

The Preliminaries of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215): From an Orthodox Perspective

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The reaction of the Orthodox Church to the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) arguably set a pattern that would persist until the end of Byzantium. While members of the hierarchy were mostly opposed to accepting invitations to attend the council, the Emperor Theodore I Laskaris saw it as an opportunity to open up a dialogue with the papacy in the hope of deriving some political advantage. This episode reveals that negotiations over the Union of Churches divided Byzantine society in a way that had not happened before 1204.

Chris Schabel and Nickiphoros Tsougarakis have recently reminded us that the Fourth Lateran Council had more of a bearing on the Church of Constantinople than has normally been supposed.¹ They dispute the view that Innocent III considered that the Eastern Church was no longer a problem because of a happy accident, which came in the shape of the conquest of Constantinople by the Fourth Crusade. They provide evidence of the way in which the pope continued to work for reconciliation with the Greeks by taking practical measures to protect their interests. They draw attention to the number of Orthodox bishops who made their submission to Rome, and the number of Orthodox monasteries that were taken under the protection of the Apostolic See. Their work prompts a closer look at the Orthodox reaction to the calling of the Fourth Lateran Council by Pope Innocent III, which

Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', II/i = A. Heisenberg, *Quellen und Studien zur spätbyzantinischen Geschichte*, London 1973, no. II/i; Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', II/ii = Heisenberg, *Quellen und Studien*, no. II/ii; Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', II/iii = Heisenberg, *Quellen und Studien*, no. II/iii.

¹ C. Schabel and N. Tsougarakis, 'Pope Innocent III, the Fourth Lateran Council and Frankish Greece and Cyprus', this *JOURNAL* lxxvii (2016), 741–59.

has, in any case, attracted little scholarly attention. The prospect of a General Council called by the papacy presented the Orthodox Church with a serious challenge, not least because there were Orthodox attracted to reconciliation with Rome thanks to Innocent III's tactful treatment of the Greeks under Latin rule.² It was not so much that the Orthodox Church surmounted this challenge, as that in the process there emerged a series of recurring fault lines: between emperor and patriarch, monks and laity, and between the Byzantine successor states that came into being after 1204. The importance of the episode under consideration lies in the way it set a pattern which was to run like a *leitmotif* through later Byzantine history.

I

It is difficult to separate the Orthodox reaction to the calling of the Fourth Lateran Council in April 1213 from the mission of Cardinal Pelagius to the Church of Constantinople in 1214.³ Though dispatched with a relatively narrow remit the cardinal quickly found himself face to face with the problem of relations with the Orthodox Church and the question of attendance at the forthcoming council. There are reasons for believing that Cardinal Pelagius' mission to the Church of Constantinople was a matter of improvisation. Innocent III announced his intention of sending the cardinal to Constantinople in letters dated 30 August 1213 addressed to the Latin Emperor Henry of Hainault and to the Latin bishops and clergy of Constantinople, and in another dated 31 August 1213 to Geoffrey Villehardouin, prince of Achaëa.⁴ However, the pope's surviving instructions to Cardinal Pelagius were issued nearly three weeks later, on 18 September 1213.⁵ In contrast to the letters sent to the Latin emperor and others, which were reasonably detailed, the papal instructions to Cardinal Pelagius must be among the most perfunctory ever delivered to a papal legate. They did little more than explain the circumstances that compelled the papal notary Maximus to abort his mission to Constantinople. Its purpose was to settle the disputed election of a new Latin patriarch of Constantinople that followed the death in the early

² For the impact of Innocent III's denunciation of the excesses of the Fourth Crusade see A. Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen zur Geschichte des lateinischen Kaisertums und der Kirchenunion, II: Die Unionsverhandlungen vom 30. August 1206: Patriarchenwahl und Kaiserkrönung in Nikaia 1208', *Sitzungsberichte der bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, philosophisch-philologische und historische Klasse* (1923), pt II (= Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', II/ii, 21, lines 12–28). See also Nicholas Mesarites, *His life and works (in translation)*, trans. Michael Angold, Liverpool 2017, 203 and n. 22.

³ J. P. Donovan, *Pelagius and the Fifth Crusade*, Philadelphia, PA 1950, 3–24.

⁴ *PL* ccxvi.901–4.

⁵ *PL* ccxvi.907D.

summer of 1211 of Thomas Morosini. This task was now handed over to Pelagius. A copy of the suitably comprehensive letter of commission dated 18 August 1212 issued to Maximus would have been given to Cardinal Pelagius, thus precluding the need for more detailed instructions.⁶

Raising the mission to the Church of Constantinople to legate status by entrusting it to a cardinal may have been a reaction to the obstructionism encountered by Maximus at Venice, which had forced him to abandon his mission. But there was an additional and more pertinent reason for raising the status of the mission. On 19 April 1213 invitations were sent out to the whole of Christendom to attend a General Council of the Church, which the pope had summoned.⁷ It would be a scandal if the vacancy on the patriarchal throne continued with the result that there was no Latin patriarch of Constantinople in attendance at the council. It would undermine the theory of papal primacy developed by Innocent III on the basis of Revelation iv. 6–7, which had the pope as the Vicar of Christ presiding over the four patriarchates, each representing an evangelist: Matthew for Jerusalem; Mark for Alexandria; Luke for Antioch; and John for Constantinople, but it was to the latter that the pope awarded first place after Rome, on the grounds that despite being the last of the evangelists John was first in Christ's affections.⁸

Pelagius did not travel directly to Constantinople, but made his way *via* Greece, where he stopped at Levadeia to invest the duke of Athens Otto de la Roche with its castle as a vassal of the Apostolic See.⁹ He must then have proceeded to Thessalonike, because he had already received instructions from the pope dated 12 January 1214 to investigate the affairs of the monastery of Chortaiton.¹⁰ He reached Constantinople by 21 June 1214, when he issued a privilege for the canons of Levadeia.¹¹ Once there his primary task was to resolve the disputed patriarchal election, but it had as its corollary obtaining the obedience of the Greeks, who formed the vast majority of those comprised within the Church of Constantinople.¹²

⁶ *PL* ccxvi.674–5.

⁷ *PL* ccxvi.824–30, esp. 826D.

⁸ W. O. Duba, 'The status of the patriarch of Constantinople after the Fourth Crusade', in Alexander D. Beihammer, Maria G. Parani and Christopher D. Schabel (eds), *Diplomatics in the eastern Mediterranean, 1000–1500: aspects of cross-cultural communication*, Leiden 2008, 74–84.

⁹ P. Fabre and L. Duchesne, *Le Liber censuum de l'Église romaine*, Paris 1910, no. cccxxxvii, pp. 74–84.

¹⁰ *PL* ccxvi.951–2.

¹¹ Fabre and Duchesne, *Le Liber censuum*, no. cccxxxvii, pp. 584–5. The document was issued at Scandabli, which can be recognised as a garbled version of Constantinople. Latins often prefixed Greek place names with the letter S, as in Satines (Athens) and Stives (Thebes).

¹² W. Maleczek, *Papst und Kardinalkolleg von 1191 bis 1216: die Kardinäle unter Coelestin III. und Innocenz III.*, Vienna 1984, 167–8; J. M. Powell, *The anatomy of a crusade, 1213–1221*, Philadelphia, PA 1986, 26.

He had an early success when the Greek bishop of Raidestos in Thrace submitted to Rome. This gave hope that other Greek bishops, monks and clergy would follow his example.¹³ This does not seem to have happened. The task facing Pelagius was all the more difficult for the way in which Innocent III had deliberately ignored the creation in March 1208 of an Orthodox patriarchate in exile at Nicaea, preferring to assume that in due course events would force it to return to the fold. Pelagius therefore received no instructions as to how he was to obtain the submission of the Greeks. Patience never being his strong point, if Nicholas Mesarites is to be believed,¹⁴ and with time running out on his mission, he resorted to force. In the autumn of 1213 he closed down Orthodox churches in Constantinople, dismissed the Greek clergy and drove Orthodox monks from their monasteries. This was a reversal of the favourable attitude which the Latin Emperor Henry of Hainault had, with the backing of the pope, displayed towards the Orthodox monasteries within his territories.¹⁵ There is a tradition that he forced a Latin lord – who may have been the bishop of Sevaste – to dismantle the fortress that he had built on Mount Athos,¹⁶ while he played a part in obtaining papal protection for its monasteries, which was granted on 17 January 1213.¹⁷ Some three years earlier he had supported the Orthodox community of Hosios Loukas near Thebes against the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, to which it had been granted by Cardinal Benedict of Sta Susanna as part of a general policy of subordinating Byzantine monasteries to Latin houses.¹⁸ He intervened to have the monastery of Chortaiton outside Thessalonike returned to the original community of Orthodox monks after its shameless exploitation by the Cistercians of Locedio, to whom it had been granted after 1204 by Boniface of Montferrat.¹⁹ Though we have no record of any action that Cardinal Pelagius may have taken over the monastery of Chortaiton, the fact that it is later attested with a Latin abbot at its head suggests that he found in favour of the abbey of Locedio.²⁰ He

¹³ *PL* ccxvi.647BC.

¹⁴ A. Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen zur Geschichte des lateinischen Kaisertums unter Kirchenunion, III: Der Bericht des Nikolaos Mesarites über die politischen und kirchlichen Ereignisse des Jahres 1214', *Sitzungsberichte der bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, philosophisch-philologische und historische Klasse* (1923), pt III (= Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', II/III, 23.11); Mesarites, *Life and works*, 266.

¹⁵ See F. Van Tricht, *The Latin renovatio of Byzantium: the Empire of Constantinople (1204–1228)*, Leiden–Boston 2011, 231–4.

¹⁶ See J. Richard, 'The establishment of the Latin Church in the empire of Constantinople (1204–27)', in B. Arbel, B. Hamilton and D. Jacoby (eds), *Latins and Greeks in the eastern Mediterranean after 1204*, London 1989, 54, and P. Lemerle, A. Guillou, N. Svoronos and D. Papachryssanthou (eds), *Actes de Lavra*, iv, Paris 1982, 6.

¹⁷ *PL* ccxvi.956–8.

¹⁸ *PL* ccxvi.303–4.

¹⁹ *PL* ccxvi.951–2.

²⁰ P. Pressutti, *Regesta Honorii papae III*, Rome 1895, ii, no. 1391.

effectively reversed the favourable treatment that Orthodox monasteries had received from Henry of Hainault. His actions made a deep impression on the Orthodox. In the face of Pelagius' persecution, the leaders of the Greek community in Constantinople turned for support to Henry of Hainault, who saw to it that the persecution was called off more or less immediately.²¹

This episode helped to fix a particular image of the papacy in Orthodox minds and drove an even deeper wedge between Latin and Greek because it caused large numbers of Orthodox priests and monks to abandon Constantinople and to seek refuge at Nicaea.²² Before Pelagius' mission the Orthodox community in Constantinople was open to a *rapprochement* with the papacy. Two letters survive from the Orthodox of Constantinople to Innocent III offering their submission provided that they were allowed to elect their own patriarch. At the same time, they proposed a General Council – to be held preferably at Constantinople – as a way of settling the differences separating the two Churches. One of these letters was the work of John Mesarites, the brother of Nicholas Mesarites, and is securely dated to the early autumn of 1206.²³ The other is undated²⁴ and is often connected with Pelagius' mission, but, as Schabel and Tsougarakis have recently observed, its plea that the pope should call a General Council of the Church is at odds with the invitation that had already been sent out to attend the forthcoming council in Rome.²⁵ The whole tone of the letter, with the prominence it gives to the horrors recently inflicted on Constantinople, is consistent with the vacancy created by the death of the Patriarch John x Kamateros on 26 May 1206. However, dating this letter rather earlier than is usual in no way undermines the impression that there was relative harmony between Latin and Greek thanks to the Emperor Henry's benevolent disposition towards his Greek subjects. This was much in evidence when he conquered the key points of Lentiana and Poimanenon in Asia Minor from Theodore Laskaris in the autumn of 1211. He took the Byzantine garrisons

²¹ George Akropolites, *Historia: Georgii Acropolitae opera*, ed. A. Heisenberg and P. Wirth, Stuttgart 1978, i. 30, lines 4–17; *The history*, trans. R. Macrides, Oxford 2007, 154–5.

²² Idem, *Historia* (Heisenberg-Wirth edn), i. 30, lines 17–24; *The history* (trans. Macrides), 155.

²³ A. Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen zur Geschichte des lateinischen Kaisertums und der Kirchenunion, I: Der Epitaphios des Nikolaos Mesarites auf seinen Bruder Johannes', *Sitzungsberichte der bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, philosophisch-philologische und historische Klasse* (1922), pt v (= Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', II/1, 63–6); Mesarites, *Life and work*, 184–7.

²⁴ J. B. Cotelerius, *Ecclesiae Graecae monumenta*, Paris 1686, iii. 514–20; *PG* cxi.293–8.

²⁵ Schabel and Tsougarakis, 'Pope Innocent III and the Fourth Lateran Council', 756–7.

into his service and entrusted them with the defence of his new conquests, placing them under the command of a Greek archon called George Theophilopoulos.²⁶

II

The Orthodox patriarch in exile who had the task of responding to the challenge posed by Pelagius' mission was Theodore Eirenikos (1214–15). He was a man of some distinction, who corresponded with the leading figures of his times, such as the brothers Michael and Niketas Choniates. He had become the chief minister of Alexios III Angelos in 1197 and appears to have held the position until 1203. After the fall of Constantinople, he escaped to Asia Minor, where he became a monk. He subsequently entered the patriarchal administration and obtained the office of chartophylax before being elected patriarch on 28 September 1214.²⁷ The publication more than twenty years ago by Annaclara Cataldi Palau of an important new document drafted by Theodore Eirenikos in his capacity as chartophylax has not attracted the attention that it should have done.²⁸ To appreciate its historical value it has to be remembered that the dispatch of Pelagius to Constantinople followed hard upon the invitations sent out on 19 April 1213 to the bishops, both Greek and Latin, of the Church of Constantinople to attend the General Council of the Church, which the pope was calling. How the Orthodox were to respond to these invitations adds a dimension to Pelagius' mission which has been almost entirely overlooked. It put the Orthodox of Constantinople in a real dilemma, since in both their letters to the pope they called for the convocation of a General Council, as a way of settling the differences between the two Churches.²⁹ The document

²⁶ Akropolites, *Historia* (Heisenberg-Wirth edn), i, 29, lines 2–11; *The history* (trans. Macrides), 153. This paralleled the measures that Henry took for the defence of Thrace, where he entrusted Adrianople to Theodore Branas. An Orthodox bishop remained in place: F. Van Tricht, 'The Byzantino-Latin principality of Adrianople and the challenge of feudalism (1204/6–ca.1227/28): empire, Venice and local autonomy', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* lxxviii (2014), 331–5, 336–8.

²⁷ Niketas Choniates, *Historia*, ed. J.-L. van Dieten, Berlin–New York 1975, 492–3, and *Orationes et epistolae*, ed. J.-L. van Dieten, Berlin–New York 1972, 206–8, 211–14.

²⁸ A. Cataldi Palau, 'Una "lettera al papa" di Ireneo, cartofilace della Grande Chiesa (Teodoro Ireneo, patriarca di Costantinopoli 1214–1216?)', *Bollettino della Badia greca di Grottaferrata*, n.s. xlvi (1994), 23–87 (= A. Cataldi Palau, *Studies in Greek manuscripts*, Spoleto 2008, ii, 767–834). I have to thank Professor Cataldi Palau for her generosity in sending me a copy of her *Studies in Greek manuscripts*.

²⁹ Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', II/1, 65–6; Mesarites, *Life and works*, 186–7; *PG* cxi.296.

discovered by Cataldi Palau purports to be – but is certainly not – a letter sent to the pope. The address to the pope is a much later addition made by a copyist. As Cataldi Palau has convincingly shown, the only member of the Eirenikos family who could conceivably have sent this letter was Theodore Eirenikos, who held the position of chartophylax before becoming patriarch.³⁰ The document advises rejection of the invitations being sent out by papal representatives to attend a General Council. In normal circumstances, it would have been the patriarch rather than his chartophylax who would have been responsible for such a document. The most plausible explanation is that there was a vacancy on the patriarchal throne and that the chartophylax was carrying out caretaking duties. These came within the remit of his office, by virtue of the chartophylax's role as deputy for the patriarch.³¹ Just such a vacancy occurred after the death of the Patriarch Michael Autoreianos in the autumn of 1213, because Theodore Eirenikos's election as patriarch was delayed until 28 September 1214.

This vacancy has gone more or less unnoticed because Vitalien Laurent³² dismissed the information provided by the church historian Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos to the effect that, after the death of Michael Autoreianos, the patriarchal throne was vacant for ten and a half months.³³ This would place the patriarch's death in the middle of November 1213. This is consistent with his last recorded action, which was the issue in October 1213 of a synodal document.³⁴ An alternative reading for the length of the vacancy is ten months and six days, which would give 13 November 1213 as a precise date for Autoreianos's death.³⁵ That Theodore's letter as chartophylax indeed dates to the period between November 1213 and September 1214 receives confirmation from a document that has long been known, but little used. This is the letter of Basil Pediadites, metropolitan bishop of Kerkyra, to Innocent III,³⁶ in which he politely but decisively declines the pope's

³⁰ Cataldi Palau, *Studies in Greek manuscripts*, ii, 769–83.

³¹ M. Angold, *Church and society in Byzantium under the Comneni, 1081–1261*, Cambridge 1995, 58–9, 70, 127.

³² V. Laurent, 'La Chronologie des patriarches de Constantinople au XIII^e siècle', *Revue des études byzantines* xxvii (1969), 133.

³³ PG cxlvii.465AB.

³⁴ A. Pavlov, 'Синодальная грамота 1213 года о браке греческого императора с дочерью армянского князя' [Synodal letter of the year 1213 concerning the marriage of a Greek emperor to the daughter of an Armenian prince], *Византийский временник* iv (1897), 160–6; V. Laurent, *Les Regestes des actes du patriarcat de Constantinople*, I/fasc. 4: *Les Regestes de 1208 à 1309*, Paris 1971, no. 1214.

³⁵ See K. A. Manaphes, 'Επιστολή Βασιλείου Πεδιαδίτου μητροπολίτου Κερκύρας πρὸς τὸν πάπαν Ἰννοκέντιον Γ' καὶ ὁ χρόνος πατριαρχείας Μιχαήλ Δ' τοῦ Αὐτορειανοῦ' [Letter of Basil Pediadites, metropolitan of Kerkyra to Pope Innocent III and the dating of the patriarchate of Michael IV Autoreianos], *Ἐπετερίς Ἐταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν* xlii (1975–6), 433–4.

³⁶ Ibid. 429–40.

invitation to attend the forthcoming General Council. There is a connection between this letter and that sent by Theodore Eirenikos. Both use the image of the five patriarchates being the five senses as a way of countering papal claims to primacy.³⁷ More to the point, Basil Padiadites indicates that at the time of writing the Orthodox patriarchate of Constantinople was vacant,³⁸ a circumstance which made it impossible for the bishops of the patriarchal synod to attend the council. Padiadites was of the opinion that not only was the presence of a properly elected Orthodox patriarch of Constantinople necessary for the canonical validity of the council, but also that there was no precedent for an ecumenical council being held in Rome.³⁹ He noted that Innocent III's letter of invitation began, as indeed it did, with the image of beasts trampling the vineyard of the Lord of hosts, by which the pope meant the conquest of the Holy Land by the Muslims. Padiadites wondered whether these beasts were not rather heresiarchs, among whom he included Makedonios – the originator in his opinion of the misguided understanding of the procession of the Holy Spirit entertained by the Latins.⁴⁰ His reasons for declining Innocent III's invitation to the council may have owed something to Theodore Eirenikos's letter but the emphasis was different. While Padiadites underlined the procession of the Holy Spirit as being the main cause of disagreement between the two Churches, Theodore Eirenikos put just as much stress on the *azymes* as a source of contention.⁴¹ The tone of Padiadites's letter pointed to differences that were emerging between the patriarchate in exile and the bishops of the Greek lands. The bishop of Kerkyra was concerned less about the general state of the Orthodox Church than about the fate of his fellow Greek bishops, drawing attention to the way the Orthodox bishops of Greek sees were being driven out by the Latins with the connivance of the pope.⁴² There was an element of *parti pris*, because he failed for obvious reasons to mention the case of Theodore, bishop of Euripos or Negroponte, as the Latins called the chief city of Euboea. This bishop had made his submission in 1205 to the papal legate Benedict of Sta Susanna and was confirmed in office. Berard, the new Latin archbishop of Athens, had then driven him out of his see on the ground that he was unwilling to receive episcopal unction in the Latin fashion. Theodore appealed to Innocent III, who on 8 December 1208 reinstated him.⁴³ He could very well be the bishop of

³⁷ Cataldi Palau, *Studies in Greek manuscripts*, ii. 823, lines 19–24; Manaphes, 'Επιστολή Βασιλείου Πεδιαδίτου' [Letter of Basil Padiadites], 437, lines 87–8.

³⁸ Manaphes, 'Επιστολή Βασιλείου Πεδιαδίτου' [Letter of Basil Padiadites], 431–4, 436, lines 59–61.

³⁹ *Ibid.* 435, lines 27–32.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* 437–8.

⁴¹ Cataldi Palau, *Studies in Greek manuscripts*, ii. 830–1.

⁴² Manaphes, 'Επιστολή Βασιλείου Πεδιαδίτου' [Letter of Basil Padiadites], 436, lines 61–7.

⁴³ *PL* ccxv.1492–3.

Negroponte, who was present seven years later at the Fourth Lateran Council.⁴⁴ This is a reminder that there were not only Orthodox bishops but also monasteries that had submitted to the Roman Church, which made the challenge presented to the Orthodox patriarchate in exile by the gathering of the council that much more alarming.

III

All the more so because, at the time of the arrival of Cardinal Pelagius in Constantinople, the Orthodox Church in exile was divided by a controversy, which had been simmering under the Patriarch Michael Autoreianos. It came to a head during the long vacancy which followed his death on 13 November 1213.⁴⁵ It was over the verse 'For My Father is greater than I' (John xiv.28), which the formulation set out in Manuel I Komnenos's *Ekthesis* (1166) had failed to resolve.⁴⁶ As a young deacon of St Sophia Michael Autoreianos had been an opponent of the *Ekthesis*. He took the opportunity of his promotion to the patriarchal throne more than forty years later to persuade Theodore I Laskaris to repeal it. The emperor was in a weak position. He had recently lost his wife Anna Angelina, who had provided him with dynastic legitimacy, and around the same time, in October 1211, he had suffered a disastrous defeat at the hands of the Latin Emperor Henry of Hainault.⁴⁷ In the circumstances, he had more need than ever of the moral and spiritual support of the patriarch. However, the repeal of the *Ekthesis* was not to the liking of a group within the Church led by Theodore Eirenikos, which had the support of the bishop of Ephesos, Nicholas Mesarites.⁴⁸ After Michael Autoreianos's death they were able to reverse the repeal of the *Ekthesis*. There was more to this incident than the niceties of theological definitions. At stake was the legitimacy of an emperor's intervention in ecclesiastical affairs as *epistemonarches* or moderator of the Orthodox Church.⁴⁹ It was in this capacity that Manuel I Komnenos had forced through his favoured interpretation of the Johannine verse in the teeth of ecclesiastical opposition. Nicholas Mesarites was a staunch supporter of the imperial role as

⁴⁴ A. Luchaire, 'Un Document retrouvé', *Journal des savants* n.s. iii (1905), 562.

⁴⁵ The vacancy can be explained by the long absence from Nicaea of the Emperor Theodore I Laskaris on business in the theme of Thrakesion: *PG* cxlvii.465BC.

⁴⁶ Angold, *Church and state*, 83–6, 99–100; P. Magdalino, *The empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180*, Cambridge 1993, 287–90.

⁴⁷ G. Prinzing, 'Der Brief Kaiser Heinrichs von Konstantinopel vom 13. Januar 1212', *Byzantion* xliii (1973), 414–16.

⁴⁸ Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', II/iii, 18 line 17; Mesarites, *Life and works*, 261.

⁴⁹ G. Dagron, *Emperor and priest: the imperial office in Byzantium*, Cambridge 2003, 252–5, 294–5.

moderator of the Church, which he saw in the disturbed conditions of his times as essential for the continued existence of Church and Empire as a single entity.⁵⁰ The danger that he foresaw was one that others among his contemporaries welcomed: the survival of the Orthodox Church but without the underpinning of the empire.⁵¹

The combination of ecclesiastical division and military defeat left the Orthodox Church in a very weak position to face up to the challenge presented by the calling of a General Council of the Church by Pope Innocent III. The authority of the patriarchs in exile at Nicaea extended in practice little further than the territories controlled by Theodore I Laskaris. Other Orthodox rulers in Epiros and Trebizond were beginning to have bishops elected to sees in their territories without reference to the patriarch at Nicaea.⁵² There was a distinct danger of the Orthodox Church of Constantinople breaking up along political lines. In that case there was the strongest possibility that it would survive only in some form of subordination to the Roman Church, of the kind that existed in southern Italy and Sicily, which may have been Innocent III's intention.⁵³ That his calling of a General Council of the Church might serve as the occasion for the formalisation of such a possibility is a fear that is threaded through the letter of Theodore Eirenikos. It was addressed to a group of 'brothers', who will have been the bishops of the Orthodox Church, given that the subject of the letter was how to respond to the papal invitation to bishops to attend the forthcoming council. The problem that Theodore Eirenikos identifies is that to accept the invitations was tantamount to recognising the pope as head of the whole Christian community. Why, he asks, should the pope be head of the other patriarchs? His answer becomes a critique of the notion of papal monarchy. It examines the Petrine basis of papal claims to supremacy. Eirenikos can see no good reason why only the pope has a claim to be the equal of St Peter.⁵⁴ He argues that there is no canonical validity to the pope's transmutation of a primacy of honour into a claim to supremacy over all Churches. He connects the descent of the papacy into violent and tyrannical acts with the papal rejection of imperial authority and with the assumption of monarchical powers.⁵⁵ The pope is no longer content with the reverence and honour that used to be accorded to him but demands worship and obedience.⁵⁶ The question of papal primacy had long been an issue between the two Churches, but the Orthodox

⁵⁰ Mesarites, *Life and works*, 242–6.

⁵¹ Angold, *Church and society*, 538–42.

⁵² Ibid. 536–8; A. D. Karpozilos, *The ecclesiastical controversy between the kingdom of Nicaea and the principality of Epiros (1217–1233)*, Thessalonike 1973, 46–69.

⁵³ See Richard, 'The establishment of the Latin Church in the empire of Constantinople', 47–8.

⁵⁴ Cataldi Palau, *Studies in Greek manuscripts*, ii. 826, lines 142–50.

⁵⁵ Ibid. ii. 833, lines 265–75.

⁵⁶ Ibid. ii. 828, lines 150–4.

Church never denied Rome a primacy of honour. It had, however, guarded against it turning into a claim to supremacy by challenging Rome's claim to a monopoly of Petrine authority and by insisting that Christ was the true head of the Church.⁵⁷ Even if the old arguments continued to be deployed, the conquest of Constantinople changed the terms of debate because it was a concrete example of the papacy seeking to impose its tyrannical rule over the Church universal by force. It is the moment when the question of papal primacy turns into the 'papal scandal': when the pope himself becomes an obstacle to Christian unity.⁵⁸ The calling of a General Council of the Church in the name of the pope will have offended the Orthodox, for whom it was an imperial responsibility, and will have alerted them to the papacy's imperial pretensions. It fell to Theodore Eirenikos to articulate the dangers to Orthodoxy. He saw only humiliation for an Orthodox bishop attending the council, where the pope and others were going to act as judges of the disobedient, by which he meant anybody refusing to make submission to Rome. Theodore judged that behind the sending out of invitations to attend the council was the intention of forcing the Orthodox to make their submission to Rome and thus to betray their traditions.⁵⁹ The future patriarch warned with heavy irony that the pope wished to enlighten the Orthodox, who remain in darkness, by introducing Latin customs (*latinismos*), such as eating strangled meat, animal sacrifices and the wearing of rings.⁶⁰

IV

Such a charge is reminiscent of the tracts denouncing the errors of the Latins. If there is no direct borrowing, there is an affinity between Eirenikos's letter and the Griefs (*aitiamata*) against the Latins compiled at almost exactly the same time by Constantine Stilbes, the bishop of Kyzikos.⁶¹ Both, for example, display a distinct hostility towards the Armenians.⁶² More specifically the tract is critical of the way in which Latin bishops flaunt their rings, as a sign that they are married to the

⁵⁷ A. E. Siecienski, *The papacy and the Orthodox: sources and history of a debate*, Oxford 2017, 261–81.

⁵⁸ D. M. Nicol, 'The papal scandal', in Derek Baker (ed.), *The Orthodox Churches and the West* (Studies in Church History xiii, 1976), 141–68.

⁵⁹ Cataldi Palau, *Studies in Greek manuscripts*, ii. 829, lines 162–8.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* ii. 829, lines 159–60.

⁶¹ J. Darrouzès, 'Le Mémoire de Constantin Stilbès contre les Latins', *Revue des études byzantines* xxi (1963), 50–100. See also T. M. Kolbaba, *The Byzantine lists: errors of the Latins*, Urbana–Chicago 2000, 32–87.

⁶² Cataldi Palau, *Studies in Greek manuscripts*, ii. 830–1; Darrouzès, 'Le Mémoire de Constantin Stilbès', 86–8.

Church.⁶³ It also denounces the Latin habit of eating strangled meat and notes how at certain times of the liturgical year animal sacrifices are introduced into church services.⁶⁴ It further emphasises that the pope considers himself to be not the successor of St Peter, but St Peter himself and is therefore no longer content with mere reverence.⁶⁵ The tract was written after the fall of Constantinople to the crusaders, because its most original sections are devoted to the horrors that they inflicted on Constantinople after they had broken into the city.⁶⁶ It includes the story of a cardinal who chalked over the images in the church of St Michael the Archangel at Anapλους and emptied its relics into the sea, meaning to come back later to collect them.⁶⁷ It is unlikely to be strictly accurate, since there were no cardinals present at the conquest of Constantinople. The cardinal in question might possibly have been Peter Capuanus, who had arrived in Constantinople by December 1204.⁶⁸ He was, like so many other prelates attached to the Fourth Crusade, an avid collector of relics, but his special interest was in St Andrew, the patron saint of his native city of Amalfi,⁶⁹ not in the Archangel Michael. The chalking over of images seems more likely to have been part of the formal closing of churches placed under an interdict, which suggests Cardinal Pelagius as a more plausible candidate. Indeed, a marginal note added to one of the manuscripts of the text does make this identification, but since it is as likely to be the work of a copyist as an addition made by the author not too much can be made of this. It is not possible to establish the date of Constantine Stilbes's death. He was still alive in March 1208, when the 'in all things good Stilbes' had a role to play in the preparations for Michael Autoreianos's elevation at Nicaea to the patriarchate.⁷⁰ He had previously had a distinguished career as teacher at the Patriarchal school attached to St Sophia before being made bishop of Kyzikos shortly before 1204. He was a correspondent – interestingly enough – of Basil Padiadites, bishop of Kerkyra,⁷¹ and the author of poems and other pieces⁷² whose highly wrought rhetoric contrasts with the propagandist tone of his Grievs against the Latins. The major consideration that points to his tract's being a product of Cardinal Pelagius' mission to Constantinople is that this was the first direct confrontation of the patriarchate in exile with papal agents. Earlier debates had

⁶³ Darrouzès, 'Le Mémoire de Constantin Stilbès', 78, lines 286–8.

⁶⁴ Ibid. 67–8.

⁶⁵ Ibid. 72, lines 182–6.

⁶⁶ Ibid. 81–6.

⁶⁷ Ibid. 85, lines 403–7.

⁶⁸ W. Maleczek, *Pietro Capuano: patrizio amalfitano, cardinale, legato alla quarta crociata, teologo* (†1214), Amalfi 1997, 209–10.

⁶⁹ Ibid. 231–9.

⁷⁰ Choniates, *Orationes et epistulae*, 215, lines 1–3.

⁷¹ Sp. P. Lampros, *Κερκυραϊκὰ Ἀνέκδοτα* [Unedited documents from Kerkyra], Athens 1882, 42–7.

⁷² Constantine Stilbes, *Poemata*, ed. J. M. Diethart and W. Hörander, Munich 2005, pp. vii–xv.

fallen on the shoulders of representatives of the Orthodox community in Constantinople. As for Stilbes, he had been driven from his see of Kyzikos following Henry of Hainault's victory over Theodore I Laskaris in the autumn of 1211, when Kyzikos became a Latin see.⁷³ The precise occasion for the compilation of the Grievances against the Latins is, in fact, of less importance than its emphasis upon the way in which papal primacy had degenerated into tyranny through the Latin Church's espousal of war. This was something new. In a more restrained way this was also Theodore Eirenikos's message.

V

At the very beginning of his patriarchate Theodore Eirenikos responded to letters that he received from the Orthodox clergy of Constantinople and from the Grand Duke Philokales. They warned the patriarch that Cardinal Pelagius was demanding their submission to the papacy and recognition of a Latin patriarch installed by the pope.⁷⁴ They needed guidance. The patriarch was thoroughly alarmed, almost certainly because he believed that there was a good chance that the Greeks of Constantinople might submit to Rome. He advised them to be as 'wise as serpents and as harmless as doves' (Matthew x.16).⁷⁵ He underlined that Christ, not the pope, was the supreme head of the Church.⁷⁶ Consequently, submission to the papacy was incompatible with remaining a true Orthodox,⁷⁷ because the pope was arrogating to himself a role that properly belonged to Christ. The patriarch's anxieties are evident from his injunction that it was dangerous to listen to the teachings of others. To add force to his point he recalled St Paul's warning against 'false brothers' (Galatians ii.4, cf. 2 Corinthians xi.26).⁷⁸ The patriarch forbade them to engage in debates over doctrine, a responsibility which was properly his. They should consult him if there were questions of dogma that bothered them.⁷⁹ In other words, it was a question of authority. The patriarch felt that he was being challenged by Orthodox leaders in Constantinople and threatened them with excommunication should they accept a new shepherd, meaning a patriarch of Constantinople to be ordained by the

⁷³ The Emperor Henry's tolerance of the Greek hierarchy had its limits: J.-C. Cheynet, 'Les Biens de l'Eglise latine de Constantinople en Asie Mineure', *Byzantinische Forschungen* xxix (2007), 160–2.

⁷⁴ A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, 'Θεόδωρος Ειρηνικός, πατριάρχης οἰκουμενικός ἐν Νικαίᾳ' [Theodore Eirenikos, ecumenical patriarch at Nicaea], *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* x (1901), 189, lines 26–190, line 2; Laurent, *Regestes*, no.1219.

⁷⁵ Papadopoulos-Kerameus, 'Θεόδωρος Ειρηνικός' [Theodore Eirenikos], 187, line 7.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* 188, lines 4–13. ⁷⁷ *Ibid.* 190, lines 35–6. ⁷⁸ *Ibid.* 190, lines 10–14.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.* 188, lines 24–32.

pope.⁸⁰ Theodore Eirenikos judged that there was a real danger of the Orthodox community of Constantinople succumbing to the pressures being brought to bear on it by Pelagius' mission. There is not a word about persecution in Theodore Eirenikos's letter, which leaves the suspicion that the decision to consult the Orthodox patriarch contributed to Pelagius' decision to embark on persecution as a way of overawing the Orthodox community in Constantinople.

It fell hardest on the Orthodox monasteries in the environs of Constantinople. But Orthodox churches in the city were also closed down and some priests were imprisoned, as we learn from George Akropolites's *History*.⁸¹ He is the only historian to deal with this event. It occurred some three years before he was born in Constantinople to a family, which, if not in Latin service, was close to the Latin Emperor Henry of Hainault. He is therefore likely to have been well-informed thanks to family tradition and possibly the survival of family papers.⁸² His narrative, for example, contains a version of the petition sent by the Greeks of Constantinople to the Latin emperor begging him to use his influence to end Pelagius' persecution, which duly came about before the end of November 1214. Since it can only have started around mid-October, it did not last long.

Did it accomplish anything? If Akropolites's account is accepted at face value, then Pelagius' mission to Constantinople was a failure. He had done much to alienate the Greeks of Constantinople and had been forced to call off his persecution by the Latin emperor. However, it was clearly understood at Rome that his mission had achieved its desired ends. Why else would Cardinal Pelagius have been placed in charge of the Fifth Crusade, which was to be the crowning achievement of Innocent III's pontificate?⁸³

VI

The truth of the matter is that Theodore Eirenikos's uncompromising stance in the face of Pelagius' demands and actions was not the only Orthodox reaction, which was in any case complicated by the precarious position of the Emperor Theodore I Laskaris. His defeat by the Emperor Henry in the autumn of 1211 resulted in the loss of nearly half his territories in Asia Minor. He now only controlled a small area around Nicaea and Prousa in the north and a larger area along the coastlands to the South, of which the theme of Thrakesion, the classical Lydia, was

⁸⁰ Ibid. 191, lines 8–13.

⁸¹ Akropolites, *Historia* (Heisenberg-Wirth edn), i. 29, lines 22–3; *The history* (trans. Macrides), 155.

⁸² Akropolites, *The history* (trans. Macrides), 7.

⁸³ Powell, *Anatomy of a crusade*, 114–15.

the core.⁸⁴ If Akropolites is to be believed, a truce concluded early in 1212 put an end to hostilities, but there was no definitive peace, which became a matter of some urgency for Theodore Laskaris with the death of David Komnenos, the ruler of Paphlagonia, on 13 December 1212 as the monk Daniel.⁸⁵ The circumstances of the latter's death are unclear. It cannot have happened at the conquest of Sinope by the Seljuqs in 1214, as always used to be supposed. This makes it more likely that David Komnenos embraced the monastic life, willingly or under duress, after Theodore Laskaris conquered Pontic Herakelia and Amastris, two of the most important places in Paphlagonia, in the late summer of 1211.⁸⁶ However, Laskaris's defeat at the hands of the Emperor Henry some two months later left control of Paphlagonia in doubt. Since Paphlagonia under David Komnenos had been a client or possibly a vassal state of the Latin Empire of Constantinople,⁸⁷ the Emperor Henry had a decided interest in the future of Paphlagonia. In October 1214 papal emissaries arrived in Nicaea with a view not only to establishing good relations between the Churches, but also to bringing about a lasting peace between Theodore I Laskaris and Henry of Hainault.⁸⁸ In other words, the Latin emperor and the papal legate were cooperating to attain their separate aims. The former wanted a permanent settlement, which recognised his superior rights as Latin emperor, while the latter wanted recognition of papal primacy. A religious and a political settlement were seen as two sides of the same coin, as much on the Nicaean side as the Latin.

The arrival of the papal emissaries was sufficiently important to bring Theodore I Laskaris back to Nicaea from campaigning in Paphlagonia. He held secret discussions with them, but that was not the end of the negotiations. Because the papal delegation to the emperor was headed by a high-ranking prelate it was decided that an Orthodox bishop of equivalent standing should be sent as an envoy to Constantinople. The choice fell upon Nicholas Mesarites, bishop of Ephesos.⁸⁹ This was especially appropriate because of the stress laid by Innocent III on St John the Evangelist,

⁸⁴ Akropolites, *Historia* (Heisenberg-Wirth edn), i. 127–8; *The history* (trans. Macrides), 149.

⁸⁵ S. Eustratiades and A. Vatopedinos, *Catalogue of the Greek manuscripts in the library of the monastery of Vatopedi on Mount Athos*, Cambridge, MA–London 1924, cod. 760, fo. 294r; A. Bryer, 'David Komnenos and Saint Eleutheros', *Ἀρχαῖον Πόντου* xlii (1988–9), 184.

⁸⁶ Akropolites, *Historia* (Heisenberg-Wirth edn), i. 18.1–4; *The history* (trans. Macrides), 132. For the possible fate of David Komnenos see M. Angold, 'Mesarites as a source: then and now', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* xl (2016), 55–7.

⁸⁷ Henri de Valenciennes, *Histoire de l'Empereur Henri de Constantinople*, ed. J. Longnon, Paris 1948, §551, 51.

⁸⁸ Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', II/iii, 19, lines 8–12; Mesarites, *Life and works*, 262.

⁸⁹ Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', II/iii, 19, lines 15–25; Mesarites, *Life and works*, 262.

as the Apostle of the Greeks, bearing in mind the Apostle's close association with the Church of Ephesus. The charade that Nicholas Mesarites indulged in with Cardinal Pelagius over their respective slippers may therefore have had greater significance than it is normally accorded. It was a way in which Mesarites was able to demonstrate his superiority, as the successor of St John to a representative of St Peter.⁹⁰

Nicholas Mesarites does not give us very much to go on. It can be assumed, because there is nothing said about any debates on religious matters at Nicaea, that discussions there were pretty much limited to the settling of political matters with the aim of achieving a formal peace with Henry of Hainault, the settlement of the Paphlagonian question being the most pressing issue. Nicholas Mesarites's responsibility would therefore have been the establishment of some kind of *modus vivendi* with the papacy. This was made all the more urgent because of Pelagius' persecution of the monks, which became known in Nicaea just before Nicholas Mesarites set out for Constantinople in mid-November.⁹¹ At the very first opportunity he raised this with Cardinal Pelagius. He let it be known that he found the persecution of the monks all the harder to understand because of the exceptional tolerance that the Latins displayed towards Jews and heretics, such as the Armenians, Jacobites and Nestorians.⁹² It was also self-defeating, because the majority of monks were of little account. If the cardinal wished to reconcile the Orthodox to the demands of the Roman Church he needed 'to concentrate his attention on people of importance'. Nicholas Mesarites, of course, meant Theodore I Laskaris and immediately launched into a catalogue of the emperor's recent achievements in Paphlagonia: a nice commentary on how religious and political matters meshed together. Mesarites suggested that only direct negotiations with Laskaris would achieve the cardinal's purposes.⁹³ The latter's reply, as recorded by Mesarites, is instructive. He was willing out of respect for Theodore Laskaris to forego the drastically harsher persecution of the monks which he had planned. He also undertook to leave all members of the episcopal hierarchy in undisturbed possession of their churches. He hoped that he would soon 'bring together the fragments into which the Roman Empire divided long ago and make them whole' and be able to 'welcome the Lord emperor Theodore as a true son of Rome'.⁹⁴ He was, in other words, considering negotiations over the Union of Churches. This is likely to have been a personal initiative because it would not have been possible to consult with Rome, but it fitted with a

⁹⁰ Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', II/III, 22–3; Mesarites, *Life and works*, 265–6.

⁹¹ Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', II/III, 19, lines 26–9; Mesarites, *Life and works*, 262.

⁹² Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', II/III, 23–4; Mesarites, *Life and works*, 266–7.

⁹³ Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', II/III, 25–6; Mesarites, *Life and works*, 268.

⁹⁴ Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', II/III, 26, lines 11–28; Mesarites, *Life and works*, 269.

role assigned by Innocent III to the Fourth Lateran Council as a celebration of the return of the Church of Constantinople to the Roman fold.

At this point discussions were broken off to allow the cardinal to attend to other business and for Nicholas Mesarites to oversee the funeral of his mother, who had just died. They resumed a few days later with an unsatisfactory debate over the azymes or communion wafers, which was followed by Nicholas Mesarites's rendition of Gregory of Nazianzos's Easter sermon.⁹⁵ Taken at face value it was a bizarre way of conducting a theological debate. It was, in fact, a deliberate obfuscation of concessions made by Nicholas Mesarites to Cardinal Pelagius. We only learn about these later, when Mesarites returned to Nicaea to a very frosty reception from the patriarch. He at first put this down to the patriarchs' 'being too much a patriarch', but then admitted that the cause of patriarchal ire was that he had not prevented the cardinal from addressing the patriarch in a letter as archbishop of the Greeks rather than as patriarch of Constantinople. Nicholas Mesarites contented himself with the thought that it could have been worse. The cardinal had originally wished to address the patriarch as the archbishop of Nicaea, but Mesarites had prevailed upon him to change it to the Greeks.⁹⁶ It was more than just a matter of the form of address. It went to the heart of the problem created by the existence of two patriarchates of Constantinople. Nicholas Mesarites was indicating the concessions that the Orthodox might be willing to make in future discussions over the Union of Churches. They were in line with Innocent III's stress on St John the Evangelist as the Apostle of the Greeks, which would allow the Orthodox to accept the validity of a Latin patriarchate of Constantinople against a much vaguer recognition that by virtue of St John the Evangelist the Greeks as a people possessed a distinct religious identity and organisation, but unconnected to Constantinople.

Cardinal Pelagius had done enough to satisfy Pope Innocent III. There was nothing to detain him longer in Constantinople. By 12 January 1215 he had laid down his legatine powers and was on his way back to Rome.⁹⁷ For Theodore I Laskaris it was another story. He devoted his last years to a *rapprochement* with the Latin Empire of Constantinople in the teeth of opposition from the Orthodox Church. It is symptomatic that when the Patriarch Theodore Eirenikos died on 31 January 1216 Theodore Laskaris quite scandalously forced through the election of his chaplain Maximos in the search for a more amenable patriarch. The new patriarch was dead by the year's end and was succeeded by Manuel Sarantenos, who before 1204 had been a member of the patriarchal

⁹⁵ Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', II/iii, 27–32; Mesarites, *Life and works*, 271–5.

⁹⁶ Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', II/iii, 47, lines 1–15; Mesarites, *Life and works*, 289.

⁹⁷ Fabre and Duchesne, *Le Liber censuum*, no. cccxxxviii, p. 584.

administration.⁹⁸ He soon found himself caught between loyalty to the emperor and responsibility to the Church. Theodore I Laskaris saw negotiations over the Union of Churches as a means of facilitating his marriage alliance with the Latin Empire of Constantinople. He requested the patriarch's support, but the latter insisted on first consulting with the Orthodox patriarchs of Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem. This was recognition that before complying with the emperor's demands his first responsibility was to sound out opinion throughout the Orthodox Church, which was unlikely to be favourable. When asked for his opinion on the matter a senior figure in the Orthodox Church in Epiros, John Apokaukos, bishop of Naupaktos, was adamant that the Orthodox would gain no advantage from the Union of Churches. With memories of Pelagius' persecution still fresh in his mind he reminded the patriarch that this would only encourage Rome 'to close our churches, where they rule, and to commit a thousand and one mischiefs against the Christians [i.e. Orthodox] under them'.⁹⁹ Not for the first or the last time the interests of an emperor were at odds with the preservation of the integrity of the Orthodox Church.

The conquest of Constantinople in 1204 forced the Orthodox Church to address the claims made upon it by the papacy with added urgency, if only because individual bishops and monastic communities were willing to submit to papal authority. In the face of Latin occupation, the Orthodox Church proved more fragile than it is usual to admit. Negotiations over the Union of Churches seemed to offer the possibility of preserving it as a distinct entity rather than allowing it to be absorbed into the framework of the Roman Church, as happened in southern Italy. However, they could equally be seen as a betrayal of the integrity of Orthodoxy. It was a dilemma that Byzantine emperors, prelates and society at large wrestled with till the end of the empire and to which they never found a solution. The pattern was set during the preliminaries to the Fourth Lateran Council, which represented a challenge to the Orthodox Church that has so far gone virtually unrecognised. There was a danger that it would become the stage for the formalisation of the Union of Churches on papal terms, whence Theodore Eirenikos's stance against accepting invitations to attend the council. For his part, the Emperor Theodore I Laskaris could only see the short-term political advantages to be gained from engaging in dialogue with the Roman Church. It created serious divisions within ecclesiastical ranks, because the emperor enjoyed the support of bishops, such as

⁹⁸ Akropolites, *Historia* (Heisenberg-Wirth edn), i, 32, lines 12–24; *The history* (trans. Macrides), 159–60; *PG* cxlvii.465BC.

⁹⁹ V. Vasilievskij, 'Епіротика saeculi XIII: Изъ переписки Іоанна Навпактскаго' [Thirteenth-century documents from Epiros: from the correspondence of John of Naupaktos], *Византійскій временникъ* iii (1896), no.15, 265–7.

Nicholas Mesarites, who respected intervention in ecclesiastical affairs by the emperor in his capacity as *epistemonarches* of the Church.¹⁰⁰ Also potentially divisive was a populist strand to Eirenikos's arguments against papal primacy, which was brought out more starkly by Constantine Stilbes in his anti-Latin tract. It contained a demonstration of the essentially tyrannical character of papal authority, which was notable for its denigration of Latin beliefs and practices. Though often unfair it appealed to a deep-rooted xenophobia. If it was designed to rally popular support, it was primarily addressed to the monks who, thanks to the Emperor Henry, were beginning to trust the Latin regime. Brief as it was, Pelagius' persecution marked a watershed. Thereafter Orthodox monks were among the most rabid opponents of the Union of Churches. More unexpected were the geographical divisions opened up by the invitations to the Fourth Lateran Council. Basil Padiadites's rejection of his invitation presaged the misgivings of his Epirot colleague John Apokaukos about the overtures to the papacy being made by Theodore I Laskaris. Later in the thirteenth century the Epirot successor states were to be at the heart of the opposition to Michael VIII Palaiologos's unionist policy. This was a fault line, which had not existed before 1204.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Dagron, *Emperor and priest*, 252–5, 294–5.