
REVIEWS

A HISTORY OF BYZANTINE CIVILIZATION. By *H. W. Haussig*. Translated by *J. M. Hussey*. New York and Washington: Praeger Publishers, 1971. 448 pp. 169 plates. \$22.50.

Originally published in German as *Kulturgeschichte von Byzanz*, this book is a detailed, learned, and highly interpretive essay, in which the author presents a personal synthesis of religion, art, literature, and institutional development in Byzantium. Political developments play a small role in this work. Its great strength is Professor Haussig's wide knowledge of art, literature, and archaeology, and his use of that knowledge not only to give an integrated picture of Byzantine culture but also to illustrate the nature of political and religious institutions. Thus he provides an illuminating discussion of the nature of the imperial office in the middle Byzantine period drawn from the iconography of imperial art, the *Book of Ceremonies*, and reconstructions of the imperial palaces in Constantinople.

Haussig believes that Byzantine civilization developed out of the late antique world under the impetus of two "revolutions": the reforms in the army of the sixth and seventh centuries, and the triumph of monasticism over the "common culture of late antiquity." The emergence of the theme system determined the social structure of the middle Byzantine period and produced a feudal state. The author maintains that "the Byzantine society which emerged after the Arab attacks and the closely connected army reforms consisted of only a small class of the rich and powerful in contrast to the great mass of the exploited and propertyless" (p. 185). No less sweeping were the effects of the monastic movement. Secular culture was rooted out and the traditions of Egypt and Syrian monasticism substituted. In art, this meant the rise of iconic style; in literature, the substitution of the chronicle for classical traditions of historical composition. It was this monastic culture which influenced Western art and the developing Slavic civilizations. Not until the eleventh century, with the circle of Psellus and a new naturalistic style in art, was the dominance of monastic tradition overthrown in a period of economic and political decline. Byzantinists will probably find both of these themes overdrawn. Although we can trace the growth of a class of "powerful" landowners and propertyless peasants in the tenth century, our evidence is much too meager for the seventh century to read these conditions back to the period of the reform. Similarly, although monks were the most prominent defenders of icons, and their ninth-century writings are particularly plentiful, it is an overstatement to describe the Byzantine culture of the entire period between the seventh and eleventh centuries as dominated by monasticism. Recent studies have emphasized the continuing importance of secularly educated officials and clergy in both religion and the revival of classical study from the early ninth century. The iconoclastic controversy destroyed the early icons within the Byzantine Empire, but scholars like Weitzmann and Kitzinger have shown that the Byzantine influences on Western art of the iconoclastic period cannot be traced to a single unified style, but came from different places and traditions within the empire. But if Haussig's work sometimes suffers from overemphasis on general themes, it remains a rich study, with an extra-

ordinary number of provocative ideas, which should stimulate both Byzantinists and nonspecialists.

The least satisfactory feature of this work is its format. Praeger has published the book in a large edition with numerous plates, to which the author appends explanatory notes. But there are no footnotes, and the bibliography is very inadequate. Even the plates are hard to use, for the frequent discussions of individual works of art in the text are not accompanied by references to the illustrations. Although this work does include some discussion of the influence of Byzantium on Slavic culture, the author's main interest outside the empire is obviously Western Europe. As an interpretation of Byzantine culture, however, this study will be valuable for Slavic scholars as well as for Byzantinists.

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THE GREAT CHURCH IN CAPTIVITY: A STUDY OF THE PATRIARCHATE OF CONSTANTINOPLE FROM THE EVE OF THE TURKISH CONQUEST TO THE GREEK WAR OF INDEPENDENCE.
By *Steven Runciman*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1968. x, 455 pp. \$9.50.

The title of this interesting work is decidedly, though perhaps forgivably, misleading. Almost the first half of it deals with the Byzantine background of Near Eastern Orthodoxy in general and the Ecumenical Patriarchate in particular—concentrating successfully on such important issues as the structure of the church, church-state relations, Orthodoxy's dealings with the Latin West, and Eastern learning and piety. This is useful background, especially since the author's objective is "to examine the effects of the Ottoman conquest upon Greek ecclesiastical history and religious life" (p. 9). Consequently, it becomes effortlessly comprehensible how "in theory, at least, the Orthodox Church of Constantinople survived the shock of the Ottoman conquest better than might have been expected" (p. 179), since the Conqueror, despite some modifications, chose to follow some of the practices established by his Byzantine predecessors as far as church-state relations went. Furthermore, the millet system enabled the Greeks of the Ottoman Empire to establish themselves conspicuously as businessmen, interpreters, or administrators—the best-known group of such individuals being the Phanariots, who also served as hospodars of the Danubian Principalities. But Sir Steven Runciman is quick to point out that the church's position as well as that of the Greek millet as a whole was, after all, one of servility to "infidel" sultans, many of whom were not as enlightened toward their Christian subjects as Mohammed the Conqueror had been.

What emerges, then, is an extremely sympathetic account of the Great Church (as the Constantinople patriarchate was frequently called) in captivity, explaining how in fact the privileged status which the patriarchate enjoyed burdened it with secular concerns which inevitably led to a decline of spirituality and theological learning. For it must be remembered that besides the exodus of Greek intellectuals to the West ("we know of not a single Greek of intellectual distinction living within the bounds of the Ottoman Empire during the later fifteenth century and the first years of the sixteenth," p. 209), the task of maintaining adequate Greek educational facilities within the empire was nearly impossible. The Patriarchal Academy in