

East and West and between East and Middle East, will give all students pause to think about man's inhumanity to man, an inhumanity in which the West has played a Machiavellian role, but one in which the fierce individualism, nationalism, and anti-Hellenism of many of these Churches, because of their deep-seated hatred of their Byzantine oppressors and all things Byzantine, and their Monophysitic Theology, left them isolated and victims to a militant Islam that in many instances has virtually annihilated them. It is only in our time that both Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian Orthodox have come to recognize how much more they have in common than they have apart that the first steps have been taken for reconciliation (for example, the Unofficial Consultation between Theologians of Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches at Aarhus, Denmark, August 11-15, 1964). These first steps, though a decade has passed since they were taken, are remarkable considering that it was in the 5th century that the first major Schism of Christianity took place as a result of the Council of Chalcedon and that the non-Chalcedonian Churches (which deplore the use of the «Western» term Monophysite to describe them) followed the Synod of Egypt in rejecting Chalcedon. If there is a limitation to Professor Atiya's approach, it is that he tends to isolate the role of the Oriental Orthodox Churches and underplay the role of the majority Eastern Orthodox Church in the total history of Christianity. This is not to say that he is narrow but rather circumspect in his view. He is, nevertheless, ecumenical-minded because he realizes that «the need for consorted action and a united front, if not union, of the Churches of Christ is paramount and now seems to be universally upheld in principle, though the realization is still more of a dream than a reality» (p. 447).

Aziz Atiya's *History of Eastern Christianity* will not only enable the reader to understand better the long, rich tradition of Christianity but also the turbulent history of the Near and Middle East.

Colgate University

JOHN E. REXINE

Peter Arnott, *The Byzantines and Their World*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1973, pp. 275.

*The Byzantines and Their World* is an introduction to Byzantine civilization for a preliminary course in Western or World Civilization. The book is quite well-written and not without merit, but it is really only a brief survey that does not fully explain the content of Byzantine culture. The text is very readable and is interspersed with translations of quotations which undergraduates find attractive. Also there are sufficient illustrations to draw the reader's attention and to give him some idea of the architectural features of Byzantine building in Ravenna, Thessaloniki, and Constantinople.

Organized into nine relatively equal chapters, the work concentrates for six of its chapters on a quickly paced but often superficial discussion of late Roman and Byzantine architecture. These segments of the book concentrate on the earliest periods of Byzantine building (i. e. to the eighth century) with only the chapters on Thessaloniki and Constantinople giving any attention to the later period. The limited space available obviously delineated this allotment of attention but a more balanced approach could have given the reader a better understanding of the architectural aspects of Byzantine civilization. Already placed in a subsidiary position by this emphasis on architecture, the remaining three chapters suffer from their own im-

balances. Two parts discuss the role of the church and the third examines court ceremonies. But these chapters are not sufficiently adequate for the reader to perceive the importance of these two elements, the church and the court, in Byzantine culture; in particular the nature of the relationship of Church and Emperor is difficult to understand from the author's explanation.

The writing in the book tends, on the whole, to be anecdotal and episodic; the book is not a survey of Byzantine civilization but a sampling of their culture with an overly large portion of the material dealing with ecclesiastical architecture. The several favorable aspects of the book are, however, overshadowed by the disadvantages which have already been mentioned. The author's intention seems to have been to write a work for a general rather than an academic audience, though these two public interests ought not to be necessarily irreconcilable.

*Appalachian State University*

FRANK E. WOZNIAK

Nestor Camariano, *Alexandre Mavrokordato, Le Grand Dragoman. Son Activité Diplomatique 1673 - 1709*, Thessaloniki, Institute for Balkan Studies, 1970, pp. 107 + pl. viii.

Decline of the Ottoman Empire's military might and the consequent deterioration of its political position during the 17th century—especially after the defeats suffered by its armies in the wars with Austria following Kara Mustafa Paşa's failure to take Vienna in 1683—convinced its rulers that if the empire was to survive, diplomacy would have to assume an important role in its relations with the European powers in place of its traditional political conception of dealing with them. And in order for its diplomacy to be effective the state would have to attract individuals who would be competent to deal with political questions (that might arise from the new circumstances) and have knowledge of foreign languages. This change in relations with the European powers was inaugurated by the first two Köprülü grand viziers who began to draw into the Ottoman service members of a group of Greek notables from the Fanar district in Istanbul—the Fanariots—whose education and expertise, they felt, could be utilized to the advantage of the empire. This aristocracy, comprising financiers, businessmen, physicians, writers and other professional persons, many of whom were educated abroad, in Italy in particular, and commanded foreign languages, soon took a leading place in the Ottoman hierarchy by occupying some of the highest positions in the state, such as chief dragoman of the Sublime Porte, chief dragoman of the fleet, and as hospodars of Wallachia and Moldavia under the suzerainty of the sultans.

In the well-researched and straightforwardly-written book under review, the Rumanian historian Nestor Camariano gives a fine historical account of the life, career and diplomatic achievements of the most prominent, most prestigious and probably most renowned of the Fanariots in the Ottoman service: Alexander Mavrokordatos, who occupied the post of chief dragoman of the Porte (*divan-i hümayun tercümanı*) for thirty years. In dealing with his subject, the author first describes Mavrokordatos' family background, his formative years and his scholarly activities (Ch. I), he then discusses the importance of the position of chief dragoman in the Ottoman state system and Mavrokordatos' appointment to the post (Ch. II), and, lastly, in separate chapters (III - V) he surveys Mavrokordatos' diplomatic relations with three of the important powers in Europe of that period—Austria of Leopold I,