The subject of Christians attracted by Judaism and integrating elements of the Mosaic religion into their practices or hermeneutics remains to be studied systematically. If antiquity contains numerous examples of these Judaizing Christians, the establishment of Christianity over the Eastern Roman Empire does not signal their demise. On the contrary, their survival is attested to by the writings of Eastern theologians. The most astonishing fact remains, however, their sporadic reappearances throughout the history of the Byzantine Empire, until the fourteenth century.

The purpose of this short chapter will thus be to emphasize this question, in particular by presenting the available but often fragmentary sources, themselves borrowed from theological *topoi*, which renders difficult any analysis of the specifics of these sects. Nevertheless, a joint effort remains to be completed and we propose only an introduction to a study which will be all the more enticing as its challenges are multiple and fundamental. For example, the Judaizing Christians force us to question the relations between Christians and Jews in the history of the Byzantine Empire, and the image of the Jews in Orthodox Christian writings. To obtain a complete picture of the subject it will be necessary to check information given by Christian and Jewish sources. In addition, the resurgence of Judaizing movements occurs at key moments in Byzantine history and the central investigation thus relates to the significance of the revival of these sects. Finally, they developed in Anatolia, a geographic area which is traditionally considered in Byzantine theology as a nest of heresy.

Anatolia contains a profound paradox: it is the land of the first Christians and the birthplace of numerous fathers of the Church, but it develops as well a different culture which renders it more eastern and therefore fundamentally dangerous, according to European Byzantine civilization. A land of passage, assimilation, and syncretism, Anatolia preserves within itself traces of different cultures which were more or less implanted and synthesized at the same time. Finally,
when Islam arrived, its empire acquired the status of a frontier zone relatively ignored by the central authority because it was judged as being stained with heretical values; a new faith, treated with mistrust and speculation.

It is in this syncretic context that the different Judaizing sects developed. But is the interest of orthodox Christians, whose religion is firmly vētērestamentary, to integrate the elements of Judaism in their systems and thereby prompt a break with orthodoxy? My goal will be to propose the outline of a response.

I. Judaizing Christians Long Implanted in Anatolia

We find Judaizing movements in Anatolia in the fifth century. They were baptized Hypsistarians by Christian authors and they specifically spurned the dogma of the Trinity;¹ they survived in Cappadocia until the ninth century.² Similarly, in the second half of the sixth century, a sect of Christian origin is found called Melchizedekians because its adherents considered Melchizedek above Christ and assimilated him into God the Father. The specifics of these heterodox believers were that they kept the Sabbath—but not circumcision—and they practiced magic. Later, Timothy of Constantinople would assimilate the Athinganoi into this heresy.³ Finally, a homely of Photius described the sect of the Quatuordecimans. Benefiting from their presence at the religious services of Holy Saturday in the year 867, the author berated these Christians as frozen in the dogma and the discipline of the old Church which accepted Jewish customs, recognized apocryphal books, apparently no longer had bishops, professed “new opinions,” and distinguished themselves by other aberrations which the author does not take the trouble to describe.⁴

Still, the story of the Athinganoi is particularly informative for our study because the sources devoted to it, deeply critical, since they were

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