



**The role of Ephesus in the late antiquity from the period of Diocletian to 449AD the *Robber Synod*<sup>1</sup>**

**El papel de Éfeso en la Antigüedad Tardía desde el período de Diocleciano hasta 449 d. C. El *Concilio de los ladrones***

**O papel de Éfeso na Antiguidade Tardia desde o período de Diocleciano até o *Concílio dos ladrões***

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**Resumen:** Durante o reinado de Diocleciano (284-305), Éfeso foi reorganizado em linhas centralizadas e autoritárias até o nível provincial. Uma grande parte da cidade foi reconstruída por Constantino I. Em 401, após o *Edito de Tessalônica* do Imperador Teodósio I, as ruínas do templo de Artemis foram totalmente destruídas. O papel mais importante da cidade ocorreu em 431. Lá, o *Concílio de Éfeso* foi montado pelo Imperador Teodósio, *o Jovem*, a fim de resolver as disputas levantadas pela Igreja a respeito do ensino herético de Nestório, bispo de Constantinopla. Finalmente, em 449, outro conselho ocorreu, o *Concílio dos Ladrões*, condenado pelo Quarto Concílio Ecumênico em Calcedônia, em 451.

**Abstract:** During the reign of Diocletian (284-305AD), Ephesus was reorganized on centralized and authoritarian lines down to the provincial level. A big part of the city was rebuilt by Constantine I. In 401AD after the Edict of Thessalonica from Emperor Theodosius I, the ruins of temple of Artemis was destroyed. The most important role of the city took place in 431AD. There, the Council of Ephesus was assembled by the Emperor Theodosius the younger to settle the contentions which had been raised in the Church by the heretical teaching of Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople. Finally, in 449AD another council took place the *Robber Synod*, which was condemned by the Fourth Ecumenical Council in Chalcedon in 451.

**Keywords:** Ephesus – Temple of Artemis – Diocletian – Edict of Thessalonica – Robber Synod – Council of Ephesus – Cyril of Alexandria.

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## I. Introduction

Ephesus was an ancient Greek city on the coast of Ionia, three kilometres southwest of present-day Selçuk in İzmir Province of Turkey.<sup>3</sup> Ephesus is identified with the city Apaša, capital of the kingdom of Arzawa «Minor», which is found in the records of Hittite kings towards the late 14th century BC.<sup>4</sup> As the mythical founder of the city, was thought the prince of Athens, named Androklos, the son of the last Athenian King Codrus. According to the legend, Androklos left Greece after his father's death and founded Ephesus<sup>5</sup> at the place shown to him by a fish and a boar, as the Oracle of Delphi had predicted. Soon after while Androklos was frying, a fish fell out of the pan and a startled boar hiding in the bushes ran. He followed the boar and killed it.

The location, where the boar was killed, was where the city of Ephesus was established.<sup>6</sup> Androklos drove away most of the native Carian and Lelegian inhabitants of the city and united his people with the remainder. He was a successful warrior, and as a king he was able to join the twelve cities of Ionia together into the Ionian League. During his reign the city began to prosper. He died in a battle against the Carians when he came to the aid of Priene, another city of the Ionian League.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> MICHAEL GAGARIN, «Ephesus», in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Greece and Rome*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2010, p. 78.

<sup>4</sup> TREVOR BRYCE, *The Routledge Handbook of the Peoples and Places of Ancient Western Asia. The near East from the early Bronze Age to the Fall of the Persian Empire*, London and New York 2009, p. 230.

<sup>5</sup> STRABON, *Geography*, 14.1.3. *Internet*, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0198%3Abook%3D14%3Achapter%3D1%3Asection%3D3>: «Pherecydes says concerning this seaboard that Miletus and Myus and the parts round Mycale and Ephesus were in earlier times occupied by Carians, and that the coast next thereafter, as far as Phocaea and Chios and Samos, which were ruled by Ancaeus, was occupied by Leleges, but that both were driven out by the Ionians and took refuge in the remaining parts of Caria. He says that Androclus, legitimate son of Codrus the king of Athens, was the leader of the Ionian colonization, which was later than the Aeolian, and that he became the founder of Ephesus; and for this reason, it is said, the royal seat of the Ionians was established there».

<sup>6</sup> PETER MECHTIDIS, *Ephesus*, Thessaloniki 2007, p. 18.

<sup>7</sup> STRABON OF AMASEIA, *Geography*, 14.1.3. Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 7.2.8-10.



Androklos and his dog are depicted on the Hadrian temple frieze, dating from the 2nd century.<sup>8</sup> Later, Greek historians such as Pausanias, Strabo and Herodotos and the poet Kallinos, the earliest Greek elegiac poet, reassigned the city's mythological foundation to Ephos, queen of the Amazons.<sup>9</sup>

In the ancient world, Ephesus was a center of travel and commerce. Situated on the Aegean Sea at the mouth of the Cayster River, the city was one of the greatest seaports of the ancient world. The late antique city can be presented as a city with a great tradition, culture and urban life. Ephesus was a center of learning and the birthplace and home of the great Pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus. Women enjoyed rights and privileges equal to men and there are records of female artists, sculptors, painters and teachers. In Ephesus, there was the Temple of goddess Artemis, one of the Seven Wonders of the World and the largest building of the ancient world according to Pausanias.<sup>10</sup> The temple received gifts from the Lydian king Croesus (560-547BC). Pausanias mentions that the temple was built by Ephesus, son of the river god Caystrus, before the arrival of the Ionians. Of this structure, scarcely a trace remains. The temple was dedicated to the Greek goddess Artemis, as it referred.

Generally, the Greek goddess Artemis and the great Anatolian goddess Kybele were identified together as Artemis of Ephesus. The many-breasted «Lady of Ephesus», identified with Artemis, was venerated in the Temple of Artemis.<sup>11</sup> There was a strong belief by the citizens of Ephesus that Artemis was born in Ephesus, and not on Delos, as was commonly assumed, and accepted the shrine as an asylum.<sup>12</sup>

After Alexander's conquests and death, Ephesus fell into the areas the diadochi disputed, being part of the domain of Antigonos, Lysimachus, Antiochus Soter, Antiochus Theos, and the Seleucid monarchs.<sup>13</sup> Then monarchs from Pergamum and

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<sup>8</sup> NADA SAPORITI, «A Frieze from the Temple of Hadrian at Ephesus», in *Essays in memory of K. Lehmann* New York 1964, p. 270-271.

<sup>9</sup> PAUSANIAS, *Description of Greece*, 7.2.8-9. Strabon of Amaseia, *Geography*, 14.1.3-4. Herodotus, *Historia*, 4.110.

<sup>10</sup> PAUSANIAS, *Description of Greece*, 4.31.8.

<sup>11</sup> PAUSANIAS, *Description of Greece*, 4.31.8. RICHARD, E. OSTER, «Ephesus as a religious Center under the Principate, I. Paganism before Constantine», in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, II.18.3, 1713.

<sup>12</sup> TACITUS, *Annals*, 3.61.

<sup>13</sup> ELIAS JOSEPH BICKERMAN, *Chronology of the Ancient World*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York 1968. PETER GREEN, *The Hellenistic Age, A Short History*, The Modern Library, New



Pontus, Mithradates took control with Rome in between.<sup>14</sup> It fell to Rome in through a will written by a monarch of Pergamum and then again, in connection with the Mithridatic wars. Although dedications were not always to local figures but might honor the emperor, major public building efforts – construction, dedication, or restoration – attributable to specific male and female benefactors continued into the early imperial period, slowing by the third century AD, when Goths attacked the city between 262 -263.<sup>15</sup>

Especially, in 262AD, during the reign of the Emperor Gallienus, Goths sacked the city and burned the temple. They destroyed both the city and the temple of Artemis. Ephesus declined since then and even though it was rebuilt, it never regained its old splendor. When Diocletian came to power, he started the restoration process. In the later period its history continued not as pagan city but as a Christian one.

## II. Ephesus in the period of Diocletian. From paganism to Christianity

Ephesus was a great important city from its foundation and later. It was a center of travel and commerce. The city was one of the greatest seaports of the ancient world. Three major roads led from the seaport: one road went east towards Babylon via Laodicea, another to the north via Smyrna and a third south to the Meander Valley.<sup>16</sup>

Ephesus was a bustling, energetic, and intellectual Greco-Roman city when Paul visited it. It was considered the gateway of Asia. In fact, one of its statutes was that when a Roman proconsul came to take office as the new governor of Asia, he had to

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York 2007. MICHAEL GRANT, *From Alexander to Cleopatra, The Hellenistic World*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London 1982. BOARDMAN, JOHN, GRIFFIN, JASPER, & MURRAY, OSWYN, *Greece and the Hellenistic World, The Oxford History of the Classical World*, Oxford 1988. FRANCIS, E PETERS, *The Harvest of Hellenism, A History of the Near East from Alexander the Great to the Triumph of Christianity*, Simon and Schuster, New York 1972. BRADFORD WELLES, *Alexander and the Hellenistic World*, A.M. Hakkert Ltd., Toronto 1970. WILLIAM WOODTHORPE TARN, *Hellenistic Civilization*, World Pub. Co, Cleveland 1961. EDWARD MORGAN FORSTER, *Alexandria, A History and a Guide*, Oxford, 1986. JAMES ROMM, *Ghost on the Throne, The Death of Alexander the Great and the War for Crown and Empire*, Knopf, New York, 2011. ROBIN WATERFIELD, *Dividing the Spoils, the War for Alexander the Great's Empire*, Oxford 2011.

<sup>14</sup> HANS WILLER LAALE, *Ephesus (Ephesos): An Abbreviated History From Androclus to Constantine XI*, Westbow Press, Bloomington 2011, p. 112-118.

<sup>15</sup> JOHN TURTLE WOOD, *Discoveries at Ephesus. Including the site and remains of the great temple of Diana*, Cambridge University press, Cambridge 1820, p. 12.

<sup>16</sup> ISEKHUA EVBOROKHAI. *Visions From Patmos: An Unending Cascade of Mysterious Encounters*, Lacepoint Publishing, Ireland 2015, p. 125.



disembark at Ephesus and enter Asia through this city. It was arguably one of the most important of cities in early Christianity.<sup>17</sup> Jerusalem probably took first place in this competition, but Ephesus ran a close second, along with Antioch. Because of its geographical position, Ephesus attracted many influential Christian leaders, including Paul, John, and Timothy.<sup>18</sup>

For all the travellers and the trade, from the Cayster and the Maeander Valleys, from Galatia, from the Euphrates and from Mesopotamia, Ephesus was the highway to Rome. In later times, when the Christians were brought from Asia to be flung to the lions in the arena in Rome, Ignatius Theophorus called Ephesus the Highway of the Martyrs.<sup>19</sup> The city was naturally chosen by St. Paul as a centre for missionary labours. The church at Ephesus was spiritually strong. The church at Ephesus was founded well, taught by the best possible leaders, preachers and teachers. It was founded by Aquila and Priscilla<sup>20</sup>, who were left there by the apostle Paul. They may have been the original folks who got the church going. Later another man came and influenced that church, and his name was Apollos.<sup>21</sup>

Paul trained and retrained the pastors there many years.<sup>22</sup> They loved him so much, they wept when he said he was leaving. Later, Timothy pastored the church at Ephesus.<sup>23</sup> In fact, when Paul wrote to him, he gave him instruction about how to do it. Another faithful servant named Tychicus<sup>24</sup> pastored there, and finally, the great apostle John. So all these under the instructions of Paul preached the teaching of Jesus Christ, the truth of the gospel<sup>25</sup>; People who were dwelling in Ephesus believed in Christ, they were baptized; and in a sense, the church was

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<sup>17</sup> PAUL TREBLICO, *The Early Christians in Ephesus from Paul to Ignatius*, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004, p. 14.

<sup>18</sup> 1 TIM. 1:3.

<sup>19</sup> WILLIAM BARCLAY, (ed.), *The Revelation of John*, translated with an introduction and Interpretation, Vol. 1, Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville Kentucky 1976, p. 58.

<sup>20</sup> ACTS 18:18-21: « After this, Paul stayed many days longer and then took leave of the brothers[c] and set sail for Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila. At Cenchreae he had cut his hair, for he was under a vow. And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there, but he himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. When they asked him to stay for a longer period, he declined. But on taking leave of them he said, "I will return to you if God wills," and he set sail from Ephesus».

<sup>21</sup> ACTS 19:1.

<sup>22</sup> ACTS 18:19-21; 19:1-7; 20:31.

<sup>23</sup> 2 TIMOTHY. 2:3-4. Ibid. 4: 1-4.

<sup>24</sup> EPH. 6:21.

<sup>25</sup> EPH. 1:1.



born. So the city became from the cradle of paganism with the great temple of Artemis<sup>26</sup>, one of the cradles of Christianity.

In Ephesus, there was the temple of Artemis, as we referred, but the Lord chose this city to become His. So the Lord sent some of his most faithful warriors into battle according to the Acts:

And you see and hear that not only in Ephesus but in almost all of Asia this Paul has persuaded and turned away a great many people, saying that gods made with hands are not gods. And there is danger not only that this trade of ours may come into disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis may be counted as nothing, and that she may even be deposed from her magnificence, she whom all Asia and the world worship.<sup>27</sup>

In the period of Diocletian (284-305), Ephesus was a Christian city which recovered and prospered.<sup>28</sup> Under the reign of Diocletian, Ephesus became the seat of the proconsul of Asia.<sup>29</sup> In 293AD statues of the Tetrarchs were placed in front of the Temple to Hadrian. They are lost, but the dedicatory inscriptions have been found. It is interesting to note that Diocletian was referred to with words: «Domino Nostro – Our Lord», which eventually were used for Jesus Christ. Also, there was a beautiful statue of Diocletian. On its base there was the inscription:

B(onae) F(ortunae). Optimo clementissimoque, principi, domino nostro, Diocletiano, invicto Aug(usto): To Good Fortune. To the best and most clement ruler, our lord Diocletianus, unconquered Augustus.<sup>30</sup>

Diocletian persecuted Christians. It was the tenth persecution of Christians, this time under Diocletian. Most important for Christians, Diocletian required worship of himself as the earthly embodiment of the god Jupiter in Greek, Zeus. And he made war against Christians, whom he knew would never accept his new religion. The

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<sup>26</sup> The temple at Ephesus housed the multibreasted image of Artemis which was reputed to have come directly from Zeus. Cf ACTS 19:35.

<sup>27</sup> ACTS 19: 26-27.

<sup>28</sup> CLIVE FOSS, *Ephesus After Antiquity: A Late Antique, Byzantine, and Turkish City*, p. 4.

<sup>29</sup> CLIVE FOSS, *Ephesus After Antiquity: A Late Antique, Byzantine, and Turkish City*, p. 4.

<sup>30</sup> FRANZ, ALTO BAUER, *Stadt, Platz und Denkmal in der Spätantike*, Mainz 1996, p. 424. H. Wankel at al., *Die Inschriften von Ephesos II. Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien vol. 12*, Bonn 1979, p.106, no. 305, 1. Internet, <http://edh-www.adw.uni-heidelberg.de/edh/inschrift/HD015037&lang=en>; <http://laststatues.classics.ox.ac.uk/database/detail-base.php?record=LSA-718>.



emperor's goal was to wipe out the Church.<sup>31</sup> He hunted down Christians and their Scriptures. He especially loved to get hold of church leaders. He was trying to turn them back to paganism, to the old Roman religion with the emperor as a God. Therefore, anyone he caught and tried could be released by offering a sacrifice to the gods or to the emperor.<sup>32</sup> Diocletian ordered that Christians who refused to worship the Roman gods were to be subjected to extensive tortures, and he ordered the local authorities to search out the Christians so that they might be purged. They could also gain great favour by turning over copies of the Scriptures to be burned. In addition, Diocletian destroyed their church buildings.<sup>33</sup>

This was something that couldn't be done earlier, as Christians rarely had devoted meeting places in the 2nd century. It was too easy to see them destroyed or taken over.<sup>34</sup> While empire-wide persecutions were rare, local persecutions at the whim of a governor or prelate were not. It was a horrible, difficult time for Christians, at least for their leaders. Many Christians fell away, and many others were tortured, thrown in a dungeon, or put to death.<sup>35</sup> Approximately 500,000 Christians were executed in 9 years during systematic massacres (284-305 AD). In Ephesus, there were many Christians who were tortured and punished with the death penalty, because they refused to worship the pagan gods.<sup>36</sup>

### III. Ephesus after the edict of Milan 313 AD

Constantine and Licinus issued the Edict of Milan in 313<sup>37</sup>, which proclaimed religious tolerance of all religions throughout the empire. Today, some historians

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<sup>31</sup> EUSEBIUS OF CAESAREA, *History of the Church*, VIII. 2.

<sup>32</sup> EUSEBIUS OF CAESAREA, *History of the Church*, VIII. 8-9; VIII.12.10-11.

<sup>33</sup> EUSEBIUS OF CAESAREA, *History of the Church*, VIII. 8-9; VIII.12.10-11.

<sup>34</sup> ARTHUR JAMES MASON, *The Persecution of Diocletian*, Cambridge 1876, p. 97 sq.

<sup>35</sup> ARTHUR JAMES MASON, *The Persecution of Diocletian*, Cambridge 1876, p. 97 sq.

<sup>36</sup> ARTHUR JAMES MASON, *The Persecution of Diocletian*, Cambridge 1876, p. 97 sq.

<sup>37</sup> EDICTUM MEDIOLANI (313): Cum feliciter, tam ego Constantinus Augustus, quam etiam ego Licinius Augustus, apud Mediolanum convenissemus, atque universa, quae ad commoda et securitatem publicam pertinerent, in tractatu haberemus, haec inter caetera quae videbamus pluribus hominibus profutura, vel in primis ordinanda esse credidimus, quibus divinitatis reverentia continebatur, ut daremus et christianis, et omnibus liberam potestatem sequendi religionem, quam quisque voluisset, quo quidem divinitas in sede coelesti, nobis atque omnibus qui sub potestate nostra sunt constituti, placata ac propitia possit existere. Itaque hoc consilio salubri ac rectissima ratione ineundum esse credidimus, ut nulli omnino facultatem abnegandam putaremus, qui vel observationi christianorum, vel ei religioni mentem suam dederat, quam ipse sibi aptissimam esse sentiret; ut possit nobis summa divinitas, cujus religioni liberis mentibus obsequimur, in omnibus

support that there was no official Edict but only Licinus' and Constantinus' decisions about the religion.<sup>38</sup> The Edict did not only protect Christians from religious persecution, but all religions, allowing anyone to worship whichever deity they chose.<sup>39</sup>

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solitum favorem suum benevolentiamque praestare. Quare scire Dicationem tuam convenit, placuisse nobis, ut, amotis omnibus omnino conditionibus, quae prius scriptis ad officium tuum datis super christianorum nomine videbantur, nunc vere ac simpliciter unusquisque eorum, qui eandem observandae religioni christianorum gerunt voluntatem, citra ullam inquietudinem ac molestiam sui idipsum observare contendant. Quae sollicitudini tuae plenissime significanda esse credidimus, quo scires nos liberam atque absolutam colendae religionis suae facultatem hisdem christianis dedisse. Quod cum hisdem a nobis indultum esse pervideas, intelligit Dicatio tua, etiam aliis religionis suae vel observantiae potestatem similiter apertam, et liberam pro quiete temporis nostri esse concessam; ut in colendo quod quisque delegerit habeat liberam facultatem, quia (nolumus detrahi) honori, neque cuiquam religioni aliquid a nobis.

Atque hoc insuper in persona christianorum statuendum esse censuimus, quod si eadem loca, ad quae antea convenire consueverant, de quibus etiam datis ad officium tuum litteris certa antehac forma fuerat comprehensa, priore tempore aliqui vel a fisco nostro, vel ab alio quocumque videntur esse mercati, eadem christianis sine pecunia, et sine ulla pretii petitione, postposita omni frustratione atque ambiguitate, restituantur. Qui etiam dono fuerunt consecuti, eadem similiter hisdem christianis quantocius reddant: etiam vel hi qui emerunt, vel qui dono fuerunt consecuti, si petiverint de nostra benevolentia aliquid, Vicarium postulent, quo et ipsis per nostram clementiam consulatur. Quae omnia corpori christianorum protinus per intercessionem tuam, ac sine mora tradi oportebit. Et quoniam iidem christiani non ea loca tantum, ad quae convenire consueverunt, sed alia etiam habuisse noscuntur, ad jus corporis eorum, id est, Ecclesiarum, non hominum singulorum, pertinentia, ea omnia lege, qua superius, comprehendimus, citra ullam prorsus ambiguitatem vel controversiam hisdem christianis, id est, corpori et conventiculis eorum reddi jubebis, supradicta scilicet ratione servata, ut ii qui eadem sine pretio, sicut diximus, restituerint, indemnitate de nostra benevolentia sperent.

In quibus omnibus supradicto corpori christianorum intercessionem tuam efficacissimam exhibere debebis, ut praeceptum nostrum quantocius compleatur, quo etiam in hoc per clementiam nostram quieti publicae consulatur. Hactenus fiet, ut sicut superius comprehensum est, divinus juxta nos favor, quem in tantis sumus rebus experti, per omne tempus prospere successibus nostris cum beatitudine nostra publica perseveret. Ut autem hujus sanctionis benevolentiae nostrae forma ad omnium possit pervenire notitiam, perlata programme tuo haec scripta et ubique proponere, et ad omnium scientiam te perferre conveniet, ut hujus benevolentiae nostrae sanctio latere non possit. LACTANTIUS, *De mortibus persecutorum*, XXXIV, Traducción de Ramon Teja, Gredos, Madrid 1982, p. 165-167.

<sup>38</sup> EIRINI ARTEMI, «Emperor Constantine and the theology of Christianity from his autocracy to the second Ecumenical Council», *Proceedings of International conference commemorating the 1700th Anniversary of the Edict Milan, 31/5/2013- 2/6/2013*, in Nis of Serbia, Nis 2013, p. 86-97, esp. 87.

<sup>39</sup> EUSEBIUS OF CAESAREA, *History of the Church*, V. 15-17. Lucius Caecilius Firmianus Lactantius, *De mortibus persecutorum*, 34.1-35.1, 48.1-12.





From this date and after Ephesus gained again its glory as a holly christian city. A legend, which was first mentioned by Epiphanius of Salamis in the 4th century AD, purported that the Holy Virgin Mary may have spent the last years of her life in Ephesus.<sup>40</sup> Although Epiphanius didn't accept the view that Holy Virgin Mother had her residence in Ephesus, he underlined this opinion that many christians believed this. The Ephesians derived the argument from John's presence in the city, and Jesus' instructions to John to take care of Mary after his death.<sup>41</sup>

Epiphanius, however, was keen to point out that, while the Bible says John was leaving for Asia, it does not say specifically that Mary went with him.<sup>42</sup> He later stated that she was buried in Jerusalem. According to the opinion that Mary lived in Ephesus, it could be explained why there was the Church of Mary near the harbour of Ephesus.<sup>43</sup> There it was the setting for the Third Ecumenical Council in 431, which resulted in the condemnation of Nestorius.<sup>44</sup> A Second Council of Ephesus was held in 449, but its controversial acts were never approved by most Christians. It came to be called the Robber Council of Ephesus or Robber Synod of Latrocinium by its opponents.<sup>45</sup>

#### **IV. The Third Ecumenical Council of 431 and the *Robber* Council in 449 in Ephesus**

Nestorius of Constantinople refused to give Mary, Mother of Christ, the predicate *Theotokos*, God – bearer, Mother of God. The reaction to this sermon and to the condemnation of *Theotokos* was immediate and unfavourable: «He disturbed many of the clergy and all of the laity in this matter».<sup>46</sup> Everywhere he forbade the word

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<sup>40</sup> EPIPHANIUS OF SALAMIS, *Panarion* LXXVIII.11.2.

<sup>41</sup> EPIPHANIUS OF SALAMIS, *Panarion* LXXVIII.11, in *On the Dormition of Mary: Early Patristic Homilies*, by Br. J. Daley, trans. Br. J. Daley, St Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, NY 1998, p. 5.

<sup>42</sup> MICHAEL CLAYTON, *The Apocryphal Gospels of Mary in Anglo-Saxon England*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK 1998, p. 8.

<sup>43</sup> BRIAN E. DALEY (eds), *On the Dormition of Mary: Early Patristic Homilies*, by Br. J. Daley, trans. Br. J. Daley, St Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, NY 1998, p. 9.

<sup>44</sup> VLASIOS FEIDAS, *History of the Church*, I, Athens 1992, p. 604.

<sup>45</sup> MICHAEL GADDIS, *There Is No Crime for Those Who Have Christ: Religious Violence in the Christian Roman Empire*, University of California Press, California 2005, p. 75.

<sup>46</sup> SOCRATES SCHOLASTICUS, *History of the Church*, VII.32: «... Mary was but a woman; and it is impossible that God should be born of a woman. These words created a great sensation, and troubled many both of the clergy and laity; they having been heretofore taught to acknowledge Christ as God, and by no means to separate his humanity from his divinity on account of the economy of incarnation, heeding the voice of the apostle when he said, 'Yea, though we have



*Theotokos*.<sup>47</sup> His heretical teaching led to a dispute about his conception of the unity of the human and divine natures of Christ. When Cyril of Alexandria was informed about Nestorius's teaching, he tried to explain to him why Mary should be called *Theotokos*. Unfortunately, he failed in his explanation. A correspondence with Nestorius followed in a rather moderate tone. The Bishop of Constantinople insisted on refusing to use the term *Theotokos* for the mother of Jesus. The Nestorian controversy was fundamentally Christological<sup>48</sup>, but Mary, the mother of Christ, was the focus of this dispute between Cyril and Nestorius.<sup>49</sup>

The Bishop of Constantinople was an Antiochian in Christology.<sup>50</sup> He was influenced by the teaching of Theodore of Mopsuestia.<sup>51</sup> Early in his reign, he was called upon to give his opinion on the suitability of *Theotokos* – the woman who gave birth to God – as a title for the Blessed Virgin, and he would support the doubtful nature of this term unless Anthropotokos -the woman who gave birth to man- was added to compensate for it.<sup>52</sup> He insisted that the title Christotokos – the one who gave birth to Christ – was preferable as it did not beg questions. God did not originate from a creaturely human being and, for this reason; the word Christotokos would be preferred.

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known Christ after the flesh; yet now henceforth know we him no more' 2 Corinthians 5:16. And again, 'Wherefore, leaving the word of the beginning of Christ, let us go on unto perfection', Heb. 6:1 While great offence was taken in the church, as we have said, at what was thus propounded, Nestorius, eager to establish Anastasius' proposition – for he did not wish to have the man who was esteemed by himself found guilty of blasphemy – delivered several public discourses on the subject, in which he assumed a controversial attitude, and totally rejected the epithet 'Theotoxos'.

<sup>47</sup> SOCRATES SCHOLASTICUS, *History of the Church*, VII.32.

<sup>48</sup> NIKEPHOROS KALLISTOS XANTHOPOULOS, *History of the Church*, XIV. 32.

<sup>49</sup> EVAGRIUS SCHOLASTICUS, *History of the Church*, I.2.4.

<sup>50</sup> STYLIANOS PAPADOPOULOS, *Patrologia II*, Athens 1990, p. 566-574.

<sup>51</sup> THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA, *Fragments of De Incarnatione*, PG 66, 981BC. Theodore of Mopsuestia wanted to affirm the perfect humanity of Christ and considered that this perfect humanity cannot be achieved unless Christ was a human person because he believed that there is no perfect existence without a personality. Thus he did not only affirm the existence of a perfect human nature in the Lord Christ but went further into affirming that God the Word took a perfect man and used him as an instrument (tool) for the salvation of humanity. He considered that God the Word dwelt in this person through good will, and that He was conjoined to him externally only. He used the expression conjoining (in Greek *synapheia*) rather than union (in Greek *enosis*). Thus he puts two persons in Christ, one Divine and the other human; together they formed one person who is the person of the union (external union) in the likeness of the union between man and wife.

<sup>52</sup> CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Adversus Nestorium*, I, A, ACO, t. 1, I, 6, 18: 27-40, 19: 1-43, 20: 1-5, 37: 9-42, 38: 1-43, 39: 1-38, 40: 1-12 (=PG 76, 25A-28D, 72A-77D, 120A-D).



In support of his theory, Nestorius told his congregation that Mary bore a mere man, the vehicle of divinity, but not God.<sup>53</sup> He argued that, in the case of the term *Theotokos*, he was not opposed to those who wanted to use it, unless it would lead to confusion, as in the case of the insanity of Apollinarius<sup>54</sup> or Arius.<sup>55</sup> Nonetheless, he had no doubt that the term *Theotokos* was inferior to the term Christotokos, as the latter was mentioned by the angels and the gospels.<sup>56</sup> Nestorius also mentioned that the term Christotokos kept the assertion by both parties to the proper limits, because it both removed the blasphemy of Paul of Samosata, who had claimed that Christ the Lord of all was simply a human being, and also flees the wickedness of Arius and Apollinarius». <sup>57</sup>

Cyril of Alexandria to face up the heresy of Nestorius arranged a council to be held in Ephesus in 431.<sup>58</sup> The choice of the city for the third Ecumenical Council became because it was the last house of Mary according to the tradition, so for Cyril this had an enormous importance.<sup>59</sup> It was organized by the emperor Theodosius II. On Pentecost Sunday 431, the Council of Ephesus began. Without the papal delegates, the Pope sent three who were in route, and with some of the bishops not in attendance, Cyril opened the Council of Ephesus in the Church of St. Mary, where he assumed the executive position. It's not known if he took this authority on his own. Also in Ephesus, Nestorius and his cohorts protested the council, left the gathering, and met in an *anticouncil*.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Adversus Nestorium*, I, A, ACO, t. 1, I, 6, 18: 27-40, 19: 1-43, 20: 1-5, 37: 9-42, 38: 1-43, 39: 1-38, 40: 1-12 (=PG 76, 25A-28D, 72A-77D, 120A-D).

<sup>54</sup> Cf. GUILLAUME VOISIN, *L' Apollinarisme*, Louvain 1901. STYLIANOS PAPADOPOULOS, *Patrologia* II, Athens 1990, p. 533. VIASIOS FEIDAS, *History of the Church*, I, Athens 1992, p. 585. APOLLINARIS OF LAODICEA, «On the Union in Christ of the Body with the Godhead», in *The Christological Controversy*, ed. R. A. Norris, Jr. Fortress Press, Philadelphia 1980, p. 103.

<sup>55</sup> STYLIANOS PAPADOPOULOS, *Patrologia* II, Athens 1990, p. 114. Athanasius of Alexandria, *Contra Arianos*, I.5.4, M. Tetz, *Athanasius Werke*, τ. 1, I, publ. De Gruyter, Berlin 1940, σ. 114<sup>15-18</sup> (=PG 26, 21AB).

<sup>56</sup> *III Epistula Nestorium ad Celestinem*, LOOFS FREDERICH, *Nestoriana*, 1980, p. 181-182.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> ALOYS GRILLMEIER, S.J., *Christ in Christian Tradition: From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (451)*, transl. by J. Bowden, Vol. I, USA 1970, p. 484-487.

<sup>59</sup> ALOYS GRILLMEIER, S.J., *Christ in Christian Tradition: From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (451)*, transl. by J. Bowden, Vol. I, USA 1970, p. 484-487.

<sup>60</sup> ALOYS GRILLMEIER, S.J., *Christ in Christian Tradition: From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (451)*, transl. by J. Bowden, Vol. I, USA 1970, p. 484-487.



The Council decreed that Jesus was one person, not two separate «people»: complete God and complete man, with a rational soul and body. The Virgin Mary is *Theotokos* because she gave birth not to man but to God as a man. The union of the two natures of Christ took place in such a fashion that one did not disturb the other. The Council also declared the text of the Nicene Creed decreed at the First and Second Ecumenical Councils to be complete and forbade any additional change, addition or deletion, to it. In addition, it ratified the condemnation of Pelagianism.<sup>61</sup>

Some years after it, a disturbance arose about a monk of Constantinople, named Eutyches<sup>62</sup>, who had been very zealous against Nestorius, and now ran into errors of an opposite kind. Another council was held at Ephesus in 449; The Second Council of Ephesus – commonly known as the Robber Council of Ephesus – was a Christological church synod in 449 AD convened by Emperor Theodosius II under the presidency of Pope Dioscorus I of Alexandria.<sup>63</sup> It was intended to be an Ecumenical Council, but because of the scandalous nature of the proceedings, canon legalities, and the heterodox nature of the canons and decrees as viewed by the orthodox bishops of East and West and the later ecumenical councils, it was never accepted as ecumenical. It was explicitly repudiated by the fourth and next ecumenical council, the Council of Chalcedon of 451, and named the «Latrocinium», or «Robber Council». The name «Latrocinium»<sup>64</sup>, which means a meeting of robbers. The name was given by Pope Leo I, who condemned the council for supporting the Monophysite<sup>65</sup> heresy of Eutyches. Its decisions were reversed by the Council of Chalcedon in 451.

The fourth Ecumenical council of 451 in Chalcedon laid down the doctrine that our Christ, the incarnate Logos is «stating that Christ is the eternal Son of God made known in two natures without confusion [i.e. mixture], without change, without

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<sup>61</sup> ROGER, E. OLSON, *The Story of Christian Theology: Twenty Centuries of Tradition & Reform*, Intervarsity Press Illinois 1999, p. 223.

<sup>62</sup> VASILJE VRANIĆ, «The Christology of Eutyches at the Council of Constantinople 448», *Philoteos* 8 (2008) 208-221.

<sup>63</sup> L. D. Davis, S. J, *The First Seven Ecumenical Councils (325-787): Their History and Theology*. Theology and Life Series 21, MN: Michael Glazier/Liturgical Press, Collegeville Minnesota 1990, p. 342. J JOSEPH FRANCIS KELLY, *The Ecumenical Councils of the Catholic Church: A History*, MN: Michael Glazier/Liturgical Press, Collegeville Minnesota 2009, p. 226.

<sup>64</sup> Latin *latro*, a mercenary soldier; *robber* + *cinium*, service: *latrocinium*: service of mercenaries; freebooting, robbery.

<sup>65</sup> JOSEPH FRANCIS KELLY, *History and Heresy: How Historical Forces Can Create Doctrinal Conflicts*, MN: Michael Glazier/Liturgical Press, Collegeville Minnesota 2012, p. 70.



division, without separation, the difference of the natures being by no means removed because of the union, but the property of each nature being preserved and coalescing in one prosopon [person] and one hypostasis [subsistence]—not parted or divided into two prosopa [persons], but one and the same Son, only-begotten, divine Word, the Lord Jesus Christ». <sup>66</sup>

## Conclusions

The city was founded for the second time by the Ionian Androclus, son of Codrus, and the cities that were established after the Ionian migrations joined in a confederacy under the leadership of the city of Ephesus. From the 1st century CE onwards, Ephesus was visited repeatedly by early Christians most notably Saint Paul, who preached there, and Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, is said to have retired there along with Saint John.

In the late antiquity, the roman emperors could play a significant role in the social and religious life of local associations in cities such as Ephesus, both regarding honours and networks of benefaction and with respect to cultic activities. On the other side, a Christian church was rounded there and flourished, and one of its first leaders was the apostle John. Finally, in 262 A., when the temple of Diana was again burned, its influence had so far departed that it was never again rebuilt. Diana was dead. In the Diocletian's era, Ephesus became the highway for martyrs. Many Christians were arrested and were driven to Rome to be killed in Coliseum.

Ephesus was a very important Christian city, and in 431 AD the third council of the Christian church was held there, where it was decided that Mary was the mother of Christ as total God and total man. Eighteen years later, another council was held in this City. It was the robber Council of 449. The council simply rubber-stamped the Monophysite position. According to this teaching the human nature of Christ was essentially absorbed into His divine nature in a way that both natures were changed to some degree which resulted in a third nature being formed. The pope Leo (440-461AD) later called this meeting not a council but a latrocinium, a «robber synod».

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<sup>66</sup> JOSEPH FRANCIS KELLY, *History and Heresy: How Historical Forces Can Create Doctrinal Conflicts*, MN: Michael Glazier/Liturgical Press, Collegeville Minnesota 2012, p. 71. A. E. MCGRATH, *An Introduction To Christianity*, Mass: Blackwell, Cambridge 1997, p. 131-32.



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To sum up Ephesus had an important role from the antiquity to the period of the robber synod, and there was a significant religious center either for paganism or for Christianity.

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