

Claudia Rapp et al.

Mobility and Migration in Byzantium: A Sourcebook

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Moving Byzantium

Volume 1

Edited by

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The volumes of this series are peer-reviewed.

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Introduction

Mobility and migration were an integral part of Byzantium. This is true for geographical movement as for social mobility. The dynamic diversity of Byzantine culture would not have been possible without the contribution of other cultural traditions, nor would the longevity of the Byzantine political system have been sustainable without the possibility for social change. All of this depended on the movement of individuals from one location to another. People moved in and out of Byzantium, and within the Byzantine Empire, for a wide variety of reasons: voluntarily in search of a better future, or coerced as a result of warfare, imperial settlement policy or natural catastrophes. They moved as individuals, in small families, in larger clans, or as parts of ethnic or religious groups, regardless of their status, whether free or enslaved. In the process, they fostered cultural, linguistic and political connectivity while struggling to maintain their identity or striving to adjust to their new surroundings.

From our particular vantage point as global citizens in the third decade of the second millennium where the many different push-and-pull factors that lead to migrations and mobility are ever present in our lives and in political discourse, these phenomena take on acute importance. Yet, they do not take center stage in Byzantine writing. Mentions of mobility and migration must be sought out across a large range of texts that survive from the period, and then carefully interpreted and contextualized, as will be explained below.

The focus of this book is thus on Byzantine authors and their depiction of mobility and migration, from the middle of the 7th to the 15th century, across a wide array of genres. It has no aspirations to offer a complete documentation of movements within, into and out of the empire: such an undertaking would require the consultation of non-Greek sources as well as the inclusion of evidence from material culture and archaeology. Instead, we wish to demonstrate that the themes of mobility and migration are present in Byzantine writing to a far larger extent than might be assumed, if we only start looking.

Contexts of inquiry

This volume represents a collective effort that results from a research project in Vienna which is described in greater detail at the end of this introduction. The exploration of mobility and migration inserts itself into larger contexts of inquiry that have been prominent in medieval scholarship in recent decades, mirroring the political concerns of our current societies, especially in the northern hemisphere. I will mention only four, along with a small selection of relevant publications.

First, agency: In the highly stratified societies whose hierarchies were defined by ecclesiastical and worldly rulership, to what degree were individuals able to articulate their autonomous self? What choices were open to them to determine their life trajectory? What kinds of departures from their original surroundings (figurative or geographical) did this require?¹

Second, networks: What kinds of networks did historical agents create in order to achieve their goals? How were these networks maintained, for example through marriage or gifts? How were these connections articulated? Letters and the study of epistolography play a major role in this investigation. Historical network research has made great advances to a better understanding of how networks were created, but also how different networks intersected and interacted, often across social hierarchies and over wide geographical distances.²

Third, migrations: The movement of individuals, groups, or peoples has drawn attention in a wide range of historical research, depending on its cause. Warfare that results from invasion may lead to the immediate displacement of the resident population (either as refugees or as prisoners of war), and results in the settlement of the invaders. Any military action involves soldiers being recruited and leaving their homes for parts unknown. These aspects have been studied by political historians in conjunction with the major invasions into Byzantine territory, by the Arabs, the Seljuqs, the Crusaders, and the Ottomans, but also by administrative and military historians who are investigating the organization of military recruitment in the context of provincial administration, and the origin of the theme system.³

1 For the Latin Middle Ages, the studies of Gerd Althoff on 'Spielregeln' are particularly relevant. See his most recent English publication: *Rules and Rituals in Medieval Power Games* (Leiden 2019).

2 The pathbreaking publication for Byzantine studies is Mullett, Margaret, *Theophylact of Ochrid. Reading the Letters of a Byzantine Archbishop* (Aldershot 1997); for ongoing work in this regard, the research profile of Johannes Preiser-Kapeller offers valuable information: <https://oeaw.academia.edu/JohannesPreiserKapeller>. Retrieved 29 August 2022.

3 For introductions into this vast topic and further bibliography, see Borgolte, Michael (ed.), *Migrationen im Mittelalter. Ein Handbuch* (Berlin 2014), and Preiser-Kapeller, Johannes,

Religious missions require long journeys by the missionaries and bring them into contact (and often deliberate confrontation) with local people, their customs and beliefs. The sixth-century expansion of Christianity from the realm of the Eastern Roman Empire further East that led to the expansion of Syriac-speaking Christianity all the way to Asia, and the Byzantine missions to the Slavs in the 9th century that resulted in the spread of Constantinopolitan ('Orthodox') Christianity in northeastern Europe have been studied through this lens.

Changes in the climate and the environment have been traced in recent years with the help of new scientific methods (such as pollen analysis or limnological sampling), leading to a better understanding of food scarcity as a motor for migration or hostile attacks.⁴

Fourth, global connectivities: Cultural interactions have traditionally been studied as they resulted from warfare or mission. In more recent decades, greater attention has been paid to border regions as contact zones with their distinctive profile. Jerusalem or the Monastery of Saint Catherine in the Sinai emerge as entrepôts of cultural and social exchange – often across multiple languages – alongside Constantinople and other major cities. The exploration of the Cairo Genizah documents and a rise in Mediterranean studies have led to investigations of transregional contacts. Greater attention to long-distance trade by land or by sea, along with important shipwreck discoveries, have further expanded the scope of inquiry all the way to the Indian Ocean and to Asia.⁵

Byzantium is now being studied not only as one of the three successor cultures that grew out of Greco-Roman antiquity in the Mediterranean, but also as an economic, political and cultural entity that was linked, directly or indirectly, with contemporary cultures and societies, whether in Iceland, the Sudan or China.⁶

Lucian Reinfandt and Ioannis Stouraitis (eds.), *Migration Histories of the Medieval Afroeurasian Transition Zone* (Leiden and Boston, 2020, open access).

4 For Syriac Christianity, consult the web portal [syriaca.org](https://www.syriaca.org/geo/browse.html?view=map) (<https://www.syriaca.org/geo/browse.html?view=map>, Retrieved on 29 August 2022). The seminal study for the Slavonic world was Obolensky, Dimitri, *The Byzantine Commonwealth. Eastern Europe 500–1453* (London, 1974). For climate studies, see Izdebski, Adam and Michael Mulryan (eds.), *Environment and Society in the Long Late Antiquity* (Leiden, 2019); Izdebski, Adam and Johannes Preiser-Kapeller (eds.), *A Companion to the Environmental History of Byzantium* (Leiden and Boston, 2023).

5 Beihammer, Alexander, *Byzantium and the Emergence of Muslim-Turkish Anatolia, ca. 1040–1130* (London and New York, 2017); Tannous, Jack, *The Making of the Medieval Middle East: Religion, Society and Simple Believers* (Princeton, 2018); Brubaker, Leslie, Rebecca Darley and Daniel Reynolds (eds.), *Global Byzantium. Papers of the Fiftieth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies* (London and New York, 2022). For up-to-date information, see the internet forum 'The Mediterranean Seminar', directed by Brian Catlos and Sharon Kinoshita: <http://www.mediterraneanseminar.org>. Retrieved 29 August 2022.

6 Preiser-Kapeller, Johannes, *Jenseits von Rom und Karl dem Grossen. Aspekte der globalen Verflechtung in der langen Spätantike, 300–800 n. Chr.* (Vienna, 2018); Holmes, Catherine and Naomi Standen (eds.), *The Global Middle Ages, Past and Present Supplements 18* (Oxford,

This is the background that makes the study of mobility and migration so relevant. In order to gain a better understanding of how the Byzantines themselves articulated their own ideas on these topics, we must begin with the sources.

Telling the story

Sources are never neutral snapshots, but always shaped by the lens of the author and coloured by the perception of the reader. Understanding the way in which authors chose their words and tell their stories brings us closer to the perceptions of the Byzantines regarding mobility and migration. Is this regarded as an opportunity or as a calamity? Are people who move for professional reasons envied for their extensive experience and new opportunities, or pitied for their unstable life? Do authors approve of imperial orders for forced re-settlements or do they report them as a way to criticize an emperor? Understanding how authors do (or do not) address these topics brings us one step closer to a broader appreciation of how and in what contexts the Byzantines themselves made mobility and migration an issue of reflection.

The attitudes towards travel and mobility displayed by Byzantine authors change over time.⁷

In late antiquity, when the political unity forged by the Roman Empire ensured the possibility of safe and relatively easy travel across large distances, authors such as Cosmas Indicopleustes ('the traveler to India', 6th century) displayed a certain curiosity and eagerness to engage with distant regions and peoples. In the middle Byzantine period, as the empire dealt with invasions along its northern and eastern frontiers and their aftermath, the writings of the intellectuals of the political and ecclesiastical elite focused their attention exclusively on Constantinople, displaying a certain disdain even towards the provinces. Even those who traveled abroad as ambassadors did not describe their experiences in detail. This changed in the late Byzantine period, when the Italian maritime republics expanded their trading networks to include Byzantium which now formed the pivot in an extensive transportation network that connected Asia with Latin Europe. This was the time when Byzantium held diminished political power in an increasingly fragmented geopolitical setting. In this context, individuals who had traveled, usually for the purposes of diplomacy and trade,

2018); Ivanova, Mirela and Hugh Jefferey (eds.), *Transmitting and Circulating the Late Antique and Byzantine Worlds*, (Leiden, 2020).

7 Kislinger, Ewald, Verkehr, Reisen, Logistik (with a contribution by Andreas Külzer), in: Falko Daim (ed.), *Byzanz. Historisch-kulturwissenschaftliches Handbuch*, Der neue Pauly. Supplemente 11 (Stuttgart, 2016). The original German edition remains superior to the English version.

began to present themselves as cultural brokers who made it their mission to share their impressions and experiences with their audience at home.

Mobility and migration were a fact of life in Byzantium as in any other culture and period. We would like to know more about the frequency and scale of movement in order to gain a deeper understanding of the significance of movement within the political system. How often did this happen? How many people were involved? Was the social mobility of individuals facilitated and encouraged by the imperial government, or was it a matter of enterprising individuals operating at their own initiative? We would also like to understand the systemic aspects of mobility and migration. To what degree was the re-location of peoples from one region to another an essential part of Byzantine imperial governance, securing the continued functioning of the empire? How did the imperial administration organize its forced migrations? Was there an established administrative protocol that the imperial administrators could draw upon? Scholarship is just beginning to pay attention to these issues, and a more attentive approach to the surviving textual material through the lens of mobility and migration may well bring to light previously overlooked aspects.

The sources only rarely address mobility and migration directly. But absence of evidence should not be construed as evidence of absence. Instead, we must note with Anthony Kaldellis, that many Byzantine authors “cultivated a view of themselves as discrete and isolated”, rather than in dialogue with other peoples and cultures.⁸ The description of the people who move, the reason and modality of movement and the authors’ attitude to both, depends on the type of text that tells their story.

An attempt at a classification

Two parameters can be applied in the analysis of Byzantine writing on mobility and migration: whether the movement is depicted intentionally or incidentally; and who the actors are, whether nameless masses, specific groups, families or individuals.

The first and largest category are texts where movement is mentioned on purpose. They draw attention to the fact of the movement itself, either as a remarkable feat or in order to depict or explain a particular situation. Such mentions appear in historical accounts, chronicles, biographies, ego-accounts, and saints’ *Lives*, while specialized handbooks offer advice on various concrete aspects of mobility.

8 Kaldellis, Anthony, *Ethnography after Antiquity: Foreign Lands and Peoples in Byzantine Literature* (Philadelphia, 2013), 39.

Historians are driven to write about events that they consider unusual or momentous, and Byzantine authors are no exception. The decisive events in the history of Constantinople, and by extension of the entire Byzantine Empire, were the capture of the city by the Crusaders in 1204 and the Ottoman sieges that began in the 14th century, culminating in the Fall of Constantinople in 1453. The resulting displacements of individuals, families and larger groups are described vividly by eye-witnesses who were themselves affected. Niketas Choniates stands out for his lively account as an eye-witness and participant in the exodus of high-class families from Constantinople after 1204 (1.1.1).

The displacement of larger groups of people, by contrast, is reported in chronicles, often in a summary fashion: they describe how large numbers of inhabitants of cities or regions were either captured as prisoners of war or forcibly re-settled as a result of imperial policy. These are most often reported in the middle Byzantine period, in conjunction with the Arab advance of the 7th to 9th centuries and with the Seljuq advance in the 11th to 13th centuries, although such forced displacements could also be triggered by religious dissent, as in the case of the Paulicians (1.6.3, 1.6.4). The forced movement of large groups of people from one region to another is a recurring theme in the *Chronicle of Theophanes*, who is one of the main sources for Byzantium's initial confrontation with the Arabs in the seventh to ninth centuries (1.2.1).

The movements of marginal groups, whether religious or ethnic are reported in technical treatises (4.3.1), historical narratives, sometimes also biographies. Throughout Byzantine history and in various regions of the empire, migrating population groups maintained their own characteristics, clinging to their language and (religious) customs. The most prominent such groups are the Jews (3.4.5, 3.4.6), the Armenians (3.4.1, 3.4.2, 3.4.3, 3.4.4) and the Vlachs (1.8.1, 1.8.2, 1.8.3), the latter further distinguished by their transhumance as cattle-herders which made them a perceived threat to settled locals.

People who move around have more stories to tell than those who remain in one place. This explains why there are many reports of movement by authors who write ego-accounts from their own experience, whether as intellectuals (3.4.7) or ambassadors (3.1.0, 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3). Poets sometimes assumed the stance of a first-person narrator affected by displacement (4.1.1). Ego-documents and autobiographical narratives that are written in retrospect tend to present the author's mobility in positive terms, as an essential step in the trajectory of a life that has turned out successful, even if they occasionally acknowledge the challenges involved or recall the painful moment of the first departure from home. Many of the descriptions of faraway places and their exotic appearance, the tales of distant peoples and their customs that were produced in Byzantium have their origin in the author's own travels.

Monks and nuns, and especially holy men and holy women, cultivated an attitude of detachment from material possessions and family ties. Byzantium did not propagate the spiritual value of *peregrinatio* to the same extent as the Latin West, where it is particularly prominent in Irish monasticism. Indeed, compared to the West, there is a striking dearth of Byzantine texts specifically related to pilgrimage, such as travel guides or accounts of pilgrimage. Still, monastics are often depicted as being in motion, whether embarking on pilgrimage to Jerusalem or moving from one monastery or one spiritual father to another in their search of a suitable spiritual environment. Beginning with the 9th century, saints' *Lives* record the involuntary displacement of their protagonists either as a result of the Arab incursions in Asia Minor or of Arab piracy in Sicily and the Peloponnese. These people either flee to safety, often moving from one place to another, or are captured as prisoners of war and, if they are fortunate, later return to Byzantium. Their fate at the hands of the Muslims is often discussed in stories that address conversion to Islam (or resistance to it) and re-conversion to Christianity. Monastic living that lacked a permanent residence became popular again, after early beginnings in late antiquity, in the eighth and ninth centuries. In the 13th and 14th centuries, *xeniteia* (i.e. detachment, or living as a stranger) was propagated as a monastic virtue, as reflected in a number of hagiographical accounts where the protagonists make the lack of a stable abode their life's calling.⁹

Among the sources that explicitly address mobility are a whole range of texts that were specifically created to assist in the preparation and execution of movement: military handbooks give guidance how to prepare and conduct a military campaign, and geographical treatises explain passageways by land and sea.¹⁰

Now that we have discussed those texts that place movement front and center, let us look at the second category, namely references to movement in texts that deal with other (not movement-related) topics. An attentive reading can reveal a wealth of movement-related evidence, even in such disparate sources as judicial

9 Malamut, Élisabeth, *Sur la route des saints byzantins* (Paris, 1993). Recent publications within the participation of the Moving Byzantium project: Delouis, Olivier, Maria Mossakovska-Gaubert and Annick Peters-Custot (eds.), *Les mobilités monastiques en Orient et en Occident de l'antiquité tardive au moyen âge (VIe–XVe siècle)*, Collection de l'École française de Rome 558 (Rome, 2019); Daim, Falko, Johannes Pahlitzsch, Josef Patrich, Claudia Rapp and Jon Seligman (eds.), *Pilgrimage to Jerusalem: Journeys, Destinations, Experiences Across Times and Cultures*, *Byzanz zwischen Orient und Okzident* 19 (Mainz, 2020), for download at: <https://doi.org/10.11588/propylaeum.711>. Retrieved 31 August 2022.

10 Hunger, Herbert, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner* (Munich, 1978), chapter 5: Geographie (vol. 1, 507–542), chapter 12: Kriegswissenschaft (vol. 2, 323–340); McGeer, Eric, *Military Texts*, in: Elizabeth Jeffreys, John F. Haldon and Robin Cormack (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, (Oxford, 2008), 907–914.

documents, imperial pronouncements, patriarchal archives, and inscriptions. They offer welcome and often detailed glimpses of the personal fate of individuals or small groups of people, but it is not clear to what degree these should be generalized. The depiction of mobility in writing where the authorial voice does not draw attention to itself, but is nonetheless present, is a topic with many ramifications that would repay intensive further study.

Once we began looking at the non-literary sources, we found in court records the mention of women who walked on foot for a whole week in order to appear before a judge to get their marriage dissolved (4.2.2), or detected in the testament of an aristocrat his reflection on how he and his family had to start their new life in a new location and how he looked back with pride on their accomplishments in moving and settling in a new environment (3.2.2). Other instances could not be included: in a saint's *Life* we encountered the description of the desperation of farmers driven to abandon their plots after droughts and famines;¹¹ and in a monastic foundation charter, we could detect how the founder of the community, a nobleman from Georgia, expressed his relief at settling down in what is now Bulgaria after decades spent on military campaign in the service of the Byzantine emperor, but stipulated that only Georgians should be allowed to join this community, in a striking display of resistance to assimilation.¹²

While we have tried our best to include a wide range of examples, from a wide range of texts, we are aware that this cannot adequately capture the lived experience of the people involved. The texts often report only in cursory terms what we must imagine as the misery of refugees, the agony of prisoners of war, the despair of women fleeing domestic violence, the effects on settled families of the rapaciousness of pirates, the hardships of nomadic cattle-herders, the risky business of traders, and the back-breaking work of migrant laborers. The scholarly language we have been accustomed to use implies a certain level of detachment and abstraction, but this should never detract from the fact that – then as now – mobility and migration were often deeply emotional and life-changing (and very frequently life-threatening) experiences whose memory lives on and shapes the self-perception of subsequent generations.

11 Niketas of Amnia, *Vita Philareti Misericordis*, 3, ed. Lennart Rydén, *The Life of St. Philaretos the Merciful written by his grandson Niketas*, (Uppsala, 2002), 64–67.

12 Gregory Pakourianos, *Typicon monasterii Theotoci Petritziotissae*, esp. 24, ed. Paul Gautier, *Le typikon du sébaste Grégoire Pakourianos*, *Revue des études byzantines* 42 (1984): 19–133, 105. English translation: Robert Jordan, in: John Thomas and Angela Constantinides Hero (eds.), *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents* (Washington, 2000), 507–563, esp. ch. 24, p. 547.

Guiding principles of the sourcebook

The selection of source materials assembled in this volume highlights how Byzantine authors understood and represented the processes of mobility and the experience of people on the move. This also allows us to take stock of the variety of sources in which mobility and migration are mentioned. By adopting this focus on the written evidence, we are putting ourselves at the authors' mercy, depending as we do on the information they chose to provide. Our only antidote to their subjectivity is to question their intentions, to pay attention to their literary artistry in manipulating the readers' reactions, and to set their writing within larger literary and historical contexts. Indeed, an early, provisional title for this volume was 'Perceptions of Mobility and Migration in Byzantium'. We are fully aware that our efforts are only a first step. A full assessment of mobility and migration in Byzantium would require recourse to archaeology and material culture, and the inclusion of texts written in other languages than Greek.

The passages presented here come from texts that cover the period from ca. 650 to 1453, and derive from a wide range of sources, including archival or administrative documents. Our challenge was to ensure coverage across centuries, literary genres, and themes within this one collection. We also aimed to include women and the lower social strata who tend to be below the radar of the elite male authors who wrote historical narratives. We have also given preference to texts written in the first person, as these may offer reflections from a personal vantage point.

It is essential to pay attention to the way in which a particular movement is represented. Is movement described in a positive or a negative way? How does the author depict the agents in the text? What kind of language register is used? With these kinds of insights, it may be possible to come one step closer to an understanding of what mobility and movement may have signified to the Byzantines themselves – the characters in the text, the authors who tell their stories and the audience that receives them. For this reason, the text passages in each segment are arranged according to their date of composition, and not according to the date of the events they are describing. We have aimed to combine the better-known passages with sources that have not yet been at the center of scholarly attention. Many of them are translated here into English for the first time.

Organization of the sourcebook

The book is arranged in five large thematic clusters. The first cluster, *Why moving?* offers passages that illustrate the reasons for movement and migration. These could range from major historical events to professional advancement and

private motives. Next to warfare and other forms of violent conflict, forced resettlement takes up a prominent place. The reasons for movement may have been systemic, imposed by imperial foreign, domestic or religious politics, or caused by natural catastrophes. Here we encounter larger groups of people, often nameless. Equally common was movement in pursuit of a livelihood, beginning with nomadic pastoralism, but also to advance one's career prospects, to pursue an education, to engage in diplomacy, to seek physical or spiritual health, or for family reasons.

Who moved? shifts perspectives from systemic necessity to individual agency: Here the emphasis is on the people whose occupation implied or required movement: the wealthy and privileged who maintained their extensive networks of influence through visits and marriages, skilled laborers in search of specialized work, dependent farmers at the whim of their landlords, men under arms who depended on recruitment and opportunities to fight near and far, merchants, traders and artisans who peddled their trade in different locations, entertainers and other self-made men and women who traveled around.

Scales, configurations and perspectives takes yet a different vantage point: it depicts representations of movement depending on the number of people involved and their interrelations. The accounts by ambassadors and messengers are rare ego-documents that talk not only about the circumstances of their travels, which are highlighted here, but could also be further explored with regard to their experiences in distant places and their perceptions of the world outside Byzantium. Kinship groups, families and clans are depicted as moving due to necessity or under duress, while the intentional movement of larger groups and confederations of people is represented as potentially violent and threatening. The diasporas and networks these people formed are treated by the Byzantine authors with distant respect and an undercurrent of suspicion.

The volume would not be complete without addressing *Modalities of movement*, which offers some examples of the depiction of the various stages of movement, from departure to arrival and subsequent settlement. The means of movement that were available to the poor and the rich varied widely. The emotions at the moment of departure into an unknown future are experienced by young brides sent off to their future husbands and by intellectuals evicted from their home, and on a different scale by local groups who were forcibly re-settled in distant regions (cf. 1.2.1).

At the conclusion of the volume stands a cluster on *The Imaginary* that draws attention to the many different ways in which the Byzantines approached travel in the widest sense in their fictional and religious imagination: both as a painful departure from the known and as an adventuresome movement towards the unknown. In order to transport their characters to worlds beyond human reach, whether Heaven or the underworld, authors also imagined fantastic ways of

transportation for them. Only rarely does the harsh reality of enslavement become fictionalized.

Structure of the volume

The five larger clusters are sub-divided into thematic segments, preceded by an introduction. Each segment features a selection of three or more text passages. Segment introductions and text passages are identified by a three-digit number. These are also used for cross-referencing.

Each segment begins with a short introduction that addresses the general topic, sets the source passages that follow into a larger context, and offers bibliography for further reading.

The source passages follow a standard format to guide the readers: introduction, source passage in translation, further remarks and bibliography. First comes information about author, date and genre of the text (as has been noted above, we are guided by the date of composition of the text, not the date of the event that is being reported), followed by remarks about the literary aspects of the source passage, the historical significance of the movement, and information about the edition and, where appropriate, the translation that was used. If serviceable English translations were available, we have checked and adapted them. In many cases, we have created our own translations. The translation of the relevant passage is followed, where appropriate, by more detailed commentary. A bibliography suggests further readings.

The book is intended for the widest possible audience – anyone interested in Byzantium and/or mobility and migrations, their representation in writing and their history – without sacrificing scholarly standards. It is our hope that the book will also be useful in academic instruction.

For this reason, the bibliographies mention introductory works and anglo-phone scholarship which will guide the reader towards further in-depth study. To encourage further research, particular efforts have also been made to include footnote references to the relevant biographical dictionaries (prosopographies), where more information about historically known individuals can be found.

Supplementary material

Further helpful material is to be found at the end of the book, in order to guide the non-specialist reader:

The List of Terms explains Byzantine special words that appear frequently and remain untranslated. The List of Names includes both authors of texts and actors in the narratives. The List of Places allows insights into the regions that were most affected by mobility and migration. It is also the basis of the maps.

The List of Source Texts by Date of Composition should facilitate further synchronic or diachronic study, and make the book especially suitable for classroom use.

The citation system is that of the journal *Medieval Worlds*.¹³

For the spelling of Byzantine words in transliteration and for abbreviations of journal and series titles, we follow the *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*.

How to cite individual entries

Citations of sourcebook entries should follow the rules for entries in encyclopedias or dictionaries. For example:

Simeonov, Grigori, Pastoralism: nomadic and transhumant, in: Claudia Rapp et al. (ed.), *Mobility and Migration. A Byzantine Sourcebook*, Moving Byzantium 1 (Göttingen, 2023), 1.8.0, 155–158.

Origins and context of this book: recent research at Vienna on mobility and migration

The book is the result of sustained collaboration of a multi-generational and international group of scholars in the context of the ‘Moving Byzantium’ project at the University of Vienna and the Austrian Academy of Sciences. This work was financed through the Wittgenstein-Award of the Austrian National Research Fund (FWF, Z288-G25) granted to Claudia Rapp in 2015 for the exploration of ‘Mobility, Microstructures and Personal Agency.’ The following team members contributed to this volume: Dirk Krausmüller, Matthew Kinloch, Ekaterini Mitsiou, Ilias Nesseris, Christodoulos Papavarnavas, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, Claudia Rapp, Giulia Rossetto, Rustam Shukurov, Grigori Simeonov, and Paraskevi Sykopetritou.¹⁴ In earlier years of the project, the Moving Byzantium team also included Emilio Bonfiglio, Nicholas Evans and Yannis Stouraitis.

13 Medieval Worlds citation guidelines: <https://medieval.vlg.oeaw.ac.at/index.php/medievalworlds/about/submissions#authorGuidelines>. Retrieved 29 August 2022.

14 For more information, see ‘Contributions to the sourcebook by author’, 497–498, and the Moving Byzantium website <https://rapp.univie.ac.at>. Retrieved 30 August 2022.

‘Moving Byzantium’, the abbreviated project title, is also the title of the series that results from it, published by Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht for Vienna University Press, co-edited by Claudia Rapp and Johannes Preiser-Kapeller. It is suitable that this sourcebook, which represents a collective effort, should be the first volume in the series. A companion volume that follows the same format, covering the ‘migration periods’ of late antiquity and the early middle ages with the inclusion of Latin sources is in preparation by the Tübingen research group (DFG Forschungsgruppe) ‘Migration and Mobility in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages’.¹⁵

15 <https://uni-tuebingen.de/fakultaeten/philosophische-fakultaet/fachbereiche/geschichtswissenschaft/forschung/dfg-kolleg-forschungsgruppe-migration-und-mobilitaet-in-spaetantike-und-fruehmittelalter/>. Retrieved 03 August 2022.

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Timeline

330	11 May, inauguration of Constantinople as new capital of the Roman Empire
395	The Empire is divided between imperial governments in East and West; the latter ends in 476
527–565	Reign of Emperor Justinian I (*ca. 482), attempt to reconquer the western provinces
541/542	First outbreak of the ‘Justinianic’ Plague, which returns in waves until the mid-8 th century
545	First incursions by Slav groups into the area south of the Danube, gradual migration into the Balkans over the next 100 years
568	Establishment of the Avars, who migrated from Central Asia, in the Carpathian basin
586	Attacks by Slav groups on Thessaloniki
614	Conquest of Jerusalem by the Persians
622–629	Far-reaching campaigns by Emperor Herakleios in the South Caucasus and Mesopotamia
626	Unsuccessful siege of Constantinople by an allied army of Persians, Avars, and Slavs
636	Byzantine defeat against the Arabs at the Yarmuk River, until 642 loss of Syria, Palestine and Egypt to the newly emerging Arab Islamic Caliphate; emigration of Christian population to remaining Byzantine territories
680/681	Establishment of the Bulgars, who migrated from the steppes to the north of the Black Sea, at the lower Danube
717–718	Siege of Constantinople by the Arabs
726/730–787	First Iconoclasm (debate on the veneration of holy images) in the Byzantine Empire; successful military campaigns of Emperor Constantine V (741–775) against Arabs and Bulgars, deportations of population between Asia Minor and the Balkans
800	Coronation of the Frankish King Charlemagne as Emperor in Rome
815–843	Second Iconoclasm, ends with a victory for the venerators of icons
824–827	Arab conquest of Crete, beginning of the Arab conquest of Sicily

863/864	Mission of the monks Cyril-Constantine and Method to the Great Moravian Empire; baptism of the Bulgar ruler Boris-Michael
904	Arab pirates plunder Thessaloniki
960/961	Byzantine reconquest of Crete by the general (and later emperor) Nikephoros (II) Phokas
963	Foundation of the Monastery of Megisti Lavra on Mount Athos in Northern Greece
987/988	Baptism of Prince Vladimir of Kiev, ruler of the Rus in Eastern Europe
1014/1018	Final destruction of the (west) Bulgarian empire by Emperor Basil II; the Balkan Peninsula again largely under Byzantine rule
1054	So-called 'Great Schism' between Orthodox and Roman Catholic ('Latin') Churches
1071	Battle of Manzikert: defeat of the Byzantines under Emperor Romanos IV Diogenes against the Seljuk Turks, who had migrated from Central Asia to the Middle East
1096–1099	First Crusade; the Crusaders capture Jerusalem; establishment of four Crusader states; growing presence of 'Latins' in the Levant and the Byzantine Empire, also as merchants (from Venice, Genoa and Pisa)
1147	Arrival of the participants of the Second Crusade (King Conrad III, King Louis II of France) in Constantinople
1176	Defeat of Emperor Manuel I Komnenos against the Seljuks at Myriokephalon
1185	Temporary conquest of Thessaloniki by the Normans from Southern Italy
1187	Jerusalem falls into the hands of Saladin, Sultan of Egypt and Syria
1189/1190	Third Crusade; the Byzantines lose control over Bulgaria and Serbia
1204 April 13	Conquest of Constantinople by the Crusaders and Venetians of the Fourth Crusade.
	Byzantine successor polities arise in western Greece (Epiros), western Asia Minor (Nicaea) and northeast Asia Minor (Trebizond)
1243	Defeat of the Seljuk Turks against the Mongols in the battle at Köse Dağ
1261, July	Reconquest of Constantinople by the troops of Nicaea
1274	Council of Lyons for the Union of the Churches between Rome and Constantinople
1302	Defeat of the Byzantines against the Ottomans at Bapheus, in Bithynia
1303	The Catalan Company arrives from Southern Italy in Byzantium
1321–1328	Civil war between Andronikos II Palaiologos and his grandson Andronikos III
1326	Prusa / Bursa in Bithynia is conquered by the Ottomans and becomes their first capital
1341–1347	Civil war between John VI Kantakouzenos and the regency of John V Palaiologos
1347	The plague pandemic of the Black Death reaches Constantinople from the Crimea
1354	Conquest of Gallipoli peninsula by the Ottomans, who expand further on the Balkans

1390	Conquest of the last Byzantine city in Asia Minor, Philadelphia, by the Ottomans
1394–1402	First siege of Constantinople by the Ottomans
1402	Defeat of the Ottomans by the Mongol ruler Timur Leng at the Battle of Ankara
1422	Siege of Constantinople by the Ottomans
1438/1439	Council of Ferrara / Florence for a union of churches between Rome and Constantinople
1453	The Ottomans conquer Constantinople on May 29 th
1460	Conquest of the Byzantine Morea (Peloponnese) by the Ottomans
1461	Ottomans conquer the Empire of Trebizond at the Black Sea
1492	Year 7000 according to Byzantine calculation of times

Abbreviations

AOC	Archives de l'Orient Chrétien
BA	Byzantinisches Archiv
BAR	British Archaeological Reports
BHG and BHG Novum	François Halkin (ed.), <i>Bibliotheca hagiographica graeca</i> , 3 vols., 3rd ed., SH 8a (Brussels, 1957); François Halkin (ed.), <i>Novum auctarium Bibliothecae hagiographicae graecae</i> , SH 65 (Brussels, 1984)
BBA	Berliner byzantinistische Arbeiten
BBOM	Birmingham Byzantine and Ottoman Monographs
BBOS	Birmingham Byzantine and Ottoman Studies
BBTT	Belfast Byzantine Texts and Translations
BIAL	Brill's Inner Asian Library
BOO	Byzanz zwischen Orient und Okzident
BSLT	Byzantine Saints' Lives in Translation
BV	Byzantina Vindobonensia
CC CM	Corpus Christianorum, <i>Continuatio Mediaevalis</i>
CC.SG	Corpus Christianorum. Series Graeca
CFHB	Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae
CSHB	Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae
Diktyon	Réseau numérique pour les manuscrits grecs (http://www.diktyon.org/en/)
DOML	Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library
DOS	Dumbarton Oaks Studies
DOT	Dumbarton Oaks Texts
EI ²	The Encyclopaedia of Islam (2nd ed.)
EIr	Encyclopedia Iranica
HdA	Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft
LBG	Lexikon zur byzantinischen Gräzität, ed. Erich Trapp et al. (Vienna, 2001–2017)
LMA	Lexikon des Mittelalters
MBM	Miscellanea Byzantina Monacensia
MMED	The Medieval Mediterranean
ODB	Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium

PBW	Prosopography of the Byzantine World (https://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/)
PG	Patrologia Graeca
PLP	Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit, ed., Erich Trapp et al. (Vienna, 1977–94)
PLRE	Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire
PmbZ	Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit/Prosopography of the Middle Byzantine Period Online, ed. Ralph-Johannes Lilie et al. (Berlin, 2013). Accessed on 7 April 2021: https://www.degruyter.com/view/db/pmbz .
RB	Réalités byzantines
SH	Subsidia Hagiographica
TIB	Tabula Imperii Byzantini
TM	Travaux et Mémoires
TRE	Theologische Realenzyklopädie (also Online, partially accessible)
VB	Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung
WBS	Wiener byzantinistische Studien

1 Why Moving?

The first section offers passages that illustrate the reasons for movement and migration. These could range from major historical events to professional advancement and private motives. Next to warfare and other forms of violent conflict, forced re-settlement takes up a prominent place. The reasons for movement may have been systemic, imposed by imperial foreign, domestic or religious politics, or caused by natural catastrophes. Here we encounter larger groups of people, often nameless. Equally common was movement in pursuit of a livelihood, beginning with nomadic pastoralism, but also movement to advance one's career prospects, to pursue an education, to engage in diplomacy, to seek physical or spiritual health, or for family reasons.

Claudia Rapp

1.1.0 Warfare

Warfare and all other forms of armed conflict were one of the main reasons for the movement of people, both those actively engaged in the conflict (fighters and support personnel on both sides, see 2.4.0) and those on whose territory the conflict was carried out. The latter either moved temporarily to seek safety during the confrontations, or were forced to abandon their homes afterwards for a variety of reasons, most prominently forced re-settlement within the empire (see 1.2.0) or abduction as prisoners of war beyond its borders (see 1.3.0).

Scholars of Byzantium have used three military confrontations to divide the history of the empire into three phases. The early Byzantine period ended with the Arab invasions, the middle Byzantine period came to an end with the arrival of the Crusaders, and the late Byzantine period was shaped by the advance of the Ottomans. The initial phase of the Arab expansion into the Mediterranean basin led to the loss of a considerable part of the empire's eastern provinces, culminating in the conquest of Alexandria and the fall of Egypt in 641.¹ Henceforth, annual raids took place in Byzantine Anatolia, while in 669 the Arabs even got as far as Chalcedon on the Asiatic coast of Bosphorus, just across from Constantinople. The capital itself was besieged, unsuccessfully, from 717 to 718. The decline of Abbasid power in the second half of the 10th century gave Byzantium the chance to mount a counter-offensive, which was led by the emperors Nikephoros II Phokas,² John I Tzimiskes³ and Basil II,⁴ all capable military leaders.⁵ As a result of these efforts the Empire was able to consolidate its presence in Anatolia

1 A sober and detailed account of the initial confrontation of the Byzantines with the Arabs is provided by Kaegi, Walter E., *Heraclius, Emperor of Byzantium* (Cambridge, 2003) 229–323.

2 PmbZ 25535, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ27689/html>.

3 PmbZ 22778, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ24932/html>.

4 PmbZ 20838, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22991/html>.

5 For the conduct of warfare by the Byzantines during this period see McGeer, Eric, *Sowing the Dragon's Teeth: Byzantine Warfare in the Tenth Century*, DOS 33 (Washington, D.C., 1995). See also Theotokis, George, *Byzantine Military Tactics in Syria and Mesopotamia in the Tenth Century. A Comparative Study* (Edinburgh, 2018).

and to reclaim provinces that had been lost in the previous centuries.⁶ When the crusading armies arrived at the beginning of the 12th century, the empire fought again in the East, this time against the Seljuk Turks who from the middle of the 11th century had started to encroach on Byzantine territory and had eventually captured places near the capital such as Nicaea. The various crusader kingdoms and principalities in the Levant, which were founded after the First Crusade (1096–1099), formed also partly a threat to Turkish polities in Anatolia. This led to a shift in the balance of power, which gave the Komnenian emperors the opportunity to retake many of the lands that had been lost. They got, however, also involved in conflicts with the Crusaders such as in the struggle for the overlordship over the County of Antioch in Northern Syria.⁷ The culmination of this new political reality was the fall of Constantinople to the armies of the Fourth Crusade and the Venetians in 1204⁸ (for the description of the flight of the Greek population from their fallen capital by Niketas Choniates see 1.1.1), an event that deeply affected the mentality of the Byzantines, even after the reconquest of the City in 1261 (see 1.1.2). In the last two centuries of its existence the Eastern frontier of the Empire was again threatened by various Turkish formations, with the Ottomans making constant advances (see 1.1.3) until they finally managed to conquer the capital itself in 1453.

From the 7th to the 10th century a large number of military handbooks were composed in Byzantium. Their authors often give detailed instructions about the movements of troops. Some of the more well-known manuals were written by or attributed to emperors, who were experienced military leaders, such as Maurice in the late 6th century and Nikephoros Phokas in the 10th. Other works were compilations based on older material, produced during the reigns of Leo VI the Wise⁹ and his son Constantine VII¹⁰ in the age of encyclopedism.¹¹ Although the

6 For the administrative reforms brought about by Byzantine military success in the Eastern front see Howard-Johnston, James, *Military and Provincial Reform in the East in the 10th Century*, in: Béatrice Caseau et al. (eds.), *Ὁ δῶρὸν εἶμι τὰς γράφας βλέπων νόει. Mélanges Jean-Claude Cheynet*, TM 21/1 (Paris, 2017) 285–309.

7 See the seminal study of Lilie, Ralph-Johannes, *Byzanz und die Kreuzfahrerstaaten. Studien zur Politik des Byzantinischen Reiches gegenüber den Staaten der Kreuzfahrer in Syrien und Palästina bis zum vierten Kreuzzug, 1096–1204*, Poikila Byzantina 1 (Munich, 1981).

8 Angold, Michael, *The Fourth Crusade: Event and Context* (London and New York, 2003).

9 PmbZ 24311, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ26465/html>.

10 PmbZ 23734, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25888/html>.

11 For an overview of military literature in Byzantium see McGeer, Eric, *Military Texts*, in: Elizabeth Jeffreys et al. (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies* (Oxford, 2008) 906–914; Sullivan, Denis F., *Byzantine Military Manuals: Prescriptions, Practice and Pedagogy*, in: Paul Stephenson (ed.), *The Byzantine World* (London and New York, 2010) 149–161. See also now Chatzelis, Georgios, *Byzantine Military Manuals as Literary Works and Practical*

Byzantine manuals reflect up to a point the current military practices on the empire's Eastern frontiers, they are mostly derivative and prescriptive rather than descriptive in nature.

Byzantine hagiography, by contrast, offers vivid descriptions of the effects of warfare on the lives of individuals, families, villages, cities, and regions. A surprising number of holy men were forced by military confrontations, but also by piracy and brigandage to lead itinerant lives. One of the most significant examples is the Life of Saint Christodoulos,¹² who in the late 11th century was constantly on the move due to pirate raids and the advance of the Seljuk Turks until he finally founded a monastery dedicated to Saint John the Theologian on the island of Patmos (see 2.3.3).¹³ A cluster of hagiographical accounts of the 9th and 10th centuries features protagonists who were affected by the Arab attacks, and were either deported as prisoners of war (see 1.3.0) or killed by the enemy and subsequently celebrated as neo-martyrs. Saint Elias the Younger (ca. 823–903)¹⁴ lived a very tumultuous life [BHG 580]. He was taken prisoner by Arab raiders who brought him from his hometown in Sicily to North Africa. There he spent many years in captivity as a slave, before finally managing to gain his freedom.¹⁵ Generally it was the case that more prominent prisoners were exchanged or ransomed, as this was in the interest both sides, and in fact there are provisions in Byzantine military manuals for such occasions. This was not, however, always the case. The forty-two high Byzantine officials that were taken prisoner during the sack of the city of Amorion (near modern Hisarköy) by the Arabs in 838 were executed several years later and were subsequently venerated by the Church as martyrs.¹⁶

In Byzantine historical writing, the focus is on emperors and their deeds, which are often described in great detail. Authors of chronicles, too, make mention of armed conflicts in their shorter entries of annual events, usually in a matter-of-fact style. With greater chronological distance to the events, the reporting tends to be less vivid; the people affected are no longer viewed as individuals, but begin to be treated as a nameless mass. The fate of the people who

Handbooks. The Case of the Tenth-Century Sylloge Tacticorum (London and New York, 2019), as well as Chlup, James T. and Conor Whately (eds.), *Greek and Roman Military Manuals: Genre and History*, Rutledge Monographs in Classical Studies (London and New York, 2021).

12 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Christodoulos/101/>.

13 The monastic community remained in peril from pirate activity also in the following centuries, see Gerolymatou, Maria, *Vivre avec les pirates aux XII^e-XIII^e siècles: l'exemple de Patmos*, in: Béatrice Caseau et al. (eds.), *Ὁ ὁσιώτατος εἰμι τὰς γραφὰς βλέπων νόει. Mélanges Jean-Claude Cheynet*, TM 21/1 (Paris, 2017) 257–265.

14 PmbZ 21639, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ23792/html>.

15 Rossi, Taibbi Giuseppe, *Vita di Sant'Elia il Giovane* (Palermo, 1962) ch. 6–17.

16 ODB II, 800–801. See also Detoraki, Marina, *Greek Passions of the Martyrs in Byzantium*, in: Stephanos Efthymiadis (ed.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, vol. 2: *Genres and Contexts* (Farnham and Burlington, VT, 2014) 61–101, at 83–84.

are actively or passively involved in the conflict is rarely mentioned, and even rarer are reports about their movements. The most detailed accounts are offered by historians who write in close proximity to the events they narrate, who observed them as eyewitnesses, or who themselves experienced some kind of displacement.

Further reading

- Haldon, John, *Warfare, State and Society in the Byzantine World, 565–1204* (London, 1999).
 Haldon, John (ed.), *Byzantine Warfare* (Aldershot and Burlington, 2007).
 Haldon, John, Byzantium to the Twelfth Century, in: Anne Curry and David A. Graf (eds.), *The Cambridge History of War*, vol. 2: *War and the Medieval World* (Cambridge, 2020) 107–132.
 Stouraitis, Yannis (ed.), *A Companion to the Byzantine Culture of War, ca. 300–1204*, Brill's Companions to the Byzantine World 3 (Leiden and Boston, 2018).
 Stouraitis, Yannis, Migrating in the Medieval East Roman World, ca. 600–1204, in: Johannes Preiser-Kapeller et al. (eds.), *Migration Histories of the Medieval Afroeurasian Transition Zone. Aspects of Mobility between Africa, Asia and Europe, 300–1500 C.E.*, Studies in Global Social History 39; Studies in Global Migration History 13 (Leiden and Boston, 2020) 141–165.
 Treadgold, Warren, *Byzantium and its Army, 284–1081* (Stanford, 1985).
 Treadgold, Warren, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society* (Stanford, 1997).

Ilias Nesseris, Claudia Rapp

1.1.1 Niketas Choniates and his family flee from Constantinople after the Crusader conquest of 1204

Author: Niketas Choniates (born ca. 1155 in Chonai, died 1217 in Nicaea)¹⁷

Text: *History (Chronike Diegesis)*

Date of text: late 12th century /first decade of the 13th century

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: Niketas Choniates' *History* is the most important Byzantine source for the period from 1118 to 1207. Towards the end of his work, Niketas laments the conquest and plunder of Constantinople by the Crusaders in 1204, which he observed and experienced first-hand, regarding them as divine retribution for the corruption of Byzantine society and its rulers. The passage below describes his own departure from Constantinople, after one of his homes was burnt down and a second one was seized by the invaders. His narrative becomes even more dramatic when he reports his family's flight from Constantinople first

17 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Niketas/25001/>.

to Selymbria and then to Nicaea, where he spent the remainder of his life in the service of Theodore I Laskaris (1205–1221)¹⁸ and also wrote his *History*, which is preserved in the manuscripts in three redactions. A paraphrase in a less erudite register of Greek was produced in the early 14th century.

Historical significance of the movement: Niketas provides a rare autobiographical account of involuntary movement as a result of military action, following one of the most decisive events in the history of Byzantium, the capture of Constantinople by the Crusaders in 1204.

Type of movement: involuntary / war / refugees.

Locations and date of movement: April 1204–June 1206 (from Constantinople to Selymbria), June 1206–December 1206 (from Selymbria back to Constantinople); 1207 or 1208 (from Constantinople to Nicaea).

Edition used: Niketas Choniates, *History*, ed. Jan-Louis van Dieten, CFHB 11/1–2 (Berlin and New York, 1975) vol. 1, 587–588, 593–594, 635.

Translation used: Magoulias, Harry J., *O City of Byzantium. Annals of Niketas Choniates* (Detroit, 1984) 322–323, 326, 348 (heavily modified by Claudia Rapp).¹⁹

Niketas Choniates, *History*

[p. 587] (...) their leaders [of the Crusading armies] decided to allow those who wished to do so to depart from the city. So they left, gathered into groups, covered in rags, worn out by hunger, ashen in complexion, looking like corpses and with blood-shot eyes, shedding more blood than tears. Some lamented their possessions, others considered the loss of their belongings as their least worry and bewailed that a beautiful daughter of marriageable age had been seized and abused by someone, or they lamented that their wives had been taken away. Thus they went on their way, each one lamenting a different calamity.

In order to add to my narrative also my own situation (...) [p. 588] I had a friend who had also shared my house, one of the Venetians (...) This excellent man, who had once enjoyed our hospitality and protection, now became our helper and defender in this critical moment. He led us to another house, where Venetians of our acquaintance resided. So we went in small groups, with downcast eyes and shoddily clad, led by him by the hand as if we were his captives, and thus he guided us along the way.

18 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Theodoros/1/>.

19 Other translations: German: Grabler, Franz, *Die Kreuzfahrer erobern Konstantinopel: die Regierungszeit der Kaiser Alexios Angelos, Isaak Angelos und Alexios Dukas, die Schicksale der Stadt nach der Einnahme*, Byzantinische Geschichtsschreiber 9 (Cologne, 1958); Italian (based on an improved version of van Dieten's edition for Books 9–14): Kazhdan, Alexander P., van Dieten, Jan-Louis, Maisano, Pietro, Pontani, Anna, *Grandezza e catastrofe di Bizanzio*, 2 vols. (Milan, 1994–1999).

Because this part of the city had fallen to the Franks, we had to leave again. Since our servants were dispersed here and there and they all had abandoned us, showing no human sentiment, we were forced to carry on our shoulders our small children that could not yet walk, and hold in our arms a baby boy who had not yet been weaned. And thus we moved through the streets.

We remained in the city for five days after the conquest, then we left as well. It was a Saturday [17 April 1204], and what had happened was not, I believe, by chance, but according to divine providence, and it was winter, and my wife was close to giving birth, so that the prophecy of Christ that “Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a sabbath” and “Woe to those who are pregnant” (Mt 24:19–20) were fulfilled, as if they had been spoken for us.²⁰ Many of our friends and relatives and a crowd of others came together to see us on our way, and we were like a colony of ants, walking through the streets. (...)

[As the group leaves the city, they take care to protect the women from unwanted attention by sheltering them in their midst. A beautiful girl, the daughter of an old judge,²¹ is nonetheless seized by a ‘barbarian’ and carried off to his home. Niketas succeeds in liberating her, by calling other Latins to assistance and through the power of his speech.]

As we left the city, everyone gave thanks to God (for their safe escape) and lamented their fate. But I threw myself to the ground, as I was, and almost chastised the walls which alone were lacking in sentiment, shedding no tears, not even crumbling down, but still standing upright. [Niketas now launches into a long speech, laced with Biblical references, addressed to the walls of Constantinople.]

[p. 593] After having emptied out the vexations overflowing from our souls in this fashion, we went forth crying and casting lamentations like seeds. If we ever manage to return, reaping in jubilation the sheaves of the most auspicious change, that will be a gift from God, who comforts the weak in mind and girds them with the cloak of salvation and dresses them in the tunic of joy.

The ecumenical chief shepherd²² preceded us, carrying neither a leather wallet nor gold about his loins, without a staff or sandals, and wearing a single tunic, a perfect evangelical apostle, or rather, a true imitator of Christ, except that he departed from New Sion (i. e. Constantinople) riding on a lowly donkey and was not planning to celebrate a triumph on that site.²³ At this time we ended our

20 This relates to Jesus’ prophecy about the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem.

21 Note that the trek of those who leave the city includes men (and their families) of similar rank and profession as Niketas.

22 Patriarch John X Kamateros (1198–1206) [PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Ioannes/s/20/>] after the capture of Constantinople took refuge in the city of Didymoteichon in Thrace, rejecting the proposal of Theodore I Laskaris to go to Nicaea.

23 A reference to Christ’s Entry into Jerusalem.

journey at Selymbria²⁴ and rested from our wandering, all of us being unharmed – thanks to God’s great generosity towards us and his perfect gift that will forever be remembered – and without having been subjected – like many of ours – to the rack or handcuffs of rope or whipping on the temples for the payment of a ransom. And we were nourished solely by God who provides food to all in the right season and a plentiful feast for the young ravens who call upon him, and who, furthermore, magnificently clothes the lilies of the field which neither spin nor sow (cf. Mt 6:28).

The peasants and those of low birth greatly taunted those of us who came from Byzantium [Constantinople]; foolishly, they called our suffering in misery and in nakedness equality, without being chastened by the evils occurring to those close to them. In fact, many seized upon lawlessness and said, “Blessed be the Lord, for we have become rich,” [p. 594] purchasing for a cheap price the possessions of their compatriots which were offered for sale. They had not yet received the beef-eating Latins into their homes and thus did not know that they pour out their wine unmixed and pure in the same exact fashion that they pour out their anger, and that they treat the Rhomaioi with arrogance and contempt.

Such was the fate that befell us and those of our station, as well as those who had participated in rhetorical studies with us.²⁵ (...)

[p. 635] Therefore for these reasons we left from Selymbria and returned to Constantinople, and after we remained in the city for six months we sailed to the East, escaping at one and the same time the sight and arrogance of the Latins. Therefore, we live as strangers in Nicaea,²⁶ alongside Lake Askania, the capital of the province of Bithynia, which claims boastfully to have the primacy among all the eastern cities under Roman dominion thanks to the strength of her walls. Our change of residence did not bring about any improvement in our condition, however, but we are once again deluged by sorrow, and we manage thanks only to God, because we only receive a negligible assistance from the hands of men and this is unpleasant for it is begrudgingly bestowed, and, one can say, they are inimical to sharing. We are nourished by a little bread and sometimes by a

24 For the city of Selymbria in Thrace on the north shore of the Sea of Marmara see ODB III, 1867–1868, and Külzer, Andreas, *Ostthrakien (Eurôpē)*, TIB 12, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften 369 (Vienna, 2008) 635–643.

25 John Belissariotes [PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Ioannes/341/>], the brother-in-law of Niketas, was for example one of those peers, who ended up in Nicaea with him, see Niketas’ funeral oration, ed. van Dieten, Jan-Louis, *Nicetae Choniatae Orationes et Epistulae*, CFHB 3 (Berlin and New York, 1972) 147–170, no. 15.

26 For the city of Nicaea see Foss, Clive, *Nicaea: A Byzantine Capital and Its Praises*, Archbishop Iakovos Library of Ecclesiastical and Historical Sources 21 (Brookline, Mass., 1996); Belke, Klaus, *Bithynien und Hellespont*, TIB 13, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften 513 (Vienna, 2020) 807–808, 813–814.

measure of wine, we are surfeited with the calamities of our compatriots as well as of our own, receiving the cup of suffering without any taste of joy. Like a line stretching out into infinity, all that was oppressive, horrible, heart-rending, soul-destroying, wholly devastating, and utterly desolating in full measure they brought to the Roman nation.²⁷

Comments: Niketas' narrative is carefully crafted and displays his rhetorical skills. He comes across as a man of privilege, indignant at his loss of status. His fate and that of his family depend on his personal network: a Venetian acquaintance shelters them for a few days, and other people of the same social stratum, such as the judge and his daughter, are part of the same group that leaves Constantinople to begin a new life elsewhere. Niketas inserts himself into the story as a heroic fighter who resists the brutality of the conquerors, offering a dramatic blow-by-blow account of his role in the release of the judge's daughter from her captor. This story of personal heroism must later have assumed legendary proportions, as it is repeated in greater detail in the funerary eulogy on Niketas by his equally learned brother Michael, Archbishop of Athens.²⁸

In Umberto Eco's novel *Baudolino*, Niketas appears as the interlocutor of the main character.

Further reading

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27 This section is only found in manuscript L of the *History* (Laur. IX 24, 13th century, *Diktyon* 16112) and O (Bodl. Roe 22, y. 1286, *Diktyon* 48403).

28 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Michael/20528/>. Michael Choniates, *Funerary Oration (Monodia) on Niketas Choniates*, 43–48, ed. Spyridon P. Lambros, *Michael Akominatou tou Choniatou ta Sozomena*, vol. 1 (Athens, 1879; reprint Groningen, 1968) 360, 16–363, 5.

1.1.2 Latins leaving Constantinople in 1261

Author: George Pachymeres (born in 1242, Nicaea; died after 1307 in Constantinople), latter 13th–early 14th century²⁹

Text: *Historical Narration* (*Syngraphikai historiai*)

Date of text: after 1307

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: Pachymeres was a church official (*protekdikos*) as well as a prolific and versatile author. His interests and literary output cover the whole spectrum of knowledge from rhetoric, theology and philosophy to the *Quadrivium* of the sciences (arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy).³⁰ He is, however, most renowned for his prose history, which continues that of George Akropolites,³¹ and covers the period between the reign of Theodore II Laskaris (1254–1258) and 1307, including the entire reign of Michael VIII Palaiologos (1258–1282)³² and part of that of Andronikos II (1282–1328).³³ The first two books of his *History* are largely devoted to the events leading up to the recapture of Constantinople, which is described in great detail.³⁴ A simplified version of the *History* is also extant, produced in the 14th century by a Byzantine scholar who has remained anonymous.³⁵

Historical significance of the movement: Pachymeres was an objective and trustworthy historian, who followed the standards set by ancient Greek historiographers. He offered a reliable narrative of the events he described, some of which he witnessed himself; and about those he did not, he obtained information from eyewitnesses, which he then corroborated.³⁶ It is important to note here that he did not rely on the work of George Akropolites although he knew it and probably had access to it. The account of the efforts of the Byzantines to reclaim their lost capital and the subsequent flight of the Latins, and the vivid description

29 PLP 22186.

30 Constantinides, Costas N., *Higher Education in Byzantium in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries (1204– ca.1310)*, Cyprus Research Centre, Texts and Studies of the History of Cyprus 11 (Nicosia, 1982) 61–64.

31 PLP 518.

32 PLP 21528.

33 PLP 21436.

34 A good reconstruction and commentary on these events on the basis of all available sources has been given by Geanakoplos, Deno John, *Emperor Michael Palaeologus and the West, 1258–1282. A Study in Byzantine-Latin Relations* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959) 92–115. For their chronology see also Failler, Albert, *Chronologie et composition dans l'Histoire de Georges Pachymère*, *Revue des études byzantines* 38 (1980) 5–103, at 53–59.

35 Failler, Albert, *La version brève des Relations Historiques de Georges Pachymères*, vols. I–III (*Livres I–XIII, Index*), AOC 17–19 (Paris, 2001–2004).

36 George Pachymeres, *History*, Book 1, 1, ed. and transl. by Albert Failler and Vitalien Laurent, *Georges Pachymères, Relations historiques*, CFHB 24/1 (Paris, 1984) vol. 1, 23, 8–13.

of these events – viewed by the author as a payback for the suffering caused by the Latins during the conquest of Constantinople in 1204 – are in stark and powerful contrast to the narrative of Niketas Choniates, who described the conquest of Constantinople by the armies of the Fourth Crusade (see 1.1.1).

Type of movement: involuntary / war / refugees.

Locations and date of movement: Latins returning from Daphnousia in the Black Sea to Constantinople to defend the capital and population fleeing the city during these events; July 1261.

Edition used: George Pachymeres, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι*, ed. and transl. by Albert Failler and Vitalien Laurent, *Georges Pachymérès, Relations historiques*, CFHB 24/1–5 (Paris, 1984–2000) vol. 1, 199.12–203.21, Book 2, 27.

Translation used: Cassidy, Nathan J., *A Translation and Historical Commentary of Book One and Book Two of the Historia of George Pachymeres*, Unpublished PhD thesis (University of Western Australia, 2004) 71–73 (modified by Ilias Nesseris).

George Pachymeres, *Historical Narration*, Book 2, 27

[p. 199] So their emperor, Baldwin,³⁷ because he had become panic-stricken at the news, and taken leave of his senses, was able to think of nothing else but flight. And indeed, he abandoned the palace of Blachernai, as if dry land did not seem able to offer sufficient defense – he placed his trust more in the sea – withdrew swiftly to the Great Palace, and then, just as he was, after having shed his headdress (*kalyptra*) and his sword, the symbols of his imperium,³⁸ he descended to the shore and entrusted his safety to a ship.³⁹ On that same day the soldiers of the Roman division, who came to find and capture the emperor, used his imperial insignia as evidence of his flight and from this point onwards their confidence was increased, since the one they had been assigned to watch for had run away; so after they gathered up the headdress and the sword, they considered them to be a sufficient beginning and the first fruits of the loot taken in the city. And at the

37 PLP 2070; ODB I, 247. Baldwin II (1217–1273), the last Latin emperor of Constantinople, was the son of Peter of Courtenay and Yolanda of Flanders.

38 A more detailed description of Baldwin's headdress and sword is provided by George Akropolites, see Macrides, Ruth, *George Akropolites, The History. Translated With an Introduction and Commentary* (Oxford, 2007) 381–382. For the imperial *insignia* of the Latin emperors of Constantinople see Hendrickx, Benjamin, *Les Institutions de l'Empire Latin de Constantinople (1204–1261): Le pouvoir imperial (L'empereur, les régents, l'imperatrice)*, *Byzantina* 6 (1974) 85–154, at 123–128.

39 Although not stated by Pachymeres, it stands to reason that Baldwin escaped from the adjacent palace harbour of Boukoleon, for which see Heher, Dominik, *Der Palasthafen des Bukoleon*, in: Falko Daim (ed.), *Die byzantinischen Häfen Konstantinopels*, BOO 4 (Mainz, 2016) 67–90.

same time this signified to those who were still confident in him, that they would get nothing from him since he had preferred to flee.

While this event was becoming revealed to them, as they were still struck by amazement not really believing that they possessed what they held in their hands, the rumour – *and rumour is also divine* –⁴⁰ swiftly reached those [i. e. the Latins] who were besieging Daphnousia;⁴¹ those men no sooner heard it than they felt themselves lost, trembling in horror for their wives and children. Nevertheless, they hastened to come to protect them as best as they could; for it is said that they had used about thirty long ships,⁴² both *monoremes*⁴³ [p. 201] and *triremes*,⁴¹ against Daphnousia. Sailing at speed with all of these, they rushed towards the City, putting their trust also in the great ship from Sicily that had many fighting men aboard, in order to defend their people and come to close quarters with their attackers; it was by such hopes that these men were animated as they rushed onwards. The *kaisar* [i. e., Alexios Strategopoulos]⁴⁴ having been made aware of their approach, called upon the people of the Roman race, and they, being Rhomaioi, worked willy-nilly together with our forces. Baldwin had at the time in his entourage a certain servant (*therapon oikeios/familiaris*)⁴⁵ called John Phylax,⁴⁶ a cunning man to whom profound thoughts came easily; he gave advice, which was most opportune and suited to the situation, that any other person would have hesitated to give, considering the destructive nature of the action. For he knew that they [i. e. the Italians] would fight out of necessity beyond their strength for the sake of their wives and families, their homes and all their be-

40 An allusion to Hesiod, *Works and Days*, ed. Friedrich Solmsen, *Hesiodi opera* (Oxford, 1970) 49–85, lines 763–764.

41 For Daphnousia, a small town and harbour in the Asiatic coast of the Black Sea near Bosphoros see Belke, *Bithynien und Hellespont*, 522–524.

42 Cassidy, Nathan J., *A Translation and Historical Commentary of Book One and Book Two of the Historia of George Pachymeres*, Unpublished PhD thesis (University of Western Australia, 2004) 307–308, thinks that the estimation given by Pachymeres for the number of ships (30) comprising the Latin fleet is exaggerated by the historian.

43 For these types of war galleys with one or three rows of oars respectively see Pryor, John H. and Jeffreys, Elizabeth M., *The Age of the Dromon. The Byzantine Navy ca 500–1204*, MMED 62 (Leiden and Boston, 2006) 172–173. The shipwrecks of two such *monoremes* from the 9th or 10th century were unearthed in 2006 at the Theodosian harbour, see Pulak, Cemal, Ingram, Rebecca and Jones, Michael, Eight Byzantine Shipwrecks from the Theodosian Harbour Excavations at Yenikapı in Istanbul, Turkey: an Introduction, *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 44.1 (2015) 39–73.

44 PLP 26894.

45 For this term see Verpeaux, Jean, *Les Oikeioi*. Notes d'histoire institutionnelle et sociale, *Revue des études byzantines* 23 (1965) 89–99. For the concept of *therapeia*, used to refer to service personnel or a retinue, in the restored Empire see Schrijver, Frouke Marianne, *The Early Palaeologan Court (1261–1354)*, Unpublished PhD thesis (University of Birmingham, 2012) 163–170.

46 PLP 30197.

longings, attacking like wild boars to defend them, so that they would either prevail or fall gloriously; therefore he cut to the heart of the matter with prudence and suggested to light a fire, so that when the houses and all the redundant and unnecessary things would be burning, the women and children would necessarily seek safety in flight, salvaging only treasures of a pure and valuable nature; while the men, on the one hand, upon seeing from the ships the fire reducing their houses to ashes and, on the other hand, their wives and children raising their arms to signal for help, would pay no attention to their houses, which no longer existed, but would seek out and save the people; thus the ones seeking vengeance would give thanks and be content, if they could save themselves and their women and children, for they would have their *triremes* at their disposal to receive the crowd, and if others wanted to leave, they would also be allowed to do so, because the Sicilian ship was capable of taking them on board.

As the advice thus formulated seemed sound, and even more so because they could not resist an attack on account of the small number of their soldiers, they immediately lit a fire, just where their [i.e. the Italians'] houses and goods were; and as it spread, it reduced the houses to ashes. The inhabitants, panicked like smoked-out bees, fled outside, and took to the hills of the city, naked as they were, and at the same time, fearing for their safety, tearfully calling out to those who were watching from outside what was happening. Then being at a loss [i.e. the Italians] as to what course of action to take – for if [p. 203] they pressed on, they would be in a difficult position as they were exposed, and their families would at the same time be in danger; and in case they were not victorious, they would be lost along with their women and children – they had recourse to supplication begging with great passion for their people and for their property, if they would agree to it; if not, it would be enough for them to recover their relatives safe and sound.

Many terrible and shocking things were done then, greater than any that has ever been seen or heard of; for respectable women and young girls, clad only in their tunic, and with even these being torn, or else wrapped up in anything they could find, ran ashamedly on bare feet towards their relatives under the gaze of many eyes. The Italians were therefore clearly repaid for what they had formerly done to the Rhomaioi; and at the same time the old prophecy was fulfilled: “Alexios, Alexopoulos and also Koutritzakes”.⁴⁷ Previously, before these events even occurred, the present writer had heard his father talking about it with another man and uttering these words. As they were Constantinopolitans they enquired about their own country, and sought to know if their fatherland would

47 For a detailed analysis of this prophecy see Lampakis, Stylianos, *Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, πρωτεύδικος και δικαιοφύλαξ. Εισαγωγικό δοκίμιο*, National Hellenic Research Foundation/Institute for Byzantine Research, Monographs 5 (Athens, 2004) 71–72.

ever be retaken; this was at night and by candlelight – for I was the one hold the candle to make light for them – and these words came to be spoken by them, as if they knew just when this would take place; for they surmised that the recapture of the city would occur during the time of a future emperor, Alexios, along with the others named in the prophecy. However, it so happened that these men were the *kaisar* Alexios, his nephew Alexios,⁴⁸ who contributed much, and Koutritzakes,⁴⁹ the most important of the *thelematarioi*,⁵⁰ who in fact first put forward the idea of capturing the city.

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Karpozilos, Apostolos, *Βυζαντινοί ιστορικοί και χρονογράφοι*, vol. 4 (Athens, 2015) 60–98.

Nicol, Donald, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium, 1261–1453* (2nd edition), (Cambridge, 1993).

Ilias Nesseris

1.1.3 Turks advance in Asia Minor, Byzantines take to flight

Author: Nikephoros Gregoras (born c. 1295 in Herakleia/Pontos, died ca. 1361 in Constantinople⁵¹)

Text: *Roman History* (*Historia rhomaike*)

Date of text: Second quarter of the 14th century (between the 1330s and the 1350s)

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: In his historical work consisting of thirty-seven books, Nikephoros Gregoras, a renowned scholar and theologian, covers the period from the conquest of Constantinople by the forces of the Fourth Crusade (1204) to the

48 PLP 625. In the prophecy a few lines above he is mentioned as Alexopoulos, which is meant as a diminutive and not a family name.

49 PLP 92461.

50 The precise meaning of *thelematarioi* is not entirely clear in our sources, but in all probability, they were Byzantine farmers living in the vicinity of the capital who offered their services to the Latins, for instance as volunteer soldiers, but usually changed allegiances at will, see Bartusis, Mark C., *The Late Byzantine Army. Arms and Society, 1204–1453* (Philadelphia, 1992), 41–42, 158–159 and Karayannopoulos, Ioannes, Οι Θεληματάριοι, in: Costas N. Constantinides et al. (eds.), *ΦΙΛΕΛΛΗΝ. Studies in Honour of Robert Browning* (Venice, 1996) 159–173. See also Kyriakidis, Savvas, *Warfare in Late Byzantium, 1204–1453*, *History of Warfare* 67 (Leiden and Boston, 2011) 95–96.

51 PLP 4443.

events of 1358/1359. He draws heavily on the works of earlier historians, i.e. Niketas Choniates, George Akropolites and George Pachymeres.⁵² The events that took place during his own lifetime are described in greater detail. He was greatly interested in the theological matters, esp. in the controversy on the Hesychast movement in Byzantine monasticism in which he was personally involved,⁵³ but he also provided a clear, detailed and rich historical account, drawing from his own experience whenever possible.

Historical significance of the movement: This passage illustrates how Asia Minor was lost to a coalition of nomadic Turkish groups who gradually made their way to the western parts of Byzantine Anatolia. They met with little resistance because the empire was greatly weakened through incessant wars with its neighbours (the Frankish principalities and the Angevin Kingdom of Sicily, the State of Epirus, as well as the Bulgarians and the Serbs) and internal division due to the Union of the Churches signed at the Synod of Lyon in 1274, the revolt of Alexios Philanthropenos⁵⁴ in 1295 and the Arsenite schism. Some local governors, such as Manuel Tagaris, governor of Philadelphia (ca. 1309–1327),⁵⁵ even cooperated with the Turks for personal gain.⁵⁶ After the decisive defeat of the Byzantines by the Ottomans in the battle of Bapheus (near Nikomedeia in Bithynia) on 27 July 1302⁵⁷ and the ensuing devastation, the surviving population was forced to either join the Turks in hopes of a better future or to abandon the countryside and seek refuge in a few fortified cities (e.g. Nicaea or Nikomedeia) or in Constantinople and Thrace.⁵⁸ Soon the northwestern part of Anatolia was depopulated and its

52 See for instance Failler, Albert, *Les sources de Nicéphore Grégoras pour le règne des premiers Palaiologoi*, *Revue des études byzantines* 69 (2011) 219–234.

53 Hart, Teresa, Nicephorus Gregoras: Historian of the Hesychast Controversy, *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 2.2 (1951) 169–179. See also Beyer, Hans-Veit, *Nikephoros Gregoras, Antirrhetika I: Einleitung, Textausgabe, Übersetzung und Anmerkungen*, WBS 12 (Vienna, 1976).

54 PLP 29752. Laiou, Angeliki, Some Observations on Alexios Philanthropenos and Maximos Planoudes, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 4 (1978) 89–99.

55 PLP 27400. For an outline of the family's history see Nicol, Donald M., Philadelphia and the Tagaris Family, *Neo-Hellenika* 1 (1970) 9–17 [repr. in Nicol, Donald M., *Studies in Late Byzantine History and Prosopography*, Variorum Reprints (London, 1986) ch. XII].

56 Kyriakidis, *Warfare*, 28–29.

57 For the events leading up to and a detailed analysis of the battle utilising also Ottoman chronicles see Inalcik, Halil, *Osman Ghāzi's Siege of Nicaea and the Battle of Bapheus*, in: Elizabeth Zachariadou (ed.), *The Ottoman Emirate (1300–1389). Halcyon Days in Crete I: A Symposium Held in Rethymnon, 11–13 January 1991* (Rethymnon, 1993) 77–99.

58 The same events are described vividly by George Pachymeres, *History*, Book 10, 25–26, ed. Albert Failler, *Georges Pachymérès, Relations historiques. Livres X–XIII*, CFHB 24/4 (Paris, 1999) vol. 4, 359–369; Laiou, Angeliki E., *Constantinople and the Latins. The Foreign Policy of Andronicus II, 1282–1328*, *Harvard Historical Studies* 88 (Cambridge, Mass., 1972) 90–91. See also Bartusis, Mark C., *The Late Byzantine Army. Arms and Society, 1204–1453* (Philadelphia, 1992) 76, 78. For the measures taken by the Patriarch Athanasios I to provide relief to the refugees see Agoritsas,

economic life totally disrupted by constant Turkish raids.⁵⁹ Andronikos II tried in vain to stem the tide by enlisting the services of the Catalan Company (see 2.4.0), but it was not long before the remaining cities fell into enemy hands and Turkish states were founded in the area.

Type of movement: involuntary / war / refugees.

Locations and date of movement: Turks advancing to western Asia Minor and Byzantine population fleeing from their cities towards Thrace; ca. 1302.

Edition used: *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina historia*, ed. Ludwig Schopen, CSHB, vol. 1 (Bonn, 1829) 214.1–215.2, Book 7, 1.

Translation: Ilias Nesseris⁶⁰

Nikephoros Gregoras, *Roman History*, Book 7, 1

[p. 214] During that year, a great number of disasters burst forth, just like when myriads of winds suddenly blow all together, carrying away and mixing everything. Since the eastern part of the Roman Empire had remained empty of troops, the satraps [i. e. emirs] of the Turks after forming a coalition ravaged everything up to the sea and settled by that time near the coastline. And most of the inhabitants, men, women and children, and all the flocks and herds as well as the property they owned, fell under the yoke of the enemies; and from those who escaped without being detected, some, on the one hand, sought refuge in the nearest cities, and some, on the other, crossed over to Thrace without equipment and stripped of their belongings. The Turks, after having made an agreement, divided the territory of Asia, which belonged to the Roman [i. e., Byzantine] Empire, by drawing lots. Karmanos Alisourios⁶¹ occupied the greatest part of continental Phrygia, the region up to Philadelphia and the places around Antiochia near the Maeander river.⁶² Another (satrap), by the name of Sarukhan, occupied the territories up to Smyrna and the coastline of Ionia. And another

Demetrios K., *Κωνσταντινούπολη. Η πόλη και η κοινωνία της στα χρόνια των πρώτων Παλαιολόγων (1261–1328)*, Byzantina Keimena kai Meletes 62 (Thessaloniki, 2016) 487–493.

59 It has been observed that there is a discrepancy between the image of the emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos as presented by imperial propaganda – he was praised for defending Asia Minor from the Turks in various contemporary, elaborate orations – and reality, see Kyriakidis, *Warfare*, 25–30. See also the more careful approach of Agoritsas, *Κωνσταντινούπολη*, 498–520.

60 Other translations: German: *Nikephoros Gregoras, Rhomäische Geschichte / Historia Rhomaike*, 1: Kapitel I–VII, transl. by Jan-Louis van Dieten, Bibliothek der griechischen Literatur, 4 (Stuttgart, 1973) 173–174; Modern Greek: *Νικηφόρος Γρηγοράς, Ρωμαϊκή Ιστορία, Α': Περίοδος 1204–1341*, transl. by Demetrios Moschos (Athens, 1997) 221–222.

61 PLP 668.

62 Belke, Klaus and Mersich, Norbert, *Phrygien und Pisidien*, TIB 7, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften 211 (Vienna, 1990) 332–333.

satrap, by the name of Sasan,⁶³ after coming first, took away the territories around Magnesia, Priene and Ephesus. The territories from Lydia and Aeolis up to Mysia towards the Hellespont were occupied by the so-called Qalum⁶⁴ and his son Karasi.⁶⁵ Another (satrap), by the name of Osman,⁶⁶ occupied the territories around Olympos⁶⁷ and the rest of Bithynia. The territories [p. 215] from the river Sangarios⁶⁸ up to Paphlagonia were distributed among the children of Amourios.⁶⁹

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63 PLP 24948.

64 PLP 10249.

65 PLP 11130.

66 This Osman (mid-13th century-1323/1324) is none other than the founder of the Ottoman dynasty, which ruled the Ottoman empire until the early 20th century, see PLP 21013; ODB III, 1539–1540.

67 Belke, *Bithynien und Hellespont*, 860–865.

68 Belke, *Bithynien und Hellespont*, 980–984.

69 PLP 799.

1.2.0 Resettlement

This segment of the sourcebook considers textual presentations of the forced migration and resettlement of large groups of people within the medieval Roman (hereafter Byzantine) state.⁷⁰ The three selected cases both illustrate resettlement as a key strategy by which state power was reproduced and extended and serve as an example of the coercive force wielded by that state's elite over its population.

As for almost all states and elites, the distribution, acquisition, and control of people and their labour power constitutes a foundational concern of the Byzantine state and its ruling classes. Securing and maintaining a surplus producing population in controllable locations where that surplus was both legible and extractible (i. e., proximate to centres of state power) was one of the foundational concerns of the Byzantine state, just as it was and remains for all states.⁷¹ Although forced resettlement has been transformed in accordance with the radical transformation of the capacities of states, resettlement continues to constitute a key state strategy in controlling populations. The Neo-Assyrian empire (ca. 10th century BC) offers the earliest textual attestation of state resettlement in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East, but the modern Turkish state's forced resettlement in Kurdistan (in the 1980s and 1990s) should be understood as another expression of the same state strategy in the same region.⁷²

The resettlement of subject populations within the boundaries of the medieval Roman state's authority constitutes a consistent strategy by which it maintained and expanded its effective control over specific regions of the empire and re-

70 The resettlement of groups from outside imperial territory within the empire will be treated elsewhere in the sourcebook (3.4.0 and 4.4.1).

71 For discussion of population control in the earliest states and the phrase and the vivid designation of those states as 'population machines', see Scott, James, *Against the Grain: A Deep History of the Earliest States* (New Haven, 2017) esp. 150–182. On legibility, see Scott, James, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, 1998) esp. 9–83.

72 Oded, Bustenay, *Mass Deportations and Deportees in the Neo-Assyrian Empire* (Wiesbaden, 1979); Jongerden, Joost, *The Settlement Issue in Turkey and the Kurds* (Leiden, 2007).

distributed the military and labour power at its disposal. The state regularly coerced large groups to resettle for a range of military, demographic, political, and economic reasons, as well as to impose the cultural and religious worldview of the central state.⁷³ Most importantly, the extraction of people from their geographical location and social networks made them more dependent on the central state. It created taxable populations and people available for military service, particularly in areas that were depopulated from conflict and that were on the edge of state control. The cultural and religious practices of the resettled people were also tools for the state of stabilising ideological threats to state ideology. For example, in the cases of religious practices (see 1.6.0) defined by the state as heresy, whether non-Chalcedonian Christians or Muslims (as in case 1.2.2).

The first two case studies discussed in this segment are illustrative of the textual presentation of large-scale state-coerced resettlement, as presented in historiographical narrative. The first (1.2.1) describes the resettlement of people from the *themata* (i. e., Asia Minor) to the *Sklaviniai* (i. e., the ‘Slavicised’ areas of the Balkan peninsula) in the early 9th century. This passage illustrates the various interests of the state that are served by resettlement. However, it is particularly interesting for this sourcebook, since it focuses more than most other descriptions of resettlement in Byzantine historiographical narratives on the experience of resettlement for those being forcibly relocated. This description emerges from the *Kaiserkritik* of the reigning emperor who ordered the movement and the manner in which the resettlement was organised, but does not throw into question the policy of resettlement itself. The second entry (1.2.2) offers a more matter-of-fact presentation of the resettlement of Armenians and Rhomaioi from across the empire in Crete following its conquest in the 10th century. Here the narrative is more typical, displaying the virtuousness of the reigning future emperor who ordered the resettlement. Both cases reflect a common logic of imperial power and wellbeing centred on the person of the emperor as the anthropomorphic embodiment of the state. As such they participate in a state-centred ‘common sense’, which the *Kaiserkritik* of Theophanes⁷⁴ only partly counters. The logic that they deploy does not dispute the power, authority and

73 The classic study here is Charanis, Peter, *The Transfer of Population as a Policy in the Byzantine Empire*, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 3/2 (1961) 140–154 [repr. in Charanis, Peter, *Studies on the Demography of the Byzantine Empire*, Variorum Reprints (London, 1972) ch. III]. More recently, see Stouraitis, Yannis, *Migrating in the Medieval East Roman World, ca. 600–1204*, in: Johannes Preiser-Kapeller et al. (eds.), *Migration Histories of the Medieval Afroeurasian Transition: Aspects of Mobility between Africa, Asia and Europe, 300–1500 C.E.*, *Studies in Global Social History* 39; *Studies in Global Migration History* 13 (Leiden and Boston, 2020) 141–165, at 153–158.

74 PmbZ 8107, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ19364/html>.

violence wielded by the state and the emperor, but merely the specific manner of its manifestation. It is worth noting that although historiography is the most common source material in which such large-scale state-forced migrations are presented, the places where it appears in hagiography portray a similar logic.

At the most basic level it is essential to recognize that the medieval Roman state's coercive capacity and its centralised organisation – both of which are remarkable amongst other states of the medieval period in Europe – are demonstrated simply by its ability to forcibly relocate large groups of people across such vast distances.⁷⁵ Together these examples illustrate the different ways in which the Byzantine state forcibly relocated populations to areas where the state had limited authority and required a dependent, dependable, legible, and exploitable population and a counterbalance to the populations that lived there before.

These two instances are both examples of resettlement related to frontier zones, but resettlement was not unidirectional. Although most textual presentations of resettlement describe the forced migration of people to imperial frontiers, Constantinople itself was also resettled repeatedly. The *Chronographia* of Theophanes, for example, also narrates how Constantine V⁷⁶ resettled Constantinople with people from the Aegean islands and Greece, following its depopulation as a result of plague in 747/748 (see 1.7.1), while the *Syngraphikai historiai* of Pachymeres⁷⁷ describe how Emperor Michael VIII⁷⁸ forced Tzakones from the Morea (Peloponnese) to migrate to Constantinople and the Propontis shortly after 1261 to serve in the imperial navy.⁷⁹

Equally not all the cases of resettlement by the Byzantine state occurred exclusively within the boundaries of the imperial state's enforceable military and political authority. The empire also consistently resettled people from outside the empire into it. For example, the Miaphysite Mardaites who were resettled from the Amanus Mountains (in Syria) to Asia Minor in the 7th century and the Pechenegs settled by Alexios I Komnenos⁸⁰ in Moglena (in Macedonia) in the

75 Haldon, John, *The Army and Military Logistics*, in: Paul Stephenson (ed.), *The Byzantine World* (London, 2010) 79–92.

76 PmbZ 3703/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14852/html>.

77 PLP 22186.

78 PLP 21528.

79 Theophanes, *Chronicle*, A.M. 6247, ed. Carl de Boor, *Theophanis Chronographia*, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1883) 429. In the sentence before the *Chronographia* states that Constantine V also resettled Paulician Syrians and Armenians from Theodosiopolis and Melitene in Thrace, which it identifies as the cause for the spread of Paulicanism to the Balkans. George Pachymeres, *History*, Book 3, 9, ed. Albert Failler and Vitalien Laurent, *Georges Pachymères, Relations historiques*, CFHB 24/1 (Paris, 1984) vol. 1, 253, 5–10.

80 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Alexios/1/>.

11th century.⁸¹ Likewise in the 13th century, the emperor of Nicaea is described as resettling Skythians (i. e., Cumans) from Macedonia to western Asia Minor in the *Chronike syngraphe* of Akropolites.⁸²

The third case (1.2.3) commented on in this segment provides an example of a different scale of resettlement and a different textual medium, since it describes the relocation of a village as mandated by the 12th-century *typikon* (foundation document) of a Thracian monastery. In a section dedicated to describing the immovable properties of the founder, that he was donating to the monastery, it states that one of the villages, several estates, and their inhabitants, should be moved closer to the monastery being refounded and endowed, presumably, in order that the dependant peasants that were being gifted to the monastery could better provide labour to the monastery. Despite the radical shift of scale – from relocations that literally spanned continents to one that consisted of less than a day’s walk – this case suggests strong continuities in the uneven distribution of power throughout Byzantine society, the arbitrariness of power, and the constant threat of violence in everyday life, not to mention the normative logic that the presentation of such power expresses in its textual depiction. It is closely associated with the capture and retention of labour power, as discussed below (see 2.2.3).

Modes of referring to the movement of people in general and migration in particular often conjure up images of something organic – for example, the hydraulic metaphor of population flows is often employed.⁸³ The frequency with which movement occurs (as described above in the Introduction) should not necessarily lead us to naturalise all movement. As the examples in this segment of this sourcebook (and others) demonstrate, it cannot be forgotten that movement is regularly the product of violence. The elitist and state-centric worldview of the textual presentations of resettlement in Byzantium should not obscure the violence inherent in the relocation of human lives.

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81 John Zonaras, *Chronicle*, Book 18, 23, 6–7, ed. Theodor Büttner-Wobst, *Ioannis Zonarae Epitomae historiarum libri XIII–XVIII* (Bonn, 1897) III 740, 19–741, 5.

82 George Akropolites, *History*, ch. 40, ed. August Heisenberg and Peter Wirth, *Georgii Acropolitae opera*, vol 1 (revised edition) (Stuttgart, 1978) 241–243.

83 Tsing, Anna, *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection* (Princeton, 2005).

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Matthew Kinloch

1.2.1 The resettlement of the *Sklaviniai*

Author: Theophanes the Confessor (born in ca. 750/760, Constantinople; died in 818, Samothrace)

Text: *Chronicle (Chronographia)*

Date of text: ca. 814

Genre: Historiographical Narrative/Chronicle

Type of movement: This is an example of forced migration. From the perspective of the state which coerced the movement, it served many purposes: economic-demographic, religious, and military-political. This is a migration within the imperial territories.

Literary context: In the passage below, Theophanes recounts a series of measures that Emperor Nikephoros I (802–811)⁸⁴ implemented in order to satisfy the demographic, economic, and military-political needs of the Byzantine Empire. Within this framework, Emperor Nikephoros ordered that the imperial subjects from Asia Minor, consisting especially of Greek-speaking Chalcedonian Christians, be relocated to the Slavicized territories of Greece which had recently come under imperial authority again. According to Theophanes, the Emperor forced part of the population of Asia Minor to sell its properties and abandon its homeland and homes. All other measures listed below introduced new taxation arrangements and, according to the text, affected the entire population of the empire, including the migrating Christian people. In this light, the population that was relocated to Greece must have found itself in a very difficult position. Byzantine sources rarely describe the conditions of movement, as well as the reactions and emotions of the migrating people so graphically. The resettlement is paralleled with captivity, as the affected population reluctantly abandoned its homes and possessions to move to a new and unfamiliar area. This was a situation that placed everybody, not only poor but also rich, in an uncertain and anxious position.

It should be noted here that Theophanes was in general ill-disposed towards the Emperor Nikephoros I. Thus, it is uncertain whether the author's description

84 PmbZ 5252, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16435/html>.

reflects historical reality or was the result of his bias against the emperor and his governance. In any case, the passage under discussion depicts Nikephoros I as a vicious and greedy emperor.⁸⁵ It is also remarkable that the text does not clarify whether the property of the migrating people was to be sold by them or by the state (προσέταξεν... τὰς δὲ τούτων ὑποστάσεις πιπράσκεισθαι), so it remains unclear whether the property holders were allowed to determine the sale price of their estates and profit from the transactions. The author may imply that this was a further way in which the state, and especially Emperor Nikephoros I, tried to deceive and financially exploit the imperial subjects. The fact that the affected population was not given the time to take care of its possessions properly, but was obligated to abandon them, indicates that all these measures were taken hastily and unexpectedly as a result of poor organization.

Historical significance of the movement: Such state-coerced relocations of populations within the borders of the Byzantine Empire indicate the “highly centralized function of the Byzantine state”, as well as “its monopoly of control over superior military power.”⁸⁶ The relocation of Greek-speaking Chalcedonian Christians from western Anatolia to Greece can be interpreted as a strategy to re-Christianize (or re-Romanize) the newly reconquered areas. From the perspective of the state, this could also potentially solve many economic and demographic problems. Given the fact that the division of the empire in the so-called *themata*, namely the administrative units with both military and civil authority, started in this period,⁸⁷ it is possible that the people selected for the relocation had a military background and were expected to contribute to the re-establishment of the imperial state’s authority in the Balkans.⁸⁸

Locations and date of movement: from Asia Minor to the *Sklaviniai* at the Byzantine border regions in the Balkans, including the Peloponnese and Thrace (second transfer); 806/807 (first transfer), September 809-Easter 810 (second transfer).

Edition used: *Theophanis Chronographia*, ed. Carl de Boor, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1883) 486–487.

85 These conventions of the Byzantine *Chronicle* have seen it characterized as ‘Trivialliteratur,’ cf. Herbert Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, vol. 1: *Philosophie, Rhetorik, Epistolographie, Geschichtsschreibung, Geographie*, HdA 12; Byzantinisches Handbuch 5.1 (Munich, 1978) 257–258.

86 Stouraitis, *Migrating in the Medieval East Roman World*, 153.

87 Haldon, John F., A Context for Two “Evil Deeds”: Nikephoros I and the Origins of the Themata, in: Olivier Delouis et al. (eds.), *Le saint, le moine et le paysan. Mélanges d'histoire byzantine offerts à Michel Kaplan*, Byzantina Sorbonensia 29 (Paris, 2016) 245–266.

88 Stouraitis, *Migrating in the Medieval East Roman World*, 154–155.

Translation used: *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern history A.D. 284–813*, transl. by Cyril Mango and Roger Scott (Oxford, 1997) 667–668 (heavily modified by Christodoulos Papavarnavas).

Theophanes the Confessor, *Chronicle*, A.M. 6302

[p. 486]: 8th year [Nikephoros]; 2nd year [Mohamed]; 14th year [Leo]; 5th [Nikephoros]

In this year, after [having inflicted] ungodly punishments with the intention of impoverishing the troops (*strateumata*) in every way, Nikephoros displaced Christian people from all the *themata*⁸⁹ and commanded that they be transferred to the *Sklaviniai*,⁹⁰ and also that their property be sold. This action was no less grievous than captivity: many [of them] out of insanity engaged in blasphemies against God and implored to be attacked by the enemy, while others lamented at the tombs of their ancestors and extolled the bliss of the dead; there were also those who killed themselves by hanging in order to be spared from these tribulations. At the same time, since their possessions were too heavy to move (*dyskineta*), they were unable to carry them along and witnessed the loss of property acquired by the hard work of their parents. And everyone was in complete perplexity: the needy due to the aforementioned circumstances and those that will be told in the following, and the wealthier because they felt sympathy for them [i.e. the needy] and as they were not able to help, they anxiously expected even graver calamities. These [measures] began in the month of September and were completed by holy Easter.⁹¹ In addition, a second mistreatment (*kakosis*) [took place]: he [i.e. the emperor] commanded that poor people be taken into the army (*strateuesthai*)⁹² and be equipped by the local residents (*homochoroi*), while also providing the state treasury (*demosion*) with 18 ½ *nomismata*⁹³ each plus the taxes (*demosia*) in joint liability (*allelengyos*).⁹⁴ The third malignity (*kakonoia*): he ordered that everyone be assessed (*epopteuesthai*), and everyone's taxes be

89 Roman population from Asia Minor.

90 The term *Sklavinia(i)* refers to the territories that were dominated by Slavs and recently reconquered by the Byzantines.

91 September 1st signalled the begin of the Byzantine year; the Easter Sunday of the year 810 AD was March 31st in the Julian calendar, see also Treadgold, Warren, *The Byzantine Revival 780–842* (Stanford, 1988) 160.

92 On the meaning of this term, see Brubaker, Leslie and John Haldon, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era c. 680–850. A History* (Cambridge, 2011) 748.

93 The standard gold coin of the time, defined as 1/72 of the Roman pound (= 4.55 g).

94 LBG I, 57 (s.v.). During the reign of Nikephoros I, *allelengyon* defined the collective obligation of a community to pay the taxes of its poor and in military service members.

raised, with an additional payment of 2 *keratia*⁹⁵ per person for the [administrative] paperwork (*chartiatika*).⁹⁶

[In the following, the text refers to seven more taxation measures.]

[p. 487] I presented just a small selection from many other [things] in a very short and comprehensive fashion to reveal the inventiveness (*polymechanon*) of this man [Emperor Nikephoros] regarding different forms of greediness. It would be impossible to describe the misfortunes he inflicted in the Imperial City [i.e. Constantinople] on dignitaries, on the middling folk, and the poor.

Comments: This passage has been discussed widely in scholarship on the reign of Nikephoros I and the administrative history of the 9th century.⁹⁷ Most recently, John Haldon has summed up the earlier discussion and provided a new interpretation with regard to the actual emergence of the so-called ‘thematic system’. The emperor’s resettlement order affected members of the troops (*strateumata*) from what Theophanes calls the *themata*, i.e. the military administrative districts in Asia Minor (at that time, Opsikion, Anatolikon, Armeniakon, Thrakesion and Boukellarion). As Haldon (and others) have pointed out, Theophanes is not only the first author to use the term *thema* for these administrative units (also applying it to earlier periods), but the description of Nikephoros’ measures and further evidence (such as seals) indicate that the concept of *thema* as such only emerged during the reign of this emperor (replacing the earlier term *strategis/strategia*).⁹⁸

The affected soldiers held landed property at their original deployment areas in Asia Minor. As Haldon also points out, this did not take the form of the military estates (*stratitika ktemata*) provided by the state and documented for the 9th century, but as privately acquired or inherited possessions (as also the description by Theophanes suggests). According to Theophanes, the sale of these assets by those selected for resettlement implied significant material losses (which may also have derived from the necessity to sell under time pressure within the period mandated for the departure to the new homelands). The more emotional effects and resulting despair (peaking in acts of suicide) described by the chronicler, however, may primarily serve as tools to defame the accused

95 One *keration* is 1/24 of a *nomisma*, see ODB II, 1123–1124 (s.v.).

96 LBG I, 1984 (s.v. *chartiatikon*).

97 Niavis, Pavlos, *The Reign of the Byzantine Emperor Nicephorus I (AD 802–811)* (Athens, 1987) 68–74; Rochow, Ilse, *Byzanz im 8. Jahrhundert in der Sicht des Theophanes: Quellenkritisch-historischer Kommentar zu den Jahren 715–813*, BBA 57 (Berlin, 1991) at 290–292, and Dölger, Franz and Andreas E. Müller, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des Oströmischen Reiches von 565–1453. 1. Teil, 1. Halbband: Regesten 565–867* (second revised edition) (Munich, 2009) nos. 372–373, for an overview of earlier literature.

98 Brubaker and Haldon, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era, 744–753* (with a definition of the new meaning of *thema* on 752); Haldon, A Context for Two “Evil Deeds”.

emperor.⁹⁹ Yet, Theophanes as founder and abbot of the monastery of Megas Agros on the southern shore of the Sea of Marmara in the area of Opsikion may have had the opportunity to observe the actual impacts of the imperial order in his neighbourhood.¹⁰⁰

The relationship between the emperor and the troops of Asia Minor was ambivalent from the start. Shortly after Nikephoros I's overthrow of Empress Irene¹⁰¹ (in October 802), he had to face a rebellion of the armies of Asia Minor, who in 803 proclaimed the general Bardanes Tourkos¹⁰² as emperor. This uprising, however, collapsed after a few weeks.¹⁰³ In the following years, Arab troops under the command of Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd¹⁰⁴ invaded Asia Minor several times. According to Theophanes, Nikephoros I's military reactions were ineffective. Nevertheless, the emperor in 806 was able to agree a more permanent peace with the caliph; in two exchanges of prisoners in 805 and 808, reportedly 3,700 respectively 2,500 captives returned to the Arab side and equivalent numbers to Byzantium.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, Nikephoros seems to have favoured and called to Constantinople selected groups from his region of origin in inner Anatolia, whom Theophanes in their entirety debases as heretics (Paulicians and *Athinganoi*).¹⁰⁶ These other categories of groups mobilised from Asia Minor also may have played a role in the resettlement policy of the emperor on the Balkans. We do not have any indications for the scale of the resettlement; Warren Treadgold estimated the numbers of affected soldiers and their families between 70,000 and "perhaps (...) a quarter million".¹⁰⁷ While this is guesswork, the order of magnitude of several tens of thousands may be realistic. In any case, a resettlement of such a scale must have been prepared, supervised and executed by the state administration, especially the logistics of maritime transport from Asia Minor to Europe. Equally, the timing of the resettlement followed administrative routines (see above); it overlapped, however, with the autumn and winter sea-

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- 99 Varona, Patricia and Óscar Prieto, Three Clergymen against Nikephoros I: Remarks on Theophanes' Chronicle (AM 6295–6303), *Byzantion* 84 (2014) 485–509, at 503–505.
 100 Haldon, A Context for Two "Evil Deeds", 258; Neville, Leonora, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing* (Cambridge, 2018) 63; PmbZ 8107, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ19364/html>.
 101 PmbZ 1439, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ12537/html>.
 102 PmbZ 766, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ11854/html>.
 103 Theophanes, *Chronicle*, A.M. 6295, ed. de Boor, 479, 15–480, 3.
 104 PmbZ 2541, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ13656/html>.
 105 Dölger, *Regesten*, no. 363a, no. 368b and 368 d, with the respective Arab sources.
 106 Theophanes, *Chronicle*, A.M. 6303, ed. de Boor, 488, 19–31; Brubaker and Haldon, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era*, 359 and 364; Varona and Prieto, Three Clergymen against Nikephoros I, 504.
 107 Treadgold, *The Byzantine Revival*, 164.

sons, which could make travelling more difficult, especially when long sea passages were necessary, although Theophanes interestingly does not report any hardships of this kind. At the same time, a start of the relocation in autumn would have allowed the affected landowners to collect their harvest in order to provide for some provisions and/or to sell it.

The term *Sklaviniai* designated territories in the Balkans settled by Slavs which the emperors tried either to integrate, as semi-independent entities under their own *archontes* ('chiefs'), into their sphere of influence or to annex completely as imperial provinces.¹⁰⁸ Nikephoros I celebrated a first success along these lines in 805/806 with a privilege charter for the Archbishopric of Patrai on the Peloponnese, whose patron saint Andreas was credited with the successful defence against a Slavic attack on the city, followed by the subjugation of the local *Sklaviniai* under Byzantine rule. According to the so-called Chronicle of Monembasia, this re-establishment of Byzantine control over the Peloponnese was accompanied by a settlement of population from other parts of the empire, including descendants of the refugees that had fled from the Peloponnese to Southern Italy in the late 6th century as well as people from the areas of Thrakesion and Armeniakon in Asia Minor.¹⁰⁹ The Peloponnese can thus be identified as one destination point for the resettlements of 809/810.¹¹⁰ More significant target areas, however, may have been the *Sklaviniai* at the borders in Thrace nearer to the capital of Constantinople, where Byzantine authority in the reign of Nikephoros I was challenged by the Bulgars under their Khan Krum (ca. 802–

108 Curta, Florin, *The Edinburgh History of the Greeks, c. 500 to 1050. The Early Middle Ages* (Edinburgh, 2011) 118–119.

109 Kislinger, Ewald, *Regionalgeschichte als Quellenproblem. Die Chronik von Monembasia und das sizilianische Demenna. Eine historisch-topographische Studie*, Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für die TIB 8 (Vienna, 2001) 38–51, 203 (with the Greek text); Ditten, Hans, *Ethnische Verschiebungen zwischen der Balkanhalbinsel und Kleinasien vom Ende des 6. bis zur zweiten Hälfte des 9. Jahrhunderts*, BBA 59 (Berlin, 1993) 242–249, 339–340; Dölger, Regesten, no. 365; Haldon, A Context for Two "Evil Deeds", 250; Curta, *The Edinburgh History of the Greeks*, 135–138. The source also mentions *Kapheroi* (maybe deriving from Arab *kāfir*, meaning 'infidel', 'apostate') among the new settlers, who may have been converts from Islam from the eastern frontier regions, cf. Ditten, *Ethnische Verschiebungen*, 341–343, and Curta, *The Edinburgh History of the Greeks*, 136–137 (with further literature); this may also have been connected with the above-mentioned exchanges of prisoners with the Arabs. Both the relocation of population from (Western) Asia Minor and from Southern Italy to the Peloponnese required longer maritime voyages and the respective logistical preparations.

110 Since Theophanes does not specify the location of the *Sklaviniai*, scholars have debated the target regions of Nikephoros' resettlement in 809/810. The first interpretation suggests a population transfer from Asia Minor (Kibyrrhaioton and Armeniakon) to Peloponnese and is based on the accounts of the Chronicle of Monembasia and a scholion by Arethas of Caesarea. The second possibility assumes a transfer of population to Macedonia and Thrace (Strymon Valley) and takes into consideration Theophanes' information about a Bulgarian assault in 813. For further details, see Ditten, *Ethnische Verschiebungen*, 333–360.

814).¹¹¹ According to Theophanes, the emperor's first military encounters with the Bulgars were not promising. He may, therefore, have considered it wise to strengthen the defence perimeter militarily and demographically, as is suggested by various pieces of evidence for Western Greece via Thessaloniki to Thrace (all possible destination areas for the action of 809/810).¹¹² In order to raise the number of troops, Nikephoros I resorted to further "mistreatments" (*kakoseis*), as Theophanes calls them, such as the recruitment and armament of "poor" men at the joint liability of their village community (in the newly-settled areas on the Balkans – which equally suggests that the settling was supervised and organised by the state¹¹³ – and/or in the "old" *themata* in Asia Minor) and a series of tax assessments in order to finance the new armies. As John Haldon explains, however, many of these "evil inventions" (*kakonoiai*) can be interpreted within the context of long-established legal and administrative practices. In their entirety, though, they mark a significant step in the development of the inner organisation of the Byzantine Empire towards the so-called thematic system of regional administration. Despite Theophanes' defamation and Nikephoros I's unexpected death in battle against the Bulgars in July 811, only one and half years after the end of the resettlements, their effects were therefore long lasting.¹¹⁴ At the same time, the passage in Theophanes' chronicle provides us with a highly tendentious but rare description of the emotional reactions of the people who were subjected to imperial settlement policies in this period.

Further reading

- Ditten, Hans, *Ethnische Verschiebungen zwischen der Balkanhalbinsel und Kleinasien vom Ende des 6. bis zur zweiten Hälfte des 9. Jahrhunderts*, BBA 59 (Berlin, 1993).
 Neville, Leonora, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing* (Cambridge, 2018) 61–71.
 Treadgold, Warren T., *The Middle Byzantine Historians* (New York, 2013) 38–77.
 Karpozilos, Apostolos, *Βυζαντινοί ιστορικοί και χρονογράφοι*, vol. 2: 8^{ος}-10^{ος} αι. (Athens, 2015) 117–188 (with further references).

Matthew Kinloch, Christodoulos Papavarnavas, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller

111 PmbZ 4164, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ15319/html>.

112 Ditten, *Ethnische Verschiebungen*, 333–353; Brubaker and Haldon, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era*, 358–359 (with the relevant sources and further literature).

113 Haldon, A Context for Two "Evil Deeds", 256.

114 Haldon, A Context for Two "Evil Deeds".

1.2.2 Populating Crete with Armenians, Rhomaioi, and others

Author: Leo the Deacon¹¹⁵

Text: *History (Historia)*

Date of text: Late 10th century, after 989 or 959¹¹⁶

Genre: Historiography

Type of movement: forced/coerced migration for military, economic-demographic, religious, and macro-political reasons.

Literary context: The *History* of Leo the Deacon is primarily structured around two principal characters, the emperors Nikephoros II Phokas¹¹⁷ and John Tzimiskes.¹¹⁸ In the laudatory presentation of Nikephoros, his military prowess and masculinity – two qualities that are explicitly linked – are central. He is presented as defending the empire valiantly from the external threat posed by the Arabs and the internal threat of effeminate eunuchs plotting against him in the Constantinopolitan court.¹¹⁹ The passage below, which occurs in book two of the *History*, recounts the final stages of the Cretan campaign, led by Nikephoros. The campaign occurred before he became emperor and demonstrated his suitability for the office. In it *he* is presented as personally conquering Crete from the Arabs. The success of Nikephoros and his manly valour is contrasted both with the failure of the earlier expedition led by the eunuch Constantine Gongyles,¹²⁰ with which the *History* begins, and the cowardly plotting of the eunuch Joseph,¹²¹ who sought to remove Nikephoros after the death of the emperor Romanos.¹²² The passage below fits into this wider narrative context as one of many manifestations of Nikephoros' military competence and sound decision making. The resettlement that follows his successful military conquest is intended to solidify

115 PmbZ 24547, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ15319/html>.

116 For the date of composition, a general introduction, and further bibliography, see Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, esp. 124, n. 1.

117 PmbZ 25535, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ27689/html>.

118 PmbZ 22778, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ24932/html>. For this argument, see Markopoulos, Athanasios, *From Narrative Historiography to Historical Biography: New Trends in Byzantine Historical Writing in the 10th–11th Centuries*, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 102 (2009) 697–715, at 705.

119 Markopoulos, *From Narrative Historiography to Historical Biography*, 706.

120 PmbZ 23823, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25977/html>.

121 PmbZ 23529, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25683/html>.

122 Markopoulos, Athanasios, *Gender Issues in Leo the Deacon*, in: Markopoulos, Athanasios, *History and Literature of Byzantium in the 9th–10th Centuries*, Variorum Reprints (Aldershot, 2004) ch. XXIII, 1–16.

imperial control. In this context, it is simply further evidence of Nikephoros' positive male-gendered characteristics.

In comparison to the first entry in this segment (1.2.1), this passage presents the resettlement of Crete in an apparently straightforward manner. As such, it offers a far more typical presentation of resettlement by the Byzantine state in historiographical narratives, both in length and emphasis, than the emotionally charged and highly critical presentation of the resettlement of people from the *themata* to the *Sklaviniai*. This short passage, in which the right of the Byzantine state – personified in the person of the emperor – to resettle its subjects is taken for granted, is illustrative of a common sense amongst the Byzantine literati, on whose textual presentations modern constructions of imperial resettlement policy depend.

Historical significance of the movement: The *History* of Leo the Deacon is one of several historiographical narratives that describe the conquest of Crete in 961. The degree to which any of them provide reliable evidence for the happenings they describe remains an open question in empiricist historiography.¹²³

Nevertheless, the text presents Crete as being resettled by bands of Rhomaioi, Armenians, and rabble (Ἀρμενίων τε καὶ Ῥωμαίων καὶ συγκελεύδων ἀνδρῶν φατρίας ἐνοικισάμενος). It is not clear if these people were members of the army that had just conquered Crete or if they were brought in afterwards, although the 16th-century chronicle/commentary of Antonio Calergi, which recalls that Chandax [i.e., Candia] was settled at this time by “Armenians and many noble Constantinopolitan families” seems to imply the latter.¹²⁴

Regardless of whether these people were resettled in Crete from the army which had moved there, were brought later, or some combination of the two, this description illustrates several key elements of Byzantine imperial resettlement. The resettlement of Armenians in Crete fits a wider pattern of the resettlement of Armenians across the empire, following the empire's expansion and increasingly active control of eastern Anatolia and Caucasia from the late 9th century, in the

123 For a discussion of the merits of the heroic poem by Theodosios the Deacon, *On the Capture of Crete*, ed. Denis Sullivan, *The Capture of Crete by Theodosios the Deacon*, in: Denis Sullivan (ed.), *The Rise and Fall of Nikephoros II Phokas* (Leiden, 2018) and the continuation of the *Chronicle* of Symeon Logothete, as source material for reconstructing the events of the 10th century, see Kaldellis, Anthony, *The Byzantine Conquest of Crete (961 AD)*, *Prokopios' Vandal War, and the Continuator of the Chronicle of Symeon*, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 39/2 (2015) 302–311; Sullivan, Denis, *The Capture of Crete by Theodosios the Deacon*, in: Denis Sullivan (ed.), *The Rise and Fall of Nikephoros II Phokas* (Leiden, 2018) 124–191. On Arabic narratives see Takirtakoglou, Konstantinos A., *Οι πόλεμοι μεταξύ του Νικηφόρου Φωκά και των Αράβων*, *Byzantina Symmeikta* 25 (2015) 57–114.

124 Antonio Calergi, *Commentarii delle cose fatte dentro e fuori il Regno e Isola di Candia*, in: ms: Venezia, Bibl. Marciana, Ital., cl. VI, n. 155 (5801) p. 574–575; Georgopoulou, Maria, *The Meaning of the Architecture and the Urban Layout of Venetian Candia*, Unpublished PhD thesis (UCLA, 1992) 489–490, n. 39.

face of varying levels of coercion. This became especially pronounced in the mid-10th century, which saw Armenians and Syrian Jacobites populate lands recently conquered from the Arabs, such as the depopulated Melitene (ca. 934), Tarsos (ca. 965), and Antioch (ca. 969), while, later, Basil II¹²⁵ also resettled Armenians in Macedonia (ca. 988).¹²⁶ Armenians were typically settled as *stratiotai* and given land in return for military service (see 3.4.1 and 3.4.2).¹²⁷ The translators of the text have assumed that the Homeric term *φάτρη* (band) implies that these were also ethnic groups.¹²⁸

As with the previous case (1.2.1), the Romanization and Christianisation of the island's Muslim population appears to have been a principal concern. The sig-nifier Rhomaioi seems to imply that the group being referred to are Chalcedonian Christians. The active attempts of the imperial government to Christianize Crete in this period is confirmed by the *Life of Saint Nikon*, which describes monks being sent to Crete for this purpose.¹²⁹

Locations and date of movement: from various unspecified territories of the Byzantine empire to Crete, including the newly founded settlement of Temnos; 961.

Edition used: *Leonis diaconi Caloënsis historiae libri decem*, ed. Karl-Benedikt Hase, CSHB (Bonn, 1828) 27, 19–28, 12, Book 2, 8.

Translation used: Talbot, Alice-Mary and Dennis F. Sullivan, *The History of Leo the Deacon: Byzantine Military Expansion in the Tenth Century. Introduction, Translation, and Annotations* (Washington, D.C., 2005) 79–81, 2, 8.

Leo the Deacon, *History*, Book 2, 8

[p. 27] But in this way the town [Chandax (i.e., modern Heraklion)] was taken and captured through the hands of the Rhomaioi. When everything inside had been brought out, Nikephoros commanded that the circuit wall be pulled down; and when it had been destroyed in many places, he led his forces out again into the countryside. After he had taken captives and plundered this area, and had

125 PmbZ 20838, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22991/html>.

126 Charanis, *Transfer of Population as Policy*, 146–147.

127 McGeer, Eric, *The Legal Decree of Nikephoros II Phokas Concerning Armenian Stratiotai*, in: Timothy S. Miller and John W. Nesbitt (eds.), *Peace and War in Byzantium: Essays in Honor of George T. Dennis, S.J.* (Washington, D.C., 1995) 123–137, esp. 124–125.

128 Talbot, Alice-Mary and Dennis F. Sullivan, *The History of Leo the Deacon: Byzantine Military Expansion in the Tenth Century. Introduction, Translation, and Annotations* (Washington, D.C., 2005) 80, n. 49.

129 *Life of Saint Nikon*, ch. 20 and 21, ed. Dennis F. Sullivan, *The Life of Saint Nikon. Text, Translation and Commentary*, The Archbishop Iakovos Library of Ecclesiastical and Historical Sources 14 (Brookline, Mass., 1987) 82–88.

subdued every foe without bloodshed, he went to a high and steep hill, [p. 28] which was not very far away from the destroyed town, and ordered all his men to build a wall. For the place appeared to be safe, and strong as regards defence, since it was cut off by cliffs and steep ravines on both sides, and gave forth permanent springs from the summit, and was irrigated with their waters.

After the bulwarks had been made most secure and strong, he settled a considerable army there, and named the town Temenos. Then he pacified the entire island, settling it with bands of Armenians, Rhomaioi, and rabble (συγκλύδων ἀνδρῶν); and he left behind fire-bearing *triremes* for its defence, while he himself took the booty and the captives and sailed back to Byzantium.

Comments: Resettlement and fortification are regularly depicted as occurring together. The *Chronike diegesis* of Niketas Choniates,¹³⁰ for example, narrates a relevant example of impelled (as opposed to forced) migration related to fortification. In response to the Seljuk threat in the 12th century, Manuel I Komnenos (r. 1143–1180)¹³¹ fortified numerous settlements in western Asia Minor, in what became the theme of Neokastra (lit. new castles). The security given by the new fortifications, Choniates states, encouraged people to move from the surrounding land to those settlements. Thus, migration was impelled by the selective organisation of fortification.¹³²

Further reading

Charanis, Peter, The Transfer of Population as a Policy in the Byzantine Empire, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 3/2 (1961) 140–154 [repr. in Charanis, Peter, *Studies on the Demography of the Byzantine Empire*, Variorum Reprints (London, 1972) ch. III].

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Stouraitis, Yannis, Migrating in the Medieval East Roman World, ca. 600–1204, in: Johannes Preiser-Kapeller et al. (eds.), *Migration Histories of the Medieval Afroeurasian Transition: Aspects of Mobility between Africa, Asia and Europe, 300–1500 C.E.*, Studies in Global Social History 39; Studies in Global Migration History 13 (Leiden and Boston, 2020) 141–165.

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130 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Niketas/25001/>.

131 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Manuel/1/>.

132 Niketas Choniates, *History*, ed. Jan-Louis van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae historia*, CFHB 11 (Berlin and New York, 1975) 150, 35–56.

1.2.3 Relocation of villages and peasants

Author: Isaac Komnenos (born 1093; died shortly after 1152)¹³³

Text: *Typikon* of the Sebastokrator Isaac Komnenos for the Monastery of the Mother of God Kosmosoteira near Bera

Date of text: 1152

Type of movement: impelled migration of the inhabitants of three villages / relocation.

Literary context: This entry is taken from a lengthy monastic *typikon* (foundation charter), composed by Isaac Komnenos in 1152 when he refounded the monastery of the Mother of God Kosmosoteira, near Bera (modern Pherrai, Thrace).¹³⁴ Nancy Ševčenko, the text's preeminent scholar, has argued that this *typikon* should broadly be read as part of the reformist 12th-century tradition often connected with the Monastery of the Theotokos Evergetis in Constantinople, albeit with both fewer egalitarian features and more emphasis on the traditional norms of private patronage.¹³⁵ The passage cited below comes from a fourth section of the *typikon*, which contains the majority of the idiosyncratic/original material in the text (i.e., material not closely related to the *typikon* of the Evergetis).¹³⁶ This section includes a long list of donations given by Isaac to the monastery, including fifteen *proasteia* (estates) and thirteen villages. The *typikon* stipulates that Lykochorion, Tou Drachou, and Tou Triphylliou – three of the *proasteia* – should be physically moved closer to the monastery. This passage thus prescribes the physical resettlement of

133 Isaac, a *sebastokrator* and member of the ruling Komnenos family, was respectively son, brother, and father of the emperors Alexios I Komnenos (1081–1118), John II Komnenos (1118–1143), and Andronikos I Komnenos (1183–1185), see PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Isaakios/102/> and ODB III, 1146.

134 For the location of Bera, see Soustal, Peter, *Thrakien (Thrakē, Rodopē und Haimimontos)*, TIB 6, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften 221 (Vienna, 1991) 200–201.

135 Ševčenko, Nancy Pettersen, Kosmosoteira: *Typikon of the Sebastokrator Isaac Komnenos for the Monastery of the Mother of God Kosmosoteira near Bera*, in: John Thomas et al. (eds.), *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents: A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments*, DOS 35 (Washington, D.C., 2000) no. 29, 782–858, at 784. For divergent views of the Evergetian tradition more generally, see Thomas, John, Documentary Evidence from the Byzantine Monastic *Typika* for the History of the Evergetine Reform Movement, in: Margaret Mullett and Anthony Kirby (eds.), *The Theotokos Evergetis and Eleventh-century Monasticism. Papers from the Third Belfast Byzantine International Colloquium, 1–4 May 1992*, BBT 6/1 (Belfast, 1994) 246–273; Krausmüller, Dirk, The Abbots of Evergetis as Opponents of “Monastic Reform”: A Re-appraisal of the Monastic Discourse in 11th and 12th-Century Constantinople, *Revue des études byzantines* 69 (2011) 111–134.

136 For her division of the text into four sections, see Ševčenko, Kosmosoteira, 784–785. Ševčenko hypothesises that the fact that the majority of the original material remains in one section and was not better integrated into the *typikon* is the result of lack of time owing to the author's illness at the time of composition.

the *paroikoi* living there and their homes. The proposed resettlement is not central to the *typikon*, constituting a small aside in the lengthy list of Isaac's donations, which contain numerous similar qualifications and stipulations.

Historical significance of the movement: The passage cited below demonstrates the potential power held by landowners – such as Isaac or the monastery of Kosmosoteira – over their dependent peasants.¹³⁷ The relocation of villages and *paroikoi* close to the monastery was understood by Michel Kaplan, in his detailed analysis of the monastery's economy, as part of an attempt to increase productivity.¹³⁸ The scope of this desire can also be seen later in the *typikon*, where Isaac forbade villages to be removed from near the monastery and encouraged the monks to relocate more villages near it.

“Let no superior, for the Lord's sake, ever at any time consider moving the villages situated near the monastery, or allow them to be established at some other place. For it is advantageous to the monks and to the monastery that still other [villages] be added, if possible, in this proximity [to it].”¹³⁹

Although the relocation of the village benefitted the monastic landlord, it meant that its new *paroikoi* were forced to travel a greater distance to the fields that they cultivated. Consequently, the stipulation of the *typikon* includes a proviso that if any difficulties or trouble should arise from the proposed movement, because of the distance it created between the fields that the *paroikoi* had to work and their relocated dwellings, particularly related to the summer harvest, then the resettlement should be abandoned. This provision thus not only implies the possibility of resistance from the *paroikoi*, but demonstrates the potential strength and disruption of such resistance.¹⁴⁰

The question of proximity between donated villages, estates, and *paroikoi* and the monastic landowners is solved differently in a *chrysobull* of Alexios I Komnenos¹⁴¹ to the monastery of Lavra (1104), in which various distant possessions of the Lavra were exchanged for more proximate ones.¹⁴²

137 For a summary of *paroikoi*, see Kaplan, Michel, *The Producing Population*, in: John F. Haldon (ed.), *A Social History of Byzantium* (London, 2009) 143–168, at 153–157.

138 Kaplan, Michel, *L'économie du monastère de la Kosmosôteira fondé par Isaac Comnène d'après le typicon* (1152), in: *Mélanges Cécile Morrisson*, TM 16 (Paris, 2010) 455–485, at 480.

139 Papazoglou, Georgios, *Τυπικὸν Ἰσαακίου Ἀλεξίου Κομνηνοῦ τῆς Μονῆς Θεοτόκου τῆς Κοσμοσωτείρας*, Thrakike Bibliothek 3 (Komotini, 1994) 138, 1892–1894, ch. 103; Ševčenko, Kosmosoteira, 843, ch. 103.

140 On peasant counterpower and resistance, see the discussion of case 2.2.3 below.

141 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Alexios/1/>.

142 *Actes de Lavra*, no. 56, ed. Paul Lemerle et al., *Actes de Lavra, 1: Des origines à 1204. Édition diplomatique: Texte*, Archives de l'Athos 5 (Paris, 1970) 287–296. See also Laiou-Thomadakis, Angeliki, *Peasant Society in the Late Byzantine Empire: A Social and Demographic Study* (2nd edition) (Princeton, 2019) 152–153.

In his discussion of peasant dwellings, Alexander Kazhdan has used this passage as evidence for the ease with which peasants' houses could be built.¹⁴³

Locations and date of movement: relocation of the *proasteia* Lykochorion, Tou Drachou, Tou Triphylliou to locations near the monastery; ca. 1152.

Edition used: Papazoglou, Georgios, *Τυπικὸν Ἰσαακίου Ἀλεξίου Κομνηνοῦ τῆς Μονῆς Θεοτόκου τῆς Κοσμοσωτείρας*, Thrakike Bibliothek 3 (Komotini, 1994) 93, 1248–1295, 1260, ch. 69.¹⁴⁴

Translation used: Ševčenko, Nancy Petterson, Kosmosoteira: Typikon of the Sebastokrator Isaac Komnenos for the Monastery of the Mother of God Kosmosoteira near Bera, in: John Thomas et al. (eds.), *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents: A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments*, DOS 35 (Washington, D.C., 2000) no. 29, ch. 69, 828–829 (lightly adapted by Matthew Kinloch).

Isaac Komnenos, Typikon for the Monastery of Kosmosoteira, ch. 69

[p. 93] Those of my immovable properties that came to me from family inheritance through imperial decrees and commands, and those that I have assigned to the monastery for its use and ownership from now on, so that it may have them entirely inalienable till the end of time, with all their territory safeguard and tenure, and with all rights and privileges over them, just as I declared above, are as follows: Neokastron¹⁴⁵ with its *paroikoi* [dependent peasants] settled both inside and outside, and its houses, mine and those of others; also the rights over the fairs taking [p. 94] place there annually, and over the catch from the rivers Samia and Maritza for a good supply of fish. Also the *proasteia* [estates] Tou Kanikleiou, Lykochorion and Tou Drachou, and the cap Banianous, (and also) the following estates: the village [p. 95] Sykea, and the *proasteion* before it that is called Tou Triphylliou are to be counted, by imperial ordinance, as belonging to Neokastron after the death – and from then on – of Aspeiotēs, who at present holds it for his own use. I wish also for it to be relocated (μετατεθῆναι) close to the monastery, where I also put (ἡδράσαμεν) Lykochorion and Tou Drachou – unless some difficulty (δυσχέρεια) arises, due to the length of the road between, for the *paroikoi* living in the village (τὸ χωρίον), in harvesting in summertime of the fruits of the farms, and the transportation of them to their relocated houses (μετατεθησομένης οἰκίας).

143 Kazhdan, Alexander, The Peasantry, in: Guglielmo Cavallo (ed.), *The Byzantines* (Chicago, 1997) 43–73, at 58.

144 See also the older edition of Petit, Louis, Typikon du monastère de la Kosmosotira près d'Aenos (1152), *Izvestija Russkogo archeologičeskogo instituta v Konstantinopole* 13 (1908) 17–75.

145 Soustal, *Thrakien*, 373.

Comments: This passage is included as an example of the impelled resettlement of *paroikoi*. However, the proviso concerning the potential cancellation of the resettlement also offers a snapshot of movement within the daily rhythms of agricultural labour, in its presentation of *paroikoi* moving between the land they cultivated, their homes, and the monastery, and the seasonal changes in the intensity of such movement.

Further reading

Asdracha, Catherine, *La region des Rhodopes aux XIII^e et XIV^e siècles: étude de géographie historique*, Texte und Forschungen zur Byzantinisch-neugriechischen Philologie 49 (Athens, 1976).

Bartusis, Mark C., *Land and Privilege in Byzantium: The Institution of Pronoia* (Cambridge, 2012).

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1.3.0 Prisoners of war

Armed conflicts can have a complex impact on the parties involved, especially on the losers. Apart from causing death, they often lead to the displacement of thousands, sometimes of millions of people, which can be categorised as involuntary and forced migration. The natural instinct to save one's life and escape further calamities can cause individuals or groups to flee from their homes. Acts of mass violence and even murder as they were perpetrated in the 20th century did happen, but not on the same scale, also since they were hard to 'organise' in the same way in premodern times. Yet, the winners in military conflicts still had various ways of dealing with foreign populations once the battles were over. One of them was resettlement. It involved people whose presence in a region of particular interest to the winner was undesirable (see [1.2.0](#) and [4.4.1](#)). When the victors were in need of captured humans, they could spare their lives and take them away.

We can distinguish between various motives that made taking prisoners of war preferable to killing them, be they individuals or larger groups. Usually, the captors wanted to reap some profit, either by using the services of prisoners for a longer period or by selling them into slavery. Moreover, captives could be used in negotiations with the other party, so as to extract ransom payments. When interstate diplomacy intervened (see [1.10.0](#)), exchanges of prisoners of war could also take place.

Since the main source of power in pre-industrial economies was human muscles, it comes as no surprise that certain people, especially when they were highly skilled in arts or crafts, would be taken captive rather than killed. A famous example is the female weavers of Thebes who were taken to Sicily by the Normans after the fall of their city in 1147;¹⁴⁶ in their new homeland they were expected to produce high-quality silk fabrics, thus bringing great profit to their new masters.

146 Niketas Choniates, *History*, ed. Jan-Louis van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, CFHB 11 (Berlin and New York, 1975) 74, 45–49.

In 1336, when Emperor Andronikos III Palaiologos¹⁴⁷ and his Turkish allies raided Thessaly, they captured many Albanians together with their women, children and thousands of domestic animals. In this case it appears that the looters' aim was to weaken the rival's economic power. Moreover, military conflicts offered good opportunities for taking slaves.¹⁴⁸

Yet, the experience of captives could be extremely varied. From the historiographical work of Theophanes Continuatus we learn that an anonymous student of Leo the Mathematician¹⁴⁹ had served as a secretary to a Byzantine provincial official and was then taken captive during a conflict with the Arabs. Because of his learning, he was treated with great respect by his new master and was even introduced to the court of Caliph al-Ma'mūn,¹⁵⁰ where he had a long dispute with Arab scholars to whom he could demonstrate his outstanding knowledge in geometry.¹⁵¹ One tends to mistrust the information of the Greek chronicler who may just have wished to assert Byzantine cultural superiority. Yet, the ego-account of Gregory Palamas (see below) who was himself a prisoner of war shows that people of learning were often treated well by their captors, who hoped to receive a higher ransom for them.

Not everyone, however, was so lucky. From Greek hagiographical and historiographical works, we learn that Christian prisoners of war could be pressured by their captors into giving up their faith. This happened in the case of Byzantine civilians and soldiers who were captured and then killed by the Muslim Arabs after the sack of Amorion in 838,¹⁵² and in the case of prisoners of the pagan Bulgars.¹⁵³ Both groups were proclaimed martyrs by the Orthodox Church. From the 14th century onwards, there was a significant increase in the number of references in Greek texts but also in the registers of Western merchants about Christian slaves from the Balkans – mainly women –, who had been victims of raids by other Westerners (such as the Catalan Company, see 2.4.0) or Turks. In Sultan Bayezid I's harem¹⁵⁴ in Prousa (Bursa) there were boys and girls of Greek,

147 PLP 21437.

148 John Kantakouzenos, *History*, Book 2, 32, ed. Ludwig Schopen, *Ioannis Cantacuzeni ex imperatoris Historiarum Libri IV*, CSHB, vol. 1 (Bonn, 1828) 496, 13–498, 1.

149 PmbZ 4440, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ15604/html>.

150 PmbZ 4689, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ15856/html>.

151 Theophanes Continuatus, Book 4, ch. 27, ed. Michael Featherstone and Juan Signes Codóñer, *Chronographiae quae Theophanis Continuati nomine fertur, Libri I–IV*, CFHB 53 (Berlin and Boston, 2015) 264,9–268, 64.

152 PmbZ 10542, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ20506/html>.

153 PmbZ 10420, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ20384/html>.

154 PLP 21248.

Serbian, Vlach, Albanian, Hungarian, Saxon, Bulgarian and Latin origin.¹⁵⁵ With a certain irony the Byzantine historian Doukas¹⁵⁶ tells his readers that Turks prefer Greek and Italian women to those of their own blood. According to him, the Turks obtain foreign women through captivity or defection.¹⁵⁷

The different forms of forced migration in the wake of military activity cannot always be neatly distinguished. Sometimes, resettlement of prisoners of war in the enemy's land could become permanent. For example, in the first half of the 9th century the Bulgars resettled thousands of Byzantine inhabitants of Thrace to the so-called "Bulgaria beyond the Danube".¹⁵⁸ By doing so, the Khans wanted to undermine the empire's resistance in the hinterland of Constantinople and possibly also facilitate the cultivation of land in the thinly populated regions to the north of the Danube.

It is a well-known fact that a good education offered a small number of Byzantine intellectuals access to the highest positions of provincial and central government (see 1.9.0, 1.9.1, 1.9.2 and 2.1.3). At the same time, some descendants of families of high social status enjoyed the best education available in Byzantium. Thus, literati often occupied some of the most important secular and ecclesiastical offices. Yet this fusion of political power and learning could easily turn them into victims of turmoil and conflict. Hence there is a good number of learned men such as Pope Martin (see 1.5.0), the monastic leader Theodore of Stoudios (see 1.5.0, 1.6.1 and 4.2.4), and the high official and historian Niketas Choniates (see 1.1.1) who were banished or exiled due to their involvement in disputes with the Byzantine government or because of a foreign assault. Others, such as John Kaminiates,¹⁵⁹ Gregory Palamas¹⁶⁰ and George Sphrantzes¹⁶¹ became victims of military conflicts with external powers and were taken into captivity (see below).

When learned men were subjected to forced migration, they sometimes left us with eyewitness accounts, which cast light on the broad range of emotions that

155 Doukas, *History*, Book 15, 2, ed. Vasile Grecu, *Ducas, Istoria turco-bizantină (1341–1462), ediție critică*, Scriptores Byzantini 1 (Bucharest, 1958) 87, 7–17. More general on the various groups active as slave traders in the late Byzantine period in the region see Barker, Hannah, *That Most Precious Merchandise: The Mediterranean Trade in Black Sea Slaves, 1260–1500* (Philadelphia, 2019).

156 PLP 5685.

157 Doukas, *History*, Book 10, 1, ed. Grecu, 59, 7–18.

158 *Scriptor Incertus*, ed. Francesca Iadevaia, *Scriptor Incertus. Testo critico, versione italiana, note e indici* (2nd reprinted edition) (Messina, 1997) 43–45, 136–190; Symeon Logothete, *Chronicle*, 131, 9, ed. Staffan Wahlgren, *Symeonis Magistri et Logothetae chronicon*, CFHB 44/1 (Berlin and New York, 2006) 235, 70–236, 77.

159 PmbZ 22904, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25058/html>.

160 PLP 21546.

161 PLP 27278.

captivity aroused, especially when the captors were foreigners. Two of them deserve to be mentioned here, John Kaminiates who was taken prisoner by the Arabs in Thessaloniki in 904, and George Sphrantzes who was captured by the Turks after the fall of Constantinople in 1453. Of particular value is Kaminiates' account of the fate of his family members, which begins at the moment when they realise that the city would fall to the Arabs and ends when they arrive in the enemy's land. Once Kaminiates' family realised that the final assault of the besiegers would be successful, they hid their precious belongings in a secret place. Kaminiates states explicitly that they planned to offer them to the attackers (ch. 47). This was perhaps one of the reasons why his family was spared; the other one was the suspicion of the Arabs that Kaminiates' father was a church official, for whom they could expect a high ransom. Therefore, as one of the foreign soldiers assured him, they had nothing to be afraid of once they had told the enemy where their belongings were hidden (ch. 48). The enemy commander, Leo of Tripoli,¹⁶² assured Kaminiates in a conversation that nothing was going to happen to him and his family because they were taken unarmed and had given money to their captors. From then on, they were to share the fate of the other Byzantines under his authority. The Arabs were going to bring them to Tarsos where they would await negotiations with imperial diplomats and the expected exchange of prisoners of war with Constantinople since the Byzantines were also holding many Arabs in captivity (ch. 55) (see 1.10.0 and 3.1.0).

Sphrantzes' account of what happened to him and his family after 29 May 1453 is more dispiriting. Initially, the Ottomans showed respect to him, his wife and two children because of his high status at the former Byzantine court. He was quickly ransomed and went to the Morea, but from his historiographical work we learn that his son John and his daughter Tamar were taken into the harem of Sultan Mehmed II¹⁶³, at whose orders the young boy was killed; two years later, a disease took the life of the girl.¹⁶⁴

One of the major objectives of Byzantine diplomacy was the exchange or ransom of prisoners of war (see 1.10.0), though sometimes these people took the initiative in their own hands and made an attempt to return to their homeland. However, a coordination of their actions with Constantinople must have heightened the chances of success of such a venture. A 'patriotic' sentiment seems to have been particularly strong among larger groups of prisoners of war or resettled populations, especially during the first or second generation of their captivity, when they preserved their religion in a non-Christian milieu. In the

162 PmbZ 24397, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ26551/html>.

163 PLP 17998.

164 George Sphrantzes, *Chronicle*, 37, 3 and 9, ed. Riccardo Maisano, *Giorgio Sfranze, Cronaca*, CFHB 29; Scrittori Bizantini 2 (Rome, 1990) 144, 5–9 and 146, 7–9.

7th century when the troops of the Avar Khagan ravaged and plundered Byzantine territory as far as Constantinople itself, his warriors captured and then resettled Byzantine subjects north of the Danube. Yet, according to the *Miracles of Saint Demetrios*, they remained Christians and taught their religion to their children, although some of them mixed with Avars and Bulgars. At some point, they decided to come back to the land of their ancestors. Guided by a certain Bulgar chieftain, Kubër,¹⁶⁵ the Sermesianoï – as the descendants of the Byzantine prisoners of war were called – crossed the Danube and settled somewhere in Macedonia.¹⁶⁶ Some 150 years later, the Khanate of the Bulgars became the Byzantines' new enemy in the West. As we have seen, in the early 9th century the Bulgars resettled populations with the aim of weakening the Byzantine defence in Thrace. In order to keep Byzantine prisoners of war as far away from Constantinople as possible, they were resettled in areas north of the Danube. But even there they did not forget their homeland. They sent delegates to Emperor Theophilos,¹⁶⁷ who agreed to help them and dispatched the imperial fleet to the Danube, where – after some victories over Bulgars and Magyars – the Byzantine prisoners of war boarded the ships and sailed back to Byzantium. According to the chronicle of Symeon Logothete, one of them was the future emperor Basil I (see 1.4.0 and 4.2.4).¹⁶⁸

Further reading

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Holmes, Catherine, Basil II the Bulgar-slayer and the Blinding of 15,000 Bulgarians in 1014: Mutilation and Prisoners of War in the Middle Ages, in: Holger Afflerbach and Hew Strachan (eds.), *How Fighting Ends. A History of Surrender* (Oxford, 2012) 85–98.

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165 PmbZ 4165, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ15320/html>.

166 *Miracles of Saint Demetrios*, II 5, 284–288, ed. Paul Lemerle, *Les plus anciens recueils des miracles de saint Démétrius et la pénétration des Slaves dans les Balkans*, I: *Le texte* (Paris, 1979) 227, 16–229, 3.

167 PmbZ 8167, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ19429/html>.

168 Symeon Logothete, *Chronicle*, 131. 9–13, ed. Wahlgren, 235,70–237, 109. On Bulgar prisoners of war in Byzantine hands see Holmes, Catherine, Basil II the Bulgar-slayer and the Blinding of 15,000 Bulgarians in 1014: Mutilation and Prisoners of War in the Middle Ages, in: Holger Afflerbach and Hew Strachan (eds.), *How Fighting Ends. A History of Surrender* (Oxford, 2012) 85–98.

- Lykaki, Marilia, L'économie du pillage et les prisonniers de guerre: Byzance, VII^e-X^e siècle, in: Rodolphe Keller and Laury Sarti (eds.), *Pillages, tributs, captifs. Prédation et sociétés de l'Antiquité tardive au haut Moyen Âge*, Histoire ancienne et médiévale 153 (Paris, 2018) 89–102.
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- Stouraitis, Yannis, Migrating in the Medieval East Roman World, ca. 600–1204, in: Johannes Preiser-Kapeller et al. (eds.), *Migration Histories of the Medieval Afroeurasian Transition Zone. Aspects of Mobility between Africa, Asia and Europe, 300–1500 C.E.*, Studies in Global Social History 39; Studies in Global Migration History 13 (Leiden and Boston, 2020) 141–165.

Grigori Simeonov

1.3.1 John Kaminiates and his family are taken captive in Thessaloniki

Author: John Kaminiates

Text: *On the capture of Thessaloniki (Eis ten halosin tes Thessalonikes)*

Date of text: October 904 – September 905

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: *The Capture of Thessaloniki* is the only work of the otherwise unknown author John Kaminiates. He belonged to the family of a high ecclesiastical official and was himself a cleric. His work presents a valuable account of the geography and history of Thessaloniki and its hinterland at the beginning of the 10th century and is the most important source about the sack of the second largest city of Byzantium by the Arab navy in 904. Although a later date was argued by some scholars based on a presumed analogy with accounts about later sieges of the same city, the authenticity of the text is now seldom doubted. The author states that he wrote his work after he was ransomed at the request of a certain Gregory of Cappadocia,¹⁶⁹ a prisoner of war whom he met on his arrival in Tripoli. Kaminiates' account is of particular value for the study of forced mobility in Byzantium. He describes how he and his family were captured by the Arabs and transported to Tarsos in Cilicia where they were to wait for an exchange of prisoners. He speaks of his emotions and actions, and of the horrible conditions on board the enemy ships during the journey to Tarsos, such as overcrowding and starvation.

Historical significance of the movement: Although the Byzantines had succeeded in stopping the Arab invasion in Asia Minor in the late 7th and the 8th centuries, the sea was far from being safe. In the 9th century Cyprus, Crete and

169 PmbZ 22387, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ24540/html>.

Sicily fell into the hands of the Arabs. Arab naval raids had a major impact on communications, and soon threatened the largest cities of the empire. In 904, a fleet set sail against Constantinople but after having been confronted by Byzantine ships in the Dardanelles, diverted to Thessaloniki. Its commander was Leo of Tripoli, a Byzantine renegade who had been captured by the Arabs and converted to Islam. After a three-day siege, the Arabs sacked Thessaloniki. Many of its citizens were taken into captivity and brought to Tarsos. Some of them died on the way, others were sold into slavery. The blow which the Arabs inflicted on Byzantium caused Emperor Leo VI¹⁷⁰ to send one of his leading diplomats, Leo Choiosphaktes, to Baghdad in order to negotiate the ransom of the prisoners (see 3.1.0).

Type of movement: Involuntary due to captivity.

Locations and date of movement: from Thessaloniki to Tripoli and Tarsos; August 904.

Edition used: *Ioannis Caminiatae De expugnatione Thessalonicae*, ed. Gertrud Böhlig, CFHB 4 (Berlin and New York, 1973) 55, 28–56, 70, ch. 65, 2–67, 1.

Translation used: *John Kaminiates, The capture of Thessaloniki*. Translation, Introduction and Notes by David Frendo and Athanasios Fotiou, Byzantina Australiensia 12 (Perth, 2000) 107–109 (modified by Dirk Krausmüller).

John Kaminiates, On the Capture of Thessaloniki, ch. 65–67

[p. 55] On the tenth day after the capture when the sun had reached its zenith we rushed out from the harbour and went to the so-called Roman Gate. There we spent the rest of the day. We were five, as we had been overpowered, on a ship belonging to the leader of the Egyptian fleet. My father had asked him through an interpreter, since he did not even know how to speak our language, to tell the bodyguards under his command to bring our relatives from the various places to which they had been dispersed. This would almost have been done, if the multitude of our transgressions had not been an obstacle even in this matter and caused to hesitate those who had been sent on this errand. In fact, they quickly brought back to us, from wherever they happened to be, my mother and one of my other brothers, who had not been captured at the beginning together with us, and also my brother's wife. But my wife, along with my three small children [p. 56] and our youngest sister, and a large number of other relatives, they either did not wish to find or, if perhaps they did find them, they were unwilling to bring them to us. Instead, they languished, some in one place some in another, struck down by the common misfortune and by the freezing storm of their separation

170 PmbZ 24311, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ26465/html>.

from us. Nevertheless, we persevered, in our terrible state, even though we were separated from each other, even though our situation was worse than all previous experience of pain.

When we were about to set sail, the barbarians put shackles on all our feet and stuffed and put each of us onto the ships like some piece of inanimate matter used for stuffing, not even allowing us to breathe the air freely but cutting it off through the intensity of the choking. They joined us to one another to such a degree that our multitude seemed to be an uninterrupted body without any distance or separation from the compression. But when the sun was setting and the light of day ceased at the approach of night's darkness, they struck up a song of victory with drums and cymbals, caused the air above their heads to flash with their brandished swords, and after late evening let out a harsh and unintelligible cry, pulled up the anchor and moved away from the land. One could hear how most of us were quietly bemoaning our native city and how each one was in some way making a sound to God in his invisible soul and imploring Him that, after we had undergone whatever trials and tribulation He wished to chastise us with, we might again be given back to the city that had nurtured us and not be left finally abandoned without any hope of release from our afflictions.

The night was already advancing towards daybreak when we set out. We were afflicted by many other unpleasant forms of constraint such as hunger and thirst and were crushed from the overcrowding (on the one ship alone on which we were aboard there were eight hundred prisoners, apart from the barbarians, who numbered another two hundred) besides which there were the pitiful cries of infants unable to bear the full rigour of hardships whose intensity served merely to hasten their untimely death.

Further reading

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- Tougher, Shaun, *The Reign of Leo VI (886–912). Politics and People*, MMED 15 (Leiden and Boston, 1997).
- Vasiliev, Aleksandar, *Byzance et les Arabes*, II: *Les relations politiques de Byzance et des Arabes à l'époque de la dynastie Macédonienne (les empereurs Basile I, Léon le Sage et Constantin VII Porphyrogénète, 867–959 (253–348))*, 1: *Les relations politiques de Byzance et des Arabes à l'époque de la dynastie Macédonienne. Première période: de 867 à 959*, Corpus Bruxellense Historiae Byzantinae 2/1 (Brussels, 1968).

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1.3.2 A Scythian woman and her Byzantine slaves

Author: Nikephoros Gregoras (born c. 1295 in Herakleia/Pontos, died ca. 1361 in Constantinople)¹⁷¹

Text: *Roman History* (*Historia rhomaïke*)

Date of text: Second quarter of the 14th century (between the 1330s and the 1350s)

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: Nikephoros Gregoras was one of the outstanding figures in Byzantine history during the first half of the 14th century.¹⁷² A student of Theodore Metochites (see 3.1.1), he inherited from his teacher a vivid interest in astronomy and was one of the first to propose reforms to the Julian calendar. Like his teacher, the well-educated Gregoras served as an imperial envoy to the Serbs. He is known for his opposition to the Hesychast movement in Byzantine monasticism. He was involved in a debate with its leader, Gregory Palamas, and was eventually condemned as a heretic since Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos supported the hesychasts.¹⁷³ Gregoras' most famous work is his *Roman History* in 37 books. It is the most important source about Byzantine history during the first half of the 14th century. The author who was a *chartophylax* in Constantinople and had access to the court and to archival material, was an eyewitness of some of the events that he described. He followed the rules of Greek historical writing in the high style.

Historical significance of the movement: Around the middle of the 13th century Nicaea (and after 1261 Byzantium) came into contact with the Mongols. Being on good terms with them was of great importance to Constantinople. Michael VIII Palaiologos¹⁷⁴ married his illegitimate daughter Maria¹⁷⁵ to the Khan of the Ilkhanate, the Mongol ruler of Persia and Iraq. After the death of her husband, she returned to Constantinople, but still served as a Byzantine envoy to her former subjects (see 1.10.3). The passage in Gregoras' history highlights the connections between Byzantines and Mongols from a different perspective, shedding light on the microhistory of medieval prisoners of war. According to the text, the Mongols of the Golden Horde (from Eastern Europe, rivals to the Ilkhanate) raided Byzantine territory as far as Thrace. Captives were taken, who found a new homeland in the steppes. Although it may be exaggerated, Gregoras' account can be regarded as a summary of their experiences. It covers the whole range of

171 PLP 4443.

172 Manolova, Divna, Who Writes the History of the Romans? Agency and Causality in Nikephoros Gregoras' "*Historia Rhōmaïkē*", *New Europe College Yearbook* 15 (2014–2015) 97–123.

173 PLP 10973.

174 PLP 21528.

175 PLP 21395.

phenomena related to the life of prisoners of war, such as being sold into slavery, intermarriage, desire to come back to Byzantium, and the spread of Christianity among pagans who were won over by their Byzantine servants.

Type of movement: Involuntary due to captivity.

Locations and date of movement: From Thrace to the steppes of Eurasia and then back to Constantinople; early 14th century.

Edition used: *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina historia*, ed. Ludwig Schopen, CSHB (Bonn, 1829) vol. 1, 542, 23–544, 18, Book 11, 5, 2.

Translation: Rustam Shukurov, Dirk Krausmüller

Nikephoros Gregoras, *Roman History*, Book 11, 5, 2

[p. 542] At that time there was among the Scythians [Mongols] who dwell on the other side of the Ister [the Danube River] a woman who had neither a husband nor children. [p. 543] When she saw in front of her door the captives who were being led away from Thrace (she had for a long time yearned to go over to the Rhomaioi and to receive the divine baptism) she stirred and took for a husband one of the Christian captives who were for sale, having him confirm beforehand through oaths that he would not abandon the cohabitation with her even if they decamped for another place. While they were seeking for an opportune time a whole year passed in which she had two children from him, one already born and the other still in the womb. Therefore, she gained an even greater and firmer love for her husband. While matters stood thus, the former wife of the aforementioned man happened to be led away as a captive in the following year. When the man saw her, he burst into tears. And after the Scythian woman had learned the reason for the grief and the tears, she did not show jealousy towards the woman, but bought her, too, in order that she serve the needs of the house, and also be a comfort for the man who could see her close by. But when an opportune time had arrived, she received the holy baptism and went to the queen of cities. There the previous wife ran to the patriarch and shouted and beat her breasts and claimed that she had been wronged by the Scythian woman who had taken away her husband. But when she, too, came and explained the matter as it stood in precise detail, there was nobody who could bring any justified charge, for she was the mistress of both as she had bought them with her own money when they were on sale and had so-to-speak taken them from wild beasts. Yet when all were silent, [p. 544] and could not bring a charge against her, she made such a judgement in the matter. She gave her husband the release as a free gift because they had lived together and she had borne his children, and she added that she wanted to free the woman but could not do so because she did not possess the wherewithal and she was a foreigner with two infants. ‘Therefore’, she said, ‘she shall bring the price that was given for her and depart with her husband, and I will henceforth be

with the infants, relying on the providence of the merciful God.’ All praised this judgement, including the patriarch, and admired the greatness of the character of the woman. But not much later justice was brought to its proper conclusion by the merciful God who judges unswervingly from above. For when the woman left the city in order to collect the purchase price, and went around her neighbours in Thrace, where she had dwelt before, she again fell into the hands of the Scythians who all of a sudden invaded Thrace, and she disappeared as a captive whereas the man henceforth continued to cohabit with the good woman of Scythian descent.

Further reading

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Vásáry István, *Cumans and Tatars. Oriental Military in the Pre-Ottoman Balkans, 1185–1365* (Cambridge, 2009) 131–133.

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1.3.3 The theologian Gregory Palamas speaks about his captivity among the Turks

Author: Gregory Palamas

Text: *Letter (Epistole)*

Date of text: July 1354 (first redaction)

Genre: Epistolography

Literary context: Being proclaimed a saint by the Orthodox Church in 1368, some ten years after his death, Gregory Palamas was one of the outstanding figures of his age. Yet his ideas and actions were far from being appreciated and accepted by everyone. Palamas was a prominent theologian and clergyman, who became monk on Mount Athos, one of the leading monastic centres of Eastern Orthodoxy, and was later ordained Archbishop of Thessaloniki. Yet he is best known not for his ecclesiastical career and close connections to Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos, but for his fervent support of the hesychast monastic spirituality, to which he tried to give a comprehensive theological foundation. Among the targets of his theological polemics were Barlaam of Calabria¹⁷⁶ and Nikephoros Gregoras. Palamas used the chance for religious discussion even during

176 PLP 2284.

his captivity among the Ottoman Turks in Asia Minor, this time with Muslim theologians. Apart from describing these efforts, he also gives details about the circumstances of his captivity.

Historical significance of the movement: Gregory Palamas has left us an eye-witness account of events, which other sources such as historiographical works describe on the basis of second-hand information. He speaks about the Ottoman conquest of Kallipolis (modern Gelibolu) in 1354 and the combination of environmental (an earthquake) and political (foreign raids) factors (ch. 5) that resulted in the involuntary migration of the local population (see 1.1.3 and 1.7.3). Furthermore, Palamas gives details about the activity of Turkish pirates along the shores of the Eastern Aegean, and his itinerary as a prisoner of war through Asia Minor. As he remarks, his captors treated him well because they recognised that he was an educated man. Since they assumed that he was a high state official, they expected a good ransom for him. Soon he was set free and came back to Byzantium.

Type of movement: Involuntary.

Locations and date of movement: Palamas started his journey at Tenedos (Bozca Ada) and fell into captivity in the Dardanelles and was then brought to various cities in Asia Minor such as Lampsakos (near Lapseki), Pegai (Karabiga), Prousa (Bursa), Nicaea (Izник); March–July 1354.

Edition used: Philippidis-Braat, Anna, *La Captivité de Palamas chez les Turcs: Dossier et commentaire*, TM 7 (Paris, 1979) 109–222, here 137–151, ch. 3, 7, 9–13, 16–17.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Gregory Palamas, *Letter*, ch. 3, 7, 9–13, 16–17

[p. 137] [3.] What I have understood from divine providence when I was brought to Asia as a captive and saw Christians and Turks dwelling, walking about, leading and being led indiscriminately, I will tell your charity. For it seems to me that through this dispensation the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is God over all, is made manifest even to the very barbarians that are the most barbarous of all, in order that they have no excuse at his most frightful tribunal, which is coming and is already nigh. Because of this dispensation, as one can see from what has come to pass, we too were given into their hands, as well as some measure of punishment for our many sins against God, as those who now are sorely tried are given over to some fire, but one that is again extinguished, whereas those who cause trouble, if they do not repent of their lack of faith and brutality, will be kept in the inextinguishable fire that is to come. (...)

[p. 141] [7.] Together we were first brought to Lampsakos, then immediately the characteristics of servitude, nakedness, the privation of what was needful and

the multifarious sufferings of the outer body, were common to me and to the captives who were with me, whereas specific to me was not only the suffering of the innards and the wasting of the flesh that was caused by it but also well-nigh a paralysis of the limbs. And in addition, a great clamour, supposedly about me, arose among the Rhomaioi, which was directed at the barbarians. They praised not a little my education in speeches and the virtue of my character, and made known my struggles on behalf of the church, which as they said they valued more highly than all that was present. This was no lie, as I think, or rather I know that the greater part of it is exactly thus, but it was of no use at all to me. For it raised the hope of the leader of the barbarians that thousands of gold coins would be brought by me, and he saw to it that those who hold fast to the barbarian doctrines, raged against me. As a consequence, some of them came and started a debate, and since in all other respects they appeared not to be strong, they pointed to our captivity as a sign that there was no soundness in our faith. (...)

[p. 143] [9.] A great crowd of men and women and children, as you well know, surrounded me there. Some of them desired to confess what was in their minds and to receive the cure, others wished to hear the solution of some problems about the faith, [p. 145] the greater part asked what was the reason for God's abandonment of our people, and yet others compassionately bewailed my mis-hap. Having spent seven days there and having suffered on the seventh day the questioning of the barbarians who wished to increase our purchase price, we were led on the eighth day on the road that leads to Pegai. And if I were to list the sufferings which we endured on this road neither the ink which is now at my disposal nor the parchment would suffice.

[10.] But for three days they led us to Pegai. And at first, we suffered great hardship because of the journey and what happened during it. Yet even so they let us spend the days in the open, even though the days were freezing. Then they took me with the monks and again used threats which it is unbearable even to hear, in order to force us to increase the amount of the purchase price. But when they did not succeed – for all I have is what is needful on each day, and one can find many who know this – when they then did not succeed in gaining what they desired, they did not carry out their threats, but sent us to a church of Christ, which has survived there even now through his power, praising him with frankness. We regarded it as a calm harbour after those many and manifold stormy waves, for around it there dwelt those who lived a monastic life and those who lived in the world. For those who arrived there from captivity, they were literally kindly harbours, and we received from them not a little consolation.

[11.] Together with all those who were with me I was the guest of the one who exceeded the others in goodness. This was the *hetairiarches* Maurozoumes,¹⁷⁷

177 PLP 17439.

who led us under his roof, and clothed us who were naked, and fed us who were hungry and gave drink to us who were thirsty, or rather who fed us for almost three months, and also liberated us from the company of the barbarians and comforted us and saw to it that we could teach in the churches, as it is our custom, and console the souls of the Christians, both the locals and those who were brought there as captives.

[12.] After three months had passed, as I have said before, we were snatched away from there as if through the hands of the lawless, and were led to Prousa in four days. And there those among the Christians who excelled in wisdom came to us and touched on important questions, [p. 147] although there was not the right time for it, for there were barbarians surrounding us. But those who held fast to piety did not consider the inopportune time, as they unexpectedly had in their sight the one who could tell them what they wished to know, as they thought.

[13.] But after two days had passed, we left Prousa together with the ones who led us, and after two further days we came to a hilly place, which was surrounded by mountains at a great distance and adorned with thickly shaded trees. As the winds blow through it at times from one direction and at times from another, it furnishes very cold water and is surrounded by cold air even in the season of summer. Therefore, the most powerful of the leaders of the barbarians spent the summer in it. As I myself was led there together with the other captives, a grandson of the great emir who was sent to us called me and separated me from the other captives. And he sat with me on the soft grass, while some grandees stood around him. And after we had sat down, fruits were set in front of me and meat in front of him. And at his command I ate the fruits whereas he ate the meat. While we were eating, he asked me if I never ate meat and for what reason. And when I answered him as it was fitting, someone came from outside and made known the reason for his absence, stating: 'I have only now been able to carry out the distribution of alms that had been ordered by the great emir for the Friday.' And as a result, we spoke not a little about almsgiving. (...)

[p. 149] [16.] Afterwards there was a driving rain, and he stood up and went away running whereas I returned to the captives, and with them endured the rain in the open. And when the rain had ceased and the day was already ending, in the evening, those who brought us took all of us together into the presence of the emir. And at his order we were led to the neighbouring place, which was far away from the Christian Rhomaioi, and in which there was a dwelling for the imperial envoys. We were together with them all days, and received not a little care and consolation from them, even if the harshness and coldness of the place and the lack of that which was necessary for those who like me were ill were not of such a kind that they vanquished their eager wish.

[17.] When the emir had pains in his liver, the good Taroneites,¹⁷⁸ who had been sent for, arrived, a physician who is most God-loving as well as loved by God. He did everything for me, when he saw that it would be profitable for my soul and my body to get to Nicaea. [p. 151] He took pains to persuade the emir who asked him about me and said: ‘Who and of what kind is this monk?’ And when he had said what he said, the emir said again: ‘I, too, have wise and educated men who shall debate with him.’ And immediately he sent and let come the Chiones, men who study and are taught by Satan nothing else but blasphemy and shamelessness in respect of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Yet when they had come, Taroneites who saw it and listened to it in person recorded in writing what was said and done, and those who wish can peruse and learn what has been disseminated by him.

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178 PLP 27532.

1.4.0 Rebellion and treachery

Roman imperial power survived in the Near East until the 7th century and in Asia Minor and the Balkans into the Middle Ages. It is often assumed that Byzantium, as the Medieval Roman Empire of the East is commonly known, was a centralised, bureaucratic state based on a complex hierarchical system of offices and dignities, which was topped by the *basileus* of the Rhomaioi, the Byzantine Emperor. The emperor, whom Greek sources style “autocrat in Christ”, was considered by his subjects to be God’s vicar in the world, even though it was the *Kaisertum*, the imperial office, and not the person of the ruler that was claimed to have divine character.¹⁷⁹ Despite this fact – or perhaps because of it – a sizable number of pretenders denied the legitimacy of the emperor in office. These men attempted to overthrow the ruling emperor and to usurp the throne. As revolting against the government was not an easy task, rebels often needed assistance or a safe refuge where they could flee in case of failure. Therefore, finding an ally within or without the empire was a major factor that could greatly contribute to the successful outcome of an insurrection. Yet there were also other reasons for rebellion and unrest. Governmental policies (especially raising the tax burden and offending religious rights), corruption, social unrest, and the personal agenda and ambitions of the various factions within the elite at a central or provincial level could lead to dissatisfaction with the status quo and a wish for change.

All of this made the involvement of foreign powers – either as associates of Byzantine political players or following their own interests – an important element in cases of discontent.

Constantinople was well aware of the threat posed by a pretender to the imperial throne who succeeded in getting assistance from abroad. This is evident from the first treaty that Byzantium concluded with Bulgaria. Some thirty years after the foundation of the Bulgarian state on the Balkans, the empire already

179 Dagron, Gilbert, *Emperor and Priest. The Imperial Office in Byzantium*, transl. by Jean Birrell (Cambridge, 2003).

insisted on including a clause in the text that regulated the status of renegades. According to the report of Theophanes, the Bulgars were obliged to deliver them to Byzantium.¹⁸⁰ The Byzantines' motives are easy to guess – in 705 the exiled emperor Justinian II¹⁸¹ escaped from Cherson on the Crimea and sought the assistance first of the Khazars and then of the Bulgars (see 1.5.0). It was with the aid of the latter that he succeeded in recovering his throne. Byzantine renegades also sought to obtain support from the East. For centuries, the Arabs were the most dangerous enemy of Byzantium, more than once threatening the existence of the empire. Yet this fact does not seem to have concerned usurpers when they needed assistance against the legitimate emperor or were looking for refuge (1.4.1 and 1.4.2). Later, with the political and military rise of Western Europe, it was quite natural for a pretender to reach out as far as Italy and ask even the Crusaders for help. That is what Alexios (IV),¹⁸² the son of the dethroned emperor Isaac II Angelos,¹⁸³ did at the beginning of the 13th century when he fled to the West and negotiated (successfully) with Boniface of Montferrat the conditions for diverting the Crusaders' fleet towards Constantinople. Imperial subjects of non-Greek origin, who once had had a state of their own, could also resort to foreign help when they decided to reject the emperor's sovereignty. When the Bulgarians rebelled against Constantinople in the 1070s, they sent envoys to Zeta (Montenegro) and asked the local prince that he give them military aid and send them his son who on his mother's side was a descendant of the late Samuel of Bulgaria;¹⁸⁴ he would then be proclaimed the new tsar and lead the joined forces of Bulgarians and Montenegrins.¹⁸⁵

Yet Byzantium also knew how to exploit the potential of political refugees for its own purposes, as can be seen from the case of Theophobos,¹⁸⁶ an alleged Persian prince, who lived in the empire and made a career under Emperor Theophilos.¹⁸⁷ A member of the Khurramite sect, which had rebelled against the Arabs but had been defeated, he led the rest of his men to Byzantium where he

180 Theophanes, *Chronicle*, A.M. 6305, ed. Carl de Boor, *Theophanis Chronographia*, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1883) 497, 16–26.

181 PmbZ 3556, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14702/html>.

182 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Alexios/4/>.

183 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Isaakios/2/>.

184 PmbZ 26983, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ29137/html>.

185 *Skylitzes Continuatus*, ed. Eudoxos Tsolakes, *Ἡ Συνέχεια τῆς Χρονογραφίας τοῦ Ἰωάννου Σκυλίτζη (Ioannes Skylitzes Continuatus)*, Hetaireia Makedonikon Spoudon, Idryma Meleton Chersonesou tou Haimou 105 (Thessaloniki, 1968) 163, 5–10.

186 PmbZ 8237, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ19500/html>.

187 PmbZ 8167, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ19429/html>.

converted to Christianity. Then he served as one of the highest generals of the imperial army during joint campaigns with Theophilos' forces against the Caliphate, whereas the Persian refugees were enlisted in the Byzantine army. In order to win his loyalty Theophilos married him to his sister and made him a patrician.

The outcome of a military conflict often caused involuntary movement such as resettlement, captivity, and flight (see 1.1.0, 1.2.0 and 1.3.0). Moreover, mistakes of the new power or the wish to avenge the old one could nurture the feeling of discontent among local populations and keep alive a desire for change. Former subjects of the Byzantine emperors endured the sovereignty of new political powers in different ways. When the troops of Emperor John II Komnenos¹⁸⁸ reached Lake Pousgouse (Beyşehir Gölü) in Southern Anatolia, the local Christians refused to accept his authority and expressed their wish to continue living under the Seljuks (see 4.4.2).¹⁸⁹ In the 14th century, historiographical narratives and legal documents (the Register of the Patriarchate of Constantinople for example) frequently mention refugees who fled before the Ottoman Turks who were advancing in Western Anatolia and Thrace (see 1.1.3). On the early Medieval Balkans, prisoners of war, who were taken into captivity by Avars or Bulgars and resettled in the regions to the north of the Danube, were sometimes dissatisfied with the life in their new homeland, took arms against their barbarian masters and attempted to return to imperial soil (see 1.3.0). Some examples from the 13th century, when vast regions in the Southern Balkans often changed their sovereign, can show us how ethnic identity could trigger a change in loyalty towards current masters, especially if a new army was approaching. When in 1246 the troops of Emperor John III Vatatzes of Nicaea besieged the town of Melnik in Eastern Macedonia, a local dignitary persuaded the citizens to prefer the yoke of a righteous, adult emperor to that of another infant Bulgarian ruler. Moreover, he mentioned another reason for obeying Vatatzes – they were of “pure Roman ancestry” because they had been resettled from Philippopolis to Melnik.¹⁹⁰ As a consequence, the city soon surrendered to Nicaea. Yet we also encounter the opposite scenario. A few years later, some fortresses in the Rhodope mountain opened their gates to the advancing Bulgarian army because they were – ac-

188 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Ioannes/2/>.

189 John Kinnamos, *History*, Book 1, 10, ed. August Meineke, *Ioannis Cinnami epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, CSHB (Bonn, 1836) 22, 4–22; Niketas Choniates, *History*, ed. Jan-Louis van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, CFHB 11 (Berlin and New York 1975) 37–38, 85–86.

190 George Akropolites, *History*, ch. 44, ed. August Heisenberg and Peter Wirth, *Georgii Acropolitae opera*, vol. 1 (revised edition) (Stuttgart, 1978) 76, 24–77, 5.

according to George Akropolites – of the same origin as the enemy and hated the Byzantines.¹⁹¹

A group whose loyalty was questionable were heretics, especially when they lived in borderlands. In the 9th century the Paulicians became a real threat to Constantinople. They started a rebellion against the Byzantine government and deserted to the Arabs with whose help they ravaged imperial territories (see 1.6.3). Although the members of this bellicose heresy were defeated by Basil I and resettled in Thrace by John Tzimiskes (see 1.6.4),¹⁹² they were not pacified. At the end of the 11th century, they rose against Byzantium after they had been persecuted by the government. This time they sought the assistance of the Pechenegs, Turkic nomads who lived in the Danubian plain and were the real masters of the Northern Balkans.¹⁹³ The two parties joined forces and fought together against Alexios I Komnenos.¹⁹⁴

Although Byzantium made serious efforts to integrate foreigners and use their services – especially in the economy and the army (see 4.4.1) – there was always the danger of defection (see 1.5.0). Thus, the Slavs whom Emperor Justinian II¹⁹⁵ resettled to Asia Minor in the late 7th century so that they might fight against the Arabs, simply deserted to the enemy during the battle of Sebastopolis in 692.¹⁹⁶ Around the middle of the 11th century, Byzantium settled Pechenegs in various places in the Balkans because some areas were depopulated due to wars. Moreover, the government tried to use their military potential and sent some of them to Anatolia where they remained under the command of their chieftains. On their way through Asia Minor they suddenly decided not to obey further orders. Then they crossed the Straits on horseback and returned to their countrymen.¹⁹⁷

As long as the empire was politically and militarily strong, Constantinople could easily handle cases like those discussed above. But in the early 14th century, when Byzantium had become a shadow of its former power, disobedience could turn into a real threat to the emperor. The Catalan mercenaries, for example, raided Anatolia and the Balkans and eventually founded their own polity on imperial soil (see 2.4.4–2.4.10). Yet, we also have evidence for the opposite scenario. After the early Arab conquest of the Near East the local populations

191 George Akropolites, *History*, 54, ed. Heisenberg and Wirth, 109, 1–5.

192 PmbZ 22778, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ24932/html>.

193 Anna Komnene, *Alexiad*, Book 6, 4, 2–4, ed. Diether Roderich Reinsch and Athanasios Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, CFHB 40 (Berlin and New York, 2001) 174, 80–14.

194 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Alexios/1/>.

195 PmbZ 3556, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14702/html>.

196 Theophanes, *Chronicle*, A.M. 6184, ed. de Boor, 366, 16–20.

197 John Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, ed. Hans Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis historiarum*, CFHB 5 (Berlin and New York, 1973) 460, 94–461, 42.

continued to harbour pro-Christian and pro-Byzantine sentiments, despite longstanding religious grievances against Constantinople. Thus, when the fleet of the Caliph besieged Constantinople in 717–718 his Egyptian sailors switched sides and joined the Byzantines.¹⁹⁸

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1.4.1 The international connections of the rebellion of a resettled Slav: Thomas the Slav

Author: Anonymous (at the request of Emperor Constantine VII)

Text: *Theophanes Continuatus* (Book 2)

Date of text: before 959

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: Among Byzantine historians, the work of the monk Theophanes the Confessor¹⁹⁹ enjoyed such a high reputation that two later historiographical projects began their narratives where Theophanes finished his work.²⁰⁰ The earlier one is the so-called Theophanes Continuatus or *Scriptores post Theophanem*, a product of the literary circle of Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos.²⁰¹ Preserved in a single manuscript, it contains accounts that differ in style and have been attributed to different authors in Byzantine scholarship. The first four books are the 'real' Theophanes Continuatus since their author ex-

198 Theophanes, *Chronicle*, A.M. 6209, ed. de Boor, 397, 5–9.

199 PmbZ 8107, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ19364/html>.

200 Jankowiak, Marek and Federico Montinaro (eds.), *Studies in Theophanes*, TM 19 (Paris, 2015).

201 PmbZ 23734, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25888/html>.

plicitly says that he continues the work of the renowned chronicler. The fifth book is a panegyric biography of Basil I,²⁰² known as *Vita Basilii* (see 4.2.3), while the sixth book is very close to the chronicle of Symeon Logothete.²⁰³ Theophanes Continuatus is a collection of imperial biographies, the first four of which are dedicated to Leo V,²⁰⁴ Michael II,²⁰⁵ Theophilos, and Michael III²⁰⁶ respectively. The second book, dedicated to Michael II's reign, deals extensively with one of the most significant events of that time, namely the rebellion of Thomas the Slav.²⁰⁷ Although Michael was the founder of the Amorian dynasty that was violently terminated by Constantine Porphyrogenetos' grandfather, the account about the insurrection does not present Thomas in a positive light, even claiming that the leader of the rebels converted to Islam. The reason may have been his positive attitude towards Iconoclasm, which made him as unsuitable for later official historians as the rulers of the Amorian dynasty. A great challenge for scholars is the fact that Theophanes Continuatus offers two reports on Thomas' early years, of which, however, only the former is trusted by the author.

Historical significance of the movement: The rebellion of Thomas the Slav is one of the most famous cases of civil war in Byzantine history. It sought to overthrow Michael II and make the usurper emperor of Byzantium. This insurrection shows in a characteristic way to what extent an internal issue of a Mediterranean power such as Byzantium could acquire international dimensions and set in motion various political players. The leader himself was a product of migration, since he is claimed to have been one of the Slavs who had been resettled in Asia Minor by the Byzantine government. According to the first report of Theophanes Continuatus, Thomas was a renegade who deserted to the Arabs, converted to Islam, and offered his military service to his new masters. As already mentioned, rebellions could quickly acquire an international dimension and this is what happened in Thomas' case – when the Arabs learned about the turmoil they decided to intervene, but he defeated them and made an alliance with them. Thus,

202 PmbZ 832, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ11920/html> and PmbZ 20837, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22990/html>.

203 PmbZ 27504, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ29659/html>.

204 PmbZ 4244, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ15402/html>.

205 PmbZ 4990, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16167/html>.

206 PmbZ 4991, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16168/html>.

207 PmbZ 8459, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ19726/html>.

he not only made his rear safe but could also rely on the assistance of Patriarch Job of Antioch²⁰⁸ who crowned him emperor. With the Arabs on his side, Thomas quickly conquered vast areas in Asia Minor and Greece and proceeded to Constantinople which he then besieged. Then, however, another power intervened – the Bulgarian cavalry arrived in order to help the legitimate emperor Michael II, perhaps fulfilling a clause of the peace treaty of 815.

Type of movement: Voluntary.

Locations and date of movement: Eastern Anatolia, then followed a march to Constantinople; 821–823.

Edition used: *Chronographiae quae Theophanis Continuati nomine fertur, Libri I–IV*, ed. and transl. by Michael Featherstone and Juan Signes Codoñer, CFHB 53 (Berlin and Boston, 2015) 82, 1–24, Book 2, 12.

Translation: Ibid. (modified by Dirk Krausmüller).

Theophanes Continuatus, Book 2, 12

[p. 82] When the Hagarenes [the Arabs] heard these things, it seemed welcome and thoroughly delightful to them. For seizing the opportunity, they overran every land and island with impunity, with no-one to hinder them. Thus, when Thomas heard this, because he thought that there might be commotion and revolt amongst his men if he did not take care of those left at home and others in the East but allowed their children and wives to be carried off and made prisoners, he thought it profitable to stop their onslaught at that moment through his appearance and to terrify them by the multitude of his forces and cunningly invite them to peace. This indeed did come to pass; for straightway invading their country on his return he appeared to be unstoppable to the Saracens; and entering into negotiations with the barbarians, he concluded a treaty of peace and invited them into an alliance, agreeing to and promising that which has been mentioned before, that he would betray the Roman territories and put control of them in their hands. Consequently, he did not fail in his plan, but received the crown and was proclaimed emperor by Job who then held the see of Antioch; and he brought together a great force, or rather took hold of it in order to increase his power: there were not only Hagarenes, our neighbours who share a border with us, but also those dwelling further, Egyptians, Indians, Persians, Assyrians, Armenians, Chaldeans, Iberians, Zechians, Kabeirans and all those who followed the doctrines and decrees of Manes.

208 PmbZ 3397, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14540/html>.

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Lemerle, Paul, *Thomas le Slave*, TM 1 (Paris, 1965) 255–297.

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1.4.2 An aristocratic rebel in service of the emir: Bardas Skleros²⁰⁹

Author: John Skylitzes

Text: *Synopsis of Histories* (*Synopsis historion*)

Date of text: late 1050s

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: John Skylitzes,²¹⁰ a prominent judge in Constantinople, is the second historian who saw in Theophanes the Confessor *the* model for writing history.²¹¹ Accordingly, he starts his work with 811, taking the narrative up to the year 1057. He calls it a *Synopsis of Histories* and that is what it actually is – a compilation of accounts of historians whom he had read. He reproduces (and sometimes paraphrases) the narratives of others, which make him a source of lower value for events about which earlier accounts have survived. However, since his sources about the late 10th and the early 11th centuries have not been preserved, his synopsis of older historians is the most important work of Greek historiography for the time around the year 1000. Although Skylitzes criticises them for being partiality he reproduces their narratives so that one can still perceive their political affiliations and sympathies. One of them, for example, was particularly fond of the mighty family of Phokas. It is still a matter of scholarly debate whether the so-called Skylitzes Continuatus which covers the years 1057–1079 is Skylitzes' own continuation of his *Synopsis* or the work of someone else.

Historical significance of the movement: After the time of Thomas the Slav, the Byzantine Empire again witnessed rebellions of a great scale during the reign of Basil II,²¹² although Basil is considered one of its mightiest rulers. However, the

209 PmbZ 20785, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22938/html>.

210 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Ioannes/110/>.

211 Kiapidou, Eirene-Sophia, *Η Σύνοψη Ἱστοριῶν του Ἰωάννη Σκυλίτζη και οι πηγές της (811–1057). Συμβολή στη βυζαντινή ιστοριογραφία κατά τον ΙΑ' αιώνα*, Meletes Byzantines Grammateias 9 (Athens, 2010).

212 PmbZ 20838, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22991/html>.

social and ideological backgrounds had changed. The great source of tension in Byzantine society of the early 9th century was the clash between Iconoclasts and Iconophiles (see 1.6.1 and 1.6.2). Moreover, despite the different accounts about his early years, Thomas the Slav was surely of obscure origin. By contrast, the two namesakes and troublemakers of the 970s and the 980s, Bardas Skleros and Bardas Phokas,²¹³ belonged to the most powerful aristocratic families of Asia Minor. These families had gained great wealth and influence during the 9th and 10th centuries, and the Phokas kin even put one of its members – Nikephoros II Phokas²¹⁴ – on the throne. When we add that the families of Skleros and the Phokas produced some of the most prominent military commanders of the time, the fusion of wealth, might, power and ambition could easily turn into a real threat to the legitimate emperor. In 976, Bardas Skleros, a renowned general, revolted against the government. Despite initial successes, he was defeated by government forces and their Georgian allies, and fled to the Arabs in Martyropolis. At the order of the Buyid emir Adud ad-Daula²¹⁵ he was brought to Baghdad and kept in honourable captivity. Emperor Basil II knew very well what an alliance between Skleros and the Arabs could mean and sent envoys to the emir. Yet the emir declined the offer and, according to Skylitzes, appointed Skleros general of a corps of Byzantine prisoners of war who fought for him against his revolting Persian subjects. Later Bardas Skleros returned to Byzantium and joined the revolt of Bardas Phokas against Basil II.

Type of movement: Involuntary.

Locations and date of movement: Escape from Asia Minor to Martyropolis, then captivity in Baghdad and service in Persia; 979.

Edition used: *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis historiarum*, ed. Hans Thurn, CFHB 5 (Berlin and New York, 1973) 327, 23–43; 332, 67–74; 333, 86–334, 39, ch. 10 and 14–15.

Translation used: *John Skylitzes, A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811–1057. Introduction, Text and Notes*, transl. by John Wortley (Cambridge, 2010) 310–317 (modified by Dirk Krausmüller).

213 PmbZ 20784, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22937/html>.

214 PmbZ 25535, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ27689/html>.

215 PmbZ 20131, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22284/html>.

John Skylitzes, *Synopsis of Histories*, Basil and Constantine

[p. 327] But Skleros, together with a few others, escaped and fled to Martyropolis. From there he sent his own brother, Constantine,²¹⁶ to Chosroes [Adud ad-Daula], the ruler of Babylon [Baghdad], asking for help and for an alliance. But when he dragged his feet and neither granted nor refused the gift, and Constantine tarried so long, Skleros himself was forced to go to Chosroes together with all those who were with him. When the rout of Skleros and his flight to Babylon were reported to the emperor through a letter by [Bardas] Phokas, the emperor received and honoured him as he deserved it. He sent the vestes Nikephoros Ouranos²¹⁷ as an ambassador to Chosroes, the amermoumnes of Babylon, entreating him not to deem the rebel worthy of return nor to be willing to furnish a thoroughly bad example to his descendants by showing no care for an emperor who was being wronged, when he was himself an emperor and by supporting a lawless tyrant and traitor. He handed in to him an imperial letter that was sealed, which granted Skleros and those with him a complete pardon if they would remember their duty, recognise their sovereign and go back home. When Ouranos reached Chosroes and this imperial letter was detected, Chosroes became suspicious and threw into prison the ambassador and Skleros and all the Rhomaioi with him. (...) [p. 332] Imprisoned, as we have said, by Chosroes together with his men, Skleros remained in Babylon, being held in prison and denied all care. He was worn out by the misery of imprisonment and the wanton behaviour of those who guarded him. Then suddenly a bright future beckoned him when he and those with him were unexpectedly let out of prison. (...) [p. 333] Chosroes frequently arrayed himself against the Persians, by the agency of his generals and sometimes personally, but he was defeated in all the battles. He despaired as he realised that henceforth he was not strong enough to turn weapons against the Persians since his troops were often cut to pieces and could not bear even to hear the name of the Persians. Then he remembered the Rhomaioi that were held in prison and he considered very prudently that if the prisoner had not been one of the famous and even distinguished Rhomaioi, valiant in body and soul, he would not have rebelled against his own lord and run the risk of falling into such a wretched situation, and afterwards as a refugee who suffered misery, he would not have been proclaimed emperor by so many people of such quality. Chosroes consulted with his council of elders, then released the men from goal, honoured them with all manner of care and finally put his request to them concerning the war. Skleros was reluctant at first and asked with heavy irony how it were possible

216 PmbZ 23921, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ26075/html>.

217 PmbZ 25617, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ27771/html>.

that men who had been so long imprisoned and had been sated with the affliction of captivity moved their arms. But Chosroes again insisted and beseeched him to accept an innumerable amount of money and an army that was beyond counting and splendid in equipment, to take command of the war, and not to bear a grudge about his imprisonment, as he could erase the ill-treatment and discomfort of prison by the good things and the delights which were to come. In the end Skleros was persuaded and promised to accomplish what was required of him. But he absolutely refused to lead an army made up of Arabs or Saracens or of other races under Chosroes; he asked for a search to be made in the prisons of the cities of Syria and the Rhomaioi being held there to be released and armed. [p. 334] He said that otherwise it was not possible for him to take up the fight against the Persians. Chosroes accepted this plan, and the prisons were quickly opened and the Rhomaioi in them set free; three thousand men were assembled from those prisons. After he had sent them to the baths and cleansed them of the filth of imprisonment, Skleros clothed them with new garments and cloaks, giving each man the appropriate and adequate equipment. Then he took guides for the road and went out with them against the Persians. When a formal battle took place and Skleros' men charged the Persians in a violent rush, these were perplexed by the strange nature of their armament, the unusual sound of their speech, their previously unknown battle order and, most of all, by the violence and speed with which they charged. Thus, the Persians were roundly put to flight and every one of them fell. (...) Skleros regained Roman territory and, finding that Bardas Phokas had been proclaimed emperor, he too was likewise proclaimed by his companions.

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1.4.3 The Battle of Manzikert and the betrayal of the Doukas family

Author: Michael Attaleiates

Text: *History (Historia)*

Date of text: early 1080s

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: The other Byzantine historian of the 11th century who made a career as a high legal official in the capital was Michael Attaleiates,²¹⁸ who was also a member of the Senate.²¹⁹ Unlike his colleague Skylitzes who speaks extensively about events that took place decades, sometimes centuries before his time, Attaleiates deals with contemporary issues. He wrote his *History* shortly after the battle of Manzikert (Malazgirt) and says in the preface that his aim was to describe “both the victories and the defeats”. Accordingly, his main objective was to highlight the causes of the accomplishments and of the reversals. His high social status in the capital provided him with easy access to power and wealth. Thus, it is not surprising that his narrative is sometimes polemical and that he criticises severely initiatives of certain emperors and high officials in the field of politics and economy (see 2.4.3 and 2.5.3). In 1071, Attaleiates accompanied Romanos IV Diogenes²²⁰ on his campaign against the Seljuks and witnessed the Byzantine defeat at the battle of Manzikert. The historian felt deep sympathy for the captured emperor.

Historical significance of the movement: One of the most momentous battles in Byzantine history was that of Manzikert in 1071. What made it so important was not the casualties, which were not severe, or the military defeat itself, but the consequences of the actions of the imperial government headed by the Doukas family and the historian and politician Michael Psellos (see 2.1.3).²²¹ The betrayal of the former had already begun during the battle when Andronikos Doukas²²² treacherously left the battlefield and abandoned the emperor. Romanos IV Diogenes was captured by the Seljuk Turks together with his Varangian guard (see 3.3.0). Sultan Alp Arslan²²³ treated the emperor with honour and concluded a peace treaty with the Byzantines. Yet when Romanos was on his way back to Constantinople he learnt that he had been deposed and he was then defeated in a

218 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Michael/202/>.

219 Krallis, Dimitris, *Michael Attaleiates and the Politics of Imperial Decline in Eleventh-Century Byzantium*, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies 422 (Tempe, 2012); Krallis, Dimitris, *Serving Byzantium's Emperors. The Courtly Life and Career of Michael Attaleiates* (Cham, 2019).

220 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Romanos/4/>.

221 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Michael/61/>.

222 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Andronikos/61/>.

223 PBW <https://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/106248/>.

sequence of battles. Although the Doukas family had assured him that his life would be spared if he surrendered, he was taken into captivity and savagely blinded. Romanos was then sent into exile but died of his wounds. Since the agreements that had been made with the sultan were not honoured by the Byzantines, the Seljuks began with their attacks on Asia Minor, soon reaching the coast of the Sea of Marmara. This marked the beginning of the Turkish settlement in Anatolia (see 1.8.5).

Type of movement: Involuntary.

Locations and date of movement: Manzikert, various places in Asia Minor, Kotyaion (Kütahya), the Sea of Marmara; 26 August 1071 (battle), 29 June 1072 (blinding of Romanos Diogenes).

Edition used: *Michaelis Attaliatae Historia*, ed. Eudoxos Tsolakis, CFHB 50 (Athens, 2011) 135, 2–11 and 19–31; 138, 8–19.

Translation used: *The History. Michael Attaleiates*, transl. by Anthony Kaldellis and Dimitris Krallis (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 2012) 317–325 (modified by Dirk Krausmüller)

Michael Attaleiates, *History*

[p. 135] Finally, the two sides negotiated with each other and they agreed that Diogenes would give up his imperial status and also give up his hair, and thus he would spend the rest of his life as a monk. This was done and shortly afterwards he came out of the fort dressed in black and crying about how his affairs had fallen out. (...) Since the general thought of returning, the army returned on the road leading home, and Diogenes was also sent along on a wretched beast of burden and got up in monastic attire; he travelled through those villages and regions where formerly he had passed with his imperial retinue and had been recognised as equal to a god. As far as Kotyaion he made the journey in pain, for he was ill with some condition of the stomach which, it was said, was caused by hemlock that had been prepared for him by his enemies. He was kept there by those who led him until an imperial order could arrive decreeing what should be done with him. And a few days later the harshest and most execrable verdict of condemnation arrived against a man who had suffered so much, ordering that his eyes be immediately gouged out. (...) [p. 138] When he arose, his eyes were drenched with blood, a pitiable and miserable sight that caused in those who saw him an uncontrollable shedding of tears. He lay there half dead, as he had already been weakened by his illness. Then he despaired of everything and received such a reward for his earlier imperial splendour and glory that reached to the heavens, or rather for doing noble deeds on behalf of the Rhomaioi. He was led on a wretched pack animal as far as the Propontis [the Sea of Marmara], dragged along like a rotting corpse with his eyes gouged out, his head and face all swollen up and

maggots were visibly dropping off. A few days later he died in excruciating pain, and even before his death had begun to stink.

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1.5.0 Banishment and defection

In Byzantium banishment was a political tool used by the emperors when they wished to neutralise predecessors, who they had deposed, or punish members of the political and ecclesiastical elites who had conspired against their rule. Considered a milder alternative to execution, it often went hand in hand with other measures. The condemned might be disabled through the mutilation of body parts; or they might be forced to become monks (or nuns), which removed them from the political scene. Neither measure, however, was infallible. Disability could be disregarded and monastic vows could be broken. Preferred places of banishment were outlying regions of the empire, such as the Northern coast of the Black Sea; and localities near the capital, such as the Princes' Islands in the Sea of Marmara. In the first case it was hoped that the condemned would be isolated and thus unable to maintain political networks. Yet there was also a drawback. In remote areas imperial control was weak, and flight to neighbouring countries could not always be prevented. In the second case this problem did not arise, but it was easier for potential allies of the exiled to overcome the barriers, for example, through the bribing of gaolers.

Exile as a punishment was not a Byzantine invention. It had already been used in the Roman era. Thus, it is not surprising that we encounter two famous cases already at the beginning of the period covered by the sourcebook. In the 640s the monk and famous theologian Maximus the Confessor²²⁴ and Pope Martin²²⁵ incurred the wrath of Constans II²²⁶ when they agitated against the official doctrine of the church and lent support to the emperor's political enemies. In the year 653 Martin was apprehended in Rome, which at the time was still part of the Byzantine Empire, and brought to Constantinople where he was tried for treason.

224 PmbZ 4921/add., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16096/html>.

225 PmbZ 4851, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16024/html>.

226 PmbZ 3691/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14839/html>.

Constans wished him to be executed but at the request of the patriarch of Constantinople commuted the sentence to banishment. In 654 he was brought to Cherson in the Crimea where he died shortly afterwards. In the following year Maximus who appears to have travelled from Rome to Constantinople of his own volition was also tried for treason. At first, he was banished to the Thracian city of Bizye, which was only 150 kilometers distant from Constantinople. When he continued to agitate against the official doctrine the emperor ordered that he be brought to another location in Thrace. This was a rather light punishment, which suggests that Maximus had supporters among the elite. In 662 Constans felt in a position to take more decisive steps. Maximus was again brought to Constantinople, his tongue and right hand were cut off to prevent him from disseminating his ideas, and he was sent into exile in Lazica (today Western Georgia) in the Caucasus where he died.

Constans' reign was one of the darkest periods in Byzantine history. The Eastern provinces had been lost to the Arabs and the Balkans overrun by Slavs. Yet in one respect there was continuity. Constans had inherited the rule from his father and grandfather, and he passed it on to his son Constantine IV. This continuity was only broken during the reign of Constantine's son Justinian II.²²⁷ In the year 695 the people of Constantinople rebelled against him and chose the general Leontios²²⁸ as their new emperor. Due to the reverence felt for the ruling dynasty, Justinian was not executed. Instead, his nose was cut off and he was banished to Cherson. Leontios ruled only for three years and was then overthrown by Apsimaros Tiberios.²²⁹ His nose and tongue were cut off and he was imprisoned in the Constantinopolitan monastery of Dalmatos. Apsimaros ruled until the year 705 when Justinian returned to power. Already in Cherson, Justinian had proclaimed that he still considered himself to be the rightful ruler. The chronicler Theophanes states that as a consequence the local population 'took fright of the danger they were incurring on the emperor's part and decided either to kill him or to send him to the emperor.'²³⁰ In order to avoid this danger Justinian fled to the Khazars whose state bordered on the Crimea. From there he went to the Bulgars who supplied him with an army. Once back in his capital, he was determined to stamp out all dissent. He even blinded Patriarch Kallinikos²³¹

227 PmbZ 3556/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14702/html>.

228 PmbZ 4547/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ15713/html>.

229 PmbZ 8483/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ19751/html>.

230 *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor. Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 284–813*, transl. by Cyril Mango, Roger Scott, and Geoffrey Greatrex (Oxford, 1997) 520.

231 PmbZ 3587, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14734/html>.

and exiled him to Rome. Yet in the end he could not prevent his own downfall. In the year 711 he was ousted by Philippikos Bardanes²³² who had him killed. Philippikos himself was no stranger to banishment. He had conspired against Apsimaros and been sent to the island of Kephallonia. He appears to have been recalled by Justinian but was soon exiled again, this time to Cherson. There he proclaimed himself emperor, apparently with the support of the local population. When Justinian sent a fleet against him, he fled to the Chazars who gave him military support. The fleet then went over to him, which enabled him to attack the Byzantine heartland. Here we are clearly in the presence of a recurring pattern. In both cases exile is followed by defection, which gave the empire's neighbours an opportunity to meddle in its internal affairs.

The frequency of regime change in the late 7th and early 8th century is not surprising. During these years the Byzantine state was threatened in its very existence by the relentless advance of the Arabs. One can easily imagine that this dire situation led to tensions within the elite. A measure of stability was only restored during the rule of Leo III.²³³ Leo weathered a lengthy Arab siege of Constantinople and managed to suppress all revolts against his rule. He was succeeded by his son Constantine V,²³⁴ but only after a ferocious civil war. Constantine's enemy was Artabasdos,²³⁵ the *komes* of Opsikion, who had been close to his father. In the year 743 Constantine managed to defeat him and had him and his sons blinded and sent to the monastery of Chora on the outskirts of the capital. Here we have another case where an emperor chose to keep his enemies close by. After 743 the survival of the dynasty was assured. Constantine was succeeded by his son Leo IV and Leo in turn by his infant son Constantine VI²³⁶ for whom his widow Irene²³⁷ acted as regent. Irene later had Constantine blinded and ruled alone. In 802, however, she was ousted by the minister Nikephoros²³⁸ who banished her first to the Princes' Islands and then to the island of

232 PmbZ 6150/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ17350/html>.

233 PmbZ 4242, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ15400/html>.

234 PmbZ 3703/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14852/html>.

235 PmbZ 632/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ11720/html>.

236 PmbZ 3704/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14853/html>.

237 PmbZ 1439/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ12537/html>.

238 PmbZ 5252/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16435/html>.

Lesbos. Nikephoros' successor was his son-in-law Michael I Rangabe²³⁹ who only ruled for two years. When Leo,²⁴⁰ the *strategos* of the Anatolikoi, proclaimed himself emperor, Michael did not put up any resistance but fled to a church in Constantinople and had himself and his whole family tonsured, thus signalling that he had relinquished his claim to be emperor. Leo sent him and his sons to the Princes' Islands and gave them an annual stipend. Michael's sons were castrated, which permanently disqualified them for the imperial office. This suggests that monastic tonsure was no longer considered a sufficient precaution. Michael's wife Prokopia²⁴¹ and his daughters were not formally exiled but nevertheless entered a nunnery in Constantinople. In 815 Leo V reinstated Iconoclasm as official doctrine, which led to the banishment of Patriarch Nikephoros²⁴² and a number of bishops and monks to various places in Asia Minor. Among their number was Theodore, the abbot of the famous Stoudios monastery, whose experience is discussed in greater detail below.

The next two instances of regime change did not involve banishment. In the year 820, Leo V was murdered by his associate Michael,²⁴³ and in 867 Michael's grandson Michael III was murdered by his friend Basil I.²⁴⁴ Basil founded the so-called Macedonian dynasty, which remained in power until 1056. This was a period of political stability. There were only two exceptions. In 944 Romanos Lekapenos²⁴⁵ who ruled the empire as guardian of the young Constantine VII, a grandson of Basil, was deposed by his own sons when they feared that they would be passed over in the succession. They exiled their father to the Princes' Islands and forced him to become a monk. Yet this measure availed them nothing since Constantine had them tonsured and sent first to the Princes' Islands and then to various Aegean islands. In 1042 Zoe²⁴⁶ who together with her sister Theodora was the last living member of the dynasty was deposed by Michael V,²⁴⁷ the nephew of her deceased husband, whom she had adopted. Michael tried to banish her to the

239 PmbZ 4989/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ1616/html>.

240 PmbZ 4244/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ1540/2/html>.

241 PmbZ 6351, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ17552/html>.

242 PmbZ 5301/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ1648/5/html>.

243 PmbZ 4990/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ1616/7/html>.

244 PmbZ 832 add./corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22990/html>.

245 PmbZ 26833, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28987/html>.

246 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Zoe/1/>.

247 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Michael/5/>.

Princes' Islands but this caused a revolt. In the end, Michael was blinded and banished to a monastery where he died. Zoe was brought back and ruled together with her sister Theodora. This event shows clearly how attached the population of Constantinople was to the ruling dynasty.

The next period of crisis was the 1070 and 1080s when the Turks invaded Asia Minor. This led to a rapid succession of rebellions. The ruling emperor Michael VII²⁴⁸ resigned in 1078 when the general Nikephoros Botaneiates²⁴⁹ appeared before Constantinople. Botaneiates then had to contend with the rebellions of Nikephoros Bryennios²⁵⁰ and Nikephoros Basilakes²⁵¹ and was eventually ousted by Alexios I Komnenos²⁵² whose descendants were to rule until the year 1185. Botaneiates had Bryennios and Basilakes blinded but appears to have refrained from further measures. In the case of Bryennios we know that he could stay on his ancestral estates. The most likely explanation is that these men represented aristocratic families who had found other ways to negotiate their relative status. Inferiors were not let off so lightly. After his master's resignation Nikephoritzes,²⁵³ Michael's unpopular chief administrator, was exiled to the Princes' Islands and tortured to death.

The rule of Alexios Komnenos' son John II²⁵⁴ and his grandson Manuel I²⁵⁵ was largely secure, thanks to a policy that gave the most important aristocratic families a share in the administration of the empire. Only close relatives of the emperors were an exception. In the 1130s and 1140s Alexios' younger son Isaakios²⁵⁶ repeatedly fell out with his brother and his nephew because he considered himself to be more worthy of rule. In 1139 Isaakios' son John²⁵⁷ defected to the Seljuks of Ikonion who had founded a state in inner Anatolia on the former lands of the empire. There he became Muslim and married the sultan's daughter. An even more interesting case is Manuel's cousin Andronikos,²⁵⁸ in whose life defection and reconciliation alternated. In the 1160s and 1170s he went to Galicia (in modern-day western Ukraine), to the Crusader states of Antioch and Jerusalem, to the sultanate of Damascus and to Georgia before returning to the empire where he was banished to the ancestral estates of the Komnenos family on

248 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Michael/7/>.

249 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Nikephoros/3/>.

250 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Nikephoros/62/>.

251 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Nikephoros/61/>.

252 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Alexios/1/>.

253 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Nikephoros/63/>.

254 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Ioannes/2/>.

255 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Manuel/1/>. Magdalino, Paul, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180* (Cambridge, 1993).

256 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Isaakios/102/>.

257 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Ioannes/25002/>.

258 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Andronikos/1/>.

the Black Sea coast (see 2.1.4). This itinerary reflects the fragmented political landscape of the time, which gave those who sought to escape punishment several possible ports of call. Defection remained an option after the collapse of the empire in the year 1204. As can be seen below, in the mid-13th century Michael (VIII) Palaiologos,²⁵⁹ fearing punishment from Emperor Theodore II Laskaris (1254–1258), fled to the Seljuks of Ikonion.

Dirk Krausmüller

1.5.1 The travails of a monk

Author: Michael the Monk²⁶⁰

Text: *Life (Vita B) of Saint Theodore of Stoudios* [BHG 1754]

Date of text: after 868, probably before 900

Genre: Hagiography

Literary context: The author of the *Life*, Michael, was monk at the Constantinopolitan monastery of Stoudios, where Theodore had been abbot. At the behest of the leaders of the community he reworked a now lost *Life* by Patriarch Methodios of Constantinople²⁶¹ (843–847), which had been composed soon after Theodore's death. The reworking (in Greek: *metaphrasis*) was deemed necessary because Methodios' *Life* was written in very difficult Greek and could not be understood by most members of the community. Michael amplified his text by incorporating into it other older sources, such as a *letter* by Theodore's disciple Naukratios,²⁶² which gave an account of the saint's last days. Michael had received a good education, most likely before he became monk, which enabled him to execute this task. Indeed, he was a prolific author who wrote many hagiographical texts, including a *Life* of the Stoudite abbot Nicholas,²⁶³ another disciple of Theodore. He later became archimandrite of the Constantinopolitan monastery of Dalmatos and confidant of Patriarch Nicholas Mystikos²⁶⁴ (901–907, 912–925).

259 PLP 21352.

260 PmbZ 5121, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ27253/html>.

261 PmbZ 4977, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16154/html>.

262 PmbZ 5230/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16411/html>.

263 PmbZ 5576, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16761/html>.

264 PmbZ 25885, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28039/html>.

Historical significance of the movement: Theodore is quite well known to us because of the numerous sermons and letters that he composed. Born in the year 759 into a Constantinopolitan elite family, he became caught up in the monastic revival that followed the end of the First Iconoclasm. Together with his uncle Platon,²⁶⁵ he founded the monastery of Sakkoudion in Bithynia on an estate that belonged to his family. Later he became abbot of the venerable Stoudios monastery where he attracted hundreds of monks. He clashed several times with the Byzantine rulers. When in 795 Constantine VI (780–797) divorced his wife and married her lady-in-waiting Theodote²⁶⁶ he claimed that the divorce was illegal and that Constantine was therefore an adulterer (despite the fact that Theodote was a relative of his). As a consequence, he was banished to Thessaloniki and could only return when Constantine was deposed by his mother Irene (797–802). When Irene was in turn deposed by her minister Nikephoros (802–811) the controversy about Constantine's second marriage flared up again. Theodore was again sent into exile, this time to the Princes' Islands near the capital. Under Nikephoros' successor Michael Rangabe (811–813) he was rehabilitated but when in 815 Leo V (813–820) reintroduced Iconoclasm he was again banished, this time to Western Asia Minor, because he considered the veneration of images to be an essential part of the Christian faith. He died in exile in the year 826.

Type of movement: Involuntary movement for reasons of faith.

Locations and date of movement: Constantinople, Metopa, Boneta, Smyrna; 815.

Edition used: *S. P. N. Theodori Studitae opera omnia*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, PG 99 (Paris, 1860) col. 233–328, esp. 288 A-D, 297C-D, ch. 37, 44.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Michael the Monk, *Life (Vita B) of Theodore of Stoudios*

[col. 288 A-D] From then on our father Theodore did not cease to write one letter after the other, and to inspire courage in those far and near, wishing rather to make himself known in this way to the raving heretic. And as he did not pay heed to his threats, he assuredly also did not fear death for the faith. As a result the evil-minded Leo rages even more and sentences him to exile. Then our sacred father and unashamed teacher of orthodoxy accepts the decision that for a long time had been desirable and welcome to him. He calls the crowd of the disciples and appoints from among them seventy-two leaders, encouraging the brotherhood to divide themselves up among them according to their free wish. And he gave them

265 PmbZ 6285, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ17486/html>.

266 PmbZ 7899, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ19150/html>.

the commandment that those who wished for the true life and yearned to see good days, as the holy David sings, should not stay there [i. e. in the monastery of Stoudios] after his departure. And having been arrested by the imperial official who had been sent, he is gladly exiled to a fortress near the lake of Apollonia, which is called Metopa. But there, too, the captive for Christ though being incarcerated, did not desist from the activities that are loved by God, but again encouraged through his own words those who were determined to keep the faith wherever they might live and roused them to the good. When the brutal Leo found out about this, he sent another imperial official, whose name was Niketas and whose sobriquet was Alexios, who was exceedingly pious and most Christian, which was unknown to the beast (i. e. the emperor), and had Theodore transferred through him to another fortress, which is called Boneta, letting the father know by those who served him through commands that he should see nobody at all nor teach anybody about matters of faith through his letters. The man, who was Apostle-like in mind and in conduct, replied with Apostle-like words: 'If it is right before God to hear you rather than God, judge thus. For we cannot not say what we have seen and heard, since one must obey God rather than men.' When the ruler had heard this and rebuked Niketas who was Christ-loving, as not having acted straightaway to satisfy the imperial dignity, he sends him for a second time that he might give the pious martyr a hundred lashes with a whip.

[col. 297C-D] And when these wounds had not yet scarred over properly there came to him another evil-doing messenger of the ruler who was to transfer him to the province of Smyrna. He came with an entourage of flatterers or rather dogs that accompanied him, and broke down the door that had been blocked off. After he had forced the sacred fathers [i. e. Theodore and his disciple Nicholas] to come out, he asked them – for he was a lover of money – about the leftovers of Mammon, which they did not have. And when the search turned out to be futile he made his followers go into the cell and search every nook and cranny. But when their endeavour turned out to be fruitless the wretched ones went crazy and hastened the saints on their road without a shred of mercy or pity, and they did not show them any compassion at all, especially when they saw that the godly Theodore's body was entirely withered and resembled a corpse. Thus, then, they travelled from there a small distance and at a late hour stopped at some place where they saw to it that the feet of the captives for Christ walked in pain all night long. But in the morning they left the place and likewise moved ahead. Because of the pain in his feet our father could barely walk, but even so forced himself, putting his trust in God and strengthening the weakness of nature through the hope for the good things that are stored up for the righteous. And thus in a few days they arrived at the settlement of Smyrna and were handed over to the arch-heretic [i. e. the Iconoclast bishop] there, who was inebriated with the unmixed wine of his impiety, and locked up the confessors of Christ in a room inside the

precinct of the bishop's palace, leaving only this one opening so that from there they could receive the daily food consisting of bread and water.

Further reading

Krausmüller, Dirk, *Vitae B, C and A of Theodore the Stoudite: Their Interrelation, Dates, Authors and Significance for the History of the Stoudios Monastery in the 10th Century*, *Analecta Bollandiana* 131 (2013) 280–298.

Pratsch, Thomas, *Theodoros Studites (759–826) zwischen Dogma und Pragma*, BBS 4 (Berlin, 1998) 6–16.

Theodori Studitae Epistulae, ed. Georgios Fatouros CFBH 31/1 (Berlin, 1991) 3*–20*.

Cholij, Roman, *Theodore the Stoudite: The Ordering of Holiness* (Oxford, 2002).

Dirk Krausmüller

1.5.2 The banishment of an empress

Author: Anonymous

Text: *Life of Empress Irene* [BHG 2206]

Date of text: prior to 11th century

Genre: Hagiography

Literary context: Little is known about the *Life*. We do not have the name of the author or the date of its composition (it must have been written before the 11th century since the only manuscript that contains it was copied in those years). The content is largely adapted from the *Chronographia* of Theophanes the Confessor, which was composed in the early 9th century. Accordingly, the nature of the text is less hagiographical than historical. Its purpose is unclear. As far as we can tell Irene was never the recipient of a cult.

Historical significance of the movement: Irene who hailed from Athens became the wife of the Emperor Leo IV (775–780). After the death of her husband, she was regent for her small son Constantine VI. When Constantine tried to get rid of her, she had him blinded and from 797 ruled as the sole empress. In 787 she had already convened the Second Council of Nicaea where Iconoclasm, which had until then been the official doctrine, was rejected and the veneration of images was declared orthodox. In the year 802 she was deposed by her minister Nikephoros who accused her of misrule. Nikephoros (802–811) banished her first to the Princes' Islands where she founded a convent and then to the island of Lesbos where she died in the year 803.

Type of movement: Involuntary movement for political reasons.

Locations and date of movement: Constantinople, Prinkipo and Lesbos; 802–803.

Edition used: Halkin, François, Deux impératrices de Byzance, I. La vie de l'impératrice sainte Irène et le second concile de Nicée en 787, *Analecta Bollandiana* 106 (1988) 5–27.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Anonymous, *Life of Empress Irene*

[p. 24] She [i. e. Irene] said: (...) 'I beg you to spare my weakness. Permit me to keep the house of Eleutherios, which I have founded, as a comfort for my incomparable misfortune.' And he [i. e. Nikephoros] said: 'Swear by the entire divine power that you will not hide from me any of the imperial treasures, and I will grant your request and give you everything you need for your care and respite.' And she swore on the venerable and life-giving cross that she would not hide anything from him down to a farthing, which she did. But when he had received what he had desired he immediately exiled her to the Princes' Islands, to the monastery which she had built. The envoys of Charlemagne were in the city and saw what was going on. Nikephoros who was insatiable and lawless and a new apostate laid hold of the rule, and could not even for a little time hide through deception the evil and avarice that was in his nature. (...) [p. 25] But what speech could narrate properly what was done in those days by this thrice-wretched and lawless man with the permission of God because of our sins? When he saw that all were aggrieved about him he feared that they might remember the benefactions of the pious empress Irene and demand that he bring her back again. Though a most severe winter storm threatened, the heartless one had no pity for her but banished her to the island of Lesbos. And he ordered that she be closely guarded and not be seen by anybody at all. O the violence, o the reward, o the manner in which the perjuring and treacherous emperor repaid her! But when Irene who was famous among empresses was about to set out for her exile, she called the Abrahamic and praiseworthy woman of God, who was the first of those most pious women, and said to her: 'Dear mother, take this hut for your venerable body and the small abode for those who in future will renounce the world with you. Take this little house, which will be the mercy seat for me and for many. For even if you assume a strange name and garb, you know how to welcome the locals and benefit their souls. Take the flock of my staff. For a staff that crushes will not tend it. Become the leader of my sheepfold. For I know that the whole flock will submit to you and be obedient. I know that my sheep will prosper. Nourish them and guide them to the spring of respite and a shady meadow. Increase them and lead them also to the sheepfold above and enter it together with them. For from now on you will not have me as a companion in the flesh, but you will have me as a fellow-shepherdess in the spirit.' [p. 26] When she had said these words to her and arranged fittingly all the affairs of the monastery, she hastened on the road to

exile, I mean, to the island of Lesbos, with a big crowd and the shedding of tears, especially since the impious ruler commanded that she not be seen by anybody.

Further reading

Garland, Linda, *Byzantine Empresses: Women and Power in Byzantium, AD 527–1204* (London, 2011) 75–93.

Haldon, John F., and Leslie Brubaker, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era, c. 680–850* (Cambridge, 2011) 252–294.

Herrin, Judith, *Women in Purple: Three Byzantine Empresses* (London, 2001) 51–129.

Dirk Krausmüller

1.5.3 Defecting to the infidels

Author: George Akropolites²⁶⁷

Text: *Chronicle* (*Chronike syngraphe*)

Date of text: after 1261

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: Born in the year 1217 in Constantinople, which was then under the control of the Latins, Akropolites was sent to Nicaea in Northwest Asia Minor where the Byzantine ruler in exile, John III Vatatzes (1221–1254), resided. He received an excellent education and then served the emperors Theodore II (1254–1258) and Michael VIII Komnenos Palaiologos²⁶⁸ (1259–1282) in various functions. He was also a teacher of philosophy and the author of several theological and hagiographical texts. His most important work is the *Chronike syngraphe*, which narrates the history of the Byzantine Empire from 1203 to 1261. It stands in the tradition of classicising historiography, which took its inspiration from ancient and late ancient texts. One feature of this genre was the use of ancient names for contemporary peoples: thus, Turks are called Persians and Mongols are called Tocharians. Due to his functions Akropolites had first-hand knowledge of many of the events and is therefore a very reliable source.

Historical significance of the movement: In 1256 Michael Komnenos (VIII Palaiologos, the later emperor), then a high official and relative of Theodore II Laskaris, was suspected of treason. In order to avoid punishment, he fled to the ‘Persians’, that is, the Seljuk Turks of Ikonion. Their state, the sultanate, had been founded around the year 1100 in inner Anatolia and had in the early 13th century expanded to encompass the Northern and Southern coasts. Both the Byzantine

²⁶⁷ PLP 518.

²⁶⁸ PLP 21528.

Empire and the sultanate resembled one another insofar as they were states with functioning bureaucracies and sedentary populations. By contrast, the areas in-between were inhabited by nomadic Turks, so-called Turkmens, who did not respect any borders or agreements. In the middle of the 13th century, they could no longer be held in check by the sultans because the Seljukid state was weakened by ‘Tocharian’, that is, Mongol attacks. This explains why Michael Komnenos Palaiologos was attacked and why the attempts to recover his goods came to nothing. A few decades after the events narrated by Akropolites the old order collapsed altogether, and the Turkmens set out to conquer all the Byzantine lands in Western Asia Minor. Another point of interest is the presence of a Christian population in the sultanate, which did battle for their overlords. Descendants of this group lived in inner Anatolia until the beginning of the 20th century. Michael was given the command over them by the sultan, which shows that Christians and Muslims could respect each other.

Type of movement: Voluntary movement to avoid punishment.

Locations and date of movement: Nicaea, Ikonion, Kastamon; 1256.

Edition used: *Georgii Acropolitae opera*, ed. August Heisenberg and Peter Wirth, vol. 1 (revised edition) (Leipzig, 1978) 136–138, ch. 65.

Translation used: Macrides, Ruth, *George Akropolites, The History. Translated with an Introduction and Commentary* (Oxford, 2007) 315–316, esp. 136–138 (modified by Dirk Krausmüller)

George Akropolites, *Chronicle*, ch. 65

[p. 136] Since we have reached this point in the narrative, we shall broaden the scope of the history, as is necessary; for the things that happened during the flight of Michael Komnenos are deserving of many words. He came to the dwellings of the Turkmens. This is a people who occupy the furthest boundaries of the Persians and feel implacable hatred for the Rhomaioi, glory in plundering them, and rejoice in booty from wars; this was especially the case when Persian affairs were agitated and thrown into confusion by the Tocharian attacks. Some Turkmens encountered him, as if he were a chance find, and casting a greedy eye on his possessions, snatched everything of his, gold, silver, horses, weavings and the very garments that his men wore. They also divided up his entire entourage, each taking into his own service the man he had seized. Barely escaping from their hands, saved by divine providence, Michael Komnenos reached the ruler of the Persians, denuded of everything. The latter greeted him not as a newcomer who had fled but accepted him gladly. For he had learnt of the man’s nobility and all the magnates who were with the Persian ruler admired his [p. 137] appearance and his character and, as one of the ancients says, they judged it worthy of monarchy. Exchanging a few words with him they quickly recognised the

steadfastness of the man; they saw evidence of his skill as a soldier and his precision in wars, and found that he was initiated in the matters that pertain to battles. So then, letters of the sultan were written, although in vain, so that his plundered possessions and his distributed servants, everything and everyone, might be collected and brought to him. Since the outcome of the battle stood on the razor's edge for them (for the Tocharians, having looted most of the Muslims' land, were encamped at Aksaray) there was every need for the Persians to resist the Tocharians in battle; and so the Persians appointed Michael Komnenos to be commander of the Christian forces. (...) [p. 138] Many Persians were falling, struck by the arrows of the Tocharians. And the victors gave chase up to a long distance. When this had happened, Michael Komnenos encountered on the road the general of the Persian army (whom the Persians are wont to call *peklarpaki*), and they marched very many days, fighting sporadically, with the army pursuing them. Since the home of the aforementioned *peklarpaki* happened to be at Kastamon, they pressed on and arrived there. The race of the Tatars overran all the territory under the Muslims.

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Dirk Krausmüller

1.6.0 Religion

According to a well-known definition, the historical phenomenon called by modern scholarship *Byzantium* consisted of three elements. These were Roman state tradition, Greek language and culture, and Christian religion.²⁶⁹ It would surely be ahistorical and misleading to ask which one of them played the most significant role in shaping the identity and culture of the medieval Rhomaioi. Yet what we can see in the sources is a much higher degree of sensitivity to issues of religion than to questions concerning the relations to Ancient Rome or the use of the various idioms of the Greek language. And if we add that this interest in religious affairs was deep-rooted in all strata of Byzantine society and not only in a small group of highly educated intellectuals living in the capital and the major episcopal sees, it comes as no surprise that if there was a topic that could rock the whole empire with all the consequences one could expect – or not – this was religion.

Seven ecumenical councils and dozens of smaller synods were summoned to resolve problems concerning the official dogmas of Christianity. One side in these disputes was bound to lose and had to face the consequences. If one remembers that since the time of Constantine the Great the state was greatly interested in religious issues and supported the winning side (resulting in what was later to become the so-called political Orthodoxy), the rejected party found itself in a difficult situation. Since Eastern Christianity never really resorted to the legal path of formal accusations, trial, condemnation and execution as a means of punishing the heretics as the Catholic West did, the victorious religious party had to find other ways of coping with opposition. According to the canonist Theodore Balsamon (12th century),²⁷⁰ the various types of executions were simply inhuman murders; speaking about punishments he mentions first house arrest (*perior-*

269 Ostrogorsky, George, *History of the Byzantine State*, transl. by Joan Hussey (2nd English edition) (Oxford, 1980) 27.

270 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Theodoros/20364/>.

ismos).²⁷¹ By imposing it, the state or church officials sought to punish their opponents and also to weaken their position through division and separation (see 1.5.0). Yet this way of dealing with religious dissent could work only with individuals or small groups. When the group was larger, resettlement of the troublemakers became an option (see 1.2.0). It was used in the case of non-Orthodox Christians from the East like Syrians, Armenians or the heresy of the Paulicians. They were brought to the Balkans where they were tasked with protecting the borders against Slavs, Bulgars, and the Rus (see below). When speaking about religious dissent, one should remember that this term is by no means synonymous with heresy. First, people condemned as heretics by the victorious Orthodox Church considered themselves to be the true Christians. Moreover, they regarded the official church hierarchy as heretical. How things could turn upside down and how the persecutors could become persecuted and vice versa, can be seen from the clash between Iconophiles and Iconoclasts in the 8th and early 9th centuries.

Thus, religious groups should not be regarded only as objects of mobility, especially of a state-driven one. Just like the official Church, they followed the words of Christ to the apostles to go and teach all the nations (Matthew 28:18–20; Mark 16: 14–16), and therefore considered it their mission to preach *their* view of Christianity. The present chapter deals with the mobility of three religious groups, which left a significant impact on the Church history of Byzantium during the middle and late period. However, some preliminary remarks need to be made before we can turn our attention to the texts and their literary and historical contextualisation. Apart from their Christian denomination, the only thing Iconophiles, Paulicians, and Bogomils had in common was the fact that they all were involved in involuntary mobility caused by religious persecutions. What distinguishes the latter two from the first one is that the Iconophiles' views on Christology and Christian worship finally succeeded in becoming official dogma. Accordingly, the victorious Iconophilia has been regarded as Orthodox Christianity since the middle of the 9th century. The followers of Paulicianism and Bogomilism never had such success and their beliefs remained bywords for heresy. However, it seems that some emperors were prepared to overlook the political and religious sins of the Paulicians if their military skills could be of profit for the Byzantine army. In order to better control them they expelled them from their homeland in the East and resettled them in the West.

271 Rhalles, Georgios and Michael Potles, *Σύνταγμα τῶν θείων καὶ ἱερῶν κανόνων τῶν τε ἁγίων καὶ πανευφήμων ἀποστόλων, καὶ τῶν ἱερῶν οἰκουμενικῶν καὶ τοπικῶν συνόδων, καὶ τῶν κατὰ μέρος ἁγίων πατέρων*, vol. 1 (Athens, 1852) 190.

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- Beck, Hans-Georg, *Vom Umgang mit Ketzern. Der Glaube der kleinen Leute und die Macht der Theologen* (Munich, 1993).
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Grigori Simeonov

Iconoclasm is the modern term used to describe a religious movement in Byzantium, which rejected the veneration of images of Christ and the saints. During two periods, the so-called First Iconoclasm (730–787) and Second Iconoclasm (815–843), it had the support of the state. The opponents of the Iconoclasts, which are dubbed Iconophiles, rejected the official doctrine and were at times prepared to suffer punishment for their beliefs. Unfortunately, it is not always possible to say how widespread resistance was and whether Iconophiles were punished. Sources referring to the First Iconoclasm are not only few in number but also highly tendentious, accusing the Iconoclasts of all manner of misdemeanours. Therefore, it has been argued that accounts of exile and flight have no basis in reality. By contrast, the Second Iconoclasm is quite well documented. We have not only hagiographical texts but also the letters of the abbot Theodore of Stoudios,²⁷² which allows us to reconstruct the networks of the Iconophiles. After Emperor Leo V²⁷³ had reintroduced Iconoclasm in the year 815 he demanded that everyone fall in with his views. It appears that a great number of bishops and monastic communities did so. Yet there was also considerable resistance. The most prominent figure was the patriarch Nikephoros I.²⁷⁴ He was sent first to the monastery of Agathos and then to the monastery of Saint Theodore. Yet this exile appears to have been not very onerous. Both houses had been founded by Nikephoros and had been visited by him even before. Moreover, they were not very distant from Constantinople. High-profile Iconophiles among the clergy were Michael,²⁷⁵ the metropolitan of Synada, and Theophylaktos,²⁷⁶ the

272 PmbZ 7554, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ18819/html>.

273 PmbZ 4244, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ15402/html>.

274 PmbZ 5301, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16485/html>.

275 PmbZ 5042, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16219/html>.

276 PmbZ 8295, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ19558/html>.

metropolitan of Nikomedeia. The two men were wedded to the Iconophile cause since they had been close associates of Patriarch Tarasios²⁷⁷ who reinstituted the cult of images in 787. They were sent to Eudokias and Strobilos in Southwest Asia Minor, well away from the capital, but do not seem to have been imprisoned. The majority of Iconophiles, however, appear to have been monks. In the section about banishment and defection we have already encountered the case of Theodore of Stoudios (see 1.5.1). He was exiled to different places in Asia Minor, kept imprisoned and subjected to torture. The harshness of his treatment explains itself when we consider that he was the leader of the Iconophile resistance. Other abbots were less steadfast. Niketas,²⁷⁸ the head of the monastery of Medikion in Bithynia, was exiled to the fortress of Masalaion in Eastern Anatolia, but immediately recalled to Constantinople and persuaded to enter into communion with the Iconoclast patriarch. He set out to return to his community but changed his mind during the journey and returned to the capital. He was then exiled to the Aegean island of Hagia Glykeria where he is supposed to have been imprisoned and starved. From Niketas' *life* it is clear that the community of Medikion stayed put and accepted an Iconoclast abbot. This, however, was not always the case. As can be seen below, the abbot Peter of Atroa²⁷⁹ told his monks to disperse in groups of two and three. A similar arrangement was made at Stoudios. According to his hagiographer, Theodore appointed seventy-two monks and told the others to choose one of them and depart with him (see 1.5.1). For the Iconophiles the worst was over in 820 when Leo V was assassinated by his old associate Michael.²⁸⁰ Although formally an Iconoclast, Michael showed little interest in doctrinal matters. This meant that Iconophile abbots could move freely again, provided that they did not return to their communities. An exception was Methodios,²⁸¹ who had followed Theodore as leader of the Iconophiles. He was imprisoned on the island of Hagios Andreas in the Sea of Marmara. It seems likely, however, that Michael took this step for political reasons. Methodios may have conspired against his rule.

277 PmbZ 7235, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ18463/html>.

278 PmbZ 5443, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16625/html>.

279 PmbZ 6022, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ17220/html>.

280 PmbZ 4990, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16167/html>.

281 PmbZ 4977, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16154/html>.

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Dirk Krausmüller

1.6.1 The flight of the monks during Iconoclasm

Author: Stephen the Deacon²⁸²

Text: *Life of Saint Stephen the Younger* [BHG 1666]

Date of text: ca. 807/809

Genre: Hagiography

Literary context: The *Life of Stephen the Younger*²⁸³ is the first surviving hagiographical text devoted to a monastic saint after a hiatus of more than a century. Its author Stephen was deacon at the Constantinopolitan cathedral of Saint Sophia under the Iconophile patriarch Nikephoros I.²⁸⁴ The text is not entirely original since several sections are borrowed from older texts, with only slight modifications. According to the author, Stephen was a hermit on a mountain near Constantinople who opposed the Iconoclast emperor Constantine V²⁸⁵ and was executed for his Iconophile convictions. While it is accepted that Stephen was indeed a victim of the emperor there is no agreement among scholars on whether the issue of icons played any role. Stephen may have been condemned because he supported a plot against the emperor.

Historical significance of the movement: Should the list of the destinations be correct it would give us an idea of how far the emperor's power reached. Most of the regions are on the fringes or even outside the empire but mention is also made of the Southern coast of Asia Minor (Lycia, Pamphylia, Isauria), which was firmly integrated into the Byzantine state. Therefore, the information cannot be taken at face value, especially when one considers that the *Life* was written half a century after the events. It has even been doubted whether the champions of icon worship (if there were indeed such people during the First Iconoclasm) moved because of

282 PmbZ 7055, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ18279/html>.

283 PmbZ 7012, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ18235/html>.

284 PmbZ 5301, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16485/html>.

285 PmbZ 3703, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14852/html>.

their convictions. Another text, however, the *Life of Saint Romanos the New Martyr*,²⁸⁶ which was written in the late 8th century, mentions two monks, John²⁸⁷ and Symeon,²⁸⁸ who left the Byzantine Empire for the Caliphate because of their opposition to Iconoclasm.

Type of movement: Voluntary movement for reasons of faith.

Locations and date of movement: from Constantinople and its environs to the Northern coast of the Black Sea (Zechia, Cherson, Bosporos, Nikopsis and Gotthia), to Rome and Southern Italy with Naples, to Nicopolis (in Epirus?), to Lycia, Syleon in Pamphylia, Syke, and Isauria, to Cyprus and to the coastal region opposite Cyprus up to Tripolis, Tyre and Joppe; ca. 765.

Edition used: *La vie d'Étienne le Jeune par Étienne le Diacre*, ed. Marie-France Auzépy, BBOM 3 (Aldershot and Brookfield, 1997) 125, ch. 28.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Stephen the Deacon, *Life of Stephen the Younger*, ch. 28

[p. 125] After the most blessed Stephen had conversed with that sacred group of monks, when all were crying and beating their breasts, the father heaved a deep sigh and said: 'There are three places in our time, which do not hold communion with this unclean heresy. There, I counsel you, you should go. For no other place is left under the power of the dragon, which does not obey his idle blather.' Then they asked: 'What are these places, father?' And he answered: 'The regions in the upper parts of the Black Sea in the eparchy of Zechia, from Cherson, Bosporos, Nikopsis and until the hollow Gotthia, then the regions around the Parthenic gulf, where the Southern bay is crossed, and what lies below the Old Rome, the metropolis of the Nicopolitans and Naples and the land that stretches up to the river of Rome, and sometimes also the lower parts of the eparchy of the Lycians from Syleon, Syke and what is sailed in this sea, and the island of Cyprus and the opposite shore up to Tripolis and Tyre and Joppe. And what need is there to mention the patriarchs of Rome and Antioch and Jerusalem and Alexandria? They not only abhor and anathematise the polluted doctrine of the image-burners, but also do not cease to castigate in their polemical letters the impious emperor who is inclined to it, calling him apostate and heresiarch.'

286 PmbZ 6417, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ17619/html>.

287 PmbZ 3117, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14254/html>.

288 PmbZ 7183, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ18409/html>.

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Gero, Stephen, *Byzantine Iconoclasm during the Reign of Constantine V with Particular Attention to the Oriental Sources*, CSCO, Subsidia 52 (Leuven, 1977) 112–113.

Dirk Krausmüller

1.6.2 The dispersal of a community during Iconoclasm

Author: Sabas the Monk²⁸⁹

Text: *Life of Saint Peter of Atroa* [BHG 2365]

Date of text: ca. 843

Genre: Hagiography

Literary context: The *Life of Peter of Atroa*²⁹⁰ is one of several hagiographical texts devoted to champions of icon worship during the Second Iconoclasm. It was written by the monk Sabas who had come from Constantinople in order to join the saint. Peter was born around the year 773 in a village near the city of Pergamon in Western Asia Minor. At a young age he joined the hermit Paul²⁹¹ who later founded a monastery on Mount Olympos near present-day Bursa. After Paul's death he became his successor. When in 815 Emperor Leo V²⁹² reinstituted Iconoclasm as official doctrine he spoke out in favour of image worship. This brought him into contact with the Iconophile resistance, which was led by Theodore,²⁹³ the abbot of the Stoudios monastery in Constantinople. Yet soon frictions began to emerge. Peter was a typical 'holy' man. Having imposed on himself a gruelling ascetic regime, he came to be credited with the ability to perform miracles. This lifestyle was frowned upon by the Iconophile abbots of the capital and its environs who came from elite families and preferred a strictly coenobitic life where all monks subject themselves to a common rule. In his later years Peter wandered through Western Asia Minor and founded several monastic communities. He died in the year 837.

289 PmbZ 6647, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ17651/html>.

290 PmbZ 6022, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ17220/html>.

291 PmbZ 5838, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ17029/html>.

292 PmbZ 4244, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ15402/html>.

293 PmbZ 7554, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ18819/html>.

Historical significance of the movement: The text shows how monastic communities acted in times of persecution. They did not move *en masse* but broke up into smaller groups of two to three monks who then retreated to inaccessible areas in the neighbourhood. Here we can clearly see that the communities were built on bonds between individuals and that the monastery as a whole was merely an aggregate of these microstructures, even though this ran counter to the coenobitic idea where particularistic relations are meant to be suppressed. One possible reason for the emergence of this phenomenon is the Arab raids of the 7th to 9th centuries, which made it necessary for monastic communities to be highly mobile.

Type of movement: Involuntary movement for reasons of faith.

Locations and date of movement: a monastic community: in the region of Mount Olympos, abbot: Ephesus, Chonai and Cyprus; ca. 815.

Edition used: *La vie merveilleuse de saint Pierre d'Atroa* († 837), ed. Vitalien Laurent, SH 29 (Brussels, 1956) 99, ch. 13–14, 101, 103.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Sabas the Monk, *Life of Peter of Atroa*, ch. 13–14

[p. 99] The impious and lawless tyrant Leo killed through various tortures and punishments many of the rational shepherds who did not obey him, and he sent out his underlings that they might search out such men. When he had learnt this, the blessed Peter gathered his whole brotherhood and said: 'Children, the devil who always battles against the Church of Christ and is always defeated through the power of the cross, does not rest even now from such pursuits. For he has stirred up some impious men who scratched out as evil and called idol the mark of the incarnation of Christ [i. e. the icon] with which the church was adorned by the divine Apostles, and those who do not obey them are mercilessly tortured by them. Hence, brothers, as we have been commanded by the divine Scriptures, let us not hurl ourselves into temptations. Instead, let us go to the desert in groups of two or three who are joined together through the bond of love in order that we preserve our faith undefiled and do not fail in our coenobitic and angel-like state.' Then indeed the community of the brotherhood went to places covered with thick vegetation in keeping with the words of the blessed one. But our great father Peter who regarded the temples and oratories of the saints as dwellings of God, [p. 101] also took with him one of the brothers by the name of John who was zealous and virtuous. And he went first to the temple of John the Theologian in Ephesus in order to pray there, and then to Michael, the general of the heavenly hosts, in Chonai. But the multitudes of those who were molested by unclean spirits announced his coming and said: 'Woe to us, that Peter is coming in order to stay here and to drive out from here us wretched ones.' And so it happened. For

when he arrived fifteen days later, many of those demoniacs were healed through his prayers. And after that he embarked for Cyprus where he wandered about for ten months, venerating the holy places on it, as he had desired, and putting to flight the sicknesses of many. Then he returned to Mount Olympos and to the brothers of his flock who were dispersed in small groups. And he settled in one of the hermits' cells, which is called Mesolympion, and saw like another Moses milk-like sweat dripping from the face of an icon of Christ through which as I think the grace of the all-holy Spirit in him indicated what would happen to him. [p. 103] On the following day, when his monks who lived separately there in different places had heard about his coming, they gathered around him in the manner of birds, to say it with the Gospels, and asked about the edifying pain, which he had suffered after his departure from the monastery.

Further reading

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Markopoulos, Athanasios, Notes et remarques sur la *Vie de saint Pierre d'Atroa*, in: Olivier Delouis et al. (eds.), *Le saint, le moine et le paysan. Mélanges d'histoire byzantine offerts à Michel Kaplan* (Paris, 2016) 395–405.

Dirk Krausmüller

1.6.3 Rebellion and defection in Asia Minor: the Paulicians

Author: Anonymous (at the request of Emperor Constantine VII)

Text: *Theophanes Continuatus* (Book 4)

Date of text: before 959

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: In the 9th century, due to their formidable military skills, the Paulicians became a real threat to the government in Constantinople. This explains the extraordinary attention that Byzantine authors paid to them and their teachings. Texts dealing with their history and ideas include official court historiography, such as the works of Theophanes Continuatus and Joseph Genesios,²⁹⁴ but also works of authors close to the government like Peter of Sicily²⁹⁵ – a

294 PmbZ 23526, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25680/html>.

295 PmbZ 26431, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28585/html>.

monk who acted as an envoy of emperor Basil I²⁹⁶ to the Paulicians –, and Patriarch Photios.²⁹⁷ However, if one seeks to determine the reasons why the relations between Constantinople and the Paulicians became so strained in the 9th century, one will find them not in the works of the Byzantine clergymen already mentioned, who present the heretic Karbeas²⁹⁸ as the one who triggered the insurrection against the sovereignty of Constantinople in 843. It is actually a text of the official court historiography of the 10th century, namely Theophanes Continuatus, which tells us that it was the religious fervour of Empress Theodora²⁹⁹ and the pogroms of Byzantine officials that led to the murder of Karbeas' father. Thus, it was the religious policy of the triumphant Orthodoxy, which celebrated its major victory over the Iconoclasts in the same year of 843, that provoked the hostility of Karbeas.

Historical significance of the movement: The reason why the Paulician insurrections – the first one dates to the early 9th century and was led by Sergios/Tychikios³⁰⁰ – became such a threat to Byzantium was not only their military skills. This bellicose population of partially Armenian descent occupied the farthest reaches of the eastern borderlands of the empire and lived next to the Muslim neighbours and old rivals of Constantinople. It goes without saying that the Arabs were the first to aid the persecuted religious movement. After Karbeas' Paulicians had joined the Arabs, a number of joint raids started that caused great trouble to Byzantium. The situation became even worse when Karbeas' nephew Chrysocheir³⁰¹ took command over the renegades. The result was new attacks on Byzantine soil, reaching as far as Western Asia Minor, and the capture of thousands of prisoners of war (see 1.3.0). The empire finally succeeded in overwhelming them in the late 870s when Basil I defeated the Paulicians and seized Tephrike (Divriği), their stronghold.

Type of movement: Involuntary/religious persecutions and pogroms.

296 PmbZ 832, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ11920/html> and PmbZ 20837, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22990/html>.

297 PmbZ 6253, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ17454/html> and PmbZ 26667, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28821/html>.

298 PmbZ 3625, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14772/html>.

299 PmbZ 7286, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ18519/html>.

300 PmbZ 6657, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ17864/html>.

301 PmbZ 1153, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ12246/html> and PmbZ 21340, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ23493/html>.

Locations and date of movement: The Byzantine-Arab borderlands at the upper Euphrates, exodus to the East; 843 and 878 (sack of Tephrike).

Edition used: *Chronographiae quae Theophanis Continuati nomine fertur, Libri I–IV*, ed. and transl. by Michael Featherstone and Juan Signes Codoñer, CFHB 53 (Berlin and Boston, 2015) 236, 1–238,40, Book 4, ch. 16.

Translation used: Ibid. (modified by Dirk Krausmüller)

Theophanes Continuatus, Book 4, ch. 16

[p. 236] Thus, affairs in the West were in a splendid state and were the common talk everywhere. She [Empress Theodora] rejoiced in this, and as if desiring to set up a greater trophy, she made an attempt also on the Paulicians in the East, either to convert them to piety, as she wished, or to eliminate them and wipe them out from mankind; and this filled our land with many evils. For she sent certain men with authority – those sent were called the son of Argyros [Leo Argyros],³⁰² the son of Doux [Andronikos Doukas]³⁰³ and Soudales³⁰⁴ – and they hung some Paulicians on the fork, others they gave over to the sword and yet others to the depths of the sea. The people who were thus destroyed numbered some hundred thousand, and their property was brought to the imperial treasury and paid into it. Now, amongst the servants of the strategos of the Anatolikoi – this was Theodotos of the family of Melissenos³⁰⁵ – there was counted a certain man by the name of Karbeas who held the office of *protomandator* and who prided himself and exulted in the faith of these aforesaid Paulicians. When he heard that his own father had been hung on the fork, he considered this the most terrible of things and, taking care of his own affairs, he fled as a refugee together with another five thousand men who shared this heresy to Amer [Umar al-Aqta, Emir of Melitene]³⁰⁶ who then held Melitene [Malatya], and from there they went to the *amer-moumnes* and were accepted with great honour. And having given and likewise received guarantees, they soon set out against the land of the Romans; and on account of these victories, when their numbers had increased, they proceeded to found cities for themselves, one named Argaun [Arguvan], and also Amara [Çakırsu]. And again, after many who held fast to the same evil had streamed in

302 PmbZ 4506, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ15672/html>.

303 PmbZ 436, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ11521/html>.

304 PmbZ 7155, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ18381/html>.

305 PmbZ 7962, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ19214/html>.

306 PmbZ 8552, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ19821/html>.

there, they began to found another, calling it Tephrike. Setting out from these cities and gathering in one place, Amer of Melitene, whom the vulgar, somehow mixing up the letters, called Ambros, and Ales of Tarsos [Ali ibn Yahya al-Armani, Emir of Tarsos?]³⁰⁷ and also the wretched Karbeas himself, did not cease wilfully to devastate the land of the Rhomaioi. [p. 238] But Ales, who was sent to rule some country of the Armenians, lost his life there sooner than he had wished, together with his ill-suited army; and Amer stood in civil war against the one who ruled together with him – who was called the son of Skleros – and corrupted by rivalry, he thought it necessary to make war on him rather than others. The enmity between them increased and they made war on each other to such an extent that from a little more than fifty thousand scarcely ten thousand men were left of their forces. When, therefore, Amer had overcome his enemies, he decided again with rashness to take command and wage war against the Rhomaioi, uniting with Karbeas. Against them Petronas³⁰⁸ took the field, who held the office of *domestikos*.

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1.6.4 Resettling heretics to the Balkans and using them as a border guard

Author: Anna Komnene³⁰⁹

Text: *Alexiad (Alexias)*

Date of text: after 1136/1137

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: The historiographical work of the Byzantine princess Anna Komnene was intended to be a eulogy of her father Alexios I Komnenos.³¹⁰ The situation in which Byzantium found itself in the late 11th century lent itself to such a presentation of historical events. Since the 7th century, the empire had never faced such an enormous pressure on its territories in Asia Minor and on the Balkans. The fact that it withstood the numerous attacks can be explained – regardless of whether one tends to believe everything in Anna’s panegyric – at least in part by the energetic rule of Alexios I. The young emperor had to deal not only with the Seljuk Turks advancing from the East, the Pechenegs raiding the Danubian Plain and Thrace, and the Normans marching from Southern Italy, but

307 PmbZ 200, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ11282/html>.

308 PmbZ 5929, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ17124/html>.

309 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Anna/62/>.

310 Neville, Leonora, *Anna Komnene. The Life and Work of a Medieval Historian* (Oxford, 2016) 43–60.

also with irredentism among his own subjects, who belonged to various heretical movements. These were the old troublemakers, the Paulicians, and the Bogomils. However, all these vexations were grist to Anna's mill, helping her to build the image of her father as the one who saved the empire from so many threats.

Historical significance of the movement: The death of Chrysocheir, the sack of Tephrike and the following triumph of Basil I in Constantinople in 878/879 did not mark the end of the relations between Constantinople and the Paulicians. Even though their bellicosity had caused great trouble to the Amorian and the Macedonian dynasties, the central government played with the thought of using their military capacity for its own needs. It was keenly aware of the need to keep them away from their old bases in the East and from the neighbouring Arabs. Thus, just as Constantine V³¹¹ had done in the 8th century,³¹² Emperor John Tzimiskes³¹³ ordered their resettlement to the Balkans where they were charged with protecting the border in Thrace from the "Scythians", most probably the Rus of Svjatoslav.³¹⁴ What happened was perhaps to be expected – in their new homeland the Paulicians started preaching their beliefs to the local population, thus causing an even greater spread of heretical doctrines in a region that had already witnessed the activity of the Bogomils. The Paulicians made the Byzantines remember their old zeal in combat and defeated an army led by one of the Alexios' closest associates, the *Great domestikos* of the West Gregory Pakourianos (see 1.4.0).³¹⁵

Type of movement: Involuntary (resettlement) and voluntary (spreading the teachings of the heresy).

Locations and date of movement: From Eastern Asia Minor to Thrace and the region of Philippopolis (Plovdiv); late 960s – early 970s, then the 11th century, up to the early 1080s.

Edition used: *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, ed. Diether Roderich Reinsch and Athanasios Kambylis, CFHB 40 (Berlin and New York, 2001) 455–456, Book 14, 8, 3, lines 45–52, and Book 14, 8, 5–7, lines 65–74 and 87–5.

Translation used: *Anna Komnene, Alexiad*, transl. by Edgar Robert Ashton Sewter. Revised with Introduction and Notes by Peter Frankopan (London, 2009) 424–426 (modified by Dirk Krausmüller).

311 PmbZ 3703, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14852/html>.

312 Theophanes, *Chronicle*, A.M. 6247, ed. Carl de Boor, *Theophanis Chronographia*, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1883) 429, 18–22.

313 PmbZ 22778, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ24932/html>.

314 PmbZ 27440, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ29594/html>.

315 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Gregorios/61/>.

Anna Komnene, *Alexiad*, Book 14, 8, 3 and 8, 5–7

[p. 455] Besides, Philippopolis was also unlucky insofar as many heretics lived there. Armenians had divided the city among themselves and the so-called Bogomils, about whom and about whose heresy we will speak at the appropriate time, as well as the most godless Paulicians, an offshoot of the Manichaean heresy, which had been founded by Paul and John as the name shows, who had pulled to themselves the unmixed wine of the impiety of Manes, and had passed it on to their followers. (...) These disciples of Manes [Mani, Persian prophet],³¹⁶ of Paul [Paul of Samosata, heretic and bishop]³¹⁷ and John [Paul's brother], the sons of Kallinike, whose disposition was quite savage and cruel and who braved danger if it led to bloodshed, were defeated in war by that admirable ruler John Tzimiskes. He enslaved them and moved them from Asia, and from the lands of the Chalybes and Armeniakoi, to Thrace, and forced them to dwell in the area of Philippopolis, taking them away from the heavily fortified towns and strong-points which they had ruled as tyrants, [p. 456] and at the same time setting them up as most secure guardians against those Scythian incursions, from which the lands of Thrace had often suffered because of the barbarians. (...) John Tzimiskes turned our opponents, these Manichaean heretics, into allies and arrayed them as a force of mighty warriors against the nomadic Scythians. And thereafter the towns, protected now from most of their raids, breathed freely again. The Manichaeans, however, being by nature independent and undisciplined, did what was their wont and reverted to type. The entire Philippopolis apart from very few were Manichaeans and tyrannised the Christians there and looted their goods, paying little or no attention to the emperor's envoys. Their numbers increased until all the people around Philippopolis were heretics. Another flood of immigrants joined them, Armenians – a brackish stream – as well as others from the foulest springs of Jacob [Jacob Baradaeus, Monophysite bishop]. It was a meeting place, so-to-speak, of all polluted waters. And if the others differed from the Manichaeans in doctrine, then they were at least unified in their rebellions.

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316 EIr, <https://iranicaonline.org/articles/mani-founder-manicheism>.

317 Slusser, Michael, Paulus von Samosata, TRE 26 (Berlin and New York, 1996) 160–162 [online, partially accessible: https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/TRE/entry/tre.26_160_14/html].

1.6.5 Heretics send missionaries abroad

Author: Peter of Sicily

Text: *History of the Paulicians (Historia tes kenēs kai mataias hairesēs ton Manichaion ton kai Paulikianon legomenon)*

Date of text: 870

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: One of the most informative sources about the history of the Paulicians is the work of the monk Peter of Sicily. For his account he used the information that he had gathered during his embassy to Tephrike in 869–870 where he negotiated the exchange of prisoners of war between Byzantines and Paulicians on behalf of Emperor Basil I.

Historical significance of the movement: One of the first things that Peter of Sicily mentions in his account is a fact he learned from his Paulician hosts. They informed him that they had sent missionaries to Bulgaria. In the 9th century, after a long break during the so-called Dark Ages, the Byzantine Empire was able to start its old missionary activity among non-Christians (see 1.10.1). One of the first to be baptised were its Bulgarian neighbours. However, we know from other sources that Bulgaria soon became a target not only for Byzantine, but also for Western, Jewish, Muslim, and – as we learn thanks to Peter of Sicily – Paulician missionaries. Thus, one can see that heretical movements were in no way lagging behind the official Orthodoxy when it came to religious zeal and spreading their own beliefs, even beyond the borders of Byzantium.

Type of movement: Voluntary (heretical missionaries sent abroad).

Locations and date of movement: From Eastern Asia Minor to Bulgaria; the late 860s.

Edition used: Astruc, Charles et al., *Les sources grecques pour l'histoire des Pauliciens d'Asie Mineure*, I: Pierre de Sicile: *Histoire des Pauliciens*, TM 4 (Paris, 1970) 3–67, here 9, 16–25, ch. 5.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Peter of Sicily, *History of the Paulicians*, ch. 5

[p. 9] I have spent a long time in this very service that took me to the Paulicians in Tephrike, and have often spoken with them, and have furthermore learnt their affairs more precisely from many orthodox who dwell there, and have again also listened to these impious ones who babble that they will send some of their number to the places of Bulgaria in order that they detach some people from the orthodox faith and attract them to their own filthy heresy, relying on the fact that the divine proclamation is in its infancy there, and believing that they can easily sow their own tares among the pure and true seed – for the impious ones are

often went to do this and eagerly undergo great hardships and dangers in order to spread their own pest to those who encounter them – for this reason I have embarked on this topic.

Further reading

- Dixon, Carl, Between East Rome and Armenia: Paulician Ethnogenesis c.780–850, in: Mirela Ivanova and Hugh Jeffery (eds.), *Transmitting and Circulating the Late Antique and Byzantine Worlds*, MMED 118 (Leiden and Boston, 2019) 251–273.
- Garsoïan, Nina, *The Paulician Heresy. A Study of the Origin and Development of Paulicianism in Armenia and the Eastern Provinces of the Byzantine Empire*, Columbia University, Publications in Near and Middle East Studies, Series A, 6 (Paris, 1967).
- Lemerle, Paul, L'histoire des Pauliciens d'Asie Mineure d'après les sources grecques, TM 5 (Paris, 1973) 1–144.

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1.6.6 Classification of heretics: Bogomils and Phoundagiagites

Author: Euthymios of the Peribleptos Monastery³¹⁸

Text: *Letter against Phoundagiagites or, as they are also called, Bogomils (Epistole)*

Date of text: 11th century (after 1034)

Genre: Religious treatise

Literary context: Besides laymen who wrote historiographical works, members of the Church also put pen to paper when they were confronted with heretical movements. As we have seen, there exists a number of works by Orthodox clergymen dealing extensively with the teachings of their religious opponents. Such texts present the ideology of the movement in question but they usually also pay attention to its genesis and development. It was sometimes the extensive spread of a heresy that motivated a clergyman to devote his attention to it. This was the case with the dualist teaching of the Bogomils. Within one hundred years, two Byzantine monks and theologians by the name of Euthymios wrote about them. One is Euthymios Zigabenos³¹⁹ who composed the so-called “Full Armour of Belief” in which he describes various heretical movements. The other is Euthymios of the Peribleptos Monastery in Constantinople (known also as Euthymios of Akmonia) who speaks about a dualistic movement known under different names in different regions of the empire. Byzantine authors often call

318 PmbZ 21974, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ24127/html>.

319 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Euthymios/120/>.

all dualistic teachings Manichaeism or Armenian, which makes it difficult to determine whether we are dealing with one and the same movement or with different ones. This is also the case with the work of Euthymios of the Peribleptos Monastery who identifies the old heresy of the Phoundagiagites of Asia Minor with the new one of the Bogomils, which originated from Bulgaria.

Historical significance of the movement: It is a common feature of Byzantine writing about the Bogomils to present their emergence as something that happened suddenly and quickly affected vast areas and numerous people. Its followers regarded the material world as Satan's work, and they abstained from any armed resistance and violence, which distinguished them clearly from the Paulicians. No accounts of wars and raids started by the Bogomils have survived, and it is highly unlikely that they ever took place. Bogomilism had been influenced by Eastern dualism that was imported to the Balkans by resettled populations. It spread within the empire after the conquest of Bulgaria in the early 11th century. Due to its preaching against lay and church authorities and social injustice, it had already found the support of the lower social strata in its homeland. It seems that its peaceful character and its spread from below led to its further penetration in Byzantium. From the late 11th century onwards, it was one of the heresies that one commonly encountered in the empire.

Type of movement: Voluntary (spreading the teachings of the heresy).

Locations and date of movement: Various places in Asia Minor and the Balkans; 11th century, before 1028.

Edition used: Ficker, Gerhard, *Die Phundagiagiten. Ein Beitrag zur Ketzergeschichte des byzantinischen Mittelalters* (Leipzig, 1908) 61, 27–62, 14 and 66, 24–68, 4.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Euthymios of the Peribleptos Monastery, *Letter against Phoundagiagites or, as they are also called, Bogomils*

[p. 61] As I considered this and [p. 62] recalled another utterance of the same Christ and God of ours, namely: 'The whole world is not worth one single soul', my heart was pained and I left my own evils for the sake of the souls that went astray and were lost. I cried not a little, and after a diligent search I found a book, in which the blessed and holy John of Damascus had painstakingly written up and castigated all heresies, lest the people go astray through ignorance. And I perused the entire aforementioned book on the chance that I might somehow learn the nature of this evil heresy and impiety, and its name. For the inhabitants of Opsikion call those who follow this most evil impiety Phoundagiagites, whereas in the Kibyrrhaiotes and in the West and in other places they call them

Bogomils. And because of this discrepancy, I have the suspicion that the name of the heresy is not derived from personal names.

[p. 66] During the reign of Basil and Constantine [Basil II and Constantine VIII],³²⁰ who were born in the purple, Romanos Argyropoulos [Romanos III Argyros]³²¹ who later also became emperor, served as judge in our theme of Opsikion. [p. 67] I remember that he once came to our bishopric of Akmonia, and I, too, went with my mother who brought a lawsuit against someone else. And the attendants put up a makeshift structure near the Archistrategos [i.e. the archangel Michael], who is called Strouthopolites, and there the tribunal took place. And they brought the impious [John] Tzourillas,³²² who as you all know is the leader of their new-fangled impious belief and spent three full years in the proclamation of the devil and persuaded entire cities in the parts of the Thracians and in the location of Smyrna [Izmir] and in many other places to repudiate Christ and worship the devil. And this well-known place in which he has his dwelling is densely populated and full of people and large. As I remember, all those who lived in it were Christians and orthodox, but as you, too, now see he gradually brought it about that all of them were of one mind with him, and worshipped and venerated the devil and repudiated the orthodox faith of the Christians. For the village, as I think, is Chilioi Kapnoi [Batos in Phrygia?], and as I have gained precise knowledge from you, [p. 68] there are left no more than ten Christians, and they are being harassed and molested by the jests and the sneers of the impious ones, and it will not take much before they, too, march into perdition.

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1.6.7 The heresiarch meets the emperor

Author: Anna Komnene

Text: *Alexiad* (*Alexias*)

Date of text: after 1136/1137

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: During his reign Alexios I Komnenos had to attend to various problems, including the existence of various non-Orthodox beliefs. At the end of

320 PmbZ 23735, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25889/html>.

321 PmbZ 26835, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28989/html>.

322 PmbZ 23401, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25555/html>.

the Alexiad his daughter Anna records that the Bogomils spread their heresy within the empire and even succeeded in establishing themselves in the capital. When she speaks about Alexios' countermeasures she seizes the opportunity to describe her father as a talented statesman and a champion of orthodoxy, especially during his encounter with the heresiarch Basil.

Historical significance of the movement: Anna's account lacks any topographical remarks on how and where the Bogomils preached their teachings. We learn that they moved around in different regions and even succeeded in winning new followers in the capital itself. What makes her text important for those interested in the history of Bogomilism, is her information about the visit that their heresiarch Basil the Physician³²³ paid to Alexios I Komnenos in Constantinople, allegedly because he wished to convert the emperor and his brother to Bogomilism. Yet the leader of the Bogomils was to pay a high price for this attempt – his account of Bogomil teachings was secretly written down, and he was condemned by the patriarch and the synod. Because of the memories the capital had of the process against the philosopher John Italos³²⁴ some decades ago, Alexios obviously did not want to take a further risk and sentenced Basil to death. What followed was the only case of an auto-da-fé in Byzantine history, when both the head of the state and the head of the church sentenced a heretic to death. Basil was burned alive in Constantinople, perhaps in 1111.

Type of movement: Voluntary (spreading the teachings of the heresy; then a debate with the emperor in the imperial palace).

Locations and date of movement: the provinces of the empire, then travel to Constantinople; around 1111.

Edition used: *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, ed. Diether Roderich Reinsch and Athanasios Kambylis, CFHB 40 (Berlin and New York, 2001) 485–486, 35–42 and 53–73, Book 15, 8, 1 and 8, 3–4.

Translation used: *Anna Komnene, Alexiad*, transl. by Edgar Robert Ashton Sewter. Revised with Introduction and Notes by Peter Frankopan (London, 2009) 455–457 (modified by Dirk Krausmüller)

Anna Komnene, *Alexiad*, Book 15, 8, 1 and 8, 3–4

[p. 485] Afterwards, in the ... year of his rule, an enormous cloud of heretics was whipped up; the form of the heresy was novel, hitherto unknown to the church. For two doctrines, each known to ancient times and representative of what was most evil, most foul, now joined forces: the impiety of the Manichaeans, as one might say, which we have also referred to as the Paulician heresy, and the blas-

323 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Basileios/179/>.

324 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Ioannes/66/>.

phemy of the Massalians. Of such a kind is the doctrine of the Bogomils, a combination of those of the Manichaeans and the Massalians. (...) [p. 486] The infamy of the Bogomils had by now spread everywhere (for a certain monk by the name of Basil had been most adept at managing the heresy of the Bogomils, having twelve disciples whom he called apostles and dragging along with him also some female disciples – women of loose morals and generally bad character – articulating their evil everywhere). When, like some fire, the evil devoured many souls the emperor's soul could no longer bear it. He made an enquiry into the heresy. Some of the Bogomils were brought to the palace, all of whom denounced a certain Basil as their teacher and protagonist of the heresy of the Bogomils. One of them, Diblatios,³²⁵ was apprehended. Since he was unwilling to confess anything about which he had been asked, he was subjected to torture. He then named the so-called Basil and those who had been ordained as apostles. The emperor therefore entrusted many men with the task of finding him. Basil, archisatrap of Satanael, was brought to light, a monk in garb, austere of face, with a thin beard, quite tall. At once the emperor wished to drag out the man's innermost thoughts through the force of persuasion, and summoned him through such a scheme. He even rose from his seat when Basil came in, made him sit with him and share his own table. The whole line was run out for the catch, with all kinds of tempting bait on the hooks for this voracious monster to swallow.

Further reading

- Beck, Hans-Georg, *Actus fidei. Wege zum Autodafé*, Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-hist. Kl., Sitzungsberichte, Jahrgang 1987, Heft 3 (Munich, 1987).
- Christian Dualist Heresies in the Byzantine World, c. 650 – c. 1450*, selected sources translated and annotated by Janet Hamilton and Bernard Hamilton, assistance with the translation of Old Slavonic texts Yuri Stoyanov (Manchester and New York, 1998).
- Obolensky, Dimitri, *The Bogomils. A Study in Balkan Neo-Manichaeism* (2nd edition) (Twickenham, 1972).

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325 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Anonymus/903/>.

1.7.0 Natural disasters and the environment

Natural catastrophes were identified as potential causes for migration and mobility already in ancient scholarship; in the 1st century, for instance, the philosopher Seneca reasoned that some people “were forced to flee by plague, or frequent earthquakes, or some intolerable deficiency of barren soil”.³²⁶ The Byzantines, too, adopted scientific theories of ancient Greek scholars about the causes of such calamities, such as the idea of Hippocrates of Kos (5th century BC) that pollutions of the air (in Greek miasmata) were the reason for epidemics, or the hypothesis of Aristotle (4th century BC) that turbulences of gas flows in the bowels of the earth generated seismic tremors.³²⁷ Even more influential, however, were biblical descriptions and explanations of extreme events. The catastrophic trio of war, hunger and plague appears in many places in the Old Testament, as a threat and as an actual means of punishment by the Lord for misdeeds of the chosen people of Israel.³²⁸ These passages were not just read as abstract warnings; rather, they provided a powerful framework for interpreting comparable extreme events in one’s own time. This was all the more true as the Christianised Roman Empire in the East saw itself as a new ‘chosen’ people who had entered into a similar covenant with a God who blessed, but also punished them.³²⁹ In addition, there emerged the expectation of an end of the world and a second coming of

326 Seneca, *Ad Helviam matrem de consolatione* 6, 11, ed. John W. Basore, *L. Annaeus Seneca, Moral Essays*, vol. 2 (London and New York, 1932). See also Meier, Mischa, *Geschichte der Völkerwanderung. Europa, Asien und Afrika vom 3. bis zum 8. Jahrhundert n. Chr.* (Munich, 2019) 113.

327 Telelis, Ioannis, *Meteorology and Physics in Byzantium*, in: Stavros Lazaris (ed.), *A Companion to Byzantine Science*, Brill’s Companions to the Byzantine World 6 (Leiden and Boston, 2020) 177–201; Touwaide, Alan, *Medicine and Pharmacy*, in: Stavros Lazaris (ed.), *A Companion to Byzantine Science*, Brill’s Companions to the Byzantine World 6 (Leiden and Boston, 2020) 354–403.

328 Robertson, Warren C., *Drought, Famine, Plague and Pestilence. Ancient Israel’s Understandings and Responses to Natural Catastrophes* (Piscataway, 2010).

329 Jeffreys, Elizabeth, *Old Testament “History” and the Byzantine Chronicle*, in: Paul Magdalino and Robert Nelson (eds.), *The Old Testament in Byzantium* (Washington, D.C., 2010) 153–174.

Jesus Christ, which, according to the descriptions in various apocalyptic texts, would also be accompanied by catastrophes such as extreme weather, famine and epidemics. Periods around certain chronological turning points were charged with such end-time expectations – such as the years 500 (especially in the Christian East) or 800 (especially in Western Christianity), interpreted as the year 6000 since creation (based on calculations of a date of the creation of the world around 5500 BC or 5200 BC), or the year 1000 as the turn from the 1st to the 2nd millennium after the birth of Jesus.³³⁰ However, Byzantines were well aware of Jesus' admonition that no one except God himself knows the day and hour of the end of the world and that the believers should always be vigilant. Thus they could link accumulations of extreme events as well as hardship and political unrest to end-time expectations at any time.³³¹ Contrary to modern popular representations, however, medieval authors were not over-excited prophets of doom, but integrated motifs and warnings from the tradition of the Bible and the church fathers into their texts in order to give weight to their own concerns of political, ecclesiastical and moral reform or to offer their verdicts on rulers and other protagonists of their histories.³³²

Nevertheless, major catastrophes such as pandemics caused significant shocks to the political and socio-economic systems as well as established frameworks of interpretation. The Roman Empire of the East fell victim to two plague pandemics, between the 6th and 8th century (the so-called Justinianic plague, named after Emperor Justinian I who ruled during the first outbreak 541/542), and from the mid-14th century onwards (the so-called Black Death). Both epidemics returned in waves every few decades, the latter one also after the fall of Byzantium in 1453 in the Ottoman period up to the 19th century.³³³ After a long scholarly discussion about the microbiological identity of the pathogen, recent paleogenetic analyses of remains of victims of both pandemics have determined different variants of the Bacterium *Yersinia pestis* as cause of this disease (i.e., the

330 Meier, Mischa, *Das andere Zeitalter Justinians. Kontingenzerfahrungen und Kontingenzbewältigung im 6. Jahrhundert n. Chr.* (Göttingen, 2003); Magdalino, Paul, *The Year 1000 in Byzantium*, in: Paul Magdalino (ed.), *Byzantium in the Year 1000* (Leiden and Boston, 2003) 233–270; Palmer, James T., *The Apocalypse in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2014).

331 Matthew 24:36 and 42.

332 See in general on this Rohr, Christian, *Extreme Naturereignisse im Ostalpenraum. Naturerfahrung im Spätmittelalter und am Beginn der Neuzeit* (Cologne, Weimar and Vienna, 2007); Wozniak, Thomas, *Naturereignisse im frühen Mittelalter. Das Zeugnis der Geschichtsschreibung vom 6. bis 11. Jahrhundert* (Berlin and Boston, 2020).

333 Little, Lester K. (ed.), *Plague and the End of Antiquity: The Pandemic of 541–750* (Cambridge, 2006); Varlık, Nükhet, *Plague and Empire in the Early Modern Mediterranean World. The Ottoman Experience, 1347–1600* (Cambridge, 2015).

Bubonic plague).³³⁴ Strains of this bacterium were (and are) endemic in the fleas of mammal populations, especially rodents, in various regions of East Africa and East and Central Asia, with the latter (in the Qinghai province of modern-day China) hosting the biggest genetic variety of *Yersinia pestis* (and therefore maybe constituting the original ‘homeland’ of those versions of the pathogen affecting the Mediterranean in the 6th and 14th centuries). The decisive spillovers of fleas and bacteria from wild animals to rodents living in human habitats (especially rats, whose death is mentioned in 1.7.2) as well as domestic animals and from them onto humans were most probably initiated by sequences of cold-humid and then dry weather anomalies in East-Central Asian regions as they took place ahead of the first and second pandemic both in the 530s (with the so-called Dust Veil-event of 536, which marked the beginning of the so-called Late Antique Little Ice Age, 536–660) and in the early 14th century (marking the transition from the Medieval Climate Anomaly to the Little Ice Age of the 14th to 19th centuries).³³⁵ The pathogen then travelled with its hosts (fleas of rodents, most probably also of humans), but also in furs and textiles (in which it can survive up to one month) via the trade routes to Western Eurasia and entered – according to contemporary sources – in 541 the Mediterranean at Pelusion in Egypt and in 1346 in the Genoese colony of Caffa on the Crimea. From there, in both cases, the epidemic reached Constantinople relatively quickly via the dense networks of maritime connections (see also 1.7.2).³³⁶ After this first infusion of the pathogen, the epidemic frequently circulated between regions of the Middle East, the Mediterranean and Europe and most probably became endemic among local rodent populations in mountain or steppe areas. The last outbreak of the Justinianic plague reached Constantinople in 747 on the sea routes from Sicily via Southern Italy and the Peloponnese and probably originated in North Africa (see 1.7.1). The constant mobility of people, animals and goods thus was a pivotal precondition for the diffusion of these epidemics. Only from the late 14th century onwards cities such as Ragusa (Dubrovnik, in Dalmatia) and Venice developed

334 Keller, Marcel et al., Ancient *Yersinia Pestis* Genomes from across Western Europe Reveal Early Diversification during the First Pandemic (541–750), *PNAS* 116/25 (2019) 12363–12372; Demeure, Christian et al., *Yersinia Pestis* and Plague: an Updated View on Evolution, Virulence Determinants, Immune Subversion, Vaccination and Diagnostics, *Microbes and Infection* 21 (2019) 202–212.

335 Campbell, Bruce M. S., *The Great Transition. Climate, Disease and Society in the Late-Medieval World* (Cambridge, 2016) 237–238; Luterbacher, Jürg et al., Past Pandemics and Climate Variability across the Mediterranean, *Euro-Mediterranean Journal for Environmental Integration* 5 (2020). Accessed on 1 December 2020: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41207-020-00197-5>.

336 Stathakopoulos, *Famine and Pestilence*, 113–114, 278–286; Barker, Barker, Laying the Corpses to Rest: Grain, Embargoes, and *Yersinia pestis* in the Black Sea, 1346–1348, *Speculum* 96/1 (2021) 97–126.

procedures to monitor and impede the import of the disease especially on board of ships (i. e. the emergence of the quarantine).³³⁷ Yet, the epidemic did not only depend on human mobility, it also caused further movements: first, people tried to flee from plague-affected settlements, even leaving behind their relatives and friends. This option, however, presupposed sufficient means, which would allow individuals and households to sustain their existence elsewhere. On the occasion of the outbreak in Constantinople in 747/748, for instance, we hear that Emperor Constantine V³³⁸ left the capital for Nikomedeia (in Bithynia), but most of the inhabitants had to stay behind (see 1.7.1). Second, in the aftermath of the epidemic of 747/748, we learn that Emperor Constantine V tried to repopulate Constantinople by “transferring to it a multitude of people from the lands and the islands subject to the power of the Rhomaioi” (see 1.7.1). Since this was the last outbreak of the Justinianic Plague in Constantinople, this imperial measure may have contributed to an enduring demographic recovery of the capital.³³⁹ The plague of 1347, by contrast, was the first in a series of epidemic outbreaks affecting Constantinople over the next centuries. In combination with the general political and economic crisis of the late Byzantine Empire, it contributed to a demographic contraction until the re-settlement ordered by the Ottoman Sultans after the conquest of 1453.³⁴⁰

While most of the information on epidemic outbreaks comes from cities (although especially *Yersinia pestis*, due to its non-human hosts, was also able to create havoc in less densely settled and rural areas), crop failure was a recurrent threat for farming communities, which (as in all pre-industrial agrarian societies) constituted 80 to 90 percent of the Byzantine population. Insufficient rainfall, but also cold spells could cause damage of the main crops (grain, olives, wine) quite frequently; studies of pre-modern peasant households in the Mediterranean show that they were able to compensate such losses for up to two years in a row, but not much longer. If harvest failures continued for a longer period, help had to come from elsewhere (which was easier in coastal areas where maritime transport was possible, but a major logistical challenge in more remote inland regions) or at least some members of a family had to leave to find the means of livelihood in other places.³⁴¹ Conditions could turn from distress to catastrophe if an accu-

337 Blažina Tomić, Zlata, and Vesna Blažina, *Expelling the Plague: The Health Office and the Implementation of Quarantine in Dubrovnik, 1377–1533* (Montreal and Kingston, 2015); Campbell, *The Great Transition*, 299–300.

338 PmbZ 3703/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14852/html>.

339 Ditten, *Ethnische Verschiebungen*, 307–308.

340 Varlık, *Plague and Empire*; Preiser-Kapeller and Mitsiou, *The Little Ice Age and Byzantium within the Eastern Mediterranean*, 190–220.

341 Halstead, Paul, *Two Oxen Ahead: Pre-Mechanized Farming in the Mediterranean* (Malden and Oxford, 2014).

mulation of adverse weather events affected wider areas of the empire over a longer period; this was the case especially during climate anomalies which effected a higher frequency of extreme and otherwise rare events (such as plagues of locusts, see 1.7.3). 1.7.3 reports such a sequence of calamities for the 1030s to 1040s; during these and the following decades, not only Byzantium, but also Central and Western Europe, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Iran and China were affected by unusual clusters of extreme events. Between 1010 and 1080, the so-called Oort-Minimum of solar activity brought about colder average temperatures and more turbulent weather conditions across Afro-Eurasia.³⁴² Interestingly, we not only learn about the large-scale movement of people from affected provinces especially in Asia Minor in the direction of Constantinople, but also about measures of emergency relief both of the emperor and of church officials. The main aim of the imperial government, however, was the redirection of the refugees to their places of origin in order to guarantee a restoration of the structures of settlement and land use (and therefore taxation) there and to avoid supply shortfalls in the metropolitan region of Constantinople, which was crucial for the stability of imperial rule. In contrast to the aftermath of the plague outbreak of 747/748 (see 1.7.2), when the emperor wanted to attract population, mass movements of rural population to the capital on their own initiative was not in the interest of the imperial regime in the 11th century. When larger numbers of refugees fled from Asia Minor to Constantinople in the aftermath of the Battle of Manzikert against the Seljuks in 1071, the contemporary historian Michael Attaleiates informs us that this contributed to a hunger crisis in the capital which in turn brought about civil unrest and resulted in the overthrow of the emperor.³⁴³

Along similar lines, imperial authorities usually tried to support the reconstruction of destroyed homes and settlements in the case of earthquakes, at least in important cities, such as in Antioch in Syria after a series of seismic and other extreme events in the 6th century. In contrast to epidemics or harvest failures, the direct danger to life was gone after such a short-term catastrophe, and the surviving population (theoretically) had less motivation to leave if assistance was provided in the immediate aftermath of the calamity. Seismic aftershocks and other factors, however, may have provided reasons for individuals and families to permanently leave their homes.³⁴⁴ Earthquakes were quite frequent phenomena along the seismic fault lines in the Aegean and Anatolia,

342 Preiser-Kapeller, *Der Lange Sommer und die Kleine Eiszeit*, 183–186.

343 Preiser-Kapeller, *Der Lange Sommer und die Kleine Eiszeit*, 187–189; *The History. Michael Attaleiates*, transl. by Anthony Kaldellis and Dimitris Krallis (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 2012) 26, 8–9.

344 Mordechai, Lee, Antioch in the Sixth Century: Resilience or Vulnerability?, in: Adam Izdebski and Michael Mulryan (eds.), *Environment and Society in the Long Late Antiquity* (Leiden, 2019) 207–223.

especially in and around Constantinople itself. Seismic events of higher magnitude, though, which caused major destructions of stone buildings and cities, took place less often and are therefore also recorded in the historical sources.³⁴⁵ In 1.7.4, Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos³⁴⁶ reports such a catastrophe which in 1354 especially affected the city of Kallipolis (modern-day Gelibolu) and surrounding places on the Thracian peninsula. Large-scale flight of the surviving inhabitants was not only motivated by the earthquake, but equally by fear of Ottoman troops who had established a first base on European soil in the nearby fortress of Tzympe in 1352.³⁴⁷ According to John VI Kantakouzenos, the Byzantine population expected attacks from the enemy after the fortifications of their cities had been destroyed and were afraid of murder and enslavement. However, since John VI's alliance with the Ottomans during the preceding civil war had enabled them to get a foothold in Thrace in the first place, the earthquake of 1354 also allows him to attribute the subsequent loss of these strategically important territories to an act of nature beyond his control. This shows that one cannot accept narratives of extreme events at face value, since they may serve other purposes in a historiographical narrative than constituting a mere factual report (see also above).

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1.7.1 The last outbreak of the Justinianic plague and the flight and resettlement of people from and to Constantinople, 747/748

Author: Patriarch Nikephoros I (born in 757/758, Constantinople; died in exile in 828, Monastery of Hagios Theodoros near Chrysopolis)³⁴⁸

Text: *Short History* (*Historia Syntomos*)

Date of text: 780s to 790s, maybe after 787³⁴⁹

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: The "Short History" was written by Nikephoros during his service in the imperial chancellery. It narrates the history of the Rhomaioi from

345 Hütteroth, Wolf-Dieter, *Türkei. Wissenschaftliche Länderkunde* (Darmstadt, 1982); Ambraseys, *Earthquakes in the Mediterranean and Middle East*; Guidoboni, Emanuela and John E. Ebel, *Earthquakes and Tsunamis in the Past: A Guide to Techniques in Historical Seismology* (Cambridge, 2009).

346 PLP 10973.

347 Külzer, Andreas, *Ostthrakien (Eurōpē)*, TIB 12, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften 369 (Vienna, 2008) 688.

348 PmbZ 5301/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16485/html>.

349 For the dating of the text Neville, Leonora, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing* (Cambridge, 2018) 73.

the reign of Emperor Phokas (602–610) to the marriage of Emperor Leo IV³⁵⁰ to Irene³⁵¹ in 769, maybe as a continuation of the historiographical work of Theophylact Simocatta, which dates to the 7th century. Due to its negative stance vis-à-vis the iconoclast emperors (Leo III³⁵² and his son Constantine V³⁵³), it was probably written after the (temporary) restoration of the veneration of icons under Empress Irene and her son Constantine VI in 787. In 806, Nikephoros became Patriarch of Constantinople. He was deposed in 815 when Emperor Leo V³⁵⁴ renewed Iconoclasm, and sent into exile where he died in 828.³⁵⁵

Historical significance of the movement: Nikephoros narrates the last major outbreak of the Justinianic plague. A parallel and very similar description is provided in the Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor.³⁵⁶ From there we also learn that the epidemic spread from Sicily (probably arriving there from North Africa) via maritime links to Calabria and via the Peloponnese to Constantinople. Among those who fled the city was also Emperor Constantine V, who relocated his residence to Nikomedeia. To the emperor and his iconoclast followers Nikephoros also assigns the blame for the catastrophe, claiming that they aroused the wrath of God. Nevertheless, he reports on the efforts of the emperor to repopulate Constantinople after the end of the plague through resettlement from other regions of the empire, which was a common practice in the reign of Constantine V as well as before and afterwards.³⁵⁷

Type of movement: involuntary movement due to (natural) catastrophe, migration due to state coercion for economic and demographic reasons.

Locations and date of movement: from Constantinople and its environs to nearby regions, from various regions and islands of the empire to Constantinople; 747/748 and afterwards.

Edition used: *Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople: Short History*, Text, translation, and commentary by Cyril Mango, CFHB 13 (Washington, D.C., 1990) 138–140.

350 PmbZ 4243/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ15401/html>.

351 PmbZ 1439, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ12537/html>.

352 PmbZ 4242, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ15400/html>.

353 PmbZ 3703/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14852/html>.

354 PmbZ 4244/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ15402/html>.

355 Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, 72–73.

356 Theophanes, *Chronicle*, A.M. 6238, ed. Carl de Boor, *Theophanis Chronographia*, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1883) 422–423.

357 Ditten, *Ethnische Verschiebungen*, 307–308; Stathakopoulos, *Famine and Pestilence*, 147, 382–385.

Translation used: Ibid, 139–141 (modified by Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller)

Patriarch Nikephoros I, *Short History*

[p. 138] [A great plague] fell upon the capital and the lands surrounding her, and wherever this death-bringing disease prevailed it consumed and entirely annihilated all humankind. Only those who fled as far away as possible from those regions were to be saved, surely by God's will. The pestilence was particularly intense in Byzantium [Constantinople]. (...)

[The population of the city is haunted by demonic appearances, which forebode death; the enormous number of victims of the plague can be transported and buried only with difficulties.]

[p. 140] The effects of the plague lasted for a year, after which time it disappeared for the most part and, as in the beginning it had increased, so now it slowly abated. Those who were able to think aright judged that these (misfortunes) were inflicted by God's wrath inasmuch as the godless and impious ruler at that time and those who concurred with his lawless purpose dared to lay their hands on the holy images to the disgrace of Church of Christ. Since the City [Constantinople] thus had become almost unpopulated, [Emperor Constantine V] populated it by transferring to it a multitude of people from the lands and the islands subject to the power of the Rhomaioi.

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1.7.2 The Black Death arrives in Byzantium from the Black Sea and spreads across the Mediterranean, 1347

Author: Nikephoros Gregoras (born between 1292 and 1295 in Herakleia Pontike; died between 1358 and 1361 in Constantinople)³⁵⁸

Text: *Roman History (Historia Rhomaike)*

Date of text: between the 1330s and 1350s³⁵⁹

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: In his *Roman History*, the scholar Nikephoros Gregoras covers the period from the Fourth Crusade 1204 to his own time (until 1358/1359). Of special interest is the narration of events of which he was an eyewitness; these include the civil war between the regency for Emperor John V Palaiologos³⁶⁰ and

358 PLP 4443.

359 For the dating of the text Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, 243.

360 PLP 21485.

John VI Kantakouzenos (1341–1347),³⁶¹ and the contemporaneous debate about the theology of Gregory Palamas (see also 1.3.3), of which Nikephoros Gregoras became an important opponent (which led to his temporal house arrest after the victory of John VI and Palamism). On top of this turbulent (and already disastrous) period in the history of Byzantium, the plague arrived in Constantinople, coming via maritime links from the Black Sea (and from Central Asia).³⁶²

Historical significance of the movement: The diffusion of the plague was facilitated by the dense network of commercial links (and the mobility of humans and commodities) which connected the Black Sea, the Mediterranean and adjacent regions especially since the economic and political expansion of maritime powers such as Venice and Genoa in the 13th to 14th century. Via the Black Sea and the Crimea, this network was connected to the trade routes across the Mongol realms in Western and Central Asia, on which also the pathogen (*Yersinia pestis*) travelled to the west. Constantinople and the adjacent Genoese colony of Pera/Galata were deeply embedded in these networks and therefore were affected by the disease very early.³⁶³

Type of movement: involuntary movement due to (natural) catastrophe, all forms of movement which allow for the spread of the disease, especially via maritime links.

Locations and date of movement: from the river Don via the Black Sea to Constantinople and across the Mediterranean; 1347/1348.

Edition used: *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina Historia*, ed. Ludwig Schopen, CSHB, vol. 2 (Bonn, 1830) 797–798, Book 16, 1.

Translation used: Bartsocas, Christos S., Two Fourteenth Century Greek Descriptions of the “Black Death”, *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 21/4 (1966) 394–400 (heavily modified by Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller).

Nikephoros Gregoras, *Roman History*

[p. 797] It was around this time that a serious plague hit the people. It began among the Scythians [Mongols] on the Maiotis [Black Sea] and the mouth of the Tanais [river Don] when spring [1347] had just come. It lasted the whole year and also raged exclusively along the coast of the inhabited world [*oikumene*]; it ruined cities and countries, among us as among all (peoples), and subsequently

361 PLP 10973.

362 Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, 243–245; Campbell, *The Great Transition*, 230–250.

363 Brandes, Wolfram, Die Pest in Byzanz nach dem Tode Justinians (565) bis 1453, in: Mischa Meier (ed.), *Pest. Die Geschichte eines Menschheitstraumas* (Stuttgart, 2005) 219–224.

spread to Gadeira [Cádiz in Spain] and to the pillars of Heracles [Gibraltar]. In the second year, it also spread to the islands of the Aegean Sea. Then it also beset the inhabitants of Rhodes, as well as the Cypriots [p. 798] and the inhabitants of the other islands. The disease affected men and women, poor and rich, young and old, in short, it spared neither old age nor class. Countless houses were emptied of all residents at one stroke, or occasionally in two days without anyone being able to help, neither from the neighbours nor from family members or relatives. The disease plagued not only people continuously, but also other living beings, if such, as is usually the case, lived with people in the same house, I mean dogs, horses and all sorts of poultry, yes even the rats who happened to live in the walls of the houses. Symptoms of this disease and harbingers of sudden death were: a tumour-like swelling on the end of the arms and legs and the vomiting of blood. (...). At that time, the emperor's [John VI Kantakouzenos] youngest son, Andronikos [Kantakouzenos, born 1334],³⁶⁴ also died.

Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller

1.7.3 A series of natural disasters leads to larger scale migration movements and counter-measures of the government, 1028–1040

Author: John Skylitzes (late 11th/early 12th century)³⁶⁵

Text: *Synopsis of histories* (*Synopsis historion*)

Date of text: ca. 1078

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: The historiographical work of John Skylitzes, a legal scholar and imperial official, covers the period between 811 and 1057. The author quotes, sometimes verbatim, from older texts, which he partly lists at the beginning of his text. In-between military and political events, the author reports for the years 1028 to 1040 a series of disasters both in the provinces and in and around the capital. These events are embedded in chapters narrating the deeds of characters who otherwise do not have the sympathy of Skylitzes (and other authors dealing with the period): Emperor Romanos III Argyros,³⁶⁶ whose attempts to imitate the military glory of the uncle of his wife Zoë, Basil II,³⁶⁷ failed, or John the Orphanotrophos,³⁶⁸ who convinced Zoë³⁶⁹ to hand over the crown first to his brother

364 PLP 10954.

365 Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, 156–157; PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Ioannes/110/>.

366 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Romanos/3/>.

367 PmbZ 20838, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22991/html>.

368 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Ioannes/68/>.

Michael IV³⁷⁰ and then to his nephew Michael V.³⁷¹ Nevertheless, these catastrophes are not simply attributed to divine disapproval of these individuals; Skylitzes equally reports on their effective measures to deal with the impacts of these calamities.³⁷²

Historical significance of the movement: The climate historical background to these weather extremes and calamities is provided by the so-called Oort Minimum of solar activity (ca. 1010–1040), which caused similar phenomena in other regions across Afro-Eurasia. Of particular interest is the description of how these calamities motivated people from various regions of Asia Minor to migrate towards the area of the capital (in expectation of security of supply there, as is also illustrated with the import of grain to the capital later in the series of events) and how Emperor Romanos III Argyros tried to repatriate these people by giving them material support. It was in the government's interest both to maintain the demographic basis and workforce in the provinces and to avoid an overload of Constantinople's supply system with additional mouths to feed.³⁷³

Type of movement: involuntary movement due to (natural) catastrophe, migration due to state coercion for economic and demographic reasons.

Locations and date of movement: from regions of central and western Asia Minor towards the west in the direction of Constantinople and back; 1032 and 1034.

Edition used: *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis historiarum*, ed. Hans Thurn, CFHB 5 (Berlin and New York, 1973) 355–400.

Translation used: *John Skylitzes. A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811–1057. Introduction, Text and Notes*, transl. by John Wortley (Cambridge, 2010) 355–356, 364, 367, 371, 372, 376, 377, 378, 379, 381 (with modifications by Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller).

John Skylitzes, *Synopsis of Histories, Romanos Argyros and Michael the Paphlagonian*

[p. 355] In those days [the beginning of the rule of emperor Romanos III Argyros; 1028] God caused an adequate amount of rain to fall and the crops were abundant, especially the olives. (...) [p. 356] In October [1029] (...) rain fell in torrents continuously until the month of March. The rivers overflowed and hollows

369 PmbZ 28508, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ30663/html>.

370 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Michael/4/>.

371 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Michael/5/>.

372 Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, 155–161.

373 Preiser-Kapeller, Johannes, A Collapse of the Eastern Mediterranean? New Results and Theories on the Interplay between Climate and Societies in Byzantium and the Near East, ca. 1000–1200 AD, *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 65 (2015) 195–242.

turned into lakes, with the result that nearly all the livestock was drowned and the crops were levelled. This was the cause of a severe famine in the following year [1030]. (...) [p. 386] This year [1032] famine and pestilence afflicted Cappadocia, Paphlagonia, the thema of Armeniakon and the Honorias, so grave that the very inhabitants of the themes abandoned their ancestral homes in search of somewhere to live. The emperor met them on his return to the capital (...) and (...) obliged them to return home, providing them with money and other necessities of life. And Michael [the Metropolitan of Ankyra] performed virtuous works, sparing nothing which might procure the survival of the victims of famine and pestilence. (...) [p. 389] For some time the eastern themes had been consumed by locusts, compelling the inhabitants to sell their children and move into Thrace. The emperor [Romanos III Argyros; the year is 1034] gave to every one of them three pieces of gold and arranged for them to return home. (...) On (...) Easter Day [1034] there was an unendurable hailstorm, so violent that not only the trees (fruit-bearing and otherwise) were broken down, but also houses and churches collapsed. Crops and vines were laid flat to the ground; hence there ensued a great shortage of all kinds of produce at that time. (...) [p. 394] Swarms of locusts (...) overran the coastal regions of the Hellespont again, devastating the *thema* of Thrakesion for three whole years, then they appeared in Pergamon but perished there. (...) [In 1035] there was unbearably cold weather; the Danube froze and Pechenegs [a nomadic federation living in the steppes to the north of the Black Sea] crossed it, doing considerable damage in Mysia and Thrace, as far as Macedonia. The *thema* of Thrakesion suffered another plague of locusts and the crops were damaged. [p. 400] [In 1037] there was a drought and for six whole months no rain had fallen, the emperor's [Michael IV] brothers held a procession, John [the Orphanotrophos] carrying the holy mandylion. (...) Not only did it not rain, but a massive hail-storm was unleashed which broke down trees and shattered the roof tiles of the city. The city was in the grip of famine so John purchased one hundred thousand bushels of grain in the Peloponnese and in Hellas; with this the citizens were relieved. (...) [In 1038] there was a famine in Thrace, Macedonia, Strymon and Thessaloniki, right into Thessaly. (...) The emperor (...) scrutinised the (...) treasury [of Metropolitan Theophanes of Thessaloniki] and found 33 kentenaria of gold. Out of this he paid the clergy (...); the rest he distributed to the poor. (...) That year [1039] there were continuous earthquakes and frequent heavy rainfalls while, in some of the *themata* there was such an epidemic of quinsy that the living were unable to carry away the dead.

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- 1.7.4 An earthquake forces the population of Kallipolis and other cities to flee and allows for the establishment of a firm Ottoman foothold in Thrace, 1354

Author: Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos³⁷⁴

Text: *History (Historia)*

Date of text: between 1354 and 1369³⁷⁵

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: In his history, (ex-)emperor John VI Kantakouzenos covers the period from 1320 up to 1356, with some references to later events up to 1363. Its main purpose is to justify his own role in the turbulent events of these decades, especially in the civil war between Andronikos III Palaiologos³⁷⁶ and his grandfather Andronikos II³⁷⁷ (1321–1328) and later his own fight against the regency for Emperor John V Palaiologos³⁷⁸ between 1341 and 1347. Between 1347 and 1354, John VI sat on the throne in Constantinople, but ultimately he was forced to abdicate in favour of John V. He became a monk, but still played a prominent role in the politics of the empire. Byzantium, however, was significantly weakened after these series of civil wars and vulnerable to the Ottomans, who had been able to establish themselves permanently on European soil from 1352/1354 onwards. John VI had precipitated this development through his alliance with the Ottomans during the civil war; the devastating earthquake of 1354 thus also gives him the opportunity to attribute the Ottoman occupation of Kallipolis and surrounding cities partly to this natural catastrophe.³⁷⁹

Historical significance of the movement: The earthquake on 1/2 March 1354 ruined many cities along the coast of the Sea of Marmara down to the Dardanelles and was also strongly felt in Constantinople. Interestingly, according to the text the main motivation for the surviving population of Kallipolis and other places to evacuate these cities are not the devastations per se, but the inability to rebuild the fortifications in time in order to guarantee security from the attacks of the Ottomans.³⁸⁰

Type of movement: involuntary movement due to (natural) catastrophe.

Locations and date of movement: From Kallipolis and other cities along the Sea of Marmara to nearby places in Thrace; March 1354.

374 PLP 10973.

375 For the dating of the text Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, 267.

376 PLP 21437.

377 PLP 21436.

378 PLP 21485.

379 Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, 266–270.

380 Külzer, *Ostthrakien*, 428; Ambraseys, *Earthquakes in the Mediterranean and Middle East*, 372–375.

Edition used: *Ioannis Cantacuzeni eximperatoris Historiarum Libri IV*, ed. Ludwig Schopen, CSHB, vol. 3 (Bonn, 1828) 277, 10–278, 4, Book 4, 38.

Translation used: Ambraseys, Nicholas, *Earthquakes in the Mediterranean and Middle East. A Multidisciplinary Study of Seismicity up to 1900* (Cambridge, 2009) 374 (modified by Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller).

John VI Kantakouzenos, *History*, Book 4, 38

[p. 277] While these things were happening, an extraordinary earthquake occurred at the beginning of spring. It was strongest at the beginning of the night, destroying the cities on the coast of Thrace. Not only did houses fall on their occupants and killed many of them, but the earthquake also tore out the cities' walls from their foundations. Those of the citizens who had not been killed by the earthquake, seeing that they could not easily put back up the walls which had been knocked down, and that they would not be able to fight or defend themselves against the barbarians [the Ottomans], if the latter attacked; and fearing also lest they be led away into slavery, they took their wives and children and left by night for such of the other cities, as they believed had not fallen in the earthquake. As there was rain and snow and unbelievable cold, some of them were killed by the frost, [p. 278] especially women and new-born babes. The rest, apart from those who succumbed to the cold, reached the cities, which had escaped destruction, [but] all of them were enslaved when the barbarians attacked. The latter, seeing that the walls of the city had collapsed, and surmising that in such circumstances they could defeat [the Greeks], either if they fled, or, if they remained [in the cities], the barbarians would surround them; and so they marched on the Greeks, vanquished them and made of all the cities stores for their booty. Kallipolis, the most illustrious of all the Thracian coastal cities occupied by the barbarians, suffered worse damage than the others; all its people fled to safety in boats, which were very numerous there.

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Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller

1.8.0 Pastoralism: nomadic and transhumant

Pastoralism is an occupational mobility related to a form of animal breeding where livestock grazes on wide vegetated outdoor grounds (pastures) and is tended by herdsmen. Though the clear distinction between its types is a matter of scholarly debate, one can discern three variants depending on mobility patterns and animal possession. The first is nomadism or nomadic pastoralism, which is characterized by irregular movement between pastures by herdsmen who tend their own livestock. The second one is transhumance – sometimes called semi-nomadism – in which hired professional herdsmen take care of the flocks of someone else, usually a landlord who may at the same time be the owner of the pastures needed for grazing. Thus, transhumance usually implies seasonal movement between fixed summer pastures in mountainous and highland areas, and winter pastures in the valleys or littoral regions. In both nomadic pastoralism and transhumance, herdsmen seldom live in sedentary settlements and migrate together with their households and families. The third form of pastoralism is the so-called *Almwirtschaft* (also known in English as vertical transhumance). What is typical of this variant of domestic animal management is that herds travel between summer and winter pastures, but the grazing grounds are part of the common land of a fixed, sedentary settlement, usually a village. The herdsmen are based in settlements situated in the lowlands where their families live permanently, and spend the summer in the highlands, taking the livestock seasonally up and down the mountains.

The mountains of the three large south European peninsulas – Iberia, the Apennine Peninsula and the Balkans –, and of Asia Minor have favoured the spread of pastoralism in its various forms since prehistoric times. Crucial factors contributing to its economic role as a subsistence strategy were the mountainous and semi-mountainous landscape of the inland areas, and the Mediterranean climate in the coastal areas that provided grazing ground for pasture during winter. In the Balkans, Medieval Greek sources discern three regions where pastoralism was a common way of life: Macedonia, Thessaly, and Epiros. It was mostly economic reasons that embedded pastoralism within networks of local

and trans-border economic patterns. Yet, seasonal migration as a way of life can sometimes also be a matter of cultural tradition inherited from previous generations and preserved for centuries. Its various forms, especially transhumance, thus became a characteristic of the way of life of various ethnic groups in pre-modern times, especially of the Vlachs and the Albanians.

The first accounts about pastoralists in Byzantine sources of the Middle and Late period date back to the end of the 1st millennium AD. From the 11th century onwards, their number gradually increased. This may have happened for two reasons. Firstly, the subjugation of Bulgaria by Byzantium and the end of military conflicts in what is now Northern and Central Greece seems to have facilitated seasonal migration of herdsmen and livestock. And secondly, economic production itself stimulated and at the same time necessitated the various forms of pastoralism. Animal husbandry was time and labour consuming, which meant that working the land and tending domestic animals on a larger scale could take medieval peasants to the limit of their capacity (see 2.2.0). Accordingly, labour in the countryside was divided between agriculturalists, who in any case also kept domestic animals but on a much smaller scale, and professional herdsmen. Thanks to this specialisation, production in both agriculture and animal husbandry could be intensified. Moreover, when animal breeding was concentrated in mountainous and highland areas, peasants had more arable land at their disposal, which helped them to optimise the land use and the seasonal exploitation of available resources. And when domestic animals were allocated spaces in non-cultivated environments beyond the settlement borders, crop damage by moving livestock could be avoided and potential conflicts between agriculturalists and pastoralists, especially during the summer harvest, could be minimised. It is not surprising that part of our knowledge about different forms of domestic animal management stems from legal texts prescribing measures aimed at limiting such conflicts (the Farmer's Law),³⁸¹ or verdicts of local jurisprudence (for example, by Nicholas, judge of the *thema* Strymon and Thessaloniki, as well as the high church officials John Apokaukos and Demetrios Chomatenos) dealing with harvest damage.³⁸²

381 *Farmer's Law*, 25 and 52, ed. Igor Medvedev et al., *Vizantijskij zemledel'českij zakon. Tekst, issledovanie, kommentarij* (Leningrad, 1984) 106–107 and 116.

382 *Actes d'Ivion*, 9, ed. Jacques Lefort et al., *Actes d'Ivion*, 1: *Des origines au milieu du XI^e siècle. Édition diplomatique: Texte*, Archives de l'Athos 14 (Paris, 1985) 162, 38–41; Bees, Nikos, Unedierte Schriftstücke aus der Kanzlei des Johannes Apokaukos des Metropolitens von Naupaktos (in Aetolien), *Byzantinisch-neugriechische Jahrbücher* 21 (1971–1974) 55–160, here 78–79, no. 18; Demetrios Chomatenos, *Ponemata diaphora*, no. 116, ed. Günter Prinzing, *Demetrii Chomateni ponemata diaphora*, CFHB 38 (Berlin and New York, 2002) 380–381.

Since they had no other duties, pastoralists could concentrate their efforts on tending domesticated animals, predominantly sheep and goats, usually in huge herds, an activity that would have been impossible to undertake in a village. The economic significance of pastoralism and the products it yielded – primary such as meat, and secondary such as dairy products and wool – was one of the reasons why medieval texts shed light on the life of nomadic and transhumant herdsmen. Here one has to mention above all charters preserved in the archives of Byzantine (and for the Late Middle Ages Serbian) monasteries such as those on Mount Athos.³⁸³ As it has already been mentioned, transhumant pastoralists usually tended the livestock of major lay and religious landlords who provided them with the pastures needed for grazing. Data preserved in the charters that lay benefactors granted to monastic communities permit us to reconstruct the extent and range of migratory patterns of medieval pastoralists. For example, we know the routes of seasonal migration from mountains in the Balkan hinterland to winter pastures on the seashores of the Aegean. From a charter that Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos³⁸⁴ granted to the Chilandar monastery in 1319, we learn that the Serbian religious foundation on Mount Athos obtained the rights to summer pastures (*planene*) near Melnik (nowadays in Southwest Bulgaria) and to a winter pasture (*cheimadeion*) in Kassandreia in the Chalkidiki, which were necessary for its livestock.³⁸⁵ This means that herds and herdsmen had to cover some 100 km in a linear distance (about 140 km on a modern land route) twice a year.

Pastoralists migrated seasonally between the pastures, accompanied by their families and thousands of animals. Thus, it comes as no surprise that they soon attracted the attention of Byzantine and foreign authors. They were curious about their way of life, especially the fact that within Vlach pastoralist communities, women tended the livestock just as men did. Yet, medieval texts also reproduce prejudices of the sedentary population who regarded migrating pastoralists as unfaithful and treacherous. Since they had to protect the livestock against wild beasts and cattle rustlers, the pastoralists customarily bore weapons. Therefore, they were often hired as soldiers and mercenaries, especially in the Late Middle Ages. It is this military activity of pastoralists that attracted the attention of Byzantine historians, not only those living in the capital, but also those dwelling in the provinces, such as the Peloponnese and Epiros. They were much more interested in politics and military conflicts than in the economic life of mobile herdsmen in the countryside.

383 Delouis, Olivier and Kostis Smyrliis (eds.), *Lire les Archives de l'Athos. Actes du colloque réuni à Athènes du 18 au 20 novembre 2015 à l'occasion des 70 ans de la collection refondée par Paul Lemerle*, TM 23/2 (Paris, 2019).

384 PLP 21436.

385 *Actes de Chilandar*, no. 42, ed. Mirjana Živojinović et al., *Actes de Chilandar*, 1: *Des origines à 1319. Édition diplomatique: Texte*, Archives de l'Athos 20 (Paris, 1998) 269, 135–149.

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Grigori Simeonov

1.8.1 The origin and pastoralism of the Vlachs

Author: Kekaumenos³⁸⁶

Text: *Strategikon (Consilia et narrationes)*

Date of text: ca. 1078

Genre: Treatise with advice about government and personal household

Literary context: The work of the provincial landlord Kekaumenos is unique in Byzantine literature. In his *vademecum*-like *Consilia et narrationes* the author gives advice not only to the members of his own family but also to the emperor himself.³⁸⁷ Thus one can find a broad range of topics, about which Kekaumenos holds forth in a non-sophisticated language, dealing with land use, household management, family affairs, religious mentality, provincial governorship, warfare, local history, etc. His narrative focuses on the areas of Thessaly and Macedonia. His worldview can be characterised as conservative and strongly influenced by Orthodox Christianity and loyalty to *Romania*, that is the Byzantine Empire. Even though his ancestors had been high officials in the Kingdom of Armenia and in Bulgaria, Kekaumenos had strong prejudices against foreigners. He even advised the emperor not to grant high office to non-Byzantines because their lack of loyalty would pose a threat to the empire (see 3.3.2). Kekaumenos' discontent also becomes apparent when he is speaking about an ethnic group that had been living on Byzantine soil for centuries and whose members in the *thema* of Hellas had been under the command of Kekaumenos' grandfather,

386 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Anonymus/274/>.

387 Litavrin, Gennadij, *Kekavmen, Sovety i rasskazy. Poučenie vizantijskogo polkovodca XI veka. Podgotovka tekste, vvedenie, perevod s grečeskogo i kommentarij* (2nd edition) (Saint Petersburg, 2003).

namely the Latin-speaking Vlachs. The main reason for his prejudice was the mobility of this population whom he considered to be untrustworthy, especially during military conflicts or insurgencies. Even so, the author's *Consilia et narrationes* are one of the earliest extant texts that shed light on the migratory patterns of Vlach pastoralism.

Historical significance of the movement: Kekaumenos' *Strategikon* contains the earliest Medieval account of the migration of Latin-speaking populations first to the regions south of the Danube (perhaps a reminiscence of Emperor Aurelian's withdrawal from Dacia and the establishment of Dacia Aureliana in the northern Balkans in 275) and then to the highland regions of Macedonia, Epiros and Thessaly. Since it is such an important source, Kekaumenos' work attracted the interest of scholars early on. They used the information to challenge the so-called *Dako-romanische Kontinuitätstheorie*, which claimed a cultural and ethnic continuity on the soil of modern Romania in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages. Leaving aside the various national aspirations of the 19th and 20th century, there was a considerable presence of a Latin-speaking population in some regions south of the Danube. Greek and Latin authors localise the so-called Great Valachia or *Megale Vlachia*³⁸⁸ in Thessaly. There the Vlachs were encountered by the Jewish traveller Benjamin of Tudela who states that they were swift as hinds, coming down from the mountains and attacking the Greeks, not recognizing the authority of anyone, and giving their children Old-Testament names.³⁸⁹ In their new mountainous homeland, the Vlach pastoralists (nowadays known as *armâni* in their language) quickly established themselves as professional shepherds. Their consummate skill in producing the best cheese, milk and meat is praised in the *Anonymous Description of Eastern Europe* dating to 1308, which also speaks about Vlachs who used to be *pastores Romanorum* in Hungary.³⁹⁰ Unfortunately, Medieval Greek sources – including Kekaumenos' *Strategikon* – have little to say about the interconnection and transition between the different forms of pastoralism, and how and to what extent sedentarisation occurred in Vlach pastoralist communities.

388 Niketas Choniates, *History*, ed. Jan-Louis van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, CFHB 11 (Berlin and New York, 1975) 49–51; Carile, Antonio, *Partitio terrarum imperii Romaniae, Studi veneziani* 7 (1965) 125–305, here 221, 107–108; George Akropolites, *History*, ch. 25, ed. August Heisenberg and Peter Wirth, *Georgii Acropolitae opera*, vol. 1 (revised edition) (Stuttgart, 1978) 42, 23–43, 3.

389 Adler, Marcus N, *The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela. Critical Text, Translation and Commentary* (London, 1907) 11.

390 *Anonymi Descriptio Europae Orientalis*, ed. Tibor Živković et al., *Anonymi Descriptio Europae Orientalis. Anonimov opis Istočne Evrope. Kritičko izdanje teksta na latinskom jeziku, prevod i filološka analiza*, Dragana Kunčer, *Izvori za srpsku istoriju* 13; *Latinski izvori* 2 (Belgrade, 2013) 102–103.

Despite the prejudices, Vlach pastoralists became significant players in networks of local production and trans-regional trade systems. It is noteworthy that a Byzantine poet from the capital, probably Theodore Prodromos (12th century),³⁹¹ speaking in the name of a hungry Constantinopolitan monk in one of his *Bettelgedichte*, names Vlach cheese among the delicatessen which one could find on the capital's markets and which he was craving.³⁹²

Type of movement: voluntary as pastoralists and involuntary due to resettlement.

Locations and date of movement: migration of Latin-speaking populations from the former Roman province of Dacia to the south of the Danube and then to Thessaly, Epiros, Macedonia, and Hellas (2nd to the 9th/10th centuries)/seasonal migration of Vlach shepherds in the southern regions of the Balkans (Macedonia and Thessaly);³⁹³ 1066.

Edition used: Kekaumenos, *Consilia et Narrationes*. Greek text (digitally) edited by Charlotte Roueché, online 2013: <https://ancientwisdoms.ac.uk/library/kekaumenos-consilia-et-narrationes/index.html>.

Translation used: Ibid. (modified by Dirk Krausmüller)

Kekaumenos, *Strategikon*, ch. 187–188 and ch. 175

[ch. 187] I give you, and your children, this advice. Since the race of the Vlachs is completely untrustworthy, and crooked, and keeps correct faith neither with God nor with the emperor, nor with a relative or a friend, but strives to do down everyone, tells many lies and steals a great deal, swearing every day the most frightful oaths to its friends, and breaking them easily, performing brother-making rituals and baptismal alliances, and scheming in this way to deceive simpler people, it has never yet kept faith with anyone, not even with the ancient emperors of the Romans. After being fought by the emperor Trajan, and entirely wiped out, they were captured, and their king, the so-called Dekabalos [Decebalus], was slaughtered and his head was fastened on a spear in the middle of the city of the Romans. These are the so-called Dacians and Bessi. They lived formerly near the Danube river, and the Saos, the river which we now call the Sava, where Serbs live now, in fortified and inaccessible places. Being confident in these places, they pretended to be friends and servants of the ancient emperors of the Romans, and used to go out of their fortresses and ransack the lands of the Romans; therefore, they were angered with them, and, as has been said, destroyed them. They left those places, and were dispersed throughout all Epiros and

391 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Theodoros/25001/>.

392 *Ptochoprodromika*, IV 211, ed. Hans Eideneier, *Ptochoprodromos. Einführung, kritische Ausgabe, deutsche Übersetzung, Glossar*, Neograeca medii aevi 5 (Cologne, 1991) 150.

393 Pétrides, Sophrone, Jean Apokaukos, lettres et autres documents inédits, *Izvestija Russkogo archeologičeskogo instituta v Konstantinopole* 14 (1909) 69–100, here no 6, 75, 30–76, 2.

Macedonia, but most of them inhabited Hellas. They are very cowardly, having the hearts of hares, but with boldness – and even this comes from cowardice. So, I advise you not to trust them at all. And, if a revolt ever takes place, and they pretend friendship and trust, swearing by God to keep it, do not trust them. It is better for you not to make them swear at all, nor to offer them an oath, but to watch them, as evil men, rather than swearing or receiving an oath. So, you must not trust them at all; rather, pretend yourself to be their friend. But, even if, sometimes, a revolt takes place in Bulgaria, as has been said before, even if they profess to be your friends, or even swear, do not trust them. [ch. 188] But, even if they bring their women and their children into the fortress of Romania [Byzantium], urge them to bring them, but let them be inside the citadel; let the men be outside. If they wish to go in to their kindreds, let two or three go in; when they come out, you let others in turn come in. Pay great attention to the walls and to the gates. If you do so, you will be safe. But, if you allow many to go in to their kindreds, the fortress will be betrayed by them, and you will be bitten by them as if by an asp, and then you will remember my advice. But, if you observe this, you will have them as your subjects, and will also have freedom from care.

[ch. 175] And when he asked the Vlachs: ‘Where are your animals and your wives now?’, they said: ‘In the mountains of Bulgaria.’ For they have such an arrangement that the animals of the Vlachs and the Bulgarians and their households are from the months of April until the month of September in the high mountains and freezing cold places.

Grigori Simeonov

1.8.2 Vlach shepherds enter Mount Athos together with their families and livestock

Author: Anonymous copyist of letters of Emperor Alexios I Komnenos³⁹⁴ and Patriarch Nicholas III Grammatikos³⁹⁵

Text: *Partial Account (Diegesis merike)*

Date of text: ca. 1105

Genre: Modified copy of letters / charters of the highest state officials

Historical significance of the movement: At the beginning of the 12th century the so-called Vlach scandal occurred. The reason was the presence of Vlach shepherds – and shepherdesses as well – together with their livestock on Mount Athos. As is well known, domestic animals were not allowed to enter the Holy Mountain. Thus, a group of monks, among them many ascetics, complained to the emperor

394 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Alexios/1/>.

395 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Nikolaos/13/>.

and the patriarch in Constantinople. The Vlachs, their women and herds were then expelled from the peninsula. Like other medieval documents connected to Byzantine monasticism, this copy of letters (charters?) of Emperor Alexios I Komnenos and Patriarch Nicholas III Grammatikos casts light on the economic interests of religious foundations who hired professional shepherds in order to exploit lands and resources.

Type of movement: Voluntary (as transhumant pastoralists) and involuntary (expulsion).

Locations and date of movement: South Macedonia and Mount Athos; ca. 1105.

Edition used: Meyer, Philipp, *Die Haupturkunden für die Geschichte der Athosklöster* (Leipzig, 1894) 163, 10–27.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Partial Account

[p. 163] After the animals and the Vlachs had been expelled from the Holy Mountain the monks did not thank God because he had removed a great and pernicious reason for anger, because God had visited us with a visitation and had purified the Holy Mountain, the mountain on which God had deigned to live, but rather cried and beat their breasts. And [instead] there was on the Holy Mountain a wailing as great as that about Egypt, and the Israelites remembered the Egyptian fare, the flesh and the pots, and also the onions and garlic and gourds, whereas the dwellers on the Holy Mountain remembered how numerous and pleasant were the dealings with the Vlachs, the milk and the cheese and the wool, the parties and the consorting and the dealings with each other, of the Vlachs, I mean, with the monks, and the diabolical drunkenness, which later came to light. For the devil entered the hearts of the Vlachs, and they even had their wives with them wearing men's clothes, as if they were trustworthy, and they tended the sheep and served the monasteries, providing them with cheese, milk and wool and also making sourdough for the comfort of the monasteries, and in sum, they were loved by the monks as *paroikoi* who served them.

Grigori Simeonov

1.8.3 A conflict between Vlach and Cuman transhumant pastoralists

Author: Andronikos I Komnenos³⁹⁶**Text:** *Charter (Prostaxis)***Date of text:** 1184**Genre:** Document

Historical significance of the movement: Sometimes, the mobility of large groups of humans and animals led to conflicts between pastoralists and the sedentary population, but the need for grazing land also caused conflicts between pastoralists. Although the emperor himself and the patriarch could intervene, examining the case and solving the disagreement was usually the task of provincial officials. The written decisions – especially in arguments involving a monastery – were usually preserved, in order to be presented when another dispute arose. The attitude towards the Vlach pastoralists tending the livestock of the Great Lavra is completely different from that of Kekaumenos. The 11th and 12th centuries saw the settlement of Turkic groups on imperial soil where they served as cavalry archers under Byzantine command. The most prominent were the Pechenegs and the Cumans, both of whom are attested in Macedonia – in Moglena where the Kožuf Mountain is situated.³⁹⁷ However, some of these nomads originating from the steppes of Eurasia came into conflict with local pastoralists over grazing grounds. In such a case, powerful religious landowners such as the Great Lavra possessed the authority and networks needed for seeking the assistance of the emperor himself. As one might expect, the emperor intervened in favour of the Lavra's transhumant pastoralists of Vlach origin, confirmed the monastery's rights over the pastures in Moglena, and guaranteed the Vlach shepherds full security when they were grazing their animals in the region.

Type of movement: Voluntary (as transhumant pastoralists).

Locations and date of movement: Between summer pastures (Pouzouchia, probably in the Kožuf Mountain / Tzena) and winter pastures in Moglena (South Macedonia); the early 1180s.

Edition used: *Actes de Lavra*, 1: *Des originès à 1204. Édition diplomatique* par Paul Lemerle et al., Archives de l'Athos 5 (Paris, 1970) 343–344, 1–12, no. 66.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

396 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Andronikos/1/>.

397 John Zonaras, *Chronicle*, Book 18, 23, 6–7, ed. Theodor Büttner-Wobst, *Ioannis Zonarae Epitomae historiarum libri XIII–XVIII* (Bonn, 1897) III 740, 19–741, 5; *Gesta Francorum*, I, ed. Rosalind Hill, *The Deeds of the Franks and the Other Pilgrims to Jerusalem* (reprinted edition) (Oxford, 1979) 9, 6–18; *Actes de Lavra*, no. 65, ed. Paul Lemerle et al., *Actes de Lavra 1: Des originès à 1204. Édition diplomatique: Texte*, Archives de l'Athos 5 (Paris, 1970) 338, 25–30.

Andronikos I Komnenos, *Charter*

[p. 343] Our imperial rule received a memorandum from the party of the venerable monastery of Saint Athanasios on Mount Athos, which states that the Cumans living in Moglena go up to the mountain pasture called Pouzouchia, [p. 344] which belongs to their monastery, and make enclosures there for their animals and freely let them graze, and refuse to pay to it the required tithe for their animals. And if matters are thus, our imperial rule orders the respective tax officials of Moglena to show them this command of our imperial rule and to force them by all means to pay the entire tithe to the monastery of Saint Athanasios or any other fee that belongs to it. If henceforth and after the present command of my imperial rule they dare to do such a thing they may not permit them to treat the Vlachs and Bulgarians who do not belong to them as if they were their own, but demand all of them for the party of the aforementioned monastery as it is established custom. But if they do not accede to this, but again attempt to hold back something or make the Vlachs and Bulgarians exempt according to the unjust custom that has held sway until now, they are henceforth driven out of the aforementioned mountain pasture by the tax officials, even against their will. But if afterwards they will use the way up to the aforementioned mountain pasture in a lawless fashion, or will refuse to act in accordance with the command of my imperial rule as regards any other thing that is owed to the aforementioned monastery, they will be chastised by them according to what is lawful and just. But as regards the Vlachs who belong to the aforementioned monastery, since they do not have sufficient grazing land for their animals after they have come down from the mountain pasture, and therefore out of great need let their animals graze in the district of Moglena, my imperial rule orders that they shall let graze animals of any kind that belong to them within the boundaries of this same province of Moglena without being molested or bothered and without giving any gift. If they are hindered or threatened by one of the tax officials or soldiers or provincial officials or even the Cumans themselves, even if they do not want to, whoever attempts to act against the command of my imperial rule, whoever he may be, will incur the greatest displeasure from my imperial rule. The Vlachs of the monastery of Saint Athanasios, then, as has been indicated, shall let the animals that are with them graze within the boundaries of the province of Moglena from now on and in the future, without being molested or bothered or subjected to of any kind of fee.

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Grigori Simeonov

1.8.4 Transhumant shepherds of Albanian origin and their kin

Author: Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos³⁹⁸

Text: *History (Historia)*

Date of text: between 1354 and 1369

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: John Kantakouzenos belongs to a select group of members of the imperial family that engaged in literary activity.³⁹⁹ He wrote a historiographical work after his abdication in 1354 when he had become a monk. His narrative shows two peculiarities. On the one hand, he tells the story of contemporary events in which he took part, which makes his work a collection of first-hand information by one of the best informants. On the other, however, he was entangled in historical events, especially in the early Turkish conquest in Europe for which he was blamed by his contemporaries. Accordingly, he sought to justify his own policy of which he offered a retrospective view. Nevertheless, there is no reason to doubt the historical accuracy of his account about Albanian mobility, which was based on his recollections of a campaign of his friend, Emperor Andronikos III,⁴⁰⁰ in 1332.

Historical significance of the movement: The Albanian migration of the 14th and 15th centuries to Epiros, Aitolia, Akarnania, and the Peloponnese is one of the last significant migrations in the history of the Medieval Balkans. A major factor contributing to the success of the Albanian settlement in these regions was the political situation and the existence of small polities that were often hostile to each other and thus found themselves in constant need of armed forces. The

398 PLP 10973.

399 Nicol, Donald, *The Reluctant Emperor. A Biography of John Cantacuzene, Byzantine Emperor and Monk, c. 1295–1383* (Cambridge, 1996); Weiss, Günter, *Johannes Kantakuzenos – Aristokrat, Staatsmann, Kaiser und Mönch – in der Gesellschaftsentwicklung von Byzanz im 14. Jahrhundert*, Schriften zur Geistesgeschichte des östlichen Europa 4 (Wiesbaden, 1969).

400 PLP 21437.

Albanians – praised in Greek and Latin sources for their military skills, especially as archers and pikemen⁴⁰¹ – offered their services to Byzantine, Serbian, and Western rulers. One of these was the Byzantine emperor Andronikos III who encountered three Albanian tribes/kin-groups during his campaign in Thessaly in 1332. Medieval sources state that the Albanians lacked any towns – save for Dyrrhachion / Durrës – and lived in regions poor in grain but abundant in livestock, milk and cheese, where they dwelt in tents and migrated seasonally.⁴⁰² Thus, according to an author of imperial blood – Manuel II Palaiologos⁴⁰³ – some 12,000 Albanians migrated with their women, children and livestock in the early 15th century and settled in the Peloponnese,⁴⁰⁴ where other sources localise winter pastures of Albanian shepherds in regions close to the seashore.⁴⁰⁵ Just like the Vlachs, Albanians met with prejudice. When they offered their services to one regional ruler, they were despised by historians close to opposing politics (like, for example, George Sphrantzes,⁴⁰⁶ and the author of the *Chronicle of the Tocco*).⁴⁰⁷

Type of movement: Voluntary (seasonal migration as pastoralists).

Locations and date of movement: Winter and summer pastures in Thessaly; 1332.

Edition used: *Ioannis Cantacuzeni eximperatoris Historiarum Libri IV*, ed. Ludwig Schopen, CSHB, vol. 1 (Bonn, 1828) 474, 9–19, Book 2, 28.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

John Kantakouzenos, *History*, Book 2, 28

[p. 474] The Albanians who dwell in the mountainous parts of Thessaly are some twelve thousand in number. They are not subject to a ruler and call themselves Malakasians, Buians and Mesarites after their tribal chiefs. When the emperor was spending some time in Thessaly, they prostrated themselves before him and promised to serve him. For they feared that when winter had come, they would be destroyed by the Rhomaiοi since they live in no town but dwell in the mountains and inaccessible places, from which they withdraw in winter because of the frost

401 *Anonymi descriptio Europae Orientalis*, ed. Kunčer, 115.

402 *Anonymi descriptio Europae Orientalis*, ed. Kunčer, 116.

403 PLP 21513.

404 Manuel Palaiologos, *Funeral Oration*, ed. Julian Chrysostomides, *Manuel II Palaeologus, Funeral Oration on His Brother Theodore. Introduction, Text, Translation and Notes*, CFHB 26 (Thessaloniki, 1985) 119, 22–26.

405 Lampros, Spyridon, *Παλαιολογία και Πελοποννησιακά* (Athens, 1926) III 195, 20–30.

406 PLP 27278; George Sphrantzes, *Chronicle*, 39, 8, ed. Riccardo Maisano, *Giorgio Sfranze, Cronaca*, CFHB 29; Scrittori Bizantini 2 (Rome, 1990) 154, 21–30.

407 *Cronaca dei Tocco di Cefalonia; prolegomeni, testo critico e traduzione*, by Giuseppe Schirò, CFHB 10 (Rome, 1975).

and the snow, which in the mountains falls in unbelievable quantities. Thus, they thought that they would be easily overwhelmed.

Further reading

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Grigori Simeonov

1.8.5 Turkic nomads try to prevent the reconstruction of Dorylaion by Emperor Manuel I Komnenos⁴⁰⁸

Author: Niketas Choniates⁴⁰⁹

Text: *History* (*Chronike diegesis*)

Date of text: Two redactions of Choniates' historiographical work are attested in the manuscripts, one dates to before, the other to after 1204

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: Niketas Choniates is one of the most prominent Byzantine historians. Serving as a high court official – a chancellor – under Isaac II Angelos⁴¹⁰ and as a governor of Philippopolis in Thrace, he also had an influence on Byzantine politics in the last two decades before the sack of Constantinople by the Crusaders in 1203/1204.⁴¹¹ A well-educated intellectual with a taste for rhetoric, who in his high-style speeches addressed the ruling elite in the capital, Choniates wrote a historiographical work that is considered to be one of the masterpieces of Byzantine historiography. Since he was actively involved in politics, he could give first-hand accounts about various topics. In some instances, he speaks as an eyewitness. His *History* starts with the reign of John II Komnenos⁴¹² and is of peculiar value for the reign of Manuel I Komnenos⁴¹³ and the Angelos dynasty. As was the case with many other Byzantines, the Fourth Crusade and the fall of Constantinople to the Crusaders marked a break in Choniates' professional and

408 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Manuel/1/>.

409 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Niketas/25001/>.

410 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Isaakios/2/>.

411 Simpson, Alicia, *Niketas Choniates. A Historiographical Study* (Oxford, 2013).

412 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/loannes/2/>.

413 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Manuel/1/>.

private life. The former courtier and intellectual witnessed the looting of the capital and his own property, and was one of many who left the captured city in the spring of 1204 in order to seek refuge in Nicaea (see 1.1.1).

Historical significance of the movement: Dorylaion (Eskişehir) was one of the major traffic junctions in the Anatolian province of Phrygia, Choniates' homeland. One route connected Constantinople with Ankyra (modern Ankara), whereas the other led to Antioch in Syria via Amorion and Ikonion. Its important role in logistics is evident from two battles between Crusaders and Seljuks (in 1097 and 1147) that took place nearby. This explains the decision of Emperor Manuel I to fortify the settlement on the eve of his last major campaign in the East in 1175. However, this plan was not welcomed by the Turkic pastoralists who lived in the region. Choniates' account shows us a completely different pattern of pastoralism and its relations to sedentary populations. Contrary to Vlach and, to a certain degree, Albanian transhumant pastoralists, who offered their services to Byzantine monastic foundations and were Christians, the presence of Turkic nomads in Asia Minor since 1071 marked a considerable change in the ethno-demographic, cultural, and political map of Byzantine Anatolia. Here the nomadic way of life, combined with the Muslim religion and the existence of Turkic polities, led to conflicts between Byzantium and the Turks which went beyond the usual quarrels between pastoralists and sedentary populations for economic reasons. Manuel's attempt to fortify Dorylaion and use it as a permanent base in his campaign against the Seljuks failed in the following year – in 1176 the Byzantines suffered another defeat, this time at the battle of Myriokephalon.

Type of movement: Voluntary (nomadism).

Locations and date of movement: Dorylaion in Phrygia; 1175.

Edition used: *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, ed. Jan-Louis van Dieten, CFHB 11 (Berlin and New York, 1975) 176, 49–65.

Translation used: *O City of Byzantium, Annals of Niketas Choniates*, transl. by Harry Magoulas (Detroit, 1984) 99 (modified by Dirk Krausmüller).

Niketas Choniates, *History*

[p. 176] Since he [Manuel] wanted to rebuild Dorylaion, he provoked and incited the barbarian to fight him. The sultan pretended that he had not known that the emperor had arrived at Dorylaion and sent an embassy to ask about the cause of the difficulties and to appeal to him to leave (...) Since he took steps to rebuild the city, he began to carry stones on his back, bringing out manliness in the others as well. Thus, the walls were raised with great speed, the palisade was thrown up outside, and wells were dug inside so that more water could be drawn up. The Turks knew that they would be in danger should they be forced to leave the fertile plains of Dorylaion on which their herds of goats and cattle grazed in summ-

er, cavorting in the verdant meadows, and should the city be built with a Roman phalanx installed as a garrison. They gave free rein to their horses and attacked the Rhomaioi.

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Korobeinikov, Dimitri, *Byzantium and the Turks in the Thirteenth Century* (Oxford, 2014).

Vryonis, Speros, *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth Century* (Berkeley, 1971).

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1.9.0 Education and advancement

In Byzantium, travel could be a means of personal advancement. From hagiographical texts we know that the sons of provincial families went to Constantinople where they entered the service of powerful relatives. One such case is that of Sergios,⁴¹⁴ a native of Galatia in Central Anatolia. At the age of twenty-three he went to the capital together with his father in order to meet the official Bryainios⁴¹⁵ whose wife was a cousin of his. Sergios stayed with Bryainios and in 842/843 accompanied him on an embassy to Bulgaria before he left him in order to become a monk. A few decades later Abraamios,⁴¹⁶ who hailed from Trebizond on the Black Sea coast, took a similar step. As an orphan he could not rely on the help of his father. As will be seen below, he overcame this problem by making friends with a tax collector who took him to Constantinople. Once there, however, he encountered the official Zephinezer⁴¹⁷ whose daughter-in-law was a relative of his. From then on, he lived in Zephinezer's house where he was expected to share the meals with the family and was given the clothing he needed. When after 944 Zephinezer became *strategos* of the *thema* Aigaion Pelagos, "he took Abraamios with him because he had great affection for him".⁴¹⁸ It was only after they had returned from there that Abraamios decided to take his future in his own hands. He became a monk and moved to Mount Kyminas in Western Asia Minor.

414 PmbZ 21752, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ23905/html>.

415 PmbZ 1041, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ12133/html>.

416 PmbZ 20670, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22823/html>.

417 PmbZ 27682, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ29837/html>.

418 *Life (Vita B) of Saint Athanasios of Mount Athos*, 8, ed. Jacques Noret, *Vitae duae antiquae Sancti Athanasii Athonitae*, CC.SG, 9 (Turnhout and Leuven, 1982) 134.

Not all youths from the provinces sought employment with aristocratic families. In the early 10th century, Constantine,⁴¹⁹ the son of the landowner Metrios⁴²⁰ from Paphlagonia in Northern Anatolia, was sent to Constantinople where he entered the service of the imperial chamberlain Samonas and later became the *parakoimomenos* of the emperor. This career was possible because Constantine had been castrated by his father. Indeed, the post of *parakoimomenos* was reserved for eunuchs. Here we are clearly in the presence of a pattern. A few years later, Nikephoros,⁴²¹ a boy from the village of Basileion in Northwestern Asia Minor, was also “castrated by his parents and sent to the imperial city (...) where he was welcomed in a caring and friendly manner by the *magistros* Moselle”.⁴²² He then appears to have attended a school in a monastery that had been founded by Moselle.⁴²³ Afterwards he became a member of the clergy of the imperial palace.

The imperial palace and aristocratic houses were not the only destinations for sons of ambitious provincial families. There was also Saint Sophia, the cathedral of Constantinople, where the patriarch resided. The clergy serving at Saint Sophia were numerous, including not only priests but also deacons who were theoretically of lower rank but could be very powerful figures since they staffed the patriarchal administration. Their aim was to be appointed metropolitan or bishop. Although this made for intense rivalry, they had a common self-image. Having attended schools of rhetoric that were attached to the patriarchate, they regarded themselves as cultivated and refined. This does not mean, however, that they all had the same background. Some came from Constantinopolitan families, which in each generation enrolled at least one of their offspring in the patriarchal clergy. Others came from the provinces. In many cases we know their birth places. Yet little is known about the social mechanisms that brought them to the capital. In the second half of the 9th century a young man from the village of Aplatianai in Central Anatolia, Blaise,⁴²⁴ went to Constantinople in order to join his brother who had already become a cleric at Saint Sophia. Unfortunately, we do not know

419 PmbZ 23820, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25974/html>.

420 PmbZ 25087, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ27241/html>.

421 PmbZ 25576, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ27730/html>.

422 *Life of Saint Nikephoros of Miletos*, 4, ed. Hippolyte Delehaye, *Vita s. Nicephori*, in: Theodore Wiegand (ed.), *Milet. Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen und Untersuchungen seit dem Jahre 1899*, vol. III/1: *Der Latmos* (Berlin, 1913) 157–171, here 159, 23–29.

423 PmbZ 26844, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28998/html>.

424 PmbZ 21177, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ23330/html>.

who had been instrumental in bringing Blaise's brother to the capital. A more informative case is Theodore,⁴²⁵ the later metropolitan of Nicaea. He was a native of Argos in present-day Greece. When in 916 a new bishop, Peter,⁴²⁶ was sent there from Constantinople, Theodore became his protégé, receiving from him an education that would otherwise have been unavailable in a provincial town. Later he went to the capital where he became a patriarchal deacon and held an important post in the patriarchal administration. From his letters we know that his relations with deacons from Constantinopolitan families were strained. Accusing them of depravity he declared that "we have not been educated and raised by flute-players and third-rate actors and tax-collectors (...) we have not been nourished in women's quarters, as they were, we have not castrated and made eunuchs our unlucky servants (...) so as to fulfil our most shameless desires, as they have."⁴²⁷ Such focus on morals permitted him to challenge the claim of the inhabitants of Constantinople that they were superior to the people from the provinces.

Further reading

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Moulet, Benjamin, *Évêques, pouvoir et société à Byzance (VIII^e–XI^e siècle). Territoires, communautés et individus dans la société provinciale byzantine*, *Byzantina Sorbonensia* 25 (Paris, 2011).

Dirk Krausmüller

The roots of education are bitter, but the fruits are sweet, according to a well-known maxim commonly attributed to Isocrates, the ancient Athenian rhetor. This was especially true for Byzantine pupils, who had to endure considerable hardship (including corporal punishment), before they could reap the fruits of their labours later in their lives. Apart from minor changes (e.g., occasional additions to the curriculum), the educational system in Byzantium never strayed far from the patterns that had been established already during the Hellenistic period. It was divided into three stages: a) Primary education (the so-called *hiera grammata* or sacred letters), during which the young pupils were taught the basics (i. e., counting, reading, and writing), usually from liturgical books, such as

425 PmbZ 27705, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ29860/html>.

426 PmbZ 26428, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28582/html>.

427 Darrouzès, Jean (ed.), *Épistoliers byzantins du X^e siècle*, AOC (Paris, 1960) 306.

the Psalter. b) Secondary, or encyclical education, when the student advanced to a more intricate understanding of the grammar and syntax of the Greek language in its Attic form through the study of the classical poets and learned how to express him or herself in the form of short rhetorical exercises (*progymnasmata*) usually based on classical prose authors. The curriculum also included the study of philosophy and mathematics at an introductory level. c) Higher education, when those students, who were willing and had the means or were able to secure patronage in order to continue with their studies, would proceed to delve deeper into philosophy – based on the so-called *Organon*, the six works of Aristotle on Logic, and to a lesser extent to the Platonic Dialogues – as well as the subjects of the *Quadrivium* – namely arithmetic and geometry, astronomy and harmonics – and perhaps even medicine.

While elementary schools could be found in almost every corner of the empire, this was not the case with the other two stages of education, which were not available everywhere. A pupil who aspired to continue his studies to the next levels had to leave his village/hometown and move to other provincial cities or major centres of the empire (such as Alexandria, Antioch, Beirut and others). After the 7th century when the eastern provinces were lost first to the Persians and then to the Arabs, the highest level could only be obtained in the capital itself, where schools of all levels, libraries and books abounded. There are numerous accounts in hagiographical texts that show how the saints had to abandon their homes and families for this very purpose. A typical example is found in the *Life* of saint Eutychios [BHG 657], the future patriarch of Constantinople (512–582). He was born to a family of high social status in the village of Theion in Phrygia,⁴²⁸ where his grandfather served as the sacristan at the local church. He received instruction at the primary level in his native place, but at the age of twelve he was sent away by his parents and grandfather to Constantinople, in order to continue with his studies at the secondary stage.⁴²⁹

This movement of youths from the provinces to the centre for educational purposes continued at a steady pace during the following centuries. In the 12th century, Theophylaktos Hephaistos,⁴³⁰ later archbishop of Ohrid, left his native island of Euboea for the capital, and there may have become a pupil of the famous

428 Belke, Klaus and Norbert Mersich, *Phrygien und Pisidien*, TIB 7, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften 211 (Vienna, 1990) 402–403.

429 Kalogeras, Nikolaos, *Byzantine Childhood Education and Its Social Role from the Sixth Century until the End of Iconoclasm*, Unpublished PhD thesis (The University of Chicago, 2000) 88.

430 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Theophylaktos/105/>.

polymath Michael Psellos.⁴³¹ The Choniates brothers, Michael,⁴³² the future bishop of Athens, and Niketas,⁴³³ the historian (see 1.1.1), left their ancestral home at Chonai in south-western Phrygia in Asia Minor, where they enjoyed the guidance and protection of their uncle Niketas, the local bishop. One can surmise that their family's wealth and the connections of their uncle in the capital significantly facilitated their move to Constantinople, where Michael was able to study with one of the most prolific and versatile authors of this period, Eustathios of Thessaloniki.⁴³⁴

It is not always easy to decide whether a student left his home for the capital of his own volition or was simply presented with no other alternative by his family. The difficulties are greatest in hagiographical texts, which often repeat *topoi*⁴³⁵ or do not give sufficient details. One notable exception is the *Life* of Saint Gregory of Assos (see 1.9.2), where it is made clear that in the 12th century the most gifted children from the island of Lesbos and their families had little say in this matter, since according to an imperial custom they should be taken to the royal palace to be educated for a maximum of three years.

Usually, the fame of a good teacher attracted students who had hopes of continuing their studies at a more advanced level. There is perhaps no better example than George of Cyprus,⁴³⁶ who after 1259 left his native island, then under Frankish rule, in search of a suitable teacher who would introduce him to the natural sciences and philosophy.⁴³⁷ He tried in vain to enter the school of Nikephoros Blemmydes⁴³⁸ near Ephesus, and then enrolled at a school in Nicaea. Yet it was only after the recapture of Constantinople by the Byzantines in 1261 that he was able to fulfil his dreams by studying under George Akropolites.⁴³⁹

In some rare occasions, the students would even travel far from home to other lands in search of a good or famous teacher, who would instruct them in the more advanced courses. One well-known example is the Armenian Ananias of Shirak (Anania Širakaci),⁴⁴⁰ who in the 7th century (ca. 632–640) travelled to the Byzantine empire to study the natural sciences with Tychikos in Trebizond, whose

431 On this issue see Mullett, Margaret, *Theophylact of Ohrid. Reading the Letters of a Byzantine Archbishop*, BBOM 2 (Aldershot, 1997) 370–371.

432 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Michael/20528/>.

433 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Niketas/25001/>.

434 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Eustathios/20147/>.

435 Pratsch, Thomas, *Der hagiographische Topos. Griechische Heiligenviten in mittelbyzantinischer Zeit*, Millennium-Studien 6 (Berlin and New York, 2005) 92–105.

436 PLP 4590.

437 Constantinides, Costas N., George of Cyprus as a teacher, in: Theodoros Papadopoulos and Benediktos Englezakis (eds.), *Πρακτικά του Δεύτερου Διεθνούς Κυπριολογικού Συνεδρίου*, vol. 2 (Nicosia, 1986) 431–439.

438 PLP 2897.

439 PLP 518.

440 ODB I, 84–85.

fame had exceeded the boundaries of the empire.⁴⁴¹ Almost seven centuries later, a Byzantine this time, Gregory Chioniadēs, (see 1.9.3) would follow the opposite route, going from Byzantium via Trebizond to Ilkhanid Persia for the same purpose.

Further reading

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Ilias Nesseris

1.9.1 A provincial receives his education in Constantinople

Author: Anonymous

Text: *Life (Vita B) of Saint Athanasios of Mount Athos* [BHG 188]

Date of text: after 1028

Genre: Hagiography

Literary context: The *Life* as we have it now was written by a monk of the Lavra monastery on Mount Athos, which had been founded by Athanasios in the year 961. It postdates the reign of Emperor Constantine VIII (1025–1028). Yet it has been argued that it is based on an older text, which it reproduces with only slight modifications. The author of this older text appears to have been Anthony,⁴⁴² Athanasios’ favourite disciple and designated successor. After Athanasios had died Anthony was ousted from the Lavra by a rival faction and went to Constantinople where he founded the monastery of Panagios. Anthony would have written his *Life* at the beginning of the 11th century, soon after Athanasios’ death.

441 Mahé, Jean-Pierre, *Quadrivium et cursus d’études au VII^e siècle en Arménie et dans le monde byzantin d’après le “K’nnikon” d’Anania Širakac’i*, TM 10 (Paris, 1987) 159–206; Mahé, Jean-Pierre, *L’âge obscur de la science byzantine et les traductions arméniennes hellénisantes vers 570–730*, in: Bernard Flusin and Jean-Claude Cheynet (eds.), *Autour du Premier Humanisme Byzantin et des Cinq Études sur le XI^e siècle, quarante ans après Paul Lemerle*, TM 21/2 (Paris, 2017) 75–86.

442 PmbZ 20498, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22651/html>.

In it he makes the case that the monks of Panagios, and not the monks of Lavra, are the true heirs of Athanasios' spiritual legacy.

Historical significance of the movement: From the passage we gather that in his youth Athanasios, who was then still named Abraamios, was keen to get a good education. This was not possible in his hometown Trebizond on the Black Sea coast where only elementary reading and writing was taught. Thus, he decided to go to Constantinople as the only place in the empire where one could receive rhetorical training in classical Greek. In order to achieve this aim he bonded with a tax collector⁴⁴³ who had been sent from the capital. This shows clearly how important personal relations were for advancing one's career. Since the tax collector stayed in Trebizond only for a short while Athanasios had to act fast. That he was successful shows that he possessed impressive networking skills. Yet it seems likely that this was not an isolated event. Other imperial officials may have acted in the same way.

Type of movement: voluntary (for educational purposes).

Locations and date of movement: Trebizond, Constantinople; between 920 and 944.

Edition used: *Vitae duae antiquae Sancti Athanasii Athonitae*, ed. Jacques Noret, CC.SG, 9 (Turnhout and Leuven, 1982) 130, ch. 4.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Life (Vita B) of Saint Athanasios of Mount Athos, ch. 4

[p. 130] This excellent boy had a very great desire to go to the imperial city and experience the science of grammar. And nothing separated him from this desire, neither lack of support from humans, nor the grief of orphanhood, nor deprivation regarding the things that are necessary for the body, but he was at a loss as to how his desire might be fulfilled. But God, who gives means when there is a lack of means, helped him, too, through a dispensation so that his plan would be carried out. For during the reign of the famous Romanos who is called the elder [Romanos I]⁴⁴⁴ in order to distinguish him from the younger, a *kommerkiarios* who happened to be a eunuch was sent to Trebizond. When he saw that the boy showed self-control and was most wise and indeed a shoot of God, he loved him greatly and welcomed him genuinely and shared abode and meals with him. When this *kommerkiarios* wished to return to the imperial city, he took the boy with him because of his innate virtue. And the boy followed him, being led by the

443 PmbZ 31152, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ31829/html>.

444 PmbZ 26833, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28987/html>.

desire for learning. When, then, both entered the imperial city, the *kommerkiarios* found a teacher for the boy, Athanasios by name, a man who was incomparable in knowledge and speech and way of life.

Further reading

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Dirk Krausmüller

1.9.2 Children from Lesbos go to Constantinople

Author: Anonymous

Text: *Life of Saint Gregory, Bishop of Assos*

Date of text: late 12th century (shorter version), mid-14th century (longer version)⁴⁴⁵

Genre: Hagiography

Literary context: The *Life* of Saint Gregory of Assos is one of the few lives of saints, which were composed during the 12th century.⁴⁴⁶ The text has survived in two versions: one shorter, transmitted in cod. Athous, Meg. Lavra Ω 014 (1824) (*Diktyon* 28876) (hereafter L) [BHG 710a] and considered to have been written shortly after the repose of the saint most probably by one his monastic disciples, and an enriched, considerably lengthier version preserved in cod. Patm. 448 (*Diktyon* 54689) (hereafter P) [BHG 710a], compiled almost two centuries later. The latter manuscript also contains an *akolouthia*, a liturgical office, for Saint Gregory as well as a *synaxarion*, a short biographical entry [BHG 710c], which according to its title was composed by Nikephoros Kallistou Xanthopoulos,⁴⁴⁷ the well-known church historian of the early Palaiologan period. The *Life*, although not devoid of the common places usually found in hagiographical texts,⁴⁴⁸ contains a wealth of information about the saint's wanderings to the Holy Land and

445 For the dating of the two versions see Sophianos, Demetrios, 'Ο ἅγιος Γρηγόριος ἐπίσκοπος Ἀσσοῦ (β' μισὸ τοῦ ΙΒ' αἰῶνα) καὶ τὰ ἀγιολογικά του κείμενα (κριτικὴ ἔκδοση), *Mesaionika kai Nea Ellenika* 7 (2004) 302–303.

446 Magdalino, Paul, The Byzantine Holy Man in the Twelfth Century, in: Sergei Hackel (ed.), *The Byzantine Saint* (Crestwood, New York, 2001) 51–66.

447 PLP 20826.

448 See, for instance, Kaldellis, Anthony, The Hagiography of Doubt and Scepticism, in: Stephanos Efthymiadis (ed.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, vol. 2: *Genres and Contexts* (Farnham and Burlington, VT, 2014) 453–477, at 457.

back to Byzantium, which can be considered realistic, especially since many of the details provided in the text were corroborated by archaeological discoveries in the first decades of the previous century.⁴⁴⁹

Historical significance of the movement: In Byzantium students could receive their primary education in their native towns or villages. Yet in order to gain intermediate and higher education they had to move to bigger cities or to the capital itself. The *Life* of Gregory of Assos contains interesting information about this topic. The author claims that during the reign of Manuel I Komnenos the most gifted children from Lesbos were brought to the imperial palace in order to be educated there. This custom is not attested in any other contemporary or later source. Yet when one considers the general credibility of the *Life*, especially in its earlier version, the information should perhaps not be discounted. It is not clear what was the purpose of this custom was or if it applied to other provinces apart from Lesbos and possibly the surrounding islands. The children may have been intended as companions for the offspring of the imperial and aristocratic families of the capital. Moreover, their time in the palace may have served to strengthen the ties between the centre and the periphery, since after graduation they would have been free to return to their homes, perhaps even in an official capacity as bureaucrats in the lower strata of civil administration.

Type of movement: Involuntary (?) movement (for educational reasons, i.e., schooling in the imperial palace).

Locations and date of movement: from the village of Akorna⁴⁵⁰ (Lesbos) to Constantinople; during the reign of Manuel I Komnenos (1143–1180).

Edition used: Sophianos, Demetrios, 'Ο ἅγιος Γρηγόριος ἐπίσκοπος Ἀσσοῦ (β' μισὸ τοῦ ΙΒ' αἰῶνα) καὶ τὰ ἀγιολογικά του κείμενα (κριτικὴ ἔκδοσις), *Mesaionika kai Nea Ellenika* 7 (2004) 293–367, at 307–318 (edition of L) and 319–346 (edition of P).⁴⁵¹

Translation: Ilias Nesseris

449 Sophianos, Γρηγόριος Ἀσσοῦ, 300–301.

450 For the village of Akorna on the southeastern part of Lesbos see Koder, Johannes, *Aigaion Pelagos (Die Nördliche Ägäis)*, TIB 10, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften 259 (Vienna, 1998) 267; see also Louizides, Kimon, *Η Βυζαντινὴ Λέσβος (330–1355)*, Unpublished PhD thesis (University of Ioannina, 2003) 225 [<https://www.didaktorika.gr/eadd/handle/10442/24144>].

451 The *Life* has been also edited by Halkin, François, Saint Grégoire d'Assos. Vie et synaxaire inédits (BHG et Auctarium 710a et c), *Analecta Bollandiana* 102 (1984) 5–34, at 6–29.

*Life of Saint Gregory, bishop of Assos*⁴⁵²

[L: p. 308] [P: p. 321] Indeed, in the fourteenth year of his life, because there was in effect an imperial custom (*thesmos basilikos*) mandating that the best children of the island [i.e. Lesbos] should be taken to the imperial palace⁴⁵³ and kept as a pledge for the duration of three whole years and then returned to their families and replaced with others, the righteous George⁴⁵⁴ was taken along with the rest of the children, when Manuel the *porphyrogennetos* [Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180] was emperor of the Romans.⁴⁵⁵ He remained there for three entire years and he did not surrender to vanity like the rest of the children and consume his time with vainglory and games⁴⁵⁶ nor did he rejoice at physical beauty and acts of indulgence like the others, but with steady conviction he went through the stage of secondary education (*enkyklion paideusin*),⁴⁵⁷ through which he developed a moral character, having as a companion and teacher the most holy and great Agathon.⁴⁵⁸ And while, as we said, he was living in the palace, and since all the children from Lesbos who were living in the palace received all their means of sustenance from the royal provisions and a sum for their expenses, his mother Maria moved by the sentiment of love and affection (*philtron*), would gather all the money for the week's expenses [i.e. which she would have otherwise used to feed George] and on Saturday kindly give them to the poor. So, both George living

452 L: 308.29–45= P: 321.56–73. This excerpt is nearly identical in both versions of the text (L and P), with the exception of only a few menial differences.

453 During the Komnenian period the Blachernai palace became the customary imperial residence, see ODB I, 293.

454 This was the saint's baptismal name. Upon his monastic tonsure in the Holy Land three years later he received the name Gregory (see L: p. 310.77–79; cf. P: p. 323.173–175), which customarily begins with the same initial. For Gregory see Kaldellis, Anthony and Stephanos Efthymiadis, *The Prosopography of Byzantine Lesbos, 284–1355 A.D. A Contribution to the Social History of the Byzantine Province*, VB 22 (Vienna, 2010) 83–85.

455 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Manuel/1/>.

456 The reference to the saint's indifference to earthly pleasures and his devotion to his studies is another *topos* frequently found in saints' lives, see for instance the *Life of Saint Gregentios, archbishop of Taphar* [BHG 705], ed. Berger, Albrecht, *Life and Works of Saint Gregentios, Archbishop of Taphar. Introduction, Critical Edition and Translation*, Millennium-Studien 7 (Berlin and New York, 2006) 194.107–112; see also the *Life of Saint Fantinos the Younger* [BHG 1509b], ed. Follieri, Enrica, *La Vita di San Fantino il Giovane. Introduzione, testo critico, traduzione, commentario e indici*, Subsidia Hagiographica 77 (Brussels, 1993) ch. 2, 402.10–18. This does not mean of course that all teachers were fortunate enough to have so well-behaved students, on the contrary they would often have to chastise their pupils for wasting their time in the hippodrome and other spectacles and games instead of actually studying, see for instance Michael Psellos, *[To his students] when they arrived late for school*, ed. Littlewood, Antony R., *Michaelis Pselli oratoria minora*, Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana (Leipzig, 1985) 81,62–79.

457 For the schools, teachers and curriculum in 12th century Constantinople see Magdalino, Paul, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180* (Cambridge, 1993) 323–330.

458 Agathon, Gregory's teacher and spiritual father, is otherwise unattested in the sources.

in the palace and his mother Maria staying in their house in Lesbos were thriving in these splendid and God-pleasing deeds.

Further reading

Magdalino, Paul, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180* (Cambridge, 1993).

Paschalidis, Symeon A., The Hagiography of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries, in: Stephanos Efthymiadis (ed.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, vol. 1: *Periods and Places* (Farnham and Burlington, 2011) 143–171.

Ilias Nesseris

1.9.3 The studies of Gregory Chioniades in Persia

Author: George Chrysokokkes⁴⁵⁹

Text: *Introduction to the Syntaxis of the Persians*

Date of text: ca. 1346

Genre: Commentary on an astronomical treatise

Literary context: George Chrysokokkes was an astronomer and physician, but also a known copyist,⁴⁶⁰ active in Constantinople and Trebizond during the second quarter of the 14th century. This treatise, which still remains unpublished in its entirety, constitutes a detailed commentary on the *Syntaxis of the Persians*, a slightly earlier translation into Greek of a Persian astronomical text, complete with its star and planet charts and other accompanying tables and canons.⁴⁶¹ Although Chrysokokkes did not make any significant contributions to the field of astronomy himself, his work had a wide manuscript tradition⁴⁶² and was well received in the West.

Historical significance of the movement: This passage from the prologue of the treatise of Chrysokokkes is the most important source for the life and career of Gregory Chioniades.⁴⁶³ In Byzantium astronomy was traditionally taught on the

459 PLP 31142.

460 See <https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/copiste-possesseur-autre/1035/>.

461 Tihon, Anne, Les tables astronomiques persanes à Constantinople dans la première moitié du XIV^e siècle, *Byzantion* 57 (1987) 471–487 [repr. in Tihon, Anne, *Études d'astronomie byzantine* (Aldershot, 1994) ch. V].

462 More than 35 copies survive, see <https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/oeuvre/6443/>.

463 PLP 30814. Chioniades' subsequent career and movements (after his departure from Tabriz Chioniades lived in a Constantinople for a few years teaching Persian astronomy and medicine; in 1305 he was appointed bishop of Tabriz and he remained in Persia for nearly five years before returning to Trebizond once again to spend there his final years) can be reconstructed on the basis of his letters and other works, see Westerink, Leenert G., La profession de foi de Gregoire Chioniades, *Revue des études byzantines* 38 (1980) 233–245, at

basis of the works of ancient Greek astronomers, for instance Geminus of Rhodes and Cleomedes, but mainly Claudius Ptolemy.⁴⁶⁴ While it has been established that some astronomical texts were translated into Greek from Arabic prior to the 13th century,⁴⁶⁵ Gregory Chioniades is the first person known to have actually travelled to the Islamic Near East in order to be instructed in astronomy. He studied at the famous observatory of Maragha (in modern-day northwestern Iran), where, due to the Mongol expansion, Islamic scholars encountered also those coming from Central Asia and even China. According to Chrysokokkes, he returned to Byzantium bringing with him a number of texts that he translated himself, while also passing his knowledge on to his students.⁴⁶⁶ Thus, he re-invigorated the study of astronomy, which was to find its peak with Theodore Metochites⁴⁶⁷, and was instrumental in giving the Byzantines a more intimate knowledge of Islamic astronomy, that was taught until the fall of the Empire.

Type of movement: Voluntary movement (for educational purposes).⁴⁶⁸

Locations and date of movement: 1. From Constantinople to Trebizond and along to Tabriz in Persia; ca. 1293–1296 2. back to Constantinople with a stop at Trebizond; after 1296.

Edition used: Lambros, Spyridon, Τὰ ὑπ' ἀριθμὸν ἑα' καὶ ἑβ' κατάλοιπα, *Neos Hellenomnemon* 15 (1921) 332–336, esp. 335–336.⁴⁶⁹

238–242. See also now Kafasis, Christos, From Tabriz to Trebizond and Constantinople: the Introduction of Persian Astronomy into the Byzantine World (ca. 1300–1350), in: Charalambos Dendrinis and Ilias Giarenis (eds.), *Bibliophilos. Books and Learning in the Byzantine World: Festschrift in Honour of Costas N. Constantinides*, Byzantinisches Archiv 39, (Berlin and Boston, 2021) 245–257. For an assessment of his activities see Pingree, David, Gregory Chioniades and Palaeologan Astronomy, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 18 (1964) 135–160.

464 For a very helpful overview of astronomy in Byzantium see Tihon, Anne, L'astronomie byzantine (du Ve au XV^e siècle, *Byzantion* 51 (1981) 603–624 [repr. in Tihon, *Études d'astronomie byzantine*, ch. I]. See also now Caudano, Anne-Laurence, Astronomy and Astrology, in: Stavros Lazaris (ed.), *A Companion to Byzantine Science*, Brill's Companions to the Byzantine World 6 (Leiden and Boston, 2020) 202–230.

465 Tihon, Anne, Sur l'identité de l'astronome Alim, *Archives internationales de l'histoire des sciences* 39 (1989) 3–21 [repr. in Tihon, *Études d'astronomie byzantine*, ch. IV].

466 For Chioniades as a disseminator of Islamic astronomy in Byzantium see Ragep, F. Jamil, New Light on Shams: The Islamic Side of Σάμψ Πουχάρης, in: Judith Pfeiffer (ed.), *Politics, Patronage and the Transmission of Knowledge in 13th -15th Century Tabriz* (Leiden and Boston, 2020) 231–247, esp. 236–243.

467 PLP 17982.

468 Cf. Pérez Martín, Inmaculada and Divna Manolova, Science Teaching and Learning Methods in Byzantium, in: Stavros Lazaris (ed.), *A Companion to Byzantine Science* (Leiden and Boston, 2020) 53–104, here at 74–75 (Chioniades' movement is being designated here as a study trip).

469 Another edition of the text is by Usener, Hermann, *Ad historiam astronomiae symbola* (Bonn, 1876) 27–28. It contains also partial translation of our text.

Translation used: Tihon, Anne, *Astrological Promenade in Byzantium in the Early Palaiologan Period*, in: Paul Magdalino and Maria Mavroudi (eds.), *The Occult Sciences in Byzantium* (Geneva, 2006) 265–290, esp. 275 (heavily modified by Ilias Nesseris)

George Chrysokokkes, *Introduction to the Syntaxis of the Persians*

[p. 335](...) Therefore I have to make mention of the following things, that this *syntaxis* was brought from Persia and from whom it was translated into the Greek language. So, he [i. e., Chrysokokkes' tutor in astronomy, a priest named Manuel⁴⁷⁰ from the city of Trebizond] reported that a certain Chioniades, who had been raised in Constantinople and had mastered all fields of study, fell in love with the learning of another science, through which he could obtain wisdom and practice medicine with perfection. Since he was informed by some people that he would not be able to satisfy his desire unless he went to Persia, he abandoned everything and took to the road swiftly. He came to Trebizond⁴⁷¹ in passing and he often spent time there with the emperor Grand Komnenos,⁴⁷² and, after he informed him about his affairs, he was deemed worthy of the greatest solicitude (*kedemonia*). Having received a lot of assistance from him [i. e., the emperor], he proceeded to Persia itself. In a short amount of time, he was instructed in the way of the Persians and he spent some time in the company of their ruler,⁴⁷³ whom he persuaded to aid him, because he wanted to be instructed in astronomy, but there was no one who could teach him; for there was a law in Persia at the time that it was allowed to anyone to be instructed in every subject, but for astronomy, which was restricted to Persians only. So, he [Chioniades] looked into the cause of this and he found out that there was a widespread belief among them that the Rhomaioi would use it to destroy their kingdom [i. e. the Khanate] and he was quite at a loss as to how he could partake of this benefit [i. e. astronomy]. But he put in a lot of effort and he rendered his services to the ruler of the Persians over a long

470 It has been cautiously suggested that this cleric Manuel is none other than Manuel Bryennios [PLP 3260], who later went on to instruct Theodore Metochites in astronomy, see Constantinides, Costas N., *Higher Education in Byzantium in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries (1204- ca.1310)*, Cyprus Research Centre, Texts and Studies on the History of Cyprus 11 (Nicosia, 1982) 95–96. For another view on this matter see the discussion in Bydén, Börje, *Theodore Metochites' Stoicheiosis Astronomike and the Study of Natural Philosophy and Mathematics in Early Palaiologan Byzantium*, *Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia* 66 (Göteborg, 2003) 249–250.

471 A city on the region of Pontos (the Black Sea coast of northeastern Turkey), see ODB III, 2112–2113.

472 Alexios II Grand Komnenos, ruler of the empire of Trebizond (1297–1330), see PLP 12084.

473 The Ilkhanid ruler of Persia at the time was Maḥmūd Ghāzān (1295–1304), see PLP 10114; also EI², vol. 2, 1043.

time and he utterly succeeded in achieving what he desired. After all the teachers were gathered by royal decree, Chioniades was bestowed with honours by the ruler and soon became an important person in Persia. After he had gathered a lot of money and acquired many pupils he returned to Trebizond [p. 336] again bearing away from Persia many astronomical texts. He translated them into Greek, thus producing a work worthy of remembrance.

Further reading

Constantinides, Costas N., *Higher Education in Byzantium in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries (1204 – ca.1310)*, Cyprus Research Centre, Texts and Studies on the History of Cyprus 11 (Nicosia, 1982).

Pingree, David, Gregory Chioniades and Palaeologan Astronomy, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 18 (1964) 135–160.

Ilias Nesseris

1.10.0 Diplomacy and embassies

During its more than thousand-year-long history, the Byzantine Empire came into contact with numerous polities and peoples. Relations could vary, covering a broad spectrum between alliance and hostility. In the field of foreign affairs there were two ways by which Byzantium sought to secure its interests, namely war and diplomacy. Both were closely connected: diplomacy could be an alternative to war and bloodshed; but it could also supplement war efforts as a tool in accomplishing the objectives of Constantinople's foreign policy.

Byzantines – or, more precisely, the political and ecclesiastical elite of the empire – regarded themselves as an integral part of the Late Antique and medieval political map of Afro-Eurasia. The Roman state tradition, the Greek language and culture, and the Christian religion constitute the three foundational elements of Byzantine identity. The Roman imperial tradition and Christianity played a crucial role in building a certain sense of superiority towards other polities and ethnic groups that had an impact on the empire's foreign affairs.⁴⁷⁴ The linguistic efficiency of Greek and the acquaintance with the ancient Hellenic culture, for their part, were a common motif in the ego-accounts of Byzantine envoys to foreign peoples, especially if they were literati (see 3.1.0), and are therefore a common place (*topos*) of eye-witness narratives on diplomatic missions, distinguishing the Byzantines from the 'Barbarians'.

During the early and the middle Byzantine periods, only the Persians, and since the 7th century the Arabs, were regarded as partners with whom Constantinople would negotiate on a more or less equal footing. The Byzantine notion of a hierarchy of states and the sense of superiority undoubtedly played a role in Byzantine history and in the history of its diplomacy. Yet their importance should not be exaggerated as this would lead to a simplistic view of the means and motives of Byzantine diplomacy. Rulers who in imperial ideology and during

474 Kaldellis, Anthony, *Romanland. Ethnicity and Empire in Byzantium* (Cambridge, Mass., 2019); Eshel, Shay, *The Concept of the Elect Nation in Byzantium*, MMED 113 (Leiden and Boston, 2018).

ceremonies were called spiritual sons or grandsons of the “Emperor of the Romans” were still diplomatic partners. When it was in their interest the Byzantines did not hesitate to seek assistance and to convey to them the emperor’s respect and gratitude (see below). During the thousand years and more between the reigns of Constantine the Great and Constantine XI Palaiologos⁴⁷⁵ Byzantium had to deal with numerous partners and enemies. Here one can see the great flexibility of imperial diplomacy. This fact did not escape the attention of foreign ambassadors to Byzantium, of whom Liutprand of Cremona,⁴⁷⁶ who visited Constantinople in 949 and 968, is one of the most famous. During his second visit he did not receive the same honours at the emperor’s table as the barbarian-looking messenger of Bulgaria, despite being the envoy of the (Western) Roman Emperor Otto the Great.⁴⁷⁷ Deeply offended by this treatment,⁴⁷⁸ he vented his spleen on the court of Nikephoros II Phokas.⁴⁷⁹ A major change in Byzantine attitudes towards foreign countries occurred after Constantinople had been sacked by the Crusaders in 1204 and again been recaptured by the Byzantines in 1261. From the beginning of the 14th century when the Ottoman Turks emerged as a major power, the main aim of Byzantine diplomatic missions was the survival of the empire (see 3.1.2 and 3.1.3).

A brief look at the *Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit* shows that in the time between 641 and 1025 the Byzantine emperors dispatched their embassies and received foreign envoys mainly for three reasons – peace negotiations, the conclusion of alliances and the exchange (or ransom) of prisoners of war. A special case was the negotiations with Charlemagne⁴⁸⁰ at the beginning of the 9th century. He in the year 800 was the first to lay claim to the title of Roman emperor in Western Europe since 476, thus challenging the Byzantine emperor’s pretensions to be the sole heir to the ancient *Imperium Romanum*. Sometimes, peace talks could go hand in hand with negotiations of terms of ransoming or the exchange of prisoners of war. These were either soldiers or civilians taken prisoner by a foreign army. Here one can mention the mission on behalf of Emperor

475 PLP 21500.

476 PmbZ 24745, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ26899/html>.

477 PmbZ 26211, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28365/html>.

478 Liutprand of Cremona, *Legatio*, ch. 19, ed. Paolo Chiesa, *Liudprandi Cremonensis opera*, CC CM 156 (Turnhout, 1998) 195–196, 295–318.

479 PmbZ 25535, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ27689/html>.

480 PmbZ 3628, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14775/html>.

Theophilos⁴⁸¹ to the Abbasid caliph al-Mu‘taṣim⁴⁸² after the sack of Amorion by the Arabs in 838, or that of Leo Choiosphaktes⁴⁸³ to Baghdad in 906, two years after the Arab navy under Leo of Tripoli⁴⁸⁴ had ravaged Thessaloniki (see 1.3.1 and 3.1.0).

In order to protect its territory and population, or to secure the successful outcome of a military campaign on foreign ground, Byzantine diplomacy sought to conclude alliances. This was often – as Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos⁴⁸⁵ proposed in his work *De Administrando Imperio* – a neighbour of a neighbour of the empire. The clash with the Arabs in the Near East and the Mediterranean, culminating in two sieges of Constantinople by the caliph’s troops, made the Khazars living to the north and east of the Black Sea one of the most important allies of Constantinople. Other peoples of Eurasia such as Bulgars, Magyars, Pechenegs, the Rus, Alans and Mongols (see 1.10.3) were also diplomatic partners of Byzantium. Sometimes these groups were asked to lend support to Constantinople not only in conflicts with other polities like, for example, Bulgaria or the Ottoman state, but also in cases of civil war and insurgency. Here one needs to mention the help which Vladimir of Kiev⁴⁸⁶ sent to Basil II⁴⁸⁷ against the rebellious Bardas Phokas (see 1.4.2), or the aid that Omurtag, Khan of the Bulgars⁴⁸⁸ – otherwise an enemy on the Balkans – gave to Michael II⁴⁸⁹ during the rebellion of Thomas the Slav (see 1.4.1). The emerging threat of the Normans who were based in Sicily and Southern Italy led to an alliance with Venice and its fleet, which was of vital significance to Constantinople, although the Venetian residents in the Byzantine capital, who were known to be skilful merchants, soon became a real thorn in the side of Byzantine policy and economy (see 2.5.0). Then the empire tried to play off the other Italian sea republics – mainly Genoa –

481 PmbZ 8167, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ19429/html>.

482 PmbZ 5205, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16385/html>.

483 PmbZ 24343, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ26497/html>.

484 PmbZ 24397, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ26551/html>.

485 PmbZ 23734, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25888/html>.

486 PmbZ 28433, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ30588/html>.

487 PmbZ 20838, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22991/html>.

488 PmbZ 5651, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16838/html>.

489 PmbZ 4990, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16167/html>.

against Venice by giving them trade privileges. Despite some initial successes, this policy ended up transferring the rivalry between Venice and Genoa onto the territory of the militarily and economically weakened Byzantine state. When at the end of the 11th century Byzantium was threatened by enemies coming from the west, north and east it sought the help of Western Europe against the Seljuk Turks, which resulted in an unprecedented mobility (and migration) of Westerners to the Near East and the Eastern Mediterranean, namely the Crusades. Western aid against the Muslims remained the main objective of Byzantine diplomacy during the Palaiologan period (1261–1453). One needs to mention here the Byzantine missions to the Pope, especially those that negotiated the conclusion of a Church Union with the Catholic Church at the Councils of Lyon in 1274 and Ferrara/Florence in 1438–1439 (for which we have the important narrative Sylvester Syropoulos, who was a member of this delegation), and embassies headed by Byzantine emperors (see 3.1.0 and 3.1.3).

As already noted, trade was an important aspect of Byzantine foreign affairs, closely connected to diplomatic relations. Thanks to the *Book of the Eparch* we know that Bulgarian and Arab merchants – despite the hostilities with Byzantium – were present at the markets of the capital. The latter even had their own mosques in Constantinople. The interests of Byzantine policy in the regions to the north of the Black Sea soon attracted Varangian/Russian merchants (see 3.3.1), who sailed to the Bosphoros in their dugouts. They became an economic partner of Byzantium, and in 907, 911 and 944 concluded with it treaties regulating trade. The 10th century saw the first trade concessions granted to Italian sea republics. The first to come were the Amalfitans (first half of the 10th century), followed by Venice (992), Pisa (1111) and Genoa (1169, then in 1261).

Although one cannot deny certain stereotypes and prejudices within the elite, the Byzantines knew how to adapt their diplomacy to the realities of contemporary politics. This is evident from the marriage policy of Constantinople. In the 10th century, Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos criticized Romanos I Lekapenos⁴⁹⁰ for engaging his granddaughter to the Bulgarian Tsar Peter (see 2.1.2); he stated that women of imperial blood should not be married off to foreign rulers. Among European states only the Franks were considered worthy of such an honour.⁴⁹¹ Yet a glimpse at Byzantine history of the 7th and 8th centuries shows us that the empire did not always follow that rule, especially when a military alliance with the groom's or bride's state was of vital significance for Byzantium (see 4.1.3). The first marriage alliance of a Byzantine princess to a

490 PmbZ 26833, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28987/html>.

491 Constantine Porphyrogenetos, *De administrando imperio*, 13, ed. and transl. by Gyula Moravcsik and Romilly J. H. Jenkins, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus, De administrando imperio*, CFHB 1 (revised edition) (Washington, D.C., 1985) 70–74, 104–186.

foreign ruler dates back to the 620s when Emperor Herakleios,⁴⁹² who was fighting against Persia, sent his fifteen-year-old daughter Epiphania/Eudoxia⁴⁹³ to the Western Turkic Khagan T'ong Yabghu, a prospective ally against the Sasanians. However, this initiative came to nothing because the groom died during his bride's journey to the Turks. The role that the Khazars played in Byzantine defensive strategies against the Arabs in the Caucasus explains why Leo III⁴⁹⁴ married his son (the future Emperor Constantine V)⁴⁹⁵ to a Khazar Princess, Tzitzak/Irene,⁴⁹⁶ daughter of Khagan Bihar.⁴⁹⁷ Byzantium had already seen an emperor's bride of Khazar origin, although the marriage occurred under different circumstances – the exiled emperor Justinian II⁴⁹⁸ fled to the Khazar khagan Busir⁴⁹⁹ and asked for his help to regain power over Byzantium. The Khagan's assistance was sealed with a marriage between Justinian, who was soon to take Constantinople, and Busir's sister, who was baptized and received the name Theodora.⁵⁰⁰ The next foreign bride who was supposed to be sent to Constantinople was Rotrude/Erythro,⁵⁰¹ the second daughter of Charlemagne, who betrothed her to Constantine VI⁵⁰² in 781, when she was six. A Byzantine monk even taught her Greek, though the marriage was never concluded. The continuing Byzantine interests in the Caucasus explain why Maria of Alania,⁵⁰³ daughter of King Bagrat IV of Georgia,⁵⁰⁴ was sent to Constantinople where she married Michael VII Doukas⁵⁰⁵ and then Nikephoros III Botaneiates.⁵⁰⁶ The new realities of Byzantine policy since the 12th century ushered in a new period in

492 PLRE III B 586–587.

493 PLRE III A 445–446.

494 PmbZ 4242, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ15400/html>.

495 PmbZ 3703, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14852/html>.

496 PmbZ 1437, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ12535/html>.

497 PmbZ 7524, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ18766/html>.

498 PmbZ 3556, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14702/html>.

499 PmbZ 2654, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ13774/html>.

500 PmbZ 7282, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ18515/html>.

501 PmbZ 1606, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ12710/html>.

502 PmbZ 3704, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14853/html>.

503 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Maria/61/>.

504 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Bagrat/101/>.

505 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Michael/71/>.

506 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Nikephoros/3/>.

Byzantine marriage alliances, when marriages to female members of foreign dynasties – such as Irene/Piroska of Hungary,⁵⁰⁷ Irene/Bertha of Sulzbach,⁵⁰⁸ Maria of Antioch,⁵⁰⁹ Anna/Agnes of France,⁵¹⁰ Margaret of Hungary, Maria of Courtenay, Anna/Konstanze of Hohenstaufen,⁵¹¹ Irene/Yolanda of Montferrat,⁵¹² Anna of Savoy,⁵¹³ Helena Dragas⁵¹⁴ – became the rule rather the exception. Among Byzantine princesses who married foreign rulers, are Maria/Irene (see 2.1.2), granddaughter of Romanos I Lekapenos who married Peter of Bulgaria in 927, Theophano,⁵¹⁵ a niece of John Tzimiskes and wife of Otto II and Roman empress since 972, Anna Porphyrogenita,⁵¹⁶ the sister of Basil II who married her to Vladimir of Kiev in 988, and Theodora, a niece of Manuel I Komnenos and wife of Heinrich II Jasomirgott (see 4.1.3). The marriage of Anna and Vladimir had an especially important impact on European history because the Russian-Byzantine alliance resulted in the baptism of the Rus.

The marriage of Anna and Vladimir was the culmination of Byzantium's efforts to baptize the Rus that began in 860 and were furthered by the visit of Princess Olga⁵¹⁷ to the Great Palace of the Byzantine emperors and her conversion in the 940s or 950s (see 3.3.0). Thus, one is confronted with another significant aspect of Byzantine ideology and diplomatic relations. According to the Gospels, Christ himself told his disciples to go and spread his teaching (Matthew 28:18–20; Mark 16:14–16). The Church adopted this notion of evangelizing the pagans and thereby laid the foundations of Christian missions. As we have seen, the Church was an integral element of the Christian Roman Empire (Byzantium) since the reign of Constantine the Great and was an institution of crucial significance for its identity. However, it is difficult to say where the interests of the state ended and those of the Church began – as Obolensky remarked, Christianizing a foreign country through baptism can hardly be regarded as the final aim of Byzantine diplomacy. Once they had reached foreign territory Byzantine missionaries and clergymen had to serve the political interests of the patriarchate of Constantinople and the imperial palace. Thus, baptism

507 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Eirene/62/>.

508 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Eirene/66/>.

509 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Maria/63/>.

510 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Agnes/101/>.

511 PLP 1002.

512 PLP 21361.

513 PLP 21347.

514 PLP 21366.

515 PmbZ 28127, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ30282/html>.

516 PmbZ 20436, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22589/html>.

517 PmbZ 26186, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28340/html>.

could easily turn from an aim to a means of accomplishing the long-term policy of Byzantium.

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- Drocourt, Nicolas and Élisabeth Malamut (eds.), *La diplomatie byzantine, de l'Empire romain aux confins de l'Europe (V^e-XV^e s.). Actes de la Table-Ronde "Les relations diplomatiques byzantines (V^e-XV^e siècle): Permanences et/ou changements" XXIII^e Congrès International des Études Byzantines – Belgrade, Août 2016*, MMED 123 (Leiden and Boston, 2020).
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Grigori Simeonov

1.10.1 The Byzantine mission to the Slavs

Author: a Greek church official in Ohrid, most probably Theophylaktos of Ohrid⁵¹⁸

Text: *Long Life of Saint Clement of Ohrid*⁵¹⁹ (*Bios kai politeia, homologia te kai merike thaumatou diegesis tou en hagiois patros hemon Klementos episkopou Boulgaron*) [BHG 355]

Date of text: late 11th – early 12th century

Genre: Hagiography

518 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Theophylaktos/105/>.

519 PmbZ 3655, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14802/html>.

Literary context: Although Cyril⁵²⁰ and Methodios⁵²¹ were Byzantine Christian missionaries, our knowledge about the life and work of the Apostles of the Slavs is based mainly on Slavonic and Latin sources. Surprisingly, Greek texts, which are contemporary to their mission, are not preserved. In the late 11th or the early 12th century a Greek account of Cyril and Methodios' activity in Rome and Greater Moravia was written. Its author, however, used Slavonic sources. After the conquest of Bulgaria by Emperor Basil II in 1018, an autonomous church province known as the Archbishopric of Ohrid was established in the former realm of the empire's enemy. Soon the Byzantine emperors started sending some of the best-educated Constantinopolitan intellectuals to Ohrid where they were responsible for organising the religious life of the emperor's new subjects (see 2.3.2). These Greek-speaking church officials, who sought to legitimise the autonomy of their diocese by blending Late Antique (Byzantine) and Medieval (Slavic and Bulgarian) church history, were the driving force behind the translation of the lives of local saints from Slavonic into Greek. The most famous example is the *Long Life of Saint Clement of Ohrid*, a student of the Apostles of the Slavs who accompanied his masters during their mission in Greater Moravia. Although some parts of the preserved Greek text relate to the time after 1018, others reflect the Slavonic original written by a student of Clement, who had been an eyewitness of the mission to the Slavs. Lavish praise of Cyril and Methodios is also found in the Greek version, where their missionary work among the Slavs of Central Europe is compared with the journeys of the Apostle Paul.

Historical significance of the movement: Of all Christian missions organised by Byzantium, that of Cyril and Methodios occupies the most prominent place. Their lives, on the other hand, are a good example of the occupational mobility of Byzantine intellectuals (see for example 1.9.3). The two brothers originated from Thessaloniki and initially went different ways. Cyril went to Constantinople and studied at the Magnaura. His teachers were two of the most prominent scholars of the time, the future Patriarch Photios⁵²² and Leo the Mathematician.⁵²³ Methodios served in the provincial administration. Then the two brothers withdrew to the Holy Mountain of Olympos in Bithynia where they created the Glagolitic script, the first Slavic alphabet. Apart from engaging in scholarly activities, they served

520 PmbZ 3927 corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ15080/html>.

521 PmbZ 4975 corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16152/html> and PmbZ 25062, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PM BZ27216/html>.

522 PmbZ 6253, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ17454/html> and PmbZ 26667, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PM BZ28821/html>.

523 PmbZ 4440, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ15604/html>.

as Byzantine missionaries to the Khazars and Alans in the Black Sea region. When in 863 the ruler of Greater Moravia (in modern-day Slovakia and Czech Republic), Rastislav,⁵²⁴ asked Michael III⁵²⁵ for “teachers” who could preach Christianity to his subjects in their own language, the Byzantine Emperor sent him the brothers Cyril and Methodios. Thus, the so-called mission to the Slavs started that was to become a focal point of the interests of Moravians and Germans, of Rome and Constantinople. Seeking to find legitimacy for their work, the brothers visited Rome where Pope Hadrian II⁵²⁶ blessed the Slavic alphabet. Cyril died in Rome in 869 and Methodios went back to Greater Moravia, this time ordained by the Pope as archbishop of Moravia and Pannonia. However, the German clergy in his diocese would not allow him to continue his work in Slavonic undisturbed. After his death in 885, his students who had meanwhile lost the support of the new Moravian ruler Svjatopluk,⁵²⁷ were expelled from Greater Moravia. Some of them found a new homeland in Bulgaria where they were able to continue their work, whereas others spread the Glagolitic script in the Western regions of the Balkans (Croatia).

Type of movement: Voluntary (Christian mission).

Locations and date of movement: From Greater Moravia to Rome and back; 863–886 for the entire mission and 867–869 for the visit in Rome

Edition used: Iliev, Ilia, *The Long Life of Saint Clement of Ohrid. A Critical Edition*, *Byzantinobulgarica* 9 (1995) 62–120, here 82–85, lines 66–93, 155–161 and 173–181, ch. 8–9 and 14–15.

Translation used: Scott, Stephen N., *The Collapse of the Moravian Mission of Saints Cyril and Methodius, the Fate of Their Disciples, and the Christianization of the Southern Slavs: Translations of Five Historical Texts with Notes and Commentary*, Unpublished PhD Thesis (University of California, Berkeley, 1989) 79–84 (modified by Dirk Krausmüller).

Long Life of Saint Clement of Ohrid, ch. 8–9 and 14–15

[p. 82] Since they knew that Paul had shared the Gospel with the Apostles, they, too, rushed to Rome in order to show their work, the translation of the Scriptures, to the most blessed Pope, to find out whether they had done right and not

524 PmbZ 6393, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ17595/html>.

525 PmbZ 4991, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16168/html>.

526 PmbZ 22537, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ24690/html>.

527 PmbZ 27437, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ29591/html>.

struggled in vain. When Adrianos [Pope Hadrian II] who at the time excelled on the Apostolic see heard about their arrival he was overjoyed. For he had long been smitten by the thunder of the fame of the saints and also wished to see the lightening of the grace that was in them. He experienced that in regard to the divine men, which Moses had experienced in regard to God, and he wished that the desired appearance be manifested to him, and clearly known by him. He could not contain himself but assembled the entire priesthood together with the archpriests who were present and went out to meet with the saints, having the sign of the cross [p. 83] carried before him as it was customary and showing through the light of the lamps the joy that he felt, and so-to-speak also the brightness of the guests. The Lord who is glorified by the saints glorified them and saw to it that many miracles were performed at their arrival. But when the work was shown to the Pope and he considered the translations of the Scriptures, as being the offspring of a truly Apostolic soul and spiritual grace, he did not know what to do for joy. He praised the men with all manner of epithets and called them fathers, yearned for children, his own joy, wreaths of faith, glory and beauty, crowns of the church. And in that situation what did he do? He took the translated books and put them on the altar, dedicating them as some gift to God and showing that God is pleased by such sacrifices, the fruit of the lips, and that he accepts such fruit-offerings as the smell of sweet scent. (...) [p. 84] Since it was time for Methodios to travel to Pannonia and it was henceforth necessary that he turn his attention to the bishopric of that place, he embraced the tomb of his brother and frequently uttered the beloved name of Cyril and bewailed his bodily orphanhood, and asked for the help of his intercessions, before setting out with his disciples. And when he arrived in Moravia, he was this very thing, a bishop. (...) [p. 85] Besides, he also did not cease to exhort Rastisthlabos [Rastislav], the ruler of Moravia, every day and to govern his soul through divine letters. He also educated and guided the ruler of the entire Pannonia, whose name was Kotzeles [Kocel],⁵²⁸ that he be transfixed by the fear of God, and thus evade all evil, as if we were controlled and held back by some reins. And in like fashion he behaved towards Borises [Boris],⁵²⁹ the ruler of Bulgaria, who lived during the reign of the Roman emperor Michael [III].

528 PmbZ 23721, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25875/html>.

529 PmbZ 1035, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ12127/html> and PmbZ 21197, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ23350/html>.

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Grigori Simeonov

1.10.2 Ceremonial reception of foreign delegations at the Byzantine court

Author: Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos

Text: *Book of Ceremonies* (*De ceremoniis*)

Date of text: 950s

Genre: Treatise on court ceremonies

Literary context: *The Book of Ceremonies* / *Ceremonial Book* / *De ceremoniis* is one of the most prominent works of Byzantine encyclopedism of the 10th century, associated with the person and reign of emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos.⁵³⁰ Constantine was the author of two other texts, *De administrando imperio* and *De thematibus*, which contain valuable data about Byzantine history from the 7th to the 10th century (see 3.3.1 and 4.3.1). The third example of Constantine's interest in the past is the *Book of Ceremonies*, a treatise about Byzantine court ceremonies, imperial processions, and high state offices. The work has an antiquarian character and has preserved accounts of Late Antique and Medieval ceremonies and acclamations. Its information concerning Late Antiquity is based on Peter Patrikios,⁵³¹ who lived in the 6th century. After Constantine's death the text was supplemented with data about the acclamations of Nikephoros II Phokas in 963. Moreover, the *Book of Ceremonies* contains rich material about foreign mercenaries in the Byzantine army such as the Varangians (see 3.3.0) and is a valuable source for the topography of Constantinople, especially that of the Great Palace. Moreover, it shows an interest in diplomatic relations and reproduces documents about the reception of foreign envoys at the Byzantine court.

530 Toynbee, Arnold, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus and His World* (London, 1973).

531 PLRE III B 994–998.

Historical significance of the movement: Much of what we know about Byzantine diplomacy at the peak of its medieval power in the 10th century and its ideological background comes from the *Book of Ceremonies*. This information is complemented by Byzantine and Arab historiography and the accounts of foreign ambassadors to Constantinople in Latin (Liutprand of Cremona) and Arabic (Ibn Šahrām).⁵³² The text sheds light on the accommodation and provision of foreign embassies on Byzantine soil on their way to the capital, as well as on the hierarchy of states, at least as the Byzantines regarded it. Of particular interest is the treatment of envoys coming from Bulgaria, the empire's rival on the Balkans. Before the baptism in the 860s, the ruler of that country was considered in Byzantine ceremonial to be a spiritual grandson of the emperor. After Christianization, he became his spiritual son. Another passage of the *Book of Ceremonies* refers to him as a *basileus* – an emperor or tsar – of Bulgaria. The marriage of Maria/Irene Lekapena, granddaughter of Romanos I, to Peter of Bulgaria in 927 surely contributed to the recognition of his imperial title by Byzantium and to his legitimation (see 2.1.2). The events of that year show a remarkable change in Constantinople's attitude to the Balkan neighbour. The profit to Byzantium was the conclusion of a 40-year peace treaty with the Bulgarians.

Type of movement: Voluntary (diplomatic missions and negotiations).

Locations and date of movement: from various regions in Europe (Rome, Bulgaria) and the Near East to Constantinople; middle of the 10th century.

Edition used: *Constantin VII Porphyrogénète, Le livre des cérémonies, tome III: Livre II, édition, traduction et notes par Gilbert Dagron, CFHB 52/3 (Paris, 2020) 347–355, Book 2, 47.*

Translation used: *Constantine Porphyrogennetos, The Book of Ceremonies*, transl. by Anne Moffatt and Maxene Tall, *Byzantina Australiensia* 18/2, vol. 2: Book II (Canberra, 2012) 680–686 (modified by Dirk Krausmüller).

Constantine Porphyrogennetos, *Book of Ceremonies*, Book 2, 47

[p. 347] The greetings to the emperor of ambassadors coming from various foreign nations.

The greetings to the emperor of the ambassadors coming from Old Rome.

The foremost of the holy apostles, Peter, the keeper of the keys of heaven, and Paul, the teacher of the nations, are visiting you. Our spiritual father so-and-so, the most holy and ecumenical patriarch, together with the most holy bishops, priests and deacons and the entire priestly order of the holy church of the

532 PmbZ 22703, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ24856/html>.

Romans, through our humble selves, and you, emperor, faithful prayers. The most glorious so-and-so, prince of Old Rome, and the archons and all the subject population, send your imperial power their most loyal service.

The logothete's questioning of them

How is the most holy bishop of Rome, the spiritual father of our holy emperor? How are all the bishops and priests and deacons and the rest of the clergy of the holy church of the Romans? How is the most glorious so-and-so, prince of Old Rome?

[p. 349] The greeting to the emperor of the ambassadors coming from Bulgaria How is the divinely crowned emperor, the spiritual grandfather of the ruler of Bulgaria by the grace of God? How is the *augousta* and lady? How are the imperial sons of the great and sublime emperor and the rest of his children? How is the most holy and ecumenical patriarch? How are the two *magistroi*? How is all the senate? How are the four *logothetai*?

The logothete's questioning of them

How is the spiritual grandson of our holy emperor, the *archon* of Bulgaria by the grace of God? How is the *archontissa* by the grace of God? How are the *kanar tikeinos* and the *boulias tarkanos*, the sons of the *archon* of Bulgaria by the grace of God, and the rest of his children? How are the six great boyars? How are the rest of the boyars, both inside the court and outside? How are the common people? (...)

[p. 351] The greeting to the emperor when ambassadors from Syria and from the *amermoumnes* come

Peace and mercy to you, happiness and glory from God to the sublime and great emperor of the Rhomaioi! Good life and health to you [p. 353] and long life from the Lord, peace-making and virtuous emperor! May justice and abundant peace rise up in your time, most peaceable and merciful emperor!

The logothete's questioning of them

How is the most highly distinguished and most nobly-born and famous *amermoumnes*? How is the emir and the council of elders of Tarsos? If, however, the envoys of the *amermoumnes* come from another emirate, they should ask questions about that emir and his council of elders. How are you? How were you received by the *patrikios* and *strategos* of Cappadocia? How did the imperial emissary give you safe conduct on your journey? We trust that nothing untoward or distressing happened to you on the way. Come with great gladness and re-joining; today you are dining with our holy emperor. (...)

[p. 355] The greeting to the emperor of the ambassadors coming from a chief emir, whether of Egypt or Persia or Khorasan, that is to say, those who are subject to the imperial power of the Rhomaioi and send tribute.

Long life and glory and happiness from God to you, our sublime and great emperor! We find in your sublime and great imperial power noble protection and shelter and support. May your rule and imperial power be vouchsafed us for many years for we are your people and most loyal servants of your sovereign power.

The logothete's questioning of them

How is the most nobly-born so-and-so, the most trustworthy and close friend of our holy emperor? How are all his people, the trustworthy and grateful servants of our holy emperor? How are you? How were you received by so-and-so, the *patrikios* and *strategos* of the theme? How did the imperial emissary give you safe conduct on your journey? We trust that nothing untoward or distressing happened to you on the way. Approach with great gladness and rejoicing; today you are dining with our holy emperor.

Further reading

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Grigori Simeonov

1.10.3 Maria Palaiologina leaves Constantinople and travels to the Mongols, first as a bride-to-be (1265) and then as an ambassador (1307)

Author: George Pachymeres (born in 1242, Nicaea; died in ca. 1310, Constantinople?)⁵³³

Text: *Historical narration (Syngraphikai historiai)*⁵³⁴

533 PLP 22186.

534 It is also called “Chronicle” (*Chronikon*, cf. MS Munich, Monac. Gr. 442) and “Roman history” (*Rhomaïke historia*, cf. MS Paris, BNP, Gr. 1723), see Ekaterini Mitsiou, *Syngra-*

Date of text: After 1307

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: George Pachymeres' historiographical work is distinguished by a remarkably unbiased view of the historico-political events, while at the same time reflecting the author's particular interest in the practice of dynastic marriages as part of foreign policy and diplomacy during the Palaiologan era.⁵³⁵ In the passages cited below, Pachymeres discusses two missions that were undertaken by Maria Palaiologina (also known as Mary of the Mongols),⁵³⁶ the illegitimate daughter of Emperor Michael VIII (r. 1261–1282) and half-sister of Andronikos II (r. 1282–1328). In her first mission in 1265, Maria is a bride-to-be on the move, while in her second mission in 1307, she is called on to act as an ambassador and form a marriage alliance with the Mongols.

Historical significance of the movement: The historical events narrated in the passages below reveal the decisive role that diplomacy and embassies played in the foreign affairs of the Byzantines. The Byzantines greatly desired, through in-person negotiations, to arrange and maintain an alliance with the Mongols who could offer military support in Byzantine areas threatened by the Ottoman Turks. Against this backdrop, Maria Palaiologina was called on to undertake two different missions: first, to become the bride-to-be of a Mongol ruler (i.e., Maria as a *passive participant* in the negotiations) and later on, to act as an ambassador negotiating with a Mongol ruler (i.e., Maria as an *active participant* in the negotiations). It is highly interesting that these crucial affairs were trusted to a female member of the imperial family. Maria Palaiologina is the only known late Byzantine female ambassador sent to personally meet and directly negotiate with a Mongol ruler and probably also the only one involved in the movement of Byzantine troops.⁵³⁷ Nevertheless, Pachymeres squarely denounces Maria for her “arrogant” approach to the Ottoman Sultan, Osman, in 1307, while at the same time he indirectly puts on her a partial blame for the conquest of Trikokkia, located at a strategic point near Nicaea.⁵³⁸ Overall, based on knowledge and personal experience, the historiographer vividly describes and evaluates the sustained efforts of the Palaiologans to prevent Ottoman advances towards Byzantium.

phikai historiai, in: David Thomas (ed.), *Christian-Muslim Relations 600–1500*. Accessed on 13 September 2020: http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1877-8054_cmri_COM_25324.

535 Hunger, Herbert, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, vol. 1: *Philosophie, Rhetorik, Epistolographie, Geschichtsschreibung, Geographie*, HdA 12; Byzantinisches Handbuch 5.1 (Munich, 1978) 447–453, 449.

536 PLP 21395.

537 Cf. Melichar, Petra, *Imperial Women as Emissaries, Intermediaries, and Conciliators in the Palaiologan Era*, *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 67 (2017) 103–128, at 111. See also the comments.

538 On Trikokkia see Belke, Klaus, *Bithynien und Hellespont*, TIB 13, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften 513 (Vienna, 2020) 1056.

Type of movement: Involuntary (?) (for diplomatic and political-military reasons).

Locations and date of movement: 1. First mission/movement: from Constantinople to the Ilkhanate (with its centre of power in modern-day north-western Iran), 1265; 2. second mission/movement: from Constantinople to Nicaea and from there to the Ottoman court, 1307.

Edition used: *Georges Pachymères, Relations historiques*, ed. and transl. by Albert Failler and Vitalien Laurent, CFHB 24/1–5 (Paris, 1984–2000) vol. 1, 235; vol. 4, 683 and 701–703; Book 3, 3, Book 13, 25 and Book 13, 35.

Translation: Christodoulos Papavarnavas

George Pachymeres, *Historical Narration*

[I, p. 235] As all affairs were settled to the satisfaction of the emperor [Michael VIII] and according to his wishes, embassies were also sent to distant [princes], one to the chief [i. e., the Mongol khan] of the Tatars, Hulagu (...). So, through the agency of the hieromonk Prinkips [i. e., the monk Theodosios],⁵³⁹ he [i. e., the emperor] married his daughter Maria, the fruit of his extra-marital affair with Diplobatzina,⁵⁴⁰ to Hulagu. And Prinkips, who, at that time, was the archimandrite of the Pantokrator monastery, escorted the young maiden (...). And this alliance was prepared in such a way that it could result in magnificent dividends. Although Hulagu had departed this world before they [i. e., Maria and her retinue] arrived, later – when the maiden [finally] arrived – she married his son Abaqa who became the successor to the ruling power (*arche*). (...)

[IV, p. 683] But the marriage alliance with Kharbanda was being prepared painstakingly. When he [i. e., Emperor Andronikos II] heard that the region of Nicaea was in a bad position, he sent his own sister Maria, also commonly called “the princess (*despoina*) of the Mongols”,⁵⁴¹ to Nicaea, along with a sufficient army (*laos*). He ordered that she first take up residence there and then forge the marriage alliance with Kharbanda and master the problem with the Persians [i. e., the Ottomans] as effectively as possible. (...)

539 The monk Theodosios [PLP 7181] is called here “Prinkips” (or Princeps) because of his kinship with the Villehardouin princes of Achaea, see Albert Failler, *Georges Pachymères, Relations historiques*, CFHB 24/1–5 (Paris, 1984–2000), vol. 1, 234–235, n. 5.

540 PLP 5515. The otherwise unattested Diplobatzina was probably the offspring of parents coming from the two different branches of the Batatzes family, see Gerakini, Konstantina, *Marriage strategies in the early Palaiologan period*, Master’s thesis (University of Vienna, 2018) 64 and fn. 346 [<http://othes.univie.ac.at/52738/>].

541 The Greek phrase δέσποινα τῶν Μουγουλίων could also be rendered as “the empress of the Mongols”, cf. Korobeinikov, Dimitri, *The Ilkhans in the Byzantine Sources*, in: Timothy May et al. (eds.), *New Approaches to Ilkhanid History*, BIAL 39 (Leiden and Boston, 2021) 385–342, at 389.

[IV, p. 701–703] On the other side, in the East, especially around Nicaea, the situation was grave, since Osman [i. e., the Ottoman Sultan] terrorised the region, mainly because the sister of the [Byzantine] emperor, Maria, the so-called “princess (*despoina*) of the Mongols”, once she arrived in Nicaea, approached Osman with excessive arrogance and directly threatened to appeal to Kharbanda [for military support]. And this is what happened. It was rumoured that thirty thousand men were sent to the eastern regions of inner Persia. The news reached the emperor, and the emperor sent [emissaries] to lavish on them [i. e., the Ottomans] many and magnificent gifts and honours (*philotimemata*). But nothing could slow down [the plans of] Osman or increase, so to speak, his prudence regarding his actions, but rather it excited him: (...) he finally attacked Trikokkia, the rampart of Nicaea, and besieged it with [the support of] the entire masses of Persians who were by his side.

[He suffered various hardships because of the strong and combative spirit of the inhabitants of Trikokkia, but in the end he managed to subdue them.]

Comments: In 1265, Emperor Michael VIII sent Maria to marry the Mongol Khan Hulagu, who, however, died while Maria was still on her way to his court. The archimandrite Theodosios Prinkips, later Patriarch of Antioch, headed the embassy escorting Maria Palaiologina to the Mongols. In fact, through a marriage alliance with the Ilkhanate (i. e., part of the Mongol Empire), Michael VIII trusted that he would gain support for the defence of Western Asia Minor against various Turkish groups. Because Hulagu had died, Maria married his son, Abaqa Khan, who was now the ruler of the Ilkhanate. Almost twenty years later (1282), Abaqa also died. Maria, along with her daughter Theodora, then returned to Constantinople where she re-founded a convent known as *Saint Mary of the Mongols* and where she may have taken the veil.⁵⁴²

In 1307, due to her status as a widow of a Mongol khan, Maria was sent by her brother Andronikos II to negotiate a marriage with the Mongol ruler Kharbanda. Her familiarity with the Mongol language and culture would certainly have aided her in conducting her mission successfully. She was expected to settle permanently in the East and serve as a faithful and steady ambassador, contributing to the efforts of both the Byzantines and the Mongols to contain the Ottomans. According to Pachymeres, she was sent to Nicaea, from where she would start her negotiations with the Mongols. It is of great interest that, for military and political reasons, an imperial woman was called on to travel to the dangerous area of Nicaea. On the way, she was accompanied by a large army. However, the historiographer does not clarify if the duty of the army was limited to providing protection for the travelling

542 Melichar, *Imperial Women as Emissaries*, 111 (with further references); cf. Rustam Shukurov, *The Byzantine Turks, 1204–1461*, MMED 105 (Boston, 2016) 82–84.

princess. Perhaps Maria was also charged with leading the army to Nicaea, thereby bringing reinforcements to that city which was threatened by the Ottomans. Another important detail that Pachymeres' narration does not reveal is the name of the Byzantine lady who would marry the Mongol ruler if the negotiations for a marriage alliance between Maria and Kharbanda were successful. Given the fact that Maria was already of advanced age (in her fifties), it is likely that the intended bride was not she, but Irene, the daughter of Andronikos II.⁵⁴³ It is also unlikely that Maria would have brokered her own marriage.

According to Pachymeres, although Maria managed to gain support from the Mongols, she failed drastically in her negotiations with the Ottomans. In the summer of 1307, the Ottomans forestalled the military forces of the Mongols and captured the fortress of Trikokkia, which ultimately facilitated the conquest of Nicaea in 1331.⁵⁴⁴

Sometime after 1307, Maria presumably returned from the Mongol court to Constantinople, specifically to her convent where she took vows as Melane the nun. Perhaps she also sponsored the project of restoring the Chora Monastery, which was carried out by her relative, Theodore Metochites.⁵⁴⁵ The *Deesis* mosaic of the Chora Monastery, executed between 1313 and 1321, depicts Maria dressed in monastic attire;⁵⁴⁶ the fragmentary inscription above her reads as follows "[...] of Andronikos Palaiologos, the Lady of the Mongols, Melane the nun."⁵⁴⁷

Further reading

Karpozilos, Apostolos, *Βυζαντινοί ιστορικοί και χρονογράφοι*, vol. 4: 13^{ος}-15^{ος} αι. (Athens, 2015) 60–82 (with further references).

Melicharová, Petra, *Empresses of Late Byzantium: Foreign Brides, Mediators and Pious Women* (Berlin, 2019).

Melichar, Petra, Imperial Women as Emissaries, Intermediaries, and Conciliators in the Palaiologan Era, *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 67 (2017) 103–128.

Neville, Leonora, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing* (Cambridge, 2018) 237–242.

Christodoulos Papavarnavas

543 Melichar, Imperial Women as Emissaries, 111–112.

544 Korobeinikov, Dimitri, *Byzantium and the Turks in the Thirteenth Century* (Oxford, 2014) 212.

545 PLP 17982.

546 Carolyn L. Connor, *Women of Byzantium* (New Haven, 2004) 312–316. Cf. Melichar, Imperial Women as Emissaries, 111–112; Korobeinikov, The Ilkhans in the Byzantine Sources, 385–390. According to some scholars, the mosaic may not depict Maria, the sister of Emperor Andronikos II, but his daughter Maria, who was also married to a Mongol khan.

547 Paul A. Underwood, *The Kariye Djami*, vol. 1: *Historical Introduction and Description of the Mosaics and Frescoes* (New York, 1966) 45.



Image 1: Depiction of the adoration of Jesus Christ by the Virgin Mary, with Maria Palaiologina depicted at the bottom to the right (mosaic, Chora Church/Kariye Camii, Istanbul, 14th century).



Image 1a: Detail: Maria Palaiologina depicted in the mosaic in the Chora Church (Kariye Camii, Istanbul, 14th century).

1.11.0 Health, healing, and pilgrimage

In the history of mankind, worries and concerns about life and health have always been important reasons for mobility and migration. It was not only the fear of diseases and pandemics that set individuals or large groups of people in motion (see 1.7.0). The anxiety about one's health – physical but also spiritual – could make medieval men and women seek for assistance, long before a pandemic disease was on the horizon. When speaking about health care in Byzantium and Western Europe, we have to keep in mind one major difference between pre-modern reality and the contemporary way of life. Before the year 1800 the entire sector of helping the needy – including those searching relief from pain and sickness – was dominated by the idea of Christian charity (*philanthropia*), which was based on the preaching of Christ Himself (Matthew 25:34–36: “Then the King will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me’”). Hospitals and other charitable institutions emerged in the Christianised Roman Empire during the 4th century and remained under the aegis of the Church for centuries to come. Despite their initial animosity towards classical (pagan) medicine, Christians soon adapted ancient Greek and Roman medical knowledge to the needs of their charity. The intertwining of religion, medicine, and health care reflected the widespread view that the salvation of the soul was the final goal of Christian *philanthropia*. On the one hand, the afflicted were to learn that God sent diseases and sickness in order to test the faith of His flock and to give it the chance to repent before death. On the other hand, the benefactors were taught that following Christ's example in the Gospels was the best way to find God's grace and thereby to secure the salvation of their souls in the afterlife. When speaking about Christian charity in Byzantium, one must keep in mind the wide range of institutions that cared for the brothers in need. It comprised not only hospitals (*xenones*), nursing homes (*gerokomeia*), and orphanages (*orphanotropheia*), but also hostels (*xen-*

odocheia) built on the major routes in order to provide the travellers with various services free of charge. The hostels commissioned by the *great domestikos* of the West Gregory Pakourianos (11th century)⁵⁴⁸ along the *Via Militaris* and the *Via Egnatia* in Thrace are a good example of this aspect of Christian *philanthropia*.⁵⁴⁹

Although modern medicine has seen remarkable progress in the last 200 years, which has made obsolete various traditional features, it still retains some characteristics of its *modus operandi* before the 19th century. The first is the concentration of hospitals and charitable institutions in big urban centres or along the major transport routes, which leads to an uneven distribution in a state and an unequal access to medical services among the members of society. The result is travel. The second peculiarity that premodern and modern healthcare and medical service have in common is their dependence on financial resources. As already mentioned, medieval benefactors tried to provide the funding needed for the effective functioning of their foundations, though the number of such institutions in Byzantium as a whole was far from meeting the demands of the people. Medieval texts speak of learned physicians, though their distribution seems to have been even more uneven than that of the charitable institutions. The loss in the 7th century of the rich Eastern provinces with their centres Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem made Constantinople the indisputable centre of Byzantine medical knowledge and medicalised charitable work during the High and Late Middle Ages. Moreover, if someone needed specialised medical services offered outside the hospitals, he needed to pay for them. This meant that the majority of the inhabitants of the empire had to rely on other means of assistance when it came to their physical and psychological health.

Since religion and health were so closely intertwined, the afflicted could find relief not only in hospitals that were most often organised by lay or religious authorities within a monastic foundation. Another way of caring for physical and spiritual well-being was to visit holy shrines that were famous for their miraculous relics or icons. Here we have another field of medieval life where the Church tried to secure its leading position. Pilgrimage to such sanctuaries soon became a significant element of the Byzantine mentality and had its effect on religion, communication, economy, and daily life, as it is evident from Byzantine literature – especially hagiography – and material culture. Returning from a healing shrine, the visitors could take with them an object such as a copy of a miraculous icon, or a flask filled with holy water or oil from the grave of the healer saint and bring it to his or her home. We can distinguish between the following types of pilgrims' motivations. The first type concerns the visit of a healing shrine by the

548 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Gregorios/61/>.

549 Gautier, Paul, Le typikon du sébaste Grégoire Pakourianos, *Revue des études byzantines* 42 (1984) 5–145, at 111–115, ch. 29, lines 1530–1589.

afflicted person or one of his/her relatives. The second concerns the travel to a sanctuary or a famous pilgrimage centre by a physically healthy visitor who, however, is moved by more or less spiritual reasons, wishing to pray to God in a place that had since long proved its efficacy as a site of communication between human beings and the divine. The two motives are connected to the salvation of an individual or its close relative. According to the Byzantine mentality, in a case of weakness of the body or the soul, a visit to a Christian sanctuary, especially to a healing shrine, served the same goal as going to a learned physician.

Further reading

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- Horden, Peregrine, *Hospitals and Healing from Antiquity to the Later Middle Ages* (Aldershot and Burlington, 2008).
- Pitarakis, Brigitte and Gülru Tanman (eds.), *Life is Short, Art Long. The Art of Healing in Byzantium. New Perspectives*, İstanbul Research Institute Publications 38, Symposium Series 2 (İstanbul, 2018).
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Grigori Simeonov

1.11.1 Travelling to the capital in order to receive better medical treatment

Author: Theodore Prodromos⁵⁵⁰

Text: *Monody* (*Monodia*)

Date of text: After 1140

Genre: Rhetoric

Literary context: Theodore Prodromos, one of the best-known Byzantine poets,⁵⁵¹ composed texts about a broad range of topics and themes. In his *satirical* work the medical profession appears in a negative light. For example, he describes his visit to the dentist whom he compares to an executioner because of the tool he uses.⁵⁵² He also composed a monody for his friend Stephen Skylitzes (a

550 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Theodoros/25001/>.

551 Zagklas, Nikos, "How Many Verses Shall I Write and Say?": Poetry in the Komnenian Period (1081–1204), in: Wolfram Hörandner et al. (eds.), *A Companion to Byzantine Poetry*, Brill's Companions to the Byzantine World 4 (Leiden and Boston, 2019) 237–263; Hörandner, Wolfram, *Theodoros Prodromos, Historische Gedichte*, WBS 11 (Vienna, 1974) 21–72.

552 Podestà, Giuditta, Le satire lucianesche di Teodoro Prodromo, *Aevum* 21 (1947) 3–25, esp. 12–25.

metropolitan of Trebizond)⁵⁵³ on the occasion of the latter's death in 1140. There he states that his friend left Trebizond (Trabzon) in order to seek the assistance of the capital's doctors whom he believed could offer better treatment. Byzantine intellectuals who experienced the reality of life outside the capital and were forced to take long journeys that were an additional source of worry regularly complained about travel, especially when it happened on a sea route.

Historical significance of the movement: Few Byzantine texts offer details about the mobility of learned physicians or of the patients that visited them in search of a cure. The Pantokrator monastery in Constantinople and its hospital (*xenon*) is thought to have been the most advanced medical institution in Europe offering help to the sick. From its charter (*typikon*) we learn that the founders – Emperor John II Komnenos⁵⁵⁴ and his wife Irene⁵⁵⁵ – forbade the physicians working there to leave the capital. Even an order by the emperor could not excuse them.⁵⁵⁶ It is no coincidence that John II issued such a prohibition – we learn from the works of Byzantine historians that while on a campaign against Antioch, the emperor was accompanied by physicians who, however, were not able to save his life after he had been injured by a poisonous arrow during a wild boar hunt.⁵⁵⁷ Travel to Constantinople in order to receive better medical treatment from learned physicians is rarely mentioned in secular Greek texts. This makes Prodrōmos' account all the more valuable.

Type of movement: Voluntary (access to better medical treatment).

Locations and date of movement: From Trebizond to Constantinople; 1150.

Edition used: Petit, Louis, *Monodie de Théodore Prodrome, sur Etienne Skylitzès métropolitain de Trébizonde*, *Izvestija Russkogo archeologičeskogo instituta v Konstantinopole* 8 (1903) 1–14, at 13, 218–234.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Theodore Prodrōmos, *Monody*

[p. 13] Waving his hand a little and whispering something with irregular breathing, he made himself known to me through his inner traits and even more through the companionship with me. By then I had already realised that he was

553 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Stephanos/25002/>.

554 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Ioannes/2/>.

555 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Eirene/62/>.

556 Gautier, Paul, *Le typikon du Christ Sauveur Pantocrator*, *Revue des études byzantines* 32 (1974) 1–145, here 107, 1305–1312.

557 John Kinnamos, *History*, Book 1, 10, ed. August Meineke, *Ioannis Cinnami epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, CSHB (Bonn, 1836) 24, 10–25, 14; Niketas Choniates, *History*, ed. Jan-Louis van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, CFHB 11 (Berlin and New York, 1975) 40–41, 61–95.

an old friend of mine, and I was first shocked by the unexpected sight, and then uttered these crazy and dissonant words: “You have come to me, the one from Trebizond, in the body of another, which shows that the migration of the souls really happens, and your most beautiful soul has stripped off the beautiful body that it had and put on this ugly one.” And I embraced and held him tight and moistened him with tears. Who do you think, listeners, I had become through the sight, if even now I cannot remember, how shall I suppress my tears? But he begged me and said that he had enough of this mourning over him, and described in tragic tones the Iliad⁵⁵⁸ that he had suffered, the ill-treatment on the sea-voyage, the waves, the ship’s movement from one side to the other, the dizziness caused by it, the sea-sickness, the journey to Trebizond, the splendid welcome by the locals, the obedience and deference of the army and the generals, the quartan fever, the dropsy, and finally how he returned to this imperial city, so that one of two options might come true, that he might consult the most skilled physicians and be healed from the illness, or that he might die among friends and in the fatherland, which is what happened.

Further reading

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Miller, Timothy, *The Birth of the Hospital in the Byzantine Empire*, Bulletin of the History of Medicine, N.S. 10 (Baltimore and London, 1985).

Grigori Simeonov

1.11.2 Visiting Saint Artemios and his healing shrine

Author: Anonymous hagiographer

Text: *Miracles of Saint Artemios* (*Diegesis ton thaumatou tou hagiou kai endoxou megalomartyros kai thaumatourgou Artemiou*) [BHG 173]

Date of text: Late 7th century

Genre: Hagiography

Literary context: Of all Byzantine literary genres, hagiography gives the most detailed information about social and economic conditions, and cultural life in the Eastern Mediterranean. An important subgenre is miracle collections, the majority of which dates to the middle Byzantine period. In tales of miraculous healings, the Church found one of the most powerful and effective means of propagating its teachings, conquering the hearts and minds of the readers/lis-

558 A reference to the travels of Odysseus in search of his home after the fall of Troy (Ilion).

teners, whose everyday life was beset with troubles. The final aim of such texts was to show the almighty power of God into which the saints could tap. A special role was played by miracle stories about afflicted visitors coming from abroad, who by facing the challenges of travel demonstrated their firm belief in Christian wonderworkers. Descriptions of journeys on land or on the sea have survived. The texts sometimes speak about parents of both sexes going to healing shrines in order to pray for the recovery of their children, since the pleas of a mother were considered a firm attestation of faith, capable of winning God's mercy. However, when they deal with long-distance travel, miracle stories like the one about the sick boy from Egypt state that it was the father who went abroad.

Historical significance of the movement: Despite its significance for the history of medicine, medicalised health care in Byzantium remained restricted to a small number of people. The result was the emergence of the cult of miraculous relics and icons offering their help on one condition, namely the firm belief in God and the Christian saints. By doing so, the Church sought to replace the veneration of pagan healing shrines. Indeed, sometimes the sanctuaries of the healer saints were built on the site of old pagan temples – like those of Asclepius – known for their miraculous healings. Moreover, the Church started propagating the activity of Christian miracle workers, who showed their power at certain sites. This resulted not only in literary production, but also led to the emergence of the first major pilgrimage centres of Christianity, which were known explicitly as places where miraculous cures were performed. Such were the shrines of Saint Menas, and Saints Kyros and John in Egypt. After the loss of the Eastern provinces to the Arabs, a shift occurred. Now Constantinople became the New Jerusalem – parallel to its former glory as the New Rome – that saved and preserved some of the most significant relics of Christianity. Thus, for Eastern Christianity the Byzantine capital turned into the leading centre of pilgrimage to healing shrines. Of particular importance were the sanctuaries of the “Holy Unmercenaries” (in Greek *Anargyroi*, due to their refusal of payment for their medical services) Kosmas and Damian in the Kosmidion Monastery, of the Church of the Mother of God of the Life-giving Spring (*Zoodochos Pege*), and of Saint Artemios in the Church of Saint John the Baptist, for which miracle collections have survived. The cult of Artemios, who specialised in healing andrological disorders,⁵⁵⁹ attracted afflicted visitors from Constantinople, the Aegean, Africa, and Gaul during the so-called Dark Ages (7th–8th century).

Type of movement: Voluntary (healing).

Locations and date of movement: From Africa and Rhodes to Constantinople; 7th century.

559 Alwis, Anne, Men in Pain: Masculinity, Medicine and the *Miracles* of St. Artemios, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 36/1 (2012) 1–19.

Edition used: Crisafulli, Virgil and John Nesbitt, *The Miracles of St. Artemios. A Collection of Miracle Stories by an Anonymous Author of Seventh-Century Byzantium*, MMED 13 (Leiden and New York, 1997) 82, 19–84, 16; 184, 12–186, 5; 188, 16–25, miracle 4 and 35.

Translation used: Ibid. (modified by Dirk Krausmüller)

Miracles of Saint Artemios, miracle 4 and 35

[p. 82]: A certain other man, an African by birth who resided in Africa itself, had an only child, a male who suffered terribly in his testicles. And although the man had spent much money on doctors, it had not helped his son at all. Since he was in extreme distress over this, in conversation some people said to him, as they themselves had experience of the martyr's efficacy, that, if it were possible for him to go to the holy martyr Artemios in Constantinople, he would be cured immediately. When he heard this, [p. 84] he inquired diligently about the location and wrote on papyrus taking notes, just as they told him saying: "To Saint John the Baptist in the Oxeia, near the colonnades of Domninos." So travelling from Africa, he headed for the divinely favoured city, leaving behind his ailing son in Africa. Coming to the church of the Forerunner, he made in the name of his son a votive lamp according to the prevailing custom with wine and oil. And this he did unflinching for as long as he stayed in the city. When he was about to sail back, he put the burnt residue from the lamp into a glass vessel and took it with him to Africa. Then hastening to rub his son with the blessing, he saw that he was healthy. Then he learnt from the servants when they realised that he was restored to health. And from what they said, he discovered that on the day and the hour at which he had made the votive lamp the visitation of the holy martyr that led to his son's cure had happened, and he blessed the Lord, rejoicing in the convalescence of his son.

[p. 184]: There was a certain man by the name of George, a Rhodian by birth who owned property in Rhodes itself; he was also a shipowner with a boat of his own and had two sons as well. For many years this man was weighed down, suffering in both his testicles. After he had sailed to the happiest city with his two sons, the miracles of the holy martyr Artemios came to his ears. And after unloading, he said to his sons: 'Bring to me at Saint Artemios sufficient provisions so that I may stay there, and you discharge.' And after they had done what their father asked for, they sailed back to their own country. After some time had passed, they embarked again and sailed over to Constantinople and came to their father and found him in the same state. Disembarking and getting ready to sail away, they said to their father: 'What is your plan? Are you sailing back with us?' He said to them: 'Bring me provisions; for I wish to be here in order that God may heal me through his holy martyr. You sail back with God as your help.' Then they

sailed away and returned, making a second and a third round trip, doing this for two years. On the third round trip they said to him: 'Are you sailing back, father, or are you staying here?' He said to them: 'My children, my sins prove to be an obstacle, [p. 186] and I am unworthy of receiving good health because of my deeds; but since I have given the saints a headache and have defiled this church and have annoyed the clergy, bring me what I need so that I may hold a love feast with all of them and to sail out with you.' [... Artemios heals the man ...] [p. 188] So, on the next day having made an offering to the best of his ability, he brought it to the martyr and after having feasted with the sacred clergy, he departed from there and sailed back to his own country with his two sons, being filled with joy and gladness and relating to everyone the marvels which Christ does through his beloved martyr Artemios, his compassion, his humility and his gracious condescension.

Grigori Simeonov

1.11.3 The miraculous power of the shrine of the Mother of God of the life-giving spring at Pege

Author: Nikephoros Kallistou Xanthopoulos⁵⁶⁰ [BHG 1073]

Text: *Miracles of Pege* (*Logos*)

Date of text: early 14th century

Genre: Hagiography

Literary context: After it had flourished in the middle Byzantine period, writing about miraculous healings in Byzantium came to a halt. A revival occurred in the Palaiologan period when new collections of miracles of two major Constantinopolitan healing shrines – that of Kosmas and Damian in Kosmidion, and that of the Mother of God in Pege – were composed. The author of the second collection is Nikephoros Kallistou Xanthopoulos, known also for having written a *Church history*. He presents new miracles but also paraphrases old tales such as the one about the man from Thessaly who was resurrected from the dead through water from the spring of the Church in Pege because of his firm belief. We find this remarkable story already in the anonymous collection from the 10th century,⁵⁶¹ but Xanthopoulos adds new information, speaking about the grave of the pilgrim who decided to live as a monk in the monastery in Pege until his death,

⁵⁶⁰ PLP 20826.

⁵⁶¹ *Miracle Tales from Byzantium*, transl. by Alice-Mary Talbot and Scott Fitzgerald Johnson (Cambridge, Mass. and London, 2012) 228–232, ch. 12.

which he claims to have seen with his own eyes.⁵⁶² This account was intended to give even greater credence to the miraculous tale in the eyes of his public, and eventually to attract more visitors to the healing shrine of the Zoodochos Pege.⁵⁶³

Historical significance of the movement: A look at the places of origin of afflicted pilgrims in Xanthopoulos' collection shows a further change in mobility patterns, which corresponds to the political reality of the time. The visitors came from Macedonia, Thrace, and Western Asia Minor. Another shift concerns the social status of the protagonists. The anonymous collection from the 10th century speaks of visitors belonging to the highest strata of Constantinopolitan society, among them members of the imperial family itself – a peculiar feature that is missing in Xanthopoulos' work. We also do not know what happened to the palace in the vicinity of the monastery of Pege, where the emperor celebrated the feast of the Assumption in the presence of the patriarch and high state and church officials.

Type of movement: Voluntary (healing).

Locations and date of movement: From Thessaly to Constantinople; before or during the 10th century.

Edition used: Pamperis, Ambrosios, *Νικηφόρου Καλλίστου τοῦ Ξανθοπούλου περὶ συστάσεως τοῦ σεβασμίου οἴκου τῆς ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει Ζωοδόχου Πηγῆς, καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ ὑπερφυνῶς τελεσθέντων θαυμάτων* (Leipzig, 1802) 24, 24–26, 27, no 9.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Nikephoros Kallistou Xanthopoulos, *Miracles of Pege*, no. 9

[p. 24] Nor is it right to consign the following to silence, as it is not lesser than the previous ones, and to my mind may well be the greatest of all, since it can definitely prove that she [the Mother of God] herself has the power, according to the Son and Word, to breathe life into the dead, and truly make them leap out of their graves. Lend, then, your ears to the story lest some inattentiveness interfere and deprive you of the supernatural narrative. A man from Thessaly had even in his youth had a paradoxical love [p. 25] to come to the sacred and divine source and satisfy his desire. For the fame of what took place in it resounded in his ears, and in some mysterious way he made a promise to the Mother of God and confirmed the matter with an oath. Yet hindered by the cares and vicissitudes of

562 Rhoby, Andreas, *Byzantinische Epigramme auf Stein, nebst Addenda zu den Bänden 1 und 2*, VB 35; *Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung* 3/1 (Vienna, 2014) 676–677, no. TR80.

563 Constantinou, Stavroula, A Rewriter at Work. Nikephoros Xanthopoulos and the *Pege Miracles*, in: Stavroula Constantinou and Christian Høgel (eds.), *Metaphrasis. A Byzantine Concept of Rewriting and Its Hagiographical Products*, MMED 125 (Leiden and Boston, 2020) 324–342.

life, and also influenced by the evil spirit, he postponed the matter. And adding day to day, he was unaware that he had passed the greater part of his life in empty promises. But at some point, he brushed off all that was in the way, put some necessities into a ship and sailed straight for Constantinople, having no care for the affairs of his house. As the man from Thessaly was in the middle of his journey, he became mortally ill, and when he got to the estate that is called Athyras, because the ship moored there, he departed from the choppy sea of this world, since his life had ended. But while some breath was still in his nose, he adjured his fellow-travellers with frightful oaths and implored them by the source of the Mother of God not to do to him any of the things that are customary after death, before they had brought him to the life-giving source, and had three times poured out over his entire stretched-out and naked body the vessel with which it is customary to draw from the sacred water, which the common people call bucket. “For then”, he said, “that place shall be my burial site.” When he had impressed this on his fellow-travellers, he departed. As they got there, they carried the body of the Thessalian on their shoulders and came to the church. They laid him on his back by the fountain at the church of the martyr Eustratios, and did what the deceased had charged them with. Indeed, they took off the clothes of the dead man and poured water over him. I shudder to narrate [p. 26] what happened afterwards. For as the third and last vessel had been poured out, then as if the water had become a soul for him, he leapt up and stood, a spectacle for all to see. He was unknown for a long time, for they seemed to see a phantom. But as he led them to the faith through shapes and things, they embraced him and shouted loudly, praising the truly life-giving source. Who would say that this was lesser than the miracle of Lazarus? By no means! But as much as flowing tears and a sharp command raised him who was jumping out stinking, it was not tears and voice but the sound of the ever-living source that breathed life into him. And what was equally amazing was that the mother of Christ did this, and Christ, her son, did that, as he let her do this, thus he also let her do the same in this case. But the man from Thessaly, having been deemed worthy of the greatest things, explained the portent in detail and became a member of the monastery after having been inducted into the monastic life. And having lived the remainder of his life in a God-loving manner, he departed for God in the best manner of life, and now he lies in the portico of the church, proclaiming the miracle through the slab that covers the grave, as a Stentorian corpse.

Further reading

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- Talbot, Alice-Mary, Pilgrimage to Healing Shrines: The Evidence of Miracle Accounts, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 56 (2002) 153–173.

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1.11.4 A courtier leaves the capital and visits the Holy Land

Author: Constantine Manasses⁵⁶⁴

Text: *Itinerary (Hodoiporikon)*

Date of text: 1160s

Genre: Rhetoric

Literary context: Constantine Manasses is one of the most prolific Byzantine authors of the 12th century. His literary works include a verse chronicle, a verse romance (*Aristandros and Kallithea*) – of which only fragments have survived –, various rhetorical pieces (2.6.1), and a verse account of his journey to Jerusalem, known as *Hodoiporikon*. Manasses' account of his travel to the Holy Land differs in tone from other such works because he did not go there voluntarily but had to leave Constantinople and visit the East as a member of a delegation sent by Emperor Manuel I Komnenos.⁵⁶⁵ The purpose of this mission was not pilgrimage in the strict sense of the word, but negotiations with Baldwin III, King of Jerusalem,⁵⁶⁶ about a new wife for the Byzantine emperor. Manasses describes the most significant pilgrimage sites of Christianity, but does not at all conceal his unwillingness to make the long journey to the Holy Land, and does not hesitate to complain about calamities such as seasickness that went along with it. The larger part of his narrative deals with the diplomatic negotiations, whereas the description of Palestine and its sanctuaries remains in the background. At the end, as an intellectual who is involuntarily on the move – even on a visit to the Holy Land itself – the author of one of the most famous descriptions of a pilgrimage

564 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Konstantinos/302/>.

565 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Manuel/1/>.

566 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Baldwin/53/>.

from the middle and late Byzantine period expresses his joy about coming back to Constantinople, called by him “the eye of the world”.⁵⁶⁷

Historical significance of the movement: After Manuel I Komnenos’ first wife Irene (born as Bertha of Sulzbach)⁵⁶⁸ had died in 1159, the emperor not only turned his attention to a possible second marriage, but also tried to take this opportunity in order to strengthen his relations with the Crusader states in the Near East. In 1160 he sent his cousin John Kontostephanos⁵⁶⁹ to the court of Baldwin III, King of Jerusalem. Among the members of the embassy there was Constantine Manasses, a poet at the Byzantine court, whose patron was the *sebastokratorissa* Irene Komnene. Manuel’s delegation stayed in the East until the autumn of 1161 and came back to Constantinople with a bride of royal blood, Maria of Antioch.⁵⁷⁰ Manasses’ motivation for undertaking the journey is far removed from personal piety and concerns about the salvation of his soul. The emotion that he expresses in the text is discontent about going abroad, rather than a pilgrim’s joy at seeing the places where Christ suffered. Even so, his account about the Holy Land and its pilgrimage centres is of historical significance. After the end of Late Antiquity in the early 7th century, pilgrimage to the Holy Land shrank because of the wars between the Byzantines and the Arabs. The conquest of Sicily, Crete and Cyprus, and the activity of Muslim pirates in the Aegean made travel between the Western and the Eastern Mediterranean even more difficult. Consequently, there were no pilgrim’s accounts like that of Egeria from the late 4th century, just to mention one of the most famous. Around the year 1000 the situation had changed again. The growing mobility on different levels, such as for example diplomacy and trade (see 1.10.0 and 2.5.0), led to an intensification of communications between Byzantium and the world around it. In 1048, Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos supported the reconstruction of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem after its destruction at the order of the Fatimid Caliph al-Ḥākim in 1009.⁵⁷¹ Yet even in the days of Patriarch Photios (9th century)⁵⁷² descriptions of the Holy Land were available to Byzantine intellectuals. For all his discontent about the circumstances that had caused and accompanied the travel, Manasses still gives a vivid description of the most significant pilgrimage sites, and shows an interest in travel literature. Far more detailed and what is more important – displaying the enthusiasm of authors on

567 Fenster, Erwin, *Laudes Constantinopolitanae*, MBM 9 (Munich, 1968).

568 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Eirene/66/>.

569 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Ioannes/17013/>.

570 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Maria/63/>.

571 PmbZ 22544, <https://www.degruyter.com/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ24697/html>.

572 PmbZ 6253, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ17454/html> and PmbZ 26667, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28821/html>.

pilgrimage – are the three descriptions of the Holy Sites in Palestine and Egypt, known under the names of John Phokas, Andrew Libadenos⁵⁷³ and a certain Agathangelos⁵⁷⁴ (all of them postdating Manasses' journey).

Type of movement: Involuntary.

Locations and date of movement: From Constantinople to Palestine and back; 1160–1161.

Edition used: Chrysogelos, Konstantinos, *Κωνσταντίνου Μανασσῆ Οδοιπορικόν. Κριτική έκδοση – Μετάφραση – Σχόλια* (Athens, 2017) 106 and 116–122, lines 61–74, 218–267, 275–284, 288–293, 302–316 and 331–336.

Translation used: Aerts, Willem, A Byzantine Traveller to One of the Crusader States, in: Krijnie Ciggaar and Herman Teule (eds.), *East and West in the Crusader States: Context, Contacts, Confrontations*, III. *Acta of the Congress Held at Hernen Castle in September 2000*, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 125 (Leuven and Dudley, Mass., 2003) 165–221 (modified by Dirk Krausmüller)

Constantine Manasses, *Hodoiporikon*

[p. 106] The brightly coloured morning was already breaking, and the lightbringer, the leader of stars and bringer of dawn, was rising and conversing with what is above, when suddenly an evil message full of bitterness followed on their heels, which said: 'You will travel with the *sebastos* [John Kontostephanos] to Jerusalem and Palestine.' Although I was struck by the words as if by a whip, I was not confounded, I did not bring forth tears, I did not pour out the dripping of the eyelids. For the bitter word that had fallen into my ears mortified my soul and froze my heart. The rushing of the tears was interrupted and the sighs were runaways and fugitives, there was no moaning and the mouth was without speech. (...)

[p. 116] After a long time and after long toils we left the city of the Neapolitans [Neapolis in Cyprus] and saw Jerusalem, the most blessed city, which was endowed with a secure location. For a deep ravine that had almost no beginning, a gorge that was difficult to climb, surrounded in a circle the entire city. I venerated the precious tomb, in which he who had mixed the dust in order to fashion Adam poured forth eternal life for those who were descended from Adam, as if he were a sleeping lion's cub, because we had transgressed. I saw Golgotha, I saw the rocks that had once been cleft and dissolved by fear when my God, the potter of my race, sustained the suffering that saved the whole world, and thereby raised children of Abraham from stones and renewed the shattered nature. I saw and embraced the earth where the killers of God had hidden the blessed and venerable cross. From there I went out and came to Zion, which bewitched me with many

573 PLP 14867.

574 PLP 67.

charms. It is outside the fortifications but very close to them and almost touching them. There I saw the thrice-blessed place where he washed the feet of the disciples, he who reins in the ungovernable sea. Going a bit further I saw a little house where the host of the disciples hid so as to escape the rabid anger of the murderers, [p. 118] like herbivorous sheep that flee the attack of wild lions when the beast-killing shepherd is not around. How could I overlook the goodly room in which the net-menders stayed together and were endowed with coal-like, fiery, strangely sounding tongues, having been hammered by the force of the Spirit from invisible and flameless fire-throwing machines? There I saw another divine place, where the most pure course of my God breathed his last into the hands of the Son. I went down near the dusky corners in which Peter, the brave coward, wiped off his sins with tears. Gethsemane of the virgin who gave birth to God showed me the thrice-beloved tomb, a place that is sad to see and lowly, but hides inside the priceless ruby. (...) I ascended to the much-hymned hill on which stood bodily the one who made the mountains stand, and blessed the wise apostles and was raised up to the Father, the origin of light. I passed by Bethlehem, I saw the manger. I was fired up by the ovens of Jericho. I saw the parched sandy plain, which is roasted, without moisture and dried up, [p. 120] where the flame of the sun is so hot that it enters into the very brain. (...) I washed myself in the water of the Jordan, I saw water that is entirely mixed up with mud, neither clear nor good to drink. Its colour was like the colour of milk. For its flow is slow and one might say that the course of the river is asleep. (...) But as it seems right, as you alone know, you have chosen in all your corporeal life whatever is poor, whatever is nameless, from the rivers the flow of the Jordan, which is not even counted among rivers, from the towns of Palestine the most miserable and dried up one: Capernaum, which is detested, and Nazareth, which has been turned into coal. All divine places, then, in which the saviour sojourned in the body are venerable, but if one subtracted openly the fragrance of the miracles of the Lord, one would liken the places to dry brambles. For what is in them that is worth mentioning? (...) [p. 122] O land of Byzantium, city built by God, which has shown me the light and nourished me, in you I wish to be, your beauties I wish to see. Yes, yes, I wish to be under your wing, that you preserve me like a starling.

Further reading

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- Külzer, Andreas, Konstantinos Manasses und Johannes Phokas – zwei byzantinische Orientreisende des 12. Jahrhunderts, in: Xenja von Ertzdorff and Gerhard Giesemann

- (eds.), *Erkundung und Beschreibung der Welt. Zur Poetik der Reise- und Länderberichte. Vorträge eines interdisziplinären Symposiums vom 19. bis 24. Juni 2000 an der Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen*, Chloe 2003 (Amsterdam and New York, 2003) 185–209.
- Külzer, Andreas, *Peregrinatio graeca in Terram Sanctam. Studien zu Pilgerführern und Reisebeschreibungen über Syrien, Palästina und den Sinai aus byzantinischer und metabyzantinischer Zeit*, Studien und Texte zur Byzantinistik 2 (Frankfurt am Main, 1994).

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1.12.0 Family matters

Mobility is one of the changes that men and women experience when they get married. In Byzantium, it was usually the case that the woman moved into the house of the groom's parents, though the opposite practice, namely the husband living in the home of his parents-in-law, is also attested in the sources (see 3.2.3). Men, or even all members of a family, would also move in search of better income (see 2.2.0). Finally, complications and incompatibilities have always accompanied family life and might result in separation. In such a case one family member usually moves out and leaves, often without taking into consideration the wishes of the other(s). This section presents legal texts that cast light on various aspects of mobility connected to problems within the family such as adultery, the dissolution of a betrothal or a marriage, and second marriages.

As is well known, Byzantine studies do not have evidence of the kind as for the medieval French village of Montaillou, famous through the study of Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie;⁵⁷⁵ even Radolibos, a village in Southern Macedonia for which a couple of tax registers from the 11th to 14th century are preserved can hardly match the famous settlement in Occitania. Writing a microhistory of the *homo byzantinus* (the 'typical' Byzantine) – his or her marriage and family life included – must therefore rely on two sets of sources, namely hagiography and judicial texts. As regards court cases, three major corpora are preserved – the correspondence of John Apokaukos, Metropolitan of Naupaktos (12th–13th century), the acts of Demetrios Chomatenos, Archbishop of Ohrid (1216–1236), and the Register of the Patriarchate of Constantinople (14th and the early 15th century).⁵⁷⁶ The three collections refer to the place of origin of the petitioners and often give extensive information about various aspects of mobility. The texts give us an insight into why people took to the road and headed for the ecclesiastical court.

575 Le Roy Ladurie, Emmanuel, *Montaillou. The World-Famous Portrait of Life in a Medieval Village*, transl. by Barbara Bray (Harmondsworth, 1980).

576 Gastgeber, Christian et al. (eds.), *The Register of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. An Essential Source for the History and Church of Late Byzantium. Proceedings of the International Symposium, Vienna, 5th–9th May 2009*, VB 32 (Vienna, 2013).

The travel of women, which sometimes lasted several days, was regarded by the religious authorities as a praiseworthy “man-like” behaviour (see 4.2.2 and 4.2.3). Among the reasons for travel are usually family affairs such as (dissolved) engagement and marriage arrangements, divorces, and arguments about property. Depending on the case, some of the interrogations undertaken in ecclesiastical courts contain detailed descriptions of family life, sometimes over two or three generations, thus allowing us to see what role mobility and migration played in the life of the lower social strata in Constantinople, the provincial towns and the countryside.

Further reading

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Patlagean, Évelyne, *Familie und Verwandtschaft in Byzanz*, in: André Burguière et al. (eds), *Geschichte der Familie, Mittelalter*, transl. by Gabriele Krüger-Wirrer et al. (Essen, 2005) 207–236.

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1.12.1 A groom leaves his bride⁵⁷⁷

Author: Patriarch John XIII Glykys⁵⁷⁸ and the Synod

Text: *Register of the Patriarchate of Constantinople*

Date of text: September – December 1315

Genre: Judicial document

Type of movement: Involuntary (coercion to marriage).

Locations and date of movement: From Melnik (Eastern Macedonia) to an unnamed place abroad; before September – December 1315.

Edition used: *Das Register des Patriarchats von Konstantinopel, 1. Teil. Edition und Übersetzung der Urkunden aus den Jahren 1315–1331*, ed. and transl. by Herbert Hunger and Otto Kresten, CFHB 19/1 (Vienna, 1981) 176–178, 1–25, no. 11.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

⁵⁷⁷ There is a similar case preserved in the dossier of John Apokaukos, cf. Bees, Nikos, *Unedierte Schriftstücke aus der Kanzlei des Johannes Apokaukos des Metropolit von Nau-paktos (in Aetolien)*, *Byzantinisch-neugriechische Jahrbücher* 21 (1971–1974) 55–160, here 80–81, 25–49, no. 19.

⁵⁷⁸ PLP 4271.

Register of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, no. 11

[p. 176] The former page of my most powerful and holy emperor, Constantine Palates, has reported to my modesty, which presides over the synod, that a woman called Alamanina who is from the same area of Melenikos [Melnik] had agreed to take George Tarchaneiotes as son-in-law for her own daughter through the exchange of pectoral crosses. When Tarchaneiotes saw that the girl was disfigured in several parts of her body, that is, on her face and one of her eyes, and also on her hands, he immediately dissolved these bonds. After he had abandoned the girl, the mother joined her with Palates by using a trick. The ceremony took place at night through the payment of an earnest without the involvement and agreement of his parents who did not know why the aforementioned Tarchaneiotes had dissolved the agreement with her, as became known afterwards. [p. 178] Then, after Palates had realised that this was a trick, he immediately rejected this marriage. And he sought to avoid the girl completely, developed a profound hatred of her, and could not at all cohabit with her. He withdrew from her and fled from that place and went to foreign parts and could not bear to come together with the woman for marriage and legal blessing. Consequently, he spent four years in exile, outside the boundaries of his own land and of that of the Rhomaioi. But now he has returned and still detests her and is gripped by irreconcilable hatred of the woman and has threatened to kill her and to do to her the worst things imaginable, if he is forced to cohabit with her. He has asked to obtain a synodal decision from our modesty and has added that his mother-in-law and his wife went after his life through magic and all other evil-doing, since they did not see how he might agree to the marriage contract.

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1.12.2 A wife lives in another town without the permission of her husband

Author: Demetrios Chomatenos

Text: *Various Works (Ponemata diaphora)*

Date of text: Between 1216 and 1236

Genre: Collection of 152 documents of administrative relevance (letters, responses, decisions and evaluations)

Type of movement: Voluntary (adultery).

Locations and date of movement: From Ohrid (?) to Prilep and back through the village of Bodanes; between 1216 (recapture of Prilep by the ruler of Epiros) and 1236 (circa six months before the court decision).

Edition used: *Demetrii Chomateni Ponemata diaphora*, ed. Günter Prinzing, CFHB 38 (Berlin and New York, 2002) 92–93, 2–46, no. 23.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Demetrios Chomatenos, *Various Works*, no. 23

[p. 92] Not only words sufficed John who dwelt in the court of the *kastrenos* [citizen of Ohrid?] Basil, son of Boleslaba [Boleslava], to put blame on his wife Irene, who he said had already spent six months in Prilapos [Prilep] without his consent, and to file for a divorce. But it was necessary for him to produce the woman and to confirm through testimony that she had gone away from him in disorderly fashion. And today he has brought before the lordly and divine greatness a document signed by the most venerable priests in Prilapos, the *hi-erologos* Romanos and the *protekdikos* Theodore, who bear witness that the wife of John has spent the aforementioned time in Prilapos without showing restraint. When her husband had already gone and sought her out and indeed dragged her to the law court, and when they had reached the place called Bodanes [Vodjane], the woman all of a sudden threw herself into the river that flowed by. And if she had not immediately been snatched from the flood of the water through the efforts and interventions of the master of this place, that is, the most glorious lord Gregory Gabras, and his men, she would have immediately swallowed the water that filled it. But when she had come to, she uttered a few words, stating that if she had not just escaped the danger of the water, after she had dived into it in the presence of them all, she would afterwards when nobody would look sail to Hades through it. And the letter bore witness to this, but John said that for this reason he could not force his aforementioned wife any further, dragging her to the law court, as has been said, from where he had demanded a divorce. [p. 93] He also produced witnesses, the most God-loving *despotes* of the churches, Andrianos Autoreianos, the most venerable *primikerios* of the readers of the left choir, Michael Sberilbos, the most venerable priest and *periodeutes* Leo, and others who said that they knew unerringly that Irene had not only gone to Prilapos in a disorderly manner, having left her husband, and had spent such a long time there, but that she did not show good conduct in the house of her husband even before she left, as having gone from his bed on each day. After this had been reported in the lordly and divine law court, it was decided by it that there should be a divorce in the case of the cohabitation of Irene and John, according to the 117th novel of Justinian, which is found in the 28th book of the Basilica, in the seventh section and first chapter,⁵⁷⁹ which decrees among other things that a

579 Chomatenos refers here to a regulation of the Macedonian legislative work Basilica 28,7,1, ed. Scheltema, Herman J. et al., *Basilicorum Libri LX* (Gröningen, 1945–1988).

husband can send his wife a letter of divorce, if without his knowledge she dwells outside his bed, not in the house of a relative but in that of a stranger. For the aforementioned Irene was condemned because she had spent a space of six months not only outside the bed of her husband but also in another place that was far away, which is sufficient to put the blame on her and to bring her the decision of a divorce.

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1.12.3 An orphan leaves home because of problems with his stepfather

Author: Demetrios Chomatenos

Text: *Various Works (Ponemata diaphora)*

Date of text: Between 1216 and 1236

Genre: Collection of 152 documents of administrative relevance (letters, responses, decisions and evaluations)

Type of movement: Involuntary (disagreement with a family member).

Locations and date of movement: From Kastoria or its region (the village of Brastianai?) to unnamed places; first half of the 13th century.

Edition used: *Demetrii Chomateni Ponemata diaphora*, ed. Günter Prinzing, CFHB 38 (Berlin and New York, 2002) 293, 14–294, 52, no. 85, ch. 2–4.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Demetrios Chomatenos, *Various Works*, no. 85, ch. 2–4

[p. 293] One victim of such a mishap was the man who had previously been called Israel because of the Israel of old (for this was the origin of his people and his faith), but later came to be called Manuel because of the Emmanuel (for to him he was relocated through the holy baptism). But he did not remain without succour until the end, since the father of the orphans and the judge of the widows, as it is written, moved the divine laws and the judges who follow them to give him help. For when Manuel had not yet come of age, his mother, who had remarried after the death of his father Abraham and joined herself to the Jew Moses, already sold together with the same Moses the vineyard that had come to Manuel from his father, which is situated in Kastoria, that is, in the village of Brastianoi [Brjast-jane?], and from which he had hoped to draw some comfort for his orphanhood. Not much later his mother, too, departed from this life and commended Manuel to his stepfather Moses, that he might gain from the vineyard his livelihood and nourishment and any kind of comfort, since there were also some immovable items there that had come to him from his father, which were kept in trust. But the

stepfather Moses showed no care at all for his stepson Manuel, not only leaving him entirely unprovided but also depriving him [p. 294] of the things that were kept in trust for him as has already been said, with an attitude that was devious and crooked. From then on and henceforth vagrancy became Manuel's lot and filled him with its multifarious evils, that is, being a foreigner, being naked, begging, working for money, being plagued and distressed, until the art of the hearth, which is full of ashes, that is, the art of a cook, received him, and made him its assistant. And what happened afterwards? Having completely satisfied his needs from this art, and so-to-speak, having come to, he remembers his paternal land and his paternal possessions, he goes to the place, he finds them in part sold by the mother and the stepfather, and in part used up with evil intent, as has been stated, he files a lawsuit against the stepfather and straightaway gains the upper hand, as he is supported by justice and by the laws that love the pious, and finally receives in a legal document a decision that is in accordance with them, from the judge (it was the most sacred archpriest of Kastoria and *protothronos* of our most holy churches, a man who struggled for justice so that he was clad in priestly righteousness, to say it with Scripture, and adorned with wisdom of every kind).

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- Laiou, Angeliki, *Mariage, amour et parenté à Byzance aux XI^e-XIII^e siècles*, TM, Monographies 7 (Paris, 1992).

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2 Who moved?

This section shifts perspectives from systemic necessity to individual agency: Here the emphasis is on the people whose occupation implied or required movement: the wealthy and privileged who maintained their extensive networks of influence through visits and marriages, skilled laborers in search of specialized work, dependent farmers at the whim of their landlords, men under arms who depended on recruitment and opportunities to fight near and far, merchants, traders and artisans who peddled their trade in different locations, entertainers and other self-made men and women who traveled around.

Claudia Rapp

2.1.0 Elites

Different parts of the Byzantine population had different reasons and motivations for mobility and movement. The agrarian population in villages and the artisan and merchant town dwellers were often forced to move by economic necessity and by warfare. They were also subject to imperial re-settlement policies.

For men and women of status and wealth, the patterns of mobility were different. They were not subject to imperial re-settlement policies, and even if warfare caused their displacement, most prominently after 1204, they knew how to claim their privileges.

High social status allowed men and women to move as they deemed necessary and to do so in style. Their status and wealth occasioned movement for a large variety of reasons: men of prominent families from the provinces sought to gain a position at the imperial court or in the ecclesiastical administration, after achieving the necessary qualifications either through education or military service (see [1.9.1](#), [1.9.2](#)), while women were the pawns in marriage alliances (see [1.10.3](#), [2.1.2](#), [4.1.3](#)). A new appointment to a prestigious bishopric or a metropolitan see often meant a re-location to a previously unknown place. But not all movement was entirely voluntary: elite men could be required to come to the court at very short notice ([2.1.1](#)), and women were given away as brides to foreign rulers (see below, [2.1.2](#) and [1.10.0](#)).

Byzantine authors take the mobility of elites for granted, rarely offering comment, but often dwelling on colourful detail. From their descriptions, it is clear that people of wealth and status were able to move in great comfort (see [4.2.3](#)), their means of transportation also serving as a display of their status. They also had access to superior services. While simple merchants had to contend with poor road conditions (see [4.2.0](#)), emperors could send messages swiftly through the official relay system of horses and riders, and status-conscious intellectuals like Michael Psellos were grateful to be able to travel on horseback ([2.1.3](#)). When the imperial household moved outside of Constantinople, great logistical efforts

were required to replicate the appropriate courtly setting, which was achieved through the use of elaborate tents.¹

The sources that report on elite mobility were written by people of the same social strata: narrations of the history of the Byzantine emperors and their court, or letter collections by high imperial or ecclesiastical dignitaries who take pleasure in displaying their erudition in their correspondence with their peers. Elite mobility is also implicit in the normative works written in the orbit of the imperial court that fall under the general rubric of 'Taktika', such as military handbooks that offer instructions for generals leading the army on campaign, or instructions for court ceremonies (such as the *Book of Ceremonies* or the work of Pseudo-Kodinos) that provide details for imperial processions through the capital or gatherings where members of the court were expected to be present.

Matthew Kinloch

2.1.1 Men of the nobility, eager for an imperial reward, hasten to Constantinople

Author: Anonymous (at the request of Emperor Constantine VII)

Text: *Theophanes Continuatus* (Book 3)

Date of text: before 959

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: The so-called *Theophanes Continuatus* (or *Scriptores post Theophanem*), a continuation of the chronicle of Theophanes Confessor,² which ends in the year 813, is the product of the literary circle of Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos.³ Preserved in a single manuscript, it contains accounts that differ in style and have been attributed to different authors in Byzantine scholarship. The first four books are the 'real' *Theophanes Continuatus* since their author explicitly says that he continues the work of the renowned chronicler. They contain the biographies of Leo V⁴ Michael II⁵ Theophilos,⁶ and Michael III⁷ respectively.

1 Heher, Dominik, *Mobiles Kaisertum: Das Zelt als Ort der Herrschaft und Repräsentation in Byzanz (10.–12. Jahrhundert)* (Münster, 2019).

2 PmbZ 8107, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ19364/html>.

3 PmbZ 23734, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25888/html>.

4 PmbZ 4244/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ15402/html>.

5 PmbZ 4900/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16167/html>.

6 PmbZ 8167/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ19429/html>.

Historical significance of the movement: The author describes with an undertone of barely disguised glee how the members of the elite who hastened to the court in anticipation of honour and rewards found themselves tricked by the emperor Theophilos (829–842) whose real motive in summoning them was to punish them. These men had helped Theophilos' father Michael II to kill his predecessor Leo V. Michael who was beholden to them gave them great honours. The viewpoint of his son Theophilos was rather different. He saw in these men potential plotters who had once turned against an emperor and might again do so.

Types of movement: voluntary (?) on state business

Locations and date of movement: from the provinces to Constantinople; 829.

Edition used: *Theophanes Continuatus, Libri I–IV*, ed. and transl. by Michael Featherstone and Juan Signes Codoñer, CFHB 53 (Boston and Berlin, 2015) 124, 126, Book 3, ch. 1.

Translation used: Ibid. 125, 127 (lightly modified by Dirk Krausmüller)

Theophanes Continuatus, Book 3, ch. 1

[p. 124] He wanted to be called a fervent lover of justice and strict keeper of the laws of the state. In reality, however, he sought to protect himself from those who were plotting against him, lest anyone should carry out a revolution against him. Recognising the impending danger, he decided upon the destruction and slaughter of all those who through conspiracy had handed over the empire to his father and had rebelled against Leo. Therefore, he issued a decree that all those who enjoyed imperial munificence, and moreover those who had received any imperial honour whatsoever, should assemble in the Magnaura. When this had been done, no one daring to disregard the command, he concealed for a while, as if in darkness, the brutality of his soul and softly, in a gentle voice, he spoke briefly in such wise: [Theophilos declares that he will give great rewards to the dignitaries who helped his father kill his predecessor and asks them to step forward one by one.] Tricked and deluded by these words each revealed himself and was seen clearly by all. [p. 126] Immediately, then, he commanded the prefect to apply the law of the state: 'At once, man', he says, 'give these men the worthy recompense for their deeds: not only did they not fear the divinity, polluting their right hands with human blood, but the wretches even killed the emperor, the anointed of the Lord.' With this he dismissed that first and rather extraordinary assembly.

7 Pmbz 4991/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16168/html>.

Further reading

Codoñer, Juan Signes, *The Emperor Theophilos and the East, 829–842. Court and Frontier in Byzantium during the Last Phase of Iconoclasm*, BBOS 13 (Farnham, 2014).

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2.1.2 The departure of a Byzantine princess after peace with Bulgaria is sealed through a marriage alliance

Author: Theodore Daphnopates (?)⁸

Text: *Theophanes Continuatus* (Book 6)

Date of text: before 963

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: The sixth book of the so-called *Theophanes Continuatus* may have been composed by the imperial official Theodore Daphnopates who also wrote letters and hagiographical texts.⁹ It covers the years from 886 to 948 and is very close to the chronicle of Symeon Logothete.¹⁰

Historical significance of the movement: The professional hazard, so to speak, of women of imperial lineage was the possibility of becoming pawns in the power politics conducted by their male relatives. Maria Lekapene,¹¹ the daughter of Emperor Romanos I Lekapenos' son Christophoros,¹² was married to Peter I of Bulgaria¹³ to confirm a peace treaty. She subsequently took the name Irene ('peace'). This was the first time in centuries that an imperial princess was married to a foreigner. The author describes in remarkable detail the sequence of the three-day wedding celebrations, the locations and the people who were involved. Especially noteworthy is his depiction of the ambivalence of Maria at the moment of her final departure: she is caught between the sadness of leaving her parents and the pride of doing her patriotic duty.

Types of movement: involuntary, to accompany a husband to his land

8 PmbZ 27694, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ29849/html>.

9 However, see Markopoulos, Athanasios, Theodore Daphnopates et la Continuation de Theophane, *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 35 (1985) 171–182.

10 PmbZ 27504, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ29659/html>.

11 PmbZ 24919, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ27073/html>.

12 PmbZ 21275, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ23428/html>.

13 PmbZ 26409, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28563/html>.

Locations and date of movement: Constantinople to Bulgaria; October/November 927.

Edition used: *Theophanes Continuatus, Chronographia*, ed. Immanuel Bekker, CSHB (Bonn, 1838) 413–415, Book 6, ch. 22–23.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Theophanes Continuatus, Book 6, ch. 22–23

[p. 413] When they [i. e. the Bulgarian envoys] had seen Maria, the daughter of the emperor Christophoros, and been greatly pleased with her, they wrote to Peter telling him to come quickly, having first made an agreement about the peace that had been negotiated. The *magistros* Niketas,¹⁴ the father-in-law of the emperor Romanos, was sent out to meet Peter and accompany him to the city. When the Bulgarian Peter was approaching, the emperor Romanos boarded a ship and went to the Blachernai where he saw Peter who had just arrived and embraced him. After they had exchanged with one another appropriate words, the peace treaty and the marriage agreement were signed, with the *protovestiaros* Theophanes acting as middleman between the Rhomaioi and the Bulgarians [p. 414] and thoughtfully arranging everything. On the eighth day of the month of October the patriarch Stephen,¹⁵ in the company of the *protovestiaros* Theophanes and of Maria the daughter of the emperor Christophoros, and of the entire senate, went to the church of the all-holy Theotokos at the Pege, and he blessed Peter and Maria, and put the wedding crowns on their heads, the *protovestiaros* Theophanes¹⁶ and George Soursouboules¹⁷ being best men. After an opulent and rich meal had been served and all that is customary at weddings had been performed in a splendid manner, the *protovestiaros* Theophanes entered the city in the company of Maria, the daughter of the emperor. On the third day of the wedding the emperor Romanos gave a splendid banquet on the gangway of Pegai which he had adorned with silken tapestries, while the imperial ship moored at the same gangway. There Romanos met with the Bulgarian Peter, accompanied by his son-in-law Constantine and his son Christophoros. Since the Bulgarians insisted not at little that Christophoros be acclaimed first and only then Constantine, the emperor Romanos gave in to the request and it happened as they had wished.

14 PmbZ 25740, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ27894/html>.

15 PmbZ 27245, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ29399/html>.

16 PmbZ 28087, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ30242/html>.

17 PmbZ 22137, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ24290/html>.

When everything concerning the wedding had been completed, and Maria was already about to travel to Bulgaria together with her husband Peter, her parents accompanied them up to the Hebdomon, together with the *protovestiaros* Theophanes. When she was about to depart, they held their daughter close [p. 415] and cried many tears, doing everything that is customary when one is deprived of a greatly beloved person. They embraced their son-in-law and gave her into his hands and then returned to the palace. But Maria who had been given into the hands of the Bulgarians went on her way to Bulgaria, rejoicing at the same time as grieving – grieving because she was deprived of her most dear parents and the palace and the company of her relatives, but rejoicing because she had been wedded to a husband who was an emperor and had been acclaimed queen of Bulgaria. Thus she went, taking with her innumerable riches and effects of many kinds.

Further reading

Runciman, Stephen, *The Emperor Romanus Lecapenus and His Reign. A Study of Tenth-Century Byzantium* (Cambridge, 1929).

Shepard, Jonathan, A Marriage too Far? Maria Lekapena and Peter of Bulgaria, in: Adelbert Davids (ed.), *The Empress Theophano, Byzantium and the West at the Turn of the First Millennium* (Cambridge, 1995) 121–149.

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2.1.3 A status-conscious courtier and intellectual receives the gift of a horse

Author: Michael Psellos

Text: *Letters*

Date of text: ca. 1059–1078

Genre: Epistolography

Literary context: Michael Psellos¹⁸ was the dominating literary figure of the 11th century. A polymath whose interests ranged from demonology and hagiography to astronomy, he authored the main historical account of the emperors, covering the period from 976 to 1078, many of whom he experienced first-hand thanks to his high position at court. He received an imperial appointment to teach philosophy at the newly revived university of Constantinople, and maintained a lively correspondence with former pupils, learned friends and a wide network of aristocrats.

18 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Michael/61/>.

Historical significance of the movement: In the letter Psellos thanks his addressee, the *kaisar* John Doukas,¹⁹ for the gifts he has sent. Chief among them is a horse, which Psellos praises fulsomely. We can assume that this costly present served to solidify a political alliance. John Doukas was a highly influential member of the ruling family. He and Psellos were on the same side during the turbulent political events of the later 11th century, especially the dethronement and blinding of Emperor Romanos IV Diogenes (see 1.4.3).

Types of movement: voluntary

Locations and date of movement: Constantinople; later 11th century.

Edition used: *Michaelis Pselli Epistulae*, ed. Stratis Papaioannou, vol. 1 (Berlin-Boston, 2019) 150–153, at 150,7–151,16.²⁰

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Michael Psellos, *Letter 67* (to the *kaisar* John Doukas)

[p. 150] In exchange for cheeses and truffles and perhaps also ointments and pastries and perfumes, my greatly admired *kaisar*, I can perhaps send a letter as an adequate return gift. But in exchange for a horse that is so beautiful, so tall, so delicate, so quick and agile, I am unable to craft a letter of commensurate magnitude and power. If it were not of such qualities nor adorned with so many good traits that not even the famous horse of Alexander could compete (for that horse was spirited, [p. 151] despising the reins and not accepting a rider because of its exceeding arrogance),²¹ it would still remain the case that it was sent to me as a gift from such a man who has no rival among the mortals from the beginning of time. How, then, will I compete in words with the virtue of the sender? The sender sits somewhere above the clouds and what is sent is almost incomparable with animals of the same kind. With two such accomplishments, beauty and greatness, even the famous Herakles could not compete, as the saying goes.

Further reading

Bernard, Floris, Exchanging Logoi for Aloga: Cultural Capital and Material Capital in a Letter of Michael Psellos, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 35 (2011) 134–148.

Jeffreys, Michael J. and Marc D. Lauxtermann (eds.), *The Letters of Psellos: Cultural Networks and Historical Realities* (Oxford, 2017).

19 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Ioannes/62/>.

20 This is Letter 232 in the older edition Michael Psellos, *Scripta minora*, vol. 2: *Epistulae*, ed. Eduard Kurtz and Franz Xaver Drexl (Milan, 1941) 278–279.

21 In a story that presages his future daring and greatness, Alexander the Great was said at the young age of 12 or 13 to have skilfully tamed the wild and beautiful horse Bucephalus.

Papaioannou, Stratis, *Michael Psellos: Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium* (Cambridge, 2013).

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2.1.4 Youthful escapades of a future emperor

Author: Niketas Choniates²²

Text: *History* (*Chronike diegesis*)

Date of text: late 12th century, first decade of the 13th century

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: Niketas Choniates, born in the middle of the 12th century in Chonai (modern Honaz), a city in Western Asia Minor, was sent to Constantinople together with his brother Michael²³ where he received an excellent education. He then served in the imperial administration until the collapse of the empire in 1204. He wrote a number of highly elaborate speeches and a handbook of heresies. Yet his most important work is no doubt his *History*, which covers the period from 1118 to 1207. Niketas revised the text several times, becoming increasingly more critical of the actions of Emperor Manuel I Komnenos²⁴ and his successors, which he thought had prepared the way for the catastrophe of 1204. His account of the escapades of Andronikos Komnenos²⁵ is a rhetorical *tour de force*.

Historical significance of the movement: Before Andronikos I Komnenos became emperor in his early 60s (r. 1183–1185), he spent several years in his late 40s away from Constantinople on military campaigns and pursuing romantic interests. Although the ruling emperor Manuel I Komnenos, his uncle, was trying to rein him in, Andronikos was able to escape capture through sheer luck, military agility, and the assistance of those who fell for the attractions of his appearance and imperial lineage. After his affair with Philippa²⁶ of Antioch, daughter of Raymond of Poitiers,²⁷ came to an abrupt end, he had a long affair with Theodora Komnene,²⁸ the widow of King Baldwin III²⁹ of Jerusalem, who bore him two children. This passage shows how high-status men were able to move freely and at their whim, receiving support along the way from their peers. Significantly,

22 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Niketas/25001/>.

23 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Michael/20528/>.

24 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Manuel/1/>.

25 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Andronikos/1/>.

26 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Philippa/17001/>.

27 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Raymond/17001/>.

28 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Theodora/17002/>.

29 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Baldwin/53/>.

Andronikos sought refuge not only in the Christian Crusader states but also in a Turkish emirate. This shows that one must take with a grain of salt Byzantine claims that the Turks were an uncivilised race and that Islam was an abominable religion.

Types of movement: Voluntary (to escape punishment)

Locations and date of movement: Antioch, Jerusalem, Koloneia (Şebinkarahisar); 1160s.

Edition used: *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, ed. Jan-Louis van Dieten, CFHB 11 (Berlin, 1975) 140–142.

Translation used: Magoulias, Henry J., *O City of Byzantium: Annals of Niketas Choniates* (Detroit, 1984) 79–81 (lightly modified by Dirk Krausmüller)

Niketas Choniates, *History*

[p. 140] Andronikos feared Manuel's threats and was terrified that he might be captured and thus exchange Philippa's affection for his former prison and endure long-lasting ill-treatment. Thus, he departed from there [sc. Antioch] and took the road to Jerusalem, [p. 141] exposed like the proverbial weasel accused of chasing after the suet. He returned to his former life as a runaway and focused on the wiles he had used in the past. Not caring about his way of life, he carnally harassed and assaulted unrestrainedly Theodora like a crazed stallion, jumping on mares in unconscious copulation. Theodora was the daughter of his first cousin (I speak of Isaac the *sebastokrator*, Emperor Manuel's brother); the husband of her maidenhood was Baldwin, an Italian by descent, who had ruled over Palestine earlier, but he had died shortly before. Manuel, suffering yet another blow because of these goings-on, thought up all manner of schemes in the hope of catching Andronikos in his own nets. He sent a letter written in red ink enjoining the rulers of Coele Syria to seize Andronikos as a rebel guilty of incest and deprive him of the light of his eyes. Andronikos' eyes might have been reddened with blood, and pallor might have gripped his cheeks and he might have been taken captive and bound in chains, or even been coloured with dark death, if the letter of imperial [red] colouring had been delivered. But he was protected by God, who, it seems, was storing up against the day of wrath the evils that Andronikos would later visit unjustly upon his subjects when he reigned as tyrant over the Rhomaioi and the horrors which, without pity, were visited upon him. The letter fell into Theodora's hands. Reading it, she understood that mischief was being concocted against Andronikos and immediately handed the document over to him. Andronikos, then, realised that it was necessary to depart hastily and that henceforth there was no time to tarry. [p. 142] (...) He went from region to region as a vagrant, the guest of rulers and princes who held him in high esteem, thought him worthy of their greatest benevolence, and lavished substantial gifts

on him. His wandering finally came to an end when he came to the realm of Saltouchos [Saltuq], whose principality then included the borderlands of Kolo-neia and who enjoyed the fruits of the lands adjacent to Chaldia and nearby. There Andronikos lounged idly with Theodora who bore him two children, Alexios and Irene.

Further reading

Grünbart, Michael, Die Macht des Historiographen: Andronikos (I.) Komnenos und sein Bild, *Zbornik radova Vizantoloshkog instituta* 48 (2011) 75–85.

Jurewicz, Oktawiusz, *Andronikos I. Komnenos* (Amsterdam, 1970).

Labuk, Tomasz, Andronikos I Komnenos in Choniates' History: a Trickster Narrative?, in: Messis, Charis, Margaret E. Mullett, and Ingela Nilsson (eds.), *Storytelling in Byzantium. Narratological Approaches to Byzantine Texts and Images* (Uppsala, 2018) 263–285.

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2.2.0 Labour

Labour mobility constitutes such a foundational feature of the Byzantine world that it has become naturalised in modern reconstructions of the Byzantine past. Byzantine elites (see 2.1.0) regularly moved in order to take up different positions in the imperial administration; armies moved when they went on campaign (see 2.4.1, 2.4.2); and, of course, merchants travelled in order to buy and sell their wares (see 2.5.3). Rarely, however, have these types of movement been considered with specific reference to labour.³⁰ Although elites, soldiers, and merchants are all examples of labour mobility, they will not be considered in this segment, which will instead focus on the movement of peasants and workers within the territorial confines of the Byzantine empire. It is, however, important to bear in mind that elites (whether secular or ecclesiastical) moving from Constantinople to take up positions in the provinces and soldiers marching out on campaign are equally examples of the mobility of labour.

As the segment concerning resettlement (see 1.2.1, 1.2.3) has already shown, pre-modern states, such as the Byzantine empire, and their elites were deeply concerned with controlling their populations. This ranged from forcibly moving large groups of people across vast distances (see 1.2.1, 1.2.2) to coercing villagers to move their homes a few hours' walk, so that they would be closer to the monastery to which they were being donated (see 1.2.3). This segment includes a similar range of macro to micro movements.

The first entry (2.2.1) is illustrative of the state's capacity to rapidly mobilise and relocate labour power within the empire. The passage commented on presents the redeployment of workers from various provinces to the capital, in response to a natural disaster (see 1.7.0). The centralised redeployment of the empire's human resources should be seen as closely linked to its capacity to

30 For a notable exception, see Mitsiou, Ekaterini and Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, *Moving Hands: Types and Scales of Labour Mobility in the Late Medieval Eastern Mediterranean (1200–1500 CE)*, in: Christian De Vito and Anna Gerritsen (eds), *Micro-Spatial Histories of Global Labour* (Cham, 2018) 29–67.

mobilise manpower for military action (see 1.1.0). The passage examined below (see 2.2.1) distinguishes between different workers, with varying levels of skill, which directly relate to the distances that the state is prepared to transport them. Any number of texts might have been selected to illustrate this large-scale movement of labour for specific infrastructural projects.

The second entry (see 2.2.2) is concerned with the social and religious regulation of movement at its intersection with labour, gender, and sexuality. This examination of the prohibition of eunuchs, boys, and beardless youths from working in the monastic communities of Mount Athos, is intended to illustrate one of the many vectors through which labour and mobility were socially constructed and policed. Although Athos is exceptional, it exemplifies the wider policing of labour according to gender roles, religious expectations, and other normative socially constructed regulations.

The final case in this segment (see 2.2.3) examines a 13th-century documentary text from a monastery that demands that a number of *paroikoi*, who had fled from the monastic properties to which they had been allocated, should be returned. This entry is illustrative of the regime of power that tied labour to specific landowners in the late Byzantine period, the anxiety that landholders experienced when they feared to lose their *paroikoi*, and one of the potential vectors for peasant resistance, flight.

Together these three entries offer a glimpse of the omnipresence of labour mobility, hinting at its intersection with state power and capacity, the social construction of gender and its policing, and peasant counterpower.

These three entries are, as with this entire sourcebook, illustrative rather than exhaustive. For example, although the focus is retained here on movement within the empire, there is considerable evidence for the movement of labour beyond its territorial confines. However, this evidence does not (in general) manifest itself in a manner appropriate for a sourcebook of Greek textual presentations of migration and mobility. The regular movement of skilled labourers, such as artists and builders, is extensively attested by the detailed analysis of artistic and architectural forms, although they are more seldom textually attested.³¹ Outside the realm of architecture, the famous kidnapping of Theban silk workers by the Normans of Sicily offers an example of the forced migration of skilled labourers, which is illustrated in more detail in the section of this sourcebook dedicated to prisoners of war (see 1.3.0). It is also worth observing that the relative freedom of the Byzantine peasantry (of which the *paroikoi* discussed below constitute just one type) changed, in general becoming less free over time, so the entry cited below can only be understood as a snapshot from the end of the Byzantine world (see 2.2.3). Likewise, the extent to which surplus production was driven by slave

31 On this see Ousterhout, Robert, *Master Builders of Byzantium* (Princeton, 1999).

labour remains an open question, despite various mentions of slaves in Byzantine texts, including in the will of Boilas discussed below (see 3.2.2).

Further reading

Kaplan, Michel, *Les hommes et la terre à Byzance du VIe au XIe siècle: Propriété et exploitation du sol* (Paris, 1995).

Mitsiou, Ekaterini and Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, Moving Hands: Types and Scales of Labour Mobility in the Late Medieval Eastern Mediterranean (1200–1500 CE), in: Christian De Vito and Anna Gerritsen (eds), *Micro-Spatial Histories of Global Labour* (Cham, 2018) 29–67.

Sarris, Peter, Large Estates and the Peasantry in Byzantium c. 600–1100, *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 90 (2012) 429–450.

Matthew Kinloch

2.2.1 Forced relocation of workers to build infrastructure

Author: Theophanes Confessor (born ca. 750/760, in Constantinople; died in 818, Samothrake)³²

Text: *Chronicle* (*Chronographia*)

Date of text: ca. 814

Genre: Historiography

Type of movement: Involuntary (transfer of work force).

Literary context: In the passage below, the iconodule historian Theophanes recounts how the iconoclast emperor Constantine V (r. 741–775)³³ unlawfully ordained a eunuch as patriarch of Constantinople, Niketas I (r. 766–780).³⁴ Theophanes implies that a drought occurred as a direct consequence of this ordination and that Constantine was thus forced to assemble labourers to repair the aqueduct. In short, the drought and thus also the expense of recruiting and moving the 6,900 workers described is thus presented as divine retribution for Constantine's heresy. This reading of the passage is confirmed by the slightly wider narrative context. Immediately before the passage cited below is the description of Constantine's treatment of the relics of Saint Euphemia and their

32 PmbZ 8107, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ19364/html>.

33 PmbZ 3703/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ1485/2/html>.

34 PmbZ 5404/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ1658/7/html>. On Theophanes and Iconoclasm, see Brubaker, Leslie and John Haldon, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era c. 680–850: A History* (Cambridge, 2011) 168–171.

miraculous recovery in the reign of the iconodule emperor, Constantine VI,³⁵ empress Irene,³⁶ and patriarch of Constantinople Tarasios³⁷ (in 796), in whose company he notes he saw the relics himself. These characters are implicitly contrasted with those of Constantine III³⁸ and Niketas I. Immediately after this passage, Theophanes continues to describe the sacrilegious men appointed by Constantine V. In short, the passage under consideration is sandwiched between the declaration of Constantine V's failings.

The collection of labourers and the repair of the aqueduct is also described in the *Short History* of Nikephoros,³⁹ which explicitly states that the labourers were paid lavishly from the public treasury.⁴⁰ This narrative is also iconodule and is offered as part of a description of Constantine's avarice and heavy taxation.

Historical significance of the movement: The aqueduct of Valens was destroyed in 626 during the Avar siege of Constantinople and was only repaired in 765, as the passage below describes.⁴¹

The passage identifies different types of workers from different places, with the most skilled (artisans, masons, and plasterers) being brought from the furthest away (Asia Minor and Greece) and the least skilled (labourers and brickmakers) being drawn directly from Constantinople's Thracian hinterland.

The passage cited below offers an illustrative example of the Byzantine state redeploying its population within the empire in the case of a specific emergency, precipitated by a natural disaster. The passage is well known and has been used by scholars as evidence for two contrasting interpretations of the strength of the 8th-century Byzantine state. It is either cited as evidence for the lack of manpower of Constantinople and the sad state of the city's infrastructure and thus as evidence for a 'dark age' or as an example of the capacity of the state to command the labour of a huge workforce for specific projects.⁴²

35 PmbZ 3704/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14853/html>.

36 PmbZ 1439/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ12537/html>.

37 PmbZ 7235/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ18463/html>.

38 PmbZ 3701/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14850/html>.

39 PmbZ 5301/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16485/html>.

40 Nikephoros I, *Short History*, 85, ed. Cyril Mango, *Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople: Short History*. Text, Translation, and Commentary, CFHB 13 (Washington, D.C., 1990) 160.

41 Crow, James, *Ruling the Waters: Managing the Water Supply of Constantinople, AD 330–1204*, *Water History* 4 (2012) 35–55, here 42.

42 Following Crow, James, et al., *The Water Supply of Byzantine Constantinople* (London, 2008) 219, n. 38. See Mango, Cyril, *Le développement urbain de Constantinople (IV^e–VII^e siècles)*, TM Monographies 2 (Paris, 1985) 56; Ousterhout, *Master Builders*, 56; Magdalino, Paul, *Con-*

The role of Constantine V in the restoration of Constantinople's hydraulic system also appears to be reflected in a folk tale about Constantine who slew a dragon in the aqueduct.⁴³

Locations and date of movement: from Asia, Pontos, Hellas, the Aegean islands, and Thrace; 765/6.

Edition used: *Theophanis Chronographia*, ed. Carl de Boor, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1883–1885) 440.

Translation used: *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern history A.D. 284–813*, transl. by Cyril Mango and Roger Scott (Oxford, 1997) 608 (modified by Dirk Krausmüller).

Theophanes, *Chronicle*, A.M. 6258

[p. 440]: Constantine [V, emperor], 26th year; Abdelas [Abdallah b. Ali], 12th year;⁴⁴ Constantine [II, Patriarch], 5th year;⁴⁵ Niketas, bishop of Constantinople [14 years], 1st year

(...) On 16 November of the same 5th indiction the eunuch Niketas, a Slav, was unlawfully ordained by the emperor's decree patriarch of Constantinople. There ensued a drought, such that even dew did not fall from heaven and water entirely disappeared from the City. Cisterns and baths were put out of commission; even those springs that in former times had gushed continuously now failed. On seeing this, the emperor set about restoring Valentinian's aqueduct,⁴⁶ which had functioned until Herakleios⁴⁷ and had been destroyed by the Avars. He collected artisans from different places and brought from Asia and Pontos 1,000 masons and 200 plasterers, from Hellas and the islands 500 clay-workers, and from Thrace itself 5,000 labourers and 200 brickmakers. He set taskmasters over them including one of the patricians. When the work had thus been completed, water flowed into the City.

stantinople médiévale. Études sur l'évolution des structures urbaines (Paris, 1996) 11 and 17–18.

43 Crow et al., *The Water Supply*, 218–219 and 236; Auzépy, Marie-France, Constantin, Théodore et le dragon, in: Katerina Nikolaou (ed.), *Toleration and Repression in the Middle Ages* (Athens, 2002) 87–96.

44 PmbZ 16/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ11093/html>.

45 PmbZ 3820, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14971/html>.

46 This is in fact a reference to the aqueduct of Valens, commonly referred to as the aqueduct of Valentinian in medieval texts, Crow, *Ruling the Waters*, 42, n. 20.

47 PLRE III A 586–587. PmbZ 2556/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PM BZ/entry/PMBZ13671/html>.

Further reading

Neville, Leonora, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing* (Cambridge, 2018) 61–71.

Rochow, Ilse, *Byzanz im 8. Jahrhundert in der Sicht des Theophanes: Quellenkritisch-historischer Kommentar zu den Jahren 715–813*, BBA 57 (Berlin, 1991) 197–198.

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2.2.2 Gender and labour on Mount Athos

Authors: Emperor John Tzimiskes;⁴⁸ Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos⁴⁹

Texts: *Typikon* of Emperor John Tzimiskes⁵⁰ and *Typikon* of Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos⁵¹ for the Monasteries of Mount Athos

Date of texts: 971–972; 1406⁵²

Genre: Monastic *typika*. The texts are not, however, standard *ktetorika typika* (i.e., founders documents) or *leitourgika typika* (i.e., liturgical documents). Instead, they belong to a group of self-declared *typika* that are quasi-juridical in nature, resulting from imperial inquests concerning the entire monastic community of Mount Athos, which principally arbitrate inter-monastic strife.⁵³

Type of movement: Voluntary movement (with restrictions).

Locations and date of movement: Mount Athos; no specific date.

Literary context: The two passages cited below belong to two different arbitrary/juridical *typika* addressed to the entire monastic community of Mount Athos. They both solve a specific set of disputes⁵⁴ and give a set of normative rules for the entire community of Mount Athos that are intended to be universally

48 The text was actually composed by Euthymios of Stoudios, see PmbZ 21945, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ24098/html>.

49 The text was probably composed by Demetrios Boullotes (PLP 3084).

50 PmbZ 22778, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ24932/html>.

51 PLP 21513.

52 Papachrysanthou, Denise, *Actes du Prôtaton*, Archives de l'Athos 7 (Paris, 1975) 207; Dennis, George, *Tzimiskes: Typikon of Emperor John Tzimiskes*, in: John Thomas and Angela Constantinides Hero (eds.), *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents. A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments*, DOS 35 (Washington, D.C., 2000) 234, n. 1.

53 There is an argument as to whether these texts should technically be considered *typika*, for which, see “Athonite Monasteries”, in: John Thomas and Angela Constantinides Hero (eds.), *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents. A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments*, DOS 35 (Washington, D.C., 2000) 193–204, at 193–194; Galatariotou, Catia, *Byzantine Ktetorika Typika: A Comparative Study*, *Revue des études byzantines* 45 (1987) 77–138, here 84. In addition to the two texts discussed in this entry there is also the *typikon* of the emperor Constantine IX Monomachos and to a lesser degree the *typikon* of the patriarch Athanasios I.

54 On that see below, “Historical significance of the movement”.

applicable. Despite the more than 400-year difference in composition the texts, including the passages cited below, are closely related.⁵⁵

Both *typika* include a clause prohibiting the movement of specific types of labourers in and out of monastic communities, namely eunuchs, boys, and beardless (i. e., young) men, who are understood to be likely to accompany older male workers as apprentices. The two passages cited below consequently represent the intersection of two wider concerns of the monastic *typika* (and indeed monasticism itself), namely the regulation of the sexual desire of monks – itself a subset of the wider regulation of monks’ ‘spiritual health’ – and the regulation of monastic economies and infrastructure.

Byzantine monastic *typika* are replete with sexual anxiety and regulations intended to prevent temptation. Women are the target of multiple restrictions from the admission of females into both individual monasteries and the entirety of Mount Athos – a restriction that extends to female animals – to the giving of alms to female beggars, lest a monastery should gain a reputation and thus attract female beggars.⁵⁶

The *typika* also deal extensively with monks’ sexual desire for eunuchs, boys, and beardless (i. e., young) men, who are considered all the more disruptive for the ease with which they are able to penetrate monastic communities.⁵⁷ The basic manner in which such desire is dealt with is by creating an age threshold for monks, by prohibiting the acceptance of eunuchs, boys, and beardless/young men.⁵⁸ Both of the *typika* cited here include such prohibitions, which in the case of the *typikon* of Manuel II, cited below, is explicitly referenced in continuum with the prohibition of eunuchs and boys as labourers.⁵⁹

While it does not create the same kind of anxiety within monastic communities the regulation of laypersons entering monastic space was also a concern. As evidenced by other entries in this sourcebook (see 1.2.3 and 2.2.3) monasteries

55 Specifically, the sections 8, 10, 13, 14, and 15 of the *typikon* of Manuel II are hypertexts of sections 5, 14, 16, 22–23, and 25 of the *typikon* of Tzimiskes. On which, see Dennis, Manuel II, 1617, n. 5.

56 Galatariotou, Byzantine Ktetorika *Typika*, 121–124.

57 On masculinity and homoerotic desire, see Messis, Charámbos, *La construction sociale, Les “réalités” rhétoriques et Les représentations de L’identité masculine à Byzance*, Unpublished PhD thesis (Paris, 2006); Morris, Stephen, “When Brothers Dwell in Unity”: *Byzantine Christianity and Homosexuality* (Jefferson, 2015). 17–41. On eunuchs in particular, see Messis, Charis, *Les eunuques à Byzance entre réalité et imaginaire* (Paris, 2014); Tougher, Shaun, *The Eunuch in Byzantine History and Society* (Abingdon, 2009) 75.

58 Talbot, Alice-Mary, The Adolescent Monastic in Middle and Late Byzantium, in: Despoina Ariantzi (ed.), *Coming of Age in Byzantium*, Millennium-Studien 69 (Berlin, 2018) 83–98.

59 Dennis, Tzimiskes, 238 and Dennis, George, *Manuel II: Typikon of Manuel II Palaiologos for the Monasteries of Mount Athos*, in: John Thomas and Angela Constantinides Hero (eds.), *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents. A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders’ Typika and Testaments*, DOS 35 (Washington, D.C., 2000) 1621.

– which were major landholders – were deeply invested in controlling the population whose labour was exploited by the monasteries in order to fund their lifestyles. This extended from the peasantry to the nomadic pastoralists who also sought to use the peninsula and with whom there were regular conflicts (see 1.8.2), where gender concerns were also relevant.

Historical significance of the movement: The first – composed in the name of the emperor John I Tzimiskes by Euthymios of Stoudios, who led the inquest – was written shortly after the ascension of Tzimiskes in response to the dispute between Athanasios the Athonite⁶⁰ and his fellow monks on Mount Athos. This dispute primarily concerned the resistance of ascetics to the coenobitic developments driven by Athanasios. This point of conflict is salient here, since despite several weak clauses restricting outright attempts to accumulate wealth, the *typikon* evidences widespread economic activity and agricultural enterprise.⁶¹ This conflict was taken up 73 years later in the *typikon* of Monomachos, which was confronted by a greatly expanded Lavra.⁶²

The second text cited was probably composed by Demetrios Boullotes who in 1404 was assigned by the emperor Manuel II Palaiologos to investigate disputes between the Athonite monks and both the Turks and John VII Palaiologos,⁶³ then the governor of Thessaloniki, over properties in Macedonia. This investigation, which took place in 1404, was precipitated by the visit of a delegation of monks to Constantinople in 1403 who travelled to the capital after the Athonite peninsula was returned to Byzantine control in a peace treaty of the same year with the Ottoman Sultan Suleiman I (r. 1403–1410).⁶⁴

Edition used: Papachryssanthou, Denise, *Actes du Prôtaton*, Archives de l'Athos 7 (Paris, 1975) no. 7, 209–215, esp. 213, 141–142 (*typikon* of Tzimiskes) and no. 13, 257–261, esp. 260, 74–76 (*typikon* of Manuel II).

Translations used: Dennis, George, *Tzimiskes: Typikon* of Emperor John Tzimiskes, in: John Thomas and Angela Constantinides Hero (eds.), *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents. A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments*, DOS 35 (Washington, D.C., 2000) 232–244, here 240.

Dennis, George, *Manuel II: Typikon* of Manuel II Palaiologos for the Monasteries of Mount Athos, in: John Thomas and Angela Constantinides Hero (eds.), *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents. A Complete Translation of the Sur-*

60 PmbZ 20670, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22823/html>.

61 Dennis, Tzimiskes, 232–233.

62 “Athonite Monasteries”, in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 199.

63 PLP 21480.

64 PLP 26323; Dennis, Manuel II, 613.

living Founders' Typika and Testaments, DOS 35 (Washington, D.C., 2000) 1613–1624, here 1622.

John Tzimiskes, *Typikon*

[p. 213] Concerning construction workers who come here, it is our view that they should not bring boys along to work with them as assistants or apprentices.

Manuel II, *Typikon for the Monasteries of Mount Athos*

[p. 260] Building workers may enter within the monastery and do work needed by the brothers, but they should not be accompanied by beardless boys on the pretext that they are assisting them. In this case the reason is the same as was given a little bit earlier concerning eunuchs and beardless youths.

Comments: The phrasing of the second example implies that beardless boys were being brought into monasteries on the pretext of them working, rather than as actual workers. This can thus be seen as an example of a loophole in pre-existing monastic regulations.

It is worth observing that in the *Typikon* of Constantine IX Monomachos the first directive relates to the expulsion of eunuchs and beardless youths from Mount Athos.⁶⁵ Although it is not identical with the two examples included here, it not only includes monks themselves but all those who work in the fields or the monastery itself. Both the prominence of this directive and the similarities are therefore relevant here.

Further reading

Anastasiević, Dragutin, La date du typicon de Tzimiscès pour le Mont Athos, *Byzantion* 4 (1927–1928) 7–11.

Dölger, Franz, Die Echtheit des Tragos, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 41 (1941) 340–350.

65 Papachrysanthou, *Actes du Prôtaton*, no. 8, 224–232, here 226, 45–47; Miller, Timothy, *Constantine IX: Typikon of Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos*, in: John Thomas and Angela Constantinides Hero (eds.), *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents. A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments* (Washington, D.C., 2000) 281–293, here 285: “Before all else they said that some [of the monks] showed no respect for the provisions laid down in the *typikon*, namely, that the monks should not accept and tonsure either eunuchs or beardless youths, nor have these in the fields or the monastery. The monks said that such evil demanded correction. Therefore, we together with the monks were immediately roused to condemn this and correct what pertained to it and we found that all [the monks] from the great down to the small were convinced and were ready to offer fervent promises that they would expel all such persons from the Mountain.”

- Oikonomidès, Nicolas, Le ‘haradj’ dans l’Empire byzantin du XV^e siècle, in: *Actes du premier Congrès international des Études balkaniques et du sud-est européennes 3* (Sofia, 1969) 681–688 [repr. In Oikonomidès, Nicolas, *Documents et études sur les institutions de Byzance (VII^e–XV^e s.)*, Variorum Reprints (London, 1976) ch. XIX].
- Oikonomidès, Nicolas, Monastères et moines lors de la conquête ottomane, *Südost-Forschungen* 35 (1976) 1–10.
- Rapp, Claudia, *Brother-Making in Late Antiquity and Byzantium: Monks, Laymen, and Christian Ritual* (Oxford, 2016).

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2.2.3 The flight and forced relocation of rural labourers (*paroikoi*)

Author: Uncertain (either John III Vatatzes or Michael VIII, see date)

Text: *Prostagma* (imperial decree)

Date of text: 1244/5 or 1274/⁶⁶

Genre: Cartulary⁶⁷

Type of movement: The migration of *paroikoi* (dependant peasants) away from the monastic lands of Lembiotissa⁶⁸ and their presumptive return (itself an example of state-coerced forced migration), as decreed in the *prostagma*.

Locations and date of movement: from Mela (Bare), Palatia, Potamou and other properties to Nymphaion, Mourmounta, Koukoulon, Maiorion, Petra, and elsewhere; mid/late 13th century.

66 The *prostagma* is dated only by month (May) and indiction (second). For a date in 1244/5, see Dölger, Franz and Peter Wirth, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des Oströmischen Reiches*, vol. 3 (Munich, 1977) no. 1784; Angold, Michael, A Byzantine Government in Exile: Government and Society under the Laskarids of Nicaea (1204–1261) (Oxford, 1975) 133; Mitsiou, Ekaterini, *Untersuchungen zu Wirtschaft und Ideologie im “Nizänischen” Reich*, Unpublished PhD Thesis (Vienna, 2006) 103 [https://othes.univie.ac.at/66465/]. On the contrary, Paris Gounaridis, the new editor of the cartulary, prefers the year 1274, see Gounaridis, Paris, Παρατηρήσεις για τους παροίκους τον 13^ο αι., in: *Επιστημονικό Συμπόσιο στη μνήμη Νίκου Σβορώνου* (Athens, 1990) 210, n. 33 and Gounaridis, Paris, Τὰ τοῦ μετοχίου τῶν Παλατίων χαρτῶα δικαιώματα: Σύσταση, τοπογραφικά δεδομένα και εντοπισμός ενός μετοχίου της Λεμβιώτισσας (Σμύρνη), *Byzantina Symmeikta* 14 (2008) 95–141, here 98.

67 The cartulary was compiled probably in the early 14th century (perhaps prior to 1307 when the monastery was burned leaving fire marks on its folios), see Ahrweiler, Hélène, L’Histoire et la géographie de la région de Smyrne entre les deux occupations Turques (1081–1317), particulièrement au XIII^e siècle, *Travaux et Mémoires* 1 (1965) 2–204, here 153; Murata, Koji, Cartulary and Archive of the Lembiotissa Monastery near Smyrna: Some Preliminary Remarks, *Journal of Western Medieval History* 38 (2016) 37–67, here 45–46.

68 On the properties of Lembos see Smyrlis, Kostis, *La fortune des grands monastères byzantins (fin du Xe – milieu du XIV^e siècle)*, Centre de recherche d’histoire et civilisation de Byzance, Monographies 21 (Paris, 2006) 56–61.

Literary context: The *prostagma* comes from the cartulary of the Lembiotissa monastery near Smyrna.⁶⁹ It is one of only a handful of cartularies that survive from Byzantium, all of which date to the 13th century or later. Although some elements of the cartulary are organised thematically, this *prostagma* is not grouped with any other documents, but instead is likely to reflect the organisational system of the 14th-century monastic archive.⁷⁰ Almost all documents that are included are connected in some way to the rights and properties of the monastery.

Historical significance of the movement: The imperial ordinance (*prostagma*), which is cited below in full, narrates how a number of the *paroikoi* who had been gifted to the monastery, had left its lands in the specified settlements in order to find employment elsewhere. As a consequence, the taxable revenue from their labour was being collected by local functionaries of the imperial fisc or private landholders in the places to which the *paroikoi* had fled, and not by the monastery. Presumably, after a complaint from the monastery to the Nicaean government, this ordinance was written, stating that these *paroikoi* should be yielded to the monastery and made to return to their original homes.

In general, *paroikoi* were not permitted to leave the domain of their landlord – in this case the monastery of Lembiotissa.⁷¹ However, as this *prostagma* illustrates, *paroikoi* migrated and did so quite regularly. Angeliki Laiou's detailed analysis of the Macedonian possessions of Athonite monasteries in the 14th century – for which the most detailed material survives – identifies several of the key characteristics of peasant mobility in the late Byzantine world. Firstly, 'unauthorised' migration away from and into monastic estates was relatively common, as can be seen from the turnover of households in monastic *praktika*, as well as from documents, such as that cited below, which sought to correct or prevent such movement.⁷² The *praktika* also suggest that the households that were most likely to migrate were those that held the least land and paid the least taxes, with the poorest category of peasants, *eleutheroi*, being the most likely to migrate.⁷³ Although women appear to be systematically under-represented in the docu-

69 On the monastery of Lembos see Ahrweiler, Smyrne, 59–60. A more precise localisation will be offered by Külzer, Andreas, *Westkleinasien (Asia und Lydia)*, TIB 14 (Vienna, in preparation).

70 On the organisation and structure of the cartulary, see Murata, Lembiotissa Monastery, esp. 47–55.

71 On the heritability of the status of *paroikoi*, see Laiou-Thomadakis, Angeliki, *Peasant Society in the Late Byzantine Empire: A Social and Demographic Study* (Princeton, 2019) 253.

72 It is worth noting that the manner in which migration can be traced in the documentary record – namely the disappearance of households from the *praktika* – makes it difficult to distinguish from mortality.

73 The correlation between low income and mobility can be seen in the argument of Georg Ostrogorsky that *eleutheros*, the lowest category of peasant, designated fugitive *paroikoi*, Ostrogorskiĭ, Georg, *Pour l'histoire de la féodalité byzantine* (Brussels, 1954) 322–347; Laiou, *Peasant Society*, 160, 213–214 and 245–247.

mentary record, the particularly high ratio of male to female *eleutheroi* also suggests that migratory patterns were gendered.⁷⁴ Not only do (poor) male peasants seem to be more likely to migrate, but exogamy (caused by social taboos regarding incest) seems to have been a probable motivation for migration, alongside economic necessity.⁷⁵ Further, the study of Macedonian peasant onomastics – although an imprecise instrument – seems to suggest that the majority of migration occurred within the region of Macedonia.⁷⁶ In short, late Byzantine *paroikoi* were relatively mobile, especially over short and medium distances, while the poorest male peasants were particularly so.

This text illustrates the competing concerns of the Byzantine state and its elite landholders and those of the peasantry. The former sought to capture the labour power and surplus of the producing population and bind it to specific holdings. Restricting the movement of peasant labour thus offers a mode of population control, both comparable and complementary to “Resettlement” (see 1.2.3). In contrast, peasants sought to profit better from their own labour and fled the lands of landholders to seek more rewarding employment, playing off different elites against each other as those elites tried to attract and bind labourers to their lands.⁷⁷ Opportunity to do this increased as states proliferated around the Aegean, especially from the 13th century. David Jacoby’s study of peasant mobility within and between the Byzantine and Latin states of southern and central Greece in this period points to the intensification of peasant mobility with the proliferation of states and highlights the agency of peasants in playing off competing interests and tactically crossing state boundaries to improve their positions.⁷⁸ It is worth noting that flight is not the only form of peasant resistance encountered in the cartulary. In another case, for example, the *paroikoi* of Bare refused to pay the *telos* (i.e., the sum of taxes and rents dependent peasants had to pay) to the monastery or to perform labour services for the monks.⁷⁹

Edition used: Miklosich, Franz and Joseph Müller, *Acta et diplomata Graeca medii aevi sacra et profana*, vol. 4 (Vienna, 1871) 261–262, no. 166.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

74 Laiou, *Peasant Society*, 269.

75 Laiou, *Peasant Society*, 260; Jacoby, David, Phénomènes de démographie rurale à Byzance aux XIII^e, XIV^e et XV^e siècles, *Études rurales* 5/6 (1962) 161–186, here 180.

76 Laiou, *Peasant Society*, 259; Jacoby, *Démographie rurale*, 180–185.

77 On flight as a mode of peasant resistance, see Scott, James, *Against the Grain: A Deep History of the Earliest States* (New Haven, 2017) esp. 150–182.

78 Jacoby, David, Peasant Mobility across the Venetian, Frankish and Byzantine Borders in Latin Romania, Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries, in: Despina Vlassi et al. (eds), *I Greci durante la venetocrazia: uomini, spazio, idee (13–18. sec.): atti del Convegno internazionale di studi, Venezia, 3–7 dicembre 2007* (Venice, 2009) 525–539.

79 Miklosich and Müller, *Acta et diplomata*, vol 4, 248–249 and 255–256. On which, see Laiou, *Peasant Society*, 150.

Prostagma for the paroikoi of Lembos

✠*Prostagma* concerning the *paroikoi* who have fled from the possessions of the monastery and gone from other places, commanding that they bring them again to their houses even against their will. ✠⁸⁰

The party of the venerable monastery of Lembos has reported to my imperial majesty that the *paroikoi* [i. e., dependent peasants] who had been handed over to it in the village of Mela, in Palatia, in Potamos and elsewhere have left their homes and gone either to Nymphaion or to Mourmounta or to other places where they have settled, and likewise also to Koukoulon and to Maiorion and to Petra. As the party of the monastery is thus deprived of the rights accruing from them, it made a request to my imperial majesty with respect to it so that upon receiving his majesty's ordinance it may gather them from the places where they have settled and brings them and settles them in their own place, that it also has them again as before and takes from them what belongs to it. My imperial majesty, which takes care of the monks who exert themselves there, orders through this present document of it that these *paroikoi* of the aforementioned monastery are released by the local functionaries of the fisc (*demosios*), to whom they have absconded, without any objection or excuse. For my imperial majesty has the wish that this monastery is not deprived of even one of these *paroikoi* belonging to it but that they are released to it by those who hold them when this present command of my imperial majesty is shown to them, which was handed over to it for the purpose of legal security.

✠ It [the *prostagma*] had: Month of May, second indiction through red letters of the imperial and divine hand. ✠

Further reading

Bartusis, Mark C., *Land and Privilege in Byzantium: The Institution of Pronoia* (Cambridge, 2012).

Charanis, Peter, On the Social Structure and Economic Organization of the Byzantine Empire in the Thirteenth Century and Later, *Byzantinoslavica* 12 (1953) 94–153 [repr. in Charanis, Peter, *Social, Economic and Political Life in the Byzantine Empire. Collected Studies* (London, 1973) ch. IV].

Kaplan, Michel, The Producing Population, in: John Haldon (ed.), *A Social History of Byzantium* (London, 2009) 143–168.

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80 This 'title' is in fact the resume appended to this document when the cartulary to which it belongs was compiled in the early 14th century.

2.3.0 Monks and clerics

Clerics

The hierarchical organisation of the Byzantine Church was also reflected in its territorial administration. This had consequences for the mobility of the clergy. Next to the provincial administration, the holders of higher ecclesiastical office probably displayed the greatest need for professional mobility. The head of the Byzantine Church was the patriarch of Constantinople who from the 8th century onwards had the entire Byzantine territory under his control. Next in rank were the metropolitans who oversaw larger districts, and at the bottom of the ladder were the ordinary bishops whose sees were situated in those districts. Both bishops and metropolitans had originally been elected by the inhabitants of the cities in which they resided. In the Byzantine era, however, the situation was quite different. Metropolitans until the 12th century were customarily chosen by the patriarch from among the deacons of his cathedral Saint Sophia (who were not necessarily all natives of Constantinople) (see 1.9.0). After their ordination the new office-holders travelled to their sees where they took up their responsibilities. To become metropolitan was the aim of all ambitious deacons since the post brought with it influence and revenue. Yet instead of expressing gratitude they often complained that they were now living in the wilderness, and they yearned for the cultured ambiance of Constantinople. In the late 10th century Leo of Synada,⁸¹ a city in Central Anatolia, declared that his see was a primitive backwater.⁸² In the 11th and 12th centuries similar voices could be heard. When Michael Choniates⁸³ travelled from Constantinople to his see of Athens, he spoke

81 PmbZ 24416, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ26570/html>.

82 Leo of Synada, *Letters*, 43, ed. Martha Pollard Vinson, *The Correspondence of Leo, Metropolitan of Synada and Syncellus*, CFHB 23 (Washington, D.C., 1985) 69.

83 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Michael/20528/>.

of a descent into Hades.⁸⁴ The situation of ordinary bishops was somewhat different. They were chosen by the metropolitans. From the letters of Theophylaktos of Ohrid⁸⁵ we can see that some of them were locals. Yet others had also come from Constantinople.⁸⁶ Indeed, we know that deacons forged bonds of friendship with each other so that when one of them became metropolitan he ensured that the others became bishops. These expectations are mentioned in a letter of Theodore of Kyzikos,⁸⁷ which dates to the 10th century: “I would have wished to be able to serve the requests of my friends because I remember our friendship from the beginning. (...) Yet the bishoprics, even if they were more numerous than they are and those that are in them could be chosen by command, would even so not easily suffice for the multitude of those who have asked that I promote shepherds in them.”⁸⁸

Metropolitans and bishops did not always remain in their sees. They could be summoned to Constantinople in order to attend church councils. As a rule, they turned up in great numbers, even in the year 752 when the empire consisted of little more than Asia Minor. In the *Chronicle* of Theophanes we read that at that date “the impious emperor convened in the palace of Hieria an illegal assembly of 338 bishops against the holy and venerable icons.”⁸⁹ In other cases long lists of participants are preserved that now serve as a record of the territorial structure of the church.⁹⁰ Unfortunately, we have no accounts of the actual travels. We can only assume that the state offered support as had already been the case in Late Antiquity. Even more important was the participation of metropolitans in the permanent synod, the so-called *endemousa*, a body that assisted the patriarch in judging legal cases and also had a hand in ecclesiastical appointments. Ideally the permanent synod should have been made up of metropolitans who already happened to be in Constantinople because they had important business to conduct. Yet over time it became customary for metropolitans to travel to Constantinople with the express purpose of attending the synod. Already in the 9th century, the metropolitans whose sees were closer to the capital, above all those in the region of the Sea of Marmara (Herakleia, Kyzikos, Nikomedeia,

84 Michael Choniates, *Letters*, 62, ed. Foteini Kolovou, *Michaelis Choniatae epistulae*, CFHB 41 (Berlin, 2001) 84–85.

85 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Theophylaktos/105/>.

86 Theophylaktos of Ohrid, *Letters*, 18, ed. Paul Gautier, Théophylacte d'Achrida, lettres. Introduction, texte, traduction et notes, CFHB 16/2 (Thessaloniki, 1986) 191–193.

87 PmbZ 27697, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ29852/html>.

88 Theodore of Kyzikos, *Letters*, 41, ed. Maria Tiatzi-Papagianni, *Theodori metropolitae Cyzici epistulae*, CFHB 48 (Berlin, 2012) 63.

89 *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor. Byzantine and Near Eastern History*, transl. by Cyril Mango, Roger Scott and Geoffrey Greatrex (Oxford, 1997) 591.

90 See *Notitiae episcopatum ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae*, ed. Jean Darrouzès (Paris, 1981).

Nicaea and Chalcedon) where travel by ship was possible, formed a core group.⁹¹ Their power exceeded that of their colleagues in more distant areas, such as the metropolitans of Caesarea in Central Anatolia, who theoretically had a higher rank. Thus, it is not surprising that the metropolitan Theodore of Kyzikos possessed a house in Constantinople. By the 11th century, however, it had become customary for metropolitans even from far-off regions to remain in the capital for long periods of time, which made it unnecessary for them to travel frequently. They must have communicated with their sees on a regular basis although we do not know whether this involved travel. A special case was the appointment of new bishops. Traditionally metropolitans had conducted this business in their provinces in collaboration with the bishops that were subject to them. For those who stayed permanently in the capital this would have meant long and arduous journeys. Thus, it is not surprising that they began to explore other ways of dealing with the problem. Some dispensed with the traditional procedure altogether and single-handedly made their choice in Constantinople. This practice was harshly criticised by Patriarch Michael Keroularios⁹² (1043–1058) who tried to force the metropolitans to go back home. Yet only a few years later Patriarch John Xiphilinos⁹³ (1064–1075) abrogated this order and admitted freely that nobody had heeded it.⁹⁴ In the 12th century Theodore Balsamon⁹⁵ suggested a compromise. According to him appointments of bishops can take place in the capital but at least three bishops from the metropolitan's district have to be present.⁹⁶ This may have meant that these bishops had to travel to Constantinople. But it is also possible that even ordinary bishops abandoned their flocks and came to the capital. This custom became even more wide-spread when Asia Minor was lost to the Turks. Many metropolitans and bishops from this area could not visit their sees but had to stay in the capital where they were given sinecures.⁹⁷

91 See *Documents inédits d'ecclésiologie byzantine*, ed. Jean Darrouzès, AOC 10 (Paris, 1966) 108.

92 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Michael/11/>.

93 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Ioannes/18/>.

94 Oikonomidès, Nicolas A., Un décret synodal inédit du patriarche Jean VIII Xiphilin concernant l'élection et l'ordination des évêques, *Revue des études byzantines* 18 (1960) 55–78, esp. 58.

95 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Theodoros/20364/>.

96 *Documents d'ecclésiologie*, ed. Darrouzès, 19.

97 On the late Byzantine period see Preiser-Kapeller, Johannes, *Der Episkopat im späten Byzanz. Ein Verzeichnis der Metropolen und Bischöfe des Patriarchats von Konstantinopel in der Zeit von 1204 bis 1453* (Saarbrücken, 2008).

Monks

Monks were enjoined by canon law to stay in one place. Reality, however, was rather different. From the beginning there had been individuals without fixed abode who spent their lives travelling. Unsurprisingly, the authorities sought to stamp out such behaviour. At the end of the 7th century the participants of the Council in Trullo (692) legislated against so-called eremites “who are clothed in black robes, and with long hair go about cities and associate with the worldly”.⁹⁸ Yet it is doubtful whether these measures met with success. In hagiographical texts from the 9th to 12th centuries vagrant monks, the so-called *kykleutai* (literally ‘those who go in circles’), make a regular appearance. They often appear as villains. In the *Life of Saint Blasios of Amorion*⁹⁹ and in the *Life of Saint Lazaros of Galesion*¹⁰⁰ they try to sell the young saints into slavery. The latter text is particularly interesting because it gives a concise account of the life of a vagrant: “He would thus turn aside from the straight road and go round on a detour to the villages where he would beg and collect bread and whatever else anyone offered him. (...) Then, wherever they were when evening fell, they would go in, whether it was to a village or a local market, and he would sell these things and pocket the price he got for them.”¹⁰¹ Lazaros’ hagiographer describes such behaviour as ‘crooked’ but he then narrates that Lazaros travelled through Syria and Asia Minor. Although no mention is made of begging there can be little doubt that Lazaros supported himself in the same manner. It is evident that vagrants could only survive if people were prepared to give them alms. This in turn presupposes a measure of respect for them. That they could enjoy high regard even in monasteries is evident from the *Life of Athanasios of Mount Athos*.¹⁰² When a vagrant comes to the Lavra he is given clothes by the monks.¹⁰³

We can assume that vagrants were always a comparatively small group. Most monks joined monastic communities, usually in the areas where they had been born and raised. Yet this did not necessarily mean that they stayed put. Many went on pilgrimage to holy places, either nearby, or to Jerusalem and the Sinai. Others left the houses where they had given their vows and moved elsewhere,

98 Council in Trullo, canon 42, see English translation by Price, Richard, *The Canons of the Quinisext Council (691/2)*, Translated Texts for Historians 74 (Liverpool, 2020) 124–125.

99 PmbZ 21177, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ23330/html>.

100 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Lazaros/104/>.

101 Greenfield, Richard P. H., *The Life of Lazarus of Mt Galesion. An Eleventh-Century Pillar Saint* (Washington, D.C., 2007) 85.

102 PmbZ 20670, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ20670/html>.

103 *Life (Vita B) of Saint Athanasios of Mount Athos*, 49, ed. Jacques Noret, *Vitae duae antiquae sancti Athanasii Athonitae*, CC.SG 9 (Turnhout, 1982) 184–185.

either because they did not get along with the abbot and the brethren or because they could not resist the lure of other communities, which had a higher prestige. Such people are mentioned in the rules of Athanasios of Athos for the Lavra. There the monks are warned not to despise those of their brothers who had been tonsured elsewhere, the so-called *xenokouritai*.¹⁰⁴ Significantly, Athanasios does not criticise this group for its lack of constancy.

Monastic life in the same location could have an element of mobility. The Lavra itself was what has been called a hybrid monastery. Members of the community whom the abbot judged to be ready could move out of the monastery and live in its vicinity as hermits.¹⁰⁵ This was a common practice at the time. Athanasios himself had followed such a trajectory when he was a member of the community of Michael Maleinos¹⁰⁶ in Western Asia Minor. Yet for some this would only be a passing phase. Eventually they would decamp and go elsewhere in order to live in complete solitude. These places are usually referred to as 'desert' although in Byzantium there were no deserts in the strict sense of the word. Athanasios himself left Michael Maleinos' monastery to cross the Aegean and arrive at the peninsula of Mount Athos, which was at that time virtually uninhabited. Yet he did not remain a hermit for long. His holiness became so widely known that monks joined him, and eventually a monastery was founded. Even as an abbot, however, Athanasios did not stay put. He travelled to Constantinople in order to defend the rights of his monastery, and he set out on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Further reading

Malamut, Élisabeth, *Sur le route des saints byzantins* (Paris, 1993).

Tiftixoglu, Viktor, Gruppenbildungen innerhalb des konstantinopolitanischen Klerus während der Komnenenzeit, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 62 (1969) 25–72.

Dirk Krausmüller

104 Thomas, John and Angela Constantinides-Hero (eds.), *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents. A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments*, vol. 1, DOS 35 (Washington, D.C., 2000) 257.

105 For the following cf. Papachryssanthou, Denise, La vie monastique dans les campagnes byzantines du VIII^e au XI^e siècle, *Byzantion* 43 (1973) 158–180.

106 PmbZ 35124, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ27278/html>.

2.3.1 The abbot of the monastery of Bathys Ryax travels to Constantinople

Author: Evaristos (compiler of the collection),¹⁰⁷ by the order of emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos¹⁰⁸

Text: *Synaxarion of Constantinople*

Date of text: mid-10th century

Genre: Hagiography

Literary context: The Synaxarion of Constantinople, a liturgical book made up of brief notices about the saints commemorated on each day of the year during the divine office, was composed by a certain Evaristos at the request of emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos, in the 10th century. Various versions (*recensiones*) of the Synaxarion are extant. The most ancient (10th–11th century) is preserved in the library of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, with the shelfmark Hierosol. Stavrou 40 (*Diktyon* 35936). Among the commemorated saints, Ignatios – the fourth abbot of the monastery of Bathys Rhyax in Eastern Asia Minor – is remembered on September 27th.

Historical significance of the movement: Ignatios went to Constantinople in order to provide the holy church of Bathys Rhyax with valuable sacred objects. After accomplishing his mission, he sent the monks who had accompanied him back to the monastery and stayed in the capital in order to deal with other important issues. Having spent some time there, he fell ill with dysentery. With the brother who accompanied him, he left the city in September in order to return to the monastery. Upon arriving in Amorion, he died on the 27th of the same month and was buried in that city. After a year, the monks came back to transfer his dead body to the monastery and found it uncorrupted and undamaged. It is of great interest that the movement of the abbot Ignatios begins while he is still alive and is completed posthumously.

Type of movement: voluntary / professional.

Locations and date of movement: from the monastery of Bathys Ryax (Eastern Anatolia)¹⁰⁹ to Constantinople after the rebellion of the Byzantine general Bardas Skleros against Emperor Basil II; 976–979 (see 1.4.2).

107 Luzzi, Andrea, Synaxaria and the Synaxarion of Constantinople, in: Stefanos Efthymiadis (ed.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, vol. 2: *Genres and Contexts* (Farnham and Burlington, VT, 2014) 197–208, at 201.

108 PmbZ 23734, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25888/html>.

109 Bathys Rhyax has been located 28 kilometers north-northwest of Sebaste at the crossroads of two roads (i.e. less than 200 kilometers north of Caesarea of Cappadocia), see Hild, Friedrich, *Das byzantinische Straßensystem in Kappadokien*, Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für die Tabula Imperii Byzantini 2 (Vienna, 1977) 109 and 157–158. On previous discussions about the location of this monastery see Métivier, Sophie, *Le monastère du Sauveur de Bathys Rhyax. Remarques sur l'élaboration du Synaxaire de Constantinople*, in:

Edition used: Delehay, Hippolyte, *Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae: e codice Sirmondiano nunc Berolinensi adiectis synaxariis selectis, Propylaeum ad Acta Sanctorum Novembris* (Brussels, 1902) 4, cols 84–86.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Synaxarion of Constantinople, 27 September, 4, col. 84–86

[col. 84] On this same day falls the commemoration of our pious father Ignatios, who became the fourth abbot of the monastery of the Saviour, which is called Bathys Rhyax. He was born in the second eparchy of the Cappadocians under the emperors Nikephoros [Nikephoros II Phokas]¹¹⁰ and John [John I Tzimiskes].¹¹¹ Already in his infancy he was dedicated to God by his parents, like another Samuel in our time, and he was taught the entire monastic discipline by his uncle Basil who had founded the monastery, and after he had passed through all ecclesiastical ranks, he was ordained priest. Strengthened by the grace of the Holy Spirit, he mightily increased and multiplied the monastery as regards its income and its other ameliorations. And he also built the temples of the *Taxiarches* [i. e. the Archangel Michael] and the visionary Elijah, and on an estate the sacred precinct of the Holy Apostles. And for the nuns (*kanonikai*) he built a secure and very strong enclosure.¹¹² And in the days of the revolt he fought valiantly against the leaders of the time whom the lawless rebel had appointed, the most impious [Bardas] Skleros,¹¹³ who shook the entire world, and he kept intact and peaceful the monastery that had been entrusted to him. And when the rebel had been eliminated, he felt a godly desire to go to Constantinople and commission sacred *keimelia* ('valuable objects') for the holy church. When he had entered the city and through the grace of God put his plans into action, [col. 85] he commissioned sacred vessels and the sign of our Lord Jesus Christ and venerable icons and a Gospel that was clad in silver, and some other items that adorned the whole church. And after he had done this, he sent them ahead with the brothers who were with him in the monastery, while he himself stayed behind in the city because of some pressing matters. And while he remained there, he contracted

Sebastian Brodbeck et al. (eds.), *Mélanges Catherine Jolivet-Lévy*, TM 20/2 (Paris, 2016) 369–384, at 373–375.

110 PmbZ 25535, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ27689/html>.

111 PmbZ 22778, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ24932/html>.

112 This presence of nuns could indicate that the monastery of Bathys Rhyax was double (male and female). See more on term *kanonikai* (nuns) in Métivier, *Le monastère du Sauveur*, 371 n. 8.

113 PmbZ 20785, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22938/html>.

dysentery. In the month of September, he left the city together with the brother who was with him and embarked on the road that led to his monastery. When they reached Amorion, he passed away on the twenty-seventh of the same month and was provisionally buried in a venerable house of the city. When a year had passed, the fathers of the monastery [col. 86] who remembered well how he had struggled and toiled in the past, decided to transfer the corpse. When they came to the place in which he lay and opened the coffin they found his venerable body hale and pure, and giving off a sweet smell. And they joyously lifted it up and transferred it to his monastery. And when all saw that he was so undecomposed and intact, they sang praises to God who even before the common resurrection honours his servants with incorruptibility, and they deposited him in the narthex of the most holy church there, in the left part, which is dedicated to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Further reading

Luzzi, Andrea, Synaxaria and the Synaxarion of Constantinople, in: Stefanos Efthymiadis (ed.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, vol. 2: *Genres and Contexts* (Farnham and Burlington, VT, 2014) 197–208.

Métivier, Sophie, Le monastère du Sauveur de Bathys Rhyax. Remarques sur l'élaboration du Synaxaire de Constantinople, in: Sebastian Brodbeck et al. (eds.), *Mélanges Cathérine Jolivet-Lévy*, TM 20/2 (Paris, 2016) 369–384.

Giulia Rossetto

2.3.2 Constantinopolitan clerics in the provinces

Author: Theophylaktos of Ohrid

Text: *Letters (Epistolai of the most blessed bishop of Bulgaria, Lord Theophylaktos)*

Date of text: 1080s/1090s

Genre: Epistolography

Literary context: Born in present-day Greece, Theophylaktos¹¹⁴ was sent to the capital where he became a deacon at the cathedral of Saint Sophia. Around the year 1078 he was appointed archbishop of Bulgaria, with residence in Achrida (Ohrid). He is attested in the sources until the year 1107. He received an excellent education and was a prolific author. Apart from commentaries on the Gospels and hagiographical texts, he penned a dialogue in defence of eunuchs and numerous letters. The letters are written in classicising Greek, which could only be

114 PBW <https://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Theophylaktos/105/>.

understood by the learned. Yet they are not simply rhetorical exercises. Through them Theophylaktos maintained a network of friends and contacts in high places, which helped him defend his position as archbishop against attacks from officials who wished to meddle in the appointment of bishops, and from the patriarchs of Constantinople who tried to curtail the autonomy of the see of Bulgaria, which had been granted by Emperor Basil II¹¹⁵ (976–1025).

Historical significance of the movement: The passages below are excerpts from letters that date to the 1070s, 1080s, and 1090s when Theophylaktos was already archbishop of Bulgaria. The addressees are Empress Maria of Alania,¹¹⁶ the state officials Adrianos Komnenos¹¹⁷ and Nicholas Anemas¹¹⁸ and the otherwise unknown Machetares.¹¹⁹ The letters cast light on the mentality of Constantinopolitan clerics who were appointed to sees in the provinces. They were wont to complain about the low standard of living and the lack of intellectual stimulus and to yearn for the days they had spent at Saint Sophia. The contrast was even greater in Bulgaria where the population did not even speak Greek. Theophylaktos complains about the rustic attire as much as about moral deficits of his flock. From the texts one gets the impression that the author suffered banishment. Yet this attitude is deceptive. It was not the case that patriarchal clerics were forced to take up such posts. Quite the contrary, it was a step up on the career ladder. As archbishop Theophylaktos had access to the revenue generated in his diocese. This explains why he can say that he is envied by some people.

Type of movement: voluntary/professional (to take up a post in the church).

Locations and date of movement: Constantinople, Achrida (Ohrid); 1070s, 1080s, and 1090s.

Edition used: *Théophylacte d'Achrida, Lettres*, ed. Paul Gautier, CFHB 16/2 (Thessaloniki, 1986) 141, 145, 243, 277, letters 4, 5, 34, 44.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Theophylaktos of Ohrid, *Letter 4* (to Empress Maria of Alania), 1071–1081

[p. 141] During my stay in this city [i. e. Achrida] – it has been a long time since I came here – all that pertains to me and was once pleasant and sweet-smelling has begun to stink and to rot. I have descended to Bulgaria, true Constantinopolitan

115 PmbZ 20838, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22991/html>.

116 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Maria/61/>.

117 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Adrianos/102/>.

118 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Nikolaos/107/>.

119 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Anonymus/239/>.

that I am, and strangely enough, I am a Bulgarian now, who smells of rot as they stink of sheepskins.

Theophylaktos of Ohrid, *Letter 5* (to the great *domestikos* Adrianos Komnenos), 1088/1089

[p. 145] I am not a slave of a queen who is rich and cleanly and beautiful and in short, a golden Aphrodite, but I am the slave of barbarian and unclean slaves who smell of stinking sheepskins and are as poor in means as they are rich in malignity, or rather who rule everyone through their poverty and through their malignity.

Theophylaktos of Ohrid, *Letter 34* (to Nicholas Anemas), 1093/1094

[p. 243] You tell me my own dream, o most dear among men, when you say that you have become a barbarian in the midst of the Bulgarians. For look how deeply I have drunk from the cup of rusticity, having been away from the regions of wisdom for so many years, and how I have become inebriated with gracelessness. For who will give us the opportunity to become inebriated with the opposite drunkenness from the cup of wisdom? (...) For us who have already spent much time in the land of the Bulgarians rusticity has become a way of life and a companion.

Theophylaktos of Ohrid, *Letter 44* (to Machetares), 1093/1094

[p. 277] For in the barbarian lands, which do not wish to teach me anything good, a tiny drop of wisdom that descends on us appears to be a spring of nectar. Do not henceforth overlook me as one who is parched in a deserted and pathless and waterless land. For such is the land to which we have been condemned, we who are considered blessed and admirable by the many.

Further reading

Mullett, Margaret, *Theophylact of Ochrid. Reading the Letters of a Byzantine Archbishop*. BBOM 2 (Aldershot, 1997).

Dirk Krausmüller

2.3.3 Saint Christodoulos leaves his homeland Bithynia and, after a long journey, arrives on Patmos

Author: Christodoulos (born in the first half of the 11th century, Bithynia; died on March 16, 1093, Euboea)¹²⁰

Text: *The Rule of Saint Christodoulos of Patmos*¹²¹ [BHG 307]

Date of text: May 1091

Genre: Rule (*typikon*) – Monastic foundation document with hagiographical character and autobiographical details

Literary context: The passage below delineates the long-distance travels, rich in adventure, which the holy man Christodoulos experienced before eventually arriving on the island of Patmos where he founded a male monastic community, that is, the Monastery of Saint John. The detailed depictions of Christodoulos' strong urge both for asceticism and isolation as well as his constant dread of falling into enemy hands pervade the text's extensive introduction cited below. These descriptions comply with the characteristics of the hagiographic discourse, while at the same time lending a highly literary value to the text. Although this work is written in the form of a document, it is characterized by literary structure and content.¹²²

The text opens with the pledge of Christodoulos, the founder and, at that time, abbot of the monastery of Patmos, to issue a monastic rule (*typikon*) in the form of advice that the monks of his monastery should heed to reach spiritual perfection and salvation. Interestingly, this document is interspersed with various autobiographical details explaining his previous experiences while travelling and moving from place to place. The description of his consistent mobility at the very beginning of the text seems to serve a twofold aim: first, to demonstrate the spiritual status that he deservedly acquired through a number of hardships he had endured so far, and second, to claim authority for himself and – by extension – for his written rule and his monastic community since this foundation was conceived by a person remarkably experienced and wise to the world. In other words, it is his mobility, along with those associated pertinent experiences, that has enabled him to give advice for spiritual advancement to other monks. By sharing this kind of personal information with the recipients of the text, he

120 PBW <http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/pbw2011/entity/person/120214>.

121 The translation of the full title of this work is: "Godly Rule or Ordinance of our holy father Christodoulos, which he laid down for his disciples in the monastery belonging to him on the island of Patmos" (translation by Karlin-Hayter).

122 This text can by no means be considered non-literary, cf. Hinterberger, Martin, *Byzantine Hagiography and Its Literary Genres. Some Critical Observations*, in: Stephanos Efthymiadis (ed.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, vol. 2: *Genres and Contexts* (Farnham and Burlington, VT, 2014) 25–60, esp. 27.

actually fulfils the major purposes of the hagiographic genre: the literary depiction of travels and hardships contribute to the edification and entertainment of the readers, while at the same time the author, the holy man Christodoulos, is presented as worthy of imitation and veneration.

Historical significance of the movement: Above all, the text provides evidence for the continuous turbulence across Byzantine territories in the 11th century due to enemy raids, which affected not only densely populated urban areas but also remote regions and mountains with small and large monastic communities. At the same time, a different kind of mobility, motivated by the desire to practise asceticism and live in a monastic community, is also attested in the text. Specifically, at first, Christodoulos willingly left his hearth and home to stay at the monastery on Mount Olympos in Bithynia where he began his religious career as a monk (cf. ch. 2). He then abandoned this monastic community to go on pilgrimage to the Holy Land (cf. ch. 3), where he also practised asceticism by living in solitude. But after the conquest of Jerusalem by the Seljuk emir Atsiz ibn Uwaq in 1070,¹²³ he was compelled to abandon the region of Palestine. Christodoulos then settled on the mountain of Latros (today Beşparmak Mountain) near Miletus in Asia Minor, where he founded a lavra (cf. ch.3–4). According to the text, a long time ago, the holy men of Raithou and Sinai who were faced with the raids of Blemmyes (a nomadic group living in the desert to the east of the Nile valley) also found refuge on that mountain. However, because of the advance of the Seljuk Turks (cf. ch. 5), Christodoulos, accompanied by some of his monks, fled first to Strobilos on the Aegean coast and then to the island of Kos (cf. ch. 6–7). Before leaving for Patmos, he founded another monastery on Kos.

Type of movement: first movement: voluntary (pilgrimage); second movement: involuntary (due to enemy raids).

Locations and date of movement: Asia Minor (Bithynia and Latros), Palestine, Strobilos, Kos, and Patmos; during the 11th century.

Edition used: Christodoulos of Patmos, *Hypotyposis*, ed. Franz Miklosich and Josef Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana*, vol. 6 (Vienna, 1890) 59–90, esp. 59–63.

Translation used: Patricia Karlin-Hayter, Christodoulos: Rule, Testament and Codicil of Christodoulos for the Monastery of St. John the Theologian on Patmos, in: John Thomas and Angela Constantinides Hero (eds.), *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents: A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders'*

123 Cf. Patricia Karlin-Hayter, Christodoulos: Rule, Testament and Codicil of Christodoulos for the Monastery of St. John the Theologian on Patmos, in: John Thomas and Angela Constantinides Hero (eds.), *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents: A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments*, DOS 35 (Washington, D.C., 2000) 564.

Typika and Testaments, DOS 35 (Washington, D.C., 2000) 564–606, esp. 578–581 (heavily modified by Christodoulos Papavarnavas)

Saint Christodoulos of Patmos, *Rule*

[p. 59] [1.] (...) I have thought it my duty to outline in writing for my chaste community (*synodia*) what, I believe, will help it to be perfectly and salvifically pleasing to God (...). However, it seems to me right and necessary to let you know some personal information (...). No one reproached them [i.e., other people] for talking about themselves, nor was this considered a sin, so long as it was in order to expound and clarify something obscure (*agnooumenon*) (...).

[p. 60] [2.] I hail from the East [Bithynia]. From an early age, I was swayed back and forth by conflicting thoughts (*logismoi*) and, still a small child, I thought of leaving home, parents, and family, and fleeing to take refuge with Christ, our true God and Saviour. And this is exactly what I did; I went to a flock of monks [on Mount Olympos] to whom I surrendered myself, living under the guidance of a teacher and educator who was the superior of this holy band. (...)

[3.] But a desire for more complete isolation (*xeniteia*)¹²⁴ possessed me, and I found myself compelled to wander from place to place. In fact, I went to Palestine, wishing to venerate the holy steps of our Lord but most of all to “flee like a sparrow” (cf. Ps. 10 [11]:3; 54 [55]:7), choosing, like those of old, “to lodge in the wilderness.” (Ps. 54 [55]: 7) Thus, certainly, I worshipped extensively at the holy places, while also conversing with none but the luminaries and [holy] fathers there (I hesitate to go so far as to say that I derived [spiritual] profits from imitating their life). Immediately afterwards, I settled for a while in the most desolate areas of the country, that is, Palestine. But then the [onset of the] Saracen swarm made this [i.e., staying in Palestine] impossible. They appeared in all regions of Palestine and spread like a monstrous hailstorm, with pernicious squeaking and gibbering,¹²⁵ destroying and annihilating the whole Christian society (*systema*). (...) I removed myself from there, expelled, as it were, and driven out by the barbarian phalanx, and I arrived at a peaceful mountain, which was located in a pleasant site in Asia [Minor] and was called Latros by the locals – I was led there by its ancient reputation. For those blessed fathers who once lived in Raithou and Sinai (if not all of them, in any case the majority) are said to have

124 Here the word *xeniteia* acquires the meaning of voluntarily living in a foreign land as a form of asceticism and isolation.

125 The phrase used here, namely “squeak and gibber” (τρίζω/trizo), is usually employed to denote the noise made by ghosts haunting a house or a city. The author presumably wanted to draw a parallel between the irrational actions of the invading enemies and the incomprehensible movements of ghosts.

settled (*metanasteusai*) [p. 61] there because of the constant raids of the savage Blemmyes, except those who suffered martyrdom on the spot.

[4.] So, my love for these saints as well as [God's] will (*neuma*)¹²⁶ which led me to this mountain settled me there, with my goal before me. I enlisted in a [spiritual] struggle,¹²⁷ and I founded there a community (*systasis*) [which might be called] spiritual, at least by human standards.¹²⁸ (...) There, living together we practised asceticism, (...) a considerable body of men could also be seen, at once separate and together, maintaining, I may say, a lavra (...). Never was there any disreputable cohabitation. (...)

[5.] (...) The right arm of the Persians, the ferocity of the Turks, (...) eradicated the whole of the East and ravaged it viciously. This lawless nation that destroyed towns and countryside alike [p. 62] attacked that land too, bringing the same destruction upon its inhabitants. The multitude of our sins increased daily the successes of the Agarenes, and they did not leave undisturbed our place of refuge in that mountain either. For there was not even a hole that escaped the notice of these godless [men]. Driven by fear, [I moved away] from this place too, migrating for the second time (...). Well, perhaps I [being the *protos*] should have faced death there if the law is to be interpreted rigorously.¹²⁹ But human frailty, ever turning to the Lord's mercy and emboldened thereby, made me confident that I was doing no wrong in moving once more because of the great vexation caused by the aforementioned enemies.

[6.] So, I came in due course to Strobilos, a city on the seashore. I wished, in a way, to avoid the cruelty of the barbarians, and I had with me, too, some of the brothers, who felt that expatriating themselves (*xeniteuein*)¹³⁰ with me was the answer to their prayer (...). Nonetheless, God's grace was not yet pleased to let us

126 In this context, the word *neuma* should be understood as God's approval for the decisions and actions of the holy man.

127 At this point the text reads as follows: ἀγῶνα θέμενοι (literally: "I entered the lists"). This expression goes back to the concept of the ancient Olympic Games and the relevant participation process. In the English translation provided above, the rendering of this Greek phrase as "enlist/engage in a [spiritual] struggle" is an effort to translate it appropriately in its Christian ascetic-monastic context.

128 It is remarkable that Christodoulos, in his statements above, consistently appears to be hesitant about characterising his life or his community as spiritual. This should be interpreted as an expression of modesty and humility.

129 At this point, Christodoulos refers to the fact that Patriarch Kosmas I (1075–1081) [PBW <https://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/107614/>] appointed him as *protos* (1076–1079), that is, the head of the confederation of adjacent monasteries on that mountain, which automatically meant that Christodoulos was officially expected not to abandon his post but to remain there and defend his monastic community whenever it was in danger.

130 Contrary to the previous context of use of the word *xeniteia* (see above ch. 3), here this word (in the form of an infinitive, namely *xeniteuein*) instead bears the negative meaning of an involuntary expatriation or exile.

be and grant us rest (...) not even there did we find peace. The same fear was still haunting us. There, however, we met with a pious man of distinguished birth – for he was a native (...) and a monk. His name was Arsenios, his surname Ske-nourios. He devoted himself entirely to looking after us. This man, a stranger (*agnooumenos*) to us until recently, was now bound even closer to us through the spiritual bonds of affection. He began by offering me his own monastery at Strobilos, but since he was not able to keep me there – I was weary of the East for good because of continually being on the move out of fear of the enemy (for at Strobilos, too, a Persian attack was expected any moment!) – he supplicated me to cross over to the island of Kos, go round it, inspect his patrimonial lands there, and found a monastery on them wherever I chose. (...) I obeyed and made haste to visit Kos. (...)

[p. 63] [7.] There again, on Pelion [i. e., a hill of Kos], though I endured labours too great to relate, in the end I failed my aim. God had decided that on Patmos I should find my fate (*potmos*) and my grave. (...)

[Before leaving Pelion to head towards Patmos, Christodoulos proceeded with a building program; at first, he erected a church and finally, a self-supporting and completely equipped monastery. In August 1088, he began the construction of the monastery on Patmos. Around May 1092, Christodoulos abandoned Patmos and moved to Euboea, where he died on March 16, 1093.]



Image 2: The monastery of St John on Patmos, founded in 1088 by St Christodoulos.

Further reading

Karlin-Hayter, Patricia, Christodoulos: Rule, Testament and Codicil of Christodoulos for the Monastery of St. John the Theologian on Patmos, in: John Thomas and Angela Constantinides Hero (eds.), *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents: A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments*, DOS 35 (Washington, D.C., 2000) 564–606 (with further references: 577–578).

Christodoulos Papavarnavas

2.4.0 Soldiers, warriors, and mercenaries

Mobility was a core element of a soldier's life; it was, at least in theory, strongly determined and monitored by the military chain of command (with the emperor on top). Places of deployment, marching routes and periods of leave were prescribed to guarantee that the troops were ready for defence. The term *thema*, for instance, which since the 9th century was used for a military province, comes from Greek *tithemi*, “to put”, “to position”. Originally it indicated the areas in Asia Minor across which the remains of the field armies were stationed when they were reorganised after the territorial losses to the Arabs in the 7th century. Infringements against such constraints to soldierly mobility were heavily penalised, even with death in cases of desertion (see 2.4.1). At the same time, soldiers profited from a “relatively privileged position in comparison with the ordinary inhabitants of towns or countryside” and “constituted an identifiable group within society”, distinguished by their military dress, their right to bear arms, their juridical status (which extended to their landed property), and their claim on fees and supplies that were often provided directly by taxpayers living near marching routes or places of quartering (see 2.4.3).¹³¹ In addition, in the provinces (the *themata*) soldiers often acquired cultivated land near their garrisons or were allocated such pieces of properties (in the form of the *stratitotika ktemata*, which show up in legislation first in the 10th century) and thus established strong connections with the local population. This development may have meant that they were less ready to get mobilised and transferred elsewhere, and resulted in the emergence of part-time soldiers, who combined military service with agricultural work. With the loss of large parts of Asia Minor in the late 11th century, and partially already before, the term (and system of) *stratitotika ktemata* dis-

131 Haldon, John, *Warfare, State and Society in the Byzantine World, 565–1204* (London, 1999) 259–260 (for the citations). See also Rance, Philip, *The Army in Peace Time: The Social Status and Function of Soldiers*, in: Yannis Stouraitis (ed.), *A Companion to the Byzantine Culture of War, ca. 300–1204* (Leiden and Boston, 2018) 394–438.

appeared from the sources.¹³² Since the 8th century, the new regiments of the *tagmata* became increasingly important. These full time-soldiers, especially heavy cavalry, were first stationed in and around the capital, but since the 10th century also in important frontier districts where they eclipsed the troops of the *themata*. In addition, the share of foreign mercenaries in the Byzantine army increased (see also 2.4.3).¹³³ From the 12th/13th century onwards, soldiers and mercenaries were often remunerated in the form of a *pronoia* (literally care or provision), which granted to its holder a share of the tax revenue of a specific property or settlement. In this way, the material interests of soldiers were again linked to particular regions. In total, the expenditure for the armed forces and its logistics (see 2.4.2) made up the lion's share of government spending.¹³⁴

The soldiers' position within the ideological framework of the empire remained ambiguous. The army was regarded as an essential pillar of the state, even with a traditional share (for those troops stationed in or near the capital, especially at the palace) in the selection of the emperor (who, in return, honoured soldiers as their "beloved children", see 2.4.2). From the 4th century onwards when the Roman Empire became Christianised, the church fathers, too, accepted that the state needed to be defended with arms; this, however, was considered only a necessary evil. When Emperor Nikephoros II Phokas (r. 963–969), for instance, demanded that those who died in battle for the empire be venerated as martyrs (maybe inspired by similar ideas in Islam) he met with fierce opposition from the synod of bishops in Constantinople. Yet again, liturgies, prayers and holy icons accompanied Byzantine armies on campaigns so as to invoke divine assistance.¹³⁵

Equally ambiguous is the depiction of soldiers and the effects of their mobility in textual sources. They could be heroic warriors who defended the "chosen people" of the empire against barbarian and infidel enemies (symbolised in the

132 See ODB III, 1966, and for a new perspective on the emergence of the *stratitika ktemata* and *themata* Haldon, John F., A Context for Two "Evil Deeds": Nikephoros I and the Origins of the Themata, in: Olivier Delouis, Sophie Métivier and Paule Pagès (eds.), *Le saint, le moine et le paysan. Mélanges d'histoire byzantine offerts à Michel Kaplan*, Byzantina Sorbonensia 29 (Paris, 2016) 245–266.

133 Kühn, Hans-Joachim, *Die Byzantinische Armee im 10. und 11. Jahrhundert: Studien zur Organisation der Tagmata*, Byzantinische Geschichtsschreiber, Ergänzungsband 2 (Vienna, 1991).

134 Bartusis, Mark C., *The Late Byzantine Army: Arms and Society, 1204–1453* (Philadelphia, 1992); Bartusis, Mark C., *Land and Privilege in Byzantium: The Institution of Pronoia* (Cambridge, 2013).

135 Stouraitis, Yannis, *Krieg und Frieden in der politischen und ideologischen Wahrnehmung in Byzanz (7.–11. Jahrhundert)*, Byzantinische Geschichtsschreiber, Ergänzungsband 5 (Vienna, 2009); Stouraitis, Yannis, 'Just War' and 'Holy War' in the Middle Ages: Rethinking Theory through the Byzantine Case-Study, *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 62 (2012) 227–264.

form of warrior saints such as Saint George or Saint Theodore), undergoing severe strain on long marches and risking their lives in bloody battles. Yet they could equally be seen as undisciplined, greedy, and bloodthirsty hordes who harmed peaceful Byzantine subjects as if they were enemies. For authors (and actual victims of such abuse), the lines between warfare and brigandage were fluid.¹³⁶ Mistrust increased even further in the case of foreign warriors, when the lines between soldier and ‘barbarian’ also became fluid. There was a constant influx of manpower to the military labour market of Byzantium from nearby (Southern Caucasus, Balkans) and more distant regions (Western Europe, Scandinavia, Central Asia), both among commanding officers and the rank and file. These fighters were either employed in long-standing regiments under Byzantine command (such as in the units of the *phoideratoi* or the Varangian guard) or had their own commanders for specific campaigns as auxiliary forces or mercenary companies.¹³⁷

For the latter, the most illustrative case is the Catalan Company, which is discussed *in extenso* in the second part of this section. The Catalans hold a special position in the military history of Byzantium and the late Middle Ages. Their actions exemplify various forms of military mobility, which even ended with the creation of a new state. The Catalan Company entered Byzantine service coming from Southern Italy in 1303 after an invitation by the Byzantine emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos (r. 1282–1328).¹³⁸ The emperor’s aim was to recover the territories in Western Anatolia which had been conquered by the Turks in the decades before (see 2.4.4). The “Magnas Societas exercitus Catalanorum” was an amalgam of various ethnic groups (especially Catalans and Aragonese from the Iberian Peninsula, later even Turks recruited in Asia Minor). Originally it included 8,000 men who between 1302 and 1305 were led by Roger de Flor, a former Knight Templar of German origin and later pirate.¹³⁹ In addition, there were also naval forces (originally ca. 12 ships) under the command of Admiral Ferran d’Aunés.¹⁴⁰ Their itinerary encompassed thousands of kilometres in Anatolia and

136 Grotowski, Piotr, *Arms and Armour of the Warrior Saints. Tradition and Innovation in Byzantine Iconography (843–1261)* (Leiden and Boston, 2010); Stouraitis, Yannis, *State War Ethic and Popular Views on Warfare*, in: Yannis Stouraitis (ed.), *A Companion to the Byzantine Culture of War, ca. 300–1204*, Brill’s Companions to the Byzantine World 3 (Leiden and Boston, 2018) 59–91; McGrath, Stamatina, *Warfare as Literary Narrative*, in: Yannis Stouraitis (ed.), *A Companion to the Byzantine Culture of War, ca. 300–1204* (Leiden and Boston, 2018) 160–195.

137 Scharf, Ralf, *Foederati: Von der völkerrechtlichen Kategorie zur byzantinischen Truppengattung* (Vienna, 2001). For the Varangians see 3.3.1 and 3.3.2, for the example of the Armenians joining the Byzantine army see 3.4.1 and 3.4.2.

138 PLP 21436.

139 PLP 24386.

140 PLP 29632.

in Europe. They moved mainly on the Byzantine road system. In Asia Minor they covered a vast area from Constantinople until Lydia, Caria, and Cilicia whereas in the European provinces they were active in Thrace and Macedonia, from where they moved south to Thessaly before establishing the Catalan State of Athens in 1311. The Company demonstrated significant capacity in strengthening the defence of remaining Byzantine centres such as Philadelphia (Alaşehir) (see 2.4.6) and Magnesia (Manisa) and in recovering areas from the Turkish emirates. However, their growing financial demands and their raids for booty made them increasingly unpopular among the population and members of the Byzantine court. Very soon, it became obvious that they were an efficient, but independently acting military unit, with the potential to create their own polity inside the Byzantine Empire. In Asia Minor the military equilibrium was fragile, which meant that their initial successes could not be turned into stable gains.¹⁴¹ Confronted with the Catalans' uncontrolled behaviour, Andronikos II saw no other remedy than to call them back to Europe (see 2.4.7). When in 1305 Roger de Flor was murdered by members of the retinue of the emperor's son and co-ruler Michael IX Palaiologos¹⁴² all hell broke loose. Selecting the city of Kallipolis (today Gelibolu) as their stronghold, the Catalans proceeded to devastate Byzantine territories in Thrace (see 2.4.8 and 2.4.9). After an unsuccessful siege of the city of Ainos (today Enez), they moved to Macedonia. They established a new basis in the city of Kassandreia on the Chalkidiki (see 2.4.10), from where they attacked Mount Athos and Thessaloniki before moving south to Thessaly. In 1310, Walter V of Brienne, the Duke of Athens,¹⁴³ hired the Company to fight against his internal enemies in the Duchy, which was one of the Latin states created after the Fourth Crusade (1204). When the Duke was unable to pay the agreed amount of money, the Catalans declared war. In the battle of Neopatra (or Battle of Halmyros) on 15 March 1311 they won a decisive victory. Duke Walter V died on the battlefield. In the aftermath, the Catalans gained control over the Duchy of Athens, where they ruled until 1388–1390.¹⁴⁴ The passages about the Catalan Company in Byzantine sources provide an impressive overview of various aspects of military mobility, its effects on the population (especially the thin line between soldiery and brigandage) and their interpretation by members

141 Laiou, Angeliki, *Constantinople and the Latins. The Foreign Policy of Andronicus II, 1282–1328*, Harvard Historical Studies 88 (Cambridge, Mass., 1972); Jacoby, David, *The Catalan Company in the East: The Evolution of an Itinerant Army (1303–1311)*, in: Gregory I. Halfond (ed.), *The Medieval Way of War: Studies in Medieval Military History in Honor of Bernhard S. Bachrach* (Ashgate, 2015) 153–182.

142 PLP 21529.

143 PLP 23750.

144 Setton, Kenneth M., *Catalan Domination of Athens, 1311–1388* (London, 1975).

of the literate elite. A complementary interior view of the Company is provided by the Catalan commander Ramon Muntaner (1265–1336) in his chronicle.¹⁴⁵

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2.4.1 The Soldier's Law regulating the mobility of soldiers, 7th–9th century

Author: Anonymous compilation

Text: *Soldier's Law* (*Nomos stratiotikos*)

Date of text: Between the 7th and the 9th century (see below)¹⁴⁶

Genre: Compilation of laws

Literary context: The so-called Soldier's Law is a compilation of regulations relevant for the disciplining and penalization of military personnel which mostly stem from texts of the 6th century AD (the Strategikon of Emperor Maurice and the legal corpus of Emperor Justinian I). Scholars of Byzantine law still not agreed on the date of this compilation and its historical context. It has variously been dated to the 7th century, to the 8th century (during the reign of Emperor Constantine V, 741–775,¹⁴⁷ in connection with the Ekloga, a much more extensive selection of Justinianic law, combined with new regulations¹⁴⁸), or to the reign of Emperor Leo VI (886–912).¹⁴⁹ Transmitted in numerous manuscripts (the earliest dating to the 10th/11th century), the text most likely underwent several revisions, which also explains the emergence of various theories regarding its dating. In any case, the rules included in the collection of the Soldier's Law must have been of relevance for the compilers of the 7th, 8th or 9th century and thus reflect enduring aspects of military life in this period.¹⁵⁰

Historical significance of the movement: It has been argued that “the *Nomos stratiotikos* sought to affirm imperial control of the army, military discipline, and

145 *The Catalan Expedition to the East: from the 'Chronicle' of Ramon Muntaner*, transl. by Robert D. Hughes (Barcelona and Woodbridge, 2006).

146 For the ongoing debate on the date, see Burgmann, Ludwig, *Die nomoi stratiotikos, georgikos und nautikos, Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta* 46 (2009) 53–64; Humphreys, Mike, *Law, Power, and Imperial Ideology in the Iconoclast Era, c. 680–850* (Oxford, 2015) 152–154; Troianos, Spyros, *Die Quellen des byzantinischen Rechts* (Berlin and Boston, 2017) 139–140; *The Laws of the Isaurian Era: The Ecloga and its Appendices*, transl. by Mike Humphreys, *Translated Texts for Byzantinists* 3 (Liverpool, 2017) 19–21.

147 PmbZ 3703/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14852/html>.

148 Troianos, *Die Quellen des byzantinischen Rechts*, 118–126.

149 PmbZ 24311, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ26465/html>.

150 Burgmann, *Die nomoi stratiotikos, georgikos und nautikos*, 53–64; Humphreys, *Law, Power, and Imperial Ideology*, 152–165; Troianos, *Die Quellen des byzantinischen Rechts*, 139–140; *The Laws of the Isaurian Era*, transl. Humphreys, 19–21.

piety, through the creation of a loyal and godly army to protect the Chosen People of Byzantium”, and that these attempts were connected to the re-organisation of the Byzantine army after the dramatic territorial losses to the Arabs in the 7th century.¹⁵¹ Once the remains of the field armies had been deployed across several provinces in the *themata* in Asia Minor, soldiers started to establish connections with the local population around their garrisons and to acquire arable land by means of purchase, marriage or inheritance (see above the introduction). This may have complicated the control of their coming and going and their mobilisation for longer campaigns.¹⁵² However, since the regulations in the *Soldier's Law* are almost exclusively compiled from older legislation, similar problems must already have existed within the earlier framework of Late Antique military organisation. The fact that the text is extant in more than 50 manuscripts (the oldest dating to the 10th/11th century) also indicates that the rules touched upon problems of military discipline common throughout the Byzantine period, including various forms of unauthorised mobility of soldiers, such as the exceeding of periods of leave or even desertion. Other issues were breaches of law committed by soldiers during times of leave or on campaigns, such as damaging the property of civilians or other soldiers, but also cases of adultery by wives of soldiers during their absence. Special cases are exiles and other convicts who seek shelter in the army under false pretences, and sons of soldiers who seek to avoid recruitment for obligatory military service by mutilating themselves. The *nomos stratiotikos* thus provides some insights into everyday problems of military life.¹⁵³

Type of movement: Voluntary, but forms of movement forbidden to soldiers.

Locations and date of movement: To and from military garrisons and hometowns of soldiers across the Byzantine province; 7th to 10th centuries.

Edition used: Ashburner, Walter, *The Byzantine Mutiny Act*, *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 46 (1926) 80–109.

Translation used: *The Laws of the Isaurian Era: The Ecloga and its Appendices*, transl. by Mike Humphreys, *Translated Texts for Byzantinists* 3 (Liverpool, 2017) 81, 84, 87, 88 (modified by Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller).

151 Humphreys, *Law, Power, and Imperial Ideology*, 165.

152 Haldon, *A Context for Two “Evil Deeds”*, 245–266.

153 Humphreys, *Law, Power, and Imperial Ideology*, 152–165; Troianos, *Die Quellen des byzantinischen Rechts*, 139–140. On limits to the mobility in the case of Armenian soldiers see also 3.4.2.

*The Soldier's Law*¹⁵⁴

5 [=ch. 46 Ashburner]. If anyone dares to exceed his period of leave, he shall be dismissed from the army, and handed over to the civil authorities as a civilian.

6 [=ch. 47 Ashburner]. If in wartime anyone should dare to let a soldier go on leave, he shall pay a fine of thirty *nomismata* [gold coins]. While in winter quarters, a soldier may go on leave for two or three months. During peacetime, the soldier may go on leave within the boundaries of the province.

7 [= ch. 48 Ashburner]. If anyone is convicted of wishing to desert to the enemy, he shall suffer the ultimate penalty [i.e., death], and not only he but anyone who knew about it and kept silent.

8 [=ch. 49 Ashburner]. If anyone causes damage to a soldier or a taxpayer, he shall restore twice the amount of the thing damaged. If any officer or soldier in winter quarters, on the march or encamped should cause damage to a soldier or taxpayer, and does not recompense them as he ought, he shall pay back twice the amount.

(...)

24 [=ch. 39 Ashburner]. If anyone plans to desert to the barbarians and is caught, he shall suffer capital punishment. Furthermore, those from Roman territory who desert to the enemy may be killed with impunity as enemies.

(...)

40 [=ch. 20 Ashburner]. Anyone who has been deported, escapes from the punishment, and afterwards endeavours to enlist in the army, having concealed his deportation, or allows himself to be enlisted, shall suffer capital punishment. Anyone who has been temporarily exiled and voluntarily enlists shall be deported to an island, but if he dissembles and allows himself to be enlisted, he shall be exiled permanently. And if anyone who has been exiled temporarily escapes the punishment and enlists after the completion of his time of exile, the reasons as to why he was sentenced to exile shall be enquired into, and if they confer permanent infamy then the same penalty shall be observed.

(...)

43 [=ch. 24 Ashburner]. If anyone takes his son away from the army during wartime, he shall be exiled, and part of his property confiscated. If anyone disables his son during wartime so that he is found unfit for the army, he shall be exiled.

(...)

52 [=ch. 34 Ashburner]. If a soldier comes to an agreement with his wife's lover he is dismissed from the service.

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154 The reference is to the translation of Humphreys who offers a better chapter order of the text. For the readers' convenience we add cross-references to the Ashburner edition.

2.4.2 The mobilisation of the troops for an imperial campaign in Asia Minor, 9th–10th century

Author: Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos (born in 905, Constantinople; died in 959, Constantinople)¹⁵⁵

Text: *What should be observed when the great and high emperor of the Rhomaioi goes on a campaign*

Date of text: ca. 950

Genre: Military treatise¹⁵⁶

Literary context: The text is one of three military treatises of different length, which have been handed down to us in the manuscript tradition together with the famous *Book of Ceremonies*. Like this much more extensive work, the three shorter texts are compilations of earlier material, which were created at the court of Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos in Constantinople in the mid-10th century. The passages discussed here are taken from Text C in the edition and translation of John Haldon, who demonstrates that most of the information included comes from the reign of Constantine VII's grandfather and founder of the Macedonian dynasty, Basil I (r. 867–886)¹⁵⁷ and some of it from Constantine VII's father (and son and successor of Basil I), Leo VI¹⁵⁸ (r. 886–912).¹⁵⁹

Historical significance of the movement: In contrast to his son and grandson, Basil I took personal command of his troops and led campaigns especially against the dualistic sect of the Paulicians, who since the 840s had attacked Byzantine territories from their main base at Tephrike (modern-day Divriği) near the Euphrates, and against their Arab allies such as the Emir of Melitene (see 1.6.3).¹⁶⁰ The passages presented here as well as the two other treatises therefore deal with the special case “when the great and high emperor of the Rhomaioi goes on a campaign”, based on actual preparations for the campaigns of Basil I. Such military undertakings required both a special organisation for the logistics of the imperial court and baggage and regulations for the ceremonial when the armies in the provinces (the *themata*) encountered their supreme commander-in-chief – the emperor, who presents himself in ancient Roman tradition as “father” of his soldiers. For these purposes, troops and supply goods had to be mobilised in

155 PmbZ 23734, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25888/html>.

156 *Constantine Porphyrogenitus, Three Treatises on Imperial Military Expeditions*, ed. and transl. by John F. Haldon, CFHB 28 (Vienna, 1990) 59–61.

157 PmbZ 20837, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22990/html>.

158 PmbZ 24311, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ26465/html>.

159 Constantine Porphyrogennetos, *Three Treatises*, ed. Haldon, 54–61.

160 On the Paulicians see 1.6.3 in the present volume.

advance across Asia Minor, especially at predetermined fortified marching camps (the *aplekta*) along the route from Constantinople to the theatre of war at the eastern frontier.¹⁶¹ A counterpart of the three treatises describing land-based campaigns would be two similar texts integrated within the *Book of Ceremonies* which give an account of the preparations for two (unsuccessful) naval operations against Arab-ruled Crete in 911 and 949.¹⁶² Together, these texts allow for a quite detailed view of the machinery of Byzantine warfare in the late 9th to 10th century, when the empire switched to a more offensive strategic mode again. **Type of movement:** Voluntary and ordered movement for the purpose of military campaigns.

Locations and date of movement: From Constantinople along the marching routes across Asia Minor to the eastern frontier; late 9th and early 10th century. **Edition used:** *Constantine Porphyrogenitus, Three Treatises on Imperial Military Expeditions*, ed. and transl. by John F. Haldon, CFHB 28 (Vienna, 1990) 96–98 and 122.

Translation used: Ibid. (modified by Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller).

What should be observed when the great and high emperor of the Rhomaioi goes on a campaign

[p. 96] When the great and high emperor is about to go on an expedition and to mobilise arms and troops against the enemy, he orders first that a *lorikion* [chain mail]¹⁶³ and a sword and a shield should be hung up on the *Chalke* [the main gate of the imperial palace], outside the gates. From this, the preparation of an imperial expedition is made clear to all, and from this moment, each officer and soldier begins to prepare his weapons and such things as are necessary and required of a soldier. Then, after this has taken place, he orders the *logothetes* of the herds that a fair distribution and rationing (of baggage animals) from the *mitata* of Asia and Phrygia, and according to the strength and capacity of each *mitaton*, should be carried out in the fear of God and in all truth and piety.¹⁶⁴ For each of the above-mentioned *mitata* has a specific number of animals due from it according to its status, which is set down clearly for all: from Asia and Phrygia 200

161 On *aplekton* see ODB I, 369. More general on military logistics see Haldon, John, *Warfare, State and Society in the Byzantine World, 565–1204* (London, 1999) 137–154.

162 Haldon, John, *Theory and Practice in Tenth-Century Military Administration*. Chapters II, 44 and 45 of the *Book of Ceremonies*, TM 13 (Paris, 2000) 201–352.

163 Kolias, Taxiarchis G., *Byzantinische Waffen. Ein Beitrag zur byzantinischen Waffenkunde von den Anfängen bis zur lateinischen Eroberung*, BV 17 (Vienna, 1988) 37–40.

164 A *mitaton* was a kind of ranch supervised by the state which supplied mules and horses for the imperial army, see ODB II, 1385.

mules at 15 *nomismata* [gold coins], 200 pack-horses at 12 *nomismata*, in total 5424 *nomismata*, which is 76 pounds of gold. (...)

[p. 122] Once the emperor has passed into the *themata* [the area of the military provinces in Asia Minor], he is welcomed by each *thema* [the army of a specific military province], when the *thema* is drawn up in parade order, of course. When the emperor approaches, (all officers of the *thema*) dismount from their horses while the emperor is still in some distance from reaching them and form a reception party. And when the emperor passes through, all the aforementioned fall to the ground, paying homage to the emperor; but the soldiers all remain mounted. After the *strategoï* [the commanders of the *themata*] and the officers referred to have paid homage to the emperor, the latter makes a short detour from the road, saying to them: “Well met!”. Then he asks them: “How are you, my children? How are your wives, my daughters-in-law, and the children?” And they reply, that “In the life of your Majesty, so we, your servants, are well”. And again, the emperor responds: “Thanks be to Holy God who keeps us in health”. When all have acclaimed the emperor, he commands the *strategos* and all the above-mentioned officers to mount up, and to leave with their army for their own ordained position.

Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller

2.4.3 A list of burdens on taxpayers for the supply of the army in quarters and on the move, 1077/1079

Author: Michael Attaleiates (born in Attaleia ca. 1020–1030, died in Constantinople, ca. 1080)¹⁶⁵

Text: *Diataxis* respectively *Chrysobull of Emperor Nikephoros III Botaneiates*

Date of text: March 1077 and 1079¹⁶⁶

Genre: Charter for the establishment of a private foundation and imperial charter in favour of this foundation

Literary context: Michael Attaleiates, a native of Attaleia in southwestern Asia Minor, rose to the rank of senator in Constantinople and served as imperial judge. He is best known for his history that covers the period from 1034 to 1079/1080 (see 1.4.3 and 2.5.3). In the present text, he transfers a large part of his

¹⁶⁵ PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Michael/202/>.

¹⁶⁶ Alice-Mary Talbot, Attaleiates: Rule of Michael Attaleiates for his Almshouse in Rhaidestos and for the Monastery of Christ Panoiktirmon in Constantinople, in: Thomas, John and Angela Constantinides Hero (eds.), *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents. A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments*, DOS 35 (Washington, D.C., 2000) 326.

considerable property to an almshouse in the city of Rhaidestos (Tekirdağ) at the Sea of Marmara (where part of his possessions was located) and to the Church of Christ *Panoiktirmon* (“All-Merciful”) in Constantinople.¹⁶⁷ A main aim of Attaleiates was to protect these institutions and the estates bequeathed to them from any infringements by others, including state officials, especially tax collectors, soldiers, and mercenaries. For this purpose, he obtained imperial charters of privilege (with a golden seal, therefore called *chrysobull*¹⁶⁸) from the emperors Michael VII Doukas (r. 1071–1078)¹⁶⁹ and Nikephoros III Botaneiates (r. 1078–1081),¹⁷⁰ who granted immunity from various kinds of taxation in coin and in kind by the state and the army. These texts were added to the original document from 1077.¹⁷¹

Historical significance of the movement: The passage vividly illustrates the range of payments and contributions in kind, which the Byzantine Empire demanded from civilians and private and ecclesiastical institutions for the billeting and provisioning of members of the armed forces. The text demonstrates the enormous burden, which the mobility and presence of the military constituted for society. Besides soldiers of the *themata* and *tagmata* (i.e. indigenous troops), mercenaries of various foreign origins are mentioned, who sometimes also had to be accommodated in the provinces either on campaign or during the winter months.¹⁷²

Type of movement: Various forms of military movements and quartering, resulting in fees and other obligations for civilians and ecclesiastical institutions.

Locations and date of movement: Across the Byzantine provinces; 11th century.

Edition used: Gautier, Paul, La diataxis de Michel Attaliate, *Revue des études byzantines* 39 (1981) 5–143, here 119, 1652–121, 1681 (with French translation).

Translation used: Alice-Mary Talbot, Attaleiates: Rule of Michael Attaleiates for his Almshouse in Rhaidestos and for the Monastery of Christ Panoiktirmon in Constantinople, in: John Thomas and Angela Constantinides Hero (eds.), *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents. A Complete Translation of the Sur-*

167 Krallis, Dimitris, *Michael Attaleiates and the Politics of Imperial Decline in Eleventh-Century Byzantium* (Tempe, Arizona, 2012) 2–3, 30–32, 41, 78, 232; Krallis, Dimitris, *Serving Byzantium’s Emperors. The Courtly Life and Career of Michael Attaleiates* (Cham, 2019) 42–45, 104–116, 206–217.

168 See ODB I, 451–452.

169 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Michael/7/>. On the chrysobull of Michael VII see Dölger, Franz and Peter Wirth, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des Oströmischen Reiches*, vol. 2 (Munich, 1995) no. 1005.

170 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Nikephoros/3/>. On the chrysobull of Nikephoros Botaneiates see Dölger and Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 1042 (April 1079).

171 Talbot, Attaleiates: Rule, 326–330.

172 For this see also 3.3.3 in the present volume, as well as Scheel, Roland, *Skandinavien und Byzanz: Bedingungen und Konsequenzen mittelalterlicher Kulturbeziehungen* (Bonn, 2015) 824.

living Founders' Typika and Testaments (Washington, D.C., 2000) 366–367 (modified by Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller).

Michael Attaleiates, *Diataxis respectively Chrysobull of Emperor Nikephoros III Botaneiates*

[p. 119] They will also be exempted from the billeting of officers of the *tagmata* or *themata*, of the Rus,¹⁷³ Varangians¹⁷⁴ or Koulpingoi,¹⁷⁵ or Franks¹⁷⁶ or Bulgarians or Saracens¹⁷⁷ or any others, from *antimitatikia*,¹⁷⁸ *aplekta* and the provisioning of *aplekta*,¹⁷⁹ *mesaplekta*,¹⁸⁰ judges (*kritai*), tax gatherers, high-ranking military officers (*archegetai*) and all others, from the requisitioning of pack-animals, the payment of *kaniskia*¹⁸¹ and *antikaniska*,¹⁸² both old ones and those which might be imposed subsequently, the provisioning of fortresses, the purchase of mules, half-shares of mules, pack mules, half-shares of pack-mules, horses, horses for use as outrunners, jackasses, she-asses, mares, draft oxen and beef cattle, pigs, sheep, goats, cows, buffalo, hunting dogs and other four-footed animals, the furnishing of produce by forced sale or some other cause, the obligation of the *dromos*,¹⁸³ the *oikomodion*,¹⁸⁴ the *komodromikion*,¹⁸⁵ the *prosodia*,¹⁸⁶ the *aeri-*

173 Mercenaries of Eastern European respectively Scandinavian origin, see 3.3.1 in the present volume.

174 Mercenaries of Scandinavian origin, see 3.3.2 in the present volume.

175 A group of mercenaries from Scandinavia; the term shows up in Scandinavian runestones as “KylfingR”, its actual meaning is unclear, see Scheel, *Skandinavien und Byzanz*, 143–151.

176 Mercenaries from Western Europe, see ODB II, 803.

177 Mercenaries from the Arab world, see ODB I, 149–150.

178 Payments to avoid the obligation of providing lodging for troops, see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1679.

179 Obligation to provide lodging for troops, see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1679.

180 A fiscal obligation connected with the billeting of troops, see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1685.

181 A donation in kind to state officials, see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1683.

182 A payment in order to avoid the obligation of *kaniskion*, see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1679.

183 Payments to the department of official post and transportation, see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1681.

184 A tax in kind, see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1686.

185 An obligation to provide army blacksmiths with nails and horseshoes, see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1684.

186 Fees to be paid to state officials, see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1687.

kon,¹⁸⁷ the *synone*,¹⁸⁸ the *strateia*,¹⁸⁹ the hearth tax, the tax for the construction of fortresses, the paving of roads and the building of bridges, the *taxation*,¹⁹⁰ the *matzoukation*,¹⁹¹ the provision of supplies to be given to judges or fiscal agents or other officials, or foreign envoys in transit, or an army, the supplying of fodder, the sustenance of *protokentarchoi*,¹⁹² or *proeleusimaioi*,¹⁹³ imperial agents dispatched on certain missions, the provision of produce or transport of wine, meat and miscellaneous items, the armament of sailors, lancers, bowmen or mounted archers, the purchase of wheat, barley, oats, oil, legumes and grains of all kinds, the cutting and transport of any sort of wood or the transport of oars or anything else, [p. 121] the provision of *malaratoi*,¹⁹⁴ archers, the outfitting of soldiers, cavalry and infantry officers, lodging of top-ranking officers, *doukes*, *katepano*, *strategoi*,¹⁹⁵ judges and other tax gatherers, the provisioning and lodging of armies going to and returning from war, *vestiariatai*,¹⁹⁶ *mandators*¹⁹⁷ of the *dromos*¹⁹⁸ who are escorting ambassadors or exiles, or passing through for any other reason, *topoteretai*,¹⁹⁹ *tourmarchai*,²⁰⁰ *merarchai*,²⁰¹ and anyone else entrusted with

187 Supplementary fiscal levy, see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1679.

188 Originally the obligation to sell part of the harvest to the state at a fixed price, later a form of land tax (from the 10th century onwards), see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1689.

189 A payment to avoid military service, see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1689.

190 Tax for the maintenance of police forces, see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1689.

191 Payment for the maintenance of soldiers armed with maces, see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1685.

192 The first among the commanders of units of 100 men in a larger regiment, see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1683.

193 Members of the retinue of a general, see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1687.

194 Soldiers armed with axes, see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1685.

195 *Doux*, *katepano* and *strategos* are three types of high-ranking generals of the *tagmata* respectively the *themata*, see Kühn, *Die Byzantinische Armee im 10. und 11. Jahrhundert*.

196 Members of the imperial bodyguard, see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1690.

197 Officials employed for special missions, see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1685.

198 Imperial department of official post and transportation, see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1681.

199 Military officer in charge of a small district, see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1690.

200 Military commander and civil governor of a subdivision (*tourma*) of a *thema*, see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1690.

201 Commander of a cavalry division, see the Glossary in: Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 1685.

making inquiries into affairs of the fisc, compulsory labour and additional work, or any other imposition, whether mentioned [above] or omitted, whether existing at this moment or devised at a later time.

Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller

2.4.4 The Catalan Company arrives in Byzantium, September 1303

Author: George Pachymeres (born in 1242, Nicaea; died after 1307 in Constantinople)²⁰²

Text: *Historical Narration (Syngraphikai historiai)*

Date of text: after 1307

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: George Pachymeres' history is the main source for the late 13th–early 14th century. The focus of his narrative is on the loss of Asia Minor, the ecclesiastical controversies of his time, and the failures of the Palaiologan policies. The final episode, covering the books XI and XII, is dedicated to the deeds of the Catalan Company in Byzantium. George Pachymeres speaks of the catastrophic consequences of their actions in and later retreat from Asia Minor. For a short time, the Western mercenary army was able to win important victories over the “Persians” (Turks). Problems regarding their payment, their arrogant disposition towards the Byzantine authorities, and their atrocities towards the local population led to tensions between them and the Byzantine governors and population.

Historical significance of the movement: In this passage, Pachymeres narrates the events around the arrival of the Catalans in Byzantium. He describes the background of their activities in Sicily after the Sicilian Vespers (1282, a revolt in Sicily against King Charles I of Anjou, who ruled the kingdom of Sicily), as well as the invitation of the Byzantine Emperor who asked them to serve as mercenary troops in the east. The Catalan mercenaries were active in the dispute between Peter III of Aragon²⁰³ who was proclaimed king of Sicily (1282–1285), and Charles d'Anjou,²⁰⁴ about the rule over Sicily. Frederick II of Aragon, King of Sicily (1296–1337)²⁰⁵, continued the fight with the Angevines until the peace of Caltabellotta (31 August 1302). The altercations ended with the marriage of Frederick II and Eleonore, daughter of Charles d'Anjou. The Catalan mercenaries who were left

202 PLP 22186.

203 LMA, VI, col. 1923–1926.

204 PLP 11231.

205 PLP 30184.

without employment were organised as a Company by Roger de Flor²⁰⁶. They were then invited by Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos²⁰⁷ to fight for Byzantium. The main reason for the emperor's decision was the advance of the Turks in Anatolia and the loss of these territories. Previous Byzantine efforts to put up an efficient defence such as the expedition of Alexios Philanthropenos²⁰⁸ proved unsuccessful or had no lasting effect. When the Company arrived, the Byzantine Emperor granted the title of *meḡas doux* to Roger de Flor, who married Maria Asanina,²⁰⁹ a niece of Andronikos II.

Type of movement: Voluntary/professional movement (mercenaries).

Locations and date of movement: Messina, Monemvasia, Constantinople; September 1303.

Edition used: George Pachymeres, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι*, ed. Albert Failler and Vitalien Laurent, *Georges Pachymères, Relations historiques CFHB 24/ 1–5* (Paris, 1984–2000) vol. 4, 431,1–10, Book 11, 12.

Translation: Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller

George Pachymeres, *Historical Narration*, Book 11, 12

[p. 431] On the Latins who arrived on an invitation and their actions

In the following September of the second indiction [September 1303], Constantinople was unfortunate to see the Latin Rontzerios [Roger der Flor], (who came) with seven ships (of his own) along with a very great allied fleet of Catalans and Amogavars [Almogavares]²¹⁰ whose number was eight thousand.²¹¹ Farentas Tzimes [Ferran Ximenis d'Arenós]²¹² arrived earlier and completed the army. But Tzimes was a noble man and the ones he led were his own; he appeared without being called to forge an alliance (with the emperor) and to fight the Persians

206 PLP 24386.

207 PLP 21436.

208 PLP 29752.

209 PLP 16890.

210 George Pachymeres, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι*, ed. Albert Failler and Vitalien Laurent, *Georges Pachymères, Relations historiques CFHB 24/ 1–5* (Paris, 1984–2000) here Book 11, 21, offers a peculiar etymology of the Almogavars and claims that the ethnonym derives from the Avars. The name signifies lightly clad, quick-moving frontiersmen and foot-soldiers who were used extensively in the Reconquista in the 13th and 14th century Iberian Peninsula.

211 Pachymeres estimates the army at 8,000 soldiers (Book 12, 3, ed. Failler). Ramon de Muntaner, the Catalan historian of the events, speaks of 6,500 men to whom reinforcements were added at later stage (1,200 in 1304 and the 1,300 soldiers of Bernat de Rocafort [PLP 24373]). Andronikos II expected only 1500 men (George Pachymeres, *Historical Narration*, Book 12, 5, ed. Failler) and he protested very often to Roger de Flor on the excessive number of troops (George Pachymeres, *Historical Narration*, Book 11, 13; Book 12, 3, 4, 5, 14, 15, 18, 19, 22, ed. Failler).

212 PLP 27944.

[Turks] if the emperor wanted, but for a fixed price. Roger, however, came upon invitation. He was a fierce-eyed man, young in age, quick in whatever he undertook and ardent in his actions.

Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller

2.4.5 The Catalans move to Kyzikos, late September 1303

Author: George Pachymeres (born in 1242, Nicaea; died after 1307 in Constantinople)²¹³

Text: *Historical Narration (Syngraphikai historiai)*

Date of text: after 1307

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: Pachymeres narrates the movement of the Catalans to the East after a prolonged stay in Constantinople which the historian describes *in extenso*. The presence of the mercenaries caused altercations with the Genoese who were unhappy about the newcomers because of their connections with the Aragonese crown. Additional problems were caused by the refusal of the Catalans to pay back a debt that they had taken from the Genoese. A confrontation between the two parties in September 1303 led to the killing of 3,000 Genoese. Under these circumstances, the emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos pressured Roger de Flor to move to Asia Minor.

Historical significance of the movement: The movement of the Company signals the beginning of its enterprises on the Asiatic front. A fleet commanded by the Admiral Ferran d'Aunés²¹⁴ brought it to Artake (Erdek²¹⁵) near Kyzikos (Balız).²¹⁶ Early on, however, the Catalans started looting the area. The Company won a significant victory against the Karasid Turks (a Turkish beylik in the area of ancient Mysia) in the Battle of Kyzikos (October 1303), but Roger de Flor decided not to move to the south and instead to spend the winter in Kyzikos. He and his wife visited Constantinople while the soldiers were plundering and devastating the area of Kyzikos. To persuade the Company to move to Philadelphia (modern-day Alaşehir),²¹⁷ Andronikos II sent his sister Irene Asan to Roger de Flor. A further delay was caused by disputes in April 1304 between the Almogavars and the Alans, another group of mercenaries, due to the different payments they

213 PLP 22186.

214 PLP 29632.

215 Belke, Klaus, *Bithynien und Hellespont*, TIB 13, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften 513 (Vienna, 2020) 420–422.

216 Belke, *Bithynien und Hellespont*, 705–720.

217 ODB III, 1648.

received. Finally, the army of 6,000 Catalans, 1,000 Alans and the other Byzantine forces under *megas archon* Maroules²¹⁸ moved to Achyraus (today Balıkesir²¹⁹).²²⁰

Type of movement: Voluntary/professional movement (mercenaries).

Locations and date of movement: Constantinople, Artake/Kyzikos (by sea); late September 1303.

Edition used: George Pachymeres, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι*, ed. Albert Failler and Vitalien Laurent, *Georges Pachymérès, Relations historiques, CFHB 24/1–5* (Paris, 1984–2000) vol. 4, 437, 25–39, Book 11, 14.

Translation: Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller

George Pachymeres, *Historical Narration*, Book 11, 14

The emperor finally quelled the disturbance, and they sailed to Cyzicus where they were to winter. After they arrived there, they perpetrated many misdeeds: they stayed inside the fortifications, took money, looted property, harassed the women of these people and commanded the inhabitants as if they were purchased slaves.

Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller

2.4.6 The Catalan successes in Asia Minor: Philadelphia

Author: Nikephoros Gregoras (born c. 1295 in Herakleia/Pontos,²²¹ died ca. 1361 in Constantinople)²²²

Text: *Roman History* (*Historia rhomaïke*) (cf. George Pachymeres, *Historical Narration*, Book 11, 21, ed. Failler)

Date of text: between the 1330s and 1350s

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: Nikephoros Gregoras' *Roman History* is one the most important historical narratives for the period 1204–1358/1359. Gregoras describes the Catalan presence and actions in book VII of his work. However, his narrative is shorter than the one of Pachymeres. Gregoras tries to explain – without suc-

218 PLP 92644.

219 Belke, *Bithynien und Hellespont*, 364–366.

220 Laiou, Angeliki, *Constantinople and the Latins. The Foreign Policy of Andronicus II 1282–1328*, Harvard Historical Studies 88 (Cambridge, Mass., 1972) 135; Jacoby, David, The Catalan Company in the East: The Evolution of an Itinerant Army (1303–1311), in: Gregory I. Halfond (ed.), *The Medieval Way of War: Studies in Medieval Military History in Honor of Bernhard S. Bachrach* (Ashgate, 2015) 153–182, at 153–154.

221 ODB II, 915–916.

222 PLP 4443.

cess – the fatal decisions of the Byzantine emperor. But like Pachymeres, he also provides the historical background to their arrival in Byzantium.

Historical significance of the movement: Nikephoros Gregoras briefly refers to the raids of the Catalans in Asia Minor against cities where the Greek population had fled from the Turkish raids. The defence of Philadelphia in May 1304 was a significant victory and the main aim of the Byzantine emperor. The city was besieged by the Germiyanids (a Turkish beylik in Asia Minor, 1300–1429) (Pachymeres calls them Karmans: *Καρμανοί*) under Yakup bin Ali Şir (in the Greek sources: Alisyra).²²³ Roger de Flor reached Philadelphia after marching from Achyraus and Germe (unknown location²²⁴) via Chliara (Kırkağaç), Thyatira, the valley of the Hermos River and various other places. The Turks lifted the siege of Philadelphia and confronted the Catalans in Aulax (localisation unknown but near Philadelphia) with 20,000 soldiers. After the Turkish defeat, Roger de Flor entered the city and was received by the magistrates and the metropolitan Theoleptos of Philadelphia (1250–ca.1325).²²⁵ In this passage, Gregoras emphasises with a certain admiration how effective the Company had been, without giving any numbers of the armies involved. Other sources mention that after Yakup bin Ali Şir retreated, the Catalans conquered the fortresses north of Philadelphia, Koula and Fournoi. After punishing the governors of these two fortresses for their incompetence, Roger de Flor returned to Philadelphia.²²⁶

Type of movement: Voluntary/professional movement (mercenaries)/banditry.

Locations and date of movement: Kyzikos, Achyraus, Germe, Chliara, Thyatira, Hermos River valley, Aulax, and Philadelphia; May 1304.

Edition used: *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina Historia*, ed. Ludwig Schopen, CSHB, 3 vols (Bonn, 1829–1855) 221–222, Book 7, 3.

Translation: Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller

Nikephoros Gregoras, *Roman History*, Book 7, 3

[p. 221] In the following spring [1304] they left to expel the enemies who were besieging Philadelphia. The inhabitants of Philadelphia fought indeed against two evils, outwardly with the enemy who had long surrounded them but inside with much worse enemies, destitution, and hunger. The Catalans performed this task admirably and very bravely, and God's hand supported them for the sake of the great virtue of the city's holy bishop and man of God Theoleptos [metropolitan of Philadelphia]. When the enemy saw the disciplined movement, the

223 PLP 668; George Pachymeres, *Historical Narration*, Book 11, 23, ed. Failler, 469, 18.

224 Belke, *Bithynien und Hellespont*, 574–575.

225 PLP 7509.

226 Van Dieten, Jan Louis, *Gregoras Nikephoros. Rhomäische Geschichte*, 6 vols (Stuttgart, 1973–2007) here vol. 1, 285–286.

shining weapons, and the unshakable will to attack of the Latins, they were seized by fear and they ran away. Not only did they retreat far from the city [Philadelphia], but almost beyond the former border of the Rhomaioi. This army was large and strong, and so excellently composed in terms of weapons, war experience and number (of soldiers); for the Latins were accompanied on this campaign not only by the elite of the Roman soldiers, but also by the entire corps of the Alans. It caused such a surprise among the enemies [p. 222] that many at the time dared to argue that, if the emperor had not prevented them from advancing further through imperial *prostagmata* out of cowardice, nothing could have stopped them [the Catalans], from handing over to the emperor in a short time all the cities and regions that belonged to the Rhomaioi free from enemies.

Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller

2.4.7 The Catalans move to Europe, late October 1304

Author: George Pachymeres (born in 1242, Nicaea; died after 1307 in Constantinople)²²⁷

Text: *Historical Narration (Sygraphikai historiai)*

Date of text: after 1307

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: After narrating events at the Mongol frontier and the efforts of the Emperor to solve the Arsenite Schism (an ecclesiastical schism in Byzantium caused after the forced deposition of Patriarch Arsenios²²⁸), George Pachymeres returns to the Catalan Company. He describes how they were ordered by the Emperor to abandon Asia Minor and to join the co-emperor Michael IX²²⁹ on the Balkans in his fight against Czar Svetoslav of Bulgaria (Theodore Svetoslav, r. 1300–1322).²³⁰ The order came after the events in Magnesia where the Catalans besieged the Byzantine city when the citizens refused to submit to Roger de Flor's demands for money.

Historical significance of the movement: This passage signals a new phase of the expedition, that is, the transfer of the Company to the European parts of the empire, which had devastating consequences. Troubled by their treatment of Magnesia, Andronikos II ordered the Catalans to leave Asia Minor, using as an excuse the need for reinforcement of the troops of Michael IX. The co-emperor, however, had a hostile attitude towards Roger de Flor and the Catalans, which

227 PLP 22186.

228 PLP 1694.

229 PLP 21529.

230 PLP 27251.

later led him to order the murder of de Flor. This murder initiated a period of devastating warfare in the European parts of the empire, which ended only in 1310. In these passages Pachymeres provides particularly important information about the calculation of the payment of this mercenary group.

Type of movement: Voluntary movement for professional reasons (mercenaries).

Locations and date of movement: From Magnesia (Manisa) via Lampsakos²³¹ to Kallipolis.²³² The naval forces moved from Mitylene²³³ to Madytos²³⁴; late October 1304.

Edition used: George Pachymeres, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι*, ed. Albert Failler and Vitalien Laurent, *Georges Pachymères, Relations historiques*, CFHB 24/1–5 (Paris, 1984–2000) vol. 4, 527,20–529,10, Book 12, 3.

Translation: Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller

George Pachymeres, *Historical Narration*, Book 12, 3

[p. 527] Passage of the grand duke to the West with the Catalans

The *megas dux* [Roger de Flor] suffered enormously due to the siege of Magnesia [of Sipylon²³⁵] and his confrontation with Attaleiotes²³⁶ where he lost many men. Since after much plundering of the towns, during which he collected money with cruelty, he did not master the situation and did not even reach his goal, as the saying goes, he came back and went again to Mytilene; he led some of the men on the ships, while he ordered the others to go to Kallipolis. The reason for that was that the emperor wrote to him and ordered him to abandon the siege of Magnesia, and with the best of his soldiers to take the route to Haimos,²³⁷ where the emperor Michael [IX Palaiologos] had established his camp, and he pursued on the one side Eltimir [despot of Bulgaria]²³⁸ and on the other he pushed back the assault of Theodore Svetoslav. However, the emperor [p. 529] wrote many times and sent messengers, and a lot of time was wasted. The reason was that they demanded once more high salaries not only for their work after joining emperor Michael but also for their actions which they allegedly finished before; they did not measure their salaries according to their actions but based on the duration (of their employment), even during truces or in times of rest. In this

231 Belke, *Bithynien und Hellespont*, 722–726.

232 Külzer, Andreas, *Ostthrakien (Eurōpē)*, TIB 12, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften 369 (Vienna, 2008) 425–431.

233 Koder, Johannes, *Aigaion Pelagos (Die nördliche Ägäis)*, TIB 10, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften 259 (Vienna, 1998) 230–234.

234 Külzer, *Ostthrakien*, 501–504.

235 ODB II, 1268.

236 PLP 1656.

237 ODB I, 248–249.

238 PLP 6025.

way, they calculated their salaries to demands of hundreds of thousands of *nomismata*. At last, they left Mitylene and reached the coasts of Madytos. Those who moved on foot made a stop in Lampsakos (today Lapseki), brought together all their forces, passed en masse, and conquered the entire opposite coast.²³⁹

Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller

2.4.8 The Catalans devastate the western provinces, late October 1304

Author: George Pachymeres (born in 1242, Nicaea; died after 1307 in Constantinople)²⁴⁰

Text: *Historical Narration (Sygraphikai historiai)*

Date of text: after 1307

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: The passage is included in a series of chapters related to Berenguer d'Entença,²⁴¹ an emissary of the Aragonese crown, who had served under Frederick II of Sicily (1296–1337) until the peace treaty of Caltabellotta (1302) and in late October 1304 arrived in Kallipolis. On Christmas 1304 he received the title of *megas dux* while Roger de Flor, the former *megas dux*, received the title of *kaisar*.²⁴² The passage follows the chapter about the oath of loyalty that Berenguer swore to the emperor Andronikos II.

Historical significance of the movement: In this passage, Pachymeres narrates the events that took place after the move of the Company to Europe. The Catalans demanded a high amount of payment, i.e., 300,000 *hyperpyra* (gold coins) and Andronikos II was obliged to impose a new tax *sitokrithon* to pay them. Berenguer generally had a more aggressive attitude towards Byzantium and was persuaded with difficulty to submit to imperial authority. At the same time, having Kallipolis as a stronghold, the Company started looting the area.²⁴³

Type of movement: Voluntary movement for professional reasons (mercenaries)/banditry.

Locations and date of movement: One part of the army moved from Lampsakos to Kallipolis, another part of the army from Mitylene to Madytos; end 1304 (?).

239 Laiou, *Constantinople and the Latins*, 136; Jacoby, *The Catalan Company*, 155.

240 PLP 22186.

241 PLP 27580.

242 George Pachymeres, *Historical Narration*, Book 12, 22, ed. Failler.

243 According to Sophoulis, Panos, *Banditry in the Medieval Balkans, 800–1500* (Cham, 2020) 8 n. 8: “Byzantine sources frequently describe Catalan mercenaries as brigands”. Sophoulis, *Banditry*, 30 n. 64 also argues that “when the Catalans moved from Thrace into Macedonia, in the first decade of the 13th century, brigandage became endemic there”.

Edition used: George Pachymeres, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι*, ed. Albert Failler and Vitalien Laurent, *Georges Pachymérès, Relations historiques*, CFHB 24/ 1–5 (Paris, 1984–2000) vol. 4, 548,29–549,7, Book 12, 13.

Translation: Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller

George Pachymeres, *Historical Narration*, Book 12, 13

[p. 548] The Almogavares and Catalans fell like a cloud of shrill and fatal hail and destroyed entire regions which they had attacked and conquered, without omitting anything that shows the wickedness and violence of a man in his actions, so that the West has suffered another barbaric incursion, more unbearable than the other, the one in the East which in comparison was more supportable and tolerable, insofar as those who experienced the first had time to see that it came from enemies and, for some, to flee in advance from misfortune, once calmed down by the fear of others, while those who were experiencing the second did not know how to behave: they received them as friends, but they found in them the most fierce enemies. In an identical way for those and these, if they resisted, the sword was the response.

Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller

2.4.9 A naval attack of the Catalans in areas around Constantinople, May 1305

Author: George Pachymeres (born in 1242, Nicaea; died after 1307 in Constantinople)²⁴⁴

Text: *Historical Narration (Sygraphikai historiai)*

Date of text: after 1307

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: The events of this passage follow the murder of Roger de Flor and its aftermath. The author manages to describe in detail the Catalan reaction to the events but also their fears for those Catalans who lived in non-secured areas and in Constantinople.

Historical significance of the movement: After the murder of Roger de Flor on April 30, 1305²⁴⁵ and after the attack of Alans (mercenary troops from the Caucasus) against them in Adrianople (today Edirne)²⁴⁶ where about 100 cavalry men

244 PLP 22186.

245 George Pachymeres, *Historical Narration*, Book 12, 23–24, ed. Failler, vol 4, 571.

246 Soustal, Peter, *Thrakien (Thrakē, Rodopē und Haimimontos)*, TIB 6, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften 221 (Vienna, 1991) 161–167.

and 1,000 infantrymen perished, the Catalans devastated Thrace. Their revenge had a negative impact on the entire region that lasted for centuries. The Byzantine reaction was to besiege Kallipolis with a large army (14,000 cavalry men and 30,000 infantry), made up of Greeks, Alans and Tourkopouloi (Turkish mercenaries in the Byzantine army). The new leader of the Catalans, Berenguer d'Entença, planned a raid against Constantinople. In the meantime, Kallipolis was to be defended by a garrison of 206 horsemen and 1,256 infantries, under the command of Ramon Muntaner (as captain of Gallipoli) and Bernat de Rocafort (as Seneschal).²⁴⁷

Type of movement: Voluntary movement for professional reasons (mercenaries)/banditry.

Locations and date of movement: From Kallipolis to locations around Constantinople (Artake, Proikonessos [Marmara Adası],²⁴⁸ Herakleia [Marmara Ereğlisi]²⁴⁹); May 1305.

Edition used: George Pachymeres, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι*, ed. Albert Failler and Vitalien Laurent, *Georges Pachymérès, Relations historiques*, CFHB 24/ 1–5 (Paris, 1984–2000) vol. 4, 577,27–579,16, Book 12, 25.

Translation: Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller

George Pachymeres, *Historical Narration*, Book 12, 25

[p. 577] So, the Catalans reinforced the fortress further, and after having embarked a troop of fighters on seven long boats [p. 579] and nine other small ones, sent them to plunder the residents. As they had attacked Artake, the port of Kyzikos, and Proikonessos, without obtaining any result because of the firm resistance of the inhabitants, on the 28th of the same month of May they attacked Perinthos [Herakleia] and massacred the adults who were there. They devastated the regions on both sides: some emigrated and, among the others who were taken, they killed some and sold the others as booty. That is why the gates of Constantinople remained open at night; imitating the current of river waters of all kinds, people entered it [the city], bringing with them a little of what they had, and that at random. Outside, the Catalans disembarked from their boats on the same day and moved from the sea to a great distance inside the continent, set fire to the region in full freedom and committed the worst crimes, while most of the inhabitants fell victim to fire and sword. Inside, it was another sphere of Empedocles [an ancient Greek philosopher of the 5th century BC, who assumed a cyclical cosmos]: indeed, those who emigrated from the entire other side [i. e., the Asiatic side] and those who lived in the small islands, after having fled the

247 Laiou, *Constantinople and the Latins*, 161–162.

248 Belke, *Bithynien und Hellespont*, 940–944.

249 Külzer, *Ostthrakien*, 398–408.

Persians, had the City as their only refuge to escape from an uncertain supply (of means).

Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller

2.4.10 The Catalans move further to the West after internal conflicts

Author: George Pachymeres (born in 1242, Nicaea; died after 1307 in Constantinople)²⁵⁰

Text: *Historical Narration* (*Syngraphikai historiai*)

Date of text: after 1307

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: This text closes the *History* of Pachymeres and its narration of the Catalan expedition in Byzantium. It follows a chapter about the officials of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and their financial demands. This final chapter starts with the author clearly announcing the end of his *History*. Pachymeres apologises for telling stories of disaster and failure but he expresses a certain optimism about the future.

Historical significance of the movement: Pachymeres narrates one major episode of the internal conflicts in the Catalan Company and its consequences for Byzantium. In summer 1307, the Company moved to Macedonia after an unsuccessful siege of Ainos.²⁵¹ On the way, Berenguer d'Entença turned against Bernat de Rocafort due to a long-lasting rivalry between them. In their confrontation, Berenguer lost his life, whereas Rocafort stayed in Kassandreia for the next two years. However, he was unsuccessful in conquering Thessaloniki where he had planned to establish a state in Macedonia.²⁵²

Type of movement: Voluntary movement for professional reasons (mercenaries)/banditry.

Locations and date of movement: From Ainos to Kassandreia; July-August 1307.

Edition used: George Pachymeres, *Συνγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι*, ed. Albert Failler and Vitalien Laurent, *Georges Pachymérès, Relations historiques*, CFHB 24/ 1–5 (Paris, 1984–2000) vol. 4, 711, Book 13, 38.

Translation: Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller

250 PLP 22186.

251 Soustal, *Thrakien*, 170–173.

252 Laiou, *Constantinople and the Latins*, 181–183.

George Pachymeres, *Historical Narration*, Book 13, 38

[p. 711] The emperor learned of the episode of Ainos and that they had been repulsed, after a whole month of fighting.²⁵³ He also learned that Rocafort had moved away with the Turks he had brought in.²⁵⁴ He (learned also) that the troops of Berenguer, Ferran Ximenis and Gidas²⁵⁵ would make sure to pursue them, because they had a dispute with Rocafort and were observing the moment to attack this Rocafort. Rocafort then set off and camped in the region of Kassandreia with the Turks, aware of the evil design of his pursuers. But shortly after, these also arrived, and they encamped a short distance away. Rocafort wanted to take the lead and act rather than suffer their attack.²⁵⁶ In the morning, when darkness reigned, he burst in with the Turks and won a resounding victory, so that Berenguer fell [died], while Ferran was captured without glory and then released again to return to his home, as Rocafort treated him with kindness. But Ferran Ximenis, utterly desperate, deserted, like a wanderer and a fallen exile, to an imperial dignity.²⁵⁷ When this became known he was saved and went to the Emperor. Those of the Italians who did not fall in the fight joined Rocafort; according to rumour they set out to reach Thebes.²⁵⁸

Further reading

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Kühn, Hans-Joachim, *Die byzantinische Armee im 10. und 11. Jahrhundert: Studien zur Organisation der Tagmata*, Byzantinische Geschichtsschreiber, Ergänzungsband 2 (Vienna, 1991).

Kyriakidis, Savvas, *Warfare in Late Byzantium, 1204–1453* (Leiden and Boston, 2011).

Laiou, Angeliki, *Constantinople and the Latins. The Foreign Policy of Andronicus II 1282–1328*, Harvard Historical Studies 88 (Cambridge, Mass., 1972).

253 The siege of Ainos in spring 1307 lasted one month and ended with a defeat of the Catalans, s. George Pachymeres, *Historical Narration*, Book 13, 34–35, ed. Failler, vol. 4, 701–705.

254 Turks from the Emirate of Aydin joined the Company in May 1305 after the battle of Kallipolis, promising to give one fifth of the booty to the Company. Another group composed by Turks and Tourkopouloi which deserted the Byzantine army in June or July 1305.

255 PLP 4173.

256 According to Muntaner, the battle took place in a place two-day distance away from Christoupolis (Kavala) and not in Kassandreia.

257 According to the Short version of the History of Pachymeres, he became a *domestikos* in the city of Xantheia

258 In the Short version, it is Thessaly. They reached indeed Thebes in 1311 and they occupied the Duchy of Athens until 1388.

Sophoulis, Panos, *Banditry in the Medieval Balkans, 800–1500* (Cham, 2020).

Stouraitis, Yannis, *Krieg und Frieden in der politischen und ideologischen Wahrnehmung in Byzanz (7.–11. Jahrhundert)*, Byzantinische Geschichtsschreiber, Ergänzungsband 5 (Vienna, 2009).

Stouraitis, Yannis (ed.), *A Companion to the Byzantine Culture of War, ca. 300–1204*, Brill's Companion to the Byzantine World 3 (Leiden and Boston, 2018).

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2.5.0 Traders, merchants, and artisans

Trade is the transfer of goods or services from one person to another. As such, it has always entailed the movement of people and commodities. This is true for the producers of goods (peasants, artisans) who could go to a market and offer them to customers, and for professionals (merchants, traders).

Scholars have identified four levels of commercial exchange in Byzantium, depending on the scale of mobility – local, regional, interregional, and international. Permanent markets in the big cities and weekly markets – in the urban centres but also in villages and at crossroads in the countryside – were commonly used for the exchange of goods. There, local inhabitants (mainly agriculturalists, pastoralists, and artisans) could sell their products and at the same time get commodities from abroad that were usually not available in their home settlements. Besides, there were also periodic markets, which were frequented by local producers such as the villager Metrios from Paphlagonia,²⁵⁹ who transported on his peasant cart products that he wished to sell,²⁶⁰ but also by Byzantine merchants coming from various regions of the empire and by foreign merchants. Such markets were called *panegyris*. Initially, the term had denoted feast days of pagan deities. Later, the Church adapted this traditional form of ancient culture to its own agenda. From Late Antiquity onwards, a local bishop would organize a *panegyris* on the feast day of a city's patron saint. Besides the performance of religious activities such as processions and commemorative services, an annual market, known also as a panegyric market, was held. Thus, Byzantine *panegyreis* became focal points for the exchange of goods of local or international origin. Two of these markets deserve a particular mention. The first, which is documented in a satirical dialogue from the 12th century called *Timarion* (see 5.1.3), took place in Thessaloniki, the second largest city of Byzantium, in the week

259 PmbZ 25087, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ27241/html>.

260 *Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae*, ed. Hippolyte Delehaye, *Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae e codice Sirmondiano nunc Berolinensi adiectis Synaxariis selectis, Propylaeum ad Acta Sanctorum Novembris* (Brussels, 1902) 720, 24–32.

starting from the feast day of Saint Demetrios, the city's patron, on 26 October. From the description of this event, we learn that numerous merchants from the Balkan hinterland, the Black Sea region and the Mediterranean, as far as Portugal came together at the panegyric market of Thessaloniki.²⁶¹ The second, dedicated to Saint Theodore Tiron, took place in the Anatolian city of Euchaita and is often referred to in the works of the local metropolitan John Mauropous (see 4.1.1).²⁶² Although Theodore's memory is celebrated on 17 February, the panegyric market of Euchaita took place on a mobile date in March or April, perhaps due to the wish to facilitate the movement of local inhabitants and foreign visitors and thereby to attract a greater interest.

A panegyric market was visited not only by peasants, artisans, and merchants but also by pilgrims (see 1.11.3). Indeed, cities with famous panegyric markets were at the same time the most important pilgrimage centres in the Eastern Mediterranean. Thus, it comes as no surprise that among the visitors one could often find monks. For example, a monk went to the *panegyris* of Saint Spyridon in Trimithous in Cyprus in order to venerate a local patron saint and to sell commodities made by his brethren.²⁶³ The money thus gained was used for the needs of the community and for Christian charity (see 2.3.0).

The fulcrum of internal and international trade activities in Byzantium was Constantinople, a medieval megalopolis located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia and of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. Before the 13th century, the imperial capital was the largest city not only in the empire but also in Europe, and one of the most populous urban centres in the Mediterranean world. This meant that a secure supply of food was of crucial importance. Various goods were brought to the capital on a daily basis, on land or sea routes, originating from the suburbs, the nearby regions in Europe and Asia Minor, the distant provinces and even from abroad. Well-known is the remark of Michael Choniates,²⁶⁴ an archbishop of Athens, that Macedonia, Thrace, Thessaly, the Aegean islands, Thebes and Corinth were providing food and clothing for Constantinople in the late 12th century.²⁶⁵ Moreover, the presence of the court and the high state and church officials, residing in the city on the Bosphorus, necessitated the supply with luxury

261 *Timarion*, 5, ed. Roberto Romano, *Pseudo-Luciano, Timarione. Testo critico, introduzione, traduzione, commentario e lessico*, Byzantina et Neo-Hellenica Neapolitana 2 (Naples, 1974) 53, 114–123.

262 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Ioannes/289/>. John Mauropous, *Orationes*, 180, ed. Paul de Lagarde, *Iohannis Euchaitorum Metropolitanæ quæ in Codice Vaticano Graeco 676 supersunt* (reprinted edition) (Amsterdam, 1979) 130–131.

263 Theodore of Paphos, *Life of Saint Spyridon*, 23, ed. Paul van der Ven, *La légende de S. Spyridon évêque de Trimithonte*, Bibliothèque du Muséon 33 (Leuven, 1953) 96, 10–99, 5.

264 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Michael/20528/>.

265 Michael Choniates, *Letters*, 50, 10, ed. Foteini Kolovou, *Michaelis Choniatae epistulae*, CFHB 41 (Berlin and New York, 2001) 69, 60–70, 65.

goods. Such goods were produced in the workshops of Byzantine artisans and craftsmen but could also be imported from other countries by Byzantine and foreign merchants. Even in the 14th century, when the empire had long become a less significant political and military power at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, Nikephoros Gregoras²⁶⁶ described Constantinople as the destination of various products of agriculture and craftsmanship, imported on land or sea routes.²⁶⁷ This means that throughout its history Constantinople was a commercial centre of international rank. The 7th century saw the emergence of two new enemies – the Arabs in the East and the Bulgars on the Balkans. Yet the hostilities did not preclude a lively exchange between them and the empire. Both Syrian and Bulgarian merchants are among the few foreign traders called by their ethnic name in the 9th/10th century *Book of the Eparch* (see below). About the former we know that they even had two mosques in the Byzantine capital, which met their religious needs.

In the early Middle Ages, parts of Italy were still considered to be under Byzantine sovereignty, which explains the activity of Italian merchants on the markets of Constantinople. They sought to get quarters there and to be granted trade privileges on Byzantine soil. The first group that received such concessions was from Amalfi. In the first half of the 10th century, its merchants settled on the Bosphorus. They were followed by the Venetians who were to play the most crucial role in the history of the Byzantine economy and state of all imperial allies. In 992, they received the first trade concessions from the emperors. In the 1080s the Byzantine emperor Alexios I Komnenos²⁶⁸ was in desperate need of an ally against the bellicose Normans of Sicily and Southern Italy. He repaid the assistance of the Venetian navy with trade privileges to the Serenissima (see 1.10.0). Moreover, its merchants got a quartier in Constantinople situated on the southern shore of the Golden Horn. New treaties were to be signed with Venice, as well as with Pisa and Genoa, the two other Italian republics that the Komnenian emperors tried to use as allies in their political initiatives in the Eastern Mediterranean and in Italy.²⁶⁹

The activity of these merchants undoubtedly contributed to the economic growth in the 11th and 12th centuries, though their financial power, catholic faith, rivalry with each other, and the temptation to interfere in the empire's internal

266 PLP 4443.

267 Nikephoros Gregoras, *Roman History*, Book 13, 11, 1, ed. Ludwig Schopen, *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina historia*, CSHB (Bonn, 1829) vol. 2, 678, 1–13.

268 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Alexios/1/>.

269 For the maritime infrastructure of Constantinople and the quarters of Latin merchants see Daim, Falko and Ewald Kislinger (eds.), *The Byzantine Harbours of Constantinople* (Mainz, 2022), open access online: <https://books.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/propylaeum/catalog/book/911>.

politics soon made them a target of unprecedented hatred and scorn. In 1171, the Venetians were expelled from Constantinople and their property was confiscated at the order of Emperor Manuel I.²⁷⁰ An even worse scenario was about to follow: in 1182 the supporters of the usurper Andronikos I organised a massacre of the capital's Latin inhabitants. Some of them, however, succeeded in boarding their ships and thus escaped the wrath of the Byzantines.²⁷¹ After the Fourth Crusade and the sack of Constantinople with Venetian aid, the activity of western merchants within the former Byzantine realm intensified, and even continued beyond the Ottoman conquest (see 1.1.2).

The presence of Western merchants on Byzantine soil had numerous effects. Many of them settled in the Balkans, on the shores of Asia Minor, in the Aegean, on Crete and Cyprus (see 4.4.3). Some of them brought their families, while others married locals. Their economic success was stupendous. The Byzantines ironically remarked that there were three occupations, which the Latins were good at – warfare, seafaring, and trade. The commercial activities of Venetians and Genoese after 1261 had both positive and negative effects on Byzantine politics and the economy. Their trade networks facilitated contacts with Western Europe, including trade and bank transactions, in which numerous Byzantines – even Loukas Notaras,²⁷² a famous enemy of a union with the Catholic Church, and his family – participated. This commercial exchange is attested in a variety of sources from the Palaiologan time, written in Greek, Latin or Italian.

In a military treatise dealing with warfare in the Near East, Emperor Nikephoros II Phokas²⁷³ makes his reader aware of the fact that merchants could be used as spies against the Arabs.²⁷⁴ Their occupational mobility and their knowledge of various landscapes and languages could make them a valuable ally, as well as a potential traitor in case of a military conflict. This raised suspicions, especially in Constantinople, of some of the foreign traders. This can be seen very clearly in the case of the Rus. Texts from the 10th century describe how they sailed along the western shores of the Black Sea (“Trade route from the Varangians to the Greeks”), carrying to Constantinople furs, slaves, and other commodities. At the same time, they were highly praised for their military skills and were hired as

270 John Kinnamos, *History*, Book 6, 10, ed. August Meineke, *Ioannis Cinnami epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, CSHB (Bonn, 1836) 280, 11–283, 19; Niketas Choniates, *History*, ed. Jan-Louis van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, CFHB 11 (Berlin and New York, 1975) 171–172, 41–78, PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Manuel/1/>.

271 Niketas Choniates, *History*, ed. van Dieten, 250–251, 21–44.

272 PLP 20730.

273 PmbZ 25535, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ27689/html>.

274 Nikephoros II Phokas, *Treatise on War*, 7, 2, ed. Gilbert Dagron and Haralambie Mihăescu, *Le traité sur la guérilla (De velitatione) de l'empereur Nicéphore Phocas (963–969)* (Paris, 1986) 51, 10–16.

mercenaries in Byzantine military campaigns (see also 3.3.0). Yet, before 988, the Rus were pagans and raided Constantinople and its hinterland more than once. Thus, although Byzantium signed three trade treaties with them, the imperial government did not allow Russian merchants to establish a quarter within the capital. Instead, they were forced to reside in a suburb, Hagios Mamas, and the duration of their stay on Byzantine soil was also limited.²⁷⁵

The restrictions of the commercial activity of Russian merchants reflect one of the most important peculiarities of Byzantine economy in general and trade in particular: the question of state management and state regulation in the production and exchange of commodities, both on a regional and on an international level. In the East, the *Imperium Romanum* survived the great migration movements of the third to sixth centuries, which had implications for its economy. The production and distribution of some goods, such as silk and silk fabrics, were a state monopoly. Their export without the permission of the Byzantine authorities was prohibited. In order to secure the trouble-free coexistence of several branches, the state regulated the exchange and food supply in Constantinople. This is reflected in a collection of regulations by the city prefect known as the *Book of the Eparch* (early 10th century). According to them, Constantinopolitan silk traders were not allowed to sell silk to Jews – probably because the latter had trade connections in the whole Mediterranean – and other merchants for the purpose of trade outside the capital.²⁷⁶ Moreover, in order to secure the livelihood of Constantinople's butchers, the government required that meat traders should not buy animals close to the capital but beyond the Sangarios River (Sakarya Irmağı) in Asia Minor.²⁷⁷ A well-known case of state management in the exchange of goods is the grain trade in the 11th century, which resulted in a monopoly (see below).

The state's control over certain branches of the economy and their support by the imperial administration not only allowed the central government to impose restrictions on the mobility of Byzantine and foreign merchants. The state was also capable of organising groups of labourers such as artisans and relocating them on imperial soil (see 2.2.1) or even sending them abroad, if this was in its interest (see below).

275 Malingoudi, Gianna, *Die russisch-byzantinischen Verträge des 10. Jahrhunderts in diplomatischer Sicht* (Thessalonike, 1994).

276 *Book of the Eparch*, 6.16, ed. Johannes Koder, *Das Eparchenbuch Leons des Weisen. Einführung, Edition, Übersetzung und Indices*, CFHB 33 (Vienna, 1991) 100, 343–345. On Jewish merchants in the Byzantine Empire see also Holo, Joshua, *Byzantine Jewry in the Mediterranean Economy* (Cambridge, 2009).

277 *Book of the Eparch*, 15.3, ed. Koder, 124, 616–620.

Further reading

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- Mundell Mango, Marlia (ed.), *Byzantine Trade, 4th–12th Centuries. The Archaeology of Local, Regional and International Exchange. Papers of the Thirty-eighth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, St John's College, University of Oxford, March 2004*, Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies, Publications 14 (Farnham and Burlington, 2009).
- Ritter, Max, *Zwischen Glaube und Geld. Zur Ökonomie des byzantinischen Pilgerwesens (4.–12. Jh.)*, BOO 14 (Mainz, 2019).

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2.5.1 A business arrangement between a nobleman and merchants in a time of siege

Author: Patriarch Matthew I²⁷⁸ and the Synod**Text:** *Register of the Patriarchate of Constantinople***Date of text:** October 1401**Genre:** Judicial act

Literary context: Trade, especially the transfer of goods at an international level, has always involved a certain degree of risk, which could lead to a conflict between trade partners. Therefore, an official had to intervene. Such a story is preserved in one of the decisions of the Synod of the Patriarchate of Constantinople at the beginning of the 15th century. The remit of the synod was wide. It dealt with legal matters concerning issues of everyday life in late Byzantine society such as, for example, family affairs (see 1.12.1). Here, the high church officials of the capital had to resolve the case of Nicholas and Manuel Koreses,²⁷⁹ on the one side, and George Goudeles,²⁸⁰ on the other. An account of the entire story and the decision of the ecclesiastical court is preserved in the register of the

278 PLP 17387.

279 PLP 13183 and 13180.

280 PLP 4334.

Patriarchate. The legal text refers to the business arrangement between Koreses and Goudeles as a *synthrophia* and presents, according to Klaus-Peter Matschke, a rare example of *colleganza* or a bilateral *commenda* in Byzantium.

Historical significance of the movement: Two aspects underline the significance of the case preserved in the Register of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. One is the unique character of the text itself. The other is connected to the economic and political circumstances of the time. It has become customary in the study of Byzantine trade and economy to refer to a passage of Theophanes Continuatus, according to which Emperor Theophilos²⁸¹ ordered a ship to be burned, once he learned that it belonged to the empress. In his view, it was unacceptable for people of noble ancestry to be engaged in commercial activity.²⁸² However, the reality, especially that of the late Byzantine period, was different. For centuries, the main source of income and power in Byzantium had been landed property. The shrinkage of the empire's territories since the middle of the 14th century left the highest strata of Byzantine society – to which George Goudeles, chancellor of Manuel II Palaiologos,²⁸³ belonged – few opportunities for economic and financial profit. Trade seems to have been one of them, perhaps the most significant one. Moreover, the presence of Italian merchants in Constantinople with networks in the entire Mediterranean and the Black Sea facilitated commercial activities of the Byzantine elite. From the document here, we learn that the Genoese harbour at Pera/Galata in Constantinople was involved in the commercial arrangement between Goudeles and the Koreses family. Furthermore, the text sheds light on the risks to which merchants were exposed during their travels, in this case the turmoil caused by Mongol raids in Northern Asia Minor and shipwreck that led to the loss of some of the goods that were the object of the commercial arrangement. What makes the case even more interesting for the study of Byzantine trade is the fact that Koreses and Goudeles concluded the *commenda* during the Ottoman siege of Constantinople in 1394–1402. The ship with the goods and Manuel Koreses on board left the besieged city in 1400 and headed for the southern shores of the Black Sea, regardless of the complicated political situation.

Type of movement: Voluntary (professional occupation of a merchant).

281 PmbZ 8167, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ19429/html>.

282 Theophanes Continuatus, Book 3, ch. 4, ed. Michael Featherstone and Juan Signes Codoñer, *Chronographiae quae Theophanis Continuati nomine fertur, Libri I–IV*, CFHB 53 (Berlin and Boston, 2015) 128–130, 6–30; Joseph Genesios, *On the Reigns of the Emperors*, III 20, ed. Anni Lesmüller-Werner and Hans Thurn, *Iosephi Genesii regum libri quattuor*, CFHB 14 (Berlin and New York, 1978) 53, 87–4.

283 PLP 21513.

Locations and date of movement: From Constantinople (Pera) to Sinope (Sinop) and Amisos (Samsun); 1400.

Edition used: Miklosich, Franz and Joseph Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca Medii aevi sacra et profana*, vol. 2 (Vienna, 1862) 546, 20–547, 19, no. 675.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Register of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, no. 675

[p. 546] Nicholas Koreses and Manuel Koreses, his son, the sons in the spirit of my modesty [i. e. the patriarch], have come to it when it presided over the synod, and made an accusation against the familiar of my most powerful and holy emperor, the beloved son in the spirit of our modesty, Lord George Goudeles. They said that Manuel Koreses had years earlier had an agreement with him about the use of a ship, and had then dissolved it and made another written agreement about the use of a ship one and a half years earlier, for which he paid one thousand *hyperpyra*, whereas Goudeles paid two thousand six hundred *hyperpyra*. Koreses had agreed that he would take this himself and travel to Amisos and Sinope and elsewhere, wherever he saw fit, in the Black Sea region, and conduct business and sell and buy and exert himself and return to the city [i. e. Constantinople] with the wares, during the whole October of the ninth indiction, and that he would pay first the capital, the three thousand and six hundred *hyperpyra*, but if he made a profit, they that would divide it in equal parts, that Koroses would take the counterpart of the thousand *hyperpyra* [p. 547] and his toils, whereas Goudeles would take the counterpart of the two thousand six hundred *hyperpyra*. But if he did not do this in any way, and did not return on the agreed October, there would be from then on the *hyperpyra* of Goudeles unspent and risk-free, and he would present himself as guarantor for his father, the Lord Nicholas Koreses. And he showed the document of the agreement, which contained this in detail. Michael Koreses, then, reported that when he went to Sinope and Amisos he found matters there in chaos and confusion, as the Scythian was plundering the surrounding places, for which reason he could not sell and buy at all during the period of the agreement, apart from trifles, which he put into the ship and sent in his name to his guarantor and father. But it was lost on the way, when the ship dissolved through wreckage, and, since he could not sell during the agreed time what was left of the wares, he spent the winter there, and traded with it, and safely came back here in spring. When he wanted to settle the account and dissolve this agreement for the use of a ship, Goudeles attempted to ascribe the wares that had been lost at sea and the resulting loss to Koreses alone.

Further reading

Jacoby, David, *The Byzantine Social Elite and the Market Economy, Eleventh to Mid-Fifteenth Century*, in: Alison Frazier and Patrick Nold (eds.), *Essays in Renaissance Thought and Letters in Honor of John Monfasani*, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History 241 (Leiden and Boston 2015) 65–86.

Oikonomidès, Nicolas, *Hommes d'affaires grecs et latins à Constantinople (XIII^e-XV^e siècles)* (Montréal and Paris, 1979).

Matschke, Klaus-Peter, *Geldgeschäfte, Handel und Gewerbe in spätbyzantinischen Rechenbüchern und in der spätbyzantinischen Wirklichkeit. Ein Beitrag zu den Produktions- und Austauschverhältnissen im byzantinischen Feudalismus*, *Jahrbuch für Geschichte des Feudalismus* 3 (1979) 181–204.

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2.5.2 The account book of a Byzantine merchant

Author: Probably a clergyman from Rhodes

Text: *Rhodian Account Book*

Date of text: Between 1380 and 1400

Genre: Account book

Literary context: As it has already been mentioned, we have a better knowledge of trade in the late Byzantine period because there is a greater variety of texts, both in Greek and in Western languages, in comparison with earlier times. This gives us the chance to study the trade in the Levant and the Black Sea region on the basis of first-hand accounts written by those who were involved in the exchange of commodities, namely the merchants. There are account books, among them the famous one of the Venetian Giacomo Badoer who lived in Constantinople from 1436 to 1440 (in Italian),²⁸⁴ notebooks like that of the anonymous official of the metropolis of Thessaloniki (in Greek, the beginning of the 15th century),²⁸⁵ and the acts of the notaries of the Genoese colonies in the Black Sea, the Aegean, and the Eastern Mediterranean.²⁸⁶ The short passage here is an excerpt from one of the few extant account books in the Greek language. It offers us a glimpse at the commercial activities in the Aegean during the last decades of the 14th century.

Historical significance of the movement: Just like the previous text, the passage from the so-called *Rhodian Account Book* documents ongoing trade activity in

284 *Il Libro die contii di Giacomo Badoer (Costantinopoli 1436–1440)*, ed. Umberto Dorini and Tommaso Bertelè, *Il Nouvo Ramusio* 3 (Rome, 1956).

285 Kugéas, Sokrates, *Notizbuch eines Beamten der Metropolis in Thessalonike aus dem Anfang des XV. Jahrhunderts*, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 23 (1914–1919) 143–163.

286 See the numerous volumes of the series *Collana Storica di Fonti e Studi*, initiated by Geo Pistarino.

the Aegean, one of the core areas of the Byzantine Empire, in spite of its deteriorating military power and the emerging Ottoman state. The account book contains data about various issues in a merchant's enterprise such as income, debts, money transfer, and delivery of goods, mostly fabrics, olive oil and citrus fruits. Places mentioned are Ephesus, Kos, the Dodecanese and Makre (Fethiye) in the Aegean, and also Cyprus.

Type of movement: Voluntary (professional occupation of merchants).

Locations and date of movement: From Rhodes to Ephesus; late 14th century.

Edition used: Schreiner, Peter, *Texte zur spätbyzantinischen Finanz- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte in Handschriften der Biblioteca Vaticana*, Studi e Testi 344 (Vatican City, 1991) 70, no. 2, 4, 42–47.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Rhodian Account Book, 2, 4

[p. 70] On 9 March: I sent with Koreses to Ephesus 50 silver *staurata*, for Manuel Saronites. (I sent) again two pieces (of cloth), one 52 cubits long, and the other 54, and in addition also 5 monk's habits, and the cloth for 3 *phelonia*, two *sakkoi* and olive oil.

On 10 March: I gave Nicholas Lagoudes one measure of oil, worth 5 gold ducats and 4 silver *staurata*, and sent with him to Ephesus for Saronites a stitched *phelionion* and four containers of olive oil.

Furthermore, I sent with the ship of the Lord Bestiarites 6 monk's habits and wax for two *staurata*.

I also gave the Lord Antonios Boulgases 32 gold ducats, so that his business associate Marmaras, consul of Theologos (Ephesus) might give to the aforementioned Saronites 32 gold ducats in the same manner, without incurring a risk.

Furthermore, on 28 December, I sent with John Chartoularios 25 gold ducats and candles for 3 *staurata* and the entry of 3 ½ *staurata*, 8 pieces of curd cheese, 200 lemons, 40 bitter oranges, 6 citrons.

Furthermore, on 24 January, (I sent) with Sagoudinos smooth cloth, 43 cubits, and 400 lemons, and with George candles weighing 2 ounces.

Further reading

Jacoby, David, *Trade, Commodities and Shipping in the Medieval Mediterranean* (Aldershot and Brookfield, 1997).

Schreiner, Peter, Das byzantinische Rechnungswesen im Rahmen der Mittelmeerwelt mit besonderer Berücksichtigung spätbyzantinischer Kontobücher des 13. bis 15. Jahrhunderts, in: *Kommunikation zwischen Orient und Okzident. Alltag und Sachkultur*, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-hist. Kl., Sitzungsberichte 619

(Vienna, 1994) 117–141. [repr. In Schreiner, Peter, *Byzantinische Kultur. Eine Aufsatzsammlung*, III: *Die materielle Kultur*, eds. Christina Katsougiannopoulou and Silvia Ronchey, *Opuscula Collecta* 8 (Rome, 2011) ch. IX].

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2.5.3 Mobility due to a grain monopoly

Author: Michael Attaleiates

Text: *History (Historia)*

Date of text: early 1080s

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: The *History* of Michael Attaleiates²⁸⁷ is one of the most authoritative accounts of Byzantine history in the second half of the 11th century since the events that he describes took place in his lifetime.²⁸⁸ The author had studied law in Constantinople and later made a career as a high judicial bureaucrat in the Byzantine capital. He served under at least four emperors and was a member of the Senate (reference 1.4.3). His knowledge of the law is reflected in a synopsis of Roman law, known as *Ponema Nomikon*. Moreover, his high position in Constantinopolitan society allowed him to make a fortune, which he then used for charity work, as another text written by him, the *Diataxis* (Ordinance) of 1077, documents (see 2.4.3). Attaleiates' hostility towards the establishment of the *phoundax* at Rhaidestos (Tekirdağ) and the restrictions to free grain trade might be explained by his own interests. One of his almshouses where food was to be distributed to those in need was situated in the same Thracian city, which means that it was negatively affected by the prescriptions of the government.

Historical significance of the movement: The establishment of the *phoundax* in Rhaidestos on the Thracian coast of the Sea of Marmara is a remarkable example of a state monopoly in Byzantine history. The word comes from the Arabic *fundūq* and corresponds to the Italian *fondaco*, which, in turn, is derived from the Greek *pandocheion* (guesthouse). The facility at Rhaidestos comprised warehouses and quarters for the merchants who were trading there. In Magdalino's view, they may have been of Amalfitan origin. Attaleiates vehemently criticizes the plans of the *logothetes* Nikephoritzes²⁸⁹ to nationalise the grain trade in the

287 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Michael/202/>.

288 Krallis, Dimitris, *Michael Attaleiates and the Politics of Imperial Decline in Eleventh-Century Byzantium*, *Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies* 422 (Tempe, 2012); Krallis, Dimitris, *Serving Byzantium's Emperors. The Courtly Life and Career of Michael Attaleiates* (Cham, 2019).

289 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Nikephoros/63/>.

European hinterland of the Byzantine capital. Yet it is possible that the establishment of the *phoundax* at Rhaidestos was an attempt of the government to secure the grain supply of Constantinople after the Battle of Manzikert (see 1.4.3) and the loss of vast areas in Asia Minor to the Seljuks. Thus, the formerly free trade was restricted to a place that was determined by the state, and buyers could no longer move to another location if they were not satisfied with the offers. What followed had, according to Attaleiates, disastrous results for the supply with grain, the price of which rose eighteen-fold. The *phoundax*, however, did not exist for long – during the rebellion of Nikephoros Bryennios²⁹⁰ in 1077, one of the first things that the villagers did was to destroy “that universal insult and injustice, the *logothetes*’ horrible invention, that threat to the common good”.

Type of movement: Involuntary (prohibition of trade with grain outside the *phoundax*).

Locations and date of movement: From Thrace to Rhaidestos; late 1070s.

Edition used: *Michaelis Attaliatae Historia*, ed. Eudoxos Tsolakis, CFHB 50 (Athens, 2011) 155, 23–156, 25.

Translation used: *The History. Michael Attaleiates*, transl. by Anthony Kaldellis and Dimitris Krallis (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 2012) 367–373 (modified by Dirk Krausmüller).

Michael Attaleiates, *History*

[p. 155] Thus, when he [Nikephoritzes] learnt that in the town of Rhaidestos many carts bring the grain and disperse and sell it at the hostels of the monasteries and the establishments of the Great Church and of many locals, and sell it freely [p. 156] and without hindrance to whoever wishes to buy it, and thus the benefits of abundance find their way to everyone, that most evil man envied the well-being of the world and built a *phoundax* outside the town, ordering through an imperial decree that all the carts had to assemble there. He established a monopoly over this most essential matter, grain, as nobody was able to buy it except from the *phoundax*, this most malicious and demonic thing and name. For from the moment that it was built, the prosperity of the cities disappeared and the wrath of God fell harder upon the realm of the Rhomaioi. It was no longer possible as before that whoever wished bought grain and made an agreement with the seller, and if he should be unhappy with one establishment, he moved to another and then yet another, and the sales were conducted from the carts. Instead of this, now the harvest was brought to the *phoundax*, as if to a prison, and the *phoundax* had many residents who bought grain and traded with it. These people bought the grain in advance, and stored it, and then competed to

290 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Nikephoros/62/>.

make a profit of three gold coins for every gold coin that they had paid. Nobody bought from the carts anymore, neither the captains importing the grain to the capital nor the urban or rural residents, or anybody else. Rather, all selling went through the grain merchants of the *phoundax*, as these men wanted. Their president was the corrupt *phoundakarios* who made up new rules to exploit those bringing in the grain, wrongly taking it away from them, and by collecting heavy fees for use of the facilities he forced sales to yield a much lower profit through all these innovations.

Further reading

Krallis, Dimitris, *Michael Attaleiates and the Politics of Imperial Decline in Eleventh-Century Byzantium* (Tempe, 2012).

Laiou, Angeliki E., God and Mammon: Credit, Trade, Profit and the Canonists, in: Angeliki E. Laiou, *Economic Thought and Economic Life in Byzantium* (Farnham, 2013) I, 261–300.

Magdalino, Paul, The Grain Supply of Constantinople, Ninth – Twelfth Centuries, in: Cyril Mango and Gilbert Dagron (eds.), *Constantinople and Its Hinterland. Papers from the Twenty-Seventh Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Oxford, April 1993*, Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies, Publications 3 (Aldershot and Brookfield, 1995) 35–47.

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2.5.4 Exporting Byzantine know-how in the field of technology

Author: Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos²⁹¹

Text: *On the Governance of the Empire (De administrando imperio)*

Date of text: 948–952

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: To the literary activity of Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos we owe three major works of Byzantine encyclopedism of the 10th century: an antiquarian collection of court ceremonies known as the *Book of Ceremonies*, a work dedicated to the evolution of administrative units in the provinces (*themata*), and a manual on domestic and foreign affairs, dedicated to Constantine's son Romanos (II),²⁹² known in Byzantine studies with its scholarly

291 PmbZ 23734, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25888/html>.

292 PmbZ 26834, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28988/html>.

Latin name *De administrando imperio*.²⁹³ The last work is an indispensable source of data for the history of the numerous states and peoples with which Byzantium came into contact from the 7th to the 10th century. It shows the wide range of Byzantine diplomacy in Afro-Eurasia (see 1.10.0) and contains information that was obviously known to the imperial government but due to differences in genre, never found its way into the works of official historiography.

Historical significance of the movement: One of the most important spheres of interest for Constantinople was the region of the Eurasian steppes; the dominant power there had easy access to the Lower Danube and the Caucasus, areas that were of vital significance for Byzantium. Thus, the empire made major efforts to win the masters of the North Black Sea region as its allies. From the late 7th to the late 10th century, it was the Khazars whose friendship and military efficiency against the Arabs and other polities in the steppes played an important role in Byzantine diplomacy (see 1.10.0). As we can see from the account of *De administrando imperio*, the Khazar dominance in the region was to be strengthened not only through administrative measures but also through the construction of defensive structures, for which Byzantine know-how seems to have been used.

Type of movement: Voluntary (assisting an ally in building a fortress).

Locations and date of movement: From Constantinople to the Chersonesos and then to Sarkel; between 829 and 842.

Edition used: *Constantine Porphyrogenitus, De administrando imperio*, ed. and transl. Gyula Moravcsik and Romilly J. H. Jenkins, CFHB 1 (revised edition) (Washington, D.C., 1985) 182–184, 15–55, ch. 42.

Translation used: Ibid. (modified by Dirk Krausmüller)

Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos, *De administrando imperio*, ch. 42

[p. 182] One must know that from Thessaloniki to the river Danube on which lies the city called Belgrade, it is a journey of eight days, if one is not in haste but travels with breaks for rest. The Turks [Magyars] live beyond the Danube river, in the land of Moravia, but also on this side of it, between the Danube and the Save river. From the lower parts of the Danube river, opposite to Dristra [Silistra], Patzinakia [the land under the control of the Pechenegs] stretches along, and their region of settlement reaches as far as Sarkel, the city of the Khazars, in which three hundred soldiers are posted and annually relieved. Sarkel among them means ‘white house’, and it was built by the *spatharokandidatos* Petronas, surnamed Kamateros,²⁹⁴ when the Khazars asked the emperor Theophilos²⁹⁵

293 Toynbee, Arnold, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus and His World* (London, 1973).

294 PmbZ 5927, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ17122/html>.

that this city should be built for them. For the chagan of that time and the *pech* of Khazaria sent envoys to this same emperor Theophilos and asked that the city of Sarkel be built for them, and the emperor was persuaded by their request and sent to them the aforementioned *spatharokandidatos* Petronas with imperial warships, and sent also warships of the *katepano* of Paphlagonia. This same Petronas reached Cherson and left the warships at Cherson, and, having embarked his men on ships of burden, [p. 184] went off to that place on the Tanais river [the Don River] where he was to build the city. And since the place had no stones suitable for the building of the city, he made some ovens and baked stones suitable for the building of the city, making quicklime out of tiny shells from the river. Now this aforesaid *spatharokandidatos* Petronas, after building the city of Sarkel, went to the emperor Theophilos and said to him: 'If you wish complete control and dominion over the city of Cherson and of the places in it, to prevent that they should slip out of your hand, appoint your own *strategos* and do not trust to their primates and *archons*.' For until the time of Theophilos the emperor, there was no *strategos* sent from here, but the one who administered all was the so-called primate, together with the so-called fathers of the city. The emperor Theophilos took counsel in this matter, whether to send as *strategos* so-and-so or such-an-one, and at last made up his mind that the aforesaid *spatharokandidatos* Petronas should be sent, as one who had experience of the place and was not unskilled in affairs, and so he promoted him to the rank of *protospatharios* and appointed him *strategos* and sent him out to Cherson, ordering that the primate of the time and everyone else were to obey him; and from that time until this day it has been the rule for *strategoi* in Cherson to be appointed from here. This, then, was the building of the city of Sarkel.

Further reading

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Zhivkov, Boris, *Khazaria in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450–1450, vol. 30 (Leiden and Boston, 2015).

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295 PmbZ 8167, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ19429/html>.

2.6.0 Entertainers, sex workers and entrepreneurs

In 1957 Fellini's *La Strada* won the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. The movie tells the story of a young woman sold by her mother to an itinerant street performer, who then joins a travelling circus. The tale of the life of the two main characters shows in a vivid way the everyday reality of entertainment before the invention of cinema and television which was closely linked to mobility. Byzantine sources also do not lack stories about parents who sold their daughters to travelling showmen (but also panderers, with the boundaries often blurred in the Byzantine imagination) because they could not provide for too many children,²⁹⁶ or about entertainers who moved from town to town in order to earn their living. It is a well-known fact that Byzantine high-style secular historiography seldom pays attention to themes dealing with everyday life, especially when it concerned the lower social strata. But entertainment has never been reserved only to the poor. The palace and the capital also had their ways of enjoying themselves. Moreover, the learned Byzantine authors – even if dwelling in the palace or connected to the court – had a lively interest in the unusual and bizarre. Thanks to this fact, we learn from the historiographical work of the court cleric Leo the Deacon²⁹⁷ the story of the Siamese twins from Cappadocia who came to Constantinople on several occasions in the 10th century riding a donkey.²⁹⁸ A similar tale – this time about Siamese twins from Armenia – is told by John Skylitzes,²⁹⁹ a high judge and historian in the 11th century.³⁰⁰ He gives an

296 Justinian I, *Novels*, 14, Prooimion, ed. Rudolf Schöll and Wilhelm Kroll, *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, III: *Novellae* (seventh edition) (Berlin, 1959) 106, 2–11; John Malalas, *Chronicle*, Book 28, 24, ed. Hans Thurn, *Ioannis Malalae Chronographia*, CFHB 35 (Berlin and New York, 2000) 368, 34–40.

297 PmbZ 24547, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ26701/html>.

298 Leo the Deacon, *History*, Book 10, 3, ed. Karl Benedikt Hase, *Leonis Diaconi Caloënsis historiae libri decem*, CSHB (Bonn, 1828) 165, 3–16.

299 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Ioannes/110/>.

300 John Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, ed. Hans Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis historiarum*, CFHB 5 (Berlin and New York, 1973) 232, 73–78; Theophanes Continuatus, Book 6, 4, 49, ed. Im-

account of the death of one of the twins and the surgical intervention by Constantinopolitan medics, which is depicted on one of the miniatures of the famous illuminated manuscript of *Scylitzes Matritensis*. In the 14th century, another Byzantine intellectual, high state official and historian, Nikephoros Gregoras,³⁰¹ reserved considerable space in his historiographical work for the description of a troupe of itinerant acrobats from Egypt (perhaps Gypsies) who travelled in the Near East, Georgia and Armenia, Thrace and Macedonia, and as entertainers often do, also stopped in the biggest city of Byzantium, namely Constantinople.³⁰²

In Late Antiquity entertainment was still deeply rooted in pagan culture, which was rejected by the Christian Church. On moral grounds, too, the Church fathers were extremely sceptical about some of its forms such as theatres, and demanded that they should be closed. Prostitution, often considered entangled with these entertainments, was considered a deadly sin. Others, such as the feast days of pagan deities (*panegyreis*, see 2.5.0) were Christianized by moving festivities to the feasts of saints. But supernatural practices and beliefs connected to entertainment, though incompatible with Christian virtues and teachings, still had a hold on the minds of some Byzantines and seem to have survived throughout the whole Middle Ages. Needless to say, such services, which were offered by more or less marginalised groups, necessitated mobility for various reasons, not only fear of persecution but also the need to find more customers. The vigilant eye of the Church could not let them out of its sight. Yet the fact that canonists kept noting activities and services considered contradictory to the ideal of a Christian believer shows clearly that they never seem to have lost their attractiveness.

Further reading

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Leontsini, Stavroula, *Die Prostitution im Frühen Byzanz*, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Vienna (Vienna, 1988).

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manuel Bekker, *Theophanes Continuatus, Ioannes Cameniata, Symeon Magister, Georgius Monachus* (Bonn, 1838) 433, 1–11.

301 PLP 4443.

302 Nikephoros Gregoras, *Roman History*, Book 8, 10, 1–5, ed. Ludwig Schopen, *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina historia*, vol. 1 (Bonn, 1829) 348, 6–351, 6.

2.6.1 Prostitution in an area of commercial activities

Author: Anonymous compiler

Text: *Patria of Constantinople* (*Patria Konstantinoupoleos*)

Date of text: Late 10th century

Genre: Patrography

Literary context: The *Patria Konstantinoupoleos* is a remarkable compilation of accounts about the history of various buildings and monuments in the Byzantine capital. It was written in the late 10th century and includes material from the *Parastaseis syntomoi chronikai* (“Brief Historical Notes”), which were compiled in the 8th century, and from a Late Antique patrograph, Hesychios of Miletos, as well as a story about the construction of the Hagia Sophia, and other information. Despite its taste for legends and interest in the strange and bizarre, the *Patria* have preserved data unknown from other texts, thus becoming an indispensable and valuable source for the topography of Byzantine Constantinople.

Historical significance of the movement: Prostitution is a service that has always had a connection to mobility – either of those practicing it or of the customers. As the early biography of Empress Theodora³⁰³ shows – provided that we take for granted everything that Procopius of Caesarea³⁰⁴ narrates in his invective *Secret History* –, a sex worker could both accommodate and also visit the clients, depending on demand.³⁰⁵ The tale that the famous late antique historian tells about his literary “victim”, to quote Hans-Georg Beck, is one of the best-known accounts of prostitution in Early Byzantium. For later times we have at our disposal a much smaller number of texts. This is surely due to the growing authority and power of the Orthodox Church not only in medieval society but also in Byzantine literary production and its preservation and transmission. This does not mean, however, that prostitution ceased to exist – the repentant prostitute remained a common motif in Byzantine hagiography,³⁰⁶ just as fornicators kept their place among the sinners burning in hell, as they were depicted in the mural paintings of

303 PLRE III B 1240–1241.

304 PLRE III B 1060–1066.

305 Procopius of Caesarea, *Secret History*, 9, 1–19, ed. Jakob Haury and Gerhard Wirth, *Procopii Caesariensis opera omnia*, III: *Historia quae dicitur arcana* (Leipzig, 1963) 56, 9–59, 23. See also now Betancourt, Roland, *Byzantine Intersectionality: Sexuality, Gender, and Race in the Middle Ages* (Princeton and Oxford, 2020).

306 Leontios of Neapolis, *Life of Saint John the Almsgiver*, 38 and 50, ed. André-Jean Festugière and Lennart Rydén, *Léontios de Néapolis, Vie de Syméon le Fou et Vie de Jean de Chypre. Édition commentée*, Institut français d’archéologie de Beyrouth, Bibliothèque archéologique et historique 95 (Paris, 1974) 389, 96–101 and 400–401, 24–61 = 36 and 43, ed. Heinrich Gelzer, *Leontios’ von Neapolis Leben des heiligen Iohannes des Barmherzigen Erzbischof von Alexandrien*, Sammlung ausgewählter kirchen- und dogmengeschichtlicher Quellschriften 5 (Freiburg und Leipzig, 1893) 73, 4–9 and 87, 12–89, 13.

Byzantine churches. The account of the *Patria*, though being short, gives further details about prostitution in the Eastern Mediterranean during the High Middle Ages. It informs us about the location of the brothel frequented by visiting “lovers” – it was situated near the Zeugma and was thus close to the harbours on the Golden Horn where travellers, sailors, soldiers, and other people on the move could easily go. However, the services offered there seem to have caused the displeasure of Emperor Theophilos,³⁰⁷ at whose order the prostitutes were expelled from the brothel and the building was turned into a hospital.³⁰⁸

Type of movement: Voluntary (of the customers) and involuntary (expulsion of the women).

Locations and date of movement: From abroad and Constantinople to the Zeugma district of the capital; before 842.

Edition used: *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum*, ed. Theodor Preger (Leipzig, 1901) 185, 15–186, 4, ch. 2, 65.

Translation used: *Accounts of Medieval Constantinople. The Patria*, transl. by Albrecht Berger (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 2013) 95–97 (modified by Dirk Krausmüller).

Patria of Constantinople, ch. 2, 65

[p. 185] On the hostel of Theophilos – Constantine the Great built the big hospital building that can be seen on top of the hill, near the so-called Zeugma, as a brothel. (It also became the house of the patrician Isidore, and later a convent, and Theophilos turned it into a hostel). A statue of Aphrodite stood there on a braided stone pillar. Those in love went there and consorted with the adulterous women living there, and besides [p. 186] this house there was found no other brothel nor such adulterous women elsewhere. Inside the house were compartments, separated at the columns with rings and curtains, and in this way the wanton lovers enjoyed themselves.

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307 PmbZ 8167, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ19429/html>.

308 Theophanes Continuatus, Book 3, 8, ed. Michael Featherstone and Juan Signes Codoñer, *Chronographiae quae Theophanis Continuati nomine fertur, Libri I–IV*, CFHB 53 (Berlin and Boston, 2015) 138, 6–10.

2.6.2 An itinerant dwarf entertains the imperial court

Author: Constantine Manasses³⁰⁹

Text: *Description of a Small Human* (*Ekphrasis anthropou mikrou*)

Date of text: Second half of the 12th century

Genre: Rhetoric

Literary context: The 12th century produced especially rich sources for those who study the connections between political power, grouped around the Byzantine emperor and his family, and literary production written in different registers of the Greek language. The names of some literati close to the court are known, such as Theodore Prodromos,³¹⁰ John Tzetzes,³¹¹ “Manganeios” Prodromos³¹² and Constantine Manasses. The latter owed his career to the patronage of various members of the imperial family of the Komnenoi, of whom the *sebastokratorissa* Irene³¹³ seems to have played the most important role.³¹⁴ It is to her that Manasses dedicated his famous verse chronicle. His oeuvre consists of a verse romance of which only fragments have survived (*Aristandros and Kallithea*), a description of his travel to the Holy Land in 1160 (*Hodoiporikon*, see 1.11.4), and numerous works in which he displays his proficiency in rhetoric. Apart from orations dedicated to members of the imperial family, he shows his talent in composing descriptions (*ekphraseis*) of events, objects, and creatures. The topics chosen include mosaics, the hunting of cranes, goldfinches and chaffinches, and an itinerant dwarf. The latter originated from Chios and visited Constantinople where he performed at the imperial palace. The courtier Manasses saw him and decided to write a description of the extraordinary visitor with whom he even talked in order to learn details about his life.

Historical significance of the movement: As has already been mentioned, Manasses’ description of the “small man” belongs to a number of texts written by members of the political and intellectual elite of Constantinople. The interest of such people was often provoked by performances of itinerant entertainers. These, for their part, as we learn from Manasses’ conversation with the dwarf, travelled from town to town and also came to the capital, where they could perform before a larger and, needless to say, wealthier audience. The acrobats from Egypt and the dwarf from Chios even had the chance to amuse the court of

309 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Konstantinos/302/>.

310 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Theodoros/25001/>.

311 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Ioannes/459/>.

312 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Manganeios/101/>.

313 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Eirene/20115/>.

314 Rhoby, Andreas, *Verschiedene Bemerkungen zur Sebastokratorissa Eirene und zu Autoren in ihrem Umfeld*, *Nea Rhome* 6 (2009) 305–336.

the emperor himself. Thus they earned their own living and supported their relatives through their performing skills.

Type of movement: Voluntary (occupational mobility of a travelling entertainer).

Locations and date of movement: From Chios to Constantinople with probable stopovers; second half of the 12th century.

Edition used: Messis, Charis and Ingela Nilsson, Constantin Manassès, *La description d'un petit homme*. Introduction, texte, traduction et commentaires, *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 65 (2015) 169–194, here 189–190, lines 22–27, 55–60 and 65–70.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Constantine Manasses, *Description of a Small Human*

[p. 189] Such a stunted mannikin was also produced by the island of Chios, and the monstrosity was brought to the city of Byzas [Constantinople] and lived in the palace. And there was a crowd of people who ran around him and watched him and took him in the middle and wanted to speak with him, and the mannikin was in their midst like a mule among thoroughbred Arab horses, so extraordinary was his stuntedness, so strange his shortness. I, too, saw him then and watched him. (...) [p. 190] I myself saw the man thrust out the staff in his hands and challenge some to a fight (for he was fond of horseplay, when he found some who would play with him), and nevertheless stand without being in danger. I saw him become embittered about some of those who played with him, and I repeated by myself this saying: 'Even the ant has gall.' And I also heard him speak and it seemed to me that his manner of speech was lisping and came up from somewhere deep down. (...) It was also said that though he had to make do with such shanks, and use such legs, he was sent away from his country and circled cities and went around towns and was found well able to procure things, for it was said that he was one who cared and looked after his kindred and considered staying at home to be harmful.

Further reading

Nilsson, Ingela, *Writer and Occasion in Twelfth-Century Byzantium. The Authorial Voice of Constantine Manasses* (Cambridge, 2020).

Taxidis, Ilias, *The Ekphraseis in the Byzantine Literature of the 12th Century*, Hellenica 90 (Alessandria, 2020).

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2.6.3 Matchmakers visit the homes of their customers

Author: Kekaumenos³¹⁵**Text:** *Strategikon (Consilia et narrationes)***Date of text:** ca. 1078**Genre:** Treatise with advice about government and domestic affairs

Commentary: In his advice to his relatives, the provincial official Kekaumenos does not limit himself only to questions of power and economy (see 3.3.2).³¹⁶ In the fashion of a conservative, orthodox official from the countryside, he also discusses family matters. In Byzantium, marriages were usually arranged by the parents. When we look at Greek tax registers and the acts of the Byzantine judiciary, we see that a second marriage – though barely tolerated by the Orthodox Church – was a part of everyday life. Various reasons, in particular wars and diseases, could lead to the premature death of one of the partners. Adultery, too, was not lacking in Byzantium. The hard reality of the everyday life of a Byzantine family where a living had to be earned and children had to be nursed, drove many people to abandon the ideal of the abstinent widow(er) and to look for a new partner. Kekaumenos gives us an interesting glimpse at Byzantine microhistory, informing us about women, who were obviously acquainted with the family life of other members of the community and hence offered their services to persons who were in search of a new partner. Their work was to visit the homes of their customers and agitate in favour of those who had paid them for this service. A somewhat similar story is preserved in the Greek translation of the *Book of the Philosopher Syntipas*, a cycle of stories relating to Sindbad. Here, however, the old woman visiting the house of the wife on behalf of a young man who sent her fits the image of a procuress.³¹⁷

Type of movement: Voluntary.**Locations and date of movement:** Unknown places, probably in Thessaly where the author lived; 11th century.**Edition used:** Kekaumenos, *Consilia et Narrationes*. Greek text (digitally) edited by Charlotte Roueché, online 2013: <https://ancientwisdoms.ac.uk/library/kekaumenos-consilia-et-narrationes/index.html>.**Translation used:** Ibid. (modified by Dirk Krausmüller)

315 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Anonymus/274/>.

316 Litavrin, Gennadij, *Kekavmen, Sovety i rasskazy. Poučenie vizantijskogo polkovodca XI veka. Podgotovka tekste, vvedenie, perevod s grečeskogo i kommentarij* (2nd edition) (Saint Petersburg, 2003).

317 *Syntipas*, ed. Victor Jernstedt, *Michaelis Andreopuli liber Syntipae*, Zapiski Imperatorskoj akademii nauk po istoriko-filologičeskomu otdeleniju 11/8 (Saint Petersburg, 1912) 38, 12/27–41, 9/25.

Kekaumenos, *Strategikon*, ch. 131-132

[p. 246] He who has buried his wife has lost half or even the greater part of his life, as well, if she is good. And if he will be modest, he will be great before God and men; he himself will live in much security and happiness, raising his children well, and his children will ride along as if on a carriage, and his house will be in a peaceful state. But, if he is pierced by the sting of wantonness, especially if he appears to be continent, he weeps when he enters and leaves the house, as if indeed remembering his wife, of blessed memory, and puts forward as an excuse the neglected state of his house, and the bad condition of his children; he will befriend women who have experience in procuring – whom they call ‘gossips’; he will deem them worthy of his table, and will honour the dishonourable, the wretch. When he has given them what they need, he makes them great promises, if they will procure him a beautiful wife. They promise him a better one; then, having been paid in advance for this by a woman, they go to her and say: ‘We have found you the kind of man you wanted- enjoy his goods’. Then they return to the wretch, extolling her. After enchanting his ears, and, every day, talking to her and to him in a pleasing way, and enjoying the goods of both of them, they persuade him.

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3 Scales, configurations and perspectives

This section depicts different representations of movement depending on the number of people involved and their interrelations. The accounts by ambassadors and messengers are rare ego-documents that talk not only about the circumstances of their travels, which are highlighted here, but could also be further explored with regard to their experiences in distant places and their perceptions of the world outside Byzantium. Kinship groups, families and clans, are depicted as moving due to necessity or under duress, while the intentional movement of larger groups and confederations of people is represented as potentially violent and threatening. The diasporas and networks that are formed by these people are treated by the Byzantine authors with distant respect and an undercurrent of suspicion.

Claudia Rapp

3.1.0 Ego-documents of ambassadors and messengers

A diplomatic service relying on the activity of a permanent ambassador who represents the interests of a sending state in a receiving state is a phenomenon that goes back to late medieval Italian city-states. Medieval polities – including the Byzantine Empire – had to resort to other means when there was need for negotiation. The usual procedure was to send an envoy (or several) who represented the ruler. As noted by various scholars, Byzantium owed its thousand-year-long existence in part to its diplomacy (see 1.10.0). Diplomatic activities were initiated in the imperial palace of Constantinople (and the patriarchate, especially in the late Byzantine period), yet it was seldom the case that the emperor went abroad in order to negotiate with foreign powers. Therefore, the state – which often meant the emperor – had to rely on ambassadors and envoys to represent the interests of the empire.

This link between the palace and foreign policy meant that the diplomatic service was closely connected to and associated with the elite of the empire (see 2.1.0). This does not mean that belonging to the ruling dynasty and the court was the only or most significant criterion for choosing the proper envoy. On the occasion of an embassy to Cilicia headed by Theodore Metochites¹ and John Glykys² (whom he calls “the best of the wise ones”), Nikephoros Gregoras,³ a scholar and high official in the capital, lists the requirements that a good envoy was expected to meet. Apart from experience, he mentions good knowledge in theology and Greek language.⁴ Thus, it comes as no surprise that a good number of literati – naturally those who enjoyed the trust of the government – served as ambassadors and envoys of Byzantine emperors. Spurred by their literary interests and rhetorical ambition, these men would sometimes describe their diplomatic service to the empire.

1 PLP 17982.

2 PLP 4271.

3 PLP 4443.

4 Nikephoros Gregoras, *Roman History*, Book 6, 8, 1, ed. Ludwig Schopen, *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina historia*, CSHB, vol. 1 (Bonn, 1829) 193, 18–194, 9.

Ego-accounts of Byzantine ambassadors have been transmitted to us in different ways. Sometimes their authors included them in larger narratives such as historiographical works. That is the case with Nikephoros Gregoras' mission to Serbia in the 1320s, which he described in one of his letters and then again in his *Roman History* (see below). Another example of this practice is the *History* of the Paulician heresy, which was written by the monk Peter of Sicily, an envoy of Emperor Basil I⁵ to the Paulician stronghold of Tephrike in the 870s. Peter was sent to negotiate the exchange of prisoners of war (see 1.6.3 and 1.6.5) and after his return wrote a history of the Paulicians, in which he included the account of his own mission. Embassies could also be described in letters. To name one of the earliest examples: Leo Choirosphaktes,⁶ an outstanding intellectual with close connections to the court who distinguished himself in diplomatic service, wrote letters in which he gave accounts of his missions abroad. His diplomatic activity stretched from the Lower Danube, where he tried to settle problems with Bulgaria's ruler Symeon,⁷ to the Euphrates, where he negotiated with the Arabs. He engineered the release of the prisoners of war whom the Arabs had taken captive after the sack of Thessaloniki in 904 (see 1.3.1). Though Choirosphaktes – who was praised by one of his correspondents as the best negotiator of his time – is known for the letters that he wrote during his missions, his accounts are quite laconic. In a letter that he sent from Baghdad in 906 he explains that he was ill and therefore could give no details about this important mission.⁸ More information about a Byzantine embassy can be found in the correspondence of Leo, metropolitan of Synada and *synkellos* of the Patriarch of Constantinople.⁹ In 996–998 Leo served as an envoy to the Western Roman Emperor Otto III¹⁰ and to Rome, where he supported the appointment of the antipope John XVI Philagathos.¹¹

5 PmbZ 832, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ11920/html> and PmbZ 20837, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22990/html>.

6 PmbZ 24343, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ26497/html>.

7 PmbZ 27467, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ29622/html>.

8 Leo Choirosphaktes, *Letters*, 21 and 25, ed. Gioacchino Strano, *Leone Choirosphaktes, corrispondenza. Introduzione, testo critico, traduzione e note di commento*, Pubblicazioni del Centro Studi sull'Antico Cristianesimo 2 (Catania, 2008) 86, 1–9 and 90, 10–11 = 15 and 19, ed. Georges Kolias, *Léon Choerosphactès, magistre, proconsul et patrice. Biographie – correspondance (texte et traduction)*, Texte und Forschungen zur byzantinisch-neugriechischen Philologie 31 (Athens, 1939) 91, 1–9 and 97, 11.

9 PmbZ 24416, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ26570/html>.

10 PmbZ 26213, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28367/html>.

11 PmbZ 23486, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25640/html>. Leo of Synada, *Letters*, 1–12, ed. Martha Pollard Vinson, *The Correspondence of Leo, Metropolitan of Synada and Syncellus*, CFHB 23; DOT 8 (Washington, D.C., 1985) 2–22.

We possess detailed information about the embassy of John Kontostephanos to Jerusalem in the early 1160s because it was described by a member of the delegation, Constantine Manasses, an intellectual at the Byzantine court who enjoyed the patronage of the *sebastokratorissa* Irene Komnene (see 1.11.4). Manasses was not, however, the head of the mission but merely accompanied those who were to negotiate in the East. One of the leading figures in Byzantine literature and politics of the 13th century, the historian George Akropolites,¹² also served the early Palaiologan emperors as a diplomat. In his history, he briefly mentions his embassy to the Bulgarian capital Tărnovo in 1260.¹³ Unfortunately, his historiographical work ends with the events of the following year, thus omitting the important negotiations at the Council of Lyon in 1274, where a Byzantine delegation headed by Akropolites signed the union with the Catholic Church.¹⁴ Moreover, Gregoras, when listing the requirements for envoys, mentions that John Glykys wrote a report about the embassy to Cilicia, which, however, has not survived.¹⁵

Starting with the 13th century, the number of surviving ego-documents of Byzantine ambassadors gradually increases. Thus, Nicholas Mesarites, metropolitan of Ephesus and author of a long *epitaphios* (funeral oration) for his brother John, which also presents an eye-witness account of the Fall of Constantinople to the Crusaders, described his journey from Nicaea to the Latin-occupied Constantinople in 1214, where he had a discussion with Cardinal Pelagius of Albano about dogmatic differences between the Orthodox and the Catholic Church.¹⁶ Two literati – Theodore Metochites and his student Nikephoros Gregoras – visited Serbia where they negotiated with the kings Stefan Uroš II Milutin (1282–1321) and Stefan Uroš III Dečanski (1322–1331) respectively. The former describes his mission in a report to a high court official (see below), whereas the latter tells the story of his travel in an informal letter to a

12 PLP 518.

13 George Akropolites, *History*, ch. 84, ed. August Heisenberg and Peter Wirth, *Georgii Acropolitae opera*, vol. 1 (revised edition) (Stuttgart, 1978) 175, 26–176, 10.

14 George Pachymeres, *Historical Narration*, Book 5, 17, ed. Albert Failler and Vitalien Laurent, *Georges Pachymères, Relations historiques, Livres IV–VI*, CFHB 24/2 (Paris, 1984) 491, 30–493, 12.

15 Nikephoros Gregoras, *Roman History*, Book 6, 8, 2, ed. Schopen, vol. 1, 194, 19–22.

16 Heisenberg, August, *Neue Quellen zur Geschichte des lateinischen Kaisertums und der Kirchenunion*, III: *Der Bericht des Nikolaos Mesarites über die politischen und kirchlichen Ereignisse des Jahres 1214*, Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Philologisch und Historische Klasse, Jahrgang 1923, 3 [repr. in Heisenberg, August, *Quellen und Studien zur spätbyzantinischen Geschichte*, Variorum Reprints (London, 1973) ch. II/3] ch. 12–32, 19–33.

friend.¹⁷ The growing threat of the Ottoman conquest intensified diplomatic activities between Byzantium and the West. Two intellectuals with a vivid interest in the Latin language and the achievements of Renaissance Italy – Demetrios Kydones (see below) and Manuel Chrysoloras¹⁸ – served as envoys of John V Palaiologos¹⁹ and his son Manuel II²⁰ to Western Europe. They both expressed their astonishment at the greatness of the city of Rome and their hope that they might help the fatherland. At the end, the pressure of the Ottomans forced the highly educated emperor Manuel II Palaiologos to leave his besieged capital and search for help in various places in Western Europe.²¹ From two of his stations there – Paris and London – he sent to his addressees in Constantinople reports about his diplomatic activity. The last great effort of Byzantine diplomacy to save the doomed empire was the signing of a church union with Pope Eugene IV²² in Florence in 1439. It has left us with the longest ego-account of an imperial envoy. About a decade before the Ottomans conquered Constantinople in 1453, Sylvester Syropoulos²³ wrote his famous *Mémoires* in which he described the mission of John VIII Palaiologos²⁴ and his entourage to Italy.²⁵

The aim of Byzantine diplomacy and its envoys may have been negotiations. Yet, ego-documents of imperial ambassadors not only report on their political talks but often also give rich details about their journeys (see 4.2.0). This peculiarity of Byzantine diplomats' narratives comes across very clearly in the last edition of Metochites' *Presbeutikos*: more than the half of the account (p. 292–310 of p. 291–328) describes the travel from Constantinople via Thessaloniki to Skopje (?) and the reception at the court of the Serbian king. Apart from offering extensive narrations about land and sea trips, accommodation (sometimes in peasant houses), and weather conditions, Byzantine ambassadors do not hesitate to share their opinion about the other. A common theme is the contrast between their *agroikia* (wilderness) and the superiority of Byzantine culture, as seen by people whose life and career took place in Constantinople, in the retinue of the emperor. However, this changed to a certain extent when a group of literati

17 Nikephoros Gregoras, *Letters*, 32b, ed. Pietro Luigi Leone, *Nicephori Gregorae epistulae* (Matino, 1982), II 103–124 = *Roman History*, Book 8, 14, 3–8, ed. Schopen, vol. 1, 374, 19–383, 22.

18 Manuel Chrysoloras, *Letters*, 1–2, PG 156, cols 24–57; PLP 31165.

19 PLP 21485.

20 PLP 21513.

21 Gautier, Paul, Un récit inédit du siège de Constantinople par les Turcs (1394–1402), *Revue des études byzantines* 23 (1965) 100–117, here 102, 31–106, 37, esp. 106, 15–22.

22 PLP 6200.

23 PLP 27217.

24 PLP 21481.

25 Laurent, Vitalien (ed.), *Les "Mémoires" du Grand Ecclésiarque de l'Église de Constantinople Sylvestre Syropoulos sur le concile de Florence (1438–1439)* (Paris, 1971).

became acquainted with the culture of the Catholic West, and the Palaiologan dynasty set its hopes on the Pope and Western countries. At that point some of the ego-documents began to reflect a certain (positive) change in the attitude of some imperial diplomats towards their diplomatic partners, on whose assistance the survival of the empire was dependent.

Further reading

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Grigori Simeonov

3.1.1 Travelling to a Balkan neighbour during winter

Author: Theodore Metochites

Text: *Presbeutikos* (logos)

Date of text: 1299 or shortly after

Genre: Rhetoric

Literary context: Metochites' eyewitness report of his mission, known under the name of *Presbeutikos*, is considered one of the most famous ego-documents of Byzantine ambassadors. It looks back to an old tradition of envoys writing their reports of diplomatic missions to foreign lands. Here one needs to mention

Priskos' account of the negotiations with Attila the Hun in Pannonia in 449 (of which only fragments survived),²⁶ the mission of Nonnosos²⁷ to the Kingdom of Axum (in East Africa) in the 6th century (his report is lost and we only have a summary by Patriarch Photios),²⁸ and the ego-document of Zemarchos²⁹ about the embassy to the Gök Turks in Central Asia in 569 (also lost, but a description of the mission based on Zemarchos' account has survived in the historiographical work of Menander the Guardsman).³⁰ After a hiatus of several hundred years the tradition resumed in the 13th century, when Mesarites and Metochites offered their diplomatic services to the Laskaris and Palaiologan dynasties. Unlike Priskos who accompanied the ambassadors sent by Constantinople but was not involved in the negotiations, the author of the *Presbeutikos* also served as the head of the mission. Thus, Metochites' report is the first wholly preserved ego-account of an imperial diplomat in Byzantine history since Zemarchos (the beginning of Mesarites' work is lost due to manuscript damage, though the description of his journey is intact).

As already mentioned, more than half of the text describes the trip and the reception of the Byzantine mission. The author speaks extensively about the weather and the accommodation of the envoys, which gives him the opportunity to indulge in high-style rhetoric. A common theme is the difference between the Byzantines and the Triballians (an archaism for Serbs), where the neighbours of the empire in the northern Balkans are considered to be in all respects inferior to the Byzantines. The only exception is physical strength, which attracted the attention of Metochites, who ironically remarks that his hosts were at least doing their best at imitating the Byzantine way of life. Moreover, he often underlines the fact that an imperial embassy was coming, headed – naturally – by him, thus indulging in the vanity of a high imperial official and Constantinopolitan intellectual. Another reason for the boastful tone of his diplomatic account is the fact that the report was addressed to a high

26 *Priscus Panita excerpta et fragmenta*, ed. Pia Carolla (Berlin and New York, 2008); Blockley, Roger, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire. Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus, II: Text, Translation and Historiographical Notes*, ARCA Classical and Medieval Texts, Papers and Monographs 10 (Liverpool, 1983) 221–400.

27 PLRE III B 948.

28 Photios, *Bibliotheca*, 3, ed. Luciano Canfora et al., *Fozio, Biblioteca* (Pisa, 2016) 14–16 = ed. René Henry, *Photius, Bibliothèque* (Paris, 1959) I, 4–7.

29 PLRE III B 1416–1417.

30 Menander the Guardsman, *Fragments*, 10, 2–5, ed. Roger Blockley, *The History of Menander the Guardsman. Introductory Essay, Text, Translation, and Historiographical Notes*, ARCA Classical and Medieval Texts, Papers and Monographs 17 (Liverpool, 1985) 116, 3–126, 24; PLRE III B 873.

functionary of the Byzantine government, most likely the *mesazon* (chancellor) Nikephoros Choumnos.³¹

Historical significance of the movement: Before he left for Serbia in 1299, Theodore Metochites had already participated in a diplomatic mission. In 1295 he had accompanied John Glykys on an embassy to the Armenian Kingdom in Cilicia. Because of the growing military power of Serbia under Stefan Milutin, who threatened the Byzantine possessions in Macedonia, Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos³² was forced to negotiate with his neighbour in the Balkans. For this purpose, a Byzantine mission led by Metochites travelled to the Serbian court. The result of the negotiations was the marriage of Milutin to Simonis,³³ the five-year-old daughter of Andronikos II, and a peace treaty between both powers. Further diplomatic missions in the service of the emperor won Metochites the trust and favour of Andronikos. Eventually he was appointed to the post of great *logothetes*, which allowed him to accumulate enormous power and wealth. This high social status found its expression in the restoration of the Chora Church in Constantinople, where the donor portrait of Metochites kneeling before Christ – one of the masterpieces of Byzantine art – is still preserved.

Type of movement: Voluntary (diplomatic mission).

Locations and date of movement: From Constantinople through Thrace and Thessaloniki to the Serbian Kingdom, probably Skopje; winter of 1299.

Edition used: *Theodorus Metochites Orationes*, ed. Ioannis Polemis and Eleni Kaltsogianni, Bibliotheca Teubneriana 2031 (Berlin and Boston, 2019) 291–328, no. 8, ch. 3–15.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Theodore Metochites, *Presbeutikos*, ch. 3–15

[p. 293] [ch. 3, lines 1–17] As we were travelling on, the Triballian who accompanied us on our travel tested us, inquiring from where he would get the food and any other necessity on the road, and he said: ‘Most certainly from the land and the people that we pass on our journey, because this is our custom, when envoys arrive and turn up.’ I responded: ‘My good man, this is not our custom, for the imperial kindness and greatness is sufficient and more than sufficient for all envoys both when they stay as long as it is necessary and when they return home. And this is partly the gift and the pride of the emperor who honours the embassy and partly also the necessary provender for a great many and in fact all days of the journey. This whole land through which we are travelling is the emperor’s. It is

31 PLP 30961.

32 PLP 21436.

33 PLP 21398.

free and exempt from all burdens and annoyances, apart from the taxes that we consider appropriate, and enjoys the kindness of the ruler. And you now have both as it has been said (for you know it). You will get the provender that you have from the emperor, and you will sometimes get in addition perhaps also gifts from us as it is proper when we are in our lands.' (...)

[p. 295] [ch. 4, lines 51–57] For you know that this year's winter was very harsh, so much so that one wonders if there was ever such a one at another time, and there was a lot of snow, and a fierce roaring of winds from the North. So it was in our lands and especially in Byzantium, and we were imprisoned in our houses as if in some holes, especially when they had underground rooms (for elsewhere it was unbearable), and most of the time we were shut off from all roads and travels. (...)

[p. 295][ch. 5, lines 1–43] When there was need then to go out nevertheless, we went to the palace, on many days walking on foot and leaning on a staff because of the slipperiness. I did not ride a horse as I usually do because the snow was piled up and rose high and was poured out in such a way that it subsided under animals when they passed with loads, and did not provide a solid or fixed or safe base but let them glide in up to the hams, so that they were stuck and collapsed and fell. And indeed, I know this, too, [p. 296] that I did not yet go out of the city at all after it had ceased to snow, since the snow that had fallen covered the earth for a long time, and most of it had not yet thawed and there was a good chance that the season would bring more of the same, especially for one who was about to travel in Thrace, and thus we were sorely tried. For you know the Thracian winds (this was for us the worst part of the winter), which occur together with snow, together with rain, and which assault from all directions and lash and beat and lacerate, coming from the plains there that are very wide and boundless and entirely unconnected with mountains and not walled off by them, as if from some vast and stormy sea. When one travels through them, they sometimes blow all of a sudden directly into one's face and prevent weapon-carrying leaders or those who lead horses from going forward, and sometimes pull them down from the side and wear them out together with their animals. For this reason we often attempted to set out in the morning but when we had just started or had proceeded a little way, we could not bear it at all and returned again from where we had come, or rested immediately and got off our horses, on the chance that we might find a village or an estate in the meantime, which was very close by, where we could each time inquire from each other about the road and the time, which we would reach first, and especially if it was close, whether it was necessary to stop there, and no longer travel or whether it was possible to force ourselves to continue our journey despite all difficulties. And with all eagerness we stopped off at villagers and rustics whom Winter had imprisoned at home, and most gladly partook of the common shelter and fire. We all joined and mixed and rolled

together in the ashes of the fire, jointly surrounding the warmth for our common need and our common necessity, and no-one at all demanded from anyone that he move away, for we [p. 297] could not unjustly or tyrannically deprive of our fire wretched creatures, and old women and babies who were naked and lamenting and tossed about through the common need and who had bodily illnesses. Instead, we were very grateful and deigned them worthy of the common need, commonly partaking of what was ours.

[p. 297–298] [ch. 6, lines 1–29] And this was necessary when we stopped off somewhere. But on the road, it was even more necessary to wear as many cloaks as possible on the entire body, when as I have said, we were exposed to the winds. If anyone was to withstand even a little the mishap that dominated the season, I think, I, too, could bring forth a great many things. Then, more than at any time, my head was covered, my whole body was shrouded, and my feet were bound, and even so I could barely withstand the onslaught, and not without suffering. Thus the extreme cold overcame us in all ways and touched us painfully, and so did the winds that were blowing. Indeed, here something happened to the Triballian, my fellow-traveller, which is worth mentioning. Until that point he had walked in utter contempt of that evil hour, as it seemed. He appeared to put his trust in some habit and the power of his body, when confronted with any difficulty and any problem, as it was firm and hardy and hale. And he cared nothing at all for himself and his body, when he battled against that great hardship of the season. Accordingly, he took no care at all for the head and did not make provisions for it, and if the weather was inclement, put on just a little felt hat that was fashioned according to their custom. And what is more, it merely sat on the crown and was useless on both ends, especially since it did not cover at all the back of the head and was not put around it, so that he fought with a naked head, as the saying goes. And he stuck out his neck as far as he could against the insolence of the season and the winds, and he wore the little felt hat only as long as he was on horseback, which [p. 298] made me think that it was a law for riders. But when it was necessary for him to get down from the animal in some place, he immediately pulled it off and threw it somewhere. And for the longest time the miscreant stood in the open and showed himself to us with a completely unclad and naked head, as if he were a statue (...)

[p. 298] [ch. 6, lines 37–45] We lodged in a village (its name is Tarchaneiou, a short space before the city of Kypsela [Ipsala]) since on this day we were in truth completely exhausted by the winter. In the morning when it was necessary to move on, the Triballian whose custom it was to meet us quickly and always call out my people before they were ready, had not yet shown himself for a reason. First, we did not know what this was about but then he sent openly and reported to us that he wished to stay put on this day. For in the previous night he had taken ill and was now very sick so that he could not move on yet (...) [p. 298] [ch. 6, lines

54–62]: Not just the season but also I myself attacked him with a great number of criticisms [p. 299] and reproaches. And I said to him: ‘You fool were completely ignorant about the nature of our lands and seasons and about how one should best behave in them. You should have obeyed, you should have taken heed, and you should have changed your mind, before you thought about it, and listened to us who were kindly disposed to you and taught you our conditions of which you were ignorant, so that you could change your ways. You should not have been so haughty nor shown contempt by erring in matters where there was the greatest danger.’ (...)

[p. 300] [ch. 7, lines 1–17] Thus we stayed in this place and in a second one, since the man was feeling better. And at the same time the weather changed and became warm, and indeed it appeared that gradually it would become even warmer. From there we set out and travelled again to a third one. And as far as it was possible, we covered the sick man who was now quite obedient, and we swaddled his body and wrapped it in felt completely from head to toe, and we did so partly with wool and skins and partly with a great many weavings from linen, as much as he could bear and endure it. And so as not to dwell on each and every detail, after toiling some days of which I do not know the exact number, we came to the exceedingly great and beautiful city that belongs to the emperor in the West, Thessaloniki. Our coming had been known already beforehand by its inhabitants who are our friends, who were aware of our needs and the passing by of the embassy. And when we had come, they were very desirous just as we were. For we came to the beloved city and men as into a harbour from shipwreck and storms and waves. (...)

[p. 301][ch. 8, lines 1–9] Nevertheless we stayed there as they said, as friends with dear friends. They had much earlier learnt through rumour about the embassy, which was said to be a very great one and really was a great one. And they took us in and fawned on us and wondered greatly why we had been so tardy. For the apparent importance of the embassy as I have said, led to a greater preparation as regards honour and friendship. For the city had already heard previously that a certain person would come, an envoy from the emperor, on his way to the ruler of the Triballians. (...)

[p. 307][ch. 13, lines 19–36] We tarried in that land, and we tarried more than we should have, since we had been deceived by the locals who said that the distance that we would have to walk on that day was quite short and there was no need for us to make great haste. And we had unwittingly learnt this beforehand and obeyed it and shown more neglect than we should have, when we set out on the road and travelled forward, being led astray from the truth in our reckoning. And at a late hour we rushed as much as it is fitting for envoys, and went on foot and with great ease with carriers of implements and many beasts of burden, but not as quickly as it would have been possible. And we walked in a manner that is

customarily called ‘one horse’. Thus, we had not arrived at the city [Skopje?] before the first or second hour of the night. And we remained behind not a little distance in the midst of the plain. And then as I know we were uncertain about what we should do. For we could not stay there or anywhere as we were strangers, and the night was already falling, but to arrive in the middle of the night as envoys there when one should rest did not appear seemly to us because we would rush in from an invisible hiding-place like slavers and grave-robbers.

[p. 307][ch. 14, lines 1–22] Nonetheless, this appeared better to us, and we made haste as far as it was possible, and when we had come very close I sent two of my followers who understood the local language. [p. 308] They were to make enquiries through questioning and, when they had found the magistrate and the lord of that land, were to let them know that we had arrived and learn from them what should be done and where we should lodge. And thus it happened. It was a close thing because the city was barricaded since the evening and remained so until that point as it was proper, but those who had been sent by us nevertheless spoke with them. And immediately and without any hesitation the magistrate went out to us and greeted us in the proper fashion and sent us on to lodge in the place that had been prepared. And while we were walking, he was very ashamed and apologetic, and begged our pardon that because of the tardiness he had not accorded us the honourable escort that would have been customary and proper for us who were thus envoys from the emperor. In fact, he should have done that even before our arrival when we were still far away. And he asked us not to be angry but to excuse what had happened. He said that both he himself and the ruler [Stefan Uroš Milutin] had cared about this very much and that they had prepared the honour and the friendly embrace and the handshake a great many days earlier. They had waited for us and tarried until the evening but as we could not be seen coming, they had thought that we would not come and returned. (...)

[p. 309] [ch. 15, lines 13–28] In the morning we were called and came to the abode of the ruler. And there were many valiant youths who were dressed up for a feast and who brought honour as it was considered, and brought such things to us. And the whole escort and defile was very refined and in one word full of respect and decorousness, showing and demonstrating to the people of the land the noble embassy of the greatest ruler, dealing with affairs of great significance and surpassing all the previous missions. The king himself was lavishly adorned, his body was clad in a robe covered with jewels, gems and especially gold, as much as he could carry. The whole court was resplendent with silk and gold-striped textiles. Standing around him were his chosen officials who were unexpectedly and more splendidly dressed and adorned as before. The whole scene was, so-to-speak, arranged according to a zeal to imitate an emperor’s and – as far as that was possible – Roman nobleness. As the proverb says, “The one walking on foot was thus contending with a Lydian chariot”.

Further reading

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Grigori Simeonov

3.1.2 An intellectual serving his fatherland in Rome

Author: Demetrios Kydones³⁴

Text: *Letter (Epistole)*

Date of text: 1369–1370

Genre: Epistolography

Literary context: The critical edition of Kydones’ letters comprises 450 pieces, thus making him one of the most prolific writers of his time. The letter he sent from Rome to his brother Prochoros³⁵ in 1369–1370 reveals in a remarkable way the interconnectedness of his political and cultural agenda. The author was obviously amazed at the culture of the Rome of the middle of the 14th century, but he let his scholarly interest take a back seat and emphasised the purpose of his stay in Rome – his concerns about the future of the “fatherland” and his wish to offer it all his services in order to stave off the looming threat of the Ottoman conquest. As we are going to see, such concerns about the “fatherland in danger” and the will to help it are expressed in other ego-documents of Byzantine diplomats of the Palaiologan period.

Historical significance of the movement: The Palaiologan period witnessed a division within Byzantine society based on deeply held political and religious views, which lasted until the very end of the empire. This in turn was caused by the attitude towards the Catholic West and the hope that the Latins would eventually help against the advancing Ottoman Turks. The readiness of some Byzantine literati with influence at the imperial court to accept the primacy of the

34 PLP 13876.

35 PLP 13883.

Pope went often hand in hand with their scholarly interest in the achievements of Medieval Latin theology and philosophy and the Italian Renaissance. Among them was Demetrios Kydones, a highly distinguished figure. In the late 1360s emperor John V Palaiologos³⁶ went on a diplomatic mission to the West. His close associate Kydones was already in Rome where he negotiated with the Pope. It was Demetrios Kydones – himself a convert to Catholicism, while emphasising his loyalty to his “fatherland” – who persuaded the emperor to convert as well. His knowledge of Latin and Greek, as well as his connections with the Palaiologan dynasty and the Catholic Church, made him one of the central figures in Byzantine diplomacy of the second half of the 14th century

Type of movement: Voluntary (diplomatic mission).

Locations and date of movement: From Constantinople to Rome; 1369–1370.

Edition used: *Démétrius Cydonès, Correspondance*, ed. Raymond-Joseph Loenertz, *Studi e Testi* 186 (Vatican City, 1956) vol. 1, 72,4–73, 43, no. 39.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Demetrios Kydones, *Letter*, no. 39

[p. 72] What grieves us most is that we have been pulled away from the fatherland and from you all and that we have experienced many terrible things on land and at sea and that we have been deprived of the pleasures at home and yet remain without a taste of those here. For since we are constantly busy with the affairs of the emperor and frequent daily the doors of those who might give us support, and strive to make sure that this activity will result in something that will be beneficial for us, we are far off from the purpose for which we are here, as you know, and conduct these many negotiations. And none of the wise men has become our friend nor have we heard them speaking or teaching or conversing. But we also have not had the leisure to look at the Roman books, even though the big city has a great abundance of wisdom and virtue and all that is noble for those who wish to take advantage of it. For everyone who has something on his mind runs to the church and its leader, and every day one can see herds of those who know weighty matters and are able to teach, and those who are not lesser than them, who add deeds to their words. But as I have said, we turn our attention to other things, and while we have wonderful things in our hands, we pass over what we have desired for a long time. In this we resemble those who run from the house to the well, and sit next to it, and do not quench their thirst but count those who come to it, and afterwards return home and still suffer want. Yet each one of those here who appears to be great in any way knows us well, and those who are the greatest among them and the leaders of others come and greet me and call me, and they

36 PLP 21485.

say something pleasant to us and hear something even more pleasant, and we are visited by those who come after them as regards affairs and fortunes but not lesser as regards virtue. And all enjoy our conversation [p. 73] and call profit whatever they hear from us, and when they hear about our return home they are aggrieved and try to hold us back even against our will, and promise that Rome and they themselves will be friends and fatherland for me. But he who is the leader of them all and the head of them all thinks that my company will further his affairs not a little, and therefore accords me honours and incomes, some now and others after I have stayed a little while. But none of this pleases me when I think of the fortunes of the fatherland and the laughter of the enemies and that the walls will henceforth become a prison for us, and that we will see our enemies carry away booty from them, while all we do here has no effect. For the Romans point to our doctrines about the divine, which they consider bad, and to the innovations we have made concerning the church and the faith, and call the insolence of the barbarians a just punishment for them. Accordingly, staying here is painful for me and returning again causes bitterness. For when I stay the rebukes of those in the city will grieve me, and when I return it will pain me to add my misfortunes to theirs. Pray then that we are led by God to what is beneficial, for he who does not ask him cannot gain anything good and your manner of life lets you speak frankly to him and will easily move him who is good to give us help.

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Grigori Simeonov

3.1.3 A Roman emperor negotiates foreign aid for his doomed country

Author: Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos

Text: *Letter (Epistole)*

Date of text: 1400–1401

Genre: Epistolography

Literary context: With Leo VI,³⁷ Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos,³⁸ Theodore II Laskaris³⁹ and John VI Kantakouzenos,⁴⁰ Manuel II Palaiologos belongs to a group of Byzantine (Nicaean) emperors who were greatly interested in literary production. Manuel is known for his numerous rhetorical works of which one needs to mention here only the funeral oration for his brother Theodore,⁴¹ the Counsels on Imperial Conduct (*Fürstenspiegel*) to his son John VIII, and an account (“Dialogues”) of his theological dispute with a ‘Persian’ teacher (that is, a Muslim). Therefore, it comes as no surprise that he is the author of a collection of letters, some of which he wrote during his long diplomatic mission to the West at the turn to the 15th century. Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos, who had ruled in a completely different political situation, had been able to give his son advice on how to play off various nations against each other or to avoid marriages to foreign dynasties (see 1.10). The general tenor of Manuel’s correspondence from abroad is quite different. He desperately needed military and financial help for his dying empire, as the capital was besieged by the Ottomans. Accordingly, he calls the French king “the most glorious king”, whereas the English king “is imbued with so many good qualities and is adorned with all manner of virtues”.

Historical significance of the movement: Byzantine emperors were key players in imperial diplomacy, especially during ceremonial (or occasional) receptions of foreign envoys. Yet, until the 14th century they hardly left imperial territories in order to negotiate abroad. There may have been two reasons for this reluctance. Firstly, the fear of usurpation during the emperor’s absence. It is reflected not only in diplomacy but also in internal policy, where emperors seldom left the vicinity of Constantinople. When they did, it was usually during a military campaign and in the company of armed forces which could assist them in case of a coup d’état. Secondly, Byzantine state ideology and the way Constantinople regarded the polities with which it maintained diplomatic relations. According to this ideology, the Byzantine emperor was considered superior to European rulers

37 PmbZ 24311, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ26465/html>.

38 PmbZ 23734, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25888/html>.

39 ODB III, 2040–2041.

40 PLP 10973.

41 PLP 21460.

(see 1.10 and 1.10.2). Therefore, a visit of the *basileus* of the Rhomaioi (Greek for Romans) to a foreign polity could be (mis)interpreted as a legitimisation and a recognition by Constantinople. Before the 14th century, only one emperor, namely Isaac II Angelos⁴² in 1191, negotiated with a foreign king on non-Byzantine soil. Yet this meeting took place on the Hungarian side of the Danube, facing the Byzantine territories lying on the southern bank.⁴³

The need for help against the Ottomans, however, made Byzantine emperors soon give up their middle Byzantine predecessors' claims of superiority. In 1367, John V Palaiologos was the first emperor ever to head a diplomatic mission abroad that took him far away from the borders of the empire. He visited Hungary, Rome, and Venice, and even converted to Catholicism. During his stay in Buda, he was joined by his son Manuel.⁴⁴ Further deterioration of the political situation caused both John's son and grandson, who succeeded him on the throne, to travel to the West. Manuel II did so in 1399–1402 when he left the besieged Constantinople and sought help in Northern Italy, Paris and London, and John VIII headed to the West twice – first in 1423–1424 when he visited Italy and Hungary (as the co-emperor of his father, whose health was rapidly deteriorating at the time),⁴⁵ and then in 1439 when he headed the Byzantine delegation which signed the church union with the Pope in Florence (see above).

Type of movement: Voluntary (diplomatic mission).

Locations and date of movement: From Constantinople to Paris and London; 1400–1402.

Edition used: *The Letters of Manuel II Palaeologus. Text, Translation, and Notes* by George T. Dennis, CFHB 8; DOT 4 (Washington, D.C., 1977) 99–101, lin. 1–19; 103, lin. 17–25 and 36–42; 105–107, lin. 23–35, no. 37, 38 and 39.

Translation used: *ibid.* (modified by Dirk Krausmüller)

Manuel II Palaiologos, *Letters*, no. 37, 38 and 39

[p. 99] 37. To Lord Manuel Chrysoloras

I have often wanted to write to you, but it held back my hand that I had nothing to write which would have pleased you. For the road was difficult, and what hap-

42 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Isaakios/2/>.

43 Niketas Choniates, *Speeches*, 4, ed. Jan-Louis van Diten, *Nicetae Choniatae orationes et epistulae*, CFHB 3 (Berlin and New York, 1972) 33, 21–31; Vučetić, Martin M, *Zusammenkünfte byzantinischer Kaiser mit fremden Herrschern (395–1204). Vorbereitung, Gestaltung, Funktionen*, (Münster, 2022).

44 Laonikos Chalkokondyles, *History*, I, ed. Jenő Darkó, *Laonici Chalcocandylae historiarum demonstrationes* (Budapest, 1922) vol. 1, 46, 3–47, 18.

45 George Sphrantzes, *Chronicle*, Book 12, 3 and Book 13, 1, ed. Riccardo Maisano, *Giorgio Sfranze, Cronaca*, CFHB 29; Scrittori Bizantini 2 (Rome, 1990) 24, 13–16 and 26, 11–14.

pened on it was not greatly enjoyable. Then there was the difference in language, which did not permit us to converse, as we had wished, with really excellent men who wished to show us every favour. But now that we have arrived in Galatia [France], my hand has begun to move of its own accord and hastens to clarify to you through letters what would have been the task of a tongue that speaks to men who are present, and I could thus surpass the limits of a letter. My hand is moving, and has started to write, but it would seem to attempt what is unachievable, if it sought [p. 101] to enumerate every detail. For, first of all, many are the things that were done for us by the most glorious king, and many, too, the things from his kinsmen, and not few in number those from his nobles and from everyone. All of this certainly is testimony of their nobility of soul, their friendship towards us, and a constant zeal for the faith. But now to say it in brief: unless the customary malice of evil fortune should oppose us, and some terrible and unexpected obstacle should occur, we have great hopes that we shall return to the fatherland soon, which is what we know you are praying for and what our enemies are praying against.

[p. 103] 38. To the Lord Manuel Chrysoloras

(...) Now what is the reason for the present letter? A large number of letters have come to us from everywhere bearing great and wonderful promises, but the greatest of all is the ruler with whom we are now staying, the king of Great Britain, of a second inhabited world, as one might say, who is imbued with so many good qualities and is adorned with all manner of virtues. His reputation earns him the admiration of people who have not met him, while for those who have once seen him, he proves clearly that fame is not really a goddess, since she is unable to show the man to be as great as does actual experience. (...) Now, if it is necessary to speak concisely in keeping with the law of letters, let us say this. This man is good in what he sets out to do, and he is also good in completing the course, becoming better each day, struggling at all times to outdo himself in what concerns us. In the end he has given even greater proof of his valour by adding a crown to our negotiations, worthy of his character and of the negotiations themselves. For he is giving us military assistance, with soldiers, archers, money, and ships to transport the army where it is needed.

[p. 105] 39. To the priest Lord Euthymios

(...) But now that your hopes have at last come to fruition; now that our negotiations are moving along very smoothly from everywhere; now that the military commanders have already embarked on those tasks which should make them become in actuality what they are called; and now that nothing else is needed except the coming of the day fixed for setting out on our return journey to [p. 107] you – for a day had to be determined and also a place in which the troops

of the Britons and the other allies should gather – I straightaway began to write. Though I could say to you many pleasant things, I will just say one thing, since the problems urgently demanding attention do not allow me time to write at length. Not much later than the present good tidings we ourselves expect to arrive. Then you will see, with the help of the Mother of God, an army following us, composed of all manner of troops, specially chosen and assembled from everywhere, an army capable of really completing that for which it comes and, to sum it up, I believe, an army greatly surpassing your hopes.

Further reading

- Barker, John, *Manuel II Palaeologus (1391–1425): A Study in Late Byzantine Statesmanship* (New Brunswick and New Jersey, 1969).
- Bourbeau, Mickaël, Manuel II Paléologue en Occident (1399–1402): La perspective de l'échec confrontée aux sources, in: Nicolas Drocourt and Élisabeth Malamut (eds.), *La diplomatie byzantine, de l'Empire romain aux confins de l'Europe (V^e-XV^e s.)*. *Actes de la Table-Ronde "Les relations diplomatiques byzantines (V^e-XV^e siècle): Permanences et/ou changements" XXIII^e Congrès International des Études Byzantines – Belgrade, Août 2016*, MMED 123 (Leiden and Boston 2020) 273–284.
- Çelik, Siren, *Manuel II Palaiologos (1350–1425). A Byzantine Emperor in a Time of Tumult* (Cambridge, 2021).
- Leonte, Florin, *Imperial Visions of Late Byzantium. Manuel II Palaiologos and Rhetoric in Purple* (Edinburgh, 2020).
- Nicol, Donald, A Byzantine Emperor in England. Manuel II's Visit to London in 1400–1401, *University of Birmingham Historical Journal* 12/2 (1971) 204–225 [repr. in Nicol, Donald, *Byzantium: Its Ecclesiastical History and Relations with the Western World*, Variorum Reprints (London, 1972) ch. X].

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3.2.0 Kinship groups

Kinship groups, which usually consist of a relatively small number of people ranging from two to an entire network of relations bound together by descent, consanguinity or affinity (e.g., marriage), are mostly involved in movements that take place within a broader context of mobility and particularly large-scale resettlement. Examples of mobility carried out by Byzantine kinship groups can be found not only in historiographical and hagiographical works, but also in texts of various other genres that may serve as a source of socio-historical information. In such texts, these movements are largely attributed to piracy and captivity or the state-coerced relocation of population and evacuation of territories.⁴⁶ In either case, members of a family (and sometimes their relatives) undergo a forced resettlement; they unwillingly leave hearth and home to move to a different place within or without the boundaries of the Byzantine Empire. However, in a few cases, an individual voluntarily travels with the intention to visit other members of his or her family living in a different place or even to move into their house. All these kinds of movement are attested in Byzantine narratives that contain either fictional characters or historical persons, some of whom even participated in the events they describe.

Byzantine hagiography is especially rich in relevant descriptions: the 10th/11th-century *Life of Saint Luke of Steiris* [BHG 994] recounts both the displacement of the protagonist's ancestors (along with the rest of their community) as an attempt to avoid capture by Arab raiders and the hostile attitude of the receiving community towards the newcomers, while the 14th-century *Life of Saint Gregory of Sinai* [BHG 722] speaks of the capture and forced relocation of the protagonist and his family by Turkish raiders.⁴⁷ The 9th-century *Life of Saint Philaretos* [BHG 1511z]

46 These kinds of movement are connected not only with kinship groups but also with other contexts, see the above sections on warfare (esp. 1.1.1, 1.1.3), resettlement (esp. 1.2.1, 1.2.2), and monasticism (esp. 2.3.3).

47 *Life of Saint Luke of Steiris*, ed. Demetrios Z. Sophianos, Ὅσιος Λουκᾶς. Ὁ βίος τοῦ ὁσίου Λουκᾶ τοῦ Στεiriώτου: προλεγόμενα, μετάφραση, κριτική ἐκδόση τοῦ κειμένου, Hagiologike Bibliothke 1 (Athens, 1989) 159–223; *Life of Saint Gregory of Sinai*, ed. Hans-Veit Beyer,

gives an illustrative example of a family man who, unable to pay his taxes and clear his debts, contemplated abandoning his homeland together with his wife and his nine children.⁴⁸ The 10th/11th-century *Life of Saint Irene of Chrysobalanton* [BHG 952] presents a case of female mobility: Irene and her sister, accompanied by their retinue, travel from Cappadocia to Constantinople to participate in an imperial bride-show, where the young Michael III (r. 842–867)⁴⁹ was to pick his future wife.⁵⁰ The three case studies analysed below were selected to demonstrate not only the variety of movements related to kinship and family, but also to provide textual examples from different genres and periods: the 10th-century *Life of Saint Theoktiste of Lesbos*, the 11th-century will of the provincial magnate Eustathios Boilas, and the 13th-century court records by Demetrios Chomatenos.

Further reading

Andrikopoulos, Apostolos and Jan Willem Duyvendak, Migration, Mobility and the Dynamics of Kinship: New Barriers, New Assemblages, *Ethnography* 21/3 (2020) 299–318.
 Preiser-Kapeller, Johannes et al. (eds.), *Migration Histories of the Medieval Afroeurasian Transition Zone: Aspects of Mobility between Africa, Asia and Europe, 300–1500 C.E.*, Studies in Global Social History 39; Studies in Global Migration History 13 (Leiden and Boston, 2020).

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3.2.1 Theoktiste visits her sister on Lesbos where both of them, along with other locals, are captured by Arab raiders

Author: Niketas Magistros (born in ca. 870, Larissa, Thessaly; died after 946)⁵¹

Text: *Life of Saint Theoktiste of Lesbos*⁵² [BHG 1723–1724]

Kallist I Patriarch Konstantinopol'ja: Žitie i dejatel'nost' iže vo svjatyh otca našego Grigorija Sinaita (Ekaterinburg, 2006).

48 *Life of Saint Philaretos*, ed. Lennart Rydén, *The Life of St Philaretos the Merciful Written by His Grandson Niketas: A Critical Edition with Introduction, Translation, Notes, and Indices*, *Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia* 8 (Uppsala, 2002) 60–119.

49 PmbZ 4991, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ16168/html>.

50 *Life of Saint Irene of Chrysobalanton*, ed. Jan-Olof Rosenqvist, *The Life of St Irene Abbess of Chrysobalanton: A Critical Edition with Introduction, Translation, Notes and Indices*, *Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia* 1 (Uppsala, 1986) 2–112.

51 PmbZ 25740, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ27894/html>.

52 The translation of the *Life's* full title is: “The Life of our blessed mother Theoktiste of Lesbos who practised asceticism and died on the island named Paros, written by Niketas the most glorious Magistros” (translation by Hero).

Date of text: Early or mid-10th century⁵³

Genre: Hagiography

Literary context: According to the text, the nun Theoktiste,⁵⁴ who, at that time, was almost eighteen years old, went to visit her sister's family in a village near the city of Methymna on Lesbos during the Easter season. The visit was interrupted by the Arabs who raided the island and captured its inhabitants, among them Theoktiste, her sister and her brother-in-law. However, Theoktiste succeeded in escaping from the Arabs and for 35 years led an ascetic life on the island of Paros. Theoktiste is not a historical person, and her *vita* is largely based on the literary models of other hagiographical texts: the structure of the text and the depiction of the female protagonist's life in an uninhabited area (i. e., the island of Paros) after escaping her captors resemble the *Life of Saint Mary of Egypt*. However, unlike Mary who was struggling with temptations of the flesh, Theoktiste is confronted with war and enemy raids, which indicates similarities with the *Life of Saint Athanasia of Aegina* and that of *Saint Theodora of Thessaloniki*.⁵⁵

Historical significance of the movement: Although the main characters of the story are fictional, the events described in the text have a basis in reality. The text provides information on the socio-political situation of the 9th century, which must have been known to the author of the text, Niketas Magistros, who lived at the end of the 9th century. The story is set on Lesbos and Paros during the Arab raids of the Aegean islands which took place sometime after the conquest of Crete in 826. In narrating the life of Theoktiste, the text makes mention of the Arabs who raided Lesbos in order to kidnap the local population and sell them as

53 On the dating of this saint's *Life* between 913 and 919/920, see Hero, Angela C., *Life of St. Theoktiste of Lesbos*, in: Alice-Mary Talbot (ed.), *Holy Women of Byzantium: Ten Saints' Lives in English Translation*, BSLT 1 (Washington, D.C., 1996) 97–98 (with further references). Cf. Delierneux, Natalie, *The Literary Portrait of Byzantine Female Saints*, in: Stephanos Efthymiadis (ed.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, vol. 2: *Genres and Contexts* (Farnham and Burlington, VT, 2014) 363–386, esp. 372. For a different opinion, according to which the text was composed around the year 948, see Høgel, Christian, *Beauty, Knowledge, and Gain in the Life of Theoktiste*, *Byzantion* 88 (2018) 219–236, esp. 233–235.

54 PmbZ 28039, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ30194/html>.

55 Hero, *Life of St. Theoktiste of Lesbos*, 95–96 (with further references). Cf. Jazdzewska, Katarzyna, *Hagiographic Invention and Imitation: Niketas' Life of Theoktiste and its Literary Models*, *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 49 (2009) 257–279; Nilsson, Ingela, *The Same Story, but Another: A Reappraisal of Literary Imitation in Byzantium*, in: Elisabeth Schiffer and Andreas Rhoby (eds.), *Imitatio – aemulatio – variatio: Akten des internationalen wissenschaftlichen Symposions zur byzantinischen Sprache und Literatur* (Wien, 22.–25. Oktober 2008), VB 21 (Vienna, 2010) 195–208, esp. 203–208; Messis, Charis, *Fiction and/or Novelisation in Byzantine Hagiography*, in: Efthymiadis, *The Ashgate Research Companion*, vol. 2, 313–341, esp. 329–330; Delierneux, *The Literary Portrait of Byzantine Female Saints*, 372–373.

slaves in Arab markets.⁵⁶ According to the text, the Arabs then sailed to the island of Paros which recently had been abandoned. This episode also reflects reality and particularly the efforts of the Byzantine state to evacuate the population from the Greek islands as a strategic response to Arab piracy.⁵⁷

Type of movement: Voluntary movement of a nun (Theoktiste) to visit family; forced and involuntary movement of entire families and communities due to Arab piracy (captivity or evacuation of the Byzantine islands); voluntary movement from captivity to religiously-motivated isolation.

Locations and date of movement: Lesbos (Methymna and a nearby unspecified village) and Paros; during the Arab raids in the 9th century, after 826.

Edition used: Hippolyte Delehaye (ed.), *Acta Sanctorum* Nov. IV (1925) 224–233, esp. 229, ch. 14–16.

Translation used: Hero, Angela C., *Life of St. Theoktiste of Lesbos*, in: Alice-Mary Talbot (ed.), *Holy Women of Byzantium: Ten Saints' Lives in English Translation*, BSLT 1 (Washington, D.C., 1996) 101–116, esp. 110–111 (slightly modified by Christodoulos Papavarnavas).



Image 3: Beginning of the text of the Life of Saint Theoktiste of Lesbos, Metaphrastic Menologion, 11th century (cod. Add. 36636, fol. 71v, British Library, London)

⁵⁶ Rotman, Youval, *Byzantine Slavery and the Mediterranean World*, transl. by Jane Marie Todd (Cambridge, 2009) 47–56; idem, *Forced Migration as Slavery in the World of Byzantium*, in: Johannes Preiser-Kapeller et al. (eds.), *Migration Histories of the Medieval Afroeurasian Transition Zone: Aspects of Mobility between Africa, Asia and Europe, 300–1500 C.E.*, Studies in Global Social History 39; Studies in Global Migration History 13 (Leiden and Boston, 2020) 387–412, esp. 399–400.

⁵⁷ Rotman, *Forced Migration as Slavery*, 400.

Niketas Magistros, *Life of Saint Theoktiste of Lesbos*, ch. 14–16

[p. 229] (...) thus she began telling [me about herself]: “My homeland is Lesbos, my city is Methymna, my name is Theoktiste and I am a nun by occupation. Having been orphaned while still a very young child, I was entrusted to a convent by my relatives, and I took the veil. When I was nearly eighteen years old, I went to a village near the city [of Methymna] to visit my sister during the Easter season, for she lived near that village with her husband. But during the night, Arabs from Crete, whose leader was the infamous Nisiris,⁵⁸ conducted a raid [there] (*epidramontes*) and took everyone prisoner. Early in the morning, after chanting songs of triumph, they set sail and came to anchor at this island [i. e., Paros]. They brought out the prisoners and started assessing and settling the price [for each of them]. But I invented a pretext and, heading toward the forest, I fled, running further into the interior of the island. In fact, I did not stop running until I had torn my feet to pieces, piercing them with stones and sharp twigs, and had stained the ground with my blood. When finally exhausted, I collapsed half-dead and spent the entire night in distress, unable to endure the pain from my wounds. But in the morning when I saw the abhorrent [men] sailing away, I was released from all pain and filled with so much joy as I cannot describe. And since that time – a little over thirty-five years already – I have lived here, subsisting on lupine [seeds] and other herbs that grow in the wilderness, or rather on the word of God.”

Further reading

Hero, Angela C., *Life of St. Theoktiste of Lesbos*, in: Alice-Mary Talbot (ed.), *Holy Women of Byzantium: Ten Saints' Lives in English Translation*, BSLT 1 (Washington, D.C., 1996) 95–116 (with further references: p. 100).

Høgel, Christian, *Beauty, Knowledge, and Gain in the Life of Theoktiste, Byzantium 88* (2018) 219–236.

Jazdzewska, Katarzyna, *Hagiographic Invention and Imitation: Niketas' Life of Theoktiste and its Literary Models*, *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 49 (2009) 257–279.

Nilsson, Ingela, *The Same Story, but Another: A Reappraisal of Literary Imitation in Byzantium*, in: Elisabeth Schiffer and Andreas Rhoby (eds.), *Imitatio – aemulatio – variatio: Akten des internationalen wissenschaftlichen Symposions zur byzantinischen Sprache und Literatur* (Wien, 22.–25. Oktober 2008), VB 21 (Vienna, 2010) 195–208.

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⁵⁸ Nisiris, a hellenised form of the Arabic name Nasr, is unknown elsewhere, cf. Hero, *Life of St. Theoktiste of Lesbos*, 107, n. 48.

3.2.2 Eustathios Boilas, along with his family, abandons his homeland to settle in the region of Edessa

Author: Eustathios Boilas (born in Cappadocia and died in the region of Edessa (?) in the middle Byzantine period)⁵⁹

Text: *The will of a provincial magnate*

Date of text: The will, preserved in an 11th-century manuscript of the Bibliothèque nationale de France (Cod. Coislin 263, fols. 159–165) (*Diktyon* 49404), was dictated on April 4 in 1059 by Eustathios Boilas to Theodoulos, a monk and priest of the Theotokos Monastery erected by Eustathios in Salem (also called Tantzoute), near Edessa (today Urfa, Turkey).

Genre: Testament in autobiographical form

Literary context: In order to describe his forced and involuntary displacement, Eustathios Boilas employs a variety of terms (see passages below) which underline his discontentment with his experiences of migration and assimilation. According to the text, he was compelled to abandon his homeland, together with his mother, his wife Anna (and probably his children Irene,⁶⁰ Maria,⁶¹ and Romanos⁶²), to settle in the region of Edessa.⁶³ The text recounts the hardships that Eustathios and his family endured in the receiving society with regard to both their communication with the majority of the locals who did not speak Greek but Armenian, and the religious practices of the Armenians which differed from those in their homeland. Eustathios and his family were Chalcedonian Christians (“Orthodox”), while the Armenians were considered heretics as they did not follow the principles of the Council of Chalcedon (451 AD).⁶⁴ In fact, through his narration, Eustathios attempts to differentiate himself and his family from the other members of their new community, namely the Armenians, thus establishing his own identity in relation to the foreign element. Despite the adversities in this new land, Eustathios managed to increase his property with hard and honest work.

Historical significance of the movement: The will of Eustathios Boilas provides a remarkable insight into the life and experiences of an immigrant and his family.

59 PBW <http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/pbw2011/entity/person/107071>.

60 PBW <http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/pbw2011/entity/person/107011>.

61 PBW <http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/pbw2011/entity/person/107740>.

62 PBW <http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/pbw2011/entity/person/108223>.

63 The text does not clarify whether the children were born before or after the family’s migration.

64 Rapp, Claudia, Zwangsmigration in Byzanz: Kurzer Überblick mit einer Fallstudie aus dem 11. Jahrhundert, in: Thomas Ertl (ed.), *Erzwungene Exile: Umsiedlung und Vertreibung in der Vormoderne (500 bis 1850)* (Frankfurt am Main and New York, 2017) 59–79, at 71.

What makes this legal document even more special is the fact that it was composed in the form of an autobiography by the person central to the events. Although the text is very revealing about the conditions of migration and assimilation in a new land, it is vague in its discussion of the reasons for Eustathios' displacement. However, some information in the text may suggest that the forced relocation of Eustathios and his family was the result of political intrigues that took place in the middle Byzantine period. His title (*protospatharios epi tou chrysotrikliniou* and *hypatos*) indicates that Eustathios was a high official at the court and even a member of the senate. During the years 1051–1052, a man named Romanos Boilas, who was also a senator and possibly a relative of Eustathios, organised a conspiracy against Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos (r. 1042–1055) to seize the throne. When the conspiracy was uncovered, the persons involved were evicted from Constantinople and had to live elsewhere. If Eustathios participated in this conspiracy or if he was falsely accused of participation is unknown, but this might have been the reason why he was exiled from the Byzantine capital and from his home in Cappadocia.⁶⁵

Type of movement: Involuntary forced migration, possibly due to (false?) accusations of treason, political intrigues and conspiracy against the Byzantine emperor.

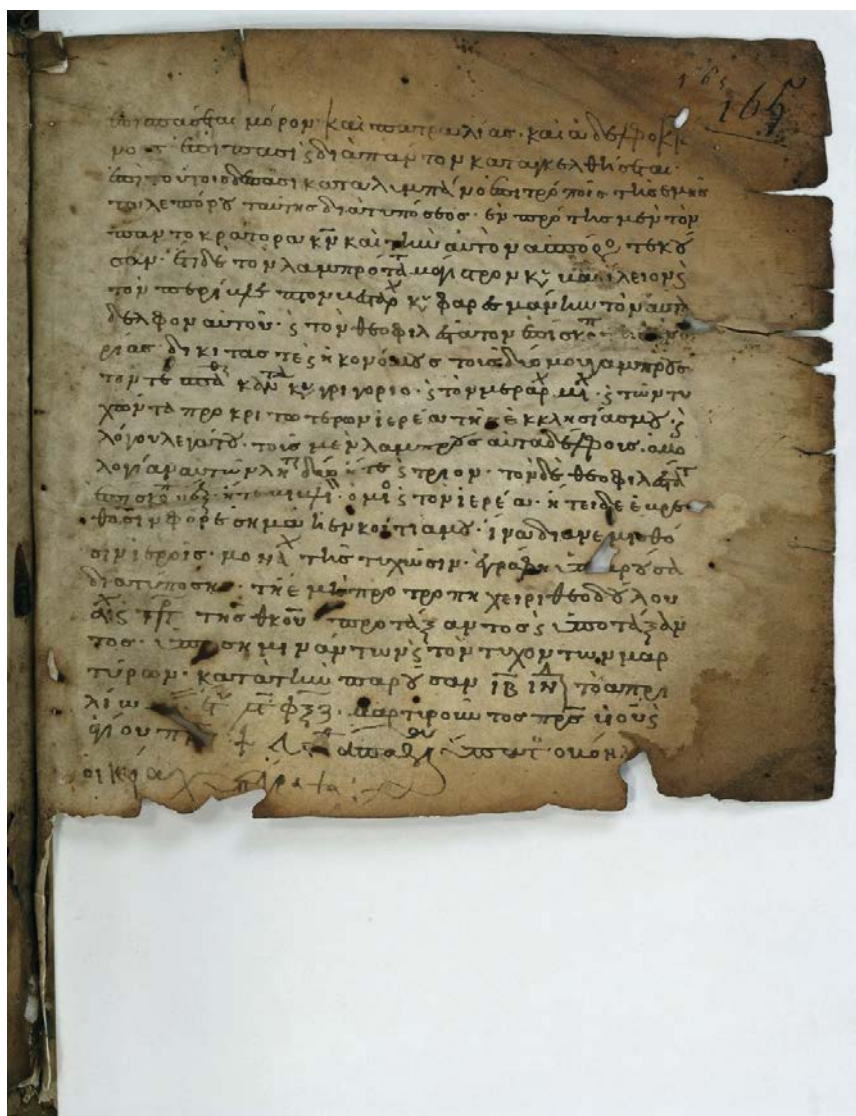
Locations and date of movement: From the province of Cappadocia to the region of Edessa; possibly during the years 1051–1052.⁶⁶

Edition used: *Cinq études sur le XI^e siècle byzantin*, ed. Paul Lemerle, Le monde byzantine (Paris, 1977) 20–29, esp. 20–21.

Translation used: Vryonis, Speros J., The Will of a Provincial Magnate, Eustathius Boilas (1059), *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 11 (1957) 263–277 (heavily modified by Christodoulos Papavarnavas).

65 Vryonis, Speros J., The Will of a Provincial Magnate, Eustathius Boilas (1059), *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 11 (1957) 263–277, at 274, 276–277. Cf. Rapp, Zwangsmigration in Byzanz, 65–66.

66 Vryonis, The Will of a Provincial Magnate, 274.



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des Manuscrits, Coislin 263

Image 4: Manuscript of the will of Eustathios Boilas, Cod. Coislin 263, folio 165r (the end of the text with the date of composition and the name of the scribe; Bibliothèque nationale de France)

Eustathios Boilas, *The Will of a Provincial Magnate*

[p. 20] I was distressed by difficulties and was overwhelmed by the continuous violence of the waves [i. e., vicissitudes of life] to such an extent that I became an emigrant (*metanastes*) from the land which bore me, living away from home (*ekdemos*) and beyond the boundaries of my fatherland (*hyperorios*). I went a distance of one and one-half weeks, and I settled among foreign nations with a strange religion and different language. I had come under the helping wings of Michael the most illustrious and famous *dux*,⁶⁷ under whom I served the public by executing the imperial orders for fifteen years. And then I fully rested for eight years. (...)

[p. 21] After I married, my lawful wife Anna, of blessed memory, [and] I left home (*apoikos*) and emigrated (*metanastas*) from [our] fatherland and settled (*epidemesas*) in this land in which I am now living. [I brought with me] whatever money and possessions remained to me and [here I also own] what I have recently amassed by fair means, and, in addition, I was blessed with children, two daughters and one son.⁶⁸

Further reading

Lemerle, Paul, *Cinq études sur le XI^e siècle byzantin*, Le monde byzantin (Paris, 1977) 15–63 (with further references).

Rapp, Claudia, Zwangsmigration in Byzanz: Kurzer Überblick mit einer Fallstudie aus dem 11. Jahrhundert, in: Thomas Ertl (ed.), *Erzwungene Exile: Umsiedlung und Vertreibung in der Vormoderne (500 bis 1850)* (Frankfurt am Main and New York, 2017) 59–79 (with further references).

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3.2.3 A son-in-law moves in with his wife's family after signing a legally binding agreement with her father

Author: Demetrios Chomatenos (born in the middle of the 12th century and died ca. 1236)⁶⁹

Text: *Various Works (ponemata diaphora)*⁷⁰

67 For the *dux* Michael, see Vryonis, *The Will of a Provincial Magnate*, 274–275.

68 At this point Eustathios lists all the possessions, animate and inanimate alike, that he managed to amass up to the time that this will was composed.

69 PBW <http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/pbw2011/entity/person/159486>.

70 The full title of the work could be rendered as follows: “Various works (*ponemata diaphora*) which were composed by Demetrios Chomatenos, the most holy, wise and fair archbishop of

Date of text: 13th century

Genre: Collection of 152 documents of administrative relevance (letters, responses, decisions and evaluations)

Literary context: The passage below deals with a legally binding agreement between a father-in-law and a son-in-law, which also stipulates the latter's resettlement: when his daughter Irene was betrothed, Bourougos made an agreement with his future son-in-law Constantine Goudeles that, after the marriage, the young man and his wife would move into her parents' house so that they could take care of the elderly couple when need arose. In the passage cited below, Constantine refers to this legal agreement before the court in Ohrid, in which Demetrios Chomatenos acted as judge between ca. 1216 and ca. 1236. For the purposes of this court hearing, Constantine travelled from the theme of Stanon near Pelagonia to Ohrid.⁷¹

Interestingly, the text employs a special term to describe this type of movement, namely *esogambros*, which literally means a *live-in son-in-law*, a man who after marrying a woman begins living in the house of his wife's parents instead of setting up his own household or living with his own parents. The existence of a relevant term and the fact that it is used in an official context, namely a legal court, indicate that this type of arrangement and movement constituted a common concept.⁷²

Historical significance of the movement: The text speaks of the resettlement of a man who abandons his previous home to live with his wife's family. This was a small-scale movement in everyday life which, however, had to be concluded by a contract signed by both parties, the son-in-law and the father-in-law.

Type of movement: The motive for the above-mentioned resettlement and cohabitation is not known, but given the fact that both sides were satisfied with the terms of this legal agreement, it should be considered a voluntary movement. This cohabitation may have been arranged due to financial difficulties that the newly-engaged couple were expecting to encounter. The movement of Constantine Goudeles as described in the text would also benefit his in-laws in their old age.

Locations and date of movement: From Constantine Goudeles' family home to his parents-in-law's house (in Stanon?); unknown date of the resettlement.⁷³

the whole of Bulgaria, who had served as chartophylax in this holiest Great Church [of Ohrid]" (translation is mine).

71 For the location of Stanon, see Vassiliki Kravari, *Villes et villages de Macédoine occidentale*, RB 2 (Paris 1989) 335.

72 It is also interesting that there existed a corresponding term to describe a woman who leaves her parents' home to live with her husband's family (*ἐσώνυμπος/esonymphos*, cf. LBG I, 606), which indicates that this option was also possible.

73 Prinzing, *Demetrii Chomateni Ponemata diaphora*, 128*.

Edition used: *Demetrii Chomateni Ponemata diaphora*, ed. Günter Prinzing, CFHB 38 (Berlin and New York, 2002) 186–187, no. 51, ch. 2, lines 14–29.

Translation: Christodoulos Papavarnavas

Demetrios Chomatenos, *Various Works*, no. 51, ch. 2

[p. 186] “I was legally betrothed,” he said, “to a woman, Irene, the daughter of the late Bourouges of Stanon. Mutual matrimonial contracts [for the use of property] were concluded between us, in which it was agreed that after the marriage blessing and ceremony I would move into the house of my parents-in-law as a son-in-law (*esogambros*), in order to share with them the same way of life (*omodiatos*), the same roof (*omostegos*), the same food (*omotrapezos*), and to become entirely inseparable from them. And if I and Irene, who had been engaged to me, looked after (*geroboskesomen*) her parents and, at the same time, my parents-in-law, and they died in our arms, then we should become universal heirs to all that they leave behind. But if we wished to separate from our common parents and become independent from them while they are still alive, we should be allowed to do so unhindered [p. 187] and to receive, without any objection, our clothes intact, as well as a third of the movable, immovable and self-movable property, and to lead our own life as we want. We did everything as agreed: we lived with our afore-mentioned parents and looked after them in their old age until their last breath and funeral.”

Further reading

Prinzing, Günter (ed.), *Demetrii Chomateni Ponemata diaphora*, CFHB 38 (Berlin and New York, 2002) 126*–128*.

Simeonov, Grigori, *Alltagsleben im nördlichen Makedonien (11.–13. Jahrhundert)*, Unpublished PhD Thesis (University of Vienna, 2019) (with German translation of the relevant passage) [<http://othes.univie.ac.at/57688/>].

Christodoulos Papavarnavas

3.3.0 Larger groups and confederations: the Varangians in Byzantium

Over the centuries, numerous groups entered the sphere of the Byzantine Empire. Byzantine sources that speak about them use various ethnonyms (including antiquarian ones, such as Scythians for various confederations in the Steppes or “Persians” for Turks). At a first glance this gives the impression of an actual migration of peoples at large (in German *Völkerwanderung*). Recent research, however, has shown that these larger groups did not only primarily appear in the written evidence of the Roman/Byzantine or other empires, but also became tangible as cohesive formations often only at or within the imperial frontiers. This was first demonstrated for the Germanic groups entering the Roman Empire in the 4th and 5th centuries, but has more recently also been suggested for the Slavs in the Balkans of the 6th and 7th centuries or for the Seljuk and other Turkish groups in Asia Minor in the 11th century.⁷⁴

This phenomenon is true to certain extent equally for those Scandinavians – individuals and groups, mostly coming from modern-day Sweden – who from the 8th century onwards used the river system of Eastern Europe to get from their homelands to the rich commercial centres of the Arab-Islamic Caliphate and of the Byzantine Empire. Since the 9th century, they are subsumed in Greek, Arabic or Latin texts under umbrella terms such as Varangians⁷⁵ or Rus.⁷⁶ Not only the

74 Pohl, Walter, *Die Völkerwanderung: Eroberung und Integration* (Stuttgart, 2022); Curta, Florin, *The Making of the Slavs: History and Archaeology of the Lower Danube Region, c.500–700* (Cambridge, 2001); Beihammer, Alexander D., *Byzantium and the Emergence of Muslim-Turkish Anatolia, ca. 1040–1130* (Abingdon, 2017).

75 Maybe from Old Norse “var” for “oath”, meaning those who have bound themselves through an oath for a trade or raiding expedition, see Shephard Jonathan, *The Viking Rus and Byzantium*, in: Stefan Brink and Neil Price (eds.), *The Viking World* (London and New York, 2012); Gonneau, Pierre, and Aleksandr Lavrov, *Des Rhôs à la Russie: Histoire de l'Europe orientale (730–1689)* (Paris, 2012) 82–84. There are also similar debates on the etymology of the term Viking used for Scandinavian traders and raiders in Northwestern Europe, cf. Price, Neil, *The Children of Ash and Elm. A History of the Vikings* (London, 2020) 7–8.

76 Maybe from Finish “ruotsi” for “rowers” or from Slavonic “rusyi” for “red” (referring to the hair colour of the newcomers from Scandinavia). The term with reference to Scandinavian

etymology of these terms is contested until today; they also suggest a uniformity of the backgrounds and identity of these (mostly) men which was not given, at least not from the beginning. By the 860s, however, a principdom of the Rus had emerged on the basis of an alliance of Scandinavians with local Slavic elites and populations around the emporium of Novgorod in modern-day Northern Russia.⁷⁷ In 882, these *Rus* expanded their influence to the city of Kiev (in modern-day Ukraine), which most probably had been under the control of the Khazars before, a confederation of various tribes which since the 660s dominated the steppes to the north of the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. Despite their close (diplomatic and mercantile) relations both with Byzantium and with the Caliphate, the elite of the Khazars converted to Judaism around 800.⁷⁸ The advance of the Rus challenged the hegemony of the Khazars in the region, although from 865 onwards they also allowed the Varangians to advance via the Volga into the Caspian Sea, where they looted coastal regions in Northern Iran and Southern Caucasia.⁷⁹

The *Rus* equally used violence in their encounters with Byzantium and in 860 and 907 carried out surprise attacks on Constantinople (called Miklagarðr – “big city” – in later Norse sources) from the Black Sea. They were not able to capture the city, but succeeded in concluding trade agreements with the Byzantines, which provided them with access to the markets of Constantinople. Since they were perceived as a security risk, however, the *Rus* were not invited to establish their quarters directly in Constantinople. Instead, they stayed (since 911) in Hagios Mamas on the Bosphorus to the north of the city.⁸⁰ Only smaller groups of them were then allowed to enter the capital at specific times to do business. In ca. 950 the route of these traders from Novgorod and Kiev via the Black Sea to the Byzantine borders was described in detail by Emperor Constantine VII Por-

groups present in Constantinople first shows up in a Latin reference to a Byzantine delegation to the Frankish Emperor Louis I the Pious in 839, which also included a group of “Rhos” on their way home to the north, see Franklin, Simon and Jonathan Shepard, *The Emergence of Rus’ 750–1200* (London, 1996) 29–30; Gonneau and Lavrov, *Des Rhôs à la Russie*, 83–84 and 92–95; Scheel, Roland, *Skandinavien und Byzanz: Bedingungen und Konsequenzen mittelalterlicher Kulturbeziehungen* (Bonn, 2015) 77–80.

77 Franklin and Shepard, *The Emergence of Rus’*, 50–59; Androshchuk, Fedir, *Vikings in the East: Essays on Contacts Along the Road to Byzantium (800–1100)* (Uppsala, 2014); Shepard, *The Viking Rus and Byzantium*; Price, *The Children of Ash and Elm*, 424–440; Jakobsson, Sverrir, *The Varangians. In God’s Holy Fire* (Cham, 2020) 16–20.

78 Golden, Peter B. et al. (eds.), *The World of the Khazars. New Perspectives* (Leiden and Boston, 2007).

79 Franklin and Shepard, *The Emergence of Rus’*, 60–70; Androshchuk, *Vikings in the East*.

80 Külzer, Andreas, *Ostthrakien (Eurōpē)*, TIB 12, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften 369 (Vienna, 2008) 512; Jakobsson, *The Varangians*, 23–28, 38–41.

phyrogennetos⁸¹ (see 3.3.1), which shows the interest of the Byzantines in these people and their regions of origin. In addition to trade, an increasing number of Varangians was hired as mercenaries for the Byzantine army; several hundreds of them already show up in the documentation of (unsuccessful) campaigns against Arab-ruled Crete in 902, 911 and 949.⁸²

Political relations with the principdom of the Rus remained fraught; in 941, a fleet under the command of Igor (from Norse Ingvar)⁸³ of Kiev again attacked Constantinople to press for improved conditions for trade. In 957, Igor's wife Olga (from Norse Helga)⁸⁴ visited Constantinople and accepted baptism.⁸⁵ Between 965 and 969 her son Svjatoslav I,⁸⁶ who bore a Slavic name (meaning "one who worships the light"), not only destroyed the most important centres of the Khazars in Sarkel on the river Don and in Itil on the Volga, but also tried to establish his rule on the lower Danube in modern-day Bulgaria. Only after he had been defeated by the Byzantine emperor John I Tzimiskes⁸⁷ in 971/972, did he retreat to the north (and was killed on his way back in an ambush by the Pechenegs, who now controlled the steppes to the north of the Black Sea – they are also mentioned as a menace for Varangian traders travelling to Constantinople in 3.3.1). Finally, Svatoslav's son Vladimir I⁸⁸ allied himself with Emperor Basil II⁸⁹ and in 987/988 sent several thousand mercenaries to support him against the usurper Bardas Phokas,⁹⁰ who was defeated in 989. Vladimir received the hand of

81 PmbZ 23734, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25888/html>.

82 Gonneau and Lavrov, *Des Rhôs à la Russie*, 87–92; Haldon, John F., *Theory and Practice in Tenth-Century Military Administration*. Chapters II, 44 and 45 of the Book of Ceremonies, TM 13 (Paris, 2000) 201–352 (for the expeditions against Crete); Shephard, *The Viking Rus and Byzantium*; Hoerder, *Introductory Essay*.

83 PmbZ 22751, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ24905/html>.

84 PmbZ 26186, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28340/html>.

85 Gonneau and Lavrov, *Des Rhôs à la Russie*, 109–114; Jakobsson, *The Varangians*, 49–52. For the discussions on the dating of Olga's visit(s) in Constantinople and her baptism see Tinefeld, Franz, *Zum Stand der Olga-Diskussion*, in: Lars Hoffmann (ed.), *Zwischen Polis, Provinz und Peripherie. Beiträge zur byzantinischen Geschichte und Kultur* (Wiesbaden, 2005) 531–569; Jakobsson, *The Varangians*, 55–58.

86 PmbZ 27440, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ29594/html>.

87 PmbZ 22778, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ24932/html>.

88 PmbZ 28433, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ30588/html>.

89 PmbZ 20838, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22991/html>.

90 PmbZ 20784, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22937/html>.

the emperor's sister Anna⁹¹ and in return accepted baptism, which initiated the (orthodox) Christianization of the Rus.⁹²

The survivors of Vladimir's auxiliary forces were re-organised by Emperor Basil II as the famous Varangian guard, whose soldiers became a core element of the Byzantine armed forces and were renowned for their battle axes, which were also presented during court ceremonial. Service in this regiment provided the opportunity to acquire riches and status and therefore attracted warriors from all over the countries of the *Rus* and Scandinavia.⁹³ Among them were prominent figures such as the exiled Norwegian prince Harald Hardrada, who together with his retinue served in the Varangian guard between 1034 and 1042 (see 3.3.2). Relations between these foreign fighters and the Byzantine population were not always peaceful, especially when the usual quartering of troops across various locations during winter allowed for closer interaction with the civilian population (see 3.3.3). There were also tensions between the Varangians and other foreign units in the Byzantine army, such as the Normans (who came from Normandy in Northern France and since the early 11th century served as mercenaries in Byzantine armies in Southern Italy, which they eventually would conquer), as can be seen from an incident in the military camp of the general (and later emperor) Isaac Komnenos in 1057,⁹⁴ which was reported by the 11th-century polymath and historian Michael Psellos.⁹⁵

A partial shift in the recruitment for the Varangian guard took place after the Norman conquest of England in 1066, when exiled Anglo-Saxon noblemen and warriors found their way to Constantinople and thereafter constituted a significant share of these troops. They equally had an enduring effect on the tradition of the guard, which existed up to the 14th century; in the so-called Pseudo-

91 PmbZ 20436, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22589/html>.

92 Franklin and Shepard, *The Emergence of Rus'*, 139–180; Gonneau and Lavrov, *Des Rhôs à la Russie*, 114–130; Raffensperger, Christian, *Reimagining Europe: Kievan Rus' in the Medieval World*, 988–1146 (Harvard, 2012); Hoerder, Dirk, Introductory Essay: Migration-Travel-Commerce-Cultural Transfer. The Complex Connections Byzantium-Kiev-Novgorod-Varangian Lands, 6–14th Century, in: Johannes Preiser-Kapeller et al. (eds.), *Migration Histories of the Medieval Afroeurasian Transition: Aspects of Mobility between Africa, Asia and Europe, 300–1500 C.E.*, Studies in Global Social History 39; Studies in Global Migration History 13 (Leiden and Boston, 2020) 50–78; Jakobsson, *The Varangians*, 58–61, 66–72.

93 Blöndal, Sigfús, *The Varangians of Byzantium. An Aspect of Byzantine Military History*, transl., rev. and rewritten by Benedikt S. Benediktz (Cambridge, 1978); Scheel, *Skandinavien und Byzanz*, 96–100, with a more critical approach towards an actual establishment of a Varangian guard by Emperor Basil II; Jakobsson, *The Varangians*, 73–74.

94 Michael Psellos, *Chronographia* 7, 24, ed. Diether Roderich Reinsch, *Michaelis Pselli Chronographia*, I: *Einleitung und Text*, Millenium-Studien 51 (Berlin and Boston, 2014) 217, 19–27. PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Isaakios/1/>. See also Blöndal, *The Varangians of Byzantium*, 107–110; Scheel, *Skandinavien und Byzanz*, 816–817.

95 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Michael/61/>.

Kodinos, a manual on court ceremonial from the mid-14th century, we read: “Then the Varangoi come and also wish ‘Many years’ [to the emperor], they also in their native language, that is in English (ἡγουν ἐγγλινιστί), while striking their axes which produce a clashing noise.”⁹⁶ Yet when Emperor Alexios III Angelos (r. 1195–1203), tried to recruit additional soldiers for the guard in 1195, he again sent envoys to the kings of Denmark, Norway and Sweden.⁹⁷ Further opportunities for recruitment of Scandinavians as well as for encounters of these soldiers with representatives of their home countries arose from visits of Northern kings to Constantinople on their pilgrimage (or crusades) to Jerusalem, such as King Erik I of Denmark in 1103 or King Sigurd I Magnusson of Norway in 1110.⁹⁸ The Varangian guard was re-established after the Fall of Constantinople in 1204 or the re-conquest of the capital in 1261 (with the traditional route of the Varangians from Scandinavia via Eastern Europe being since 1240 under Mongol control), but is mentioned mainly in the context of court ceremonial (see also above), as a personal guard of the emperor or as minders of prominent prisoners.⁹⁹ Its members are also depicted, still with their characteristic axes, as standing behind the imperial throne on a manuscript illumination showing Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos on the occasion of a synod in Constantinople in 1351.¹⁰⁰ They disappear, however, from the sources at the end of the 14th century.¹⁰¹

The case of the Varangians thus provides illustrative examples of how – during a time span of over 500 years – mobility to the Byzantine Empire offered anchor points for identity-building of heterogeneous groups from various background across Northern and Eastern Europe within the framework of the empire (in the Varangian guard), at its borders (with the state formation and Christianisation of the *Rus*) and beyond in Scandinavia itself (where adventurous expeditions to

96 Macrides, Ruth, Joseph A. Munitiz, and Dimiter Angelov, *Pseudo-Kodinos and the Constantinopolitan Court: Offices and Ceremonies* (Farnham, 2013) 154–155; Shepard, Jonathan, *The English and Byzantium: A Study of Their Role in the Byzantine Army in the Later Eleventh Century*, *Traditio* 29 (1973) 53–92; Blöndal, *The Varangians of Byzantium*, 122–123, 180; Scheel, *Skandinavien und Byzanz*, 883.

97 Scheel, *Skandinavien und Byzanz*, 92 and 965 (with the text and translation of the relevant passage from the *Sverris saga*); Jakobsson, *The Varangians*, 109–113.

98 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Magnus/26101/>; Blöndal, *The Varangians of Byzantium*, 131–141; Jakobsson, *The Varangians*, 95–103.

99 Scheel, *Skandinavien und Byzanz*, 869–891.

100 Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, Ms. grec 1242, fol. 5 verso (*Diktyon* 50849). See also Blöndal, *The Varangians of Byzantium*, 174–176; Scheel, *Skandinavien und Byzanz*, 879–881 (for textual references to the presence of Varangians at this synod).

101 The latest references can be dated to ca. 1395/1400, see Scheel, *Skandinavien und Byzanz*, 889–890; Jakobsson, *The Varangians*, 159–168.

Byzantium and adjacent regions became a prominent motif in the narratives about rulers and warriors).¹⁰²

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3.3.1 How the Varangians (*Rus*) travelled from *Rosia* to Constantinople

Author: Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos (born in 905, Constantinople; died in 959, Constantinople)¹⁰³

Text: *De administrando imperio* (*For his own son Romanos*)

Date of text: ca. 950

Genre: Treatise of political advice to the emperor's son Romanos II¹⁰⁴

Literary context: In this treatise, Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos gives advice to his son, the future emperor Romanos II, on how to deal with various neighbouring states and peoples of the Byzantine Empire. Resorting to ancient and more recent material, Constantine describes the history and customs of these polities and ethnic groups; starting from there, he outlines diplomatic and organizational procedures, detailing how to negotiate, to trade or to fight with these neighbours.¹⁰⁵

Historical significance of the movement: The passage is one of most important sources for the encounter between Byzantium and the Varangians or *Rus* and provides detailed information about the preparations, organization and dangers of their regular travels from Eastern Europe to Constantinople. It also shows us how much geographical knowledge the Byzantines had about these regions, which would be even more closely linked to their empire after the Baptism of the Rus, ca. 40 years after this text was written (see above).¹⁰⁶

Type of movement: Voluntary and regular movement for economic/professional reasons (trade, joining the ranks of the Byzantine Army).

Locations and date of movement: from Novgorod respectively Kiev via the Dnieper river to the Black Sea and along the Balkan coasts to Mesembria and Constantinople; regular movement in the 9th and 10th centuries.

102 Jakobsson, *The Varangians*.

103 PmbZ 23734, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25888/html>.

104 PmbZ 26834, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28988/html>.

105 Belke, Klaus and Peter Soustal, *Die Byzantiner und ihre Nachbarn. Die De administrando imperio genannte Lehrschrift des Kaisers Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos für seinen Sohn Romanos*, Byzantinische Geschichtsschreiber 19 (Vienna, 1995) 36–46.

106 Jakobsson, *The Varangians*, 53–55.

Edition used: *Constantine Porphyrogenitus, De Administrando Imperio*, ed. and transl. by Gyula Moravcsik and Romilly J. H. Jenkins, CFHB 1 (revised edition) (Washington, D. C., 1985) 56–62.

Translation used: *Ibid.*, 57–63 (heavily modified by Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller)

Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos, *De administrando imperio*

[p. 56] 9. Of the coming of the *Rus* in *monoxyla* from *Rosia* to Constantinople

The *monoxyla* [logboats] which come down from outer (*exo*) *Rosia*¹⁰⁷ to Constantinople are from Nemogardas [Novgorod], where Sphendosthlabos [Sviatoslav], son of Ingor [Igor], ruler [archon] of *Rosia*, had his seat, and others from the city of Miliniska [Smolensk] and from Telioutza [Ljubech] and Tzer-nigoga [Chernigov] and from Bousegrade [Vyshegrad]. All these come down the river Dnieper [Danapris], and are collected together at the city of Kioaba [Kiev], also called Sambatas.¹⁰⁸ Their Slav tributaries, the so-called Kribitaiinoi [Krivichi] and the Lenzaninoi and the rest of the Slavonic communities, cut the *monoxyla* on their mountains in winter time, and when they have prepared them, as spring comes, and the ice melts, they bring them on to the neighbouring lakes. And since these lakes debouch into the river Dnieper, they enter thence [p. 58] on to this same river, and come down to Kioaba [Kiev]. There they draw the ships on land to be finished and sell them to the *Rus*. The *Rus* buy these bottoms only, furnishing them with oars and rowlocks and other tackle from their old *monoxyla*, which they dismantle; and so they fit the new ones out. And in the month of June they travel down the river Dnieper and come to Bitetzebi [Vitichev], which is a tributary city of the *Rus*. There they gather during two or three days; and when all the *monoxyla* are collected together, then they set out, and come down the said Dnieper river.

[The following passage [p. 58–60] describes the seven barrages along the route on Dnieper, their names and the meaning of these names, and how the *Rus* pass them and which dangers they encounter, such as attacks by the Pechenegs, who live in the steppes to the north of the Black Sea.]

[p. 60] After traversing this place, they reach the island called Hagios Gregorios [Hortica], on which island they perform their sacrifices because a gigantic oak-tree stands there; and they sacrifice living cocks. Arrows, too, they

107 “Outer *Rosia*” most probably refers to the regions around Novgorod in the north of *Rosia*, in contrast to the southern regions which were nearer to Constantinople, cf. Belke and Soustal, *Die Byzantiner und ihre Nachbarn*, 78.

108 The etymology of the name Sambatas for Kiev is unclear, maybe it derives from a Khazar name for the place meaning ‘high castle’, cf. Belke and Soustal, *Die Byzantiner und ihre Nachbarn*, 79.

peg in round about, and others bread and meat, or something of whatever each may have, as is their custom. They also throw lots regarding the cocks, whether to slaughter them, or to eat them as well, or to leave them alive. From this island onwards the Russians do not fear the Pechenegs until they reach the river Selinas. So then they start from there and sail for four days, until they reach the lake which forms the mouth of the river, on which is the island of Hagios Aitherios. After they have arrived at this island, they rest there for two or three days. And they re-equip their *monoxyla* with such tackle as is needed, sails and masts and rudders, [p. 62] which they bring with them. Since this lake is the mouth of this river, as had been said, and carries on down to the sea, and the island of Hagios Aitherios lies on the sea they come thence to the Dniester [Danastris] river, and having got safely there they rest again. But when the weather is suitable, they put to sea and come to the river called Aspros, and after resting there too in the same manner, they again set out and come to the Selinas, as this branch of the Danube river is called. And until they are past the river Selinas, the Pechenegs trace them. And if the sea casts a *monoxylon* on shore, which happens often, they put all (*monoxyla*) on the land, in order to present a united defence against the Pechenegs. But after the Selinas they fear nobody, but, entering the territory of Bulgaria, they come to the mouth of the Danube. From the Danube they come to Konopas¹⁰⁹, and from Konopas they get to Konstantia [Constantia], and from there to the river of Varna, and from Varna they come to the river Ditzina. All this is Bulgarian territory. From the Ditzina they reach the district of Mesembria [modern-day Nesebar in Bulgaria, at that time Byzantine territory].¹¹⁰ And there at last their voyage, fraught with such travail and terror, such difficulty and danger, ends.

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109 Most probably a place in the delta of the Danube; the exact location is unclear, cf. Belke and Soustal, *Die Byzantiner und ihre Nachbarn*, 85.

110 Maybe most of the crews had to stand behind here in Mesembria and only selected Rus were allowed to continue to journey to Hagios Mamas at the Bosphorus, from where they had the permission to enter Constantinople in small groups according to the earlier treaties (see above), cf. Belke and Soustal, *Die Byzantiner und ihre Nachbarn*, 85.

3.3.2 The career of the Norwegian prince Harald Hardrada in the service of the Varangian guard, 1034–1042

Author: Kekaumenos (11th century)¹¹¹

Text: *Strategikon (Consilia et Narrationes)*

Date of text: ca. 1078

Genre: Treatise on strategic and political advice to the Byzantine emperor and officials in his service

Literary context: In this section, Kekaumenos advises the emperor against promoting “foreigners” to great honours or entrusting important offices to them, since this would both alienate members of the Byzantine elite who would have hoped to receive the same honours as well as make the foreigners believe that there were no suitable candidates found among the Byzantines. Kekaumenos supports his advice with several episodes of foreign princes joining the ranks of the Byzantine court and army, for which the case of Harald Hardrada provides a positive example. Kekaumenos explains that despite being a royal prince of Norway who later even ruled as king in his country, Harald was not disappointed that he only received minor honorific titles, but continued to show respect for the Byzantine Empire. Kekaumenos gives additional weight to his opinion by mentioning that he himself fought alongside Harald and his troops against the rebel Petros Delianos in Bulgaria in 1040/1041.¹¹²

Historical significance of the movement: Harald Hardrada is the most prominent representative of the Scandinavian elites joining the ranks of the Byzantine army; his long journey led him from Norway via the Baltic Sea to the land of the *Rus* and Kiev and from there to Constantinople. Later he fought with his retinue both in Sicily and on the Balkans. Snorri Sturluson in his 13th-century history of the Norwegian kings (*Heimskringla*) quotes excerpts from heroic songs created after Harald’s return to the north, which allow for a Scandinavian view on his service in Constantinople as a counterpart to the Byzantine sources.¹¹³

Type of movement: Voluntary movement for professional reasons (joining the ranks of and fighting for the Byzantine Army).

Locations and date of movement: From Norway via Kiev to Constantinople; from Constantinople on military campaigns to Sicily and Bulgaria; from Constantinople via Kiev back to Norway; between 1034 and 1042.

111 For a recent overview, see the introduction to the new online edition of Charlotte Roueché: <https://ancientwisdoms.ac.uk/library/kekaumenos-consilia-et-narrationes/intro-kekaumenos/index.html>. On this family see also PmbZ 23694, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/t/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25848/html>.

112 Scheel, *Skandinavien und Byzanz*, 819–820.

113 Blöndal, *The Varangians of Byzantium*, 54–90; Scheel, *Skandinavien und Byzanz*, 1013–1030 (with German translation of the relevant passages); Jakobsson, *The Varangians*, 75–83.

Edition used: Kekaumenos, *Consilia et Narrationes*. Greek text (digitally) edited by Charlotte Roueché, online 2013: <https://ancientwisdoms.ac.uk/library/kekaumenos-consilia-et-narrationes/index.html>.

Translation used: Ibid. (modified by Dirk Krausmüller)

Kekaumenos, *Consilia et Narrationes*, ch. 246

I will tell your Majesty another story, and then I shall end my discourse about this topic. Harald [Araltes] was the son of a king (*basileus*) of Varangia. He had a brother, Hioulabos [Olav],¹¹⁴ who, after the death of his father, took the reign of his father, and appointed Harald, his brother, to be second with him in the realm. He [Harald], even though he was a young man, chose to go and do obeisance to the emperor lord Michael Paphlagon,¹¹⁵ of most blessed memory, and to come and see the Roman establishment. He brought with him as well troops, five hundred men of noble birth, and entered (the City), and the Emperor received him suitably, and sent him, with his troops, to Sicily; for the Roman army was there, attacking the island.¹¹⁶ He went off, and demonstrated great deeds. When Sicily had been conquered, he returned with his troops to the Emperor, and he [the Emperor] honoured him with the title of *manglabites*.¹¹⁷ After this, the revolt of Delianos took place in Bulgaria.¹¹⁸ And Harald also went on campaign with the Emperor, and had his own troops with him, and demonstrated deeds against the enemy worthy of his nobility and valour. When the Emperor had subdued Bulgaria, he returned; I too was then exerting myself on behalf of the Emperor, to the best of my ability. When we came to Mesinopolis [a city in Thrace], the Emperor, rewarding him [Harald] for his exertions, honoured him with the title of *spatharokandidatos*.¹¹⁹ After the end of (the reigns of) the lord Michael, and of his

114 Olav II Haraldsson (r. 1015–1028), later Olav the Saint, was actually Harald's half-brother and had been deposed as king in 1028; he died in an attempt to regain his throne against King Cnut of Denmark in 1030 in the battle of Stiklestad in 1030. In this battle, also Harald took part; he then had to flee the country and first joined the service of Prince Jaroslav of Kiev before travelling to Constantinople, Blöndal, *The Varangians of Byzantium*, 50–59.

115 Emperor Michael IV, called the Paphlagonian, who ruled from 1034 to 1041; PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Michael/4/>.

116 This campaign under the command of George Maniakes between 1037 and 1040 succeeded in a temporary conquest of several places in the east of Sicily, including Syracuse. These territories were later lost when Maniakes got into conflict with Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos in 1043, cf. Blöndal, *The Varangians of Byzantium*, 59–61.

117 The *manglabitai* were since the 9th century a regiment of imperial bodyguards, see ODB II, 1284.

118 Petros Delianos claimed to be a grandson of Tsar Samuel of Bulgaria and raised a rebellion in the Balkans in 1040, which after some initial success was defeated in 1041, see PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Petros/102/>.

119 On the court title of *spatharokandidatos* see ODB III, 1936.

nephew and successor,¹²⁰ in the reign of Monomachos,¹²¹ (Harald) wanted, and requested, to return to his land. And he was not allowed to, and departure was made difficult for him. However, he got away by stealth, and ruled in his land instead of his brother, Hioulabos [Olav].¹²² He did not grumble because he had been given only the title of *manglabites*, or *spatharokandidatos*, but, instead, even when he was ruling, he kept faith and love towards the Rhomaioi.

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3.3.3 The assault of a Varangian soldier on a Byzantine woman in winter quarters in western Asia Minor

Author: John Skylitzes (late 11th/early 12th century)¹²³

Text: *Synopsis of history* (*Synopsis historion*)

Date of text: ca. 1078

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: The historiographical work of John Skylitzes, a legal scholar and imperial official, covers the period between 811 and 1057, quoting older texts (which he partly lists at the beginning of his work), sometimes verbatim. In-between high politics, warfare and natural catastrophes, he reports this episode from the year 1034 (in the reign of Emperor Michael IV, called the Paphlagonian, 1034 to 1041), which describes the encounter between one and then several members of the Varangian guard and a Byzantine woman. It caught his attention (and that of his sources) since it highlights both the bravery of the woman when assaulted by the Varangian soldier and the sense of honour of the comrades of the malefactor, which is also acknowledged in other Byzantine sources.¹²⁴

Historical significance of the movement: The text informs us that the members of the Varangian guard were stationed not only in Constantinople, but also in other provinces during winter, in this case the *thema* of Thrakesion in Western Asia Minor. Furthermore, it allows for a rare insight into (in this case, violent)

120 Emperor Michael V, who ruled from 1041 to 1042, cf. Blöndal, *The Varangians of Byzantium*, 76.

121 Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos, who ruled from 1042 to 1055; PBW <https://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/107527/>.

122 Actually, Harald followed his nephew Magnus I in 1047 as King of Norway, after he had shared power with him since his return to the country in 1045. Before that time, after his departure from Constantinople in 1042, he had spent another three years in Kiev, where he had married Elisabeth, the daughter of Prince Jaroslav, see Blöndal, *The Varangians of Byzantium*, 54–90.

123 Neville, Leonora, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing* (Cambridge, 2018) 156–157.

124 Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, 155–161; Scheel, *Skandinavien und Byzanz*, 827–828.

interactions between lower ranking foreign soldiers in the Varangian guard and the Byzantine civilian population.¹²⁵ The episode is also depicted in the famous illuminated Madrid manuscript of the work of Skylitzes (Skylitzes Matritensis).¹²⁶

Type of movement: Involuntary movement for professional reasons (transfer to winter quarters in service of the Byzantine Army).

Locations and date of movement: From Constantinople to winter quarters in the *thema* of Thrakesion in Western Asia Minor; 1034.

Edition used: *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis historiarum*, ed. Hans Thurn, CFHB 5 (Berlin and New York, 1973) 394, 70–77.

Translation used: *John Skylitzes, A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811–1057. Introduction, Text and Notes*, transl. by John Wortley (Cambridge, 2010) 372 (with modifications by Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller).



Image 5: A Byzantine woman kills a Varangian soldier who tried to rape her and is compensated for the assault by his colleagues. Biblioteca Nacional de España, Codex Vitae. 26–2, fol. 208r.

John Skylitzes, *Synopsis of history, Michael the Paphlagonian*, ch. 4

Something else remarkable happened this year [1034]. One of the Varangians,¹²⁷ stationed for the winter in the *thema* of Thrakesion, met a woman from the country in the wilderness and tried to seduce her. Since he did not convince her and therefore began to use force, she pulled the man's (...) sword, rammed it into the barbarian's heart and killed him on the spot. When the crime became known in the surrounding area, the Varangians gathered and honoured the woman, and

125 Blöndal, *The Varangians of Byzantium*, 62–63; Scheel, *Skandinavien und Byzanz*, 827–828; Jakobsson, *The Varangians*, 84–85.

126 Biblioteca Nacional de España, Codex Vitae. 26–2, fol. 208r. (*Diktyon* 40403).

127 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Anonymus/153/>.

handed over to her all the possessions of the perpetrator, whom they left without burial in accordance with the law on suicides (*biothanatos*).¹²⁸

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- Androschchuk, Fedir, *Vikings in the East: Essays on Contacts along the Road to Byzantium (800–1100)* (Uppsala, 2014).
- Blöndal, Sigfús, *The Varangians of Byzantium. An Aspect of Byzantine Military History*, transl., rev. and rewritten by Benedikt S. Benediktz (Cambridge, 1978).
- Franklin, Simon and Jonathan Shepard, *The Emergence of Rus' 750–1200* (London, 1996).
- Golden, Peter B., Haggai Ben-Shammai and András Róna-Tas (eds.), *The World of the Khazars. New Perspectives* (Leiden and Boston, 2007).
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- Hoerder, Dirk, Introductory Essay: Migration-Travel-Commerce-Cultural Transfer. The Complex Connections Byzantium-Kiev-Novgorod-Varangian Lands, 6–14th Century, in: Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, Lucian Reinfandt and Yannis Stouraitis (eds.), *Migration Histories of the Medieval Afroeurasian Transition: Aspects of Mobility between Africa, Asia and Europe, 300–1500 C.E.*, Studies in Global Social History 39; Studies in Global Migration History 13 (Leiden and Boston, 2020) 50–78.
- Jakobsson, Sverrir, *The Varangians. In God's Holy Fire* (Cham, 2020).
- Price, Neil, *The Children of Ash and Elm. A History of the Vikings* (London, 2020).
- Raffensperger, Christian, *Reimagining Europe: Kievan Rus' in the Medieval World, 988–1146* (Harvard, 2012).
- Scheel, Roland, *Skandinavien und Byzanz: Bedingungen und Konsequenzen mittelalterlicher Kulturbeziehungen* (Bonn, 2015).
- Shepard, Jonathan, The English and Byzantium: A Study of Their Role in the Byzantine Army in the Later Eleventh Century, *Traditio* 29 (1973) 53–92.
- Shepard Jonathan, The Viking Rus and Byzantium, in: Stefan Brink and Neil Price (eds.), *The Viking World* (London and New York, 2012) 496–516.

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128 For the translation of *biothanatos* cf. Scheel, *Skandinavien und Byzanz*, 828.

3.4.0 Diasporas and networks: the examples of Armenians and Jews

The multi-ethnic (or trans-ethnic) and multi-religious empire of the Rhomaioi included communities that settled not only within the imperial frontiers, but also beyond.¹²⁹ Linguistic, religious and other commonalities provided a basis for the establishment of ties of kinship, commercial exchange and further forms of interaction, which were maintained through constant mobility of individuals and groups across borders. Similar networks emerged between groups of these communities that lived in various places across the provinces of the empire, sometimes called “diaspora” (in Greek meaning ‘scattering’ or ‘dispersion’). This term was originally applied to the Jews, whose communities were found ‘scattered’ among other populations in the Middle East and the Mediterranean after the conquests of their ‘promised land’ by various invaders from the 8th century BC onwards.¹³⁰

Another ethno-religious group which qualified both as a trans-frontier and as a diaspora community were the Armenians. After the late 4th century when the Kingdom of Greater Armenia was divided between the Roman Empire and the Sasanian Persian Empire, areas of Armenian settlement were located within and beyond the imperial border. Even when Greater Armenia in its entirety came under Arab suzerainty in the late 7th/early 8th century, an Armenian population was still found on Byzantine territory to the west of the Euphrates River. Between these areas, mobility and migration never stopped, although the great powers that claimed overlordship over Armenia tried to control and constrain the movement

129 On the term “trans-ethnic”, indicating that the Byzantines did not define their society in ethnic terms, see Koder, Johannes, *Griechische Identitäten im Mittelalter. Aspekte einer Entwicklung*, in: Anna Avramea, Angeliki E. Laiou and Evangelos K. Chrysos (eds.), *Byzantium. State and Society* (Athens, 2003) 304. However, see also now the interpretation of Byzantium as medieval “Roman nation state” by Kaldellis, Anthony, *Romanland: Ethnicity and Empire in Byzantium* (Cambridge, Mass. and London, 2019).

130 Cohen, Robin, *Global Diasporas: An Introduction* (London and New York, 2008).

of people and goods.¹³¹ Especially the members of the Armenian noble elite proved to be mobile, crossing borders several times in search of career opportunities within the respective empires or of ways to avoid their control (see 3.4.1). Since the 6th century, generals of Armenian background formed a significant element of the Byzantine military elite. Through this mobility, the aristocratic clans of Armenia also became accustomed to the division between various rulers and spheres of interest of the neighbouring empires and to multiple layers of authority and loyalty. Thus, some members of a noble house would stay in Persian- or Arab-controlled Armenia, whereas a relative would serve in the Roman/Byzantine army, which led to the formation of trans-local families.¹³²

The retinues of these aristocrats consisted not only of other noble warriors, but also of members of their families and non-aristocratic elements such as common soldiers, farmers and artisans (see 3.4.1, 3.4.2 and 3.4.3).¹³³ From the early 10th century onwards, they were actively recruited by the Byzantine authorities to resettle the sparsely populated areas at the Arab frontier, when Byzantium regained control over these territories, often again due to the activities of commanders of Armenian origin (see 3.4.1 and 3.4.2). Some of these settlers, however, demonstrated a similar tendency to migrate back and forth across the border, which collided with the imperial authorities' zeal to monitor and tax their subjects (see 3.4.2); such phenomena appeared to confirm Byzantine stereotypes of the Armenians' 'unreliability'.¹³⁴ From the 6th century onwards, Armenians of various status and their families not only took residence in frontier provinces near their former homelands, but also in other parts of Asia Minor, in Constantinople and its hinterland and in provinces further to the west (even in Italy and North Africa). This provided opportunities for interacting with individuals and families of Byzantine and other backgrounds and for establishing ties of kinship and friendship across ethno-linguistic boundaries; a mixture of Armenian and Byzantine/Greek milieus, for instance, could become manifest in the

131 Preiser-Kapeller, Johannes, Aristocrats, Mercenaries, Clergymen and Refugees: Deliberate and Forced Mobility of Armenians in the Early Medieval Mediterranean (6th to 11th Century A.D.), in: Johannes Preiser-Kapeller et al. (eds.), *Migration Histories of the Medieval Afroeurasian Transition Zone. Aspects of Mobility between Africa, Asia and Europe, 300–1500 C.E.*, Studies in Global Social History 39; Studies in Global Migration History 13 (Leiden, 2020) 327–384, at 329–333, 349–350.

132 Preiser-Kapeller, Aristocrats, Mercenaries, Clergymen and Refugees, 332–336. On the concept of trans-local families see Harzig, Christiane and Dirk Hoerder, with Donna Gabaccia, *What is Migration History?* (Malden, MA, 2009) 123–126.

133 Preiser-Kapeller, Aristocrats, Mercenaries, Clergymen and Refugees, 339–346.

134 Garsoïan, Nina G., The Problem of Armenian Integration into the Byzantine Empire, in: Hélène Ahrweiler and Angeliki E. Laiou (eds.), *Studies on the Internal Diaspora of the Byzantine Empire* (Washington, D.C., 1998) 53–124; Preiser-Kapeller, Aristocrats, Mercenaries, Clergymen and Refugees, 364–367.

naming practices (see 3.4.3).¹³⁵ Full integration within the Byzantine elite, however, presupposed the newcomers' willingness to adapt in language (Greek) and religion.¹³⁶ Some families rapidly attained high social status, and occasionally individuals even reached the imperial throne, such as Leo V¹³⁷ (ruling 813–820). Leo V, however, made enemies with his ecclesiastical policy (against the veneration of the holy images), who seized on his 'barbarian' and 'heterodox' Armenian origin. After the late 6th/early 7th century when the Byzantine and the Armenian churches split, Armenians who did not profess the Orthodox faith were, at least in theory, considered heretics and forbidden to marry Byzantines, for instance.¹³⁸ Some representatives of the Byzantine church even argued for a physical separation of communities of Armenian Christians, as in the cases of non-Christians such as Jews or Muslims (see 3.4.4). Everyday practices of interaction, however, seem to have differed; in ca. 1300 Patriarch Athanasios I¹³⁹ sent a letter to Emperor Andronikos II¹⁴⁰ in which he complained that in Constantinople Armenians, Jews and Muslims could practice their faith unhindered.¹⁴¹ The Armenian community in Constantinople long survived the Ottoman conquest of the city in 1453.

In terms of religious status, the Georgians who entered Byzantine service from the 7th century onwards were better placed, since they were in communion with the Byzantine Church (and separated from the Armenian church). We read, however, about cases of discrimination against Georgian clerics and monks due to differences of language and (liturgical) traditions. Around 980, Georgian nobles founded the monastery *ton Iveron* ("of the Iberians", i.e. Georgians) on Mount Athos. Yet, even there conflicts between Georgian and Greek monks broke

135 Preiser-Kapeller, *Aristocrats, Mercenaries, Clergymen and Refugees*, 356–360.

136 Recently, Kaldellis, Anthony, *Romanland. Ethnicity and Empire in Byzantium* (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 2019) 155–195, has discussed what he calls the "Armenian fallacy", that is the tendency in scholarship to identify individual member of the Byzantine elite as Armenian even several generations after the immigration of their ancestors and their integration into the Eastern Roman polity with regard to language, religion and identity.

137 PmbZ 4244/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ15402/html>.

138 Preiser-Kapeller, *Aristocrats, Mercenaries, Clergymen and Refugees*, 357–359.

139 PLP 415.

140 PLP 21436.

141 Athanasios I, *Letters*, 41–42, ed. Alice-Mary Maffry Talbot, *The Correspondence of Athanasios I Patriarch of Constantinople. Letters to the Emperor Andronicus II, Members of the Imperial Family, and Officials. Edition, Translation, and Commentary*, CFHB 7; DOT 3 (Washington, D.C., 1975) 82–85. See also Booramra, John L., *Athanasios of Constantinople: A Study of Byzantine Reactions to Latin Religious Infiltration*, *Church History* 48/1 (1979) 27–48.

out repeatedly throughout the centuries. After 1204, the city and Empire of Trebizond became a focal point for Georgian presence.¹⁴²

As mentioned above, the Jewish diaspora had a long history of migration and community-building across the Mediterranean and the Middle East, which predated the Roman/Byzantine Empire.¹⁴³ With the Roman expansion to the East in the 1st century BC, both the Jewish homeland between the river Jordan and the Mediterranean and other centres of Jewish settlement such as Egypt became provinces of the empire; other regions of strong Jewish presence such as southern Mesopotamia remained outside of its frontiers. Especially the 1st and 2nd centuries were characterised by three Jewish rebellions (two of them in the “holy land”), their bloody suppression, the destruction of the second Temple in Jerusalem and the expulsion of the Jews from the city (see also 3.4.5). After Emperor Constantine I had lent his support to the Christian Church in the early 4th century, Jerusalem was transformed into the holy city of Christianity, dominated by its churches. The growing influence of Christianity in the Roman Empire also created new limits on the freedom of other religions. Although Judaism was not banned outright, a series of laws promulgated between the 4th and 6th century prohibited them from serving in the civil service or the army, from teaching publicly, from converting Christians, from building new synagogues, from owning Christian slaves and from giving testimony in court against Christians. In addition, the Quinisextum Council which was held in Constantinople in the years 691/692 forbade Christians to visit synagogues, to participate in Jewish festivals, to use the same bathhouses as Jews or to consult Jewish physicians (as obviously many Christians did).¹⁴⁴ However, the degree “to which such provisions actually affected daily dealings between Jews and Christians is debatable, especially since such bans were constantly reiterated in legislation”.¹⁴⁵ There were also no occupational restrictions for Jews, and they are found in various professions, in-

142 Iamanidzé, Nina and Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, The Caucasus, in: Falko Daim (ed.), *Brill's New Pauly. History and Culture of Byzantium* (Leiden and Boston, 2019) 513–515; Exarchos, Leonie, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, Saskia Dönitz and Zachary Chitwood, Minorities in the Empire, in: Falko Daim (ed.), *Brill's New Pauly. History and Culture of Byzantium* (Leiden and Boston, 2019) 526–531, at 527.

143 For the geographical distribution of Jewish communities in the Byzantine Empire see *Mapping the Jewish Communities in the Byzantine Empire*, Online atlas, ed. Centre for Advanced Religious and Theological Study, Faculty of Divinity, Cambridge University (Cambridge, 2010). Accessed on 1 December 2020: <http://www.byzantinejewry.net/>.

144 Preiser-Kapeller, Johannes, Relations with other churches and religions, in: Falko Daim (ed.), *Brill's New Pauly. History and Culture of Byzantium* (Leiden and Boston, 2019) 276; Exarchos, Preiser-Kapeller, Dönitz and Chitwood, *Minorities in the Empire*, 527–528.

145 Exarchos, Preiser-Kapeller, Dönitz and Chitwood, *Minorities in the Empire*, 528.

cluding agriculture (on their own landed property); some local communities played an important role in the textile and silk production (see also 3.4.6).¹⁴⁶

Starting with Herakleios¹⁴⁷ in the aftermath of the war against the Sasanian Persians (with whom the Jews in Jerusalem and elsewhere were accused of co-operating) in 630, several Byzantine emperors launched campaigns of persecution and forced baptism against the Jews, such as Leo III (717–741),¹⁴⁸ Basil I (867–886, see 3.4.5)¹⁴⁹ and Romanos I Lekapenos (920–944).¹⁵⁰ The exact extent of these actions is difficult to assess, and their success is doubtful; nevertheless, some of them may have contributed to the emigration of Jews from the Byzantine Empire (see 3.4.5, also indicating the presence of Jewish communities in Byzantine Southern Italy). The Byzantine Church disapproved of forced baptism and regarded it as invalid, because it was considered merely an external gesture, devoid of inner conviction. Even so, a growing number of clerics produced polemical writings against the Jews, in the hope of converting them. In these texts, apologetics – defence against Jewish criticism of Christian practices, such as for instance, the veneration of icons – were mixed with attacks on Jewish beliefs, such as their refusal to recognize Jesus Christ as the Messiah.¹⁵¹ Some clerics actively attacked Jewish communities and argued for their ejection or physical separation from Christian settlements (see 3.4.5 and 3.4.6). Despite these hostilities, Jewish communities continued to exist in many places of the Byzantine Empire. In the late 12th century, the Jewish traveller Benjamin of Tudela found congregations in some 25 larger cities, including Constantinople and Thessaloniki. These communities were in close contact with each other and with places of Jewish settlement and learning in other regions of the Mediterranean, with rabbis and students travelling between localities.¹⁵² We also get some information on Jewish life in 10th to 12th century Byzantium from one of the most important archives of

146 Jacoby, David, *The Jews in the Byzantine Economy (Seventh to Mid-Fifteenth Century)*, in: Robert Bonfil et al. (eds.), *Jews in Byzantium. Dialectics of Minority and Majority Cultures* (Leiden and Boston, 2012) 219–256; Exarchos, Preiser-Kapeller, Dönitz and Chitwood, *Minorities in the Empire*, 528.

147 PLRE III A 586–587.

148 PmbZ 4242, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ15400/html>.

149 PmbZ 20837, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22990/html>.

150 PmbZ 26833, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28987/html>.

151 Külzer, Andreas, *Disputationes graecae contra Iudaeos. Untersuchungen zur byzantinischen antijüdischen Dialogliteratur und ihrem Judenbild* (Stuttgart and Leipzig, 1999).

152 Starr, Joshua, *The Jews in the Byzantine Empire 641–1204* (Athens, 1939) 35–37.

medieval Jewish history across Western Afro-Eurasia, the *Geniza* (storage room) of the Ben Ezra-Synagogue in Cairo.¹⁵³

While the Jewish community in Constantinople seems to have suffered after the Latin conquest of the city in 1204, congregations continued to exist in the Byzantine successor states, although they experienced assaults by Theodore I Doukas Komnenos in Epiros (in Western Greece) in 1229/1230 and by Emperor John III Vatatzes in 1254 in Nicaea (in Western Asia Minor). Emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos (1258–1282),¹⁵⁴ however, suspended the anti-Jewish measures of his predecessor and also welcomed the Jewish community back to Constantinople after its conquest from the Latins in 1261.¹⁵⁵ Jews then lived in various quarters of the Byzantine capital, but also in the Genoese colony of Galata; like the Armenians and Muslims, their presence in Constantinople enraged Patriarch Athanasios I¹⁵⁶ in ca. 1300 (see above). Supposed or actual links with Jews also served as starting points for polemics against opposing clerics and intellectuals, such as Patriarch Philotheos Kokkinos (who was of partly Jewish origin)¹⁵⁷ or George Gemistos Plethon¹⁵⁸ (who studied with a Jewish scholar, see 3.4.7). The Jewish community in Constantinople, however, continued its existence beyond the Ottoman conquest of 1453 and even grew in numbers due to immigration from other regions of the Ottoman Empire and beyond, especially after the expulsion of the Sephardic Jews from Spain in 1492, whose traditions merged with those of the Romaniotes.¹⁵⁹

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3.4.1 Trans-frontier mobility and the establishment of the *mikra Armenika themata* – the career of Melias

Author: Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos (born in 905, Constantinople; died in 959, Constantinople)¹⁶⁰

Text: *De administrando imperio* (For his own son Romanos)

153 Jacoby, David, What do we learn about Byzantine Asia Minor from the Documents of the Cairo Genizah?, in: Stelios Lampakes (ed.), *Byzantine Asia Minor (6th–12th cent.)* (Athens 1998), 83–95; Holo, Joshua, *Byzantine Jewry in the Mediterranean Economy* (Cambridge, 2009).

154 PLP 21528.

155 Bowman, Steven B., *The Jews of Byzantium, 1204–1453* (Alabama, 1985) 13–14 and 16–18.

156 PLP 415.

157 PLP 11917.

158 PLP 3630.

159 Exarchos, Preiser-Kapeller, Dönitz and Chitwood, *Minorities in the Empire*, 527–528.

160 PmbZ 23734, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25888/html>.

Date of text: ca. 950

Genre: Treatise of political advice to the emperor's son Romanos II¹⁶¹

Literary context: In this treatise, Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos gives advice to his son, the future emperor Romanos II, on how to deal with various neighbouring states and peoples of the Byzantine Empire. Resorting to ancient and more recent material, the text describes the history and customs of these polities and ethnic groups; it then outlines diplomatic and organisational procedures, detailing how to negotiate, to trade or to fight with these neighbours.¹⁶²

Historical significance of the movement: In this passage, Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos recalls more recent developments and administrative changes at the borders of the empire, including the emergence of several smaller units of military administration at the eastern frontier, which were later called *mikra Armenika themata* ("small Armenian themes") because commanders of Armenian background and their retinues contributed to the creation and re-settlement of these regions. Prominent among these commanders was Melias (in Armenian Mleh),¹⁶³ who had come to Constantinople early in the reign of Emperor Leo VI (886–912) in the retinue of the Armenian nobleman Azatos or Azotos with the telling nickname "Makrocheir" ("with big hands", "with long arms").¹⁶⁴ In 896, Azotos died in the battle of Boulgarophygon against the Bulgarians, while Melias survived and returned to Armenia. Around 904, he was again in Byzantine service and fought together with the Byzantine commander Eustathios Argyros¹⁶⁵ in the East. Shortly afterwards, in 906, both men fell from imperial favour because they had participated in a rebellion. In 907/908, Melias, together with four other Armenian noblemen, Ismael¹⁶⁶ and the three brothers Baasakios,¹⁶⁷ Krikorikes¹⁶⁸

161 PmbZ 26834, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28988/html>.

162 Belke, Klaus and Peter Soustal, *Die Byzantiner und ihre Nachbarn. Die De administrando imperio genannte Lehrschrift des Kaisers Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos für seinen Sohn Romanos*, Byzantinische Geschichtsschreiber 19 (Vienna, 1995) 36–46.

163 PmbZ 25041, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ27195/html>.

164 PmbZ 20643, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22796/html>.

165 PmbZ 21828, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ23981/html>.

166 PmbZ 23566, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25720/html>.

167 PmbZ 20723, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22876/html>.

168 PmbZ 24198, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ26352/html>.

and Pazunes,¹⁶⁹ was in exile at the court of the Emir of Melitene, but he returned to the Byzantine Empire after Eustathios Argyros, who had regained imperial favour, had vouched for him. All five Armenians then received commands at the Eastern frontier. The passage thus casts light both on the networks which enabled the (often multiple) movements of members of the Armenian elite across the Arab-Byzantine border and on the contribution of Armenian manpower to the stabilization and expansion of the Byzantine frontier in the East from the early 10th century onwards.¹⁷⁰

Type of movement: Voluntary movement for professional reasons (joining the ranks of the Byzantine Army), involuntary movement for political reasons (exile).

Locations and date of movement: from Armenia to Constantinople, from Constantinople to Thrace, from Thrace to Armenia, from Armenia to the Byzantine-Arab frontier, from Byzantine territory to Melitene, from Melitene to the region of Euphrateia and then between various regions at the Byzantine-Arab frontier; between 896 and 908 (and afterwards).¹⁷¹

Edition used: *Constantine Porphyrogenitus, De Administrando Imperio*, ed. and transl. by Gyula Moravcsik and Romilly J. H. Jenkins, CFHB 1 (revised edition) (Washington, D.C., 1985) 238–240.

Translation used: Ibid, 239–241 (modified by Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller)

Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos, *De administrando imperio*

[p. 238] In the reign of Leo [VI, 886–912], the Christ-loving lord (*despotes*), Eustathios, the son of Argyros, was recalled from exile and appointed *strategos* of Charsianon. Melias was still a refugee in Melitene, as were Baasakios with his two brothers, Krikorikes and Pazounes, and also (the later deceased) Ismael the Armenian. They wrote both to him [the emperor] as well as to the aforesaid Argyros, that they might receive a charter with a golden seal (*chrysoboullon*) and might come out (from exile), and that Baasakios and his brothers might settle in Larissa and that Baasakios be named *kleisourarches* of Larissa, which happened; and that Ismael should be (appointed) *kleisourarches* of Symposion, which happened; and that Melias should be made *tourmarches* in Euphrateia, Trypia,

169 PmbZ 26400, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28554/html>.

170 Dédéyan, Gerard, Mleh le Grand, stratège de Lykandos, *Revue des études arméniennes*, N.S. 15 (1981) 73–102; Preiser-Kapeller, Aristocrats, Mercenaries, Clergymen and Refugees, 353–354.

171 On the chronology of these events, see also Belke and Soustal, *Die Byzantiner und ihre Nachbarn*, 244, n. 536.

and in the (so-called) desert (*eremia*),¹⁷² which also happened. But since the people of Melitene came out and killed Ismael, [p. 240] Symposion remained deserted. And when Baasakios was accused of plotting treachery and was sent into exile, Larissa became again a *tourma* under Sebasteia, and Leo Argyros, son of Eustathios, was appointed *strategos* there (...). But Melias took his seat in Euphrateia, and when Konstantinos Dux had been appointed in Charsianon, this aforesaid Melias came down and took possession of the ancient *kastron* [fortified settlement] of Lykandos and built it up and made it a strong fortress and took his seat there; and it was named a *kleisoura* by Leo, the Christ-loving emperor. After this he moved over from Lykandos to the mountain of Tzamandos, and there he built the *kastron*, which is there now, and this was equally designated as a *kleisoura*. He also took possession of Symposion and turned it into a *tourma*. In the first reign of Constantine [VII], the Christ-loving lord, however, when his mother Zoë was co-ruling with him,¹⁷³ Lykandos became a military province, and the first *strategos* to be appointed was the *patrikios* Melias, who was at that time *kleisourarches* of Lykandos. And this same Melias, for his loyalty toward the emperor of the Rhomaioi and for his many and countless brave deeds against the Saracens, was afterwards honoured with the title of *magistros*.

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3.4.2 Trans-frontier mobility and the establishment of the *mikra Armenika themata* – the law of emperor Nikephoros II Phokas against Armenian unsteadiness

Author: Emperor Nikephoros II Phokas (born in 912, Cappadocia; died in 969, Constantinople)¹⁷⁴

Text: *Novel of the same* [Emperor Nikephoros II] *in response to a petition concerning Armenians and others, and persons who commit the crime of murder*

Date of text: 964

Genre: Legal text, in response to a petition of a local governor

Literary context: In the 10th and early 11th centuries emperors of the so-called Macedonian dynasty (and those who ruled in their name, such as Nikephoros II Phokas) sought to regulate through laws the distribution and selling of pieces of property, which were awarded to soldiers who were obliged to do military service

172 A section of the deserted no-man's land at the Byzantine-Arab frontier, see Belke and Soustal, *Die Byzantiner und ihre Nachbarn*, 245, n. 537.

173 In the period between 913 and 920.

174 PmbZ 25535, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ27689/html>.

(the so-called *stratiotika ktemata*). The main purpose of these laws was to maintain this type of property and the military and financial resources tied to it against attempts to alienate it in favour of owners of large estates (both laymen and ecclesiastical institutions). The law of 964 is a special case since it focuses on soldiers of Armenian background.¹⁷⁵

Historical significance of the movement: This is another text that casts light on Armenian mobility in the eastern frontier region in the 10th century. It may even have been addressed to the commander of the region of Lykandos, which had been re-settled by the Armenians under Melias 50 years before. This official had informed the emperor about several problems in this region, especially about the habit of Armenian owners of military estates to leave their property for longer periods without permission, which threatened the stability of the Byzantine defence perimeter in this area.¹⁷⁶

Type of movement: frequent voluntary (but unauthorised) movement of soldiers of Armenian background across the Byzantine frontier.

Locations and date of movement: from Byzantine frontier provinces into adjacent regions ruled by Arab or Armenian princes under nominal suzerainty of the Arab Caliph and back; around 964.

Edition used: Svoronos, Nicolas, *Les nouvelles des empereurs Macédoniens concernant la terre et les stratiotes. Introduction, édition, commentaires*. Édition posthume et index établis par Paris Gounaridis (Athens, 1994) 170, 1–11, no. 9.

Translation used: McGeer, Eric, *The Land Legislation of the Macedonian Emperors. Translation and Commentary*, Medieval Sources in Translation 38 (Toronto, 2000) 87–89 (modified by Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller).

Novel of the same [Emperor Nikephoros II] in response to a petition concerning Armenians and others, and persons who commit the crime of murder

[p. 170] We order that if Armenian *stratiotai* [soldiers] have gone away again [after their settling and allocation of land] and spent a period of three years elsewhere, and afterwards upon their return discover that their properties have been granted either to refugees, to other *stratiotai* who excelled (in battle), or that these have been offered to officers of the *themata* or *tagmata*, or to *strategoï* for their brave deeds, or even to others because of services useful for the public

175 Svoronos, Nicolas, *Les nouvelles des empereurs Macédoniens concernant la terre et les stratiotes. Introduction, édition, commentaires*. Édition posthume et index établis par Paris Gounaridis (Athens, 1994); McGeer, Eric, *The Land Legislation of the Macedonian Emperors. Translation and Commentary*, Medieval Sources in Translation 38 (Toronto, 2000).

176 Dölger, Franz and Peter Wirth, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des Oströmischen Reiches*, vol. 2 (Munich, 1995) no. 720; Garsoïan, *The Problem of Armenian Integration*, 63; Preiser-Kapeller, Aristocrats, Mercenaries, Clergymen and Refugees, 365–366.

(*koinon*), the Armenian *stratiotai* who return after three years do not have the permission to claim and recover these properties.¹⁷⁷ For the instability and wandering (*astaton kai polyplanes*) of the Armenians will not be overcome unless by such legislation. If they had the authorisation, however, to go off to parts elsewhere and change dwelling, and come back once more to acquire their properties without obstruction, all the Armenian (*armenika*) *themata* would disappear. It is necessary instead, just as explained, to present the properties of Armenians who have gone away – if a three-year period has elapsed and they have not returned – to refugees, as said, or to give them as a reward to *stratiotai* who excelled (in battle).

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3.4.3 A female Byzantine saint of Armenian background: Mary the Younger of Bizye

Author: Anonymous (11th century)¹⁷⁸

Text: *Life of Saint Mary the Younger (Life, deeds, and partial account of the miracles of the blessed and celebrated Mary the Younger)* [BHG 1164]

Date of text: after 1025

Genre: Hagiography

Literary context: The *Life of Mary the Younger of Bizye*¹⁷⁹ represents the rare case of a hagiographical text about a married woman, who due to the pious deeds that she performed during her lifetime and the miracles that she performed after her death (as a result of mistreatment by her husband) is acknowledged as a saint. This is contrary to the standard hagiographical focus on virgins and nuns, a tension also visible within the text, when various (male) representatives doubt Mary's sainthood because of her former status as a wife and mother. Scholars have assumed that the anonymous author himself partially shared these doubts and therefore resorted to humour and irony in some passages or even used the "form of parody" of one of the most authoritative Byzantine texts on female

177 The usual time limit for reclaiming abandoned land was 30 years, see Preiser-Kapeller, *Aristocrats, Mercenaries, Clergymen and Refugees*, 365–366.

178 On the date of the text (and therefore the lifetime of the anonymous author) see Laiou, Angeliki, *The Life of St. Mary the Younger*, in: Alice-Mary Talbot (ed.), *Holy Women of Byzantium: Ten Saints' Lives in English Translation* (Washington, D.C., 1996) 242–245; Constantinou, Stavroula, *A Byzantine Hagiographical Parody: Life of Mary the Younger*, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 34/2 (2010) 160–181, here 162.

179 PmbZ 24910, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ27064/html>.

sainthood, the *Life* of Macrina written by her brother Gregory of Nyssa, in the 380s.¹⁸⁰

Historical significance of the movement: Important for our purposes are the details about the Armenian background of Mary's family, their coming to Byzantium and their establishment of networks with the indigenous military elite, which results in Mary's marriage to a Byzantine officer named Nikephoros,¹⁸¹ who in turn is transferred to the city of Bizye in Thrace.¹⁸² The story is also set against the background of the Byzantine-Bulgarian wars of the late 9th and early 10th centuries. Furthermore, we are informed about the career paths of Mary's two sons, Baanes¹⁸³ and Stephen-Symeon,¹⁸⁴ the first as a military commander like his father, the later as a monk living at the famous monastic centre of Mount Olympos in Bithynia. Interestingly, the text never mentions the potential dogmatic divide between members of the Byzantine and the Armenian churches and assumes tacitly that Mary is a faithful orthodox believer from the beginning.¹⁸⁵

Type of movement: Voluntary movement for professional reasons (joining the ranks of and fighting for the Byzantine Army in the case of Mary's father, relocation to a new command post in the case of Mary's husband and later son), movement of Mary into her husband's household and later movement together with him to Bizye, movement of Mary's son to become a monk in Bithynia.

Locations and date of movement: from Greater Armenia to Constantinople, from Constantinople to Bizye (in Thrace), from Bizye to Constantinople and Mount Olympos in Bithynia; between 867 and 925.¹⁸⁶

Edition used: Hippolyte Delehaye (ed.), *Acta Sanctorum Novembris* 4 (1925) 692–705.

Translation used: Laiou, Angeliki, *The Life of St. Mary the Younger*, in: Alice-Mary Talbot (ed.), *Holy Women of Byzantium: Ten Saints' Lives in English Translation* (Washington, D.C., 1996) 239–289 (with modifications by Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller).

180 Laiou, *The Life of St. Mary the Younger*, 239–252; Constantinou, *A Byzantine Hagiographical Parody*.

181 PmbZ 25558, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ27712/html>.

182 Külzer, Andreas, *Ostthrakien (Eurôpē)*, TIB 12, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften 369 (Vienna, 2008) 289.

183 PmbZ 20719, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22872/html>.

184 PmbZ 27225, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ29379/html>.

185 Laiou, *The Life of St. Mary the Younger*; Preiser-Kapeller, *Aristocrats, Mercenaries, Clergymen and Refugees*, 360.

186 For the dating of the various movements, see Laiou, *The Life of St. Mary the Younger*.

Life, deeds, and partial account of the miracles of the blessed and celebrated Mary the Younger

[p. 692] [ch. 2] During his [Emperor Basil I] reign [between 867 and 886], it happened that some of the very powerful men of Greater Armenia (*Megale Armenia*) came to the great city of Constantine [Constantinople] and appeared before the emperor Basil. He received them gladly, rewarded them with presents, raised them to high positions, and held them in the greatest honour. Among them was the father of the revered Mary. To him were born two sons and three daughters; two of the latter were given in marriage while the father was still alive, while Mary, the one praised here, being the last of the children, was left to live with her mother and be raised by her, after the father's death. The (husband) of Mary's sister, named Bardas Bratzes,¹⁸⁷ had in Mesene in Thrace¹⁸⁸ an estate (*proasteion*), which is called "tou Bratze"¹⁸⁹ after him even today. Bardas would often go out to this small property, and he became a friend and companion of a certain Nikephoros, a *droungarios* who hailed from a village named Kamarai.¹⁹⁰ As, with time, their friendship grew greater and stronger, Bardas was eager to make it even closer; so he devised a firm and unbreakable bond. Once, as he was talking with Nikephoros, he said, "Since, O dearest of men, we have been connected and bound together so intimately, I think it proper to make this bond of love more forceful and more perfect, by adding to it the ties of marriage alliance, so that we may be twice bound, adducing kinship to our acquaintance." And then he began to recount to him the following: "My wife has a sister, a virgin most beautiful both in appearance and in soul, so that her inner beauty is reflected in the beauty of her body. Take her for your wife, if it please God, and thereafter we shall preserve our love unbroken. It will be my affair to persuade the girl's mother to assent to the marriage of her daughter." Nikephoros heard these words with pleasure, and without further ado, they went to Constantinople and discussed the matter with the girl's mother. She was persuaded, and married her daughter off to Nikephoros; thus, the most excellent Mary followed her husband when he set out for home. [p. 693]

[Two sons, Orestes¹⁹¹ and Bardanes,¹⁹² are born to the couple, but both die soon, which Mary accepts due to her piety. Because of his valiant deeds, Mary's

187 The name also indicates an Armenian or maybe Georgian background, see PmbZ 20766, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22919/html>.

188 Külzer, *Ostthrakien*, 530–531.

189 Külzer, *Ostthrakien*, 299.

190 Külzer, *Ostthrakien*, 434. On the title of *droungarios* see ODB I, 663.

191 PmbZ 26192, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28346/html>.

192 PmbZ 20761, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22914/html>.

husband Nikephoros is promoted to commander of the *tourma* of Bizye, where the family moves. There, Mary starts to do acts of charity. Shortly after the death of her second son, she gives birth to twins.]

[p. 694] [ch. 6] When her second child died, she bore the suffering with thanksgiving. Not long afterwards, she conceived again and gave birth to twins. Immediately, something strange occurred with regard to the children. The first one, called Baanes, had a belt, so to speak, extending diagonally from his right shoulder to his left side, while the one born after him, who was named Stephen, had around him a sort of girdle, vertically from his head to his loins. To their father and mother the sight seemed not without meaning, and they wondered what it portended. The mother prophesied that one would become a soldier and the other a monk. The father said that he, too, wanted to enlist the first-born in the army, and to give the second one over to a teacher so that he would become expert in letters and join those who live at the imperial court. The blessed woman said, "Let it be as God wishes; as for myself, whichever of the two possibilities is realized, I will not see it; for I believe I will depart hence before these things occur." The sequence of the narration will show that her prophecy was fulfilled, and one of her sons became a soldier while the other became a monk.

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3.4.4 Exclusion and integration: Armenians and other minorities in the late Byzantine world

Author: Demetrios Chomatenos, Archbishop of Ohrid between 1216 and 1236¹⁹³

Text: *Answers of the most blessed and holy Archbishop of Bulgaria Demetrios Chomatenos to Konstantinos Kabasilas, Archbishop of the Metropolis of Dyrrhachion*

Date of text: 1220–1235¹⁹⁴

Genre: *Erotopokriseis* (questions and answers), on aspects of ecclesiastical and secular law

Literary context: This collection of texts contains eight answers of Demetrios Chomatenos, Archbishop of Ohrid, to questions of his colleague Metropolitan Konstantinos Kabasilas of Dyrrhachion (Durrës). Both were leading ecclesiastical figures in the so-called Byzantine state in exile in Epiros, which controlled territories in north-western and western Greece and adjacent regions; they en-

193 *Demetrii Chomateni Ponemata diaphora*, ed. Günter Prinzing, CFHB 38 (Berlin, 2002) 1*-41*.

194 *Demetrii Chomateni Ponemata diaphora*, ed. Prinzing, 48*-49*.

gaged in the re-establishment of orthodox religious life in these areas after the disintegration of the Byzantine Empire after the Fourth Crusade in 1204.¹⁹⁵

Historical significance of the movement: The text refers to communities of non-orthodox Christians (especially Armenians) and non-Christians (Jews and Muslims), which had already existed for a long time in cities under Byzantine-orthodox rule. It prescribes spatial exclusion, regulations for the selection of places of dwelling and worship and other limitations for these groups. The ideas of Demetrios Chomatenos may have differed from the actual practices of co-habitation of these groups in various cities.¹⁹⁶

Type of movement: Involuntary confinement to specific city quarters.

Locations and date of movement: movement of various groups especially from the eastern neighbourhood of Byzantium to areas in western Greece and the Balkans; before 1204.

Edition used: Pitra, Johannes B., *Analecta sacra et classica spicilegio solesmensi parata*, vol. VI. *Iuris ecclesiastici Graecorum selecta paralipomena* (Paris and Rome, 1891; reprint Farnborough, 1966–1967), cap. CLXXVI ad C. Cabasilam resp. XXII, cols 661–664.

Translation used: Bowman, Steven B., *The Jews of Byzantium, 1204–1453* (Alabama, 1985) 221–222 (with significant modifications by Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller).

Answers of the most blessed and holy Archbishop of Bulgaria Demetrios Chomatenos to Konstantinos Kabasilas, Archbishop of the Metropolis of Dyrrhachion

[col. 661][Question:] Do the Armenians in the cities, in which they live, have every freedom to establish churches, or must they be hindered, or can they build them as they wish?

[Answer:] From the beginning people of other languages and religions were permitted to live in Christian lands and cities, namely Jews, Armenians, Ismaelites, Agarenes¹⁹⁷ and others such as these, except that they do not mix [col. 662] with the Christians, but live separately. For this reason, places have been separated for each of these groups, either within the city or outside of it, so that they may be restricted to these and not extend their dwellings beyond them. [col. 663] I believe that this was granted by earlier rulers for three reasons: First, they should be separated in a narrow and designated place for their dwelling, since they are segregated as condemnable because of their heresy. The other (reason), too, (that) little by little due to their frequent communication with Christians, they

195 *Demetrii Chomatēni Ponēmata diaphora*, ed. Prinzing, 48*–49*.

196 Jacoby, *The Jews in the Byzantine Economy*, 219–256.

197 Both terms refer to Muslims.

might be converted; if, indeed, not all, at least some, as many as salvation favoured. And third, that those, the fruits of whose labour is needed for livelihood, be brought back. [col. 664] Hence, the Armenians, as long as they build a church in a place wherein they are enclosed and practice (therein) their heretical things, they may stay without disturbances. In the same manner, Jews and Ismaelites are permitted to live in Christian cities. If they exceed, however, the limits of the boundary for their neighbourhood, not only must they be prevented, but even their buildings, no matter what type, must be destroyed. They lost utterly long ago the freedom and license of such a sort.

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3.4.5 Emperor Basil I attempts to convert the Jews in the Byzantine Empire to Christianity

Author: Anonymous, under the patronage of Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos¹⁹⁸

Text: *Theophanes Continuatus, Life of Emperor Basil I (Vita Basilii= Theophanes Continuatus, Book 5)*

Date of text: ca. 945–959¹⁹⁹

Genre: Historiography/biography

Literary context: This is the second part of an anthology nowadays entitled *Theophanes Continuatus* (since it includes texts which continue the *Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor* from the early 9th century), which was compiled under the patronage of Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos. The present text is from the biography of the emperor's grandfather and founder of the dynasty, Emperor Basil I (r. 867–886)²⁰⁰ and therefore of special relevance for the entire publication project. Constantine VII wrote a preface, in which he claimed authorship for the entire text. This claim was accepted by earlier scholarship; yet the creator of the most recent edition, Ihor Ševčenko, assumed that it was written by the same group of anonymous authors as the earlier parts of *Theophanes Continuatus*. Nevertheless, the main purpose of the text is to praise all aspects of Basil's rise to the imperial throne and his deeds as ruler.²⁰¹

198 PmbZ 23734, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25888/html>.

199 Neville, Leonora, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing* (Cambridge, 2018) 101–102.

200 PmbZ 20837, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22990/html>.

201 Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, 101–106.

Historical significance of the movement: The attempt of Basil I to forcibly convert the Jews in the Byzantine Empire is one among four such imperial initiatives reported from the 7th to 10th centuries (see above). However, the end of the passage shows that as in all other cases, these conversions were rather short-lived and ineffective.²⁰² Interestingly, we also have a Jewish narration of these events, preserved in the family chronicle of Aḥima'az ben Paltiel, which was composed in 1054 in Capua (Southern Italy). According to this text, some Jewish communities in Byzantine-ruled Italy were exempted from the conversion campaign of the emperor after Rabbi Shefatiah ben Amittai²⁰³ had travelled from his hometown of Oria in Apulia to Constantinople at the order of Emperor Basil I. There, he not only successfully confronted Christian representatives in disputations, but saved Basil's ill daughter from death. It is obvious that this text contains several legendary elements, but it also indicates that Jewish communities could evade conversion.²⁰⁴ In this chronicle, we read the following about the initiative of Basil I: "In the 800th year after the destruction of the holy city, the exile of the people of Judah and Israel, the destruction of the Sanctuary of the celestial Residence [the conquest of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans in 70], rose a worshipper of idols to destroy the unforsaken people; a king whose name was Basili was about to make my path crooked, to efface the name and residue of the remnant of Israel, to extirpate, to divert them from the Torah [the first five books of the Hebrew bible] and to mislead them in a hopeless faith. He commanded that couriers be sent in all the lands and horsemen be dispatched to the very ends of his dominions that lie far off to make the Jews deviate from their belief and force them to follow vanities."²⁰⁵ The Chronicle of Aḥima'az ben Paltiel also indicates that Basil's edict was annulled by his son and successor Emperor Leo VI.²⁰⁶ In his Novel 55, Leo VI actually praised the initiative of his father, but equally stated that the older

202 Starr, *The Jews in the Byzantine Empire*, 133–134; Bonfil, Robert, Continuity and Discontinuity (641–1204), in: Bonfil et al., *Jews in Byzantium*, 76–77, 89–90; Domínguez, Oscar Pietro, The Mass Conversion of Jews Decried by Emperor Basil I. in 873–874. Its Reflection in Contemporary Legal Codes and its Underlying Reasons, in: John V. Tolan (ed.), *Jews in Early Christian Law, Byzantium and the Latin West, 6th–11th centuries*, Religion and Law in Medieval Christian and Muslim Societies (Turnhout, 2014) 283–310.

203 PmbZ 27000, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ29154/html>.

204 Bonfil, Robert, *History and Folklore in a Medieval Jewish Chronicle: The Family Chronicle of Aḥima'az ben Paltiel* (Leiden and Boston, 2009) 54–55, 76–80, 259–270 (edition of the Hebrew text and English translation); Starr, *The Jews in the Byzantine Empire*, 130–131; Bonfil, *Continuity and Discontinuity*, 90–91.

205 Bonfil, *History and Folklore*, 260.

206 PmbZ 24311, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ26465/html>.

regulations which allowed the Jews to practice their faith had not been formally revoked by Basil I and therefore were still effective.²⁰⁷

Type of movement: forced movement from one religion to another, dispatch of couriers to announce the edict of conversion (see above).

Locations and date of movement: all over the Byzantine Empire, and movement of Rabbi Shefatiah from Oria in Apulia to Constantinople (by imperial summons) and back; ca. 870.

Edition used: *Chronographiae quae Theophanis Continuati nomine fertur liber quo vita Basilii imperatoris amplectitur*, ed. Ihor Ševčenko, CFHB 42 (Berlin, 2011) 308–310, ch. 95.

Translation used: Ibid., 309–311 (modified by Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller)

Theophanes Continuatus, *Life of Emperor Basil I*, ch. 95

[p. 308] Since he [Emperor Basil I] knew that God cherishes nothing more than the salvation of souls, and that he who turns an unworthy one into a worthy one serves as God's mouth, he showed himself in this apostolic activity not indifferent and carefree, but first tried to win the uncircumcised and hard-hearted people of the Jews into submission to Christ. He ordered them to put themselves up for discussion with evidence [p. 310] of their religion and either to prove their beliefs as firm and irrefutable or to be convinced that the head of the law and the prophets was Christ and the law [= the Old Testament] was just a shadowy outline that dissolves in the glow of the rising sunlight; but then they should turn to the teaching of the Lord and be baptised. For those who converted, he held out the prospect of rewards and positions of honour, as well as exemption from the previous heavy taxation, and promised to turn them from dishonourable into honoured citizens. So he lifted from many the veil of blindness that weighed on them and led them to faith in Christ, although after the death of the emperor most returned like dogs to their own vomit. But even if those, or rather some of them, like the Ethiopians, remained unchanged in their complexion, the God-beloved emperor should receive the full reward of his zeal from God for his work.

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²⁰⁷ Bonfil, *History and Folklore*, 270–272; Starr, *The Jews in the Byzantine Empire*, 134 (for Novel 55 of Leo VI), 140.

3.4.6 Nikon ho Metanoëite has the Jews expelled from Lakedaimon (Sparta) on the Peloponnese on the occasion of an epidemic, ca. 970

Author: Anonymous, Abbot²⁰⁸ of the monastery founded by Nikon ho Metanoëite in Lakedaimon between 1000 and ca. 1042²⁰⁹

Text: *Life of Saint Nikon (Vita Niconis)* [BHG 1366/1367]

Date of text: mid-11th century (ca. 1042)²¹⁰

Genre: Hagiography

Literary context: Nikon ho Metanoëite ([the one who exclaims]: “You shall repent”)²¹¹ was born between 930 and 935 in Pontos Polemoniakos (a province in Asia Minor, at the Black Sea) where he became a monk and hermit. From 962/967 onwards he wandered around the empire. He visited various parts of Greece, including Crete, which shortly before had been reconquered by the Byzantines from the Arabs, where he converted several Muslims. He finally settled on the Peloponnese, where he encountered delegates from the city of Lakedaimon (Sparta), which was affected by an epidemic. After the inhabitants had followed his advice to eject all Jews from the city, Nikon moved there and with broad support built a monastery (of Alethine-Philosophia) and a church, where he was buried after his death in ca. 1000. His Vita was composed by an abbot of the monastery of Alethine-Philosophia in Lakedaimon in the mid-11th century.²¹²

Historical significance of the movement: We not only learn about the presence of a Jewish community in the provincial town of Lakedaimon (and its eviction), but also about the support of one prominent townsman, John Aratos,²¹³ who opposes the measure demanded by Nikon (and also his building project) and even brings back into the town one anonymous Jew²¹⁴ from the community, which must have resettled nearby, but outside of Lakedaimon – which leads to an even more brutal action of the saint. Following the logic of the hagiographical text, John Aratos, who insults Nikon, is punished with illness and dies a little later, after he has repented his sins and received forgiveness from Nikon. The reference to the

208 PmbZ 32028, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ32705/html>.

209 *The Life of Saint Nikon: Text, Translation, and Commentary*, ed. Denis F. Sullivan (Brookline, 1987) 7.

210 *The Life of Saint Nikon*, ed. Sullivan, 2–7.

211 PmbZ 26155, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28309/html>.

212 *The Life of Saint Nikon*, ed. Sullivan, 2–19.

213 PmbZ 23105, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25259/html>.

214 PmbZ 31522, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ32199/html>.

fabrication of textiles suggests that the well-off John Aratos had business connections with the Jewish craftsmen.²¹⁵

Type of movement: involuntary (forced) migration due to religious reasons (of the Jews of Lakedaimon), voluntary migration for religious reasons (Nikon).

Locations and date of movement: from the town of Lakedaimon to a nearby place; ca. 970.

Edition used: *The Life of Saint Nikon: Text, Translation, and Commentary*, ed. Denis F. Sullivan (Brookline, 1987) 112, 118–120.

Translation used: Ibid., 113, 119–121 (modified by Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller).

Life of Saint Nikon

[p. 112] He [Nikon] promised them [the delegation from Sparta] that the epidemic would cease if they would expel from their town those of the Jewish race who were residing among them, so that it should no longer be contaminated by their disgusting customs and by the pollution of their religion (...). Upon his arrival, after the removal of the Jews from the town, the plague disappeared (...) [p. 118] But that fool [John Aratos] declared that the expulsion of the Jews from the town was neither just nor praiseworthy (...). Using some job as a pretext, the bold bastard brought into the town [p. 120] one of those Jews whom he was wont to employ in the finishing of woven fabrics. Thereupon he [Nikon] seized a club lying there and administered many blows to the Jew, whom he drove out of the town (...). For so abominable was the Jewish race to the saint that he advised all neither to hear nor to utter their name.

Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller

3.4.7 George Gemistos Plethon moves to Ottoman-ruled Adrianople to study with the Jewish scholar Elissaios, ca. 1380

Author: George Gennadios (II) Scholarios,²¹⁶ Patriarch of Constantinople (with intermissions) between 1454 and 1465 (born between 1400 and 1405 in Constantinople; died between 1472 and 1474 in the Prodromos-Monastery near Serrhai)

Text: *Letter to Theodora Asanina*²¹⁷

215 Starr, *The Jews in the Byzantine Empire*, 167–168; Jacoby, *The Jews in the Byzantine Economy*, 240.

216 PLP 27304.

217 PLP 91379.

Date of text: 1455²¹⁸

Genre: Epistolography

Literary context: The letter is addressed to Theodora Asanina, wife of Demetrios Palaiologos,²¹⁹ the last Despot of the Morea (Peloponnese), who at that time still lived on the Peloponnese. George Gennadios (II) Scholarios refers to George Gemistos Plethon,²²⁰ since this scholar had served both as professor and several times also as state official in the Despotate of Morea and had died a few years before in 1452 in Mystras, the capital of Byzantine-ruled Peloponnese. Plethon had been born in Constantinople in ca. 1360, but had been exiled to the Peloponnese in 1405 at the order of Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos²²¹ because of his propagation of pagan ancient philosophy. In his later works, Plethon even argued for a renewal of classical Hellenism and a replacement of Christianity with ancient Greek religion. Therefore, George Gennadios Scholarios, who was also a leading spokesman against church union with the Papacy, became a fierce opponent of Plethon and later also ordered the burning of his book on “Laws” (*Nomoi*) between 1460 and 1465.²²²

Historical significance of the movement: For George Gennadios Scholarios, the studies of George Gemistos Plethon with the Jewish (or rather pagan) scholar Elissaïos (Elisha, died ca. 1393)²²³ serve as further confirmation of the ‘corrupted’ basis of his philosophy (Scholarios also wrote two works of anti-Jewish polemics). This motif of Jewish inspiration can also be found in earlier Byzantine history, e.g. in the case of the iconoclast Emperor Leo III in the 8th century (although he actually tried to convert the Jews by force).²²⁴ In a later letter written at the time when he ordered Plethon’s work burned, Scholarios claims that the “polytheist” Elissaïos was later burnt because of his “heresy” (although this was rather uncommon among the Ottomans), thereby also legitimising his own action. The “barbarian court” Elissaïos was active at was that of the Ottoman Sultan

218 Montague Woodhouse, Christopher, *George Gemistos Plethon: The Last of the Hellenes* (Oxford, 1986) 23–24.

219 PLP 21454.

220 PLP 3630.

221 PLP 21513.

222 Bowman, *The Jews of Byzantium*, 313–314; Blanchet, Marie-Hélène, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios (vers 1400-vers 1472). Un intellectuel orthodoxe face à la disparition de l’empire byzantine* (Paris, 2008); Siniossoglou, Niketas, *Radical Platonism in Byzantium: Illumination and Utopia in Gemistos Plethon* (Cambridge, 2011) 125–133, 138–141; Congourdeau, Marie-Hélène, *Cultural Exchanges between Jews and Christians in the Palaeologan Period*, in: Robert Bonfil et al. (eds.), *Jews in Byzantium. Dialectics of Minority and Majority Cultures* (Leiden and Boston, 2012) 714–715.

223 PLP 6022.

224 Starr, *The Jews in the Byzantine Empire*, 90–92.

Murad I²²⁵ in Adrianople (between 1369 and 1389), where George Gemistos Plethon travelled to study with Elissaios.²²⁶

Type of movement: voluntary migration for educational reasons.

Locations and date of movement: from Constantinople to Adrianople; ca. 1380.

Edition used: *Œuvres complètes de Gennade Scholarios*, I–VIII, ed. Louis Petit, Xénophon Sidéridès and Martin Jugie (Paris, 1928–1936) vol. 4, 152–153.

Translations used: Bowman, *The Jews of Byzantium*, 313–314; Woodhouse, Christopher Montague, *George Gemistos Plethon: The Last of the Hellenes* (Oxford, 1986) 24 (both modified by Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller).

Patriarch George Gennadios (II) Scholarios, *Letter to Theodora Asanina*

The climax of his [George Gemistos Plethon's] apostasy came later under the influence of a certain Jew with whom he studied, attracted by his skills as an interpreter of Aristotle. This Jew was an adherent of Averroes [the Arab philosopher Abū l-Walīd Muhammad ibn Ahmad Ibn Rushd, 1126–1198] and other Persian and Arabic interpreters of Aristotle's works, which the Jews had translated into their own language, but he paid little regard to Moses or the beliefs and observances which the Jews received from him. This man also expounded to Gemistos the doctrines of Zoroaster [the founder of the ancient Iranian religion] and others. He was ostensibly a Jew but in fact a Hellenist [pagan]. Gemistos stayed with him for a long time, not only as his pupil but also in his service, living at his expense, for he was one of the most influential men at the court of these barbarians. His name was Elissaios. So Gemistos ended up as he did.

Further reading

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225 PLP 19503.

226 *Œuvres complètes de Gennade Scholarios*, vol. IV, 162; Woodhouse, *George Gemistos Plethon*, 23–28; Siniosoglou, *Radical Platonism in Byzantium*, 395–402; Congourdeau, *Cultural Exchanges between Jews and Christians*, 714–715.

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Starr, Joshua, *The Jews in the Byzantine Empire 641–1204* (Athens, 1939).

Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller

4 Modalities of movement

Byzantine authors associated travel with extreme discomfort and danger to their lives.

Moving from one place to another meant being exposed to the forces of nature, challenged by inhospitable terrain and threatened by bandits and pirates. Accordingly, those who successfully made a journey, whether on foot (4.2.2) or by more comfortable means (4.2.3), were regarded with admiration and respect. The skilled *literati* who wrote about their journeys in ego-accounts, such as ambassadorial reports (see 3.1.0) or epistolography (4.2.4), were usually intellectuals of the imperial or ecclesiastical bureaucracy who only reluctantly left the comforts of the bustling capital of Constantinople for the provinces or for a foreign mission. There is a certain whiff of snobbery as they not only complain about the arduous journey, but also perceive the exposure to unknown peoples (often of lower social standing) and their language, customs and foods as an assault on their physical and mental well-being.¹

Claudia Rapp

1 Galatariotou, Catia, Travel and Perception in Byzantium, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 47 (1993) 221–241; Kislinger, Ewald, Reisen und Verkehrswege in Byzanz. Realität und Mentalität, Möglichkeiten und Grenzen, in: Ilija Iliev (ed.), *Proceedings of the 22nd International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, vol. 1 (Sofia, 2011) 341–387; Kislinger, Ewald, Verkehr, Reisen, Logistik, in: Falko Daim (ed.), *Byzanz. Historisch-Kulturwissenschaftliches Handbuch*, Der Neue Pauly, Supplemente 11 (Stuttgart, 2016) 697–764; Macrides, Ruth (ed.), *Travel in the Byzantine World. Papers from the Thirty-Fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Birmingham, April 2000*, Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies, Publications 10 (Aldershot and Burlington, VT, 2002); Avramea, Anna, Land and Sea Communications, Fourth-Fifteenth Centuries, in: Angeliki E. Laiou (ed.), *The Economic History of Byzantium*, vol. 1, DOS 39/1 (Washington, D.C., 2002) 57–90.

4.1.0 Leaving

The rhetorical handbook by Menander Rhetor of the late 3rd century that continued to be used in Byzantine institutions of higher learning mentions four rhetorical genres associated with travel, and more specifically with speeches in different voices made at the moments of departure and arrival: the *propemptikos* to send off a traveller; the *syntaktikos* in which the departing traveller bids his farewell; and the *epibaterios*, a speech by the traveller himself at this arrival.² Such speeches can be found embedded in hagiographical narratives, or in the form of poems where the poetic self speaks in the first person (4.1.1).

In the life of most individuals, the significant event of departure and arrival occurred at weddings, when the bride left her parents' home and was welcomed at the home of her new husband. On this occasion, special speeches could be performed (*epithalamios*). As is usually the case, these speeches only survive for the highest level of society, the aristocracy and the imperial household (4.1.3).

Due to the uncertainties and dangers of travel, for whatever reason, departure not only implies leaving one's accustomed surroundings for an unknown future, but also a farewell for an undetermined time – perhaps even forever – from one's family and associates. These moments are accompanied by sadness, anxieties and uncertainties. It is in the literary depictions of departure that we encounter rare attestations of emotions in Byzantine writing (4.1.1, 4.1.2, see also 2.1.2).

Claudia Rapp

2 Menander Rhetor 2.5, ed. Donald A. Russell and Nigel G. Wilson (Oxford, 1981) 126–134 (*propemptikos*); 2.15, ed. Russell and Wilson, 194–200 (*syntaktikos*); 2.3, ed. Russell and Wilson, 94–115 (*epibaterios*). This kind of speech may also be used to address a governor upon his arrival.; Mullett, Margaret, In Peril on the Sea: Travel Genres and the Unexpected, in: Macrides, *Travel in the Byzantine World*, 259–284, at 260.

4.1.1 A poet's sentiment on leaving from and returning to his house

Author: John Mauropous³ (born ca. 1000 in Paphlagonia, died ca. 1075–1081 in Constantinople)

Text: *Various Verses* (*Stichoi diaphoroi*)

Date of text: 11th century (third quarter)

Genre: Poetry

Literary context: John Mauropous' cycle of 99 poems (*Various Verses*) is transmitted, together with his letters and orations, in the manuscript Vat. gr. 676 (*Diktyon* 67307), a so-called master copy, authorized by the author himself. The collection includes poems of various nature, such as religious epigrams, polemical works, funeral elegies, and autobiographical pieces. In his poems Mauropous presents a poetic self who speaks about the vicissitudes of public life and the dangers incurred by those who pursue a political career. In particular, in poems 47 and 48 the author probably refers to his experience of exile through third- and first-person statements:⁴ he describes how painful and difficult it was for him to abandon his home and how he feels when he is able to return. The two poems are written in dodecasyllables and engage with ancient tradition, both for their topic (the hero's exile and homecoming) and language. There are several allusions to the classics, especially Homer, Pindar, Euripides, as well as quotations from the Bible. The words '*oikos*' (house), '*philos*' (friend) and '*xenos*' (stranger) are key terms.⁵

Historical significance of the movement: John Mauropous was a renowned teacher in 11th-century Constantinople (Michael Psellos⁶ was one of his most famous pupils) and enjoyed the favour of Constantine IX Monomachos.⁷ His autobiographical poems 47 and 48 on the forced abandonment and then recovery of his house mark the turning point in this positive period. They are probably connected with the author's forced exile from Constantinople, his appointment as a metropolitan in Euchaita (northern Anatolia) around 1050, and his return to the capital, probably after 1075. He ended his life in retirement at the Monastery of Saint John Prodromos *tes Petras* in Constantinople.

Type of movement: involuntary / state coercion / political.

3 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Ioannes/289/>.

4 There is scholarly debate about the actual reference of the poems in connection with Mauropous' departure for Euchaita. See more in Karpozilos, Apostolos, *The Letters of Ioannes Mauropous, Metropolitan of Euchaita. Greek Text, Translation, and Commentary*, CFHB 34 (Thessaloniki, 1990) 19 and Livanos, Christopher, *Exile and Return in John Mauropous, Poem 47, Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 32 (2008) 38–49, at 43.

5 Livanos, *Exile and Return*.

6 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Konstantinos/308/>.

7 On the educational views and practices of this author see Karpozilos, *Letters*, 11.

Locations and date of movement: 1. from Constantinople to Euchaïta, northern Anatolia; around 1050, 2. from Euchaïta, northern Anatolia back to Constantinople; after 1075.

Edition used: Bernard, Floris and Christopher Livanos, *The Poems of Christopher of Mytilene and John Mauropous*, Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library 50 (Cambridge and London, 2018).

Translation used: *ibid.* (modified by Dirk Krausmüller)

John Mauropous, *Various Verses*, no. 47 and 48:

47: On his own home, when he sold and left it

[p. 410] Do not be angry with me, my house,
 As having been left deserted and empty,
 For you procured for yourself your present suffering,
 Being unfaithful to your own masters
 And loving none of those who possessed you,
 Nor keeping up your service until the end.
 For it is not your nature to remain with those who have you,
 But you always want to pass from one to the other,
 Like a bad servant who absconds.
 Before you can betray and desert your master
 like a fugitive, he wisely leaves you.
 Before he unwillingly feels the harm you would inflict,
 of his own accord he casts you off and runs away.
 Still, he is not without pain or without pity;
 for he mourns for you, dearest, and he mourns a lot,
 as his dear possession and his paternal hearth,
 as the one thing that his family gave or willed to him.
 My ardent love for you, the result of long intimacy,
 ties up my stomach and heart in knots.
 You were the one, dear house, who raised and nurtured me.
 [There are fond memories of the family home as a place of teaching and writing.]
 [p. 412] So, as if suddenly bitten by gadflies,
 I depart from here to where God leads,
 the former owner now a paying guest,
 the former native now a pitiful wanderer,
 without a hearth, and borrowing a stranger's roof,
 I who never turned a stranger away from my own.
 Well, time to move on to another place.
 So farewell, then, you, my true home,
 which has to be another's from this day on.

So farewell, now, farewell, my second mother,
 since it was you who nursed me and raised me,
 preparing and equipping me
 from infancy toward the perfect standard.
 Now you'll have others to educate and raise.
 [p. 414] You'll give them now a chance to read and write,
 if letters interest them – no more for me.
 Farewell, farewell, you dear faithful retreat
 where I spent my earlier life in seclusion.
 I bid farewell, good neighbours, to you too;
 do not let my departure cause offense.
 It is the hand of God that holds all things,
 and so with ease will bring the distant near,
 till all are gathered for a final judgment.

48: When he recovered his house

[p. 414] I have you back and look at you, my most beloved,
 Yet I no longer call you my inheritance from the fathers,
 But rather a lovely gift from Christ,
 And a splendid present from the pious emperor,
 Who have applied sweet force,
 Which again turns my course back to here,
 The one proffered his divine right hand during sleep,
 And often appeared to lead me to this place here,
 Whereas the other openly applied force,
 And demanded, as a debt that cannot be waived,
 [p. 416] That I return to the paternal roof,
 Until they persuaded me to live here again.
 Inhabiting it now for a second time,
 I do not know till when and for how long
 I can be called the new master of my old home.
 This mobility⁸ is wondrous beyond belief,
 – beyond belief, yes! – I own the house I left.
 So God changes our course, he alone knows how,
 and directs our life in varying directions.
 I am confident, and I trust, that God
 will also guide the rest of my life,

8 In order to speak about mobility Maupous uses the word '*eukinesia*' (literally: 'moving well').
 This word has 82 total occurrences, with a striking prevalence among 11th-century authors,
 especially Psellos (TLG search, 11.05.2020).

and lead me to salvation with these good omens,
 feeble and fainthearted though I am;
 for I do not bear adversities well.
 [The poem ends with an invocation of Christ as a guide to the hereafter.]

Further reading

- Karpozilos, Apostolos, *Συμβολή στη μελέτη του βίου και του έργου του Ιωάννη Μαυρόποδος* (Ioannina, 1982).
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- Lauxtermann, Marc, *The Intertwined Lives of Michael Psellos and John Mauropous*, in: Marc Lauxtermann and Michael Jeffreys (eds.), *The Letters of Psellos. Cultural Networks and Historical Realities* (Oxford, 2017) 89–127.
- Livanos, Christopher, *Exile and Return in John Mauropous, Poem 47*, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 32 (2008) 38–49.

Giulia Rossetto

4.1.2 Moving into the monastic world: emotions of father and son

Author: Niketas Stethatos⁹ (born ca. 1005 in Constantinople, died ca. 1090 in Constantinople)

Text: *Life of Saint Symeon the New Theologian* [BHG 1692]

Date of text: ca. 1054–1090

Genre: Hagiography

Literary context: Niketas Stethatos, the author of the *Life of Saint Symeon*, was a monk – and later abbot – at the renowned monastery of Stoudios in Constantinople. He was a disciple of Symeon the New Theologian¹⁰ (d. 1022), whose numerous works Niketas edited and published fifteen years after the teacher's death. As an introduction to the collection, Niketas wrote the *Life of Saint Symeon*.

Historical significance of the movement: Symeon was born probably in the year 949 in Paphlagonia to an aristocratic family, who sent him – as a young boy – to

9 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Niketas/105/>; PmbZ 25842, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ27996/html>.

10 PmbZ 27488, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ29643/html>.

the capital with the aim of pursuing a suitable education that would allow him to work at court. However, Symeon soon understood that he ardently desired to become a monk at the monastery of Stoudios in Constantinople and for this reason – after the completion of the elementary level – he decided to abandon the secular education. His application to become a monk was first rejected and therefore he was forced to work at court, while praying and reading theological writings in private. Six years later things changed: his spiritual father Symeon Eulabes¹¹ communicated that he was ready to join the monastic life. On the occasion of an imperial mission back home, he visited his family. The selected passage (chapters 8–9) describes how Symeon bid farewell to his father and his family obligations in order to become a monk in the monastery of Stoudios. Symeon entered the monastery perhaps in 977 at the age of 27 or 28, possibly in response to political upheavals at court in 976.¹² However, he was soon expelled. His spiritual father secured admission for him at the nearby monastery of Saint Mamas. In 980, at the age of 31, he became superior of that monastery. Later in his life Symeon was sentenced to exile, perhaps in 1009, and had his property confiscated (chapters 87–99).

Type of movement: voluntary / professional.

Locations and date of movement: from the village of Galati in Paphlagonia to Constantinople; late 10th century (perhaps 977).

Edition used: Koutsas, Symeon, *Νικήτα τοῦ Στηθάτου Βίος καὶ Πολιτεία τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Συμεῶν τοῦ νέου Θεολόγου* (Athens, 1996) 46–390.

Translation used: Greenfield, Richard, *The Life of Saint Symeon the New Theologian*, Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library 20 (Cambridge and London, 2013) (modified by Dirk Krausmüller)

Niketas Stethatos, *Life of Saint Symeon the New Theologian*, ch. 8–9

[p. 22] But then came the time of his [Symeon's] departure to the great city and his genitor saw that he was eagerly preparing for the road. When realised that he could not dissuade him from his plan, even though he left no stone unturned, he took him aside and began to beseech him with tears: 'Do not leave me, I beg you, in my old age, for as you see the end of my days is near and the time of my passing is not far off. Once you have covered my body in the grave, go where you wish and travel the road that you want. But for now do not wish to grieve me overmuch

11 PmbZ 27579, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ29634/html>.

12 McGuckin, John A., Symeon the New Theologian (d. 1022) and Byzantine Monasticism, in: Anthony Bryer and Mary Cunningham (eds.), *Mount Athos and Byzantine Monasticism. Papers from the Twenty-Eighth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Birmingham, March, 1994*, Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies, Publications 4 (Aldershot, 1996) 17–35, at 22–23.

through the separation from you. For you know that I have only you as a staff for my old age and as a consolation for my soul. For this reason I regard the separation from you as my own death.' The father said this and more of the kind and cried streams of tears. But the son who had already overcome the laws of nature and preferred the heavenly Father to the earthly one, said: 'It is impossible for me to remain any further in this manner of life, even for a short time. For we do not know what the following day will bring, and to prefer any other thing to the service of the Lord is to my mind perilous and dangerous.'

[p. 24] He said this, and immediately renounced in writing his whole property that had come to him from his parents. Then he took only his own things, his house servants, and what accrued to him from other sources, and mounted a horse and like Lot fled in a wild gallop [Genesis 19:17–26]. And he did not turn round at all to what was behind him, to the wailing of his relatives, nor did he show any care for the public service that was entrusted to him. Thus the searing, intense longing for the heavenly Father is fiercer than anything else, even than the natural affection for parents. For this longing knows no constraint from any natural relationship, nor is it ever thwarted by any human threat, since the better conquers the worse and frees the sovereign mind from the world of the senses. Because he was in this state then, the wondrous Symeon ordered his men to go on ahead. Sometimes he himself would hang back and follow behind them while he grieved, but sometimes he would go so far ahead of them that they could not hear his laments. And in this way, filling the mountains with his mournful lamentations and the valleys with his cries, he found some fulfilment for his intense desire for God. One day, however, when he had gone on ahead and was somewhere in the mountains, the grace of the Spirit suddenly flashed about him like fire from above, just as it once did with Paul, and it filled him with indescribable joy and sweetness, increasing his love for God and his faith in his spiritual father.

Further reading

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- Krausmüller, Dirk, The Monastic Communities of Stoudios and St Mamas in the Second Half of the Tenth Century, in: Margaret Mullett and Anthony Kirby (eds.), *The Theotokos Evergetis and Eleventh-Century Monasticism, Papers of the Third Belfast Byzantine Colloquium, 1–4 May 1992*, BBT 6/1 (Belfast, 1994) 67–85.
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Giulia Rossetto

4.1.3 Joy and grief of dynastic marriages: the emperor's niece marries the ruler of Austria

Author: Manganeios Prodromos¹³ (12th century)

Text: *Poems*

Date of text: 12th century

Genre: Poetry

Literary context: Manganeios Prodromos (often confused with Theodore Prodromos) was active in the 12th century as the author of verses which were commissioned by the emperor and other members of the imperial family (for instance, the *sebastokratorissa* Irene).¹⁴ His poems are preserved in a 14th-century manuscript currently kept in Venice: Marc. gr. XI.22 (*Diktyon* 70658). As of today, there is no complete edition of his c. 18000 verses. Manganeios' poems 22 (composed early 1148) and 47 (composed sometime after 1148) describe the same event: the marriage of Theodora, the niece of Emperor Manuel I Komnenos, to Heinrich II of the Babenberger dynasty, but from different perspectives. The first is a joyous wedding poem, the second a lament in the voice of Theodora's mother over the departure of her daughter, which adds to the grief she experiences as her son Alexios Komnenos leaves for a military campaign. The change in perspective also results in a different characterization of the husband and the foreign environment; such a more anti-Latin perspective is also found in other poems of the collection.

The poet displays his erudition and ennobles his subjects through frequent recourse to figures and events from classical antiquity.

Historical significance of the movement: Sometime between the summer of the year 1148 and the beginning of the year 1149 the wedding of Theodora and Heinrich II Jasomirgott of the Babenberger dynasty (then duke of Bavaria, later of Austria) was celebrated in Constantinople. Theodora (born approximately in

13 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Manganeios/101/>.

14 Jeffreys, Elizabeth, A 12th-Century Perspective on Byzantium's Western Neighbours. The Witness of Manganeios Prodromos, in: Nikolaos Chrissis, Athina Kolia-Dermitzaki, Angeliki Papageorgiou (eds.), *Byzantium and the West. Perception and Reality (11th–15th c.)* (London, 2019) 128–139, at 128. Cf. PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Eirene/20115/>.

1132) was the daughter of the *sebastokrator* Andronikos Komnenos (who was already deceased at that time) and the *sebastokratorissa* Irene. The wedding ceremony took place in the presence of the German King Konrad III of Hohenstaufen and the Byzantine Emperor Manuel I Komnenos, who was her uncle. After the wedding, the couple moved to Vienna. While Theodora is rarely encountered in Western sources, the name of the city of Vienna appears in two documents signed by Heinrich in a Hellenized form: Windopolis.¹⁵

Type of movement: involuntary / state coercion / political.

Locations and date of movement: from Constantinople to Vienna; 1148 or 1149.

Editions used: Neumann, Carl, *Griechische Geschichtsschreiber und Geschichtsquellen im 12. Jh.* (Leipzig, 1888) 65–68 [Poem 22];

Jeffreys, Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys, The “Wild Beast from the West”: Immediate Literary Reactions in Byzantium to the Second Crusade, in: Angeliki Laiou and Roy Mottahedeh (eds.), *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World* (Washington, D.C., 2001) 101–116 [Poem 47, lines 116–123].

Translation used: Jeffreys, Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys (eds.), *Manganeios Prodromos, Poems* (forthcoming) [used with permission] (slightly modified by Giulia Rossetto)

Manganeios Prodromos, Poems 22 and 47

Poem 22, lines 1–5, and 27–50: Celebration of the marriage of Theodora and Heinrich II Jasomirgott

To *kyra* Theodora, daughter of the *sebastokrator*, and her husband, the brother of the king of Alamania

Alamania, dance and leap and shine brilliantly,
for the *sebastokrator*'s most beautiful daughter
is being united to the glorious duke, to his great good fortune,
and he is becoming more brilliant from her greater brilliance
and much more glorious from her greater glory.

[The emperor must beam at the bridal pair. Adopting the persona of the city and its people, the poet asks that the emperor illuminate the occasion with his presence, but takes care that the Western prince is not eclipsed.]

Alamanoi, let forth your shouts of joy and applause,
dance today a dance of joy beyond telling.

For your king's brother, the duke, is becoming *gambros* [son-in-law]

15 Rhoby, *Verschiedene Bemerkungen*, 312–313, 316.

of the powerful emperor, the branch of the *porphyra*,¹⁶
 and is gaining further power and winning greater glory,
 which is yet more splendid and magnificent.
 Hail, most fortunate duke, hail, bridegroom,
 hail, brother of the most glorious king.
 Today you advance from glory to greater glory,
 you are promoted from honour to higher honour:
 for the most beautiful rose of the *porphyrogennetos*
 unites and intertwines and joins with you.
 King's brother and duke, you have become a star,
 and have been brightly lit up by the light of the giant sun;
 now you have become an Orion of the mighty emperor,
 and you shine more clearly – for you come close to the sun –
 through your glorious wife and your status as *gambros*.
 King's brother and most fortunate bridegroom,
 you possess a rose which is variegated, a mixture of two colours,
 her father's hyacinth and her uncle's purple.
 Hail then, most honourable groom with your most glorious wife,
 for the *sebastokrator*'s most beautiful daughter,
 like the most noble of roses, adds brilliance to your family,
 and will become for you like a priceless, fragrant perfume.
 [The emperor is praised for his military achievements and asked to take care not
 to outshine the Western bridegroom. The emperor of many talents must con-
 tinue his defence of the Romans, but also cherish the bridal couple whose
 marriage he has engineered. His enemies recognize the emperor's achievements;
 his people praise him for his deeds on their behalf and his generosity even to his
 enemies.]

Poem 47, lines 111–123: Theodora's mother's lament on the departure of her children

To the *sebastokratorissa*, a speech of lament, when the emperor commanded that
 the youngest son of the *sebastokrator*, *kyr* Alexios Komnenos, who was still
 young, should leave on campaign

[After the death of her husband Andronikos Komnenos in 1142, Irene had to
 endure two year-long imprisonments, along with Theodora and her youngest

16 The *porphyra* was a chamber in the imperial palace that had purple walls, the use of purple
 being the exclusive privilege of the emperor. It was here that empresses gave birth to legit-
 imate heirs to the throne who would be known as 'born in the purple' (*porphyrogennetos*).

child Alexios Komnenos (1143 and 1147). Now she was struck by a third catastrophe: her daughter's marriage to a brutal Westerner.]

I was a second Hekabe, I was deprived of my children,

I saw my wretched child, like a second Polyxene,

snatched from my embrace by violence,

and joined in marriage to Charon;¹⁷ alas for the transgression,

an unseemly union and false coupling!

When was there such a mingling of opposites?

When did a virgin cohabit with a flesh-eating beast?

When did a tender maiden dwell with an ogre?

When has a most delicate heifer been joined to a boar?

But, unwillingly, I endured even this event,

and I saw my delicate little daughter defiled,

when the beast from the west was united with her,

and I mourned my living daughter as if she were dead.

[Irene suffers from the confiscation of her wealth and the removal of Alexios, who has been her sole consolation. The poet prays that God will comfort her in this difficulty.]

Further reading

Bernardinello, Silvio, *Theodori Prodromi de Manganis* (Padua, 1972).

Jeffreys, Elizabeth, A 12th-Century Perspective on Byzantium's Western Neighbours. The Witness of Manganeios Prodromos, in: Nikolaos Chrissis, Athina Kolia-Dermitzaki, Angeliki Papageorgiou (eds.), *Byzantium and the West. Perception and Reality (11th–15th c.)* (London, 2019) 128–139.

Magdalino, Paul, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180* (Cambridge, 1993) 494–500.

Miller, Emmanuel, *Recueil des historiens des croisades: historiens grecs*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1881).

Rhoby, Andreas, Verschiedene Bemerkungen zur Sebastokratorissa Eirene und zu Autoren in ihrem Umfeld, *Nea Rhome* 6 (2009), 305–336.

Giulia Rossetto

17 References to ancient mythology: Hekabe, the wife of King Priam of Troy, is famous for her lament over the death of her son Hector. Polyxene, another of Hekabe's children, died a sacrificial death. Charon is the ferryman in Hades, the underworld of the dead.



Image 6: Gertrud (Gertraud), daughter of Emperor Lothar, and Theodora Komnene, niece of the Byzantine emperor Manuel I Komnenos, wife of Duke Heinrich II. Detail from the Babenberg family tree, Stift Klosterneuburg



Image 7: Memorial plaque for Theodora Komnene, Duchess of Austria, Schottenstift, Vienna

4.2.0 En route

There were many reasons for people to leave one place in order to reach another. Traders (see 2.5.0), ambassadors (see 3.1.0), imperial officials, artisans, and other professionals (see 2.5.0, 2.6.0) were among those individuals for whom travel was part of their livelihood. A smooth and uneventful journey was facilitated by an infrastructure of roads and resting places, as well as by access to the relevant information about them.

Based on scattered information from hagiographical and historical narratives, along with military handbooks, some generalizations regarding the speed of travel by land are possible: For medium- and long-distance journeys, individuals and small groups travelling on horseback could cover 30 to 45 kms per day, although in exceptional cases the maximum speed could be much higher, up to 75 kms per day and more. The army on campaign, by contrast, marched on foot and was slowed down by the need to carry provisions and, on occasion, the presence of siege engines, resulting in an average distance of 15 kms per day, although distances of up to 24 kms are also reported. Means of travel differed, depending on purpose, social status (see Elites, 2.1.0), and the distances involved. Shorter distances were covered by individuals and small groups either on foot or by riding donkeys and mules. Donkeys were probably the most commonly available means of transportation by land. They were sure-footed even in difficult terrain and found their own food by grazing, so that no special fodder had to be carried for them.¹⁸ Stories of monks or men of the church who displayed their humility by riding on a donkey, just as Christ had done at his Entry into Jerusalem, are frequent in hagiography.

Long-distance movements of individuals and small groups often involved a combination of travel by land and by sea. Travel by sea offered the swiftest means

18 Belke, Klaus, Verkehrsmittel und Reise- bzw. Transportgeschwindigkeit zu Lande im byzantinischen Reich, in: Ewald Kislinger et al. (ed.), *Handels Güter und Verkehrswege. Aspekte der Warenversorgung im östlichen Mittelmeerraum (4. bis 15. Jahrhundert). Akten des internationalen Symposions Wien, 19.–22. Oktober 2005*, VB 18 (Vienna, 2010) 45–57.

of movement, and was the most cost-effective for the transportation of bulky goods.¹⁹ It was accompanied by grave risks, however, due to weather conditions and piracy.²⁰ The ships stayed close to the coast (cabotage) so that they could re-provision, especially with water, every few days. They could cover a distance of between 30 to 50 kms per day.

Literary praise for Byzantine emperors often includes laudatory remarks about their building activities and their efforts to improve the infrastructure through the construction of roads and bridges.²¹ Conversely, emperors could be criticized for their failure to maintain a functioning transportation system. An anonymous letter composed shortly before 1118 voices grievances to Emperor Alexios I Komnenos and his son and designated successor John II Komnenos, complaining with great indignation that a piece of the northern branch of the *Mese*, the main road in Constantinople, which was subject to severe flooding, rendered the passage of people with their merchandise perilous: the traveller who experienced “a journey of many days, and has arrived here unharmed, after passing many rivers and mountains, across impassable and abysmal terrain, comes to perdition – dear me! – in the middle of the city as if attacked by wild animals and wolves, oh you who incorporate erudition and justice, laws and virtue, and this should happen in the city that surpasses all nations and cities, in faith, in erudition and in its way of life.” The critical tone of this letter suggests that it may never have left the author’s desk.²²

Not much is known about Byzantine maps and mapmaking after the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, a late Roman roadmap of the late 4th century, preserved in a medieval copy from the 12th century now housed at the Austrian National Library in Vienna.²³ We know that a map of the empire once adorned the imperial palace,

19 There is a growing body of research regarding commerce, trade, and seafaring, partly spurred by the discovery of 37 shipwrecks, mostly of cargo ships, of the 5th to the 11th centuries in the Yenikapi district of Istanbul, the location of the Byzantine Theodosian Harbour. See for example Magdalino, Paul and Nevra Necipoğlu (eds.), *Trade in Byzantium. Papers from the Third International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium, Istanbul, 24–27 June 2013* (Istanbul, 2016).

20 Kislinger, Ewald, *Verkehrsrouten zur See im byzantinischen Raum*, in: Ewald Kislinger et al. (ed.), *Handelsüter und Verkehrswege. Aspekte der Warenversorgung im östlichen Mittelmeerraum (4. bis 15. Jahrhundert)*. *Akten des internationalen Symposions Wien, 19.–22. Oktober 2005*, VB 18 (Vienna, 2010) 149–174.

21 Belke, Klaus, *Roads and Bridges*, in: Elizabeth Jeffreys, John Haldon, and Robin Cormack (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies* (Oxford, 2008) 295–308.

22 Mercati, Giovanni, *Gli aneddoti d’un codice Bolognese*, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 6 (1897) 126–143 (Greek text). Translation Claudia Rapp. See also Schreiner, Peter, *Schlechte Strassen in Konstantinopel*, in: Klaus Belke et al. (eds.), *Byzantina Mediterranea. Festschrift für Johannes Koder zum 65. Geburtstag* (Vienna, Cologne and Weimar, 2007) 581–588 (with German translation).

23 Descriptions of distant and not-so-distant regions and their peoples (geography, ethnography) were not popular with Byzantine authors, who rather relied on texts from classical

but this would not have been useful to travellers. Ptolemy's *Geography*, composed in the 2nd century, was known and used in Byzantium and enjoyed renewed popularity from the 13th century onwards. Texts from classical antiquity that list harbours and towns (*Periploi*) as an aid to shipping continued to be copied (and used) in Byzantium. Portolans for seafaring are attested since the 10th century (*stadiodromika*), but survive in Greek only from the 16th century onward, in the West already since the 13th century.²⁴

Some of the travel accounts by ambassadors and pilgrims mention enough details to serve as itineraries that include information about privately run inns (some by female innkeepers) or monastic hostels (*xenodocheia*, literally: 'buildings to receive strangers'). The earliest pilgrim itineraries to the Holy Land, some of which passed by land through Byzantine territories, were composed in Latin, by travellers from the West, beginning with Egeria in the late 4th century. In Greek, itineraries for the use of pilgrims to the Holy Land became popular only from the 14th century onwards.²⁵

An important source of information about Byzantium and its traffic infrastructure are travel accounts written by foreign visitors, which are, however, coloured by a combination of culturally determined prejudice and personal impressions. Luitprand of Cremona (10th century) and Pero Tafur from Castile (15th century) offer Western perspectives, while Russian travellers of the 14th and 15th centuries convey a view from the North. al-Mas'ūdī from Baghdad (10th century) and Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (14th century) give an informed view of Byzantium from a Muslim perspective, while Benjamin of Tudela (12th century) represents a Jewish view. Since they are not written in Greek, they are not included here.

Information about the movements of the army can be gained from Byzantine military handbooks (*Taktika*), which survive in large numbers, beginning with the *Strategikon* attributed to the Emperor Maurice in the late 6th/early 7th century and flourishing in the 9th and 10th centuries (see 4.4.1). The *Taktika* offer generic advice on multiple issues, including the preparations for a military campaign, the march itself, and the building of an encampment.

antiquity. In Hunger, Herbert, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, vol. 1: *Philosophie, Rhetorik, Epistolographie, Geschichtsschreibung, Geographie*, HdA 12; Byzantinisches Handbuch 5.1 (Munich, 1978) the treatment of geographical texts from Byzantium occupies only a short chapter (vol. 1, 505–542).

24 Delatte, Armand, *Les Portulans grecs* (Paris, 1947); Huxley, George, A Porphyrogenitan Portulan, *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 17 (1976) 295–300; Gautier Dalché, Patrick, Portulans and the Byzantine World, in: Macrides, *Travel in the Byzantine World*, 59–71; Dilke, Oswald A. W., Cartography in the Byzantine Empire, in: John Brian Harley and David Woodward (eds.), *The History of Cartography*, vol. 1 (Chicago and London, 1987) 258–275.

25 Külzer, Andreas, *Peregrinatio in Terram Sanctam. Studien zu Pilgerführern und Reisebeschreibungen über Syrien, Palästina und den Sinai aus byzantinischer und metabyzantinischer Zeit*, Studien und Texte zur Byzantinistik 2 (Frankfurt am Main, 1994).

The Byzantine emperors rarely attempted to legislate on travel and movement. An exceptional case is the so-called *Rhodian Sea Law* that was compiled in the late 7th or early 8th century. It contains detailed regulations concerning commercial sea-faring, mentions captains and crew, merchants and passengers, and addresses possible instances of conflict and financial loss: “The captain brings the ship into a place which is infested by thieves or pirates, although the passengers testify to the captain what is at fault with the place. There is a robbery. Let the captain make the loss good to the sufferers. On the other hand, if the passengers bring the ship in in spite of the captain’s protests and something untoward happens, let the passengers bear the loss.”²⁶

Claudia Rapp

4.2.1 An organized trek of the army, refugees and prisoners of war

Author: Anna Komnene (born 1 December 1083, Constantinople; died ca. 1153, Constantinople)²⁷

Text: *Alexiad* (*Alexias*)

Date of text: 1143–1153

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: Anna Komnena, the only Byzantine woman who wrote a historical narrative, was the daughter of Emperor Alexios I Komnenos (r. 1081–1118),²⁸ and married to the general Nikephoros Bryennios (died 1138).²⁹ She wrote the *Alexiad* which represents the accomplishments of her father’s reign from the perspective of the court, after the latter’s death and after her own retreat to the Kecharitomene monastery which her mother, Irene Doukaina,³⁰ had founded.

The passage below is from the last book of the *Alexiad* and describes how parts of the Christian population of Philomelion were brought to safety in Constantinople. They were protected by the army on its retreat from a military campaign against the Seljuks. The trek included refugees and prisoners of war, and the presence of women and children is especially highlighted.

Historical significance of the movement: Retreat at the end of a military campaign

26 Rhodian Sea Law 3.4, ed. and transl. by William Ashburner, *Nomos Rhodion Nautikos. The Rhodian Sea Law. Primary Source Edition* (Oxford, 1909) 12 (text), 83 (transl.). See also Troianos, Speros, *Die Quellen des byzantinischen Rechts* (Berlin and Boston, 2017; first published in Greek [Athens and Komotini, 1986, 3rd. ed. 2011]) 132–135.

27 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Anna/62/>.

28 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Alexios/1/>.

29 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Nikephoros/117/>.

30 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Eirene/61/>.

Type of movement: Military/deportation/refugees. This is a migration within the imperial territories.

Locations and date of movement: Philomelion (Bithynia, modern Akşehir) to Constantinople; 1116.

Edition used: *Anna Comnenae Alexias*, ed. Diether R. Reinsch and Athanasios Kambylis, CFHB 40/1 (Berlin and New York, 2001).

Translation used: *Anna Comnena, The Alexiad*, transl. by Edgar Robert Ashton Sewter, revised by Peter Frankopan (London and New York, 2009) 451–452 (heavily modified by Claudia Rapp).

Anna Komnena, *Alexiad*, 15. 7.1–3

[p. 481] [1] When the emperor [Alexios] had reached Philomelion, after gathering those who had fallen as prisoners into the hands of the barbarians [i.e. Seljuks], as has been said above, the return journey was made gently, so to speak in a leisurely way and at an ants' pace, with the captives, women and children and all the booty in the centre of the column.

[2] Many of the women were pregnant, and many of the men were afflicted with disease. Whenever a woman was about to give birth, at the emperor's order a trumpet would sound so that everybody halted and the entire army came to a standstill on the spot. When he had received news of the birth, another call of the trumpet was sounded, one that was not common. It summoned all to resume their movement and to continue on their march. The same was done when somebody was about to die. The *autokrator* went to the person and summoned the priests to chant the hymns and administer the sacraments for the one who was dying. And after all the appropriate rites for the dying had been concluded, he did not permit even the smallest movement of the column until the dead person had been placed in a coffin and buried.

Whenever he had to take a meal, he called those women and men who were weakened by age or illness, and offered them the greatest part of his dishes, encouraging his companions to do the same. His table was like a veritable divine banquet, without any musical instruments, without flutes or drums, or indeed any distracting music. In this way he made provisions for the march. On their arrival at Damalis, as it was late in the day, [p. 482] he did not wish to hold a magnificent entry when he reached Constantinople, nor did he wish to have an imperial procession or a lavish display of decorations by waiting until the next day, as would have been customary. Instead, he immediately embarked on a small boat and reached the palace at dusk.

[3] On the next day, he dedicated himself entirely to the care of the prisoners of war and the strangers. All children who had lost their parents and suffered the bitter fate of being orphaned he entrusted to their relatives and to those whom he

knew to be respectable people, and to the abbots of the holy monasteries, along with the instruction to treat them not as slaves, but as free people, to see that they had a thorough education and to teach them the Sacred Scriptures. Some children he gave to the orphanage that he himself had founded, making it rather into a school for those who wanted to learn. He handed them over to the directors in order to give them the foundations of higher education.

[The chapter continues with a detailed description of the charitable foundation (*orphanotropheion*) established by Alexios in Constantinople that catered to the needs of the sick and handicapped, took care of orphans and provided a high level of education.]

Comments: Anna Komnena often points out how much thought Alexios (she refers to him with the title *autokrator*) expends on military strategy and battle formation. Here, he is praised for arranging an orderly retreat from Philomelion in Bithynia back to Constantinople. The orderly and deliberate nature of this movement stands in marked contrast to the Seljuks who are in earlier sections of the *Alexiad* depicted as making rash decisions and engaging in disorderly conduct. She depicts Alexios as an embodiment of Christian virtues due to his care for the weak and the ill, his religious observances when births or deaths occurred along the march, and his allocation of orphaned children to monasteries once they had reached Constantinople, as well as his decision to forego the usual pomp that would have accompanied an emperor's return to the capital. This theme is explored as Anna continues with a detailed description of Alexios' charitable foundation in the capital which also served as an institution of higher learning, depicting him as a Saviour-like figure both in the stable security of Constantinople as well as on the march with his army.

Further reading

- Angold, Michael, Belle Époque or Crisis?, in: Jonathan Shepard (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire, c. 500–1492* (Cambridge, 2009) 583–626.
- Gouma-Peterson, Thalia (ed.), *Anna Komnene and Her Times* (New York, 2000).
- Shepard, Jonathan (ed.), *Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire* (Cambridge, 2009).
- Mullett, Margaret (ed.), *Alexios I Komnenos. Papers of the Second Belfast Byzantine International Colloquium, 14–16 April, 1989*, BBT 4/1 (Belfast, 1996).
- Frankopan, Peter, *The First Crusade. The Call from the East* (Cambridge, 2012).
- Neville, Leonora, *Anna Komnene. The Life and Work of a Medieval Historian* (Cambridge, 2016).

Claudia Rapp

4.2.2 Two women travel to seek legal judgment

Author: Demetrios Chomatenos (Archbishop of Ohrid from 1216–1236)

Text: *Various Works (Ponemata Diaphora)*

Genre: Collection of 152 documents of administrative relevance (letters, responses, decisions and evaluations)

Literary context: The *Various Works* of Demetrios Chomatenos allow rare insights into the administrative record-keeping of an archbishop in the late Byzantine period. Two examples illustrate how, even in a composite work that has no literary aspirations, the travel over longer distances undertaken by women is treated as unusual and deserving of respect, and perhaps even a mitigating factor to tilt judgments in their favor.

Historical significance of the movement: The first example (*Various Works* 50) shows a middle-class woman travelling to Demetrios Chomatenos' court in order to obtain his ruling to protect her financial interests. Maria traveled from the island of Kerkyra to Sthlanitzta (Bulgaria) prior to 7 June 1230, by sea and by land. Since her contested dowry included real estate, she would have had the means to travel in relative comfort.

The second example (*Various Works* 129) is taken from a letter written by Demetrios Chomatenos on 20 June 1219 to the Bishop of Diabolis (slavonic: Devol) to confirm his hearing of Zoe who had come from the *thema* Koloneia to Ohrid to confess her guilt in the death of a thief, and to inform him of the penance he imposed. The punishing arduousness of multi-day travel on foot, especially if done by a woman, is considered by the archbishop as an act of penance, as Zoe seeks his spiritual assurance in a case that today might be labeled involuntary manslaughter.

Type of movement: voluntary. Travel on legal business.

Locations and date of movement: 1. Kerkyra to Sthlanitzta (Bulgaria); prior to 7 June 1230, 2. *thema* Koloneia to Ohrid; 20 June 1219.

Edition used: *Demetrii Chomateni Ponemata Diaphora*, ed. Günter Prinzing, CFHB 38 (Berlin and New York, 2002) 183–184, cf. p. 125*–126* (*Various Works* 50); 401, cf. 246*–248* (*Various Works* 129).

Translation: Claudia Rapp

Demetrios Chomatenos, *Various Works*, no. 50

[p. 183] Since she has an eager and manly spirit, Maria the daughter of Op-sikianos began her journey in Kerkyra. Without concern for a woman's weakness, [p. 184] she took upon herself the trouble of crossing the sea and covering long distances by land, in order to come to us, to appear before our own mediocrity and to bring forth her case. For this reason, her case was given a hearing today by

our mediocrity in a synod/in a gathering/in public and in addition to her accusation, she received our judgment (as follows).

[Maria then brings her case to reclaim her dowry against her husband Theodore Makrembolites, who was also present. The archbishop's judgment confirms that the husband is prohibited from alienating his wife's dowry without her consent.]

Demetrios Chomatenos, *Various Works*, no. 129

[Zoe, the daughter of the late Nicholas Petzikopoulos, from the *thema* of Koloneia, had come to throw herself at the feet of the archbishop to confess under many tears how, six years ago and driven by Satan, she had caused the death of her servant who had repeatedly stolen things and threatened her in her bed with a knife. At her behest, loyal servants had seized him and cut off both his hands. Since the wounds did not receive proper attention, the thief subsequently died.]

[p. 401, lines 27–37] The aforementioned woman described this with grief, declaring that she shared responsibility in the death of this man. She sought from God's holy church an antidote against the blemish on her soul. She clearly made her declaration with a contrite heart and a humble spirit. Not only her tears and her sighs were a sign of her compunction, but also the fact that she had walked on foot for six days from her home to come here, without concern for herself, or for the travails and the length of the journey. For these reasons, she was received in the most holy church of God and dismissed with admonitions by the most holy *despotes* (i.e. the Archbishop) not to despair of the church's (promise of) salvation.

[The archbishop imposes a strict regimen of penitential practices for a total of five years.]

Further reading

Simon, Dieter, *Byzantinische Provinzialjustiz*, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 79/2 (1986) 310–343.

Claudia Rapp

4.2.3 A wealthy woman travels in style to Constantinople

Author: Anonymous, under the patronage of Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos³¹

Text: *Theophanes Continuatus, Life of Emperor Basil I* (*Vita Basilii*= *Theophanes Continuatus*, Book 5)

Date of text: ca. 945–959

Genre: Historiography/biography

Literary context: Basil³² became emperor in 867 (r. 867–886)³³ thanks to a combination of personal initiative, athletic good looks, networking, and intrigue. The Macedonian Dynasty which he founded would last until 1056. The story of his life was composed at the instigation of his grandson, Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos, and later embedded in the context of a larger historical narrative in succession of the work of the chronicler Theophanes, labelled by scholars as *Theophanes continuatus*, i. e., the continuation of Theophanes.

Historical significance of the movement: A woman's wealth is tied up in imperial history through travel.

Type of movement: Voluntary (travel for family reasons).

Locations and date of movement: From Patras to Constantinople; after 867.

Edition used: *Chronographiae quae Theophanis Continuati nomine fertur Liber quo Vita Basilii imperatoris amplectitur*, ed. and transl. by Ihor Ševčenko, CFHB 42 (Berlin and New York, 2011) 254–258, ch. 74–75.

Translation used: Ibid. (modified by Claudia Rapp)

Theophanes Continuatus, *Life of Emperor Basil I*, ch. 74–75

[On a visit to Patras while he was still a stable boy in the service of a Constantinopolitan courtier, Basil had come to the attention of the wealthy widow Danelis.³⁴ She encouraged her son John³⁵ to enter into a relation of 'spiritual brotherhood' (*adelphopoiesis*) with Basil in anticipation of the latter's ascent to the throne that had been prophesied to her by a monk. Once Basil had become emperor, he invited John to join his household.]

31 PmbZ 23734, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25888/html>.

32 PmbZ 832/add. corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ11920/html>.

33 PmbZ 20837, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ22990/html>.

34 PmbZ 21390, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ23543/html>.

35 PmbZ 3328, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ24934/html>.

[p. 254, lines 4–21] John's mother, despite the fact that she was by then considered almost an old woman, felt a great longing and desire to see the emperor and, in her old age, to partake of some additional honour as well, both on account of the prophecy [of Basil's ascent to the throne] of the pious monk and because of her own <earlier> munificence and hospitality. Thus, by order of the emperor, she went up to the capital with great honours, many guardsmen and a large body of attendants. Since she was unable either to ride in a vehicle or to mount a horse – perhaps also because she was enjoying the luxury of her immense wealth – she reclined in a litter, having <previously> selected three hundred young and strong men from her household, she ordered them to carry her on her way. In this way she completed the journey from the Peloponnese to this Queen of Cities [Constantinople], with teams of ten men each lifting her couch in turns. A reception was held at the Magnaura Palace, as is the usual custom for the emperors of the Rhomaioi whenever they receive some great and famous leader of a foreign nation; <and> she, too, was brought before the emperor with honours and in splendour.

[Now follows a description of the numerous and exquisitely luxurious gifts that Danelis presents to the emperor, and the recognition she receives from him in return. The description ends:]

[p. 258, lines 13–14] In the same way as she had come up, she also made her return.

Comments: Danelis' extravagant journey is facilitated by Emperor Basil I, who invited her to his court because he considered her a 'mother' on account of the bond of ritual brotherhood he had concluded with her son John. The description of Danelis' travel, her lavish gifts, and her reception at the court is reminiscent of the Biblical narrative of the visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon in Jerusalem (1 Kings 10:1–13, 2; Chron 9:1–12) and of the encounter of Queen Kandake with the young Alexander in the *Alexander Romance*.

Further reading

Anagnostakes, Elias, Το επεισόδιο της Δανιηλίδας: Πληροφορίες καθημερινού βίου ή μυθοπλαστικά στοιχεία; in: Christine Angelidi (ed.), *Η καθημερινή ζωή στο Βυζάντιο. Πρακτικά του Α' Διεθνούς Συμποσίου* (Athens, 1989) 375–390.

Rapp, Claudia, *Brother-Making in Late Antiquity and Byzantium: Monks, Laymen and Christian Ritual* (New York and Oxford, 2016) 201–210.

Runciman, Steven, The Widow Danelis, in: *Études dédiées à la mémoire d'André Andréadès* (Athens, 1940) 425–431.

Claudia Rapp

4.2.4 A monastic leader's long road to exile

Author: Theodore of Stoudios, born 756 Constantinople, died 11 November 826, Constantinople (Prinkipos Island)³⁶

Text: *Letter 3*

Date of text: April to August 797

Genre: Epistolography

Literary context: In his third letter to his uncle Plato,³⁷ the founder of the monastery of Sakkoudion who was also in exile, Theodore of Stoudios describes how he and his ten companions interacted with others as they made their way into exile under imperial guard.

He laments his separation from Plato whom he regards as his spiritual father, rejoices over the fact that he had received a letter from him and sets out with great detail the path that his party took over the course of a month from Constantinople to Thessaloniki.

Historical significance of the movement: Theodore, who had been elected in 794 to succeed Plato as abbot of Sakkoudion at the foot of Mount Olympos in Bithynia, was a prominent critic of Emperor Constantine VI³⁸ for his second marriage to his concubine Theodote³⁹ after sending his wife Mary of Amnia in Paphlagonia⁴⁰ to a nunnery. For their resistance in the Moechian controversy, Theodore and his monastic brethren were banished to Thessaloniki. Their exile lasted only for a few months, until political circumstances allowed their return.

Type of movement: involuntary (exile).

Locations and date of movement: Sakkoudion to Thessaloniki; second half of February 797 to 25 March 797.

Edition used: *Theodori Studitae epistulae*, ed. Georgios Fatouros, CFHB 31/1–2 (Berlin and New York, 1992) incl. German summary and historical notes on p. 9*–10*, 143*–146*.

Translation used: Gardner, Alice, *Theodore of Studium. His Life and Times* (London, 1905, repr. 1974) 59–62 (modified by Claudia Rapp).

36 PmbZ 7574/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ18819/html>.

37 PmbZ 6285/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ17486/html>.

38 PmbZ 3704/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ14853/html>.

39 PmbZ 7899, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ19150/html>.

40 PmbZ 4727, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ15895/html>.

Theodore of Stoudios, *Letter 3*

[p. 13, line 53] Since you ask me to give you a detailed account, from the day when we suffered our painful separation, of our journey and what we experienced along the way, I must not hesitate, although I am unequal to the task. On the same day when you left, o father, willing to endure the way of death, we too were sent forth on the path of banishment, mounted on whatever animals were at hand. And at first, being unaccustomed to such experiences, we were somewhat dejected. For when we arrived at certain villages, we became a spectacle for people of all walks of life and of all ages. Our ears were besieged with noise and shouting while we were pausing so that our guards could procure the necessities. As we advanced further, we became accustomed to this and it became easier for us to bear this predicament. What caused greater distress to us was the illness of our father, the lord deacon. And thus we continued on our way under guard and under great pressure.

[Theodore and his companions encounter a group of nine like-minded monks, but are not allowed to communicate with them. On a later occasion, they are able to hold a surreptitious night-time meeting with the sister of Plato, Theodore's mother Theoktiste,⁴¹ and Sabas, the abbot of Stoudios.⁴²]

[p. 14, line 81] Proceeding from there, we halted at Loupadion [Lopadion], where we were kindly received by the inn-keeper, and could even visit the bath to relieve our festering wounds; for some of us, they had become very troublesome along the way.⁴³ (...) [p. 14, line 91] Taking ship (in Lampsakos), we stopped at Abydos and were received with piety and compassion by the governor. We stayed for a week and sailed to Eleountes. There we waited for another week, since the wind was contrary, and when it became favourable we reached Lemnos after nine hours. Let me halt my narrative here to praise the piety of the local bishop: unlike any other, he received us with hospitality, cheered our spirits, and gave us supplies for our journey.

[p. 15, line 99] Departing from there in some fear because of the people along that shore, and while the north wind was blowing and whistling, we measured in twelve hours a course of a hundred and fifty [Roman] miles, and anchored at Kanastron in the vicinity of Thessaloniki. From there to Pallene, which lies near the gulf and from there to Embolos. From there, we continued by riding again,

41 PmbZ 8023/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ19277/html>.

42 PmbZ 6442/corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ17646/html>.

43 It is not clear whether these were chafing wounds or blisters that had occurred during the journey or, as some scholars suggest, injuries resulting from the punishment of lashing prior to departure.

and we were led, at the third hour, into the city. It was a Saturday and the Feast of the Annunciation. And what an entry it was! This too must not be omitted.

The prefect had dispatched one of the chiefs with a military contingent to expect us at the east gate, where they received us in silence, drawn up in a line. And when we had entered, they locked the gates and led us through the marketplace, parading us as a sight for those who had gathered for this purpose, and thus brought us before the governor. What a good man he was! After he had fallen down before us, he welcomed us with a friendly demeanour, and spoke to us in kind words. He then sent us on to the archbishop, after we had offered our prayers at the church of the Holy Wisdom [Hagia Sophia]. This most holy man first offered a prayer in his chapel, then received us with an embrace, conversed with us agreeably, and from then on restored us with baths and food.

On Monday, they made us get up early, and under the pretext of leading us to prayers in the church of Saint Demetrios, they separated us from one another, after we had made a prayer and embraced each other. Taking us two brothers [Theodore and his biological brother Joseph?] to the place where I am now, they separated us, while we were embracing each other with tears such as moved the bystanders to pity. This is how things are, o father. And now my miserable self is here, dragging out my life with much pain and sighing.

Comments: The comfort of travel depended not only on financial means and social status, but also on the circumstances that necessitated the journey. While extravagant travel arrangements (as in the case of Danelis, 4.2.3) may be recorded by narrators, the hardships along the way are often reported in ego-accounts. Churchmen who were sent into exile as part of their punishment (see also 1.6) often report in letters to their followers back home how they suffered on the way to their destination.

Theodore and his companions travelled by land, mounted on animals (donkeys?), and by sea, stopping at villages and towns. Monasteries and bishops treated them well. The opportunity to frequent a bathhouse is mentioned with special gratitude. There is a conspiratorial undertone to Theodore's description. His praise for the monks and bishops who offer hospitality seems to imply that they were supporters of his stance.

Plato, the addressee of the letter, was the brother of Theodore's mother Theoktiste. He had founded the monastery of Sakkoudion which was joined by many members of this well-to-do family. Like Theodore, Plato suffered for his resistance to the Emperor's second marriage, which was considered adulterous since the first wife of Constantine VI was still alive (Greek *moicheia*=adultery). In 795, at the age of sixty, he was imprisoned in Constantinople and released in 797.

Further reading

Pratsch, Thomas, *Theodoros Studites (759–826) – zwischen Dogma und Pragma: der Abt des Studiosklosters in Konstantinopel im Spannungsfeld von Patriarch, Kaiser und eigenem Anspruch*, Berliner byzantinistische Studien 4 (Frankfurt am Main, 1998).

Claudia Rapp

4.3.0 Arriving

Byzantine authors took recourse to migration history when they wished to explain toponyms in current use. The legendary account of the settlement of people from Thrace that was supposed to have occurred in ancient times serves as an aetiological story for the province (*thema*) Thrakesion (4.3.1). It is a story of invited migration: a family from Thrace who had apparently come to Asia Minor on their own are noted for their exceptional work ethic, especially the highly competent wife at the centre of this story. The local ruler then arranges for large numbers of settlers from their region and towns of origin to join them, presumably by creating incentives.

As has been noted above (4.1.0), Byzantine authors distinguished different kinds of speeches and other texts that were associated with the departure and arrival of important persons. Triumphal entries of emperors after a victorious military campaign called for grand celebrations which included rhetorical fireworks performed by highly skilled *literati*. A fine example from an earlier period is George of Pisidia's *Hexahemeron*, composed in iambic trimeter, that glorified the seven-year campaign of Emperor Heraclius against the Sasanians (622–628) by comparing it to God's creation of the world in seven days. However, when Constantinople was reconquered by the Byzantines in 1261 after 57 years of Crusader rule, the Emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos chose to enter the city not as a victorious hero, but as a humble recipient of God's grace (4.3.2). The ceremonial entry into the capital was imbued with special significance when the new arrival was an imperial bride-to-be and future empress, as she had to be 'Byzantinized' before she could be seen by the population and the court. This is suggested by the poem composed on one such occasion to prepare a young bride from abroad for her first moments in Constantinople (4.3.3).

Claudia Rapp

4.3.1 A legendary account of Thracian settlement in the *thema* Thrakesion

Author: Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos⁴⁴

Text: *De thematibus* (*Peri thematon Anatoles kai Dyseos*, literally: *On the Themes of East and West*)

Date of text: ca. 925–950

Genre: Antiquarian compilation

Literary context: Constantine VII became emperor in 913 when he was still a boy and remained in office until his death in 959. Until the year 945, however, the real power lay in the hands of others, in particular his father-in-law Romanos Lekapenos.⁴⁵ This left him time for literary pursuits. He commissioned or may even have written himself a number of texts about agriculture, about the administration of the empire, about court ceremonies and about the provinces (*themes*) of the empire, which are based on older sources. These texts constitute our most valuable sources for Byzantine politics and culture in the middle Byzantine period. *De thematibus* discusses first the Eastern and then the Western themes (provincial regions). It is antiquarian in character. Its full title reads in translation: “Work by Constantine, the emperor, the son of Leo, about the themes, which belong to the empire of the Rhomaioi, what is the origin of their names and what do their names mean, and that some of them have old names and others new names”.

This passage is a medieval attempt to explain the then-current regional designation ‘Thrakesion’ with recourse to a supposedly ancient origin myth that highlights female virtue, and draws on the greatest textual authorities available, Homer and the New Testament. It depicts the migration of a large number of families as a peaceful and organized process, supported by the rulers at both the origin and the destination, for the sake of gaining new settlers: men and women who are competent at many skills and hard-working. This is an idealized account, the texts in section 1.2.0 offer a more sober account of the brutal realities of forced settlement.

Historical significance of the movement: The *tourma* and later *thema* of the Thrakesioi, which encompassed the central part of Western Asia Minor, was named after army units that had been transferred there from Thrace (the ‘Thracenses’) in the first half of the 7th century. Yet Constantine tells us an entirely different story, which he had found in a now lost work by the Hellenistic author Nicholas of Damascus, but which ultimately goes back to Herodotus.

44 PmbZ 23734, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ25888/html>.

45 PmbZ 26833, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28987/html>.

According to this story the Lydian king Alyattes (7th–6th century BC) was so impressed by the multi-tasking skills of a woman from the Balkans who had come to his capital Sardis that he invited settlers from her homeland. Constantine gives the story a new twist by focusing on the fact that the Balkans were inhabited by the Thracians. He claims that it was the Thracian settlers who gave the region the name Thrakesioi.

Types of movement: Voluntary movement to settle in a different region (legendary)

Locations and date of movement: from Mysia (Moesia)/Thrace to Asia Minor/*thema* Thrakesion; supposedly in the 7th–6th century BC.

Edition used: *Costantino Porfirogenito, De thematibus. Introduzione, testo critico, commento*, ed. Agostino Pertusi, Studi e Testi 160 (Vatican City, 1952) 67–68.

Translation: Dirk Krausmüller

Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos, *De thematibus*, ch. 3, lines 1–31

[p. 67] The *thema* that is now called ‘of the Thrakesians’ was originally and at the beginning called Asia, and the proconsul who governed it was called Asiarch. And so that I do not (only) refer to pagan authorities, also the Evangelist and Apostle Luke himself, the witness of truth, confirms this in the Acts of the Apostles, when he makes mention of Alexander, the leading man of Ephesus at the time, calling him Asiarch.⁴⁶ They were called Thrakesians for the following reason: In the days of Alyattes, the king of the Lydians, a man with his wife and children moved from Mysia, the land of the Thracians – which Homer, too, mentions with these words: ‘the Mysians, fighters at close quarters, the noble Hippemolgoi’⁴⁷ –, and crossed over to the region of Asia, to a land that is called Lydia and settled near the city of Sardis. While the king sat on the wall of the city, the wife of the Thracian entered it, carrying a jar on her head and a distaff and a spindle in her hands, and behind her a horse was tied to her belt. And the jar on her head was full of water, and she worked with her hands, spinning from the distaff onto the spindle, and behind her, tied to her belt, the horse followed, which had been watered at a well. When the king saw this, he was greatly astonished and asked where she came from and who she was and from which city. She answered that she was Mysian by descent (...) ⁴⁸ it is a town of Thrace. Inspired by the woman, the king sent an embassy to the king of Thrace, who was called Cotys, and received from there a substantial crowd of settlers with their wives and children. It is from this race that the

46 Acts 19.31 mentions the word ‘Asiarchs’ (literally: officials of Asia), but not with specific reference to Alexander.

47 Homer, *Iliad* 13.5.

48 There is a gap in the manuscript.

inhabitants of Asia Minor are called Thrakesians because they are hard-working farmers and craftsmen. The entire *thema* of the Thrakesians consists [p. 68] of these peoples: Lydians, Maeonians, Carians, Ionians, and those who inhabit Miletus and Ephesus are called Ionians, whereas those in the hinterland are Sardians, Lydians, Maeonians, Carians and the inhabitants of lesser Phrygia. Nicholas of Damascus, who was an author in the service of King Herod, gives this account in his eighteenth book.

Further reading

Ahrweiler, Hélène, Sur la date du “De thematibus” de Constantin VII Porphyrogénète, *TM* 8 (Paris, 1981) 1–5.

Macurdy, Grace Harriet, The Origin of the Herodotean Tale in Connection with the Cult of the Spinning Goddess, *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 43 (1912) 73–80.

Magdalino, Paul, Constantine VII and the Historical Geography of Empire, in: Bazzaz, Sahar (ed.), *Imperial Geographies in Byzantine and Ottoman Space* (Washington, D.C., 2013) 23–42.

Toynbee, Arnold J., *Constantine Porphyrogenitus and His Word* (London, 1973).

Dirk Krausmüller, Claudia Rapp

4.3.2 The entry of emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos in Constantinople after 57 years of Latin rule, 1261

Author: George Akropolites⁴⁹

Text: *History (Chronike syngraphe)*

Date of text: 13th century

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: Born in the year 1217 in Constantinople, which was then under the control of the Latins, George Akropolites was sent to Nicaea in northwest Asia Minor where the Byzantine ruler in exile, John III Vatatzes (1221–1254),⁵⁰ resided. He received an excellent education and then served the emperors Theodore II Laskaris (1254–1258)⁵¹ and Michael VIII Palaiologos (1259–1282)⁵² in various functions. He was also a teacher of philosophy and the author of several theological and hagiographical texts. His most important work is the *Chronike syngraphe*, which narrates the history of the Byzantine Empire from 1203 to 1261.

⁴⁹ PLP 518.

⁵⁰ ODB II 1047–1048.

⁵¹ ODB III 2041–2041.

⁵² PLP 21528.

It stands in the tradition of classicising historiography, which took its inspiration from ancient and late ancient texts. Due to his functions Akropolites had first-hand knowledge of many of the events and is therefore a very reliable source. This description emphasizes the hasty and improvised nature of the emperor's movements, against the background of the fortuitous, but unexpected turn of events.

Historical significance of the movement: The triumphal entry by Michael VIII Palaiologos into the capital, after it had easily been taken by general Alexios Strategopoulos,⁵³ signalled the re-establishment of Byzantine power after 57 years of Crusader rule and ushered in the late Byzantine period under Palaiologan emperors (see also 1.1.2). It was carefully choreographed. The emperor entered the city on foot in order to show his piety and humility, and then rode to the cathedral of Constantinople in full regalia (see also 1.1.2 on these events).
Type of movement: Voluntary (end of warfare).

Locations and date of movement: Kosmidion to Constantinople; 15 August 1261.

Edition used: *Georgii Akropolitae Opera*, ed. August Heisenberg and Peter Wirth, vol. 1 (revised edition) (Leipzig, 1978) 183-188, ch. 85-88.

Translation used: Macrides, Ruth, *George Akropolites, The History. Translated with an Introduction and Commentary* (Oxford, 2007) (modified by Dirk Krausmüller).

Georgios Akropolites, *History*, ch. 85–88

[p. 183] By the providence of God the city of Constantine again came under the control of the emperor of the Rhomaioi, in a just and proper manner, on the 25th of July, in the fourth indiction, in the 6769th year [1261] since the creation of the world, after being held by the enemies [the Latins] for 58 years. (...) At that time the emperor was encamped near Meteorion; suddenly a rumour came to the ears of the people by night. The rumour came from a child servant [p. 184] of the emperor's sister Irene⁵⁴ – renamed Eulogia when she took the monastic habit – who came to her from the parts of Bithynia; the servant had learned on the way of the conquest of the city of Constantine by the Roman army. [Eulogia wakes Michael with the news, who is ready to accept this turn of events as God's will, but for at least one day remains doubtful of the report until it is confirmed by another informant.] [p. 185] So the emperor departed from Meteorion with great cheer since he was striving to reach the city of Constantinople quickly (...) When we had traversed the mountains of Kalamos and the emperor had encamped near Achyraus, it was then that the imperial insignia of Baldwin, who had claimed to

53 PLP 26894.

54 PLP 21360.

rule over the city of Constantine as emperor, were brought to him.⁵⁵ These were a *kalyptra*, Latin in shape, decorated with pearls and with a red stone on top, red-dyed shoes [p. 186] and a sword sheathed in a red silk cover. It was then that most of the people gave credence to the statements, for the magnitude of the matter had not allowed anyone to believe the reports easily. (...) The emperor then hastened his movements. He made his progress from place to place faster and greater. As the emperor was approaching the city of Constantine, it occurred to him to make the entrance into the city of Constantine in a manner more reverential to God than imperial, and he considered the way it might take place, that is, through words of thanksgiving to God and prayers uttered on behalf of the imperial rule and the clergy, and on behalf of the city, its residents and its whole population. [Akropolites, tasked with composing the prayers, writes thirteen prayers in the course of 24 hours.] The monarch arrived at the city of Constantine; [p. 187] it was then the 14th of August. He did not want to enter Constantinople on the same day; instead, he encamped at the Kosmidion monastery which is near the Blachernai. Having spent the night there, getting up early, he made the entrance into Constantinople in this manner: [A bishop climbs up one of the towers of the Golden Gate, the ceremonial entry point into the city, and recites the entire sequence of the 13 prayers, each one followed by 100 exclamations of *Kyrie eleison* ('Lord, have mercy').] When this holy ritual had taken place in this way, the emperor entered the Golden Gate in a way that was more reverential to God than imperial; for he walked on foot, while the icon of the Mother of God was carried ahead of him. He went as far as the Stoudios monastery, and when he had left the icon of the most holy Mother of God there, he mounted a horse and went to the shrine of the Wisdom of God [i. e. the church of Hagia Sophia]. [p. 188] There he paid reverence to the Lord Christ, and when he had given Him due thanks he came to the Great Palace. The Rhomaioi rejoiced and felt great gladness of heart and immense happiness. There was no one who was not leaping for joy and exulting and almost doubting the deed because of the unexpectedness of the event and the extreme pleasure.

Comments: A parallel account of the events is given by the Byzantine historian George Pachymeres, *Historical Narration*, ed. Albert Failler and Vitalien Laurent, *Georges Pachymérès, Relations historiques*, CFHB 24/1 (Paris, 1984) 191–203.

55 PLP 2070; ODB I, 247. Baldwin II of Courtenay (1217–1273) was the Latin emperor of Constantinople from 1228 to 1261.

Further reading

Failler, Albert, Chronologie et composition dans l'Histoire de Georges Pachymère, *Revue des études byzantines* 39 (1981) 145–249.

Geanakoplos, Deno J., *Emperor Michael Palaeologus and the West, 1258–1282: A Study in Byzantine-Latin Relations* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959).

Talbot, Alice-Mary, The Restoration of Constantinople under Michael VIII, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 47 (1993) 243–261.

Dirk Krausmüller

4.3.3 Instructions for the reception of a foreign bride in Constantinople

Author: George Kodinos (Pseudo-Kodinos)

Text: without title (*De officiis*)

Date of text: mid-14th century

Genre: *Taktikon*

Literary context: The treatise, falsely attributed to one George Kodinos, is a compilation of texts that describe ceremonies at the imperial court. The anonymous author may have been close to Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos⁵⁶ (1347–1354) who showed great interest in such matters, in contrast to his predecessors Andronikos II (1282–1328) and Andronikos III (1328–1341). The texts are sometimes modified in order to reflect the latest developments. The author gives information about dignitaries and their ceremonial duties, the ceremonies performed at high feasts, and the rituals of crowning and installation.

The highly significant moment when the future empress who comes from abroad first sets foot in Constantinople is marked by the ceremonial welcome she receives from the women at court who constitute her future network of attendants and supporters. They help her to embody her new, Byzantine identity by clothing her with imperial garments.

Historical significance of the movement: The text specifies what should be done when imperial brides arrive in Constantinople. The description is most likely based on real events taking place in the early Palaiologan period, when several emperors took non-Byzantine wives: Andronikos II⁵⁷ married Anna of Hungary⁵⁸ (1272) and after she died, Yolanda-Irene of Montferrat⁵⁹ (1284), his son Michael IX⁶⁰ married Rita-Maria of Armenia⁶¹ (1295), and the latter's son Andronikos III⁶²

56 PLP 10973.

57 PLP 21437.

58 PLP 21348.

59 PLP 21361.

60 PLP 21529.

61 PLP 21394.

married Adelheid-Irene of Braunschweig-Grubenhagen⁶³ (1318) and, after the latter's death, Anna of Savoy⁶⁴ (1326) (see 1.10.0). Yet similar arrangements must already have been in place during the Komnenian period when emperors began to marry female relatives of foreign rulers. A poem describes what happened when a particular foreign bride (Agnes of France⁶⁵ or Anna of Hungary⁶⁶) arrived in Constantinople. It speaks about the emotions of the young bride, an aspect that is missing from the account of Pseudo-Kodinos.

Type of movement: coerced, by relatives who make marriage contracts.

Locations and date of movement: from outside the empire to Constantinople, either by land or by sea; first half of the 14th century?

Edition used: *Pseudo-Kodinos, Traité des offices. Introduction, texte et traduction*, ed. Jean Verpeaux (Paris, 1966) 286.

Translation used: Macrides, Ruth, Joseph A. Munitiz, and Dimiter Angelov, *Pseudo-Kodinos and the Constantinopolitan Court: Offices and Ceremonies* (Farnham, 2013) 267, 269 (modified by Dirk Krausmüller, Claudia Rapp).

Concerning an imperial bride-to-be

[p. 286] One must also know this. When an imperial bride arrives from abroad, either by land or by sea, the emperor who is her newly wedded husband, along with the emperor who is his father, if the latter is alive, meet her (but if not, the former meets her alone) on the day when it is known that she will arrive safely in the city. If she arrives by land, it is customary that she dismounts at Pege.⁶⁷ If she arrives with ships, she disembarks near the church of the Blachernai, outside the city, wherever it might be appropriate.⁶⁸ The most distinguished and most noble wives of the dignitaries, senators and other holders of court titles come in advance to the place of arrival, whether here or there, and receive the imperial bride as she arrives. They welcome her in an imperial manner and tend to her, while the emperors meet her as well, either both of them, or only the bridegroom, if there is not also a father, as was mentioned.

62 PLP 21437.

63 PLP 21356.

64 PLP 21347.

65 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Agnes/101/>.

66 PLP 21348.

67 The monastery of the Holy Virgin of the Life-Giving Spring was located outside the southwestern part of the Theodosian Walls, near a spring (Greek: *pege*) (see 1.11.3).

68 The church of the Holy Virgin of the Blachernai was located inside the Theodosian Walls, in the northwestern part of Constantinople, and accessible by water from the Golden Horn. Note that the author insists that in this location, too, the first encounter should take place outside the city walls.

If she comes with ships, the emperor meets her on horseback along with the holders of court titles, near the Acropolis at the Eugenios Gate.⁶⁹ If she comes by land, he meets her outside the city, as has been said. After this the emperors, or the emperor, depart and leave her there, while from among the mentioned wives of the holders of court titles, either *basilissai*, if there are any, or *sebastokratorissai* or *kaisarissai* or those who are the most noble among the others, put the red shoes on her. For the imperial clothing had been prepared beforehand. Sent forth in imperial fashion, she goes, escorted, on horseback to the palace. After this the wedding ceremonies are carried out on a specified day.

Further reading

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⁶⁹ This meeting place is different from the disembarkation place that was mentioned earlier. The Eugenios Gate was located at the eastern end of the Golden Horn, close to the Acropolis.

4.4.0 Settling

Although Byzantine authors do write about the movement of people, as the array of examples assembled in this sourcebook demonstrates, they rarely address the topic of settlement. Yet, in modern migration studies this is perhaps the most crucial issue, as it raises questions of adaptation and assimilation – whether voluntary, coerced or forced – questions that, in the final analysis, concern individual and collective identity, whether assumed by the individuals or groups, or ascribed to them by others (see also [1.2.1](#) and [1.2.2](#)).

The description in Leo's *Taktikon* of the policy of Emperor Basil I to force the assimilation of the Slavs through Christianization, integration into the administrative structure of the Empire (and hence the abandonment of their tribal structure of leadership), and forced military service is a rare and often-cited example of a deliberate imperial effort to integrate new arrivals into the Empire ([4.4.1](#)). This stands in marked contrast to the experience of Basil's own ancestors, as described in the *Vita Basilii* (cited here at [4.2.4](#) in conjunction with travel): they were Armenian settlers who had come to northern Greece in the early 7th century and had since then retained their customs and their identity by avoiding inter-marriage.

When rulers pursued a policy of re-settlement, they also had to give thought to the living conditions of the settlers in their new surroundings. In order for such a move to be of lasting benefit to the settlers and those who settled them, the living conditions at the destination needed to compare favourably to those left behind. Blunt advice to this effect is given in a farming manual that was compiled in the 10th century based on ancient sources, the *Geoponika*: "Some advise that plants (and farm workers) should not be transferred from healthy sites to unhealthy ones but rather from worse to better or from like to like or to those that are very little worse. Those who are moved are alienated and disturbed by the change to a

worse position, and the very wise believe that this is to be applied not only to people but also to plants.”⁷⁰

The greatest concern of the emperors was to ensure a steady flow of revenue through taxation, regardless of whether the people who worked the land had lived there for generations, or were new arrivals. This is not often addressed explicitly in the sources. One rare instance is the *Farmers' Law* (*Nomos georgikos*), which was compiled in the mid-8th century: “When a farmer, for lack of means to work his own land, takes to flight and goes away, the harvest from this land should go to those who are accountable to the tax office [because they have taken over the abandoned land]. If the farmer should return, he shall not be entitled to demand from them any kind of compensation.” This is one of several regulations in the *Farmers' Law* that mentions the abandonment of lands by hard-pressed farmers.⁷¹

It is striking that the only Byzantine account that offers detailed information about the administrative book-keeping that is involved in the forced settlement of prisoners of war has its setting across the border, in the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum (4.4.2). Sometimes, rulers are depicted in a positive light for attracting voluntary settlers from afar. Guy of Lusignan, the King of Cyprus at the end of the Third Crusade – and thus himself, in a sense, a migrant ruler – is reported as offering financial incentives and legal privileges to families from Francia and from Syria. His aim was to create a new upper class that shared his own background and would owe him loyalty, while keeping the local population under control (4.4.3).

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4.4.1 Migration of the Slavs to the Balkans and imperial efforts at assimilation

Author: Emperor Leo VI⁷²

Text: *Taktikon (Polemikon paraskeuon diataxeis XXVIII; 28 Constitutions on Preparations for War)*

Date of text: 886–912

Genre: military treatise

70 *Geoponika* 2. 48, transl. by Andrew Dalby, *Geoponika. Farm Work. A Modern Translation of the Roman and Byzantine Farming Handbook* (Totnes, Devon, 2011) 101.

71 *Farmers' Law*, ch. 18, cf. Koder, Johannes, *Nomos georgikos. Das byzantinische Landwirtschaftsgesetz. Überlegungen zur inhaltlichen und zeitlichen Einordnung. Deutsche Übersetzung*, WBS 32 (Vienna, 2020) 49–50 (with Greek text). See also *Farmers' Law*, ch. 11, 13, 14 and 21.

72 PmbZ 24311, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ26465/html>.

Literary context: Leo VI (886–912), a pupil of Patriarch Photios,⁷³ was one of the most learned Byzantine emperors. His interests ranged wide: apart from works of a religious nature – homilies for feast days and a handbook on asceticism – and legal texts, he also composed a manual about warfare (although he had no first-hand experience of military actions). In it he revises and expands the so-called *Strategikon* of the late 6th or early 7th century which in the manuscripts is attributed to Emperor Maurice (582–602). The sections about the Slavs are characteristic of Leo's approach. The description of the way of life of the Slavs is lifted from the *Strategikon*, whereas the reference to measures taken by his father Basil I⁷⁴ (867–886) is his own contribution.

Historical significance of the movement: The borrowings from the *Strategikon* reflect the situation in the early 7th century when the Slavs had crossed the Danube and settled in the Balkans and in Greece. The ensuing collapse of Roman rule is attributed to their rejection of all political control. Here Leo makes only one change to the text of his model: he suppresses the reference to the Antes, since this people no longer existed in the 9th/10th century. Yet this is not simply an exercise in antiquarianism.

In the next passage Leo signals that the way of life of the Slavs had not remained unchanged. Emperor Basil I is credited with 'having Greekified' (*graikosas*) Slav populations on Byzantine territory. This is no doubt a reference to the Christianisation of the Balkans, but it may also refer to the adoption by the Slavs of Byzantine customs and even of the Greek language. Assimilation was likely most advanced in Slavic communities that had been resettled in Asia Minor where they were surrounded by speakers of Greek.

The steps of top-down assimilation that are outlined here include the abandonment of their old ways, the imposition of the Byzantine ('Roman') political system, integration into the ecclesiastical structure, and recruitment for military service. All of this is said to amount to their transformation into 'Greeks'.

Types of movement: voluntary migration

Locations and date of movement: from areas north of the Danube to the Balkans; c. 600.

Edition used: *The Taktika of Leo VI. Text, Translation, and Commentary*, ed. George Dennis, CFHB 49; DOT 12 (Washington, D.C., 2014) 470.

Translation used: Ibid, 471 (modified by Dirk Krausmüller)

73 PmbZ 2667, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ28821/html>.

74 PmbZ 832/add. corr., <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ11920/html>.

Leo VI, *Taktikon*, Constitution 18. 93–95

[p. 470] The Slavic nations had the same customs and way of life with each other. They were free, refusing to submit or be governed in any way, especially when they lived on the other side of the Danube in their own land. And when they crossed over from there to here and so-to-speak were forced to accept submission, they still did not want to obey someone else gladly but in some way only themselves. For they considered it better to be destroyed by a ruler of their own race than to serve and to submit to the Romans and to be subjected to their laws. Even after they received the sanctification of the salvific baptism, until our own times, they just as strongly retained their ancient and customary freedom. They were always a populous people and used to hardship, readily enduring heat, cold, rain, nakedness and scarcity of provisions.

Our father Basil, *autokrator* of the Rhomaioi, of pious memory, persuaded these peoples to abandon their old customs and, having made them Greek (*graikos*), subjected them to rulers according to the Roman model, and having honoured them with baptism, he liberated them from submission to their own rulers and taught them to take part in warfare against the nations that fight against the Rhomaioi. In this way, he arranged these things carefully. As a result, he caused the Rhomaioi to feel relaxed after the frequent uprisings by the Slavs in the past and the many upheavals and wars they had suffered from them in ancient times.

Further reading

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4.4.2 Organized settlement of Byzantine captives by the Seljuk Sultan of Ikonion

Author: Niketas Choniates⁷⁵

Text: *History* (*Chronike diegesis*)

Date of text: late 12th century, first decade of the 13th century

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: Niketas Choniates, born in the middle of the 12th century in Chonai (modern Honaz), a city in western Asia Minor, was sent to Constantinople together with his brother Michael⁷⁶ where he received an excellent education. He then served in the imperial administration until the collapse of the empire in 1204. He wrote a number of highly elaborate speeches and a handbook of heresies. Yet his most important work is no doubt his *History*, which covers the period from 1118 to 1207. Niketas revised the text several times, becoming increasingly more critical of the actions of Manuel I Komnenos⁷⁷ and his successors, which he thought had prepared the way for the catastrophe of 1204. In the course of his narrative he also speaks about the relations between the Empire and the Seljuks (whom he calls ‘Persians’). A typical Byzantine, he regards the Seljuks as barbarians (although they had their own, Islamic, high culture), but he is not blind to the efficacy of the sultan’s policies.

Historical significance of the movement: After the battle of Manzikert in 1071, Turkish tribes flooded into Asia Minor (see 1.4.3 and 1.8.5). Members of the ruling Seljuk family founded a state there, the Sultanate of Rum (i.e. Rome). Originally this state encompassed a large part of western and central Anatolia. Yet after the First Crusade and subsequent Byzantine campaigns it was limited to Inner Anatolia where Ikonion (Konya) served as the capital (the Byzantines held the west and the northern and southern coasts). The status quo was maintained until the late 12th century when the Seljuks were becoming ever more assertive. In 1198 Sultan Kaykhusraw raided Southwest Asia Minor and took a great number of captives. These were not, however, simply sold off to the highest bidder as it was the custom. The sultan played a longer game. He settled them in Philomelion, which was under his rule. This was a shrewd move since the Turkish population in Central Anatolia was mostly nomadic. Nomads, however, are notoriously difficult to tax. Revenue could only be generated from the sedentary population, which was of Byzantine stock. The favourable conditions offered by Kaykhusraw even attracted other settlers who left Byzantine territory. Their descendants continued to live around Philomelion until the early 20th century.

75 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Niketas/25001/>.

76 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Michael/20528/>.

77 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Manuel/1/>.

Types of movement: forced and voluntary movement

Locations and date of movement: from Byzantine to Seljuk territory (from the Maeander valley in southwest Asia Minor to Philomelion in Pisidia); 1198 and later.

Edition used: *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, ed. Jan-Louis van Dieten, CFHB 11 (Berlin, 1975) 494–496.

Translation used: Magoulias, Henry J., *O City of Byzantium: Annals of Niketas Choniates* (Detroit, 1984) 272–273 (modified by Dirk Krausmüller).

Niketas Choniates, *History*

[p. 494] [At Lampe] he [Sultan Kaykhusraw] appointed officials to register the captives, asking each one his native city and his name; he asked who had captured him, whether he had lost any of his substance, and whether a son or daughter [p. 495] or spouse had been hidden away by one of the Persians. After registering them in such a way, returning everything back to the Romans, dividing them according to tribe and kinship, he then moved on. The multitude of those that had been enslaved was numbered at five thousand persons. When they were being led away, the barbarian took pains that the captives should not lack the necessities of life, he provided them with food and was well aware of the unbearable cold of the season; taking into his hands an axe, he himself split into splinters an old tree nearby which had fallen long ago. To those Persians who came running to see the sight, he suggested that they do the same, setting out and explaining the reason for the labour, adding that it was also for their own good. The Persians were permitted to leave the camp at all times to cut wood, for there was no-one to hinder them, but the captive Romans were not allowed to do so, being kept under guard so that they would not consider escaping and thus avoid being put in chains as suspect runaways.

When he came to Philomelion, he gave them farmsteads and measured out lands so that they could cultivate fertile ground; he then provided grain and seed for the sowing of crops. Indeed, he filled them with high hopes, saying even that once he and the emperor were reconciled and had renewed the former treatises, they could return home freely. Should the emperor decide otherwise (and they remained under Seljuk rule), they would be exempt from tribute for five whole years, free of any demands of tax collectors; afterwards, he would impose upon them a light tax which would never exceed the limit, as is customary among the Romans, nor would it be increased many times. And after he had arranged matters in this way, he returned to Ikonion.

His humane pronouncement not only ensured that none of the captives pined for their homeland, but also attracted to Philomelion many who had not been

captured by the Persians but who had heard of what the Persian had done for their kinsmen and countrymen.

Thus it was that among the Romans of our generation, the love of many grew cold, not because the godly men had failed and the truth diminished, but because iniquity multiplied. As a result, entire Hellenic cities preferred to settle among the barbarians [p. 496] and gladly left their homelands. For the frequent oppressions frustrated prudent conduct of the subjects, and the majority, stripped bare by the rapine, took no thought of behaving with moderation towards their fellow countrymen.

Comments: This passage can be compared to the retreat of the Byzantine population from Philomelion under Alexios I Komnenos a century earlier, as reported by his daughter Anna Komnene (4.2.1). It is one of the few descriptions of the administrative processes that prepare and accompany the re-settlement of large numbers of people. It is striking that such a description should not be associated with the Byzantine Empire, but with its adversary the Seljuks. Niketas Choniates, who is otherwise not complimentary of the Seljuks, may well have intended this passage as a contrast to the policies of Emperor Isaac II Angelos whom he views with great criticism.

Further reading

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4.4.3 Guy de Lusignan attracts Franks and Syrians to Cyprus and grants them privileges

Author: Leontios Machairas⁷⁸

Text: *Recital Concerning the Sweet Land of Cyprus Entitled: 'Kronika', which is to say 'Chronicle' (Exegesis tes glykeias choras Kyprou, he poia legetai Kronika, toutestin Chronikon)*

Date of text: after 1432

Genre: Historiography

Literary context: Born around the year 1350, Leontios Machairas was the scion of a well-to-do family with close connections to the court of the Lusignan kings of Cyprus. At the beginning of the 15th century he served as secretary to a nobleman, and by 1426 he had entered the service of King Janus (1398–1432). He wrote a history of Cyprus beginning with the 4th century AD. Yet he treats his subject matter only cursorily until he gets to the reign of Peter I (1359–1369). Although Machairas was of Greek descent, he paints a very positive picture of the Frankish rulers of whom he wholeheartedly approves. The text is written in vernacular Greek. It is debated among historians whether it belongs to the Byzantine tradition of historiography or whether it is not rather influenced by Western European models.

Historical significance of the movement: In the year 1191 Cyprus was conquered by Richard I the Lionheart, King of England (1157–1199) who ousted the local ruler Isaak Komnenos. Richard then sold the island to the Knights Templar. After a revolt of the local Byzantine population, it came into the hands of Guy of Lusignan,⁷⁹ the former king of Jerusalem, who ruled there from 1192 to 1194. According to Machairas, Guy took advice from the Sultan of Egypt who encouraged him to invite settlers from elsewhere in order to have a broader power base that would help him to hold his own against the Byzantine majority. These settlers came from Western Europe and from Syria. Being Catholic and Jacobite, they kept themselves aloof from the local population, which belonged to the Orthodox church. The status of the local population was greatly diminished; they could not challenge the newcomers in court.⁸⁰

Types of movement: voluntary movement of settlers

Locations and date of movement: from Western Europe and the Levant to Cyprus; 1192–1194.

⁷⁸ PLP 17517.

⁷⁹ PLP 15061.

⁸⁰ On the status of Greek and other non-Latin Christian in Cyprus see also Schabel, Christopher, *Greeks, Latins, and the Church in Early Frankish Cyprus* (Aldershot, 2010).

Edition used: *Leontios Makhairas, Recital Concerning the Sweet Land of Cyprus Entitled 'Chronicle', Edited with a Translation and Notes*, ed. Richard M. Dawkins, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1932) 24, Book 1, ch. 26–27.

Translation used: *Ibid.*, 25 (modified by Dirk Krausmüller)

Leontios Machairas, Recital Concerning the Sweet Land of Cyprus, Book 1, ch. 26–27

[p. 24] Then the king [Guy of Lusignan] sent envoys to the West and to France with letters and licenses, and to England and to many great rulers that were rich, and to Catalonia, and promised to give silver, gold, and inheritances to them and to their children. And because of the holy relics which are found in Cyprus, and because Jerusalem was close to Cyprus, many came with their wives and with their children and settled in Cyprus. And the king gave them some monthly payments, and to others rents and assignments, and judges to judge their cases, there and in the lands of Jerusalem. And to those of lower rank he granted freedoms and liberties of enfranchisement. And also to the Syrians he granted that they should pay in all cases half of the fees for buying and selling, and whatever dues the natives paid they were not to pay.

And many Syrians and many Latins came and settled in Cyprus. And remembering the trouble that the Greeks had given to the Templars, they asked the king that they should have this freedom not to be judged like the locals, and that if they said anything about the poor men of the land they should be believed, and if the poor folk said anything, that they should not be believed nor should their witness avail against the knights nor against the holders of fiefs.

Further reading

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5 The Imaginary

This cluster draws attention to the many different ways in which the Byzantines represented travel in the widest sense in their fictional and religious imagination: both as painful departure from the known and as an adventuresome movement towards the unknown.

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5.1.0 Movement and mobility in the Byzantine imaginary

Any journey described in a text – be it documentary, historical or artistic – is in a sense an ‘imaginary’ journey. It is imaginary because dynamic reality is recorded in a static text, where the narrative is created by the interpreting thought of the author. The author re-visualizes and re-works in his imagination the event that has already occurred and then verbally fixes the resulting image in his textual description. Byzantine culture, however, also recognised a special kind of mobility, which modern analytical thought qualifies as imaginary, since it has no real factual counterpart and is performed by a person in his or her imagination or dreams.

Byzantine imaginary journeys can be divided into at least three major types, which cut across genres. The first type is imaginary travels in the physical world by a literary character in his or her physical body, which are envisioned by the author’s imagination. The second type is spiritual travels where a soul visits metaphysical spaces such as the hereafter, and the dwellings of angels, as well as the distant future. The third type is mobility in dreams of the sleeper himself or herself or of those who visit him or her in his or her dreams. To the Byzantines, the second and sometimes the third types of mobility could well seem to be not imaginary, but quite real events. Byzantine imaginary wandering is based on and continues predominantly two traditions, that of ancient Greece and Rome and that of the Jewish Old Testament; more rarely one encounters Muslim (Persian and Arabic) influences. The different traditions are in most cases tightly intertwined, but the impact of Semitic religiosity is predominant in spiritual travels.

The first type of imaginary physical travels in Byzantine literature continues the rich tradition of fictitious journeys in ancient Greco-Roman literary tradition.¹ Imaginary movement – be it a long journey or just moving from one spatial

1 For Greco-Roman heritage in Byzantine literature and culture see Kaldellis, Anthony, *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition* (Cambridge, 2008).

point to another – is an important element in practically every genre of Byzantine *belles-lettres*, functioning as an effective literary device that helps to unfold the plot and enhances the informative as well as the entertainment value of the story.² The motif of travel and spatial movement is especially effective in fictional narratives such as historic and epic novels (*Alexander Romance*, 5.1, the Byzantine *Iliad*, *Belisarios*, the famous *Digenes Akritas* cycle set at the Arab-Byzantine borderlands, etc.) and romantic novels (by Theodore Prodromos,³ Eumathios Makrembolites⁴ etc.).⁵ The novels as well as other works of prose and poetry exemplify diverse kinds of imaginary movement performed by the narrator himself or by other *dramatis personae*.

The second type of spiritual travel can be found in many genres of Byzantine secular and church literature. Byzantine spiritual travels were profoundly influenced by both literary Greco-Roman and religious Semitic traditions. The roots of spiritual journeys can be traced back to animistic ideas and experiences in prehistoric times. The visions of the Old Testament prophet Daniel (Dan. 2, 7, 8, 9, 10–12) were of particular importance for the Byzantine Christian mentality. However, the impact of Greek philosophy is also perceptible, such as, in particular, in the motif of the soul's enlightenment and purification in the course of a journey, which was introduced in Plato's *Phaedrus* ('chariot allegory') and further developed in the later philosophical tradition.⁶

Byzantium inherited from the Greco-Roman past a colourful and paradoxical genre of fantastic travels to the otherworld. Three works of this genre are of major importance, the prose novels *Philopatris* (10th or 11th century), *Timarion* (12th century), and *Mazaris* (1414–1415), which have much in common. These are satirical dialogues continuing the Lucianic tradition that was quite popular in Byzantium. All three texts tell us about a fictitious hero who being alive or, for one reason or another, temporarily dead travels to the otherworld, descending into subterranean spaces or ascending into the sky; he converses with the souls of those who died in the distant past and those who died quite recently; finally, he

2 For travels in Byzantine literature, see also Mullett, Margaret E., In Peril on the Sea: Travel Genres and the Unexpected, in: Ruth Macrides (ed.), *Travel in the Byzantine World. Papers from the Thirty-Fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Birmingham, April 2000*, Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies, Publications 10 (Aldershot and Burlington, 2002) 259–284, here 260–261.

3 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Theodoros/25001/>.

4 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Eumathios/20102/>.

5 On these authors and works see chapters 2, 4, 10, 18, 19 concerning Byzantine literature in: Cupane, Carolina and Bettina Krönung (eds.), *Fictional Storytelling in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean and Beyond*, Brill's Companions to the Byzantine World 1 (Leiden and Boston, 2016).

6 See chapters 2 and 9 in Ekroth, Gunnell and Ingela Nilsson (eds.), *Round Trip to Hades in the Eastern Mediterranean Tradition. Visits to the Underworld from Antiquity to Byzantium* (Leiden and Boston, 2018).

returns back to earth and recounts what he has witnessed. The novels are satires that target human sins, vices and passions and caricature Byzantine social evils and the hideous habits of bureaucrats and nobility.⁷

A special group of spiritual travels concerns Christian saints and other righteous persons. Two major subtypes may be distinguished here. The first is the apocalyptic visionary tradition where a righteous person travels in the spirit to future ages, and then warns people about troubles to come and predicts the signs of the approaching eschatological moment (e.g. *Apocalypse of Anastasia*, see 5.1.2). Another kind of spiritual experience is encountered in various hagiographic texts which recount the travels of a saint's soul before or after his/her demise. The saint may also travel in other people's dreams, as can be seen from the activities of Saint Artemios who healed sick persons in their dreams (see 1.11.2). Such travels convey a strong religious message, providing testimonies of the Christian truth, justifying the historiosophical and metahistorical mission of Christianity, and also warning readers of their present sins and deviation from God.⁸

The third type of dream travels may be found in many genres of the Byzantine textual tradition, including *belles-lettres*, historiography and hagiography. Most important, however, is the specific technical genre of *oneirokritika* (books of dream interpretations), which were quite popular in Byzantium. *Oneirokritika* were a significant part of the occult scientific tradition that flourished throughout the history of the Byzantine civilization. Byzantine oneiromancy continued the Greco-Roman and – to a lesser extent – Old Testament traditions. Yet it also adopted a great deal of information originating from the Muslim East. The Muslim dream interpretations, along with their Greek roots, incorporated and systematised the rich Middle Persian, Near Eastern Semitic, and Indian occult experiences.⁹

The fictitious character of imaginary travels does not mean that such tales contain no evidence about Byzantine realities. Imaginary travels are characterised by a complex interaction of artistic, literary, folklore, and documentary elements. Most texts of this kind include valuable (and sometimes unique) in-

7 Hunger, Herbert, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, HdA 12; Byzantinisches Handbuch 5.2 (Munich, 1978) 149–158; see chapters 1, 2, 12, 16, 17 in Ekroth and Nilsson, *Round Trip to Hades*.

8 See chapters 13, 14, 15 in: Ekroth and Nilsson, *Round Trip to Hades*. For individual examples from the rich Byzantine apocalyptic tradition, see the classic study of Alexander, Paul J., *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition* (Berkeley, 1985).

9 Mavroudi, Maria V., *A Byzantine Book on Dream Interpretation: The Oneirocriticon of Achmet and Its Arabic Sources*, MMED 36 (Leiden, 2002).

formation concerning Byzantine social, economic, cultural and even political life at the time of their creation.¹⁰

Further reading

Halsall, Guy (ed.), *Humour, History and Politics in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2002).

Pseudo-Lucian, *The Patriot*, in: Lucian, *Works*, ed. Matthew Donald Macleod, The Loeb Classical Library, vol. 8 (Cambridge, Mass., 1967) 413–465.

Mazaris' *Journey to Hades: or, Interviews with Dead Men about Certain Officials of the Imperial Court*, Arethusa Monographs 5 (Buffalo, NY, 1975).

Schmidt, Victor Michael, *A Legend and Its Image: The Aerial Flight of Alexander the Great in Medieval Art* (Groningen, 1995).

Georganteli, Eurydice, Transposed Images: Currencies and Legitimacy in the Late Medieval Eastern Mediterranean, in: Jonathan Harris et al. (eds.), *Byzantines, Latins, and Turks in the Eastern Mediterranean World after 1150* (Oxford, 2012) 141–180.

Marinis, Vasileios, *Death and the Afterlife in Byzantium* (Cambridge, 2016).

Rustam Shukurov

5.1.1 Kingly ascension: The journey of Alexander the Great into Heaven

Author: Pseudo-Kallisthenes

Text: *Alexander Romance*

Date of text: ca. 3rd–ca. 14th centuries

Genre: romance

Literary context: The *Alexander Romance*, an artistic reworking of famous historical events associated with the biography of Alexander of Macedon (356–323 BC), contains a series of legends relating to the protagonist's exploration of the world and its wonders.¹¹ In particular, Alexander once reached the end of the world and, in order to make sure of this, decided to travel into Heaven. The story forms part of Alexander's (fictitious) letter to his mother Olympias and is therefore recounted in the first person.

10 See for instance Galatariotou, Catia, Travel and Perception in Byzantium, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 47 (1993) 221–241; McCormick, Michael, Byzantium on the Move: Imagining a Communications History, in: Macrides, *Travel in the Byzantine World*, 3–29, here 7–10, 13–14.

11 For a survey of the current state of research and expert historical and philological commentary to the romance with further bibliography, see Nawotka, Krzysztof, *The Alexander Romance by Ps.-Callisthenes. A Historical Commentary*, Mnemosyne Supplements 399 (Leiden and Boston, 2017).

Historical significance of the movement: The *Alexander Romance* exemplifies the Hellenistic universalistic roots of the Byzantine conception of supreme worldly power, and also the fusion of the traditional pagan with the new Christian world-view. The *Alexander Romance* was an important element in the Byzantine foundation myth, which focused on the notion that the Hellenistic world absorbed the entire universe through Greek civilization. In Christian times, this unification of the inhabited universe under the sway of Alexander was re-interpreted as an important prerequisite, conceived by God, for the acceptance of the Universal Truth of Christianity by all of mankind. Alexander's ascent into Heaven is a legend central to Byzantine mentality, which, depending on the context, was interpreted as a symbol of the sacredness of imperial power, or as a spiritual transformation of a person, or as a Christological metaphor referring to the Ascension of Jesus.¹² Alexander's journey into Heaven became an extremely popular theme in the visual arts of Byzantium, medieval Europe and the Arabic and Persian Muslim worlds.¹³

Type of movement: imaginary; physical travel.

Locations and date of movement: the end of the world where the sky touched the earth; no specific date.

Edition used: *Der griechische Alexanderroman Rezension β*, ed. Leif Bergson (Stockholm, 1965) 201–203 (II.41).

Translation used: Stoneman, Richard, *Pseudo-Callisthenes. The Greek Alexander Romance. Translation, Introduction and Notes* (London, 1991) 137–138 (modified by Dirk Krausmüller).

Alexander Romance

[p. 201] Then I began to ask myself again if the end of the world was really there and if the sky sloped down there. [p. 202] I wanted to discover the truth, and so I gave orders to capture two of the birds that lived in that place. They were very large white birds, very stout but tame; for they did not fly away when they saw us. Some of the soldiers climbed on to their necks, and they flew off bearing them. The birds fed on dead beasts, which was the reason why a great many of them

12 See Gero, Stephen, The Alexander Legend in Byzantium: Some Literary Gleanings, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 46 (1992) 83–87; Djurslev, Christian Thru, *Alexander the Great in the Early Christian Tradition: Classical Reception and Patristic Literature* (London, 2020); Zu-wiyya, David, *A Companion to Alexander Literature in the Middle Ages*, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 29 (Leiden and Boston, 2011).

13 Galavaris, George, Alexander the Great Conqueror and Captive of Death His Various Images in Byzantine Art, *Canadian Art Review* 16/1 (1989) 12–18, 74–77; Stoneman, Richard et al. (eds.), *The Alexander Romance in Persia and the East*, Ancient Narrative, Supplementum 15 (Groningen, 2012) part 5 'Images' with further bibliography.

came to us, because of the dying horses. I captured two of them and saw to it that they were given no food for three days. On the third day I had something like a yoke constructed from wood, and had this tied to their necks. Then I had made some kind of bag, and I climbed into the bag, holding two spears, each about ten feet long and with a horse's liver fixed to the point. At once the birds soared up to eat the liver, and I rose up with them into the air to such a height that I thought I must be close to the sky. I shook all over because of the extreme coldness of the air, caused by the beating of the birds' wings.

Soon a flying creature in the form of a man approached me and said, "O Alexander, you have not yet reached all places on the earth, and are you now exploring the heavens? Return to earth as fast as possible, or you will become food for these birds". And again he said to me, "Look on the earth below, Alexander!" I looked down, somewhat afraid, and behold, I saw a great snake curled up, and in the middle of the snake a tiny circle like a threshing-floor. Then my companion said to me, "Point your spear at the threshing-floor, which is the world. The snake is the sea that surrounds the world".

Thus, I returned to earth, as it was the wish of Providence above, landing about seven days' journey from my army. I was now completely mortified and half-dead. [p. 203] Where I landed, I found one of the satraps [rulers] who was under my command; borrowing 300 horsemen from him, I returned to my camp. From now on I will make no other attempt at what is impossible. Farewell.

Rustam Shukurov

5.1.2 Sainly ascension: the journey of Saint Anastasia to Heaven

Author: anonymous

Text: *Apocalypse of Anastasia*

Date of text: ca. 1000

Genre: apocalypse; hagiography

Literary context: The passages from the *Apocalypse of Anastasia* exemplify Christian imaginary travels of a pious soul, which thus gains new spiritual and worldly knowledge and experience.¹⁴ The nun Anastasia became ill and soon died; however, three days later, she arose and recounted the story of her journey to the Other World.

Historical significance of the movement: Two passages from the *Apocalypse* are presented here. The first one concerns the beginning of Anastasia's journey. It

¹⁴ For the Byzantine apocalyptic tradition see above and also Baun, Jane, *Tales from Another Byzantium. Celestial Journey and Local Community in the Medieval Greek Apocrypha* (Cambridge, 2007), chapters 5–9.

speaks about the moment of transition to another world and gives us an insight into the purposes and meanings of such spiritual travels. The second excerpt concerns Anastasia's visit to Hell. It shows how the heavenly and terrestrial worlds were regarded as mutually permeable and interconnected; and how metaphysical experiences could be blended with presumably real historical events: the meeting of emperor Nikephoros II Phokas (r. 963–969)¹⁵ and his nephew John Tzimiskes¹⁶ in Hagia Sophia and the oaths taken may have happened in reality. Similar instances of blending and interweaving of spiritual and material realities can be found in Byzantine literature in general.

Type of movement: imaginary; spiritual travel.

Locations and time of movement: travel from earth to heaven, travel in heavenly space; no specific date

Edition used: *Apocalypsis Anastasiae*, ed. Rudolf Homburg (Leipzig, 1903) 3–4, 27–28.

Translation used: Baun, Jane, *Tales from Another Byzantium Celestial Journey and Local Community in the Medieval Greek Apocrypha* (Cambridge, 2007) 413 and 422 (according to the Palermo version) (modified by Dirk Krausmüller).

Apocalypse of Anastasia

[p. 4] And after she had finished her prayer, she said, “So then, after I had fallen ill, an angel came to me, who as I knew was not someone from this world, whose name was Michael.¹⁷ He took my hand and led me to the heavens and said to me, ‘Do you know where you are standing?’ I said, ‘No, my lord.’ And he said to me, ‘I took you out from the lower world, and brought you to the heavens, at the command of God, and I shall bring you back again to this place. Fortify yourself, and put aside all fear, and apprehend everything that you hear and observe, so that you may report everything to men.’”

[Anastasia's soul on its way to Heaven approaches the seven gates, one after the other.]

[p. 27] And I saw there the throne of an emperor, and he did not have imperial status, and behind him there lay a dark man. And the angel said to me, ‘This is John, who is also called Tzimiskes, and he killed Nikephoros the Emperor; he neither has respite, nor was he deemed worthy of a throne.’ And when I gazed at him, I saw again Nikephoros the Emperor, standing and rebuking him: ‘Lord

15 PmbZ 52535, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ27689/html>.

16 PmbZ 22778, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ24932/html>.

17 The Archangel Michael, mentioned in the Book of Daniel, accompanies souls to Heaven and will judge souls at the Last Judgment.

John, why did you do this unjust murder to me? Why did you not have mercy with your own soul? Do you not know that we put our hands <together> at Saint Sophia, and made peace with one another, so that there should not be treachery between us? But you did not keep this, and now for the kind of deed you did, you receive such a kind of deed.' But that one, lamenting, said nothing, but only 'Ah me,' and 'woe is me, ah me, ah me'.

Rustam Shukurov

5.1.3 Going to Hades: Timarion's crossing the border of life and death

Author: anonymous

Text: *Timarion*

Date of text: first half of the 12th century

Genre: satirical dialogue

Literary context: The dialogue is a remarkable example of the continuity of the Hellenic tradition. The adoption of Christianity by the Roman Empire did not prevent the reproduction and further development of ancient pagan forms, models, ideas, and conceptions. *Timarion* represents a typical example of the genre of satirical travels to the Beyond. On his way from Thessaloniki to Constantinople, Timarion dies of a severe illness and is taken to Hades by demons; however, the law court in Hades decides that his disease is not fatal and sends him back to his body. Timarion arises and finally reaches Constantinople where he tells his story to his friend Kydion.

Historical significance of the movement: The passage selected gives an interesting insight into how the Byzantines envisioned the process of personal death, that is, the initial point of one's journey to the next world. The transition from this world to Hades that is described here mostly reflects the interpretations of personal death in ancient Greece, with some cosmetic adjustments necessitated by Christian dogma. It may be contrasted with St Anastasia's journey in 5.1.2 above, which gives a thoroughly Christian version of the initial stages of the afterlife.

Type of movement: imaginary; spiritual travel.

Locations and date of movement: from earth to subterranean spaces; no specific date.

Edition used: *Pseudo-Luciano, Timarione. Testo critico, introduzione, traduzione, commentario e lessico*, ed. Roberto Romano, Byzantina et Neo-Hellenica Neapolitana 2 (Naples, 1974) 49–92, here 61–63, lines 334–386.

Translation used: *Timarion*, translation, introduction and commentary by Barry Baldwin (Detroit, 1984) 50–52 (modified by Dirk Krausmüller)

Timarion

[p. 61] Since my poor body was completely worn out by dysentery, my dear Kydion, and even more so by going twenty full days without food, I began, so it seemed, to sleep the last sleep. [p. 62] Now, there are in the universe certain avenging spirits, who are appointed by divine providence to punish those who transgress against the laws of God. There are also benevolent spirits who reward the good. In addition to these, there are conductors of souls¹⁸ whose mission it is to bring down by whatever way they can the souls that have already left their bodies to Pluto, Aeacus, and Minos¹⁹ so that they may undergo examination according to the customs and laws of the dead before being accorded their lot and dwelling-place. This is also what happened to me. Just before midnight, some shadowy creatures of dusky appearance came flying through the air and landed on my bed where I was stretched out trying to sleep. As soon as I saw them, I froze at the strangeness of the sight. My voice was paralysed although I tried very hard to scream and my organs of speech were immobilised. I cannot say whether I dreamt it or was awake since terror had also robbed me of my faculty of judgement. Whatever it was, it was so clear, so very clear. Indeed, it seems even now to be right in front of me, so frightful was it what happened to me then. For having placed, as it were, an unbreakable gag over my tongue, they bound my faculty of speech either through the frightfulness of the sight or through some hidden power, and began to whisper to each other, saying, "This is the man who lost the fourth of his constituent elements by voiding all his bile. He cannot be allowed to go on living on the strength of the remaining three. Asclepius²⁰ and Hippocrates²¹ have said as much in the decree they wrote down and posted up in Hades whereby no man, even if his body be hale, shall go on living if he has been deprived of one of his four elements". [p. 63] "So", they expressed in harsher tones, "follow us, you wretch, and be numbered as a dead man among the dead". I had to follow them, for what else could I have done. Against my will I was transported through the air the same as they were; I became light, nimble, weightless, my legs unimpeded so that I went forward lightly and without any problems, like ships that run before the wind. You could hear a light rushing sound as I was carried along, similar to the whizzing noise that arrows make when they are shot from bows. When we had crossed that river we have heard about,

18 These are to be understood as a combination of pagan Hermes and Christian angels as conductors of souls to the underworld (see Baldwin, *Timarion*, 101–102, n. 96).

19 Pluto is god of the underworld, Aeacus and Minos are two of the three judges in Hades along with Rhadamanthus who is not mentioned here (see also Baldwin, *Timarion*, 102 n. 98).

20 Greek god of healing.

21 Famous Greek physician (d. 370 BC).

without getting wet, and also the Acherusian Lake²² – a name, incidentally, which my guides also used – we approached a subterranean opening, much larger than the one wells have. The darkness that one could make out from the mouth was foul and horrible. I did not want to go down there, but my guides separated and took me in their midst until one of them went headfirst down the opening and dragged me after him with a fierce look. I resisted as best I could, clinging to the mouth with hands and feet until the other guide who was following behind hit me across the cheeks with his knuckles and beat me over the back as well, thus forcing me with both his hands down that dark pit. Once inside, we journeyed a long way in darkness and solitude until we came at last to the iron gate through which the realm of Hades is closed in.

Rustam Shukurov

5.1.4 Dreaming about means of locomotion

Author: anonymous (Pseudo-Achmet)

Text: *The Oneirokritikon of Achmet*

Date of text: 9th–10th centuries

Genre: science (occult); book of dream interpretation

Literary context: The so-called *Oneirokritikon of Achmet* exemplifies the ancient Mediterranean tradition of occult sciences. The book is attributed to a certain Achmet son of Sereim, who is in all probability to be identified with Muḥammad Ibn Sīrīn (d. 729), a famous dream interpreter at the court of the Umayyad caliphs.²³ The claimed authorship, however, is fictitious. The book extensively borrowed translated material from the Arabic tradition that became popular in middle Byzantine times. As a result, its dream interpretations draw heavily on the famous dream book of Artemidoros of the 2nd century AD, which was accessed either directly or through Arabic adaptations, and also on additional information from Sasanian and Indian occult science, which was accumulated by Muslim scholars. Accordingly, the book is divided into Indian, Persians and Egyptian sections, although in many cases the indicated ethnic affiliation of an interpretation is hardly justifiable.

Historical significance of the movement: Two passages on seeing ships in dreams are presented here. For Byzantines, the idea of a ship was normally connected with long-distance travel, which many of them loathed. Consequently, the ship's symbolism was often connected with negative expectations, trials and hard-

²² Lake or swamp in the underworld.

²³ Mavroudi, *Byzantine Book*, 32–34.

ships.²⁴ However, as it often happens in dream interpretations, the symbolism of an object which is known to the waking mind does not hold true for dreams where different senses are suggested. In dream interpretation, the image of the ship has a neutral meaning and signifies one's destiny and life path, that is, continuous movement from birth to death; soundness of a ship in dreams refers to the well-being of a dreamer. Additionally, the selected passages underscore that shipping as a means of transportation and an element of everyday life was quite common in Byzantium.

Type of movement: imaginary; mobility in dreams.

Locations and date of movement: one's dreams; no specific date.

Edition used: *Achmetis Oneirocriticon*, ed. Franz Drexl (Leipzig, 1925) 139–140.

Translation used: *The Oneirocriticon of Achmet: A Medieval Greek and Arabic Treatise on the Interpretation of Dreams*, transl. by Steven M. Oberhelman (Lubbock, 1991) 176–177 (modified by Dirk Krausmüller).

The Oneirokritikon of Achmet

[p. 139] From the Indians concerning ships

Ships can refer to various people. If someone saw that he died aboard a ship, the death signifies life and a release from need. If he saw that he filled a ship with his belongings in order to go away, he will find anxiety and grief. If he saw that after he embarked, he was sailing under a fair wind, he will be prosperous and find analogous favour from a ruler; but if the wind was adverse, he will have illness, sorrow, shackles, and hindrances to his wishes. If he saw that he turned his ship to land in order to anchor, [p. 140] his affliction will be less in accordance to his proximity to land. If he saw that grain and pulse were loaded on this ship, he will find worry and lengthy sorrow in proportion to the size of the load, but he will not die: for the ship signifies salvation. If someone saw that he was building a merchant ship, he will assemble men for secret aims; however, this will only be seen by the greatest men. If he saw that he completed the ship to his satisfaction, he too will see his will fulfilled in all things; but if it was not finished, he will have a long period of days that is not to be despised and will be proportionate to the work. If he saw that he was sailing on dry land he will have long-lasting worry while on a long trip and his end will be perdition.

24 Kazhdan, Alexander and Simon Franklin, *Studies on Byzantine Literature of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Cambridge, 1984) 263–78; McCormick, Byzantium on the Move, 9–10; Galatariotou, Travel and Perception, 225–230.

179. From the Persians and Egyptians concerning ships

If someone saw that he was crossing a river or ocean in a ship, the ship is his salvation and signifies absence of fear from enemies; but if the boat came into danger, he will lose his health and become ill; but if the boat is in a good condition, each one will be fruitful in his pursuits. If someone saw that he owned merchant ships, he will acquire men of servile character as household slaves; and if he sees that his ships were in some danger, those slaves will become imperilled and he himself will become poor. If someone saw that he was building ships, he will get the additional wealth he has anticipated in proportion to the number of ships.

Rustam Shukurov

5.1.5 Sinister mobility: harsh reality of the imagined

Author: Eumathios Makrembolites²⁵

Text: *Hysmine and Hysminias*

Date of text: 12th century

Genre: romantic novel

Literary context: This novel is a typical Byzantine love story, which continued the similar genre of ancient Greek fiction.²⁶ It recounts in a highly entertaining style the travails of two lovers, Hysmine and Hysminias (who also acts as the first-person narrator) who struggle to be together despite many expected and unexpected obstacles.

Historical significance of the movement: The chosen passage is a part of the imaginary travels of the novel's main characters and concerns piracy in the Mediterranean.²⁷ Despite the purely fictitious character of the novel, it mirrors quite credibly the realities of sea travel in the Eastern Mediterranean during most of the Byzantine era. Piracy in the Eastern Mediterranean, which for many centuries could not be extinguished, played a significant role in the economies and politics of coastal areas and their hinterland and often was taken for granted by the authorities. With almost documentary precision the novel depicts the vicissitudes of the fate of prisoners who were captured by enemies (whether pirates or government troops) and normally condemned to slavery; the excerpt

25 PBW <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Eumathios/20102/>.

26 For the author, creation date and analysis of the novel, see the introduction to the translation by Jeffreys, Elizabeth, *Four Byzantine Novels. Theodore Prodromos, Rhodanthe and Dosikles; Eumathios Makrembolites, Hysmine and Hysminias; Constantine Manasses, Aristandros and Kallithea; Niketas Eugenianos, Drosilla and Charikles*, (Liverpool, 2012) 159–175 (see reference below).

27 Mullett, *In Peril on the Sea*, 259–284.

also exemplifies instances of coerced population movement as it was viewed by a 12th-century writer.²⁸

Type of movement: imaginary; physical travel.

Locations and date of movement: the Mediterranean Sea and islands; no specific date.

Edition used: Eumathius Macrembolites, *De Hysmines et Hysminiae amoribus libri XI*, ed. Miroslav Marcovich (Munich-Leipzig, 2001), 94–100, Book 8, ch. 1–9.

Translation used: *Four Byzantine Novels. Theodore Prodromos, Rhodanthe and Dosikles; Eumathios Makrembolites, Hysmine and Hysminias; Constantine Manasses, Aristandros and Kallithea; Niketas Eugenianos, Drosilla and Chari-kles*, translation, introduction and notes by Elizabeth Jeffreys (Liverpool, 2012) 236–239, Book 8, ch. 1–9 (modified by Dirk Krausmüller).

Hysmine and Hysminias, Book 8

[p. 94] So I rose from sleep with pleasure and delight, and with all my eyes I sought to see Hysmine, but she was nowhere to be found. But I see a host on the seashore, an incalculable host of Ethiopians,²⁹ savage men, and when I saw them – oh, the bitter sea of my misfortunes! – I rose immediately and wished I was dreaming. But I was awake, for they see me and savagely drag me by the hair, like some hunting trophy, to their *trireme* (for it was hovering above the ground with planks and cables). Taking me to the *trireme*'s hold, they sit me by an oar. When they depart from land, having drawn in all the cables, they spread wings on the ship with all those oars which are the pride of *triremes*. On coming to a calm and very lovely harbour, they moor the *trireme* and, after partaking of a little food and drink (for they had brought bread and water with them), they turn to sleep, setting guards who never nodded off at both the prow and the stern. [p. 95] About the third watch of the night they rise from sleep and again spread wings on the ship with oars and put out from the harbour. They come to a small town and tie the ship up without making noise; then taking shields in their left hands and drawing swords with the other and protecting themselves with arms, they swarm around the town like bees round a honeycomb. Generating a barbaric and un-

28 For slave trade and piracy in Byzantium, see Rotman, Youval, *Byzantine Slavery and the Mediterranean World*, transl. by Jane Marie Todd (Cambridge, Mass., 2009), especially 47, 48, 74–75 for piracy; McCormick, Michael, *Origins of the European Economy: Communications and Commerce A.D. 30–900* (Cambridge, 2001) 244–254. On the ambiguous social position of pirates see also Reyerson, Kathryn, Pirates as marginals in the medieval Mediterranean world, in: Ann E. Zimo et al. (eds.), *Rethinking Medieval Margins and Marginality* (London, 2020), 186–203.

29 Most likely, Egyptian pirates are meant here. A 12th-century reader undoubtedly took this to be a reference to Muslim Egyptian pirates.

intelligible noise, they made their attack – armed men falling on unarmed, the alert on the sleeping, grabbing and slaughtering them like wild beasts, totally tearing the town apart; they plundered everything that came into their hands, including women, maidens, youths, men – everyone whom the barbarians' dagger did not send to Hades.³⁰ Collecting up all their loot on the *trireme*, the pirates themselves went on board and left the harbour far behind. When they reached the middle of the sea and had the entire ship fixed with cables like a foundation, they share out the spoils. All the men, all the youths, all the maidens and women they stripped of their tunics and they were uncovered right down to their private parts and had their whole body naked. The *trireme's* hold received the youths and the men, but the barbarians' immorality and licentiousness received the women while the maidens, by what barbarian law I do not know, were clad in a torn tunic and no arrogant hand was laid on them nor was anything barbaric or shameful done to them. [p. 96] After the barbarians had treated the women in shameless fashion and ordered everything else in disorderly fashion, they turned to dinner. Their table was plentiful and not barbaric or in any way paltry as it had been shortly before. The *trireme's* hold, as has been said, was reserved for the men, while the area around the prow was kept for the maidens, but the women sat shamefully at the meal with the barbarians. After the delicate food, as has been mentioned, and the shameful table full of blood, they set the youths (there were few of them) to the oars whereas those of a higher age (woe to the barbarians' pitiless souls) became fodder for the sword, and their heads were hurled mercilessly into the sea. The women lay shamefully with the barbarians, and the *trireme* became a brothel full of turpitude and a symposium of blood. This is what went on at night. When night had vanished (for the sun was over the land) and the longed-for light smiled down on us and was the day, the barbarians emerged as if from a bridal chamber and were quite intoxicated with their pleasures, and when they conversed in their barbarian tongue it sounded like a hideous chatter. After an incredible noise of the sort that sailors, and especially barbarian sailors, raise, an alien and unintelligible song saw the *trireme* adorned with a white sail and the wind that blew from the stern billowed out the sail and the *trireme* bucked like a horse let loose on the plain. [p. 97] In order to pass over what took place in the meantime, all the barbarous riot, all their shameful behaviour towards the women and everything else that went on in a barbaric and indecent fashion, we reached Artykomis with a favourable wind and we see a crowd from Artykomis³¹ on the shore. And after many negotiations of the sort that barbarians conduct and which pirates exchange in barbarian manner with those on land, the *trireme* took hostages on board while the land received the

30 The term 'barbarian' in this passage confirms non-Greek/Byzantine affiliation of the pirates.

31 *Artykomis* is in Greek "Village of Artemis", a fictitious city.

trireme's load, which the pirates had looted from the town. And there was a make-shift celebration on the seashore. Everything made of silver, gold, bronze and iron and all clothing and anything else that a barbarian band takes as loot, was unloaded from the *trireme* and all made available for sale. But the loot that consisted of us human beings was not unloaded onto dry land but was put up for sale on board of the *trireme* itself. About the women and us young men who were captives there was little discussion among the inhabitants of Artykomis – or rather, none; their entire attention was devoted to the acquisition of the maidens. These were much prized by the barbarians and purchased by many of those in Artykomis, after the bow and spring of Artemis, which Artykomis considers to be the Celtic river Rhine. For there is in Artykomis a famous temple of Artemis; in the middle of which is a golden statue of Artemis aiming a bow [p. 98] with her hands and with a spring bubbling up at her feet and flowing like a raging and turbulent river. If you saw the springs you would say that they are boiling. These – the bow and the spring – test virginity and its loss. If anyone is in doubt about a virgin and seeks to test her, they garland the maiden with a laurel wreath and put her in the spring. If the girl who dips into the spring has not lied about her virginity and has not been despoiled of her chastity, Artemis does not aim her bow, the water grows calm and the maiden floats comfortably on the water, her head adorned with the garland of laurel. But if a gale from Aphrodite has snuffed out the lamp of her maidenhood and Eros has surreptitiously stolen her virginity, Artemis – the maiden goddess – aims her bow against her who is no maiden, who has deceived her, and seems to shoot at her head; the girl shudders at the weapon, dips her head beneath the water and the foaming water takes away her garland. So all the maidens who had been collected by the barbarians were garlanded with laurel and put in the spring. All who did not dip their heads and who did not lose their garlands were sold for a high price; all who falsely claimed virginity were allotted to the *trireme* and counted among the women, receiving bronze instead of gold, and a barbarian bridal chamber in place of the virgin's laurel wreath. [p. 99] Thus matters stood at Artykomis, and thus the loot was unloaded from the *trireme*. Once again the *trireme* put its accustomed wings in motion and the barbarian fleet made for another city while we were dragged along who had become the barbarians' slaves instead of free men. On the third day we landed in another harbour, and when we had hauled the *trireme* up onto the beach and made it entirely fast with cables, all the barbarians jumped out and stood on the shore. They dragged the women out with them and set up a tent by the waves and prepared a splendid table. After all the food and drink and barbarian jests and all the other unseemly and barbarian behaviour to which they subjected the women, the barbarians turned to sleep with the women, immersing their souls completely in pleasure and being entirely intoxicated with their passions. Thus matters were with the barbarians. We in the ship's hold, putting our trust in the barbarians'

drunkenness, let ourselves out and were tormented by countless thoughts. Should we disembark from the *trireme* on to the shore or should we escape the hands of the barbarians together with the *trireme* itself, or should we arm ourselves in Hellenic fashion with the many weapons that the *trireme* carried and attack the barbarians and either be victorious or fall during the fight? While matters stood thus with us, [p. 100] an armed troop attacks the barbarians on land as they all sleep, all intoxicated with wine and lust; and while the barbarian band was plundered by the others, we exchanged servitude to Hellenes³² for servitude to barbarians and having been slaves became slaves once again, becoming our barbarian masters' fellow slaves, and while being enslaved with our former masters, we had become the slaves of Hellenes who shared our tongue. And in the middle of the market and city of Daphnepolis, the city sacred to Apollo, the general and his army chant the victory odes over us, and the city applauds and shouts happily.³³ All of us – the booty, the spoils – are dragged pitifully to the shrine of Apollo, which is the wonder of Daphnepolis.

Rustam Shukurov

32 The term 'Hellenes' indicates here that the attacking soldiers were compatriots of the captives (implying 'Byzantines' for a 12th-century reader). Judging by the context, these 'Hellenic' troops must have been governmental military forces.

33 According to Roman laws, a Roman who was enslaved by the enemy remained of slave status even if he returned to Roman territory.

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List of terms

amermoumnes: from arabic 'amīr al-mu'minīn (literally "Commander of the Faithful"), title of the Arab caliph

aplekton: fortified camp for the supply of troops, or the obligation to provide short-term billeting of troops or officials

Athinganoi: a gnostic sect of the 9th century in Phrygia which denied the doctrine of Trinity

basileus: the principal imperial title of the Byzantine emperor since the 7th century

Byzantion/Byzantis: Megarian colony in Bosphorus, chosen by Constantine I as the site of a new Roman capital

caesar/kaisar: senior court title usually awarded to imperial relatives, and only rarely to foreigners

Chalcedonian Christians: followers of the theology formed at the Synod of Chalcedon (451) on the connection between the divine and human nature of Christ

chartophylax, lit. the keeper of the documents: an ecclesiastic official responsible for the official documents and records. After 1328, the chartophylax of the Patriarchate of Constantinople was called the megas chartophylax.

Chrysobull: the most prestigious document bearing the golden seal (*chryse bulla*) of the Byzantine emperor

despotes: a title of the highest rank usually held by sons or brothers of the emperor

domestikos (ton scholon): originally, commander of a guard group; after the 11th c. commander in-chief of the army

doux: since the 10th century, military commander of a larger frontier district. After the 12th century, it denoted the governor of small themes.

ducats: Venetian gold coins (after 1284)

gambros: (lit. "son-in-law"), a semi-official title for nobles connected to the emperor by affinity

hyperpyron: the name for the late Byzantine golden coin, equivalent to the nomisma

indiction: a cycle of 15 years used in Byzantium to date. It started on the 1st of September

kaniskion: donation by peasants to their lord or from the faithful to priests on specific occasions such as requiems and festival days

kanonikai: members of a *diaconia* of religious women

kastron: fortress or citadel, fortified city

katepano: since the 10th century, a commander of a military unit. Primarily it designates the governors of major provinces.

keimelia: valuable objects of the church such as icons, vessels, etc.

kyr/kyra: unofficial title of respect corresponding to “sir” (kyr) and “lady” (kyra)

kleisoura, kleisourarches: a territorial unit smaller than a thema under the direction of kleisourarches, usually at a point of strategic relevance

kommerkiarios: a fiscal official responsible for the collection of the *kommerkion* (sales tax)

krites: high-ranking official with judicial, administrative, and financial rights

lavra: a type of monastery that combines eremitic and coenobitic monasticism

logothetes: senior administrative title for an office equivalent to a minister or secretary of state

lorikion: chainmail, part of the outfit of the infantry troops in the middle Byzantine period

magistros: a high-ranking dignity, mentioned first time in the 9th century

Magnaura: a building (in the form of a basilica) next to the Great Palace used for the reception of embassies

Mandylion: the Holy Towel, a square or rectangle of cloth believed to bear the image of Christ and re-discovered in Edessa in the 6th century; 944 transferred to Constantinople

manglabites: a corps of bodyguards in the Byzantine Empire

megas doux: title designating the commander of the imperial fleet

monoreme: a galley with one bank of oars

mitaton: official inn for foreign merchants; or military camp or ranch for the supply of soldiers; or obligation of private individuals to shelter military and state officials

monoxylon: dugout (canoe) made from a single tree used by the Rus to attack Constantinople

narthex: outer part of an orthodox church originally used for those who were not (yet) baptised

nomisma: (histamenon) name of the Byzantine standard gold coin (of 4.55 g) in the 10th century; earlier name of the hyperpyron

oikeios: an honorific designation, a semi-official title awarded to senior civil dignitaries

orphanotrophos: title for the curator especially of the imperial orphanage; one of the senior ministers

Palamism: the theology of Gregory Palamas (1296/1297–1359) on the divine light

paroikoi: dependant peasants, in Late Byzantium under the authority of the pronoria holder

patrikios: high-ranking dignity, granted to the most important governors and generals in the 8th–10th century

- pech: leader (beg) of the Khazars besides the khan
- phelonia (singular: phelonion): liturgical vestment of an orthodox priest
- phoundax (fondaco): central warehouse, imperial depot of grain
- praktikon/praktika: fiscal records listing the taxes, peasants, and possessions of an individual or an institution
- porphyra/porphyrogennetos: the children of the emperor born during his reign in the special room of the Great Palace called porphyra (purpur)
- proasteion: lit. “suburb,” from the 10th century it denoted a rural estate, and later it signified a village.
- pronoia: conditional grant of a specific amount of tax revenues from properties and peasant households, used by the Byzantine state especially from the 12th/13th centuries onwards
- prostagma: a type of imperial document, a decree issuing a command
- protomandator: head of the corps of special messengers (mandatores)
- protovestiarior: a high court position originally only for eunuchs; in Late Byzantium the highest financial official
- Rhomaioi: a self-identification term (literally: “Roman”) used by the citizens of what later scholarship called the “Byzantine Empire”
- sakkoi (singular sakkos): liturgical vestment of an Orthodox bishop in the form of a tunic
- sebastokrator/sebastokratorissa: a very high title held normally by close relatives of the emperor, since the late 11th century
- sitokrithon: (=wheat and barley), a tax imposed in 1304 by Andronikos II to collect money for the payment of the Catalans
- spatharokandidatos: a mid-ranking court dignity used in the 7th–11th centuries
- staurata (singular: stauraton): a silver coin of Late Byzantium introduced by Emperor John V Palaiologos
- strategos: general of a thema, who had the military and civil governance of the thema
- stratiotes: soldiers of the themata, who received military lands or often acquired cultivated land near their garrisons
- stratitotika ktemata: land properties allocated to the thematic stratitotai for their supply with equipment and horse
- synone: (=purchase), forced sale of commodities to government officials at a prescribed price
- tagma: since the 8th century, a military unit especially of the elite regiments comprising the central army
- taktikon/taktika: 1. official lists of titles and offices used for the court precedence; 2. military books on strategy and tactics of war
- taxiarches: commander of an infantry brigade (taxiarchia) (500 heavy infantry, 300 archers and 200 light infantry)
- thelematarioi: farmers who lived outside Constantinople acting as middlemen between the Nicaean Empire and the Latin Empire

thema (plural: themata): the main military/administrative units of the middle Byzantine Empire, emerging since the 7th century, but documented as term only from the 9th century onwards. In English often rendered as ‘theme’, ‘themes’.

tourma, tourmarches: a military subunit of the army of a thema, headed by the tourmarches (commander of the tourma)

typikon: 1. liturgical book with the Church rite; 2. the rule of a monastery

triereme: a type of galley with three rows of oars, manned with one man per oar

vestiarites: a court title of modest rank

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https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/15/Chora_Maria_mosaic.jpg

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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Varangian_Guard#/media/File:A_Thracasian_woman_kills_a_Varangian.jpg

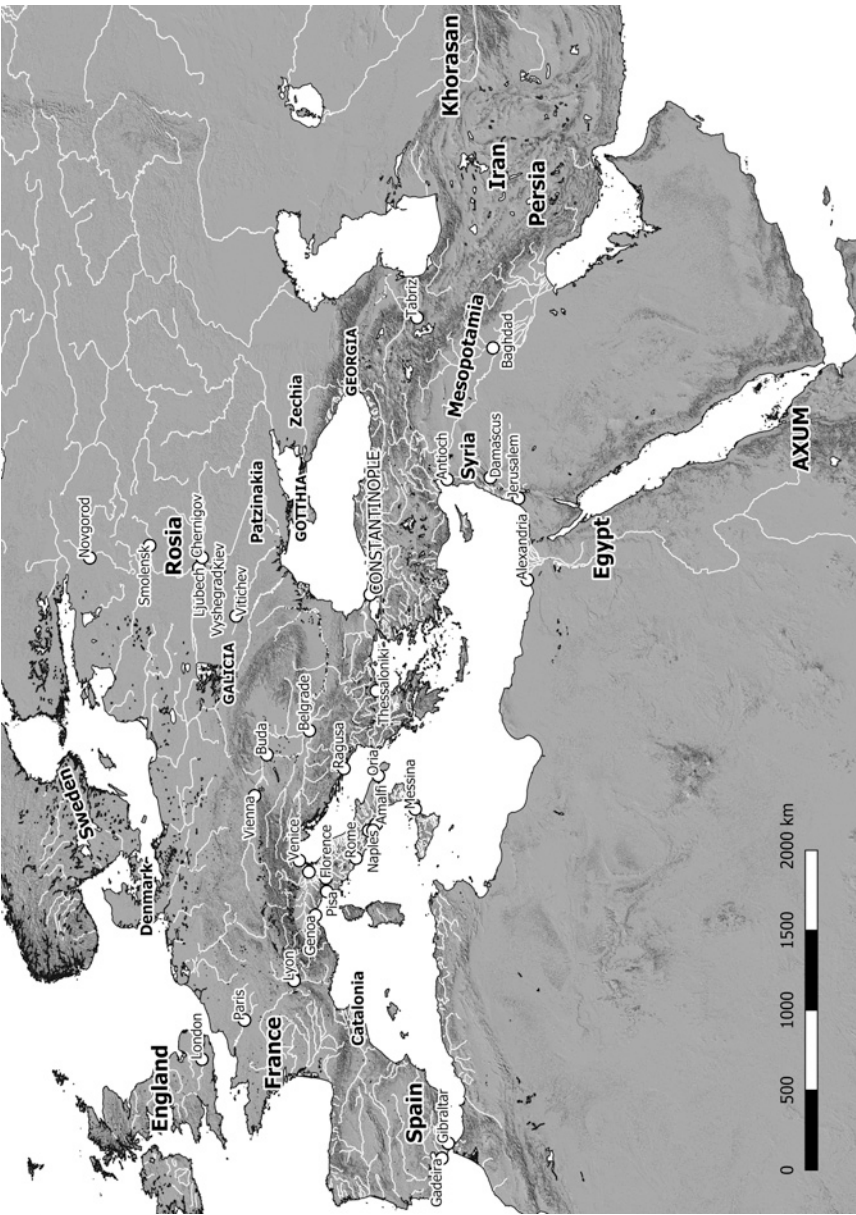
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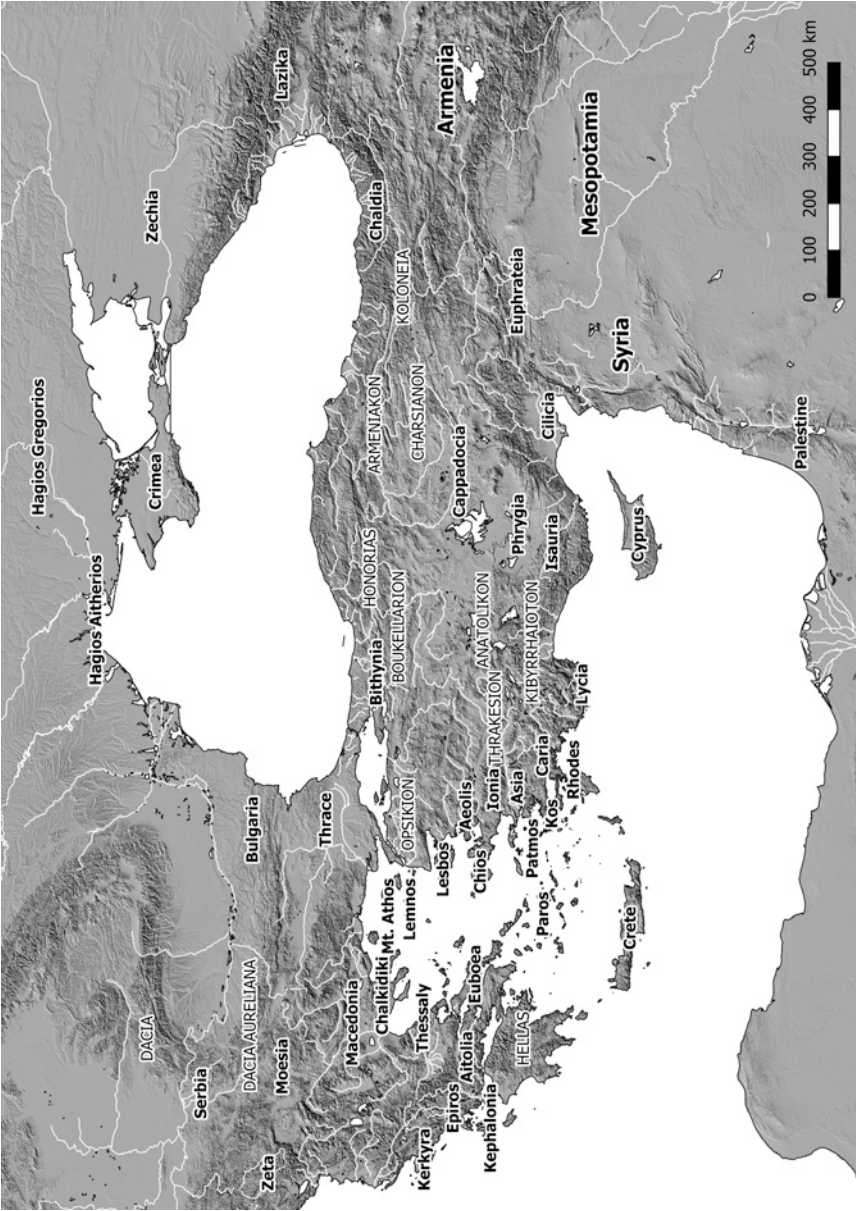
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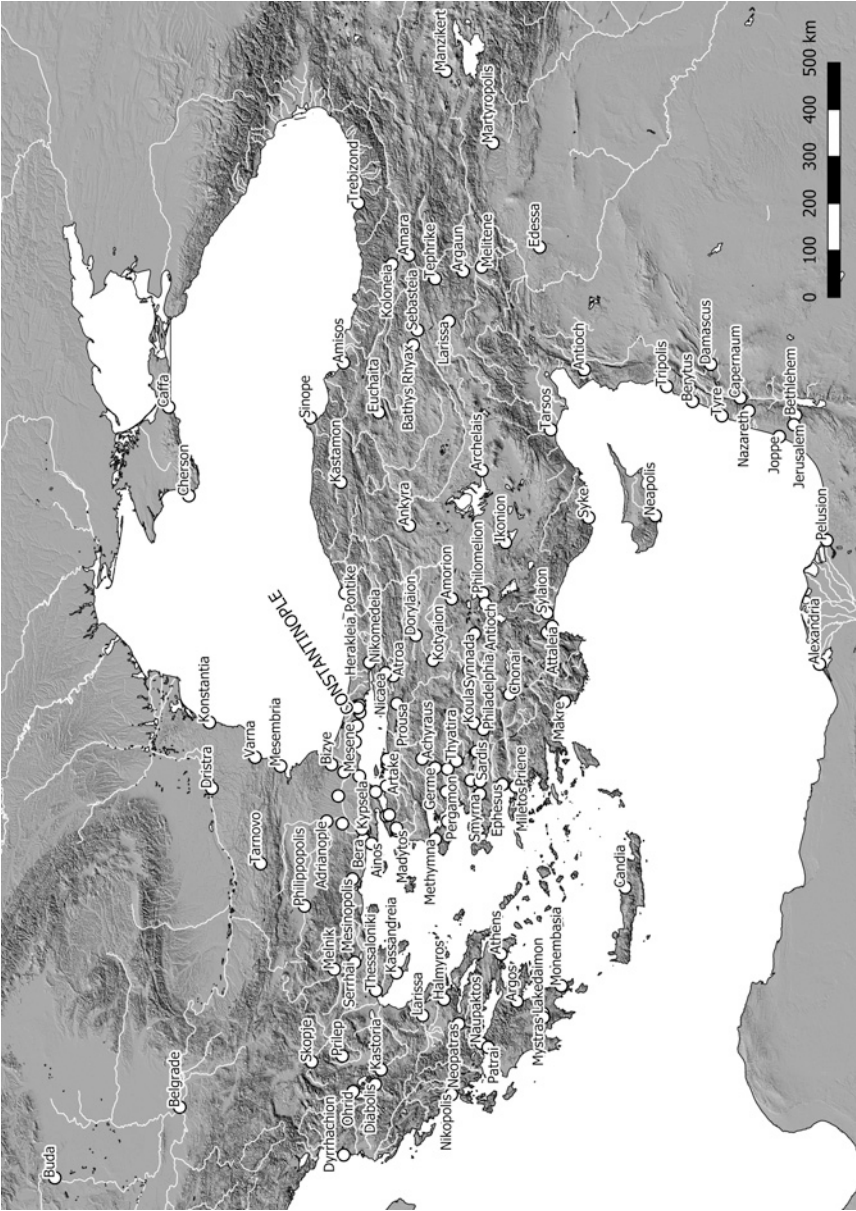
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