The present article deals with a Byzantine letter, written by a certain Lazaros to his anonymous "spiritual master" (νευματικός δεσπότης). The letter was inserted by a late ninth century Western scribe into the manuscript St. Gall 902, on a blank page at the beginning of the volume. The copy is incomplete, the text breaking off in the middle of a sentence.

The Epistula Lazari was first published in 1975, in Bernice Martha Kaczynski's Yale dissertation, Greek Learning in the Medieval West: A Study of St. Gall 816-1022. "Terse, and undeniably dramatic", she says, "the letter commands the attention of its readers. Yet without any knowledge of the context it is difficult to interpret" (p. 181). Its grammatical and orthographical irregularities point towards a date "some time after AD 400" (p.290) - though many of its corruptions and omissions must be attributed to the Carolingian scribe with his poor understanding of Greek (p.181).

It is, of course, absolutely correct that we do not know the original context of Lazaros's letter - nor, for that matter, the reason for its occurrence on p. 7 of cod. Sangallensis 902, or its 'life' between the unknown date of composition and the late ninth century. But even so, our situation is far from being as hopeless as Bernice Kaczynski depicts it. In fact, the very beginning of the letter provides an important clue. Τῇ ἱσογέλῳ θεωρηματὶ θεοσκεπάσματι νεομολογητῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ πνευματικῷ

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1. My interest in Lazaros's letter goes back to the summer of 1972 where I visited St.Gallen and incidentally hit upon the following note in Gustav Scherrer, Verzeichniss der Handschriften der Stiftsbibliothek von St. Gallen, Halle 1875, p.316: "Auf der vordersten Seite (p.7) ein Bruchstück von 17 Zeilen in kleiner griechischer Uncial (über Lazarus, aber nicht aus den Evangelien)." The fragment is mentioned in Albert Bruckner, Scriptoria mediae ñvi Helvetica, III, 1938, p.122, without any details.
2. "What was the letter of a distressed Byzantine doing in a quiet Benedictine monastery north of the Alps? It had been found, perhaps, in one of the late-classical manuscripts from Italy, with which the library was so well-supplied. And again, perhaps - a St. Gall teacher directed that it be included among the Greek materials assembled for classroom use in MS 902", Kaszynski, p.181.
μου δεσπότη ("To the equal of angels, God-guided, God-protected, new
professor of Christ, my spiritual master"): The addressee must be a highly
ranked ecclesiastic - a bishop, at least 3 - who has suffered bravely for
his faith, not long ago. 4

In the letter Lazaros speaks of some hostility which has arisen "be-
tween me and the King". The most natural inference is that it was on be-
half of his "spiritual master" that Lazaros had to do with the said king,
in other words that Lazaros was an agent or envoy. Now, there happens to
be at least one such Lazaros on record: Lazaros the Chazar, the famous
painter, an ardent supporter of Ignatios the Patriarch, involved in mis-
ions to Rome in 855 and on one later occasion. 5

Obviously, an identification of our Lazaros with the painter and of
his master with Ignatios needs more support to become plausible. Also,
the text needs a more careful work of emendation than could be applied to
it in the editio princeps from 1975.

Let us begin with the text. Below (p.126) follows my reconstruction
of Lazaros's original. To facilitate checking, I also print a sketch of
what the letter looks like in Sangallensis 902. My reconstruction is
based on four assumptions, the reasons for which will become clear in the
following:

1. The letter cannot have been written earlier than 858.
2. There is no reason to assume intermediate copies between the let-
ter and the St. Gall manuscript.
3. The Carolingian scribe did not understand what he was copying and
was not familiar with Greek pronunciation – nor with the abbreviation sys-
tem; he sometimes confused letters of similar shape.
4. Lazaros – and not the scribe of Sangallensis 902 – was responsible
for the syntactical oddities and for the orthography.

3. DuCange, s.v. ζωάγγελος. One of his references is to a letter from Theo-
dore Studites to Pope Leo III (Migne, PG 99,1021: Τῷ ζωάγγελῳ μακαρωτάτῳ
καὶ ἀποστολικῷ πατρὶ Λέοντι τῷ Μήττῳ Ρωμής).
4. The Greek ὁμολογητής is more restricted in meaning than its Latin
counterpart confessor. "Le mot 'confesseur', ὁμολογητής, ne désigne pas,
comme dans l'Église latine depuis le haut moyen âge, tous les saints non
martyrs. C'est le terme réservé aux héros chrétiens qui ont souffert pour
la foi sans mourir dans les tourments" (François Halkin, Analecta Bolland-
diana 85, 1967, 6, note 3).
5. Cf. the texts quoted below (Appendix B) and Cyril Mango's article in
BZ 1954 (cf. below, note 15).
Τῷ ἡσαγγέλῳ θεωρητῷ θεοσκεπάσμα
tῷ νεοσομολογητῷ τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ πνευματικῷ μου
dεσπότῃ: Ἀδάμουυ δοῦλος ἁνάξιος καὶ τοῖς ποιῶ
προσκείμενος τοῦ δεσπότου μου μετὰ πάσης ὁμολογίας
5 καὶ ταπεινώτατος καὶ πίστεως, καὶ ἐλπίζων τελείος ἐπιτυχήν
τῷ ἀγγελωμηνήτῳ εἰς τοῦ δεσπότου μου· σῶτα γὰρ τὸ εὐσπλανὸν αὐτοῦ
καὶ τεκνοθημάτες καὶ φιλότεκνον, καὶ τὸ πρὸς Χριστὸν ἐδοξοσιαστόν.
Οὖν ἀγνωθῇ δὲ βούλομαι τὸν δεσπότην μου τὰ ἐν ἐμοὶ συμβάν-
tα ἁπάντα. ἀπὸ γὰρ τετάρτης ἡμέρας τοῦ Ἰανουαρίου μηνὸς - ἀφ’ ὅδ
10 τοῦ δεσπότου μου ἐκφώρίζην - γέγονα ἐν πιστοτῇ λύπῃ διὰ
τὸ μεγάλην ἔχομαι θὴνα ὅτι ὁ ἑκτός παιντός ἁγαθὸν καὶ ὁ πᾶσι
τοῖς βαρβάροις καὶ γε ἡπείν καὶ παρ’ ἐμοὶ καλούμενος Εβραῖος
Γεώργιος ἀναμένον ἐμοῖ καὶ τοῦ ὁληρίας. ὅμως ὁ’ ὅδῃ ἀναφυ-
χεικὸν τὴν ἐκδοχὴν ποιούμενος τοῦ δεσπότου μου νομίζω αὐτὰ
15 ἐν τάχι γενέσθαι. Φθάνας δὲ τῆς εἰσάγος πρώτης τοῦ αὐτοῦ
μινὸς, ὡς ὀδῷ τῆς νυκτὸς ὡς τρίτης, καὶ ἀγωνίστης
ἐγγὺς πυρὸς καθεξόμενος καὶ τὴν ἐκδοχὴν — — — — — — —

("To the equal of angels, 6 God-guided, God-protected, new confessor 7 of 
Christ, my spiritual master. (From) Lazaros, unworthy servant, lying at 
my master's feet - respectfully, humbly, and trustfully 8 - and hoping for 
the full benefit of my master's angel-imitating prayer; for I know that he 
is merciful, that he is full of compassion and kindness towards his child-
ren, and that he has freedom of speech to Christ. Let my master not be 
ignorant of all that has happened to me. For since the fourth day of the 
month of January when I left my master, I have become bitterly distressed 
because of great hostility between me and the King, caused by George, an 
entirely bad person whom all the Barbarians - and I too, for that matter 
- call a Jew. 9 However, I am seeking comfort in my master's ἐκδοχή 10 and 
suppose that these things will happen soon. 11 The twenty-first of the 
same month having come, approximately at the third hour of the night, and 
as a combattant 11 sitting at the fireside and (with) the ἐκδοχὴ 12 ....")

6. The "messenger" of Kaczynski's must be a lapsus.
7. Or 'new-confessor'. The compound word is otherwise unattested and 
should, perhaps, be considered a misspelling of νεός ὁμολογητός. In post-
medieval Greek, the expression νεομάρτυς has been coined as a technical 
term for martyrs from the period of the Turcocratia.
8. I am not sure that I have grasped the exact value of these words, es-
pecially that of πίστες.
9. George is an unusual name for a Jew. I take it, therefore, that Εβραῖ̣-
Τῷ θεός αγγέλω θεωρήθης τῷ θεοκεπασ
τῶνεοι ομολογηθητ' εὖ κ' ηνευματικως μόν
δεσποτὴν: Λαζαρός διλος άνάξιος κ' τοίς ποσίν
προσκειμενος τ' δεσποτ' μ' μεταπαλακος ομολογη
t' άγγελημιμηθ' εὖ κ' δεσποτ' μ' οίδα γαρ τε ευπλανό μ' άγτ' ή
τεκνοςυμπάθες κ' φιλοτεκνον κ' προς εὖ κ' ευπαρρικτό
t' άκανθίναι δι' άρματοι τονδεσποτηνμ' ταενεμοι συμβα
τά απαντά ἀπογαρ τέταρτης ιμερος τ' αιναρίμενος ἀπου

10
γαρ δεσποτ' μ' εὑρίσκων γεγονα' εν μικροται λυπή διὰ
το μεγαλεχρανθήναι οικτοσπαντος αγαθ' έναρατα
τοις βαρβαροις κ' γεννεῖν κ' παρ' εμοί καλομενος εβραος
γεωργος αναμεκομεν' κ' τοιρος ομιθανάρψη
χεῖχον τεκάοξη ποιήμενος τ' δεσποτ' μ' νομιζ' άγτ'

15
ἐνταχθ' γενεσθαι φθαράσικε ἐν θεείκαδοςπρωθος τ' αυτ'
μινος ώρας ὀριος νυκτος όντος ήτινης κακωνικήτο
ἐγγύς πυρος καθεζομενος κ' τεκάοξη

ος does not cover any ethnic or confessional reality, but is a nickname
with a pejorative, antisemitic ring. Kaczynski’s reference to "a Hebrew
farmer" (p.181), is curious; there can be no doubt that Γεώργιος is a
proper name.

10. The entire passage (lines 13-15) is far from being clear to me. I un-
derstand the adjective ἀνάφυλλος (not known from elsewhere, as it seems)
in the metaphorical sense of 'relief' (e.g. τόνων οτ κακών). Because of
the widely different meanings of the word ἐκβολή, I have preferred not to
translate it; the most likely, perhaps, is that Lazaros refers to some
written or oral instructions which he has brought with him or is expecting
to receive. Kaczynski (p.181) takes the passage to imply that Lazaros "is
impatient for his master's arrival".

Finally, the αὐτό is obscure. Can it be a vague reference to the contents
of the instructions - deliberately phrased in such a way that no outsider
will understand what Lazaros is talking about?

11. The reading of Sangallensis 902 (ΚΑΚΩΝΙΚΗΤΟ ἘΓΓΥΣ ΠΥΡΟΣ ΚΑΘΕΖΟΜΕΝΟΣ)
can be palaeographically explained in various ways, none of which makes
much sense. The first Kappa is more likely to be a copyist's error for
an abbreviated καθ than a crasis. Kaczynski suggests ὅ' ἀγωνικτὸν ὅ ἐγγύς
πυρὸς καθεζόμενος.

12. Lazaros must be the subject of the missing verb, τ' ἐκβολήν is prob-
ably the object.

For the peculiarities of orthography and syntax in the letter, see details
below p.136, Appendix A.
To make our identifications plausible, we must compare the data and implications of this letter with the general historical context - the turbulent period after the restoration of Orthodoxy in 843. In our connection, the strife between the Constantinopolitan patriarchs and ex-patriarchs Ignatios and Photios and their supporters is, of course, the dominating feature of the period, a conflict in which successive popes were involved. As a by-product of the ups and downs of the Ignatian and Photian parties, many important sources have unfortunately disappeared or have been tampered with - and the surviving sources are so biased that scholars by and large disagree in their evaluation, and it remains unclear what really happened.

From the wording in lines 8-10 we learn that the letter was Lazaros’s first report back to the Patriarch after his departure on January 4. It may very well be that the letter was actually written on the night of January 21 - 22 (cf. lines 15-17) - but since the letter breaks off, we do not know for sure how much longer a period it was intended to cover. As a first report, however, describing the difficulties Lazaros had met in his talk with the King, it cannot very well have been written much later than by the end of January. In which year? Hardly before 858; for until Ignatios was accused of high treason and banished to the island of Terebinthos in July 857, not even his most loyal partisan would probably think of calling him a νεομολογητής (line 2). As for the latest possible date, the cruel treatment to which Ignatios was submitted in 858, to make him 'spontaneously' resign, and also his subsequent banishment to Mytilene and Terebinthos, would sufficiently account for Lazaros’s describing his master as "Christ's new confessor" at any time afterwards.  

Having thus, in accordance with our general hypothesis, established January 21, 858 as a terminus post quem for the letter, we turn to its ante quem. Ignatios died on October 23, 877, and Lazaros left his master "on January 4". Consequently, the letter cannot possibly have been written later than in the beginning of 877. And if Lazaros did not survive the Patriarch, the terminus ante quem must be the year in which Lazaros died - in all likelihood on November 17, the date of his commemoration in the liturgical Synaxarium. Now, there seems to be a general agreement among scholars to place the death of Lazaros in the late 860s:

13. The pro-Ignatian documents bear ample witness to this attitude, see especially the Vita Ignatii and the libellus of Theoktistos (Migne, PG 105, 487 sqq. and 855 sqq.).
14. See below, p.137, Appendix B.
Cyril Mango: "That his death occurred after 865 is proved by the famous letter of Pope Nicolas I to the emperor Michael, dated the 28th of September 865, in which it is requested that Lazarus be sent to Rome along with other legates to represent the claims of Ignatius... The death of Lazarus occurred therefore shortly after 865."

Cyril Mango & Ernest Hawkins: "Lazarus' second mission cannot be dated so accurately, except that it must have taken place after 865... Unless, therefore, the Pope was misinformed, Lazarus was still alive at the time. We do not know, however, when he set out for Rome or, indeed, whether he did so before or after the downfall of Photius (September 23, 867)."

Robin Cormack: "He died while accompanying a second papal mission soon after September 865."

As far as I can see, the expressions "shortly after" and "soon after" 865 rest on pure guesswork. The only fact is that the Pope on September 28, 865 suggested that Lazaros and others be sent to Rome ("mittantur") - a suggestion which he certainly would not have made, if he knew that Lazaros had died. This, I suppose, is the only deduction which can safely be made from the only Papal letter in which Lazaros is mentioned by name. Apparently, no embassy was sent to Rome at the time; more than one year later - on November 13, 866 - Nicolas wrote another letter to the Emperor, restating his request in somewhat different terms. In this letter of 866, however, the Pope did not give a list of those whom he wanted to receive,

18. MGH, Epistolae VI, 1925, p.482: Porro, si venire illi (i.e. Ignatios and Gregory of Syracuse) per se nequeunt, primo quidem ipsi, cuius rei causa venire non valeant, nobis per satisfactorias suas litteras indicent. Deinde veniant de his, qui cum Syracusano Gregorio sunt, quotquot voluerint, vices ceterorum tenentes, qui ipsius sunt partis. Mittantur etiam de parte Ignatii archiepiscopi quidem Antonius Cyzici, Basilius Thessalonicae, Constantinus Larissae, Theodorus Syracussianorum, Metrophanes Smyrnai et Paulus episcopus Ponti Heracliae; egumeni autem Niceta Chrysopeleos, Nicolaus Studii, Jositheus Osiidii atque Lazarus presbyter et monachus qui dicitur Chasaris... Mittat nihilominus et Photius ex sua parte quos decreverit... Necnon et imperialis apex vester, si libet, suos e latere mittat auxilicos...
but simply referred to the previous letter - of which a copy was includ-
ed. 19 Thus, this piece of evidence is inconclusive for us - Lazaros may
still be alive, or his death may not have been known in Rome, or not found
worth mentioning in the actual context of the new letter. 20 However that
may be, it is evident that 'soon after September 865' cannot be used as a
terminus ante quem for Lazaros's letter.

More promising is a detail in the letter itself: Lazaros, it will be
remembered, set out from his master on January 4, i.e. in winter-time. He
must have travelled very fast; for less than three weeks later he seems
to have had his unsuccessful talk with the King (τοῦ ὅγος, line 13). Now,
a ἔργος is most certainly a Western king (or emperor) - and of the possible
candidates for an identification no one comes in more readily than Lewis
II, King of Italy and Emperor of the Franks (†875). Let us now keep in
mind that the letter - according to our hypothesis - was Lazaros's first
message back to Ignatios. Running the risk of an interpretation e silen-
tio, we notice that Lazaros does not speak about his talk with "the King"
in words which suggest that their meeting was incidental; he writes in
a matter-of-fact way which seems to imply that Ignatios expected that this
meeting would take place. Now, nobody would start West with a message for
Lewis II without having an idea of where to find him. In other words: If
Lewis II is the ἔργος of the letter - and who else could one reach in so
short a time? - Ignatios must have known where to dispatch Lazaros. We
are thus led to infer that Lazaros's mission took place in a period when
Lewis II was not moving around. The whole context presupposes a 'statio-

19. Ibid., p. 510: iam vero si epistola (i.e. the letter from 865) per
eundem legatum vestrum aliquo vobis modo delata non est et tenorem vel or-
dinem, quo diximus praenominae personas Romam fore venturas (see pre-
ceding note) scire cupitis, a preasentibus missis nostris exigit et hunc
nosse plene valebitis. Siquidem illis exemplaria epistolae, quas magni-
tudini vestrae vel Photo per Rhadoaldum et Zacchariam tunc episcopos di-
reximus, scripta pro collatione cum authenticis facienda tradidimus.....
In ista (scil. epistola) ergo tenorem et ordinem, quo praefatas personas
ad iterandum judicium huc venire decrevimus, latius sagax industria vestra
repperiet, quem nos in hac fastidium prolixitatis declinantes replicare
refugimus.

20. On the same day (November 13, 866), the Pope dispatched a number of
other letters to Constantinople. From the fate of these letters we can ex-
tract a useful memento against jumping to conclusions; for the Papal en-
voys never reached their destination. They were stopped at the Bulgaro-
Byzantine frontier and had to return (cf. Nicolas's letter to Hincmar of
Reims from October 23, 867, MHC Ep. VI, 603). The incident is vividly
nary' Lewis, so to speak. From the Annales Bertiniiani we learn that in 866 "Hludowicus, Italize imperator, una cum uxore sua Ingelberga in Bene-
ventum contra Sarracenos movit", to be staying in Southern Italy for the
next years, either in Benevent or at the siege of Bari; this Saracen strong-
hold withstood for several years, finally to surrender in February 871. The
years 866-871 would thus give an excellent context for Lazaros's winter-
mission to Lewis II.

Lazaros's voyage from Constantinople to Southern Italy took place in
January. It must have been unusually fast - and possible only if the
weather was favourable and the route was made as short as possible, with
a short cut over the Corinthian Isthmus. Lazaros's case seems to be one
of the exceptions to the rule that sea traffic between Constantinople and
Rome was usually suspended from October to March. Also in more friendly
seasons it was both difficult and perilous - and might take quite a long
time - to exchange messages between the Old and the New Rome; we have con-
temporary evidence about that. To illustrate the situation a couple of
examples will suffice:

(a) When Pope Nicolas wrote to Hincmar in October 867 (cf. above, note
20), he described how the envoys were sent off from Rome with the letters
to Constantinople on November 13, 866: "Videbatur enim nobis iter navale
satis difficile et propter eorumdem Grecorum expertas insidias valde ca-
vendum. Cum his itaque anxietatibus undique coartaremur et ingentiibus pre-
meremur angustiis, ecce subito legati iam fati regis Vulgarum (i.e. Boris)
nobis adesse nuntiantur..." (follows a description of the Pope's happiness
and its many reasons; the last reason is "quia per eorum regnum facilem ad
terrenum missis nostris ad terram Grecorum accessum patere perspeximus").

(b) On December 11, 867 the Emperor Basil includes in his letter to
the Pope a recapitulation of a previous letter, apparently written soon
after the assassination of Michael III on September 24. He has good rea-

21. Migne, PL 125, 1228A.
22. Liutprand's sea voyage from Venice to Constantinople in 949 took 24
days and nights. In Detlev Ellmers, Frühmittelalterliche Handelsschiffart
in Mittel- und Nordeuropa. Neumünster 1972, p.250 it is measured to 1310
nautic miles (i.e. approximately 2400 km.).
23. This is a favourite element in Dvornik's chronological reasoning;
examples can be found in The Photian Schism, pp.20, 139-40, 171. The waters
of the Adriatic are rough and stormy. Cf. the fascinating Easter tempest
of 775, as described by the Swedish novelist Eyvind Johnson in the first
five chapters of Hans Nådes Tid.
sons for doing so: "Nescientes autem, si sanctis vestris et (secundum Moya-
sen) Deo gratissimis sit posita palmis - multa namque in longinquo itinere
impedientes accidunt causae - necessarium conspeximus primum quae in eadem
continebantur epistola in brevi commemorare." 

On the strength of the circumstantial evidence and the observations
put forward in the preceding, I consider the winter of 870/71 to be the
most likely terminus ante quem for the letter. As to its terminus post
quem, our first attempt must be corrected; for if the reasoning about 'the
stationary Lewis II' is to be given any credit, the siege of Bari - or,
more precisely: the knowledge of Lewis's difficulties in Southern Italy
having reached Constantinople - would make the beginning of 867 its earli-
est date possible. Thus, Kaczynski's dating to "some time after AD 400"
can be narrowed in to "between the end of January 867 and the end of Feb-
uary 871" - provided, evidently, that our identifications with Lazaros
the Chazar, Ignatios, and Lewis II be accepted.

In our attempt to construct a plausible context for the Epistula La-
zarī we still have some loose ends - unsolved questions which it is much
more easy to ask than to answer. What, for instance, was the subject of
Lazaros's mission to Lewis II? And who was the evil-doer George, whose
intervention made Lazaros so unhappy?

To begin with George, the very fact that he had access to Lewis II
shows that he cannot have been a 'Mr. Nobody'. He had position. And what
is more: From the way in which he is introduced in the letter (not ἡωρηχος
tus, but ἡ ἐκτὸς παντὸς ἄγαθοῦ...ἡωρηχος) the most natural inference is

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24. In Dwornik's detailed treatment of the correspondance between Emperor
and Pope in 867 and 868 (The Photian Schism, pp. 138-41) it is suggested
that Basil' second letter was written on December 11, 868, a re-dating with
great consequences for the understanding of the negotiations. As far as I
can see, Dwornik's attempt to re-date the letter rests (mainly, at least)
on a wrong interpretation of the passage which I have just quoted. The nes-
scentes-clause implies no more than Basil's being aware of the possibility
that the Pope will receive the letters in reverse order. But Dwornik makes
it reveal details about Basil's feelings at the moment: "the Emperor sent
a second letter to the Pope, telling him of his fears concerning his first
ambassador, and wondering if his letter has reached the Pope, as the writer
had been wasting in vain for a reply..... even if Basil had sent Euthymios
to Rome by the end of September 867, there was no reason for him to be sur-
prised at not getting an answer before 11 December of the same year." Thus,
Dwornik reads fear, impatience, and surprise into a text which in my opin-
ion simply shows that Basil knew how easily a letter might be delayed on
its way from Constantinople to Rome. Multa namque in longinquo itinere im-
pedientes accidunt causae!
that Lazaros expected Ignatios to know whom he was talking about. We need, in short, one George who is (a) of some position, (b) on friendly terms with Lewis II, (c) known in Constantinople. Without insisting upon the fact—which may be a mere coincidence—I shall only mention that there happens to be a George who seems to fit perfectly to the description: the patricius George, mentioned in the Chronicon Salernitanum as commander of a small Byzantine fleet which was assisting Lewis at Bari. From a letter which Lewis addressed to the Byzantine Emperor in 871, we can see that Lewis admired this "stratigus": "Nam istic stratigus Georgius, licet tolleret invigilet et strenue pro suo posse decertare non tamen sufficient obviare, si plures inimicorum naves ex parte qualibet appuarerint, non videat licet nisi paucar prorsus chelandia possident." Here, at least, we have a George of whom Ignatios must have known, and who is on friendly terms with the Latin Emperor. Unfortunately, we do not know when and for how long the patricius/stratigus carried out his naval operations in the waters of Bari.

The small fleet of George's is not the only Byzantine fleet to appear at Bari during the siege. In 869, before the month of June, Lewis and his counsellors were aware that more than two hundred Byzantine ships were on their way; and when the fleet arrived—in late 869—it had grown to more than 400 ships, under the command of the Great Drungarius Nicetas. Nicetas had a double mission to take care of; for beside the strictly military job, he was to bring Lewis's daughter back to Constantinople to marry one of the Emperor's sons. But Nicetas soon left again—in anger—and "returned to Corinth" without the young lady. Unfortunately, almost nothing is known about the negotiations which led, in 869, to the dispatch

25. MGH Scriptores III, 521 and 527.
26. Ibid. p. 527.
27. Annales Bertiniani (PL 125,1244C/D): cui (i.e. Hludowico imperatori) amplius quam ducentas naves rex Graecorum in auxilio contra eosdem Saracenos festinato mittebat.
28. According to Jules Gay (L'Italie Méridionale et l'Empire Byzantin. Paris 1904, p.95) "c'est bien la flotte impériale, qu'il faut distinguer nettement des flottes provinciales, chargées de la défense particulière de tel ou tel thème".
29. Annales Bertiniani (PL 125,1251C): Qui (i.e.Basilius) patricium suum ad Bairam cum CCCC navibus miserat, ut et Hludowico contra Saracenos ferret suffragium, et filiam ipsius Hludowici a se desponsatam de eodem Hludowico susciperet et illi in conjugio sibi copulandam duceret. Sed quadam occasione interveniente, dispucluit Hludowico dare filiam suam patricio; unde idem patricius molestus Corinthum redidit...
of Nicetas and his navy: they began, perhaps, already the preceding year— and probably on Basil's initiative. In addition to the campaign against the Saracens and the marriage proposal they may have touched yet another topic: the recognition of Lewis II's imperial status, originally formulated at the Constantinopolitan Synod of 867 (i.e. shortly before Photios was removed). In the following years, these three important items were still being discussed between the two Emperors and the Pope— and it is in this network of messages and missions that Lazaros and his letter seem to find their most logical place.

Depending on the view which we take on the evil George and his eventual identification with the patricius and stratigus, we might, at the end, venture some possibilities of placing Lazaros's winter-mission within the years in question:

(a) If the George of the letter is not the commander mentioned in Lewis's letter from 871, nothing prevents us from letting Lazaros join the embassy which Basil must have sent before Nicetas's expedition in 869. This is normally dated to 868 (e.g. by Gay and Jenkins) — but a departure from Constantinople in the beginning of January 869, in order to fit the only exact reference in the Epistula Lazari, would not be impossible.

(b) If the said two Georges are one person, our reasoning will depend on the movements and whereabouts of the patricius George. From Lewis's letter and the Chronicon Salernitanum it is usually deduced that George's small fleet arrived at some later time, after Nicetas had already left the scene. This would exclude a dating of the Epistula Lazari to the beginning of 869 and eo ipso point towards the beginnings of 870 or 871. But, again, we do not know whether George had been operating in the area for some time already, or if he, perchance, had anything to do with the very ship which supposedly carried the envoys over the Adriatic in January 869.

30. Gay, p. 89.
32. Cf. notes 30 and 31.
(c) One further consideration - the validity of which I cannot define - points rather towards 870. From October 5, 869 to February 28, 870 the Eighth Oecumenical Council held its ten sessions in Constantinople. The first seven meetings took place in October, the eighth on November 7 - but then there is a curiously long pause, and the ninth meeting is not held until February 12. Finally, the tenth session concludes the council on February 28 - and it is only at this last session that representatives for Lewis II are present.\(^{33}\) Anastasius Bibliothecarius, one of the three representatives for the Western Emperor, states that his reason for being in Constantinople at precisely this time, was not the council, but the marriage negotiations.\(^{34}\) As far as I know, it is nowhere said on what grounds the three men were allowed to partake in the concluding session. Now, I fail to see how Anastasius and his two companions could appear informally; their presence ought to imply that Basil had invited Lewis II to be represented at the meeting. Was that, maybe, the reason for the long pause after November 7? And can it be such last-minute negotiations with Lewis which made also the Patriarch send his envoy to Southern Italy?

There is no need to insist upon the hypothetical character of a dating of the Epistula Lazarī to around February 1 in one of the years 869, 870, or 871. It rests on so many assumptions that it can hardly be termed more than a qualified guess. But there is no reason, I think, to deny that it would be absolutely in accord with the general historical context to let Ignatios, too, find it appropriate to approach the Western Emperor, and to entrust his message to the mutilated hands of the aged Lazaros.\(^{35}\)

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\(^{33}\) Similiter conseruunt in dextra parte gloriosissimi principes et apocrisiarii perspicui Ludovici imperatoris Italorum atque Francorum, videlicet Anastasius Deo amabilis bibliothecarius Romæ, Suppo primus gentefanonariorum (see the Latin DuCange s.v. GUNTANO) et consobrinus uxoris eius, et Eurardus praepositus mensæ ipsius. (PL 129,147D-148B).

\(^{34}\) Igitur cum hæc celebraretur venerabilis synodus, accidit me famulum vestrum missum a Ludovico pœssimo imperatore cum duobus aliis viris insignibus interesse, ferentem etiam legationem ab apostolicis meritis, decorato presulato vestro, causa nuptialis commercii, quod efficiendum ex filio imperatoris Basilii, et genita præfati Dei cultoris Augusti, ab utraque parte sperabatur simul et parabatur. (PL 129, 17C)

\(^{35}\) The fate of Lazaros's hands is one of the gruesome details in his biography. See e.g. Theophanes Continuatus (PG 109, 117A-C).
EPILOGUE:

Presumably, the letter in which Lazaros informed the Patriarch about his unsuccessful talk with Lewis II never reached its destination. Once in Constantinople, the text would not have been accessible for copying in St. Gallen within so short a span of years. It is much easier to imagine some accident to have happened during its long over-land transportation; multæ namque in longinquō itinere accidunt causa!

As for Lazaros himself, he died on a mission to Rome; if the Synaxarion can be trusted, this happened περὶ τὰ μέσα ποιος δὲ δοῦμαι, in all likelihood on November 17. This implies one of two things, depending on how we understand the expression "approximately mid-way". For if this is taken to refer to the voyage back from Rome, it suggests that Lazaros continued from Southern Italy to Rome and stayed there until autumn. If, however, we read the notice in the Synaxarium (see Appendix B) without paying any attention to the Epistula Lazari, the natural inference of the Greek words is rather that he died on his way to Rome - in which case he must have returned alive from his winter-mission to Lewis II.

Anyhow, his dead body was carried back to Constantinople and buried in the Euandrou Monastery near the city, and he was given a modest place among the saints of the orthodox church, as one of the confessors from the last phase of the Second Iconoclasm.

APPENDIX A: ORTHOGRAPHIC AND SYNTAXICAL PECULIARITIES:

In my reconstruction of the Epistula Lazari (above, p.126) I have corrected the following typically Western misspellings and misreadings:
8 ἈΤ衫ΣΝ 9 ἙΜΕΡΟΣ 10 Ἱ, ΜΙΚΡΟΤΑΘ 11 ΜΕΓΑΛ (abbreviation symbol disregarded, cf. lines 14 and 17) 13-14 ἈΝΑΤΥΧΕΙΧΩΝ 14 ΤΕΚΔΟΧΗΝ 16 ΚΑΤΩΝΙΣΤΗΘΟ 17 ΤΕΚΔΟΧΗΝ.

Twice, the scribe corrected his own mistakes in scribendo: MENOC in line 9 and ΕΧΠΙΣΚΗΝ in line 10 were properly corrected, evidently from the model.

I have retained the following spellings, considering them to be what might be expected from a Byzantine of the ninth century:
1 παναγγελω, θεωβηγητω 5 ταπελωντητος, τελεος εκτυχου 6 αγγελω-
μηνητω, ευσπλανον (for ευσπλαγχνον) 7 ευκαρπουσαστον 8 αγωνυ (a
safe reconstruction from the meaningless ATοΝ) χλ ηςναζ 12 παλυ
13 ρυγος 13-14 αναφυκελκον 15 ταχη, φθεγασες 16 μυνος, ως (for ὄσες; the manuscript has Ο Η with a space between).

From a syntactical point of view, there is at least one 'blunder', the nominative construction in lines 10-13 (instead of accusative, as subject for ταῦτα). In line 6, the dative after ἐπετυχεῖν is less strange than the word εὐχη (or εὐχῶ?) itself. Is it a miswritten εὐχη, or is it formed from an otherwise unknown εὐχός?

**APPENDIX B: LAZAROS IN THE TRADITION OF THE CHURCH.**

a) Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae (ed. H. Delehaye) coll.231-234:

Τῇ αὐτῇ ἡμέρᾳ (ἀ.ε. November 17) μνήμη τοῦ ὀσίου καὶ ὁμολογητοῦ Λαζάρου τοῦ εὐγράφου. Οὗτος ὑπήρχεν ἐπὶ τῆς βασιλείας τῶν εἰκονομάχων ἐρωτεῖ δὲ τῆς θείας τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἀγάπης τρώγεις, ἤμετροτάτο ἐκ παλάβων ὑπελθείς τοῦ μονήρα βου, καύτερει εἰπόν πάση μακαρίστητη, ἀκτισμοῦνας μεταρχόμενος καὶ ἐλεπιστούχους ἐπιμελοῦμένους πρὸς τῇ σκληραγωγῇ καὶ ἐγκρατείᾳ καὶ ἀγρυπνίᾳ.

Ἐν τούτοις τοῖς μεγάλοις πλεονεκτήμασι διαλάμβανον, τοῦ τῆς ἐρωτεύσης τετύχηκεν ἀξιώματος. Πλεύστα δὲ κολαστήρια καθυπέμεινεν οὐ μόνον παρὰ τῶν τά Νεοτορίου καὶ Ἐὔτυχοῦ καὶ Ἀμσκόρου φρονοῦντων, ὁμολογῶν τὸν Χριστὸν τέλεσον θεὸν καὶ τέλεσον ἄνθρωπον, ἀσυγχώτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀναλομάτως, ἄλλα καὶ παρὰ τῶν βοηθητῶν καὶ ἄνωσῶν εἰκονοκαυστῶν πολλαῖς κατακύσθη πληγαῖς καὶ βασάνοις, διὰ τὸ τέτεθαι καὶ προσκυνεῖτα τὰ τῶν ἁγῶν σεβασμοί ἐκτυχώματα διὰ τὸ τέτεθαι εὐγραφέως ταῦτα οἰκειοτεχνῶς τοῖς πύναξιν καὶ οἷα βέλεσι τοὺς ἀλητρύους κατατοξεύειν. Οὗτος τὴν ἐπὶ τὴν πρέσβυτην ἱστορίαν ἐντελείως ἐκμακαρίσθηκεν, τῶν πατρικῶν φημι καὶ ἀποστολικῶν ὁμογένων καὶ παραδόσεων ἐνεκεν’ καὶ ἀείως ἐνεπέθεθεν μεγαλοπρεπῶς ὑπεστρέφειν’ πάλιν δὲ εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν πορείαν κεμφείς τῶν αὐτῶν ἐνεκεν ὑποθέσατον, περὶ τὰ μέσα κοι τῆς ὁδοῦ τὴν τριάδα αὐτοῦ φυχῆν τῷ Κυρίῳ παρέδετο. Τὸ μέντοι ἔρωτατον αὐτοῦ ὀμοὶ τοῖς κοιδοῦσιν ἀνακουσθέν ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν τόλμων κατεσθῆκεν πέραν τοῦ ἀστεοῦ, ἐν τῇ μονῇ τῶν Εὐανέρου.
b) Μηναζού του Νοεμβρίου (ed. Saliverou, Athens), under November 17:

Τῇ αὖτὶ ἡμέρᾳ, Μνήμη τοῦ Ὀούζου καὶ Ὀμολογητοῦ Λαζάρου τοῦ Ζωγράφου.

Στίχοι.

Οὐ ζωγραφεῖ σε Λάζαρος καὶ νῦν Λάγει,
'
'Ἀλλὰ βλέπει σε ἔννυτα, μὴ λητῶν χρῶν ἢ.

Οὕτως ὑπειλήθην τὸν μονήρα βίου ὑπέρχεται, καὶ ζωγραφικὴν ἐπιστήμην ἐκπαι-
δεύεται, καὶ πρὸς τῇ σκληραγωγῇ καὶ ἐγκρατείᾳ, καὶ τῆς ἔλεηοςύνης ἐπεμε-
λείτοι ὡς καὶ τὸ τῆς ἀρεσκόντης ἀξίωμα ἀδέχεται. 'Εντεῦθεν κατὰ παῖσιν τῶν
αἱρέσεων ἀποδύτεται' καὶ τοσάτας θλίψεις, οὐ μόνον παρὰ τῶν τὰ Εὐτυχοὺς
καὶ Νεστορίου καὶ Διοκλῆρου φρονοῦντες, ἄλλα καὶ ταῦτα τῶν ἅθεων Εἰκονο-
μάχων ὑπέμεινεν, ὡς ὦθεὶ ἔστων εἰσεῖν. 'Ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐκ τῆς πρεσβυτέρου
Ῥώμης στέλλεται, τῶν Πατρικίων καὶ Ἀποστολικῶν ὑπερμαχῆσιν δογμάτων. Καὶ
μεγαλοπρεπῶς ὑποστρέφας, ἀδεις τῶν αὐτῶν ἐνεκεν ὑποθέσουν ἐπὶ Ὁ ὒμοῦ ἄπ-
αρει. Καὶ περὶ τὰ μέσα τοῦ τῆς ὄσιος, ἀνωμαλίας τυγχα ἀὕτη περὶ τὸ σῶμα
γενουμένης, τελευτᾷ ἐν Χριστῷ. Καὶ τὸ τύμλον αὐτοῦ σῶμα ἀνακομισθέθν, ἐν
τῇ μονῇ τοῦ Εὐδάνδρου κατετέθη.