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НА РЕПУБЛИКА МАКЕДОНИЈА – СКОПЈЕ

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Главен и одговорен уредник:

Тони ФилиПОСКИ

Уредувачки одбор:

Витомир МИТЕВСКИ

Ратко ДУЕВ

Александар АТАНАСОВСКИ

Сашо ЦВЕТКОВСКИ

Стојко СТОЈКОВ

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1018 AND AFTER: NEW REALITY AND NEW PERCEPTIONS IN BYZANTINE BALKANS

Stojko STOJKOV

Анстракт. – Во 1018 г. државата на комитопулите капитулира пред Василиј II поставувајќи го пред дури поголем предизвик отколку што било нејзиното покорување. Неопходноста да реинтегрира балкански територии, кои 4 века биле надвор од византиските граници и население, кое не само културно, економски и социјално било многу различно, но и покажало голема степен на непријателство спрема Византија во последниот половина век. Василиј создава на Балканот „зона со посебен режим“ сочинета од темата Бугарија и Охридската архиепископија. Таквата зона била создадена не на етнички принцип, туку за населението со највисока степен на нелојалност спрема Византија и на лојалност спрема државата на комитопулите. Имало и сериозни мотиви од геостратегиски карактер за нејзиното создавање особено односите со папата и Германија кои влијаеле врз многу аспекти од овој процес особено на решавањето на црковното прашање и новата реалност што сите овие мерки ја создале. Причините за нејзиното создавање, одржување и развој, нејзиниот опфат, како и последиците од тоа во областа на претставите, терминологијата и категоризацијата на покорените како „други“ во византиското општество, се во фокусот на ова истражување..

Клучни зборови. – Василиј, император, папа, Охридска архиепископија, Бугарија, цела Бугарија, терминологија.

In 1018, a fundamental change happened on the Balkans – the Comitopuloi Empire collapsed and the Byzantine border, after more than 4 centuries was again on Sirmium. Instead of solving, it multiplied the problems faced by the conqueror. The main challenges were three, and they defined the Byzantine politic in the conquered country and led to the appearance of a

new reality in the Balkans, which brings a new perception reflected in contemporary sources. The factors defining the Byzantine politics in the conquered country, its results as a reality and perception are the subject of this article.

The first challenge constitutes the conquered territory itself. The Empire lacked a military, administrative and financial capacity to successfully occupy, integrate, and keep under control this big, poor, not well-developed land. The subjugated population was numerous and, raised in 42 years of wars against Byzantium, it had a high level of disloyalty to the Empire. In some way, this seems to be a poisoned gain. We even could not be sure if taxes, especially in the beginning, were able to cover the expenditures for its defence, bureaucracy, or for the titles and subsidies given to members of the elite, to buy their cooperation and loyalty.¹ The fate of Tzimiskes' Balkan conquest half a century earlier was a serious warning to Basil II how easy such a gain could turn into a loss.

The second and the third problem were of geopolitical nature.

The Empire defeated one weaker and one neighbour relatively similar to itself, just to replace it with two stronger and more foreign neighbours: the nomadic Pechenegs and the Hungarians. The Empire found itself again in the same strategic situation as before the VII c., when it had to make wars on two fronts with strong enemies.² Byzantium faced a new and dangerous geopolitical situation that needed a radical reorganisation of the area.³ After 1014, on the West a close cooperation emerged between the German emperor Henry II and Pope Benedict VIII, and the young Polish and Hungarian kingdoms gravitated around this axis. The Hungarian king Stephan I married the sister of Henry II and received his king's title and crown from the Pope.⁴ In contrast, the Byzantine empire after 1015 lost its most powerful ally in Europe—Kievan Rus': after the death of Basil's brother-in-law, the grand prince Vladimir on 15 July 1015, Kievan Rus' entered a period of civil wars in which the Polish king, who even tried to become the ruler of Kiev, intervened in 1018. On the top of

¹ Maybe it deserves to be taken into account possibility that it played some role for the serious financial problems that Byzantium start to experience shortly after.

² Драган Ѓалевски, *Византиската воена стратегија за време на конфликтот со Самуил*, Самуиловата држава во историската, воено-политичката, духовната и културната традиција на Македонија, Струмица 2015, 72.

³ Paul Stephenson, *The Balkan Frontier in the Year 1000*, Byzantium in the year 1000, Brill Leiden – Boston 2003, 120; Anthony Kaldellis, *Streams of gold, rivers of blood: the rise and fall of Byzantium, 955 A.D. to the First Crusade*, Oxford University Press 2017, 124.

⁴ Johnatan Shepard: *Byzantium and the West*, The New Cambridge Medieval History, Volume III c. 900 – c 1024, Cambridge University Press 2008, 621

its power in 1018, the Byzantine Empire was dangerously alone in Europe, and the problems were already there or could emerge at any moment.

The third challenge was in the sphere of church politics. The relation between Rome and Constantinople worsened as a consequence of the eruption of reforms movements in the West, religious zeal related to the expected end of the World in 1000 and 1033 and close cooperation between the Pope and the German emperor in church matters. In Byzantium, the papal verdicts on religious questions still mattered: clerics continued to appeal to the papal authority and emperors, too, looked to the papacy in their efforts to manage their own patriarchate. "The Pope was the sole western figure who could intervene substantively in the empire's affairs and within its sphere of influence."⁵ Into papal diocese were some imperial lands as Apulia and Dalmatia. Other were subject of old disputes: Calabria, Sicilia, Illyric, Bulgaria. Finally, there was the old problem: the relation between the Pope and the patriarch, which worsened with the rise of the Cluniac movement.⁶ The problems actualized dramatically after the supremacy of the pro-byzantine party in Rome was broken in 1012 – 1014 and replaced with the pro-German one represented by the Pope Benedict VIII (1012-1024),⁷ a capable administrator, an active politician and a reformer and close ally to Henry II.⁸ On 14 February 1014, he crowned Henry II as the Roman emperor and accepted his request to include Filioque in the Creed, the act to which Constantinople replied with not accepting the name of the Pope in the diptych.⁹

The close connection between the church and political issues was clearly shown in following years. The Pope, inspired by the idea of his universal role, began to intervene in the South Italy politics,¹⁰ supported the rebellion of Melo from Bari in 1017, which led to serial defeats of the Byzantine army and seriously challenged Byzantine authority in South Italy. Some pilgrims took part in this uprising,¹¹ and, accordingly, Byzantine measures in near future

⁵ Shepard, *Byzantium and the West*, 607, 609.

⁶ McKitterick, *The Church*, 142

⁷ Rogger Collins, *Keepers of the keys of Heaven, A history of the papacy*, New York 2009, 197; P. G. Maxwell – Stuart, *Chronicles of the popes*, Thames and Hudson 1997, 79.

⁸ J. P. Whitney, D.D., Dixie, *The reform of the Church*, The Cambridge medieval history, t. 5, New York 1926, 15.

⁹ Steven Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, Oxford University Press, 1997, 30, 33; Collins, *Keepers*, 198; Rosamond McKitterick, *The Church*, The New Cambridge Medieval History, Volume III c. 900 – c 1024, Cambridge University Press, 2008, 161; Walter Ullmann, *A Short History of the Papacy in the Middle Ages*, Routledge 2003, 78.

¹⁰ Vera von Falkenhausen, *Between Two Empires: Southern Italy in the Reign of Basil II*, Byzantium in The Year 1000, Brill Leiden - Boston 2003, 155, 158.

¹¹ Holmes, *Basil II*, 505; Glabri, *Historiarum*, 98, f. 2; Kaldellis, *Streams*, 132.

would target pilgrims too.¹² Close collaboration between the Pope and the Emperor in the West after 1014 was in no small degree directed against Byzantine interests. The Ottonianum – signed by the German emperor in 962 and reaffirmed in 1020 included the guarantee that if the German emperor conquered Italy and Sicily, he would subordinate them to the church authority of the Pope.¹³

However, at the end of 1018 and the beginning of 1019, the situation seemed optimistic for Byzantium. The defeat of Cimitopuloi state in early 1018 allowed military force to be relocated in Italy¹⁴, which resulted in the crushing of rebellion of Melo to the end of 1018.¹⁵ The Croats defeated by the Byzantine ally Venice recognized the suzerainty of Basil II.

The situation changed dramatically at the beginning of 1020. In Bamberg, the German emperor, the Pope and other enemies of the Byzantine Empire gathered and agreed on a joint military campaign against Byzantine territories in Italy.¹⁶

In such complicated conditions, the Byzantine politics and system in conquered Balkan lands developed and evolved. The Empire was accustomed, especially in peripheral and non-Romanized regions as this of Comitopuloi empire, to establish indirect and flexible authority into the framework of the Catepanates, which by itself constitute a "series of small new themes placed under the authority of overarching regional units", "predicated on indirect methods of rule in which local official and neighbouring potentates often had an important part to play", "characterized by a considerable degree of highly flexible and responsive to internal and external political pressures".¹⁷ It is not surprising that similar politics was implemented in the conquered Comitopuloi empire.

Basil had few options in this direction. Faced simultaneously with the lack of capacity to secure his gain and the danger of widespread conflict that could easily put to an end to the byzantine rule there, he had to ensure support and cooperation from aristocracy and clergy and to avoid confrontation with the commoners on the conquered territory. In building byzantine rule

¹² Kaldellis, *Streams*, 137

¹³ Collins, *Keepers*, 182.

¹⁴ Falkenhausen, *Between Two Empires*, 147

¹⁵ Catherine Holmes, *Basil II and the governance of Empire (976–1025)*, Oxford 2005 505; Shepard, *Byzantium and the West*, 622; Kaldellis, *Streams*, 136.

¹⁶ Shepard, *Byzantium and the West*, 623, Kaldellis, *Streams*, 137; McKitterick, *The Church*, 161, Collins, *Keepers*, 198; Falkenhausen, *Between Two Empires*, 148, 149; Holmes, *Basil II*, 505, 506

¹⁷ Holmes, *Basil II*, 301, 392, 424.

there, Basil continued to use more diplomacy than force¹⁸ as in the time before 1018. The aristocrats who submitted were granted titles and positions in the court and kept their privileges, and possibly even increased their income through titles and positions and connected to them salaries and subsidies. To strengthen their integration into the imperial elite, Basil organized marriages with Roman aristocratic families. Through such measures the Comitopuloi elite was integrated into the imperial hierarchy.¹⁹ Basil also implemented the experience from the conquest made by John Tzimiskes in 970s – members of the ruling family were taken to Constantinople and given high court titles; Prussian, the heir of John Vladislav become magister just as Tzimiskes did with emperor Boris II earlier. Through the high positions of members of Comitopuloi family, their aristocracy received their own unofficial but effective representative in the inner circle of the emperor. Basil learned from mistakes of Tzimiskes and did not take the autocephaly of the church keeping it under the same head as before 1018 and confirmed its privileges from the time of Emperor Samuel. The church was also given another important role – to supplement the poorly developed administration in the conquered lands.²⁰ The elite forces of the defeated army were moved to other fronts thus decreasing the possibility of rebellion. The relocation of members of the dynasty and higher aristocratic families far from their lands – in Constantinople or even Eastern borders, made them hostages and guarantees for loyalty of their compatriots back home.

Still, the conquered territory received treatment that differed from that implemented in other *catepanates*.²¹ It continued to „rule in its matters under its own supervisors and customs as was under Samuel” and the old tax system remained with its low natural taxes.²² Through a combination of all listed measures, a *territory with special regime* (juridical and fiscal) was created, different from the main part of the Empire, united into *catepanate of Bulgaria*

¹⁸ Holmes, *Basil II*, 426; Stephenson, *The Balkan Frontier*, 130.

¹⁹ Иван Божилов, Васил Гюзелев, *История на България т. I*, История на средновековна България, VII – XIV в., София, София 1999, 389; Holmes, *Basil II*, 418 – 420; Johnatan Shepard, *Byzantium expanding 944 - 1025*, The New Cambridge Medieval History, Volume III с. 900–с 1024., Cambridge University Press, 2008, 601.

²⁰ Бојана Крсмановић, *У односу управне и црквене организације на подручју Охридске архиепископије*, Византиски свет на Балкану, I, Београд 2012, 17, 22, 35.

²¹ Петровски, *Самоил по Самоил*, 154.

²² Йордан Иванов, *Български старини от Македонија*, София 1970, 556; Ioannis Scylitzae, *Synopsis Historiarum*, edition princeps, Ioannes Thurn, Berolini et novi Eboraci, 1973, 412, 67–72; Georgius Cedrenus, Ioannis Scylitzae, *Historiarum Compendium*, t. II, ed. Imanuele Bekker, Bonn, 1839, 715, 1–3; Paul Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan Frontier. A Political Study of the Northern Balkans, 900–1204*, Cambridge 2000, 77; Крсмановић, *Управне и црквене организације*, 26; Kaldellis, *Streams*, 126; Holmes, *Basil II*, 428.

with its capital in Scopie led by strategos autocrator and later dux, and with its own autocephalous church, clergy and holy language.²³ Church and catepanate included the territories with the higher level of loyalty to Comitopuloi, such that have resisted byzantine occupation the most: the land between Sirmium and Strumitsa and from Servia to Serdica. The special regime creates a framework and gave time for this disloyal population to adapt to the byzantine governance - a transitional period that will continue for 20 years.²⁴

Transforming the conquered enemies into allies and even supporters of the regime that replaced their own state is of course a brilliant achievement,²⁵ but at the same time, it made byzantine authority there fragile and dependent on the good will of the subjugated people.²⁶ Because of it, the deterioration of the situation in relation to Germany and the Pope at the beginning of 1020 constitutes a very serious danger to the freshly established order there.

Byzantium took a series of measures to anticipate the inevitable conflict. In Italy, the catepan Boioannes built several castles on the borders of north Apulia against an expected attack, succeeded to convert the duxes of Capua, Napoli and Salerno into Byzantine allies and vassals, and invited many Lombards to settle in byzantine parts of Italy. And, what is especially characteristic, he closed the border for the western pilgrims even arresting any who reached it and sending them to Constantinople.²⁷ It shows that at this particular moment, the pilgrims movement, organised and inspired mainly by the Cluniacs - the strongest advocates of the universal claims of Rome,²⁸ were seen as a potential enemy, propagandists of the papal supremacy or spies.

Similar measures were taken on the Balkans. The newly conquered territories were protected by buffer zones constituted from dependent or allied principalities in the western Balkans such as Sirmium, Ras, Bosna, and Croa-

²³ Предраг Коматина, *Појам Бугарске у XI и XII веку и територија Охридске Архиепископије*, Охридска архиепископија у византијском свету, Византијски свет на Балкану, I, Београд, 2012, 41

²⁴ Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan Frontier*, 75; Петровски, *Самоил по Самоил*, 150.

²⁵ Бобан Петровски, *Самоил по Самоил: Компромисите на Василиј II*, 1000 години од битката на Беласица и смртта на цар Самоил, Скопје 2018, 149; Boban Petrovski, *Central-southern Europe under the Restored Byzantine Administration after the fall of Samuel State*, South-eastern Europe in the second half of 10th – the beginning of 11th centuries: History and Culture, Sofia 2015, 267.

²⁶ A good example of how well Comitopuloi descendants incorporated themselves into Roman aristocracy is magister Prusianos, son of John Vladislav, who after only one decade tried to become a Byzantine emperor with the help of Basil's niece Theodora. How fragile was byzantine authority and dependency of the support of local elites and neutrality of the population was clearly demonstrated in the rebellion of Petros Delianos in 1040.

²⁷ Kaldellis, *Streams*, 137

²⁸ Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 35

tia.²⁹ In such a way, *the territory with special regime* was surrounded with lands that for Byzantium were difficult to conquer or defend and sometimes not worthy to keep, and the rulers of which were bounded to the Empire and its interest through titles and subsidies making them natural enemies to everyone who would want to attack the empire through their territories. Thus the newly attached to Byzantium parts of the Balkans were organized in two zones with a different level of dependence, but still not fully integrated into the empire,³⁰ where the byzantine authority relied on the intertwining between the interests of local elites and its own. In the future, these two zones will evolve in different directions – to integration or fully emancipation from the Empire, but for the moment, it seems that they solved the immediate problem. The direct contact between a *territory with special regime* and foreign powers was limited to a small space on Hungarian border where castles will be build and garrisons stationed – Sirmium, Belgrade and Branicevo (but, after immediate danger was gone, the garrisons were removed and castles turned back to local aristocrats).³¹ To neutralize the last potential danger from this side – which came from the fact that the Hungarian king was ally of the German Emperor and married to the his sister - in 1020 a Byzantine princess married the Hungarian king's heir. In such a manner, the frontline for the coming conflict with Germany and the Pope was moved far from vulnerable Balkans and limited to South Italy where towns and dukes endangered from regular Arab attack were natural allies to the Byzantine Empire. Lacking powerful allies in Europe, the Empire ensured such on lower level into the border-zones.

These measures seemed to be considered enough so Basil moved in Caucasus in 1021 – 1022.³² And they really worked – the big anti-byzantine invasions in Italy in 1021/22 – 1023 ended fruitless.³³ The tensions ended with the death of the Pope and the German emperor accordingly on 9 April and 13 June 1024³⁴. Basil immediately took advantage of the situation and offered an agreement for the division of church spheres to the new Pope,³⁵ and Boioannes

²⁹ Cf. Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan Frontier*, 155. Of course, we could not be sure that all this happened exactly in 1019/1020 and only to counter this danger, but it is very plausible that it gave important motivation in this direction.

³⁰ Cf. Kaldellis, *Streams*, 126.

³¹ Holmes, *Basil II*, 425, 502.

³² Shepard, *Byzantium expanding*, 602.

³³ Holmes, *Basil II*, 437; Shepard, *Byzantium and the West*, 623; Kaldellis, *Streams*, 137; McKitterick, *The Church*, 161; Falkenhausen, *Between Two Empires*, 148, 149; Collins, *Keepers*, 198.

³⁴ Kaldellis, *Streams*, 138.

³⁵ Rodulfi Glabri, *Historiarum Libri Quinque*, ed. Neithard Bulst, Oxford 2002, xxv, xxviii, 4.2–3, 172–17.

attacked Croatia and put it under a more direct byzantine control taking hostages from the kings family.³⁶

CHANGES IN BYZANTINE POLITICS REFLECTED IN THE SIGILLIAS OF BASIL II (1018 – 1025)

Instead of subordinate and include eparchies of conquered territory into diocese of Constantinopolitan patriarchate, Basil gave them the status of an autocephalous archiepiscopate.³⁷ When the first sigillion of Basil II for the Ohrid Archiepiscopacy was written (1018) it had as its main dominant - organizing of the newly conquered territory, which in its clerical dimension should include avoiding confrontation with clergy and ensuring church support for the new regime. And it is reflected in the document: the sigillion confirms the economic privileges that bishops had under Samuel. There were 17 bishops' sees under Ohrid and they formed the territory that matched the zone with a higher level of disloyalty against Byzantium³⁸ - *the territory with special regime*.

Far more interesting is the second sigillion from May 1020, two and a half years after Samuel state fell. It brings serious changes, which could not be explained with the same motives as the first sigillion,³⁹ because nothing on the terrain changed to evoke such drastic measures. One of the important changes is that in the second sigillion the basis of the church's rights and privileges shifted from Samuel (in the first sigillion) to mainly Petros. In the second sigillion, Samuel is mentioned only once together but second after Petros, but Petros is mentioned two more times as a sole base for church's rights. Even bigger are territorial changes: now Ohrid bishops' sees raised from 17 to 30, i.e. by 60 %. The author clearly felt the need to explain why these 13 were not among the first 17 bishops' sees, and to justify their addition. It is clumsily explained as being omitted or even forgotten to be mentioned in the first

³⁶ Falkenhausen, *Between Two Empires*, 149; Kaldellis, *Streams*, 137.

³⁷ Геннадий Литаврин, *Болгария и Византия в XI–XII вв.*, Москва 1960, 355, 356; Gunter Prinzing, *Convergence and divergence between the Patriarchal Register of Constantinople and the Ponemata Diaphora of Archbishop Demetrios Chomatenos of Achrida*, Ohridska arhiepiskopija u vizantijskom svetu, Vizantijski svet na Balkanu I, Beograd 2012, 3. Many reasons are offered for this; some of them - such as bad relations between Basil and patriarch Sergios II (1001-1019, or the desire not to strengthen the patriarchate of Constantinople too much, do not look sustainable, but other - as an effort to win the support of the church and the population, are logical (cf. Holmes, *Basil II*, 427, 428; Alexandru Madgearu, *The church organization in the lower Danube between 971 – 1020*, Études byzantines et post-byzantines, IV, Iași 2001, 76).

³⁸ Божилов – Гюзелев, *История*, 367

³⁹ As supposed by Litavrin, *Болгария и Византия*, 355, 356

sigillion, or that were seized by neighbouring metropolitans. This explanation is incorrect and misleading. Apart of absurdity of the very idea that more than 40 % of bishoprics were forgotten, it is also obvious that none of these “forgotten” bishoprics is inside the area constituted by the first 17; they are all outside, and the majority could not pretend to be part of the *zone of problematic loyalty*, therefore they were not forgotten, but added. The second moment - that other metropolitans had taken some bishops’ sees is dishonest – some of them were traditionally suffragans of the accused metropolitans (as these under Thessalonica and Larissa), and others were given to them by Basil himself (as many given to Dirachium). Therefore, there were not forgotten, omitted or “stolen” bishoprics. The Emperor simply used the archbishop’s complaint about some bishops’ sees⁴⁰ to fundamentally expand the archdiocese of Ohrid, but for some reasons refused to explain the real reasons and motives, and even the sole fact that he changed his politics.

Equally non-sustainable is the second given explanation that shows a clear discrepancy between the declared goal and the realized result. Basil repeats three times that he changes nothing, just reinforces the decisions of the emperors before him, and defends the traditions established “from old times”; based on this, he confirmed for archbishop of Ohrid to have such a big archdiocese and to rule over “all Bulgarian episcopates that under Petros the emperor and Samuel were owned and ruled by archbishops, and the all other towns”,⁴¹ forgetting silently the decisions of some of his byzantine predecessors which he now broke. Despite these promises, the archiepiscopate did not receive the dioceses, let alone “all towns” owned by the church in Petros’ empire. On one hand, it received 9 bishoprics, which were never part of Petros’ Empire and which legitimately belonged to the metropolitan sees of Dyrrachion, Thessalonica, Naupact and Larissa,⁴² and on the other hand - did not receive many bishoprics in Mysia and Thrace including the capitals of the Bulgarian empire Pliska and Preslav. The archdiocese in the second sigillion did not correspond with the boundaries of church and state in Petros’ empire,

⁴⁰ It is noticeable in the third sigillion that the archbishop was interested in bishoprics close to Ohrid – as Servia, Veria and Stag, and did not use the opportunity given by the second sigillion to ask for the bishopric that belonged to Petros state in Mysia or Thrace; it could mirror the discrepancy that existed between the episcopates that archbishop asked for in 1020 and those he received from Basil.

⁴¹ *Гръцки извори за българската история*, т 6, София, 1965 (further ГИБИ 6), 44 – 47.

⁴² Литаврин, *Болгария и Византия*, 265, 352; Holmes, *Basil II*, 428; Крсмановић, *Управне и црквене организације*, 30, 31; Stephenson, *Byzantium’s Balkan Frontier*, 75. Some of them were added shortly before that to Dyrrachion or Larissa (Stephenson, *The Balkan Frontier*, 117 – 119) and could be seen as “returned”, but others like Beria have always belonged to Thessaloniki.

and could be connected to Samuel's state only in the short period of its apogee, with its political borders, but not with those of the church (especially if we take into consideration the number of seats (14 -17) and toponyms listed in the church of saint Achileos in the lake Mala Prespa).⁴³ We can speculate in this regard that the strange mentioning of "towns" apart from "episcopates" there is connected with the only mention of the name of Samuel, and that there, as in other two places, Petros is connected to "episcopates", not "towns". Such a wide formula gave opportunity for adding to archdiocese the territories that only politically belonged to Samuel but never ecclesiastically to his church.

The church did not keep its rank – it had to be patriarchate in the time of "Emperor" Samuel, and the church under Petros was recognized by the Constantinople *patriarchate*, but Basil confirmed the rights of the *archiepiscopate*, without mentioning the old title or explaining the reason of its degradation.⁴⁴ The Emperor also degraded the metropolitan see of Drstar to a bishopric,⁴⁵ seemed to have abolished the bishopric of Diabolis which existed under Samuel⁴⁶ and changed the number of clerics and paroikoi owned by some bishops (as Vodena and Drstar) according to his own will.

Therefore, the pretension that Basil II changed nothing is very much untrue.

Some if not all of the rights and privileges of the archbishop such as collecting taxes and to be respected and listened to by "all strategs and others servants and archons" are clearly bonded with the term "Bulgaria" (also *Bulgarian region* - τῶν βουλγαρικῶν ὄρων, "whole Bulgaria" - πᾶσαν Βουλγαρίαν), which accordingly has to be a territory with clear boundaries established in the fra-

⁴³ Белчовски, Охридската архиепископија, 80, 81.

⁴⁴ Holmes, *Basil II*, 428; Shepard, *Byzantium expanding*, 601; Петровски, *Самоил по Самоил*, 151.

⁴⁵ According to Madgearu, *The church organization*, 73-76 this degradation happened in the time of Tzimiskes, when Preslav was transformed into a Metropolitan see, and in 1020 later already as a bishopric subjected to Tomi, Drstar was transferred to the archbishop of Ohrid. However, we find the name of Drstar as a metropolitan see in Notitia 11, separately from Preslav (J. Darrouzès, *Notitiae episcopatum ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae*, Paris 1981, NE 11, 73, 81), which together with one specific moment in the second sigillion according to which the bishop of Drstar, the only among the bishops subjected to Ohrid, received clerics and paroikoi not only in towns of his diocese but also "in the other town around it" (Иванов, *Старини*, 557), suggest that before that Drstar had a status higher than that of an ordinary bishopric see.

⁴⁶ The bishopric of Diaboli is mentioned in the inscriptions of the church of Saint Achileos in Mala Prespa, but in Basil's sigillias it could not be found (Белчовски, Охридската архиепископија, 80; Драган Зајковски, *Охридската патријаршија во времето на Самоиловата држава: ерархија и диоцеза*, Самоиловата држава во историската, воено-политичката, духовната и културната традиција на Македонија, Струмица 2015, 121.

mework of the Byzantine administrative and legal reality.⁴⁷ It (despite the document declarations) could not be based on territories of former and no more existing states, which had different and not permanent borders. The only possible solution is that “Bulgaria” in this document is not the territory of the states of Petros or Samuel but the Byzantine catepanate of Bulgaria.⁴⁸

And this invokes a following question – which archdiocese the catepanate was equal with – this of the first or that of the second sigillion, taking into consideration the well-known principle of church jurisdiction to follow administrative boundaries. We have three possibilities. First – the archdiocese of the first sigillion was established prior to the establishment of the catepanate and was smaller than it and now the Emperor just adjusted the borders of two institutions. Second, they were equal in the first sigillion but for some reason the catepanate changed its borders before May 1020 and that led to the change of borders of the church – this could be indirectly supported by the statement that if there were other episcopates or castra that lay in “Bulgarian borders” but were forgotten – the archbishop should rule them too. Third, it was equal with that of the first sigillion, but, for some reason, in the second sigillion the Ohrid archdiocese was expanded out of the boundaries of the catepanate, and, because of it, Basil insisted that the archbishop should keep all bishoprics and towns ruled by the emperors Petros and Samuel, which gave him the excuse to include in the archdiocese the territories that were out of catepanates boundaries. It seems that the last possibility is most correct as we will see further on.

One neglected territorial anomaly also seems important here. The bishopric of Drstar is the only one in the whole of Mysia east of Vidin that is given to Ohrid, without a territorial connection with the archdiocese, surrounded by bishoprics subordinated to Constantinople.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ ГИБИ 6, 46.

⁴⁸ Литаврин, *Болгария и Византия*, 264; Shepard, *Byzantium expanding*, 601; Delikari, *Die situation*, 243

⁴⁹ In the historiography, unfounded in my opinion, the adding of the bishopric of Drstar is treated as an inclusion of whole Mysia into the diocese of Ohrid (see Јован Белчовски, *Охридската архиепископија, од основањето до паѓањето на Македонија под турска власт*, Скопје, 1997, 163, мај 2, Madgearu, *The church organization*, 76 – 78). There could not have been just one episcopal see in this large area from Vidin to the Black Sea. We are talking about territories on which the capitals of the former Bulgarian Empire were located. Attempts to explain it with alleged non-urbanization of this area and its comparisons with the mountain and poorly developed region of Ras do not seem reasonable and contradict to what we know about towns and bishoprics in Mysia in the late 10th and early 11th centuries (see: Madgearu, *The church organization*, 76, 78). Drstar was previously a metropolitan seat and accordingly had dependent bishoprics, which were not added to Ohrid in 1020. Apart from it, there were other metropolitan and bishoprics

Drstar is mentioned in the first place in the list of 13 new added sees and it is explained with a special argumentation. A part of it is justified by the content (explains why Drstar will have equal economic privileges as Ohrid - it used to be the archbishop's seat). The second part is more interesting – the supposed “moving” of archbishops from Drstar to "Triaditsa, the other in Voden and Moglen and ... Ohrid",⁵⁰ which, in addition to being unnecessary for the main purpose of the document, is also quite questionable. For us, however, the reality of this story is not as important as its use here. For some reason, the emperor was not satisfied with a simple statement of identity between the archiepiscopates of Drstar and Ohrid, but he argued it further. If this needed to be argued it should not be obvious and undisputable for contemporaries. The last is understandable given that the two churches not only have different seats, but also that Drstar Patriarchate lost its autocephaly and was degraded in 971/2 to a metropolitan seat under Constantinople patriarchate.⁵¹ But this do not explain *way* and *to whom* it needed to be argued in the sigillion.

It is easy to notice that all incorrect statements and anomalies listed above are not incidental and gravitate around one topic. The main part of the sigillion is devoted exactly to the argumentation of the thesis that Basil made no changes, but only confirmed the rights and territories given by the emperors of the past to the Bulgarian church, and that the archiepiscopate had them from “the old times”.⁵² This argumentation takes around 42 % of text of the second sigillion, where the part with concrete legal content is only 27 %. It is well noticeable that, instead of invoking his own will as a basis of his decisions, the Emperor in this document consistently avoids the responsibility for the decisions he makes and he "hides" behind the decisions of former rulers.

sees such as Preslav, Pliska, Odesos, Tomi, etc., and at least some of the more important fortresses such as Varna, Isaccea, Krivina, Vetren and Gravan (cf. Madgearu, *Byzantine Military Organization*, 94), should also be seats of bishops.

⁵⁰ ГИБИ 6, 45; Иванов, *Старини*, 557

⁵¹ If the archdiocese of Drstar continued to exist in the time of John Tzimiskes, and the region of Drstar was conquered by the Cometopuloi only after 987, then the question is what church organization existed in the rebelled territory before. And if, as it is likely, the bishops in the rebelled territories elected their head, then the connection between the Drstar archiepiscopate and the Prespa-Ohrid's would be legally non-existent - neither the rebels had the right to create new church organizations or appoint their heads, nor would Constantinople ever agree to the renovation of the abolished autocephalous church in favor of the apostates.

⁵² “... we confirmed them for the archbishop of Bulgaria, because he ruled them from old times and his authority was established from the old. ... to be kept without brake or change all that belong to archiepiscopate from old times” (ГИБИ 6, 46, Иванов, *Старини*, 558, 559)

However, this concealment could not be directed against factors inside Byzantium - the emperors whose names and decisions are invoked were not authorities in Byzantium – Petros was recognized with great regret by Constantinople as a *basileos*, but of Bulgars, not of Romans, and the title of Samuel was never recognized, and he was seen as a tyrant and an apostate. Basil's decisions supported only by the will of Peter and Samuel, which on other hand violated decisions of several Byzantine emperors, could not be convincing to anyone in Byzantium, at least to the damaged metropolitans of the patriarchate.

The only way to explain these anomalies in my opinion is to put them into the framework of church politics of those days and to view them as a part of argumentation directed against the possible papal claims.⁵³ The Pope traditionally had the right over the dioceses in Illyricum, and from 865 he also claimed the right to the dioceses in Bulgaria. In 879 Byzantium had to agree that the Patriarch of Constantinople should not ordain bishops in Bulgaria. The spread of the papal diocese in the interior of the Balkans was prevented only by the determination of the Bulgarian rulers to remain in the Constantinople sphere⁵⁴ – the dilemma solved silently by giving an autocephalous status of Bulgarian church from the emperors in Constantinople. The fall of Samuel's empire in 1018 brought the disputed dioceses under direct Byzantine rule. The Patriarch of Constantinople had no right to ordain there and now when the decisions were again in the hands of the Emperor, the Pope had a legal basis to demand the decisions of the church councils to be respected and dioceses in conquered territories to be given to him. Basil had no excuse or possibility to avoid this question – the responsibility laid now on him, and he had no good answer to the papal claims.

From the time of Charlemagne in the West "it had become customary for new archdioceses to be established only through the papacy" and it was the same with ordination of the archbishops,⁵⁵ and in 1020 that was confirmed by Henry II. Because of it, decisions of Basil II about establishing autocephalous archiepiscopate in the former Comitopuloi state in 1018 could (and may be were) understood as provocation. This problem would be even deeper

⁵³ Here I return and upgrade an old but neglected hypothesis offered by Golubinski and supported by Zlatarski (Васил Златарски, *История на българската държава през средните векове*, т. II, София 1994, 31, 32), later criticized and rejected by Литаврин, *България и Византия*, 354, 355.

⁵⁴ Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 26; Предраг Коматина, *Црквена политика Византије од краја иконоборства до смрти цара Василија I*, Београд 2014, 347, 348.

⁵⁵ Uta-Renate Blumenthal, *The papacy, 1024–1122*, *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, Volume iv c. 1024–c. 1198 Part II, Cambridge 2008, 11.

if we accepted the thesis that the church in Samuel's empire was already subordinated to the Pope.⁵⁶

Tensions between the papacy and Byzantium reached their peak in the months right before signing the second sigillion in May 1020. At a gathering in Bamberg that began with a liturgy served by the Pope with a Filioque in creed, Henry II confirmed the Ottomanium, and Melo was appointed as dux of the Byzantine territory - Apulia⁵⁷, steps directed clearly against Byzantium, both politically and ecclesiastically. The conflict with the West escalated, and thus the possibility of re-opening the question of church jurisdiction in the newly conquered territories.

In these circumstances, to invoke his will as a basis of the decisions of establishing an autocephalous archiepiscopate would mean to enflame the confrontation with the Pope. That would explain Basil's insisting on avoiding making decisions on his own behalf, but hiding behind the will of dead rulers: God has given him the land he has conquered and he does not change anything in it but simply confirms, the Ohrid Archbishopric is identical with the autocephalous church in Drstar, and Basil will defend its old rights.

It is worthy to mention that this alleged "respect" for the old imperial orders was not just selective of the will of which emperors should be respected, but most importantly – it was applied almost exclusively to the zone to which the Pope had rights - in Illyricum, not to that of Constantinople in Thrace: there the patriarch silently received everything except Drstar. 12 of the 13 bishoprics added with the second sigillion are in the part of the prefecture of Illyricum, which was disputed with the Pope. The only exception - Drstar, was included to prove the identity between the churches of Drstar and Ohrid. Majority of these 12 bishoprics traditionally belonged to the metropolitan sees of Dyrrachion, Naupact, Larissa, and Thessaloniki,⁵⁸ and this can also be understood in the light of possible papal pretensions. Including of a large number (about 40%) of "loyal" bishops into the assembly of the Ohrid archiepiscopate guaranteed byzantine loyalists' majority there⁵⁹, and thus the sup-

⁵⁶ Angeliki Delikari, *Die situation in Nord – West Makedonien während der regierung des Basileios II., die sogennante kirche des zaren Samuel and die grundung des erzbistums von Ochrid*, Европейският югоизток през втората половина на X – началото на XI век, История и култура, София 2015, 243; Белчовски, *Охридската архиепископија*, 83.

⁵⁷ Shepard, *Byzantium and the West*, 623; Kaldellis, *Streams*, 137; McKitterick, *The Church*, 161; Collins, *Keepers*, 198

⁵⁸ Darrouzès, *Notittiae*, NE 7, 298, 300, 303, 308, 574, 580, 582, 583, NE 9, 184, 196, 445, 451, 453, 454, NE 10, 217, 219, 222, 228, 524, 536, 539, 540; Крсмановић, *Управне и црквене организације*, 30, 31.

⁵⁹ It is also the answer to the only objection given by Litavrin (Литаврин, *Болгария и Византия*, 355) against the theory of Golubinski – Zlatarski.

port of the clergy in a future dispute with Rome. The new bishoprics seriously complicated possible papal claims because now the question would be not only about the "Bulgarian diocese", but also about a number of bishops sees that, according to the decisions of several emperors from the last three centuries, belonged to Constantinople and to which Basil could refer.

The inclusion of this extensive argumentation into the second sigillion shows that it was addressed to the Ohrid archbishop and his suffragans. The arguments against possible papal claims had been presented as the basis of their church's rights and privileges, something they should not forget in eventual future negotiations and disputes with the Pope. That is why it has been said and underlined many times: the status, rights and privileges of the archiepiscopate of Ohrid are based on the rights of the former Bulgarian autocephalous church under Petros and on the emperor's decision "to change nothing" - everything depends on it.

However, there is one more possible dimension here – and it is revealed in connection with the question of Justiniana Prima. A century later, Michael of Diabolis wrote that when Basil gave autocephaly to the Ohrid archiepiscopate, he based this decision "on the orders of Emperor Justinian, that it is the First Justiniana".⁶⁰ It is rightfully rejected in science because it is not in the sigillias of Basil II. However - the idea was quite present at the time. Basil I included the 131st Justinian Novel for Justiniana Prima in the Basilica. The Council in 879 equated by statute the Bulgarian with the Cypriot archiepiscopate,⁶¹ which was known as Justiniana Secunda.⁶² In one church's list, which with some hesitations⁶³ is dated at the time of John Tzemesces, these two churches are listed as subordinated to the Constantinople patriarchate, but as a separate group – first Bulgarian and next Cypriots,⁶⁴ which by itself suggests that they were seen as Justiniana Prima and Justiniana Secunda. In the middle of the 11th century, the Ohrid Archbishopric was already clearly connected with Justiniana Prima in the frescoes of the Cathedral church of St. Sophia in Ohrid.⁶⁵ The complete avoidance of this idea in Basil's decisions, however, is quite understandable in the light of possible complications in relation with the Pope. Justiniana Prima, according to 131 novels of Justinian, was under the authority of the Pope. It was not an idea that Basil would like to give to the bi-

⁶⁰ Scyl. 365, 8–11.

⁶¹ Коматина, *Црквена политика*, 348

⁶² Белчовски, *Охридската архиепископија*, 70.

⁶³ Darrouzès, *Notitiae*, 85; Пириватрић, *Самуилова држава*, 149, 150.

⁶⁴ ГИВИ 5, 242

⁶⁵ Бранислав Тодић, *Архиепископ Лав – творац иконографског програма фресака у светој Софији*, Византијски свет на Балкану, т. I, САНУ, Београд 2012, 131, 132, 134 see also Белчовски, *Охридската архиепископија*, 127.

shopric of the conquered state - an alternative possible solution to their problems through an appeal to the Pope, much less to give the Pope more legal basis to his claims. However, it was an idea that could be easily reached not just because it was already “in the air”, but also through the western Pilgrims, after Via Egnatia was opened again as the road for their pilgrimage and on which Ohrid was located. From this point of view, giving 13 new bishoprics to the Ohrid archiepiscopate could be understood also as making Justiniana Prima smaller as a diocese and with this - an unattractive option for the Ohrid clergy: at least 10 of 13 (but also could be argued that it is 12 from 13) of the newly added bishop sees were out of the diocese of Justiniana Prima, when the majority of the first 17 were in the diocese of Justiniana Prima.

The second sigillion therefore strongly bonded the Ohrid archiepiscopate to the will and interest of the Emperor and “immunized” it against the possible papal appeals and pretension.

The escalation of tension with the West after 1020 forced Basil to stick to his decisions until at least 1024, something reflected in the third sigillion, from the content of which we understand that the decisions of the second sigillion met certain resistance and were not realized in all places. However, the situation changed in 1024, with the death of Pope Benedict VIII and his supporter Henry II, which opened a period of instability in the West. Basil tried to take advantage of the situation. In 1024 he offered to the new Pope an agreement about the relationship between Constantinople and Rome, according to which “the church of Constantinople might be called and regarded as universal in its own sphere, just as Rome is throughout the whole world”.⁶⁶ The same year, the Apulia diocese was reorganized, and an agreement was reached that allowed services in Byzantine rites in Apulia and in Latin in Constantinople.⁶⁷ Whether then an agreement about the Ohrid archiepiscopate was reached is not known.

After Basil’s death on December 13 or 15, 1025,⁶⁸ his church policy in the Balkans lost its relevance. The establishment of a new dynasty in Germany and its efforts to legitimize itself, including through the approval of Byzantium,⁶⁹ together with the deterioration of relations between Germany and

⁶⁶ Glabri, *Historiarum*, 199; Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 35-7; Тодѡћ, *Архиуениуекон Јав*, 130.

⁶⁷ Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 123.

⁶⁸ Kaldellis, *Streams*, 138.

⁶⁹ In 1027, after he was crowned as emperor in Rome (Collins, *Keepers*, 198, 199) Conrad II sent envois to Constantinople to ask for a princess bride and, although they did not find one, they still considered what was achieved as a great success, because “Constantine’s successor, Romanus III, had acknowledged his imperial status” (Herwig Wolfram, *Conrad II, 990–1039: emperor of three kingdoms*, The Pennsylvania State University Press 2006, 198–202).

Hungary after 1026 and weakening of the papacy under John XIX (1024-1033), certainly played a role in alleviating the problem and its relevance and it also helped to stabilize the Byzantine government in the Central Balkans.

This resulted in the abandonment of Basil's policy and the reduction of the Ohrid archiepiscopate to the limits of the first sigillion, with only few crumbs of what was so widely promised in the second one - Ras, Voden (or Vidin) and the bishopric of the Vlachs. The first church lists after the time of Basil (late XI c.) shows that 12 of 15 bishoprics given with the second and third sigillia do not belong to Ohrid again.⁷⁰ We find Drstar again as the metropolitan see with 5 subordinated bishoprics under the patriarch Constantinople.⁷¹

When the external motive disappeared, the archiepiscopate of Ohrid was reduced to what dictated the condition of the terrain, what was at the base of the first sigillia - to the *zone of problematic loyalty*, to the catepanate of Bulgaria. However, it had its effects and created a solid argumentation for the autocephaly of the Ohrid archiepiscopate. As the conflict between Constantinople and Rome once led to the birth of the Bulgarian autocephalous archiepiscopate, so now the antagonism between the two dominant church centres led to the formation of the Ohrid archiepiscopate, under cover of the already abolished Bulgarian patriarchate of the past. This archiepiscopate, despite the claims of it being identical with some old churches as Bulgaria and Justiniana Prima, was practically a new church, with a title and boundaries mirroring the new byzantine administrative reality, not the realities from the past.⁷²

"BULGARIA", "WHOLE BULGARIA" AND "BULGARIANS"

If the term "Bulgaria" before May 1020 was an exact administrative and legal category matching the territory of the catepanate Bulgaria, what was its territory? Some scientists claim that Mysia did not enter Bulgaria at all.⁷³ Others, taking as a starting point that in the second sigillion Drstar was given to the archiepiscopate together with the claims in the document that the archbishopric should have all the territories Peter ruled, believe that the catepanate and church "Bulgaria" include Mysia from 1018, as at this time there was not a separate province of Paristrion - (Paradounavon), a claim suppor-

⁷⁰ Darrouzès, *Notitiae*, NE 13, 223, 233, 227, 229, 358, 572, 586, 588 - 590, 828, 832, Крсмановић, *Управне и црквене организације*, 37. Види и Белчовски, *Охридската архиепископија*, 165, 166; Божилов – Гюзелев, *История*, 368, 369.

⁷¹ Darrouzès, *Notitiae*, NE 11, 73 (71, p. 344); 12, 71 (p. 350), 13, 781 (p. 368), 14, 45 (p. 375).

⁷² Delikari, *Die situation*, 243

⁷³ Литаврин, *Болгария и Византия*, 266; Божилов – Гюзелев, *История*, 354; Madgearu, *Byzantine Military Organization*, 63; Kaldellis, *Streams*, 125.

ted by the fact that this term appeared for the first time in the sources in 1040s.⁷⁴ Other offered a compromise position: Paristrion existed as a separate administrative entity but ecclesiastically its territory was part of the Ohrid archiepiscopate.⁷⁵ Stephenson includes in this debate the question of appearance and correlations of terms "Bulgaria" and "whole Bulgaria" and supports the argument that after 1018 Bulgaria was "closely and loosely" defined: "Bulgaria" related to the administrative and military district, and "whole Bulgaria" – included also Paristrion and, as proof of it, he use the titles of the archbishops "of whole Bulgaria".⁷⁶ The last interpretation contradicts the fact that the term "whole Bulgaria" appears in the titles not after 1018 but in the middle of the XI century and firstly in the titles of civil administration, and only later it entered in the title the archbishops.

Starting from the observation that the term "whole Bulgaria" appears in the titles of some civil servants (pronoite and anagrafevs), but not in the title of the governor of the province, and that the districts of Sirmium and Paristrion had even been militarily autonomous - still we can't find anything about their civil servants such as praetors, neither in the sources, nor in the known seals, Krsmanovic concludes that both districts were covered by the relevant officials from the theme of Bulgaria and thus explains the emergence of the title "whole Bulgaria".⁷⁷ "Bulgaria" would be the province, while "whole Bulgaria" would include Sirmium and Paristrion. However, it is obvious that such a situation could not have existed from the 1018, because the term "whole Bulgaria" and "Paristrion" appeared in the titles at about the same time - in the 1040s. It also stipulates that Mysia and Sirmium should be part of "Bulgaria" from 1018, so that after they were separated from Bulgaria, some of the civil duties continued to be done from administrators in Skopie, and that created a need for the term "*whole* Bulgaria" to refer to the full scope of their responsibilities over land of former big "Bulgaria" as opposed to the new *abbreviated* one. But, as the author of the hypothesis herself states, after 1018 Mysia was not part of what was understood in the sources as "Bulgaria".⁷⁸ The closely connected fact that the population east of Vidin in the sources of the XI – XII c. was not called "Bulgarians"⁷⁹ should be added. Given the close connection

⁷⁴ Константин Иречек, *История на българите* София 1978, 235; Златарски, *История*, II, 4 – 6; Paul Stephenson, *Balkan borderlands (1018–1204)*, The Cambridge history of The Byzantine Empire, Cambridge 2008, 664 - 691, 671, 672, 675. Scylitzes mentioned Paristrion under 1043 (Scyl., 457, 32), and the seals of its governors are dated after 1045.

⁷⁵ Madgearu, *The church organization*, 75 – 77.

⁷⁶ Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan Frontier*, 78.

⁷⁷ Крсмановић, *Управне и црквене организације*, 25, 26.

⁷⁸ Крсмановић, *Управне и црквене организације*, 32. See: Коматина, *Појам Бугарске*, 46, 47.

⁷⁹ Cf. Коматина, *Појам Бугарске*, 51–54.

between the term "Bulgarians" and the corresponding administrative and ecclesiastical units at the time, such a phenomenon could only be explained if Mysia was neither part of the theme nor of the diocese "Bulgaria", neither from 1018 nor later.

What territories were included in the term "whole Bulgaria" could be concluded from the extent of the archdiocese after archbishops of Ohrid changed their title from "Bulgaria" to "whole Bulgaria", which happened in the second half of the XI century.⁸⁰ As it is well known, it does not include the territories east of the city of Vidin.

That Mysia was not part of *Bulgaria* after 1018 and of *the area with a special regime* we find confirmation in the uprising of Petros Delian. For contemporaries, it was an uprising "in Bulgaria", of the "Bulgarians", and of the whole of "the Bulgarian genous", not just a *part* of it, not of *some Bulgarians*.⁸¹ The uprising spread from Belgrade to Thessaly and from Serdica to Dyrrachion, but did not include Mysia. The reason is quite natural - the uprising was caused by the abolition of the tax privilege that in 1018 were granted to the conquered area "Bulgaria" and to its inhabitants - "Bulgarians". However, Mysia was not part of it - in 1018, it had been under Byzantine rule for 18 years and its statute had already been regulated.⁸² It was never part of *the area with problematic loyalty* for which Basil II created *the special regime*; it did not take part in the Comotopuloi uprising in 976, and it seems that it surrendered to the empire without a fight in 1000.⁸³ That is why the abolition of *the special regime* did not damage this province and its population did not reacted to it, even when the population of other themes such as Nicopolis "joined the Bulgarians" in the Delianos' rebellion.⁸⁴

A solution can be found in the direction offered by Krsmanovic if we make two adjustments. First: "whole Bulgaria" includes Sirmium but not Paristrion. The lack of mentioned civil officials in Paristrion does not mean that those territories were covered by a distant Skopie; on the contrary, following the geographical logic and administrative tradition, they should be covered by some headquarters in Thrace, especially because they constitute one admi-

⁸⁰ We find it on three seals of John of Lampe (1064 - 1077/8): Ἰωάννη μοναχῷ καὶ ἀρχιεπισκόπῳ πάσης Βουλγαρίας <https://www.doaks.org/resources/seals/byzantine-seals/BZS.1955.1.4701>. Used on 20 March 2020.

⁸¹ ГИБИ 6, 95 Michael Psel: "the whole genous"; 89, 90: when Emperor went against rebellion he "came to borders of Bulgarians"; 97: Alusianos going to rebels came "into the land of Bulgarians" 98: after Delian was blinded "the Scythian (nation) again united under one rule".

⁸² Божилов – Гюзелев, *История*, 352.

⁸³ Scyl., 333, 83 – 334, 88.

⁸⁴ Scyl., 441, 58.

nistrative unit under the dux of Mesopotamia and Thrace (after 1000) and "Dorostol and Thrace" before 1018.⁸⁵ Second: "whole Bulgaria" was possible to appear in the title or at least in the jurisdiction of the dux of Bulgaria. An example of this could be the appointment of Nicephorus Bryenius in the 1070s as *δοῦκα τῆς τῶν Βουλγάρων ... πάσης χώρας*,⁸⁶ to govern "Bulgarian matters" (τῶν ἐν Βουλγαρία πραγμάτων κυριεύεσθαι) and to stop „the Slavic nation“ from devastating Bulgaria; in the description are listed "Skopie and Naisus... Sirmium and the lands around the river Sava and the cities around Danube to the Vidin itself", and later separately Ohrid and Kastoria are mentioned.⁸⁷ So, in an extraordinary situation, a dux of "whole Bulgaria" could be appointed and that was done by adding the space from Vidin to Sirmium under the rule of the dux in Skopie. However, a situation that needs to be assigned a dux that unites only "Bulgaria" and "Sirmium", which would make him a dux of "whole Bulgaria", without including other themes that would make the term "whole Bulgaria" inappropriate (such as Thessaloniki or Serbia for example)⁸⁸ was a rare, extraordinary situation, which explains the lack of seals with this title.

Therefore, Paristrion was never part of the Byzantine "Bulgaria" - from 1000 onward it developed in a different direction. Although the appearance of the term "Paristrion" coincides in time with the emergence of "whole Bulgaria", they are not interrelated. This new terminology seems to be related to the reform of the peripheral imperial areas of the Balkans in the 1040s as a result on one hand of the abolition of *the special regime* and the suppression of the Delian uprising in the Central Balkans, and on the other hand the beginning of serious problems with the Pechenegs along the Danube. The emergence of the term "whole Bulgaria" is a consequence of the first, and of "Paristrion" of the second factor.⁸⁹ The reduction of Bulgaria's borders and the complete separation of Sirmium, which in 1026 was governed by an archon,⁹⁰ could lead to the emergence of the title "whole Bulgaria", which included the now-separated Sirmium.⁹¹

⁸⁵ Божилов – Гюзелев, *История*, 352; Madgearu, *The church organization*, 74.

⁸⁶ Nicephori Bryennii, *Historiarum libri quatuor*, Corpus fontium historiae Byzantinae IX, Bruxelis 1975, 211, 2–5, 213, 13–20.

⁸⁷ ГИБИ 7, 115.

⁸⁸ Holmes, *Basil II*, 423, Kaldellis, *Streams*, 125.

⁸⁹ Stephenson, *Balkan borderlands*, 675.

⁹⁰ Scyl., 373, 94, 95.

⁹¹ Some recent research suggests that Sirmium was a separate theme from 1018: Alexandru Madgearu, *The Military Organization of Paradunavon*, "Byzantinoslavica", 60, 2, Praga, 1999, 422; Madgearu, *The church organization*, 76; Madgearu, *Byzantine Military Organization*, 56; Shepard, *Byzantium expanding*, 601; Kaldellis, *Streams*, 134. Спореди и Petrovski, *Central–southern Europe*, 266, 267.

This conclusion gives answer to the earlier risen question – with second sigillion the Ohrid archiepiscopate was extended out of borders of the catepanate of Bulgaria.

Before 1040, although it appeared once in Basil's second sigillion, there was no reason for the term "whole Bulgaria" to be part of any title because there was only one "Bulgaria" - the Byzantine administrative area equal, most of the time (except 1020–1025), with the diocese of the Ohrid archiepiscopate. Reducing the territory of this Bulgaria led to the emergence of two "Bulgarias" - one administrative and the other ecclesiastical. Officially, the term "Bulgaria" now referred to the new and smaller district, but some officials continued to cover the old territories, which led to the need for a term that defines the scope of their duties. Soon, as the new official use of the term become prevalent, Ohrid prelates would feel uncomfortable with the title "Archbishop of Bulgaria" – which did not cover even half of its diocese anymore and archbishops' rights outside boundaries of new "Bulgaria" could be now in jeopardy. Guaranties given in three sigillia were about "Bulgaria", which in the new administrative reality could make Ohrid archdiocese vulnerable. It is understandable that church soon followed the example of administrative authorities and changed the title into "Archbishop of whole Bulgaria" to connect it clearly with the old and bigger Basil's "Bulgaria".

Such use of these terms is evident in the John Scylitzes' works in the late XI c. - in his history the term "whole Bulgaria" is associated with the state of Samuel⁹² and after with the city of Ohrid - the seat of the archbishopric (μητρόπολις ... τῆς πάσης Βουλγαρίας),⁹³ while Skopie, the capital of the Catepanate, is the seat only of "Bulgaria" (Σκοπίων, τῆς μητροπόλεως Βουλγαρίας)⁹⁴ – not "whole".

REALITIES, PERCEPTIONS, AND TERMINOLOGY

These two entities - administrative and church unit will define what constituted "(whole) Bulgaria" and, accordingly, who the "Bulgarians" were and where they lived from 1018 to the end of the XII c. That is why there will be no Bulgarians in Mysia or Thrace in this period. On the contrary, the population there was not considered Bulgarians.⁹⁵ The only person in the period

⁹² Samuel becomes the monarch of "whole Bulgaria" (μόναρχος Βουλγαρίας ἀπάσης) after the death of Aaron (Scyl., 330, ⁹²), and in 1018 magnates of whole Bulgaria obeyed (δυνατῶν ἀπάσης τῆς Βουλγαρίας - Scyl., 360, ⁵³).

⁹³ Scyl., 358, ¹⁴.

⁹⁴ Scyl., 409, ^{5, 6}.

⁹⁵ Skylitzes does not mention "Bulgarians" in Thrace and Mysia at all, but prefers terms such as local people - ἐγχώριοι (Scyl. p. 465, ^{32, 33}, Ἐκατὸν βουνοὺς τὸν τόπον ὀνομάζουσιν οἱ ἐγχώ-

1018-1200 who identified himself as a Bulgarian - born in Euboea Grecophone archbishop Theophylact of Ohrid⁹⁶ - will state quite clearly that there are no Bulgarians in the diocese of the Constantinople Patriarchate (which then included Mysia and Thrace) but only in Ohrid's archdiocese: "why Constantinople patriarch interferes among Bulgarians (ἐν Βουλγαροῖς), when he has no rights to ordain there ... who will be so backward and stupid ... to tolerate the presence of the Constantinople Exarch among the Bulgarians."⁹⁷

The new reality established by Basil II after 1018 created new understandings and terms or, more rightfully, gave a new meaning to the previously existing terms. The combination of a separate administrative unit, a separate church using a language different from the official imperial language, a different tax regime and especially the existence of alternative to Byzantine loyalty (to the Comitopuloi family) will make the inhabitants of this area *different* and *others* to Byzantine authors in the XI c., expressed with administrative term *Bulgarians*. The main pillars that support this reality have been created as an accommodation for the disloyalty of the conquered. In the course of the XI c., in parallel with the successful integration of the population, these factor will disappear one by one (or vice versa): the special regime, the dynasty and its associated alternative loyalty, the catepanate and the theme and their "Bulgarian" attributes (army, population, rulers and officials), leaving it in the XII c. as the only factor that creates a difference - the already partially Romanized Ohrid archiepiscopate. Thus, the perception of the population in the areas subjugated in 1018 as "other" will melt, and the term "Bulgarians" will become a rarity in Byzantine sources.

In the XIII and XIV c., the core of Samuel's state, equally as the territory south of the Hemus Mountain, will become known to all the neighbours as "Romania" and the inhabitants - "(Western) Romans" (accordingly in old Slavonic: "Greeks land" and "Greeks"), i.e. the land and population loyal to the Emperor of the Romans, not to the Bulgarian or Serbian rulers; a phenomenon that will lie at the root of future Ottoman Rumelia.

The only one of the creations of Basil II that continued to exist in this "Roman – Rumelia" period – the archiepiscopate of Ohrid, will keep the title and will pretend that despite all territorial changes and losses its archdiocese

ρ101). Коматина, *Појам Бугарска*, 48 gives in the same direction the example of Boril and German, who, despite being Slavs, will nowhere be called "Bulgarians".

⁹⁶ In the letter to empress Maria *Грѣцки извори за българската история т. IX, част II, София 1994* (forward *ГИБИ 9, 2*), 140, 141 letter N. 57, 32; Христо Меловски, *Москополски зборник, пролошки житија на светците*, Miscelanea Byzantine-Makedonica, 1.1., Скопје, 1996, 93.

⁹⁷ *ГИБИ 9, 2*, 179, Letter N. 82 to Michael nephew of the bishop of Chalcedon (between 1095–1106).

constitutes “the whole Bulgaria”, which will keep the term *Bulgaria* and in a lesser degree - *Bulgarians* alive in the sources describing the Central Balkans. Like several other medieval terms, the terms "Bulgaria" and "Bulgarians" in the Middle Ages have meanings variable but related to the medieval, not modern realities.⁹⁸

⁹⁸ There I agree with Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan Frontier*, 79, that “One thing we can say for certain is that the use of the ethnonym ‘Bulgarian’ and the toponym ‘Bulgaria’ in the medieval sources does not correspond with the modern usage.”