

AN EPISTLE FROM EPIPHANIUS OF CYPRUS TO PATRIARCH IGNATIUS AND THE ADHERENCE OF THE CYPRIOT CHURCH TO THE ANTI-PHOTIAN COUNCIL¹

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Abstract: IBÁÑEZ CHACÓN, Álvaro. *An Epistle from Epiphanius of Cyprus to Patriarch Ignatius and the Adherence of the Cypriot Church to the Anti-Photian Council*. The so-called Anti-Photian Collection comprises various documents related to the successive appointments and depositions of Ignatius and Photius as Patriarchs of Constantinople. Among these is a letter from Epiphanius, Archbishop of Cyprus, addressed to Patriarch Ignatius. In this epistle, Epiphanius offers his congratulations on Ignatius's reinstatement to the Patriarchal See. This epistle is not an autograph document but a copy preserved in two manuscripts owned by Cardinal Bessarion, from which all subsequent copies derive. The text follows the typical themes and structure of Byzantine epistolography but it is clearly an *excerptum*. However, since no official documentation from Ignatius's Patriarchate has survived, this letter stands as a unique record of the autocephalous Church of Cyprus' adherence to the decrees of the Eighth Ecumenical Council. Notably, no Cypriot representative was present at the anti-Photian synod, as recorded in the *acta conciliaria*.

Keywords: *Anti-Photian Collection, Photius, Ignatius, Epiphanius of Cyprus, Eighth Ecumenical Council*

Photius of Constantinople (PmbZ 6253, 26667) is undoubtedly the central figure of Byzantine history in the second half of the ninth century. Everything surrounding him has been, is, and will always remain steeped in controversy, primarily due to his conflict with Rome.² The series of appointments and depositions he and his rival Ignatius (PmbZ 2666, 22712) endured shaped the political and religious landscape of the time, directly influencing their respective supporters both within and beyond Byzantine borders.³ Just as Photius's disciples and sympathizers sought to preserve the *monumenta* of his wisdom and teachings,⁴ it is unsurprising that his opponents compiled literary works and documents against him, forming what became known as the Anti-Photian Collection (henceforth AC).⁵ In addition to the Greek versions of documents otherwise known through their Latin translations – such as the *acta* and papal correspondence – this

¹ This study was undertaken as part of the Project PPJIA2020.01 “La colección anti-fociana: documentos inéditos del partido ignaciano”, funded by the University of Granada (Spain).

² The main works on Photius are still Hergenröther (1867-1869) and Dvornik (1948); should be added for the socio-political and religious context, among others Bury (1912), Every (1947), Stiennon (1967), Simenova (1998), Chadwick (2003), Prieto Domínguez (2020).

³ See Grumel (1939), Stephanou (1955), Dvornik, (1973), Konstantelos (1989-1991).

⁴ The most notable *monumentum* is the *Library*, compiled and put together by his circle of disciples; see now Ronconi (2015a) and (2015b).

⁵ A list with the texts can be found in Leonardi – Placanica (2012, lxiv-lxxii); analysis by Dvornik (1948, 216-278); see too Montinaro – Price (2022, 63-68).

compilation preserves key pro-Ignatian testimonies, including the *Life of Ignatius* (BHG 817), attributed to Nicetas David the Paphlagonian (PmbZ 25712),⁶ and the *libellus* (BHG 818c) of Theognostus (PmbZ 8018)⁷. It also contains lesser-known texts, such as excerpts from an encomium of Patriarch Ignatius (BHG 818)⁸ and the epistle that is the subject of this paper.

1. The epistle of Epiphanius to Ignatius: text and transmission

The text of the epistle, like the entire AC, has been preserved through two copies owned by Cardinal Bessarion:⁹

- Venezia, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, gr. Z 167 (*diktyon*: 69638), ff. 47r-47v, s. XIVⁱⁿ. (Mioni 1981, 246-247; Mazzone 2022).
- München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. graec. 436 (*diktyon*: 44884), pp. 39-40, s. XIV (Hardt 1810, 352-354).¹⁰

All other copies derive directly or indirectly from these,¹¹ which explains the absence of significant textual variations beyond minor spelling errors.

The *editio princeps* of the AC was produced by Rader (1604), dedicated to Cardinal Baronio, and based on two codices (Canfora 2004, 7–22). As his base text, he used the apograph München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Graec. 27 (*dyktion*: 44470), a manuscript copied *ca.* 1550 (Tiftixoglu 2004, 154–170). Later, thanks to M. Welser, he was also able to consult the previously mentioned Cod. Graec. 436.¹²

Since Rader's Graeco-Latin bilingual edition, the AC has been incorporated into all editions of the *acta conciliaria* – except for the recent Leonardi – Placanica edition – introducing textual variants absent from both the manuscripts and the *editio princeps*.¹³ However, Rader was not the first to translate the anti-Photian documents into Latin. In the mid-fourteenth century, Filippo de Bindo Incontri, a Dominican from the Monastery of Pera in Constantinople and Inquisitor of the East,¹⁴ produced an early Latin version with the assistance of Demetrius Cydones (PLP 13876) from a manuscript he discovered in the Monastery of St. Ioannes Prodromos in Petra.¹⁵ The only known copy of this translation, preserved in Firenze, Biblioteca Centrale Nazionale, Conv. Soppr. C.VII.419, ff. 138v–173r, does not contain the complete collection, and it is unclear whether

⁶ The edition by Smithies – Duffy (2013) is not definitive at all, cf. Luzzi (2019).

⁷ There is no modern edition or detailed study apart from Hergenröther (1867, 407-412); however, see Bernardakis (1903, 254-257), Jugie (1918), Dvornik (1960, 25-26), Ronconi (2018, 62-63).

⁸ Attributed to an unknown Michael *synkellos*, cf. Ibáñez Chacón (2021).

⁹ They are listed in the 1468 inventory as nos. 194 and 193, respectively: Labowsky (1979, 165).

¹⁰ Smithies – Duffy (2013, xvii) consider this copy an apograph of the Venetian manuscript. However, Canfora (1998, 270) argues that both manuscripts are independent witnesses to the text.

¹¹ List of manuscripts in Leonard – Placanica (2012, lxvi-lxix).

¹² Bessarion's manuscript was already in Germany, possibly stolen from Venice by Manuel Glynnunios: Sicherl (1956: 51).

¹³ AAVV (1612, 302-468); Labbé – Cossart (1671, 1179-1490); Hardouin (1714, 943-1196); Coleti (1730, 681-994); Mansi (1771, 209-516).

¹⁴ Biographical data in Loenertz (1948); Delacroix-Besnier (2007).

¹⁵ Cydones' correspondence reveals his connection with De Bindo (*Epist.* 31, 32 and 110, in Loenertz, 1956), who may have even been his Latin teacher: Mercati (1931, 514), Delacroix-Besnier (2003).

this selection was made by De Bindo-Cydones or by the copyist of the Florentine manuscript.¹⁶ Additionally, another unpublished Latin translation was produced by Federico Mezio for Cardinal Baronio and survives in two manuscript versions: a complete one in Roma, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, C.31, and a partial one in *ms.* C.29 of the same library (Carlucci 2007, 183–187). This translation was well known to Rader, who frequently cited it (Rader 1604, 125, 204, 402, etc.).

As for the Greek text itself, as is typical with Byzantine epistolary documents, we do not have the autograph but rather a copy made by an anonymous individual, whose identity remains unknown (Grünbart 2004, 352). Some have attributed the AC to Nicetas David the Paphlagonian, biographer of Ignatius,¹⁷ suggesting that he might have copied Epiphanius's letter. However, this is another hypothesis that remains difficult to prove. It is also unclear where the compiler found the original letter, although it is possible that, after being received by Ignatius, it was kept in the archives of the Patriarchal Palace Library,¹⁸ where it would have been read alongside the other documents that comprise the collection. If one accepts the hypothesis that Ignatius moved the patriarchal archive to the Monastery of Stoudios,¹⁹ further research would be necessary to determine how long it was stored there and whether the compiler consulted the Stoudite documents – though this, too, is impossible to confirm. The only certainty is that the epistle was sent to Ignatius after his reinstatement to the Patriarchal See, around 870, which also accounts for its literary and rhetorical characteristics. Below is the text of the epistle.²⁰

Ἐπιστολή Ἐπιφανίου ἀρχιεπισκόπου Κύπρου πρὸς Ἰγνάτιον τὸν Κωνσταντινουπόλεως μετὰ τὴν ἐπάνοδον αὐτοῦ.

Τολμῶν²¹ ὁ ἀνάξιος καὶ πανευτελὴς τοῦ πανιέρου καὶ ἰσαγγέλου δεσπότου μου δοῦλος γράφω.

Ἦσαντο μὲν καὶ τῆς ὑμετέρας²² ἀγίας καὶ θεοειδοῦς ψυχῆς, ἱερώτατε, παρὰ τοῦ πειράζοντος πάντας τοὺς κατὰ Θεὸν ζῶντας ἀρχεκάκου δαίμονος²³ οἱ πειρασμοί, ὅτι δὲ δοκιμώτερον καὶ κραταιότερόν σε ἀνέδειξαν καὶ ὥσπερ²⁴ χρυσὸν ἐν καμίνῳ πυρώσαντες λαμπρότερον καὶ φαιδρότερον κατέστησαν πᾶσιν εὐδελον. ὄντως εἰς²⁵ μάτην ἠγρύπνησεν ὁ φυλάσσων τῇ ὑμετέρᾳ²⁶ στερρότητι πέτρα προσκρούσας· ἰδοὺ οἱ συκοφάνται²⁷ τῆς ἀληθείας παρῆλθον καὶ ὁ φωστὴρ

¹⁶ All the circumstances surrounding its production need to be analysed in detail; see for now Kaeppli (1953); Pomaro (1982, 236).

¹⁷ Since Assemanus (1762, 322–325), followed by Dvornik (1948, 271–278) or Paschalides (1999, 83), but his role in the compilation is now considered secondary: Zuckermann (2020, 442); Montinaro – Price (2022, 66–67).

¹⁸ References to the Patriarchal Palace Library are few and ambiguous; however, see Janin (1950, 174, 372–373); Guiland (1969, 14–27); Lemerle (1971, 96–98); Mango (1975, 30–37), Wilson (1989, 86–87), or Canfora (1995, 25–28).

¹⁹ Suggestion by Afinogenov (2006) accepted by Prieto Domínguez (2020, 167–168).

²⁰ We present our own edition of the text after collating all the manuscripts and consulting the editions of the *acta conciliaria*. In the notes, we highlight the main textual variants, omitting the usual spelling errors unless they alter the meaning of the text, as well as the *loci similes*.

²¹ τολμῶν – δοῦλος *initium sim.* Basil. Cal. *epist.*, cf. Holtzmann (1928, 64).

²² ὑμετέρας] ἡμέρας K^{a.c.}, ἡμετέρας K^{p.c.} K = Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, Ms. 4708 (*dyktion*: 40184), *an.* 1557; text in ff. 51v–52r.

²³ ἀρχεκάκου δαίμονος: Bas. *hex.* 6.1 (PG 29, 117; CPG 2835); Jo. D. B.J. 32.73 (CPG 8120).

²⁴ ὥσπερ – πυρώσαντες: Bas. *hom.* in Lc. 12:8 (PG 31, 261; CPG 2850).

²⁵ εἰς – φυλάσσω: Ps. 126:1

²⁶ ὑμετέρᾳ] ἡμετέρᾳ R. R = Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1183 (*dyktion*: 67814), s. XVI; text in ff. 8v–9r.

²⁷ οἱ συκοφάνται τῆς ἀληθείας: Epiph. *haer.* 67.7.7 (CPG 3745).

τῆς οἰκουμένης²⁸ αὐθις τὴν ἰδίαν ἀπέλαβε δόξαν· διὸ καὶ συντρέχει καὶ συνευφραίνεται ἐπὶ τῇ ἀποκαταστάσει σου πᾶσα ἡ οἰκουμένη καὶ συνεορτάζουσι τούτοις καὶ αἱ ἄνω δυνάμεις.

Πάνυ δὲ καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐφιέμεθα οἱ ταπεινοὶ καὶ ἁμαρτωλοὶ, οἱ τὴν ἐσχατιὰν ταύτην οἰκοῦντες²⁹, τῆς περὶ σὲ εὐφροσύνης³⁰ κοινωνῆσαι καὶ τῶν πνευματικῶν χαρισμάτων³¹ ἐμφορηθῆναι· ἀλλὰ κεκωλύμεθα φόβῳ καὶ αἰδοῖ, μήπως καὶ προπετείας κριθῶμεν, ἀκελεύστως τοῦτο δράσαντες· ἀνάξιον γὰρ ἡγοῦμεθα ἄνευ τῆς προστάξεως τῶν εὐσεβῶν³² καὶ δικαίων μεγάλων βασιλέων ἡμῶν καὶ τῆς ὑμετέρας δεσποτικῆς ἀγιοσύνης τοῦτο κατατολμῆσαι.

Πλὴν εἰ καὶ τῷ σώματι οὐ παρέσμεν, ἀλλὰ τῇ ψυχῇ καὶ συνευφραινόμεθα καὶ συγκοινωνοῦμεν καὶ συνευδοκοῦμεν πᾶσι τοῖς ὑφ' ὑμῶν³³ καὶ τῆς ἱερᾶς ὑμῶν³⁴ συνόδου δεδογμένους καὶ συντάττομεν ταύτην ταῖς ἀγίαις ἐπτά συνόδοις ταῖς παρελθούσαις καὶ τοὺς ταύτην μὴ δεχομένους ἀποβαλλόμεθα.

Therefore, the epistle is an *amtliche Brief*, that is, official correspondence between two prominent figures, which, in some cases, became part of thematic or authorial *corpora* (Hunger 1978, 203). However, since no original documentation from either of the two Ignatian Patriarchates has survived,³⁵ the letter stands as a singular piece of evidence.³⁶ Additionally, like most texts in the AC, Epiphanius's epistle is a shortened version of the original missive, as is evident from the text itself. While it is true that Byzantine epistolography was less formal than its classical counterpart, and that in medieval rhetoric, συντομία (brevity) was one of the central principles,³⁷ the extreme conciseness of the letter, the abrupt transitions between arguments, and the lack of a concluding formula suggest that it is an epitome. Nevertheless, the author of the *excerptum* has preserved certain rhetorical elements from the original epistle.

The *initium* (line 3), for example, is an *amplificatio* of the motif τολμῶν ὁ δοῦλος σου (Hunger 1978, 217), similar in its wording to the *initium* of the epistle of Basilios, Metropolitan of Calabria, to Patriarch Nicolaus III (Grünbart 2020, 333; text in Holtzmann 1928, 64-67).³⁸

The *initium* is followed by an indirect salutation formula, which is also amplified with other common elements,³⁹ maintaining the *Doppeldaktylos* (xxx/xxx),⁴⁰ the typical rhythm in Byzantine epistolography (Grünbart 2005, 62-66). Other forms of salutation in the letter include:

²⁸ ὁ φωστὴρ τῆς οἰκουμένης: Jo. Chrys. *hom.* in Mt. LXVIII (PG 58, 644; CPG 4424); Cyr. Jo. 11.9 (PG 74, 517; CPG 5208); Thdt. epp. Paul. proem. 1 (PG 82, 36; CPG 6209); BHG 495 (AASS Nov. III, 305A-B), etc.

²⁹ οἰκοῦντες] οἰκοῦνται Rader (1904, 220).

³⁰ εὐφροσύνης] ἀφροσύνης R^{ac}.

³¹ πνευματικῶν χαρισμάτων: 1Cor. 12:1.

³² τῶν εὐσεβῶν – ἡμῶν: Petr. Sic. Hist. 188.

³³ ὑμῶν] ἡμῶν *omnes codd.*; Rader (1904, 220); Hardouin (1714, 1024).

³⁴ ὑμῶν] ἡμῶν RK

³⁵ At best there are extracts and the Latin translations incorporated in the *acta conciliaria*, cf. Grumel – Darrouzès (1989, nos. 444-455, 528-537b). Unlike other patriarchs, Ignatius was not a writer or theologian, so none of his works have survived (Beck 1959, 603; Prieto Domínguez 2020, 280-282).

³⁶ In fact, it is not listed in Grünbart (2020).

³⁷ For the rhetoric of the Byzantine epistolography see the synthesis of Kotzabassi (2020), with the preceding bibliography.

³⁸ The humility formula is also common in episcopal seals (Laurent 1972, xxxiv).

³⁹ Cf. Grünbart (2005, 316 πανίερος; 276 ισάγγελος; 248-256 δεσπότης).

⁴⁰ Hörandner (1981, 41-46), Valiavitcharska (2013, 63-64).

- Line 4: τῆς ὑμετέρας ἀγίας καὶ θεοειδοῦς ψυχῆς, ἱερώτατε – an indirect compound apostrophe with ellipsis of the pronoun, followed by the direct simple apostrophe common in clerical correspondence.⁴¹ This clause also preserves the *Doppeldaktylos*.
- Lines 7 – 8: τῇ ὑμετέρᾳ στερρότητι – an indirect compound apostrophe, again maintaining the *Doppeldaktylos*.⁴²
- Line 15: τῆς ὑμετέρας δεσποτικῆς ἀγιοσύνης – an indirect apostrophe.⁴³

In terms of style, traces of the original χάρις remain, achieved through quotations and references to literary tradition (cf. *loci similes* in the notes). The language adheres to the expected, archaic, and lofty σαφήνεια, without descending into rhetorical excess.

Finally, although the primary purpose of the letter is to congratulate Ignatius on his reinstatement to the Patriarchate and acknowledge his authority,⁴⁴ the autocephalous nature of the Church of Cyprus should not be overlooked (cf. *infra*). Thus, the sender did not owe his position to the Patriarch, and his relationship with him was not governed by the motif of φιλία, which is essential in the epistolary genre as a connecting link between sender and recipient on both an ideological and emotional level.⁴⁵

2. The author of the Epistle: Epiphanius III, Archbishop of Cyprus

Throughout the history of the ecclesiastical hierarchy of Cyprus, there have been several homonymous figures, starting with Epiphanius of Salamis (ca. 310 – 403), a renowned theologian and venerated saint on the island.⁴⁶ Consequently, there are three more archbishops who assumed the name Ἐπιφάνιος in various lists.⁴⁷ The author of the letter to Ignatius is Epiphanius III (PmbZ 21700), a largely unknown figure.⁴⁸ There is only one contemporary document that mentions him: a *sigillum*, part of Bryer's collection and edited by him in 1970 before its inclusion in Laurent's *corpus* (1972, 287, no. 2015; see also Metcalf 2004, 369–370, no. 459). Found in Constantinople, it is badly damaged, but its characteristic features can still be read, allowing it to be dated with relative precision:

- Obv.: effigy of the Θεοτόκος embracing a medallion with the image of the Child, framed by the initials ΜΡ ΘΥ (μήτηρ Θεοῦ). From the legend surrounding the seal, only ΘΕΟ[---]ΥΛΩ is legible, corresponding to the humility formula Θεο[τόκε βοήθει τῷ σῷ δο]ύλῳ.
- Rev.: full legend with the official title of the owner of the seal: + ΕΠΙΦΑ/ΝΙΩ ΑΡΧΙΕ/ ΠΙΣΚΟΠΩ/ ΚΥΠΡΟΥ.

⁴¹ Grünbart (2005, 209 ἀγίος; 270 θειοειδής; 356-360 ψυχή; 275-276 ἱερώτατος).

⁴² Grünbart (2005, 324 στερρότης).

⁴³ Grünbart (2005, 212 ἀγιοσύνη).

⁴⁴ In other words, a distinctly diplomatic undertone, which is sometimes difficult to distinguish from the rhetorical and literary nature of the epistolary document (Beihammer 2020).

⁴⁵ Cf. Tinnefeld (1973), Mullet (2003), Bourboulakis (2020).

⁴⁶ See Delehay (1907, 242-243); Rapp (1991); Englezakis (1995); Paschalides (2012); Jacobs (2016).

⁴⁷ See Cappuyns (1935); Laurent (1948); Gouillard (1967, 11, 274); Papacostas (2002).

⁴⁸ Cf. Le Quien (1740, 1050-1052); Hackett (1901, 258-259); Papaioannou (1927, 72-73); Gouillard (1967, 11, 274); Fedalto (1988, 875-876).

Thanks to the abbreviation of the *nomina sacra* MP ΘΥ and the arrangement of the other elements,⁴⁹ it is possible to ascribe the seal to the so-called “Photian type” (Nesbitt 1995, 55), a style used by the Patriarch in one of his two issues.⁵⁰ Therefore, the Bryer *sigillum* is contemporary to Epiphanius III. Since it was found in Constantinople, Laurent (1972, 287) hypothesized that it was the seal accompanying the letter.

Along with this possible document, it is also worth noting an obscure reference in the *Vita Demetriani* (BHG 495, §10),⁵¹ according to which Eustathius, Bishop of Chytri (PmbZ 21835), ascended to the Archiepiscopal See of Cyprus following the death of the previous archbishop, whose name is not provided. Although Eustathius does not appear in the official records,⁵² and despite the anonymity of his predecessor, it has been believed since Le Quien (1740, 1052) that the unnamed archbishop was Epiphanius III, who died around 885 – 886.

The seal, the hagiographic reference, and the letter from the AC are therefore the only available evidence for situating Epiphanius III within the turbulent context of the second half of the ninth century.

3. The epistle of Epiphanius as evidence of conciliar adherence

As is well known, the Church of Cyprus was officially recognized as an “autocephalous church” at the Third Ecumenical Council of Ephesus (431 AD). According to the Apostolic theory, it was entitled to this status due to its significance as a preaching and founding site of St. Paul and St. Barnabas (Vailhé 1910; Janin 1953). Thus, during the seventh session of the council, through the mediation of the Cypriot representatives – especially Zeno of Kourion –⁵³ the synod validated Cyprus’ ecclesiastical self-determination, freeing it from the influence of the Patriarchate of Antioch. As a result, the Church of Cyprus became the next in the hierarchy following the so-called “Pentarchy”,⁵⁴ which included Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem.⁵⁵

Autocephaly ensured the independence of certain dioceses from the primacy imposed by Rome and the other four Patriarchates, leading to conflicts and disputes with newly autocephalous churches, such as the Church of Bulgaria.⁵⁶ However, by the time of the Eighth Ecumenical

⁴⁹ The abbreviation began to be used in representations of the Virgin Mary from the ninth century onwards (Kalavrezou 1990) and its use extended to other objects such as sigillographic production until the mid-tenth century, cf. Nesbitt (1995).

⁵⁰ Specifically, during the second patriarchy (Zacos – Veglery 1986, 7). Nesbitt (1995, 55) notes that it is not possible to determine precisely to which period the iconography belongs. Photius had revived the iconography used by Methodius I, in contrast to that of Ignatius, cf. Cotsonis (2020, 106-107).

⁵¹ The text edited by Delehaye (1910, 298-308) replaces the deficient *editio princeps* by Grégoire (1907, 217-237).

⁵² This is not surprising, given the nature of the records (Laurent 1948, 161-162), and he does appear in the lists of bishops of Chytri contained in the *synodicon* of Cyprus (Cappuyns 1935, 492).

⁵³ Subsequently sanctified, cf. Delehaye (1907, 255), Sauget (1967).

⁵⁴ See Hefele – Leclercq (1869, 386-387); Hackett (1901, 11-23); Vailhé (1910, 8-10); Janin (1953, 794-795). Text of the session in Schwartz (1929, 118-122); extract from the conciliar decision in Abramowski (2006, 111-112); English translation in Tanner (1990, 68-69).

⁵⁵ The literature on the “Pentarchy its organization, and related disputes is extensive. For a comprehensive overview, see the following studies: Peri (1988); Panagiotopoulos (2003); Morini (2012), (2014); Herrin (2013, 239-266).

⁵⁶ Cf. Kyriakos (1902); Dvornik (1979, 27-39); Felmy (1980). It was also possible for dioceses to be independent of their metropolitans. See the comments of Chrysos (1969) on the *notitia episcopatum* attributed to St Epiphanius; text in Darrouzès (1981, 204-213).

Council (the Fourth of Constantinople), the autocephaly of Cyprus was firmly established, and its representatives remained unaffected by the rivalry between Photius and Ignatius. In fact, no member of the Cypriot ecclesiastical hierarchy is known to have been involved in the succession of appointments and depositions that accompanied the rise and fall of both Patriarchs. For this reason, we know little about the position of the Church of Cyprus concerning various synodal decisions imposed by both Ignatius (e.g., the deposition and excommunication of Gregorius Asbestos in 847 – 848 or 852 – 853)⁵⁷ and Photius (notably, the excommunication of Pope Nicolaus I in 867).⁵⁸ These actions were decreed in local synods, which did not require the convocation of other Sees. The anti-Ignatian synod of 861, though, did have a Roman delegation.⁵⁹ However, the papal *apocrisarii* – Rhadoaldus of Porto (PmbZ 6404) and Zacharias of Anagni (PmbZ 8636) – were sent to Constantinople to investigate the case against Ignatius, not to confirm his deposition on behalf of the Roman See (Anastos 1990; Mormino 2015). Similarly, Photius later used certain figures, purportedly ambassadors of the Oriental Patriarchates and anti-papal Roman clergy, to support his intentions to excommunicate the Pope (Sansterre 1973).⁶⁰ Nothing is known about the stance of the Church of Cyprus on these events, and it was not present at the anti-Photian council.

Certainly, the Eighth Ecumenical Council was convened with great pomp and canonical rigor, ensuring that all relevant parties, both religious and secular, were represented (Dvornik 1966). As a result, all members of the “Pentarchy” are present in the *subscriptions*:

- For Rome the *apocrisarii* of Pope Hadrian II (PmbZ 22537): Donatus, Bishop of Ostia (PmbZ 1390), Stephen, Bishop of Nepi (PmbZ 27381) and Marinus, Deacon of Rome (PmbZ 4819, 24983).⁶¹
- Ignatius signs as the new Patriarch of Constantinople.
- The Deacon Ioseph (PmbZ 23512) on behalf of Michael, Patriarch of Alexandria (PmbZ 25098).
- Thomas, Metropolitan of Tyrus (PmbZ 28279), representing the then-vacant Patriarchate of Antioch.
- Helias, presbyter and syncellus (PmbZ 21641), representing Patriarch Theodosius of Jerusalem (PmbZ 27887).⁶²

⁵⁷ On Gregorius Asbestos see PmbZ 2480, 22348. His destitution was not welcomed by Rome or the Byzantine clergy, cf. Grumel (1941); Dvornik (1948, 18-38); Stiennon (1967, 15-17, 19-23); Karlin-Hayter (1977); Chadwick (2003, 121-123).

⁵⁸ See Hergenröther (1867, 649-653); Bury (1912, 201-203); Every (1947, 128-129); Dvornik (1948, 119-131); Mango (1958, 299-306); Chadwick (2003, 158-161); Simeonova (1998, 223-246).

⁵⁹ The *acta* were destroyed during the Eighth Ecumenical Council, but an abridged Latin version survives, created by Cardinal Deusdedit in the eleventh century from the copy taken to Rome (see the edition of Wolf von Glanvell 1905, 603-610). The disciplinary canons issued by the synod, however, have been preserved, possibly added by Photius himself to the collection initiated by Ioannes VIII Scholasticus in the sixth century, cf. Lauritzen (2016). For the development of the synod see Hergenröther (1867, 419-438); Hefele – Leclercq (1911, 275-280); Dvornik (1948, 70-90); Stiennon (1967, 35-41); Chadwick (2003, 139-146).

⁶⁰ For a discussion on the different phases of the relationship between Photius and the Oriental Patriarchates, see Signes Codoñer (2013, 106-133).

⁶¹ See too *Liber Pontificalis* (1892, 180), English translation by Davis (1995, 275).

⁶² See the Latin text in Leonardi – Placanica (2012, 356-358), English translation in Montinaro – Price (2022, 428-429). The abridged Greek version –edited by Rader (1604, 358)– and the *Liber Pontificalis* II, 108, 46 (Duchesne 1892, 182) omit the names of the Oriental representatives, but the same list, with some divergences, present Nicetas David, *Life of Ignatius* 61 (Smithies – Duffy 2013, 86-87), and *Synodicon vetus* 162 (Duffy – Parker 1979, 138-141).

The signature of the representative of the Cypriot Church should have been recorded here, after the representatives of the five Sees and before the other participants. However, no one was present to do so. In this context, the epistle of Epiphanius to Ignatius effectively replaces the *subscriptio* of the *acta conciliaria*, serving as an official letter of recognition from the representative of the autocephalous Church of Cyprus to the new Patriarch of Constantinople (Mazzone 2022). This is clearly stated in the epistle itself, where Epiphanius, on behalf of the Cypriot Church, acknowledges the authority of the seven previous ecumenical councils and rejects the dissenters – Photius and his supporters.

As Peri pointed out (1995, 239): “la corrispondenza ufficiale che le Chiese patriarchali intrattenevano tra loro e con la cancelleria imperiale, conservate nei rispettivi archivi, fornisce pertanto, allorchè sussiste, la documentazione più autorevole e diretta per chi voglia approfondire il carattere di tali rapporti”. Thus, by including it in the *Anti-Photian Collection*, the compiler not only completes the picture of conciliar ecumenism, adding the principal autocephalous See to the common agreement of the *subscriptio*es from the representatives of the “Pentarchy”, but also provides a unique and valuable document showcasing the pro-Ignatian position of the Church of Cyprus. However, the sincerity and loyalty of this position over time cannot be fully assured.

4. Conclusion

In summary, the autocephalous Church of Cyprus refrained from intervening in the religious and political conflicts between Constantinople and Rome following the deposition of Ignatius and the appointment of Photius as Patriarch. In fact, no representative was sent to the anti-Photian synod. However, the Church expressed its support for Ignatius’s second appointment through a letter sent by Epiphanius, Archbishop of Cyprus. In doing so, the Cypriot Church affirmed its adherence to the conciliar decision and validated the authority of the synod. For this reason, the epistle was included in the collection of anti-Photian documents.

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