

Elias of Nabinaux, Archbishop of Nicosia, and the Intellectual History of Later Medieval Cyprus

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In the later Middle Ages Cyprus was an independent kingdom that was not only part of Byzantine civilization, but also the western cultural sphere.¹ On his way to Syria during the Third Crusade, Richard the Lionheart conquered Cyprus in 1191. Shortly thereafter the island was sold to Guy de Lusignan, who installed a Frankish feudal aristocracy over the mainly Greek speaking populace. Before the end of the century, Guy's brother Aimery had become the first Lusignan King of Cyprus. The Lusignans ruled the island until shortly before the Venetians took over in 1489, the only major disturbance of duration being the Genoese invasion in 1373, resulting in the loss of the Famagusta and its surroundings. The Ottomans ended Latin control of Cyprus in 1571.

The political legitimacy of King Aimery's title came from his submission to the Holy Roman Emperor, while ecclesiastical legitimacy stemmed from his request that the pope set up a local Latin Church hierarchy in Cyprus, a hierarchy that remained until the Ottoman conquest.² Because the foundation of the Kingdom of Cyprus and the installation of the Latin Church on the island closely coincided with the rise of the universities, the foundation of the mendicant orders, and the establishment of the Latin Empire of Constantinople following the Fourth Crusade of 1204, they combined to bring Cyprus into the intellectual and cultural history of the Latin West, while the primarily Greek population of the island ensured continuing contacts with Byzantine scholarship.³ Cyprus reached its zenith as a participant in these intellectual currents in the reigns of King Hugh IV of Lusignan (1324-1359) and his son Peter I (1359-1369). The activities of Elias of Nabinaux, Archbishop of Nicosia (1332-1342), exemplify how small the world of learning could be in the fourteenth century.

A. Intellectual Ties between Cyprus and Western Europe

The reigns of Hugh IV and Peter I were particularly interesting for the intellectual crosscurrents which they sponsored, and their fame spread

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¹ On this subject generally, see especially G. Grivaud's very impressive "Πνευματικός Βίος—Γραμματολογία," in T. Papadopoulos, ed., *Ιστορία της Κύπρου Ε: Μεσαιωνικόν Βασίλειον, Ενετοκρατία. Μέρος Β* (Nicosia 1996), pp. 863-1207.

² For the early political history of the Lusignan kingdom, see P. Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus and the Crusades 1191-1374* (Cambridge 1991). On the establishment of the Latin Church, see N. Coureas, *The Latin Church in Cyprus, 1195-1312* (Aldershot 1997); and for documents, see N. Coureas and C. Schabel, eds., *The Cartulary of the Cathedral of Holy Wisdom of Nicosia* (Nicosia 1997).

³ I will treat Greek scholarship, as well as Latin learning after 1400, in a wider study.

widely. To some extent Cyprus had already had a romantic image in the west because of its position as a crusader kingdom. After all, some of the most famous or infamous individuals of the late-twelfth and thirteenth centuries spent time in Cyprus: Saint Francis of Assisi (reportedly); King Richard the Lionheart of England; Emperor Frederick II, the *Stupor Mundi*; and King Louis IX of France (Saint Louis). Latin Cyprus had already established its own literary tradition as well, with Philip of Novara, for example.

With the fall of Acre in 1291, and the subsequent influx of refugees to Cyprus, to the romantic crusading image was added the reputation for wealth and gluttony, especially in Famagusta. The four arguably most famous secular writers of the fourteenth century wrote about the commerce, the excesses, the patronage, or the chivalrous exploits of Cyprus and its kings: Dante Alighieri, Giovanni Boccaccio, Geoffrey Chaucer, and Guillaume de Machaut.⁴ Even Petrarch had indirect ties with Cyprus via Peter I's physician and diplomat Guido da Bagnolo, himself a learned doctor.⁵

While Dante confined his remarks about the excesses of Cyprus to its bad king, Henry II, Benvenuto da Imola, writing after the Genoese takeover of Famagusta in the 1370's, applied Henry's "superfluity of luxury, gluttony, effeminacy and every kind of pleasure" to the Cypriots as a whole.⁶ Henry fared slightly better in Boccaccio, it appears, but Cyprus still figured prominently in the *Decameron* for its wealth and trading connections with the Italian maritime cities. Indeed, according to the traveler Ludof von Suchen, who visited Cyprus during Elias of Nabinaux's archbishopric sometime between 1336 and 1341, Cyprus was such an international emporium that merchants were taught in special language schools, much as today.⁷

Later in the century Peter I was taken as the paradigm of the chivalrous hero. In a cynical period of war between Christians and ecclesiastical schisms, Chaucer looked to Peter's exploits for their undeniable merit, *prima facie* at least. Thus in the Prologue, the knight, who is described in favorable terms generally, is first said to have been present "when we took Alexandria" (1365) and it is later added that he was also as Ayas (1367) and Satalia (1361). In all cases Peter I was the leader, although the events were so well-known to his readers that Chaucer made no mention of the king of Cyprus with whom his knight served so long. Later, however, in the Monk's Tale, Peter is

⁴ Cf. Dante, *Paradiso*, canto XIX, ll. 145-149 (on Henry II); Boccaccio, *Il Decamerone*, day I-tale 9 (on Guy de Lusignan and, by extension, Henry II; cf. E. Peters, "Henry II of Cyprus, *Rex inutilis*: A Footnote to *Decameron* 1.9," in *Speculum* 72.3 [1997], pp. 763-775), day II-tales 4 (Peters, p. 766, has 4.4) and 7 (the latter quite important), day III-tale 7, day VIII-tale 10, day X-tale 9 (day V-tale 1 appears to speak of an earlier period); Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, prologue (the knight's exploits with Peter I) and the Monk's Tale (on Peter I); Machaut, e.g. *La Prise d'Alexandrie*.

⁵ Cf. R. Livi, "Guido da Bagnolo, medico del re di Cipro," *Atti e memorie della Real Deputazione di storia patria per le provincie modensi*, 5.11 (1918) pp. 45-91, on his relationship with Petrarch, pp. 69-78.

⁶ Quoted in C.D. Cobham, *Excerpta Cyprica* (Cambridge 1908), p. 15.

⁷ Cf. Cobham, *Excerpta Cyprica*, p. 20.

explicitly placed in an illustrious series of historical figures who once rode high, in Peter's case in the taking of Alexandria, but who fell from great heights (Peter was murdered). The list is as follows: Satan, Adam, Samson, Hercules, Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Zenobia, Peter of Spain, Peter of Cyprus, Bernabo Visconti of Lombardy, Count Ugolino of Pisa, Nero, Holofernes, Antiochus, Alexander the Great, Caesar, and Croesus! Finally, when Guillaume de Machaut sought a suitable subject for a modern epic poem, Peter I of Cyprus and his capture of Alexandria was the obvious choice.

Despite its romantic image, however, Cyprus did not play a *central* cultural role in Europe in the period of the Lusignan kingdom. It is, however, true to say that Cyprus was as much a Western European kingdom in scholarship as was any such region situated on the periphery. After Pope Celestine III had established the Latin Church on the island, provisions were made for schools of grammar and theology to be set up on the island, connected with the cathedrals, in accordance with the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215. The Greek Cypriot (as opposed to Frankish or other Cypriot) George of Cyprus (born ca. 1240), later Patriarch Gregory of Constantinople, actually attended one of the Latin schools in Nicosia in the 1250's, suggesting that intellectual exchanges and cooperation between Greeks and Latins on Cyprus were already taking place early on. It is assumed, plausibly but without direct evidence, that George attended the cathedral school. The fact that George was not satisfied with his education should not detain us: he was even less satisfied with local education conducted in Greek, and he was not comfortable with the Latin language. What George does *not* say, contrary to some historians' claims, is that his lack of progress in the Latin school was due to "the incapacity of his teachers,"⁸ or that "the approach to Aristotle's logic through the filter of a Latin translation seemed to him completely ridiculous."⁹ He does say that he could not, however much he tried, learn grammar and Aristotelian logic in the "bastard" language of his teachers. Any incapacity is ascribed to his Greek teachers. George thus left the island for a Byzantine education.¹⁰

Nevertheless, the cathedral school was both new and probably inferior to the local mendicant alternatives. Despite the provisions of the Innocent III's council of 1215, it appears that in 1223 there was still no school of theology attached to the cathedral of Nicosia. On May 10 of that year, the papal legate Cardinal Peter decreed that the local bishops should allow their canons to leave for theological studies after arranging for a replacement

⁸ C. Constantinides, *Higher Education in Byzantium in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries* (1204 - ca. 1310) (Nicosia 1992), p. 25, citing George's text.

⁹ Grivaud, "Πνευματικός Βίος—Γραμματολογία," p. 892, citing the same text of George: "του φαινόταν εντελώς γελοία η προσέγγιση στη λογική του Αριστοτέλους μέσω του ηθρού μιάς λατινικής μεταφράσεως." Grivaud assumes that George attended the cathedral grammar school. It is with some exaggeration, then, that Grivaud later (p. 925) describes George's portrait of Latin learning in Nicosia as "καταστροφικό."

¹⁰ For a reprint of George's recollections, with no mention of the cathedral school, see B. Nerantzi-Barmazi, ed., *Σύνταγμα Βυζαντινών Πηγών Κυπριακής Ιστορίας. 4^{ος} - 15^{ος} αιώνες* (Nicosia 1996), pp. 136-137. On his education generally, see Constantinides, *Higher Education*.

canon, and that these bishops should provide them with five years' income from their prebends. Obviously a local school of the secular church was not a hand.¹¹ As late as 1248 the papal legate Eudes of Châteauroux, himself a learned Paris theologian, complained in the strongest terms of the sorry state or even non-existence of the secular church's schools, both of grammar and theology, in Nicosia:¹²

It was beneficially ordained in the [Fourth] Lateran Council that there should be masters of grammar in all cathedral churches, and also masters of theology in the archiepiscopal cathedrals, who might instruct others to escape from their own ignorance, which is the mother of all errors, and to fill others with the pearls of knowledge. Nevertheless, even with such a useful statute, so far no fruit or very little has appeared in the Kingdom of Cyprus, since, as we sadly relate, it scarcely or never is seen to be observed there. Because of this, besides the sin of so great a transgression, with which they greatly offended the eyes of the divine majesty, one must truly fear that by their negligence they will without doubt drive out reason completely from their souls and the souls of their subjects. Since they are blind and leaders of the blind, they have fallen, along with those whom they should lead, into the infernal pit, into which they also lead the others' [souls]. It stands to reason that the farther away [the negligent] live from the places where there is a *studium*, the less excusable they are in this regard, since, constrained by poverty, or the distance between places, or the difficulty of the terrain in [the students'] paths, or the danger of the sea, few or none dare go or are able to go from their homes to where there are studies. Wishing therefore to cure so grave and dangerous a sickness with a quick remedy, lest we also be condemned for neglecting this along with the negligent ones, we strictly command the archbishop of Nicosia, with the threat of divine judgment, with every delay, excuse, and difficulty put aside, to make sure that from now on there are masters of theology and grammar to teach in the city of Nicosia, as provided for according to the

¹¹ For Peter's decree, see L. de Mas Latrie, *Histoire de l'Île de Chypre sous le règne des princes de la maison de Lusignan* III (Paris 1855), p. 623. Grivaud remarks ("Πνευματικός Βίος—Γραμματολογία," p. 891, n. 71) that the fifteenth-century Greek Cypriot historian Leontios Makhairas "τοποθετεί τη δημιουργία εδρών θεολογίας στα πρώτα έτη της κατακτήσεως της Κύπρου από τους Λατίνους." The word "έδρα," however, is nowhere present in Makhairas' text, and "δασκάλους της θεολογίας" is only in the Venice ms. (not in Oxford or Ravenna). Moreover, the entire remark is within a quotation from the pope, saying whom he will send to Cyprus under certain conditions. Cf. Leontios Makhairas, *Recital concerning the Sweet Land of Cyprus* entitled "Chronicle," ed. and trans. R.M. Dawkins, vol. 1 (Oxford 1932), para. 28.

¹² Cf. J.D. Mansi, ed., *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, vol. 26 (Venice 1784), col. 338B-E. On Eudes' measures, see B.Z. Kedar, "Ecclesiastical Legislation in the Kingdom of Jerusalem: The Statutes of Jaffa (1253) and Acre (1254)," in P. Edbury, ed., *Crusade and Settlement* (Cardiff 1985), pp. 225-230.

statutes of the aforesaid council. Nevertheless, if necessary, to remove every manner of impediment to such a good, those whom we wish to teach [others] for free should be enticed by more benefices, so that scholars will not withdraw from learning from fear of some exaction. We also command these same things of the suffragans of the Nicosia Church with respect to masters of the grammar faculty.

He went on to further threaten and encourage the local prelates to promote education and educated clergy, and ensure that every parish has books.¹³ Still, even in 1313 the Papal Legate Pierre de Pleine-Chassagne, Bishop of Rodez, could hint at simple linguistic ignorance of the lower Latin secular clergy in Cyprus:¹⁴

Item, [we order] that all clerics who do not know how should promptly learn reading and singing, besides grammar skills, so that they know and understand in a basic way, at least in the literal sense, what they say and hear in church, to distinguish themselves from lay people, so that the clergy does not become like the people, ignorant of formed thought.

And as late as 1392, however, the canons of Famagusta were given language examinations.

The mendicant schools were undoubtedly superior. The Franciscan and Dominican orders were founded in the first decades of the thirteenth century, and almost immediately they were active on Cyprus, together with the other major mendicant order, the Carmelites.¹⁵ After their foundation in 1256, the Augustinian Hermits also established convents on the island, although more gradually. All four orders had houses in Nicosia, Famagusta, and Limassol, while the Franciscans at least had a convent in Paphos, and the Carmelites and Dominicans possessed *casalia* outside the towns.¹⁶ The Dominicans and following them the Franciscans and the others placed great emphasis on learning as a tool to combat heresy and debate the infidel, and therefore all four mendicant orders set up an international school system on a hierarchical

¹³ Cf. Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum*, vol. 26, cols. 338E-339C.

¹⁴ Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum*, vol. 26, col. 317C. Grivaud ("Πνευματικός Βίος—Γραμματολογία," p. 879) mentions this, but it is debatable whether Peter's statement is enough to show "the decline of an authentic Latin civilization."

¹⁵ On the establishment of the mendicant orders on Cyprus, see Coureas, *The Latin Church*, pp. 205-247. Since this occurred before mid-century, one is puzzled by Grivaud's remark ("Πνευματικός Βίος—Γραμματολογία," p. 891), "Ωστόσο, μετά το πέραςμα του Λουδοβίκου Θ' από την Κύπρο (1248-1249), η ανάπτυξη της θρησκευτικής εκπαίδευσης είναι καταφανής, κυρίως μετά την εγκατάσταση των μοναστικών Ταγμάτων Επαυτών στη νήσο."

¹⁶ Cf. Etienne de Lusignan, *Description de toute l'isle de Cypre* (Paris 1580), ff. 89a-90a. As late as 1328, however, the Augustinians still had only one house. On June 14 of that year John XXII wrote the order's prior general, permitting him to set up two more houses on donated properties that were sufficient to support convents of at least 12 friars each. Cf. G. Mollat, *Joannis Papae XXII (1316-1334) Litterae Communes*, vol. 7, fasc. 17 (Paris 1919), #41573.

basis. The brightest Franciscan boys at the local *studium*, for example, were sent to the provincial *studium*, and then perhaps to one of the *studia generalia* of the order. The orders positioned their most important schools alongside the newly evolved universities in Paris, Bologna, and Oxford, where the best scholars of the mendicant orders enriched these institutions and ensured their continued vitality as corporations of higher learning.

Unfortunately for George of Cyprus, it seems he did not attend one of the *studia* of the mendicants. The example of Peter of Candia, however, shows that a century later a Greek peasant sometimes had the opportunity to rise through the hierarchy of mendicant schools to the pinnacle of western scholarship and ecclesiastical power. Born around 1340 in Venetian Crete and orphaned by Greek parents, Peter was taken in and educated by the local Franciscans, who largely dominated fourteenth-century thought in the West. As a member of the order from 1357, Peter was sent to study in Norwich and Oxford, and finally in 1381 he reached the very apex of Latin learning: the Franciscan regent master of theology at the University of Paris. Peter's career did not stop at Master of Theology, but he became bishop, archbishop, cardinal-priest, and finally Pope Alexander V at the council of Pisa in 1409.¹⁷

Although we have no examples from Cyprus of such a meteoric rise from a local boy, Greek or French, there is evidence that Cypriots did make their way to continental schools. In the thirteenth century the popes frequently ordered that overseas students be sent to study at the University of Paris, for example, and they also supported the study of oriental languages. Perhaps one such scholar was Master John of Cyprus, a layman, whom Benedict XI mentions in 1303 as having served the Apostolic See.¹⁸ After 1291, the Dominicans in Cyprus had the right to send two to three friars annually to Rome or Lombardy to complete their studies in theology, while a letter of 31 December 1373 relates that the Franciscans of Cyprus were allowed to send two brothers to Paris for the same purpose. In fact we have the names of a few Franciscans from Cyprus who excelled in theology in the fourteenth century, and still more information for the fifteenth.¹⁹

This trend intensified in the fifteenth century with the rise of Venetian influence on the island. Already in 1353 Giovanni de Guglielmo the Cypriot went to Padua to study canon law. Pierre de Caffron set up a scholarship that began sending Cypriot students to Padua in 1393. When Venice conquered nearby Padua in 1406, it thereby obtained its own university, and the presence

¹⁷ On Peter of Candia, see F. Ehrle, *Der Sentenzenkommentar Peters von Candia, des Pisaner Papstes Alexanders V.* (Münster in Westf. 1925), and, more recently, C. Schabel, "Peter of Candia and the Prelude to the Quarrel at Louvain," *Επετηρίς του Κέντρου Επιστημονικών Ερευνών* 24 (Nicosia 1998), forthcoming.

¹⁸ For John of Cyprus, see *Acta Benedicti XI*, ed. A.L. Tautu, CICO 8 (Vatican City 1963), p. 248. For the sending of overseas students to Paris and the study of oriental languages, see e.g. *Acta Alexandri IV*, ed. T. Haluskynskyj and M. Wojnar, CICO 4.2 (Vatican City 1964), pp. 74-75, and "Acta Honorii IV," in *Acta Romanorum Pontificum ab Innocentio V ad Benedictum XI*, ed. F.M. Delorme and A.L. Tautu, CICO 5.2 (Vatican City 1954), pp. 118-119.

¹⁹ Cf. Grivaud, "Πνευματικός Βίος—Γραμματολογία," pp. 892-893.

of Cypriot students at the University of Padua on scholarships continued until the Turkish conquest of Cyprus in 1570-71. In fact, for a time the Cypriot element was so strong that the guild of overseas students there was called the "Cypriot Nation."²⁰

It was not, of course, a one-way street. The secular church and the mendicant orders sent masters from the West to teach in the Cypriot schools. The most striking example is Thomas Aquinas, who apparently taught in Nicosia at the Dominican *studium* for a number of months between September 1266 and the spring of 1268, and dedicated his *De regno, ad regem Cypri*, to King Hugh II.²¹ The Franciscan Raymond Lull, so interesting for his support of the study of foreign languages for biblical scholarship and proselytism, also visited the island and composed works there.²² Moreover, because the mendicant orders existed in part to convert the infidel and the schismatics, it made sense for the popes to promote mendicants to high local ecclesiastical posts. Thus the mendicants, often educated in eastern languages such as Greek and experienced in missionary activity, made up a high percentage of archbishops of Nicosia and bishops of Famagusta, Paphos, and Limassol.²³ Elias of Nabinaux was one such prelate.

B. The Reigns of Hugh IV and Peter I

When the Franciscan Elias of Nabinaux was named Archbishop of Nicosia in 1332, medieval Cyprus was at its cultural height. Famagusta was one of the wealthiest ports in the Mediterranean, and the Lusignan court in Nicosia reflected this wealth. Changing trade routes, papal dispensations for trade with the Muslims, the lifting of papal restrictions altogether on this trade in 1344, and the Black Death began to eat away at the source of Cyprus's wealth, but the island was prosperous at least until the Genoese invasion in 1373. This was a period of artistic patronage on the part of Hugh IV and Peter I, the period of the completion of Famagusta Cathedral, the last phases of Nicosia Cathedral, the greatest parts of Bellapaise Abbey, the Orthodox

²⁰ On Cypriots at Padua, see A. Tselikas, "Η Διαθήκη του Petro de Cafrano και οι Πράξεις Εκλογής Κυπρίων Φοιτητών για το Πανεπιστήμιο της Πάδοβας (1393, 1436-1569)," *Επετηρίς του Κέντρου Επιστημονικών Ερευνών* 17 (Nicosia 1988-89), pp. 261-292, and Grivaud, "Πνευματικός Βίος—Γραμματολογία," especially pp. 887-898.

²¹ For Aquinas's stay in Nicosia, cf. Grivaud, "Πνευματικός Βίος—Γραμματολογία," p. 892, although Grivaud's remark (p. 922) that Aquinas was in Cyprus in those months "μετά από επτά έτη σπουδών και διδασκαλίας στην πρωτεύουσα του βασιλείου των Καπετιδών" misleadingly suggests that Aquinas was in Paris from 1259 to 1266. For the authenticity and identification of the dedicatee of *De regno* (an authentic part of an otherwise often apocryphal *De regimine principum*) with Hugh II, see also T. Eschmann's introduction to his translation Saint Thomas, *On Kingship to the King of Cyprus* (Toronto 1949), pp. xi-xxx, and Grivaud, "Πνευματικός Βίος—Γραμματολογία," pp. 988-992.

²² Cf. Grivaud, "Πνευματικός Βίος—Γραμματολογία," pp. 1045-1046.

²³ On the ecclesiastical background of the local prelates, see G. Fedalto, "Η Λατινική Εκκλησία στο Μεσαιωνικό Βασίλειο," in T. Papadopoulos, ed., *Ιστορία της Κύπρου Δ: Μεσαιωνικών Βασιλείων, Ενετοκρατία. Μέρος Α* (Nicosia 1995), pp. 667-732, and Coureas, *The Latin Church*, esp. pp. 235-239.

Cathedral of St. George in Famagusta, and of other monuments, some now lost. It was also an era of intellectual patronage and endeavor. It was for his patron Hugh IV that Boccaccio composed what he considered to be one of his most important works, *On the Genealogy of the Gods*.²⁴ Moreover, Philip of Mézières, whom Hugh sent on diplomatic missions and who became Peter I's chancellor, was an accomplished author in his own right.²⁵ R. Livi suggests that with the connections of Mézières, Peter I's personal physician Guido da Bagnolo, and Jason de Nores with Petrarch, Boccaccio, and other Italian luminaries there may have been a significant literary exchange between Italy and Cyprus in the mid-fourteenth century.²⁶

The great Byzantine scholar Nicephoros Gregoras, who dedicated a treatise *On Kingship* to Hugh, praised the Cypriot king's patronage of learning.²⁷ Hugh has been described as a "fanatic of theological and philosophical discussions," for his entertainment of Latin, Greek, and Arab scholars at his court.²⁸ Further evidence for the Arab connection might be the fact that the Spanish Dominican Alfonso Buenhombre made Latin translations of Arabic works while staying in Famagusta at some time between 1339 and 1342.²⁹ Cyprus had particularly close Byzantine connections in Hugh's reign, with Gregoras, Barlaam, and Gregory Akindynos. The center of these ties seems to have been George of Lapithos, a respected thinker at Hugh's court.³⁰ Besides composing original works and carrying on an active correspondence with these Byzantines, George was probably responsible for the copying of Greek manuscripts of philosophical and theological texts. A Cypriot manuscript of the Pseudo-Aristotelian *De mundo*, dating to the beginning of Hugh's reign, has been linked to George, and other contemporary Cypriot manuscripts include witnesses of Aristotle's *Physics*, the works of St. John Chrysostomos, and John of Damascus' *De fide orthodoxa*, all known to the West in Latin translation.³¹

Several Cypriot manuscripts of astronomical texts also survive. It was most likely George of Lapithos who translated the Toledan Tables into Greek, an important indication of the level of astronomical learning on Cyprus at the

²⁴ Cf. G. Hill, *A History of Cyprus*, vol. II: *The Frankish Period 1192-1432* (Cambridge 1948), p. 305, n. 2.

²⁵ On Philip, see recently K. Petkov, "The rotten apple and the good apples: Orthodox, Catholics, and Turks in Philippe de Mézières' crusading propaganda," *Journal of Medieval History* 23.3 (1997), pp. 255-270.

²⁶ Cf. Livi, "Guido da Bagnolo," p. 67, n. 1, stating that there may have been "un scambio di relazioni letterarie fra l'Italia e Cipro" at this time.

²⁷ For Nicephoros' remarks, see Nerantzi-Barmazi, ed., *Σύνταγμα Βυζαντινών Πηγών Κυπριακής Ιστορίας*, pp. 161-164.

²⁸ Grivaud, "Πνευματικός Βίος—Γραμματολογία," p. 910.

²⁹ Grivaud, "Πνευματικός Βίος—Γραμματολογία," p. 924.

³⁰ Cf. Grivaud, "Πνευματικός Βίος—Γραμματολογία," pp. 1049-1054, and for Byzantine texts involving George, see Nerantzi-Barmazi, ed., *Σύνταγμα Βυζαντινών Πηγών Κυπριακής Ιστορίας*, pp. 148-160 and 168.

³¹ Cf. C. Constantinides and R. Browning, *Dated Greek Manuscripts from Cyprus to the Year 1571* (Nicosia 1993), #40, 44, 49, and 47 respectively. Cf. idem, pp. 10-13, for a summary of Greek connections and Cypriot manuscript production in these years.

time.³² It is curious to note in passing that earlier in the century John of Murs, one of the greatest mathematicians, musical theorists, and astronomers of the fourteenth century, spent time on the island. At the age of ten he was exiled from France to Cyprus for having been a participant in the murder of a monk by a group of noble youths. His exile was for seven years, but under certain circumstances he was to be allowed home after only three.³³ Nevertheless, however long his stay was, and whatever the use of Cyprus as a place of exile may say about the island's reputation in the West, it must be the case that one of the greatest scientists of the century received some of his basic education in Cyprus.

Cyprus's intellectual connections with the West in this era were if anything stronger than those with Byzantium, to judge from the works present on the island in Hugh's and Peter's reigns. From the inventories of the properties of Guido da Bagnolo and Guy d'Ibelin, we can get an idea of the availability of scientific, philosophical, and theological books in Latin on Cyprus in this period. According to a posthumous inventory of 1380, Guido (†1370) left some 60 books, of which most were medical or related scientific texts of use in his role as physician to Peter I. Included among these works were important writings by classical authors such as Galen, Ptolemy, and of course Aristotle, Islamic scholars such as Avicenna and Averroës, and more recent western thinkers such as Arnold of Villanova, Albertus Magnus, and Peter of Abano. Although some of these books he may have obtained after leaving Cyprus, Guido did state in an earlier will of 1362 written in Nicosia Cathedral that he possessed and wished to return certain commentaries of Averroës (on the works of Aristotle, no doubt), which he had borrowed from the local Franciscan convent. Guido himself owned only Averroës' *Physics* commentary, and probably temporarily supplemented this with volumes from the Franciscans' collection.³⁴

Guy d'Ibelin was a Dominican bishop of Limassol from 1357 until his death in 1367. Although his see was probably the least important on the island at the time, Guy left a substantial library of 52 volumes, on par with the size of the library of a prelate of comparable importance in the West.³⁵ Guy

³² On this, see D. Pingree, "The Byzantine Version of the *Toledan Tables*: The Work of George Lapithes?" *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 30 (1976), pp. 86-132, and A. Tihon, "Un traité astronomique Chypriote du XIV^e siècle," *Janus* 64 (1977), pp. 279-309. We should learn more about George's translation with the completion of the edition of the Latin text by Fritz S. Pedersen.

³³ Cf. C. Gack-Scheiding, *Johannes de Muris. Epistola super reformatione antiqui kalendarii. Ein Beitrag zur Kalenderreform im 14. Jahrhundert* (Hannover 1995), p. 49. Another edition of the text that is the basis for Gack-Scheiding's book is in C. Schabel, "John of Murs and Firmin of Beauval's Letter and Treatise on Calendar Reform for Clement VI," *Cahiers de l'Institut du Moyen Âge Grec et Latin* 66 (1996), pp. 187-215.

³⁴ Cf. Livi, "Guido da Bagnolo," pp. 51, 54, 78-91.

³⁵ Grivaud ("Πνευματικός Βίος—Γραμματολογία," p. 914) has "57" books, a typo (he gives the correct figure on p. 943). For the inventory of Guy's books, see M.-H. Laurent and J. Richard, "La bibliothèque d'un évêque Dominicain de Chypre," *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 21 (1951), pp. 447-454 (reprinted in J. Richard, *Les relations entre l'Orient et l'Occident au Moyen Âge. Études et documents* [London 1977], article VI). While it is true that Guy may have been exceptional, his

had probably been a friar at the Dominicans' Nicosia convent, and he most likely obtained his books via that convent. Not surprisingly Guy possessed mostly works of theology and its tool, logic. Guy owned several important theological works of the twelfth century, and many of the (thirteenth century) works of Thomas Aquinas, the newly canonized teaching doctor of Guy's order, including parts of the *Summa Theologica*.³⁶ What is interesting, however, is that the inventory suggests that the Nicosia Dominicans stayed fairly current with western intellectual developments in these fields. Thus Guy had several works from the 1310's, 1320's, and 1330's, for example Walter Burley's *Logic* and commentary on the *Physics*.

Guy also had some works by major theologians from the early fourteenth century. He owned the sermons of his fellow Dominican Peter de Palude, who was a famous master of theology at the University of Paris. Peter became patriarch of Jerusalem in 1329, succeeding another Parisian Dominican and master of theology, Raymond Bequini.³⁷ As patriarchs, Raymond and Peter were *de facto* Guy's predecessors, administering the see of Limassol, where Raymond died in 1328. Peter administered the vacant see of Limassol from 1329 to 1337 or 1340.³⁸ The patriarchs of Jerusalem, like most of the Latin bishops in Cyprus at this time, lived in Nicosia, in the Dominicans' case in a house in the citadel, close to or within the confines of the Dominican convent. Hackett hints that Peter was actually resident in Cyprus during this entire time, but this is doubtful. Peter armed himself with papal privileges in 1329 before coming to Cyprus,³⁹ where his presence is attested in 1330. We also

near contemporary Odo de Cancaliis, Bishop of Paphos, is not a good counter-example, contrary to Grivaud ("Πνευματικός Βίος—Γραμματολογία," p. 880). Although he had only five Latin mss. at his death in 1356 (Grivaud says four), Odo was mostly a papal tax collector in Cyprus, as numerous papal letters show, and he even dissented from certain of Elias's reform measures, as we shall see. On Odo's books, see J. Richard, "Les comptes du collecteur de la Chambre Apostolique dans le royaume de Chypre (1357-1363)," *Επετηρίς του Κέντρου Επιστημονικών Ερευνών* 13-16.1 (Nicosia 1984-87), pp. 1-47, esp. p. 14, n. 40, and p. 26.

³⁶ Fedalto's remark ("Η Λατινική Εκκλησία στο Μεσαιωνικό Βασίλειο," p. 701) that Aquinas was "το αστέρι της εποχής" should be taken with caution. Aquinas was important among the Dominicans, but in the fourteenth century his influence in theology outside the order was not so great, and many of his ideas were rejected. In fact, the Franciscans dominated theology and philosophy in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, despite Grivaud's reiteration ("Πνευματικός Βίος—Γραμματολογία," p. 892) of the stereotype that "οι Δομινικανοί είναι εκείνοι οι οποίοι αποτυπώνουν έντονα τη σφραγίδα τους στην ανάπτυξη των σπουδών," however true that may be for the period before Aquinas's death in 1274.

³⁷ Bequini is of particular interest to the present author because he is the only theologian known to have produced a work *Against the Errors of Peter Auriol*, a Franciscan theologian whose *Opera Omnia* I am editing with scholars at the Universities of Copenhagen and Iowa.

³⁸ Cf. J. Hackett, *A History of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus* (London 1901), p. 572.

³⁹ Cf. G. Mollat, ed., *Joannis Papae XXII (1316-1334) Litterae Communes*, vol. 8, fasc. 20 (Paris 1924), #45363, 45366, 45465, 45470-1, 45475, 45694-6, 45955, all from the summer of 1329. These privileges were commonly sought by and given to prelates leaving for the East. Cf. the example of Archbishop Philip of Chamberlithac, Elias's successor, in Coureas-Schabel, *The Cartulary*, #115-129.

know, however, that in 1334 Peter was in Paris, involved in the controversy over the beatific vision, as we shall see, and in Avignon in 1335.⁴⁰

Guy had in addition several *Sentences* commentaries. Peter Lombard's (†1160) four books of the *Sentences*, or opinions, were the theological textbook at the universities of the later Middle Ages. Bachelors of theology would lecture on this text, and also the Bible, as part of the requirements for receiving the degree Master of Theology. Guy owned the commentaries of the Dominican Robert Holcot, who lectured at Oxford 1331-1333; the Augustinian Hermit Thomas of Strasbourg, who taught at Paris 1334-1335;⁴¹ an anonymous author; and a certain "Bernadina," perhaps the Cistercian or "Bernardine" John of Mirecourt, who lectured at Paris 1344-1345.⁴²

Thus Guy, who resided in Nicosia along with most local prelates, had quite a good theological library. Undoubtedly patristic works and the Bible were also close at hand, perhaps in the Nicosia cathedral library.⁴³ When we remember that the Franciscans, Dominicans, Carmelites, and Augustinians probably all had libraries in their schools in Nicosia, keeping in mind the evidence of Guido da Bagnolo's own personal collection, the Greek manuscripts, the astronomical work of George of Lapithos, and the many other works available of a legal, historical, or fictional nature, the obvious conclusion is that Cyprus in general and Nicosia in particular provided the raw materials for a wide range of advanced studies in the mid-fourteenth century. The fact that such figures as Raymond Bequini and Peter de Palude were personally present suggests that the means were available to put these raw materials to good use.

⁴⁰ Peter co-authored decisions of some Paris theologians on 2 January 1334. Cf. H. Denifle and A. Chatelain, eds., *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, II (henceforth CUP II) (Paris 1891), #981-982. For his Avignon stay, cf. CUP II, #995. On the residence of the patriarchs, and of Peter's presence on the island in 1330, see E. de Lusignan, *Description*, f. 32a, and Hill, *A History of Cyprus* II, pp. 193, n. 2, and 294.

⁴¹ I have Holcot's dates from K. Tachau, "Introduction," in eadem and P.A. Streveler, eds., *Seeing the Future Clearly. Questions on Future Contingents by Robert Holcot* (Toronto 1995), p. 27. For Strasbourg, I rely on Z. Kaluza, "Serbi un sasso il nome: une inscription de San Gimignano et la rencontre entre Bernard d'Arezzo et Nicolas d'Autrecourt," *Historia Philosophiae Medii Aevi* 1 (1991), p. 462.

⁴² For "Bernadina," Richard ("La bibliothèque," pp. 453-454, n. 32) suggests the possibilities of Bernard of Auvergne, Bernard the Lombard, and Bernard de Trilia, all Dominicans from the late-thirteenth and early-fourteenth centuries. Holcot's and Strasbourg's commentaries were among the most popular of the time, however, unlike those of the three Bernards, whose works we would not expect to see in Cyprus. Because the inventory states that the commentary in question is on all four books, only Bernard the Lombard remains a plausible possibility in any case (and he lectured on the *Sentences* at Paris in 1327-1328, close to the dates of Holcot and Strasbourg). John of Mirecourt's commentary on the other hand was very popular and survives in many more manuscripts. Perhaps in the future we will be able to identify Bernadina, the anonymous author, and the particular manuscripts of Holcot and Strasbourg that Guy owned, based on marginalia, incipits, and explicit.

⁴³ The fact that Guy's library contains nothing of Scripture or of the Church Fathers does not necessarily mean that he was not interested in those works or in classical and Arab authors, contrary to Fedalto's assertion ("Η Λατινική Εκκλησία στο Μεσαιωνικό Βασίλειο," p. 701), since they were probably readily at hand. Besides, the theological and philosophical works Guy did have are filled with Biblical, Patristic, classical, and Arabic references.

But were perhaps all of these things superficial, reaching only the non-Greek elite, with some notable exceptions? Did this interconnection with the West mean anything to the majority of the population? Were they affected in any way whatsoever? The story of Elias of Nabinaux suggests that the answers to these questions might be yes.

C. Elias of Nabinaux and the Beatific Vision Controversy

It appears that Elias of Nabinaux was from a place called Nabinaux in the Périgord region of southwest France. He became a Franciscan and embarked on a scholastic career. Eventually he became a master of theology at the University of Paris, and Pope John XXII named him Archbishop of Nicosia on 16 November 1332, replacing the late Dominican John of Conti.⁴⁴

Like Peter of Palude, Elias received many papal dispensations before departing for the East. If we can generalize from the examples of Peter and Elias's successor Philip of Chambarlhac, Elias arrived in Cyprus in 1334 or 1335, having obtained the dispensations in the late summer of 1333.⁴⁵ Upon his arrival in Cyprus, Elias appears to have been determined to reform the local clergy. Elias examined the state of affairs on the island and the documents recording the regulations established by his predecessors and by papal legates in the preceding century's local and provincial synods, regulations which "we found much given to neglect and thus more filler for parchment than devoted to a healthy purpose in any manner." Therefore Elias renewed these regulations insofar as they did not conflict with one another.⁴⁶ Elias also found that, as in many places under Latin rule, benefices had been promised to too many candidates, so that for each position there was more than one claimant. The archbishop attempted to solve the problem to the satisfaction of both the claimants and the local church, and to avoid related abuses.⁴⁷ It might appear that Elias himself fell prey to nepotism, since among the witnesses is the deacon Léger of Nabinaux and, in 1340, his cousin Itier of Nabinaux, OFM, later bishop of Limassol and Famagusta.⁴⁸ In fact Léger, at least, preceded Elias in his connection with Cyprus, and he is mentioned as a canon of Paphos as early as 1328.⁴⁹

⁴⁴On Elias generally, see L. de Mas Latrie, "Histoire des archevêques de Chypre," *Archives de l'Orient Latin* 2 (1884), pp. 261-267; Hackett, *A History of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus*, pp. 546-547; Hill, *A History of Cyprus*, vol. III: *The Frankish Period 1432-1571* (Cambridge 1948), pp. 1076-1077; Fedalto, "Η Λατινική Εκκλησία στο Μεσαιωνικό Βασίλειο," p. 694.

⁴⁵For the dispensations, see G. Mollat, *Joannis Papae XXII (1316-1334) Litterae Communes*, vol. 12, fasc. 25 (Paris 1932), #61108, 61384-5, 61388-94, and 61396.

⁴⁶Cf. Mansi, ed., *Sacrorum conciliorum*, vol. 26, col. 371.

⁴⁷Cf. Mansi, ed., *Sacrorum conciliorum*, vol. 26, col. 337.

⁴⁸For the latter, cf. Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum*, vol. 26, col. 376, and Hackett, *A History of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus*, pp. 573 and 582.

⁴⁹Cf. G. Mollat, *Joannis Papae XXII (1316-1334) Litterae Communes*, vol. 7, fasc. 17 (Paris 1919), #40013.

Pope Benedict XII, who succeeded John XXII in 1334, wished to carry out a general reform of the church, and of the religious orders especially.⁵⁰ It appears that Elias was following the wishes of his superior, although one of Benedict's targets was nepotism. There was some strong opposition to Elias's reforms on Cyprus, however, especially among the Premonstratensians at Bellapaise, some of whom Elias imprisoned. Benedict was concerned about the matter in November 1337, but he wrote to Elias in May of 1338, enthusiastically approving Elias's reforming efforts and proselytizing zeal, i.e. for "attracting and inducing the diverse nations of Greeks, Armenians, Jacobites, and other easterners residing in the Kingdom of Cyprus to the rite of and obedience and devotion to the Roman Church."⁵¹

Elias went on to hold a provincial synod in Nicosia in 1340, in which he presented the doctrine of the Roman Church to representatives of all Christian denominations on the island, restated some of the terms of the *Bulla Cypria* of Pope Alexander IV, and laid down eight statutes. It is worthy of note that Bishop Odo of Paphos, who had become accustomed to some degree of independence from the archbishop, refused to endorse two of the regulations which infringed on his power.⁵² I shall return to this synod later.

Elias's activities continued to please his superiors, and on 12 July 1342 Pope Clement VI named him Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, replacing Peter de Palude, who had died. Elias continued to administer the archdiocese until, two months later, on 22 September, Clement made Elias Cardinal-Priest of San Vitale. Thereafter Elias departed for the West and by 1343 Philip of Chambarlhac replaced him as archbishop.⁵³ Elias retained his position as patriarch, and also maintained contacts with the University of Paris.⁵⁴ Elias died in 1348.

What is of chief concern here is what impact Elias's role as a scholar might have had on the intellectual and religious climate of Cyprus during his stay on the island. To do this let us go back to his earlier days as a student. In 1328 Elias was the Franciscan Provincial Minister of Aquitaine, and the Franciscan General Chapter held at Bologna in May of that year absolved Elias of his administrative duties and sent him to the University of Paris to lecture on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard.⁵⁵ In the late thirteenth and early

⁵⁰ Cf. C. Schmitt, *Une Pape réformateur, Benoît XII et l'ordre de Frères Mineurs (1334-1342)* (Quaracchi 1959).

⁵¹ Cf. *Acta Benedicti XII*, ed. A.L. Tautu, CICO 8 (Vatican City 1958), pp. 43-44.

⁵² Cf. Mansi, ed., *Sacrorum conciliorum*, vol. 26, cols. 371-379.

⁵³ On September 11 of that year Clement wrote to Hugh IV, asking him to excuse Philip temporarily from coming to Cyprus. Cf. E. Déprez and G. Mollat, *Clément VI (1342-1352) Lettres closes, patentes et curiales*, vol. 1, fasc. 1 (Paris 1960), #276. Philip did come eventually, and with the letter this suggests that Mas Latrie's statement, cited by Grivaud ("Πνευματικός Βίος—Γραμματολογία," p. 916), that from the second third of the fourteenth century we have mostly absentee archbishops without the obligation of permanent residence, might need to be qualified slightly.

⁵⁴ In 1345 Elias wrote Pope Clement VI asking him to support Raymond of Paris's promotion to master of theology. Cf. CUP II, #1107

⁵⁵ Cf. CUP II, #886, n. 1.

fourteenth centuries, Franciscans commonly lectured over a two-year period, but sometime around 1320 this had apparently been reduced to one year, or even less in exceptional cases. We may assume that Elias lectured on the *Sentences* at the Franciscan's Paris convent in the 1328-1329 academic year, since he is referred to as "bachelor" in February 1329.⁵⁶ Often a mendicant lectured on the *Sentences* at a less important convent before moving on to Paris, reserved for the brightest scholars. It was usually the case, however, that one's Paris lectures on the *Sentences* would be the last before becoming master of theology. Since ordinarily one was in one's early 30's, we can establish Elias's date of birth at approximately 1297.

Unfortunately we cannot assign any known surviving commentary on the *Sentences* to Elias. There is one anonymous Parisian commentary from the mid- to late 1320's, contained in manuscript Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Palat. lat. 1439, but it is doubtful whether we will ever be able to claim that there is more than a 25% chance that this is Elias's commentary.⁵⁷ Wadding claimed without citing evidence that Elias must also have composed a commentary on Revelations and a *De vita contemplativa*, but if these existed they have apparently not survived.⁵⁸

We do have more information about Elias's days at Paris, however. Pope John XXII appears to have been on good terms with Elias, even though at the time John XXII was basically at war with some of the Franciscans, mainly the Spirituals, over the issue of apostolic poverty and other matters. Elias was not a Spiritual Franciscan, however, but a more conservative member of the order. Thus in February 1329 Pope John wrote Elias, asking him to assist Gerard of Campimulo in capturing Elias's fellow Franciscan Francis of Esculo!⁵⁹ According to John, Francis was a supporter of Michael of Cesena, the former Minister General of the Franciscans who had lapsed into heresy in the pope's eyes and who was then the focal point of the dispute between John and the Friars Minor. Elias was to assist in Francis's extradition to Avignon.

Elias probably complied, because on 1 May 1331 the pope wrote to the chancellor of the University of Paris, William Bernard, in support of Elias's promotion to Master of Theology.⁶⁰ Elias must have maintained a close relationship with John, for on 27 May 1332 John rewarded Elias with 100 gold florins, because Elias had given the pope Nicolas of Lyra's famous Bible commentary in three large volumes.⁶¹ As was mentioned, John made Elias archbishop of Nicosia on 16 November 1332, but Elias did not proceed immediately to Cy-

⁵⁶ Cf. CUP II, #886.

⁵⁷ On the particulars of this commentary, see R. Friedman and C. Schabel, "The Vitality of Franciscan Theology at Paris in the 1320's: MS Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Palatinus 1439," *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Âge* 65 (1996), pp. 357-372.

⁵⁸ Cf. A. Teetaert, 'Nabinals (Élie de),' *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* XI (Paris 1935), col.

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⁵⁹ Cf. CUP II, #886.

⁶⁰ Cf. CUP II, #911.

⁶¹ Cf. CUP II, #981, n. 4.

prus. Instead he went to or was already at the papal court in Avignon, in support of the aging pope, where Elias no doubt received his dispensations. According to documents which Elias himself signed, the new archbishop was in Avignon at least until 15 September 1333.⁶² On 2 January 1334, King Philip VI of France required all masters of theology who were in Paris to give their opinions on a certain matter. Elias was not present, so he probably did not return to Paris.⁶³

Pope John had been embroiled in a series of controversies. The matter at hand in 1333 and 1334 was of the utmost doctrinal importance, and John came out badly. The issue was the beatific vision. In a series of sermons in the fall and winter of 1331-1332 Pope John, speaking as a common theologian and not in his capacity as pope, maintained that the blessed have the face-to-face vision of the divine essence only after the resurrection of the body and the last judgement. What John was claiming, contrary to the accepted position, was that the goal of all human existence, the sempiternal beatific vision of the divine essence in heaven, was not to be enjoyed, even by the saints, until the end of time.⁶⁴

John's various opponents, such as William of Ockham, many of them safe in the protection of John's main secular enemy, the Emperor Louis of Bavaria, saw another opportunity to attack John and claim that his ideas were at least erroneous and perhaps even heretical. John tried to defend himself by asking the advice of several theologians concerning the views of two of his opponents, Durandus of St. Pourçain and Thomas Waleys. In September of 1333 in Avignon these theologians came to some conclusions, although not always unanimous or unqualified conclusions. Basically, their declarations were at best a lukewarm defense of the pope. Elias of Nabinaux signed his name to this document along with twelve other prominent theologians. Interestingly, Elias's name is second after Pierre Roger's, the future Pope Clement VI, and before such figures as Gerard Odonis, the minister general of Elias's own Franciscan order.⁶⁵

King Philip VI, seeking to weaken the pope, summoned the theologians of the University of Paris to give their opinion on the matter, and on 2 January 1334 29 Parisian masters of theology gave their decision.⁶⁶ This went entirely against Pope John. The theologians at Paris stated that the souls of the holy fathers that Christ rescued from limbo as well as the purified souls of other faithful have "the plain, clear, beatific, intuitive, and immediate vision of the divine essence." At the top of the list of theologians was Peter de Palude himself, patriarch of Jerusalem and acting bishop of Limassol. The

⁶² Cf. CUP II, #974.

⁶³ Cf. CUP II, #981.

⁶⁴ Unfortunately, Yves Renouard, in his popular *The Avignon Papacy 1305-1403* (London 1970), p. 38-39, completely confuses the issue, and ascribes precisely the opposite position to John.

⁶⁵ Cf. CUP II, #975. The theologians are listed twice (pp. 419 and 423), and Elias is second in both cases.

⁶⁶ Cf. CUP II, #98 1.

fact that Pierre Roger also endorsed these decisions attests to the fact that John's own gathering of opinions was less than supportive of the pontiff.

Pope John XXII died in 1334 and Benedict XII succeeded him. On 29 January 1336 Benedict definitively decided the issue, against the late pope's position.⁶⁷ In 1340 Elias, now in Cyprus, held his synod in the archbishop's hall in Nicosia. Present also were:

lords Odo of Paphos, Lambertino of Limassol, and brother Mark of Famagusta and Tortosa, bishops, and present at and participating in the same council the following venerable fathers in Christ: the lord bishops of the dioceses of the Greeks, brother Leondio of Soli of the Nicosia [diocese], brother Matthew of Arsinoe of the Paphos [diocese], brother Clement of Lefkara of the Limassol [diocese], and brother Michael of Karpasia of the Famagusta [diocese]; and the leaders and bishops brother George of the Maronites and brother Gregory of the Armenians; and the rectors of other nations, namely the Nestorians and Jacobites; and a great multitude of other clerics Latin and Greek and of the aforesaid nations.⁶⁸

In front of this crowd, Elias,

the aforementioned archbishop, after the customary speeches of the Roman rite and first invoking the grace of the Holy Spirit, with the word of God put forward, clearly, distinctly, and explicitly declared, laid bare, and exposed the catholic faith which the Roman Church holds, teaches, and preaches concerning the articles [of faith] and ecclesiastical sacraments and other matters that could perhaps drive certain people into error out of ignorance, to the aforesaid prelates of the nations and to their subjects who heard and understood clearly, singularly, and distinctly—via the below written faithful men, interpreters of authority, having full and true knowledge of the languages of which they were interpreters—whatever was declared by the aforesaid archbishop in word and in writing by the unanimous consent of the Latin popes publically read there, for the understanding of every nation, with the below written interpreters mediating.⁶⁹

The mediators were several local Latin clergymen "having knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages," the interpreters being other local clergymen, a knight, and the prior provincial of the Dominicans and the provincial minister of the Franciscans, thus attesting to the mendicants' knowledge of Greek.

⁶⁷ Cf. *Acta Benedicti XII*, pp. 10-13; H. Denzinger, ed., *Enchiridion Symbolorum* (Barcelona 1948), pp. 229-230.

⁶⁸ Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum* 26, col. 372A-B.

⁶⁹ Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum* 26, col. 372B-C.

John Mahe, a priest and canon of Tarsus, interpreted for the Maronites, Jacobites, Nestorians, and Peter of Ascalon did so for the Armenians.⁷⁰

Elias outlined many of the basic positions of the Roman faith, mostly stances that had been repeated several times before. Interestingly, however, Elias inserted, either on his own initiative or on Benedict's direction, Benedict's decree of 29 January 1336:

But on account of various errors devised by some out of ignorance and others out of malice, [it is necessary to say that the Roman Church] says, holds, teaches, and preaches that, according to God's common design, the souls of holy men who departed from this life before the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ; and also [the souls] of the holy apostles, martyrs and confessors, virgins, and other faithful who died after receiving Christ's holy baptism, in whom when they passed away nothing that could be purged existed nor even will exist in the future when they die; or if at that time there were or will be something in them that could be purged, when after their death they are purified; or the souls of children reborn or to be baptized by the same baptism of Christ, when they are baptized but dying before having the use of free will; just after their death, and the aforesaid purification in those who are in need of such purification, even before the resurrection of their bodies and the last judgement after the ascension into heaven of our Savior Lord Jesus Christ, were, are, and will be gathered with Christ and the consortium of holy angels in the heaven of heavens, kingdom and celestial paradise, and after the Passion and death of Lord Jesus Christ saw, see, and will see the Divine Essence with intuitive and even face-to-face vision, with no creature by way (*ratione*) of an object mediating except as mediating in accordance with the Divine Essence in order to see Itself clearly and to show Itself openly to others; and [the Roman Church says, holds, teaches, and preaches] that those have the vision in this way fully enjoy the Divine Essence; and that on the basis of this vision and fruition, the souls of those who have already died are truly blessed and have eternal life and rest; and [blessed] will be those who will die afterwards when they will see the same Divine Essence and fully enjoy It before judgement day; and that after such an intuitive and facial vision and fruition in these [creatures] had commenced or will have commenced, the same vision and fruition was continued and will be continued until judgement day and from then on forever without any removal or cancellation of this vision and fruition.⁷¹

⁷⁰ Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum* 26, col. 376C-D.

⁷¹ Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum* 26, cols. 373E-374C.

Thus Elias brought the most current issue in Western theological circles to Cyprus, not only to his local Latin suffragen bishops, but to all the Christians of Cyprus. The section on the beatific vision, taking up a full 20% of Elias's "Confession of Faith," is in fact the most detailed element in that confession, perhaps because of its novelty.

What the Greeks, Maronites, Jacobites, Nestorians, and Armenians made of all of this is an interesting question for further study. The following year, however, 1 August 1341, Pope Benedict XII came out against the Armenians on some of the points raised in the new confession of faith, including the matter of the beatific vision. According to the charges the Armenians claimed that the blessed souls see not God's essence but only His "clarity,"⁷² although a group of Armenian prelates denied the charge in 1345.⁷³ If we recall that at the time Cyprus was the only Latin-controlled region with a substantial Armenian population, one might draw a connection between Elias's report and Benedict's pronouncement.

It would appear that the Armenians in Cyprus got on well with Elias and the Roman Church, however. In a letter of 19 April 1344 to brother George Noreghes, the bishop of the Armenians in Cyprus, Pope Clement VI reveals that Elias had made George bishop, but that George had gone to Rome personally for papal confirmation. George apparently also wished to align more fully the Armenian rite with that of Rome.⁷⁴ Elias's efforts may have changed George's perspective on matters.

Geographically Cyprus was on the Roman Catholic periphery in the later Middle Ages, especially after the fall of Acre in 1291. This does not mean that the island was excluded from participation in the Latin intellectual and artistic currents of the day. On the contrary, although Cyprus was not the center of the Latin cultural world, and although most Cypriots were not Roman Catholics, Cyprus was an integral part of the western tradition, and the brilliance of Hugh IV's and Peter I's courts was no accident. Moreover, although the connection between ideas and society is notoriously difficult to make, in the Middle Ages ideas often had immediate and concrete effects, even on populations of a different cultural background. The example of Elias of Nabinaux shows both how scholars and ideas flowed from the West to Cyprus and back in the mid-fourteenth century and how these ideas may have actually had an impact on the majority of the population, albeit indirectly.

⁷² "De erroribus Armenorum," in *Acta Benedicti XII*, pp. 122-123.

⁷³ "Responsa Armenorum," in *Acta Benedicti XII*, pp. 168-169.

⁷⁴ Cf. *Acta Clementi VI*, ed. A.L. Tautu, CICO9 (Vatican City 1960), pp. 68-70.