9. The church of Ravenna, Constantinople and Rome in the seventh century

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Throughout the seventh century, great mutual amity was professed by the churches of Ravenna, Constantinople and Rome. Sometimes, there *was* amity. But the situation of the Byzantine empire was often so precarious as to threaten, directly and indirectly, the churches of Rome and Ravenna and hence preclude even a pretence of amity.[1]

From the end of the sixth century the empire had had to contend with Persian attacks on its eastern front as well as Avar-Slav attacks in the Balkans, only temporarily halted by the victories of the Emperor Heraclius both in defending Constantinople (626) and in recapturing Jerusalem in 628. Such military successes were short-lived, however. For the Empire was confronted by a new threat: the expansion of Islam from 632, which rapidly shrank the empire's territory in Asia and Africa, while in Italy Lombard expansion restricted the areas conquered by Justinian in the mid sixth century to the old capital of Rome and the new capital of Ravenna, with a long but fairly narrow corridor dividing them along the Via Emilia by the end of the seventh century. At the same time, the crisis situation evoked a military reorganisation of Italy in the form of the exarchate, with its capital in Ravenna.[2] The exarch's powers were not only civil and military: they extended ecclesiastically over the bishops, including those of Ravenna and Rome, and they specifically covered episcopal elections, behaviour

[1] The accounts of these events are too numerous to mention, and I will simply refer to one from the perspective of the Byzantine Empire (J. Herrin, *The Formation of Christendom* (1st paperback edn, 1989), pp. 145–219, 250–90); one from the perspective of Italy (S. Cosentino, *Storia dell'Italia Bizantina (sec. VI–XI) da Giustiniano ai Normanni* (Bologna, 2008)); and one from that of Ravenna (D. M. Deliyannis, *Ravenna in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 277–94).

[2] The history of the exarchate is widely discussed, most extensively in T. S. Brown, *Gentlemen and Officers: Imperial Administration and Aristocratic Power in Byzantine Italy, A.D. 554–800* (Rome, 1984), and in his 'Byzantine Italy, *c.*680–*c.*876', in *NCMH*, II (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 320–7; J. Ferluga, 'L'Esarcato', in *Storia di Ravenna II.1: Dall'età bizantina all'età ottoniana. Territorio, economia e società,* ed. A. Carile (Ravenna, 1991), pp. 351–78; and G. Ravegnani, *I Bizantini in Italia* (Bologna, 2004), pp. 81–143.

and orthodoxy.[3] The exarch, acting as imperial viceroy, was empowered to remove bishops deemed inadequate by the imperial government, and also to condemn and imprison them. The exarch could also present candidates to vacant sees, receive the tax on election, request from the emperor the concession of the pallium, preside over regional councils and examine schismatics. Above all, with the power to request the emperor's approval for papal elections, the exarch could control the election of the pope, for without imperial approval such an election would be invalid and the new pope could not be consecrated.

In 685 the emperor Constantine IV (668–85) accepted Pope Agatho's (678–81) request to abolish the tax levied on the confirmation of a pope, and at Pope Benedict II's (683–5) request he granted the exarch the right to order the consecration of the newly-elected pope straightaway.[4] Justinian II kept the annulment of the tax but reinstated the obligation of confirmation by the emperor himself, though he gave to the exarch the right to deputise for him, as happened with the election of Pope Conon (686–7).[5] This may have been a step too far, since for his successor Pope Sergius (687–701), the role of exarch was even more prominent in the election: promised large sums by one candidate, Exarch Paschal found, when he arrived in Rome, that Sergius had already been elected by the people, the clergy and the army. He confirmed the election but asked for the promised payment to be handed over just the same.[6] In addition, the church of Ravenna had particularly close economic links with the exarchs to whom it could lease out land and properties in exchange for a small rent, as for example with the emphyteutic lease to Exarch Calliopas for land and houses in Rimini.[7] Such financial ties would remain even after the incumbent's period of office had ended: exarchs often married into the local elite and became part of local society, closely intermingled with the church and its personnel – Agnellus's family was descended from one such group.[8]

The first problems between exarchs and popes which came to involve Ravenna arose when Exarch Romanus (589–96) held off Gregory the

[3] A. Simonini, *Autocefalia ed Esarcato in Italia* (Ravenna, 1969), pp. 42–4.

[4] *Le "Liber Pontificalis": Texte, introduction et commentaire,* ed. L. Duchesne (3 vols., Paris, 1886–92), I (henceforth *LP* I), 363; Simonini, *Autocefalia*, pp. 107–8.

[5] *LP* I, 368.

[6] *LP* I, 371–2; Ferluga, 'L'Esarcato', p. 367.

[7] Brown, *Gentlemen and Officers*, pp. 82–108, 199; T. S. Brown, 'The aristocracy of Ravenna from Justinian to Charlemagne', *CARB*, xxxiii (1986), 135–49, esp. 140–1; T. S. Brown, 'The church of Ravenna and the imperial administration in the seventh century', *EHR*, ccclx (1979), 1–28, esp. 10.

8 Brown, 'The church of Ravenna', pp. 10–11 and Brown, 'The aristocracy of Ravenna', pp. 216–17.

Great, who wanted him to end the Istrian Schism, resulting from the Three Chapters Controversy. This attempt to reconcile monophysitism and catholic belief through condemning the works of three theologians particularly hostile to the catholic or chalcedonian church in 543, had led in 553 to a break between the churches of northern Italy, including Aquileia, Milan and Istria, with the church of Rome, since they refused to join in the condemnation.[9] Gregory was also anxious to prevent the bishop of Ravenna from wearing the pallium on occasions when he was not supposed to, for this was a sign of imperial appointment which only the pope had the right to use whenever he wished, while the bishop of Ravenna was allowed it only on very special feast days.[10] The exarch supported the bishop and the emperor Maurice supported his exarch against Pope Gregory. The emperor also bestowed the title of 'oecumenical', implying a universal authority, on the patriarch of Constantinople, which made relations with Rome even worse. Gregory had some successes of his own: for example, when Bishop John of Ravenna died in 595, Gregory secured the election of his chosen man Marinianus rather than the local candidate.[11] But in other respects the problem between pope and emperor worsened, especially when Gregory made peace with the Lombards, an act to which he was driven by the papacy's dangerous situation in Italy and the Lombards' obvious successes, but which was viewed with grave suspicion by Exarch Callinicos, who used the army of Ravenna to restart the fight against the Lombards.

The relationship between Italy and the emperor saw its last relatively calm period for many years during the reign of Phocas, who came to power after a coup in 602. He replaced Exarch Callinicos with the more accommodating Smaragdus, exarch for the second time in 603, and the subsequent demonstrations of support for Phocas in Italy contrasted with the perception widely held elsewhere of his reign as a disaster.[12] He was the last emperor to have had a statue erected to him in the Roman Forum, by Smaragdus. Phocas and Smaragdus succeeded in creating slightly smoother relations with the Lombard forces, and in 603 the emperor confirmed the importance of papal authority, a gesture meant to allay the pope's resentment at the patriarch of Constantinople's assumption of the 'oecumenical' title. Phocas' stronger western interests are also visible in his approval of the first

[9] On the various aspects of the schisms, see the most recent studies in *The Crisis of the Oikumene: the Three Chapters and the Failed Quest for Unity in the Sixth-Century Mediterranean*, ed. C. Chazelle and C. Cubitt (Turnhout, 2007).

[10] *Gregorii I Papae Registrum Epistolarum*, eds. P. Ewald and L. M. Hartmann, *MGH Epp.* (Berlin, 1899), VIII. 36; G. Ravegnani, *Gli Esarchi d'Italia* (Bologna, 2011), pp. 58–64.

[11] Simonini, *Autocefalia*, pp. 46–8.

[12] Herrin, *Formation*, pp. 187–8.

moves by the popes to christianise the pagan monuments in the centre of Rome, by allowing Pope Boniface to convert the Pantheon into the church of Santa Maria ad Martyres.[13]

There seems to have been a lull during the reign of Phocas, followed, after the coup in which Heraclius replaced him in 610, by the rapid deterioration of relations with the papacy on account of Monophysitism. Despite the loss of core Monophysite places like Antioch, Monophysitism, seen as heretical by the western church, remained strong in the east with imperial support. It did, however, come to be adapted into what the emperors had hoped would be a more acceptable version, in the form of Monothelitism. This formula was promoted by Heraclius, who issued the imperial decree of the *Ekthesis* in 638.[14] Heraclius (610–41) opposed all of the policies of Phocas, and his political interests were concentrated on the east, leading him to extract higher taxes and to reduce aristocratic privileges generally, but especially in Italy. An immediate response was the killing of his appointed exarch John Lemigios, sent to implement imperial policy in Italy, in a rebellion.[15] The new exarch Eleutherius put down the rebellion but in 619 personal ambition led him to rebel too, supported by Rome, the Lombards and possibly, secretly, Bishop John of Ravenna. Instead of agreeing to crown him in Ravenna, the bishop prudently sent him off to be crowned at Rome on the grounds that Rome was the 'seat of empire' (*solium imperii*). In the end Eleutherius was killed by an army group faithful to the emperor.[16]

Meanwhile eastern support for Monothelitism added to the complexity of the situation in Italy. Pope Honorius (625–38) half-heartedly accepted the decree of Heraclius, but his successor Severinus (638–40) at first refused it and then under pressure from the exarch Isaac accepted the *Ekthesis* in order to be elected. He refused it again later on and in 638 anathematised Monothelitism. So too did his successors John IV (640–2) and Theodore I (642–9), partly under the influence of the fiery refugee monk and theologian Maximos the Confessor and other eastern and African refugees in the city.[17]

After Heraclius's death in 641, a coup led by the senate and Paul, the patriarch of Constantinople, created a new emperor, Constans II, grandson of Heraclius. He was crowned in 641 though he did not really govern until 650.[18] Constans II continued to lose military ground in the east, but was

[13] *LP* I, 317.
[14] Herrin, *Formation*, pp. 206–9, 213–15.
[15] Herrin, *Formation*, pp. 191–205; Ravegnani, *Esarchi*, p. 69.
[16] Ravegnani, *Esarchi*, pp. 69–70; *LP* I, 321.
[17] On the history of the Monothelite controversy and the vicissitudes of the papacy, see Herrin, *Formation*, pp. 217–82; Ravegnani, *Esarchi*, pp. 76–8.
[18] Herrin, *Formation*, pp. 216–63.

determined to pursue Monothelite policies. Thus, for example, his Italian exarch Platon was a Monothelite. Constans II and Patriarch Paul attempted another kind of reconciliation with the intractable Pope Theodore in the form of a new imperial decree called the *Typos* in 648, whereupon Paul was promptly excommunicated.[19] But the imperial attempt to use the exarch and other officials to force the western clergy to sign their adherence to the *Typos* and the throwing out of papal legates from Constantinople led, after Pope Theodore's death in 649, to the immediate election of one of these legates, Martin, as his successor. Since Pope Martin was also confirmed in post immediately, without waiting for the required imperial approval, the emperor refused to ratify his election unless the papal legates promised to guarantee the new pope's agreement to sign the *Typos*. He sent a new exarch, Olympios, to Italy to guarantee this, but by then the new pope had already brought together a council of more than 100 bishops, who met at the Lateran and again condemned Monothelitism. Exarch Olympios was told to respond and went to Rome to put the condemnation into effect but, supported by the pope, he rebelled against the emperor and attempted to have himself crowned emperor in Italy. He almost succeeded, but went to fight in Sicily in 652 and died there. After Olympios's rebellion, the situation went from bad to worse: the uprising was stopped but Theodore Calliopas, the new exarch sent from Constantinople, accused Martin of complicity, and ordered him to be arrested, transported to Constantinople, tried for treason and eventually sentenced to exile at Cherson in the Crimea, in circumstances so harsh that his death soon followed in 653. The Romans had already chosen a more flexible pope, Eugenius I, who lifted the excommunication of the patriarch and did not openly speak against the *Typos*, and neither did his successor Pope Vitalian. But the issue of Monothelitism would not be finally resolved until the sixth oecumenical council held in Constantinople in 680–1, with the triumph of Roman orthodoxy.

How did all this turmoil affect Ravenna? In the previous century, the church of Ravenna had already developed a close relationship with that of Constantinople, and above all had shown itself a firm supporter of Roman orthodoxy during the schism of the Three Chapters, when the patriarchs of Aquileia and Milan embraced it. The bishops of Ravenna had already demonstrated a greater engagement with the emperor, especially once the exarch's seat was settled in the city, making it the capital of Byzantine rule in Italy, while Rome, like the rest of the exarchate, only had a duke subject to the exarch.

[19] *LP* I, 333, 336–8. On Pope Martin, the Lateran council and the end of the story in 680–1, see Herrin, *Formation*, pp. 217–82; Ravegnani, *Esarchi*, pp. 76–8.

But in ecclesiastical terms, the situation of Ravenna was anomalous: while the bishop of Ravenna was the metropolitan bishop for the dioceses of the province of Emilia, he himself remained a suffragan of the pope – in other words, he had jurisdiction over other bishoprics but was himself subject to Rome. He had to have his election confirmed in Rome and be consecrated by the pope; he had to take part in Roman synods and keep Roman feast days, while decisions taken in synods in Emilia, which he presided over, were not technically applicable in Ravenna itself.[20] This anomalous situation had already posed a problem under Justinian, but he had used it to his advantage against Rome, during the Three Chapters schism when Pope Vigilius had been taken away from Italy as a 'guest' of the emperor. In 546 when Bishop Victor of Ravenna died, Justinian appointed his own man, Maximian of Pola, to the throne of Ravenna, and gave him the pallium.[21] This was a kind of super-promotion bestowed directly by the emperor, with authority over Emilia but also over the technically schismatic churches of Aquileia and Milan, and it allowed Maximian to use the title of archbishop. Whether Maximian was the first bishop of Ravenna to have been granted the pallium is uncertain, but subsequently the archbishops of Ravenna effectively deputized for the emperor or the pope as leading opponents of the Istrian Schism.

As Ravenna saw it, thereafter the pope was no longer the metropolitan head of the church of Ravenna but merely the patriarch, as he was for all western sees. Ravenna was finally no longer subject to Rome but could match its ecclesiastical status to its political role as capital of the western empire, of the subsequent Gothic kingdom, and now as the seat of the exarchate. This was all the more justified in Ravenna's eyes since not only was it part of the Byzantine tradition that the religious and political functions of a city should correspond in their importance, but also Ravenna's large ecclesiastical possessions in land and economic resources all over the Pentapolis, Umbria, Istria, and above all Sicily, made its patrimony more or less equal to the patrimony of the church of Rome.[22] Of greater relevance to this rise in the authority of Ravenna, however, was probably the fact that it was increasingly cut off from Rome by the expansion of Lombard territory, and on frequent occasions the need arose for powers to be delegated to the archbishops to deal with the situation in the exarchate locally.[23] By the end

[20] Simonini, *Autocefalia*, pp. 54–6; Brown, 'Church of Ravenna', 7–8.

[21] Agnellus' *Liber pontificalis Ravennatis ecclesiae*, ed. O. Holder Egger, *MGH SRL* (henceforth *LPRE*) c. 70, p. 326; *LP* I, 297–9; Simonini, *Autocefalia*, pp. 56–60.

[22] Simonini, *Autocefalia*, p. 61; G. Fasoli, 'Il patrimonio della chiesa ravennate', in *Storia di Ravenna II.1*, 389–400; Brown, 'Church of Ravenna', 6, 9, 11–14.

[23] Brown, 'Church of Ravenna', 11.

of the seventh century, when the popes had to request imperial approval for their election from the exarch through their intermediary the archbishop of Ravenna, this could only make the latter feel even more aware of his power. All this was going some way towards the idea of autocephaly: the three great sees of Constantinople, Rome and Ravenna should accept Rome's pre-eminence among them, but not be subject to its jurisdiction.

The achievement of the autocephaly of Ravenna has to be seen, however, very much as part of the context of Constans II's reign, and his stay in Italy from 660 to 668. It was led by the strong personality of Archbishop Maurus (642–71).[24] Essentially, Constans II tried to use the church of Ravenna as an imperial church at the service of the emperor in the west, corresponding to the church of Constantinople in the east, through privileges, gifts and rights in exchange for full support of imperial policies. Ravenna, on the other hand, tried to use its traditional support for the emperor and his exarch as a way of ensuring its own autonomy from Rome. Maurus had been elected when the conflict of the popes with Heraclius was at its height, and relations between Rome and Constantinople were already very poor. Maurus was somewhat ambiguous in his attitude towards the *Typos*. When asked by Pope Martin to attend the Lateran Council of 649, he did not actually go himself, but he did send representatives and supported the bishops of Emilia who went in person. He also sent a letter to be read out at the synod, expressing support for Roman orthodoxy. After Olympios's rebellion and death, and when Calliopas had been appointed the new exarch, Ravenna supported him, to the extent that, faced with the refusal of the Roman militia to obey imperial and exarchal orders on that subject, Pope Martin had to be arrested by the *exercitus* of Ravenna.[25]

Later, the need of a new pope to go through the archbishop to obtain confirmation of his election from the exarch led Maurus to make his final bid for autocephaly.[26] He went to Constantinople himself, bringing rich gifts to the imperial court and promises of greater economic support through large quantities of grain, gold and silver from Sicily, in addition to the church of Ravenna's already enormous contribution of 15,000 gold solidi, half of its income from the province. He obtained from Constans

[24] Ferluga, 'L'Esarcato', pp. 364–6; Simonini, *Autocefalia*, pp. 82–7; G. Orioli, 'L'autocefalia della Chiesa ravennate', *Bollettino della Badia greaca di Grottaferrata* n.s., xxx (1976), 10–19; Deliyannis, *Ravenna*, p. 283; A. Guillou, *Régionalisme et indépendance dans l'empire byzantin au VIIe siècle. L'exemple de l'Exarchat et de la Pentapole d'Italie* (Rome, 1969), pp. 167–9, 206–7.

[25] *LP* I, 337–8.

[26] Agnellus, *LPRE*, cc. 110–14, pp. 349–53; *LP* I, 343–4; Brown, 'Church of Ravenna', 11–17; Simonini, *Autocefalia*, pp. 82–104.

II a decree guaranteeing the autonomy of Ravenna vis-à-vis the papacy, and made Pope Vitalian officially recognize the right of the archbishops of Ravenna to that title. This had been employed in the city for a long time but had never previously been accepted by the popes, who regarded its use in Ravenna as abusive. Maurus, however, wanted stronger confirmation, and contributed greatly, as promised, to funding Constans' Sicilian military campaigns through the patrimony of the church of Ravenna in Sicily. In 666 Maurus's administrator, Reparatus, went to Sicily, bringing with him two documents: first, a copy of the *Passio S. Apollinaris*, which purported to show that the church of Ravenna had been founded by Apollinaris, a disciple of St Peter, thus making it a church of apostolic foundation; and second, a spurious diploma of Valentinian III (425–55) in which the emperor gave the pallium and the title of archbishop to the bishop of Ravenna, as well as his metropolitan rights over Emilia.

The result of this long campaign of attrition was Constans II's privilege of autocephaly to the church of Ravenna: the emperor decreed that the archbishop would be free of any interference from others *(ab omni superiori episcopali conditione*) and in no way subject to the Roman patriarch (*et non subjacere pro quolibet modo patriarchae antiquae urbis Romae*) but would remain for ever autocephalous (*sed manere eum autocephalon*). From now on, the archbishop would be consecrated by his own suffragans, and would have the right to the imperial pallium (*a propris consecratus episcopis, vestris videlicet, et decore palei sicut nostrae divinitatis sanctione, superna inspiratione, perlargitum est*).[27] Since only Rome and a few other patriarchates in the east had such a privilege, the archbishop of Ravenna would thus be on the same level as the other patriarchates. It is still unclear whether it was the granting of the privilege itself that was commemorated in Ravenna by a mosaic to one side of the altar, the gift being bestowed by the four emperors Constans II and his sons on Maurus and Reparatus, possibly commissioned by the latter for S. Apollinare in Classe, or a subsequent confirmation of it by the Emperors Constantine IV and his brothers.[28] The privilege gave a great deal to Ravenna but it was also, in a way, an imperial triumph, which associated the archbishops of the exarchal capital more closely with the empire, and prevented the association of both the church of Ravenna and the exarchs with the popes of Rome. Some modern historians have seen it as essentially

[27] The privilege is edited by O. Holder-Egger in Agnellus, *LPRE*, cc. 111–12, pp. 350–1, n. 8.

[28] Agnellus, *LPRE*, c. 115, p. 354. This long-debated point has been recently summarized and the latter view convincingly argued in a forthcoming paper by S. Cosentino, 'Constans II, Ravenna's autocephaly and the panel of privileges in St. Apollinare in Classe: a reappraisal'. I am grateful to Salvatore Cosentino for allowing me to see it while it was in preparation.

a reward to Ravenna for its economic support of the empire, especially in Sicily.[29] In reality, being the beneficiary of such a privilege, especially one which appeared to reward the specific services of a bishop, was not uncommon in the east, where other metropolitan churches also had it. In a western context, however, which saw Rome increasingly becoming the centre, the new situation of Ravenna seemed highly unusual to the popes, and they took it extremely badly.[30]

In 668 Constans II was assassinated in Syracuse by a usurper, against whom the new emperor Constantine IV sent an army, supported by both the papacy and Ravenna, and the rebellion was killed off. The new emperor, Constantine IV, was much less inclined to support Ravenna and more interested in peace with the pope.[31] Pope Vitalian summoned Maurus to Rome: he refused to go, was threatened with deposition, and ultimately the two prelates exchanged reciprocal anathemata, which continued until their respective deaths. At first Constantine IV refused to take sides, and Maurus was seen as the hero of independence of Ravenna from Rome. His last words to his clergy, according to Agnellus, were: '*non vos tradatis sub Romanorum jugo*'.[32] He was succeeded by his old administrator Reparatus (671–7). He too went to Constantinople, where he obtained various privileges and fiscal immunities for the clergy, some of which were exemptions from taxes and dues, and confirmation of exemptions from secular jurisdiction. He may also have gained a renewal of the autocephaly privilege in a modified form. But perhaps not: we now hit a considerable divergence in our sources, for which no entirely satisfactory account has yet been given. What exactly did take place in Constantinople?[33] According to Agnellus, the archbishops continued to ignore Rome in the matter of consecration, and Reparatus was consecrated in Ravenna. But the Roman *Liber Pontificalis* says that Reparatus was consecrated in Rome. Again, Agnellus says that his successor, Theodore, was consecrated by his own suffragans. This may be just confusion, or possibly each believed his own version. Perhaps, as Simonini suggested, both embassies were in Constantinople at the same time, where they agreed to a compromise, with Ravenna accepting future consecration in Rome and Rome agreeing not to make the process take longer than eight days. When they returned to Italy, each embassy went back to its previous position, thinking the problem had been solved to their satisfaction. Thus

[29] Brown, 'Church of Ravenna', 17.

[30] Brown, 'Church of Ravenna', 12–13; T. S. Brown, 'Justinian II and Ravenna', *Byzantino-slavica*, lvi (1995), 31; *LP* I, 348; Simonini, *Autocefalia*, pp. 87–95.

[31] Simonini, *Autocefalia*, pp. 102–9.

[32] Agnellus, *LPRE*, c. 115, p. 353.

[33] Agnellus, *LPRE*, c. 115, pp. 353–4; Simonini, *Autocefalia*, pp. 102–4.

it has been possible for historians to claim that the privileges obtained in Constantinople were a way for Ravenna to agree to the loss of independence, while being richly compensated for it by fiscal and economic privileges, but also to suggest that these may have been a reward for the church's loyalty after the death of Constans II and the ensuing attempt at usurpation.

The fact is that after a relative peace with the Arabs in 677, followed by a few other military successes, Constantine IV wanted peace within the church. He attempted a reconciliation with Pope Donus (676–8) and Pope Agatho (678–81) which ended with the Sixth Oecumenical Council in 680–1 condemning Monothelitism; and the emperor also gave further proof of the supremacy of Rome, including accepting the consecration of popes immediately after their election.[34] The issue of the end of the autocephaly of Ravenna was thus slow to evolve but it had already moved in that direction by the time of the Lateran Council of 680, which was the preliminary western meeting before the council in Constantinople. Archbishop Theodore of Ravenna, who had succeeded Reparatus in 677, and had been consecrated in Ravenna, was invited to Rome.[35] Unfortunately for the clergy of Ravenna, Theodore had his own plans. He had fallen out badly with his own clergy when he used a grain crisis to make them give up their traditional rights to a quarter of the church's income. The clergy hated him so much that they organised a boycott of his Christmas Vigil in the cathedral by taking themselves en masse to Classe, and refusing to come back. The archbishop beat his chest and claimed that he felt eternal regret and repentance, but the clergy refused to come back; the exarch intervened, under threat from the clergy, to ask Constantine IV for the archbishop to be replaced, and only at the eleventh hour did they finally all get together to celebrate.

Whether because he could not forgive them this humiliation or because he had a better grasp of political realities, Theodore then secretly asked the pope to send him a letter summoning him to Rome: serendipitously it arrived in 680 at the same time as a summons to Rome for the Lateran Council. With grave misgivings but having no choice, the clergy of Ravenna allowed Theodore to leave. Once in Rome, he immediately agreed to give up unconditionally any claim to autocephaly: '*cum pervenisset Romam, subiugavit se suamque ecclesiam sub Romano pontifice*', says Agnellus.[36] The decree of Constans II had to be given back and a new rescript from Constantine IV was issued. Archbishop Theodore managed to retain the

[34] *LP* I, 350–4, 360.
[35] Agnellus, *LPRE*, c. 124, pp. 359–60 ; Simonini, *Autocefalia*, pp. 109–13.
[36] Agnellus, *LPRE*, cc. 117–24, pp. 355–60.

limit of eight days' maximum in Rome for consecration and the definitive remission of the tax for obtaining the pallium, as well as limiting the archbishops' obligation to go to Rome to only once a year. In exchange he guaranteed Ravenna's commitment not to celebrate Maurus, who was condemned to a kind of *damnatio memoriae*. But the see of Ravenna also gained the primacy of honour in the west after Rome – it was to be second only to Rome – a status it would keep in the future. This achievement did not gain recognition for Maurus, even 200 years later: for the Ravenna clergy he remained the archbishop who '*non sub Romana se subiugavit sede*'.[37]

The story did not quite end there. A further attempt to revive the independent status of the church of Ravenna may have been made by Archbishop Felix (711–24), while he attempted to decide which emperor to support. First, he chose (badly) against Justinian II, then (better) his successor (Philippikos) who had go[illegible]d of Justinian II, reinstated Felix at the cost of his possible support of Monothelitism. But ultimately even Felix gave way and before his death, accepted that the cause of autocephaly was a lost one.[38] The popes, however, may have found this hard to believe: certainly they remained very anxious as late as the mid eighth century lest the issue might be revived.

Ultimately, two conclusions can be drawn from this rapid tour of relations between Constantinople, Rome and Ravenna. Both deal fundamentally with more general issues. The first is cultural history. The phenomenon of the gradual disaffection of the church and the city of Rome vis-à-vis its Byzantine imperial association during the 150 years after Gregory the Great's death, is a well-studied subject.[39] Its roots have been identified in the mixture of despair at the lack of support from the emperors in the papacy's and Italy's fight against the Lombards, and the parallel despair at the constant need to fight off decrees and policies issuing from Constantinople which were perceived as heretical. I have has highlighted elsewhere my

[37] Agnellus, *LPRE*, c. 115, p. 354; Simonini, *Autocefalia*, pp. 113–15; on the later perception of the period of independence from Rome, see R. Savigni, '*Memoria Urbis*: l'immagine di Ravenna nella storiografia di età carolingio-ottoniana', in *Ravenna da capitale imperiale a capitale esarcale. Atti del XVII Congresso internazionale di studio sull'alto medioevo, Ravenna, 6–12 giugno 2004* (2 vols., Spoleto, 2005), II, 648–50.

[38] Simonini, *Autocefalia*, pp. 123–32.

[39] There are many discussions of this issue, see for example, O. Bertolini, *Roma di fronte a Bisanzio e ai Longobardi* (Bologna, 1941); P. Llewellyn, *Rome in the Dark Ages* (1970), pp. 109–228 and J. Richards, *The Popes and the Papacy in the Early Middle Ages, 476–752* (1979), pp. 181–232. Two of the best remain D. H. Miller, 'The Roman revolution of the eighth century', *Medieval Studies*, xxxvi (1974), 96–101, and P. Llewellyn, 'The Roman church in the seventh century: the legacy of Gregory I', *JEccH*, xxv (1974), 363–80; and Brown, 'Justinian', pp. 29–36.

theory and that of several eminent historians of what was at the root of a by then fairly irreconcilable cultural gap between the Greek east and the Latin west. The gap was certainly perceived in that way, at least by the western side.[40] It does not appear that Ravenna's 'separatism' can be ascribed to any deliberate pro-Byzantine and Greek leanings against Rome: rather, its desire for independence from Rome arose from a heightened view of its own importance, based on its past as an imperial and exarchal capital. It was no more Greek by the end of the seventh century than Rome was; it was difficult to find among its clergy a fluent Greek speaker and interpreter in Johannicius.[41] Further, it was no more prepared to accept Monothelitism, for example, than the popes were, even at the cost of supporting the latter wholeheartedly in that respect, for example at the Lateran synod in 649 and later. But Ravenna, unlike Rome, could use its imperial connections and economic support to try to gain for itself the autonomy it regarded as a right on the basis of its political status and alleged apostolic origin. Ravenna managed this successfully while circumstances allowed. After all, if the emperors were prepared to play Ravenna against Rome, why should Ravenna not play the emperors against Rome and vice versa?

But by the end of the seventh century, this was no longer the most important issue. Social transformation was, this chapter's second conclusion. By then, both Rome and Ravenna were no longer simply elements of the Byzantine exarchate; they had increasingly seen the personnel in charge, politically and in terms of their churches, become far more closely associated with their local power and economic base. Such expressions of regional identity were far more likely to constitute negative responses to any attempt at Byzantine intervention, as when the Roman militia defended Pope Martin, for example, and equally when the Ravenna militia later defended the pope against the emperor's envoy the *protospatharius* Zachariah. The latter had been sent to arrest Pope Sergius in 693 for resisting Justinian II's order that he accept the acts of the Quinisext council in Trullo.[42] What this implies, in my view, is an increasing detachment from Byzantine and imperial interests on the part of the social and political elites of both Rome and Ravenna, elites which saw their interests increasingly identified with those of their respective territories and their western, not to say Italian, roots.

[40] V. Ortenberg, 'Angli aut angeli: Les Anglo-Saxons ont-ils sauvé la papauté au VIIe siècle?', *Revue Mabillon*, vi (1995), 5–14.

[41] Agnellus, *LPRE*, c. 120, p. 357; L. M. Hartmann, 'Johannicius von Ravenna', in *Festschrift Theodor Gomperz* (Vienna, 1902), pp. 319–23.

[42] *LP* I, 372–4; Ravegnani, *Bizantini*, p. 120; Brown, 'Justinian II', 32.