

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Deno J. Geanakoplos, *Byzantine East and Latin West: Two Worlds of Christendom in Middle Ages and Renaissance*. New York: Harper and Row, 1966. Pp. X + 206.

In a formidably footnoted work, Professor D. J. Geanakoplos has brought together six engaging essays dealing with the broad theme of the interaction between Byzantium and the West. Several have appeared previously in various scholarly meetings and publications, one is based on the author's *Greek Scholars in Venice* (1962). The first three essays deal with East and West in the medieval period, while the subjects of the remaining essays belong chronologically to the Renaissance. And while the first group ploughs ground familiar to many scholars, the second group follows a more original path.

The latter has a similar theme, that of the Greek *diaspora* before and after the collapse of the Empire. Their value is greatly enhanced by the rich bibliography which is included. One essay reconstructs the little known and little studied history of the Greek community in Venice (the largest concentration of Greeks in the West) and its contribution to the Renaissance. Another deals with an even less known phenomenon: the contribution of Cretan intellectuals to this movement by way of Venice. Although the names of Zacharias Calliergis, Marcus Musurus, Demetrius Ducas may be unfamiliar, their influence was far from negligible. The final essay is a study of another neglected Cretan, Maximos Margounios — theologian, bishop and humanist. While his career is of some interest, his library is even more so; part of it was left to the Iviron monastery on Athos, and there the author examined and catalogued it.

The very first essay in this book raises the question of the specific channels by which Byzantine culture was transmitted to the West, and therefore discusses literature, medicine, philosophy, science, art, guilds, diplomacy and industry. As for caesaropapism, the subject of the second essay, Geanakoplos convincingly demonstrates that Byzantine political theory did not give the emperor authority in the crucial

matter of faith. There is not one case in the long life of the Empire in which an emperor succeeded in altering or controlling the essential doctrinal life of the Church. To be sure, some Byzantinists may disagree with this thesis, yet the author presents facts that are difficult to dispute.

The Council of Florence and the problem of union is the subject of the third essay. The ecclesiastical tug-of-war between East and West saw its culmination in this celebrated fiasco of 1439 — the final attempt to reach an ecclesiastical *modus vivendi* in the Middle Ages. By the fifteenth century, however, hopes for uniting Christendom had grown very dim, largely due to what had transpired since 1054, particularly the Fourth Crusade in 1204 and its aftermath. Geanakoplos sees this as creating the Greek fear of being Latinized and thus losing their national identity.

The interaction between Byzantium and the West is a subject which is, in the main, still uncharted. The herculean task of tracing the story in full has not yet really been undertaken, notably because the Byzantine side of the question is incomplete. In addition, Western historians have only recently ceased to look at Byzantium from the periphery and have come to recognize that both East and West never ceased to be conscious of each other throughout the long medieval period. But if Byzantium's splendid isolation is an outdated myth, so is the idea of "the two worlds of Christendom." For decades, sensitive and intelligent theologians have disputed this concept, arguing that the two segments of Christendom do indeed belong together; neither is intelligible if taken separately. Although this book reflects this argument, its subtitle, *Two Worlds of Christendom in Middle Ages and Renaissance*, unfortunately does not.

This is admittedly a minor point. Some others, however, are more significant. The first essay attempts far too much and therefore does not deal adequately with all the areas touched upon. Thus, it would certainly have been wiser to offer greater space than a mere three paragraphs regarding the guilds and their influence on the parallel Western institution, while the five pages devoted to the well-known subject of Byzantine art seem misplaced.

What Geanakoplos says of the fear of Latinization and loss of national identity in the third essay is no doubt profoundly true. Yet it is debatable whether this should be the principal vantage point from which to view the events of 1439. Papal policy until then had been to integrate

matter of faith. There is not one case in the long life of the Empire in which an emperor succeeded in altering or controlling the essential doctrinal life of the Church. To be sure, some Byzantinists may disagree with this thesis, yet the author presents facts that are difficult to dispute.

The Council of Florence and the problem of union is the subject of the third essay. The ecclesiastical tug-of-war between East and West saw its culmination in this celebrated fiasco of 1439 — the final attempt to reach an ecclesiastical *modus vivendi* in the Middle Ages. By the fifteenth century, however, hopes for uniting Christendom had grown very dim, largely due to what had transpired since 1054, particularly the Fourth Crusade in 1204 and its aftermath. Geanakoplos sees this as creating the Greek fear of being Latinized and thus losing their national identity.

The interaction between Byzantium and the West is a subject which is, in the main, still uncharted. The herculean task of tracing the story in full has not yet really been undertaken, notably because the Byzantine side of the question is incomplete. In addition, Western historians have only recently ceased to look at Byzantium from the periphery and have come to recognize that both East and West never ceased to be conscious of each other throughout the long medieval period. But if Byzantium's splendid isolation is an outdated myth, so is the idea of "the two worlds of Christendom." For decades, sensitive and intelligent theologians have disputed this concept, arguing that the two segments of Christendom do indeed belong together; neither is intelligible if taken separately. Although this book reflects this argument, its subtitle, *Two Worlds of Christendom in Middle Ages and Renaissance*, unfortunately does not.

This is admittedly a minor point. Some others, however, are more significant. The first essay attempts far too much and therefore does not deal adequately with all the areas touched upon. Thus, it would certainly have been wiser to offer greater space than a mere three paragraphs regarding the guilds and their influence on the parallel Western institution, while the five pages devoted to the well-known subject of Byzantine art seem misplaced.

What Geanakoplos says of the fear of Latinization and loss of national identity in the third essay is no doubt profoundly true. Yet it is debatable whether this should be the principal vantage point from which to view the events of 1439. Papal policy until then had been to integrate

the Eastern Church into the institutional and liturgical fabric of the Western Church (witness the forcible conversion of the Orthodox in Cyprus in the fourteenth century), but 1439 marks an important departure from this policy. By agreeing to meet with the Byzantines in council, the papacy was silently acquiescing in the Eastern ecclesiastical principle that a council was the only place in which matters affecting the welfare of the entire Church could be discussed. Geanakoplos places insufficient emphasis on this point. The importance of the Council of Florence for Church history lies in this acquiescence by the papacy; the Greeks were quick to see and take advantage of this. The fact that the Greeks urgently needed military aid does not lessen the importance of the papacy's concession.

In this same essay, the author advances the startling thesis that the Byzantines regarded subscribing to the *filioque* as tantamount to Latinization, and therefore were adamantly opposed. I find this explanation of Greek obduracy difficult to accept. The *filioque* first appeared in the ninth century, when surely the fear of Latinization did not exist. Yet the Greeks were just as obdurate then as they were later at Florence. To the Orthodox, it was fundamentally a theological issue; hence they persuaded the Latins in the ninth century to agree to keep the notorious addition out of the Creed. And today, when fear of Latinization is gone, the *filioque* still constitutes one of the two crucial issues that separate the two Churches.

Similar difficulties regarding emphasis and significance appear in the final study on Margounios, whom Geanakoplos accords a prominence equal to that of Bessarion and Cydones. But he was not as important or profound as these well-known Byzantines. Margounios actually became significant at a time when a break occurred in Orthodox theology and when Romanizing phraseology and Romish opinions began appearing in ostensibly Orthodox works. The resulting confusion in the Orthodox Church was of course the result of the Turkokratia. Accordingly, Margounios (in whose works Latin thought appears to be strong) is not really representative of the Orthodox patristic tradition, as I think Geanakoplos wishes us to believe. Perhaps this was the root of the difficulty that Margounios faced when trying to convince his compatriots of the orthodoxy of his theology.

Despite these criticisms, Geanakoplos' newest work is a welcome

addition to Byzantine historiography and should prove valuable to Byzantinists and Renaissance historians alike.

Dumbarton Oaks, Harvard University

ARISTEIDES PAPADAKIS

Francis H. Eterovich and Christopher Spalatin (eds.). *Croatia: Land, People, Culture*. Vol. I. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964. Pp. XXIII + 408.

A group of Croatian emigré intellectuals, directed and encouraged by Rev. Eterovich and Dr. Spalatin, prepared this, the first volume of a survey of Croatia, primarily for the English-speaking public, to which they are introducing the "Croatian idea." The introduction was written by the late Ivan Mestrović (d. 1962), who suggests the theme by calling attention to the general lack of information about Croatia, its people and territory. He paints an optimistic picture of the Croatian personality, statehood and cultural heritage, while largely ignoring the reality of interwar and contemporary Yugoslavia.

The stage for the book is set: the culturally creative, politically superior, religiously profound Croatian nation is sketched in such glorious colors that a realist might have difficulty correlating these descriptions with the actual facts. Furthermore, the boundaries of Croatia in this book extend from the Slovene border — sometimes including part of Slovenia within its confines — deep into Serbia, incorporating all the territories which sometimes, somehow, formed part of Croatia, were under Croatian influence, or shared the fate of Croatia. Hence the Adriatic coast, including Istria and extending to the Albanian border, (leaving to Montenegro only a few miles of coast between Ulcinj and the Bojana) is regarded as part of Croatia. In the interior, the boundary follows the present eastern border of Bosnia and Hercegovina to the Sava, includes Srem and most of Backa, and finally joins the Hungarian border on the Tisza. The presence within these borders of many non-Croatians is largely disregarded: these transitory "exotic" groups cannot affect the concept of a large, coherent and integrated Croatia. Many Croats will find this picture rather unrealistic; most non-Croats will reject it as historically false and politically preposterous.

This interpretation of the Croatian polity, as representing an uninterrupted continuum from the pre-Roman period through the Middle Ages to the final affirmation of the *Nezavisna*, is based more on mytho-