and Bosporan Huns (but, apparently, not Avars and Slavs), Laz, Tzani, Apsilians and Abasgians, Zichians, Himyarite Arabs, Macurites, Berber inhabitants of Tripolitania and inhabitants of Sasanid Persia.

[50] "Syrian Chronicle," in S.A. Ivanov, "Religious Missions," in *Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire*, ed. J. Shephard (Cambridge: CUP, 2018), 312.

CHAPTER 3. DOWNTURN IN MISSIONARY ACTIVITY AFTER JUSTINIAN DYNASTY (602-843)

Constantinople's Dark Age

The Justinian dynasty, representing a "peak" in Constantinople's missionary activity, was followed by a period of instability running, arguably, until 843. Heraclius' reign 610-641 did represent a partial recovery, but, in terms of foreign affairs, during Heraclius' final years, Muslim Arabs replaced the Persian Empire as Constantinople's rival super-power. Likewise, during the seventh century, Avars and Slavs became more entrenched in the Balkans, and from the 680s Bulgars migrated to the Danubian basin establishing the Bulgarian Empire.[1] "Subsequent military defeats of Byzantium by Arabs and Bulgars and also a deep economic crisis led to a situation where there was no strength left for centralised foreign missions," writes Ivanov.[2] Throughout the period 602-843, internal theological controversies, Monothelite (602-681) and Iconoclast (726-787 and 814-843), sapped Constantinople's energy. The years from the mid-seventh to mid-eighth centuries, in particular, constituted a "Dark Age". The historiographical tradition of Constantinople was interrupted, no contemporary historical source surviving from this time, resuming only with Theophanes the Confessor, writing in the years 810 to 815, who retrospectively covers the intervening period.[3] Vavrïnek's stark, and, in the light of the evidence below, overstated, claim is that "There is no evidence of any official Byzantine missionary activity in the course of the

[1] J. Harris, *Lost World of Byzantium* (London: Yale University Press, 2015), 64-102.
[2] S. A. Ivanov, *Vizantiiskoe missionerstvo* (Moscow: Iazyki slavianskoi kul'tury, 2003), 333 (translation mine).
[3] W. Treadgold, *Middle Byzantine Historians* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), ch. 1-2; C. Mango, "The Tradition of Byzantine Chronography," *Harvard Ukrainian studies* 12/13 (1988/89): 360-372.

iconoclastic period."[4]. In fact, as shall be demonstrated in the present chapter, even during this unstable period, missionary work *was* undertaken, and Barbarians won for the faith.

Imperial mission under Heraclius and later

Four instances of Justinian-style state-sponsored missionary work in the period 602-843 shall be considered first. A first instance was under Emperor Heraclius, in 619, when Organa, leader of Onogur Bulgars, was baptised, along with his wife, his nobles and their wives. Organa's relative, Kovrat, baptised earlier, acted as baptismal sponsor. Moravcsik references *inter alia* Nicephorus (Patriarch of Constantinople, 806-815) and John of Nikiû, a seventh-century Coptic bishop, as sources for these events.[5] Having converted, Onogur Bulgars aided the Empire against the Avars. A revolt around the 630s led to creation of the short-lived Old Great Bulgaria (632-668).[6] A century or so later, according to the relevant *Notitia Episcopatuum,* dated by Moravscik "between 733 and 746", Crimea had a metropolitan see with seven bishoprics, four of which, including Onogurs, were identified not by place, but by ethnicity. Moravscik suggests these were missionary bishoprics among semi-nomadic peoples, concluding, "In the eighth century an intensive missionary work was being done among the Magyars, or, better, among the Onogurs, component elements of the later Magyars." Moravcsik also references Eastern Orthodox artefacts, dating to this time, found among the related Cutrigur people.[7]

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4 V. Vavřínek, "Cyril and Methodius: Was There a Byzantine Missionary Program for the Slavs?" in *Byzantium and the World of the Slavs*, ed. A.-E. Tachiaos (Thessaloniki, 2015), 25-36; M. Telea, "Mission and/or conversion: strategies of Byzantine diplomacy," *International Journal of Orthodox Theology* 6 (2015): 81-105.

[5] Moravcsik, "Byzantine Christianity and the Magyars, 37-38.

[6] J. F. Haldon*, Byzantium in the Seventh Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 47.

[7] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 115; G. Moravcsik, "Byzantine Christianity and the Magyars in the Migration Period," *American Slavic and East European Review* 5 (1946): 40; C. de Boor, "Nachträge zu den Notitiae episcopatuum," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 12 (1891): 679-694.

A second instance, recorded by Constantine VII, writing around 950, was around 626, when Croats and Serbs sought refuge with Emperor Heraclius, becoming *foederati*, and accepting baptism. Interestingly, Heraclius used missionaries from Rome for their baptism. The alliance was intended to defend against Avars, and the new *foederati* were granted land in Dalmatia to resettle from their Central Europe homeland.[8] Their conversion was, however, "short-lived" and they "fell from Christian doctrine".[9]

A third instance of Justinian-style missionising in this period was in 628, when Emperor Heraclius met Varaz I Grigor Mihranid, ruler of Caucasian Albania, and either baptised or converted him from Oriental Orthodoxy to Chalcedonian Christianity, as Ivanov establishes from Agvanian sources. Later, in 662, Emperor Constans II awarded Caucasian Albanian ruler, Javanshir, the honorary title of 'Protopatrician'.[10] However, in the longer term, Caucasian Albania seemingly (re)entered communion with Oriental Orthodox Armenia.[11] In areas militarily reclaimed in the Middle East Heraclius forcibly reimposed Chalcedonian Christianity, creating resentment towards the Empire and Imperial Christianity.[12]

After Heraclius, possibly the only other instance of Justinian-style mission, between 641 and 843, this time recorded by Theophanes, was under Leo IV in 777, when Khan Telerig of the Bulgarian Empire fled to Constantinople. He was received and baptised, taking the name Theophylact, was

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[8] Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio,* ed. G. Moravcsik, trans. R. Jenkins (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2007), ch. 30-32; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 115-139; G. Kardaras, *Byzantium and the Avars, 6th-9th Century AD: Political, Diplomatic and Cultural Relations* (Leyden: Brill, 2018), 98.
[9] Haldon, *Byzantium,* 47. T. Živković, "Constantine Porphyrogenitus' source on the earliest history of the Croats and Serbs," *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskoga fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu* 42 (2010): 117-131.
[10] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 116.
[11] J. Howard-Johnson, *East Rome, Sasanian Persia and the End of Antiquity* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 41.
[12] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 111.

made 'Patrician', and married a relative of the Emperor's wife.[13] Citing many of the examples above, Ivanov claims, "However, apart from this, we do not hear of any [other] centralised initiatives by the Imperial power with a view to converting the tribes until the ninth century."[14] This may also be due, in part, to the paucity of sources available.

Reconquista

Besides Justinian-style Christianising of Barbarians outside the Empire, in this period there *was* also work undertaken to Christianise Barbarians *within* the Empire.[15] An important, although later source text for this, dated by Curta to the late tenth/early eleventh century, is the *Chronicle of Monemvasia*.[16] By 587 the southern Balkan area was controlled by Avars and Slavs, from Constantinople's perspective, a "Scythian wilderness", the earlier system of bishoprics destroyed. Christian influence nevertheless remained. Ivanov and Moravcsik, for example, reference discoveries among Avars, dating to the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries, of Christian symbols and artefacts, such as Byzantine crosses.[17] The process of thus reclaiming the Balkans is known as the *Reconquista* or "Byzantine recovery".[18] Possibly as early the reign of Constans II (641-668), military campaigns attempted to regain control of the southern Balkans, and some Slavs were resettled to Asia Minor.[19]

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[13] *The Chronicle of Theophanes: Anni mundi 6095-6305 (A.D. 602-813),* trans. H. Turtledove (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), 137; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 119.
[14] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 119.
[15] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 139.
[16] F. Curta, "Coins and burials in Dark-Age Greece. Archaeological Remarks on the Byzantine 'Reconquista'," https://www.academia.edu/9840933/Coins_and_burials_in_Dark-Age_Greece._Archaeological_Remarks_on_the_Byzantine_Reconquista (accessed 26 July 2019).
[17] Francis Dvornik, "Some Remarks Concerning the Christianization of the Slavs in Greece," *Sbornik Prací Filosofické fakulty Brněnské University* 14-15 (1971): 27-32; D. Obolensky, "The Balkans in the Ninth Century: Barrier or Bridge?" in *Byzantine warfare*, ed. J. Haldon (London: Routledge, 2016), 295-314; Moravcsik, "Role of the Byzantine Church," 134.
[18] Obolensky, *Commonwealth*, 110-114; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 138.
[19] A. J. Toynbee, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus and his world* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), 90.

There were also campaigns under Constantine V around 758, and, with greater success, by Stauricus in 783. Theophanes records a short-lived Slav revolt in Thessaly in 799. As the *sklaviniae* were conquered militarily, they were integrated into the Empire via a system of "themes" (military districts, usually under the authority of a *strategos*). Thrace and Hellas themes were created in the late seventh century, followed by Macedonia almost a century later, and later others.[20] According to the *Chronicle of Monemvasia*, certainly by the reign of Nicephorus I (r. 802-811), this was accompanied by replanting of Eastern Orthodoxy, converting Slavs and Avars. As part of this, possibly in 805, the bishopric of Patras was raised to metropolitan rank with three subordinate bishoprics.[21] Nicephorus brought in Greek settlers from various places including the *Thrakesion* and *Armeniakon* themes, and southern Italy. Emperor Nicephorus I "concerned himself with rebuilding churches and with turning the Barbarians themselves into Christians."[22] Harris writes, "In this bloodless reconquest, hermits and monks were in the vanguard rather than soldiers. They wandered through the remote and mountainous area of the Peloponnese as itinerant preachers, converting the last of isolated pockets of Slavs to Christianity."[23] As a result Avars and Slavs who had come to occupy these areas were Christianised. Unlike the later Cyril-Methodius mission further north, in this case, Christianisation went hand-in-hand with Hellenisation, including imposition of the Greek language.[24] Emperor Leo VI (r. 886 to 912) paid tribute to his predecessor, "Our father of blessed memory, Basil [I], the emperor of the Romans, prevailed upon them to renounce their ancient customs and, having made Greeks of them and subjected them to governors according to the Roman

[20] Theophanes, *Chronicle*, 119, 142; Obolensky, *Commonwealth*, 105.
[21] "Chronicle of Monemvasia," in Curta, "Coins and burials"; Nicholas III, "Synodal Letter of 1084," in Curta, "Coins and burials"; S. Ivanov, "Religious Missions," in *Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire*, ed. J. Shepard (Cambridge: CUP, 2018), 305-332; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 115-139.
[22] "Chronicle of Monemvasia," in Ivanov, "Religious Missions."
[23] Harris, *Lost World,* 107.
[24] I. Ševčenko, "Byzantium and the Slavs," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 8 (1984): 295; G. Huxley, "Topics in Byzantine historical geography," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 82 (1982): 90; Obolensky, *Commonwealth*, 110-114.

model and bestowed baptism upon them, he freed them from bondage to their own rulers and taught them to make war on the nations that are hostile to the Romans."[25]

Non-state-sponsored mission

Besides state-sponsored Christianisation of Barbarians *outside* the Empire, and replanting of Eastern Orthodoxy *within* the Empire, during the period 602-843 there were also cases of *non-state-sponsored* mission which individuals engaged in "at their own risk". Ivanov writes, "In reality the temporary decline only was in respect of that form of mission which relied on diplomacy and military force."[26] In particular this missionary activity was directed at Chazars and Muslims (Arabs and Greeks).

By 680 the Empire's northern frontier was dominated by Turkic *Chazars*, emerging from break-up of the Göktürk Empire, and who, approx. 650-950, controlled the area from the Volga-Don steppes down to eastern Crimea and the northern Caucasus.[27] Moravcsik observes, "Other records also confirm the fact that Byzantine conversion of the eighth century was remarkably successful among the Khazars. It will suffice to mention that during the reign of Emperor Constantin V (741-775) a Byzantine soldier, Stephen [of Sourozh, d. 764], was expelled to Cherson fled to Khazaria where he became bishop of Sougdaia."[28] The *Life of Stephen of Sourozh*, albeit a hybrid source one which Ivanov characterises as a "distant reflection of the original text", recounts, "When the pagans heard that he worked wondrous miracles, they believed in the Lord, and a countless multitude was

[25] Leo VI, "Tactica," in Obolensky, *Commonwealth*, 113.
[26] S. Ivanov, "Religious Missions," in *Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire*, ed. J. Shepard (Cambridge: CUP, 2018), 305-332.
[27] P. Golden, "The peoples of the south Russian steppes," in *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia*, ed. Denis Sinor (Cambridge: CUP, 1990), 256-284.
[28] Moravcsik, "Byzantine Christianity and the Magyars," 40.

baptised. And he appointed many presbyters and deacons for them."[29] Ivanov and Moravcsik reference other work in Crimea and Chazaria at this time.[30] In the mid-eighth century, allegedly, there were numerous churches in Chazaria, a "series of missionary bishoprics established".[31] According to his *Life* written in the early ninth century, at the end of John of Gothia's life around 791, when John was in prison, a Chazar leader brought his ill son, whom John baptised.[32]

Pace Vavrïnek and others, Khroushkova argues that theological controversies actually had a positive effect on missions: "The iconoclastic era contributed to the propagation of Christianity thanks to the iconodules who needed to leave the capital and other major cities."[33] This meant iconodules such as Stephen the Younger (d. 754), who became bishop of Zichia in Colchis, ministered in Barbarian areas. Likewise, John of Psychaita (755-825), banished to the Crimea in the eighth century, "persuaded many pagans, living in the environs of the Bosporus, to convert to Christianity," writes Khroushkova.[34]

Another group reached by non-state-sponsored missionary work from Constantinople at this time were Muslims – both Arabs and Greek-speakers. Indeed, virtually all Eastern Orthodox Arabs had converted to Islam in the seventh century, and many Greek-speakers likewise.[35] The relevant sources

[29] "Life of Stephen of Sourozh," in Ivanov, "Religious Missions," 305-332; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 121.
[30] Moravcsik, "Byzantine Christianity and the Magyars," 29-45; Ivanov, "Religious Missions," 305-332.
[31] G. Vernadsky, "Byzantium And Southern Russia: Two Notes," *Byzantion* 15 (1940): 67-86; Huxley, "Topics," 92.
[32] "La Vie de Jean de Gothie (BHG 891)," trans. M.-F. Auzépy, in *La Crimée entre Byzance et le khaganat Khazar*, ed. C. Zuckerman (Paris, 2006), 77–85.
[33] Vavrïnek, "Program," 25-36; L. Khroushkova, "Les missions byzantines dans la région de la mer Noire du Nord" at http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=10695 (translation mine) (accessed 30 May 2019).
[34] Khroushkova, "Missions"; P. van den Ven, "La Vie grecque de Jean le Psichaïte, confesseur sous le règne de Léon l'Arménien (813-820)," *Le Muséon* 21 (1902): 97-125.
[35] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 130. An exception would be the Banu Sahid tribe among whom there were still Christians in 823.

are hagiographical, and are prone to contain legendary elements, however an underlying factual basis may be assumed.

The *Life of Stephen the Sabaite* (725-807) records him returning to the Christian faith those who had accepted Islam.[36] According to his *Life,* Romanus the Neomartyr was executed in 780, after nine years as a prisoner in Baghdad, for seeking to reconvert Greek-speaking fellow-prisoners and converts to Islam.[37] According to the semi-legendary *Vita s. Phantini Confessoris*, under Emperor Leo V (r. 813-820), on Constantinople-controlled Sicily, Fantinus the Wonderworker sunk an invading Arab fleet and "the captive Hagarites [sic], having believed due to the miracle that occurred with them, were baptised, became Christians and did not want to return to their land."[38] Gregory of Decapolis the New Miracle-Worker (d. 832), a ninth century itinerant monk and defender of icon veneration, in a sermon, recounts the conversion of Ampelon the Saracen. Ampelon attempted to bring camels into a church. The camels miraculously died, and, on his return to the church, Ampelon had visions of the reality underlying the Eucharist. He requested baptism, and became a monk, taking the name Pachomius. Eventually he was stoned to death for confessing Christ and rejecting Islam.[39] The *Life* of Theodore the Confessor of Edessa (776-856) tells how he travelled to Baghdad to complain of injustices vis-à-vis Christians. On arrival he found Caliph Muawid ill, healing him by giving him water to drink containing earth from the Sepulchre of the Lord. The Caliph embraced Christianity and was baptised, along with three others. Shortly afterwards, all four were martyred.[40] The *Life* of Elias the Younger (Ilya the New) recounts how he was captive in North Africa, becoming

[36] "Life of Stephen the Sabaite," in Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 132.
[37] A neomartyr is a post-311 martyr, often a victim of Islamic persecution. "Life of Romanus the New Martyr," in S. F. Johnson, *Languages and Cultures of Eastern Christianity: Greek* (London: Routledge, 2017).
[38] Referring to Arabs as descendants of Biblical Hagar. "Vita s. Phantini Confessoris," in Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 115-139 (translation mine).
[39] Gregory of Decapolis, "Ameroumnes Syrias," in J. V. Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York: Columbia University Press 2002), 57.
[40] "Life of St. Theodore," in Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 134.

an itinerant preacher on this release. He healed and baptised many Muslims in Palestine in the ninth century, and later travelled to Persia, meeting twelve Muslims who converted and were baptised.[41]

Constantinople also engaged in Christian-Muslim apologetics. Theodore Abū Qurrah (740-820), Chalcedonian bishop at Harran, may be considered a pioneer in this, employing Islamic terms to make his case. Writing in Greek and Arabic, Abū Qurrah addressed issues such as the Trinity, the death of Christ, predestination, the Eucharist and polygamy. While his view of Islam was entirely negative, he did attempt to engage with Islam.[42]

Individual conversions

Besides Justinian-style mission to external Barbarians, the *Reconquista* and "internal" Barbarians, and freelance missionary work, fourthly, during this period there were also individual conversions to Eastern Orthodoxy. Theophanes records how Emperor Constantine V (r. 741-775) married Tzitzak, daughter of Chazar Khagan Bihar. She accepted Orthodoxy and was baptised Irene. "She became eminent for her piety and, after closely examining the holy Scriptures, condemned their [i.e. Leo III's and Constantine V's] impiety."[43] In a similar vein, Theophanes Continuatus, writing in the mid tenth century, records the conversion of later monk and artist Lazarus (829-865), a Chazar, and also Bulgar "defector", Theodotus the Patrician.[44]

[41] "Life of Elias the Younger,*"* in Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 136.
[42] J. Meyendorff, "Byzantine Views of Islam," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 18 (1964): 113-132.
[43] Theophanes, *Chronicle*, 101.
[44] "Theophanes Continuatus," in Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 137.

Chapter conclusions

Thus, it has been demonstrated that, notwithstanding any decline during Constantinople's "Dark Age", missionary work *did* continue throughout the period 602-843: Justinian-style mission to external Barbarians (Onogur Bulgars, Caucasian Albanians, Croats and Serbs, and Bulgarians), Christianisation of internal Barbarians (Avars and Slavs), non-state-sponsored missionary work reaching Chazars and Muslims, and also cases of individual conversion.

CHAPTER 4. SECOND PEAK IN MISSIONARY ACTIVITY (843-1025)

"New age of recovery and expansion"

The instability of the previous two-and-a-half centuries ended with the "Triumph of Orthodoxy" in 843. This ushered in a "new age of recovery and expansion", accompanied by a "resurgence of the missionary energies of the Byzantine church".[1] Michael III reigned 842-867, and his reign was followed by the Macedonian dynasty, beginning with his successor, Basil I.[2] For a time, two patriarchs alternated at Constantinople: Ignatius (847-858 and 867-877) and Photius (858-867 and 877-886). In terms of missionary impetus, some consider Photius to have been the driving force, and others Michael III.[3] Militarily, Petronas's victory at Poson in 863 and the later campaigns by future Emperor Nicephorus II Phocas (912-969) represented Constantinople's "upper hand" over Arab forces. Territory was reclaimed and favourable treaties concluded in 961 and 974. Likewise, under Basil II (r. 976-1025), Constantinople gained the upper hand over Bulgaria.[4] The present chapter shall detail missionary work during this second "peak" in Constantinople's missionary activity (843-1025), dividing the period up into seven successive phases.[5]

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[1] D. Obolensky. *The Byzantine Commonwealth: Eastern Europe, 500-1453* (London: Sphere Books Ltd, 1974), 101.
[2] J. Harris, *Lost World of Byzantium* (London: Yale University Press, 2015), 101-104, 151-160.
[3] Harris, *Lost World*, 112; S. Ivanov, "Religious Missions," in *Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire*, ed. J. Shepard (Cambridge: CUP, 2018), 314.
[4] Harris, *Lost World,* 112, 146-160.
[5] I. Ševčenko, "Religious missions seen from Byzantium," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, 12/13 (1988/9), 11; S. A. Ivanov, *Vizantiiskoe missionerstvo* (Moscow: Iazyki slavianskoi kul'tury, 2003), 251; A. Yannoulatos, "Orthodox Mission—Past, Present, and Future," in *Orthodox Perspectives on Mission*, ed. Petros Vassiliades (Oxford: Regnum, 2013), 16.

First stirrings (before 860)

First stirrings of "resurgent missionary energies" may be traced to publication of the *Life of Andrew*, sometime between 815 and 850, which, besides the Apostle's miracle-working power, highlighted missionary skills such as mastery of foreign languages.[6] At about this time, possibly in 850, an embassy was undertaken to Abassid Arabs, ruled by Caliph Al-Mutawakkil (r. 847-861), possibly at Samarra. This is recorded in the *Life of Constantine*, originally written in Slavonic between 862 and 885, but with extant manuscripts dating only to the sixteenth century.[7] Such embassies were regular occurrences and essentially diplomatic, however there was also a missionary dimension.[8] Constantine the Philosopher, future Enlightener of the Slavs, took part, debating the Virgin birth and the Trinity; Muslim opponents were allegedly confounded when he quoted the Quran in support of the Trinity.[9] The aim was probably more about standing one's ground theologically and diplomatically, than converting opponents.[10] In 850 Emperor Michael III received polemical correspondence from Arabs, and asked Nicetas Byzantius to reply in his name, which Nicetas did, based on knowledge of the Quran in translation. According to Nicholas Mysticus, writing at the start of the following century, Photius likewise engaged in such correspondence.[11] Indeed, Ivanov writes, "If we believe Niketas Byzantinos, Michael [III] was associated with some kind of coordinated religious work among the Muslim Arabs."[12]

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[6] F. Dvornik, *The idea of Apostolicity in Byzantium and the Legend of Saint Andrew* (Cambridge, MS: Harvard University Press, 1958); Ivanov, "Religious Missions," 314.
[7] "Life of Constantine," in *Medieval Slavic Lives of Saints and Princes*, ed. Marvin Kantor (Ann Arbor: Michigan Slavic Publications, 1983), 35-41; F. Dvornik, "The embassies of Constantine-Cyril and Photius to the Arabs," in *To honor Roman Jakobson : essays on the occasion of his 70. birthday, 11. October 1966:* Vol. 1 (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 2018), 569-576; J. Meyendorff, "Byzantine Views of Islam," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 18 (1964): 130.
[8] Ivanov, "Religious missions," 315.
[9] Constantine took the monastic name, Cyril, shortly before his death. Meyendorff, "Views," 130; F. Curta et. al., *Southeastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 500-1250* (Cambridge: CUP, 2006).
[10] J. Shepard, "Spreading the Word" in *Oxford History of Byzantium,* eds. C. Mango et al. (Oxford: OUP, 2002), 235.
[11] Meyendorff, "Views," 113-132.
[12] Ivanov, "Religious missions," 314.

Flurry of activity associated with Constantine the Philosopher (860-869)

A second phase, from 860 onwards, saw a flurry of missionary activity, and is particularly associated with Constantine the Philosopher (d. 869). The major event in 860 for Constantinople was the attack on the city by the Slavic Rus' people, as attested *inter alia* by contemporary Photius and the twelfth-century *Primary Chronicle of Kievan Rus'*. In response, an embassy was dispatched, presumably, to Kiev, and, at some point, a delegation of Rus' came to Constantinople, receiving baptism – "First baptism of the Rus".[13] In 867 Photius records having sent a bishop to the Rus' "the formerly terrible people, the so-called Rus, for even now they are abandoning their heathen faith and are converting to Christianity, receiving from us bishops and pastors as well as all Christian customs."[14] Harris, however, considers such an assessment "premature"; there were too few Christians in Rus', and the ruler was not among them.[15] This first conversion was followed by a "long gap in the record"[16]. Shubin considers that, under Oleg and Igor (882 to 945), Christianity "went underground or practically vanished."[17] In 911 the Rus' secured, on "generous terms", a treaty with Constantinople, containing provision for showing the Rus' the beauty of churches, and instructing them in the faith.[18]

Constantinople also sought Chazar military support vis-à-vis the Rus'.[19] Constantine's *Life* records how, in 861, he participated in an embassy to the Chazars, who had been missionised for over a

[13] Harris, *Lost World*, 105-126.
[14] Photius, "Encyclical Letter of Saint Photius (867)," https://churchmotherofgod.org/salvation-history/new-life-church-history/6257-encyclical-letter-of-saint-photius-867.html (accessed 15 July 2019)
[15] Harris, *Lost World*, 105-126; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 160,189.
[16] Ivanov, "Religious missions," 325.
[17] D. Shubin, *A History of Russian Christianity, Vol. I: From the Earliest Years through Tsar Ivan IV* (Sanford: Algora, 2004), 16.
[18] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 172.
[19] Harris, *Lost World*, 111.

century.[20] Ivanov writes, "Hopes of converting the [Chazar] khaganate apparently rose in Byzantium at the start of the ninth century, in the course of a multifaceted diplomatic offensive to the north."[21] *En route*, Constantine took a detour to Phoullai (Crimea), felling a sacred oak tree, and also recovering the remains of Clement of Rome.[22] Constantine was well received by the Chazar Khan and "about two hundred of these people were baptised, having cast off heathen abominations and lawless marriages."[23] Constantine was invited to debate with Jews and Muslims: "Chazar emissaries, claiming to believe in a single God, asked for a scholar to be sent to debate with Jews and Muslims in Chazaria, writes Huxley, "According to his Slavonic *Life*, Cyril was specifically commanded by the Emperor to expound the Trinity."[24] (The Chazars later converted to Judaism, and then, in 965, to Islam.)

Then, in 961, Constantine's *Life* records, Rastislav, ruler of Greater Moravia, a Slavic state, wrote to Emperor Michael III: "Though our people have rejected paganism and observe Christian law, we do not have a teacher who can explain to us in our language the true Christian faith, so that other countries which look to us might emulate us. Therefore, O lord, send us such a bishop and teacher; for from you good law issues to all countries."[25] This represented a turning-point in Constantinople's missionary story. Earlier that century, Moravia had been evangelised by the Western Catholic Diocese of Passau, and was already Christian, however Rastislav wanted an indigenous Christianity without foreign hegemony.[26] Constantine was selected for the mission, along with his brother,

[20] "Life of Constantine," 43; J. Shepard, "Spreading the Word" in *Oxford History of Byzantium,* eds. C. Mango et al. (Oxford: OUP, 2002), 231.
[21] Ivanov, "Religious missions," 305-332.
[22] Herrin, *Byzantium,* 132; "Life of Constantine," 43.
[23] "Life of Constantine," 61.
[24] G. Huxley, "Byzantinochazarika," *Hermathena* 148 (1990): 69-87.
[25] "Life of Constantine," 65.
[26] J. Schulman, *The Rise of the Medieval World, 500-1300: A Biographical Dictionary* (Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002), 117; T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (London: Pelican, 1993).

Methodius. Both were originally from Thessalonica, near Slav-occupied areas, and from childhood had known Slavonic, possibly their mother's native tongue. Constantine was "one of the most distinguished scholars in contemporary Byzantium", and their father had served as *droungarios* (military commander) of the Thessalonica theme, and so may have been involved in Christianising "internal" Slavs.[27] Before setting out, Constantine is reputed to have invented Glagolitic, the alphabet antecedent to Cyrillic.[28] On arrival, they were entrusted with men to train; their work was mainly translation of liturgy and Scripture, and training local clergy.[29] Dvornik holds that the mission was essentially cultural, including introduction of a civil law code. Beck describes them as "re-educators", rather than missionaries.[30] The mission lasted forty months, concluding in 866.[31] Following their time in Greater Moravia, in 866 the brothers spent some months in neighbouring Pannonia, ruled by Kocel. There the brothers were given fifty disciples to train, and taught them their Slavonic alphabet.[32] In late 866, the brothers were summoned to Rome by Pope Nicholas I, and eventually received by Pope Hadrian II.[33] The brothers, greeted by Roman crowds, brought with them the venerated remains Clement of Rome, retrieved at Phoullai. The Pope blessed use, on the mission field, of their Slavonic liturgy, which was celebrated in major churches in Rome.

Meanwhile, in 864, the Bulgarians also embraced Eastern Orthodoxy. Bulgars had migrated into Moesia (south of the Danube) at the end of the seventh century; their capital was at Pliska.[34] There

[27] "Life of Constantine"; "Life of Methodius," in *Medieval Slavic Lives of Saints and Princes*, ed. Marvin Kantor (Ann Arbor: Michigan Slavic Publications, 1983), 111; T. E. Gregory, *A History of Byzantium* (Chichester, Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 238; F. Dvornik, "The Significance of the Missions of Cyril and Methodius," *Slavic Review* 23 (1964): 195-211; Obolensky, *Commonwealth*, 103.
[28] Obolensky, *Commonwealth,* 187.
[29] F. Dvornik. *Byzantine Missions Among the Slavs* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1970).
[30] Dvornik, "Significance*,"* 197,199; Beck, "Propaganda," 666.
[31] Dvornik, *Among the Slavs*, 128.
[32] Dvornik, "Significance," 195-211.
[33] "Life of Methodius," 113; J. Herrin, *Byzantium: The Surprising Life of a Medieval Empire* (London: Penguin, 2008), 133.
[34] The pre-migration people were 'Bulgars'; the settled western/Danubian people are 'Bulgarians'.

had been various military conflicts with Constantinople, for example under Khan Krum (d. 814), and also individual converts over the centuries. The events of 864 were preceded by twenty years of missionary work by both Rome and Constantinople.[35] A crucial factor was the testimony of remaining local Christians, and of captives, in particular monk Theodore Cupharas.[36] Bulgarian ruler, Boris, had a sister who had already been baptised at Constantinople. Delivery from drought in 864, by the prayers of Cupharas and Boris' sister, sealed, in Photius' own words, an "unlikely" decision.[37] Khan Boris was baptised around 865, taking the Emperor's name, Michael. Boris put down opposition to his conversion in bloody fashion.[38] A primary source is a letter from Patriarch Photius to Boris, warning of heresies and commending the duties of a Christian prince.[39] However, disagreements over the limited autonomy afforded the Bulgarian church, and also rigorism (*acribeia*) in respect of local customs, led, within two years, to the Bulgarian church recognising Roman jurisdiction.[40]

Looking back at the "flurry" of 860-869, initially, there was almost nothing to show for it. Arabs remained Muslim, Chazars converted to Judaism and later Islam, Moravia, Pannonia and Bohemia were drawn into the orbit of the Roman church, Bulgaria recognised Papal jurisdiction, and the first conversion of the Rus' was very partial.[41] However, as Neill writes, "the seed sown by Constantine and Methodius grew into a great tree."[42]

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[35] A. P. Kazhdan, ed., *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (Oxford: OUP, 1991), 336.
[36] S. A. Ivanov, *Vizantiiskoe missionerstvo* (Moscow: Iazyki slavianskoi kul'tury, 2003), 161-162; Curta, *Southeastern,* 199.
[37] Dvornik, *Among the Slavs*, 127; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 164.
[38] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 161-168.
[39] Photius, "Letter to Khan Boris of Bulgaria," in *The Patriarch and the Prince : the letter of Patriarch Photios of Constantinople to Khan Boris of Bulgaria*, eds. D. Stratoudaki White and J. R. Berrigan (Brookline, Mass.: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1982).
[40] Photius, "Encyclical,"; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 165-167.
[41] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 172; J. Hussey, *The Byzantine World* (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1967), 158. Hussey's view differs from that of Ivanov.
[42] S. Neill, *History of Christian Missions* (London: Penguin, 1990)*,* 87.

Phase associated with Methodius (869-885)

A third missionary phase, 869-885, is associated with Methodius, whose *Life*, originally written in Slavonic shortly after Methodius' death, records Cyril's death at Rome in 869. Pope Hadrian sent Methodius back to Pannonia, appointing him archbishop of the revived see of Sirmium, with a wide jurisdiction expanding across Central Europe: "to all the Slavic lands do I send him." However, this represented a challenge to the rival see of Salzburg. Methodius was able, for example, to convert Duke Bořivoj I of Bohemia (852-889). Conflicts with Frankish clergy persisted and Methodius was imprisoned for two and a half years in Swabia, although later released.[43] Meanwhile, around 874, the Serbians**,** previously converted under Emperor Heraclius, and subsequently apostatised, under ruler Mutimur (r. 851-891), sent envoys to Emperor Basil I, requesting missionaries to convert people (back) to Christian faith. This "second conversion of the Serbs" is attested by tenth-century Constantine Porhpyrogenitus.[44] Back in Central Europe, on Methodius' death in 885, the tide turned; the "Life of Naum" reports older priests being deported to Bulgaria, while younger ones were sold as slaves in Venice.[45] Ivanov holds that the rigorous stance vis-à-vis permissible marriages led to the mission's "failure".[46] About twenty years later, the Magyar (Hungarian) invasion ended the Greater Moravian state.[47]

[43] "Life of Methodius," 115 et al.; Neill, *History of Christian Missions,* 86.
[44] Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio,* ed. G. Moravcsik, trans. R. Jenkins (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2007), ch. 29-32; P. Christou, "Missionary Task of the Byzantine Emperor," *Byzantina* 3 (1971): 279–86; Ševčenko, "Three Paradoxes," 220-236.
[45] "Life of Naum," in Dvornik, "Significance," 209.
[46] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 160,189.
[47] I. Ševčenko, "Three Paradoxes of the Cyrillo-Methodian Mission," *Slavic Review* 23 (1964): 220-236.

Phase associated with the "Five" (885-901)

Alleged failure of the Cyril-Methodius mission, and expulsion of Constantinopolitan missionaries to Bulgaria in 885 opened up the next phase of missionary activity, associated with the "Five" disciples of Methodius and running until Nicholas Mysticus' installation as Patriarch in 901.[48] Following Methodius' death, the eleventh-century *Life of Clement* records how Methodius' followers, including the "Five in number" (*Pětipočetníci*), Gorazl, Sava, Angelyar, Clement and Naum, took refuge in Bulgaria in 886.[49] Since 870, Bulgaria was again under Constantinople's ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The "Five in number", themselves Slavs, brought Slavonic liturgy and Scriptures; initially, in Bulgaria, the liturgy had been celebrated in Greek.[50] Boris saw the opportunity of embracing Orthodoxy without cultural and political submission to Constantinople.[51] Naum was installed in Preslav, while Clement was sent to the more remote Ochrid; in both places literary schools were founded, incubators for nascent Slavic Christian culture, translating and fostering literacy. It may be Naum who created the Cyrillic alphabet based on the earlier Glagolitic one.[52] Three thousand five hundred disciples were trained by Clement at Ochrid and sent out in groups of three hundred to the twelve regions in his charge, including Serbia.[53] Indeed, Serbian Orthodoxy was under the Bulgarian Church until being raised to a Patriarchate under Sava in 1219.[54] Yannoulatos writes, "the definite spread and consolidation of Christian faith was achieved by the disciples of Cyril and Methodius, Clement and Naum."[55] After a failed return to paganism, the reign of Symeon (893-927) is

[48] Harris, *Lost World*, 116; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 152-177.
[49] Theophylact, "Life of Clement of Ochrid," in *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria,* ed. K. Petkov (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2008).
[50] Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (London: Pelican, 1993), ch. 4.
[51] Harris, *Lost World*, 117.
[52] Theophylact, "Life of Clement"; Curta, *Southeastern*, 221-222; C. Korolevsky, *Living Languages in Catholic Worship: An historical inquiry*, trans. Donald Attwater (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1957), 82.
[53] R. E. Sullivan, "Early Medieval Missionary Activity," *Church History* 23 (1954): 17-35.
[54] Harris, *Lost World*, 208.
[55] A. Yannoulatos, *Dazhe do kraia zemli* (Moscow: Poznanie, 2018), 49-96 (translation mine).

considered crucial for establishing Bulgarian Christianity. Having defeated Constantinople, Symeon was controversially recognised, by Nicholas Mysticus, as "Emperor of the Bulgarians".[56] The Church of Bulgaria was raised to Patriarchal status around 918; the *Book of Boril*, an important Bulgarian source dating to 1211, identifies Leontius as first Patriarch.[57] This phase of missions thus resulted in establishment of a Slavic Eastern Orthodox culture encompassing Bulgarians and Serbs.[58]

Phase associated with Nicholas Mysticus (901-925)

The following, fifth phase is associated with Nicholas Mysticus (852-925), Photius' pupil, who served as Patriarch of Constantinople 901 to 907 and again 912 to 925. A major source on his patriarchal reign are his letters.[59]

Around 912, Nicholas Mysticus sent Euthymius and Peter on a mission to the *Alans*, an Iranian people living north east of already Christianised Abasgia.[60] There is evidence of Christian influence in the eighth century or earlier. This area was never incorporated into the Empire, and the Alans were potential allies against Bulgarians and Chazars. Nicholas' letters evidence support for the mission from the Abasgian ruler and clergy of nearby Cherson (Crimea). Correspondence dwells on hardships endured and eternal reward for service, as well as the tough "transition from pagan life to strict observance of the gospel" on issues such as marital irregularities. Ivanov considers Euthymius

[56] Harris, *Lost World*, 121.
[57] "Book of Boril," https://archive.ph/20130701124526/http://www.europeana.eu/portal/record/9200114/E51093BEF1289C6C14181BCD5B6EBBB0BEDF5D8C.html (accessed 18 January 2022); Ware, *Orthodox Church*, ch. 4; Harris, *Lost World*, 122. The Bulgarian church's patriarchal status was withdrawn in 1018, reinstated in 1235, then discontinued in 1383 when Bulgarian was taken by the Seljuks.
[58] Ware, *Orthodox Church*, ch. 4.
[59] 'Mysticus' means member of the imperial privy council. Harris, *Lost World*, 121; Nicholas I, *Letters*, trans. R. J. H. Jenkins and L. G. Westerink (Washington, D.C.: 1973).
[60] Nicolas Mysticus, "Letter 162," in Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 180.

and Peter the first true missionaries from Constantinople, for the first time grappling with adaptation to a recipient culture.[61] Initial Christianisation was directed at ruling classes, as recorded by contemporary Arabian geographer Ibn-Ruste: "The king of the Alans is a Christian, while the majority of the inhabitants of his kingdom are *kafir* [i.e. pagans] and worship idols."[62] In 932, as recorded by Arabian historian Al-Masudi, bishops and priests were expelled from Alania, including Euthymius and Peter, but, possibly by the 960s, Eastern Orthodoxy returned.[63] Ivanov considers that genuine Christianisation of Alania occurred from the end of the tenth century. The see of Alania is mentioned, along with Rus', in the *Notitia Episcopatuum* dated 1032.[64] Christianisation of Alania from Constantinople continued in subsequent centuries.

Also under Patriarch Nicholas Mysticus, missionary work resumed among Magyars (Hungarians), who, at the turn of the ninth century, had migrated west, settling in the Carpathian basin. A key source for this is eleventh-century John Scylitzes, drawing on Constantine VII, who wrote around 950.[65] These same Magyars, it was recognised, had earlier been missionised in *Etelköz* (Pontic steppe), "a region which so many peoples passed through [in which] the Byzantines did not cease to spread the light of faith among the Barbarian tribes in transit."[66] The Turkic and Slavic origin of basic Christian vocabulary suggests earlier Chazar and Bulgar influence. In 920, a missionary, Gabriel, was sent from Constantinople to Hungary. Twenty years later, a Magyar delegation arrived in Constantinople, and envoy Bultsu was baptised, with Emperor Constantine VII acting as baptismal sponsor, along with fellow envoy, Tormas. Bultsu later apostatised. After Nicholas Mysticus' death,

[61] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 178-189.
[62] In Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 190.
[63] In Ivanov, "Religious Missions," 322.
[64] In Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 190, 254.
[65] John Skylitzes, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History*, trans. J. Wortley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Moravcsik, "Role of the Byzantine Church," 137.
[66] G. Moravcsik, "The Role of the Byzantine Church in Medieval Hungary," *American Slavic and East European Review* 6 (1947): 134-151; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 191 (translation mine).

around 953, a Hungarian *Gyula* (ranking second below Grand Prince), whom historians identify with Zombor or his brother, was baptised at Constantinople. Constantine VII likewise acted as baptismal sponsor, and the *Gyula* received the title of *Patricius*.[67] Gyula II subsequently returned to Hungary with Hierotheus, who had been consecrated as Bishop of Turkia [sic] by Patriarch Theophylact in 950.[68] Hierotheus lived at Gyula II's court, baptising his daughter and maybe some courtiers. Many converted, and Eastern Orthodoxy flourished, especially in eastern Hungary.[69] Later Grand Princes, Taksony, Geza, and particularly Vaik (r. 997-1001), who took the Christian name Stephen, favoured the western church, although for some time both rites had equal status. Ajtony, for example, was baptised "*secundum ritum Graecorum*".[70] Moravcsik writes, "although St. Stephen aligned his country with the community of the Western Church, nevertheless the Byzantine form of Christianity also found its way into his court." Also, "the number of Greek monasteries on Hungarian territory must have been very considerable in the eleventh and twelfth centuries." These included John the Baptist monastery at Marosvar and monastery at Oroszlano. Archaeological finds confirm major Byzantine influence and artefacts in Hungary.[71] Eastern Orthodoxy continued for a couple of centuries in eastern Hungary, however declined in the early thirteenth century, coinciding with the 1204 sacking of Constantinople.[72] The 1215 Lateran Council took measures to restrict use of the Eastern rite.[73]

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[67] Moravcsik, "Role of the Byzantine Church," 134-151; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 190-194.
[68] Skylitzes, "Synopsis," in Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 192; J. Czebe, "Ephraim, Missionär von Τουρκία," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 25 (1925): 106-113.
[69] Ivanov, "Religious missions," 322.
[70] "Gerardus Legend," in Moravcsik, "Role of the Byzantine Church," 139.
[71] Moravcsik, "Role of the Byzantine Church," 134-151; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 193; Hussey, *Byzantine World*, 158.
[72] Ivanov, "Religious missions," 322.
[73] "Constitutions of the Fourth Lateran Council 1215," canon 4, http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/1215-1215,_Concilium_Lateranum_IIII,_Documenta_Omnia,_EN.pdf (accessed 18 July 2019).

Phase between Nicholas Mysticus and Emperor Basil II

Following Nicholas Mysticus's death in 925, the next, intermediate phase approx. 925-976 included conversions from Islam and Rechristianisation. Slightly earlier, the *Life* of Peter of Argos the Wonderworker (d. 922) reported Arab invaders of the Peloponnese being impressed by his sanctity and promptly accepting baptism.[74] Around 927, Kurdish prince, Ibn Ad-Dahhak, abandoned Islam for Christianity, briefly entering the service of Emperor Romanus I Lepapenus (r. 919-944), under whom there was also "a new wave of Byzantine Christian-Muslim polemics".[75] In 935 the Banu Khabib tribe, numbering twelve thousand, converted *en masse,* transferring allegiance to Constantinople; a thirteenth century Arab historian, Ibn Safir, recorded them remaining Christian "to this day".[76] There were, regrettably, cases of coerced or incentivised conversion, sometimes on pain of death, or the practice of financially rewarding conversion. In other cases, cross-border contact led to conversions.[77] From 960, military campaigns masterminded by future Emperor Nicephorus II Phocas, "the Pale Death of the Saracens", recaptured various territories, e.g. Crete in 961 and Syria/Palestine in 975. These short-lived gains were accompanied by reconversion of former Christians, and Christian conversion of Muslims. A prominent example of this was the ministry of Nikon Metanoite, recorded in his *Life,* who laboured 961-981 to Rechristianise liberated Crete.[78] The work of Nikon Metanoite and Athanasius the Athonite on the island of Crete was continued by John the Stranger (b. 970), as recorded in his *Life.* Tomadakis writes, "He dedicated his life to spreading

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[74] A. Vasiliev, "The 'Life' Of St. Peter Of Argos And Its Historical Significance," *Traditio* 5 (1947): 163-191.
[75] "Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit Online," https://www.degruyter.com/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ24838/html; J. Waardenburg, *Muslim and Others: Relations and Context* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2003), 142.
[76] In Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 197; V. Bartold, "Turtsiia*,"* in *Islam i khristianstvo* vol. 6, ed. V. Bartold (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo vostochnoi literatury, 1966), 421.
[77] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 197-8.
[78] Harris, *Lost World*, 137-147; *Life of Saint Nikon*, trans. D. Sullivan (Brookline, Mass.: Hellenic College Press, 1987).

the Gospel, to the consolidation of national and religious consciousness, the organization of church life as well as monastic life and the construction of dozens of temples and monasteries."[79]

Final phase associated with Emperor Basil II

The seventh and final phase of Constantinople's second "peak" in missionary activity coincided with the reign of Basil II (976-1025). It was under the reign of Basil II that Nikon, who had earlier ministered on Crete, ministered to pagans on the Mani peninsula in Greece, near ancient Sparta. The pagan Maniots, writes Huxley, began to convert to Christianity from the ninth century, but fully accepted Christianity only in the eleventh.[80] Nikon's evangelistic preaching was prefaced by the single word, "*Metanoite!*" ("Repent!"). He also engaged in church-building, including two churches at Sclavochori and Parori, both key strongholds of pagan worship. Nikon was also said to perform miracles, for example planting a cross-shaped stick during a drought, resulting in a spring of water.[81]

The major missionary event of Basil II's reign was, however, the conversion of Kievan Rus. The key source for events at this time is the twelfth-century *Primary Chronicle*.[82] According to this source, Kievan princes Askold and Dir, baptised in the 860s, had built St. Elias church in Kiev, and were martyred in 882.[83] The *Primary Chronicle* records that, in 945, a service was celebrated at St. Elias church. During the intervening period, according to Ware, "Russia [sic], however, continued to

[79] N. V. Tomadakis, "St. John Xenos and his Will," *Kritika Chronika* 2 (1948): 65-66, http://www.imks.gr/index.php/en/saints/local-saints-eng/64-sacred-texts/64-saint-john (accessed 24 October 2019).
[80] G. Huxley, "Topics in Byzantine historical geography," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 82 (1982), 103.
[81] *Life of Saint Nikon*, ch. 32-33.
[82] *Russian Primary Chronicle,* trans. SH Cross, S. H. and O P Sherbowitz-Wetzor (Cambridge, Mass: Medieval Academy of America, 1953).
[83] Daniel Shubin, *A History of Russian Christianity, Vol. I: From the Earliest Years through Tsar Ivan IV* (Sanford: Algora, 2004), 15.

undergo a steady Christian infiltration from Byzantium, Bulgaria, and Scandinavia."[84] Trading and other contacts between Constantinople and Kiev likewise led to conversions.[85] There was, therefore, already an Eastern Orthodox presence in Kiev when, in 957, Dowager Queen Olga came to Constantinople, was received according to the protocol for client rulers, was baptised and granted the title *Zoste Patricia*, i.e. second woman in the Empire. Olga's baptismal sponsor was Helena, wife of Emperor Constantine VII. Back in Kiev, priest Gregory ministered to Olga and, possibly, other Eastern Orthodox.[86] However, by 959, Olga had, albeit abortively, invited Saxon, i.e. Western Catholic, missionaries to Kiev.[87] Olga's son, Svyatoslav, had no sympathy for Christianity. During his reign, in 983, Theodore and John were martyred. It was Olga's grandson, Vladimir, who, during Basil II's reign, would embrace Christianity. According to the *Primary Chronicle*, a "philosopher" was sent to him, discrediting alternative religions and confessions, and delivering a long speech expounding sacred history, concluding with the last judgment, and urging Vladimir to accept baptism. At this time, however, Vladimir opted to wait. In 987 he sent out envoys to surrounding nations, Jews, Muslims, Western Catholics and Eastern Orthodox, inquiring as to their religion. It was the aesthetic beauty of worship at Constantinople's Cathedral of Holy Wisdom that was said to win over the Rus': "We no longer knew whether we were in heaven or on earth, nor such beauty, and we know not how to tell of it." In 988, Vladimir invaded Cherson (Crimea), aided by priest Anastasius. Vladimir agreed to return the territory in exchange for accepting baptism and marrying the Emperor's sister, Anna. Possibly the following year, Vladimir oversaw mass baptism of his subjects in the river Dnieper.[88] Christianisation in Rus' was very gradual. At the initial stages Christianity was a foreign religion and clergy were Greek or Bulgarian.[89] A Metropolitan of Kiev,

[84] Ware, *Orthodox Church*, ch. 4.
[85] Shubin, *Russian Christianity*, 15.
[86] *Primary Chronicle,* 82; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 210.
[87] Ivanov, "Religious missions," 325.
[88] *Primary Chronicle*, p. 88, pt. 2; Shubin, *Russian Christianity,* 24.
[89] Ivanov, "Religious missions," 325; O.N. Iashina, *Istoriia Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi* (Moscow: Metodkniga, 2007), 22.

Nicephorus, addressed his flock saying, "I have not been granted the gift of tongues."[90] Eleventh-century Leontius of Rostov tells how his predecessors, Theodore and Ilarion, were subjected to abuse and returned to Constantinople. Leontius himself withdrew to a remote hut to conduct an unobtrusive teaching ministry, however he too died in an uprising.[91] As Orthodoxy became indigenised, martyrs Boris and Gleb were canonised as saints, the first home-grown metropolitan, Hilarion, was appointed in 1051, and a home-grown monastic movement developed with the Kiev Monastery of the Caves, founded in 1051 by Antony of the Caves (d. 1073).[92]

Chapter conclusions

In summary, the second "peak" in missionary activity from Constantinople ran from the mid-ninth century to the start of the eleventh (843-1025). This "peak" has been broken down into a succession of seven phases: the first stirrings of renewed missionary interest pre-860; a 'flurry' of activity 860-869; Methodius' second term in Central Europe 869-885; a phase, associated with the "Five", based in Bulgaria and Serbia (885-901); a phase associated with Nicholas Mysticus (901-925); an intermediary phase between Nicholas Mysticus and Basil II, and, finally, the reign of Basil II (976-1025). As has been detailed, there was missionary activity throughout this entire period, reaching out to Arabs, Chazars, Slavs in Moravia, Pannonia and Bohemia, Bulgarians and Serbs, Alans and Hungarians, inhabitants of territories regained from the Arabs, the pagan Maniots of Greece, and Kievan Rus'.

[90] In Ivanov, "Religious Missions," 237.
[91] *Zhitie Sviatogo Leontia, episkopa Rostovstogo*, trans. A. A. Titov (Moscow: Universitetskaia tipographia, 1893).
[92] *Russian Primary Chronicle*, pt. 3.

CHAPTER 5. SECOND DOWNTURN IN MISSIONARY ACTIVITY (1025-1261)

From Basil II's death to restoration of Greek power in Constantinople in 1204

After the missionary effort and achievements of the ninth to eleventh centuries, the following period saw some decline in missionary activity. Hussey writes, "The really constructive missionary work of the Orthodox church was done in its early days amongst its pagan neighbours, or further afield, when countless churchmen toiled to convert Slav or Khazar."[1] Nevertheless, as shall be demonstrated in the present chapter, the missionary zeal of the past did not disappear altogether.[2] By the time of Emperor Basil II's death in 1025, Constantinople was already in decline. At this time, a weak imperial throne was counter-balanced by a stable imperial bureaucracy, represented by figures such as Michael Psellus (d.1078), who is also an important historical source for 976-1078.[3] Also in the eleventh century, various Turkic peoples Islamised from the mid-seventh to the tenth century migrated south west from their previous homelands in Central Asia. Among them were the Seljuk Turks, who converted to Islam in 960 under leader Seljuk. They entered Baghdad in 1055, replacing the Arabs as Constantinople's geopolitical rival. At the 1071 Battle of Manzikert Constantinople was defeated by Seljuk Turks, and subsequently lost most of Anatolia.[4] During the later Comnenian Restoration (1096-1180), some territory was regained.[5] From 1176 until 1204, however, with defeat in 1176 at Myriocephalon, the Empire "entered the fatal period of the Angeli and ended its political

[1] J. Hussey, *The Byzantine World* (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1967), 102.
[2] S. A. Ivanov, *Vizantiiskoe missionerstvo* (Moscow: Iazyki slavianskoi kul'tury, 2003), 224-275.
[3] M. Psellus, "Chronographia," trans. E.R.A Sewter (London: Penguin, 1966).
[4] J. Harris, *Lost World of Byzantium* (London: Yale University Press, 2015), 161-170.
[5] A. Stone, "Manuel I Comnenus (A.D. 1143-1180)," https://www.roman-emperors.org/mannycom.htm (accessed 12 November 2021); Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 248.

existence in the final catastrophe of 1204," writes Vasiliev.[6] Following mutual anathemas in 1054, the ecclesiastical rift between Rome and Constantinople was exacerbated by the sacking of Constantinople in 1204. Following 1204, three successor states took up the Imperial mantle. One of these, the Empire of Nicaea, recaptured Constantinople in 1261. Meanwhile, the Great Mongol State captured Kievan Rus' in 1237. Two of its successor branches, the Golden Horde and Ilkhanate, later conquered Christian lands in the Caucasus, Middle East and western Anatolia.[7] Constantinople's missionary work during this period shall now be considered in three phases: under, respectively, the Macedonian and Ducas dynasties (eleventh century), the Comneian dynasty (twelfth century), and the Empire of Constantinople's successor states (1204 to 1261).

Macedonian and Ducas dynasties (until 1081)

Under the Macedonian and Ducas dynasties missionary work focused on nomadic Turkic peoples, namely Pechenegs (Patzinaks), Oghuz Turks (known to Constantinople as "Ouzes", and later as "Turcomans"), and Cumans (also "Polovtsians" or "Folban"). By the eleventh century, these peoples had moved westward into the Pontic Steppe and the Danube basin.[8] Overthrowing the *Pax Chazarica*, Pechenegs, in particular, represented both a strategic threat and potential allies for Constantinople.[9]

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[6] A. A. Vasiliev, "The Foundation of the Empire of Trebizond (1204-1222)," *Speculum* 11 (1936): 3-37.

[7] Following Möngke Khan's death in 1259, the Mongol Empire fragmented into four branches: the Yuan dynasty (China), the Golden Horde (Eurasia), the Chagatai Khanate (Central Asia) and the Ilkhanate (Persia, Middle East and Anatolia).

[8] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 226; J. M. Hussey, *The Orthodox Church in the Byzantine Empire* (Hutchinson's University Library, 1957), ch. 6.

[9] Harris, *Lost World,* 133; G. Mako, "Two Examples of Nomadic Conversion in Eastern Europe: the Christianization of the Pechenegs, and the Islamization of the Volga Bulghars (tenth to thirteenth century A.D.)," https://www.academia.edu/993993/Two_Examples_of_Nomadic_Conversion_in_Eastern_Europe_the_Christianization_of_the_Pechenegs_and_the_Islamization_of_the_Volga_Bulghars_tenth_to_thirteenth_century_A.D._ (accessed 19 July 2019).

Concerning the Pechenegs and Eastern Orthodoxy, Mako describes data as "so scanty."[10] One contemporary source, Arab Al-Bakri (d. 1098), states that, until 1009, Pechenegs were "followers of the religion of the Magi," which could refer to Zoroastrianism, Manicheism or Shamanism.[11] The later *Nikon Chronicle*, compiled in the sixteenth century, records the conversions of Pechenegs Metigay in 989 and Küčüg in 991.[12] The Pechenegs were exposed to Christian influence in at least two ways: cultural osmosis from Bulgarians, and military alliance/subjugation vis-à-vis Constantinople. In respect of Bulgarian influence, Mako writes, "Pecheneg links to Christianity did not involve the Byzantines, but the Bulgars [sic]." He asserts, "There are no signs of Bulgarian *proselytizing activity* among the Pechenegs." Instead, Pechenegs were partially Christianised through mixed marriages with Bulgarian Christians.[13] In respect of military influence, contemporary John Scylitzes, records that, in 1048, under Emperor Constantine IX Manomachus, one horde of Pechenegs were defeated by Constantinople, and their leader, Tyrach, baptised. He likewise records another Pecheneg horde similarly defeated the same year, leading to baptism of their leader, Kegen, his designation as *Patricius,* and being granted Imperial territory and fortresses along the Danube river. The monk Euthymius was sent to baptise, although apparently only a few Pecheneg leaders converted. [14] Mako writes, "The baptism of Kegen and Tyrach, and the settlement of their Pechenegs seems to be one of the few, if not only, Byzantine attempts to integrate the Pechenegs into their realm, and use at least some of them as a kind of border guard."[15] Curta references "the mission of

[10] Mako, "Two Examples".
[11] Al-Bakri, "Book of Routes and Realms," in R. Finch, "Christianity among the Cumans," https://www.scribd.com/document/280022853/Christianity-Among-the-Cumans (accessed 19 July 2019).
[12] "Nikon Chronicle," in G. N. Garustovich, "The Penetration of Christianity into the Turkic-Speaking Nomadic Pechenegs in the Middle Ages," *Problemy Vostokovedeniia* 2013 (59): 32-38.
[13] Mako, "Two Examples" (emphasis mine).
[14] John Skylitzes, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History*, trans. J. Wortley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), ch. 21; Harris, *Lost World*, 165; D. Obolensky. *The Byzantine Commonwealth: Eastern Europe, 500-1453* (London: Sphere Books Ltd, 1974), 213.
[15] Mako, "Two Examples," 43.

evangelization dispatched by emperor Constantine X (1059-1067), which began performing mass baptisms in the waters of the Danube river". There was an Archbishop at Dristra (modern-day Silistra) with five suffragan bishops under his authority.[16] In 1091 Pechenegs were defeated at Levounion and subsequently baptised and resettled. Shortly thereafter, in 1092, Constantinople, in alliance with the Cumans, decisively defeated the Pechenegs in battle, resulting in their disintegration and absorption into other peoples.[17]

Similarly, regarding the related "Ouzes" people, Scylitzes records a six hundred thousand-strong horde, in 1064, threatening the Empire, but then decimated by plague, and survivors resettled in Macedonia, becoming "subjects and allies", possibly implying Christianisation.[18] As for the Cumans, they were exposed to Christianising influence from Constantinople, Rus', Georgia, Hungary and Central Europe, and Golden also references "symbiosis with the Alans".[19] Christianisation of Cumans continued later.

Comnenian dynasty

Under the Comnenian dynasty, it was Seljuk Turks who represented a new neighbour to contend with, and, potentially, missionise. After Constantinople's defeat by Seljuk Turks in 1071, Anatolia was controlled by the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum. It was in this new situation that Alexius I Comnenus (r. 1081-1118), founder of the dynasty, came to power. His daughter, Anna, later authored her father's biography, the Alexiad, praising his missionary activity and hailing him as "thirteenth apostle" on a par with Constantine the Great. Since the 1050s there had been two-way traffic of

[16] Curta, *Southeastern*, 166.
[17] Harris, *Lost World,* 182.
[18] Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, ch. 21; Obolensky, *Commonwealth*, 279.
[19] Peter B. Golden, "Religion among the Q1pčaqs of Medieval Eurasia," *Central Asiatic Journal* 42 (1998): 180-237.

defectors from the Seljuk Turks to Constantinople. This "passive mission" saw the conversion and baptism of individuals such as Siaous (Çaous, Chaush) in 1086, Tzachas around 1087, Il-Khan (Elchanes) in 1092, child captive John Axouchus in 1097, Scaliarus, "a Turk who was formerly of the most distinguished leaders in the East, who went over to the Emperor and received holy baptism", in 1108, Cutlumuş, a Turkish refugee and convert in the early 1100s, who went on to become a monk and found a monastery, and later Hasan ibn Gabras in 1179, and Kaykhusrau around 1200.[20] Brand writes, "Byzantium had not exhausted its power to attract and absorb."[21] On the other hand, Beihammer assesses Anna's portrayal of Emperor Alexius I thus: "Anna Komnene *ex eventu* interpreted her father's attitudes towards Turkish apostates in terms of religious zeal aiming at the Barbarians' conversion and baptism."[22] It was Emperor Alexius I who created the post of "Teacher of the Nations", a missionary role Stone suggests oversaw catechising of converts to Christianity.[23] Fincati references a primary source, *Parisinus graecus 880,* listing incumbents of this post, including the Jew, Leo Mung, who had engaged in missionary work in Kiev early in the twelfth century.[24] Besides Seljuk Turks, Alexius I likewise directed missionary work at the neo-Gnostic Bogomils and Paulicians in Thrace. He commissioned Euthymius Zigabenus (1050-1120) to write *Panoplia Dogmatica*, a refutation of heresies.[25] Anna Comnene claimed Alexius "humbled" the Bogomils, and also the Paulicians, visiting them in Philippopolis in Thrace in 1115; Alexius' approach included

[20] Anna Komnene, *The Alexiad*, trans. E. R. A. Sewter and P. Frankopan, (New York: *Penguin, 2009*), 79-108, 169-171; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 238, 251.
[21] C. M. Brand, "The Turkish Element in Byzantium, Eleventh-Twelfth Centuries," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 43 (1989): 1-25.
[22] A. D. Beihammer, "Defection across the Border of Islam and Christianity: Apostasy and Cross-Cultural Interaction in Byzantine-Seljuk Relations" *Speculum* 86 (2011): 614.
[23] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 240; Stone, "Missionaries," 254.
[24] In M. Fincati, *The Medieval Revision of the Ambrosian Hexateuch* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016), 429.
[25] *The Panoplia Dogmatike by Euthymios Zygadenos*, ed. N. Miladinova (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 1-29, 258.

theological debate, but also rewards and punishments. Allegedly, some were converted and baptised.[26]

In 1124, Emperor John II Comnenus, whose reign 1118-1143 was chronicled by contemporaries Anne Comnene, John Cinnamus and Nicetas Choniates, defeated Seljuks militarily, converted them to Orthodoxy, and recruited them for the army.[27] Indeed Turcopoles (sons of Turks) became a "standard contingent" in Constantinople's army.[28]

Likewise, notable for missionary activity was the reign of Manuel I Comnenus 1143-1180, "documented in part by a number of historically contemporary panegyrics", including an encomium by Nicholas Mouzalon for Patriarch Nicholas III (d. 1111).[29] Ivanov affirms, "Some revival of missionary activity can be traced during the reign of Manuel Komnenos."[30] Stone writes that Manuel I's missionary work among the Seljuk Turks was against the backdrop of military campaigns, and at least some of it was directed at prisoners-of-war. Stone also speculates that Mouzalon may refer to missionary journeys deep into Seljuk lands. [31] Hanson observes, "Both Turkish Muslims and former Christians converted to Islam were objects of Manuel's missionary attentions."[32] On the other hand, since Manuel I petitioned the Sultan to allow Christian worship and bishops on his territory, he may

[26] Anna Komnene, *Alexiad*, 187, 427; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 238, 239; Obolensky, *Commonwealth*, 216.
[27] Anne Comnene, *Alexiad*; John Cinnamus, *The Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, trans. C.M. Brand (New York, 1976); Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, ed. J.-L. Van Dieten (Berlin and New York: 1975); Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 248.
[28] C. L. Hanson, "Manuel I Comnenus and the 'God of Muhammed'," in *Christian Perceptions of Islam: A Book of Essays,* ed. J. V. Tolan (New York: Garland Press, 1996), 55-84.
[29] Stone, "Missionaries," 253; J. Darrouzes, "L'eloge de Nicolas III par Nicolas Mouzalon," *Revue des études byzantines* 46 (1988): 5-53.
[30] S. Ivanov, "Mission Impossible," in *Expansion of Orthodox Europe,* ed. J Shepard (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 251-266.
[31] A. Stone, "The missionaries of Manuel I," *Revue des études byzantines* 66 (2008): 253-258; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 250.
[32] Hanson, "God of Muhammed," 55-84.

have been mainly focused on those already Orthodox and re-establishing former bishoprics.[33] In respect of (potential) converts from Islam, Chionates records controversy involving Manuel I, in 1180, regarding the anathemas required of them.[34] Catechetical books required converts to abjure Quranic Sura 112. In Greek the adjective *şamad* ('compact'), ruling out multiple persons within the Godhead, was translated *holosphyros*. However, Muslim converts baulked at rejecting the God of Muhammed, holding that Muslims and Christians worshipped the same God. Hanson writes that Manuel I was "motivated… by his commitment to the evangelisation of Muslims", considering many Seljuks inclined to convert if anathemas were revised.[35] His revised *formula*, however, though approved, remained unimplemented, being opposed by Bishop Eustathius of Thessalonica and Patriarch Theodosius Boradiotes.[36] Also, contemporary Euthymius Tornikes reports that, during Manuel I's reign, Nicholas Hagiotheodorites, Metropolitan of Athens, was known as a preacher to (unidentified) Barbarians.[37]

Stone summarises, "Even as late at the twelfth century, the same missionary zeal that had converted the Bulgars and Slavs in the tenth, and then the Turkic nomads of the Danube in the eleventh was still present now, continuing to target [the Pechenegs and the Cumans] and the Seljuks and their subject Turks in addition…"[38] Throughout this period, missionary work also continued among the Alans, formally Christianised in the tenth century. Between 1084 and 1105, the see of Alania amalgamated into a single metropolitan see with nearby Soterioupolis.[39] An important aspect of

[33] Stone, "Missionaries," 255-258.
[34] Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, 213-219.
[35] Hanson, "God of Muhammed," 75.
[36] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 248-261; C. Simelidis, "The Byzantine Understanding of the Qur'anic Term al-Ṣamad and the Greek Translation of the Qur'an," *Speculum* 86 (2011): 887-913; J. Meyendorff, "Byzantine Views of Islam," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 18 (1964), 122.
[37] Euthymius Tornikes, "Syngraphai," in Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 251.
[38] Stone, "Missionaries," 257.
[39] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 254; J. Preiser-Kapeller, "The global Patriarch," in *The Patriarchate of Constantinople in Context and Comparison*, ed. C. Gastgeber et al. (Austrian Academy of Sciences

ongoing missionary work was church buildings. Ivanov remarks, "The main work of construction took place in the eleventh and twelfth centuries."[40] Dvornik cites Giljach in the Caucasus as an example of "Byzantine missionary basilicae", while Ivanov considers Abasgian/Abkhazian or Georgian architectural influence more probable.[41] Evidence of Constantinopolitan influence is visible in twelfth century Greek inscriptions, the use of the Greek alphabet to transliterate local languages, and apparent remnants of Greek in local words and names.[42]

Successor states to the Empire of Constantinople 1204-1261

Missionary work under the post-1204 successor states to Constantinople shall now be considered. Following the 1204 sacking of Constantinople, the Empire of Constantinople was replaced with the Latin Empire, and a Latin Patriarch appointed from 1208. The tradition of Constantinople continued *ecclesiastically* both within the Latin Empire and outside. *Politically*, the tradition of Constantinople was continued outside the Latin Empire by three rump states, namely the Despotate of Epirus (for a period, the Empire of Thessalonica) in modern-day Greece and Macedonia, the Empire of Nicaea in western Anatolia, and the Empire of Trezibond around the shores of the Black Sea. During this time, Eastern Orthodox patriarchs, from Michael IV of Constantinople to Nicephorus II, had their see in exile at Nicaea.[43] Ivanov writes, "However, *the catastrophe of 1204 did mean not that Byzantine missionising ceased***.** Rather, Greek preachers would now have to reckon with a lack of political support from the Imperial power and also a loss of religious monopoly."[44] This is truly remarkable.

Press: Vienna, 2017), 351-360. Soterioupolis may be either Bichvinta at the Black Sea, or Borçka to the east of Trebizond.

[40] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 255.

[41] Ivanov, "Mission impossible," 329.

[42] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 256-261.

[43] Harris, *Lost World,* 198-204; J. J. Norwich, *A Short History of Byzantium* (London: Penguin, 2013), 317-312; T. E. Gregory, *A History of Byzantium* (Chichester, Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), ch. 13.

[44] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 262. (My translation. Emphasis mine.)

Firstly, missionary work was carried out from the Despotate of Epirus, with its capital at Arta, and ruled by a branch of the Angeli dynasty. Contemporary sources refer to this missionary work, including a letter from John Apokaukos, Metropolitan of Naupaktos, to Theodore Comnenus Ducas (r. 1215-1230), an encomium compiled, in 1250-1254, by Theodore II Ducas Lascari to John Comnenus Ducas, and Georgius Acropolis's epitaph to John Comnenus Ducas. The ruler in question was commended for acting as "herald of grace" to the Cumans ("Scythians"), "tearing them away" from the worship of fire and "cleansing them from disgusting filth by divine spiritual fire."[45]

Secondly, work went on under the Nicaean Empire. In 1219, under Patriarch Manuel I, the Serbian Church was granted autocephaly with Sava (d. 1236) as archbishop.[46] In 1222 the same Patriarch wrote of receiving, at his see in Nicaea, representations from "the north, the far north and the east" for bishops to be sent to provide pastoral oversight.[47] In 1228, Georgius Acropolites, bishop of Epirus, addressed Patriarch Germanus II, speaking of the "seed" he was "sowing" in various far-flung locations, although Ivanov considers these references to the care of existing churches and not to missionary work.[48] Meanwhile, Nicetas Choniates, who fled to Nicaea, where Emperor Theodore I Lascaris (r. 1208-1221/2) had his court, continued the polemical tradition vis-à-vis Islam with his *Panoplia Dogmatike* (1206).[49] Nicaean Emperor John III Vatatzes (r. 1222-1254) founded a

[45] John Apokaukos, "Letters" in *Noctes Petropolitanae*, ed. A. I. Papadopulo-Cerameus (St Petersburg: V. F. Kirshbaum, 1913), 258; Theodore II Ducas Lascari, *Encomio dell'imperatore Giovanni Duca*, ed. L. Tartaglia (Naples: M. D'Auria, 1990): 100; Georgius Acropolis, "Epitaph to John Comnenus Ducas," in *Georgii Acropolitae Opera* volume II, ed. P. Wirth, (Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner, 1978), 24; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 262-263; W. Treadgold, "The Formation of a Byzantine Identity," in *Culture and Identity in Eastern Christian History*, ed. R. E. Martin and J. B. Spock (Bloomington: Slavica Publishers, 2009), 319-42.
[46] Harris, *Lost World*, 208.
[47] In Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 263.
[48] In *Georgii Acropolitae Opera,* 6-24; John Apokaukos, "Letters," in Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 263.
[49] J. Waardenburg, *Muslim and Others: Relations and Context* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2003), ch. 5; J. Meyendorff, "Byzantine Views of Islam," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 18 (1964): 113-132.

monastery at Sosandra, in the area of Magnesia (modern-day Aegean region, Turkey, a base for missionising Seljuk Turks.[50] He was also involved in Christianising Cumans, transferring them from Thrace to the Asian frontier.[51] The best-documented work from the Nicaean Empire, however, also under John III's reign, was that of Theodore, Bishop of Alania (1225), recorded in his missionary report, *Alanicos*.[52] This details experiences ministering to semi-Christian Alans near Cherson (Crimea), and then in Alania. While he was an Alan by nationality, Theodore's inclinations lay with Greek language and culture.[53]

In the case of the third successor state, the Empire of Trebizond, predating 1204 and lasting until 1461, and which, for some time, included Perateia (in the Crimea), there does not appear to be evidence of missionary work during the years 1204-1261. Trebizond's Barbarian neighbours-cum-overlords were the Seljuk Turks and the Il-Khanate, a branch of the Mongol Empire which conquered lands in the Caucasus, Middle East and eastern Anatolia; Trebizond was under the suzerainty of the Il-Khanate from 1243. However, evidence of Eastern Orthodox presence/missionising among Mongols belongs to a later time.[54]

[50] E. Mitsiou, "The monastery of Sosandra: a contribution to its history, dedication and localisation," https://www.academia.edu/656059/The_monastery_of_Sosandra_a_contribution_to_its_history_dedication_and_localisation (accessed 31 May 2021); Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 264.
[51] Mitsiou, "Sosandra".
[52] "O "Alanikos" tou episkopou Alanias Theodorou kai e eis ton patriarchikon thronon anarrhesis Germanou tou 2 (chronologike diakribosis)," ed. M. Nystazopoulou, *Epetēris Etaireias buzantinōn spoudōn* 33 (1964): 270–278.
[53] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 267-268.
[54] A. A. Vasiliev, "The Foundation of the Empire of Trebizond (1204-1222)," *Speculum* 11 (1936): 3-37; R. Shukurov, "Foreigners in the Empire of Trebizond," *Publications de l'Institut Français d'Etudes Anatoliennes* 25 (2012): 71-84.

Chapter conclusions

Thus, it has been demonstrated that, following the "peak" in missionary work during the ninth to eleventh centuries, while missionary work *did* experience a downturn, it *by no means ceased* in the period 1025-1261, continuing under emperors such as Constantine IX, Constantine X, Alexius I, John II and Manuel I, reaching Pechenegs, "Ouzes" and Cumans in "Scythia", the Seljuk Turks in Anatolia, winning over some Bogomils and Paulicians in Thrace, and continuing among Alans and their descendants in the Caucasus. Even after the 1204 sacking of Constantinople, missionary work continued from Constantinople's successor states under rulers such as Theodore Comnenus Ducas and John Comnenus Ducas at Arta, and John III Vatatzes at Nicaea, missionising Cumans, Seljuk Turks and Alans.

CHAPTER 6. 'LIMPING ON': MISSIONARY WORK FROM CONSTANTINOPLE UNDER THE PALAEOLOGAN DYNASTY (1261-1453)

'Limping on'

In 1261 Michael VIII Palaeologus won back Constantinople. His Palaeologan dynasty became Constantinople's last and most durable. Despite victory, territory was hugely reduced and the Empire politically and militarily weak. Phrases such as "Palaeologan coda", "mere shadow" and "terminal decline" describe this period politically. At the same time, culturally, this was an "Indian summer" and a "renaissance", when art and sciences flourished. Spiritually and ecclesiastically, Eastern Orthodoxy was restored as the established faith, and the patriarchal see once again in the Imperial capital, with Arsenius Autorianus as Patriarch. Nevertheless, political expediency led to several unsuccessful attempts at Church union on Rome's terms in 1274, 1369 and 1439. Geopolitically, both Michael VIII and Andronicus II (r. 1282-1328) preferred *rapprochement* with the Ilkhanids (Persia-based branch of the Mongol empire) and the Golden Horde (Eurasian branch of the Mongol Empire) to *rapprochement* with the Seljuk Turks. This led to political marriages between daughters of Constantinople and sons of Mongol khans. Dissolution of the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum by 1308 saw the emergence of various Turkish emirates. Andronicus III (r. 1328-1341) concluded treaties with various emirs, most notably Umur of the Aydin Turks. He failed to reclaim Asia Minor from the Turks, but did restore other territories. In 1346 Emir Orhan, ruler of the Osmanli (Ottoman) Turks, married John VI's daughter. By 1372 the power differential had changed, and John V became a vassal of the Osmanli Turks. Constantinople was also on cordial terms with another Turkish state, the Mamluk Sultanate. The fourteenth century witnessed cataclysmic events, including the Black

Death from 1347 and the major earthquake of 1354. The final decades of the Empire ran from 1380 with its territory reduced to little more besides the city itself. The city was taken by the Ottoman Turks in 1453.[1]

Given this historical background, five avenues of missionary activity at this time shall be explored, corroborating that missionary work, at very least, "limped on after restoration of Greek power in Constantinople."[2]

"Passive mission"

A first avenue was "passive mission", namely Barbarians, in particular Turks, settling in the Empire, accepting baptism and assimilating.[3] George Pachymeres, a contemporary of the events he describes, wrote, "Melik Constantine, one of the sons of the [Seljuk] Sultan, was left with the Romans; having been baptised, he became an enthusiastic supporter of Roman ways."[4] Sultan Izz al-Din Kay Kawus II (r. 1246-1257) had sought refuge in Constantinople in 1261 and two of his sons and a daughter settled in the Empire. His sons, Constantine Melik and Athanasius Sultanus, became, respectively, the progenitors of the *Melikai* and *Sultani* families. The *Anatoulai* and *Lyzici* families were possibly likewise of Turkic origin. Indeed, Shukurov's study of names in the Empire concludes that "baptized Asians" represented at least two percent of the population. It also claims "the overwhelming

[1] J. Harris, *Lost World of Byzantium* (London: Yale University Press, 2015), 207-239; J. J. Norwich, *A Short History of Byzantium* (London: Penguin, 2013), 318-381; J. Herrin, *Byzantium: The Surprising Life of a Medieval Empire* (London: Penguin, 2008), 255-320; J. Herrin, *Unrivalled Influence: Women and Empire in Byzantium* (Princeton University Press, 2015), 314; T. E. Gregory, A History of Byzantium (Chichester, Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 337-400.
[2] S. Ivanov, "Religious Missions," in *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire c.500–1492,* ed. J. Shepard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 305-332.
[3] S. Ivanov, *Vizantiiskoe missionerstvo* (Moscow: Iazyki slavianskoi kul'tury, 2003), 251.
[4] George Pachymeres, "*De Michele et Andronico Palaeologis*," in S. Ivanov, "Mission Impossible," 251; R. Shukurov, *The Byzantine Turks, 1204–1461* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

majority…. were Christians". Assimilation was deliberate policy: "the Palaiologan authorities succeeded in the Christianization of the Oriental migrants".[5] By contrast, just over a century later, fifteenth-century historian Ducas records Emperor Manuel II (r. 1391-1425) refusing baptism to an Ottoman prince, fearing repercussions.[6]

Disputation

A second avenue of mission was disputation, specifically with Islam. In 1354, while captive under the Osmanlis, Gregory Palamas (1296-1357) appealed for religious tolerance and engaged in debate, as he himself recounts in his *Pastoral Letter to the Thessalonians*.[7] Philippidis-Braat writes, "As an example of this more practical approach to mission one might point to Gregory Palamas: while in Muslim captivity in 1354, Gregory conducted religious disputations and in Nicaea he preached Christianity in the streets, on his own initiative."[8]. Palamas recorded his debate with Ishmael, grandson of Orhan. Palamas understood the purpose of his captivity to be "so that [God's] truth would be revealed even to these, most barbaric of the Barbarians."[9] Ivanov comments: "his openness to contact with Barbarians is astounding", although there were no recorded converts.[10] Also, at this

[5] R. Shukurov, "The Byzantine Turks: An approach to the study of Late Byzantine Demography," in *L'Europa dopo la caduta di Constantinopoli: 29 maggio 1453* (Spoleto: Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo, 2008): 73-108.
[6] Ducas, "Historia Turco-Byzantina," in Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 282; S. Ivanov, "Mission Impossible," in *The Expansion of Orthodox Europe*, ed. J. Shepard (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 263.
[7] Gregory Palamas, "Pastoral Letter," in "Captivity and Dialogue: Gregory Palamas 1296-1360 and the Muslims," ed. D. J. Sahas, *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 25 (1980): 409-436; G. Arnakis, "Palamas among the Turks and Documents of his Captivity as Historical Sources," *Speculum* 26 (1951): 104-118.
[8] A. Philippidis-Braat, "La captivité de Palamas chez les Turcs," *Travaux et Mémoires* 7 (1979): 137, 161.
[9] Nazar Sloboda, "The Conversations of Gregory Palamas During His Ottoman Captivity (1354-1355)", https://www.academia.edu/12253003/THE_CONVERSATIONS_OF_GREGORY_PALAMAS_DURING_HIS_OTTOMAN_CAPTIVITY_1354-1355_ (accessed 31 January 2020); Philippidis-Braat, "Captivité," 109-222.
[10] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 291.

time, former Emperor John VI Cantacuzenus (d. 1383), now known as monk Joasaph, wrote four apologies and four treatises, one entitled, "Against Islam," apparently inspired by the Greek translation of *Against the Law of the Saracens* by Riccoldo da Monte di Croce.[11] Manuel II Palaeologus (r. 1391-1425) likewise contributed to this polemical tradition, for example, with his *Dialogue with a Persian*.[12]

New ecclesiastical provinces

A third missionary avenue was associated with new ecclesiastical provinces, recorded in the *Notitiae episcopatuum*.[13] "In the late Byzantine period some new ecclesiastical provinces were created on barbarian territory," observes Ivanov.[14] Following the earlier capture of Kievan Rus by the Golden Horde, a bishopric, from 1261, served Saray, their capital, as recorded in "Laurentian Codex", a source dating to 1377.[15] Clergy from Constantinople were engaged in this work. In 1276 Bishop Theognostus of Saray (r. 1275–82) and Patriarch of Constantinople, John Beccus, corresponded on issues arising on the mission field.[16] The correspondence made many concessions to nomadic life, following the principle of *oeconomia* (concession), however western sources, such as William of

[11] J. Meyendorff, "Byzantine Views of Islam," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 18 (1964): 113-32; C. J. G. Turner, "A Slavonic Version of John Cantacuzenus's 'Against. Islam'," *Slavic and Eastern European Review* 51 (1973): 113-117.
[12] S. Çelik, "The emperor, the sultan and the scholar: the portrayal of the Ottomans in the Dialogue with a Persian of Manuel II Palaiologos," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 41 (2017): 208-228.
[13] *Notitiae episcopatuum ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae,* ed. J. Darrouzès (Paris: Institut Etudes Byzantines, 1981).
[14] Ivanov, *Mission Impossible,* 262, 265; A. Cameron, "Christian Conversion in Late Antiquity: Some Issues," in *Conversion in late antiquity: Christianity, Islam, and beyond*, ed. N. McLynn, Neil et al. (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 3-21.
[15] "Lavrent'evskaia letopis'," in Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 284
[16] In Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 285-286

Rubruck, record that Constantinople forbade converts from drinking *kumys* (horse milk), essential in their diet, applying the opposite principle of *acribeia* (strictness).[17]

Another new bishopric on Barbarian territory was in Lithuania, a last bastion of paganism in Europe. Under rulers Mindaugas (d.1263), Gedimas (r. 1316-1341) and Algirdas (r. 1345-1377), Lithuania expanded its territory, such that, by 1362, Lithuania had, in the words of Obolensky, "replaced the Tatars as overlords of the middle Dnieper valley", and extended to the Black Sea. Not only did this make Lithuania Constantinople's neighbour, but Kiev, nominal seat of the Eastern Orthodox Primate of all Rus' was now controlled by pagan Lithuania (the incumbent actually resided at Vladimir and later Moscow). A contemporary primary source on this is Nicephorus Gregoras (d. 1360).[18] Ruler Algirdas' Christian wife, Maria Jaroslavna (d. 1346), had built a church at Vilnius. After her death he persecuted Christianity and martyred some, most notably the Three Martyrs of Vilnius, although by 1347 his sons were Christians. According to Obolensky, there was a prospect of "reviv[ing] the great missionary traditions of the patriarchy and to incorporate a large new area of Eastern Europe into the Byzantine Commonwealth".[19] So, despite a "very small" baptised population, the Metropolitanate of Lithuania was created between 1315 and 1317, as recorded in *Notitia no. 17*.[20] Constantinople was involved in establishing bishoprics and appointing clergy. There was an ecclesiastical power struggle between Lithuania and rival Moscow; sees were created and abolished, and rival appointments made. Moscow prevailed, and Algirdas abandoned any intention to convert to Orthodox Christianity; the see was discontinued in 1371. Later, "the attempts of Lithuania to get the advantage in the Orthodox Church were halted in 1386 when Jagiello, the son of the pagan ruler Olgerd, became a Roman

[17] Ivanov, "Mission Impossible," 264; P. L'Huillier,"L'économie dans la tradition de l'Église Orthodoxe," *Jahrbuch der Gesellschaft für das Recht der Ostkirchen* 6 (1983): 19-38; A. Cameron, *Byzantine Christianity* (London: SPCK, 2017), 102.
[18] Nicephorus Gregoras, "Byzantine History," bk. 26, in Obolensky, *Commonwealth*, 338-341.
[19] Dimitri Obolensky. *The Byzantine Commonwealth: Eastern Europe, 500-1453* (London: Sphere Books Ltd, 1974), 338-341.
[20] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 287-289; *Notitiae episcopatuum.*

Catholic and married the young queen of Poland."[21] Ivanov comments, "Byzantium had missed its last chance at religious expansion."[22]

The *Notitiae Episcopatuum* and other documents record other sees created or raised in status, such as the "metropolitan see of the Caucasians" in 1317, a new bishopric of Achochia in 1365, new metropolitan sees Wallachia (1330) and Moldovia (1365), and also in Albania. However, these represent not missionary expansion, but political developments, migration, and realignment of previously Western Catholic churches.[23]

Diaspora believers

Fourthly, there were Eastern Orthodox living in diaspora in Barbarian nations, and, in some cases, marrying Barbarian rulers. "During the *pax Mongolica*," writes Ivanov, "when Tabriz was the capital of the Il-khanate in Persia it was visited by many western travellers, who report the presence of Armenians, Greeks, and Syrians."[24] Relying in part on Armenian sources, Ivanov details how Michael VIII's illegitimate daughter, Maria Palaeologina, was given in marriage to Abaqa, ruler of the Ilkhanate. Maria's original intended spouse had been Abaqa's father, Hulagu Khan, who had been friendly to Christians, but who died before she arrived. Maria was dispatched along with an entourage and a Christian bishop. She was designated *Despina Khatun* (First Lady), and, in the years 1265-1281, according to Herrin, exerted influence in Tabriz, "actively promot[ing] her Christian

[21] J. M. Hussey, *The Orthodox Church in the Byzantine Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 292.
[22] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 289.
[23] *Notitiae episcopatuum*; J. Shepard, "Byzantine Commonwealth 1000-1550," in *Cambridge History of Christianity* vol. 5, ed. M. Angold et al. (Cambridge: CUP, 2006), 1-52; Ivanov, "Religious Missions," 332; Hussey, *Byzantine Church,* 291.
[24] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 288.

faith among the Mongols".[25] One of those who came to hear her was Baydu Khan (d. 1295). Maria sent for iconographers to decorate a church in Tabriz.[26] Roux references coins displaying the cross and a Trinitarian inscription in Arabic.[27] It is just possible Abaqa was baptised.[28] Upon the death of her husband in 1281, Maria fled back to Constantinople. Maria, taking the monastic name Melania, rebuilt and patronised the *Theotokos* convent ("St Mary of the Mongols") in Constantinople.[29] In 1307 this or another Maria was offered as a bride, this time to Mongol prince, Charbanda (Öljaitü), at Nicaea, a marriage which may or may not have materialised.[30] Maria Palaeologina's marriage was by no means an isolated case. Indeed, Beck speaks of a "marriage policy". Another daughter of Michael VIII, Euphrosyne, was given in marriage to Nogai Khan of the Golden Horde (Eurasia-based branch of the Mongol empire) in 1266.[31] Similarly, in 1346, Ottoman Turkish Emir, Orhan, married John VI Cantacuzenus' daughter, Theodora Cantacuzene, sealing an alliance. She retained her Orthodox Christian faith and "practiced Christian philanthropy" until Orhan's death in 1362 when she returned to Constantinople.[32] In a similar vein, Alexius III Comnenus Megas of Trebizond (r. 1349-1390) gave his sister, Theodora, in marriage to Hajji Umar, Emir of Chalybia, in 1358, and his four daughters were also married off to Muslim husbands.[33] George/Gregory Choniades (1240-1320) also spent time in Tabriz, namely in 1295-6 and later 1305-1310. His first trip was as an astronomer, bringing back Persian expertise. His second sojourn, in 1295-6, was assisting the bishop of Tabriz,

[25] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 281; J. Herrin, *Unrivalled influence*, 314.
[26] E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Chronicle of Gregory Abû'l Faraj, 1225–1286* (London: Oxford University Press, 1932), xxvii.
[27] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 281.
[28] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 281.
[29] A. Von Millingen, *Byzantine Churches in Constantinople* (London, 1912), 289.
[30] D. Korobeinikov, *Byzantium and the Turks in the Thirteenth Century* (Oxford University Press, 2014), 212
[31] Beck, "Propaganda," 672.
[32] J. Herrin, *Unrivalled Influence: Women and Empire in Byzantium* (Princeton University Press, 2015), 314.
[33] W. Miller, *Trebizond: The last Greek Empire of the Byzantine Era: 1204-1461* (Chicago: Argonaut, 1969), 60.

although his ministry was to existing Christians in exile, rather than missionary work.[34] It is debatable whether Christian diaspora and political marriages classify as "mission", however, Beck considers this to have been Constantinople's "last attempt" at missionary work.[35]

Proactive missionary work in the Crimea

The fifth avenue, and clearest example, of missionary work during the Palaeologan period was in the Crimea, particularly at Sudaq (Sougdaia or Sourozh), in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[36] Crimea was under the control of the Golden Horde from 1239 to 1441. The population was predominantly Greek, however there were significant numbers of Turkic people. Of these "Cuman" probably referred to Turkic people who had been in the area since before the eleventh century, while "Tatar" referred to those, of mixed Mongol and Turkic origin, who arrived from the thirteenth century onwards under Mongol leadership. For some time "Cuman" and "Tatar" were used somewhat interchangeably. The latter later superseded the former, especially with the emergence of the Crimean Khanate, breaking away from the Golden Horde in 1441. There was "a sizable Christianized Cuman population" in Sudaq and surrounding area at this time.[37] Likewise, "substantial numbers of the Tatar elite became Christians."[38] The evidence for this comes in the form of double names (Greek and Turkic), reflecting the practice of assigning a saint's name at baptism, recorded in over two hundred notes appended, between 1194 and 1419, to a text called the

[34] Ivanov, "Mission Impossible," 251-266; H.-G. Beck, "Christliche Mission und politische Propaganda im byzantinischen Reich," in *Ideen und Realitäten in Byzanz: gesammelte Aufsätze* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1972), 673.
[35] Beck, "Propaganda," 672.
[36] I. Vásáry, "Orthodox Christian Qumans and Tatars of the Crimea in the 13th-14th centuries," *Central Asiatic Journal* 32 (1988): 260-271.
[37] P. B. Golden, "Religion among the Q1pčaqs of Medieval Eurasia," *Central Asiatic Journal 42* (1998): 180-237.
[38] J. Shepard, "The Byzantine Commonwealth 1000–1550," in *The Cambridge History of Christianity* Volume 5, ed. M. Angold (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1-52.

Synaxarion of Sogdeia.[39] In some cases grave inscriptions identify Tatars as Christians, such as "Ioannes It-Mängü" (died 1275) and "Paraskeve, called Baraq" (died 1276), and even "the archbishop of Sogdeia, Lord Zacharias, son of Tolay."[40] Perhaps related to this, the local see, merged into the joint see of *Sougdophoulloi* since the late eleventh century, was raised to metropolitan status between 1275 and 1282.[41] Vásáry notes that, at this stage, Christians could retain some connection with their pre-Christian roots; later, wholesale adoption of Greek cultural identity was necessary.[42] Also, baptistries for adults, dating to the post-1261 period, have been found in various Crimean cave monasteries at Shuldan, Chilter-Koba, Eski-Kermen and Inkerman.[43] This strongly indicates frequent convert baptism.[44] However, after 1342, following mass conversion to Islam, Vásáry asserts, "Christian mission, both in its Catholic and Orthodox forms, practically ceased."[45]

[39] A. I. Kapustin, "Zametki XII–XV veka, otnosyashshiesya k krymskomu gorodu Sugdee (Sudaku), pripisannyye na grecheskom Synaxare," *Zapiski Odesskogo obshshestva istorii i drevnost'ey* 5 (1863): 595-628.
[40] Parry, "Central Asia and China," 99; Golden, "Q1pčaqs," 180-237; Vásáry, "Qumans," 260-271; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 282 (my translation).
[41] O. Pritsak, "Phoulloi," in *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium,* ed. A. P. Kazhdan (Oxford: OUP, 1991), 1670.
[42] Vásáry, "Qumans," 271.
[43] Ivanov, "Mission Impossible," 263; I. M. Mogarichev, *Peshchernye tserkvi Tavriki* (Simferopol: Tavria, 1997), 36,37,45,46.
[44] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 283.
[45] Vásáry, "Qumans," 267.

Chapter conclusions

Thus, the present chapter has shown and detailed how, in spite of the "destitute state" of the Empire of Constantinople, or, in Ivanov's view, because of it, during the period 1261-1453 missionary work, did continue along at least five avenues: passive conversions of Turks, polemics vis-à-vis Islam (at least as late as the reign of Manuel II [r. 1391-1425]), new episcopal sees founded on Barbarian territory, e.g. at Saray and in Lithuania (the latter only discontinued in 1371), Eastern Orthodox diasporas and political marriages exercising influence in Barbarian nations, such as Turkish and Mongol states, and, finally, proactive missionary work in the Crimea among Cumans/Tatars (up until 1342, and maybe beyond).[46] This missionary activity lasted into the second half of the fourteenth century. Possibly one of the last references to missionary work prior to 1453 was a funeral oration by Emperor Manuel II Palaelogus to his departed brother Theodore I (d. 1407), "By the power of language he turned even greatest savagery of Scythians to philanthropy."[47]

[46] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 282.
[47] Manuel II Palaeologus, "Funeral Oration on his Brother Theodore," ed. J. Chrysostomides, *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* 26 (1985), 91; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 281.

CHAPTER 7. MISSIONARY ROLES AT THE STAGE OF INITIAL CHRISTIANISATION

The aim of the next two chapters is to produce an analytical breakdown of Constantinople's historical missionary work into its constituent parts, expressed in terms of missionary "roles". The preceding historical survey provides a millennium of data to ground this in historical fact. Constantinople's "missionary approach" was not limited to a single activity, but was, to use Bavinck's term, "comprehensive", and may be broken down into several overlapping activities, some or all of which might be present in a given case.[1] These roles correspond to what existing analytical breakdowns term "elements of mission practice", "clear-cut and essential principles", or "characteristics".[2] The present chapter focuses on what Ivanov calls "initial Christianisation", and the logical order is broadly inspired by his analysis.[3]

Linguist

Bria, Stamoolis and Yannoulatos, writing from an Eastern Orthodox perspective, as well as Bosch and Sullivan, cast the missionary from Constantinople in the role of *linguist*, citing examples such as

[1] J. Bavinck, *Introduction to the Science of Missions* (Presbyterian & Reformed, 1960), 107; I. Ševčenko, "Religious missions seen from Byzantium," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 12/13 (1988/9): 7-27.
[2] D. J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission* (New York: Orbis Books, 1991), 205-213; I. Bria, "On Orthodox Witness," *Ecumenical Review* 69 (1980), 527-528; S. Ivanov, *Vizantiiskoe missionerstvo* (Moscow: Iazyki slavianskoi kul'tury, 2003), 295-397; Ševčenko, "Religious Missions," 7-27; J. J. Stamoolis, "Eastern Orthodox Mission Theology," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 8 (1974): 59-63; R. E. Sullivan, "Early Medieval Missionary Activity: A Comparative Study of Eastern and Western Methods," *Church History* 23 (1954): 17-35; A. Yannoulatos, "Orthodox Mission—Past, Present, and Future," in *Orthodox Perspectives on Mission*, ed. Petros Vassiliades (Oxford: Regnum, 2013), 15-33.
[3] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, ch. 9.

Theodore of Edessa (776-856), who spoke Greek, Syriac, Arabic and Farsi, Colymbadius, bishop of Bosporus in the ninth century, who reputedly knew ten languages, and ninth-century missionaries, Constantine-Cyril and Methodius, who learnt Slavonic from childhood.[4] However, the issue of "missionary languages" is a matter of scholarly controversy. From a secular historical perspective, Ivanov and Ševčenko, consider "use of the vernacular" the exception to the rule. Ivanov cites, as examples of missionaries who appear *not* to have learnt Barbarian tongues, Longinus in Nubia (sixth century), Stephen of Sourozh in Chazaria (eighth century), the "Philosopher" sent to Vladimir of Kiev (tenth century), Hierotheus (tenth century), Euthymius and Peter in Alania (tenth century), Euthymius missionary to the Pechenegs (eleventh century), and Theodore of Alania (thirteenth century).[5] Ivanov quotes Metropolitan of Kiev, Nicephorus, "I have not been granted the gift of tongues." Ivanov holds that this was true of many if not most Constantinopolitan missionaries.[6] He writes, "One serious problem for Byzantine churchmen [in Rus'] was their ignorance of the local language."[7] In the fifth century Chrysostom had preached through an interpreter, as did Gregory Palamas (fourteenth century). Ivanov assumes this was the case with many or most of Constantinople's missionaries.[8]

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[4] "Life of Constantine," in *Medieval Slavic Lives of Saints and Princes,* ed. M. Kantor (Ann Arbor: Michigan Slavic Publications, 1983); Bosch, *Transforming Mission,* 205-213; Bria, "Orthodox Witness," 527-528; Stammoolis, "Mission Theology," 61; Sullivan, "Early medieval missionary," 26; Yannoulatos, "Past, Present, and Future," 16-17.
[5] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 141, 306, 307; Ševčenko, "Religious Missions", 18-19.
[6] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 70-72, 304-8.
[7] S. Ivanov, "Mission Impossible," in *The Expansion of Orthodox Europe*, ed. J. Shepard (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 251-266.
[8] Chrysostom, "Homilia habita postquam presbyter Gothus," http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/1004/1003__Ioannes_Crysostomus_010/0345-0407,_Iohannes_Chrysostomus,_Homilia_habita_postquam_presbyter_Gothus_concionatus_fuerat,_MGR.html (accessed 26 February 2019); N. Sloboda, "The Conversations of Gregory Palamas During His Ottoman Captivity (1354-1355)," https://www.academia.edu/12253003/THE_CONVERSATIONS_OF_GREGORY_PALAMAS_DURING_HIS_OTTOMAN_CAPTIVITY_1354-1355_ (accessed 31 January 2020); Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 307.

Exile

A feature of mission from Constantinople, referred to by Yannoulatos, Ivanov and Sullivan, was the contribution by non-specialists, i.e. those neither monastics nor clergy, namely "princes, diplomats, officers, soldiers, merchants, mariners, emigrants, travellers, captives" and others who found themselves side-by-side with Barbarians.[9] This is what Stamoolis describes as the "presence" approach to mission.[10] The missionary was thus an *exile*, i.e. an ex-patriate, temporary resident or displaced person, in some cases part of a Christian diaspora, exercising Christian influence. Bollók writes, "… if there were Christian communities living among a particular barbarian people, there was a greater potential for Christianity to strike deeper roots."[11] Following the influx of Avars, Slavs and later Bulgars into the Balkans, from the sixth century onwards, Christians remained, and exerted influence over two or more centuries.[12] During the iconoclastic period, iconodules fled to areas outside the Empire, such as Chazaria, coming into contact with Barbarians, whom they missionised.[13] Elias the New evangelised as a captive in Muslim North Africa.[14] Before 988, Kievan Rus' was subject to "steady Christian infiltration" through trading and other contacts.[15] Prior to the Pechenegs' conversion to Christianity, there was "cultural osmosis" from Bulgaria, for example

[9] Yannoulatos, "Orthodox Mission,", 17; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 32, 299; Sullivan, "Early Medieval," 20; A. Sterk, "Mission from Below: Captive Women and Conversion on the East Roman Frontiers," *Church History* 79 (2010): 1-39; J. Stanfill, "John Chrysostom and the Rebirth of the Antiochene Mission in Late Antiquity," *Church History* 88 (2019): 900.
[10] Stamoolis, *Mission Theology*, 61.
[11] Á. Bollók, "Christians, Christianity and the 'Northern Barbarians' in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages," https://www.academia.edu/36949659/Christians_Christianity_and_the_Northern_Barbarians_in_Late_Antiquity_and_the_Early_Middle_Ages (accessed 17 January 2022).
[12] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 161.
[13] L. Khroushkova, "Les missions byzantines dans la région de la mer Noire du Nord", http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=10695 (accessed 30 May 2019).
[14] "Life of Elias the Younger," in Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 136.
[15] T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (London: Pelican, 1993), ch. 4; D. Obolensky. *The Byzantine Commonwealth: Eastern Europe, 500-1453* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971), 280.

through mixed marriages.[16] Cumans were similarly influenced by the Rus', Georgians, Hungarians and other Central Europeans, and especially by the Alans.[17] In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries there was an Eastern Orthodox diaspora, for example, at Tabriz in Persia. At times this influence was more intentional, for example the political marriages of Maria, Euphrosyne and Theodora Palaeologinae, and other Eastern Orthodox princesses to Barbarian husbands, Mongol and Turk.[18] Theodora, wife of Seljuk Turk ruler, Orhan, practised Christian philanthropy at Prousa in the fourteenth century.[19] Often what began as pastoral care for Christians branched out into mission.[20] Christian artefacts along the lines of the decorative cross Emperor Maurice gave to Shah Chosroes, or those found in Avar tombs, or Christian customs, such as burial customs in Kievan Rus prior to official Christianisation, provide evidence of Eastern Orthodox presence and influence in a given area.[21]

[16] G. Mako, "Two Examples of Nomadic Conversion in Eastern Europe: the Christianization of the Pechenegs, and the Islamization of the Volga Bulghars (tenth to thirteenth century A.D.)," https://www.academia.edu/993993/Two_Examples_of_Nomadic_Conversion_in_Eastern_Europe_the_Christianization_of_the_Pechenegs_and_the_Islamization_of_the_Volga_Bulghars_tenth_to_thirteenth_century_A.D._ (accessed 19 July 2019).
[17] P. B. Golden, "Religion among the Q1pčaqs of Medieval Eurasia," *Central Asiatic Journal* 42 (1998): 180-237.
[18] See chapter six.
[19] J. Herrin, *Unrivalled Influence: Women and Empire in Byzantium* (Princeton University Press, 2015), 314; J. Herrin, *Byzantium: The Surprising Life of a Medieval Empire* (London: Penguin, 2008), 283.
[20] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 120.
[21] G. Moravcsik, "The Role of the Byzantine Church in Medieval Hungary," *American Slavic and East European Review* 6 (1947): 134; Y. Hamant, ed., *The Christianization of ancient Russia; a millennium: 988-1988* (Paris: Unesco, 1992), 43, 65; J. Harris, *Lost World of Byzantium* (London: Yale University Press, 2015), 12; S. Ivanov, "Religious Missions," in *Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire*, ed. J. Shephard (Cambridge: CUP, 2018), 305-332; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 115-139; Moravcsik, "Role of the Byzantine Church*,"* 134.

Holy Man

Another, very effective point-of-contact and missionary role was the *holy man*, i.e. a solitary ascetic and wonderworker with a magnetic power to draw in Barbarians.[22] Ivanov favourably contrasts this grass-roots approach with top-down, emperor-driven evangelism. For him a holy man was the "ideal missionary".[23] Yannoulatos writes, "The monks' saintliness was what brought many converts into the church… The radiance of the anchorites' life was a potent factor in the expansion of Christianity. One could call them *magnetic* poles of attraction to the faith."[24] Ivanov writes, "In Byzantine missionary activity we find a paradoxical yet characteristic instance of isolationism, in the form of barbarians being converted by a stylite. The image of a static, lone missionary *contradicts the basic concept of activism* that the idea of proselytising normally implies. Yet in this image we can see the distillation of a *specifically Byzantine perception of mission*."[25] In the fourth and fifth centuries, particularly, this was the missionary approach to Arabs. Conrad writes, "elsewhere the Arab tribesman's main contact with the faith was through individual monks and hermits".[26] Osman identifies a major theme in the conversion of Arabs, namely "interaction with a monk – often living in a solitary cell – that leads to the traveler's conversion and adoption of an ascetic lifestyle."[27] During times of drought the hermits of the desert, such as Sabbas (d. 532) gave food to needy Arabs.[28] The appeal of the holy man included miraculous powers. "[Aspebetos'] Christianization is

[22] Ševčenko, "Religious missions," 7-27; Cameron, *Conversion*, 28.
[23] Ivanov, "Religious Missions," 305-332; R. M. Price, "The Holy Man and Christianization from the Apocryphal Apostles to Stephen of Perm" in *The Expansion of Orthodox Europe*, ed. J. Shepard (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 215-238.
[24] A. Yannoulatos, *Monks and Mission in the Eastern Church during the 4th Century* (Athens: Porefthendes, 1966), 212, 214 (emphasis mine).
[25] Ivanov, "Religious missions," 332 (emphasis mine).
[26] L. Conrad, "Eastern Neighbours: the Arabs to the Time of the Prophet," in *Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire c.500–1492,* ed. J. Shephard (Cambridge: CUP, 2018): 173-195.
[27] In M. Kappers, "Christianity in the Arabian Peninsula: Islam's Stepping Stone", https://www.academia.edu/22657698/Christianity_in_the_Arabian_Peninsula_Islams_Stepping_Stone (accessed 20 April 2020).
[28] Cyril of Scythopolis, *The Lives of the Monks of Palestine,* trans. R.M. Price (Collegeville: Cistercian Publications, 1991), 105.

thus an instance of the pattern of conversion prevalent in this period; it follows the exercise of the miraculous power of healing on the part of a Christian monk or saint," writes Shahîd.[29] Throughout 398-1453 there were claims of miracle-working: Arab Zocomus' childless wife was cured of sterility by a hermit (fifth century), Theotimus performed divine deeds among the Scythians (fifth century), Stephen of Sourozh performed miracles among the Chazars (eighth century), Fantinus sank an Arab fleet (ninth century), Ampelon the Saracen's camels died entering a church (ninth century), Elias the Younger healed Arabs and baptised them (ninth century), Theodore the Confessor healed Caliph Mavias by sprinkling earth from the holy sepulchre into a cup of water (ninth century), Cupharas' prayers delivered the Bulgarians from drought (864), Peter of Argos wrought miracles among Muslims in Greece (tenth century), and Nikon produced a spring of water by planting a cross-shaped stick (tenth century). In all these cases, the miracle, mediated by a holy man, served to win Barbarians for the faith.[30]

While the holy man worked alone, Constantinople also sent out organised teams of monks. Chrysostom's letters refer to such teams operating in the Levant.[31] In Justinian's time teams of missionaries went "from place to place and tried to compel such persons as they met to change from their ancestral faith".[32] Likewise Harris refers to itinerant "hermits and monks" reclaiming the Balkans for Eastern Orthodoxy.[33] It was in this capacity that Cyril and Methodius arrived in Moravia.[34] Ševčenko, referring to the Alanian mission, writes, "We can infer from one case that

[29] I. Shahîd, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fifth Century* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1989), 45.
[30] See relevant historical survey chapters.
[31] Chrysostom, "Letter 221," in *Patriologia Graeca,* vol. 52, ed. J.P. Migne (Paris: Imprimerie Catholique, 1857–1866).
[32] P. Christou, "The Missionary Task of the Byzantine Emperor," *Byzantina* 3 (1971): 279-286.
[33] Harris, *Lost World,* 107.
[34] "Life of Constantine," in *Medieval Slavic Lives of Saints and Princes*, ed. Marvin Kantor (Ann Arbor: Michigan Slavic Publications, 1983).

teams of missionaries were first sent out to prepare the ground for the arrival of the regular hierarchy in the mission land."[35]

Celebrant of the Divine Liturgy

A related expression of Eastern Orthodoxy's come-and-see, centripetal, non-activist missiology is celebration of the *Divine Liturgy*, also described as a "magnet" drawing in the nations, with the missionary acting as *celebrant*.[36] Bria is representative of Orthodox thinking in emphasising "the importance of the local liturgical community as the basis of mission and evangelization."[37] Sterk writes, "The centrality of a physical church and liturgy is also common to many accounts of mission in Late Antiquity."[38] Cameron references "the part played by liturgy and spectacle."[39] Echoing this thinking, Bosch identifies this as "the main form of witness and mission", "the major manifestation of the missionary activity of the Orthodox Church".[40] However, there would appear to be relatively few historical instances of this. Two instances from the history considered would be ninth-century Ampelon the Saracen, who perceived the reality behind the Eucharistic ceremony and believed, and the classic case of the tenth-century Rus' emissaries who visited Hagia Sophia and attested, "We knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth." Both sources in question, a sermon by Gregory of Decapolis and the *Primary Chronicle of Kievan Rus'*, may be reinforcing preconceived ideological convictions, rather than identifying what actually prompted Barbarian conversion. [41]

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[35] Ševčenko, "Religious missions," 17.
[36] Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 207.
[37] Bria, "Orthodox Witness," 527.
[38] A. Sterk, "Bishops and Mission Beyond the Frontiers: From Gothia to Nubia," in *Episcopal Networks in Late Antiquity*, ed. C. Cvetković and P. Gemeinhardt (Berlin: DeGruyter, 2019), 313-332.
[39] A. Cameron, "Christian Conversion in Late Antiquity: Some Issues," in *Conversion in late antiquity: Christianity, Islam, and beyond*, ed. N. McLynn et al. (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 3-21.
[40] Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 207; Yannoulatos, *Past, Present, and Future*, 15-33; J. J. Stamoolis, "Eastern Orthodox Mission Theology," 59-63.
[41] Gregory of Decapolis, "Ameroumnes Syrias," in J. V. Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York: Columbia University Press 2002), 57; *Russian Primary*

'Idoloclast'

In some cases, in order to clear the way for true worship, the missionary would act as what we may term '*idoloclast'*, i.e. destroying rival objects and places of pagan worship.[42] Such missionary idoloclasm was practised by Jonas among Goths, Porphyry at Gaza, elsewhere in the Levant in Chrysostom's time, by Gordas among Bosporan Huns who "had the pagan idols melted down", by Cyril who "mount[ed], at his own initiative, a missionary raid on the people of Phoullai in the Crimea, felling their sacred oak tree", and in Kievan Rus' where Olga and later Vladimir pulled down idols, and the image of Perun was thrown into the river Dnieper.[43] While such incidents might be written off as excesses of zeal, they were considered part-and-parcel of missionary strategy, arguably constituting an "alternative method of conversion".[44] According to Price, the object or site was perceived as an "actual abode of demons", and, attacking it, the saint was "acting out a spiritual battle against the demonic forces of evil"; the demon's impotence was proven by their inability to defend themselves.[45] Often, as at Gaza, Christian places of worship were later erected on the same site.[46]

Chronicle, trans. S. H. Cross and O P Sherbowitz-Wetzor (Cambridge, Mass: Medieval Academy of America, 1953), 111.

[42] I have coined the term 'idoloclasm' to avoid confusion with the movement within Orthodoxy opposing icon veneration. Price, "The Holy Man," 215-238; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 314.

[43] Ivanov, "Religious Missions," 315; M. Labunka, "Religious Centers and their Missions to Kievan Rus': From Ol'ga to Volodimer," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 12/13 (1988/1989): 159-193; P. Longsworth, *Russia: The Once and Future Empire from Pre-History to Putin* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2006), 38.

[44] H. Saradi-Mendelovici, "Christian Attitudes toward Pagan Monuments in Late Antiquity and Their Legacy in Later Byzantine Churches," *Dumbarton Oaks* 44 (1990): 47-61.

[45] Price, "Holy Man," 215-238.

[46] C. Mango, *Byzantine Architecture* (New York: H. N. Abrams, 1976), 18; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 324.

Polemicist

Another, less violent form of confrontation was the missionary as *polemicist*, countering competing belief-systems.[47] Constantine the Philosopher, having acted as 'idoloclast', addressed the people of Phoullai, denouncing paganism and calling them (back) to Christian faith: "How then shall you who worship a tree, a worthless thing intended for burning, escape the eternal fire? … Brethren, know the God who created you. Behold the Gospel of God's New Covenant in which you too were baptized."[48] Later Euthymius Zigabenus wrote Bogomil and Paulician teachings, and Anna Comnene recounts how Emperor Alexius II (twelfth century) also polemicised with them, "refuting their corrupt heresy", and winning many for baptism.[49]

The polemic genre was, however, most developed vis-à-vis Islam. The first known text attempting refutation of Islam is correspondence between Emperor Leo III and Caliph Omar dated 717-720.[50] Other Emperors, such as John VI or Manuel II, wrote or debated with Muslims. The former, in his post-abdication *persona* as monk Joasaph, wrote four apologies and four treatises, including "Against Islam."[51] The latter reiterated the commonplace that, "Muhammed's only innovations were evil…"[52] The aim of imperial polemics was, however, not so much conversion, as to "[hold] his own intellectually as well as militarily"[53] The founder proper of Orthodox-Muslim apologetics, living

[47] Obolensky, *Commonwealth,* 73, 104.
[48] "Life of Constantine," in *Medieval Slavic Lives of Saints and Princes*, ed. Marvin Kantor (Ann Arbor: Michigan Slavic Publications, 1983), 63.
[49] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 238; Anna Komnene, *The Alexiad*, trans. E. R. A. Sewter and Peter Frankopan (New York: *Penguin, 2009*), 426, 455.
[50] Meyendorff, "Views," 113-132.
[51] J. Waardenburg, *Muslim and Others: Relations and Context* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2003), ch. 5; Meyendorff, "Views," 113-32; C. J. G. Turner: "*A Slavonic Version of John Cantacuzenus's* "Against. Islam," *Slavic and Eastern European Review* 51 (1973): 113-117.
[52] In C. Fitzpatrick and A. Walker, eds, *Muhammad in History*, *Thought, and Culture; An Encyclopedia of the Prophet of God*, (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2014), 81.
[53] J. Shepard, "Spreading the Word" in *Oxford History of Byzantium,* eds. C. Mango et al. (Oxford: OUP, 2002).

under *Dar al-Islam*, was Theodore Abu-Qurra (740-820), author of seven treatises against Islam, addressing the Trinity, the eucharist, polygamy and predestination. It is Abu-Qurra who made this decisive initial "contribution to the history of Byzantine polemics against Islam". While entirely negative about Islam, Abu-Qurra wrote from a position of knowledge, and "the arguments used are conceived in such a way as to be understood by the opponents." A second seminal figure, Nicetas Byzantius (mid-ninth century), had a full text of the Quran in Greek translation, which he knew well.[54] Likewise Cyril, later missionary to the Slavs, defended the Trinity in a disputation at Samarra.[55] Later polemicists include Euthymius Zigabenus (approx. 1100) and Nicetas Choniates (1155-1217).[56] Gregory Palamas engaged in debate with Muslims in 1354.[57] Palamas, in his *Pastoral Letter to the Thessalonians,* penned towards the end of his captivity, details three debates – with the Emir's grandson, Ishmael, with the Chiones, and with Tasimanes.[58] Gregory was in captivity in *Dar al-Islam,* and had to tread carefully. Topics covered included Christ's divinity and the Trinity, Muhammed's prophethood, the corruption or otherwise of the Bible, and the veneration of the cross and icons. The debates concluded relatively amicably, expressing hope of future agreement.[59]

Teacher of the faith

Following all the above, the crucial missionary role, affirmed by Sullivan ("the importance of teaching in Greek missionary practice"), Ivanov and others, was *teacher of the faith*, i.e. catechising

[54] Meyendorff, "Views", 113-132.
[55] G. Huxley, "Byzantinochazarika," *Hermathena*, 148 (1990): 69-87; Obolensky, *Commonwealth*, 104.
[56] Waardenburg, *Muslim and Others*, ch. 5; Meyendorff, "Views," 113-132.
[57] Sloboda, "Conversations"; A. Philippidis-Braat, "La captivité de Palamas chez les Turcs," *Travaux et Mémoires* 7 (1979).
[58] Gregory Palamas, "Pastoral Letter," in "Captivity and Dialogue: Gregory Palamas 1296-1360 and the Muslims," ed. D. J. Sahas, *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 25 (1980): 409-436; D. Sahas, "Gregory Palamas (1296-1360) on Islam," *Islamic World* 73 (1983): 1-10; Sloboda, "Conversations".
[59] Sloboda, "Conversations".

with a view to administering baptism.[60] Ševčenko refers to Cyril and Methodius "teaching the catechism" in Pannonia.[61] Later, *Basileus* Alexius Comnenus created the position of "teacher of the nations", overseeing catechising of Barbarian converts.[62] In some cases, catechetical teaching has been preserved for us in the form of specific instances of such teaching. In this genre is, for example, Photius' letter to Boris, the address by a philosopher-monk to Vladimir of Kiev, and Constantine IX Monomachus' address to a converted pagan king.[63] Regarding the second, Ivanov comments, "The speech, supposedly delivered in Vladimir's presence, is overburdened with names and details that were hardly central to the teaching of Christianity. It is ponderous in the extreme, and hardly likely to have attracted and held the attention of a curious pagan. We cannot treat it as a standard missionary text, routinely regurgitated by Greek missionaries for the conversion of barbarians."[64] Ševčenko, on the other hand, holds that "this method", namely a recounting of the Old Testament from creation to the latter prophets, a retelling of the gospel events, followed by an interpretation of the gospel message, and a call for response in the light of the judgment to come, "must have been used in actual practice" and give some idea of what was taught to would-be Barbarian converts.[65] In the case of Boris of Bulgaria, and in the account at the start of the *Life of Methodius*, the events of the Seven Ecumenical Councils were recounted in detail.[66] Ševčenko concludes, "overly complicated didactic material.. [was] part of missionary practice".[67] Sullivan concurs: "Greeks… sought to

[60] Sullivan, "Early Medieval," 24-27; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 314-316.
[61] I. Ševčenko, "Three Paradoxes of the Cyrillo-Methodian Mission," *Slavic Review* 23 (1964): 220-236.
[62] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 240; A. Stone, "The missionaries of Manuel I," *Revue des études byzantines* 66 (2008): 254.
[63] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 296; Photius, "Letter to Khan Boris of Bulgaria," in *The Patriarch and the Prince: the letter of Patriarch Photios of Constantinople to Khan Boris of Bulgaria*, ed. D. Stratoudaki White and J. R. Berrigan (Brookline, Mass.: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1982).
[64] Ševčenko, "Religious missions," 7-27.
[65] D. Shubin, *A History of Russian Christianity, Vol. I: From the Earliest Years through Tsar Ivan IV* (Sanford: Algora, 2004), 24-25; Ševčenko, "Religious Missions," 7-27; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 314-315.
[66] "Life of Methodius," in *Medieval Slavic Lives of Saints and Princes*, ed. Marvin Kantor (Ann Arbor: Michigan Slavic Publications, 1983); Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 151.
[67] Ševčenko, "Religious Missions," 23.

transmit to the pagans a complicated and sophisticated version of Christianity. The convert was expected to accept the new religion in all its complexity."[68]

By contrast, Theophylact writes of Clement of Ochrid, "Knowing the coarseness of the people and their extraordinary obtuseness in mastering Scripture, [he]... devised the following scheme: for every festival he composed sermons that were simple, clear, containing nothing deep or subtle, the type of sermon that could not escape the comprehension of even the dullest of Bulgarians.'[69] Euthymius Tornikes praised Athenian bishop, Nicholas Hagiotheodorites (d. 1175), for his "exposition of the ancient dogmas of salvation to heathen from afar", comparing him to the Apostle Paul as "teacher of the nations", his tongue able to "charm even the Barbarians", "moving mountains" for the Heathen to "come to a knowledge of the truth".[70] While affirming the rhetorical and complicated nature of Constantinople's teaching, Ivanov assumes that "practical missionaries in their everyday work must have adapted the material taught to Barbarians for them to understand."[71] Works of art could also be used as part of the teaching process. For example, "model books" showing scenes from the life of Christ, used in conjunction with readings, or the depiction of the Last Judgment on the wall of Boris of Bulgaria's hunting lodge, and a similar "curtain" used by the "philosopher" who evangelised Vladimir of Kiev.[72] Having received teaching, Barbarians professed faith in the triune God, and repudiated former beliefs at their baptism. Details of baptismal vows were laid down in catechetical

[68] R. E. Sullivan, "Early Medieval Missionary Activity," *Church History* 23 (1954): 26.
[69] Theophylact, "Life of Clement of Ochrid," in *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria,* ed. K. Petkov (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2008).
[70] Euthymius Tornikes, "Syngraphai," in Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 251 (translation mine).
[71] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 316 (translation mine)
[72] Ševčenko, "Religious missions," 21.

books, such as the *euchologion*.[73] Emperor Manuel I, for example, sought to soften the anathemas in the vows required of converts from Islam.[74]

Imperial baptismal sponsor

"Initial Christianisation" culminated, in many cases, in "the establishment of Byzantium's suzerainty over the neophyte country", represented by baptism of the ruler.[75] Secular historians Ivanov and Ševčenko, in particular, emphasise the top-down, empire-sponsored nature of much of Constantinople's mission work.[76] Particularly from the Justinian era onwards, the Emperor himself acted as missionary-in-chief and, as *anadochos*, or *baptismal sponsor* for foreign rulers.[77] Sullivan observes, "An almost stereotyped procedure had been developed. The imperial government singled out for conversion pagan groups where a prince had already established his authority. Then operating through war, diplomacy, economic concessions, and its own example of effective statecraft, the Byzantine government sought to convince or compel the pagan prince that it was advantageous to accept the new religion."[78] Kazhdan writes, "Characteristically, Byzantine missionary activity worked "from the top down" by focusing first on the rulers and leaders of society who then arranged the conversion of their people *en masse...*"[79] In many cases the practice was "to invite a foreign ruler to Constantinople and to baptise him there, at the same time drawing the Barbarian into the political

[73] C. L. Hanson, "Manuel I Comnenus and the God of Muhammed: A Study in Byzantine Ecclesiastical Politics" in *Medieval Christian Perceptions of Islam,* ed. J. V. Tolan (New York and London: Garland, 1996), 55-78; E. Montet, "Un rituel d'abjuration des musulmans dans l'Eglise grecque" *Archives Perdrizet* (1906): 146-7; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 318-320.
[74] Hanson, "God of Muhammed," 75.
[75] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 298.
[76] Ivanov, Missionerstvo, 295-298; Ševčenko, "Religious missions," 15.
[77] *Anadochos*, based on the Greek phrase *αναδεχεται εκ της κολυμβηθρας* ("to lift from the font"), denotes the one who "receives into their arms" the one newly baptised, and thus designates the baptismal sponsor or godparent.
[78] R. E. Sullivan, "Early Medieval Missionary Activity," *Church History* 23 (1954): 17-34.
[79] A. P. Kazhdan, ed., *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (Oxford: OUP, 1991), 1381.

orbit of the Empire."[80] Balogh notes, "It was a custom of Byzantine diplomacy for emperors to baptize foreign rulers or people of very high standing, to award them Byzantine titles and, of course, gifts, to ensure their loyalty to the empire."[81] In each case the neophyte was showered with gifts, and often granted an honorific title such as *Patricius* (or, in the case of Olga of Kiev, *Zoste Patricia*, i.e. imperial lady of honour), otherwise granted to senior military governors and provincial governors. In many cases neophyte pagan rulers were given a wife from Constantinople, sometimes from the Imperial family.[82] Ivanov writes: "The Christianisation of a Barbarian country immediately made it in the eyes of the Emperor not only part of the church, but in some sense part of the Empire." The Emperor was understood to be the Emperor of all Christians.[83]

From Justin I onwards, a succession of ethnic leaders was baptised with the Emperor acting as baptismal sponsor. Tzanes king of the Lazes was "lifted from the baptismal font" by Justin I in 522; Grod of the Bosporan Huns, also given a Byzantine wife, by Justinian in 527; Grep of the Herules by Justinian in 527; Organa of the Onogur Bulgars by fellow-countryman Kovrat under Heraclius in 619; Telerig the Bulgar by Leo I, becoming a patrician and marrying an in-law of the Emperor in 777; Varaz I Grigor Mihranid the Agvanian in 628; Khan Boris of Bulgaria by Michael III in 864; Mutimur the Serb by an imperial dignatory in 874; Bultsu the Hungarian by Constantine VII around 940; Gyula II by Constantine VII in 953; Olga of Kiev by Empress Helena in 957; Vladimir of Kiev in 988, marrying Anna, sister of Emperor Basil II; Tyrach the Pecheneg by Constantine IX in 1048; Kegen the Pecheneg by Constantine IX the same year; and, possibly, Melik Constantine the Seljuk Turk in 1261.[84]

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[80] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 56 (translation mine); Ševčenko, "Religious missions," 7-27.
[81] L. Balogh, "A besenyők hitvilága és a világvallások," in *Térítés - Megtérés. A világvallások terjedése Kelet-Európa népei között*, eds. L. and S. Kovács (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2009), 98.
[82] The title *Patricius* fell out of usage in the early twelfth century.
[83] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 49, 298 (translation mine).
[84] Ševčenko, "Religious Missions," 7-27; P. Christou, "Missionary Task of the Byzantine Emperor" in *Byzantina* 3 (1971), 279–86. See also relevant historical survey chapters.

There were cases, such as Khan Telerig of the Bulgarians, or Bultsu the Hungarian, where the converted leader was unable to win over his people or be recognised by them. However, usually, imperially sponsored baptism resulted in one of several outcomes for the ruler's nation. In some cases, peoples, such as the Tzani or Abasgians under Justinian, became subjects of the Emperor, and their lands part of the Empire.[85] A second, more common outcome was becoming *foederati*, i.e. military allies, a protective buffer for the Empire, for example loyal Arab tribes protecting against incursions – and similarly in the case of peoples in the Caucasus and Pontic Steppe. *Foederati* might serve as mercenaries or collect taxes for the Empire.[86] Thirdly, beginning with the ninth-century Slavic missions, Constantinople might acknowledge the status of other 'great' nations converting to Orthodoxy. These retained political autonomy and their rulers were recognised by Constantinople. Symeon I of Bulgaria was crowned "Emperor of the Romans and Bulgarians" by Patriarch Nicholas Mysticus. His son, Peter, was later granted an imperial marriage.[87] In the case of Kievan Rus', in 988 Grand Prince Vladimir was granted the hand of the Emperor's sister, Anna, in marriage. Later, in 1346, Stefan Dušan of Serbia was self-styled "Emperor and Autocrat of Serbia and Romania".[88] The evolving ideology viewed the *oecumene* (inhabited world) as being ruled by a *familia principuum* (family of princes) with the *Basileus* at Constantinople still retaining the role of head of the family; Obolensky referred to this as the "Byzantine Commonwealth".[89]

[85] J. A. S. Evans, *Age of Justinian* (London: Routledge, 1996), 93-94; Huxley, *Byzantinochazarica*, 75.
[86] Shahîd, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fifth*, 256; J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *East and West in* Late *Antiquity: Invasion, Settlement, Ethnogenesis and Conflicts of Religion* (Leyden: Brill, 2015), 248.
[87] Harris, *Lost World*, 121-122.
[88] See relevant historical survey chapters.
[89] Obolensky, *Commonwealth.*

Chapter conclusions

Thus, based on the historical data, it has been shown how, at the stage of initial Christianisation, work from Constantinople to Christianise Barbarians involved the missionary, depending on the case in question, fulfilling the respective roles of linguist, exile, holy man, celebrant of the liturgy, 'idoloclast', polemicist, teacher of the faith, and/or Imperial baptismal sponsor.

CHAPTER 8. MISSIONARY ROLES AFTER INITIAL CHRISTIANISATION

Having, in the previous chapter, broken down, into its constituent parts, Constantinople's missionary work at the stage of initial Christianisation, expressed in terms of "roles", the aim of this chapter is to continue this analysis, focusing on the subsequent stage after "initial Christianisation".

Missionary bishop

A characteristic of Eastern Orthodox mission is its "ecclesial" character. Bria affirms "the importance of the local liturgical community as the basis of mission and evangelization".[1] Stamoolis, Yannoulatos and also Bosch concur.[2] Given Eastern Orthodoxy's episcopal sacramentology and ecclesiology, a key stage in the Christianisation of Barbarians was therefore the establishment of a bishopric. According to Yannoulatos, end-goal of Orthodox missionary work is to "create an authentic, local eucharistic community", at which a bishop presides.[3] Bishops in Barbarian areas drove forward missionary work, as affirmed by Ivanov and Sterk.[4] However, more significantly, in Eastern Orthodox missiology, expressed by Bria, "the Church is the *aim*, the fulfilment of the Gospel, rather than an *instrument* or *means* of mission".[5] It is a matter of scholarly debate whether

[1] I. Bria, "On Orthodox Witness," *Ecumenical Review* 69 (1980), 527.
[2] J. J. Stamoolis, "Eastern Orthodox Mission Theology," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 8 (1974): 59-63; A. Yannoulatos, "Orthodox Mission—Past, Present, and Future," in *Orthodox Perspectives on Mission*, ed. Petros Vassiliades (Oxford: Regnum, 2013), 15-33; D. J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission* (New York: Orbis Books, 1991), 205-213.
[3] Yannoulatos, "Past, Present, and Future," 16
[4] S. Ivanov, *Vizantiiskoe missionerstvo* (Moscow: Iazyki slavianskoi kul'tury, 2003), 323; A. Sterk, "Bishops and Mission Beyond the Frontiers: From Gothia to Nubia," in *Episcopal Networks in Late Antiquity*, ed. Carmen Cvetković and Peter Gemeinhardt (Berlin: DeGruyter, 2019), 313-332.
[5] I. Bria, "The Church's Role in Evangelism – Icon or Platform?" *International Review of Mission* 64 (1975): 245 (emphasis mine).

the distinct institution of a "missionary bishopric" existed in Eastern Orthodoxy as it did, for example, in the Western Christian church. One line of argument is whether a bishopric had a *see* (seat) in a particular geographical town, or was assigned to a people group or area to be reached. Ivanov argues that the institution of "missionary bishopric" did not exist in theory, but did exist in practice. [6] On the northern shore of the Black Sea, what De Boor argues were missionary bishoprics among nomad peoples were named after the peoples, or identified with nearby towns.[7] Chrysostom appointed Unila as bishop at Doros for the Crimean Goths. Aspebetus was designated "bishop of the encampments" for nomadic Arabs near Jerusalem; another bishopric for Arabs was created in Phoenicia Secunda. In the sixth century bishoprics were created, for example, at Phanagoria, converting peoples at the foot of the Caucasus, and at Cydamus for the Berber people. In the eighth century, under the metropolitan see in the Crimea there were bishops assigned to various peoples, including the Onogurs. Stephen of Sourozh became bishop of Sougdaia for the Chazars, indeed there was a "network of missionary bishoprics" in Chazaria. Stephen the Younger became bishop of Zichia and ministered in Barbarian areas. In the context of the reclaiming the southern Balkans, a key moment was "creating, and in some cases reconstituting, a network of bishoprics" with the see of Patras raised to metropolitan rank. In 867 Photius refers to a bishop sent to the Rus'. Methodius became Archbishop of the revived see of Sirmium with a wide jurisdiction. In 950 Hierotheus was consecrated as Bishop of Turkia [sic] to reach the Hungarians. For the Pechenegs there was an Archbishop at Dristra (modern-day Silistra) with five suffragan bishops under his authority. In the thirteenth century, an existing see for the Rus', at Pereslav, was repurposed to serve Saray, the capital of the Barbarian Golden Horde. In the case of Lithuania, a metropolitan see was founded while there were still very few converts, as an attempt to 'win' the country for Eastern Orthodoxy.[8]

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[6] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 320-323.
[7] C. de Boor, "Nachträge zu den Notitiae episcopatuum," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 12 (1891): 679-694; G. Moravcsik, "Byzantine Christianity and the Magyars in the Migration Period," *American Slavic and East European Review* 5 (1946): 29-45.
[8] See relevant historical chapters.

Assimilator

Kazhdan writes, "missionaries also worked consistently among the people after the "official" conversion."[9] Once Eastern Orthodoxy was the politically established faith in a given territory, or as Barbarians settled in the Empire, the missionary acted as *assimilator;* Constantinople had a remarkable "power to absorb".[10] This corresponds to Yannoulatos' concept of "internal mission".[11] With the Theodosian laws (fourth century), and later under Justinian (sixth century), there were concerted efforts to purge paganism within the Empire.[12] Another case of assimilation was the *Reconquista* of the Balkans, which involved Christianising and Hellenising Slavs and Avars.[13] Similarly, Alexius II won over heretical Bogomils.[14] From the eleventh century, certain Seljuk Turks defected, were baptised and integrated into the life of the Empire.[15] In these cases, the assimilee was catechised, leading to a repudiation of their old faith, and profession of the new at baptism, when they were given a 'Christian' (i.e. Greek) name and identity.[16] The convert adopted Greek language and culture and made their way in society.[17] In many cases converts served in the army, or became

[9] A. P. Kazhdan, ed., *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (Oxford: OUP, 1991), 1381.
[10] I. Ševčenko, "Religious missions seen from Byzantium," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, Vol. 12/13 (1988/9): 13.
[11] C. M. Brand, "The Turkish Element in Byzantium, Eleventh-Twelfth Centuries," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 43 (1989): 1-25; Yannoulatos, "Past, Present, and Future," 1.
[12] M. R. Salzman, "The Evidence for the Conversion of the Roman Empire to Christianity in Book 16 of the "Theodosian Code"," *Historia: Zeitschrift Für Alte Geschichte* 42 (1993): 362-78.
[13] Leo VI, "Tactica," in D. Obolensky, *The Byzantine Commonwealth: Eastern Europe, 500-1453* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971), 81; S. Ivanov, *Vizantiiskoe missionerstvo* (Moscow: Iazyki slavianskoi kul'tury, 2003), 138-139.
[14] Anna Komnene, *The Alexiad*, trans. E. R. A. Sewter and Peter Frankopan, (New York: *Penguin, 2009*): 426, 427, 455-463.
[15] Brand, "Turkish Element," 1-25.
[16] I. Vásáry, "Orthodox Christian Qumans and Tatars of the Crimea in the 13th-14th centuries," *Central Asiatic Journal 32* (1988): 271; A. Kapustin, "Zametki XII–XV veka, otnosyashshiesya k krymskomu gorodu Sugdee (Sudaku), pripisannyye na grecheskom Synaxare," *Zapiski Odesskogo obshshestva istorii i drevnost'ey* 5 (1863): 595-628.
17 J. Koder, "On the Slavic Immigration in the Byzantine Balkans," in *Migration Histories of the Medieval Afroeurasian Transition Zone*, ed. J. Preiser-Kapeller et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 81-100.

heads of major families.[18] In areas, such as ninth-century Bulgaria or tenth-century Rus', which embraced Eastern Orthodoxy politically, but were not integrated into the Empire, assimilation displayed some of the features above, for example mass baptism in the Dnieper in 989, but did not involve Hellenisation.[19]

Moral reformer

Christianisation involved not only embracing a new identity, but also a new way of life. In this regard the missionary acted as *moral reformer*. Chrysostom speaks of wild Barbarians becoming mild, and of them "standing together with the sheep of the church, with a common pasture and one fold, and the same table set before all alike".[20] Sozomen describes how Theotimus "tamed the wild, fierce Huns".[21] Procopius recorded, that, having converted to Christianity, the Herules, who had previously practised such things as bestiality, senicide and widow-suicide, "adopted a gentler manner of life."[22] When Abasgia was Christianised, the practice of male castration was forbidden.[23] In the case of the Slavs, brutal punishment due for witchcraft in the Empire was mitigated, while the age-old practice of "compositions" (*vira)*, i.e. monetary fines for murder, was to be made more

[18] R. Shukurov, *The Byzantine Turks, 1204–1461* (Leiden: Brill, 2016); R. Shukurov, "The Byzantine Turks: An approach to the study of Late Byzantine Demography," in *L'Europa dopo la caduta di Constantinopoli: 29 maggio 1453* (Spoleto: Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo, 2008), 73-108.
[19] *Russian Primary Chronicle,* trans. SH Cross, S. H. and O P Sherbowitz-Wetzor (Cambridge, Mass: Medieval Academy of America, 1953), p.88 and pt. 2.
[20] In J.N.D. Kelly, *Golden mouth: The story of John Chrysostom − Ascetic, preacher, bishop* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1995), 143.
[21] Sozomen, "Ecclesiastical History," bk. 7 ch. 26, in *NPNF2-02. The Ecclesiastical History of Socrates, The Ecclesiastical History of Sozomen,* trans. P. Schaff, https://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf202 (accessed 27 January 2022).
[22] Procopius, *History of the Wars (Gothic War),* trans. H. B. Dewing (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1928), bk 2 ch. 8.33.
[23] M. Maas, "Strabo and Procopius," in *From Rome to Constantinople*, ed. H. Amirav et al. (Dudley: Peeters, 2007), 79.

stringent.[24] Someone who had killed in combat could not serve as priest in the See of Saray.[25] A very common issue was "irregular marriages", for example, among the Chazars, Slavs and Alans. In the case of the Moravian Slavs, Methodius' strict line (*acribeia*), "defending the sanctity of marriage", led to conflicts.[26] Indeed, Ivanov describes how the "Laws of the Himyarites", possibly imposed "rules for the newly converted Arabs" in the sixth-century Kingdom of the Himyarites "…much stricter than the rules in force in the Christian empire itself".[27] However, in the later case of the Alans, "transition from pagan life to strict observance of the gospel" involved accommodation of irregular marriages, especially for ruling classes, while ensuring that future generations avoided such sins.[28] Similar lenience was applied in the Mongol Horde.[29] Moral and other issues arising on the mission field were addressed in correspondence, such as John Chrysostom's letters (c. 398-407), Nicholas Mysticus' letter to Euthymius and Peter among the Alans (913), Theophylact's "Life of Clement of Ochrid" and letters, the report from Theodore Archbishop of the Alans (1225), and the correspondence between Patriarch John Beccus and bishop Theognostus of Saray (1276).[30]

[24] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 230-233.
[25] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 285.
[26] F. Dvornik. *Byzantine Missions among the Slavs* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1970), 118; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 160.
[27] S. Ivanov, "Religious Missions," in *Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire*, ed. J. Shepard (Cambridge: CUP, 2018), 305-332.
[28] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 187, 189.
[29] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 283.
[30] Chrysostom, "Letter 123," "Letter 221," in *Patriologia Graeca*, vol. 52, ed. J.P. Migne (Paris: Imprimerie Catholique, 1857–1866); John Chrysostom, "Letter 126," in *St. John Chrysostom: The Cult of the Saints: Select Homilies and Letters*, ed. W. Mayer and B. Neil (Crestwood NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2006); Nicholas I, *Letters*, trans. R. J. H. Jenkins and L. G. Westerink (Washington, D.C., 1973); Theophylact, "Life of Clement of Ochrid," in *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria,* ed. K Petkov (Leiden: Brill, 2008); Theodore of Alania, "Alanikos," in *Patriologia Graeca,* vol. 140, ed. J.P. Migne (Paris: Imprimerie Catholique, 1857–1866); Theognostus of Saray, "Otvety konstantinopol'skogo patriarshego sobora na voprosy saraiskogo episkopa (Feognosta)," in *Pamjatniki drevne-russkogo kanonicheskogo prava*, ed. A. Pavlov (St. Petersburg: Tipographia M. A. Alexandrova, 1908), pt 12.

Bearer of culture

Besides introducing Christian morals, the missionary also acted as *bearer of culture*.[31] Ivanov views the benefits of civilisation as a way of Constantinople "getting the attention" of disinterested Barbarians, and Sullivan speaks of the appeal of "superior civilisation".[32] Yannoulatos, from his Eastern Orthodox perspective, points to a "direct interest in the social and cultural dimensions of life".[33] Hussey writes, "In East Roman eyes the gift of Christianity which they brought offered at the same time an introduction to a more highly developed way of life. Thus their converts integrated into the civilized *oecumene* and Byzantine statecraft and culture were introduced to young and vigorous societies who were able to combine what they had learnt from East Rome with their own native originality."[34] Yannoulatos refers to "care for the educational, agricultural, and artistic or technical development of the tribes and peoples drawn to Orthodoxy"[35] Ševčenko writes, "On the territory newly gained for the faith, missionaries would introduce such agricultural improvements as the culture and grafting of fruit trees and planting of vegetables."[36] At Velica, Clement of Ochrid (ninth century) "even engaged in farming activities, wishing in this way to be useful to his people. Looking at the land around him, he saw that it was not sufficiently cultivated, so he cleared away the wild trees and bushes and planted fruit-trees in their stead."[37] In the case of the Tzanes in the sixth century, "[Military commander Sittai] had the forests cleared and routes laid out for new roads; pastures for horse breeding were established; and commerce with the neighboring tribes was

[31] Bavinck, *Missions*, 100.
[32] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 308-310; R. E. Sullivan, "Early Medieval Missionary Activity," *Church History* 23 (1954): 20.
[33] Yannoulatos, *Perspectives*, 16;
[34] J. Hussey, *The Orthodox Church in the Byzantine Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 91.
[35] Yannoulatos, "Past, Present, and Future," 15-33; C. Diehl, *Les grands problèmes de l'histoire byzantine* (Paris: A. Colin, 1943), 17.
[36] I. Ševčenko, "Religious missions," 16-17.
[37] G. Nurigiani, *The Macedonian Genius Through The Centuries,* trans. Jan Robert Turnage (London: David Harvey, 1972), 48.

fostered."[38] In Moravia a central aspect of Constantinople's mission was to pass on a Justinian-style law code; indeed the *Corpus Juris Civilis* of 528 became the basis of the law codes of several Slavic nations.[39] In Rus' under Grand Princes Vladimir and Yaroslav "book-learning" (*uchenie knizhnoe*) was introduced with children of leading families taken off to schools.[40] Ivanov comments, "Sometimes civilising boiled down to imposing that way of life which to the missionaries appeared to be the only one."[41] Indeed, "the imperial government usually regarded the nomadic way of life as incompatible with the practice of Christianity".[42] One tenth-century author wrote that Bulgarians "had become the adopted sons of our God, and had… unlearnt the life of the wagon-dweller and nomad and learnt instead the Gospel of Grace".[43] Imposition of cultural norms could also hamper mission, e.g. later Central Asian nomads were expected not to drink *kymis* (fermented horse milk).[44]

Establishment of philanthropic institutions

As Barbarian societies Christianised, the missionary oversaw the *establishment of philanthropic institutions*. Constantelos writes, perhaps somewhat overstating the case, "The Byzantine Church emphasized the establishment of institutions which would help her missionary activities among the barbarians. Thus, the episcopal headquarters and the monastic establishments became the shelter for all those in want. Preaching the gospel and caring for the poor and unfortunate were excellent means for the conduct of missionary work. It was understood that supplying man's physical needs was part of the responsibility of the Church."[45] In particular, this was the institution of the hospital

[38] H. G. Beck, "The Early Byzantine Church," in *The Imperial Church from Constantine to the Early Middle Ages*, ed. K. Baus et al. (London: Burns & Oats, 1980), 507.
[39] Dvornik, *Significance,* 197, 199; Hussey, *Orthodox Church,* 96.
[40] Obolensky, *Commonwealth,* 369.
[41] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 309 (translation mine).
[42] J. Shepard, "Spreading the Word: Byzantine Missions," in *Oxford History of Byzantium*, ed. C. Mango et al. (Oxford: OUP, 2002), 243.
[43] Obolensky, *Commonwealth*, 364.
[44] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 336.
[45] D. Constantelos, *Byzantine philanthropy and social welfare* (Rutgers University Press, 1968).

(*nosocomium*), pioneered by Basil of Caesarea in 369 and part-and-parcel of life in the Empire of Constantinople.[46] For example, in Kievan Rus', after 988, the monastic hospital became a new form of medical care, and the Kievan Cave *Patericon* (monastic rule) set out the work of the monk-doctors, who provided their services free of charge. Ephraim, bishop of Pereyslavl (d. 1098), established several hospices to provide free care for the poor and travellers.[47]

Trainers of local clergy

Clergy, in particular bishops, would, initially, be Greek-speakers from Constantinople (or elsewhere in the Empire), e.g. Methodius at Sirmium, Hierotheus in Hungary, Nicephorus at Kiev, or the incumbents at the new Moldovan bishoprics.[48] However, Bria, Ivanov, Stamoolis, Sullivan and Yannoulatos concur that Constantinople's missionary work majored on *training and ordaining/consecrating local clergy*.[49] Stamoolis writes, "The usual procedure was to have the most promising converts ordained as soon as possible."[50] This practice was also particularly prominent in the mission of Cyril and Methodius. Dvornik writes, "… in Moravia, it seems evident that the main object of the Byzantine mission was not conversion but instruction."[51] On their arrival the brothers were entrusted with "the education of a native clergy in the reading and understanding of the translated liturgical texts".[52] In due course homegrown clergy would take on responsibility.[53]

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[46] T. Miller, "Medical Thought and Practice," in *The Cambridge Intellectual History of Byzantium,* ed. Anthony Kaldellis and Niketas Siniossoglou (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 264-265.
[47] G. Kharkiv and D. Novikov, "Historical models and legal regulation of health care practice in Kievan Rus," *Inter Collegas* 3 (2016): 58.
[48] Hussey, *Orthodox Church*, 291.
[49] Bria, "On Orthodox Witness," 527-528; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 295-397; Stamoolis, "Eastern Orthodox Mission Theology," 59-63; Sullivan, "Early Medieval Missionary Activity," 17-35; Yannoulatos, "Past, Present, and Future," 15-33.
[50] Stamoolis, "Eastern Orthodox Mission Theology," 61.
[51] F. Dvornik. *Byzantine Missions Among the Slavs* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1970), 106.
[52] Dvornik, *Among the Slavs*, 106.
[53] Hussey, *Orthodox Church,* 159.

Chrysostom consecrated the Goth Unila to a see in Crimea. In 427 Arab Aspebetus became bishop for his own tribe. Stephen (d. 764), working among the Khazars, left behind many priests and deacons. The fruit of Cyril and Methodius' labours were the "Five": Gorazl, Sava, Angelyar, Clement and Naum – ethnic Slavs who later trained and sent out thousands of others from the Literary Schools at Preslav and Ochrid. The first homegrown Metropolitan of Kiev, Hilarion, was consecrated in 1051. Later, Theodore of Alania (1225) was a native Alan, although culturally yearned for civilised Constantinople. And, in thirteenth century Crimea, the bishop Zacharias, son of Tolay, was clearly Turkic.[54]

Tutelage of indigenous monks and monastic movements

Just as Barbarian converts took on roles as ordained and consecrated clergy, so, in some cases, they took monastic vows, and came to lead *indigenous monastic movements*. The missionary's role in this regard was one of *tutelage*. There was an extensive monastic movement in Arab-populated lands. For example, in the fifth century, Euthymius the Great baptised Maris, an Arab, who was later appointed head of a monastery under Euthymius' tutelage.[55] There was a Gothic monastic community on the former estate of Promotus in Constantinople (fifth century).[56] Ampelon the Saracen became monk Pachomius (ninth century). There were also monasteries at Marosvar and at Oroszlano in Hungary (from tenth century), and in Kievan Rus, where the Monastery of the Caves was founded in 1051.[57]

[54] See relevant historical chapters.
[55] I. Shahîd, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fifth Century* (Dumbarton Oaks, 1989), 191.
[56] J. Stanfill, "John Chrysostom's Gothic Parish and the Politics of Space," *Studia Patristica* 77 (2011): 348
[57] Moravcsik, "Role of the Byzantine Church," 134-151; Hussey, *Byzantine World*, 159.

Sacred translator

Bria, Stamoolis and Yannoulatos, from an Eastern Orthodox perspective, and also Sullivan emphasise Eastern Orthodox missionaries' role as *sacred translators* and creators of Orthodox literary cultures, while secular historians Ivanov and Ševčenko give a more nuanced view.[58] Chrysostom commended the use of the Gothic language for the liturgy and reading the Bible in translation, the work of Arian Ulifas. Interestingly, in many cases it was non-Nicenes and non-Chalcedonians who pioneered translation.[59] By contrast, for the Macurites missioned by Constantinople in the sixth century there was no translation. Condoñer notes that "[they] adopted both the Greek language and alphabet for liturgical and representative purposes."[60] Translation of liturgy into Arabic only dates to the eighth century, and the Bible to the ninth century.[61] Work to missionise "internal Slavs" in the context of the *Reconquista* had been Greek-based. By contrast, translation into the vernacular *was* a hallmark of the later ninth century mission to Slavs in Moravia and elsewhere, including translation of liturgical texts. It was Methodius who, helped by his Slavic disciples, completed translation of the whole Bible, as well as the *Nomocanon* (church law) and patristic texts.[62] Thanks to Clement of Ochrid and others, with the literary schools at Preslav and

[58] Bria, "On Orthodox Witness," 527-528; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 307 et alia; Ševčenko, "Religious Missions," 18-19; Stamoolis, "Eastern Orthodox Mission Theology," 61; Sullivan, R. E. "Early Medieval Missionary Activity," 26-28; Yannoulatos, "Past, Present, and Future," 16.
[59] Chrysostom, "*Homilia habita postquam presbyter Gothus,"* http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/1004/1003__Ioannes_Crysostomus_010/0345-0407,_Iohannes_Chrysostomus,_Homilia_habita_postquam_presbyter_Gothus_concionatus_fuerat,_MGR.html (accessed 26 February 2019); B. Metzger, *The Early Versions of the New Testament: Their Origin, Transmission, and Limitations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977); Stamoolis, "Eastern Orthodox Mission Theology," 59-63.
[60] J. S. Condoñer, "New alphabets for the Christian nations. Frontier strategies in the Byzantine Commonwealth between the 4th and 10th centuries," in *New Perspectives on the Late Roman Eastern Empire*, ed. A. de Francisco Heredero and D. Hernández de la Fuente (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2014), 140.
[61] D. D. Grafton, "The identity and witness of Arab pre-Islamic Arab Christianity: The Arabic language and the Bible," *HTS Teologiese Studies* 70 (2014): 1-8.
[62] "Life of Methodius," in *Medieval Slavic Lives of Saints and Princes*, ed. Marvin Kantor (Ann Arbor: Michigan Slavic Publications, 1983), 125.

Ochrid, an Orthodox Slavonic written culture emerged and flourished. Stamoolis writes, "All Orthodox missions that have in any way been successful in establishing a church have translated the Liturgy and the Scriptures in the vernacular." [63] This appears to be a difference between success with Slavs, versus the opposite with, for example, Turkic peoples. According to Hussey, key sacred texts, such as by John of Damascus and Maximus the Confessor, may have been translated into Hungarian by Constantinople in the early twelfth century, however there is no evidence of the liturgy being translated or celebrated.[64] In other cases, such as the Alans of the Caucasus, Greek was retained as the liturgical language, while nevertheless fostering some limited literacy in the local languages.[65] It is a significant point that there was no sacred translation for many peoples of Central Europe, such as the Herules, or Colchis, such as the Lazes, nor for any of the Turkic peoples, including the Pechenegs, Cumans, Seljuk Turks and Tatars, missionised by Constantinople over long periods of time.[66] The number of Eastern Orthodox liturgical languages remained limited, namely Greek, which retained a dominant status, Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Georgian, Ge'ez, Old Slavonic and Arabic.[67] Use of the vernacular was selective, governed by political expediency and the honour given to the language and people in question; Cyril spoke of "the *great* nations that praise God in their own language."[68]

[63] Stamoolis, "Eastern Orthodox Mission Theology," 61.
[64] Hussey, *Byzantine World*, 158.
[65] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 190-194.
[66] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 256-261, 307. The Church of the East and Oriental Orthodox used other languages, such as Uighur Turkish.
[67] Ševčenko, "Religious missions," 7-27; Korolevsky, *Living,* 8.
[68] "Life of Constantine," in *Medieval Slavic Lives of Saints and Princes*, ed. M. Kantor (Ann Arbor: Michigan Slavic Publications, 1983), 14 (emphasis mine).

Agent of localisation

Another characteristic of Eastern Orthodox mission and ecclesiology is what Stamoolis calls "the selfhood of the mission church".[69] Yannoulatos makes the same point, speaking of creating "an authentic *local* Eucharistic community".[70] The word local (*topikē*), in Eastern Orthodoxy, has cultural and ecclesiological dimensions. In Eastern Orthodoxy, a *local church* is not a parish, but a church in a particular political nation, "united by territory and common concerns."[71] Bria writes, "*Local* church refers primary to the incarnation of the universal among a particular people through its own culture and language."[72] The missionary thus acted as an *agent of localisation*. Local churches also enjoy a degree of scope for cultural and linguistic adaptation; location-specific variations in *typica* (style) were admissible.[73] This also related to wider cultural assimilation. Yannoulatos affirms the "flexibility and understanding with which the Greek missionaries adapted the Byzantine liturgy and tradition to local circumstances," and holds that "the development of the vernacular and of a national temperament among these peoples – for which many Byzantine missionaries toiled with such reverence and tenderness – helped preserve the personality of the converted peoples."[74] Obolensky describes the "reception" of Constantinople's culture as a "selective borrowing and adaptation to local conditions."[75] Obolensky uses the metaphor of "transplantation of the Christian Orthodox tradition", seen, for example, in the canonisation and veneration of royal victims of assassination, Boris and Gleb, or "the growth of "original" literature in different parts of the Slavonic

[69] Stamoolis, "Eastern Orthodox Mission Theology," 61.
[70] Yannoulatos, "Past, Present, and Future," 16 (emphasis mine).
[71] A. Schmemann, "The Canonical Problem," http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/schmem_canon.aspx (accessed 3 June 2021).
[72] I. Bria, "The Liturgy after the Liturgy," in *Orthodox Perspectives on Mission*, ed. Petros Vassiliades (Oxford: Regnum, 2013), 46-59 (emphasis mine).
[73] S. Harakas, "Local Church: An Eastern Orthodox Perspective," *Ecumenical Review* 29 (1977): 141-53; D. Payne, "Nationalism and the Local Church: The Source of Ecclesiastical Conflict in the Orthodox Commonwealth," *Nationalities Papers* 35 (2007): 831-852.
[74] Yannoulatos, "Past, Present, and Future," 16.
[75] Obolensky, *Commonwealth*, 427.

world".[76] Vinogradoff writes, "the way in which the light of Roman legal lore was transferred while breaking through the many-coloured panes of local custom was most varied."[77] That being said, variations, especially when touching on issues of faith and church practice, were always less significant than the common pattern; Eastern Orthodoxy, represented by John of Damascus, Photius the Great and others, always upheld the "sacred and indivisible unity" of the faith. John of Damascus wrote, "We do not change the boundaries marked out by our Fathers. We keep the Tradition we have received. If we begin to lay down the Law of the Church even in the smallest things, the whole edifice will fall to the ground in no short time."[78]

Church-builder (and diffusion of Constantinople's art)

As early as Chrysostom, missionary work included the role of *church-builder*. Churches were built for the Arab encampments overseen by Peter Aspebetus. When Anna of Constantinople came to Kiev as Vladimir's spouse in 988, part of her remit was to build churches. The Eastern Orthodox church at Tabriz was refurbished under the sponsorship of Mary Palaelogina.[79] Church-building had various dimensions. Yannoulatos refers to the aesthetic and proclamational dimension: "the building of beautiful churches which would proclaim—with the eloquent silence of beauty—that God had come to live amongst humanity".[80] Another dimension was to cater for new Barbarian converts. Ivanov writes, "In Abkhazia [the] many new churches… were clearly intended for the barbarians; they contain baptisteries suitable for adult baptism." Similarly, in the Palaeologan period, monastery complexes were built for the Tatars at Sougdaia (Crimea) with provision for baptising adult

[76] Obolensky, *Commonwealth,* 381, 402, 427.
[77] P. Vinogradoff, *Roman Law in Mediaeval Europe* (Clark, NJ: Lawbook Exchange, 2001), 18.
[78] John of Damascus, "Apologia Of St John Damascene Against Those Who Decry Holy Images. Part II," http://theology.balamand.edu.lb/index.php/works/147-st-john-of-damascus/works/1007-joicons2 (accessed 20 May 2021).
[79] See historical chapters. J. Stanfill, "John Chrysostom and the Rebirth of the Antiochene Mission in Late Antiquity," *Church History* 88 (2019): 899-924; Ivanov, Vizantiskoe, 218.
[80] Yannoulatos, "Past, Present, and Future," 15-33.

converts.[81] Church-building was also about asserting religious exclusivity, expressed by occupying public space. Ivanov observes, "An important stage in the mission after initial Christianisation was the construction of churches (often on the sites of humbled idols) or the transformation of pagan temples into churches."[82] In the early 400s, the *Eudoxiana* church was built at Gaza on the site of the destroyed *Marneion* shrine.[83] As the Balkans were reclaimed at the time of the *Reconquista,* or later under Nikon Metanoite (d.998), a key ministry was to build new churches, in some cases rebuilding inside ruins of ancient churches dating back to before the Slav and Avar incursions.[84] Uniform architectural style also bound the periphery of the Empire to the centre. Under the Justinian dynasty, churches in the "East Roman style" were built for the Tzani, Abasgians, the Himyarite kingdom of Arabia, and in Macuria (Nubia).[85] Brown writes, "Throughout the Empire, Justinian placed churches whose style, based on the basilicas of the capital, was uniform from Ceuta, on the Atlantic coast of Morocco, to the Euphrates."[86] Speaking of the tenth century, Arzhantseva writes, "It is obvious, that all the major churches… were built with the direct use of Greek craftsmen who arrived together with missionaries. All the other small churches were very likely to have been built by local craftsmen who had undergone the necessary training by Byzantine builders."[87] At the same time, "us[ing] simpler architectural types better suited…a newly converted land".[88] Church-building programmes might be undertaken some time after initial evangelisation, as for the Alans in the eleventh and twelfth

[81] Ivanov, "Religious Missions," 305-332; Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 283.
[82] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 324.
[83] P. Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity* (London: Thames and Hudson,1971), 16.
[84] Dvornik, *Among the Slavs*, 122.
[85] Ivanov, "Religious Missions," 311.
[86] Brown, *World of Late Antiquity*, 18, 152. Some of these churches, such as that at Ceuta, would have come under the jurisdiction of Rome.
[87] I. Arzhantseva, "Alans: between Byzantium and Khazaria," in *Medieval Europe, Third International Conference of Mediaeval and Later Archaeology* Volume 1 (Basel: Hertingen, 2002), 441-445; V. Kuznetsov, *Zodchestvo feodal'noi Alanii* (Ordzhonikidze: Ir, 1977); I. Arzhantseva, "The Christianization of the North Caucasus (Religious Dualism among the Alans)," in *Die Christianisierung des* Kaukasus, ed. W. Seibt (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2002), 17-36.
[88] Dvornik, *Among the Slavs*, 125.

centuries, for example at Giljach (Caucasus).[89] Interesting insight into the connection between faith and church-building can be found in the words of Theophylact concerning Symeon of Bulgaria: "[he] *fortified* Orthodoxy with the churches he built everywhere."[90]

Similarly, Obolensky charts the diffusion of "Byzantine art", including iconography, following the Triumph of Orthodoxy in 843, out from Constantinople to places such as the Cathedral of St Sophia in Kiev, or at Studenica and Sopićani in Serbia, in the form of compositions in mosaic and paintings arranged inside church buildings, and following a particular hierarchical pattern – to a greater or lesser degree assuming "local features" of the receiving culture.[91]

Chapter Conclusions

Thus, missionary work from Constantinople "after initial Christianisation" involved the missionary acting in the overlapping roles of missionary bishop, assimilator, moral teacher, bearer of culture, overseeing establishment of philanthropic institutions, trainer of indigenous clergy, providing tutelage to indigenous monks and monastic movements, as sacred translator, agent of localisation and/or builder of churches.

[89] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 256.
[90] Theophylact, "Life of Clement of Ochrid," in *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria, Seventh-Fifteenth Century: The Records of a Bygone Culture*, ed. K. Petkov (Leiden: BRILL, 2008) (emphasis mine).
[91] Obolensky, *Commonwealth*, 443-465.

FINAL CONCLUSIONS

The present thesis has demonstrated that, throughout the entire period 398-1453, work from Constantinople to Christianise Barbarians was indeed not the "exception", but the "rule". It has been detailed how this was the case both during the recognised "peaks" in Constantinople's missionary activity – during the sixth and ninth to eleventh centuries respectively – and also during the subsequent "downturns" or "lulls", in particular during Constantinople's "Dark Age" and during the time of exile 1204-1261. In particular, Constantinople missionary activity reached out to Arabs pre- and post-Islam, Nubian Macurites and Berbers in the sixth century, various Oguric peoples, Chazars in the eighth century, "internal" Slavs pre-860, Hungarians in the tenth century, Pechenegs and others in the eleventh century, Seljuk Turks in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Cumans and Tartars in the Crimea in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, Mongols of the Ilkhanate and Golden Horde, and, finally, pre-Christian Lithuania. Arguably, all of these are significant and poorly known. Geographically, Constantinople's missionary footprint covered an area from Ghadames in the west to Tabriz and Saray in the east, and from Vilnius in the north to Dongola (Sudan) and Sanaa (Yemen) in the south. However, while Constantinople did keenly missionise neighbouring peoples, there does not appear to have been a drive to reach more distant peoples, for example, the Göktürk Empire, which was in alliance with Constantinople 563 to 628.

Building on existing analytical breakdowns, the present work has characterised Constantinople's missionary activity by identifying its constituent parts (expressed in terms of missionary "roles"). At the stage of "initial Christianisation", depending on the particular historic mission in question, Constantinople's missionising comprised the roles of linguist, exile, holy man, celebrant of the Divine Liturgy, "idoloclast", polemicist, teacher of the faith and imperial baptismal sponsor. Constantinople's missionising thus began with a magnetic, "come and see", non-activist approach.

Barbarians were drawn to the faith by lay Christians exercising Christian influence and showing *philanthropia* in their midst, by the example of holy men, and also through the perceived magnetism of the Divine Liturgy. Having "won a hearing", the crucial missionary role was that of teacher of the faith, transmitting a "complicated and sophisticated version of Christianity" to the Barbarian hearer preparing for baptism. While this ensured that the fullness of the faith was transmitted, in many cases such teaching may have been obtuse and difficult to digest. Data would also suggest that the missionary was often *not* a foreign linguist, but instead used Greek and/or spoke through an interpreter. The established practice of the Emperor personally sponsoring the baptism of Barbarian rulers reflects the "top-down, empire-sponsored" nature of Constantinople's missionary work, and the fact that baptism implied "establishment of Byzantium's suzerainty over the neophyte country".[1] This connection with the Empire could make Eastern Orthodox Christianity appealing and expedient, but also could make it unattractive and politically problematic for potential converts, for example in the case of Persia.

After "initial Christianisation", at the subsequent stage of "ongoing Christianisation", Constantinople's missionary work, depending on the particular historic mission in question, may be characterised by the roles of missionary bishop, assimilator, moral teacher, bearer of culture, overseeing establishment of philanthropic institutions, trainer of local clergy, providing tutelage for indigenous monks and monastic movements, sacred translator, agent of localisation, and church-builder. Thus, missionary work centred on creation of a "local eucharistic community" in which Barbarian converts participated and presided over by the bishop. With this in mind, Constantinople's missionary work majored on the training and ordination of local clergy, and provided tutelage for indigenous monks and monastic movements. Beyond acceptance of the gospel and participation in the liturgy, the longer-term aim was wholesale adoption of Christian identity, morals and

[1] S. Ivanov, *Vizantiiskoe missionerstvo* (Moscow: Iazyki slavianskoi kul'tury, 2003), 298

culture/civilisation. In some cases Constantinople's missionaries insisted on the use of Greek, heavy-handedly applied *acribeia* (strictness) in moral matters, and imposed Constantinople's cultural norms on those missionised. For example, historical data would suggest that no translation was offered for a whole list of languages: Arabic (until very late), many languages of Colchis, Cuman, Turkish, Mongolian etc. In other cases, Constantinople's missionaries promoted the use of the vernacular, applied *oeconomia* (flexibility) in moral and other matters, and gave scope for Eastern Orthodox culture to be adapted to ethnic distinctives, giving Orthodoxy a local flavour without, however, compromising the unity of the faith. When translation *was* undertaken for the Slavs, and a literary culture created, this reinforced their Orthodox faith and identity in the long term, as did strong cultural ties with Constantinople.[2] The Christianisation of the Slavs represented, and, arguably, to this day still represents the textbook case of successful mission from Constantinople.

It may also be said that, in the long term, much missionary work from Constantinople proved to be unsuccessful or short-lasting. Peoples at least partially Christianised, e.g. Arabs, Chazars, Cumans and Tatars, were later to be almost completely lost for Eastern Orthodox Christianity.[3] Several major factors contributing to this may be identified. Firstly, Eastern Orthodoxy, including its complicated doctrinal teaching and sophisticated Empire-based civilisation, was something nomadic and other peoples might superficially accept without ever fully appropriating, leaving them susceptible to apostasy or conversion to another faith. Secondly, migration and the decline of Constantinople's geopolitical hegemony removed peoples from Orthodoxy's sphere of influence. Thirdly, and even more importantly, Eastern Orthodoxy proved unable to withstand the advance of Islam, or compete with rival Christian communions, such as the Oriental Orthodox and Western Catholics, whose missionising was arguably more dynamic and effective. Yannoulatos, writing from an Eastern

[2] A. Yannoulatos, "Orthodox Mission—Past, Present, and Future," in *Orthodox Perspectives on Mission*, ed. P. Vassiliades (Oxford: Regnum, 2013), 15-33.
[3] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo*, 337.

Orthodox perspective, attributes the high attrition rate to "the great ethnological changes and redistribution which took place during the centuries following this missionary fervour, and especially by the spreading of the Islam [sic]". [4]

However, particularly as time wore on, missiological lessons *were* learnt. The successful Hellenisation of the Slav-occupied Balkans inside the Empire, particularly in the early ninth century, appears to have laid the groundwork for the later successful mission to Slavs outside the Empire (e.g. Greater Moravia, Bulgaria and Rus'). An earlier failure to translate the Scripture and liturgy into Arabic and an intransigent application of *acribeia* gave way to a more flexible approach (*oeconomia*), which, at least in the case of the Slavic peoples, produced lasting success. By the time of Euthymius and Peter of Alania, and, later, Gregory Palamas, Eastern Orthodoxy was engaging with rival cultures and religions in a way inconceivable in earlier centuries. Ivanov attributes this more flexible approach to Nicholas Mysticus. [5]

Key figures, representing the high-water mark of Constantinople's missionary tradition, include John Chrysostom, Euthymius the Great, Stephen of Sourozh, Thedore Abu-Qurrah, Photius the Great, Cyril and Methodius, Clement of Ochrid, Nicholas Mysticus, Euthymius and Peter of Alania, Nikon Metanoite, Theognostus of Saray, Gregory Palamas and Maria Palaeologina, In their role as "missionaries-in-chief", Emperors such as Justin I, Justinian, Maurice, Heraclius, Nicephorus I, Michael III, Basil I, Constantine VII, Constantine IX, Constantine X, Alexius I, Manuel I and Michael VIII all made a major contribution to the missionary cause.

[4] A. Yannoulatos, "The Missionary Activity of the Orthodox Church," *Syndesmos 6th General Assembly* (Punkaharju, 1964): 3.
[5] Ivanov, *Missionerstvo,* 286.

The present work opens up countless avenues for further research. One such avenue would be to investigate other instances of missionary work from Constantinople in the fifth and early sixth centuries. Another potential avenue for research would be to investigate whether there were institutions, such as the Gothic monastery at Constantinople, the Ochrid school, the Esphigmenu monastery in the theme of Charsianon, and the Sosandra monastery, which served as bases and training centres for Eastern Orthodox missionary work.

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