

THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY
OF AFRICA

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THE CAMBRIDGE
HISTORY OF
AFRICA

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Volume 2
from c. 500 BC to AD 1050

edited by
J. D. FAGE

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THE CHRISTIAN PERIOD IN MEDITERRANEAN AFRICA

communion as smoothly as possible. These were published at Easter 306. Meletius and his followers rejected them and entered on a schism.

The Emperor Maximin, who ruled Egypt first as Caesar under Galerius, and then as Augustus, restarted the persecution during AD 306. The officials he appointed as Prefect of Egypt, such as Sossius Culcianus (305-7) and Hierocles, were convinced pagans. For six years persecution continued, though for some reason Antony and his followers were not molested. Eusebius gives a vivid account of the final stages of what in the Thebaid had by now become a civil war:

And we ourselves also beheld, when we were at these places, many all at once in a single day, some of whom suffered decapitation, others the punishment of fire; so that the murderous axe was dulled and, worn out, was broken in pieces, while the executioners themselves grew utterly weary and took it in turns to succeed one another. It was then that we observed a most marvellous eagerness and a truly divine power and zeal in those who had placed their faith in the Christ of God. Thus, as soon as sentence was given against the first, some from one quarter and others from another would leap up to the tribunal before the judge and confess themselves Christians; paying no heed when faced with terrors and the varied forms of tortures, but undismayedly and boldly speaking of the piety towards the God of the universe, and with joy and laughter and gladness receiving the final sentence of death; so that they sang and sent up hymns and thanksgiving to the God of the universe even to the very last breath.¹

It was not only the rural Christians who suffered. On 25 November 311, Bishop Peter was executed in Alexandria. This terrible time was never forgotten. In Christian Egypt, the Era of Diocletian became known to this day as the Era of the Martyrs.

Events in the West, culminating in Constantine's victory over Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge on 28 October AD 312, brought relief. Next year Maximin was defeated by Constantine's colleague Licinius, who took over the government of the East and was favourable to Christianity. The aftermath of the ten years of persecution proved at first to be an almost exact parallel to the situation in North Africa. The schism between the followers of Peter and Meletius hardened. Meletius won conspicuous support among the Copts in the Thebaid and a significant amount in the Delta and in Alexandria. There one of his adherents was a learned cleric named Arius. He made his peace with Peter's successor, Achilles, was ordained presbyter, and in a few years rose to be priest in a rich Alexandrian suburb. To Meletius, however, he was a traitor. Seven

¹ Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, viii.9.4-5 (trans. by J. E. L. Oulton).

9 TEMMUZ 2002

FROM NICAEA TO CHALCEDON

years later, in AD 318/19, his followers brought him down on a charge of heresy.

As we have seen, Origen's theology had its weaknesses. To regard Christ as the link between God and creation may have been intellectually satisfying, but it inevitably raised the question whether Christ belonged to the created order or not, and, if he did so, did he not himself need redemption? This might be an academic question so long as Christian theology remained a matter of debate among Greek-speaking intellectuals schooled in Platonism, but it was a different matter when it became a popular religion among ignorant but fanatical Egyptians, who saw in Christianity release from the threat of demons represented not least by the old gods of Egypt. Christ must be truly God in order to guarantee salvation. The Meletians represented the popular point of view, and Arius laid himself open to attack by claiming that not only was Christ as Divine Word subordinate to God, but that He also 'grew in stature' and was subject to temptation. He was therefore neither fully divine nor fully human. Arius found himself condemned by a council of Egyptian bishops and exiled c. AD 320. For the next four years the conflict simmered. Arius had powerful friends, including the historian Eusebius and another Eusebius, bishop of the capital, Nicomedia; Bishop Alexander of Alexandria was pressed to restore him. Meantime, Licinius, realizing perhaps that conflict with Constantine was inevitable, had turned against Christianity. There was a period of sporadic harassment of Christians in the East, ended only in September 324 when Constantine gained a decisive victory at Chrysopolis on the east side of the Bosphorus and became ruler of the entire Roman world. At once he set about attempting to heal the religious disorders in Egypt caused by Arius's doctrines and the Meletian schism. Early in 325 he summoned at Nicaea an ecumenical council representing the Church in all his dominions. It was designed to settle not only these disputes, but all other outstanding questions that divided the Christian world.

FROM NICAEA TO CHALCEDON

The Council that opened on 20 May AD 325, and sat for a month, was the most significant assembly in the early Church. It had been summoned by the emperor himself, a symbol of the part the civil power was to play in the affairs of the Church in the eastern Roman provinces, and not least in Egypt. After a month of confused debate, Arius and his

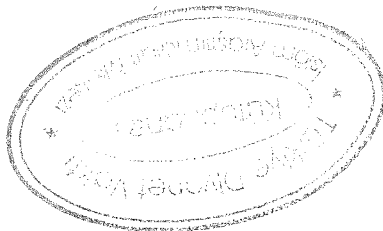
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Roma İmparatorluğun'da Kilise Konsillerinin
Siyasallaşması: İznik Örneği*

Yrd.Doç.Dr. Turhan KAÇAR
Balıkesir Üniversitesi
Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi

Öz: Erken Kilise konsillerinin yapısı eskiçağlı Hıristiyan yazarlar tarafından farklı değerlendirilmektedir. Bir yanda bu konsilleri Hıristiyanlık propagandası için geliştirilmiş kurumlar olarak ele alınırken, öbür yanda, konsiller siyasal çatışmalar platformu olarak görülmektedir. İznik konsilini temel alan bu çalışma bu iki farklı fikri dengelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Burdaki yaklaşım, kilise konsillerinin toplanmasından, kilise liderlerinin sorunlara yaklaşım tarzına kadar değişen derecelerde siyasallaşmayı ele almaktadır. İznik konsiline ilişkin burada dört temel problem tesbit edilmiştir: toplantı yerinin Ankara'dan İznik'e aktarılması, imparatorluk makamının müdahaleleri, itikad metninin ve kanonların siyasallaştırılması.

Konsil yerinin değiştirilmesi tamamen kilise içi politik kaygılardan kaynaklanmaktadır. İmparatorun amacı dini sorunlara bulaşmaktan ziyade kiliseyi birleştirecek bir çözüm bulma iken, kilise liderleri rakiplerini saf dışı bırakmak için hemen her yolu denemekteler. Ancak konsiller Hıristiyanlık tarihi açısından ele alındığı zaman büsbütün olumsuz sonuçlar da doğurmamıştır, çünkü hem kilise disiplini hem de itikadi kimlik bu konsillerde tanımlanmıştır.

Anahtar sözcükler: Dördüncü yüzyıl Kilise tarihi, İznik konsili, Ariusçu tartışma.

Abstract: The Christian opinions regarding the nature of the early church councils differed whether they were an instrument of the Christian propaganda or they were the platforms for political conflicts. This paper, having taken the council of Nicaea as a case study, seeks to redress the balance between these two entirely different perceptions. The approach here is an attempt to understand the degree of the politicization of a church meeting from the aspects of convocation, the way the Church Fathers handled the business, the imperial attitudes and expectations. I have four main concerns here; the reasons behind the re-location of council from Ankyra to Nikaia, the contribution of the imperial bureau to politicization and controversies on the creeds and canons.

My answers to the above problems are mainly these. The change of the site of the council was completely a political enterprise of Eusebius of Nicomedia, as he discerned the disaster the Arians would have come across. The imperial authority did not directly get involved the religious controversies, the emperor only wanted to unite the church. The early church fathers tried every method to produce a text which would test or excommunicate their rivals. However the church councils were not that bad at all, as they were also concerned the moral and religious problems of their congregations and it was through the church councils that the identity of catholic or orthodox emerged out of shadow.

Key words: The Fourth-Century Church Politics, the Council of Nicaea, the Arian Controversy.

* Bu çalışma, 1-4 Kasım 2006 tarihinde İznik Vakfı tarafından düzenlenen I. Uluslararası İznik Sempozyumunda sunulan bildirinin genişletilmiş halidir.

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Hıristiyan ve İslâm Kaynaklarında Tartışmalı Bir Dinî Toplantı: İznik Konsili

Mustafa Sinanoğlu*

A Religious Gathering Subject to Debate in Christian and Islamic Sources: the Council of Nicea

The Council of Nicea (325), regarded as the first ecumenical council in the history of Christianity and representing an important starting point for both the Christian creed and the building of the Church, will here be treated in the light of both Christian and Islamic sources. The Christian sources will be analyzed to discover whether or not religious reasons alone may account for the holding of the council, and it will focus on the subjects of debate at the council, its decisions, and consequences. Consideration of the Islamic sources will dwell on the character of the presentation of the subject of Council of Nicea and its perspective concerning the debated issues. The conclusion presents a comparison of the perspectives displayed in the Christian and Islamic literature.

Hız. İsa'nın tebliğinde havâriyelerine inşa edeceğini vâdedtiği kilise, havâriyeler döneminden itibaren Hıristiyanlık'ta dinî hayatın merkezinde yer alan bir kurum haline gelmiştir¹. Öte yandan Hız. İsa'nın kısa süren tebliğ faaliyetinden sonra müntesiplerinin muhatap oldukları öğretileri anlama gayretleri neticesinde karşılaştıkları dinî meselelere, yahudilerden gördükleri tepki ve Roma İmparatorluğu'nun baskıları da eklendiğinde, dinî olanların yanında siyasi etkenlerle Hıristiyanlığın ilk dönemden itibaren çeşitli akide problemleriyle karşılaştığı bilinmektedir. Bu problemler ise yerel kiliselerde veya duruma göre yerel kiliselere bağlı piskoposların katılı-

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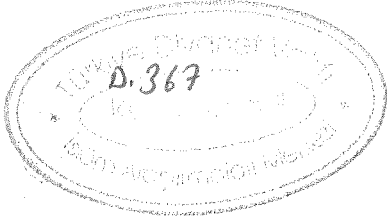
1 Matta İncili'nde Hız. İsa'nın "Sen Petrus'sun ve ben kilisemi bu kayanın üzerine kuracağım; ve ölümler diyarının kapıları onu yenmeyecektir." (16/18) şeklindeki ifadelerle havâriyelerinden Petrus'a Kilisesini inşa edeceğini bildirdiği aktarılmaktadır. Hıristiyanlık'ta kilise, İsa'ya inananların kutsal birliğiyile yeryüzünde İsa'yı temsil eden ve Kutsal Ruh'un (Rûhulkudûs) himayesinde olan bir kurumdur. Katolik öğretiyeye göre Kilise'nin kaynağı, Hıristiyanlıktaki konumu ve tarihi için bk. Ludwig Ott, *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma* (Almanca'dan trc. Patrick Lynch), Tan Books And Publishers, Rockford., Illinois 1974, s. 270-313; Geoffrey Chapman, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, The Bath Press, Avon 1994, s. 170-223.

TARİH

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İznik Konsilinde Din ve Siyaset

Modern Türkiye'nin kuzey batısındaki İznik'te toplanan piskoposlar meclisi, insanlığın sorunlarıyla ilgilenen her tariheye mükemmel fırsatlar sunar. Sonraki kuşaklar, bu toplantıyı hıristiyan kilisesinin ilk ekumenik konsili olarak tanımladılar. Konsil kararları yüceltilerek, sürekli geçerli olarak önemsendi. Bir çok kilise, halâ ayinlerde İznik itikadını ilâhi olarak okumaktadır. Tarihsel anlamda İznik konsili "*erken kilise devrinin*" sonunu ve ortaçağın başlangıcını işaretler. Zira kilise ile devlet ilişkilerinde köklü bir değişimin ilk adımı burada atılmıştır. Asırlarca Roma imparatorları hıristiyanları zaman zaman takibata almıştı, şimdi ise Konstantin (M. 306-337) piskoposların arasına girip onlarla beraber teoloji tartışmaktadır.



Fakat tarihi şartları araştırmaya başladığımız zaman, kralların ve yöneticilerin faaliyetleri ile ilgilenen hemen herkesin karşılaştığı problemlerle biz de karşılaşırız; zira resmi mitoloji ile gerçekler her zaman birbiriyle örtüşmemektedir. İznik konsili, katılımcıların bütün Roma dünyasından olması bakımından ekumenik idi, fakat aslında sadece imparatorluğun doğu kanadı oradaydı. Konsilin faaliyetlerinin çoğu kapanışını izleyen bir iki yıl içinde anlamsızlaştı. İznik itikadı olarak bilinen şey hakikatte 381 de İstanbul'da ortaya çıkarıldı. Konsilde imparatorun faaliyetleri öyle masumane alîcenaplıklardan mürekkep değildi. Daha sonra derli toplu döneceğimiz bu noktaların ötesinde, en dikkate değer gerçek, konsilin resmi kayıtlarının neredeyse kapanışının hemen akabinde kaybolmuş olmasıdır. Bize ulaşan bilgiler, konsilden sonraki 25 yıl içinde önde gelen bir katılımcının hafızasının gücüne güvenerek, orada olup bitenleri aktarması suretiyle canlı kalabildi. Başka bir deyişle konsilin tutanakları kesinlikle ulaşılabilir olarak mevcut değildir. İznik konsili, Konstantin'in Britanya'dan Mezopotamya'ya kadar bütün Roma dünyasının tek hakimi olduğu ilk yılda toplandı. İmparator bunu kendisinin 19. yılı olarak kabul eder, zira 306 yılının yazında iktidara gelmişti. 312 yılına gelindiğinde Konstantin artık kilisenin önemini kavramıştı. Onun için kilise işlerinden sorumlu danışmanı (Kurtuba piskoposu Osius)

Robert M. Grant*
(Çev. Turhan Kaçar)

* Grant, Christian Beginings: Apocalypse to History, Variorum Reprints London 1983. (11. Makale: Religion and Politics at the Council of Nicaea)..

İznik

NICAEA I, COUNCIL OF

The first general council of the Christian Church, convoked by Emperor *Constantine I, probably toward the close of 324, and lasted from May 20 or June 19 to c. Aug. 25, 325.

Background. After his victory over Licinius (September 324), Constantine, Emperor of the East, found his provinces seriously disturbed by religious controversy, spearheaded by the Alexandrian priest *Arius and his bishop, *Alexander. The dissension apparently began about the year 318, or somewhat later, when Arius was publicly rebuked by Bishop Alexander for teaching that the Word was not coeternal with the Father but had a beginning of existence; otherwise, Arius said, there would be two "unbegotten" principles. If, then, the Word had a beginning, He could not be of the same nature as the Father; He must, like other creatures, have been made from nothing. Nor can He be called the true and natural Son of God; at best He is the adopted Son. It follows that the Word, as a creature, is in fact the first and most perfect of creatures and is subject to change and sin. He did save mankind, but because He was utterly faithful to God's grace. Arius seems to have denied that the Incarnate Word had a human soul. The deep roots of his doctrine are discoverable in his master, *Lucian of Antioch, and it is understandable that Arius's fellow disciples at Antioch, called Collucianists were among the first fervid promoters of *Arianism.

Unwilling to change his position, Arius had to appear before a synod of almost 100 bishops of Egypt and Libya convoked by Bp. Alexander c. 320. Remaining unmoved, he was excommunicated by the synod, as were his followers, Bps. Secundus of Ptolemais and Theonas of Marmarica, and some of the Alexandrian clergy and virgins. As usual, Alexander sent encyclical letters in the synod's name to the more distinguished bishops, explaining and refuting the errors of Arius, notifying them of his excommunication and requesting them to avoid communion with him. These letters affirm, especially on the basis of John ch. 1, that the Word is coeternal with the Father, truly God, God's only begotten Son.

Expelled from Alexandria, Arius went to Coelesyria to fellow disciples, prominent among whom were Paulinus of Tyre and Theonas of Laodicea. *Eusebius of Caesarea gave him a friendly welcome. In Nicomedia, whose bishop, *Eusebius, lent him unflinching support, he wrote the *Thalia* (Banquet), a long rhapsody, at least partly in metric form, in which he incorporated his theological ideas. With his growing number of supporters he held a synod, which issued encyclical letters against Alexander. This situation continued during the persecution waged by Licinius against the Christians (321-324) and was of serious concern to his conqueror, Constantine.

Captivated by Christianity, Constantine wanted to give it the protection of the state; for, in line with the old Roman idea, he regarded himself as Pontifex Maximus of Christianity, "bishop in matters external" (*Vita Const.* 4.24). As such, he thought it his task to settle a controversy that was upsetting the politico-religious unity of his Christian empire. Theologically incompetent despite the assistance of his adviser Bishop

*Hosius of Córdoba, Constantine wrote to Alexander and Arius enjoining silence in this nuanced matter, which seemed to him to have no relation to Christian dogma. Hosius, who took the Emperor's letter to Alexander, returned unsuccessful. When another synod in Antioch late in 324 failed to effect the desired unity, the Emperor decided to settle the controversy by a general synod of the more important bishops of the world. He hoped that such a synod would also solve the paschal controversy concerning the date of *Easter. There were still *Quartodecimans who followed Jewish custom; and although most of the bishops celebrated Easter on Sunday in honor of the Resurrection, even some of these, to determine the lunar cycle, consulted the Jews, who did not follow the astronomical computation as did the Christian churches. Constantine wanted to eliminate these differences by establishing the date of Easter independently of the Jews.

The Council. The Council opened at Nicaea in Bithynia (modern İznik, northwestern Turkey in Asia), in Constantine's palace, with an address by the Emperor. About 300 bishops were present (the number 318 reported by *Ambrose of Milan and *Hilary of Poitiers is symbolic: cf. the 318 servants of Abraham, Gn 14.14), and almost all were from the eastern half of the Empire: more than 100 came from Asia Minor, about 30 from Syria-Phoenicia, fewer than 20 from Palestine and Egypt. Prominent figures were Hosius of Córdoba (who presided with the delegates of Pope Sylvester, the Roman priests Vitus and Vincentius), Alexander of Alexandria (accompanied by his secretary and future successor, the deacon Athanasius), *Eustathius of Antioch, *Marcellus of Ancyra. Eusebius of Caesarea in Palestine, Leontius of Caesarea in Cappadocia, *Macarius of Jerusalem. Eusebius of Nicomedia, Caecilianus of Carthage, and some "confessors" who had suffered in the persecution of Licinius. In the beginning at least, Constantine was honorary president and even intervened to ensure peaceful discussion.



Nave and apse of Hagia Sophia in Nicaea.

İZNİK KONSİLİ

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- 1 MÜRSEL ÖZALP, I.İznik konsilinin Hıristiyan teolojisindeki yeri ve önemi, Sakarya Üniversitesi, Yüksek Lisans, 2005

perial *xenodocheion*. Rebels sought to control it as a strong point near Constantinople: Bardas SKLEROS, ISAAC I KOMNENOS, NIKEPHOROS III BOTANEIATES, and Nikephoros MELISSENOS all fought in and around Nicaea. When Melissenos joined Alexios I in the West in 1081, he left Nicaea to his Turkish allies, who soon assumed control. Nicaea was thus capital of the first Turkish state in Asia Minor until the First Crusade captured it in 1097 after a long siege, their first victory in Asia and the only time in history that Nicaea succumbed to direct assault rather than blockade. Alexios I took control of Nicaea from the reluctant Crusaders and defended it against the Turks. In 1147, Nicaea was the supply base for the abortive Second Crusade and in 1187 unsuccessfully revolted against Andronikos I.

After the fall of Constantinople in 1204, Nicaea at first took an independent position, but recognized THEODORE I LASKARIS in 1206; he was crowned there in 1208. From that date until 1261 Nicaea served as capital of the empire (see BYZANTIUM, HISTORY OF: Empire of Nicaea), although JOHN III VATATZES resided in NYMPHAION and MAGNESIA; it was also the seat of the patriarch and home of many illustrious refugees, notably Niketas CHONIATES, Nicholas MESARITES, and Nikephoros BLEMMEDES. Laskarid Nicaea was the scene of frequent synods, embassies, and imperial weddings and funerals and became a center of education, notably under THEODORE II LASKARIS, who founded and endowed an imperial school. After the recapture of Constantinople, Nicaea declined in importance and prosperity. Neglect of the eastern frontier provoked a serious revolt in the region in 1262, and in 1265 the whole city panicked on rumor of a Mongol attack. In 1290 Andronikos II arrived on a tour of inspection and restored the walls, but the region remained defenseless against a new foe, OSMAN. Nicaea held out until 1331, when it fell to the Ottomans after a long blockade. When Gregory PALAMAS visited Nicaea in 1354, its Christian population was severely depleted.

The well-preserved walls of Nicaea, completed in 270, manifest numerous styles of construction representing constant rebuilding, notably in the 8th, 9th, 12th, and 13th C. Originally a single rampart 5 km long with 80 towers, built of rubble and brick, the walls were raised and strengthened before being transformed by John III, who added

an outer wall and a moat. The most noted of Nicaea's churches was the monastery of Hyakinthos, known in modern times as the Church of the Dormition. A rectangular structure with a cruciform nave surmounted by a dome on massive pillars and separated from the aisles by arcades, it manifests affinities with a group of cross-domed basilicas and appears to date to the late 6th C. The church was decorated with mosaics whose images, replaced by the Iconoclasts, were restored after 843. It was rebuilt and redecorated after the earthquake of 1065 and stood until 1924. The surviving basilica of Hagia Sophia in the center of the city, probably site of the council of 787, preserves traces of its elaborate marble decoration. Most renowned in the 13th C. was the Church of St. Tryphon, scene of a miracle in which lilies bloomed out of season on the annual festival of the saint, Nicaea's patron. The recently discovered ruins of the church are no longer in evidence. Surviving remains of two other 13th-C. churches have not been identified. Civic buildings have not been preserved, with the exception of the Roman theater, abandoned and used as a quarry and dump after the 7th C. The 13th-C. city is known in some detail, from the *enkomia* of Theodore Laskaris, delivered before John III ca. 1250, and of Theodore METOCHITES, addressed to Andronikos II in 1290. Although the speeches are filled with extravagant rhetoric, they give an image of the city in its regional context and show that churches, monasteries, charitable institutions, palaces, and houses shared the area within the walls with extensive open spaces.

LIT. A.M. Schneider, *Die römischen und byzantinischen Denkmäler von Iznik-Nicaea* (Berlin 1943). R. Janin, "Nicée. Étude historique et topographique," *EO* 24 (1925) 482-90. A.M. Schneider, W. Karnapp, *Die Stadtmauer von Iznik (Nicaea)* (Berlin 1938). L. Robert, "La titulature de Nicée et de Nicomédie," *HStClPhil* 81 (1977) 1-39. E. Trapp, "Die Metropoliten von Nikaia und Nikomedia in der Palaiologenzeit," *OrChrP* 35 (1969) 183-92. T. Shmit, *Die Koimesis-Kirche von Nikaia* (Berlin-Leipzig 1927). H. Grégoire, "Encore le monastère d'Hyacinthe à Nicée," *Byzantion* 5 (1930) 287-93. C. Foss, J. Tulchin, *Nicaea: A Byzantine Capital and Its Praises* (Brookline, Mass., 1990). -C.F.

NICAEA, COUNCILS OF. Two ecumenical councils were convened in Nicaea.

NICAEA I. The first ecumenical council (20 May or 19 June-ca. 25 Aug. 325) was convened by Emp. CONSTANTINE I to deal with the controversy

IZNIK?