

<u>THE FRONTIER PROBLEMS OF THE</u>		
<u>HERACLEIAN DYNASTY WITH</u>		
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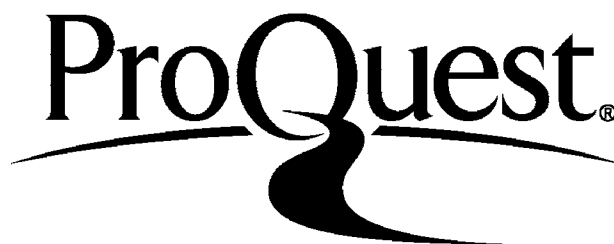
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played a special part in Byzantine history. It is in this light that the available material has been considered, and, while it is not claimed that anything new has been discovered, such an approach has, at some points, led to a somewhat different interpretation of what has been widely used in the past by others.

INTRODUCTION

The Heracleians were the rulers of the Byzantine Empire during a particularly interesting period. The seventh century was an age of invasions and, in this respect, it did not differ greatly from much which had preceded it. But the Heracleians, in the course of their efforts to defend the empire against the Slavs, the Persians and the Arabs, were forced to introduce many radical changes. The empire which they succeeded in preserving was very different from that which they had inherited from the successors of Justinian. This development is the salient feature of Byzantium in the seventh century and is directly connected with frontier problems of the Heracleians. The reigns of Heraclius himself, of Constans II, of Constantine IV and of Justinian II almost span this century and their work needs to be treated as a whole since it played a special part in Byzantine history. It is in this light that the available material has been considered, and, while it is not claimed that anything new has been discovered, such an approach has, at some points, led to a somewhat different interpretation of what has been widely used in the past by others.

Both the primary and the secondary material for this period are to be found in a variety of languages and scripts (1) with consequent problems in citation, and it has not proved practicable to follow throughout one uniform method. Names of Greek authors and titles of Greek works are, as is the usual custom, given in Latin wherever there is an accepted Latin form, otherwise they are left in the original. Names of Russian authors and titles of Russian works have been transliterated according to the system recommended by the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London. Arabic, Syriac, Armenian, Georgian and Ethiopic texts, however, have had to be read only in translation and the methods of transliteration have therefore normally been those of the editions in which these texts appear. In the case of Arabic, however, an attempt at consistency, based upon the system of Professor P. K. Hitti, has been made possible through the valuable advice of Dr. W. J. Martin, Rankin Lecturer in Hebrew and Ancient Semitic Studies in the University of Liverpool. Names of places that have acquired a customary English spelling have been left in that form. Quotations have been given in English except where a purpose could be served by preserving the original.

(3) *Chronographia*, ed. I. Bekker, CSBB, Bonn, 1831.

(1) A general note on the sources follows, see below, pp.3-22

A NOTE ON THE SOURCES

Any account of the Heracleian dynasty must be based, in the first place, on the Chronographia of the monk Theophanes (1) and the Chronographia Compendiaria of the patriarch Nicephorus (2). Both these are "world chronicles", the former extending from the death of Diocletian to the accession of Leo V and the latter from the creation of the world to the year A.D.829. Both, therefore, are contemporary sources only for the closing years of the eighth century, but both derive their information from earlier material some of which is still extant. For example, notices of events in the sixth century are often drawn from John Malalas who provides a contemporary source for the last years of the reign of Justinian and whose work is continued by another hand down to the year 610 (3). A few references to the early years of the seventh century have their authority in a contemporary compilation known as the Chronicon Pascale (4). A more important early seventh century source, used especially by Theophanes, are the epic poems of George of Pisidia, a deacon

(1) ed. C. de Boor, 2 vols. Leipzig, 1883-85.

(2) ed. C. de Boor, Leipzig, 1880.

(3) Chronographia, ed. I. Bekker, CSHB, Bonn, 1831.

(4) ed. L. Dindorf, CSHB, Bonn, 1832 and MPG vol. 92.

particularly for the reign of Constant II, the sources used of S. Sophia and an eyewitness of the departure of Heraclius on his first campaign against the Persians (5). His works have been called "more poetic than historical" (6), but in them there can be found confirmatory evidence of the reforms introduced by Heraclius in the army after the disorganisation caused by his predecessor Phocas and by the Persian invasion (7). George of Pisidia, however, died in 630 (8) and the Paschal Chronicle does not go beyond the year 628. For the greater portion of the seventh century both Theophanes and Nicephorus make use of material no longer extant. It is possible that some of this material was only known to Nicephorus since certain details of events at the end of the century are to be found in the Historia and not in the Chronographia (9). It is obvious from the phraseology of the two writers that there was a source or sources used by both of which Theophanes nearly always gives the fuller version. For the middle years of the century,

(5) De Expeditione Persica and De Bello Avarico, ed. I. Bekker, CSHB, Bonn, 1836, and MPG vol. 92. On George's life, see E. Stephanou in Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique Vol. 12 (1935) cols. 2130-2134.

(6) Stephanou, col. 2134.

(7) See below, pp. 205-206

(8) Stephanou, col. 2131.

(9) For example, details of the embassy sent by the emperor Anastasius to Damascus, see below, pp. 136-137

particularly for the reign of Constans II, the sources used by Nicephorus fail him and a general account of Byzantine affairs during that period can only be found in the Chronographia. It is supposed that this section of the Chronographia is based on an eastern source unknown to Nicephorus but well known to a later writer, Michael the Syrian, monophysite patriarch of Antioch from 1166 to 1199, who makes considerable use of it in his description of events in the eastern part of the empire, and whose chronicle has therefore an independent importance in that respect as a check upon the accuracy of the version produced by Theophanes (10). The western writers Cedrenus in

(10) Le Chronique de Michel le Syrien, ed & trans J. B. Chabot,

4 vols. Paris, 1899-1910. For a discussion of the sources used by Michael see the introduction, p.xxv, and for a good general account of Michael see the article by E.Tisserant in Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, vol.10 (1928-1929) cols. 1711-1720. See also the review of the first two volumes of J.B.Chabot's edition of Michael in EHR 19(1904) pp 768-770, where E.W.Brooks suggests that the author of the source common to Michael and Theophanes was a Syrian melkite, writing in Greek. Other passages, which may be connected with the same source, occur in a number of Syriac chronicles and fragments. See E.W. Brooks, 'A Syriac Chronicle of the Year 864', Zeitschrift der deutschen Morgenlaendischen Gessellschaft 51(1897) pp 569-588 and Chronica Minora, Scriptores Syrii, CSCO, ser.III vol.4, fasc. i-iii (1903-1905). See also, A.Baumstark, 'Eine syrische Weltgeschichte des 7 Jahr.', Roemische Quartalschrift fuer christliche Altertumskunde und fuer Kirchengeschichte, 15(1901) pp 273-280, and J.B.Chabot, Le Chronique de Denys de Tell-Mahre, (Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des hautes Etudes fasc.112), Paris, 1895. In addition, the account in Arabic of Elias of Nisibis has some importance. Written in A.D.1019, it is based on Syriac and Arabic sources now lost, and, although summary in character, occasionally confirms incidents of the Arab invasions. See La Chronographie d'Elie Bar-Sinaya, (Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des hautes Etudes, fasc.181), Paris, 1910.

vagaries, a reasonably reliable one (13).

Although there is thus no general narrative of this period the eleventh century and Zonaras in the twelfth follow Theophanes to a very great extent in their notices of the Heraclians, though both appear to have access to other sources which have not survived, (11) while the eastern writer Bar Hebraeus in the thirteenth century follows Michael the Syrian, also occasionally introducing original material (12). It is the Chronographia of Theophanes, therefore, which is the main Byzantine authority for the seventh century, and, despite certain chronological Imperial history from 570 until 642, and, as such, has been justly welcomed by historians in this field (14). A similar

- (11) Georgius Cedrenus, Synopsis Historiarum ed. I. Bekker, 2 vols. Bonn, 1838-1839 and MPG Vol. 121-2. This is a "world chronicle" from the creation till the year 1057. It has, for instance a description of the personal appearance of Heraclius which does not appear in Theophanes, see MPG vol.121 col.781B
 Johannus Zonaras, Annales, ed. I. Bekker, 2 vols. Bonn 1841-1844 and MPG vol. 134-5. For a comment on his sources see Krumbacher, Geschichte der Byzantinischen Literatur, Munich, 1897, p.373. The Annales are a "world chronicle" from the creation till the year 1118.
- (12) The Chronography of Bar Hebraeus, ed & trans by E. A. Wallis Budge 2 vols. Oxford, 1932. This is a "world chronicle" from the creation till 1285 and closely follows Michael the Syrian till 1196. An example of a passage which differs from Michael is that which describes the actions of Justinian II in Cyprus, see below, p.132
- (14) L'Histoire d'Héraclius par l'Evêque Sebèos, trans. F. Macler, Paris, 1904. See the review by E. V. Rieuks in BH 20(1905) pp 552-564. There is an earlier Russian version by K. Patkanov, St. Petersburg, 1892.

vagaries, a reasonably reliable one (13).

Although there is thus no general narrative of this period written earlier than the ninth century, the information which it gives can be supplemented from the works of other writers who were concerned with a particular aspect, and who were, in some instances, eyewitnesses of the events which they describe. A history of Heraclius, for example, the work of the Armenian bishop Sebeos, is an account by a contemporary of the Arab invasion of Armenia together with other events in Armenian and imperial history from 570 until 662, and, as such, has been justly welcomed by historians in this field (14). A similar

- (13) The main difficulty is the frequent lack of correspondence between the indiction and the year of the world. The indiction is nearly always right. See G. Ostrogorsky, 'Die Chronologie des Theophanes im 7 und 8 Jahr.', Byzantinisch-Neugriechesche Jahrbuch, 7(1930) pp 1-56, especially the comparative tables showing the dates of the accession of emperors (p.35) and of the deaths of Khalifs (p.42). The indiction is correct in twenty-one out of twenty-three examples. See also J.B. Bury, A History of the Later Roman Empire (1889) vol.2 p.197 (note 1) and pp 425-427, F. Martroye, 'La Chronologie de Théophane', Bulletin de la Société nationale des Antiquaires de France (1910) pp 292-295, and V. Grumel, 'L'Anée du Monde dans la Chronographie de Théophane', Echos d'Orient 33(1934) pp 396-408. The errors in Theophanes for the last years of the reign of Phocas and the first years of Heraclius are discussed by Y.A. Kulakovskiy, 'K Kritike Izves'tii Feofana o Pos'lednikh Godov Pravitel'stvo Foki', VV 21(1914) pp 1-14
- (14) L'Histoire d'Héraclius par l'Eveque Sebeos, trans. F. Macler, Paris, 1904. See the review by E.W. Brooks in EHR 20(1905) pp 552-554. There is an earlier Russian version by K. Patkanov, St. Petersburg, 1862.

work, however, written at only a slightly later date, Ghevond's History of Conquests and Wars, has been very much neglected being rarely mentioned by modern authorities, although it does give interesting details of the Arabs in Armenia not to be found in Sebeos.(15) A new edition of this work, which could reconcile some of the repetitions and chronological difficulties occasionally to be found in it, might prove very useful. Just as the writings of Sebeos and of Ghevond are important for events in Armenia, so are the writings of John of Nikiu and of Leontius of Neapolis for events in Egypt. The Chronicle of John has a first-hand account of the Persian and Arab invasions (16). Leontius wrote a life of John the Almsgiver, Patriarch of Alexandria, in which is to be found a great deal of material bearing not only upon the state of Egypt but also on conditions in other parts of the empire at the beginning of the seventh century.(17) Additional information may be found in The

(15) trans. into French by G. V. Chahnazarian, Paris, 1856. The author's name may be transliterated as "Zuond" (British Museum Catalogue) or "Levond", Krumbacher, op.cit. p.407.

(16) trans. from Ethiopic text by R. H. Charles, London, 1916.

(17) H. Gelzer, Leontios von Neapolis Leben des Heiligen Johannes des Barmherzigen Erzbischofs von Alexandrien (Sammlung ausgewählter Kirchen- und dogmengeschichtlichen Quellenschriften, Heft 5, Freiburg & Leipzig 1893 and MPG Vol. 93. See N. H. Baynes, Three Byzantine Saints, London, 1950, pp.195-198 for a discussion of the historical importance of this hagiographical work.

deux premiers livres des Miracles S. Demetrios
46(1953) pp.349-361.

History of the Patriarchs, a record of the lives of the coptic patriarchs of Alexandria till 661 with interesting references to the two invasions (18). This is an Arabic text, the work of the Egyptian bishop Severus in the tenth century, but a great part of it derives from translations of seventh-century material. On the other hand, the sources for the history of the expansion of the Avars, the Slavs and the Bulgars are, on the whole, unsatisfactory and their implications have given rise to considerable controversy. The chief passage in Theophanes on this topic is unclear and the two chapters on the early Slavs in the De Administrando Imperii have been variously interpreted (19). The most striking notices are the vivid descriptions of the great Slavic invasions at the end of the sixth and at the beginning of the seventh century which are to be found in the story of St. Demetrius, patron saint of Thessalonica (20). In addition to the literary sources, the evidence of seals, of coins and of epigraphic material has been used to elucidate some of the outstanding

(18) ed. & trans. B. T. A. Evetts, PO vol. 1.

(19) See below, pp. 3-19 and pp. 148-149

(20) Miracula S. Demetrii, Acta Sanctorum Oct 8 vol. 4 MPG Vol. 116. Many extracts, translated into French with a commentary appear in A. Tougaard, De l'Histoire profane dans les Actes grecs des Bollandistes, Paris, 1874. For a recent discussion of the chronology in the Miracula see P. Lemerle, 'La composition et la chronologie des deux premières livres des Miracula S. Demetrii' BZ 46(1953) pp. 349-361.

problems, particularly the extent of Slavic and Bulgar penetration of Greece (21). Two passages in Theophanes and a seal acquired by the Russian Institute at Constantinople in 1903 is the chief evidence for the presence of Slav colonies in Asia Minor (22), while the probability of fairly considerable Slav migration into territories conquered by the Arabs is attested both by Theophanes and in a number of interesting references to the Slavs made by Muslim writers from the seventh to the tenth century and collected by A. E. Harkavy (23). So far as the expansion of Islam itself is concerned, contemporary evidence from the Arab side can scarcely be expected. Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabari and Ahmad ibn Yah'ya al-Balādhuri, two of the earliest and, in some ways, the greatest of Muslim historians, wrote in the ninth century. It has only been possible to consult the former in the French translation of a Persian summary a version in which its literary qualities far

- (21) The controversy between Professor Setton and Professor Charanis on the significance of the finds of belts and buckles at Corinth is discussed below, pp.166-168
- (22) Theoph. 348 (15-20) & 364 (11-18). The seal is described by B. A. Panchenko, Monument Slavyan 7-vo Veka v Bifinii, Russkiy Arkheologicheskiy Institut, Izves'tiya, 8 (1903) pp.15 - 62. See below pp. 155-156
- (23) Theoph. 348 (15-20) and Skazaniya Musulmanskikh Pisatiley o Slavyanakh i Russkikh, St. Petersburg, 1870. See below pp.157-158

outweigh its value as a source (24). It is the work of the latter which has been used as the chief Muslim authority on the invasions (25). Additional material on the Arab campaigns in Egypt has been found in another ninth-century account - The Conquest of Egypt by Abd al-Rahman ibn 'abd Allah ibn 'abd al Hakam (26) while the conquest of North Africa is most fully described by the great fourteenth-century historian and geographer ibn-Khaldun (27). Finally, there is a valuable collection of references by Muslim writers - chiefly of the ninth and tenth centuries - to the Arab attacks on Asia Minor, translated by E. W. Brooks (28).

Just as there is no contemporary Byzantine narrative source of the seventh century, so there is a dearth of contemporary writers in Italy, Spain and Merovingian Gaul.

- (24) Chronicle trans. into French from a Persian Summary by H. Zotenberg, 4 vols., Paris, 1867.
- (25) The Origins of the Islamic State, trans. P. K. Hitti, Columbia College Studies in History, Economics & Public Law, 2 vols. New York, 1916.
- (26) Trans. by C. C. Torrey, Biblical & Semitic Studies, Yale, 1901.
- (27) History of the Berbers trans. into French by McGuckin de Slane, Paris, 4 vols. 1925-34. See also The Conquest of Africa by al-Nuwairi included in Vol. 1 of this work and the account of al-Bakri in Journal Asiatique 12(1858) pp. 412-534.
- (28) The Arabs in Asia Minor, JHS 18 (1898) pp. 182-208.

Isidore of Seville ends his Chronicon, a short history of the world, in 616, and his Historia de Regibus Gothorum, a good source not only for events in Spain, in 621 (29). The latter is continued by Isidore of Bajadoz down to 754 but the work is a summary and has little value (30). The writers who go under the name of Fredegarius are responsible for a history of the Franks which is of interest only for the early years of the seventh century (31). The best continuous narrative is a history of the Lombards by Paul the Deacon, but this was written not earlier than the middle years of the eighth century (32). These somewhat meagre sources can be supplemented by more interesting ecclesiastical material. There exist short contemporary biographies of the Popes, compiled by a succession of writers having access to documents from the papal curia, which have been collected in a series, stretching from the sixth to the tenth century, known as the Liber Pontificalis (33). In them are preserved not only details of ecclesiastical

(29) Both these works in MGH: SS. Berlin, 1894 and MPL vol. 92.

(30) Isidorus Pacensis, Chronicon MPL vol. 96.

(31) Fredegarius, Chronicon MGH: SS Rerum Merovingarum Vol. 2, Berlin, 1885.

(32) Historia Langobardorum MGH: SS Rerum Langobardorum (Saeculae V - IX) Hanover, 1878.

(33) ed. L. Duchesne, Ecole française d'Athènes, 2-ième série, fasc 13, 2 vols. Paris, 1886.

to be considered in the light of another contemporary source - organisation but also much information about papal relations far more accessible than the *Doctrina* but very largely ignored. This is an account by an eyewitness of the capture of Jerusalem by the Persians who ascribes the disorders to the activities of the circus parties (36). Then there is an interesting series of documents dealing with the Persians in the years before the coming of Islam (37). The most important is a Syrian Bishop's account of an embassy to the Emperor Heraclius (38) and his account confirms the story which is given in the Jewish seditious in Syria and Palestine at the beginning of the seventh century, has been skilfully used by Kulakovsky to correct certain chronological errors in Theophanes. (35) But whether its evidence of Jewish responsibility for these disorders, which were of direct assistance to the Persian invaders, can be completely accepted is a question which has

There are available a number of other literary sources with useful information about some aspect of the mediterranean world in the time of the Heracleians. They deal with a variety of topics. The Doctrina Jacobi Nuper Baptizati, for example, an account in Greek by a Jewish convert to Christianity of Jewish seditious in Syria and Palestine at the beginning of the seventh century, has been skilfully used by Kulakovsky to correct certain chronological errors in Theophanes. (35) But whether its evidence of Jewish responsibility for these disorders, which were of direct assistance to the Persian invaders, can be completely accepted is a question which has

(34) S. Martini Epistolae and Notitia Historica, MPL vol. 87, S. Maximi Confessoris, Opera Omnia, MPG vols. 90 & 91. See especially Acta & Vita et Certamen, MPG vol. 90.

(35) Doctrina Jacobi Nuper Baptizati, ed. Bonwetsch, Abhandlungen der Koeniglichen Gessellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Gottingen, Philol. -Hist. Klasse, Bde 12, no.3, Berlin, 1910, and Y. A. Kulakovskiy, K Kritike Izves'tii Feofana o Poslednikh Godov Pravitel'stvo Foki, VV21 (1914) pp. 1-14.

(40) Ed. & trans. Addei Scher, PG vol. 7.

to be considered in the light of another contemporary source - far more accessible than the Doctrina but very largely ignored. This is an account by an eyewitness of the capture of Jerusalem by the Persians who ascribes the disorders to the activities of the circus parties (36). Then, there is an interesting Syriac document dealing with the Christians in the Yemen before the coming of Islam.(37) The author may have been a Syrian bishop sent on an embassy to the Ghassānid king Mundhir (38) and his account confirms the strength with which the monophysite doctrine was held in the south as well as in the north of Arabia (39). References to the same subject from a Nestorian standpoint occur in the Ethiopic Chronicle of Seert - a history of the world down to 650 (40). Professor Gregoire, one of the

- (36) Antiochus Strategos, The Capture of Jerusalem by the Persians. This is a shortened version of the Georgian text (itself a copy of a Greek text not now extant) first published in a Russian translation by N. Marr, Teksty i Razveskaniya po Armyano-Gruzinskoye Filologii, St. Petersburg, 1909. It is by F. Conybeare and appears in EHR 25 (1910) pp. 502-517. The question of the Jews and the empire is discussed below, pp. 51-54
- (37) The Book of the Himyarites, trans. with an introduction by A. Moberg, Lund, 1924.
- (38) The Book of the Himyarites, introduction, pp. LXXV-LXXVI
- (39) The main source for the monophysite kings of the Ghassānids is the Ecclesiastical History of John of Ephesus (Third Part) trans. by R. Payne Smith, London, 1860. See below, pp. 60-62
- (40) Ed. & trans. Addai Scher, PO vol. 7.

very few to make use of these last two documents, has with their aid constructed an ingenious argument on the link between Islam and monophysite Christianity, but the possibilities of the two documents have by no means been exhausted.(41) Finally, four interesting texts, each in their own way with a bearing on events in the seventh century, ought to be noted. There is an account of a journey to Jerusalem in or about 670 made by the Irish monk Arculfus which is remarkable for its lack of comment on the Muslim rulers of the Holy Land.(42) Then there is a Syriac history of the Nestorian monastery of Beth 'Abe in Mesopotamia, written between 832 and 850, which has a number of references to the conflict between the Jacobites and the Nestorians.(43) A short Armenian autobiography by a certain Ananias of Shirak is interesting in that it describes a Greece sufficiently peaceful in 630 for the regular teaching of philosophy in Athens.(44) Lastly, an aid to the elucidation of the problem of the circus parties can be found in an unexpected

(41) See below, pp. 65-66

(42) See Adamnanus, De Locis Sacris ed. P. Geyer. (Itinera Hierosolymitana Saec IV - VIII) CSEL Vol. 39, Vienna, 1898.

(43) The Book of Governors ed. & trans. E. A. Wallis Budge, London, 1893. See below, p. 49, note (37).

(44) Trans. F. Conybeare, BZ 6(1897) pp. 573-574. See below, p. 159

place - a midrash or commentary on a passage in the Talmud, may be, it has been suggested, a description of the hippodrome in seventh-century Constantinople (45). It is with miscellaneous material of this kind that the straight narrative sources have to be supplemented in order to get a better picture of the empire and its neighbours during the seventh century.

Contemporary record sources are equally scarce but those that exist are full of interest. The most outstanding are a text entitled *νόμος γεωργικός*, embodying land legislation at one time connected with the Ecloga of Leo III but more probably originating towards the end of the seventh century, (46) and two works dealing with military organisation - the Strategicon and the *περὶ στρατιωτικῶν ἐπιτιμίων* (47). Both these last are of uncertain date and authorship but there are good reasons for accepting them as a guide to conditions in the

(45) See below, p. 223 - 225

(46) *νόμος γεωργικός* ed. W. Ashburner, JHS 30 (1910) pp. 85-108 and translated with a commentary JHS 32(1912) pp. 68-95. See G. Vernadskiy, 'Sur l'origine de la Loi agraire' BYZ vol. 2(1925) pp. 169-180. The question is discussed below, pp. 159-162

(47) The Strategicon has been edited twice: by Schaeffer, Upsala, 1664 and by Sybyshev & Gezman, St. Petersburg, 1903. It has been impossible to use either edition and recourse has been had to the French summary by F. Aussaresses L'Armée byzantine à la Fin du VI Siècle, Bordeaux, 1909. The *περὶ στρατιωτικῶν ἐπιτιμίων* has been edited by W. Ashburner:- 'The Byzantine Mutiny Act', JHS 46(1926) pp. 80-109.

army under the Heracleians (48). Various series of records and other types of material, generally used in any work on a Byzantine subject, are particularly valuable for the seventh century with its comparatively scanty sources. A great deal of information, not readily found elsewhere, can be gathered from the proceedings of councils and synods of the church. The synod called by the pope Martin I in 649, the Sixth Oecumenical Council held in 680 and the so-called 'Quinisext' Council summoned by Justinian II in 687, all had political as well as ecclesiastical significance, and their decisions must be taken into account in a study of the period (49). Obviously important are the notices of imperial rescripts, treaties and other official acts of the government in Constantinople, and these have been published in an indispensable work (50).

- (48) See below, pp. 207-14. The origin of the νόμος ναυτικός on the other hand, remains uncertain. See W. Ashburner, The Rhodian Sea Law Oxford, 1909, pp. cxii-iii. It cannot be used with confidence for conditions under the Heracleians.
- (49) This material is collected by J. D. Mansi, Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio; 31 vols. Florence & Venice, 1759-1798. See also L. Duchesne, Liber Pontificalis, vol. I Paris, 1886. For the synod of 649 see below, pp. 194-5 and for the two Councils pp. 198-200
- (50) F. Doelger, Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des ostroemischen Reiches (Corpus der griechischen Urkunden des Mittelalters und der neueren Zeit, Reihe A Abt. I) Teil I: 565-1025, Munich-Berlin, 1924.

Similarly, there is available a collection of references to documents emanating from the patriarchate (51). An example of the evidence derived from coins and seals has already been mentioned. The standard work on the former is by W. Wroth and on the latter by G. Schlumberger (52). So far as the geography of the empire is concerned, in addition to the very full maps of the medieval world produced by Spruner-Menke, excellent historical sketch-maps are to be found in Geschichte des Byzantinischen Staates and in Die Ostgrenze des byzantinischen Reiches von 363 bis 1071 (53).

There is an abundance of modern work devoted to the history of the empire in the seventh century. Certain questions in particular have been made the subject of intensive research. Problems, for example, connected with the expansion of the Slavs have produced a considerable literature, especially in

- (51) V. Grumel, Les Régestes des Actes du Patriarchat de Constantinople Vol. I: Les Actes des Patriarches, fasc 1: 381-715, Istanbul, 1932.
- (52) Catalogue of the Imperial Byzantine Coins in the British Museum, London, 1908, and Sigillographie de l'Empire Byzantin, Paris, 1884.
- (53) G. Ostrogorsky, Geschichte des Byzantinischen Staates, Munich, 1952, and E. Honigmann, Die Ostgrenze des byzantinischen Reiches von 363 bis 1071. See also Spruner-Menke, Hand-atlas für die Geschichte des Mittelalters und der neueren Zeit, Gotha, 1880.

organisation in the seventh century (58). The monthlies
 recent years. (54) The rise of Islam and the great Arab
 invasions have frequently attracted those, not always
 Byzantinists, concerned with the affairs of the mediterranean
 world in that period, (55) while the relations of the empire with
 Italy, with Egypt and with North Africa have each been the theme
 of important studies. (56) Much attention has also been paid to
 internal matters. Sincer Gelzer's essay on the theme system (57)
 there have been many contributions to the question of provincial

- (54) It is impossible to attempt anything like a complete bibliography of the expansion of the Slavs within the scope of the present work. One of the chief questions - the extent of Slav penetration into Greece - is at the moment the subject of controversy between Professor Charanis and Professor Setton. The latest contribution is from the former, 'On the Slavic Settlement in the Peloponnesus', BZ vol. 46(1953) pp. 41-103. See below, pp. 166-168
- (55) A Bibliography appears in C. Huart, Histoire des Arabes Vol. 1, Paris, 1912. A useful work is P. K. Hitti, History of Syria, London, 1951.
- (56) On Italy in the seventh century, apart from standard works such as Fliche et Martin, Histoire de l'Eglise, Vol. 5, Paris, 1947, and E. Caspar, Geschichte des Papstums, vol.1 Tubingen, 1930, the best is still Diehl's Etudes sur l'Administration byzantine dans l'Exarchat de Ravenne, Paris, 1888. On Egypt, see A. J. Butler, The Arab Conquest of Egypt and the Last Thirty Years of the Roman Dominion, Oxford 1902 and J. Maspero, L'Organisation militaire de l'Egypte byzantine, Paris, 1912. On Africa, see Diehl, L'Afrique byzantine, Paris, 1896.
- (57) H. Gelzer, Die Genesis der byzantinischen Themenverfassung Leipzig, 1899.

organisation in the seventh century (58). The monothelite controversy has been studied in detail by V. Grumel (59). The impetus to examine afresh the function of the circus parties - which appear to reach the height of their power at the beginning of the century and then very rapidly to lose their importance - was first given sixty years ago by F.I. Uspenskiy (60). This inexhaustible problem has since been discussed by numerous scholars. In 1904 G. Manojlović threw on it a new light and in more recent work has been done on it by, amongst others, Professor Grégoire, Professor Dvornik and the Soviet byzantinist A. P. Diakonov (61). Apart from these more or

- (58) For example by Diehl, Etudes Byzantines (pp 276-292), Paris, 1905 and by E. Stein, Studien zur Geschichte des byzantinischen Reiches (pp 117-140-, Stuttgart, 1919). The latest contribution is by W. Ensslin, 'Der Kaiser Herakleios und die Themenverfassung', BZ 46(1953) pp 362-368. See below, pp 214-221.
- (59) 'Récherches sur l'Histoire du Monothélétisme', Echos d'Orient, 27(1928) pp 6-16 and 257-277, 28(1929) pp 19-34 and 272-282, and 29(1930), pp 16-28. See also, G. Osweopian, Die Entstehungsgeschichte des Monothelietismus Leipzig, 1897. See below, pp 47-50.
- (60) 'Partii Tsirka i Dimy v Konstantinopole', VV 1(1894) pp 1-17.
- (61) The monograph of Manojlović was little noticed until translated into French and published by Professor Grégoire in BYZ 11(1936) pp 617-716. See below, p.222. Professor Grégoire's latest contribution on this subject and the views of Professor Dvornik and A.P. Diakonov and others are discussed below, p.231.

less specialised studies, there are, of course, a number of general histories in which the events of the seventh century find their place. One of the most useful is Professor Ostrogorsky's Geschichte des Byzantinischen Staates to which reference has already been made and of which a revised edition, translated into English, is shortly to appear.(62)

Nevertheless, there are noticeable gaps, particularly in the treatment of the dynasty which ruled the empire during nearly the whole of the seventh century. There is no full-length study based on the result of modern research, of the emperor Heraclius. The least unsatisfactory is that of A. Pernice, but it is now nearly fifty years old.(63) L. Drapeyron's book is fanciful and out of date, while V. Bolotov's article is no more than a sketch.(64) Perhaps

(62) One of the most outstanding contributions to general Byzantine history after Finlay was made by J. B. Bury whose History of the Later Roman Empire (Vol.2) London, 1889, is still of very great value for any study of the seventh century. Of more modern works may be mentioned Y. A. Kulakovskiy, Istoriya Vizantii 3 vols. Kiev 1915. L. Brehier, Vie et Mort de Byzanie Paris, 1947 and C. Diehl and G. Marcais, Le Monde Oriental de 395 a 1081 (Histoire du Moyen Age, ed. G. Glotz) vol. 3, Paris, 1945.

(63) L'Imperatore Heraclio, Florence, 1905.

(64) L'Empereur Héraclius et l'Empire byzantine au VII^e Siècle Paris, 1869 and V. Bolotov, 'K Istorii Imperatora Irakliya' VV vol. 14 (1907) pp. 68-124.

a more important omission, in view of the climacteric character of the seventh century, is the lack of material on the later Heracleians and on the achievements of the dynasty treated as a connected whole. There exists a short study of Constans II (65), the subject of a doctoral thesis in 1907, a factual account of the Heracleians by E. W. Brooks in the second volume of the Cambridge Medieval History, (66) and a most stimulating chapter on the period in the Geschichte des byzantinischen Staates. The present piece of work is chiefly concerned with the external policy of the empire, but it is hoped that it may become the basis of a general study devoted to Heraclius and his successors.

(65) I. Kaestner, De Imperio Constantini III, Academia Ienensis Philologisches seminar: Commentationes Ienenses Vol. 8 fasc.1) Leipzig 1907.

(66) 'The Successors of Heraclius' CMH vol. 2 pp. 391-417. L. Bréhier, 'La Transformation d'Empire byzantine sous les Héraclides, Journal des Savants 15 (1917) pp. 401-15, 445-53 and 498-506 is confined to a review of Vol. 3 of Y. A. Kulakovskiy's Istoriya Vizantii, Kiev, 1915.

CHAPTER ONETHE INHERITANCE OF THE HERACLEIANS

The division of history into periods is rarely justified. The stream of history is continuous and "time with its irresistible flow" - to quote Anna Commena (1) - does not pause to give historians many opportunities of deciding that a series of events with a common character has come to an end and that a new series has begun. There have been events, however, with such wide contemporary repercussions and such serious later consequences as to make this demarcation reasonably valid. Their impact affected the whole structure of the society in which they occurred, altering alike ways of thought and the material conditions of life. In such instances it becomes necessary to conclude that one kind of era came to an end and another began, although it may not be possible to point with precision to the actual time when the change took place. The disintegration of the Roman empire and the growth of medieval society is an example of such a change. A series of events fundamentally altered the political

(1) Alexiad, Bk. I ch. 1.

and social structure of the Mediterranean community. Although the immediate causes and the actual time may for long remain in dispute,(2) between the fourth and the ninth century a moment did come when men could no longer suppose themselves to be still living in a Roman world.

The events of the seventh century, whether or not it contained that decisive period, undoubtedly marked an important stage in the birth of the middle ages. The last attempt to re-establish something of the old imperial system had been made by Justinian, and his immediate successors still had been concerned to some extent with salvaging what they could from the failure of his Italian campaigns. The emperors of the seventh century, on the other hand, abandoned all hopes of a genuine "renovatio imperii". They no longer expected to rule from Rome,(3) but were content with the influence they could gain in the west through prestige rather than through conquest.

(2) The thesis that this change coincided with the end of the Merovingian and the beginning of the Carolingian period and was the result of the Interruption of mediterranean trade-routes by the Arabs, was first advanced by H. Pirenne, Mahomet et Charlemagne, Paris, 1936 and became the starting point of much of the subsequent discussion. It has been fundamentally criticised by Ganshof, Lopez and others. See A. Riising, 'The Fate of Henri Pirenne's Thesis on the Consequences of the Islamic Expansion', Classica et Mediaevalia vol. 13 (1952) pp. 87-130.

(3) The Journey of Constans to Italy did not have complete conquest as its aim. See below, pp. 186-190

The real centre of imperial power was irrevocably fixed in Constantinople. Not only new dangers from the east, but also the presence of Avars, Slavs and Bulgars in Macedonia and Illyricum had made serious interference in Italian affairs no longer possible. The west passed into the hands of rulers who, while still recognising the pre-eminence of the emperors, were gradually building a system of government more and more divorced from the imperial tradition. In the sixth century Theodorich had consciously followed Roman models. In the seventh century, on the other hand, while the laws of Rothari still owed something to Justinian, similarities between Roman and Lombard customs are far less readily enumerated than between Roman and Ostrogothic. The Merovingian Franks in the sixth century, ever since the presentation of the consular ornaments to Clovis by Anastasius, had, at least in theory, been carrying on the government of Gaul on behalf of the emperor and had occasionally supported him in his campaigns. Their administration had preserved some recollections of Roman tradition. But, during the seventh century, the power of the Merovingians declined. After the Battle of Tetry the Franks began to come under the influence of a new dynasty whose centres were far to the north, having little contact with the Mediterranean world.

The decay of imperial rule in the west increased the importance of the papacy. The pontificate of Gregory the Great

bore its fruit in the seventh century when, on a number of occasions, the emperor was forced to reckon very seriously with men who themselves were scarcely Gregory's equals. The attempts of Heraclius and Constans II at a doctrinal compromise, the brutality of Constans II to one pope and the conciliatory attitude of Constantine IV and Justinian II to another partly arose from a recognition of this growth in papal importance. It was a step towards the day when a papal blessing was required to complete the enthronement of a new emperor in the west. Meanwhile, the emperors themselves were acquiring a new status in the ecclesiastical sphere. In the pagan world religion had been a department of state with the emperor as "pontifex maximus" at its head. The "pax deorum" was the business of the secular power, although experts might be consulted in its execution. But the state itself had been tolerant and had been willing to assimilate an indefinite number of subsidiary beliefs and rituals. The persecution of the Christians and the destruction of the Temple by Titus had been its reaction against movements which had refused to compromise in the slightest degree for the sake of religious unity, in practice scarcely to be distinguished from secular unity. When Christianity became the religion of the empire, the headship of the emperor and the need for one unifying religion continued to be taken for granted. But there was an

important difference. Christianity, so far from being willing to permit the existence of any rival cults, could not even suffer the smallest variations in the interpretations of its own doctrine. Constantine's participation in the Council of Nicea was perfectly natural, since the state was committed to take a leading part in theological disputes and to give its full support to whatever might be considered the true interpretation at any particular time. Equally naturally, his successors had taken an active part in controversies that troubled the church. Nevertheless they remained laymen, and, despite obvious exceptions, the initiative in questions of doctrine was expected to come from the clergy. But in the seventh century the emperor was for the first time given the title of *πίστος ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ βασιλεύς* which had a semi-sacerdotal significance (4). The relationship of the emperor to the patriarch began to develop the special features which characterise later Byzantine ecclesiastical history. At the same time, the emperor could openly challenge the pope in theological controversy. The entry of the emperor into this field meant that any question of theology could have immediate

(4) For other implications of the title *βασιλεύς* see below, pp. 233-34 Cf. L. Bréhier, *L'Origine des Titres impériaux à Byzance*, BZ Vol. 15 (1906) pp. 179-151.

and far-reaching political consequences while political differences were likely to be expressed in theological terms.

The seventh century witnessed the climax of an old dispute. Ever since the fourth century the Christian world had sought to define the nature of Christ in terms admitting no ambiguity. The defeat of the Arian tendency at Nicea had led to further difficulties. In 451 the Council of Chalcedon had attempted to define the double nature of Christ - perfectly human and perfectly divine - but many in the east continued either to emphasise the divine nature at the expense of the human, as decreed two years previously by the so-called Robber Synod of Ephesus, or to separate the divine and human natures. The "Henoticon" or act of union of the emperor Zeno, which sought to effect a compromise by omitting to mention explicitly the decision of Chalcedon failed in its purpose, as did the intermittent persecutions of Justinian and his successors. In the last half of the sixth century the monophysites, who had earlier begun to make schisms among themselves, became stronger and more united against the attacks of the Chalcedonians and the work of the monk Jacob Baradaeus (541-578) helped to establish in Egypt and Syria a powerful monophysite church while the Armenian clergy, strangers to western ecclesiastical tradition since the fourth century, accepted the same doctrine

in 554 at the synod of Dwin (5). Conflicting religious views, in part encouraged by cultural and political differences, were themselves seriously and passionately believed. It was an age when religious controversy was taking on an ever greater interest and importance in the life of the people and the intellectual atmosphere of the time was one of fierce intellectual discussion. The parties of the hippodrome, for example, were divided between the two doctrines and, to some extent, they represented the population of the great cities (6). There could have been few nominal Christians: the supreme importance of getting hold of the right variety of Christian dogma was everywhere taken for granted. In one respect it was not accidental that certain dogma were adopted by the majority in the east. The orthodox view of the incarnation depended for its exposition on the appreciation of philosophical terms which were confined to the Greco-Roman tradition. Both the monophysite and the Nestorian approach tended to avoid the main difficulties and thus could be better understood by eastern theologians to whom they would appear as the only

(5) H. F. Tournebise, Histoire Politique et Religieuse d'Arménie, Paris, 1910, p.352 note 1.

(6) See below, pp. **225-226**

interpretations consistent with a true monotheistic belief. The gulf was a wide one and, in their attempt to conciliate their eastern subjects, the emperors inevitably antagonised the west. They helped to create the rift - widened in the next century by the Iconoclasts - which finally destroyed the old unity of the ancient world, leaving society in the west and in the east to pursue separate paths of development.

The seventh century was in a special sense an age of transition. The continuity of imperial tradition in the west and the unity of Mediterranean peoples did not entirely disappear. But, in every sphere, the signs of imminent and profound changes became obvious. The Persian and Arab invasions accelerated this destruction of the ancient world (7), this is the reason that, for a student of European history, they give to the seventh century its peculiar interest. The effect of the invasions was to concentrate attention on the east and to make it more difficult for the emperors to pursue a successful policy in Italy. The patriarchates of Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria were first temporarily and then permanently isolated from the rest of the Christian community. The doctrinal conflict was thus, for the time being, solved, but the papacy

(7) So much must be accepted without necessarily accepting the views of Pirenne.

in Rome and the patriarchate in Constantinople were now the only remaining high authorities in Christendom - a situation with the possibilities of greater discord between the east and the west. Egypt and North Africa were lost to European culture and the commerce of the Mediterranean was at least partially interrupted. The emperors were compelled to depend more and more upon their possessions in Asia Minor while the Lombards and the Franks looked to Germanic tradition for their inspiration. A gradually modified classical Latin remained the common language of Italy and Gaul while in Constantinople rarely anything but Greek was spoken. The many invasions and threats of invasion that fill the history of the seventh century made frontier defence the chief consideration of imperial policy. To this consideration the emperors were compelled to subordinate the claims of prudence in the handling of ecclesiastical affairs. To the need for an adequate defence of the imperial frontier can be traced fundamental changes in the organisation of the army, in the administration of the provinces and of the capital, and in the status of the emperor himself. A discussion of frontier problems in the seventh century can shed a light on the stage reached in the growth of medieval Europe and Asia, and can indicate some of the reasons for the survival of a Byzantine Empire.

CHAPTER TWOFRONTIER PROBLEMS AT THE BEGINNINGOF THE SEVENTH CENTURY

The defence of the imperial frontier was probably the most difficult task that Rome had ever to face, since, at the height of her power, the empire stretched northward to Scotland, westward to the Pillars of Hercules, eastward and southward to the Euphrates and the Jordan. One of the main causes for her comparative success was that the majority of her opponents were in a primitive stage of social development and could be both fascinated and overawed by one of the most complex civilisations of the ancient world. Many of them could be absorbed into a system which took little account of racial differences and which readily accepted any number of religions at the cost of a formal gesture to the imperial cult. At the very beginning of her expansion Rome had had to fight a struggle with Carthage, the centre of a civilisation with comparable standards, but Rome had emerged victorious, and, for hundreds of years, there was over most of her frontier no further serious challenge to her supremacy. The one great exception was in the east. There she had to face peoples of a very different kind who could not be impressed by Roman methods and who were often positively hostile to them. Not

only did the Persians remain a constant threat, but also the population of conquered or partially conquered areas, of Palestine, Syria and Armenia, kept itself, apart from a few cities, outside Roman influence. When the Roman poet complained that the Orontes had flowed into the Tiber, a more serious cause for sorrow might have been that the waters of the Tiber never managed effectively to adulterate the waters of the Orontes. The religions - Mithraism, Judaism, and, finally, Christianity - might number Roman citizens among their converts, but would not themselves submit to inclusion within the Pantheon. The civilisations of the east were older than the Roman, older, or as old as the Greek. The splendour of the Greco-Roman world could not have the same effect on them as it had had upon Celtic and Germanic tribes living, before their contact with Rome, in little more than a state of barbarism.

Finally, however, the policy of defence through assimilation proved inadequate in the west. The purely Roman element in the army declined. The bulk of its manpower began to be supplied by the "foederati" - tribes with their own leaders, over whom the central government exercised progressively less and less control. This development coincided with a great westward and southward movement of Germanic peoples which the Roman armies, themselves by then largely Germanic in character, were unable to hinder. During the fifth and sixth centuries,

Vandals, Ostrogoths, Vizigoths and Franks overran the western centres of the empire and limited its effective rule to its eastern dominions. Justinian was unable to reverse this process. His victory over Theodoric in Italy merely opened the way to new Germanic invaders - the Lombards. But they, while destroying much of the Roman characteristics of government preserved by the Ostrogoths, themselves very soon divided into more than thirty separate principalities, and were far too busy with internal struggles either to attack the remaining imperial strongholds in Italy, or, still less, to make a move against what had now become the western frontier - the frontier of Illyricum.

During the last half of the sixth century, a new threat had appeared in the north. The movement of the Goths westward from the Dniester after their defeat by the Huns in 372 and their crossing of the Rhine at the end of 406 had left a vacuum in the area stretching from the Carpathians to the northern shores of the Black Sea which was gradually filled up by peoples hitherto almost unknown to the classical world. The most numerous of these were the Slavs, described in early chronicles by a variety of names, usually referring to particular Slavonic tribes (1). These tribes, although speaking a variety of

(1) For example, the Neuri and the Budini in Herodotus (iv. 17 & 21)

dialects had a common origin, probably between the Vistula and the Elbe (2). They were a semi-nomadic people who had developed the arts of hunting, fishing and bee-keeping, but had only a very primitive method of agriculture (3), which tended very quickly to exhaust the soil. Whenever this happened, whole tribes would simply move on to fresh areas, and, by the first century, large numbers were already settled in the southern reaches of the Dniester under Gothic domination. When this had come to an end, Slav expansion continued at a greater rate, partly, perhaps, because of an increase in population during a comparatively peaceful period and partly because of fresh pressure from the Huns. This movement, beginning as a trickle, had, by the middle of the sixth century, become a flood, not only engulfing the lands bordering on the Empire but also much of central and northern Europe.

Brandenburg and Pomerania began as Slavonic settlements (4) and there were Slavs on the site of modern Berlin and in the

constituted no more of a problem than the Slavs and Germans

(2) See F. Dvornik, 'The First Wave of the "Drang nach Osten"', CHJ Vol. 7 (1943) p.129. The theory that they originated around the Pripet marshes in the north-east of modern Poland is no longer accepted.

(3) They were only able to scratch the soil. The Slavonic word for plough is late and of Germanic origin.

(4) Both these place names are Slav in origin: Pomerania = ПО МОРЕ, Brandenburg : БРАНЕБОР

eastern outskirts of Vienna (5). After the destruction of Attila's armies in 451, the Slavs spread far to the east until they were halted by the Bulgars and the Khazars. In the south they crossed the Carpathians and settled in the territory left by the Lombards when they invaded Italy. They moved down the valley of the Prut towards Illyricum, and, probably in 527, began to cross the imperial frontier (6). In number and geographic extent, therefore, the expansion of the Slavs was certainly as great as that of the Germanic tribes. Like them, the Slavonic tribes moved as a whole people, at first with no intentions of military conquest, impelled simply by the need to find new homes. But they had no unifying tradition of gods and heroes, of leaders and legendary deeds and had developed even less of a civilisation than had the Goths. They, even quicker than the Germanic tribes, could be assimilated by an higher civilisation (7). So long as the state of eastern empire remained internally sound, they constituted no more of a problem than the Gauls and Germans

(5) These last were the Lusatian Sorbs. In recent years the Russians are said to have revived what they suppose had been their language and customs.

(6) Procopius, Anecdota 18 (Historia Arcana, ed. Teubner iii.114)

(7) F. Dvornik, Slaves, Byzance et Rome, Paris, 1910, p.25.

had presented to the west before the period of decline. At the end of the sixth and at the beginning of the seventh century, the expansion of the Slavs did assume a temporarily threatening character. A people of Turco-Tartar origin, the Avars, who had shared in the general westward movement to which the Huns had given the main impulse, founded a short-lived kingdom to the south of the Carpathians. They imposed their rule upon the Slavs and gave them a military cohesion which the Slavs themselves had lacked. Under their leadership, Slavs invasions after 545 increased year by year in intensity and met with very little opposition because the empire was occupied with the struggle against Persia. In 551 the Slavs reached the "Long Walls" - the northern perimeter of Constantinople itself. Thessalonica was besieged on more than one occasion, and, in 616, the emperor himself nearly captured (8). In 626 the Avars joined the Persians in an unsuccessful attack upon the capital, but the power of the Avars had begun to decline, and, by the middle of the seventh century, they disappear from Byzantine history. Meanwhile the Slavs had established themselves in Thrace and Macedonia and

(8) See N. Baynes, 'The Date of the Avar Surprise', BZ 21 (1912) pp. 110 - 128.

(12) The most extreme estimate can be found in the Chronicon of Isidore of Seville where their activities are given equal

(13) See below, pp. 158-9

had poured into Greece (9). The fear and loathing which they inspired has been recorded in the Miracula of St. Demetrius, (10) but their importance as a real threat to the frontier should not be exaggerated. Even under the leadership of the Avars and despite their skill at sea in their primitive vessels (11) they achieved no major military successes and the cities held out against them. Their coming was sudden, extensive and terrifying and impressed contemporary writers more than the consequences justified (12). After they had settled down in their new habitations, and particularly after the end of the ascendancy of the Avars, their presence, although continuing to need vigilance and occasional military action, was no longer a serious frontier problem. (13)

(9) The extent of Slavic penetration into Greece has been continually in dispute since Fallmerayer. See A. Vasil'ev, 'Slavyani v Gretsiiye', VV 5(1898), pp. 404-438 & 626-670, which is still fundamental. See P. Charanis, 'The Chronicle of Monemvasia and the Question of the Slavonic Settlement in Greece', Dumbarton Oaks Papers 5(1950) p. 141, note 1, for a reference to this and other, more recent, contributions to this question.

(10) MPG Vol. 116, col. 1288.

(11) The μονοδένδρα (hollowed-out tree trunks).

(12) The most extreme estimate can be found in the Chronicon of Isidore of Seville where their activities are given equal importance to the Persian conquest of Syria and Egypt: see MPL Vol. 83, col. 1056.

(13) See below, pp. 158-9

It was in a world such as this that the successors of Justinian left to Heraclius what had been always the most intractable problem of all - the defence of the eastern frontier. It stretched from the Caucasian Mountains to the Red Sea and ran through territories where the people had a very different character to the others with whom previous emperors had had to deal. The north, from the river Cyrus or Koura to the Euphrates, was occupied by Armenia with claims to a national history from early antiquity and a continued degree of independence both from western and eastern attempts at encroachment. She had been assisted by the unusually difficult nature of the terrain, mountainous and with very few roads, which every invader had to negotiate, and by the specialised organisation of the army under these conditions. In the campaign of the Armenian king Tigranes against Lucullus, for example, it included "road and bridge builders and performers of other necessities for the fighting forces to the number of thirty-five thousand" (14). The Armenian army had acquired some of the best elements in both Roman and Persian military practice. Armenian troops were renowned for their bravery and were able to endure, far better than other Mediterranean or eastern peoples, the extremely hard winters which were a

(14) Plutarch, Vita Luculli ch. 26 (ed. Teubner, vol. 1.i.434)

a serious obstacle to the invader and are noticed by the chroniclers. (15) The attitude of Armenia to the great powers on her frontiers was often unclear and always changeable. The Armenian king Arsaces or Arslak for example, was supposed to have held the Romans in great contempt according to the Armenian historian Moses of Khoren, (16) yet the same man was their faithful friend in the account of the Roman historian Marcellinus. (17) When, from the fifth century onwards, the Romans and Persians began a serious attempt to divide up Armenia between them, the Armenian hereditary nobles - the "nakharars" - began to change sides with such bewildering rapidity that the emperor Maurice is said to have suggested to the Persian Khosroes that each side should send "their own" nakharars into exile "otherwise there would never be peace in Armenia". (18) Faced for centuries with the task of defending themselves against one or other of two great contending empires, the Armenians, not unnaturally, evolved the practice of shifting their allegiance as often as the situation demanded. At the

(15) Plutarch, *ibid*, ch. 32, Cf. Sebeos, p.132.

(16) Langlois, vol. 2, p.142.

(17) Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, Bk. 20, ch.11 (ed. Teubner, vol. 2, p.221.)

(18) See below, pp. 75 & 127

(18) Sebeos, pp.30 - 31.

(20) For example, M. Tchérax, *L'Eglise Arménienne, Le Muséon*, 16(1897) pp. 236-238.

beginning of the seventh century, they were neither fundamentally pro-Persian nor pro-Roman, they were, as always, solely concerned with preserving their independence. The position of the Armenian church was a part of this same attitude. Its short periods of union with the west were the result to a certain extent of military compulsion. Occasionally, an individual catholicos might favour the view of the patriarch in Constantinople (19) in the same way as a particular nakharar might favour the imperial cause. Modern Armenian historians explicitly connect the behaviour of their church with the struggle for the preservation of Armenian independence (20). The task of the Heracleians was to persuade the Armenians that they had least to fear and most to gain by a permanent alliance with their western neighbour. Had they succeeded in that task, they might have made of Armenia a loyal buffer state, and, because of its geographic and strategic advantages, a valuable addition to frontier defence.

In Syria and Palestine the problem of defence was more complicated. Although these provinces had been under Roman rule for more than five hundred years the process of assimilation - the mainstay of successful Roman government -

(18) Ibid, pp. 73-74. Festers gives an impressive list of "Greek" interpreters of oriental culture who were, in fact, often Armenians.

(19) See below, pp. 75 & 137

(20) For example, M. Tchéráz, *L'Eglise Arménienne, Le Muséon*, 16(1897) pp. 236-238.

At the southernmost end of the imperial frontier lay had taken place only to a limited extent. In the not very numerous towns were concentrated the different elements of the conquerors - veterans of the Roman armies, Greek immigrants from Macedonia and indigeneous Greeks settled from the time of the Seleucids. But, in the countryside, and, even, below the surface in the towns the old Aramaic foundation persisted below the official facade (21). There is good reason to suppose that the intellectual Greek was never genuinely interested in understanding or sympathising with the oriental attitude (22). The real antagonism was not, however, between two races but between two types of culture. In Cappadocia Phrygia and Lydia, despite the existence of many racial strains, language and custom was unequivocally Greco-Roman in character. But, south of the Taurus range, two separate trends persisted and even church services had to be conducted in Syriac and Greek so that all could understand. John Chrysostom complained that if he preached in Greek his sermons were not understood even in Antioch and that the priests heard nothing but Syriac from the congregation (23).

(21) P. Peeters, Le Tréfond Oriental, Brussels, 1950, p.16.

(22) Ibid, pp. 73-74. Peeters gives an impressive list of "Greek" interpreters of oriental culture who were, in reality, themselves orientals, - often Armenians.

(23) P. Peeters, Le Tréfond, pp. 61-62.

(27) Leontius Neapolis, Johannis Eleemosynarii Vita, MFG vol. 93 col. 1625.

At the southernmost end of the imperial frontier lay Egypt - the oldest and richest of the provinces and the main source of the corn supply. At the beginning of the seventh century its commercial importance was as great as ever. Merchants from Alexandria had visited Spanish and Frankish ports and had reached Britain (24). One of the Alexandrian patriarchs inherited eight thousand pounds in gold, possessed his own fleet of trading vessels, (25) and was able to assist relatives in business difficulties at Constantinople (26). Egyptian money was available for the relief of the inhabitants of Jerusalem after its devastation by the Persians (27). But the years of prosperity had nurtured a corrupt administration, not unwelcome to the imperial government which was beset by the constant fear that a strong Egypt might be a serious danger - a view which Heraclius himself had the best of reasons for supporting. Accordingly the army in Egypt was kept divided between five generals of equal rank, while those to whom the taxes had been farmed prospered exceptionally, became important

(24) Johannis Eleemosynarii Vita, MPG vol. 114 col. 909B. This is a lesser known version attributed both by Martin Hanck and by Daniel of Nessel to Simon Metaphrastes in their catalogues of his works, although, in the catalogue of Daniel, John appears as the patriarch of Antioch, not of Alexandria. See MPG vol. 114 col. 302B.

(25) Ibid, col. 909A.

(26) Pratum Spirituale, ch. 193 (MPG 87 col. 1073)

(27) Leontius Neapolis, Johannis Eleemosynarii Vita, MPG vol. 93 col. 1625.

landowners and organised what were, in effect, private armies of their own (28). The rivalry of Egyptian merchants and the unjust behaviour of imperial officials bred hostility in Egypt to the imperial government just as the gulf between the Greek and Syrian population bred it in Syria and Palestine. The monophysite controversy only made it more bitter by adding to cultural differences and economic grievances and irreconcilable doctrinal dispute. But the monophysite view certainly did not gain universal support in these provinces, particularly in Palestine and the political significance of the division that resulted can be readily deduced from the description of melkite that is, royalist - applied to the supporters of the symbol of Chalcedon (29).

It was the task of Heraclius in all these territories to strive for a greater internal unity for on that alone could be based a stable policy of frontier defence. The Persian invasion at the beginning of his reign was especially serious, since it concentrated and encouraged all these anti-imperial

(28) For the army in Egypt see J. Maspero, Organisation militaire de l'Egypte byzantine, Paris, 1912. See also G. Rouillard, L'Administration civile de l'Egypte byzantine, Paris, 1928. On the loss of Egypt see A. J. Butler, The Arab Conquest of Egypt and the last last Thirty Years of the Roman Dominion, Oxford, 1902.

(29) This is the meaning of the Semitic root, cf. Hebrew melekh Arabic malik king or ruler.

tendencies. The peculiar difficulties of the eastern frontier must have been well known to Heraclius whose father had been a general of the emperor Maurice and had been, like him, of Armenian origin. The unwillingness of Heraclius to engage in a prolonged struggle with the Persians on territory whose inhabitants were so unreliable is probably part of the explanation for his ten years of comparative inactivity. (29) The capture of Jerusalem by the Persians in 614 and the loss of the holiest Christian relics proved no stimulus to a more aggressive policy. On the contrary, in the following year, he was treating for peace with the Persian general Shahan, who seems to have reached Chalcedon unopposed, in a manner which can be described as conciliatory if not humble (30). It was not until 622, four years after Alexandria had fallen to the invaders, that Heraclius commenced serious military operations. In 623, after he had won a great victory in Cappadocia, he once again tried to make peace and was once again unsuccessful (31).

The war had therefore to be continued and fought to its conclusion and, in the event, Heraclius was victorious. After

(33) N. P. Kondakov, *Arkhéologicheskoye puteshestviye po*

(30) Sebeos, p. 79.

(31) Doelger, Regesten, 179.

seven years mostly spent in marching and skirmishing (32), Persian strength already for long in a state of decline finally collapsed. Khosroes was murdered, the holy relics were restored to Jerusalem and Heraclius returned to Constantinople in triumph. But the damage the Persian invaders had caused to imperial prestige could not be repaired. For example, the Russian archaeologist and historian N. P. Kondakov made the following evaluation of its effect on Palestine (33):-

"The Persian invasion immediately removed the effects of the imported artificial Greco-Roman civilisation it ruined agriculture, depopulated cities, destroyed temporarily many monasteries and lauras and stopped all commercial development. This invasion freed the marauding tribes of Arabs from the ties of association and the fear that had controlled them, and they began to form the unity which made possible their attacks at a later period. From now on the cultural development of the country ends. (Kondakov, is, of course, speaking from a Greco-Roman standpoint). Palestine enters upon the troubled period which very naturally can be called her middle ages were it not for the fact that it has lasted until our own times".

(32) During the whole war there were only two great battles, the second was on Persian territory at Nihavend in 627. The details of the strategy of Heraclius are closely followed by N. H. Baynes, 'The Military Operations of the Emperor Heraclius', United Services Magazine, 1011-1012 (1913) pp. 526-533 & 659 - 666 and 1017-1018 (1913) pp. 30-38, 195-201, 318-324, 401-412, 532-541, 665-679.

(33) N. P. Kondakov, Arkheologicheskoye Puteshestviye po Sirii i Palestine, St. Petersburg, 1901, pp. 173-4.

A similar description could with justice be applied to all the other areas which temporarily came under Persian rule.

629. The efforts of Heraclius to conciliate those who had been aroused to open hostility, and, in other ways, to ensure future loyalty to the empire, had no success. He attempted to solve the doctrinal question in the territories which he had reconquered by enforcing a compromise between the Chalcedonians and the monophysites. About the year 600, Eulogius of Alexandria had elaborated a theory about the incarnation by which Christ was said to have two natures but only one will. This became known the monothelite doctrine and may have been, at first, favourably received by other Egyptian theologians (34). Heraclius tried it in Armenia. He realised the desirability of as loyal population there as possible before the commencement of operations against the Persians. He began negotiations with an Armenian monk named Paul and forbade the teaching of the full Chalcedonian doctrine in Cyprus where the population had an Armenian element. The death of the catholicos Comitas occurred a year before the murder of Khosroes and thus nearly coincided with the end of Persian influence in Armenia. Heraclius,

(34) For a detailed discussion of the steps leading up to the publication of this doctrine in the Ecthesis, see V. Grumel, 'Récherches sur l'Histoire du Monothélisme' (pt.1), Echos d'Orient, 27(1928) pp 6-16.

(36) See above, p. 65

therefore, got a free hand there precisely at the time when he could exercise it with a new head of the Armenian church. In 629, the successor to Comitas, Ezra, under threats from the newly-appointed imperial governor Mzez Gnuni, was compelled to accept the new dogma and to take communion with the emperor at Asorestan (35). But this did not make the Armenians loyal to Constantinople. The war against Persia had brought great hardships upon them. The first great battle had been fought on their western frontier and most of the subsequent movement had taken place over their territory (36). Imperial troops had wintered in Armenia in the winter of 623-4, and, in 626, the sufferings of the inhabitants had been increased when Heraclius had invited the Khazars to besiege Tiflis. Accordingly the Armenians had no love for the victors. A synod held in 633 at Theodosiopolis (Garin) plainly showed that Ezra's action was extremely unpopular and communion with the Chalcedonians lasted only until 640 - for just so long as he was alive. Heraclius' attempt at conciliation was a failure. Later events proved clearly enough that the Persian war and its aftermath had changed what had been in essentials neutrality into a positive hostility towards Constantinople.

(35) Sebeos, pp. 91-92.

(36) See above, p. 45

In Syria and Palestine the Persians had, for obvious reasons, supported the monophysites, so much so that occasionally conflicts including physical violence arose between that sect and the Nestorians who had been in the past considerably favoured by Persian influence (37). The return of imperial power was therefore by no means welcomed and all the efforts of Heraclius to please the Syrians with his new formula proved fruitless. Isiah, the bishop of Edessa, categorically refused to communicate with him until he had publicly anathemised Chalcedon, and Heraclius, tired of negotiating, appointed a melkite bishop in his place. The monophysite patriarch of Antioch, Athanasius, was equally obdurate at a meeting with emperor in 631, and, once again Heraclius, changing persuasion to repression, deprived the recalcitrant monophysites of their churches and monasteries for the benefit of his own supporters. (38)

- (37) There is an account by Thomas, Nestorian bishop of Marga of how ten Jacobite monks nearly murdered the abbot Rabban Hormizd and of the reprisals against them. See The Book of Governors, ed. & trans. E. A. Wallis Budge, London, 1893, Vol. 1 chs. 41-46. On the rise of the monophysites under Persian rule and their conflict with the Nestorians see J. Labourt, Le Christianisme dans L'Empire perses sous la Dynastie sassanid, Paris, 1904, pp. 217-246 and L. Duchesne, L'Eglise au VI Siècle, Paris, 1925, pp. 304 - 337. The former should be used with caution when it refers to events outside Persian territory. See the review by E. W. Brooks, EHR 20 (1905) pp. 130-131.
- (38) Michael the Syrian, vol. 2 p.412. For a description of the church in the eastern provinces during the Persian and Arab invasions, see Duchesne, pp. 338-340.

In Egypt, just as in Syria, the monophysites had been encouraged by the Persians. They had become the official church and the recognised intermediary between the occupying power and the people. Their patriarch, Benjamin had been very popular. When the Persians left Egypt, he absented himself for ten years - significantly enough until the coming of the Arabs. Heraclius appointed as patriarch Cyrus and gave him civil and military as well as ecclesiastical power. At a synod held in Alexandria in 631 Cyrus compelled the acceptance of a combination of the symbol of Chalcedon with the monothelite concept of a single will in Christ. But this, while failing to commend itself to the Egyptian monophysites at the same time horrified the Chalcedonians.(39) Sophronius who became the patriarch of Jerusalem shortly after the expulsion of the Persians called it the greatest heresy of all, and, although Sergius, the monothelite patriarch of Constantinople, managed to obtain the support of the pope Honorius in 638,(40) it was repudiated by subsequent popes and later led to dissensions in Italy and North Africa.(41)

(39) In Egypt at this time there were probably five million monophysites as against three hundred thousand Chalcedonians. See C. J. Hefele, Histoire des Conciles, Paris, 1909, Vol. 3 p.322.

(40) See below, p.193

(41) See below, p.193

Lastly, Heraclius was unfortunate in his handling of the Jewish question. There were large Jewish communities in many of the towns in Syria and Palestine. The Jews had recovered to a certain extent from the disaster inflicted upon them by Titus, they had obtained some selfgovernment under the Antonines, and, until 433, had even had their own patriarch. But, from then onwards, their position began once more to deteriorate. In 553, Justinian imposed restrictions upon the services in the synagogue.(42) The civil rights of the Jews gradually began to be circumscribed. The holding of public office was restricted to those instances where it was most expensive. Relations with the Christians of Antioch and Caesarea worsened, and many of the Jews must have looked upon the Persians as deliverers rather than as enemies. But their disaffection just before the invasion has been very much exaggerated. The disorders in Syria and Palestine between 607 and 610 are, in a number of sources, put down to other causes. According to Paul the Deacon, it was the circus parties, "the Greens and the Blues" who "about that time produced a state of civil war throughout Egypt and the east accompanied by great slaughter"(43). Michael

(46) 'The Capture of Jerusalem by the Persians' *EBR* 25 (1910)

(42) Novel 146, quoted by J. B. Bury, History of the Later Roman Empire, London, 1923, vol. 2 p.366.

(43) Historia Langobardorum, Bk. 4, ch. 36 - MGH *SS Rerum Langobardorum*, p.128 (16-17).

the Syrian supports the view that the cause of the troubles was the traditional struggle between the circus parties (44), while John of Nikiou believes that all the bloodshed was the result of the insistence of the monophysites on choosing their own bishops in defiance of imperial prohibition (45). Particularly the riots in Jerusalem, which materially helped the Persians to capture the city are ascribed to the circus parties in an interesting passage (46):-

"But in those days there arrived certain wicked men who settled in Jerusalem. Some of them aforetime dwelled in this holy city with the devil's aid. They were named after the dress which they wore, and one faction was dubbed the Greens and the other the Blues. They were full of a villiany, and were not content with merely assaulting and plundering the faithful, but were banded together for bloodshed as well as for homicide. There was war and extermination among them and they constantly committed evil deeds even against the inhabitants of Jerusalem".

Identifications have been made in the sources between the Jews and one of the circus parties although they have been contradictory (47). This is not done here although it might

- (44) Vol. 2 pp. 378-379. Jewish misbehaviour is clearly described as the result not the cause of the disorders.
- (45) Chronicle, trans. R. H. Charles, London, 1916, p.166.
- (46) 'The Capture of Jerusalem by the Persians' EHR 25 (1910) p.503. See above, p.14
- (47) Malalas, Chronographia, 389, thinks the Jews always supported the Blues, but Theophanes, 182.16, links them with the Greens. It is likely that they were automatically connected with the party unpopular at the moment.

have suited the author who does specifically accuse the Jews of revenge on the Christian population - but after the victory of the Persians (48).

(51) The source providing the chief evidence that the Jews were the main cause of the disorders in the east and that they thus assisted the invaders is the Doctrina Jacobi Nuper Baptizati (49). It is the work, as the title suggests, of a Jew converted to Christianity and the testimony of a convert against the members of his former religion ought to be treated with caution (50). The worst of which the Jews can, with any certainty, be convicted is their readiness to seize the chance of revenge when their opponents were temporarily at their mercy. Heraclius would have been wiser to have recognised that the Jews had for long been loyal citizens of the empire and not to have accepted the stories he must have been told of their behaviour during the invasion. He should have treated them leniently and not antagonised them as he did the monophysites. After his triumphant return to Palestine, he seems at first to have

(48) EHR 25 (1910) p.508.

(49) Ed. Bonwetsch, Berlin, 1910, See above, p. 13

(50) Y. A. Kulakovskiy for example, accepts the evidence completely in Istoriya Vizantii, Vol. 3. p.12. Its main importance is that it corrected the view that the great persecution of the Jews was initiated by Phocas. See Y. A. Kulakovskiy K Kritike Izvestii Feofana o Poslednikh godov Pravitel'stvo Foki, VV 21 (1914) pp. 1 - 14.

decided upon this course and to have promised them his protection. He was persuaded to change his mind and, in 630, a great slaughter of them took place in and around Jerusalem (51). Four years later, he ordered the forcible baptism of all the Jews in his dominions, supposedly as the result of a prophecy that a circumcised race would destroy the empire, and caused Sisibut, king of the Vizigoths and Dagobert, king of the Franks, to do the same (52). From that time on, the Jews looked openly for assistance from any enemy of the empire and became a far greater danger in the east than they had been at the time of the Persian invasion.

The victory over Persia, therefore, and its results, had not improved the situation in the frontier provinces. The long war and the temporary loss of Egypt had strained the resources of the empire which had not fully recovered after the maladministration of Phocas. In the north, the Avars had been decisively defeated at the seige of Constantinople and their dominion over the Slavs was crumbling. But, in the east, the Persian invasion had brought to the surface all the latent hostilities. Heraclius had intended to re-unite the provinces

(51) Eutyclus, Annales, MPG vol. 111 cols. 1089-1091.

(52) Doelger, Regesten, 207.

which he had re-conquered, but his attempt had ended in failure. the first thirty years of the seventh century had brought into sharp prominence the weakness of the links that bound the eastern territories to the capital. The last years of

The aftermath of the war against Persia had left the empire Heraclius and the first years of his successors were to see weaker in a number of respects and less capable of dealing with these links completely destroyed. any new enemies. Shortly after the cross had been triumphantly restored to Jerusalem, an incident seventy-five miles to the south - east at Mu'tah began a series of events which exploited this weakness to the full.

A troop of about three thousand Arabs, sent to avenge the death of an ambassador from their newly arisen leader Muhammad, were attacked and put to flight by the imperial general Theodore. Three amirs were slain and the remnant was led back to their capital Medina in al-Hijāz (1) by the young Khālid ibn al-Wālid - "the sword of God" (2). But, before his retreat, Khālid had seen much to tempt him in imperial territory, and, four years later, three armies under his command invaded Palestine completely defeating imperial troops led by a brother of Heraclius, somewhere west of the Jordan. In the same year the Arabs captured Gaza and Bessa and, on the 20th August, 635, the new enemies of the empire entered Damascus. In the summer of the

(1) The north-west of Arabia, parallel to the Red Sea.

(2) Theophanes, 335. 23 - 336. 3.

CHAPTER THREE

THE FIRST ARAB ONSLAUGHT

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(1) The north-west of Arabia, parallel to the Red Sea.

(2) Theophanes, 335. 23 - 336. 3.

(3) Al-Balādhuri, Vol. 1, p.335.

following year, after a battle lasting several days, another imperial army was defeated in the valley of the river Yarmūk, a tributary of the Jordan, and its two generals, Theodore and Baian, were killed. In 637, Jerusalem fell to a foe more dangerous than the Persians had been and the invaders pressed northward into Syria, capturing Antioch, which Heraclius abandoned without a struggle. By 640, despite being compelled to abandon Damascus for a short time and despite an outbreak of plague, the Arabs were masters of the whole of Palestine and Syria and had, besides, overrun Iraq and much of Mesopotamia. In December, 639, before the conquest of Syria was complete, another Arab leader, 'Amr ibn-al-'Ās, had with a small force of about three thousand five hundred carried out a raid into Egypt (3). An unbroken list of successes which turned a raid into a conquest was repeated. In January, 640, al-Faramā' (Pelusium), the gate of eastern Egypt, was captured and the Arabs proceeded south-westward along the Nile delta. Babylon fell, after a siege, on the 6th April 641, and Nikiu (Naqyūs) at the extremity of the delta, on May 13th. With fresh reinforcements, 'Amr turned northwards to attack apparently impregnable Alexandria which, however, fell to him on the 8th November. It was completely evacuated by the imperial troops within the year and the whole of the province of Egypt,

(3) Al-Balādhuri, Vol. 1, p.335. MPG vol. 121 col. 8230.

the richest and the most important of the empire, was added to the number of Arab conquests. This bare recital of events, in essence a chronology of Arab victories and imperial disasters that resulted in three provinces changing hands within seven years, is in itself an indication of one important cause for this phenomenon, a cause which cannot in any way be minimised. To some extent the Arab victories were simply the result of military superiority. The imperial armies could not be re-organised in time after their Persian campaign. On the Yarmūk the Arabs were faced by a mixed crowd of Armenian and Arabian mercenaries. Heraclius himself died on the 6th February, 641, at a critical point in the Egyptian campaign, and imperial forces there were weakened by the internal struggle that broke out between the supporters of his widow Martina and those of her step-son Constantine. Neither side had any money. Martina's faction, temporarily in power, antagonised the Egyptians even more by despoiling the churches, stopping the public dole and raising the taxes, (4) while, in the capital, Constantine was considering opening his father's tomb in order to sell the imperial crown that lay there (5). It scarcely needed the equivocal behaviour of the

(4) The hostility of the Egyptians to the imperial administration is shown, for example, in John of Nikiou, ch. 120 (pp.191-192)

(5) Cedrenus, Synopsis Historiarum, MPG vol. 121 col. 823C.

patriarch for Alexandria to be lost under such conditions (6). It is equally clear why little could be done against the Arabs in Syria (7). The immediate cause of the Arab victory was that the empire was too weak and disorganised to fight effectively. But this was not the whole of the explanation. The loss of the three provinces had other causes.

In the whole of Syria, Greco-Roman culture had scarcely existed below the surface. In the southern and eastern districts of Syria, in addition to the Aramaic influence, there were other influences coming from the desert and having no connection at all with the western world. Every summer, for hundreds of years before the coming of Islām, nomadic Arabs, driven by the scorching heat, were accustomed to cross the Syrian frontier. Permanent contacts had been established between these nomads and various sedentary tribes who lived in Syria and to whom they were racially akin. The long period of comparative peace under the Romans had caused commercial and

(6) This was Cyrus, appointed by Heraclius and exercising civil and military as well as ecclesiastical power, al-Mukaukis in Arabic sources. See A. J. Butler, 'On the Identity of 'al-Mukaukis of Egypt' Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology 23 (1901) pp.275-290. He was almost certainly responsible for the first capitulation of Alexandria, see al-Hakam, The Conquest of Egypt, trans. C. C. Torrey, Biblical and Semitic Studies, Yale, 1901, p.287.

(7) See above pp. 46-50

social intercourse on the frontier to flourish. A series of Syro-Arabic kingdoms had established themselves in this region of which the last and most important, was that of the banu-Ghassān. The Ghassānids had become Christian in the fourth century and had later, in common with the majority of the Syrians, accepted the monophysite interpretation of which they were enthusiastic propagandists. The monophysite historian John of Ephesus speaks of one of their kings, al-Mundhir as "both a believer and an active and zealous man" and as one who for long "had regarded Jacob Baradaeus as a great man"(8). The capital of the Ghassānids was at al-Jābiyah, fifty miles south of Damascus in a highly strategical position on the banks of the Yarmūk.(9) The Ghassānid state was an excellent bulwark against the continually encroaching nomads from the deserts. But the emperors were unable to make proper use of this aid to the defence of their eastern frontier despite its efficiency being proved on more than one occasion. Although al-Hārith, the father of al-Mundhir, was well received by Justinian and given a position with a military rank (10) and although both

(8) Ecclesiastical History trans. R. Payne Smith, London, 1860, pp.284 & 285.

(9) The military potentialities are discussed by L. Caetani, Annali dell' Islam, Vol.3. p.928.

(10) Theoph. 240 (13-17)

al-Harith and al-Mundhir fought consistently against the neighbouring Arabic kingdom which had a dynasty supported by the Persians, the successors of Justinian did not for long believe that a monophysite ruler could be a loyal subject.(11) Both al-Mundhir and his son al-Nu'mān were in turn imperial prisoners and their realm was broken up into a number of small states even before the Persian invasion had brought anarchy to the whole region. The victorious Heraclius made one of his many errors in refusing to give financial support to what remained of the Ghassānid regime. Genuine lack of resources may well have been the reason, but the refusal could have been phrased less bluntly if the version of Theophanes is to be believed.(12) The last of the Ghassānids is supposed to have fought on the imperial side at the battle of the Yarmūk before himself embracing Islām (13) but it is only reasonable to conclude that his followers were scarcely enthusiastic opponents of the Arab invaders to whom they were connected by race and language and who were fighting against a power which despite

(11) John of Ephesus. p.415.

(12) "My master scarcely pays his soldiers, should he give money to dogs?" - Theoph. 335.23.

(13) al-Balādhuri, Vol. 1. pp.208-209.

many years of loyal service had persisted in treating the Ghassanids with suspicion and insults. The Ghassānid kingdom had been in two ways important to frontier defence. It had been a barrier between the cities of Palestine and Syria and the traditional infiltrations from the desert, not inevitably hostile but always potentially dangerous. Secondly, it had been an area where Greco-Roman, Syrian and Arab customs could meet and, in time, possibly fuse into a unity not necessarily opposed to the government in Constantinople. Al-Hārith and his successors might have become the focus of loyal elements on both sides of the frontier, but the emperors could not overcome their mistrust of those who held an opposite theology and the fatal gap between the inhabitants of Syria and Palestine and the imperial government remained unbridged.(14)

- (14) P. Goubert, 'La Problème Ghassanide a la veille de l'islam', Actes du VI-ième Congrès d'Etudes Byzantines, Paris, 1948, Vol.1. pp.103-118, holds the view that al-Mundhir was in the pay of the Persians and that the policy of Justinian and of Tiberius II had been originally inspired by Theodora who was known to be sympathetic to the monophysites. He believes that Maurice was right in reversing that policy since no real trust could ever be placed in what Goubert calls "the oriental spirit". It may well be that Ghassanid kings were on occasions bribed by the Persians as they were by the Romans, since both sides realised their value as allies, and Goubert is right in implying that the Ghassanids would tend to compare the practical advantages to be gained from each rather than be guided by any principles. It is still to be regretted that the empire abandoned its policy of encouraging this flourishing kingdom on the Syrian frontier which was at least receptive to Greco-Roman ideas and potentially valuable as an ally in war.

The mistaken policy of Heraclius after the defeat of the Persians (15) widened this gap and weakened the resistance that might have been made against the Arabs though it would be inaccurate to think of an east unreservedly welcoming the invader. It is difficult to be certain about the attitude of the Jews, for example since contemporary accounts are inevitably biased. It is likely, however, that after the events of 630-34 (16) the Jews would not be unfriendly to declared enemies of the empire. The Armenian historian Sebeos asserts (17) that, after the persecutions, "they turned their steps to the desert to the sons of Ishmael and requested them to come to their assistance, adducing the Holy Scriptures as proof of their common origin". Twelve thousand are supposed to have fled to the Arabs after Heraclius had driven the Persians from Edessa, and to have assisted the Arabs in their invasion of Palestine. There is much that is doubtless exaggerated here, but it is likely that such of the Jews as survived the persecutions and forced baptisms must have welcomed the new invaders. On the

(15) See above, pp. 46-50

(16) See above, pp. 53-64

(17) Sebeos, 95.

other hand, it would be incorrect to assume any sympathy towards Judaism from the new religion. Muhammad drew many of his ideas both from confused versions of Judaism and of Christianity and allotted both to Jews and Christians, in theory at least, a special place in the Islamic commonwealth as "the people of the book". But there are a number of passages in the Qu'ran which specifically name the Jews as having strayed from the true path (18), and between 624 and 627 Muhammad and his supporters in al-Hijāz had successively attacked and annihilated the three tribes there professing Judaism (19). It was precisely the sudden worsening of conditions for them within the empire which drove the Jews to unite with the enemies of the empire. It was imperial policy and not the attraction of Islām which made of the Jews an additional hostile element in an already hostile province.

In the same way, the manner in which the presence of monophysites assisted the Arab invaders needs careful analysis. Heraclius' return had meant the persecution of the monophysite church by the melkites, and this had increased the dissatisfaction which already existed with imperial rule. In Egypt,

(20) *History of the Patriarchs, Patrologia Orientalis* Vol. 1.

(18) See esp. Sūrah, 5, verse 85.

(19) The Banu Kainuka, Banu al-Nadīr and Banu Kuraiza. The events are celebrated in the Qu'ran, Sūrah 33, verses 26 and 27.

for example, where among other incidents, the brother of the monophysite patriarch was horribly tortured (20), the Arab victory was put down directly to the wickedness of the Chalcedonians (21) while there is some indication that the monophysites among the Egyptian population openly refused to take up arms in defence of the empire (22). Apart from these events, a close similarity has been suggested between Islāmic beliefs about Christ and the docetic version of the monophysite doctrine. Professor Grégoire (23) has pointed out that one reference to Christ in the Qu'rān could have a strictly docetic interpretation, that which describes the crucifixion:

"Yet they slew him not and they crucified him not but they only had his likeness" (Sūrah 4, verse 156)

In the same Sūrah, (verse 169) Christ is spoken of as "a Spirit proceeding from God" which could also be taken in a docetic sense though Professor Grégoire does not mention this additional evidence. The Yemenite Church, in the south of Arabia, which, after a difficult period, had been firmly established by the

(20) History of the Patriarchs, Patrologia Orientalis Vol.1. p.491.

(21) John of Nikiou, ch.121 (p.193)

(22) Ibid, ch.119. Compare al-Balādhuri, Vol. 1. p.346.

(23) 'Mahomet et le Monophysisme', Mélanges Diehl 1 (1930) pp.106-119. It should be remembered that the usual interpretation of this passage is that Muḥammad believed in the actual substitution of another person for Christ on the cross.

by the Abyssinians (24) was monophysite and possibly docetic in character (25), and the Ghassānids, on the opposite frontier were also monophysite (26). Professor Grégoire thinks that Muhammad possessed a fairly detailed knowledge of the controversies within Christianity and deliberately adopted these views in order to gain converts for Islām (27). It is possible however, to give another explanation of the similarity that may have existed between docetic ideas and the view of Christ expressed by Muhammad. Muhammad could only have gained any knowledge that he did have of Christianity from the Christians that he met or heard about. It was likely that they would be monophysites and therefore it is hardly surprising that his view of Christ should bear some resemblance to theirs. In fact, the monophysites themselves, while they could not be very hostile which his followers held made them more likely to be tolerant

(24) The Book of the Himyarites, trans. A. Moberg, ch. 48. (p.142)

(25) Chronique de Seert, ed. & trans. Addai Scher, Patrologia Orientalis, Vol.7. p.144.

(26) See above, p.60

(27) Similarly Muhammad gives a version of the legend of the Seven Sleepers in order to associate himself with other subjects which were being discussed in the Christian world according to Professor Grégoire.

(30) al-Balādhuri, vol. 1. p.103.

(31) Ibid, p.106.

against any enemy of the Chalcedonians, were by no means sympathetic to the religion of Islām. John of Nikiou, (28) while admitting that many of his compatriots became Muslim converts, speaks of them as having "accepted the detestable doctrine of the beast". In the north of the Yemen, the Najrānites remained Christian even after they had been transplanted to the outskirts of al-Kufah (29) and there are references to Najrānite bishops in the time of Hārūn-al-Raschīd, (30) while in the south Christianity disappeared only after the Abyssinian domination had been upset by the Persian Badhan who had himself accepted Islām in 628 and had carried out what was in all likelihood a forcible conversion of his new domain (31). It was not so much, therefore, that Muḥammad, by a deliberate acceptance of a particular Christian approach gained adherents to his cause, it was rather that the particular view of Christ which his followers held made them more likely to be tolerant of that version of Christianity which seemed most to accord with it. Certainly this tolerance was of great assistance to the Arabs in consolidating their earlier conquests. And while

(28) John of Nikiou, p.201., thus penetrating imperial Asia Minor

(29) al-Balādhuri, Vol. 1. p.100.). This raid took place in the

(30) al-Balādhuri, Vol. 1. p.103.

(31) Ibid, p.106., 'The Arabs in Asia Minor' JES 18(1898)

it would be a great mistake to suppose that Islām had an underlying similarity to monophysite Christianity, it is not unlikely that both these creeds would appeal more to peoples who could not be expected to understand the Graeco-Roman tradition in theology and who, through their cultural background and as a result of political events, had become positively hostile to it. The loss of the three provinces Syria, Palestine and Egypt was therefore the culmination of a long process the final stages of which had been ushered in by the Persian invasion. So far as Syria and Palestine were concerned, it was to some extent a reversion to the native culture which neither Greeks nor Romans had greatly influenced. But the impetus of the Arabs, once set in motion, could not halt at that point, while the material gains that the acquisition of these areas brought them encouraged them to fresh attempts at raiding and conquest. Five years after the series of fights on the banks of the Yarmūk which really brought to an end imperial rule in Syria and Palestine, an Arab force under an unknown leader crossed the Amanus mountains through the Baïlan pass and followed the coast line from Alexandretta to Tarsus, thus penetrating imperial Asia Minor for more than a hundred miles (32). This raid took place in the

(32) E. W. Brooks, 'The Arabs in Asia Minor' JHS 18(1898) pp.203-204.

year of the death of Heraclius and the empire was too troubled for any effective resistance (33) although al-Balādhuri mentions that there were a number of imperial fortresses along the route which Heraclius had left behind on his retreat (34). For the next five years there was peace on the frontier. Then, in 646, these same imperial fortresses were found to be deserted and were temporarily occupied by the Arabs (35). In the same year, or possibly two years later (36) they penetrated very much deeper into imperial territory. Michael the Syrian (37) speaks of them as reaching Amorium, which lies more than 250 miles north-west of Tarsus. They sacked it without occupying it, and wasted all the country round. There is some evidence that they embraced an even wider area. "When he went out", says Ibn al-Athīr of the leader of this raid, "he destroyed the fortresses as far as Antakhiya"(38). Syrian Antioch can hardly be meant, for the

(33) This first raid is not even mentioned in Greek sources.

(34) al-Balādhuri, vol. 1 pp.253-255.

(35) Brooks, 'Arabs in Asia Minor', p.183.

(36) al-Balādhuri, vol. 1 p.254.

(37) Michael the Syrian, vol. 2 p.441.

(38) Brooks, 'Arabs in Asia Minor', p.183.

natural way then would be to refer these events to the return journey. The conclusion can only be that this must have been Pisidian Antioch. If that be so, then the Arabs, in order to touch both Amorium and Pisidian Antioch must have covered in their journey the greater part of Asia Minor. Whether this supposition be accepted or no, it is clear that this raid was much more serious than either of the first two had been. Whatever frontier defences there may have remained by this time were obviously useless, since the Arabs appeared to be able to do what they pleased (39). It was rapidly becoming a question not so much of defending a frontier but of preventing Cappadocia, Phrygia and Lydia from suffering the fate of Palestine and Syria.

Three years later the Arabs had a new weapon. The khalif 'Umr who had dreaded the sea had been succeeded by the first of the 'Umayyads, 'Uthmān, who had no such inhibitions (40). An important obstacle to Arab expansion was thus removed. A fleet was quickly built, and, with that extraordinary adaptability and energy which characterised all Arab enterprises, as quickly proved its value for, in 649 Cyprus was attacked and

(39) On the other hand, the Arabs were able to construct a system of frontier defence - 'awāsim - with Antioch as its centre which proved very useful to them. See Brooks, 'Arabs in Asia Minor', p.203.

(40) See below, pp. 95

overrun.(41) This success resulted in the first imperial reaction to the Arab advance since the loss of Antioch. In 650 Constans II sent an embassy to Damascus and obtained a three year truce.(42) During this period, there appears to have been no attempt made to strengthen imperial frontier defence or take any other precautions against the time when Arab attacks were bound to be renewed. That day was not long in coming. Between 652 and 655 (43) three events occurred which put the actual existence of the empire into danger. A great sea battle was fought off the Lycian coast in which Constans himself barely escaped death or capture.(44) About

(41) Michael the Syrian, vol. 2 pp.441-2.

(42) Doelger, Regesten, 226.

(43) Ibn Athir (Brooks, 'The Arabs in Asia Minor', p.184) gives AH 32 (August 12th 652 - August 1st 653) as the year in which Constantinople was attacked by an Arab fleet. Sebeos (p.140) places this event in the 13th year of Constans (654) and adds that there was also an attack by land forces. Theophanes also gives 654 but only describes a naval battle and does not mention any attack on the capital (345.15). Rhodes also fell in 654 and the Colossus was melted down and sold (Theoph.345.8).

(44) M. Canard, 'Les Expéditions des Arabes contre Constantinople dans l'Histoire et dans la Légende', Journal Asiatique 208 (1926) pp.65, quotes an Arab tradition that the emperor was wounded.

(47) See above, pp.47-48

(48) John VI Catholicos, quoted by Tournebise, pp.97-98.

the same time, or, possibly, a little earlier, the Arabs captured Rhodes. Most serious of all, although Sebeos is the only non-Arabic authority to record it, there was, for the first time an actual attack upon the capital itself.(45) But, in 655, the Arab onslaught was temporarily halted because of internal troubles and the empire was granted a breathing space.

In the same year that the Arabs made their first step of westward expansion into Asia Minor, they made their first step northward into Armenia (46). The victory of Heraclius over the Persians had brought there neither peace nor contentment (47) and the attitude of the nobles had hardened into a settled enmity against the empire. Although an individual might continue to change sides with the old frequency, the opinion of the majority by the second half of the seventh century emerges clearly from their reply to Justinian II:-

"How many times under Greek rule have we received practically useless assistance in our worst disasters! Often, on the other hand our submission has only earned us insults. To swear fealty to you means exposing ourselves to death and destruction. Leave us, then, under the rule of our present masters who give us their protection.(48)

(45) Sebeos, p.140.

(46) This is the most generally accepted date. Jean Mamigonian, *History of Daron*, Langlois, Vol.1. pp.57-8, gives an earlier one.

(47) See above, pp.47-48

(48) John VI Catholicos, quoted by Tournebise, pp.97-98.

But for nearly seventy years the successors of Heraclius, with a great deal of misdirected energy, continued to act on the assumption that by a sufficient show of force they could unite in Armenia a substantial number of the nobles in support of their policies. This assumption was proved to be entirely mistaken. Their influence rarely extended beyond the area of actual conquest. While the only result of their efforts was to subject the land to long periods of devastation and ruin which would have been even greater had it been more suitable for military operations.

Most of the Armenian nobles took little notice of the new invaders. The Arab governor of Mesopotamia occupied without opposition the frontier district of Arzan, and from there marched eastward through the mountains by the Bitlis pass to Akhlat'. On 6th October, 642, the Arabs fell upon Dwin, the capital of Armenia and burned its churches. Ghevond, the nearest contemporary historian after Sebeos, has a particularly vivid account of this episode (49). They were allowed to return to Syria unmolested with their plunder, and Ghevond states that the Armenian forces made no attempt to hinder them (50). The following year, (51) there was another invasion when the Arabs

(49) Histoire des Guerres et des Conquêtes, trans. G. V. Chahnazarian, Paris, 1856, ch.3.

(50) Ghevond, op.cit., p.9.

(51) Ghevond, ibid. The date "A.H.36" is clearly a misprint.

separated their forces into three divisions which took apparently pre-arranged routes (52). The one which was plundering the district of Gokhovid, feeling itself completely safe from interference and taking no precautions, was attacked and massacred by the Armenian Theodore Rishtuni (53), who apparently was one of the few Armenians to think he could gain something from the empire. His action encouraged the imperial government to send a certain David Utratii on a reprisal raid into Mesopotamia whose sole achievement was to destroy the defenceless village of Beit Ma'da with a thoroughness which caused a protest from one of his own officers (54). In addition to Rishtuni and Utratii, Symbat Bagratouni, a member of one of the oldest Armenian families who had been implicated in a conspiracy against Heraclius in 638 and was now rehabilitated, enjoyed the favour of the imperial court. Nevertheless, imperial influence in Armenia did not grow any stronger, nor did the standing of those known to be within its orbit count for very much with the rest of the Armenian that of Theodore.

(52) Sebeos, p.108.

(53) Ghevond, op.cit. p.10. *Prinya Vissntii, Kiev, 1915, Vol.3, p.191 appears to misunderstand the feelings of the nobility*

(54) Michael the Syrian, Vol.2. pp.443-4. *ing with the Armenians before no more secure despite imperial recognition".*

(55) Ghevond, pp.3-5. His dates are confused but he is undoubtedly referring to this incident.

(57) See above, p.48

nobility.(55) In fact, it seems, that the Emperor Constans himself was not particularly confident in the policy which he was pursuing. He so little trusted Theodore that, during the next Arab incursion into Armenia which began in 644, the imperial general Procopius would neither grant Theodore assistance nor give him permission to act on his own.(56) Theodore disobeyed these orders and it was probably for this that he was taken to Constantinople in chains. He was shortly after released, perhaps through the efforts of Nerses III Shinogh ("The Constructor"), the Armenian Catholicos. After the forced union of 629, (57) the Armenian church had become more and more estranged from the west. But, just as it was possible nearly always to find someone from among the Armenian nobility who would for a time, at least, support imperial claims, so it was equally possible to find someone from among the Armenian clergy to accept the interpretation of Chalcedon. Such a one was Nerses, Catholicos from 642 to 660, but his friendship proved to be of no greater value to the empire than that of Theodore.

(55) Y. A. Kulakovskiy, Istoriya Vizantii, Kiev, 1915, Vol.3. p.191 appears to misunderstand the feelings of the nobility when he says that "Theodore's standing with the Armenians became no more secure despite imperial recognition".

(56) Ghevond, pp.5-6. His dates are confused but he is undoubtedly referring to this incident.

(57) See above, p.48

In 646, the Arabs once more captured the Armenian capital, but, far from this event influencing the Armenians in favour of the Byzantines, the moderate behaviour of the Arabs persuaded them that their best chance of future protection lay in that quarter rather than in the west. In 648-9, a Synod was held which rejected the "Type"(58) of Constans and confirmed that the Armenian church was no longer in communion with the church of Constantinople. It is difficult to see how this could have come about without at least the acquiescence of Nerses, the supposed supporter of Chalcedon. The existence of a determined monophysite church was in other areas of great assistance to the Arab cause, and Armenia was no exception. Six years after this Synod, Theodore himself, apparently without any opposition from the Armenian nobility or clergy, openly signed a treaty with the Arabs:-

"The same year (12th of Constans)" says Sebeos "the Armenians separated and freed themselves from Greek rule and passed under that of the Ishmaelite king ('Uthmān). They came to an agreement with death and made an alliance with hell, by following Theodore, lord of the Rishtunis and of all the Armenians, and rejecting the alliance with God. The leader of the Ishmaelites (Mu'āwiyah) bargained with him and said, 'So that there may be peace between us for as many years as you may desire, I will not levy tribute on you for seven years. But, according to your pledge, you must give as much as you wish, and you must provide

(59) Sebeos, pp. 132-134.

(58) See below, p. 194

for fifteen thousand horsemen in your country. You must supply them with bread and I shall count it in the list of royal tribute. I shall not require the horsemen to go to Syria. But anywhere else that I may order them to go, you must be ready to send them. I shall not place Emirs in your fortresses, not a single Arab officer or horseman. No enemy must come to Armenia, and, if the Greeks march against you, I shall send soldiers to your aid, as many as you want.' thus did he, the great ally of Anti-Christ, separate them from the Greeks."(59)

It is scarcely necessary to comment on the favourable nature of these terms which Sebeos, no friend to the Arabs, has to quote. They were, in fact, more favourable by far than those given to the Armenian city of Tiflis six years previously,(60) and for a very good reason. The decision of the Synod cannot have been unknown to the Arabs. They saw the trend of events in Armenia and immediately the opportunity arose took the chance that it offered to them. For, so long as the Armenians could get protection so cheaply and could, moreover, see in Syria and Egypt an example of religious tolerance, the imperial cause was lost, despite any subsequent changes of military fortune.

But, unfortunately for themselves no less than for the Armenians, Constans and his successors could not appreciate the uselessness of military successes unaccompanied by an

(59) Sebeos, pp.132-134.

(60) See below, p. 97

acceptable diplomacy, and, for the next fifty years, attempted by force alone to keep Armenia within the imperial sphere of influence. In 654, despite the menace nearer home, (61) Constans preferred to concentrate all his efforts on a full invasion of that unhappy country. He entered Dwin in triumph, imposed Chalcedonian orthodoxy upon the church, and summoned the principal notables to a grand council. It says much for the weakness of imperial influence even at this juncture, that he was unable to have Theodore declared a traitor, or indeed to injure him in any way apart from depriving him of his imperial titles of nobility. Shortly after, clearly unable to effect much by his presence, Constans left Armenia and Nerses went with him. But that strange man, who, in 648, had declared that the empire was the precursor of God's reign upon earth, (62) had no desire to complete his journey to the capital of that earthly paradise. Instead, he returned to Dwin, to the protection of Theodore and the pro-Arab nobility. (63) Thus, the results of Constans' show of force were utterly useless to the empire. They were disastrous to Armenia. In revenge for Constans' invasion, 1,775 hostages, acquired on the

(61) See above, p. 71

(62) Sebeos, p.132.

(63) Tournebise, p.367.

occasion of Mu'āwiyah's treaty with Theodore, were immediately slaughtered, and, when Constans had left, the Arabs fell furiously upon Armenia and gave the land three very gloomy years. The northern districts were entirely laid waste. Theodore, once more on the Arab side, drove one imperial force to the Black Sea and captured Trebizond. In the spring of 655, the imperial general Maurianos was defeated near Nakhitchevan and retreated into Georgia. But, by this time, internal difficulties stayed the Arab impetus in Armenia as they had stayed it in Asia Minor, and, in 656, the Arabs returned with much booty to Damascus, taking Theodore with them. It is significant of the real Armenian attitude that when the Arabs invaded again in 660 they immediately submitted to them, agreeing to the paying of tribute - and that on the recommendation of the same Nerses, his last act as Catholicos. Imperial policy in Armenia had been proved a complete failure and indications were not wanting that when the Arabs were ready to recommence the struggle, the total alienation of Armenia from the Greco-Roman world would be accomplished.

The first twenty-five years of Arab expansion had thus two main results so far as the empire was concerned. The loss of Syria and the beginnings of the end in Armenia meant the loss of those portions of territory which had been least

integrated into Greco-Roman civilisation. Egypt, which had, in fact, had a long history as part of that civilisation, had been steadily antagonised during the course of nearly two hundred years of religious controversy and persecution. It had been pushed out of the Greco-Roman orbit. First the Persian, and, then, the Arab, invasion only emphasised development which had already occurred. On the one hand, therefore, Arab expansion into all these territories did no more than complete the process which the Persians had begun and prove that the victory of the empire in the Persian War could bring no lasting benefits. On the other hand this first Arab expansion had another very important result. For the first time, territories truly Greco-Roman in character began, to be seriously menaced. The Persians had certainly reached Chalcedon on one occasion, but this solitary thrust could not be compared to the methodical Arab incursions, which, apart from short intervals, were to continue for year after year from the death of Heraclius to the accession of Leo III. The Slavs had overrun the Balkans and parts of Greece but they were very quickly being absorbed into the Greco-Roman pattern and the Bulgar threat was still in the future. It was the establishment of the Arabs in Syria and their successes in Armenia which really placed the empire on the defensive. The question that faced it in the middle of the seventh century was no longer a

problem of frontiers but almost the preservation of its actual existence. The reply to this challenge could not be a very effective one so long as the internal state of the empire was unsound. In addition to the disorganisation following the Persian wars, there were other causes to make the Arab attack at that time especially dangerous. It took place when one emperor had just died and another had to be found to succeed him - a process which was more often than not attended by disorders and conspiracies of every kind. Constans II, the grandson of the old emperor, who was ultimately successful, attempted to continue the policy of his predecessor in seeking a doctrinal compromise and was bitterly hated for it by the Chalcedonians and monophysites alike. (65) The Arabs were still not adepts at sea-fighting, (66) but, even this temporary advantage did not bring the empire much relief. When an imperial fleet re-captured Alexandria in 645 no good use was made of the victory, and the Arabs were back in the city within the year. In short, by the middle of the century, there seemed to be many reasons why the empire might not survive the conflict.

(65) See below, pp. 193-4

(66) The Arabs relied upon Egyptian naval contingents in their first attack on Cyprus (Michael the Syrian, vol.2. pp.441-442). In the battle off the Lycian coast (see above, p.71) one Arabic source suggests that there was an attempt to transform it into a land battle (Canard, p.65).

There were, however, a number of factors, both internal and external, which helped to prolong its existence, and the first of these was the respite afforded it by the dissensions which began to develop within the Muslim world.

During the very period when the Arabs began to make serious incursions into the heart of the Byzantine dominions, changes had begun within their own community with political and military consequences both for themselves and for the world that lay outside Islām. Dissensions of a kind apparently endemic in the Arabic social structure in these years came to the surface, and the particular way in which they did so needs to be noted for a just estimation of the results which they produced.

The unity of all Arabic tribes in the common bond of Islām had been by no means perfectly achieved by Muhammad before his death. The Riddah wars, supposedly fought against apostates, were more probably an indication of the old tribal feuds which continued to flourish, and which, not long after, came very much more to the forefront. These feuds were the result of rivalries which had existed long before the coming of the prophet and which were based upon claims of nobility of blood and purity of descent. They could involve struggles between groups of tribes, between tribes within the same group and between clans within the same tribe. There was, for

CHAPTER FOUR

THE Umayyad Revolution

During the very period when the Arabs began to make serious inroads into the heart of the Byzantine dominions, changes had begun within their own community with political and military consequences both for themselves and for the world that lay outside Islām. Dissensions of a kind apparently endemic in the Arabic social structure in these years came to the surface, and the particular way in which they did so needs to be noted for a just estimation of the results which they produced.

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example, a long-standing conflict between the Yemenite group of tribes and the tribes of the Kuraish group. The coming of Islām embittered this conflict. Muḥammad came from the Kuraish, but gained some of his first converts from the Yemenites - both heathen and Christian. (1) The tribes of the Kuraish group had their own internal jealousies. The Banu (tribe of) 'Abd Manāf, for example, considered itself to be the most aristocratic. That tribe itself was divided between the clan of the Hāshimites to which belonged Muḥammad, and the clan of the Umayyads from which arose the first great Arab ruling house. The coming of Islām helped to perpetuate the feud that had long existed between those two clans for the Umayyads had only become believers by force of circumstances and were despised accordingly by the Hāshimites. The defeat of the Riddah rebels by Khālīd ibn al-Wālid, the future conqueror of Syria, did not really eliminate the basis for future dissension. The rebels were forcibly converted to the new faith, and, once Muslim, found fresh material for dispute in the very structure of Islām.

The inevitable consequences of Muḥammad's death had never seriously been considered for the prophet, without having

(1) See above, pp. 65-67

ever explicitly claimed it, was supposed by his closest followers to be immortal. Methods for appointing a new leader had to be hurriedly improvised and the result was more or less accidental. Abu Bakr, Muḥammad's first successor or khālīf, was by no means unanimously accepted and the supremacy of Medina, despite the bloody suppression of the Riddah, was by no means secure. The whole subsequent record of internal strife covering the last half of the seventh century, can be in part related to those two sources - the continuation of blood-feuds and the uncertainty of the khilafat which neither strong religious feeling nor the growth of what, for want of a better term might be called Arab nationalism, managed to eradicate. On the contrary, the new faith itself made a distinctive addition to pre-Islāmic rivalries. Side by side with the old divisions there now arose a complicated system of family precedence based in general upon the supposed date of a particular family's adherence to Muḥammad. Thus his first converts ("The Companions") and their descendants, themselves elaborately subdivided, became the aristocrats of the new dispensation. The next to be converted - the so-called "helpers" (anṣārī) - founded a dynasty next in rank. Those who first made the pilgrimage to Mecca after the death of the prophet, those who knew the Qu'rān by heart and claimants to many other kinds of

honour in Islām, all had in theory a separate and unassailable place in the new hierarchy, and they and their descendants quarrelled and intrigued most bitterly in their efforts to preserve their known or supposed status for posterity.(2)

The events that followed the death of Abu Bakr, therefore, only emphasise the inherent disunity that for one reason or another continued to exist among the Arabs. His successor, 'Umr, lived in perpetual fear of his colleagues, fears which were apparently justified, for he was murdered on the 3rd November, 644. He left the choice of a successor to a shura or selection committee, and the choice fell upon 'Uthmān, a member of the Umayyad clan.(3) The result was fresh intrigues and jealousies, and, on the 17th June, 655, he in turn was murdered. This second murder, however, produced a very different situation from anything that had previously taken place during this first period of Arab expansion. Hitherto, despite the underlying conflicts, the leaders of the Factions and their followers had been able to prosecute a continuous struggle against the Byzantines and the Persians and to present an appearance of unity to the non-Islāmic world. Now

(2) J. Zaidan, Umayyads and 'Abbasids (E. J. W. Gibbs Memorial Series No.4), London, 1905.

(3) See above, p. 84

the situation had changed. The Persian empire had been destroyed and the Byzantines had been driven back beyond the Taurus. There was not the same sense of urgency to keep the conquerors united. The first result of the murder of 'Uthmān was to bring into the open the old feud between the Umayyads and the Hāshimites. Civil war broke out between Mu'āwiyah, an Umayyad, the governor of Syria, and 'Ali ibn Abu Tālib, a Hāshimite, the son-in-law of the prophet, in a struggle for the khilafat. The war continued until the murder of 'Ali in 661, but, although his son al-Ḥasan resigned his rights in return for a large annual pension, (4) Mu'āwiyah's seizure of the khilafat did not bring unity to the Arab world. The war had not been merely between two rivals for the khilafat or between two clans within the Abd Manāf tribe. It had enflamed whole series of old hatreds, and had, besides, engendered several new ones. For example, to the traditional rivalry between the Kuraish and the Yemenites was added a quarrel (5) between the Kelba tribe long in Syria and allied to Mu'āwiyah and a sect called the Ḥarīṭites (6) all fought each other,

(4) This is the usual account. See P. K. Hitti, History of Syria, London, 1951, pp.435-436. But at that early date it is unlikely that the succession could have been considered as naturally on an hereditary basis. Within

(5) the framework of Islamic custom as then accepted, al-Hasan had hardly rights to resign. Mu'āwiyah's was an ex-gratia

(6) payment and an instance of his shrewdness. See below, p.99

History of Syria, p.435. Michael the Syrian (Vol. 2 p.435) derives it from the village where the sect first arose. Chabot spells it "Harourite".

by marriage - and the Kais - who took the side of 'Ali. Furthermore, the Arabs introduced their habit of quarrelling into their new surroundings and rivalries between towns and territories only recently brought under their influence supplemented, and, occasionally cut across, the old rivalries between tribes. The war between Mu'āwiyah and 'Ali turned partially into a struggle for pre-eminence between al-Kūfa and Damascus, between Iraq and Syria. But neither the murder of 'Ali, nor the subsequent death of Mu'āwiyah in 680, could make final the victory of the Umayyads. Mu'āwiyah's son Yazīd had to wage a war against the holy cities of Mecca and Medina which put up a fierce struggle to return to the old Hāshimite khilafat, and, his death in 683 was followed by a year of confused fighting before the Umayyad Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam was proclaimed khālīf after the battle of Marj Rāhiṭ. But the Umayyads were still not secure. 'Abd al-Malik had to take part in a complicated struggle in which he, the Shī'ites (5) under a certain Mukhtār, the Kais led by Mu'ṣab and an extreme religious sect called the Khārijites (6) all fought each other, a struggle in which he was only partially successful by 692.

(7) Hunger was perhaps the most important single cause - illustrated in the verse quoted by P. K. Hitti, History

(5) The followers of 'Ali. 1937, p.144:-

"No, not for paradise didst thou this nomad life forsake"

(6) The name means "seceders" according to P. K. Hitti, and History of Syria, p.433. Michael the Syrian (Vol.2 dates, p.450) derives it from the village where the sect first arose. Chabot spells it "Harourite".

The dissensions of the Arabs, therefore, from the murder of 'Uthmān to the accession of 'Abd al-Malik show very clearly that Arab unity in the first period of expansion was temporary, superficial and had not been strengthened by Islām in its earlier forms. The postponement of the conquest of Africa and Armenia, and the inability to accomplish the conquest of Asia Minor or to make much impression in the early sieges of Constantinople can be in part explained by this internal discord, of which the intermittent open wars were only symptoms. While this discord lasted, it was obviously the greatest source of safety for the world outside Islām, which after the destruction of Persia, consisted in what remained of the old Roman empire. But this discord was only the expression of a much deeper conflict which the rise to power of the Umayyads brought to Islām, and which had important political and military results. Arab expansion was due to a large number of causes amongst which the desire to gain converts to the new faith was relatively unimportant (7) and it has indeed been necessary

(7) Hunger was perhaps the most important single cause - illustrated in the verse quoted by P. K. Hitti, History of the Arabs, London, 1937, p.144:-

(8) "No, not for paradise did'st thou this nomad life forsake
 (9) Rather, I believe, it was thy yearning after bread and dates.

to reject the old concept of a fanatical horde bearing the choice of Qu'rān or sword to the infidel. But it would be wrong to eliminate religious motives altogether. For, while the actual reasons for the expansion may have had little to do with any religion, principles based upon the religion of Islām did to a great extent govern the actions of the Arab leaders during the first few years of expansion and conquest. The intentions of the first four khālifs, and of Muḥammad himself, undoubtedly included the establishment and maintenance of an Islamic theocracy. Such a state would make no distinction between spiritual and secular obligations. Its people would live in complete equality irrespective of rank or wealth, and their chief task would be to preserve the purity of their doctrine and to bring worthy converts into the fold. These principles had been insufficient to produce real unity among the Arabs, (8) and, while they still were guided by them, their powers of expansion were not very great. They were only able to conquer areas where the population had already some racial or cultural kinship with them, or where it had become thoroughly disaffected to its former rulers.(9) But, almost

(8) See above, pp. 85-86

(9) See above, pp. 57-59 for Egypt as an example.

from the very beginning, another tradition had begun to arise of which the exponents were the Umayyads, just as the exponents of the former had been the Hāshimites, and which differed from the original tradition in practically every important aspect.

First of all, it is by no means certain that the original Arab attitude to conquest was what it became under the Umayyads and, generally, in later Islāmic History. Professor Hitti, for example, after pointing out that, in theory, all wars waged by Muslims were a jihād, that is, holy wars, being of believers against unbelievers, goes on to suggest that from the very beginning it was the duty of every Muslim to increase the size of the dār-al-Islām, that is the land of Islām, by decreasing the size of the dār-al-hārb, that is hostile lands, that, in other words, there was an explicit injunction to territorial conquest (10). But it is difficult to find unequivocal support for this view either in the Qu'rān or in the hadīṭ (11) although there is plenty of glorification of fighting in general and many direct exhortations to defend the dār-al-Islām. "He who dies and has not fought for the religion of Islām, says a typical hadīṭ, " nor has ever said in his heart 'would to God I were a champion that could die in

(10) Hitti, History of the Arabs, p.136.

(11) The oral tradition, as distinct from the written tradition of the Qu'rān.

the road of God' is ever as a hypocrite". Again, "Fighting in the road of God or resolving to do so, is a divine duty. When your Imām orders you to go forth to fight then obey him".(12)

In a number of sūrahs of the Qu'rān very similar sentiments are expressed, but, in neither compilation, is it easy to find any direct exhortation to conquest or invasion. In fact such exhortations are missing precisely from the passages where they might be expected to occur, while other passages, in a sense, discourage wholesale expansion and conquest.

"Guarding the frontiers of Islām for one day," says another hadith,(13) "is worth more than the whole world and all that is in it". It is there for example, that one might expect an injunction to cross the frontiers and endeavour to expand them. The two chief references in the Qu'rān dealing directly with this topic read respectively "Kill those who join other gods with God wherever you shall find them"(14) and "Make war upon those to whom the scriptures have been given as believe not in God and who forbid not that which God and his holy apostles have forbidden".(15) Not only is there in neither

(12) T. P. Hughes, Dictionary of Islam. London, 1885. pp.244-245.

(13) Hughes, *ibid.*

(14) Sūrah ix. 5-6.

(15) Sūrah ix. 29.

any suggestion of territorial conquest or annexation but it may even be argued that the first surah must automatically exclude all Christians and Jews from attack, (16) and that the second can only refer to backsliding Christians, Jews, and, for that matter, Musl^oms. In short, while there is plenty of authority for raids on adjacent territories, it is hard to find anywhere in the earlier Musl^om scriptures or traditions encouragement for wars of deliberate conquest.

It may be objected that the distinction being made is a very fine one, and that glorification of war as such, and war especially against the enemies of Isl^am, would have had very much the same result as any direct injunction to expansion or conquest. It is true enough that, in the actual fighting, such exhortations tended to make the Arab more effective than his opponent. But it is only necessary to examine the attitude of the kh^alif 'Umr, the first Arab ruler to be confronted with these questions in practice, in order to realise that conscious expansion was in no sense a part of the original Isl^amⁱc outlook. 'Umr was extremely reluctant to extend the gains made in Syria and Iraq. (17) The sole object

(16) It cannot be too strongly stressed that early Isl^amⁱc teaching always made favourable exceptions for Christians and Jews - "People of the Book."

(17) These had followed the routes of traditional migrations (see above, pp. 4-60) and were not the results of "expansion".

of his policy was to consolidate and defend Islam against a Byzantine or Persian counter-attack. Until 638 he tried to enforce the old precept which prohibited Arabs from journeying further from Medina than a camel could travel in a day.(18)

It was the attempt to extend this distance which was first called "expansion" - in 'Umr's use by no means a term of approbation. For a long time he withheld permission to invade Egypt, hedging and making all kinds of difficulties until the last possible moment. On one occasion he is said to have prayed that a wall of fire might descend between the Arabs and Persians to prevent them from coming into conflict with each other. He tried to hinder members of the Kuraish from ever leaving Medina at all, and would reply to requests for such permission with the pronouncement, "Thou hast raided sufficiently with the prophet of God, rather than thou shouldst go raiding today, it were better for thee to quit this world.(19) And when, after the conquest of Egypt, 'Amr al-'Āsi, the victorious Arab general, asked for permission to invade Africa, 'Umr replied, "Nay, it is not "Africa" but 'Mafriqa' (place of scattering) betraying and betrayed. No

(18) Zaidan, p.32.

(19) Zaidan, p.33.

Eventually ~~the~~ one shall invade it as long as I live.(20) His dislike of the sea did not arise from the existence of any religious prohibition. On the contrary, in the Qu'rān Allah is spoken of as:

"he who made subservient to you the sea that ships may run therein by his command."(21)

while Muhammad specifically permitted voyages by sea to three classes of Muslims - pilgrims, visitants and warriors. But 'Umr saw that experience of seafaring would lead to temptation for expeditions further and further afield and his dislike of this possibility was in accord with the fundamental teaching on the subject of "expansion".(22) This outlook began to change during the khilafat of 'Uthmān and the change was considerably accelerated by Mu'āwiyah and his successors. New ideas about expansion encouraged raids into Asia Minor and the building of a fleet became a military necessity.(23)

(20) al-Hakam, p.287.

(21) Sūrah XVI. 14.

(22) It is true that Mu'āwiyah's intrigues were partly the cause of the rejection of 'Amr's request. See a notice of G. F. Hourani's book (note 23 below) in EHR 67 (1952) p.428.

(23) Inhabitants of Southern Arabia had been seafarers for long before the coming of Islām - it was for the north that it was a novelty. See G.F.Hourani, Arab Seafaring in the Indian Ocean in Ancient and Medieval Times, (Princeton Oriental Studies No.13) Princeton, 1951, and N. Abbot's comment in his review of this book, Journal of Near Eastern Studies, 12 (1953) p.141, (note 1).

Eventually Constantinople itself was besieged and, when opportunity offered, the conquest of Africa and Armenia was undertaken. This new, conscious policy of conquest, which had little sanction in the original teaching of Muhammad, was only one aspect of a wider change that the rise of the Umayyads was bringing to Islam.

One aspect of this development was a slight but, nevertheless significant change in the attitude to the conquests which the Arabs were making. The earlier attitude emerges clearly from the terms of truce given to the people of Damascus after its first capture in September, 635:-

"In the name of Allah the compassionate" says Khālid ibn al-Walid, "this is what he would grant to the inhabitants of Damascus. If he enters therein, he promises to give them security for their lives, property (24) and churches. Their city wall shall not be demolished neither shall any Moslem be quartered in their houses. Thereunto we give them the pact of Allah and the protection of his prophet, the khalif, and the believers. So long as they pay the poll-tax, nothing but good shall befall them.(25)

The terms given to Jerusalem were similar. The safety of churches was guaranteed and the authority of the patriarch

(24) E. Nys, *Le Droit de Gens dans les Rapports des Arabes et des Byzantins*, *Revue de Droit International*, 26 (1894)

(26) p.463, asserts that the protected property excluded imperial property, the property of fugitives and half of the remainder. But he gives no reference to a primary source for this view.

(25) al-Balādhuri, Vol.1 p.187.

Sophronius over his community was recognised. To these terms may be compared the text of a treaty made in 647 between Habīb ibn Maslamah and the inhabitants of Tiflis:-

"..... this is a statement to the inhabitants of Tiflis securing them safety for their lives, churches, convents, religious services and faith, provided they acknowledge their humiliation and pay tax to the amount of one dinar to every household Ye owe us council and support against the enemies of Allah and his prophet to the utmost of your ability, and are bound to entertain the needy Moslem for one night If a Moslem is cut off from his companions and falls into your hands, you are bound to deliver him to the nearest body of believers. If ye return (26) to the obedience of Allah and observe prayer, ye are our bretheren in faith, otherwise poll-tax is incumbent on you. In case an enemy of yours attacks and subjugates you while the Moslems are too busy to come to your aid, the Moslems are not held responsible, nor is this a violation of the covenant with you. The above are your rights and obligations.(27)

The language of this second treaty is much more strict, but, it is important to note, that this is by no means the result of an increase in religious fervour. Christianity continues to enjoy the same protection that, in theory, in Muslim lands it has always shared with Judaism as one of the "dhimma" or tolerated communities. On the contrary, it is stricter from obligations in the secular sphere which are being prescribed.

proved to be an irresistible temptation. The third of the

(26) This phrase suggests that Islām was considered as the original faith from which Christianity had degenerated. But the more usual assertion was that Judaism was the offender in this respect. (See above, p.63)

(27) al-Balādhuri, Vol.1. pp.316-317.

An unbeliever is expected to play his part in defending the faithful. A clear distinction is for the first time drawn between religious rights and the duty owed to the state - and it is on the latter that the stress is placed.

With the Umayyads there came about, too, a social change which was equally as significant. The original Kuraish aristocracy had been poor by the standards of Greek and Persian rulers, and the first khālifs had seriously attempted to implement the democratic aspect of Islām by not acquiring wealth greatly in excess of that possessed by their followers. 'Umr, in particular, was renowned for his modesty in that respect and is said to have upset Sophronius by the poverty and the dirtiness of his dress on his entry into Jerusalem.(28) In 640, after the Arabs had captured Babylon, the ambassadors from Alexandria are supposed to have said of them, "Their leader is like unto one of them: the low cannot be distinguished from the high, nor the master from the slave." (29) But, as conquests increased, so did the proceeds from the tax on unbelievers, and a swelling central treasury proved to be an irresistible temptation. The third of the

(31) Zeidan, p.156.

(28) Theoph. 339 (17-29)

(29) al-Hakam, quoted by Hitti, History of the Arabs p.163 (this passage is from a section not translated by C. C. Torrey)

so-called "Pious Khālifs"(30) 'Uthmān - who was himself the first of the Umayyads - amassed a personal fortune of fifteen thousand dinars and a million dirhems and his example was naturally followed and improved upon by his successors. The amount of the poll-tax was often raised and as often rigorously and violently exacted - occasionally from classes hitherto exempt, for example, the monks. It was even said to have been demanded from converts on the ingenious pretext that their dead relatives remained infidels and that therefore payment was due on their behalf.(31) The struggle with the 'Alids was an additional motive for acquiring wealth, for, by its aid, the supporters of that faction could be won over.(32)

This increase in wealth, together with all the other changes, was accompanied by a perceptible degeneration in the moral character of many an individual khālif. The contrast between the "Pious Khālifs" and the Umayyads in this respect can be undoubtedly exaggerated. 'Uthmān was one of the "Four"

(30) Abu Bakr, 'Umr, 'Uthmān and 'Ali.

(31) Zaidan, p.136.

(32) Mu'āwiyah is said to have lavished riches on his enemies as a matter of policy, for example on al-Hasan (see above p.87) His hilm, or subtlety, was much admired.

the brother of 'Abū al-ʿAlā' al-Faḥrī, who was rich and and his wealth and nepotism were alike notorious. But it built many churches cannot be altogether ignored. Instead of strict obedience to Islam with its well defined policy of toleration to certain other religions, there arose, in the closing decades of the seventh century, a capricious attitude unpredictably cruel and lax by turns. Of this are many examples. Mu'āwiyah seems to have left the Christian community and the Holy Places of Jerusalem undisturbed (33) and himself employed a Christian physician whom he advanced to high honours (34) while, at the same time, he divided the population of Egypt into "men" - the Muslims, and "non-men" - the Christian Copts.(35) On the other hand, a governor of Iraq had a Christian mother for whom he built a church, and employed Christians and Magians above Muslims in his service. The story is told of a certain Athanasius bar Goumāye who, as advisor and guardian of al-'Azīz,

(33) The Irish monk Arculfus, who visited Jerusalem about the year 670, has nothing derogatory to say about the new masters of Palestine. See Adamnanus, De Locis Sacris, ed. P. Geyer, Itinera Hierosolymitana saec. IV-VIII, CSEL vol. 39, Vienna, 1898. The only references appear to be to the building of a great mosque in Jerusalem (pp.226-227) to one in Damascus (p.276) and to Mu'āwiyah judging in a dispute between Jews and Christians (pp. 237-238).

(34) Hitti, History of Syria, vol. 2 p.475.

(34) Hitti, History of Syria, p.439.

(35) Zaidan, p.136.

the brother of 'Abd al-Malik, became enormously rich and built many churches in Edessa, his birthplace. (36) A Chalcedonian complained about him to the khālif, who, pronouncing that it was unfitting for a Christian to have such possessions ordered him to start giving them up to the treasury until it was decided that he had given up enough. The patriarch Mār Elias was received with all honour by the khālif Wālid in 708 and had his churches burned down by the same khālif two years later. (37) One Christian official of his who refused to accept Islām to eat of his own thigh flesh. 'Abd-al-Malik, in a similar instance, merely laughed when told that all the water in the Euphrates could not compensate for a single drop of wine which would be foregone by the convert. (38) Interest in poetry had always been widely diffused among the Arabs, and controversy about the merits of rival poets could even lead to disorders in the army. It was Abd al-Malik who encouraged a great poetic revival and displeased pious Muslim. He even had favourite Christian poets at his court whom he encouraged to compose satires on secular one. Such, undoubtedly, was the kind of change which

(36) Michael the Syrian, vol. 2 pp.475-477.

(37) Michael the Syrian, vol. 2 p.475.

(38) R. A. Nicholson, Literary History of the Arabs, Cambridge pp.137-138.

(40) Michael the Syrian, Vol.2 p.475.

(41) Hitti, History of Syria, p.441.

the "Companions" of the prophet.(39) Yet it was the same khālīf who showed his religious zeal in 694 by ordering the killing of all pigs and the destruction of all crosses in his dominions.(40) Sometimes these stories are not well authenticated but they illustrate none the less a strong tradition regarding the behaviour of the Umayyads. Finally, all these changes brought with them the beginnings of a significant new concept, based partly upon the old tribal aristocratic pretensions. It was no longer the Muslim who was the superior of the non-Muslim, but the Arab who had become the superior of all other peoples - Muslim and non-Muslim alike. This last change expressed within itself the meaning of all the others. It emphasised that the Umayyads had not merely supplanted one khālīf by another but had begun a veritable revolution within Islām.

It has been asserted by Shi'ite historians that it was Mu'āwiyah who transformed the "khilafat" into the "mulk" (kingdom),(41) that is, turned a theocratic state into a secular one. Such, undoubtedly, was the kind of change which was taking place within the Arab world during the last half

(39) R. A. Nicholson, Literary History of the Arabs, Cambridge 1930, pp.239-241.

(40) Michael the Syrian, Vol.2 p.475.

(41) Hitti, History of Syria, p.441.

of the seventh century of the Christian era, though it may be assumed that the theocratic state never completely existed except as an ideal in the minds of religious purists. It is true, that, for this ideal, the Umayyads did substitute quite another. But Mu'āwiyah alone was scarcely responsible as Shi'ite historians assert. If the actions of any one man were the cause, than it was 'Uthmān who, by acquiring great wealth on the one hand and by reversing the policy of his predecessor and permitting "expansion" on the other, provided both the incentive and the means for the growth of an open Arab imperialism. In fact, such a development within Islām was an obvious possibility from the moment when the first step had been taken outside the Arabian peninsula and the riches of the Mediterranean and Persian worlds were made visible to the eyes of the Arab tribesmen. This possibility was transformed into a reality under the Umayyads. In place of the economic necessity, which was most probably chiefly responsible for first setting the Arabs into motion, and the religious considerations which guided most of their early behaviour, there was substituted the desire to gain wealth and the luxuries and refinement that went with it by the establishment of an Arab empire which could not differ greatly in moral or cultural essentials from any other empire that had preceded it.

In short, the Islāmic world during this period was becoming afflicted with the common disease of all new religions and movements of humanity. The original impulse was beginning to weaken, the original motives for action were changing into something very different. In a later period, the new outlook would provide a much stronger basis for expansion and conquest than had the old. Meanwhile, the actual process of change was a check upon activity and a source of temporary safety for the world outside Islam. There were two reasons for this. First of all, the violent internal struggles, which were the first outward signs of this change, hindered the Arabs in their various raids and expeditions. For example, the truce obtained by Constans II in 650 (42) was only granted because the last of the "Pious Khālifs" was too occupied with the growing menace of the Umayyads to spare any time for an offensive against the Byzantines. Again, from the time of the murder of 'Ali until the seizure of power by Mu'āwiyah, there is no record of any Arab incursion into Asia Minor, while, in 659, Mu'āwiyah was actually compelled to pay a tribute of a thousand pounds in gold, together with a horse and a slave, to

(42) See above, p. 71

completely self-sustained occupying force. So far from Islām the Byzantine emperor.(43) During the same period the Arabs being without question originally a religion for the city were compelled to abandon their conquests in Armenia (44) and postpone any serious attempt upon Africa (45) while the failure of their "seven year siege" of Constantinople can be in part set down to the same cause.(46)

Secondly, the change of attitude involved in the substitution of the ideal of a secular empire with all the attributes of a complex urban civilisation for that of a theocracy governing the simple life of semi-nomadic tribes could not but be a very gradual one. In one sphere, for example, that change was particularly slow. Early Arab settlements in conquered territory were purely military encampments outside the walls of the cities which had been captured, for instance, Basrah, Kūfah and Fūṣṭat. Every effort was made to prevent any but the most essential contact with the local population and to preserve the Arabs as a

(43) Doelger, Regesten, 230.

(44) See above, p. 79

(45) 'Amr had captured the capital of the Pentapolis, Barca, in 642, Tripolis had been reached in 646, but there were no further advances for the next twenty years. See below, pp. 141-142.

(46) See below, pp. 122-123

(51) G. Strange, Palastine under the Moslems, London, 1890, pp. 336-357.

completely self-contained occupying force. So far from Islām being without question originally a religion for the city dweller as has been supposed by Marçais, (47) it should be remembered that 'Umr strongly advocated the virtues of a nomadic life and the dangers of a settled existence. "Never has the ploughshare entered the house", he is supposed to have said on one occasion (48) "but humiliation has entered it also". This attitude does not seem to have changed greatly under the Umayyads. The first, and the only town to be founded by the Arabs in Syria was al-Ramlah during the khilafat of Sulaimān ibn-'Abd-al-Malik (715-717)(49). Hārūn al-Raschīd tried in 800 unsuccessfully to rebuild Tyana in Cappadocia which had been captured and destroyed nearly a hundred years before (50) and there is not one Syrian or Palestinian city in the list given by Le Strange (51) in which there is any sign of Arab interest earlier than the beginning of the ninth century.

(47) G. Marçais, 'L'Islamisme et la Vie urbaine', Comptes rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres (1928) pp.89-94.

(48) Quoted by Zaidan, p.42.

(49) al-Balādhuri, vol.1, pp.220-221.

(50) See below, p.136

(51) Le Strange, Palestine under the Moslems, London, 1890, pp.334-367.

The whole of the earlier attitude therefore could not have simply been obliterated either by the death of 'Umr or by the rise to power of Mu'awiyah, and must have continued to persist, to some extent, both amongst the supporters and the opponents of the Umayyads. While it did so, it was undoubtedly a check upon unbridled expansion and aggrandisement. It was the sign of a period of transition during which the non-Islamic world was sheltered from the full force of the Arab onslaught. By the last decade of the seventh century, however, this period had nearly come to an end, and, the new, aggressive imperialism of the Umayyads was about to make a fresh attack upon the west. This was the decisive conflict which tested all the resources of the Heracleians.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE MARDAITES

In 661 Mu'āwiyah was victorious in his struggle against 'Ali and became khālīf.(1) This event did not by any means make the Umayyad dynasty secure or bring immediate stability to the Arab world. It was, however, the signal for a fresh outburst of aggressive activity which, although very intermittent in character and at first partially hindered by internal difficulties inflicted defeat after defeat upon the Byzantine armies and culminated in a grand attempt to capture Constantinople. As a beginning, Arab incursions immediately recommenced across the Syrian frontier. The leader of the first of these, possibly Mu'āwiyah himself, must have caught the Byzantines completely unprepared for, on that occasion, "the Roman commander made peace and did not care to engage with him".(2) In the following year (662), or, possibly in the spring of the year after, there was a very much more severe attack, noted Theophanes,(3) who, in contrast to his usual brief reference,

(6) al-Wakidi, quoted by Conrad, p.57.

(1) See above, p.87

(2) al-Yakūbi, quoted by Brooks, Arabs in Asia Minor, p.184.

(3) Theoph. 348 (13-14).

gives the information that many patricians were killed and much land was laid waste. By this time another event had added to the difficulties facing the imperial government. In 662 Constans II had left his capital for Italy and Sicily, never to return (4) and, during the next six years, the weakness of the defence in the east can be partly explained by the absence of the emperor. In 663 for the first time, the Arabs probably wintered in Byzantine territory, (5) and may have, once more, made a brief attack upon the capital. (6) In the course of the following two years their raiding bands reached Pisidian Antioch and Koloneia (the latter far to the north in the direction of Trebizond), while, to make matters worse, Slav troops to the number of five thousand who had been conscripted eight years previously into the Byzantine forces by Constans, deserted to them, remained under their protection, and, later, settled in Syria. In the autumn of 667 matters reached a climax with the revolt of the Byzantine general Shapur (7) on the Armenian frontier at the very moment when

(4) See below, p. 186. Brooks, 'The Arabs in Asia Minor', p. 185.

(5) Brooks, p. 184, Arabs in Asia Minor.

(6) al-Wakidi, quoted by Canard, p. 67.

(7) Theoph. 348 (29-30)

Arabian troops were actually wintering in Pisidian Antioch. Constans' son, the future Constantine IV, sent the cubicularius Andreas to Damascus in a vain attempt to persuade Mu'āwiyah that support of any rebel was in itself unwise (8), and the Arabs, with combined land and sea forces and reinforcements from Medina and Egypt moved to Shapur's assistance. Although Shapur was accidentally killed before a junction could be effected, the impulse had been given. The Arabs continued without him (9) and, with a great army, marched to Chalcedon. (10)

It is possible that the nature of this particular attack may have been even more serious. Constantinople may have been once again attacked, although no Greek source mentions this. Brooks (11) notes the names of two Arab annalists who say that in that year the Arabs did reach "al-Kunstantiyah". Canard (12) relates the story as handed down in other sources. According to this version, the Arab general Fadāla was first

(8) Doelger, Regesten, 235.

(9) On the way they are supposed to have sacked Antioch "the Black". The locality of this city seems impossible to determine, see Brooks, 'The Arabs in Asia Minor', p.185.

(10) Theoph. 351 (2-5)

(11) 'Arabs in Asia Minor', p.186.

(12) pp. 68-77.

sent to aid Shapur whose accident occurred before the former's arrival. Fadāla wintered at Chalcedon and asked for more help. Mu'āwiyah sent him his son Yazīd who went unwillingly for, by that time, the Arab armies were suffering from plague and famine. (13) Other Arab notables taking part in this expedition were supposed to have been more eager than the future khālīf, and, around them, an elaborate tissue of legend arose based upon the theme that to penetrate the walls of the Christian capital on this particular occasion carried with it a special blessing. Abu Ayyūb, one of the original "Companions", and, by this time, presumably, a very old man, longed to achieve this but died on the journey. His comrades were able to make a temporary breach in one of the walls and to bury his body within it. Various miracles were later performed upon this spot both in favour of Muslim and of Christian suppliants. It was particularly suitable to pray there for rain - the *istikā'* as the Muslims called it - but it apparently was also a Christian custom. Canard gives three separate versions of this same legend (14), it is therefore not unlikely that some kind

(17) It is difficult to call this a "seven-year" siege as, e.g., Canard does (pp.77-8). Peace was signed in 678 (see below p.114) and the Arab writers who place this

(13) There is an interesting poem on this theme which is quoted by Canard on p.69. Asia Minor, p.109) may be referring to an exactly similar treaty made with 'Abd al-Malik.

(14) Hitti (History of the Arabs, pp.201-2, History of Syria, p.444) relates the story without comment as part of his chapter on Arab-Byzantine relations in the seventh century and appears uncritically to accept it.

of attack, if not a regular siege, was made upon Constantinople as a result of this expedition. It was, however, then, that the Arabs suffered their first serious reverse. Part of their forces, concentrated inside Amorium, were surprised by that same Andreas who had been unsuccessful as a diplomat and were slaughtered to a man. While Greek sources agree in their version of this event (15), the Arab account is rather less precise (16) and this is hardly surprising. It was the first time that there had been any effective resistance against them. The strong hand of the new emperor, Constantine IV could be discerned. Shortly after, the Byzantines underwent a more serious trial. Every summer, from 673 to 678 (17), Constantinople was subjected to a series of naval attacks. In order to hinder counter operations by the imperial fleet, these

(15) e.g. Theoph. 351 (5-9), Cedrenus, MPG 121 col.833C.

(16) e.g. al-Athīr, Brooks, 'Arabs in Asia Minor', p.186, "the Moslems and the Romans fought for some days and the battle was severe between them ... then Yazīd and the army returned to al-Sham (Syria).

(17) It is difficult to call this a "seven-year" siege as, e.g., Canard does (pp.77-8). Peace was signed in 678 (see below p.114) and the Arab writers who place this after the death of Mu'āwiyah, i.e. after 680 (see Brooks, 'Arabs in Asia Minor', p.189) may be referring to an exactly similar treaty made with 'Abd al-Malik. Including the landing on Rhodes, the whole operation cannot be spread over more than six summers.

attacks had been preceded by temporary occupations of Rhodes, (18) Cos and Crete, while, probably in April, 673, Cyzicus, on the southern shore of the Bosphorus, had been seized (19) and was used as a base throughout the whole period. But the full extent of this threat to the capital cannot be determined for whether the Arab fleet had regular land support from an army in Chalcedon, as Bury believed (20) is by no means certain. An Arab army did suffer a severe defeat about that time, but the date given to this event varies in the sources (21). One source (22), in fact, suggests that the defeat was suffered not by an army in Chalcedon but by a body of men landed by the Arab fleet on the Lycian coast, while Michael the Syrian (23)

(18) al-Balādhuri, Vol.1, p.376, says that the Arabs were there for seven years, and that there was a regular relief system for the garrison with provision for religious instruction.

(19) Theoph. 354 (2-4), Niceph. 32(14-15), Zonaras, MPG 134, col. 1293C. Cedrenus, MPG 121, col.836C.

(20) Later Roman Empire, (1889) Vol.2 p.311.

(21) Theoph. 354.10, gives A.M.6165 = A.D.673 and incorrectly names Arab general who had in fact been killed three years previously. Nicephorus (p.32) does not mention a land battle. Michael the Syrian (p.455) gives AS982 = A.D.670, probably a slip since he equates it with A.H.55 which is Dec. 6th 674 - Nov. 25th 675.

(22) Agapius of Marbij, quoted by Canard, p.79.

(23) p.455.

connects the fleet to this incident by saying that the survivors used it for their escape. All this could show that the Arabs were actually beginning to prefer sea to land operations, indicating not only the growth of their own skill in the new element, but also that land operations were becoming more difficult. The early summer of 678 saw the last of this series of attempts upon Constantinople, and peace was signed by August 12th (24).

There were a number of apparently unrelated reasons for the Arab failure. The first, and most obvious, was the constant one of the city's geographical position, surrounded, as it was, on three sides by water, with the consequent difficulty of making a practicable breach in the walls without having to get large forces over onto the land, or western approach. The second, according to all the sources, was the use of the compound, whatever it may have been and by whatever means it was discharged, called Greek fire (25). The third was a succession of contrary winds followed by a great storm (26). But the most important of all, and the one which had probably

(24) Doelger, Regesten, 239.

(25) See C. Zhengelis, 'Le Feu grégois et les armes à feu des Byzantins' *BYZ* 7(1932) pp.265-286 for an account of the theories held on this subject.

(26) Niceph. 32(22-23). Apart from the use of Greek fire there is only a bare mention of the part played by the imperial fleet in repelling the besiegers.

slowed down Arab operations even before the final withdrawal, was the intervention on the Byzantine side of a tribe or group of tribes living in territory newly conquered by the Arabs. (29) The relation of these peoples with the Byzantines was important, not only because at first they were of great assistance during a crisis of the struggle against the Arabs, but also because later they provide an illustration of a particular development within the empire which had begun before the time of Heraclius and which contributed, in no small measure, to the disasters of his epoch.

The Greek name for these people was *Μαρδαίται*. Their origin and their precise nature is covered in a certain amount of obscurity. Sathas, who wrote one of the best accounts of this subject (27), believed them to have been the descendants of Syrian tribesmen who remained unreconciled to the conquests of Justinian's general Belisarius and retired into the foothills of the Taurus from whence they made forays upon the surrounding countryside. This is probably a better conjecture than that of Kulakovskiy (28) who, possibly misled by their

(27) K. N. Sathas, *Μεσαιωνική Βιβλιοθήκη* (vol.2) Athens, 1872

(28) *Istoriya Vizantii*, vol.3 p.255. The reference in Niceph. 36 (28-29) describing them as "soldiers lurking there from long ago" may be evidence for the view of Kulakovskiy but it is part of a brief account of their transfer into imperial territory which was a later event. See below, p.121

(29) A. Amalricus, *Μαρδαίται*, *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 5 (1908) pp. 150-152.

later pro-Byzantine attitude, supposed them to have been the descendants of imperial veterans quartered in the Lebanon, since their appearance so far south was a much later event. (29) Their behaviour in the first place was undoubtedly that of bandits, not particularly concerned on whom they might make their attacks, and throughout their career, this aspect was never completely in the background. With the coming of the Arabs the Mardaites, who were Christians of a sort (30) began to support the Byzantine cause more and more openly. So much can even be inferred simply from the fact that whereas the Byzantine description of them was **ἀπελάται** meaning "watchmen" or "armed guardians of the camp", the Arabs and Syrians called them "al-Jarājimah" which meant simply "robbers". (31) As their usefulness behind the enemy lines became more obvious, the Byzantines began to assist their activities with small regular units (32) which were able to

they were incorporated into the Arab defence system although
(29) See below, p. 119

(30) Either monophysite or monothelite and highly jealous of independence for their faith. See H. Lammens, Etudes sur la Regne du Calife Omayyade Muawia I, (Mélanges de la faculté orientale d'Université S. Joseph) Beirut, 1906-8, vol.1. p.18.

(31) Another meaning of **ἀπελάται**, however, is "cattle thief" (Liddell & Scott Lexicon, ed. H. S. Jones, 1925-1940, vol.1. p.184) The use of this word, therefore, may indicate some uncertainty in the minds of the Byzantines regarding the status of their allies.

(32) A. Amantos, 'Μαρδαῖται', Ελληνικά 5(1932) pp. 130-136.

(34) Vol.1 p.130.

infiltrate through the Arab defences, though it is difficult to say whether Amantos (33) is right in supposing that, in the first place, the name Mardaite was only applied to this people after a unit of this description had been specially brought over to fight the Arabs. When Antioch fell in 638, the Mardaites had apparently remained unknown to the conquerors. They were at that time concentrated in the Amanus mountains which are part of the Taurus range and whose foothills almost reach the north bank of the Orontes, that is, practically to the walls of Antioch itself. There the Mardaites commanded the Baīlan pass to Alexandretta and the sea-board of Byzantine Anatolia. Being in such a strong position, they were able, in their own good time, to make a separate peace with the Arabs and to gain certain special privileges. For example, they had not to pay the "jizyah" (33) - although they never became converts to Islām - and, contrary to usual custom, they were incorporated into the Arab defence system although their land had not been conquered. In his description of the fortifications the Arabs built on the Syrian frontier, south-al-Balādhuri (34) mentions a body of al-Jarājimah which the Arab general Hishām stationed at a key point - in Fort Murah, near a place the Arabs called Darb, which was probably the

(35) Lamrens, p.17.

(33) See above, p.116

(34) Vol.1 p.258. phrase "Mardaite fashion" (397.17)

Bailan pass. This is one of several examples when Mardaites were used in this manner, although they were more usually combined with the moqatila or Arab garrison units (35). They received no pay but were entitled to the spoils of battle. In some ways, they can be compared to the guerrilla troops of later ages. But, their loyalty to the Arabs was never very strong. "On certain occasions", al-Balādhuri remarks "al-Jarājimah acted properly with respect to the Muslim governors, but, on others, they deviated from the right path and held friendly communications with the Greeks". (36) And, indeed, their strong position gave them an excellent opportunity to play this double part. Soon their predatory attacks upon their Arab allies became proverbial (37), and reprisals against them began to take on the characteristics of a real "jihād" or holy war. (41). But they were unsuccessful.

In 682 At the beginning of the reign of Constantine IV, they received something more than "friendly communications" from the Byzantine government. They were encouraged to leave their homes on the "Black Mountain" (the Amanus) and to move southward into Syria. Aided by small bodies of regular troops, their journey in 677 became almost a full-scale invasion of Arab territory, and Syrians dissatisfied with Arab rule rallied against them, they slew a part of them and blinded others. (40) Theoph. 356 (5-7)

(35) Lammens, p.17. of *Islām*, ed. M. T. Houtsma and others, London, 1924-26, vol. 4, p.200.

(36) Vol. 1 p.247.

(42) See below, p.120

(37) Cf. Theophanes' phrase "Mardaite fashion" (397.17)

to their side (38). Despite an initial setback (39), they established themselves in the mountains of the Lebanon where they constituted an obvious threat to the Arabs, particularly to their control of the Syrian coast-line, and Theophanes suggests that their influence extended even as far as Jerusalem. (40) It was as a direct result of this migration or invasion that, at the end of 677, Mu'awiyah was forced to call off the siege of Constantinople and to ask for peace. But this was not the last of the services that the Mardaites were to perform. The Arabs tried to offset their influence by settling amongst them groups of loyal converts whom they transferred for this purpose from their homes around Basrah, the Sind, and other areas near the Persian Gulf, the fruit of some of their early conquests, men upon whom they thought they could completely depend (41). But they were unsuccessful. In 685 and again in 689, Mardaite activity compelled them to make peace with the Byzantines (42). In 688, Antioch itself

(38) "Runaway slaves once possessed by the Muslim" - as al-Balādhuri, vol.1. p.247, calls them.

(39) Michael the Syrian alone (Vol.2. p.455) implies that this setback was a serious one, "In the end the Arabs prevailed against them, they slew a part of them and blinded others."

(40) Theoph. 356 (6-7)

(41) Encyclopaedia of Islām, ed. M. T. Houtsma and others, London, 1928-36. vol.4, p.200.

(42) See below, p.120

was temporarily lost to them (43). That these reverses were suffered by the Arabs directly owing to Mardaite activity is made quite clear by al-Balādhuri who describes the events leading up to the peace of 689 as follows (44):-

When 'Abd al-Malik was seeking the succession to the khilafat ... (between 684 and 685) a Roman (i.e. Byzantine) army went out of the mountains of al-Lukhān (Amanus) under one of their generals, then they went to Lubnān (Lebanon) where was collected a large force of al-Jarājimah and Nabateans and runaway slaves of the Muslims. And 'Abd al-Malik was compelled to make peace with them on condition of paying one thousand denarii every assembly day (Friday), and he made peace with the emperor of the Romans (Justinian II) for the amount which he was to pay him, in order to prevent him from fighting against him, and because he was afraid he would go out to al-Sham (Syria) and conquer it. And this was in the year 70 (July 6th, 688 - June 25th, 689). The importance of the Mardaites, therefore, in the Byzantine system of defence on the eastern frontier, should be sufficiently obvious. They were, in fact, its greatest asset - the famous "brazen wall" of Theophanes (45). But it is still clear that in 689 Justinian II gained nothing from the just as Maurice and Heraclius had been unable to appreciate the importance of the Ghassānids as a barrier between the west and the ferment that was growing in the east, so was Justinian II unable to estimate at its true value the activity

(46) Doalger, *Regesten*, 237.

(43) It was re-captured in 694. See Michael the Syrian,

(47) Vol. 2. p. 470. *sten*, 253.

(44) Vol. 1. p. 247. Vol. 1, p. 247, al-Jabari, quoted by Brooks, *Arabs in Asia Minor*, p. 189.

(45) Theoph. 364.5.

of the Mardaites. In 690, as a result of the treaty made in the previous year (46), he had them transferred from the Lebanon into imperial territory. It is difficult to see a good reason for this action. The terms gained from the Arabs in 689 were certainly no more favourable than those of 685. In the latter year, the Arabs had promised to pay the Byzantines one thousand gold pieces (denarii), one slave and one horse every day (47). In 689 the agreement was, according to the Greek sources, identical, but the Arab sources now imply that this new payment was only to be made weekly (48). This would mean that the new agreement, by which the empire would lose the services of the Mardaites, was in fact even less favourable than the old. But if, as seems reasonable, the same emendation be made in the terms of the first treaty on the ground that otherwise the payment appears to have been impossibly large, it is still clear that in 689 Justinian II gained nothing from the Arabs that he did not already have. It is possible that, impressed by the military value of the Mardaites he wished to incorporate them into his regular armed forces, as was, in

(50) *Istoriya*, Vol. 3, p. 256.

(46) Doelger, Regesten, 237.

(47) Doelger, Regesten, 253.

(48) al-Balādhuri, Vol. 1, p. 247, al-Tabari, quoted by Brooks, 'Arabs in Asia Minor', p. 189.

(54) 363, 15.

fact, done in later years (49), since he is known to have been particularly interested in army organisation and recruitment. Kulakovskiy's suggestion (50) that the reason was his desire to re-settle a Christian people in a Christian land, is very difficult to accept. The sixth oecumenical council, held nine years previously, condemned monothelitism, and the Mardaites, were fanatically monothelite or even monophysite. (51) They were therefore probably the last group of people in the world to be invited to settle in territory the ruler of which prided himself on his Christian orthodoxy - precisely on account of their religion. Whatever may have been Justinian's motives, and a desire to show his power by the wholesale transference of peoples may have formed a part of them, (52) the results were unquestionably disastrous. (53) Theophanes (54) sums up the general effect of this action by saying that, whereas before, all the Arab-held cities from

optimism (37). It was only when Constantine IV deliberately

(49) From 697 onwards they were systematically settled on the Pamphylian coast as an additional defence, grouped into regular military and naval units, as they were also in the Peloponnese.

their enemy. The Mardaites are one of the most important
(50) Istoriya, Vol. 3. p.256.

(51) See above, p. 116, note (30)

(52) See above, p. 119

(52) Cf. his actions in Cyprus and his transfer of Slavs,

(56) see below, p. 131 and p.150

(53) See below, pp.123-124.

(54) 363.15.

Mopsuestia to Fourth Armenia had been in terror of Mardaite attack, and, as he had remarked in another place, (55) this terror had reached southward as far as Jerusalem, now "since their departure, Rome has suffered every kind of evil from the Arabs until the present day".

The thirty-seven years of the period from the first raid across the Syrian frontier to the Arab withdrawal at the end of the "seven-year siege" have one characteristic in common. During the whole of that time, with the exception of the episode at Amorium, the Byzantines were unable to retaliate effectively against the invaders. Even in Armenia, the occasionally successful actions were reprisals against the local inhabitants, successful only for exactly so long as the Arabs were occupied with other matters, for example with their internal conflicts (56), while the events in Africa during the latter part of this period provided no better grounds for optimism (57). It was only when Constantine IV deliberately made use of a new weapon - the Mardaites - that the Byzantines for about ten years were able to take the initiative against their enemy. The Mardaites are one of the most important

(55) See above, p.119

(56) See above, p.88

(57) See below, p.140

claim to patronage of the arts (59). The Mardaites, at their best, were little more than groups of malcontents banded together only for some immediate advantage. Yet their successes have been valuable to the Byzantines. Both were conducted for a barrier which would have a defensive value of its own. On the contrary, they were the result of a well-planned attempt to carry the fighting into the territory held by the enemy. They were a sign of that vitality and resourcefulness which the empire temporarily lost at the end of the war against Persia. After the Mardaite adventure was over a spirit of hopelessness descended on the eastern frontier, and the whole picture of Byzantine foreign relations in the closing years of the century was one of almost unrelieved gloom. Had they. The question of the Mardaites was particularly important in connection with the menace of the Arabs in Syria. While the action of Justinian in altogether removing the Mardaites was clearly a tragic blunder, Constantine, too, although his energy is to be admired, could perhaps have made altogether better use of this extremely valuable people. An illuminating comparison can be made between the Mardaites and the Ghassānids despite the differences between them. The Ghassānids had had a court, an administration and even some

(59) Hitti, *History of Syria*, pp. 405-406.

(58) See below, p. 125-126

(60) See above, pp. 60-61

claim to patronage of the arts (59). The Mardaites, at their best, were little more than groups of malcontents banded together only for some immediate advantage. Yet both could have been valuable to the Byzantines. Both were good material for a barrier which would have made penetration of imperial territory more difficult. Both would have repayed the cost of the bribes and benefits necessary to guarantee reliability. Maurice and Heraclius had failed to appreciate the advantages of a Ghassanid state under imperial protection.(60)

Constantine IV, although he saw clearly enough the strategic potentialities of the Mardaites, did not consider the wider advantages which they might have brought to the empire. Had they, for example, been encouraged to return to their strongholds in the Amanus mountains, they might have become as effective a barrier as the Ghassanids had been against the infiltrations of the Arabs, and, while not preventing them entirely, might have reduced their impetus and scope. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that just as Maurice and Heraclius both Constantine IV and Justinian II could not really bring themselves to trust any group of people with whom they had theological differences. Justinian's action

(61) See above, p.122

(59) Hitti, History of Syria, pp.405-406.

(60) See above, pp. 60-61

might easily have had a reason precisely opposite to the one suggested by Kulakovskiy (62). He may have wished to keep closer under his control a people whose theology he disliked and whose loyalty, therefore, according to the logic of the day, he was bound to suspect. The episode of the Mardaites had that much in common with Byzantine

The years that elapsed from the raising of the "seven-year siege" until the last of the Heraclians had been understood the situation in Armenia. It was an example of banished from the imperial throne, were, with the exception how much more difficult it was to establish stability in of the Mardaites episode, years of almost unrelieved defeat the east than anywhere else in the empire and how the and disaster so far as the struggle against the Arabs was problem was almost inevitably complicated by theological concerned. The record of these defeats is important for it difficulties.

emphasises the apparently complete helplessness of the Byzantines whenever they came into conflict with their eastern enemy and clearly indicates that the question of why they did, in fact, survive the struggle is not an easy one to answer.

The victory that the raising of the siege implied did not bring any real period of peace to the eastern frontier. For the years A.H. 58, 59, 60 and 61 that is covering the period from November, A.D. 677 to the end of September, A.D. 681, there are notices of fresh Arab expeditions (1), suggesting that they even continued after the death of Mu'awiyah

(61) See above, p.122

(1) Brooks, 'Arabs in Asia Minor', pp.188-9.

(6th April, 680). The fact that they appear to have done so after the signing of CHAPTER SIX of 689 need not necessarily be a reason for seeking to amend the date in the last of these notices (2). THE STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL apparent contradiction

may indicate that, whereas the Byzantines had given the Arabs a serious setback, it had been by no means serious enough to

The years that elapsed from the raising of the "seven-year siege" until the last of the Heracleians had been banished from the imperial throne, were, with the exception of Theophanes (3) was, to some extent, a piece of wishful thinking. There was no real stability on the frontier and disaster so far as the struggle against the Arabs was during this period. The only difference was that now, with the advantage that he had gained, Constantine IV was able to emphasises the apparently complete helplessness of the Byzantines whenever they came into conflict with their eastern enemy and clearly indicates that the question of why they did, in fact, survive the struggle is not an easy one to answer. Arab world became steadily more disorganised. At his death,

The victory that the raising of the siege implied did not bring any real period of peace to the eastern frontier. For the years A.H.58, 59, 60 and 61 that is covering the period from November, A.D.677 to the end of September, A.D.681, there was a series of Byzantine successes, largely because of there are notices of fresh Arab expeditions (1), suggesting Mardaites assistance. In the year A.H.70 (June, A.D.689 - that they even continued after the death of Mu'awiyah

(2) Brooks, 'Arabs in Asia Minor', p.186, note 3.

(1) Brooks, 'Arabs in Asia Minor', pp.188-9.

(3) Theoph. 356 (8-7).

(6th April, 680). The fact that they appear to have done so after the signing of the peace of 689 need not necessarily be a reason for seeking to amend the date in the last of these notices (2). On the contrary, this apparent contradiction may indicate that, whereas the Byzantines had given the Arabs a serious setback, it had been by no means serious enough to prevent them from taking further offensive action, that, in other words, the ἀμεριμνία ἐν τῇ ἀνατολῇ καὶ τῇ δύσει of Theophanes (3) was, to some extent, a piece of wishful thinking. There was no real stability on the frontier during this period. The only difference was that now, with the advantage that he had gained, Constantine IV was able after the death of the khalif to take the offensive for a comparatively short time, Yazīd, Mu'āwiyah's son had not the character of his father, and, during his short reign, the Arab world became steadily more disorganised. At his death, Byzantine armies, for the first time since 636, crossed the frontier in force and thrust southward into Syria and northward towards the Caucasus. For the next seven years there was a series of Byzantine successes, largely because of Mardaite assistance. In the year A.H.70 (June, A.D.689 -

(2) Brooks, 'Arabs in Asia Minor, p.189, note 3.

(3) Theoph. 356 (6-7). 151

(6) Ἄλλος περιόυστος Theoph. 356.2.

(7) Doelger, Regesten, 289.

June A.D. 690), the year that the amount of tribute payable by the Arabs to the Byzantines was confirmed (4), the Arabs appeared to be at their weakest on the frontier since their original conquest of Syria, the Byzantines at their strongest. But the reality was very different. The failure not only of Justinian II but also, to an extent, of Constantine IV to estimate the Mardaites at their true value prevented the advantages gained by the Byzantines from being as decisive as they might have been. Now, the foolish policy of Justinian II proved only too clearly that the enemy was quite capable of resuming the offensive if given the chance to do so.

Emboldened by a victory over the Bulgarians (5), Justinian formed a large number of the prisoners he had taken as a result of it into what he called a "supernumerary corps" (6) and decided that with this addition to his forces he could safely re-open hostilities.

In 693 (7) he denounced the truce with 'Abd al-Malik on the pretext that he could not accept in the tribute gold coins bearing the image of the khalif. This, by itself, cannot be a sufficient explanation for the outbreak of hostilities in that year. It is known that during the

(4) See above, p. 121

(5) Michael the Syrian, Vol. 2, 473.

(6) See below, pp. 150-151

(7) *Ἰαὸς Περιούσιος* Theoph. 366.2.

(7) Doelger, *Regesten*, 260.

khilafat of 'Abd al-Malik there was carried out a reform of the currency, but this was not till 696 when "the Arabs began to strike, dinars, zuzim and obols on which there were no images but only inscriptions"(8). Even if this date be not accepted, it has at least to be admitted that, after the reform, there could be no complaint of images of the khālif since from then on there were no images on the coins of any kind. Before the reform, however, there were certainly images on the coins circulating among the Arabs, yet there is at least one important piece of evidence which would suggest that the majority of them were, in fact, of Byzantine minting:-

"The Greeks", says al-Balādhuri (9), "used to get the karatis (rolls of papyrus or cloth) from Egypt, and the Arabs used to get the dinars from the Greeks. 'Abd al-Malik ibn-Marwān was the first to inscribe on the upper part of these fabrics such phrases as "Declare: Allah is one!" and other, with the name of Allah. One day he received from the Byzantine king a message, saying, "You have recently introduced upon your karatis some inscriptions which we hate. If you leave that out, well and good; otherwise, you shall see on the dinars the name of your Prophet associated with things you hate". This was too much for 'Abd al-Malik, who hated to abolish a worthy law that he had established. He thereupon sent for Khālid ibn-Yazīd ibn-Mu'āwiyah and said to him, "O abu-Hashim! It is a calamity!" Khālid replied, "Be free from your fright, 'Commander of the Believers'; declare the use of their dinars illegal; strike new coinage in place of them, and let not those infidels be free from what they hate to see on the fabrics. "Thou hast eased my mind," said 'Abd al-Malik, "may Allah give thee ease!" He then struck the coinage.

(8) Michael the Syrian, Vol.2, 473.

(9) Vol.1, p.383.

(13) Michael the Syrian, vol.2 p.470.

This passage indicates that at least one of the motives for the currency reform was to put an end to the circulation of Byzantine coinage within the Arab dominions. (10) It is likely therefore that the reason given by Justinian was not the true one, and it is not difficult to discover a far more serious cause of war for which he himself and not the khālīf was responsible.

One of the clauses of the treaty of 689 had included a rather optimistic decision regarding Cyprus. The island was to be administered by the Arabs and the Byzantines jointly who were each to collect half the taxes. Justinian could not remain content with this arrangement and transferred about a third of the population to Cyzicus and to other areas in the south of Asia Minor (11) so that the tax-paying potentialities of the island should not be altogether wasted (12). Michael the Syrian plainly states that it was this which angered the khālīf: (13)

(10) For a discussion of the currency problem in the seventh and eighth century see R. Lopez, 'Mahomet and Charlemagne - A Revision' Speculum 18(1943) pp.14-38.

(11) Theoph. 265.9.

(12) Kulakovskiy, Istoriya Vizantii, vol.3 pp.261-262, seemingly always eager to put the best construction on the policies of Justinian II, suggests that those transferred were ethnically akin to the populations of the areas to which they were taken. Even if this be so, the political wisdom of the action may be questioned.

(13) Michael the Syrian, vol.2 p.470.

"Justinian, Emperor of the Romans", he says, "who had an overweening pride, did not allow Cyprus to be shared by the Romans and Arabs; he caused the inhabitants to be transferred On hearing of this, 'Abd al-Malik bitterly reproached him for breaking the peace and for not having the patience to wait for the end of the ten years. That is why Mahomed, emir of Djerizhan invaded Roman territory."

Bar Hebraeus further asserts that the emperor made captive the Arabs who were at that time in Cyprus (14). Even if this addition to the story be rejected, the breaking of the agreement was in itself a sufficient cause for war. It seems less likely that 'Abd al-Malik merely protested over the Byzantine action in Cyprus but did not open hostilities until his tribute was refused by them. It would then follow, that the affair of the tribute money was a belated attempt of Justinian's to put himself in the right before beginning his offensive against the Arabs. In the event, he was unable even to do that, for, it was his own territory, as appears in the passage from Michael the Syrian just quoted which was invaded. It is not necessary, however, only to rely upon this testimony. The battle of Sebastopolis, which took place shortly after, whether it was in Cilicia or on the northern coast of Asia Minor in Pontus (15) as Brooks has suggested, was, in either case, well within the Byzantine frontier, since it was

(14) Chronographia, ed. & trans. E. A. Wallis Budge, London, 1932, Vol.1. p.103: "He broke the peace before it was fulfilled and he sent and made captives the Arabs who were in Cyprus".

(15) E. W. Brooks, 'The Locality of the Battle of Sebastopolis', BZ 18(1909) pp.154-156.

certainly not the Sebastopolis in Armenia to which the description τῆ παρὰ Θάλασσαν would be inapplicable. (16) But Brooks has pointed out that Muhammad was governor of Mesopotamia and not of Syria. The route that his invading army would naturally take would therefore bring about a collision somewhere in the north-east of the Byzantine provinces and not in Cilicia. If this be so, then it is reasonable to suppose that Justinian was already on the march with the intention of invading Arab territory when he was met by Muhammad who had been sent to avenge the breaking of the agreement over Cyprus. The whole story of Justinian's provocation then becomes a connected whole, and it only remains to note its disastrous result. At the battle of Sebastopolis (A.D. 693), two-thirds of the "supernumerary corps" went over to the enemy, and the Byzantine forces were routed.

The immediate consequence was the revolt and loss of the Byzantine part of Armenia, (17) but this was by no means the only one. The situation on the eastern frontier, which had been temporarily stabilised in favour of the Byzantines, was now once more unstable and very much in favour of the Arabs. Nor could Justinian's slaughter of the families of those who had

(16) Theoph. 366.6.

(17) See below, pp. 137-139

gone over to the enemy and the re-settling of the loyal remainder in the Opsikian theme (18) where they provided cavalry contingents for the imperial forces, do much to restore Byzantine fortunes. In the year of his first expulsion from the throne, the Caucasian kingdom of Lazica, for a hundred years the loyal ally of the empire, voluntarily went over to the Arabs through the treachery of its ruler, a sudden change, after such a long period of close contact which can certainly be in part explained by the loss of prestige the Byzantines suffered at Sebastopolis. During the reign of Justinian's supplanter Leontius, Arab raids across the Syrian frontier recommenced exactly as before. When, in 698, Leontius, in turn, was overthrown by Apsimar (Tiberius III) there was a slight revival of Byzantine initiative. In 700 (19) the Byzantines captured Samosata, about a hundred and fifty miles north-east of Antioch on the Euphrates, though they were soon driven out again. In 703 and 704 they had some successes against Arab armies in Cilicia. In 701, however, the Arabs had effected a much more serious change in the frontier situation. Their previous capture of cities in Asia Minor had been temporary - intended for booty or for

(22) See below, p. 150

(23) The date of the capture of Tyana varies somewhat in the sources quoted by Brooks, 'Arabs in Asia Minor', pp. 191-192, give either AH 87 or AH 88 (AD 705-707). In Nicoph. 43.22 - 44.3 it is AD 708 and in Theoph. 377.10 it is AH 8801 (AD 709).

immediate strategical reasons. Now they seized Mopsuestia (20) and spent the next two years strengthening it with fortifications and embellishing it with mosques (21). The length of the notice regarding these activities in al-Balādhuri is some indication of the importance the Arabs gave to this city. There was, indeed, a good reason for this. Mopsuestia stood on the Byzantine side of the Taurus range, commanded the pass into Cilicia known as the Cilician Gates, and was not more than fifty miles from Tarsus. Its value to the Arabs was demonstrated very clearly within the next few years. In 705, Justinian, with the help of a large Bulgarian army (22), returned to the imperial throne and immediately began an wholesale slaughter of his real and supposed enemies. It was unfortunate that he extended his vengeance to the army, decimating whole formations. For, in the middle of, or shortly after his programme of revenge, the Arabs struck northward from Mopsuestia at the Cappadocian city of Tyana. (23) Pisidia was once more attacked and sacked (24). In the

(20) Theoph. 363.17. Michael the Syrian, vol.2 pp.447-448.

(21) al-Tabari, quoted by Brooks, 'Arabs in Asia Minor', p.191. al-Balādhuri, vol.1. pp.255-256. Theoph.372.4.

(22) See below, p.170

(24) See above, p.106

(23) The date of the capture of Tyana varies somewhat in the sources: Writers quoted by Brooks, 'Arabs in Asia Minor', pp.191-192, give either AH 87 or AH 88 (AD 705-707).

(26) Michael the Syrian gives AS1019 (AD 707) (vol.2 p.478). In Niceph. 43.22 - 44.5 it is AD 708 and in Theoph.

(27) 377.10 it is AM 6201 (AD 709).

Justinian had done his work too well. The army had been thoroughly disorganised, and the only force that could be sent to the relief of the city was a crowd of half-armed and untrained peasants. As a result, Tyana was sacked and laid waste and remained uninhabited until the time of the khālīf Hārūn al-Raschīd who attempted unsuccessfully to make it into an Arab centre of learning (24). But this was not the end of the new Arab offensive. Between 708 and 710 the Arabs a number of strongholds in Cilicia, and followed this up by a raid on Chrysopolis. In 711 Justinian was overthrown by yet another conspiracy and Varden or Bardan, taking the name of Philippicus, reigned in his stead. The same year the Arabs moved northward from Tyana and captured Sebasteia, Amasia, and other fortresses in the region of Melitene. They did whatever they wished, as Theophanes puts it (25), and Byzantine defences might as well not have existed. In 713, when Anastasius II had replaced Philippicus, Antioch in Pisidia was once more attacked and sacked (26). In the following year, Anastasius sent Daniel of Sinope, a practiced diplomat according to Nicephorus (27) on a pretended peace

(24) See above, p. 106

(25) Theoph. 382.28.

(26) Deolger, *Requaten*, 274.

(27) al-Tabari, quoted by Brooks, 'Arabs in Asia Minor', p.194.

(28) Niceph. 49.29 - 50.4.

mission to Damascus (28) and Daniel was able to bring back the detailed descriptions of preparations for what was to be the great Arab attack on Constantinople. There was little to cheer Anastasius in this report - on the eastern frontier imperial fortunes were at their lowest ebb. The record of events in Armenia during these years is equally gloomy. The struggle of the Umayyads and the 'Alids had been an obvious opportunity for Byzantine intervention, and, in 657, they had been able to appoint as their governor the Armenian Hamazsasp Mamigonian who favoured their cause. The victory of the Umayyads naturally altered the situation. The Arabs recommenced their attacks upon Armenia demanding an annual tribute of five hundred dinars, while the last act of the catholicos Nerses was to recommend submission to them. The Byzantines were ousted once more and most of the country passed under the rule of two successive pro-Arab governors. The second of those, Ashot Bagratuni, was according to Ghevond, "Illustrious ... noble ... a great man" ... "his riches", he goes on to say, "and generosity equalled his courage. The wise moderation of his life, his goodness, his loyalty made him stand out amongst all. He feared God and was zealous for all good deeds. He nurtured with equal care and good results the study of the sciences and of the arts. Through his care, the churches of God were provided with eloquent preachers, schools of theology and a numerous clergy". (29)

(28) Doelger, Regesten, 274. *Annales de l'Arménie*, Vol. 2 pp. 247-262, Paris.

(29) Ghevond, pp. 15-16. This cannot be an interpolated reference to the betterknown Ashot I (859-864) famed for his benevolent rule, since the Ashot mentioned here is clearly described as in conflict with Justinian II in a following passage.

This opinion of an Armenian historian, usually hostile to the Arabs, is a good illustration of the fundamental hopelessness of the Byzantine struggle in Armenia. During the same period occurred the revolt of Shapur (30). The area concerned was possibly the so-called Hexapolis around Melitene in "Fourth Armenia", the most loyal district and the last to be lost, and this indicated that dislike of Byzantine rule was spreading to areas previously unaffected. (31) There was a slight recovery of initiative in the confusion after the death of Mu'awiyah when three Byzantine invasions took place. Justinian regained some of his lost territory, but the attitude of the Armenians to their liberators was scarcely encouraging. (32) Furthermore, while religious union of a sort tended to follow manifestations of Byzantine military supremacy, it never had a great deal of reality about it. For example, at this time the catholicos Isaac and some other bishops visited Constantinople. When they returned to Dwin, their reception was so unpleasant, that they were forced to pronounce anathemas against themselves for having had communion with "the Romans", an action which caused them to admit that

(34) See above, p. 133

(30) See above, p. 110

(35) The disaster provided the opportunity, but Symped had

(31) See V. Tourneur, 'Le Héxapolis arménienne au VII et au VIII siècles' Mélanges Bidez, Vol. 2, pp. 947-952, Paris, 1934.

(36) Chevard, p. 33

(32) See above, p. 72

own sins were incurable".(33) They may well have considered that, with recovery of the Arabs under 'Abd al-Malik, this was the wisest course to adopt. In 693 the disaster at Sebastopolis (34) provided the opportunity for revolt to yet another Byzantine nominee, Sympad (35). Events followed a familiar pattern. Sympad turned against his new masters, and, after an initial success, sent trophies of his victory to Apsimar. In 704 or 705 he was defeated at Vavand. He and a few of his supporters escaped, but the Arabs were determined to run no further risks from pro-Byzantine factions within the Armenian nobility, those whom they suspected of such sympathies were gathered into a church at Nakhitchevan and burned alive. The Byzantines were driven from their last footholds and the whole of Armenia passed under Arab rule, for there was no one left who could dispute it. ("Armenia lost her nakharars", says Ghevond referring to the massacre at Nakhitchevan, "and, from then on, without support or defence, she was delivered over to her enemies like a flock of sheep into the midst of wolves."

(36)

(38) Vol.1 pp.352-355.

(33) Isaaci Armeniae Catholici De Rebus Armeniae MPG vol.132 col. 1253D. and outskirts, see al-Baladhuri, Vol.1 p.356

(34) See above, p.133

(35) The disaster provided the opportunity, but Sympad had already a sufficient motive. His father had been murdered by the Byzantines (Ghevond, p.18) p.314.

(36) Ghevond, p.33.

The extinction of Byzantine rule in Africa followed a pattern which was very similar to the one that can be discerned in the other disasters which the empire suffered during this epoch. Barka, the capital of the Pentapolis, had been captured immediately after the Arabs had established themselves in Alexandria, and Tripolis had fallen four years later. But, although al-Balādhuri in his account of those events states that 'Amr's intention was the conquest of the whole of al-Maghrib, the old feeling against "expansion" did not immediately disappear. The khālif 'Umr's reaction to a suggestion for a further advance westward from Egypt had been unfavourable, and one of the Arab notables taking part in a raid beyond Tripolis in 647 seems to have quoted 'Umr's sentiment with approbation. When the exarch Gregory was defeated, and possibly killed, in the same year somewhere near

(42) See below, p. 144

(37) See above, p. 105 note 45

(38) Vol. 1 pp. 352-355. p. 357.

(39) i.e. "the west". The Arab Ifrikiyah referred only to the modern Tunis and outskirts, see al-Balādhuri, Vol. 1 p. 356

(46) al-Bihar, p. 317, gives A.H. 46 (A.D. 665-667).

(40) See above, p. 94. Vol. 1 p. 357, gives A.H. 30 (A.D. 640-641),

but this is an obvious error since this event must have

(41) al-Nuwairī, La conquête de l'Afrique du Nord par les Mussulmans, trans. McGuckin de Slane, Paris, 1925, p. 314.

(43) 667.

(47) See below, pp. 189-190

(48) Theoph. 346. (18-13)

Tunis (42), the Arabs were content to extract a large sum, (43) possibly two and a half million dinars (44) from the defeated Byzantines and did not annex the fresh territory that now lay at their mercy (45). The real attempt to extend Arab of dominion west of the Nile delta was not undertaken until the Umayyads had won their first great victory against the 'Alids and Mu'awiyah held the khilafat. And then there was as little effective resistance from the Byzantines against their advance as elsewhere in their conquests. Mu'awiyahs' governor of Egypt, Ibn-Hudaij al-Sakuni, gave the task of conquering al-Maghrīb to the Arab general 'Ukbah ibn Na'fī, who commenced his march westward soon after 661 (46), and, despite the intervention of an expeditionary force sent by Constans II of which little is known (47), was able to effect both a devastating raid on Sicily (48) and the occupation of the had endured the rule first of the Romans, than of the Vandals,

(42) See below, p. 144 administration appointed by Constantinople.

(43) Theoph. 343. 27. However, this administration was

(44) al-Balādhuri, Vol.1 p.357. among the Byzantine population

(45) al-Ḥakam, p.302.

(46) al-Ḥakam, p.317, gives A.H.46 (A.D.666-667).

(47) al-Balādhuri, Vol.1 p.357, gives A.H.20 (A.D.640-641), but this is an obvious error since this event must have occurred in the khilafat of Mu'awiyah. Theophanes' date for the Arab counter-attack on Sicily is A.M.6155

(48) (A.D.663). (12-13).

(47) See below, pp. 189-190

(48) Theoph. 348. (12-13)

whole of the peninsula south of Carthage including the taking of many prisoners (49). At this point the Arab advance was halted, not through any effort of the Byzantines, but because by that time Mu'āwiyah's successors had their own problem of preserving the stability of the Umayyad khilafat. (50) When this problem had been more or less solved, the advance was resumed by Hasan ibn Nu'mān who temporarily occupied Carthage in 695 and finally made it an Arab possession three years later. (51) The rest of the coast line to Septem (Ceuta) was conquered by the newly appointed governor Mūsa ibn Nusair, and the Arabs became so well established that, by 711, they were able to begin their conquest of Spain.

Any resistance that there was against the advance of the Arabs in those regions came, not from the Byzantines, but from the Berber tribes who were the local inhabitants and had endured the rule first of the Romans, than of the Vandals, and, finally, of the administration appointed by Constantinople. By the time of Heraclius, however, this administration was commanding less and less support among the Byzantine population

(52) For the effect in the east, see above, pp. 47-50

(49) Theoph. 352. (11-12) *Epistola XII MPG Vol. 91 col. 464*

(50) This is plainly stated by al-Nuwairī, p. 338. See above, pp. **87-88**, see below, pp. 196-197

(51) Theoph. 370. (16-17). *Les des Berbères*, trans. McDuckin de Basse, Vol. I, 1913, 1925, pp. 207-208 and p. 177.

(52) For the Ghassanids in this context, see above p. 61

of Africa, his own victory having provided the best possible example of how easily the central government could be coerced and overthrown. Imperial support of a compromise with the monophysites as shown in the "Ecthesis" of Heraclius and in the "Type" of Constans II (52) infuriated the clergy who were supposed to have been exceptionally firm adherents to Chalcedon (53), while the flood of refugees, both orthodox and monophysite, from Syria, Palestine, and Egypt further embittered the situation. While the exact extent to which overtly disloyal acts were committed by the orthodox clergy as a result of this tension cannot be easily estimated since almost all the evidence is contained in texts written by their supporters (54), this state of affairs undoubtedly did have an unsettling effect on the Berbers who gradually withdrew themselves from Byzantine influence and built up semi-independent states under their own tribal leaders (55). This process was accelerated when, as with the Ghassanids, the government ceased to pay them their accustomed subsidy. (56)

(57) Ibn Khaldūn, vol.1 p.209.

(52) For the effect in the east, see above, pp.47-50

(53) Maximi Confessoris Epistola XII MPG Vol.91 col.464.

(54) For a view of the connection of Maximus' party with the various revolts, see below, pp.196-197

(55) Ibn Khaldūn, Histoire des Berbères, trans. McGuckin de Slane, Vol.1, Paris, 1925, pp.207-208 and p.177.

(56) For the Ghassānids in this context, see above p.61

The Byzantines began to be confined more and more to the cities on the coast while the Berbers ruled the interior. When the latter's death in 685, apart from their own internal disputes, be put down entirely to Berber activity. Lastly, exarch Gregory proclaimed himself emperor in 647 it was at the loss of Carthage, after its first capture was caused by Sbitla (Subaitala) (57), two hundred and fifty miles inland yet another Berber revolt under the so-called Prophetess or "Kahina". In the end, however, the Arabs were considerably and began to strike coins with his own image (58), and it was there that the Berbers, **Τοῖς Ἀφροῖς** as Theophanes than had been the Byzantines, and loyal Berber levies calls them (59), joined his standard. After his defeat (60) accompanied the Arabs in their expedition across the straits there appears to have been an wholesale emigration of to Spain. (63)

Byzantines from Africa who fled to the near-by islands, particularly Pantellaria, and remained there until an expedition sent by 'Abd al-Malik captured those too. (61) It differs greatly from those which accounted for the loss of Palestine, Syria, Egypt and Armenia. In the case of Egypt and the eastern provinces it had been a local population either for a time their own struggle against the new invaders of their out of sympathy with the Greco-Roman world, or rendered hostile land. There is a reference to a Berber chief (62) who by doctrinal controversies. In Africa, the work of destruction apparently embraced Islam but later led a revolt against 'Ukba ibn Nafi, while the reverses that the Arabs suffered after the completed by the alienation of the Berbers. That they for many years did not assist the invaders but provided the chief

(57) ibn Khaldūn, vol.1 p.209.

(58) al-Hakam, p.301.

(59) Theoph. 343.16.

(60) See above, p.141

(63) Two examples of behaviour adopted by Arab leaders

(61) al-Bakri, 'Description de l'Afrique Septentrionale', trans. McGuckin de Slane, Journal Asiatique 12(1858) p.525.

(62) ibn Khaldūn Vol.1 pp.286-287.

latter's death in 683, can, apart from their own internal disputes, be put down entirely to Berber activity. Lastly, the loss of Carthage, after its first capture was caused by yet another Berber revolt under the so-called Prophetess or "Kahina". In the end, however, the Arabs were considerably more successful in winning the friendship of the Berbers than had been the Byzantines, and loyal Berber levies accompanied the Arabs in their expedition across the straits to Spain. (63)

The fundamental reasons for the loss of Africa did not differ greatly from those which accounted for the loss of Palestine, Syria, Egypt and Armenia. In the case of Egypt and the eastern provinces it had been a local population either out of sympathy with the Greco-Roman world, or rendered hostile by doctrinal controversies. In Africa, the work of destruction had been begun by the doctrinal controversies and had been completed by the alienation of the Berbers. That they for many years did not assist the invaders but provided the chief resistance against them matters little in this context. On the contrary, Gregory's revolt, based on their support, was

(63) Two examples of behaviour adopted by Arab leaders undoubtedly to impress the Berbers are described by al-Hakam on p.318 and p.320.

the beginning of the end in Africa. His rule had extended from Tunis to Tangier (64). The fact that he chose to fight the Arabs and not to ally himself with them against Constantinople, did not prevent his action from giving a unity to the Berbers in the whole of that extensive territory which they had previously lacked. After his disappearance from the scene, the Berbers continued the war against the Arabs on their own behalf, but it is only reasonable to suppose that they would have made it very difficult for the Byzantines to return had they brought it to a successful conclusion.

Thus, the closing years of the seventh and the beginning of the eighth century had shown the Byzantines to be incapable, apart from isolated attempts, of making any effective resistance to the advancing Arabs. Forced to abandon position after position, time after time besieged in their own capital, usually unable to obtain the support of local populations or to use it to good advantage whenever it was forthcoming, they were involved in a struggle no longer to preserve frontiers but for survival. During that same period the capital underwent on four occasions the upheavals consequent upon a

(64) al-Balādhuri, Vol.1 pp.356-7.

violent change of rulers (4). Nevertheless, the success of Leo III during the great siege of 717-18 and the revival of the empire under him and his dynasty indicates that Byzantine resources were by no means exhausted.

The southward and westward movement of the Slavs had reached its climax in the first years of the seventh century, (1) but its dangers were scarcely as great as those which threatened the empire from the east. This does not mean, of course, that the movement lacked significance or that it did not seriously influence imperial policy. Its effect, however, was totally different in kind from that of either the Persian or the Arab invaders.

By the middle of the seventh century, the Slavs had occupied much land south of the Danube and it could hardly be doubted that the occupation was going to be lasting. But, by that time, the Slavs were, on the whole, ceasing to be an hostile element. In the west, the Serbs and Croats, whatever may have been the real meaning of these two names or the true place of origin of the tribes that bore them, (2) had thrown off Avar rule with some kind of encouragement from the

(1) See above, pp. 35-38

(2) See below, pp.

(2) See H. Grégoire, *BYZ 17* (1944-45) pp. 88-118, 'Les Origines et le Nom des Croates et des Serbes', for a discussion of the much disputed passages in the *De Administrando Imperio*. His article includes many references to earlier work on this topic.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SLAVS, BULGARS AND KHAZARS

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imperial government, (3) had formed their own state under their ruler Samo and had accepted Christian missionaries. (4) Further east, those Slavs who had settled in Macedonia and Thrace had also been regularly in contact with the church, (5) so much so that a bishopric was provided for the thirty thousand transferred by Justinian II to Bithynia, (6) while the grant made by him to the church of Saint Demetrius in Thessalonica may well have been in recognition of successful missionary activity (7) which that city, together with others remaining unengulfed by the original flood of Slav invaders continued to carry out. (8) The old violent attacks upon the imperial cities, particularly upon Thessalonica had died away. Professor Gregoire, by comparing the titles bestowed upon the emperor in an account of two Slav attacks in S. Demetrius Theophanes as follows:- (10)

- (3) Constantinus Porphyrogenitus, De Administrando Imperii, ed. & trans. R. H. Jenkins and Gy. Moravcsik, Budapest, 1949, pp.146.8. - 148.20.
- (4) De Administrando Imperii, p.148(31-42).
- (5) L. Bréhier, 'La Transformation de l'Empire byzantine sous les Héraclides' Journal des Savants (NS)15(1917) p.450.
- (6) F. Dvornik, Les Slaves, Byzance et Rome (Etudes Slaves No.4) Paris, 1910, pp.102-103.
- (7) The importance of Thessalonica in this context is discussed by A. Vasil'yev, 'An Edict of the Emperor Justinian II' Speculum 18(1943) pp.1-13.
- (8) It is difficult to agree that at this time "the Slav tongue was continually heard in the streets, of Thessalonica" (Goryanov & Rossezshkin, Sbornik Dokumentov po Sotsial'no-Ekonomicheskoy Istorii Vizantii. Moscow, 1951 Vol.2, p.66)

to those contained in the inscriptions recording the grant and the bishopric, would identify the emperor in the passage of S. Demetrius as Justinian II and conclude that active Slav hostility continued later than has been supposed (9). It would be necessary to find some stronger evidence than a resemblance between imperial titles if such a suggestion were to be accepted, since there is no mention of Slav attacks so late in the century anywhere else in the sources.

There is, however, one very interesting piece of evidence regarding the attitude of the Slavs to the Byzantine empire, contained in a well-known passage of Theophanes, the full implications of which, have never, it seems, been properly emphasized. The occasion when Justinian II transferred his thirty thousand Slavs is described by Theophanes as follows:- (10)

"In that year Justinian marched against the Slavs and the Bulgars. He not only fought battles with the Bulgars, who attacked him, but also, on reaching Thessalonica, he collected an enormous number of Slavs, some of them prisoners and some of them volunteers, whom he ferried over to Abydus and settled in the Opsikian theme. But, during his return journey, he was ambushed by the Bulgars in a narrow defile and scarcely escaped after suffering the slaughter of his own troops and much damage".

(11) Bulkovsky is the only modern authority to question the whole story and to suggest that Justinian never penetrated into Bulgar territory at all or reached Thessalonica. He

(9) 'Une Edit de l'Empereur Justinien II', BYZ 17(1944-45) pp.118-124a.

(10) Theoph. 364 (11-18).

The passage as a whole refers to Justinian's first campaign against the Bulgars. Slavs and Bulgars are carefully distinguished one from another, and it is clear that the former are not the main enemy. But the real importance of the passage in the present context lies in the concluding sentence. It cannot be doubted that by "the return journey" is meant not a return from Abydos to Constantinople, but the return journey of the emperor with his army from Thessalonica back into imperial territory. It is highly improbable that the sense of the passage can be that those who had escorted the Slavs into Asia Minor were attacked by Bulgars when returning along the north shore of the Sea of Marmora, where, in any case, there can hardly be any "narrow defiles". It was, therefore, while still encumbered by his "enormous number of Slavs" that Justinian must have suffered this all but disastrous Bulgarian onslaught. (11) It has therefore to be explained how it was that, confronted by the apparent destruction of the army of their captors, the Slavs, whether "prisoners" or "volunteers" neither deserted to the

(10) Theoph. 356.2.

(11) V. I. Lavrenko, *O Slavyanakh v Maloy Azii* St. Petersburg.

(12) Kulakovskiy is the only modern authority to question the whole story and to suggest that Justinian never penetrated into Bulgar territory at all or reached Thessalonica. He thinks that this was an incident concerning a comparatively small Bulgar raiding party far to the south of Bulgar possessions. (See Istoriya Vizantii Vol.3

(13) pp.260-261.) Thessalonique - ses Origines au IV^e siècle Paris, 1918, p.127.

(14) See below, p. 154-155

victorious Bulgarians, nor made any other attempt to leave the convoy, but instead meekly proceeded on their journey. It is known that of those who did get to Bithynia, Justinian formed a corps of thirty thousand men (12) and Lamanskiy in his work on the Slavs in Asia Minor (now nearly a hundred years old but still the fullest discussion of the subject) calculated that this would mean the transfer of a total population of eighty thousand (13). Vasil'yev accepts this figure, but neither he, in his article on the whole question of Justinian's campaign (14), nor Tafrali (15), nor, it seems, any other modern authority, asks how it was that a horde of barbarians continued to accept the authority of an escorting force after that force had been almost completely overwhelmed in battle. Lamanskiy did, in fact, make one suggestion which does indicate a partial explanation. Since the establishment of a Slav colony in Asia Minor earlier in the century (16), there had

- (17) Lamanskiy, p. 37.
 (18) For example, Hisham ibn Muhammad al-Kalbi, writing at the end of the eighth century (see A. N. Markov, *Skazaniya musulmanskiy pisatiley o Slavyanakh i Rusakh*, St. Petersburg, 1907, p. 15) and Muhammad ibn Haukal, writing in the tenth (The *Oriental Geography*, trans. Sir W. Wright, London, 1850, p. 137).
 (12) Theoph. 366.2. 370, p. 15) and Muhammad ibn Haukal, writing in the tenth (The *Oriental Geography*, trans. Sir W. Wright, London, 1850, p. 137).
 (13) V. I. Lamanskiy, *O Slavyanakh v Maloy Azii* St. Petersburg, 1859, p. 3.
 (14) A. Vasil'yev, 'L'Entrée triomphale de l'Empereur Justinien II à Thessalonique en 688', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 13(1947) pp. 358-360.
 (15) O. Tafrali, *Thessalonique - des Origines au XIV siècle*, Paris, 1919, p. 137.
 (16) See below, p. 154-156

the last campaign against the Slavs had been such earlier - remaining in the Balkans, so that it is possible that in 657, under Constant II. (20) The Slavs were no longer a Justinian's contingent knew where they were going and knew danger to the empire and did not, in themselves, constitute a problem of frontier defence. that they were on their way to join others of their own people (17). Nevertheless, Justinian's successful transfer of them after his narrow escape, must surely indicate something more. It is evidence of strong Byzantine influence among the Balkan Slavs, stronger than can be explained merely by Slav hatred of the Bulgarians, and must point to a degree of hellenisation greater than has hitherto been supposed. It is known that the Slavs never completely resigned themselves to the rule of the Bulgars and for long retained a way of life sufficiently distinct to be noticed as a separate people of those regions by Arab sources in the ninth and tenth centuries (18). This transfer of the Slavs took place in 688. Constantine IV had marched against the Bulgars in 679 (19) but

- (17) Lamanskiy, p.17.
- (18) For example, Hishām ibn Muhammed al-Kalbi, writing at the end of the eighth century (see A. E. Markaviy, Skazaniya Musulmanskikh Pisatiley o Slavyanakh i Russkikh, St. Petersburg, 1870, p.15) and Muhammad ibn Haukal, writing in the tenth (The Oriental Geography, trans. Sir W. Ouseley, London, 1800, p.10).
- (19) O. Tafarli, Théssalonique des origines au XIV siècle, Paris, 1919, p.137, implies a second campaign shortly after but gives no reference to a source for this view and this omission is noticed by A. Vasil'yev, 'L'Entrée triomphale de l'Empereur Justinien II à Théssalonique en 688', Orientalia Christiana Periodica, 13(1947) p.358. Y. E. Lipshits, 'Vizantiyskoye Khrestyanstvo i Slavyanskoye Kolonizatsiya', Vizantiyskiy Sbornik 1(1945) p.137, also seems to be thinking of two campaigns, placing them in succeeding years - 678 and 679 - but he, too, gives no reference to a source.

the last campaign against the Slavs had been much earlier - refers to Slavs in that part of the world caused Lashinsky in 657, under Constans II.(20) The Slavs were no longer a danger to the empire and did not, in themselves, constitute a problem of frontier defence.

On the other hand, the Slavs, in the second half of the seventh century, while not actively hostile, were not an entirely dependable element. Two-thirds of that corps of thirty thousand by their treachery turned the day against the Byzantines at the battle of Sebastopolis(21). This was not the first appearance of the Slavs in Asia Minor, nor the first time that they had proved themselves to be unreliable. The earliest reference to Slav settlements in Asia Minor in a literary source is to be found in Theophanes who speaks, significantly enough of five thousand of them making common cause with the Arabs in 664.(22) The casual way in which he

(20) P. Lemerle, 'La Composition et la Chronologie des Miracula S. Demetrii', BZ 46(1953) pp.356-359, believes that the fourth chapter of the second book of the Miracula refers to events between 674 and 678. He places the revolt of Perbund, a Slav tribal chief, in the former year and an expedition by Constantine IV against the Slavs in the latter which was successful. But he admits that there is no mention anywhere else in the sources of such an expedition.

(21) See above, p. 133

(22) Theoph.348 (15-20)

refers to Slavs in that part of the world caused Lamansky to suspect that the settlement was of longer standing and in 1903, B. A. Panchenko was able to adduce evidence for this surmise by his work on an imperial seal which had been brought to the Russian Archaeological Institute at Constantinople and which indicates, according to his dating of it, the presence of an organised Slav community in the opsiikian theme, that is Bithynia by 650. (23) This date has been rejected by Kulakovskiy, who assigns the seal to an indication corresponding to the year 710/711 and by Ostrogorsky, who places it in the reign of Justinian II settlement of Slavs in Asia Minor. There is, incidentally, no

(23) B. A. Panchenko, 'Momument Slavyan 7-vo Veka v Bifinii', *Izves'tiya*, (Russkiy Arkheologicheskiy Institut), 8(1903) pp.15-62.

The lettering of the seal is not beyond dispute. Panchenko believed it to be: - **ΤΩΝ ΑΝΔΡΑΣ ΔΟΝΤΩΝ
ΣΚΛΑΒΩΝ ΤΗΣ ΒΙΘΥΝΩΝ ΕΠΑΡΧΙΑΣ**

G. Schlumberger, 'Sceau des Esclaves d'Eparchie du Bithynie BZ 12 (1903), p.227, from a study of the photograph provided by Panchenko, op.cit. p.62, read it as: - **ΤΩΝ ΑΝΔΡΑΠΟΔΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΣΚΛΑΒΩΝ
ΤΗΣ ΒΙΘΥΝΩΝ ΕΠΑΡΧΙΑΣ**

and N. Niederlé, *Manuel de l'Antiquité Slav*, Paris, 1923, p.114, supported Schlumberger's version.

The second version would more closely describe the status of the Slavs, though, perhaps, an elaborate seal is less likely if that status were so low. The very existence of a seal implies a substantial number of Slavs and supports the present argument.

(24) G. Ostrogorsky, *Geschichte des Byzantinischen Staates*, Munich, 1952, p.107, note 1.

(25) See below, p.218

(694/695)(24). But, whatever weight a specialist may attach to the sigillographic arguments for either of these dates, they both suffer from a difficulty which does not apply to the date suggested by Panchenko. It is known that in 688 or 689, when Justinian II transferred his thirty thousand Slavs, Bithynia is spoken of for the first time as the "opsikian theme" (25), yet it has not been questioned that the last two words on the seal should be read as meaning "the eparchy of Bithynia". This is not advanced as a conclusive argument but it is supported by the passage in Theophanes which does imply that, sometime before 664, there had been a substantial settlement of Slavs in Asia Minor. There is, incidentally, no mention of Byzantine opposition, however hard the Slavs were fought elsewhere, and it is not impossible that an amicable agreement permitting a specified amount of migration into Asia Minor by the Slavs had been reached earlier in the century. At the same time, Panchenko has to notice that the majority of references to Slavs in Asia Minor, are those which mention bodies of Slavs deserting to the Arabs and there is some evidence to support the view that there was a fairly strong tradition of contact between those two peoples as well as between the Slavs and the Byzantines. The Slavs who

(24) G. Ostrogorsky, Geschichte des Byzantinischen Staates, Munich, 1952, p.107, note 1.

(25) See below, p.218

revolted in 664 were settled by the Arabs in Syria, but Lamanskiy lists a number of examples of what he believes to have been contacts between the Arabs and the Slavs in Europe. (26) On the whole, however, it would seem that these contacts were of much later date than the seventh century. Out of all the Arab references to the Slavs collected by Harkaviy there is probably only one which does not clearly refer to a later period. (27) That is the one which Lamanskiy quotes (28) but it is disappointingly vague (29). Nor has it been possible to verify the reference which Lamanskiy makes (30) to a passage in the Oriental Geography of ibn Haukal describing the presence of Slavs in Syria at an early date. The edition

(26) Lamanskiy, p.15.

(27) Some of these (but not the extract discussed below) have been translated into English by S. Rappaport, Slavonic Review, 8(1929) pp.80-98.

(28) Lamanskiy, p.3.

(29) From the diwan (collection of verses) of Ghiyath ibn Ghauth al-Akhtal (Harkaviy, p.2): "as though you really saw in them a crowd of red Slavs". This is taken to mean that the Slavs would be sufficiently well known to the poet's reader to be used in a simile.

(30) Lamanskiy, p.2, quotes Reinaud, Invasions des Sarrazins en France, Paris, 1836, who quotes an edition of ibn Haukal in the Bibliothèque Royale.

(31) P. Charanis, 'The Chronicle of Monemvasia and the question of the Slavonic settlements in Greece', Dumbarton Oaks Papers 5(1950) pp.151-153.

quoted has proved inaccessible, and in that produced by ^{and} Sir William Ouseley in 1800 no such passage is to be found. The only reference which brings the word "Slavonian" into a description of any part of the Middle East, is the statement that "in the land of Saied (the right bank of the Nile) there are Slavonian asses"(31). It would be probably incorrect therefore to think of the contacts that did exist between the Arabs and the Slavs both in Asia Minor and elsewhere as some indication of a long-standing anti-Byzantine alliance. The revolts and treacheries ascribed to the Slavs prove that they were by no means completely integrated into the Byzantine system, but in Asia Minor, it does seem as though the process of integration had gone a very long way, and the defections were exceptional to the general trend of assimilation. Nor did the Slavs in Greece constitute a serious danger. Professor Charanis has shown that extensive penetration of the Peloponnese by the Slavs at the end of the sixth century can be inferred from evidence less ambiguous than the notices in John of Ephesus which may only refer to the Balkan peninsula. (32) But even if his contention, based admittedly on much later

(31) Oriental Geography, p.37. ^{passed below, pp.166-168.}

(32) P. Charanis, 'The Chronicle of Monemvasia and the question of the Slavonic settlements in Greece', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 5(1950) pp.151-153.

sources, be accepted that the Slavs maintained an independent existence in certain parts of the Peloponnese for two hundred and eighteen years (33), it is still significant that they rarely acted with open hostility to the empire (34). So small appears to have been the effect of the Slavs, even at their worst, upon Greek life that the continuity of learning at Athens remained undisturbed where between 620 and 630 a certain Ananias of Shirak succeeded to the chair of philosophy (35). Finally, the integration of the Slavs into the Byzantine community is illustrated in the land legislation which was developed at the end of the seventh century. The Roman empire, had, at first, in the east as in the west preserved the institution of the colonate, a system by which the peasant proprietor was legally tied to his piece of land and virtually became the serf of the great landowner. But the east did not have as acute a population problem as the west and restrictions on the movement of the rural population were not

(37) For a summary of the condition of the free peasant at the end of the seventh century see G. Ostrogorsky,

(33) P. Charanis, *ibid.*, pp.147-148: *Byzantine Empire in the middle ages, Cambridge Economic History*, Vol.1, pp.194-223.

(34) Whether the expedition of Constans II was for the purposes of relief of Corinth is discussed below, pp.166-169.

(35) 'The Autobiography of Ananias of Shirak', trans. by F. Conybeare, *BZ* 6(1897) pp.573-574. passed to him who discharged the liability.

so vitally necessary. Furthermore, with the growth of the military "theme" (36), which depended upon local recruitment, the existence of a free peasantry became once more highly desirable (37). By the end of the seventh century, the peasantry of the eastern empire had acquired freedom of movement to a considerable extent. This development was assisted by the irruption of the Slavs into imperial territories (38). They had never known institutions comparable to the Teutonic "læti". No free cultivators of theirs had ever lived attached to the land. Their presence in large quantities within the empire must undoubtedly have assisted in the disappearance of the "adscripti glebae" and in their replacement partly by the the **μορτίται** - peasants paying a rent for individual pieces of land and partly by the **κοινωνοί** - communities of cultivators farming a piece of rented land in common (39). In both instances the element of compulsion

(36) See below, pp. 214 - 221

(37) For a summary of the condition of the free peasant at the end of the seventh century see G. Ostrogorsky, Agrarian Conditions in the Byzantine Empire in the middle ages, Cambridge Economic History, Vol.1, pp.194-223.

(38) It would be wrong to make this outweigh the other causes as Y. E. Lipshits, op.cit. passim, tends to do.

(39) These were the communities subject to the "allelengyon" tax by which the land of a defaulter passed to him who discharged the liability.

remaining was small (40). The legal status of the free peasant, not tied to the soil, was recognised in the existence of head tax - distinct from any taxes upon landholdings. There seems little doubt that the law which codified these developments must be dated in the last years of the seventh century (41). It therefore can provide evidence of how the coming of the Slavs helped to change the rural economy of the empire - a change important enough to be reflected in the legislation of the period (42). At the same time, the coming of the Slavs did help to solve the problem of a declining population in so far as it did exist. It improved the agricultural resources of the empire and increased source of strength for the empire and its most valuable ally.

(40) The **μορτίται** and, if leaving the land, might have to pay a fine. W. Ashburner, while rejecting the view that the new legislation meant complete freedom for the peasant proprietor, does believe that it implied a new and freer conception of landholding consequent upon the appearance of new settlers with their own customs. (νόμος γεωργικός JHS 32(1912) pp.76-79 and p.84) At the same time, infringements carried heavier punishments (pp.74-75) This was in conformity with the other legislation of the period, see below, pp.212-213

(41) See G. Vernadskiy, 'Sur l'origine de la Loi agraire', BYZ 2(1925) pp.169-180. and A. Vasil'yev, 'L'Entrée triomphale de l'Empereur Justinien II', p.367.

(42) Vernadskiy connects this legislation with the influence of refugees from Egypt (Sur l'Origine de la Loi agraire, pp.178-180), but Alexandria had fallen forty years before it could have come into force - probably during the reign of Justinian II (pp.172-173)

(43) zhkin, Sbornik Dokumentov po Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskoy Istorii Vizantii, Moscow, 1981, vol.2 p.87.

recruiting potentialities for the new army (43). Three years later those of the Slavs who had not travelled far enough southward to come directly under Byzantine influence, fell under the domination of the Bulgars who, from the middle of the seventh century onwards, become prominent in questions of Byzantine frontier policy. But there again, as with the Slavs, the danger from the Bulgar state in the seventh century, despite certain appearances, cannot be compared to the danger from the Persia of Khosroes II or the Arabia of Muhammad. On the contrary, while the Slavs, despite their ready assimilation, were on occasions a doubtful and the unreliable element, the Bulgars gradually became a positive source of strength for the empire and its most valuable ally during a very troubled and dangerous period. The Bulgars, a people of Turco-Tartar origin, participated in the general westward movement to which the Huns had given the impulse at the beginning of the fifth century. Their early relations with the Byzantines followed the same pattern of uneasy alliances followed by periods of open hostility which had for long typified relations with other tribes on the imperial frontier. In 482, for example, the Emperor Zeno

(44) G. Sengon, *Histoire de la Bulgarie*, Paris, 1913, p.44.

(43) On the re-organisation of the army see below, pp. The recruiting potentialities of the new settlers are stressed by Goryanov & Rossezshkin, Sbornik Dokumentov po Sotsial'no-Ekonomicheskoy Istorii Vizantii, Moscow, 1951, vol.2 p.67.

asked for their aid against the Goths, while, three years later, Theodoric, then governor of Thrace, fought a campaign against them and defeated them near the river Dnieper. (44) In 499, occurred the first Bulgar invasion of imperial territory, when, together, with Slavs and Huns, they were invited to the support of the patrician Vitalian in his revolt against the emperor Anastasius. During the sixth century they began to move westward in large numbers from the area between the Don and the Volga which had been their first halting place. They settled in the old Roman province of Dacia and simultaneously began to make raids over the Danube. Bulgars took part in the Avar attack on Constantinople of 626, but shortly after they threw off Avar rule just as the Slavs had done, and by 641 (45) were an independent group, which, in turn, began to subjugate the Slavs living around it.

The sequence of events during the next forty years is by no means easy to determine. The most usual account is that scarcely anything, of importance occurred until 679 or 678 (46) when the Bulgars crossed the Danube in force and made what was to be a permanent settlement immediately south of it at Pliska

(44) G. Sogonon, Histoire de la Bulgarie, Paris, 1913, p.44.

(45) All dating in early Bulgar history is highly controversial. See below, pp. 164-168

(46) See above, p. 153

method to which Bury arrived at his conclusion. There are other reasons why his hypothesis is attractive. First of all, made by Uspenskiy into the excavations there showed that, the revised list of rulers which Bury produced (50), seems to give a far more credible indication of the length of their respective reigns than that which follows from the more generally accepted version (51). Secondly, if the earlier trans-Danubian centre before the building of their better known capital of Preslav a hundred and fifty years later. (47) According to this dating, it was in this first year of their establishment south of the Danube that Constantine IV organised a campaign against them and was signally defeated. (48)

But there is some reason for supposing that the crossing of the Danube and the establishment of the Bulgars at Pliska was a much earlier event. J. B. Bury, working on a Bulgar regnal list came to the conclusion that it included dates in a definite chronological system, and put forward the thesis that a new time cycle, which, it was reasonable to assume, coincided with the establishment of the first Bulgar state, began in 659, this being therefore the year of the crossing of the Danube. (49) It is impossible to discuss here the ingenious

(50) See J. B. Bury, 'The Chronological Cycle of the Bulgarians' *EA* 19(1910) pp.127-144.

(47) F. Uspenskiy, Istoriya Vizantiyskoy Imperii Vol.1 pp.778-782.

(48) Theoph. 358.27 - 359.5.

(49) J. B. Bury Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire London, 1921, Vol.6. pp.546-547.

method by which Bury arrived at his conclusion.⁵⁵ There are also other reasons why his hypothesis is attractive. First of all, the revised list of rulers which Bury produced (50), seems to give a far more credible indication of the length of their respective reigns than that which follows from the more generally accepted version (51). Secondly, if the earlier date for the permanent crossing of the Danube be accepted, it is far easier to explain the defeat of Constantine in 679. If the Bulgars had been only settled a matter of months on the south side of the Danube when Constantine conducted his campaign, it is difficult to see why they should have so quickly defeated his armies. Their potential allies the Slavs had been completely overcome by Constantine II in 657. They had been "caused to submit" (52) and had made no hostile move during the subsequent twenty years. Thus, by 679, they would either have been neutral or under Byzantine influence, a situation which did obtain by 688 (53). But the picture in 679 becomes a very different one if it be assumed that the inscription on the base of a statue at Corinth commemorates

(50) See J. B. Bury, 'The Chronological Cycle of the Bulgarians' BZ 19(1910) pp.127-144.

(54) Meaning either 'agui' - enclosure formed by the Danube,

(51) Asperukh would have to reign for thirty-eight years and Kuvrat for considerably longer.

(55) *A History of the First Bulgarian Empire*, London, 1930,

(52) Theoph. 347 (6-7) See above, p. 154

(53) See above, p. 151 *Balkans and the Occupation of Corinth in the Seventh Century*, *Speculum* 25 (1950) pp.502-545.

permanent crossing of the Danube took place in 659. It would then follow that the Bulgars spent the next twenty years in building their city of Pliska and submitting to their sway those Slav tribes who lived around their "ὄγλος" (54). They would be in a far better position to deal with Constantine's ill-advised attempt at aggression, and his failure does not have to be explained by a fortuitous attack of gout.

S. Runciman accepts neither the traditional date for the Bulgar crossing of the Danube nor the views of J. B. Bury. He believes it to have been "a gradual affair between 650 and 670" and that the "ὄγλος" described settlements on islands in the middle of the Danube (55).

Recently Professor Setton presented some material which has an important bearing on this problem (56). Chiefly relying on finds of belts and buckles in graves at Corinth, he has put forward the opinion that a force of Onogur Bulgars captured that city about the year 657. At the same time, in Professor Kent has suggested that a partially effaced inscription on the base of a statue at Corinth commemorates

pp. 545-546.

(54) Meaning either 'agul' - enclosure formed by the Danube, the sea and the mountains or a Tartar word for settlement.

(55) A History of the First Bulgarian Empire, London, 1930, p.26, note 3.

(56) The Bulgars in the Balkans and the Occupation of Corinth in the Seventh Century, Speculum 25 (1950) pp.502-545.

(57) The Bulgars in the Balkans, p.541, Kent, p.546.

its recapture by Constans II during the same period. (57) These views have begun a controversy which is still in progress. Professor Charanis has completely rejected the possibility of a serious Bulgar invasion so far south at that time, and holds to the opinion, based on a notice in the Chronicle of Monemvasia, that the capture of Corinth took place during the reign of Maurice (58). P. Lemerle has sought to modify the former thesis. He has pointed out that neither the finds of equipment nor some of the other evidence adduced is conclusive (59). It is true that the Corinthian belts and buckles could have other explanations as Professor Charanis has suggested (60) and that Professor Kent's arguments about the inscription do not entirely satisfy. But the inference that Professor Setton has made from the finds of coins is more difficult to criticise. (61) The number of coins found at Corinth of emperors reigning between 582 and 829 exhibits a remarkable and sudden drop in activity in that area and Bulgar settlement south of the

(57) A Byzantine Statue Base at Corinth, Speculum 25(1950) ed. pp.545-546.

(58) On the Slavic Settlements in the Peloponnesus, BZ 46(1953) pp.91-103.

(59) Une Province Byzantine - le Péloponnèse BYZ 21(1951) p.344.

(60) On the Capture of Corinth by the Onogurs and its Recapture by the Byzantines, Speculum 27(1952) pp.343-350.

(61) The Bulgars in the Balkans, p.541, Kent, p.546.

the middle of the seventh century. The same decrease is observed both in the lower town and in the acropolis. This does indicate some catastrophic event in Corinthian history about that time. The reply made by Professor Charanis that despite this decrease there is no reign which is not represented by a few coins and the proportion of coins to the length of a reign is either similar or even smaller in periods when Corinth was incontestably in Byzantine hands, does not seriously alter the significance of this evidence. (62) The fact remains unchallenged that at or about the time under discussion there is a great decrease of Byzantine coinage found at Corinth. It is in the light of this fact that all the other evidence must be considered. But, even if the question of the actual capture of Corinth in 657 must remain for the present in dispute, the evidence produced by Professor Setton, if added to the chronological emendations suggested by Bury (63) makes it reasonable to accept both Bulgar activity in that area and Bulgar settlement south of the Danube considerably earlier than has been generally supposed.

It has been frequently asserted that the only reason why Byzantine campaigns into northern territory were not more

(64) See above, p. 11

(62) On the Slavic Settlements, p.98.

(63) See above, pp. 164-165

numerous during the seventh century is because during the earlier part of it the attention of the empire was engaged by the Persians and during the latter by the Arabs. It is true that Constantine II marched against the Slavs after Mu'awiyah had been compelled to sign a truce with him during the struggle between the Umayyads and the 'Alids (64). The expedition of Constantine IV took place immediately after the Arabs had been driven off from the walls of Constantinople. Justinian II's triumphal progress to Thessalonica could only have taken place at a time when 'Abd al-Malik was faced with the Mardaite danger (65) and had, besides, to deal with rival pretenders to the khilafat (66). But the comparative rarity of a northern campaign has other implications. It means that, after the raids and expeditions culminating in the campaign of 657, neither the Slavs nor the Bulgars initiated of their own accord hostilities against the empire, during a period when the empire would have been least able effectively to counter such hostilities. Although the Bulgars were in the process of unifying the Slavs and giving them an administrative and military cohesion very much as had done the Avars, both

(67) See Bury's list in 'The Chronological Cycle of the

(64) See above, p. 71 according to this, Tervel would be Asperukh's grandson.

(65) See above, p. 120

(68) See above, p. 134

(66) See above, p. 88

(69) See below, p. 174

(70) For example, his decimation of the army, see above, p. 135

Bulgars and Slavs in the second half of the seventh century were apparently ready to live at peace with the empire, and even to give it assistance and alliance in time of need, despite the actions of the imperial government. This situation lasted in the first instance for twenty years until the expedition of Constantine IV provoked the Bulgars into hostility. Justinian's return from Thessalonica was followed by a further period of quiet on the northern frontier. In 696 or 697 the Khan Tervel became the ruler of the Bulgars the first Khan of whom something definite appears in the sources since the time of Asperukh (67). Meanwhile Justinian had been overthrown (68) and exiled to the Chersonese. (69) Tervel appears to have ruled without any hostile intentions against the Byzantines, and in 704-5, his relations with them entered into a new phase. He received Justinian at his court, and with the help of a Bulgar army restored him to power. For this he was granted the title of Caesar and awarded with the district of "Zagoria" - a name that may indicate territory on the southern side of the Balkan mountain range. Much in character with his other foolish actions on return to power (70),

(67) See Bury's list in 'The Chronological Cycle of the Bulgarians' According to this, Tervel would be Asperukh's grandson. Bury, 'The Bulgarian Treaty of 814 AD and the Great Fence of Thrace' *EBR* 25(1910) pp.276-287.

(68) See above, p.134

(75) *Uspevskiy, Istoriya Vizantiyskoy Imperii, Vol.1 p.776.*

(69) See below, p.174

(70) For example, his decimation of the army, see above, p.135

Justinian in 708 marched against his Bulgar friends but was completely routed at Anchilaois, (71) a city on the Black Sea coast slightly south of the mouths of the Danube. Nevertheless, once again, these hostilities seem to have had no lasting (76) effect upon Bulgar relations with the empire. After Justinian's final overthrow in 711, he was once again kindly received by Tervel who again espoused his cause in alliance with certain troops, probably Slav (72), from the opsikion with them. His help this time was unsuccessful, but Bulgar friendship for the empire continued. In 715-716 a treaty of very great importance was signed between the Bulgars and the Byzantines (73). It included the demarcation of a frontier, (74) and the regulation of trade. It marked the beginning of the Byzantine attempt to assimilate the Bulgars to their own culture. (75) Peace between the two powers lasted until the middle of the eighth century, but its value to the Byzantines

(76) Uspenskiy, Istoriya Vizantiyskoy Imperii, vol.1, p.776.

(71) Theoph. 376 (13-19). 25. Cedrenus, MEG 121, col. 868D, 26. Cedrenus, MEG 121, col. 1317C. Nicephorus, 54.

(72) Cf. Panchenko, p.33, who believes this to indicate that Justinian's massacre of the families of those who turned traitor at the battle of Sebastopolis could have been by no means complete.

(73) Theoph. 376 (13-19). 25. Cedrenus, MEG 121, col. 868D, 26. Cedrenus, MEG 121, col. 1317C. Nicephorus, 54.

(74) Doelger, Regesten, 276.

(75) See J. B. Bury, 'The Bulgarian Treaty of 814 AD and the Great Fence of Thrace' EHR 25(1910) pp.276-287.

(76) Uspenskiy, Istoriya Vizantiyskoy Imperii, vol.1 p.776.

was proved at an early stage. The Arab attack on Constantinople of 717-718 was precisely the moment when, as Uspenskiy puts it "there was given to the Bulgarians the full possibility of settling their account with Byzantium." (76) Instead, the treaty continued to be respected. Bulgar forces made repeated attacks upon the base camp of the besiegers, and, by eventually accounting for twenty-two thousand of the enemy undoubtedly were as responsible as the ships fitted with Greek Fire for turning the day against the Arabs. (77) When the fighting was over, the Bulgars performed yet another service by refusing to shelter Artemius and his fellow-conspirators against the emperor Leo III. (78) In spite, therefore, of numerous mistakes in Byzantine policy, the empire derived great advantages from its contact with the Bulgars, including decisive assistance at critical moments.

Theophanes (80) describes them as "the Turks from the east".

(76) Uspenskiy, Istoriya Vizantiyskoy Imperii, vol.1, p.776.

(77) Thus Theophanes, 379.29., Cedrenus, MPG 121, col.866D, Zonaras, MPG 134, col.1317C. Nicephorus, 54. (15 - 19) is the only source not to mention the role of the Bulgars and to ascribe the victory entirely to Leo's fireships. Arab forces stationed there. The

(78) Theoph. 400.18. - 401.3. Nic.55.19 - 56.27, specifically states that when Artemius sheltered with the Bulgars, Leo invoked this treaty and the Bulgars surrendered him.

(79) Vasil'ev, The Goths in the Crimea, Cambridge (Mass.) 1936, p.74.

(80) Theoph. 315 14 - 16.

The Heracleians had also important relations with the Khazars, in the lands between the Don and the Volga, and the Goths in the northern parts of the Crimea. The Khazars were another people of turco-tartar origin who had probably migrated westward during the same period as the Bulgars and the Avars. But, from an early stage, the Khazars had been very hostile to the Avars and had petitioned Justin II not to admit them into the empire (79). By the end of the sixth century the power of the Khazars had increased considerably, and, in 576 they effected a temporary occupation of the north-east part of the Chersonese. But, on the whole, they maintained a tradition of hostility to those who were also the enemies of the empire. The first important reference to the Khazars in the sources, is in 626 when Heraclius made an alliance with them against the Persians and the Avars - Theophanes (80) describes them as "the Turks from the east". In 650, the Arabs appeared in Transcaucasia and, between 651 and 652, came into conflict with the Khazars and were defeated by them. In 683 the Khazars, on their own part, invaded Armenia and defeated the Arab forces stationed there. The Arabs recommenced the attack, and by the beginning of the

(82) See above, pp. 170

(79) Vasil'yev, The Goths in the Crimea, Cambridge (Mass.)

(83) 1936, p.74.

(80) Theoph. 315 14 - 16.

eighth century, had pushed the Khazars well back into their own territory. In 717, the Khazars carried out a reprisal expedition, which must have been of some assistance as a diversion during the siege of Constantinople. (81) At the same time, they once more began to extend their influence over the Chersonese. The towns in the south, since the time of Justinian I, had owed allegiance to the empire, while the north had remained an indeterminate territory peopled by a number of Gothic tribes. After Justinian II had fled from his exile in Cherson to the Khazars, he was at first received by them in a friendly manner and was given their ruler's old daughter for a wife and the city of Phanagoria to live in. The situation changed, and he was forced to seek support elsewhere, (82) while the Khazars helped to power his rival Philippicus (Vardan) (83). Justinian on his return carried out a senseless plan of revenge against Cherson which was once more an opportunity for Khazar intervention. There are certain significant aspects of this Khazar activity. Firstly, the Khazars did not overthrow Byzantine institutions in those was therefore, very different from that in the east. The

(81) Vernadskiy, Ancient Russia, p.222, considers effects to have been small, but it is worth mentioning.

(82) See above, pp.170

(84) Theoph. 378.3.

(83) See above, p.136

(85) Theoph. 409.31.

(86) Encyclopaedia of Islām, Vol.2, col.935.

cities such as Bosphorus and Cherson where they had gained some control. The representative of Khazar power, the tudun continued to rule side by side with the representative of Byzantine power - the πρωτοπολίτης (84). Secondly, after the accession of Leo III had put an end to the struggles of various pretenders to the imperial throne, the Khazars remained in firm alliance with Byzantium against the Arabs - an alliance which was sealed by a royal marriage in 732.(85) Lastly, although the outcome was to be very different, Christian missionaries began to make some headway among them in the last two decades of the seventh century and Barthold (86) believes that they were actually converted to Christianity which would be an important indication of Byzantine influence. Relations with the Khazars were thus, on the whole, beneficial to the empire. Perhaps more positively than the Slavs and the Bulgars, the Khazars assisted the Heracleians in their defence of the imperial frontier.

The situation on the northern frontier during the last half of the seventh and the beginning of the eighth century, was therefore, very different from that in the east. The Slavs and the Bulgars, after the first onrush, settled down

(84) Theoph. 378.5.

(85) Theoph. 409.31.

(86) Encyclopaedia of Islām, Vol.2, col.935.

in the territories they had acquired. The Slavs, despite their unreliability, were scarcely a menace, while the Bulgars became actually important in imperial defence and helped to save the capital from destruction. The Khazars, on the other hand, were, almost from the first, valuable allies and their part in the intrigues for the imperial throne at the end of the century did not materially alter that role. It was from the north that the later Heracleians drew some of their strength, and it is in the north that must be sought at least one reason for the preservation of the empire during a very critical period. though comparatively little attention, and events in Italy and Spain during the previous century had made any spectacular successes extremely unlikely. But, nevertheless, something may be set to the credit of the dynasty.

Nothing, for example, could be done to reverse the flow of the Visigothic tide in Spain. All but a small area in the extreme south-east had been lost to the empire by the time of Justinian I. During the reign of the Visigothic king Sisebut there were more losses of imperial possessions and his successor Swinthila drove the "Romans" from their remaining strongholds (1). At that time the government in

(1) Isidore of Seville, *Historia de Regibus Gothorum* c. 82, (MPL Vol. 83 col. 1074B) assigns no date to this but merely speaks of it as taking place in the reign of Swinthila. Spruner-Menke's map gives 639 and the article in *GMH*, (Vol. 5, p. 175), 634, unfortunately, however, without a reference.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE HERACLEIANS AND THE WEST

The Heracleians never forgot that they were Roman emperors. Part of their task was to seize every opportunity of asserting their prestige in those western territories of the old empire which had partly or wholly fallen under barbarian domination. The problem of the west was never allowed to disappear entirely from their calculations, though more urgent dangers elsewhere caused it to receive comparatively little attention, and events in Italy and Spain during the previous century had made any spectacular successes extremely unlikely. But, nevertheless, something may be set to the credit of the dynasty.

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(1) Isidore of Seville, Historia de Regibus Gothorum c.62, (MPL Vol.83 col.1074A) assigns no date to this but merely speaks of it as taking place in the reign of Swinthila. Spruner-Menke's map gives 629 and the article in CMH, (Vol.2, p.175), 624, unfortunately, however, without a reference.

Constantinople was too pre-occupied with the Persians to take much notice of this loss of a distant province. (2) There is, however, a piece of evidence to indicate that Heraclius did make one effort to preserve imperial prestige in the distant west. In 616 he made a treaty with Sisibut which included a provision for the forcible baptism of Jews in their respective dominions (3). This policy had proved disastrous in the lands bordering the eastern frontier and there had been little reason for employing it. (4) So far as the west was concerned, it was clearly an attempt to assert imperial leadership in an important matter. Heraclius could be certain of getting Visigothic support for the drastic measures which he advocated. The results must have been satisfactory for in 634, he concluded a similar treaty with Dagobert, king of the Franks. (5) But it was obvious that little of positive benefit to the Empire could be done in Spain. The situation there remained stable, and there are, indeed, very few references to Spain in Greek sources until

concerned, this proved to be no empty undertaking. After

(2) There is not even a mention in Theophanes of this end to Roman dominion in Spain.

(3) Doelger, Regesten, 168.

(4) See above, pp. 51-54

(5) Doelger, Regesten, 207.

Dagobert's death in 639 there followed the famous series of the Arabs began its conquest in 711.

The situation was equally stable in the time of the Heracleians so far as the Franks were concerned. These conquerors of Roman Gaul had been for some time the allies of the empire. Their reliability was greatly strengthened by their early conversion to Catholic Christianity in contrast to the Arianism of their Lombard and Visigothic neighbours. The consular ornaments had been presented to the first important Frankish leader Clovis in 507 by the emperor Anastasius I. Frankish aid had been obtained against the Lombards in Italy on more than one occasion during the last years of the sixth century, though, as was not unusual with imperial allies, that aid was not given for nothing.⁽⁶⁾ These friendly relations were maintained by Heraclius. Even before the agreement on the Jewish question,⁽⁷⁾ Dagobert, impressed by the imperial victory over the Persians, sent two ambassadors to Constantinople to conclude a perpetual alliance.⁽⁸⁾ So far as his immediate successors were concerned, this proved to be no empty undertaking. After

(6) Doelger, Regesten, 76 and 77.

(7) See above, p.178

(8) Fredegarius, Chronicon ch.62 (MGH SS rer. Mer. Vol.2. p.151). Doelger, Regesten, 202, gives 630 as the date for this event.

(9) See below, pp.24-25 the southern possessions were under Exarchate of Africa.

Dagobert's death in 639 there followed the famous series of Rois Faineants who had not the power to meddle in matters outside their frontiers even had they the desire to do so, the century progressed, it tended to get worse, while Pepin II's victory at Tetry in 687 foreshadowed a change in Frankish affairs with which the Heracleians, at least, were not to be troubled.

For the Heracleians, therefore the main centre of interest was in Italy. The Lombards had succeeded in destroying much of the work of Justinian I, and, by the end of the sixth century, there was only left under imperial control a number of isolated districts varying in importance. In the north the Byzantines held Ravenna, with the country around it extending to Venice, and Liguria, - roughly corresponding in extent to the Italian Riviera of the present day. In the centre, there was Rome, with a narrow corridor joining it to Ravenna and Naples, separated from Rome by a potentially hostile strip of Lombard territory belonging to the duke of Beneventum. In the south Calabria, the "heel" and the "toe" of Italy together with the island of Sicily were still imperial possessions. For the sake of greater efficiency, military and civil powers were combined in the administration of these possessions - a development common to other parts of the empire at this time (9) - and were

(15) See below, pp. 187-189

(9) See below, pp. 214-221 The southern possessions were under Exarchate of Africa.

vested in the person of the imperial exarch.(10) Little could be done to better the territorial situation, and, indeed, as the century progressed, it tended to get worse. The Lombard king Agilulf made a treaty with Smaragdus (exarch from 602 to 611) on the basis of existing conquests. This treaty was eventually confirmed by Constantinople (11) and renewed on at least two occasions.(12) After Agilulf's death in 615, his general Sundrar recommenced operations against the Byzantines with such success that the Exarch Eleutherius was compelled to buy an unfavourable peace.(13) About 640 (14) Rothari drove out the Byzantines from their cities in Liguria, and the campaign of Constans II in 688 did nothing to lessen Lombard gains (15). The victory of Constantine IV over the Arabs in 678 impressed the Mediterranean world

(10) For a discussion of the origin of this term, see Diehl, Etudes sur l'administration byzantine dans l'exarchat de Ravenne, Paris, 1888, pp.15-16.

(11) Doelger, Regesten, 157.

(12) Paulus Diaconus, Historia Langobardorum, Bk.4, ch.35 (MGH, SS rer. Lang. p.128) and ch.40 (ibid. p.133)

(13) Prosperi Aquitani Continuator, quoted by T. Hodgkin, Italy and Her Invaders, Vol.6, p.155, Oxford, 1895.

(14) Paulus Diaconus, Bk.4., ch.45 (MGH SS rer. Lang. p.135) Diehl, Etudes, p.45, believes this to be the approximate date.

(15) See below, pp.188-189

sufficiently to bring Lombard ambassadors on a mission of peace to Constantinople, (16) but the closing years of the century saw Romuald of Beneventum occupying the imperial cities of Calabria. (17)

But the work of the Heracleians in Italy cannot be **judged** entirely from this record of territorial losses. For so long as the Persians and Arabs presented the greater danger, little material aid could be spared for Italian imperial possessions. The efforts of the emperors had to be limited to the preservation of prestige without the power to enforce their will in reality. In those conditions their losses were less than might have been expected. Except for Liguria and the temporary occupation of part of Calabria, Byzantine possessions in Italy were as extensive at the end of the seventh century as they had been at the beginning. At the same time there is ample evidence of the high prestige of the imperial name. There are examples of this evidence in the history of the exarchate. Smaragdus had had to make an unfavourable treaty with the Lombards. His successor, John Lemigius was probably killed in an uprising in 616. (18)

(23) The intervening period of five years seems to have

(16) Doelger, Regesten, 240. Cf. Theoph. 355.27 - 356.7.

(17) Paulus Diaconus, Bk. 6 ch. 1 (MGH SS rer. Lang. p. 164)

(18) Eleutherius is spoken of as having "occidit omnes qui in nece Johanni exarchi et iudicibus reipublicae fuerant mixti" (Lib. Pont. 319.12) Regarding John's second name, cf. Lib. Pont. p. 319, note 2 and Diehl, Etudes, p. 173, note 2.

Eleutherius, who was exarch for the next four years, had first to put down another revolt, (19) and, after he had killed the leader, (20) himself attempted to usurp imperial power and to rule Italy in his own name. (21) But he could get no support from the people of Ravenna (22) and was slain by his own troops while on a march to Rome. The regime of his successor Isaac (625 - 644) (23) was scarcely less eventful. Sent by Heraclius to enforce the Ecthesis on the pope Severinus (24) the confirmation of whose election was delayed until he had complied with the emperor's wishes, Isaac passed his time at Rome in seizing various valuables from the Lateran church and sending them to Constantinople. (25) Nevertheless when a certain Mauricius, an officer of his, and a participant in these proceedings, began to prove disobedient, Isaac was able to get the support of Roman citizens to help Italy was preserved by the Heraclians.

(19) Liber Pontificalis ed. L. Duchesne, Vol.1 Paris, 1886, p.319.6.

(20) Paulus Diaconus, Bk.4. ch.34 (MGH. SS rer. Lang. p.128)

(21) Lib. Pont. 321 (7-9)

(22) Lib. Pont. 322 note 7.

(23) The intervening period of five years seems to have been one of confusion of which little is known.

(24) See below, p.193

(25) Lib. Pont. 329 (3-4)

him to put down the beginnings of a revolt.(26) It was during his period of office that Liguria was lost to the Lombards.(27) The reigns of the exarchs during the second half of the century were equally troubled. Olympius intervened in imperial policy with unfortunate results for himself.(28) Theophylact (702-709) barely escaped with his life after some sort of tumult (30) and his successor, John Rizocopus, was murdered by a Ravenna mob. Other examples can be given of the apparent decay of imperial administration, but the experiences of Eleutherius and Isaac plainly show how the imperial idea persisted despite occasional misgovernment by individuals, and could at critical moments command the loyalty of the population. At the end of the century, the exarchate itself remained unshaken. It remained the chief institution through which the concept of imperial power in Italy was preserved by the Heracleians.

(26) Lib. Pont. 331 (1-11)

(27) See above, p.181 His epitaph was tactful on this point, it is printed by Hodgkin, pp.169-170.

(28) See below, p.195

(29) Lib. Pont. 383 (1-7)

(30) Fredegarius, ch.49 - 50 (MGH SS rer. Mer. Vol. 2. p.145)

(32) Studes, p.127.

(33) Diehl, Rhodes, p.211.

There were other institutions through which the same end was in varying degrees achieved. The Lombard kingdom was a collection of independent principalities in theory owing common allegiance to one monarch. The fact of this allegiance depended in practice on the monarch's personality, and, from the time of Agilulf at the beginning of the seventh century to the time of Liutprand at the beginning of the eighth there seems to have been only one - Rothari - who could really command it. The Byzantines tried to exploit this situation. On one occasion an attempt was made to bring Agilulf's son Adelwald completely under imperial influence, but it was unsuccessful. On another occasion, Aio, the son of a duke of Beneventum, became so involved in a Byzantine intrigue that he appears to have gone off his head.(31) Neither event had any sequel of direct benefit to the empire, but both did have a useful result. They served to keep alive and active what Diehl called the "Greek Party" within the Lombard community.(32) This task was becoming more difficult. For, although Diehl speaks of "clergy naturally hostile to rulers who practiced Arianism", (33) this was no longer true from

(31) Paulus Diaconus Bk.4. ch.42 (SS rer. Lang. p.134)

(32) Diehl, Etudes, p.197.

(33) Diehl, Etudes, p.211.

the middle of the century onwards, while even Rothari, who was an Arian, is nevertheless described as "following the path of justice" by Paul the Deacon. (34) The means to be used, therefore, had to be diplomatic, while no reliance could be placed on the religious division which occasionally had been to the disadvantage of the Lombards in the past. The most considerable episode in the history of Byzantine attempts to influence the course of events in Italy during the seventh century was the Italian expedition of Constans II. Many of the theories that have been advanced to account for his departure from Constantinople are either completely untenable or do not, of themselves, provide sufficient reason for such a very drastic step. For example, it has been supposed, by a comparatively modern historian that, without any particular plan in mind, Constans left his capital in horror at the reaction caused by the murder of his brother Theodosius. (35) If dislike of Constans were the cause, than the reason for it is far more likely to have been his religious views rather than a violent death in the imperial family which was not an unusual event. Many sources give the incident of Theodosius as one amongst a number of much more

(38) See below, p. 198, note (70)

(34) Paulus Diaconus, Bk.4. ch.42 (MGH SS rer. Lang. p.134)

(35) Kulakovskiy, Istoriya Vizantii, vol.3. pp.221-222.

(40) Ibid., p.75 (note 5)

(41) See above, p. 108

serious reasons for hatred, of which the monothelite heresy and the fate of the pope Martin and the monk Maximus are emphasised as the most important.(36) But, in that event, the west ought to have been the last direction in which Constans should have wished to make his escape, for that was where the monothelite doctrine was hated most and where Martin and Maximus had had most support.(37) On the other hand, Martin's undignified arrival at Constantinople and subsequent trial was not wholly condemned by the people.(38) Kaestner, while suggesting that Constans felt himself to be in immediate danger - a suggestion for which he advances no evidence - (39) - admits that flight to the west in the circumstances was a true instance of jumping out of the frying pan into the fire.(40) A certain weariness with the conflicts and intrigues of the capital and a disinclination to face once again the problem of the eastern frontier where Mu'awiyah's success had re-opened the struggle against the Byzantines,(41) may have had something to do with the emperor's

(36) E.G. Cedrenus, MPG Vol.121 col.833, Zonaras, MPG Vol.134, col.1291.

(37) See below, pp. 193-195

(38) See below, p. 195, note (73)

(39) I. Kaestner, De Imperio Constantini III, Leipzig, 1907, pp.73-74.

(40) Ibid, p.75 (note 5)

(41) See above, p. 108

decision, just a similar situation fifty years before had prompted Heraclius to threaten the removal of the imperial government to Carthage. But, by far the most important motive with Constans, and one that may have influenced Heraclius too, was the desire to assert the imperial prestige in Italy which the Heracleians were making every effort to retain within the imperial sphere. When Constans said that "one ought to honour the mother rather than the daughter"(42) he emphasised that the Heracleians, no less than Justinian and his successors, ever remembered that Rome had been the origin of their imperial power and that their fundamental policy was the preservation of the unity of those portions of the Roman world which still remained or could be brought under their control.

Constans landed in Italy at a time most suitable for the aims he had in mind. The Lombard king, Aripert I, had died in the previous year, and his two sons Pectarit and Godopert bore each other the hostility usual on these occasions. Grimuald, duke of Beneventum, profiting by this dissension, had occupied Pavia, and Constans in turn, during the duke's absence, was able to occupy town after town in southern Italy meeting practically no resistance - an indication of the effect of the imperial name.(43) But the assertion of Paul the Deacon

(42) Lib. Pont. 338. (11-12)

(42) Zonaras, MPG 134 col.1291.

(43) See above, p.142 and 143.

(43) Paulus Diaconus Bk.5 ch.7. (MGH SS rer. Lang. p.147)

that the emperor's intention was the conquest of all Italy cannot be accepted without qualification.(44) Constans was primarily interested in the impression of imperial prestige and appreciated the impracticability of a serious campaign. When Romuald, the son of Grimuald, refused to surrender Beneventum itself, Constans hurriedly concluded a treaty and proceeded to Rome,(45) after submitting to two minor reverses in the neighbourhood of Naples.(46) At Rome, the pope Vitalian did him homage and honoured him with processions and special religious ceremonies, although the emperor seized much of the wealth of the city for the benefit of the treasury in Constantinople.(47) After a stay of twelve days, however, Constans was forced to turn his attention to another quarter of his western possessions. The Arabs had been making raids on Sicily (48) and had established a settlement there,(49) constituting a serious threat to Carthage.(50) This was the

(44) Paulus Diaconus, Bk.5 ch.6. (MGH, p.146)

(45) Doelger, Regesten, 231.

(46) Paulus Diaconus, Bk.5 ch.9. (MGH pp.148-9)

(47) Ibid. Bk.5 ch.11. (MGH p.150)

(48) Theoph. 348 (12-13)

(49) Lib. Pont. 338. (11-12)

(50) See above, p.142 and C. Diehl, L'Afrique Byzantine, Paris, 1896, (p.570)

reason why Constans left Rome, where he had been obviously welcomed,(51) and spent the last years of his life in Sicily. It was the money which he needed for his expedition against the Arabs that caused him to levy exceptional taxation not only on Sicily but also on the Byzantine possessions in Italy (52) and it was this which caused the unpopularity of his rule possibly accounting for his strange death.(53) But whether or not he was hated in his last years there is no question that imperial prestige stood as high as it had ever done when he had gone. Grimald carried out one or two reprisals against imperial towns in the north (54), but the imperial officer Mzez could find no supporters for the revolt which he raised after the death of his master. He was suppressed by loyal troops with the encouragement of the pope,(55) and Brooks has abundantly demonstrated how unlikely it was that the new emperor, Constantine IV had had to give

(51) Kaestner, p.82, stresses the magnificence of his reception.

(52) Paulus Diaconus, Bk.5 ch.11 (MGH SS rer. Lang. p.150)

(53) Constans' Roman spoils may well have been intended to provide money for his Sicilian garrison. So much may be inferred from Lib. Pont. 346 (10-11).

(54) Paulus Diaconus, Bk.5. ch.27 (MGH SS rer. Lang. p.153)

(55) Constantine IV wrote to thank the pope for his help. See his letter in Mansi, vol. 11 col.200.

his personal assistance in this connection.(56) Later, with it Perctarit was glad to gain the friendship of Constantine.(57) For the remainder of the century Lombard and Byzantine Maurice remained more or less at peace.(58) The Heracleians had ably maintained their status in their western dominions.

There was a third aspect of relations between the empire and Italy which became important in the seventh century. The growth in stature of the papacy during the pontificate of Gregory I together with the conversion of the Lombard rulers to catholicism had increased the influence of the Italian clergy. Their co-operation became a necessity for the maintenance of imperial prestige among the Italian population and doctrinal unity between the papal and the imperial courts was therefore a vital political question. The action of every emperor from Heraclius to Anastasius II regarding the papacy was taken, wisely or unwisely as events turned out, with this question in mind, and, despite many mistakes, papal respect for the emperor was, on the whole, remarkably well maintained.

(56) E. W. Brooks, 'The Sicilian Expedition of Constantine IV' BZ 17(1908) pp.455 - 459.

(57) See above, p. 182

(58) See above, p. 182

(59) See above, pp. 47-50

The development of the papal power did not bring with it an inevitable hostility towards Constantinople. On the contrary, Gregory I had maintained good relations with Maurice for the greater part of that emperor's reign, (59) while his cordial letters to Phocas (60) have puzzled and scandalised some historians, (61) yet they were only the reflection of the imperial influence that persisted in Italy. It was with Heraclius that the situation became more difficult. He had supported what he hoped would be an acceptable compromise between the monophysite view of Christ and that expressed by the council of Chalcedon (62) with the intention of gaining the loyalty of his subjects in the east during and immediately after the Persian war. But his solution proved to be no more satisfactory in the west than it had been in the east, although at first it seemed as though the weight of imperial influence would overcome all doctrinal objections. Pope

(63) See the two letters of Honorius to Sergius, patriarch of Constantinople (MPL vol. 80 cols. 470-472).

(59) Maurice's restrictions on entry into the monastic life angered Gregory (Gregorii Epistolae Bk. III no. 65 MPL vol. 77 cols. 662B-665A) but the breach was healed

(64) (cf. Greg. Ep. VI. 16 MPL vol. 77 col. 808B)

(60) See especially Greg. Ep. XIII. 38. MPL vol. 77 cols. 1287-1288.

(61) L. Bréhier and R. Aigrain, Grégoire le Grand, les Etats barbares et la conquête Arabe (Histoire de l'Eglise

(66) ed. A. Fliche et V. Martin Vol. 5) Paris 1947, pp. 69-70.

(62) See above, pp. 47-50

Honorius accepted the monothelite formula, or, at least, of used phrases which to most did not appear to differ greatly from it (63) and the exarch Isaac was able to force a like opinion upon Honorius' successor Severinus. (64) The real struggle over the Ecthesis took place during the reign of the next emperor, Constans II, and the amount of support that the Chalcedonians were able to rally was extraordinarily small.

In 646, the monk Maximus (65) persuaded a number of African bishops to draw up a manifesto against the new heresy, and to ask the successor of Severinus, Theodore, to enquire into the orthodoxy of Paul, the patriarch of Constantinople, as a result of which, Paul was excommunicated. This action of the pope could not be ignored. The Arabs were in Egypt and their power was spreading. (66) The empire was

(63) See the two letters of Honorius to Sergius, patriarch of Constantinople (MPL vol.80 cols. 470-476A). The phrase, unde et unam voluntatem fatemur (col.472A) caused most offence to the supporters of Chalcedon.

(64) See above, p. 183

(65) For a discussion of the chronology of the life of Maximus, see V. Grumel, 'Notes d'Histoire et de Chronologie sur la Vie de Saint Maxime le Confesseur', Echos d'Orient 26(1927) pp.24-32.

(66) See above, p. 81

(70) Martini Epistolae 4.

faced with a critical situation and papal encouragement of those who doubted imperial decisions was clearly dangerous. Accordingly, in 649 Constans issued the edict known as the Type, (67) which sought to shelve the whole dispute by forbidding discussion of the whole question whether Christ had one or two natures. In the same years Martin I became pope. He was not prepared to acquiesce in the imperial policy of subordinating doctrinal accuracy to political expediency. His first act was to call a synod which anathemised the Ecthesis, the Type and all the supporters of compromise with heresy. Copies of the synodal edict were sent to all parts of the empire, (68) together with instructions to unseat those bishops who, in consequence, had been uncanonically appointed. (69) At the same time, Martin congratulated the Carthaginians on the stand they had taken against the imperial decrees. (70) From the point of view of the imperial government these were the acts of a rebel and could not be excused by doctrinal arguments. "He should not live", they

(71) Martini Notitiae Historicae (MPL 87, col. 113)

(67) The patriarch is more likely to have been responsible, or other advisers, since the emperor himself was only the eighteen years old.

(68) Lib. Pont. 337 (5-6) Martin also sought the support of the Franks. See Vita S. Eligii, MPL 87, col. 505C.

(69) Martini Epistolae 6, 7, 8, and 11 (MPL 87).

(70) Martini Epistolae 4. Italian wholeheartedly supported Chalcedon.

said of Martin at his first trial, (71) "who alone is responsible for the destruction and betrayal of the whole IV west." Although he may not have been directly concerned in the revolt of the exarch Olympus who in the first place had been sent to arrest him (72), the effect of his activities, possibly without intention, was to weaken the loyalty of Italians and Africans to the emperor, and thus the unity of what was still thought of as the Roman world. This estimate of Martin was apparently shared by many outside the imperial court, including his own successors to the papal see. He was arrested by the exarch Theodore Calliope without difficulty, or effective protest from anyone in Rome or Italy. He was insulted with impunity on the deck of the ship which had brought him to Constantinople, (73) and, after his death in exile, the pope Vitalian proved himself to be an exceptionally loyal subject of the emperor. (74) Under Vitalian's successors relations with the emperors remained so

(71) Martini Notitia Historica (MPL 87 col.113)

(72) Martin called Olympus "a worthless and emptyheaded kind of man" Martini Epistolae, 15 (MPL 87 col.200C) but the account in Lib. Pont. 338 does not entirely exclude Martin's responsibility.

(73) Martini Notitia Historica MPL 87 col.112. Kulakovsky's view (Istoriya, Vol.3 p.216) that Constans had no support at all for his action is surely unjustified.

(74) Maximi Confessoris Acta NPG 80 cols.112A and 112D.

(74) See above, p.190 Yet Vitalian wholeheartedly supported Chalcedon.

tranquil, that, when the final loss of the eastern provinces ended the importance of the doctrinal question, Constantine IV was able to hold the Sixth Oecumenical council in an excellent atmosphere. The trial and execution of Maximus had a similar character. It is probable that he concerned himself rather more with secular matters than had Martin and that he was partly responsible for the inadequate defence of the Pentapolis and for the revolt of the exarch Gregory.(75) The account of his trial, written by his supporters, contains unconvincing accusations based on second and third-hand evidence relating to events which are supposed to have occurred in one instance nine, and, in another, twenty years before.(76) Either there was other evidence which Chalcedonian writers deliberately omitted or the imperial officers were so certain of approval for their actions that they thought it unnecessary to manufacture more plausible charges than those which were brought against their enemy. In any case, his imprisonment, his torture and his death did not arouse as much anger as might have been expected. Loyalty to the emperor at a time of danger was considered supremely important. The real offence of Maximus was that

(75) See above, p. 144

(76) Maximi Confessoris Acta MPG 90 cols. 112A and 112D.

through his activities, whether or not they could be legally called treasonable, "the good name of our revered lord was being insulted." (77) The maintenance of imperial prestige was the real issue behind the attack both upon Martin and upon Maximus, making their conviction and destruction inevitable. On such an issue, there could be found no effective opposition to the imperial will. When the loss of the eastern provinces robbed the monothelite doctrine of its political value, it was gradually abandoned and the maintenance of good relations with the papacy became a far easier task. Constantine IV made the best possible use of the new opportunity. He desired an Oecumenical Council which could make real the possibilities of unity, but he was too clever to let the papacy see his eagerness. For a time, he could not find a suitable occasion to pursue his plans. (78) He pretended to listen to those who had not accepted the implications of the new developments, - such as Theodore, the Patriarch of Constantinople and Macarius, the patriarch of Antioch, - and who still proclaimed themselves to be convinced monothelites. In 679, in response to their petition, he removed Vitalian's

(77) Maximi Confessoris Acta MPG 90 col.124D-125A.

(78) Mansi, vol.11, col.200.

name from the diptychs.(79) A year later he presided at the Sixth Oecumenical Council (80) which wholly abandoned the monothelite doctrine, anathemised Macarius and Theodore(81) - the only two dissentients present - and pronounced an anathema in retrospect on the long-dead pope Honorius.(82) The council's address to the emperor included an explicit statement of the pre-eminence of the Roman see (83) which showed how far Constantine IV was prepared to go to win the goodwill of those he thought to be most influential in Italy. The same terms were used in the account of the council's proceedings sent to the pope Agatho.(84) A fresco or mosaic was constructed to celebrate the event.

Just! Good relations continued between Rome and Constantinople during the pontificates of Agatho's successors Leo II and Benedict II. To the latter Constantine may have granted the right to be elected without imperial confirmation,(85) but in Italy.(81)

(79) See above, p.190

(80) Lib. Pont. 351 (10-12) and 356 note 16. The council had 18 sessions.

(81) Lib. Pont. 357 note 30.

(82) Mansi Vol.11. col.621 A.

(83) Mansi Vol.11. col.665 C and D.

(84) Mansi Vol.11. col.684 D.

(85) Lib. Pont. 363 (12-14)

this exemption seems not to have been very seriously accepted in practice by the imperial exarchs.(86) Constantine also caused his two sons to be formally adopted by the pope.(87) Justinian II did his best to continue this policy of peaceful union between the east and the west but with the maladroitness which characterised many of his other actions. On the 16th February, 687, he caused a document to be sent to the pope Conon containing a solemn re-affirmation of belief in the acts of the fifth and sixth councils.(88) It was signed by representatives of all ranks of the community, including the senate, "the people", (89) and military and naval units both in the capital and in the provinces.(90) It was as though Justinian wished to vouch for the orthodoxy of the entire empire, and thus carry the policy of his predecessor to the greatest possible lengths. With the document went letters granting relief from taxation of papal possessions in imperial territory in Italy.(91) The Council which followed, the "Quinisextum",

(92) particularly the thirteenth canon - on clerical marriage. This did not give permission for priests to marry, as

(86) e.g. John Platyn demanded 100 lbs. in gold before he would permit the election of the pope Sergius, see Lib. Pont. 372.(3-15) priests without putting away their wives (which is expressly forbidden). Priests are forbidden to marry

(87) Lib. Pont. 363 (14-17) vol.11 col.944) Nevertheless, these regulations were lax according to western customs.

(88) Mansi, vol.11 cols.737-738.

(89) See below, p.232

(94) Lib. Pont. 372 (11-15)

(90) See below, p.220

(91) Lib. Pont. 369 (1-3)

was intended to confirm adhesion to the acts of the fifth and sixth Oecumenical Councils. But it did not achieve the good results in the west for which Justinian had hoped. Its first two canons, dealing with matters of faith, were unexceptionable, but a number of the other hundred which concerned themselves with church discipline, were not well received at Rome. (92) Nor did the Council possess an oecumenical character although papal representatives had been present at the meetings. The pope Sergius refused to approve the final text of the proceedings and forbade it to be read in public. (93) Justinian attempted to follow the examples set by Justinian I and Constantine II. He sought to compel the pope to obedience, but Zacharias, the imperial official sent to arrest Sergius, was first nearly murdered by papal supporters from Ravenna and then was saved through the intervention of the pope himself. (94)

- (95) Lib. Pont. 382.4.
- (96) Whether the emperor had placed the bishopric of Ravenna outside papal jurisdiction, is by no means certain. The ecclesiastical historian of Ravenna, Agnellus, says this
- (92) Particularly the thirteenth canon - on clerical marriage. This did not give permission for priests to marry, as J. B. Bury, History of the Later Roman Empire (1889) Vol. 2 p. 327 asserts, but merely for those already married to remain priests without putting away their wives (which is expressly forbidden). Priests are forbidden to marry after ordination. (Mansi vol. 11 col. 944) Nevertheless, these regulations were lax according to western customs.
- (97) Lib. Pont. 389.11.
- (93) Lib. Pont. 373.6.
- (98) Lib. Pont. 385.18.-386.3.
- (94) Lib. Pont. 372 (11-15)

This worsening of relations was only temporary. Justinian II, during his second period of rule, took a barbarous revenge on the nobility ~~and~~ clergy of Ravenna - probably because of their interference on behalf of Sergius. But this very act of Justinian endeared him to the papacy, since Felix, the bishop of Ravenna, had omitted to deposit certain documents in the papal chancery, (95) an act of submission from which he believed himself to have been exempt, (96) and was, as a consequence, very unpopular. His punishment, as that of others who had been "equally disobedient to the holy see" was watched with approval (97) and Justinian became gradually rehabilitated in papal eyes. Although the pope John VII, when asked about the Quinisextum, forbore to make any comment upon it, (98) relations improved sufficiently

(95) Lib. Pont. 389.4.

(96) Whether the emperor had placed the bishopric of Ravenna outside papal jurisdiction, is by no means certain. The ecclesiastical historian of Ravenna, Agnellus, says this privilege was granted to the bishop Maurus during the exarchate of Gregory by Constans II and this is accepted by Doelger (Regesten 233). But the opposite assertion is made in Lib. Pont. 348 (6-7) and the editor of Agnellus mysteriously comments that "the truth must lie somewhere between the two" (MGH SS rer. Lang. p.354) See also the comment in Lib. Pont. 348 (note 5).

(97) Lib. Pont. 389.11.

(98) Lib. Pont. 385.18.-386.3.

The first of the Byzantine emperors, Leo III, made, as a matter of course, his profession of faith to the pope Gregory II. (105) the emperor at Nicomedia, (99) while later still the pope Gregory II professed himself completely satisfied with the answers he had obtained from Justinian on a number of important points. (100) The reconciliation was complete. Justinian's final deposition and his murder was recorded sadly as that of "the most Christian and orthodox emperor. (101) With the exception of the two years during which Philippicus restored

In all their contacts with their western possessions and to the diptychs the names of the monothelite patriarchs, (102) these good relations were maintained. The patriarch John apologised profusely for the actions of Philippicus, (103) and the appointment later of Germanus, bishop of Cyzicus, to the patriarchate was approved by the papal representative. (104)

eastern provinces at the beginning of the century. In place (99) Lib. Pont. 390 (9-18). The summons came from the emperor of the East, apparently, the pope readily accepted it.

- (100) Lib. Pont. 396 (9-11)
- (101) Lib. Pont. 391 (10-11)
- (102) Mansi, vol. 12 cols. 189B and 192D. Philippicus held a synod which re-asserted the monothelite position, suggesting the ease with which theological views could be subordinated to political necessities.
- (103) Mansi, vol. 12 cols. 196-208.
- (104) Theoph. 384.19. - 385.4. Mansi vol. 12 col. 256D.
- (105) Mansi vol. 12 cols. 253-254.

The first of the Syrian emperors, Leo III, made, as a matter of course, his profession of faith to the pope Gregory II. (105) During the whole of the seventh century, the emperors had either succeeded in remaining on friendly terms with the papacy, or, when other considerations had made this impossible, had found that the papacy was not really capable of organising any serious opposition against them in Italy, and was always only too willing for these terms to be resumed.

In all their contacts with their western possessions and with the lands bordering upon them the Heracleians had, therefore, amply demonstrated the continuity and the reality of imperial prestige. They were able to achieve this partly because the power of the imperial name could operate in the west precisely in the way in which it had failed to do in the eastern provinces at the beginning of the century. In place of the cultural division that existed between the peoples of the eastern frontiers and the empire as a whole, there was between Rome and Constantinople in the seventh century still a persisting unity which differences of language and custom had not begun seriously to affect, and within which religious disputes were as yet episodes without serious consequences. The secret of the survival of the empire in face of the

(105) ^Mansi vol.12 cols. 959A-959B.

CHAPTER NINE

tremendous onslaughts upon it at the end of the century, was to some extent this essential unity of the core of the old Greco-Roman world. This unity was the reason, too, why the west did not figure so prominently amongst the frontier problems of the Heracleian dynasty. Internal attack, and, towards the end of the century, in the face of growing internal disorder, must include a description of certain administrative and constitutional developments. The fundamental achievement of the Heracleians in this field, particularly of Heraclius himself, was a thorough re-organisation of the armed forces. The new system which emerged, continued to function, undamaged in its essentials, after the defeats inflicted by the Arabs. It helped to slow down their further encroachments and to preserve the new frontiers. (1)

At the accession of Heraclius the army was in a chaotic condition, and the first urgent task was to transform it into a force which could be effective against the victorious Persians. The disintegration of army discipline at the end of Maurice's reign, the mismanagement during the reign of Phocas, the easy victories which the Persians had gained, all point to such a state of affairs. E. Darks has collected a number of

(1) Together with the Arabs' internal difficulties.
See ch. 4 passim

CHAPTER NINE

THE INTERNAL RESOURCES OF THE HERACLEIANS

A discussion of the reasons for the survival of the empire at this time both in the face of external attack, and, towards the end of the century, in the face of growing internal disorder, must include a description of certain administrative and constitutional developments. The fundamental achievement of the Heracleians in this field, particularly of Heraclius himself, was a thorough re-organisation of the armed forces. The new system which emerged, continued to function, undamaged in its essentials, after the defeats inflicted by the Arabs. It helped to slow down their further encroachments and to preserve the new frontiers. (1)

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(4) Theoph. 302 (4-5)

(1) Together with the Arabs' internal difficulties.
See ch.4 passim

references to the military reform of Heraclius which occur in the epic poem De Expeditione Persica of George of Pisidia.(2) In one of the most striking of these, Heraclius is described as finding the army in a state of weakness and disorganisation and patiently teaching it the art of war from its very beginnings.(3) Another piece of evidence is the assertion of Theophanes that in 613 Heraclius tried to discover all the men who had taken part in the revolt against Maurice and could only find two.(4) This could imply that in eleven years there had been a complete change of personnel, either because of desertion and disorganisation or because of new methods of recruitment and training introduced by Heraclius himself in the first three years of his reign.(5) But such an explanation is difficult to accept. It is scarcely surprising that the officers of Heraclius found it hard to discover men who would admit to rebellious acts against their lawful emperor. The story can have a different significance. It can indicate the

(2) E. Darko, 'Influences touraniennes sur l'Evolution de l'art militaire des Grecs, des Romains et des Byzantins BYZ 12(1937) pp.119-147. See also BYZ 10(1935) pp.443-469.

(3) De Expeditione Persica, II.44-48 (MPG 92 cols.1215-1216)

(4) Theoph.300 (4-6)

(5) This is the view of Kulakovskiy, Istoriya, vol.3 p.31.

Maurice and during the reign of Phocas. There had, of course, been a number of changes in the army from the time of Justinian until the time when Heraclius applied the principles of the reform carried out by Heraclius. It is likely enough that the survivors of the events of 602 kept themselves as inconspicuous as possible after the overthrow of Phocas. Theophanes exaggerated this absurdly in order to emphasise what Heraclius had done for the army.

Part of the Heracleian reform can be studied in a document of military instruction entitled the Strategicon. Its authorship is still in dispute. Gy. Moravcsik (6) has made it difficult to believe that the author was the emperor Maurice, (7) while Darko's arguments that the author was Heraclius himself do not carry complete conviction. (8) The references that occur, however, to particular enemies of the empire make it reasonably certain that the Strategicon was written at the end of the sixth or at the beginning of the seventh century. Therefore, whoever its author may have been, it could only have been applied in practice for the first time by Heraclius, since little could have been done to make it effective during the confusion at the end of the reign of

(6) Byzantinoturcica, Vol.1. p.250. With a full bibliography.

(7) For the view that Maurice was the author, see F.Aussaresses, 'L'Auteur du Strategicon', Revue des Etudes anciennes 8(1906) pp.23-39.

(8) Influences touraniennes, p.122.

Maurice and during the reign of Phocas. There had, of course, been a number of changes in the army from the time of Justinian until the time when Heraclius applied the principles of the Strategicon. The last half of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh century was the period when cavalry definitely took the place previously held by the infantry of the Roman legion. The reverses that followed the victories of Justinian made re-organisation necessary, and some of it was carried out by Tiberius II. (9) The whole period was one of continual change. The importance of the Strategicon is that it combined many previous tendencies into a coherent system.

It is a work of remarkable interest. (10) After the description of the principal foes of the empire, (11) there follows a complete and remarkably detailed account of recruitment and organisation based throughout upon the predominance of the cavalry arm. The first portion has

- (9) The units that Tiberius II raised ^{ἐξ ἰδίου ὀνόματι} have probably this significance (Theoph. 251.25), see N. H. Baynes, 'The Successors of Justinian'. CMH Vol. 2. p. 273 note 1. J. B. Bury, Later Roman Empire (1889) Vol. 2. p. 80, thought it referred to a private force and compared it to the Varangian Guard. The translation of this passage in the CSHB vol. 26 p. 387 has "privatam aciem" but the phrase is more likely to mean "on his own authority".
- (10) The summary by F. Aussenances L'Armée Byzantine à la fin du VI-ième siècle, Bordeaux, 1909 is used. See above, p. 16, note (47).
- (11) Aussenances, pp. 6-7.

(19) For example, Aussenances, pp. 34-35.

(20) Aussenances, pp. 17-19.

chapters on equipment, (12) pay, (13) leave, (14) and the types of troops that are to be included (15) in the order of battle. There is a full description of every unit and formation (16) from the stratos - the largest group - to the tetrarchy - the smallest. (17) From the information supplied it is possible to reconstruct the composition of a typical stratos including the number of officers and men in every subsidiary unit. (18) It is also possible to assign with a fair degree of exactness the place of each officer in the military hierarchy and his actual task while on active service. (19) Lastly there is a full list of what were considered essential non-combatant duties. (20) The second portion of the work deals with the training both of individuals and of units and the same care is given to a description of the methods recommended. The

(12) *Aussaresses*, pp.11-12 and p.51.

(13) *Aussaresses* p.12. From the information collected by Gelzer here quoted it is possible to suggest equivalents in pre-1914 pounds sterling (not, of course, in purchasing power):- The highest officer, the strategos would receive £1440 per annum and the lowest officer the decarkh £40 per annum.

(14) *Aussaresses*, p.10. Leave was not granted during the campaigning season.

(15) *Aussaresses*, pp.13-19.

(16) *Aussaresses*, pp.19-41.

(17) *Aussaresses*, p.31.

(18) *Aussaresses* has a table of this kind on p.41. The regular stratos consisted of approximately nine thousand troops divided into three mere. The meros was the complete fighting and tactical unit comparing in function, if not in size, to the modern division. The smallest administratively self-contained unit was the tagma.

(19) For example, *Aussaresses*, pp.34-35.

(20) *Aussaresses*, pp.17-19.

There is evidence for supposing, however, that the document third part is devoted to the provision of food and of equipment. refers to conditions obtaining considerably earlier. The total impression is that the Strategicon describes an important stage in the history of army organisation. The Heracleians had at their disposal a very efficient fighting machine if only a proportion of the instructions contained in the Strategicon were ever put into practice.

There was one aspect of army reform at the beginning of the seventh century which had a particular significance. In the Strategicon there is, as is natural, a section on discipline. (21) The subject is treated under various headings, not very differently from the way in which it has been treated in other ages. There are the expected injunctions on obedience, military honour, dress, care of weapons, and relations with the civilian population. There is a list of punishments and a number of hints on the occasional need to use tact instead of severity. But the Strategicon is not the only source with material on army discipline of that period. In 1926 W. Ashburner published a new edition of the περὶ στρατιωτικῶν ἐπιτημίων with the title of 'The Byzantine Mutiny Act' (22), of which the earliest extant ms. is probably not earlier than the end of the tenth century. (23)

(21) Aussaresses, pp.46-47.

(22) W. Ashburner, 'The Byzantine Mutiny Act', JHS 46(1926) pp.80-109.

(23) Ashburner, 'The Byzantine Mutiny Act', p.91. He rejects the somewhat earlier date assigned by Zachariae von Lingenthal 'Wissenschaft und Recht für das Heer, vom 6 - 10 Jahr'. BZ 3(1894) p.448.

There is evidence for supposing, however, that the document refers to conditions obtaining considerably earlier. J. R. Vieillefond, quoting from other tenth century documents on military discipline, describes the very severe penalties meted out to those who failed to follow the instructions they contain regarding religious observances.(24) An elaborate liturgy had been evolved for different occasions and had become an integral part of military law. There is no reference whatever to religious observances in 'The Byzantine Mutiny Act'. As with the Strategicon, there is only the general impression that the regulations it contains are the regulations of a Christian army. In the late sixth and during the seventh century there are only occasional references to acts of army commanders stressing the allegiance of the army to specific facets of the Christian faith.(25) Emphasis on compulsory religious observances in the army was a much later development. It is very unlikely that a document on military discipline written after this development had already begun should have no clause relating to it. Thus, 'The Byzantine Mutiny Act' can scarcely have originated in the ninth or tenth centuries. Nor can it be ascribed to the Syrian emperors, for then it is

(24) J. R. Vieillefond, *Les Pratiques religieuses dans l'Armée byzantine*, Revue des études anciennes, 37(1935) p.325.

(25) There are only three mentions of crusades. (25) For example, one campaign of Maurice against the Avars and the campaign of Heraclius was called a crusade. See Vieillefond, p.322.

inconceivable that it should have no clause prohibiting the worship of images. On the other hand, the Act cannot be earlier than the Strategicon for it repeats many of its provisions. There is good reason, therefore, to treat it as material bearing on military questions of the seventh century. In that light, the text of the Act acquires a special interest. The whole of it is devoted to an exposition of military law. (26) It is the only text in which such a clear and complete exposition can be found in one place, and it can be conjectured that it was originally compiled under the inspiration of the other military reforms initiated by Heraclius. The events which led to the overthrow of Phocas and of Maurice had had a bad effect on army discipline, for, on both occasions, units of the army had played a decisive part. The strengthening of discipline must have been an obvious step for Heraclius, and, whether the Act was written on his instructions, or was a later compilation based on other material, it nevertheless must give an accurate picture of the kind of discipline which existed in his re-organised army. It was a strict discipline, at least in intention, and the punishments were heavy. Of the sixty offences listed, twenty-seven could be punished by death.

There is no indication that the phrase κεφαλικῶς κολάζειν

(26) There are fifty-three sections, excluding repetitions.

(capite punire) which is in those instances used is ever intended to bear its less severe sense of loss of civil rights.(27) There is, moreover, a striking change towards greater severity since the time of Justinian I. Twenty-five sections of the Act are, in effect, transcriptions from the relevant passages in the Digests or the Code. Of the remaining twenty-eight, sixteen occur in the Strategicon, four appear nowhere else, and in six, though a parallel in the Digests or Code can be found, the severity of the punishment or the strictness in interpreting a regulation has been appreciably increased.(28) Only one section is milder in tone. Of the four sections which are peculiar to the text, two are particularly interesting since they deal with relations to the civilian population, a relation which became more important because of

(27) Although in ch.14 (Ashburner, 'The Byzantine Mutiny Act', p.94) a specific reference occurs to execution which might imply that other instances of **κεφαλαιῶς κολλᾶσαι** did not mean the death penalty, in Roman law "degrees" of capital punishment had definite terms attached to them and these appear nowhere in the Act.

(28) In the Digests or the Code are to be found versions of sections 1(p.89) 4,5(p.90), 14(p.94), 16,17(p.95), 19(p.96) 20,21,(p.98) 22,24,25(p.99), 26,28(p.100), 30,31,32(p.101), 34(p.102), 38(p.103), 39,40(p.104), 51(p.108), 56(p.109) Sections with an increased severity are 2(p.90), 7(p.91), 15(p.95), 23(p.99), 29(p.101), 33(p.102). The four sections peculiar to the text are 35(p.102), 53(p.108), 54,55(p.109). This increase in severity can be paralleled in the land legislation of the later Heracleians. See W. Ashburner, **ὑβμός ὑεωργικός** JHS 32(1912) pp.74-75, and see above, p.161

(31) The first reference to the African exarchate is in Greg. op.1 61 (MPL vol.77 no.5190)

other developments under the Heracleians.(29) The changes, therefore, that took place in the army at the end of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh century, particularly under Heraclius himself produced a more efficient and disciplined force than the empire had seen for years. It was thus a weapon which the Heracleians could use with far greater confidence than had for long been possible.

The reform of the army was not only one of the most important causes for the measure of success which the Heracleians achieved in the field. It was also an important factor in more far reaching and comprehensive changes in the life of the empire during the seventh century. Firstly, it helped to bring about a change in the method of provincial government. Ever since the time of Justinian, through the pressure of military events, there had been a tendency to undo the work Diocletian and to permit to rulers of provinces the joint exercise of civil and military power. This process was most noticeable in the west, where the ambitions of the empire in the sixth century chiefly lay and where it culminated in the creation of the "exarchates" of Italy (30) and of Africa,(31) - a form of provincial organisation where civil and military powers

(29) See below, p. 220

(30) See above, p. 181

(31) The first reference to the African exarchate is in Greg. Ep. I 61 (MPL vol. 77 co. 519C)

were united in the person of one imperial official. Towards the end of the century, affairs in the east began to claim more and more attention, but for some years there is no evidence that the new system had been applied to the government of the eastern provinces. The exercise of military powers could serve no useful purpose so long as the army itself was in a state of disintegration. It is precisely after a reform of the army had been carried out and after the results had been tested in battle, that notices of the re-organisation of the eastern provinces into military districts first begin to appear. It is, in fact, in the Strategicon itself, that the word *θέμα* is first used in the sense of a military formation - interesting evidence of a connection between the reform of the army and the "thematic" organisation of the provinces. (32) The actual time at which the word theme acquired in addition an incontestable territorial meaning, in other words, the time at which a province or group of provinces passed under military control, has so far proved impossible to determine. It can only be stated with certainty that by the middle of the seventh century there existed an "Armeniac Theme" (33) and that, before the century had ended, others had been added to it. The view

(32) This passage is quoted by Kulakovskiy, Istoriya, Vol.3 p.388.

(33) Theoph. 348.9.

that the foundation of the theme system as well as the reform of the army must be placed to the credit of Heraclius himself has been convincingly argued by E. Stein.(34) The beginnings of the system entailed the settling of army veterans on the land where they would be available as a reliable nucleus for defence and where their descendants would provide equally reliable recruits for the future. Heraclius had promised the most fruitful parts of Asia Minor to the deserving of his soldiers in order to raise their morale during his Persian campaign,(35) and had fulfilled his promise after victory had been won. Professor Baynes, on the other hand, cannot believe that the themes could have been created immediately after the defeat of the Persians since Heraclius is known to have sunk into apathy during the last years of his reign.(36) The latest contribution to the discussion is from Professor Ensslin.(37) He sees no sufficient reasons for rejecting the attribution of the earliest themes to Heraclius made by Constantine

(34) E. Stein, Studien zur Geschichte des byzantinischen Reiches, Stuttgart, 1919, pp.117-140.

(35) Stein, *ibid.* p.132.

(36) N. H. Baynes, 'The Emperor Heraclius and the Military Theme System', *EHR* 67(1952) pp.380-381.

(37) W. Ensslin, 'Der Kaiser Herakleios und die Themenverfassung' *BZ* 46(1953) pp.362-368.

Porphyrogenitus in De Thematibus, (38) and, in reply to Professor Baynes, remarks that the illness of Heraclius was first noticed only after his return from Syria in 638 and not after the Persian campaign when his energy was conspicuous enough in the ecclesiastical sphere.(39) But even if the credit for the creation of the themes cannot be unreservedly given to Heraclius, the terminus a quo for the Armeniac theme, and, possibly, for the Anatolic also, indicates that the beginnings of the system must have been in operation, if not at the end of his reign, then shortly after his death and thus can be closely connected with the reform of the army.(40)

The Armeniac theme covered the whole of the north-east of Asia Minor, while the Anatolic theme included the south-

(38) Ensslin, *ibid*, pp.362-363. The latest editor of De Thematibus, however, does reject the evidence of Constantine Porphyrogenitus on the early themes and suggests that their origin was more likely during the period of the truce with the Arabs (656-660). See A Pertusi, Constantino Porfirogenito de Thematibus, (Studi e Testi no.160) Vatican City, 1952, pp.108-11.

(39) Ensslin, p.367 and see above, pp.47-50

(40) For the themes, in addition to the work already cited, see H. Gelzer, Die Genesis der byzantinischen Themenverfassung, Leipzig, 1899, C. Diehl, 'L'Origine de Régime des Thèmes', Etudes Byzantines, Paris, 1905, pp.276-292, and J. B. Bury, Later Roman Empire (1889) vol.2 pp.339-351.

eastern portion.(41) Western Asia Minor was absorbed into the Opsikian theme, which is first mentioned when Justinian II, (46) made his famous transfer of Slavs there in 688.(42) The so-called "naval" theme, of which there is a mention in 698, was formed out of the islands in the Greek archipelago together with a narrow strip of the Cilician coast.(43) That part of territory north of the sea of Marmora which was not under the Bulgars,(44) became the "Thraceian" theme,(45) while, probably in order to exercise greater control over the Slavs, the old coins and seals, and, very rarely, in the sources. But such

(41) Ensslin, p.363 accepts the passage in De Thematibus which asserts the existence of both an Armeniac and an Anatolic theme at the time of the first Arab onslaught. The first reference to an Anatolic theme in Theophanes is in the year 669 (Theoph. 352.14) The story is told there of troops from the Anatolic theme mutinying because of the refusal of Constantine IV to crown his two brothers. E. W. Brooks, 'The Brothers of Constantine IV' EHR 30(1915) pp.42-51, believes that this was a later event, and, by comparison with eastern sources, particularly a passage in the Kitab al'Unvan (PO vol.8 p.494) suggests that the date of this mutiny should be 680 or 681. On this date would then appear the first reference to an Anatolic theme in Theophanes.

(42) Theoph. 364 (13-15)

(43) Theoph. 370 (23-24)

(44) For the Bulgar frontier see above, p.171

(45) Theoph. 414.33.

(48) Diehl, Byzantine Coins and Seals, p.171

(49) Diehl, Byzantine Coins and Seals, p.171

prefecture of Illyricum was re-organised as the Helladic theme. (46) Towards the end of the century, too, a military government, independent of both the Italian and African exarchates, may have been imposed on Sicily. (47) During the course of the century, the old provincial system was thus replaced by six great military districts in the east and north and by three in the west. It is quite true that the old separation of powers was not instantly destroyed. Names of civilians as high officials continued to be found on coins and seals, and, very rarely, in the sources. But such officials, as Diehl put it "perdaient chaque jour de leur importance." (48) In essentials, the seventh century saw the establishment of widespread military rule. The evidence of coins, which Diehl advances against such a view, cannot be completely accepted. (49) Coins continue to circulate for long periods, and the inscriptions on them may not correspond to the historical reality at any given moment. Thus, for example, the

(46) Theoph. 405.16

(47) If that is the meaning of patricius Siliciae (Martini Notitia Historica MPL vol. 87 col. 113). See Diehl, L'Origines de Régime des Thèmes, p. 283 note 3 where the date 654 is suggested.

(48) Diehl, L'Origine de Régime des Thèmes, p. 288

(49) Diehl, L'Origine de Régime des Thèmes, p. 288.

(50) Diehl, L'Origine de Régime des Thèmes, p. 287.

Byzantine solidus only lost its Latin inscription towards the middle of the eighth century long after Latin had ceased to be used for official purposes. Similarly, coins bearing the names of high civilian officials, which can be assigned dates after the probable establishment of the first themes, need prove nothing more than the length of time these coins were in circulation. The use of the word exercitus as a synonym for theme in the sources, of which Diehl gives a number of examples, (50) need not necessarily mean, as he believes, that, for a long time, the term theme did not completely acquire a territorial significance but continued to refer simply to military formations. On the contrary, the constant use of the word exercitus, which has first and foremost a military sense, in connection with different parts of the empire, could mean that the military element in any area was so predominant as to make the mention of any other entirely unnecessary. One of the chief characteristics of these military districts, at least in Asia Minor, was that soldiers serving there were allotted land holdings and thus became a part, and, presumably the most reliable part of the permanent population. It was no doubt because of this that when Justinian II pledged the loyalty of his entire people to the decrees of the Sixth Oecumenical

guarantee occurs and of which there is only a Latin translation, see Mansi, Vol. II cols. 737-738.

(50) Diehl, L'Origine de Régime des Thèmes, p. 287.

(1894) pp. 1-17.

Council he gave such prominence to various "armies" which were not only the names of districts but also a reference to the numbers of soldiers settled in those districts on the land and to the military control of these districts which guaranteed their dependability.(51) It was an army re-organised with a stricter attention to details and to discipline which was in command of the new system of provincial government. Through the creation of the themes, the reform of the army had introduced a new idea of discipline into provincial administration. The change from a civil to a military governor under those circumstances must have added considerable strength not only to provincial but also to central authority.

The second important development in the life of the empire arising from the reform of the army is concerned with the functions of the two circus parties. Their exact status at any given time cannot even now be determined despite the amount of work devoted to this subject. However, from the information collected during the last fifty years it is possible to draw some interesting conclusions. Ever since the analysis made by F. I. Uspenskiy in 1894 (52) it has been generally agreed that

(51) For the papal letter of Justinian II, in which this guarantee occurs and of which there is only a Latin translation, see Mansi, Vol.11 cols.737-738.

(52) 'Partii Tsirka i Dimy v Konstantinopole', VV.vol.1 (1894) pp.1-17.

the "Blues" and the "Greens" had an importance in Byzantine life greater than the chariot races in the hippodrome. In 1904 the subject was further developed by G. Manojlović (53) who, by a close study of the comparatively small amount of source material available, arrived at the hypothesis that the "Blues" lived in the richer quarters of the city and the "Greens" in the poorer. (54) The difference was an economic one. Their conflict was a result of this difference and was an aspect of political activity not only in the capital but also in other imperial cities such as Antioch and Alexandria. There is some confirmation for the view that the activity of the circus parties, at its greatest between the fifth and the seventh century, was only a continuation of an earlier form of expression of popular will. During the fourth century it was the theatre claque which had often led the opposition to imperial decrees. Just as later did the circus parties, the theatre claque seems to have included separate organisations of the rich and the poor. The theatre claque had excited the great riot at Antioch in 387 as a reply to the imposition of a particularly mean tax. (55)

(53) 'Le Peuple de Constantinople', trans. H. Grégoire, BYZ.11(1936) pp.617-716.

(54) Manojlović, pp.652-654.

(55) R. Browning, 'The Riot of A.D.387 in Antioch', JRS 42(1952) pp.13-20.

The riot was begun by the landowners, but, very quickly, still under the leadership of the claue, the poor people of the city had taken control.(56) In later years, both the claue and the circus parties are mentioned in the same context. There seems to have been a common membership of both at the time of Zeno,(57) and Justinian I, in addition to his troubles with the circus parties, had had to take action against the theatre claue.(58)

Professor Grégoire has presented some interesting material in confirmation of this theory of the functions of the circus parties.(59) He has used the evidence of a midrash or rabbinic commentary, dating probably from the seventh century, with the title of The Throne and Circus of King Solomon.(60) In this circus the spectators are said to be divided into four groups each distinguished by a colour:-

(56) Browning, p.15.

(57) Malalas, 386 (14-23)

(58) Malalas, 417 (1-4)

(59) 'Le Peuple de Constantinople ou Les Bleus et Les Verts', Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, Paris, 1946.

(60) J. Perles, 'Thron und Circus des Königs Salomo', Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judenthums 21(1872) pp.122-139.

"The king with his household, the scholars, the priests and the Levites dressed in blue. The people of Jerusalem dressed in white. The people who lived outside Jerusalem dressed in red. The Gentiles, who from distant countries brought presents to Solomon, dressed in green. These four colours symbolised the four seasons of the year: autumn, winter, spring and summer."(61)

Now, as Professor Grégoire points out, the Jews were strictly prohibited from visiting the hippodrome or from taking any part in the pastimes of the Gentiles.(62) It is unlikely, therefore that the possession of a hippodrome would be attributed to Solomon except by a Byzantine Jew who would wish him to have all the attributes of supreme power which he saw in his own contemporary world. The passage may therefore be a description of the imperial hippodrome in the seventh century and the apportioning of colours to different classes of spectators a confirmation that that was the significance the colours had to the Byzantines themselves. But this passage has greater interest.(63) Precisely as in the theory put forward by Manojlovič, the midrash accords the highest rank to the blues, and the lowest to the greens. Furthermore, the greens are Gentiles. They live outside the city, take no part in the day

(61) English text is in Jewish Encyclopaedia, Vol.11 p.445.

(62) Prohibitions of this kind may be found in the Talmud, e.g. Aboda Zarah, 18B (Soncino Edition, Neizikin VIII.95)

(63) Neither H. Grégoire, nor A. Maricq, 'Factions de Cirque et Parties populaires', Bulletin de la classe de lettres d'Académie Royale de Belgique, Sér.5, Vol.36(1950) pp.396-421, who also comments on this midrash, have expanded on this point.

population. They were a sign that the government either to day life of the community, and only appear on special occasions. A striking parallel is provided by the knowledge that the Greens in Constantinople complained of their exclusion from public life "and knew neither the seat of government nor the palace which they only visited seated on a mule".(64) The affinity of the midrash to western explanations of the circus colours is also supported by the last sentence quoted from it. The idea that the colours were, in the first place, derived from the seasons of the year was a common one amongst Roman and Byzantine writers. J. Perles cites a passage of this kind in Cassiodorus, and F. Uspenskiy refers to the Greek sources where similar passages can be found.(65) During the sixth and the early seventh century the Greens and the Blues often attracted the notice of the chroniclers by riots among themselves or by their support or desertion of an emperor at a moment of crisis.(61) The evidence indicates that these instances were neither the expression of racing enthusiasts disappointed at the defeat of a favourite charioteer, nor the purposeless excesses of a city mob, but were the reflection of a real conflict of interests within the

(64) Theoph. 182(26-29). Bury, Later Roman Empire (1923) Vol.2, p.73, note 3 suggests the journey would be for punishment.

(65) Perles, p.125, Uspenskiy, Partii Tsirka, p.2.

population. They were a sign that the government either permitted or accepted the existence of genuine popular political activity. During the so-called "Victory" riots in the reign of Justinian I and at a critical period in the reign of Anastasius, the two factions had united in their opposition to the authorities. On both occasions, the emperor had been nearly forced to abdicate. (66) Nothing could give clearer evidence of the support that the two parties together could command from the population of Constantinople (67).

During the first half of the seventh century, the importance of the Greens and the Blues declined and this kind of activity seems to have come to an end. The meaning of this development cannot be properly understood unless some attention is first paid to the "demes" οἱ δημοί - as distinct from the parties - τὰ μέρη. The only completely unambiguous differentiation between those two terms has been made by

(66) See Y. Janssens, 'Les Bleus et les Verts sous Maurice, Phocas et Heraclius', *BYZ* 11 (1936) pp 499-536. For Justinian, see Procopius, *De Bello Persico*, Bk.1, ch.24 and for Anastasius, Malalas, 393-395 and 408.

(67) This point has been developed at some length by N. Pigulevskaya, 'K Voprosu o razlozhenii rabovladel'cheskoy formatsyi na blizhnem vostoki', *Voprosy Istorii* 4(1950) pp 44-54. F. Dvornik, 'The Circus Parties in Byzantium', *Byzantina-Metabyzantina*, 1(1946) p.125, goes so far as to call the hippodrome "a sort of parliament".

G. Brătianu (68) and, at greater length, by the Soviet Byzantinist A. P. Diakonov. (69) The latter, who is particularly interested in social questions, dwells in great detail on the demes as local organisations with well-marked boundaries, often with names which indicated the occupations of the majority of inhabitants in each locality, and with a long tradition of an intense political life of their own. (70) It was these local organisations, or the leaders elected by them, which gave their allegiance to one or other of the parties, the poorer districts usually to the Greens, the richer to the Blues. Diakonov goes on to suggest that these organisations did not include all the male adults of a district but that various strict conditions made of the deme a political elite. (71) Whether this be so or not, it is undoubtedly in studying the activity of the deme that a number of questions about the life of the parties can be answered. Apart from being responsible

(74) Theoph. 294.7.

(68) Etudes Byzantines d'Histoire Economique et Sociale, Bucharest 1938, pp.101-124.

(69) Vizantiyskii Dimy i Partii τὰ μέρη ot 5-vo do 7-vo Stoletiyе, Vizantiyskiy Sbornik, 1(1945) pp.144-227

(70) Diakonov, p.150

(71) Diakonov believes that there is an absolute distinction between the terms "demes" and "people", for example as in Theoph. 294 (21-22) :- ὁ δὲ δῆμος καὶ οἱ ὄχλοι ἐκράζον and that ὁ δῆμος was the only body with political rights. But the evidence is scanty.

for public order in their locality, and, possibly, for the levying of taxes, (72) the demes performed one very important function, particularly noticeable at the end of the sixth century. They were the organisers of a militia which, at critical moments, was of great military value to the empire. In 558-9, Belisarius is said to have led out such a force against the attack of the Avars. (73) In 583, four Slav attacks on the long walls were defeated with the help of the demes. (74) In 600, and, again, in 602, the demes seem to have played a similar part. (75) But, from then on, references to this activity of the demes become very sparse, and, with the exception of a possible action by the militia during the siege of 626, (76) the seventh century is a complete blank so

There is not sufficient evidence to say that, at some

(72) Diakonov, p.151.

(73) Theoph. 233.(12-13) This must be the meaning of **ἐδημοτέωσε**

(74) Theoph. 254.7.

(75) Theoph. 279.20 and 287.23.

(76) George of Pisidia, *Bellum Avaricum* MPG Vol.112 col.1268, but his use of **πολιτῶν** is vague. Cf. Manojlovič,

(77) p.632. Dvornik, *The Circus Parties*, believes that the Heraclian discipline was already beginning to work and that the demes did not rally to the defence of the capital of their own free will.

(78) For example, when Phocas was overthrown, see Theoph. 296, 29-297, 4.

(79) Heraclius reported on his campaigns to representatives of the demes and Justinian II included them in his guarantee of orthodoxy. But such instances are rare and the demes in time acquire a purely ceremonial role. Functions of this type are, for example, described by *Leipziger*, *Leipzig*, ed. J. Becker, *Manuscript & Leipzig*, 1916, p.130 (13-25).

far as military aid from the demes is concerned. It may be inferred that it was the army reform which made the use of bodies of men, to a great extent untrained, no longer necessary, nor advisable (77). As soon as the reform of the army had been accomplished and the Heracleians thought they had trained forces on whom they could depend little more is heard of the militia of the demes. But, in order to make it as certain as possible that the leaders of the demes would not of their own accord call out the militia at an awkward moment (78), their other activities had also to be discouraged. Thus the parties, the organised expression of much of these activities, gradually disappear from the sources, while the demes themselves remain, though their function becomes less and less important (79).

There is not sufficient evidence to say that, at some point in the seventh century, the parties were formally prohibited and dissolved. It is difficult to accept the ingenious arguments of Professor Grégoire, based on two mural inscriptions, that Constans II officially suppressed the parties

(77) There were 1500 Blues and 600 Greens available as a cadre capable of expansion. See Janssens, p.507. Presumably the cadre had some training.

(78) For example, when Phocas was overthrown, see Theoph. 296.25-297.4.

(79) Heraclius reported on his campaigns to representatives of the demes and Justinian II included them in his guarantee of orthodoxy. But such instances are rare and the demes in time acquire a purely ceremonial role. Functions of this type are, for example, described by Liutprand: Legatio, ch.9; ed. J.Becker, Hanover & Leipzig, 1915, p.180 (18-25).

in 641.(80) It is not entirely correct that, "après 641 on ne trouve plus aucune trace du rôle politique des couleurs du cirque".(81) A. Maricq cites two passages which indicate that both Leontius and Apsimar had some help from the parties in achieving their ambitions.(82) There is a passage in the Commentary of Theodore Balsamon which strongly suggests that during this period the function of the parties was radically altered. According to Theodore, they were taken out of the hands of their former leaders and placed in the charge of officials appointed by the emperor.(83) But Theodore does not give sufficient details to show whether this change was gradual or sudden, nor the time when it might have occurred.(84) Nevertheless, it is true enough, that, either by the definite act of one of the Heracleians or after a series of attacks on the privileges of the leaders, during the seventh century the regime of the parties came to an end. Just as a re-organised army had helped the Heracleians to tighten and centralise their rule in the provinces, so it had helped them to strengthen their

(80) 'Une Inscription au nom de Constantin III', BYZ.13(1938) 165-75.

(81) Ibid, p.175.

(82) 'La Durée du régime des parties populaires à Constantinople,' Bulletin de la classe des lettres d'Académie Royale de Belgique Vol.35(1949) pp.66-67.

(83) Dvornik, Circus Parties, pp.131-132.

(84) He merely refers to a change "since the time of Anastasius, Justinian and Phocas the tyrant" - MPG 137 cols.592D-593B.

rule in the capital. It was only during periods of disorder such as marked the accession of Leontius and Apsimar that the parties could once again dare to raise their head. As a whole, however, the seventh century saw the abolition of what had been a riotous but genuine democratic activity. The struggle between the parties had often added to the danger in times of crisis. Their decline in the capital and in the other imperial cities had undoubtedly strengthened the powers of resistance of the Byzantine state.

This tendency towards a stricter central authority of which the army reform was at once a cause and an example, can be noticed in other aspects of Byzantine life during the seventh century. Up to the time of Justinian there can be found numbers of instances of the Senate taking an active part in the business of government. Justinian himself consulted the senate much less frequently though, after him, there was a short revival of its importance. During the seventh century, however, references to the senate become very rare and are limited to those occasions when a change of emperor has temporarily weakened the central power. Thus, in the period

(85) Diehl, 'Le Senat et le Peuple Byzantin au VIIe et VIIIe siècles, BYZ 1(1924) pp.201-205. Even so, its composition had considerably changed from classical times, see Bury, Constitution of the Later Roman Empire, London, 1910, p.7.
(89) Diehl, Le Senat, p.207.
(91) The Iconoclast emperors, for example, unquestionably sought popular support for much of their policy.

when the succession was not completely secure after the death of Heraclius, there are two mentions of the senate, (86) and there is another mention in connection with the trouble between Constantine IV and his brothers. (87) In the letter of Justinian II guaranteeing the orthodoxy of the empire the emphasis is on the "armies" (88) - the "senate" seems as much an afterthought as the "people". At the end of twenty years of disorganisation, the senate appears as one of the bodies agreeing to the elevation of Leo III to the imperial throne. (89) There is no mention of any consultations with the senate when an emperor is firmly in the saddle. There is little evidence to show that the senate played a serious part in political life under the Heracleians and it is difficult to agree with Diehl when he speaks of their century as exhibiting the symptoms of a resurrected classical Greek democracy. (90) On the contrary, everything seems to indicate the establishment of an autocratic regime differing in quality to much which had preceded it and was to follow it. (91)

(86) Theoph. 331.3. and 342(9-19).

(87) Theoph. 352(19-21), *The Master of Offices in the Later Roman and Byzantine Empire*, New York, 1918, p. 60.

(88) See above, p. 120

(89) Theoph. 390(20-24) *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, London, 1911, pp. 12-20.

(90) Diehl, *Le Senat*, p. 209. *Industry in the Byzantine Empire*, *Speculum* 20(1945) p. 12 note 4.

(91) The Iconoclast emperors, for example, unquestionably sought popular support for much of their policy.

The concept of a greatly increased imperial authority under the Heracleians can be supported by other evidence. Their period saw the end of the administrative hierarchy of the old Roman empire. The great offices of state were replaced by administrative officials with a greatly restricted competence (92) directly responsible to the emperor, while the former appointments became honorary ranks without powers or duties ^{2/} **ἀπρακτοί**. An example of this change was the fate of the "magister officium" who was made head of the senate but whose actual functions were taken over by others. (93) Similarly the Count of the Court of Commerce was replaced by a number of **κομμερκίαριοι** - officials with far less personal power. (94) Most important of all, was a change in the status of the emperor himself. For centuries, a strong conservatism had linked the imperial title to the titles conferred upon the early Roman emperors. The desire to preserve the old terminology was based upon a deep hatred of kingship and of "tyranny" and it was felt that, so long as the old titles were kept, the emperor, whatever the actual extent of his

(92) See A. E. R. Boak, The Master of Offices in the Later Roman and Byzantine Empire, New York, 1919, p.50.

(93) Bury, 'The Imperial Administrative System', British Academy Supplemental Papers 1, London, 1911, pp.19-20.

(94) R. S. Lopez, The Silk Industry in the Byzantine Empire, Speculum 20(1945) p.12 note 4.

personal power, was still, in a real sense, "the first amongst equals". The distinction that was felt to exist between **βασιλεία** - kingship - and imperium emerges in the assertion of Lydus that the only function of Caesar was to restore what had been destroyed by popular tumult and to raise armies for the defence of the empire. (95) But a custom had grown up of which instances may date from the first century, of applying to the emperor, albeit unofficially, the royal title of **βασιλεύς** (96). It was with Heraclius that this new title replaced the old Latin formula with its republican associations. On 25th November, 629, in the full flush of victory over the Persians, he and his son Constantine became **πιστοὶ ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ βασιλεῖς** (97). The new title abolished at one stroke the constitutional implications that had previously existed of senatorial or popular influences in the government and symbolised the autocratic quality of the Heracleian regime.

(95) L. Bréhier, L'Origine des Titres impériaux à Byzance, BZ 15(1906) p.170.

(96) L. Bréhier, L'Origine des Titres, pp.165-168.

(97) L. Bréhier, L'Origine des Titres, p.173. It was the title **βασιλεύς ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ** which was the innovation. The epithet **πιστοὶ** had been previously used. See G. Ostrogorsky, Geschichte des byzantinischen Staates, p.86 note 2.

In short, the inner strength of Byzantium in the seventh century was based upon emperors whose personal power had increased both in theory and in practice. Its exercise now depended upon a re-organised and highly disciplined army, a militarised system of provincial government, a docile senate and people, and a reconstituted and easily managed civil service. It was partly because of this development that the regime was able to withstand the shock of the Arab invasion and the apparently unavoidable disorders following the death of an emperor. In a period of what was, on the whole, one of economic decline, it was able to preserve Byzantine pre-eminence in the commerce of the medieval world and even temporarily to improve a gradually deteriorating coinage.⁽⁹⁸⁾ It was able to hand on to its Syrian successors a structure which had remained unimpaired in its essentials despite all the stresses that it had had to withstand during the course of the seventh century.

(98) W. Wroth, A Catalogue of Byzantine Coins in the British Museum, London, 1908. vol.1, pp.xxiii - xxiv. It is an exaggeration to speak of this improvement, however, as "a sudden renaissance" as does R. S. Lopez, 'Byzantine Law in the Seventh Century and its Reception by the Germans and Arabs', *BYZ* 16(1942-43) p.460. Together with a new and improved νόμισμα, slovenly re-striking of old coins continued. (Wroth, vol.1, p.xxv.)

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CHAPTER TEN

THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE HERACLEIANS. It was precisely
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of the Byzantine state.

The extent of the dominions inherited by Leo III was a
great deal smaller than that which had fallen to the share of
Heraclius. Byzantine frontiers had considerably contracted.
A long time had to elapse and a bitter struggle had to be fought
before any of the lost territories could be recovered or any
portion of the old frontiers could once again be included in
the system of defence. In the light of these losses, to a
great extent permanent, the frontier policy of the Heracleians
must be judged a failure. It failed largely through their
inability, after the collapse of the Persians, to gain the
support of the peoples living in the re-conquered territories
or make the most efficient use of any support which they did
gain. As a result the attacks of the Arabs had, in general,
proved irresistible. In the last half of the seventh century
there seemed every reason why the Heracleians should fail not
only to solve their frontier problems but also to preserve the
very existence of the Byzantine state.

Why, then, did Byzantium survive? The real merit of the
Heracleians was that during the seventh century the Byzantine
state successfully adapted itself to changed conditions without

a merely formal function. The title of *Basileus* long dis- suffering too much damage in the process. In subsequent crises it was again and again able to repeat this development, even, to some extent, after the disaster of 1204. It was precisely this flexibility which was often the dominant characteristic of Byzantine rule and not the changelessness once attributed to it. It was this flexibility which often secured its survival.

During the seventh century, largely as a result of the change in the frontier situation, the Heracleians guided the Byzantine state through a complete transformation. The whole provincial system was re-organised. In place of the civil administration which had persisted, unchanged in essentials, from the time of Diocletian, there arose a militarised regime based upon an army which had gained considerably in efficiency and discipline. There was as great a change in the central government. The old Roman methods disappeared and were re- placed by an highly centralised beurocracy in the functioning of which, for good or ill, the intentions of the emperor played an ever greater and greater part. The status of the emperor himself finally lost its connection with the Roman imperial concept. The phrase "senatus populusque Romanus" could have little meaning when both were limited to performing the Byzantine possessions in Italy to the Taurus mountains one religion, one culture united the empire while the consequences of the beginniage of division between its Latin and Greek speak- ing halves were reserved for a later period.

a merely formal function. The title of βασιλεύς long dis-trusted and disliked in the Roman world symbolised the fundamental nature of the change which had taken place. At the end of the century, the Heracleians were, in the classical sense, exercising "tyrannical" power, and the authoritarian regime said to have been established by the Syrian emperors must be placed to the credit of their predecessors. Whether this achievement of the Heracleians be welcomed or deplored on other grounds it is certain that it made the territory over which they ruled more easily defensible, and that it was a primary factor both in the survival of the state during their own epoch and in the positive gains made by the Byzantines in the epoch which followed. In short, after the first great failure to solve the problems of the original frontiers, these were the methods which the Heracleians used with great success to solve the problems of the frontiers which remained.

But, apart from the reform of the army, the re-organisation of the provinces, the changes in the imperial constitution and the increase in the authority of the emperor, there was yet another circumstance which made the defence of the frontiers an easier problem at the end of the Heracleian epoch than it had been at the beginning. They had become the frontiers of a Greco-Roman community with very few discordant elements. From the Byzantine possessions in Italy to the Taurus mountains one religion, one culture united the empire while the consequences of the beginnings of division between its Latin and Greek speaking halves were reserved for a later period.

It was natural that Asia Minor became the centre of this new Byzantine world. It had had a very long history of Greek civilisation on which, eventually, Roman life had been superimposed and with which it had been successfully fused. In Asia Minor had been fought out the early struggles of the church, and it had been there that the spirit and principles of the Christian religion had been first accepted. The great councils which had made the important decisions - Nicea, Ephesus and Chalcedon - were part of its history and the many different racial strains that existed there had been successfully combined in one common cultural unity. A particularly striking example of this assimilation is the history of the Jews in Asia Minor in contrast to their history in Syria and Palestine. Between 300 and 150 B.C. a large number of Jews had been introduced to garrison the cities of Antiochus the Great.⁽¹⁾ After the destruction of the Temple, there had been a fresh influx which assisted in maintaining a considerable Jewish population during the second and third centuries of the Christian era.⁽²⁾ The Spanish Jew Benjamin of Tudela, however,

(1) Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, ed. Winstanley (1825), Vol.1 pp.472-473.

(2) So much can be gathered from tomb inscriptions. See W. Ramsay, 'Intermixture of Races in Asia Minor', Proceedings of the British Academy 7(1915-16) p.365.

(3) ibid., p.367.

who was extremely careful to note all the communities which he visited on his travels says nothing at all of any Jews in Asia Minor in the twelfth century.(3) Yet, during the intervening period, there is no mention anywhere in the sources of any persecutions or forced baptisms of the Jews, or of any disorders caused by the Jews in those regions. It may be concluded that in Asia Minor this people, usually so difficult to assimilate, had been completely integrated into the rest of the population.

The natural preoccupation with frontier defence and the problems connected with it was common to all the Heracleians. They differed, however, in their approach to this problem and the measure of success which they achieved. The founder of the dynasty, Heraclius himself, came to the throne at a time of crisis. Like his predecessor Phocas he was an usurper, but, unlike him, he acquired the abilities to perform the duties of his office. He destroyed the Persian armies in a series of brilliant campaigns and re-established the old frontiers in Armenia, Syria and Palestine. He was undoubtedly responsible for much of the reform of the army and for the re-organisation of the provinces. He made a great but unsuccessful effort to solve the doctrinal conflict and, at least, must have the

(3) Ibid, p.367.

credit of gaining the acquiescence of the pope Honorius, but to the compromise which he produced. The inactivity of the last ten years of his life has puzzled historians, (4) but there is no doubt that the major part of his reign provided an affirmative answer to the dying Phocas. (5) The fame of Heraclius, unimpaired to our own day, has tended to obscure the interest of his successors. His grandson Constans II must be remembered for his determined attempt to re-assert imperial influence in Italy. (6) He was, however, a less able soldier and statesman than Heraclius. His methods of enforcing compliance to his solution of the monophysite problem were unquestionably barbarous. His Armenian diplomacy was crude

(4) The inactivity of Heraclius can, in the end, be largely explained by illness - probably dropsy. In this connection should be consulted E. Jeanselme, 'Histoire pathologique de la dynastie d'Héraclius' IV-ième Congrès Internationale d'Histoire de Médecin, Brussels, 1923. Unfortunately, despite many efforts it has proved impossible to find a copy of this communication. The psychological complexities advanced by L. Drapeyron, L'Empereur Héraclius et l'Empire byzantine au VII-ième siècle, Paris, 1862, do not convince.

(5) The reported dialogue between the successful and the unsuccessful usurper: Is it thus that you govern the empire? Will you govern it any better? (Cedrenus MPG 121 col.780C, Zonaras MPG vol.134 col.1276C)

(6) See above, pp. 188-189

and unrealistic. Nevertheless it was during his reign that the empire withstood the first Arab inroads into the heart of its territories. Constantine IV was able to convene the Oecumenical Council which marked the end of a long epoch of theological quarrels, but his real services to the empire lay in another direction. Arab conquests had solved the doctrinal conflict and to secure agreement was no longer difficult. It was his intelligent use of the Mardaites which turned the tide of invasion in 678 and enabled the empire, after nearly forty years, to resume the offensive. The last and the worst of the Heracleians, Justinian II, at least proved the strength of the system which they had established, for, despite his misgovernment, particularly during his second term of power, he was unable to undo its good effects. His way of proving orthodoxy was maladroit, his transfer of the Mardaites incredibly foolish and his war against 'Abd al-Malik almost entirely unnecessary. Nevertheless, his transfer of the Slavs did help to integrate them into the Byzantine community, and, despite their treachery at Sebastopolis, help, on a long view to turn them into a source of strength for the empire. Justinian II cannot be refused a share of the Heracleian achievement, partly imposed on by external events and partly by what seems like a conscious decision to defend the state even at the cost of the most revolutionary changes in its

structure. If the foundations for these changes were laid in the reign of Heraclius, their fulfilment was left to his successors who must, in the final analysis, alike share the credit or blame for the Byzantium inherited by the Syrian emperors.

Before the Arab invasions, Constantinople had been a centre of empire influencing by force or example territories with cultures different from its own. In later periods, some of the lost territories were regained and it was able once more to play something of the same imperial role. But the territories ruled by the last of the Heracleians and the first of the Syrians did not include a variety of cultures and religions subject, in virtue of conquest or tradition, to one government. They were an homogenous community with a single framework of custom and culture, a single religion, and, very largely, a single language. These are the characteristics, not of an empire but of a nation. The Heracleians themselves certainly did not imagine that they were anything other than emperors and to describe the state which they ruled as a nation, without qualification, would be to commit a clear anachronism. Nevertheless, they did rule a state fundamentally different from both what had gone before and from what came after. For a short period it had become a cohesive whole. An efficient

administration and a disciplined army enabled it to survive twenty years of palace revolution and to strike back powerfully at the Arabs. They, for their own part, had been changing from bands of raiders driven by a mixture of economic need and mystical impulse into the exponents of a sophisticated secular imperialism. The upheavals caused by this development had checked their original impetus and had enabled the Heracleians to preserve and consolidate the Byzantine possessions which remained. This was the fundamental achievement of the Heracleian dynasty.

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ABBREVIATIONS

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- EZ** Byzantinische Zeitschrift, Leipzig, 1892 - and Munich (in progress)
- HJ** Cambridge Historical Journal. London, 1923 - (in progress)
- CSOC** Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, Paris, 1903 - (in progress)
- CSEL** Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum, Vienna, 1856 - (in progress)
- CSHB** Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae. ed. I. Bekker, L. Dindorf and others, 48 vols. Bonn, 1826-1897.
- CH** Cambridge SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY, vol. 2 ed. H. Gwatkin and others, Cambridge, 1913.
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- ENR** English Historical Review, London, 1896 - (in progress)
- JHS** Journal of Hellenic Studies, London, 1880 - (in progress)
- JRS** Journal of Roman Studies, London, 1911 - (in progress)
- Langlois** F. Langlois, Collection des Historiens anciens et modernes de l'Arménie, 5 vols., Paris, 1878-1886.
- Mansi** J. D. Mansi, Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio 31 vols. Florence and Venice, 1759-1798.

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- BYZ Byzantion. Paris, 1924-29, Brussels, 1930-39, Boston, 1942-45, Brussels, 1948 - (in progress)
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- CHJ Cambridge Historical Journal. London, 1923 - (in progress)
- CSCO Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, Paris, 1903 - (in progress)
- CSEL Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum, Vienna, 1886 - (in progress)
- CSHB Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae. ed. I. Bekker, L. Dindorf and others, 48 vols. Bonn, 1826-1897.
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- VV Vizantiyskiy Vremenik, St. Petersburg, 1893-1916 and Moscow/Leningrad, 1947 - (in progress)
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