

= Paul Palaiologos Tagaris =

Paul Palaiologos Tagaris ( Greek : ?????? ?????????????? ??????? , ca . 1320 / 40 ? after 1394 ) was a Byzantine Greek monk and impostor . A scion of the Tagaris family , Paul also claimed a connection with the imperial Palaiologos dynasty . He fled his marriage as a teenager and became a monk , but soon his fraudulent practices embroiled him in scandal . Fleeing Constantinople , he travelled widely , from Palestine to Persia and Georgia and eventually , via Ukraine and Hungary to Italy , Latin Greece , Cyprus and France . During his long and tumultuous career he was appointed an Orthodox bishop , sold ordinations to ecclesiastical offices , pretended to be the Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem , switched from Greek Orthodoxy to Roman Catholicism and back again , supported both the See of Rome and the Avignon anti @-@ popes in the Western Schism , and finally managed to be named Latin Patriarch of Constantinople . In the end , his deceptions unmasked , he returned to Constantinople , where he repented and confessed his sins before a synod in 1394 .

= = Early life and family = =

The main source on Paul 's life is the document of his confession before the patriarchal synod in Constantinople in 1394 , complemented by an account of his visit to Paris , written by a monk of the Abbey of Saint @-@ Denis .

Paul Tagaris was apparently a scion the Tagaris family , a lineage which first appears in the 14th century . His father is unnamed , but is described by Paul as a valiant and famous soldier , so that he is possibly identifiable either with the megas stratopedarches Manuel Tagaris , or with the latter 's son , George Tagaris . Tagaris himself also claimed to be related to the ruling imperial dynasty of the Palaiologoi and adopted the surname for himself . Manuel Tagaris was indeed married to Theodora Asenina Palaiologina , a niece of Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos , but even if Paul was Manuel 's son , Theodora was , according to the Byzantinist Donald Nicol , " almost certainly not the mother of Paul " .

Tagaris was probably born in the 1320s , or at the latest around the year 1340 . His parents arranged his marriage at the age of 14 , but soon he abandoned his wife and went to become a monk in Palestine . After a while he returned to Constantinople , where , in the words of Alice @-@ Mary Talbot , " his greed led him into scandal and corruption " : he claimed that an icon in his possession had miraculous properties , and made money out of gullible believers . This affair scandalized his family , but Patriarch Kallistos I declined to take action against him . It was not until the patriarch went to a visit to Serbia in 1363 that his locum tenens , the hieromonk Dorotheos , confiscated the icon and forced Paul to return to Palestine .

= = Career in the East = =

In Palestine , Paul managed to be ordained a deacon by the Patriarch of Jerusalem Lazaros , who took him under his protection . Shortly after , however , Lazaros left for Constantinople , and his locum tenens Damianos brought charges against Paul , forcing the latter to abandon Jerusalem for Antioch . In Antioch , Paul once again managed to befriend the newly elected ( 1368 ) Patriarch Michael , who not only ordained him a priest , but eventually made him patriarchal exarch and administrator of the Patriarchate 's affairs . It was not long before Paul began abusing his authority : he sacked serving bishops and put their sees up for sale , threatening to report those who complained to the Turkish authorities . Soon he claimed the title of Patriarch of Jerusalem for himself and began to ordain bishops , even in territories subject to the Patriarchate of Constantinople . In 1370 , he went to Iconium and thence to Persia and Georgia , where , according to his own recollection ? no such dispute is recorded in Georgian sources at this time ? he adjudicated a dispute among three rival claimants of the throne , finding in favour of the highest bidder .

At this point , again according to his own account , he felt remorse and considered returning to Constantinople , where he would give the fortune he had amassed to the poor , but he was

forestalled by the Bishop of Tyre and Sidon , who found him and delivered an offer by the Patriarch of Antioch to name him bishop of Taurezion ( an unidentified location , variously suggested as being either in the Taurus Mountains or in the Tauric peninsula , i.e. the Crimea ) . Paul accepted , and was apparently consecrated by the Bishop of Tyre and Sidon ( ca . 1375 ) . At the same time , however , the Patriarch of Constantinople Philotheos I Kokkinos heard about his dealings in the east , and at Trebizond Paul was met by a messenger from the Patriarch who demanded his immediate return to Constantinople to stand trial .

= = Latin Patriarch of Constantinople = =

Reluctant to face the Patriarch 's wrath , Paul once more decided to flee and try his luck in Rome . As Nicol points out , such a move would be highly unusual for an Orthodox priest , but may be explained by the links of his family with pro @-@ Catholic circles in the Byzantine capital : George Tagaris , his putative brother or father , was among those who supported the Union of the Churches and had received letters of encouragement from Pope Innocent VI . To avoid passing near Constantinople , Paul was forced to make a broad detour . He took ship , probably from Trebizond , to the Crimea , where he presented the local governor of the Golden Horde with jewels from the treasure he had amassed . In exchange he secured an escort through the Horde lands for the Kingdom of Hungary , from where he went on to Rome . There he secured an audience with Pope Urban VI , claiming to be the Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem . Paul presented himself to the Pope as a penitent , offering a ? probably partial ? confession of his errors , and to embrace the Catholic faith . Impressed by Paul 's humble demeanour , the Pope named him ( late 1379 or early 1380 ) to the titular post of Latin Patriarch of Constantinople , which had been vacant since September 1378 , when its incumbent , Giacomo da Itri , had declared his allegiance to the Avignon anti @-@ pope Clement VII . In addition , Urban named Paul apostolic legate for all countries " east of Durazzo " .

Paul 's new office ? in effect " a second Pope " , as he called it ? quickly caused him to become conceited . He abandoned his simple monastic habit and adopted magnificent vestments to suit his new rank , wore ostentatious jewellery , and , according to the chronicler of Saint @-@ Denis , went about on horseback surrounded by a magnificently outfitted entourage . An example of Paul 's splendid vestments and accoutrements at this time is probably the richly embroidered altar cloth , featuring a Byzantine double @-@ headed eagle with a monogram on its breast and the legend " Paul , Patriarch of Constantinople and New Rome " in Greek , now in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City .

Constantinople having been recovered by the Byzantines in 1261 , since 1314 the seat of the Latin Patriarch of Constantinople had been at Negroponte , which still remained in Latin hands . Soon after his investment , Paul made for Ancona , from where he would take ship for Greece . He remained in the city for several weeks , fêted by the locals , and on 4 March 1380 presented to them the head of James the Just , followed on 17 April by further relics , among them the foot of Saint Anne and a nail from the True Cross , although , as Nicol comments , " one may be tempted to question the authenticity , and still more the provenance , of his donation " . The documents of grant , preserved in the cathedral of Ancona , are signed by Paul and a certain " Alexios Palaiologos the Despot " , allegedly a son of the Byzantine emperor but in reality , according to Nicol , probably " another figment of Paul 's fertile imagination " .

From 1380 until 1384 , Paul remained at his see in Negroponte . A relative of his , George Tagaris ? probably a different person than Manuel Tagaris ' son ? was called in to help with the administration of the patriarchal domains . His tenure was troubled : the local Orthodox clergy appealed to the Venetian authorities for protection against his exactions , the Latin Archbishop of Athens , Antonio Ballester , complained of the Patriarch 's interference in his diocese , and his lease of some of the Church lands in 1383 to a Venetian from Crete , Giacomo Grimani , proved a source of protracted legal trouble since Grimani , in the words of Raymond @-@ Joseph Loenertz , " revealed himself as much a scoundrel as the Patriarch " . In 1384 , Paul was once again denounced as an impostor to the Pope , possibly by Ballester , who was named vicar @-@ general of the Patriarchate in the same year , and who had held the same office during the 1378 ? 79 vacancy .

Paul had apparently left his diocese before his denunciation , and resumed his wanderings . In 1385 , he was in Cyprus , where he crowned James of Lusignan as King of Cyprus in exchange for 30 000 gold coins , and continued granting ecclesiastical appointments on the island as if he were still patriarch .

In 1388 he decided to return to Rome , possibly hoping that the accusations against him had been forgotten in the meanwhile . In the event , he was arrested , tried and imprisoned , but was released after Urban VI 's death in October 1389 and the general amnesty granted by the new pope , Boniface IX . Leaving Rome , Paul went to the court of Amadeus VII of Savoy . There he presented himself as a distant relative to the Count ? a claim likely relying on his tenuous links to the Palaiologoi , who in turn were remotely linked to the House of Savoy via Empress Anna of Savoy , Amadeus VII 's great @-@ aunt ? and as a victim of papal persecution on account of his support for the Avignon papacy . While Amadeus probably did not put much store in Paul 's dubious claims of kinship , he was moved by the plight of a fellow Avignon supporter , and accepted him as the legitimate Latin Patriarch of Constantinople . He provided Paul with money and an escort of twelve horses and twelve servants , and sent him on to the papal court of Avignon .

Paul received a magnificent welcome at Avignon , where he was fêted by Clement VII and his cardinals . Clement , moved by his guest 's tales of suffering at the hands of the Roman popes , loaded him with gifts and honours and sent him north to Paris . There , King Charles VI of France likewise prepared a triumphal welcome for his illustrious guest . Paul was an exotic and popular sight in the French capital , and was lavishly hosted and entertained . He obviously enjoyed his long sojourn there , " safe in a place where his past was unknown and his deception was unlikely to be discovered " , according to Nicol . For additional safety , he communicated only via an interpreter in his employ . On his visit to the Abbey of Saint @-@ Denis , he claimed that there were several relics of the abbey 's patron saint ? commonly confused with the Athenian saint Dionysius the Areopagite ? to be found back in Greece , and promised to help the monks bring them to France . His proposal was enthusiastically taken up , and two monks received permission and funds from the king to accompany Paul back to Greece . When the party arrived in the port in Italy from which they would sail for Greece , however , Paul bribed the captain of the ship to pretend that bad weather would delay their departure . In the same night , he and his servants set sail at night with their entire baggage , leaving the two monks behind . It was only in Rome , where they went in search of answers for Paul 's behaviour , that they learned the true identity of their travelling companion , and from where the chronicler of the abbey later received his information .

= = Return to Constantinople = =

According to Donald Nicol , the achievement of the " accomplished sinner " Paul was without parallel : " No @-@ one ever made such a profitable business out of changing sides , first in the schism between the Greek and Latin Churches , and then in the schism between the pope in Rome and the pope in Avignon . It is no mean feat to arrive in Rome as orthodox patriarch of Jerusalem and then to be received in Avignon as catholic patriarch of Constantinople . "

Now , however , having irreparably destroyed his reputation and ties with both papal courts , Paul was left with no option other than to return to Constantinople , perhaps motivated , in view of his advancing old age , by confessing his sins and receiving absolution . In 1394 , he was back in the Byzantine capital , where he appeared before Patriarch Antony IV , to whom he confessed his sins , abjured his conversion to Catholicism , and pleaded for mercy . As Nicol writes , " Only on one point did he protest that he had been wrongfully accused ; for , despite rumours and tales contrived against him , he had never indulged in fornication , miracle @-@ mongering , or the practice of magic " . The Patriarch passed Paul 's case on to the full patriarchal synod , before which Paul was obliged to repeat his confession twice , and then once more before an assembly of the people . The records of these sessions , kept by the patriarchal scribe Perdikes , are the main source on Paul 's life . The final portion of the manuscript , containing the final verdict , is missing , but both the synod and the people had recommended a pardon , so that it is likely that he was forgiven . Nothing further is known of him after that .

