

Patriarchal Luminaries

The mother of the Churches has included in her bosom a noteworthy number of clerics who have displayed in their character and personality their zeal, love and faith in their work as much in their civic as in the educational area. In the civic area are included their struggles for the saving and the maintenance of the Holy Shrines which exist in the region of Palestine, while in the educational area include the writing and printing of books, the support of schools as well as the continuous religious guidance of the Orthodox Christians.

Theophanis 3rd 1608-1644

At the beginning of the 17th century, the throne of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem went to Theophanis 3rd with the surname Karakallos, nephew of his predecessor Sophronios. Theophanis was connected through friendship with the famous Kyrill Loukaris, a fact that led to their close collaboration on the burning matter of the Holy Shrines. Moreover, already from the 17th century the struggles of the Latin monastic orders to appropriate the Shrines by any means, had started. Hostile attitudes from various sides, bribes and promises, unsparingly attacked the Patriarchate in its effort to protect the Shrines. Theophanis was jailed twice and escaped death miraculously. He continued his work in Moscow and Iberia, where he toiled hard for the restoration of the hierarchic order and contributed to the spiritual guidance of the Orthodox. Moreover, he displayed zeal in the rehabilitation of the Hagiotaphitic Brotherhood (Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre), such that the Hagiotaphite monks were able to confront all the dangers that pooled against the Patriarchate. To his credit are included a number of patriarchal letters, which dealt with topics of dogma and organization.

Paisios 1644-1661

Theophanis was succeeded on the throne by his nephew Paisios, who was especially involved in the matter of the Abyssinians (Ethiopians) who were leaning towards the Romans. The case was to the benefit of the Greek monks, something that somehow aroused the rage of the Armenians, who slandered him and after a lot of torments and tortures, Paisios ended up in the Imperial Jails. His supporter Dositheos was made member of the Hagiotaphitic Brotherhood. Later Paisios started a mission for the financial support of the Brotherhood and continued the work of his predecessor in Russia and Iberia. He died at the feet of Dositheos and was succeeded on the throne by the learned monk Nektarios.

Nektarios 1661-1669

Nektarios following his studies at the Sinai School of Saint Catherine, became a monk at Saint Catherine's on Mount Sinai. His activities as Patriarch, with the support of Dositheos, were the reduction of the Holy Sepulchre debt, the restoration of the Church of Bethlehem, the partial renovation of the Church of the Resurrection and the creation of schools. However, his learned quality proved catalytic. His work "Summary of the Hiero-civil History" referred to the history of Mount Sinai and the monastery there, as well as the history of the kings of Egypt. He also wrote many theological manuscripts, making him one of the most significant theologians of the Orthodox Church. Worn out he resigned, leaving the throne to Dositheos.

Dositheos 1669-1707

Dositheos constitutes a complex personality with intense and multi-faceted activity in the Hagiotaphitic Brotherhood. He struggled with zeal for the Shrines, extensively travelling to fundraise for the Holy Tomb, seeing to providing Greek printing presses to various monasteries where he printed his

works "Book of Reconciliation" and "Book of Love". His great work on the "History of the Jerusalem Patriarchs" was issued later on by his nephew and successor to the throne, Chrysanthos. His great love for education led him as much to building as in reinforcing the schools in Palestine, the Principalities and Moscow.

Chrysanthos 1707-1730

Chrysanthos continued the work of his predecessors relating to the protection of the Holy Shrines and succeeded in completing the restoration of the Church of the Resurrection. Thanks to his connections with important leaders he contributed to the financial strengthening of the Holy Sepulchre. To education however he provided the greatest aid. Having himself studied at the Patriarchal Academy of Constantinople he gave great emphasis to the need of building and strengthening the schools, especially in the Turkish occupied region. Chrysanthos had studied astronomy and mathematics, wrote an astronomical manuscript titled, "Introduction to Geophysics and Spherics", co-authored the book "China in bondage» which provides a description of the Chinese history, he wrote many letters on a variety of topics and travelled to many countries. Without doubt he constitutes a glaring personality which beacons the period of the Sionitic Church.