

**Salonika**

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# THE ENGLISH HISTORICAL REVIEW

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## *Salonika*

SALONIKA, 'the Athens of Medieval Hellenism', has been by turns a Macedonian provincial city, a free town under Roman domination, a Greek community second only to Constantinople, the capital of a short-lived Latin kingdom and of a brief Greek empire to which it gave its name, a Venetian colony, and a Turkish town.<sup>1</sup> There, in 1876, the murder of the consuls was one of the phases of the Eastern crisis; there, in 1908, the Young Turkish movement was born; and there, in 1913, King George of Greece was assassinated.

Nor has Salonika's contribution to literature been inconsiderable. The historian Pétros Patrikios in the sixth century; the essayist Demétrios Kydónes, who wrote a 'monody over those who fell in Salonika' in 1346, during the civil war between John Cantacuzene and John V Palaiológos; John Kameniátēs and John the Reader, the historians respectively of the Saracen and the Turkish sieges, and Theodore Gazēs, who contributed to spread Greek teaching in the West, were natives of the place. Plotinos and John, hagiographers of the seventh century; Leo,

<sup>1</sup> Greek medieval scholars, owing to the disturbed political conditions, have scarcely had time since Salonika became Greek to continue the historical studies of Tafel, Papageorgiou, and Tafrali—for even the last composed his two valuable treatises on the topography of Salonika and its history in the fourteenth century (see *ante*, xxix. 128–131) before the reconversion of the mosques into churches and while the city was still Turkish. But the well-known medievalist, Professor Adamantiou, has already written a handbook on Byzantine Thessalonika, 'Η Βυζαντινή Θεσσαλονίκη' (Athens, 1914); M. Risal has popularized the story of this 'Coveted City', *La Ville convoitée* (3rd ed., Paris, 1917); K. Zesíou, the epigraphist, has examined the Christian monuments; Professor Lámpros, the present premier, has published 'eight letters' of its Metropolitan Isidore, who flourished towards the end of the fourteenth century; and K. Kugéas has edited the note-book of an official of the archbishopric who was at Salonika between 1419 and 1425, a few years before its conquest by the Turks. See Πρακτικά τῆς . . . 'Αρχαιολογικῆς Ἐταιρείας τοῦ 1913, pp. 119–57; Νέος Ἐλληνομνήμων, ix. 343–414; *Byz. Zeitschr.*, xxiii. 144–63.

the famous mathematician of the ninth; Nikétas, who composed dialogues in favour of the union of the churches; Eustáthios, the Homeric commentator, historian of the Norman siege and panegyrist of St. Demétrios; Nikephóros Kállistos Xanthópoulos, the ecclesiastical historian; Gregórios Palamás, Neilos, and Nicholas Kabásilas, the polemical theologians of the fourteenth century; and Symeon, the liturgical writer, who died just before the final Turkish capture of the city, were among those who occupied this important metropolitan see; while the rhetoricians, Nikephóros Choúmnos and the grammarian Thomas Mágistros, addressed to the Thessalonians missives on the blessings of justice and unity in the fourteenth century. And precedents for the exile of Abdul Hamid at Salonika may be found in the banishment thither of Licinius, the rival of Constantine, of Anastásios II in 716, and of Theodore Studita during the Iconoclast controversy.

Salonika has no very ancient history. It did not exist till after the death of Alexander the Great, when Kassander, who became king of Macedon, founded it in 315 B. C., and gave to it the name of his wife, Thessaloníke, who was half-sister of the famous Macedonian conqueror, just as he bestowed his own upon another town, from which the westernmost of the three prongs of the peninsula of Chalkidiké still retains the name of Kassándra. When the Romans conquered and organized Macedonia, Thessalonika became the capital of that province, remaining, however, a free city with its own magistrates, the *πολιτάρχαι*, to whom St. Paul and Silas were denounced on their memorable visit. It is a proof of the technical accuracy of the author of the Acts of the Apostles, that this precise word occurs as the name of the local magistracy in the inscription formerly on the Vardar gate, but now in the British Museum. The description in the Acts further shows that the present large Jewish colony of Salonika, which is mostly composed of Spanish Jews, descendants of the fugitives from the persecutions of the end of the fifteenth century, had already a counterpart in the first. We may infer that Salonika was a prosperous town, and its importance in the Roman period is shown by the fact that Cicero, who was not fond of discomfort, selected it in 58 B. C. as his place of exile, and that Piso found it worth plundering during his governorship. But the sojourn of the Roman orator left a less durable mark upon the history of Salonika than that of the Apostle. It was not merely that two of his comrades, Aristarchos and Secundus, were Thessalonian converts, but medieval Greek writers lay special stress upon the piety of what was called *par excellence* 'the Orthodox City'—probably for its conservative attitude in the Iconoclast controversy. Salonika furnished many names to the list of martyrs, and one of them, St. Demétrios, a Thessalonian doctor put to

death in 306 by order of Galerius,<sup>2</sup> became the patron of his native city, which he is believed to have saved again and again from its foes. The most binding Thessalonian oath was by his name ;<sup>3</sup> his tomb, from which a holy oil perpetually exuded, the source of many miraculous cures, is in the beautiful building, now once more a church, which is called after him ; it was on his day, 26 October (o.s.), that in 1912 Salonika capitulated to the Greek troops, and there were peasant soldiers at the battle of Sarantáporon who firmly believed that they had seen him fighting against the Turks for the restoration of his church and city to his own people,<sup>4</sup> just as their ancestors had beheld him, sword in hand, defending its walls against the Slavs. The story of his miracles forms a voluminous literature, and on the walls of his church his grateful people represented all the warlike episodes in which he had saved them from their foes. Some of these mosaics have survived the conversion of the church into the Kassimié mosque, and among them is a portrait of the saint between a bishop and a local magnate. Nor was St. Demétrios the only Thessalonian saint. The city also cherished the tomb of St. Theodora of Aegina, who had died at Salonika in the ninth century.

Like Constantinople, Salonika was devoted to the sports of the hippodrome ; and, in 390, the imprisonment of a favourite charioteer on the eve of a race, in which he was to have taken part, provoked an insurrection, punished by a massacre. Theodosius I, then on his way to Milan, ordered the Gothic garrison to wreak vengeance upon the inhabitants ; the next great race-meeting was selected, when the citizens had come together to witness their favourite pastime, and 15,000 persons were butchered in the hippodrome. St. Ambrose, archbishop of Milan, refused to allow the emperor to enter the cathedral, and made him repent for eight months his barbarous treatment of a city where he had celebrated his wedding. Of Roman Salonika there still exists a memorial in the arch of Galerius, with its sculptures representing the emperor's Asiatic victories ; a second arch, the Vardar gate, was sacrificed fifty years ago to build the quay ; while a Corinthian colonnade, with eight Karyatides, known to the Jews as *Las Incantadas*, a part of the Forum, was removed by Napoleon III to France. The pulpit, from which St. Paul was believed to have spoken, and which used to stand outside the church of St. George, was removed—so I was informed when last at Salonika—by a German in the time of Abdul Hamid.

Salonika had been chiefly important in Roman times, because

<sup>2</sup> Migne, *Patr. Gr.*, cxvi. 1116, 1169, 1173, 1185 (where 'Maximian Hercules' of the text is corrected to Galerius, the younger Maximian).

<sup>3</sup> Akropolites (ed. Teubner), i. 82.

<sup>4</sup> Adamantiou, 49.

the Via Egnatia which ran from Durazzo, 'the tavern of the Adriatic' (as Catullus calls it), passed through its 'Golden' and 'Kassandreotic' gates. But in Byzantine days its value was increased owing to its geographical position. As long as the Exarchate of Ravenna existed, it lay on the main artery uniting Constantinople with the Byzantine province in Northern Italy, and it was an outpost against the Slavonic tribes, which had entered the Balkan peninsula, where they have ever since remained, but which, despite many attempts, have never taken Salonika. Of these invaders the most formidable, and the most persistent, were the Bulgarians, whose first war with their natural enemies, the Greeks, was waged for the possession of Salonika, because of the heavy customs dues which they had to pay there, and who, more than a thousand years later, still covet that great Macedonian port, the birthplace of the Slavonic apostles, the brothers Constantine (or Cyril) and Methódios.

The influence of these two natives of Salonika, partly historical and partly legendary, has not only spread over the Slavonic parts of the Balkan peninsula, but forms in the church of S. Clemente a link between the Balkans and Rome. The brothers were intended by nature to supplement one another: Constantine was a recluse and an accomplished linguist, Methódios a man of the world and an experienced administrator. Both brothers converted the Slavs of Moravia to Christianity, and it was long believed that a terrifying picture of the Last Judgement from the hand of Methódios had such an effect upon the mind of Boris, the Bulgarian prince, that he embraced the Christian creed. The real fact is, that Boris changed his religion (like his namesake in our own day) for political reasons, as a condition of obtaining peace from the Byzantine emperor, Michael III, in 864, taking in baptism the name of his imperial sponsor. Tradition likewise attributes to Cyril the invention of the Cyrillic alphabet, which still bears his name and is that of the Russians, Serbs, and Bulgars. But Professor Bury,<sup>5</sup> the latest writer on this question, considers that the alphabet invented by Cyril for the use of the Bulgarian and Moravian converts was not the so-called Cyrillic (which is practically the Greek alphabet with the addition of a few letters, and would, therefore, be likely to offend the Slav national feeling), but the much more complicated Glagolitic, which still lingers on in the Slavonic part of Istria, on the Croatian coast, and in Northern Dalmatia. In this language, accordingly, his translation of the Gospels and his brother's version of the Old Testament were composed, and old Slavonic literature began with these two Thessalonians, whose names form to-day the programme of Bulgarian, just as Dante Alighieri is of Italian expan-

<sup>5</sup> *A History of the Eastern Empire*, pp. 381-401, 485-8.

sion. On another mission, to Cherson on the Black Sea, Cyril is said to have discovered the relics of St. Clement, who had suffered martyrdom there by being tied to an anchor and flung into the waves. He brought them to Rome, where the frescoes in S. Clemente before Monsignor Wilpert's researches were believed to represent the Slavonic apostles, Cyril before Michael III, and the transference of his remains to that church from the Vatican—for he died in Rome in 869.

Thus sentimental and commercial reasons impelled the Bulgarians to attack Salonika. Both the great Bulgarian tsars of the tenth century, Symeon and Samuel, strove to obtain it, and during the forty years for which the famous Greek emperor Basil, 'the Bulgar-Slayer', contended against Samuel for the mastery of Macedonia, Salonika was the head-quarters, and the shrine of its patron-saint the inspiration, of the Greeks, as Ochrida was the capital of the Bulgars. We learn from the historian Kedrenós that there was at the time a party which favoured the Bulgarians in some of the Greek cities; <sup>6</sup> but in 1014 the emperor, like the present king of the Hellenes in 1913, and in the same defile, called by the Byzantine historian 'Kleidion' (or 'the key')—which has been identified with the gorge of the Struma, not far from the notorious fort Roûpel—utterly routed his rival, and took, like King Constantine, the title of 'Bulgar-Slayer'. Samuel escaped, only to die of shock at the spectacle of the 15,000 blinded Bulgarian captives, each hundred guided by a one-eyed centurion, whom the victor sent back to their tsar. Basil celebrated his triumph in the holy of holies of Hellenism, the majestic Parthenon, then the church of Our Lady of Athens, where frescoes executed at his orders still recall his visit and victory over the Bulgarians. Thus the destruction of the first Bulgarian empire was organized at Salonika and celebrated at Athens, just like the defeat of the same enemies 900 years later. But even after the fall of the Bulgarian empire we find a Bulgarian leader besieging Salonika for six days, and only repulsed by the personal intervention of St. Demétrios,<sup>7</sup> whom the terrified Bulgarian prisoners declared that they had seen on horseback leading the Greeks and breathing fire against the besiegers.

But Salonika was no longer a virgin fortress. An enemy even more formidable than the Bulgarians had captured it, the Saracens, who from 823 to 961 were masters of Crete. Of this, the first of the three conquests of Salonika, we have a description by a priest who was a native of the city and an eyewitness of its capture, John Kameníates, as well as a sermon by the patriarch Nicholas.<sup>8</sup> The 'first city of the Macedonians' was indeed

<sup>6</sup> ii. 451.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 529, 531-2.

<sup>8</sup> Migne, *Patr. Gr.*, ex. 26.

a goodly prize for the Saracen corsairs, whose base was 'the great Greek island'. Civic patriotism inspired the Thessalonian priest with a charming picture of his home at the moment of this piratical raid, in 904. He praises the natural outer harbour, formed by the projecting elbow of the *Εμβολον* (the 'Black Cape', or Karaburun, of the Turks);<sup>9</sup> the security of the inner port, protected by an artificial mole; the great city climbing up the hill behind it; the vineyards and hospitable monasteries, whose inmates (unlike their modern successors) take no thought of politics; the two lakes (now St. Basil and Beshik), with their ample supply of fish, which stretch almost across the neck of the Chalkidic peninsula; and to the west the great Macedonian plain (treeless then, as now), but watered by the Axiós (the modern Vardar) and lesser streams. In times of peace Salonika was the *débouché* of the Slavonic hinterland; the mart and stopping-place of the cosmopolitan crowd of merchants who travelled along the great highway from West to East that still intersected it; in short, both land and sea conspired to enrich it. Unfortunately, it was almost undefended on the sea side, for no one had ever contemplated any other danger than that from the Slavs of the country, and the population was untrained for war, but more versed in the learning of the schools and in the beautifully melodious hymns of the splendid Thessalonian ritual.

On Sunday, 29 July, fifty-four Saracen ships were sighted off Karaburun under the command of Leo, a renegade, who on that account was all the more anxious to display his animosity to his former co-religionists. He at once detected the weak point of the defences—the low sea-wall, which had not been put into a state of proper repair,<sup>10</sup>—and ordered his men to scale them. This attempt failed, nor was a second, to burn the 'Roma' and the 'Kassandreotic' gates on the east—the latter destroyed in 1873—more serviceable. The admiral then fastened his ships together by twos, and on each pair constructed wooden towers, which overtopped the sea-wall. He then steered them to where the water was deep right up to the base of the fortifications, and began to fire with his brazen tubes. The sea-wall was abandoned by its terrified defenders, and an Ethiopian climbing on to the top to see if their flight were merely a ruse, when once he had assured himself that it was genuine, summoned his comrades to follow him. A terrible massacre ensued; some of the inhabitants occupied the Akropolis, then known as 'St. David's', but now called 'the Seven Towers', whence a few Slavs escaped into the country; others fled to the two western gates, 'the Golden' and 'the Litaian'—the 'New gate' of the Turks,

<sup>9</sup> *Kamēniátes*, pp. 491, 519; Theodore Studita, in Migne, *Patr. Gr.*, xcix. 917.

<sup>10</sup> An inscription found in 1874 confirms *Kamēniátes*: *Byz. Zeitschr.*, x. 151-4.

destroyed in 1911—where the besiegers butchered them as they were jammed together in the gateways. Our author with his father, uncle, and two brothers took refuge in a bastion of the walls opposite the church of St. Andrew. When the Ethiopians approached, he threw himself at the feet of their captain, offering to reveal to him the hidden treasure of the family, if the lives of himself and his relatives were spared. The captain agreed, but the author did not escape two wounds from another band of pillagers, and witnessed the massacre of some 300 of his fellow citizens in the church of St. George. And, if his life had been spared, he was still a captive; 800 prisoners, besides a crew of 200, were herded in the ship which transported him to Crete, and he has described in vivid language the horrors of that passage in the blazing days of August without air or water. Over and above those who perished during the voyage, which lasted a fortnight for fear of the Greek fleet, 22,000 captives were landed to be sold as slaves. Even then his troubles were not over. A hurricane sprang up on the voyage from Crete to Tripoli, and the narrative closes as the author is anxiously awaiting at Tarsus the hour of his liberation. A curious illustration in a manuscript of Skylitzes remains, like his story, to remind us of this siege.

Salonika recovered from the ravages of the Saracens, who later in the tenth century were driven out of Crete, and the collapse of the Bulgarians in the eleventh enabled her to develop her trade. Three churches, of St. Elias, of the Virgin, and of St. Panteleimon, date from this period, to which belong the extant seals of Constantine Diogènes, Basil II's lieutenant, and of the metropolitans Paul and Leo.<sup>11</sup> The Byzantine satire, 'Timarion',<sup>12</sup> which was composed in the twelfth century, gives an interesting account of the fair of St. Demétrios, to which came not only Greeks from all parts of the Hellenic world, but also Slavs from the Danubian lands, Italians, Spaniards, Portuguese, and Celts from beyond the Alps. It is curious that this list omits the Jews, now such an important element at Salonika, for they are mentioned in the seventh century, and Benjamin of Tudela, who visited the city about the time that 'Timarion' was written, found 500 there.<sup>13</sup> As for Italians, we hear of Venetians and Pisans obtaining trading-rights, and having their own quarter and the distinctive name of *Βουρυέσιοι*.<sup>14</sup>

Not long after the brilliant scene described by the Byzantine satirist a terrible misfortune befell Salonika—its capture by the Normans of Sicily. The usurper, Andrónikos I, then sat on the throne, and Aléxios, a nephew of the late Emperor Manuel I, fled

<sup>11</sup> Schlumberger, *Sigillographie*, pp. 102-6.

<sup>12</sup> Ellissen, *Analekten*, iv. 46-53.

<sup>13</sup> Tafel, *De Thessalonica*, p. 474.

<sup>14</sup> Eustáthios (ed. Bonn), p. 449.



to the court of William II of Sicily, and implored his assistance. William consented, and dispatched an army to Salonika by way of Durazzo, and a fleet round the Peloponnese. On 6 August 1185 the land force began the siege, of which the Archbishop Eustáthios, the commentator on Homer, was an eyewitness and historian. Salonika was commanded by David Komnenós, who bore a great Byzantine name, but was—by the accordant testimony of another contemporary, Nikéatas, who describes him as ‘ more craven than a deer ’, and of the archbishop, who calls him ‘ little better than a traitor ’—a lazy, cowardly, and incompetent officer, who, in order to prevent his supersession by some one more capable, sent a series of lying bulletins to the capital, that all was well. The walls were in good repair, except (as in 904) at the harbour, but the reservoir in the castle leaked; and many of the most capable inhabitants had been allowed to escape. Still the remainder, and not least the women, who completely put to shame the effeminate commander on his pacific mule, showed bravery and patriotism, while the archbishop specially mentions the courage of some Serbians in the garrison.<sup>15</sup> There were, however, traitors in the city and neighbourhood—Jews and Armenians, and on 24 August the city fell. The conduct of the learned archbishop at this crisis was in marked contrast with that of the miserable commander. Eustáthios acted like a true pastor of his flock. The invaders found him calmly awaiting them in his palace, whence, seizing him by his venerable beard, they dragged him to the hippodrome, and thence, through lines of corpses, to the arsenal. There he was put on board the ship of a pirate, who demanded 4,000 gold pieces as his ransom. As the archbishop pleaded poverty, he was next day escorted to the presence of Aléxios himself, and thence to Counts Aldoin and Richard of Acerra, by whom he was at last restored to his palace, where he took refuge in a tiny bath-room in the garden.

Meanwhile, the Normans had shown no respect for the churches of the city. They danced upon the altars; they used the sacred ointment which flowed from the tomb of St. Demétrios as boot-polish; they interrupted the singing by their obscene melodies and imitated the nasal intonation of the eastern priesthood by barking like dogs. But it is best to pass over the revolting details of the sack, for which the only excuse was the massacre of the Latins in Constantinople three years earlier. Eustáthios, by his influence with Count Aldoin, was able to mitigate some of the tortures of his flock; he describes the miserable plight of these poor wretches, robbed of their houses and almost stark naked, and the strange appearance which they presented (like the Messina refugees after the earthquake of 1908) in their improvised hats

<sup>15</sup> Eustáthios, p. 452.

and clothes. More than 7,000 of them had perished in the assault, but the archbishop notes with satisfaction that the Normans lost some 3,000 from their excessive indulgence in pork and new wine. Vengeance, too, soon befell them. A Greek army under Aléxios Branás defeated them on the Struma, and in November they evacuated Salonika.<sup>16</sup> But their treatment of Salonika embittered the hatred between Latins and Greeks, and prepared the way for the Fourth Crusade.

Barely twenty years after the Norman capture, Salonika became the capital of a Latin kingdom. Boniface, marquis of Montferrat, was the leader of the crusaders who, with the help of the Venetians, overthrew the Greek empire in 1204, and partitioned it into Latin states. Of these the most important after the Latin empire, of which Constantinople became the capital, was the so-called Latin kingdom of Salonika, of which Boniface was appointed king, and which, nominally dependent upon the Latin emperor, embraced Macedonia, Thessaly, and much of continental Greece, including Athens. Of all the artificial creations of the Fourth Crusade, which should be a warning to those who believe that nations can be partitioned permanently at congresses of diplomatists, the Latin kingdom of Salonika was the first to fall. From the outset its existence was undermined by jealousy between its king and the Latin emperor, whose suzerainty he and his proud Lombard nobles were loath to acknowledge. For this reason Boniface, whose wife, Margaret of Hungary, was widow of the Greek emperor, Isaac II, endeavoured to cultivate his Greek subjects. But, in 1207, he was killed by the Bulgarians, who would have taken Salonika, had not a traitor (or, as the pious believed, St. Demétrios) slain their tsar.

Boniface's son, although born in the country and named after Salonika's patron-saint (whose church was, however, the property of the chapter of the Holy Sepulchre while a Latin archbishop occupied the see), was then barely two years old. His mother was regent, but the real power was wielded by her baily, the ambitious count of Biandrate, whose policy was to separate the kingdom from the Latin empire and draw it closer to the Italian marquisate. His quarrels with the Emperor Henry were viewed with joy by the Greeks; and, after his retirement and in the absence of the young king in Italy, the kingdom was easily occupied, in 1223, by Theodore Angelos,<sup>17</sup> the vigorous ruler of Epeiros, where, as at Nice, the city of the famous council, Hellenism, temporarily exiled from its natural capital, had found a refuge. The Greek conqueror exchanged the more modest

<sup>16</sup> Nikéas, pp. 384-401, 471.

<sup>17</sup> Salonika was still Lombard in May 1223: Pitra, *Analecta sacra et classica*, vii. 335-8, 577.

title of 'Despot of Epeiros' for that of 'Emperor of Salonika', while the exiled monarch and his successors continued to amuse themselves by styling themselves titular kings of Salonika for another century. But the separate Greek empire of Salonika was destined to live but little longer than the Latin kingdom. The first Greek emperor, by one of those sudden reverses of fortune so characteristic of Balkan politics in all ages, fell into the hands of the Bulgarians; and, after having been reduced to the lesser dignity of a despotat, the empire which he had founded was finally annexed, in 1246, to the stronger and rival Greek empire of Nice, which, in 1261, likewise absorbed the Latin empire of Constantinople. No coins of the Latin kingdom exist; but we have a seal of Boniface, with a representation of the city walls upon it. Of the Greek empire of Salonika there are silver and bronze pieces, bearing the figure of the city's patron-saint; while a tower contains an inscription to 'Manuel the Despot', identified by Monsignor Duchesne<sup>18</sup> with Manuel Angelos (1230-40), the Emperor Theodore's brother and successor, but locally ascribed to a Manuel Palaiológos, perhaps the subsequent Emperor Manuel II, despot and governor of Salonika in 1369-70.

Salonika, restored to the Byzantine empire, enjoyed special privileges, second only to those of the capital. Together with the region around it, it was considered as an appanage of one of the emperor's sons (e. g. John VII, nephew, and Andrónikos, son of Manuel II). It was sometimes governed by the empresses, two of them Italians, Jolanda of Montferrat, wife of Andrónikos II, a descendant of the first king of Salonika, and Anne of Savoy, wife of Andrónikos III, who was commemorated in an inscription over the gate of the castle, which she repaired in 1355. The court frequently resided there: we find Andrónikos III coming to be healed by the saint, and the beautiful Jolanda, when she quarrelled with her husband, retired to Salonika and scandalized Thessalonian society with her accounts of her domestic life. As in our own day, Salonika was the favourite seat of opposition to the imperial authority. During the civil wars of the fourteenth century, such as those between the elder and the younger Andrónikos and between John V Palaiológos and John Cantacuzene, it supported the candidate opposed to Constantinople, so that we may find precedents in its medieval history for its selection as the head-quarters of the Young Turkish movement. It enjoyed a full measure of autonomy, had its own 'senate', elected its own officials, was defended by its own civic guard, and administered by its own municipal customs. It even sent its own envoys abroad to discuss commercial questions. Its annual fair on the festival

<sup>18</sup> *Mission au Mont Athos*, p. 64; Wroth, *Catalogue of the Coins of the Vandals*, pp. 193-203; Schlumberger, *Mélanges d'Archéologie byzantine*, i. 57.

of St. Demétrios still attracted traders from all the Levant to the level space between the walls and the Vardar. Jews, Slavs, and Armenians, as well as Greeks, crowded its bazaars; scholars from outside frequented its high schools, and Demétrios Kydónes<sup>19</sup> compared it with Athens at its best.

The fourteenth century was, indeed, the golden age of Salonika in art and letters. The erection of the churches of the Twelve Apostles and St. Catherine continued the tradition of the much earlier churches of St. George, St. Sophia, and St. Demétrios. The clergy followed in the footsteps of the learned Eustáthios, and the beauty, wit, and reading of a Thessalonian lady, Eudokía Palaiologína, turned the head of a son of Andrónikos II, when governor of Salonika, 'that garden of the Muses and the Graces', as one of the literary archbishops of the fourteenth century called it. The intellectual activity of the place led to intense theological discussion, and at this period the 'Orthodox' city *par excellence* was agitated by the heresy of the 'Hesychasts', or Quietists, who believed that complete repose would enable them to see a divine light flickering round their empty stomachs, while the so-called 'Zealots', or friends of the people, with the cross as their banner, practised in Salonika the doctrines of Wat Tyler and Jack Cade in medieval England. The exploitation of the poor by the rich and the tax-collectors, and the example of the recent revolution at Genoa, caused this republican movement, which led to the massacre of the nobles in 1346 by hurling them from the castle walls into the midst of an armed mob below. The 'Zealots', like the Iconoclast emperors, have suffered from the fact that they have been described by their enemies, and notably by Cantacuzene,<sup>20</sup> to whose aristocratic party they were opposed. Yet even an archbishop publicly advocated so drastic a measure as the suppression of some of the monasteries, in order to provide funds for the better defence of the city; nor was there anything very alarming in their preference for direct taxation. Thus, Salonika was from 1342 to 1349, under their auspices, practically an independent republic, till they succumbed to the allied forces of the aristocracy and the monks.

Salonika, indeed, continued to have urgent need of its walls, which still remain, save where the Turks completely dismantled them on the sea side in 1866, a fine example of Byzantine fortification. Andrónikos II strengthened them by the erection of a tower, which still bears his initials, in the dividing wall between the Akropolis and the rest of the city. Thanks to them it escaped pillage by the Catalan Grand Company at a time when they

<sup>19</sup> Migne, *Patr. Gr.*, cix. 644.

<sup>20</sup> ii. 234, 393, 568-82; Nikephóros Gregorás, ii. 673-5, 740, 795; Kydónes, in Migne, *Patr. Gr.*, cix. 649.

sheltered two Byzantine empresses. Even during the greatest expansion of the Serbian empire under Stephen Dushan, Salonika alone remained a Greek islet in a Serbian Macedonia. But a far more serious foe than either Catalan or Serb was now at hand. The Turks entered Europe shortly after the middle of the fourteenth century, and advanced rapidly in the direction of Salonika. At least twice<sup>21</sup> before the end of that century—in 1387 and from 1391 to 1403, when Suleyman handed it back—they occupied it, and at last the inhabitants came to the conclusion that, in the weak condition of the Greek empire, their sole chance of safety was to place themselves under the protection of a great maritime power. Accordingly, in 1423, pressed by famine and by continual Turkish attacks, the Greek notables sent a deputation to Venice offering their city to the republic, whether their sickly despot Andrónikos, son of the Emperor Manuel II, consented or no. The Venetians, we are told, ‘received the offer with gladness, and promised to protect, and nourish, and prosper the city and to transform it into a second Venice’. The despot, whose claims were settled by a solatium of 50,000 ducats, made way for a Venetian duke and a captain; for seven years Salonika was a Venetian colony.<sup>22</sup>

The bargain proved unsatisfactory alike to the Venetians and the Greeks. Their brief occupation of Salonika cost the republic 700,000 ducats—for, in 1426, in addition to the cost of administration and repairs to the walls, she agreed to pay a tribute to the Sultan. Nor was it popular with the natives, especially the notables, many of whom the government found it desirable to deport to the other Venetian colonies of Negroponte and Crete, or even to Venice itself, on the plea that there was not food for them at Salonika. Others left voluntarily for Constantinople to escape the ‘unbearable horrors’ and the Venetian slavery. The Turkish peril was ever present, and when envoys solicited peace from the Sultan Murad II, he replied: ‘The city is my inheritance, and my grandfather Bajazet took it from the Greeks by his own right hand. So, if the Greeks were now its masters, they might reasonably accuse me of injustice. But ye being Latins and from Italy, what have ye to do with this part of the world? Go, if you like; if not, I am coming quickly.’ And in 1430 he came.

Two misfortunes preceded the fall of Salonika—the death of the beloved metropolitan, and an earthquake. There was only

<sup>21</sup> Müller, *Byz. Analekten in Sitzungsberichte der Wiener Akademie*, ix. 394; Chalkokondýles, pp. 47, 174; Phrantzês, p. 47; Doukas, pp. 50, 199; *Diplomatarium Veneto-Levanticum*, ii. 291; *Boçarris*, i. 234.

<sup>22</sup> Doukas, p. 197; Phrantzês, pp. 64, 122; Chalkokondýles, p. 205; Sáthas, *Mon. Hist. Hell.*, i. 133-50.

one man to defend every two or three bastions, and the Venetians, distrusting the inhabitants, placed a band of brigands between themselves and the Greeks, so that, even if the latter had desired to accept the liberal offers which Murad made them, they dared not do so. Chalkokondýles hints at treachery, and a versifying chronicler<sup>23</sup> makes the monks of the present Tsaoush-Monastir near the citadel urge the Sultan to cut the conduits from the mountain, which supplied the city with water, and ascribes to their treason their subsequent privileges. But even the wives of the Greek notables joined in the defence, until a move of the Venetian garrison towards the harbour led the Greeks to believe that they would be left to their fate. On 29 March, the fourth day of the siege, a soldier scaled the walls at the place near the castle known as 'The Triangle', and threw down the head of a Venetian as a sign that he was holding his ground. The defenders fled to the Samareía tower<sup>24</sup> on the beach—perhaps the famous 'White Tower', or 'the Tower of Blood' as it was called a century ago, which still stands there and which some attribute to the Venetian period, or at least to Venetian workmen—only to find it shut against them by the Venetians, who managed to escape by sea.

In accordance with his promise, Murad allowed his men to sack the city, and great damage was inflicted on the churches in the search for treasure buried beneath the altars. The tomb of St. Demétrios was ravaged, because of its rich ornaments and to obtain the healing ointment for which it was famous, while the relics of St. Theodora were scattered, and with difficulty collected again. Seeing, however, the wonderful situation of Salonika, the Sultan ordered the sack to cease, and began to restore the houses to their owners, contenting himself with converting only two of the churches, those of the Virgin and of St. John Baptist, into mosques. It is pleasant to note that George Brankovich, the despot of Serbia and one of the richest princes of that day, ransomed many prisoners. Two or three years afterwards, however, the Sultan adopted severer measures towards the captured city. He took all the churches except four (including that of St. Demétrios, which, as the tomb of Spantoúnes shows, was not converted into a mosque till after 1481), built a bath out of the materials of some of the others, and transported the Turks of Yenidjé-Vardar to Salonika, which thus for 482 years became a Turkish city. Chalkokondýles<sup>25</sup> was

<sup>23</sup> Sathas, *Μεσαιωνική Βιβλιοθήκη*, i. 257.

<sup>24</sup> Perhaps the name is a reminiscence of the bishop of Samaria, to whom Mount Athos belonged from 1206 to 1210: Innocent III, *Epp.*, ix. 192.

<sup>25</sup> p. 235; Anagnóstes; Phrantzês, pp. 90, 155; Doúkas, pp. 199-201; *Byz. Zeitschr.*, xxiii. 148, 152; Ν. Έλλ., v. 369-91.

not far wrong when he described its fall as ' the greatest disaster that had yet befallen the Greeks '.

When, on St. Demétrios' day, 1912, the victorious Greeks recovered Salonika, all those churches, sixteen in number, which had existed before the Turkish conquest were reconverted into Christian edifices ; and when I was there in 1914, it was curious to see the two dates, 1430 and 1912, the former in black, the latter in gold, on the eikonostasis of the Divine Wisdom, the church which was perhaps founded before the more famous Santa Sophia of Constantinople. Almost the last acts of the Young Turks before they surrendered Salonika was to destroy not only the ' Gate of Anna Palaiologína ', but also the ' New gate ', which bore the inscription recording the Turkish capture.

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