

History

The Christian Emperors of "Old Rome" and "New Rome" - „Defensores et Protectores Ecclesiae” (Defenders and Protectors of the Church)

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ABSTRACT. Among other things, the pages of our study have the purpose of informing and documenting the reader – even if succinctly – about the policy undertaken by some Christian emperors in their relations with the Church, and, ipso facto, the forms of manifestation of the relations between the State and the Church, which in fact began after the Milan Decree of 313. The historical testimonies (secular and ecclesiastical), the provisions of some Laws (roman-bizantines and byzantines) of State and Church and the Acts of the Ecumenical Synods confirm us the fact that over the centuries, some Christian emperors of the (Western and Eastern) Roman Empire turned out not to be persecutors of the Church of Christ - like their predecessors - but its "defensores et protectores" (defenders and protectors), even though their number differed from one epoch to another, and their support and protection have known different forms of manifestation. © 2018 Bull. Georg. Natl. Acad. Sci.

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According to some historians, the persecutions against Christians in the Roman Empire “did not start from an Imperial edict” [1], and that the Edict of Emperor Decius [2], from 249 - by which all subjects of the Roman Empire were compelled to bring sacrifices to the Roman gods, in order to receive a "libellus" (certificate) from the Temple - would be the first document kept for us about such a persecution against Christians.

On 30 April 311, emperor Galerius (305-311) proclaimed - from Nicomedia - the first Edict of tolerance for Christians, by which Christians were allowed "ut denuo sint" (to exist again) “..., et convencula eorum” (and to hold their meetings) [3].

The text of the Edict was copied and sent to all the provinces of the Roman Eastern Empire. But since emperor Galerius would die only a few days later (5 May 311), his Edict “... was only partially applied” [4: 77].

About “Emperor Caesar Galerius Valerius Maximinus” – who in the Edict issued in 311 also appeared with the title "Pontifex Maximus" [3: 337] – it is known to have been of Thraco-Dacian origin [5: 71-106]. His father was Thracian, and his mother, Romula, Dacian. Therefore, it is not surprising that the emperor Galerius contributed to the reconstruction of the Dobrudja limes (Pontic Dacia) [6: 6-14], which had been occupied by the

Romans since 27 A.D., as in fact other Roman emperors [7] did also, such as Maximinus Thrax (235-238), Constantinus Chlorus (293-306), the father of St. Constantine the Great, Valerius Licinianus Licinius (308-324) etc. who were also of Thracio-Dacian origin.

By the Edict of Milan [8: 4-8] in January 313, published by emperors Constantine and Licinius – who, in the opinion of some historians, "... was not a proper edict, but a letter addressed to the governors of Asia Minor and Eastern provinces" [9: 97] – Christianity was becoming a "Religio licita" (permitted Religion), but, by this legal status, it had not yet become a State religion. This peremptory reality is also confirmed to us by the fact that emperor Constantine the Great continued to keep the pagan title of "Pontifex Maximus", which actually legitimized him as Leader of the pagan Religion.

About the first Christian emperor, Constantine the Great, it is also known that, after the military victory over Licinius, in 324, he forbade performing the pagan rituals "... that contravened the Christian morality regarding chastity, such as prostitution and religious orgies", while also manifesting "officially the preference for Christians ..." [10: I-54].

Historians also noted that "... the religious policy inaugurated by emperor Constantine the Great had some unfortunate consequences. The Church had in the person of the emperor a protector, but at the same time, a master" [4].

Indeed, both the emperors from the Roman-Byzantine era (4th-6th centuries) and those from the Byzantine period - from the time of emperor Justinian (527-565) until the fall of Constantinople in 1453 – "... meddled in religious affairs, imposing their will. Some supported Aryanism, Monophysitism, Monothelitism, persecuted Orthodox hierarchs, removed them from their Seats, exiled them ..." [4].

Since the Edict of Milan [11], from 313, Christianity also became one of the legitimate

Religions, meaning it was allowed to organize and function freely within the boundaries of the Roman Empire, a right which had until then only belonged to polytheistic Religions of that age. And, consequently, "ab illo tempore", the relations between the State and the Church [12] entered a new path. Indeed, after emperor Constantine the Great (306-337), each Roman, Christian emperor wanted himself to be and called himself "*bishop for foreign affairs*", just as the first Christian emperor. However, by this very title, the Roman emperors emphasized that the Church was – volens-nolens – subjugated to the political, social, economic and geo-strategic interests of the Empire.

The same testimonies from "illo tempore" also testify to the fact that, for the most part, the Roman emperors proved to be quite receptive to the Church's express requests - expressed by its clergy, laymen and monks - to defend the faith that they themselves confessed, the Roman Basilians, in the name of the same faith confessed by the Ecumenical (Catholic) Orthodox Church.

To the same extent, the Roman Basilians responded to the demands and concerns of the Church's hierarchs also with regard to the administrative-territorial organization of the local Churches and the judgments which had to be made in order for the State law to be respected [13: 78-83]. Indeed, over the centuries, it was the Church that recognized the State's right to legislate for both its external interests and its internal life [14].

Starting with Eusebius of Caesarea (265-339), Christian historiography attributed to emperor Constantine the Great words that made history, such as those which were spoken at the festive Dinner offered to the bishops participating in the first Ecumenical Synod (Nicaea, 325), according to which the first Christian emperor is said to have spoken thus: "you are bishops for those within the Church, I also am a bishop, ordained by God, for those who are outside" [15: IV-24]. And, according to the interpretation of today's legal experts of Christian Orthodox faith, by the words "episcopos

ton ekτος" (bishop for foreign affairs), emperor Constantine wanted to say that, as "episcopus", that is "the supervising, administrative and legislative authority of the whole empire", he is making sure that "the state mechanisms, the bureaucracy and the central and decentralized powers of the empire function in line with the principles of Christian morality" [16: 143].

In the same paper, "On the Life of Constantine", the historian Eusebius of Caesarea wrote that the Emperor "... devoted special attention to the Church of God" and, among other things, he "summoned the servants of God to the Synod" in his capacity as "bishop for foreign affairs of the State (κοινὸς ἐπίσκοπος), by divine will (ἐκ Θεοῦ) ..." [15: I-44]. Undoubtedly, in the perception and conception of the first Christian emperor, his legal status was that of a "congregation servant", that is, in relation to all subjects of the law of the Roman State, including thus to the Orthodox Christian hierarchs assembled at the Nicaea ecumenical Synod in 325. And, just to this kind of ministry of public state interest lies in fact the so-called "episcopate" to which emperor Constantine actually referred.

In the interpretation of some historians and jurists of Roman-Catholic Church, the phrase "κοινὸς ἐπίσκοπος", used by Eusebius of Caesarea, is in fact "a skillful attempt to translate in theological terms an unprecedented novelty of the Christian Roman Empire: Constantine, *"The Stand-in of The Great King"* enclosed the Church into the Roman Empire, and turned the Empire into the Roman Church, leaving the bishops with liturgical functions, reserving for his Episcopate the "supervision" (ἐπίσκοπή) of the Christian people (populus christianus); the emperor explicitly claimed for himself, however, the role of ... universale protettore (κοινὸς κηδεμὼν), that is protector of Christians from any place on earth" [17: 6].

From "permitted Religion" (Religio licita), Christianity would become - on the basis of the

Edict of 380 - State religion and the Ecumenical (Catholic) Orthodoxy the official Christian Confession of the Empire, thus it can be said that "from the time of Theodosius the great, the Roman Empire becomes a Christian empire" [4]. Indeed, by imperial Decree of 28 September 380 - signed in Constantinople by Emperors Gratian, Valentinian and Theodosius - the pagan Religions were forbidden, hence the obligation for all "populos" (peoples) in their Empire to adopt "... Religio quam divinum Petrum apostolum tredidisse Romanis" [18: 96-97] (The religion with which the Romans were endowed by the divine Apostle Peter) was stipulated.

As for the heterodox, the "illo tempore" heretics, according to the Imperial Decree of 30 September 380, they had to "infamiam sustinere" [18: 96-97] (to bear the rigors of infamy), that is to be deprived of their civil rights, which also forbade them access to the Magistracy, and their "Tabernacles" were no longer allowed to bear the name of churches (ecclesiae). Consequently, "the heretics ... were first to be punished through a divine punishment (divina vindicta), and then by our Decree (motus nostri), which we consider to be a decision of Heaven (caelesti arbitrio) ..." [18: 96-97].

Regarding the organization of the Church, the Fathers of the VIth ecumenical Synod (Trullan 691/692) [19] also give us another eloquent example that underlines the fact that the Church - through its hierarchs - was the one which - volens-nolens - accepted to obey the king's scepter, that is the political will of the Emperor. It is the Church of Cyprus, whose Primate, Archbishop John, ,... in order to free himself from pagan slavery - by the care of God, the lover of men and the labor of our most faithful and most pious emperor, lover of Christ, emigrated with his people from the island of Cipriani to the diocese of Hellespont ..." (can. 39) [20: II-395-396].

Recognizing the emperors's right to honor "the citadels with names of Metropolises by decrees of

the emperor" (can. 12 of IVth ecumenical Synod), the Fathers of the IVth ecumenical Synod had in fact affirmed the canonical-legal principle of adapting or accommodating the form of Church organization to that of the state [21], according to which the division of the administrative units of the Church is to be made taking into account the way in which the administrative units of the Roman State are divided. Thus, "if any citadel should be empowered by royal power, or if it did so from now on (in the future) - the Fathers of the IVth ecumenical Synod agreed - then the political and congregation constitutions should follow the diocesan ecclesiastic organization" (can. 17). And this canonical-legal principle - according to which the form of church organization must be entered into the geographical area of the administrative-territorial unit of the State, or be ordered according to the congregation (State) - has also been reaffirmed by the Fathers of the Trullan Synod (can. 38).

Concerning the castigation of the schismatic clergy, the Synod of Antioch (341) decided that, after defrocking, the rebellious delinquent (clergyman) would be handed over to the State authorities to be tried and "... punished by external power (διὰ της ἕξωθεν ἐξουσίας) as a rebel (ὡς στασώδη)" [20: III-436] (can. 5 of the Synod of Antioch). And, in their Comments, the byzantine jurists and canonists of XIIth century precised explicitly that this "external power" meant "τῆς πολιτικῆς ἐξουσία" (political power) [20: III-436-437]. Therefore, both the Fathers of the Synod of Antioch (from 341), and the jurists of the byzantine Church and State, recognized the State's right to judge and punish the clergy of the Church who rebelled against their bishops and separated themselves from the "Church", thus categorizing themselves as schismatics.

Moreover, the synodal bishops assembled in Carthage in 397 addressed the „provincial chief“, that is the Roman State authority, in order to oblige "Cresconius, the bishop of the province of Recensa", who had extended his authority "over the

Church of Tubina". Although "... many times before he had been alerted to leave that church, in which he had entered, however, until today", - they declared - "he did not want to leave it". That is why they had decided to again call to "the chief of the province against him according to the ordinances of the glorified emperors" (sic) and "... to stop by the authority of worldly domination" (can. 48). Therefore, the bishops of the Proconsular Africa Church, from "illo tempore", appealed to the secular arm to discipline even the former fellows of the Archiepiscopate, who had grouped themselves in the Sectarian movement founded by bishop Donat, who in fact gave his name to Donatism. In fact, the same Synod of Carthage (397) stated that the presbyters who had convinced other people to join their side to "put themselves leaders (the bishops)" over the respective lands, "... to be cast off by the power of the state with certainty ..." (can. 53), that is be removed by force by State authorities. And, the same African Fathers, assembled at the Synod of Carthage on 13 September 401, decided to send synodal epistles "to the governors of Africa" in order to "inquire with official authority and jurisdiction, and with Christian faith, what had been done in all the places in which the Maximians retained the churches, then those who had separated themselves from them to appear in all cases in public documents, for all the sure knowledge of all" (can. 67).

Finally, with regard to the support and help given by emperors to the Orthodox, Catholic (ecumenical) Church, at the express request of its hierarchs, a good example is given by canon 93 of the Synod of Carthage (404), where we read that "... The Synod of Carthage" gave some "instructions" to its delegates sent to "the most honorable and most pious emperors", concerning the discussion with the Donatists "at the previous year's Synod" which, through the interventions of the governors, "were invited to meet in full freedom of speech ...". But since not only there was no agreement made, but, moreover, the Donatists "...

resorted to force ..., they took some of the churches, so it remained that by their favor, that of the emperors, to take care of the Catholic (ecumenical) Church, who bore them in its pious maternal breast and nourished them with the strength of faith, to be strengthened by their imperial care; ... Thus we now ask that the Catholic Church institutions be defended without delay in every citadel ... so that ... those who want to persist in the donatists' wandering to be taken the right to leave an inheritance or to receive anything ... Regarding all of them – it was provided in the respective Instructions – the help of the authorities of each province is necessary". And, in the same 93 canon it is mentioned that the Synod of Carthage also decided that, in addition to these instructions, "letters from our assembly should be sent to the most glorified emperors and supreme authorities, to fully convince them that the delegates are sent by us to the beatitude (imperial) Court through our full consent". Then the same Synod decided and sent thus "letters to the governors as well, ... to protect the Ecumenical Church- to authorities of the cities and the owners of the estates ... The bishop of the Church in Rome still needs to be sent letters as well as to others, where the emperor is, in order to recommend them to the delegates" (can. 93).

From the text of this canon – published in 404 – we could retain the following: a) The Proconsular Africa Church sent a synodal delegation to the imperial Court in connection with the Donatists. It is the emperor of the Roman Western Empire, Honorius (395-423), who had his residence in Rome; b) The delegates were instructed to request the imperial Court to support the secular arm against the Donatists and in the defense of the institutions of the Orthodox, Catholic (Ecumenical) Church; c) The delegates were empowered by the Synod of the African Church - meeting in Carthage in 405 - to demand that the law issued by the Western and Eastern Roman emperor, Theodosius (394-395), the father of Honorius, taken against the heretics, be reactivated so that they would be

prohibited from receiving or transmitting movable and immovable goods, by inheritance or by will. They were therefore deprived of the succession right; d) In addition to the Synodal letter, with which the two delegates of the African Church were entrusted, namely the "Theasi and Evodi" bishops (can. 93 Synod of Carthage), to attend the imperial Court, the Synod of Carthage also sent letters to the Archons of the citadel and the powerful of the day; e) The same Synod wrote to both the Bishop of Rome and to other bishops in the citadels they were passing through - during military campaigns - the emperor and his Court, to recommend its two delegates.

But, above all, we must emphasize and retain the fact that the African Church was the one who called for the help and intervention of the secular arm, through the direct imperial Court, against the Donatists, and that also thanks to the intervention of the imperial power – that is of the solicited emperors – during the following year, in 405, when a pacification of the Orthodox with the Donatists was reached. In fact, the Synod meeting in Carthage, in 405, decided to send "letters to the governors, so that they, too, would decide to strive for union in other provinces and citadels; and from the Church of Carthage, on behalf of the entire Africa, gratitude to be sent to the Court with the letters of the bishops for having freed themselves of Donatists, ... and to express gratitude for the pursuit of the Donatists to send to the Court two clergymen of the Church of Carthage" (can. 94).

As it known, peace with the „Catholics”, that is with the members of the Ecumenical (Universal / Catholic) Orthodox Church at that time, had been imposed on the Donatists "manu militari", hence the expected gratitude that the synodals of the Church of Carthage rushed to send to the Roman emperors.

Naturally, the help asked from the Roman Emperor by the African Church, and, ipso facto,

the intervention of the imperial power in a purely ecclesiastical dispute between the Catholics (orthodox) and the Donatists illustrates in the most veritable way both the way in which the support and assistance of the imperial power materialized, and the interference of the secular power in the life of the Church.

In the IXth century, the Fathers of the Eastern Church also decided that bishops and priests "... to guide those who do not obey the laws through teachings and counsel, sometimes also through church scoldings", and if "... some would in no way obey or listen to the correction of the scoldings, no one stops them from calming down by accusing them at their local governors. For also the 5th canon of the Synod of Antioch - they expressly mentioned - stipulated that those who maintain in the Church quarrels and disturbances correct their way through the outward hand" (can. 9 of the Synod of Constantinople of 861).

It was therefore recommended to bishops and priests that, if they found that they do not have sufficient spiritual-moral means, including spiritual punishments (the penances in the Confessional Seat) [22] to correct those who violated the "Law", those had to be handed over to the civil authorities so they should punish them. But, also in this respect, it was only those who disrupted public order in the Church, and not those who were found guilty of sins, because "de forum internum, non iudicat praetor".

From the Acts of the IIIrd ecumenical Synod (Ephesus, 431) we find out that "... the emperor (Theodosius the Younger, author's note) was fully assured that the Holy ecumenical synod had acted according to the canons and by good order by casting Nestorius. Therefore, approving the Synod, he condemned the Orientals (Antiochians, author's note) and punished Nestorius ..." [23: I-3: 67].

Therefore, in the decisions and measures that the emperors took even on matters concerning the Christian faith, they believed that they were acting in the defense of the Church, and in full accordance

with its teaching of Orthodox faith. In fact, in the "Sacra" of 431 (Epistle addressed to bishops to meet at the Synod of Ephesus), Emperor Theodosius II (408-450) wrote that "absolutely no measure we should have taken was omitted in the defense of our Religion" (Sacra sent to Acacius and Simeon Stylites) [23: I: I: 112]. The same emperor declared that he had utterly proven his "zeal for the Orthodox pioussness and faith" [23: I-3: 31].

In the Decree issued for the exile of Nestorius, Archbishop of Constantinople, - declared heretic by the IIIrd ecumenical Synod (Ephesus, 431) - emperor Theodosius II declared: "Although our zeal for public affairs is evident, still, we do not care less about the fate of our Holy Religion, for, if we serve this Religion, we have the assurance of being helped also with the needs of our State" [23: I-3: 67]. According to this decree, the emperor Theodosius II was equally concerned with both the "public affairs", i.e. the problems of the State's administration, and with the "fate" of Christian Religion, whose devoted son he had also proven to be. Such an attitude, however, was in fact in the spirit of the approach initiated by Constantine the Great in his policy on the relations between the State and the Church, between the State and the Religious Cults, on the basis of his so-called right in his capacity as "*bishop for foreign affairs*" of the Church.

In order to motivate his statement concerning the deposition from the Seat and the exile of the Archbishop of Constantinople, emperor Theodosius II stated that "... the so-called Nestorius" had been declared "traitor of faith" and "author of heresy", and, therefore, he "ordered" his "forever deportation in exile, to Patras, for the crimes he had committed, ..." [24: 414-415]. In his imperial law, concerning the Nestorians, the same emperor, Theodosius II, emphasized that "the honor we owe to the devoutness Religion makes that those who prove to be unrighteous towards the Divinity to be punished by righteous punishment ... That is why we proclaim that the followers of

Nestorius' unrighteous doctrine be called the Simons ... Among other things, we decree that no one dare to possess, read or copy the unrighteous books of the so-called Nestorius ...; these books must be fiercely searched for and burnt in public places". Also, Nestorius' followers were "... to be deprived of any possibility of reuniting ...; the one who transgresses this law – was stipulated in that imperial law - will be punished by confiscation of his goods" [23: I-3: 68]. Moreover, even in the "Edict of the Prefects", concerning the followers of Nestorius, it was also reaffirmed that the Christian Orthodox emperors had been really only those who had watched "with haste even in Spirituality and Religion", and who, as soon as Nestorius' heresy arose, "commanded ... the heads of the illicit doctrine to be punished by appropriate punishments" [23: I-3: 69].

In an imperial letter addressed to Archbishop John of Antioch, emperor Theodosius instructed him to comply with his decisions on the doctrine formulated by the Synod of Ephesus (431). "... So, here is, the commandment we give you ..., to accept ... everything that our Humbleness has decreed about the Orthodox faith and the unity of the holy Churches ... If you ... should have feelings contrary to our judgment ... and neglect the other commands we have given you, you have to ascribe to yourself ... the deserving punishments" [23: I-4: 3-5]. In this specific case, the Emperor was indeed the only one who decreed on "Orthodox faith" and, ipso facto, also on the preservation of the unity of the Churches in the area of Orthodoxy. He was also the one who ordered the punishment of those who did not respect his decisions.

In the "Sacra" sent by "emperor Marcian, the most pious and friend of Christ, to God's beloved bishops everywhere ..." of 23 May 451, it was stated that "above all, we must honor the Divinity. If, indeed, the Almighty God is favorable - Marcian wrote - we trust that public affairs are guarded and improved. And, since disputes over the Orthodox faith seem to be arising, ..., our Magnanimity has

decided that a Holy Synod should meet ..." [23: II: I-27]. And, in a third sacra, the same emperor Marcian wrote, "... We estimate that nothing should pass before the Orthodox faith and its strengthening, and, therefore ... we recommend - he wrote to the synodal bishops - to come without delay to the citadel of Chalcedon, to confirm the decisions about the holy and Orthodox faith, once established by the Holy Fathers" [23: II: I-30].

Consequently, just as the previous ecumenical Synods, the IVth ecumenical Synod (Chalcedon, 451) was also assembled by imperial decision, that is "at the command of most divine and most pious Lord, Marcian, Perpetual Augustus, ...", on the basis of which "the most glorious imperial commissioners and the entire Senate" decided to postpone the Sessions, so that the entire Synod, "being brought together, examine thoroughly and much more precisely the Orthodox and Catholic faith" [24: 840]. However those who pronounced themselves and formulated the faith decisions of the ecumenical Synods were the Fathers of the Church [25], and not the Emperor or his Commissioners and Senators, whose role should not, however, be neglected or minimized in this respect either. The case of the Vth ecumenical Synod (Constantinople, 553) remains obviously paradigmatic. But it must neither be ignored or concealed the fact that the Synod Fathers were those who wished "many happy years" both to "the Senators" and to the "Emperors" [24: 841].

The Emperors' right to interfere in the life of the Church – even regarding the formulation of Faith – was, in fact, acknowledged by the Church and the ecumenical Synods (cf. to the Acts of the IVth ecumenical Synod; VIth Session). In fact, the definitions or formulations of Faith of the ecumenical Synods - later known as "Dogmas" - were strengthened and legally enforced by the emperors themselves, who had convened these Ecumenical synods.

In the Acts of the Synod of Chalcedon (451) it is in fact expressly mentioned that it had met "at the

command of the most divine and pious lord, Marcian, Perpetual Augustus ..." [24: 669], and in "Ὁρος πίστεως" (definitio fidei) of the IVth ecumenical Synod we read that this "holy and great ecumenical synod" was assembled "at the command of the most pious emperors, friends of Christ, Valentinian and Marcian ..." [24: 62-65]. In fact, in the Acts of the IVth ecumenical Synod (Chalcedon, 451) it was constantly stated that the "Synodals" and "imperial commissioners" met "at the command of the most divine and pious lord, Marcian, Perpetual Augustus" (1st Session, 8 October 451), and that "the Holy and great ecumenical Synod" had met "by the grace of God according to the decree of the most pious and beloved by God emperors ..." [24: 894], that is of the two roman emperors, namely Marcian and Valentinian.

About the attitude of the first Byzantine emperor, Justinian (527-565), towards the Church, the competent Byzantinologists mentioned that he "... did nothing else but define a state of fact, beginning with the age of Constantine the Great", which offered the Church "... support even in the matters of Faith, making this one to feel indebted with a counter-service, ...", namely to accept that a Christian Emperor is "the defender and protector of the Church" (defensor et protector Ecclesiae), hence their reciprocally duty to establish a full "harmony" in the relations between them, that is between State and Church, the two fundamental institutions of human society in the first millennium.

Undoubtedly, by their concrete decisions and measures, both the Emperors of "Old Rome" and those of "New Rome" (according to can. 3, IInd ec.

Synod; can. 28, IVth ec. Synod), - who confessed the right (Orthodox) faith - proved to be truly "defensores" (defenders) and "protectores" (protectors) of the first millennium Ecumenical (Universal or Catholic) Orthodox Church, which, in turn, recognized the emperors's right to issue laws on ecclesiastical organization and discipline [26, 27], having as canonical-legal basis the very norms of the Legislation of the Ecumenical Church from the first millennium, by which it was also expressly stipulated that the relations between the State and the Church have to be based on the reciprocally respect of their inherent autonomy, the only one which could create a state of harmony of the two fundamental institutions of the human society. In fact, as the well-known Byzantinologist, Steven Runciman, rightly remarked, "by this harmony, no definite line of demarcation could be drawn between the Church and the state, faith and politics, and the problems of one institution were, consequently, of the other, of course not in the sense of merging one into the other, but in the symphony. Thus, the old Roman concept of "salus publica" was not abandoned, but reconfirmed, reinvented" [28: 8-9]. However, in the 11th-12th centuries it was already found out that from the former state of harmony – known as a state of symphony in the relations between State and Church – the Church had "... as a rule less control than the emperors even on theological and disciplinary issues ..." [10: II-110]. Anyhow, unfortunately, a such reality come out in some States of the world even in our days.

ისტორია

„ძველი“ და „ახალი რომის“ ქრისტიანი იმპერატორები - „defensores et protectores Ecclesiae“ (ეკლესიის დამცველნი და მფარველნი)

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კონსტანცას ოვიდიუსის სახელობის უნივერსიტეტი, რუმინეთი

(წარმოდგენილია აკადემიის წევრის რ. მეტრეველის მიერ)

ჩვენი კვლევის მიზანია მივაწოდოთ მკითხველს ინფორმაცია (თუნდაც ლაკონური) ქრისტიანი იმპერატორების მიერ ეკლესიასთან მიმართებით წარმოებული პოლიტიკისა და, შესაბამისად, სახელმწიფოსა და ეკლესიას შორის იმ ურთიერთობათა შესახებ, რასაც ფაქტობრივად საფუძველი ჩაეყარა 313 წელს, მილანის ედიქტის გამოცემის შემდეგ. ისტორიული (საეკლესიო თუ საერო) მტკიცებულებები, სახელმწიფოსა და ეკლესიის ზოგიერთი კანონის (რომაულ-ბიზანტიური თუ ბიზანტიური) დებულებები და მსოფლიო საეკლესიო კრებათა განჩინებანი ცხადყოფს, რომ საუკუნეთა განმავლობაში აღმოსავლეთი თუ დასავლეთი რომის ქრისტიანი იმპერატორები იყვნენ არა ქრისტეს ეკლესიის მდევნელნი თავიანთ წინამორბედთა მსგავსად, არამედ მისი „defensores et protectores“ (დამცველნი და მფარველნი), თუმცა კი სხვადასხვა ეპოქაში მათი რიცხვი იცვლებოდა, ხოლო მათი მხარდაჭერა და მფარველობა სხვადასხვა სახით ვლინდებოდა.

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